Together in Search: Experimental Evidence from Coordinating Travel Among Women Job-Seekers in Urban India *

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Abstract

We study how enabling job-seeking women to coordinate travel affects their job search in urban India. In settings where women typically only travel with adult companions to navigate safety concerns, job search can be constrained when companions are unavailable. We test whether coordinating travel with other job-seeking women can alleviate this constraint. In a randomized experiment, we match women within neighborhoods and vary whether they can coordinate travel to factory interviews. The treatment increases interview attendance by 85% and job search beyond the interview experiment by 78%. Effects are driven by travel coordination and matching without coordination has no effects.

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1 Introduction

Employment rates for women remain significantly lower than those for men across many developing countries. In India, despite sustained economic growth over the past three decades and achieving gender parity in educational attainment, only 33% of women are employed compared to 77% of men (The World Bank, 2023). This places India alongside countries in the Middle East and North Africa with the lowest female employment rates globally. Barriers such as domestic responsibilities, childcare constraints, and gender norms prevent many women from working, even when they express a strong willingness to do so.[1] In fact, a large share of Indian women report a willingness to work but do not actively search for jobs. When they do search, they face substantial frictions: they search less intensively than men, have limited information about available opportunities, and are less likely to find jobs that match their preferences (Fletcher et al. 2017).

Existing data and a growing body of research show that social norms, such as expectations around female seclusion, and safety concerns in public spaces systematically limit women's mobility compared to that of men. For instance, 53% of women report not leaving their homes on a given day, compared to only 14% of men (Biswas 2023), and non-working women make six times fewer trips than non-working men. These constraints on movement can have far-reaching economic consequences such as limiting women's access to education, employment, and other opportunities (Borker 2020; Field and Vyborny 2022; Kapoor et al. 2025). Yet, we know relatively little about how these mobility constraints affect women's ability to search for jobs.

One important but understudied dimension is that many women prefer —or are expected —to travel only with adult companions. In India, 44% of women report that they cannot travel outside their neighborhoods or short distances via public transportation alone (DHS 2019-21). For many, traveling with family members or female friends provides a way to navigate traditional norms and feel safer. However, this reliance on companions can also limit job search, particularly when companions are unavailable.[2]

A practical and socially acceptable alternative for women who prefer to travel with companions is to coordinate travel with other job-seeking women during the job search

[1] e.g., Heath and Mobarak 2015; McKelway 2021; Lowe and McKelway 2019; Baranov et al. 2020; Bjorvatn et al. 2022; Nandi et al. 2020; Hojman and Lopez Boo 2022; Ho et al. 2023; Field et al. 2021; Afridi et al. 2023; Dean and Jayachandran 2019; Bernhardt et al. 2018; Jalota and Ho 2024; Khanna and Pandey 2020; Agte and Bernhardt 2023; Jayachandran 2019

[2] While this study focuses on travel for job search, the need for companions may also impact women's daily commute to work. The need for companions can make job search particularly challenging because it often involves travel to new, unknown locations, which can heighten concerns around safety and social acceptability.

process. Such coordination can help women navigate mobility constraints by maintaining a sense of safety while adhering to social norms. However, its feasibility may be limited for women who are socially isolated or whose networks rarely include others interested in working (Afridi et al. 2023; Anukriti et al. 2022). Data from our study setting support this concern: 60% of women reported traveling with companions during their two most recent trips in the past week, and on average, they knew only one other woman interested in working at the factories. Motivated by this idea, we designed an intervention that matches job-seeking women within neighborhoods and randomly varies whether they can coordinate their travel to job interviews.[3]

To test this intervention, we partnered with five garment factories in the suburbs of Delhi, where job interviews typically require women to travel to the factory gate.[4] The study was conducted across 106 lower-income neighborhoods near these factories and included 693 women who were unemployed, interested in working at the partner factories, and skilled in sewing. [5] Neighborhoods were stratified by city and distance to the nearest factory, then randomly assigned to one of two treatment groups or a control group. To enable women to coordinate their travel with other job-seeking women, in the first treatment group, **Matching & Coordinated Travel**, we matched women within neighborhoods through group meetings and invited them to interviews scheduled on the same dates at the nearest partner factory. This scheduling was intended to make it easier for women to attend interviews together.

The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment includes two components: matching women within neighborhoods through group meetings and scheduling their interviews on the same date to enable coordinated travel. While the primary goal of this treatment is to test the effect of travel coordination, it is possible that the matching component alone could influence interview attendance. For example, being matched with other job-seeking women might shift beliefs about women's work (Bursztyn et al. 2020; Afridi et al. 2023), increase the perceived attractiveness of factory jobs (Grosset and Donald 2024), or raise expectations about workplace safety (Sharma 2023). To isolate the effect of coordinated travel, we included a second treatment group: **Matching & No Coordinated Travel**. In this treatment, women within a neighborhood were matched through group meetings

[3] We focus on attendance at job interviews to isolate the role of travel-related constraints in job search. This allows us to hold constant other barriers, such as lack of information or motivation, and to measure effects on an outcome that requires women to travel outside their neighborhoods.

[4] At these factories, women comprise 70% of the production workforce and are primarily employed as sewing machine operators.

[5] At baseline, one-third of the women in the sample had received formal training in sewing and could operate industrial sewing machines.

(identical to Matching & Coordinated Travel), but their interviews were scheduled on different dates to minimize their chances of coordinating travel among them. This design allows us to separately identify the effect of travel coordination from that of the group matching process.

In the **control** group, women from the same neighborhood were scheduled for interviews on the same dates but received their invitations through individual, one-on-one meetings with enumerators rather than group meetings. This design allows us to examine whether women who already knew other job-seeking peers actively sought each other out as travel companions in the absence of any intervention. To conduct our empirical analysis, we draw on two data sources: daily attendance records collected at the factories during the interview period and a follow-up survey conducted six weeks after the interviews.

We now turn to the question of whether enabling women to coordinate their travel with other job-seeking peers improves their likelihood of attending interviews. In the control group, 15.4% of women attended interviews; in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment, the share increases significantly by 13.1 percentage points, or 85% (p-value = 0.015). The treatment is particularly effective for women who, at baseline, reported knowing fewer women nearby or feeling unsafe while traveling: among these subgroups, interview attendance increases by 17 percentage points (155%) and 34 percentage points (310%), respectively, compared to their counterparts in the control group.

To understand whether these gains are driven by the opportunity to coordinate travel or by other elements of the treatment, we examine two sources of evidence. First, we verify that women in the treatment actually coordinate their travel to interviews. They are 9.8 percentage points (100%) more likely to travel with other study women compared to the control group. Among women in the control group who attended, 83% traveled with companions, and three-fourths of these did so with other study participants. Since women in the control group have a lower attendance rate, but most of them travel with companions, it suggests that they face constraints in finding available companions on their own.

Second, we turn to experimental variation provided by the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. In this group, women were matched through group meetings, but assigned to different interview dates to limit their ability to coordinate travel. We find that women in this group are 4.5 percentage points less likely to travel with study women than those in the control group, confirming that the design effectively reduced coordination. We then examine the effect of the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment on interview attendance and find no effect at all. We interpret this as strong evidence

that the positive effects of the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment are driven by the coordinated travel component rather than by matching women through group meetings.

We next examine whether the treatments influenced women's job search efforts beyond the interview experiment. This outcome is especially relevant in our setting because the hiring rate at the factories was low: over 80% of interviewees did not receive job offers. As a result, most women who wanted to work remained without jobs after the experiment. This raises the question of whether the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment helped women continue searching for jobs elsewhere. The treatment gave women the opportunity to travel with other job-seeking peers from their neighborhood —some of whom they may not have known before, or had not previously considered as potential companions. Experiencing the benefits of traveling together could have made women more likely to continue searching for jobs after the experiment.

We test this possibility using data from follow-up surveys conducted six weeks later, focusing on two outcomes: whether women visited a prospective employer (i.e., made a job search trip after the interviews), and how many such trips they made. The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases the likelihood of making a job search trip by 12.6 percentage points (p-value = 0.009), a 78% increase over the control group mean of 16%. It also more than doubles the average number of job search trips made.

Interpreting the effect of the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment is less straightforward. In principle, women in this group could still coordinate future job search travel with the peers they were matched with during group meetings. However, unlike in the coordinated travel group, they did not have the experience of actually traveling together during the intervention—an experience that may be important for building trust or discovering the value of coordination. The estimated effect on job search trips is positive but small (2.7 percentage points) and statistically insignificant. This is consistent with the idea that a brief introduction through group meetings without the shared experience of traveling may not have been enough to sustain connections or shift behavior after the experiment.

The idea that shared travel is key to sustaining connections—and not just initial exposure—finds further support in women's post-intervention behavior. We test whether the improved job search outcomes in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment are driven by continued travel coordination. First, women in this group are 8.9 to 11.1 percentage points (111% to 150%) more likely than those in the Matching & No Coordinated Travel or control groups to make job search trips with other women from their neighborhoods. Second, while both treatments similarly increase women's social connections—measured by

knowing and interacting with nearby women—only the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment leads to greater travel coordination for non-job-related purposes (by 8.3 percentage points, or 48%). This pattern reinforces the interpretation that it is the experience of coordinating and traveling with other women, rather than being introduced to them, that drives sustained job search behavior. While both treatments expanded women's networks, only the Matching & Coordinated Travel group shows continued coordination, suggesting that shared travel was critical for building the kind of relationships that support ongoing job search. If the effects were driven by mechanisms common to both treatments —such as shifting social norms or knowing other job-seeking women —we would not expect such a large increase in coordinated travel or significant differences between the groups.

Finally, we examine the effects of the treatments on women's employment. Six weeks after the interviews, 24% of women in the control group were employed. The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases employment by 8.1 percentage points (p-value = 0.08). In contrast, the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment yields a smaller, statistically insignificant gain of 5.6 percentage points (p-value = 0.15).

To understand what drives these effects, we consider two possibilities. First, we test whether the treatments shifted social norms around women's work. The evidence suggests otherwise: employment gains are concentrated among women who were already actively job-searching at baseline—those least likely to be constrained by prevailing norms. Instead, we find suggestive evidence that the effects are driven by increased job search intensity. Among baseline job seekers, the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment raises the likelihood of making a job search trip by 21.7 percentage points and increases the average number of trips by 0.7. In this same group, the treatment increases employment by 10.5 percentage points more than the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. This pattern suggests that the employment effects are more likely to stem from intensified search behavior than from mechanisms common to both treatments, such as reduced travel costs or improved perceptions of job amenities.

