

STUDY ON THE EXPERIENCE AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN SOLO TRAVELLERS TO GOA

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DECLARATION

I, Ashwini T, hereby declare that this dissertation titled Study on "*The Experience and Challenges of women solo travelers to Goa*" is the outcome of my own study undertaken under the guidance of Ms. Vithai Zaraunker Assistant Professor, Department of Women Studies, Goa University. This work has not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or certificate of this institute or of any other institute or University. I have duly acknowledged all the sources used by me in the preparation of the dissertation.

10TH APRIL 2023
GOA UNIVERSITY


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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "*The Experience and Challenges of women solo travelers to Goa*" is the record of the original work done by Ashwini.T under our guidance and supervision. The results of the research presented in this dissertation have not previously formed the basis for the award of any degree, diploma or certificate of this institute or any other institute or university.

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Date: April 2023

Place: Goa University

EPIGRAPH

I dedicate this research study titled "Experience and Challenges of women solo travelers to Goa" to all women solo travelers and to all the families who are supporting women to travel, to the women who are facing all the struggles in society but still starting their next day with a smile. I also dedicate the study to motivate the non- travelers to travel in the future.

I also dedicate this work, especially to the women who taught me to live, experience, learn and empower my life through traveling.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study focuses on the Indian women solo travelers to Goa. As per the study solo travelling means the women who prefer to travel alone as a tourist going somewhere to explore the place, culture, food, history, adventure activities etc, they choose and decide everything based on their individual needs. The solo travelling women are often looking for more personal growth, independence, new experience, adventure, connecting with others and an escape from the routine (Ejupi and Medarić 2022). According to the findings of the research that Cox & Kings conducted for the Travel Weekly Webcast, solo travel is ranked second among post pandemic travel options (French 2020).

As per the study of “Motivates of Female travelers for solo travel” In the past, India was considered to be very unsafe for women to travel solo projected as a host country but now India is considered as a tourist generating country and women have started travelling alone at growing rate, it is criticized that the myth that the society is not safe for women, safety is questioned to all women travelers even if the incidents are not taking place, the society is creating a fear among women that the world is unsafe and they have to take precaution steps while traveling (Ejupi and Medarić 2022).

Curiousness and a desire to learn about other cultures than knowing about them are often characteristics of solo travelers. They frequently have strong desire to explore and learn something new. In order to fully immerse themselves in the local culture, some of them prefer to stay with locals rather than in a hotel. They tend to meet new people from other countries, religion, culture and more when they travel alone. Solo travelers additionally permit them to take their own decisions about everything without any compromise (Ejupi and Medarić 2022). When it comes to travelling there is another purpose for every individual, particular motives, reasons, intentions which will fulfill their travel journey and which satisfy the choice making process. (Mahika, n.d. 2011).

Solo travelling was considered to be a western centric Idea; this study will try to contribute towards Indian solo women travelers travelling to Goa as a tourist. Hence, this study will try to put a contribution towards Solo women travelers, particularly in the experience of the Indian solo women travelers. Hence, with the help of in-depth interview and observation of the travelers, this study aims to explore the travel motivations of the Indian solo women travelers and the constraints that they had to overcome. The women solo traveler participation in tourist and leisure travel activities has been increasing in last 15 years. The women solo travelers are becoming more visible and famous phenomenon in recent years. Earlier, solo women travel made a big contribution to this trend. Women who have access to social and financial resources are now able to travel on their own as a result of gender equality, empowering them to have transformative experiences and broader perspectives on life, this study was focused in the western country. (Wilson & Harris, 2006).

Over the past 50 years, factors like increased disposable incomes, extended vacation entitlements, technological advancements, and a decrease in the actual cost of overseas travel have made pleasure travel potentially more accessible to people from western society. Leaving one's home country always brings difficulties and problems. The human mind resists change of any kind. Both men and women experience this frequently. When men and women leave their home city, they face challenges, and when they travel to another country, they face additional challenges which include the food they eat, the language they speak, culture differences etc. This goes beyond a specific nation where tourists encounter difficulties when traveling. Some of the most frequently cited reasons for the rise of solo travel include a changing perception of marriage and relationships, an increasing number of individuals living on their own, and increasingly individualized lifestyles.(Yang 2021).

Most of the time, travelling alone does not mean being completely alone; rather it means having a better chance of meeting new people without having to deal with social pressures of friends and family. There are both Positive and Negative experiences of solo travelling, Freedom of choice is one of life's positive experiences; when used constructively, it encourages creativity, new self understanding, intimacy and spiritual insight. These positive effects frequently inspire solo tourist. Loneliness, depression and poor well being are negative experiences, as there are increased risk awareness and fear of harassment, crime and attacks (Heimtun and Abelsen 2013).

A Great number of female travelers prefer to travel alone in recent years. According to the result of a survey that was carried out by the Association of British Travel Agents, two out of every three people who are in a relationship would prefer to travel alone. Additionally, women make up two thirds of people who travel alone for leisure. Women who travel alone are different from other travelers. Women who travel alone have a different experience particularly from those of men. The travel industry has become aware of the enormous economic power of women as a result of the distinguishing characteristics of solo women travelers. (“Chiang 2006.,”)

The solo hiking experience emphasized personal control, autonomy and freedom of choice. One male participant described the psychological advantages of solo hiking as follows: *“It's a good chance to clear my head. I love to listen to the sounds without other human sounds distracting the natural sounds. I can go where I want to go and when I want to go. I can take my time or I can hike as fast as I want depending on my mood. I just really like the idea of walking in die woods where I can really just think and absorb all that's around me.”*(“Goldman2003.Pdf,” n.d.)

The study Bond (1997) predicted a new growth in the travel market that referred to the “solo women travelers” in a study which was commissioned by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA). These women travelled by themselves, without partners, friends, or family. The PATA study found that confident solo women travelers are seeking adventures, social interaction, education and social understanding. Although western women appear to be traveling alone, there has been an increase in the number of women Japanese tourists traveling alone (Wilson and Little 2005).

The Protection or safety means for an individual, place or reputation from a harm that is not caused by a person, animal or a thing which brings anxiety to a women. Whereas safety is defined as safeguarding individuals, protection of people against unanticipated and involuntary outcomes. One of the Primary concerns of the travelers is their own safety. There are many travelers who prefer to travel to the safe place than visiting an unsafe destination, it depends on the individual and also there are reviews about the destination about travelers who have experienced the incidents. The media objective information about the destination, information gathered from friends & family, travel agents and personal opinions about what is safe and unsafe shape the perceptions of safety and danger. As previously stated, a single negative travel

experience can have a significant impact on subsequent travel behavior (Mansfeld and Pizam 2012).

In this study of “concept and types of women empowerment”, empowerment means almost every society and in every area of life, women are treated differently than men where women are considered to be unequal; thus it is necessary to granting them an equal opportunity. *“The term empowerment is a multidimensional social process and it helps people gain control over their own lives. Further, it can be called as a process that fosters power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, by acting on issues they think as important. Empowerment refers to increasing the spiritual, political, social, or economic strength of individuals and communities”* When women join political parties, educational institutions or decision making bodies; occupy jobs and travel to various locations; occupy land and wealth, they develop self confidence, recognize their worth and take charge of their own income and body, giving them a psychological boost. They have opportunities to see and learn more about the world than those who have remained at home due to their participation in any institution or occupation. As they have exercised their independence away from home, this personal growth and exploration has given them self respect pride, maturity and resilience (“IFOTS_v9_n2_art3.Pdf,” n.d.).

The present study is carried out to understand the experience of women solo travelers to Goa. The study will attempt to find out the challenges they face while travelling solo, the stereotype which are prevalent in society which targets women solo travelers and also focuses on “growth and empowerment” of women travelling solo.

Based on the gaps identified, this study provides an in depth exploration of Women solo travelers to Goa, the study aims to explore how empowered women are when they travel alone for a vacation as a solo traveler, to know the safety of women solo travelers to Goa, while travelling in Public transport, during the stay and during exploring the places; and also how society welcome women who travel alone, when it comes to women travelling solo, stereotype plays an important role.

OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH:

1. To Know How empowering women feel when they travel for a vacation as a solo traveler. The experience they get by solo travelling.
2. To know the safety of women solo travelers when they travel to Goa.
3. To study on how Stereotype plays a major role when it comes to women solo travelers.

SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER:

Chapter 1 talks about the Introduction to the topic of Experience and Challenges of Women Solo Travelers to Goa. It talks about women solo travelers, the challenges they face during solo travel across the globe.

