Communication design as an agent in creating gender equality in India

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Abstract

Developing from the field of behavior change through design, this study investigated if communication design is an effective tool in changing cultural behaviors and perceptions of gender in India. Previous studies on gender violence campaigns (Gadornski, 2001; Murphy, 2009; Kostick et al., 2011) suggest utilising men and traditional gender stereotypes are effective in creating behavior change. Yet there exists a gap on specific cultural roles and changing ingrained behaviors.

This study focuses on the necessary recognition of cultural traditions and behaviours that must precede any design activity within an epistemological setting. Developing communication strategy within sensitive and complex social issues must be created in full recognition of cultural inflections on patriarchy and sociological insights.

I conducted two stages of investigation. First, male Indian participants were interviewed about gender equality in India. Second, participants completed self documentation kits, which focused on perceptions of gender. Insights indicated the term *gender equality* was misunderstood with many believing India was very much an equal society for men and women.

I argue that the findings from this study can position a communication campaign that is culturally relevant, can tackle gender violence from an *insider* perspective, and can promote behavior change within the Indian context.

Keywords

Motivation for this research was born out of a trip to India, where I was present in Delhi at the time of the 2012 Delhi rape case. The worldwide coverage and overwhelming reaction in India to this violent attack promoted Indians as progressive on the issue of gender violence and wanting both policy and behavioral change. Numerous accounts were documented internationally around the appalling attitudes amongst Indian men around gender violence with all sources heralding the need for large-scale change for gender equality. In one account, a young Indian man recited to a journalist: "Rape is a big, big problem. It starts with the woman. They drive the man fucking crazy. When the girls look sexy and the boys can't control themselves, they are going to rape. It happens" (Chamberlin, 2013, para. 1).

During my experiences working with SNEHA (Society for Nutrition, Education and Health Action) in Mumbai I was presented with many stories from women as victims of gender violence. I was involved in an arts exchange program from Melbourne Australia working with these women and their children from Dharavi, a large slum in Mumbai. The research presented in this paper followed on from my time in India and was conducted in Australia.

Gender equality implies a society in which women and men enjoy the same opportunities, outcomes, rights, and obligations in all spheres of life. Yet this implies equality is defined

equally in all implications of culture and social tradition. Patterns of gender in India are the outcomes of social forces and relationships and it is these intrinsic cultural behaviours that need to be explored to use communication design as an agent in changing behavior.

In India, as in many other countries, gender inequity and abuse against females are socially accepted and women's subordinated status and inequalities are reflected in almost every sphere in Indian society, beginning before birth and continuing through women's lives (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahdid, 2010). Son preference and sex ratio at birth of males (the higher number of boys born relative to girls) continues to increase in many states in the country; dowry is still widely practiced, and child marriage (although illegal) still takes place. In 2010, the World Economic Forum released its Global Gender Gap report, in which India ranked at 112 out of a total of 134 countries (Hausmann, Tyson & Zahdid, 2010, p.63). The report measured the difference in how men and women in each country had access to resources and opportunities. Rita Banerji (2010, para 1) describes this disparity faced by India's women as fueled by an unrestrained misogyny.

Ethical questions arise with the differentiation of gender equality in India from equality in the west. Suma Chitnis in 'Feminism in India' describes that unlike the west where individuality and personal freedom are emphasized, Indians cherish values like submission to superiors, self-denial and sublimating the individual ego. Previous research has shown that Indian women have a general "disapproval of [the western] feminist anger" (Chitnis, 2004, pp. 8-10). However the public outcry following the 2012 Delhi rape case implies that traditional notions of gender in India are shifting, especially how masculine and feminine empowerment is expressed.

The majority of campaigns focused on gender violence or the promotion of gender equality are focused around women's empowerment, or women as victim. Less discussion is around actively engaging men, yet it is the behaviour of men, and the social forces that drive those behaviours, that are at the root of preventing gender violence. While the term *gender* has often been a code for women, its use needs also to recognize men as gendered. Men, as the main perpetrators of gender violence are more important to target to alter their behavior as they are directly involved in the maintenance of gender inequalitites.

