Mobile phone use among female live-out domestic workers in Delhi

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**MOBILE PHONE USE AMONG FEMALE LIVE-OUT DOMESTIC
WORKERS IN DELHI**

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**WEE KIM WEE SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATION AND
INFORMATION**

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A thesis submitted to the Nanyang Technological University in partial fulfilment of
the requirement for the degree of Master of Mass Communication

2018

ABSTRACT

This study explores mobile phone use among female live-out (as opposed to live-in) domestic workers in Delhi. Through interviews with 102 workers, it examines two main themes. First, it provides a nuanced perspective on the relationship between mobile telephony and women's empowerment by viewing the impact of the device through the conceptual lens of restricted agency. It finds that for marginalized women who have limited options available to them, the device is integrated into existing power structures that remain unaltered. Yet, it is within the constraints imposed on them by patriarchal cultural beliefs and their low socio-economic status that they utilize the mobile phone to gain a greater sense of autonomy and control over their domestic and professional lives. Second, this study also examines the economic impact of the mobile phone on their work. It finds that the device enhances their productivity and makes job-seeking more efficient. Moreover, it is the workers' ability to stay in touch with family and friends, which can often be ignored amidst the heavy focus on instrumental business-related uses of the mobile phone, that significantly contributes towards the device's positive impact on their work.

Keywords: Mobile phones, gender, live-out domestic workers, restricted agency, remote mothering, adaptive preferences

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

According to a report published by the GSMA, India is the second largest mobile market in the world with 616 million unique users subscribing to mobile services, representing almost half of the country's population (GSMA, 2016). With this incredible growth, the mobile phone has reached people from various sections of Indian society. In fact, even as far back as a decade ago, it was claimed that it had gone from being a device for the elite to a device "possessed by people in marginally compensated trades such as carpentry, peddlers, pedicab drivers, and domestic servants" (Rao & Desai, 2008, p. 389). This study focusses on how this device has become integrated into the lives of individuals engaged in one of these trades as it examines mobile phone use among female live-out domestic workers in Delhi.

Mobile phone use among domestic workers has previously been examined by observing foreign workers in different parts of the world, with a special emphasis on how they utilize the device for transnational mothering (Chib, Malik, Aricat, & Kadir, 2013; Madianou & Miller, 2011; Parreñas, 2005; Uy-Tioco, 2007). Research has also highlighted how the mobile can help live-in foreign workers deal with the isolation of staying within their employers' homes (Thomas & Lim, 2010). Further, some studies have analysed the impact of the device on the workers' relationship with their employers (Lin & Sun, 2010; Platt et al., 2014; Sun, 2006). However, most of this research has concentrated on live-in workers in developed countries. This study instead focusses on live-out workers plying their trade in a developing nation. Unlike live-in workers, they do not reside with any employer and usually perform several different domestic tasks in multiple homes every day (Mehrotra, 2010; Neetha, 2004). Further, the women engaged in

this profession in metropolitan Indian cities like Delhi are usually internal migrants from rural areas (Kaur, 2006; Mehrotra, 2010; Neetha, 2004; Neetha, 2009). Thus, they have different experiences and face different issues compared to live-in foreign workers, whose mobile phone use has been studied extensively. The next section elucidates these experiences and issues as it provides some background on the nature of the domestic service sector in India, the characteristics of a typical live-out domestic worker, and the problems these workers frequently encounter.

1.1 Domestic Work in India

1.1.1 Rising demand for workers. In India, the growing demand for domestic workers over the past few decades has been linked to the rise of an urban middle-class that can afford to employ them (Bhattacharya, Sukumar, & Mani, n.d.; Mehrotra, 2010; Neetha & Palriwala, 2011; Palriwala & Neetha, 2010). It has been observed that much of this demand is for live-out domestic workers in particular (Neetha, 2009; Palriwala & Neetha, 2010). A lack of space in middle-class homes for live-in workers to reside in and the fact that the live-out arrangement allows employers to budget according to the specific tasks they need performed are seen as the primary reasons behind this demand.

The workers hired by these middle-class employers are usually women rather than men. A 2013 report claimed that 90% of the domestic service sector in India was comprised of women (KPMG, 2013). Female workers are often preferred as the tasks usually performed by the woman of the house are carried out without contravening patriarchal beliefs associated with the division of household labour (Bhattacharya et al., n.d.; Kaur, 2006; Neetha, 2004; Palriwala & Neetha, 2010; Rustagi, 2016). The

prevalence of this patriarchal ideology is also one of the reasons that the workers are awarded low wages as women's work in the household remains undervalued. Further, as the number of middle-class Indian women taking up non-home-based jobs has increased, the demand to hire these workers to reduce their burden of domestic responsibilities has also risen (Bhattacharya et al., n.d.; Neetha & Palriwala, 2011).

1.1.2 Characteristics of a typical live-out domestic worker. In some cases, live-out domestic workers may work in just one household for the entire day and return home; however, they more commonly work in multiple households on a daily basis, performing various different tasks such as sweeping and mopping, washing dishes, laundry, dusting, cooking, child care, and elderly care (Mehrotra, 2010; Neetha & Palriwala, 2011). The wages these workers earn can differ according to the tasks they perform as well as the locality they work in (Rustagi, 2016). According to Rustagi, the average pay for a live-out domestic worker in Delhi is 1500 rupees (approximately USD 23) per month from each employer. She found that these workers put in an average of one and a half to two hours of work per day in each household they work in.

Workers plying their trade in Delhi usually reside in slum areas and are typically rural migrants (Kaur, 2006; Neetha, 2004; Neetha, 2009). These women migrate to the city because of diminished earnings from agrarian jobs in the village, taking up domestic work due to its low barriers of entry and lack of requirement of formal skills. They are also largely uneducated and take up this work despite the low wages and low status associated with it (Kaur, 2006). According to Neetha and Mazumdar (2010), "Domestic service has been the commonest and also normally the first occupation of poor and marginalised women" (p. 66). Further, the flexibility associated with the live-out

arrangement is appealing to these women as they are also expected to be responsible for childcare and domestic chores within their own homes (Bhattacharya et al., n.d; Palriwala & Neetha, 2010). This arrangement enables them to adjust their workload according to the time they need to put in to fulfil these responsibilities.

1.1.3 Issues faced by live-out domestic workers. While live-out work is flexible, it is also unstable (Neetha & Palriwala, 2011). Any dispute with an employer, or a sudden event like an employer relocating can lead to a worker losing her job without notice or monetary compensation. These workers are not protected by any legal provisions because they do not have a formal contract with their employers (Neetha, 2009). Their resultant insecurity is exacerbated by the fact that there is a steady supply of migrants ready to replace them. This means that they are also in an unfavourable position when it comes to wage negotiations. Indeed, their employers usually hold most of the power in the employer-employee relationship (Mehrotra, 2010; Rustagi, 2016). This relationship is characterized by “domination, dependency and inequality” (Mehrotra, 2010, p. 3).

In the absence of a formal contract, the workers do not have any guaranteed leaves, and they often work seven days a week (Bhattacharya et al., n.d.; Kaur, 2006). In some cases, the number of hours these women end up working for each day is more than the hours put in by a regular factory worker (Neetha, 2009). Their schedule is also physically taxing as they are usually on the move throughout the day, with little time for rest (Qayum & Ray, 2003). In addition, these workers often face physical health issues due to poor sanitary conditions in the slum areas they reside in (Kaur, 2006). Their mental health is also negatively affected as they deal with the stress of managing their own domestic responsibilities alongside their commitments at work (Bhattacharya et al., n.d.).

Absenteeism, even due to ill-health, can result in employers letting them go, adding to their stress. In fact, loss of work in even one household can have massive impact on the workers' financial situation (Kaur, 2006). The income they generate is vital for their family as their husbands also usually hold low-paying and unstable jobs in the informal sector.

1.2 Research Objectives

This study explores how the mobile phone impacts live-out domestic workers' lives as they deal with the multitude of issues described in the previous section. Extant research has found that the mobile phone can be beneficial for women, but it can also have a negative impact on their lives. As Svensson and Wamala Larsson (2015) asserted: "The same technology can empower women as well as amplify gender disparities" (p. 216). Nguyen, Chib, and Mahalingam (2016) noted that research examining the positive impact of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) including mobiles has traditionally focused on how women can gain economic and other tangible developmental benefits from using these technologies. However, they added that recent studies have also examined how women can acquire more intangible benefits like agency. Contrarily, studies have also found that the mobile phone can reflect and even strengthen existing gender inequalities. For instance, it can contribute to reinforcing the gendered division of household labour (e.g., Rakow & Navarro, 1993), and it can also play a role in strengthening unequal power relations between women and men (e.g., Garcia, 2011; Stewart, 2004).

Meanwhile, in their study of smartphone use among women in Delhi's slum areas, Tacchi and Chandola (2015) urged researchers to guard against "situating these technologies in an overly deterministic projection of the future, or to highlight the staticness of social order and its traditions" (p. 187). Therefore, rather than claiming that the mobile phone eliminates the restrictions live-out domestic workers face, or arguing that its use simply reflects existing inequalities, this study offers a more nuanced perspective on the relationship between mobile telephony and women's empowerment.

To provide this perspective, it draws upon the concept of situated or restricted agency (Peter, 2003). While agency is an important aspect of women's empowerment (Sen, 1999), it has traditionally been described as "an individual's capacity to act independently and to make his or her own free choices" (Chew, Ilavarasan, & Levy, 2015, p. 524). However, as the previous section illustrated, live-out domestic workers' choices are severely limited by various constraints engendered by socio-cultural and socio-economic factors. They face inequalities in both their domestic and professional lives. The concept of situated or restricted agency can help researchers recognize that women may possess agency even when they find themselves in situations characterized by inequalities (Vera-Gray, 2016). Restricted agency does not represent complete freedom of choice. Rather, it is viewed as a contextualized form of agency possessed by women whose ability to make choices may be limited by societal and personal restrictions (Peter, 2003). Thus, women faced with constraints and a lack of options are not viewed as lacking agency. In fact, "what may, in terms of manifest behavior, seem like submission, may hide more subtle strategies of resistance" (Peter, 2003, p. 27).

