

# “GTALK Report Series: Safer Cities in Asia”

## *Cagayan de Oro, Philippines*



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# GTALK Report Series: Safer Cities in Asia

**Gender and Transport Assemblage of  
Learning and Knowledge**



The **Women in Transport Leadership Knowledge Network (WITL)** is an international community of transport scholars with the ambition of encouraging more women and girls to take up careers in transport and foster women's leadership in the transport sector. In partnership with transportation domestic societies in Asia, and the regional transport peak body Eastern Asia Society for Transport Studies (EASTS), we collectively aim: 1) to increase the profile and global presence of women leaders in transport; 2) to strengthen women's voice to be able to advocate their distinct transportation needs; 3) to acknowledge and celebrate female leadership; and 4) to employ research to gather evidence base to better address the gendered dimension of transport planning and design, strategically supporting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 (make cities inclusive and safe, resilient and sustainable) and SDG5 (empower women and girls). [www.witl.info](http://www.witl.info)

The **Gender and Transport Assemblage of Learning and Knowledge or GTALK** is a unifying framework for an online, open-access knowledge database on gender and transport (e.g. information, research publications, webinar presentation materials, interviews of women transport leaders, including case study initiatives on pandemic response in transport settings across the several cities), to be shared nationally and internationally. These materials are developed to raise awareness and support the embedding of planning and policies that will help advance the shared regional opportunity of shaping a more gender-inclusive and responsive transportation sector in Australia and Asia-Pacific.

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## Summary

This report presents the results and findings of the survey implemented in Cagayan de Oro City the Philippines in 2021. The report is drawn from a combination of literature review and online survey responses of 332 tertiary students attending higher education in Cagayan de Oro City. This documents their perception of public transport safety. The study was undertaken from November 2020 to January 2021. This report on Cagayan de Oro was an output of the GTALK Research conducted by the Women in Transport Leadership Knowledge Network.

## Introduction

**Demographic Profile.** Cagayan de Oro City (CdeO) is located on the Mindanao Island of the Philippines. The city is the capital of Region X, which is on the northern side of Mindanao. Geographically, the city is comprised of 80 Barangays or wards that are demarcated by the Cagayan de Oro River that subdivide the city into two main city districts, namely: District 1 on the West and District 2 on the East.

The total population of CdeO is about 461, 877 (NSO, 2020) whereby gender 51% are female and 49% are male. The population comprised 93,525 households with an average household size of 4.92 persons. Educational attainment based on household population in Figure 1 revealed that 27% attained tertiary education, 36% attained secondary education, and 32% are in elementary and pre-school levels. Across educational attainment levels and gender comparison, female (51%) students exceed their male (49%) counterparts in attaining higher education levels.

According to the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), the City will become the 4<sup>th</sup> metropolitan center of the country and Region X's Metro Cagayan de Oro by 2025. As a metropolitan center, it will serve as a key educational center, a center for trade and commerce for agriculture and tourism, and a major gateway and transshipment hub.

According to CdeO's motorization data from the Land and Transportation Office (LTO, 2018) revealed that its top transportation volume includes: private motorcycles (69%), jeepneys and motorela (20%), private cars (6%) and trucks/trailers (4.5%). Moreover, the CdeO's Transportation Master Plan (TMP, 2021) reports on household travel demand revealed that 54% of household trips are from public transportation; 29% from active transportation and only 17% from private transportation. Thus, CdeO's overall household mobility is predominantly dependent on public transportation



Image 1: From Archdiocese of Cagayan De Oro, Wikimedia, 2013 ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RC\\_Archdiocese\\_of\\_Cagayan\\_de\\_Oro.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RC_Archdiocese_of_Cagayan_de_Oro.png))



**Victimization Survey Profile.** The survey in CdeO collated a total sample size of about 332 respondents from various tertiary schools in the city. Respondent's profiles show that by gender 52% are male, 21% are female and 0.30% identified as LGBTIQ+. Their age profile revealed that 94.6% range between 18 to 24 years old (49.7% male and 43% female) and only about 4% are between the age of 25 to 29 years old. Based on the highest educational attainment, about 47.6% have a bachelor's degree; 27.4% have a secondary education degree, and 17.8% others.

Across Region X's provinces, the majority of the respondents came from Misamis Oriental Province (84.04%), Bukidnon Province (4.5%) and Lanao Province (5.1%). Moreover, a majority (92%) of the respondents have resided in the CdeO city for more than five years.

