RANI TRANSCRIPT

- I: INTERVIEWER
- P: PARTICIPANT

(0:01) I: Okay, hello, can you hear me?

(0:01) P: Yeah.

(0:16) I: Okay. So, hi, I'm Khadijah. I'm a student from Christ University and thank you so much for taking part in my study, women's safety, perceptions following education, relocation. Have you had the chance to read the consent form that I sent you?

(0:30) P: Yes, and I have sent the signed copy.

(0:38) I: Do you consent to being recorded and having your data used in my dissertation.

(0:40) P: Yeah, yeah, no issues.

(0:43) I: So, me and my researcher will have access to your info. Okay? Is that okay?

(0:44) P: Yeah, absolutely.

(0:46) I: Thank you so much. So, let's start with the opening questions. Can you please pick a pseudonym for yourself?

(1:01) P: I would like to be called Rani.

(1:03) I: Okay, Rani, can you tell me how old you are?

(1:07) P: I'm 21

(1:15) I: Okay and what is your gender?

(1:16) P: Female.

I: Okay, where did you relocate from and where did you move to?

P: So, I relocated from West Bengal, which is just the outskirts of Kolkata, and I relocated to Bangalore.

I: Okay, and what's your reason for relocation?

P: Education.

I: And what is your living arrangement?

P: I live in a PG, and I share a room with a roommate.

I: Okay, can you please begin with telling me what does the concept of safety mean to you? So, this can include both physical safety and your emotional comfort, what makes you feel secure in a place that you move to?

P: So, I've always had- I have been living in one particular place all my life before I relocated. So, my ideas of safety were honestly not something that I had thought about previously, but coming here, relocating has made me think about what really makes me feel comfortable in a situation, be it physically or my perceived form of safety. So I feel, for me feeling safe anywhere is sort of feeling, feeling enough for myself to go ahead and express or, you know, go ahead and be myself and not be looked down upon, just because I choose a certain- I choose to be a certain way and and that's- also the ways that I express my opinions, and not just physically, what I'm wearing or how I- how my appearance is. So yeah, that basically is what safety would be to me.

I: Just feeling secure enough to express yourself somewhere?

P: Yeah.

I: Express yourself without any concerns of what others may think or things like that?

P: Yeah, yeah.

I: Okay, sounds good. So, when you first moved to Bangalore, like you mentioned from West Bengal, can you please describe your initial perception of safety in this new environment, like, what was your first impression of the area that you were living in? Things like language, public transport, like general surroundings. How did that

make you feel? Did they make you feel safe? unsafe? What was your initial perception?

P: So, when I first moved here, I- my parents had come with me and going around there was- uh because I happened to live very close, very near to my campus there. There is a population of students that is just so humongous, you do not see anyone else. The first time I came here, all I saw were students from my institution, and there was just so many of them. And beyond that, there were also the local people who were here. And I had heard a lot of- lot about Bangalore before coming here, and I had heard a lot of intolerance or a lot of disdain towards people from other other places, but when I came here, my primary experiences were nothing that you know, left much of an impact negatively, because they were fine. I did not have to- for- as I as I told you it, this place is so centered around students that everything here, even though, even the locals living here, have sort of molded their lives accordingly. So, they have, they're pretty nice, and they speak to you well. But what the first thing that I came here and what got me a little under confident about like the place, was the fact that you are really not taken into consideration when you do not know the local language by the localities, as in, if you would really just want to go and ask somebody for help, or ask a shop shopkeeper of- for a certain price of this and that, or ask even an auto to like for their services, like how much they would charge and all. If you do not know the local language, the price is immensely hiked, or they're not interested in answering to you. So, language was a bit of an issue. Other than that, when I, like primarily, started to figure out- okay, on that note, I would like to also talk about the fact that any place- because I've always had a very well-connected city back at my place. So, I have always found comfort in traveling in a local transport and public transport, more than like available transports through apps, as in Uber or Ola, or those, those apps where you- you get a personal vehicle for yourself. I have always found comfort in local transport, so it really makes me feel nice and makes me feel a part of the city when I get to figure out the local transport and how it works. So I tried my best to go around the city in local transport, and it really worked for me for the first few days that the rules and regulations and the way that the public service public transport runs in the city is little different from what I have known so it took me a little bit of time to figure out, but when I did, it was, it was good enough, but there have been certain incidences hence that have not been very positive. Other than that, yeah, those are the few things that were primarily going on.