This paper contributes to the broader literature on barriers to job search in developing countries (e.g., Abebe et al. 2021; Abebe et al. 2023; Franklin 2018; Caria et al. 2020; Wheeler et al. 2022). A strand within this literature focuses on barriers faced by women. For example, studies show that norms against women's work (Afridi et al. 2023; Bursztyn et al. 2020) and the gender of supervisors (Subramanian 2024) directly affect women's decision to apply for jobs. Other work highlights how women's strong preferences for non-wage amenities (Ho et al. 2023; Mahmud and Riley 2021; Becerra and Guerra 2021) and employers' gendered preferences (Chaturvedi et al. 2024; Chowdhury et al. 2018;

Gentile et al. 2023; Buchmann et al. 2023) indirectly constrain their job search by limiting the set of available jobs (Crepon et al. 2024; Chiplunkar and Goldberg 2021). The closest study to our work is Field and Vyborny 2022, which shows that providing women with women-only transport to commute daily to work significantly increases their online job applications in Pakistan. Our study differs from their work and other works in its novel, cost-effective approach to improving women's job search - by enabling job-seeking women to coordinate their travel.

We focus on a dimension not yet explored within this literature: decisions about attending in-person interviews and visiting prospective employers. This is particularly important for the manufacturing sector, especially garment factories, where hiring for production workers takes place through in-person visits. Many factories even require workers to visit the job sites to just inquire about openings. Women may miss out on job opportunities if they are unable to visit job sites frequently to inquire and interview for openings. In this paper, we show that matching job-seeking women into groups and enabling them to coordinate their travel can help them make more frequent visits to factories and employers. Our results highlight a policy implication for firms' hiring practices: when in-person interviews are required and cannot be easily replaced by online alternatives, firms can increase their pool of women job applicants by scheduling group interviews and coordinating multiple women candidates to visit on the same days.

Our paper also adds to the growing literature on commuting in developing countries (e.g., Naresh Kumar et al. 2025; Aggarwal et al. 2018; Phillips 2014), particularly women's commuting. Studies show that safety concerns and societal norms compel women to adopt coping strategies (Borker 2024), such as using gender-segregated transportation (Aguilar et al. 2021; Field and Vyborny 2022; Kapoor et al. 2025), avoiding unsafe routes (Borker 2021), and not traveling during specific hours (Hsu 2011)[6]. These strategies limit women's frequency of travel(Biswas 2023; Chen et al. 2024; Alam et al. 2021), impose additional monetary costs (Kondylis et al. 2020; Christensen and Osman 2021), and negatively impact their decisions regarding enrollment in educational and skill training programs (Borker 2021; Muralidharan and Prakash 2017; Cheema et al. 2022). Our study contributes to this literature by demonstrating that traveling with companions —another widely used coping strategy —can be leveraged to improve women's labor market outcomes, including interview attendance, job search effort, and employment. In doing so, we highlight a cost-effective way to reduce commuting costs within an existing transport infrastructure.

This paper also contributes to the literature on the role of peers, especially female

[6] 42% of women in our study sample reported not traveling after sunset compared to 13% who avoided travel during the day.

peers, in developing countries. Existing studies show that peer networks can improve outcomes in education (Rao 2019; Duflo et al. 2011), entrepreneurship (Field et al. 2016), family planning (Anukriti et al. 2022) and female autonomy (Kandpal and Baylis 2019). We contribute by showing that coordinating travel with job-seeking women can increase their job search and employment. It reaffirms the findings of Afridi et al. 2023, which show that friends-based networks improve women's labor market outcomes in urban India. We show that organizing women into groups and encouraging them to rely on each other for travel can increase their trips to employers, in addition to strengthening their social networks and providing a platform for delivering information (Neha Kumar et al. 2019; Díaz-Martin et al. 2023). Recent work by Grosset and Donald 2024 documents the presence of complementarities in labor supply in a completely different study context. They show that that job seekers are 15 percentage points more likely to accept offers if people in their network are also offered jobs, primarily due to their ability to commute together. Our research builds on this work by showing that such complementarities exist even during job search and attending interviews.

2 Study Setting

2.1 Context: Women's Job Search and Mobility

Despite India's significant economic growth and improvement in educational attainment over the past three decades, the country's female labor force participation rate hasn't increased much[7]. In 2024, only 33% of India's female population was engaged in the labor market, compared to 77% of men (The World Bank, 2023).[8] This puts India among the countries with the lowest female labor force participation rates globally, ahead of only a few nations. While other South Asian countries, such as Bangladesh and Pakistan, also have low female labor force participation rates, they have seen a steady increase over the last decade. India's stagnant and often declining participation rates have presented itself as a puzzle to researchers and policymakers.

The experiment was conducted in 106 lower-income neighborhoods in two cities in Northern India - Faridabad and Noida. Faridabad serves as an industrial hub for the state of Haryana, with garment manufacturing being one of its prominent industries. Noida is

[7] Between 2000 and 2023, India's GDP grew at an average rate of 4.65%, primary school enrollment rose from 89% to 99%, and secondary school enrollment also increased steeply from 50% to 79% (The World Bank, 2023), reaching parity between boys and girls.

[8] Since the 2000s, the women's employment rate has been steadily declining. However, there has been an upward trend since 2021, with an increase from 26% to 33% (ILOSTAT, 2023), primarily due to a change in the definition of employment in rural areas.

a software development and industrial hub in the state of Uttar Pradesh. 21% and 18% of women reported participating in the labor market in Faridabad and Noida in 2019-21 (DHS, 2019-21).

Survey evidence from our study setting shows that while many women express a desire to work, they often do not search for jobs. Even when they do, they face distinct challenges. For instance, women report searching for jobs less frequently than men: men spent an average of 10 days job searching, compared to 5.5 days for women. Only 30% of women found their preferred jobs, compared to 75% of men. Additionally, 65% of women reported not knowing where to look for jobs, compared to 35% of men. These challenges are not unique to India—Field and Vyborny 2022 document similar job search barriers among women in Pakistan.

In this paper, we argue that women's job search challenges are strongly linked to their physical mobility challenges. In India, 79% of women report experiencing harassment in public spaces, and 95% report feeling unsafe on public transport. Their physical mobility is also shaped by regressive social norms, including norms promoting female seclusion (Jalota and Ho 2024). As a result, we find stark mobility differences between men and women in our study setting. For example, women report traveling outside their neighborhoods for an average of 0.37 times in one week and men do so 0.93 times. The gap widens further among those not working: non-working women make as much as six times fewer trips than men. Although men report experiencing more safety issues when traveling, women report avoiding travel due to safety issues.

To mitigate these concerns, women often travel with companions. In our sample, 60% of women reported traveling with friends or family in the past week, compared to 18% of men. Beyond traveling with companions, women also report using other safety strategies such as avoiding unsafe areas, refraining from using shared modes of transport, and staying connected on their phones while in transit. While these strategies are essential for ensuring safety, they also significantly restrict women's mobility—and by extension, their ability to search for jobs.

2.2 Partner Firm

We partner with one of India's largest exporters of ready-made garments and its five factories. Two factories are located in Faridabad, and three factories are located in Noida[9].

[9] **??** shows the map of factory locations. The Faridabad factory units, referred to as F1 and F2, are 850 meters apart. The A5 and A7 factory units in Noida are near one another and are 50 meters apart. The distance between E10 and pair A5-A7 is approximately 12 kilometers by road.

At the partner factories, women form about 66% ($\approx 9,800$) of the total production workforce, and they primarily work as sewing operators. The average salary of a worker involved in production ranges from INR 10,500 - INR 13,500 ($128-$160) per month, slightly above the prevailing minimum wage. There is one shift at the factories from Monday to Saturday, 9 am to 5:30 pm. Women in the production workforce, on average, are 35 years old, married, 8th-grade educated, have one child, and have been employed with the factory for three years.

Hiring for the production workforce takes place through walk-in interviews. Job candidates need to show-up at the factory gate by 10 am if they want to be considered for the day's hiring. There are two stages within the interview process: first, the HR department screens the candidates. During the screening process, they check candidates' IDs, engage in a few minutes of conversation to gauge the nature, check for literacy, and enquire about prior work experience and skills training. After passing the screening, on-the-job-trials—performing a series of tasks related to the job —are conducted by production floor supervisors.[10] A trial usually lasts about 30 to 45 minutes. The supervisor determines the outcome of the trial. If a candidate passes the trial, she is offered a salary based on her skill level, and she usually starts working the day after.

The interview experiment follows the same process undertaken by the partner factories with only one difference: women in the study sample were provided with an **interview invitation** letter. In this invitation letter, we included interview dates, the address of the nearest partner factory, and how to get to the factory. It's also important to note that there is no added benefit of the letters at the factories. Even though women were assigned to interview dates and factories, they could show up at any date or factory to be considered for jobs without penalty.

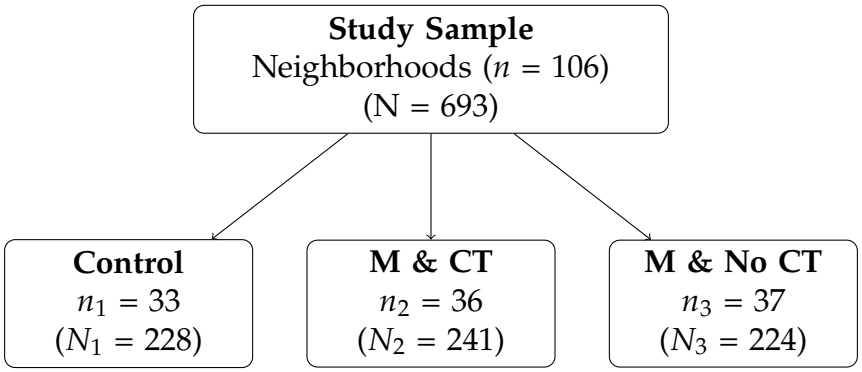
3 Experimental Design

We conducted a neighborhood-level randomized controlled trial to evaluate the effects of an intervention designed to improve women's job search by enabling them to coordinate travel with other job-seeking women in their neighborhood. The intervention involved matching women within neighborhoods and randomly varying whether they could coordinate their travel to attend job interviews at nearby factories. We assess the impact on women's likelihood of attending interviews. Figure 1 illustrates the experimental design, and Table A1 summarizes the implementation timeline. This section provides further de-

[10] For instance, floor supervisors usually ask candidates trying out for helper jobs to iron or fold clothes, and tasks related to stitching are assigned to workers trying out for sewing operator jobs.

tails on the randomization procedure, sample recruitment, treatment arms, and treatment take-up.

Figure 1: Experimental Design



3.1 Neighborhoods and Randomization

The study takes place in 106 neighborhoods that served as catchment areas for screening and enrolling women in the study sample. A team of surveyors defined and mapped neighborhood boundaries prior to the start of the experiment. The boundaries were drawn utilizing existing geographical features such as main roads, highways, parks, and fields. When it was not feasible to create natural boundaries, paved roads, and non-residential buildings were utilized. We created buffer zones between neighborhoods to minimize spillovers between them (see Figure B1)[11]

Randomization was done at the neighborhood level. It was stratified within the city and distance to the nearest factory. For each neighborhood, we calculated the distance from the centroid to the factory and binned the distances into 9 categories[12] The bins have a high correlation with travel cost to the factory using two common modes of transport: shared auto-rickshaws ($corr$ = 0.51) and private auto-rickshaws ($corr$ = 0.42). Within a city-distance bin combination, we randomly assigned neighborhoods to two treatment groups or a control group. Table 1 presents neighborhood characteristics and tests for balance across the three groups. We do not find any significant differences across the three groups.

