GAME OF CHOICE, NOT CHANCE.

Formative Research Report
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Acronyms

AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome

FP/RH - Family Planning and Reproductive Health

GoC - A Game of Choice, not Chance

GTA - Grand Theft Auto

HDI - Howard Delafield International

HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus

MEL - Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning

PUBG - PlayerUnknown's Battleground

SEC - Socio Economic Classification

STD - Sexually Transmitted Disease

STI - Sexually Transmitted Infection

USAID -United States Agency for International Development

Definitions

1. **Attitudes**: A response to a norm which either aligns with it or it is conflicted, contingent on context, environment, and stakeholders involved in decision making.
2. **Beliefs**: An understanding of self and the surrounding environment developed through observing multiple experiences and past learnings.
3. **Collective imaginary**: Symbols, norms, and values through which individuals imagine and interpret their social worlds.
4. **Data Extraction**: Extraction of data from different sources and organising according to categories.
5. **Matrix Coding**: Plotting data excerpts and quotes on a matrix and tagging to codes (organising concepts).
6. **Mental models**: The models or thought structures through which people make sense or attribute meaning to real life phenomena.
7. **Norms**: Rules and expectations defined by the society, family members, and / or internalised and self-imposed by boys.
8. **Values**: Core ideas and concepts that define the self, guide what is right or wrong, and govern actions, formed based on response to environment, understanding of society and family units, and learnings from the past experiences. Compared to attitudes, beliefs and values are relatively stable and as a result difficult to change.
9. **Young Men**: For the purpose of this research, young men refers to the men we spoke to in the age group of 15-22.

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Project and Research Outline

1. Overview
2. Study goals and Key Takeaways
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01

Overview

1a. About the Project

Game of Choice, Not Chance (GoC) is a USAID-funded innovation grant developing mobile games to support young people in becoming active decision-makers in their own lives. The target population for the game is young men and women, aged 15-19, in low income and low resource settings of Hindi and Hindi-dialect speaking Northern Indian regions of Bihar, Delhi, and Rajasthan. The platform provides an entertaining and safe space for exploration, discovery, and learning through interactive role-play. Through the game, young women and men can get connected to vital information and real-world resources, and become better equipped to shape their futures with confidence. **The Boys' Discovery Research Phase has gathered information and insights on the lives, relationships, aspirations, gaming behaviours, and family planning and reproductive health needs & challenges, of boys in the age group of 15-19 years in the cities of Patna, Delhi, and Rajasthan.**

Using a blended model of data collection, the Vihara research team with support from Howard Delafield International, FHI 360's R4S group, as well as USAID, has conducted remote and in-person research activities to gather layered, in-depth insights into the lives and worlds of young men in Hindi-speaking regions of North India. This research report is a culmination of the data collection efforts, the analysis of research findings and the collaborative insights from a sensemaking workshop facilitated by Vihara involving the GoC consortium.
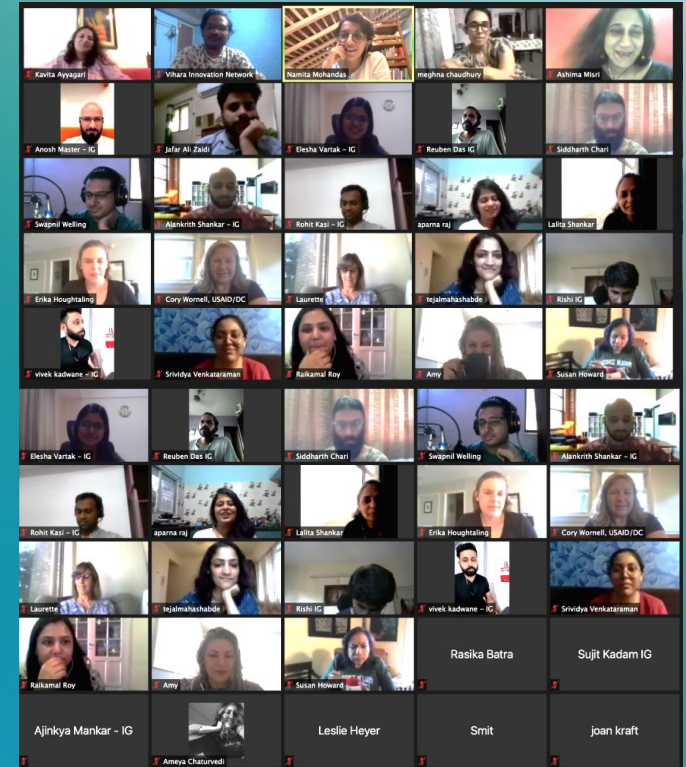
Image 1: GoC Boys - Sensemaking workshop (July, 2021)

The flow chart below highlights the key phases of the GoC project (starting with the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) plan, and moving ahead into the research, game design, game development, and outcomes evaluation phases. This map locates the GoC Boys' Discovery Research in the overall programme schematic. Over the following pages, we will discuss the processes and work phases associated specifically with the Boys' Discovery Research Phase.
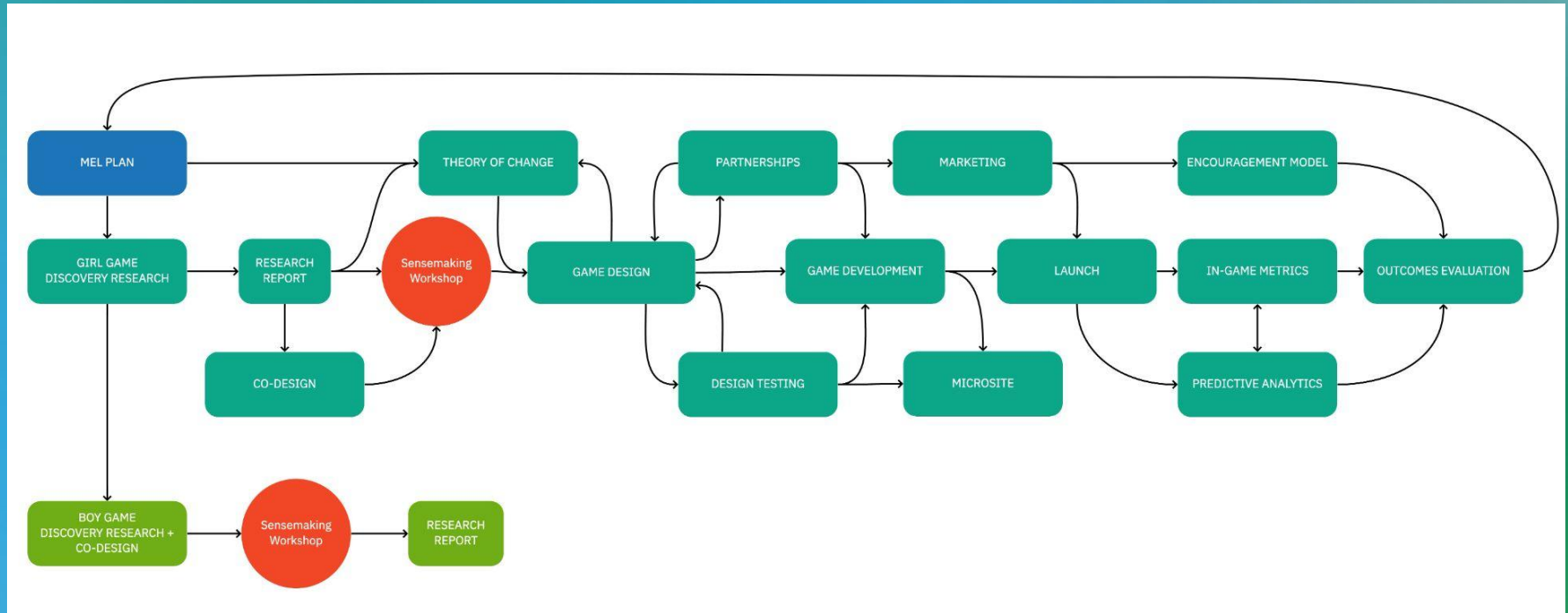
1b. How to Read this Report

Purpose of the Report

This report is a culmination of data collected between January 2021 and May 2021; and also presents a brief overview of secondary research and primary research findings and interpretations. The research team interacted with young men, their family members, and adolescent health and gaming experts to understand the target group's socio-cultural contexts, their daily lives, their mobile phone usage patterns, and their gaming habits.

The findings reported herein, can be used by learning and evaluation teams; game design, prototyping and development teams; as well as marketing and partnerships teams to develop individual strategies that align with the prevailing sentiments and needs presented by boys. **We recommend this report be read in conjunction with the Semiotics Report**.

Navigating the Report

For ease of navigation, the report has been divided into three parts.

Part 1: Project and Research Outline starts with broad context setting information from secondary research, on smartphone penetration and gaming behaviours of young men in India. It goes on to discuss the research design which informed data collection and analysis, and presents an overview of the sample, sites, data collection methods, and analysis processes. It closes with the research and analysis outcomes: **Outputs for Game Design**, which hyperlink to key sections of the report.

Part 2: Context, Findings, and Insights sets the daily life contexts of the target demographic. This part is informed by findings and insights from the field. This part discusses the everyday

realities of young men, and highlights some of their challenges, motivations, and aspirations. It also illustrates their circles of trust, their family planning and reproductive health journeys, and their ideas on love, sex, and relatiohnships. Aggregated user journeys that showcase boys' reproductive health experiences and locate their response within their environments and contexts have been included in this section.

Part 3: Building a Game for Young Men contains insights and frameworks that can be used as learnings and inspiration for game design. This part provides user segments or typologies, highlights key conflicts, beliefs, and values, provides an overview of possible player types, and links to detailed libraries of narrative, visual, and linguistic documentation.

1c. Limitations of this Research

+ This discovery research study was a user study to best understand the target user for the GoC boy game, with only indications and stimulus for game design. The scope of the study was to define the experiences and challenges of the target group; it is not intended to provide targeted directions on how the intervention should be designed.

+ The study design and approach were primarily heteronormative. Thoughts on same-sex and queer relationships and identities were not included in the scope of research.

+ The team had to adapt the research tools and methods to online formats due to COVID-19 meeting and travel restrictions. This had implications for visual and observational data collected, since the team could not be immersed in the geographies and research sites.

+ This research was conducted in Hindi-speaking urban sums and peri-urban areas in North India, with young men in low income and low resource settings. Findings from this research may not be applicable to other groups or young men in different geographies and contexts in India.

+ The quantitative, demographic screening exercise was conducted purely as a screening tool, to arrive at a balanced, purposive sample for targeted design research. Findings from the demographic screening are not intended as a representative sample of boys in the target age group.

+ The qualitative, targeted design research sample was selected for maximum variation to include a wide range of backgrounds and orientations. However, it is a small, purposive sample, and research interpretations and inferences should be made considering the scope of the sample.

+ This study collected limited high-resolution photos from the participants during interactions like Home Visit, Mobile Ethnography and Metaphor Cards. Most respondents and field facilitators' phones were low to mid-end phones, with standard data packs and limits to data usage and the visual library reflects this limitation.

1d. Findings from Secondary Research | Mobile Penetration and Use among Young Men in India

Increasingly affordable smartphones & mobile internet, and rise in vernacular content has rapidly expanded India's smartphone user base.

Based on a 2020 KPMG and ICEA report, in 2018, "India had approximately 277 million VoLTE capable devices and more than 50% 4G device penetration across India." Forecasts predict this user base is expected to double and account for 60% of the population by 2022.

Rural and low-income segments in India have contributed significantly to this rise in smartphone use. Availability of content, applications, and mobile navigation features in vernacular and regional languages and steadily dropping prices of both smartphones and data have contributed to increased smartphone penetration. (KPMG & ICEA, 2020)

Smartphones have also contributed to increased internet access in India, significantly so in rural and low income communities.

With falling smartphone and data prices, access to the internet has also increased. Smartphones are providing easy to use, private interfaces, to browse the internet and access content. So much so, that "between 2010 and 2016, smartphones became the primary mode of internet usage" (KPMG & Google, 2020) and 99% of all internet use across the country occurs via smartphones (Nielsen and IAMAI, 2019).

Internet users in India are typically young (12-29 years) and the likelihood of owning smartphones increases with education.

About "two-thirds of Internet users in India are in the age group of 12-29 yrs. and this age group corresponds to more than 70% of Internet users in rural areas". In addition to age and gender (more men, and younger men typically use smartphones), smartphone use in India also varies by education. Across the board in 11 low and middle income countries surveyed in a 2019 study, adults with a secondary education or higher were noted to be more likely to own their own mobile phone than those with less than a secondary education. (Silver et al., 2019)

1d. Findings from Secondary Research |Mobile Penetration and Use among Young Men in India

Phone ownership and use continues to have a gender bias in India, across both adult and young users.

A 2020 PwC & UNICEF report on the status of digital education in India notes that In "77% of households, phones belonged to male members and only 30% of children could access them" (PwC & UNICEF, 2020). The survey goes on to note that in the case of children aged 16 years and younger, "37% of boys reported access to mobile phone as opposed to only 26% of girls" (PwC & UNICEF, 2020). GSMA's mobile gender disparity survey across adult age-group smartphone users shows that this gap continues. In 2019, around 63% of women in India owned smartphones, as opposed to 79% men (GSMA, 2019).

Video streaming and social media use lead when it comes to smartphone data use, occupying nearly 90% of the share of data-based smartphone activities. From the range of audio and video content available, most young men between the ages of 15-20 prefer watching movies.

Smartphone users in India use their devices to view video and audio content, for emailing, for networking and social media, for online shopping, and for playing games. However, smartphone data use skews very heavily to audio and video entertainment content. (ICEA, 2020)

Among younger users (15-20 years), the type of content viewed varies with gender. Unlike girls in the same age group, who are drawn more to general entertainment channels, boys prefer to watch movies. Salman Khan movies top most-watched Hindi movies, being more relatable, having a higher entertainment quotient, and expressing a more potent dimension of masculinity. South Indian movies dubbed in Hindi are on a rise, especially among young men belonging to lower socio-economic backgrounds. (Lobo, 2018; Barc India, 2018)

1d. Findings from Secondary Research |Influence of Media on Male Youth in India

Over-the-top (OTT) platforms, or platforms which provide media services directly over the internet are on the rise, specifically among young men from lower SEC backgrounds.

These platforms, such as Hotstar, Voot and Sony Liv, are most subscribed platforms among lower SEC (Socio Economic Classification) households. With increasingly low price points for mobile and tablet subscriptions, OTT platforms offer affordability, targeted individual viewing, more Indian content, and bold uncensored content targeted to engage young audiences. Most Lower SEC households access OTT platforms through free trials to either just explore or choose the most preferred platform to purchase. The rise has also been because of bundling offers such as free subscription with new phones, or network packs, or even pre-installed apps in different phone models. *(Bhatia, 2020; Maanvi, 2019; Mahendra, 2019)*

In a cultural milieu where male youth are strongly influenced by on-screen depictions of masculinity, OTT platforms could potentially contribute to further shape these perceptions.

Indian male film watchers enjoy watching male stars, and aspire to emulate their physical and perceived personal traits. This is manifested in imitation of the stars' style, speech, and other traits. Young men in particular copy the clothes, hairstyles and mannerisms of both heroes and villains.

Depictions of men in Hindi media have evolved from the anti-establishment working-class hero of the "angry young man" films in the seventies and eighties, to the cosmopolitan, consumerist (yet still traditional) romantic hero of the early nineties to a quirky, experimental, metrosexual (yet 'Macho') hero of the 2020's. This is furthered by OTT content, which often show more vulnerable, real, layered, often alternate characters of men, struggling with and responding to a variety of environmental and psychosocial constraints. *(Pramit, 2020).*

1d. Findings from Secondary Research |Online Gaming Landscape in India

Mobile gaming has seen a significant rise in India with greater smartphone and internet penetration in both urban and rural settings.

Increasing internet penetration has primed the Indian gaming market as a significant emerging opportunity area for expansion. While the Indian gamer currently is young and male, India is moving towards improved age and gender parity among online gamers. The majority will continue to play on mobile devices in 2021. The online gaming industry is expected to gain momentum and reach a market value of $1 billion and approximately 310 million online gamers by 2021. About 90% of online gamers use smartphones and tablets. (KPMG & Google, 2020)

The study goes on to note that "an average Indian online gamer
  a. is a below 24 year male
  b. is introduced to online gaming through their friends, family and peer group
  c. is engaged in gaming for stress relief and social interaction" (KPMG & Google, 2020)

This is a significant overlap with the study's target population, who are mostly 15-19 year old, smartphone users, in urban settings in India.

Image 2: PubG gameplay; (source Whittfiel, 2020)

1d. Findings from Secondary Research |Online Gaming Landscape in India

Secondary research shows that boys engage in multiplayer games to connect with other people or play with friends.

Boys tend to view gaming as an audiovisual and social activity - to be able to participate in audio chats, and use the game volume. Boys use what earlier used to be the family TV viewing time as the time to uninterruptedly engage with their mobiles. The prime time (9-11 p.m.) becomes gaming time for young men.

Boys are conscious of the element of 'winning' 'defeating others'

Secondary research tells us that games are played to earn rewards, defeat opponents, compete, and 'win'. Rewards and victories are important motivators for continued gameplay. Mere exploration and experience are often not sufficient drivers for young men to engage with online games.

[Source: Pinterest]

Men also frequently take up girls' avatars while playing games.

While the top stated reason for doing so is aesthetics, with anatomically perfect female characters in games, men also tend to play as females for a few other reasons. (Gerson, 2016)

Reasons include tactical advantage (female characters often come with advantages) and novelty. In multiplayer games, female characters are often selected since they represent softer targets. For instance, when encountered with a female character, male players might behave less aggressively, and react more favourably. (Gerson, 2016)

02

Study Goals & Key Insights

a. Study Goals
b. Key Insights from Primary Research

2a. Study Goals

The overarching goal of this research was to gather contextual information on young men's lives to inform the GoC design. Two primary objectives supported this goal, related to boys' self and social spheres:

Self : To understand game-relevant dimensions of boys' lives, including phone use and engagement, media and game usage, aspirations, conflicts, gender ideologies, and FP/RH-related behaviors and perceptions.

Social : To explore the semiotic, social, and normative context of young men's understandings of FP/RH, gender and masculinity.

Using different methods of research, the team interacted with young men (15-22), family members, and experts to answer some of the foundational questions listed below.

+ How does the social, spatial, and cultural environment of our target population shape their gender ideologies, and FP/RH attitudes, events, and outcomes?
+ What are the motivations, aspirations, and tensions in our target population's lives?
+ How does our target population engage with their phones, media, content, and data (specifically with respect to content on FP/RH)?
+ What are our target population's gaming behaviours, practices, and preferences?

2b. Key Insights from Primary Research

 # 1 'Adolescence' is not recognised as a unique phase by both young men and their families. This leads to mixed and conflicting messaging. Set expectations of 'adulthood' lead young men to think their life trajectories as future providers are predetermined, leaving little room for unique experiences. Messages of 'childhood' lead young men to think experiencing desire, love, and romance are prohibited. Young men are seldom allowed to experiment, self-reflect, and understand their needs better; and this time in their lives is used to regulate expectations, and inculcate social responsibilities.

 # 2 Through socio-cultural environments, families, and media, young men absorb normative roles and responsibilities of boys and girls. They begin to chart clear and sometimes conflicting distinctions between boys and girls. Differences are exacerbated by limited avenues for socially acceptable interactions between the genders. With no shared experience, boys view girls as separate entities, who need to be looked after and taken care of, rather than as collaborators and co-participants with equal goals and destinations.

 # 3 Young men struggle to understand the need to learn about sex, family planning, and reproductive health beyond what is taught in school, or what they gather from pornographic videos and discussions with friends. Learning about sex, family planning, and reproductive health is usually relegated for after boys form socially sanctioned relationships like marriage. Low awareness is further compounded by boys' perceptions, that matters of love, sex, and family planning are 'natural', and do not need further learning and reflection.

 # 4 There is no one common, reliable object of boys' trust. Therefore, communication is fragmented and partial. Boys prioritise privacy, confidentiality, and openness when faced with the option of reaching out to parents, siblings, friends, neighbours, teachers, or other community members. Boys hesitate to communicate, but when and if they do, they expect open, value neutral, and judgement-free opportunities to do so. When faced with lack of such sources, opportunities to communicate remain closed for them.

 # 5 For young men in our sample, negotiating time to use phones is never a barrier, as phone and the internet are easily accessible and available. They perceive their phone and the internet as companions and guides that provide information, and let them ask questions without judgement. Constrained for private space, young men see phones as extensions of their self, and keep them close and guarded. Through their phones, they are able to access media and source information which goes on to inform their aspirations and value systems.

 # 6 For most young men, gaming is an activity that elevates their mood, allows them to find a distraction from their daily lives, and enables them to find a sense of achievement through building gaming strategies and winning battles. Games are reflections of boys' aspirations, especially physical, in terms of characters they choose and the prowess and skills they come with. Most boys we spoke to fall under the gamer category of 'achievers', where collecting points, clearing levels, and earning rewards are prioritised over other motivating factors.

Research Methodology
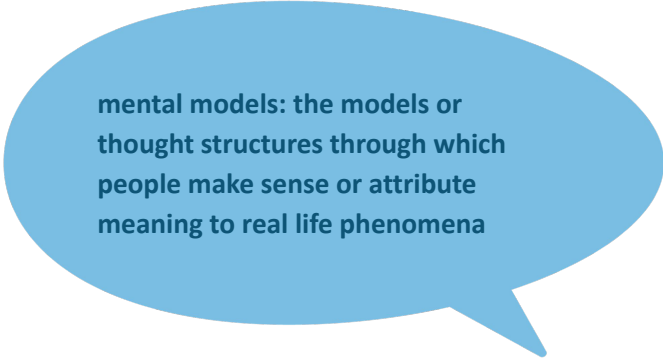
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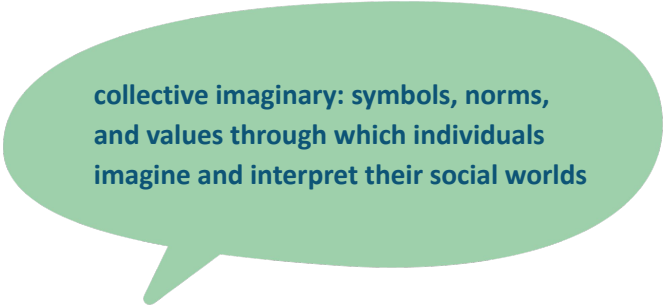
3a. Study Design

The discovery research for the boys game was a cross-sectional study, using a blend of structured, semi-structured, and observational methods of research.

1. **Primary Research** was conducted to understand the young men's demographic background, socio-cultural contexts, mental models and worldviews, phone and game use behaviour, gender ideologies, and reproductive health behaviours in the selected geographies of Delhi, Jaipur, and Patna. In each of these cities, Vihara focused on low-income, low-resource urban settings.

2. **Semiotic Analysis of Phone-Based Popular Media** was conducted to understand how young men's collective imaginary is shaped through messaging in movies, websites, music videos, and other sources of phone-based popular culture.

3. **Secondary Data Review** of books, journal articles, newspaper reports, videos, and adolescent health programme findings and reports, was conducted to understand smartphone penetration and use within the target demographic, and their content and gaming preferences.

mental models: the models or thought structures through which people make sense or attribute meaning to real life phenomena

collective imaginary: symbols, norms, and values through which individuals imagine and interpret their social worlds

Image 3: Definitions of 'mental models' and 'collective imaginary'

3a. Study Design | **Methods**

The primary research used both structured and semi-structured research methods.

1. **Structured Research Methods**
   This included closed-ended screening activities, which listed broad demographic parameters, and assessed respondents' background, education, income, phone use, game use, basic FP/RH awareness, and awareness of key gender equitability concepts. This exercise was conducted to identify a smaller sample to conduct semi-structured, targeted design research with.

2. **Semi-Structured Research Methods / Targeted Design Research**
   These include qualitative, ethnography-inspired, design research methods, conducted over 4 months with a small sample group. These methods were intended to be immersive, open-ended, participatory, and observational in nature. A range of activities were designed to better understand the daily life of the target group, their aspirations, key conflicts in their lives, their gender ideologies and attitudes towards FP/RH, and the opposite sex. A set of tools was also designed to understand their living conditions, their relationship with their mobile devices, and their gameplaying behaviour.

The findings and interpretations in this report have been drawn largely from Semi-Structured or Targeted Design Research.

3b. Sample & Geography

The research for this project was conducted in the states of Delhi, Rajasthan, and Bihar, targeting the **Northern, Hindi- and Hindi dialect-speaking geographies**. Urban villages [village communities inside or on the urban peripheries of major cities], urban slums, and peri-urban areas have been selected as study sites.

This demographic has demonstrated persistent challenges in major public health outcomes, women's autonomy and empowerment, and FP/RH indicators. (Tiwari, 2019; Harshana & Kapoor, 2018; Santhya, et al, 2017; Jeejeebhoy & Acharya, 2014)

Specifically, the study was conducted in the cities of Delhi, Patna, and Jaipur, in the states of Delhi, Bihar, and Rajasthan, respectively. This is the geography that GoC girls is also being designed for.


Delhi

Jaipur

Patna

3b. Sample & Geography | **Study Sites**

Delhi

Sites: Nardan Basti, Tughlakabad Gaon, Mehrauli-Badarpur road

Young men residing in the urban slums of Delhi lack appropriate and adequate knowledge of FP/RH related matters. According to a 2018 report, a majority of boys (86.4%) do not have correct knowledge regarding sex and 70% do not have correct knowledge regarding contraceptives (Harshana & Kapoor, 2018). New Delhi offers a comparative urban landscape to Patna and Jaipur (according to NFHS - 4 findings, both Patna and Jaipur report lower rates of literacy, participation of women in the workforce, digital access for women, and higher rates of gender-based violence).
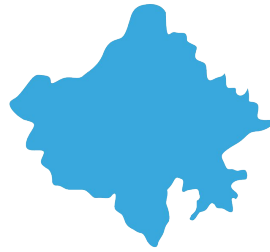
Rajasthan

Sites: Jaipur - Kalakar colony, Panipech, Gujjar ki thadi, Mansarovar

Avenues for accessing reproductive health care and knowledge remain low with youth in Rajasthan, with research reporting they had no one to confide in for such matters (Jejeebhoy & Acharya, 2014). Additionally, awareness of STIs is also low in the state, with 2012 data reporting that only 30% of boys and 15% of girls had heard of diseases spread through sexual contact (Jejeebhoy & Acharya, 2014).

Bihar

Sites: Patna - Harijan Colony, Mandiri area, Sanji Masjid, Phulwari Sharif

Bihar has historically under performed according to social and human development indicators. High STI rates, and hesitancy to seek FP/RH care leads to significant unmet needs, necessitating innovative methods to impart knowledge about FP/RH, and link to products and care. A 2017 survey (Santhya et al., 2017) notes that awareness and reach of government programmes to promote youth health is low. Only 31% of younger boys and 18% of older boys received health-related information or services from a healthcare provider in their place of learning (Santhya et al., 2017).

3b. Sample & Geography | **Target Population**

The primary target population for data collection for this study was boys in the age group of 15-19 years in low-income and low-resource settings of urban and peri-urban Delhi, Jaipur, and Patna. Secondary target populations included older boys (aged 20-22), male family members (fathers, older brothers), female family members (elder sisters, mothers, sisters-in-law), and experts (academics, counsellors, regional programme officers, and game developers).

