

# Economic Status of Rickshaw Pullers (Cycle) - A Case Study in North Lakhimpur Town, Assam, India

DadulRajkonwar

Assistant Professor, Department of Commercial Law  
Lakhimpur Commerce College

Affiliated to Dibrugarh University, North Lakhimpur, Assam, India  
Pin-787001, Mobile no. 09706386327

## Abstract

*Rickshaw pullers are found in different cities and towns of India. They can carry people where the transportation by other means is not available. It has been observed from the study that most of the rickshaw pullers are too poor to own a new rickshaw. It has also been observed that a significant number of rickshaw pullers worked hard to survive as their daily incomes are very meager. The study has observed that most of the rickshaw pullers' savings are very little. The study found that overall economic condition of rickshaw pullers is not satisfactory in the study area.*

*The study is a humble attempt to highlight economic status of cycle rickshaw pullers based on the primary data collected from field survey and secondary data collected from books, journals, magazines, internet etc.*

**Key words:** *Transportation, poor, survive, economic condition, satisfactory*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Rickshaw pullers have been providing valuable services to the common people at their convenience. They are considered as most deprived section of the society. A significant number of the rickshaw pullers are not covered by basic economic services. A large number of rickshaw pullers lives is very painful and work hard to survive in the competitive environment. Approximately 90 percent of the rickshaw pullers come out in 8 a.m. in the morning and go home late evening. A significant number of the rickshaw pullers hire their rickshaws from the owners on the basis of daily rent ranging from ₹40 to ₹60 per day while their sale of services ranges from ₹ 200 to ₹ 500 per day. The cost of a new rickshaw is around ₹ 18,000/- which is not possible to buy a new rickshaw as most of the rickshaw pullers belong to low income group in the society. In the era of privatization and liberalization, the rickshaw pullers have to encounter many problems in their working life. The municipal authority have been taken various initiatives to modernize the local areas particularly cities and towns. This compels the rickshaw pullers to evict

from their services in most of the cities and towns of the country. This situation forces them to leave their job which creates another problem of unemployment in the society by creating jobless.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the proposed study is to highlight economic conditions of cycle rickshaw pullers based on the study in North Lakhimpur town, Assam. The following objectives have been adopted to achieve the main objective-

- i. To study the economic status of rickshaw pullers.
- ii. To recommend some suggestions on the basis of findings of the study.

## III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study is confined to North Lakhimpur town of Assam, India. There are 600 hundred registered rickshaw pullers under Municipality Authority of North Lakhimpur towns, Assam. The registered 600 cycle rickshaw pullers are taken as population of the study. The sample size of the study is 10 percent of the total population. Simple random sampling technique has been adopted for the purpose of the study. The study was conducted from April, 2015 to October, 2016.

The study is based on both primary data and secondary data. Primary data have been collected with the help of interview schedule method and personal interview method.

Secondary data have been used from municipality board and NGOs, books, journals, research articles, magazines, government/non-government records, newspapers, internet etc.

The following statistical tools and techniques are used for the analyzing of data:

- simple percentage analysis
- chi square test

**IV. ANALYSIS OF DATA**

The study highlights various aspects of rickshaw pullers like working conditions of rickshaw pullers, income, spending and saving patterns, source of finance etc. Rickshaw pullers are the part and parcel of transportation in various towns and cities of India. A significant number of rickshaw pullers come from lower classes of the society and they are mostly found in informal sector providing services as wages earners, daily laborers, footpath traders, street vendors etc. before entering into this profession. This informal sector is comprised of mostly resources less people. This reveals that upper classes in the society are maintaining standard in the society. The poor and unskilled sections of informal economy have great contributions to the economy of a country. Cycle rickshaws are eco-friendly and they have been contributed to reduce pollution in the society. The contributions of rickshaw pullers have not been adequately recognized rather harassed by the local authority in the name of rules and regulations. The following sections highlight various aspects of economic conditions of rickshaw pullers.

**A. Working Conditions**

A large number of the rickshaw pullers have to work under the pressure of different authorities. The local authority often harasses the rickshaw pullers by evicting them from the place of work. The problems of rickshaw pullers have more aggravated when some local people travel without paying fair to them.