[11] Whenever possible, we used natural separators such as highways or non-residential buildings

[12] Specifically, the bins were defined as follows: distance bin = 1 if the distance from a neighborhood to the factory (d) $\leq$ 2km. distance bin = 2 if $2 < d \leq 3$; distance bin = 3 if $3 < d \leq 4$; distance bin = 4 if $4 < d \leq 5$; distance bin = 5 if $5 < d \leq 6$; distance bin = 6 if $6 < d \leq 7$; distance bin = 7 if $7 < d \leq 8$; distance bin = 8 if $8 < d \leq 11$ and distance bin = 9 if $11 < d \leq 13$.

Table 1: Neighborhood Characteristics and Balance

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)-(2)	(1)-(3)	(2)-(3)
	Control	M & CT	M & No CT	Pairwise t-test		
Variables	Mean/(SD)	Mean/(SD)	Mean/(SD)	P-value	P-value	P-value
Number of women enrolled to the study	6.91 (0.45)	6.69 (0.64)	6.05 (0.43)	0.78	0.17	0.41
Approximate number of households	200.61 (4.13)	201.67 (7.72)	198.92 (6.85)	0.90	0.83	0.79
= 1 if metro station nearby	0.45 (0.09)	0.36 (0.08)	0.38 (0.08)	0.44	0.53	0.88
= 1 if bus stop within neighborhood boundary	0.03 (0.03)	0.00 (0.00)	0.03 (0.03)	0.32	0.94	0.32
One-way trip to closest partner factory:						
Cost of private auto (USD) to factory	1.30 (0.10)	1.43 (0.10)	1.93 (0.47)	0.36	0.19	0.30
Cost of shared auto (USD) to factory	0.37 (0.06)	0.29 (0.02)	0.29 (0.02)	0.24	0.23	0.97
Distance to factory (Kms)	4.50 (0.48)	4.60 (0.45)	5.37 (0.53)	0.88	0.23	0.27
Minutes to factory	15.94 (0.93)	16.86 (0.94)	16.51 (0.96)	0.49	0.67	0.80
Number of neighborhoods	33	36	37	69	70	73

Notes: This table presents the average values for neighborhood characteristics and tests for balance across the three groups - control, Matching & Coordinated Travel, and Matching & No Coordinated Travel. A unit of observation is a neighborhood. The last 3 columns show the p-values from the pairwise t-tests checking for equality of two means. Standard errors are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

3.2 Sample Recruitment

Post randomization, starting in February 2024, enumerators went door-to-door to screen and enroll women in the experiment. For screening, random sampling procedures were used. [13] The screening criteria included six conditions, and women needed to satisfy all six: (1) be between the ages of 18-40, (2) have a government-issued ID, (3) be able to operate either an industrial or home sewing machine, (4) not engage in full-time or part-time work outside their homes, (5) not have worked with our partner factory in the last 3 months, and (6) be interested in working at the partner factory[14]. Criteria (1)-(3) aligned with the hiring requirements of the partner factories, while criteria (4)-(5) targeted women more likely to face mobility constraints when engaging in paid work outside their homes. Criterion (6) ensured we recruited women who had expressed a willingness to work.

Based on the screening criteria, 693 women across 106 neighborhoods —on average,

[13] Prior to initiating recruitment, we mapped the lanes and entry points for each neighborhood and selected a random entry point to start the screening process. Following this, they navigated the area using a right-hand rule. This approach ensured that houses closer to main or paved roads did not have a higher likelihood of being surveyed.

[14] We asked women to express their willingness to work independently of their families' approval or disapproval. Therefore, if a woman indicated she was willing to work but was unsure whether her husband would allow it, she was still considered eligible.

7 women per neighborhood —were included in the study sample. Table A2 presents the baseline sample characteristics by the three groups and tests balance. Table A4 tests for balance in balance survey completion across the three groups. We do not find evidence of selection into the sample based on treatment assignment[15].

At baseline, women on average were: 28.7 years old, mostly married, and had 3.5 household members. 11% had worked in the past six months and only 16% reported making a trip outside their homes in search of jobs. 70% reported traveling with friends or family to mitigate safety concerns. A significant proportion (47%) had traveled with companions in the past week, and 60% did so during their most recent trip. 24% women reported that they didn't go outside of their neighborhoods in the past week and 14% reported not even leaving their houses.

3.3 Treatments

3.3.1 Individual & Group Meetings

In the treated neighborhoods, women from the study sample were matched through group meetings. Group meetings often took place in a public space on the same day as the baseline surveys. On average, two meetings were held per neighborhood, with four women present in each meeting.[16] In the control neighborhoods, individual (one-to-one) meeting with an enumerator was conducted instead.[17] Female enumerators facilitated all research activities, including screening, surveys, and meetings.

During these meetings —individual and group —women were provided with details about the jobs at the partner factories. This included information about the factory, interviews, how to travel to the factory, salaries, work days and timings, and overtime policies. Women were also invited to attend job interviews during the meetings and were provided with an "invitation letter". It included their name, factory's address, interview time, and assigned interview dates. Women were assigned to a 2-day interview window and they could show up on either day.[18]

[15] At the time of consent, we explicitly informed women about the three groups and the group they were assigned to.
[16] We piloted conducting one meeting per neighborhood. However, a majority of women refused to attend meetings more than 2-3 minutes walking distance away. Therefore, we decided to conduct multiple meetings per neighborhood (ideally two) to improve take-up.
[17] Table B1 presents key details about the content of the meetings.
[18] If a woman didn't follow her assigned date and showed up on a different date, she was still considered for the job.

3.3.2 Matching & Coordinated Travel (M & CT) Treatment

If a woman only travels with companions—whether to feel safer, or to navigate social norms, or for convenience —the unavailability of companions could limit her attendance at interviews and visits to prospective employers. It might also lead her to give up working outside her home. A potential solution is to travel with other job-seeking women, but they often do not know each other. In our study context, women tend to be socially isolated, with their networks mostly limited to family members, who may discourage them from working outside (Anukriti et al. 2022; Afridi et al. 2023). The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment addresses these challenges by matching job-seeking women within neighborhoods and helping them coordinate travel.

In a Matching & Coordinated Travel neighborhood, women from the study were invited to attend group meetings - designed to introduce them to each other. During the meetings, enumerators led ice-breaking activities, provided information about interviews and jobs at the nearest partner factory, and explained how to travel there. The main objective was to help women coordinate their travel to the interviews. To facilitate this, women were assigned to the same two-day interview window at the factory. It was meant to nudge them to coordinate their travel with each other instead of relying on family members. We also explicitly encouraged them to coordinate their travel.[19] To improve the coordination, we also created WhatsApp groups for each meeting. 44% of the women from the treatment were part of the WhatsApp groups. At the end of the meetings, women were given time to socialize.

In the control neighborhoods, enumerators conducted individual meetings with women and invited them to interviews. To understand if women face constraints in coordinating their travel and finding travel companions, women within a control neighborhood were assigned to the same two-day interview window at the nearest partner factory, same as the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment. But, they were not matched together. We also did not discuss the idea of coordinating travel or traveling with companions to avoid inducing demand effects. This approach allows us to examine if women do travel with companions to interviews.

[19] Interview windows varied across **Matching and & Coordinated Travel** neighborhoods based on when the baseline surveys were completed for all women within a neighborhood. As a result, interview windows were spread out between March and June 2024.

3.3.3 Matching & No Coordinated Travel (M & No CT) Treatment

The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment combines two elements: first, it matches women through group meetings, and second, it helps them coordinate their travel to factory interviews. To isolate the effect of coordinated travel from the effects of matching or group meetings, we designed the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. In a Matching & No Coordinated Travel neighborhood, women were invited to attend group meetings, but they were assigned different interview windows to reduce their probability of coordinating travel with other women. Women, in principle, could disregard their assigned dates and attend interviews with other women from the group meetings but we do not find many instances of this happening.

Within each group meeting, women were assigned a unique 2-day interview window to avoid women from having overlapping dates. The dates were assigned randomly on a rolling basis, usually starting one day after the group meeting. For example, if four women attended a meeting on June 20, 2024, one woman was assigned to interview on June 22-23, another to June 24-25, and so on. The group meetings were identical in design and content to those in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment, except that coordinating travel was not mentioned. This meant that a woman in the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment received same interactions with other women as in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment. We also created WhatsApp groups for each meeting and 57% of women joined the groups.

3.4 Treatment Take-Up

In the two treatment neighborhoods, we scheduled group meetings shortly after completing the baseline surveys to maximize participation. If a woman was unable to attend a scheduled meeting, we rescheduled it for a time when at least one other woman was available. When even this was not feasible, we conducted individual (one-to-one) meetings with her. During the individual meetings, we provided her with an interview invitation letter and assigned an interview window according to the research design. If a woman refused to attend the meetings after completing the baseline surveys, we didn't follow up with her for rescheduling.

By design, meeting participation in the control group was 100%. In Table 2 we present details on the group meetings for the two treatments and in Table A5, we check for balance across the two groups. 95% of women from the Matching & Coordinated Travel and 93% women from the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatments attended the group meetings. Only 4% and 2% of women from the Matching & Coordinated Travel and

Matching & No Coordinated Travel attended the meeting alone. On average, 4.3 women were present per Matching & Coordinated Travel group meeting, and 3.8 women were present per Matching & No Coordinated Travel group meeting. The only dimension where there is an imbalance across the two treatments is the average number of days between the meeting and the start of the interview window: in Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment, there were 6.5 days compared to 3 and 3.5 days for the Matching & Coordinated Travel and control groups. In Table A7 we show that the treatment effects are robust to controlling for the number of days between the meetings and the interviews.

Table 2: Detailed Information on Group Meetings

	M & CT	M & No CT
	Mean(SD)	Mean(SD)
=1 if attended meeting	0.95	0.93
	(0.21)	(0.25)
=1 if attended alone	0.04	0.02
	(0.19)	(0.15)
=1 if attended with 1 other woman	0.11	0.13
	(0.31)	(0.34)
Total women present in the meeting	4.28	3.87
	(1.97)	(1.73)
=1 if joined meetings' WhatsApp group	0.44	0.57
	(0.50)	(0.50)
Number of women known prior to the meeting	1.35	1.22
	(1.50)	(1.35)
Observations	241	224
Neighborhoods	36	37

Notes: This table presents the details of the group meetings for the two treatment groups - Matching & Coordinated Travel and Matching & No Coordinated Travel. A total of 122 group meetings were conducted across 73 neighborhoods.

