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"Please, please, please let me reach safely"
Exploring the fear of sexual violence in Delhi

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Abstract

Since the gang rape of a physiotherapist student in Delhi 2012 the media reporting on sexual violence has increased by 30 percent. Several studies have looked at how media report on sexual violence in India, but very few have looked at the increased news reporting from a critical point of view. This thesis draws upon interview narratives collected in Delhi in February and March 2016 and looks at how the increased reporting on sexual violence influence young female students´ fear of sexual violence in Delhi and how this in turn produce and reproduce a discourse of women as vulnerable and in need of protection. In turn, this results in women restricting their mobility which is to be seen as a way of controlling women. The narratives were analyzed through a thematic narrative analysis which was centered around masculinities, femininities and bodily experiences expressed in relation to fear of sexual violence in public space.

Keywords: Gender, masculinities, femininities, sexual violence, fear, space

Acknowledgements

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1. Introduction

Women who go at night have only themselves to blame in case they attract attention of male molesters. Housework and housekeeping are for girls, not roaming in discos and bar at nights or wearing wrong clothes.

Mukesh Singh, India´s Daugther, 2015

On the 16th of December, 2012, a 23-year-old female physiotherapist student is brutally raped on a moving bus. She later dies from the injuries the six men caused her by first raping her, and then damaging her internal organs with an iron rod (Barry 2015).

This horrible event, known as the Delhi Gang Rape or Nirbhaya[1], was given enormous attention in leading newspapers – not only in India, but globally (Drache & Velagic 2013:6). The event shed light on one of the most challenging issues confronting Indian society today – the sexual violence against women. News reporting on rape increased by approximately 30 per cent after Nirbhaya, which clearly indicates that rape was being brought to the forefront. This rape case is more than one hideous event – it has functioned as a trigger event for the gender equality debate in India and to some extent situated rape as not only a crime, but as crime against women in a structure of power (Drache & Velagic 2013:3).

Nearly 96 per cent of the women in Delhi feel fear of being victims of sexual violence (Indo Asian News Service 2009) and this is an issue which is not personal, but highly political. Fear of violent crimes can have profound effects on our lives in terms of mobility and lifestyle and is one of the most influential constraints on women´s freedom of movement in cities (Pain 1997:234). Women´s fear of violence in public spaces is often centered to sexualized violence and assault, and although studies globally have shown that most violence take place in homes, there is a perception of that male strangers are prevailing and

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[1] Indian law does not allow media to publish the name of rape victims and the murdered woman became known as Nirbhaya, meaning fearless in Hindi.

scary (Sandberg 2011:1). It has become a part of women´s identity and commonly accepted that women feel fear in public space (Koskela 1999) which makes fear of crime one the most oppressive sources of social control of women (Madriz 1997).

I landed in Delhi on the 19th of January in 2016 to collect interview narratives on fear and mobility patterns, which this thesis draws upon. I cannot think of anyone who didn´t tell me that I had to be careful during my stay and I always replied with that yes of course I will be careful. India, and Delhi in particular, is marked as almost being dangerous for women to be in and as Kumkum Dasgupta, an editor at Hindustan Times once told me; People think that you will be raped just by walking down the street as a woman in Delhi. Of course, and fortunately, that is not true. But this common image of Delhi that most of my friends and family in Sweden share, did cause some extra fear in me. My relation to fear is as complicated as most women´s. I grew up in a suburb of Stockholm where the crime rates are quite high compared to other parts of the capital, as well as the route from the bus to my family's apartment, is deserted and with very few street lights. I often ran from the bus station to the front door. It is difficult to know how I should think of my own fear, something which was present in some of the narratives that the interviewees shared with me. But I realize it affects me in several ways. On one hand, I don´t want the fear to influence how I use a space, but on the other hand it just does, although I try to convince myself that I shouldn´t be afraid. It was interesting to see that this was common not only among myself and some of my friends in Sweden, but also among the Indian students that I spoke to.

1.1. Aim of the study

This study is exploring how fear of sexual violence among female students in Delhi[2] have changed in regards to the increased news reporting of sexual violence

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[2] Delhi and New Delhi is often used interchangeably, where the latter is a smaller part of the former. This study will use Delhi, as my respondents are living and/or studying in both parts of the city.

and how they respond to the threat of being subjected to sexual harassments or violence in public spaces. I explore where, when and who feels afraid and I do so by addressing the following research questions:

- How has the fear of sexual violence among female students in Delhi changed over time due to the increased media reporting on sexual violence?
- How do the respondents construct femininities and masculinities in their narratives?

The chosen topic is especially interesting to explore in Delhi since sexual violence is widely discussed in the Indian political and academic arenas as well as in every-day lives. India introduced a new law after the public outcry that followed the Nirbhaya case and sexual violence was prioritized by the government as they introduced a new law which broadened the definition of what constitutes a sexual violent act (Drache & Velagic 2013:14).

Delhi is particularly interesting because of it topping charts in sexual violence in India. I begin with the Nirbhaya case, where a student was raped and killed, and thus, I have chosen to talk to female students about their fear and mobility patterns as I assume many can identify with her.

2. Setting the Scene – Mobility and sexual violence in Delhi

In this chapter I aim to set the scene for the study. I will create an image of Delhi from the perspective of a female student. It is based on previous research, my understanding of the city, the stories the respondents shared with me and news articles on sexual violence and harassment in Delhi. This part should also be seen as part of my analysis, although not focusing on the exact research questions of this study.

2.1. Delhi and its challenges

The society in India, like all societies, is suffering from misogyny (Bhattacharyya 2015:1345) and sexual violence against women in India in general, but in Delhi

particularly, is omnipresent. The capital has several times been referred to as the rape capital, topping charts in domestic violence, rape and female feticides. What should also be stressed is that most cases of rape and other sexual violent acts go unreported (Rao 2014:154). However, we can see some progress for women at this time. Statistics show there is a decline (in some areas in India) in sex-selective abortion, higher literacy rate, more work outside the home and an increased political participation among women (Adhikari 2015:202).

In late 1970's the women´s movement in India was focusing increasingly on custodial rape as the emphasis in the trials of two high profile cases was on the sexual history of the women rather than evidence, which led to the alleged police men going free. The events led to the women´s right movement stressing that rape is a violation of a woman´s right to her body. It challenged the legal as well as the social understanding of rape in India. The protests and demonstrations that followed led to a law reform where it was recognized that consent was irrelevant in custodial rape cases and a mandatory minimum sentence of rape was included (Sharma & Bazilli 2014:5). Decades later in Delhi, 16 December 2012, Jyoti Singh (the young woman in the Nirbhaya case) was brutally raped and killed and once again, one of the first demands from demonstrations was a call for legal reform. This time, death penalty was rejected and acid attacks and marital rape became a criminal offence. Furthermore, the definition of sexual assault was broadened to include voyeurism, stalking and other assaults with the intention to disrobe women (Sharma & Bazilli 2014:6).

One of the most common forms of sexual assaults against women in public spaces in Delhi is the so called eve teasing, which is when women get comments on their appearance, e.g. whistling, staring, stalking, pinching or touching (Bhattacharyya 2015:1345). Yamnini Narayan (2012) conducted a study on sexual violence in Delhi from an urban sustainability approach. Narayan writes that "the issue of VAW [Violence against women] in the city´s public spaces was repeatedly identified as one of the biggest challenges to urban sustainability" (Narayan 2012:2). On the same line is Baxi (2003) who has written an article in India

Together on rape and Delhi´s urban environment. The author stresses that the urban environment in Delhi produces a constant fear for women.

Travelling through the city of Delhi on foot, by public transport or personal vehicles has always been fraught with sexual danger. Today, cars symbolise the material culture of rape, telling us that the perpetrator is usually middle or upper class; or that he has enough capital to escape the law, proving false the idea that the working class man is the average criminal. For women, the moving terrain of rape is a terrifying image that makes the capacity to survive each day in the city even more difficult to negotiate. Political strategies fail to see how women's experiences of the city are re-structured through such practices of violence.

Baxi 2003

According to a survey from 2009, nearly 96 per cent of the women feel unsafe in Delhi, and especially in markets such as Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place and Karol Bagh (Indo Asian News Service 2009). In my interviews, almost all of the women said that Chandni Chowk is one of the areas they like the least in Delhi and a place they avoid going to, especially alone and never after dark. Mariah, one of my respondents, is studying Chandni Chowk for her PhD in geography at Delhi University, and she told me that there is fear in almost every girl who walks through or visits Chandni Chowk.

I tell you, I have been there for two to three times for my work and in daytime only right. There is a slight, I mean, I cannot quantify, but there is a slight notion of fear in my mind. That if I´m walking, what is someone just touches me? Because it´s already very chaotic and if I would like come back and be like why did you touch me, he would say it´s already so chaotic how can you make out it´s me who touched you. So for that matter, that slight notion of fear is there when I´m in that area. And it´s male dominated population wise, so the majority is men working there so they can have legitimate reason for that it´s already crowded. How can you know it was that person, you know. So slight fear is still there, so in the past visits I have kept my mind, I mean that now you better walk straight, have your eyes open, who is watching you and who is following you because people might pick pocket you there also. It has happened with my friend so it´s like this. You have to be very cautious and aware when you are there in these narrow lanes and dense populated areas. I mean, every girl has a fear at Chandni Chowk.

Mariah, 26 years old, Delhi

Narayan (2012) poses a challenge that also Mariah identified – the skewed gender ratio at some places in Delhi, and especially in areas where there are migrants from other parts of India. Delhi is a megacity with 15 million inhabitants which is growing and is expected to become even bigger with more than 20 million inhabitants by the year of 2021, according to Delhi Master Plan[3] from 2011. Every day, one million people travel to Delhi from nearby cities such as Noida and Guragon. The population ratio of men to women in Delhi in 2001 was 827:1000, compared with the national ratio 933:1000, which can be explained by the male-dominated migration to the city (Narayan 2012:2).

Studies have shown that women´s fear of sexual violence have an effect on their mobility, as they avoid public transport or stay inside after sunset (Bhattacharyya 2015:1343). Public spaces in India are a male domain and women are restricted to private spaces where taking care of the house and children are central while men attend public spaces such as taking part in work and university, although this is changing and women to some extent do take part in public spaces (Bhattacharyya 2015: 1344).

2.2 News reporting on sexual violence in India

A starting point for the recent national and international debate on sexual violence in India was the case of Nirbhaya in 2012 (Nham 2013:1). It changed how rape was represented and debated in India, and sexual violence started to be discussed to a greater extent than before. The news reporting on rape increased by 30 per cent after the Delhi Gang Rape (Drache & Velagic 2013:17).

