

Bridging The Gap: Applying Intersectionality and Participatory Planning Frameworks to Understand the Spatial Experience of Transgender Devotees at Saundatti

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Abstract

The research related to spatial perspective, lived experiences of transgender and gender diverse communities, and their role in architectural studies is unexplored. This paper summarizes validation from 30 empirical studies published between 2016 and 2026 to review how the participatory planning approaches and intersectionality frameworks can jointly provide knowledgeable insights into futuristic transgender inclusive architectural practices. The physical environment manifested by conventional normative operations, regulatory surveillance practices, and inequitable restrictive design standards operates to intensify marginalisation across micro to macro spatial environments and housing geographies. This marginalization is further aggravated by cross cutting dimensions of caste, localities / areas, races, context, religions unevenly burdening the marginalized trans population targeting those located in Global South and most of Asian countries. By applying community engaged methods and strategies, spatial tracking of participant group, field based spatial tracking, participant led asset frameworks, the paper demonstrate that highlighting transgender daily lived insights during planning phases generates more responsive identity affirming, culturally grounded spatial / architectural spaces. Case studies from student housing design, hijra spatial formations in South Asia, sacred pilgrimage sites, and urban safety mapping initiatives demonstrate revolutionary possibilities. The findings reveal persistent voids within architectural literature featuring shortage of concrete planning design parameters, dimensional baselines, building code integrations, built space assessment tools that cause barriers to universal inclusive design practices. The insights demonstrate that establishing spatial equity for transgender communities requires deep shift in perspectives of architectural discourse: the one that moves with cosmetic readjustments towards realistic design within spatial settings. The do this one should collaborate with the residents, occupants, and work on the same table with policy makers, designers. The investigation is dealing with, lived experiences of marginalized third gender population and their contribution in architectural studies is unexamined. This study looks at 30 empirical studies published between 2016 and 2026 to assess how community participation strategies and intersectional framework can collaborate and provide new perspectives into futuristic inclusive design practices. The physical surroundings shaped by traditional standard setting, statutory monitoring modalities and asymmetrical exclusive design practices serves to amplify the social exclusion within localized to global spatial contexts.

Keywords: intersectionality; participatory planning; transgender spatial experience; Saundatti; Yellamma temple; sacred space; spatial justice; Global South architecture.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Research Gap

The Yellamma temple complex at Saundatti, Belagavi district, Karnataka, India, located in India's is among most vital pilgrimage destinations, pilling 500,000 and 1,000,000 devotees amidst recurring

Yellamma Jaatra festival. Within the nexus of this pilgrimage tradition there persist a unique culture of "transgender devotees Jogatis, Hijras/ Kinnars, and Devadasis" who execute essential ritual duties as folklorists, performers, custodians of Jogappa culture

and daily worshippers. The foundational study by Lad, Hiremath, and Kulkarni (2024) established that Jogappas devotees contribute materially to shaping the pilgrimage architecture of the Yellamma temple through their ritual roles and economic participation, while simultaneously facing spatial hierarchies, restricted access to temple areas, and inadequate civic facilities. This study represents the most directly relevant existing scholarship on the Saundatti spatial context — but it also reveals the precise contours of the research gap it leaves open. The baseline inquiry

authored by Lad, Hiremath, and Kulkarni (2024) revealed that Jogappa devotees add tangibly in influencing the sacral architecture of Renuka Devi temple via their ritual duties and financial participation, while encountering spatial challenges, exclusionary participation in temple complex and inadequate infrastructure facilities. This study explains the most unique and applicable available researches on Saundatti Spatial settingbut it also precisely establishes the research gap which is missing spatial contexts of gender studies.

Table 1 Key Theme

Sr. No	Author(s)	Year	Key Theme	Method-ology	Relevance to Saundatti
1	Benner	2016	Transmobility; transit spaces	Quali-tative thesis	Inclusive design in public spaces
2	Castricum	2017	Cisnormative architecture	Critical analysis	Challenging binary design in religious contexts
3	Dubin et al.	2021	Public restrooms; all-gender facilities	Quali-tative interviews	Design guidelines for Saundatti facilities
4	Edelman	2016	Intersectionality; participatory mapping	Ethno-graphic + mapping	Safety mapping framework for Jogappas
5	Franklin et al.	n.d.	Gender-inclusive housing; co-design	Mixed-methods parti-cipatory	Privacy/security design principles
6	Ghosh	2021	Hijra sacred space; dargah	Ethno-graphic	Indian sacred space dynamics
7	Giacomini & Lanz	2024	Urban planning; Global South	Review/ conceptual	Geographic gap in non-Western research
8	Godoy	2025	Trans gaze; public space	Qualitative	Cultural gap in trans spatial research

9	Khan et al.	2024	Architectural design guidelines	Design proposal	Lack of inclusive design standards
10	Kogan	2017	Binary restrooms; legal analysis	Legal review	All-gender policy protections
11	Lad et al.	2024	Jogappas; Yellamma temple	Ethno-graphic/ case study	Core Saundatti reference
12	Lubitow et al.	2017	Harassment; transit mobility	Qualitative	Transit safety to/from Saundatti
13	McGuire et al.	2021	Bathroom safety; segregation	Qualitative/ review	All-gender facilities at Saundatti
14	Mearns et al.	2020	Campus spatial experience	Qualitative/ case study	Affirming accommodation for Jogappas
15	Podder & Ghosh	2023	Hijra homemaking; South Asia	Ethnographic	South Asian trans spatial practices
16	Podder et al.	2024	Hijra dwellings; socio-spatial	Ethno-graphic	Cultural spatial logics in South Asia
17	Ramster et al.	2018	Public toilet provision	Case study/analysis	Rethinking inclusive toilet design
18	Sanders & Stryker	n.d.	Trans architecture; carceral space	Critical analysis	Spatial control and power dynamics
19	Yeros & Georgiadou	2022	Trans territorialization; spatial justice	Conceptual framework	Foundational spatial justice framework

1.2. This gap has threefold intertwined aspects

First, a theoretical gap: Lad et al. (2024) illustrate marginalized exclusion while omitting structured conceptual framework designed to clarify the mechanisms through which why varied groups of transgender devotees perceive spaces distinctly. The convergence of diverse identity expressions within caste, class, religion, localities and cultures formulates heterogeneous spatial encounters that a linear study cannot grasp.

