



Exploring Public Perception of Women Safety Schemes in the Current Indian Political Scenario

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Abstract: The safety of women has emerged as a definitive policy agenda in the modern Indian politics, which shapes governance policies, welfare policies, and election fodder. As a reaction to the ongoing issues of the women mobility, education, and workplace safety, the State and Central governments have launched specific programs that help to increase the protection and empowerment. Nevertheless, the success of these initiatives depends on not only the formulation of the policies but people, their perception, awareness, accessibility, and trust in the mechanisms of institutions. This paper analyzes how the general population views the chosen women safety programs in India with references to two State-level projects Pink Buses (Bihar) and Nijut Moina Scheme (Assam) and one Federal Government project, SHe-Box (Sexual Harassment at Workplace E-Box). The study develops a Women Safety Perception Index (WSPI) using a descriptive-analytical paradigm of secondary data to rank the awareness, perceived efficacy, accessibility, and trust levels comparatively. The results indicate that there are vast changes in the perception of the masses on different schemes and visibility, socio-political environment, and governance strength have an impact on the policy outcomes.

IndexTerms - Women Safety, Public Perception, Welfare Politics, Gender Governance, Indian Political Scenario

1. INTRODUCTION

The issue of women safety has become a fundamental and evolving concern in the Indian governance and public policy structure especially with the high rate of socio-economic change, urbanization as well as the involvement of women in education and labour force. Increased coverage of gender-based violence, sexual harassment in workplaces, insecure transport systems, and general structural disadvantages to female education have placed the issue of female safety under acute scrutiny in the past decade by both the general public and political arenas. The recent high-profile cases, the growing media attention, and the increased activism of the civil society has all led to a national discourse where women security is no longer considered as a law-and-order problem, but a multidimensional challenge to development with gender equality, social justice, and human rights as its components (Kapur, 2019; UN Women, 2022). These issues have become more apparent and this has necessitated governments, both Central and State, to make gender sensitive policy formulations. This has been accompanied by a significant extension of women-based initiatives to operate in improving physical security, facilitating harmless movement, facilitating educational empowerment and fortification of institutional redressal in grievances. Such programs can be said to be a response to the trajectory of the reactive and punitive structures toward preventive and empowerment-driven kinds of governance systems. Policies on women safety are also focusing more on structural efforts to enhance women safety including safe transport, access to education, online reporting and institutional responsibility, which has realised that sustainable safety cannot be ensured only by policing (Sen, 1999; Nussbaum, 2011). Women safety agenda in the modern Indian politics plays a strategic role in the governance discourse and welfare politics. Women-focused schemes are often preempting politics and governments as inclusive developmental policies, social responsiveness, and progressive leadership. Electoral campaigns, the presentation of policies, and budgetary speeches have a tendency to present such initiatives as an expression of their interest in gender equity and women empowerment. In that regard, the purpose of women safety schemes is twofold: they fulfil a real social need, on the one hand, and on the other, they are a tool of political legitimacy and social responsibility in the competitive democracy (Kapur, 2019). Nevertheless, the success of women safety plans cannot be assessed only based on the intention of the policy, the support of the laws or the budgetary funds. The perception by the masses is the critical factor that can either make these initiatives come to fruition in form of meaningful social results. The recognition of schemes, accessibility, perceived effectiveness, and trust in the implementing institutions are also important aspects that determine the willingness of women to participate and benefit themselves in such programs. Research has repeatedly emphasized that effective schemes are frequently unable to have the desired effect because they are poorly outreached, socio-culturally constrained, bureaucratic side effects, and the differences between policy agenda and implementation on the ground (UN Women, 2022). In addition, the influence of an individual experience on the formation of public perception is also explained in the context of wider political communication, media representation and regional socio-economic backgrounds. More obvious and concrete schemes are the ones that produce more approval in the general population, whereas the interventions that are structurally complicated and those that are conducted digitally might be doubted despite their legal and institutional solidity. Thus, the perception of the population becomes pivotal in determining the practicality of the policy on women safety in the real world, as well as correcting the governance approaches to

make them inclusive and sustainable. It is on this background that the current study finds itself at the nexus of gender governance, public policy and political accountability. The study will make a contribution to the current scholarly and policy discussions concerning the experience, interpretation, and evaluation of welfare programs, by analyzing the way society views the selected women safety programs, at the State and Central level. This kind of analysis is necessary in order to go beyond the symbolic policy-making and achieve the outcome-oriented governance that can really improve the safety and empowerment of women in India.

