

Rethinking Home Tutoring Through User Experience

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Abstract – The main aim of this study is to explore user needs and experience challenges associated with finding and selecting home tutors through digital platforms. The study focuses particularly on trust, tutor verification, safety, affordability, flexible scheduling, tutor–student matching, and progress tracking from the perspectives of parents and students. Based on these insights, the study proposes a user-centered approach to designing a more accessible and trustworthy home tutoring experience.

Design/methodology/approach – A user-centered design approach was adopted. Qualitative insights were gathered through interviews with potential users to understand their experiences, concerns, expectations, and difficulties in finding and managing home tutors. A competitive audit of existing tutoring platforms was also undertaken to identify gaps in usability, tutor verification, reviews, communication, payment, progress tracking, and tutor matching. The findings informed the development of personas, empathy maps, user journeys, user stories, information architecture, user flows, and an interactive prototype.

Findings – The findings indicate that users experience difficulties in identifying qualified and trustworthy tutors and have concerns regarding safety, privacy, unclear pricing, unreliable reviews, and poor tutor–student matching. Users also expressed the need for flexible scheduling, transparent information, easy communication, demo classes, and progress updates.

Practical implications – The study demonstrates how user research can inform the design of digital tutoring platforms that simplify tutor discovery, comparison, booking, communication, and learning management.

Originality/value – The study contributes a user-centered perspective to digital home tutoring by bringing together the experiences of parents and students and translating their needs into a proposed UX solution. It highlights trust, personalization, and usability as important considerations in designing more effective digital home tutoring experiences.

Keywords: User-Centered Design, Digital Tutoring, Tutor–Student Matching

1. Introduction

The rapid growth of digital technologies has significantly influenced the way education is delivered, accessed, and experienced. The expansion of online learning platforms, mobile applications, and digital educational services has created new possibilities for learners to access academic support beyond the traditional classroom. In India, this transformation became

particularly visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, when educational institutions increasingly adopted online and blended modes of teaching. Studies conducted during this period reported both the opportunities and challenges associated with digital learning, including issues related to accessibility, learner engagement, technological infrastructure, communication, and adaptation to new modes of education (Anithasri & Karthikeyan, 2022; Barua et al., 2021; Bordoloi et al., 2021). These developments have also contributed to the growing relevance of digital tutoring platforms and mobile-based tutoring applications.

Online tutoring applications provide learners with opportunities to obtain academic assistance beyond conventional classroom settings. Unlike traditional tutoring arrangements, digital platforms can potentially connect students with tutors based on subjects, academic levels, learning preferences, availability, and other individual requirements. This flexibility can be particularly valuable for students who require personalized academic support or have difficulty accessing suitable tutors through conventional networks. Lone (2017) highlighted the broader impact of online education in the Indian context, indicating the growing relevance of digital modes of learning for expanding educational access. Similarly, research examining students' experiences with online learning in India has identified the potential of digital platforms while also drawing attention to challenges associated with their effective use (Barua et al., 2021; Bordoloi et al., 2021).

The emergence of online tutoring applications has therefore shifted attention from simply providing digital educational content towards creating more engaging and personalized learning experiences. Roy (2024), in a study of the productivity dynamics of online tutoring applications in India, discusses strategies such as personalized learning, high-quality content, live tutoring, gamification, and mobile optimization as important approaches for improving the effectiveness of online tutoring applications. Such features can potentially support learner engagement, retention, and academic performance. However, the effectiveness of a tutoring platform does not depend only on the availability of technological features. The overall experience of discovering a tutor, evaluating their suitability, communicating with them, scheduling classes, making payments, and monitoring learning progress also influences how users perceive and interact with the platform.

The user experience dimension becomes particularly important in the context of home tutoring, where parents and students may have different expectations and decision-making requirements. Parents may prioritize tutor qualifications, safety, reliability, affordability, reviews, and progress information, while students may be more concerned with teaching style, subject understanding, communication, flexibility, and the

ability of a tutor to make learning engaging. A platform that does not communicate such information clearly may make the tutor-selection process difficult and uncertain. Research on online learning during the COVID-19 period similarly indicates that students' experiences are shaped not only by the availability of online education but also by technological, pedagogical, and interaction-related factors (Anithasri & Karthikeyan, 2022; Barua et al., 2021).

