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The Pink Bus

Decoding Gendered Policies for Everyday Mobilities

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Buses are an inseparable element of the fabric of our cities. The social life of an urban bus, thus, reflects the social life of our contemporary cities.

- Govind Gopakumar

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This thesis would not have been possible without the timely and critical contributions of passengers, conductors, drivers, bystanders and other citizens of the city who maneuver its complicated public transportation system daily. I really appreciate your time and insight - thank you for answering my questions whilst travelling in Karachi's relentless traffic with me.

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To my family, who has always been my biggest cheerleader and paved countless paths for me - I will always be in debt to your kindness and patience with me. Thank you for praying for me everyday mama, and for watching over me every time, papa - your love holds me.

Last but never the least, thank you Maha Minhaj, for seeing our Karachi as a playground in its madness. I love taking over urban spaces with you. ~
May we rejoice, reclaim, retain... because we are here to stay.

all images have been taken by author unless specified otherwise.

ABSTRACT

Mobility is intricately linked to one's identity – their class, race, gender and ethnicity along with the transport infrastructure and policies provided by the state. In cities with transport poverty, public transport systems are inherently unequal as they consistently deny space to certain marginalized groups. Cities with increasing rates of gender-based violence and a culture of segregation introduce gendered policies to ensure women's safety and comfort which can in turn plaster deeper structural issues. Gender segregated transport in a suffocated cityscapes is frequently criticized to be regressive, compensatory, and underutilized which can result in its discontinuation. However, gender-segregation also has the potential to enhance women's mobility. This thesis aims to examine the implications of a gender-segregated line, the Pink bus, on women's daily mobility in Karachi, Pakistan. Using Massey's *Gender, Space and Power* framework, and in critique of Lefebvre's *Right to the City*, this bottom-up research deploys qualitative feminist and decolonial methodology to unravel how the service effects women and men differently. Ethnographic methods include observations in and around the bus, intercept interviews with passengers, drivers, conductors and bystanders, and photographic evidence to reveal the operations and perceptions of this gender-segregated line. Data from the field is supplemented with mining secondary data (policy and media documents) that provide a state and civil society perspective on the service. The cross-sectional data outlines that even though the segregated line is infrequent and not fully accessible or safe, women in the city still make use of it and have begun to affiliate themselves with it. A women-only space allows them to carry out place-making activities which helps them understand their own identity and power in the urban sphere. Furthermore, accountability mechanisms from above and below reveal the ploys and loopholes of the state that are further addressed with policy recommendations in lieu of the Pink bus. This work decodes the city's patriarchal value system through the implementation of a gendered policy and contributes to gender and mobilities research in complex urban spaces that have been ignored and under-studied historically.

Keywords: gender, mobility, transport, state, patriarchy, segregation, operation, perception, place-making, power-geometry, imaginaries, Karachi

ABSTRAKT

Mobilität ist eng mit der Identität einer Person verknüpft – ihrer Klasse, Rasse, Geschlecht und Ethnizität sowie der vom Staat bereitgestellten Verkehrsinfrastruktur und -politik. In Städten mit Verkehrarmut sind öffentliche Verkehrssysteme von Natur aus ungleich, da sie bestimmten marginalisierten Gruppen konsequent den Zugang verwehren. Städte mit steigenden Raten geschlechtsspezifischer Gewalt und einer Kultur der Segregation führen geschlechtsspezifische Maßnahmen ein, um die Sicherheit und den Komfort von Frauen zu gewährleisten, was wiederum tiefere strukturelle Probleme überdecken kann. Geschlechtergetrennte Verkehrsmittel in erstickenden Stadtlandschaften werden häufig als rückschrittlich, kompensatorisch und untergenutzt kritisiert, was zu ihrer Einstellung führen kann. Geschlechtertrennung hat jedoch auch das Potenzial, die Mobilität von Frauen zu verbessern. Diese Arbeit untersucht die Auswirkungen einer geschlechtergetrennten Linie, des Pink Busses, auf die tägliche Mobilität von Frauen in Karachi, Pakistan. Unter Anwendung von Masseys Rahmenwerk zu Geschlecht, Raum und Macht und in Kritik an Lefebvres Recht auf Stadt nutzt diese Bottom-up-Forschung eine qualitative feministische und dekoloniale Methodologie, um aufzudecken, wie der Dienst Frauen und Männer unterschiedlich betrifft. Ethnografische Methoden umfassen Beobachtungen im und um den Bus, spontane Interviews mit Passagieren, Fahrern, Schaffnern und Umstehenden sowie fotografische Beweise, um die Funktionsweise und Wahrnehmung dieser geschlechtergetrennten Linie zu zeigen. Die Felddaten werden durch die Auswertung von Sekundärdaten (Politik- und Mediendokumente) ergänzt, die eine Perspektive von Staat und Zivilgesellschaft auf den Dienst bieten. Die Querschnittsdaten zeigen, dass obwohl die getrennte Linie unregelmäßig und nicht vollständig zugänglich oder sicher ist, Frauen in der Stadt sie dennoch nutzen und beginnen, sich damit zu identifizieren. Ein ausschließlich für Frauen bestimmter Raum ermöglicht es ihnen, Platz schaffende Aktivitäten durchzuführen, die ihnen helfen, ihre eigene Identität und Macht im urbanen Raum zu verstehen. Darüber hinaus offenbaren Rechenschaftsmechanismen von oben und unten die Machenschaften und Schlupflöcher des Staates, die mit politischen Empfehlungen im Zusammenhang mit dem Pink Bus weiter angegangen werden. Diese Arbeit entschlüsselt das patriarchale Wertesystem der Stadt durch die Implementierung einer geschlechtsspezifischen Politik und trägt zur Geschlechter- und Mobilitätsforschung in komplexen städtischen Räumen bei, die historisch ignoriert und unzureichend untersucht wurden.

Schlagwörter: Geschlecht, Mobilität, Verkehr, Staat, Patriarchat, Segregation, Betrieb, Wahrnehmung, Platzschaffung, Machtgeometrie, Imaginationen, Karachi

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I. INTRODUCTION

"How will you make sense of this chaos? There are problems upon problems."
- Shafaq, Pink Bus Conductor

During my fieldwork for the following thesis, I was interviewing a young female bus conductor, and she asked me why I was interested in knowing *how* the Pink bus functions. I explained to her that I am doing a master's in urban studies, where I try to understand how cities function in a specific socio-political landscape. As we rode on the bus with heavy traffic on the roads of the city with automobiles of every kind along with pedestrians and animals trying to make way for themselves, she pointed out Karachi's relentless chaos to me and satirically said the quote. This mega-city is indeed filled with complex mobility issues, but that makes this urban space a critical study point.

A mass transit system was never introduced in a city that houses 21 million people which has resulted in the citizens to accept any compensatory public transport policies that the state provides for them. The People's Bus Service, a project introduced by the provincial government of Sindh with a $572 million loan given by the Asian Development Bank manifests on the roads and streets of Karachi in the form of Red, Pink and White buses. The Red Bus runs on eleven routes on the peripheries of the city and the **women-only** Pink Bus currently runs on five of those eleven routes with reduced frequencies, but with a promise of provision on all routes.

This thesis is co-produced with the passengers, conductors and drivers of the People's Bus Service and aims to understand how a gendered policy, the Pink Bus, impacts women's everyday mobilities. I use the Pink Bus - a gender-segregated line - as a case study to unravel transport and mobility issues in the city and how they impact the most vulnerable under complex urban governance systems. The backdrop of this thesis is imbued in Doreen Massey's *space, gender and power* framework along with a critique of Lefebvre's right to the city which lacks gender analysis. Gender manifests differently depending on the historical, cultural and social norms of a space. In a contested urban space like Karachi, where power geometries arise from different negotiations that citizens engage in to ***belong in the city,*** a gendered policy has myriad implications shifting the operations and perceptions of public transportation services for certain groups.

The movement of women in Karachi's public space is limited and controlled by institutions like the family, school, work and the state. Gender segregation is welcomed by women at the cost of their own invisibilization because they do not want to deal with the fear or enactment of gender-based violence normalized in public transportation. However, women still travel in the city for several different purposes creating various mobility patterns.

The Pink Bus was initiated in February 2023 in the city but this is not the first time such a policy has been introduced in the city or country. Policies like this have been sporadically initiated and discontinued due to lack of research on *how* they work, and the ways they can be adapted into the city. The state introduces these policies after an increase in GBV cases to showcase its care for women, plastering over deeper social, intellectual and infrastructural issues in the country. The new mobilities paradigm examines the 'place of movement' with the very workings of social institutions and social practices which form people's lives. Therefore, mobility theory encourages a bottom-up investigative approach to study spatial relativities where bodies engage in different types of movements and mobilities along with everyday social practices. This approach helps unpack the current relations between mobilities, immobilities, as well as infrastructural moorings that are shaped in and by uneven and unequal spatial terrains.

Under the shadow of transport poverty in Karachi, I aim to investigate the effects of gender segregation in public transportation on women's daily mobility, visibility and safety behavior in the city. The Pink Bus line offers a unique opportunity to explore these questions in the context of a specific policy intervention aimed at addressing gender segregation in public transport. The issue also highlights the potential trade-offs between and visibility in a patriarchal and conservative setting that can result from such interventions. My research question is as follows:

What are the implications of gender-segregated public transport policy on women's daily mobility in Karachi, Pakistan?

The theoretical framework outlines the power geometries in the production of space that result in a gendered right to the city followed by contributions from feminist urban scholars in the fields of sociology, geography, anthropology, cultural theory, architecture and design. Then, it outlines the relational mobilities and how mobility and gender relations have a reciprocal relationship as mobility and *control* over mobility reinforce power hierarchies historically positioned by race, gender, class, age, ethnicity and ability, ranging from local to global (Hanson, 2010).

Being on the move is contingent, uneven, contested and dependent upon different materialities, temporalities, and spatialities which I aim to explore through the case of the Pink Bus in Karachi, and women's experiences in relation to segregated transit. I utilize the lens of feminist geography to lay the theoretical groundwork for this research as it legitimizes everyday struggles and ways of exercising right to the city constructed through *experiences, processes and practices* animated by citizens that operate in varying power geometries in relation to their identities. The paradoxical concepts of patriarchal bargains carried out by women and patriarchal accommodations brought forward by the conservative state illustrate how segregating, restricting or invisibilizing women in the city can in turn make them more mobile as patriarchal agents in the family allow women to travel if their safety is ensured through policies of segregation introduced by the government, and respectability politics ensured by

the family.

This is followed by a detailed literature review of gender-segregation in public transportation where I outline the motivations behind gendered transport policies and the range of implementation of such policies in different global cities to illustrate how gender segregation in public transport manifests differently according to the political, legal, economic and social situation of a city. Then, I bring forward the local context of Pakistan and the city of Karachi to show how segregation in public transport manifests in this specific space.

I applied social-constructivist epistemology to study the case of the Pink Bus and utilized feminist ethnographic tools like observations, unstructured interviews, and photography to collect data while ***being on the move***. To complement this primary data collected over eight days riding the Pink Bus, I have done media mining since the initiation of this policy to gauge the viewpoints of civil society members along with conducting a document analysis of the Gender Action Plan and the Report and Recommendation by the President of the Asian Development Bank in 2019.

I conduct thematic and discourse analyses of this bottom-up inductive research to reveal how this gendered policy impacts women's everyday mobilities through mechanisms functioning on a micro, meso and macro scale that in turn impact the operations and perceptions regarding frequency, safety and accessibility of the Pink Bus service. The results are followed by a discussion on how gendered governing mechanisms result in the contestations of space, power and identity for women as they maneuver through limited and segregated transport options. Women's body and spatial politics in relation to the city, and their everyday tactics make a case to listen to their demands and grievances rather than using copy-paste urbanism or gender-mainstreaming techniques without understanding gender relations in a specific urban context.

Where women are considered second-class citizens, the policies relating to them are not taken seriously and eventually discontinued. However, women of Karachi still make use of the Pink Bus irrespective of its infrequencies, relative accessibilities and questionable safety mechanisms which solidifies the case for paying more attention to initiating and working with gendered policies in public transport.


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II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This section lays the conceptual groundwork to understand the implications of gender-segregated transport policy in a specific context. Gender and mobility concepts are dissected to unravel their relationships with *space* and how these manifests into contestations of women's power and identity in urban spheres. It further underscores the importance of using the lens of feminist urban geography to understand how women exercise their *right to the city*.

a. Power geometries in the production of space

Henri Lefebvre's (1978) theorisations on the production of space are consequential to understand how social, economic, and political forces are active in shaping physical and conceptual space(s). He emphasizes that space is produced via social relations mobilized through human actions, decisions, negotiations as well as conflicts. Further, he utilizes the 'spatial triad' with three interrelated concepts of perceived, conceived and lived space (p.40). The perceived refers to the physical and material aspects of space - how it is used, organized, and experienced in everyday life making an overall **'spatial practice'** with movement patterns, regiments and infrastructures shaped by the lived environment. Conceived space refers to how space is thought about planned by urbanists, architects, planners and policymakers curating different '**representations of space'** and lived space refers to the embodied experience of a space where people attach cultural and symbolic meanings through emotive and imaginative means conjuring a **'representational space'** through the dynamisms of everyday life (p.33).

Geographer Doreen Massey (2009, p.16) delves further into this production of space and argues that space and power are "intimately intertwined" as they imbue each other in a myriad ways. She proposes three characteristics for a re-conceptualization of space and argues why such re-conceptualizations are crucial for intellectual work, social relations and political practice. First, she denotes that space is a product and it is *produced* through the 'establishment or refusal' of relations. She articulates space in its

> *"complexity of networks, links, exchanges, connections, from the intimate level of our daily lives... to the global level (p.17)."*

Secondly, she proposes the "characteristics of space" arguing that space itself is a "dimension of multiplicity" and without space as a dimension there would be no possibility of multiplicity, which makes the concepts "mutually constitutive" (p.17). Lastly, drawing on space being *produced in multiplicities*, she affirms that space is always under construction and in processes of relations which are "still to be made, or unmade, or re-made (ibid)." Consequently, the production of space is a social and political task. Therefore, the urban space with its diversity and intersectionalities is ingrained in cartographies of power that can be violent, authoritative, seductive or creative amongst several more. This results in power geometries being created on different spatial levels.

> "*The idea of «power-geometries», then, is simply an attempt to capture both the fact that space is imbued with power and the fact that power in its turn always has a spatiality (p.19).*"

This concept helps to elucidate the inequalities or deficiencies in democracy in different spaces in the world which makes it an instrument of critique but also of imagination to build more egalitarian societies. Massey (2009) advocates that when power geometries are 'in action' they manifest through the imperative role of **place** in urban settings. Symbolically, it promulgates that every geographical collectivity has a political status which is a small but essential in constructing new power geometries (p.19). Therefore, popular and participatory forms of democracy are found in the *idea of places* (p.22).

b. A gendered right to the city

The social theory and political activism mobilized by Lefebvre's (1968) "*right to the city*" mainly critiques the way urban spaces are designed, governed, and experienced, particularly in capitalist societies. The revolutionary concept and slogan demands a reclamation of urban life for all citizens through the forces of participation and social justice to eventually create spaces which function in accordance to the needs and desires of those inhabiting them. Even though Lefebvre's Marxist critique of class and capitalism in the urban sphere has pushed scholars, activists, urbanists, and planners to fundamentally rethink urban life and its governance, it stands inadequate in addressing the specific and complex experiences and challenges faced by women in urban spaces which makes *right to the city* inherently gendered. The following critique dialogues the lack of gender analysis in Lefebvre's work, providing reconceptualisations brought forward by feminist urban scholars since the 1970's.

Massey's (1994) seminal work that draws out the interconnections between *space, place, and gender* examines how they are socially constructed and intersect with issues of power, identity, and social relations. Lefebvre's (1968) theory concerning public space and urban life neglects the private sphere, which is traditionally associated with women (Andrews and Shahrokni, 2014). The public-private demarcation and the division of labor between these spaces reinforces patriarchal structures. Massey (1994), however, strongly opposes the binaries of public/private, male/female, and local/global, which have traditionally shaped gendered thinking on varying spatial praxes. She also argues against dualisms that oversimplify the existence of multiplicities in spaces.

Whilst fighting these binaries, Massey (2009) also confronts the spatial division of labor that has existed historically and geographically through the forces of patriarchy and capitalism. Even though she analyses regional differentiations in Britain, her work is imperative for the British colonial thought that led to class, gender and ethnic demarcations and segregations in many parts of the South Asia. Her analysis of industrial geography helps us examine the restructuring of labor inside and outside the home and the burdens and vulnerabilities that women have to endure because of

their identity and status in society.

Beebeejaun (2017) further criticizes narratives around *right to the city* debate arguing that even after decades of feminist scholarship, the rights being gendered are deeply unacknowledged. Recent feminist and queer scholarship dissects how "everyday life and multiple tactics of marginalized city dwellers reveal a complex urban arena in which rights are negotiated or practiced (p.323)." Therefore, investigating everyday spatial practices can help provide insights into how claims to the urban space are inherently gendered.

Sexuality, city and the gaze

The theorization on governing women's bodies can is linked to sexuality in the city as feminist researchers Elizabeth Wilson (1995) and Judith Walkowitz (1992) have emphasized on the crucial influence of sexuality on spatial structure, regulation and behavior as male gaze in the city eroticized life and sexualized several spaces. Female sex workers in the city became the image of women taking up space which resulted in the regulation and policing of women's bodies. The historical work on the regulation of bodies in the urban areas is helpful to illustrate the ways in which women have been consistently denied civil rights, civic subjectivity and urban sociality today.

At the turn of the century, feminist interest heightened in understanding how bodies are mapped into spaces. Grosz (1995) tries to dissect how bodies are formed by the city and the spaces they inhabit - this model is based on the notion of *bodies and cities mutually defining each other*. She argues that an understanding of ways in which women occupy space is dependent on the exploration of the appropriation and disenfranchisement of femininity in dominant knowledge systems (Grosz, 1995). Therefore, more inclusive policy making needs to acknowledge the invaded nature of bodies and spaces as we know and understand them. The city has become the locus for the production of and circulation of power, and bodies have to negotiate in these power dynamics depending on their intersecting vulnerabilities.

By "gaze" Löw refers to the "sense of seeing" advanced by Sartre and Foucault. Sartre argues that the gaze becomes a gateway to dual awareness, of the self and of the *Other.* Relatedly, Foucault developed a meaning of "the gaze" intricately connected to the modern systems of power. In such systems, economic, political, and military organizations invented subtle strategic practices as well as novel methods of surveillance directed at individual bodies. These practices and methods were employed in institutions such as panoptic prisons, schools, the military, and hospitals. The aim was to produce docile bodies that would *self-police* because of the constant possibility of being watched by the ever-present invisible "gaze" of those in positions of power.

Subsequently, feminists have deepened the understanding of "the gaze" and argued that the way men look at women with a particular "male gaze" tends to objectify women. Additionally, on the topic of

the modernization of power, feminist philosopher Bartky (2009) criticized Foucault for treating the bodily experiences of all genders in the same way. She argues that in contemporary patriarchal culture, most women have a "panoptical male connoisseur" constantly present inside their consciousness (Pederson, 2020, p. 378).

> *"Before women see themselves through their own eyes, they are disciplined to consider what the "male gaze" would have them do in terms of behavior, look, dress, posture, and movement* (Pederson, 2020, p.378)."

Spatial expressions of patriarchy

Valentine (1989) argues that women's fear is geographical - they are afraid of male violence in public spaces and being victim-blamed after enduring different forms of sexual violence. Therefore, they create their own 'mental maps' of environments they fear. And because of the nature of their fear, they tend to perceive and experience public space differently than men. However, this fear of public space loops women into a system of male dominance which is detrimental to their independence and freedom as it results in women having to depend on men to be protected from male violence. Pederson (2020) argues that transport-related inequalities do not exist in a vacuum but are embedded into larger structures like the government, economy, workplace policies, social hierarchies etc that play a monumental role in maintaining an uneven gendered playing field in a male-dominated society.

Patriarchal norms and values have a 'ghost-like' presence as people tend to internalize norms and values for social acceptance which outweighs the benefits of their own well-being (Sidesinger, 2019). As patriarchal and harmful practices are woven into the fabric of society, it becomes difficult for women and other marginalized groups to make sense of their own experiences or even make it intelligible to others. This results in the spatial expression of patriarchy to be structural, but it can also relational as the expression is inherently dependent upon the creation of different spaces (Pederson, 2020).

Urbanization processes and VAW

> *"The term 'violence against women' means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life (p.3)."*
> United Nations Declaration of the Violence Against Women (1993, p.3)

McIlwane (2013) addresses the nature and paradoxes between urbanization and gender-based violence, especially violence against women. While the underlying causes of GBV are rooted in patriarchal norms and values, certain triggers and risks can lead to variations of GBV between urban and rural areas. Even though urban settings can promise to provide women with opportunities to *cope*

with violence, in relation to access to economic resources and institutional support, instances of structural patriarchy can harm women even when they have to access such needs.

Social relations are likely to be fragmented in urban areas intertwined with the pressures of urban living like poor housing conditions and the physical configuration of urban areas like unsafe roads and public transport. Ultimately, cities do not generate gender-based violence but the *processes* of urbanization can create higher risks for women to be targeted under this violence. GBV is not limited to micro level interactions but pans out through structural inequalities deeply embedded with communal and societal processes (McIlwane, 2006, p.2).

Feminist perspectives now carry a lot of nuance as their critique has moved further from just the public-private binaries perpetuating gender roles in the city that lead to marginalization and exclusion of certain bodies. New terrains of feminist thought bring a fresh light to old problems by allowing subjectivity, sexuality, corporeality and the place of the imaginary to come to the fore (Watson, 2000). This challenges us to rethink spaces for women and gender minorities which are sensitive to their lived experiences.

c. Feminist urban geography

In *Bodies, Gender, Cities,* Watson (2000) highlights that due to the last fifty years of feminist campaigns urban research and theory has led to greater recognition of gender inequalities and become sensitive towards the specific needs and experiences of women in urban and social policy debates. If we observe quantitative data in the Global North, women's experiences in the urban areas regarding higher education, certain occupational sectors and home ownership rates has improved significantly since the past but broad statistical brush strokes mask greater complexities and subjectivities in lieu of women's experiences in the urban. Therefore, qualitative and ethnographic data collection is encouraged to reveal the subtle ways in which gender inequalities consistently persist. Even though the re-theorisations of space in different disciplines like sociology, philosophy and cultural theory has unraveled issues of marginalization and inequalities in the city, Watson (2000) argues that contemporary debates need to engage with questions about the *kind* of cities and spaces that are being offered to different genders amidst the huge social and economic shifts over the last century.

Therefore, contemporary feminist urban theory focuses on post-structuralist ideas of subjectivity, identity and meaning where space is considered as "fragmented, imploding, imaginative, subjective, unknowable and fantastic" as it is intertwined with power and difference (p.102). Watson's (2000) work on qualitative research methodologies examines how different subjectivities are formed in 'city sites' and how the same spaces can be experienced and lived in entirely different ways by different people (p.102).

In Sanz and Gil's (2020) inquiry about the discourse on gender and sexuality inequalities, they

underscore the value of *emotions* and use ethnographic methods to study conflicts that take place in the urban space along with practices of 'resistances imbued in everyday life'. They propose to restore as well as politicize the subjectivities encountered in the production of knowledge while questioning the imperatives of positivism and the reason-emotion dichotomy that demands for objectivity as the only legitimate way of producing scientific knowledge. Therefore, as ethnographers, they identify new methodological ways that allow us to legitimize everyday struggles and ways of exercising *right to the city*, not only from a class point of view but with an intersectional approach that relates to gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity.

Harvey (2012) refers to social urban movements as "spaces of hope", but the authors argue that emotions articulated in informal spaces can become equally "subversive and hopeful" which can help us explore lesser-known *everyday life resistances* that are monumental in the improvement and dynamism of an urban space. Harvey also pushes to rethink concepts of work and class because they are not only conditioned by capitalist places of work and production but also places of social reproduction, like the home. To chart out a subjective urban map, one needs to use *feelings* as part of a space that imply the repetition of practices that facilitate its appropriation. For Sanz and Gil (2020), **(i) use, (ii) participation and (iii) belonging** are the three axes through which the right to the city can be understood and they are not separated from stances on gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity and class functioning under complex neo-liberal and patriarchal models.

Amidst the geographies of fear, women tend to cognitively anticipate unwanted attention which compromises their actions and routines in the urban sphere accordingly (Pederson, 2020). These precautionary acts and morphed journeys against actual and perceived threats are called *coping strategies* (Valentine, 1989). These strategies include avoiding travel during nighttime, opting for taxis, taking indirect routes, and avoiding rush hour trains and buses due to the fear of being harassed. Opting for these strategies for their safety tends to impede women's mobility. Moreover, low-income and minority women are in double jeopardy as they have to navigate through class and ethnic socio-spatial segregations as well (Pederson, 2020). Fear and threat of gender-based violence and cultural norms that tend to invisibilise women to keep them safe have created relational mobilities, immobilities and moorings in urban movements.

d. Paradigm transitions

Several colonial and industrial cities in the Global South adapted the modern transport paradigm with car-centered mobility and no growth limits which resulted in the construction of road infrastructure like flyovers, underpasses and pedestrian bridges that eventually took away streets from people and created massive socio-spatial segregations. Public transport systems in these cities are mostly ad hoc with no planned growth initiations and a dearth of mass-transit systems. The transportation system, that is provided by weak and corrupt governance mechanisms or public-private

partnerships, only benefits a few and creates disparities amongst different classes in a developing country. Along with car-centered mobility due to weak public transport provision, there is also a major rise in ownership of motorcycles which become the easiest and fastest form of transport in cities with heavy automobile traffic.