4 Data and Empirical Specification

4.1 Data Collection

The empirical analysis uses the data from two sources: three rounds of survey data and official factory records. Using surveys, we collected data on primary outcomes for the study: interview attendance, job search trips, and number of job search trips. We rely on administrative data from the factories to assess the effects on passing interviews and accepting job offers. Baseline and follow-up surveys were conducted privately inside women's homes with only the enumerator and the respondent present. The surveys at the factory location were administered inside a room in the factory. The study timeline is presented in Table A1.

The first round of surveys were the baseline surveys. We collected data on household demographics, employment history, job search activity such as making trips to employers or places of work, travel patterns, feeling of safety when traveling, gender attitudes, existing social connections, and prevalent household norms. Questions on job search included instances of women traveling outside their homes in search for jobs in the past two weeks, number of employers visited, and number of interviews attended. To measure physical mobility, we collected information on the total number of trips made outside their homes and neighborhoods in the the past week and also elicited details on cost, duration, travel companions, and mode of transport for two most recent trips. We also asked women to identify the number of women they know living nearby and the frequency of interacting and traveling with them.

The second round of surveys were conducted at the partner factories to collect data on interview attendance. Enumerators were present every day all day at the factories to record information on study participants showing up for the interviews. We collected information on cost, duration, travel companions, and mode of transport to the factory.

The third round of surveys are the follow-up surveys that were conducted six weeks after the interviews. We collected same information as the baseline surveys. The completion rate for follow-up surveys is 80%. In Table A4, we test for selective completion across the three groups and find no evidence of the same.

4.2 Empirical Specification

The primary specification estimates the Intent-to-Treat (ITT) effects of being assigned to either Matching & Coordinated Travel or Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatments relative to the control group. It implements a comparison of means and estimates:

$$Y_{ins} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{M \& CT}_n + \beta_2 \text{M \& No CT}_n + \gamma_1 X_i + \gamma_2 Z_n + \mu_s + \epsilon_{ins} \tag{1}$$

Y_{ins} is the outcome for women i in neighborhood n in stratum s. $\textbf{M \& CT}_n$ is a binary indicator for whether a neighborhood n was assigned to Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment and $\textbf{M \& No CT}_n$ is the binary indicator for whether it was assigned to Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. X_i is a vector of baseline characteristics of women in Table A2 and Z_n is a vector of neighborhood characteristics such as travel time and cost to the nearest factory in Table 1. μ_s denote strata fixed effects[20]. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level. All regressions include strata-fixed effects. We

[20] Strata are city-distance bin combinations, as discussed in subsection 3.1.

also test for $\beta_1 = \beta_2$.

We also estimate heterogeneous treatment effects by number of known women nearby and feeling of safety when traveling, measured at the time of baseline surveys. We estimate the regression equation:

$$\begin{aligned} Y_{ins} = {} & \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{M \& CT}_n + \beta_2 \text{M \& No CT}_n \\ & + \beta_3 \text{M \& CT}_n \times \text{Covariate}_{ins} + \beta_4 \text{M \& No CT}_n \times \text{Covariate}_{ins} \\ & + \beta_5 \text{Covariate}_{ins} + \gamma_1 X_i + \gamma_2 Z_n + \mu_s + \epsilon_{ins} \end{aligned} \tag{2}$$

Number of known women nearby is the total number of women they know in their buildings, and adjacent and opposite housing structures. $Covariate_{ins} = 1$ if number of known women is less than the median for the study sample. To create a measure of women's feeling of safety, we use baseline responses to three questions: How safe do you feel while traveling by the following means - auto, walking, and bus during daytime? Women ranked their responses on a Likert scale - very less, less, neither less or more, more, a lot more. A higher score implies a higher feeling of safety. We take an average of the three responses. $Covariate_{ins}$= 1 if the average is less than the median for the study sample.

Outcomes of Interest

There are three primary outcomes of interest. The first primary outcome of interest is interview attendance: a binary indicator for whether a woman i attended interviews at the partner factories. The second primary outcome of interest is a binary indicator for whether a woman made a job search trip —i.e., traveled outside her home in search of jobs or to visit a prospective employer —in the past six weeks. The third primary outcome is the number of job search trips made in the past six weeks. Data on job search outcomes were collected during the follow-up surveys and we reminded women to not include the trip made to the interviews as part of the interview experiment when recalling such instances.

We also measure the effect on a range of secondary outcomes. One secondary outcome of interest is whether women coordinated their travel with study women to the interviews. It is a binary indicator for whether a woman traveled to the interviews with study women. We also estimate the effect of the treatments on whether a woman made a job search trip with a woman from her neighborhood. We also measure the effect on employment: whether a woman accepted job at a partner factory and whether she was employed anywhere at the time of the follow-up surveys. Finally, we measure the effects on a

woman's connections with other women living nearby. During the follow up surveys, we asked each woman to identify all women they know living in the same building as her and in adjacent and opposite houses. We estimate the effects on the number of known women nearby, if she interacted and discussed household issues with them in the past week and if she traveled outside her home with them in the past week.

5 Results

5.1 Interview Experiment

Table 3: Overview of experimental arms

	Interview Invite	Group Meeting	Same Interview Dates
M & CT	Yes	Yes	Yes
M & No CT	Yes	Yes	No - Different to all
Control	Yes	No	Yes

We begin our empirical analysis by examining the effect of the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment on one of the primary outcomes for the experiment - interview attendance at the partner factories. We show the results in Table 4. Columns 1 and 2 show the effect on women's attendance at interviews; columns 3 and 4 show the effect of coordinating travel with study women to the interviews; and columns 5 and 6 show the effect of traveling with non-study companions to the interviews. Columns 1,3 and 5 include strata-fixed effect, and columns 2,4 and 6 also control for baseline neighborhood and sample characteristics (showing estimates of regression Equation 1).

The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment led to a large increase in the probability of women attending interviews compared to the control group (columns 1 and 2). 15.4% of women from the control group attended interviews.[21] The treatment increases this share by 13.1 percentage points (p-value = 0.015, column 2). These effects are remarkable. A soft-touch intervention that matches job-seeking women within a neighborhood and enables them to coordinate their travel can increase the probability of attending interviews by as much as 85%. These point estimates align closely with previous research on labor market barriers faced by women. For example, Bursztyn et al. 2020 document a 11–15 percentage point increase in job sign-up and show-up rates among women in Saudi Arabia after

[21] The attendance is similar to the baseline proportion of women from the control group making a trip to an employer in search of jobs in the past two weeks.

learning that most Saudi men support women working outside the home.[22] Our findings also parallel those of Grosset and Donald 2024, who show that job-seekers in Côte d'Ivoire are 15 percentage points more likely to accept a job if individuals in their social network are also offered the same shift.

Table 4: Effects on Attending Interviews

			=1 if traveled to the interviews with			
	= 1 if participated in interviews		Study women		Non-study companion	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
M & CT (β_1)	0.118**	0.131**	0.095*	0.099*	0.043	0.043
	(0.055)	(0.053)	(0.051)	(0.051)	(0.030)	(0.030)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.017	-0.006	-0.041	-0.041	0.044	0.048*
	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.028)	(0.029)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.015**	0.007***	0.007***	0.002***	0.975	0.885
Controls	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Control Mean	0.154	0.154	0.096	0.096	0.035	0.035
Neighborhoods	106	106	106	106	106	106
Observations	693	693	693	693	693	693

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on women's probability of attending interviews at the partner factories (columns 1 and 2) and whether the women traveled to the factories with study women or non-study companions (Columns 3-6). Each column represents a separate regression. All regressions include strata-fixed effects. Controls include baseline values of variables in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

We investigate the role of travel coordination in driving the treatment effects by analyzing how women traveled to the interviews. Among interviewees in the control group, 83% (control mean of 0.096 + 0.035) traveled to the factory with companions, and three-fourths (or 63%) did so with other study women. This is particularly striking because during the individual one-to-one meetings with the women from the control group there was no mention of traveling with companions or coordinating with peers. In columns 3 and 4 of Table 4, we find that the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases the likelihood of women traveling with study peers by 9.5–10 percentage points, or approximately 98–104% over the control group mean of 9.6%. Columns 5 and 6 show a smaller and statistically insignificant increase of 4.3 percentage points in traveling with non-study companions. Conditional on attending interviews, the likelihood of traveling with companions is similar across groups, suggesting that the treatment did not create new demand for companions but instead made it easier for women to act on existing preferences.

[22] Similarly, McKelway 2021 finds an 11 percentage point increase in women signing up for jobs in rural India when their families are given information and shown a promotional video about the job.

The two findings —higher interview attendance in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment, and the fact that most interviewees in the control group traveled with companions —suggest that women face constraints in coordinating their travel on their own. If there were no such constraints, we would observe similar attendance rates across the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment and the control group or lower instances of women traveling with companions.

It is also possible that the increase in interview attendance under the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment is driven by women knowing other job-seeking peers in their neighborhood, rather than by the opportunity to coordinate travel with them to interviews. Expanding a woman's social network to include others who are also interested in working at the same employer can influence interview attendance through mechanisms beyond travel coordination. First, it may reduce pushback from her family by providing them with information about jobs (McKelway 2021), by signaling the gender-appropriateness of the work (Subramanian 2024), or by lowering the social costs associated with her working outside the home. Second, it may make factory jobs appear more attractive by offering the possibility of working and commuting alongside friends and neighbors (Grosset and Donald 2024), or by improving expectations about safety in the workplace (Sharma 2023).

While we are not able to separately identify the effects of these mechanisms, our experimental design allows us to isolate the effect of coordinated travel from them. The Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment is designed to generate the same social exposure as the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment. Women in both treatments meet other job-seeking women from their neighborhoods, but those in the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment are assigned to interviews on different dates, limiting their ability to travel together. This ensures that the key difference between the two treatment groups lies in the ability to coordinate travel. Consistent with this, women in the Matching & No Coordinated Travel are 4.1 percentage points less likely to travel with study women than those in the control group.

We find no effect of the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment on the probability of women attending interviews. In fact, the point estimate is negative. The impact of Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment relative to the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment are similar to its effects relative to the control group: 13.7 percentage points (p-value <0.01) or 93% increase over the mean of 14.7%. With this estimate, we can attribute the differences in interview attendance between Matching & Coordinated Travel and the control group to women coordinating their travel. In other words, it suggests that group meetings or matching job-seeking women in a neighborhood is not sufficient

to improve attendance in interviews if women can't ultimately coordinate their travel to interviews.