Trust is another important consideration in digital tutoring environments. When parents and students search for tutors through an online platform, they may have limited opportunities to independently verify a tutor's qualifications, teaching experience, reviews, or suitability. Consequently, features such as tutor verification, transparent profiles, ratings, reviews, introductory or demo classes, and clear pricing can help reduce uncertainty during the selection process. From a user experience perspective, these elements need to be organized in a simple and understandable manner so that users can compare alternatives and make informed decisions. The design of such platforms therefore requires an understanding of users' actual expectations, concerns, behaviors, and pain points rather than focusing only on technological functionality.

The present study focuses on the user experience of digital home tutoring and explores how a user-centered design approach can address the challenges experienced by parents and students while finding and selecting tutors. The study draws on qualitative interviews with potential users, a user survey, and competitive analysis to identify recurring needs and challenges. The project documentation reports interviews with 10 potential users and a survey involving 45 respondents. The research identified concerns related to tutor trustworthiness, safety and privacy, unclear information, unreliable reviews, affordability, tutor matching, scheduling, and progress tracking. These findings were subsequently translated into user personas, empathy maps, user journeys, user stories, information architecture, user flows, and a prototype.

Thus, the study positions user experience as an important component of digital tutoring platform design. Rather than viewing a tutoring application merely as a technological medium for connecting students and teachers, it considers the complete experience surrounding tutor discovery, evaluation, booking, communication, payment, and learning support. By identifying user needs and translating them into design solutions, the study aims to contribute to the understanding of how digital home tutoring platforms can become more trustworthy, usable, personalized, and responsive to the expectations of their users.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Growth of Online and Digital Learning

The use of digital technology has changed the way education is accessed and delivered. Online learning has become an important alternative to traditional classroom-based education, particularly in situations where learners need flexibility in terms of time, location, and access to educational resources. In India, the use of online education increased considerably during the COVID-19 pandemic, leading students and teachers to adapt to digital modes of teaching and learning. Studies conducted in the Indian context have reported that students recognised the

convenience and accessibility of online learning, while also experiencing challenges related to technology, interaction, communication, and learning effectiveness (Anithasri & Karthikeyan, 2022; Barua et al., 2021). Bordoloi et al. (2021) also examined perceptions of online and blended learning in India and highlighted the changing role of digital platforms in education. These developments have created opportunities for digital tutoring services, where learners can receive academic support beyond the conventional classroom environment.

2.2 Online Tutoring and Personalized Learning

Digital tutoring platforms have the potential to provide more flexible and personalized learning experiences. Unlike conventional classroom teaching, tutoring platforms can allow learners to select tutors according to their subject requirements, academic level, availability, language, and individual learning preferences. Personalized learning is particularly relevant in tutoring because students may differ in their pace of learning, areas of difficulty, and preferred teaching styles. Roy (2024), in the context of online tutoring applications in India, identifies personalized learning, high-quality educational content, live tutoring, gamification, and mobile optimization as important strategies for improving the effectiveness of online tutoring applications. Such features can support learner engagement and improve the overall learning experience. However, personalization is not limited to providing different learning materials. It also involves helping learners find an appropriate tutor who understands their academic requirements and preferred way of learning. Therefore, digital tutoring platforms need to consider the individual needs of users while designing the overall tutoring experience.

2.3 User Experience in Digital Education

The effectiveness of a digital education platform depends not only on the educational content it provides but also on how easily and comfortably users can interact with it. Students and parents need to complete several activities when using a tutoring platform, such as searching for tutors, viewing tutor profiles, comparing alternatives, communicating with tutors, scheduling classes, and making payments. If these activities are complicated or unclear, users may find the platform difficult to use even when it provides useful educational services. Previous studies on online education in India have identified issues related to students' experiences, interaction, technological challenges, and adaptation to online learning environments (Barua et al., 2021; Bordoloi et al., 2021). This suggests that the design of digital learning platforms should consider the complete user experience rather than focusing only on technological functionality. A user-centered design approach can help identify what users actually need, what difficulties they experience, and how digital services can be designed around these requirements.