However, now cities are trying to transition towards the sustainable mobility paradigm that aims to develop transport policies and praxis that balances economic efficiency, environmental responsibility and social equity. The sustainable mobility paradigm pushes to manage demands related to car travel rather than accommodating it through road infrastructure, but this transition is not easy as roads and car travel have become a necessity for everyday mobilities in mega-cities in the South. Bannister (2008) argues that for the sustainable mobility paradigm to become a reality, it needs to be *flexible*. More importantly, he emphasizes that for any urban policy intervention to work, necessary *conditions for change* are required. These conditions highly depend on the implementation of sustainable and innovative schemes through active involvement and action by different stakeholders in an urban space.

Hanson (2010) unpacks how gender and mobility consistently shape each other but the deep interconnected implications have been consistently underscored. Under the sustainable mobility paradigm, and for a feminist analysis, she asks how sustainable mobility can become an agent of change for gender, and to what extent can gender become an agent in creating sustainable mobility.

Relational Mobilities

Urry (2000) took on monumental work to pivot the *spatial turn* into the *mobilities turn* as he introduced the **new mobilities paradigm**. This paradigm examines the **place** of movement with the very workings of social institutions and social practices which form people's lives. (Urry and Sheller, 2006). It also emphasizes on the combinations of human and non-human physical mobilities with **communicative, virtual and imaginative** mobilities which have not been under-utilized in spatial theory. The multiple mobilities necessitate distinct examples of research to capture and represent various kinds of movements, related spatial practices and social regimes. Urry and Sheller (2016) highlight,

> *"Mobile methods not only mix together qualitative, quantitative, visual and experimental approaches such as "following things" and mobile videography but also intervene in applied problems by defining the empirical in innovative ways that point towards new problems (p.3)."*

Therefore, the emphasis is on noticing and researching the complex assemblies of movements and moorings within these mobility forms because these systems continually presuppose immobile infrastructures. The paradigm also pushes to focus on the emergence of new social practices emerging via unintended consequences through which people *use, innovate and combine* different systems. For

example, using technology but also talking to bystanders to figure out different public transportation options. Lastly, the new paradigm argues against analyzing a **fixed place** so there can be a more dynamic analysis of networks, relations, flows and circulation in mobilities research (Urry and Sheller, 2016).

To mobilize this new mobilities paradigm, three new theories have been developed: complexities theory, social-technical transitions theory and social practice theory because the scope of mobilities research has gone far beyond studying public transport to eventually map and follow physical and virtual terrains of interconnected systems and of uneven mobilities. Urry and Sheller's work together focused on Lefebvre's theorisation of the production of space and Massey's relational analysis of space where she sees it as "the product of interrelations" and "always under construction." (p.9, Massey, 2005). The new mobilities paradigm has helped extend spatial thinking to new terrains beyond political economy and geography and towards cultural sociology in the same vein as Massey (2005).

Patriarchal Bargains

Turkish feminist scholar Deniz Kandiyoti (1988) analyzes how patriarchy is the most overused yet under theorized concept in feminist theory because it is mostly understood without contextualizing how it functions under different economic and socio-political structures. This liberal approach to patriarchy can obfuscate us from understanding the inner workings of culturally distinct arrangements between genders. She identifies a different entry-point to understand workings of patriarchy where women have to *strategize* within a set of concrete constraints that vary in relation to their class, caste and ethnicity - she calls these strategies. These bargains in any given space reflect the gendered subjectivities of everyday experiences in contested spaces.

Kandiyoti expands on examples of women´s accommodations in the deeply embedded *classic patriarchy* in contrast with other forms (and resistances to) patriarchy in Kenya - she highlights Iran, Turkey and Pakistan in her work which have overt and covert forms of gender segregation. Women who have to work for wages in these contexts sometimes use "modesty markers" like veiling to be accepted and protected in society. However, she also highlights that this specific analysis of veiling does not by any means exhaust the range of tactics that women employ to maneuver through patriarchal systems.

Therefore, systemic analyses of women's tactics and coping strategies can help us understand the nature of patriarchal systems in their context-dependent temporalities and reveal how men and women resist, accommodate, adapt, and conflict with each other over resources, rights, and responsibilities (p.285). The systems of male dominance which women have to negotiate and strategize impact the forms and positionalities of their resistance and struggles. She emphasizes how it is crucial to equip ourselves with better understanding of **short and medium-term strategies** of

women in different social locations to reveal how feminist consciousness operates in an urban space riddled with class, ethnic and gender marginalities.

Patriarchal Accommodations

Even though patriarchy aims to confine women, it also utilizes them for capitalist gains which paradoxically increases their mobility. Patriarchal state institutions tend to mediate between global economic pressures and gender-differentiated cultural practices that are *realized* by women themselves. Andrews and Shahrokni (2014) study the new mobilities paradigm and argue that women gained mobility through the very gendered policies that attempted to confine or exclude them. They used 'linked ethnographies' as a method between Tehran, Iran and San Pedro, Mexico to understand the impact of gender-segregated transport on women's mobility. 'Patriarchal accommodations' driven from 'reactive' gendered policies played an imperative role in facilitating women's access to education, employment and consumption (Andrews and Shahrokni, 2014, p.169).

The cases of Iran and San Pedro elucidate how "global economic pressures intersect with local patriarchal policies to carve out new and differentiated mobilities, at particular places and moments (p.3)". Both cities extended gendered segregations which hampers women to fully exercise their right to the city into new forms of mobility. In Tehran, women became the majority of bus riders as soon as the state segregated public transport, and women from the rural San Pedro predominantly began to migrate to the United States. Scholarship on globalization and gender attributes growing forms of women's mobility to the growth in western egalitarianism in conjunction with global economic pressures. Local, gender-differentiated frameworks centered on the ideas of modesty and segregation accommodate new practices of movement for women.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender-segregated transport isn't a new phenomenon - it has been introduced in several Global South cities across the world, along with Tokyo because of gender-based violence and institutional inequalities (Guardian, 2015). However, gender-segregated transport policy is perceived and contested differently; it is either welcomed as a haven by women or considered an unfair measure that invisibilizes them from the public sphere. The local culture and value systems of each *place* lead to a specific kind of response to gendered transport policies.

In the following section, I highlight cases of such policies from different parts of the world impacting women's daily mobilities in a myriad ways. The main factors that lead to the initiation of gendered public transport policy are (i) transport and infrastructural poverty (ii) socio-cultural factors and (iii) fear and enactment of gender-based violence in the city which have been discussed in academic debates attributing to critical gender, transport and mobilities research. These causes are interrelated and reinforce each other if policymakers do not confront underlying issues in urban spaces like the patriarchal dominance on women's bodies, poor developmental legacies and weak policy implementation mechanisms.

a. Transport and infrastructural poverty

Poverty in public transportation impacts women adversely as it is not easy for them to get on and get off transport services that are not properly built, and they are not fully comfortable walking without pavements and waiting at precarious bus stops. Burns (2017) argues that gender transport poverty can be classified as a *wicked problem* in urban studies which means that it cannot be adequately comprehended in isolation from the bigger systems it is part of (Rittel and Webber, 1973). Wicked problems can be understood as socio-cultural issues that are difficult to overcome because of incomplete or contradictory knowledge, the number of people and opinions involved, economic burdens, and the interconnectedness with other problems (ibid). Faiz et al. (2018) researching gender transport inequality in Malaysia and Pakistan highlights that in low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) along with inadequate public transport provision, women's mobility is also linked to socio-political, economic and cultural problems which makes it a wicked problem. Rather than attempting to dissect these issues, policymakers introduce gender-segregation in public transport to show that they care when they are plastering over deeper societal issues.

b. Socio- cultural factors

Furthermore, these include religious factors, strong public-private division and an inherent culture of segregation which can mobilise gender-segregated public transport. Sil, Chowdhury and Thoreau (2023) position themselves from the South and emphasize that women from South and Southeast Asia encounter unique mobility barriers because of poor transport services and patriarchal societal norms. They further unpack how international policies cannot be contextualized to solve local

problems because policies as they are *interpreted and adapted* in different ways. A systematic literature review revealed that the socio-cultural barriers included (i) patriarchal society and disproportionate household dynamics (ii) hostile bystanders' attitude and (iii) blame for victimization has resulted in some countries of the South to opt for segregated transport services for women.

c. Fear and enactment of gender-based violence

Gender based violence is a big motivator to introduce gender-segregated public transport in cities where women are continually considered second-class citizens. Research on gender-based violence and public transport includes both subjective and objective reasons that result in women feeling unsafe in public spaces. The objective parameters include levels of service, schedule information, infrastructure design, and design capacity and the subjective parameters include educating people about forms of harassment, urban campaigns for safe spaces, and using legal measures to improve safety and accessibility for women (Kacharo, Teshome, Wolmato, 2022).

The overlapping reasons, one influencing the other, results in the provision of different forms of gender-segregated public transport rather than addressing underlying structural problems that don't give equal space for women in the city. The table below outlines the different gendered policies that were introduced in various cities to segregate women in public transport to make transit spaces safer and more accessible for them. However, the failure to inculcate gender and mobility with other systemic issues has resulted in varied operations of such gendered policies with an array of perceptions from both men and women regarding such policy initiations. I discuss the bones of contention that come up when introducing gendered policy to solve this wicked problem. These are **safety vs invisibilisation**, **short term solution vs ignoring systemic issues** and **respecting culture vs institutionalizing segregation**.

d. Social and cultural geographies of mobility

The feminist critique of gender-blind transportation elucidates the problems of studying gender and transport rather than understanding gender and everyday mobilities (Law, 1999). The new approaches to understanding everyday mobilities situate *spaces* in certain social and cultural geographies further arguing for the systemic treatment of gender as a theoretical concept. When gender is theorized in a space, it can reveal demands, strategies and moorings of everyday travel by women and gender minorities. Gender structures social relations, gives meaning to spaces, organizing multiple aspects of daily life. However, daily mobility is shaped by gender through activities in time and space, access to resources and experiences of embodiment, which gives meaning to mobility practices and settings creating gendered environments (p.576).

Cities	Years	Policies	Operations	Perceptions
Mumbai	1992	Women-only compartment in Local Train	Still working as women from the city and peripheries are making use of it.	Mixed compartments are sometimes considered men-only as men want to dominate that space.
Delhi, Tamil Nadu & Karnatka	2022	Public buses free for women	As women do shorter and more frequent trips, the Free Fare Scheme increased women's mobility and motility.	Uproar by men stating that they are subsidizing women's travel.
Jakarta	2012	Women-only carriages in commuter trains Women have 1/3rd of the section in public buses.	Discontinued in six months because of less capacity	One in three buses will have to be women-only to accommodate segregation in public buses.
Tokyo	2001	Women-only sections in commuter trains	Functioning until today but sparse and low frequency.	Men complain that rush hours become even more intense
Sao Paolo	1990	Segregated carriages in subway trains	Discontinued in 1997	Feminist organisations and international community fought against the policy of segregation
Cairo	2000	Segregated sections in metro	Still active but not with increasing frequency	Men claim that women's presence in the workplace is congesting public transport for men.
Dubai	2013 and 2017	Pink Taxis and women-only carriages during rush hours in metro	Active - works in all parts of the city and stands outside most public spaces like malls, airports, parks and public squares.	Due to the prevalence of Islam and culture of segregation, the policies are welcomed by both men and women.
Mexico City	2002 2009	Women-only sections introduced in trains	Active. GBV didn't reduce so INMUJERES (Women's Department initiated socio-legal campaigns to spread awareness and empower women.	Well received and the campaign helped people learn more about gender-segregation and why women's safety is a priority

Table 01: Gendered transport policies in different parts of the world

i. Safety vs Invisibilsation

Providing safety has been one of the topmost goals when introducing gender-segregated transport. The ideology lies behind the idea of hiding women to protect them, but this protectionist mindset is at the cost of invisbilising their presence, identity, labor, power and agency. Mumbai's local trains are very cramped but chosen by several women to travel because they are cheap, available for long routes that allow people to travel easily from the periphery to the center and also have a gender-segregated compartment for women which was introduced in 1992 to provide safer means for them to commute. The centrality of Mumbai locals in the lives of its citizens is apparent; it is a means to commute in the growing global city that connects different urban forms and landscapes with another.

Maria (2023) studied the experiences of women living in the peripheries of Mumbai utilizing the local railway as a means for everyday travel. She specifically focused on what it means for women to take such long journeys for work or travel and how it impacts their agency and well-being. The results are two-fold; on the one hand, an increase in mobility does not necessarily improve women's agency and well-being because they have to navigate in a space that is primarily dominated by men and has the constant threat of gender-based violence. But, on the other hand, ladies' compartments in the local trains become a critical place for women as they collaboratively repurpose public infrastructure to meet their day-to-day needs and this place-making has the potential to improve their agency and overall well-being even if it creates gendered segregation. Therefore, the question arises, is it more important to stay safe or hidden when navigating the urban sphere? Immediate protection is warranted in gender-segregated transport provisions which can result in an increase in women using public transport. However, segregation can only guarantee limited safety in specifc spaces, and these strict binaries of male-female segregations violently exclude trans individuals who can be a target of GBV in men's areas and of exclusion in women's if strict gendered segregations perpetuate.

ii. Short-term Solution vs Ignoring Systemic Issues

Arundhati (2023) adds that even though these segregated compartments protect women from sexual assault, class and ethnic based conflicts still exist between women in these in-between gender segregated places. Moreover, normalizing gender segregation by having ladies-only compartments results in the labeling of mixed compartments as **men-only** spaces which impacts the daily interactions and negotiations between men and women in the railway. Jakarta introduced women-only carriages on commuter trains in 2012 which were painted in bright pink to distinguish them from mixed carriages. However, because of less capacity, the segregated carriages were reverted into mixed ones in only six months. Poor public transport provision has resulted in citizens opting for dangerous modes of travel like being on the rooftop of carriages to go from one place to another to earn a livelihood (Asia News, 2013). Gender-based violence is an on-going problem in public transportation in Jakarra which is why one-third section of mixed buses is reserved only for women. Following these trends, if women-only buses are introduced in Jakarta it would mean that every third bus would need to be women-only. And if a woman wants to ride in the segregated section her wait

would be three times longer than waiting for the mixed bus. Consequently, this would also increase the wait time for men by 1.5 times as they are being provided two buses instead of three (Nusantara Economics, 2015).

Gender-segregated transport in Japan dates to 1912 when the Chuo Line was introduced in Tokyo to provide safe transport to schoolgirls traveling during rush hours. Later some trams introduced women-only sections in the 1930s. The women-only car system in the Japanese metro was introduced in 2000 because of rampant assault cases on public transportation in the country mostly referred to as *chikan* (Ito, 2023). More than 50% of Japanese women have gone through *chikan* as there have been several groping incidents in crammed public transport. After persistent protesting and rallying by anti-harassment organizations in the 1990s, women-only cars were introduced in 2001 in the country. Several Japanese men have complained about this service saying that this makes rush hours even worse as more men are concentrated in less space because there are separate cars available only for women. However, this service allows women to travel in peace and some men are also okay with this segregation as it prevents them from being wrongly accused for accidentally touching a woman during rush hours (ibid).

Activists and urbanists in Latin American countries have honed into the deeper systemic issue of GBV and the gendered right to the city to bring reform in socio-legal work through bottom-up initiatives. Segregated carriages were introduced in subway trains in Sao Paulo in 1990 to reduce gender-based violence but the segregation was discontinued in 1997. However, Rio de Janeiro introduced a similar policy in its metro system in 2006 because of rapidly increasing harassment cases (Kanga, 2022). Feminist groups from Brazil and international organizations questioned this policy, and during the #MeToo Movement, a campaign by women and girls was initiated in the country called *Chega de Fiu Fiu* which translates into English as 'Enough with the Catcalls' to raise awareness about sexual harassment (Moss, 2015). The multi-modal campaign produced a collective map where women and girls could mark the places where they had been harassed to illustrate the scale and density of such cases in the urban arena.

In Mexico, nine out of ten women face sexual violence in the public transit system (National Board for the Prevention of Discrimination). Therefore, to improve women's everyday mobility in the city, INMUJERES targeted the judicial and transit system to bring an end to institutional discrimination against women (Dunckel-Graglia, 2013). They painted women's sections in pink to raise awareness about this segregation, distributed flyers that provided information on reporting against sexual harassment, and initiated a programme called *Viajemos Seguras* (We Women Travel Safely). The program established monitoring stations throughout the subway system, encouraging women to report any form of harassment. Additionally, they maintain billboards, posters, bumper stickers etc for all kinds of public transit in Mexico City. Each announcement has the title "Es nuestra derecha a viajar sin miedo" ("It is our right to travel without fear") with a toll-free, 24-hour hotline number

below it to report harassment. Examples from Latin American cities illustrate that short-term solutions can also address systemic issues through informative interventions by the state and civil society which can reform collective consciousness.

iii. Respecting Culture vs Institutionalising Segregation

Policymakers aim to respect cultural norms when introducing gendered interventions to promote social harmony. These norms are also rooted in religion - the concept of *purdah* (veling) is predominant in Muslim countries. With a conservative culture of place and complicated gender politics, Cairo introduced segregated sections for women in its metro system in 2000 to provide a comfortable and safe transport solution to women who had to endure gender-based violence in transport regularly (Miskin, 2015). However, misogynist men in Egypt claim that women's presence in the workplace has resulted in congestion in public transport systems rather than thinking that the public space should be as much for women as it is for men (Institute for Transportation and Development Policy, 2018).

Moreover, Dubai, a global metropolitan with secular policies, also has a culture of veiling and segregation. Therefore, there are women-only carriages during rush hours in the metro and segregated taxi services for women as well called the Pink Taxis (Baker 2019; Marnicio 2016). This allows certain women who veil themselves to feel freer in public transportation and the segregation also increases their overall mobility as patriarchal men sometimes do not allow women to take mixed transportation systems. Respecting culture allows spaces to be open for women where they can be themselves freely but institutionalizing segregation results in a loss of mix-gender spaces and takes away the inherent right to the city. This undermines women's rights in the public sphere and normalizes gender-based violence in various forms. Furthermore, institutionalising segregation concretises socio-spatial segregation which leads to inequitable access for several amenities in the city.

Socio-spatial and cultural contexts of each city highlight the contestations that arise when introducing gender-segregation in public transport systems. Therefore, exploring the dynamics of a city are crucial to dissect the implications of segregation. Sadana (2022) in *The Moving City: Scenes from the Delhi Metro and Social Life of Infrastructure* conducts ethnographic explorations in Delhi's metro and its impact on the city's urban life. By observing daily life of commuters she comments on how the city is *shaped* by both - the metro and those who depend on it by highlighting issues of class, gender and modernity in relation to urban infrastructure. By focusing on the *concretized inequalities,* she articulates *radical possibilities* through bottom-up findings that reveal what it takes morally and materially to sustain urban life.


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IV. CONTEXT

a. National

Women in Pakistan make more than half of the population and need transport options to 'study, work or consume' along with the added burden of moving for their required care work responsibilities (Iqbal et al., 2020). However, women's mobility is constantly curbed because of transport poverty in the city and conservative values that demarcate public and private spaces according to people's gender; masculinity becomes synonymous with mobility, and femininity is associated with 'fixity, passivity, and the private sphere' (Andrews and Shahrokni, 2014). A study in 2019 recorded the types of harassment (verbal, non-verbal and physical) that women face in public spaces and it reveals that 92.2% women faced at least one type of harassment in public spaces (Anwar et al., 2019).

In 2004, the first gender-segregated line was initiated in Karachi but closed down shortly after its inauguration because of low frequency and missed timelines, which rendered the service useless as the buses were not available at peak hours when women needed them the most. In 2012, another segregated line was introduced in Lahore - another big city in Pakistan - by a public-private company but funding was pulled back as the project wasn't considered commercially viable (Fazal, 2023). A women-only service was introduced in 2019 by the KP Government but funded by the Japanese government and facilitated by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and UN Women Pakistan, but the project lasted only a year because of several contract violations, like not running on certified routes and boarding male passengers on the bus (Hoti 2019; Fazal 2023).

b. Local

Karachi has a population of over 21 million individuals belonging to different ethnicities, coming from all around the country to find work or themselves in the metropolis but the ever-growing urban dwellings and poor infrastructure have now begun to suffocate the city. The city is ranked the worst in the world in terms of public transport provision even though 60% of the city's population solely depends on it (Khawar, 2017; MisterAuto, 2017). Accountability is fragmented in the city with the military controlling most of the wealthy areas and the constant tiff between the federal and the provincial governments as they contest through various political motivations in relation to the city.Despite its importance, Karachi is a political orphan which means that the city's problems belong to everyone and no one at the same time (Mangi, 2020).

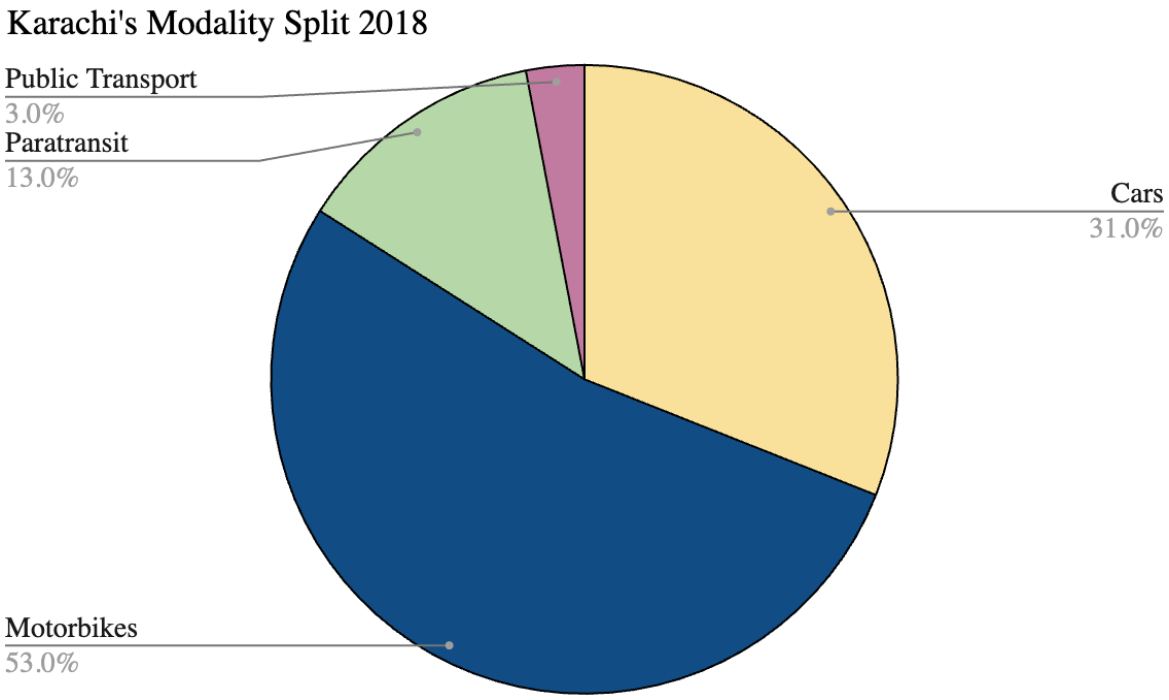


Chart 01: Karachi's Modality Split 2018

The ever-growing population of Karachi uses different forms of transport including cars, motorcycles, public transport paratransit (rickshaw and taxis) hired privately (Chart 1). The existing public transport infrastructure has only 4.5% fleet and meets only 42% of the consumer's demand. Private vehicles comprise 36% of the fleet on road which carry only 21% of the passengers. The disproportionate division between public and private fleets and the people it serves illustrates the increasing transport poverty in the city (Mangi, 2020).

Between 2000-2016, there was a 65% reduction in the number of buses and the ownership of motorcycles skyrocketed. In 1990, the city had only 450,000 registered motorcycles which increased to around 2 million by 2015, and it is estimated that by 2030 there will be 2.5 million motorcycles registered in the city (Hasan and Raza, 2015). Motorcycles are cheap and compact and allow maneuvering through Karachi's crazy traffic and poor road infrastructure. Even if people travel in buses or minibuses, after a point in their journey, they have to walk or commute on a motorcycle or a rickshaw to get to home because it is impossible for the bus to enter small lanes where mosr urban dwellings exist. The economic and social disparity in the city is huge where private four-wheelers are owned and used by the rich one percent while the rest of the population has to cram themselves in constellations of different forms of transport (Chart 2).

Big buses and minibuses also have the inherent gender segregation with women in front of the bus and men at the back. Minibuses have the capacity to fit 25 people, but this segregation provides only seven seats to women. Therefore, women sometimes sit on the engine which is next to the driver's seat which makes them vulnerable to the driver's intentional or unintentional touch while changing gears and being leered at by men as they are facing their section on the commute (Hasan and Raza, 2015). The minibuses have more routes and can withstand the narrow roads and dilapidated road infrastructure of the city but do not have enough capacity to accommodate people which results in buses being overloaded with men sometimes having to sit on the roof of the bus. Consequently, Karachi's seat to passenger ratio is staggeringly low (1:40) and women are given only one-third of the seats in this poor provision of public transport.