This study views the effect of the mobile phone on live-out domestic workers' lives from this perspective. It recognizes that the device may not necessarily have a transformative impact. However, in the context of the difficulties these women face, it may engender a form of restricted agency. Further, drawing from Masika and Bailur's (2015) study of women's access to ICTs in Uganda and India, this study also utilizes the concepts of adaptive preferences (Elster, 1983; Khader, 2011; Narayan, 2005) and patriarchal bargaining (Kandiyoti, 1988). Masika and Bailur argued that these concepts helped them gain a deeper understanding of the conscious and unconscious choices the subjects of their study made in relation to their access to ICTs as they negotiated agency within the restrictions they faced. Therefore, applying these concepts, this study examines the following research question: *How do live-out domestic workers negotiate restricted agency through their use of the mobile phone?*

In addition to this focus on agency, this study also explores a second theme as it examines how the mobile phone impacts the workers in a more tangible manner. This part of the study moves away from exclusively focussing on concepts associated with gender. Instead, it draws from research that has explored how the device can be utilized by small-scale entrepreneurs in developing countries to enhance productivity and generate income (Donner & Escobari, 2010). Donner (2009) argued that most of this research has not differentiated between instances where people benefit from the device's mobility and instances where they only benefit from the connectivity it affords. As live-out domestic workers are required to constantly travel between multiple homes for work, they stand to benefit from both the connectivity and the mobility that the mobile phone affords them. Further, due to the unstable and non-formalized nature of their job, the workers'

employment can often be transient. If they lose work in a certain household, they need to quickly find a replacement job in another home. Therefore, this study examines the role that the mobile phone plays in the process of finding this new work. In addition to the workers' use of the mobile phone for these instrumental work-related purposes, this study also analyses the impact their use of the device for social or personal reasons has on their job. Finally, it also explores whether the device engenders any overlap between their personal and professional lives, or in other words, "blurs lives and livelihoods" (Donner, 2009, p. 99). Therefore, this part of the study focusses on the following research question: *How does the mobile phone affect live-out domestic workers' productivity and job-seeking process?*

1.3 Study Outline

An analysis of research that focusses on how the mobile phone has this tangible economic impact on individuals working in the Global South serves as the starting point for the literature review. This includes studies that demonstrate how the use of the device to connect with family and friends can also engender this impact. Following this, the other themes discussed in this chapter are also explored in greater detail. Extant research on the impact of mobile telephony on women's lives is examined. This includes studies that illustrate the positive empowering impact of the device. Conversely, studies that demonstrate how the mobile can reinforce gender inequalities by strengthening the gendered division of household labour and amplifying unequal power relations in women's lives are also discussed. The literature review concludes with a detailed description of the concepts of restricted agency, adaptive preferences, and patriarchal bargaining, including how these concepts have been applied in other studies that have

examined women's use of ICTs. Following this, the process of data collection and analysis is described, and the findings from interviews with live-out domestic workers are presented. These findings are then analysed by utilizing the concepts discussed in this study. Finally, the limitations of the study are presented, and some concluding remarks are proffered.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Mobile Phones in the Developing World: Economic and Personal Use

In the developing world, a prominent strand of research has focussed on how mobile phone adoption can bring about economic development (Donner, 2008a, 2010). Much of this research focuses on how the device can benefit micro and small enterprises (Donner & Escobari, 2010), especially ones engaged in the trading of goods or products (e.g., Jagun, Heeks, & Whalley, 2008; Jensen, 2007). However, some studies have also analysed how the device benefits individuals that provide various types of services. For instance, Ling, Oreglia, Aricat, Panchapakesan, and Lwin (2015) discovered that trishaw riders in Myanmar used the mobile to cultivate connections with certain shopkeepers, who called on them to transport goods on a regular basis. The mobile enabled the riders to efficiently coordinate their business with these regular customers, who were a consistent source of income. Similarly, Kamga (2006) described how the mobile phone benefitted people providing laundry services in Côte d'Ivoire as their regular clients were able to call and inform them about when the clothes needed to be picked up, facilitating more efficient coordination. In China, itinerant workers such as plumbers and salespersons were surveyed about their mobile phone use by the consulting firm McKinsey, and it was found that the device had a significant impact on their productivity as it helped them save time (Enriquez, Schmitgen, & Sun, 2007).

These studies portray the mobile as a great economic tool that can help in boosting productivity in developing countries. Therefore, one may expect people in these regions to spend a large chunk of their airtime on making business or work-related calls to sellers,

traders, or clients. However, studies have discovered that this is not actually the case. For instance, in a study of micro-entrepreneurs in Rwanda, Donner (2005) found that their use of the mobile to talk to family and friends far outweighed their use of the device for business purposes. Similarly, it was observed that people predominantly used the mobile for social or personal purposes in Bangladesh (Richardson, Ramirez, & Haq, 2000) and Ghana (Sey, 2011).

However, Sey (2011) argued that the use of the mobile for social or personal reasons is not necessarily in opposition to its use for work-related purposes. She stated that sometimes even when people choose to call family, it may have an underlying economic purpose. Indeed, research has revealed that the use of the mobile to maintain familial bonds can be beneficial for business. For instance, Tenhunen (2008) observed that the adoption of mobile phones helped to strengthen kinship networks in rural West Bengal. However, relatives within these networks were also heavily involved in business-related activities. They even provided loans in times of crisis and influenced decisions associated with land usage. Therefore, the social use of the mobile to bolster connections with them was also advantageous for business. Meanwhile, the maintenance of kinship networks via the mobile can also benefit workers seeking new employment opportunities. In China, studies have found that internal migrants often utilize the device to contact their vast kinship network for information on new job opportunities (Law & Peng, 2008; Wallis, 2011). These workers may also rely on friendship networks that are maintained with the help of the mobile when they need to look for a new job (Yang, 2008). All of these examples illustrate that there is a thin line between the use of the mobile for personal

or social reasons and its use for business or job-related matters. This underscores Donner's (2009) claim regarding the mobile blurring lives and livelihoods.

The use of the mobile phone to stay in touch with personal connections may also indirectly facilitate economic or business-related development. This can be observed in cases where individuals leave their families at home and travel or migrate for work. Donner (2005) argued that sometimes people may only be able to travel and enhance their productivity at work if they are able to stay in touch with their family at the same time. Similarly, in cases where people migrate for work, the personal use of the mobile to stay connected with family members can allow them to continue generating income away from home. For instance, Madianou and Miller (2011) discovered that Filipino workers often decided to continue working in a foreign nation because the mobile allowed them to have regular contact with their children. Donner (2006) came to a similar conclusion while describing the use of the mobile by a Ugandan restaurant owner in Rwanda. He asserted that she may feel comfortable pursuing her business in another country because the mobile allows her to stay in touch with her family. In these cases, there is no implicit or explicit financial reason for workers to contact their loved ones. However, the fact that they can use the mobile to maintain these personal connections gives them the emotional strength to continue generating income for themselves and their family.

Donner (2010) presented the user choice framework to help researchers examine the impact of mobile phones in developing countries. He argued that if people's access to mobile phones is not a part of any developmental initiative, then they are free to choose how to use the device. He urged researchers to recognize that the choices users make ultimately determine the impact the mobile has, and it is not necessary that these choices

will always be directed towards achieving developmental results. This section has illustrated that the relationship between how someone chooses to use the mobile and the impact the device has is not necessarily straightforward. Even if a user's choice is directed towards achieving personal or social goals like maintaining connections with family and friends, it can also impact their business or job. There may also be an overlap between personal and work-related goals in some cases. This study explores how this is reflected in live-out domestic workers' mobile phone use. In addition, their use of the device for exclusively instrumental work-related purposes is also examined.

While Donner (2010) emphasized that users are free to choose how they use the mobile, he did not focus on how these choices may be influenced by a user's gender. As the rest of this literature review illustrates, women's position in society as well as socio-cultural beliefs associated with their gender may influence how they utilize the mobile. In some cases, their use of the device can play a role in reinforcing the inequalities they face, but in other cases it may also help in challenging them.

2.2 Mobile Phones and Women's Empowerment

The mobile phone often aids in empowering women when it is introduced to them as a part of a developmental initiative. Here, the stated goals of the initiative may influence how the women choose to use the device. For instance, Balasubramanian, Thamizoli, Umar, and Kanwar (2010) examined a developmental initiative in southern India, wherein rural women were sent voice clips on their mobile to help them learn about how to improve their goat rearing business. The authors found that the mobile helped in transferring knowledge and facilitated non-formal learning, engendering collective agency

among the self-help groups these women were a part of. Meanwhile, Chib and Chen (2011) discovered that on being given mobiles, rural midwives in Indonesia were able to devise strategies to cope with social and organizational restrictions, allowing them to “develop the capacity for agency and autonomy” (p.486).

Instances of empowerment have also been observed in the absence of such initiatives. In rural Mozambique, the mobile engendered social empowerment by helping women enhance their personal support network (Macueve, Mandlate, Ginger, Gaster, & Macome, 2009). It also facilitated economic empowerment in some cases as it enabled female traders to establish communication with suppliers and clients. Similarly, Komunte (2015) found that women entrepreneurs in Uganda were economically empowered as they utilized the mobile to enhance their business activities. Meanwhile, in their study of female entrepreneurs in Chennai, Chew et al. (2015) analysed the link between mobile phone use and empowerment from a socio-psychological standpoint. They discovered that talking to family and friends on the mobile made the entrepreneurs feel like their business pursuits mattered, resulting in them gaining the psychological asset of “mattering”. Chew et al. argued that gaining this asset helped in boosting the women’s agency.