I: That's nice. You mentioned that you faced a little bit of a language barrier, so when it came to public transport and such, did that make you feel unsafe in any way or add to your sense of safety?

P: Yeah, it did really add to my sense of safety quite a lot, because I had faced like so once it so happened that I got up on a bus, and because previously I had seen online scanners on busses, so I thought that it is fine, even if I do not go ahead with cash. But I got up on one such bus, on a route that I had already perfected by then, and I got up and the conductor asked me for cash. And I said that, 'sir, could I have a QR so that I can send it to you across online payment?' But he got really intolerant, and he told me, 'Oh, there is no QR. Why do you get up? Or what is the need? You don't understand'. So, it- he got really hostile in a- in a little while, and I could not express to him that I did not have the money, or is there any other option that I could do? Should I get down from the bus? I could not communicate to him that, my helplessness. Yeah, so a kind stranger actually helped me with the amount that I had needed for- for my journey, and I-I made sure that I sent it back to her through online. And that was- that was genuinely nice. But also, it does, it does not take away the fact that the intolerance and hostility. So, the very moment that he, you know, shouted in front of everyone that, 'oh, why did you get up without money on the bus?' And all that I got- I got scared because I thought that I'm doing something really wrong, and just because I do not know the local language, I cannot communicate to him about the helplessness that I'm facing. And even beyond that, sometimes what has happened is that even though I have known a route quite well, and I've gone there one or once or twice, and I know the fare, and I know everything I have, they have intentionally charged more from me and given me a ticket that is of a further bus stop so that they can charge more from me, even after me deliberately telling them, 'sir, this is the stop that I want to get down at' and, and probably it was, again, a language barrier where I could not get through to them, and they thought that I was meaning a different thing than I really was. And to, you know, garner looks from people, from the local people who are also traveling on the bus when you are trying in a broken English, in a broken Hindi and a broken Kannada all at once, it's very hard, and it's also it seems like a comic relief for other people, but yeah, yeah. So those are a few things that actually caused a bit of trouble, and even for like the- not just busses, when it comes to autos, and when you go ahead and beyond the apps, the apps are still- you ask for a price, and they so- uh sorry, they give you a price, and you pay that. But when you ask just

an auto on the road as to whether it will be able to drop you at a certain location. They're very intolerant when you ask them in Hindi or English, and they almost ask like, triple the price that it shows on an app. So yeah.

I: Okay, so how did all of this make you feel when you initially came so how would you summarize your initial perception? Did you feel safe? unsafe? What did you think about the area?

P: Um if I have to summarize, I-I felt safer, I would say, as in, I have felt safer elsewhere. But it's not like that. I felt unsafe. I did feel somewhat safe, but I've felt safer elsewhere as well. That's- that's probably where it is.

I: Okay. So, how has- would you say your perception of safety has changed over time? And if so, how and why? What factors contributed to that?

P: See, um, I-I realized that it has changed a little, because, how should I explain this to you? Right, so basically, there have been multiple events hence, like thereafter, which has kind of made me feel like I felt alone in this city is probably where the idea of safety has shifted for me, where there's been a lot of incidences, or some incidences where I felt utterly alone, and I felt like, if here, right now, somebody does something to me, there is nobody I can call out to. So that's probably something that has changed my perception of safety. So, when I first came here, I thought it's fine. I'll have to try and understand the language. I'll do my part, and that will probably be all right, as long as I respect the language and I try to honor the language of the place that I'm relocating to, but that was really not the case. I realized that no matter what, you cannot- you cannot change the innate sense of disgustingness that exists among a lot of people, I think so certain incidences, like, should I go on about like?