2.4 Trust and Safety in Digital Tutoring

Trust becomes especially important when users select tutors through a digital platform. In traditional tutoring arrangements, parents may depend on recommendations from friends, family members, teachers, or other known sources. In contrast, digital platforms may require users to make decisions based on information presented on a screen. Parents may therefore want to know whether a tutor is qualified, experienced, reliable, and suitable for their child before booking a class. Students may also

want information about the tutor's teaching style, subject expertise, communication skills, and previous learner experiences. The student's existing user research reflects similar concerns, with participants reporting difficulty in finding trustworthy tutors, concerns about safety and privacy, and a need for more reliable tutor information and reviews. The project also identifies verified tutor profiles, reviews, demo classes, clear pricing, and easy communication as important user expectations. These observations indicate that trust should be considered an important part of the user experience of digital tutoring platforms.

2.5 Need for a User-Centered Approach to Home Tutoring

The existing literature establishes the growing importance of digital education, personalized learning, and improved online learning experiences. However, the experience of finding and selecting a suitable home tutor involves a different set of user needs. Parents may focus on safety, tutor qualifications, affordability, reviews, scheduling, and their child's academic progress, while students may give greater importance to teaching style, patience, subject understanding, and an enjoyable learning experience. The student's project also identifies these differences through separate parent and student personas. Therefore, there is a need to understand the experiences of both groups before designing a digital home tutoring platform. A user-centered approach can help capture these different expectations and translate them into meaningful design decisions. The present study addresses this area by exploring the needs, expectations, challenges, and concerns of parents and students through user interviews and using these insights to inform the design of a more trustworthy, personalized, and usable home tutoring experience.

3. Research Objectives

The major research objectives of this study are:-

1. To identify the needs, expectations, challenges, and concerns of parents and students while searching for and selecting home tutors through digital platforms.
2. To explore how user-centered design can be applied to create a more trustworthy, personalized, and usable digital home tutoring experience.

4. Design Process

The study followed a user-centered design process to understand the needs and challenges of parents and students before developing the proposed home tutoring experience. The process began with the Research stage, where user interviews were conducted to understand existing experiences, expectations, and problems related to finding and managing home tutors. A competitive analysis was also undertaken to understand the features and user experience offered by existing tutoring platforms.

The next stage was Empathize, where the information collected from users was organized to understand their needs, motivations, frustrations, and expectations. User personas, empathy maps, and journey maps were developed to represent the experiences of parents and students. This helped identify important concerns such as tutor trust, safety, teaching style, pricing, scheduling, and ease of communication.

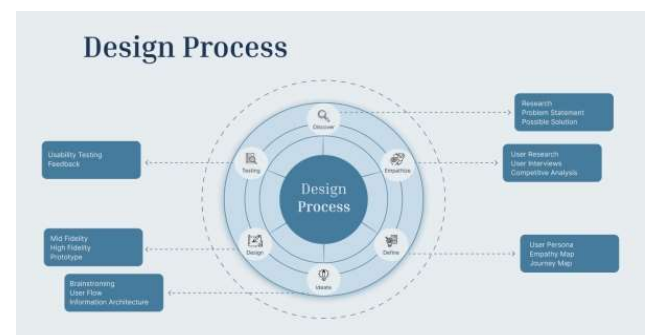
In the Define stage, the research findings were converted into specific user needs and design requirements. User stories and goal statements were developed to describe what different users wanted from the platform and how the proposed solution could address these needs. For example, parents wanted safe and reliable tutors, while students wanted tutors who could explain concepts clearly and make learning more comfortable and engaging.

The Ideate stage focused on generating possible solutions to the identified problems. Brainstorming was used to explore ways of improving tutor discovery, tutor matching, booking, communication, and learning support. This stage was followed by the development of the user flow and information architecture, which helped organize the main functions and navigation of the proposed platform.

The Design stage involved translating the research insights into interface solutions. Medium-fidelity wireframes were first developed to establish the structure, layout, and interactions of the platform. These were then developed into high-fidelity screens representing the proposed home tutoring experience, including tutor profiles, demo booking, tutor preferences, AI assistance, scheduling, reviews, and payment.

Finally, the Testing and Feedback stage was intended to evaluate the usability of the proposed solution and identify areas for improvement. The project timeline indicates that usability testing and feedback were part of the final stage of the design process.

Fig 1 : Design Process Diagram [Source : Behance Illustration]



4.1 Competitive Audit

The competitive audit was conducted to understand how existing tutoring platforms address the needs of students and parents and to identify opportunities for improving the user experience of a home tutoring platform. Five existing platforms—UrbanPro, HomeGuru, GharPe, Shiksha, and

The survey findings indicate that many users still depend on friends and family recommendations when searching for tutors. This suggests that personal trust remains important even when digital tutoring platforms are available.