However, it is also important to recognize the influence of wider social and cultural factors when considering the mobile’s empowering potential. Mobile phones may only bring about empowerment and improve the social position of women in conjunction with broader positive changes in society (Tacchi, Kitner, & Crawford, 2012; Tenhunen, 2008). As Tacchi et al. argued,

While mobile phones can be considered to be contributing in important ways to transforming lives, they are agents within a much wider set of social and cultural changes. They are not a one-size-fits-all technological solution to the issues of development, inequality and exclusion, and can in some cases highlight and amplify existing tensions (p.534).

Therefore, the mobile may sometimes reflect and even reinforce existing tensions and inequalities rather than bringing about empowerment. The two sections that follow examine this phenomenon.

2.3 Mobile Phones and the Gendered Division of Household Labour

Studies that link mobile telephony with gender inequality have often focussed on women's use of the mobile phone to carry out domestic responsibilities as this reinforces the gendered division of household labour. Rakow and Navarro (1993) published a seminal study in this area. In their early analysis of women's mobile phone use in America, they observed that the subjects of their study primarily used the device to manage responsibilities associated with childcare when they left home. The authors called this practice "remote mothering". They found that these women performed mothering duties even when they were at their jobs, resulting in them working a "parallel shift". Rakow and Navarro argued that in fulfilling these responsibilities via the mobile, their interviewees reinforced the idea that childcare is a duty meant to be performed by women. Meanwhile, studies examining Filipino migrant workers' use of the mobile have observed that they utilize the device for transnational mothering (Parreñas, 2005; Uy-Tioco, 2007). The authors of these studies argued that even though the migrant workers were somewhat

empowered by becoming the primary earners in their family, their use of the mobile to uphold the responsibility of performing traditional mothering duties tied them back to domesticity. In fact, the phenomenon of women using the mobile to take care of domestic responsibilities has been observed across various different cultures and countries. Women in Israel (Lemish & Cohen, 2005), housewives in Japan (Dobashi, 2005), housewives and home-based workers in the Philippines (Portus, 2008), and Latina farm workers in Ohio (Garcia, 2011) have been found to engage in this practice.

Utilizing the mobile to manage these responsibilities can even cause women stress and anxiety. In America, Chesley (2005) found that unlike men, women had to cope with domestic matters while working if they were accessible via the mobile. This caused them stress and resulted in a reduction in their family satisfaction. Meanwhile in China and Korea, Lim and Soon (2010) discovered that using the mobile phone to stay in touch with children could be unnerving for mothers as any disruption in contact caused anxiety.

This section has reviewed some of the research that links mobile phones to inequality as women use the device to carry out gendered responsibilities. The next section also explores the theme of inequality by analysing literature that describes how the mobile can often play a central role in reinforcing women's lack of power.

2.4 Mobile Phones and Power Relations

According to Green and Haddon (2009), power is “a structuring influence within society that permeates all our social relationships” (p.109). They argued that a bulk of the research that examines the connection between power and mobile communication falls under two categories. The first category includes studies that focus on interpersonal power

relations. Here, themes such as how much control individuals have over their own and others' use of the mobile as well as how interpersonal relationships are negotiated via the mobile are examined. The second category comprises of studies that concentrate on how mobile phones impact power differentials that exist due to the prevailing social order, including hierarchical power at work. This section explores these themes from a gender perspective by focussing on research that has examined the impact of the mobile phone on women's power relations at home and at work.

2.4.1 Power relations within the household. Women's lack of power at home is often reinforced when their access to mobile phones is restricted or controlled by men. Studies have found that this frequently occurs when men suspect that women are using the mobile phone to engage in extra-marital affairs (Burrell, 2010; GSMA, 2015; Masika, 2017; Masika & Bailur, 2015; Stark, 2013; Wakunuma, 2007). As Masika (2017) discovered in Uganda, sometimes this is due to a general perception among men that if a woman adopts a mobile phone then she will use it for this purpose. Also in Uganda, Burrell found that in such cases, women had to settle for shared access to mobiles. These sharing arrangements also reflected men's power as they controlled how the women used the device. Meanwhile, this assertion of power can also impact women's work. Studies have found that female traders can face difficulties taking business-related calls at home because their husbands assume that the call is from a man they are having an affair with (Masika, 2017; Masika & Bailur, 2015; Svensson & Wamala Larsson, 2015). In more extreme cases, men may assert their power by subjecting their wives to verbal and physical abuse due to this distrust caused by the mobile phone (Wakunuma, 2007).

Conversely, Svensson and Wamala Larsson (2015) discovered that this distrust can sometimes result in a situation where rather than restricting access, men take advantage of women being accessible via the mobile by constantly calling them to find out about their whereabouts. This exertion of power has even been observed in cases where there is no evidence of this distrust. In her study of family farms in Australia, Stewart (2004) found that wives were given access to mobiles to ensure their safety when they left the farm. This allowed their husbands to stay in constant touch with them, giving the men a greater sense of power and control over them. Women may even encounter this control at an early age. In Canada, Campbell (2006) discovered that parents gave teen girls a mobile phone due to safety concerns, enabling them to monitor the girls' activities and constantly check up on them. Both Stewart and Campbell recognized that the female participants in their respective studies showed opposition to this control through little gestures of resistance such as switching off their mobile or occasionally not answering calls. However, both authors suggested that these acts were minor and did not necessarily represent a shift in power as control continued to be exerted via the mobile. These studies reveal that despite evidence of some subtle acts of defiance, gendered power hierarchies continue to remain relatively unchanged and are even exacerbated when women have access to a mobile phone.

2.4.2 Mobile phones and power relations at work. In addition to giving rise to suspicions at home, the mobile phone may also engender distrust in the employer-employee relationship. Employers may suspect that their employees can undermine their authority if they have access to a mobile. In Singapore, Sun (2006) observed that employers of female live-in domestic workers wanted to limit their contact with other

workers. They viewed this contact with suspicion as the workers could compare wages and living conditions with each other. Thus, they displayed their power by restricting the workers' access to mobiles. However, the workers managed to show some resistance by covertly used mobiles to talk to family and friends. Meanwhile, Lin and Sun (2010) stressed that if Singaporean employers allowed foreign domestic workers to use a mobile, they were expected to follow "explicit and implicit rules" (p.191) with respect to their use of the device. Platt et al. (2014) also observed a similar trend in their study of ICT use among Indonesian domestic workers in Singapore. Thus, employers can exert their power over workers by restricting or only allowing them conditional access to mobile phones.

Conversely, power and control are also exerted in situations where employees do have access to mobile phones as they become accessible to employers even during non-working hours (Kinnunen, Suopajarvi, & Ylipulli, 2011). As Ling (2014) argued, the expectation of constant availability engendered by the mobile phone can often reflect existing power structures. Viewing this from a gender-specific perspective, Edley (2001) discovered that while technology including mobile phones enabled women to juggle mothering and work-related responsibilities more effectively, it also allowed for their organization to have more control over them. In China, Wallis (2011) observed that by being accessible via the mobile, young female rural migrant workers suffered at the hands of their powerful employers as they could now be surveilled and harassed by them. Therefore, the mobile phone can provide another avenue for employers to assert their power over employees.

2.5 Restricted Agency, Adaptive Preferences, and Patriarchal Bargaining

The previous sections in this chapter have detailed how the mobile phone may have a positive or negative impact on women's lives. However, as noted before, the assumption that the mobile empowers women and helps them acquire complete freedom of choice may be too optimistic. Conversely, it may be facile to conclude that the device simply reinforces existing inequalities. Utilizing the conceptual lens of restricted agency enables this study to move beyond this dichotomy and instead present a more nuanced view of the impact of the mobile phone. Here, the agency women can negotiate through their use of the device is viewed within the context of the inequalities and restrictions they face. As Vera-Gray (2016) argued, viewing women's agency from such a perspective helps "to avoid binaries of freedom or constraint, subject or object, actor or victim" (p. 52).

Restricted agency is shaped by the constraints women face, which are contingent on their individual circumstances as well as other contextual factors (Peter, 2003). However, women can enact this agency and make choices directed towards gaining benefits within these constraints. In their study of Vietnamese foreign brides in Singapore, Nguyen et al. (2016) described how restricted agency can be strategically negotiated through the use of mobile phones. For example, the Vietnamese foreign brides needed to learn English and Chinese when they came to Singapore. However, they were restricted to their homes and unable to go to school due to financial impediments and domestic responsibilities. Within these restrictions, the mobile enabled them to learn at home as they utilized the internet and applications on their smartphones to acquire this knowledge.

Thus, the women were able to gain a sense of independence within the restrictions they faced with respect to their mobility, illustrating restricted agency.

In some cases, the choices women make in negotiating this restricted agency may reinforce the gender inequalities that constrain them. According to Kandiyoti's (1988) concept of patriarchal bargaining, women may strategically make such choices and submit to patriarchal beliefs to gain some form of power or advantage within the constraints they face. Masika and Bailur (2015) utilized this concept to describe how some of the subjects of their study negotiated agency by strategically accepting patriarchal beliefs while accessing ICTs. For instance, they found that some women in rural India were only allowed to visit a telecentre for IT classes if they were accompanied by a male family member to ensure that they did not interact with other men and foreigners at the centre. Masika and Bailur argued that submitting to the patriarchal belief of needing to travel with male protection enabled the women to access technology that could potentially empower them within the constraints they faced in a patriarchal society. However, Masika and Bailur admitted that it is difficult to ascertain to what extent women make these choices strategically rather than as a response to their circumstances.