Results from studies on gender violence campaigns included the use of tradition stereotypes of gender being more effective in creating behavior change than non-traditional stereotypes (Gadomski, Tripp, Wolff, Lewis & Jenkins, 2001, pp. 270-274). In addition, promoting positive aspects of gender equality, such as empathy, is more effective than showing men as batterers, aggressive or perpetrators and women as victims (Murphy, 2009, p. 118). Studies found promoting equality to men is more effective in changing behavior and reducing gender based violence than promoting equality to women (Kostick, Schensul, Singh, Pelto & Saggurtu, 2011). The key findings from secondary research focused on gender and formed the backbone of this research – that of the focus on men to change behavior.

From a policy approach, studies have shown men can change their gender related attitudes in relatively short periods of time. Furthermore they offer an understanding of what strategies are most effective, such as those that include using positive and affirmative messages, ecological approaches and ongoing monitoring and evaluation (World Health Organisation, 2010). However, most programs are devoid of any communication design strategies, have been small in scale and have not been taken up or integrated into government policies or large institutions. As Chowdhury and Parnaik (2010) describe;

Whatever may be the legal and policy initiative, male cooperation and understanding would be pivotal in understanding women's equality and empowerment. Providing support, cooperation, assistance, and above all the consent of male population to achieve gender equality is not only difficult but also very far from reality. Thus, engaging and empowering the male population can make this hard task simpler and quicker as well. (p. 455)

Research from a policy level reported groups that promote healthy masculinities and gender justice are open to attack as being unpatriotic, or even as agents of Western cultural depravity (Sahayog, 2008, p.15). Additionally, there is a problematic thread of Indian cultural nationalism that calls for a sense of militant aggressive masculinity in the name of honor, defense and security of the self.

Current policy approaches to engaging men and boys in achieving gender equality fail to include reference to any form of communication design. There is a missing link between recommendations from organisations such as WHO, Promundo, International Centre for Research on Women (ICRW) and the UN, with the design sector. Often "campaigns" are mentioned as a viable solution to create behavior change, but there is no discussion of these outcomes using communication design as an agent of change. According to Margaret Greene (ICRW, 2007):

[W]e can all think of million examples where if we provide men with a little more information, a few more skills, and a bit of encouragement, they themselves can be far more supportive, communicative and caring for their sexual partners and family members. It is not rocket science, and it is not happening on a significant scale. (p. 1)

There is an overwhelming call for more research on the areas of masculinities within modern India, yet the focus of this research seeks to understand how we can best use design to tackle the missing dialogue around male behaviour change in relation to gender violence and how best to develop a communication design strategy created in full recognition of intrinsic gender perceptions. This pre-design research describes the necessary analysis that must precede the design activity, developing a strategy, which utilizes a culturally based approach. This strategy would in turn, provide further insights once deployed and analysed.

Methods

This research utilised two methods of investigation. First, male Indian participants were interviewed about their culture, male and female role models, and explanations for gender violence in India. Second, participants were presented with self documentation kits that explored their current perceptions to gender in India and traditional and non-traditional role models.

Six male India participants aged between 28 and 54 were interviewed concerning their attitudes and beliefs on Indian culture, gender equality in India, the 2012 Delhi rape case, and tradition and non-traditional notions of masculinity in India. The self documentation kits focused around exercises and participatory design games, such as ranking and matching imagery with key words, to offer attitudes not referred to or subconsciously ignored during interviews. The interviews were conducted face-to-face, and the self documentation kits were completed in private within the participant's own time. All interviews were conducted in the participants' home or place of work.

I was conscious of my role as a Western researcher and the implications this has on this research. As Smith (1999) notes:

From an indigenous perspective Western research is more than just research that is located in a positivist tradition. It is research which brings to bear, on any study of indigenous peoples, a cultural orientation, a set of values, a different conceptualization of such things as time, space and subjectivity, different and competing theories of knowledge, highly specialized forms of language, and structures of power. (p. 42)

To ensure cultural sensitivities and identify any Western assumptions of knowledge within the research, all material was first reviewed by Dr Nayreen Daruwalla, Programme Director for Prevention Of Violence against Women and Children for SNEHA, Mumbai. Dr Daruwalla has over 18 years of experience in the area of mental health, counseling, crisis intervention, and training. She has worked extensively in the field of violence against women and children abroad and in India for 12 years.