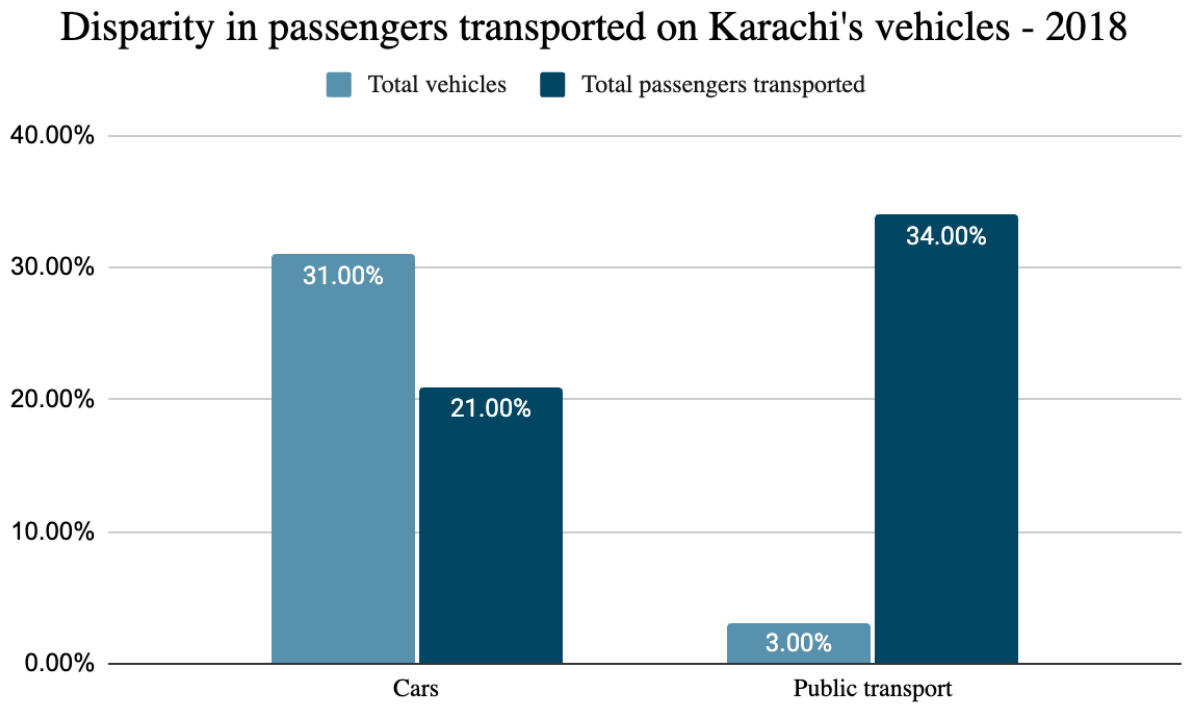


Chart 02: Disparity in cars and public transport usage in Karachi - 2018

Through the findings of the quantitative survey, the Iqbal, Woodcock and Osmond (2020) laid out that women have to disproportionately face mobility poverty, affordability poverty, transport poverty, time poverty and sex-based poverty compared to men. Adeel et al (2016) used the nationally representative data of Time-Use Survey to examine gender differences in daily trip rate, mode choice, travel duration and purpose of travel to decode gender inequality in mobility and mode choice in Pakistan. They found that social and cultural context of the country that renders women as secluded and the on 'family honor' that mostly burdens the character of women is deeply influential in their mobility and type of activities.

Asian Development Bank (2014) conducted a rapid assessment on sexual harassment in public transportation in Karachi and connected spaces by collecting qualitative and quantitative data from females travelling in buses, mini-buses and chingchis. 230 female commuters shared their experiences of sexual harassment in public transport which included consistent staring or leering and deliberate eye contact as well as groping along with crude comments, sexual innuendos and obscene gestures directed towards women in or near the public transport. Other forms of harassment include men stalking women, blocking their way or touching women sitting on the back seats of chingchis and quickly speeding away with their motorcycles.

Sexual harassment in public transport is rampant and normalised in the city which results in women sometimes verbally retaliating but mostly ignoring such remarks or acts towards them. Women blame the culture of place and lack of education which has resulted in them suffocating in public transport. The design of public transport services does not recognize the needs and mobility patterns of women along with their ever-growing concerns, priorities and preferences in the city's contested landscape. The prevalence of harassment further invisibilises them from the public sphere as they struggle to participate in educational and professional activities which can in turn improve their economic and social mobility.

V. PEOPLE'S BUS SERVICE & THE PINK BUS

To provide better mobility solutions to the people of Karachi, the provincial government introduced the People's Bus Service under a public-private partnership with the Asian Development Bank. Under this service, 270 buses with international standard infrastructure were imported from China and Turkey with more coming in sporadic installments. The Red Bus Line runs on eight routes connecting major residential hubs with industrial and business centers which the working- and middle-class residents of the city can utilize. The fair is quite affordable at Rs.50 (€0.17) per ride in the metropolis and Rs.100 (€0.34) after the Malir Halt boundary. The buses are air conditioned and have the capacity for 40 people to sit and 30 to stand with a trained bus driver and conductor to manage tickets as there is no transport card system available for the public. Even though the Red Buses are mixed, women occupy the front of the bus and use the front door to enter the bus while men use the back door. This segregation is normalized in public buses in Karachi and has been an unspoken rule since the inception of public buses in the city because of a conservative culture of place. But the Sindh Government introduced a separate women-only bus called the Pink Bus on three out of eight routes on which the Red Bus runs. The infrastructure of the buses is the same, they are just painted in bright pink and only provide service to only femme-presenting individuals and their accompanying children. The buses run on less frequency during rush hours so women can ride comfortably in the already crammed public bus system (Think Transportation, 2024).

Under the shadow of transport poverty, I aim to investigate the effects of gender segregation in public transportation on women's daily mobility, visibility and safety behavior in Karachi, Pakistan. The Pink Bus offers a unique opportunity to explore these questions in the context of a specific policy intervention aimed at addressing gender segregation in public transport. The issue also highlights the potential trade-offs between safety and visibility, implementing short term policy solution and ignoring systemic issues, and respecting cultural norms and institutionalizing segregation in a patriarchal and conservative setting that can result from such interventions.
I use the single case of the Pink Bus in Karachi to understand how the policy and the city interact with each other by studying the body and spatial politics of women using this segregated line.


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VI. METHODOLOGY

Sarah Harding (1987) posits how feminist inquirers have raised fundamental questions when studying the social life of men and women, the issues of methods, methodology and epistemology are intertwined to understand how the traditional forms of analyses can be **undone** or at the least questioned. Research methods are *ways* of evidence-gathering techniques that fall into one of the three categories: (i) listening to or interviewing informants, (ii) observing behavior and (iii) examining historical traces and records around the topic. These methods have been used by both feminist inquirers and traditional androcentric researchers. However, the *way* feminists carry out these methods is strikingly different; they listen carefully to their informants, they observe social behaviors and practices that historically haven't been thought to be important and they seek examples of newly recognized patterns in secondary data.

The methodology of this research is feminist and decolonial as it aims to understand how a policy is manifested from a bottom-up level impacting everyday mobilities of female bus riders in Karachi. Women and gender-minorities in the city are treated as second-class citizens therefore the policies designed for them are mostly a compensation for not providing safe and accessible spaces for them in the city. A bottom-up approach helps understand the usage of this service along with the grievances and demands of the people connected to the service. More importantly, this approach can help enhance the implementation and effectiveness of policies in a volatile state with weak accountability mechanisms.

Feminist and decolonial discourses have the capacity to unravel the diversity and unpredictability of political, social and cultural life. These discourses support the subversion and change in these landscapes not only to bridge the distance from the margins to the center but to also bring crucial knowledge that tends to be ignored at the margins. An intersectional approach to feminism allows us to view multiple **sites of oppression** and to **reject universalisms** around gendered experiences by being more critical and reflexive (Parashar, 2017).

The gendered policy is decoded through contextual understanding and local insight as I deploy qualitative methods encompassing observations, unstructured interviews and photography during my ethnographic trips along with mining government and media documents to unravel the implications of a gender-segregated bus line in the city.

> *"For feminists, the everyday routines traced by women are never unimportant, because the seemingly banal and trivial events of the everyday are bound into the power structures which limit and confine them. The limits on women's everyday activities are structured by what society expects women to be and*

> *therefore to do. The everyday is the arena through which patriarchy is (re)created - and contested." (Rose, 1993)*

a. Social constructivist epistemology

Social constructivist theory asserts that the information that people receive through sensations and cognition in turn formulates their own experiences and knowledge. Therefore, knowledge essentially is 'constructed' through the meanings that a person attributes to people and the environment that is informed by their own memory and cognition (Ültanir, 2012). Jerome Bruner (1966) formulated this theory as he believed that people learn about the world by experiencing it and by continually reflecting on those experiences. The meaning of constructivism is therefore contingent upon one's **perspective** and **position**. To begin with, constructivism theory is neither a social nor educational theory; it is a meta and scientific theory that helps outline the possibilities and limitations of deriving meaning through everyday experiences.

> *"Constructivism is a theory about knowledge and learning... the theory defines knowledge as temporary, developmental, socially and culturally mediated, and thus, non-objective."* (Brooks & Brooks, 1993 p vii)

Constructivists don't view knowledge as a 'product' but consider *knowing as a process* (p.197). They also argue that the knowledge that people hold is rooted in their socio-political and cultural contexts along with media's influence on their everyday lives which makes this knowledge relative, temporary and heavily dependent upon observation (Ültanir, 2012, p.207). Therefore, it is the duty of the constructivist observer to structure a problem in the complex urban arena and then figure out the *ways* to analyze it. Henceforth, a social constructivist also needs to be reflexive about their positionality so that their own life stories do not take over meaning-making conducted during their research observations. The interpretivist paradigm relies on decoding the meanings and motivations of individuals to understand their behaviours and actions in a particular social environment. I use the space of the Pink Bus to understand gender and transport issues through everyday mobilities in Karachi's context. Under the social constructivist theory, I deploy decolonial and feminist methodologies to understand the implications of a gendered urban intervention. By using these methodologies, I resist western imperial research that has been asserted on the lands of the colonized for far too long.

> *"To acquiesce is to lose ourselves entirely and implicitly agree with all that has been said about us. To resist is to retrench in the margins, retrieve what we were and remake ourselves. The past, our stories local and global, the present, our communities, cultures, languages and social practices - all may be spaces of marginalization, but they have also become spaces of resistance and hope* (Smith, 1999, p.4)."

The intersubjective nature of social research means that the researcher and the people being

researched are creating meaning together. In the following section, I highlight my positionality as a researcher and passenger based in Karachi but studying in Europe. Then, I discuss the qualitative methods that I mobilised to conduct this research followed by my process of data analysis.

b. Positionality

As a Karachi native, I am claiming a genealogical, cultural and political set of experiences of living in a city as an upper-class, Sunni Muslim, cis queer woman. My ethnographic trips to understand the operations and perceptions of the Pink Bus made me constantly reflect on my positionality as a female passenger of the bus service, and a researcher who has been studying gender, space and power for over three years now. The dual positionalities nuanced the participatory research process, as I was constantly observing the different social mechanisms and my own understanding and biases riding the bus. England (1994) argues that researchers' positionality and biography directly affect their fieldwork and it is a dialogical process which is structured by the researcher and the participants. It is imperative for researchers to consider the structure of their social relations, how they are accountable for them and which of their actions perpetuate those relations. She highlights that the culturally constructed nature of the social world is peppered with contradictions and complexities which need to be embraced rather than dismissed. This means that "the field" is constantly transforming and that researchers may find that they have to maneuver around unexpected circumstances. The result is research where the only inevitability seems to be unreliability and unpredictability. This, in turn, ignites the need for a broader, less rigid conception of the "appropriate" method that allows the researcher the flexibility to be more open to the challenges of fieldwork.

Stanley and Wise (1993) highlight that researchers remain human beings complete with all the usual assembly of feelings, failings, and moods. And all those things influence how we feel and understand what is going on. Our consciousness is always the medium through which the research occurs; there is no method or technique of doing research other than through the medium of the researcher (Stanley and Wise 1993, 157). Researchers do not follow a universal monolith and are differently positioned subjects with different life stories rather than dematerialized or disembodied entities.

In general, relationships with the researched could be reciprocal, asymmetrical and potentially exploitative because the researcher can potentially adopt the stance of intimidation, ingratiation, self-promotion, or supplication but a feminist researcher favors the role of the supplicant which is seeking reciprocal relationships based on empathy and mutual respect, and often sharing their knowledge with those they research (p.82). Carrying the role of the supplicant, the researcher explicitly acknowledges their reliance on the research subjects to provide insight into the subtle nuances that shape everyday lives. The appeal of the supplication lies in the potential for dealing with asymmetrical and potentially exploitative power relations by shifting a lot of power over to the researche*d.*

c. Data Collection

I collected primary and secondary data to understand the implications of the gender-segregated bus line in Karachi. I deployed ethnography, an inductive mode of qualitative research that utilizes participant observation in conjunction with interviews to collect data (Robertson & Boyle, 1984). These ethnographic methods are always in *relation* to people, spaces or people in spaces.

> *"Ethnography is concerned with the context of discovery, rather than verification, and leads to narrative descriptions and interpretations of cultural phenomena (Ibid, p.1)."*

The ethnographic data collection was done between **20 July 2023 - 25 August 2023** on three different routes where the Pink Bus runs. The journeys of the Pink Bus were done alongside multiple rides of the Red Bus (provincial) and Green Bus (federal) as well as rickshaws and cars (private) to find and get to the Pink Bus. I spent eight days (34 trips) on the field riding the Pink Bus to understand how this service works on the ground and the ways in which it impacts women's everyday mobility in the city. This data was supplemented with 36 intercept interviews with bus drivers, conductors, passengers and bystanders who told me about their perceptions and experiences of the Pink Bus. The interactions were between 15 minutes to 2 hours depending on the length of the journey the research participant and I took together and the willingness and time the participants had to answer these questions. I took notes on my phone and notebook during the ethnographic data collection and would record myself at the end of the research day along with filling out the observation guides (Appendix 2) with thick descriptions of my observations. The demographic information of the participants along with the length of interaction is provided in table 6 which is further referenced in the results.

d. Methods

I utilized an assortment of qualitative methods to gather information about how this policy works on the streets of Karachi - these include auto-ethnographic observations, unstructured interviews and photography done during my journeys (8 days; 34 trips) where I used the principles of decolonial feminist ethnography which addresses the complexities of the lived world and the constellations of power in research to bring forward varied worldviews, knowledges and lived experiences. Manning (2022) argues that integrating feminist theory into critical ethnography can help achieve *epistemological decolonisation* as it enables researchers to engage with politics of power along with recognising intersections of **voice, place and privilege** throughout the entire research process. This ethnographic method involves embodied performances of *moving with and listening to* the participants - constantly involved in a dialogic process. When I was on the field, I let the different stakeholders (passengers, conductors, drivers, bystanders) guide me as I conversed with them - I would take a longer journey if I was talking to a participant or conductor who had the time and interest to share their experiences.

i. Observations

The observations during this ethnographic research involved observing the infrastructure of the bus

and how accessible and safe it is for women to get on the bus, followed by noticing the changes in their everyday mobilities through this service including gendered behaviors and conversations. I used an observation guide[1] (table 4) to make several observations from different mobility standpoints (bus stops, inside the bus, rickshaws, and cars) and at different points in the journey such as *waiting, in-transit and getting off* (table 4); Appendix 2) to unpack the implications of this policy intervention in the city. The observations also helped me compare different forms of mobility infrastructure in the city, especially the segregated bus line (Pink Bus) to the non-segregated forms of transport (Red Bus, Green bus and rickshaws). I was constantly reflexive during my observations to make sure I understood my own biases because my observations were not to *otherize* but to integrate different stakeholders in the process. The detailed observation guides with locations, timestamps, stakeholders, behaviors, general mood and reflexive comments are available in Appendix 2 for eight ethnographic journeys (34 trips) and are interspersed in the results and discussion section with other findings referenced as Trips 1.1, 1.2...

ii. Interviews

The second strand of my ethnographic research was conducting unstructured interviews with passengers, conductors, drivers and bystanders in and around the Pink Bus. The unstructured interview technique was developed in the disciplines of anthropology and sociology as a method to elicit people's social realities. In literature, the term is used interchangeably with the terms, conversational interview, in-depth interview, and ethnographic interview. Minichiello et al. (1990) defined unstructured interviews where the question-and-answer categories are not predetermined and instead rely on social interaction *between* the researcher and the informant. Unstructured interviews can also be understood as a natural extension to participant observations because they rely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of interactions (Patton, 2002). Punch (2002) outlined that unstructured interviews are a way to understand the complex behavior of people without imposing any a *priori categorization*, which might limit the field of inquiry.

The decision to use unstructured interviews as a data collection method is governed by the researcher's *epistemology* and their study objectives. Researchers utilizing unstructured interviews often hold a constructivist lens and correspondingly design studies within an interpretive research paradigm. They believe that to make sense of a participant's world, researchers must approach it through the participant's *own* perspective and in their *own* terms (Denzin, 1989; Robertson & Boyle, 1984). No hypothesis should be made beforehand, and the purpose of inquiry is theory development rather than theory testing. In an ideal unstructured interview, the interviewer follows the interviewees' narration and generates questions spontaneously based on his or her reflections of that narration. However, the structure of the interview can be loosely defined and these dialogues are

[1] Adapted from Roller, M. R., & Lavrakas, P. J. (2015). *Applied qualitative research design: A total quality framework approach.* The Guilford Press.

often disrupted because of mobile methods especially in Karachi's loud, chaotic and busy transport atmosphere.

My focus was on women's mobilities, but it was helpful to talk to people who were not in the Pink Bus to gain more perspective about how this service is being operated and perceived in the city. I entered the field with some questions for female passengers and drivers (Appendix 1), but I kept the whole process very open-ended where I wanted to fully hear the interviewee and let the conversation flow according to their discretion. The length of my interview and my interview questions depended on the **gender** and the **journey** of the participants along with how comfortable they were answering my questions. I wanted to know more about women's experiences, so I was inclined to talk to them more, but talking to men also helped me understand how the overall service works.

iii. Photography

Like any professional photographer, when ethnographers take photographs, they situate themselves in reference to specific theories about photography, and in the context of particular social relationships. A reflexive approach to ethnographic photography means researchers are aware of the theories that inform their own photographic practice, of their relationships with the subjects that they photograph, and the power dynamics that are involved with a lens-based approach (Pink, 2007).

Visual methods were an important part of my research as I wanted to capture *how* the policy was functioning on-ground because the photos of the Pink Bus that the state provided online has all the buses standing in a line in a depot rather than operating on the roads of the city. The images of the bus maneuvering in Karachi's chaos supplement the revelatory findings about how a policy looks on paper vs how it functions on-ground.

Keeping the cultural context in mind, I did not take anyone's photograph with their face on it, but women would still feel uncomfortable when they would see the lens of my phone camera directed towards any object. This made me realize that photography can be an intrusive tool in public spaces that are so heavily segregated, and the camera lens can easily make a woman uncomfortable. Therefore, I took pictures from road and bus corners and decided not to take a lot of pictures inside the Pink Bus as it felt like a segregated space where women were traveling with ease.

iv. Secondary data mining

Another important arena for my data collection was going through information provided by media outlets about the Pink Bus that had opinions from academics, journalists, and civil society members. I began collecting articles about the Bus Rapid Transit in August 2022, when the Red Bus was inaugurated in the city. At that time, I was not in Karachi, but I was curious about how these buses were functioning back home as I had never witnessed a gender-segregated line moving on the roads of my city. The media mining (Table 2) provides perspectives of journalists, policymakers, academics and

citizens as the policy initiative unravels in the city. This was supplemented with information provided by the provincial government about the public-private investment to initiate the Bus Rapid Transit project and the Gender Action Plan under this project which aims to come up with gender-mainstreaming policies aimed to improve everyday mobility of Karachi's women. I collected articles from local newspapers over a year along with retrieving state documents to understand the narrative of the media and the state regarding this segregated line which would help decode the power structures, ideologies and motivations behind such policies.

v. Methods metamorphosis

Even though my methodology remained the same throughout the course of the study, the methods for data collection transformed. I planned to conduct observations and in-depth interviews with passengers and policymakers. But my ethnographic trips were interspersed with intercept interviews that helped me collect rich data on women's mobility patterns and perceptions of the Pink Bus. I tried to contact several policymakers like the Information and Transport Minister as well as members of the parliament who were working on this project to understand their motivations behind the initiation of the policy and how they plan on implementing it but I did not receive any response. I also went to the People's Bus Service office as well as the depots where all the buses are parked but the security guard refused to let me in. A female bus conductor also inquired if I could interview someone in the administrative office, but they gave a harsh rejection saying that I require a permission slip from the government to interview them. England (1994) discusses how research is a *process* and not just a product as it requires us to continually reflect on and learn from past experiences and be open to transforming our methods according to the needs of the situation. Therefore, I decided to conduct a discourse analysis after mining through media articles and government documents to reveal what the policymakers were informing and portraying vs the reality on ground.

		Key:		Pink Bus article
				People's Bus Service article
S. No.	**Date**	**News Agency**	**Author**	**Headline**
	People's bus service was inaugurated on June 27th, 2022			
	2022			
1	June 27th, 2022	Tribune	Hafeez Tunio	Bilawal inaugurates Peoples Bus Service in Karachi
2	June 28th, 2022	DAWN	Shazia Hasan	Peoples bus service starts commercial operation on one of seven routes
3	June 28th, 2022	Pakistan Today	News Desk	People's Bus Service: 100 more buses reach Karachi from China
4	July 2nd, 2022	DAWN	Staff Reporter	Second route of 'red buses' launched in Karachi
5	July 17th, 2022	DAWN	Gulraiz Khan	PEOPLE AND THE PEOPLES' BUS SERVICE: How to save Karachi's new bus service
6	July 21st, 2022	DAWN	Staff Reporter	Another route of Peoples Bus Service launched in Karachi
7	August 21st, 2022	DAWN	Imran Ayub	Setback for Karachiites as Sindh govt cuts key routes of Peoples bus
8	October 13th, 2022	Zameen Blog	Yousuf Mazhar	Peoples Bus Service: Karachi's New Air-conditioned Transport Project
9	December 13th, 2022	Graana	Muhammad Jahanzaib	People's Bus Service, Karachi: History, Routes & More
	2023			
10	January 15th, 2023	DAWN	Hawwa Fazal	Will Karachi's pink bus finally break the glass ceiling or crash into it yet again?
13	February 6th, 2023	The Guardian	Zofeen T. Ebrahim	Can Karachi's women-only pink buses drive change in Pakistan?
14	February 11th, 2023	DAWN	Zofeen T. Ebrahim	Women's mobility
15	February 18th, 2023	The News	Sumeta Afzal Syed	Pink Bus Service: a way of mobility with dignity and safety
16	March 1st, 2023	The News	Staff Reporter	Pink bus service to start operation on two new routes today

17	March 2nd, 2023	DAWN	Staff Reporter	Pink bus service termed step towards women empowerment
18	March 6th, 2023	Zameen Blog	Yousaf Mazhar	Pink Bus Service in Karachi: Route, Timings & More!
19	April 6th, 2023	DAWN	Peerzada Salman	The bus ride
20	April 10th, 2023	DAWN	Imran Ayub	Sindh govt shelves plan to increase fare of Peoples Bus Service
21	April 29th, 2023	Profit	Shahzad Paracha	Has the 'Peoples' Bus Service fallen prey to the people's representatives?
22	May 9th, 2023	Car Base	ProPK Staff	Peoples' Bus Service is Becoming a Problem for Travelers
23	May 18th, 2023	DAWN	Staff Reporter	Sharjeel vows to expand fleet of Peoples Bus Service
24	April 9th, 2023	DAWN	Staff Reporter	Sindh govt to launch Peoples Bus Service on Lyari Expressway
26	April 24th, 2023	DAWN	Ibrahim Farooqi	Passenger narrates Red Bus ordeal
30	August 3rd, 2023	Pakistan Today	Staff Reporter	Female drivers to steer 'women-only' pink buses in Sindh
31	October 4th, 2023	Hamari Web	Web Desk	Pink Bus Karachi: Complete Guide to Routes, Timings, and Fares (2023)
32	December 23rd, 2023	Bol News	Web Desk	Karachi's Red Bus Service unveiled routes, fares, and timing
	2024			
33	January 11th, 2024	Times of Karachi	Web Desk	Karachi's People's Bus Service fleet expands to 192 buses with activation of 30 hybrids
34	March 19th, 2024	The News	Staff Reporter	Peoples Bus Service benefitting over 100,000 commuters daily in Karachi, says Sharjeel
35	March 28th, 2024	DAWN	Hawwa Fazal	A year on, pink buses continue to empower women on Karachi's roads
46	April 6th, 2024	The News	Staff Reporter	Second phase of Pink Bus Service to be launched after Eid
37	April 23rd, 2024	The News	Staff Reporter	Faryal Talpur launches two new routes of women-only pink buses in Karachi
38	April 23rd, 2024	DAWN	Imran Ayub	Women can travel free of cost in Karachi's pink buses for two months

Table 02

: Media mining about the Pink bus from local newspapers

PINK BUS		Operations	Perceptions
Frequency	micro	What is the frequency of the bus on the ground?	What do passengers, conductors and bystanders think about the frequency of the bus?
	meso	What do civic actors say about the frequency of the bus?	What kind of narratives are provided by media outlets on the frequency of the bus?
	macro	What role does the state play to maintain the frequency of the bus?	What promises have the politicians made about the frequency of the bus?
Accessibility	micro	Who is the bus accessible for on the ground?	What do the riders think about the accessibility of the bus?
	meso	How does civil society ensure that the bus is accessible for differently-abled people?	How does civil society perceive the accessibility of the bus?
	macro	What measures are used by institutional bodies to make the bus accessible?	What narratives do institutions produce on the accessibility of the service?
Safety	micro	What features make this segregated bus safe?	What are the perceptions of safety in and around the bus?
	meso	Is the bus safe for all citizens in the city?	Do civic actors consider this service to be safe?
	macro	What measures has the state taken to ensure women's safety in these buses?	What safety narratives do politicians posit through this segregated service?

