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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	<p style="text-align: center;">THE OUTSOURCING DECISIONS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON BANK PERFORMANCE: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>POONAM RAUTELA, Dr. MADHULIKA P. SARKAR & Dr. REKHA GOEL</i></p>	1
2.	<p style="text-align: center;">IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 ON THE PERFORMANCE OF THE SBI: A STUDY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dr. JYOTIRMOY KOLEY</i></p>	6
3.	<p style="text-align: center;">SCOPE FOR THE BIKE TAXI SERVICES IN COIMBATORE CITY: A FEASIBILITY STUDY</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Dr. R. SUDHA</i></p>	10
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK & DISCLAIMER	13

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SCOPE FOR THE BIKE TAXI SERVICES IN COIMBATORE CITY: A FEASIBILITY STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Offering bike taxi services to the commuters with basic goals of overcoming traffic congestion issues, being effective and affordable is the trend today. Online service taxi cabs hiring system have removed the barriers of several consumers for their transport expectations giving more opportunity to the public to obtain the facilities and a phenomenal growth in this segment i.e., domestic cabs service segment. This research work is an attempt to assess the feasibility for the promotion of bike taxi service in the tier II, recently announced smart city Coimbatore. Needed data were collected from a sample group of 125 volunteer respondents, who belong to different segment in a society i.e., college students, private sector employees, business class persons and professionals. A self-administered ethnographic survey was conducted by the author in Coimbatore city. The study provides an outlook that there is a more feasibility for the growth, promotion and sustainability of bike services in the large and small cities across the nation. Potential bike taxi riders have said that they prefer these services as it is cost and time wise economic (68 per cent), very convenient for them during peak hours (64.75 per cent), easy to access to congested lanes (61.25 per cent) and support they overcoming parking issues in busy areas (57.75 per cent). At the same time 77.67 per cent of the sample subjects have registered that these services are reliable in nature.

KEYWORDS

potential customers, bike taxi, feasibility, conveyances service.

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INTRODUCTION

For centuries people have been travelling from one place to another and they return back to their home town /city after a specific time period. Traveller used number of means to travel from one place to another. With the invention of rolling wheel, the traveller has become daily commuters, who passes certain distance every day with modern mode of transportation. Commuters either use own their private vehicles or hire a public transportation like cycle, bike, car, bus, tram or a train, boats or small ships. Self-consciousness towards environment pollutions issues, being a process of cost-cutting and also rise in traffic conjunction have influenced daily traveller to think of other alternative means of transportation like usage of hire car i.e., taxi services. With the identification and development of prominent cities in the country recognised as "Smart cities" have provided wider scope for the growth of public transportation services hired by individuals as per their convenience of travel either by individual, two, four people or in group. On the other side, technology advance has supported these service providers in enhancing or offering quality, timely and most economic services. Carrying the discussion further, it can be rightly said that the online service taxi cabs hiring system have removed the barriers of several consumers for their transport expectations giving more opportunity to the public to obtain the facilities and a phenomenal growth in this segment i.e., domestic cabs service segment. Following the track of call taxies, private box services are offered to single commuters across a state i.e., specific geographical area.

FEASIBILITIES FOR THE GROWTH OF BIKE TAXI SERVICES IN INDIA

The Economic Times has published the Ola Mobility Institute Report (2020) stating the opportunities available for the bike taxi service across India. It has been reported in the News daily that this service sector has the opportunity of earning Rs.5 billion per annum and can also employ 2 million youths. Bike taxi services are more preferred during peak hours of day morning 8 am to 12 Noon and in the evening 4 pm to 8pm. As per the opinion of Gupta (2019) so far rental car services are available in almost all major and small cities in India, bike services as at present available in major cities in Karnataka and Maharashtra. Uber and Ola, two major service providers are currently operating bike services in 52 cities across India and they expect to reach 200 by the end of the year 2020, rolling 1,50,000 passenger trip per day. As per Shah (2021) report in the Financial Express, outbreak of Pandemic has provided wider opportunity for the flourishing bike taxi services in the country. The report has stated that adoption of bike taxi services has rose in tier I and II cities.