Kumkum Dasgupta, editor at the Hindustan Times agrees; the Nirbhaya case changed not only the news reporting on sexual violence, but started a broader and deeper debate and critique against gender roles and women´s rights. She told me that rape cases and stories on sexual violence had been written about in media before, but at this time they became front page stories. They took up significant space in papers and magazines and people started to analyze the violence to a

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[3] The Delhi Master Plan consists of formulations and strategies with the aim to make Delhi a global metropolis and world-class city by 2021.

greater extent than before. Furthermore, she said that the rape stories also spurred debates about the lack of transport options for women in cities and the result of the rigid gender norms that Bollywood movies often reproduce.

Media also ran articles at this time on other previous brutal rapes which reminded people that this was not an isolated incident, which also resulted in an increase in fear among women (Drache & Velagic 2013:17). However, most of the respondents I was speaking to, were of the opinion that the amount of rape cases has not increased. Sarah is 22 years and had been living in Delhi for six months by the time I met her.

It´s obviously most the public spaces that will be highlighted cause no one will come behind your closed door and find out weather you are sexually violated or not. It´s crazy to think of it in that way. But I mean, sexual violence has been happened all the time it´s just not that the media has highlighted it. But now it has come to a stage when people know it is happening.

Sarah, 22 years old, West Bengal

The idea of who is raped or sexually harassed is mirrored and reproduced in the news reporting of sexual violence in India, where rape cases on poor and Dalits[4] seldom are represented nor reported on to a balanced extent (Rao 2014: 160). Instead we often see news reporting of rape cases on middle or upper class working women. India´s media is selective about condemning rape cases. In 2005 a gang rape took place in northwest Delhi. The woman was 20 years old and from Mizoram[5] and the case was poorly covered by media (Rao 2014:162).

Another related issue in regards to rape reporting in India is how media focuses on women who have changed their stories or statements, and are therefore accused of lying. Media in India has shown to give these stories a lot of space, putting

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[4] Dalits are known to be 'untouchable' and subjected to so-called 'untouchability practices' in both public and private spheres. 'Untouchables' known in South Asia as Dalits are often assigned the dirtiest and most hazardous jobs and many are subjected to forced and bonded labor. They have limited access to resources, services and development which keeps most Dalits in poverty.

[5] Mizoram is a state located in the northeast India. The population from Mizoram is often facing discrimination in society due to the linguistic and cultural similarities with China.

headlines such as "Gross Misuse and Abuse of Rape Laws", instead of setting the news stories into a bigger context, i.e. that the women might have been threatened (Drache & Velgaic 2013:10). This can instill a fear of being mistrusted if one decides to file a report, which results in that fewer women report cases of sexual violence.

2.3 Cage or college?

In order to try to set the scene not only for women in general in Delhi, but for female students in particular, I will present a brief history of women being enrolled in university programs and the housing conditions for students and what their mobility patterns look like.

Since independence there has been a significant rise in the number of women enrolled in universities. In 1950-1951 women constituted 10.9 percent of students enrolled in university, which is to be compared to 42.66 in 2011-2012 (Gautam 2015:32). Although, the numbers are almost equal it is far from easy for women to enroll in university education – especially for the women that have to leave their hometowns. Some parents are reluctant to send their daughters to universities located far away from home due to security and safety reasons (Gautam 2015:47).

In India it is common that students live in so called student hostels which are located inside or nearby the university campuses. It´s seen as a cheap and suitable alternative in terms of safety for the female students. But it comes with unfair rules. The rules, however, differ from university to university and hostel to hostel. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) is known as one of the most liberated and progressive universities in Delhi and the rules between male and female hostels are less discriminatory at JNU than at for example Delhi University. Several articles have shed light on the discriminatory rules of women´s hostels[6]. In one article in Indian Express, Noori, a student in Delhi, is interviewed.

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[6] See for example Aggarwal´s article "Stop treating us like kids", published in Times of India 2013 and Chakrabarti in Indian Express from 2015.

"Why would you tell me that I have to be indoors at 8 pm 'for my own good'? Why would you not believe that if I want to go out, I might want to watch a movie or go to an exhibition? Why is it that the first thing people think if you are late is that you were out with your boyfriend and you were sleeping around? And even if I do, why would you not recognise my autonomy over my body?" she asks."

Noori´s questions are echoed in dorms in hostels across the country, where women often find that the promised freedom of adulthood does not stand a chance against repressive curfew hours, suspicion about their sexual lives and wardens who, in all earnestness, believe they are obliged to ensure that the girls do not "stray".

<div align="right">Chakrabarti 2015</div>

All students living in the university hostels at Delhi University have so called local guardians. The guardians are officially responsible for the student when she is not in the hostel or attending classes. Sarah explains and illustrates her reality.

If you want to go for a party or disco or a local guardian or a friend´s place you have to tell the hostel and they have to sign for when you are going and when you are coming back. So you can take two nights out without permission from your local guardian but if you take three or more then you have to write to your guardian. You have to give a letter to them signed by your local guardian saying that you can be out on that day and back on that day.

<div align="right">Sarah, 22 years old, West Bengal</div>

In January and February 2016 protests took place against the discriminatory rules and regulations in women´s hostels. Flyers were handed out demanding "Control over the only space we can call "ours" in the city", "Respect for our independent decision making as adult women and our constitutional and fundamental right to equality and freedom" and "Access to resources of the colleges/university and city after curfew time". When I asked how it works in the men´s hostels at Delhi University I was told that they have much more freedom and no curfew hours.

We are still infants in their eyes, they don´t see we are above 18 and we are adults according to India, Indian state. Women are not supposed to be adult.

<div align="right">Dipti, 21 years old, West Bengal</div>

Returning to the reluctance of sending or letting daughters study in cities far away, I had a discussion with Kumkum Dasgupta at Hindustan Times, and I expressed my feelings and opinions about this. Thinking the she would share the opinion of the students and myself, she gave me another perspective – that if these systems didn't exist, young women might not be allowed to go to far away universities by their families, and if that is what it takes for women to get a higher education, it is good at this point in time.

3. Theoretical perspectives on fear in public spaces

In the following chapter I will present the concepts and theories that have been influencing this work. This is important in order to understand the different aspects of fear, safety and sexual violence and harassments. Furthermore, I will discuss gender, masculinities, femininities and space and how these affect each other and are interconnected. Lastly, I will try to present how media´s representations influence the different concepts, as that has a central role in this study.

3.1 Defining and explaining sexual violence and harassments

Any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic, or otherwise directed, against a person's sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work.

Krug et al. 2002

Examples of sexually violent acts against women, which can also be referred to as sexual harassment, are rape, beating, whistling, staring, pinching, touching and eve teasing (Bhattacharyya 2015:1345). However, sexual and/or gender based violence can also include child marriage, female feticide, breast ironing, physiological manipulation and abuse (UNFPA 2015; Krug et al. 2002). The list can be long. The violence can take place in private as well as public spaces. In this study I have had to limit the concept and exclude some parts. Therefore, this study should not be seen as covering all forms of sexual violence. The definition

employed here includes sexual violence, as defined by WHO, taking place in public spaces – I do not include the fear of sexual violence in domestic spaces.

It is challenging to explain sexual violence due to the multiple forms it takes, but it is rarely an act of passion. It is an aggressive act aiming to express power over the victim. Most feminist analyses of sexual violence and harassments share the view of that the silence around sexual violence against women has to be broken (Kim 2012; Pineau 1989; Brownmiller 1975). However, there are differences in the analyses of the causes of rape, depending on if it's a liberal or more radical view of the violence. In a liberal or individual phycologist point of view the single perpetrator is seen as a sick and violent person. According to this view on sexual violence, the woman is also seen as a deviant as well as the act of violence in itself. This point of view is not fully recognizing the gendered dimension of the issue, which I have chosen to employ in this study. This means that I believe sexual violence and harassments are crimes which are highly gendered and an example of men´s dominance over women (Johnson 2005:4). This is also evident in statistics presented by Greenfield (1997) where 91 per cent of rape victims are women and 99 per cent of the perpetrators are men – these numbers clearly show, I would argue, that women as a category are affected by rape. This is also mirrored in those who fear sexual violence, which was evident in the survey from 2009 where 96 per cent of the women feel insecure in public space in Delhi (Indo Asian News Service 2009).

Brownmiller (1976) stresses that sexual violence always serves as a function to maintain the unequal power relations between men and women, and although men who rape are being condemn by other men, it is to all men´s advantage as it causes fear in women, which is a kind of oppression against women as it limits them in many aspects.

It is of importance not to limit the understanding of the concept to be a personal and/or family related issue. Many feminist scholars argue that it should be seen as socio-economic and political processes that are deeply patriarchal (Agathangelou

& Ling 2004: 519; Brownmiller 1976; Connell 2005; Kapur 1998:42). Menon and Kannabiran (2007) exemplifies by writing that "the sexual domination of women by men forms the crux of this argument: rape, or the threat of rape, keeps most women subjugated to, in fear of, and under control of men (Menon & Kannabiran 2007:4).

Kim (2012) argues that legislation is central, or perhaps the fastest way, to prevent rape and sexual violence. But also stresses that education is of importance in combating this issue. If the rules about what is socially acceptable are to change, this information would need to be spread throughout the population i.e. mass media. Information campaigns can have effect, but mass media has globally shown to be reluctant to deal with questions of sexual relations in a good manner (Kim 2012: 243).

3.2 Introducing gender, masculinities and femininities

Gender. n. a grammatical term only. To talk of persons or creatures of the masculine of feminine gender, meaning the male of female sex, is either a jocularity (permissible or not according to context) or a blunder.

Fowler´s Dictionary of Modern English Usage, Oxford, 1940

Gender as a concept has been discussed for decades, although its most recent usage is believed to have derived from American feminists who wanted a rejection of biological determinism which comes with the term "sex" (Scott 1986:1054). The concept of gender employed in this field study is taking its departure from a discussion by Joan Scott (1986). The definition presented by Scott is based on that gender is "a constitutive element of social relationships based on ´perceived´ differences between the sexes, and gender is a primary way of signifying relationships of power" (Scott 1986:1054). This means that genders are socially constructed processes which determine what is appropriate for women respective to men when it comes to e.g. work, attributes and social activities, which opens up for oppression and hierarchy (Connell 1987:134-141; Scott 1986:1069). The understanding of gender as processes which are relational and

socially constructed, corresponds to how I have employed the concepts of space and place in this study, defined and discussed later in this chapter.

Lisak et al. (1996) argues that in places where gender norms are more rigid the violence against women have shown to be more prevalent. I have therefore chosen to explore how masculinities and femininities are expressed in my respondent's narratives.