Chapter 2 contains a literature review on this topic and also highlights the authors who have worked on this topics related to the subject in India and different parts of the world. This Chapter also covers about tourism which plays a major role.

Chapter 3 talks about the methods that were used to complete this study. It defines the data collection methods used and also the Literature review.

Chapter 4 contains the case studies of 9 women solo travelers to Goa interview where they share their experiences and challenges of solo travelling.

Chapter 5 contains a summary of findings, analysis and conclusions about the case studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to the existing literature and statistics about women solo travelers around the globe, women solo travelers are facing more issues compared to men. It also shows that women's growth and issue are not more focused. There are many studies which talks about the constraints of women solo travelers. It also speaks about the struggle they face during the travel. On the other hand, some study discusses about the experience and motivation of the women solo travelers. There has been limited research done on women solo travelers in India, I have referred many papers researched outside India. It is not enough to study only on constrains of women solo travelers. My study aims at knowing the personal growth of women solo travelers have due to solo traveling.

According to Wilson in the study of “ The solo Women Travel experience: Exploring the Geography of Women's fear ” has been discussed that public and tourist scenes are developed as masculinized, worked for the development for the satisfaction in men frequently at the avoidance and isolation of women.(Wilson 2008). Travel and tourism has traditionally been viewed as collective rather than traveling alone. In any case, the example of travelling with many people has been changing (Malik 2018). According to Collins and Tisdell's research, demographic and socioeconomic factors like ethnic identity, nationality, age, family size, gender, marital status, religion, income, occupation and education can influence travel demand. The Study was only limited on women's fear, their experience on traveling and how other factors are influencing women to travel alone, it does not focus on the freedom women get through travelling.

In an article titled “A Relative Escape ? The impact of constraints on women who travel solo” by Wilson and Donna in 2005 explains about the constraints expressed by the women in four categories Sociocultural, Personal, Practical and Spatial. These four categories will give a broader view of constrains of women solo travelers. The Result of the research has revealed that women experienced constraints within each of these four categories depending on their stage of travel. There are many women travelers who have experienced hardships encompassing others

view as relatives, work associated and friends expressed their disapproving attitudes towards their choices to travel alone. For a number of the women solo travelers, there was a clear sign of others social insensitivity, which effectively restricted their ability to travel. In this study there were 40 women interviewed using the semi structured indepth interview were taken, these interviewed women in this study clearly had the choice, freedom and circumstances to travel. The findings also revealed that the women's solo travel experiences and the perceived as well as actual constraints women face during solo travel. (Wilson and Little 2005).

According to study of (Malik 2018) stated the constraints in solo or all women travel in five categories safety and security, sociocultural, individualization, pragmatic and geographic. As per the study in 2017, the world Economic Forum stated, "India is frequently considered as an dangerous destination for women travel. Women are less likely to travel alone or in a group of all women due to the rising number of cases in rape, eve teasing, sexual assault, theft from public transportation and unsafe roads. The Indian culture is not women friendly, sexual assaults can occur when a person travels alone in a public transportation system, walks alone on a road or stays alone in a hotel.

One more significant part of women solo travelers is finding and also exploring different cultures and learning about their lifestyles. These include sightseeing, attending new cultural events and trying the local cuisine will be a part of travelling. Women travel not only to see new palces but also to lean and experience new things. They also involve themselves to learn various perspectives about the world. According to Chiang and Jogartnam (2006), one of the main reasons that people travel alone is to experience culture because it gives them the chance to have an independent experiences. Identity issues are frequently associated with this motive as well, Women travelers self perceptions serve as a model for travel motivations (Ejupi and Medarić 2022).

According to the result of research paper "Why do women travel solo for purpose of leisure?" it states that Solo Travel for women is not an easy task due to the fact that it is still somewhat of a status- oriented activity and there are concerns about safety. As a result, women should consider the Experience motivation when planning a leisurely trip on their own because it can provide them with opportunity to learn new things and explore the world. The Findings also showed that women who took shorter vacations (four to six days) were more likely to spend

time alone or to escape from responsibilities and pressures than women who prefer to go on a longer vacations. At some vacation oriented destinations the tour planners can plan a shorter trip with less activity to satisfy a specific group of women solo travelers who need an escape. The findings also indicated that the respondents demographic backgrounds which is attached to the motivational dimensions. (Chiang and Jogaratnam 2006).

The study has been limited to know the purpose of women travelling solo, it is criticized on the basis of findings made by the researcher, women don't have to escape from responsibilities and pressure by solo travelling. There are 157 unmarried and 33 married women as per the study. It was also limited to the social factor of the women travelers.

As per the research paper "What motivates and hinders people from traveling alone? A study of solo and non- solo travelers" it was clearly stated that Academic studies have examined the emerging trend of solo travel that is not gender focused, with the exception of descriptive statistics provided by travel companied like booking.com and klook. The various researchers' significance of the market for solo travel has been established by these studies, laying the groundwork for subsequent research. In the last few years, there have been a number of studies on solo travel that have focused on the barriers to solo travel in Asia. Solo travel market which includes travelers who may have an interest in solo vacations but have yet to experience one, is poorly understood. (Yang 2021)

According to the researched article, Women fearfulness is a cultural construct is created and upheld by men and women for the benefit of the dominant male group. There is a myth of female victimhood is repeatedly maintained to keep women under control, so that they plan their activities, remain visible, inform where they are going, how they will reach there and when they will get back to home (Wilson and Little 2008). The study has been criticized on the basis of stereotype, making the statement normal which is maintained to keep the women under control, there are many updates made for the women solo travelers. It is limited in studying the fear of women.

Jordoan and Gibson (2005) in his work titled "We're not stupid... but we'll not stay home either": Experience of solo women travelers speaks about the women solo travelers who choose for a vacation by themselves, the researchers aim was to find how and why these women

travel alone, their experience both good and bad and many meanings that solo travel has for them. The study focuses on the gaze of others while travelling. Many women have experienced in this study were feeling vulnerable as there were alone throughout their journey. They are women without help from anyone else. This study was also related to empowerment of women solo travelers explaining if these women are subjects to gaze and believe they must use strategies to evade the gaze, why are these women traveling solo? Feeling of opportunity, Independence, Freedom, Taking quick decisions, pride and strength; among others these women solo travelers frequently referred to as motivations behind why they kept on appreciating and enjoying solo travel. In the findings of the study regarding the potential solo women travel to provide a space for self reflection, education and self development. For many of the women in this study, overcoming potential travel obstacles and dealing with whatever came up on the road gave them confidence that they carried with them throughout their travel and everyday lives. Women felt empowered during their travels due to the acts of resistance required to reclaim some traveling space and resist others gaze. (“Jordan2005.Pdf,” n.d.)

According to the study of (Su and Wu 2020) in the Article titled ‘The Dark Side of Solo Female travel : Negative Encounters with Male Strangers’ explains that the solo women travelers appear to be taking on more difficult tasks because they are new to the foreign realm and sometimes to will not be used and know about the local customs and languages. Nearly all of the participants either ignored or walked away as our analysis presented leers, whistles, catcalls and stalking. According to a study of Fairchild (2010), some women did consider the harmless acts to be fun or compliments. Strangers were sometimes regarded as friendly. However in order to avoid conflict, the majority of solo women chose not to continue interacting with them.

According to the study which reveals the fear of Women travelers in the article Titled ‘The Dark Side of Solo Female travel : Negative Encounters with Male Strangers’ The fear they have in each incident had strong influence on independent solo women travelers perceptions on security and their methods of dealing with the situations. When planning their solo trip, nearly all of the participants prioritized safety above everything else, including the place they stay, transportation, places they want to explore, itinerary, time schedule etc. the normal wellbeing code is “not to stay out late”. They were scheduled to reach in a new city before sunset, so they returned to their accommodation before dusk; some of them booked female only dorms. They

did not prefer to opt for night transportation, walk in dark places or go into dangerous areas etc. In addition to the extensive list of prohibited restrictions, they altered their behavior and schedule to avoid trouble. According to the findings, all of the women have experienced varying degrees of sexual harassment from strangers and the incidents ranged from passive to active on a continuum with hierarchical differences in threatening levels. The women solo travelers who are considered to be the targets of the sexualized harassment suffer both physical and mental harm. Due to the harassment, most of them respond passively, blaming them and only a few speak up and fight back. The women solo travelers took preventive measures before and during the trip to ensure their safety. In order to protect themselves from underlying threats, the measures taken merely restrict the traveler's freedom to explore. The preventive measures to be safe not only limit their time, but also restrict them from fully participating in public places. Many participants came to a conclusion that the lone women looking for adventures were insecure and unequal, and that they were fortunate not to be the victims of even worse accidents (Su and Wu 2020).