AIM OF THE STUDY

Innovation and rapid adoption to the changing customers need are two golden keys that support in the prosperous of any business. Offering bike taxi services to the commuters with basic goals of overcoming traffic congestion issues, being effective and affordable is the trend today. Rapido has pioneered in over bike taxi services fulfilling above mentioned goal. At present Indian bike taxi market is valued at US \$ 150 million and every month 20 per cent growth is predicted in this segment. Business model of bike taxi service is very unique in India, where a bike ride could be offered at a cost of Rs.60-Rs.70, compared to costly Rs.200 call taxi ride. Success of this innovative service is purely depending on the nature of support extended by the potential bike riding customers. This study is an attempt to assess the feasibility for the promotion of bike taxi service in the tier II, recently announced smart city Coimbatore.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀: There exists no close association between mode of transportation customers feel comfortable during peak hours and most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service.

METHODOLOGY

Daily travelers' preferences for bike taxi, nature of factors they consider while selecting a specific bike taxi services and their expectation among potential users were assessed in this study. Needed data were collected from a sample group of 125 volunteer respondents, who belong to different segment in a society i.e., college students, private sector employees, business class persons and professionals. A self-administered ethnographic survey was conducted by the author in Coimbatore city.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF THE ARTICLE

As stated above in the discussion that bike taxi services are highly preferred by the daily commuters for it convenient i.e., hassle free transportation available at their door step. Assessment of demographic profile of the potential supporters of bike taxi service give an overall understanding on nature of bike taxi service is expected by a specific demographic segment of population in a city. Among 125 respondents surveyed, 58.40 per cent of bike taxi users were male and 41.60 per cent of sample subjects were female. Nearly 60.80 per cent of samples bike taxi users were in the age group of 20-30 years and 21.60 per cent of the bike taxi

service supporter are employed in an organisation. It was inferred that 82.40 per cent of the sample subjects are single and 65.50 per cent of the bike taxi patron-ages are graduates. Monthly income of 45.60 per cent of the samples ranged between Rs.20000-Rs.40000 and 51.20 per cent of the sample subjects live in urban regions of the city.

TABLE 1: CUSTOMERS AWARENESS TOWARDS THE APP BASED BIKE TAXI SERVICE AVAILABLE IN THE CITY

Sl. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Aware	68	54.40
2.	Not Aware	57	45.60
	Total	125	100

Source: Primary Data

Data assessment table revealed that 54.40 per cent of the bike taxi users are aware of app-based bike taxi services recently introduced in the city. And 45.60 per cent of the respondents are not aware of app-based bike taxi services.

TABLE 2: SOURCES OF KNOWLEDGE GATHERED ON APP BASED BIKE TAXI SERVICE

Sl. No	Sources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Media Advertisement	39	31.20
2.	Friends	70	56.00
3.	Relatives	11	8.80
4.	Hoardings	5	4.00
	Total	125	100

Source: Primary Data

Sample subjects had gathered information on specific app-based bike taxi services from various sources i.e., through their friends (56 per cent), through media advertisement (31.20 per cent), relatives' references (8.80 per cent) and through hoardings display in outdoor (4 per cent).

TABLE 3: POTENTIAL REASONS STATED BY THE TRAVELLERS FOR CHOOSING BIKE TAXI SERVICE

Sl. No	Purpose of Travel	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Personal Work	50	40.00
2.	Official	25	20.00
3.	Emergency	17	13.60
4.	Unavailability	33	26.40
	Total	125	100

Source: Primary Data

Nearly 40 per cent of the sample potential bike taxi rider have said that they would travel in bike taxi without any compulsion i.e., on their personal decision for personal work accomplishment. Followed by, 26.40 per cent of the sample respondents said that they will travel at unavoidable situations, 20 per cent of the rental bike taxi users would select app-based bike taxi services for official purposes and 13.60 per cent of the sample subjects have opined that they would pick app-based bike taxi services at the time of emergency.