5.2 Beyond Interview Experiment

In Table 5, we test whether the two treatments affected women's job search beyond the interview experiment. Since most women who participated in the interviews did not secure jobs at the partner factories (we present details in subsection 6.2), we examine if women in the two treatments were more likely to continue looking for jobs elsewhere. We estimate the effect on three outcome variables. Columns 1 and 2 show the impact of making a job search trip —whether a woman traveled outside her home in search of jobs or to visit a prospective employer —in the past six weeks. Columns 3 and 4 show the effects on making such trips with women from the neighborhood. Columns 5 and 6 show the impact on the number of job search trips made in the past six weeks.

From the control group, 16% of women made a job search trip in the past 6 weeks. The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases the probability by 12.6 percentage points (column 2, p-value < 0.01). This represents a 78% increase over the control group mean. In columns 5 and 6, we find that women in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment also make an additional 0.37 trips (column 6, p-value = 0.016) —or more than double the number of trips than women in the control group.

In principle, women from the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment could also coordinate their travel to prospective employers outside of the interview experiment. Consequently, it could have a positive effect on women's job search beyond the interview experiment. We find results along this reasoning. The Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment has a positive but statistically insignificant impact on women's probability of making a job search trip. The magnitude of the effect on the number of job search trips is similar (statistically and in magnitude) to the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment. These results suggest that while both treatments matched job-seeking women in a neighborhood, there was an additional benefit of inviting women to attend interviews on the same dates. Perhaps the actual experience of coordinating travel to interviews led women to continue coordinating their travel for future trips.

Columns 3 and 4 provide evidence suggesting that the effects of Matching & Coordinated Travel on women's job search are driven by coordinated travel. We find that the treatment has a large and statistically significant impact on a woman making job search trips with women from her neighborhoods. Specifically, a woman from Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment is 10-11 percentage points (135% to 150%, p-value < 0.01) more

likely than a woman from the control group to have traveled with women from their neighborhoods in search of jobs. We find limited but similar evidence for the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. Women in Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment are 2.2 percentage points more likely than women in the control group to make job search trips with women from the neighborhood. However, the difference is not statistically significant. As a result, the difference between the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment and Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment is large and statistically significant: approximately 9 percentage points (p-value < 0.01).

Table 5: Effects on Job Search 6 weeks after Factory Interviews

	= 1 if made job search trips		= 1 if made job search trips with women from neighborhood		Number of job search trips	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
M & CT (β_1)	0.120***	0.126***	0.106***	0.111***	0.349**	0.369**
	(0.045)	(0.047)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.143)	(0.150)
M & No CT (β_2)	0.031	0.027	0.025	0.022	0.252	0.206
	(0.045)	(0.047)	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.188)	(0.197)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.024**	0.007***	0.007***	0.002***	0.591	0.339
Controls	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Control Mean	0.160	0.160	0.074	0.074	0.330	0.330
Neighborhoods	104	104	104	104	104	104
Observations	560	560	560	560	560	560

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on women's job search trips outside the interview experiment as reported by women during follow-up surveys 6 weeks after the interviews. The number of observations is less than N = 693 because it only includes women that we were able to follow up with during these surveys. The reference period for the three outcomes is six weeks after the interviews at the partner factories and does not include interviews at the partner factories. In Columns (1)-(2), *=1 if made job search trips* is the indicator variable for making a trip outside the home in search of jobs or to prospective employers. In Columns (3)-(4), *=1 if made job search trips with women from neighborhood* is the indicator variable of making any job search trip with other women from their neighborhoods. In Columns (5)-(6), *number of job search trips* is the total number of trips made to the employers. If a woman visited multiple employers in one trip, it's counted as one trip. All regressions include strata-fixed effects. Controls include baseline values of variables in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

6 Discussion

6.1 Pathways

In this section, we provide a discussion on different pathways that can help explain the effects of Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment on women's job search.

We begin by documenting evidence supporting our argument in the previous section that the effects of Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment are driven by women being

able to travel with other job-seeking women when looking for jobs. In Table 6, we present the results on women's interactions with nearby women during the follow-up surveys. In column 1, we look at the effect on the number of known women nearby and find that Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases it by 1.08 and Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment increases it by 0.52. The two-point estimates are not statistically different from each other ($\beta_1 = \beta_2$, p-value = 0.2). Similarly, in column 2, we find that the two treatments also have a similar size effect on a woman discussing general issues with nearby women in the past week: women in Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment are 9.1 percentage points, and women in Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment are 8.6 percentage points more likely to discuss household or general issues with these women.

In contrast, in column 3, we find that women in Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment are significantly more likely (7.8-8.3 percentage points) than women in Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment (($\beta_1 = \beta_2$, p-value = 0.03) and control group (p-value = 0.052) to have traveled outside with the nearby women in the past week for non-job search related purposes. This shows that the two treatments have similar effects on a woman knowing nearby women and interacting with them. However, a woman from Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment is more likely to travel with them for non-job related purposes in the past week.

This set of results reassures us that the nature of group meetings and the effect of the group meetings in both treatments did not differ significantly except for changing how women travel. The experience of coordinating travel to interviews could increase women's job search through multiple mechanisms. It could encourage a woman to continue traveling with other job-seeking women for future job-search trips. It could also foster deeper friendships, which may further motivate her to actively seek employment. Consequently, these friendships could also provide her with valuable information about job openings or prospective employers and might even help convince her family to support her job search. The fact that women were more likely to coordinate their travel with others from their neighborhoods for job search (column 4 of Table 5) and for non-job related purposes (column 3, Table 6), while their connections and interactions did not differ across the two treatments —is potentially consistent with the first mechanism. If it were driven by other mechanisms, such as encouraging women to keep looking for jobs or providing information regarding job vacancies, we would not expect to see a large effect on women coordinating their travel when making job-searching trips and even non-job-related trips. These results, therefore, provide direct evidence that effects are primarily driven by women continuing to coordinate their travel when looking for jobs.

Table 6: Effects on Connections with Women Living Nearby

	Nearby known women (#)	Discussed issues w/ nearby women (=1)	Traveled w/ nearby women (=1)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
M & CT (β_1)	1.085***	0.091*	0.083*
M & No CT (β_2)	(0.407)	(0.047)	(0.042)
Peer Effect	0.519	0.086	0.005
	(0.504)	(0.054)	(0.043)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.20	0.91	0.03**
Control Mean	4.16	0.37	0.17
Neighborhoods	104	104	104
Observations	560	560	560

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on women's connections with other women living nearby as reported by them during Follow-up Surveys. The number of observations is less than N = 693 because it only includes women that we were able to follow up with during these surveys. Each column is a separate regression. In column 1, *Nearby women known* is the total number of women study participants knew living nearby. We define living nearby as living in the same housing structure and in adjacent and opposite houses. In column 2, *=1 if discussed household issues with peers* is the indicator variable for discussing household or general issues with nearby women in the past week. In column 3, *=1 if traveled with peers* is the indicator variable for traveling with nearby women outside in the past week. All regressions include strata fixed effects and controls in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Next, we present results from the heterogeneity analysis of effects on interview attendance and job search. In Table 7, we estimate heterogeneous treatment effects on the probability of attending interviews (using regression Equation 2) by three baseline variables: column 1 reports the effects by fewer number of known women nearby (i.e., if the number of nearby known women is less than the sample median), column 2 reports the effects by the lower feeling of safety when traveling (i.e., if the sense of safety is less than the sample median), and column 3 reports the effects by job search at baseline (i.e., if women reported making a job search trip in the past 2 weeks). See subsection 4.2 for more information on the three variables.

In column 1, we find that the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment is significantly more effective in increasing attendance for a woman who knew fewer women nearby than the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. That is, for a woman who knew fewer women, the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases her attendance in interviews by 21.8 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$, p-value < 0.01) or by 192% relative to the control group and by 19.1 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$, p-value <0.01) or 160% relative to the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. The effect of *Only* Matching treatment is positive but small (2.7 percentage points) and statistically insignificant. Since the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment has such large effects on a woman with relatively fewer connections in her neighborhood and Matching & No Coordinated Travel

treatment has comparatively much smaller effects, it suggests that the treatment effects (of Matching & Coordinated Travel) are not just driven by matching job seeking women but also through their ability to coordinate their travel.

In column 2 we estimate the heterogeneous treatment effects by women's baseline levels of feeling of safety while traveling. This measure is complicated to interpret as it is subjective and may be influenced by women's experiences with harassment and the frequency of travel. For example, a woman who seldom leaves her house may report feeling safer simply because she doesn't travel enough to experience issues with safety. Conversely, a woman who reports feeling unsafe may be someone who travels more frequently and, therefore, has a higher awareness of the safety challenges associated with traveling. Nevertheless, we find that women who reported feeling unsafe while traveling are more responsive to the treatment. Specifically, for women with a lower reported feeling of safety, the Matching & Coordinated Travel intervention increases the interview attendance by 43 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$, p-value < 0.01) relative to the control group and by 27 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$, p-value <0.01) relative to the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment.

In column 3, we estimate the heterogeneous treatment effects by whether a woman made a job search trip outside her home in the two weeks preceding baseline surveys and find no heterogeneity. From the control group, 32% of women who were searching for jobs at baseline attended the interviews. For this group of women, we do not find any differential effect of the two treatments on women's probability of attending interviews. For instance, women in the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment who were searching at baseline were 3 percentage points more likely to participate in interviews compared to women who were not searching at baseline ($\beta_3 + \beta_5$).

In Table A9, we replicate the heterogeneity analysis, this time focusing on treatment effects on job search behavior. The results here are somewhat noisy due to a smaller sample size, but we observe patterns consistent with previous findings. For women who knew fewer women in their neighborhoods (column 1), the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases their likelihood of making a job search trip by 12.8 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3$, p-value = 0.02), or 100% relative to the control group, and by 7.9 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4$, p-value = 0.16) relative to the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment. The effects on making job search trips with women from the neighborhood are similar (column 4): for women who knew fewer women, Matching & Coordinated Travel increases the probability of making a job search trip with neighborhood women by 10.2 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3$, p-value = 0.018), a 200% increase over the control group,

and by 6.1 percentage points ($\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4$, p-value = 0.13) relative to the Matching & No Coordinated Travel group. For the effect on the number of job search trips (column 7), the direction of effects is consistent, but the differences are not statistically significant. A plausible explanation for the smaller differences between Matching & Coordinated Travel and Matching & No Coordinated Travel for women with fewer known connections (compared to Table 7) is that for job search beyond the interview experiment, women in the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment could also now coordinate their travel together to pursue job opportunities.