In this research study of "The normality of unsafety – foreign solo female travelers in India" explains about solo women travelers in India and safety, India experiences one of the highest annual rates of rape. Academic journals, news paper, official government websites and social media all cover this kind of crime against women. According to the information provided in 2016 by the National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) crime against women have increased by 34% in the past four years and an average of 95 women are raped each day in India. In addition, sexual violence against women in India has reached alarming level according to data (2016). Indeed the Indian Express reported more than 34600 rape cases in the country in 2015 (PTI, 2016). The following year, the crime rate against women in India increased despite these reports. This indicates that no enforcement action to lessen the impact of violence against women was successful (Thomas and Mura 2019).

In the research Article "The solo Indian Women Tourist" explains that the constant sexualized male attention was another constraint. Women's fear of being attacked or abused by men at the destination also limited amount of time they could spend alone doing leisure activities. However, none of the factors could prevent the participants from travelling on their own. The findings of this study have made us understand the reason for the Indian women to take up travel solo, because Indian women come from a patriarchal society in which they are

considered as a “weaker sex” they must overcome numerous obstacles throughout their trip. Explaining to their friends and family why she wants to go on a solo trip was one of the biggest challenges. The basic concern of the family and friends was the safety and security of the travelers. If the traveler was employed, the situation was relatively manageable; others who were unemployed were also able to convince their families and friends as a result of the society’s rapid change in mentality. However, despite our efforts to persuade them, fear remained a significant barrier to solo travel. Many of the travelers previously wanted to travel solo did not have the courage because of their fear of new destination which is unknown as well as solo women travelers safety and security since they have been habitual to a protected environment. But once they decided to take a solo trip nothing could stop their determination. As there are many challenges some of the travelers have a decided schedule for their travel and some who wanted to challenge themselves more to experience freedom and flexibility choose not to have a pre scheduled plan and act spontaneously (Gurung 2018).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

OUTLINE OF THE STUDY AREA:

Goa is the smallest state of India which is situated on the west side of India. Panaji is the capital of Goa and the total population as per the census. Goa is divided into North and South Goa and has 12 Talukas. The present study is based on North Goa, it focus on the hostels of north Goa where normally solo travelers stay. Goa is well known for the Tourism and revenue generated from tourism industry. Goa is a well known and popular tourist destination due to its stunning beaches, sun set and architectural splendors Goa temples, churches and Old Portuguese homes. The incredible coastline of more than 100km in Goa, dotted with impressive beaches, offers stunning views and tranquility for tourist to enjoy and unwind the sun. Every beach has its charm, beauty and calm making it's a popular destination for tourist. Goa is also beyond beaches if the tourist is not a beach person. It is amazing to walk in the lane of Goa with Portuguese houses all around. The churches of Goa form the Portuguese era which has its own architectural style. There are also famous old Hindu temples which will amaze the tourist. Goa is home to numerous ancient forts that bear witness to this centuries long power struggle. Goa is also blessed with beautiful waterfalls and hill station.(Geetanjali Achrekar 2020)

AIM OF THE STUDY :

The key issues covered by the interview guide's questions deal with the social issues among the women solo travelers to Goa, it tries to identify the experience and challenges faced by women and it talks about their view on safety, Stereotype and empowerment.

The study is based on the Women solo backpackers and trekkers who are travelling to Goa, excluding travelers who are travelling for two days period for a week end. The study is focused on the age group ranging from 23 – 40.

PROCESS INVOLVED IN COLLECTING DATA:

The population in this study was women solo travelers who are travelling to Goa from other states of India. In order to collect data of the women solo travelers to Goa, I approached four hostels of North Goa Located in Anjuna, Arpora and Vagator. The names of the hostels are The Hostellers Goa, Gostop, The work Hostel, The Musafir Hostel. These hostels were selected as two of the hostels are their all over India and two of the hostels are selected by the rating of the hostels. These hostels were booked by going directly and visiting the hostels. Two Respondents were contacted through social media who were travelling to Goa during the month of October to January, met them in person to conduct the in-depth interview and semi structured interview.

SAMPLING METHODS USED:

This paper draws on grounded theory, I have used a purposive sampling which is used for collecting my data by conducting an indepth interview, intial coding was used by category identification. I have used qualitative data collection form conducting an indepth interview and unstructured interview of the respondents. The study is focused on people's belief and experiences of women solo travelers to Goa, with the sample of 20 women, ranging the age group of 23 – 40. The aim of this study was to know the experience of women solo travelers and to know about how safety, stereotype and empowerment play a major role in their travel journey. The study was conducted only with the Indian solo travelers excluding the foreigners to Goa as a tourist. My study is based on the primary data collection where I went to meet solo travelers who are travelling to Goa, in hostels they stay in north Goa, found them through social media and interviewed them in person. All the Interviews were observed and taken notes after the conversation with the respondents as the respondents are traveling solo as a researcher I did not prefer audio recording. Interview location was taken in the hostels which are mentioned in the process involved in collecting data. These interviews were then transcribed.

LANGUAGE OF THE INTERVIEW:

The interview was conducted in English Language with the solo travelling women respondent. Later all the interview were transcribed into English, many women were comfortable answering the questions, some of the questions were changed after two interviews and included few questions which I felt it is necessary for the study. There was no direct questions asked such made them narrate their experience and asked few questions where I felt the information is missing, few felt convenient asking questions. For few interviews I stayed in the hostels to build the rapport with the women solo travelers. I spent about ten to eleven days consecutively in conducting the interviews and approximately it took one hour to 30 minutes to 45 minutes per interview, during lunch or in the evening when they explored the places and came back, as my study is a qualitative based research so likewise the interview is also qualitative based.

STUDY TOOL:

I had frame the questions can refer the annexure I had taken interview of 9 women solo travelers. Methods used were indepth interviews meeting them in person by staying the hostels and meeting them outside in the tourist spot. The questions were framed about their personal information, their travel experience, about their safety, expenses, details of the booking and stay and the experience in Goa.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY :

I want to do this study because I have seen women travelers who had huge change in their life by solo travelling. I have communicated with women around me who wish to travel and explore but they were not allowed by their parents to travel with their friends or alone. I have spoke with women solo travelers who don't inform their parents about their travel. The stereotype plays a major role in many families, especially for women who prefer to travel alone for any purpose, the struggle they face for getting permission from their family. I have communicated with few women while travelling, it is said that women solo travelers are taken advantage by the men in many ways, and there comes a question of safety of women solo travelers. I also preferred to choose this topic to know the positive approach and a different view about life and the decision making power of solo travelling from women who travel solo for a

longer period on a vacation. This study will be an inspiration for many women who want to be independent and to overcome the fear about the society to explore the world in the future.

There was a need to study about women solo travelers to Goa, there is lack of knowledge about the solo travelling women who are travelling all around the world alone, women independence is still questioned in our society. Every woman are who themselves say other women not to travel alone and asking the need of exploring to the new places, questioning for making themselves more independent. The study is to know about the safety and stereotype which plays a major role in travelling.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION:

The identity of the individual women solo travelers who are interviewed are kept confidential. The consent for interviewing was obtained from the respondents orally and no real names will be revealed in the study. They were informed that it was conducted only for the research work and these data will be kept confidential. For the privacy reasons no pictures of the respondents were taken as the respondents are traveling alone. There was no audio recording done as the respondents should be comfortable while talking.

LIMITATIONS :

This study is conducted only focusing on North Goa. Initially as per the proposal it was mentioned that 20 respondents will be interviewed, it was not possible as it was difficult to find women solo travelers with the given time limit. This study was done during the season of tourism from October to February, when many travelers visit Goa during these months. As I wanted to stay in hostels to identify the travelers as there was less time I was able to identify only 9 respondents for my study. There are few travelers who did not stay in the hostels, as they went out exploring places and two of the travelers did not want to give the interview. In some days even after booking and staying in the hostel it was not possible to find the respondents as we cannot assure their stay in the hostels.

As they are solo travelers who are in their vacation I was not able to take more of their time, the research topic is also of a sensitive nature, as they are traveling alone a lot of care and sensitivity was required in building the rapport with the respondents. Also frequently travelling to find the respondents, were based on time consuming and as well as financially constraining. Literature on this topic was also difficult to find as not a lot of studies focused in this field especially were from India.

