

## **Research plan for personal safety app.**

### **Study 1: Semi-Structured Interview**

#### **Background**

This app is currently in its concept phase, pre-design. It will be designed as a quick-access for women and other people while out at bars or parties, or even when walking alone. The app will feature a one-button press to alert a friend with a pre-written text, share your location, perhaps get them to send a distraction call (allowing for an excuse out of a scary situation), or even to call 911.

Sexual violence is a huge problem throughout our culture, but especially on college campuses. This app will enable women to feel like they have a plan when the inevitable occurs and they receive unwanted sexual attention.

#### **Research Goal**

I am consulting with 5-8 women currently studying at the University of Texas Austin. My goal is to discover how often they feel unsafe while at parties or at bars, or walking alone, and when the last time that happened. I will also be gathering information as to whether they have a plan that helps him feel safer or are using another personal safety app.

#### **Research Questions**

- [Needs] What is essential for women to feel safe out at night in the face of unwanted sexual attention / advances?
  - What, if anything, are users' current plan for when they feel or are unsafe?
- [Behaviors] How do they deal with these uncomfortable to dangerous situations?
  - Do they interact with existing digital products?
  - Do they feel paralyzed and trapped, or are they able to ask for help?
- Do users need/want a technical solution to help in these situations?
  - Do users use existing personal safety apps?
  - Would they feel it's beneficial to have handy?

#### **Method & Recruiting**

I have a contact at the University of Texas at Austin, and he has agreed to forward a few questions to a few of his friends. He lives in a fraternity house, so hopefully these women will have ample experience attending frat parties and going to bars on sixth street.

This initially will be a survey type questionnaire, perhaps in Google forms, but I will perhaps follow up with more detailed questions afterward, offering an Amazon gift card.

## Screening Questions

1. When do you feel the most in danger from unwanted sexual advances?
  - a. At a bar
  - b. At parties
  - c. Walking alone at night
  - d. All of the above
  - e. None of the above
2. What is your primary strategy to get out of a dangerous situation?
  - a. Create a distraction
  - b. Make an excuse to leave
  - c. Text a friend
  - d. Signal the bartender for help
  - e. Tell them off
3. How long have you been experiencing unwanted sexual attention / advances?
  - a. Since before puberty
  - b. Since puberty
  - c. Starting in high school
  - d. Not until college
4. When was the last time you experienced sexual misconduct of some form?
  - a. Today or Yesterday
  - b. Within the past week
  - c. Within the past month
  - d. Over a month ago

## Timeline

- Design proposal: February 21—23, 2021
- Recruiting: February 24—26, 2021
- Sessions: February 28—March 3, 2021
- Readout: March 5, 2021

## Script

### Introduction

Thank you very much for participating in this study. My name is Christine, and I am taking a course in UX (User Experience) Design, a field that designs apps and websites. I'm designing a personal safety app made specifically for women, so your answers will help me with my class project.

I am reaching out today to ask you about your personal experience when going to parties and bars. This information will be strictly confidential. The results of this survey will be shared with complete anonymity, so no one will see your email address but me.

Content warning: these questions ask about how safe you feel from unwanted sexual or romantic attention and/or advances at parties and bars. If you do not feel comfortable answering them, please don't feel obligated to do so.

Again, no one will see any identifying information, just anonymous results from college-aged women.

### **Interview Questions**

Warm-up Questions [*Rationale: build rapport for difficult topic*]

1. Could you tell us more about yourself?
2. How long have you been attending UT Austin? What are you studying here?
3. The following questions will be about your previous experience with sexual violence. There is no pressure to answer any of them. You are in complete control, and if you are uncomfortable sharing this information with me, wave your hand, and I'll cease questioning immediately. Are you okay to continue?

Probe into needs and behaviors

4. Have you experienced unwanted sexual attention or sexual misconduct like sexual harassment, abuse, or assault? [*Rationale: does their history show experience with unwanted attention?*]

Follow-up questions:

- When did this happen?
  - Where did this happen?
  - Were you able to get to safety?
5. Do your female friends also experience such unwanted attention?
  6. Do you feel it's solely your responsibility to avoid / escape these situations?

### **Observation & follow-up questions:**

- Observe the comfort level of participants before continuing or sending survey.
- Ask what obstacles are present that prevent them from getting to safety?
- What tactics do they use to deal with the situation?
- What solutions would you like available to you?

### **Wrap-up**

Thank you so much for sharing your experience and insights. Your answers will help me design a better product. If you have any additional thoughts and comments, I would love to hear about them at any time. I can be reached at [professor.rose@gmail.com](mailto:professor.rose@gmail.com).

Hope you have a wonderful day, and stay healthy!

## **Study 2: Survey**

### **Background**

In our previous study, we learned that women have felt unsafe from unwanted male attention for much of their lives, and it has only increased in college. They have few resources available to them when trapped in a scary situation, so this is an opportunity to provide a simple-to-use, quick solution that allows them to call for help.

### **Research Goal**

This study focuses on better understanding of how often they feel unsafe and what (if anything) they feel empowered to do in that situation.

### **Research Questions**

- Can a digital product help women feel safer?

### **Method & Recruiting**

- Use surveys to collect data from 8 college-aged women
- Test survey questions with 3 volunteers (friends & family)
- Follow up with previous women from Study 1 to take quick survey.

### **Survey Questions**

1. Do you currently use a personal safety app?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

**The rationale for this question is to see if they already use such an app.**

2. Do you sometimes, often, or never feel unsafe due to unwanted romantic/sexual attention at a party or at a bar, or even walking alone day or night??
  - a. Often
  - b. Sometimes
  - c. Never

**The rationale for this question is to determine if feeling unsafe and/or experiencing unwanted sexual/romantic attention or advances is a recurring problem.**

3. If you answered sometimes or often, What have you recently done to feel safe again? Like, call a friend, signal the bartender, make an excuse to get out of the situation? Or do you not know what to do?
  - a. Called or texted a friend
  - b. Signal the bartender or someone else to interfere
  - c. Made an excuse to leave
  - d. Nothing because you didn't know what to do
  - e. Unable to do anything without the aggressor knowing / afraid of making him angry

**The rationale for this question is to explore whether or not they have a plan in place to help them feel safe again or if they're just too scared to take action.**

4. When was the last time you felt unsafe due to unwanted attention?
  - a. In the last few days
  - b. In the past two weeks
  - c. In the last month
  - d. Longer than a month

**The rationale for this question is to determine how frequently they experience unwanted sexual/romantic advances or attention.**

5. An app with a single-button to text a friend for help or even 911 would be helpful in those situations.
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

**The rationale for this question is to determine whether a simple app with a simple-to-press button would be helpful when they feel unsafe.**