



Kerala State Institute of Design

# A STUDY ON AUTORIKSHAW DRIVER'S EXPERIENCES IN HELPING ROAD ACCIDENT VICTIMS

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## 1. ABSTRACT

Road accidents are considered as one of the major problem India has facing now, because of various factors such as increase in number of vehicle, population, improper construction of road etc. Accidents contribute various problems related to health, wealth, social and economical to citizens. Public often neglect the road accident victims. Lot of studies were conducted on this issue. In most cases people are afraid of the legal harassment. This study focus more on the experiences faced by auto rikshaw drivers for helping accident victims. This research goes deeply into the core issue of problems drivers face while helping accident victim and the design elements of auto rikshaws for carrying road accident victim. This study also examines the scope of redesigning auto rikshaws. A survey was conducted for auto rikshaw drivers in Kollam town and associated places.



## 2. INTRODUCTION

Auto rickshaw drivers are doing a very important job for our society. It is the taxi for common people. The work of the auto rickshaw drivers is full of responsibility. The profession of auto rickshaw drivers is the most interacted profession to the common people. They know the geographical aspects of that particular area like nearest hospitals, medical centers, schools etc. Accidents are very common in Kerala. Lot of lives are lost in the streets of Kerala due to these

accidents. Congested roads and increasing number of vehicles are the major cause for the road accidents. In most cases accident victims lay on roads for hours before they were taken to the nearest hospitals.

Accessibility of ambulance service is difficult in rural Kerala compared to the urban place. If the victim would not get enough emergency medical facility, it leads to mortality in serious cases. Unavailability of ambulance service is also an another concern. In most accident cases auto rikshaw act as the source of transportation of accident victim to the hospital. This research is about the problem faced by auto rikshaw drivers when they tried to help a road accident victim. This research is also focused on the design of the auto rikshaw. Research was concentrated on the auto rikshaw drivers of various places in Kollam Town. This study will also look on the design features of the auto rikshaws whether it is capable of bringing road accident victims to hospitals.

### 2.1 RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Autorikshaw could access to the accident spot better than ambulance in rural areas of Kollam. As they are doing a great social work. A study is needed to address various issues these drivers face. This study is important because the government has the responsibility to safeguard the lives of accident victims. Auto rikshaw drivers has to get the necessary recognition as they are doing a great service to society and to humanity. It's time to find the design of autorikshaw is enough to carry a person to hospital.

### 2.2 SCOPE FOR THIS STUDY

By addressing various issues of these people, this could help government to understand the present scenario and it helps to make policies that could give a solution to the issues. This study could also bring design intervention if needed.



### 2.3 OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY

1. The primary objective of this study is to find the problem faced by the autorikshaw drivers for helping a road accident victim.
2. To find the design of autorikshaw whether it is good enough to carry the victims safely.
3. To find the behavior of medical staffs and police towards autorikshaw drivers for helping an accident victim.

### 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In India more than 70,000 people killed in road accidents per year<sup>[1]</sup>. Road accidents is the 3rd major cause of death across the country, after heart failure and cancer with first and second place respectively. Kerala consists of 2.76% [2] of India's population, but in the case of traffic accidents, Kerala has a share of 10%. Doctors states that if the accident victim get medical treatment with in 1 hour, 50% of death cases can be avoided.<sup>[3]</sup>

Save life foundation, an NGO conducted a survey that elaborates why people fail to come forward to help road accident victims. The survey reveals that 74% of bystanders are unlikely to help severely injured road accident victims. 88% of bystanders who are unlikely to help a victim felt that having to go to police stations and courts.<sup>[4]</sup> These findings are major eye opener for us.

A Supreme Court-appointed committee (K Skandan committee for road safety) recommendations to supreme court also mention to encourage bystanders to rush road accident victims to the nearest hospital or inform the police.<sup>[5]</sup> Thiruvananthapuram corporation was already implemented a project with the help of autorikshaw drivers, in which an autorikshaw driver from a particular auto stand will trained to give first aid to the accident victim before carrying to the hospital<sup>[6]</sup>. Similar initiative was done in Ahamadabad city also<sup>[7]</sup>. They trained city auto rikshaw drivers to carry accident victims in case of emergency to the hospitals. These initiates are good for the society as it promotes to save the life and to give public an awareness about the importance of saving a life.



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## 4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted for this study was collecting data from auto rikshaw drivers through primary survey in Kollam Town and other nearer areas. Interviewed 63 auto rikshaw drivers individually with the questionnaires. Questions were asked about their experiences of helping road accident victims like behaviors of police, hospital staffs etc. Questions are mainly focused to find the real problem a common man facing when they tried to help an accident victim.

