



Changing Lanes: Commuters' Perspectives on Women Cab Drivers

Dr. Bindu Dogra

Assistant Professor

Post Graduate department of Sociology
Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV, College for women
Sector-36 Chandigarh.

Sonia Kumari

Assistant Professor

Post Graduate department of Sociology
Mehr Chand Mahajan DAV, College for women
Sector-36 Chandigarh.

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ABSTRACT

The transport sector is a critical component of economic and social infrastructure, offering a wide range of employment opportunities and services essential for societal functioning. In recent years, women have increasingly entered the transport industry, taking on various roles, including cab drivers. This shift marks a significant change in a traditionally male-dominated field, reflecting broader societal trends towards gender inclusivity. The transport sector involves multiple stakeholders, including government bodies, service providers, and commuters. This paper focuses on commuters as a key segment, exploring their perspectives on women cab drivers and their services. Transportation is a service-oriented sector and perspective of the customer, in present case of the commuter has a significant importance, as it can influence the acceptance and success of women in this industry. Investigation of this area is significant because it sheds light on the social dynamics that women face in the transport sector, particularly in roles that involve direct interaction with the public and marked as masculine jobs. Insights gained from the present study can

enhance practice and policy formation, by promoting a more inclusive and equitable transport system that caters to the needs of all users. The current paper is an empirical study of 100 cab commuters which includes 50 male and 50 female respondents. The present study is an exploratory study conducted in Delhi (NCT) India on commuters who often commute with women cab drivers. These results suggest a mixed response to women drivers and underscore the importance of enhancing and supporting women's participation in this sector.

Introduction

The transportation industry is vital to society, serving as the backbone of economic growth and social development. It enables the movement of goods and people, fostering trade, commerce, and employment opportunities. Efficient transportation networks connect communities, reduce travel time, and improve access to essential services like healthcare and education. Additionally, it plays a critical role in urbanization, globalization, and disaster response, facilitating swift action and recovery. By promoting mobility and accessibility, the transportation industry enhances the quality of life, drives innovation, and supports the overall functioning and progress of society (Khosa, 1997). In the past few decades, the spike in the unemployment rate and the necessity of economic empowerment have compelled women to pursue careers in this sector as drivers, conductors, mechanics etc, however traditionally this sector and these jobs were considered male-dominated.

Till date women remain marginalized in this industry, particularly in operational and leadership positions. Despite efforts to promote gender diversity, preconceptions, and biases continue to influence the views and experiences of women working in transport sector. Moreover, increased proportion of working women in the transportation industry has opened many challenges which requires effective reorganisation of the system keeping in mind the needs of the female stake holders. A transportation system can become more effective if all stake holders' needs are actively represented in its policy, planning, and implementation. This inclusive approach not only addresses diverse requirements but also enhances the sustainability of transportation development (Fraszczyk and Piip, 2019). Turner and Fouracre's (1995) examination of transportation sector in the developing nation, yielded below mentioned findings. Women have unequal work possibilities in the transportation sector compared to men. Women face higher negative impacts from transportation than men, as it is less user-friendly for

them. Women have little participation in the transportation sector due to its nature. Fourth, transportation is often unfavourable to women, and developments have not been evaluated to consider the needs of all users. (Turner and Fouracre, 1995).

Definition of Commuters

In transportation and urban studies, "commuters" are often characterized as those who travel from their house to work, or other regular activities and then return home. According to the International Transport Forum (2017)¹, Commuters are those who regularly travel between their home and their place of work or school, which heavily influences the transport systems. Commuters are always considered a significant part of any commercial transport industry. Overall, women commute more than males, except for work-related travel, where men commute the most. (Olmo & Maseo, 2013). Therefore, the present study seeks to examine the socio-economic profile of the commuters with female cab driver, their perspective regarding women cab drivers in comparison to male drivers and their satisfaction level with their services.

