

Navigating care work, safety and informality in urban India

EVIDENCE FROM DELHI'S WOMEN DOMESTIC
WORKERS



Foreword

The inception of this research goes back to the days immediately after the first nationwide Lockdown was lifted. In our interactions with women domestic workers regarding their livelihood challenges during the Pandemic, as part of our rapid survey 'Livelihoods on Loan', we found that these women workers are facing severe economic challenges due to reduced income. As they shared their experiences, we gathered three main reasons behind this: first, even after the lockdown was lifted, bus services on several routes did not resume, forcing workers to take auto rickshaws that cost so high that they couldn't afford for long. Owing to the lack of affordable transportation, WDWs had to give up employment in many households. Second, every single worker we spoke to had shared how the household responsibilities have been doubled during this time, hindering them to invest more time in paid work. And third, the already existing safety concerns for women in Delhi streets were exacerbated due to regulations in public places at specific times of day during the Pandemic. Hence, workers were unable to take up work at late evening hours impacting their chances to earn more, at a time when they needed it the most.

Many of these workers are primary earners in their families, especially so when other members lost their jobs during the Pandemic. They had taken loans and needed extra income to pay their debts along with bearing daily expenses. Listening to these workers made us think how the combination of these three factors is weighing so heavily on their choices and their likelihood of earning more; how it is impacting their work participation and endangering their health and safety. That's when we felt the urgent need to do a time-use survey to better understand how unpaid care work, safety concerns and mobility issues are impacting the livelihoods of domestic workers in Delhi-NCR.

The Global Fund for Women readily agreed to support this research. Now we only needed an expert in the field of economics, and accomplished Feminist Researcher Mitali Nikore came to our rescue. We were already familiar with Mitali's work on gender responsive budgeting, infrastructure and transport. When we requested her assistance, she not only extended her help in conducting the research, but led the entire study with dedication and ownership. I am deeply grateful to Mitali and the entire Nikore Associates team for making this happen.

I do believe this research would contribute significantly in understanding the interplay of unpaid care work, women's safety concerns and female labour force participation in the country, especially in the case of domestic workers. It also has the potential to generate dialogues with relevant authorities to initiate gender transformative planning and budgeting that is cognisant of the rights and needs of women domestic workers.

Jayashree Velankar

Director, Jagori

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We are grateful to the members of the Ethics Committee, Amulya Nidhi, Dr. Saumya Uma, and Dr. Sona Mitra for their invaluable guidance in navigating the ethical considerations of this study.

We extend our special appreciation to Nikore Associates, our research partner, for their expertise and dedication without which this study would not have been possible. Under the brilliant leadership of Ms. Mitali Nikore, Founder and Chief Economist, Nikore Associates, their contributions have been instrumental in shaping this research.

We dedicate this research to all women domestic workers who are an integral part of our daily lives—working tirelessly to support households while facing systemic barriers to their fundamental rights as workers and human beings. We believe their life-sustaining labour deserves greater recognition. This study is a collective effort—an exercise in solidarity and commitment. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to this endeavour.

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Introduction

The care economy represents a crucial yet undervalued segment of India's labor market. Recent estimates indicate that women's unpaid domestic and care work contributes significantly to the economy, valued between 15-17% of India's GDP¹. The National Statistical Organization's Time Use Survey (2019) highlights substantial gender disparities in this sector, with working-age women spending 5.6 hours daily on unpaid work compared to just 30 minutes for men². Even among employed women, the burden remains disproportionate, as they perform six times more unpaid care work than their male counterparts. This "double burden" significantly impacts women's ability to participate in the formal workforce, underlining the urgent need for recognition and investment in the care economy to promote more equitable economic growth and enhanced female labor force participation.

Domestic workers currently form the backbone of household care through the provision of essential services in India. Domestic workers perform a diverse range of direct and indirect care services within private households, encompassing not only traditional domestic tasks like cleaning and cooking, but also specialized care work for children, elderly, and disabled family members. Their employment arrangements vary significantly (ILO, n.d), from part-time to full-time positions, single or multiple household employment, and live-in versus live-out arrangements in largely informal settings, reflecting the complex nature of domestic labor markets.

Global statistics reveal the deeply gendered nature of domestic work, with women comprising 76.2% of the 75.6 million domestic workers worldwide (ILO, 2021)³. This gendered distribution reflects broader patterns of occupational segregation, where care work remains disproportionately feminized despite its critical role in supporting formal economic activities. The concentration of women in domestic work represents both a crucial employment pathway and a perpetuation of gender-based labor market segregation.

Domestic workers face a paradoxical combination of essential economic contribution and systematic marginalization within labor protection frameworks. Despite providing services fundamental to household functioning, 81% (ILO, 2021)⁴ remain trapped in informal employment arrangements – which is twice the rate found in other employment. This informality manifests in multiple forms of vulnerability: wages averaging just 56% of other workers', extreme working hour variations, exposure to harassment, and restricted mobility. The absence of comprehensive labor legislation and weak implementation of existing protections particularly affects informal domestic workers, creating a cycle of precarity.

1 Press Information Bureau. (2024, March). Formulating a Strategy for India's Care Economy: Unlocking Opportunities. Government of India. Retrieved from <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2024/mar/doc202435319501.pdf>

2 Press Information Bureau. (2024, March). Formulating a Strategy for India's Care Economy: Unlocking Opportunities. Government of India. Retrieved from <https://static.pib.gov.in/WriteReadData/specificdocs/documents/2024/mar/doc202435319501.pdf>

3 International Labour Organization. (2021). Making decent work a reality for domestic workers: Progress and prospects ten years after the adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_protect/%40protrav/%40travail/documents/publication/wcms_802551.pdf

4 International Labour Organization. (2021). Making decent work a reality for domestic workers: Progress and prospects ten years after the adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). International Labour Office. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40ed_protect/%40protrav/%40travail/documents/publication/wcms_802551.pdf

India's policy framework regarding domestic work reveals evolving but inconsistent institutional recognition of these workers' rights. While the Task Force on Domestic Workers (Ministry of Labour and Employment (MOLE, 2011))⁵ provided a narrow definition focused on remuneration, the National Policy on Domestic workers (MOLE, 2015)⁶, which is yet to be implemented, expanded this conceptualization to encompass the diverse spectrum of household management activities⁷. This definitional evolution reflects growing recognition of domestic work's complexity but highlights persistent gaps in worker protection frameworks.

Statistical evidence suggests significant undercounting of India's domestic workforce, with official estimates of 7.4 million workers contrasting sharply with unofficial estimates exceeding 50 million (NDWM, n.d.; SEWA, 2014)⁸⁹. Based on e-Shram portal¹⁰ registrations in the unorganised sector as of October 2024, domestic work is the second-largest employment category for women after agriculture (MOLE, n.d.).

Domestic work exemplifies the challenges of informal, feminized labor in India's urban economy, with estimates of the sector's size varying significantly. The classification of domestic work as "unskilled" labor, despite its essential nature, combined with its predominantly female and migrant workforce, has resulted in systematic exclusion from labor protections, making workers particularly vulnerable to exploitation within the informal urban economy. Educational disadvantage compounds economic vulnerability for domestic workers in India, with the majority lacking basic literacy and formal education, creating intergenerational cycles of poverty and exploitation. (Mander, 2015)¹¹.

The market for domestic labor in India has expanded through interrelated forces affecting both supply and demand. On the supply side, limited formal employment opportunities have pushed workers, particularly women, into domestic service as one of few accessible occupational options. On the demand side, India's economic transformation has produced an expanding middle class with

5 Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL&E). (2011). Final report of the Task Force on domestic workers: Realising decent work. ESocialSciences. Available at: <http://labour.nic.in/dglw/FinalReportTaskForceDomesticWorkers.pdf>

6 Centre for Women's Development Studies. (2020). Action Research on Women's Labour Migration in India (Working Paper No. 9). Retrieved from <https://www.cwds.ac.in/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Working-paper-9.pdf>

7 The Final Report of the Task Force on Domestic Workers defines "Domestic worker as a person who is employed for remuneration whether in cash or kind, in any household work, but does not include any member of the family of an employer". On the other hand, the National Policy For Domestic Workers In India (MOLE, 2015) states that "Domestic or household work" means all such work involved in the management of private living home(s) including but not limited to activities assigned to servants, maids, cooks, waiters, valets, butlers, bell-boys/girls, caregivers for sick, old or disabled, laundresses, gardeners, gate-keepers, security guards, stable-lads, chauffeurs, caretakers, governesses, babysitters, sweepers, cleaners, car-washers, drivers and such other home management responsibilities including shopping for food and undertaking other household errands."

8 National Domestic Workers Movement. (n.d.). The state of domestic workers in India. Retrieved from <https://ndwm.org/domestic-workers/>

9 SEWA. (2014). Domestic workers' laws and legal issues in India. WIEGO Law and Informality Resources. Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). Retrieved from <https://www.wiego.org/sites/default/files/resources/files/Domestic-Workers-Laws-and-Legal-Issues-India.pdf>

10 e-Shram is a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW) launched by the Government of India under the Ministry of Labour & Employment. The primary purpose of the portal is to facilitate delivery of welfare benefits and social security measures to unorganised sector workers across the country. The platform aims to register and provide identity cards to unorganised workers, enabling them to access various government schemes, benefits, and services more efficiently.

11 Mander, H. (2015). Looking away: Inequality, prejudice and indifference in New India (pp. 157-158). Speaking Tiger. <https://scroll.in/article/720811/underage-children-as-domestic-workers-middle-class-indias-great-est-shames>

rising household incomes and growing demand for domestic help. As Ghosh (2014)¹² shows, these dual forces create a self-reinforcing cycle: while wealthy households increasingly rely on domestic workers to maintain their lifestyle, workers enter domestic service due to lack of alternatives, despite its informal nature and low wages. This dynamic helps explain the sector's rapid growth while highlighting its role in perpetuating economic disparities. As a result, most domestic workers continue to work with low security of pay.

The Delhi-NCR region exemplifies the urban concentration and evolving patterns of domestic work in metropolitan India, hosting approximately 500,000 domestic workers (WIEGO, 2020)¹³. The region's labor market exhibits a dual structure: predominant demand for part-time help alongside a significant segment of more vulnerable live-in workers, typically migrants from economically disadvantaged states like Jharkhand, Odisha, and Bihar. This pattern reflects broader urban-rural migration dynamics and the intersection of gender, class, and regional inequalities in India's domestic work sector.

This report is a contribution to the literature on the care economy. It aims to expand the understanding and interpretation of the care economy beyond childcare and elder care services, recognising the domestic care segment and challenges of domestic workers. Specifically, the report presents the results of a survey conducted amongst 270 women domestic workers in Delhi-NCR with the objective of understanding: (i) key challenges with care responsibilities for domestic workers in their own homes; (ii) safety issues faced by domestic workers during their commute through the city; and (iii) understand working conditions. The data from Delhi-NCR allows us to formulate key policy, institutional and infrastructure related recommendations for national stakeholders.

Specific safety concerns of women domestic workers in Delhi-NCR are further highlighted in the findings from the Women's Safety Audits (added as an appendix to this report) conducted in Delhi-NCR. Four safety audit walks were undertaken in four major locations covering different parts (West Delhi, South Delhi, Faridabad and Gurgaon) of Delhi-NCR along the routes taken by women domestic workers who reside and commute for work. The Safety Audit report covers the detailed observations during the walks, analysis of the key findings from the audits, major issues identified and principal action points towards ensuring safe mobility and increased labour participation of women domestic workers in Delhi-NCR.

12 Ghosh, J. (2014). The invisible workers: Rights, justice and dignity for domestic workers. United Nations in India. Available at: <https://in.one.un.org/page/the-invisible-workers-rights-justice-and-dignity-for-domestic-workers/>

13 Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). (2020). Domestic workers, risk & social protection in Delhi National Capital Region (Policy Brief No. 21).



2. Review of Literature

India's urban care economy reflects profound transformations in gender relations and labor markets, particularly evident in metropolitan regions like Delhi NCR. While domestic work has historically been shaped by caste hierarchies, its contemporary manifestation emerges from rapid urbanization and increasing female labor force participation among privileged classes. As Banerjee (2009)¹ demonstrates, this shift has produced a “new underprivileged class” - predominantly female migrants from economically disadvantaged backgrounds who navigate dual care responsibilities at work and home, revealing how class and gender intersect to create new forms of labor market segmentation.

The performance of domestic work involves complex intersections of physical, emotional, and social labor that distinguish it from other forms of informal employment. Workers must skillfully manage power dynamics within employers' homes while performing intimate care tasks, a phenomenon Klimczuk (2017)² characterizes as emotional labor. This multidimensional burden is particularly acute for women who must balance their employers' care needs with those of their own families, creating what scholars term a “double burden of care” that reinforces gender-based economic vulnerabilities.

1 Banerjee, A., & Raju, S. (2009). Gendered Mobility: Women Migrants and Work in Urban India. *Economic and Political Weekly*, 44(28), 115–123. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40279264>

2 Klimczuk, A. (2017). Work, domestic work, emotional labor. In B. Turner (Ed.), *The Wiley-Blackwell encyclopedia of social theory* (pp. 1-4). Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118430873.est0409>

Mobility constraints fundamentally shape women's access to public spaces and economic opportunities in Delhi NCR, with safety concerns creating significant barriers to their daily movement. According to the Toolkit for Enabling Gender Responsive Urban Mobility and Public Spaces³, 95% of women's mobility was restricted due to fear of harassment, while 82% identified buses as the most unsafe mode of transport, creating a deeply concerning picture. Further evidence indicates that 89% of college-going female students reported experiencing harassment while using public transport in Delhi, compelling them to adopt various safety precautions. These safety concerns particularly affect women's daily commuting patterns, creating temporal restrictions on their participation in education and workforce.

Transportation infrastructure gaps compound the economic precarity of domestic work, with limited early-morning public transit options forcing reliance on costly informal alternatives. For instance, the Metro trains in Delhi first start running at 6:00 AM only, preventing early hour usage by domestic workers whose shifts may start even earlier. Research by WIEGO (2020)⁴ demonstrates how working in multiple households (typically 3-4 daily) creates complex mobility patterns that increase both costs and safety risks. This fragmented nature of work reflects broader structural constraints on women's economic mobility in urban India.

The economic position of domestic workers in Delhi NCR reveals the persistent vulnerability of feminized informal labor despite its essential role in urban households. With average monthly earnings of just INR 6,000 (NSDC, 2022)⁵ and significant variation based on tasks and employer locality, domestic workers face systematic economic insecurity. This precarity is exacerbated by the near absence of formal contracts (only 2% coverage; Ghatak, A., & Sarkar, K. 2019)⁶ and limited access to financial institutions, forcing reliance on informal networks and perpetuating cycles of economic marginalization.

Precarious working conditions persist for domestic workers in Delhi NCR despite growing labor advocacy, reflecting fundamental gaps in worker protection frameworks. WIEGO's (2020)⁷ analysis reveals systematic exploitation through extended working hours - 10-12 hours daily for full-time workers and 40 hours weekly for part-time workers - compounded by inadequate rest periods and occupational hazards from cleaning chemicals. The absence of standardized working conditions is exacerbated by Delhi NCR's urban geography, where workers concentrated in unauthorized colonies face lengthy commutes to affluent employment zones, creating a spatial dimension to their economic vulnerability.

The absence of comprehensive social security coverage for domestic workers has led to the emergence of parallel support systems through informal networks. While formal protections

3 World Bank. 2022. India - Toolkit for Enabling Gender Responsive Urban Mobility and Public Spaces. <http://hdl.handle.net/10986/38199>

4 Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). (2020). Domestic workers, risk & social protection in Delhi National Capital Region (Policy Brief No. 21).

5 Government of India, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, National Skill Development Corporation. (2017). Human resources and skill requirements in the domestic help sector (2013-2017, 2017-2022). KPMG. <https://skillsip.nsdcindia.org/sites/default/files/kps-document/Domestic-Help.pdf>

6 Ghatak, A., & Sarkar, K. (2019). Status of domestic workers in India: A tale of two cities (Working Paper No. 255). Gujarat Institute of Development Research. <https://gidr.ac.in/pdf/wp-255-9932.pdf>

7 Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO). (2020). Domestic workers, risk & social protection in Delhi National Capital Region (Policy Brief No. 21).

like health insurance, pensions, and maternity benefits remain largely inaccessible, Barua (2022)⁸ documents how workers have developed sophisticated informal networks that facilitate job placement, childcare arrangements, and information sharing. These self-organized support systems represent both a survival strategy and a critique of institutional failures to protect vulnerable workers.

Urban spatial inequality emerges as a critical determinant of domestic workers' economic opportunities and daily experiences in Delhi NCR. The city's socio-spatial segregation, marked by stark housing affordability gaps between workers' residential areas and employment zones, creates a structural mismatch that increases both temporal and financial costs of employment. This spatial organization of inequality is particularly evident in unauthorized colonies, where inadequate infrastructure and services multiply workers' vulnerabilities.

Social hierarchies continue to fundamentally shape domestic work in contemporary urban India, with gender, class, and caste intersecting to create layered patterns of discrimination. Arora's (2023)⁹ ethnographic research demonstrates how these social categories determine not only immediate working conditions and wages but also structure access to better employment opportunities. The persistence of caste-based task allocation in domestic work reveals how traditional hierarchies are reproduced within modern urban labor markets, perpetuating historical patterns of exclusion through new economic arrangements.

3. Research Methodology

This study employs a mixed-methods approach to examine the complex intersections of gender, labor markets, and economic agency among WDWs in Delhi-NCR. Through systematic quantitative analysis complemented by qualitative insights, the research investigates how structural barriers in transportation, safety, and employment shape women's labor market participation and decision-making autonomy.

The analytical framework centers gender as a critical determinant of labor market outcomes while recognizing economic marginalization's multifaceted nature. Through an intersectional lens, the study examines how gender-based discrimination interacts with informal labor markets and unpaid care burdens. This six-month investigation (May-November 2024) focuses on Delhi-NCR's urban areas.

Strategic sampling ensures comprehensive representation of domestic workers' diverse experiences through collaboration with grassroots organizations. The study encompasses 270 women domestic workers, selected through random sampling in partnership with Jagori, a women's rights organization. The sampling framework aimed to capture variation across age, migration status, employment patterns, and socioeconomic backgrounds, specifically targeting women for whom domestic work constitutes primary employment.

Data collection instruments capture workers' multidimensional experiences while maintaining methodological rigor. The structured questionnaire examines seven domains: socioeconomic profiles, employment patterns, mobility access, safety concerns, care responsibilities, workplace dynamics, and

8 Barua, P. (2022). Organising paid domestic workers in India: Analysing collective mobilisation through a new form of 'unionism' in the Global South. In G. Ågotnes & A. K. Larsen (Eds.), *Kollektiv mobilisering: Samfunnsarbeid i teori og praksis* (Chapter 10, pp. 247–276). Cappelen Damm Akademisk. <https://cdforskning.no/cdf/catalog/view/168/897/7288>

9 Arora, A. (2023). Caste, gender, and labour: A case study of Dalit women domestic workers. *International Journal of Political Science and Governance*, 5(2), 19-21. <https://doi.org/10.33545/26646021.2023.v5.i2a.252>

resource access, combining quantitative metrics with qualitative insights. The study comprises two distinct components: a trip diary and a time-use survey. The trip diary documents journey durations between destinations and identifies transportation challenges encountered during travel. The time-use survey, meanwhile, offers detailed insights into the distribution of time between paid employment and unpaid caregiving responsibilities.

The implementation strategy prioritizes ethical considerations and data quality through carefully designed field protocols. Face-to-face interviews conducted by trained interviewers form the core of data collection, with particular attention to participant sensitivity and vulnerability. The process emphasizes informed consent, confidentiality, and participant rights, while maintaining systematic documentation and regular quality checks.

The analysis combines quantitative and qualitative interpretation, employing descriptive statistics and statistical testing to identify patterns, while qualitative analysis of responses provides context for personal experiences.

Methodological constraints are systematically addressed through targeted mitigation strategies to ensure research validity. The study acknowledges limitations in accessing certain worker populations, potential response bias, and geographic constraints, implementing solutions through diverse sampling, community-based trust-building, and flexible data collection approaches.

The design enables theoretical contribution and practical application through its focus on structural analysis and policy implications, generating insights for both scholarly discourse and policy interventions.

4. Findings

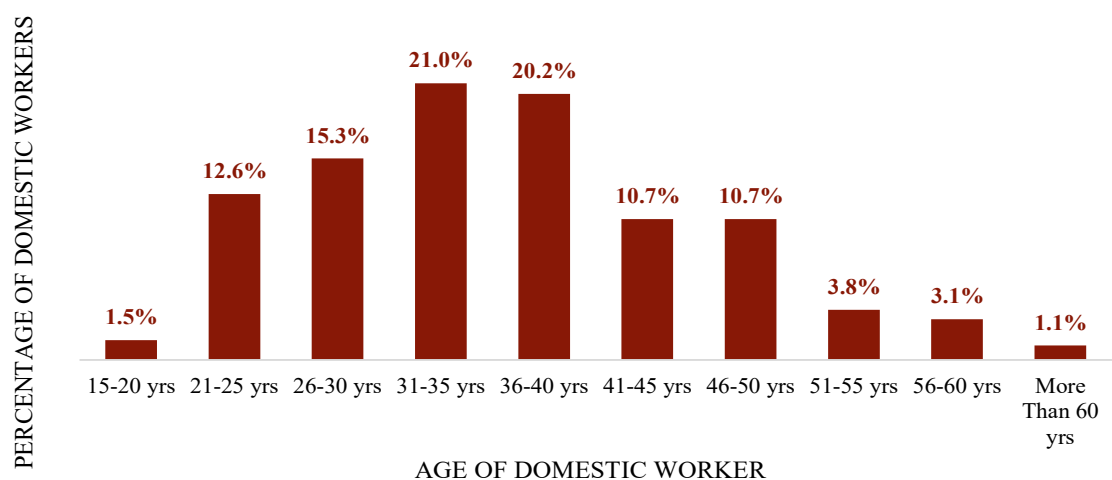
4.1. Socioeconomic profile and labour participation

The socioeconomic landscape of WDWs in Delhi NCR provides crucial insights into their educational background, work patterns, and economic conditions. This analysis explores their literacy rates, employment preferences, income levels, and the underlying factors influencing their choice of domestic work. Nearly half the WDWs in the study sample are between the ages of 30 and 50 years and have four or five children.

The age distribution data shows a notably young demographic profile, with about (1.5%) of the population in the 15-20 age group. The next major concentrations are in the 31 to 35 years age group and 36 to 40 years age group, each accounting for roughly one-fifth (21.0% and 20.2%) of the total. The middle age segment of 26-30 represents approximately one-sixth (15.3%), while about one-eighth (12.6%) falls in the 21-25 age range. There's a clear downward trend in the older age groups, with around one-tenth (10.7%) each in the 41-45 and 46-50 brackets, declining to less than 5% for ages above 50. The over-60 population represents a minimal fraction at just about 1%. This distribution highlights a bottom-heavy age structure, suggesting a predominantly young population base.

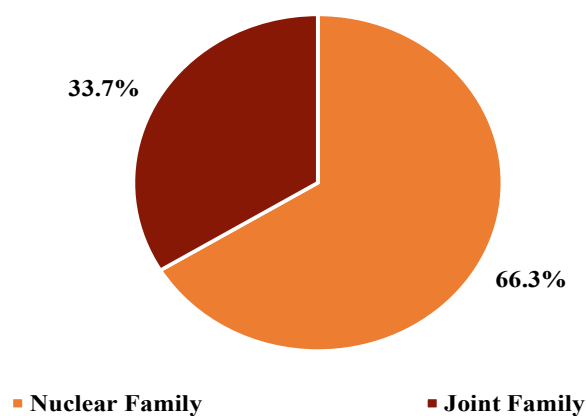
The data reveals distinct patterns in family structures among women domestic workers. A significant majority, approximately two-thirds (66.29%) of the workers, live in nuclear family setups, while the remaining one-third (33.71%) belong to joint family arrangements. This indicates a clear preference or circumstance favouring nuclear family structures among these workers.

Figure 1: Frequency Distribution of Age of Domestic Workers



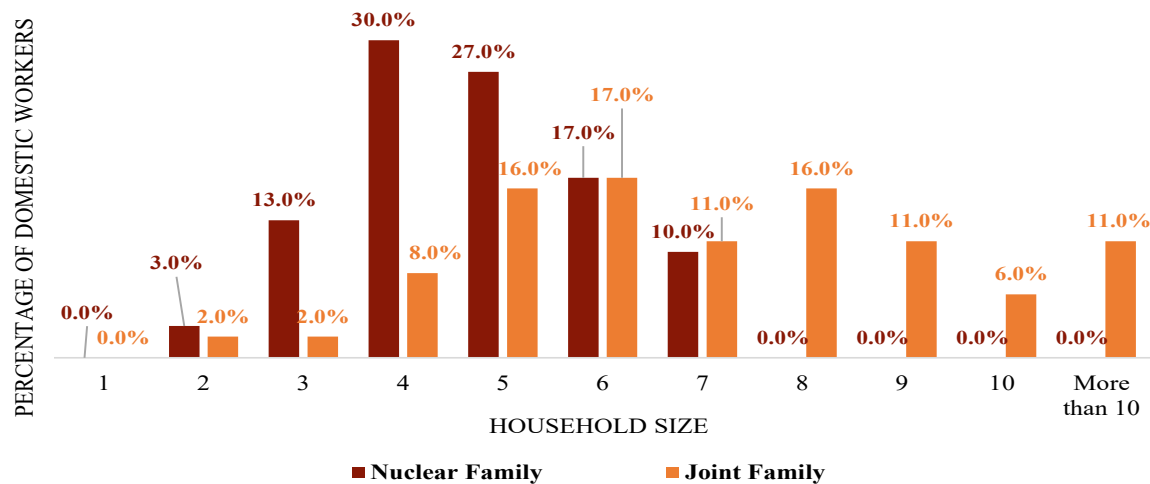
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 2: Household Type



Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 3: Household Structure of Domestic Workers (Nuclear and Joint Family)



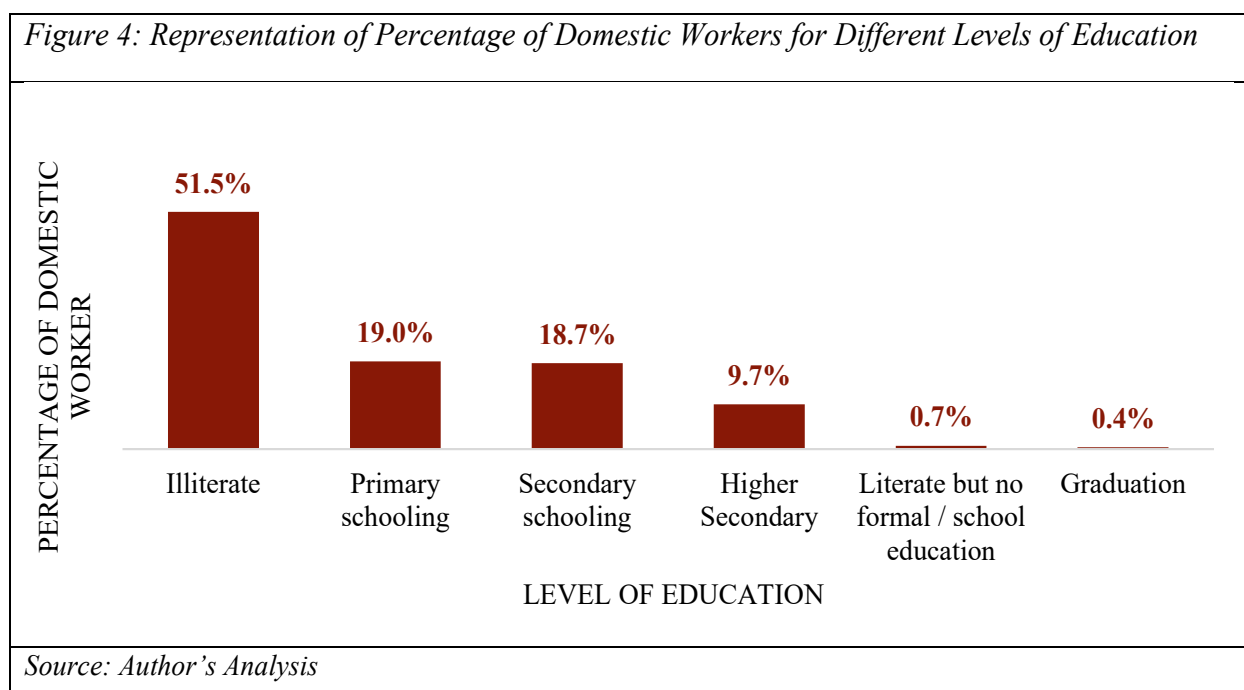
Source: Author's Analysis

By analysing household sizes of nuclear families show the highest concentration of WDWs in 4-member households (30%), followed by 5-member households (27%). This suggests that the typical nuclear family unit comprises parents with two or three children. Smaller nuclear households with 2-3 members represent a relatively smaller proportion (16% combined) of WDWs.

The joint family distribution shows a different pattern. These households tend to be larger, with a significant portion of the households having between 5 to 7 members. In addition, 11% of the joint family households have more than ten members. This distribution aligns with the traditional concept of joint families where multiple generations or family units live together.

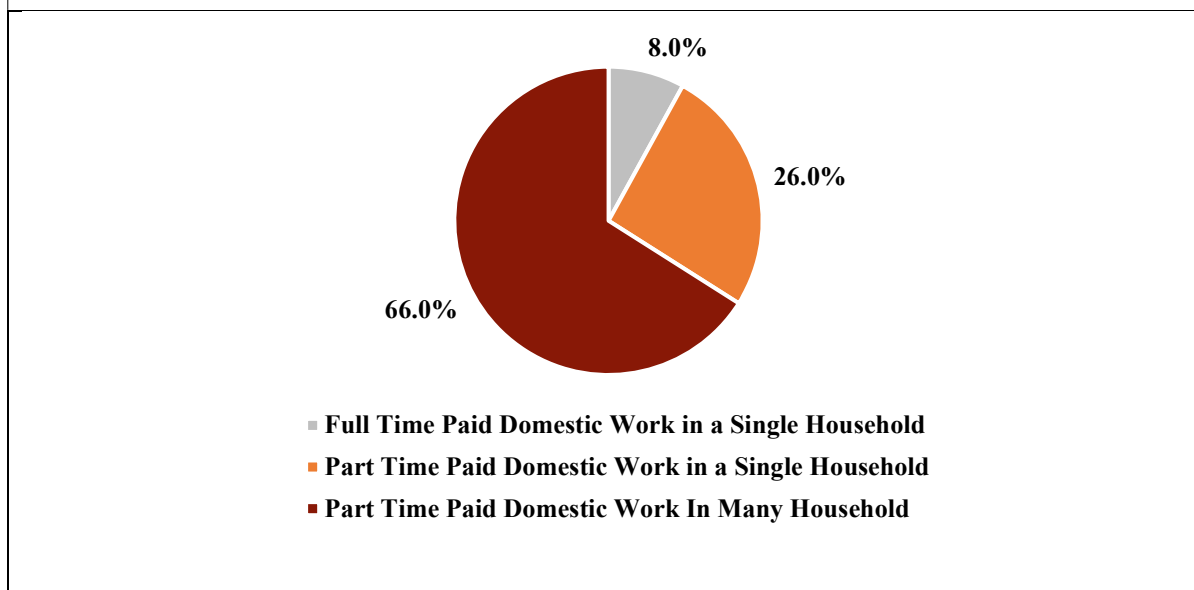
This household structure data provides valuable insights into the living arrangements of women domestic workers, highlighting the predominance of nuclear family setups while also showing the persistence of traditional joint family arrangements, particularly in larger household sizes.

Educational barriers significantly limit job opportunities, with illiteracy recorded characterising half of the domestic workers surveyed. The negligible proportion of graduates (less than 1%) highlights the significant barriers these women face in accessing formal education. This limited educational background often becomes a crucial factor in steering them towards domestic work, as it requires minimal formal qualifications while offering immediate employment opportunities.



Multiple-household work pattern emerges as a dominant strategy for maximizing earnings and flexibility. The work patterns reveal an interesting adaptation to economic necessities and personal constraints. Nearly two-thirds (66%) of the workers have adopted a multiple-household approach, working part-time across different homes. Nearly 90% of part time workers work in 2 to 4 households. This preference stems from the potential for higher cumulative earnings and the ability to negotiate better terms with multiple employers. In contrast, those working full-time in single households (8%) often choose this pattern for job security and consistent income, while those maintaining single part-time positions (26%) typically do so to balance work with family responsibilities or health constraints.

Figure 5: Percentage of Women Engaged in Different Job Types



The data reveals a significant disparity in work patterns among women domestic workers, with 90% of the domestic workers working across 2 to 4 households, suggesting that this is the most sustainable and common work arrangement. Only a small fraction (10%) work in 4 to 6 households, which could indicate that managing more households may be logistically challenging or physically demanding for most workers. This pattern likely reflects both the workers' need to earn sufficient income while balancing workload manageability and employers' preference for part-time domestic help.

The preference for part-time work, whether in single or multiple households, appears to also be the need to balance income generation with family responsibilities. Those working in multiple households often do so to offset low wages from individual employers, while those choosing single-household employment typically prioritize time management and reduced travel burden. This work pattern flexibility, combined with the sector's low entry barriers, makes domestic work an accessible, though not necessarily optimal, employment choice for women with limited educational qualifications and significant family responsibilities.

Figure 6 : Part Time Work in Multiple Households

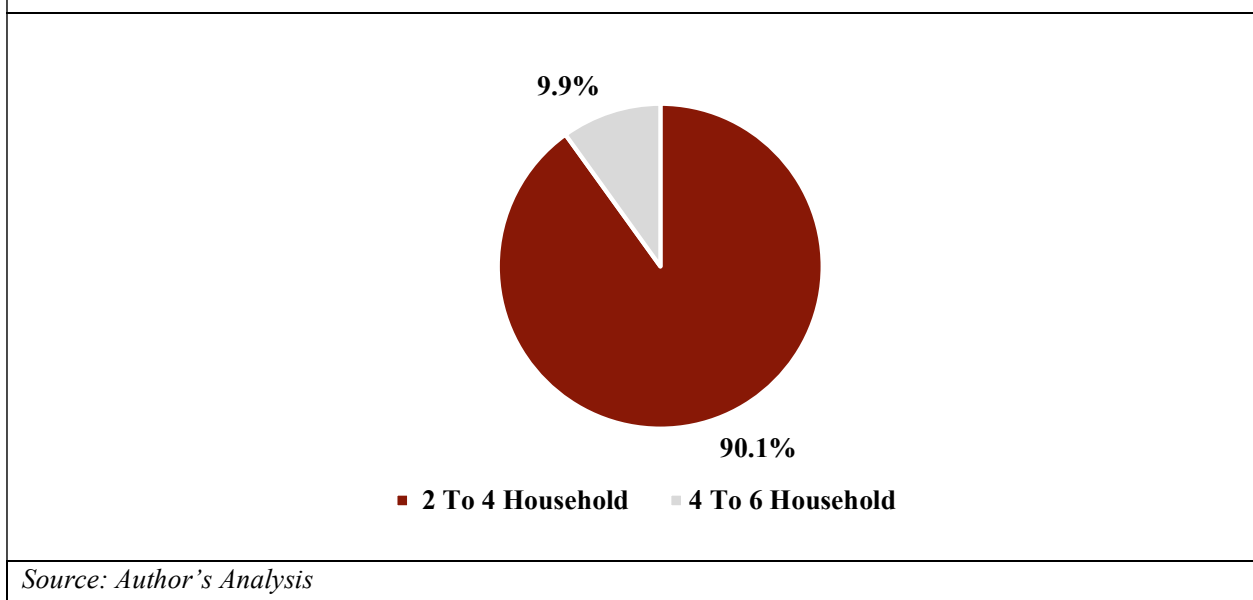
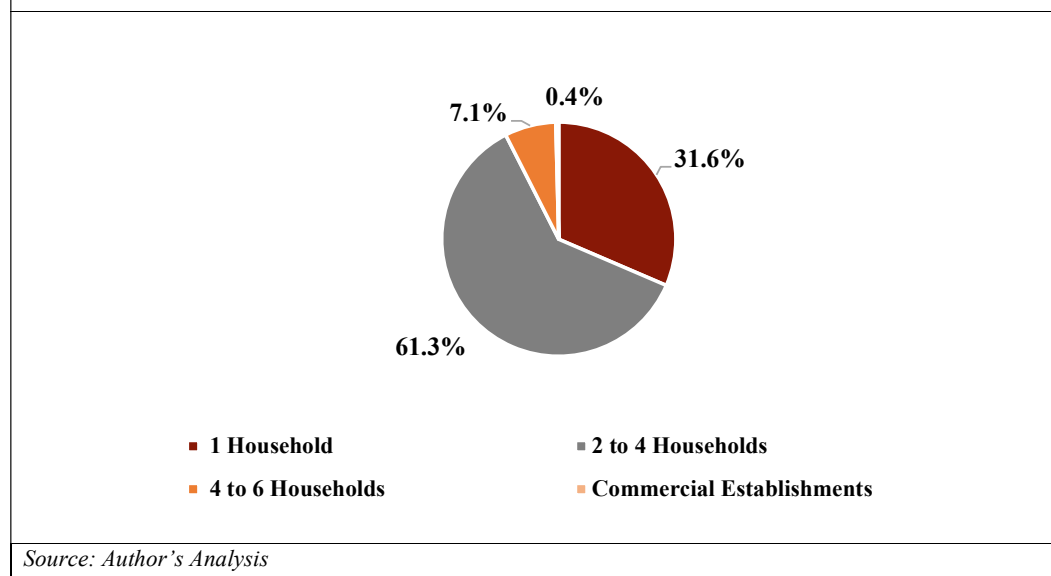


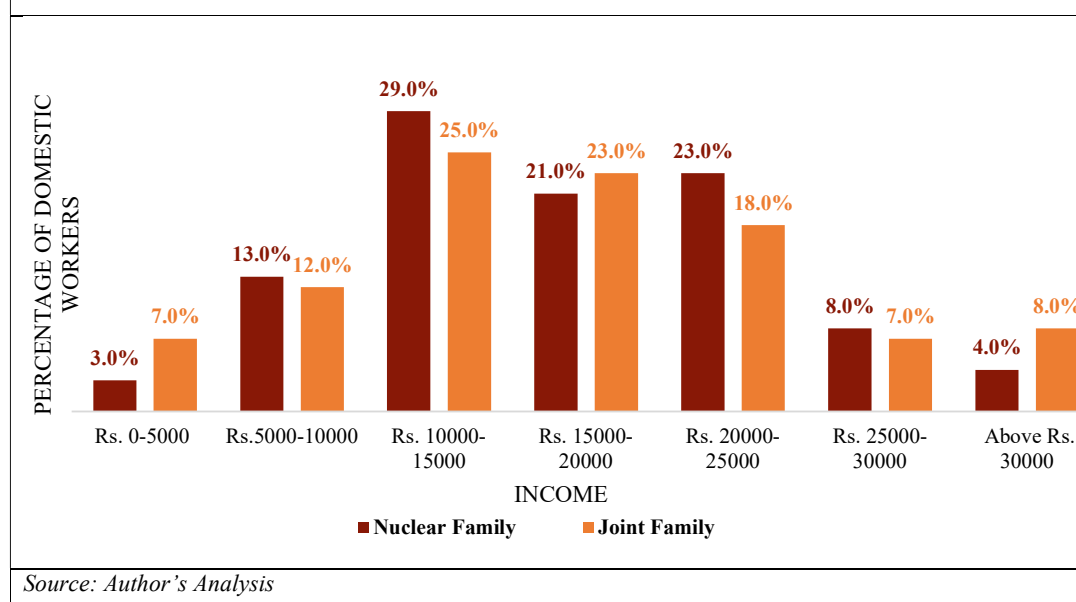
Figure 7: Percentage of Women working in Number of Households



Majority of women domestic workers (61.3%) are employed in 2 to 4 households, suggesting this arrangement is common and sustainable within the sector. A significant portion (31.6%) work in a single household, possibly indicating a preference for this arrangement. A smaller percentage (7.1%) work across 5-6 households, which might suggest logistical or physical challenges associated with managing a higher number of households. Finally, a very small fraction (0.4%) work in commercial establishments.

The household income data reveals distinct economic patterns across family structures. Overall, most households are concentrated in the INR 10,000-15,000 (27%) and INR 15,000-20,000 (20%) brackets. Nuclear families show their highest representation in the INR 10,000-15,000 range at 29%, followed closely by the INR 20,000-25,000 bracket at 23%. Notably, only 4% of nuclear families earn above INR 30,000, indicating limited upward economic mobility.

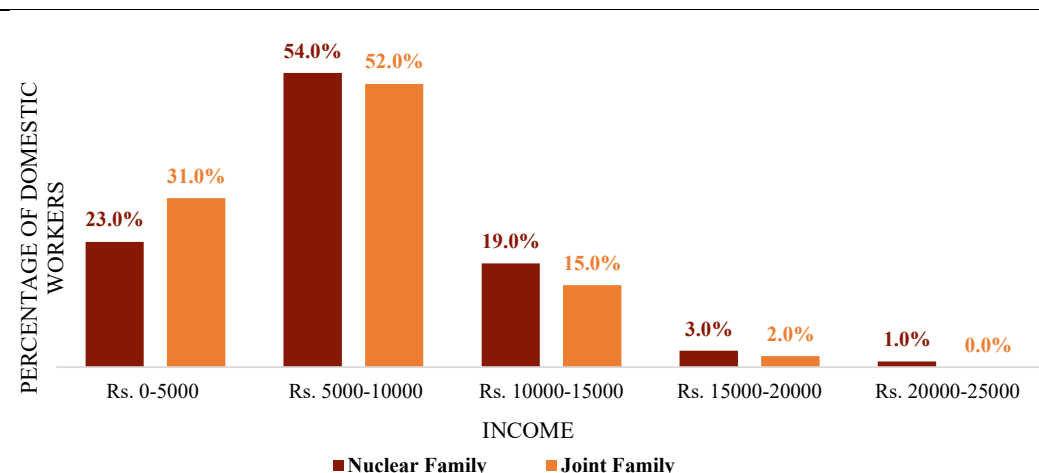
Figure 8: Representation of Domestic Worker's Monthly Household Income



Joint families display a more balanced distribution, with significant concentrations in the INR 10,000-15,000 (25%) and INR 15,000-20,000 (23%) brackets. Interestingly, they show a higher percentage (8%) in the above INR 30,000 category compared to nuclear families, suggesting greater earning

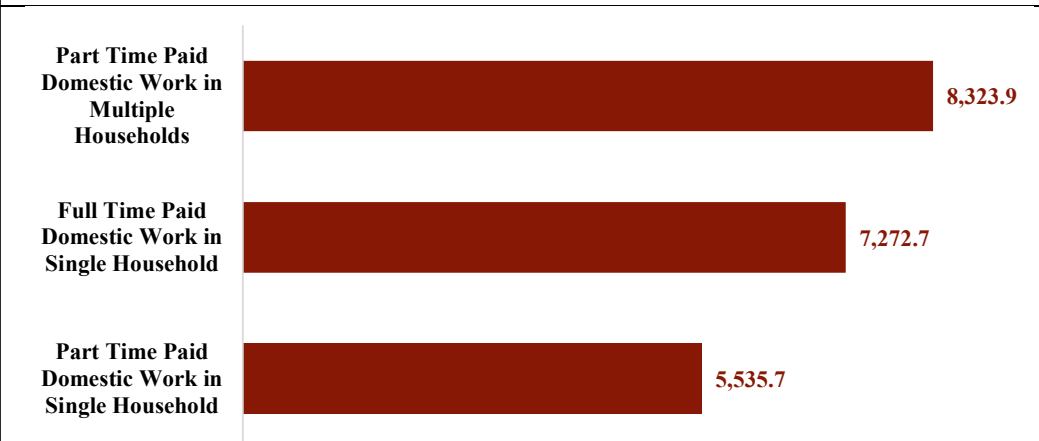
potential possibly due to multiple working members. However, both family structures maintain similar representations in the lower income brackets below INR 10,000, indicating that family structure alone may not be a determining factor in escaping poverty.