I: Yes please

P: So, so once it so happened that the PG that I stay in, it happens to be a girl's PG, and all girls PG and till, like the longest time there wasn't a woman caretaker in our building, and it was just run by men. And there was, there was a particular young guy who used to very blatantly talk very flirtatiously to women and ask for their numbers. And, you know, ask whether, like they were going, when, when, probably we are going out. And we inform them that them that we will be a little late. He's like, ‘Oh,

where are you going? Should we? Should I come with you?' Or 'would you get me a beer', or certain things like that, and he would really cross his boundaries. And once also, it happened that he unsolicited, without prior information, he entered a girl's room as well, which just happened to be on the next floor that I was in, and she was sleeping, and he abruptly entered the door thinking that she wasn't there. But, you know, you can never be sure that whether he actually thought that we are-

I: Like did he do it on purpose or not.

P: Yeah, or is it, 'was it deliberate', and 'was it intentional?' So, you can't really tell for sure. And so that kind of that was one of the first incidences that- that freaked me quite a bit as to, what do you mean that you entered in the room while this person was sleeping, and the woman that this happened with, she was very visibly freaked, and she was my friend, so she shared quite a bit. And so we spoke to the owner, and we told him everything that was going on. And we realized that each room has like, three keys that- that are there with the like, PG owners. And we were like, 'Why does it need three keys? And why are you keeping a spare key when you're giving it to us? Why do you need' and they're, like, no, maintenance this- that a lot of- a lot of banter. And after that, what we did is we took all the three keys that were our room keys, and we said that, as long as you do not, like have a better security system, we're not giving these keys back. But unfortunately, the very night, or I think the night next to that, after we took the case. I got locked out of my room, and then then my room- did not have a roommate, so I was locked out of my room the entire night, and I had an exam in the morning. So, yeah, I had an exam in the morning. So, I called up my owner and caretaker, and this guy was just so hostile towards me that, 'oh, I told you to give us the key', and he just was, there was just no point of helping me at all. It was like at four in the morning when I called a key maker from a place and he came in and opened the door for me. I just spent- spent in panic on the corridors, because there is a, there's a girl who asked me to come into her room and stay the night, but it is still like it's her room, and it's still that- is also uncomfortable for her. And I also had my exams. I was studying till it was late. I just did not know what to do. So that is one day I felt like, like, I do not have anybody in the city, and I felt very alone and not safe at all after that, or after that. Certain incidences also happened in the public transport where I was- I was, I was going to my friend's birthday party. And as I said, like it's easier for me, and it's like it makes me feel safer when I take up transport,

public transport. So yeah, I got up on a bus wearing- and if clothes were to be blamed, I must mention that I was wearing decent enough clothes, and it wasn't like I was wearing something very revealing, or something that was very tight.

I: Even if you were not, it’s not a reason to-

P: Yeah, exactly. So no, but still, you know, if you had to go ahead and think of your attire and all. So, I got up on a bus, and I was so so- it was like one bus, and I go- go to one place and I change the bus. So, after one bus, I stand. I was standing at the bus stop for the changing of the bus, and there was a man who just kept lingering by my side, and he looked very ragged and very disgusting, and he was just lurking by my side, peeping, trying to peep through, trying to, like, you know, get close by without really just being very, very negligent of your space. So, there were other people as well, but he somehow, like you know, was- and I got scared, and I tried to, I gripped my phone a little tighter so that he doesn't run away with it, and I kept my purse closed, and I just kept myself at bay, and I did not show that. I tried to not show it on my face that I was a little unshaken and uncomfortable. But what followed was something that really, really scared me, was he so- So the bus came, and as you would have seen here, there are two doors. The front door opens up for women, and the second door, mostly men get up on and it was a properly like there were already a lot of people on the bus. So, I got on it from the front door, and after paying my ticket, I just turned to look that side, and I see this man on the bus, and that- that scared me to a point where I got like visibly shaken, as in, he was rubbing his lips. He was showing me gestures with his hand in the middle of an entire crowd in the bus, and he just, you know, directed that, and he knew that I was somehow, you know, he has been able to intimidate me. So, I was looking from the corner of my eye, because I was also, like, scared. So, he kept, you know, rubbing his lips together, making weird, inappropriate gestures with his tongue and his fingers, and he kept running his hand through his chest, and it just was extremely, extremely sexualizing and problematic. So, I tried to turn and go in the absolute- besides- just beside the conductor, so that I can get down as fast as possible. So, when my stop came and I got down, I just took one last look back at the bus, and he was trying to get down from the back door and rubbing like he was rubbing his genitals on the door, like on the glass adjacent to the glass door, you it is very visible, right? So, he was trying to get down, but by then, the door had already closed, so thank God he could not get down. But, yeah, that was one such