Since early 1980's, the concept of masculinity has been used to explain the gender hierarchies and men´s power over women, as well as it has been employed to explain and understand men´s violence against women and men´s health (Jewkes et al. 2015). Masculinities are, according to many researchers multiple, fluid and dynamic as well as context based and differencing from situation to situation (Connell 2005; Kimmel et al. 2005:3; Jewkes et al. 2015:11), therefore I have mixed western scholars with Indian ones, in order to make this theoretical perspective fit to the context. Furthermore, I'd like to point out that this study has a post structural understanding of masculinities, which is in line with how Butler (1990) explains the performativity of gender. In other words, according to Butler, we are "doing" and "undoing" masculinities and femininities.

Masculinities are not to be seen as being constructed and performed in a vacuum. They are intersecting with other social divisions such as femininities, age, class, racialization, ethnicity etcetera. This means, masculinities can only exist in relation to other categories (Kimmel et al. 2005:3). Connell (2005) has identified the so called hegemonic masculinity as the type of masculinity which is on the top of the hierarchal ladder, and therefore the most privileged one. According to Donaldson (1993) ideal characteristics attached to a hegemonic masculinity would be toughness, aggression, group solidarity and autonomy (Donaldson 1993:644). Although violent acts are not always part of a hegemonic masculinity, it is one possible characteristic, as it aims to stabilize men´s dominance over women. Important to point out as well, is that masculinity represents not a certain type of man but a way that men position themselves through discursive practices (Connell

& Messerschimdt 2005:841). In this study I am mostly focusing the hegemonic masculinity and traditional and equality femininities.

Also evident from research is that heterosexuality is linked to masculinity. Horton and Rydström (2011) have explored how heterosexuality and masculinity intersect with each other in a Vietnamese context, where an act of performing and accomplish a heterosexual masculinity shown to be through buying heterosexual sex. However, it is not only a way of manifesting one´s own masculinity, but also to differentiate oneself from other masculinities (Horton & Rydström 2011:55). On the same line, Jewkes et al. (2015) claim "a core element of the construction of hegemonic masculinity is heterosexuality, and to a greater or lesser extent hegemonic masculinity is constructed as a gender position that is as much 'not gay' as it is 'not female'" (Jewkes et al. 2015:11).

As mentioned, masculinities could not exist without femininities. There are multiple ways of expressing masculinity or femininity. Bhattacharyya (2015) stresses that the when women in India practice the traditional Indian femininity, it shows an effort to "fit" into the traditional Indian society, and she could be considered a "good" girl and would then be more "protected" against sexual violence. This kind of femininity can be defined by having bindi, piercings and henna paintings on one´s hands (Bhattacharyya 2015:1345).

Sandberg (2011) has looked at fear of violence in public spaces, using the Swedish town Umeå as her field of study. When women believe in gender equality and live in a country and city which is often labeled as gender equal, there is no room for fear of men´s violence. Women would position themselves in an "equality femininity" which would challenge their fear and create frustration as they could not access the "equality femininity" due to their fear of violence in public spaces, or their fear became an individual problem. This means that the discourse of gender equality demands a specific femininity (Sandberg 2011:54).

Jocelyn Hollander (2001) points out what is common for all femininities – vulnerability. She writes that "vulnerability to violence is a core component of

femininity, but not masculinity. Relatedly, potential dangerousness is associated with masculinity, but not femininity" (Hollander 2001:84). However, vulnerability would be a more common characteristic in a "traditional femininity" than an "equality femininity" (Sandberg 2011:54).

Female bodies are believed to be inherently vulnerable and not dangerous to others because of their average size, perceived lack of strength, and psychical vulnerability to rape. Male bodies, in contrast, are seen as potentially dangerous to other due their larger size, greater strength, and potential use as a tool of sexual violence.

Hollander 2001:84

Sara Ahmed (2004) asks in her third chapter in "The cultural politics of emotion" – what makes us frightened? Who gets afraid of whom? Ahmed argues, in line with Jocelyn Hollander (2001), that fear is partly a bodily experience and fear in public is closely linked to masculinities and femininities and the bodies of men and women (Ahmed 2004:62). "Within feminist approaches the question of fear is shown to be structural and mediated, rather than an immediate bodily response to an objective danger" (Ahmed 2004:69), which means that fear works as a response to the threat of violence women are facing. This vulnerability in turn makes women´s mobility in public spaces restricted and creates an idea that home is safe while outside home is not. Two forms of femininity are created here; either as domestication (staying home) or as constrained mobility (careful about how they move in public) (Ahmed 2004:70). These ideas that we have of bodies are so naturalized that we do not recognize it in our everyday life.

Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) are revisiting the concept of masculinity once explored by Connell (1987) in Gender and Power. They are responding to the critic and are redefining the concept according to the critic they find relevant. One of the most important aspects they revisit is that masculinities have to be analyzed at different levels; global, regional or local. They argue that at the local level, masculinities are constructed in face-to-face interactions, which is the level where my analysis is placed (Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:849)

I have chosen to not only have a gendered approach for this study when looking at fear of sexual violence in public spaces, but also an intersectional approach. Intersectionality has long gained little attention within feminist geography and been ignored. Valentine (2007) argues this is necessarily not because feminist geographers are unaware to see how viewing gender as a single category is limited. She would rather say it is that intersectionality has not been played out with geography, although it has clear spatial connections (Valentine 2007:12-13).

Intersectionality aims to theorize how different social categories (i.e. age, sexuality, ethnicity and class) intersects with each other (Valentine G. 2007:10). I have decided to use the definition of concept from the classical article by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1986). "In the context of violence against women, this elision of difference in identity politics is problematic, fundamentally because the violence many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such as race and class" (Crenshaw 1986:1242). Intersectionality looks at how the different social categories are exposed to marginalization and discrimination and how they articulate power. The categories are not fixed and they get meaning through actions in different places (Crenshaw 1986). An intersectional approach is important in order to understand possible intragroup experiences. I hope that through including this aspect in my analysis, I will avoid "ignoring differences within groups and tensions among groups", as Crenshaw puts it (Crenshaw 1986:1242).

I depart from the belief that no woman is born with the characteristic of being fearful (Kosekela 1999:112). Women´s fear in public space is influenced by several factors where the constructions of femininities and masculinities and men´s and women´s bodies have a big impact on women´s fear as well as the social behavior of men and women. Furthermore, the fear is part of the patriarchal system where women are physically and emotionally controlled, and they are so partly through the different sources instilling fear in them (Preston and Ustundag 2005:220).

3.3 Understanding fear

The emotional reactions to the possibility of victimization are anger, rage, fear, worry and concern (Madriz 1997:49). Women are more fearful than men, this is distinctive not only in India and Delhi, but in most parts of the world (Indo Asian News Service 2009). Fear is gendered (Pain 1997 & 2000) and it is evident that fear is both a result of the inequalities between men and women as well as contributing to maintain these inequalities (Koskela 1999). But fear seldom corresponds to who is at highest risk at being subjected to crime. Paradoxically, reports of assaults do not correspond to the fear, and according to statistics, in most countries men´s risk of experiencing violence is higher than women´s – except when it comes to sexual assault and violence, which women experience to a much greater extent (Hollander 2001:84).

Pain (2000) stresses that the concept of fear is very complex and challenging to define, and this is due to the many dimensions, levels, processes and factors that influence our fear. Firstly, it is a phenomenon that varies between individuals. Secondly, it has several dimensions such as economic, social, cultural, psychological and geographical. Lastly, it is also influenced by global, local, household and bodily processes. Therefore, it is important to remember that the concept of fear is fluid and not fixed. It changes with time, space, age, class and environment (Pain 2000:372).

Smith (1987) quoted in Pain (2000) defines fear in a concise way by saying that it is "what is being tapped is an emotional response to threat: an admission to self and others that crime is intimidating; and an expression of one´s sense of danger and anxiety at the prospect of being harmed".

A characteristic of women´s fear of violence is that it is very strongly connected to time and place. Its temporality and spatiality mean that women´s fear changes during the day as they are moving through different spaces. How public spaces are occupied and dominated by different groups during the different times in a day.

Therefore, the fear of sexual violence has a big impact on the way women choose to live their every day lives (Pain 1997:238; Sandberg 2011:24).

Hollander (2001) and Pain (2001:374) argue that conversation is central as a source from where fear is derived and is constructed. Examples of conversations are media, information campaigns, advertisements but also conversations we have with family, friends or strangers. These conversations constantly reproduce the idea of women´s perceived sexual vulnerability and men´s strength. Although men, by average, are taller than women, the strength of a person has much to do with gender expectations where women are expected to be thin, while men should be athletic. Partly, this difference in strength is related to physical training (Hollander 2001:85). Responses to fear are therefore dependent on already existing public narratives of who is fearsome (Ahmed 2004:69).

Pain (1997) describes how fear has at least a two-folded impact on women´s lives. The first level is connected to how women actually choose to live their lives and how they change their mobility patterns due to fear of sexual violence. Examples are: not opening the door, avoiding certain streets and choosing social activities based on when they fear and when do not fear violence. The second "effect-level" is emotional and psychological. This basically means that women cope with their fear of sexual violence partly or completely unconsciously, based on how they have been socialized since childhood (Pain 1997:234). This can also be linked to Ahmed (2004) and the discussion how fear shrinks bodily space and how this then leads onto mobility restriction in public spaces.

Hearns (1992) book on "Men in the public Eye" highlight important arguments about men in public, mostly focusing on men performing the hegemonic masculinity. One of the main arguments is that mans power has to be understood in relation to mans relationships in public as well as private domains. The differences in domains are central and public spaces are created through men gaining power over women in the private domains. The perceptions we have of men and women have consequences in our daily lives in terms of how we cope

with fear and the strategies for how to stay safe, and therefore also the interactions we have with other people and how we use public space (Hollander 2001:85).

To summarize, I define fear of sexual violence in public spaces as a structural problem, rather than an individual one. Fear in public spaces is about social control, where the fear becomes an expression of gendered unequal power relations (Koskela 1999; Pain 1997).

3.4 Space and place

The concepts of space and place are central in the field of geography. The two concepts are often used interchangeably in our everyday conversations and different scholars employ different definitions. To start off this chapter I would like to quote Anderson (2010:38) which make the difference between place and space by saying that "in contrast to space, places are meaningful, they root people both geographically and socially, and are fashioned from culture and context". This means that place is made meaningful by people, it is a location which people have attached emotions to. There is no general definition for space within geography however, the definition I have chosen to employ is that space is not a container for life to take place in, but rather it is relational, meaning that it is constantly produced by relations and processes. This approach would also allow a space to be transformed or overturned (Massey 1994:2).