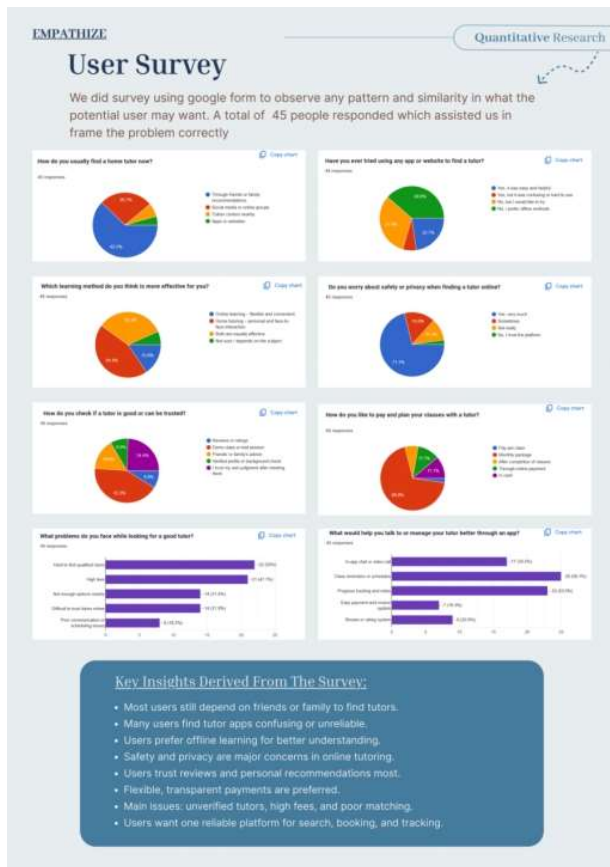
A second important finding was that users perceived some existing tutoring applications as confusing or unreliable. This supports the interview finding that ease of use and trust are important factors in the tutor-selection process.

The survey also indicated a preference for offline learning, suggesting that home tutoring continues to hold value for users who prefer face-to-face interaction and personalized academic support. At the same time, safety and privacy remained major concerns when users considered online tutoring services.

Another important finding was the role of reviews and personal recommendations in developing user confidence. Users also preferred flexible and transparent payment options and identified unverified tutors, high fees, and poor matching as major concerns.

Overall, the survey supports the major themes identified through the interviews. Users want a reliable platform where they can search for suitable tutors, evaluate their credibility, compare alternatives, understand costs, communicate easily, and manage the tutoring process in one place.

Fig 2 : Analysis of conducted surveys [Source : Real data



4.4 Consolidated User Insights

The findings from the competitive audit, user interviews, and user survey were considered together to identify the major requirements for the proposed home tutoring platform. While the competitive audit highlighted the features and limitations of existing platforms, the interviews provided deeper insights into users' experiences and concerns. The survey further supported several of these findings by identifying similar patterns among a larger group of respondents. Across the three sources, five major requirements emerged: trust and tutor verification, personalized tutor matching, transparent information and pricing, simple booking and communication, and continued learning and progress support.

Table 2 : Consolidated User Insights

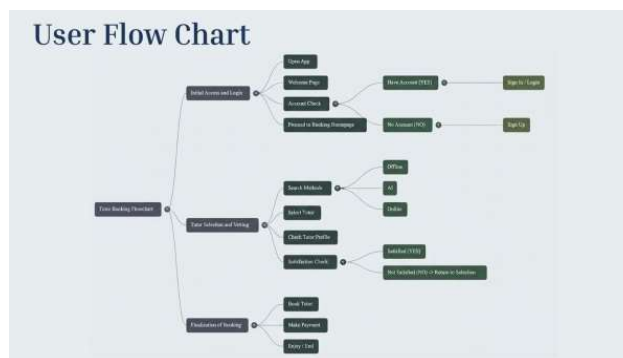
Major Insight	Evidence from Research	Design Requirement
Trust is important	Interviews + Survey	Verified tutors, ratings, reviews
Users need better matching	Interviews + Survey	Personalised tutor preferences
Tutor information is unclear	Interviews + Competitive Audit	Detailed tutor profiles
Booking can be confusing	Interviews + Competitive Audit	Simple booking flow
Pricing is a concern	Interviews + Survey	Transparent pricing
Users want flexible learning	Interviews + Survey	Flexible timing/mode
Parents want progress information	Interviews	Progress dashboard/ reports
Users want confidence before booking	Interviews + Competitive Audit	Free/demo class