**Table: 1:Types of problems of rickshaw pullers**

Types of problems	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Eviction by municipal authority	0	3 0 5 . 0 0
Bribe charged	4	0 6 . 6 7
Problem from local people	0	3 0 5 . 0 0
Others	5	0 8 3 . 3 3
Total	6	0 1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

Table: 1: shows that a large number (83.33 percent) of sample rickshaw pullers have faced other problem while a few rickshaw pullers have been faced similar type of problems.

**Table: 2:Working hours in a day**

Working hours	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Less than 5 hrs	2	1 3 5 . 0 0
Between 5 hrs to 10 hrs	1	5 2 5 . 0 0
Above 10 hrs	2	4 0 . 0 0
Total	6	0 1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

Table: 2: reveals that that 40 percent of total sample rickshaw pullers worked more than 10 hours in a day. Table: 2: also shows that 35 percent of total sample rickshaw pullers worked less than 5 hours in a day

**B. Daily Income, Spending and Saving Patterns:**

**Table: 3:Daily income of rickshaw pullers**

Ranges of income (in ₹)	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Less than ₹ 200	0	7 1 1 . 6 7
Between ₹ 200 to ₹ 500	4	6 7 6 . 6 6
Above ₹ 500	0	7 1 1 . 6 7
Total	6	0 1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

Table: 3: reveals that a significant number (76.67 percent) of total sample rickshaw pullers have earned from ₹ 200 to ₹500 in a day. It can be observed from the study that a significant number of rickshaw pullers earned very low from their services.

**Table: 4: Saving habits**

H a b i t s	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Yes	2	6 4 3 . 3 3
No	3	4 5 6 . 6 7
Total	6	0 1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

Table: 4: highlights that 56.67 percent of total sample rickshaw pullers have no saving habits while 43.33 percent of total sample rickshaw pullers having saving habits. It has observed from the study a significant number of sample rickshaw pullers used their income to consume.

**Table: 5:Where do you save?**

Savings and consumption	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Banks and post office	1	3 2 1 . 6 7
Shopkeepers	0	3 0 5 . 0 0
Rickshaw owners	0	3 0 5 . 0 0
Home	0	7 1 1 . 6 7
Consumed	3	4 5 6 . 6 6
Total	6	0 1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

It can be observed from Table: 5: that majority of sample rickshaw pullers used their earning for consumption. It has revealed from the study that rickshaw pullers used their money to save in different areas.

**Source of finance**

**Table: 6: Sources of finance**

S o u r c e s	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Own source	1	2 2 0 . 0 0
Friends and relatives	0	2 0 3 . 3 3
Banks and MFIs	0	3 0 5 . 0 0
Others	4	3 7 1 . 6 7
Total	6	0 1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

Table:6: shows that 20 percent of total sample rickshaws pullers arrange finance from own source and around 3 percent of sample rickshaw pullers avail finance from friends and relatives while 5 percent avail finance from banks and MFIs. The

others source here include the rickshaw owners who have been provided rickshaw to the pullers on daily rental basis.

**C. Motivations in Business:**

**Table: 7:Motivation in business**

M o t i v a t o r s	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
F a m i l y m e m b e r s	4 9	8 1 . 6 7
F r i e n d s a n d r e l a t i v e s	0 6	1 0 . 0 0
O t h e r s	0 5	0 8 . 3 3
T o t a l	6 0	1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

It can be observed from Table :7: that around 82 percent of total sample rickshaw pullers motivated by their family members to work as rickshaw pullers while around 18 percent of sample rickshaw pullers motivated by friends and relatives and others sources.

**Table: 8:Satisfaction in business**

S a t i s f a c t i o n	Total no. of sample	Percentage to the total
Y e s	5 6	9 3 . 3 3
N o	0 4	0 6 . 6 7
T o t a l	6 0	1 0 0 . 0 0

Source: Primary data collected from field survey

It has been observed from Table: 8: that majority of sample rickshaw pullers satisfied in their business. Around 7 percent of the total sample rickshaw pullers have revealed that they are not satisfied in rickshaw pulling.

**D. Following Section has Dealt with Hypotheses Testing**

1. H°= The level of education is related to age of rickshaw pullers.
2. H°= The level of income is related to hours of work of rickshaw pullers.
3. H°= type of ownership is related to level of income of rickshaw pullers.

Table: 9: reveals the observed and expected frequencies to test the null hypothesis are that the level of education is related to age of rickshaw pullers.