Figure 9: Representation of Domestic Worker's Monthly Personal Income



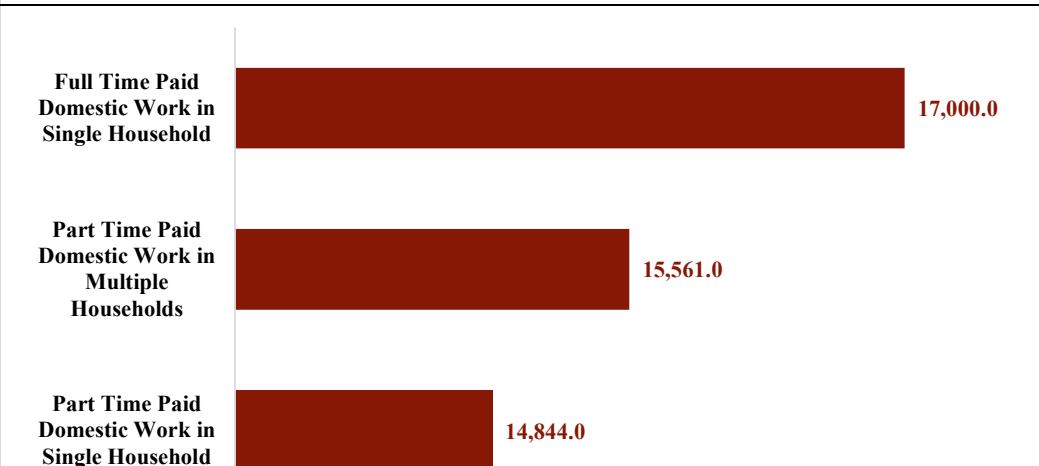
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 10: Average Personal Income according to the Job type



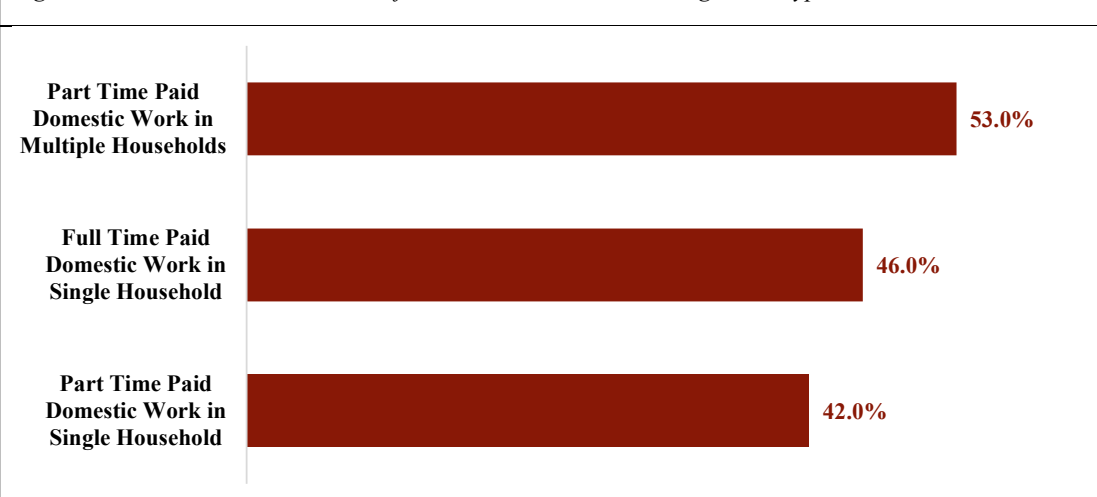
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 11: Average Household Income according to the Job type



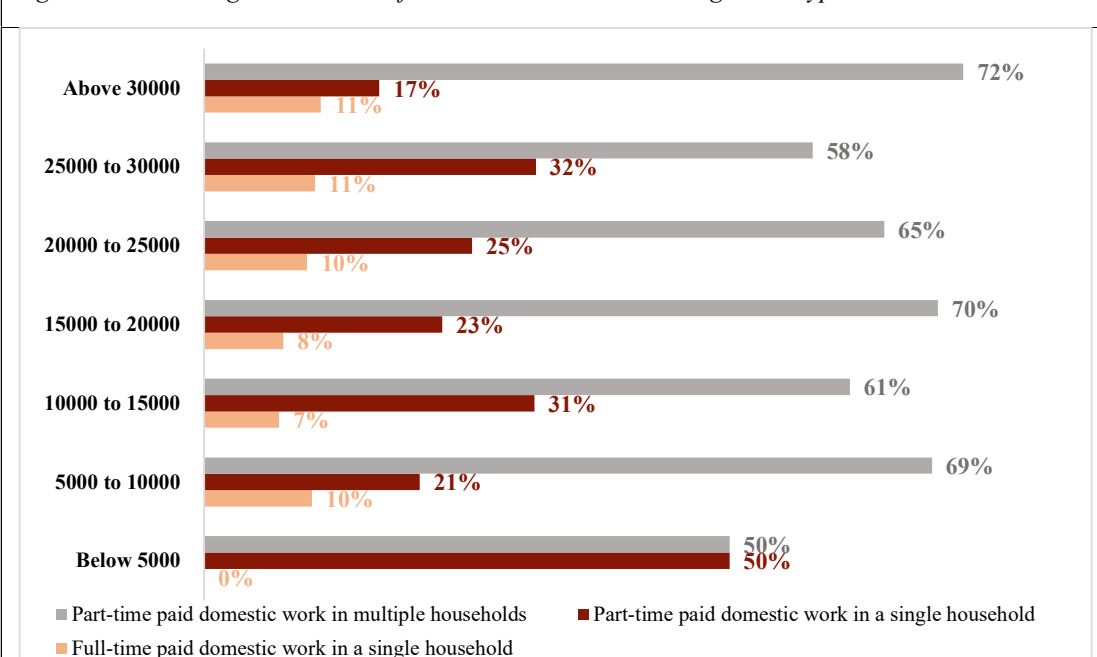
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 12: Personal income as a % of Household income according to Job type



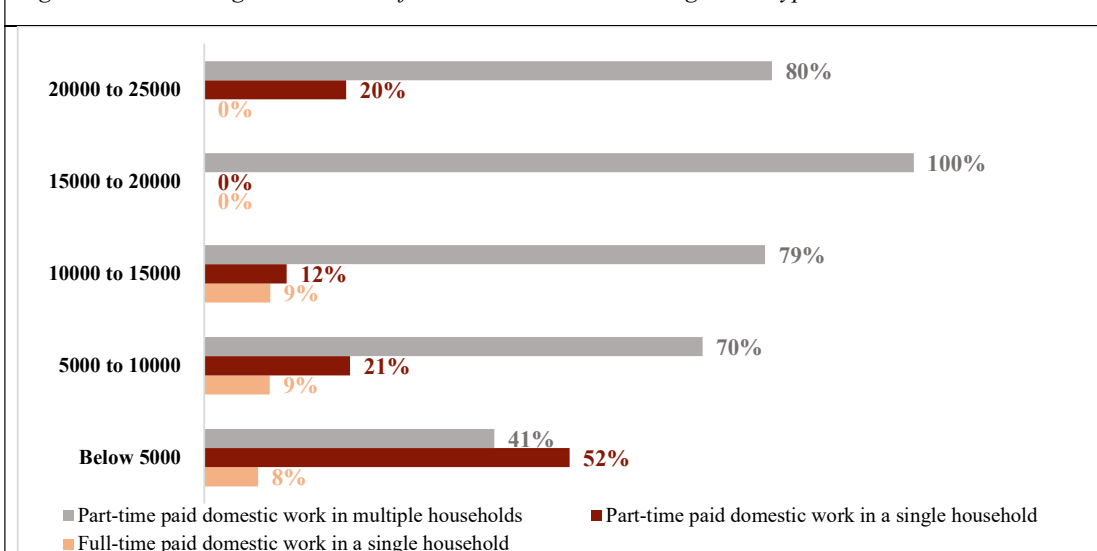
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 13: Percentage distribution of Household income according to Job type



Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 14: Percentage distribution of Personal income according to Job type



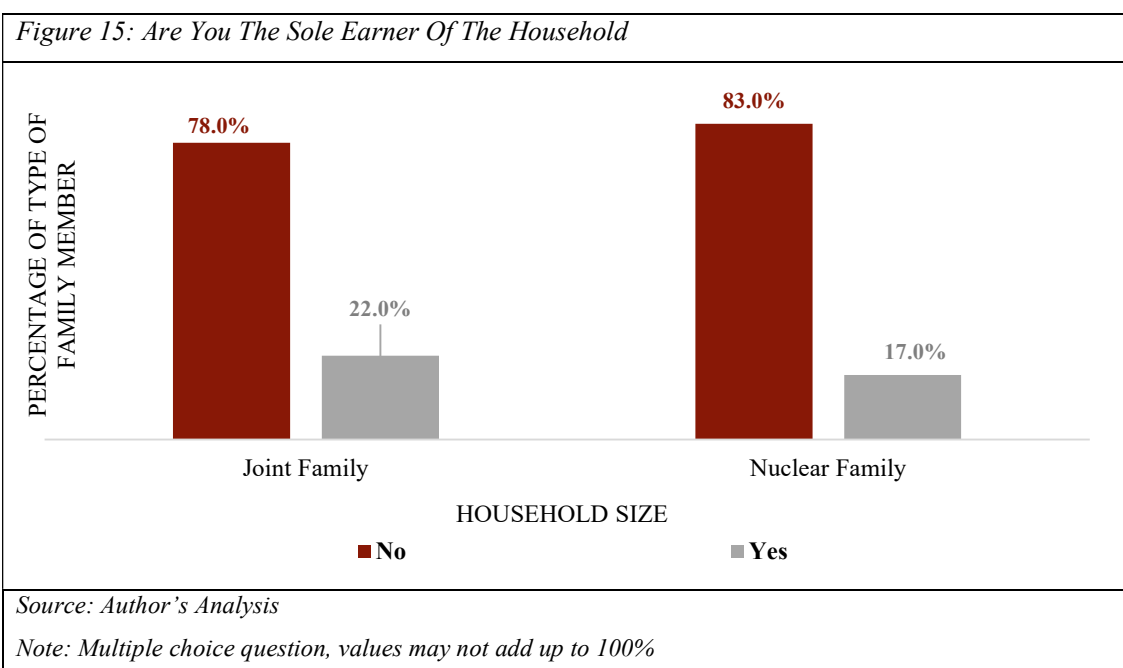
Source: Author's Analysis

Looking at household income distribution across different employment types, full-time domestic workers in single households predominantly earn in higher income brackets, with 11% earning above Rs.30,000 and another 11% in the Rs.25,000-30,000 range. Only 7-10% fall in the lower-middle income brackets (Rs.10,000-25,000), and notably, none earn below Rs.5,000, suggesting full-time single household work provides relatively stable income.

Part-time workers show contrasting patterns - those working in multiple households are concentrated in higher income brackets (72% earning above Rs.30,000 and 70% in Rs.15,000-20,000), while those in single households show more varied distribution, with significant proportions in both lower- and middle-income ranges. This indicates that working across multiple households might offer better earning potential compared to single-household arrangements, whether full-time or part-time.

Analysis of personal income patterns reveals stark differences across domestic work arrangements. Among part-time workers in multiple households, there's a clear upward trend in representation as income increases - from 41% in the lowest bracket to 100% in the Rs.15,000-20,000 range and 80% in the highest bracket. This suggests multiple-household work offers better earning potential.

In contrast, full-time single household workers show limited representation across lower income brackets (8-9% in ranges up to Rs.15,000) and are completely absent from higher income categories. Part-time single household workers are heavily concentrated in the lowest income bracket (52%), with declining representation in higher brackets, indicating this work arrangement may be the least financially rewarding.



A comparative analysis of household earning patterns reveals notable differences between nuclear and joint family structures. In nuclear families, 17% of women domestic workers serve as the sole earners for their households, while a substantial majority (83%) belong to households with multiple income sources. The pattern shifts slightly in joint families, where a higher proportion (22%) of women workers are sole earners, while 78% of households have additional earning members. These findings have important socio-economic implications, as the higher percentage of sole earners in joint families,

despite having more family members, suggests greater economic vulnerability in these households. While both family types predominantly have multiple earners, the presence of 17-22% sole earner households across both structures indicates a significant segment where women domestic workers bear complete financial responsibility, highlighting the crucial role these women play in household survival and emphasizing the need for social security measures and fair wage practices to support these primary breadwinners.

Juxtaposing household incomes against the distribution of WDWs per employment type shows a preference for part-time arrangements across different segments. Even in higher household income brackets (above INR 25,000) there is a clear dominance of part-time work in multiple-households.

These patterns indicate that domestic workers often opt for or are compelled to take multiple household employment to achieve desired income levels, despite the higher time commitment and complexity of managing multiple employers. The consistently low numbers in full-time single household arrangements across all income brackets suggest a shift away from traditional employment patterns in the domestic work sector, possibly due to wage inadequacy in single-household arrangements.

Survey findings reveal distinct income patterns among women domestic workers across nuclear and joint family structures. In nuclear families, a substantial 54% of workers earn between Rs. 5,000-10,000 monthly, with an average income of Rs. 7,500. A concerning 23% earn below Rs. 5,000, while 19% manage to earn between Rs. 10,000-15,000, with an average income of Rs. 12,500. Only a marginal 4% of nuclear family workers earn above Rs. 15,000, indicating limited income mobility. The Average per capita income (personal income) was observed to be Rs 7,460 approximately.

The income pattern among joint family workers shows similar trends but with greater economic constraints. While 52% earn in the Rs. 5,000-10,000 range (Average income of Rs.7500), a notably higher proportion (31%) earn below Rs. 5,000 compared to their nuclear family counterparts. The middle-income bracket of Rs. 10,000-15,000(Average income of Rs.12,500) represents 15% of joint family workers, with merely 2% earning above Rs. 15,000, and none reaching the highest bracket of Rs. 20,000-25,000. These distributions suggest that women domestic workers from nuclear families have a marginally better income profile compared to those from joint families, though both groups predominantly fall within lower-income categories.

The analysis of income patterns across different job types reveals a clear hierarchy in earning potential. Part-time workers employed in multiple households earn the highest average income at INR 8,324, demonstrating the financial benefits of diversifying employers. Full-time workers in single households follow with an average of INR 7,273, while part-time workers in single households earn notably less at INR 5,536.

This income distribution suggests that either working full-time with one household or diversifying across multiple households as a part-time worker leads to better earnings compared to part-time work in a single household. The near INR 2,800 difference between multiple-household part-time workers and single-household part-time workers particularly highlights how employer diversification or time commitment to a single employer could significantly impact earning potential in domestic work.

The household income data shows significant variations across different work patterns. Full-time single household workers have a monthly household income of Rs. 17,000, while part-time multiple household workers have Rs. 15,561, and part-time single household workers have Rs. 14,844. Working in multiple households provides only marginally higher earnings (Rs. 717 more) compared to single household part-time work, which may not justify the additional travel costs and time.

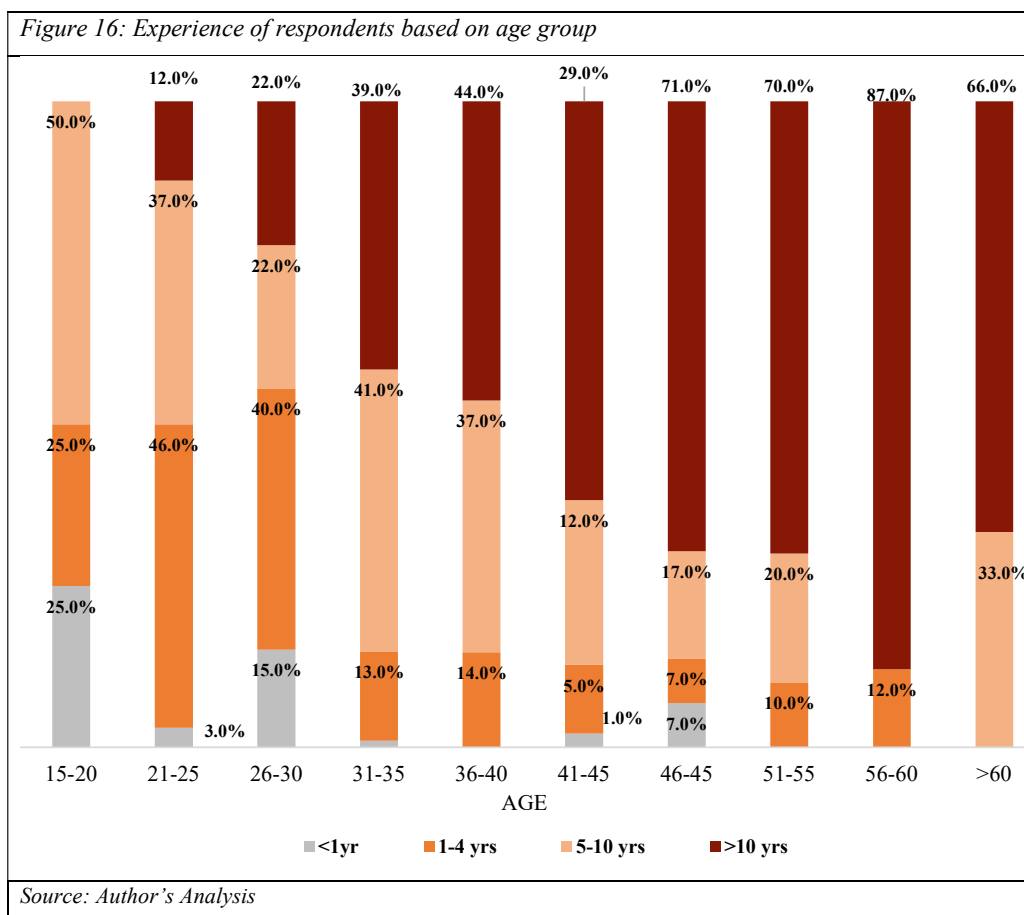
The 14.5% premium for full-time work over part-time single household work suggests an undervaluation of full-time domestic labor. These findings indicate a need for standardized hourly wages and improved labor protection measures to ensure fair compensation across all work arrangements.

The relationship between personal and household income reveals critical insights into domestic workers' economic contribution to their families. Part-time workers serving multiple households contribute the highest share at 53% of their household income, suggesting their significant role as primary earners. This contrasts with full-time workers in single households who contribute 46%, while part-time workers in single households contribute the least at 42% to their family income.

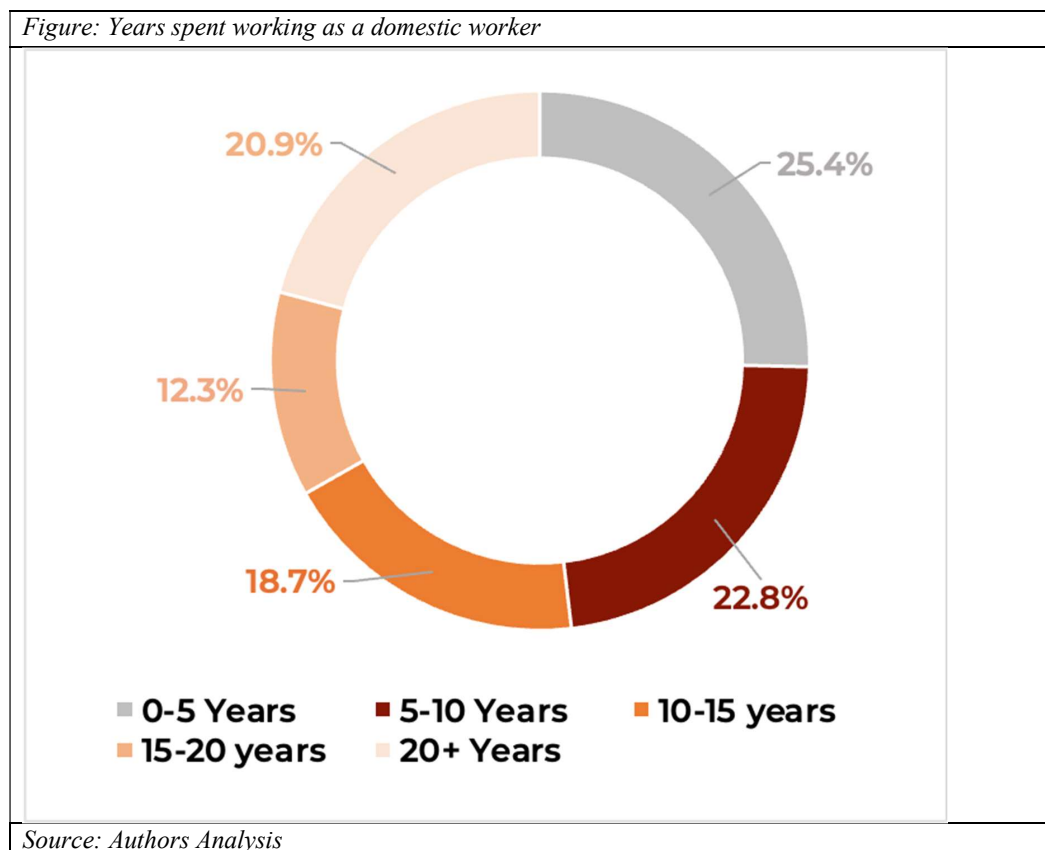
These patterns carry important implications for household economic dynamics. The higher contribution ratio of multiple-household workers indicates that this work arrangement not only generates better personal income but also creates greater financial impact at the family level. However, the relatively lower contribution ratios of single-household workers, whether full-time or part-time, suggest these families might be more dependent on income from other family members or alternative sources to meet their household needs. This underscores how work arrangement choices can significantly influence both individual earning capacity and overall household economic stability.

The work experience of respondents based on the analysis of age data reveals a stark reality about the longevity and early entry patterns in domestic work among women. Most notably, 50% of workers aged 15-20 have already spent 5-10 years in the profession, indicating they began working as early as age 10 raising serious concerns about child labour in the domestic work sector. This early entry pattern creates a cycle of limited occupational mobility, as evidenced by the overwhelming majority (87%) of workers aged 56-60 having spent over a decade in domestic work.

There is a clear correlation between age and overall years of work, with a significant shift in long-term employment patterns. While younger age groups show more distributed experience levels, workers above 45 years are predominantly long-term workers, with 70% to 87% having over 10 years of experience. This suggests that once women enter domestic work, particularly past middle age, they are effectively locked into the profession with minimal opportunities for career transition. The data also reveals that new entrants (with less than 1 year experience) are virtually non-existent in age groups above 40 years, indicating that domestic work serves as a last-resort occupation for younger women rather than a chosen career path for older individuals.

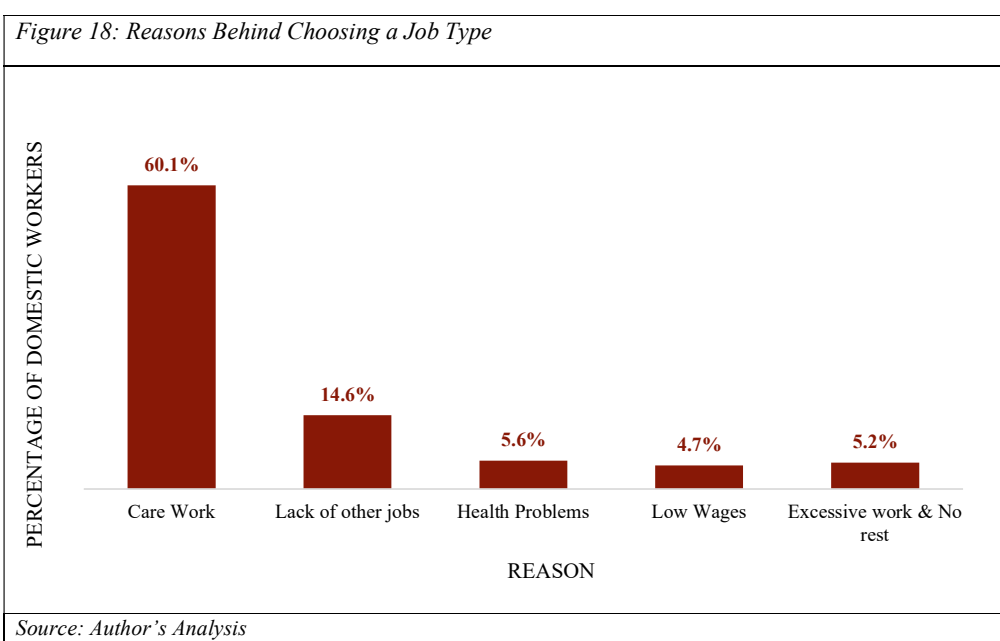
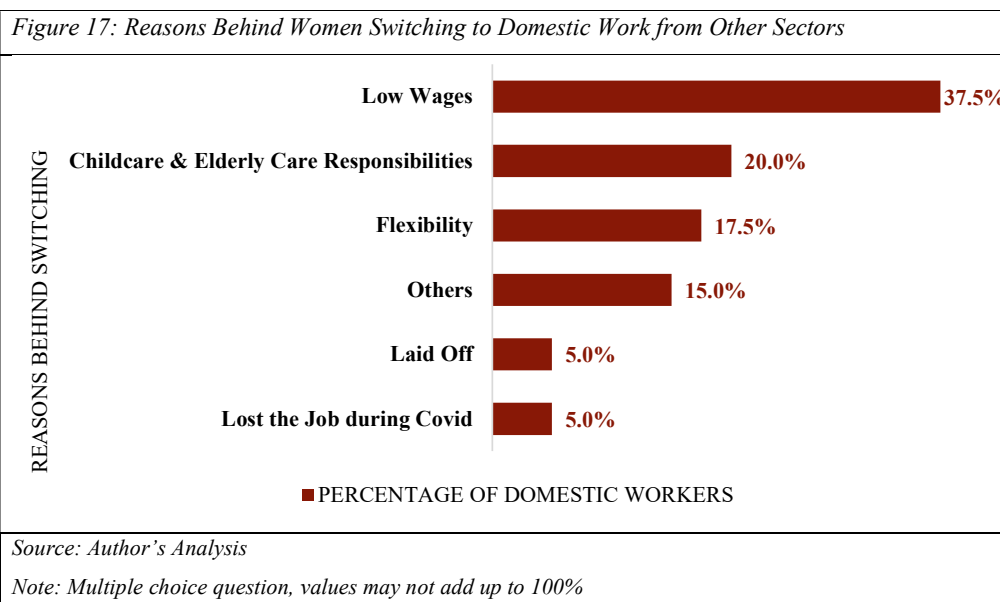


As depicted in the distribution of years spent working as a domestic worker, a majority of domestic workers (20.9 %) have been working in this field for 20 years or more, with the largest group (25.4%) having 0-5 years of experience. This suggests that the domestic worker population is relatively young, with a significant portion being relatively new to this type of employment

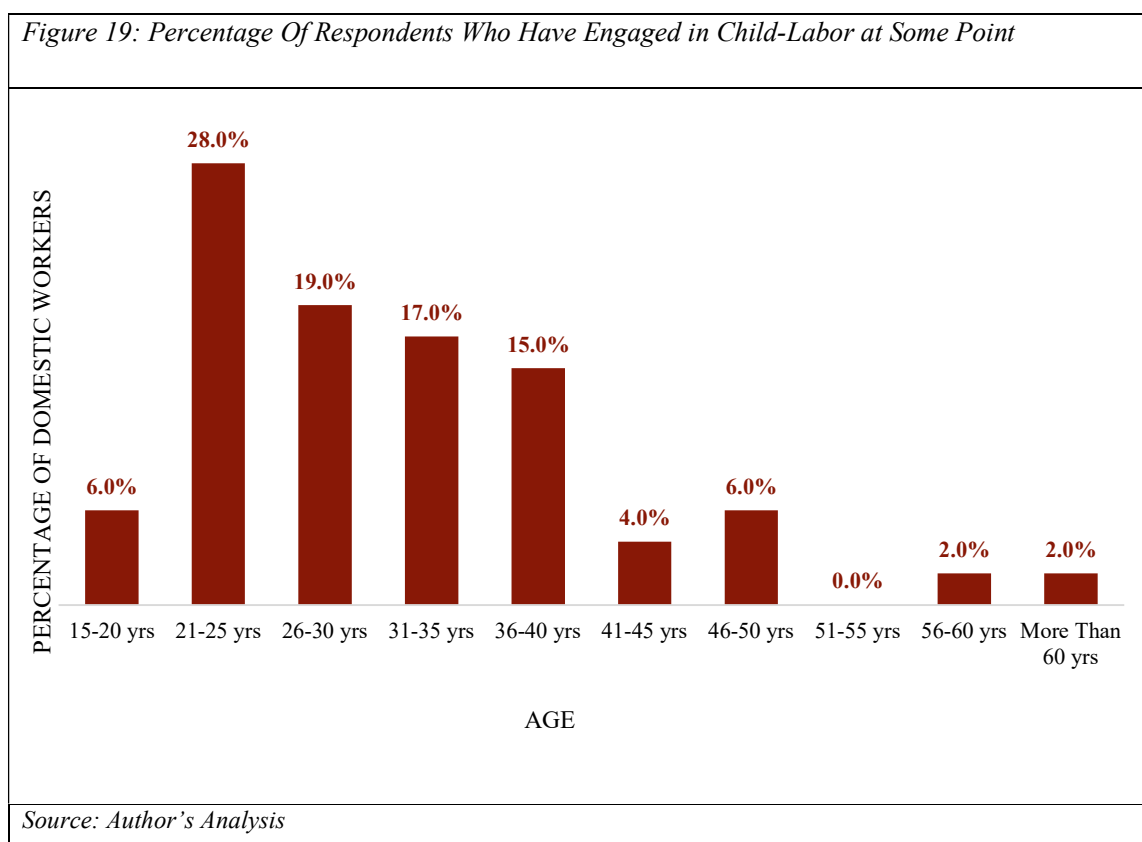


The decision to work in domestic roles is largely influenced by low wages in the other sectors they were working. While some are influenced by family responsibilities, relatively low wages, remains the main factor. A significant number of workers mention childcare and elderly care duties as primary reasons for choosing domestic work, as it allows them to stay close to their homes and manage family obligations. The flexible work schedule is particularly appealing to those with multiple responsibilities, enabling them to work at hours that do not conflict with family duties.

Health considerations also play a role, with WDWs choosing this profession due to health-related constraints that might make more physically demanding or structured jobs challenging. Other reasons included safety, health issues, commute inconveniences and some of the most common sectors included Construction, farming, factory work, retail unsuccessful venture. The finding indicates a diverse range of previous occupations, with construction, farming, factory work, and retail being the most common sectors. A smaller number transitioned from IT, education, food service, specialized manufacturing roles, work, retail, temple work, cleaning, ironing, working for a mobile charger company, tailoring, vegetable shop operation, gardening, caretaking, and working for an export company. This highlights the varied socioeconomic backgrounds of individuals who have taken up household work.



Survey findings reveal that caregiving responsibilities predominantly drive women's entry into domestic work, with 60.1% citing carework obligations as their primary reason. This significant percentage underscores how domestic work allows women to balance their familial caregiving duties with income-earning opportunities. The second most common factor is the lack of alternative employment options, cited by 14.6% of respondents, highlighting limited job market accessibility for these women. Health-related constraints account for 5.6% of the responses, suggesting that some women choose domestic work due to its relatively flexible nature in accommodating their health conditions. Low wages and excessive working makes up for 10% of domestic workers switching to this profession. Some of the other reasons for their current job included good employer relationships, safety, convenience, holiday restrictions in other jobs, the freedom to not be confined to one job type and the flexibility to work with multiple employers, free time while working part-time, demand for part-time work, and sufficient income in their existing role as WDW



A concerning examination of child labor history among women domestic workers reveals significant generational patterns and social vulnerabilities. The data shows the highest concentration (28%) of reported child labor among women currently aged 21-25 years, followed by 19% in the 26-30 age bracket, 17% in the 31-35 group, and 15% in the 36-40 category. The youngest age group of 15-20 years represents 6% of cases, while those aged 41-45 and 46-50 account for 4% and 6% of reported child labor experiences. Notably, minimal cases are reported among women above 50 years, with just 2% each in the 56-60 and 60+ age groups. Of the 270 Surveyed women domestic workers, 50 (approximately 20%) were found to be engaged in child labor at some point. The average age at which these women domestic workers began engaging in child labor was 13 years.

These findings have crucial social implications. The higher percentages among women in their 20s and 30s indicate that child labor practices were more prevalent 10-25 years ago, suggesting persistent socio-

economic vulnerabilities during that period. The relatively lower percentage in the 15-20 age group could potentially indicate some improvement in child protection measures in recent years, though the practice has not been eliminated. This data underscores the need for continued vigilance in child labor prevention, stronger social protection mechanisms, and targeted support for families at risk of engaging in child labor practices. The intergenerational impact of child labor is evident, as these women continue to work in domestic service, highlighting the cyclical nature of economic vulnerability.

The analysis of domestic work patterns across age groups highlights significant variations in workforce distribution across different employment arrangements. In Part Time Work in Multiple Households, there's a notable concentration (50%) in the 36-45 age bracket, with equal representation (17% each) in the 26-35 and 46-55 groups, suggesting that managing multiple households requires experience and established networks. Part Time Work in Single Household shows a different pattern, with a majority (55%) in the 26-35 age group, followed by 17% in the 36-45 bracket and 15% from young workers aged 15-25, indicating this might be an entry point into domestic work. Full Time Work in Single Household demonstrates a concentrated distribution in the middle age ranges, with 42% in the 26-35 age group and 39% in the 36-45 bracket, suggesting this arrangement is most suitable for workers in their prime years who can commit to regular employment.

An examination of these demographic trends reveals broader implications for workforce dynamics and policy considerations in the domestic work sector. The predominance of workers in their prime years (26-45) across all categories suggests physical demands and the need for reliability, while low participation of older workers indicates limited job security and retirement benefits. This points to the need for age-specific support systems, including training programs for younger workers, health and safety measures for those handling multiple households, and social protection schemes for older workers. The varying age distributions also suggest that workers might transition between arrangements based on life stage and experience, highlighting the importance of policies that facilitate smooth transitions and career development pathways. Additionally, the concentration of workers in certain age brackets indicates potential gaps in work opportunities for both younger and older age groups, which could be addressed through targeted interventions and social security measures.

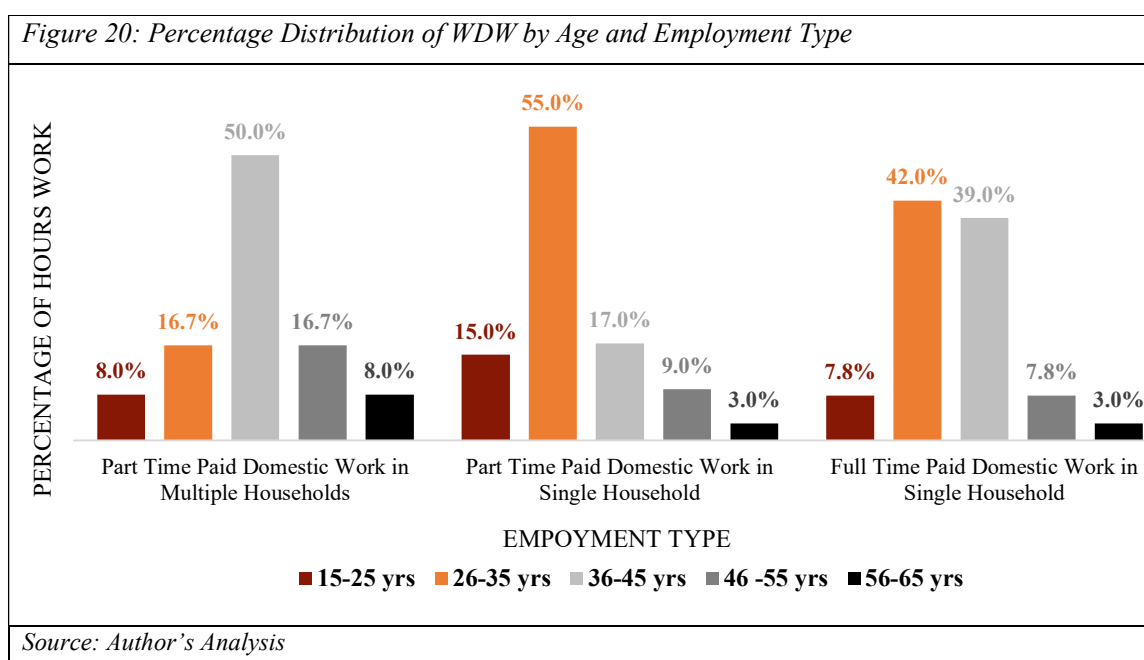
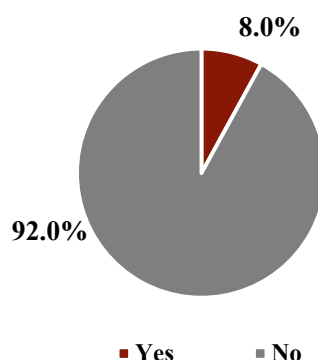


Figure 21: Is There Any Additional Income Generating Activity Performed by You

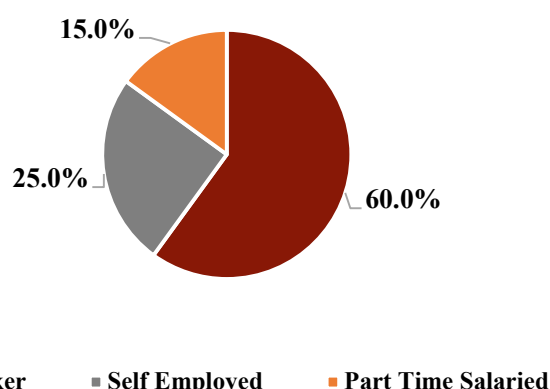


Source: Author's Analysis

An examination of supplementary income patterns among women domestic workers illuminates critical dimensions of economic vulnerability and employment adaptability in the informal sector.

The finding that only 8% of women domestic workers pursue additional income sources indicates that the majority (92%) likely rely primarily on their domestic work wages for their livelihood. The composition of their supplementary employment presents an even more concerning picture - the predominance of casual labour (60%) indicates widespread job insecurity and irregular income streams, while the modest proportion engaged in self-employment (25%) suggests limited entrepreneurial opportunities. Most telling is the minimal representation in part-time salaried positions (15%), which points to significant structural barriers in accessing formal employment, potentially due to educational constraints, social limitations, or rigid domestic work schedules. This employment pattern reflects a cycle of economic vulnerability where workers, despite diversifying their income sources, remain largely confined to precarious informal work arrangements.

Figure 22: Additional Nature of Work



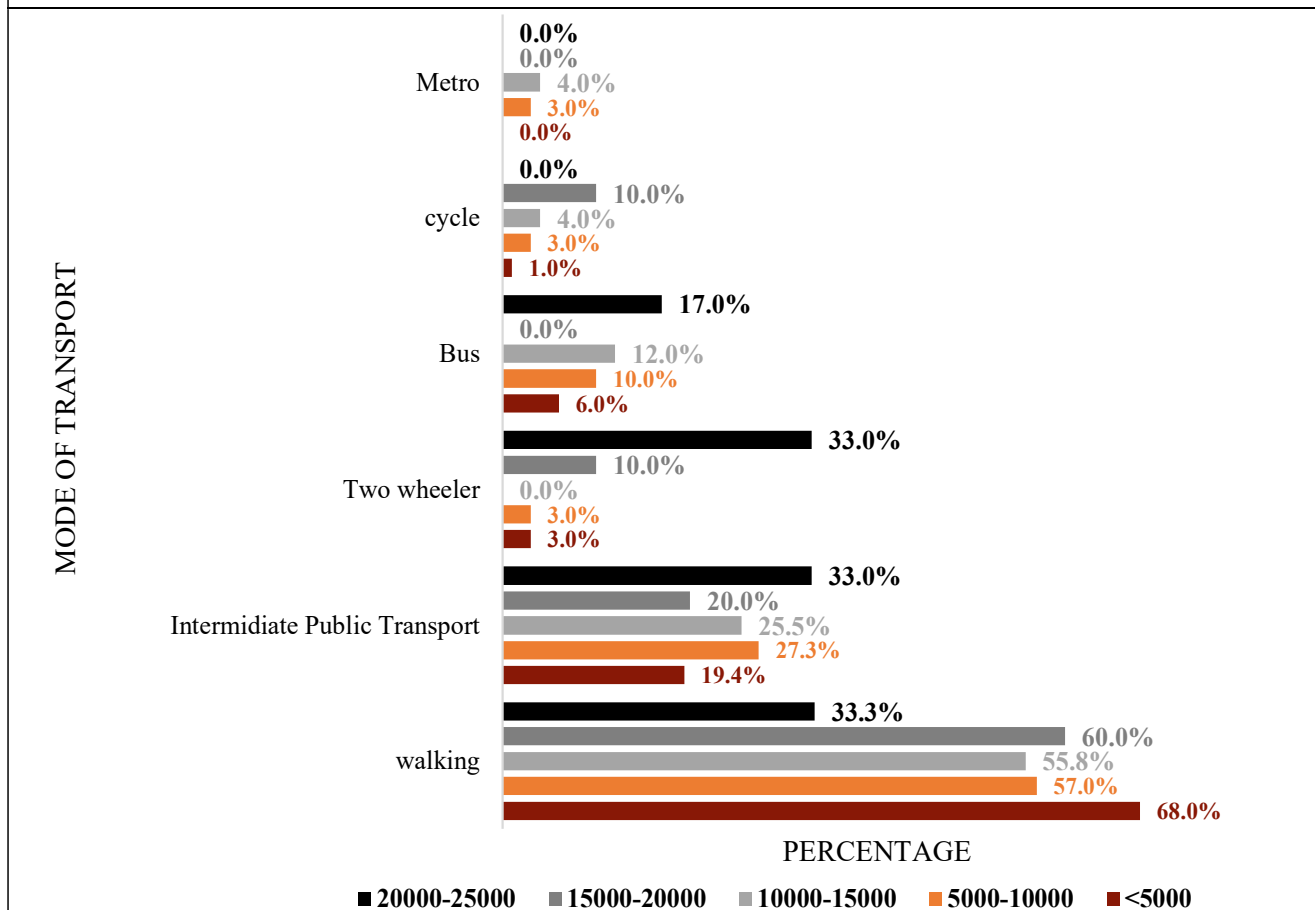
Source: Author's Analysis

4.2. Mobility and transportation

The mobility patterns of WDWs in Delhi NCR significantly influence their access to employment opportunities and economic advancement. Understanding their transportation choices, associated costs, and daily commuting challenges provide crucial insights into how mobility shapes their work possibilities and income potential.

Limited transportation options restrict mobility and job access for most workers, creating geographic constraints on opportunities. Transportation choices reveal a striking disparity in mobility options. An overwhelming majority (about 79%) of workers rely on walking as their primary mode of transport, while approximately one-fifth (31.9%) use public transportation. The minimal use of personal vehicles (11.1%) highlights the limited transportation resources available to these workers. This heavy reliance on walking suggests that most workers are constrained to seeking employment within their immediate neighbourhoods, potentially limiting their access to better-paying opportunities in other areas.

Figure 23: Mode of Commute Based on Income Levels

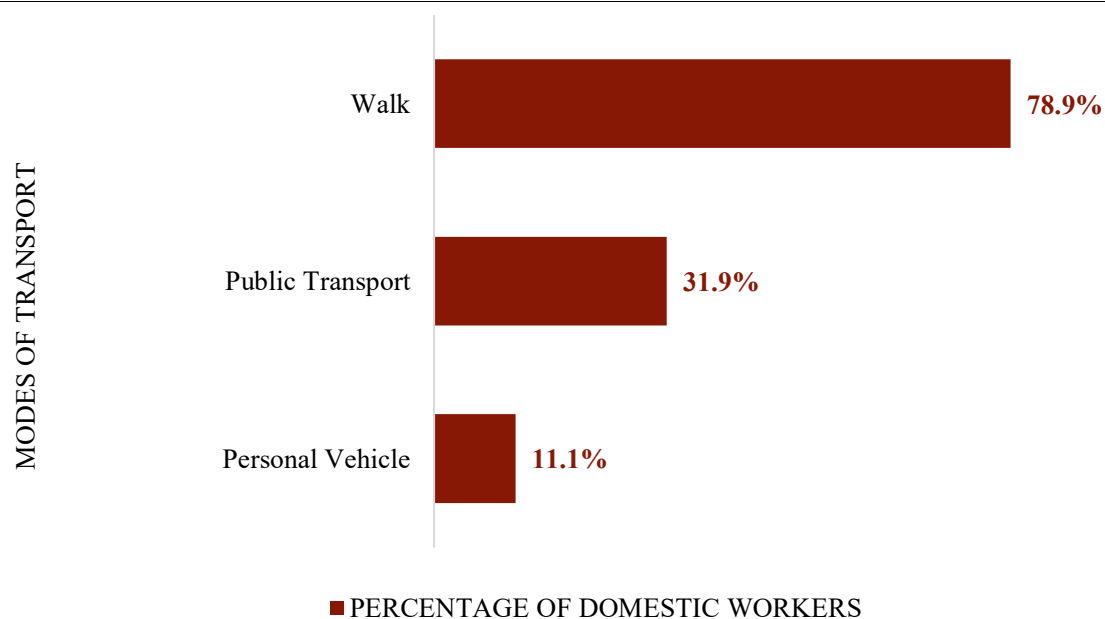


Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

Analysis of transportation patterns across income levels reveals significant variations in mode choice. Walking remains the predominant mode across most income brackets, showing highest usage (68%) among workers earning below Rs. 5,000, and gradually decreasing to 33.3% for those earning Rs. 20,000-25,000. Intermediate Public Transport (IPT), which includes auto, shared autos and rickshaws, shows an inverse trend, with usage increasing from 19.4% in the lowest income bracket to 33% in the highest, suggesting greater affordability and preference for these services as income rises. Bus usage peaks in the Rs. 20,000-25,000 bracket (17%), while cycle usage is highest among those earning Rs. 15,000-20,000 (10%). Notably, two-wheeler usage remains minimal across all income levels, and metro usage is limited to specific income brackets, indicating that regardless of income levels, women domestic workers primarily rely on walking and IPT for their daily commute.