Table 03: Framework of analysis

Date: 20/07/23	**Time:** 10:00am-01:30pm	**Route:** Red Bus R10 (Clock Tower to II Talwar)	
Day 1 – trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Clock Tower, DHA	Clock Tower –II Talwar	II Talwar, DHA
Type of stakeholder(s)	A security guard and another man sitting outside the restaurant under the umbrella shade	Male Bus Conductor	Female domestic worker and retired old man
Behavior(s)	The men stared at me for a bit, confused as to why am I not taking the buses that would stop in front of me	Trying to segregate men and women in the mixed bus.	Reserved and quiet – the women was wearing a niqab and was shy but still answered questions
Conversations	The guard asked me why I wasn't taking the red buses going on towards II Talwar and I saud	I asked him about the Pink Bus and he said that it is only for show.	Told me that the Pink Bus comes at the depot.
Context	35 degree heat and no shade or sitting space, no information regarding the bus stops or directions of the bus.	Bus filled with men and women and the conductor squirming through women to sell them tickets	Under the shade of the bus stop. No signs of direction but the bus stop was segregated and properly built.
General Mood	Calm and slow morning with less buses	Loud and packed with a lot of people	Calm afternoon with very few people on the bus stop.
Reflexive Comments	I was a bit scared as I was alone and there was no sign of the bus stop.	Gender-segregation was cramming the bus.	Roundabout with a lot of people and buses going through.

Table 04: Observation guide sample

Key	Inside Red Bus
	Inside Pink Bus
	Bystander

Date	Pseudonym	Sex	Age	Link to the bus service	Profession	Interaction length
20 July 2023	Bilal	M	30s	Conductor	Conductor	15 mins
	Hamza	F	60s	Bystander	Government Officer	20 mins
	Beena	F	30s	Passenger	Maid	20 mins
	Minish	F	20s	Conductor	Conductor	50 mins
	Shazia (recurring)	F	40s	Passenger (recurring)	Saleswoman	Three different trips – 2 ½ hrs
02 August 2023	Rabia	F	20s	Passenger	Research Assistant	1 hr
	Sadaf	F	40s	Conductor (recurring)	Conductor	1 ½ hr
06 August 2023	Mustafa	M	30s	Conductor	Conductor	25 mins
	Shehzad	M	50s	Driver	Driver	40 mins
	Shamim	F	40s	Passenger	Housewife	15 mins
	Priyanka	F	20s	Passenger	Dentist	25 mins
09 August 2023	Saima	F	50s	Passenger	Lab Assistant	10 mins
	Zara	F	70s	Passenger	Housewife	15 mins
	Kiran	F	20s	Passenger	Research Assistant	15 mins
	Razia	F	20s	Passenger	Receptionist	15 mins
	Humera	F	20s	Passenger	Salon Manager	7 mins
	Erum	F	50s	Passenger	Managerial Assistant	8 mins
	Zubaida	F	70s	Passenger	Unemployed/Housewife	10 mins
	Rahat	F	50s	Passenger	Housewife	8 mins
		M	40s	Passenger	Security Guard	30 mins
	Taha	M	30s	Driver	Driver	20 mins
	Faizan	M	60s	Timekeeper	Timekeeper	35 mins

19 August 2023	Uzma	F	20s	Conductor	Conductor	2 hrs
23 August 2023	Sidra	F	20s	Passenger	Student	15 mins
	Zarina	F	50s	Passenger	Maid	20 mins
	Beenish	F	30s	Passenger	Housewife	20 mins
	Soha	F	50s	Passenger	Maid	25 mins
	Nafeesa	F	30s	Passenger	Government School Teacher	20 mins
	Hamida	F	60s	Passenger	Maid	15 mins
	Shamim	F	40s	Passenger	Housewife	20 mins
	Priyanka	F	20s	Passenger	Dentist	35mins
25 August 2023	Niloufer	F	50s	Passenger	Maid	20 mins
	Farhana	F	40s	Conductor	Conductor	20 mins
	Yusra	F	40s	Passenger	Housewife	30 mins
	Shafaq	F	20s	Conductor	Conductor	1 hr
	Asif	M	40s	Driver	Driver	1 hr

Table 05: Participant profile and interaction length

e. Data Analysis

I conducted thematic and discourse analysis with the qualitative data collected during this research process. While thematic analysis allowed me to work with primary data (transcripts of ethnographic trips, observation guides, images) to code and re-code themes in abundance, discourse analysis unraveled *power structures, ideologies and motivations* behind the texts of media and policy documents. I also used mapping as a reflexive tool to understand my decision-making processes, feelings and motivations during the ethnographic trips. The thematic and discourse analysis is then structured to understand the operations and perceptions of the Pink Bus on a micro, meso and macro level as I work with data from stakeholders on all these levels through a bottom-up approach.

Thematic

I used qualitative data analysis software called Atlas.ti to analyze my findings from the field. Atlas.ti helps analyse multi-media input like text, audio and images to produce coherent, thematic findings. Inductive thematic analysis is a systematic yet flexible way to analyse rich qualitative data. The research process involves identifying, analysing and reporting themes within the data to answer the research question(s) and open room for discussion (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

I transcribed and coded my recordings of ethnographic journeys and observation guides along with visual data collected during ethnographic trips. The emerging themes were operations and perceptions of the Pink Bus with frequency, safety and accessibility as sub-codes under these larger themes. Other themes include women in/and travel with codes regarding inferior access to transport options, care work, place-making, patriarchal bargains and patriarchal accomodations. The discussion includes accountability mechanisms from above and below, perceptions of civil society, and a bottom-up policy analysis to situate the case of the Pink bus in Karachi's specific socio-political and economic landscape in its complex urban governance systems.

Discourse

Hodes (2018) highlights that critical discourse analysis can be used to examine multiple forms of textual data as a decolonial practice in any national context that is struggling to acknowledge its colonial past and its ongoing neo-colonial present. To dissect the policy from a bottom-up level, I chose to conduct a discourse analysis of state and media documents. Discourse analysis helps to decode the *power structures, ideologies and motivations* behind the texts in policy and media documents. Wodak and Meyer (2001) outline that critical discourse analysis *draws* on prevailing social problems at its point of departure but is also characterized with developing a specific context. Context is established through an understanding of institutional frameworks - the history and social location of the actors involved and the institutions that are implicated - the interdiscursive between texts, utterances and discourses within a variety of different fields of action along with playing close attention to extralinguistic, sociological and structural variables that limit or expand the range of discursive possibilities within a given context (p. 2). Critical discourse analysis calls researchers to

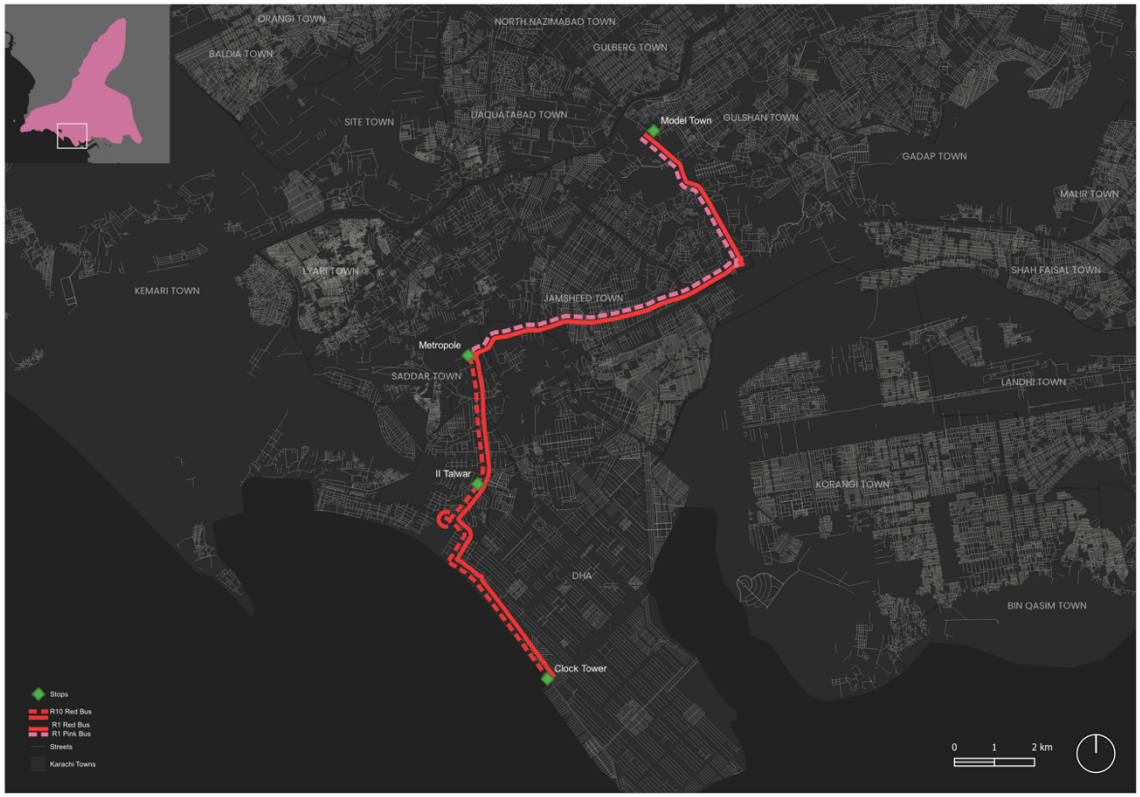
investigate the multiple ways that "language mediates ideology" through the production of discourse in the context of social institutions (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 3; Fairclough, 2001). Language is therefore not just a description, or an organizing principle attached to reality or a way of communicating truth - it is rather manifesting the realities that it is purporting to describe (Kachur, 2021). It is important to note that language is structured by dominance which means that both text and talk are socially, historically and geographically situated in dominant structures and mediated by the interests and ideologies of powerful groups of people (Wodak & Meyer, 2001, p. 3).

The documents that I have reviewed to conduct a policy analysis are **Proposed Loan and Administration of Loans and Grant Islamic Republic of Pakistan: Karachi Bus Rapid Transit Red Line Project"** by the Asian Development Bank and the **Gender Action Plan** drafted by the local government specifically for the routes of the Red Line where the segregated Pink Bus runs along with reports and newspaper articles by media houses and think tanks collected since the inauguration of the People's Bus Service in the city.

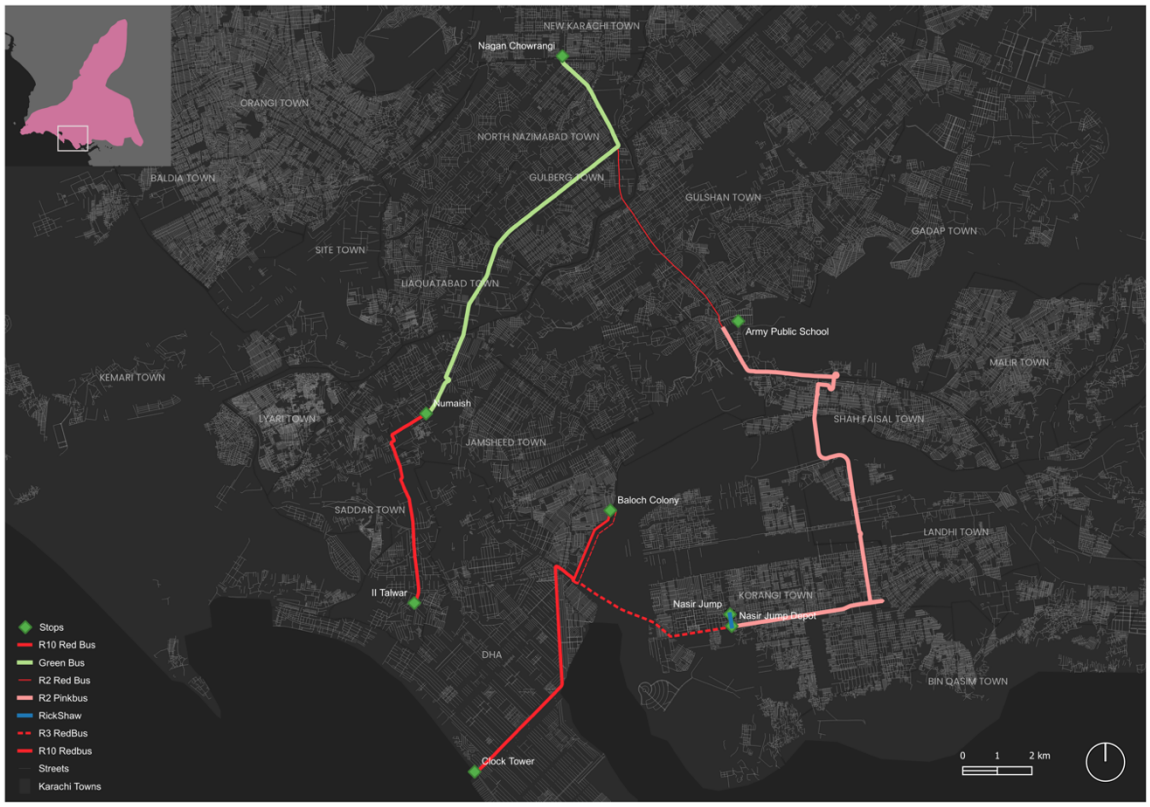
Mapping[2] and Reflexivity

My fieldwork included *mobile methods* in and around the Pink bus – I would wait, walk, and ride in buses or rickshaws to get to the Pink bus and stayed in it for a longer time to talk to passengers about their experiences and build relationships with conductors. I mapped out my journeys (Map 1&2) to understand my own experience of riding the bus as a female passenger along with the mobility choices I made and the reasons behind it – my main goal was to ride the Pink bus on all three routes to unpack how it works in different locations of the city. The observation guides were filled in lieu of the mapping exercise to write about my embodied experience of interacting with the citizens and the city. Mapping through Google Earth and QGIS provides cartographical data of the ethnographic journeys which helped collate findings from intercept interviews and observations to further provide spatial representations of different mobility decisions during the fieldwork and the motivations behind them to carve out geographies. Map 1 shows the journey I undertook to find the Pink bus on my first day on the field and my decision to stay on the Pink Bus to build a relationship with the conductor. Map 2 highlights the different transport options that I utilized to go to Route 2 of the Pink Bus and ride it to find out implications of this policy on women's everyday mobilities.

[2] All maps for this thesis are sourced through Global Administrative Areas(GADM), OpenStreetMap, and Think Transportation and designed by Miguel Garcia on QGIS.



Map 01: Trips of ethnographic journey 1 – 20 July 2022.



Map 02: Trips of ethnographic journey 2 - 26 July 2022

15 11

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VII. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The section of the thesis aims to explore the implications of a gender-segregated bus service on women's everyday mobilities in the city. I utilize the analytical findings from my auto-ethnography, observations, intercept interviews and photographs to reveal how the policy functions from a bottom-up level. This qualitative data analysis is supplemented with secondary information provided through media outlets (Table 2) and state documents by civil society actors and policymakers about the Pink Bus to illustrate revolving discourses in lieu with how this policy operates in the city and is perceived by different stakeholders in relation to their gender. Frequency, accessibility and safety are discussed on micro, meso and macro scales (Table 3).

a. Frequency

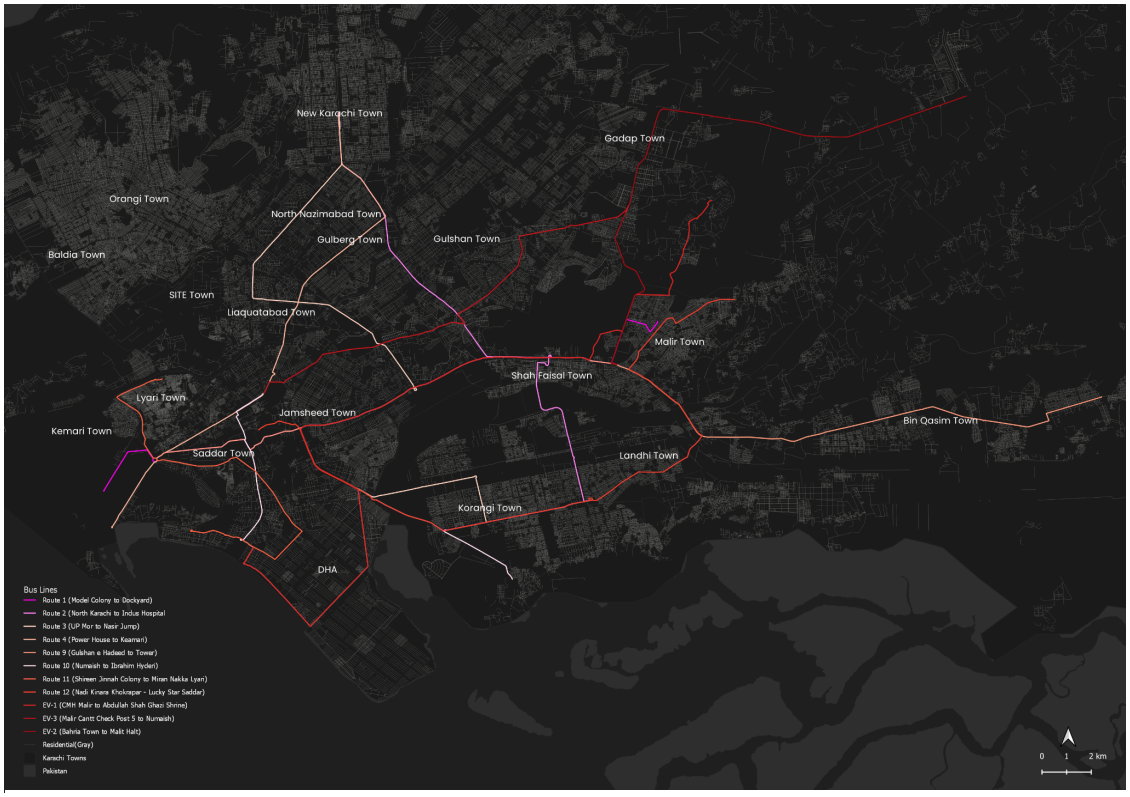
The functioning of a bus is highly dependent upon its frequency - it allows the passengers to depend on the service and use it more frequently rather than utilizing it as a one-time option. The following section outlines the dearth of the segregated Pink Bus since its initiation. Infrequencies are constantly normalized rather than questioned which further creates on the service creating different demands for transport services by men and women.

i. Where is Pink Bus?

The Pink Bus looks like any other bus provided by the People's Bus Service, but it is plastered in bright pink to distinguish that it is only for women. Bystanders and male passengers waiting at the bus stop mostly do not know about the provision of the gender-segregated line unless told (Trip 3.4). Most female passengers who utilized PBS on Routes 1, 2 or 10 knew about the Pink Bus because those are the only routes that it runs on out of the 11 routes that mixed buses function on (Map 3 & 4). On Route 1 there are eight Pink Buses, on Route 2 there are six Pink Buses and on Route 10 there is only one Pink Bus which makes only three rounds on that route during the day (Trip 3.2, 6.4, 7.2; Map 2).

The approximate ratio of Red: Pink bus is 6:1 which was calculated during long waits (+1 hour) for the Pink Bus to arrive when the Red Bus would arrive within 10-15 minutes (Trip 1.1, 1.2, 2.1). Pink buses could be found at the depot stations of these three routes. A female passenger waiting on the bus stop told me,

> "*I sometimes get on the Pink Bus, but it is not as frequent. Only one of the buses runs so I have to take the Red one, but, if you want to catch the Pink Bus, come to the depot with me - you will definitely be able to catch one from there - I have seen at least six or seven.*"
>
> - Beena, Red Bus Passenger, 20 July 2023



Map 03: Total Routes of People's Bus Service in Karachi, Pakistan



Map 04: Segregated Pink Bus on R1, R2 and R10 of People's Bus Service in Karachi Pakistan

At the depot, there are several Pink Buses parked and about to begin their journeys but to access them on the roads of Karachi at a specific time can be an arduous task. Passengers can either catch the Pink Bus if they wait long hours for it to arrive, or if there is careful deliberation on *how* and where to find it. To conduct my research on/in the Pink bus, it was crucial for me to catch it, and sometimes I had to take other forms of transport to catch the bus like the Green Line, rickshaws or the same routes on the Red Bus. I put in this extra time to collect my ethnographic data but a female passenger who is rushing to get to get a task done while negotiating socio-spatial gendered dynamics does not have the time to wait for the Pink bus or make extra efforts just to catch it when it is extremely infrequent.

Mainstream news channels announced that Pink bus runs from 7am to 8pm every day and during peak hours a Pink bus arrives every 20 minutes at each stop, while during other times, there's a bus per route every hour (Bol News, 2023). This is not the case on ground as observations and intercept interviews reveal that the Pink Bus runs between 9am - 4pm only from Mondays to Saturdays and there is no segregated line that runs on Sundays (Trip 4.4).

ii. Normalizing infrequency

Finding and getting on the Pink bus revealed the infrequencies of the service (Map 2 & 4) and the reduction in the buses that were promised to the public - in the already restricted routes, the number of buses have also significantly reduced. Pink Bus conductor working on Route 10 informed me,

> *"There were two more Pink buses running on the same route but they decreased the frequency after a year. I don't know why they did that - it is unfortunate, but it is what it is."*
> - Sadaf, Pink Bus Conductor, 02 August 2023

The bus driver and conductor are obligated to make three full rounds of the bus on the route, but the fourth one is at their discretion. If they make an extra round, they get compensated for overtime work otherwise they are paid the same amount (Trip 3.4). Therefore, there is no guarantee that a bus will arrive every twenty minutes let alone every hour because the frequency even in the restricted hours of the service depends on the moods of the drivers and conductors on driving on the bus route.

However, the decision of when the bus is going to move from the depot is made by the timekeeper who keeps a tab on when the buses are coming to the last stop and leaving from there (Trip 1.4). At the last stop of a trip, after waiting on the stationary bus for 10 minutes, I asked the bus driver about when the bus is going to move or when it usually goes. He replied,

> *"There is no set time Maám - the timekeeper tells us when to move the bus. When he asks us to go, we go."*
> - Shehzad, Pink Bus Driver, 07 August 2023

Stakeholders working on the ground have normalized the bus' infrequency in the city and have become resilient enough to work through this chaos. I was once in a Pink Bus and had to change routes which resulted in the bus driver honking and notifying the bus driver across the road to slow down his bus and then he stopped the bus in the middle of the road so that I could leave the bus and get on the other one (Trip 1.5).

Even though this was a caring gesture offered by the driver as he was afraid that I might not find a bus soon because of the infrequencies, stopping the bus in the middle of the road creates traffic jams which in turn impacts its frequency.

Furthermore, most passengers getting on the bus first inquire with the conductor about which direction it's going because there is no information about the route on the bus stops or inside the bus (discussed in accessibility section). These conversations between the passengers and the conductors result in further delays and infrequencies. Moreover, as the PBS buses have automatic doors, conductors cannot stand on them and shout the name of the next stop to passengers waiting, which is a common practice in the older public buses of the city (Image 1). Because of these constant interactions between the passengers and the conductors which results in the bus being delayed, a frustrated Red bus driver informed me,

> *"I only stop if an old person or woman hails the bus. We have been given 25 designated stops by the People's Bus Service but if we stop for every person hailing the bus, there will be so many delays and the bus will never reach on time."*
>
> - Taha, Red Bus Driver, 19 August 2023

Even though the government has allocated general areas where the bus stop might be, the passengers do not know exact locations of the bus stop which results in them interacting with the conductors regarding the routes. The provision of PBS by the provincial state was in a sporadic manner as all routes were not introduced in the streets at once. The first route was introduced on June 7, 2022 followed by the inauguration of two more routes (Tunio 2022, Dawn 2022) but after monsoon flooding in Karachi in July and August 2022, government cut all the routes and the buses had to stand at the depot because they became non-motorable on Karachi's roads (Ayub, 2022). The frequency increased again after road repairs on specific routes where the bus was running. By 2024, the fleet expanded to 192 buses with the initiation of 30 hybrid buses in the city (Times of Karachi, 2024).



Image 01: Karachi's public buses with open doors and storage/sitting area on the roof.

iii. Gendered perceptions on frequency

Male passengers, bystanders and conductors who did not utilize the service did not understand the significance of it and how this service might work for women. When I inquired about the Pink Bus from a male conductor on the Red Bus, he said,

> *"Why do you want to go into the Pink Bus? It is only for show. It moves only as a show for the public. There is only one Pink bus that operates on this specific route and that is also empty so I suggest you forget about the Pink Bus. You should travel in the Red Bus if you want to get somewhere."*
>
> - Bilal, Red Bus Conductor, 20 July 2023

However, a female Pink Bus conductor believes that the frequency of the bus will automatically increase once female passengers begin utilizing the service more. She said,

> *"The bus is very good, and I really like the work, and all the people that I work with, but the female passengers need to cooperate with us. They really need to cooperate with us and wait for the bus to come. If they use it more, the frequency will increase automatically. Why do they all want to cram in one Red bus?"*
>
> - Farhana, Pink Bus Conductor, 25 August 2023

Even though the female conductor on the Pink Bus wants more women to make use of the service, the frequency is largely restricted even on the three routes it runs on which results in less women knowing about the service and not being able to trust its frequency when they are making daily travel plans. Female passengers who have begun to regularly utilize PBS for their daily travels firmly believe that the frequency should be increased. A female passenger on the Pink bus said,

> *We will happily travel only in the Pink Bus if the government runs it on all routes. It runs only on three so I can barely catch it. There are a lot of women who travel from R3 – I think if the Pink bus is introduced there a lot of women like me will benefit from it.*
>
> - Kiran, Pink Bus Passenger, 09 August 2023

The demand on route 3 was acknowledged as the state introduced the gender-segregated line on two more routes in April 2024 (Samaa, 2024). Demand of the bus and its frequency are correlated which is why it is crucial to inquire women about their everyday mobility needs.

b. Accessibility

In transport planning, accessibility refers to the ease of reaching and interacting with different mobility-related activities and destinations distributed in space. Therefore, accessibility in transport can be informational or infrastructural in its capacity and arrangement aiding passengers to travel from one place to another (Geography of Transport Systems, 2024).

i. Informational

The government chose pink to introduce a gender-segregated bus line only for women and pasted an A4 sized piece of paper the large windscreen of the bus with a picture of a veiled woman and a sign written in Urdu saying that the bus is only reserved for women (Image 2). This sign cannot be seen from a long distance as it is very small and black & white (Image 2) . Also, the color of the Pink Bus is not very different from the Red Bus which can lead to further confusion about the service. I was getting onto the Pink bus with another woman and a man tried to get on it too because he didn't know that it was for women only. She stopped him and said,



Image 02: Information about the Pink Bus pasted on the windscreen.