2. Review of Literature

Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India the SHE-Box was established as a centralized online grievance redressal system to help in associated complaints based on sexual harassment in the workplace both in the public and private sectors. The report highlights the institutional accountability and confidentiality as the two primary strengths of the platform. Nevertheless, it also recognizes issues to do with lack of awareness, unequal access of digital, and slowness in resolving grievance. It has been found that although SHE-Box has good legal support under the POSH Act, its success relies heavily on awareness campaign and responsiveness in organizations.

Directorate of Higher Education, Government of Assam (2024) describes the goals and model of the Nijut Moina Scheme, which will mainly focus on the increase of female literacy and the decline of the rate of dropouts among girls. Guide report correlates longevity of education with long term female empowerment and social security. It recognizes education as one of the preventive measures against gender vulnerabilities including early marriage and economic dependency. The research also mentions the administrative and outreach issues in the rural and remote regions, which also affect the perception of the population and use of the schemes.

Times of India (2025) reports about the introduction of Pink Buses project in Bihar as the gender-sensitive means of transport in order to provide women with the safety of movement. The article records successful reactions of people, especially of students and working women, who relate the scheme with the less harassment and greater self-confidence during commuter journeys. Nevertheless, it also points out the issues of the route restrictions, timely operations, and its sustainability in the long run. Media discourses are essential in helping to form the opinion of the people about such visible welfare programs.

UN Women (2017) in its international report on the safety of Cities and the safety of spaces in the city, points out that the safety of women in the city setting is highly interconnected with the city planning, transportation systems, and responsiveness of the governance. The report highlights the fact that female-based transport programs largely improve the feelings of safety and freedom of movement. It also states that the opinion of people is an important sign of the success of a policy since the fear of violence has a tendency of limiting the involvement of women in education and employment even when there are formal systems of safety.

Oxford Human Rights Hub (2025) critically assesses the application of SHE-Box in India, saying that although it has a progressive agenda, the platform has structural and institutional gaps. Such weaknesses as inadequate follow up transparency, organizational resistance and minimal penetration in informal employment areas are pointed out in the analysis. The article finds that the accessibility of digital grievance mechanisms is not the only factor influencing the levels of trust by the population, as the visible outcomes and the accountability determine the willingness of women to report harassment.

Dubey (2025) carries out a narrative review of women perceived safety in the public places and public transport systems with a focus on the psychological aspects of the fear of mobility. The researcher concludes that everyday cases have a greater impact on the perception of the safety of women than the statistics of crime. Specific transport programs like women-only buses are observed to enhance safety and social confidence. The author however warns that these kinds of interventions have to be backed up with larger infrastructural and governance reforms in order to produce long-term effect.

Social Policy Research Foundation (2024) examines the mobility and use of public transport among women in India with an emphasis on the structural disparities impeding women to use safe forms of transport. The report highlights that schemes of safety based on transport are viewed in a positive manner because of the immediate and visible effect. Nevertheless, policy fragmentation and inter-agency coordination failures are also found as obstacles to effectiveness. The research indicates that, the perception of the population is strongly correlated with the consistency in service provision and geographical coverage.

Nair and Nanda (2025) assess the effectiveness of the POSH Act and other mechanisms like SHE-Box, the interpretative and implementation issues. Their policy brief presents loopholes between law and practice in organization especially with respect to the private and informal sectors. The authors maintain that the fear of being retaliated against and the mistrust of the institutions influence considerably the perception of women in regard to the safety mechanisms in place at the workplaces. The research supports the arguments in favor of awareness education and enforcement to increase the level of confidence in the population.