The respondent's trip characteristics vary in terms of distance and transport mode. For long-distance trips, respondents' profiles revealed that 31.6% use local public transport or paratransit i.e., jeepney, bus, motorela etc., 25.7% use private cars and 11.9% use taxis. In terms of short-distance trips, results reveal that 25.7% of the respondents prefer to use paratransit modes (jeepney, public van etc.) while 22.5% prefer walking and 16.7% prefer private cars.



Image. 2: From, Abejuela, Velez Street,  
By, Anabel Abuzo



Image. 3: From, Jr Borja, Mortola Street,  
By, Anabel Abuzo



When considering the origin of the respondents' trips before heading to school, the majority originated from home (98.5%). About 0.6% of the respondents reside near the school area. For destination after school, 65.1% of the respondents chose to head back home; 11.5% of

the respondents chose to head to restaurants/entertainment places while 8.3% chose to visit recreational places. For other trip purposes, 44.9% of the respondents travel to leisure or social places, 12.7% travel for education, and 10.8% travel to go home.

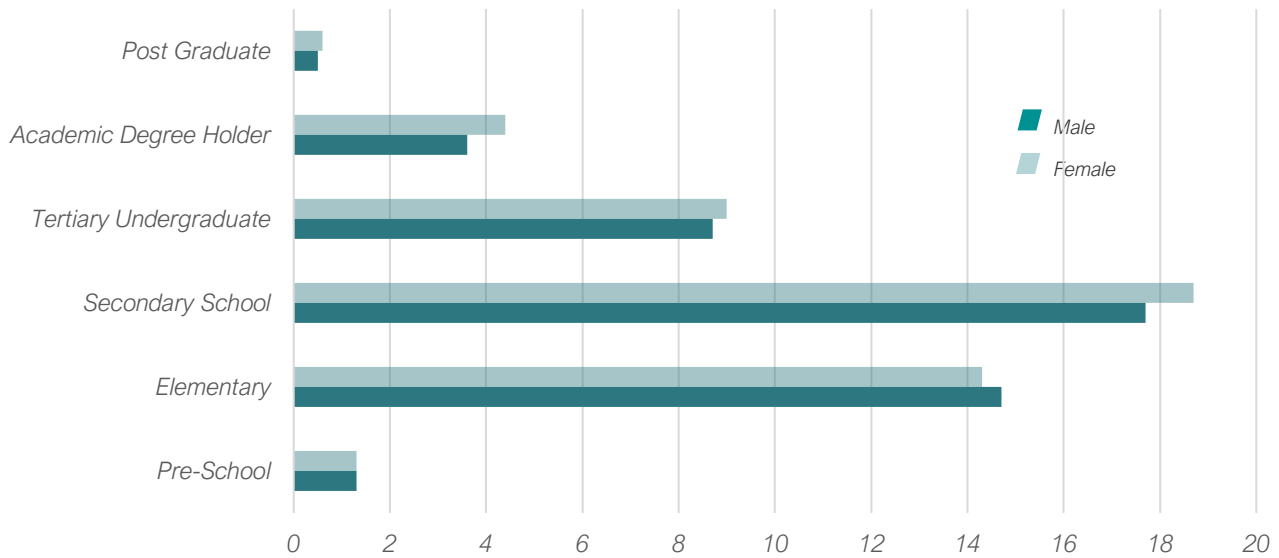


Fig. 1 Household Population and Educational attainment (Source: NSO,2000)