incident where it just freaked me out. And the entire evening I just wasn't doing well at all, because it continuously that his face flashed up. And you know, every time after that I've gone on public transport, it's kind of made me very aware. Like, be more aware than what you usually need to be, and just be on the lookout for anything like that. So, yeah, that was one such incident.

I: Oh, that's so terrible. Oh, my God. Like, and especially, you didn't have anyone with you, it's very-

P: I think that's also it- like I, if I would, if this probably was my native place, I would have made a ruckus, and I would have made sure that this man was, you know, not get away with, yeah, he wasn't going to go away with what he is doing, but just because I felt alone in a way that I do not think I would even be able to communicate, and just because he knows the local language, he would just, you know, change his posture and gesture and be all right, like, 'yeah, what did I do?'

I: He can also change the narrative in his language.

P: Absolutely so, and I would not even understand the narrative, you know, because what he says in his language I would not know. So that also- was one thing that scared me, because I was like, he knows the language he can manipulate, I won't be able to- so at the end of the day, if I got pulled out of the bus, and if, if, like, the entire thing got hampered, I would be at fault. So, yeah.

I: Oh my god, So, after this incident, were there any measures or strategies that you adopted to cope with that, how to feel safer, like did you avoid certain places? Like you said, after that, you've been very aware whenever you use public transport. So did you use anything of that sort, any strategies and even technology, something to make you feel safer?

P: See, the thing is, you can never be- you will never be too safe. Here is what I understood. But what I did do, a few things, is that I used to let my friends and my partner know when I'm boarding a bus or when probably I am going somewhere, so that at least they're aware that I am getting on somewhere and I- whether I got down. So, that's- that's one thing that I have been doing since and beyond that I like- I know it probably won't be of any use. But for this was self-protection. I keep a Swiss knife

in my bag just- just so that it doesn't get, like, really problematic. Other than that, I think the worst part, I think, is that women have made peace with the fact that no matter where you go, how you go and when you go, you are bound to be sexualized or not made comfortable at all. So, I kind of like- it- it did. It did affect me for a while, but then it also kind of was like, yeah, just an incident just happened, and now it probably is not even a part of my conscious thinking when I'm getting up on a bus, but so yeah, it kind of, you kind of normalize it. You kind of make it feel like, 'yeah, it just happened. Like, why? - What is new in that?- So, I won't say that I took up, like, very hard and fast measures that, 'Oh, I did this. I did that.' But, yeah, like, I try to keep myself safe. I try to talk as less as possible. I just book my ticket, and I'm just there on the corner, and I get down on my stop, and I'm always I have my maps handy so that I know where I'm going, what I'm doing, and what is the stop. So, yeah.

I: Okay, you mentioned how when that incident had happened, you felt really alone and really isolated, and even when- in the PG incident, you had felt like you didn't have anyone you could call at that moment. So, after relocating, how did that stress of relocation impact your sense of safety, like feeling emotionally unsafe, like you're isolated or homesick even, yeah, how that go about?

P: I will not sugarcoat this for you. It was hard. It was extremely hard, and you just had the worst nights. You just sit in your room and you cry all night and you just feel like, 'did I make the right decision. Was this the way to go? Was there no other way to go? Is this all worth it with what I have left behind?' Because so even when these incidences happened, I'm not very close to my family per se, so I wasn't even, you know, I wasn't even able to communicate these things to them even. So that just leaves me with my friends, and even though my friends have- my friends are the best bunch of people, and they always make sure that I'm doing better and doing fine, and they're always there for me. But, you know, sometimes on your bad days, the physically being present of another person, just to, you know, shake you and give you, like, a bit of reassurance that no matter what, it's going to be fine. That is something that I truly missed. And so this place sort of like just, not just because of certain incidences regarding my safety, but also in general, like the way that the city runs, and the way that things happen here, and how like people are that just, you know, initially I was hopeful that, okay, I'm not going to be a pessimistic person, and, you know, hate on every possible thing, but it did. It kind of brought me, brought out the worst in me.