The Funnel

A master recruitment sheet was prepared by field partners, from which 150 participants were selected using eligibility criteria listed in the following pages. To arrive at a diverse sample for targeted design research, 128 boys (15-19) from the master pool were screened and broad demographic parameters, phone use patterns, gameplay parameters, and gender equitability awareness were listed. A smaller sample of 90 was shortlisted for targeted design research activities, based on selection filters and eligibility criteria listed on the following page. From the shortlist of 90, we interacted with 39, over 72 engagements. **We interacted with each boy between 2-5 times.**

Secondary Sample

The secondary sample included family members of young men (9 male, 10 female), young men from an older age bracket of 20-22 years (12) and experts (4 adolescent experts, 2 games for learning / edtech experts).
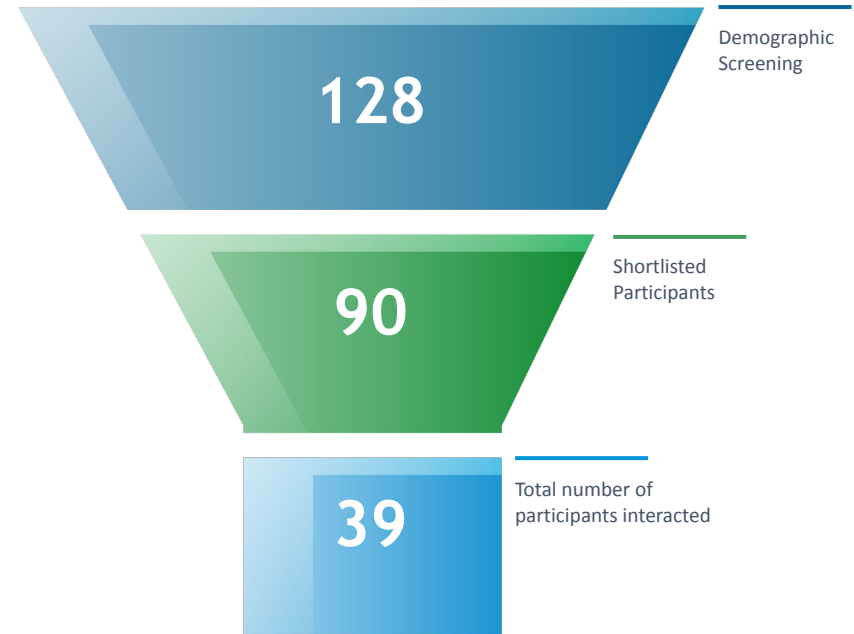
Figure 1: Sample Funnel (Boys 15-19)

Demographic Screening — 128

Shortlisted Participants — 90

Total number of participants interacted — 39

3b. Sample & Geography | **Demographic Background**

We found that few participants did not attend school at all, or received less than four years of schooling. Those who had dropped out were either working, helping the family with family business, completing courses via distance learning, or were looking for work.

Those who were pursuing higher studies (graduate / diplomas), reported that they were pursuing courses in Arts, Commerce, Science, Vocational and Technical Studies. Some also mentioned preparing for entrance exams that would allow them to pursue higher studies or enter government services.[1]

[1] These numbers are from the full sample of 128 boys (15-19). These trends replicated in the funneled TDR sample as well. For tables that represent both demographic and TDR segmentation, please refer to the Appendix.
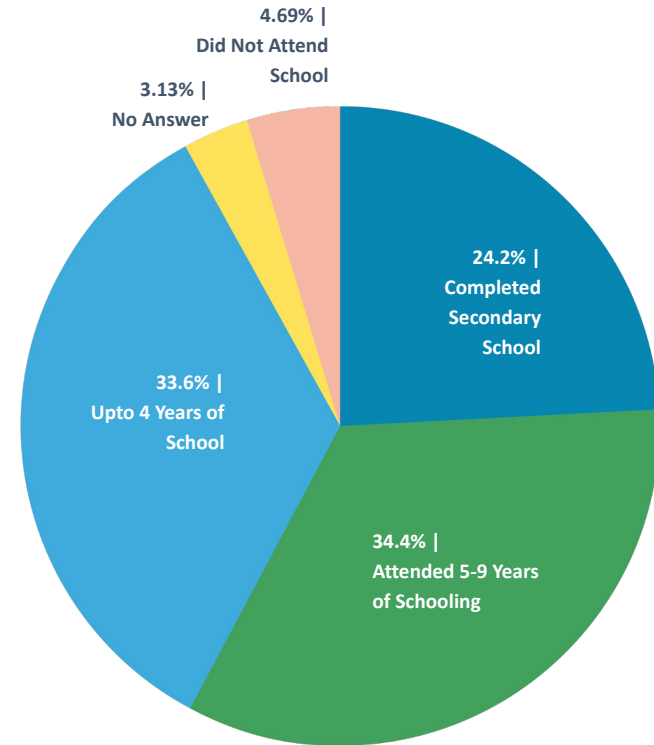
Figure 2: Demographic statistics for educational background of sample

3b. Sample & Geography | **Demographic Background**

Most participants lived in homogenous communities--small neighbourhood clusters comprising people belonging largely to the same social group. These clusters were located either in urban slums, or peri-urban areas, with limited access to space, and persistent water, electricity and sanitation issues.

Most respondents lived in large households with four or more members (who were mostly immediate or extended family). Households with large/ joint families typically consisted of parents, siblings, cousins, grandparents, uncles, and aunts.

1.56% |NA

21.9% |
2- 4 members

79.6% |
More than 4 members
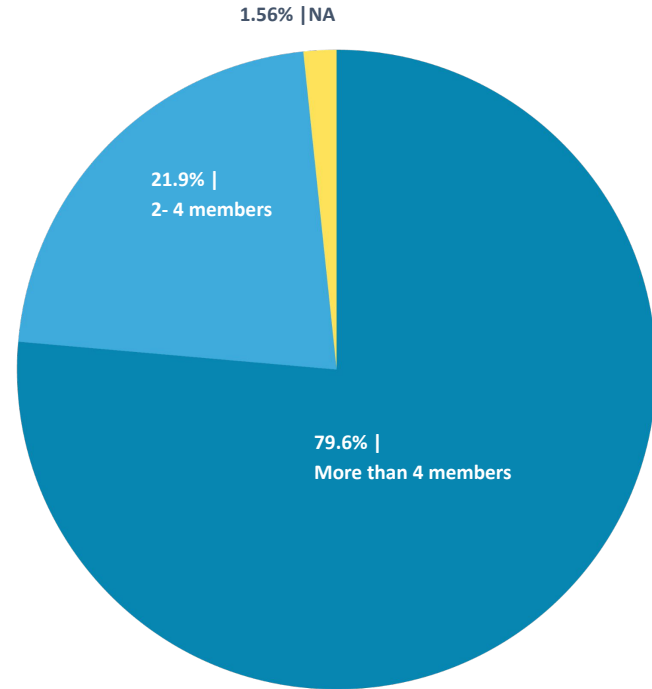
Figure 3: Demographic statistics for household structure of sample

3b. Sample & Geography | **Demographic Background**

Boys in the sample reported that parents worked in a range of occupations: shopkeepers, government jobs, teachers, community health workers, sweepers, farmers, performers, security guards, and factory workers. Most were either in informal work, or self-employed and few had formal, salaried, white collar jobs.

9.3% | No Answer

24.2% | Formal Employment /Salaried

39.8% | Self-employed Owns business

26.5% | Informal occupations
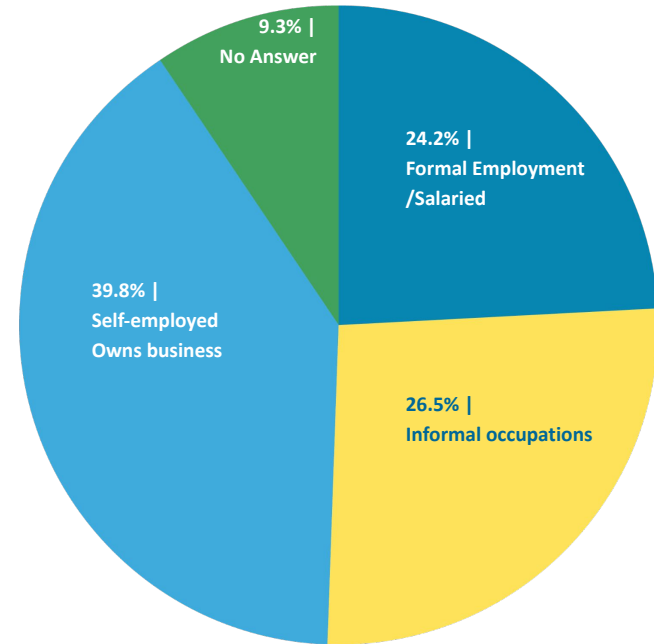
Figure 4: Demographic statistics for occupational background of parents

3b. Sample & Geography | **Sample Selection**

Selection for Demographic Screening

Using local networks, field partners first asked young men (and parents where applicable) if they were interested in participating in the study. Based on early assent, a master recruitment sheet was created. Screening questions on age, education status, and phone ownership use were asked to shortlist 150 participants. Demographic screening was conducted with 128 from the list of 150.

Selection of participants for targeted design research

The research team, after conversations with the boys, applied preliminary filters to the pool of 128 participants with whom the demographic screening was conducted. All participants were sorted according to the following filtering categories:

1. **Articulation:** *the participant's ability to convey their thoughts & opinions*
2. **Willingness**: *the participant's interest and inclination to participate*

All 128 participants were assigned scores by the research team according the scale detailed in Table 1. Ninety higher (high and medium) scoring participants were shortlisted based on their scores for TDR. Participants were a mix of *expressive* and *responsive*, and *enthusiastic* and *cooperative*. In case participants declined to take part, researchers moved down the list and replaced the participants.

Filter / Parameter	Scale	Score
Articulation	Expressive	3
	Responsive	2
	Needs Prompting	1
Willingness	Enthusiastic	3
	Cooperative	2
	Reluctant	1

Table 1: Targeted Design Research Sample Selection

3b. Sample & Geography | **Eligibility Criteria**

Demographic Screening For Boys

In addition to the preliminary filters discussed, detailed eligibility criteria for the different study participants were outlined to account for maximum variation in the sample. The demographic screening had minimum inclusion or eligibility criteria, and more detailed eligibility criteria were determined for participation in targeted design research.

Targeted Design Research

To ensure maximum variation, we included participants from diverse SEC and education backgrounds, who did not own smartphones, did not play games (or played games infrequently), and demonstrated relatively low awareness of gender equitability. Stratification targets were set for eligibility criteria in both demographic screening and targeted design research, to ensure the sample remained inclusive across the phases of research.

Site-wise lists (30 each) of shortlisted participants were made, and cross checked against the eligibility criteria listed in the subsequent pages, to check if the diversity and inclusion criteria were being consistently met. Research activities were then assigned per site, after organising participants hierarchically according to score. For in-depth interviews, participants were chosen according to the list. For activities requiring phones, participants with phones were prioritised.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	STRATIFICATION TARGET
15-19 years	At least 25% 15-16 At least 25% 17-19
In school or completed secondary education / Out of school or did not complete secondary education	At least 20% out of school or did not complete education
Own phone / does not own phone but uses phone	At least 20% do not own phone but use phone

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	STRATIFICATION TARGET
15-19 years / 20-22 years	At least 10% 20-22 years
Own phone / does not own phone but uses phone	At least 10% do not own phone but use phone
Non gamers / occasional gamers / active gamers	At least 20% active gamers At least 10% occasional gamers
Demonstrates awareness of gender equitability / does not demonstrate awareness of gender equitability	At least 10% demonstrating awareness of gender equitability based on responses to screening activity
Nuclear / Joint / Extended Nuclear	At least 10% nuclear At least 10% joint At least 10% extended nuclear
Low / Lower Middle / Upper Middle	At least 20% low income At least 20% lower middle income
Bands 2 & 3	At least 20% band 3

Table 2: Eligibility Criteria for Selection of Sample

3c. Data Collection | **Research Activities**

Data collection took place over 12 weeks, spread across 4 months, accounting for COVID delays, stops, and breaks. The following table shows the sequence of all the research activities conducted to collect data for the study. The table also highlights the number of such activities conducted.

January, 2021   *February, 2021 - April, 2021*   *May, 2021*

Demographic Screening	**Targeted Design Research**				
Remote: Telephonic	*Remote: Telephonic*	*Remote;Telephonic/Video-Based*	*Onsite; In-Person*	*Onsite; In-Person*	*Remote;Telephonic/Video-Based*
Demographic Screening	**In-depth Interviews**	**Co-Gameplay**	**Metaphor Cards**	**Mobile Ethnography**	**Home Visit**
A survey-like screening activity with 128 young men in the age group of 15-19 years, to select a smaller, varied, and representative sample for targeted design research.	Open-ended, semi-structured, narrative-based interviews with young men, older boys, family members and experts, to understand life histories, gender ideologies, and FP/RH journeys of young men.	A video-based, interactive game-playing sessions with young men to understand gaming behaviours and preferred gaming features and visuals.	Discussions with picture-based cards with visuals that depict emotions or values.	A discussion on relationship with device followed by a "tour" through their mobile phone to understand mobile usage patterns in three parts: communication, information, and entertainment/leisure.	A video walkthrough to co-create inventories of ownership, storage, display, and identity as the boy provides a guided tour through his spaces, both physical and digital.
128 surveys	**6 experts** **19 family members** **12 older boys (20-22)** **24 young men (15-19)**	**12 interviews**	**12 interviews**	**12 interviews**	**12 interviews**

3c. Data Collection | **Modes of Primary Data Collection**

The field research was conducted using a blend of remote and in-person modes of data collection, to ensure that data collection activities were robust and informative even during COVID-19 restrictions.

Remote Research

The team used various methods and platforms to conduct remote research with respondents (refer to Table 3).

In-Person Research

The team collaborated with field partners, and trained a cadre of community based researchers to conduct in-person research activities (refer to Table 3).

Focus group discussions were initially planned to be part of in-person research activities, but had to be cancelled due to COVID second wave in India.

Activity	Mode	Medium
Demographic screenings	Remote	Telephonic
In-depth interviews	Remote	Telephonic
Co-Gameplays	Remote	Zoom / Video Call
Metaphor card	In-person / Remote	Face to Face / Whatsapp Video Call
Mobile Ethnographies	In-person / Remote	Face to Face / Zoom
Home Visit	Remote	Whatsapp Video Call

Table 3: Modes of Primary Data Collection

3c. Data Collection | **Building Rapport in Remote Research**

Researchers interacted with each participant between 2-5 times, over the course of four months. To do so, rapport was built incrementally, through repeat engagements. A significant number of research activities were telephone based where rapport building was essential, but also challenging. Rapport building methods included:

1. Treating informed consent as trust building:
The informed consent process was the first instance of interaction with the respondent. In addition to following the due processes of informed consent, researchers treated this as an interactive exercise, encouraging questions, and clarifying doubts, in order to manage expectations and commitments from the start. Detailed consent processes with parents and participants alike, with strong engagement and questions, paved the way for more comfortable future interactions.

2. Respecting respondents' boundaries:
Even in telephonic interactions, researchers took note of the respondent's level of engagement and tone while answering questions. In cases where the participant seemed uncomfortable, but did not articulate it, researchers reiterated the confidential and voluntary nature of the exercise. When participants felt they were not being pressured to respond or participate, they often spoke more freely in response to other questions, and consented to participate in future interactions.

3. Speaking and listening with empathy:
Researchers were trained to approach participants without judgement and with empathy. Value judgements or opinions were not shared, and when asked for, researchers were required to maintain neutrality. This provided participants with the space to voice their thoughts and opinions without feeling judged.

4. Building on repeat interviews / engagements:
Repeat interactions with respondents meant that researchers could take cues from previous interactions and build on them while engaging with participants in future activities. This helped in establishing trust, and communicating intent to the participants. This also meant that certain relevant topics could be probed deeper.

5. Designing questionnaires to enable asking 'uncomfortable' questions:
There were significant cultural barriers to overcome while talking about love, sex, and relationships with young men in Northern India. Questionnaires were reviewed to assess whether any particular sections posed specific barriers and raised discomfort with the participants. To address issues of non-response to difficult or uncomfortable questions, the questionnaire had speculative questions where respondents were asked to respond to scenarios rather than speak from experience. Questions on love, relationships, and sex, were placed towards the end of the questionnaire to allow researchers ample time to build rapport and assess how to manage questions better.

3c. Data Collection | **Safeguards**

During field trainings, researchers and facilitators were informed about child rights violations and provided with a list of steps to take in situations where violations were observed.

Indian law lists the following activities as reportable child harm:

1. Sexual assault, sexual harassment, use of a child for pornographic purpose - Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012
2. Production, dissemination and use of child sexual abuse materials - sexual abuse materials The Information Technology Act, 2000
3. Disclosing the identity of the child victim to anyone other than appropriate authority - anyone other than appropriate authority Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, JJ Act 2015
4. Sale and procurement of children for any purpose including illegal adoption, trafficking of children for sexual exploitation, use of children by militant groups, giving children intoxicating liquor, narcotic drug or tobacco products or psychotropic substances, offences against disabled children, trafficking of children for sexual exploitation/exploitative labour/other reasons and, kidnapping - JJ Act 2015; Immoral Traffic (Prevention) Act 1956; Human trafficking (section 370 & 370A IPC), after the creation of a specific section in IPC by the Criminal Law (Amendment) Act 2013

5. Corporal Punishment in schools - Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009
6. Employment of children below 14 years in any occupation or industry - Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016
7. Employment of children 15-18 years in hazardous occupation or industries - Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Amendment Act, 2016
8. Marrying a child / promoting or solemnizing child marriage - Child marriage Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006

Procedure

1. Field staff were advised to immediately alert their supervisor to contact local authorities on witnessing any violation.
2. If witnessed during a research engagement, the facilitator was advised to immediately stop the research activity and inform the supervisor.
3. If a child reported any such activity to the researchers, they were advised to immediately contact their supervisor, who was asked to connect the child to local, relevant authorities.
4. If a relative of a child reported such activity, researchers were advised to immediately inform their supervisor, and connect the relative to the relevant authority.

3c. Data Collection | **Research Process**

The diagram below illustrates the research process. A detailed breakdown of the analysis process will be presented later on in this report. This process map outlines how we moved from the research design phase, to the recruitment phase, to the primary research phases, and then on to the synthesis, analysis, sensemaking, and report collation and writing phases.
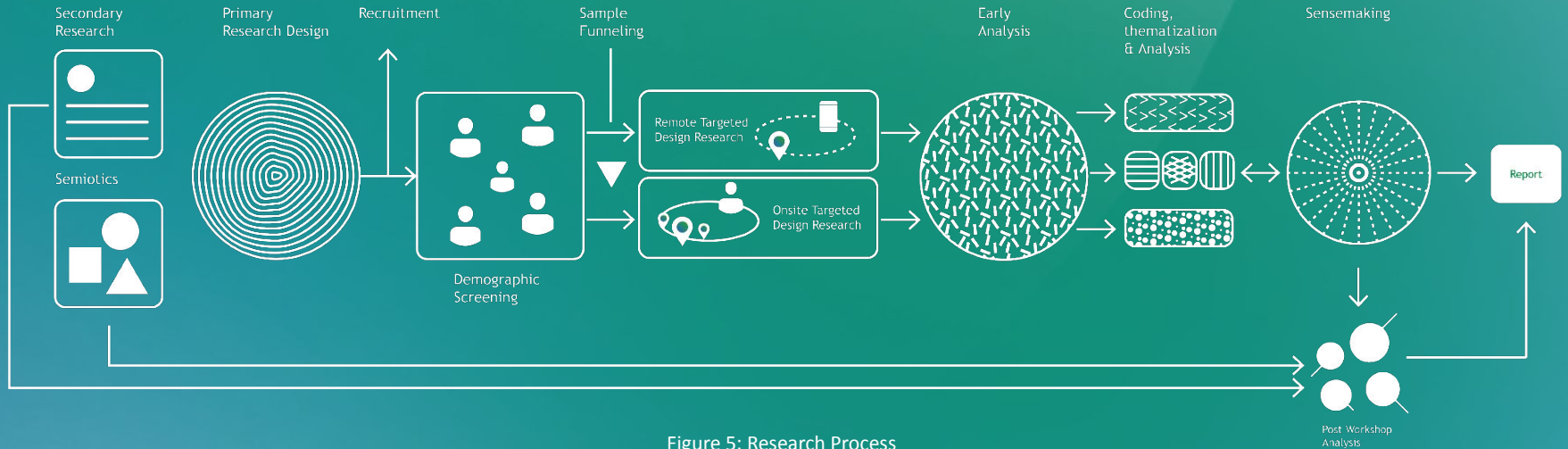

Figure 5: Research Process

3c. Data Collection | Field & Knowledge Partners

Vihara worked with dedicated field partners (organisation profiles below) throughout the research process. Field teams recruited participants, facilitated consent processes and interviews, and conducted in-person research activities. Field teams also conducted regular orientations and debriefing sessions with both participants and parents of participants, and supported in documenting data.

Delhi
Matri Sudha: A Charitable Trust
Matri Sudha A Charitable Trust works primarily in the domain of education and health. It works to improve the state of child nutrition, child and adolescent health, education, and children's rights in India by raising awareness, conducting follow-up checks, research, and advocacy.

Jaipur
Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS)
Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) is a community based national organization working in the areas of literacy, continuing education and basic education, working for gender justice and addressing issues of the marginalized, working towards a healthy society, campaigning for people's rights.

Patna
Centre for Health and Resource Management
The Centre for Health And Resource Management (CHARM) is a civil society organization. The key thematic areas of intervention of CHARM have been health, nutrition, water & sanitation, HIV/AIDS and mitigation during disasters.

Image 4, 5, 6: Field Research teams' offices

3c. Data Collection | **Field & Knowledge Partners**

To ensure effective data documentation in remote conditions and dispersed environments, Vihara partnered with Ooloi Labs to create a smartphone-first, web-based, digital data collection platform. This platform is currently the comprehensive repository for all interview / research activity and consent documentation, and offers data grouping and synthesis features as well.

Ooloi Labs

Ooloi Labs is a social enterprise building a product that is focused on helping social impact organisations and programs scale their work. Ooloi is currently building a socio-technical system, which comprises a technical web based product supported by experiences and approaches to onboard new team members and partners to be able to take learnings from pilots to appropriately create impact in other regions and other populations.

Security

The platform is behind a login such that only select members of the research and client teams have authorised logins to access data documented. Ooloi's login & registration system uses JWT tokens for authentication, and 1 time email verification to prevent spam bots. Ooloi integrates OAuth2 into login systems and secures APIs using OAuth2.0, and blocking CORS.
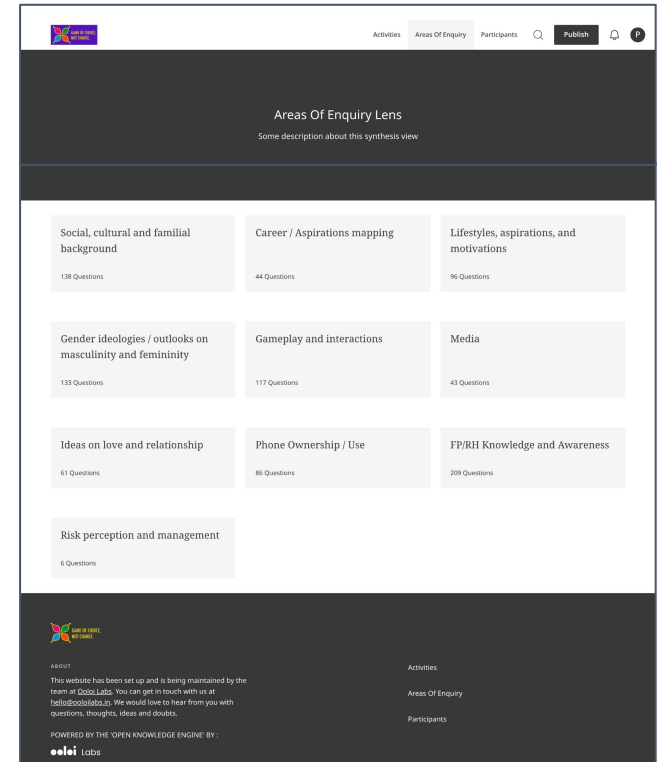
Image 7: Ooloi, GoC Knowledge Partners. Homepage for the data collection platform

3d. Ethical considerations

The study went through two levels of IRB reviews--local (India-based), and FHI 360's Protection of Human Subjects Committee (PHSC).

All researchers went through mandatory ethics training based on FHI 360's research ethics training curriculum, and were briefed fully about India's child safety policies, and detailed protocols on what steps to take should they observe child harm.

Vihara also created detailed procedures to maintain participant confidentiality, obtain informed consent from participants and parents of participants (as applicable). All participants (and parents) were also duly informed about potential risks and benefits of participation, and were compensated for their participation in the study. All the pillars of acquiring informed consent were followed for the study.

In case of participants who were minors, the team took consent from parents, and assent from participants.

Participants were provided with a one-time compensation of INR 500, at the time of the demographic screening as a token of appreciation.

Fundamental Principles of Human Research Ethics

Respect for Persons (and Community)

Beneficence

Justice

Research Ethics Training Curriculum, 2nd edition   8
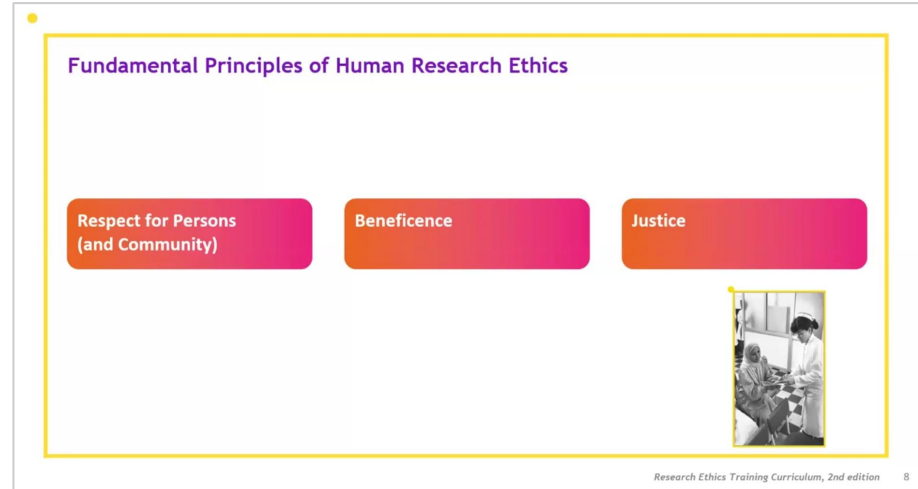
Image 8: Ethics Training for GoC Boys Research team (2020)

3e. Data Analysis | Areas of Inquiry

The study collected data on 10 key areas of inquiry. These were the major areas of data collection focus, based on which the research guides and activities were designed.

Areas of Inquiry

1. **Social, cultural, and familial background** of participants
2. **Careers & Aspirations** of participants
3. **Lifestyles**, hobbies, and interests of participants
4. **Gender Ideologies** or outlooks on masculinity and femininity
5. **Gameplay & Interactions** in game
6. **Media Use** and the phone based content they watched
7. **Ideas on Love & Relationships** and romantic interest
8. **Phone Ownership & Use** mapping of participants
9. **FP/RH Knowledge & Awareness** of participants
10. **FP/RH Risk Perception & Management** of specific events or scenarios

3e. Data Analysis | **Documentation**

A range of audio-visual and textual documentation was conducted. These were analysed as part of the analysis process. Photos of surroundings, representative images from the field, and screen grabs during home visits are part of the visual library at the end of the report. Sketches of home spaces and characters were interpreted for visual information and cues.

Field Notes
These were running notes researchers took during research activities. These notes were semi-ethnographic in nature, where the researcher also documented the tone of the respondent, hesitancies, the environment in which the activity was conducted, and focused more on softer aspects such as attitude, orientation, whether the participant was reticent or forthcoming, and so on.

Interview transcripts
Interview transcripts were the main data source which informed the analysis process. Over 70 interviews were recorded, transcribed, and translated. The body of transcripts (and other data sources) was used to develop participant profiles, create case studies, and develop codes and themes.

Interview audios
In case of inconsistencies with transcripts, audio recordings of activities were referred to. For exercises such as building a linguistic reference bank, audios were the primary data sources that were analysed.

Photographs
Photographs from the field were collected to be included in visual reference libraries. Photographs included those of indoor environments, outdoor environments, personal objects (daily use, objects of significance, gifts, household assets, and so on), and indoor and outdoor spaces.

Sketches
Some design research activities included sketching activities as well (sketching dream homes and spaces, sketching characters). These too have been included in the visual reference libraries.

Screen recordings
Screen recordings of gameplay sessions were used to understand gaming behaviours, the places where participants struggled to understand new games, the aspects of games they used and understood well, and those that they enjoyed.

3e. Data Analysis | **Methods**

Each data collection tool was designed with a specific intent, that aligns with our research objectives and study goals. Diverse tools generated data on similar topics or areas of inquiry, and data arriving from these different sources were synthesised and analysed to identify themes, map phone use and gaming behaviour, create visual and language banks for reference, and finally inform outputs for game design.

Overview of primary analysis methods

Data extraction / sorting

The first step in data analysis was to extract the data according to different areas of inquiry. To do so, each question in the research guides was tagged against an area of inquiry. Responses to questions were logged on the digital data documentation platform. Areas of Inquiry filters were created, where selecting a specific area of inquiry elicited all questions and responses tagged to that area of inquiry.