Koskela (2001) argues in her research that when gender was acknowledged in the field of geography it focused on the gendered power relations, however, feelings and emotions have rarely been at the center when looking at how space is produced. In line with her conceptualization, I would agree that emotions are produced by power relations, which produces space and place.

A public space is a space where all citizens, not matter of their social identity, can access. It can be streets, neighborhoods, public transports and markets (Bhattacharyya 2015:1343). However, the dichotomy between public and private space has been criticized by several feminist scholars (See for example Pateman 1989; Brodie 1994). The critique derives from that a binary distinction in itself

includes a hierarchal, sexualized and gendered order as well as assuming there is a clear distinction between the two can called into question.

When I interviewed the women I tried to make them talk about Delhi in general, but soon I realized that this was difficult, as a city is seldom seen as one unit, but rather as areas connected to each other depending on the time of day and the people occupying the space. The respondents often pointed out some specific areas, or characteristics of areas, which made them feel safe or attached to a place.

3.5 Rape culture

In this following section I discuss rape culture and its influence and connection to fear and safety. Rape culture is discussed by several scholars; however, it is seldom referred to as rape culture.

"A whole range of patriarchal laws and institutions tell us what to do in the guise of keeping us ´safe´" (Drache & Velagic 2013:15) is one of the cornerstones in rape culture, which also is closely linked to rape myths and victim blaming. Society believes that women have a responsibility in keeping themselves safe in order to not be subjected to sexual violence and harassments, and as a part of the traditional (Indian) femininity mentioned earlier, a woman can protect herself against violence by adopting this kind of femininity (Gustafsson 2013).

Walsh S. (2015) is also discussing the idea that the victim in some cases, according to societal structures and norms, should have been able to protect herself from being subjected to sexual violence. This indirectly indicates that women have a responsibility in keeping themselves safe. When we tell girls "Do not wear a short skirt, do not get drunk and do not choose that street" we reproduce an idea that girls and women need to protect themselves from possible perpetrators, but we are seldom telling boys and men what to do in order for women and girls do be safe which simply would be to tell them not rape or subject girls and women from sexual harassment and violence (Walsh 2015). In line with this argument is Moor (2010) and Bhattacharyya (2015) who speak of how worldwide we blame the victim, and that this is taking its expression in so called

rape myths. These argumentations are commonly used by perpetrators as well as society, which ends up with the victim being blamed for the crime taking place and for not taking responsibility for her safety (Moor 2010:115).

A common myth in India is that sexual violence only happens to "bad" women. But who is good, and who is bad? Is it bad flirting with lots of men and going to parties? Or is it bad working night shift as a police officer, nurse or journalist? These sort of myths restrict women in their mobility and scholars argue that most women can create a delusional safety barrier by practice the traditional femininities. One of the most prevalent myths is that women who dress in a certain way (i.e. revealing) are doing it with the aim of seducing and/or inviting men to sexual acts. Studies have shown that men misperceive and see friendliness, flirting and alcohol consumption as invitations to sex (Moor 2010:115). Returning to Horton and Rydström (2011), and in line with victim blaming, women (in a Vietnamese context) are assumed to be able to control their emotions. However, men can be provoked and are not able to control themselves and might therefore act in aggressive ways (Horton & Rydström 2011:553) Both insert certain expectations on the genders as well as it being used as an explanation for men´s violence against women through blaming the victim.

3.6 What´s media got to do with it?

According to Stuart Hall (1997) our lives revolve around different forms of media. It provides us with information about what is happening around the world, it debates, it sets discourses and gives us an understanding of the world. Media can control the public opinion by ignoring some topics and highlight others. It can act judgmental and create favorable situations for some, and less favorable situations for others (Hall 1997). What is spoken and not spoken shapes and forms issues (Livholts 2008), which is why it is of importance to include this perspective in this study.

Media play a significant role in what we fear and do not fear according to several researchers (See for example Callanan & Rosenberger 2015; Livholts 2008;

Williams & Dickinson 1993). According to Heber (2007), media has a significant responsibility in producing people´s fear of crime, because information on crime mostly come from media texts and it contributes to the public narrative of fear of violence.

Power relations, such as gender, are part of the power structure within media texts where it is clear that women are less quoted, and when quoted, they are often very stereotypical represented. Thus, it also reproduces notions of sexual violence, fear and safety. The ´real´ rapist is often framed as one who did not know their victim, with the rape taking place outside, during the evening time. He is monstrous and a maniac. This results in a focus on the individual rapist, rather than the structural issue with rape. It also reproduces women as vulnerable and therefore instill fear in them (Livholts 2008).

In a similar stance, Callanan and Rosenberger (2015) argue that we think women are more likely to be subjected to crime and the news reporting on crime is effecting women to a greater extent than men as "the portrayal of female victims in the media mirrors the gendered stereotype of women as victims, thus reinforcing these cultural stereotypes" (Callanan & Rosenberger 2015:324).

Through the quote below by Livholts (2008) I would like to show how places are connected to how media form them.

A crime, a meeting, a travel, a room, a view; events are often related to and remembered in relation to the places where they happened. The naming of countries, regions, landscapes, cities and villages have particular narrative understandings related to them, and the names of places where dramatic events have happened speak particularly powerfully.

Livholts 2008:200

Indians are increasingly gaining access to global and satellite television and the country has one of the biggest media in the world, meaning that media houses in India are more powerful than ever in shaping opinions and people´s world views and therefore has an influence in the constructions of fear. Especially for young and unmarried women, television has shown to be an important source of

information on everything from politics to fashion, greatly due to their restricted mobility (McPherson 2007:421).

It is noted that mass media is only one of several factors influencing our fear. Other sources have shown to be 1. Being a victim of crime; 2. Environmental characteristics, i.e. living in areas where crime rates are high; and 3. Physical vulnerability (William & Dickinson 1993), although in this study I have tried to focus at the influence of media in relation to and after the Delhi Gang Rape 2012.

To briefly summarize my theoretical framework; I study the fear of sexual violence and harassments in public spaces, believing that gender is constructed socially and is also one of the most influential categories when looking at how and when fear is constructed. I am therefore centered in my analysis around to how masculinities and femininities are performed and constructed in the stories told by the students. I furthermore, explore their bodily experiences in public spaces and how fear restricts their mobility. Conversation has a plays a major part in the reproduction of fear and I have tried to see how the Delhi Gang Rape has influenced safety strategies, femininities, masculinities and fear of crime.

4. Methodology

This chapter includes a justification for the methodological approach chosen for this qualitative field study. It aims to describe and discuss the motivation of the methodological choices, but also consider its limitations in terms of knowledge production and the data collection. The study follows a feminist and critical approach of doing research and thus, also includes a discussion on how this affects the different processes of the research. The chapter ends with ethical considerations and research related challenges.

4.1. The beginning

As suggested by several scholars (Haraway 1998; Haritaworn 2008; Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002), it is important to reflect upon your position as a researcher. Before conducting this study, I took that into consideration and asked myself

several questions; who am I in relation to the field I aim to study? How will the people I speak to read me, and how will that affect what they say, and later on also the analysis? Why do I feel the need to study the fear of sexual violence in Delhi?

I would like to start this chapter by sharing some reflections on the questions I posed myself. Why am I interested in studying this topic in Delhi? My first visit to India was in 2013. I came to work as an intern at an organization in Ladakh, a region located in the Himalayas in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The deputy director of the organization, Tashi Thokmat, a good friend and my supervisor in field, kindly explained, described and tried to make me understand social structures and politics in India. One night, we were sitting in his house, having dinner. We wore several layers of clothes because of the cold and spoke about his family. His then 20-year-old daughter was living and studying in Delhi. I asked him what she wanted to do when she finished her studies, and he replied that she would like to come back to Ladakh and work because "it is not easy being a girl in Delhi". The macho culture is known as being stronger in Delhi than in other parts of the country (Rao 2014:154) and this made his daughter so uncomfortable that she felt that she didn't want to stay there in the future, despite the job opportunities being better in the capital. I wanted to look into this closer. I discussed it with friends and followed Indian and Swedish media. I would also say that my interest comes from my background in development studies and with a combination to my master in the social studies of gender, it is the perfect topic. Furthermore, I have been studying journalism and working as a reporter so I believe it is interesting to look at the power of media in relation to our fear.

I applied for a MFS-scholarship which I was granted and left for Delhi in January. I was nervous mostly because I didn´t like the city during my previous visit, and that time I stayed only for two weeks, while this time I had to spend months there. But I also understood that if I wanted to do this for my thesis, Delhi was the place where I should be. Fortunately, I got to know the city, greatly enjoying my time there, and felt very sad that I had to leave this time. When I arrived in Delhi in

January 2016 I soon realized that the easy part was collecting the material and getting hold of interviewees. But why did they want to speak to me about this? A friend who helped me find people to contact beforehand said that it will not be a problem finding people as this is a topic many women in the universities want to speak about. But why? Most women I spoke to seemed to be engaged in gender equality, and since I studied gender, they may have wanted to support me by partaking in the interviews. Some of them were also interested in gender studies and we often connected through a common interest in society or social science.

I would face the real challenges when starting to think about the analysis. How would I be able to choose which stories to emphasize? I have simply included the stories that touched me the most. The stories that felt real. And of course, the stories that were relevant to look at from the theoretical framework and research questions. One of my major concerns during my field work has undoubtedly been related to the interpretation of my material. I was concerned about representation, and the risk of giving the women another voice, or silence their voice, when trying to present the findings and analyze them. I would therefore, in contrast to Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002) who write that feminist research is about "giving those not heard a voice", but rather agree upon what Reismann (1993:8) stresses; we can analyze and interpret the experiences of other, but we can never give the people a voice. It´s not possible to fully and directly access someone´s experience. Furthermore, Reismann (1993) stresses that the several stages of a research process (attending, telling, transcribing, analyzing and lastly reading) makes it impossible to give a voice to someone. Thus, the conclusions made are *my* interpretations of the respondent's subjective understandings of their world and should not be viewed as anything else.

I want to avoid this text to be read as an objective piece, since I do not believe such thing even exists and thus I have made a conscious decision of including my own voice. It is me telling the stories of other women, a reality I am not living. No text writes its self, and I aim to clearly show my position in this text. In the process of this thesis, I have been involved in many ways; politically,

academically and emotionally, which also is an argument for making myself visible, as it has not been possible for me to stay "neutral" in this topic.

4.2 Epistemological basis

Doing research comes with immense responsibility. What is produced gets to count as authoritative knowledge and the methodological decisions you take along the way matter (Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002:2).