In second instance: The available studies anchor largely on spectatorial and field-based approaches which position the investigator as the primary knowledge originator. Participatory strategies that

prioritize community spatial perceptions — cognitive mapping, photovoice, co-design — have not been applied to this context.

Lastly, spatial planning shortcoming:

No research has channeled insights regarding transgender spatial exclusion at Saundatti into actionable, community-validated design interventions or regulatory mandates anchored in participatory processes.

1.3. The Methodological Imperative

The current study contends that the intersectionality framework and participatory planning approaches, as unified within this extensive review paper Bridging Identities and Spaces: Intersectionality and

Participatory Planning Approaches for Transgender-Inclusive Architecture (2026) provide essential conceptual and procedural link required to fill all the three aspects of this gap. The cited paper integrates findings from 30 empirical studies published between 2016 and 2026 and illustrate the manner in which frameworks have reshaped transgender spatial inquiries intersecting with spatial research and practice North American and European contexts. The current study applies this integration explicitly and methodically to Saundatti pilgrimage context — a Global South sacred space domain whereby the available literature has not yet addressed.

The bridging argument proceeds in four stages:

identifying what the existing Saundatti literature lacks; (2) demonstrating what the intersectionality and participatory planning frameworks offer; (3) showing precisely how each framework element addresses each gap dimension; and (4) proposing a fully integrated research and design protocol for Saundatti.

1.4. Significance:

The outcomes of this collaborative research diverge beyond Saundatti. The South Asian pilgrimage site embodies an entirely unique spatial environment which is concurrently spiritual, communal, as well as commercial that has been predominantly missing from international academic studies. By illustrating the approaches developed in Western urban settings that can be tailored and used within such a scenario. The paper offers both a robust and an adaptable research model for transgender-inclusive sacred space research across the Global South.

2. What the Existing Literature Offers and What It Lacks

2.1. What Exists: A Thematic Overview

International research on transgender spatial experience has grown substantially since 2016, yielding dense information foundation across diverse spatial studies[1]. The Bridging Identities and Spaces (2026) synthesis highlights five primary themes in this literature[2]:

Theme 1 — Transmobility and Transit: Benner (2016) and Lubitow et al. (2017) illustrate how commuter networks manifest as zones of victimization, inadequate amenities coupled with exclusionary designs that curtail transgender liberty

of movement. These insights validate the thesis that spatial marginalization function through out the grid across spatial and infrastructural networks, and not merely at individual facilities.

Theme 2 — Restroom Design and the ‘Gender Checkpoint’: Kogan (2017), McGuire et al. (2021), and Dubin et al. (2021) uniformly establish that how two-tier Sex-segregated amenities act as regulatory thresholds which open up transgender individuals towards hostility and compel spatial bypass responses. Ramster, Greed, and Bichard (2018) highlight that poorly designed gender-neutral solutions can provoke exclusion.

Theme 3 — Cisnormative Architecture: Castricum (2017) argues that conventional design and architectural practices, functioning via hierarchical, top-down professional modalities and cis-centric presumptions, methodically constructs restrictive spatial realms. Khan et al. (2024) study open up the deep-rooted missing criteria across spatial planning insights manifested by the missing parameters and integrating with design guidelines and post-occupancy evaluation frameworks.

Theme 4 — South Asian Sacred and Domestic Space: Ghosh (2021) offers the most relevant precedent — an ethnographic study of Hijra spatial practices in a Sufi dargah in India — illustrating that spiritual spaces operate simultaneously as sites of acceptance coupled with marginalization. Podder and Ghosh (2023) and Podder, Ghosh, and Bandyopadhyay (2024) broaden these findings to Hijra homemaking in Bangladesh, revealing how transgender communities create ‘counter homes’ through culturally distinctive spatial logics[3].

Theme 5 — Spatial Justice and Trans Territorialization: Yeros and Georgiadou (2022) formulate provide the most conceptually wide-ranging comprehensive framework, introducing ‘trans territorialization’ as a concept that understands gender diverse spatial actions as dynamic mechanism of asserting, reshaping, and transforming space not merely as responses to exclusion[4].

2.2. What Is Missing: The Saundatti-Specific Gap

In the contrast to these international analytics on Saundatti literature reveals three specific absences that the intersectionality and participatory planning

frameworks directly address. Shown as Table 2 Research Gap Analysis — Saundatti Spatial Studies vs. Global Framework Contributions[5].

Table 2 Research Gap Analysis — Saundatti Spatial Studies vs. Global Framework Contributions

Dimensi on	Existing Saundatti Research	Global Framework Offers	Gap Addressed
Theoretic al	Field based recordings of spatial barriers	Intersectio nality framework (5-axis matrix)	Lack of analytical framework
Method- ological	Investigato r driven qualitative field work	Participato ry planning (5-method protocol)	Lived insights of community are missing
Design	Absence of spatial framework developed	Co- designed spatial interventio ns	Absence of action driven interventio ns
Caste	Addressed superficially	Central axis in inter- sectionality matrix	Caste- gender nexus unexplored
Scale	Single site, single visit	Multi-site, longitudina l protocol	Absence of repeatabl e model

