ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Economics

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF AUTO DRIVERS IN MYSORE CITY – AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

Dr. Divya.B.S | Assistant Professor PG Centre in Economics Maharani's Arts College for Women Mysore

ABSTRACT

The changes in socio-economic and technological factors have caused auto drivers in Mysore city, as well as other cities in India, to experience a variety of economic challenges. The current study work explores the economic issues vehicle drivers in Mysore City experience, as well as the elements that contribute to these issues. A survey of 80 Auto drivers in Mysore city served as the basis for the study. The results indicate that drivers of autos have a range of financial issues, including poor pay, high operating costs, competition from cab services that operate through apps and a lack of social security benefits. The study finishes with suggestions for legislative changes to enhance the financial circumstances of Mysore city's auto drivers. The study identifies the serious economic issues that affect Mysore city's auto drivers and makes recommendations for potential policy changes that the government may take to help them. Policymakers can guarantee that auto drivers can continue to offer residents vital transport services while also raising their level of life by addressing these issues.

I. INTRODUCTION

In India, especially in metropolitan areas, auto-rickshaws, often referred to as "autos," are a usual means of transportation. Auto-rickshaws are a typical sight in Mysore City, where hundreds of drivers operate them to take people to their destinations. Despite their widespread use, little is known about the financial circumstances of these drivers, including their earnings, working hours, costs, and level of satisfaction with their jobs. Given the possible effects that difficult economic situations may have on the health and wellness of auto drivers and their families, this lack of understanding is alarming. By performing an analytical research of the economic conditions of auto drivers in Mysore City, this paper aims to fill this empty space. It makes an attempt to address their problems using a sample of 80 auto drivers.

It is vital to comprehend the financial state of Mysore City's auto drivers. Thousands of passengers receive affordable and simple transportation every day from auto drivers, who are a crucial component of the urban transportation system. However, the absence of control and regulation in the Indian auto-rickshaw sector has left many drivers in a vulnerable financial condition. Low prices, competition from other drivers, and unpredictable demand are just a few of the difficulties faced by auto drivers, all of which can lead to financial distress.

N. B. Kolte and V. M. Sonawane (2019) conducted a study to evaluate the social and economic circumstances of auto-rickshaw drivers in Nashik City. It was discovered that most of the drivers had financial struggles because of their low revenue and high operational expenses. A 2017 research named "An Economic Analysis of Auto Rickshaw Drivers in Pune City" was carried out by S. G. Gadling and S. N. Mani. The study's goal was to examine the financial situation of auto-rickshaw drivers in Pune. It was discovered that these drivers experienced a number of difficulties, including poor wages, high operational costs, and unstable finances.

In India's transportation sector, the auto-rickshaw business is crucial since it offers millions of people everyday access to economical and practical mobility choices. However, there are a number of factors, including variable fuel prices, low fares, and expensive maintenance expenses, that raise concerns about the economic situation of car drivers in India. These drivers frequently put in long hours and struggle financially, which adversely impacts their quality of life and creates serious obstacles for their social and economic well-being. In light of the foregoing, this article intends to give an analytical assessment of the economic circumstances of Mysore City's auto drivers, with the goal of identifying the key factors impacting their livelihoods and suggesting appropriate governmental solutions that alleviate their problems.

II. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research paper are as follows
- To study the socioeconomic profile of auto drivers in Mysore city.
- To analyze the key factors affecting the economic conditions of auto drivers in Mysore city.

III. METHODOLOGY

The sample size for this study was 80 auto drivers in Mysore city. A random sampling technique was used to select the auto drivers, ensuring that the sample was representative of the population of auto drivers in the city.

The data was collected through a combination of interviews and a structured questionnaire survey. The survey was conducted in the local language (Kannada) to ensure clarity and ease of understanding for the respondents. The data collected through the survey and interviews were analyzed using descriptive statistics, frequency analysis and chi-square tests.

IV. DATA INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

In order to have a better knowledge of the socioeconomic background and financial status of Mysore city's auto drivers, it is important to collect information on their demographic characteristics such as gender, category, age, level of education.

4.1. GENDER STATUS

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	78	97.5
Female	2	2.5
Total	80	100

The above table shows the frequency of male and female drivers as well as the percentage of each gender in the sample. It is seen in the table that, male drivers represent 97.5 percent of the sample, while female drivers make up only a small proportion i.e, 2.5 percent.

4.2 SOCIAL STATUS

Social Status	Frequency	Percentage
General Category	5	6.25
OBC	32	40
SC	27	33.75

ST	5	6.25
Minority	11	13.75
Total	80	100

The table shows the distribution of social status among the auto drivers in the sample. Out of the 80 auto drivers, 5 drivers belong to General Category, 32 drivers belong to OBC category, 27 drivers belong to SC category, 5 drivers belong to ST category and 11 drivers belong to Minority category.

4.3. AGE STATUS

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
20-30	25	31.25
30-40	30	37.5
40-50	15	18.75
50 and above	10	12.5
Total	80	100

The data in the table shows that the majority of the auto drivers in the sample fall within the age range of 20-40 years, with a total of 55 drivers (25+30) (68.75 percent) falling in this category. This suggests that auto driving is a profession that attracts relatively younger individuals.

4.4 EDUCATIONAL STATUS

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Below SSLC	35	43.75
SSLC	27	33.75
PUC	12	15
Degree	6	7.5
Total	80	100

The data in the table shows that a majority of the auto drivers in the sample have education levels below SSLC, with 35 drivers (43.75 percent) falling in this category. Only 6 respondents are degree holders. This suggests that a significant proportion of auto drivers may not have had access to higher education or training opportunities.