5. User Flow Chart

The user flow chart was developed to define how users would move through the proposed home tutoring platform while completing key tasks. The flow begins with entering the platform and providing basic details, followed by selecting preferences such as class, board, subject, language, and tutor preference. Users can then search for suitable tutors, review tutor profiles, and explore information such as subjects taught, experience, ratings, reviews, pricing, and availability. The flow further guides users towards booking a demo class, selecting a suitable time slot, communicating with the tutor, and completing the booking and payment process. The proposed flow also includes options for AI assistance and continued interaction with the selected tutor. This structure was intended to make the tutor-selection and booking process simple and sequential, while reducing the effort required from parents and students to find and engage with a suitable tutor. The user flow therefore

translates the identified user requirements into a clear sequence of actions before moving towards the interface design.

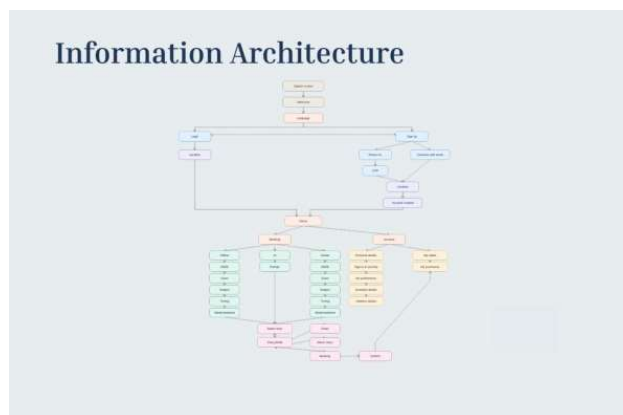
Fig 3 : User Flow Chart [Source : Self]



6. Information Architecture

The information architecture was developed to organize the content, features, and navigation of the proposed tutoring platform in a logical manner. It provides the structural foundation for the interface by determining how users can move between different sections and access the information required at each stage of their tutoring journey. Based on the proposed platform, the structure accommodates major activities such as tutor discovery, tutor profiles, tutor preferences, demo booking, scheduling, AI assistance, communication, payment, and user account management. The architecture supports a progression from finding a tutor to evaluating the tutor, booking a session, making payment, and managing the learning experience. It also separates supporting functions such as personal details, educational information, payments and preferences, security, purchases, and wallet management within the user's account area.

Fig 4 : Information Architecture [Source : Self]

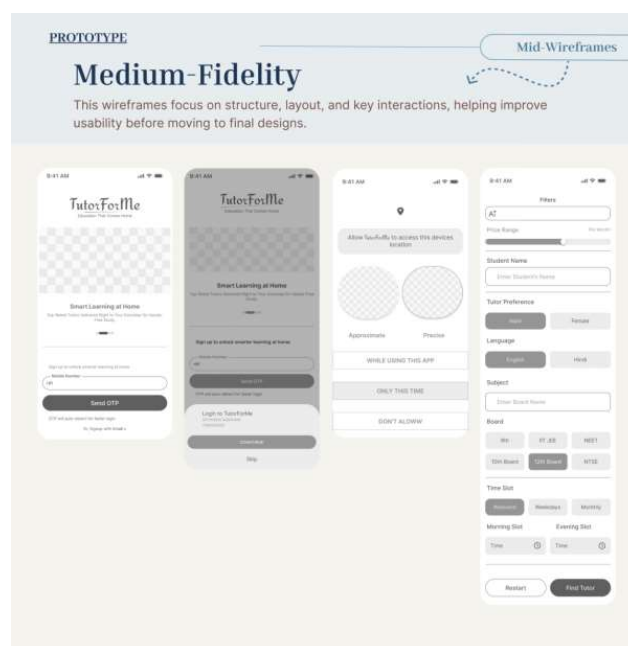


in the existing home tutoring experience. The proposed solution focuses on creating a simple, trustworthy, personalized, and convenient tutoring platform that supports users throughout the complete journey of finding and engaging with a tutor. Key solutions include verified tutor profiles, detailed tutor information, ratings and reviews, demo classes, personalized tutor preferences, flexible scheduling, transparent pricing, secure payment, easy communication, and AI-assisted learning support. These requirements were translated into the user flow, information architecture, and subsequently into medium- and high-fidelity interface designs. The proposed interface was designed to reduce complexity in tutor discovery and booking while giving parents and students greater confidence when selecting a suitable tutor. The final prototype also incorporates features such as tutor availability, teaching experience, certifications, sample lessons, progress-related information, and account and payment management.