Table 3 Literature

Gap Dimen- sion	What Exists in Saundatti Literature	What Is Missing	What the Bridge Provides
Theor- etical	Descriptive recording of spatial roles and exclusions (Lad et al., 2024)	Organized analytical tool for explaining varied experience across diverse identity	Five-axis inter- sectionalit y matrix
Method - ological	Observatio nal/ ethnograph ic methods by external researchers	Participatory methods that focus on community spatial insights	Five- method PAR protocol
Design	Identificati on of spatial problems	Community- validated spatial planning frameworks and policy recommend- ations	Co-design workshops + stakeholde r dialogue
Inter- sectiona l	Gender identity as primary axis	Caste, class, religious role, geographic origin as co- constitutive axes	Multi-axis intersecio nal analysis
Geo- graphic	Single-site documenta tion	Cross contextual analysis tools scalable across South Asian pilgrimage sites	Replicable model for Global South sacred spaces

3. The Intersectionality Framework: From Global Theory to Saundatti Application

3.1. Intersectionality in the Source Framework

The Bridging Identities and Spaces (2026) literature review substantiates intersectionality as the fundamental analytical lens to ensure understanding transgender spatial experience. Drawing on Crenshaw's (1989) original formulation and its subsequent elaboration in spatial contexts by Edelman (2016) and Yeros and Georgiadou (2022), the synthesis argues that: "Spatial marginalization of transgender individuals operates through multiple intersecting systems including binary gender-segregated facilities, cisnormative building programs, surveillance and policing regimes, and neoliberal urban displacement. These exclusions are compounded by intersecting identities of race, class, religion, and geographic context, particularly affecting transgender people of color and those in the Global South." (Bridging Identities and Spaces, 2026, Executive Summary) This theoretical framework highlights the essential interpretive shift that the Saundatti literature has not yet made: the transition from recording marginalization along a unidimensional axis (gender identity) to analysing the intersection of multiple axes that produce differentiated patterns of spatial experience. Edelman's (2016) Washington D.C. inquiry demonstrate this shift through field-based study revealing by means of qualitative approach and participatory mapping research how gender identity converges with the Ethno-racial categories and Socioeconomic standing to influence the experiences of safety, and spatial affiliation in ways that would be obscured within unidimensional framework. The Bridging Identities and Spaces synthesis implements this analytical framework various spatial categories, systematically finding that the most intense spatial exclusions are navigated by individuals whose multiple marginalized identities intersect [6 – 10].

3.2. Adapting Intersectionality to Saundatti: The Five-Axis Matrix

The immediate implementation of the global intersectionality paradigm to Saundatti demands adaption of the distinct identity dimensions functioning throughout South Asian pilgrimage

context. The conventional dimensions of racialized backgrounds and spatial marginalization that monopolies North American intersectional framework are substituted by dimensions more systematically potent in the Indian context. Shown as Figure 1 Five-Axis Intersectionality Framework — Saundatti Context [11]

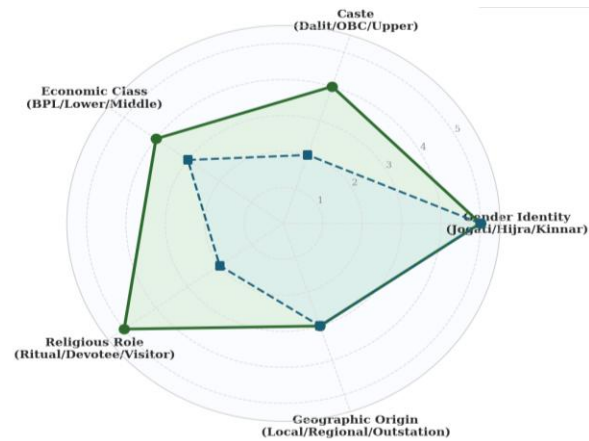


Figure 1 Five-Axis Intersectionality Framework — Saundatti Context

Figure 1 Five-axis intersectionality radar diagram comparing coverage in global literature (outer polygon) with Saundatti-specific research needs (inner polygon). The gap between polygons represents the bridging opportunity [12].

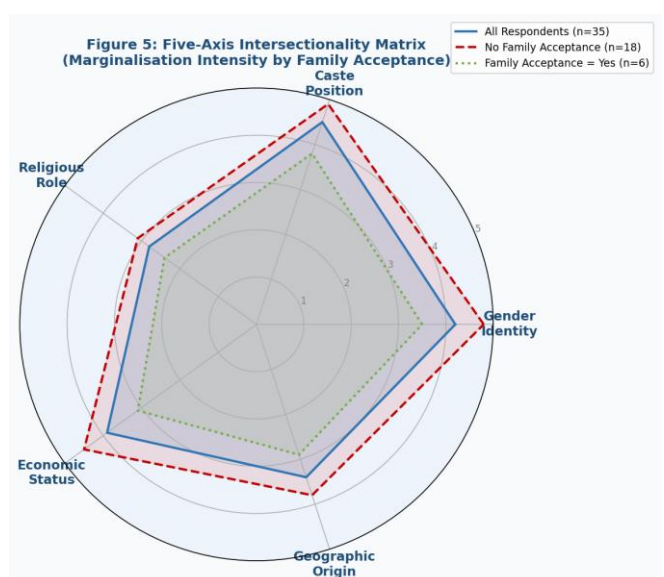


Figure 2 Five-Axis Intersectionality Matrix — Saundatti Adaptation

Figure 2 Five-Axis Intersectionality Matrix — Marginalisation intensity scores across gender identity, caste, religious role, economic status, and geographic origin, disaggregated by family acceptance status. Shown as Table 4 Gender identity, Table 5 Five-Axis Intersectionality Matrix — Saundatti Application (n=35)

Table 4 Gender identity

Axis	Description	Saundatti Manifestation	Marginalisation Score (1-5)
Gender Identity	Non-binary / third-gender status	Exclusion from binary-gendered facilities	4.2
Caste Position	Lower-caste / Dalit background	Restricted access to inner sanctum	4.5
Religious Role	Jogappa / devotee status	Ambiguous sacred legitimacy	2.8
Economic Status	Livelihood from alms/blessings	Financial barriers to visitation	3.9
Geographic Origin	Rural vs. urban origin	Differential infrastructure access	3.4