Since the research was conducted in Australia, the participants were all living within an Australian context, yet all were born, raised, and spent the majority of their life in India. The longest period outside of India for a participant was 3 years. Most participants had been in Australia for less than 18 months. This Australian context I felt enhanced participants' willingness to share stories and act as an educator on Indian culture. Although at times this was also restrictive as deeper conversations around specific cultural traits I felt became more generalized, as participants felt they were sometimes answering for all India, rather than their specific experiences.

The interview questions were formed to elicit stories from the participants, particularly around masculinity in India and specific cultural traits that shape the development of notions of gender in India.

The interviews were based around four key objectives. First, to find out to what extent Indian men think there is gender equality in India, to gauge current attitudes, and determine the impact of the 2012 Delhi rape case. Second, to investigate whether Indian men think gender equality needs to be improved, with the rationale of whether a campaign around the issue of gender equality would be welcomed in India. Third, to uncover participants male role models, with the intention of finding out whom they describe as masculine, for example sports players or movie stars. Fourth, to find out what participants describe as non-traditional male role models, what does being a non-traditional man mean in India, what qualities do they have, and how would they describe themselves.

Once the interview was completed, a self documentation kit was left with the participants to complete over the next week. These kits are designed to inspire people to thoughtfully consider personal context and circumstance and respond to questions in unique, creative ways (Martin & Hanington, 2012, p. 54). The questions are intentionally open ended and flexible, as self documentation studies emphasise users' active role in recording material and minimises the researcher's possible influence on user's responses (Mattelmäki, 2008, p.40). The kits included six tasks such as ranking masculine and feminine traits in order of importance, ranking cultural, religious, political and sporting figures on a scale of non-traditional to traditional and card sorting games for participants to align images and previous campaigns around gender violence into categories of respectful, disrespectful, peaceful and aggressive.

The objectives for the visual tasks were focused around gender stereotypes, roles of men and women in India and associations between Indian society and gender equality. Participants responded to tasks that asked them to draw, list, group certain characteristics and role models in relation to gender roles and to explain their answers.
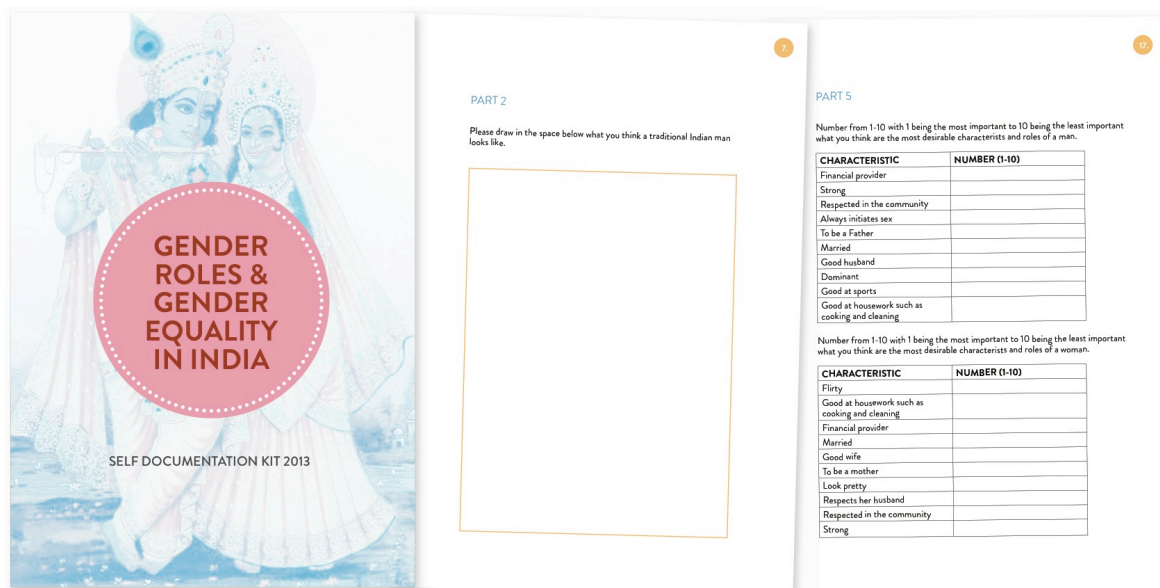
Fig 1. Self documentation kits handed to participants, 2013