And I do blame the city and the people for a lot of it, because I've never seen those sides of me come out. It's just it made- it did not make me feel very nice, and the homesickness got worse, and I- it was really hard for me to get myself out of my bed in the morning every day. But the sad part is that you have to continue. No matter what you have to, you have to go on, and you have to wake up every day, fight the world, and you can cry all you want while doing it, but you still have to do it. So, yeah, so it's been extremely tough and strenuous, and it took up a lot of my time. It still takes up a lot of my time, and it's very stressful. Like, even if you think that you're going to go somewhere, it takes, like, one day of mental preparation that, oh, okay, I'm going to go here or there. Okay, that is what it's going to cost me. This is how I have to behave. This is how I have to be. And, yeah, so that bit of travel, like that bit of thought and stress doesn't seem worth it at times to you know, even to make yourself go out and have a good time.

I: Okay, that makes sense. Yeah, you mentioned how you were talking about your friends back home. I believe, and you said that you have, like, really good support from them-

P: Yeah, yeah, they're amazing.

I: Yeah. So, after you relocated, how has making new social connections influenced your sense of safety? So, if you came to Bangalore and you made some new friends from campus, you have someone to travel with. You have someone to talk to or just get advice, about the same stuff as that. So how did having new social connections influence your sense of safety?

P: It actually changed my sense of safety, as in, when I came here, I was a month late to my course. So, you know, I when I came to my class, there was already, like, people had already formed their friends, and people were already going ahead and like they were already groups that were- that had formed. But so, when I came here, I felt like, okay, it was like, it's gonna be hard to make friends here, and to enter a group of- enter a group. And as I said that when I came here, things were so overwhelming that it took up, like a lot of my time, to just, you know, settle down with this place. So, to be emotionally unavailable- to be emotionally available for any other relationships or relationships or friendships at that point was really tough. So, it was just, it was the days were very bland. I used to go to college and just do my classes and keep my head

down and come back that that's all that used to happen. But then, thankfully, over one such group project that my institution assigned me to- had put me in a group project. And yeah, so my institution happened to put me in a group project. And that is when I came across certain people and people who like, like, one of my closest friends here. She is somebody who has grown up here in Bangalore as well as in Hyderabad. So, she knows local language. She's been here. She loves the city, and she's a big fan of Bangalore. And so, when I told her that, yeah, nothing's suiting me, I don't feel good this place is just- they don't treat their dogs right, the street dogs are so malnourished and people are so intolerant. And when I told her that she- she, she understood where I was coming from, and she was the first one to not tell me that, that, Oh, you can, like, sort of-

I: Like you'll be fine, like, brush it off.

P: Yeah, brush it off. Sort of so she was somebody who actually took things into consideration. And from then, it is actually a funny thing. She promised me that 'before you leave the city, I will make it a point that you, you know, have a good time here'. And so, she was on this mission of making me like the city and making me like the people and food and everything and so she, you know, she, she has always been somebody who has made an effort for me to feel like I belong here. All she has ever taught me all the time is that you respect people around here, and a basic, decent level of respect can get you a long way, and not like every man you need to bow down to, not that way, but respect in a way that you- you realize that you're also coming and from a different place, and you- everything is alien to the natives here, also as much as it is for us. So, she also tried to make me understand the other way, and, but, but, but it has never been the case that I have told her that,' Oh, see, I am not- this happened or that happened, and this is not, probably what would have happened and happened in my city'. And she has been- she has not heard me, or she has been, you know, ethnocentric towards her natives. She's always been by my side, and she is also the reason that I have happened to have other friends, like she invited me to her group and always gave me priority and has been there since. And I feel like I thank her quite a bit for how I'm doing right now, in a way that we were talking about a while back. So, we were talking about emotional safety, right? So, my emotional safety and the way that I feel like, you know, it's like 11 in the night and I'm just breaking down in my- in the corner of my bed, and I know if I give this woman a call, she will be out.