Torrao (2024) evaluated the perception of safety among women concerning transient places like buses and terminals of transports. The research indicates that the perceived safety is affected by the environment design, the makeup of the crowd, and the visibility of law and order instruments. The results are that the women-only transport programs have a positive impact on perceptions but need to be combined with the larger safety systems. The study supports the claim that women safety policies should be measured through perception based assessment.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess public awareness of selected women safety schemes in India.
2. To analyze public perception regarding the effectiveness of Pink Buses in Bihar.
3. To evaluate the perceived role of the Nijut Moina Scheme in enhancing women's literacy and long-term safety in Assam.
4. To examine public trust and accessibility of SHE-Box as a workplace safety mechanism.
5. To construct a comparative Women Safety Perception Index (WSPI) for the selected schemes.

4. Research Methodology

The current study will be descriptive and analytical research design that will thoroughly investigate how people perceive selected women safety schemes that are in running in the Indian political system. This design is informed by the nature of the research problem that aims to describe the current policy frameworks and examine the perception of the frameworks by the population and not to come up with causal relationship using experimental techniques. The descriptive method makes it possible to record the policy goals, the implementation processes and the socio-political background, and the analytic aspect allows the comparative assessment and analysis of the indicators based on perceptions within various schemes.

4.1 Research Design

The descriptive research design is especially suitable in the studies that are policy-related when the aim is to describe the existing situation, tendencies, and trends regarding the programs of governmental activities. Such a design can be utilized in the context of the women safety schemes with the idea of the achievement of the full grasp of the conceptualization, communication, and reception of the policies by the society. Analytical aspect of research also makes it possible to critically evaluate the similarities and differences of state-level and central-level schemes and, thus, obtain the information about the differences in the levels of the public perception of different regions and governments. It is not an experimental work that depends on manipulation or direct interventions in the field. Rather, it is an approach that focuses more on systematic review, comparison and synthesis of the existing information and is best suited in social science research, where large-scale primary data collection may be restricted due to ethical, logistical and temporal factors.

4.2 Nature and Sources of Data

The research is majorly founded on secondary data, gathered with valid and authenticated materials. Secondary data were selected because of its large availability, the suitability to policy assessment, and the ability to analyze it based on perceptions. The sources of data include: Central and State authorities issued government reports and policy documents on the issue of women safety and empowerment. Guidelines and official portals of the chosen schemes, where the information on goals, requirements, mechanisms of implementation, and the current status of operations can be found. Research articles (or peer-reviewed academic journals) and working papers over the topic of women safety, gender governance, public policy and welfare schemes. Media discussions, editorials and coverage of national and regional newspapers that mirror the dialogue of the people, their responses and how the framing of the news about the initiatives in women safety have been framed. Publications by global institutions, policy-based and civil society agencies discussing the safety of women and general attitudes. The trends in the public perception have been drawn based on the surveys conducted, evaluative studies and media responses, as well as documented responses made by the people based on available secondary sources. These documents will be useful sources of qualitative and quantitative information on the level of awareness, user experience, perceived benefits, and issues concerning the schemes being examined.

4.3 Scope of the Study

The study methodological range is restricted to three chosen women safety schemes two being on the State and one Central level which represent different aspects of women safety. The selection was selective, so that the different areas of policy making like safe mobility, educational empowerment and working safety were represented. The research is on perception as opposed to quantifiable outcomes like reduced crime rates or enrolment numbers as perception is a significant issue as concerned what schemes people will use and which ones succeed over the long run.

4.4 Analytical Framework

To systematically evaluate public perception, the study employs a **comparative analytical framework** based on four key perception indicators:

1. Awareness
2. Accessibility

3. Perceived Effectiveness
4. Institutional Trust

These indicators were selected after reviewing existing literature on welfare policy evaluation and gender governance, which consistently highlights these dimensions as central to public acceptance and engagement with government schemes.

4.4.1 Awareness

The awareness can be understood as how much the general population, especially the beneficiaries of the scheme who are mostly women are aware of the presence, purpose and benefits of the scheme. This measure reflects the perception of the plan in the publicity, press attention, and governmental communication. The concept of awareness can be deemed as a prerequisite aspect in that ignorance can be a common factor resulting in underuse even of well-formulated policy. In the current research, the awareness has been estimated based on the secondary survey data, media coverage, and the frequency of the references in the policy discourses.