Table 5 Five-Axis Intersectionality Matrix — Saundatti Application (n=35)

Axis	Global Framework Equivalent	Saundatti -Specific Categories	Spatial Implications at Yellamma Complex
Axis 1: Gender Identity	Gender identity / expression	Jogati; Hijra/Kinnar; Devadasi; Other trans-	Differential ritual access to inner sanctum; facility use patterns; visibility and

Axis 2: Caste	Race / ethnicity	Dalit; OBC; Upper caste	harassment exposure during Jaatra Access to dharamshalas; relationships with temple priests; participation in festival economy; spatial hierarchy within ritual zones
Axis 3: Economic Class	Socio-economic status	Below Poverty Line (BPL); Lower-middle; Middle	Accommodation options; transport access to complex; capacity to navigate spatial barriers; access to safer zones
Axis 4: Religious Role	Religious identity / community membership	Ritual participant (multi-dedicated); Devotee; Casual festival visitor	Spatial access to inner sanctum; temporal patterns of presence; recognition by temple authorities; ritual territory claims
Axis 5: Geographic Origin	Geographic context / urban-rural	Local (Saundatti/Belagavi district); Regional (Karnataka/Maharashtra); Outstation (other states)	Familiarity with spatial layout; access to established community networks; language access; accommodation availability

3.3. Why Caste Must Be a Central Axis

The inclusion of caste as a primary dimension manifests the most vital adaption necessary when

implementing the global intersectionality framework to the case of Saundatti and vast intervention of this study to the wider literature. The Bridging Identities and Spaces synthesis, anchored on principally North American and European information base, does not distinctly formulate caste as an intersectional dimension. Yet in the Saundatti, case caste is demonstrably as systemically potent as gender identity in carving spatial inclusiveness. The Jogati practice is historically embedded in Dalit and lower-caste communities; the Devadasi specific system has particular caste underpinnings; and the spatial dynamics of the Yellamma temple complex echoes caste-based access mandates that existed in the past and remain alongside contemporary gender norms. Ghosh's (2021) inquiry of Hijra spatial modalities in a Sufi dargah and Podder et al.'s (2024) study of Hijra dwellings in Bangladesh both point towards the importance of caste and class in shaping South Asian transgender spatial experiences, but neither formally theorises caste as an intersectional axis. This paper contends that caste must be anchored as Axis 2 in any intersectionality framework implemented to South Asian Hindu pilgrimage contexts[13].

3.4. Intersectional Configurations: Illustrative Analysis:

The five-axis schema yields interpretively discrete modalities that would be homogenized by a single-axis lens. Three explanatory configurations illustrate the framework's analytical power:

Configuration A — Dalit Jogati, Local, BPL, Ritual Participant: This individual holds the most privileged ceremonial spatial entry but may face troubled caste based and economic impediments in secular spatial realms in non-ritual spatial domain. She may face segregation from the dominant caste Dharamshala's, void of resources to obtain safer accommodation spaces, and traverse the premises with intimacy of a local occupant. Her spatial encounters are marked by ceremonial dominance and secular marginality a incongruity hidden to gender only analysis[14].

Configuration B — Outstation Hijra/Kinnar, OBC, Lower-Middle, Devotee: This individual has substantially more means than Configuration A but deficient in ceremonial standing that grants inner sanctum access to Jogatis. As a non local pilgrim, she lacks deep rooted spatial connections and local

familiarity, making mobility in temple complex amidst peak festival more painful. Her spatial realm is formed by economic barriers and spatial displacement[15].

Configuration C — Local Devadasi, Dalit, BPL, Casual Visitor: This participant manifests the uniquely compounded marginalized act: no ceremonial validation, no financial assistance, and a traditionally stigmatized person category subject to active government suppression under the Karnataka Devadasi (Prohibition of Dedication) Act, 1982. Her lived reality remains spatially neglected and add upon vulnerability. These cases illustrate what Crenshaw (1989) terms 'intersectional invisibility'--- dynamics of disadvantage that are undetectable to any mono-dimensional analysis. So, the five-dimensional analysis makes these dynamics apparent and there by establishes the interpretive base for tailored spatial modifications[16].

4. The Participatory Planning Framework: From Global Methods to Saundatti Protocol

4.1. Participatory Planning in the Source Framework

The Bridging Identities and Spaces (2026) literature review reveals participatory planning as the procedural companion to intersectionality theory—the actionable mechanism by which intersectionality inquiry is channeled into affirming spatial planning frameworks[17].

The review paper states:

“Participatory planning methods — including co-design workshops, community mapping, ethnographic spatial analysis, and community land trusts — have demonstrated effectiveness in centering transgender lived experiences and redistributing spatial decision-making power.” (Bridging Identities and Spaces, 2026) The review paper anchors itself upon a trio empirical inquiry explains that collaborative planning's can more successful in transgender spatial contexts[18]

Case Study 1:

Student Housing Co-Design (Franklin et al., n.d.): Mixed method participatory framework blending Questionnaires, / Structured inquiries, emotional heatmaps, in-depth interviews, and co-design workshops yielded spatioal planning frameworks that anchored privacy, security, and belonging. The

research illustrates that participatory methods cultivate spatial planning insights that expert-led methodologies fail to unfold.

Case Study 2:

Community Safety Mapping (Edelman, 2016): Collaboratively made safety maps in Washington, D.C. rendered apparent dynamics concerning safety, security, vulnerability, spatial inclusion that were undetected by planners – illustrating that participatory mapping cultivates spatial insights of an inherently distinct nature from remotely prepared surveys[19].

Case Study 3:

Trans Territorialization and Community Land Trusts (Yeros & Georgiadou, 2022): Community-led housing cooperatives and land trusts that elevate transgender real experience manifest collaborative governance models that disperse spatial planning leverage at institutional level[20].