Table 7: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects on Attending Interviews, by Nearby Women Known, Feeling of Safety, and Job Search at Baseline

	Fewer nearby known (#) (1)	Lesser feeling of safety (2)	Job search at baseline (3)
M & CT (β_1)	0.046	0.089	0.151***
	(0.068)	(0.056)	(0.056)
M & CT × Covariate (β_3)	0.172**	0.342**	-0.128
	(0.073)	(0.133)	(0.132)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.030	-0.024	0.022
	(0.053)	(0.045)	(0.044)
M & No CT × Covariate (β_4)	0.057	0.159	-0.147
	(0.063)	(0.107)	(0.116)
Covariate (β_5)	-0.110**	-0.103	0.157
	(0.043)	(0.078)	(0.096)
p-value:			
$\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.224	0.042**	0.020**
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$	0.000***	0.001***	0.850
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$	0.003***	0.025**	0.165
Control Mean	0.154	0.154	0.154
Control Mean if Covariate = 1	0.113	0.114	0.324
Neighborhoods	106	106	106
Observations	693	693	693

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on the interview participation at factories by women's baseline levels of number of nearby women known, feeling of safety and job search at baseline. *Nearby women known* is the total number of women study participants knew living nearby. We define living nearby as living in the same housing structure and in adjacent and opposite houses. For column 1, *Covariate* = 1 if the number of known women is less than the median of the sample. Women's feeling of safety is the average of responses to the question: *How safe do you feel while traveling by the following means (auto, walk, bus) during the daytime?* A higher score implies a higher feeling of safety. *Covariate* = 1 if the average of the three responses is less than the median of the sample. In column 3, *Covariate* = 1 if women reported traveling outside their homes in search of jobs two weeks preceding the baseline surveys. Each column is a separate regression. All regressions include strata fixed effects and controls in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

In columns 2, 5, and 8, we find no significant heterogeneity in treatment effects based on women's reported feelings of safety. However, women who reported feeling less safe in Matching & Coordinated Travel and Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatments are more likely to look for jobs than those in the control group with similar levels of feelings of safety. Next, we examine the effects by baseline job search, and find that the effects on job search are markedly larger for Matching & Coordinated Travel among women who were already searching at baseline (column 3). Specifically, among these women, Matching &

Coordinated Travel increases the probability of making a job search trip by 20.7 percentage points over the control and by 25.4 percentage points over Matching & No Coordinated Travel. It also increases their probability of traveling with neighborhood women (column 6) for job search, but we do not find significant differences in the effects on the number of trips (column 9).

Overall, these findings suggest that the treatments were especially effective for women with fewer known connections nearby. By helping them expand their networks to include other job-seeking women, the treatments likely provided these women with travel companions who could travel with them during their job search trips. The larger impact on job search for women who were already searching indicates that the treatment intensified their job-seeking efforts. Since there are no significant differences in interview attendance by whether a woman was searching for jobs at baseline, it suggests that her outside job search may have also been constrained by other barriers, such as limited information about employers or jobs - which was less of a barrier for factory interviews as job vacancies and interview locations were clearly communicated to all participants.

One simple explanation for the treatment effects of Matching & Coordinated Travel on interview attendance is that traveling together may be cheaper due to economies of scale. For example, women could split travel expenses by booking a private vehicle or using cheaper shared options, such as carpooling with other women or family members or sharing an autorickshaw. To test whether reduced travel costs explain the treatment effects, we estimate heterogeneous effects by distance and travel cost in Table A10. In column 1, we estimate the effect by distance to the nearest partner factory. The distances were measured using Google Maps from the center of a neighborhood to the nearest partner factory gate. In Column 2, we estimate the effect of attending interviews by travel cost to the factory using a private autorickshaw - a commonly used mode of transport. We find no variation in effects of Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment by distance ($\beta_3 + \beta_5 = 0.352$) or cost to the factory ($\beta_3 + \beta_5 = 0.128$). These findings provide suggestive evidence that the treatment effects are less likely to be driven by reducing travel costs.

6.2 What about Employment?

This paper centers around the effects of coordinated travel on women's job search, however, in this section, we also examine the effects on employment as a downstream outcome. We look at the effects of the treatments on accepting jobs at the partner factories and being employed six weeks after the interviews.

In Table 8, column 1, we study the effects on women passing interviews at the factories.

In column 2, we study the impact on women accepting job at the factories and in column 3, we study the effects on women working at the six week mark. Before getting into the results, it is important to acknowledge that the majority (80%) of women who attended the interviews did not pass them. This outcome was unexpected. Qualitative surveys with factory supervisors and study participants suggest that this is in part driven by some women not being qualified for manufacturing jobs and in part by hiring policies of the factories that favor candidates with prior work experience —something relatively uncommon in our sample.

Nevertheless, we find a positive effect on the probability of women attending and passing interviews. 2% of women from the control group passed them. The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases the share by 2.7 percentage points from 2% to 4.7%. This is roughly proportional to the increase in interview attendance, suggesting that the marginal women who attended interviews as a result of the treatment are not much different from those in the control group. Women in the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment are 2.1 percentage points more likely to pass the interviews compared to the control group. The differences across the three groups are not statistically significant.

Table 8: Effects on Employment

	Passed Interview	Accepted Offer	Employed at 6 weeks
	(1)	(2)	(3)
M & CT (β_1)	0.027	0.024	0.082*
	(0.024)	(0.021)	(0.048)
M & No CT (β_2)	0.021	0.012	0.056
	(0.027)	(0.021)	(0.051)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.816	0.606	0.606
Control Mean	0.02	0.01	0.24
Neighborhoods	106	106	104
Observations	693	693	560

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on the interview passing rates, job take-up at the factory, and employment at the time of follow-up surveys. The data for columns 1 and 2 comes from factory administration. In column 3, the number of observations is less than N = 693 because it only includes women that we were able to follow up with during these surveys. Each column is a separate regression. Controls include baseline values of variables in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Similarly, in Column 2, we find a positive effect on women accepting jobs at the partner factories. Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases the share of women accepting jobs by 2.4 percentage points, and Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment does so by 1.2 percentage points. It's important to note that the lack of significant effects of Matching & Coordinated Travel on employment at partner factories is not driven by women declining job offers but rather, as noted before, by women not passing interviews.

In fact, most of the women who were offered jobs accepted them.

Table 9: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects on Employment by Nearby Women Known, Feeling of Safety, and Job Search at Baseline

	Fewer nearby known (#) (1)	Lesser feeling of safety (2)	Job search at baseline (3)
M & CT (β_1)	0.045	0.063	0.044
	(0.058)	(0.056)	(0.048)
M & CT × Covariate (β_3)	0.153**	0.008	0.219***
	(0.071)	(0.151)	(0.079)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.022	0.054	0.033
	(0.060)	(0.050)	(0.053)
M & No CT × Covariate (β_4)	0.041	-0.031	0.120
	(0.071)	(0.094)	(0.080)
p-value:			
$\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.280	0.860	0.823
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$	0.027**	0.589	0.005***
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$	0.039**	0.938	0.009***
Control Mean	0.245	0.245	0.245
Control Mean if Covariate = 1	0.269	0.286	0.387
Neighborhoods	104	104	104
Observations	560	560	560

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on employment during follow-up surveys by women's baseline levels of number of nearby women known, feeling of safety, and job search at baseline. *Nearby women known* is the total number of women study participants knew living nearby. We define living nearby as living in the same housing structure and in adjacent and opposite houses. For column 1, *Covariate* = 1 if the number of known women is less than the median of the sample. Women's feeling of safety is the average of responses to the question: *How safe do you feel while traveling by the following means (auto, walk, bus) during the daytime?* A higher score implies a higher feeling of safety. *Covariate* = 1 if the average of the three responses is less than the median of the sample. In column 3, *Covariate* = 1 if women reported traveling outside their homes in search of jobs two weeks preceding the baseline surveys. Each column is a separate regression. All regressions include strata fixed effects and controls in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

In column 3, we present results on whether a woman was working for income at the time of the follow-up of the surveys. Six weeks after the interviews, 24% of women from the control group were employed. The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment increases a woman's probability of being employed by 8.2 percentage points or 33% (p-value = 0.09). The effect of Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment is 5.6 percentage points (or 23%), but the effect is not statistically significant.

To identify the mechanisms driving employment effects, we examine heterogeneous treatment effects by baseline characteristics: the number of known women nearby, feelings of safety while traveling, and prior job search status (Table 9). Since our interventions organized multiple job-seeking women within neighborhoods into groups, they could potentially influence norms around women's work. If norm changes drive the effects, we would expect the largest benefits among women not searching at baseline—those most likely constrained by social norms. However, we find the opposite: employment effects for both treatments are concentrated among women who were already searching at baseline.

Instead, the evidence suggests that increased job search intensity might be driving the

employment gains. The Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment significantly increases job search activity among baseline job-seekers during the six weeks following interviews (Table A9, column 3, $\beta_1 + \beta_3$). These women are 21.7 percentage points more likely to make job search trips and on average, conduct an additional 0.7 trips. For this same group, the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment outperforms the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment in employment gains by 11 percentage points (column 3, $\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4$, Table 9, p-value < 0.01). Supporting this pattern, women who knew fewer women at baseline —another group more likely to engage in job search (Table A9, column 1, $\beta_1 + \beta_3$) —also show significantly higher employment levels.

These findings argue against mechanisms common to both treatments, such as improved perceptions of job amenities or reduced daily commuting costs. If such shared mechanisms were primary drivers, we would not observe differential employment effects between treatments among baseline job-seekers. Together, these results provide suggestive evidence that the employment effects are at least in part driven by increasing women's job search.

Threats to Validity

A potential threat to the validity of results discussed in this section is that the negative point estimate of the Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment is driven by a larger number of days between its group meetings and the start of the interview window. As previously shown in Table A5, the average number of days between its meetings and interview window was 6.5 days. In contrast, it was 3 and 3.5 days for the Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment and the control group. A larger number of days could negatively affect the momentum of women when seeking jobs where they are more enthusiastic about attending an interview three days later rather than a week. It could also be that while waiting for interview dates, they secure jobs elsewhere. It could also be that the women who had attended interviews earlier had dissuaded others from attending by sharing negative information about the interviews or the job.

We address these concerns in Table A7 by including fixed effects for the number of days between the group meeting and the first day of the assigned interview window. We also include interview date fixed effects. The treatment effects are robust to the inclusion of these controls. Within a Matching & No Coordinated Travel group meeting, women were assigned to the dates randomly, thereby addressing concerns about the effects being confounded by other variables. In Table A8, we present results from regression Equation 2. In this table, *Covariate = 1* if the number of days between the meeting and interview

window is less than the sample median. We find that for Matching & No Coordinated Travel treatment, there are no differences in treatment effects across the two subgroups.

7 Conclusion

Restrictive social norms and safety concerns often limit women's ability to travel freely in developing countries, with far-reaching consequences for their economic participation. This paper focuses on a specific yet underexplored constraint: many Indian women prefer or are expected to travel only with companions. We show that in settings where women are socially isolated and their networks rarely include other job-seekers, matching them and enabling coordinated travel to interviews and employers can meaningfully improve job search and employment outcomes.