Debriefs

Internal debriefs of each activity were conducted after a day's research engagements. These debriefs performed the function of first level, internal brainstorming, where findings of interest and recurrences were identified.

Matrix coding

Once data was extracted and placed in an areas of inquiry matrix, transcripts and other data sources were reviewed to code data and tag them to broad concepts. Coded data, transcripts, audio, and other sources were then reviewed to find themes that were of note, or repeated across different participants.

Case Studies

Each participant's profile, outlining their family background, interests and aspirations was created. Using these profiles, case studies of unique and representative cases were developed to map the individuals' experiences, struggles, and challenges in thick detail.

User Journeys

Cumulative experiences using case studies were drawn to project and create representative FP/RH journeys of participants. These highlighted their key environmental influences, their major FP/RH events, and key gaps.

3e. Data Analysis | **Process**

This diagram illustrates the data analysis process over the key phases of data collection, documentation, analysis, and the creation of the outputs for game design (discussed on the next page).

Data Collection

Research Activities

Documentation

Documentation

Debriefs

Transcripts & Field Notes Analysis

Data Extracted based on Questions Asked, and Organised according to 10 Areas of Inquiry

Identification of patterns and recurrences

Product & Service Mapping

Matrix Coding

Coded Data

Early Analysis

Cross Cutting Analyses

Visual & Linguistic Libraries Creation

Themes & Insights

Case Studies

Participant Profiles

Outputs for Game Design

Product & Service Usage

Dictionary of Language Dialogue and Situations.
Visual Bank of References

Phone Usage

Ludic Behaviour

Circles of Trust & Influence

Conflicts

Careers & Aspiration Mapping

Gaps & Affordances / User Journeys
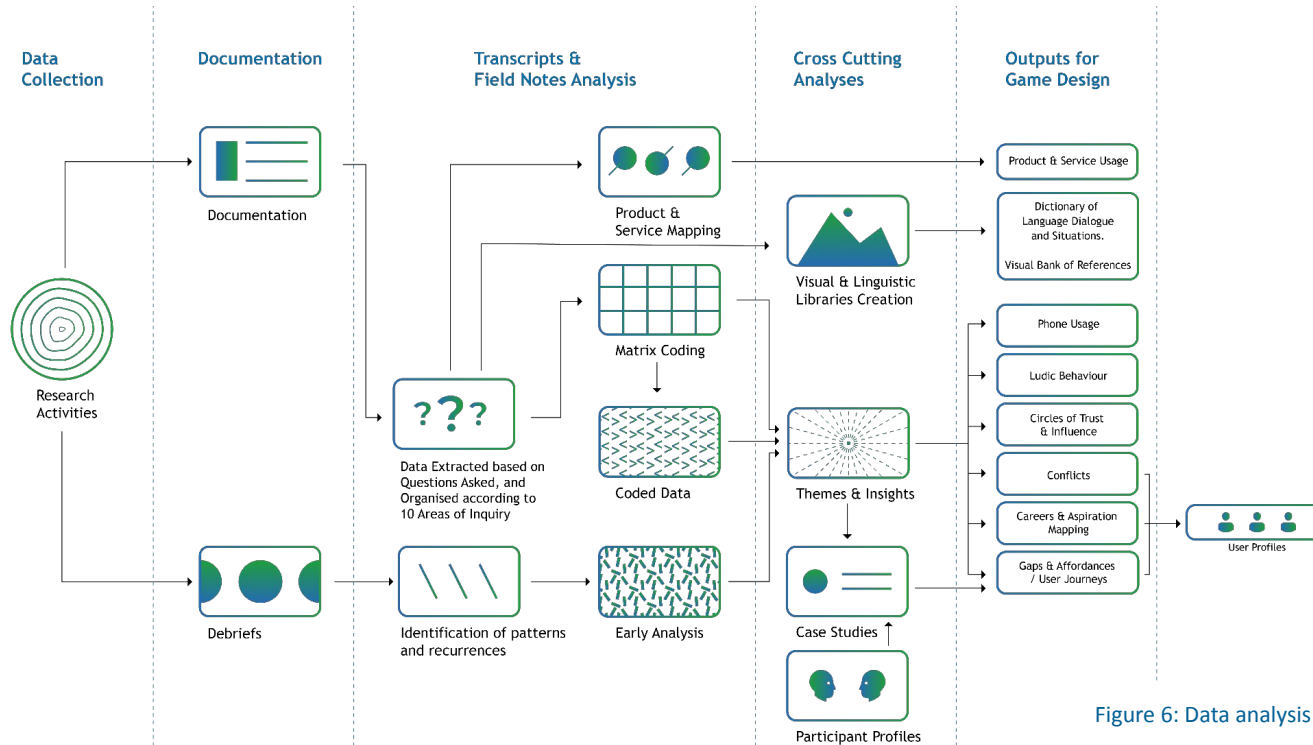
User Profiles

Figure 6: Data analysis process diagram

3e. Data Analysis | Outputs for Game Design

Data collected and analysed will go on to inform different aspects of game design. There are 10 foundational elements or outputs for game design, that were identified at the onset. Each of these elements allow us to understand the user better, identify their worldviews, needs, and challenges, and also contain data that can be read to build game design, visuals, narrative, and flow. These ten elements occur through the report and have been hyperlinked for ease of navigation. While these are crucial components of the report, the report also contains valuable context setting information, and more detailed findings from the field.

User Profiles
Profiles of users created on the basis of how a person reacts to norms, and what believe and values inform the action.

Gaps and Affordances
Represented through user journeys, these are the constraints available to boys, and how they negotiate with them.

Push/Pull (Conflicts)
A key step in building user profiles, these are a mapping of boys' response to social norms.

Phone Usage
A deep dive into boys' relationship with their mobiles and the way they use and engage with their devices.

Ludic Behaviour
An analysis of the gaming behaviour, motivations, and preferences of the target group.

Product & Service Usage
An overview of the services and products (brands, electronics, consumer goods, etc.) that young men use.

Dictionary of Language, Dialogue, and Situations
Compendium of major events and experiences and of slang and commonly used phrases.

Career/Aspirations Mapping
The range of motivations and aspirations the boys articulated.

Circles of Trust and Influence
The people in their lives that the boys relied on to share their lives and seek advice.

Visual Bank of References
A bank of visual data (photos, screenshots, sketches, semiotic photo references) to serve as visual stimulus for game design.

Part II | Context, Findings, and Insights

Context Setting

a. Socio-cultural Context
b. Environment and Objects of Significance
c. Places to Hang Out with Peers
d. Spending Time
    i. Alone
    ii. Family
    iii. Male Friends
    iv. Female Friends or Girlfriends
    v. Digital Devices
e. Common Phone Models & Specs
f. Phone Usage
    i. Apps
    ii. Media Consumption
    iii. Game Preferences
g. Impact of COVID-19

4a. Socio-cultural Context

In the following section we give an overview of the socio-cultural context of our target group.

As the demographic data indicates, our respondents largely belonged to lower income households. Constraints (financial, social, cultural) limited boys' opportunities and exposure to knowledge and experiences. It impacted their education and careers as well.

Our respondents mostly come from densely populated urban low-income settlements and peri-urban areas. In such a dense locality private spaces were scarce but there was a significant connection with the community, neighbourhood, and outside spaces.

Over the next few pages we will discuss the environments of the participants, their everyday circles and relationships, broad phone and game use patterns, and the impact of COVID on their lives.

Image 9: Street across participant's house
[Source: Participant Photo, acquired during data collection]

Ravi*
Working towards a better life

Ravi, an 18-year-old native from Patna, dropped out of school two years ago due to financial issues at home.

He lives with his family, which includes two brothers and a sister. While his elder brother has been working to support his family, he works as a housekeeping professional to support the family. He has a very demanding job that pays low wages. He spends eight to nine hours at work with a single break for lunch.

While he fulfills his duties as a responsible family member and an employee, he wishes he could go back to school. He has not given up on education

yet and would like to find a job that will allow him time to complete his education and provide him with peace and dignity. He still has his old books (seen in the image) and attempts to read them sometimes.

While talking about his plans for the future, he says, "I do not like my current job and will do my best to find a better one." For him, it does not matter if the job is in the government or private sector it needs to be better than how it is now.

His time outside of work is limited and he loves to spend that time with his friends. He says, " I do not have the luxury to focus on hobbies or interests. All I know is that I want to live my life in peace."

Image 10: Ravi's old books that he's saving for his return to school life.
[Source: Participant Photo, acquired during data collection]

*Names used for case studies are pseudonym. To maintain confidentiality, real names of the participants are not used anywhere in the report. The case study is built on the overall understanding of trends and is represented as a narrative for one boy.

Game of Choice, Not Chance   47

4b. Environments and Objects of Significance

Outdoor spaces and personal objects are of higher significance than indoor spaces

Majority of the boys do not have their own room in the house. This is because space within the house is scarce and often shared with multiple people, especially when the boys are living in a joint family.

Limited or no privacy in the house compels boys to go out and find other places where they can pursue solitary activities, or get 'alone time'. In the absence of indoor physical space, **outdoor spaces became spaces for reflection, private time, and hanging out with friends**.

Additionally, home visit interactions revealed that because of lack of space, boys were more attached to their personal belongings than to any physical space or room. For example, **boys considered their phones, study tables, bags, books, and many other objects as reflections of their identity**. Boys mentioned that they wanted family members to seek permission before accessing any of these objects.
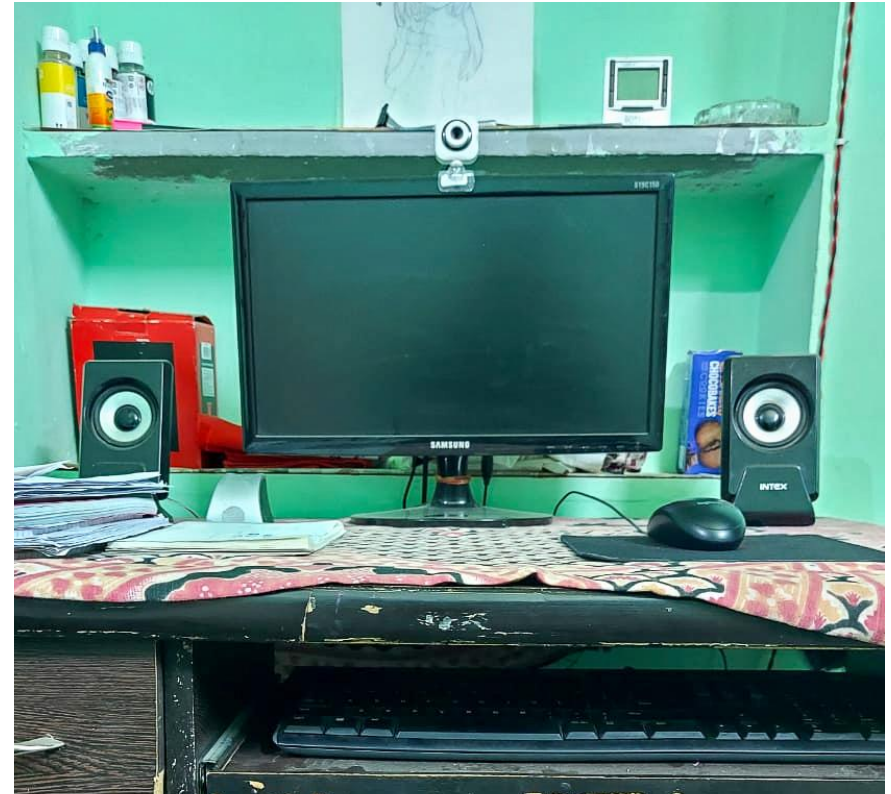

Image 10: Shared desktop computer at a participant's house.
[Source: Participant Photo, acquired during data collection]

4c. Places to Hang Out with Peers

Boys seldom invited their friends home, preferring to spend time with them outdoors at the neighbourhood tea shop or a park. Occasionally, those boys who had access to terraces, would interact with their friends there.

Corner Tea shops

I meet my friends at home or go to a
Thadi/Tapri (translation: tea shops).
There are quite a few in the neighbourhood.

Salman, 18, Patna

Park / Under the tree

There's a park nearby and we usually go hangout there, play and come back home at night.

Rakesh, 15, Delhi

4d. Spending Time | **Alone**

Private time was often associated with reflection time and/ or time spent with friends

The daily routine of young men we spoke to typically consists of activities like spending time alone, helping family members with household work, going out with friends, and attending school and tuitions (supplementary classes). Many boys mentioned that due to COVID they lost a sense of time, and it was difficult to follow a structure throughout the day.

When asked about what they like to do alone, boys reported that they often spent time watching videos, playing games, and exploring their hobbies and interests, like singing, art, and sports.

Spending time alone was sometimes associated with feeling low. In such cases boys cited that they watch videos or play games or go out for a walk to refresh their minds.

In rare instances, boys discussed consuming alcohol, smoking a cigarette or consuming substances when they were alone.

"

I go running in Gandhi Maidan from 4 am to 6 am. I bring back some bamboo to make cupboards. I work on that for next 4-5 hours till 12-1 pm. Then I take rest in the day and go to a coaching class from 3-4:30 pm. Then I take tuition at home from 5-6 pm. From 7-8:30pm, I talk to my friends who live nearby my house. I eat dinner and then sleep by 10pm.

Rehan, 16, Patna

I generally take walks on the terrace while listening to music when I am upset or in a bad mood.

Karan, 18, Jaipur

4d. Spending Time | **Family**

Spending quality and leisurely time with family members was a rare phenomena

Family time, for the most part, meant watching family TV shows, news, playing games with siblings and/or helping with outside work like buying groceries. However such instances were few, and boys rarely mentioned spending quality or fun time with family members.

Family members also noted they had limited time to spend with their children. Boys highlighted that fathers were typically busy with work and mothers were busy managing the household. This resulted in minimal time for leisurely activities with the children. Travelling for leisure was also a rare phenomenon. Family travels, when mentioned, included visiting sites of religious or national significance. Boys also had families in villages from where their parents had migrated, and mentioned visiting their native villages in holidays.

When asked about the kind of games boys played with family members, they mentioned casual board games like Ludo or Carrom, which everybody could easily enjoy.

"

My husband's business was affected because of the lockdown and now he comes home really late at night. By the time he comes home, kids are already asleep. He leaves for work early as well. Previously we all used to go to parks on weekends and father and sons used to play badminton there. Things have changed a lot.

Rukhsaar, mother, Jaipur

I play Carrom Pool and Ludo casually with my family sometimes. I usually play Ludo with my younger brother who is 8 years old. We play offline at home using pass and play option in the game.

Billu, 17, Patna

4d. Spending Time | **Male friends**

Boys prioritized spending time with male friends as it made them feel good, led to discovering new things and playing games together; and meant they would be spending time outside

While spending time with friends boys referred to activities like going to the gym, playing in the park, casually hanging out, playing mobile games, watching movies and videos, and sometimes planning short trips. Sports like cricket and *kabbadi* (a popular Indian contact sport like rugby) were the most favourite sports. Some boys mentioned that while buying new clothes, they preferred going with friends.

Boys who were working reported not having time for friends. This was something they mentioned they truly missed. The only leisure time they found was in the late evenings after completing work, and most of that time was spent browsing on their smartphones.

"

I wake up at 9-10 am, freshen up, have breakfast and hang out with friends till 4pm. We play (cricket mostly, sometimes football) till 6:30 in the evening. I then come back home, have dinner and go out with friends again. I get back home at 10, go to bed by 11 and use my phone till 1-2 am and then sleep.

Nizam, 22, Patna

4d. Spending Time | **Female Friends or Girlfriends**

Interactions with female friends were minimal and time spent with girlfriends was considered to be private time

The code of conduct for friendship with boys and girls was reportedly different. While one with male friends was open and free, the one with girls carried expectations of 'appropriate' behaviour. This included restricting certain topics of conversation, using cleaner language, and being more careful with what they spoke about and how they presented themselves.

Boys usually hung out only with their male friends. Most boys expressed some kind of hesitation in talking to girls, noting they only had classroom interactions with female peers, which were about studies. On rare occasions boys mentioned they had best friends that were girls, but were often teased or mistaken for being in a romantic relationship with them.

Time with girlfriends was considered to be intimate and private where boys liked to talk to their girlfriends, share daily happenings, and speak about personal and family problems. Whether boys had a girlfriend or not, they were aware that physical contact or holding hands in public was taboo, and they needed to maintain certain distance while interacting with girls in public places.

"

I can talk about anything with boys because boys are friends. You can't speak about everything with girls. I mean anything sexual, how can we share such a thing with girls because those friends are like sisters. We could have fun with girls but we have to be polite. We cannot be very frank in our behaviour. We have to be within our limits. We can say anything to our male friends but not female friends. We have to think before speaking. We can't do sexual jokes with them. We could have fun with them normally. We couldn't talk with them about sex and all. Actually, girls are very respectable. They are like goddess Lakshmi, so if I talk badly to them, I will feel guilty.

Sumit, 18, Delhi

4d. Spending Time | **Digital Devices**

Negotiating time to use a mobile phone was not a primary concern for boys

Since the majority of the boys were the primary owners of mobile phones, and did not belong to single-smartphone families, they did not have to negotiate with family to use the device. In some cases, boys had access to other electronic devices like laptops or computers as well. Access to multiple devices was mainly found among boys with better economic conditions.

Spending significant amount of time on phones also meant using extensive mobile data. Data collected through mobile ethnography activities indicates that while purchasing 'packs' (bundles of services including data, talktime, SMS limits, etc) on their mobile phones, boys were concerned more about mobile data than talktime or minutes.

During COVID lockdowns, boys realised how important it was to have a phone of their own as they felt it was the only way to spend time, being confined in their homes. Being confined due to COVID also changed the nature of boys' interactions with peers, and they noted interacting with friends primarily via WhatsApp groups, social media platforms, and exchanging videos and images with friends, as opposed to meeting in person or in public hangouts.

"

On mobile, you can watch anything anywhere. It is a personal screen for you. But TV is fixed at one place and you have to watch it with your family.

Arun, 22, Patna

If it is on TV then everybody can watch together, on the phone you can put your earphones and can watch. I use mostly phone to watch and not use TV more.

Karan, 18, Jaipur

Spending time with family and friends

Sandeep

Sandeep attends online school and spends most of his free time hanging out with his friends. His family time is limited to lunch or dinner conversations. This is the only time he gets to speak to his father due to long hours at the office.

Sandeep prefers to spend his time focusing on studies or playing with his friends. Before COVID his family business was doing well and his father often had spare time to play Badminton at the park with the kids.

Amir

Amir is in grade 9. He considers himself to be an active member of the family and shares a healthy relationship with everyone including his two sisters, one of whom is studying to be a doctor. The family owns a cowshed and he often helps his dad take care of their cows. At home he's the chatty one, he loves talking to everyone, so much so that claims to "tire them all".

When he's not actively participating in family activities he likes studying with his friends.

Image 12: Participant's house.
[Source: Participant Photo, acquired during data collection]

4e. Common Phone Models & Specs

Phone models/operating systems
Almost all respondents were using Android phones. Popular brands included Samsung, Vivo, and Redmi. While their ownership was shared in some cases, they were well aware of the models and what they had to offer in different price ranges.

Memory & Specifications
The respondents were well aware of the phone features, a few of them switched and upgraded to faster phones to be able to access media and play games seamlessly. Faster phones meant good RAM capacity usually around 1 to 2GB, while the storage space was always a challenge, they offloaded apps that weren't used frequently.

Data usage
Internet and data has been more accessible to the boys with 4G networks operating in all. On average, the prepaid price plans most opted for costed between Rs. 200-400 every month, with data limits of 1.5 to 2 GB per day.

Switching off their mobile data when not in use was a common practice. Most often the boys talked about saving data till the end of each day for any important whatsapp/social media conversation.

4f. Phone Usage

Phones are primarily used for entertainment and communication and secondarily to source information

Phone use occupied roughly 4-5 hours of boys' daily time. Boys who were working part time or full time spent less time on their phones compared to others. Discussions on daily routines of boys highlight that boys interact with phones multiple times in a day for activities like watching videos, listening to music, chatting with friends, playing games, and using social media apps. While most boys reported using phones to watch or read news on the internet, it was not a primary activity that they performed using the phone.

Boys also mentioned some other phone based activities such as downloading videos and songs, editing photos and videos, taking photos with friends and family, and taking selfies. A few boys reported using payment apps for online transactions.

To source information boys primarily used YouTube followed by Google Chrome browsers. YouTube was used to watch videos for self-study and to clarify doubts. In rare cases boys discussed using YouTube to learn about their hobbies, watch fitness videos, or to learn a new skill.
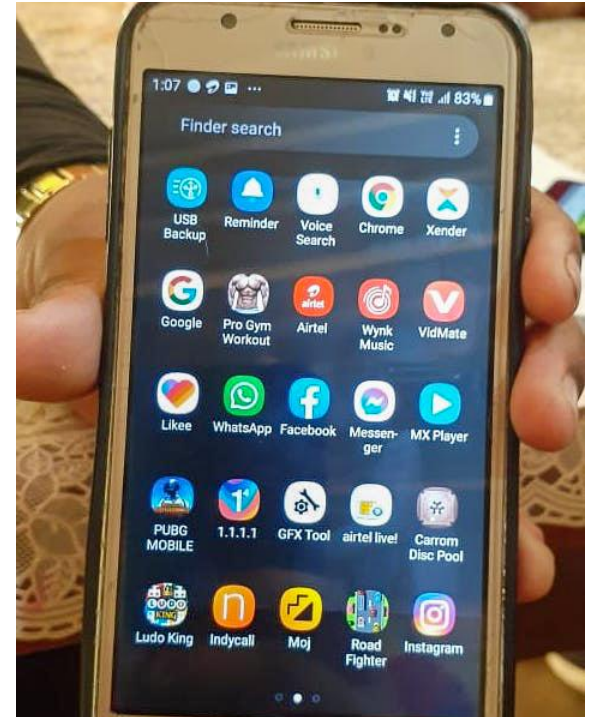

Image 13: Applications on a participant's phone

4f. Phone Usage | **Apps**

Social media and messaging applications remain widely popular because of utility aspect. Apps like Instagram which is considered social media sharing platform also acted as one of the go-to apps to message and communicate with friends. The convenience of the "stories" feature across Facebook operated apps (Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, Instagram) lets the boys stay updated about what their friends are up to.

Music listening was convenient on Youtube but some apps like Savn, Wynk and MX player are used widely. The boys like to save some of their playlists offline to be able to access media even when they're not connected to the internet.

To learn more about certain situations, or to find answers to questions about various topics, the boys talked about just 'Googling it'. Chrome, a built-in app on all Android phones, was a default option to search for any information.
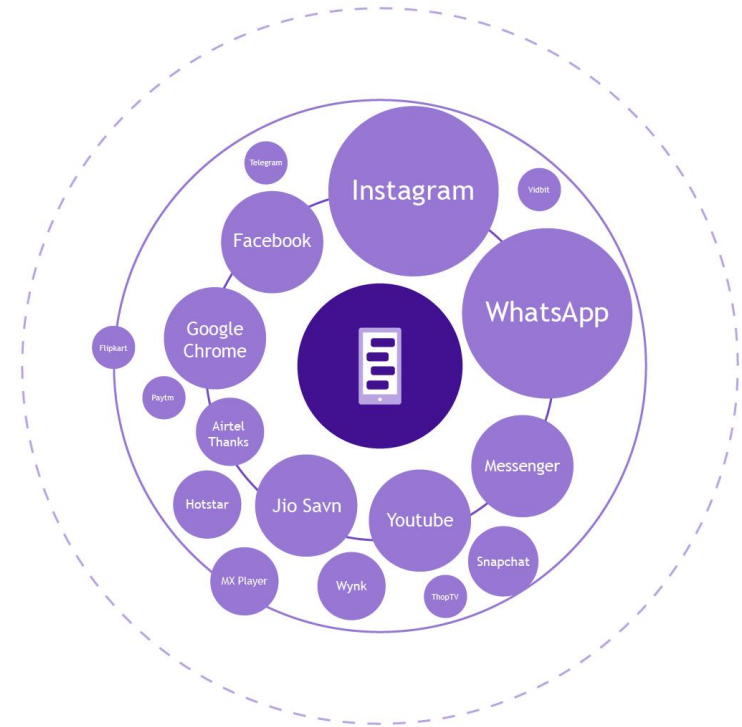

Figure 9: Applications

4f. Phone Usage | **Media Consumption**

Phones were preferred over TV to consume movies, shows, and news

Boys not only used popular TV channels to consume content but also relied heavily on YouTube and OTT platforms like Hotstar and MX player to watch entertainment shows. Some of the boys were well versed with not only Indian movies but also Hollywood movies. South Indian and Hollywood movies were popular amongst boys because of action, drama, and romance as well. In Part 3 of the report, we discuss why boys prefer mobile over TV and their relationship with the devices.

In Part 2 we discuss exposure to pornographic content in further details. It is worth mentioning here as well that respondents mentioned getting exposed to pornographic content via social media platforms where they could access reels and videos. While talking about their favourite movies, they did refer to romantic and love scenes from the movie that they liked or how they enjoyed watching 18+ movies, how they saw an advertisement on contraception while browsing through TV channels or online platforms. To maintain privacy while watching such content, they naturally preferred phones.
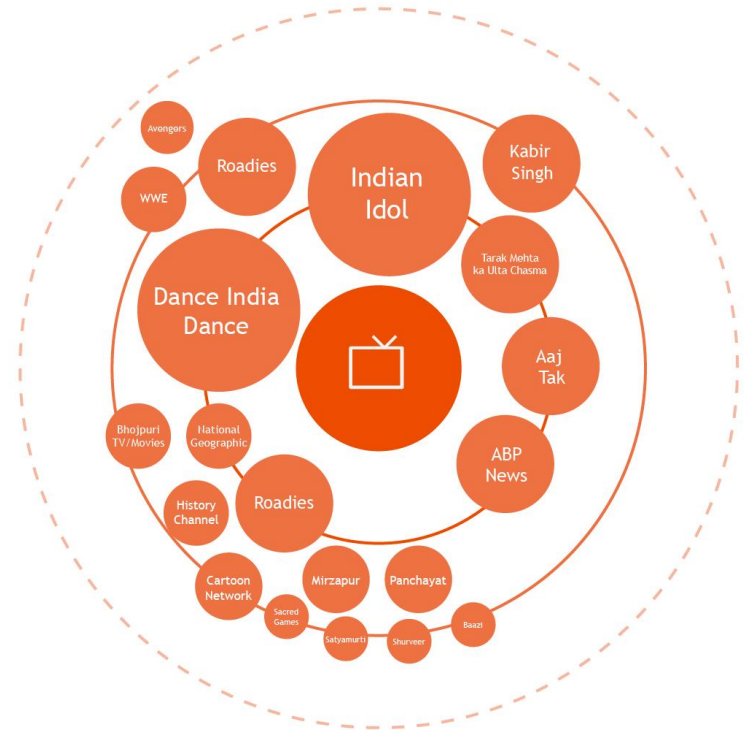

Figure 10: Media Consumption

4f. Phone Usage | **Media Consumption**

Popular personalities ranged from actors, actresses, singers and a few internet influencers

The boys continue to admire the Bollywood heavyweights such as Akshay Kumar. Apart from being an actor, Akshay's public image was elevated to flagbearer of important social issues and his ideals around being patriotic resonated with some of our boys.

Some actors like Hrithik Roshan and Tiger Shroff maintain a physically appealing and action-oriented role on screen. Their social media handles talk around how they achieve these personas. Some boys admire and follow their activities.