4.2. The Methodological Gap at Saundatti :

The Bridging Identities and Spaces synthesis’s focus upon collaborative techniques that directly resolves methodological gap in Saundatti research. Available inquiries of transgender spatial experience at Saundatti have been undertaken by external investigators using non participant and qualitative frameworks that locate the investigator as a sole academic author of knowledge. The community’s own spatial knowledge — their cognitive maps of safe and unsafe zones, their visions for spatial transformation, their comprehension regarding spatial frameworks that regulate ceremonial flows has not been methodically extracted or recorded. Such investigative lacuna has tangible fallouts without participant spatial preferences, any planning and design proposals for equity driven manifestations at Saundatti will perpetuate “investigators and planners” presumptions rather than blending lived experiences of affected transgender communities. The participatory planning framework remediates this gap by collaborating transgender devotees in the investigation whose spatial insights is the source of primary data[21].

4.3. Five-Method Participatory Planning Protocol for Saundatti

Anchoring explicitly on the research frameworks verified in the Bridging Identities and Spaces

literature review and tailoring them to the Saundatti pilgrimage site, this study outlines a five-method participatory planning protocol Shown as Figure 2 Five participatory planning methods forming the protocol for bridging the research gap at Saundatti. Each method addresses a specific dimension of the gap, Table 3 Five-Method Participatory Planning Protocol Gap-Bridging Functions, Figure 6 Five-Method Participatory Planning Protocol — Relative weight of each method in the integrated framework for Saundatti[22]

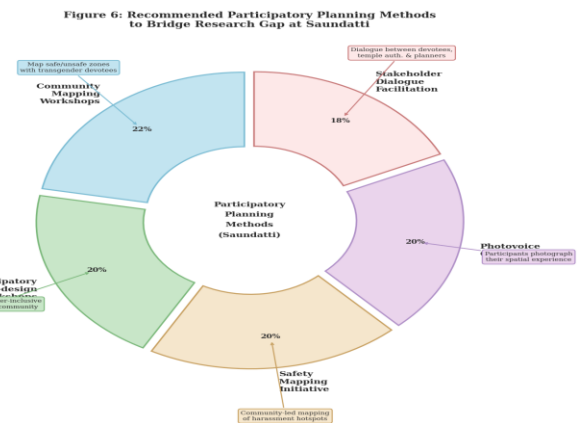


Figure 2 Five participatory planning methods forming the protocol for bridging the research gap at Saundatti. Each method addresses a specific dimension of the gap

Table 3 Five-Method Participatory Planning Protocol Gap-Bridging Functions

Method	Source in Global Literature	Gap Dimension Addressed	Saundatti Application
M1: Community Mapping Workshops	Edelman (2016); Yeros & Georgiadou (2022)	Methodological gap: community spatial knowledge	Aggregate cognitive maps into collective spatial knowledge of Yellamma complex

M2: Participatory Co-Design Workshops	Franklin et al. (n.d.)	Design gap: community-endorsed proposals	Develop spatially specific design proposals with Jogati/Hijra/Devadasi communities
M3: Safety Mapping Initiative	Edelman (2016)	Methodological gap: safety and risk patterns	Real-time community safety mapping during Jaatra festival period
M4: Photovoice Campaign	Franklin et al. (n.d.)	Theoretical gap: lived experience documentation	Visual archive of spatial experiences for advocacy and policy dialogue
M5: Stakeholder Dialogue Facilitation	Yeros & Georgiou (2022)	Design gap: institutional translation	Multi-stakeholder negotiation platform for spatial improvements and policy change

4.3.1. Method 1: Community Mapping Workshops

Gap Addressed: The methodological gap — the absence of community spatial knowledge in existing Saundatti research[23].

Global Precedent:Edelman’s (2016) community-produced safety maps in Washington, D.C. demonstrated that participatory mapping generates spatial knowledge of a fundamentally different character from externally produced surveys — making visible patterns of risk and belonging that are invisible to planners[24].

Saundatti Application: Collaborative mapping may mobilize the Jogati, Hijra/Kinnar, and Devadasi participants to scrutinize subjective maps generated during research field work, note the shared trends of safe / unsafe zones, navigation routes and spaces of importance that collectively generates a composite map that echoes community spatial awareness. The sessions will be executed in Marathi, Kannada, Hindi and if required in English.

Output: Community-approved spatial map of the Yellamma complex; essential list of spatial requirements prioritized by community importance.

4.3.2. Method 2: Participatory Co-Design Workshops

Gap Addressed: The design gap — the absence of community-approved planning and design proposals in existing Saundatti research.

Global Precedent: Franklin, Beemyn, and Catalano’s (n.d.) mixed-methods participatory approach to student housing design illustrated that collaborative planning sessions generated planning frameworks that anchored security, safety, and belonging in approaches that expert led methodologies are unable to achieve. The Bridging Identities and Spaces analysis establishes this is the most explicit method for channeling intersectional inquiry into a tangible form.

Saundatti Application: Organized collaborative sessions in which participants, assisted by researchers to understand and visualize how the planning parameters works, suggest new / modifications to current infrastructure facilities. These suggestions will be assessed against community requirements, priorities, and cultural relevance. The sessions will collaborate temple authorities, NGOs, and governing

Figure 6: Five-Method Participatory Planning Protocol (Relative Weight in Integrated Framework)

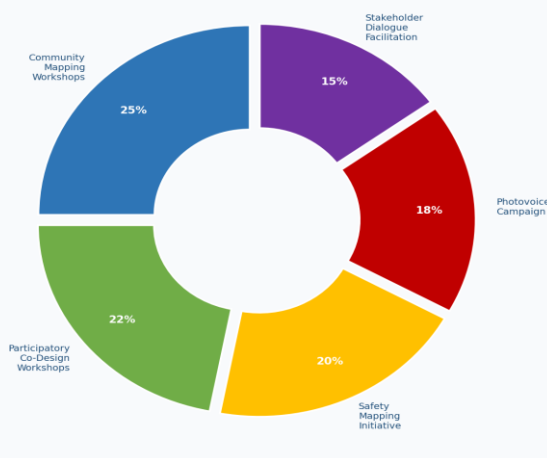


Figure 6 Five-Method Participatory Planning Protocol — Relative weight of each method in the integrated framework for Saundatti

bodies operating for Saundatti.