Review of literature

As evidenced by the current literature, women's engagement in the transportation industry is linked to gender notions, workforce participation, and life balance along with women empowerment. Hiramatsu, A. (2021) observed that women taxi drivers, especially those with state licenses, play a crucial role in the industry. Since many women customers feel unsafe while commuting, female drivers offer ride-hailing and taxi services to help make these journeys safer for women. It is important to mention here that 'ride-hailing' refers to the service of ordering a vehicle, such as a taxi or car, through a mobile app or online platform for immediate transportation. Companies like Uber and Lyft are popular examples of ride-hailing services. The app connects passengers with drivers who use their own vehicles, providing a convenient and often quicker alternative to traditional taxi services.

Porter, G., and et.al. (2022) observed less participation of women in the transport sector. The study examined the factors that continue to impede women's participation in this field. Mensah, E., and et.al. (2023) conducted qualitative ethnographic research on 30 women in commercial tricycle riding in Nigeria. The study contends that women are rising to the occasion in terms of competency and performance criteria as trike riders however, gender prejudices limit their acceptance and patronage in the industry. It was recommended that a more inclusive career culture and policies are required to

¹ <https://www.itf-oecd.org/transport-outlook-2017>, Retrieved on 18 May 2024.

address prejudices against women their marginalization in this sector. Similarly, Westmarland and Anderson (2001) described the physical assault, verbal abuse, and sexual harassment suffered by female cab drivers in northeast England. The study investigated the impact of violence on the safety of female drivers. Further, Wright, T. (2014) found that women's participation in male-dominated industries transportation in the UK remains low. The demanding and inflexible work hours, along with assumptions about gender roles and sexuality, often blur the unique challenges women face in these fields. According to Hiramatsu, A. (2021) study several women drivers face significant obstacles in their professional lives such as less power in business circle, sexual harassment, occupational risks, and mistrust from coworkers over their abilities. The study found that female drivers vary in their work habits and safety approaches based on their social status and age.

In the other context, Graglia & Brook (2013) suggested that the rise of women-only transportation services reflect greater gender inequities in cities, specifically regarding women's mobility. The article written by Ntuli (2017) discusses how public transportation hinders women's equitable access to urban resources and how new forms of transport are being implemented to overcome harassment and violence. The study examines whether there's a connection between taxi drivers' negative behaviour and their personalities. It found that confrontations are often initiated by the commuters', but some taxi drivers were found rude and hostile to both tourists and locals. (Xu, J., and et.al.,2021).

As far as commuters' perspective regarding cab service is concerned only few studies were found. Rajesh (2021) analysed the commuters' experience of Uber cab services in Mumbai and (Velumurugan and et.al. 2019) analysed the commuters' perception and improvement in Ola cab services. Literature review revealed that very few studies have been conducted on commuter's perceptive regarding women cab drivers and services provided by them. Hence present paper focused on the perception of commuters based on their genders regarding women cab drivers and their services. Keeping in mind the above facts regarding this topic following research questions emerged and further objectives were framed.

Theoretical Perspective

In present study gender-role theory has been employed to understand commuters' perspective concerning women cab drivers. Gender role theory emerged in the 1980s. This sociological and psychological paradigm describes how people internalize roles, expectations, and practices specific to

their gender in a particular society. The reasons for gender preconceptions about men and women as well as the variations in performance are explained by gender role theory. Similarly, this concept explains why certain commuters may have biased opinions about female cab drivers, prefer male drivers, or have no opinion at all regarding women working in historically male-dominated fields. In public and professional settings traditional gender norms frequently portray males as more forceful, competent, and capable. When it comes to activities requiring technical abilities women are generally connected to domestic responsibilities and are perceived as less capable. These social expectations are challenged by women who work in occupations that violate established gender norms like cab driving. While some sections of the society could respond favourably and recognize the shattering of gender stereotypes, others might find it difficult to reconcile these acts with deeply held beliefs, which could result in skepticism or prejudiced viewpoints. Thus, it is necessary to confront these deeply embedded preconceptions and encourage wider acceptance of varied gender roles in all spheres of society.

Research questions:

1. What is the socio-economic back ground of the commuters traveling with women cab drivers?
2. What is the perspective of the commuters regarding women cab drivers in comparison to male drivers
3. What is their satisfaction level with the services of women cab drivers.
4. What kind of preference commuters have for this profession?