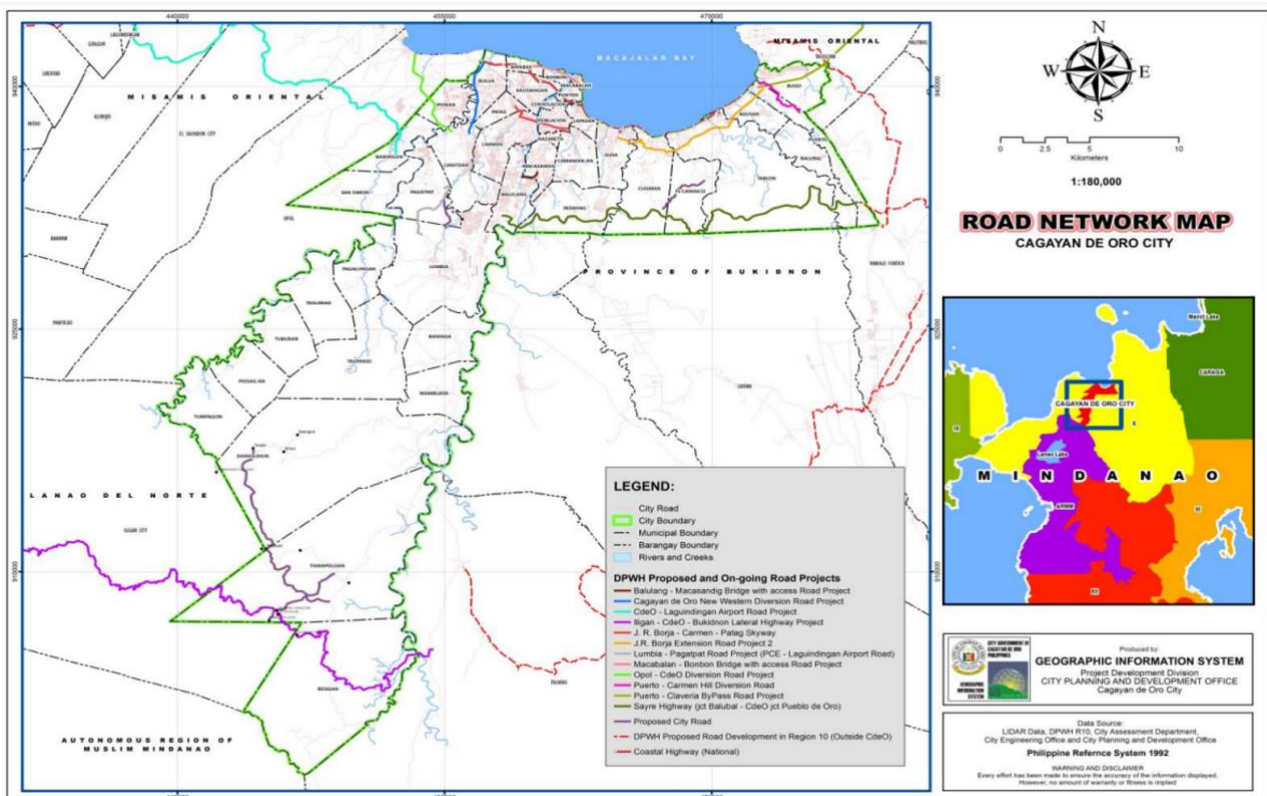


Image 4: From CdeO City Road Network Map, City Planning and Development Office (CPDO- GIS Division), 2019

[https://foodsystemsplanning.ap.buffalo.edu/wpcontent/uploads/sites/68/2019/03/City\\_Agricultural\\_Development\\_Plan\\_2019\\_2022.pdf](https://foodsystemsplanning.ap.buffalo.edu/wpcontent/uploads/sites/68/2019/03/City_Agricultural_Development_Plan_2019_2022.pdf)

# 2

## 2.1 Victimization

Table 2 shows that commuters (N=332) have experienced harassment in the last three years while riding or taking public transport (non-verbal 23.18%, verbal 21.36%, physical 12.95%, and others 0.45%), while waiting at the station or terminal (verbal 24.39%, non-verbal 18.78%, physical 6.10%, and others 0.49%) and when heading towards the waiting area (verbal 26.60%, non-verbal 18.72%, physical 5.67%, and others 0.49%).

**Verbal harassment is the most prominent form of harassment experienced by commuters which may constitute comments, whistling, obscene language etc. that the commuters may find offensive or disturbing.**

From the Table shown (?), harassment is more likely to occur while riding or taking public transportation, with non-verbal (23.2%) and verbal (21.4%) being the most prominent form of harassment experienced by the commuters.

By gender, a higher percentage of male commuters have never experienced harassment when compared to female commuters while riding or taking public transport (male 29.09%, female 11.82%), while waiting at the station or terminal (male 32.44%, female 16.59%) and when heading towards the waiting area (male 31.77%, female 15.52%). Likewise, female commuters have experienced more forms of harassment when compared to male commuters, particularly verbal and non-verbal harassment.

Figure 2 (comprised of Figures 2.1, 2.2, 2.3) reports a higher percentage of females who have experienced verbal harassment when heading toward a station or terminal (26.6%). Across gender, types of harassment include physical harassment which is more prominent on-board the vehicle (13.0%).