TABLE 4: PRIMARY REASONS STATED BY THE POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS FOR PREFERRING BIKE TAXI SERVICES

Sl. No	Variables	Sum	Mean	Rank
1.	Not access to Personal Vehicle	517	4.14	6
2.	Poor and Improper Local Transportation Facilities	462	3.70	7
3.	Personal Health Reasons	459	3.67	8
4.	Difficulties of Driving in Heavy Traffic	543	4.34	5
5.	Easy to Access to Congested Lanes	613	4.90	3
6.	Economic and Time Saving	680	5.44	1
7.	Very Convenient	648	5.18	2
8.	Overcome Parking Issues in Busy Areas	578	4.62	4

Source: Primary Data

Out of 125 samples surveyed, nearly 68 to 57.75 per cent of the potential biker taxi rider have said that they prefer these services as it is cost and time wise economic (68 per cent), very convenient for them during peak hours (64.75 per cent), easy to access to congested lanes (61.25 per cent) and support they overcoming parking issues in busy areas (57.75 per cent). A group of sample subjects have listed their reasons for choosing app-based bike taxi services to overcome the difficulties of driving in heavy traffic (54.25 per cent), in-access of personal vehicle (51.75 per cent), poor and improper local transportation facilities (46.25 per cent) and personal health reasons (45.88 per cent). The above-mentioned variables are ranked in the first to eighth places with the mean score computation of 5.44-3.67.

TABLE 5: CUSTOMERS OPINION ON THE FEATURES BIKE TAXI

Variables	Sum	Mean	Rank
Service Uniqueness (Very Innovative Concept)	259	2.07	7
Convenience of Travel	265	2.12	5
Safety & Comfort Features	268	2.14	4
Speed of Reach in Heavy Traffic	259	2.07	7
Economic Price	273	2.18	2
No Stress of Driving	263	2.10	6
Easy Payment Options	273	2.18	2
Service Reliability	291	2.33	1
Others	218	1.74	9

Source: Primary Data

Data analysis table inferred that 77.67 per cent of the sample subjects are highly attracted towards the service reliability features provided by the bike taxi services and 72.67 per cent of the bike taxi users prefer to online cab facilities for easy payment options and economic pricing values. Similarly, 71.33 per cent of the customers are fascinated towards the safety and comfort features of bike taxi services and 70.67 per cent of the samples are impressed towards the convenience for travel. Followed by, 70per cent of the bike taxi users feel that they had no stress for driving and 69 per cent of the sample populations are attracted towards the speed of reach in heavy traffic especially during peak hours and its service uniqueness as it considered an innovative concept. Moreover, 58 per cent of the bike taxi users are fascinated with the other features offered by the bike taxi services such as: its available on demand, solve the last mile connectivity problem etc., The above variables are rated in the first to ninth places with the average score range of 2.33-1.74.

Multiple regression analysis was performed to measure the association between mode of transportation customers feel comfortable during peak hours and the feature that most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service.

H_0 : There exists no close association between mode of transportation customers feel comfortable during peak hours and most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service.

Feature that most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service $(Y_1) = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \beta_7X_7 + \beta_8X_8 + \beta_9X_9 + e$

Where, Y= Feature that most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service, β_0 = Intercept, β_1 - β_9 = Slopes (estimates of coefficients), X_1 = Service Uniqueness (Very Innovative Concept), X_2 = Convenience of Travel, X_3 = Safety & Comfort Features, X_4 = Speed of Reach in Heavy Traffic, X_5 = Economic Price, X_6 = No Stress of Driving, X_7 = Easy Payment Options, X_8 = Service Reliability, X_9 = Others and e = Random error, which the author assumed as NID for this research.