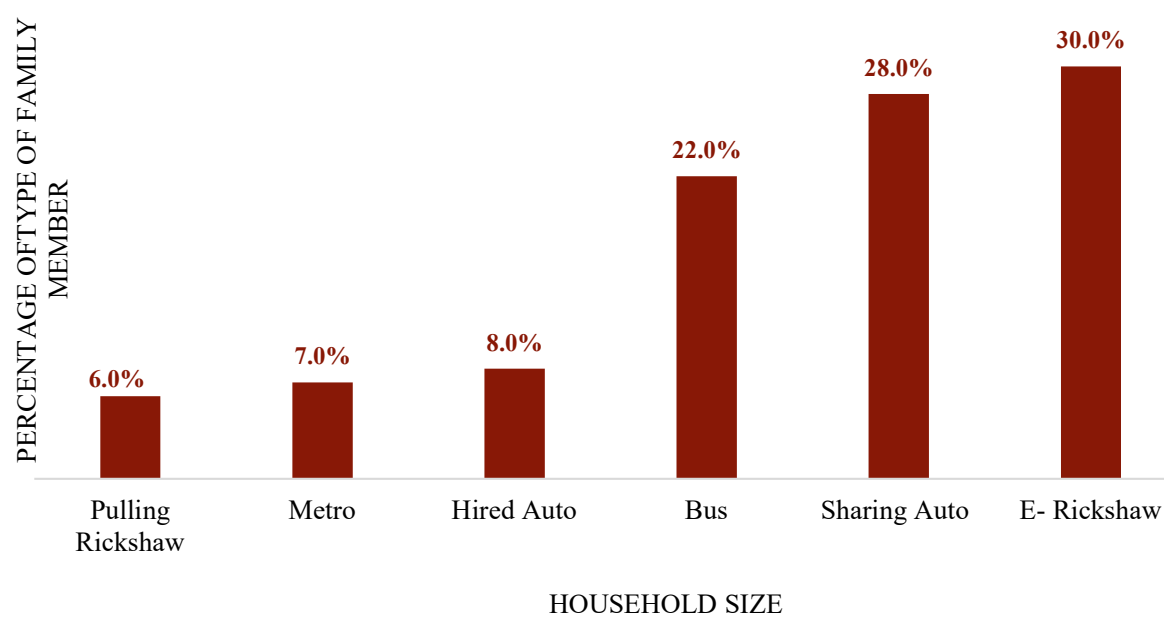
Figure 24: Representation of Transport Modes Being Used by Domestic Workers



Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

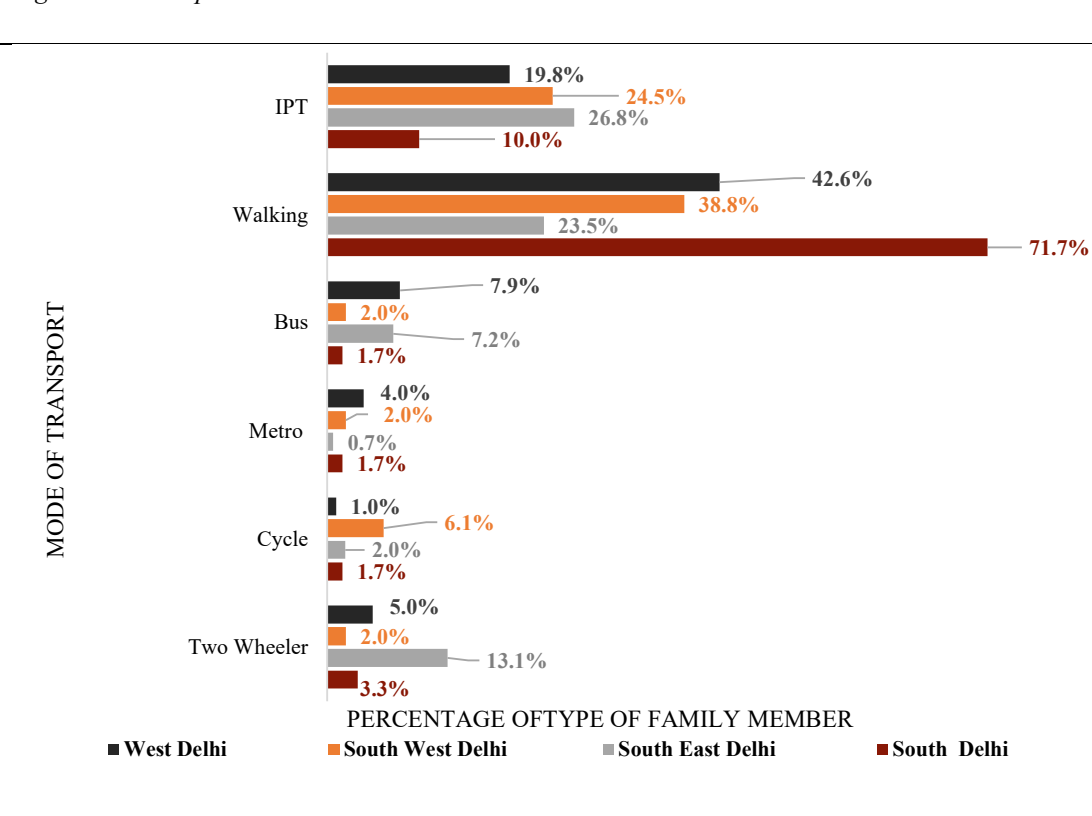
Figure 25: Mode Of Commute Is Public Transport, What Is The Type Of Transport?



Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

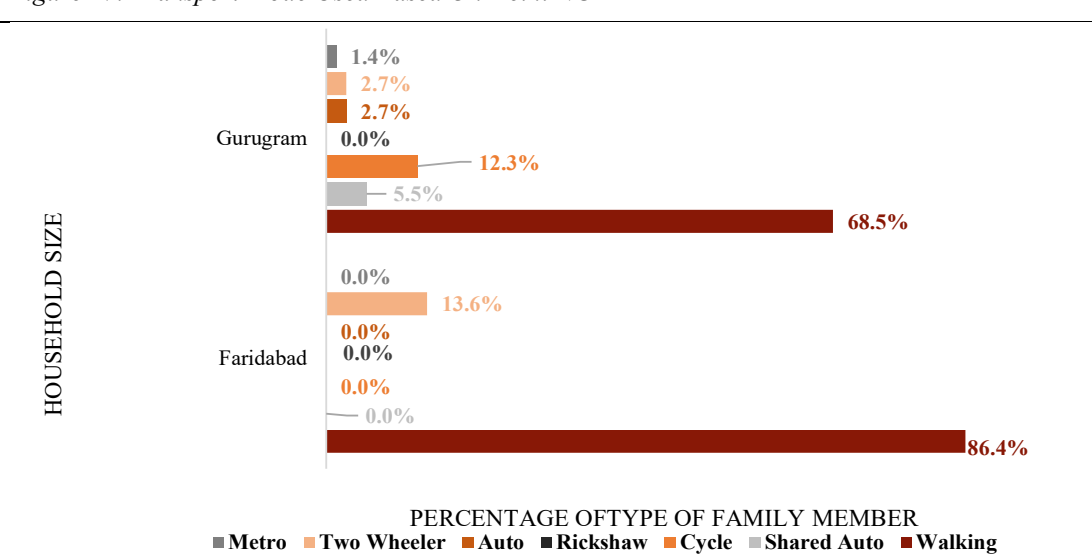
Figure 26: Transport Mode Used Based On Location



Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

Figure 27: Transport Mode Used Based On Delhi NCR

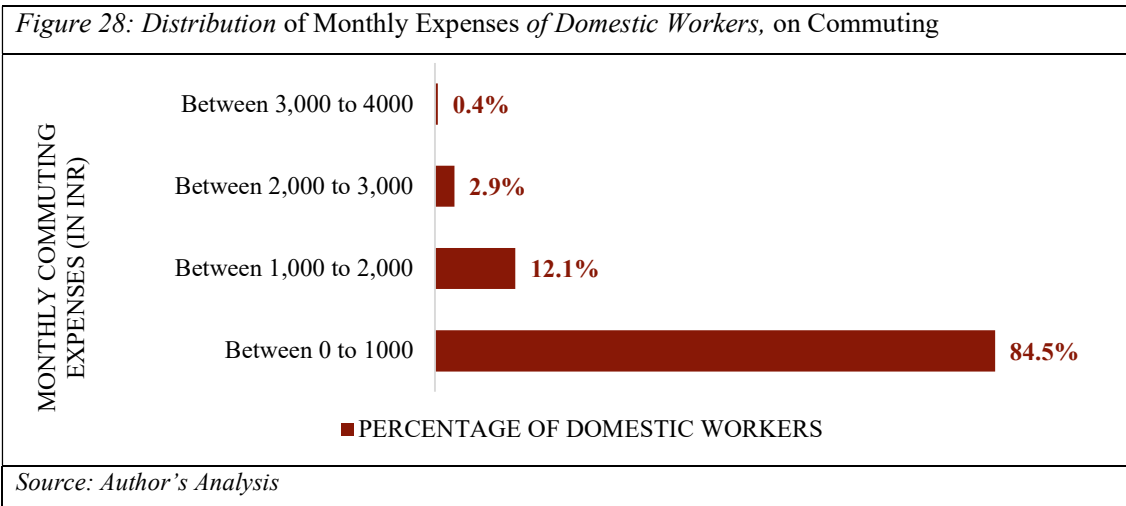


Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

Analysis of transportation patterns across NCR satellite cities reveals walking as the predominant mode of commute, with notably high rates in Faridabad (86.4%) and Gurugram (68.5%). Gurugram shows the most diverse transportation mix, with significant use of shared Cycles, shared autos (5.5%) and regular autos (2.7%). In contrast, Faridabad displays limited transportation options, with two-wheelers (13.6%) being the only other mode utilized. The absence of metro usage in Faridabad despite regional connectivity, suggests potential accessibility or cost barriers for women domestic workers in these areas.

While walking reduces direct costs, transportation expenses remain a significant burden for those using public transit. Analysis of monthly transportation expenses reveals that an overwhelming majority (84.5%) of women domestic workers spend between Rs. 0-1,000 on commuting, indicating their heavy reliance on economical transport options. A smaller segment (12.1%) spends between Rs. 1,000-2,000 monthly, while only a minimal proportion spends higher amounts - 2.9% spending Rs. 2,000-3,000 and merely 0.4% spending Rs. 3,000-4,000. This spending pattern aligns with their predominant use of walking and other cost-effective transportation modes, suggesting that most workers strategically choose workplaces within walkable distances or opt for affordable public transport options to minimize their commuting expenses. When viewed in the context of personal income levels, these transportation costs can consume a significant portion of their earnings, particularly for those in the lower income brackets.



A clear inverse relationship is demonstrated between personal monthly income and the proportion of income spent on commuting. Individuals with a monthly income below Rs.5,000 allocate a substantial 20% of their income to commuting, highlighting the significant financial burden transportation costs impose on lower-income households. As income increases, the percentage spent on commuting gradually decreases. Those with incomes between Rs.5,000 and Rs.10,000 allocate 9% to commuting, followed by 5% for those earning between Rs.10,000 and Rs.15,000, 4% for those earning between Rs.15,000 and Rs.20,000, and 3% for those earning between Rs.20,000 and Rs.25,000. This pattern highlights the regressive nature of travel expenses, where lower-income individuals bear a proportionally higher financial burden for their mobility needs compared to their higher-earning counterparts. These findings could inform transportation policy decisions, particularly regarding subsidies aimed at reducing travel costs for lower-income groups.

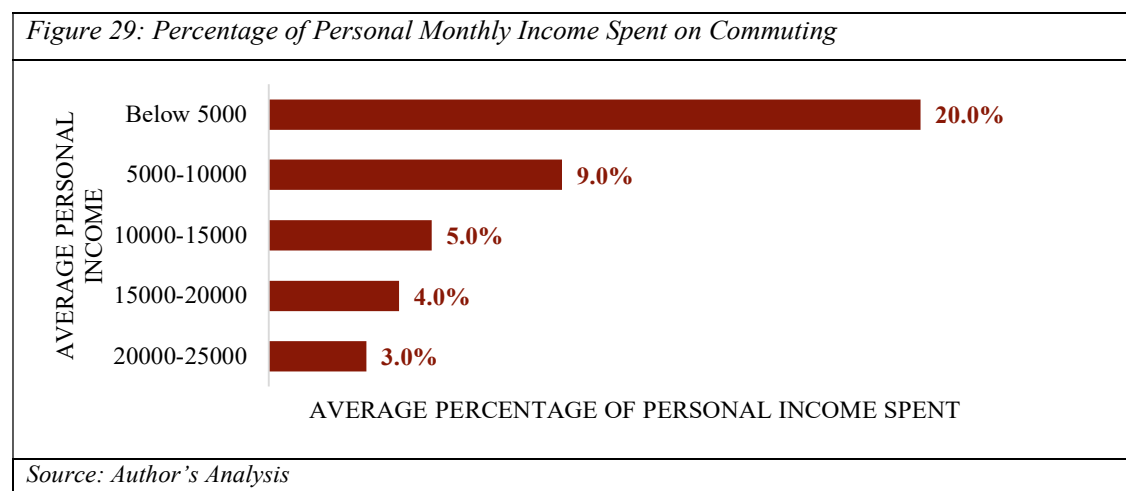
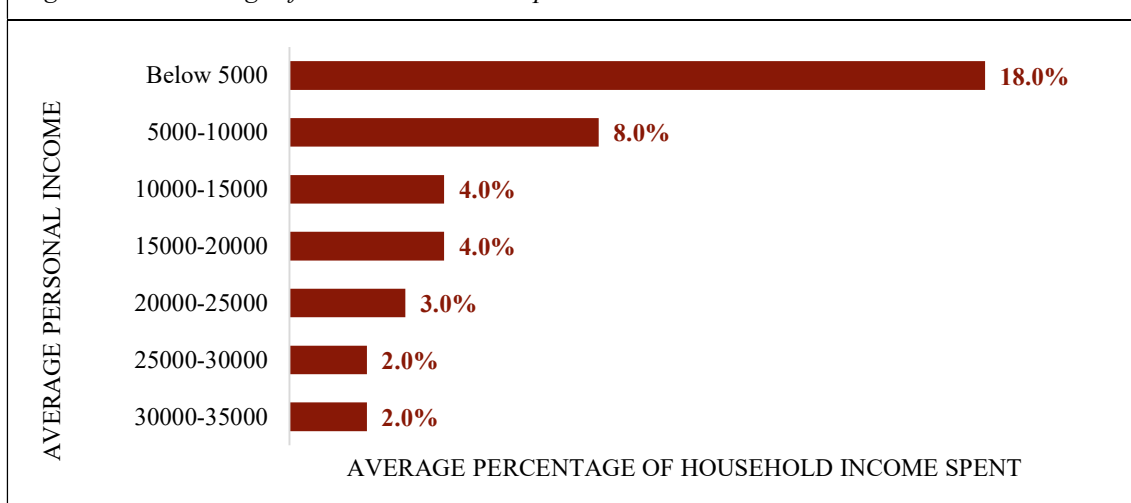


Figure 30: Percentage of Household Income Spent on Travel



Source: Author's Analysis

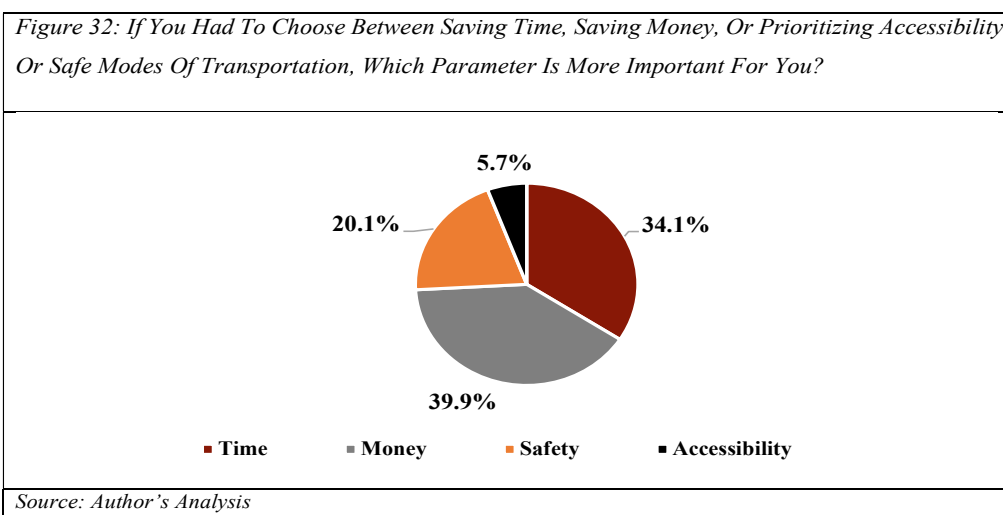
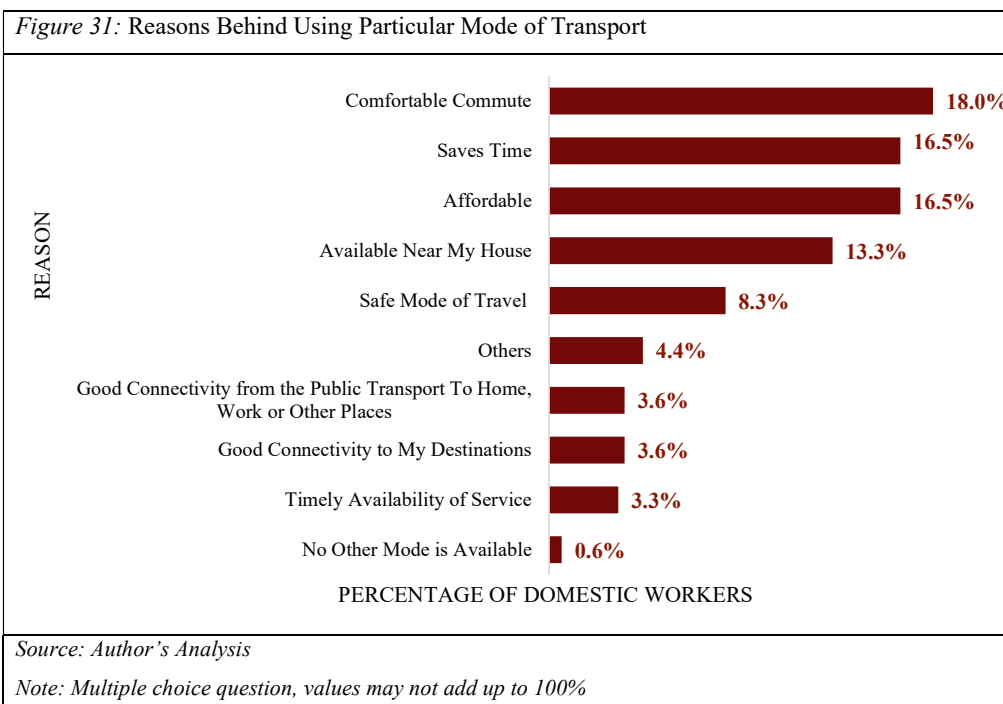
An analysis of domestic workers' walking patterns reveals concerning insights about their daily commute burden. The data indicates substantial variations in walking time, ranging from 0 to 5 hours. With a weighted average walking speed of 2.5 km/hr, which is notably slower than the typical adult walking pace of 4-5 km/hr, this suggests that these workers are likely carrying heavy loads or walking in challenging conditions. Although, the average distance covered per day remains to be 6.04 kms, multiple workers report walking more than 5 kms daily, highlighting significant physical demands and time costs associated with their commute. This extensive walking time not only represents unpaid labor but also potentially impacts these workers' physical well-being and available time for actual paid work, reflecting broader issues of transportation accessibility and economic constraints in the domestic work sector.

Table 1: Analysis of Weighted Average Speed

Age	Weights	Speed
15-25	15%	4
26-35	40%	3
36-45	30%	2
46-55	15%	1

Source: Author's Analysis

Workers navigate a complex balance between comfort, cost, and time efficiency in their daily commuting decisions. The factors influencing transportation choices reveal a careful balancing act between time, cost and safety. Comfort in commuting emerges as the primary consideration, suggesting that workers prioritize manageable and less stressful journey options. The others 4.4% of women domestic workers indicated that they chose their mode of transportation because it provided physical exercise for their body. This is closely followed by affordability and time-saving considerations, indicating that workers must carefully weigh the trade-offs between cost, convenience, and time efficiency in their daily commutes. Some of the other 4.4% reasons included saving money for children's expenses, transportation facilities, service proximity, and saving money through RTU.

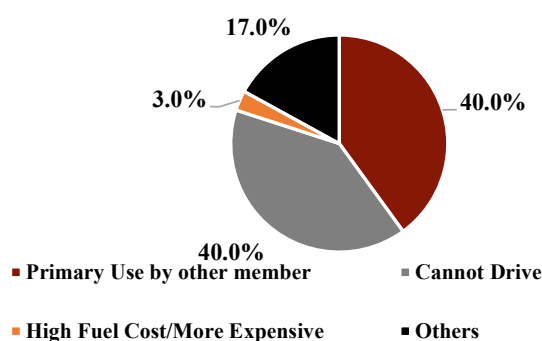


The data reveals similar patterns of challenges for both cycle and two-wheeler users, with safety and infrastructure concerns being among the issues. High prices (possibly related to maintenance and fuel costs) of the vehicles emerge as the most significant challenge. Poor lighting on the way home and lack of proper footpaths emerge as the other significant challenges. Notably, for cycle users, discomfort due to crowded conditions appears as an additional challenge. The absence of reports regarding harassment, physical attacks, poor lighting at junctions, and being stared at or followed is significant, though this might not necessarily indicate the complete absence of such issues. The presence of 'Other' challenges suggests there are additional concerns not captured in the main categories.

Analysis of transportation usage among domestic workers with household vehicle access reveals two primary constraints: 40% cannot use the vehicle due to primary usage by other family members, and another 40% are unable to drive. The high proportion of workers who cannot drive suggests potential barriers in accessing driving education or licensing. Only 3% cite fuel costs as a deterrent, indicating that economic factors are not the main barrier when a household vehicle is available. The remaining 17% cite various situational factors such as road conditions, workplace proximity, and personal choice in not learning to drive. This data highlights how vehicle ownership does not necessarily translate to vehicle access for domestic workers, with driving ability and family vehicle-sharing dynamics being the

key limiting factors. Also, among those who own a vehicle, 82.0% of respondents drive their vehicle themselves to work, while 18.0% do not.

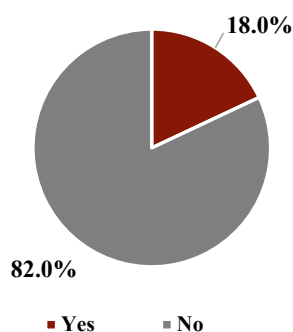
Figure 33: Reason For Not Using Personal Vehicle



Source: Author's Analysis

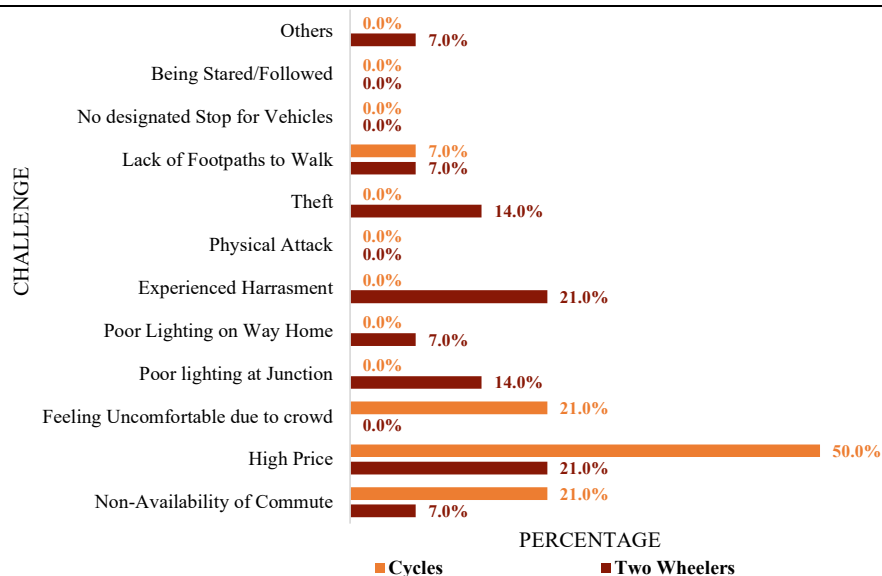
Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

Figure 34: Do You Drive Your Vehicle Yourself To Work?



Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 35: Challenges in Mobility as per people using their Own Vehicle



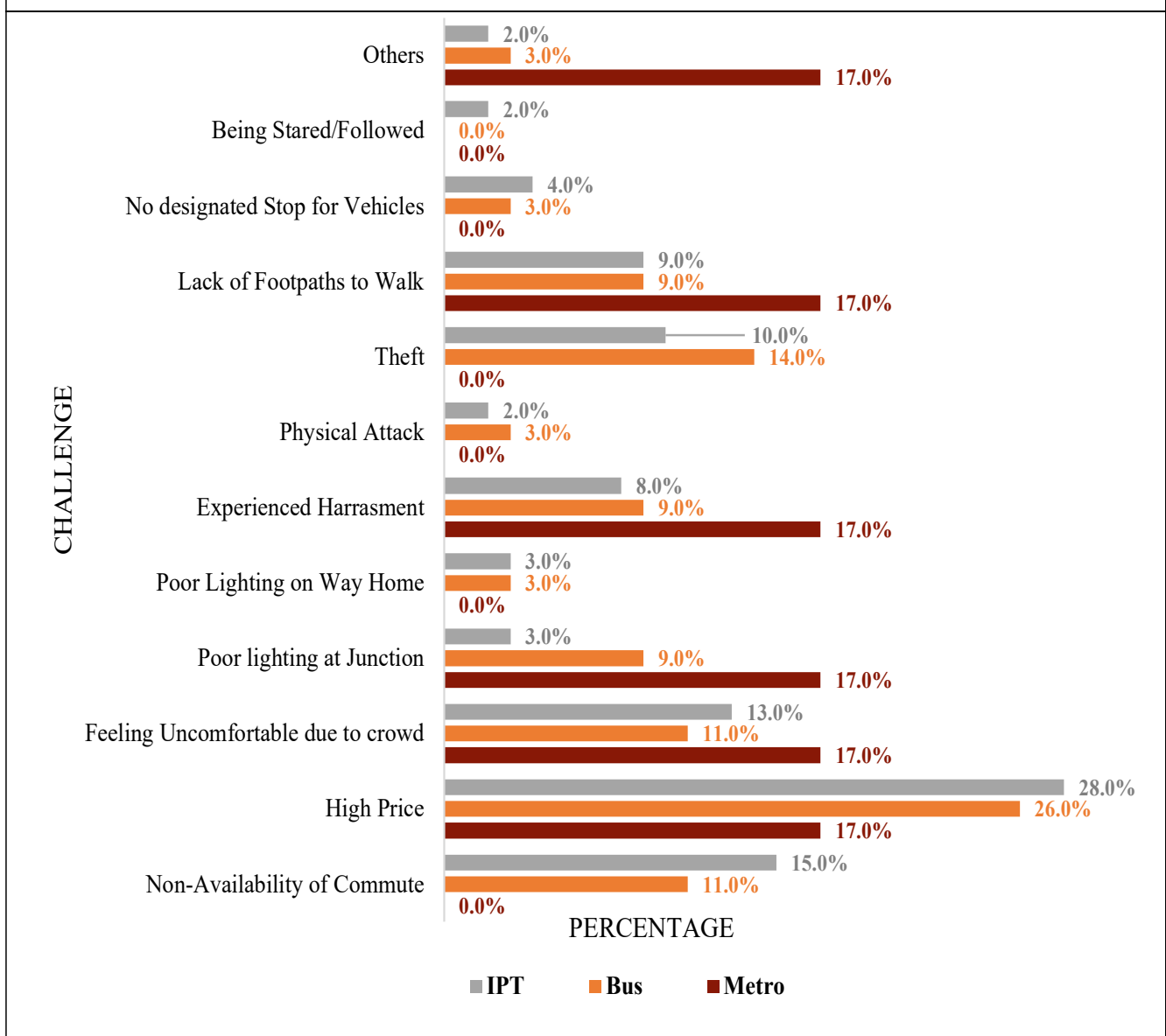
Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

Analysis of transportation challenges reveals distinct patterns across different modes of public transport. In IPT (Integrated Public Transport) services, high pricing (28%) emerges as the most significant concern, followed by crowded conditions (13%). Users also report issues with non-availability of commutes (15%), poor lighting at junctions (3%), harassment (8%), and theft (10%). For Bus users, high pricing (26%) and crowded conditions (11%) are major concerns, along with significant issues such as lack of footpaths (9%), harassment (9%), and theft (14%). Metro users face challenges such as crowded conditions (17%), high prices (17%), poor lighting at junctions (17%), harassment (17%), and lack of footpaths (17%).

This analysis highlights that while high pricing and crowded conditions are common concerns across all modes, the specific challenges vary. Metro users face a higher incidence of safety issues like harassment and poor lighting, while Bus users experience a higher rate of theft. IPT users, on the other hand, report a higher incidence of non-availability of commutes.

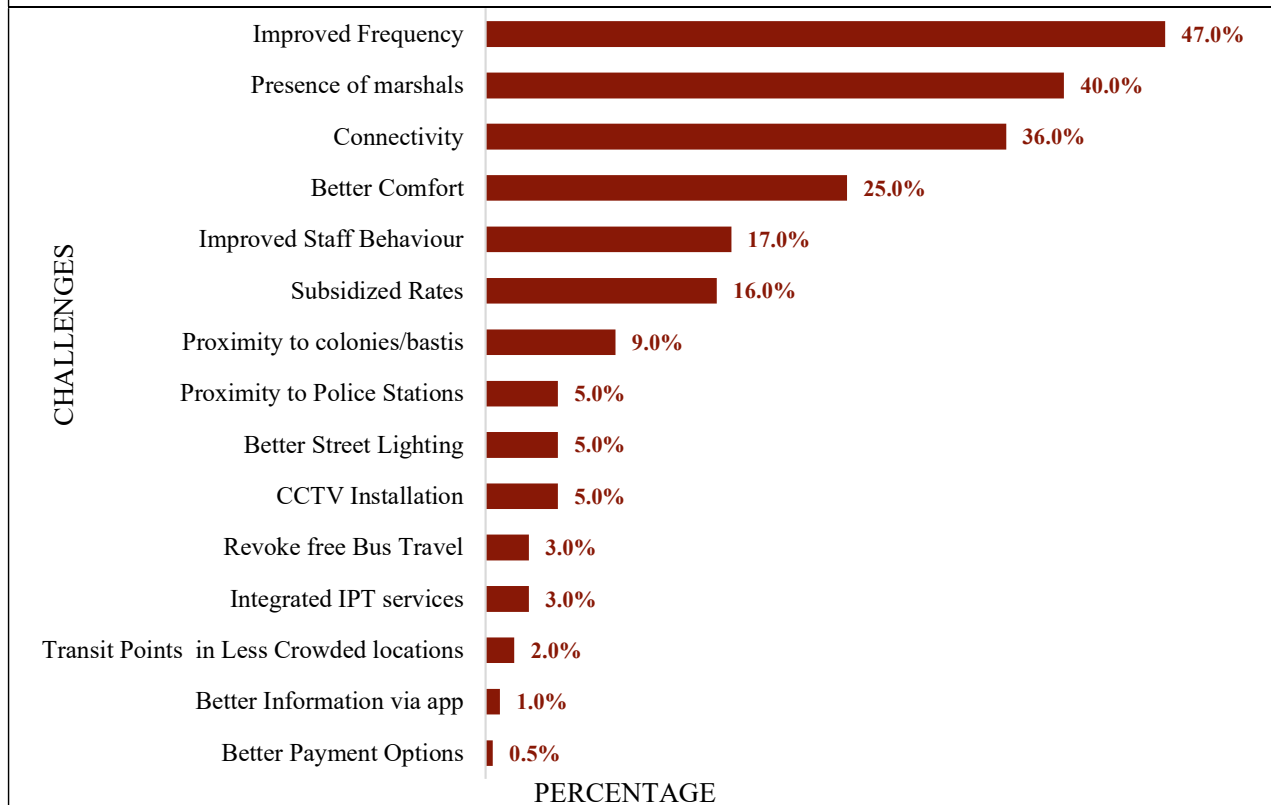
Figure 36: Types Of Challenges Faced when using Public Transport



Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

Figure 37: Suggestion For Betterment Of Public Transport When Walking Is Preferred



Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

IPT commuters face high pricing (28%) and non-availability of commutes (15%) as major challenges. Safety concerns, including harassment (8%) and poor lighting (3%), are also prominent. Bus commuters, in addition to facing high pricing (26%) and non-availability (11%), also experience concerns like feeling uncomfortable due to crowding (11%) and physical attacks (3%). Metro users report a wider range of issues (17% across 6 responses), and Across all modes, economic barriers, safety concerns, and discomfort due to crowding create interconnected challenges that impact women's commuting experience.

Transportation constraints significantly perpetuate economic vulnerability among women domestic workers, creating a complex interplay between mobility limitations and economic opportunities. The predominance of walking as a primary transport mode, while cost-effective, effectively creates geographic boundaries for employment opportunities. This spatial limitation is further exacerbated by the 'pink tax' phenomenon, where a smaller proportion of WDWs in the sample are compelled to opt for costlier but perceived safer transport options like auto-rickshaws or non-shared taxis instead of public transport. This is what these women have quoted on safety and mobility patterns –

“ Raat me akele jaane me thoda dar lagta hai. ”

-Meena

“ *Auto mein jaane ke paise hi nahi hain, paise hote to dhoop aur baarish mein dikkat nahi aati* ”
-Kavita

4.3. Safety and security in public spaces

The safety perceptions and experiences of WDWs in Delhi NCR significantly influence their mobility patterns and access to economic opportunities. This analysis explores how safety concerns vary across different public spaces, and times of day, and how these perceptions shape their daily movements and work choices.

The contrast between daytime and nighttime safety perceptions reveals the temporal nature of urban security for these workers. During daylight hours, nearly half (49%) of the workers feel very safe in the city, providing them with confidence for their daily commutes and work routines. However, this sense of security dramatically reduces after dark, with about 45% feeling unsafe or very unsafe. This day-night disparity creates constraints on their mobility and could limit their ability to accept work opportunities in early morning or evening hours.

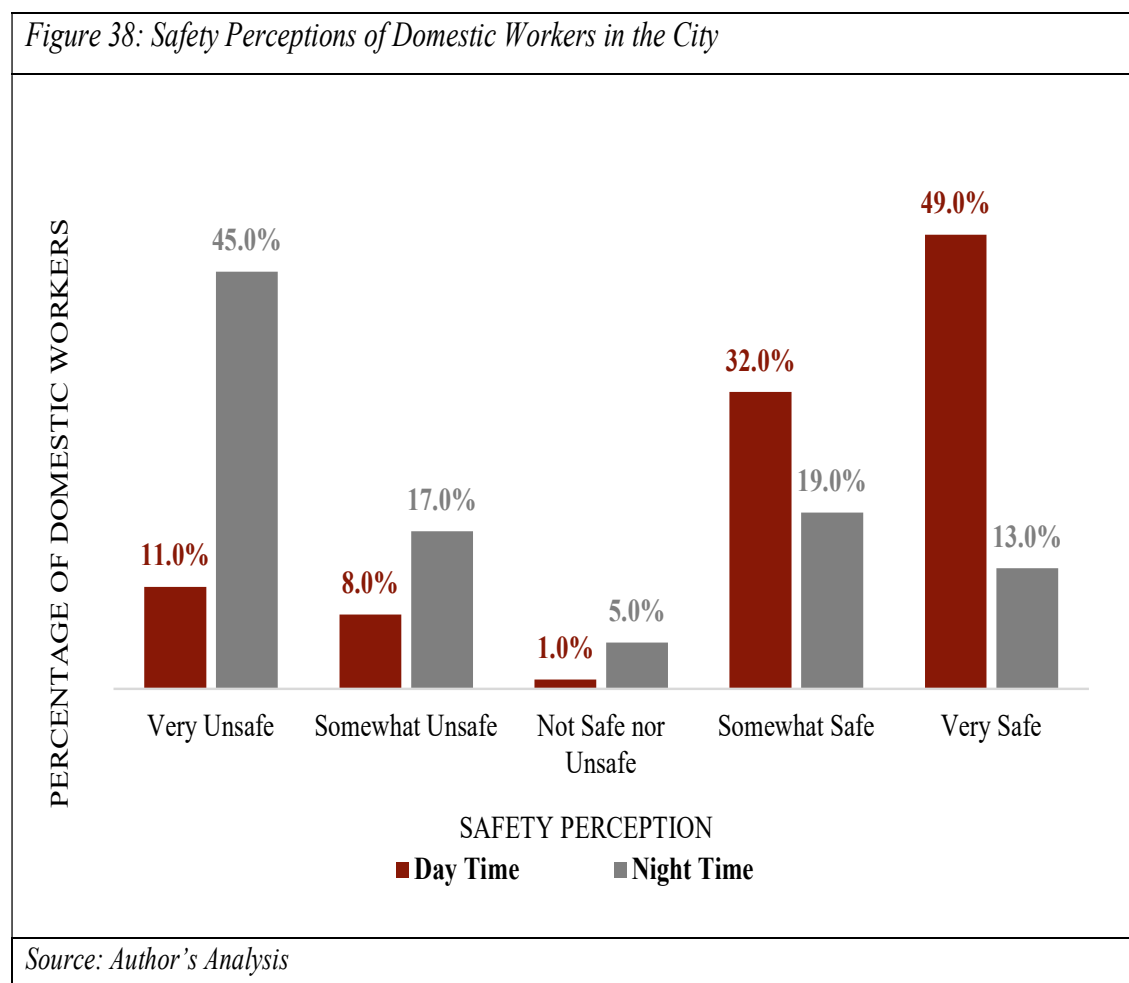
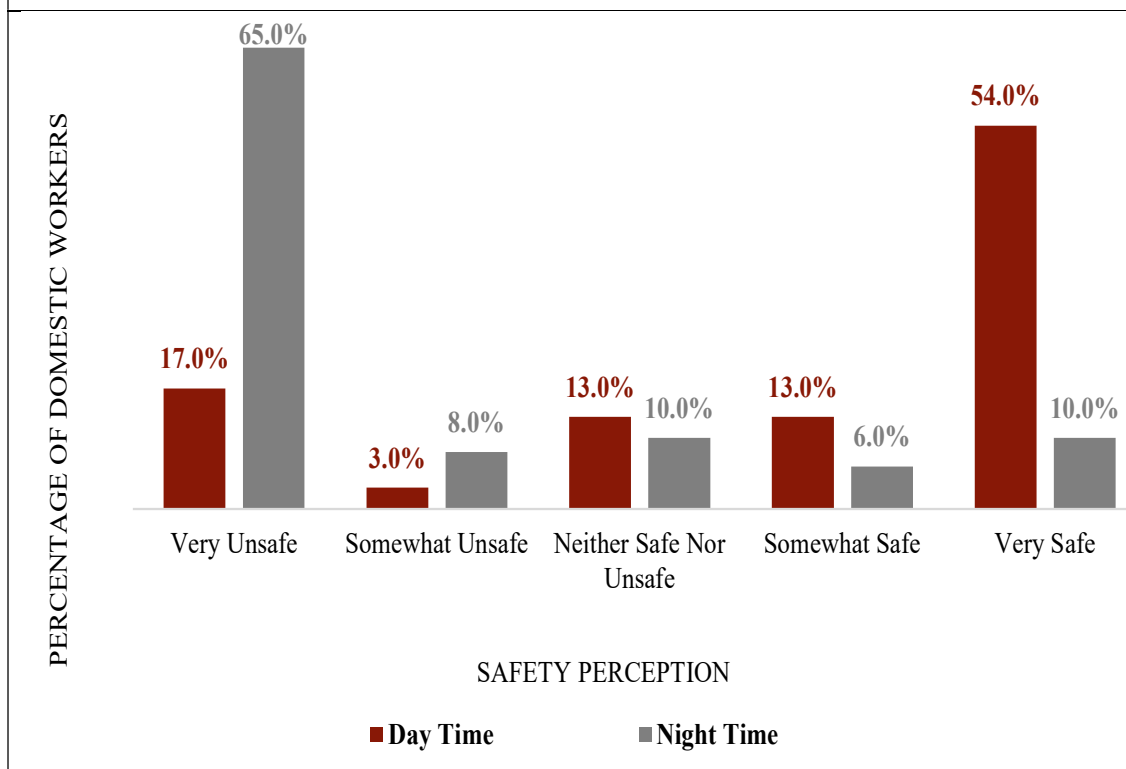
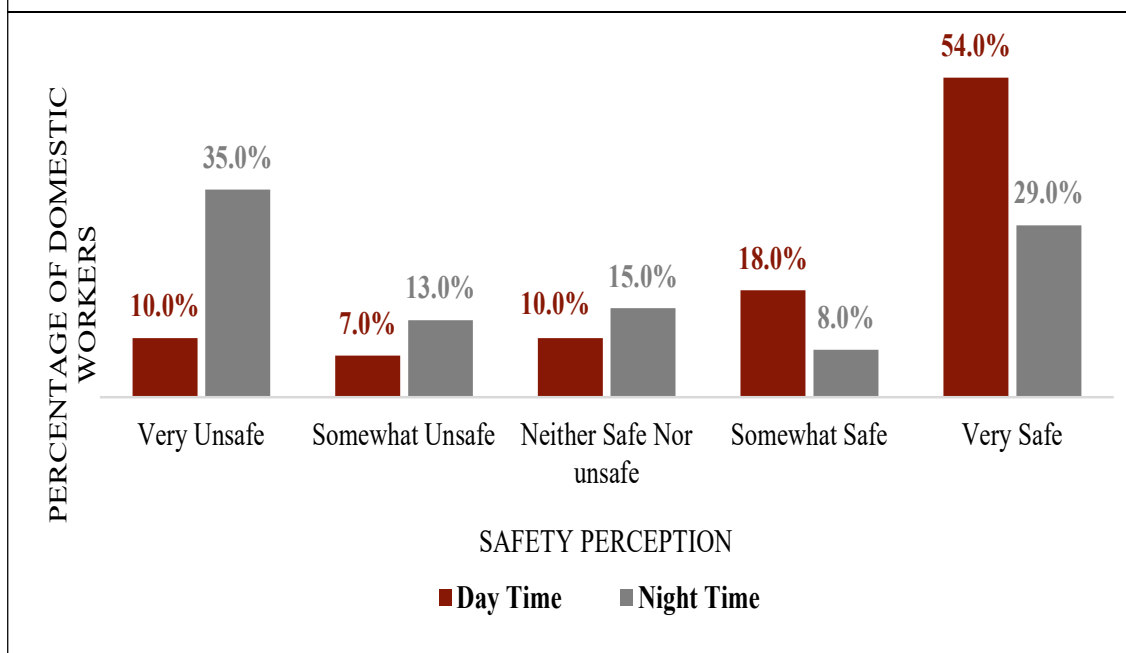


Figure 39: Safety Perceptions of Domestic Workers in Parks



Source: Author's Analysis

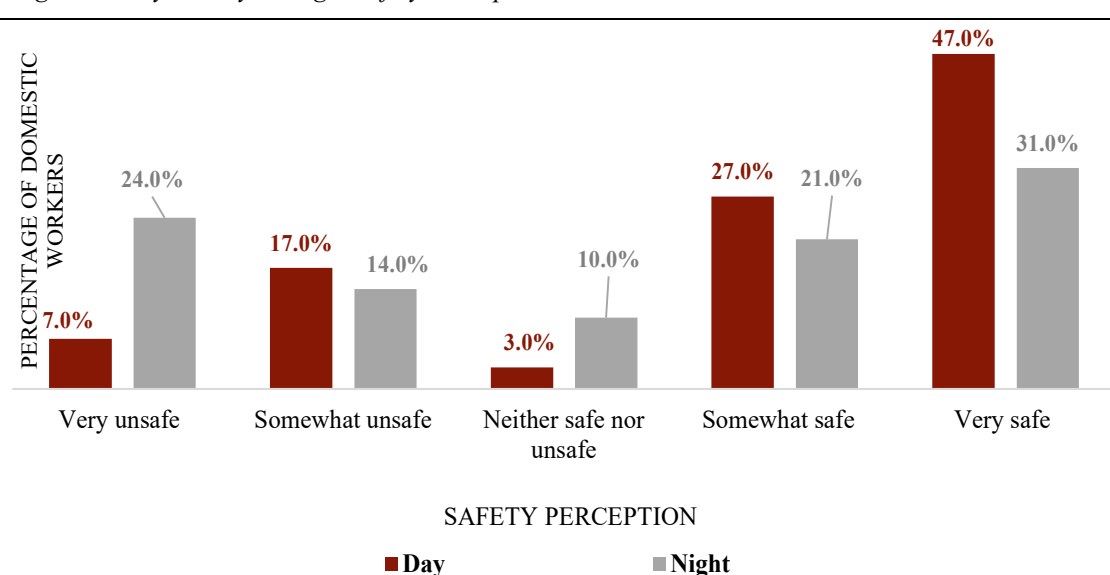
Figure 40: Safety Perceptions of Domestic Workers in Markets



Source: Author's Analysis

Different public spaces present varying levels of perceived safety, affecting how workers navigate their daily routes. Parks, while considered safe spaces during daytime by a majority (54%), become areas of high concern at night with more than two-thirds (65%) feeling very unsafe. Similarly, markets follow this pattern, 54% feel very safe during the day compared to 35% feeling very unsafe at night. This spatial variation in safety perceptions likely influences the routes workers choose for their daily commutes and their willingness to accept work in certain areas.