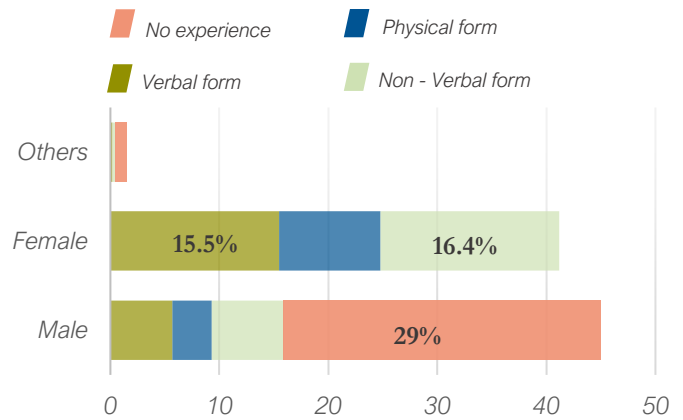


Fig. 2.1: On-board public transport

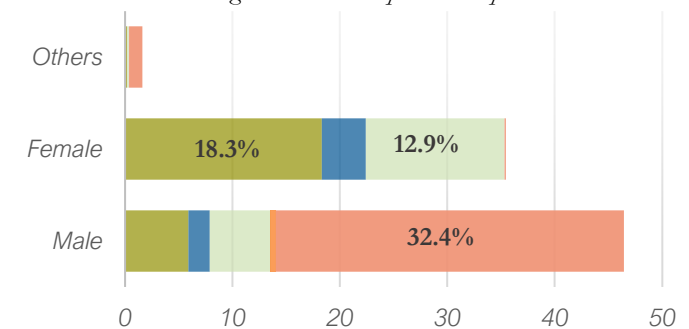


Fig. 2.2: At the station / terminal

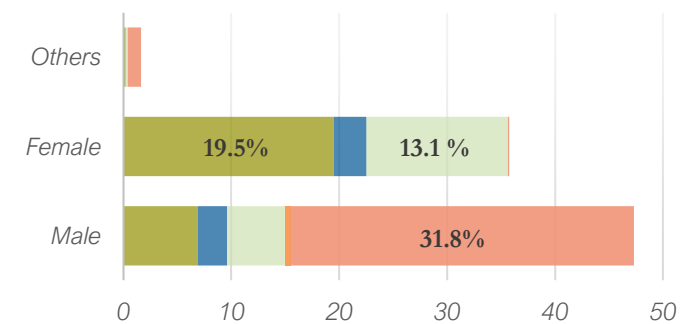


Fig. 2.3: On route the station / terminal

**Fig. 2: Commuters Recommended Public Transport Safety Applications**

## 2.2 Perception of Safety

**Perception of safety.** Based on Figure 3, commuters generally feel safe during daytime when using public transport (85.84%) compared to waiting at the station or terminal (76.20%) and walking towards a public transport station (66.57%).

However, the majority of the respondents feel less safe during nighttime trips particularly on commuting after dark (74.40%) and walking towards a public transport station or terminal after dark (64.16%).

Based on gender, a higher percentage of male respondents feel safe commuting (i.e., enroute, on-board and while waiting) during daytime and night-time trips. In contrast, female riders feel less safe using public transport during nighttime across all commuting scenarios.

