

Impact of Auto-Rickshaw Service on the Livelihood of Chauffeurs' Household, Baglung, Nepal¹

Saroj Raj Panta & Sudarshan Silwal

Abstract

This research paper investigates the socioeconomic background and survival issues of auto rickshaw drivers in Baglung Bazaar using both quantitative and qualitative methods focusing descriptive and analytical research design. Survey, observation, and interview data were collected from 30 auto-drivers using random sampling, out of 98 auto-drivers. The aim is to provide voices in favor of legalizing rickshaws and e-rickshaws in the city, as well as to present policy suggestions on enhancing safety and efficiency. The rapid expansion of the rickshaw fleet in Baglung has caused earnings to dwindle and there are more traffic problems due to intense competition. If rickshaws are properly regulated, they would contribute greatly to city planning, generate government income, and improve transportation infrastructure. The study evaluated the socio-economic impact of diesel and battery rickshaws and determined that 80% of drivers are content with their occupation. At Baglung, when there were 20-25 autos, auto-drivers were earning more, but now there are 98 autos with unhealthy competition and reduced income there. So, the government should create regulations and laws. The findings revealed that auto driving job generate stress but lack a significant impact on job satisfaction. Income is uncertain and relies on the workers' performance; however, job satisfaction has a strong impact on employee performance directly, and job stress has a direct impact on employee performance in relation to job satisfaction. The current study will be helpful to future researchers and policymakers who are facing this problem.

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Introduction

The term 'rickshaw' has its origins in the Japanese language, where it refers to "a human-powered vehicle" (Singh, 2014). Rickshaws are believed to have first appeared in Japan in 1868, with people pulling them using two poles protruding from a cabin mounted on wheels. The first pedal rickshaws are thought to have emerged in 1929 in Singapore, where a bicycle was added to the rickshaw's body (Kathmandu Post, 4 May, 2018). They made their way to Nepal in the mid-20th century. However, since their introduction in Nepal, rickshaws have seen minimal technological advancements, with individuals still relying on their muscles to pedal them.

There have been limited studies on rickshaws in Nepal. When electric rickshaws gained popularity as a mode of transport in the Terai region of Nepal in 2015 (Pandey, 2017), various newspaper and research journal articles were published examining the positive and negative impacts of electric rickshaws in detail. Electric rickshaws are believed to be faster than pedal rickshaws, reduce physical strain, allow for more trips per day, and provide higher incomes for drivers. The positive impacts have focused on employment opportunities, reduced transport costs, and enhanced transport sustainability, resulting in an increase in the number of rickshaws in several cities (ADB, 24 Apr. 2019). However, challenges such as road congestion, regulatory barriers, lack of policies affecting rickshaw pullers, and the government's inability to devise a proper management plan for both motorized and e-rickshaws remain.

Insufficient research has been conducted on the job satisfaction of electric rickshaw drivers, despite many young people choosing this career path to support their families. Researchers seem to undervalue the significance of electric rickshaws, leading them to overlook the need to study the stakeholders in this industry. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate various aspects of e-rickshaw drivers' livelihoods, including their satisfaction levels, income, and past experiences. Abuhashesh, Dmour, and Masa'deh (2019, p. 1) stated that while most individuals agree that work is a fundamental part of life, people perceive work differently. Similarly, Natarajan (2014) discussed the socio-economic conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers, the prospects and challenges faced by stakeholders, and the role of social organizations in transforming lives in Chennai, India. He also highlighted that the informal economies of auto-rickshaws pose not only socio-economic problems but also serious ecological

concerns. Abuhashesh et al. (2019) suggested that some individuals view their occupation purely as a means of financial gain, while others see it as defining their social status. People choose different occupations either by choice or necessity. Those who choose specific occupations by choice tend to be more satisfied. Wiener & Klein (1978) and Chen (2006) concluded that individuals who are satisfied with their occupation are less likely to desire a switch to other occupations.

Numerous studies have been performed in the realm of auto-rickshaws, focusing on driver satisfaction and sustainable energy; however, there has been a lack of sufficient research specifically addressing the occupational satisfaction of rickshaw drivers. Currently, a growing number of young individuals are choosing this profession to support their families. Despite the significant role that rickshaws play in promoting self-employment within the Nepalese context, researchers seem to overlook its importance and, consequently, the need for studies concerning e-rickshaw stakeholders. Therefore, this research aims to investigate various aspects of e-rickshaw drivers, including their satisfaction levels, income status, and previous experience.