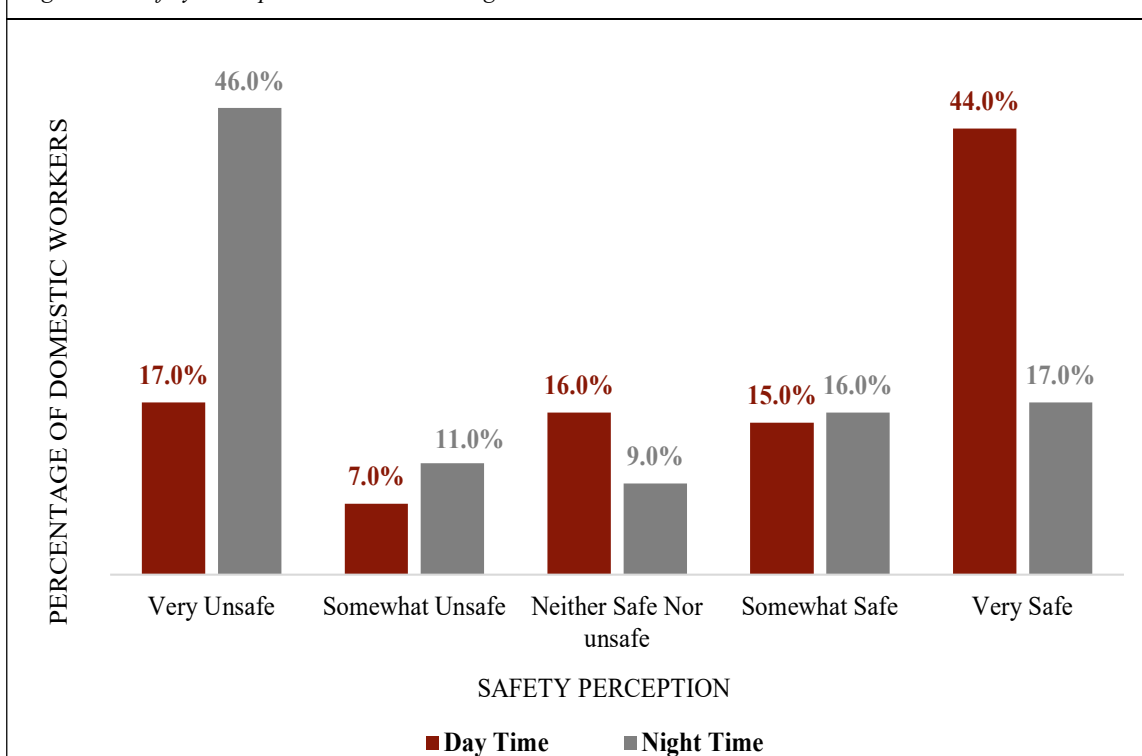
Figure 41: Cycle Day & Night Safety Perceptions



Source: Author's Analysis

Different transportation modes show varying safety patterns across day and night, with metro stations consistently being reported as safe spaces while bus stations and auto-rickshaws present more complex safety dynamics. Metro stations maintain high safety perceptions both during the day and night, making them preferred modes of transport safety-wise. In contrast, bus stations show differ in safety based on time-of-day, with most women feeling very safe during the day, and dropping to nearly half feeling very unsafe at night. Auto-rickshaws present an interesting anomaly – while daytime perceptions show that 52% expressing the feeling safety, nighttime shows the safety concerns with 34% feeling very unsafe, possibly due to the door-to-door service they provide.

Figure 42: Safety Perceptions While Travelling in Bus



Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 43: Safety Perceptions While Travelling in Metro

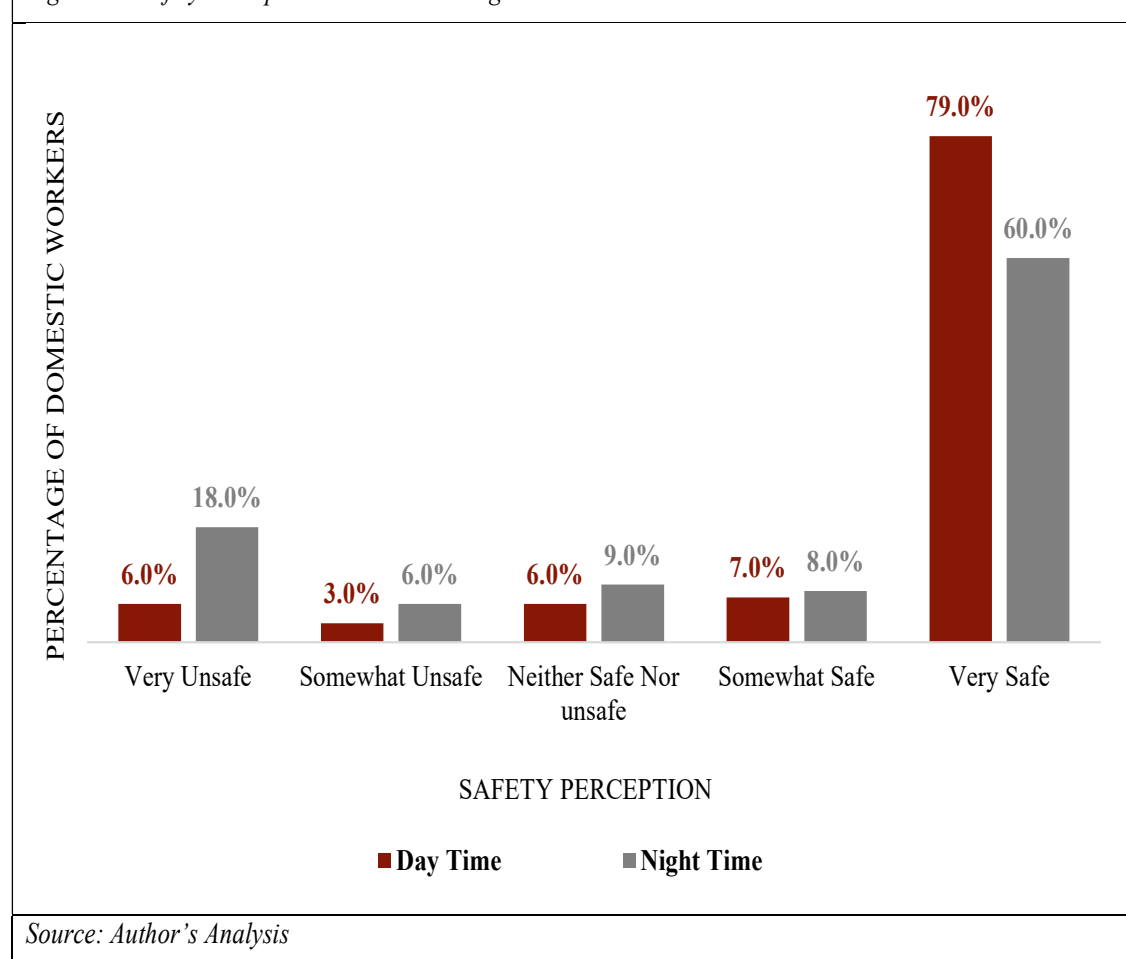
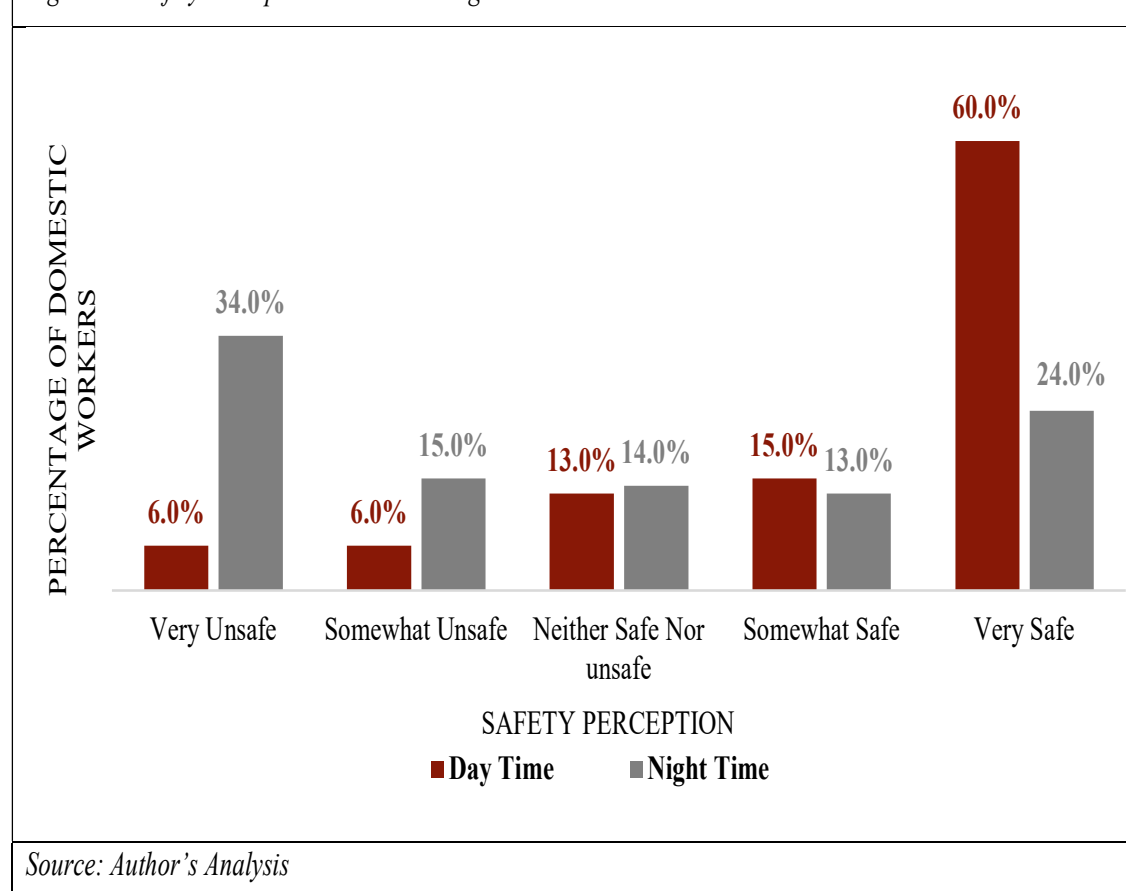
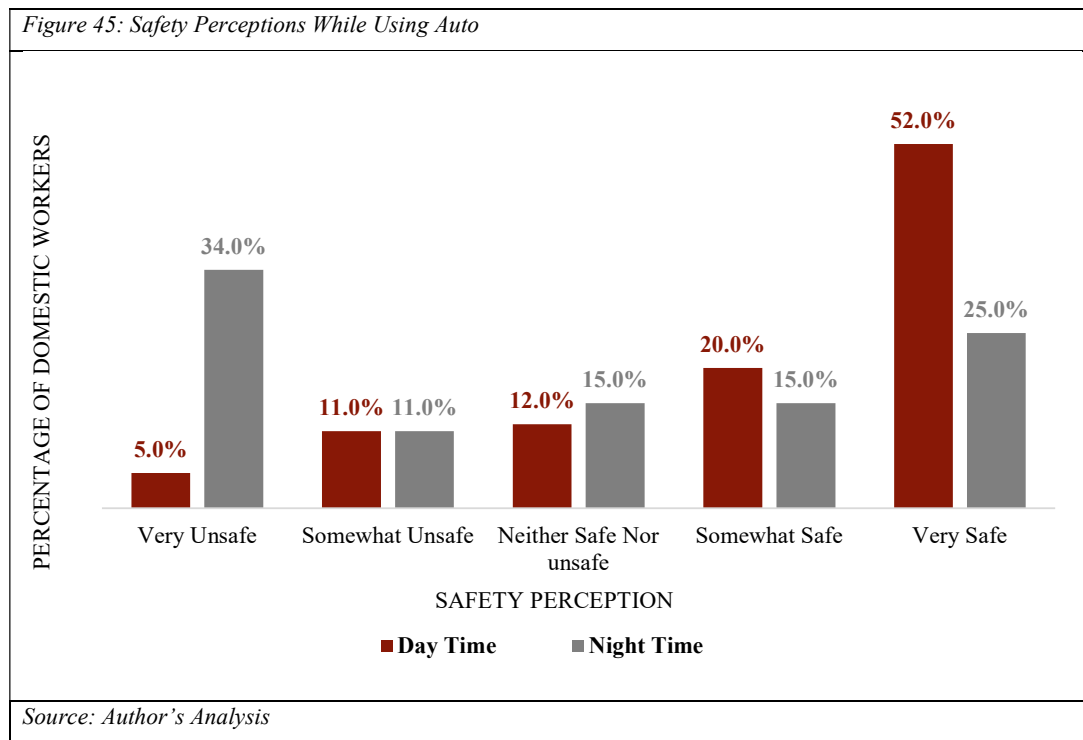


Figure 44: Safety Perceptions While Walking





The data reveals a striking discrepancy between perceived safety and actual return times. During the day, a significant majority (49%) feel “Very Safe,” with their preferred return time aligning with their perception of safety—between 12 PM and 4 PM. However, as daytime safety perceptions decline, with 32% feeling “Somewhat Safe” and 19% feeling “Somewhat Unsafe” or “Very Unsafe,” the preferred return time shifts to the later 4 PM - 8 PM slot. This suggests a surprising paradox: individuals who feel less safe during the day are still choosing to be out during potentially less secure hours.

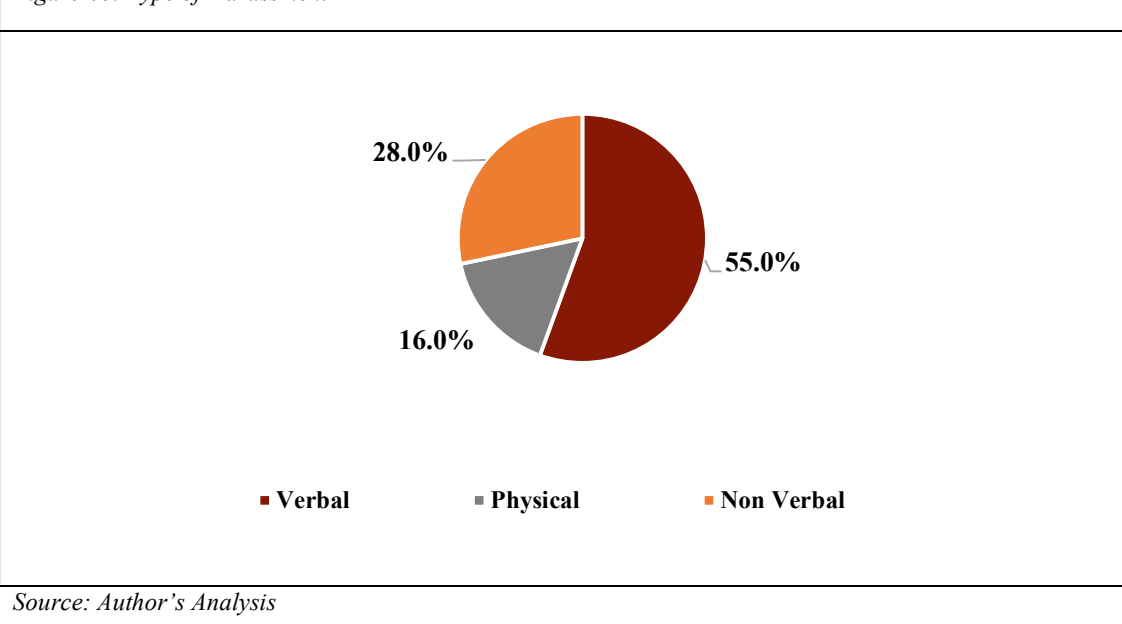
At night, the disparity between perceived safety and return times becomes even more pronounced. Only 13% feel “Very Safe,” and their preferred return time aligns with the safer early evening (12 PM - 4 PM). Conversely, a striking 45% feel “Very Unsafe” at night, yet their average return time remains fixed in the later 4 PM - 8 PM slot. This suggests a complex interplay of factors, potentially including limited choices due to work schedules, lack of safe transportation options, or societal norms, that compel individuals to remain out despite their safety concerns, even when those concerns are significant.

Table 1: Perception vs Experience (Day & Night times)

Particular	Safety1- Daytime safety perception	Average return time when safety perception about daytime	Safety2-Night time safety perception	Average return time when safety perception about night time
Very Safe	49%	12 PM- 4PM	13%	12 PM- 4PM
Somewhat safe	32%	4 PM – 8 PM	19%	4 PM – 8 PM
Somewhat Unsafe	8%	4 PM – 8 PM	17%	4 PM – 8 PM
Very Unsafe	11%	4 PM – 8 PM	45%	4 PM – 8 PM
Not Sure	1%	4 PM – 8 PM	5%	4 PM – 8 PM

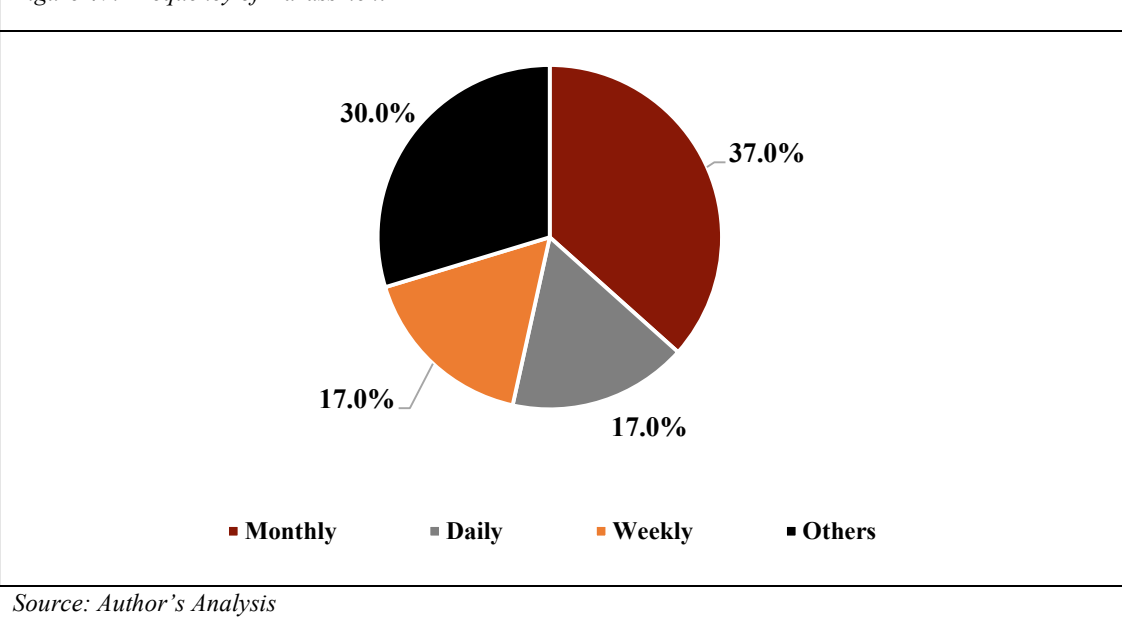
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 46: Type of Harassment



Despite significant underreporting, harassment experiences reveal patterns that impact women's daily mobility. A significant majority, 79% of those surveyed declined to discuss their experience of harassment. An analysis based on the responses of those respondents who shared their experience reveals concerning patterns that affect daily mobility decisions. Among those who did report, verbal harassment emerges as the predominant form (55%), with the prevalence of non-verbal (28%) and physical harassment (16%) being lower, but no less concerning. Moreover, nearly 37% of respondents mentioned experiencing harassment monthly, 17% weekly, and about 17% reported experiencing harassment on a daily basis.

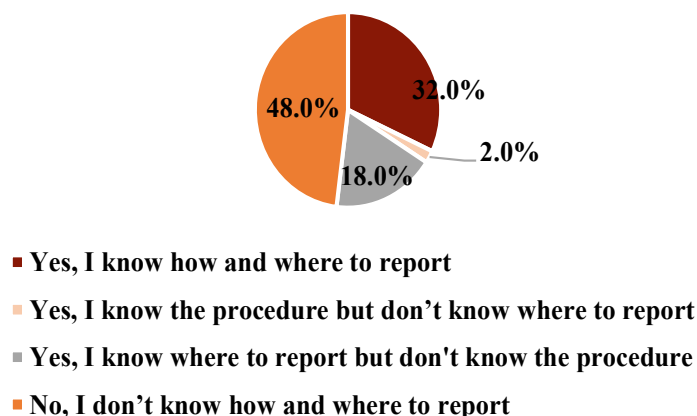
Figure 47: Frequency of Harassment



A gap exists between harassment reporting awareness and actual reporting, compounded by limited public intervention and support. The response mechanisms to harassment present a troubling picture of institutional and social support. Despite reasonable awareness of reporting mechanisms (52%), actual reporting remains strikingly low (39%). This could act as evidence to showcase some of the barriers to reporting, including the quantity of information, lack of awareness, distress among authorities, lack of confidence, and scepticism about whether actions will be taken after reporting.

The gap between awareness and action is further complicated by bystander behaviour – more than half (54%) of harassment incidents are met with general public inattention, while only about a quarter (35%) of bystanders actively intervene. This lack of social and institutional support likely contributes to the underreporting of incidents.

Figure 43: Do You Know, How And Where To Report Instances Of Sexual Harassment?



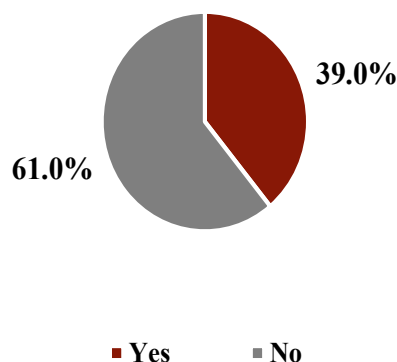
Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 48: Whether have Domestic Workers Experienced Sexual Harassment in Last Two Years

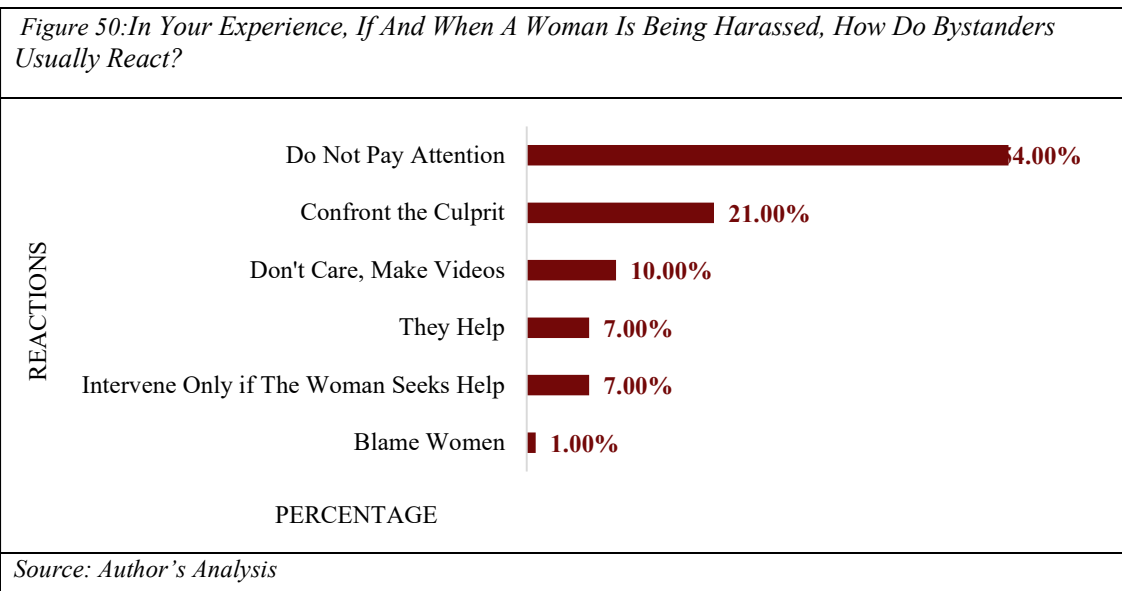


Source: Author's Analysis

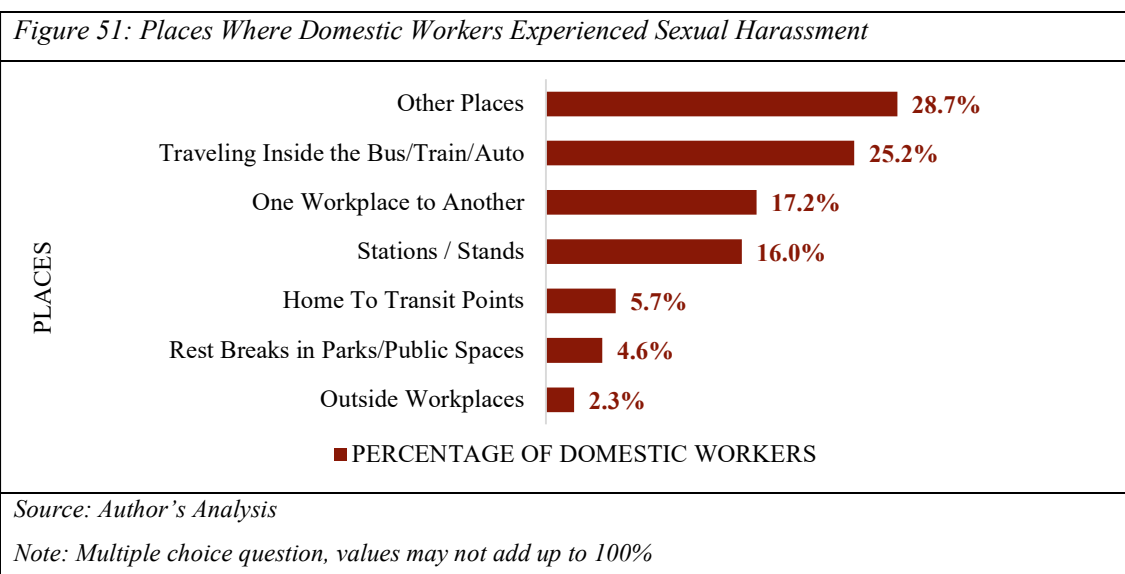
Figure 49: Have You Ever Reported An Instance Of Harassment To Relevant Authorities?



Source: Author's Analysis



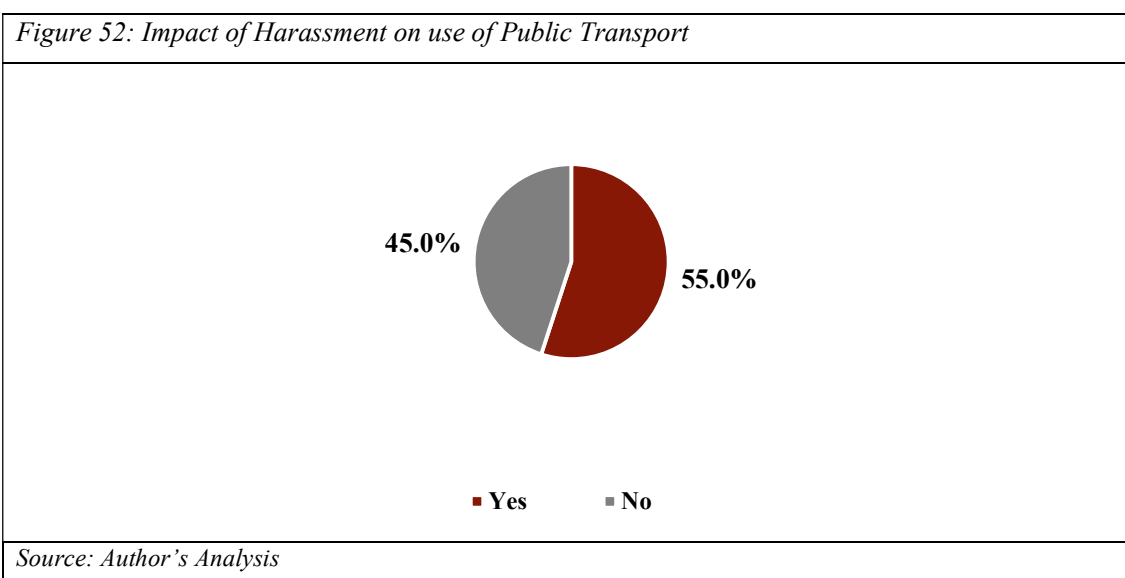
The data reveals a concerning pattern of sexual harassment faced by domestic workers across various locations, with the highest incidents occurring in “other places” (28.7%) and during transportation via bus/auto/metro (25.2%). These two locations alone account for more than half of all reported harassment cases, highlighting the significant vulnerability of domestic workers during their daily commute and in public spaces. The high percentage in “other places,” which includes areas like drains in streets, market places, deserted roads, empty streets, and roads near highways, near the house, petrol pump, village suggests that workers are at risk in diverse and often isolated locations.



The data reveals alarming vulnerability of domestic workers during their daily commute and work transitions. Public transportation spaces pose the highest risk, with 28% facing harassment in trains/buses/autos. Movement between workplaces (22%) and waiting at stations/stands (11%) emerge as other major risk zones, collectively accounting for 61% of harassment incidents during transit-related activities.

Direct work-related locations show concerning patterns as well - areas near workplaces, houses, and rest spaces each account for 5% of incidents. The geographic spread of harassment from highways to drains (3% each) indicates how women domestic workers face threats across their entire work ecosystem, highlighting an urgent need for comprehensive safety measures along their complete work-travel routes.

Safety concerns significantly influence women's mobility choices, with nearly half modifying their transportation patterns and expressing strong concerns about evening travel. The cumulative impact of these safety concerns on mobility is significant, with more than half (55%) of workers modifying their transportation choices due to harassment experiences. While slightly less than half (45%) maintain their original travel patterns, the substantial proportion altering their behaviour indicates how safety concerns directly constrain economic opportunities. The finding that 49% feel secure during daylight hours, contrasted with nearly half (45%) expressing strong apprehension during evening hours, further emphasizes how temporal safety concerns create practical limitations on when and where these workers can seek employment.



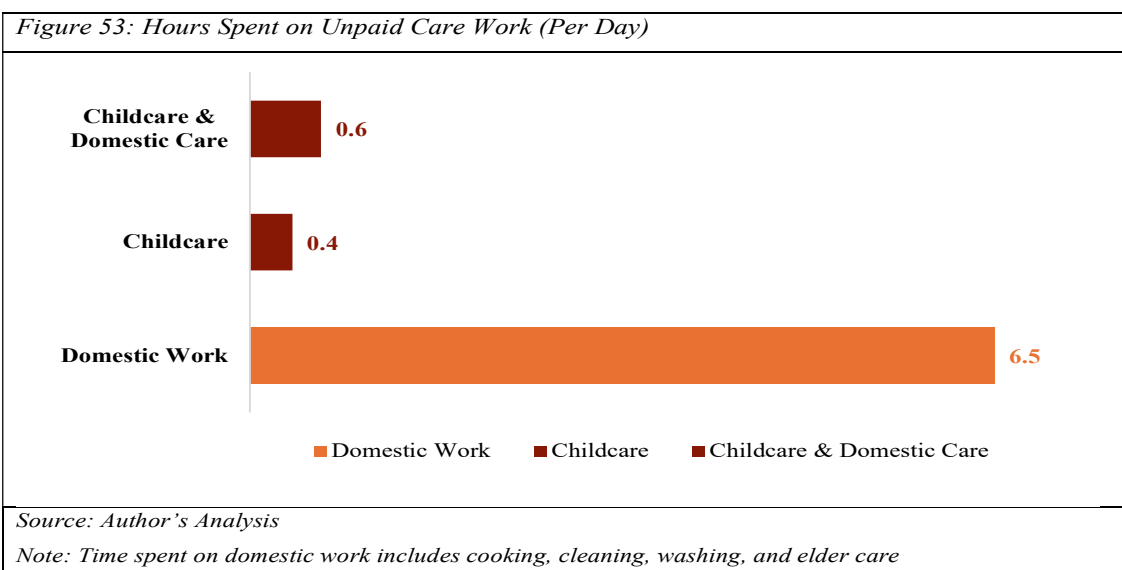
Safety concerns and harassment experiences create multilayered constraints on women's mobility, directly impacting their economic opportunities and suggesting the need for improved public safety measures. This analysis reveals how safety perceptions and harassment experiences create a complex web of constraints on women domestic workers' mobility. The interplay between temporal, spatial, and social factors shapes their daily decisions about work locations, commuting routes, and working hours, ultimately influencing their economic opportunities and overall well-being. The findings suggest that improving safety in public spaces, particularly during evening hours and at transportation hubs, could greatly expand the range of locations and times where work opportunities are available to these women.

4.4. Care work and gender dynamics

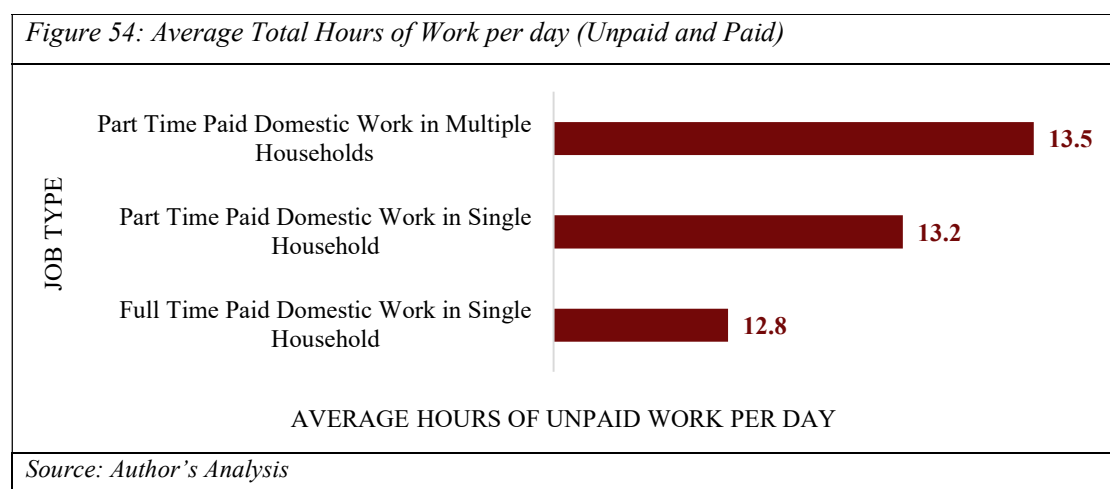
The intersection of paid domestic work and unpaid care responsibilities creates a complex dynamic for WDWs in Delhi NCR. Understanding how WDWs balance their professional duties with household care responsibilities provides crucial insights into the gendered nature of care work and its impact on their economic potential.

The data reveals a stark reality of the "double burden" faced by women domestic workers, where they spend 6.5 hours on household duties and approximately 1 hour on care duties including childcare and domestic care duties per day on average in their own homes. This significant time investment represents a substantial opportunity cost, preventing them from taking on additional paid work and potentially higher-earning opportunities. The average 7.5 total hours per day spent on unpaid

domestic labour highlights the unequal distribution of household responsibilities, creating a cycle where women's economic empowerment is hindered by the disproportionate burden of unpaid home duties. This pattern reflects broader gender inequalities in society where women's domestic labor is often unrecognized and undervalued, while simultaneously limiting their participation in the formal workforce.



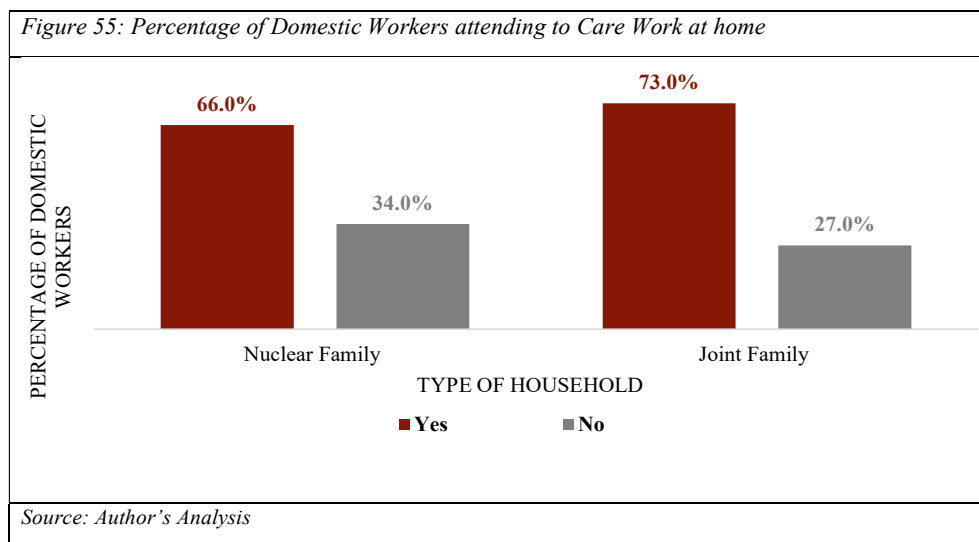
The data highlights the average total hours of unpaid and paid work performed daily across three job types by domestic workers. Part-time domestic workers working in multiple households performs the highest average total hours of work with unpaid labour at 8.5 hours per day and paid work for 5 hours, followed by part-time work in a single household at 9.6 of unpaid work and 3.2 hours of paid work. Full-time domestic work in a single household has the lowest unpaid work burden, averaging 7.6 hours per day with highest paid labor of almost 6 hours. These findings suggest that part-time roles, especially those involving single households, demand more unpaid work, potentially due to additional tasks like care responsibilities and domestic work. This indicates a disproportionate burden of unpaid labour on part-time domestic workers, particularly those working in multiple households, which may necessitate targeted interventions to address this disparity.



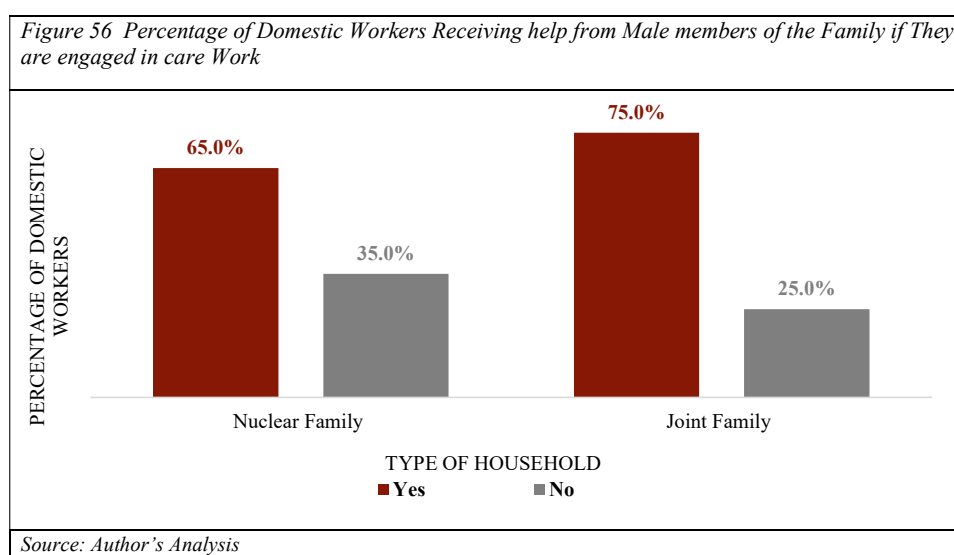
The overwhelming majority of WDWs face an intense dual burden of professional work and personal care responsibilities, particularly in childcare and elderly care. The data reveals distinct patterns in unpaid care work distribution among domestic workers across family structures. In nuclear families, 66% of domestic workers engage in unpaid care work while 34% do not, whereas in joint families,

the proportion increases to 73% of women domestic workers performing care work with 27% not participating. This 7-percentage point difference between nuclear and joint family structures suggests that family composition significantly influences care work responsibilities, likely due to the presence of extended family members requiring additional care attention.

The substantial proportion of workers engaging in unpaid care work across both family types highlights the double burden these workers face, managing both paid domestic work and unpaid care responsibilities. This pattern particularly intensifies in joint family settings, indicating a need for recognition of these dual responsibilities in policy considerations.



Survey findings on childcare support reveal contrasting patterns of male participation across different family structures. In nuclear families, a substantial 65% of women domestic workers receive assistance from male family members in care duties, while 35% handle these responsibilities without male support. In joint families, male participation is notably higher, with 75% of women receiving help and 25% managing childcare without male assistance. This pattern suggests that joint family setups foster more equitable sharing of childcare responsibilities, possibly due to the presence of multiple male family members who can contribute to childcare duties. The lower percentage of women managing childcare alone in joint families, despite having more family members, indicates that traditional gender roles in childcare might be evolving more rapidly in extended family structures, leading to increased male participation in childcare responsibilities.



Gender dynamics in eldercare responsibilities reveal notable differences across family structures among women domestic workers' households. In nuclear families, 57% of women receive assistance from male family members in elder care responsibilities, while 43% manage without male support. The pattern is more pronounced in joint families, where a higher proportion (70%) of women receive help from male members, with only 30% reporting no assistance. This higher rate of male involvement in joint families could be attributed to the presence of multiple male family members and potentially more traditional family values that encourage shared caregiving responsibilities. However, the significant percentage of women receiving no help in both family structures (43% in nuclear and 30% in joint families) indicates that eldercare responsibilities still predominantly fall on women domestic workers, regardless of family structure.

Unpaid care duties significantly limit women's paid work opportunities, with most workers indicating potential for increased economic participation if care responsibilities were shared more equally. The impact of these care responsibilities on economic opportunities is particularly striking. More than half (53%) of the workers report that their unpaid care duties directly interfere with their ability to pursue paid work opportunities. This interference becomes more significant when considering that nearly three-fifths (63%) believe they could increase their paid work hours if care responsibilities were more equitably distributed within their households. This highlights that the uneven distribution of care work not only impacts current income but also restricts potential earning capacity.

Care responsibilities restrict workers' geographic mobility, limiting their access to better employment opportunities in distant locations. Geographic mobility, crucial for accessing better-paying job opportunities, is similarly constrained by care responsibilities. Nearly half (53%) of the workers indicated they would consider employment opportunities in more distant locations if their care burden was reduced. This finding directly connects care work responsibilities to economic mobility, suggesting that more equitable distribution of care work could expand these women's geographic reach for employment opportunities.

“ Woh kya samjhenge, unhe toh lagta hai yeh ladies ka kaam hai, karegi wohi ”

- Saraswati

Figure 57: Perspective on Whether Domestic Worker's family Value their Contribution to Unpaid Care Work

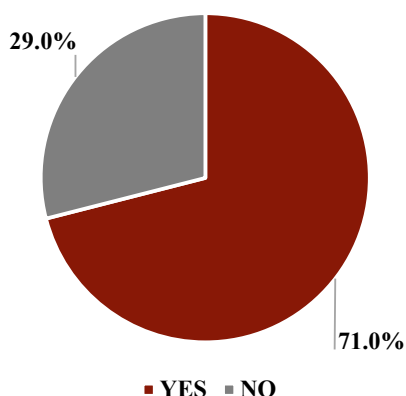
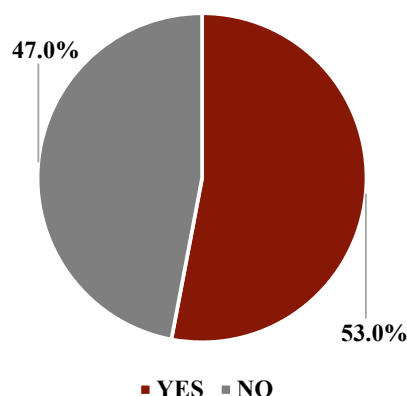


Figure 58: Perspective of Domestic Workers on Whether or Not Their Unpaid Care Work is a Hinderance to their Paid Duties



Source: Author's Analysis

Figure 59: Do You Think, If The Burden Of Care Work At Home Was Better Distributed With Other Members Of The Household, You Would Have Taken More Paid Work Duties?