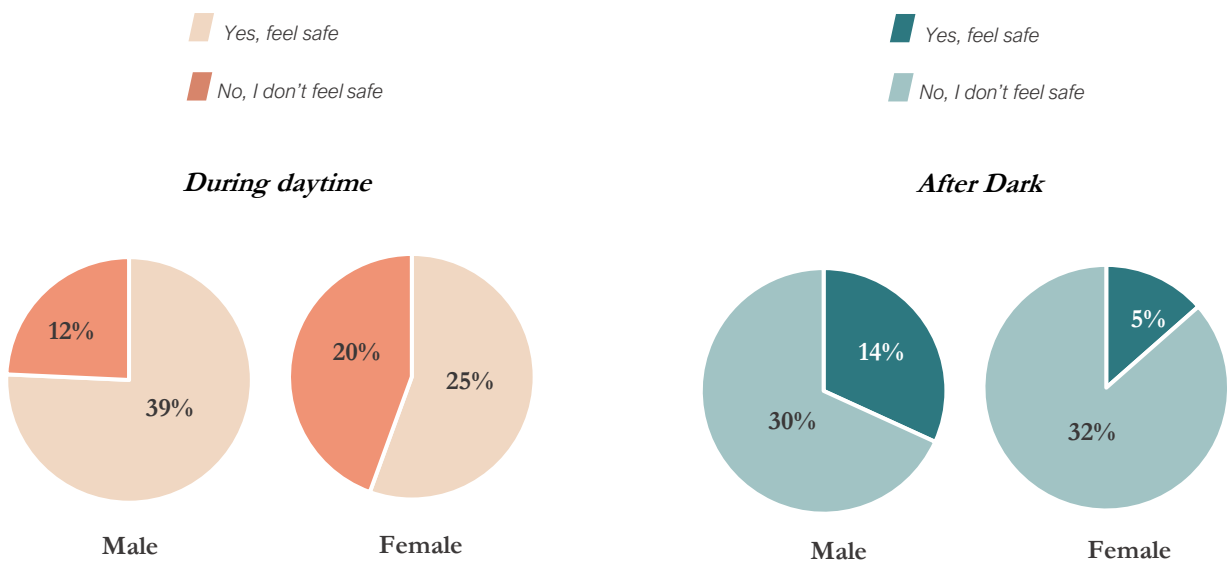


Fig. 3.1: Safety walking towards the station or terminal

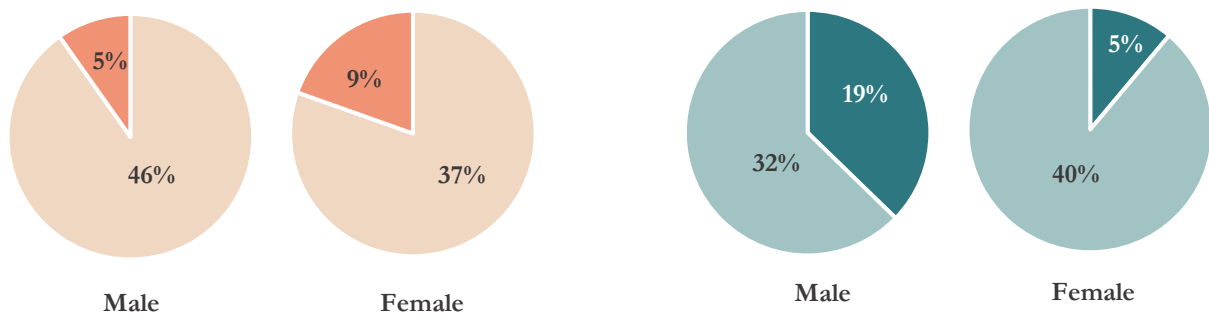


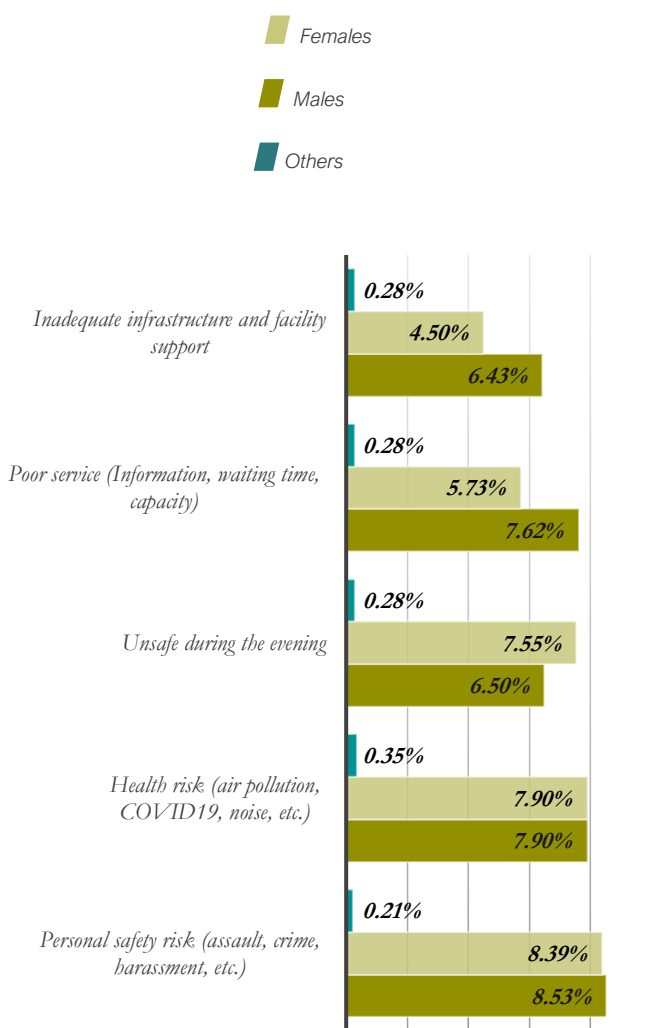
Fig. 3.2: Safety on-board public transport