The epistemological basis for the methodology in this study derives from feminist standpoint theory. In my opinion, feminist research should aim to expose power relations and injustices in society. According to previous research (see for example Koskela 1999; Sandberg 2011) fear of violence is clearly gendered and derives from and causes power relations. Thus, having a feminist standpoint on the issue was an obvious decision.

Furthermore, this means that the study, as well as myself, understand the world as patriarchal, simply meaning that the word "patriarchy refers to the rule of the father or fathers" (Hearn 1992:35). I employ the concept of patriarchy as how the societal structure of patriarchy triggers both institutional inequalities as well as inequalities in everyday action (ibid).

Feminist standpoint theory was developed as an opposite alternative to the positivist, sexist, androcentric and often racist way of doing research, which claimed objectivity and had a view of a problem from nowhere. As suggested by Harding (2004:30) feminist research should aim to bring change to society and expose power relations. Feminist research is due to its intent of bringing change to the society highly political and thus involves taking sides.

Politics was necessary to create the possibility of diverse forms of women's collective group consciousnesses that would enable women in their different class, race, sexuality and cultural locations to identify, value, and engage in the kind of research that could enable them to see how to end their culturally-distinctive forms of sexist oppression.

Harding 2004:30

There are many notions of standpoint theory (see for example Haraway 1988; Harding 1991; Hill Collins 1997) and a struggle within feminist standpoint theory is that it criticizes and challenges the notion that it is possible to produce knowledge with 'an absolute truth', but at the same time it wants to understand the 'reality' of gendered experiences. Despite the differences and challenges, Ramazanoğlu and Holland (2002) puts it nicely:

Taking a standpoint means being able to produce the best current understanding of how knowledge is interrelated with women´s experiences and the realities of gender. Knowledge can be produced from a feminist standpoint wherever women live in unequal gendered social relationships, and can develop a political consciousness.

Ramazanoğlu & Holland 2002:61

For me it has been important to make myself visible. This is stressed by several feminist standpoint theorists (see Haritaworn 2008; Ramazanoğlu C. & Holland J. 2002:65; Rose 1997:305), and means that I as a researcher have to situate the knowledge by deconstructing the 'knowing feminist'. All knowledge is produced from a specific position and thus one should be clear about from which position one speaks from. If this is succeeded, the research becomes less exploitative, however this is a task which is extremely difficult and perhaps even impossible to achieve (Haritaworn 2008; Rose 1997:305).

I have tried to be aware of how I speak from the position of being white, western, female, feminist and in my mid-twenties, how I produce knowledge from that position and how it influences the research process. I have furthermore tried to be aware of how my own experiences of fear influenced the collection of data and analysis. One thing which might have been to my advantage is being a woman myself. When talking about fear in public spaces with women, I assume they are more willing to speak to me about it as I share some of their experiences and often can give personal examples of fear and the complexity about feeling fear. I have been inspired by Barbara Czarniawska (2005) who thoroughly discusses the importance of dialogues; not only with the interviewees but also that it is an

advantage to have a dialogue with someone about what you experience when in the field as that will encourage reflection about the research process.

For above reasons, feminist standpoint theory is the best methodology for my study. But as with all methodologies, standpoint theory has been a subject to debate and it has been criticized in several ways. One of the main discussions has been whether it is possible to do group-based analyses. It poses a challenge at to whether it is possible to produce general knowledge about gender. The notion of group-based analysis is criticized because women are not a unified group, but they are divided by other social relations such as heterosexism, racism, ablebodism (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002:75).

Haraway (1991) criticizes that some standpoint theorists claim that different positions of oppression would generate epistemic privilege. She does not believe that the knowledge produced by women´s experiences is privileged knowledge in favor of partial visions and social situated knowledge. On the other hand, Susan Hekman (1997) points out that "ultimately, every woman is unique; if we analyze each in her uniqueness, systemic analysis is obviated", meaning that feminist politics and research needs to make a group based analysis if the aim is to expose power relations and structures (Hekman 1997:357). In a similar stance, Patricia Hill Collins (1997) claims that the notion of standpoint refers to historical and group-based experiences. She argues that we should highlight group-based experiences and see how these influence our daily lives for different categories (Hill Collins 1997: 377).

4.3 Research Design

This study is qualitative in its nature. When the purpose is to look at experiences and gain an in-depth understanding of these, qualitative research is the most advantageous (Langemar 2008). More specifically the study has employed feminist ethnography as a method and semi-structured interviews, participant observations and field diary as data collection methods.

Feminist ethnography

Feminist ethnography is a type of critical ethnography which focuses on marginalized people and how power serves to subordinate cultural and social minorities (Creswell 2007:70). In feminist ethnography, the focus is on men´s dominance and the oppression of women, and in line with feminist standpoint theory, the feminist ethnography criticizes the pretending of being detached and neutral.

A feminist ethnography would also stress the importance of engaging on an emotional and understanding level in order to be able to best explain a phenomenon (O´Reilly 2008). In conducting this type ethnography, I have used a combination of semi-structured interviewing and participant observations. I believe the interviews create in-depth narratives which in turn contribute to the understanding of women experiences of fear. It is of importance to create a conversation with the interviewee and not seek for standardization of the interview technique as positivist researchers (O´Reilly 2008). In some of the interviews it was challenging to get the women to share personal experiences, so I tried giving an example of a situation in India where I felt fear when a man tried to kiss me in a narrow lane. When I did this, they understood what kind of stories I wanted, as well as we could discuss the issue but instead depart from my experiences.

In addition, I have conducted observations which were documented in a field diary. I have also used secondary sources to help with the contextualization of my study and the creation of a public narrative.

Description of interviews

”In-depth interviews create space for the participants to focus on intimate details, to remember historical events, and to discuss things that would not be discussed in normal circumstance” (O´Reilly 2008:125), which has been central in this study and lead me in how I conduct the interviews. Doing research and conducting interviews in a context other than one´s own is challenging. The culture in India may have other norms surrounding interactions with strangers, for example in

how one poses questions (Kvale & Brinkmann 2009:144). However, as I had experience from conducting interviews in India before, I was somewhat familiar with these norms.

I conducted semi structured interviews, which meant that I identified in advance some important themes and a few questions belonging to each theme (see appendix 1) which I wanted to be covered during the interview. This was a beneficial strategy for me as I had some specific themes, but was still open to letting the respondents speak freely about whatever came up during the conversations. According Blommaert and Dong (2010:44), interviewing with themes opens up a conversation. It was important for me to create an atmosphere which was relaxed. I considered this important because of two reasons; I wanted the respondents to feel comfortable; and I wanted a conversation rather than an interview. In some cases, this was not a problem, but in other interviews it was a considerable challenge. During my first interview, the woman appeared nervous and seemed reluctant to talk to me. I had to quickly decide if I should or should not continue with the interview. Czarniawska (2005) writes that when interviewing you often have to make decisions quickly about whether you should continue with the interview or not. In this case, I decided to let the interview end naturally and then I asked her if she wanted to show me around the campus. I got some good and relevant material for the study. I then asked the interviewee if it was okay to include that material in my research, which all of the women agreed to. As this was my first interview I felt a little disappointed that it didn´t go the way I wanted it to, which I reflected upon in my field diary.

I´ve been in the field for one week now and yesterday I conducted my first interview. It was challenging as I could see she got nervous as soon as I turned on the recorder. We had a good talk which lasted for about 40 minutes, although I would have liked it to last longer. Suddenly she asked "is it over now?" and I replied that "yes, it is" and turned off the recorder. I had more things I wanted to ask her, but obviously she was uncomfortable so I did not want to push her.

Field Diary, February 12

Most interviews took place on the respondents' campus, in places that were not too crowded. It could be a bench in the shade or in the middle of a lawn in the

sun. Although no one else was present during the whole interview other than me and the respondent, people did pass by which sometimes made either me or the respondent loose track. Sometimes we did come back to what we were talking about at a later time, sometimes we did not. Being that most of the women wanted to meet on campus also indicates that it is a place where they feel comfortable. When I then asked the interviewees about their favorite places most of them replied their campuses, which together with their preference to conduct the interviews there, made me realize how important these places are for some of the women.

(…) the environment is very good and here people are very much like educated and they have this mind set they should not do such acts towards girls or any other people. They have the education so they can understand what to do and what not to do. Outside we can face many people, so different people and they are uneducated and sometimes don't know what is right and what is wrong and here environment is very good.

Nodul, 22 years old, Ladakh

In total I interviewed eleven female students, however one of the sessions was conducted as a group interview, meaning that I performed nine sessions in total. The women were between 21 and 26 years old and came from different places in northern India (Ladakh, Kolkata, Darjeeling etc.) and two were from Delhi itself. Thus, their relations to the city varied. The women who had lived their whole lives in Delhi seemed more secure in the city than those who had only stayed in the city for a year. I got access to the students through friends in India and Sweden. The sessions were between 45 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes.

Several times I have been asked; why do you only speak to women? Why not men? And to me the answer is quite simple; we know with certainty that women are victims of sexual violence and harassments in public spaces to a much greater extent than men (Krug et al. 2002). Secondly, I would also like to use the same argument as Koskela (1999) does in her research which is that "I single out women, not because they are exclusively victims of violence in public space, but because they are especially vulnerable" (Koskela 1999:111). However, if I had

more time, it would be interesting to look at how men feel about women´s fear of sexual violence and how they are affected by women´s fear.

Observations and field diary
My observations and field diary are not a primary source of my findings, however, the notes have helped me to get an understanding of sexual violence and harassments in Delhi as I have included both my own experiences as well as others I have talked to in bars, cafés and seminars, as well as meetings I´ve had with journalists writing on sexual violence, freelance journalists and friends. This can be understood as participant observations, and according to O'Reilly (2008) participant observations is central in an ethnographic study as it "…gives an insight to things people may otherwise forget to mention or would not normally want to discuss" (O´Reilly 2008:155).

I wrote in my field diary whenever I felt that I had something to share. The field notes I have written are very freely written as a diary, however I have always tried to include general observations, emotions and intellectual ideas as suggested by O´Reilly (2008).

The public narrative
During my field work I have continuously reviewed news stories on rape cases, women´s safety, fear and sexual harassment in India. I have mostly read the Hindustan Times and Times of India as those have mostly been available.

The interview text from transcribing the audio files are highly individual expressions, as well as being manifestations of the social discourse on sexual violence. The personal and public narratives are mirroring each other and are interwoven (Portelli 1997:82).

Thematic narrative analysis
Narrative analysis method is used in this thesis. Narrative analysis focuses both on how people talk and what they say about places, experiences and situations (Wiles et al 2005: 89), which is why I believe it to be a appropriate method of analysis for this study. Understanding what people say and how they speak about their experiences is one of the greatest challenges for researches, as an interview or

conversation taking place in specific context, with many different external factors (weather, location, health etc.), becomes a static text when a researcher presents it. However, the narrative analysis is undertaking this challenge and aims to show the different layers of meaning in conversation (ibid 2005:90).