Insights

In this section I will present insights from the study supported by quotations from the primary research to give context to the topics discussed with participants.

Family

The interviews, structured as open-ended questions around family, tended to turn into long answers around the modernization of India and the pressures these participants faced from their own families. As Participant 2 describes:

> I really tried to stop my Aunt from having my cousin married at 16, but there is nothing I can do. It's ridiculous. (Participant 2)

Stories telling of pressure from families were common from participants, with the overriding concept that from the moment you are born your parents work out what they want you to do and become. Participants felt that they could not change these ingrained cultural traits although they felt personally against some decisions and cultural norms. As participants were all living within Australia, the pressure from their family became a story around their own reasons for leaving India, with Australia reflecting their desire to be free from this seemingly prescribed cultural life. Their impressions were that the families of participants were all unhappy their sons were living in Australia, and this was a particular burden to unmarried participants.

Equality

The majority of participants believed men and women were equal in India. For example, participant 1 relates:

> In most places India is a country equal for men and women. Men and Women are treated very much equally. My older sister always had an upper hand over me! (Participant 1)

These statements, perhaps reflect their own personal understandings, or reflect the Indian laws protecting women. Yet research (Banjeri, 2010; Gadomski st al, 2001; Kishwar, 2004) suggests gender inequality has always been there in India. It is deep rooted in patriarchy and the social sanctions given to men. If men perceive Indian as an equal society for men and women, perhaps the definition of gender equality needs to be further explored within an Indian cultural context. Additionally, if there are multiple definitions of equality within cultural contexts, upholding basic human rights becomes challenging.

Responses in self documentation kits highlighted men still valued characteristics such as 'respectful of her husband', 'good at cooking and cleaning', 'flirty' and 'pretty' in women, revealed through ranking games. These kits were successful in eliciting ingrained attitudes towards gender, which often went against participants statements in interviews, that India was a very equal society for men and women.

The UN definition of gender equality states 'Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female' (UN Millennium Project, 2005, p. 30). As a western researcher investigating gender equality in India, this then becomes problematic as more consultation with both men and women is needed to identify what actions and behaviours are needed to improve gender equality in India and why participants believe that this is already the case.

Caste and Legal Systems

All participants placed themselves into the upper classes of Indian society. Although the Indian caste system is allegedly declining, high social status still holds huge influence over participants' attitudes and perceptions. Yet if participants with high levels of education and from the upper caste system believe India is an equal society, then it is this belief that needs to be challenged. It may be a misrepresentation or a misunderstanding, but if men believe there is no need for change, their fundamental cultural beliefs on equality will remain. By thinking that India is progressing, through its skewed laws to protect women into a society that overtly helps women, it will perhaps be men who will suffer because of this. Participants were quick to highlight that Indian laws are skewed towards the benefit of women, for example the Dowry law and law on domestic violence. Through law, women are favoured, but this doesn't seem to be reflected in social values. According to Participant 3:

> Men are not as privileged as women, by law. As a matter of fact, we have now, for a long time the building of parliament to give 33% reservation to women. Everything is skewed in favour of the woman. (Participant 3)

The International Centre for Research on Women (2007) report on India describes these laws as a barrier, because the current laws protecting the most basic human rights of women and girls are poorly implemented and are often seen as externally imposed and Western. However, the worst problem with the notion that laws are in place to protect women is that society and social institutions do not support them. According to Barker et al. (2008):

> Without social actors to ensure enforcement, legislation such as the Dowry Prohibition Act, Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Tests Act (to reduce sex-

selective abortion), and to a lesser extent the Child Marriage Restraint Act continue to be ignored with relative impunity. (p. 31)

Although numerous laws have been passed in India, participants described India culture, as regularly circumventing rules.