Like, ‘yeah, let's go for coffee. It's fine, come. Let's just take a walk and come back’. And when I'm with her, somehow, I do feel safe, and I feel like it's fine. We'll figure it out. You know that- that safety comes and also probably, I do not want to accept this, but also probably because she knows the local language, I feel that she- that we can get through, but not just that. Also, beyond that, I think she is an extremely smart lady, and she has a way of going around. So we have had a fair bit of fun after I've realized that, okay, there is more to the city than the like, like, this immensely student populated area that we live in, like, there's beyond, there's- there's a city beyond this place, and that city can be beautiful if you- have you know, the intention of trying to see it that way. So, yeah, a social support is extremely necessary. And thankfully, I did happen to stumble upon one which has, which is like touch wood, still with me and still with me, and yeah, has been helping me throughout. Yeah.

I: That's really wonderful. That's really great. So, do you think it has made a huge impact on your sense of safety? Do you feel safer now knowing that there is someone that you can rely on prior to not knowing that?

P: Yeah, there is actually. So, it's not like I need her go with me wherever I go, physically take like, you know, be a part of all the places that I'm going or something, but it helps to know that I have somebody to fall back onto. So even if she's physically not going somewhere, or she is physically not present. I know I can just, you know, take a picture and like, ‘what does this mean? Or what is he saying, or how to say this, or what should I- How should I behave in this situation?’ So, I can, you know, get a general idea. So, yeah, to answer your question, it has made a huge impact after she has been, you know, she's kind of taken me as her foster child of the city and introduced me in and around. So I remember that she is very so she is somebody who, again, feels comfortable traveling in autos, or, you know, personal vehicles, but upon knowing me and us coming together as friends, she has now started to use the bus and that, yeah, so that makes me feel nice as well, because, you know, it's sort of a give and take situation. You teach her something, or you make her like, yeah, you can do this and that. And she's so fascinated by the fact that the city is actually connected well via public transport. So, she has not, did not figure that out till now, but now that she is doing it, I feel like, yeah, she's also like, having her bit of fun. So, yeah, it has made a huge impact. I would say.

I: Oh, that's really lovely. So Bangalore, obviously, I think it's a city that a lot of people talk about on social media everywhere prior to moving here or even after moving here, were there any news stories or social media reports that you saw about Bangalore that made you feel unsafe or safe?

P: Yeah, so when I was coming here, there was this one. So, there were actually two incidences. One was- I had, that was a personal incident, as in, I had known a person in my back, back at home itself, and I knew that he was in Bangalore at that time when I had moved. And prior to me moving, somehow, he got to know that I was moving to Bangalore, and he started being almost a stalker. Where he, you know, yeah, so where he, you know, would be like- so even I had never told him, or I had never, you know, he was blocked from everywhere, but somehow he still knew, and that still freaks me out to this day. I do not know how, but he was coming to Bangalore, and he knew. So the creepiest thing happened is when I had come for my admissions before actually joining the course, I'd come for my admissions, and I was staying at my uncle's place, like my friend's uncle's place, and both of us were there, and the day that I came back home after admissions, I flew back into West Bengal, when I, like, get down from the flight, I receive a text message where it says that you had, like, you had multiple calls during your flight, and so and so. And then I was like, okay, whoever has called, I'll call them back and all that. But then I see another text message from this number which says that 'Oh, you went back without telling me'. And that sort of was very creepy. So, that was one personal incident which I do not know how relevant it is. But that kind of made me very scared while I was coming, because I thought that, you know, there was something that is going on, and he's aware of where I'm going, how I'm going and to come, because I also knew he was in Bangalore, so the primary few days, I used to, you know, unknowingly, be on the lookout that, okay, how does he know and what- what is going on? So that was one incident which was prior to coming here, got me freaked out a little, and I told my friends, and I shared all the numbers and contacts that I have of him to my friends and partners, so that you know they also have a track of if anything is going wrong and all that. And, yeah, he had the audacity of texting me later through a different ID over my socials, and he would talk- tell me that, 'yeah, you should have told me when you came, we should have met and all that'. And I blocked him from every possible place. And thankfully, it hasn't occurred ever since, like, he hasn't been able to or at least does not contact me beyond that point. So that's, that's, that's fine for now. Other than

