

Safe Transportation in Chile

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1. Introduction

Globally, violence in transport and public spaces, such as sexual harassment, represents one of the most significant mobility barriers affecting women disproportionately more than men. The Thomson Reuters Foundation reported that Latin American cities have the most dangerous transport systems for women, with about six in every ten women physically harassed. Women who live on the outskirts of large cities and have long daily commutes are particularly susceptible to harassment while traveling on public transport.

2. Intervention

The government of Chile is proposing a new program to guarantee women's safety in the public transportation system. The project is called "Safe Bus Stops," where they are improving the stops network so that women can report if they are being assaulted or feel unsafe. For instance, 1) the stops will have cameras, 2) incorporate an SOS button to report if they feel unsafe that is connected to the closest police station, 3) they can turn on more lights, and 4) there is precise information about the next bus, among others. They plan to launch the pilot this year and to expand it next year with a total investment of US \$8MM.

3. Field work

During July 2023, I traveled to Santiago in Chile with my coauthor, Daniela Paz, with two specific objectives: i) meet with our counterpart in the Ministry of Transportation, and ii) pilot the surveys that we wanted to do in the Fall in the Bus Stops.

3.1. Ministry of Transportation

Regarding the first objective, we met with three different people from the Ministry and established a closer relationship. We met with the person leading this initiative and agreed to give them technical support to help

them with a rigorous impact evaluation of the program. We also met with the director of the area of user experience, who gave us valuable feedback on the survey we wanted to pilot at the bus stops. Finally, we talked with the finance department director since we wanted to understand better their data and the opportunity to share it with us. This meeting was again crucial for us since he gave us advice on publicly available data that we can start and also how to work on an agreement between Berkeley and the Ministry of Transportation.

3.2. Ministry of Transportation

Regarding the pilot of our surveys, here are the ones that we found more interesting:

- Most of the users of public buses in Chile are women. Of 10 people we surveyed at each bus stop, 7 were women. We went at different hours of the day to confirm that it was the case, and that was mostly the case.
- Women feel unsafe in the public transportation system. Not only at the bus stops but also on the ride or while walking from their home to the bus stop.
- They think that the upgrades that the government is proposing make sense. Many have shared that they don't use bus stops in areas with bad lighting.

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