> India is a very regulated country, with rules from the British and still being patched up, but to break a rule is not a big deal. (Participant 3)

The notion that gender violence stems from the economic undervaluing of women was the most poignant finding from this analysis. All participants referenced dowry and female infanticide as key cultural traits in India that reflect women's status. However, these traditional customs were referred to those of low economic and educational levels whom live in rural areas in traditionally conservative parts of the country.

Many of the men proposed the same explanation to the problem of gender violence and all identified fundamental issues in Indian culture as the root cause of gender violence, including the lack of women due to female infanticide and the practice of dowry. Participants stated a range of specific traits that they felt influenced gender relations in India, mainly education, location and economic status. Participants were quick to place themselves as "other" and that gender violence as an Indian man was not their fault – that the faults were with uneducated poor rural Indians – not within their social circles.

> There is not much domestic violence in most rich homes. The violence happens in the poorer homes. Imagine a man who has 4 kids, he can't feed them. He works 13hrs a day and makes $7 for what he did. His body is so dead beat because he does physical work and he's bought a big bottle of strong beer 13% alcohol and a quarter of scotch from a bottle shop as he can't afford to drink in a bar and he'll combine that in 5mins – imagine his brain. It's like having 14 tequila shots. And then he's gone home and in that state of mind, he's just not a normal person. That triggers off the worst in some people. (Participant 3)

> Gender violence occurs when men do not have enough money or enough influence. The way men try and see themselves as superior is the problem. It's the only area you can show your superiority. Because there is no other place or anything else where you can say all right, I'm in control. (Participant 1)

All participants reported on the horrendous behavior of the young men involved in the Delhi rape case. However, this was only one incident that garnered media coverage amongst thousands of others. They were disturbed about violent actions and thought the protests against gender violence in India were much needed. Furthermore participants were all quick to compare India to other countries in relation to gender violence.

> It's the problem of the idea women are not safe at night. I think that's why this notion has come into play where everyone feels they are not safe. I could well feel the same when it's dark in Melbourne [Australia]. (Participant 1)

Although appalled at accounts of gender violence in India, participants felt this was no more of a concern than other parts of the world. Participants were quick to disassociate with any negative behaviours and actions from Indian men but were eager to talk and explain about Indian culture, particularly their family and role models.

Role Models

All participants listed their father as a key role model, whether throughout their life, or growing up within the family home. Emphasis was placed on the family numerous times during interviews and most participants described their families as being moderately traditional. These family influences are a key component in understanding how ingrained cultural behaviors are passed through generations especially in an Indian context where family plays a dominant role in society.

> Traditional has a very idealistic view in India. A good father is someone who takes care of his family, takes care of his elders, follows the customs, and religiously goes to temple. (Participant 1)

> My father is the closest person in my life. But he believes he knows best. The moment you are born your parents work out what they want you to do and become. And that's what they try and make you. My parents still complain I am what I am right now, they're not really happy about it. (Participant 2)

Although participants did not necessarily describe themselves as traditional, they still felt pressure from their family to conform to ingrained cultural behaviours. As participants described their fathers as a role model, or at least of great influence early in life, it is clear that ideas of gender and gender roles begin in the family home. Male role models are crucial in targeting a campaign around gender equality in India as men, including fathers, are active participants in forming attitudes and behaviours around gender relations.

Insights from participants self documentation kits allowed for the development of a more sensitive understanding of role models. For example, the participants were directed to sketch traditional and non-traditional Indian men, which revealed specific characteristics that could be used to inform visual outcomes of the communication design strategy, such as clothing, stance, environment, from an 'insider' perspective, rather than based on stereotype or assumptions.

