Rapid Anger & Agency Monitor: Delhi Heatwaves

Mindworks

YOUTH KI AWAAZ

Executive Summary

In June 2024 Mindworks Lab in collaboration with Youth Ki Awaaz ran a rapid heatwave monitor following the Delhi heatwave to capture how the city responds to an extreme weather event. The objective was to understand closely how the human mind functions amidst a crisis of this scale and how their mindsets shift as they experience it. The survey findings will help changemakers across the board, such as climate activists, civic engagement groups, and community mobilisers, to know their audience better. The sample size was 568, with 50% of the sample size being the 16-24 age group. YKA brings their unique perspective and reach of youth from diverse social groups.

Key Findings

The main findings of the survey included:

- **Positive emotions decrease and negative emotions increase in the heatwave:** positive emotions such as love (-56%), happiness (-47%) and hope (-29%) decrease while negative emotions such as anger (+23%), powerlessness (+15%) and worry (+17%) saw an increase.[1]

- **Women felt more angry and powerless than men:** They also felt significantly more angry about being powerless at 61% compared to only 49% of men. Anger about powerlessness was even higher amongst young women and women who worked outside both being at 68%.

- **Climate became a significantly more important crisis, especially for young people:** climate overtook COVID-19 as the most important crisis, with a +12% increase generally and an +18% increase amongst young people in the city.[2]

- **Corporations and fossil fuel industry were blamed most:** corporations or businesses (67%) and the fossil fuel industry (64%) were felt to be most to blame for the heatwave, more than the national government (46%) or the Dehli government (35%). There is also high anger towards fellow citizens with 59% feeling angry because “People act mindlessly and worsen the problem” while 52% blame “Selfish people that create more heat by traffic and ACs” (52%)

1. This is compared to a bassline study conducted nationwide in India in February 2024 (The Anger and Agency), the results of which will be published soon.
2. As above

- **A significant shift to a competitive scarcity narrative:** There was a large increase in the number of people who agreed that "*scarcer resources are causing competition and creating winners and losers*" (from 13% to 55%). This group of people also responded most negatively to the heatwave, with significantly higher negative emotions, felt most impacted and saw it as a bigger danger in the future.[3]

- **People feel most impacted by the heatwave during their commute to work** with 43% while at work stood at 21%, and doing errands at 19%. For women, errands become the second highest after the commute with 26% and home third with 19%. Even people who work outside still see the commute as the most impactful time (48% commute and 34% work.)

- While the majority (82%) believe it will get worse (hotter and more frequent), there is a divide between those who believe it will be a serious threat (56%) and those who see it as a minor inconvenience (34%). Also, 31% believe that we will be more able to cope with heat waves, while 43% believe that we will be less able. For young people, this is 35% to 40%.

- Those most impacted (working outside and who are older) tend to see the heatwave more as a future threat, while those less impacted (those working from home, in an office or younger) see it more as a future inconvenience.

- 73% consider the heat wave impacting them very much or much, and the biggest impact of the heatwave is on health 40% and emotional well-being 31%.

- Young people tended to be more optimistic on the heatwave, though this could be seen as optimistic denial. More young people feel more able to cope than the national average (+5%) and fewer young people see it as a serious threat (-8%) with more seeing it as an inconvenience (+8%). More young people also lost their temper because they were exhausted than the national average (+6%)

You can find the full graphs and data set on Tableau here, the questionnaire here and get in touch with us to know more at hello@mindworkslab.org

3. As above