"This is the pink bus. Look, it's only for women - it's written here. You can't get on it."

-Rabia, Pink Bus Passenger, 02 August 2023

People's Bus Service does not provide information on the bus stops or the buses about the routes that it will take as there are very few properly constructed bus stops. This information is provided online in English. A Red bus driver added,

"Passengers can use Facebook groups to check for the updated routes and the locations of the bus stops. All the information is available online."

- Taha, Red Bus Driver, 19 August 2023

However, online information cannot be accessed by most of the citizens in the city as only 21% individuals in Pakistan have access to the internet (World Bank, 2021). Therefore, all the information about the bus service is mostly available through word of mouth and communicated via the bus conductor.

After revisiting the same bus stop, a passenger knows where the bus will arrive, and can figure out the destinations that it will go to, along with the connections that it will make. But for first-time travelers accessing this information is a difficult task. And these difficulties amplify for women or gender-

minorities as talking to men in public space to retrieve information about the routes can be tricky at times because of the prevalent culture of segregation (Trip 6.4).

An old woman traveling on the Pink Bus got a new job but did not know how to access the route of her new workplace through PBS services. On my smartphone, I pulled out the online map and told her the buses and connections that she could take to get to her new job. She made me write this information on a piece of paper because neither she nor her family members have access to the internet (Trip 8.3). Even though the service goes to several places in Karachi, many people don't know about it because they have no means to access this information.

Even though color is used to separate the mix-gender (Red) and segregated (Pink) bus lines, advertisements plastered on Red buses have various colors which compromises the distinguishing factor. Some of the Red buses now have a pink advertisement of Dubai Water, a mineral water company which is very similar to the color of the Pink buses and can thus mislead both female and male passengers (Image 3). Female passengers might get on it thinking it's the segregated line and male passengers might avoid getting on it for the same reason.



Image 03: A Red Bus plastered with pink advertisement

The imported buses trying to *make space* on Karachi's roads with capitalistic advertisements of bottled mineral water ironically depicts the failures of situating a foreign policy into a local context and of weak accountability mechanisms that do not consider the accessibility and comfort of passengers when making transport related decisions. Visual and digital accessibility is crucial to reach public transport but the entire burden of accessing a public bus on Karachi's roads is put on passengers and conductors who have to communicate with each other to go from one place to another.

Some passengers who take the same route daily have used the strategy of procuring the phone number of the conductor to know how far the bus is. A female passenger traveling on the Red Bus told me,

> *"Women using this service have a WhatsApp group and the conductor informs the group when the bus will be coming because there is no proper application set up at this point. On Saturdays when the buses are infrequent, but we still have to go to work, the bus conductor calls me to inform me when the bus is half an hour away which prompts me to get ready for work on a weekend. "*

- Rabia, Pink Bus Passenger, 02 August 2023

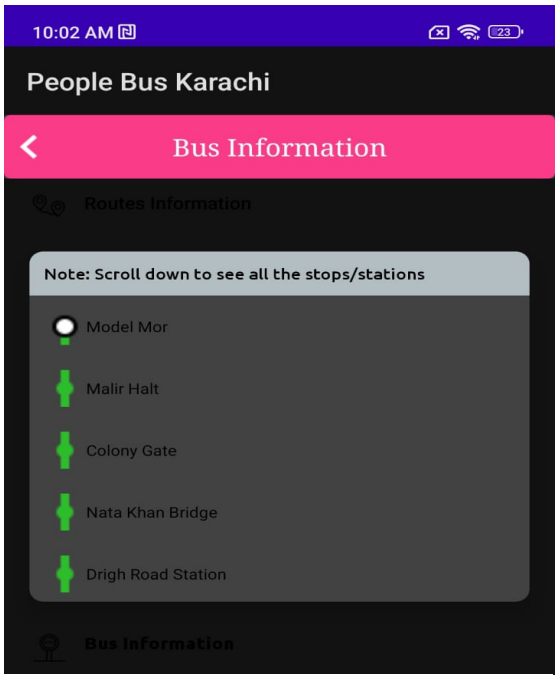


Image 04: Pink Bus Routes on PBS application for Google Play. *Screenshot retrieved from mobile phone.*

An android mobile application for finding the bus has also been announced - the dummy application can be downloaded but does not function (Image 4). Apart from maps and routes (Image 7) provided by Think Transportation, the transport and engineering consultant for Sindh Mass Transit Authority, no accurate timetables have been released yet. Passengers rely on information provided word-of-mouth and through Facebook and WhatsApp to know where to go and when. A female passenger got onto the Pink bus and I was sitting at the back which is the designated area for men on the mixed red buses; she got confused about women taking up all the space in the bus and thought she had got onto the wrong bus until the conductor told her that the bus was going on the same route but it is only for women (Trip 5.4).



Image 05: Route information on Green Bus Line



Image 06: No route information in PBS

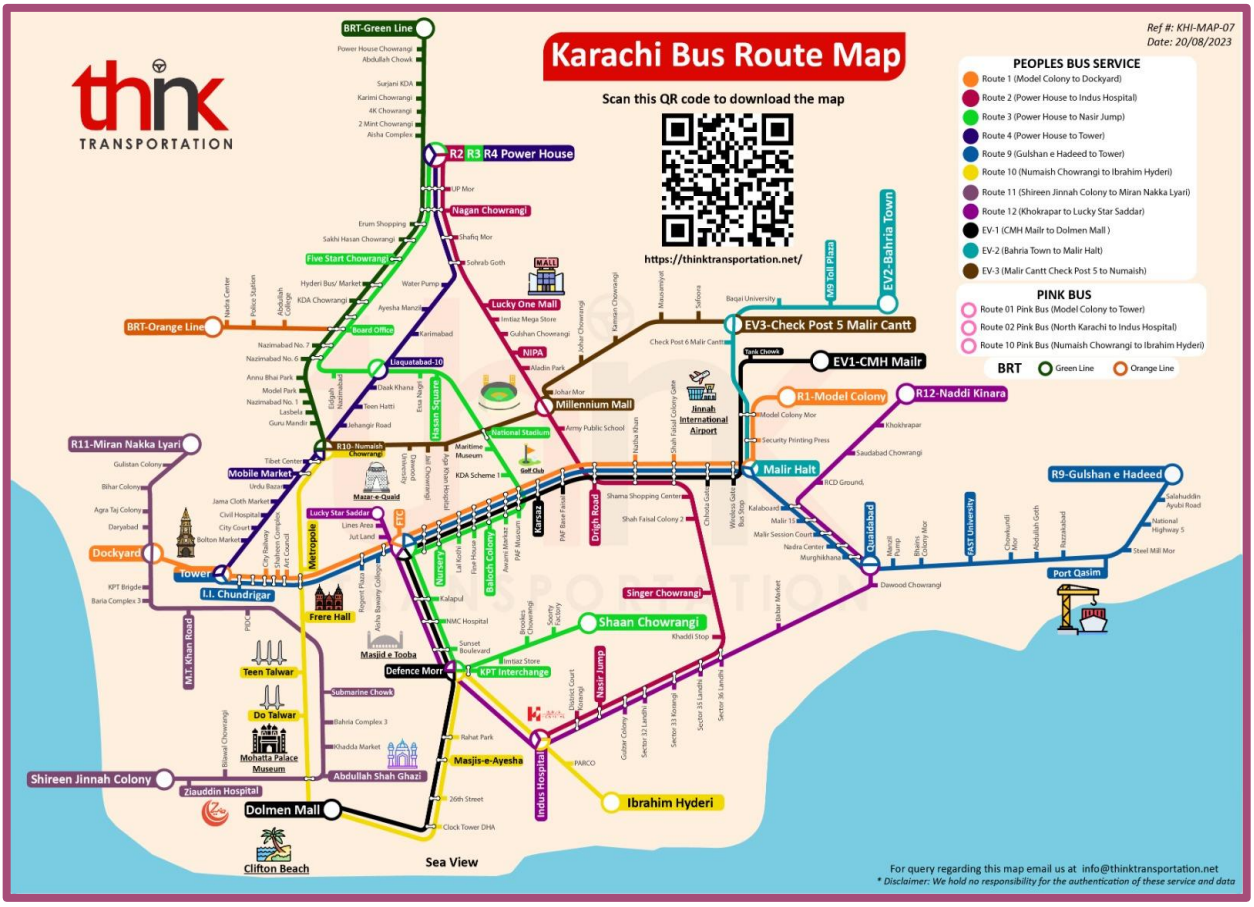


Image 07: People's Bus Service Karachi transport map. *Retrieved from Think Transportation, 2024*

After all the hassle, when passengers finally hop on the bus, they don't find any information regarding the stops as buses stop according to the needs of the passengers. This information is provided in the Green Bus Line as there are designated bus stops so the passengers exactly know where to hop on and off. Images 5 and 6 show the comparison of information regarding routes provided on the Green Line (federal) vs the PBS (provincial) – whilst one has proper routes mentioned and announced (Image 5) the other one says that tickets for children under the age of five is free (Image 6).

A middle-class woman on the Pink Bus perceived the service to be low-cost but highly inaccessible. She talked about other forms of transport that were active before the pandemic that she could frequently access,

> *"I miss SWVL and Airlift - it was so convenient for me to travel within those private buses that were operated through mobile applications. After Covid-19 they shut their business. Of course, those were much more expensive than the People's Bus Service that can take you from one end of the city to another for just Rs.50 but in services like Airlift, middle class people did not have to worry about their laptops or*

cellphones and there was no need of gender-segregation because everyone was mutually respectful. Now, we have the PBS which is not that frequent and Uber or Careem which are extremely unaffordable."

- Erum, Pink bus passenger, 09 August 2023

ii. Infrastructural

The buses have been imported from China and Turkey so the overall infrastructure of the bus is solid unlike the dilapidated local buses that people have to use to go from one part of the city to another (Image 1). The buses are fully air conditioned and have air purifiers, comfortable seats and charging ports - they are similar to buses in the Global North. They also have accessibility bars and a space to park wheelchairs and strollers but that bar is used to segregate between male and female compartments in the Red bus whereas women can take all the space that they want to in the Pink Bus (Image 8 &9).



Image 08: Accessibility bars to separate men and women in the Red bus.



Image 09: Accessibility bars used for accessibility needs in the Pink bus.

Even though several women don't prefer to wait for the Pink bus, some have memorized the approximate schedule to catch it because access to space. A female passenger deliberately waits for the Pink bus because it offers her space to sit in the long journey that she has to take. She told me,

> *"I only take this bus. This bus is very good for me. I have a leg problem. I have this problem because of diabetes. I can't stand the whole time on the bus ride because my legs hurt and in the Red bus I have to stand because women have really less space reserved in the front of the bus. Here, all the space is for us, so I can easily sit for hours and get home peacefully."*
>
> - Zarina, Pink Bus Passenger, 23 August 2023

Women have one-third of the space crammed in front of the mix-gender buses and the space becomes even more crowded because they have to stand or sit between the section of the driver and the accessibility bar that separates them from men in the bus and often they have children or groceries with them. Female conductors in the Pink bus tend to help female passengers who are juggling care work along with going from one place to another. A female conductor held the hand of a passenger's son when he was sitting on the slope of a seat (Image 9). The bus also has accessibility ramps but as there are very few properly built bus stops, the ramps do not work well with poor road infrastructure (Image 10) and can create a lot of traffic as the bus lanes are not separate which can result in a lot of time spent in pulling out the ramp (Image 19). Passengers also request stops randomly which is dangerous as there are motorbikes, rickshaws and cars still moving and maneuvering when the bus stops at a random place.

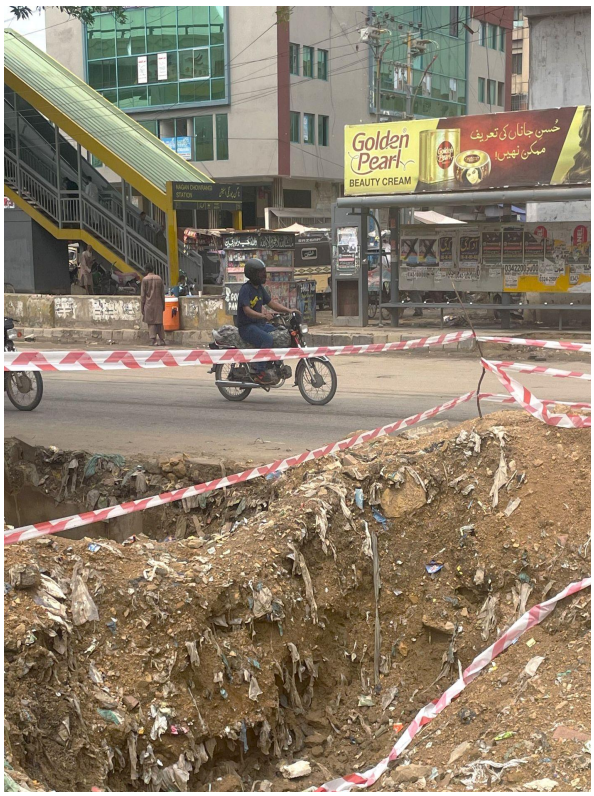


Image 10: Poor road and bus stop infrastructure at Nagan Chowrangi

One of the main goals outlined in the government documents was to construct social and gender-inclusive BRT stations according to international standards. These include (i) platform level boarding, tensile marking, ramps or escalators; (ii) separate queuing spaces for women and men; (iii) marked priority seating in waiting areas for the elderly and pregnant women; (iv) separate restrooms for males and females, with diaper-changing facilities; and (v) well-lit and unobstructed floor design with visible and operational CCTVs (ADB, 2019). As there is poor road infrastructure in Karachi, the introduction of bus stops with all the facilities is impossible. Moreover, it is futile to impose international standards without understanding the needs of a mega-city with transport poverty and poor road infrastructure. However, some of these facilities are superficially provided in the Green Bus Service, which is a project of the federal government. The

operations of the service have multi-layered externalities which are outlined in the discussion section.

iii. Role of bus conductors

Conductors in the People's Bus Service play a monumental role for the bus to function smoothly. They work as ticket providers and navigators as the people using the public transport system do not always have access to information and technology. They also mediate between different gender and ethnicities co-travelling in the bus, along with communicating with drivers about when to stop the bus in accordance with the requests of the passengers.

Ticket provision

Since the payment method is not mechanized, the bus conductors collect money from the passengers when they get on the bus and provide them with a ticket. In the mixed bus, the ticket is torn from a ticket book, and in the Pink Bus, the conductor prints the ticket from a machine. Conductors allow the passengers to board the bus without taking the payment as it can be dangerous make this transaction on constantly moving buses. The receipts of the tickets are collected after the completion of every full round by the timekeeper who tells the bus drivers when they have to leave.

Navigation

As there is no route information given on the bus or the bus stops, the conductors must work as navigators and GPS systems to figure out the routes for the passengers getting on the People's Bus Service. A female bus conductor working in the Pink Bus told me,

> *"We help passengers figure out where to go and what connections to make, but sometimes it can be confusing because people use different names for the same place. Fawara Chowk, Metropole and Arts Council are essentially the same stop but people ask with different names, so I have to know all these names and remember them to provide better information for passengers hopping on the Pink Bus."*
>
> - Minish, Pink Bus Conductor, 20 July 2023

Mediation

The bus conductors also play a crucial role mediating between the passengers and the driver. The control of the doors of the bus is with the driver but because of a lack of proper bus stops, the conductor communicates with the driver about when and where to stop the bus depending on where different passengers want to get off. The bus conductors remember the routes of several different people taking on different journeys and tell the driver when to stop according to the needs of the passengers as there is no stop button on the bus as well. Sometimes, passengers get on the bus and realize that they do not want to take that route after speaking with the conductor and they decide to get off the bus instantly. This back and forth can lead to

accidents as the control is with the driver and he decides to shut the door of the bus before moving on the road. Once a Pink Bus driver almost closed the door on a female passenger. The conductor in a frazzled state asked,

> *"Oh my god, are you okay? I am so sorry. Ugh, can they drive a bit calmly and see who is entering and leaving the bus... How is he (the driver) closing the door when people are leaving the bus?"*

- Minish, Pink Bus Conductor, 20 July 2023



Image 11: Women easily getting on the Pink Bus from the back door which is only used by men in mix-gender buses.

Other than having logistical and communicative mediations, the bus conductors also mediate any fights happening between passengers because of differences in gender and ethnicity. To avoid gender-related conflicts, men and women are inherently separated in the bus and enter from different doors (Image 11) but people have different ethnicities and religions which can sometimes become a point of contention when sharing space in the city. A Sindhi woman was reading the Quran on the bus while some Balochi women were just talking to each other. The woman reading the Quran asked the other women to shut up and not speak about her even though they were not. The male bus conductor had to come and separate them to diffuse the fight. He looked at me and said,

> *"These women fight so much. This is still not so bad but have you seen women getting on from Numaish Chowrangi? Ugh, they fight like crazy. These are fine - they are all maids that come from Ibrahim Hyderi or Baloch Colony and they work here in DHA."*

- Mustafa, Red Bus Conductor, 07 August 2023

Even though the conductors tend to mediate between different classes, genders and ethnicities, such stereotypes can be very dangerous and calling an entire ethnicity of women as troublemakers taking the bus coming from a specific stop leads to socio-spatial stereotypes.

c. Safety

The entire premise of introducing a segregated line for women is so that they can travel in peace without enduring or fearing gender-based violence. However, the policy does not account for the whole journey of the female passenger who might avail the infrequent Pink Bus. The policy document by ADB acknowledges that

> *"The low share of female passengers in public transport is mainly because of the risk of harassment that women face in overcrowded public buses. Consequently, most women prefer to walk 2 km per day on average or are forced to use more expensive private transportation, affecting their disposable income."*

- Asian Development Bank, 2019

i. Waiting is risky

As a female passenger and researcher, I felt unsafe multiple times during various interactions on the field (Trip 2.3, 3.3, 5.2). At Nagan Chowrangi, an extremely busy main road in Karachi with multiple bus stops and a pedestrian bridge (Image 19), I was waiting for the Pink/Red bus to arrive but a man kept staring at me while I was waiting at the bus stop. I felt unsafe and was about to take a rickshaw but then the Pink bus arrived and I hopped on it. Bus stops and places of wait are filled with a sea of men - women arrive in these places and have to wait for their transport but they are always dispersing and don't prefer waiting because of the fear of gender-based violence.

I was standing underneath a flyover waiting for my bus when I saw a woman standing with a younger girl and decided to photograph them from behind (Image 12). A man saw me, slowly came towards me on his motorcycle and asked me to put my phone inside otherwise it would get stolen. I felt very unsafe at that moment, but the Red Bus came soon, and I instantly got on it. Snatching is a common threat in Karachi especially during burgeoning economic and political crises and all citizens of the city

are aware about it but the man chose to give me this advice which in turn made me hypervigilant about my presence and I felt unsafe and anxious about losing my phone (Trip 2.7).



Image 12: Woman and girl at Baloch Colony

ii. Misogyny in Motion

When two women heard another woman and I talking about the PBS and safety provision, they joined in the conversation and began sharing their experiences. One of them giggled and said,

> *"These new buses have such slippery floors that men just slip and come to the women's side towards the front (laughter). Even though the conductor tries to make sure that men are at the back and women in the front, these slippery floors make men come on our side, that's why the government has introduced this special service for women. So, we can travel without the fear of men touching us."*
>
> - Kiran, Pink Bus Passenger, 09 August 2023

A family of four was trying to get on the Pink Bus - the women and children got in from the front door and the man got in from the back door, but the man had to be escorted outside the bus as the male driver told him that it is for women-only. The bus was mostly empty so the male passenger insisted that the bus takes the entire family, but the bus driver refused,

> *"If I take you on this bus, I will be in trouble because there are CCTV cameras inside - look! The authorities will know they will put me under scrutiny."*
>
> - Asif, Pink Bus Driver, 25 August 2023

The bus driver was following a standard operating procedure of not allowing any men in the women-only bus to ensure women's safety but he did not question his own deep-seated misogyny. Later on the Pink bus journey, the same bus driver made his co-worker, a young female conductor, uncomfortable by continually telling me that her name rhymes with f*ck. The female conductor and I both rolled our eyes, took this verbal harassment lightly and decided to talk to each other again. The female bus conductor told me that she will start training to become a driver for the Pink bus so the space does not have any men. The driver responded to this aggressively,

> *"You can't drive on Karachi's roads, only us men can do that who have been driving on these roads for years. We know how to drive on highways and on tough terrains. You can't handle this bus, and you for sure cannot handle Karachi's traffic – you will bring the city to a complete halt with your driver."*
>
> - Asif, Pink Bus Driver, 25 August 2023

The second indicator is to train all BRT employees to handle and record incidents of sexual harassment but because of the inherent normalization of harassment, male drivers sometimes don't take these trainings seriously and can easily make the environment in the bus unsafe. At another point in my fieldwork, I was conducting an interview with a female conductor, when the male driver asked me to save his number and kept asking me where I lived. Having negotiated gender boundaries in Karachi for a long time, I felt that comment to be a bit out of place since I wasn't even talking to the driver. I took his number but did not call him. However, every time I got on the bus, he would ask me why I hadn't called him and laughed. In a hopeful turn of events, People's Bus service has now initiated a programme to train female drivers so the entire bus can be women-only (Pakistan Today, 2023).

iii. Respectability Politics

Due to the culture of segregation prevalent in the city, women's bodies freely moving is not readily accepted – they need to be very mindful, very demure.[3] In the Pink Bus, the conductors wear a modest uniform with a pink hijab on their forehead and most female passengers wear an *abaya* (long gown), *niqab* (face veil), *hijab* (head scarf) or carry a *dupatta* (long cloth worn around the chest). On my fourth day of fieldwork, I forgot my *dupatta* and realized later that I would not feel comfortable

[3] **Pop-culture reference:** Andrew, S. (2024, Aug 13). Why 'very demure, very mindful' is on the tip of everyone's tongue. *CNN*. https://edition.cnn.com/2024/08/13/us/tiktok-demure-mindful-jools-lebron-cec/index.html.



Image 13: A Pink bus conductor in her uniform

boarding the bus without it, so I had to go all the way back to retrieve it before resuming my fieldwork (Trip 4.1).

Other than women self-policing their bodies, men also consistently police their existence in the public sphere. I was talking to a man about his use of the People's Bus Service at the II Talwar bus stop when a police officer stopped our conversation, shouted at the man and asked him to stand on the other side of the bus stop (Trip 6.2). This is the one of the few bus stops in Karachi that has a shade and a bench along with a partition between men's and women's areas which makes enforcing segregation easier.

At the Model Town bus stop, I decided to wait for the Pink Bus to come rather than boarding the Red Bus. The timekeeper got extremely uncomfortable with my presence and asked me to go on the Red Bus because it was already there. When I asked him if he had a problem with me standing there, he said,

> *"Oh, sister, what are you talking about? I have no problem. I am only saying this for your safety. It's not nice when our women are just standing on the streets all alone in the heat. I care for you, that is why I am saying this to you."*
>
> - Faizan, Timekeeper, 19 August 2023

Soon after, the Pink Bus came but the driver had gone through an accident, so they decided to park the bus while he rested. The timekeeper asked the young female conductor to take me to the parked

Pink bus as he was not comfortable with me standing on the bus stop if I was not going to ride the Red bus.

d. Care work burdens amidst inferior access to transport options

As discussed in the literature review, women have specific travel patterns - they take shorter and more frequent trips mostly for care work and providing utilities for the house to make sure it runs properly. Even though women usually don't travel in peak hours, the Pink Buses are unfortunately only available during those hours which results in less women using the service. Moreover, even if women utilize the services of the People's Bus Service, it can only help them get from one part of the city to another, but it would not drop them anywhere near their house. This is because PBS only functions on the peripheral roads of the city rather than going into narrower streets as the road and bus infrastructure do not support that sort of movement for such a big bus (Map 1&2; Image 2).

Unfortunately, women have inferior access to both public and private transport and segregated public transport is available only during peak hours as private transport is either too expensive or majority of the men make use of it in their households even if it is a shared vehicle for the family. A private school teacher riding the Pink Bus told me,

> *"My husband and I have a shared car but he takes it to his office because I have shorter working days in school and the Pink Bus is very convenient because the main road is a minute walk from my school and the bus drops me five minutes away from my house, so it works well."*
>
> - Saima, Pink Bus Passenger, 09 August 2023

Her two adolescent sons would also accompany her in the bus as they were studying in the same school where she was teaching but she thought that the bus drivers were driving in a rash manner and breaking traffic rules, so she decided to put them on a smaller van service to go back and forth from the school.

A maid working in Defence Housing Authority who lives in Model Town, 20 kilometers away from her workplace, has to change four buses and makes a three-hour journey daily. She said,

> *"This long bus journey is not enough for me to get to my house. I live in smaller settlements within the streets and my husband drops me to the bus stop in the morning and picks me up in the evening when I call him. It takes another half an hour to get home and my husband can pick and drop me because he does not have a job right now but he has a motorbike."*
>
> - Beena, Red Bus Passenger, 20 July 2023

On the other hand, a public-school teacher who daily rides with her husband on his motorcycle informed me,

> *"My husband and I work in the same school, so we come by motorcycle and I leave early with the Pink Bus because I have to go home and look after the house and my children as well. This bus is safe, and my husband is also not worried when I travel on it."*
>
> - Nafeesa, Pink Bus Passenger, Pink Bus Passenger, 23 August 2023

Due to gendered roles upheld in the house and the city, women in Karachi do most of the care work within the home which includes providing food and healthcare for themselves and their children and making sure there are cooked meals in the house even if they are busy with their day jobs. Female passengers traveling in the Pink and Red Buses mostly ventured outside the house to procure these necessities for their families. A female passenger hopped on the bus without knowing the fare of the ride or the correct route. She went on to question,

> *"Is this bus going to II Talwar? I need to pick a ration pack from my family from there. We are very poor, and my husband has cancer so it is difficult for us to make ends meet and there is someone there who said they could help me. This is the first time I am taking this service, and I am quite impressed that for* Rs.50 *I can go from one side of the city to another in* AC *– wow!."*
>
> -Soha, Red Bus Passenger, 23 August 2023

Female passengers are filled with gratitude when they witness a whole bus only for them in a city where men predominantly take over public space and have more reserved seats in public transport. A female passenger entered the Pink bus and was confused as all 24 seats were available for women as compared to the eight seats that they have in Red buses.