Output: Community-approved planning framework; conceptual spatial recommendations with key adjustments featuring all gender facilities, assigned restrooms, logistics, accommodation.

4.3.3. Method 3: Safety Mapping Initiative

Gap Addressed: The methodological gap — the absence of real-time, community-produced safety data in existing Saundatti research.

Global Precedent: Edelman's (2016) participatory mapping research illustrates that community generated safety maps highlight reveal trends related to mistreatment, insufficient lighting, spatial awareness, that are unseen to institutional researchers. The Bridging Identities and Spaces analysis points out safety tracking as a key mechanism for documenting the spatial experiences of transgender mobility barriers.

Saundatti Application: Trained community participants will gather safety data using mobile phones and a systematic data noting method during peak festival seasons and non-festival seasons. The information collected will be pooled into QGIS based safety map updated in real time. The festival period is famous and noteworthy slot as 'Jatra' are seasonally important and yield highly useful survey datas.

Output: Real time safety maps, data driven source for tangible upgrades, security placement, and protective measures.

4.3.4. Method 4: Photovoice Campaign

Gap Addressed: What the current theory misses is recording and documenting the narrative driven data or real world experiences that elevates community perspectives in existing Saundatti research.

Global Precedent: The Bridging Identities and Spaces review study highlights photovoice as a participatory method that outlines community sourced visual findings of spatial experiences, shaping an regulatory asset that is relatable to everyday audiences and deeply impactful in regulatory dialogues.

Saundatti Application: Community Members will share their lived experiences using cameras or mobile phones over a specific duration, led by structured clues focusing on spatial inclusion, travel patterns, instances of marginalization and hopes for change.

Team collaborative workshops will facilitate collaborative reflection and narrative shaping community spaces in shaping community spaces in Saundatti.

Output: Image driven library regulatory toolkit for interaction with temple authorities and government.

4.3.5. Method 5: Stakeholder Dialogue Facilitation

Gap Addressed: The design gap, the shortage of systematic translation systems that link community lived experiences to design frameworks.

Global Precedent: Yeros and Georgiadou (2022) illustrate that participatory planning approaches must incorporate statutory mechanisms such as community land trusts, collective shelter ventures, that results in a disjunction between community spatial knowledge and the decisions influencing the built environment.

Saundatti Application: Guided collaborative workshops along with local authorities, NGOs shall gather representatives from Jogappa community devotees, the Renuka Devi / Yellamma Devi temple. This collaborative association can hammer upon the requirements, spatial enhancements, facility upgradations, and planning frameworks.

Output: Collaborative stakeholder accord; strategic framework with designated timelines and accountability; evaluative structure.

5. The Integrated Framework explores the synergy between intersectionality and participatory planning

5.1. The Complementarity Argument

The Bridging Identities and Spaces (2026) reviews core argument is that intersectionality and participatory planning are not simply supportive but deeply dependent: engaging with intersectionality without participation risks now blending diverse lived experience into a single 'transgender community' expression that pushes aside most diverse population.

5.2. The Integrated Protocol

Blending these two conceptual lenses within the Saundatti context facilitates a unified research and design strategy framed around a four-phase cyclical process:

Phase 1 — Intersectional Mapping (Months 1–6): Executing purposive sampling grouped by the five intersectionality dimensions: M1 (community

mapping) and M4 (photovoice) to formulate spatial insights to differentiate lived experience across identity settings.

Phase 2 — Participatory Analysis (Months 7–12): Pooling collaborative contribution through M1 sessions ; study vocal inputs via FGD sessions and identify the spatial insights separated by intersectional configuration.

Phase 3 — Co-Design and Safety Mapping (Months 13–18, including Jaatra period): Deploy M2 (co-design workshops) to transform intersectional study into planning frameworks; deploy M3 (safety mapping) during the Jaatra festival to document festival-specific spatial knowledge; refine planning proposals in response to safety mapping findings.

Phase 4 — Institutional Translation (Months 19–24): Deploy M5 (stakeholder dialogue) to formulate community-endorsed planning frameworks into statutory frameworks; develop tracking system to following progress; disseminate findings through academic and community channels.

5.3. The Gap-Bridging Matrix

The following matrix demonstrates precisely how each element of the integrated framework addresses each dimension of the research gap

Table 4 Gap-Bridging Matrix — Intersectionality and Participatory Planning at Saundatti

Research Gap	Intersectionality Framework Contribution	Participatory Planning Contribution	Integrated Outcome
Theoretical gap (no systematic framework)	Five-axis matrix explains differential spatial experiences	Participatory methods validate and refine theoretical categories through community knowledge	Empirically grounded intersectional theory of Saundatti spatial experience

Methodological gap (researcher-centred methods)	Identifies which identity configurations require targeted methodological attention	Community mapping, photovoice, and co-design centre community knowledge production	Community-validated spatial knowledge base
Design gap (no design proposals)	Identifies which spatial interventions are needed for which intersectional configurations	Co-design workshops and stakeholder dialogue translate analysis into proposals	Community-endorsed, intersectionally differentiated design brief
Caste gap (caste absent from existing analyses)	Caste as Axis 2 makes caste-based spatial hierarchies analytically visible	Participatory methods create space for caste-differentiated community voices	First caste-intersectional spatial analysis of Saundatti
Geographic gap (Global South absent from literature)	Adapts global framework to South Asian pilgrimage context	Culturally appropriate participatory methods developed for Karnataka context	Replicable model for Global South sacred space research