Fig. 3: Public Transportation Safety and Usage

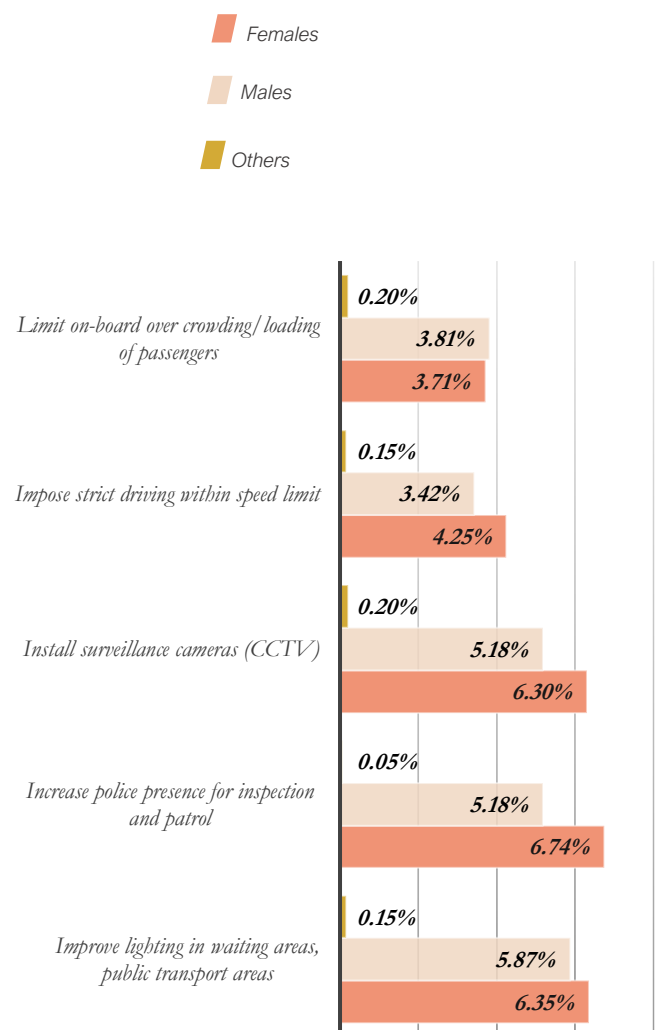
Perceived public transportation issues encountered by commuters are revealed in **Figure 4**, where the results reveal that **personal safety risk is the most significant problem for riders** (17.1%), followed by health risk (16.2%), unsafe during the evening (14.3%), poor service (13.6%) and inadequate infrastructure (11.3%). Both male and female riders consider personal safety risk (male 8.53%, female 8.39%) and health risk (male 7.90%,

female 7.90%) as the predominant issue on public transport.

According to the survey, to make travelling by public transport safer, the top three important solutions (Figure 5) include improvement of lighting in waiting areas (12.4%), increased police presence (12.0%) and installation of surveillance cameras (11.7%).



**Fig. 4: Commuters Perceived public transport safety issues**



**Fig. 5: Commuters Perceived public transport safety applications**

Based on Table 6a, the majority of the public transport commuters have experienced or known someone who has experienced harassment while riding a public transport (66.27%). When asked if the respondents reacted, taken action or taken precautionary measures against harassment, only 40.96% answered “yes” while 34.64% answered “no” and 24.40% answered “not applicable”. The top three responses for those who answered

“yes” (Table 6b) are as follows: confronted the harasser (24.32%), wait only if people are around or during daytime (19.86%), dress a certain way (14.38%) and avoid specific public transport stations/stops (14.38%). Based on gender, male commuters would confront the harasser (13.7%) whereas female commuters would commute only during daytime with other people around (14.7%).