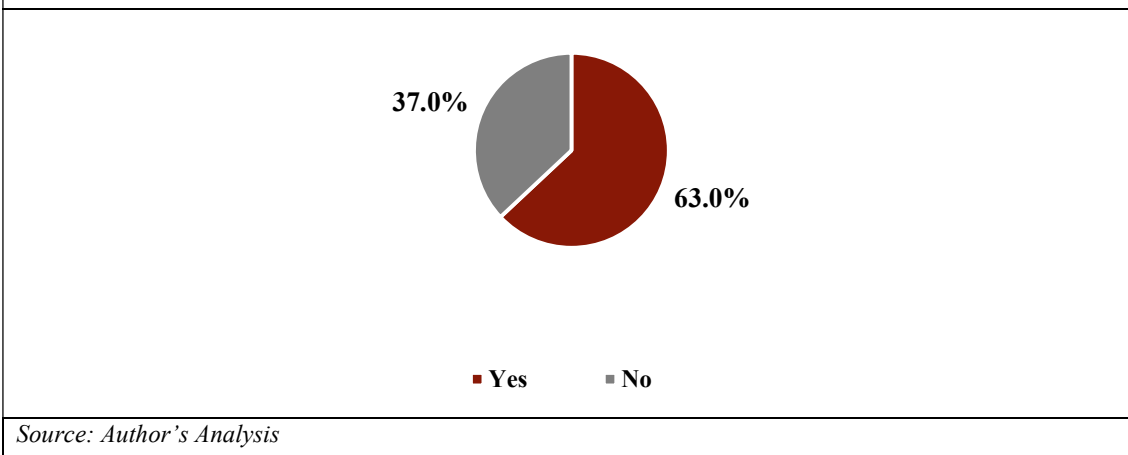


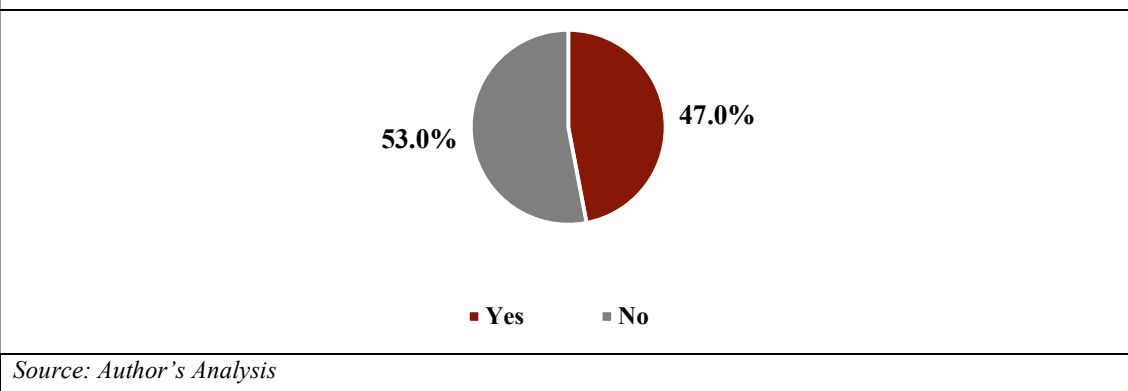
Figure 60: Extra Potential earnings If Unpaid Care Work Were Better Distributed



Of the 63% workers who would seek additional paid work if their care burden was reduced, 30% would earn more through part-time work in single households, while 20% could increase their earnings through part-time work across multiple households, and 18% through full-time single household employment.

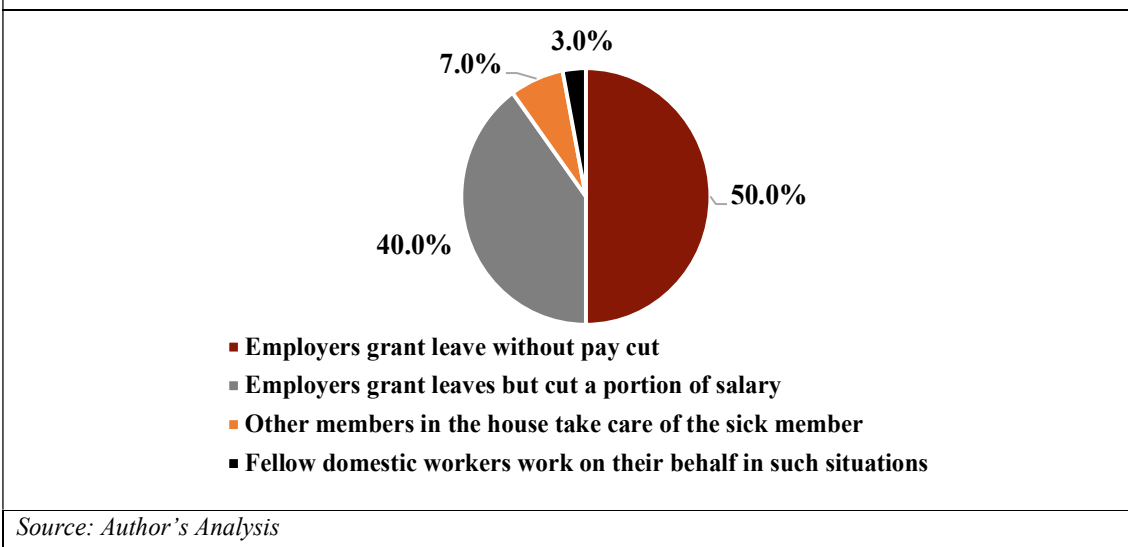
This data quantifies the economic cost of uneven distribution of household labor, effectively creating a hidden tax on women's income. The fact that nearly two-thirds of workers identify their unpaid care burden as a barrier to higher earnings demonstrates how deeply gendered domestic responsibilities directly impact women's economic empowerment. The potential income increases across different work arrangements suggest that addressing this imbalance could not only enhance these women's earning capacity but also provide them greater flexibility in choosing work arrangements that best suit their circumstances.

Figure 61: Do You Think, You Would Have Traveled Farther For Better Earning Opportunities If The Burden Of Care Work Was Less On You?



Despite high family recognition of care work's value, practical support remains limited, highlighting a gap between appreciation and actual behavioural change. The family recognition of care work shows a positive trend, with nearly three-quarters (71%) of workers reporting that their families value their unpaid care contributions. However, this appreciation appears to be more symbolic than practical, given the limited sharing of care responsibilities reported earlier. This disconnect between recognition and actual support suggests that while attitudes towards care work may be evolving, behavioural changes in household dynamics lag.

Figure 62: Leave Management When the Member of the Family Fall Sick



The survey data on sick leave management among women domestic workers reveals significant workplace disparities. The largest segment (50%) receives leaves without pay deductions when family members fall ill, indicating some employers recognize the importance of supporting workers during family health emergencies. However, a substantial 40% face wage penalties for taking such leaves, highlighting financial vulnerabilities and potential exploitation. The remaining workers rely on alternative arrangements, with 7% having family members manage care responsibilities and 3% depending on colleague support through work coverage.

This distribution suggests that while half of domestic workers have relatively supportive work arrangements during family health crises, a significant proportion still face economic penalties for attending to family care needs. The minimal percentage of workers with access to family support (7%)

or colleague coverage (3%) indicates limited social safety nets, potentially forcing many to choose between income stability and family care responsibilities.

In smaller nuclear families (2-4 members), there is a balanced distribution of power where women domestic workers and their husbands equally share individual decision-making (34% each), with a similar proportion (32%) making joint decisions. This suggests that in smaller households, women domestic workers have achieved significant autonomy in household matters, possibly due to their economic contribution and smaller family dynamics allowing for more equitable relationships. However, as family size increases (5-6 members), there is a notable shift towards joint decision-making (54%), with women maintaining strong individual authority (33%) while husbands' sole decision-making decreases substantially (13%). This trend continues in larger families (7-8 members), indicating that women domestic workers retain considerable influence even as households grow.

The implications of this data are significant for understanding women's empowerment and family dynamics in working-class households. It suggests that women domestic workers have established themselves as key decision-makers, likely due to their role as income earners. The high prevalence of joint decision-making in larger families may indicate a positive trend towards more collaborative household management, rather than patriarchal dominance. This pattern could be beneficial for addressing gender inequalities and promoting more equitable household relationships among women domestic workers' families. However, it also raises questions about whether this decision-making authority translates into reduced domestic burden or better work-life balance for these women.

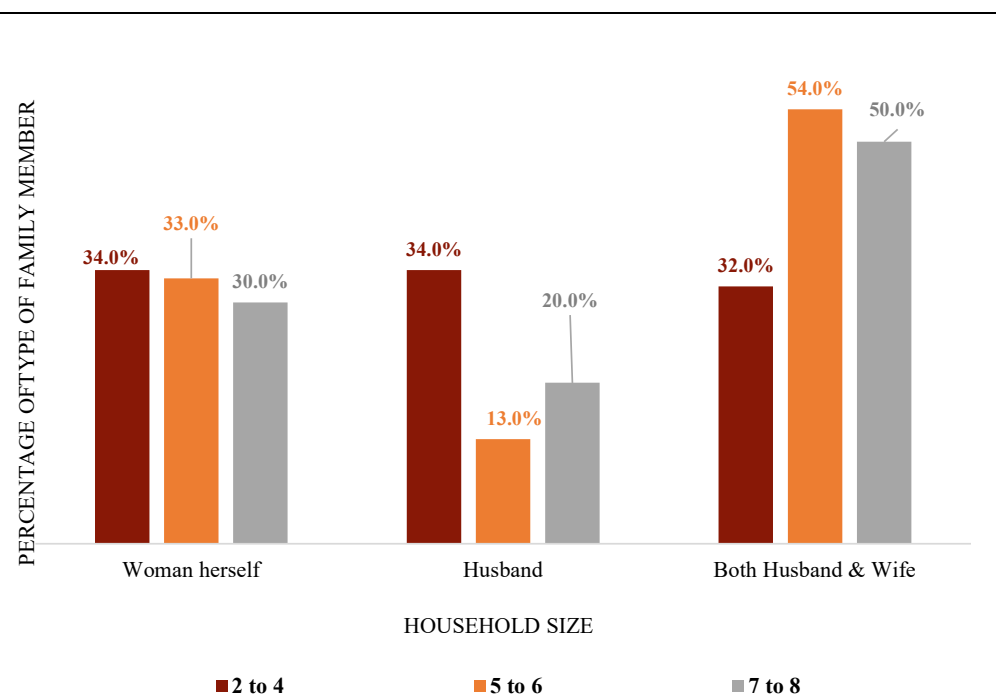
Decision-making patterns show striking differences between nuclear and joint family structures, revealing complex dynamics of power and autonomy among women domestic workers.

In joint families, women's decision-making shows an interesting upward trend as household size increases, rising from 17% in smaller households (2 to 4 members) to 29% in the largest households (9-10 members) - a pattern distinctly different from nuclear families where women's decision-making power remained relatively stable (30-34%). The role of husbands in decision-making shows high variability in joint families, with a notable decline from 33% in small households to 6% in 7-8 member households, before sharply increasing to 43% in the largest households. This contrasts with nuclear families where husbands' decision-making power showed a more consistent declining pattern as family size increased. Joint decision-making between spouses in joint families peaks at 53% in medium-sized households (5-6 members), similar to nuclear families, but shows a significant decrease to 19-21% in larger households - a stark difference from nuclear families where it maintained at 50% even in larger households. Notably, joint families show additional decision-makers such as mothers-in-law (varying between 17-19%) and mothers (13% in 7-8 member households), indicating a more complex decision-making structure compared to nuclear families. The emergence of "others" (5-13%) and daughter-in-law (5%) as decision-makers in certain household sizes further highlights the multi-layered power dynamics unique to joint family structures.

The comparative analysis reveals that women domestic workers generally have more consistent and higher individual decision-making power in nuclear families compared to joint families, where their authority varies more and is influenced by multiple family members. This suggests that the family structure significantly impacts women's autonomy, with nuclear families potentially offering more stable platforms for women's empowerment. The data also indicates that while both family types show a preference for collaborative decision-making in medium-sized households, joint families

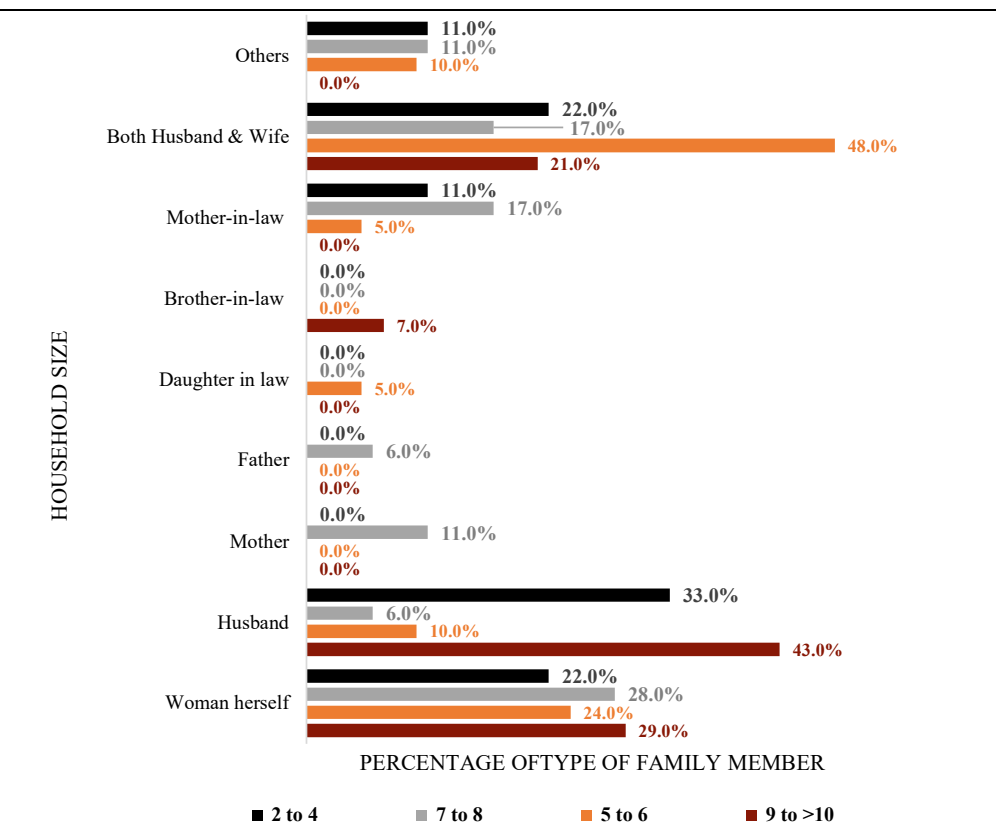
demonstrate more complex power-sharing patterns involving extended family members, particularly in larger household sizes.

Figure 63: Distribution of Which Family Members Take Household Decisions Based on Household Size (Nuclear)



Source: Author's Analysis Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

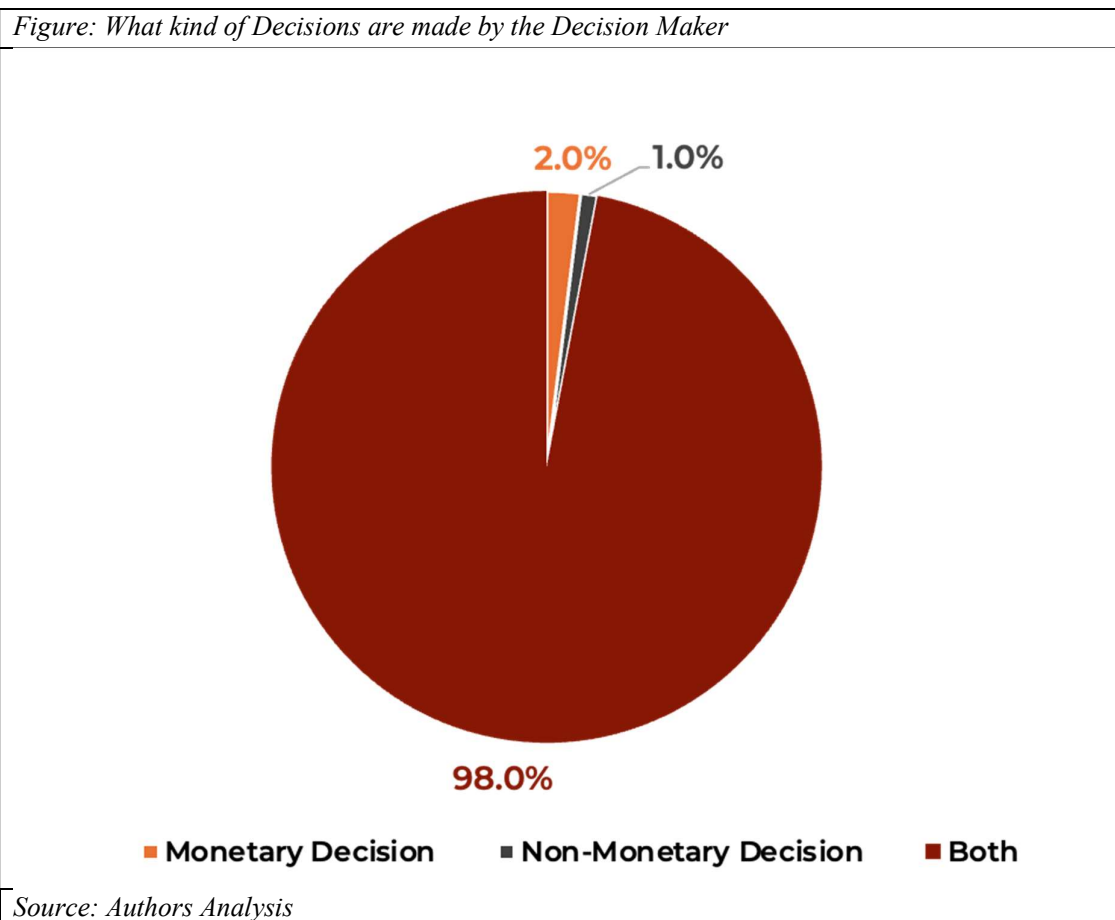
Figure 64: Distribution of Which Family Members Take Household Decisions Based on Household Size (Joint)



Source: Author's Analysis

Note: Multiple choice question, values may not add up to 100%

The Figure shows the distribution of what kinds of decisions are made by the decision-maker. Monetary decisions constitute 2%, non-monetary decisions constitute 1% and both kinds of decisions constitute 98%. A vast majority (98%) of decision-makers are involved in both monetary and non-monetary decisions, while only a small fraction focus solely on one type. This indicates that decision-makers typically have a comprehensive role, handling a wide range of responsibilities.”



The imbalanced distribution of care responsibilities emerges as a crucial barrier to women’s economic empowerment, suggesting that addressing household gender dynamics is essential for advancing women’s participation in paid work. The findings paint a comprehensive picture of how care work responsibilities shape these women’s economic choices and opportunities. The substantial care burden, combined with limited family support, creates practical constraints on their ability to maximize economic opportunities. While family recognition of care work is encouraging, the persistent imbalance in care responsibilities continues to affect these workers’ economic empowerment. This suggests that addressing gender dynamics in household care work could be crucial for enhancing women’s economic participation and advancement in the paid domestic work sector.

4.5. Working Conditions and Awareness of Safeguards

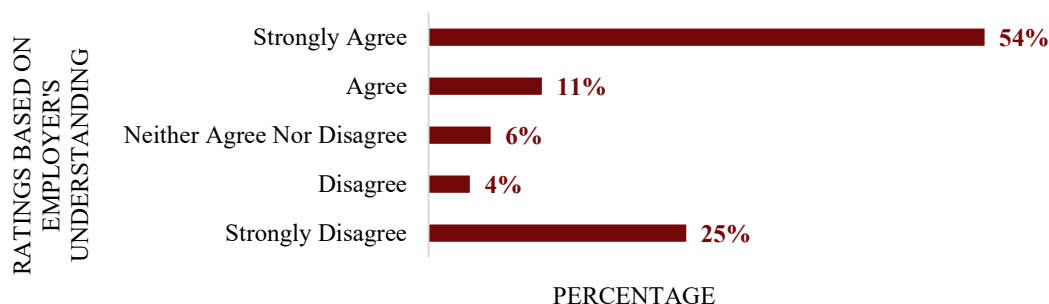
The relationship between WDWs and their employers, coupled with their decision-making power within their households, provides crucial insights into their overall empowerment and agency. This analysis explores how workplace understanding and personal autonomy intersect to shape these workers’ professional and personal lives.

Employer responses to workers’ commute challenges reveal a divided landscape, with half showing empathy while others remain unsupportive, significantly impacting workplace dynamics. Employer

relationships reveal a nuanced picture of workplace dynamics, particularly regarding commute-related challenges. Nearly half (54%) of workers report experiencing understanding and empathy from their employers about their transportation difficulties, suggesting a positive trend in employer-employee relationships. However, the fact that about a quarter (25%) strongly disagree with this assessment indicates significant disparities in workplace experiences. This split in employer attitudes potentially affects workers' ability to negotiate better working conditions or maintain sustainable work arrangements, particularly when facing commute-related constraints.

Figure 65: Perceptions of Domestic Workers on How Empathetic their Employers are to Travel-Related Constraints

Survey question: My boss would understand if I was late due to travel related challenges and will be kind towards me

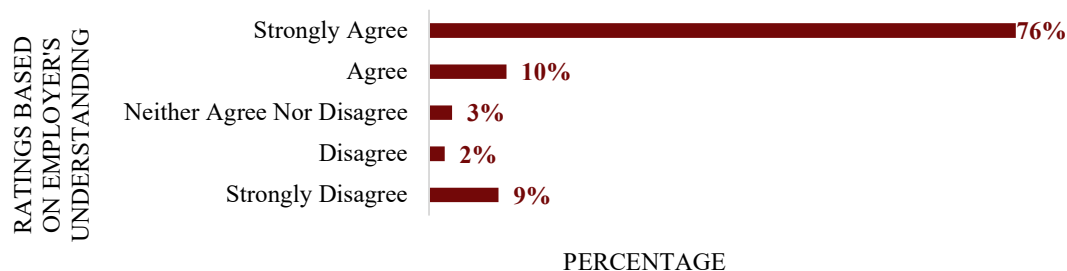


Source: Author's Analysis

A strong majority of women domestic workers demonstrate high levels of personal agency in decision-making, though this empowerment isn't universal across the workforce. The sphere of personal agency and decision-making power presents a more encouraging picture. A substantial majority (76%) of workers strongly assert their right to express opinions, even when these views conflict with family perspectives. This high level of perceived personal agency suggests that many workers have developed strong self-advocacy skills, possibly as a result of their experience in managing workplace relationships and negotiations. However, the presence of a smaller but significant group (9%) who strongly disagree with having such freedom indicates that empowerment is not uniform across the workforce.

Figure 66: Domestic Workers Perceptions of Their Agency to Express Opinions at Home

Survey question: My opinions are welcomed during family matters even if I don't agree with opinions of other family members



Source: Author's Analysis

Supportive employer relationships correlate with workers' confidence in self-advocacy, creating a reinforcing cycle of empowerment across both professional and personal spheres. The connection

between workplace dynamics and personal empowerment becomes evident in how these two spheres influence each other. Workers who experience more understanding from employers regarding their commute challenges may feel more confident in expressing their needs and opinions both at work and at home. Conversely, those facing less empathetic employers might find it harder to advocate for themselves in both professional and personal contexts.

While personal agency among women domestic workers has grown significantly, the varied levels of support from employers and families highlight empowerment as an ongoing process. These findings suggest that workplace dynamics and personal empowerment are closely interlinked for women domestic workers. While many have achieved significant levels of personal agency, the varying degrees of employer understanding and family support indicate that empowerment remains an ongoing process. The data points to the importance of both supportive workplace environments and strong personal agency in enabling these workers to navigate their professional and personal challenges effectively.

Analysis of preferred transportation solutions reveals that operational improvements are the top priority, with 47% emphasizing the need for improved frequency, followed by security concerns addressed through marshal presence (40%) and better connectivity (36%). Comfort-related improvements (25%) and staff behavior (17%) emerge as significant factors, while subsidized rates (16%) indicate cost remains a barrier. Infrastructure and safety measures like CCTV, street lighting, and proximity to police stations each account for 5% of suggestions. Notably, technological solutions such as app-based information (1%) and improved payment options (0.5%) receive minimal emphasis, suggesting that basic operational and safety improvements would be more effective in encouraging public transport usage among walking commuters.

5. Discussion

Based on the survey findings, two key analytical takeaways emerge that should be central to the discussion in the paper:

5.1. The triple burden of education, care, and mobility constraints

Limited educational attainment serves as the primary structural barrier perpetuating economic marginalization among women domestic workers in Delhi NCR. Educational disadvantage creates compounding effects across workers' lives, fundamentally constraining labor market mobility. Illiteracy among respondents restricts access to better-paying opportunities and weakens bargaining power, creating a self-reinforcing cycle where limited skills trap workers in low-wage domestic work while inadequate earnings prevent skill development.

Gender-based allocation of unpaid care work emerges as a critical mechanism reproducing women's economic subordination. Our findings show how domestic responsibilities directly constrain women's labor market participation, with childcare obligations identified as a primary barrier to expanding economic activities. Survey data supports theoretical arguments about gender norms structuring economic opportunities, as women consistently reported that equitable distribution of care work would enable greater participation in paid employment.

Transport poverty intersects with gender-based vulnerability to create distinct mobility constraints. Economic limitations force reliance on walking as the primary mode of transportation, exposing

workers to safety risks during early morning and evening hours. Women's reported alterations in transportation patterns due to harassment experiences demonstrate how mobility decisions are influenced by personal safety needs, creating a cycle where economic limitations necessitate unsafe transport options, thus constraining access to better job opportunities.

5.2. Spatiotemporal Dimensions: Understanding the role of space and time

Women domestic workers experience varying levels of agency and safety across spaces and times. While many workers reported feeling empowered within their homes, their public space interactions were marked by vulnerability and constraint. This contrast between private and public spheres highlights how domestic spaces may offer agency, while public spaces remain fraught with safety concerns.

The day-night divide significantly impacts women's mobility and economic opportunities. While women generally feel safe during the day, their security diminishes during evening hours, effectively restricting access to public spaces and economic opportunities during specific times. Limited safety measures for evening travel constrain their ability to take evening jobs, reducing work schedule flexibility and potential income sources.

Different transportation hubs present varying safety levels, with metro stations perceived as consistently safer than bus stations. Workers reported relatively consistent safety at metro stations throughout the day, while bus stations were seen as less secure, particularly at night, demonstrating how location and time shape mobility patterns.

Public bystanders' passive response to harassment perpetuates unsafe conditions, deepening workers' vulnerability during daily commutes. The lack of proactive societal support in public spaces reinforces these challenges.

5.3. Implications and Path Forward

These findings necessitate addressing challenges through multiple angles. Solutions focusing exclusively on economic empowerment, safety, or domestic gender roles will likely fall short. A holistic approach acknowledging intersectionality is needed. Urban planning and transportation interventions could improve safety and economic opportunities, while addressing household gender dynamics could unlock greater economic participation.

Spatiotemporal variations suggest policies must be tailored to specific times and locations. Key steps include enhancing evening safety in public transport and encouraging active societal support. More distant job opportunities could become viable with equitable domestic responsibility sharing, highlighting the need for coordinated public and private sector interventions.

In conclusion, the intersectional challenges faced by women domestic workers demand an approach addressing their educational, economic, gendered, and spatial vulnerabilities. Acknowledging these interconnected constraints can reduce the invisibilisation of domestic workers' needs.

6. Recommendations

6.1. Care Work Support Systems

The establishment of community-based care models emerges as a crucial intervention to address the disproportionate care burden on WDWs in Delhi-NCR. Survey findings that 66% of domestic workers

in nuclear families and 73% in joint families engage in unpaid care work (includes elder care and child care), with 52% reporting these duties directly interfere with paid work opportunities. This burden necessitates immediate institutional support systems.

Following successful community-based care service models such as those implemented by NGOs like Apanalaya in Mumbai's low-income neighbourhoods, or Mobile Crèches at MGNREGA construction sites, state governments could establish frameworks supporting anchor NGOs in implementing community care infrastructure. Centers could be strategically located in areas with high concentrations of domestic workers, particularly in unauthorized colonies. Implementation could include subsidized childcare and elderly care services, with operational hours aligned to typical domestic work schedules, as over 60% workers could increase paid work hours with better care support.

The care support framework can incorporate a collaborative model between stakeholders. Local government bodies could provide space and infrastructure, while NGOs manage operations with state funding. This approach could engage local communities, particularly in areas with worker clustering, ensuring sustainability and community ownership. The centers could offer skills development programs, creating additional employment opportunities.

6.2. Transportation Safety and Accessibility

The study's findings reveal critical infrastructure and safety gaps in public transportation systems serving domestic workers, particularly in underserved areas. With almost 80% of surveyed workers dependent on walking as their primary mode of transport and 60% reporting safety concerns during daily commutes, the data underscores the urgent need for gender-responsive infrastructure interventions. The vulnerability is particularly acute during evening hours, with 45% of workers expressing safety concerns, highlighting the critical need for enhanced last-mile connectivity solutions.

Drawing from Chennai's Gender and Policy Lab initiatives enhancing safety for women commuters, cities could implement participatory safety audits to evaluate and enhance transportation infrastructure. These could focus on street lighting maintenance ensuring 30-40 lux illumination along primary routes; continuous, unobstructed 3.5m-wide footpaths per IRC guidelines; and regular monitoring of dark spots and maintenance needs. The gender-intentional initiatives in Chennai inspired similar initiatives in Hyderabad and Bangalore, demonstrating the effectiveness of gender-responsive planning.

Building upon these infrastructural improvements, a comprehensive safety framework could integrate technological solutions to enhance security measures. This could include implementing emergency response systems such as: (i) SMS/WhatsApp-based helplines allowing anonymous reporting; (ii) panic buttons at transport stops with direct connection to security personnel; and (iii) deployment of security marshals with at least 50% women representation. The installation of CCTV cameras, as implemented in Chennai, could be prioritized along frequently traversed routes, particularly in underserved areas where domestic workers commonly commute.

While infrastructure and technology form the backbone of safety measures, their effectiveness depends on robust implementation and monitoring mechanisms. A dedicated government task force could be formed which will be responsible for: (i) conducting regular safety audits with community participation; (ii) monitoring infrastructure maintenance; (iii) coordinating rapid response teams; and (iv) gathering feedback from women domestic workers to continuously improve safety measures.

Furthermore, the current low uptake of Delhi's free transport scheme highlights the need to redesign transport subsidy programs. Following New York's Fair Fares model, a targeted subsidy program could be implemented that considers the actual travel patterns of domestic workers, including flexible pass options for multiple short-distance trips.

To ensure these interventions reach their intended beneficiaries, sustained and inclusive awareness campaigns can be implemented through strategic partnerships between Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), Public Transport Authorities (PTAs), and community-based organizations. These collaborations can leverage institutional infrastructure while utilizing grassroots connections of civil society organizations (CSOs) to: (i) enhance awareness about safety mechanisms; (ii) facilitate dialogue between authorities and workers; (iii) develop targeted communication campaigns; and (iv) implement sensitization programs for transport staff

6.3. Working Conditions and Legal Framework

The stark disparity between statutory requirements and ground reality underscores the pressing need for enforcement mechanisms in domestic work regulation. While Section 5 of the Code on Wages, 2019¹⁰ universalizes minimum wage protection to include domestic workers, our survey reveals that most workers earn between INR 5,000 to INR 10,000 monthly—significantly below the prescribed minimum wage of INR 18,066 for unskilled workers (as of October 2024)¹¹. This substantial wage gap, coupled with the absence of social security coverage, reflects the systemic challenges in implementing existing legal frameworks. The situation is further complicated by the lack of comprehensive data, as evidenced by the yet-to-be-released 2021 census data on domestic workers, impeding evidence-based policy interventions.

Drawing from the Maharashtra Domestic Workers Welfare Board Act, 2008¹², which establishes a comprehensive framework for worker registration and benefit administration, similar institutional mechanisms need to be implemented nationwide. While the Delhi Domestic Workers (Regulation of Work and Social Security) Bill, 2022¹³ proposes comparable provisions, implementation requires strategic intervention through initiatives like the SANKALP scheme. However, mere legislative frameworks may prove insufficient without addressing grassroots challenges—particularly the reluctance or inability of domestic workers to register under relevant laws. The SANKALP hubs for women, designed to improve skill development and market connectivity, could be leveraged to facilitate awareness about workers' rights and assist in registration processes. This multi-faceted approach, combining legislative reforms with targeted outreach programs, could bridge the current implementation gap and ensure better compliance with minimum wage provisions and social security measures.

10 Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India. (2021, December 16). Welfare schemes for domestic workers[Unstarred Question No. 2194, answered in Rajya Sabha]. Retrieved from <https://sansad.in/getFile/annex/255/AU2194.pdf?source=pqars>

11 Office of the commissioner (Labour), government of NCT of Delhi (Labour Department). (2024, October). Dearness Allowance Notification, Government of Delhi, October 2024. https://labour.delhi.gov.in/sites/default/files/Labour/generic_multiple_files/da_oct_2024.pdf

12 Government of Maharashtra. (2009). *The Maharashtra Domestic Workers Welfare Board Act, 2008 (Mah. I of 2009)*. <https://mahakamgar.maharashtra.gov.in/images/dcl/pdf/maharashtra-domestic-workers-welfare-board-act-2008.pdf>

13 Government of India. (n.d.). *The Domestic Workers (Regulation of Work and Social Security) Bill, 2022* [Bill No. XLI of 2022]. Rajya Sabha. <https://sansad.in/getFile/BillsTexts/RSBillTexts/Asintroduced/domestic-7417-E.pdf?source=legislation>

Integration into formal social security systems, particularly the Employees' State Insurance (ESI) Scheme, could be prioritized. This is especially crucial given the health hazards reported by workers and union representatives during key informant interviews. The framework should include provisions for paid leave, overtime compensation, and workplace accident coverage, addressing the current gaps in social protection identified in the study.

6.4. Social Security Integration and Implementation

The development of targeted social security mechanisms represents a critical pathway for enhancing women workers' economic resilience, particularly given the significant wage gaps and social protection deficits identified in our study. The Jan Dhan model, which has successfully brought 53.13 crore Indians into formal banking with 55.6% being women account holders, provides a proven framework for implementing comprehensive social security products. This becomes especially relevant for domestic workers who currently lack formal financial safety nets despite facing significant income vulnerabilities.

The implementation pathway requires a multi-tiered approach centered on accessibility and financial sustainability. Building on the existing E-Shram registration framework, Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs) can serve as intermediary registration points during initial employment verification. Drawing from the Jan Dhan model's success in accumulating Rs. 2.31 lakh crore in deposits, these social security products should be linked to either Jan Dhan accounts or any Aadhaar-linked savings bank account, providing flexibility while maintaining the direct benefit transfer framework. RWAs can play a crucial role by maintaining employment records and facilitating regular contribution deposits, similar to how 36.14 crore RuPay cards have been successfully distributed through the Jan Dhan network.

Product design must specifically address the unique challenges faced by women domestic workers while building on existing Jan Dhan features. Beyond the current Rs. 2 lakh accident insurance coverage provided through RuPay cards, additional income interruption insurance becomes crucial given that 40% of workers face salary cuts during family emergencies. The average Jan Dhan deposit of Rs. 4,352 demonstrates the capacity for small savings, suggesting that workers could contribute to specialized insurance and pension products through manageable monthly payments. This aligns with the broader objectives of the proposed Delhi Domestic Workers Bill, 2022, while providing concrete implementation mechanisms through existing financial infrastructure.

Effective implementation requires strong institutional coordination between multiple stakeholders, mirroring the Jan-Dhan-Aadhaar-Mobile (JAM) trinity's success in direct benefit transfers. Banks must leverage their existing Jan Dhan infrastructure to proactively inform eligible workers about these social security products, while RWAs can serve as local nodal points for documentation and verification. The model should utilize the established digital payment infrastructure that has enabled 16,443 crore digital transactions in FY 23-24, making contribution payments and benefit transfers seamless. This integration with formal banking channels could complement the SANKALP scheme's objectives while providing a sustainable framework for social security delivery. Regular monitoring of product uptake and effectiveness, coupled with worker feedback mechanisms through RWAs, will be essential for continuous refinement of these social security instruments.

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Appendix

Safety Concerns of Women Domestic Workers in Delhi-NCR

Findings from Women's Safety Audits

Introduction

The present document encapsulates findings from Women's Safety Audit (WSA)¹ in four locations in Delhi-NCR, focusing on safety concerns of women domestic workers in the areas. These audits were conducted for an in-depth understanding of safety issues faced by women domestic workers to supplement the findings from the time-use survey Navigating care work, safety, and informality in urban India: evidence from Delhi's women domestic workers, conducted by Jagori in collaboration with Nikore Associates. This survey investigated the nature of labour participation, transportation choices, safety concerns, and unpaid care responsibilities of WDWs through a survey with 270 women from Delhi-NCR.

The survey findings invoked the urgent need for policy interventions that address the intersections of gender, labour and urban infrastructure. It also revealed that safety is a major concern for these women, with over 45% of respondents reporting feeling unsafe during daily commutes, particularly at night and specifically in certain spaces.

Several studies have established that women may choose not to work, commute or seek employment in areas or during specific times of day when they feel unsafe. In a survey of non-working women in Delhi, it was found that safety concern is an important factor that stops women from working outside home, second only to their engagement in domestic work (1). Analysis of data collected as part of the 2005 India Human Development Survey finds that urban Indian women are far less likely to seek employment outside their homes in neighbourhoods where the self-reported level of sexual harassment against women is high(2).

Sources: 1. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237565390_Through_the_Magnifying_Glass_Women's_Work_and_Labour_force_participation_in_urban_Delhi

2. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0305750X17303534>

Evidence from the time-use survey shows that safety perceptions of WDWs in Delhi NCR significantly influence their mobility patterns and work participation. For example, women's differential perception of safety during the day and night imposes constraints on their mobility and limits their ability to accept work in early morning or late evening hours. Additionally, varied safety perceptions in different spaces like markets, parks, roads, etc. influence the routes that workers choose for their daily commutes and also their willingness to accept work in certain areas. This indicates how the perceptions of safety in public places in different times at different locations can significantly impact the participation of these women workers in the workforce. Moreover, anecdotal evidence suggests that typically for domestic and care work, early morning and late evening slots are high paying compared to regular timings, as

¹ Women's Safety Audit (WSA) is a participatory tool that is used for collecting and assessing information about perceptions of safety in public spaces. It is a process that brings people together to walk through a physical environment, evaluate how safe it feels, and identify ways to make it safer. This methodology, based on the premise that the users of a space are experts in understanding the space, was developed in Toronto, Canada (1989), by METRAC and has been adapted and used in over 40 cities around the world (<https://www.safedelhi.in/womens-safety-audit.html>). It is now a global tool for enhancing neighbourhood safety and empowering local communities, specifically women. Jagori has pioneered the adaption and usage of the WSA tool in India and has played a critical role in the Safe Cities Agenda in the country addressing women's safety issues since 2005. Jagori has also published a comprehensive handbook on how to conduct WSA in 2010.

they are in high demand in urban middle class families where working women need domestic help early in the morning before they leave for work and/or during late hours when they get home. Owing to safety concerns, WDWs often miss out on such higher wage employment options.

A safe city for women and girls is...

- A city where women and girls can enjoy public spaces and public life without fear of being assaulted.
- A city where violence is not exercised against women and girls in either the home or the street.
- A city where women and girls are not discriminated against and where their economic, social, political, and cultural rights are guaranteed.
- A city where women and girls participate in making decisions that affect the community in which they live.
- A city where the state guarantees the human rights of all people without excluding women and girls.
- A city where the state and local government take actions to provide attention, prevention, and punishment for violence against women and girls.
- A city where the state and local government guarantee women's and girls' access to justice.

<https://www.endvawnow.org/uploads/modules/pdf/1304107021.pdf>

Women's safety is not just about living lives free of violence, but it is also about living free of the fear of violence or harassment. Hence the questions remain: What are the main factors that are making them feel unsafe? How do they think it can be made safer? To generate further evidence on the specific safety concerns for women workers in these areas, Jagori decided to get a more nuanced picture through safety audit walks along the routes taken by these WDWs. Four safety audit walks were undertaken in four major locations covering different parts (West Delhi, South Delhi, Faridabad and Gurgaon) of Delhi-NCR where these women reside and commute for work. The present piece covers the detailed observations, analysis of the key findings from the audits, major issues identified and principal action points towards ensuring safe mobility and increased labour participation of women domestic workers in Delhi-NCR.



Safety Audit Walks in Four Locations

Tools and Methodology

Essentially participatory in character, the safety audit walks identify the spaces that are unsafe for vulnerable groups, women domestic workers in this case, as well as the factors causing the lack of safety for these women. Besides focusing on the issues of infrastructure and design, the safety audit walks also tried to find out subtle forms of harassment faced by women/girls when they access the essential services. Steps in this audit and its documentation are as follows:

Group Formation and Selection of Areas

The WSAs were conducted in November and December of 2024 and January 2025. A safety audit walk group was formed with 10 staff members divided in two teams to cover parallel areas along the routes at the same time. As women domestic workers were not available during the audit walks, they could not be included in the teams. However, we spoke to coordinators of local domestic workers' unions and had valuable insights from domestic workers commuting at the time of the audits. Four locations were selected based on the experiences shared by the time-use survey respondents. These included Taimoor Nagar in New Friends Colony area of Southern Delhi, Chakkarpur area of Gurgaon, Dayal Nagar Basti in Faridabad in Haryana and Choona Bhatti area in Kirti Nagar under West Delhi district. A team of three members of the audit team visited the selected areas before the scheduled dates; they identified the routes taken by WDWs in the areas with assistance from the union leaders and prepared a detailed map of each location to help navigate the route during the safety audit walks.

Tools Preparation and Safety Walk

Three major tools used for these audits included a checklist for noting down observations regarding infrastructure and the area (road, streets, parks, toilets, lighting, water supply, garbage disposal and drainage, shops and people present in the area, etc.), an interview guide to capture insights from people who uses the space and a safety rating form based on safety parameters. Walks were taken before and after dark, specifically at times when women workers take these routes while going for work and getting back home.

Checklist

The checklist served as a foundation for gathering infrastructure-related data, covering key areas such as parks, roads, police stations, and public toilets. Observations related to the availability and condition of essential services and infrastructure along the commuting routes were noted in the checklist by one member in each team.

Safety Rating Form

The safety rating form, prepared as a Google Form, recorded safety ratings for nine safety parameters: lighting, visibility, openness, people, footpaths/walk paths, security, gender usage, transport and feeling of safety. Safety scores were taken at several points along the route on a scale of 0 to 3 where 0 is the lowest and 3 the highest rating. These parameters and safety rating, developed by SafetiPin², helped evaluate the physical and social safety aspects of the commuting routes from a woman's perspective, with a particular focus on safety concerns revealed by the women domestic workers in the survey. Safety scoring was carried out by one member in each team, at both times of day.

² <https://safetipin.com/>



Light (Night)

Lighting measures the amount of illumination at a place and ranges from Dark to Bright. A place can be lit by street lighting or from other sources.



Openness

Openness refers to whether a person has a good line of sight in all directions.



Visibility

Visibility refers to how visible is one to others. It is based on the principle of 'eyes on the street'.



People

Crowd indicates the number of people around. This increases as a consequence of usage opportunities.



Security

Security refers to visible security offered either by the police or private security.



Walk Path

Walkpath indicates whether a person can comfortably walk at a place. This could refer to the quality of a pavement or space along a road.



Public Transport

Transport refers to the ease of accessing any mode of public transport i.e.



Gender Usage

metro/bus/auto/taxi etc and is measured in terms of the distance to the nearest mode.



Walk Path

Gender is about diversity i.e. the percentage of women and children amongst the crowd

Feeling indicates how safe one feels at a place. It is the only subjective parameter.

Parameters in the Safetipin application

Score		0	1	2	3
1	Walk Path/ Pootpath	None: No walking path available	Difficult: Path exists, but in very bad shape	Fair: Can walk but not run	Good: Easy to walk fast and run
2	Public Transport	Unavailable: No metro or bus stop, auto/rickshaw within a 10-minute walk	Remote: Metro or bus stop, auto/rickshaws available between a 5-10 minute walk	Available: Metro or bus stop, auto/rickshaws available between a 2-5 minute walk	Nearby: Metro or bus stop, auto/rickshaws available within a 2-minute walk
3	Lighting	None: No street or other lights	Little: Can see lights, but offers bare visibility	Enough: Lighting is enough for clear visibility	Bright: Whole area brightly lit
4	Openness	Not Open: Many blind corners and no clear sightline	Partly Open: Able to see a little ahead and around	Mostly Open: Able to see in most directions	Completely Open: Can see clearly in all directions
5	Visibility	Not Visible: No windows or entrances (to residences/shops), or street vendors overlook the point	Less visible: Less than 5 windows or entrances or street vendors overlook the point	Fairly Visible: 6-10 windows or entrances or street vendors overlook the point	Highly Visible: More than 10 windows or entrances or street vendors overlook the point
6	People	None: No one in sight	Few People: Less than 10 people in sight	Same Crowd: More than 10 people visible	Crowded: Many people within touching distance
7	Security	None: No Security guards or police nearby	Possible: Nearby area has some private security	Some: Private Security within hailing distance or police Patrols	Secure: Police/reliable security within hailing distance
8	Gender Usage	Not Diverse: No one in sight, or only men	Mixed: Mostly men, very few women or children	Fairly diverse: Some women and children	Diverse: Balance of all genders or more women and children
9	Feeling	Frightening: Will never venture here without sufficient escort	Uncomfortable: Will avoid whenever possible	Acceptable: Will take other available and better routes when possible	Comfortable: Feel safe here even after dark

Source: SafetiPin

Interviews

Informal interviews were conducted with domestic workers commuting to or from work, general commuters along the route, shopkeepers, street vendors, security guards at ATMs, factories or residential complexes and police officials posted in the booths or stations in some areas. These interviews provided qualitative insights into the perceived and experienced safety issues faced by domestic workers, along with safety perceptions of other people present in the area. Interviews were being conducted and notes were taken by two members in each team.