Masika and Bailur (2015) also utilized the concept of adaptive preferences to elucidate the choices of some of their interviewees. They argued that while patriarchal bargains are conceptualized as strategic decisions, there is ambiguity about whether adaptive preferences are conscious and rational choices. Indeed, these preferences have been described as choices wherein people unconsciously downgrade and recast their desires based on the options available to them (Elster, 1983). Meanwhile, Narayan (2005) argued that these are preferences women have internalized over the course of time:

A woman's perception of herself and her world may be so skewed by her circumstances and cultural upbringing that she may say and believe that she genuinely prefers things that she would not prefer if she were aware of other possibilities (p. 34).

On the other hand, Serene Khader's conceptualization of adaptive preferences includes conscious and rational choices as well (Khader, 2011, 2012). Khader (2012) defined adaptive preferences as "preferences incompatible with an agent's basic wellbeing that formed under unjust conditions — and that an agent would reverse upon exposure to better conditions" (p. 302). She focussed on women in the global south and argued that someone who has adaptive preferences can possess agency as well as a sense of self-worth (Khader, 2011, 2012). She stated that these preferences are often formed because women are left with limited options due to prevailing social structures. Thus, their preferences may be rational as they attempt to make the best out of the limited choices available to them. However, she did not rule out the possibility of some preferences being formed due to women failing to value their right to certain resources or freedoms.

Further, Khader (2011) argued that in certain situations, these preferences may even be viewed as trade-offs. When faced with limited options, it may not be possible for a woman to achieve beneficial outcomes in every domain of her life. Therefore, she may prefer to sustain oppression in one domain in order to achieve a favourable outcome in another domain. Unlike patriarchal bargains, which have been conceptualized as strategic decisions, these trade-offs were described as choices made in response to unfavourable circumstances.

Utilizing these concepts, this study examines the conscious and unconscious choices live-out domestic workers make with respect to their use of the mobile phone as they negotiate restricted agency within the context of the limitations they face.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

3.1 Sample

In June and July of 2017, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 102 live-out domestic workers in Delhi. The participants were recruited through a combination of purposive and snowball sampling. To ensure a diverse sample, workers plying their trade in different localities in the city were interviewed as wages can differ depending on the socio-economic class of employers in the area. The researcher's personal contacts helped to provide access to workers employed in their homes. These workers were interviewed and then asked to refer other workers employed in the same locality. The participants' ages ranged from 18 to 70 years old (see table 3.1 on this page). However, many of them revealed that they were not aware of their exact age as they had no official documentation. Thus, they could only offer a rough estimate. Lastly, workers who did not possess a personal mobile phone were also interviewed since they may have had access to a shared handset at home (see table 3.2 on the next page).

Age Range	Number of Workers
18-20	7
21-30	29
31-40	42
41-50	13
51-60	8
61-70	3

Table 3.1 Live-Out Domestic Workers' Age Distribution

Mobile Ownership/Access	Number of Workers
Personal Mobile Owners	90
Non-Owners	12
Non-Owners With Shared Access	10

Table 3.2 Live-Out Domestic Workers' Access to Mobile Phones

3.2 Data Collection

A consent form written in Hindi was prepared (see Appendix A), but since many of the workers were illiterate, verbal consent was sought before most interviews. The workers were assured anonymity and pseudonyms have been used in this study. The interviews were audio-recorded and conducted by the researcher in Hindi, lasting anywhere between 3 and 15 minutes. One of the issues encountered was that the workers were frequently in a hurry to get to work or to go back home to their children. While a majority of the interviews were one-on-one, in a few cases, two workers were interviewed together as they were short of time. Further, to elicit honest responses, it was ensured that employers were not within earshot if interviews were conducted inside the household at which the workers were employed. Interviews were also conducted in outdoor areas where the workers usually gather to rest in between jobs.

The goal of the interviews was to gain a holistic view of live-out domestic workers' mobile phone use. The workers were asked about when they first acquired a mobile phone, their main motivation behind getting it, and their primary use of the device. They were also asked about which features of the mobile they most used, and how acquiring the device had impacted their work and their lives in general (see Appendix B for Interview Guide).

3.3 Coding and Data Analysis

The interviews were transcribed and translated into English by the researcher. The digital transcripts were analysed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). At the open coding stage (Corbin & Strauss, 2008), different categories were identified through manual coding. These were primarily based on the purposes for which the workers utilized the mobile (e.g., mothering, acquiring information about job opportunities, communicating changes in schedule to employers). During this process, memos were recorded alongside the data on a digital spreadsheet. These categories were repeatedly analysed and compared with each other as overarching themes such as restricted agency and the connection between the personal use of the mobile phone and work emerged.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Childcare: Remote Mothering, Quasi-Landlines and Relief

A majority of the live-out domestic workers interviewed were married and had children. Many of them indicated that their main motivation behind getting a mobile was to practice what Rakow and Navarro (1993) called remote mothering. They mostly owned cheap basic or feature phones with prepaid SIM cards and primarily used them to make short calls to check up on their children at home. For instance, Jaya, who worked a cleaner in four homes, revealed how she called at different times to make sure all her children had returned home from school: *“In the morning, the children leave for school at 7-7:30. All four of them go to school. Some children come back at 12:30, some at 1:00, some at 2:30. Accordingly, I call home.”*

It is important to note that none of the workers had landlines. Thus, when Jaya said that she called home, she was referring to calling on another mobile that remained inside her house at all times. This use of the mobile as a quasi-landline was a common practice, resembling Ureta’s (2008) observations in Chile, where low-income families often used the mobile like a family landline. Ling (2012) also observed this practice in remote Norwegian cottages early in the mobile diffusion process. This was mainly due to a lack of infrastructure for landline connectivity. Meanwhile, the workers who had older children could also call on their mobile to check up on them and their younger siblings. However, in cases where they did not have this option, or another mobile to use as a quasi-landline; they had to rely on calling on their neighbour’s mobile. They would ask their neighbour to check on the children and hand them the mobile so that they could talk to them. This is an

example of what Steenson and Donner (2009) termed “approximate calling” in their study of mobile phone sharing in Bangalore. This practice involves using a shared handset to receive calls. Steenson and Donner stated that for it to take place, the primary owner of the mobile is required to be physically near the intended target of the call and should be willing to hand his or her mobile to the target. In the case of this study, the neighbours received approximate calls from workers who needed to get in touch with their children. The neighbours shared their mobile with the children, helping them connect with their mothers.

In addition to describing how the mobile allowed them to call their children, the workers emphasized that simply being available to receive any calls from them was also crucial. Sakshi, who performed a variety of tasks in two households, asserted that this accessibility helped her convince her family to allow her to work: *“Sometimes they say that the children need you. I tell them that if the children have any problems or if they are not feeling well, they can call.”* Even the women whose schedule allowed them to return home from work before their children came back from school valued this accessibility as the school could now contact them in emergency situations. This emphasis on simply being accessible echoes Palen and Hughes’s (2007) concept of “tethering”, which focussed on the “potential for interaction” (p. 345). Describing this concept, Palen and Hughes suggested that it is not necessary that a call is made between parents and children or parents and caretakers for remote mothering to occur. It even “happens when the parent pervasively monitors the phone that hardly ever rings” (Palen & Hughes, 2007, p. 345).

Many of the workers admitted that they would feel very anxious about leaving their children at home were it not for this accessibility as well as the ability to call them at

any time. Damini, who worked as a cleaner in one home, revealed the reason for this anxiety:

Since I rely on others to take care of my children, I need the phone. How can you trust someone else? What if they leave my children on the railing and they fall down? That is why I feel that the phone is good for me.

Similarly, Gayatri, who worked a cleaner in three homes, expressed why she needed a mobile: *“I go to work, and my children are alone at home. These days you don’t know how people are. You can’t trust anyone. You can’t even trust your neighbour these days.”*

However, in the absence of any inexpensive childcare facilities, it was these neighbours that the workers had to rely on when they left their children at home and went out to work.

In her study of domestic workers in Delhi, Kaur (2006) also observed this dependence on neighbours. According to her, the slums these workers live in are organized in a such a way that homes are in adjoining spaces and doors are left unlocked. This allows neighbours to keep an eye on the children. However, as Damini and Gayatri’s comments illustrate, the workers did not necessarily trust this arrangement. Supervision from these neighbours was intermittent and the workers felt anxious about their children’s safety.

Staying in touch via the mobile helped to relieve this anxiety as they felt calmer in the knowledge that they were always just a call away from their children. Bhavna, who cleaned and washed dishes in six homes, expressed this sense of relief while describing how the mobile had benefitted her: *“You get to know if your children are fine. That is the biggest benefit. You feel relaxed when you know that your children are safe.”* In fact, many workers highlighted this feeling of relief while discussing their use of the mobile for remote mothering.

Meanwhile, some of the workers even admitted that they could only leave the house and work because they could perform these mothering duties via the mobile. For instance, Kanchan, who worked as a cook in two homes, stated that she did not think she could have worked without a mobile because her thoughts usually revolved around her “*children and domestic issues.*” Thus, she would feel too stressed to work if she could not stay in contact with her children. Many workers admitted that they would not have been able to take on work in too many households and would have to rush back home were it not for this ability to stay connected with their children. Jaya’s description of the difference the mobile had made to her daily life illustrated how her work schedule had now opened up due to this connectivity:

The difference is that before I wouldn’t know where my children are. When they were small, I would have to leave my work and go back home to check on them. I had to keep travelling between home and work. Since I’ve got the phone, I don’t have to go back home.

In some cases, remote mothering involved communication across much larger distances than what Jaya traversed between work and home. Some workers revealed that their children resided back in the village as they were being educated there. These women emphasized that they valued the mobile because it helped them stay connected with them despite the distance. This is similar to how foreign workers value the mobile phone because it allows them to perform transnational mothering (Chib et al., 2013; Madianou & Miller, 2011; Parreñas, 2005; Uy-Tioco, 2007). Further, the workers admitted to deriving great satisfaction from using the mobile to talk to many of the other family members they

had left behind in their village. Interestingly, they divulged that these family members also possessed mobile phones, indicating that the device has become pervasive in rural areas.