Research Objectives**The study has focused on the below objectives:**

1. To explore the profile of the commuters traveling with women cab drivers.
2. To examine the perspective of the commuters regarding women cab drivers in comparison to male drivers
3. To examine their satisfaction level with the services of women cab drivers.
4. To understand the commuter's preference for this profession (Cab driving) for themselves or their female relatives.

Methodology

Research Design: This study is an exploratory investigation into the experiences of commuters who occasionally travel with women cab drivers in Delhi. Given that the entry of women into this profession is a relatively recent development and their numbers remain small compared to male drivers, an

exploratory research design was adopted. The limited data available on commuters' perceptions of women cab drivers highlights the need for this inquiry

Sampling and Data Collection: This research utilized a non-probability purposive sampling technique, as the exact number of commuters using women cab services was not readily available. Initially, women cab drivers were contacted to gather information about their commuters and further references were sought to identify commuters. The sample comprised 100 commuters in Delhi who have used the services of female cab drivers in the past six months, with an equal representation of 50 male and 50 female respondents to explore gender-based perceptions. Given that women cab drivers are predominantly found in metropolitan areas, Delhi (NCT) was chosen as the study locale. Delhi, the National Capital of India, is known for its relatively high employment rate of women in this sector as compared to other states and Union Territories. Data were collected using a structured interview schedule through convenience sampling.

Unit of analysis: male and female respondents above 18 years of age who have commuted in cabs driven by female drivers more than 10 times in Delhi (NCT) in the past six months.

Data Analysis: The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for analysis of quantitative data. The findings of the study have been described using descriptive statistics with regard to both independent and dependent variables

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Commuters

The demographic data includes gender, age, profession, and other socio-economic characteristics, which are essential for analysing the respondents' perspectives within the context of their lived experiences. A respondent's age distribution has significant implications for the type of travel habits and views regarding women cab drivers. Commuters always travel from one place to another in different ways and at different times and durations. Other factors like professional background help to understand the occupational roles and professional environments that influence perceptions and attitudes.

Table 1 Distribution of commuters according to their Age

Age (Years)	Number of Respondents	Frequency
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	Male	Female	
15 – 30	17 (17.0%)	06 (06.0%)	23 (23.0 %)
31 – 45	14 (14.0%)	28 (28.0%)	42 (42.0 %)
46 – 60	15 (15.0%)	10 (10.0%)	25 (25.0%)
61 & above	04 (04.0%)	06 (06.0%)	10 (10.0 %)
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0 %)

Source: Computed from Primary Data

Table 1 reveals notable differences in the age and gender distribution of respondents, indicating varying levels of engagement across different demographic segments. The data shows that the majority of commuters fell into the first two age categories: 15 to 30 years and 31 to 45 years. Within the 15-30 age group, male commuters represented a higher proportion (17%), while in the 31-45 age group, middle-aged adult females were more prevalent (28%). Conversely, a very small percentage of respondents were aged 61 years and above, likely due to reduced commuting frequency among older adults, possibly due to retirement, health concerns, or a preference for traveling in their own vehicles. These findings suggest that young and middle-aged commuters are the primary age categories engaging with women cab drivers.

Table 2 Distribution of commuters according to their professional background

Profession	Number of Respondents		Frequency
	Male	Female	
Student	17 (17.0%)	08 (08.0%)	25 (25.0%)
Employees	13 (13.0%)	27 (27.0%)	40 (40.0%)
Others	20 (20.0%)	15 (15.0%)	35 (35.0%)
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The above table 2 shows the distinct patterns in professional distribution among commuters, with significant gender differences in each category. It was found that 40 percent of the respondents were employees with a higher proportion of females (27 percent) in comparison to male respondents (13 percent). This data indicates that female commuters have significant engagement in the workforce. Some of the women respondents conveyed that they always prefer to travel with women cab drivers.

Some women respondents mentioned that their company had hired women cab drivers for them keeping in mind the security concerns in the city.