> *"It's amazing that the government has provided so much space for women to travel. I need to go to a doctor who is very far away to get medicines for my two children who are quite sick right now. Please pray that this works out and I can get the medicines. I have a long journey to go so I am glad I found a place to sit on the bus, MashaAllah."*
>
> - Zarina, 23 August 2023, Pink Bus Passenger

e. Place-making in transit



Image 14: Women taking up space in the Pink bus service

Even though women are not allowed to take up a lot of space in the urban arena, the segregated line provides an opportunity for female passengers to indulge in place-making activities whilst being mobile. During my ethnographic journeys, I observed that the overall energy of the Pink Bus was calmer, joyous and much less suffocating than the mixed Red Buses where women and men were separated through an accessibility bar, not being able to penetrate the segregated space even if there was more seating available on either side.

The Pink Bus became a space for women to indulge in activities that they mostly enjoy when they are in segregated spaces (Image 14 and 15). This includes laughing and talking loudly, not always covering their heads or faces, singing songs and listening to them, and sharing food (Trip 6.2 & 6.3). Childcare in the Pink Bus became much easier because of access to much more space for women and children in the bus rather than just being crammed in one-third space of the bus (Image 16).

Women taking up space in the Pink bus is illustrated through the activities of a regular female passenger of the Pink Bus and the People's Bus Service who I encountered on different routes during my fieldwork (Trip 1.3, 4.3 & 6.3). Shazia, a 40-year-old divorcee, utilized the space of the bus for several different purposes - she listens to songs in the Pink Bus and stands in front of the bus to enjoy the view of the city, sells deodorants to make quick money in a safe space, and builds community by

offering food to people who travel with her (Trip 4.3, 6.3). Shazia's activities in the Pink Bus relate to the concept of *flaneur* introduced in 19th century France and further contextualized by social theorist Walter Benjamin - it refers to the urban wanderer who embodies a leisurely and contemplative approach to urban life by aimlessly wandering, keenly observing and being fascinated with the rhythms, contradictions and atmospheres of the modern metropolis without having specific goals or pre-determined itineraries (Benjamin, 1863). Therefore, the flaneur is seen as a symbol of modernity as it reflects the constantly evolving relationship between individuals and the urban environment along with having new forms of leisure, consumption and social interaction

As there were very few Pink Buses functioning on three different routes, I met the female conductors and male drivers working in the Pink Buses quite often and built a good relationship with them over time. Whenever they would see me hop the bus, they would greet me and ask how my research was coming along. One of the Pink Bus conductors, Sadaf, would offer me candy when we would have been on long and windy roads for a long time. Another young female conductor called me *aapi* (big sister in Urdu) because she was ten years younger than me and wanted to show respect while we were talking on the journey. Moreover, the Pink bus also has advertisements targeted specifically towards women. Pointing towards a sanitary pad advertisement in the Pink bus (Image 17), a female passenger said,

> *"Everything here feels like it is thought out for us – look at these ads for instance, and the female bus conductor. It is like a breath of fresh air to be in spaces only for women."*
>
> - Rabia, Pink bus passenger, 02 August 2024

The Legal Aid Society also put awareness advertisements in relation to domestic violence and the steps that women can take to ask for help if they are in trouble. Cases pertaining to violence against women are under-reported because of stigma, or mobility and access issues but 90% of Pakistani women face domestic violence in their lifetime according to the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (2020). The segregated space of the bus with this advertisement allows women to talk about such issues on a deeper level yet it also shows the prevalence and normalization of gender-based violence in the city.

Even the presence of a single man can rupture these place-making techniques. For example, even though the bus is only for women, it is driven by a man who has a microphone to communicate which stop is coming next. Even though drivers seldom use this mic, once a driver used it to shout at women because they were making a lot of noise and that was giving him a headache. Women can feel unsafe or threatened in a bus that is reserved only for them because a man does not want them to make noise (Trip 4.3).



Image 15: Woman looking outside the Pink bus



16: Children playing in the Pink Bus

e.



Image 17: Advertisements targeted for women and female conductor in the Pink bus

f. Pink bus mobilizing patriarchal bargains and accommodations

A gender segregation policy can invisibilise women from the public sphere but it also has the capacity to increase women's mobility because of the illusion of safety and fulfilling modesty requirements by separating men and women Karachi's culture of segregation. Restrictions on mobility begin from the home and are further amplified onto the public space where men are thought of as perpetrators and saviors at the same time. Therefore, women have to work through patriarchal rules of the game (Kandiyoti, 1988), which includes seeking permission from their husband, father or brother before venturing outdoors if they are living with them. A woman travelling with her four children told me,

> *"My husband is completely tension free when I take this bus. I want to visit my mum's house every Friday but before the Pink bus, my husband had to leave work early so he could drop us to my mother's house. This service is very good, and he is not worried about me - I can easily travel with my children. He is also more comfortable if I use this service as compared to the Red Bus or any other buses."*
>
> - Yusra, Pink bus passenger, Interviewed on 25 August 2023

I was interviewing a young female bus conductor who has five elder brothers and asked her what her family thought about her working in this service. She told me,

> *"They are very supportive that I am doing this job, and they are happy that it is a women-only line. They don't have to worry about my safety, which is a problem that several bus conductors have had to face in the past. Even though I am a young girl, they empower me to work."*
>
> - Uzma, Pink bus conductor

Even though a policy of segregation can be viewed as conservative and regressive by western academics and policymakers, this patriarchal policy has the potential to create mobility possibilities for women when they have to constantly maneuver through gendered practices at home or in the urban – when they finally have permission to leave their homes, public transport options can make them feel unsafe because of fear or enactment of gender based violence. Therefore, having the option of segregated transport service can provide women ease and comfort during their complicated journeys and in turn increasing their mobility. Gendered policies need to be dissected to understand *who* they are working for before being discontinued for not meeting certain standards.


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g. Accountability mechanisms

To analyze a policy, it is crucial to observe accountability mechanisms from above and from below. During my ethnographic journeys, I observed accountability mechanisms set from below and the policy analysis brings attention towards the loopholes, inexecutions and negative externalities of a large public transport project in this mega-city. It is crucial to analyze the intervention on these levels to understand the separation between the policymaker and the common woman as policy implementation often encircles corruption, resulting in the mass being deprived of public transport.

i. From Below

The Pink bus has a male driver and female conductor but from time to time a ticket checker enters the bus and the conductor takes a back seat - this is to ensure that the conductor is charging everyone for the ticket rather than letting anyone free ride. However, it is the conductor's job is to do the checking of the purchasing of the tickets but to ensure the integrity of the bus conductor, another person is hired. The driver and conductor were kind enough to let me stay on the bus even after everyone got off at the last stop. This allowed me to observe the behind-the-scenes of the bus without the passengers. After handing over the receipts and money to the timekeeper, the female conductor told me how it would be helpful if they had a cash counting machine so that they don't have to count all the cash collected three to four times a day.

Even though the bus has infrastructure for debit/credit cards to be tapped, most of the demographic that rides these buses don't even have a bank account let alone a credit card, therefore, it does not function. We also do not have transport cards that can be topped up or tapped on the bus - a conductor is essential to collect money from passengers. A cleaner also came to sweep and mop the floor of the bus before it leaves for another round, and he also gave lunch to the driver and conductor. At another time, on the same route of the Pink Bus, a female passenger informed,

> *"The service is very nice, but it was better before. The bus was cleaner, and the drivers were better behaved than now. The drivers are a bit rash, and they keep honking and they also spit outside the bus. I don't trust them so much anymore."*
>
> - Saima, Pink bus passenger, 09 August 202

While driving the bus, a driver shared his process of being hired,

> *"I gave them my CV and they interviewed me before hiring me. They check the background and experience and train the drivers to drive these big buses."*
>
> - Taha, Red bus driver, 19 August 2023

To understand who the drivers and conductors report to, I wanted to access the depots where the buses are parked along with their administrative office. The conductors and drivers must report at

7am to check-in at the office before leaving for their journeys and check-out after they have parked their buses at the end of the day. I asked a female conductor if I could meet her boss for an interview, but he told her that I will need a permission letter from the government to conduct the interview. When I went to the office and depot at UP Mor, a security guard did not let me enter the barb wired building. A female conductor was also apprehensive when I asked her about her experiences as a conductor (Trip 1.4). She said,

> *Are you from some government agency? Who has sent you? Why are you asking these questions?*
> - Minish, Pink bus conductor, 26 July 2023.

The lack of transparency in these mechanisms result in people not knowing how the system works or could be improved. It also creates discrepancies between the people who make the policy and the people whose lives continually depend on it.

ii. From Above

The Pink bus is part of the Red bus line initiated by People's Bus Service. The loan for this project is provided by Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the world's second largest multilateral development institution that implements economic and social projects in Asia. The Bank loaned $572 million to the Sindh Government so the Sindh Mass Transit Authority (SMTA) can carry out this urban transportation and mobilities project. SMTA is responsible for regulating, planning, and funding urban mobility for all cities in Sindh province. TransKarachi, a public sector company owned by the government of Sindh implements the project and manages service contracts for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) operations in Karachi. The document highlights that Karachi is a fast-growing mega city that is declared as most unlivable in the world and without a formal public transport or mass transit system. Large investments in flyovers show the prioritization of private over public transport even though 75% of Karachi's population cannot afford a private vehicle (Hasan and Raza, 2015).

The loaning agency outlined pre-mitigation risks for SMTA and Trans Karachi which were based upon (i) internal control environment, (ii) experience in implementing development projects, (iii) supervisory procedures, and (iv) financial capability (ADB, 2019). The project plans to meet several sustainability goals but gender mainstreaming became a tick box (Image 18) on the document rather than being contextualized or analyzed for specific needs of Karachi's women. Under a paragraph called "Poverty, Social and Gender" in the document, the agency outlines that the BRT will provide

4. Drivers of Change	**Components**	**Gender Equity and Mainstreaming**	
Governance and capacity development (GCD)	Institutional development Organizational development	Effective gender mainstreaming (EGM)	✓
Knowledge solutions (KNS)	Application and use of new knowledge solutions in key operational areas		
Partnerships (PAR)	Civil society organizations Official cofinancing		
Private sector development (PSD)	Promotion of private sector investment		
5. Poverty and SDG Targeting		**Location Impact**	
Geographic Targeting	No	Urban	High
Household Targeting	No		
General Intervention on Poverty	Yes		
SDG Targeting	Yes		
SDG Goals	SDG1, SDG3, SDG5, SDG9, SDG10, SDG11, SDG12, SDG13		
6. Risk Categorization:	Complex		
7. Safeguard Categorization	**Environment:** A **Involuntary Resettlement:** A **Indigenous Peoples:** C		

Image 18: Gender Mainstreaming in ADB 2019, *Screenshot retrieved from Asian Development Bank, Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors, 2019*

transportation to 320,000 people daily with 15% women using the line. Currently, PBS has 100,000 daily commuters out of 21 million residents in the city (The News, 2024).

The second activity is to conduct periodic surveys to track changes in (i) size and diversity of riders, and (ii) their satisfaction level. Women's ridership increased from 15% to 20% since the inception of the BRT and 50% of female riders are satisfied with (i) reliability; (ii) security/safety; (iii) comfort; (iv) access; (v) connectivity; (vi) affordability, and (vii) information provision of BRT services compared to the baseline survey done in the beginning of the project (ADB, 2019). However, it is imperative to note that they don't inform the number of participants that took part in the survey and the *kind* of questions that were asked to them. Quantitative data can be extremely useful, but it needs to have certain parameters that are valid and reliable to produce solid research. To complement the survey, the government decided to produce a report and a short documentary to encapsulate lived experiences of passengers, but they have not released yet.

Risk of sexual harassment is considered a real threat that reduces women´s ridership of public transport in the city. The document does not point out a women-only (Pink) bus which was initiated later but other services were promised to provide safe and accessible transport for women, children and people with disabilities like (i)proper lighting and monitoring through closed-circuit television cameras; and (ii) buses, including segregated areas for women and staff trained to deal with harassment incidents (iii) 15% of BRT operators and Trans Karachi employees to be women. The public buses are already segregated in Karachi but the prevalence of female bus conductors and drivers in the Pink bus makes the space even more space.

Overall, the project is expected to generate 2,130 jobs directly through BRT operations, including 1,424 jobs for station services such as ticketing, security, and cleaning; 615 jobs in bus operations such as driving, conducting, and mechanics; and 81 staff jobs in TransKarachi (ADB, 2019). The plan also promises that at least 10% of shops/commercial spaces established by TransKarachi in the whole mezzanine of the staging facility, allocated to women entrepreneurs but I did not encounter any such shops on any of the stations.

1. Gender mainstreaming or losing contextuality

International development policies tend to blame informal structures and local cultures in the Global South for perpetuating gender inequalities whilst ignoring the gendered impacts of history, violent colonial legacies, conflicting state policies and the immobilities and moorings created through processes of globalization impacting most vulnerable in the Global South. Therefore, the issue of gender inequality is oftentimes depoliticized and considered a technical and static local problem when it is a problem of structural unequal power relations that don't attempt to understand the nuances of gender manifesting differently because of varying power geometries in the production of space (Karambiri et al., 2024).

However, it is imperative to note the already existing gender inequalities that marginalise women in the urban sphere. It is understood that gender mainstreaming in urban interventions can be achieved via implementing organizational and operational procedures. Former denotes cultural change where more women are involved in projects related to transport and mobility on all levels and latter pertains mainstreaming gender in design, implementation and evaluation processes (Mehra and Gupta, 2006). In an alternative framework, Rao and Kelleher (2002) suggest three dimensions that require change - (i) gender infrastructure and its *role* within (ii) organisations and (iii) institutions. Gender infrastructure involves initiating and promoting gender policies, gender units, increased female staff and managers and additional resources for women's programs (Ibid).

Rao and Kelleher (2002) posit that assessing the implications of planned actions can be done through analysing the development and implementation of *processes, capacities and techniques,* as well as shifts in structural and normative dimensions such as *beliefs, norms and power*. Bottom-up work is crucial to decode these changes that have an impact on everyday mobilities due to gendered policy interventions. And policy to action work can be fragmented if findings from the field are not inculcated in understanding how policies interact **with** the urban sphere. Copy-paste urbanism deflects responsibility as policymakers aim to apply solutions from other places rather than fully understanding their own problems. Policy documents with western goals, ideologies and strategies cannot be fully applied in the context of the Global South and often deter from the exploring effective cultural and bottom-up policy responses.

2. Negative externalities of implementing SDGs



Image 19: Chaotic traffic under the Green bus BRT corridor

The project plans to meet SDGs 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 but most of its implementation plans run in contradiction with sustainable development, mobility and housing in cities. The biggest impact has been on the environment and on natives of Karachi living on the strip of the 24.2km main corridor and 2.4km common corridor section (ADB, 2019). By constructing the corridor, this project has displaced 774 people which include small business owners losing infrastructural extensions, 77 public and private organisations shifting minor structures and 275 owners and 199 workers of microbusinesses that occupy space in informal ways (Ibid). Even though the document highlights that there are permanent vending spaces in the project design that will assist vendors to resettle, no commercial shops or space for vendors has been set up even though there is a lot of space in the station to set up small businesses. The main problem with this however is that people only using the bus will potentially make use of these shops but they won't be open to pedestrians or motorists which would dampen shopkeeper's overall revenue (Trip 2.3 and 5.6).

Creating no-signal, rapid transit corridors is not innovative infrastructure - it just shoves the problem under the corridor where buses, rickshaws, motorcycles and cars amongst other automobiles and pedestrians have to negotiate space (Image 19). Even though the corridor is supposed to increase mobility for 1.5 million people around it, it is also suffocating their existence by imposing this mammoth on the city. During the construction phase, traffic noise and disruptions, inaccess to property, relocation of utilities, tree cutting, poor air quality and threat community's health and safety were anticipated; most of these issues exist even after the two years of the construction of the corridor and keep on growing the space is not optimally utilized for transport needs (Image 20).
The SDG targeting over looks geographical and household targeting which can help us best understand the issues with sustainability in a city - just philosophising issues of poverty without doing

proper cost-benefit analysis can result in more problems in chaotic yet fragile urban settings like Karachi.

h. Governing Anarchy

Urban governance according to Pierre and Peters (2012), is the formulation and pursuit of collective goals at the local level of the political system. However, these local governments are embedded in national, sometimes also transnational institutional and policy frameworks which prescribe or prohibit specific forms of political and administrative behavior among the local governments. While it might be worthwhile to have some foreign involvement or aid in policy making, urban policies are extremely contextual and should be tailored in accordance with the needs of the people living in the land rather than superficial prescriptions arriving from a colonial
state.

In the case of Karachi, where urban transport policies are funded by institutions like the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, the city becomes indebted and must pay off heavy loans to these organizations while the governing agencies don't work on any longer-term infrastructural change. Even though urban governance sees the steering and coordination of local society as a process where local government is not a fixed as a constitutional mandate but varies in both its strengths and its function, the role of local government in relation to societal, economic and political factors is still the most important in the mechanisms of urban governance (Pierre and Peters, 2012).

Corrupt politicians and their motivations to introduce policies just before elections, but not following up on them has resulted in the city to become a "political orphan" as the state absolves itself from accountability mechanisms (Mangi, 2020). Karachi has a provincial government and a federal government that is working to improve that city´s transport infrastructure to increase people's daily mobility. Pierre and Peters (2012) highlight that

> *"cities, to a much higher degree than national government, are deeply embedded in a web of institutional, economic, and political constraints which creates a set of complex contingencies in the process of governing (p.72)."*

And Karachi is in this complicated web with several different global to local stakeholders negotiating through different forms of constraints. Public transport provision also becomes a tactic utilized by political parties to gain votes and support from the people. Since Karachi has always existed in these power contestations ultimately becoming a political orphan that no one takes accountability for, the buses or public transport provision are emblematic of the political situation of the city. On the bus stops of the Green Bus Line, there are pictures of the leaders of the PML-N (federal) with slogans saying that this service is a gift for the people of Pakistan (Image 20).



Image 20: A poster thanking federal government for the provision of Green Bus line in Karachi in the massive bus stop

In May 2023, when Imran Khan (ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan) was arrested, a People's Bus Service was put on fire by the supporters of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI). His party began to protest the coalition of opposition parties (Image 21). Anarchists have burnt buses in the past in the city which results in people collectively losing hope from the city and the services that it provides. As political parties begin fighting, such strategies are used to further divide people and create unrest in the city.

Furthermore, several expensive buses were just left at Karachi port while people awaited them on the roads so they could use them but there were no means for them to be utilized because corrupt mechanisms weren't allowing the release of these imported buses in the city - the Transport Minister said "I am surprised what really has happened this time that it's taking so much time and depriving people of better transport services," (ProPakistani, 2023) as thirty red buses were rusting on the port of Karachi. He further explained that there were some "formalities" that took time to get completed without telling what those formalities were and who was accountable for them. He further added that there were "no bad intentions" involved but it is about service provision rather than an intention of a politician who is supposed to mobilise these processes rather than not knowing about them. It is important to note that Transport Minister Sharjeel Memon was indicted in a Rs.5 billion corruption

case since the initiation of this project (Baloch, 2018).

Corrupt road contractors do not put enough effort to build and maintain roads therefore, huge buses like these can only circle around the fringes of the city rather than accessing areas that are near people's homes. Few people live within walking distance from the bus stops where these buses run and most must use another vehicle like a motorcycle or rickshaw, just to get to the bus because it cannot enter the small streets where people live. Therefore, it is imperative to understand what kind of bus will complement the current road situation before implementing the policy under the pretense of international standards. The Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project was initiated on paper in 2019 but it took three years for the buses to start moving on the roads of the city because of slow, corrupt mechanisms.



Image 21: A Red bus burnt by PTI supporters, *Retrieved from The News.*

i. Compensatory policy plastering deep structural issues

Karachi does not have a mass transit system with reliable transport facilities even though the mega city has constant movement of people. Therefore, people in the city accept any form of transport options available. The state calls basic transport provision as a "blessing for the people" of Karachi", rather than a basic right. The People's Bus Service is a compensatory policy provided by the provincial government to make up for the lack of mass transit. The imported buses provide the impression of transport infrastructure development, which the citizens are benefitting from because they can travel from one end of the city to another at very a low-cost, but it barely makes the city connected or accessible for the mass. Moreover, the idea and execution of the Pink Bus is also a compensation for female passengers in the city for not providing them with safety in public transport. These sporadic compensations ultimately distract citizens from demanding their right to the city from corrupt politicians that are using taxpayer's money but devoiding them of mobility rights

Relating to providing compensatory rights to the public, the People's Bus Service and the Pink Bus can also be considered a plaster policy that is introduced to glaze over the underlying mobility and gender issues in the city. Due to Karachi's increasing car-centric culture, neo-liberal forces are creating road infrastructure like flyovers that supports the movements of cars sidelining other forms of transport options used by 75% of the city's population. This was a growing trend until 2015 when these buses were introduced to reduce the reliance on cars (Hasan and Raza, 2015). However, the elite do not utilise public transport - they drive in their cars and their automobiles violently take over roads.

Introduction of these new buses is not an ultimate solution for transport problems in the city. The people of Karachi need smaller and more frequent buses that can help them access different parts of the city, rather than having imported buses that take a lot of space on crammed roads and increase traffic as there are no separate lanes for the buses to move as they have to maneuver amidst the chaos on Karachi's roads. In context with the Pink Bus for women, the provincial government is plastering over the deeper issue of gendered right to the city. Rather than working on providing overall safe spaces for women, the state decided to provide this plaster policy that gives the illusion of safety even though it is an infrequent line that they can only be utilized in parts of their journey and is unavailable in the night.

In Karachi, policy implementation takes different stages and forms throughout a period, specifically with unstable government regimes that can barely finish their term because of the hybrid-democracy that prevails in the country. Media analysis helps gauge civil society perceptions on how the policy initiative is being implemented with real-time regarding routes, rates, functionality and feasibility of the Pink bus service along with highlighting the benefits of the service for women amidst their marginalization in daily mobility practices.

In an op-ed piece, Fazal (2023) questions, *Will Karachi's pink bus finally break the glass ceiling or crash into it yet again?*, as this isn't the first time that a gender-segregated line has been introduced in the city or country. To make the segregated line safe for women, the government started training female drivers so that a male driver does not have to drive the Pink Bus. The age-old stereotype of women being bad drivers also thrives on the roads of Karachi, but the Gender Specialist at BRT is trying to push against that by allowing women to train and drive these big buses that are historically only driven by men. This is a step towards their liberation and empowerment and creates new job opportunities for women along with making a gender-segregated space for them (Dawn, 2024).

On March 1, 2023, the government introduced the provision of the Pink Bus on another route, but my fieldwork showed that only one bus runs on that route. Two months after the inauguration of a separate bus line for women, the provincial government decided to raise fares as some of the routes of the bus were reaching the outskirts of the metropolis. This is a problem for women as they earn significantly less than men and cannot afford increasing fares for the ride. However, one year later, the Transport Minister who announced increasing fares for the People's Bus Service said that women can ride free on the Pink Bus for two months. The chief of the women's division of the provincial party said,

> *"The provision of safe and comfortable travel is a valuable gift from the Sindh government to women. By offering such facilities and empowering women, we can foster development and prosperity in our society."*

The politicians of the country consider the provision of public transportation a blessing rather than a right and laud themselves for such initiatives rather than focusing on deeper structural issues leading to transport and spatial injustices. In April 2024, the provincial government announced that women can ride free on Pink buses for two months and expected praise for the temporary free service (Ayub, 2024). However, this shows the compensatory, band-aid interventions carried out for women. If women are not charged for the service, the Pink bus will become too expensive for the government to run which will eventually result in it being shut down. It is crucial for policymakers to implement this policy in practical not performative ways so they can sustain for a longer time amidst the developmental challenges that the city is already facing.


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VIII. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

There are radical possibilities that can be manifested on the streets of Karachi to improve women's everyday mobilities through a segregated line. If these recommendations, but in lieu with the Pink bus intervention, there are a few short and long term policy recommendations:

1. **Increase the frequency:** It is evident that women are making use of the Pink bus on all the routes available for them and they would happily travel in segregated lines if they had an option to do so on every route. Increasing the frequency of the Pink Bus will also result in women trusting the segregated service and men taking it seriously as a policy intervention for women.
2. **Hire more women:** Only men are board members of SMTA and the implementation team of BRT also only has men. There is a gender specialist and social-work advisor who are women and have been hired because they are more likely to work with women and children but are not part of the decision-making team. If gender-mainstreaming has been introduced with this policy then women need to be hired on all levels – not just as conductors and drivers of the Pink Bus.
3. **Market the Pink bus:** The bright pink bus can be seen on the roads of Karachi and newspapers and TV channels have disseminated information about the bus, but still a lot of people don't know about the provision of this service and get confused when they are entering the bus. Better signs are needed for accessibility which will then increase the ridership of the bus.
4. **Roads for Buses:** Karachi's roads have the auto-mobile monopoly with cars completely taking over any other form of transport. It is crucial that the city bans big four-wheelers and luxury cars as they take up all the space on the roads and streets. The roads also need to be properly constructed to avoid collapse during monsoon rain or other natural disasters. Buses should be the main form of transport on the road, but everyone uses cars or motorcycles to travel – this leads to greater discrepancies between people and ruptures the social fabric of society as everyone uses individual forms of transport. The feeling of collectively living and experiencing the city is also not present as people are driving in their own automobiles, *isolated.*
5. **Separate the lanes:** It is common to not follow traffic rules and keep changing lanes in Karachi to maneuver traffic problems but the state needs to separate lanes for these big buses to avoid accidents and traffic jams that happen because of the various automobiles not following rules on the roads of Karachi. Separation of lanes will lead to better traffic control and will increase overall frequency of the bus.