Some popular Indian singers were followed, and some boys aspired to someday sing like them. Diljit and Neha Kakkar were popular among the boys partly because of their appearances on reality TV shows.
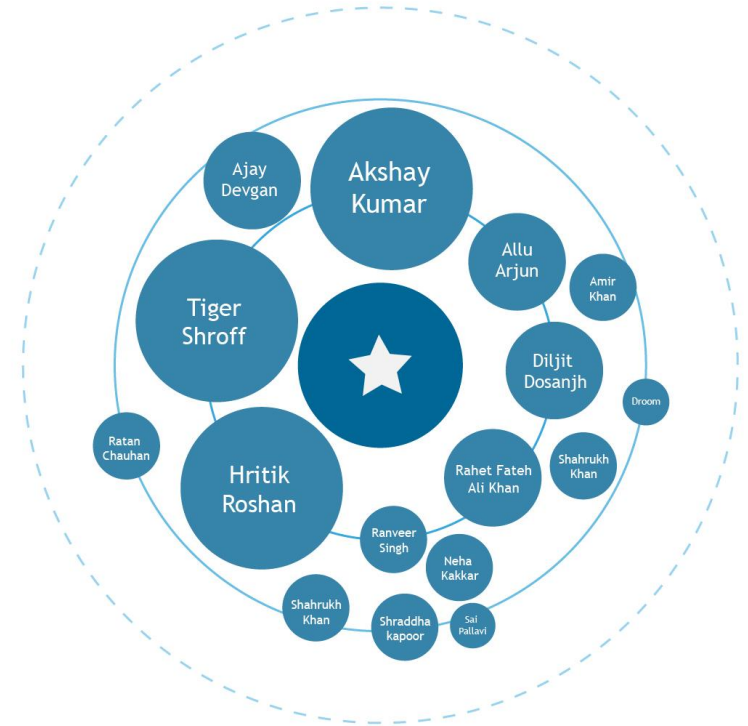

Figure 11: Popular personalities

4f. Phone Usage | **Game Preferences**

Games are discovered via referrals from friends and self exploration

Most boys reported learning about games from friends. Their friends either told them about a game or they saw their friends playing the game. Sociability that games offered, and fitting in the peer group, played an important role while selecting a game. That is why friends' recommendations were crucial to boys.

Self-exploration was another way in which boys found out about new games. Self-discovery of games was mostly accidental. Some of the ways in which boys came across games, and games came across boys were: while browsing on the internet or Play Store, through notifications and ads on different platforms like YouTube, or while playing other games.

Playing games because of the popularity or because the game was trending was only mentioned by boys who played PUB-G.

"

I scroll through the internet when I have free time. In there I watch short videos on games. I watch trailers of games on YouTube. If I like the game then I download it and play.

Karan, 18, Jaipur

PUB-G became really famous and everyone started playing it so I also downloaded it.

Billu, 17, Patna

4f. Phone Usage | **Game Preferences**

Most boys reported playing games as their favourite activity. Some of them also mentioned that playing game is a skill and one needs passion for games to get immersed in the process.

The respondents were indulged in games ranging across genres, while action oriented, fast moving games remained crowd favorites, the classic and familiar board games like Ludo, 8 Ball Pool and Carrom Pool were widely played online and offline.

The phone usage section provides an overview of the broad usage patterns to set early context and allow for more targeted reading of the report. In Part 3 of the report, when we go deeper into the considerations to keep in mind while designing a game for the target population, we delve into phone usage trends with greater detail and granularity.
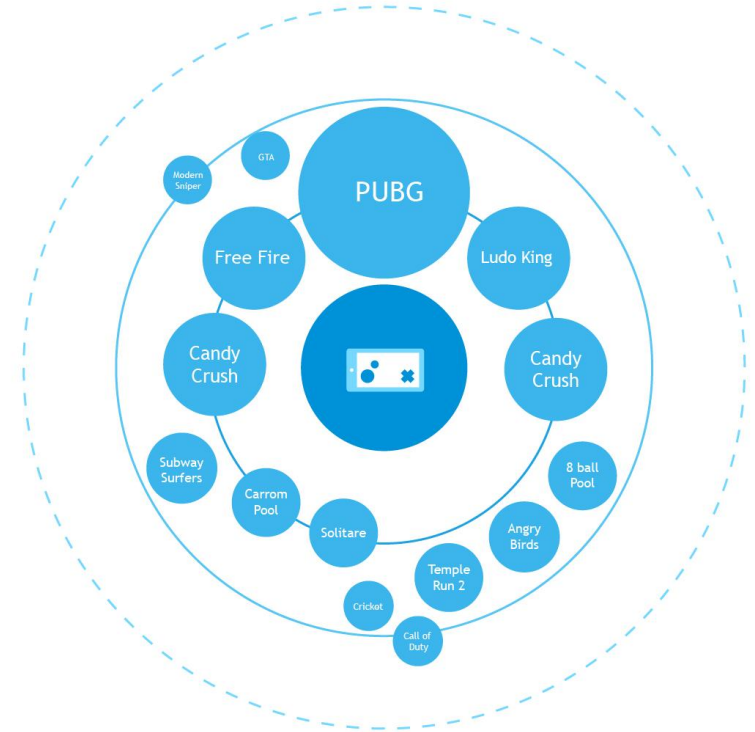

Figure 12: Game preferences

4g. Impact of COVID-19

COVID-19 brought changes in daily routine, interactions with family and friends and the overall outlook on life

Boys experienced greater restrictions on in-person activities like meeting friends, and playing in the park. Limited interaction with friends resulted in feeling bored most of the time. Restrictions on going out also meant spending more time indoors, but not necessarily with family members. Pre COVID schedules kept boys out of the home for most of the day. Boys expressed dissatisfaction and frustration at this change.

For most boys dependency on online studies reduced their interest in studying. Boys shared that they did not like attending online classes as they found them boring. A few boys also felt that because of the limited and disengaging structure of online studies, they were not able to fully grasp what was being taught in the classes. There were a few outliers who enjoyed online classes, as it allowed them more time for self-study and pursue their own interests.

Boys whose parents were working as daily wage earners or ran a small business faced financial problems due to COVID. A few boys felt that due to COVID they realised the importance of saving money for the future. Boys who were working part-time also had to face the consequences of COVID as some of them had to stop working.

"

I now spend more time watching television at home, at times I would also go on the rooftop or otherwise take a short stroll on the road in front of the house and in nearby vicinity.

Vikram, 18, Patna

"

We had online classes, they were okay. It's not as good as in person but I guess it is fine. It is boring, we used to be together but now it is just us.

Sumit, 18, Delhi

"

We faced a lot of financial problems. My father and mother both couldn't go to work during corona. Because of fear of covid spread, their work was stopped.

Armaan, 18, Patna

05

Projection of Identity, Roles and Responsibilities

5a. Gendered Roles and Responsibilities

Boys made clear, gendered associations with roles and responsibilities, and family members often reinforced this

The idea of 'standing on our own feet' was more strongly associated with boys than with girls. Boys felt that the pressure for higher education, better developed skills, and greater financial independence was more on boys than on girls, for whom building careers and livelihoods was not a necessary ask.

During the interactions with male and female family members, a clear delegation of roles and responsibilities between men and women was reported. For instance, earning money, taking care of the family in terms of monetary aspects and conflict resolution were responsibilities of the male family members and managing household expenditure and chores, caregiving, and raising children were assigned to women in the family.

Similar responses were received from the boys. By observing family and social units, boys perceived that the ultimate goal for girls was to get married, and they therefore did not have to worry about financial responsibilities. A discrete, non-overlapping set of roles for boys and girls meant that boys were learning how to place themselves in opposition and difference to girls from a young age, and families were reinforcing this.

"

A son's responsibility at this age is just to concentrate on studies. We expect our son to study well and become a big person and support his father in carrying out his responsibility towards the family.

Anju, mother, Jaipur

It is easier for girls, they have a choice to sit at home and choose to do nothing, while we boys have to work no matter what.

Sonu, 16, Patna

Girls don't need to go for higher studies because they will get married, and boys will provide for them.

Harish, 18, Delhi

5b. Opinions on Girls' Career Aspirations

Boys expressed contradictions while articulating opinions on career aspirations and choices for girls

On a broad level, most boys expressed that times have changed and that both boys and girls can exercise choice and select a career based on their interest. However, some contradictory opinions were also shared. For instance, some boys shared that girls should be able to select their own careers but they should also find a balance between caring for the family and household chores, so that the latter are always managed. Household chores were seen to be a girl's primary responsibility and their career choices needed be aligned with demands within the home.

Occasionally some boys shared that girls could start their own business or take the entrepreneurial path as well. However, kinds of business ideas shared by boys reflected inherent bias. For instance: starting a stitching / dressmaking business or a beauty salon were seen as appropriate entrepreneurial pathways for women.

Some boys also felt that there was no need for girls to find careers, and marriage was viewed as an inevitable way forward for girls. Boys also felt that choosing to earn a living reflected badly on the girl's family, and indicated that the men in the family were inadequate providers.

"

Yes, when you say engineer then a boy comes in my mind. When I say teacher then a girl comes to mind.

Hussain, 16, Delhi

She could be a teacher. She could do stitching, open beauty parlour. These are not very hard things. But girls should be in police and in army also. A girl can work anywhere but they shouldn't be given difficult tasks that men get to do because they cannot take much work load on them. People say that now both are equal but if you see men are stronger than women.

Sumit, 18, Delhi

In our community, people don't consider it good for the females to go out and work. If her father is fulfilling all her needs then why she needs to go out and work.

Salman, 18, Patna

5c. Role as a Provider & Protector

Boys imagine their roles as eventual providers and protectors for families and dependents

Boys imagine their role as providers and problem solvers for their families. Those boys who are currently not earning view themselves as eventual providers and decision makers. This aligns with expectations expressed by family members as well, who clearly note financial responsibility, and 'taking care of everyone's needs and protecting everyone' as key aspects to being a son or a husband. For the most part, and among boys who do not currently support their families, they are expected to find better paying jobs right out of school/college and support their parents.

Providing and protecting are conveyed to boys by their family members from a young age, and boys internalise this for the most part. This significantly limited the amount of choice and independent decision making boys felt they had in planning their own lives and pursuing their own interests.

Our interactions with older boys also indicate that their decisions about prioritizing education or careers were based on the fact that they were expected to become the providers of the family, and they felt they had little room to contest this.

"

Boys they should have an attitude. If anyone says something to them, then they should be able to handle all this. If anyone uses bad language at their back or even upfront then they should have the power to handle all that.

Rehan, 16, Patna

Boys have to do job in future and they [girls] have to get married.

Sonu, 16, Patna

They [Parents] expect me to get a good job so I can give them good facilities and keep them happy.

Surendra, 18, Jaipur

5d. Qualities of an Ideal Young Man

When asked about the qualities that an ideal young man should possess, responses of boys and female-male family members were on similar lines. Following are some qualities which boys think ideal or 'responsible' young men should possess and family members' thoughts on the same.

According to the boys, an ideal young man is the one who:

- Helps family members with household chores like buying vegetables, taking care of outside work

- Earns money and fulfill needs of the family

- Gives respect to elders in the family

- Builds a good image in the society

- Knows how to handle complex situations, deal with the society if they say something against him or his family

- Stays away from getting into bad habits or falling under bad influences, instead focuses on the path of achieving successful career

According to the family members male and female, an ideal young man is the one who:

- Respects his family

- Does not get into fights

- Focuses on studies and finds a good paying job and makes his parents proud

- Looks after his children and family and ensures that everyone in the family stays together

- Talks politely with girls within the family and outside of the family as well

5e.Projection of Identity, Roles and Responsibilities |**Summary**

Key takeaways

+ The family and society play a role in defining what it means to be a young man. The definition of an ideal young man who protects his family, and becomes the provider and problem solver leaves little room for exploration, taking new decisions, or making mistakes.

+ The burden and pressure to perform is already reflecting in the way boys approach girls, and in their contradictory opinions on roles and responsibilities of girls or career choices. There is a limited understanding or empathy for the opposite sex, filled with 'should haves' and 'must haves' rather than inclusive and participatory ideas and a sense of shared futures. It is important to note that family members, school and neighbourhood friends, and media remain primary sources that shape gender roles and ideologies. This highlights the limited exposure and space to understand new and diverse perspectives.

How might we...

+ How might we highlight the value / importance of inclusive and participatory outlooks towards girls, in order to model flexibility and broaden boys' perspectives, to nudge them to think what it means to have an equitable relationship with girls?

+ How might we create an opportunity for boys to discuss, debate, and learn about what is beyond normative, gendered roles?

+ How might we design prompts that will enable boys to initiate open and inclusive conversation within peer circles?

+ How might we design opportunities for boys to reflect on the messaging received from family members, society, and media, while making room for personal experiences, opinions, and values?

Influences and Aspirations

6a. Influences| **Influence by the Family Unit**

While peers are part of discussing future plans, the family unit remains the crucial source of motivating and influencing aspirations

The formation of basic ideas around aspirations were influenced by the family unit and the community that boys lived in. Boys discussed that they wanted to pursue career choices that were validated by parents and the society in general. In cases where boys referred to a broader range of aspirations, they tended to prioritise socially acceptable aspirations over what they felt were were not entirely suitable or socially appropriate, but still personally appealing.

Boys were also told time and again that achieving stable, financially secure careers, and fulfilling family expectations would prove their capabilities as men, make their parents proud, and ultimately make them more eligible in the marriage market.

"

I told my mother I will join the army after class Xth and fill the form and go for training. She said not in the army, join the police or do something else but not in the army. My mom told my father and he said no problem, do whatever dream you have but my grandparents they all said no.

Chirag, 15, Jaipur

Actually, I don't have complete freedom. My parents and my maternal uncle guided me to which career I should choose, then I chose according to that. Family thinks that he [their son] will make a good name in the future. If the family is middle class, then they rely on their son to improve their condition.

Surendra, 18, Jaipur

6a. Influences | **Influence by Media**

Media was not only a medium to consume entertaining content but also a source of ideas on lifestyle preferences and aspirations

Movies, TV shows, and celebrities were seen as a source of inspiration to understand what kind of lifestyles boys would like to have. Early access to media helped boys to get exposed to different movies and shows.

Inspiration for doing social work or good for the community also primarily came from movies and actors. Boys gave examples of famous Bollywood actors like Akshay Kumar and Salman Khan who were involved in promoting and contributing to a social cause and communicating 'positive' and 'hopeful' messages to the community. Often, the real-life characters portrayed by the actors, and some of the values they advocated in real life were viewed as inspiration.

Additionally boys also picked up cues on physiques, dressing styles, hairstyles, and even dream spaces from movies and celebrities.

"

I like Ajay Devgan. He played Bhagat Singh (Indian Freedom Fighter) in one of the movies. I liked his acting.

Rehan, 16, Patna

6b. Mapping Aspirations

Boys articulated a range of aspirations--the kind of jobs, salaries, and working lives they imagined for themselves, the kinds of families and social relationships they wanted, the physical attributes they wanted to achieve, and the material objects or artefacts they desired.

Aspirations can be largely grouped into the following categories:

+   **educational:** aspirations around pursuing education
+   **professional**: aspirations around careers and jobs
+   **social**: aspirations around relationships and families
+   **physical**: aspirations around physical attributes in either one's own self or in one's partner
+   **material**: aspirations around making money, owning objects or artefacts of significance

While aspirations were informed by overlapping sets of drivers (monetary aspirations can have social drivers, for example), this grouping allows us to identify the primary driver the boys foregrounded.

Image 15: Participant's drawing of an ideal space

6b. Mapping Aspirations | **Educational**

Education was considered as a gateway to achieving professional aspirations

Boys responses around pursuing further education indicated that largely boys wanted to complete a certain level of education to secure their career options. This was common between young men as well as older boys. It was rarely associated with pursuing purely educational interest. For instance, a few boys mentioned about seeking postgraduate or doctorate education. It is important to know that boys who wanted to pursue postgraduate or doctorate had access to people within the family who had pursued similar options.

We did hear cases of distance education or taking courses to attain additional skills, however, that was quite rare. Factors such as lack of awareness about additional skills building, limited to exposure to future opportunities, having no time to pursue distance education, financial hardships, or simply being satisfied with the existing education and job opportunities played role in boys not wanting to pursue further. In rare cases, boys reported of learning about computer coding, using EXCEL or completing education from an open university.

"

I am looking forward to completing the graduation. I have to look after my family also. After a few years, when my father will retire, then me and my brother will take the responsibility of the house. So, I want to study more. Due to family's financial condition, I don't want to study after graduation but immediately find a good job and start working. I just want to be settled well.

Arun, 22, Patna

6b. Mapping Aspirations | Professional

Professional aspirations were layered, with boys seeing stable jobs as stepping stones to achieving other social and material distinctions

Professional aspirations included wanting to make parents proud, become worthy of something, achieving financial independence and be successful in careers. However, being able to exercise choice, and **choose one's own career or livelihood** was a strongly articulated aspiration.

While boys did face different pressures from economic conditions, families, and peers, exercising personal choice to be able to make their own decisions and their own ways in the world was something they aspired to.

Relatedly, boys also expressed aspiring to be in control of not only their choices, but also their own time. Wanting to work on one's own terms was strongly expressed, where they would determine how much and for how long they would work. The need to work on their own terms came from observing their own work conditions and seeing how their parents worked all their life. It also originated from the desire to prove themselves and find a more respectable profession.

In terms of willingness to achieve a stable career or awareness of the family conditions, there were not any differences between younger and older boys.

However, older boys had more awareness in terms of understanding their professional and economic preferences, how they want to be treated at work, and their goals. This awareness was mainly built after taking the working experience.

In terms of different locations, we did notice the difference in terms of professional aspirations. Most boys from Jaipur, Rajasthan discussed joining their family business as it was considered as one of the most common career options. Some communities from Jaipur are typically involved in craft and performance based occupations. Boys across the three locations also discussed migrating to other cities as an option to pursue professional aspirations.

"

My maternal aunt's husband told me to take Science as a stream but then I said that it depends on myself and how much study I want to do. Then my family members told me to do whatever I wanted to do and based on what I could do.

Sindhu, 18, Patna

6b. Mapping Aspirations | **Professional**

The following slide highlights different career options that young and older boys thought of to achieve their professional aspirations.

I have to start studying and preparing for NEET again. I want to become a **doctor, a heart specialist - cardiologist**. I am looking which college is good to do that.

Samrat, 20, Patna

I want study as much as possible. I want to study BSc. I want to become either a doctor or a lawyer. My father scolds me if I do not study.

Rakesh, 15, Delhi

I want a government job. **I want to be a teacher, which is a high-level government job.** I will work hard to get that.

Surendra, 18, Jaipur
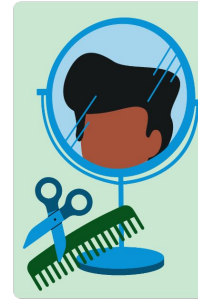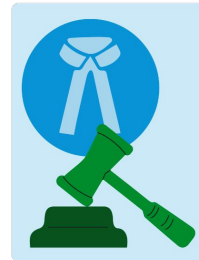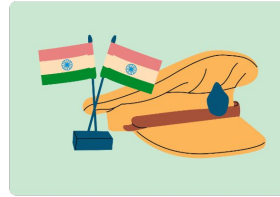
Initially, I wanted to be a model but then I decided to become a **hair stylist and open my own salon**. Now I want to set up my big salon first, and then if I get a chance in modelling that'd be great.

Mayank, 22, Jaipur

I want to secure my future and give more time to studies... I will do B.Com. then M.Com. or I would do law. I also want to prepare to be a bank manager on the side.

Pankaj, 16, Jaipur
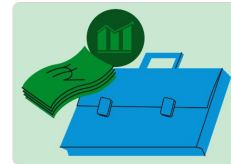
I want to **teach music to children** in college. Even if I have to clean the floor to learn music, I will do that also.

Rohan, 21, Patna

6b. Mapping Aspirations | **Physical**

Looking and appearing a certain way physically had aspirational components to it as well

Physical aspirations applied not only to boys' own self and appearance, but also to what they wanted their future girlfriends or partners to look like.

Respondents aspired to look like actors they admired, and spoke to normative standards of beauty and good looks when speaking of themselves and their partners. When describing their aspired body, boys referred to being tall with muscular body and having a good hair style.

Being physically fit, appreciating lighter skin tones and diminutive physiques in women came across when discussing what they aspired for their partners to look like, and also how they wanted their own bodies to look like. When discussing about future partners, some boys expressed that they did not feel confident that a girl would accept them because they did not think they looked handsome.

"

My favourite hero is Pawan Singh. Like him we also go to the gym. I like his body.

Sonu, 22, Delhi

I like his bearded look in that movie. I think one should have a good body and looks like Salman Khan and Yash.

Nakul, 20, Jaipur

6b. Mapping Aspirations | **Social**

Social aspirations encompassed broader goals of social mobility, fulfilling expectations of parents and family, and also choosing appropriate life partners

Most boys sought to create a life which would take them out of their current socioeconomic circumstances, and the desire to find a life outside the *basti* [tr. urban slum settlement] was strong.

Boys had thought of ways to achieve this and better their social status through different methods -- by pursuing their talents, by building their businesses, by making easy, fast money, and by seeking 'respectable' and dignified professions (white collar work, formal work, independent work).

Finding an appropriate life partner was also highly desirable and this included someone who would be respectful, responsible, caring, and invested.

"

She should talk to me, my parents and my family nicely and with respect. She should have a good image in her friend's circle. She should never misbehave with others. She should be simple and not someone who talks nonsense. Family should not taunt me in the future (because of her behaviour).

Chirag, 15, Jaipur

I want to have my own house. I want to work, it does not matter if it is a private or a government job. I want to be in a good position and not continue this housekeeping work. I want to work in a big company as a peon who handles all the documents and all.

Prem, 18, Patna

6b. Mapping Aspirations | **Material**

Monetary growth, owning a home, achieving a particular lifestyle were discussed as part of material aspirations

Sometimes, aspirations were also largely material, with no other significant social goals attached to them. Making money in itself came across as a significant aspiration.

Products (DSLRs, laptops, high-end mobile phones, apparel, and skin/body care) were viewed to be lifestyle and image enhancing. Often, these lifestyle enhancing products were viewed in an aspirational light. Accumulating wealth, building a large home, and acquiring high-end products came across as aspirations or goals to be met in adulthood.

"

I want my family to live life easily and peacefully. I want to have my own house. I can work in any private or government office, but I want to be in a good position to buy a house.

Vikram, 18, Patna

My hobby is that I want to own a personal superbike if not 250CC but at least a 200CC bike. My father has a 350CC Bullet. When I ride it, I become happy. Have you heard of Honk son GTR? That bike costs around 3 lacs. I want to own a superbike.

Billu, 17, Patna

Raunak
Dreaming of a spacious house

Raunak is 16 years old. He is in school and currently living in a joint family. He describes his dream space as inclusive, spacious, and luxurious, where the entire family lives together, but there is an opportunity to maintain individual privacy and one can spend solitary time in comfort.

He adds he wants to build a house that is peaceful, full of sunlight, with separate spaces to pursue hobbies and interests, with open yards, and big windows. He wants to have a dining table where the entire family can eat together. He has always seen such big and luxurious houses in the movies and he aspires to build one.

He believes that once he makes enough money and has a stable job and a big house, he will experience satisfaction and realise his dreams, and also make his parents proud.
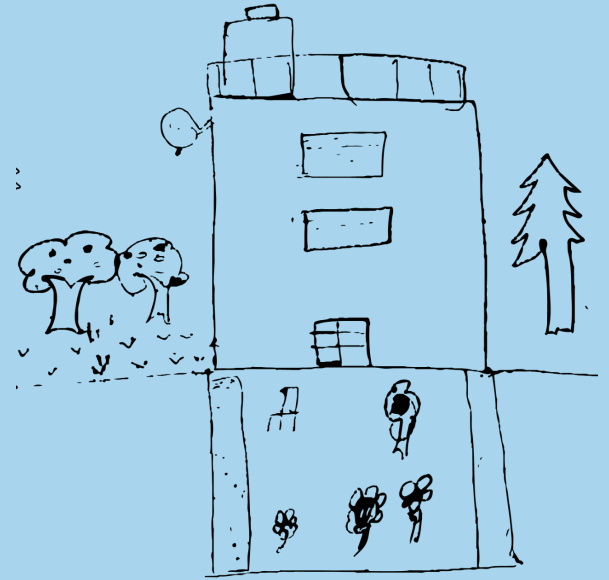
Image 16: Participant's drawing of his ideal space

6c. Motivations and Aspirations |**Summary**

Key takeaways

+ Boys believe that there are external forces such as financial hardships and family expectations that do not allow them to explore and achieve what they truly aspire for. As families also emphasize, aspirations should be primarily focussed on stability, monetary growth, and social status. This was perceived as trajectories already being defined and leaving little room to explore what one truly wants to achieve.

+ Financial hardships are often the primary factor that stops boys' education and compels them to join the workforce at a young age. This forces boys to take up short-term jobs that bring in economic stability rather than jobs that may provide growth opportunities or jobs that align with their own interests.

+ To explore and build required skill sets boys often rely on the mainstream options offered via school or college. Rarely, boys mention taking additional efforts to learning a new skill. While boys have access to the internet, using it for studies and skills building is a recent phenomenon.

+ Physical aspirations are worth noting as they have a direct impact on boys' daily life, the kind of lifestyle they aspire to have, their self-confidence, and perception of their image.

How might we...

+ How might we create opportunities for boys to learn about skills and strengths that they already possess to allow them to recognise their true potential?

+ How might we leverage aspirations as an entry point to initiate a conversation, help uncover what boys really want, enable them to pursue their interests, and to build self-confidence?

Circles of Trust and Influence

7a. Trusted Channels

There was no one consistent circle of trust or influence

Boys confided in a range of people and depending on the nature of the conversation they decided on whom to approach. Our interactions with boys also highlight that they had access to multiple sources of information and advice, ranging from family members, to friends, to individuals from the community. However, conversations about love, sex, and relationships were largely avoided across the board. Their relationship with each of these sources varied.

It is important to note that having access to multiple sources did not always translate into conversing easily and / or without any hesitation. It also did not indicate that these sources were always accessible and approachable.

Over the rest of this section, we discuss how proximity circles change depending on the topics boys wanted to discuss.
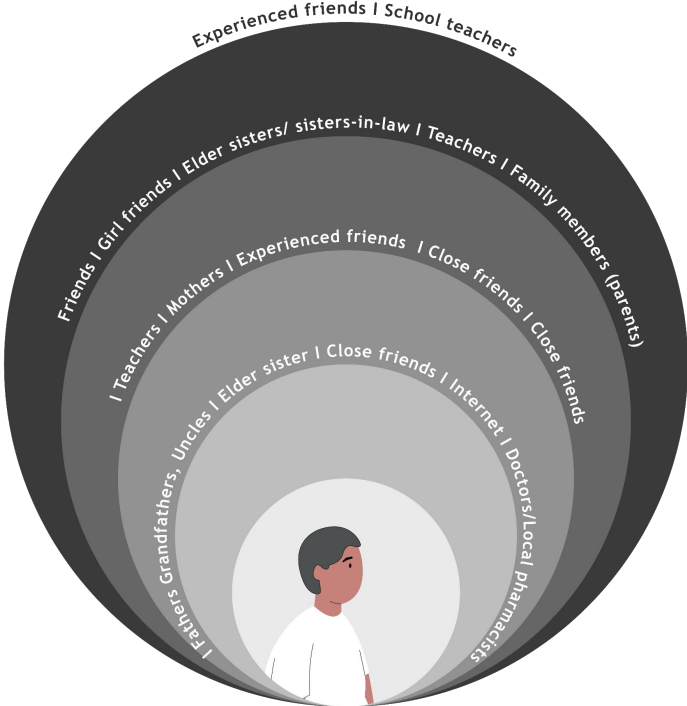
Figure 13: Representative proximity circle

7a. Trusted Channels | **Career Advice**

Elder male family members play an important role in steering career decisions

Relationship with family members was mainly functional and in the advisory capacity. Parents' opinion and their expectations influenced boys' actions and decisions.

Boys reported that it was common for them to share future plans with friends but they rarely reached out to friends for advice. They saw friends as equals who had limited or similar knowledge and experience as them.