"Narrative analysis is based on the belief that we construct and interpret and construct the world around us through interactive talk" (Wiles et al 2005: 90). This idea of how knowledge is produced is also compatible with the feminist standpoint theory and ethnography, as it believes that power relations and structures are socially constructed (Ramazanoğlu and Holland 2002). The narrative analysis is used to get an understanding for how conversations are used to represent ideas (Wiles et al 2005:90), which in this case would be how masculinities and femininities are expressed in stories about fear of sexual violence.

More specifically, I have chosen to do a thematic narrative analysis which means that I have identified themes in the stories told by the respondents. This kind of narrative analysis does not focus on how the stories are told, but rather focuses on thematic similarities and differences in the narratives. I have been inspired by Feldman et al. (2004) process of analysis, where the authors identify and exemplify three steps in analyzing individual stories. The first step is to identify the narratives in the transcripts. But what is a story then? According to Feldman et al. (2004) one can define a story in contrast with a description, where a description would be a list with a plot. I did not face any challenges when identifying the stories and thought it was very clear which parts of the transcripts were stories.

Then I went from story to analysis. This was done in three levels where the first simply was the creation of story lines which are clear and concise summaries of the stories shared by the women. The second level was to find explicit or implicit oppositions in the stories. This is done because "(…) looking for oppositions allows the researcher to uncover the meaning of a key element of the discourse by

analyzing what the narrator implies the element is not" (Feldman et al. 2004:155). Finally, I reproduced the stories in form of arguments, so called syllogisms. I categorized the stories into relevant themes and then started with the analysis.

Reismann (2008) discusses some of the limitations of employing a thematic narrative analysis. When I choose to group different narratives into categories, all those stories placed in that specific category can be read and understood as having more or less the same meaning, and that the respondents meant the same thing with telling me those stories.

4.4 Ethical considerations

Ethics have constantly been taken into consideration in this study and I have let the Swedish Research Council´s Codex guide me. The four principles which have been taken into considerations are the information requirement, the consent requirement, the confidentiality requirement and utilization requirement. Together, the four principles will protect the individual participant. All participants in this study have fictive names and prior to the interview commencing all were informed about the confidentiality, anonymity and the right to quit or/and not answer a question without giving any reason. I always asked for permission to record the interviews, which all agreed to.

An ethical dilemma of undertaking a study on sexual violence in public spaces is that it draws attention away from where most violence against women actually take place – in private spaces. However, my intention is to explore and understand the fear of crime among women, as it is one of the most oppressive sources of social control over women (Madriz 1997).

Ideally, this study should have been carried out during a longer period of time in order to fully achieve an ethnographic sensibility.

5. Analysis

5.2 "Even when I was in salwar I got stares, what should I wear then?"[7]

– Negotiating femininities

Fear of being subjected to sexual violence creates different emotions in individuals depending on the biographical history of someone (Madriz 1997; Pain 2000). Additionally, gender, age, ethnicity and class play a role in shaping how we feel about the threat of violence (Crenshaw 1986). How one deals with the threat of sexual violence is partly through how one negotiate one´s femininity. Fear is not only a *consequence* of women´s vulnerability, but also a *response* to the threat of sexual violence (Ahmed 2004:69).

In line with Pain´s argument (1997), many of the women I´ve spoken to were affected by the fear of sexual violence in at least two ways. Firstly, they actually change their lives in regards to the fear (and possibly other social norms) as they would not go out after dark, avoided some areas or as the respondent Sapna said; she would love to go on a road trip to Leh with her girlfriends, but she can´t, because she might end up in situation she really doesn´t want to be in, for example motor stop on a dark highway. Secondly, it affects women emotionally and psychologically, depending on how women have been brought up and what values that have been inserted in them.

All the women that I spoke to expressed a fear of sexual violence. Majority of the time it was very explicit, while other times it was characterized by an ambivalence; they did feel fear but tried to claim themselves as being equal to men, which is in line with an equality femininity. All of my respondents could easily identify and describe at least one situation where they have felt fear or insecure in a public space. The stories of how and when the interviewees have felt fear are shared by most of the respondents. It was often connected to either deserted or very crowded places, and when it is dark. It was evident that their fear *and* the places changed with time and environment (Pain 2000:372). Emotions

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[7] Urvashi, 26 years old, Darjeeling

about the threat of sexual violence often came up in the interviews, but I have not been able to identify a shared narrative. The women either take on a more traditional or normative femininity as well as an equality femininity. This is evident not only in the Indian context and this study, but something which studies conducted in western contexts also have identified (See for example Koskela 1997; Sandberg 2011).

I will use two contradicting narratives to illustrate how the traditional and equality femininity is negotiated in regards to the threat of sexual violence, and I will also share the story of Laxmi, who´s narrative is quite different from the others.

Sarah had lived in Delhi for six months by the time I met with her in end of January 2016. She grew up in West Bengal and moved to Delhi to study a master´s program. She is living in one of the female hostels at the university. For Sarah it is very important to be what she calls "properly dressed". Sarah tells me that properly dressed is about covering your bottom with your top, not wearing graphic shirts or clothes that are tight and revealing. She describes that she both adjusts her way of dressing as well as acting in order to stay safe and avoid being subjected to sexual harassments. When Sarah speaks there is a normalization of her emotions and strategies in response to the threat, it is clear that it comes from a behavior which she´s been socialized into by her parents and others. There is no anger nor frustration in her narratives. These constrains reinforce a notion of a traditional femininity, and therefore also vulnerability, and leads to her taking on these strategies (Pain 1997:234).

Urvashi is one of the respondents which seemed to be least restricted in her mobility, which can be partly explained by her not living in a university hostel, so she therefore doesn´t have curfew hours to deal with. She is wearing a tight top and jeans and smokes a cigarette. She is frustrated about how patriarchal Delhi is and speaks about how she is put in a category because she smokes, drinks and wears a certain kind of clothes. We are talking about how it is to commute by metro in Delhi.

(…) It doesn´t matter what you are wearing. It doesn´t matter. I wore salwar[8] always in my master´s because I used to feel scared that something might happen. (…) Even when I was in salwar I got stares, what should I wear then? Sometimes you just wanna wear stuff not because you wanna show it off to somebody you just wanna wear it and then you can´t do that because you´re supposed to think about other things.

Urvashi, 26 years old, Darjeeling

There is a frustration in Urvashi´s story which was also evident in other respondents' stories. In line with what Sandberg (2011) concluded from her research project in Umeå, it is challenging to access an equality femininity. Although, Delhi as city (and India as a country) is not known for being gender equal as Umeå and Sweden, young women in Delhi are to a greater extent demanding their equal rights (as in the example of protests about discriminatory rules in student hostels). The two parallel discourses make it difficult for women to negotiate their femininities as the two parts demand two very different expressions of femininities.

The third example I will illustrate is different from all the other respondents´ stories. Laxmi differs because she´s not fully employing either the equality femininity nor the traditional femininity. Rather she's aiming to adopt a hegemonic masculinity where toughness and autonomy (Donaldson 1993) are central for her to "protect" herself from the feeling of fear. Laxmi´s narrative is not shared by any of the other respondents, but shows that how we respond to the threat of sexual violence is very complicated and that there is no coherent pattern in how we present our bodies in public spaces (Ahmed 2004).

Laxmi is wearing a hoodie and sneakers. She has her hair in a ponytail and she is carrying a back pack over one of her shoulders. Laxmi is 24 years old and she lives with her family in a Cantt area, which is a restricted area only for government and army personnel and their families. Since she was born she has been moving from city to city in India with her family because her father is in the

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[8] Salwar is a traditional outfit in South Asia consisting of loose pants a longer shirt.

army and gets posted at different places. She loves to play sport, and especially basketball. Laxmi is the only interviewee who is commuting by bus, a mode of transport that almost all the other women said they avoid going on. One of her main characteristics is that she seems to be very bold and that she almost refuses fear to take over and restrict her in her mobility. She says that she is a tomboy and that she can fight anyone. I ask her if she´s ever experienced a situation when she felt fear. She replies and says that when she is travelling in buses where there are only men, she can feel a bit insecure, but only for a minute, because then she convinces herself that she is strong and that she is a tomboy who can beat anyone.

When women are trying to negotiate their fear and vulnerability, society, friends, family and media are constantly telling them to be careful and insert values in them, which instills the notion of them as vulnerable. At the same time though, as gender roles are being discussed and also getting less rigid, women want to act equal and claim they have the same right to public space as their male counterparts (Adhikari 2015), such as Urvashi and Laxmi are doing when they go by bus and dress in a way which could be considered "inappropriate" for a woman in Delhi.

The equality femininity is challenged by a more traditional idea of women as vulnerable, which society through families and media often reproduced. I could see clear difference between how the women felt about their mobility and fear; the women who adopted an equality femininity felt restricted and frustrated due to the restriction; and the women adopting a traditional femininity didn´t seem to share the feeling of being restricted and there was no frustration in regards to this. What is evident in many stories that they shared with me, is that there is a focus on how they present their bodies in spaces, for example what they are wearing or if they are smoking (Ahmed 2004). Referring to Butler (1990) these different actions, such as dressing, smoking, and drinking can be seen as a way of performing one´s gender.

5.3 "They just stare, stare, stare" [9]

– Expressions of hegemonic masculinities

Femininities and masculinities can only exist in relation to each other and other categories (Connell 2005; Jewkes et al. 2015; Kimmel et al 2005:3). In the empirical material, I therefore did not only see expressions of femininities but also of masculinities.

Men can dodge among multiple meanings according to their interactional needs. Men can adopt hegemonic masculinity when it is desirable; but the same men can distance themselves strategically from hegemonic masculinity at other moments. Consequently, "masculinity" represents not a certain type of man but, rather, a way that men position themselves through discursive practices.

Connell & Messerschmidt 2005:841

Experiences of harassments and violent acts

One of the most common acts through which men manifest their masculinity in Delhi is through staring. An act which women responded to in different ways; some ignore it, some question the men who stare and some even got immune to. To appear masculine, men must meet their gender expectations, which is to claim heterosexuality (Horton & Rydström 2011; Jewkes et al. 2015:11) and to show toughness, aggression, group solidarity and autonomy as suggested by Donaldson (1993:644). When the women were sharing stories about how men scan them from up to down, how men stare at them from the mixed metro compartment into the women´s compartment, it is as an expression of hegemonic masculinity and a way to position them against women through the action of staring. Although intense staring seemed to be one of the most common acts through which men demonstrate their difference to women and express and uphold their power, the interviewees had experienced other forms of harassments as well.