On the other side, one-fourth of the student respondents occasionally prefer women drivers whereas 35 percent in the other category (businessman, traveller, unemployed, housewife, etc.) professionals were found. In other professions, male respondents were more than female respondents. Overall, it signifies that students and working women have strong preference for female cab drivers due to safety concerns and trust on caring feminine qualities.

Perception of Commuters:

Table 3 Distribution of commuters’ views on whether women cab drivers are more efficient than male cab drivers

Women cab drivers are more efficient drivers than male cab drivers	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean Score
	Male	Female		
Yes	17 (17.0%)	20 (20.0%)	37 (37.0%)	SD ² 0.88
No	14 (14.0%)	08 (08.0%)	22 (22.0%)	
No Comment	19 (19.0%)	22 (22.0%)	41 (41.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The data from 100 respondents, evenly divided between male and female commuters, provides insights into their perceptions of the efficiency of women cab drivers compared to their male counterparts. The efficiency was evaluated with regard to driving skills and formal conduct with the commuters. According to Table 3, 37 percent of respondents agreed that women cab drivers are more efficient. Among these, 20 percent were female commuters, and 17 percent were male commuters, indicating a relatively balanced appreciation for the efficiency of women cab drivers across genders. However, 22 percent of respondents disagreed with this statement, with skepticism more prevalent among male respondents (14%) in comparison to female commuters (8%). These differences in the opinion suggests that gender-based biases persist in certain sections of society, which hinders the acceptance of women in traditionally male-dominated profession like cab driving. Further it also highlights the importance of addressing biases and promoting gender equality in the workplace.

² S.D – Standard Deviation

Additionally, 41 percent of respondents chose not to comment on the efficiency of women cab drivers. This significant level of neutrality expressed in this regard could imply either a lack of strong opinion or insufficient experience with women cab drivers, preventing commuters from forming a conclusive judgment. The high percentage of neutral responses suggests a need for increased technical exposure to women cab drivers so that their efficiency can be enhanced to win the trust of the commuters. The mean score of 2.04 with a standard deviation of 0.88 indicates a moderate level of agreement among those who expressed a definitive opinion.

Table 4 Distribution of commuters’ views on whether women cab drivers behave more politely and courteously than male drivers

Women behave more politely and courteously with commuters than male drivers	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean Score
	Male	Female		
Yes	32 (32.0%)	29 (29.0%)	61 (61.0%)	1.70
No	04 (04.0%)	04 (04.0%)	08 (08.0%)	SD 0.91
No Comment	14 (14.0%)	17 (17.0%)	31 (31.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The above table reflects that the a majority (61 percent) of the commuters agreed that women cab drivers behave more politely and courteously than male cab drivers. Both male and female respondents gave significant responses to the statement. A small percentage of around one-eighth (08 percent) of the respondents denied that women cab drivers do not behave politely and courteously with commuters and both males and females have equivalent responses for it. A notable portion of respondents 31 percent had chosen not to comment. This could be due to a neutral stance on gender-based behavioural differences.

The mean score of 1.70 with a standard deviation of 0.91 indicates a generally positive perception of women cab drivers' politeness and courtesy, with some variability in responses. The data highlights the positive attributes of women cab drivers which is creating space for them in this male dominated competitive sector. Similar findings were highlighted in the previous section also where commuters appreciated the efficiency of the women cab drivers. (Hochschild 1983) described that

women are more represented in the passenger air transport industry because they regarded as caregivers who perform 'emotional work'³

Table 5 Distribution of commuters’ views on whether women cab drivers are a safer option than male drivers

Women cab drivers are a safer option than male drivers	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean Score
	Male	Female		
Yes	25 (25.0%)	22 (22.0%)	47 (47.0%)	1.84 SD 0.87
No	11 (11.0%)	11 (11.0%)	22 (22.0%)	
No Comment	14 (14.0%)	17 (17.0%)	31 (31.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The above stated table indicates the gender-based perception of the commuters regarding women cab drivers whether they are a safer option than male drivers. It was found that a significant proportion of commuters (47 percent) agreed that women cab drivers are a safer option than male drivers. It was found that both male and female commuters had shown similar levels of agreement with this statement. The positive perception of commuters about women cab drivers as safer option, demonstrates change in the traditional mindset of the commuters regarding driving skills as masculine trait. Further this changed perception of commuter could potentially enhance employment opportunities for women in the transportation industry. 31 percent of commuters did not comment on the above statement and chose to remain neutral by opting for ‘No comment’. Further only 22 percent of commuters disagree with the statement and these responses were equally distributed among males and females showing no significant gender-based difference among commuters on this issue.