Table 3: Gap-Bridging Matrix — How Intersectionality and Participatory Planning Address Each Research Gap

Research Gap	Intersectionality Contribution	Participatory Planning Contribution	Integrated Outcome
Theoretical gap	Five-axis marginalisation matrix	Community-validated problem framing	Grounded theory of exclusion
Methodological gap	Intersectional sampling criteria	Five-method participatory protocol	Mixed-methods research design
Design gap	Identifies who is excluded and why	Co-designs inclusive spatial solutions	Community-endorsed spatial brief
Caste-gender nexus	Caste as central axis	Caste-inclusive mapping workshops	Caste-sensitive design guidelines
Policy gap	Documents systemic exclusion	Stakeholder dialogue facilitation	Evidence-based policy recommendations

6. Data Collection Methods and Research Tools

6.1. Seven-Method Data Collection Framework

The combined protocol is supported by a seven-method data collection framework that operationalises both the intersectionality analysis and the participatory planning protocol. All methods applied with informed consent | Kannada/Telugu language support | Participatory Action Research (PAR) framework

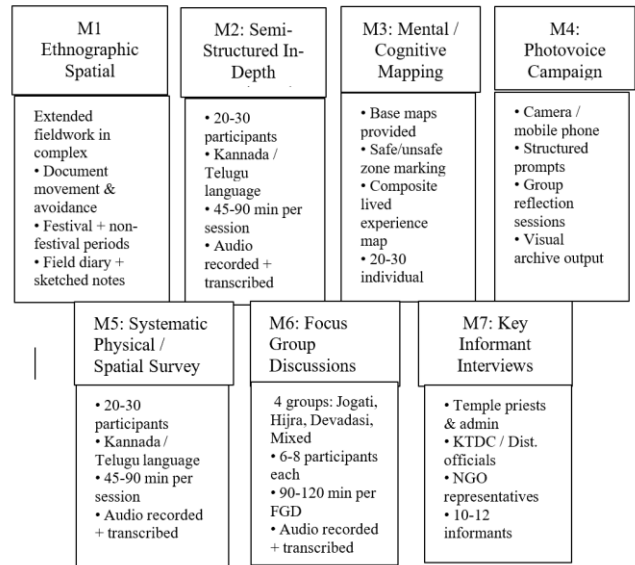


Figure 3 (Seven-Method Data Collection Framework) Seven data collection methods applied across festival and non-festival periods at Saundatti, organised by their contribution to intersectional analysis and participatory planning

6.2. The seven methods are

- **M1 — Ethnographic Spatial Observation:** Extended fieldwork documenting movement patterns, spatial access, avoidance behaviours, and spatial hierarchies across festival and non-festival periods.
- **M2 — Semi-Structured In-Depth Interviews:** 20–30 interviews in Kannada/Telugu, 45–90 minutes each, addressing spatial access, movement, harassment, and aspirations for change.
- **M3 — Mental/Cognitive Mapping:** Participants mark safe/unsafe zones, movement routes, and places of significance on base maps of the temple complex.
- **M4 — Photovoice Campaign:** Community-produced visual documentation of spatial experiences.
- **M5 — Systematic Physical/Spatial Survey:** GPS-assisted survey of all facilities, processed using QGIS.
- **M6 — Focus Group Discussions:** Four groups (Jogati, Hijra/Kinnar, Devadasi, Mixed), 6–8

participants each.

- M7 — Key Informant Interviews: 10–12 interviews with temple administrators, NGO staff, and district officials.

Figure 2: Sampling Strategy — Three-Tier Framework
Spatial Experience of Transgender Devotees at Saundatti

<p>TIER 1 — PURPOSIVE SAMPLING (Primary Strategy)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jogati (Ritual Transgender): Identity-stratified purposive selection of ritual transgender women dedicated to Yellamma. • Hijra / Kinnar (Devotees): Hijra and Kinnar community members attending the festival as devotees. • Devadasi (Yellamma Cult): Women in the Devadasi tradition associated with the Yellamma temple. • Other Transgender Identities: Other self-identified transgender persons visiting the temple complex. • Caste × Class Strata: Cross-cutting axis capturing caste and economic class variation across all identity groups.
<p>TIER 2 — SNOWBALL SAMPLING (Community Networks)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jogati Community Leaders & Elders (Saundatti): Senior Jogati women and community elders based in Saundatti who can provide referrals. • NGOs — (Kolhapur, Maitri NGO / Belagavi Humanity NGO): Civil-society organisations working with transgender communities in northern Karnataka. • Hijra Gharana Networks (Dharwad / Hubballi): Hijra household networks operating in the Dharwad-Hubballi urban corri
<p>TIER 3 — FESTIVAL-BASED TEMPORAL SAMPLING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-Festival (2 weeks before) — Spatial Survey + KI: Baseline spatial survey and Key Informant Interviews conducted two weeks before the Yellamma Jaatra. • Festival Period (Yellamma Jaatra — 3 days, Jan/Feb) — Ethnography + Photovoice: Participant observation, ethnographic field notes, and photovoice sessions during the three-day festival. • Non-Festival (Regular Pilgrimage) — In-depth Interviews + PGDs: In-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions during ordinary pilgrimage periods outside festival time.
<p>Total Sample Composition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20–30 In-depth Interviews • 3–4 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), 6–8 participants each • 10–12 Key Informants (KI) <p>Legend</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tier 1 — Purposive (Identity-Stratified) Tier 2 — Snowball (Community Networks) Tier 3 — Festival-Based Temporal Final Sample Composition

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Figure 4 (Three-Tier Sampling Strategy) Three-tier sampling strategy ensuring intersectional representation across festival and non-festival periods

The sampling strategy is structured in three tiers to ensure intersectional representation

- Tier 1 — Purposive Sampling: Stratified by all five intersectionality axes to ensure representation of all identity configurations.
- Tier 2 — Snowball Sampling: Via Jogati community leaders, NGOs, and Hijra gharana networks to access less visible community members.
- Tier 3 — Festival-Based Temporal Sampling: Additional recruitment during the Jaatra to capture festival-specific spatial dynamics.