IX. LIMITATIONS & STRENGTHS

Limitations

1. **Snap-shot study:** The fieldwork for this thesis was conducted only for eight full days, one year after the policy was initiated. Through media tracking, I was staying updated on latest developments of the intervention, but mobility and its means and needs are ever evolving. Therefore, a longitudinal study on mobility patterns and needs can reveal critical data for policymaking. My focus was also on the case of the segregated line and its implications on women's mobilities but conducting in-depth studies can reveal women's socio-spatial logic and maneuverings in patriarchal settings that can be unsafe at times.
2. **No policymakers' interviews:** For this bottom-up work, I wanted to highlight the voices of those who use this service daily and those who work for it because newspapers and TV channels already give a lot of space to policymakers and their opinions when they should be unveiling the demands of the citizens. However, questioning policymakers regarding the bones of contention that exist when initiating a gendered policy would have brought forward interesting nuances or lack thereof. The inaccessible depots and offices also made it difficult to interview other stakeholders in the ecosystem. I emailed two policymakers but did not receive any response from them.

Strengths

1. **Bottom-up:** This research is grounded in the experiences of those who get impacted by PBS and the Pink bus service as it illustrates findings from the field regarding operations and perceptions of the service and how those impact women's everyday mobilities in the city. The data was collected while being *on-the-go* to understand the complexities of using an infrequent, some-what accessible and questionably safe gender segregated line. This approach also deploys a feminist and decolonial methodology where I decided to *follow the participant* and meet them on their terms while indulging in mobile methods.
2. **Meta-ethnography:** The detailed ethnographic data reveals the different tensions that come up during waiting, in-transit and getting off the Pink bus along with other transport options in the city. The findings of this ethnography can be linked to other detailed ethnographic studies to triangulate data in similar veins. This data can be utilized with other ethnographic studies to create a meta-ethnography that helps to distinguish one place from another in context but find solidarity in everyday resistances.

X. CONCLUSION

The restricted nature of the spatial organization of Karachi's public transport physically limits all those who are dependent on it but there are other underlying limitations to mobility that women face because of their identity as they maneuver through social and political geographies of the city. Women have a unique spatial positionality that does not apply to most men: in a space that is already physically restricted, women have to face this double restriction by constantly adhering to certain gender norms and tailoring their behavior and activities around those norms. During the fieldwork for this research my internal panoptic male connoisseur (Pederson, 2020) was hyper-vigilant when I was in crowded spaces with men but eased down as I entered the Pink bus. Integrating feminist principles with critical ethnography helped attain epistemological decolonization throughout the process as I engaged with politics of power as a passenger and researcher of the segregated line.

Theorizing Lefebvre's (1978) production of space, I observed the *perceived space* of the Pink bus through its material aspects and spatial practices of waiting, being in-transit and getting off the bus and interviewing various stakeholders which helped reveal movement patterns, regimes and infrastructures shaped by the urban environment. Then, I decode the *conceived space* outlined by policymakers and civil society to highlight the discrepancies of policy implementation on-ground along with the power of language and imaginaries in creating safe and equitable public transport solutions. Lastly, I hone into the *lived space* of the segregated line as I witness cultural and symbolic meanings being attached to this service by women and men in society. While the Pink Bus suffers from infrequency, inaccessibility, and safety concerns, it serves as a critical space for women to assert their *presence* in the public sphere. Even though mechanisms from above lack accountability and efficiency, meanderings from below help increase the ridership of the bus in the city which ultimately increases women's mobility and helps them feel safe.

In a city plagued by transport poverty and rigid control over women's bodies, the Pink Bus represents more than just a mode of transportation; it is a *site* of place-making where women can explore and assert their identities, creating new power geometries. In this place, amidst the contested space of the city, women get the opportunity to momentarily step outside restrictive norms that typically govern their movement in public spaces. By offering a gender-segregated environment, the bus allows women to reclaim some degree of agency, challenging moral codes and understanding new ways of being in the city albeit mobile. The power of *place* in gender and mobility policy should not be ignored as it has the capacity to form relational mobilities for women. The Pink Bus provides a critical case study that highlights the importance of context-specific policies that consider both the physical and moral landscapes that shape the lived experiences of those they aim to serve. Only by acknowledging and addressing these complexities, we can hope to create a more inclusive and just urban environment.

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XII. APPENDIX I

Interview questions for passengers and conductors of the Pink bus

1. What is your daily route for the Pink Bus from your house and back?
2. What kind of passengers do you find in the Pink Bus and what do you think about the atmosphere of the bus?
3. What are women's reactions to the Pink Bus? Have you encountered any men commenting on this service? What do they think about it?
4. What kind of improvements can be brought in this service? Do you have any advice for the government of Sindh on how to make this service or do passengers have any suggestions or complaints?
5. In what areas of Karachi would you like this service to be provided?
6. How can people be well-informed of this service?
7. Do you feel safe when you travel in this bus? In what ways can the government protect its citizens outside the Pink Bus?
8. What mobility options would you use before the People's Bus Service? How has that changed for you since this service was introduced?

XIII. APPENDIX II

Observation guides

Trip 1.1 **Date:** 20/07/23	**Time:** 10:00am-01:30pm	**Route: Red Bus R10** **(Clock Tower to II Talwar)**	
Day 1 – trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Clock Tower, DHA	Clock Tower –II Talwar	II Talwar, DHA
Type of stakeholder(s)	A security guard and another man sitting outside the restaurant under the umbrella shade	Male Bus Conductor	Female domestic worker and retired old man
Behavior(s)	The men stared at me for a bit, confused as to why am I not taking the buses that would stop in front of me	Trying to segregate men and women in the mixed bus.	Reserved and quiet – the women was wearing a niqab and was shy but still answered questions
Conversations	The guard asked me why I wasn't taking the red buses going on towards II Talwar and I saud	I asked him about the Pink Bus and he said that it is only for show.	Told me that the Pink Bus comes at the depot.
Context	35 degree heat and no shade or sitting space, no information regarding the bus stops or directions of the bus.	Bus filled with men and women and the conductor squirming through women to sell them tickets	Under the shade of the bus stop. No signs of direction but the bus stop was segregated and properly built.
General Mood	Calm and slow morning with less buses	Loud and packed with a lot of people	Calm afternoon with very few people on the bus stop.
Reflexive Comments	I was a bit scared as I was alone and there was no sign of the bus stop.	Gender-segregation was cramming the bus.	Roundabout with a lot of people and buses going through.

Trip 1.2 **Date:** 20/07/23	**Time:** 01:30 am -01:50 pm	**Route: Red Bus R10** **(II Talwar to Metropole)**	
Day 1 – trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Dou Talwar	II Talwar - Metropole	Metropole
Type of stakeholder(s)	Traffic police, security guards, maid and retired old man	Women packed in front of the bus barely able to move.	All kinds of passengers and citizens moving in the city's center.
Behavior(s)	Men loitering on the road, women on the move from one mode of transport to another	Women crammed talking to each other about their school and work.	People moving quickly, trying to be careful of moving buses and motorcycles.
Conversations	The maid shared her thoughts on the convenience of the Pink Bus but also told me that if I really want to catch it, my best bet is to go to the depot	The maid who I accompanied from the bus stop sat with me in the front while the man went into the men's section. We talked about her 3-4 hour long commute that she has to do to earn minimum wage	A lot of traffic noise as cars, buses and rickshaws were moving around the roud abour towards four different directions. The participant quickly told me where the next bus comes.
Context	Very busy round about and moving traffic from buildings and malls	Trying to make conversation amidst people getting on and off the bus.	No built bus stop – just a sign indicating that People's Bus Service comes there.
General Mood	Only three people at the bus stop but a lot of moving traffic and movement of pedestrians.	Busy as it was rush hour – both the sections of the bus (women and men) were completely full with most people standing.	Very crowded. No space for pedestrians even though it is a commercial area.
Reflexive Comments	The maid was reserved in the beginning but	It was difficult to have in-depth conversation with	Red buses were taking several routes from the

	slowly began to share information.	her amidst the rush and her face covered.	round about with which was overwhelming

Trip 1.3 **Date:** 20/07/23	**Time:** 02:00pm-03:15pm	**Route: Red Bus R10** **(Metropole – Model Town)**	
Day 1 – trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Metropole	Metropole – Model Town	Model Town
Type of stakeholder(s)	The maid and I moving with other commuters to get from one bus stop to another.	Passengers working and studying around the strip of Shahrah e Faisal getting on the bus	Passengers, vendors, rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists
Behavior(s)	Fast-paced walking, staying wary of automobiles as there is no space for pedestrians.	Chaotic on women's side as they have less space but calm towards men's side as they don't travel during afternoons.	
Conversations	Passengers asking information about different routes of the People's Bus Service. Commuters coming from the commercial area hailing rickshaws.	Women asking conductors about directions and which routes would take them to different locations	Family members picking up female passengers getting off the bus, and rickshaw drivers asking if they want a ride.
Context	Busy bus stop at the roundabout in the city center.	Daily wage workers and students going back home.	Last bus stop in a small street before the depot.
General Mood	Vendors, pedestrians, and automobiles merging at different intersections	Quiet and calm but crammed on women's side. Women were accommodating and making space	Easy movement – felt like people were there with a specific purpose.

		for one another.	
Reflexive Comments	I followed fellow passengers		Seeing the Pink Bus parked made me happy.

Trip 1.4 **Date:** 20/07/23	**Time:** 03:15pm-04:30pm	**Route: Pink Bus R10** **(Model Town to Metropole)**	
Day 1 – trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Model Town	Model Town - Metropole	Metropole
Type of stakeholder	Drivers, conductors, vendors, timekeeper, pedestrians and motorcyclists.	Female bus conductor, female passengers, male driver	Passengers, vendors, rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists
Behavior	Interacting with each other as the buses were parked and conductors and drivers were taking a lunch break.	A lot of space for women and they were taking it up by sitting on different corners of the bus but still loudly talking to each other.	Tense pedestrians as several cars coming at the intersection of the roundabout. The driver honked at the other bus.
Conversations	Discussing heavy traffic coming from Sharah e Faisal. Timekeeper asked me why I was waiting for the Pink Bus to move when the Red ones were already moving.	Women talking about shopping and their in-laws; conductor telling different connections they have to make to go to a certain market; conductor asks me if I am part of the government; ticket checker asks conductor questions	The conductor knew where I had to get off and the conductor and the driver saw the bus leaving so they decided to honk even though I wasn't in a hurry. They assumed that I wanted to catch it immediately.
Context	At the depot with other buses parked and all the employees of PBS taking a break.	Women-only bus with a female conductor and advertisements for women as well.	The buses stopping created a bit of a jam and it was dangerous for me to cross the

			road
General Mood	Slow as people were taking a break	Giggles, loud conversations amongst women	Intense and chaotic with loud noises
Reflexive Comments	I felt annoyed by the timekeeper	Breathing space-body feeling comfortable	I had to get off the bus because of the traffic jam.

Trip 1.5 **Date:** 20/07/23	**Time:** 04:30pm-05:10pm	**Route: Red Bus R10** **(Metropole – Clock Tower)**	
Day 1 – trip 5	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Metropole	Metropole – Clock Tower	Clock Tower
Type of stakeholder	Drivers, conductor, pedestrians	Male and female passengers, male driver	Security guard, passengers, motorcyclists
Behavior	Different automobiles honking because of the massive traffic jam	It was towards the end of the day so everyone seemed tired.	People going towards the sea and to the restaurant nearby.
Conversations	I did not wait long enough to have conversations as I got off from one bus and ran on the other side to catch the other one. The conductor asked me to cross the road carefully because of the crazy traffic.	People talking on the phone, conductor asking children to not sit on the floor	People asking security guard about the routes and people stopping the bus to ask what route will it take.
Context	Two buses stopped on different sides of the roundabout so one passenger could get off	More men than women in the bus	An elite, car-centric area of Karachi with restaurants by the beach. Only people from the lower class

	which pissed off a lot of people riding other automobiles.		utilize this service in this area.
General Mood	Intense and chaotic.	Men's side completely packed	Pleasant evening
Reflexive Comments	I was scared and then also embarrassed.	A lot of men crammed at the back staring	Paved roads helped getting off the bus.

Trip 2.1 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Time:** 10:00am-10:45am	**Route:** R10 Red Bus II Talwar – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 2 – trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	II Talwar	II Talwar – Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Commuters at the bus stop, mechanics and rickshaw drivers, traffic police	Male and female passengers, male driver	Passengers and drivers
Behavior	Less conversation, people not interacting much with one another.	People on their phones playing games, typing and two of them talking to their employer	Going towards the Green Bus Line
Conversations	Traffic police standing on the corner and speaking with pan vendors as there is not enough traffic at the round about	People are quieter – not a lot of conversation	Regarding connections that need to be taken with the other line and rejecting rickshaw drivers asking them if they need a ride
Context	People starting off their day, cleaning cars and getting on different buses from the bus stop	The city is not fully functioning yet especially the centers that is bustling after 11am or noon.	Built footpaths to get from one bus stop to another
General Mood	Slow morning	Unhurried – people	Everyone in a

	with movement but not as overwhelming as afternoons and evenings at the same stop.	need to get to places but they aren't in a sense of urgency.	hurry as there is a lot of movement of cars on both sides of the road
Reflexive Comments	What time of the day is the city bustling the most?	I came to do some shopping but forgot that the shops open late.	The fully constructed bus stop shocked me compared to PBS

Trip 2.2 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Time:** 10:45pm-11:30pm	**Route: Green Bus Line** **Numaish Chowrangi – Nagan Chowrangi**	
Day 2 – trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi – Nagan Chowrangi	Nagan Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Passengers, ticket providers, security guards	Male and female passengers on segregated sides	Passengers, ticket providers, security guards
Behavior	Very formal – there was a lot of space in the built bus stop. Ticket providers were behind counters. All the employees were men	Respectful and calm. There are separate doors for men and women to enter and exit. Getting on and off the bus is also smooth because of properly built bus stops.	People were dispersed and going towards the pedestrian bridge or the main road
Conversations	Purchasing the ticket since the online machine wasn't working. Security guards verifying tickets	There are assigned bus stops and the ticket is already purchased so the conductor is not there.	Passengers asking how to exit the bus stop and the way to the escalator for the pedestrian bridge
Context	The Green Bus Line is provided by the federal government. There is a lot of space as they	Good infrastructure impacts the entire ride; people weren't confused about where the bus was going and if they	The huge infrastructure for the Green Bus Line allows for the bus to move smoothly

	have created corridors for the bus rapid transit system	were taking the correct route.	but its also connected to the pedestrian bridge and right in the middle of two main roads
General Mood	Serious and formal – presence of security	In order, organized	Calm inside the bus stop
Reflexive Comments	Different infrastructure		

Trip 2.3 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Time:** 02:00pm-03:00pm	**Route:** Red Bus R10 (Nagan Chowrangi – Army Public School)	
Day 2 – trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Nagan Chowrangi	Nagan Chowrangi – Army Public School	Army Public School
Type of stakeholder	Passengers, rickshaw drivers, vendors	Male and female bus passngers and male bus driver	Pedestrians moving on the pedestrian bridge. Empty bus stop and long roads
Behavior	Everything happening at once as different roads were merging with several automobiles	Bus driver driving really fast and kept honking	Smoothly got off at the station and sat on a paved bench.
Conversations	Asked security guard about bus stop for PBS at the Chowrangi; did not talk to anyone at the station	It was difficult to talk to each other with noise of the honks going on in the background.	The bus conductor told that I could find a Pink bus from here that would go to Indus Hospital. I wanted to understand the functionality of the Pink Bus.
Context	The Bus Rapid	Passengers getting	Quiet afternoon

	Transit corridor converging with pedestrian bridge	off at random stops –conversations between conductor, driver and passenger mediating that	with a lot of automobiles moving on no signal corridor
General Mood	Speakers blasting with readings of the Quran at the bus stop	Chaotic	Fast-paced but also quiet
Reflexive Comments	A man kept staring which made me uncomfortable	Difficult to talk to people as there is a lot of movement	I was scared for a bit until I saw two women coming.

Trip 2.4 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Time:** 03:00pm – 03:30pm	**Route:** R2 Pink Bus Army Public School – Nasir Jump	
Day 2 – trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Army Public School	Army Public School – Nasir Jump	Nasir Jump Depot
Type of stakeholder	Two women wearing Balochi chaddars	Male bus driver, female bus conductor	Mini-bus drivers, rickshaw drivers, strip of vendors
Behavior	Kind and welcoming – smiling at me but I couldn't speak in Balochi and they couldn't speak in Urdu	The male driver was a bit rude as I did not hail the bus earlier and he had to stop for me a bit ahead.	People and automobiles naturally negotiating on a chaotic road.
Conversations	Sitting under the shade of the paved bus stop – could not talk to each other but gently smiling. Women were holding hands.	The female conductor was silent when the bus driver was saying that I should ask for the bus to stop even if I am standing at the bus stop.	Buyers negotiating with vendors, mini bus conductors asking and rickshaw drivers asking if people need a ride.
Context	The women and	Pink Bus with	No paved bus

	I were waiting for our buses to come. The bus was supposed to stop at the station but it didn't and I had to hail and go after it.	female passengers taking up space in different corners of the bus.	stop – broken footpaths. The presence of automobiles made pedestrian movement difficult. The stop is near Karachi's industrial sector.
General Mood	Unhurried and easy	Easy-going but the driver was going very fast.	Noisy, busy and chaotic
Reflexive Comments	Caught off-guard when the bus didn't stop.	I did not make conversation with passengers during thus trip.	Overwhelmed by traffic – trying to stay safe

Trip 2.5 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Time: 03:30pm-03:40pm**	**Route:** Rickshaw from Nasir Jump stop to depot	
Day 2 – trip 5	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Nasir jump stop	Rickshaw	Nasir Jump depot
Type of stakeholder	Rickshaw drivers, mini bus drivers, motorcyclists, vendors	Male driver	Bus drivers, vendors, passengers, timekeepers
Behavior	Chaotic – pedestrians and automobiles trying to make way for themselves. Everything happening at once.	Kind and calm – we negotiated a price and then I got on.	Busy with a lot of conversations and interactions as this was the depot for the People's Bus Service and the mini buses.
Conversations	Mini bus drivers and rickshaw drivers asking me if I want a ride. I was asking where I	He asked me where I wanted to go and I told him Baloch colony to which he said that he could drop me off for Rs.	I asked a man about the services of Red and Pink buses and he said all kinds of buses

	could take the R2 from and a rickshaw driver told me that it is a 30 minute walk .	300 so why would I go to the depot and take the bus. We had already negotiated the cost of the ride.	are there and then pointed towards R3.
Context	Motorcyclists and rickshaws moving in all directions and slowly stopping in front of pedestrians to ask if they need a ride	No footpaths and chaotic rush was making me feel unsafe which is why I took the bus. I wanted to check out the depot and take the bus from there.	Timekeepers taking to bus drivers – men and women clustered in different sections of a big ground.
General Mood	Chaotic	Easy – sense of relief	Busy
Reflexive Comments	I gave in and took the rickshaw	Being in the rickshaw made me feel safe	The diversity in public transport was evident

Trip 2.6 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Time:** 03:55-04:20pm	**Route:** Nasir Jump depot – Baloch Colony R3 Red Bus	
Day 2 – trip 6	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Nasir Jump depot	Nasir Jump depot – Baloch Colony	Baloch Colony
Type of stakeholder	Bus drivers, vendors, passengers, timekeepers	Male driver and bus conductor, mix-gender passengers	Policemen, motorcyclists and homeless families
Behavior	Drivers, conductors and passengers waiting for the timekeeper to tell them when the bus should move.	More women in front of the bus while men have 2/3rd of the space at the back.	Under the flyover, there was a whole new socio-spatial setting with people doing their everyday lives.
Conversations	People discussing routes and figuring out which bus goes to which direction. Even though	Women talking on mobile phones and with fellow passengers. I asked the conductor about	Policemen stopping motocyclists and fining them for not wearing a helmet.

	there are a lot of buses, there are no proper maps to indicate the routes that they take.	the service and he did not even know about the Pink Bus.	Children running around underneath the flyover and talking to their mother.
Context	Busy and chaotic. Hurriedness as passengers were waiting to get on the move after drivers and conductors were done with their break.	Busy afternoon in the bus with the conductor trying to accomodate passengers getting on and off the bus.	Under the busy flyovers homeless families living, police patrolling and vendors selling fruit.
General Mood	Busy and chaotic	Busy but calm	Tense
Reflexive Comments	Scanning the different transport options	The constant movement of people made interviewing difficult.	Police presence made me uncomfortable

Trip 2.7 **Date:** 26/07/23	**Journey Time:** 04:20pm – 05:15pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus Baloch Colony to Clock Tower	
Day 2 trip 7	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Baloch Colony	Baloch Colony – Clock Tower	Clock Tower
Type of stakeholder	Motorcyclists, pedestrians, mechanics, rickshaw drivers	Male driver and conductor, male and female passengers	Security guard, passengers, motorcyclists
Behavior	The men around me kept staring at me from both the sides. A motorcyclist took a turn around the round about and slowly came towards where I was standing.	Female passengers were shicked to see the service available for the cost. They were happy that they can ride from one end of the city to another in just Rs.50.	People going towards Sea View or Phase VIII.
Conversations	I was taking a	I conversed with a	Minimal

	picture of the flyover and the motorcyclist came to me and said that I should keep my phone inside other wise it will get stolen.	poor woman who was happy about the service. She was going towards II Talwar to get a packet of ration as her husband was sick and she couldn't earn.	conversation – felt like everyone knew where they had to go.
Context	This is a busy area in Karachi and notorious for mobile-snatching especially during rush hours.	Bus fully packed with women in the front and men at the back	Breezy evening – the bus stopped in front of Sea View. Several automobiles but bus still has a separate lane.
General Mood	Tense	Hurried and chaotic	Calm
Reflexive Comments	I felt very uncomfortable with the comment.		Tired after the day of fieldwork.

Trip 3.1 **Date:** 02/08/23	**Journey Time: 01:30pm – 02:15pm**	**Route:** R10 Red Bus Abdullah Shah Ghazi – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 3 trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Abdullah Shah Ghazi	Abdullah Shah Ghazi – Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Male and female passengers, people from the shrine, vendors, pedestrians.	Male bus driver and conductor, mix-gender passengers	Rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists, policemen
Behavior	Women on the move while men lingering at the bus stop. Women were sitting at the bus	Two men having a fight on space, other men trying to stop them until the bus conductor maneuvered from	In constant movement – passengers going towards the Green Line station and

	stop and men were standing and staring.	the back and intervened	rickshaw drivers asking people if they want a ride
Conversations	Two men asked me why I wasn't taking the bus and I told them that I was waiting for the Pink Bus to come.	Female passengers quietly talking about the fight at the back	
Context	The bus stop is right across a big flyover and adjacent to the biggest shrine in Karachi with movement of a lot of devotees around it.	Segregated transport makes it difficult for the male conductor to move between the two sections when the female section is also crammed.	The chowrangi has movement of several raw materials, and it also transports people in old dilapidated buses.
General Mood	Busy with a lot of movement, sounds from the shrine and traffic.	Tense and chaotic – people minding their own business	
Reflexive Comments	Took red buse as I felt unsafe	Observed – chose not to interview	

Trip 3.2 **Date:** 02/08/23	**Journey Time:** 02:15pm- 02:30pm	**Route:** Numaish Chowrangi – Urdu Bazar	
Day 3 trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Numaish Chowrangi	Rickshaw	Urdu Bazar
Type of stakeholder	Rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists, policemen	Rickshaw driver and a woman with her daughter sharing the ride	Vendors, shopkeepers, pedestrians., rickshaw drivers,

			motorcyclists
Behavior	Rickshaw drivers offering people rides; difficult to hail buses because of fast and chaotic traffic	Kind and calm	Negotiating space amidst different automobiles and dilapidated shops.
Conversations	Asked me where I wanted to go in Urdu Bazar	The woman was talking about the school books that she has to buy for her daughter. She lives in Nazimabad but there are some books that are available only here. She took the Green Line and then the rickshaw.	People asking for school books, bargaining for a better price on different items. The tyre of a rickshaw went into a pothole in the middle of the road which stopped traffic from different streets.
Context	Urdu Bazar has small streets that are not fully constructed. There is a lot of car traffic but there is no space for a bus to move in the bazaar.	It is common to share rickshaw rides in Karachi especially when people are going towards the same direction.	The streets were packed because the infrastructure does not support the movement of so many people and vehicles which created slow movement and traffic.
General Mood	Chaotic	Calm and easy	Busy and tense
Reflexive Comments		The woman did not want to talk much	I did not stand in the chaos for long.

Trip 3.3 **Date:** 02/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:00pm- 04:15pm	**Route:** Urdu Bazar – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 3 trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Urdu Bazar	Rickshaw	Numaish

			Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Vendors, shopkeepers, pedestrians., rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists, beggars	Rickshaw driver	Passengers, pedestrians, vendors, motorcyclists, rickshaw drivers bus conductors
Behavior	People standing in different clusters – some were drinking chai, some waiting for their ride. Overall calm	Composed and friendly	Most passengers were standing on a paved spot. The slowing down of buses and conductors announcing the routes makes it a stop.
Conversations	Urdu Bazar has small streets that are not fully constructed. There is a lot of car traffic but there is no space for a bus to move in the bazaar.	I asked about going the People's Bus Service and asked him to drop me at the Numaish bus stop. He inquired where I live and told me that in the same amount of money he can drop me home.	Passengers asking conductors about the direction the buses are going in.
Context	Still chaotic but a bit calmer than before	Urdu Bazar was between my house and Numaish Chowrangi	Rush hour starting as daily wage workers and 9-5 employees go home.
General Mood	Hurried		Fast-paced
Reflexive Comments		I chose to go the bus stop even though I was offered a cheap ride home because I wanted to continue fieldwork.	Got off on the otherside of the station.