Other activities, such as ranking prominent Indian celebrities on specific traits again revealed 'insider' perspectives, behaviours and attitudes that could inform the communication design strategy in relation to the use of role models or celebrity endorsements to promote gender equality. Giving participants time to complete these exercises on their own, in their own home, provides both thoughtful and rich information, often revealing key insights not mentioned or contradicting responses in face-to-face interviews.

Discussion

As studies are presently unable to identify the exact casual mechanisms responsible for gender violence or sexual assault, it is difficult to prevent the occurrence and also to formulate an effective campaign around reducing gender violence and promoting gender equality. There has been a small number of studies offering competing visions of the best way to reach men on the topic of rape but no serious analysis of the visual form and content of related public media campaigns has been produced (Murphy, 2009, p. 118). From my research, three aspects for further investigation became apparent; causes, attitudes, and solutions. Because the causes of gender violence are difficult to examine and identify, my recommendation for a design strategy around gender violence focuses on attitudes and solutions.

Responses to domestic violence campaigns to date have mainly focused on intervention after the problem has been identified and harm has occurred; how to prevent, seek and reach out for help. Such campaigns have typically provided information on the warning signs of domestic violence and particularly in India, around community resources for victims (Wolf, 1999, pp. 112-113). Campaigns in India, mainly launched in the early eighties by the women's movement, have included topics such as rape, domestic violence, sexism in advertisements as well as against state repression during caste and communal riots (Patel, 1998, p. 5). As these campaigns have given importance to helping the victims of violence, filing legal cases, and helping women rebuild their lives, the women activists who so far have shunned men, are realizing they must strike at the root cause of violence.

As women's sexuality is socially constructed and given the patriarchal control over their existence, it becomes imperative that men are drawn into the process of rethinking gender to create behavior change. According to Murphy (2009):

> A consensus has emerged among social scientists, college health personnel, public health officials, and social service agencies that best practices for such programs include all-male, interactive workshops; nonconfrontational approaches that encourage male empathy with female survivors… and culturally appropriate and sensitive content. (p. 118)

My recommendation for a communication design strategy on gender equality based on insights from this research is to specifically target men. All participants revealed they thought India was a society equal for men and women and it is these views that need to be reestablished, especially in the patriarchal cultural context of India. In a society where men are unsure what equality means and entails, further education is needed, utilizing and empowering men to become leaders and educators in the field of inquiry.

The power equation that exists between men and women needs to be deconstructed through visual communication, while past traditions that have disempowered women, such as female infanticide, sati and dowry, need to be reconsidered. Additionally deep-rooted notions of "women drive men to rape" and "today's women expect too much," need to be dispelled in a visual way where men need not be defensive. Messages to create behavior change need to be in an honest context that highlights the positives of equality and new gender roles rather than the negative aspects of culture which may cause men to become defensive and close themselves off. How far to push these traditional notions of gender are complex from a communication design perspective. As data is not available on effective gender roles in advertising in India, more research is needed to develop an understanding of the most effective way to use gender stereotypes to target gender equality in visual communication design.

A significant insight from the research was that all participants mentioned their father as a role model, learning about gender roles through males in their family and through their peers. My recommendation for a design strategy would be to utilize this male peer-to-peer communication, using male role models as a voice to disseminate a message of equality. An initiative from America, "Men Can Stop Rape" (Men Can Stop Rape, 2013) mobilises male youth to prevent men's violence against women, however its approach that effective communication to men about rape can only be done in the absence of women have triggered critique. The men look directly at camera while the women participants avert their eyes, while the encouragement of men to re-envision themselves as nonviolent also reduces women to decorative silences (Murphy, 2009, p.119).
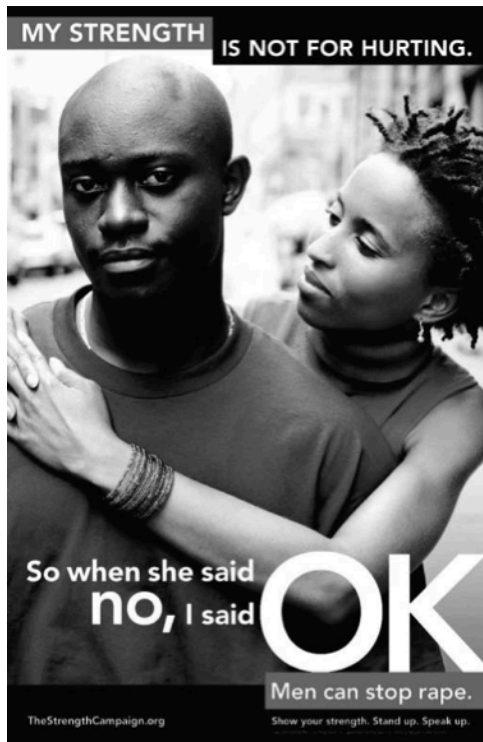
Fig 2. John Stolenberg (Design) and Lotte Hansen (Photography), Poster for Man Can Stop Rage, circa 2006.