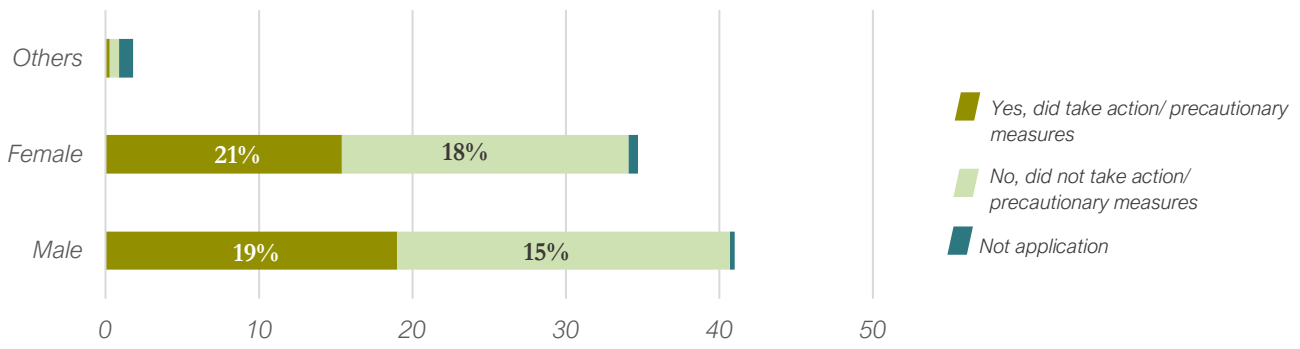


Fig. 6.1: Witness action or response during harassment

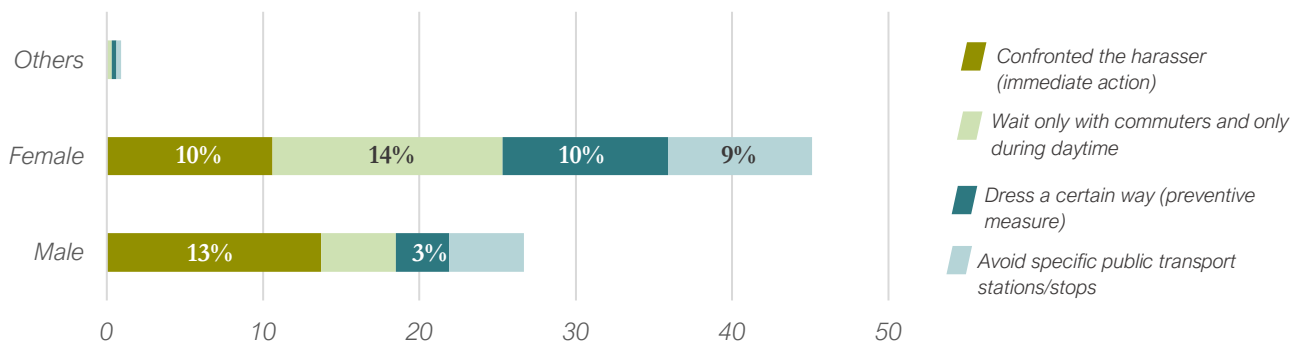


Fig.6.2: Witness form of action during harassment

**Fig. 6: Witness during harassment**



When asked if someone helped when the respondents were a victim or were being harassed (Table 7a), only 26.20% answered “yes” while 73.80% answered “no”. Across gender, the top three assistance (Table 7b) that the victim experience includes the following, namely: confronting the harasser (28.75%), asking others for help (21.25%), and calling for police (12.50%).



Image. 5: From, Bulua Road segment of BCIR Highway,  
By, Anabel Abuzo

**Challenges and recommendations from users.** The perceived problems encountered by commuters reveal that personal safety risks and health risks are the most significant issues on public transportation. Likewise, public transportation usage during night-time trips poses a safety risk for commuters.

Other perceived problems with public transportation identified by the respondents are poor service and inadequate infrastructure/facility support. Harassment is also a prominent concern in verbal and non-verbal forms with female riders being more susceptible to harassment than male riders. Harassment is also more prominent on board the public transportation.

Respondents of the survey recommend that for commuters' safety application, it is important (1) to improve night-time lighting of facilities in the station/terminal areas; (2) to increase police presence within the public transport station; (3) to install surveillance cameras (CCTV); (4) strict enforcement of speed limits to drivers; and (5) to limit on-board passengers inside the vehicle.