In 2016, the Government of Nepal issued a policy draft titled “Renewable Energy Subsidy Policy, 2073” under the Ministry of Population and Environment, aiming to implement clean energy policies to reduce dependence on conventional and imported energy by increasing access to renewable sources to improve people's livelihoods and create employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas. In light of the government's policy to promote clean energy to alleviate poverty, create employment opportunities, address global environmental issues, and counter the rise in fossil fuel prices, electric rickshaws emerge as a solution to these issues. Electric rickshaws now constitute a significant portion of vehicles on rural and urban roads, providing a livelihood for many. However, like any profession, electric rickshaw driving also comes with its challenges.

Research Methods

This study utilized both quantitative and qualitative methods, along with descriptive and explanatory research designs, to gather data. Auto-rickshaw drivers and owners were surveyed, observed, and interviewed using questionnaires to collect primary data. In Baglung municipality 98 auto are registered. Out of the 98 auto rickshaws, 30 auto-drivers were selected through simple random sampling to conduct this research. This sample type was selected because simple random sample consists of a randomly chosen subset from a population. In this type of sampling technique, every individual in the

population has the same probability of being selected. Secondary materials were collected from various journals, books, periodicals, and municipality profiles of relevant organizations. Cases and recent version of the SPSS software were used to analyze data and information for this research.

Results and Discussion

People are found engaged in auto driving for their livelihood. This study uses microdata analysis of the central regions of Baglung municipality to present the state of auto rickshaw service and their livelihood.

The entrance of auto-rickshaws in Nepal had economic, social, traffic and environmental impacts. This profession leads to increase income, generate self-employment opportunities, reduce pollution, conduct economic activities and build entrepreneur capacity. The financial gains are quick and no need previous experience (Ahmed et al., 2022). So, this study deals with the socio-economic impacts of auto-rickshaw in Baglung Bazar. For this, auto-rickshaw owners and drivers are targeted. The analysis is done using SPSS software. Perception of drivers regarding profession has been measured on the basis of five-points Likert Scale.

Table 1

Socio-economic and demographic information of the respondents (N= 30)

Factors	Variables	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	30	100
	Female	0.0	0.0
Marital status	Unmarried	2	6.7
	Married	28	93.3
Age	Age 20-30 years	8	26.7
	Age 30-40 years	14	46.7
	Age 40-50 years	6	20.0
	Age 50 above years	2	6.7
Education	Basic level	15	50.0
	Secondary level	13	43.3
	University education	2	6.7
Family size	2-4 persons	4	13.3
	4-6 persons	17	56.7
	More than six persons	9	30
Caste	Brahmin and Chhetri	5	16.7
	Janjati	4	13.3
	Dalit	21	70.0
Monthly	15,000-30,000	5	16.7

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income	(In	Above 30,000-50,000	18	60.0
Rs.)		Above 50,000-70,000	6	20.0
		Above 70,000 up to one lakh	1	3.3

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 1 shows that the demographic information of the respondents in the study area differs. Almost married (93.3 %) having aged 30-40 years' (46.7 %) and basic level education up-to eighth class (50.0 %) found involving in auto-rickshaw driving. This table further shows that the family size having 4-6 persons have taken this profession as their main livelihood. This study also observed that 70 percent Dalit have created self-job the dalits of BK, Sharki, damai involve in this occupation. Similarly, 60 percent respondents found earning income above 30-50 thousand monthly from this profession in the study area. There is influence of patriarchal society.

Table 2

Year of involvement, sources of fund and amount invested in Auto-rickshaw (N = 30)

Particular Years	Frequency	Percent
Below one year	3	10.0
One year	1	3.2
Two years	18	60.0
More than two years	8	26.7
Total	30	100.0
Sources		
Banks	4	13.3
Cooperatives	14	46.7
Self-finance	12	40.0
Total	30	100.0
Amount invested (Rs. In Lakhs)		
Three lakhs	2	6.7
Five lakhs	8	26.7
More than five lakhs	20	66.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 2 shows that the year of involvement in driving profession, sources of fund for auto-rickshaw purchase and amount invested. Few respondents (3.2 %) are found involving in auto-rickshaw driving since one year. Almost respondents (86.7 %) said that they are adopting this profession as a self-job from two and more than two years. Recently, they are creating self-motive jobs for their livelihood in the study area. For this,

about 50 percent auto-rickshaw drivers found taking loan from cooperative source and followed by self-finance (40.0 %). Only 13.3 percent used the sources of fund from banks. Pay, promotion, fringe benefits, contingent rewards, supervision, operational procedures, coworkers, nature of work, and communication are the nine items utilized to measure job satisfaction (Spector, 2001). Similarly, of the respondents, 93.4 percent were found investing five lakhs and more in auto-rickshaw purchase.