Debriefing

A debriefing session was conducted following each audit walk and key issues identified during the walk in each location were noted by the team.

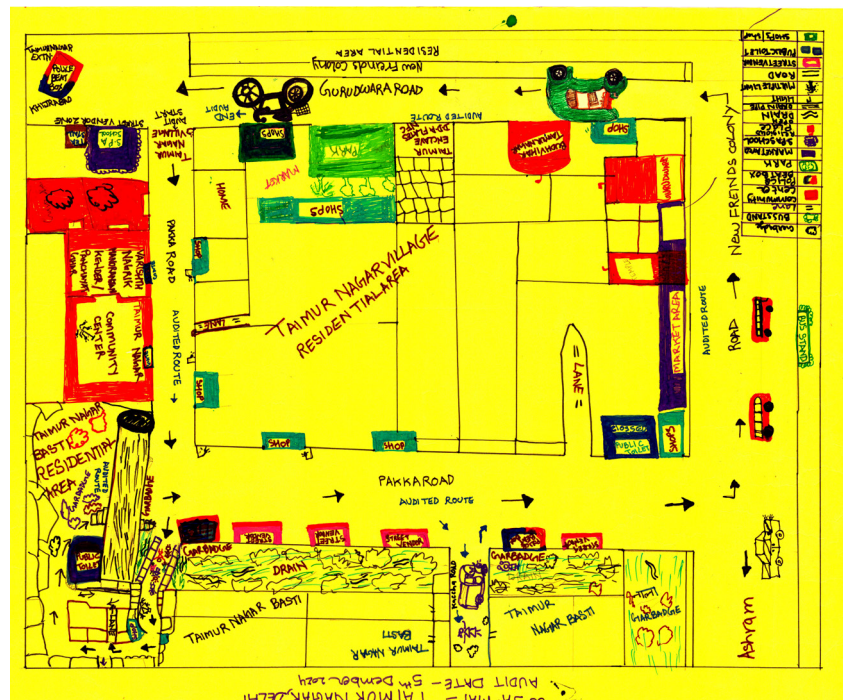
Analysis of Findings

Following the audits, location and time wise safety scores for each safety parameter and key issues identified during the walks were then analysed using a mixed method approach through qualitative analysis of observations and interviews and a quantitative analysis of safety ratings.

Overview of the Audit Routes

Taimoor Nagar, New Friends Colony, South Delhi

Taimoor Nagar is a densely populated locality in New Friends Colony, South Delhi, characterized by a mix of residential and commercial establishments, with a significant presence of informal settlements and small businesses. The route for the safety audit walk in Taimoor Nagar started from the community center, continuing along the open canal to the Gurudwara, and then back to the community center. Indira Camp, located within Taimoor Nagar, is a slum community primarily inhabited by Bengali and Bihari migrants, many of whom are rag-pickers. The Indira Camp is separated from Taimoor Nagar Village by a highly polluted open canal. For domestic workers (DWs) to access essential infrastructure and facilities, they often have to cross this canal. The canal is filled with garbage, and there are only two narrow bridges available for passage. These bridges are poorly lit, which poses serious safety risks, especially after dark, with the threat of accidents and injuries.



Audit Route Map: Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

Chakkarpur village in Gurgaon, Haryana, is a historically rich and rapidly urbanizing area with a large population of long-time residents and migrant workers, including many domestic workers

Choona Bhatti Chowk, passing through Mansarovar Garden, GTB Park, and Hedgewar Park, before ending at Ramesh Nagar Gol Chakkar. The route posed several challenges, including the absence of footpaths, heavy traffic, and poor infrastructure. Additionally, there were no clean public toilets along the route, and the community faced limited access to clean drinking water, intensifying the hardships experienced by residents and commuters.

Summary of Findings

- I) **Infrastructure & Services:** This includes observations and rating of safety parameters including condition and safety of roads or streets, street lights or overall lighting, public transport, toilets or bathing spaces, water supply and sanitation systems, parks, etc.
- II) **The area:** This includes openness and visibility at different points along the route, people or crowd along the route, gender diversity in terms of usage of spaces, security in the area and overall feeling of safety.

Challenges in infrastructure and services

- **Street lights** in these areas are **either not adequate or dysfunctional**, with at least 4 to 8 points with no light at all. For example, in Taimoor Nagar, there is only one street light around the entire Indira Camp area, leaving the community spaces, alleys and the open canal area completely dark at night. Similarly, Kirti Nagar area lacks enough lighting owing to large trees and branches covering the lamps. Gurgaon revealed even more threatening lighting conditions where lack of street lights along the routes contributes to frequent incidents of sexual harassment and snatching, forcing domestic workers to either move in groups or leave for home well before it gets dark.

“If there were proper lighting here, I could take up more jobs in the evenings.”

- domestic worker, commuter along Chakkarpur route in Gurgaon

- In terms of **public transport services**, findings reveal gaps in many aspects ranging from frequency, availability, affordability and safety. **Lack of public transportation** along main route forces women workers in Faridabad to take **shorter routes with higher risks** where they have to cross railway tracks, climb walls and walk over garbage dumping areas contributing to major health risks and fear of sexual violence. In Kirti Nagar, commuting on foot often leads to road accidents owing to uncontrolled traffic. In case of Gurgaon, shared autos are available but women prefer to walk, as they are **unable to afford high cost auto rickshaws**. Many women have reported that infrequent buses for certain routes also force them to **leave job opportunities in distant areas** where they can't reach on foot.
- Findings related to **public and community toilets** reveal that community **toilets are not regularly maintained** and they **remain closed during night**. This exposes women in these areas to either avoid going to the toilet in the night or going only in groups, as they fear sexual harassment at these hours. Most of these routes also do not have clean public toilets, especially for women. They often **do not have water or electric supply inside the toilet, or have broken doors, or doors without locks**. In some areas, like in Kirti Nagar, community bathing space is being used as storage. Along the Gurgaon route, public toilets inside the parks are being used for poultry farming.

“It is difficult because there are no toilets for us along the way. The only one in the park stinks even from the outside. What do we do then? At home, the community toilet is closed at night. Going to the railway tracks is the only option for women, if we need to use the toilet at night.”

- domestic worker, resident of Choona Bhatti in Kirti Nagar

Similarly, potable water supply and public sanitation services including drainage and garbage disposal also reveal major gaps. Many areas get dirty and polluted water from govt. supply lines, forcing them to fetch clean water from far away areas or buy expensive bottled water from other sources. Open drains, lack of proper drainage and rampant garbage dumping expose residents of Taimoor Nagar Indira Camp area, Dayal Nagar Basti area in Faridabad and Choona Bhatti Basti area in Kirti Nagar to major health risks and inhumane living conditions.



Infrastructure Barriers Across Four Locations

Challenges in overall safety and security in the area

Overall safety and security in the area have been assessed through the following parameters: openness, visibility, number of people on the roads, gendered usage of spaces, the presence of security personnel and feeling of safety. However, in addition to other safety parameters like lighting, condition of streets, gendered usage of spaces and number of people on the roads, the feeling of safety depends on various other factors like time, familiarity with the area, etc.

- On the level of openness, visibility and people there were disparities between day and night hours in each location, depending on the times for local markets in that area. For example, Taimoor Nagar reveals an increased rate of openness during the evening hours, while Faridabad is more open during daytime. Visibility and people in the area also varies with time of day.
- However, in terms of gendered usage of spaces, presence of women along these routes during the evening hours reflects a striking decline. All locations except Taimoor Nagar showed 5 or less areas with fairly diverse gendered usage, indicating absence of women in public places after dark.
- Presence of security personnel including police and feeling of safety in the area also reflect poor results in safety parameter rating and observations during the walks. In the case of police presence, some routes do get police patrolling and have localised police booths. However, more often than not, these **booths are closed or only open during evening hours**, like in Kirti Nagar. While **patrolling mostly covers the main streets** leaving the interior streets and lanes exposed to security threats. Security guards present at residential buildings in Kirti Nagar and Chakkarpur and guards at the factory gates in Faridabad do contribute as ‘eyes on the street’, but women commuters (including school going girls) were not very assured by their presence.

“I am scared to come back home after dark, we finish our work during the day. After 11 in the night even men don't go out. You will get harassed, beaten, robbed. It is a daily reality these days.”

- domestic worker, resident of Indira Camp in Taimoor Nagar

As far as the feeling of safety is concerned, women participating in the audit walks felt unsafe in most areas both during day and night. While the data shows very few ‘acceptable’ or ‘comfortable’ ratings, we have a large number of points rated as ‘uncomfortable’ or ‘frightening’. **‘Uncomfortable’ areas are specifically identified along pockets blocking clear sightlines, areas without proper lighting, routes along railway track and even along overcrowded market lanes with little lighting.**



Some High Risk Areas Identified During the Walks

Issues identified

Factors posing major threat to women's safety and hindering safe mobility and labour participation for women domestic workers in these areas are as follows:

- **Lack of footpath or walk paths** contributing to road accidents for daily commuters, especially women domestic workers who regularly goes to work on foot risking their health and safety.
- **Lack of public transport** facilities forcing women domestic workers to avoid longer main roads and take shortcuts with higher risks where there are no proper streets or walk ways, making them vulnerable to accidents, health risks and sexual harassment in sparsely populated areas.
- **Lack of clean public and community toilets**, closure of toilets during night and poor maintenance contributing to health risks for WDWs and making them vulnerable to harassment during night emergencies to use toilets.

- **Inadequate and/or dysfunctional street lighting** heightens the risks for women workers and restricts their mobility and labour participation while they are unable to avail more work opportunities offered after sundown.
- **Gaps in the supply of potable drinking water** forces the communities to fetch water from a distance and at specific times. Along with being exposed to health risks, this hinders domestic workers from accepting more work opportunities as fetching water takes up their time owing to the burden of unpaid care work on these women.
- **Poor drainage and garbage disposal systems** contribute to unhygienic living conditions, exposing these workers to severe health risks and significantly affect their quality of life.
- **Poor management and maintenance of roads** contributes to further vulnerabilities. For example, loose high voltage electric wires and water logging in main roads forcing workers to take expensive transport options in Chakkarpur; lack of traffic control and pedestrian crossing along the busy streets of Kirti Nagar leading to frequent road accidents, etc.
- **Security measures reflect major gaps** in almost all the areas covered in the audit. While some areas lack police booths or stations in the vicinity, some do not get regular police patrolling. Absence of guards at Parks or other public infrastructures contributes to further vulnerabilities for women workers living and commuting in the area. Observations and interviews with local residents and police personnel also revealed that police patrolling mostly covers main roads, leaving alleyways and areas inside the slums to grave security risks.

Key action points

In light of these barriers and gap areas identified during the audit walks, following action points are recommended to ensure safety of women domestic workers in Delhi-NCR and facilitate increased work participation among these women:

1. Endorse targeted efforts both at policy and implementation levels towards building **gender inclusive infrastructure** including adequate street lights along lanes and by-lanes leading to the main road, **safe and affordable public transports** in underserved areas, increased number of **public and community toilets**, regular maintenance and cleaning of toilets, tactile paving and designated walking paths, etc.
2. Ensure **regular police patrolling** and **24x7 police presence** at booths on roads (including interior streets and lanes) identified as high-risk areas.
3. **Capacity building and facilitating women's participation in safety assessments** in their own communities and workplaces so that they can negotiate their rights and demands with respective authorities and within their families
4. **Raise awareness among community members including men and boys** regarding women's safety concerns so that they can join women in the negotiations with government and other stakeholders

Annexure I

Detailed Findings and Analysis

Observations during the audit walks, insights from informal interviews with commuters and safety parameter scoring revealed infrastructure and service-related challenges, along with overall security and safety in the area. Detailed findings and analysis of charts are presented below.

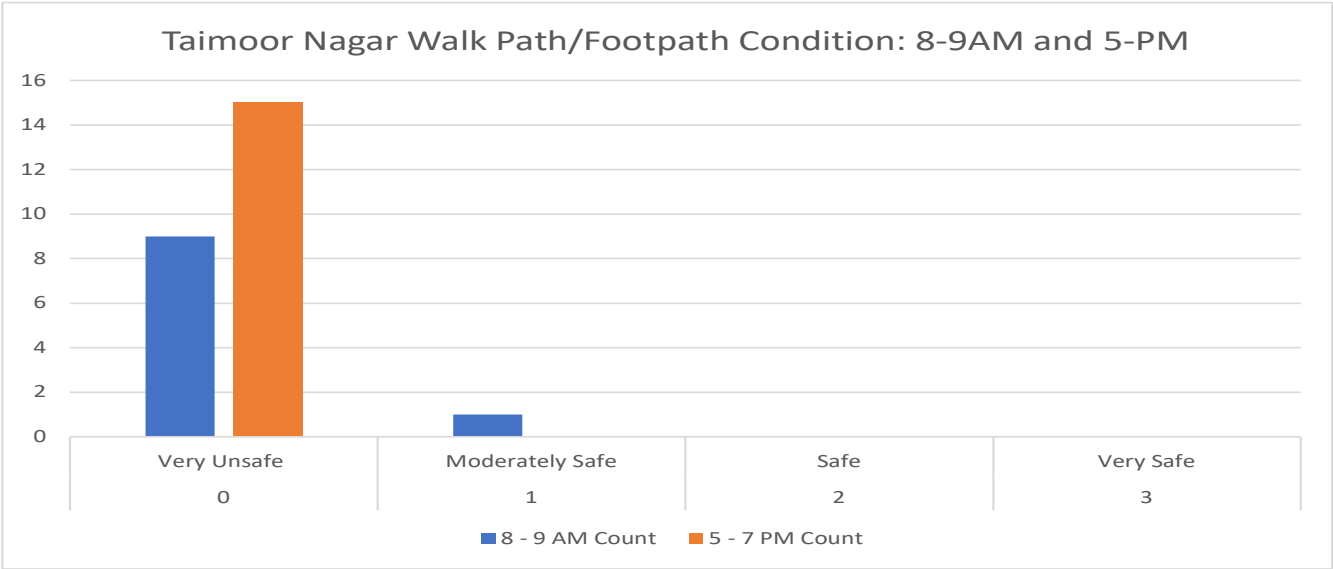
- I) The infrastructure: this includes observations and rating of safety parameters including condition and safety of roads or streets, street lights or overall lighting, public transport, toilets or bathing spaces, water and sanitation systems, parks, etc.
- II) The area: this includes openness and visibility at different points along the route, people or crowd along the route, gender usage of spaces, security in the area and overall feeling of safety.

I. Infrastructure

A. Streets and Walk paths

Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

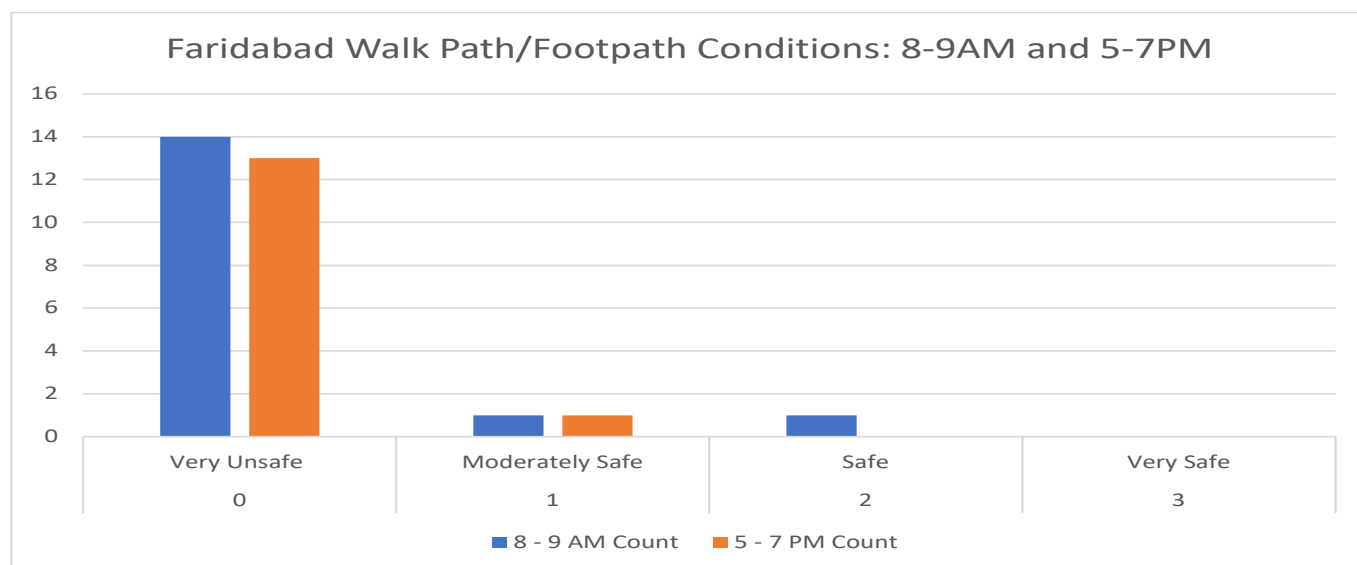
While the roads outside Indira Camp are in good condition, the streets and alleys inside the camp are narrow and damaged. These lanes are cluttered with garbage, making them slippery during monsoon. The bridge over the canal is even narrower, leaving space for just one person to cross at a time and becomes even more hazardous while wet. Analysis of safety parameter rating for walk path/footpath shows 9 areas along the route with 0 rating indicating very unsafe footpath condition and 1 location with moderately safe condition of walk path during 8 to 9 am, while 15 locations with very unsafe footpath condition during 5 to 7 pm.



Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

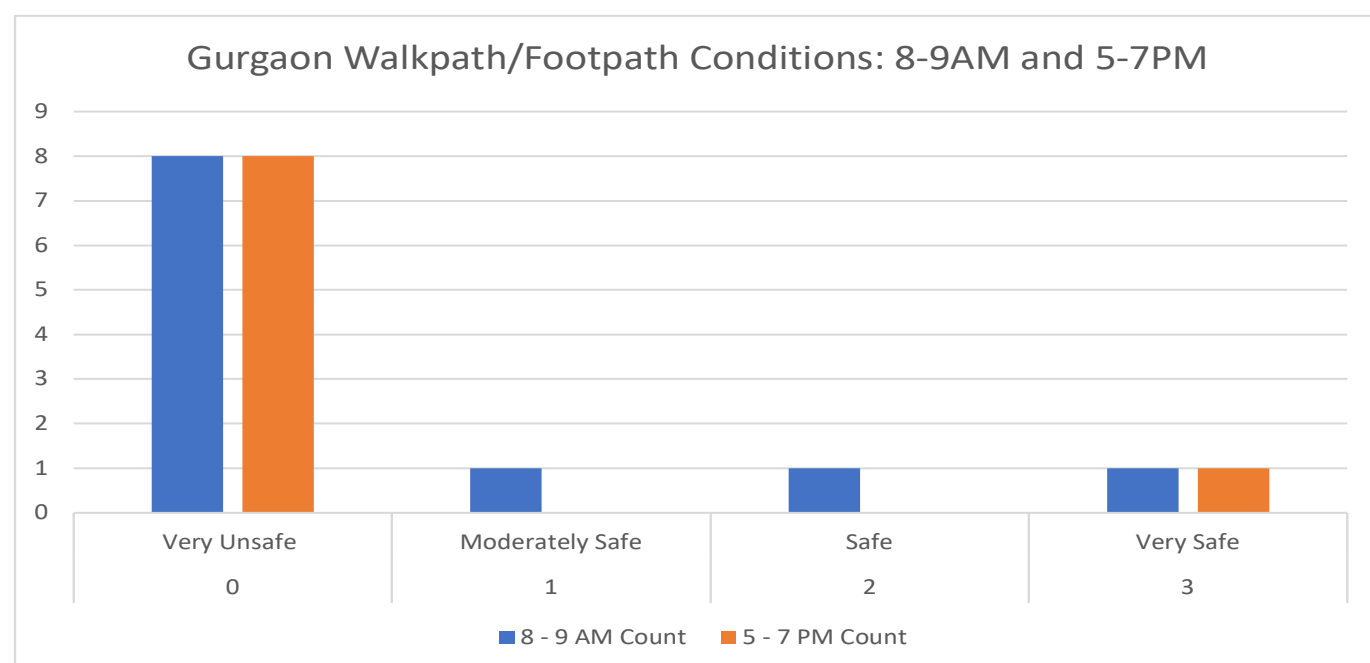
Observations during the walks reveal that there are no over-bridge or pathways to cross the railway tracks that workers use every day. The road conditions near the railway track are poor, making the area prone to accidents. As the designated route to the main road is much longer, workers use a shorter route across railway tracks that make them vulnerable to frequent accidents. This shorter route also involves passing through a garbage dumping yard and climbing a short brick wall. Additionally, inside the community, the roads are narrow and further restrict safe mobility for the women workers. Interviews

with local residents reflect that fear of demolition hinders them from demanding widening of roads. Safety parameter rating also reveals that pedestrian infrastructure in this slum area in Faridabad is critically unsafe. During the morning walk, 14 locations were rated as very unsafe walk paths, while only 1 location had been rated as moderately safe and 1 as safe. This highlights a severe lack of pedestrian-friendly and safe road infrastructure across the area.



Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

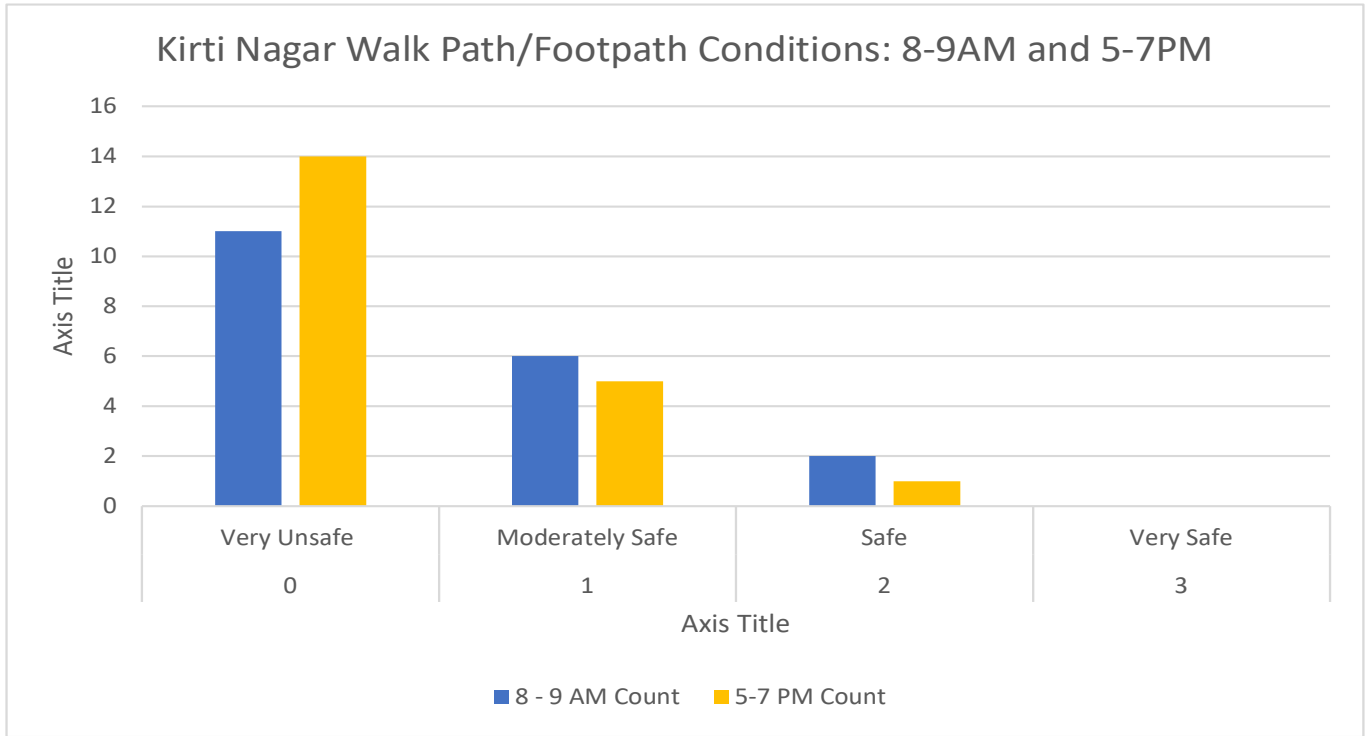
The roads are extremely crowded with people and vehicles, including autos, bikes, and cars, making it unsafe for walking. Road condition is also damaged, with frequent puddles and water-logging. Observations reveal a severe risk of electrocution along the way where high-voltage wires from transforms are hanging loose on one side of the road, with visible electric sparks and no warning signs. Interviewees reported frequent blasts and a worsened situation during monsoon. Also, there is no footpath or designated walking path, forcing pedestrians to navigate through busy traffic and rush of vehicles. Safety rating reflects 8 locations rated very unsafe during both morning and evening walks, while only 1 location is rated moderately safe and 1 location as safe during the morning walk.





Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

The morning and evening walks revealed poor road conditions along the route from Choona Bhatti to Golchakkar Ramesh Nagar. In Choona Bhatti, one side of the street is lined with parked trucks and lorries and the other side with shops, contributing to very narrow and unsafe space for commuters on foot. The main road, overcrowded with vehicles, has no footpaths and limited presence of traffic police at the crossing, making it extremely risky for pedestrians to cross the road and leads to frequent accidents especially for commuters on foot. Daily commuters shared that sometimes it takes almost 20 to 30 minutes to cross this road, contributing to WDWs facing difficulties in getting to work on



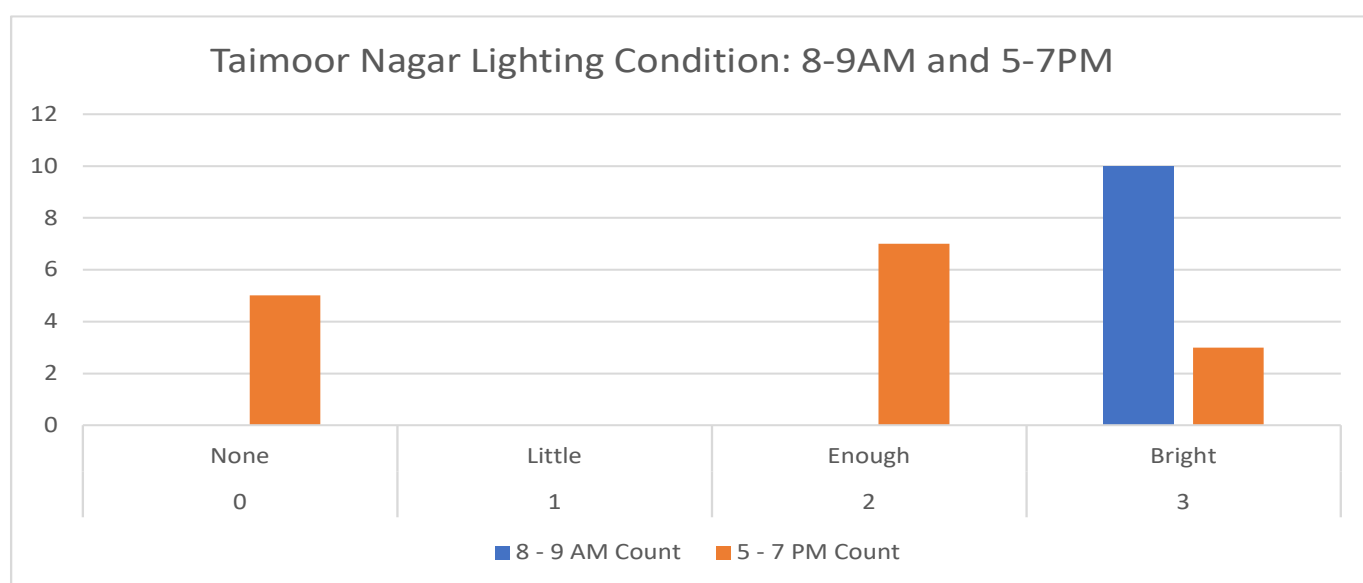
time. Streets are flooded during the monsoon and workers are forced to take e-rickshaws or autos to get to work, contributing to further financial loss for women workers. the flooded streets. Road infrastructure rating in Kirti Nagar demonstrates unsafe conditions with a significant deterioration

after dark. Morning assessments show 11 locations as critically unsafe, while conditions during the evening deteriorate further to 14 such locations. While 6 locations were rated moderately safe and 2 as safe during 8 to 9 am, only 5 locations were marked as moderately safe and just 1 location as safe after dark.

B. Lighting:

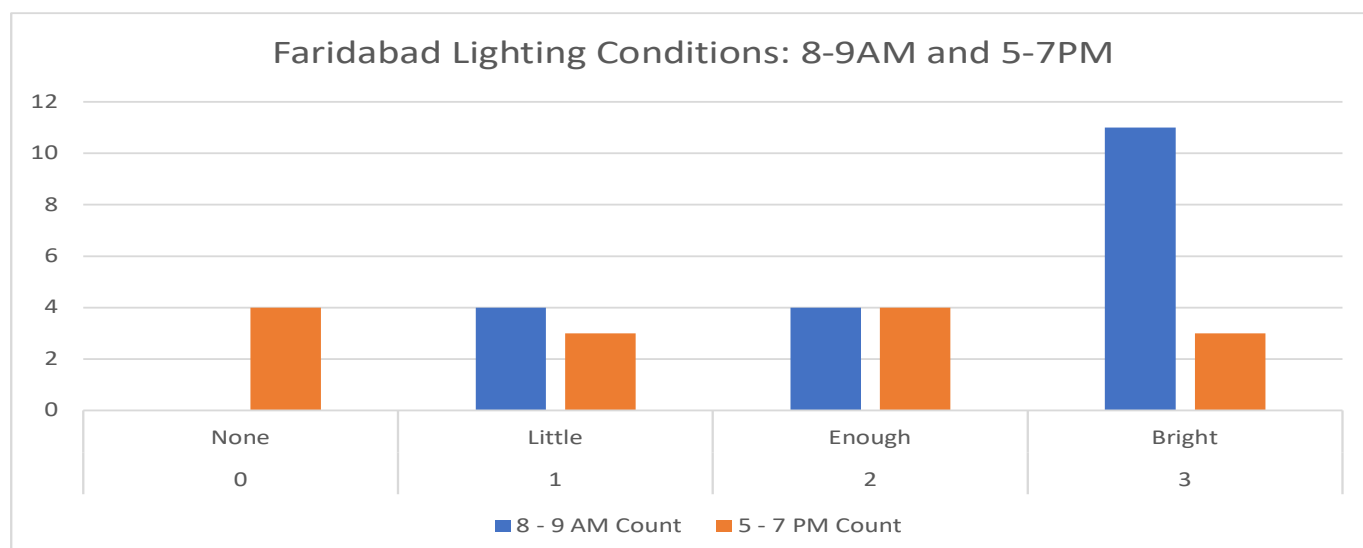
Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

In Taimoor Nagar, while there are a few functioning streetlights along the main route after crossing Indira Camp, most of the street lights are non-functional, particularly along the inside lanes of the camp and around the bridge. Local residents shared that lack of adequate lighting causes frequent accidents, especially around the canal area, and even has cost lives. Such a lack of lighting worsens significantly after dark. Safety rating reveals only 3 well lit areas during evening walks and 10 well lit locations in the morning, while 5 locations have little to no light during the night.



Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

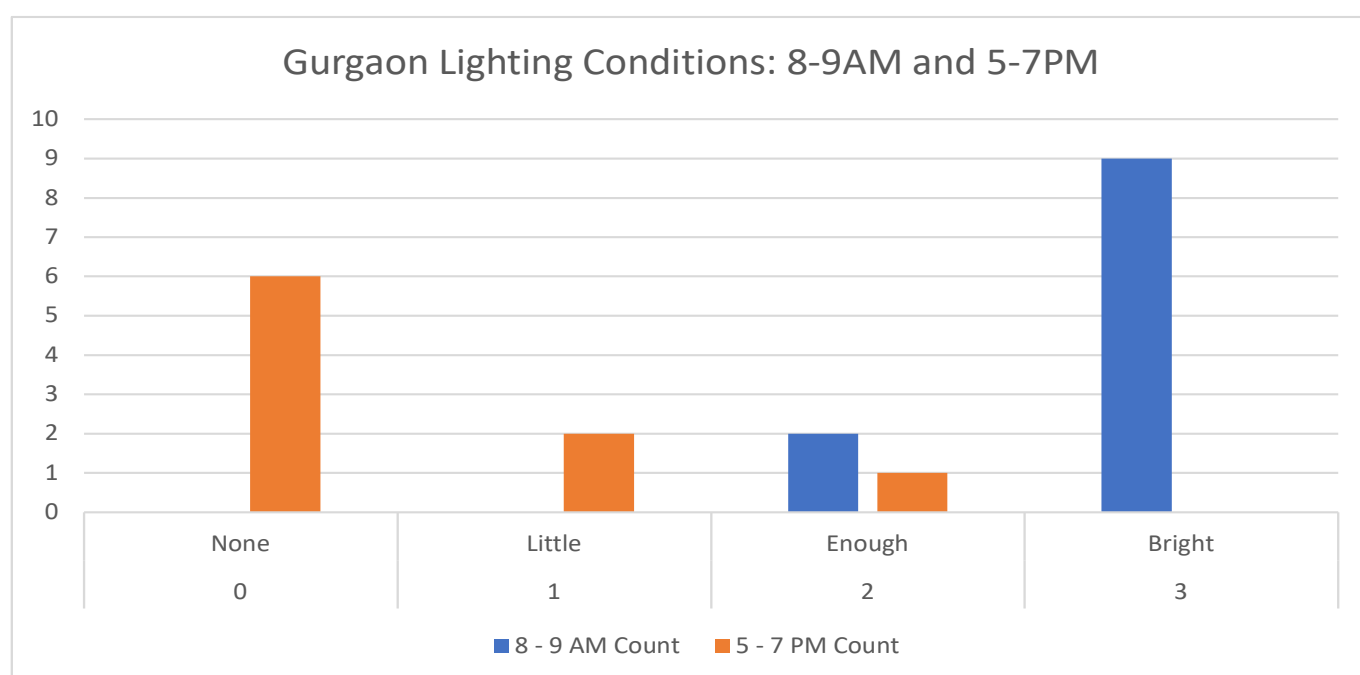
In the case of Dayal Nagar Basti in Faridabad, street lighting reflects similar concerns. Most part of the route lacks functioning street lights and are only poorly lit with the lights from people's houses, courtyards and local shops. As a result, residents often have to rely on phone torches after dark. Safety



ratings reveal striking day-night disparity in terms of lighting, while there are no areas with 0 rating in the morning, by evening, 4 locations were rated 0, owing to having no lighting whatsoever and the number of well lit areas dropped from 11 in the morning to just 3 locations after dark.

Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

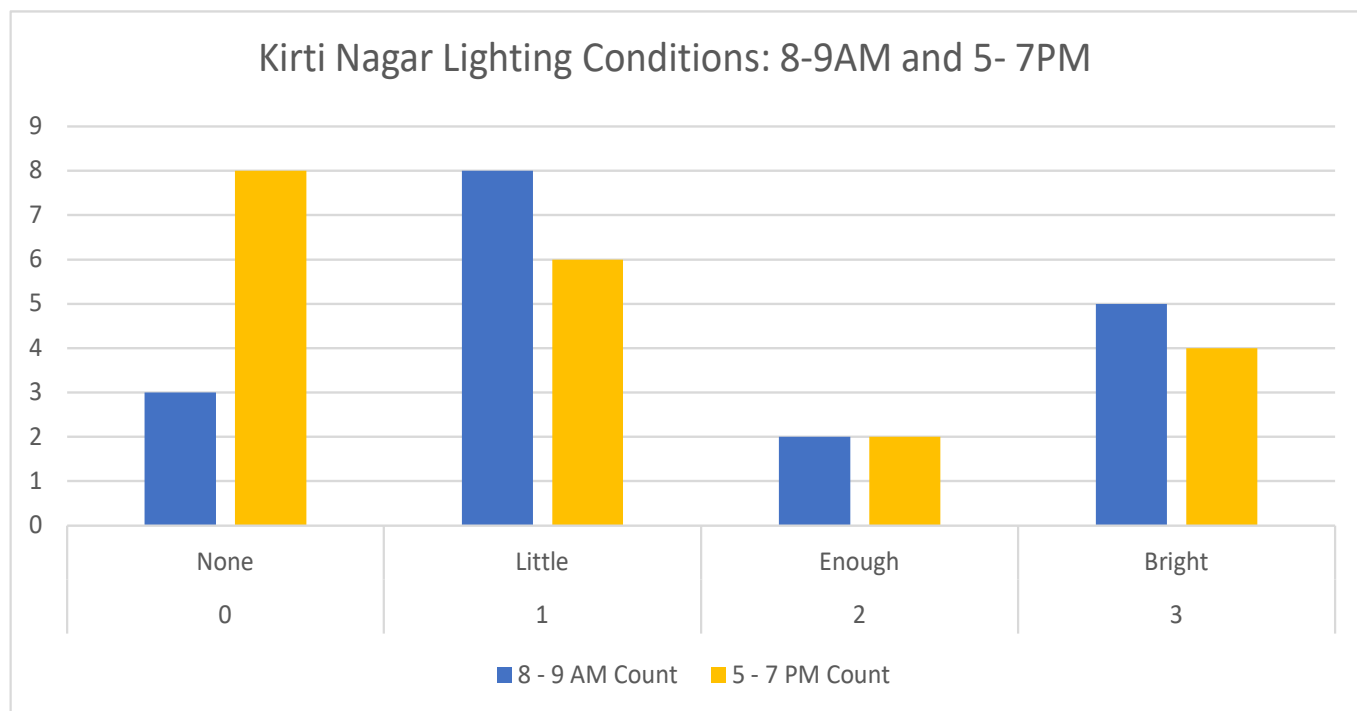
The issue of inadequate street lighting persists in the Chakkarpur area of Gurgaon. At the start of the audit walk route, Radha Krishna Park, frequently used by the locals, becomes dangerously dark at night, contributing to an unsafe environment with reported incidents of harassment. Another park along the route, frequently used by WDWs in the morning, is avoided after dark owing to its poor and inadequate solar lighting leading to frequent incidents of theft, snatching and sexual harassment. WDWs shared in the interviews that they either avoid this route during night or move in groups while coming back from work. Similarly, a parallel route by this park leading to the main road is poorly-lit as well, forcing workers to rely on phone torches to navigate, further enhancing feelings of insecurity.



Lighting conditions along the route show a stark contrast between morning and evening hours, contributing significantly to the area's safety concerns. During the day, the route is relatively well-illuminated, with 9 locations rated as well-lit and 2 as fairly-lit. However, as evening sets in, the situation worsens drastically. The entire route has a lack of sufficient street lighting, with no location rated as well-lit and 6 locations rated 0, owing to no lighting at all.

Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

Similarly, in Kirti Nagar, the entire route had very few functional street lights with major gaps between two poles leading to several dark pockets. Moreover, some functional lights were covered with trees and branches indicating poor infrastructure planning. The street lighting is even worse around the slum area where there were only two functional street lights along a 1 km. stretch. This contributed to very unsafe dark areas along this route after the roadside shops close down around 9 pm. Several workers shared their concerns regarding dark streets and the constant feeling of being scared. Safety ratings reinforce this condition while morning assessments show 3 locations with no light and only 9 locations as bright areas. However, by evening, areas with no lighting increases to 8 and number of bright locations drop to only 4.



Missing Streetlights in Kirti Nagar

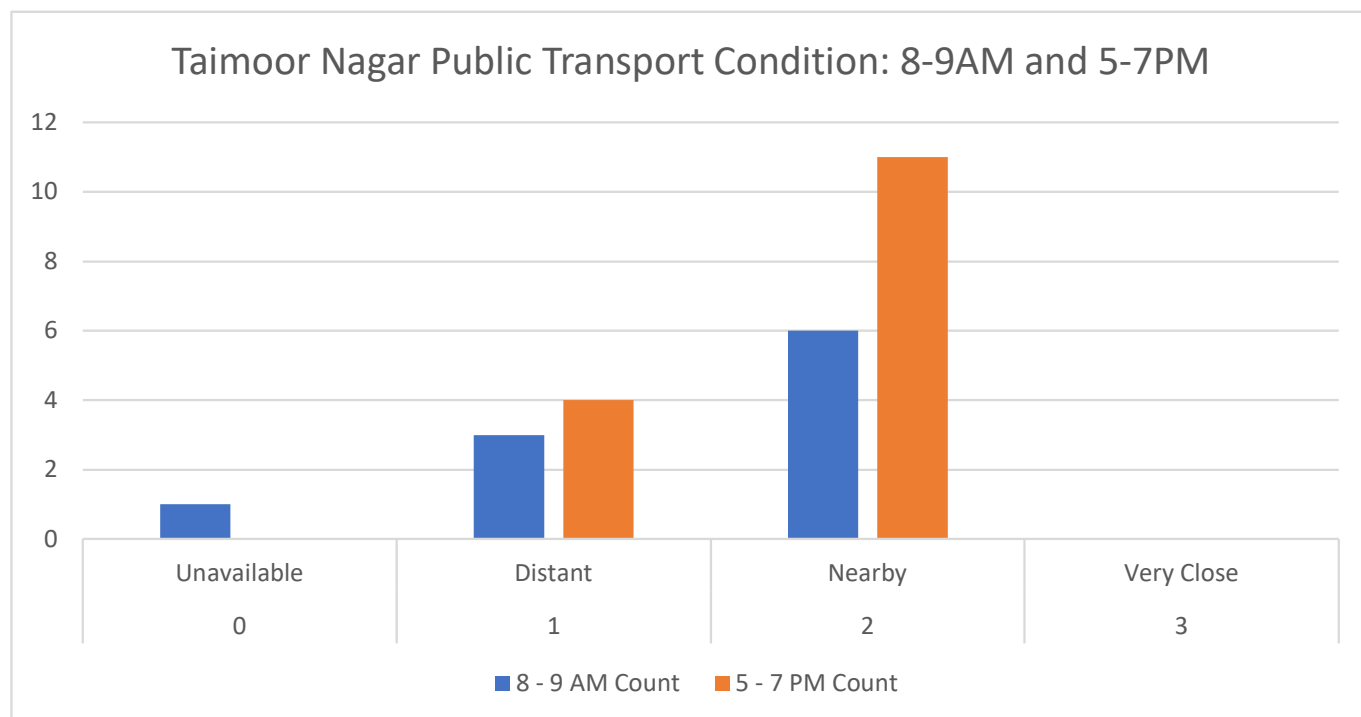
C. Public Transport

Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

There are no transport services close to the camp, hence residents must walk to the main road to catch an auto or e-rickshaw. The nearest bus stop is about a kilometer away. Many domestic workers prefer to walk during the day but rely on shared autos if they're running late or feeling unwell.

In terms of public transport safety ratings in Taimoor Nagar, day-night disparity is reflected. In the morning, 6 locations have available public transport in nearby areas and only 1 location with no

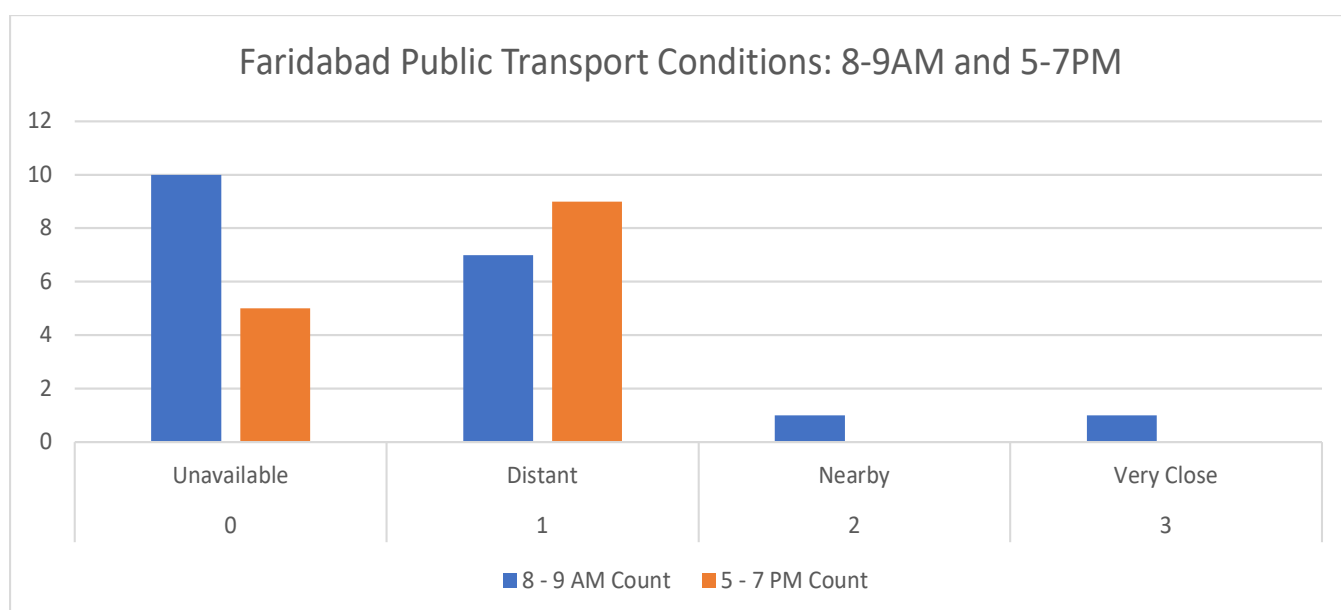
availability. Interestingly, after dark, 11 locations have public transport and there are no areas that do not have transport nearby. This indicates an increased demand of public transport after dark.



Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

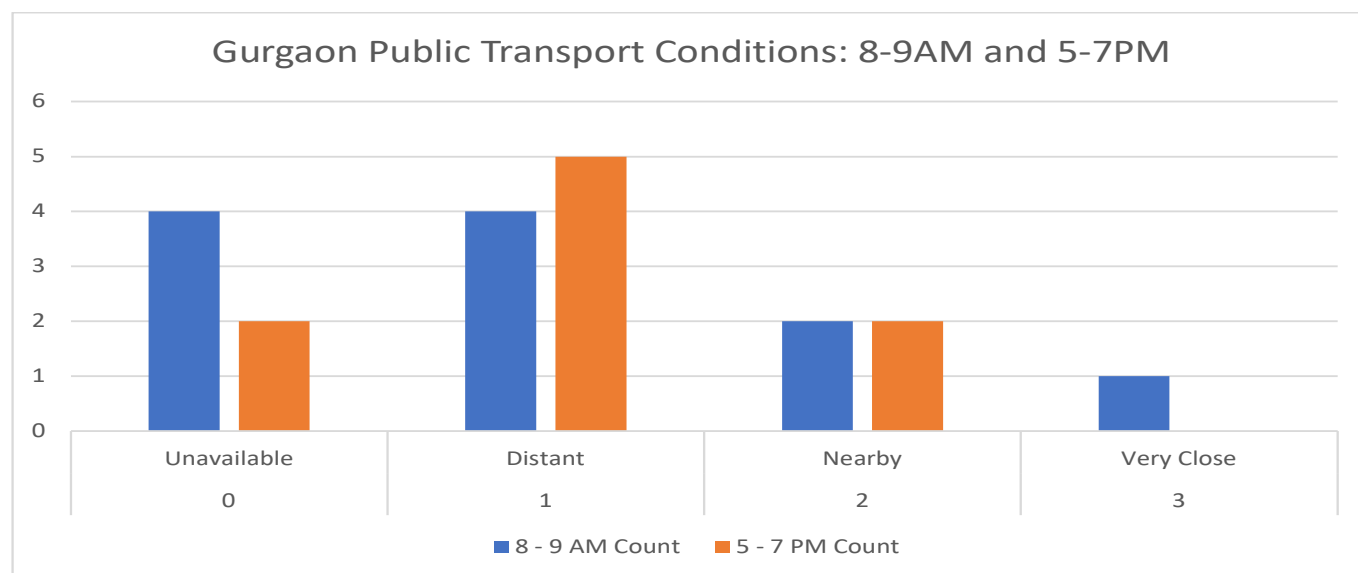
Women domestic workers in this area usually walk to work due to the lack of public transport options in the area. Bus stops are far away, and shared autos are unavailable as well. In emergencies, one can take reserved autos or e-rickshaws, but these are too costly to use for regular commuting.

Public transport safety rating in Faridabad shows a complex trend. The number of locations where public transport is 'unavailable' decreases from 10 in the morning to 5 in the evening, while locations with 'distant public transport' rise from 7 to 9. However, this improvement is overshadowed by the complete disappearance of both 'Nearby' and 'Very Close' availability of public transport in the evening. This suggests there are little to no availability of safe public transport after dark.



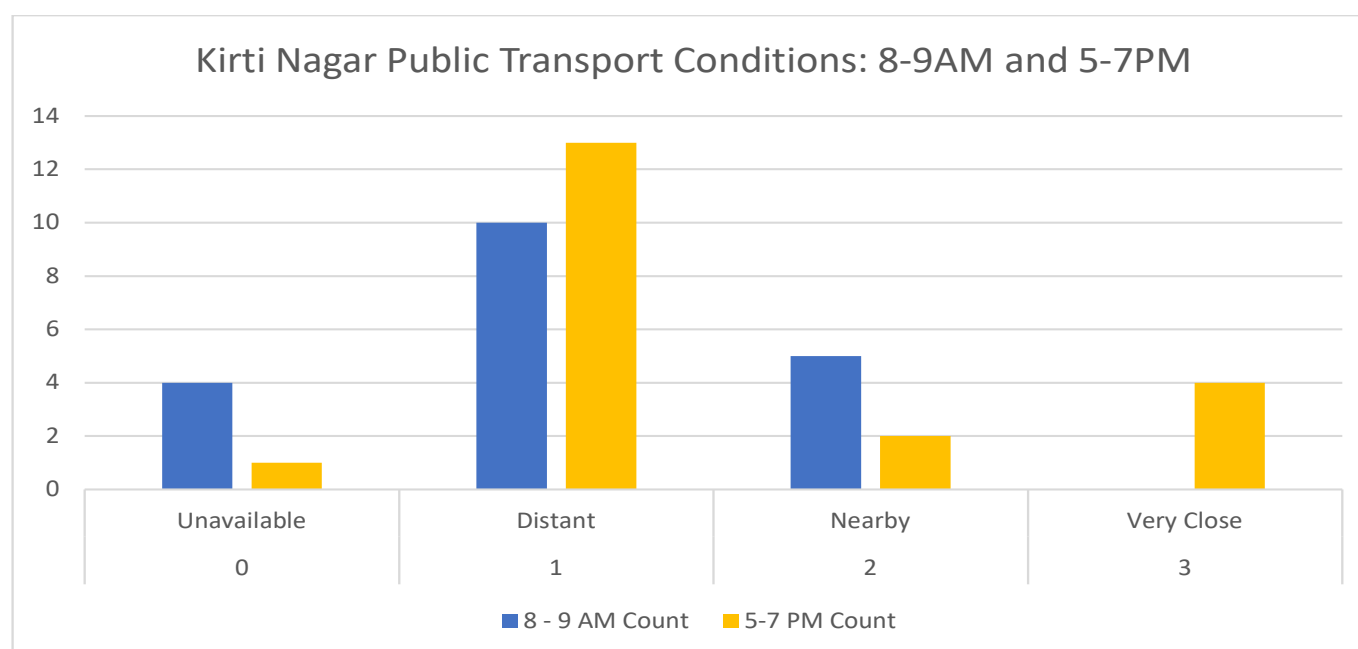
Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

In terms of commuting, workers usually walk, take e-rickshaws or shared autos, navigating through heavy traffic. The Metro station is a 20-minute walk away, and the bus stop is nearby, close to the Metro station. Public transport safety ratings in Gurgaon show that locations with distant public transport availability dominate both during morning and evening, with 4 locations in the morning and 5 in the evening. While the number of locations where public transport is 'Unavailable' decreases from 4 in the morning to 2 in the evening. Notably, locations with very close availability of transport disappear entirely by evening, dropping from 1 to 0, indicating a lack of safe transport options after dark.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

Public transport options along this route are limited. While there are bus stops near Choona Bhatti and GTB Park, the rest of the route has to be covered on foot or by taking an e-rickshaw or auto. Bus frequency is irregular. Domestic workers often walk during the day but rely on e-rickshaws or autos in emergencies or at night. Morning assessments of safety show mixed ratings, 4 locations with 'Unavailable' and 10 with 'Distant' availability of public transport. By evening, 1 location was rated as 'Unavailable' and locations with Distant transport options increase to 13, indicating increase in safety concerns after dark.



D. Water, Toilets and Sanitation Systems

Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

In terms of water, toilets and sanitation systems including garbage disposal and drainage, Taimoor Nagar presents high safety risks. The water supply in the area is provided by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB), the government body responsible for potable water supply in Delhi, twice a day, in the morning and evening. Women spend a significant amount of time collecting and storing water. The community toilet, with 10 washrooms, is cleaned once a day but was found to be extremely unhygienic during the audit. To access these toilets, residents must cross a pipeline, with no proper walk path. There are no public toilets along the entire route, contributing to further unsafe conditions for women commuters. The garbage disposal system is also non-functional and contributes to rampant garbage throwing on the lanes. The polluted canal contributes to further unsanitary conditions in the area.



Polluted Canal With Overflowing Garbage in Taimoor Nagar

Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

Clean drinking water remains a significant issue in the area, as water collected for consumption is often stored in unclean and exposed containers. Residents primarily rely on purchasing RO water for drinking, while other daily water needs are met through private suppliers. Most households lack individual toilets or bathrooms, making the community toilet their only option. However, the nearest community toilet is closed at night, forcing women to go to the railway tracks for emergencies, where they are often subjected to harassment. The area also lacks proper drainage systems with open drains cluttered with garbage and household waste. The public toilet facilities are poorly maintained, lacking essential items such as buckets, dustbins, hand wash stations, or sanitary napkin vending machines. There is only one functional light in the toilet, with the remaining bulb slots either empty or broken. The shower areas inside the toilets have been repurposed for storage. Interestingly, the men's toilets are cleaner and better maintained compared to the women's toilets. Another public toilet in the area is in slightly better condition but charges a fee of 5 rupees per visit. Local residents expressed an urgent need for a monthly arrangement to make the facility more accessible to the community.

Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

The area faces significant challenges related to waste management and hygiene. Two public toilets are poorly maintained and left in a deplorable condition, with broken doors and dysfunctional equipment. The toilet designated for persons with disabilities remains locked, and the caretaker's room has been repurposed as a rented space. There are no toilets available in the park, and the area is rife with open urination and defecation. Garbage is dumped in public spaces, worsening the unsanitary conditions. Furthermore, the toilets inside the community center are dirty and unusable, with the bathroom area being used for poultry farming. The lack of potable water sources forces domestic workers to carry water from their employer's house.



Railway Tracks Used as a Shortcut in Faridabad

Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

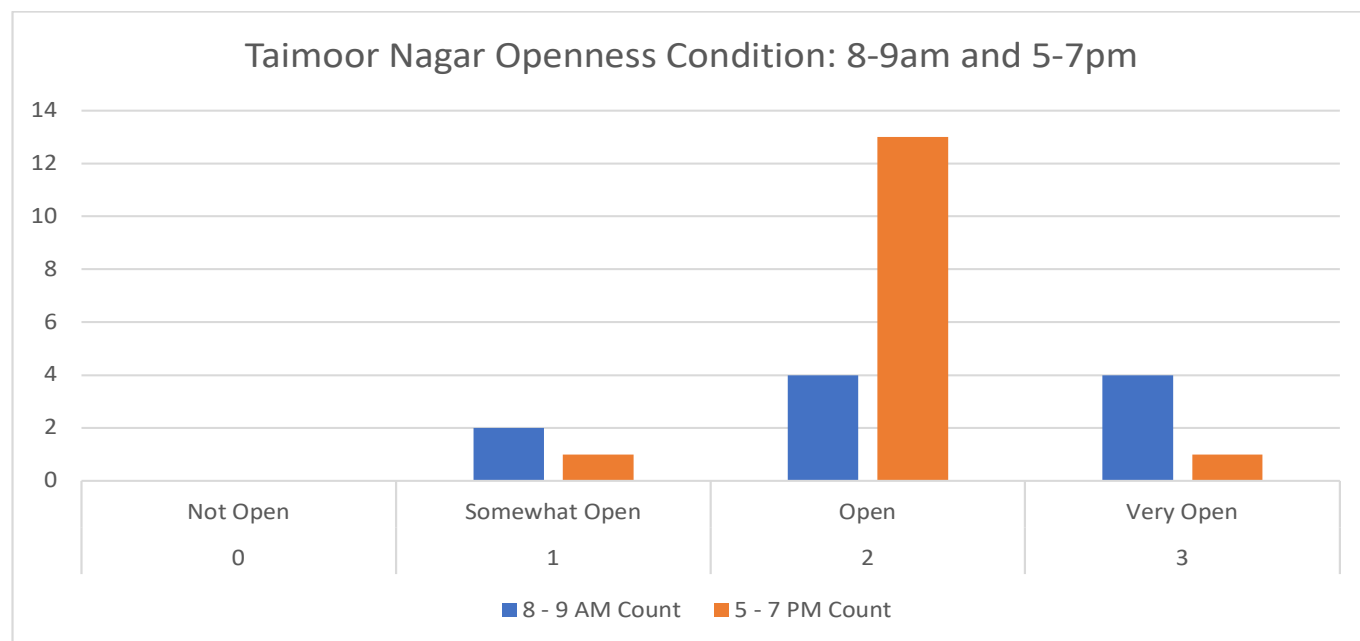
The area struggles with sanitation and hygiene due to open drains, blocked drainage and rampant garbage dumping. In terms of sanitation facilities, there are very few community toilets or washrooms near the slum area. The community toilet, managed by DUSIB, operates only from early morning until night. The only toilet that remains open is located far from the community. At night, women are forced to go to the nearby railway tracks for emergencies, where they are often beaten and chased away by the police. For safety, they tend to go in groups to avoid harassment or attacks. The community toilets are neither cleaned nor maintained regularly, and the women's toilet has no door. The community toilets, including the women's toilet in the market area, are predominantly used by men. Along the route, three public toilets managed by the MCD are present, but these facilities are in poor condition. The toilet in the park, for instance, has broken taps and a non-functioning commode. The cleaner who comes once a day has to carry water from outside to clean the facilities. Other public toilets along the route are for men only, leaving no options for women commuters. There is no supply of potable water in the area while the DJB water lines supply unclean and undrinkable water.

II. The Area

A. Openness:

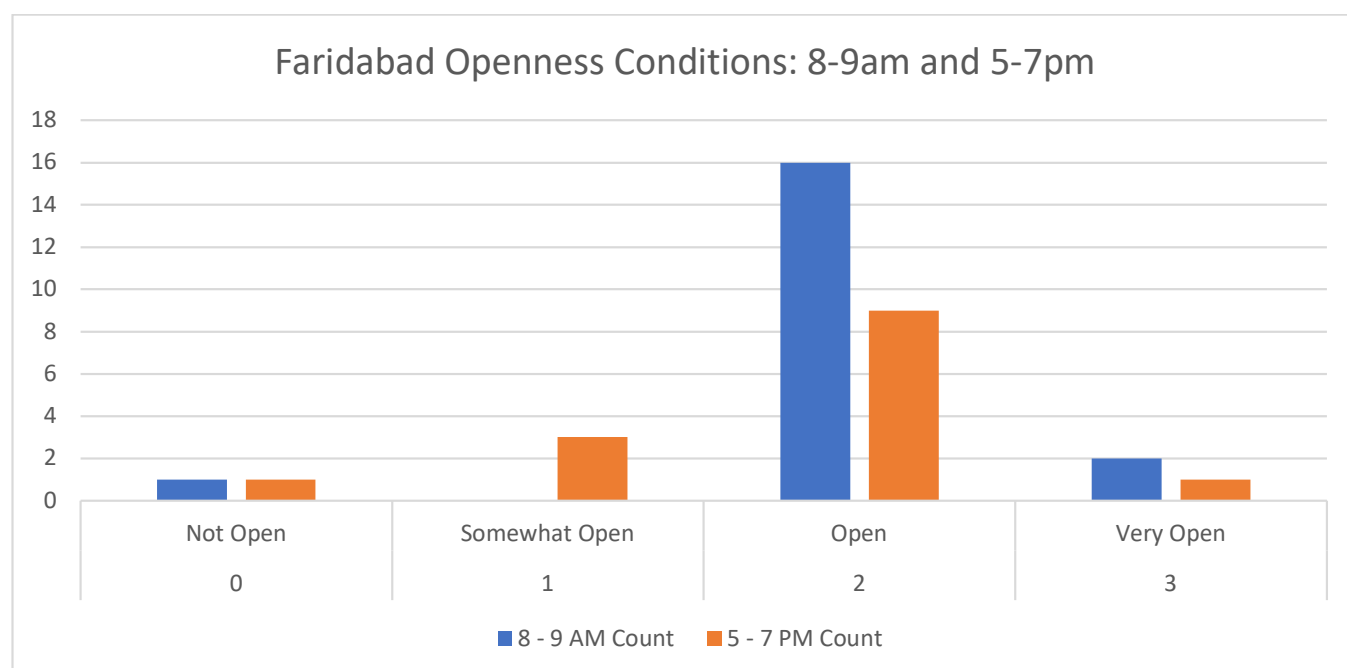
Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

The roads inside Indira Camp are very narrow, limiting the openness, while the rest of the route is quite open. Spatial openness in Taimoor Nagar shows a substantial evening transformation with 'Open' areas increasing dramatically from 4 to 13 locations between morning and evening. Morning conditions show 4 'Very Open' and 2 'Somewhat Open' locations, while evening assessments reflect a consolidation toward moderate openness with 'Very Open' areas decreasing to just 1 location.



Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

The route through Dayal Nagar Basti features narrow lanes, whereas the roads near the factory leading to the Green Field Police Chowki are much more open. Openness conditions in Faridabad show a clear decline from morning to evening. In the morning, visibility is generally good, with 16 out of 19 locations rated as 'Open' and 2 as 'Very Open,' indicating minimal obstructions. However,



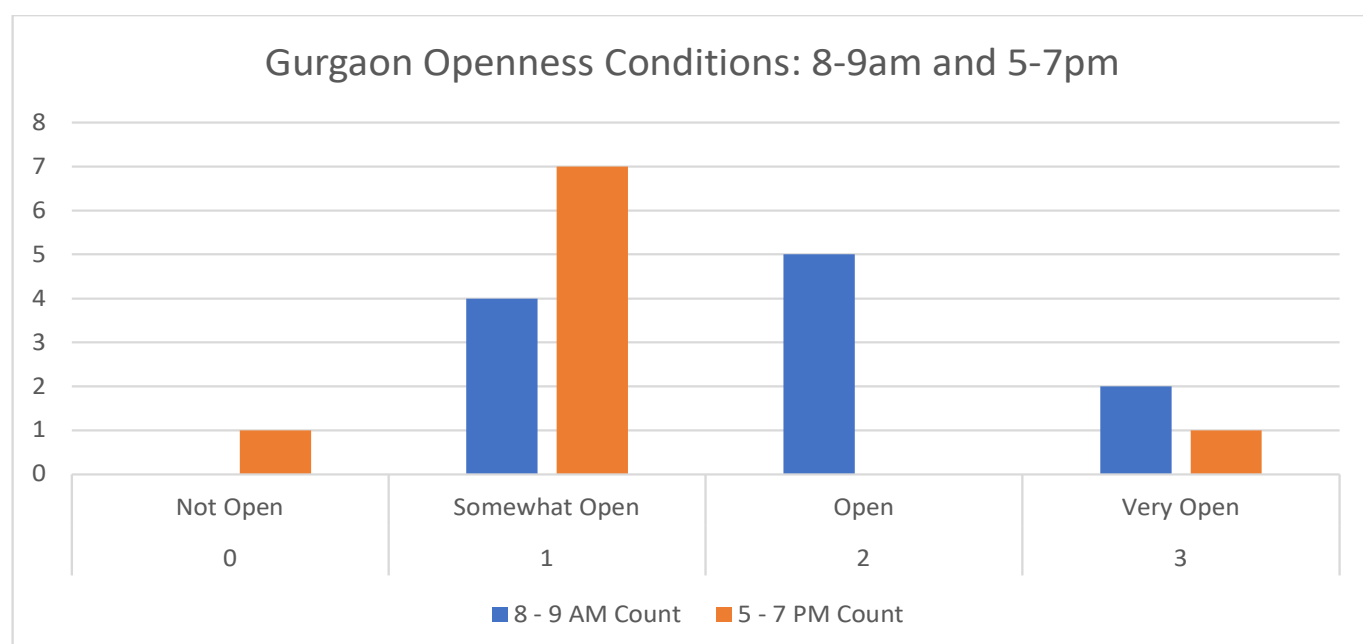
by evening, this changes significantly. Only 9 locations remain 'Open,' and the 'Somewhat Open' category increases from 0 to 3. This shift is largely due to the presence of daily markets and the Diwali Market in the Basti during the time of the audit, which caused more congestion and reduced visibility.



Narrow Lanes Restricting Openness in Faridabad

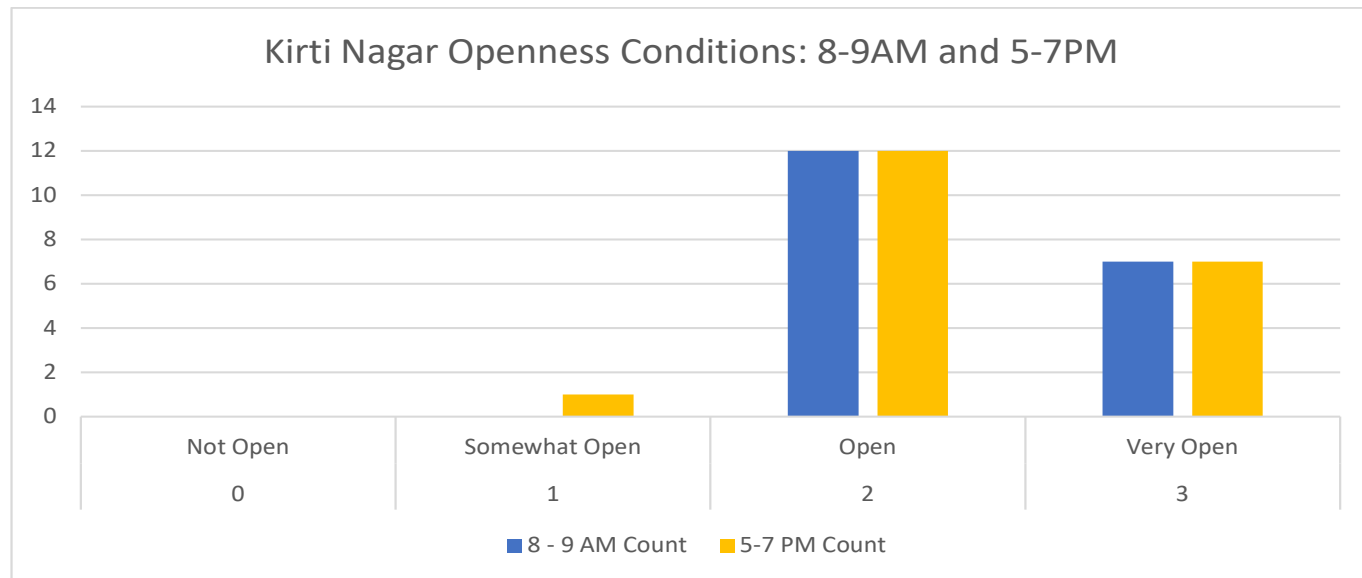
Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

In Gurgaon, openness is limited throughout the day due to heavy traffic. Many of the roads are narrow, and in some areas, vehicles are parked on one side, further restricting the flow of traffic. The spatial conditions in Gurgaon also show a clear decline from morning to evening. In the morning, there are 5 locations rated as 'Open' and 2 as 'Very Open,' indicating relatively clear roads with minimal obstructions. However, by evening, the 'Open' ratings completely disappear, and more locations shift to 'Somewhat Open,' increasing from 4 to 7. This shift reflects the growing congestion as the day progresses. Additionally, in the evening, a vegetable and fruit market sets up on both sides of the road parallel to the Eco-restoration Park, further reducing openness and contributing to the overall congestion.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

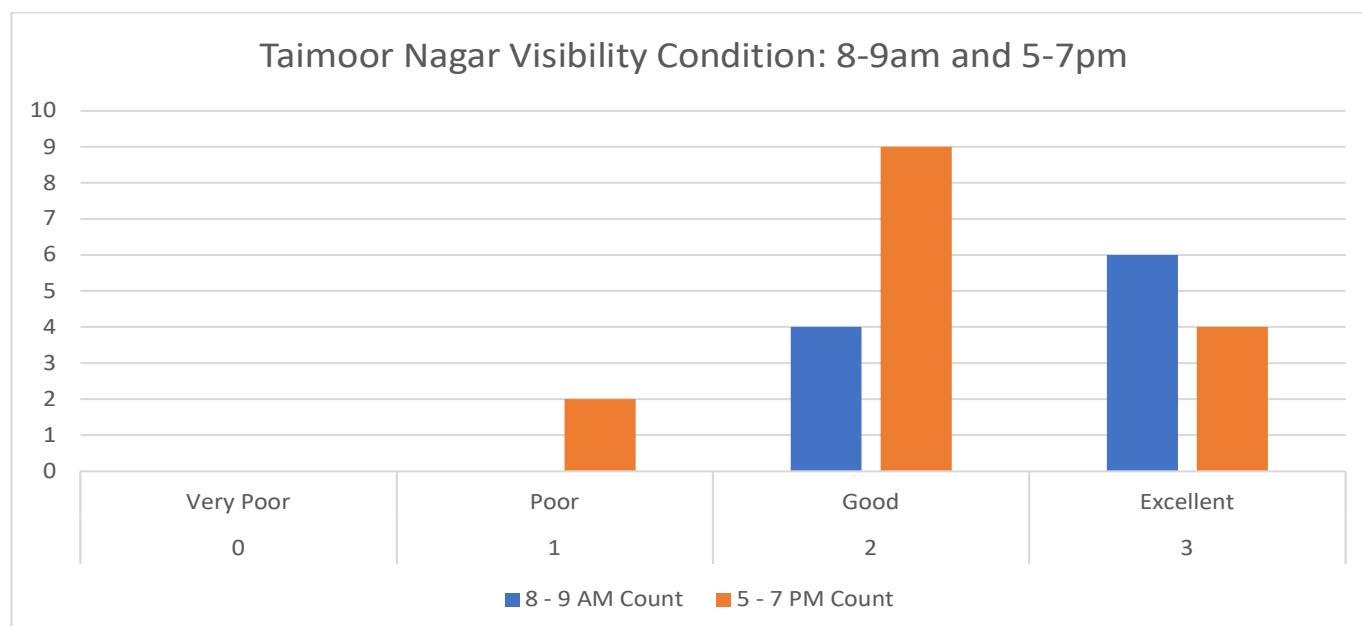
The Choona Bhatti road, being an open market area, has restricted openness. During the daytime, the market is bustling with lorries loading and unloading furniture, further restricting space. In contrast, the other roads along the route remain mostly open. Interestingly, spatial openness in Kirti Nagar shows surprising consistency between the morning and evening rush hours, with both periods featuring 7 'Very Open' locations and 12 'Open' locations, indicating minimal change in congestion throughout the day.



B. Visibility

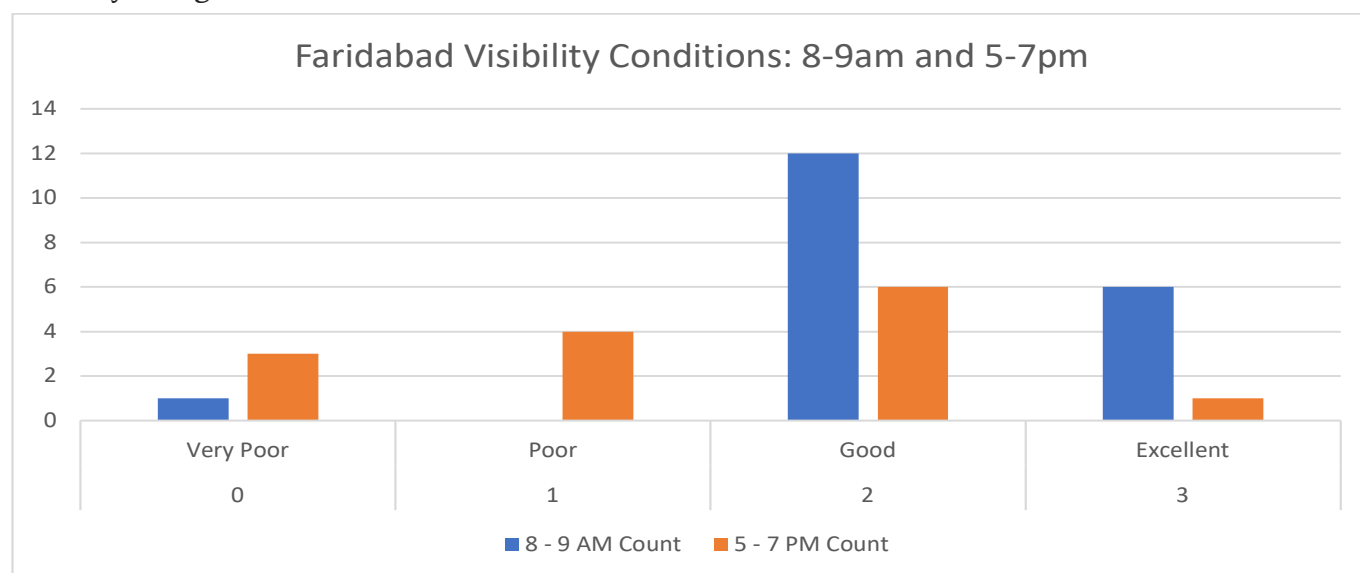
Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

In Taimoor Nagar, visibility conditions exhibit a surprising improvement from morning to evening. In the morning, visibility is moderate, with 4 locations rated as 'Good' and 1 as 'Excellent.' However, by the evening, visibility improves significantly, with the number of 'Good' locations rising to 9 and 'Excellent' locations increasing to 3. Despite this improvement, the emergence of 2 locations with 'Poor' visibility in the evening highlights a disparity in visibility after dark. The complete lack of lighting on the bridge over the canal at Indira Camp creates a dark pocket that significantly hampers visibility, making it difficult and unsafe for pedestrians to cross.



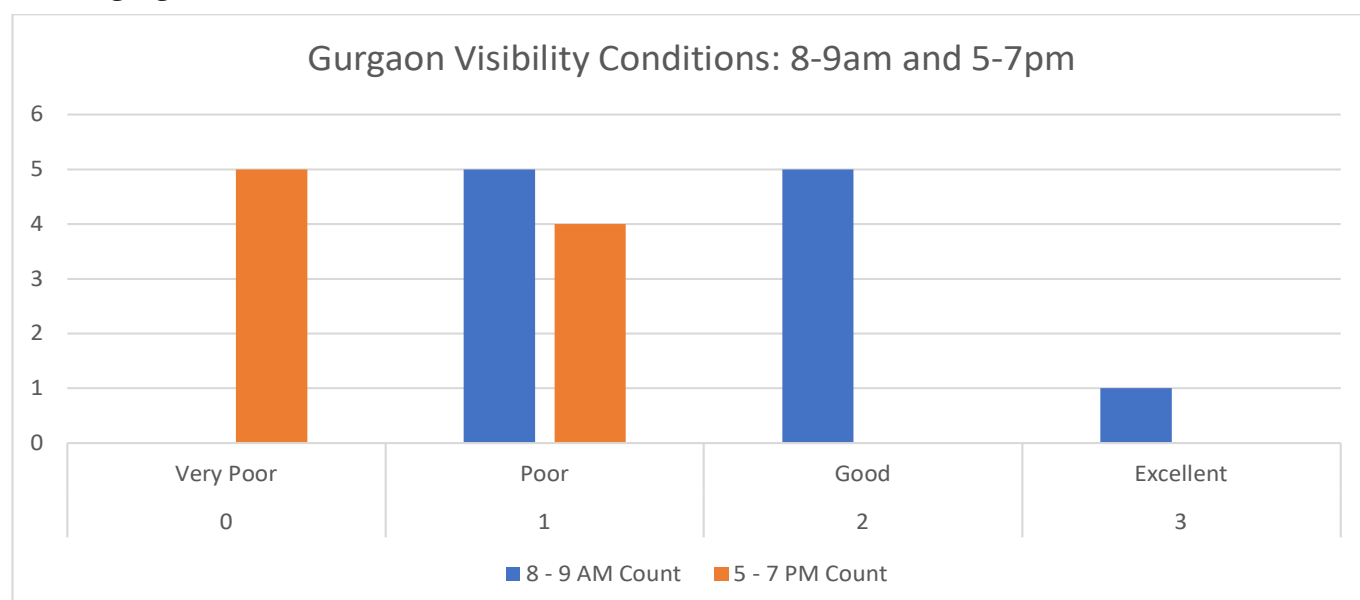
Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

Visibility conditions in the Dayal Nagar Basti route show a notable decline from morning to evening. The number of 'Excellent' visibility locations decreases sharply from 6 in the morning to just 1 in the evening, while 'Good' visibility drops from 12 to 6. In contrast, areas with lower visibility ratings increase significantly, with 'Poor' visibility rising from 0 to 4 locations, and 'Very Poor' visibility escalating from 1 to 3 locations. This shift highlights a significant compromise in street-level visibility after dark. Moreover, several areas, including the road near factories, the railway crossing, and the route to Green Field Police Chowki, lack streetlights, resulting in dark pockets that further restrict visibility at night.



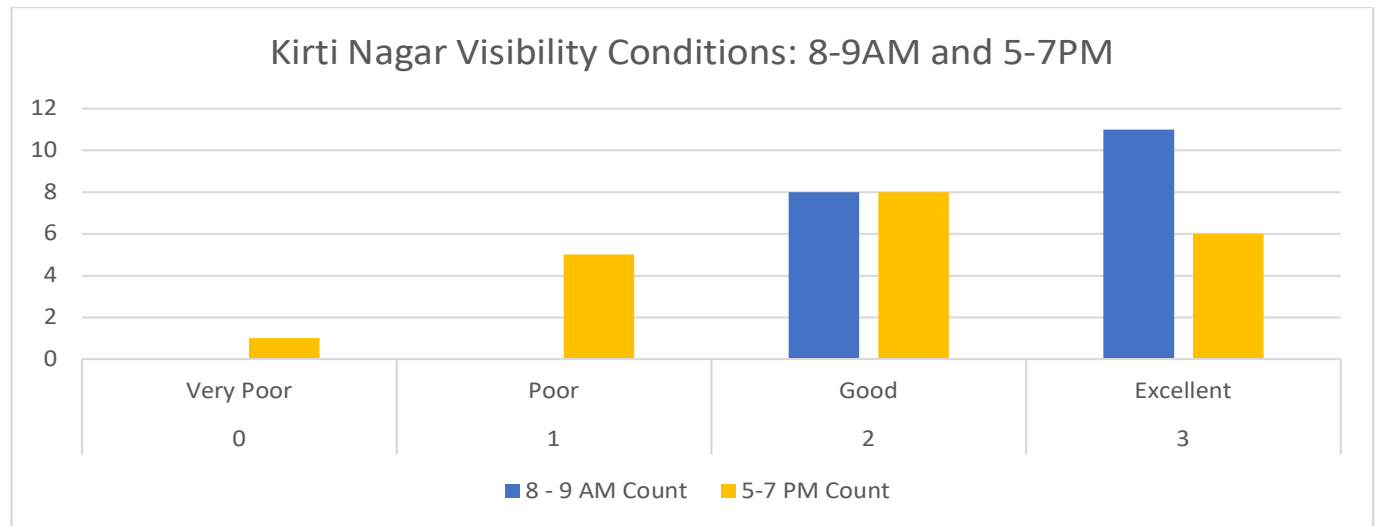
Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

Visibility conditions in Gurgaon presented challenges throughout the day. While 'Very Poor' visibility shows a slight improvement from morning to evening, dropping from 5 to 4 locations, 'Good' visibility declines sharply, falling from 5 locations to none. Although 'Poor' visibility ratings see a minor improvement (from 5 to 4 locations), the complete disappearance of locations with 'Excellent' visibility by evening (from 1 to 0) signals a notable deterioration in clear sightlines. Despite the presence of sunlight during the daytime, there are still pockets of the route that remain unusually deserted, further blocking sightlines.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

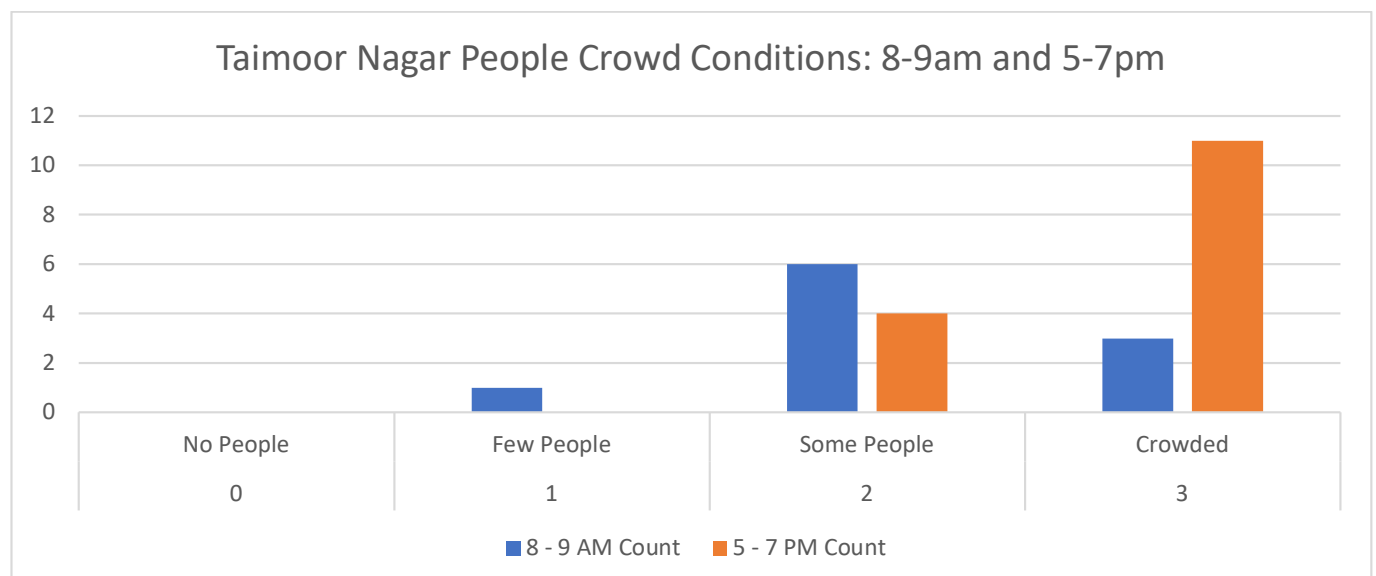
On Choona Bhatti Road, vehicles are parked on one side and intermittently along the rest of the route, obstructing pedestrian visibility. In the morning, visibility in the Kirti Nagar area is optimal, with 11 locations rated as 'Excellent' between 8 and 9 AM. However, by evening, the number of 'Excellent' locations decreases to 6, and poor visibility becomes more prominent, with 5 locations rated as 'Poor.' The situation deteriorates further during the night audit, as a higher number of vehicles, particularly those loading and unloading furniture, further limit visibility and make it increasingly difficult and unsafe for pedestrians to navigate.



C. People

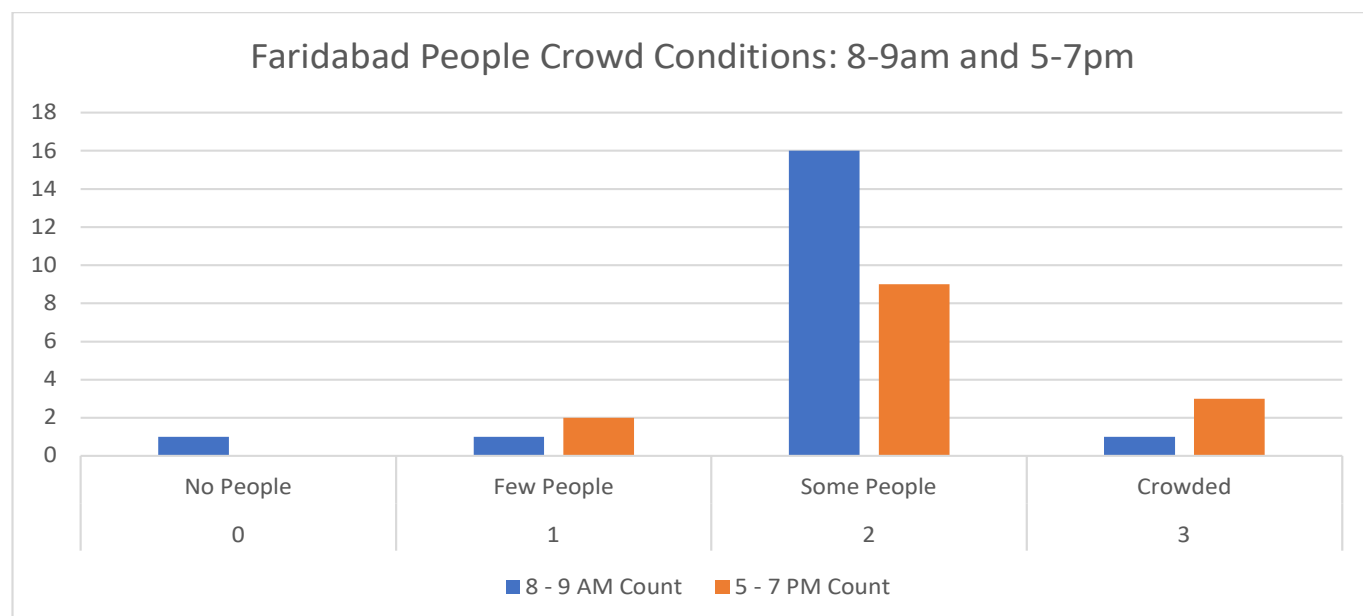
Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

Pedestrian activity in Taimoor Nagar experiences a marked increase during the evening hours. In the morning, pedestrian presence is moderate, with 6 locations showing 'Some People.' However, by evening, the number of 'Crowded' locations rises substantially to 11, reflecting a significant surge in activity. Notably, there are no locations rated as 'No People' during either time period, indicating a continuous public presence throughout the area. The increase in pedestrian density during the evening is primarily attributed to the local vegetable and fruit market in Taimoor Nagar village, which, along with the main road, becomes densely populated, making the area particularly crowded during the evening hours.



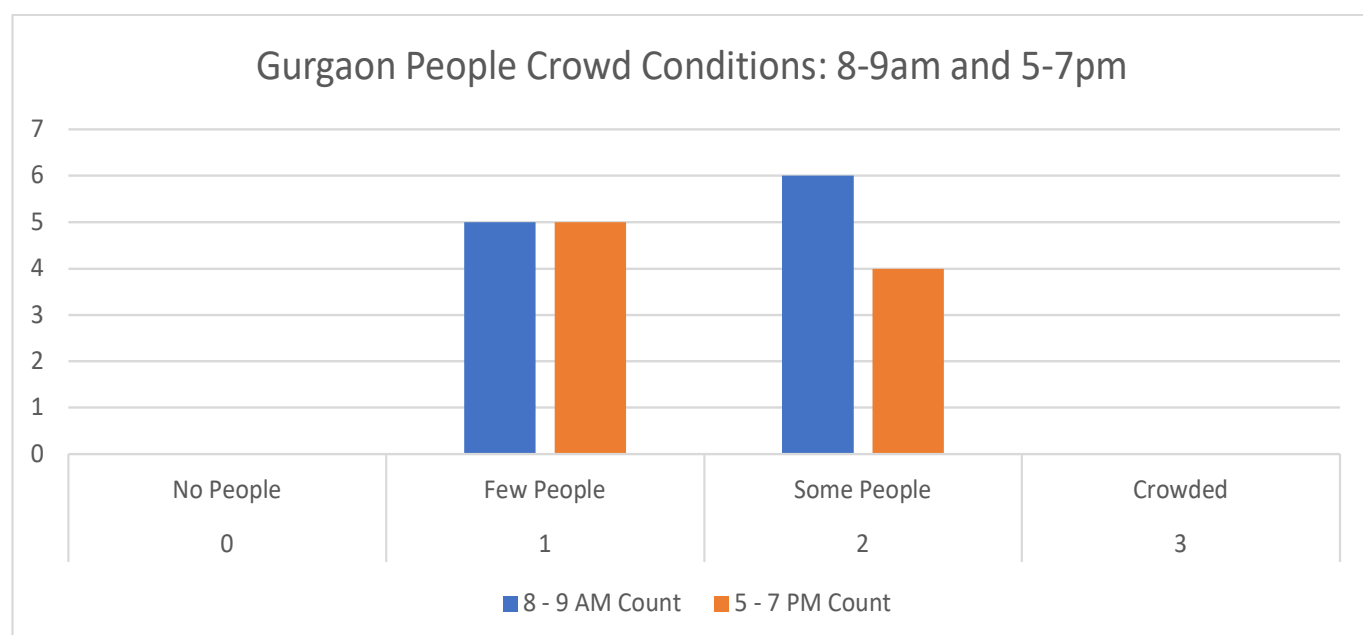
Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

In Faridabad, the morning hours witness a significantly higher pedestrian presence, with 16 locations categorized as having ‘Some People,’ compared to just 9 in the evening. However, the evening period presents a more polarized distribution of foot traffic. Notably, the number of ‘Crowded’ locations increases from 1 in the morning to 3 in the evening, while there is also a rise in areas classified as ‘Few People’ (from 1 to 2), suggesting a more uneven utilization of public spaces after working hours—the area as a whole experiences lower foot traffic during the nighttime. While certain areas, such as the local and Diwali markets, remain busy in the evening, other parts of the city, particularly roads near factories, the crossing line, and the route to Greenfield Police Chowki, remain largely deserted. This presents a somewhat decreased public space usage after dark.