The 'My Strength' (Men Can Stop Rape, 2013) campaign highlights that we need to address gendered language and visual communication codes to create a successful campaign against gender violence. Through the statements on the 'My Strength' posters we learn that women "change their minds", "don't want to" aren't "ready", say "no"' are uncertain in their "feelings" or want to "stop". The men are portrayed as showing self-restraint and being sensitive to women's sexual consent while women as portrayed as asexual, fickle, confused, or compromised by drugs or alcohol (Murphy 2009, p. 119). Men need to be shown as taking action on gender violence, not due to women's sensitivities or uncertainty, but because of their own attitudes and beliefs, reinforcing women can not be blamed for the actions of men. A more expansive, or perhaps accurate depiction of male and female sexual experience needs to be embraced in to show real world situations and the way men can alter their behavior for positive change. The textual and visual messages of these campaigns need to be considered, it is not enough to have a goal of promoting gender equality, as many policy recommendations suggest.

In particular the collectivist cultural attributes of India and cultural expectations between men and women need to be further explored to ensure the language and visual communication codes align with current cultural ideology. When viewing Indian culture through the lens of Hofstede's 5D cultural dimension theory, traits such as an appreciation for hierarchy, belonging, acceptance of imperfection predominately feature (Hofstede 1983). Although Hofstede's model has many limitations, its insights garner the potential success of a campaign that aligns itself within these cultural dimensions.

Role-play as an instrument to highlight messages and shatter myths around rape, domestic violence, and double standards of sexual morality, has been documented to be extremely effective (Patel, 1994, p. 3). In the Indian women's movement, the songs against violence against women have motivated many women to be actively involved in campaigning. This is a unique cultural tradition of folk-songs and dance passed down to women of their mothers' and grandmothers' generation (Patel, 1994, p. 3). Although only

evidenced amongst Indian women, I believe this to be an effective strategy to communicate gender equality with Indian men. Structuring information in a more casual, visual or performance basis allows key insights to be communicated in a more engaging way and allows participants to come at the topic from a different perspective (Martin & Hannington, 2012, p. 68). Key phrases within cultural performances, such as song, dance, theatre, film and even sport cement the topic and motivations for changing gender roles into the cultural of India and makes hard topics such as rape and gender violence, easier to talk about.

Taking a Western approach to gender violence campaigns, such as the Men Can Stop Rape campaign in unsuitable in an Indian cultural context. Unique cultural traditions of India, such as music, dance, song and film as described by Shakuntala Roa (2010) in order to be popular among Indians, have "an Indian touch" even while exhibiting global influences (p. 1). The same concept applies to communication design. Western principals, such as those applied in the Men Can Stop Rape campaign and the Hofstede cultural theory can be applied from a design strategy perspective, yet it is the unique cultural dimension which is essential for developing communication design that is culturally relevant and effective at changing ingrained cultural behaviours and attitudes.