Table 3

Types of auto rickshaw and appropriate season for business (N = 30)

Particular Types	Frequency	Percent
Electric	5	16.7
Petrol	25	83.3
Appropriate seasons		
Dashain and Tihar festivals	11	36.7
Marriage season	4	13.3
Chaite dashain and mahotsab	15	50.0

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 3 shows the types of auto-rickshaw and appropriate season for the business in the study area. As per the findings, auto-rickshaws with petrol are more popular (83.3 %) than those with electric auto-rickshaws (16.7 %). Chaite Dashain and Mahotsab (50.0 %) is found the most popular season for the driving activities, followed by Dashain and Tihar festivals (36.7 %). Of the total, Marriage season (13.3 %) is found the least important for this activity. Abdirahman (2020) research found that job satisfaction positively affects employee performance, i.e., higher job satisfaction will have a positive effect on higher performance outcomes. Further, Coomber and Bamball (2007) explained that employees with high job satisfaction perform their job with a good attitude and are more willing to learn other skills, and this can lead to promotion in performance. Robbins & Judge (2013) further asserted that job satisfaction produces a favorable impression of a given job following the evaluation of its characteristics. Therefore, workers with high job satisfaction would view their jobs in a favorable manner, whereas workers with low job satisfaction will perceive their work unfavorably.

Table 4

Motivational factors and satisfaction level with the profession (N = 30)

Particular Factors	Frequency	Percent
Unemployment	6	20.0
Self-motive	8	26.7

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Family	14	46.7
Society	2	6.6
Response	Frequency	Percent
Yes	23	76.7
No	7	23.3

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

According to the findings mentioned in the Table 4, family is more prevalent (46.7 %) motivational factors than the others. Of the total, self-motive factors covered 26.7 percent, followed by unemployment (20.0 %), and the least important factor is considered society (6.6 %) in the study area. Similarly, 76.7 percent respondents are satisfied with their driving profession. In this context, switching intention of e-rickshaw drivers means their willingness to change their occupation. Locke (1976) has defined job satisfaction as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's occupation or occupational experiences. Employee job satisfaction and their desire to change careers are inversely correlated. This indicates that higher levels of satisfaction in their current roles lead to a decreased likelihood of employees seeking alternative employment. The factors contributing to this job satisfaction extend beyond the nature of the work itself; they also include elements such as the work environment, relationships with supervisors and colleagues, corporate culture, and management practices.

Table 5

Challenges of auto-rickshaw driver (N = 30)

Challenges	Frequency	Percent
Legal challenge	12	40.0
Unhealthy competition	5	16.7
Road safety	10	33.3
Occupational challenge	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 5 presents the challenges faced by auto-rickshaw drivers in their profession. Of the total, 40 percent respondents found facing legal challenges, followed by road safety (33.3 %). As per the responses of the respondents, they also faced unhealthy competition and occupational challenges in the profession, but occupational challenges found only 10 percent. Auto drivers' socioeconomic backgrounds are neither favourable nor unfavourable. Their job is a source of moderate job satisfaction for them. Furthermore, a large number of people rely on the services of auto drivers, who

contribute to economic activity (Tigari & Santhoshi, 2020). This research also found the same.

Table 6

Changing patterns on livelihood variables before and after involvement in driving profession (N = 30)

Variables	Mean	SD	T	Sig. (2-tailed)	r	Sig.
Monthly income	63566.666667	10833.165339	32.139	.000	.143	.450
Consumption	8733.333333	907.187139	52.728	.000		
Education	1670.000000	362.129716	25.259	.000	.299	.109
Health	1126.666667	474.838145	12.996	.000	.225	.232
Farming invest	333.333333	713.095889	2.560	.000	.736	.000
Small business	30920.000000	7900.475760	21.436	.000	.195	.302
Loan repayment	15866.666667	2612.745066	33.262	.000	.080	.675
Saving	5363.333333	1718.757236	17.092	.000	.357	.053

Source: Result based on computed data/SPSS, 2024.