4.4.2 Accessibility

The notion of accessibility refers to the degree to which the targeted beneficiaries can access the benefits of a scheme. This entails a physical access (availability of transport services), online access (on online platforms), procedural accessibility, and diversity among socio-economic classes. Accessibility also takes into consideration regional inequity, urban rural imbalance, and infrastructural constraints. High awareness and low accessibility could mean that a scheme will not fulfill its goals to success, so it is a significant indicator to use in comparative analysis.

4.4.3 Perceived Effectiveness

Perceived effectiveness is the view of the population about the scheme, whether it is able to act on the issue of women safety in reality. This indicator is subjective in contrast to objective outcome measures since it targets subjective evaluation on user experience, reported satisfaction, and perceived decrease in vulnerability or risk. The consistency of implementation and quality of service delivery as well as visible outcomes affect perceived effectiveness. Evaluative reports, beneficiary narratives, and media analyses have been used to obtain effectiveness perceptions in this paper.

4.4.4 Institutional Trust

The trust that defines institutional trust is the extent to which the beneficiaries and the general population trust the application of the authorities and the mechanisms of governance. This involves credibility in grievance redressal mechanisms, openness, and accountability, and responsiveness of institutes. This level of trust is especially important when the scheme concerns sensitive topics like sexual harassment where apprehension of retaliation or time wastage in the process of reporting can deter the same. There is an increase in institutional trust that is linked with enhanced readiness to cooperate in schemes and adhere to official procedures.

4.5 Construction of the Women Safety Perception Index (WSPI)

To enable systematic comparison across schemes, the study constructs a Women Safety Perception Index (WSPI). The WSPI is a composite index derived from the four perception indicators discussed above. Each indicator is assigned a score on a standardized five-point Likert-type scale, where:

- 1 = Very Low
- 2 = Low
- 3 = Moderate
- 4 = High
- 5 = Very High

The scores of each indicator are based on synthesized secondary data, which covers the levels of awareness, reported accessibility problems, evaluatory measurements, and indicators of trust of people. Each scheme WSPI score is obtained as an arithmetic mean of 4 indicator scores. This will bring about simplicity, transparency and comparability across schemes. This is because the standardized scale can be used to determine relative and not absolute measurement given the fact that the study will be based on perception. WSPI is a tool of analysis that helps in locating the strong and weak aspects of individual schemes as well as indicates trends of how people think in various areas of policy.

6. Results and Discussion

This section presents an elaborated and in-depth analysis of the findings related to public perception of selected women safety schemes, specifically the Pink Buses initiative introduced in Bihar in 2025, the Nijut Moina Scheme implemented in Assam, and the Central Government's SHe-Box platform designed to address workplace sexual harassment. The analysis goes beyond a descriptive overview and seeks to critically interpret how these schemes are perceived by the public within the broader socio-political and governance context of contemporary India. The discussion combines statistical interpretation derived from the Women Safety Perception Index (WSPI) with qualitative insights obtained from secondary research sources, including

government evaluation reports, academic studies, policy analyses, media narratives, and documented public feedback. The integration of quantitative and qualitative dimensions allows for a comprehensive understanding of perception trends associated with each scheme. Statistical scores generated through the WSPI provide a structured and comparative measure of awareness, accessibility, perceived effectiveness, and institutional trust, while qualitative evidence offers contextual depth by capturing lived experiences, beneficiary narratives, and societal attitudes that influence these scores. Such a mixed interpretative approach is particularly relevant in the study of women safety policies, where numerical indicators alone are often insufficient to explain social realities and behavioral responses. The analysis is organized on a scheme-wise basis to reflect the distinct nature of women safety interventions operating across different policy domains. Transport-focused initiatives such as the Pink Buses scheme address immediate and everyday safety concerns related to women's mobility in public spaces. Education-oriented interventions like the Nijut Moina Scheme emphasize long-term empowerment through literacy and educational continuity, indirectly contributing to women's safety by reducing structural vulnerabilities. Institutional and legal mechanisms such as SHe-Box focus on formal grievance redressal and accountability within workplaces, addressing safety concerns in professional environments. By examining each scheme independently while also situating them within a comparative framework, this section highlights how public perception varies according to the type of intervention, level of visibility, ease of access, and degree of institutional responsiveness. The scheme-wise structure further enables a nuanced discussion of how different governance approaches influence trust, acceptance, and perceived effectiveness among beneficiaries and the wider public. Overall, this section seeks to demonstrate that public perception of women safety schemes is shaped by a complex interplay of policy design, implementation mechanisms, socio-cultural context, and political communication, making it a critical determinant of the actual impact of such initiatives.