Dolma shared the story of when a man touched her at a market.

One evening me and my friend went to this market to buy some vegetables and then one man just

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[9] Choskit, 23 years old, Ladakh

touched me here [breasts] and I just saw a man and he was like 40-50 years I don´t know and I just went and kicked him.

<div align="right">Dolma, 23 years old, Ladakh</div>

It was evident in my empirical material that violent acts affected the women differently depending on how they identified themselves (Crenshaw 1986). In the interviews with the Ladakhi women, but also with Urvashi, who is from Darjeeling, and is sharing similar features with Ladakhis, all four were talking about their experiences in Delhi from the perspective of being a woman who does not share the same look as most people in Delhi. Urvashi says that several times a day she is told that she speaks good Hindi, a language she grew up with, and that she feels that people have different expectations on her being from north east India, and Choskit believes people stare at her primarily because the way she looks.

When I first came to Delhi it was a bit difficult because you know the way people stare at you and comment and all and especially also because we [Ladakhi] have different features and this you know. Ladakh is much different, but slowly I got adjusted and could ignore it.

<div align="right">Choskit, 23 years old, Ladakh</div>

The demonstration of hegemonic masculinity is also a manifestation of heterosexuality, where men through these acts show an "interest" in women (Horton & Rydström 2011; Jewkes et al. 2015). These acts position men as dangerous and women as vulnerable and as little as a woman is born fearful, a man is born to pass as dangerous (Ahmed 2004; Koskela 1999:112; Preston and Ustundag 2005:220). Referring to Butler (1990) again, all above examples are ways of doing one´s gender. Furthermore, it is a way to uphold the dichotomy between men and women, where women are subordinate to men (Connell 1987 2005; Scott 1986).

What was common in most stories was that no specific attributes of male bodies were identified as specifically fearful. A perpetrator could be any man, but the

way a man used his body language seemed to influence if they would find a man fearful or not, for example if they were staring intensely or were walking closely behind them.

Protection of women

According to Hollander (2001) women´s vulnerability is constructed through everyday talk. Parents´ and friends´ warnings influence and constantly remind the respondents of how they are taught to feel and reproduces a rape culture which blames and puts the responsibility on women. The following examples illustrate this, but it also illustrates an expression of hegemonic masculinity. I will give two examples of how women are protected by society and individuals due their vulnerability.

As discussed in previous chapters, many of the women live in student hostels which have curfew hours between 8-9 pm. This system in itself, reproduce gender roles and expectations, where women are reproduced as vulnerable and in need of protection (Hollander 2001). Furthermore, it reproduces the idea that public spaces belong to men after dark, as women are "locked up" in a private space – the university hostel. The spaces are clearly produced through the daily routines of women (Bhattacharyya 2015; Kosekela 1999) where women don´t even have the possibility to occupy public spaces after dark. The system of curfew hours at women´s hostel was a system that most of the interviewees were upset about and they did not see themselves as in need of protection.

The frustration though, was mostly evident in the stories shared by the women staying in student hostels at Delhi University. The women at other universities where not restricted by the same rules and could move more freely inside and outside the campus at any time of the day. The reason for why female students at JNU have more freedom than those at Delhi University is difficult to answer, although one possible explanation could be that JNU is considered a feminist and leftist university (Sunday Guardian 2016) and according to their ideology all people should have the same rights and possibilities. The rules at female hostels are showing how society is reproducing the idea of female vulnerability and is

forcing "protection" on women.

Not only hegemonic masculinities were present in the stories the women shared with me, but also a more protective masculinity. Some of the women describe how men (fathers, friends and relatives) protected them through different acts or telling them strategies for how to stay safe. This is also connected to the public narrative of how women in Delhi are seen as being in need of protection. In most narratives women did, to a lesser or greater extent, position themselves as in need of protection. Sapna is the only woman in this study who´s mode of transport is car. She drives almost everywhere she goes. She told a story about how she had attended a wedding and was just about to leave the place, when the bride´s parents stopped her.

I was supposed to leave from there but then the parents were like no you should not go alone and it was like 10 or 11 and for parents you know it is late so then the fiancé´s friend also had to go this way [same way as Sapna] in car so what I did was that I followed him all way so we came together so that nothing happened.

Sapna, 25 years old, Haryana

During my last night in India I saw a television ad by Vodafone India called "Be a Super Buddy with Vodafone"[10], where they advertise video calls. Two women are in the metro talking. They reach the next station and one of the women gets off the train. The station is empty and she and a man are the only ones getting off at that station. They walk the same way and the man is only some meters behind the woman. She looks tense looking over her shoulder. Her phone rings and it is her friend on the metro who´s calling. She picks up and says "I´m glad you called, this guy is following me". Her friend replies and says that she noticed that and they whisper to each other over the phone that the guy is creepy. Then the ad ends with "Be a Super Buddy with Vodafone Super Net".

This type of advertisement not only creates female vulnerability, but also invokes fear in women and shapes their bodies and how their bodies inhabit space (Ahmed

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[10] Watch the ad on Youtube "Be a Super Buddy with Vodafone SuperNet – video call in metro ad

2004). It´s furthermore connected to gender expectations that women *should* be afraid in certain contexts (Connell 1987:134-141; Scott J. 1986:1069). The restrictions in women´s mobility is hence an outcome of their own fear *and* the discourse of female bodies in public space.

Responsibility of safety
The manifestations of hegemonic masculinities did not only invoke fear and vulnerability in the women, but it also made the women feel they are responsible for their own safety, which in turn reproduces rape culture. As Horton and Rydström (2011) argue, men are assumed to not be able to control themselves if provoked by a woman (or man), and thus the women have a responsibility in not provoking men.

I have to be aware of what am I wearing when I am travelling, then with whom I´m meeting and with whom I´m exchanging my phone number and whom I am greeting and whom I am making friends and also with whom my friends are talking. It´s all in my hands that I should be cautious and aware about my surrounding basically. If you see something fishy happening you should get away and move out of it. Your safety is in your hands. If you call the police in Delhi, something happens, first they will not believe you that this thing happened and they will come like hours late and then the incident already happened. And what´s the point of coming then? So you can´t really count upon the police security.

Mariah, 26 years old, Delhi

In Mariah´s story, it is clear that she has a strategy for how she should present her body in a public space (what she wears), but also how she occupies the space (when she is traveling, who she and even her friends are talking to). The feeling of being vulnerable shapes Mariah´s bodily experience of space in terms of her inhabiting the space and presenting her body (Ahmed 2004), which in turn make her understand herself as responsible for her own safety.

Patterns in the narratives of who´s responsible for one´s safety consist of two themes. Firstly, we can see how the norms around women´s safety is reflected in the narratives – they all have a patriarchal understanding of safety. It was clear in the narratives that the victim blaming in India and the myth that sexual violence

only happens to women who do not accept a more normative femininity, led them to believing that the way they act have an influence on their safety (Bhattacharyya 2015; Moor 2010; Walsh 2015).

Secondly, there is a lack of trust in the police for being judgmental as well for not showing up, which is a direct demonstration of how patriarchy influence women´s safety in Delhi.

5.4 "Please, please, please, let me reach safely"[11]

– Fearful places and safe campuses

Places nor spaces are static, but they change with time and depend on how the space or place is occupied (Koskela 1997; Sandberg 2011). The temporarily and spatiality was a common theme in the narratives of the women (Pain 1997; Sandberg 2011).

In the interviews with the students it was clear that the Delhi Gang Rape had changed the discourse of safety and fear. The image of the city was challenged which in turn changed the experiences of space. I cannot say with certainty that this was the case for all the women in this study, but several stories indicated this.

(…) And these days only there are also all the cases of sexual violence and rape and this has come up now but you know it was not there when we were kids. It´s only like these past five years that these cases come up. When I was in graduation we used to have parties until 10 or 11 in the night and it was very safe. You could travel at any point of time and it was pretty much safer than this.

Sapna, 26 years old, Haryana

Again, it would be impossible to say with certainty if sexual violence has increased in Delhi, however, the intense media reporting has influenced Sapna´s image of fear and safety in Delhi and her experience of using space. Although the rapists after the Delhi Gang Rape were caught just after the incident people realized that it was not an isolated event which instilled fear in women, parents, families and friends.

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[11] Sarah, 22 years old, West Bengal

However, none of the women seemed to have a constant fear of being victims for sexual violence in public spaces and their narratives of fear could start with them being stalked, whistled at, commented on or stared at. But the stories could also consist of them being in a place or space where they felt fear and insecurity, but didn´t get subjected to any crime or where there were no ´real´ threats. The women who occupied an equality femininity, often spoke about *situations* as uncomfortable, while the women trying to adopt a more traditional femininity spoke about *spaces and places* as dangerous. Again, it was evident that there is little room for feeling fear within equality femininity, while it is more or less expected for a traditional or normative femininity to be afraid (Koskela 1997; Pain 1997; Sandberg 2011). I will let two stories illustrate this.

Sarah goes to her uncle, who´s also her local guardian every weekend when she doesn´t have an assignment or exam coming up. The uncle lives in the outskirts of Delhi and it takes about 45 minutes by metro to reach there. When she gets off the metro she has to go by battery, a shared auto-rickshaw driving on battery, and then walk for 15-20 minutes until she would reach her uncle´s house.

(…) I get a little picky so if I see all men sitting there I´d probably wait for the next one to come and I´ll go. And you know where my uncle stay it is not actually a city, it´s more that outside of Delhi so you probably get a mixed crowd in the sense, I mean not the crowd you see here, but you probably that people are little rough so the minute I get on I am just like please, please, please let me reach safely, you know. And I have to get off and I have to walk a certain distance also so it´s like 15-20 minutes, so I prefer not take the battery so I get off and walk there. But you know I am constantly with this am I being followed or is someone with me and my phone is always in my hand if I have to give a phone call and also I take note of different sort of places where I could run to if I had to. I mean I have been told I need to be on guard.

Sarah, 22 years old, West Bengal

In a previous section I was letting Sarah illustrate a traditional femininity where there was no expression of anger nor frustration about the fact that she feels fear which restricts her mobility. This is also apparent in this story. There is a normalization in her feeling the fear and the fear does not come from a certain

event or situation, but rather from how the space is occupied by possible perpetrators (men), and thus, taking herself from A to B in a space which is occupied only by men, insert fear in her. In her traditional femininity it is expected that she should feel fear and her family has told that she needs to be on guard, reinforcing her as being vulnerable (Koskela 1997; Pain 1997 Sandberg 2011).