Table 6 presents the changing patterns of auto-rickshaw drivers on their livelihood before and after their involvement in the profession. P-value ($p = .000$ for all t-tests) indicates that livelihood variables such as consumption, saving, investment, monthly income and loan repayment considered in the study found changes significantly before and after working as a driver in auto-rickshaw. Out of these livelihood variables, investment in farming shows the highest correlation ($r = 0.736$, $p = 0.000$) pointing a strong association with the income changes. Aggregately, driving profession in the study area looks to have a generally good impact on a number of livelihood factors. Anitha Ramachander (2015) investigated the financial health of Bangalore's drivers, emphasising the connection between financial difficulties and education. In their 2013 study, Emma Shlaes and Akshay Mani examined the auto rickshaw industry in Mumbai, emphasising its function as a feeder option to public transportation. Subendiran (2014) concluded about auto rickshaws' informal economies, emphasising their socioeconomic status and environmental issues. Similarly, regarding the saving and spending on education, there is found moderate correlations impending significance.

Table 7

Perception of auto-rickshaw drivers regarding economic issues (N = 30)

(Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Neutral=3, Disagree=4, strongly disagree=5)

Statements	Responses (%)
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	1	2	3	4	5
Monthly income sufficient for household's needs.	0.0	30.0	16.7	50.0	3.3
Monthly income has increased significantly since started driving an auto-rickshaw in Baglung.	3.3	46.7	10.0	33.3	6.7
Earning from auto-rickshaw driving has improved household financial security and stability	0.0	60.0	10.0	30.0	0.0
I am able to save a portion of my earning regularly.	10.0	53.3	3.3	33.3	0.0
Auto-rickshaw maintenance and fuel costs significantly reduce my regular earning.	0.0	36.7	63.3	0.0	0.0
This work provides long-term stability for my household's livelihood	0.0	63.3	0.0	36.7	0.0
My earnings from this driving enable me to invest in other livelihood activities	0.0	50.0	13.3	36.7	0.0
It has provided a better source of income compared to previous job.	10.0	53.3	0.0	37.7	0.0

Source: Result based on computed data/SPSS, 2024.

Table 7 presents the perception of auto-rickshaw drivers considering economic issues with them. More than 63 percent of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that auto-rickshaw driving profession helped to improve the better source of income, saving and household livelihood in the study area. Of the total, sixty percent respondents perceived this profession as their financial security and stability. Similarly, fifty percent respondents agreed that they are able to increase their monthly income significantly and enable to invest it in livelihood activities. Rajesh Ranjan (2015) investigated the connection between work-life balance and life satisfaction among Mumbai auto rickshaw drivers, discovering that those who prioritised family time had a better quality of life. Akshay P. Shinde (2012) emphasised the problems of pollution and insufficient road-based public transit systems. After studying how Mumbai's auto rickshaw system is impacted by political economics, Aparna Mani & Pallavi (2011). Regarding the issue 'reduction of regular earning caused from auto-rickshaw maintenance and fuel cost', sixty-three percent respondents are neutral. Altogether 53.3 percent respondents responded that monthly income is not found sufficient to meet their households' daily needs, though monthly income has increased significantly since started auto-rickshaw profession in Baglung. Finally, this overall result point out positive perception in the issues raised.

Table 8*Perception of auto-rickshaw drivers regarding social issues (N = 30)*

(Strongly agree=1, Agree=2, Neutral=3, Disagree=4, strongly disagree=5)

Statements	Responses (%)				
	1	2	3	4	5
It has provided me a reliable source of self-employment.	23.3	76.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
The lifestyles has been changed.	30.0	70.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Self-employment of family member has increased.	0.0	76.7	23.3	0.0	0.0
It has been the major source of social standing of my family in the community.	0.0	53.3	46.7	0.0	0.0
Local government and financial institutions are supportive to the auto-rickshaw driving in Baglung.	0.0	90.0	10.0	0.0	0.0
It has helped to reduce financial vulnerability.	20.0	63.3	16.7	0.0	0.0
It has increased self-dependency.	0.0	93.3	6.7	0.0	0.0
Earnings enable me to access better healthcare for my family.	56.7	43.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
I suggest to other in the community to consider self-employment opportunities.	100	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
It has caused physical and mental health challenges.	0.0	70.0	30.0	0.0	0.0
I can spend adequate time with my family despite my work schedule.	20.0	70.0	10.0	0.0	0.0
It allows me to participate in community and social activities.	20.0	70.0	3.3	3.3	3.3
My children has got better educational opportunities compared to before.	10.0	76.7	13.3	0.0	0.0
I feel undervalued due to my profession.	3.3	83.3	13.3	0.0	0.0

Source: Result based on computed data/SPSS, 2024.