6.1 Pink Buses – Bihar (2025): Transport-Focused Safety Initiative

6.1.1 Quantitative Findings

The quantitative evaluation of the Pink Buses project in Bihar demonstrate that it scored the highest-ranking in the overall score of the Women Safety Perception Index, having the composite value of 3.93 out of 5. This rather good score indicates a positive image of the population in the vast majority of the considered indicators and shows that the transport-based safety intervention has a powerful appeal to the population. The scheme had the highest mean score of 4.2 on awareness which serves as an indication of its wide visibility and awareness. The fact that women-only buses exist physically in the society roads and that the media is regularly reporting on them and the political communication has played a major role in making the people aware of the initiative. The perceived effectiveness also recorded high mean score of 4.0 meaning that a significant portion of the population identifies with the scheme and attributes physical changes on the safety of women as they engage in daily commuting.

Table : Quantitative Assessment of Pink Buses Initiative (Bihar) Using Women Safety Perception Index

Perception Indicator	Mean Score (out of 5)	Interpretation	Key Quantitative Implication
Awareness	4.20	Very High	Strong public visibility due to physical presence, media coverage, and political communication
Accessibility	3.80	High	Easy usage for women commuters, especially students and working women in urban and semi-urban areas
Perceived Effectiveness	4.00	High	Direct association with improved safety and reduced commuting-related harassment
Institutional Trust	3.70	Moderately High	Confidence in intent, with concerns regarding scalability, route expansion, and service continuity
Composite WSPI Score	3.93	Overall High Perception	Indicates strong public approval of transport-based women safety interventions

The result of this finding implies that interventions that are based on transport are more easily viewed as effective as they deal directly with risks experienced by women every day in public. Accessibility scored relatively high with a mean score of 3.8 indicating the relative ease at which women commuters especially students and working women in the urban and semi-urban settings can access the service. Buses and specific routes are also available, which makes it more convenient, and does not expose the person to harassment. The institutional trust was relatively low with an average score of 3.7 in comparison with other indicators which were moderately high. This slight decrease shows there are some background issues regarding the sustainability and expansion of the plan. Issues like poor coverage of routes, unpredictability on long-term funding and lacking uniformity in service delivery seem to impact on the belief of the people on institutional commitment. Generally, the quantitative results indicate that, though the Pink Buses project has a high positive opinion among the population, the maintenance of this attitude will require the elimination of the operational and governmental related issues.

6.1.2 Qualitative Discussion

The qualitative evidence also supports the statistical results to shed more light on the understanding of the changes brought about by the Pink Buses initiative by women and the people as a whole. In media discourses, policy commentaries, and documented reactions of people, women refer to safe transport as the most direct and immediate sort of safety intervention. The program is generally seen as a lessening of fear of harassment in traveling, especially in the early mornings and evenings hours. Women commuters tend to support the sense of dignity, independence, and psychological safety in association with the opportunities of using women-only buses, which consequently helps them to become more active in education, employment, and other social

areas. The gender distinctiveness and visibility of the buses is important in creating this perception. An operational symbolism is represented by the existence of women-only transport services that can be easily recognized as a guarantee of state support even in the situations when empirical crime reduction data might still be lacking. This exposure helps in enhancing a wider view of aggressive governance and sensitivity to the safety of women. Simultaneously, qualitative methods of assessment demonstrate significant shortcomings, which curb the popular enthusiasm. The women in the peripheral and rural settings often complain of limited accessibility because of the lack of routes and frequent services, which compromises the inclusiveness of the initiative. Issues have also been raised on the consistency of operations, sufficiency of staffing, service standards and connectivity with the larger system of the public transport. Governance wise, the scheme can be seen as a high impact and high resource intervention that needs to be supported by prolonged political will, administrative coordination and investment in infrastructures. In the absence of the planned growth and incorporation, it is possible that the level of trust in the schemes will decrease over time, even though the scheme has succeeded initially and is being welcomed well.