### 4.1. DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES

Questions were prepared in the form of demographic variables. Each participant has to answer some demographic questions like age, auto rikshaw type (diesel or petrol), experiences in years, experiences of helping accident victims, behavior of hospital staffs and police, if any compensations/reward for bringing any road accident victims to hospitals, any financial lost, about public help, about first aid box and its uses, about emergency contact numbers and their responses, questions about design of auto rikshaw etc.

These demographics data are shown by using pie charts. It helps the reader to understand the current scenario very easily. The results were concluded by analyzing the various data through both qualitative and quantitative methods.

### 4.2 MEASUREMENTS

For each variable questions, there are multiple answer options. Each answer options were numbered as a, b, c, d. For calculating the percentage each variable is divided by total participants and the answer is multiplied by constant 100 for getting a decimal value as percentage

Percentage for each answer =  $(a \div \text{total participants}) \times 100$

## 5. SURVEY DETAILS

### 5.1 PLACES EXPLORED

This survey was taken on auto rikshaw drivers from Keralapuram to Chinnakada in Kollam - Kottarakara road covered more than 11 kilometers.



Major auto rikshaw stands explored are

1. Keralapuram
2. Karikode old stand
3. Karikode junction
4. Kallumthazham
5. Randamkutti
6. Kadappakkada
7. Sankers hospital junction
8. Kumar theatre stand, Chinnakkada
9. Clock tower stand, Chinnakkada.

### 5.2 SURVEY EXPERIENCE

When I was surveying most of the auto drivers were interested to share their experiences. I came to know that even after they had faced major problems for helping road accident victims, they are happy to help the victims again, as they are considering this as a social service without any demands. They said that next time it might be they or me. I understood that the culture of each auto rikshaw stand is different from each other. I met more than 100 auto rikshaw drivers, but 63 were ready to participate in the survey. Auto rikshaw drivers above 40 years are more interested to participate in the survey. They share their long experiences about helping road accident victims. But auto rikshaw drivers less than 30 years have less interest in participating.

Most of them are not interested in taking photographs. Some were not interested to fill the form but they want to know about the topic and also participated in discussion. Some of the auto rickshaw drivers are very much interested and they invited other auto rickshaw drivers to participate in the survey.

When I moved towards urban areas from rural areas, I came to know that there is a shift in helping mentality, as most auto rickshaw drivers in urban areas had more bad experiences of helping road accident victims than rural areas and most of them are not willing to help any more. They had bad experiences even from accident victims.



Most auto rickshaw drivers have a complaint that public treat them as a lower class in society. They are also unhappy about the fact that nobody recognizes them for the social work they are doing to the society as they are saving a valuable life. Most of them say that they will continue to help accident victims without any demand.

I interviewed K.Sadan, Police Inspector of Ilamballoor police station. He informed that every police station has a fund for giving a compensation of rupees 500 for the person who help to carry road accident victim to the hospital. He shared his experience of giving such reward once. He said that people are not aware of this policy, those who helps accident victims to reach hospital would not go beyond that, as they're afraid of legal procedures.



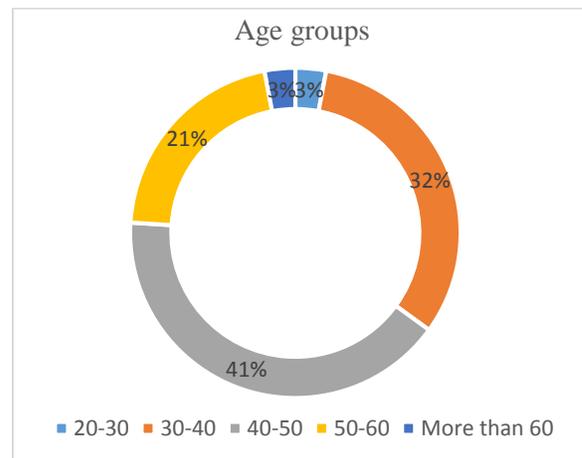
## 6. DATA ANALYSIS

The data which was collected from the Survey has analyzed in both quantitative and qualitative methods. Some data are collected for the transparency and for validation of the survey. *Example:* Name, Vehicle number, Signatures etc. Other data are analyzed by mixed methods. Created demographic pie charts for the variable data.

### 6.1 ANALYZING THE DATA THROUGH PIE CHARTS

25 questions were asked for an individual person, including name, age etc. Percentage were calculated for each variable question as mentioned in research methodology. Other invariable questions are analyzed by qualitative methods.