We find that matching women within neighborhoods and scheduling their interviews on the same day significantly increases interview attendance by 85% relative to individually invited women. By experimentally separating the effects of matching from travel coordination, we show that the gains are driven by the ability to travel together. Attendance increases by 93 percent compared to only being matched but not being able to coordinate travel. The treatment is particularly effective for women who reported knowing fewer peers nearby or feeling unsafe while traveling.

Beyond the interviews, the Matching and Coordinated Travel treatment led to a 78 percent increase in the likelihood of making job search trips and doubled the number of trips relative to the control group. These gains were sustained by continued peer support. Women in this group were twice as likely to travel with each other for job search and more likely to coordinate non-work travel as well.

To get a better understanding of how our intervention places alongside interventions that subsidize women's travel costs to search for jobs, we use results from our pilot experiment (presented in Table C1) and compare the effects of *Matching & Coordinated Travel treatment* with an intervention that covers women's travel costs of commuting to the factory for the interviews. We find that covering commuting expenses increased attendance by 7 to 9 percentage points, about half the effect of coordinated travel, which increased attendance by 18 percentage points.

These results, along with our results from the main experiment, highlight the need to study the strategies women use to navigate safety concerns and restrictive social norms while traveling, as well as the costs and benefits of these behaviors, to inform transport systems and policies better.

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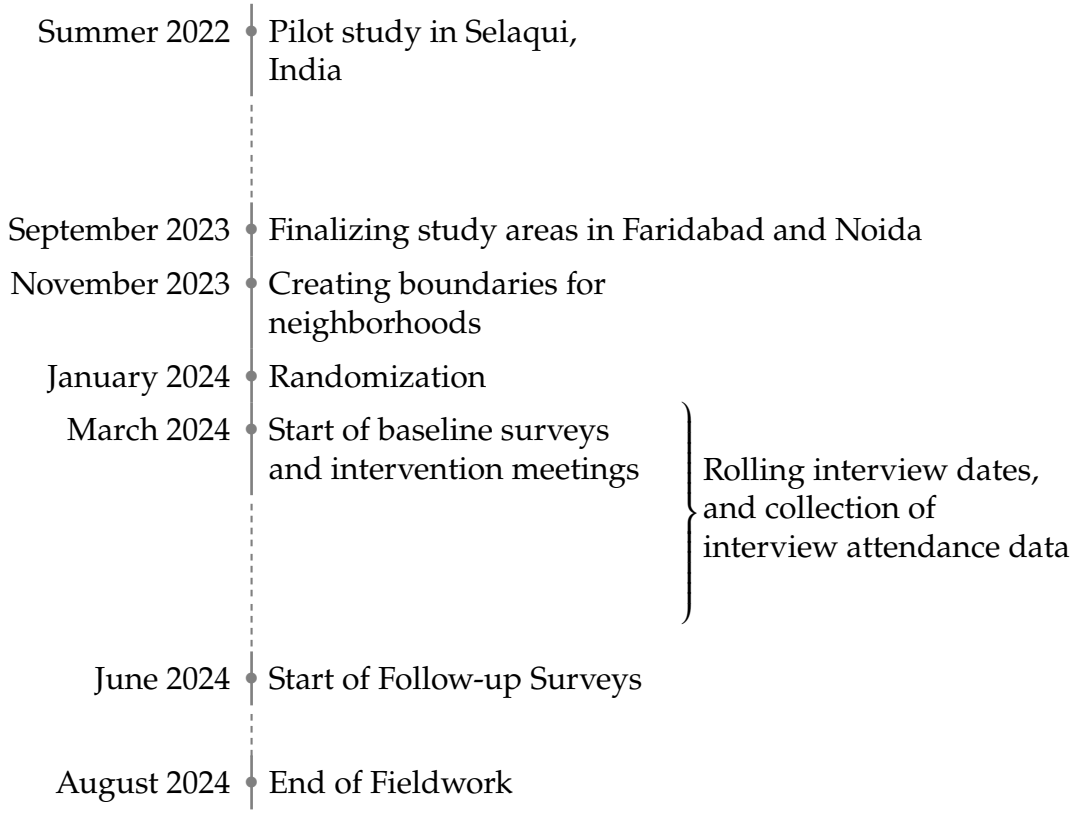
A Supplementary Tables and Figures

Table A1: Study Timeline



Notes: This table presents the timeline for the experiment and data collection. Baseline surveys and intervention meetings were held on a rolling basis from March 2024 to June 2024. During this time, we assigned women with 2-day windows beginning one day after the group meetings were completed. The data on interview attendance was collected daily at the partner factories. The follow-up surveys began by the end of May 2024 and were conducted 6 weeks after the interviews.

Table A2: Baseline Characteristics of Women and Balance

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(1)-(2)	(1)-(3)	(2)-(3)
	Control	M & CT	M & No CT	Pairwise t-test		
Variable	Mean/(SD)	Mean/(SD)	Mean/(SD)	P-value	P-value	P-value
Age	28.79	28.53	29.04	0.65	0.65	0.38
	(0.39)	(0.42)	(0.39)			
Married	0.79	0.79	0.82	0.98	0.71	0.65
	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)			
Household size	3.31	3.53	3.68	0.44	0.21	0.52
	(0.24)	(0.16)	(0.18)			
Literate	0.84	0.87	0.79	0.62	0.44	0.11
	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.04)			
Monthly household income (USD)	202.57	202.86	206.26	0.99	0.83	0.81
	(13.44)	(9.34)	(10.24)			
Owns phone	0.68	0.77	0.71	0.09*	0.49	0.22
	(0.05)	(0.03)	(0.03)			
Rented house	0.74	0.70	0.66	0.66	0.35	0.57
	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)			
Worked in last 6 months	0.10	0.12	0.16	0.55	0.12	0.32
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)			
=1 if made a job search trip in past 2 weeks	0.16	0.17	0.22	0.92	0.22	0.22
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.04)			
= 1 if didn't leave the house	0.14	0.16	0.21	0.55	0.08*	0.21
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)			
Number of trips within immediate vicinity	5.89	5.68	5.64	0.79	0.72	0.96
	(0.54)	(0.57)	(0.44)			
= 1 if didn't leave neighborhood	0.24	0.28	0.32	0.25	0.07*	0.37
	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.03)			
Number of trips outside of neighborhoods	1.26	1.44	1.13	0.41	0.53	0.13
	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.14)			
=1 if belongs to lower caste	0.22	0.20	0.20	0.67	0.67	0.95
	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)			
Number of observations	228	241	224	469	452	465
Number of neighborhoods	33	36	37	69	70	73

Notes: This table presents the average values for women's baseline characteristics tests for balance across the three groups - control, *Matching & Coordinated Travel*, and *Matching & No Coordinated Travel*. The last 3 columns show the p-values from the pairwise t-tests checking for equality of two means. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Table A3: Number of Women Screened and Study Sample

	Number of women that satisfied the criteria
	(1)
Between ages of 18-40 years	6647
Available for screening	5800
Screening Criteria:	
Government Issued ID	4028
Can operate sewing machines	1665
Not working outside	1287
Not worked with partner factory in last 3 months	1268
Interest in working	772
Interest in working at partner factory	708
Participated in Baseline Survey **(Study Sample)**	**693**

Table A4: Survey Completion and Treatment Status

	Baseline	Follow-up
	(1)	(2)
M & CT (β_1)	0.001	-0.025
	(0.022)	(0.038)
M & No CT (β_2)	0.011	-0.008
	(0.014)	(0.045)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.587	0.673
Control Mean	0.979	0.825
Neighborhoods	107	106
Observations	708	693

Notes: This table presents completion levels of Baseline and Follow-up surveys and tests for balance across the three groups. All regressions include strata-fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Table A5: Group Meeting Attendance

	Attended meeting	Attended alone	Total women present	Days b/w meeting & interview
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
M & CT	0.034	0.009	0.444	-3.603***
	(0.024)	(0.020)	(0.312)	(0.360)
M & No CT Mean	0.93	0.02	3.87	6.47
Neighborhoods	73	73	73	73
Observations	465	465	465	465

Notes: This table is restricted to include observations in *Matching & Coordinated Travel* and *Matching & No Coordinated Travel* treatments. *Attended meeting* is an indicator variable = 1 if a woman attended a meeting (columns 1-2). *Attended alone* is an indicator variable = 1 if the women attended the meeting alone with no other women present (columns 3-4). *Total women present* is the total number of women present in the meeting attended by a woman. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Table A6: Number of Women's Travel Companions to Interviews

	Total Adults	Study Women	Non-study Women	Non-study Men
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
M & CT (β_1)	0.189*	0.137*	0.033	0.024
	(0.104)	(0.081)	(0.023)	(0.021)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.004	-0.060	0.010	0.032
	(0.078)	(0.060)	(0.013)	(0.026)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.034**	0.004***	0.221	0.763
Control Mean	0.175	0.140	0.004	0.140
Clusters	106	106	106	106
Observations	693	693	693	693

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on the number of adults by composition of travel companions of women who attended the interviews. Controls include baseline values of variables in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Table A7: Effects on Attending Interviews Controlling for Number of Days between Meetings and Interview

			=1 if traveled to the interviews with			
	= 1 if participated in interviews		Study women		Non-study companion	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
M & CT (β_1)	0.139**	0.159**	0.099*	0.110**	0.048	0.082**
	(0.054)	(0.068)	(0.051)	(0.048)	(0.030)	(0.034)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.024	-0.041	-0.055	-0.077*	0.037	0.063*
	(0.047)	(0.054)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.029)	(0.034)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.005***	0.000***	0.002***	0.000***	0.737	0.608
Interview Gap	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Interview Date FE	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Control Mean	0.154	0.154	0.096	0.096	0.035	0.035
Neighborhoods	106	106	106	106	106	106
Observations	693	693	693	693	693	693

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on the probability of attending the interviews. All regressions include controls in Table 1 and Table A2. *Interview Gap* controls for the number of days between meetings and the start of the interview window. *Interview Date Fixed Effects* control for the 2-day interview window assigned to women. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Table A8: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects on Attending Interviews by Number of Days between Meetings and Interview

		=1 if traveled to the interviews with	
	= 1 if participated in interviews	Study women	Non-study companion
	(1)	(2)	(3)
M & CT (β_1)	0.139**	0.122**	0.042
	(0.055)	(0.055)	(0.032)
M & CT × Covariate (β_3)	0.026	-0.065	0.013
	(0.136)	(0.114)	(0.075)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.020	-0.033	0.030
	(0.055)	(0.045)	(0.034)
M & No CT × Covariate (β_4)	-0.000	-0.060	0.028
	(0.077)	(0.075)	(0.048)
Covariate (β_5)	0.047	0.094	-0.000
	(0.061)	(0.068)	(0.040)
p-value:			
$\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.008***	0.001***	0.722
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$	0.231	0.595	0.426
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$	0.155	0.120	0.973
Control Mean	0.154	0.096	0.035
Control Mean if Covariate = 1	0.192	0.164	0.041
Neighborhoods	106	106	106
Observations	693	693	693