CHAPTER IV

CASE STUDIES

RESPONDENT 1:

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Vaishnavi, her age is 29; she is unmarried; her first solo travel was at the age of 27. She is travelling as a Solo traveler for past two years. She chooses to travel alone for Adventurous and the journey for herself. She joins in a group when it is necessary and when she actually gets connected to people. She is first solo traveler in her family. She started to solo travel because she was fond of travelling and couldn't find the same interest in her family and friends. Therefore, she decided to travel solo to fulfill her dreams and discover new life.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The experience of solo travelling of the respondent is explained in this para. Vaishnavi's first solo trip was of Leh Ladakh, she told it was good in fact she was very excited but at the same time little scared but now she really found it was more amazing to make new friends and meet people of same interest. She chooses the random choice of places to travel. She told she learnt how to lead a life independently, making new friends, inspiring not only her but also others who she meets on the way. She clicks sometimes with herself or request someone to click for her. She told she will approach new people when she is travelling alone by having a smile then a normal conversation. She also told she is pretty good at communication so she really don't find it hard to interact or approach anyone. The minimum and maximum days of travel is 10 to 15 days, as she work from home which is a new way of travel and at the same time which is very convenient and interesting. She told she stayed in Goa for seven days, three days in North Goa and four days in South Goa.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS:

The safety steps of the respondent, She only have the limitation of reaching the destination before it gets dark or staying back after 8 as it's still not recommended to travel or explore in the night time in a new place. When I asked why she have such limitations she told

it's because of the environment that we still have, women not being safe even in the day time. Normally the transportation she prefers to travel is train, flight and bikes. She told she was comfortable when she travelled in train from indore to Goa. When she reached Goa she preferred to rent a bike to travel as it was the easy transportation, when she travelled with someone she preferred to share the petrol and rent of the bike. She normally prefers to stay in hostel because there are great opportunity to meet like minded people and share her journey and experiences. She has not done camping in tent and looking forward to camp in the future. She will suggest women to travel solo at least once in her life. The women should know to travel safe and make wise financial decisions. She told she will not hide their identity while travelling solo, she have random plans of travel so normally she don't day her next travel destination to anyone. She has never travelled without her phone charge because she have a handy power bank, she always keep her phone. She seeks someone's help in case of any health emergency. When I asked her about the safety packing essentials she told phone, charger, power bank, sanitary pads and some cash. She makes plan spontaneously also but some plans are prepared two months in prior. She has never cancelled a plan because she felt it was she felt the place had become too dangerous for her. The experience in Goa was wonderful; it was her best place she has ever visited. To be honest she always kept Goa as the last destination but fortunately it turned out to be the best destination for me. She told she did not really face any difficulties in Goa but one incident was bit threatening and she managed somehow, she was not ready to share the incident she faced. She told Goa was the safe place to travel and safety is in our hands though.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The stereotype and empowerment faced by the respondent through solo travelling. She told she don't get the same treatment and opportunities like male travelers, like women solo travelers don't travel in the dark or reaching the place she stays before it gets dark. In India it's still not safe to travel alone in the dark but she think with time everything is getting better. When she travelled to Goa she felt very safe and enjoyed the night life in Goa, even the men that she met on her way were really humble most of the time. She also told that her family and friends are really proud of her because she is making her own decisions for herself and taking charge of her happiness, they really appreciate and admire her solo travelling. The women in her family also were supportive for her travel. She always make a budget plan and manage financially, she also

have budget plans when it comes for food. Financial independence is giving opportunity to live the life on their terms and conditions and don't need validation from others. She normally books rooms and tickets for travelling online seeing the review and rating of the hostels or rooms. She does not prefer to book in travel agency and it's a random choice to travel to Goa. She updates her family every time she travels.

RESPONDENT 2 :

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Aathika, age is 26 years completed her degree in Architecture, She is a paid working women. She is unmarried; her first solo travel was at the age of 24. It is her eight solo travels; she decided to travel Goa for her vacation. Aathika stayed in hostellers, goa. She took a week break from her office as the company gives yearly allowance for the vacation, she also has saved leave normally for her travelling, she travelled for her new year in Goa. She is travelling for past two years. Aathika used to go for movies alone, restaurants and to most of the time her family is busy or she did not have many friends of her own interest to explore places. Even she makes last min decision to travel the next day, she told she makes the throughout plan in the train. She told she was interested to travel solo from seeing people travelling without anyone help inspired her more. She told she did not find people of her own interest.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

Aathika's first time travel experience was little scary and she had lots of fear but she travelled 5hrs away from her place, to Hyderabad. Now she is very confident to face any challenges and ready to face anything in the travel, she also told that she is little afraid even now only when she takes transportation train or bus. She told she have few bucket list to do, she look at places through reels, youtube, book tickets as per the timings and start travelling. My minimum days of travelling are two days and maximum is two months. She has learnt quick decision making which is very important for everyone's life and as a woman to be very confident

in life. She told she will use tripod or selfie, sometimes ask strangers to click picture. She meets new people in the hostel where she stays or group of people in the trek, they accompany me till the trek or sometimes they disappear, some people who I met in hostel while staying are still in my contact, she told she learn many things from new people. She told she has cancelled Goa trip many times because many have told Goa is fun only with friends, cancelled few trips due to weather.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS

The safety steps of the respondents, Every time she chooses a place she told she will check whether the place is safe for women, she orders her own food and do not accept offers from others. She normally prefers public transportation as it comes on her budget. she normally prefers to stay in the hostel or tent stays it depends on the place she choose to travel. Hostel is budget friendly and she can meet new travelers all around India, she told she choose well known high rating hostels. No she have not done camping in tent in Goa. There is no much struggle during solo travel, only while using washroom or playing in beach, no one will be there to take care of my bags. Surely she wish all other women should do solo travelling and build their self confidence. All other women should know that the world is not that risky, they say it's not safe for women but don't believe what society says just go and experience what you want to, it is 99% safe to travel. I don't hide my identity but sometimes I ignore talking to people, I don't say my next destination or places I want to explore. She told she join in a group sometimes when it is a costly place to visit where she can share bills, even the cab bills of the place. Mostly I carry all my emergency tablets. Yes many times she travels with a switched off phone, it is very difficult only when I don't know the name of the place or the hostel names I have booked, mostly the locals have helped me it is not that difficult, during online payment also it has been difficult. Goa actually knows all language so it was very helpful and locals here were guiding whenever necessary. She told she carry only medicines and a knife, few pins, few sharp things to help, but when we are in fear or harassed these will not be helpful as we panic already, only the confidence we have will help us in all situation. She told she makes plan even the before day it depends on the place she travels. There are no steps she takes to be safe but she always check the weather, choice of clothes she wears and culture of the place she visit. In few places she told she

is having limitations, the timings, the place she choose etc. Aathika manage financially by herself, she saves money for her travelling. Mostly she does not share the bill in the restaurants, because there will be many travelers sometimes it will be she pay for their bills for what they eat and she don't like paying for strangers. Money plays an important role in travelling but it does not play a major role for safety. She told she will book through online both for staying and travelling. She told she has never booked through travel agencies, she thinks it is more expensive and time consuming. She wants to travel Goa to explore the nature of Goa as she is not more of a beach person. Goa is a small village for me, she told she has heard many things about Goa but after coming I love the place and sunsets. She also told she loved the freedom women had here they wore short clothes without any hesitation; she loved and felt really happy exploring the places of Goa. The north is more crowded but the south was little manageable. The experience was wonderful; she has travelled alone to many places mostly in the night. Using public transportation was safe and there are no public transportation in Goa in the night timings so I rented a bike it was easier. There was difficulty of food and public transportation, Goa was very costly comparatively, they make more money from the tourist. She told she felt very safe in Goa.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent has explained about the stereotype and empowerment. She updates her mom two times in a day or mostly when something is more interesting she used to call her parents and share about the place or she used to make a video call for her parents to show the place, she ask them also to visit the place. More than travelling with friends or family, she likes to travel alone because she decides everything while travelling, she loves the decision making process which is very strong while travelling alone. In first few travels she told she had the slight fear but after completing all travels safely she had the relaxation. She told she started meeting new women who are independent and travel for many other reasons everyone had their own reason to travel so it encouraged her to travel. She is the first women solo traveler in her family. She don't like to hear others opinion, she stand by her own decision she is making, so she decided to travel solo as she feels very satisfied and happy throughout her travel. The food she choose, transport she choose, the time to sleep, she told she learnt decision making quickly. She told No not at all she don't get same treatment like male travelers but sometimes we are more

welcomed and as a women we get easy travel but we can't able to travel to many places solo but it does not apply for men, there are many places in India like that, even the locals say us not to travel alone, when the men travel they are helped by the locals. She told her father helps her in everything more than her mother for her travel but I don't hear anything else from her other cousins or relatives as she is not close with anyone else but both of her parents plays a major role.

