

Ride Sharing Apps: An Impact on Women Safety

Abdur Rahman Showrov

71.showrov@gmail.com

*Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering,
Ahsanullah University of Science & Technology, Dhaka*

Zainab, 22, an undergraduate student studying Physiotherapy somewhere in the town. Sometimes her class concludes by evening and when returning home, she somehow feels uneasy to travel by local bus due to unhealthy environment.

Kashfia, 25, who has newly been recruited in a local corporate organization, providing her best of efforts for the entire day, yet her residence, is pretty much away from the job place. She can't help but hiring a cab every time on her way back to home. This costs her too much!

Dr. Celia, a renowned researcher, suddenly is requested to attend in an assembly along with her group of 5 female students who currently are doing thesis work under her supervision. When the meeting ends, it's almost 10 at night. Now, going back to their different routes seems challenging.

It's proven that women are no more lagging behind. World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2018, the report originating from International Labor Organizations says female employment in Bangladesh increased by 35% during last year. In Dhaka, there is no exception too. If we look around our neighborhood, we also can perceive this positive change. Nowadays, women are not only getting educated or employed but they are also becoming employers, offering jobs to others and contributing themselves with dedication to alleviate the propagation of unemployment problem fractionally.

But after all this time, have we still thought about Zainab, Kashfia & Dr. Celia with her group of students? Have we figured out their safety doubt regarding their individual conditions? What would they do?

It's been just a couple of years that the utilization of ride sharing apps getting hyped. Amazingly, Dhaka people collectively accepted such advantages to move swiftly and safely. There are a lot of companies based on ride-sharing apps around this city which provide on-demand transport services. Some are completely focused on furnishing the secured movement of women i.e. Shuttle, Lily, Obon, Pink SAM etc. They absolutely aimed women as their target customers. The public transportation system is overcrowded; where women often have to swallow unpleasant occurrences like objectionable physical contact, obnoxious passive comments and equivalent situations. However, we don't see any sustainable resolution to degrade this sort of events in the nearest future surely. It has now become essential to enhance the coverage and strengthen the network of the ride-sharing apps mentioned earlier.

Before settling down the plot of this article, I compassionately inquired my close female friends Zainab, Nabila, Synthia and others who regularly prefer these services for safe commute. They really are satisfied and feel much more comfort than before, having such wonderful orientation to evacuate their problematic exposures.



*Lagging behind due to unsafe movement? Not anymore!
(Bangladesh Women Riders Club)*

Like every other matter, here are some challenges too. Question may arise regarding the driving skill of the ride-offering drivers or their concealed connection with miscreants. This argument can be taken care of only if the companies adopt strong safety measures with proper exercise. For both of the company employed and freelancing drivers the copies of their Motor Vehicle-driving License, National ID Card/Passport, Insurance Evidence and others must be collected, verified and compiled. In the maximum cases, it has been found that the ride-sharers are qualified, well-mannered and professional. Surprisingly, the ride-sharing app Lily has already inaugurated Lily Training Club for instructing their prospective lady-bikers. Mostly, it is important to popularize these services among women around the city for their safe transportation while also maintaining the quality assurance to create an impact upon the society for many.

Since, we are forwarding into a digitized Bangladesh, planning & campaigning to make Dhaka as a smart city sooner or later; we simply cannot avoid the growth of this diligent service-based industry. When we talk about Women Empowerment, we must not forget about the safety of Zainab, Kashfia, Dr. Celia and her students. Well, what happened to them then?

Zainab immediately fixed a hiring of ride using Obon app and reached home safely. Kashfia decided to unite some of her colleagues from office and became habituated to schedule Shuttle from the following day on her way back to home. Dr. Celia with her students took an Uber XL service accelerating their safe commute to the students' hostel and her residence.

—

References:

[1] World Employment Social Outlook – Trends 2018 by International Labor Organization.

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---dcomm/---publ/documents/publication/wcms_615594.pdf

[2] Newsdeeply: www.newsdeeply.com/womensadvancement/articles/2018/04/03/women-only-ride-sharing-apps-take-on-dhakas-notorious-traffic-chaos

[3] The Daily Star: www.thedailystar.net/backpage/ride-sharing-apps-brings-comport-to-commute-in-bangladesh-1716646

[4] The Independent Bangladesh: www.theindependentbd.com/magazine/details/158464/Ride-sharing-Apps-For-Women-Only