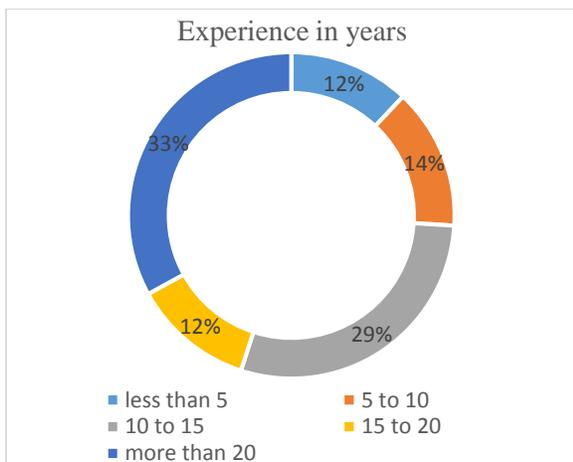
#### 6.1.1 Age groups participated in survey



The minimum age of the respondents was reported as 24 and maximum age was 65. Amongst the respondents 41% were in the age group of 40-50, 32% are in the age group of 30-40, 21% are in age group of 50-60, 3% of them were in the group of 20-30 and rest belongs to the group of more than 60 years of age.

### 6.1.2 Career experience as auto rikshaw drivers

33% of respondents have more than 20 years of experience, 29% are in between 10-15 years of experience, 14% are in between 5-10 years of experience. 12% are in between 15- 20 years of experience and the rest 12% have less than 5 years of experiences.



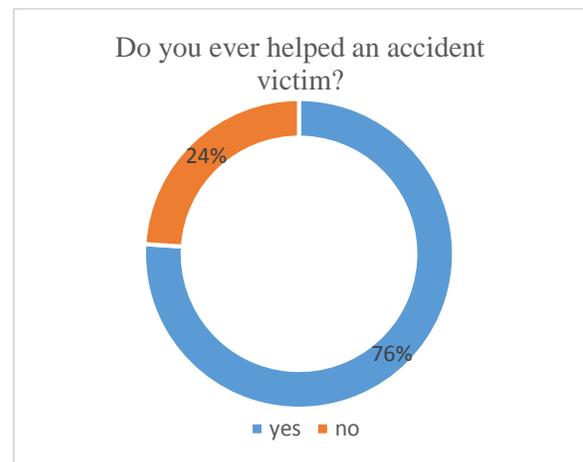
### 6.1.3 Respondents participation in helping a road accident victim.



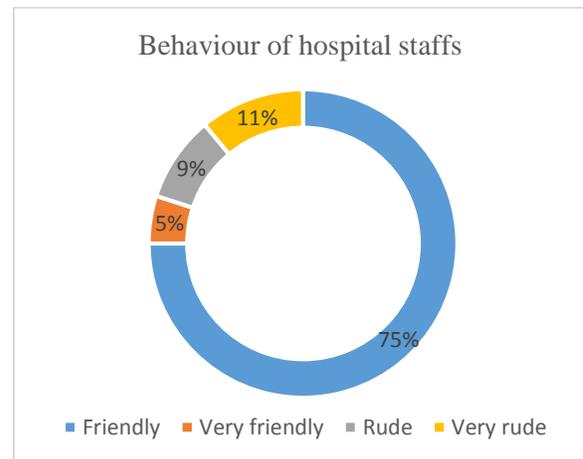
76% of respondents told that they had helped road accident at least once in their career and bring

them to either government or private hospitals which is nearby. Normally they admit the patients in District government hospital Kollam. 100% of those who helped an accident victim claim that they had lost some money in helping a road accident victim. Most of them told that it was only meter charge for riding, some claimed that they had lost more than 1000 rupees.

Auto drivers normally do not ask for any auto fair in this type of cases due to their ethics and moral values. They help the victims of road accident to reach the hospital and they go back to work without asking any compensations.



### 6.1.4 Behavior of hospital staffs



75% told that behavior of hospital staffs is good. 5% respondents told that the behavior was very good. In some instances, doctors gave auto

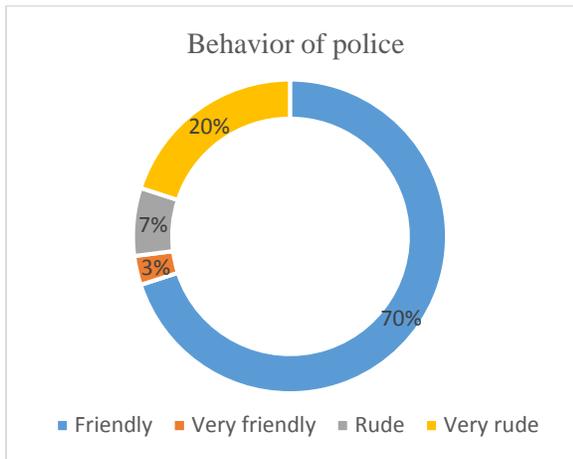
rikshaw drivers their compensation from their wallet itself.

9% have the opinion that hospital staffs are rude, 11% reveled that hospital staffs are very rude. Most of them had bad experience with attenders of hospitals as they demand bribe for treating

### 6.1.5 Behavior of police

70% told that the behavior of the police was friendly when they tried to help an accident victim.