7. Discussion

7.1. Theoretical Contributions

This paper suggests three theoretical insights to the literature on transgender spatial experience and accessible sacred space design. First, it demonstrates that the intersectionality planning process originating in North American and European settings demands fundamental calibration — not merely translation —

when executed to South Asian pilgrimage settings. Now substituting caste for race as a fundamental intersectional dimension is not a minor adjustment but a basic shift that reflects the different systemic arrangement of social hierarchy in the Indian context. This adaptation holds relevance beyond Saundatti: any implementation of the global intersectionality framework to South Asian spatial analysis must center caste as an inseparable vector. Second, the review illustrates that ‘trans territorialization’ (Yeros & Georgiadou, 2022) is an interpretively generative framework for considering Jogati and Hijra spatial behaviors at Saundatti. The ritual domains shaped by Jogatis constituted within the temple complex during the Jaatra — their route of mobility, their spatial claims, their communal occupancy — constitutes trans territorialization that configure community spatial autonomy notwithstanding official oversights their spatial requirements. Recognizing these spatial dynamics asserting rather than inert tenancy is an important conceptual shift. Third, the study enriches the emerging knowledge on Global South gender diverse real lived experiences (Giacomini & Lanz, 2024; Godoy, 2025; Podder et al., 2024) by revealing that South Asian sacred sites offer a unique spatial category that demands its own explanatory framework, the paradigms that engage with the unique convergence of ritual dynamics, race, caste, economic status, and infrastructure facilities that shape such spaces.

7.2. Practical Implications for Saundatti

The collaborative analysis provides unique applicable directives for spatial planning frameworks and management at the Yellamma temple complex:

Facility Design: The community led collaborative design will formulate design proposals for gender inclusive basic amenities which are accessible infrastructure facilities for transgender devotees.

Spatial Access Protocols: The analytical frameworks demonstrate that inclusive spaces at Saundatti is dictated by complex. Standardizing and formulating transparent guidelines for peak festive season management for transgender devotees.

Festival Management: The post participatory mapping analysis will yield precise factual data to perform improved ceremonial festive season management, featuring distinct mobility platforms

with trained staff during huge gatherings of transgender devotees.

Policy Recommendations: The collaborative framework will generate a multi stakeholder operational roadmap formulated to address the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019's requirements for non-discrimination in access to public spaces – a statutory framework that hasn't historically been applied to pilgrimage places under Karnataka state Government.

7.3. Implications for the Broader Field

The Saundatti case has implications beyond its immediate context. It demonstrates that: Sacred spaces require their own spatial typology in transgender spatial studies — this context is sparsely explored and examined through ideologies formulated for Jogappa's transit accommodation, mobile commuters' domains. Ritual inclusion and spatial inclusion are analytically distinct — A community may inhibit a vital ritual episode while encountering systematic spatial marginalization resolving one does not inherently solve the other issue. Participatory methods must be culturally calibrated — The participatory methods developed within North American contexts demand adaption for the Karnataka pilgrimage hub, entailing linguistic inclusivity, community tailored demand protocols. The Global South requires its own frameworks — the spatial concentration of current studies in North America and Western Europe is not merely a literature void to be addressed by applying existing models but a systemic constraint that demands the formulation of a fresh, indigenously grounded interpretive tools.

8. Limitations

Multiple constraints in this research matrix should be noted. The five-axis intersectional analysis, though interpretively generative yields a notable configuration that may be difficult to execute with a sample of 20-30 participants. Focusing on the most conceptually vital configurations those generating most deep-seated spatial exclusion is required in execution. This bottom-up approach predicts itself a measure of group cohesion and confidence regarding the academic inquiry that necessitate prolonged period for execution. Concludingly, the current inquiry's analytical matrix has not yet been verified

practically at Saundatti, the reconciliatory arguments propose that conceptual, anticipatory and abstract and their empirical validation necessitates the execution of the recommended research protocol followed by the evaluation of the empirical data.

Conclusion

This inquiry demonstrates that the intersectionality model and participatory planning dimensions, as brought out in this study offer the necessary conceptual and practical link or the bridge necessary to address the three-dimensional research gap in the available past studies on spatial experiences at Saundatti. The theoretical gap, the missing aspects in systematic analysis for decoding varied spatial or the lived experiences is addressed by the five-axis intersectionality matrix, tailored from global concepts to highlight caste in tandem with gender expressions, economic status, sacred duties, ritual roles, cultural expressions and location as mutually shaping aspects of spatial experience. The methodological gap — The lack of collaborative participatory methods that value community spatial experience is addressed by five-method participatory planning protocol: community mapping, co-design workshops, safety mapping, photovoice, and stakeholder dialogue, each dimension tailored to the cultural and administrative framework of the Saundatti pilgrimage. The design gap — the necessity of community-approved design proposals — is met by blending of the two approaches (frameworks) in a four-phase inquiry and planning process that shifts from intersectional mapping through participatory analysis and shared into policy framing. Collectively, these insights frame the Saundatti case as a blueprint for transgender inclusive religious setting inquiry in Global South illustrating that the theories / models developed in the Western urban settings can be productively applied to South Asian pilgrimage contexts when approached with adequate conceptual depth and place specific responsiveness. The study's wider contribution lies in its illustration that plugging a research gap is not merely a question of executing existing methods to an unstudied area but demands a commitment in the theoretical and methodological labour of adaptation— identifying what a theory can achieve, where it lacks, and what the local setting requires. This deep conceptual analysis of the

intersectionality and participatory planning bridge to the Saundatti research agenda.

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