Trip 3.4 **Date:** 02/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:30 – 05:30pm	**Route:** R10 Pink Bus Numaish Chowrangi – Abdullah Shah Ghazi

Day 3 trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi – Abdullah Shah Ghazi	Abdullah Shah Ghazi
Type of stakeholder	Male and female passengers, vendors, male bus conductors, rickshaw drivers	Male driver, female passengers and female conductor	Pedestrians, vendors, motorcyclists, rickshaw drivers
Behavior	Pink Bus R10 arrived and several men approached it to get in it as they had been waiting for a long time.	I sat beside the only woman in the bus and talked about the service.	Pedestrians trying to walk on footpath to avoid car traffic
Conversations	A young woman stopped a man from getting on the bus indicating that it is only for women because of the color and in the front of the bus.	She felt bad that the bus was completely empty and men were denied of the service. Conducted a longer interview with her and the bus conductor.	
Context	If you see from a distance, it is diccicult to distinguish between red and pink buses	The bus was empty and quiet so there was time to talk	Not a lot of people at the bus stop – this was on the other side of the road from the shrine
General Mood	Chaotic and hurried	Very calm	Slow
Reflexive Comments	I didn't have to wait long for the Pink bus which made me happy.		Same stop and different sides made a huge difference.

Trip 4.1 **Date:** 06/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus Clock Tower – Ibrahim Hyderi

Day 4 trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Clock Tower	Clock Tower – Ibrahim Hyderi	Ibrahim Hyderi
Type of stakeholder	Security guard, passengers, motorcyclists, street performers	Male driver, female passengers and male conductor	Vendors, motorcyclists, timekeeper, bus drivers and conductors – mostly male
Behavior	People waiting for buses on both sides of the roads, some people going towards the beach, some enjoying performances	I sat beside the only woman in the bus and talked about the service.	Women dispersed very quickly with men picking them up on motorcycles or rickshaws
Conversations	People asking each other about the routes that the bus takes	Before the fight happened, I was asking about his experience working with PBS and he said all. Later, he said that it is tough to mediate when people start fighting and he pointed out how women coming from certain locations fight alot	The timekeeper was reluctant to talk to me and when I asked about the timetable of the bus he asked me to just get on it. Driver later said that they move when the timekeeper asks them to.
Context	People minding their own business	The bus was empty and quiet so there was time to talk	Space filled with men – no woman standing or talking
General Mood	Pleasant afternoon	Tense as women started fighting	Slow
Reflexive Comments	I got on the Red bus instantly	Most observation and one interview	Felt a bit out of place being the only woman there

Trip 4.2 **Date:** 06/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus Ibrahim Hyderi to Bilal Masjid	
Day 4 trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Ibrahim Hyderi	Ibrahim Hyderi – Bilal Masjid	Bilal Masjid
Type of stakeholder	Vendors, motorcyclists, timekeeper, bus drivers and conductors – mostly male	Male bus driver and conductor, female passengers in front with kids, men at the back	Motorcyclists, pedestrians
Behavior	Men sitting in clusters and loitering – taking up space while there are no women	Driver was chewing betel nut and could barely answer my questions	Fast-paced, overtaking one another
Conversations	The men pushed me to stand in the parked bus with the driver than on the road. I asked several people about the Pink Bus but no one knew anything.	As the driver and the conductor were not very cooperative, I decided to call the Pink Bus conductor who told me only one bus runs on the line.	Got into an accident while getting off the bus as a motorcycle was maneuvering from the side when the driver opened the doors of the bus.
Context	The stop is located in a poor area of Karachi that is very gendered especially on the roads even though women are a big part of the Ibrahim Hyderi community.	I wanted to collect more data in the Pink Bus so I made decisions according to the time the bus was supposed to go to a specific location	Busy road with a lot of automobiles moving – no designated bus stops – people ask for a stop anywhere and hail a bus randomly too
General Mood	Serious and formidable	Tense	Chaotic
Reflexive Comments	Witnessing the other end of R10	I should have called her earlier	

Trip 4.3 **Date:** 06/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 06:00pm	**Route:** R10 Pink Bus Bilal Masjid – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 4 trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Bilal Masjid	Bilal Masjid – Ibrahim Hyderi – Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists, pedestrians	Female passengers and conductors, male bus driver	Female conductor and male bus driver
Behavior	Fast-paced; a rickshaw driver saw me running after the Pink Bus and decided to offer me a lift.	Passengers listening to loud songs and enjoying the ride of the bus.	The conductor did not talk a lot in the beginning; both allowed me to stay on the bus for the whole ride
Conversations	He was confused about why I was running after the Pink Bus when I could take the Red ones going the same route	I met a Pink Bus passenger who I also saw on another route of the Pink Bus and spoke to her. She was selling perfumes.	We talked about the number of journeys that the bus takes and how long does it stop for at two ends of a route.
Context	It is uncommon to use a rickshaw to follow a bus and is very uneconomical.	Segregation made it easier for women to be free in the bus – they did not feel the eyes watching them.	I wanted to see administration of the service on a micro level and asked if I could until the Numaish depot.
General Mood	Hurried	Light and happy – women enjoying themselves	Friendly and welcoming. Offered me to have lunch with them.
Reflexive Comments	It felt weird that I was running after the Pink Bus but I		The male bus conductor pushed me to

	did not want to lose the day especially because I had called the conductor.		take his phone number as well when I asked the conductor which made me uncomfortable.

Trip 4.4 **Date:** 06/08/23	**Journey Time:** 06:00pm – 07:30pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus Numaish Chowrangi – Clock Tower	
Day 4 trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi – Clock Tower	Clock Tower
Type of stakeholder	Pedestrians, motorcyclists, vendors, rickshaw drivers	Male bus driver and conductor, Mix-gender bus passengers	Security guard, passengers, motorcyclists
Behavior	Some students were eagerly waiting for R10 to come.	A lot of movement with people hopping on and off	People going towards tea stalls and the sea. Taking it easy.
Conversations	Passengers asking each other about the time when R10 should arrive.	Two neighbors rekindled; people talking about getting late for their exam.	About the route of the bus.
Context	People were waiting for the bus to come. The bus stops running at 8pm so this would have been one of the last rounds that the bus would be taking for the day. We were waiting for about half an hour but there was no sign of the bus.	Middle and lower income people were rushing to the Governor House to give an ICT exam that could potentially give them a job.	The bus began to get crowded again as we moved towards Ibrahim Hyderi. A woman with three children was struggling with space but there were empty seats towards men's side of the bus.
General Mood	Chaotic and	Calm and friendly	Chaotic

	hurried		
Reflexive Comments	People rushing towards home. I knew that it was my last journey for the day so I was relaxed.		Segregation can lead to wastage of space in a city where everyone is looking for some room to breathe.

Trip 5.1 **Date:** 09/08/23	**Journey Time:** 02:30pm – 04:00pm	**Route:** R10 Pink Bus Clock Tower – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 5 trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Clock Tower	Clock Tower – Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Motorcyclists, passengers, poilicemen	Male bus driver, female bus conductor, female bus passengers	Male bus driver, female bus conductor, female bus passengers
Behavior	People minding their own business. Not a lot	Woman using her digital rosary; an old woman sitting with a little girl – no one talking	Women laughing and talking to each other.
Conversations		When I entered the bus, the conductor was happy to see me and shook my hand. The bus driver laughed and asked when my research would end. I conducted a long interview with a school teacher.	Impromptu focus group on safety when I asked about women's experience of the service.
Context	I saw the Pink bus coming two minutes after I came to the bus	The passengers took over space easily. They could sit with their	I rode along with the bus driver and the conductor after

	stop because I discussed the time of its arrival with the conductor during the previous ethnographic trip.	children and did not have to cram in front of the bus.	the bus stopped at the last stop.
General Mood		Relaxed and quiet	Calm
Reflexive Comments		Felt comfortable being in the bus.	

Trip 5.2 **Date:** 09/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R10 Pink Bus Numaish Chowrangi – Clock Tower	
Day 5 trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi – Clock Tower	Clock Tower
Type of stakeholder	Timekeeper, ticket checker cleaner, men sitting on the last stop	Female passengers, female bus conductor male driver	Motorcyclists, passengers, poilicemen, security guard
Behavior	Easy-going, everyone knew each other and they were sharing lunch	Women were shocked to see so much space for themselves.	Quiet
Conversations	The conductor asked the cleaner to mop the bus and gave the tickets and money to the ticket checker and timekeeper. She told me that she wanted a note-.counting machine as she gets tired counting money after every journey.	An old woman shared that she is trying to find medicine for her two sick sons. A middle class women shared mobility options before Covid and another middle class woman complained about how far the bus stops.	Policemen interrogating motorcyclists going towards Phase VIII; women got off from the bus and started going towards the beach

Context	Even though everyone had gotten off the bus, the conductor and driver allowed me to stay on the bus	Women taking up space in the segregated line. They were conversing more with each other and the conductor	Going home after a whole day in the Pink Bus
General Mood	Calm	Lively	Evening traffiic
Reflexive Comments	The relationship with the driver and the conductor improved as we had met for the third time now.	I felt comfortable as I had been in the bus for the entire day.	Tired after a whole day in the bus.

Trip 6.1 **Date:** 19/08/23	**Journey Time:** 11:00am – 12:15pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus II Talwar – Metropole	
Day 6 trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	II Talwar	II Talwar – Metropole	Metropole
Type of stakeholder	Rickshaw drivers, policemen, motorcyclists and BYKEA riders	Male bus conductor, mix gender passengers	Rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists, pedestrians, vendors, protestors
Behavior	Everyone suddenly started moving towards a corner as the police patrol came through. A	Everyone was calm even though there was a huge traffic jam.	Protestors chanting demands to bring missing persons back
Conversations	Traffic police shouted at the BYKEA riders to stand on the side when the police patrol was coming. He also asked a man who I was interviewing	Long interview with the bus driver - he told me about his trainings and ways to access updated routes. People in the bus angry at the elite with four	Traffic police talking to protestors and cornered them. Talked to two women going to Landhi – PBS wasn't operating there so they

	to move towards the other side of the bus stop.	wheelers trying to escape the traffic.	didn't know about the service. The security guard got off at the same stop.
Context	It seemed like some VIP was coming through and the roads were being cleared of pedestrians and motorcyclists so the cars could move smoothly.	The VIP patrol resulted in the bus being stuck at near Frere Hall for a long time.	Automobile traffic at the roundabout in the city center.
General Mood	Uptight and tense	Exhausted but calm	Busy and loud
Reflexive Comments	I did not realise that the bus stop had a segregation.	Car-centered mobility disrupts orderly traffic	I felt a bit uneasy engaging with a male participant.

Trip 6.2 **Date:** 19/08/23	**Journey Time:** 12:!5:pm – 01:30pm	**Route:** R1 Red Bus Metropole – Model Town	
Day 6 trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Metropole	Metropole – Model Town	Model Town
Type of stakeholder	Rickshaw drivers, motorcyclists, pedestrians, vendors, protestors, male participant, two female passengers, old man.	Male bus driver, mix gender participants	Passengers, cyclists, rickshaw drivers, vendors, pedestrians
Behavior	Gendered clusters of people waiting for the bus. No families – solo travellers and people in small groups.	Respectful even though the bus was very crammed. A lot of movement of passengers	Women dispersed off to smaller streets in groups or with male counterparts who came to

			pick them up.
Conversations	A man was arguing about R12 for Landhi not coming to the stop. I said that it says online that the bus is running but he said I sit here everyday and it hasn't come.	A woman complained about how the AC was very cold and she wasn't used to it.	
Context	Two women, previous participant, an old man and I starting talking.	The bus moves along Sharah e Faisal which is a very busy route.	This was the last so I decided to go to the parking to find the Pink Bus.
General Mood	Easy but noisy	Calm	Busy
Reflexive Comments	Accurate operations of the bus aren't online.	The infrastructure inside the bus is different than other buses.	I saw three Pink buses in motion while I was in the Red Bus.

Trip 6.3 **Date:** 19/08/23	**Journey Time:** 02:00pm– 05:00pm	**Route:** R1 Pink Bus Model Town – Tower – Metropole	
Day 6 trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Waiting and Getting off**
Locations	Model Town	Model Town – Tower – Metropole	Tower - Metropole
Type of stakeholder	Timekeeper male and female bus conductors, male pedestrians, male cleaner	Female bus conductor, male driver and mix-gender passengers	Female bus conductor, male driver, female passengers, ex-participant
Behavior	Friendly – the employees of PBS were having their lunch and taking a break.	Young and friendly conductor excited to share her stories.	It felt like a gathering – the male conductor offered chai and ex-participant got lunch for the whole bus.
Conversations	The timekeeper asked the female	She told that she is new to the job	I spoke to the ex-participant

	conductor to take me to Pink Bus – he was confused when I didn't get on the Red bus.	that's why she wasn't wearing the uniform; told me about how she got the job and about her family along with the facilities of the bus.	and she told me that a path in life opened for her that's why she wanted to give people food.
Context	As there were only men at the bus stop until the female conductor came, the timekeeper was uncomfortable with me standing there.	The female conductor and I rode for two hours – she shared her experiences about her job.	The Pink bus was the parked at the last stop of the route and the conductor and driver were taking a break. I did not get off the bus.
General Mood	Awkward and tense	Friendly, welcoming, kind	Laughter and conversation
Reflexive Comments	I got annoyed as the timekeeper kept pushing me to leave.	The bus conductor was very open to talking.	A way to do place-making in the city.

Trip 6.4 **Date:** 19/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R10 Pink Bus Metropole – Clock Tower	
Day 6 trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Metropole	Metropole – Clock Tower	Clock Tower
Type of stakeholder	Security guards, protestors, vendors, motorcyclists rickshaw drivers	Ex-participants: Shahzad (male driver) and Sadaf (female bus conductor), female passengers	Security guard, passengers, motorcyclists
Behavior	Bored bystanders and chaotic rickshaw drivers and vendor – pedestrians and passengers finding	Conductor, driver and I met like friends as we had encountered each other several times.	Tense as there was an accident at the intersection. Several motorcyclists

	way to pass or wait.		and pedestrians stopped to see it.
Conversations	I talked to the security guard about the entrance to the Church as only some cats with police patrol were going inside. He told me specific times its open for the public.	Conversed with a housewife on her experiences.	Calling the police and the ambulance – the motorcyclist and the car driver who had an accident were fighting.
Context	We stopped near the oldest church of Karachi – there were protests for the rights of young Christian girls being converted and married to Muslim men.	People going home – the conductor and driver were also on their last journey of the day.	The intersection has a broken traffic signal so without traffic police accidents can happen easily.
General Mood	Busy and loud	Easy	Tense
Reflexive Comments		Socio-spatial class segregations	

Trip 7.1 **Date:** 23/08/23	**Journey Time:** 10:15pm – 11:00pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus II Talwar – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 7 trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	II Talwar	II Talwar – Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Motorcyclists, traffic police, rickshaw drivers, security guards	Male bus driver and conductor. Male and female passengers	Pedestrians, passengers, rickshaw drivers
Behavior	I was standing alone in the bus stop on the designated women's side and	Calm and composed – most people on their phones	Going towards the Green Bus Line or taking rickshaws

	observing from a small window constructed in their bus stop.		
Conversations	The motorcyclist and traffic police were negotiating – the traffc police had stopped him maybe because he wasn't wearing the helmet but the motorcyclist bribed him.		I asked about making the Breeze card but the ticket keeper said that the cards are unavailable at the moment. He gave me a paper ticket that the security guard checked.
Context	Busy morning with a lot of automobiles going around the round about – no one waiting for pedestrians to cross.	The bus was empty at this time in the morning and the conductor was sitting on the men's side of the bus.	A lot of space for passengers to get on and off the bus. The route is provided so people don't talk so much.
General Mood	Fast-paced	Hurried	Calm
Reflexive Comments	I was more aware about the women's section on the bus stop.	I felt uncomfortable talking to the conductor on men's side.	Differences in how people are crammed in PBS and freely moving here.

Trip 7.2 **Date:** 23/08/23	**Journey Time:** 11:15pm – 12:40pm	**Route:** Green Line Numaish Chowrangi to Nagan Chowrangi	
Day 7 trip 2	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi to Nagan Chowrangi	Nagan Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Pedestrians, mptorcyclists rickshaw drivers	Male and female passengers	Vendors, pedestrians, security guards, passengers
Behavior	Calm – people weren't rushing	Minding their own business –	People were stopping to see

	because it was 10:00am. The traffic was also slow.	knew where they exactly had to go.	when I was taking a picture of the traffic from the pedestrian bridge.
Conversations	I asked about the commercial hubs but the employees did not seem receptive to my question. The ticket counter said that they will build soon and the space will soon be covered.	A lot of college students talking to each other about the service. They told me that it's their daily routine and they like to travel with friends; they added that family members are also comfortable with this service.	I decided not to talk to anyone as there were a lot of men and I could feel their gaze on me.
Context	The Green Bus stations have separate corridors while traffic around and underneath them suffers. The buses are frequent and accessible.	The stops are displayed on the screen and announced. The overall setting of the Green Bus is very calm as there is a lot of space for it.	Big flyovers and separate no signal corridors which creates a lot of traffic for other automobiles on the road
General Mood	Hurried	Calm	Chaotic
Reflexive Comments	Taking pictures to document		Uncomfortable taking pictures

Trip 7.3 **Date:** 23/08/23	**Journey Time:** 12:40pm – 02:00pm	**Route:** R2 Pink Bus Nagan Chowrangi – Indus Hospital	
Day 7 trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Nagan Chowrangi	Nagan Chowrangi – Indus Hospital	Indus Hospital
Type of stakeholder	Vendors, pedestrians, security guards, passengers	Male driver, female conductor and passengers	Vendors, pedestrians, motorcyclists, mini bus drivers, rickshaw drivers

Behavior	Clusters of men and women standing and waiting for the bus to come. Some women opting to take the rickshaw as the bus wasn't showing up.	Respecting segregation but men also intensely staring and sometimes passing smiles at other women and me.	Everyone got off at the unpaved stop calmly. The bus driver was getting frustrated and tired.
Conversations		Talked to a student and she said that the bus is very convenient for her as it picks her up from outside her school. The conductor said that women should use the service more	I asked the bus driver and conductor if I could come with them to the parking area but they asked me to get off so I could take the bus from the other side. They said it wasn't allowed.
Context	Chaotic	Calm	Busy
General Mood	Busy and loud – women mostly veiled – others making themselves small.	A relief after chaotic Nagan Chowrangi	Chaotic – a lot of moving people and cars
Reflexive Comments	Tense but I knew my way		The stop was new to me so I was a bit uncomfortable.

Trip 7.4 **Date:** 23/08/23	**Journey Time:** 02:00pm – 03:30pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus Indus Hospital – Clock Tower	
Day 7 trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Indus Hospital	Indus Hospital – Clock Tower	Clock Tower
Type of stakeholder	Vendors, pedestrians, motorcyclists, mini bus drivers,	Vendors, motorcyclists, mechanics	Passengers, pedestrians, security guards

	rickshaw drivers		
Behavior	The fruit vendors were wondering why I was standing and waiting for the bus while rejecting rickshaw and mini-bus rides – a woman *waiting* was bothering them.	Very gendered space with no women – I was waiting for the bus to come but started feeling tense with every passing motorcycle as mobile snatching is common here.	Hot afternoon so passangers were looking for shade.
Conversations	Fruit vendors asked me to buy the fresh fruit. I asked them if they see the Pink Bus often and they said it comes sometimes but the Red one works properly.	Bought sweet potatoes from the vendor – talked to men about the People's Bis Service but they told me that they mostly use motor bikes.	
Context	Chaotic with a lot of moving cars, motorcycles, minibuses and rickshaws	Isolated corner in the city with busy automobile traffic.	Going home after a whole day
General Mood	Busy	Quiet but fast-paced	Easy-going
Reflexive Comments	I did not know when the bus would come and I was tired waiting.	Analysing my fear and opinions rooted in it.	Comfortable and used to the bus stop – not much happening

Trip 8.1 **Date:** 25/08/23	**Journey Time:** 12:30–01:30pm	**Route:** R10 Red Bus II Talwar – Baloch Colony	
Day 8 trip 1	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	II Talwar	II Talwar – Baloch Colony	Baloch Colony
Type of stakeholder	Motorcyclists, pedestrians, rickshaw drivers,	Male bus driver and conductor, mix-gender	Motorcyclists, pedestrians, rickshaw

	mechanics, passengers waiting	participants	drivers, mechanics, passengers waiting, police
Behavior	People not paying much attention to each other or the environment – busy in their work or getting somewhere.	Kind and welcoming. A woman with two children was unwell and the conductor helped her.	A lot of movement but also some slowness under the flyover
Conversations	Could not hear much because of the sound of adhans and fast moving traffic.	The conductor talked to me and helped me figure out different stops.	Mechanic talking to a man whose car broke down.
Context	A Friday afternoon with call of the adhan blaring on megaphones. People rushing towards mosque or their homes after half-day to prepare for Friday.	This was the second time I saw this male conductor. He did not recognize me as he meets hundreds of passengers but was very nice to me.	Different spatial realities in evert corner under the big road infrastructure. Movement of all kinds of vehicles and people connecting several parts of the city.
General Mood	Chaotic but also accommodating.	Chaotic at first but calm when the bus was emptying.	Chaotic
Reflexive Comments	The sound of the adhan, mechanics and traffic began to give me a headache. I wanted to wait but decided to hop on the next bus.	Differences in relationship building with male vs female bus conductors.	I did not take any pictures this time here as I was told that my phone might be snatched when I was here last.

Trip 8.2 **Date:** 23/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R3 Red Bus Baloch Colony – Indus Hospital

Day 8 trip 2	Waiting	In Transit	Getting off
Locations	Baloch Colony	Baloch Colony – Indus Hospital	Indus Hospital
Type of stakeholder	Motorcyclists, pedestrians, rickshaw drivers, mechanics, passengers waiting, police	Male bus driver and conductor	Passengers, motorcyclists, pedestrians, rickshaw drivers
Behavior	People waiting along with me – men staring at women but no one bothering each other	People getting on and off the bus – a woman slightly injured herself when getting on.	Automobiles moving but waiting for pedestrians to cross
Conversations	Rickshaw drivers stooped and asked me where I wanted to go.	The woman had a fight with the bus driver and asked him to operate the door carefully as automatic doors can easily hurt people and also push them out.	I confirmed with the bus driver if I could take R3 from here to go to Nagan Chowrangi
Context	Baloch Colony has one of the busiest flyovers and interchanges of the city but the poor of the neighborhood live in the peripheries of the big road infrastructure	Conductors coordinate with the driver about when to close the door. He opens the door whenever he stops the bus.	Busy stop with moving traffic.
General Mood	Calm	Chaotic	Chaotic
Reflexive Comments		The conversation between driver and conductor can be tense.	

Trip 8.3 **Date:** 23/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R2 Pink Bus Indus Hospital – UP Mor

Day 8 trip 3	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	Indus Hospital	Indus Hospital – UP Mor	UP Mor
Type of stakeholder	Passengers, motorcyclists, pedestrians, rickshaw drivers	Male bus driver, female bus conductor and passengers	Vendors, security guards, motorcyclists, passengers
Behavior	Hurried – everyone on the move even the rickshaw drivers offering rides	Lots of space for women in the Pink Bus. They could sit and relax.	The security guard why I was standing outside the depot.
Conversations	Talked to three women from the same family about their experiences of PBS. They told me that when their father died things got difficult and their mobility was restricted but PBS has made things better.	Talked to an old woman who said that she specifically waits for this bus because she has to go for long journeys and is not comfortable standing in the bus for long hours. It is not a problem for her to wait for the bus but to stand in the bus.	I wanted to talk to the administrative staff at the depot but that wasn't possible as they said that I need special permission to get in because the space is only for employees.
Context	Crowded bus stop with two broken benches	The Pink Bus is always calmer but the presence of a man can disturb the space.	Securitized building with barbed wire. All PBS buses and employees inside.
General Mood	Chaotic with urban tensions colliding	Women giggling but the male driver used the mic to ask everyone to shut-up. Interview with conductor and driver	Tense and restrictive
Reflexive Comments		Accessibility in transport	Reduced access to info at depot

Trip 8.4 **Date:** 25/08/23	**Journey Time:** 04:15pm – 05:00pm	**Route:** R4 Red Bus UP Mor – Numaish Chowrangi	
Day 8 trip 4	**Waiting**	**In Transit**	**Getting off**
Locations	UP Mor	UP Mor - Numaish Chowrangi	Numaish Chowrangi
Type of stakeholder	Vendors, security guards, motorcyclists, passengers	Male bus driver and conductor; mix -gender passengers	Timekeeper, ticket checker cleaner, men sitting on the last stop
Behavior	Vary of each other; not really talking. Families with children were confused to see me there.	I took the time in the Red Bus to write down notes from interviews and observations done through out the day.	People helping a man dragging a donkey cart as all of his things fell off it.
Conversations	People talking to their fellow travellers – not making conversation with anyone else.	Did not converse during commute.	
Context	Securitized building with barbed wire. All PBS buses and employees inside the depot.	Busy day with people getting on and off the bus as it moved from the depot to rush areas in Karachi. I hopped on from the depot and found a seat in front of the bus.	Busy intesrsection with a lot of automobile traffic – no space for slow or micro mobility options.
General Mood	Tense and quiet		Chaotic
Reflexive Comments		Conducted observations – no interview	