RESPONDENT 3

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Dakshana, her age is 26 from south India completed her Civil Engineering; She is a paid working women. She is unmarried; her first solo travel was at the age of 18. She is the first solo traveler in her family.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Experience of the respondent on solo travelling, She chooses to travel alone as she started liking the vibe of figuring out things on her own. It gave her the sense of joy and freedom, that's when she realized solo, was her kind of travelling. Minimum days of travel are one and maximum has been two months. The positive things she learnt from solo travelling is No matter how hard the situation get, there is always a bright side waiting for you. When I asked how she click pictured she told she takes selfies, asking strangers to click pictures and she also use tripod. She approach the new people with politeness and humble heart, by trying to be one among them and not giving them a feeling I'm superior in any way.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS:

. The Respondent explained about her safety steps of women solo travelers, The limitations Dakshana was to be extra careful while trusting people for lifts and waiting for late night in a bus station or a remote locations, she had those limitations as every coin has 2 faces and being a solo women traveler, can't take even that minute 0.0001% chance. The transportation she prefers is always public transport and rental bikes. She told she always prefer to stay in a local places like home stays and also travelers friendly hostels. She has also done her

camping alone and enjoyed the same. The struggle she face during solo travelling is carrying heavy backpacks all be herself. The other women should know before solo travelling is that, the travelling is going to be the best adventure in their lives. In case if they don't try atleast once, they are missing something major in their life. She told solo travllers hide their identity sometimes because of her safety and strangers who don't want to know more about her and also she will not say the next destination to anyone. In case of any health emergency she told she will always have some basic medication with her, if something serious she tries visiting the physician. She also joins a group during her travel. The safety packing essentials which she carry during her solo travel is first aid kit, pepper spray, multipurpose knife, A pocket diary with contact numbers of closed ones. She told depending on the trip she plan it in advance or spontaneity. Whenever she stay in a place the safety steps she take is that she check hidden camera or anything that's suspicious. She has also cancelled a plan because she felt a place had become too dangerous only because of the weather condition, it has also happened a couple of times. She manages financially as she is working and also do collaborations with few companies. In few places she travels she does have budget plans for food. She also language was not a big problem in Goa as she can talk in hindi and also most of them know English here. She told yes money is playing a major role for safety 75% of the time. She books rooms and tickets through online websites and online transaction. She does not prefer to travel through travel agencies. She told she is not a goa person even then I want to explore Goa. She felt difficulties in Goa as a solo traveler with those parties and a lot of people felt it's very easy to approach a women traveler. She told she felt safe in Goa and 75% yes.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The respondent explained about stereotype and empowerment on her solo travelling. She updates her family pretty much whenever she heads out while travelling. She told she got to make her own choices, she need not be depend on others choices and preference, when she travels alone she choose what suits her. she told her first travel was little spectacle and worried, she had literally noted down everything in her pocket diary and kept multiple backups just to be sure, now when she look back she feel she have come a long way and now she told she travel more comfortably without any hassle. She also told she will suggest other women to travel solo. She chooses the place based on stories she hear from her friends and locals, sometimes from

social media handles. She told she get the same treatment and opportunities like male travelers and in fact women travelers are often treated with more care. Atleast in her case she have met amazing people who treated her good. She told initially her families had all reserved thoughts which society has but this time they are adapting to change and are happy to see her grow, they also learn through her travels.

RESPONDENT 4

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Andria, her age is 37 from Ahmedabad completed her MBA; She is paid working women. She is unmarried; her first solo travel was at the age of 32. She chooses to travel alone from peer inspiration. She is the first solo traveler in her family.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The travel experience of the respondent solo traveling, She told she choose to travel alone as she did not have company to travel. She told first time I felt it was very confusing to travel alone and even now still it is bit confusing. She chooses the place to travel by the safety of the place. The positive things she learnt is that to be self sufficient. She clicks picture by using tripod stand, bluethooth remote and selfies. She don't know the count of her solo travelling as she takes two week end solo trips and four months once a seven to 10 days trip. She told her minimum is three day of travel and maximum is ten days of travel. She also told she prefer not talking to too many people, she don't prefer approaching new people when she is travelling alone.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS :

The safety steps of her travelling is explained, Other women should know to be alert before travelling alone. She told she does not hide her identity while traveling alone but she also told I don't know whether others do it. She told she has never travelled with a switched off phone. In case of any health emergency she will call her family and inform them regarding the same. She also prefers to join in groups while travelling. The safety packing essentials she does while solo travelling is she carry her medicines and power bank during trave. She plan spontaneously and also in advance it depends on the place she travel. When she travelled to Goa

she planned it before as it is tourist season in Goa and it will be difficult to get bookings, and the rate of the bookings of stay will be increased if it is done in the last moment. She told she travelled in a flight for reaching Goa and she booked a flight back home. She shares all the details with the family that is the step which she takes while going to a new place. She has cancelled a plan because she has felt a place had become too dangerous, she did not share about the place. She manages her financially by doing her job and few freelancing. She does not have any budget plans when it comes to food but for others things she told she will keep an eye on her budget. She always book rooms and tickets for travelling by a known agency. She told Goa is her favorite place to visit as it was her 4th time travelling to Goa. She had a excellent experience in Goa this time. The difficulties she had faced in Goa are managing healthy/ diet food while traveling. She has not felt any discomfort incident while being in Goa and she had felt safe without any anxiety being in Goa. First time when she decided to travel to Goa she have not cancelled it as she is travelling alone, as I have read few blogs where women have travelled to Goa alone. First time when she travelled alone to Goa she felt the same way. Only for party places in Goa she had a second thought to go alone but she had few girls who travelled alone, we all went together, as she is not a party person she was enjoying seeing everyone dancing and having fun and other than that she did not have any second thought of visiting a place alone in Goa. She has always booked a room alone and not stayed in a mixed dormitory or any dorm. She also told language was not an issue as she knows to talk in Hindi and English with the tourist people who are traveling, if they don't know the language.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explains about the stereotype and empowerment, She updates her family every day whenever she travels. She felt she get the same treatment and opportunities like the male travelers. The families and friends especially the male members in her family are more encouraging during her solo travel. First time when she started travelling she was financially independent and also she told she was at the age of 32 so she did not need the necessary to convince her parents for a solo trip. She normally prefer to have a pre booked cab while travelling to any place. She normally choose to stay in a hostel, she prefer staying in a hostel as she has read many blogs where solo travelers choose to stay in hostels, she took a single room in the hostel. The ambiances are better in the hostels. When she traveled to Goa she rented a bike

for traveling to places. She has not done a camping alone in a tent. The struggle she has faced during solo travelling was managing everything by herself. She also told she will suggest other women to travel alone.

RESPONDENT 5 :

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Manisha, 29 she is from Assam, paid working women, completed her B.Ed . She started traveling solo at the age of 24. She is unmarried. She developed interest in travelling as she is interested to explore new places. She is the first solo traveler of the family.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explain about her experience on solo travelling, She told She choose to travel alone because she will get her own time to think about herself. Her first solo travel experience was little anxious but she called her friends and family many times when she travelled for the first time. After travelling many times now she is feeling really comfortable in travelling. She does not have a count of her solo travel. She has visited Goa and stayed here for 4 days. She told it was school leave, so she taught it was the nearby place for a 4 days vacation so she thought she can visit Goa. She chooses the places by the financial budget she is having in her account and also sometimes by making her mom close her eyes in front of a India map touching her finger anywhere in the map closing her eyes, book tickets and leave spontaneously. She has not taken any steps or read about the places she goes as she want to go directly and know the about the place by herself, as everyone will have their own opinion. During travel many of the locals will talk about the places where she is travelling. She told her minimum days of travel is one and maximum days of travel are the leave she gets in her work. She had learnt to be more creative as she told she likes to write more so she travels to get more ideas in her writings. She click selfies, tripod and ask someone to click pictures.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS

The safety steps of the respondent are explained as, she told she is not having any limitations and also it depends on the place we travel. When she travelled to Goa she came driving by bike as she is a biker. She normally prefers to stay in a hostel as she can find many travelers and budget friendly. She has not done camping in tent. She told she struggled to find good place to park my vehicle, good healthy food. I will suggest other women travelers to travel alone, to take care of themselves. She told she have never seen women hiding their identity. She told she will join with groups both with men or women. She told she never travelled with a switched off phone, normally she told she will carry power bank, her bike also have a provision to charge phone. She told she will visit a hospital in case of emergency. The safety packing she does is mostly have stock of petrol, because while driving we will not know the petrol pump nearby by mostly will fill sufficient petrol on the bike, cash mostly all travel essentials which is necessary. She told she will plan her trip in prior or spontaneously. She told money does not play any major role on safety but money plays a major role for travelling. She books everything online or sometimes she come directly and books the hostels. She came to Goa as it was the nearby place for her holiday. Goa was good; she met many amazing people in Goa. The difficulties she faced is that she felt especially in the North Goa she felt all the beaches are same and she has already travelled to south so there is the difference. She told four days cannot decide safety and safety depends on us also, the way we handle the situations. She told safety also depends on the experience we have on things we are doing. In case if I am a first time trekker I may feel scared and if I have trekked for 100 times I will know the technique of trekking so I will enjoy the journey and will start knowing to handle the difficulties. I felt really safe in Goa. She told she did not feel any discomfort during travel.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The respondent shares about her stereotype and empowerment, She updates her family whenever she leaves a place and reaches the destination. She told her family is very supportive even her family members, cousins and upcoming generation want to travel seeing her. She also told may be if a male member in my family travels alone the thoughts of the family members are different, her mom waits till she calls her before sleep this does not happen if her brother travels

in her house. She manages financially as she is working. She do have budget plan for everything not for food.