Recent campaigns promoting gender equality from India have highlighted the role men, particularly male celebrities can play in changing attitudes and promoting equality with an "Indian touch". The language and masculine sentiments within these campaigns such as M.A.R.D (2013) and the Delhi Police advertisements (2013) invite a peer-to-peer rethinking of manhood, yet they still play into traditional roles of men, promoting somewhat dangerous patriarchal notions of mardangi, or masculinity.
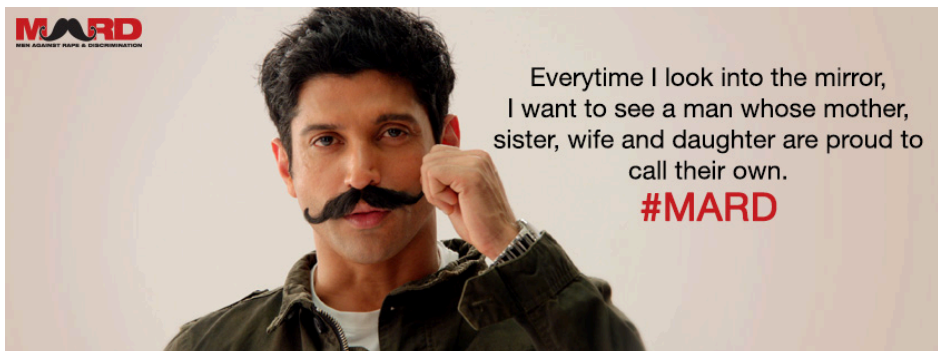

Fig. 3. Poster from M.A.R.D campaign, 2013.

The Delihi Police campaign against sexual violence features a prominent Indian action Farhan Akhtar saying, 'Make Delhi safer for women. Are you man enough to join me?' It suggests women need to be saved by a newly promoted version of masculinity, and that sexual harrasers are not real men. Such misplaces notions of manliness are evident in many women's safety campaigns, including M.A.R.D (literal: Man, acronym for: Man Against Rape and Discrimination), launched and promoted by Farhan Akthar.

Fig. 4. Poster from Delhi Police campaign against sexual harassment, 2013.

These campaigns, although inviting men into the space of gender roles, through the use of celebrity, do nothing to address patriarchal gender norms. Their overt use of masculinity, and ideas of 'real men protecting women' reiterates the notion that the protectionist masculine is an accepted cultural behavior (Krishnan, 2012). These ideas of masculinity reiterate ideas that women facing harassment feel shame and only 'real men' can protect them. Shame, in this case conveys vulnerability and need for protection, reinforcing patriarchal protection and dominance over women.

Creating a communication design strategy designed to challenge ingrained cultural attitudes and behaviours in India needs to address both deep-rooted patriarchy, yet promote a healthy masculinity between men. The imagery and language of the campaign, utilizing men as agents of behavioural change would tread a fine line between reinstating protectionist patriarchial values and promoting masculinity as separate from 'protectors of women' – that sexual violence is not caused by sexual attraction, men's role is not to 'protect' women from a discipline perspective, but to challenge gender roles and notions of equality.

Conclusion

As part of an explorative study in investigating whether communication design can promote behavior change in relation to gender violence in India, this study has identified the significance of targeting men through stereotypes and using specific cultural traditions. A younger generation of men who are exposed to campaigns promoting gender equality would be attuned to a women's rights perspective. A traditional patriarchal husband may turn out to be a compassionate father. Men working in the corporate world or state apparatus could take initiative and run gender-training programs in their institutions. Utilizing men as active participants in a campaign against gender violence could bring immediate changes in women's lives.

Through exploring the relationship between current male attitudes on gender equality and visual communications as a strategy to change behaviour, I believe that this research will contribute a unique perspective to the field of design. This research seeks to understand both progressive and traditional attitudes to gender in India and identify effective strategies in creating behavior changes in relation to gender violence. I argue that using male role models as active participants, and being able to tread the fine line of representing traditional values with progressive views on gender roles the most effective approach. In existing research, the specific attitudes of Indian men in a post Delhi rape case have yet to be explored and this research seeks to understand gender roles and ingrained cultural behaviours that could be utilized to develop a campaign based on

cultural insights and an *insider* perspective. This research has sought to show that through investigating male attitudes and male role models in India, a campaign could be developed to ultimately change attitudes to gender equality in India and reduce rates of gender violence.

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