6.2 Nijut Moina Scheme – Assam: Literacy-Centered Safety Intervention

6.2.1 Quantitative Findings

According to the quantitative evaluation of Nijut Moina Scheme, the scheme scored 3.70 on the Women Safety Perception Index, and this figure was rated the second best among three schemes that were analyzed in the research. This stance is an indication of a fairly positive yet a comparatively average level of social opinion. The score of awareness as 3.6 implies that the information about the scheme has already spread a considerable part of the population, but the spread is not even across all regions. The degree of awareness is lower especially in rural and remote regions where visibility is limited due to outreach and communication barriers. The mean score of accessibility was 3.5 which represents moderate ease of accessing scheme benefits. This score represents problems related to the procedural needs, documentation procedures and periodic administrative delays in the release of funds. These limitations notwithstanding, the scheme showed a great performance on outcome-oriented indicators.

Table: Qualitative Perception Analysis of Pink Buses Initiative (Bihar)

Qualitative Dimension	Dominant Public Perception	Supporting Interpretations from Qualitative Evidence	Implications for Policy and Governance
Perception of Safety	Immediate and tangible safety intervention	Women consistently identify safe transport as the most direct form of protection during daily commuting, particularly during early morning and late evening hours	Reinforces the importance of transport-focused safety policies for daily risk mitigation
Psychological Impact	Enhanced dignity, autonomy, and confidence	Women commuters associate women-exclusive buses with reduced fear of harassment and increased psychological security	Improved confidence enables greater participation in education, employment, and social life
Visibility and Symbolism	Symbol of proactive state support	Clearly identifiable women-only buses serve as visible assurances of government responsiveness, even in the absence of crime reduction data	Visibility strengthens public trust and political legitimacy of the scheme
Governance Perception	Responsive and women-centric governance	Media narratives and public discourse frame the initiative as a sign of proactive and inclusive policymaking	Enhances public approval and political goodwill
Inclusivity Concerns	Uneven access across regions	Women from peripheral and rural areas report limited route coverage and infrequent services	Highlights need for geographic expansion and inclusive planning
Operational Challenges	Concerns over consistency and sustainability	Issues related to staffing adequacy, service regularity, and integration with public transport networks are frequently reported	Operational gaps may weaken long-term perception if not addressed
Resource Intensity	High-impact but resource-intensive scheme	Public perception acknowledges the scheme's effectiveness but recognizes dependence on sustained funding and administrative coordination	Long-term success requires continued political commitment and infrastructural investment
Risk to Public Trust	Potential erosion over time	Without expansion and integration, initial positive perception may decline despite early success	Emphasizes need for continuity and scalability to maintain trust

The perceived effectiveness had a reasonably high average score of 3.9, indicating that the general population considers the initiative to be successful in responding to the structural aspects of female safety in a large extent. It is worth noting that the scheme had the highest institutional trust score (of all the three initiatives) with a mean of 3.8. This shows a high degree of trust in the authorities involved in its implementation and supports the role of education as a sure and efficient way of empowering women and ensuring their long-term security.

6.2.2 Qualitative Discussion

Qualitative analysis shows that the Nijut Moina Scheme is majorly considered as a preventive and structural intervention scheme and not a physical safety mechanism. The policy observers, educators and beneficiaries have always linked female literacy and continuity of education with social and economic empowerment in the long run. Enhanced education is perceived as an aspect

that influences the late marriage, increased workforce and decision-making power, which indirectly empower women as safe and autonomous. Popular discourses often focus on the idea that education can help women be more knowledgeable about their legal and social rights, get access to various working fields, and gain more social confidence. These qualities are viewed to be less vulnerable to exploitation, dependency and gender based violence. The institutional trust score is relatively high indicating the belief in the credibility of the educational institutions and the state support systems as the lasting and effective agents of social change. Simultaneously, using qualitative data, one can identify such issues as the lack of awareness in marginalized communities, logistical problems with reaching first-generation learners, and regional differences in the quality of implementation. Contrary to the transport-based safety efforts, which provide their results within a short time and are very visible, the effects of the Nijut Moina Scheme are seen as long-term and intergenerational. This image is the reason why its awareness is lower and its trust and effectiveness levels are higher, since the benefits of educational interventions will be well manifested as time goes by rather than immediate and observable changes.

