

An Indian-Australian research partnership

<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Women, minorities and Access to the City</b>	
<b>Project Number</b>	<b>HSS0503</b>	
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## Research Academy Themes:

**Highlight which of the Academy's Theme(s) this project will address?**

*(Feel free to nominate more than one. For more information, see [www.iitbmonash.org](http://www.iitbmonash.org))*

1. Advanced computational engineering, simulation and manufacture
2. Infrastructure Engineering
3. Clean Energy
4. Water
5. Nanotechnology
6. Biotechnology and Stem Cell Research
7. Humanities and Social Sciences

## The research problem

*Define the problem*

How do minorities – Muslims, Parsis, Christians – and particularly women access the city? Ghettoization has set apart Muslim neighbourhoods in many cities across India. This study aims to look at Mumbai and it could also compare it with another city such as Chennai or Delhi. While gendered access to the city has been studied, the research is further layered when we try to ask the question taking into account the sharp and sharpening religious and ethnic divides in India. The research will also seek to explore the complexities of caste and class that structure and shape the contours of the urban universe/s that minority women have entry into and thereby their experiences and stories of it/them. While the official definition of 'minority' might refer to numerical or religious categories, we will explore other ways in which social exclusion and marginalisation may affect such experiences. For Muslim girls, for example, the city can be a threatening and dangerous space – travel and routes are limited and constrained. Moving out of

circumscribed areas may not be an option thereby limiting opportunities of all kinds including for education, occupation, forms of leisure and so on. The use of the hijab in public spaces including the public transportation system thereby stretching what are considered 'safe' zones of the city is worth looking into. Moreover, violence in the past has marred the city and migration and mobility of minorities has been determined by the need to be in culturally and perhaps religiously defined neighbourhoods. These neighbourhoods may also be differentiated administratively in terms of unequal access to civic services including roads, public transport, safe water, electricity, sanitation and sewage systems and the like. At the same time, the place of sacred spaces such as prominent churches or shrines in creating alternate zones and paths of access should also be analysed.

### **Project aims**

*Define the aims of the project*

Looking at access to the city from the point of view of minority women – Muslims and perhaps also Christians but leaving the category of minority also flexible and able to encompass other marginalized categories of persons.

### **Expected outcomes**

*Highlight the expected outcomes of the project*

Ethnographic study of the complex of issues involved in accessing space and opportunity in the city on the part of women from minority and marginalized groups.

### **How will the project address the Goals of the above Themes?**

*Describe how the project will address the goals of one or more of the 6 Themes listed above.*

### **Capabilities and Degrees Required**

*List the ideal set of capabilities that a student should have for this project. Feel free to be as specific or as general as you like. These capabilities will be input into the online application form and students who opt for this project will be required to show that they can demonstrate these capabilities.*

### **Potential Collaborators**

*Please visit the IITB website [www.iitb.ac.in](http://www.iitb.ac.in) OR Monash Website [www.monash.edu](http://www.monash.edu) to highlight some potential collaborators that would be best suited for the area of research you are intending to float.*

Dr Mridula Chakraborty

Please provide a few key words relating to this project to make it easier for the students to apply.

**Religious minorities, gender, access to city, urban space**