4.2 Instrumental Benefits: Reducing Unproductive Trips and Job-Seeking

Live-out domestic workers also used the mobile to communicate with employers, which helped to increase their productivity at work. Resembling what Jagun et al. (2008) discovered in their study of Nigerian cloth weavers, the workers stated that this communication had helped to cut down on unproductive trips. It had eliminated instances where they went to an employer's house only to discover that no one was at home, resulting in them having to wait outside or return. The workers asserted that this waiting around was tiresome and affected their daily schedule. Neha, who performed a variety of domestic chores in five homes, reflected on how the mobile had solved this issue:

I would have to keep waiting for my employers. I would not know when they will reach home. Now, they can call and inform me. We know about each other's timings. Now I know what time I need to go to an employer's house.

This communication helped the workers microcoordinate (Ling & Yttri, 1999) and interlace (Ling & Donner, 2009) their activities as they adjusted their schedule on the move. Some of them even admitted that the time they saved because of this allowed them to take on additional work.

The mobile also aided them in finding this additional work. Many of them revealed that live-out domestic workers operating in the same area called one other to share information about job openings. They referred to other workers as friends and stated that

they tried to help each other out. Varsha, who swept, mopped, and washed dishes in four houses, described this practice:

If I am offered some new work, but it clashes with the work I already have, and I don't have the time to take it up. Then, I will tell someone who has the time that I know of some work that you can take up.

This is analogous to Townsend's (2000) observations in Boston. He discovered that the mobile helped taxi drivers form temporary syndicates as they could call and inform each other about where to get more customers. Ling, et al. (2015) observed a similar practice amongst trishaw riders in Myanmar, albeit to a lesser degree.

However, it is important to note that live-out domestic workers did not claim that this practice was engendered by the adoption of the mobile phone. Rather, they stated that they had always relied on this network of friends to tell them about new opportunities. Some women even said that they could inform each other about this in person as they often crossed paths while travelling from one home to another for work. Nevertheless, a majority of the workers admitted that they primarily used the mobile for this exchange of information as it was much more convenient. Varsha's comments elucidated this:

If I had to physically go to them then it would take me time. That is why I just call and tell them about any work that is available. I can't leave work and go to tell them. I can call to inform them that there is an opening at a certain house, and they should go and talk to the employer. The phone makes it very convenient.

This resembles Wallis's (2011) observations in her study of female rural migrants in China. She discovered that these migrants had always relied on their social networks to find new jobs, but using the mobile helped them utilize these networks more efficiently.

In addition to this network of friends, some live-out domestic workers also relied on their existing employers to help them get additional work. Employers would pass on the workers' mobile number to people looking to hire a domestic worker. Some of the workers also gave out their number directly to potential employers. However, others displayed a sense of discomfort when asked about giving people their mobile number for networking purposes. They found it necessary to qualify their answers with statements like *"I don't give my number to people easily"* and *"It is not very good to give your phone number to people."* These statements were an attempt from the workers to distinguish themselves from the women that Damini alluded to while describing the harmful effects of the mobile phone: *"Women use it to contact someone else and give some other man their phone number. These kinds of incidents keep occurring. For many, the phone has become a necessity, but for many, it has also become a problem."* As the next section illustrates, this perception can often result in women having to forego access to mobile phones.

4.3 Family Ties: Distrust and Safety

Resonant with the literature detailed in this study, some women revealed that their husbands suspected that they would use the mobile to conduct extra-marital affairs. In these cases, the workers chose not to keep a personal mobile. Some of these women had owned one previously, but decided to relinquish the device because of the distrust it engendered. Others claimed that they were reluctant to get one because they could foresee

the issues it would cause. Aarti, whose work included washing dishes and clothes, described this reluctance:

It would be too much of a problem at home. If I got a call from an unknown number, then my husband would ask questions. There would be fights at home because of the phone. That is why I don't have a mobile.

These workers were aware that owning a mobile could benefit them, but feared the consequences of the distrust it would cause. If they needed to communicate with someone, they used their husband's or older children's mobile. However, the women only had access to the device if they were in the same place as them, while the husband or child could take it with them wherever they went. This was also observed in cases where women used a shared mobile because they could not afford a personal handset or lacked the technical skills required to use one without any help.

Meanwhile, workers who did not face these issues with their husband and owned a personal mobile stressed the importance of using it to communicate with him and other family members. They stated that they valued this communication because it ensured that their family was not anxious about their safety. Ekta, who worked as a cleaner in one home, alluded to this while describing why she thought the mobile had become a necessity for her: *"If I get late at work then my family starts worrying about me. That is why it is necessary to keep a mobile."* In fact, many workers asserted the importance of using the mobile phone for safety purposes. They stated that they felt secure in the knowledge that they could contact their family if they faced any emergency situations and threats to their safety. Many of them believed that every woman should possess a mobile because of this

reason, especially in a city like Delhi. Pallavi, who worked as nanny in two homes, elucidated this: *“You see what happens with women in Delhi and even elsewhere. They need a phone. If something happens and you face any problem, then at least you can call someone.”*

This emphasis on safety and communication with family was even more prominent in the case of the few young unmarried workers interviewed. This was reflected in 24-year-old Kriti’s description of how the mobile had benefitted her:

I think the main benefit is that wherever you are, you can call someone and tell them about your whereabouts. So, they don’t need to feel tense and worry about you. You can inform them about when you will return home.

Kriti, who worked as a cook, added that it was also important for her to be accessible to receive calls because her parents *“feel less tense as they can ask where their child is.”* Similarly, 18-year-old Faizana, who swept, mopped, and washed dishes in four homes, said: *“Sometimes I get late and my mother gets very tense. That is why it is vital for me to keep a phone.”* These young workers believed that they primarily required a mobile to remain connected with their parents as they needed to inform them about their schedule and what time they would return home. This helped to dispel their parents’ worries about their safety.

4.4 The Employer-Employee Dynamic: Expectations and Trust

The importance of using the mobile to keep others informed about their schedule was a theme that also emerged when the workers described their communication with employers. The workers revealed that they were expected to use the mobile to inform their

employers if there was any change to the pre-decided schedule, especially if they were going to be absent. Sushma, who cleaned and cooked in nine houses, described why this communication was important: *“I can inform my employers if I am getting late. If I am unwell, then I can tell them that I will not come for work. In this way, they are also not hassled.”* The workers stated that they were also expected to be available to receive any calls from their employers in case there was a change in timings from their end. As mentioned before, this benefitted the workers as it helped to reduce the number of unproductive trips they made. The workers stressed that they needed to fulfil these expectations to ensure that their employers did not face any problems and remained satisfied with their work. Further, this could also help them avoid instances wherein a lack of communication causes distrust to emerge in their relationship with an employer.

Damini revealed how this could occur:

Earlier, if I didn't come in for work, then my employer would think that I took a holiday on purpose. Even if I was unwell, she would think that I took a holiday on purpose. With the mobile, she gets to know that I am actually unwell, and that is the reason I have not come for work.

Conversely, workers who were unable to fulfil these expectations stated that their employers were dissatisfied and were pressuring them to get a mobile. For instance, Heena, who worked as a cleaner in four homes, described the problems she had been facing with her employers after losing her mobile: *“My employers complain to me. They ask me why I don't have a phone. They say that everyone in the world has a phone now.”* In fact, being inaccessible due to not possessing a mobile could even affect the workers' chances of acquiring a new job. A few workers revealed that employers were now

reluctant to hire someone who did not have a personal mobile. Gauri, who washed dishes and clothes in three homes, described this phenomenon:

As soon as you walk into a house, the employer asks you for your number. If you don't have a mobile, then you will have to say no to them. They don't hire you quickly if you don't have a phone.

In some cases, employers even resolved this issue by giving workers who did not have their own mobile an old handset to use.

Meanwhile, a few workers claimed that these expectations did not necessarily apply to everyone. These women had worked in the same homes for many years, and some of them did not possess a personal mobile. Kalpana, who washed clothes and cooked in three homes, did not have her own mobile because she feared that her husband would suspect her of using it to have an affair. On being asked if this caused her any issues with her employers, she said: *"There is no such problem. I have been working for them for so many years. They trust me completely."* Thus, she felt that the trust she had gained over the years exempted her from having to fulfil her employers' expectation of communication via the mobile phone. These long-serving workers also added that they did not need a mobile to stay informed about new opportunities because they were satisfied with their well-established daily schedule of working in the same homes for a few hours.

4.5 Beyond Calling: Technical Know-How and Skill-Based Professions

So far, this study has described how the workers used the mobile phone to make and receive calls for various reasons. Beyond this, some workers utilized the device to listen to music. While some used the FM radio function, others got the latest songs loaded

onto their memory cards at the local “mobile shop”. However, other than a few exceptions, this was the extent of the workers’ mobile phone usage. The device was rarely used for text messaging due to their low literacy skills. Further, many workers stated that their lack of education and technical competency precluded them from accessing mobile internet services.

The aforementioned exceptions were some of the younger workers. Unlike the other workers, who typically owned basic or feature phones, these young women possessed cheap smartphones. They knew how to access the internet and used messaging services like WhatsApp to chat with family, friends, and in some cases, even employers. Further, some of them also revealed how smartphones were aiding them in learning new skills. For example, 22-year-old Geetanjali worked as a cook in one house. However, she was passionate about stitching and embroidery, and attended classes to enhance her skills in this area. She stated that she eventually wanted to leave domestic service to earn a living from following her passion. She provided an example of how the smartphone aided her in learning the skills required to make this possible:

I use YouTube if there is a design that I cannot understand despite my teacher explaining it to me. I have to go home and practice. If I can't understand it, I use the voice command function to search for it on YouTube. I can see it and then practice.