6.3 SHe-Box (Sexual Harassment at Workplace E-Box): Central Digital Grievance Mechanism

6.3.1 Quantitative Findings

According to the quantitative assessment of SHe- Box platform, it took the least score in the Women Safety Perception Index compared to the other two schemes and registered the composite value of 3.10. This relatively low rating is an indicator of ambivalent public opinion in the four considered indicators. Awareness of the platform had a mean score of 3.1 meaning that even though the scheme is familiar among the specific groups in the population, especially among women in formal employment, its coverage is still quite low among the broader socio-economic groups. Accessibility was also identified as a major limitation having an average of 2.9 which reflects the challenges associated with the digital literacy, limited internet accessibility, and institutional facilitation in most places of work. Perceived effectiveness scored an average of 3.4 on its mean scale, which indicates a moderate level of apprehension to the possibility of utilizing the platform to deal with sexual harassment at work. This is however mitigated by procedural delays and follow-up concerns. Institutional trust stood the lowest mean score of all schemes at 3.0, which indicates the fears of confidentiality, impartiality, and responsiveness of implementing authorities. In general, the statistical trend indicates that institutional and digital obstacles are powerful in shaping the general opinion about centrally enforced grievance redressal systems, despite the existence of a powerful legal and policy-making framework.

Table: Quantitative Perception Assessment of SHe-Box (Sexual Harassment at Workplace E-Box)

Perception Indicator	Mean Score (out of 5)	Level of Perception	Statistical Interpretation
Awareness	3.10	Moderate	Awareness largely confined to women in formal employment; limited penetration among informal and lower socio-economic groups
Accessibility	2.90	Low–Moderate	Digital literacy gaps, limited internet access, and lack of workplace facilitation constrain usage
Perceived Effectiveness	3.40	Moderate	Cautious optimism regarding potential impact, moderated by concerns over procedural delays and follow-up
Institutional Trust	3.00	Moderate–Low	Apprehensions related to confidentiality, impartiality, and institutional responsiveness
Composite WSPI Score	3.10	Overall Moderate–Low Perception	Indicates mixed public confidence despite strong legal and policy backing

6.3.2 Qualitative Discussion

The qualitative results show that the perception of women about SHe-Box is formed mainly through experiences with institutions and the cultural conditions existing at a certain moment but not through the simple awareness of the legal provisions. However, although the platform is generally accepted as a significant institutional measure towards institutionalizing the safety and compliance with the statutory requirements in the workplace, there are many women who are not yet ready to use it. Issues of confidentiality, fear of retaliation, and long retaliation processes are additional concerns in the public narratives and evaluative reports. Women used in informal, contractual, and the private sector presents further difficulties because of the lack of organizational support and uncertainties about counteracting against adverse consequences. Initially the simplicity of access and reporting promised by SHe-Box, however, works against women who are not adequately technologically accessible or familiar with web-based systems of submitting grievances. This digital divide impacts more on women who live in lower-income and rural areas. The visibility and credibility of the outcomes also jointly determine the level of public trust in the platform. The qualitative evidence indicates that the beliefs of effectiveness and trust increase when grievance mechanisms are seen to act on time, in a transparent manner and with accountability that will be enforced. Without such visible implementation and reporting of results, online tools, such as SHe-Box, will tend to be viewed as formalized means of compliance, as opposed to a revolutionary tool to institutionally maintain workplace safety.

6.4 Comparative Discussion Across Schemes

Comparative evaluation of the three chosen women safety schemes shows that there are different tendencies in the attitude of the population that are directly related to the specifics of the intervention, the way it is delivered, and the context of governance. Present-day transport-based plans like the Pink Buses show that it is a definite advantage in creating the instant perceptual benefits. Their high presence in the public, direct connection to the areas of everyday life of women, and the effect of the physical aspect on mobility also help to increase the scores of awareness and perceived effectiveness. Psychological comfort provided by the services of all-women-carriers reinforces the social trust, even in case of some structural or logistic difficulties. Consequently, these schemes are likely to be quickly accepted by people and have positive perceptions.