7.1 Medium-Fidelity UI Design

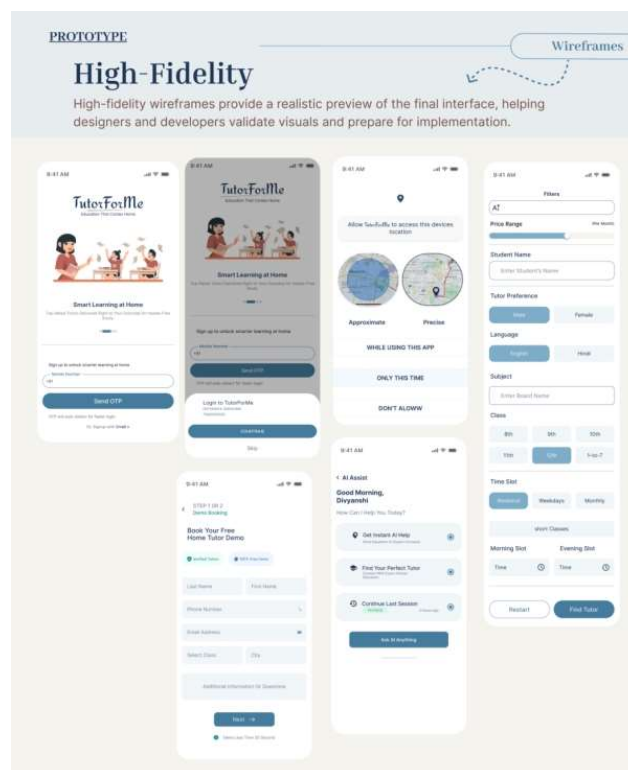
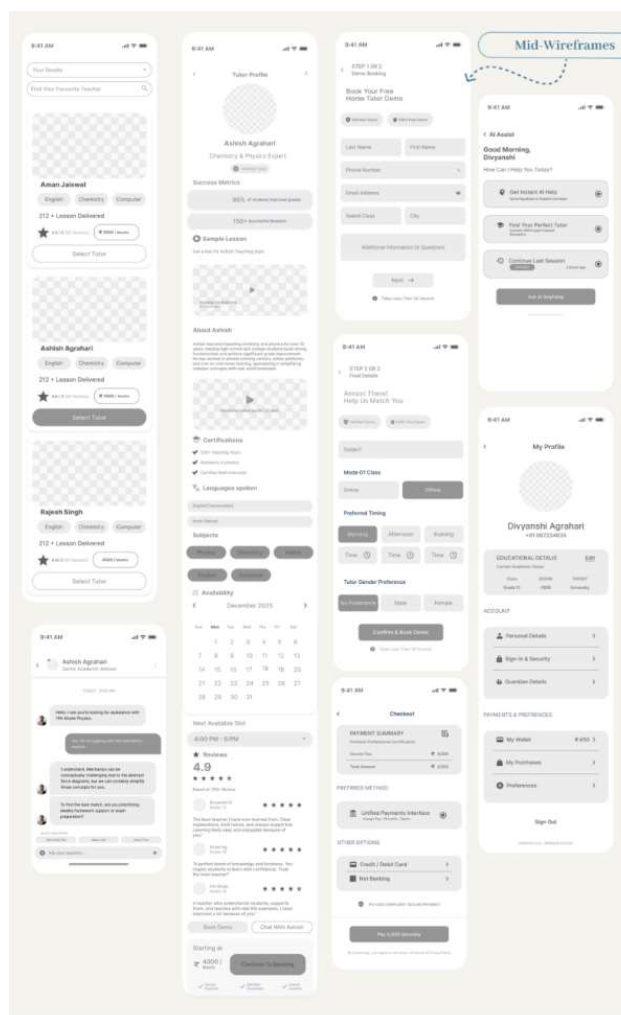
The medium-fidelity interface was developed to translate the information architecture and user flows into a clear visual structure. At this stage, the focus was mainly on the layout, content organization, navigation, and key interactions rather than detailed visual styling. The wireframes established the placement of important elements such as tutor search and filters, student details, tutor preferences, tutor profiles, demo booking, scheduling, and other key actions. This stage helped organize the core user journey and provided a basis for refining the interface before moving to the final visual design.