Similarly, 22-year-old Mala performed a variety of household chores, but was also enrolled in a course to become a beautician. She described how she was planning to acquire a smartphone to click pictures and record videos of the hairstyling techniques

taught in her course so that she could refer to these recordings and images while practicing at home. These young workers viewed the smartphone as a tool that could aid them in learning new skills. Acquiring these skills could enable them to leave domestic work and take up another profession. However, none of the other workers discussed pursuing alternative vocations and seemed to have accepted that they had no choice but to continue working in domestic service. They stated that they did not need to use the phone beyond basic voice calls as this served their primary purpose of contact with their children as well as communication with other family members and employers.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

5.1 Childcare and the Alleviation of Stress

Many workers clearly emphasized that their daily life revolves around taking care of their children and handling other domestic matters. Thus, it is no surprise that their use of the mobile is primarily directed at managing these responsibilities. As Rakow and Navarro (1993) argued, this reinforces the traditional gendered division of household labour. By asserting that they principally use the mobile to check up on their children and manage the household, live-out domestic workers imply that they have no choice but to perform these duties even when they are at work. This illustrates Narayan's (2005) description of adaptive preferences as the workers' "circumstances and cultural upbringing" influence them to such a degree that they internalize the belief that they simply have to take complete responsibility for these duties. Anderson and Shrum (2007) described how this is the case for many women in India:

Western images of gender roles often value equal participation regardless of the underlying division of labor. This is uncommon in the Indian context, where women shoulder the majority of household and child rearing responsibilities without envisioning an alternative (p. 242).

Within this cultural context, the workers' socio-economic conditions add to the stress they experience while juggling domestic and work-related responsibilities. They cannot afford institutional childcare arrangements and many of them are forced to rely on irregular supervision from neighbours when they leave their children at home. They also recognize

that the slum areas they reside in are unsafe and therefore remain constantly worried about their children when they leave them at home.

The mobile enables them to deal with this stress. The ability to call and be accessible to their children contributes to improving the workers' psychological well-being as it diminishes some of the anxiety they experience when they leave them. Being tethered to their children via the mobile enables the workers to feel comfortable staying outside the house for a longer time. Thus, they acquire the freedom to take on the amount of work they desire. They gain the ability to work in more households and generate additional income while maintaining a "connected presence" (Licoppe, 2004) in their children's lives.

This is illustrative of restricted agency. Within the context of their socio-economic issues (i.e., their inability to afford institutional childcare arrangements and their unsafe living conditions), and the prevalence of patriarchal cultural values associated with childcare, this communication enables the workers to experience a sense of autonomy in their professional lives. Further, it also improves their mental health as the stress engendered by the issues they face is diminished. However, the mobile only enables them to negotiate restricted agency rather than complete freedom of choice. The device does not eliminate many of the barriers that limit them. While it helps them carry out domestic service more efficiently, other than for a few young workers, it does not provide them with the opportunity of switching to a higher-paying profession. As noted before, rather than bringing about gender equality, it reinforces the belief that childcare is a woman's responsibility. However, it is within these constraints that the workers utilize the mobile to make the best out of the limited options available to them.

This study also demonstrates that even when the use of the mobile reinforces gender inequalities, it can engender restricted agency. This is similar to what Nguyen et al. (2016) discovered in Singapore. Their interviewees utilized the mobile to aid them in enacting idealized versions of femininity, motherhood, and wifedom, which reinforced traditional gender roles. However, this enabled them to develop a desirable identity to counter the discrimination they encountered as Vietnamese migrant women, illustrating restricted agency. While Nguyen et al. described this as a conscious strategy, live-out domestic workers' use of the mobile for mothering is an unconscious choice that is influenced by internalized patriarchal beliefs. Regardless of this distinction, these instances demonstrate that simply concluding that women's mobile phone use reinforces inequalities can be simplistic. As Nguyen et al. argued, within certain socio-cultural contexts, mobile phone use associated with inequalities may paradoxically be intertwined with women's agency. This study discovered that socio-economic factors can also play a role in engendering such a context. Issues associated with the workers' poverty and a strong belief in patriarchal socio-cultural norms combined to create a situation wherein the use of the mobile reinforced gender inequalities and facilitated restricted agency at the same time.

Recognizing the influence of these socio-economic factors also helps to explain why the workers associate their use of the mobile to manage domestic responsibilities with a sense of relief, while the subjects of Chesley's (2005) study experienced dissatisfaction and distress when they utilized the device for the same purpose. The American women who took part in Chesley's study lived in a developed nation. It is safe to assume that they did not have to worry as much about their living conditions as the

subjects of this study. Unlike live-out domestic workers, they could have possibly even hired babysitters to help them with childcare while they worked. Thus, the workers' circumstances and experiences are quite different as they occupy the lower rung of the socio-economic ladder in a developing country. This difference in socio-economic conditions coupled with differing cultural values results in the workers associating their use of the mobile to manage domestic responsibilities with relief rather than stress. These considerations underscore why it is important for researchers to consider how socio-cultural and socio-economic conditions influence women's mobile phone use.

5.2 Dutiful Communication and Distrust

Women hold multiple identities in addition to being mothers and often negotiate these through their use of ICTs (Chib et al., 2013). Thus, the workers' use of the mobile phone extends beyond mothering and is also affected by their role as wives and daughters. Many of them emphasized that it was important for them to use the device to communicate with their husband, and in the case of the younger workers, their parents. This was especially vital if there was a threat to their safety. Their comments imply that this communication is borne out of a sense of duty towards their family as they need to assuage their husband's or parents' anxiety about their safety by informing them about their whereabouts. Campbell (2006) discovered that teenage girls in Canada had similarly internalized the idea that they faced a threat to their safety whenever they exited their homes. Acknowledging this danger and consequently being available to parents via the mobile was associated "with being a good and respectful daughter" (Campbell, 2006, p. 209). Likewise, the workers' emphasis on staying connected with their husband or parents may represent their desire to play the role of a good and respectful wife, or for the younger

workers, a good daughter. This hints at the underlying influence of power differences behind this communication. Further, Rakow and Navarro (1993) argued that the perception that women need the mobile to ensure their own safety reproduces existing gender inequalities. They stated that it strengthens the idea that women are vulnerable and need protection, especially from men.

However, it is also important to recognize the local context here. The threat to women's safety is a genuine concern in Delhi. Incidents of rape have made national and international news in the past few years, and statistics reveal that it remains one of the most unsafe cities for women in India (Alavi, 2017). Cumiskey and Brewster (2012) argued that the potential to connect with loved ones when faced with danger in an unfamiliar space provides women with a sense of comfort and assurance. This was certainly the case for many of the workers. Further, some researchers have argued that women's use of the mobile to connect with family and friends in these circumstances can be empowering as it results in the "extension of their spatial life spheres" (Kinnunen et al., 2011, p. 1074). Therefore, in analysing the workers' communication practices, there is evidence of some tension between them gaining the confidence to occupy public spaces in a city where women's safety is a genuine concern, and the need to fulfil familial obligations.

This indicates that the agency enacted by the workers in exiting the domestic sphere exists within the boundaries of prevailing gendered power dynamics. The freedom they gain with respect to their mobility is somewhat conditional as they are also expected to keep family members informed about their whereabouts. The workers' acquiescence to these requirements, however, does not seem to represent a strategic choice in the form of a

patriarchal bargain. Rather, it is strongly influenced by the local context. As Masika and Bailur (2015) discovered, rather than strategic decisions, women often negotiate agency through conscious and unconscious quotidian choices “that are impinged upon by several contextual factors both presenting and restricting possibilities” (p. 61).

Meanwhile, a lack of power is much more explicit in cases where workers choose not to keep a personal mobile because of the distrust it can engender in their marriage. Here, their choice can be viewed as an adaptive preference. As Khader (2011) argued, these preferences may be in the form of trade-offs. Faced with limited options, the workers choose to give up any benefits they might have derived from the mobile in exchange for sustaining their marriage and maintaining peace at home. In Uganda, Masika and Bailur (2015) similarly observed that some women eschewed taking any business-related calls on their mobile when they were at home to avoid being confronted by their husbands, who suspected that these calls were from men they were having an affair with.

5.3 The Trust-Power Concurrence

Trust and power are themes that emerge even more prominently when the workers’ communication with their employers is viewed. The fact that employers now expect that any worker they hire will possess a mobile illustrates Ling’s (2012) assertion that the device “has become taken for granted” (p. xi). It also demonstrates the power employers hold as they exert pressure on workers without a mobile to get one. Possessing a mobile also makes the workers more accountable to the employers. The workers’ comments indicate that fulfilling their employers’ expectations of calling and informing them about

any change in schedule is vital. Like their description of communication with family members, a sense of duty is apparent here.

However, this communication can also help to engender trust with employers. By keeping them informed about their schedule and remaining accessible to them via the mobile, the workers reduce any scope for confusion or miscommunication. Indeed, before getting a mobile, a lack of communication meant that workers who needed to change their schedule risked causing distrust to emerge in their relationship with employers. The employers would be dissatisfied if they had to keep waiting for the workers without any information on how the pre-decided schedule had changed. The mobile allows the workers to flexibly adjust their schedule without any risk of this negative impact as employers are kept abreast of any changes. Further, the employers themselves can call and inform the workers about any change in schedule from their end, reducing the risk of unproductive travel.

Thus, there is a tension between the autonomy the workers gain with respect to their schedule and the power that employers exert. Giddens (1979) argued that there is a mutual dependency in any power relation, and both actors have some level of autonomy, even if the balance of power is unequal. In the context of this study, employers and workers are dependent on each other, with employers holding most of the power. The mobile enhances the workers' agency to a certain degree as it enables them to have more control over their own schedule. However, this agency is situated within existing power dynamics that remain unchanged and are perhaps even reinforced to a certain degree. While Giddens's conceptualization of power and agency is not gender-specific, utilizing it helps this study gain a better understanding of power relations that are also influenced by

class differences and employers' positional power. Further, it is also important to consider that the workers do not have the security of formal contracts with their employers. Thus, a lack of trust in the employer-employee relationship may result in a sudden loss of work, which can have a huge impact on their already precarious financial situation. Within this context, it is vital for the workers to maintain trust in this relationship, even if it involves submitting to employers' power.