Topics of conversations

Available career options → Future Plans → How to prepare for competitive exams
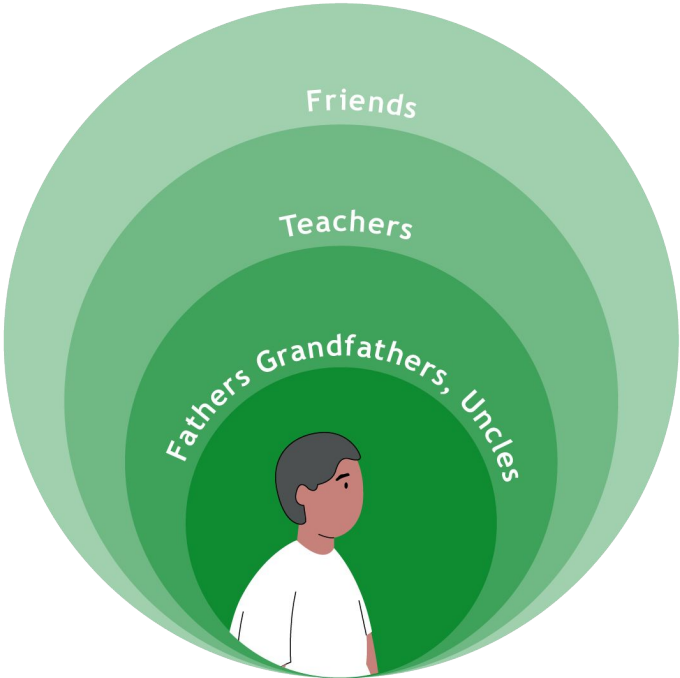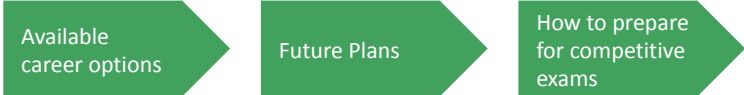
Figure 14: Circle of trust for seeking career advice

7a. Trusted Channels | **Intimate Conversations**

The social norm of reticence and low disclosure with family / the social unit creates communication barriers

Intimate conversations can be defined as sharing feelings and emotional experiences. Boys often found it difficult to share personal and emotional feelings as they were reluctant, and felt it was not always appropriate. While boys reported approaching female family members to have intimate conversations, the nature of conversations did not include love, relationships, and similar anxieties. For example, boys discussed about happenings at the school, and fights that they had gotten into. A few boys expressed that they connected the idea of having a girlfriend with having someone in life who was special, with whom they shared a relationship different to normal friendship, and with whom sharing intimate things was not an issue. Some of the boys who had girlfriends had private conversations where they discussed disagreements with friends and family.

Topics of conversations

Family problems ⟩ Disagreements with friends ⟩ Feelings towards a girl ⟩

Girl friends

Mothers

Elder sister
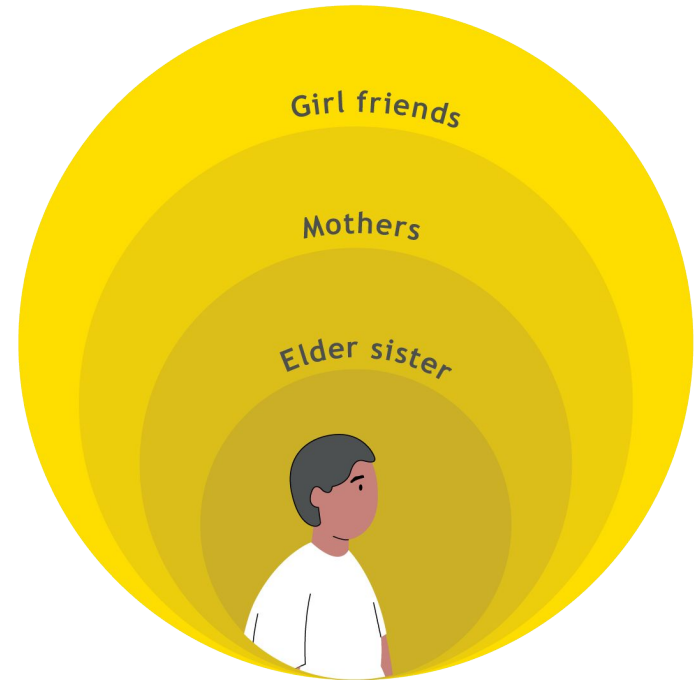
Figure 15: Circle of trust for having intimate conversations

7a. Trusted Channels | **Relationship Advice**

Close friends always remained an integral part of seeking relationship advice

Whether it was about approaching a girl, admitting romantic feelings, complaining about their girlfriend's behaviour, or seeking advice to to resolve disputes; close friends were always given the first priority. When it came to seeking advice on physical intimacy or sex some boys responded that they would approach experienced friends. They defined experienced as someone who has had multiple relationships in the past, who is older, or who is married. An experienced friend need not always be very close, but is a trusted source.

Topics of conversations

How to ask a girl out

Asking for moral support

Advice on disputes
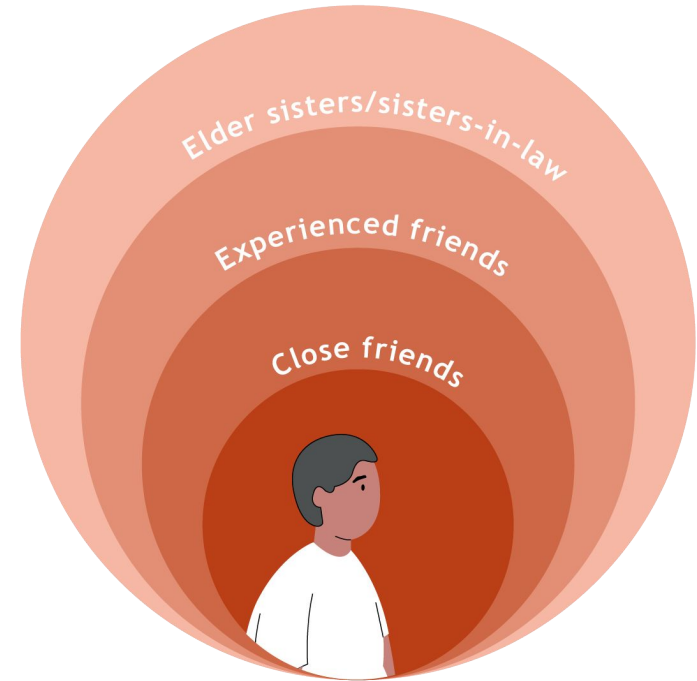
Figure 16: Circle of trust for seeking relationship advice

7a. Trusted Channels | **Reproductive Health**

Boys perceived the internet to be a judgement-free and private platform to explore reproductive health content

When it came to learning about reproductive health, privacy, openness, and non-judgemental were the key factors that defined and influenced boys' interactions. As a result of this, most boys felt safe while looking for the answers on the internet (Google, YouTube), as nobody could see the questions asked and no one could react or reprimand. Some boys reported that they did not feel afraid while using the internet as they could ask the same question or watch the same video multiple times without getting judged.

Irrespective of the fear of getting laughed at or being judged, boys also preferred learning about reproductive health from friends. The circle of friends close and otherwise is also reported as avenues to learn about sources available on the internet, porn sites, and to exchange pornographic content.

As friends were integral parts of the boys' universe and shared most experiences with them, they did not hesitate while approaching friends. However, there were exceptions. For instance, some boys did not feel comfortable talking to friends as they felt shy and did not know how to formulate questions.

Topics of conversations

Doubts related to sex

How a baby is born

Contraception
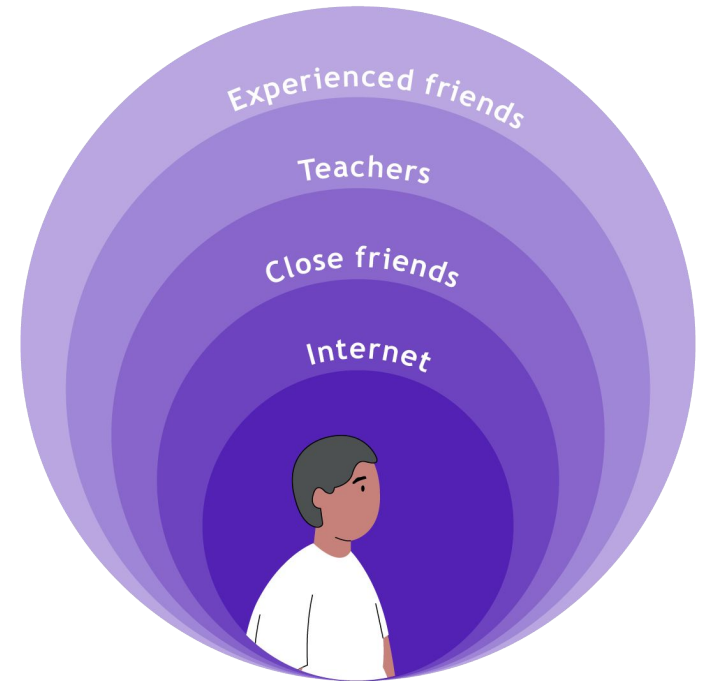
Figure 17: Circle of trust for having conversations around reproductive health

7a. Trusted Channels | **Reproductive Health Emergencies**

Boys seek quick and anonymous medical support in case of reproductive health emergencies

Boys strongly disapproved of parents intervening in reproductive health emergencies. Boys also expressed that talking about incidents like pregnancy or abortions[2] could lead to social embarrassment. For the most part, boys responded to hypothetical, scenario based questions, and they themselves did not necessarily experience such emergencies. However, this proximity circle indicates whom boys would potentially approach during the emergency. Boys discussed reaching out to close friends for moral support. However, for actual advice they reported preferring sources like local doctors and pharmacists. Local doctors were trusted with providing direct solutions to the problem, whereas pharmacists were perceived as someone who would provide a quick solution.

Topics of conversations

Infection → Possibility of pregnancy → Abortion
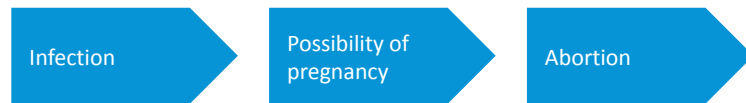
[2]Abortion in India is legal before 20 weeks of pregnancy; this limit is increased to 24 weeks of pregnancy for minors (under age 18) and victims of rape or incest.
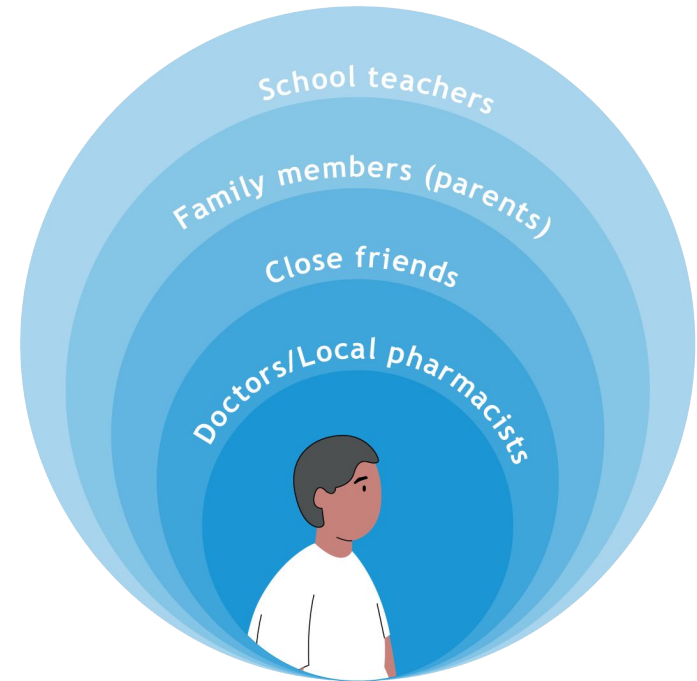
Figure 18: Circle of trust for having conversations around reproductive health emergencies

7a. Trusted Channels | **Quotes**

Career Advice

I talk to my father as a friend, but there is a limitation as he is my father, but otherwise I talk to him. I ask him what to do and how to do, what to do in the future, I tell him what is going on, and my father also suggests me. I generally talk to him when he comes back from work.

Samrat, 22, Patna

Intimate Conversations

They (girlfriend and boyfriend) should share their secrets with each other because when they share something with each other then they get to know more about each other.

Surendra, 18, Jaipur

Relationship Advice

Recently, I told my friends that there is a girl whom I like and she also likes me. I asked them what should I do. Then two of my friends told me let us talk to her, we will see how is she in talking. Then I made her meet them, next day they said the girl is o.k. I made her talk to my sister also and she said she is o.k. Then my sister told me not to cross limit and I said I am mad; it is a recent relation and I like her.

Karan, 18, Jaipur

Intimate Conversations

I talk to them casually. I cannot talk much because they (family members) are older than me. I inform them if something happens with me. Best friend is someone with whom I can share anything and they wouldn't tell my secret to anyone.

Hussain, 16, Delhi

Reproductive Health Emergencies

Interviewer: Did you go to the doctor for an emergency but not normally?

Respondent: I am hesitant to talk about this topic to a doctor.

Interviewer: But you should feel hesitant during emergencies also.

Respondent: But I can't take any risk in an emergency.

Salman, 18, Patna

Reproductive Health

There could be other people also who can tell you about it. You can ask your friends. But these days, people mostly search on the internet. Because there are many doctors who give you information through videos. They have YouTube channels also.

Salman, 18, Patna

7b. Interactions and Dynamics | **The Family Unit**

The influence of family members is seen on boys' career choices, in defining their roles and responsibilities, and rarely as confidantes with whom boys share private information

Most boys expressed that they never thought about sharing their feelings with family members. Family members also noted that they felt uncomfortable and awkward about having conversations with boys about their personal matters.

Compared to male family members, females in the house were considered to be more supportive and understanding. Despite that, the dialogue typically revolved around discussing regular, daily events, inquiring about each others' well-being, and sharing details about progress at school.

Boys were close to their siblings, but worried that they might share sensitive information with parents. As a result boys often mentioned that they were careful while talking to siblings as well. Typically when it was a matter of sharing emotional experiences, feelings, or something about a relationship, boys rarely communicated with anyone within the family unit.

"

Interviewer: Okay. So you never heard his cousin talking about this topic?

Respondent: No, never. He is also focused on studies right now. He has passed the metric (10th class) and he is in 12th class. He only focuses on studies. I don't think he is hiding something otherwise I would have caught it by reading his face.

Radha, Mother, Patna

I am closest to my brother. First of all, he is of my age. He is the only one in the family with whom I could talk openly. I could share something with him, I could tell him when I get into a fight. I could share with him whatever I couldn't share with my mother and father. But then I fear what if he shares this with my parents.

Harish, 18, Delhi

7c. Interactions and Dynamics | **The Peer Group**

Friends are viewed as a more open and tolerant group to converse about sex, relationships, and reproductive health

Friendships were described as non-judgemental relationships, where being foolish or silly was acceptable and one could act and speak without fear of consequences. Topics discussed with friends were diverse, ranging from girlfriend, break-ups, and physical attraction, to discussing future plans and disputes with family members.

Peer groups primarily consisted of male friends who were either from school or from the neighbourhood. Boys who were working reported having friends from their workplace as well. Depending on the nature of the friendship, time spent together, comfort levels, and trust towards each other, boys formed different circles of trust with different topics of discussion and issues of confidence. A close friend was typically defined as someone with whom boys spent most of their time. They were comfortable with sharing their secrets with them. Closeness of friendship depended on how comfortable boys felt with those friends.

Apart from sharing information, peer groups had a major role to play in exploration and trying new things. While some boys were reluctant to indulge in what they considered inappropriate experiences, like smoking or drinking with friends, some boys also noted they would be open to participating in such activities because they did not want to say no to their friends.

"

We talk about someone's girlfriend, if he got cheated. Sometimes someone's parents scold them, we talk about that. We talk about if someone has any problem. Or else we talk casually and have fun. If someone goes on a date then he tells us, if he broke up with girlfriend then he tells us.

Harish, 18, Delhi

Yes, we talk. One of my friend's father drinks alcohol. So sometimes, his parents fight, because of which he couldn't sleep. He asks for some solution from us.

Rakesh, 15, Delhi

7d. Circles of Trust and Influence | **Summary**

Key takeaways

+ There is no one trusted channel of communication and influence. However, close friends are the most frequent sources that boys tap into for a wide range of topics. As boys grow older and get into a relationship or start working the trusted channels may shift to their girlfriends. Involvement of family members remain confined to gatekeepers and advisors.

+ Self-imposed rules and inhibitions in starting conversations outside advice-seeking with family members creates the need to be constantly alert and conscious.

+ Amidst the scattered channels of communication and influences, boys seek private, non-judgemental, and safe spaces where they can freely discuss doubts and receive unbiased advice. For the same reasons, they rely on the sources available on the internet. Considering their dependence on the internet, it becomes important to identify how boys can be empowered to make informed decisions about their physical health.

How might we...

+ How might we leverage the peer circles and turn curiosity/ excitement about topics like porn/ adolescent phase/ physical attraction, any other into a learning and meaningful conversation?

+ How might we empower boys to identify authentic and credible sources to learn about physical health?

+ How might we empower boys to build trust with their peers and partners in order to open up and have a meaningful conversation rather than replicating communication patterns with family members?

08

Relationships and FP/RH Outlooks

a. Love & Relationships
    i. Being in a Relationship
    ii. Family Opinions
    iii. Early Relationships vs. Marriage

b. Sexual Health Awareness
    i. Interactions & Communication
    ii. Formal Sex-Ed
    iii. Pornographic Content
    iv. Misconceptions

c. Physical Relationships
    i. Opinions
    ii. Experience
    iii. What Girls Think

d. Family Planning and Reproductive Health Journeys
    i. Snapshot
    ii. Early Teens
    iii. Mid Teens
    iv. Late Teens

e. Summary
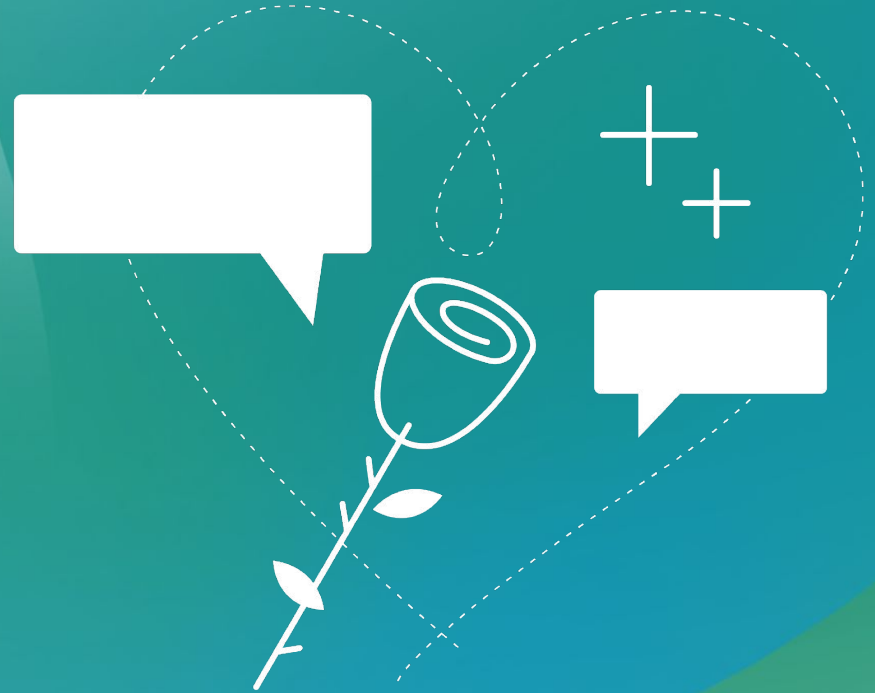
8a. Love & Relationships | **Being in a Relationship**

Boys faced difficulties while articulating why they wanted to be in a relationship

Boys always heard their family members saying that everything has a right time and right age and relationship is something that boys should get in once they get settled. As a result, some boys considered being in a relationship as a sign of being an adult. Some felt that being in a relationship was a sign of enjoying their youth. The idea of getting into a relationship was mainly influenced by peers and media and it was not always self-driven.

Boys found it difficult to articulate their long term plans or expectations from their relationship. Some, mainly older boys, viewed relationships as casual affairs while some felt that they wanted to get into a relationship with the intention of getting married.

Boys often felt that being in a relationship was time consuming, as they had to look after their girlfriend, and ensure they were happy. Boys who felt this way also shared how they did not want to be answerable to their girlfriends.

On the contrary, some boys liked having girlfriends, as they had someone to discuss their career plans, problems, and issues with. Having intimate conversations with girlfriends was important for them.

"

When I saw her for the first time, I got a current (electricity), I got nervous in front of her.

Rehan, 16 years

She becomes upset because of very small things. There are various expenses behind her. Giving and not giving both are problems. So, a girlfriend is the biggest problem.

Sumit, 18 years

8a. Love & Relationships | **Family Opinions**

Family members shared that they were comfortable with boys making friends with girls, but anything more was prohibited

Family members believed that romantic relationships in this age generally lead to physical relationships, and they actively discouraged boys from getting into romantic relationships. In addition to this, they did not feel that adolescence or young adulthood was the right time to explore romantic relationships. They strongly associated this stage with being studious and socially responsible. One of the recurring arguments they posed was that boys and girls are too young to make up their minds, and they should focus on studies, and securing a better future for themselves, rather than getting into unstable and distracting relationships.

Sometimes, arranging a marriage once the boy turned 18 years old was considered as a solution to avoid conflicts arising due to boys falling in love, choosing inappropriate partners, indulging in socially taboo acts, and getting distracted.

"

If he talks to a girl, then it should just be a friendly talk. The relationship shouldn't grow further. Actually we talked to him and made him understand about this because at his age anything can happen. So we told him that he should just talk to girls as friends and not go further with the relationship. We have told him indirectly.

Charu, sister, Delhi

8a. Love & Relationships | **Early relationships vs Marriage**

The idea of a relationship before marriage was limited to spending time together and fulfilling girlfriend's demands, but in a marriage, boys desire wives to follow normative gender roles.

Boys thought that early romantic relationships were built on materialistic needs and wants expressed by their girlfriends, for example, buying gifts for girlfriends, and taking them out for a ride or for dinner. Boys who could not afford to fulfill materialistic needs preferred to stay away from admitting their feelings or getting into a relationship. Even within the context of marriage, boys believed that their role was to fulfill the demands and needs of wives.

When asked about what they were looking for in a girlfriend or a wife; **physical appearance and being loyal** were recurring themes that boys discussed while describing **an ideal girlfriend**. Boys also appreciated traits like politeness, intelligence, courage, trustworthiness, and tenderness.

Boys also often described **an ideal wife** from **the lens of gender based roles and responsibilities.** For instance, someone who would be family oriented, supportive in nature, aware of roles and responsibilities as a wife, look after children and in-laws, and would ensure that the family stays together.

"

My ideal wife should manage all the work of the house and she should live happily with all my family members

Prem, 18, Patna

8b. Sexual Health Awareness | **Information & Communication**

In all, sources of information and advice on love and relationships were fragmented, selective, and partial.

Boys switched between different types of sources, picking and choosing what they wanted to communicate. The sources available to them were fragmented and scattered.

Boys approached individuals or sources with whom they felt comfortable sharing information or asking questions; and who could keep their information private and confidential. For example, experienced friends from the neighbourhood, seniors from school, doctors, and outsiders who did not have direct connection with the family, peers. At school, as teachers teaching sex education were not open and comfortable to resolve young men's doubts, they often identified alternate sources like seniors or other teachers from the school who were not shy to talk about the topic.

Male and female family members expressed that it was important for their children to gather information as it would be useful in the future. However, taboo around talking about sex and reproductive health, and not knowing the language of how to initiate a conversation created barriers to communication. Female family members expressed that it was the responsibility of male members in the family to inform boys, whereas male family members felt the school sex education was sufficient.

"

I think they should get this information from their father. If they don't have a friendly relationship with their father, then they wouldn't be able to share things with him. It is not a mother's responsibility to talk about sex to her kids. A mother is hesitant to talk about sex to her kids.

Rukshar, Mother, Jaipur

The first time, teachers taught me at the school, but they did not explain it fully so I went on YouTube. My friends also told me. Those friends were 2 years older than me so they had an idea.

Karan, 18, Jaipur

8b. Sexual Health Awareness | **Formal Sex-Ed**

Boys reported school sex education to be theoretical, incomplete, unrelatable, and partial

Boys explained that the nature of sex education at school was incomplete and limited. The classes primarily consisted of theoretical lectures explained by reading chapter out loud and / or drawing technical diagrams on the black board. In most scenarios boys reported that sex education was treated as part of teaching Biology, and was not treated as a separate subject or module. Boys typically received sex education when they were in grade 8 or 9.

When asked to describe sex education received in the school, boys referred to it as theoretical and full of jargon. Heavy reliance on theoretical terms made it difficult for boys to find its relevance within their context.

In addition to the curriculum, boys also commented on the limitations of teachers, that is the manner in which teachers conducted these classes. The noted teachers felt shy and uncomfortable while teaching reproductive health topics. As a result teachers gave only an overview of the topic and did not cater to questions raised by the students or go into details and their applicability to real life scenarios. As a result of this boys treated school sex education as one of the subjects from their curriculum rather than an avenue to learn about sex, family planing and reproductive health. Overall, school-delivered sex education was conspicuously distant from real life, practical experience

"

We weren't told about family planning in school. There could be a counselor or a special guest teacher who could tell about this.

Hussain, 16, Delhi

Teachers don't teach us the way they talk with us. They teach us through books in bookish language which is difficult to understand.

Yusuf, 18, Delhi

8b. Sexual Health Awareness | **Pornographic Content**

Boys often discussed passive consumption of porn rather than admitting that they consume pornographic content actively

Factors like taboos around watching porn, fear of what parents will say, and what could be the consequences of watching and being caught, did not allow boys to openly talk about porn. Boys mentioned that those who watch porn get easily addicted to it, which was another stated reason for not wanting to openly admit consumption of porn. Some used their friend's phone so there's no trace on their devices. Either knowingly or unknowingly, all the respondents claimed having had access to pornographic content through some source or another.

Sources to watch porn ranged from specific porn sites to movies and images

Boys discussed getting exposed to porn sites unknowingly via notifications and advertisements on online platforms, mobile applications, and gaming apps. They also mentioned watching soft porn movies, videos, and images. Boys typically accessed YouTube, OTT platforms, Social Media platforms, and messaging apps as well. Boys mentioned exchanging video clips, and images from Facebook, Instagram and WhatsApp with their friends. In rare instances, community places such as local shops and cyber cafes were observed as places to get access to porn.

“

I used to a have keypad phone in the beginning, so that time I used to go to phone shop and ask him to fill those videos (porn videos) on my phone.

Billu, 17, Patna

“

There are ads on the websites like Movies4me, if I click on it then porn website opens up. This is how I got to know about it. My friends also watch it. I got to know from them also.

Sahil, 19, Jaipur

8b. Sexual Health Awareness | **Misconceptions**

Lack of access to authentic sources, not having a space to validate their ideas and concepts, and the influence of equally misinformed peer groups generate misconceptions on sex and reproductive health in boys' minds. The following points highlight common misconceptions believed by the boys:

+ Masturbation makes the body weak and mind lethargic
+ Masturbation is 'dirty' but necessary
+ Watching pornography is a source of receiving education on sex and reproductive health
+ Family planning talks about how to live life after getting married, and how to manage family finances
+ Women have a limited role to play in the act of sex. They get easily tired
+ HIV is spread when women have multiple sexual partners

"

After masturbating we don't get enough energy to go to the gym. Body becomes loose, lips become black and all body parts get affected due to this. If I do it for one month my body will be badly affected due to this. I started gyming for 20 days and when I masturbated then my body became loose. So then I stopped masturbating.

Billu, 17, Patna

8c. Physical Relationships | **Opinions**

Pre-marital sex was considered to be wrong and those who experienced it were lablled as boys and girls under the influence of bad behaviour

Most boys felt that having sex before getting married was wrong. They felt that it was not socially desirable to think about sex before getting married or outside of the marriage. The notion of pre-marital sex being wrong was highly influnced by norms and rules set by the family members. Responses to the question around appropriate age to have sex fall under the range between 18 to 22 or whenver the boy gets married. When probed around why 18 +, boys typically answered that after 18 boys become mature, get married, become independent and are in the process for acquiring a stable job; in other words, they transition from childhood to adulthood.

In rare instances, boys contradicted themselves by saying that sometimes it becomes difficult to control physical attraction and sexual feelings. However, they still felt that getting married and then having sex was the right approach. It is important to note that boys were not ready to openly discuss their sexual experiences, because very few of them had experienced sex. This could be because 'being sexually active' was considered to be 'wrong'. Most of the times, stories and experiences were discussed by attributing them to friends' or acquaintances' experiences. The conversations typically started with, *"I do not have any experience, but my friends tell me…"*

"

I don't have a girlfriend, but I know others who do. Most people make girlfriends to have sexual relations with them.

Surendra, 18, Jaipur

No I did kiss and hug but sex was not in my mind, I know that if you love any girl with all your heart and then you will not think about all those things.

Sindhu, 18, Patna

8c. Physical Relationships | **Experience**

Boys were hesitant to discuss sexual experiences, admitted that when they occurred, they were rarely planned; and no clear trend regarding consent and the roles of men and women could be identified.