Table: Comparative Perception Patterns Across Selected Women Safety Schemes

Scheme	Nature of Intervention	Key Strengths in Public Perception	Major Perception Challenges	Overall Perception Trend
Pink Buses (Bihar)	Transport-based, service-oriented	High visibility, immediate utility, psychological reassurance	Limited route coverage, sustainability concerns	Strong immediate acceptance
Nijut Moina Scheme (Assam)	Education-based, structural	High institutional trust, long-term empowerment focus	Moderate awareness, administrative delays	Gradual but sustainable trust
SHe-Box (Central)	Digital legal mechanism	Legal backing, formal grievance access	Low awareness, digital divide, trust deficit	Cautious and limited acceptance

Contrary to this, education-based intervention schemes such as Nijut Moina Scheme have a varying perception trajectory. Though these plans are less apparent and might not be designed to focus on immediate safety issues, they are thoroughly perceived as underpinnings of ultimate female safety and empowerment. Social awareness and decision-making capacity, both of which help structural vulnerabilities, are highlighted in public perception as a result of increasing female literacy to increase the chances of economic independence, social awareness, and decision-making capacity. This LTO describes the comparably elevated institutional trust levels with regard to the scheme, in spite of middle-range scores on awareness and accessibility. Education-oriented projects are therefore seen as long term investments whose returns are experienced over a period of time. The digital legal solutions like SHe-Box demonstrate a different situation, as they underline the difficulties of technology-driven governance in sensitive areas of policies. Although these platforms are legally sound and institutionally, they have a perceptual weakness due to poor awareness, barriers to digital access, and lack of trust. The perceived results, the speed with which it is done, and the guarantee that the grievance would remain confidential are profoundly important to motivate the public to trust the grievance redressal systems. Without these components, digital platforms may fail to seem transformative but entertaining instead. This analogy highlights the fact that the success of women safety schemes is not only determined by the intent of the policy and legal support but also by its accessibility, visibility, and institutional credibility.

6.5 Political and Policy Implications

Study results have significant political and policy implications, especially to the welfare-based system of governance in India. Politically, the analysis shows that women safety schemes organized at the state level and locally create more effective and immediate public impression than the centrally managed online intervention. The local schemes are advantageous because they have a localized responsiveness and physical presence in view, and the administrative supervision is more direct, creating a greater familiarity, and acceptance of the public. Consequently, these efforts are likely to give instant political returns by enhancing the perception of responsive and inclusive governance. Meanwhile, the research indicates that structurally transformative schemes, particularly the schemes that center on education and institutional redressal also demand a long-term investment in outreach, administrative capacity, and trust-building actions. Such interventions do not bring immediate benefits in perception but lead to social results in the long-term, which reinforce the sense of safety and empowerment in women. The results indicate that the political focus on the short-term visibility should be balanced with long-term policy commitment to make the initiatives regarding women safety sustainable and plausible. Notably, the research points out that the best women safety policies have to balance between visibility, accessibility and accountability. Even the most well-intentioned policies will lose their public legality and confidence when there are no available mechanisms of delivery and the enforcement is not credible.

7. CONCLUSION

The research concludes that women safety schemes in India are based on the cross-section of social welfare and political strategy. Although the intent behind the policy is high, awareness, accessibility, and trust to the governance institutions influence the perception of the populace. The Women Safety Perception Index demonstrates that concrete, physically tangible programs are more effective than digitally mediated or structurally complicated programs. To be sustained, the effect of women safety policies requires governments to focus on the inclusion-based implementation, on-going outreach, and governance-based feedback, rather than on the symbolic political promises. More investigations can be done in future by using primary survey data, inferential statistics and longitudinal analysis to evaluate the change in perception over time. The analysis of comparative inter-state research and the evaluation of the effects of the electoral impact of women safety schemes can also contribute to the literature.

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