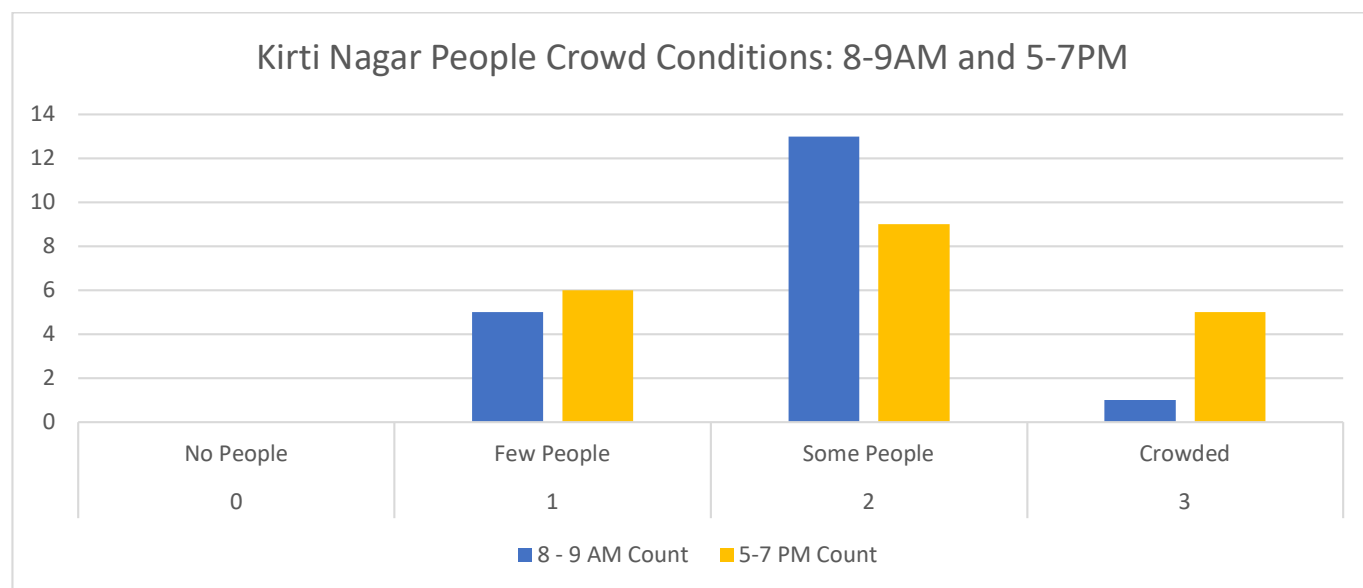
Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

Pedestrian presence in Gurgaon shows moderate consistency between morning and evening periods, with ‘Few People’ locations remaining stable at 5 and ‘Some People’ locations slightly decreasing from 6 to 4. The absence of ‘Crowded’ locations across both periods suggests that extreme congestion is not a significant concern throughout the day.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

Pedestrian activity in Kirti Nagar follows distinct temporal patterns, with immensely crowded areas observed during the morning hours. Between 8 and 9 AM, 13 locations are classified as having ‘Some



People.’ In the evening, pedestrian presence is moderate, with 6 locations experiencing similar activity. However, there is a noticeable increase in the number of ‘Crowded’ locations, rising from 1 in the morning to 5 in the evening. This increase could likely be attributed to the loading and unloading activities in the market during the evening hours.



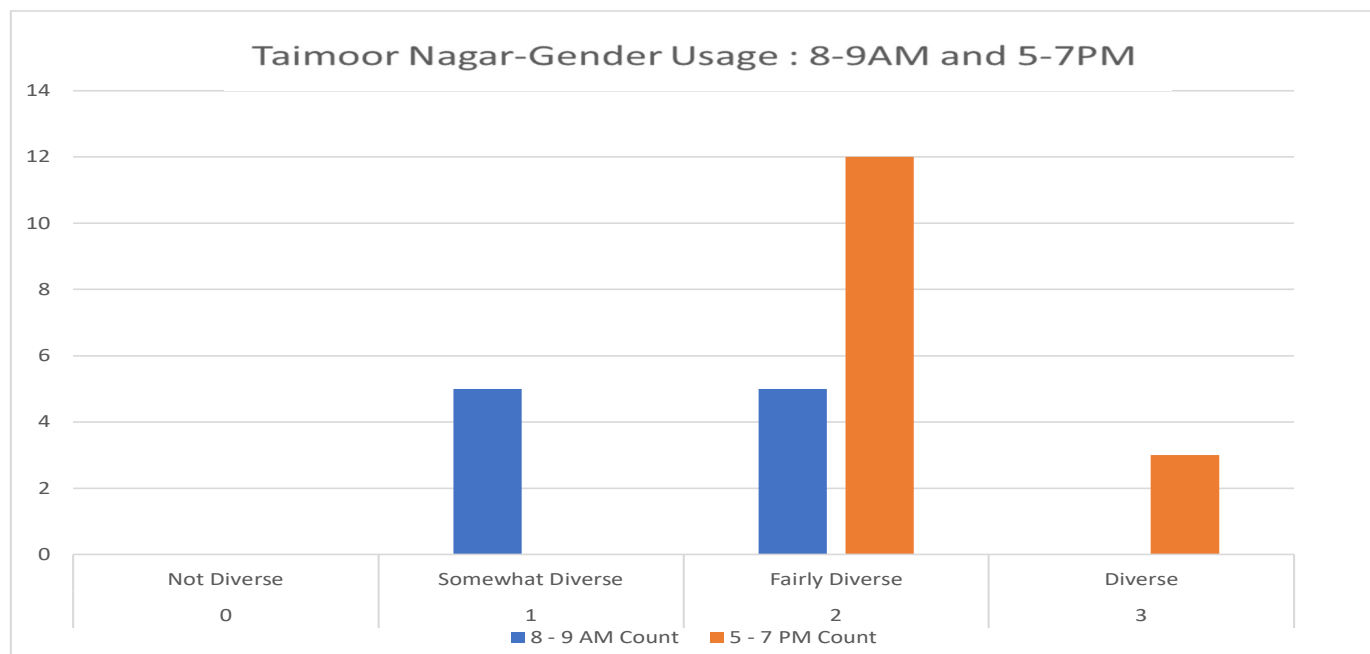
Interviews With Commuters in Taimoor Nagar

D. Gender Usage

Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

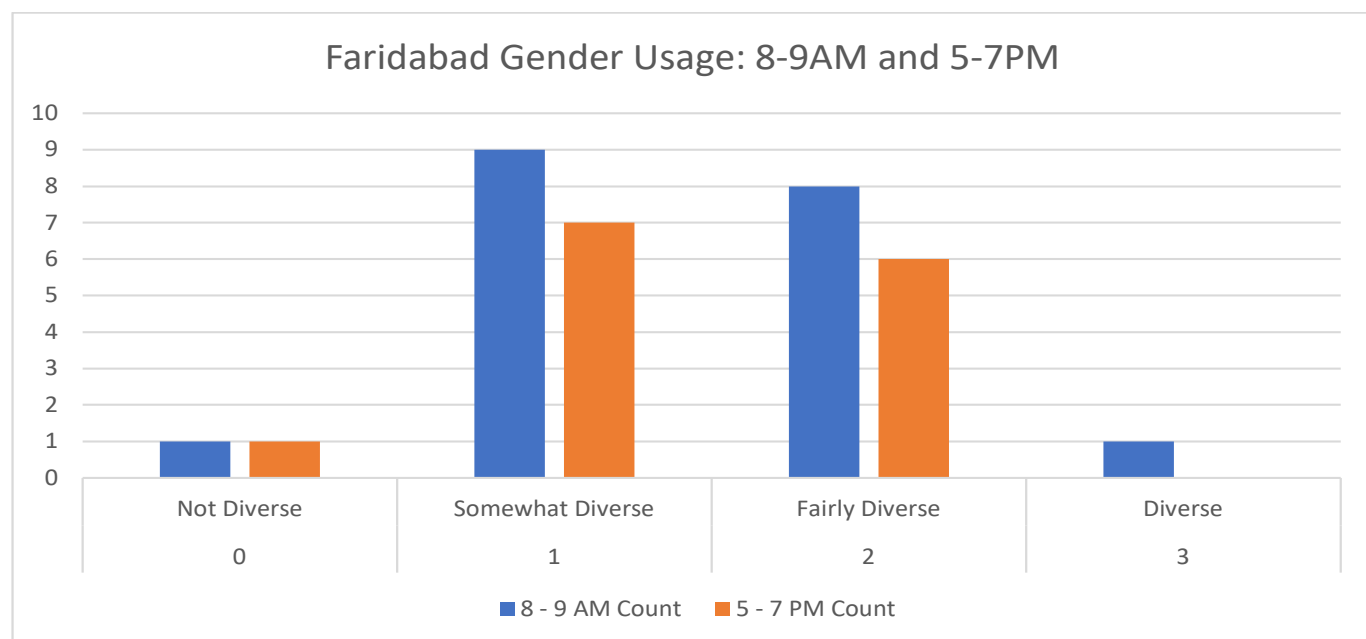
Gender diversity in Taimoor Nagar shows a notable change between the morning and evening hours. During the morning, the area reflects moderate diversity, with 5 locations classified as ‘Somewhat Diverse’ and 5 others as ‘Fairly Diverse.’ However, by the evening, there is a significant enhancement in diversity. The number of ‘Fairly Diverse’ locations increases to 12, while 3 locations are categorized as ‘Diverse.’ This increase in gender diversity during the evening can be attributed to the presence of

the local fruit and vegetable market in Taimoor Nagar village, as well as along the main road, which likely draws a more varied group of people including men and women.



Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

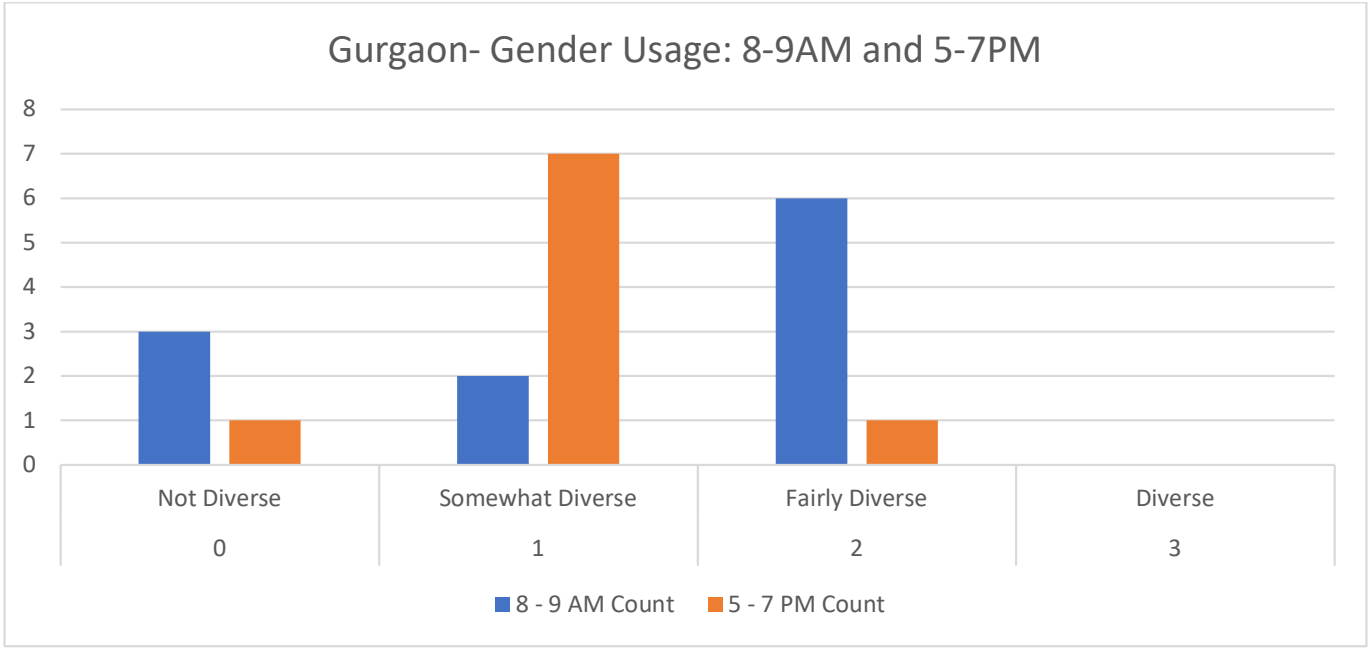
Gender diversity in Faridabad's public spaces shows a noticeable decline from morning to evening. Higher diversity categories experience consistent decrease—'Fairly Diverse' locations drop from 8 to 6, while 'Diverse' locations disappear entirely, from 1 to 0. 'Somewhat Diverse' locations also decline, with the number of such locations decreasing from 9 to 7 by evening. Lack of presence of women after dark contributes to this day-night disparity, commenting upon safety concerns of women in the area in the evening.



Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

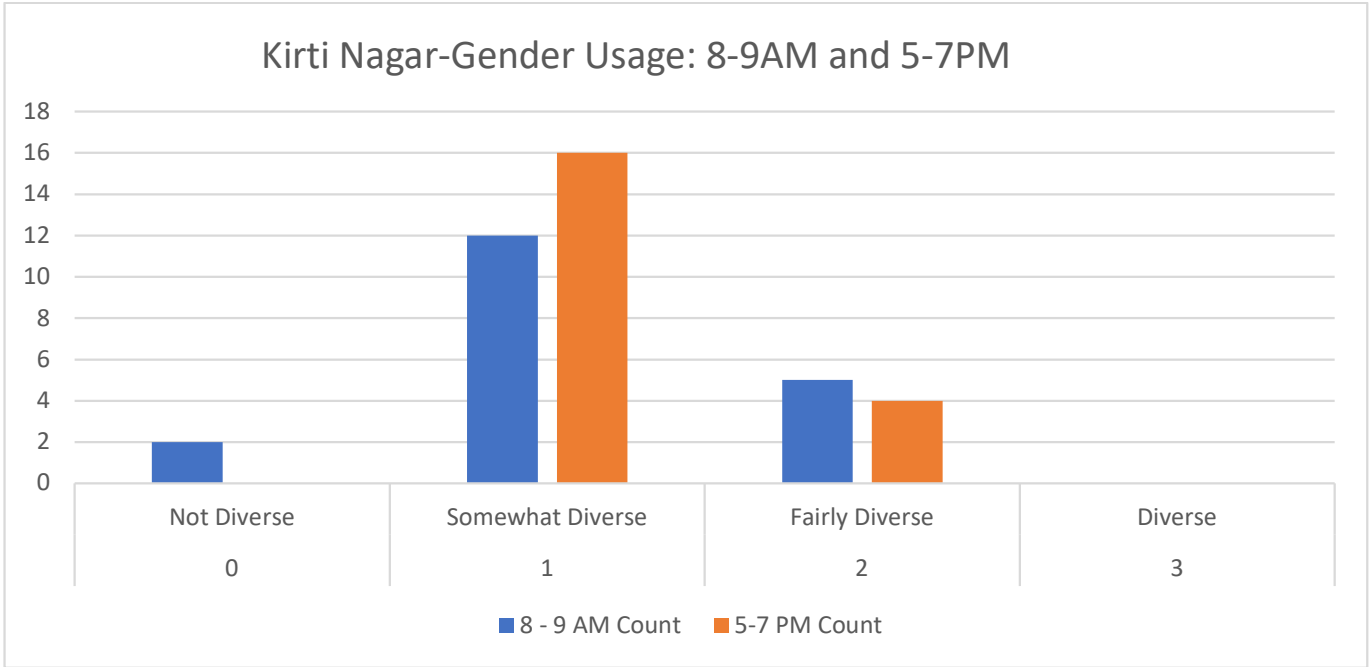
Gender diversity in Gurgaon experiences a significant decline from morning to evening hours. The number of 'Fairly Diverse' locations drops dramatically from 6 to just 1, while 'Somewhat Diverse'

locations increase from 2 to 7. Notably, the complete absence of ‘Diverse’ locations in both time periods highlights a consistent pattern of exclusionary spaces throughout the area.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

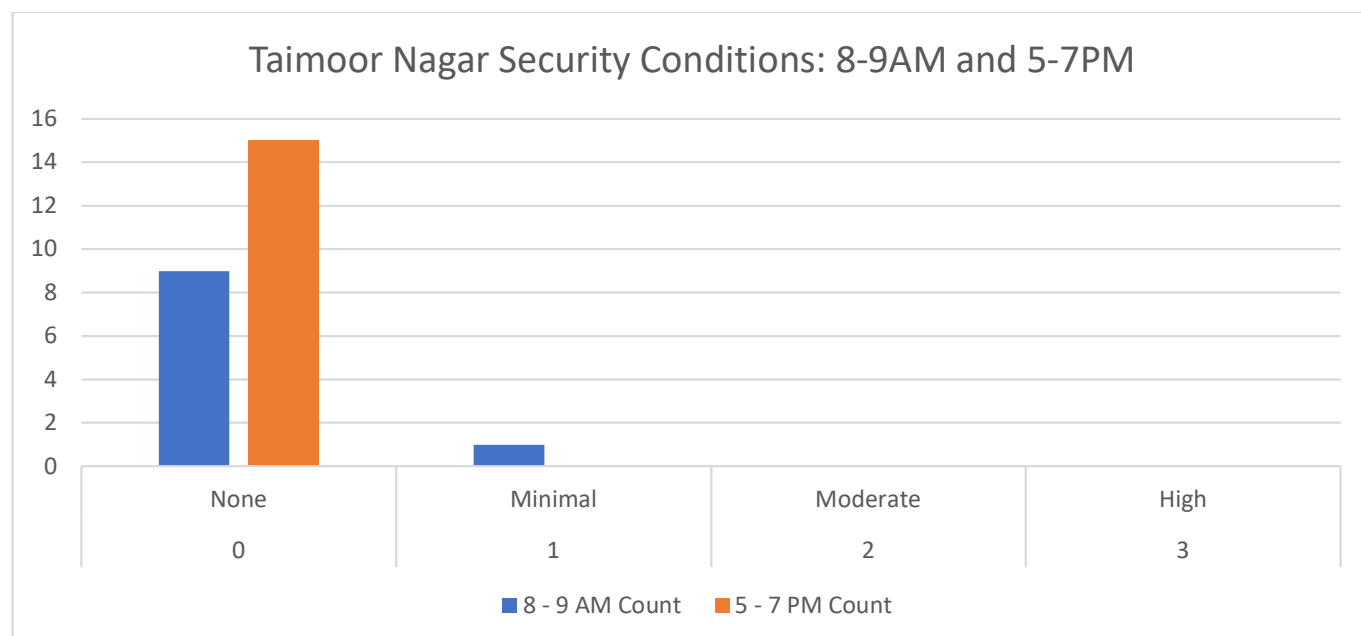
Gender diversity in Kirti Nagar reveals significant deficiencies across all time periods, with particularly low representation in the late hours, where 16 locations show ‘Somewhat Diverse’. ‘Fairly Diverse’ locations are mainly observed in the morning (5 locations between 8-9 AM) and the evening (4 locations), but higher gender diversity remains minimal throughout the day, indicating less presence of women in public places.



E. Security

Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

Security in Taimoor Nagar points to severe inadequacy, particularly during the evening hours, despite an increase in pedestrian activity. Morning assessments also reveal significant concerns, with 9 locations



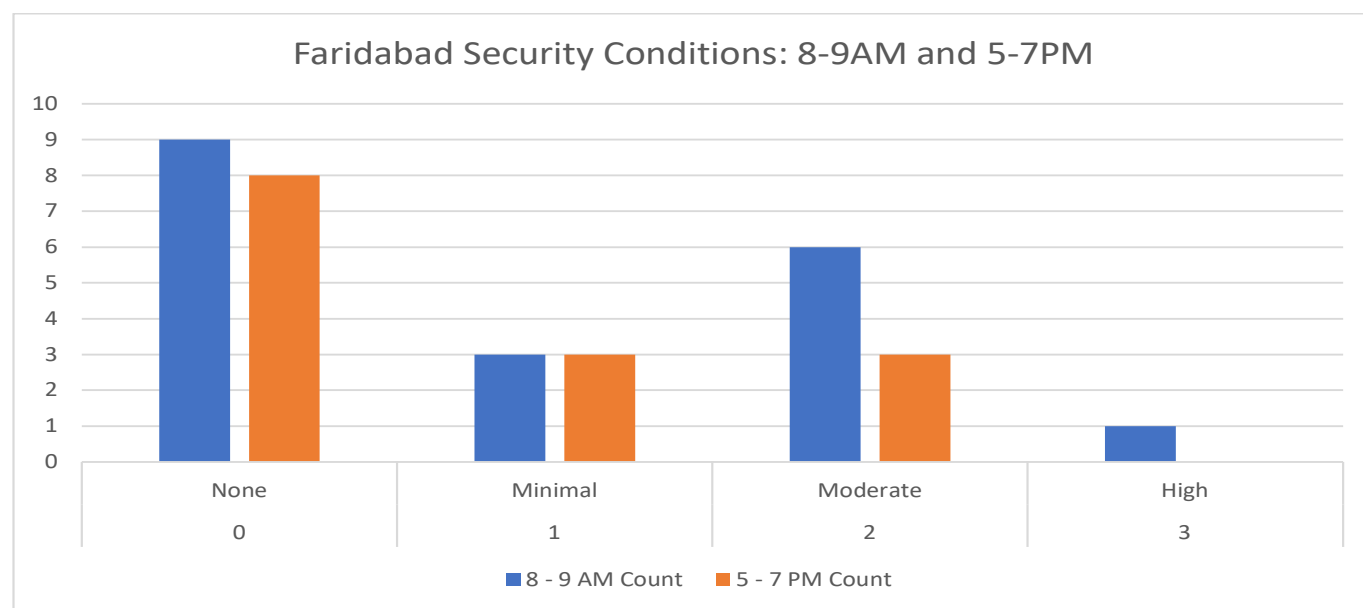
rated as 'None' and 1 as 'Minimal' with no areas rated as 'Moderate' or 'High' security. Conditions during the evening worsen even further, with the number of no security locations increasing to 15, covering almost the entire surveyed area. The only police booth in the village has been closed for two years. Reports suggest that the police do rounds in the evening to ensure the market is closed, but there are no guards along the routes, except for a few stationed at the gates of New Friends Colony residential complexes. There are frequent incidents of snatching and harassment after sundown, contributing to more intensified feelings of insecurities and potential risks in terms of women's safety. Additionally, the senior citizen home and community center in the village is reportedly frequented by drug and substance abusers.



Closed Police Booth During Operational Hours in Kirti Nagar

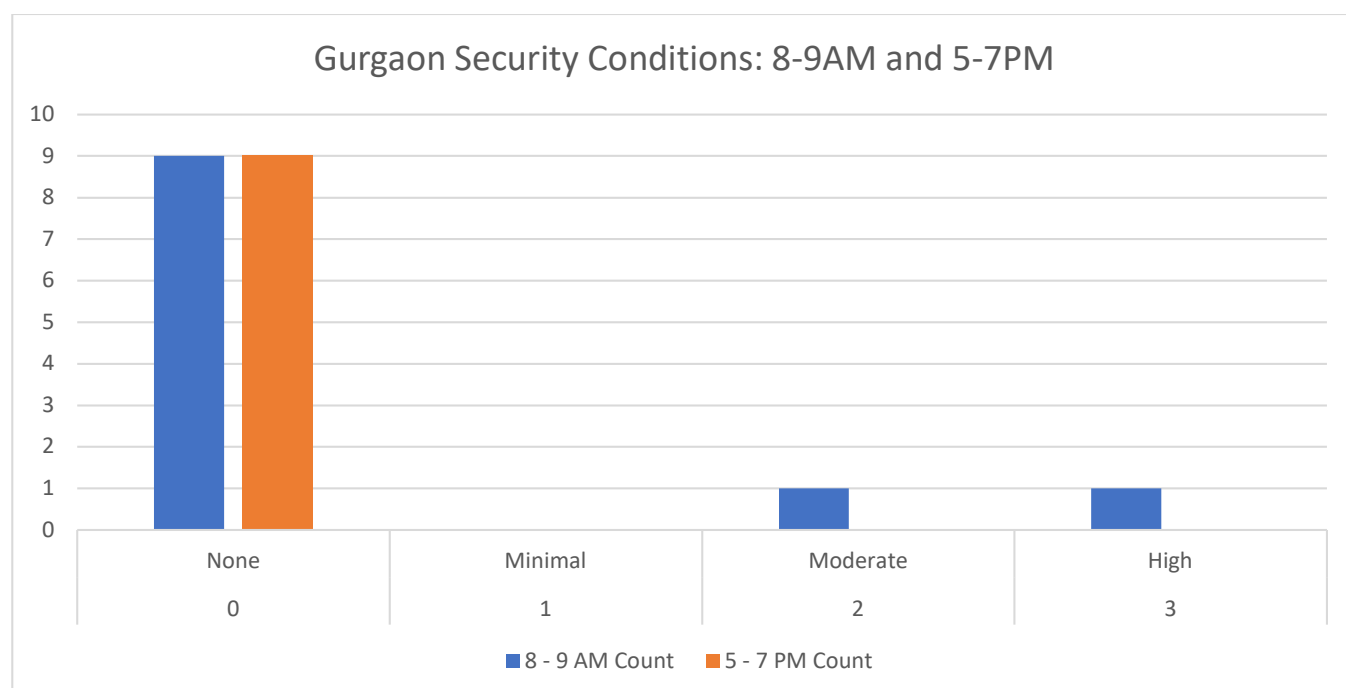
Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

Security conditions in Faridabad present persistent challenges across morning and evening walks. While no security locations are 9 in the morning, 8 in the evening, the situation deteriorates further in the evening, with moderate security locations decreasing from 6 to 3 and high security locations dropping to zero, indicating a comprehensive security deficit that worsens after dark.



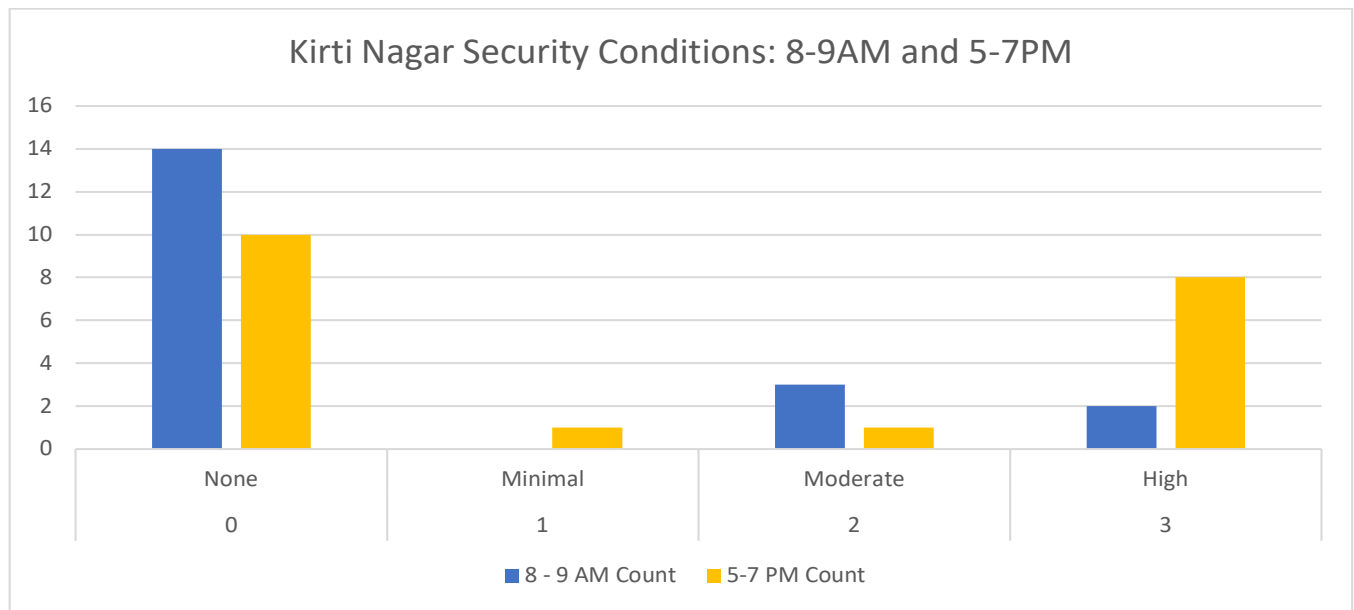
Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

Gurgaon presents similar security deficits, with 9 locations consistently rated as No security area throughout the day. The minimal presence of security is evident, with only one location rated as 'Moderate' in the morning, which declines to zero by evening. The complete absence of 'High' security ratings throughout the day further underscores the lack of police booths and visible security personnel in the area. There are no security guards at the park gates, nor is there a police station or regular police patrols along the parks. While patrolling does occur along the main road near the park, security measures remain sparse. In contrast, security guards are present in the DLF Phase-1 residential apartments, but the Chakkarpur area severely lacks security.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

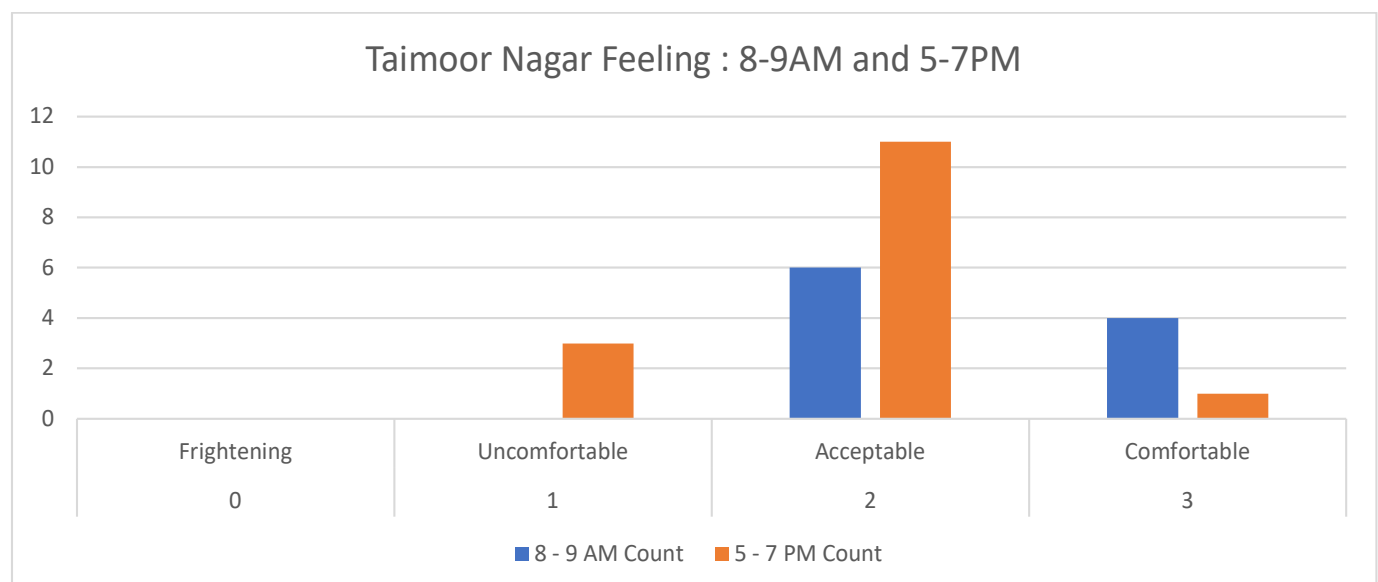
Security conditions in Kirti Nagar present a complex pattern with severe deficiencies during morning hours (14 'None' locations and a striking disparity by evening with 10 locations with no security and 8 locations with high security. The Police station is near to Choona Bhatti with regular Police patrolling on the main road. Yet security remains a major concern along the route. The parks and public toilets, places frequented by domestic workers, lack the presence of guards. While there is a police booth at Choona Bhatti, it remains closed during the day and is only open in the evening. This lack of security has led to safety concerns for women, especially after dark and frequent reports of sexual harassment were noted during the walks.



F. Feeling of Safety

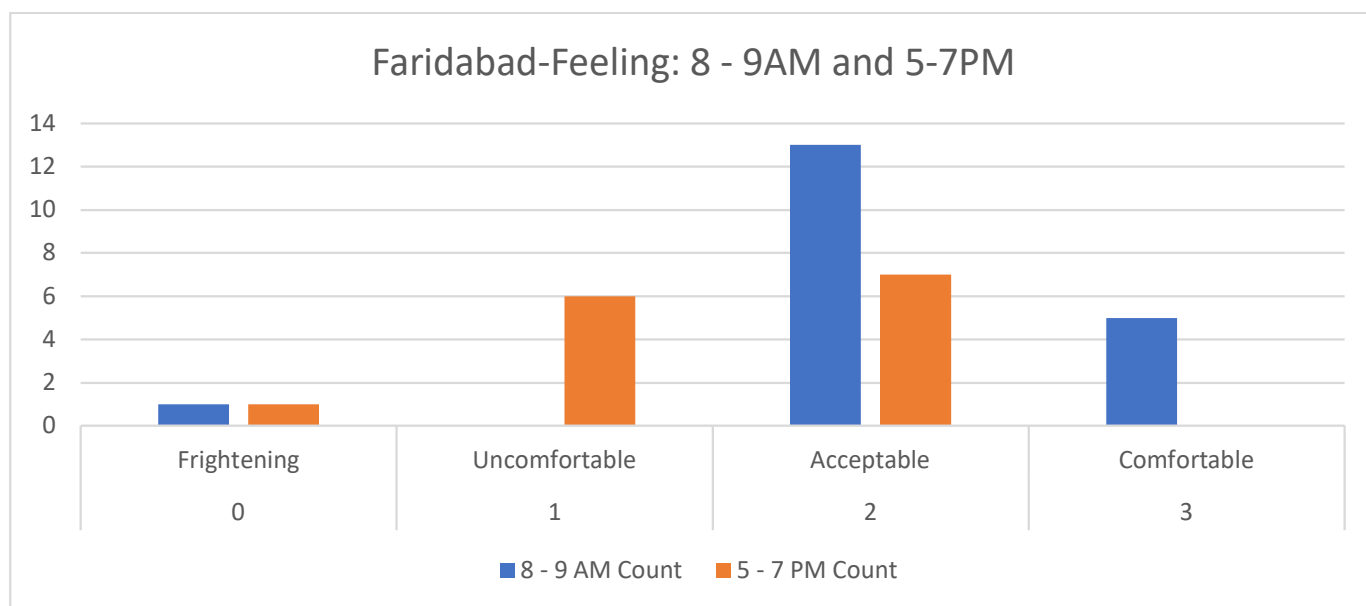
Taimoor Nagar, South Delhi

Subjective safety perceptions of the audit team show a clear change between morning and evening hours. Morning assessments reflect generally positive feelings with 6 'Acceptable' and 4 'Comfortable' locations, while evening conditions show increased 'Acceptable' feelings (11 locations) but reduced 'Comfortable' ratings (decreasing from 4 to 1). Evening ratings also show 'Uncomfortable' perceptions in 3 locations.



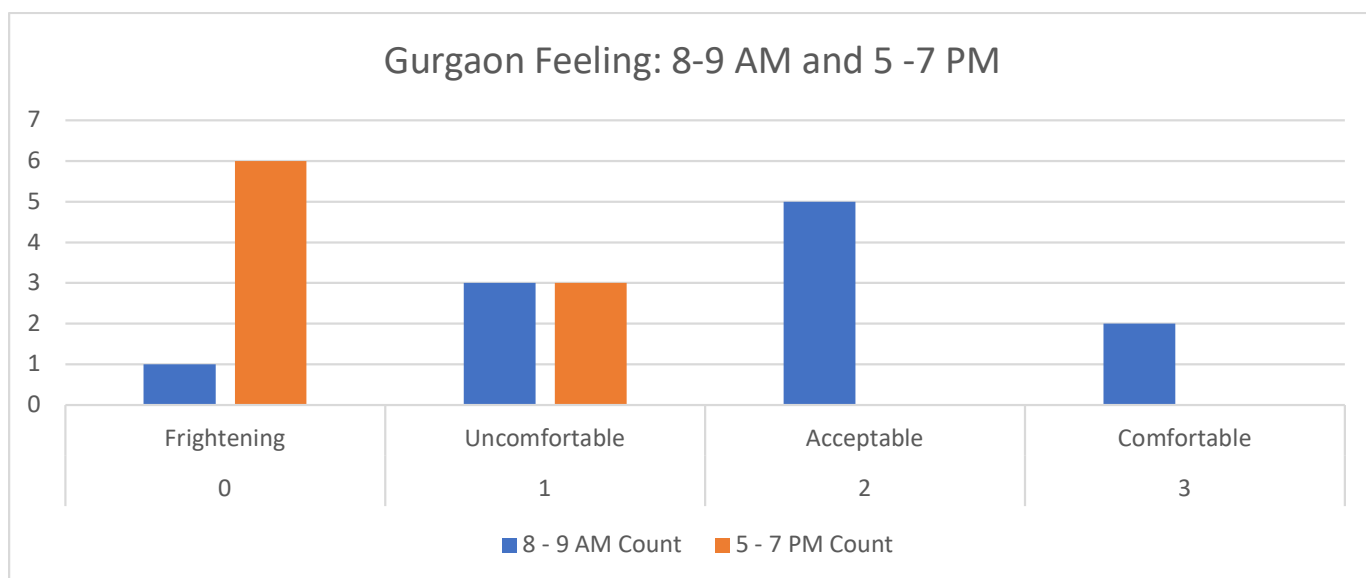
Dayal Nagar Basti, Faridabad

Perceived safety in Faridabad reflects a major decline from morning to evening. The number of 'Acceptable' locations decreases from 13 in the morning to just 7 by evening, while 'Comfortable' locations disappear entirely, dropping from 5 to 0. At the same time, 'Uncomfortable' locations emerge exclusively in the evening, rising from 0 to 6.



Chakkarpur, Gurgaon

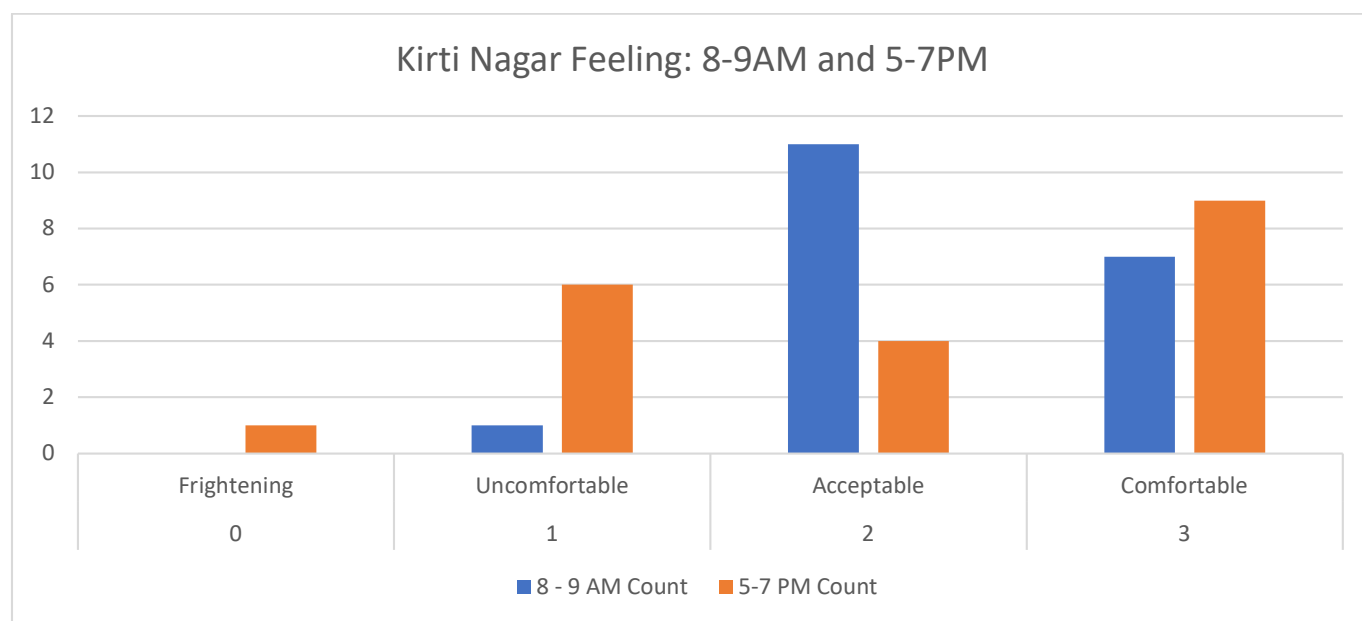
The perceived safety in Gurgaon also declines sharply from morning to evening. In the morning, 5 locations are rated as 'Acceptable' and 2 as 'Comfortable.' However, by evening, these positive perceptions completely disappear, with a significant rise in 'Frightening' ratings, increasing from 1 to 6 locations.



Kirti Nagar, West Delhi

Subjective safety perceptions in Kirti Nagar reveal interesting patterns. Despite limited security presence, morning hours show strong safety perceptions (11 'Acceptable' locations at 8-9 AM), while evening

hours demonstrate a polarized pattern with both 'Uncomfortable' (6 locations) and 'Comfortable' (9 locations) ratings peaking simultaneously at 5:30-6:30 PM. The feeling of safety in Kirti Nagar is deeply compromised, particularly after dark.



Conclusion & Recommendations

In terms of safety concerns of women, observations from the safety audit walks in all 4 locations across Delhi-NCR corroborates the findings from the survey with 270 women domestic workers in these areas. The present WSA report reflects several safety concerns for women workers in these areas including infrastructure challenges and overall poor ratings of certain safety parameters.

Issues identified

Factors posing major threat to women's safety and hindering safe mobility and labour participation for women domestic workers in these areas include:

- **Lack of footpath or walk paths** contributing to road accidents for daily commuters, especially women domestic workers who regularly goes to work on foot risking their health and safety.
- **Lack of public transport** facilities forcing women domestic workers to take shorter make shift routes with no proper streets, often forcing them to cross railway tracks, climb walls, walk over garbage dumping areas contributing to major health risks, risks of accidents and making them vulnerable to sexual harassment in sparsely populated roads like these.
- **Lack of clean public and community toilets**, closure of toilets during night and poor maintenance contributing to health risks for WDWs and making them vulnerable to harassment during night emergencies to use toilets.
- **Inadequate and/or dysfunctional street lighting** heightens the risks for women workers and restricts their mobility and labour participation while they are unable to avail more work opportunities offered after sundown.
- **Gaps in the supply of potable drinking water** forces the communities to fetch water from a distance

and at specific times. Along with being exposed to health risks, this hinders domestic workers from accepting more work opportunities as fetching water takes up their time owing to the burden of unpaid care work on these women.

- **Poor drainage and garbage disposal systems** contribute to unhygienic living conditions, exposing these workers to severe health risks and significantly affect their quality of life.
- **Poor management and maintenance of road safety** by the government contributes to further vulnerabilities. For example, loose high voltage electric wires and water logging in main roads forcing workers to take expensive transport options in Chakkarpur; lack of traffic control and pedestrian crossing along the busy streets of Kirtinagar leading to frequent road accidents, etc.
- **Security measures reflect major gaps** in almost all the areas covered in the audit. While some areas lack police booths or stations in the vicinity, some do not get regular police patrolling. Absence of guards at Parks or other public infrastructures contributes to further vulnerabilities for women workers living and commuting in the area. Observations and interviews with local residents and police personnel also revealed that police patrolling mostly covers main roads, leaving alleyways and areas inside the slums to grave security risks.

Key action points

In light of these barriers and gap areas identified during the audit walks, following action points are recommended to ensure safety of women domestic workers in Delhi-NCR and facilitate increased labour participation among these women:

1. Targeted efforts both at policy and implementation levels towards building women-inclusive infrastructure including adequate street lights along lanes and by-lanes leading to the main road, safe and affordable public transports in underserved areas, increased number of public and community toilets, regular maintenance and cleaning of toilets, designated walking paths, etc.
2. Community initiatives to demand and ensure regular police patrolling and setting up police booths in high-risk areas
3. Capacity building and Facilitating women's participation in safety assessments in their own communities and workplaces so that they can negotiate their rights and demands with respective authorities and within their families
4. Raising awareness among community members including men and boys regarding women's safety concerns so that they can join women in the negotiations with government and other stakeholders.

**Domestic workers
demand**

Dignity

Rights

Respect

Fair wages

Weekly off

No form of abuse



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