Few boys openly shared their experiences of first sexual encounters. Those who did, discussed how it was unplanned and they got carried away in the moment. While these boys were aware of using contraceptives to avoid pregnancy and transmission of disease, they could not use the protection in these unplanned instances. They reported feeling awkward, uncomfortable, fearful, and unprepared. In such scenarios, boys mentioned reaching out to their friends for comfort and moral support. An unplanned led to not using a condom but all boys were aware usage of contraception.

Imagining the role of men and women in sex, having a dialogue with partners on the use of contraception, and taking consent from partners, were questions boys found difficult to answer and there were no consistent responses across the sample. Some boys felt that their girlfriends should listen to them and have sex whenever they experienced sexual desire. Others felt that men play an important role in sex, as they are stronger, and women are physically weaker. And there were a few who felt that asking for consent from women was important. Some boys considered buying condoms to be their responsibility because it was not appropriate for girls to purchase it. Boys also expressed that they were willing to support their girlfriends in case of pregnancy; however, a few of them shared stories of how their friends neglected their girlfriends after accidental pregnancies.

"

When we had sex for the first time, there was a different feeling, I badly wanted to do it, and the girl also said do this and that, so that experience was different. It was not in my control.

Rashid, 16, Jaipur

8c. Physical Relationships | **What Girls Think**

Boys assumed that similar to them, girls also talk about attraction, sex, relationship, and boyfriends with their close friends.

Boys felt that girls shared their curiosity about sex and attraction. Some of them added that girls were close to their mothers and sisters in-laws as well and discuss these matters with them as well.

Friends, female family members, and internet were reported as the sources boys felt girls accessed to find out information and ask questions about sex, relationships and reproductive health.

"

If they have any older friends then they should ask them, otherwise the phone is best. They could clear the doubts from their elder sister or teacher.

Hussain, 16, Delhi

8d. FP/RH journeys

This section presents two approaches to family planning and reproductive health journeys that exhibit boys' romantic relationships and sexual and reproductive health behaviour. It is important to note that this is a scenario-based, projected representation, and in real life neither approaches nor journeys are linear. These journeys have been built after broad themes and sexual reproductive health experiences have been mapped, and case studies have been built.

Age wise phases are provided only to given an indication of the timeline. Influence and weightage of individual phases may vary and overlap in real life. The journeys presented here are composites of common trajectories and perspectives found in the data.

Case studies provided for each of the phases within the journey have been developed based on the aggregated data to represent common experiences in relationships and reproductive health. This applies to quotes used to describe a particular case study as well.

The journey represents two approaches to relationships and reproductive health behaviour. A set of boys who take the **'active'** approach can be described as boys who are enthusiasts, focused on enjoying life, and exploring relationships and reproductive health behaviours by actually taking experiences rather than simply living it vicariously through their friends, media, and so on, or even completely refusing to engage in it.

A set of boys adopting a **passive** approach can be described as those who are at the receiving end and do not seek experiences or manage outcomes in motivated, directional ways. They consume information, but they may or may not participate in conversations with friends on relationships and reproductive health. Those who take the passive approach do not show any signs of initiating experiences or proactively managing events.

Unlike in the preceding sections, 'how might we' statements have been placed against the different phases of the journeys, and not in the end, as part of the summary.

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Snapshot**

Early teens (13-15)	Mid teens (16-18)	Late teens (19-22)

Influence by media on identity, romance

Initiation to pornographic content

Attending formal sex education*

First interaction with girls

Romantic interest in girls

First instance of being in a physical relationship

Seeking practical knowledge about sex, contraceptives & risks
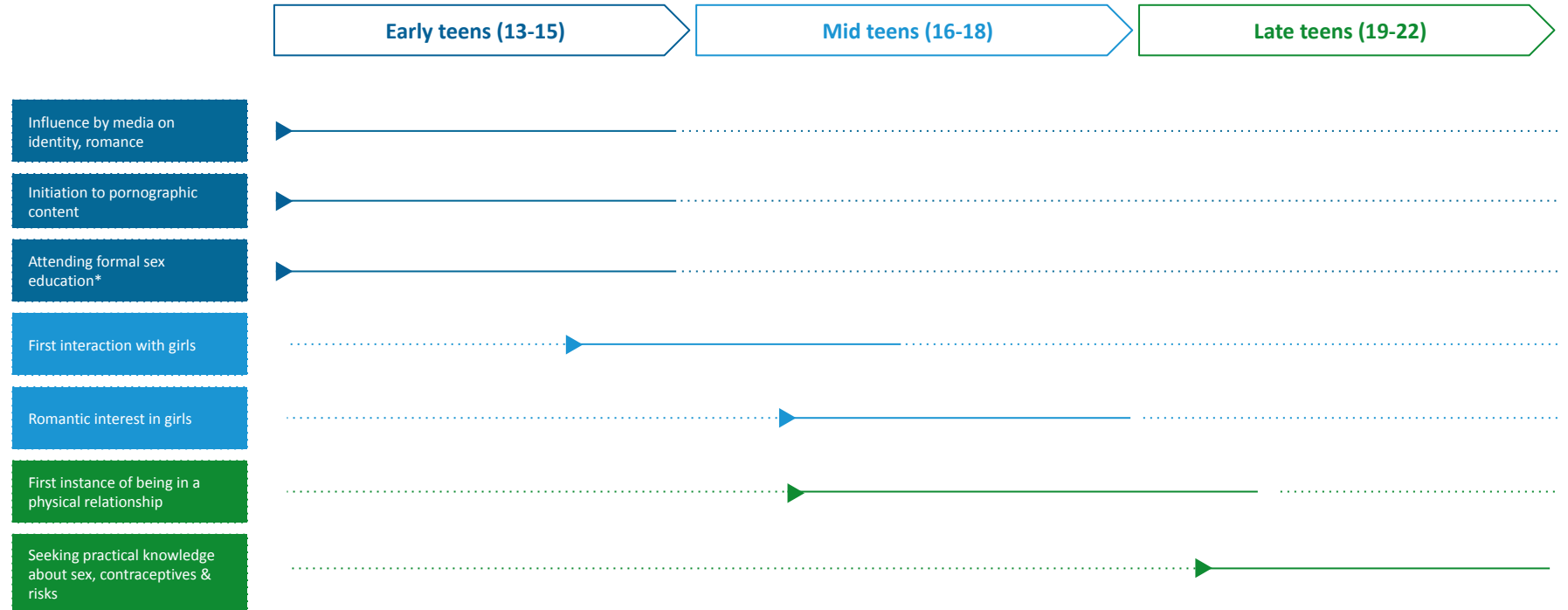
*Formal sex education is typically provided during elementary school. Boys from the study reported attending sex education classes while they were in school. Therefore, it is considered as part of early teens.

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Early Teens**

Influence by media on identity, romance	Early teens (13-15)

Passive:

Along with cartoons and animation, Sanjay begins to take an interest in watching movies with action, thrill, and romantic scenes. He notices different actors and actresses. His family, especially his mother, asks him to watch religious and motivational content, but he is curious about the movies and shows that interest him. He is confused about the sudden changes in his preferences, his feelings, and what he likes and dislikes. He has become more secretive about what he thinks or watches because he is worried about what his family would say. As a result, he finds time to watch his movies and shows alone.

Active:

Rahul is developing a keen interest in adult movies, which have fighting scenes, action, drama, and romantic scenes. His family encourages him to watch news, motivational content, and religious shows. But he ignores them and finds alternate ways to watch movies and shows that he likes, and is not overly concerned with being found out. Similar to his favourite actor, he has started dreaming about building his body, going to the gym, and paying attention to how he looks. Rahul and his friends actively exchange and look for content that they prefer.

Opportunity

How might we create a safe space to discuss changes in the body, changing feelings and preferences, and promote healthy body image and identities?

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Early Teens**

Initiation to pornographic content	Early teens (13-15)

Passive:

Sanjay thinks watching porn is weird and embarrassing, although it is common among boys of his age group. He is worried that his parents will take his phone away, reduce his screen time, beat him up, and threaten him with marriage, if he gets caught watching porn. He believes that porn and masturbation may excite him in the beginning, but they will eventually weaken his body. Some of his friends watch porn and even share photos and videos on their common WhatsApp groups. He feels guilty seeing or accidently downloading them and deletes them before anyone notices. On YouTube or Google, he feels irritated by pornographic ads that pop up on his screen sometimes. He makes sure to hide them, or to skip such ads.

Active:

Rahul thinks that his parents know he has watched porn some time, but avoids talking about it, as it is believed to be completely normal for a boy his age. It is not a topic of discussion between parents and children. It makes him feel like a grown up and fulfils his curiosity about sex. There are times when he and some older friends from school or the neighbourhood chat about sex and share information on WhatsApp. They also encourage him and suggest pornographic sites or videos online. He is not really concerned about whether porn content is realistic or not; he is curious to know more. He also uses social media apps like Instagram and YouTube to access such content. He and his friends visit a local shop where they find blue films and movie scenes.

Opportunity

How might we satisfy boys' curiosity and anxieties about sex (for example, penis size, being normal, satisfying their partner), and speak to their need for accurate and healthy sex education?

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Early Teens**

Attending formal sex education	Early teens (13-15)

Passive:

Sanjay shares that he attended sex education at school because it was part of his school curriculum and attendance was mandatory. Otherwise, he does not think it is important to know about sex at such an early age. He also feels that it is just a physical function and does not need extra thought. He firmly believes that once he gets married he will experience it first hand and learn everything automatically. Sanjay explains, "I am not interested in learning about sex and reproductive health. It feels irrelevant to me. Family planning is important but only when I start thinking of having a family."

Active:

Rahul recalls how his teachers felt awkward while teaching students about sex or the reproductive system. He adds, "children in my class wanted to ask questions because we were curious to know about it. But our teacher was not ready to discuss it in detail." He remembers how his classmates would ask silly questions just to make their teacher uncomfortable. He admits that he hardly learned anything from his teacher. Most of the information was theoretical and full of scientific words. He says, "My teacher mostly read the entire chapter aloud rather than discussing the concepts with us." He refers to a *bhaiya* (older brother / older boy) from his community who usually clarifies doubts "I know an older friend whom I call *bhaiya*. He told me everything about sex. So school was not the first time I found out."

Opportunity

How might we provide easy, engaging access to authentic and reliable sources of sexual and reproductive health information?

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Mid Teens**

First interaction with girls	Mid teens (16-18)

Passive:

Sanjay prefers to maintain his distance from girls. His family members have told him that "friendship with girls is okay but always know your limits." Unlike some of his friends and classmates, he is not eager to talk to girls and says that he doesn't know exactly why, but he hates talking to girls and it makes him extremely uncomfortable. He is willing to talk to girls at his school or after-school classes, only if it is related to studies or school.

Active:

Rahul is someone who thinks it is completely normal to be friends with girls. He has always been curious about interacting with them and grabs every opportunity that he may find to talk to them. Girls are a part of his peer circle and all of them occasionally hang out together. He ignores what his parents have to say on this matter. He pretends that he is listening to them but ultimately prioritizes his interests.

Opportunity

How might we normalize interactions with girls so that boys see them as collaborators, not outsiders or separate entities?

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Mid Teens**

Romantic interest in girls	Mid teens (16-18)

Passive:

Sanjay believes that one should only get involved in a romantic relationship if they are ready to get married. He has friends who have girlfriends and he strongly believes that these relationships are just about sex and do not last long. He is fearful about accepting his feelings and is secretive about them. He used to like a girl in school but did nothing to approach her as he thought it would distract him from his studies and responsibilities.

Active:

Rahul has a number of peers around him who advise him about changes in the body, sexual arousal, and so on. He is aware of the attraction he feels towards girls and wants to have a girlfriend soon. The only downside of getting into a relationship, he feels, is that he will be teased by his friends. His friends talk about their girlfriends and discuss issues and problems that they face with them. Rahul often asks them, his sisters and sisters-in-law for advice about how to approach the girl he likes. He believes that his girlfriend should listen to him and that they must share intimate details about their lives as part of their relationship.

Opportunity

How might we encourage open communication to discuss what does it means to feel attraction, to be in a relationship, and to communicate with partners?

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Late Teens**

First instance of being in a physical relationship	Late teens (19-22)

Passive:

Similar to his attitude about pursuing romantic interests, Sanjay is not interested in exploring physical relationships. He feels that people should not talk about or have sex and physical relationships before they are married, especially girls, as it makes them shameless and dishonourable. He says, "no one would care if the girl got pregnant after she got married, but if this happens accidentally before marriage it would bring shame to the girl's family". He has strong feelings against people who want to have physical relationships before marriage, and is even ready to break ties with them.

Active:

Rahul is someone who is nervous at the thought, but acknowledges the fact that he likes to talk to girls and is attracted to them. He recently had his first sexual encounter, which was not exactly a planned one, and he regrets it. He believes that it is natural to be interested in sex before marriage. It has become a lot safer for unmarried couples also to have sex, he says, as they can book an OYO room (aggregated hotel booking service). Despite this, he believes it will keep him worry-free if he has sex after marriage, because if he accidentally gets his girlfriend pregnant, their families wouldn't be shamed.

Opportunity

How might we encourage open communication within relationships as well as with peers around physical relationships, consent, and the risks associated with sex?

8d. FP/RH Journeys | **Late Teens**

Seeking practical knowledge about sex, contraceptives, & risks	Late teens (19-22)

Passive:

Based on his experiences with sex education, Sanjay feels that seeking information on sex, contraceptives, pregnancy, family planning or sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) is unnecessary. "Sometimes I feel irritated. All my friends can think about is sex. I try to stay away from such friends." He feels that such practical knowledge is irrelevant to him because he is not someone who is thinking of having sex before marriage. After marriage family planning and birth spacing is more important to know about but knowing about contraceptives, STDs, and preventing pregnancy is not necessary.

Active:

Before experiencing a physical relationship, Rahul was peripherally aware of contraceptives, infections, and the risks of having unprotected sex. Earlier he felt that he knew everything and took everything casually. But ever since he had sex with his girlfriend, he has become more cautious. "I know a few things about pregnancy, condoms, period cycles, but I do not think I have a very clear understanding." He uses online sources like videos on YouTube, searches on Google and sometimes talk to his friends, but his sources are limited and he does not have full clarity. "I know about the infection [HIV]. Girls who sleep with multiple partners and have unprotected sex, can spread it. I have friends who visit places where they have sex with other women. They encourage me to come but I don't go, I'm afraid of getting infected."

Opportunity

How might we provide holistic and reliable information about sexua and reproductive health?

8f. Relationships and FP/RH Journeys | Summary

Key takeaways

+ The intensity of exploring and understanding their own bodies, the opposite sex, relationships, sex, and reproductive health differs between passive and active approaches, but the underlying curiosity exists across the board.

+ While young men understand the importance of having knowledge of sex, family planning, and reproductive health; the knowledge is considered to be relevant only for the future. This attitude postpones the knowledge need to a later stage, and leaves them misinformed and confused in the present or while contending with the possibility of relationships before marriage.

+ Interviews with family members highlighted inhibitions on opening up about sex, and speaking about family planning and reproductive health. Interviews with experts indicated how boys were not aware of the language and terminologies that could be used to articulate their questions and experiences.

How might we...

+ How might we empower boys to initiate a conversation with their girlfriends / partners about consent, expectations, meaning of relationships, and physical intimacy?

+ How might we create a digital space where boys feel comfortable and secure to ask intimate questions and share their experiences?

+ How might we turn eagerness and curiosity about relationships, sex and reproductive health into an experience to understand preferences, identity, and expectations?

+ How might we empower boys with the space and the vocabulary to have meaningful conversations about their struggles, confusions, and burdens?

Building a Game for Young Men

9. Who is the game being built for?
10. How will our learnings affect game mechanics?
11. What will serve as inspiration for the design?

09

Who is the game being built for?

a. Conflicts
   - i. Identifying conflicts
   - ii. The framework of norms, attitudes, beliefs, and values
   - iii. Presenting emergent conflicts
b. Traits
   - i. Identifying personality traits
   - ii. Mapping conflicts and traits
   - iii. Definitions of the shortlisted traits
c. Values
   - i. Reference Framework for Values
   - ii. Values emerging from conflicts mapping

d. Persona Types
   - i. Identifying persona types
   - ii. Persona Type 1
   - iii. Persona Type 2
   - iv. Persona Type 3
e. Summary

9a. Conflicts|**Identifying conflicts**

In this section we discuss conflicts faced by boys across different domains. Based on the interactions with boys, we identified recurring themes of tensions or conflicts where boys had to make a decision in order to deal with an expectation from parents, peers, expectations defined by themselves, and a norm or a social rule. Understanding how boys negotiate or adhere to the expectations helped us recognize behavioural patterns and their governing value systems.

Over the following pages, the objective is to discuss some of the prominent expectations that we have observed, and present the varying responses that different kinds of boys might have to these scenarios, and highlight which response demonstrates a tension, or a conflict. **Not all the boys were in conflict with normative expectations.** Some boys were in agreement, or were undecided about how they should behave or think in response to the normative expectations set before them.

To construct conflicts and associated responses of boys, we followed the framework of norms to values. The definitions of individual terms are given on the following page.

It is important to note that beliefs and values identified in the framework create a reference point to understand the normative environment of the boys. We have demonstrated beliefs and values to provide the context of how boys engage with / interpret the world around them, and what their governing models of thought and action are. It is an indicative depiction of what may hold true for the boys from the study sample.

9a. Conflicts|The framework of norms, attitudes, beliefs and values

Norm: Rules and expectations defined by the society, family members, and / or internalised and self-imposed by boys.

Attitudes: A response to a norm which either aligns with it or is in conflict. This response may change depending on the context, understanding of the surrounding environment, and stakeholders involved in the decision.

Beliefs: An understanding of self and the surrounding environment developed through observing multiple experiences and past learnings. Similar responses to the norms over a period of time strengthen beliefs.

Values: Core ideas and concepts that define who we are as self, guide us to judge what is right or wrong, and indicate our actions. Values are formed based on the cumulative response to the surrounding environment, understanding of the society and family units, and learnings from the past experiences. Compared to attitudes, beliefs and values are relatively stable and as a result difficult to change.
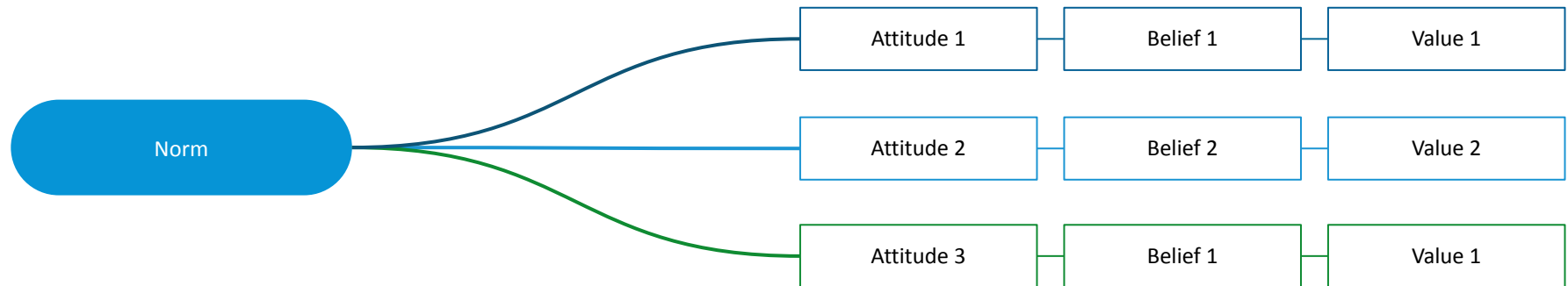
Figure 18: Constructing conflicts on the basis of norms, attitudes, beliefs and values

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

The image below illustrates how the information on norms, conflicts, and variations in attitudes are presented in the following pages..
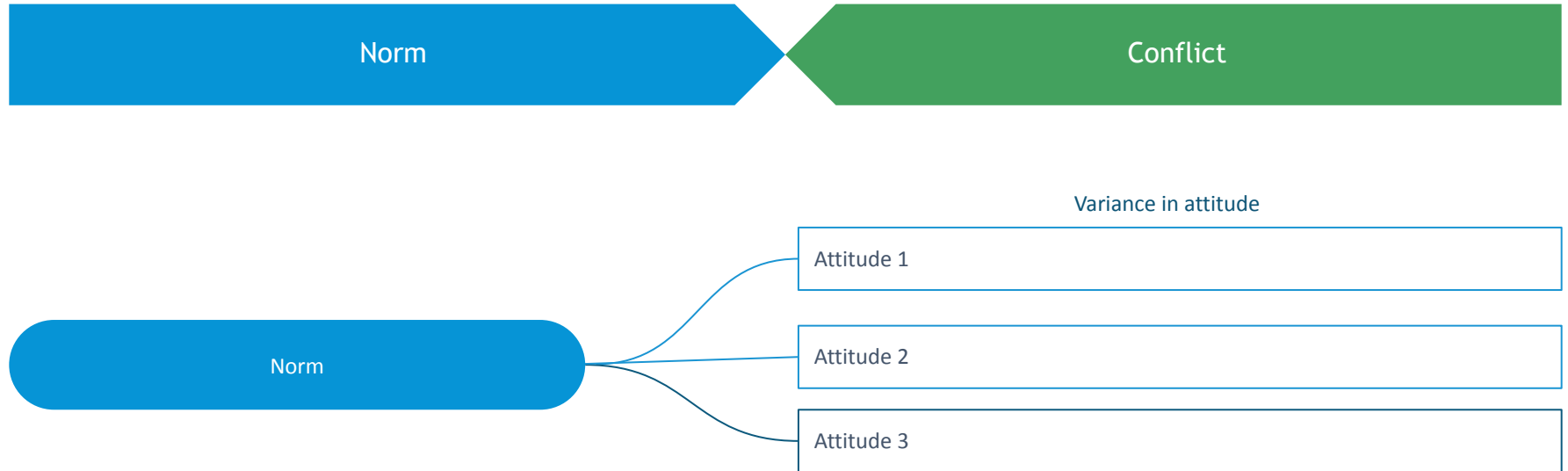
Norm	Conflict

Variance in attitude

Norm

Attitude 1

Attitude 2

Attitude 3

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

Boys are expected to get steady and respectable jobs…

… but they want to chart their own paths to financial independence

When parents expect boys to get steady and respectable job to provide a stable source of income…

Some boys want to prioritise their own interests over their parents' expectations, and set up their own businesses, study further or convert their hobbies into their vocations.

Most are content to follow their parents' direction regarding education or career path.

Some don't agree that a steady and respectable job is the only option, and are willing to do anything that will provide them with some income.

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

Boys are expected to behave responsibly...

... but they want to indulge, experience, and have fun

When boys are told to be responsible and maintain good company, stay on the path of achieving success, and make their parents proud...

Most boys want the structure defined by their parents, in order to be on the right path and become responsible young adults.

Some boys are comfortable with being somewhat irresponsible, like bunking classes or hanging out with friends when they should be studying, but draw the line at smoking, consuming substances, or exploring physical relationships before marriage.

Some boys want to explore fully and experience all kinds of things, 'responsible', or 'irresponsible'..

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

Boys are told on the surface that boys and girls are equal...

...but they notice differences in terms of actual roles, responsibilities and expectations

When boys are told on the surface that boys and girls have equal opportunities, and both are free to study, work, and be successful...

Some boys disagree, and believe that pressures, especially financial, are greater on boys than on girls.

Some boys believe that regardless of the rhetoric of equal opportunities for men and women, eventually girls have to get married so what kind of career they choose or whether they are able to fulfill financial expectations is of little consequence.

Few boys believe that each family and each individual can decide what is the right path for them, and girls and boys are entitled to equal opportunities..

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

Boys are told that talking or communicating is a sign of weakness...

... but they often feel the need to communicate

When social norms do not encourage boys to communicate, and highlight that talking or communication is not appropriate for men...

Most boys agree and feel that communicating feelings, challenges, and asking for help is unnecessary.

Some boys still want to communicate so they adopt indirect ways to communicate their problems (using humour and undermining their emotions) or experiences with friends to avoid getting judged or laughed at.

Some boys still feel the need to communicate so they try to approach selected family members (sisters in-law or elder sisters) who they feel might listen to them with less judgment.

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

Boys are told that getting into a relationship before marriage is wrong...

...but they feel attraction

When boys are told that while they are in their teens or are young adults, they must focus on studies and get good jobs; relationships can be experienced later in life, within the domain of marriage...

Most boys do not overtly question this norm set by their parents, and not consider getting into relationships with girls..

Some boys desire romance and are fine with pursuing it outside of marriage, but want to be in long-term relationships where they value fidelity and loyalty.

Few boys disagree, and want to explore multiple relationships as they believe this is the time to enjoy their life.

9a. Conflicts|**Presenting emergent conflicts**

Boys are told by their peers, they should explore romantic feelings and have a girlfriend...

... but boys are not ready to explore because of their own fears and social pressures

When boys are told that boys of their age should think about girls, relationships, and sex, and are pressured to deal with desire, attraction and relationships by their peers...

Most boys do not want to be friends with peers who encourage this, as it is a violation of parents' trust / code of conduct.

Some boys want to approach a girl they like and express their feelings, but they fear rejection.

Some boys are open to help their friends, but do not want to actively participate themselves.

Some boys agree and want to actively explore relationships and help their friends if they are facing difficulties approaching a girl.

9b. Traits|**Identifying personality traits**

While an attitude is a response to a particular situation, experience, or a person, traits consist of different attitudes and behavioural characteristics. For the most part, traits define what kind of person an individual is. Similar to values, traits are difficult to modify.

As traits indicate how an individual would respond, it is important to see where boys within the context of our study stand in terms of traits.
Mapping conflicts helped us articulate the struggles and needs of boys and the recurring tensions they faced. On the other hand, personality traits help us understand boys' orientation towards life, their relationships and connections with others, and how they negotiate their way with important people / stakeholders in their life.

While shortlisting traits we referred to well known, established theories of personality traits. The definitions of shortlisted traits are given on the following slide.

The shortlist of traits was defined based on the variance in attitudes that was observed among the boys, the needs of boys, and overall project goals.
An exercise was conducted to see how traits, project goals, and boys' needs are aligned.

Conflicts

↓

Attitudes

↓

Traits

↑

Boys' needs and project requirements
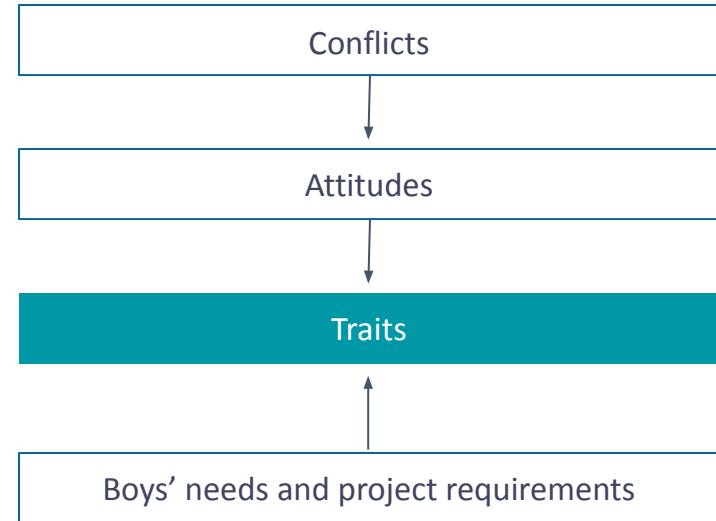
9b. Traits | **Identifying personality traits**

Based on data, and discussions with partners and consortium members during the sense-making workshop, we attempted to identify project requirements, and boys' needs that emerged from primary data. Project requirements and boys' needs were cross-referenced to find areas of overlap, and the specific behavioural traits that could be associated with them. The following infographic is an attempt to demonstrate how traits are aligned with project requirements and boys' needs.

Project Requirements:

Access to FP/RH Info, Products, Skill building
& Career: To provide access to resources that improve their existing knowledge or needs.
Open communication: To encourage open communication to discuss challenges, needs and to seek advice.
Modelling flexibility: To inculcate the value of being inclusive, open, and considerate towards women and future partners.

Boys' needs:

Building self-confidence: To build self-confidence in order to achieve goals.

Practicing open communication: To ensure that their opinion and point of view is considered.

Exercising choice making: To make choices based on their aspirations and what they want to pursue.