**Table: 9:Observed and expected frequencies**

Level of education	A g e o f R i c k s h a w p u l l e r s		Total
	Less than 30 yrs	More than 30 yrs	
L i t e r a t e	1 5 ( 1 5 . 8 3 )	23 (22.17)	3 8
I l l i t e r a t e	1 0 ( 9 . 1 7 )	12 (12.83)	2 2
T o t a l	2 5	3 5	6 0

Source-Primary Data collected from field survey

(Expected frequencies are represented in bracket)

**Interpretation:** Table value of  $\chi^2$  for (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (2-1) =1 degree of freedom at 5 % level of

significance is = 3.85. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is =.203. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is less than this table value and hence the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be concluded that there is association between level of education and ages of rickshaw pullers.

Table: 10: shows the observed and expected frequencies to test the **null hypothesis** are that the level of income is related to hours of work of rickshaw pullers.

**Table:10:Observed and expected frequencies**

Level of Income	H o u r s o f w o r k		Total
	Less than 5 hour	More than 5 hour	
Less than 300	9 ( 9 . 1 )	17 ( 1 6 . 9 )	2 6
More than 300	1 2 ( 1 1 . 9 )	22 ( 2 2 . 1 )	3 4
T o t a l	2 1	3 9	6 0

Source-Primary Data collected from field survey

(Expected frequencies are represented in bracket)

**Interpretation:** Table value of  $\chi^2$  for (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (2-1) =1 degree of freedom at 5 % level of significance is = 3.85. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is =.003. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is less than this table value and hence the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be concluded that there is association between level of income and hours of work of rickshaw pullers.

Table: 11: shows the observed and expected frequencies to test the **null hypothesis** are that the type of ownership is related to level of income of rickshaw pullers.

**Table:11:Observed and expected frequencies**

Type of ownership	L e v e l o f i n c o m e		Total
	< 3 0 0	> 3 0 0	
O w n e d	8 ( 7 . 3 7 )	9 ( 9 . 6 3 )	1 7
N o t o w n e d	1 8 ( 1 8 . 6 3 )	25 (24.37)	4 3
T o t a l	2 6	3 4	6 0

Source-Primary Data collected from field survey

(Expected frequencies are represented in bracket)

**Interpretation:** Table value of  $\chi^2$  for (r-1) (c-1) = (2-1) (2-1) =1 degree of freedom at 5 % level of significance is = 3.85. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is =0.133. The calculated value of  $\chi^2$  is less than this table value and hence the null hypothesis is accepted and it can be concluded that there is association

between types of ownership and level of income of rickshaw pullers.

## V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of study have been discussed in this section.

It can be observed from the study that the working condition of rickshaw pullers is not satisfactory. Most of the rickshaw pullers have been encountered many problems in their working situation and they have to work for long time in a day. The municipal authority should treat the rickshaw pullers as an integral part of society and provide necessary support to them.

It has been revealed from the study that almost all the rickshaw pullers earned a very low income from rickshaw pulling. It has also been revealed that most of the rickshaw pullers used their income to consume. The stakeholders in the society should encourage the rickshaw pullers to save money while travelling in rickshaws.

It can be found from the study that a significant number of rickshaw pullers have not owned a rickshaw for them. The rickshaw pullers should be identified as a separate target group so that financial services can be provided.

Most of the rickshaw pullers have been motivated by their family members to work rickshaw pullers as revealed by the study. They are responsible Municipal authority should initiate a scheme to provide new rickshaw to them on the basis of monthly installment system.

The NGOs (Non Government Organizations), MFI (Micro Finance Institutions) should come forward to help financially to the rickshaw pullers with the help of Government.

A significant number of rickshaw pullers have been revealed that the municipal authority often harassed in the name of maintaining laws in the town. They should be properly regulated and not to be evicted from their profession. This will generate another problem of unemployment in the society by making them jobless.