Notes: This table presents heterogeneous treatment effects on the probability of attending the interviews. by the gap between meetings and the start of the interview window. ***Covariate = 1*** if the number of days between the meeting and the start of the interview window is less than the median for the study sample. All regressions include controls in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

Table A9: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects on Job Search Beyond Interview Experiment, by Nearby Women Known, Feeling of Safety, and Job Search at Baseline

	= 1 if made job search trips			= 1 if made job search trips with women from neighborhood			Number of job search trips		
	Fewer nearby known (#) (1)	Lesser feeling of safety (2)	Job search at baseline (3)	Fewer nearby known (#) (4)	Lesser feeling of safety (5)	Job search at baseline (6)	Fewer nearby known (#) (7)	Lesser feeling of safety (8)	Job search at baseline (9)
M & CT (β_1)	0.083	0.109**	0.133**	0.087**	0.100***	0.103***	0.323	0.355**	0.429
	(0.067)	(0.050)	(0.051)	(0.039)	(0.033)	(0.038)	(0.253)	(0.179)	(0.261)
M & CT × Covariate (β_3)	0.045	-0.004	0.074	0.015	-0.024	0.082	-0.020	-0.181	0.265
	(0.080)	(0.134)	(0.132)	(0.052)	(0.081)	(0.094)	(0.331)	(0.314)	(0.480)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.024	0.028	0.089*	-0.004	0.012	0.041	-0.055	0.183	0.298
	(0.066)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.040)	(0.034)	(0.039)	(0.218)	(0.219)	(0.250)
M & No CT × Covariate (β_4)	0.073	-0.044	-0.136	0.045	0.076	0.017	0.494	0.236	0.417
	(0.084)	(0.117)	(0.115)	(0.057)	(0.073)	(0.094)	(0.300)	(0.355)	(0.754)
Covariate (β_5)	-0.049	-0.015	0.150*	-0.009	-0.033	0.034	-0.084	-0.103	0.434*
	(0.053)	(0.089)	(0.084)	(0.035)	(0.054)	(0.067)	(0.164)	(0.241)	(0.230)
p-value:									
$\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.071*	0.071*	0.291	0.019**	0.009***	0.053*	0.079*	0.357	0.350
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$	0.022**	0.386	0.099*	0.018*	0.305	0.035**	0.166	0.565	0.105
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$	0.163	0.303	0.027**	0.137	0.874	0.128	0.694	0.548	0.980
Control Mean	0.160	0.160	0.160	0.061	0.061	0.061	0.330	0.330	0.330
Control Mean if Covariate = 1	0.129	0.107	0.323	0.052	0.029	0.108	0.258	0.107	0.742
Neighborhoods	104	104	104	104	104	104	104	104	104
Observations	560	560	560	560	560	560	560	560	560

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on job search beyond the interview experiment. The number of observations is less than N = 693 because it only includes women that we were able to follow up with during these surveys. The reference period for the three outcomes is six weeks after the interviews at the partner factories and does not include interviews at the partner factories. In Columns (1)-(3), *=1 if made job search trips* is the indicator variable for making a trip outside the home in search of jobs or to prospective employers. In Columns (4)-(6), *=1 if made job search trips with women from neighborhood* is the indicator variable of making any job search trip with other women from their neighborhoods. In Columns (7)-(9), *number of job search trips* is the total number of trips made to the employers. If a woman visited multiple employers in one trip, it's counted as one trip. Columns 1, 4 and 7 present the heterogeneous treatment effects by fewer nearby women known. *Nearby women known* is the total number of women study participants knew living nearby. We define living nearby as living in the same housing structure and in adjacent and opposite houses. For column 1, *Covariate* = 1 if the number of known women is less than the median of the sample. Columns 2, 5 and 8 present the heterogeneous treatment effects by lesser feeling of safety. Women's feeling of safety is the average of responses to the question: *How safe do you feel while traveling by the following means (auto, walk, bus) during the daytime?* A higher score implies a higher feeling of safety. *Covariate* = 1 if the average of the three responses is less than the median of the sample. Columns 3, 6, and 9 present effects by job search at baseline. *Covariate* = 1 if women reported traveling outside their homes in search of jobs two weeks preceding the baseline surveys. Each column is a separate regression. All regressions include strata fixed effects and controls in Table 1 and Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

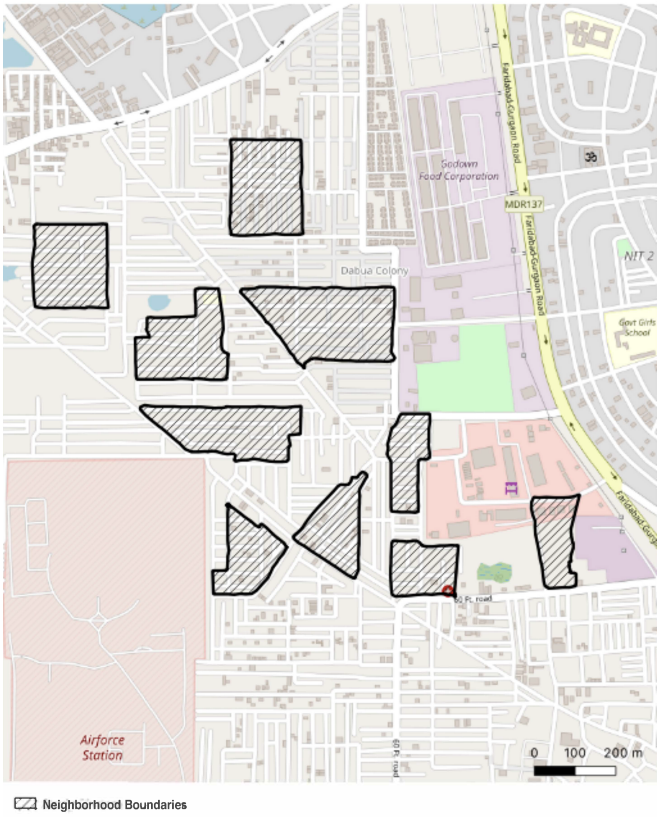
Table A10: Heterogeneous Treatment Effects on Attending Interviews By Distance and Travel Cost to Factories

	Covariate	
	Distance to factory (in Kms)	Travel cost to factory (in USD)
	(1)	(2)
M & CT (β_1)	0.232*	0.141
	(0.125)	(0.165)
M & CT × Covariate (β_3)	-0.031	-0.035
	(0.026)	(0.108)
M & No CT (β_2)	-0.085	-0.105
	(0.118)	(0.124)
M & No CT × Covariate (β_4)	0.002	0.046
	(0.025)	(0.088)
Covariate (β_5)	0.009	-0.089
	(0.026)	(0.089)
p-value:		
$\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.001***	0.066*
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 = 0$	0.050*	0.144
$\beta_3 + \beta_5 = 0$	0.352	0.128
$\beta_1 + \beta_3 - \beta_2 - \beta_4 = 0$	0.001***	0.012**
Control Mean	0.154	0.154
Clusters	106	106
Observations	693	693

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on the probability of attending interviews by distance and travel cost to the nearest partner factory. In column 1, *Covariate* = distance to factory (in Kms), and in column 2, *Covariate* = travel cost to factory (in USD). Both variables take one value per neighborhood and are for a one-way trip. Distance to the factory is measured using Google Maps from the centroid of a neighborhood to the nearest factory gate in kilometers. Travel cost to the factory is measured by surveying private auto rickshaw drivers in a neighborhood for an estimate of the cost of travel. All regressions include city and area fixed effects. Controls include baseline values of variables in Table A2. Standard errors are clustered at the neighborhood level and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.

B Experimental Design

Figure B1: Map of Selected Neighborhoods



Notes: This figure shows zoomed-in neighborhoods and their boundaries in Faridabad

Table B1: Content of Intervention Meetings

	Matching & Coordinated Travel	*Matching & No Coordinated Travel*	Control
Content of meetings			
Introduction of enumerator	✓	✓	✓
Women's introduction	✓	✓	✗
Introduction about factory	✓	✓	✓
Details about job & trial	✓	✓	✓
About coordinating their travel	✓	✗	✗
How to reach to the factory	✓	✓	✓
Time for women to socialize	✓	✓	✗
Whatsapp group	✓	✓	✗

Notes: This table lists the content of meetings for intervention meetings across the three groups.

C Pilot Experiment

In the summer of 2022, we conducted a pilot experiment in Selaqui, India, in partnership with an apparel manufacturing firm that operates two factories in the area. As in the main experiment, hiring occurred through walk-in interviews at the factory gate. We stratified 15 neighborhoods by residential area and randomly assigned them to one of three groups: *Matching & Coordinated Travel*, *No Travel Cost*, and Control. A total of 139 women, screened using the criteria in subsection 3.2, participated in the pilot. In the *No Travel Cost* group, women were invited individually (as in the control), but were reimbursed for their round-trip commute to the factory with a one-time payment of INR 50 (USD $0.625), redeemable at the factory gate. The average one-way travel cost was INR 20, making the reimbursement slightly more than the actual round-trip cost.

Table C1 presents the results. The findings are broadly consistent with the main experiment. Among women who attended the interviews, 80% traveled with the companions. Interview participation in the *Matching Coordinated Travel* group was 27%, nearly three times that of the control group (9% mean), corresponding to a 13–16 percentage point increase. The *No Travel Cost* treatment saw a 7–9 percentage point increase in interview attendance relative to the control, roughly half the effect of the *Matching Coordinated Travel* group. While the two estimates are not statistically different the point estimates suggest that covering commuting costs improves show-up rates, but not as much as enabling group-based, coordinated travel without monetary incentives.

Table C1: Results from Pilot Experiment

			=1 if traveled to the interviews with			
	= 1 if participated in interviews		Study women		Non-study companion	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
M & CT (β_1)	0.13*	0.16**	0.11	0.13*	0.02	0.01
	(0.07)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.02)	(0.03)
No Travel Cost (β_2)	0.09	0.07	-0.01	-0.01	0.10*	0.09*
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)
p-value: $\beta_1 = \beta_2$	0.636	0.402	0.102	0.063	0.137	0.180
Controls	N	Y	N	Y	N	Y
Control Mean	0.098	0.098	0.078	0.078	0.000	0.000
Neighborhoods	15	15	15	15	15	15
Observations	139	139	139	139	139	139

Notes: This table presents treatment effects on women's probability of attending interviews (columns 1 and 2) and whether the women traveled to the factories with study women or non-study companions (Columns 3-6) during the pilot experiment. Each column represents a separate regression. All regressions include area fixed effects. Controls include women's baseline characteristics Table A2. Standard errors are calculated using the bootstrapping procedure and are in parentheses. ***, **, and * represent significance at 1%, 5%, and 10%, respectively.