I will let a story shared by Dipti illustrate another way of constructing fearful space. She is constructing this space through a situation, rather than how it is occupied. She had gone out with two friends to get some snacks and was on her way back to the student hostel.

Oh now I remember, it was the area Civil Lines. It is deserted but very posh houses, posh cars and there is not much public in the streets and there are not many stores, but there was one convenient store, so me and two friends we went to buy some things, some snacks, and it was and I think seven or eight minutes away from my hostel and two minutes away from my colleges. So when we are coming there are these two guys started following us so we crossed the road and they crossed road and again we crossed the road and they crossed it and then we ran to our college and then our hostel was like opposite to that okay and we asked the guard like these guys are following us and all this and at that time it was seven o´clock and there was cars.. But actually that time we felt real fear. Two guys they were just coming and they were increasing their speed. But the guard accompanied us to our hostel. Yeah and it happened again with some other friends, same place.. I don´t know if it was the same guys but they followed them from the store to the hostel.

Dipti, 21 years old, West Bengal

This space became fearful to Dipti and her friends because they were being stalked by some random men. She also expresses that the fact that the area is deserted was a bit fearful to her.

The survey from Indo Asian News Service (2009) showed that markets such as Chandni Chowk, Connaught Place and Karol Bagh were fearful places for women in Delhi. My empirical material found that Chandni Chowk is a place the women avoid going to. Other places where Okhla and east Delhi. The reasons behind it differed, but it was a mix of personal experiences and media reports and that it

was either too crowded or too deserted, supporting the argument that the public and private narratives are interwoven (Heber 2007; Portelli 1997:82).

Safe space

When I asked the women about their favorite places in Delhi the most common answer was a place which was located close to their home, most often their university campuses or libraries. Sarah´s favorite place is the library and she calls herself a local person and she does not like traveling. The Ladakhi women and some of the Delhi University students said that the JNU campus is their favorite place. It is clear how the social practices taking place *and* not taking place in the different spaces construct their idea of safe and good spaces. I asked Nodul to describe what she did the day before we met and then followed up with how she felt during the day.

I feel very good. I have friends around me, I´m with friends and I use to go with my friends only to my classes and then we come to play some badminton and games. Yeah. I feel very safe and comfortable. I campus I feel safe and comfortable only, but out of this campus I don´t feel safe and I´m not comfortable.

<div align="right">Nodul, 24 years old, Ladakh</div>

As Anderson (2010:38) suggests the campuses are turning from being a space to a place which to the women become meaningful as they get attached socially, geographically and emotionally. I would argue that these places become extra meaningful for the women who are more restricted in their mobility and fear harassments and sexual violence as they feel this is one of few spaces (if not the only space), where they feel that they do not have to restrict their mobility, which is in line with (Bhattacharyya 2015) who explains that Indian women are expected to take part in private spaces whereas the public spaces are constructed by and for men. These expectations lead to putting women in a marginalized position, where they feel more comfortable in a campus or library which could be argued to be a sort of semi-public-space, as not all people access these spaces.

It is clear how the dichotomy between public and private becomes problematic for at least two reasons. Firstly, as briefly mentioned, it is unclear how one should define a campus or a library in a university. Is that really a public space? Not all people are not allowed there, but still, many are. It can also instill some sort of fake safety, as violence in these semi-public spaces do happen as well. The risk then, is that it becomes more of a private issue and not societal as the violence taking place in undoubtedly public spaces, such as markets.

5.5 "The only thing it has done is to instill more fear in us"[12]

– Media´s influence on fear

Media bears a responsibility in creating fear of crime as we get most of the information about crime from news reports (Heber 2007). However, it is difficult to know what exactly is influencing our fear and how the news reporting on sexual violence in Delhi has influenced my respondents´ fear.

Indian news media have presented lots of stories on attacks on women in public spheres over the past years. The diversity of the stories is big and I would argue that the event and reporting on the Nirbhaya case had a big impact on the women I spoke to, since all of them referred to or mentioned this case before I did. They could relate to the image that all women are potential victims (Pain 1997), an image which is often shared by media, or rather an image which is reproduced by media. The news article below had the headline "Life of every woman affected by fear of violence", supporting the argument that media texts reinforce this image.

The life of every woman in country, even if she is not a victim of crime, is affected by the fear of violence, the Bombay high court said on Tuesday while enhancing the sentence of Jawedkhan Habibkhan, a Jalna resident, from life imprisonment to death.

Hindustan Times, 5 March, News article

Media though, has not only instilled more fear in the women, but also in their families and friends. In the group interview the girls were having quite a vigorous

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[12] Shivani, 25 years old, West Bengal

discussion about pepper sprays. When they finally stopped interrupting each other, Dipti says that not only women were afraid after the Delhi Gang Rape, but also their parents.

The girls in the group discussion were talking about how their fear has changed in relation to media.

Shivani: The only thing it has done is to instill more fear in us

Urvashi: You are reading so many things and hearing so many things.

Dipti: At least [it has instilled more fear] in our parents and one part of me is happy this has come out, because people are aware now and it might work as a deterrent and at some point yeah parents are much more afraid than before. And not only parents, after this Delhi Gang Rape I used to get calls from my friends back home you know you should stay safe you should not go at night.

In articles from just after the Delhi gang rape, it was evident women´s safety in public space started to be highlighted. They published articles with headlines such as "Bus Rape spooks working women" and "Pepper sprays out of stock". Articles of this character can be seen as expressing women´s fear as well as instilling fear. But clearly, the news reporting in the after-math of the Nirbhaya case had a real effect on some women in the city. "The Delhi gang rape incident and the agitation following it has resulted in a defensive reaction from women across the country. Many women in the city have turned to self-defense classes and are carrying pepper spray or knives for their safety" (Dixit 2014).

The concern for women and their safety that many of the articles expressed is again reinforcing the notion that women need to be taken care of. After the Delhi Gang Rape self-defense courses were arranged and the protection of women became more organized. This is manifested in several articles.

Authorities in Delhi have announced a raft of measures to help women feel safer on the city's streets. These include a 24-hour helpline for women in distress, instructions to all BPOs to ensure female employees return home from work safely, more policing on the streets and a crackdown on drunk driving.

Reuters 2013

Weather the Delhi Gang Rape had a real effect on all of my respondents is extremely difficult to say and some respondents confirmed what Dixit (2014) argues, while other narratives did not. In the beginning of my interview with Sapna, she is telling me that Delhi is not as safe as it was about five years ago and she is referring to cases of rape that have been coming up lately in the news.

(…) these days only there are also all the cases of sexual violence and rape and this has come up now but you know it was not there when we were kids. It´s only like these past five years that these cases come up. When I was in graduation we used to have parties until 10 or 11 in the night and it was very safe. You could travel at any point of time and it was pretty much safer than this.

<div align="right">Sapna, 25 years old, Haryana</div>

When I am just about to finish the interview she starts talking again and returns to that Delhi has changed the past years.

I think that whenever you read something in the newspaper or come across anything in social media or anywhere.. You know, when I was in 12th class I had not heard about you know rapes of like 2, 3-year-old girls happening, but now you see this is happening. And in Delhi you get to know the places which are not safe. Like the place where the famous 2014 rape happened[13], I know it is like a suburb area and I would think twice before I go there.

<div align="right">Sapna, 25 years old, Haryana</div>

The above extracts from my interview with Sapna shows how media has influenced her notion about places (Livholts 2008:200) in Delhi, but also her idea to what extent rape cases happen. This has made her restrict her use of public space and she has become more aware of her vulnerability.

It is evident that media reports, did and do reinforce female vulnerability and therefore it also has a big impact on the mobility and strategies the women take on in regards to their safety (Hollander 2001) and the public discourse on women´s safety has had an effect on the individual narratives of my respondents (Portelli 1997).

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[13] I have tried to figure out which case she is referring to, but without success.

6. Concluding discussion

In this concluding discussion I will present the results of this study and discuss what it has to offer in terms of understanding the fear of sexual violence among female students in Delhi. I will discuss how the different findings in my analysis are connected to each other and answer the research questions of the study.

The analysis shows that women´s fear of being subjected to sexual violence restrict them in their mobility, therefore it´s an oppressive source of social control of women. All women could identify a situation or a space where they felt insecure, afraid or threaten. This leads to them taking on different strategies in order to stay safe; stay inside after dark, dress in a certain way or avoid some areas of the city. How they inhabit a space and present their bodies in a space is partly influenced by their fear. Hence, the geography of women´s fear mirror and reinforce the pattern of political relations.

When asking which bodies fear which bodies and when and where, it was clear that it is closely linked to time and space. After dark unknown male bodies were fearful and in areas which are crowded or deserted the male bodies appeared fearful. However, I could not identify any specific scary attributes, but rather how the male bodies inhabited space.

Norms of masculinity and femininity shapes fear. Both experiences and behavior of space are influenced, where women adapting a more traditional femininity did not seem to feel the same frustration as the women adopting a more equality femininity where ambivalence in their fear was more a characteristic. They did not want to restrict their mobility and feel unsecure, they wanted to claim themselves as being equal to men but at the same time they felt a fear which they knew men did not feel.

Although the women did not think that the amount of rape cases had increased they had changed their strategies to stay safe and although they know they are at the same risk as three years ago they felt more fear. The wide-spread debate on

women´s safety in Delhi and India legitimize the idea that women are in need of protection and being fearful becomes normalized. As a further result their mobility becomes restricted and inserting these values turns into control and social oppression of women.

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8. Appendix

8.1 Interview guide

Background

Age, education, family, living accommodation, place of birth, how long in Delhi

Delhi as a city to live in

What do you think about living in Delhi?

Tell me about what you like with Delhi?

Tell me about what you don´t like with Delhi?

Mobility Pattern

Describe what you did yesterday?

- Where did you go?
- How did you get there?
- What was your feeling at the different places?

What is your mode of transport? How has your mode of transport changed over time?

How has your mobility changed over time?

Are there any places you have started going to or stopped going to?

Is there something you would like to do or some places where you would like to go that you do not have the opportunity to?

Space

Favorite areas. Why do you like them?

Place you don´t like? Why?

What influence your idea of these areas?

How do you think you would reply to these questions some years ago? Has it changed? Why?

Safety

When and where do you feel safe?

Can you describe a situation when you did not feel safe? Where were you?

Are there some places you do not go to?

What do you think make a place safe/unsafe?

Who or what is responsible for your safety?

What do you do in order to stay safe?

Media reporting

How do you keep your self updated about news?

What do you think about the news reporting in India?

How do you think media is influencing your idea of safety?

How do you think media is influencing your idea of different areas?

Closing questions

Anything you would like to add?

Questions for me?