**TABLE 6: RESULT OF MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS
MODE OF TRANSPORTATION CUSTOMERS FEEL COMFORTABLE DURING PEAK HOURS AND MOST INFLUENCING FEATURES OF BIKE TAXI**

R Value	R ² Value	Adjusted R ²	F Value	Sig
.304	.093	.022	1.304	.243

Level of Significance: 5 per cent

$Y = 1.224 + .023X_1 + .036X_2 - .117X_3 + .074X_4 + .079X_5 - .010X_6 - .048X_7 - .006X_8 - .033X_9$

From the above presented multi-level test, it has been observed that F ratio (1.304) is statistically insignificant at 5 per cent level. Similarly, the computed regression value establishes mark 30.40 per cent relationship between the variables tested and the coefficient of correlation (R) value is found to be .304, it does not establish good relationship between variables tested. Hence the hypothesis framed stands rejected and it determined that there exists close association between mode of transportation customers feel comfortable during peak hours and most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service. Correlation and regression value of individual variables are presented in the below mentioned table.

**TABLE 7: SUMMARY OF MULTIPLE REGRESSIONS ANALYSIS
MODE OF TRANSPORTATION CUSTOMERS FEEL COMFORTABLE DURING PEAK HOURS AND MOST INFLUENCING FEATURES OF BIKE TAXI**

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t value	Sig	Collinearity Statistics	
	β	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
Constants	1.224	.342	-	3.574	.001	-	-
Service Uniqueness (Very Innovative Concept)	.023	.050	.043	.463	.644	.911	1.097
Convenience of Travel	.036	.056	.064	0.646	.519	.794	1.260
Safety & Comfort Features	-.117	.053	-.212	-2.201	.030	.853	1.173
Speed of Reach in Heavy Traffic	.074	.050	.139	1.480	.142	.897	1.115
Economic Price	.079	.053	.144	1.497	.137	.850	1.177
No Stress of Driving	-.010	.051	-.019	-0.194	.846	.865	1.155
Easy Payment Options	-.048	.055	-.083	-0.870	.386	.874	1.144
Service Reliability	-.006	.057	-.010	-0.102	.019	.768	1.302
Others	-.033	.048	-.068	-0.685	.495	.797	1.255

Level of Significance: 5 per cent

Out of nine parameters statements considered only two variables were statistically insignificant. The standardized co-efficient beta column reveals that feature that most attracted by customers in bike taxi have met beta standard co-efficient 1.224 which is statistically significant at 0.001. The computed Tolerance values and VIF (Variance Inflated Factor) fall within the set marks i.e., Tolerance values were above .500 and VIF were with five per cent of Tolerance value.

Predicted Value of

Feature that most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service = 1.224 (Constant)

±.117 (Safety & Comfort Features)

±.006 (Service Reliability)

Multiple Regression Analysis indicated out of nine variables tested only two variables: safety & comfort features and service reliability were found to be statistically significant.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Article has conveyed that out of 125 samples surveyed only 54.40 per cent of the bike taxi users are aware of app based bike taxi services recently introduced in the city. Friends and media are found to be major influencing forces that have motivated the samples to use this unique service. Nearly 40 per cent of the sample potential bike taxi rider have said that they would travel in bike taxi on their personal decision for personal work accomplishment. Potential biker taxi rider has said that they prefer these services as it is cost and time wise economic (68 per cent), very convenient for them during peak hours (64.75 per cent), easy to access to congested lanes (61.25 per cent) and support they overcoming parking issues in busy areas (57.75 per cent). At the same time 77.67 per cent of the sample subjects have registered that these services are reliable in nature. The article also claims that there exists close association between mode of transportation customers feel comfortable during peak hours and most influence the customers in selection of bike taxi service. As a summary note author have suggested the bike service providers (Ola, Uber or Rapido) to create more awareness on these innovative services, promote their service by highlighting its feature benefits, safe and convenience features. The study provides an outlook that there is a more feasibility for the growth, promotion and sustainability of bike services in the large and small cities across the nation.

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