The mean score of 1.84 with an SD of 0.87 for the yes response suggests that there is a leaning towards agreeing that women cab drivers are safer in comparison to male drivers there is considerable variability in the strength of this belief.

³ Hochschild, A. (1983). The managed heart. University of California Press.

Table 6 Distribution of commuters’ views on whether women cab drivers are more suitable for longer trips than male drivers.

Women cab drivers are more suitable for longer trips than male drivers	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean Score
	Male	Female		
Yes	07 (07.0%)	03 (03.0%)	10 (10.0%)	2.34 SD 0.65
No	21 (21.0%)	25 (25.0%)	46 (46.0%)	
No Comment	22 (22.0%)	22 (22.0%)	44 (44.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The table presents the gender-based perceptions of commuters regarding the suitability of women drivers for long-distance trips (defined in this study as trips exceeding 12 hours) compared to male drivers. The data reveals that only 10 percent of commuters, comprising 7 percent men and 3 percent women believe that women cab drivers are more suitable for long trips. In contrast, a significant proportion (46 percent) disagreed with this notion, indicating a strong skepticism among commuters about the capability of women drivers for long-distance travel. Additionally, 44 percent of respondents chose "No Comment," reflecting considerable uncertainty or indifference on this issue. Overall, the findings suggest a general preference for male cab drivers for long trips among both male and female commuters. The mean score of 2.34 with an SD of 0.65 for the no responses indicate a inclination towards disagreement, as the mean score is closer to 2, reflecting a generally negative or neutral stance on the suitability of women cab drivers for longer trips.

The findings reveal a lower preference for women cab drivers on long trips, a trend likely shaped by traditional gender roles that associate long-distance driving with male drivers. This bias appears to be influenced by deeply ingrained stereotypes regarding women's physical endurance and perceived vulnerability, which not only misrepresent women's capabilities but also contribute to their marginalization in more demanding professions. These gendered perceptions perpetuate job segregation, confining even highly capable women to roles considered less demanding and, consequently, less significant. This reinforces existing inequalities and hinders progress toward gender parity in the workforce. Addressing these biases is essential for fostering a more inclusive environment where women are recognized and valued for their abilities, regardless of the nature of the work.

Table 7 Distribution of commuters’ views on whether women cab drivers are well equipped to handle vehicle related emergencies.

Women cab drivers are well-equipped to handle vehicle related emergencies	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean Score
	Male	Female		
Yes	13 (13.0%)	17 (17.0%)	30 (30.0%)	2.20
No	09 (09.0%)	11 (11.0%)	20 (20.0%)	SD 0.87
No Comment	28 (28.0%)	22 (22.0%)	50 (50.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The data shows that only 30 percent of respondents believe that women cab drivers are well-equipped to handle emergencies related with cab driving like difficult routes, vehicle breakdowns etc. among those who believed so 13 percent were men and 17 percent were women commuters. This reflects that women commuters have more faith on the abilities of women cab driver. Moreover, 50 percent commuters in the study chose "No Comment," among them 28 percent were men and 22 percent were female commuters.

An additional 20 percent of commuters disagreed with the statement, with a surprising breakdown of 9 percent men and 11 percent women. This sentiment likely arises from the reality that adequate safety and infrastructure are often lacking for female cab drivers on long trips. The high rates of sexual offenses and other crimes against women further exacerbate this concern, making safety a significant deterrent for both drivers and passengers. These challenges explain why, regardless of gender, commuters tend to prefer male cab drivers for long trips. Addressing these issues requires stronger measures to ensure the safety and security of working women, particularly those in professions that involve extended hours and travel. By improving safety protocols and infrastructure, society can help dismantle these barriers and foster a more equitable environment where women can confidently participate in all sectors of the workforce.