that, there's this- this is- so where I stay in, there was a very gruesome incident that had happened which I had not got to know about just prior to coming, which kind of I made sure that my parents don't hear about it, because they would draw my application and they would like take me back home. But yeah, so what happened is, basically, I do not exactly know the details of this case, and I might be on the gray area, but what had happened is an estranged boyfriend of a woman who was living in a PG came in and sort of slaughtered, yeah, the woman inside her PG, because he got to know that he was- she was probably going out with a different person, so that was very close to from where I stay. So, that was one thing that kind of got me a little worried. But and it happened. So, it happened when I came here, after my parents went back, I told my PG owners, 'sir, this and this I heard. Is this true?' Or 'how should I be safe? What are the things that I should not be doing, or the places I should be avoiding?' He said that, 'see, I am aware. I know its close range as to what this incident was, and I assure you that the way that it has been told to you is not how it happened' and it you know, every, like every student would like, like a horror story to come out of a certain situation, like every place in every institution is built on a graveyard, sort of a situation, so it's a lot of mixing up of the stories and details. So, he said that there's nothing to get worried about, and there's no such place that- you do not have to avoid at night or something. It's a fairly student like led area, and you will be fine, and I'm there if you need anything. So yeah, he was also cordial, and he also installed a CCTV wherever we asked him to. And he changed, uh, like there were male cooks at the time when we had come to the PG. So, he changed that. So, yeah, one, uh, okay. There is one more incident that I got. It came to my mind, would it be fine if I shared?

I: Yes, yes.

P: Ah, so, so, as I told you, there was a male cook at the time when I had come in and when I had come into my PG, that was pretty much the second month of the PG running. So, I was one of the first people to come. And the only- the first two floors were functional then, and by and by, they got the other ones functional as well. So, there was, there were less people in the PG by back then, and so by and by, so they got changed, and a new woman came, but then that woman also fell sick. And for a while there was a different cook that was allowed, but we were told that these are the hours of the cook, so it's better. And by nine, he will be off from everywhere, and he

will go back. So, you can sit and do whatever you want at night in the- in the terrace where the cooking happens, like the kitchen upstairs. So, we were all fine with it, that it's fine. You do not have to be so cautious. We can also make our like, make it, make peace with it. So, this person, he was- he- it was him and two of his helpers, okay? And from the get-go, this person was cooking, the main cook. He was not never an issue, and he was very cordial to us. He would, you know, keep food aside for us. If sometimes it ran out of food, he would, he would make it for us. He's very, it was very cordial. But there was this other person, who was the helper, who used to be very visibly drunk at times. And one day I was, I was, it was my exams were going on, so I had asked my owner if there was an empty room that I could study in, because my room, there was a room made by then, and I needed a space where I could, like, go ahead and study. So, I was studying in a room that is in the ground floor, and just beside that room is the room where the cooks and the caretaker, they stay. So it's fine. I thought it's safer, it's better. But in the middle of the night, I heard a huge sound, like a very loud sound, and I got scared as to what is happening, and I kept my door shut and bolted. And way after in the night, I went up to my room, and when, like the noise had subsided and all, and later in the morning, I saw that. So, the room that they stay in, they that has a glass door, okay? And there was a big crack on the glass door. So, I asked the cook, the actual cook, who I told you, was cordial to us that what happened yesterday night, and he said that so this other two people were so drunk that they tried- so when he said that, please do not make a ruckus here, do not like do this and that, so they got violent on him. And it got so bad that he took some furniture that was there in the room and tried to beat him with it so the- so he did not get harmed, but the glass cracked so I got very scared that there are literal alcoholics roaming around inside the PG like you would be scared of alcoholics outside the city, and you would lock your gates, but what if it's just beside your room in the ground floor? And as I said, there wasn't any woman caretaker, and at night, it used to get really quiet because, like, there were very less people back then. So that kind of got me very, very scared, and I told my parents to immediately inform the owner about something like this. And he did take up a step. He was trying to go quite about it. You know, he was trying to go hush hush about it. But I just told him that, ‘how are you compromising our safety on this level, he is being violent towards his coworkers in the middle of the night. How do you know that he won't just come and knock and get into some girls room with a key, with a spare key that you have, you can never know the keys are