3% are in the opinion that behavior of police was very friendly. 7% told that behavior of police was rude and 20% are in the opinion that polices behaves very rudely.



### 6.1.6 Compensation/rewards

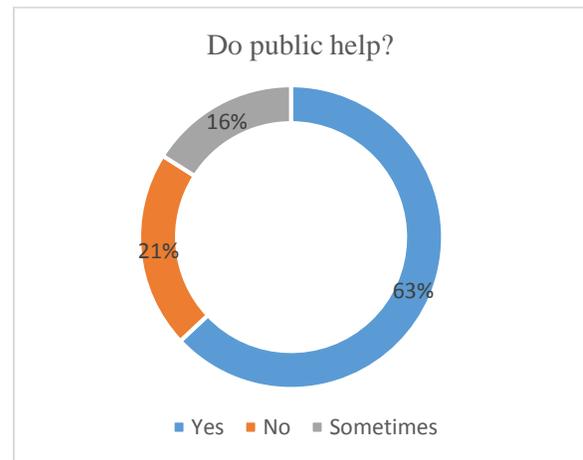


Out of 48 people, those who helped road accident victims 100% told that they had lost some amount

of money when they tried to help accident victims. Only 3% has got some type of reward or compensation for helping an accident victim. The compensation they got were less than 100 rupees.

### 6.1.7 Public help

63% respondents say public help them to bring road accident victims to hospitals. 21% says that public helps occasionally and the rest 16% says that public didn't helped them at all.



The common complaint from auto rikshaw drivers about public is that public have some hesitation to accompany them in carrying a victim. They often interested to take photographs rather than helping the victims.

### 6.1.8 First aid box

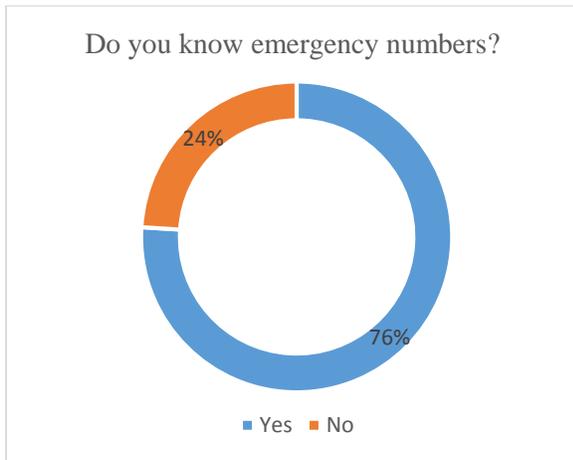


96% have first aid box in their auto rikshaws. 12% did not know how to use first aid. Even

though they had first aid box they do not want to apply in accidents. They fear that it might cause some side effects. So normally they try to bring victims to the nearest hospitals

### 6.1.9 Emergency numbers

76% respondents knew some type of emergency contact numbers such as police, fire force, ambulance etc. And only 4% believes their response was bad, the rest is satisfied with the service.



### 6.1.10 Design of Auto rikshaws

42% believes that design of auto rikshaws is not good enough to carry a road accident victim to hospital. They said that it could have been improved so that a person could lie down with a better posture.



58% believes that the current design is good enough to carry a road accident victim to hospital. The reason they explained was, auto rikshaw runs on 3 wheels and this design is too much they it can withstand. They also said that auto rikshaws are meant for carry passengers not as a substitute for ambulance.

All auto rikshaw drivers have agreed on a common fact that an another person's help is required to carry a road accident victim to hospitals.



## 7. RESULTS

By analyzing the survey using demographic charts, certain results can be found out. It is done by evaluating each individual question and its answers. The results obtained are

1. The most common problem auto rikshaw drivers facing for helping a road accident victim is that they are not getting any compensation for their work. They all have lost some amount of money for helping these victims.
2. Unawareness among drivers about the government schemes. Even though there are enough funds from government to reward them for their courageous work, drivers are not getting it. Most of them didn't t knew about such schemes.
3. Even though the behavior from police was improved most of them feared about the legal procedure they might face after helping a road

accident victim. They are unaware to the guidelines Supreme Court has announced for helping the road accident victims.

4. Design of the auto rikshaws is not good enough to carry a road accident victim. In most cases victims have to sit while travelling, as there is insufficient space in the autorikshaws.



## 8. CONCLUSIONS

After evaluating and discussing the survey report, certain conclusions can be obtained. The present system has to be improved to get a secure feeling for those drivers who wish to help road accident victims. Lack of awareness is the major issue what they are facing now. The initiatives government has putting is not reaching to the lower strata of society. Fear for legal procedures diverts them from helping road accident victims. Design of the vehicle has some draw back as it might lead to more injury while transporting victims to medical facilities. Lack of recognition for their social work is an another problem. Behavior from public and government have to be improvised, so that they could continue their social work to save thousands of lives from streets.

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