This resembles Ling et al.'s (2015) analysis of Burmese trishaw riders' relationship with their clients. They discovered that the mobile allowed trishaw riders to build trust with their regular clients, but it also led to a situation where the riders were increasingly accountable to them. Like live-out domestic workers, the trishaw riders did not have the security of a contract with their clients. Future research may focus on mobile phone use among other workers in the informal sector to explore whether there is further evidence of this concurrence of trust and power.

Meanwhile, examining the case of some of the long-serving workers reveals the other side of this trust-power concurrence. Their comments indicate that when there is already a high level of trust in the employer-employee relationship, it may diminish the requirement for employees to remain available to their employers via the mobile. Thus, in these situations, employees may not be required to possess a mobile for work, eliminating an avenue for employers to exert their power over them. However, it is difficult to ascertain to what extent these workers' diminished need for communication is also influenced by the routinized nature of their job. As they have been working in the same homes for some time, their schedule is well-rehearsed, minimizing the need for them to communicate much with employers. Further, while these workers may get by because they

have strong relationships with employers and a well-established daily routine, most of the other workers' comments indicate that it is now difficult to secure work and establish oneself in this profession without a mobile.

5.4 The Personal and the Productive

One of the underlying themes of the workers' comments was that in addition to this communication with employers, it is their use of the mobile to stay connected with their children that helps them boost their productivity and enables them to take on work in additional homes. The mobile phone's role in enhancing productivity is usually examined by focussing on areas such as its use for communication with customers and the sharing of business-related information via the device. As noted before, live-out domestic workers do use the mobile for instrumental work-related purposes as their communication with employers enables them to efficiently microcoordinate their schedule and cut down on unproductive trips. However, for many workers, the use of the mobile to contact personal connections is also crucial for work as it allows them to stay away from home and generate income for their family. The workers' revelations indicate that in societies where the gendered division of household labour is prevalent, the fact that the mobile allows women to manage these responsibilities from a distance can play a crucial role in enabling them to work. Further, it has frequently been observed that women primarily use the mobile to maintain personal connections and use it less frequently for instrumental work-related reasons, especially compared to men (Castells, Fernandez-Ardevol, Qiu, & Sey, 2009; Huyer, Hafkin, Ertl, & Dryburgh, 2006; Jouhki, 2013; Murphy & Priebe, 2011; Wajcman, Bittman, & Brown, 2008). This study demonstrates that researchers must be

cognizant of the fact that this personal use of the mobile may also indirectly impact a woman's ability to carry out her work.

The workers' comments reveal that while these personal calls may indirectly enable them to carry out their jobs, they differentiate between calls made for work-related purposes and calls made for personal or social reasons. However, evidence of the overlapping of these spheres is reflected in their use of the mobile for job-seeking. To find out about new jobs, the workers talk to a network of friends involved in the same profession. The same conversation may involve friendly chat as well as a discussion about job opportunities, demonstrating the blurring of their lives and livelihoods (Donner, 2009). Thus, there is evidence of this blurring in some instances, but there is also a clear separation between the two spheres. This echoes Chib and Aricat's (2012) findings in their study of migrant workers in Singapore. They observed that the mobile did blur the migrant workers' lives and livelihoods to a certain extent. However, in particular circumstances, the migrants also clearly distinguished between their personal and professional lives in relation to their use of the mobile phone.

Further, live-out domestic workers' use of the mobile phone to contact friends about new job opportunities resembles the use of the device among workers engaged in providing transportation services. As noted before, these workers often utilize the mobile to form temporary syndicates and alert each other about where new customers can be found (Ling et al., 2015; Townsend, 2000). The workers in this study admit that the mobile phone did not cause this practice to emerge, but they stress that it has certainly made it easier for them to participate in it. Thus, future research may observe workers in other service professions and determine whether this use of the mobile to pass on

information about potential opportunities to one another is a recurring phenomenon. In fact, research on mobile phone use among workers who provide services remains limited compared to the vast body of literature examining how the device impacts micro and small entrepreneurs engaged in selling different types of goods.

5.5 Mobile Phone Sharing and the Generation Gap

Not every woman interviewed was able to reap these work-related benefits. While examining the reasons behind women's limited access to technology was not the focus of this study, it is important to note that some workers did not have access to a personal mobile due to factors such as financial shortcomings, a lack of technical knowhow, and as mentioned before in this chapter, the distrust the device may cause in their marriage.

Women's limited access to ICTs is often blamed on inequalities associated with employment, education, and income (Huyer et al., 2006; Huyer & Sikoska, 2003; Hilbert, 2011). However, this study discovered that a perception that links women's mobile phone use with them engaging in immoral activities such as extra-marital affairs may also be a contributing factor. This perception may be viewed as a reflection of the moral panic engendered by the mobile in some sections of Indian society (see Doron & Jeffrey, 2013). Further, while most of these workers did have some form of shared access to a mobile at home, they were not the primary owners of the handset. Thus, they could not take it with them when they left home. This echoes past research that has observed that women often get only limited access to the mobile when it is shared within the household, reflecting the impact of gender hierarchies on mobile phone sharing practices (Jouhki, 2013; MacPherson & Chamberlain, 2013; Steenson & Donner, 2009).

Mobile phone sharing was also observed in cases where women did have access to a personal mobile. The workers' use of an extra handset as a shared quasi-landline at home is an example of a situation where the mobile is tied to a place rather than a person (Steenson & Donner, 2009), contravening its basic affordance of providing for individual addressability (Ling & Donner, 2009). Meanwhile, some workers' system of connecting with their children by contacting a neighbour's mobile represents a form of communal mobile phone sharing. These kinds of sharing arrangements are often viewed as "modes of appropriation of mobile use" (de Souza e Silva, Sutko, Salis, & de Souza e Silva, 2011, p. 413). Faced with a lack of resources, individuals and communities in the developing world utilize the mobile in non-traditional ways to meet their needs, which in the case of live-out domestic workers, primarily involved checking up on their children.

Lastly, workers who did possess a personal mobile used it in a fairly basic manner. Extant research has found that this is often the case for women (GSMA, 2015; Sreekumar, 2011). Chipchase (2008) argued that once textually nonliterate users learn how to make and receive calls to communicate with their close ties, it serves their main purpose for getting a mobile. After this, they are not motivated to learn how to use more advanced features afforded by the device. This was the case for many of the workers, who were also limited by owning basic or feature phones. However, some of the younger workers did possess the technical skills required to realize the full potential of the smartphones they owned, including the use of mobile internet services. In recent years, a few companies have launched mobile applications to help employers find domestic workers (Kadakia, 2016). These companies aim to make the domestic service sector more professional and organized. However, none of the workers interviewed in this study worked with any such

organization. As these applications become more popular, the younger smartphone-wielding workers will perhaps be better placed to provide their services in this manner.

CHAPTER 6: LIMITATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study is not without its limitations. It focusses on a specific group of marginalized women in Delhi, who face unique challenges due to their living conditions as well as the unorganized nature of their profession. Thus, its findings are not necessarily generalizable for other women, who may have different experiences based on their socio-cultural environment and line of work. As noted before, one of the major difficulties faced during the data gathering process was that the workers were reluctant to give up much time for longer in-depth interviews. Thus, one of the main limitations of this study is that not every worker was able to provide detailed answers to the questions asked of them. Nevertheless, in these situations, the best possible attempt was made to get the workers' comments on all the different themes explored in this study.

Indeed, this study explored various themes while examining the role of the mobile phone in the lives of live-out domestic workers in Delhi. It found that the workers primarily value the device for providing them the ability to stay connected with their children even while at work, extending the idea of home “beyond the physical house” (Palen & Hughes, 2007, p. 339). In the absence of landlines, the children are accessible to them via shared mobile phones. Viewing agency from a situated perspective enabled this study to discover that while this communication reinforces the association between women and domesticity, it also helps the workers negotiate restricted agency within the context of the limitations they face due to socio-cultural and socio-economic factors. It minimizes the impact of these limitations on their work, providing them more autonomy to carry out their job and alleviating the stress they experience when they leave their children alone at home. Similarly, the workers' communication with other family

members hints at the influence of power, but it also ensures that they gain a sense of independence as they feel more secure occupying public spaces in a city riddled with women's safety issues. As Nguyen et al. (2016) argued, viewing agency from this contextualized perspective moves research beyond simply equating development with the western idea of gender equality and can reveal instances where technology use traditionally associated with gender inequality facilitates agency. While the workers' choices in these situations are not necessarily strategic, they represent an attempt to make the best out of the limited options available to them.

However, some workers' options were limited to such a degree that they were unable to possess a personal mobile. It was found that in addition to financial and technical shortcomings, a fear that owning the device will cause their husband to suspect them of engaging in an extra-marital affair can also cause this lack of access. In these situations, marital stability and harmony at home are prioritized over mobile phone ownership. This emphasizes the fact that workers are only able to utilize the device to negotiate restricted agency and secure interests that are important to them within the constraints they face as unequal power dynamics remain intact. If the mobile phone threatens to disturb this prevailing order, it is not worth possessing.

The immutability of existing power relations is also illustrated in the workers' comments about their communication with employers. It was found that employers assert their power and pressure them to get a mobile as they now expect to be called and informed about any change in schedule. However, fulfilling these expectations benefits the workers as they can flexibly adjust their schedule without the fear of souring their relationship with employers since they are kept in the loop. Thus, this communication

helps to build trust in the employer-employee relationship even as it demonstrates the power employers hold. In keeping with the overarching theme of the study, the mobile phone allows the workers to have more control over their circumstances without disturbing the balance of power.