right there'. So I kind of confronted him and told him and all that, so he understood my- he took my thing into consideration, and he apologized, and he said that, yeah, it was our mistake. We just did not want the PG to have a bad name of sorts because- your bad name has got nothing to do with this safety of the so many girls that you keep- are keeping here and whose parents that you are assuring that, yeah, 'your girl is safe with us'. There is a reason that our parents have had faith in you and have kept us with you here. So do not, you know, compromise that, because that is kind of the ultimate- so that's also one more thing that you know got me really scared.

I: I'm really glad you took initiative for that. You mentioned by now, like a lot, about your PG itself, but and that- has the physical layout of where your campus is, as in the streets, the roads like, how has that influenced your sense of safety? If there's CCTV cameras, if there's street lights, how has that influenced your sense of safety?

P: Yeah, so where I stay in, it's pretty well lit, and the shops are open till quite late, because there are, you know, students living in flats who would like, like, would like to go out for a midnight snack. So, shops are open till pretty late, my campus, my campus, inside of my campus, and even outside, it's the safest place ever, at least what I have like experienced so far. So, there are proper- every PG here I have seen has a CCTV involved. So, because it's like so bogged down with flats and PGS, there's no like blind spot as such, from at least the route that I have taken. So, if there was something that is going to happen or something that was not right, I'm pretty sure some of the other PG's camera would be catching that, because it's just so many of them, and every one of them have cameras. My university has cameras all around and there are well lit streets. And even I've come back at like, pretty late in the night, and I felt fine. I've like, like, auto drivers or even bikes when, yeah, So I'd come back in bikes, and they dropped me at my location, and I felt safe and I entered. It was, it was not something that was of much concern ever. Yeah.

I: So, having all of that did positively add to your sense of safety?

P: It absolutely did, at least, you know, the idea that it won't go unnoticed is something that, yeah.

I: Yeah. That's right. For my last question, I just want to ask, can you share an experience where cultural differences in this new environment, if there were any

difference so social norms, or like you mentioned, the language barrier, like any sort of a cultural misunderstanding or cultural barrier that influenced your sense of safety after you came, if there are any, or if you felt like there wasn't much of a cultural difference, or anything?

P: Cultural differences..see, from the very get go, the conversation that we were having sort of does revolve around the fact that you have to take into- so every incident that happens has a lot of cultural demands and norms that are present, right? So, the very from the very first incident that I was telling you about, there is an influence of the language. There is an influence of how things are probably, people are not used to the kind of dresses or the kind of, you know, attires the other people who are coming into the city are wearing. So, they, even the women of the city, are intolerant and look down upon you, or they do not have a very good eye for you. So, yeah, I think I cannot remember, like anything else, any other incident in- I will surely get back to you if I do remember. But beyond that, I think just everything does depend on a lot of cultural- the word culture is such a diverse term, actually, it encompasses a lot of things. So, every incident will- incident will have a cultural background, even if you've not wanted to. So, nothing in particular, but, yeah, I do think that the culture and the way that things run here have had an effect on my perceived sense of safety.

I: Thank you so much for that. You shared a lot of really insightful things. I can't wait to like code this. It’s- is really good. Thank you so much. I really hope you have a nice day. Is there anything else you would like to add about the topic? Or say?

P: No, it's actually an amazing topic, and I'm so glad that somebody has taken this up, because it's something that we need to talk about and something that is so pertinent in the society right now, with so much of relocation taking place due to jobs or due to higher education. So, all the best for your study, and I wish you all the best.

I: Thank you so much. If you have any questions or anything of that, please don't hesitate to contact me again. I really, really appreciate you taking part. Thank you so much.

P: Thank you. Have a good night. Bye. Bye.

I: Have a good night. Thank you so much. Bye.