4.5. INCOME STATUS

I. Income Level	Frequency	Percentage
10000-15000	32	40
15000-20000	17	21.2
20000-25000	24	30%
25000-30000	7	8.75
Total	80	100

From the table, it can be observed that the majority of the auto drivers (40 percent) have an income level between 10000-15000. About 30 percent of the auto drivers have an income level between 20000-25000, 21.25 percent have an income level between 15000-20000, and only 8.75 percent have an income level between 25000-30000. It is clear that a significant proportion of auto drivers have a low income level, which could potentially contribute to their poor economic conditions. The income level of auto drivers is an important factor that affects their economic conditions and their ability to sustain their livelihoods.

4.6. ECONOMIC PROBLEMS OF AUTO DRIVERS

Income Level	Rise in Fuel/Gas Prices	Unscientific Fares	Operating Costs	Competition Within	Competition from Cabs	Total
10000-15000	18 (22.5%)	3 (3.75%)	5 (6.25%)	3 (3.75%)	3 (3.75%)	32
15000-20000	8(10%)	2 (2.5%)	5 (6.25%)	1 (1.25%)	1 (1.25%)	17
20000-25000	9(11.25%)	1 (1.25%)	3 (3.75%)	6 (7.5%)	5 (6.25%)	24
25000-30000	2(2.5%)	1 (1.25%)	1 (1.25%)	1 (1.25%)	2 (2.5%)	7
Total	37 (46.25%)	7 (8.75%)	14 (17.5%)	11 (13.75%)	11 (13.75%)	80

From the table, we can see that the most commonly reported problem faced by auto drivers across all income levels is the rise in fuel/gas prices, with a total of 37 drivers (46.25 percent) reporting this as a significant problem. The next most common problem is operating costs, with 14 drivers (17.5 percent) reporting it as a significant issue. Unscientific fares and competition from within the auto driver community are also reported as problems by a smaller proportion of drivers. Interestingly, competition from cabs is reported as a problem by a similar proportion of drivers as competition from within the auto driver community. It is important to note that these proportions are based on the sample of 80 drivers and may not be representative of the population of auto drivers in Mysore city as a whole.

V. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of the study included a small sample size, which may not be fully representative of the entire population of auto drivers in Mysore city. The study was also limited to only quantitative data and additional qualitative data could have provided further insights into the challenges faced by auto drivers.

VI. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study reveal that the majority of auto drivers in Mysore city are male, and only a small percentage are female. The sample size included 80 participants, out of which 78 were male, and only 2 were female. The study also found that the social status of auto drivers in Mysore city is mainly dominated by OBC and SC categories, comprising 40 and 33.75 percent of the sample, respectively.

Regarding the age distribution, the study found that the majority of auto drivers fall in the age group of 30-40 years. In terms of education, most auto drivers have completed SSLC with 35 of the sample.

Lastly, the study found that the income level of auto drivers in Mysore city varies, with most of them earning between 10000-15000 rupees per month. The study recommends the need for policy interventions to address the problems faced by auto drivers and improve their economic conditions.

According to the survey, there are several issues that auto drivers in Mysore City must deal with, such as rising gas and petrol prices, high operational costs, and competition from other cars and taxis. The majority of the participants felt that the increase in fuel/gas costs was the most important issue among them.

Based on the findings of this study on the economic conditions of auto drivers in Mysore city, the following suggestions can be made:

- The government should take measures to provide financial assistance or subsidies to auto drivers to cope with the rising fuel prices and operating costs.
- Auto drivers can form a union or association to negotiate for fair fares and protect their rights.
- The government can regulate the number of autos and cabs operating in the city to minimize competition and ensure a fair share of business for auto drivers.
- Auto drivers can be encouraged to upgrade their education and skills to explore alternative sources of income.
- Female auto drivers can be encouraged and supported through government schemes to increase their

representation in the profession.

• The government can explore the possibility of introducing alternative and eco-friendly modes of transportation to reduce the dependency on autos and minimize the negative impact on the environment.

According to those findings, the study recommends that, in order to reduce the financial problems of auto drivers, the government enact regulations that restrict tolls and offer subsidies for fuel and operational expenses. Additionally, it may be advantageous to provide auto drivers with education and training in order to improve their abilities. The study's overall findings emphasise the importance of paying more attention to the needs of Mysore city's auto drivers, who are vital to the city's transportation system.

REFERENCES

1. Kolte, N. B., & Sonawane, V. M. (2019). Economic and Social Conditions of Auto-Rickshaw Drivers in Nashik City, Maharashtra. Journal of Management Research and Analysis, 6(2), 135-138.
2. Gadling, S. G., & Mani, S. N. (2017). An Economic Analysis of Auto Rickshaw Drivers in Pune City. International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies (IJIRAS), 4(11), 18-21.
3. Mohapatra, S. K., & Mohanty, S. (2016). A Study on the Socio-economic Conditions of Auto-rickshaw Drivers in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Indian Journal of Applied Research, 6(7), 213-214.
4. Pavan Kumar, P. R., & Bhargavi, P. (2018). Economic and Social Conditions of Auto Drivers in Vijayawada City, Andhra Pradesh. International Journal of Recent Scientific Research, 9(8), 27948-27950.
5. Pradhan, P., & Barik, N. (2019). Socio-economic Condition of Auto-rickshaw Drivers in Odisha. International Journal of Innovative Research and Advanced Studies (IJIRAS), 6(1), 47-53.
6. Pradhan, P., & Barik, N. (2020). Socio-Economic Conditions of Auto-Rickshaw Drivers in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications, 10(1), 1-4.
7. Saiyed, S. A., Sinha, M. K., & Jain, M. K. (2014). Socioeconomic Status of Auto Drivers in Surat City, India. International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature, 2(4), 1-8.