The mean score of 2.20 with an SD of 0.87 for no responses suggests that the overall agreement is relatively low and varies among those who do agree and neutral.

Table 8 Distribution of commuters’ views whether they would encourage their female relative to become a cab driver

Would they encourage your female relative to become a cab driver	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean Score
	Male	Female		

Yes	08 (08.0%)	11 (11.0%)	19 (19.0%)	2.22 SD 0.07
No	17 (17.0%)	23 (23.0%)	40 (40.0%)	
No Comment	25 (25.0%)	16 (16.0%)	41 (41.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The aforementioned table presents the views of commuters whether they would encourage their female relatives to become cab drivers. It was found that only 19 percent of respondents stated that they would encourage their female relatives to become cab drivers that is 8 percent males and 11 percent females respectively. Contrarily a significant proportion of respondents (40 percent) did not like this idea. Surprisingly among them 17 percent were men and 23 percent were female commuters, suggesting higher hesitation among female commuters of encouraging their female relatives to become cab driver. In addition, 41 percent of the respondents did not comment on it. Interestingly, more males (25 percent) stated ‘No Comment’ compared to females (16 percent), suggesting higher indifference among males regarding this statement. It shows their preference of conventional careers for women. This lack of encouragement may deter women from pursuing careers in cab driving, perpetuating gender imbalances in the industry.

The mean score of 2.22 with a low SD of 0.07 suggests a general unwillingness or weak inclination towards encouraging female relatives to become cab drivers.

Table 9 Distribution of commuters’ assessment of services provided by women cab drivers

Assessment of the services provided by women cab drivers	Number of Respondents		Frequency	Mean score
	Male	Female		
Excellent	10 (10.0%)	12 (12.0%)	22 (22.0%)	2.33 SD 1.01
Good	20 (20.0%)	18 (18.0%)	38 (38.0%)	
Fair	14 (14.0%)	14 (14.0%)	28 (28.0%)	
Poor	05 (05.0%)	04 (04.0%)	09 (09.0%)	
Very Poor	01 (01.0%)	02 (02.0%)	03 (03.0%)	
Total	50 (50.0%)	50 (50.0%)	100 (100.0%)	

Chi-square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.732 ^a	4	.947
Likelihood Ratio	.739	4	.946
Linear-by-Linear Association	.010	1	.922
N of Valid Cases	100		

Source: Computed from Primary Data

The table summarizes responses from 100 participants, equally divided between males and females, regarding their evaluation of women cab drivers' services. The results show that 22 percent of respondents rated the services as excellent, and 38 percent rated them as good. Collectively, 60 percent of the commuters rated the services positively, either as excellent or good. Meanwhile, 28 percent of respondents assessed the services as fair, with a smaller segment of 9 percent rating them as poor and 3 percent as very poor.

The Pearson Chi-Square value of 0.732 with 4 degrees of freedom indicates no statistically significant difference in satisfaction levels between male and female commuters. This suggests that the variations in satisfaction ratings are likely due to random variation rather than a consistent difference based on gender.

These findings indicate that the majority of commuters have a favourable view of women cab drivers' services. This positive perception holds important implications for the transportation industry, suggesting that companies can confidently expand their workforce by hiring more women drivers, knowing that customer satisfaction is not adversely impacted by gender. Encouraging more women to enter this field could also contribute to greater gender diversity and inclusivity in the industry.

Theoretical Implications of research findings:

Profile of Commuters: The study primarily involved young and middle-aged commuters, predominantly within the age groups of 15-30 years and 31-45 years, with minimal representation from the elderly. The majority of these commuters were students or employees, with some working women expressing a preference for female cab drivers, citing safety concerns. A notable point cited by some female commuters is that some companies have proactively hired women cab drivers for female employees, reflecting an awareness of the safety issues in urban areas.