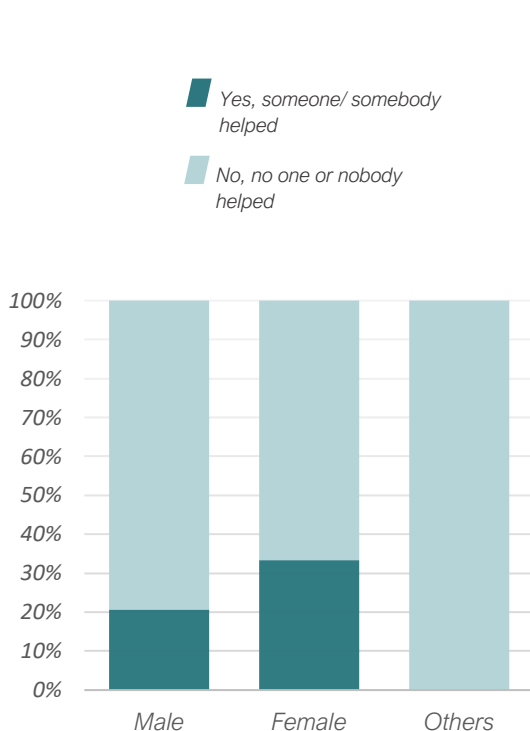


Fig.7.1: What is your action during harassment

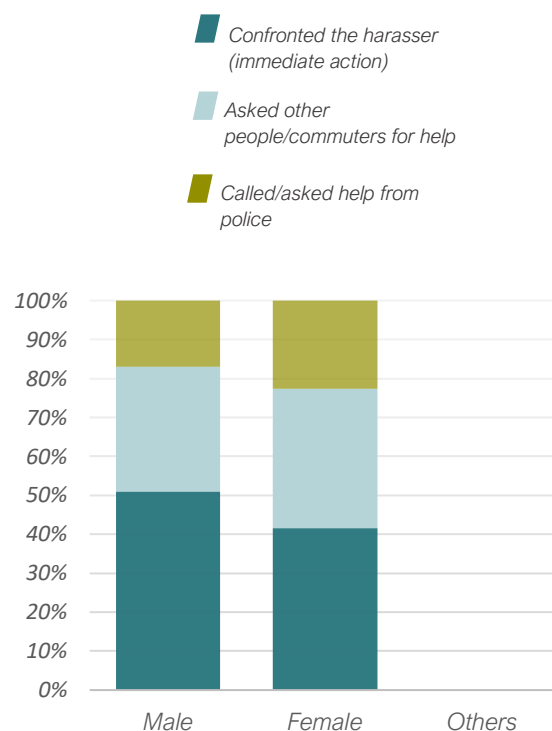


Fig.7.2: What is the form of help you received

**Fig. 7: Witness action during harassment**



# 2

## ***Conclusions and Recommendations***

Public transportation in Cagayan de Oro City poses a challenge for the local government units (LGU) especially when concerned with public welfare and safety. Based on the survey conducted, the results reveal that the perception of the safety of road users is low when using public transportation during night-time trips. This is due to public safety and health risk being the most significant problems as identified by the commuters, especially when harassment is a prominent issue onboard public transport and when waiting/en-route to a transport station.

By gender, the survey identified that female commuters are more susceptible to harassment and have a lower perception of safety compared to male commuters. Thus, the study recommends that improvement of amenities, increased police presence and security on public transport facilities are needed in the short term to make public transportation safer.

However, longer term solutions and strategies must address the root cause of sexual harassment and violence. There is also the need to increase awareness and education about how to create safer environments.

Thus, the study recommends:

***IEC Solutions.*** Information and Education Campaign to increase awareness of women and the general public awareness of the community on daytime and nighttime commuting sexual

harassment and violence in all forms of transport mobility applications. Drivers' Information and Education Campaign to increase awareness on road safety (i.e., speed limit and safe driving applications) and in-vehicle passenger safety (i.e., commuting sexual harassment and violence).

***ICT & IoT Solutions.*** Improve commuters' safety through roadside surveillance- and communication technology-related safety measures e.g., CCTV camera, convex mirrors, a phone-apps repository for complaints etc.)

***Transportation Safety Solutions.*** Improve transportation safety and security service through in-vehicle, roadside, and terminal safe-commuting programs. For In-Vehicle Safe Commuting Program include vehicle capacity and load limit; pandemic distancing protocols; and gender-responsive commuting protocols. For Road-Side Safe Commuting Program include nighttime facility illumination; police visibility; facility and infrastructure safety inspection. The Terminal-Safe Commuting Program include transport-operator security protocols; drivers' safe-driving protocols.

***Policy Solutions.*** Develop gender-responsive policy and representation in local government regulation to facilitate the adaption and enforcement of the sexual harassment law in transport mobility applications.

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