It has been concluded that the rickshaw pullers should be treated as part and parcel of our society and provide necessary assistance as and when required to them.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [1] Ahmed, F., Labour in Informal Sector, Manak Publications Pvt. Ltd., Jaipur (1999).
- [2] Ahmed, J.U., Bhagat, D. and Singaiah G., Microfinance in India: Issues and challenges, DVS Publishers, Guwahati (2010).
- [3] Ali, Mushir, in his article entitled 'socio-economic analysis of Rickshaw pullers in urban cities: A case study of Uttar Pradesh, India'.
- [4] Arora, R. and Sood, S.K., Fundamental of Entrepreneurship and Small Business, Kalyani Publishers, New Delhi, (2004).
- [5] Aziz, Abdul, Urban poor and urban informal sector, Ashish Publishing House, New Delhi (1984).
- [6] Bankshi, Gautam, Managing Entrepreneurship development, Cyber Tech Publications, New Delhi (2007).
- [7] Batra, G.B., Development of Entrepreneurship, Deep & Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (2002).
- [8] Benerjee, N., Women Workers in the Unorganized Sector, Sangam Book (India) Pvt. Ltd., Hyderabad (1985).
- [9] Borthakur, S., Gender Discrimination and its Impact on Socio-Economic Development, Assam, (2012).
- [10] Dasgupta, M., Research Methodology in Economics-Problems and Issues, Deep & Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (2007).
- [11] Desai, A., Research Methodology in Management, APH Publishing Corporation, New Delhi (2008).
- [12] Dhameja, S.K., Women Entrepreneurs Opportunities, Performance and Problems, Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (2004).
- [13] Dharmaraj, S., Informal Sector in India, Abhijeet Publications, New Delhi (2007).
- [14] Fisher, Thomas & Sriram, M.S., Beyond micro credit, putting development back into micro finance, Vister Publications, New Delhi, (2002).
- [15] Ghate, Prabhu, Indian Microfinance-The challenges of rapid growth, Sage Publications, New Delhi (2008).
- [16] Giri, V.V., Labour problems in Indian Industry, Asian Publishing House, Mumbai, (1972), p. 271.
- [17] Girjesh, Sharma, Role of Financial Institutions in India, RBSA Publications, Jaipur (2005).
- [18] Handique, K.J., Small scale industries in Assam, Rohman Printing Press, Assam, (2012).

for their family members for livelihood and they are also helping to reduce unemployment problem in the society.

It can be revealed from the chi square tests that some variables are related to other variables. The level of education is related to the age of rickshaw pullers. Income is related to hours of work and ownership is related to the level of income.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions can be forwarded so the measures can be taken to overcome the problems of rickshaw pullers:

Rickshaw pullers are not economically sound. It can be observed from the study that the rickshaw pullers have not been benefited from the existing Government schemes initiated for the backward classes. This calls for awareness among them about the various measures adopted by the Government. The general public should take initiative to create awareness among them about the benefits of the schemes while travelling in the rickshaws.

The study revealed that a large number of rickshaw pullers are not owner of the rickshaws. This hinders on their income as they have to pay a part of their income regularly to the rickshaw owners. In this regard, it can be suggested that the

- [19] Harper, Malcolm, Practical Micro Finance-A Training guide for South Asia, Vistaar Publications, New Delhi (2003).
- [20] Karmakar, K.G., Micro finance in India, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (2008).
- [21] Kaulgud, Dr.Aruna, Entrepreneurship Management, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi (2003).
- [22] Khanka, S.S., Entrepreneurship Development, S. Chand & Co. Ltd., New Delhi (2005).
- [23] Kothari, C.R., Research Methodology Methods & Techniques, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi (2004).
- [24] Kothekar, R., Emerging trends in labor economics, Cyber Tech Publications, New Delhi.
- [25] Kumar, A., LabourWelfare and Social Security-Awareness, Implementation and Utility of Labour Laws, Deep & Deep Publication Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (2003).
- [26] Kumar, Dr., Methods and Techniques of Social Research, LaxmiNarainAgarwal Educational Publishers, Agra (1996).
- [27] Saheb, B.B.S., Women Vendor in Urban Informal Sector, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, (2011).
- [28] Saikia, Kamalendu, Rural Banking Micro Finance System in Assam-An empirical study, KaustabhPrakashan, Dibrugarh (2012).
- [29] Singh, Bhagirath, Rural Finance, RBSA Publishing, Jaipur (2001).
- [30] Singh, P.D., Women Workers in Unorganized Sector, Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi (2005).
- [31] Tom, I., Women in Unorganized Sector, Usha Publications, New Delhi (1989).
- [32] Tripathi, S.N., Informal Women Labourers in India, Discovering Publishing House, New Delhi (1991).