Project Goals

Boys' Needs

Traits
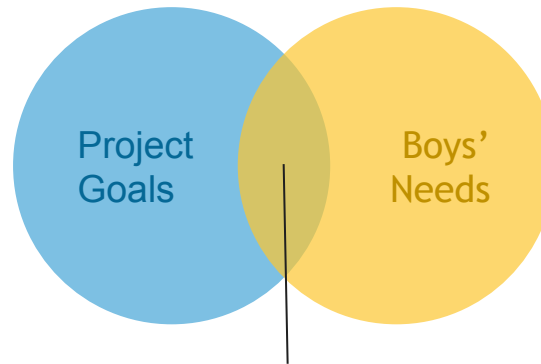
Openness to values and ideas |Communication |Conformity |Self-esteem |Self-efficacy |Self-regulation

9b. Traits | **Mapping conflicts and traits**

Norms	Conflicts	Relevant Traits
Boys are expected to get steady and respectable jobs...	… but they want to chart their own paths to financial independence	Openness, Self-efficacy, Conformity
Boys are expected to behave responsibly...	… but they want to indulge, experience, and have fun	Conformity, Self-regulation
Boys are told on the surface that boys and girls are equal...	...but they notice differences in terms of actual roles, responsibilities, and expectations	Self-regulation, Self-efficacy
Boys are told that talking or communicating is a sign of weakness...	… but they often feel the need to communicate	Openness
Boys are told that getting into a relationship before marriage is wrong...	…but they feel attraction	Self-efficacy, Self-esteem, Conformity
Boys are told by their peers that they should explore romantic feelings, have a girlfriend...	… but boys are not ready to explore because of their own fears and social pressures	Self-regulation

9b. Traits | **Definitions of the shortlisted traits**

The following infographic provides definitions of each of the shortlisted traits and indicates polarity within the traits. By providing two ends for each of the traits, we want to highlight polarity and how a person may fall anywhere within the defined range.

| Flexible | **Openness to values and ideas**
Reflects willingness to be receptive towards others' feelings and opinions, rather than enforcing one's own opinions and ideas | **Rigid** |

| **Open** | **Willingness to communicate**
Reflects willingness to openly communicate needs and struggles, receive advice, and be confident about one's emotions and needs | **Reserved** |

| **Resistant** | **Conformity**
Reflects accepting social norms and goals without understanding one's own opinions, needs, and expectations. | **Compliant** |

9b. Traits | **Definitions of the shortlisted traits**

The following infographic provides definitions of each of the shortlisted traits and indicates polarity within the traits. By providing two ends for each of the traits, we want to highlight polarity and how a person may fall anywhere within the defined range.

| Assured | **Self-esteem**
Reflects awareness of one's emotions and understanding of others' contribution, versus feeling detached or dissatisfied | **Dissatisfied** |

| Resourceful | **Self-efficacy**
Reflects a proactive attitude towards finding ways to learn and grow with respect to aspirations, familial conflicts and reproductive health | **Passive** |

| Disciplined | **Self-regulation**
Reflects the ability to remain grounded and disciplined, over being impulsive, with respect to career, relationship, and health decisions | **Impulsive** |



9c. Values | Reference Framework for Values

As values shape behaviour and may direct future actions or impact the decision making process, it was important to identify and map the values that we observed among boys from the study.

To identify values associated with beliefs, we have referred to different frameworks, one important one being the **Schwartz Theory of Basic Values**. This framework provides a clear understanding of contrast within the different values.

A set of relevant values for the boys within the study were identified after looking at conflicts and associated responses to it. The list of values is provided on the next slide. The values are important orienting frameworks and have been highlighted in the different user personas.
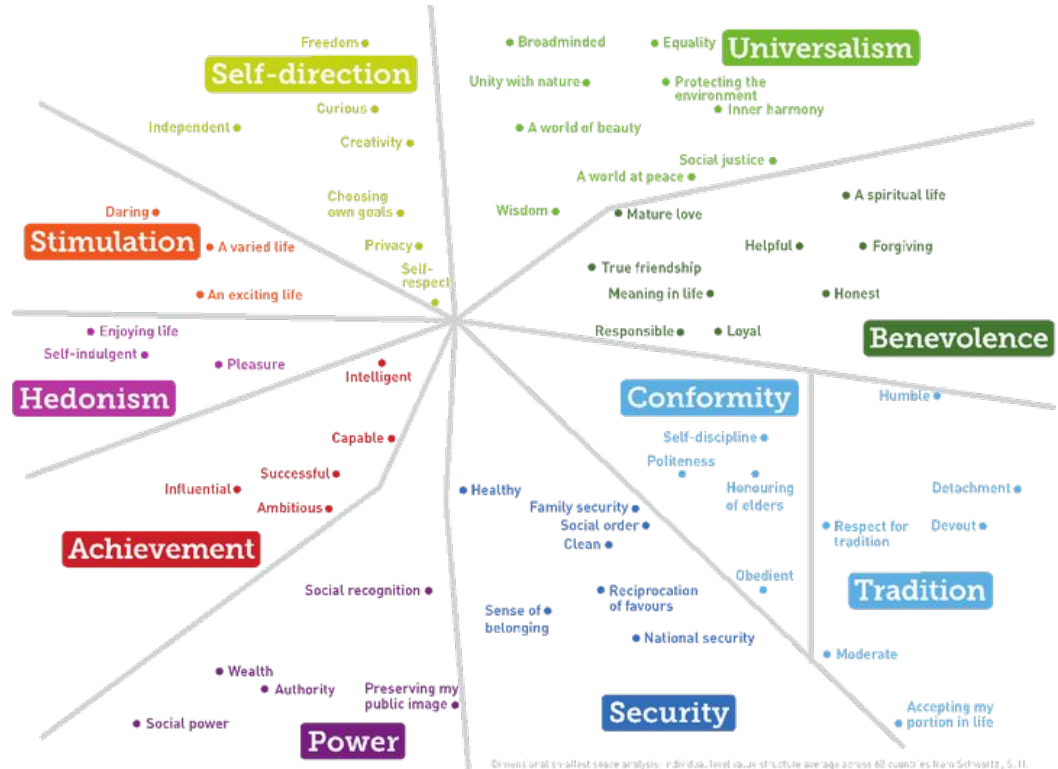
9c. Values | Values Emerging from Conflicts Mapping

Self-Direction

+ Independent
+ Curious
+ Choosing own goal

Stimulation

+ Exciting life
+ Daring

Power

+ Preserving public image
+ Social recognition

Moderation

+ Contentedness
+ Choosing moderate goals
+ Maintaining status quo
+ Surrenders to life

Conformity

+ Obedient
+ Respect for family, elders

Traditions

+ Respect for traditions
+ Accepting life
+ Moderate
+ Detachment

Achievement

+ Influential
+ Ambitious
+ Capable

Hedonism

+ Enjoying life
+ Self-indulgent

9c. Identifying Persona Types

The process of identifying persona types began with the exercise of plotting values (identified during the conflicts piece) on a quadrant chart. We explored a few combinations of key parameters:

+ social role (provider vs self-indulgent) AND efficacy (discontent vs ambitious)
+ motivation (security vs stimulation) AND compliance (conformity vs self-direction)

After multiple iterations of the above framework to determine personas, we realised that viewing them from the lens of only two parameters did not allow us to portray the complexity and dimensions of boys' personalities. In addition, it did not incorporate the overlaps and contradictions that respondents exhibited. Similar feedback was provided by partners during the sensemaking workshop.

In order to accommodate greater nuance, we decide to represent personalities in the form of an agglomeration of **individual traits** (*similar to the approach adopted for the girls' game design*). To build rich descriptions of personas, as well as choice scenarios in-game, the overlaps and permutations of personality traits is crucial. In the following slides, we have combined the traits to model a few emerging persona types.
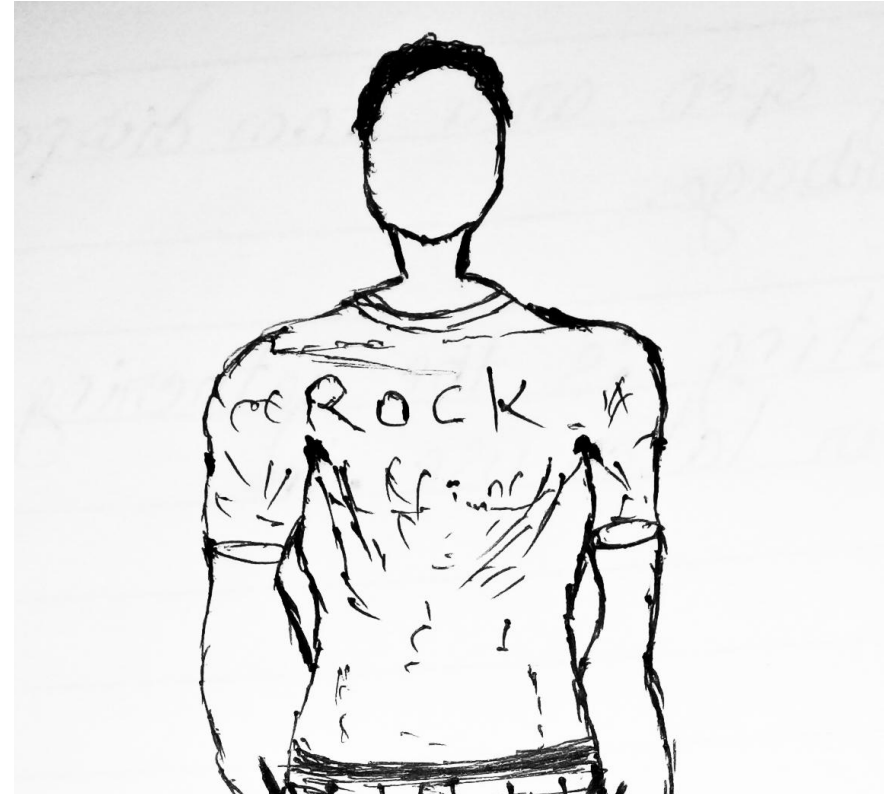
9c. Identifying Persona Types | **Persona 1**

Santosh

Personality traits

Passive | Disciplined | Rigid | Reserved | Compliant

Bio

He prefers following the structure and the path defined by his family. He is conscious of his actions and constantly looks for validation from family, friends and the society. His ideas on gender roles, friendships with opposite sex, what he can achieve in life, roles and responsibilities are highly influenced by what his family believes in.

He is reserved and prefers not to share personal information with family and friends. He finds it difficult to trust others and thinks too much about what others think about him. When it comes to dealing with conflicts, he tends to take decisions without asking questions or exploring the issue.

Motivation

He aspires to have a good job that will pay him well. His main motive is to make his parents proud and fulfill all their expectations.

Needs

Ability to chart one's own goals | Open communication | Modelling flexibility of gender roles

FP/RH journey

He is passive. He thinks of sex, relationships, and love as a distraction.

9c. Identifying Persona Types | **Persona 2**

Amir

Personality traits

Dissatisfied | Resourceful | Disciplined | Flexible | Reserved | Resistant

Bio

There is a willingness to learn others' opinions, and understand a different perspective. However, he finds it difficult to arrive at his own opinions. He is mostly conflicted and struggles between adhering to rigid gender norms versus adopting modern and flexible approaches. He believes that girls and boys should receive equal treatment but at the same time acknowledges that in real-world scenarios, that does not hold true.

He wants to share his personal experiences but faces challenges while articulating and conveying them in the most effective way. He fears that what he says will get misinterpreted and create confusion.

Motivation

He is proactive in achieving his dreams and aspirations. He is on the lookout for learning new skills. He wants to prioritize his education and career over getting married.

Needs

Building self-confidence | Open communication | Resources for skill building and career

FP/RH journey

Between passive and active. He is curious to explore but lacks self-confidence while expressing his feelings.

9c. Identifying Persona Types | **Persona 3**

Ankit

Personality Traits

Assured | Passive |Resourceful | Impulsive | Flexible

Bio

He is assertive about his opinions and actions. He portrays himself as a liberal and modern to protect his image but his opinions and actions often indicate otherwise. He is a firm believer of how boys are expected to protect and provide, and fulfil dreams and demands of family, and girlfriends / wives.

He does not think sharing or taking active efforts to communicate is required.

Motivation

He is determined to achieve a career that will give him fame and success.

Needs

Ability to chart one's own goals | Channelizing energy | Exposure to exhibit skills and talent

RH user journey

He is active and assertive. He is willing to explore physical relationships with his girlfriend and is ready to face the consequences associated with it.

10

How will our learnings affect game mechanics?

a. Device Type and Specification
b. Relationship with the Device
c. Concept of Privacy
d. Young Men's Game Ecosystem
     i. Game Genres
     ii. Motivation to Play a Game
e. Player Motivation Framework
     i. Achievers
     ii. Explorers
     iii. Killers
     iv. Socializers
f. Game Features and Mechanics
     i. In-Game Chat Preference
     ii. Multi vs. Single Player
     iii. Graphics, Personalisation, and Music
     iv. Game Character Preference
g. Summary

10a. Device Type and Specifications

Phone specifications were important to boys as they used their phones primarily for gaming and watching videos.

Boys emphasized on phone specifications while purchasing a new phone. Specifications like RAM and battery life were important to them as they consumed extensive video based content in addition to playing heavy games. When probed around reasons for deleting apps or switching to new phones, limited or outdated phone specifications were the main concerns.

Along with phone specifications, having good quality internet connectivity was another important factor for boys. Heavy usage of social media platforms, gaming, and video consumption dictated boys' preference for a top-up or a phone recharge bundle that provided more data value than talktime value.

Respondents were familiar with Play store and how to download apps, games, and how to browse the internet. All the boys have used phones in the past; their existing phones are not their 'first phones'.
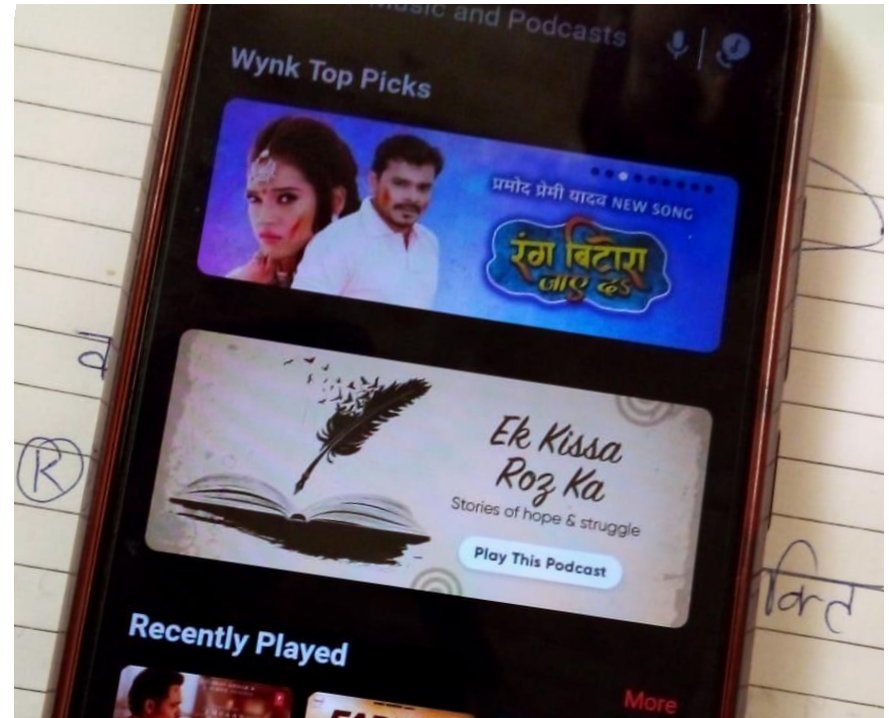

Image 25: Respondent's phone, showing the music listening app Wynk.

10b. Relationship with the Device

Boys perceive phones as their companions, and use them to store private content, for entertainment and communication, and as guides that provide answers to their questions.

Phones are considered to be primarily personal devices and are rarely shared with other family members like siblings. For most boys, they never had to share the device with their siblings or anyone in the house. They were always the primary owners. A few boys reported sharing the device with their younger siblings or with mothers.

Boys enjoyed the independence and flexibility that they received while using phones.

Smartphones allowed them mobility in terms of choosing the type of content, a place to view content, and with whom to watch the content.

Mobility was an appealing factor also because it provided an opportunity to maintain privacy. For instance, boys believed that maintaining privacy, choosing content that they like, and deciding when to watch content is easier with phones than on TV. Viewing content on television was considered a social activity whereas viewing on phones was an individual activity. Phones allowed for private viewing of content.

"

On mobile, you can watch anything anywhere. It is a personal screen for you. But TV is fixed at one place and you have to watch it with your family.

Arun, 22, Patna

I usually watch everything alone. When I watch anything with my mom and dad, it's mostly news or daily soaps. Sometimes, mom does not allow me to watch, she always switches to news.

Rohit, 16, Delhi

There is no better place than [the] mobile. We can watch anything anytime. We don't have to be concerned about other family members also. We can use our phones to get the knowledge through the internet. Because we can get better privacy and knowledge from there and if we want to watch it again then we can watch.

Yusuf, 18, Delhi

10c. Concept of Privacy

Despite being the primary owners of the phone and having personal access to the device, boys strongly felt the need to safeguard their phones.

Boys looked at phones as an extension of their self. To protect their identity, information exchanged with friends, and secrets from parents and younger siblings, boys preferred to safeguard their phones.

Personal information such as jokes, images, videos were mainly shared with close friends. Boys often referred to sexual content as *'non-veg'* content: a popular term with the boys. Our interactions indicate that boys had a clear sense of what type of content to share and with whom. As a result of this, t hey preferred to assign a security code to their phones.

"

People can open it without permission. We need safety from other people, they can view our gallery if we are charging our phone somewhere.

Prem, 18, Patna

Some of my friends share non-veg messages, photos, or videos with me. I will not like it if someone finds out this information on my phone. Hence I prefer to lock my phone.

Yohan, 18, Jaipur

10d. Young Men's Game Ecosystem | Game Genres

The respondents clearly understand the games that exist in the Playstore, and the range of genres they played included narrative driven, action, simulation, and casual games. They resorted to single and multiplayer options based on partner availability and access to the internet. In most cases, they switched to casual board games when they were alone, or chose to play as a distraction, without thinking too much.

Major Genres: The respondents indulged in games ranging across genres. While action oriented, fast moving games remained crowd favorites, classic and familiar board games like Ludo, 8 Ball Pool, and Carrom Pool were widely played both online and offline.

Game formats and in-game rewards: Among the range of game formats PUBG and Free Fire were popular. "**Battle Royale**" formats incorporating 'last-man-standing' and 'survival' tropes were popular. Such games involve dozens of players whose goal is to eliminate all the other opponents.

The idea of rewards gave respondents a sense of achievement. Some traditional concepts like earnings coins still hold strong. Earning character upgrades, weapons and new powers, also contribute to the senses of achievement and appeal.
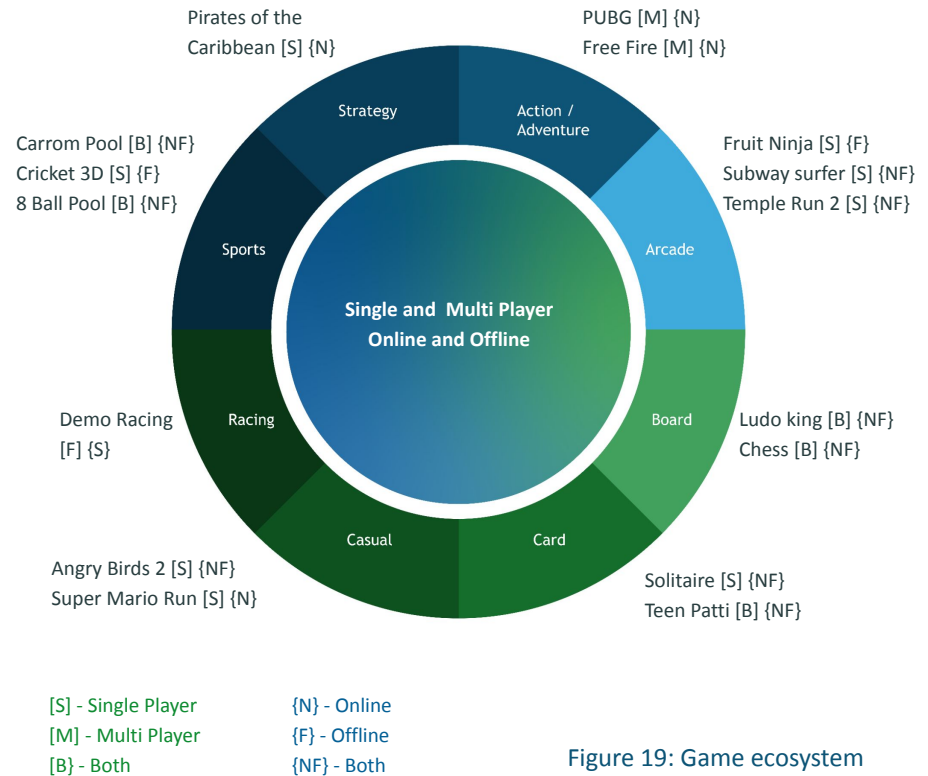

Pirates of the Caribbean [S] {N}

PUBG [M] {N}
Free Fire [M] {N}

Strategy

Action / Adventure

Carrom Pool [B] {NF}
Cricket 3D [S] {F}
8 Ball Pool [B] {NF}

Fruit Ninja [S] {F}
Subway surfer [S] {NF}
Temple Run 2 [S] {NF}

Sports

Arcade

Single and Multi Player Online and Offline

Demo Racing [F] {S}

Racing

Board

Ludo king [B] {NF}
Chess [B] {NF}

Casual

Card

Angry Birds 2 [S] {NF}
Super Mario Run [S] {N}

Solitaire [S] {NF}
Teen Patti [B] {NF}

[S] - Single Player
[M] - Multi Player
[B] - Both

{N} - Online
{F} - Offline
{NF} - Both

Figure 19: Game ecosystem

10d. Young Men's Game Ecosystem | **Motivation to Play a Game**

Mood as determinant of game preference

Games often gave boys a way to elevate their mood when feeling low or when they wanted to vent anger and frustration. For some of the boys, games took their mind off their daily routines, frustrations, and pressures.

Occasionally boys reported that games became a way to vent their frustrations arising from being confined to their homes, and with uncertainty about their futures.

Elements like action and thrill, earning rewards, clearing levels, and winning over other players provided boys with a sense of accomplishment. This contributed to elevating their mood.

"

Download Free Fire, and sign up through Facebook. It is a very easy game. You will agree that it is very good. You will feel light hearted [after playing] and you won't feel angry anymore.

Rakesh, 15, Delhi

I play PubG because I am fond of it. If I don't feel good or feel low then I play this game because it elevates my mood and makes me happy. I like this game because it has fights.

Sahil, 19, Jaipur

10d. Young Men's Game Ecosystem | **Motivation to Play a Game**

Games that provided customization, an opportunity to make choices, and build strategies, were found to be more appealing

Boys enjoyed the ability to customize and make a choice while selecting characters. The choice making and building of strategies gave them more control of their gaming experience and in-game choices, and provided them with possibilities to dictate the way the game was going to proceed.

New discoveries within the game encouraged boys to continue playing the game

As boys progressed in the game, they were constantly looking for ways to discover and unlock new challenges. This steady learning curve pushed them to stay excited about the game and contributed to remaining engaged and continuing to play.

"

I enjoy competing. Someone wins and someone loses. I like increasing my coins and levels. I like playing with friends and a random team. I like its graphics as it feels like a real carrom board. I like music when we aim and shoot striker. I really enjoy the game. It is fun.

Rahul, 16, Patna

10e. Player Motivation Framework

To further identify why respondents select a particular kind of game, we analysed responses and referred to frameworks that help us understand motivations, traits, and preferences. One such framework is Bartle's Player Taxonomy.

In the following slide, we discuss each of the categories from the taxonomy and its relevance to our respondents. It is important to note that real-world players cannot be comprehensively grouped as only one type. They may exhibit characteristics from different groups. Mapping respondents under these categories is an orienting exercise, designed us give an overall sense about their motivations and game preferences.

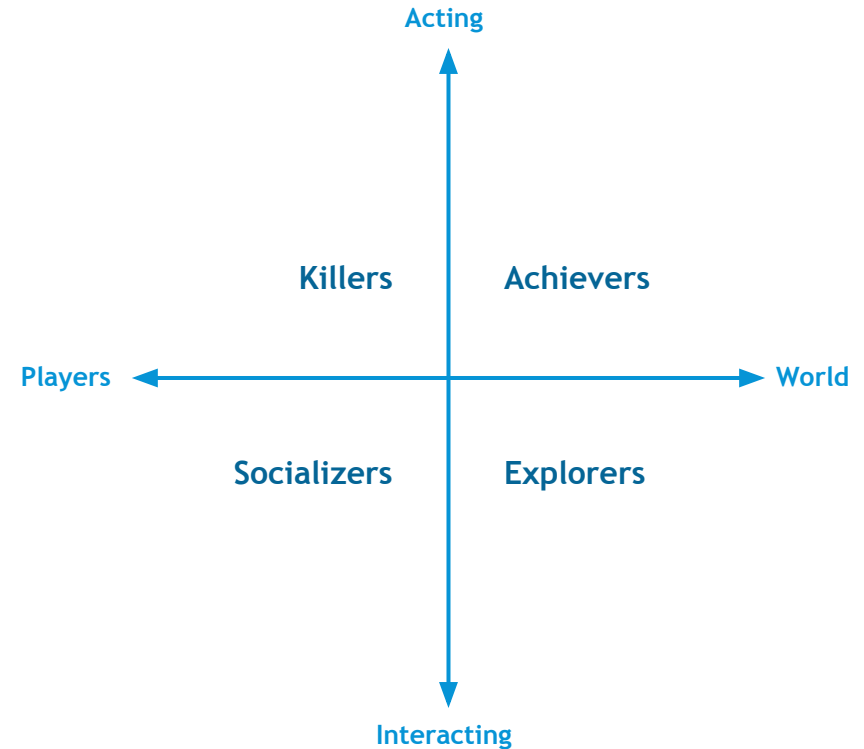Source: https://gameanalytics.com/blog/understanding-your-audience-bartle-player-taxonomy/

Figure 20: Player motivation framework

10e. Player Motivation Framework | **Achievers**

Majority of the respondents from our sample fall under the 'achievers' category. Boys had a strong urge to collect points, complete levels, and keep looking for ways to improve their performance.

This type can be described as players who enjoy showing off their points and achievements; and explore in-game activities to ensure that they are ahead of everyone else. They are determined to complete each level with full dedication and earn rewards for it.

"

I like that he runs in the Subway Surfer and collects coins. You have to use your brain fast to shift him from lane to lane, then his speed increases. It makes my mind fresh. When I clear a level, I feel good but when I can't clear a level in a day then I feel irritated.

Harish, 18, Delhi

I don't concentrate or focus much on graphics. I focus on points in the game. I get stars in this game after crossing levels. I have crossed 19-20 levels.
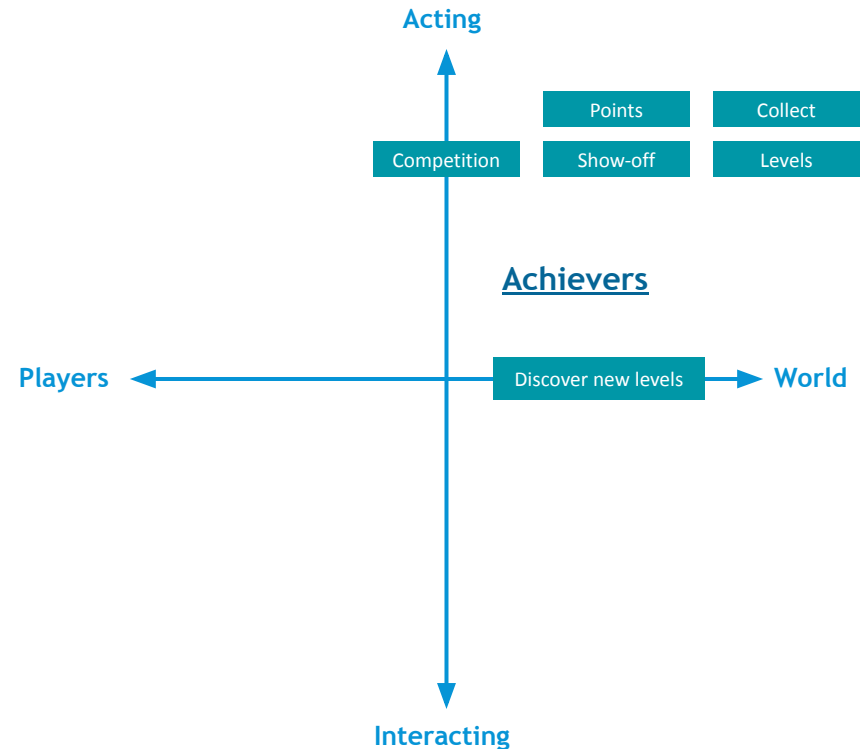
Yusuf, 18, Delhi

Figure 21: Player motivation framework - Achiever's category

10e. Player Motivation Framework|**Explorers**

After achievers, the second most common type that we observed amongst boys was *explorers.* They are collaborative in nature, they find joy in exploring hacks together as a community, and are committed to building mastery in the game rather than simply collecting points. For explorers, discovering new challenges is a rewarding experience.

