

Designing Gender-Inclusive Urban Space: A Vision for Women's Safety Cross-Country Movement at Indo-Nepal Border Case of Biratnagar/Jogbani

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Abstract : Indo-Nepal border Biratnagar/Jogbani is a hub where economic exchange and cultural ties are forged daily. Furthermore, the porous and open border not only allows for the free movement of people and goods, but it also makes women more vulnerable, as they are frequently harassed by local authorities who are supposed to protect them. On the other hand, drug users roam around this region where many women experience that the place is not safe for women and girls. Moreover, women's safety is compromised by the open-border policy, which makes it difficult to control trafficking routes. Whereas the city was supposed to be a gateway for economic and cultural exchange, due to a lack of sensitivity in urban planning regarding gender, Biratnagar, and Jogbani have emerged as spaces of insecurity, limiting the free movement of women to various opportunities. The research explores a comprehensive analysis, identifies the gap in existing conditions, and proposes women-centered improvement focusing on Gender-based disparities, public space safety, and crime prevalence. It also addresses the issues that women confront in public spaces and recommends design approaches that prioritize safety and inclusivity. Research based on pragmatic paradigm emphasizes useful outcomes and the use of research in the real world to solve issues in an efficient way. The research topic "Designing Gender-Inclusive Urban Space: A Vision for Women's Safety CrossCountry Movement at Indo-Nepal Border Case of Biratnagar/Jogbani" seeks to generate actionable strategies and designs for gender-inclusive urban spaces in a specific socio-spatial context. Pragmatic focuses on solving real-world problems making it appropriate for gender safety issues. The pragmatic paradigm is the most appropriate for this subject because it strikes a balance between the necessity of comprehending women's experiences and the need to provide concrete policy and urban design solutions. Using the pragmatic paradigm, this study used a mixed-methods approach to investigate perceptions of safety for women and girls in a cross-border zone. Both surveys and interviews will be used because sexual harassment is a delicate topic. A thorough understanding of harassment experiences is provided by this mixed-methods approach, which enables the collection of quantitative data through structured questionnaires and qualitative insights through open-ended interviews. The findings aim to provide actionable strategies for policymakers and stakeholders to transform Indo-Nepal cross border into a model of gender-inclusive planning that empowers women and fosters equitable mobility across the border areas.

Keywords : gender-inclusive urban spaces, women's safety, public space design, pragmatic paradigm

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