Fig 5 : Medium Fidelity Frames [Source :SELF]



7. Proposed Design Solutions

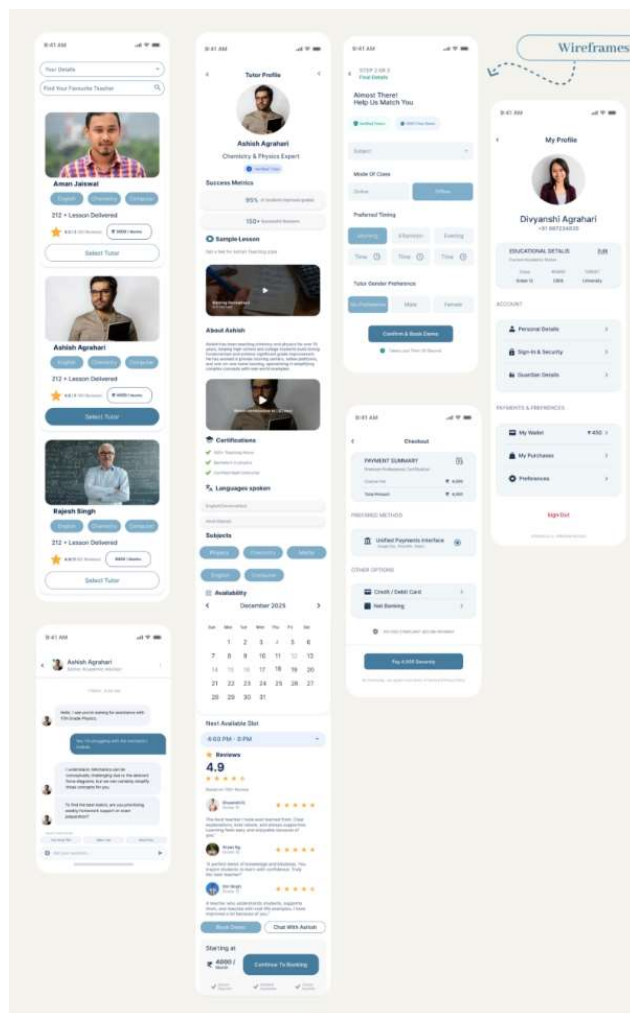
Based on the insights obtained from the user research, competitive audit, interviews, and survey, a set of design solutions was proposed to address the key challenges identified



7.2 High-Fidelity UI Design

The high-fidelity interface was developed by adding the visual and interactive details to the structure established through the medium-fidelity wireframes. The final interface incorporated the selected typography and visual palette along with detailed screens for tutor discovery, tutor profiles, verified tutor information, demo booking, AI assistance, tutor availability, reviews, payment, and user account management. The high-fidelity prototype provides a more realistic representation of the proposed TutorForMe platform and demonstrates how users would experience the complete tutoring journey from finding a tutor to booking and managing a learning session.

Fig 6 : High Fidelity Frames [Source :SELF]



8. Conclusion

The study explored the challenges and expectations of parents and students while finding and selecting home tutors through digital platforms and examined how a user-centered design approach can address these challenges. The findings from the user interviews, survey, and competitive audit indicate that users require more than a basic platform for searching tutors. Trust, tutor verification, personalized matching, clear information, transparent pricing, flexible scheduling, easy communication, and a convenient booking process emerged as important requirements for improving the tutoring experience.

The study translated these user requirements into a proposed digital home tutoring experience through personas, empathy mapping, user journey mapping, user stories, user flows, and information architecture. The design solutions were further developed through medium- and high-fidelity interfaces incorporating features such as verified tutor profiles, tutor reviews, demo classes, tutor preferences, availability, AI assistance, scheduling, and secure payment.

Overall, the study demonstrates that effective digital tutoring is not only about providing access to tutors but also about creating a trustworthy, personalized, and easy-to-use experience around the complete tutoring journey. A user-centered approach

can help translate the actual needs and concerns of parents and students into meaningful design decisions. The proposed solution provides a foundation for developing more user-friendly home tutoring platforms, while further usability testing with a larger and more diverse group of users would be valuable to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed design in real-world conditions.

9. References

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