"

All the characters have similar powers, only their looks and dresses change. As the game progresses and we keep wining and earning coins, these new characters get unlocked, both male and female.
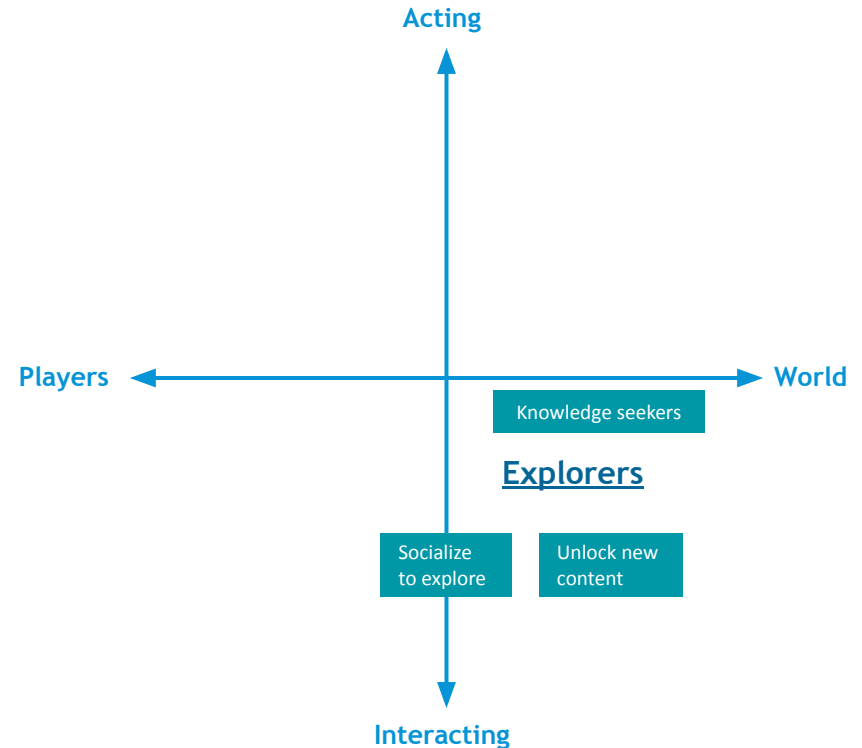
Gopal, 18, Jaipur

Figure 22: Player motivation framework - Explorer's category

10e. Player Motivation Framework | **Killers**

Killers comprised of a very small number within the study sample. Such players prefer a game where they are supposed to kill others to win the game.

Killers' main agenda is to defeat others and win the game without thinking about their teammates. While we repeatedly heard boys talking about winning and playing games based around fighting and action; they also enjoyed playing with their teammates. They enjoyed building strategies as a team in order to to win.

"

The killing pattern, that's why I like the game. If you play better than your playmates then you feel good, sometimes I play PubG with my friends so if I play better than them then I feel good.
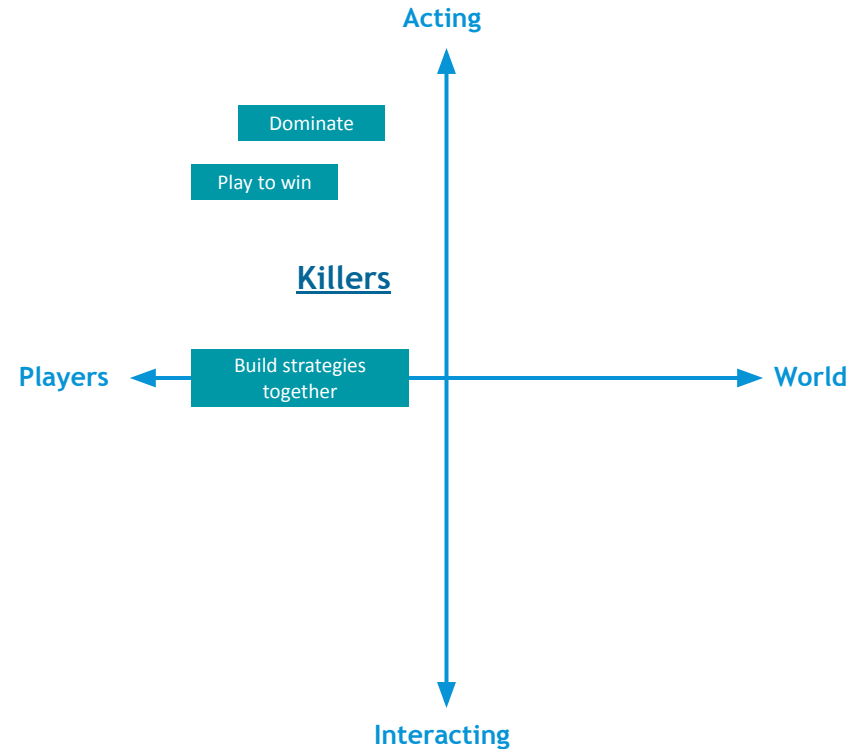
Nizam, 22, Patna

Figure 23: Player motivation framework - Killer's category

10e. Player Motivation Framework | **Socializers**

While we did come across boys who were *socializers* and therefore were keen on playing together with their friends or competing with strangers, the core motive to get together was to play rather than simply interacting with each other.

Socializers are typically interested in spending more time on socializing and less time on the gameplay. Respondents from the study cohort were significantly driven by playing the game and exploring different mechanics and features.

"

We have created a group, so we can connect with each other via video call. Also, we play mobile game together, so we switch on the audio and talk.
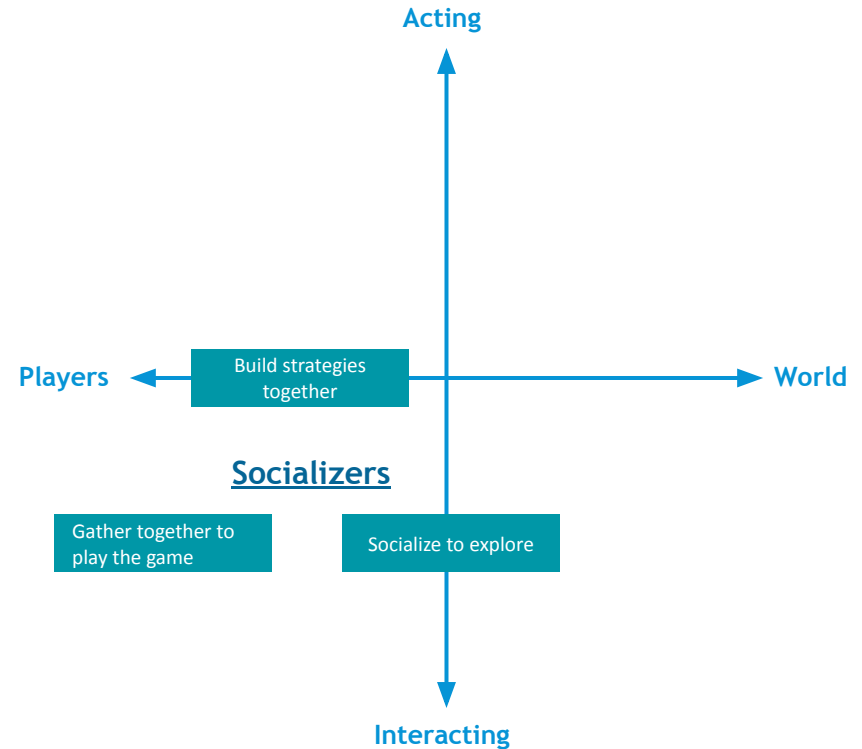
Rakesh, 15, Delhi

Acting

Players ← [Build strategies together] → World

Socializers

[Gather together to play the game]   [Socialize to explore]

Interacting

Figure 24: Player motivation framework - Socializer's category

10f. Game Features and Mechanics

Clear onboarding process: Lack of clear onboarding processes led to deleting the game without even exploring different features and the game mechanic.

Exploration: Boys repeatedly reported that they were always looking for exploration within the game. Exploration could be in terms reaching new levels, increase in difficulty, developments in game narrative, and receiving new updates. At a point when they felt that there was repetition in the game or the narrative became predictable, boys were inclined to delete the game.

Game progression: A faster game progression gave a sense of accomplishment and growth. Boys expressed that by clearing levels faster, they felt they had a better command over the game strategies.

Rewards: Boys who were inclined towards playing games like Subway Surfer, Ludo, and Temple Run, were interested in collecting points / coins. On the other hand, boys who preferred playing games with complex narrative were excited to earn rewards like unlocking new powers or challenges and new capabilities for their characters, than simply collecting coins.

"

I have played Modern Sniper for 1.5 years and I have finished all it's levels. So, I have deleted it now because there was nothing ahead in that game

Billu, 17, Patna

"

I like to play Candy Crush and running games like Subway Surfer. It is fun to collects coins.

Harish, 18, Delhi

10f. Game Features and Mechanics|**In-Game Chat Preference**

In-Game chats were primarily used to communicate inputs on gaming strategies, next moves, and to boost players from the same team.

Boys reported using in-game chats, but also found them to be distracting. They preferred more focused and selective communication within games.

Boys felt ready-made text prompts instead of writing their own messages in chat would reduce the use of abusive language.

Chat prompts also meant that it would be easier and faster to communicate with their team, appreciate good moves, and give strategic direction.

"

I use it sometimes. I only use chat when I need to coordinate for the game. When the enemy knocks me down and I need revival from my teammate.

I like killing other players in the game and moving ahead. We used pre written texts in the games like "Play fast" and "LOL" while playing the game.

Jagdish, 16, Delhi

10f. Game Features and Mechanics|**Multi Vs Single Player**

Single player:

Single player games were perceived by boys as relaxing and less stressful. When friends weren't available or online the boys switched to single player games.

Multi player:

Multiplayer games were preferred as they allowed a chance to compete with others, interact, and provided a sense of accomplishment. Multiplayer games also gave a sense of community, and of being part of a social activity

"

I feel more comfortable while playing single player games. Like I don't have tension to defend my teammate, or I don't have to take tension whether my teammate gets killed.

Salman, 18, Patna

"

I have fun competing. Someone wins and someone loses. I like increasing my coins and levels. My level is 25. I like playing with friends and a random team...I like music when we aim and shoot the striker. I like that we can play with our Facebook friends. I really enjoy the game.

Ramesh, 16, Patna

10e. Game Features and Mechanics|Graphics, Personalization, and Music

Graphics

Boys did not articulate strong inclination or preference for what kind of graphics they preferred. However, while playing games during the Co-Game play activity they did comment on whether they liked specific game graphics or not. They commented on how good graphics brought the gaming experience closer to reality. Some boys discussed how the gameplay was more important them than graphics.

Personalization

Boys took personalisation in games to mean selecting, dressing, and equipping game characters, and rarely from the point of view creating personal profiles. Boys were interested in selecting avatars rather than uploading their own photo.

Music

Boys were mostly indifferent about music used in the game.

"

I don't like adding my picture, I feel I'm not good looking. I don't put photos - I don't look very good in them *(laughs)*.

Harish, 18, Delhi

I like the picture quality, resolution of the game. Although it's animated graphics, the feel of the game is real. I like the maps - snow map, ground, green grass map, desert map, etc.

Jagdish, 16, Delhi

10f. Game Features and Mechanics|**Game Character Preference**

Boys preferred lifelike / anatomically correct renditions of game characters

While describing preferred game characters boys referred to skin colour, height, length of hair, and muscle definition. They showed higher affinity towards military figures, with rugged and tough appearances. Overall, preference was given to characters who fit in the description of a socially accepted man.

The way boys described their game characters explained how much attention was given to selecting a character and how life-like characters were important to them. It also indicated how boys' aspirations, influence of media, and celebrities are reflected on their preference for game characters.

"

The clothes should look good. Hair should be at the right length. In Free Fire I chose a character with a good hairstyle, he wore a t-shirt and a jacket.

Harish, 18, Delhi

The character needs to look innocent on the outside but tough on the inside. I'm also like that.

Yusuf, 18, Delhi

10f. Game Features and Mechanics|Game Character Preference

Boys from our sample expressed higher interest in male characters over female characters because of the skills, powers, and the looks on offer for male characters.

In rare instances when boys discussed their preference for female characters, it was clear that they wanted to use female characters as an assets to win over other players.

One of the boys mentioned that he wanted female characters so that he could trick other players and take advantage of the situation. He reported that opponents were not as aggressive when they saw female characters.

"

I like male characters .They need to run fast and fire quickly and stealthily. They survive quickly in the given time. I played with a female character because I was given one and I took it.

Sanam, 18, Patna

In PUBG, I chose a female character. Her hair is short. I keep changing the dresses. Because female characters are very slim, they can fit anywhere to hide. Also, opponents play 'soft' when they see a girl. That's why I get an advantage.

Hussain, 16, Delhi

10g. How will Our Learnings Affect Game Mechanics? |Summary

Key takeaways

+ Accessibility to phone devices increase chances of boys exploring a range of games and exchanging interests with friends and create sociability.

+ Phone usage patterns and ludic behaviour indicate that choosing apps and games were primarily based on fun and entertainment value rather than on learning and building awareness. As result It was difficult for boys to imagine a game that would help them learn about sex and reproductive health.

+ Through games, for the most part, boys looked for adventure, interaction within the game, conversing with peers to build game strategies, and challenging and engaging narratives that went beyond simply collecting points.

+ The type of games preferred by most boys, and the game characters that they preferred reflected their aspirations, what they thought about female counterparts, and how they constantly sought connections between media and their lives.

How might we...

+ How might we develop a digital space which is private, secure, informative, relevant to boys' contexts, yet enjoyable?

+ How might we design a game that is easy to comprehend, caters to the curiosity of boys and the desire to feel accomplished and move forward, has an engaging narrative, and is relatable to boys' context?

+ How might we design a game which boys are comfortable playing with their friends, in front of family members?

What will Serve as Inspiration for Design?

a. Process Overview
b. Narrative Hooks and Twists
c. Dictionary of Language and Dialogue
d. Visual Library
e. Product and Service Usage
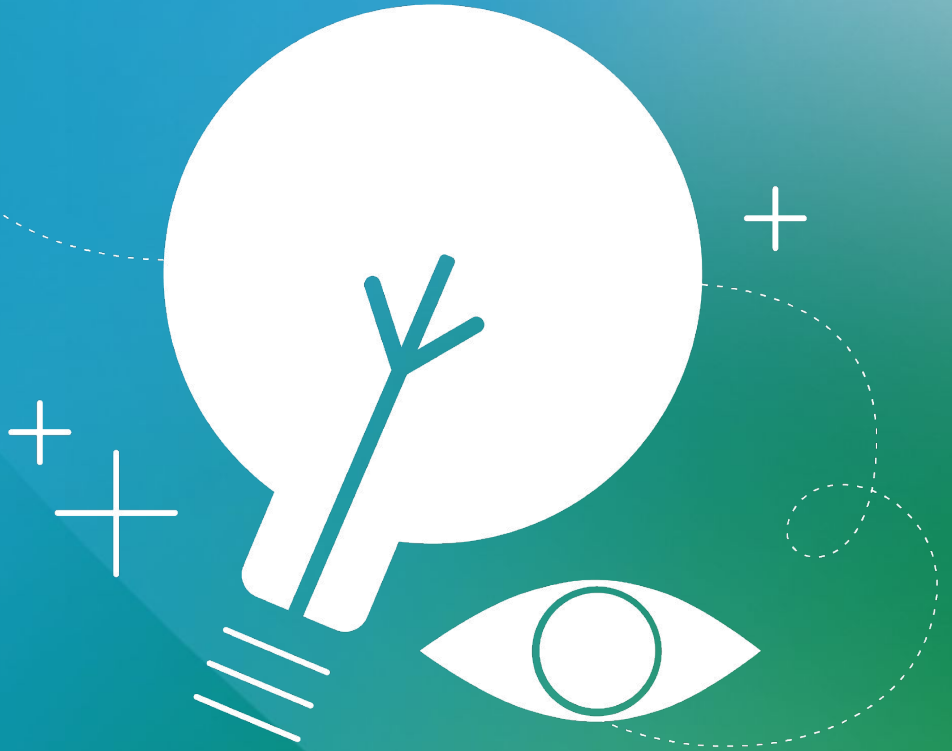
11a. Process overview

The following parameters were kept in mind while selecting interesting and relevant narrative hooks and twists:

- Is it helping us understand the context and life of adolescent boys?

- Is it a situation where boys are facing a conflict and as a result has to take a decision to move forward?

- Is it aligned with any of the elements of game design?

- Is it giving us more nuances around how boys behave in a given situation, and who they interact with?

- Can it provide visual and linguistic cues to inform game design?

The idea behind building a library of narrative, language and visuals is to provide inspiration while developing a game for boys. It will help us understand boys' point of view and enable us to better represent their realities both in terms of game visuals and game narrative. For detailed lists please follow the links provided on the respective slides.

11b. Narrative hooks and twists

Some instances the boys narrated gave us insights into how they behave or react in certain situations. The repository below could benefit game designers while constructing in-game scenarios and plots.
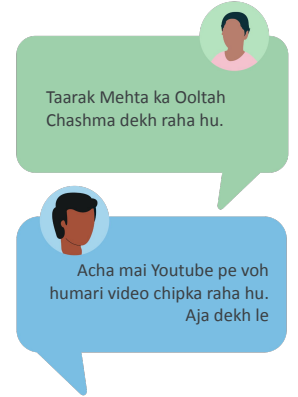
Link

11c. Dictionary of Language and Dialogue

The respondents use common phrases and slang they picked up from various circles including friends, family members, or even from their exposure to popular culture sources. Click on 'Link' below to access this library.
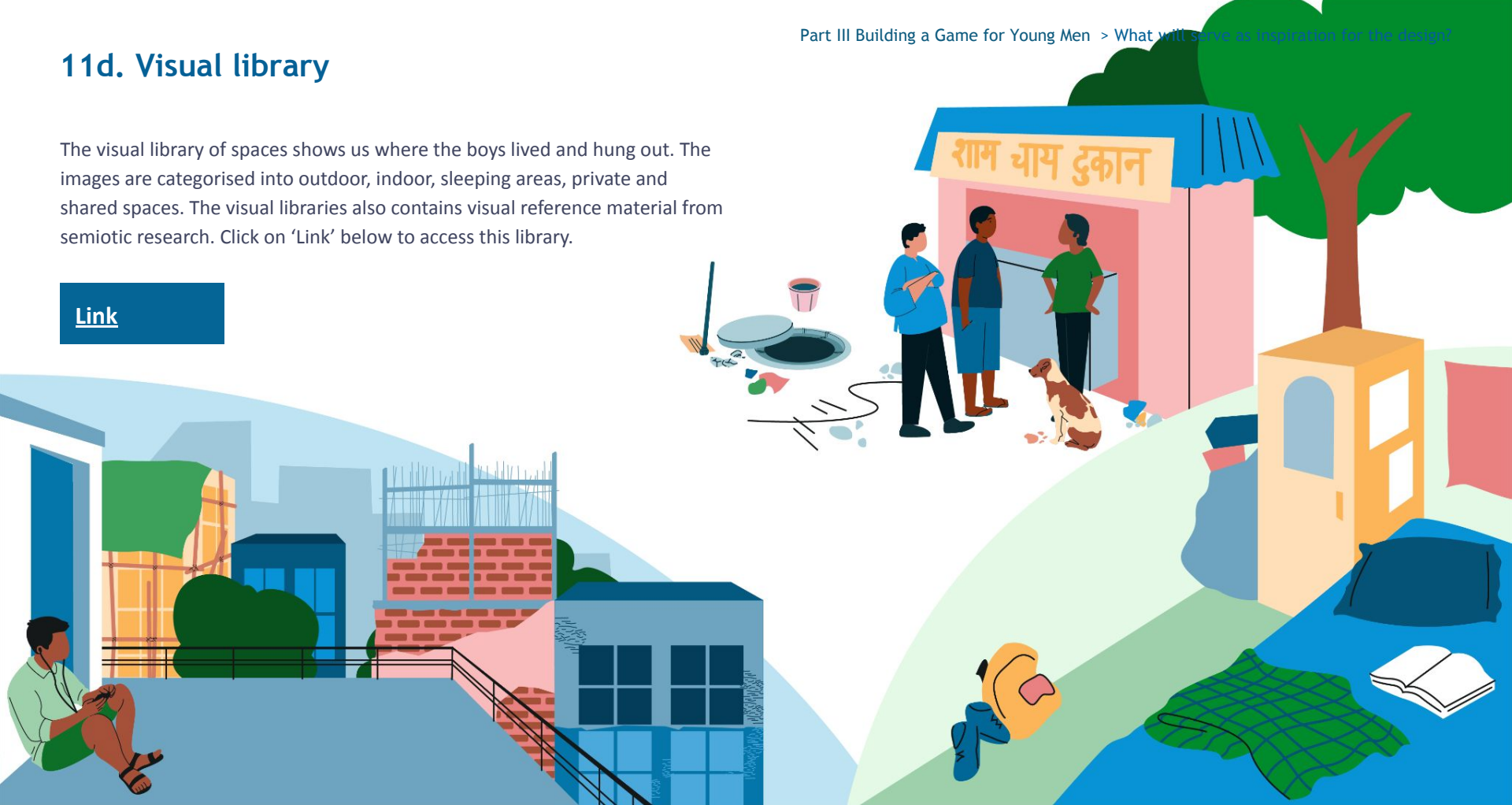
Link

11d. Visual library

The visual library of spaces shows us where the boys lived and hung out. The images are categorised into outdoor, indoor, sleeping areas, private and shared spaces. The visual libraries also contains visual reference material from semiotic research. Click on 'Link' below to access this library.

Link

11e. Product and Service Usage

The boys showed us objects ranging from a fully configured computers to face creams. The library (part of the Visual Library) is organised into sections that talk about personal objects, everyday and shared objects, objects of significance, electronics, personal care, clothes and objects related to hobbies & special Interests. Click on 'Link' below to access this library.

Link

Appendix

a.   Demographic Background Tables
b.   Previous Persona Frameworks
c.   Links to Relevant Documents

a.   Demographic Background Tables

Factors	Variables	Demographic Screening		Targeted Design Research	
		No.s	%	No.s	%
Age	15-17 years	56	43.75	42	46.67
	18-19 years	72	56.25	48	53.33
Income Group	Low	23	17.97	17	18.89
	Lower Middle	59	46.09	40	44.44
	Upper Middle	10	7.81	6	6.67
	Don't Know	36	28.13	27	30.00
Education Level	Completed Secondary School	31	24.22	19	21.11
	Completed Sr. Secondary School	43	33.59	33	36.67
	Schooling between 5-9 years	44	34.38	33	36.67
	Schooling up to 4 years	4	3.13	1	1.11
	Did not attend school	6	4.69	4	4.44
Family type	Nuclear	88	68.75	58	64.44
	Joint	29	22.66	22	24.44
	Extended Nuclear	9	7.03	8	8.89
	Don't know	2	1.56	2	2.22
Parents' Occupations	Formal	31	24.22	41	45.56
	Informal occupations	34	26.56	22	24.44
	Self-employed	51	39.84	18	20
	No Answer	12	9.38	9	10
TOTAL		**128**		**90**	

Table 7: Demographic Background

a. Demographic Background Tables

Factors	Variables	Demographic Screening		Targeted Design Research	
		No.s	%	No.s	%
Phone Ownership	Does not own phone	36	28.13	29	32.22
	Owns phone	92	71.88	61	67.78
Gaming Behaviour	Non gamers	21	16.41	16	17.78
	Occasional gamers	62	48.44	46	51.11
	Active gamers	45	35.16	28	31.11
GES (Median score 74%)	0 to 74%	47	36.72	30	33.33
	75 to 90%	56	43.75	42	46.67
	91 to 100%	25	19.53	18	20
SEC	A2	0	0	6	6.67
	A3	1	0.78125	10	11.11
	B1	17	13.28	17	18.89
	B2	26	20.31	13	14.44
	C1	30	23.44	15	16.67
	C2	14	10.94	7	7.78
	D1	20	15.63	10	11.11
	D2	9	7.03	3	3.33
	E1	3	2.34	1	1.11
	No band	8	6.25	8	8.89
TOTAL		**128**		**90**	

Table 7: Demographic Background (part 1)

c. Previous Persona Frameworks

Persona Framework: Version 1

Persona Framework: Version 2

Self-direction

Compliance

**Security
+
Stability**

Motivation

**Stimulation
+
Novelty**

**Conformity
Societal norms**

Power/ ambition

Ambition

**Socially
responsible
/ provide**

Role

**Self-serving/
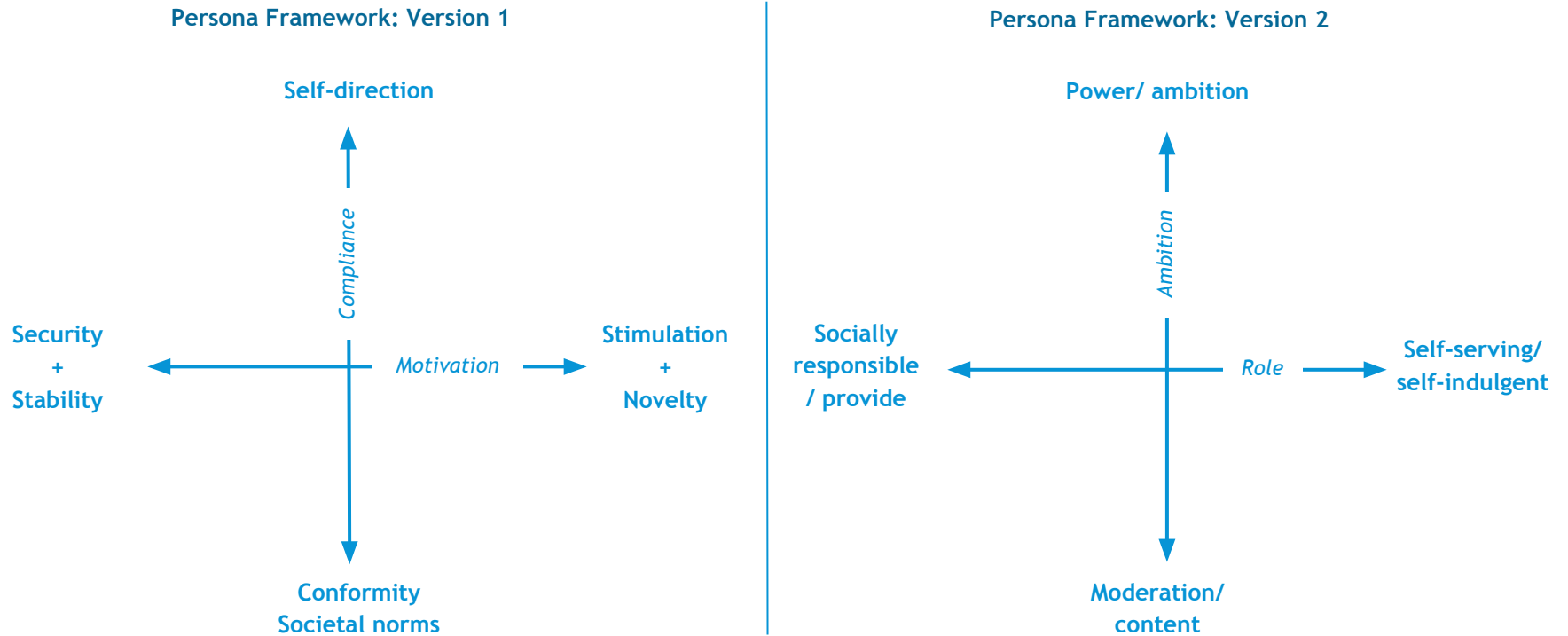self-indulgent**

**Moderation/
content**

Figure 26: Previous persona frameworks

d. Links to the relevant documents (Hyperlinked)

- [GoC Boys Semiotics Report](#)

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