While this instrumental use of the mobile to contact employers helps the workers efficiently coordinate their work schedule and save time and effort, many of them also attribute their productivity and ability to generate income to the fact that they can remain in contact with their children. Further, they rely on calls from friends to get information about any new work that is available. Therefore, the personal use of the mobile to connect with family and friends can have a major impact on an individual's job or business. Research examining how mobile phones engender economic development should pay heed to this use of the device alongside traditional instrumental business-related uses.

This developmental literature has also emphasized the potential of mobile internet services (Donner, 2009). Further, research eulogizing the empowering potential of ICTs has stressed that women can use technology to acquire knowledge and skills (e.g. Huyer & Mitter, 2003; Nath, 2001). In the case of live-out domestic workers, other than some exceptions, evidence of this was scarce. These exceptions were some young workers, but they were few in number. It is difficult to tell whether more of this new generation of workers will view the mobile as a tool that aids them in acquiring new skills via the internet, enabling them to expand their options beyond domestic service. One can even speculate that these workers may be best placed to adapt to a possible "uberization" of the domestic service sector itself, wherein jobs are brokered through organizations using mobile applications.

Nevertheless, for most other workers, mobile phone use was mainly limited to making and receiving calls on their basic or feature phones. However, this should not obscure the fact that this unremarkable use of the device to gain “affordable, basic, person-to-person connectivity” (Donner, 2008b, p. 32) is invaluable to them as it eases their worries about their children at home, enhances their productivity at work, and helps them feel more secure in public spaces. These benefits are a far cry from empowerment and gender equality, but in the context of the hardships faced by these marginalized women, they represent an improvement to their lives. The mobile phone is indeed “not necessarily a revolutionary tool” (Ling & Horst, 2011, p. 363) as these benefits are only acquired within existing power structures that limit the women. However, the device has become a fundamental part of their domestic and professional lives, even blurring the boundaries between the two in some cases. As Usha, who worked as a cook in eight homes, put it: “*It has become a necessity. Just like food is necessary, the phone is also necessary.*”

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Appendix A: Informed Consent Form

Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information

INFORMED CONSENT

इस एग्रीमेंट प्रपत्र को सावधानी पूर्वक पढ़ें। इस अध्ययन में भाग लेने के लिए आपकी उम्र 18 साल या उससे अधिक होनी चाहिए

प्रोजेक्ट का टाइटल: भारत में काम आय वाले पार्ट टाइम महिला मजदूरों के बीच मोबाइल फ़ोन का इस्तेमाल

इस प्रोजेक्ट का उद्देश्य: भारत में काम आय वाली पार्ट टाइम महिला मजदूरों के बीच मोबाइल फ़ोन के इस्तेमाल के बारे में खोज बीन करनी है। इस रिसर्च में उन मजदूर के काम और उसके पारिवारिक जीवन के ऊपर मोबाइल फ़ोन के इस्तेमाल का कितना प्रभाव है इसे रेखांकित किया जाएगा इसमें साफ सफाई, वर्तन धोने वाली, ब्यूटिशियन और अन्य घरेलू काम करने वाली कम आय के भारतीय महिलाओं का इंटरव्यू लिया जाएगा। क्योंकि ये मजदूर घर घर जाकर काम करते हैं इसमें मोबाइल फ़ोन अपने क्लाइंट्स के काम को सही वक़्त पर करने और नए नए क्लाइंट्स हासिल करने में सहायता करती है। इस रिसर्च में इस बात का भी पता लगाया जाएगा कि क्या मोबाइल फ़ोन इन महिलाओं को घर से बाहर निकलकर बेहतर काम करने और अपनी रोज़ी रोटी कमाने में कितना मददगार साबित होता है। इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य यह भी है कि मोबाइल फ़ोन इन मजदूरों को दूर देश के अपने परिवार से जुड़े रहने और उनके बारे में सही जानकारी रखने में कितनी सहायता करता है और एक मनोरंजन उपकरण के तौर पर यह उन्हें कितना लाभ पहुँचाता है यह रिसर्च Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University के प्रोफेसर Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University के मार्गदर्शन में किया जा रहा है।

भागीदारी की योग्यता : इस स्टडी में भाग लेने के लिए आपकी उम्र काम से काम 18 वर्ष होनी चाहिए। आप महिला हैं और दिल्ली में विभिन्न घरों में पार्ट टाइम घरेलू काम करती हैं

आप इस रिसर्च प्रोजेक्ट में क्या करेंगी : आप रिसर्च में व्यक्तिगत रूप से एक एक कर भाग लेगी और कभी कभी आपको एक समूह में भी भाग लेना पड़ सकता है।

आपको अपना मोबाइल फ़ोन नंबर बताता होगा। मोबाइल फ़ोन आपके काम और आपके व्यक्तिगत जीवन को कितना प्रभावित करता है इसके बारे में आपसे कुछ प्रश्न पूछे जाएंगे

जोखिम : इस रिसर्च में भाग लेने में कोई संभावित जोखिम नहीं है

भुगतान : इस रिसर्च में भाग लेने के लिए आपको किसी प्रकार का कोई भुगतान नहीं किया जाएगा।

रिसर्च में स्वेच्छा से भाग लेने से मना करना: इस रिसर्च में भाग लेना या न लेना पूरी तरह आपकी मर्जी के ऊपर निर्भर है और आप किसी भी वक़्त बिना किसी दंड या पेनाल्टी के रिसर्च में अपनी भागेदारी ख़त्म कर सकती हैं। हालांकि, हमारे लिए यह काफी महत्वपूर्ण है कि आप अधिक से अधिक सवालों का जवाब दें। हालांकि आप कुछ प्रश्नों के उत्तर नहीं भी दे सकती है। आप कारवाही अफसर को सूचित कर किसी भी वक़्त इस रिसर्च से बहार आ सकती है। अगर आप इस रिसर्च में भाग नहीं लेना चाहती तो आपसे कोई सवाल नहीं पुछा जाएगा। इस रिसर्च में भाग या भाग लेने से मना करने के आपके निर्णय से Nanyang Technological University से आपके संबंधों पर कोई असर नहीं पड़ेगा।

गोपनीयता: इस रिसर्च में आपकी भागेदारी गोपनीय रहेगी, आपकी पहचान इस रिसर्च के डाटा के साथ नहीं जुड़ी होगी। आप अपनी गोपनीयता को सुरक्षित रखने के लिए कोई भी काल्पनिक नाम रख सकती है। लेकिन ये नाम आपको नाम कार्ड में लिखना होगा। इस रिसर्च से जुड़ी सूचनाएं और सहमति फॉर्म को लंबे समय तक सुरक्षित रखा जाएगा, आपके द्वारा दी गयी सूचना और आपके जवाब आपके वास्तविक पहचान से नहीं जोड़ी जायेगी। इस रिसर्च के परिणाम को या तो किसी कांफ्रेंस में प्रस्तुत किया जाएगा या प्रिंट या ऑनलाइन प्रकाशित किया जायेगा.

अन्य जानकारीया: इस रिसर्च से जुड़ी आपकी भागेदारी से सम्बंधित जानकारी या आपके प्रश्न और अधिकार के लिए आप RILI@ntu.edu.sg या pranav010@e.ntu.edu.sg ईमेल या यहां संपर्क करें : **Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University**

इस रिसर्च में आपके अधिकार से जुड़ी सूचना के लिए आप यहां सम्पर्क करें: आप **Research Integrity Point of Contact** को WKWSCIRB@ntu.edu.sg ईमेल करें या (+65) 6792 7526 इस नंबर पर कॉल करें>

एग्रीमेंट

इस रिसर्च का उद्देश्य और प्रकृति का वर्णन प्रयाप्त तरीके से किया गया है और इस रिसर्च में आपकी भागेदारी के लिए सहमति देती हूँ। मुझे यह अच्छी तरह से ज्ञात है कि मैं इस रिसर्च प्रोजेक्ट को बिना दंड या भुगतान किये कभी भी छोड़ सकती हूँ.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Interview Guide

When did you first get a mobile phone?

What was your primary motivation behind getting a phone? Was it for work or to stay in touch with family?

Did you get the phone on the insistence of someone else (a family member or employer)?

Who is responsible for paying for your mobile bill/recharge?

Did you start your work before getting a mobile phone?

How has the mobile phone impacted your work?

As your work involves going from one location to another, has the mobile phone aided you in coordination? If yes, then how?

Has the mobile reduced the number of unproductive trips to clients' houses? If so, do you think it has allowed you to go to more homes?

How do you get to know of new job opportunities?

What role does the mobile play in finding out about new job opportunities?

Do you use the mobile to contact other people who do similar jobs?

When you give your mobile phone number to prospective clients, do you write it down on paper/recite it/give a missed call/give them a visiting card?

Who among your family do you contact the most using your mobile phone?

To those who have children, when you contact them, is it on a landline or have you provided them with mobile phones?

Does the mobile phone make you feel more secure in leaving your children at home while you are out working?

If there is a problem at home with your children, do you use the mobile phone to deal with it? If so, how do you use it?

Do your children often call you on your mobile while you are working?

Does your husband often call you on your mobile while you are working?

Do you ever feel that calls from your husband/children hinder your work?

Do you use the mobile to call your family in the village? If so, how often?

For those who are married, do you think your husband would allow you to work if you didn't have a mobile phone?

For those who are unmarried, do you think your family would allow you to work if you didn't have a mobile phone?

Do you think that your family in the village feels more secure because you are accessible to them via the mobile phone?

Does your family in the village also use a mobile or do they still use landlines?

Other than staying in touch with family and employers, how do you use the mobile phone?

What forms of entertainment do you access on your mobile phone?

Is there any other use of mobile phones that you think has greatly impacted your personal or professional life?