Gender Role Theory Perspective: Gender role theory posits that societal expectations and norms dictate the behaviours deemed appropriate for men and women, influencing both individual choices and societal structures. The relatively balanced appreciation of women cab drivers' efficiency across genders in this study aligns with a gradual shift in these traditional roles. However, the finding that 22 percent of commuters, especially males, demonstrated a lack of trust in women cab drivers' efficiency highlights the persistent influence of gender stereotypes. This skepticism reflects deeply ingrained biases that continue to associate technical competence and professional efficiency with masculinity, thus hindering the acceptance of women in traditionally male-dominated professions like cab driving.

The hesitancy among certain segments of male commuters to trust women drivers underscores the ongoing challenge of overcoming these traditional gender roles. These findings suggest that while progress has been made, gender-based biases remain a significant barrier, perpetuating job segregation and limiting women's opportunities in more demanding and significant roles.

Positive Attributes and Safety Perception: The study identified politeness and graciousness as positive attributes of women cab drivers, appreciated by a majority (61 percent) of commuters. Both male and female respondents acknowledged these qualities, indicating that such traits may be perceived as inherently feminine and therefore more acceptable within the context of service-oriented task like cab driving. Additionally, 47 percent of commuters agreed that women cab drivers are a safer option than male drivers, with both genders showing similar levels of agreement. This positive perception of safety challenges the traditional mindset that associates driving skills exclusively with masculinity. It also suggests a shift in how some gendered traits, such as nurturing and care, are valued in the workplace.

Long Trips and Gender Bias: Despite these positive perceptions, both male and female commuters showed a lower preference for women cab drivers on long trips. Gender role theory explains this bias as stemming from traditional beliefs that associate physical endurance and resilience qualities often required for long-distance driving with men. This belief, deeply rooted in societal norms, misrepresents women's capabilities and contributes to their marginalization in more demanding professions. By reinforcing these stereotypes, gendered perceptions perpetuate job segregation, confining even highly capable women to roles considered less demanding and less significant. This cycle of gender-based discrimination not only limits individual women but also hinders broader progress toward gender parity in the workforce.

Emergency Handling and Trust: Only 30 percent of respondents believed that women cab drivers are well-equipped to handle emergencies, such as navigating difficult routes or dealing with vehicle breakdowns. Interestingly, a higher proportion of women commuters expressed confidence in the

abilities of women drivers, indicating a potential solidarity among female commuters. However, the prevailing sentiment that women drivers are not well-equipped for handling emergencies highlights the ongoing impact of gender stereotypes. These beliefs likely arise from the reality that safety and infrastructural support for female cab drivers are inadequate, particularly during long trips. The high rates of sexual offenses and crimes against women further exacerbate these concerns, making safety a significant deterrent for both women drivers and passengers.

Encouraging Female Relatives to Become Cab Drivers: The study found that only 19 percent of respondents would encourage their female relatives to become cab drivers, with a significant proportion opposing the idea. Surprisingly, this opposition was more prevalent among female commuters, suggesting that even women may internalize societal norms that discourage women from entering non-traditional professions like cab driving. This internalization of gender roles underscores the pervasive nature of these stereotypes and the challenges women face in breaking free from them.

Policy Implications: The finding of the study suggests promoting gender diversity in the cab driving industry encouraging more women to join the profession, promoting gender diversity, and providing role models for other women. Transportation companies could address these biases by ensuring comprehensive training for all drivers, emphasizing emergency handling skills. Therefore, overall findings may help in ensuring continuous training and support for women cab drivers to maintain and potentially increase service quality and satisfaction levels of cab commuters

Conclusion: The findings suggest that while there is a growing acceptance of women cab drivers, traditional gender roles and stereotypes continue to influence commuter perceptions and preferences. The positive ratings of women cab drivers' services are encouraging, indicating that when given the opportunity, women can excel in roles traditionally dominated by men. However, the persistent skepticism about women's capabilities, particularly in handling long trips and emergencies, reflects the deep-seated nature of gender biases.

To foster a more inclusive and equitable environment, it is essential to challenge these stereotypes through education, awareness, and policy interventions that support women in traditionally male-dominated fields. By addressing the structural and societal barriers that reinforce gender roles, the transportation industry can move towards greater gender diversity and inclusivity, ultimately benefiting both workers and consumers.

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