RESPONDENT 6 :

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Kalpana, her age is 25, she is from Delhi and she has completed her B.E, she is a paid working women, her first solo travel was at the age group of 23. She is unmarried. She started to travel alone as she wanted to spend some time with herself without any external noise. She is the first time solo traveler in her family.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explain about her experience on solo travelling, She chooses to travel solo as she fell complete sense of independent when she is alone. She also meets new people with different vibe than my usual friends group. The first solo travel she realized that world is safer than what internet shows us and people where more helpful when I was travelling alone. After many travel experience when she is travelling mostly about meeting new people with different experiences. She told it will be her 13th solo travel, she also told she goes on a small week end trekking near Bangalore. She also told she travelled to Goa getting three days of off and its five days of travel in Goa. She told she will choose the places which is not a usual travel place, mostly not the same culture or city she is from. The maximum days of travel are seven and minimum days of travel are one. The positive things which she has learnt from solo traveling are the world is filled with people with amazing personality which is different than what we have been taught all our life. The world is safe out there. She being a extrovert and extracting energy from people is not a bad thing. She has asked people to take picture or sometimes she has taken videos of herself and then takes screenshots. She usually try to ask a lot of questions about the new people she meets in a most polite tone, people like it when they want to know their stories. She told “she think she is treated better because she is a woman but this is just her experience.” She plans spontaneously and also she does pre-planned trips. The experience is Goa was amazing in all the tourist spot. It was difficult to handle the weather as I was in Bangalore for a very long time.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS :

Those limitations are the fear of something if bad happens, the assumptions we have. She told she always prefer trains and bus as the transportation during her solo travel. She also told she did not feel any discomfort which travelling to Goa by train from Bangalore after being her for four days in Goa. She normally prefers staying in the hostels, she choose to stay in hostel as she meets new people around. She told she has not done camping in Goa. The struggle she has faced is the sanitation was an issue when she was travelling. She normally tries to be safe and prepared for the worst case scenarios. She told she suggest all women to travel solo at least once in their life. The other women should know to trust themselves but also keep a safety weapon, always stay at good rated hostels which are safer than hotels. She told she don't think traveler hide their identity. She normally does not say her next travel destination to others. She have never traveled with a switched off phone. I did not face any difficulties or any safety plans when I travelled to Goa. It was like a usual travel plans. Money plays a major role in travelling but safety yes money plays a major role, for booking a proper stay, travelling in the AC compartment sometimes, the crowd differs when we have money and we don't, the safety also differs but she told she will not say that people with money and people without money decides our safety but sometimes yes.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

She updates only when her parents call by themselves, it does not happen very often even weekly once. When they call she updates her travel history. She told she comes from a matriarchal house hold, her mother doesn't understand her need to travel and always a little hesitant when she is travelling but since she is financially independent her mother does not stop her. she told she have not cancelled any of her trips thinking its dangerous by hearing from others but due to weather yes I have cancelled. she told her limitations are she don't know to drive so it is an issue every time she travel, also she do not go out alone in the night, but she felt after coming to Goa there are many women wander around in the night. She told she will approach the doctor in case of health emergency, she used to have emergency medicines with her. She will join in a group during solo travel. She told she manages her financial stability by her salary and she does not depend on anyone on traveling. She told she felt safe in Goa.

RESPONDENT 7

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Agnes, age 27 from kerala she has completed her post graduation and paid working women. Her first solo travelling was at the age of 23, she is unmarried. She developed interest in travelling through reading. She is not the first women traveler in her family, many of her cousins even her sister is travelling solo. She updates her family every day. She choose to travel solo is to give time for herself. She told during her first solo travel she was anxious, she felt scared to get out of her comfort zone and now she is curious to explore new places. She told it is her 7th solo travel experience.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explain about her experience on solo travelling, She chooses the places to travel according to the social media and youtube. The minimum days of travel are two and maximum days of travel are 15. The positive things she learnt from solo travelling are it gives potential to deal with different problems which we have never experience when we are in our comfort zone. She told she will click pictures by asking someone's help, using a tripod and selfie stick. She avoids talking to people while travelling alone as she is an introvert. She told she is having limitations while travelling. She will have lack of basic amenities; have to worry about enjoying the night life. The transportation she normally chooses to travel in the public transportation. She prefer to stay in the hostels, as the hostels are budget friendly. She told she stays out always and come back only to sleep in the night so there is no need to book separate costly rooms. She has not done camping in tent, not because of fear but I have not felt staying in tents and doing star gazing. The struggle she had during solo travelling is the stares form men which made her feel very uncomfortable. She told she will suggest all other women to travel solo. She finds many new things about herself while travelling alone.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS

The Respondent explain about her safety on solo travelling, The women should know before solo travelling is that they always should prioritize their safety. she don't think solo women travelers hide their identity. she don't say my next travel destination to anyone. She told

have never travelled with the switched off phone. She told she will visit a doctor in case of any health emergency, she normally do carry emergency tablets during travel. She does not join any group during her solo travel. The safety packing essentials she pack is her first aid box, cash as they may be no atm facilities in some area when it comes to Goa there are google pay facilities everywhere, power bank. She told normally she does an advance plan during her solo travel. She has cancelled her plan because she has felt the place is dangerous but not in Goa, dursagar trek may be because after trek she is not ready to handle herself. She have budget plan for everything she do, she told money plays a major role when it comes to safety. She books rooms and tickets through online; she has never booked any travel agencies during her travel. She told she did not feel anxious in goa , she had a blissful experience.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explain about her stereotype and empowerment on solo travelling, My Family members and friends they are anxious about her travelling solo but they are supportive, they don't restrict her form travelling solo. She is managing her own expenses and she is financially stable.

RESPONDENT 8

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Rehena, 23 she is from Hyderabad, she is a paid working women, completed her B.E. She started traveling solo at the age of 22. She is unmarried. She developed interest in travelling as she has seen her friends travelling and she enjoyed the freedom they got. She is the first solo traveler of the family.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explain about her experience on solo travelling, My first solo travel experience was with a group in a package for two days, she told she had fear about people around then she started enjoying, later she had a two days travel alone to a nearby place, she had difficulties to decide everything by herself but she enjoyed her journey. After travelling many times solo now it is very easy and she can figure out about the difficulties and handle them by herself. This was her sixth solo travel. She has visited Goa and stayed here for 6 days. She has an

option of work from home and few leaves she can apply and also sometimes she will not have projects to work. She choose the places by social media or the culture she is interested in. she told her minimum days of travel is two and maximum days of travel is 20. She had learnt to be more independent, quick decision making and making ourselves happy on the things we do without anyone's opinion. She told she get a chance to explore new things form the normal routine, which gives her the true reason for life. She click selfies, tripod and ask someone to click pictures. She told she likes hearing others stories and their travel experience, she told she will not share many of her deep personal conversations. While travelling she told she get the same treatment like men. She told her friends are little supportive but her family is not supportive for her travel, her mother says that the world is not fare for women.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS

The Respondent explain about her safety on solo travelling, She told she is not having any limitations for her travel, as she doesn't have any fear for travelling, she also told she is ready to face anything in her life. When she travelled to Goa she has rented a bike, she told normally she chooses to travel in public transportation. She normally prefers to stay in a hostel as she can find many travelers. She has not done camping in tent. Mostly using toilets with the bags she carry, she has also struggled to travel in the bus as she falls sick while travelling in bus. I will suggest other women travelers to travel alone, not to fear about anything may be the world is cruel to women but let's go experience it and find whether it is true or not. Some women yes may be they hide their identity. She told she will sometimes and it depends on the people who I communicate with. She told she will join with one person not in a group as group will make her feel uncomfortable. She told she never travelled with a switched off phone. She told she will visit a hospital in case of emergency purposes. She will carry few pins and medicines, that is the safety packing essentials I carry, the jackets depends on the weather condition, umbrella if it's a rainy season. She told she will always plan her trip in prior, as she wants booked seats in train to travel. She told she will read about the places where she is travelling in blogs and know about the places. She told she have never cancelled the plans as people say it's dangerous. She manages financially as she is working. She do have budget plan for everything. She told money does not play any major role on safety. She books everything online and she has travelled with agencies once. She prefer travelling to Goa as many have told Goa is not meant for solo travelers, she told

she wants to prove that statement was wrong. She told she had a wonderful experience in Goa. The difficulties she faced is that she saw many who were drunk and driving, she told she might have met with an accident but she escaped by god's grace. She told she felt very safe in Goa.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explained about the stereotype and empowerment, She doesn't update her family as her parents don't attend calls if they know that she is traveling. She doesn't inform them about her travel plans, as they don't allow her to travel. She told She choose to travel alone because as we all are grown up and held up with work we don't find people to travel on the time we want to travel, she find herself while travelling alone.

RESPONDENT 9

BASIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT:

Sarnalini (Name changed), 25, North India, she is educated, paid working women, first solo travel is at the age of 20. She is unmarried. She developed interest in traveling as she is person who is not a fan of waiting for people to join in for her trips, so ended up doing it solo. She is the first women traveler in her family.

EXPERIENCE OF SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explain about her experience on solo travelling, She choose to travel solo To be with herself and know more about her, the surroundings where she is at and the culture of the place and much more. She told if you are with someone, you end up chatting and not focusing in the beauty you are surrounded by. She started travelling at the age of 22. First time when she traveled she was scared but she felt pretty safe actually after taking her first trip. She still be careful when she travel though, have a pepper spray all the time. She choose the place Whatever place she want to go, she research about it well In advance- where do she want to go, what exactly do she want to explore. Also, she enquire about where she want to stay well in advance, she read reviews on Google Maps, various hotel booking websites and also visit their personal website. The minimum and maximum days of travel are 7-25 days. Positive things she learnt about solo travelling is "You are never too much, You are always enough. -There are more

good people than bad in the world -You make lifelong friendships while travelling -People are kinder than you think -Exceptions are always there, you might find people who you don't vibe with, so better leave them alone -While talking to people, set boundaries on how you talk to them. If you're friendlier than they expected, they might think you're available." She travel by Bus, train, flight, Scooty rides with the new friends. She prefers to stray only in hostels. The struggle she face during solo travel is mostly the picture clicking and video making part.

SAFETY STEPS OF WOMEN TRAVELLERS

The Respondent explain about her safety steps on solo travelling, she told when they travel alone Then there are issues of your safety and the safety of your belongings as well because if you're in the train or anywhere else and you want to use the washroom, who looks after your luggage and similar things. She told She will suggest other women to travel solo, absolutely yes. She told she will suggest them to be careful, Know what you're going to do. Before coming to Goa she taught it's more of a party place with friends but there are many places in the south and even in the north to explore without friends. Explore during the day but when it comes to Goa she told she explored during the night, always ready for the worst case scenario. She told money plays a role for travelling and also for safety, when you prefer transportation, food, bookings of good hotels and when the travelers get stuck somewhere in the middle of the night. She told she felt safe in Goa.

STEREOTYPE AND EMPOWERMENT BY SOLO TRAVELLING:

The Respondent explains about her stereotype and empowerment on solo travelling, she updates her family every day. She told her Families and Friends are very supportive, even her women in the family are little concerned but let me explore as they did not get these opportunities. She doesn't have any limitations on travelling solo. She takes all the decisions when it comes to booking and all other plans. She told she gets the same treatment like others male travelers.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter contains the summary of the findings based on the information collected from Primary sources.

The solo women travelers are selected randomly who are travelling to Goa from other states and staying in the travelling hostels in Goa. The hostels named The Hostellers Goa, Gostop, The Work Hostel, and The Musafir Hostel were chosen because my populations are easily found in the hostels for my study, and these hostels are popular for backpackers all over India except the Musafir hostel which has been selected as per the ratings of the hostel. The solo women travelers who were selected for the survey at random are within the age group of 23–37; the age group is selected, as it is likely considered that women will complete their education and become financially independent at this particular age group. There are totally respondents of women solo travelers to Goa from the northern and southern parts of India. The respondents are unmarried. From this study, it has been found that there is a larger population of unmarried women, and they are likely to have less family responsibilities compared to married women. All the respondents are educated women. All the respondents interviewed were paid working women and financially independent women, which are likely to prove that, financially independent women are capable of taking their own decisions. All the respondents have been solo women travelers for more than a year or seven years. 89% of the respondents are the first solo travelers in their family.

Around 80% of the respondent claimed that they first became interested in travelling after being inspired by other independent women solo travelers without any assistance. The travelers fails to find a partner from their family or friends to visit the destination in which they were interested and finally they want to make an independent decision to pursue their ambition to explore. However one of the respondents said that “she is the person who is not a fan of waiting for people to join in for her trips, so ended up doing it solo”.

89% of women are the first solo travelers in their families to travel alone. One of the respondents said that she is not the first person in her family to travel alone. The study reveals that financial independence is one of the indicators that contributes to the freedom of women as per their experiences. 89% of the women travelers update the family about their travel destination. There was only one exceptional case, in which she did not update her family throughout her journey. Due to her family's restriction on travel, she does not update her family, and family support is also playing a major role in enabling travel in a peaceful way. These findings suggest that family members of the women travelers are still concerned about their travel even when they are independent and financially stable. The women solo travelers explored Goa limited to the travelers, who travel for more than three days, as the challenges and experience are comparatively different from the weekend travelers. All respondents chose to travel alone to explore new places, find themselves, spend time for themselves, experience the independence they have, learn the culture of the place, and experience the food of that place. The experiences communicate that travelling is the medium to make them independent in many ways and also help them identify themselves and make these women feel empowered.

All of the respondents travelled during their vacation and office leave, which reveals that women do not skip their responsibilities at work and do things about which they are passionate. They choose their destination through the internet, reels, and looking at other travelers updates. One of the respondents stated that while travelling, she finds information about places from other travelers and saves the places to visit in the future.

80% of the respondents were scared, worried, confused, anxious to travel alone in the beginning (first solo travel), the society has made the women feel that the world is not safe for them but later, all the respondents were not scared and realized world is more safer than what the internet portrays. Although the experiences of the women solo travelers reveals that the women have overcome the fear but there is a single women had narrated that she is still confused getting used to travel alone, one of the respondents have mentioned that the male gaze while travelling had made her feel uncomfortable, it reveals that male gaze make women feel uncomfortable and barrier in her travel. 89% of the Respondents after travelling for years have overcome the fear and more comfortable with travelling but one is still confused in travelling, as she wants someone around during her travel, as this reveals that she is still not comfortable travelling alone.

Most of the respondents have claimed that they click selfies, through tripod or else ask someone click pictures. This also reflects about their safety and open up to ask help from other people.

50% of the respondents have told money does not play a major role for safety and 50% of the respondents have told money plays a major role for travelling. This reveals that it depends on financial background and financial stability of the women travelers.

The positive approach the respondents learnt are quoted as, “No matter how hard the situations get, there’s always a bright side waiting for you; the world is filled with amazing personalities which is different than what we have learnt all your life, the world is safe out there, to be self sufficient, making new friends, inspiring not only us but also others who they meet on their way”. Their experiences reveals that from traveling solo respondents learnt to be, self sufficient, developed their good decision making skill, being more independent, building up communications, they have overcome their fear, to know to tackle problem, been determined or purposefulness and confidence through solo travelling.

89% of the women are having a supportive family and friends who encouraged them to travel and one women is not been informed home as there are many difference of opinion, this reveals that even stereotype plays a major role in traveling. All the respondents told their parents, family or surroundings say “you are a girl and how can you travel alone”, which reveals that stereotype still exist in the society for women especially when they decide to travel alone. The Respondents join with someone they are comfortable with or in a group during their travel or even travel alone, one of the respondent told “she is an extrovert and extracting energy from people is not a bad thing”, the experience state that women solo travelers join in a group from the hostel they stay, make friends and also they are capable of managing alone, if they don’t tend to meet people out of their own interest.

Almost all of the respondents agreed that Goa is really a safe place for women to travel, did not feel any discomfort during travel, through public transport, during the stay in the hostel, during the travel journey in the tourist spot in Goa. 80% of the experience also highlights the fact that all women took safety packing while travelling to Goa, safety measures as per these women are first aid kit, multipurpose knife, pocket diary with the contact numbers of the closed ones, medicines, power bank, charger, sanitary pads, liquid money. From this study it reveals that

women perspective of safety measures have changed, this safety packing is applicable for all travelers from every gender. 20% of the respondents told they pack pepper spray, knife, safety pins; they have taken safety measure predicting that some bad incidents may happen but as per their experiences they have stated that Goa is really safe for women to travel.

The 80% stated that limitations or restrictions during travel as a women that they do not travel or explore at night and have certain limitations for e.g., they have to reach the destinations before dark, this also reveals the society norms which is followed on women, even when they state they can make independent decision they are still believing on the social norms. There are two respondents who don't have any limitations. The women stated people often assume that travelling alone is not safe in the night without experiencing the night life as a solo traveler. (One of the respondents travelled to Goa in the bike even in the night).

All the respondents carry their own medical kit or approach the medical practitioner in emergency period, the statement reveals that travelers plan in prior about the worse they are going to face.

20% of the respondents have claimed that they do not get the same treatment like the male travelers and 80% of the respondents have claimed that they are more welcomed as they are women and it's easy to travel as they get more opportunities as they are women, which reveals that the society is welcoming the women solo travelers. 89% of the respondents family are supportive, even the male members of the family are supportive to the respondents. One of the respondent families is not supportive. This reveals that still stereotype plays a major role in our society.

Most of the respondents claimed that they have cancelled the trips due to weather condition only and one of the traveler claims that she canceled that trip as she has felt that the place is too dangerous but not in Goa, the respondents have cancelled Goa trips as the friends or family have told not to travel alone, as Goa was considered to be a place to travel with friends. This reveals that stereotype plays a major role in travelling alone.

CONCLUSION

The Women who travel solo are empowered, financially stable, still stereotype attached to the identity of women plays a major role for women who chose to travel alone. Women have encountered that there are some challenges when they narrated their experiences about their travel. Even when they have freedom to take decisions it is affected as they are women even when they are educated and financially stable. The family support plays a major role in the women solo travelling. Even the marital status of the women plays major role in travelling solo. The women solo travelers are clearer about traveling after the experience they get in traveling solo for many times. These women solo travelers also inspire other women in the society. The empowerment of the solo women travelers is a prominent theme that emerges from the findings of this study, their ability to travel alone indicates that they are confident and empowered in making their own decisions. Their financial independence also enables them to have control over their plans and experiences.

The respondents have chosen to travel alone to explore new places, learn about different cultures, and spend time on themselves. This reflects that they are independent, adventurous, and curious about the world around them. Through travel, they gain a sense of self-reliance and empowerment that can translate into other areas of their lives.

The respondents have overcome initial fears and anxieties about solo travel, indicating that they are resilient and adaptable in challenging situations. This fear was often fueled by societal stereotypes and biases against women traveling alone. The resilience contributes to their sense of empowerment, as they are able to navigate unfamiliar environments and take risks that can lead to personal growth and development. The respondents have taken safety measures during travel, reflects their awareness and ability to protect themselves in potentially risky situations. This self-awareness and self-reliance contribute to their sense of empowerment, as they are able to take control of their own safety and well-being.

For solo women travelers, having supportive families may be helpful since it can provide them a sense of assurance and ease understanding that their loved ones are aware of where they are and support their decisions. Families may act as supporters for women solo travelers, which can assist in eliminating social biases and misconceptions against women solo traveler.

For solo women travelers, communication in Goa can be relatively easy due to the prevalence of English as a common language, particularly in the tourism industry. English is widely spoken in Goa, especially in hotels, restaurants, and tourist areas. This makes it easier for women travelers to communicate with locals and service providers, such as taxi drivers, tour operators, and hotel staff. In addition, many locals in Goa are accustomed to interacting with tourists, and are generally welcoming and helpful to travelers.

Women travelers now find it simpler to network with other travelers, exchange tips and ideas. This may increase their capability for travel and assist them in building a network of like-minded individuals.

Women who travel solo often face stereotypes and prejudices from society, despite the fact that solo travel is becoming increasingly popular among women. These stereotypes are often deeply ingrained in cultural beliefs and can manifest in various forms, from subtle comments and attitudes to overt discrimination and harassment.

One of the most common stereotypes faced by women solo travelers is the assumption that they are not capable of taking care of themselves. This stereotype often leads to people questioning their decision to travel alone and assuming that they need to be protected or helped along the way.

Another stereotype that women solo travelers face is the assumption that they are available while traveling. This stereotype is particularly harmful as it often leads to women being objectified and harassed by men they encounter on their travels. Women may be subjected to unwanted attention, advances, and even assault. It is important to remember that women travel for many reasons, and their primary goal is not to find for people.

Women solo travelers may also face stereotypes about their appearance and behavior. Women may be judged for the way they dress, the activities they choose to do, or the places they visit but in Goa respondents have faced a stereotype based on their appearance. For example, a woman who wears revealing clothing or goes out at night may be seen as irresponsible or reckless.

Overall, the experiences of the solo women travelers interviewed in this study were largely positive and empowering and felt very safe in Goa. They faced challenges and stereotypes, but they were able to overcome it and enjoy their freedom and independence through solo travelling.

ANNEXURE 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE EXPERIENCE AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN SOLO TRAVELLERS TO GOA

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- What is your Name ?
- What is your Age ?
- Where are you from ?
- What is your education qualification and where do you work ?
- At what age was your first solo travel ?
- What is your marital status ?
- How did you develop interest in travelling alone ?
- Are you the first women traveler in your family ?
- How often do you update parents or anyone ?
- Why do you choose to travel solo ?

TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

- How was your first solo travel experience and now what is your experience ?
- How do you choose the place you want to travel ?
- What is your min and max days of travel ?
- What are the positive things have you learnt from solo travelling ?
- How do you click photos of yourself ?
- How do you approach new people when you are travelling alone ?

SAFETY RELATED QUESTIONS :

- Do you have any limitations or restriction during travel as a women ?
- If so why do you have those limitations ?

- What are the transportation do you prefer during solo travel?
- Where did you prefer to stay during solo travel ?
- Why do you choose to stay in Hostel ?
- Have you done camping in tent and the experience of camping ?
- What are the struggle do you face during solo travelling ?
- Will you suggest all other women to travel solo (who wish to) ?
- What should other women know before travelling alone ?
- Do you think solo travelers hide their identity ?
- Will you say others your next travel destination ?
- Do you join a group during your travel ?
- What will you do in case of any health emergency ?
- Have you travelled without a phone when it suddenly gets switched off ?
- What are your safety packing essentials when it comes to solo trip ?
- How much in advance do you plan or so you leave up to spontaneity ?
- Do you take safety steps when you travel to a new place ? and what are the steps ?
- Have you ever cancelled a plan because you felt a place had become too dangerous ?
- How did you reach Goa and was it a safe journey ? (Newly added questions after two interviews)

STEREOTYPE RELATED QUESTIONS :

- Do you get the same treatment and opportunities like male travelers ?
- What is your families and friends opinion on your solo travelling ? (especially your father or brother male member in the family)
- Have anyone told you that girls should not travel alone ?
- Have you skipped doing any sport or anything as you are a women ?
- Is there any place you avoided to go as a women solo traveler ?
- If you are a men in the family, will you have the same perspective and struggle to travel ?

EXPENSES :

- How do you manage financially ?
- Do you have a budget plan when it comes to spending for food ?
- Do you think money is playing a major role in safety ?

DETAILS OF THE BOOKINGS AND STAY :

- How do you book rooms and tickets for travelling ?
- Do you book a travel agencies while travelling ?

IF THEY ARE MARRIED ?

- How often do you travel after marriage ?
- What do your family members opinion when you travel solo ?
- Why do you want to travel solo even after marriage ?
- When you travel who will take care of your family ?
- what is view of the society when you travel solo ?

TRAVEL EXPERIENCE OF GOA

- Why did you choose to travel Goa ?
- What are the tourist spot you explored in North Goa ?
- Before coming to Goa what was your expectation about Goa ?
- Did you feel any discomfort while travelling in Goa ?
- How was the experience in Goa ?
- Did you choose to travel late in Goa alone ?
- Using Public transport safe while travelling or did you prefer cab or bike ?
- What was the difficulties you faced in Goa ?
- How safe Goa was to you ?

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