Table 8 also shows the perception of auto-rickshaw drivers about their profession in Baglung. Almost respondents pointed that they are able to create self-employment opportunities in the area. As per the responses of the majority respondents, this profession has improved livelihood patterns (lifestyles, family self-employment, and social status), enhanced access to healthcare and education, boosted self-reliance and reduced financial vulnerability. The study found some obstacles such as poor mental and physical health, lack of respect in the profession, lack of adequate time for family, lack of proper time for social activities etc. Regardless of some obstacles in the profession, respondents found recommending this to others for self-esteem in the society considering it as a revolutionary potentials of self-employment job within the society.

Marriage and livelihood are under economic pressure at the age of 30-40 years. Marriage and livelihood due to childbearing and providing education for their children. Basic level education leads to choosing auto-rickshaws to fulfil basic needs. Family size is 4–6. Therefore, economic pressure leads to selecting this occupation. 2-year experience: almost all of them started this occupation after marriage and struggled for livelihood. Easy access to take loan from cooperatives rather than bank. More than 5 lakhs were invested for this work. Family members motivated to be engaged in own area and country. Dalit people are found engaged in the occupation rather than others. Monthly income is 50,000, although it has various challenges and possibilities for self-employment by this work. Before starting this job, there was difficult condition to fulfil daily expenditure but after starting this work gradually, it becomes easier.

Narration on investment, income before and after with their satisfaction

An employee's intention to voluntarily shift jobs or firms is known as switching intention or turnover intention, according to Schyns, Torka, and Gössling (2007). The willingness of e-rickshaw drivers to switch careers is referred to in this context as their switching intention. An employee's intention to voluntarily shift jobs or firms is known as switching intention or turnover intention, according to Schyns, Torka, and Gössling (2007). The willingness of e-rickshaw drivers to switch careers is referred to in this context as their switching intention. In this regards a participant shared his views as follows:

Krishan Kishan is a middle-aged worker who, like thousands of other Nepalese, had to come back home from Qatar after being sickened by the working conditions there. He had spent his hard earned money to get an electric rickshaw so that he could take care of his family. Angry after he found out that Baglung Municipality had unilaterally set a quota for electric rickshaws after he had already bought the rickshaw. So he faced problem to register his electric rickshaw. Before long, he was routinely harassed by the traffic police, and had to pay hefty bribes many times. He had to drive bearing from the police to pay his loan installments timely like many others. This is just one of such stories in Baglung(Field study- 2024).

After returning home from Qatar after becoming disillusioned with the working conditions there, Krishan Kishan took this position. He purchased an electric rickshaw with hard-earned cash so he could support his family. After he purchased the electric

rickshaw, he discovered that the Baglung Municipality had unilaterally set a quota for them, which infuriated him. The findings demonstrated that job satisfaction has a significant positive impact on employee performance, job stress has a significant positive influence on worker efficiency through job satisfaction, and job stress doesn't significantly negatively affect job satisfaction or employee performance (Gracia & Lusiana, 2025). He thus encountered difficulties registering his electric rickshaw. Before long, he had to frequently pay large bribes and was frequently hounded by the traffic police. Like many others, he had to drive away from the police in order to make his loan payments on time.

As Locke (1976) has defined job satisfaction as the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's occupation or occupational experiences. It is widely recognized that individuals who experience a high degree of job satisfaction tend to exhibit a positive outlook towards their work, whereas those who are dissatisfied with their jobs often display a negative attitude. French (1982) and Tziner and Vardi (1984) define occupational satisfaction as an effective response or reaction to a wide range of conditions or aspects of one's work, such as pay, supervision, working conditions, and/or the work itself. There are some occupation-related factors that can ensure occupational satisfaction, such as supervision, pay, promotion opportunities, co-worker's, and so forth; the nature of the work itself generally emerges as the most important occupational facet (Judge & Church, 2000). In many Indian and Nepali cities, rickshaws constitute the primary mode of transportation. However, there hasn't been much discussion of rickshaws or the men who operate them in scholarly works. Despite this shortcoming, Jan Breman, who has studied this mode of transportation, suggests that people who use it are found in the unorganised sector (1983, p. 165). Auto rickshaw driving is a male-dominated occupation in Baglung. The relationships among rickshaw drivers themselves are also increasingly important in the city, due to shared experiences in the city, for example, going to festivals and eating together. In this regards another participant shared his views as follows:

Abishek Kishan was a man, approximately 20 years old when the researchers met him, who had been driving an auto rickshaw Baglung Bazaar for the last three years. For him, being able to continue living in Baglung as well as being a man required this occupation. Despite Abishek's job as an auto driver, which was quite unusual among the rickshaw drivers, the researchers who met him

acknowledged that this job came with many problems. For example, there was a significant increase in uncertainty about how much he would earn in any given day. Furthermore, like the other rickshaw drivers, whenever we spoke to him, he had little to no savings and no apparent reserve resources. If he falls ill or has to return to his village. Abishek told us that on average per day, he would expect to earn between Rs. 800 -1,000. Even to earn such a small amount, it will require significant effort and work. There were no guarantees that if one were to put in 10 to 12 hours' work, one would actually earn anything at the end of it. It was actually possible to lose money if not enough journeys were secured on a given day. In many ways, Abishek and his friends were different from the other young people we met during my fieldwork: they spoke openly and clearly about different aspects of their lives (Field study- 2024).

Abishek's life brings into sharp focus the debate of rickshaw pullers' bodies versus their self-destructive practices, which become all the more striking in the context of unorganised work. Abishek definitely achieved physical results; he can work with this, like a savings person, and he cannot eat it. He is about various actions, which can enhance the possibility of getting sick: drinking and smoking. He knew the risk, but he knew the most important thing. The job he met was his bad meal, and he couldn't do anything. Mary Searle Chatterjee considers such questions concerning street sweepers in Brooklyn: We might say that those on the bottom have less regard for their bodies and less interest in suburbia (1981 p. 70). This is paradoxical, as we can imagine that those whose survival depends only on their own bodies, Searle Chatterjee's sweepers, or in this case, rickshaw drivers, will take some initiative to protect themselves and continue with their existing tasks. In order to promote good work behavior, commitment, passion, and discipline, employee job satisfaction needs to be enhanced. Abuhashesh et al. (2019) are of the opinion that life happiness, which is extended to employees' personal lives, productivity, motivation, and job performance, are all interconnected with job satisfaction. Puspitawati & Atmaja (2021) are of the opinion that happy workers tend to perform well.

Rickshaw drivers are associated with masculinity. Their bodies are crucial ingredients of this grouping of rickshaw drivers' success. The relative frailties of some men's bodies positioned them further from the ideal type of body and its presumed physical capacity (Wienke 1998). There was most pronounced tension between the body

and the image of the successful rickshaw driver among both the younger and older men. More successful drivers appear to have a more synergistic relationship between their bodies and expectations.

Discussion

Rickshaw drivers told the researchers that ignoring pain and driving all day is also an important part of making a living and being considered successful. To be tired or to show pain was to show weakness, which in turn would lead to a lower level of success both financially and in relative status among other rickshaw drivers. Pain is an integral part of both the work and driving of a rickshaw.

Victor Seidler has addressed the very same issue, stating that "men must prove their masculinity by showing that they can endure pain" (2006, p. 7). Pain management is part of the ways rickshaw drivers create and maintain an ideal appearance of embodied masculinity.

Connell indicates, "The unskilled labourer has essentially one commodity to put on the market: his bodily capacity for labour" (2000, 64). Mary Searle-Chatterjee discusses these issues in relation to road sweepers in Benares, she states "One might say there is less respect for the body [for those at the bottom of society] as well as less concern for its margins" (1981 p. 70). This seems paradoxical, as one might expect those who rely exclusively on their bodies for their livelihood (sweepers, for Searle-Chatterjee, or rickshaw drivers in this case), to take care of themselves in order to continue in their present employment.

Research has been conducted on the topic of sustainable energy, but enough work has not been carried out on this aspect; that is, the electric rickshaw driver's job satisfaction. Most young people nowadays opt for this as a profession in order to manage their families' income. The great contribution of an electric rickshaw to generating self-employment in the Nepalese context is highly underestimated by the scholars, and its magnum was thereby ignored. Hence, conducting research related to the stakeholders in e-rickshaws seemed pointless. This research seeks to investigate various aspects of e-rickshaw drivers, including their levels of satisfaction, income status, and previous experience.

The name of means of transportation generally called rickshaw differ from country to country. It is called tuk-tuk in Egypt and Combodia. It is called car in Bangladesh, Kiki Marwa in Nigeria, Boda-bodas in East Africa, and Bentor in Indonesia (Ahmed et. al. 2022). The study found that the unemployment is the reason for the spread

of auto-rickshaw in Egypt. Owing to the spread of auto-rickshaw, the crime rate, the spread of violence and rape found increasing but it is only occurred in isolated places and the victim found only the driver. The study concludes that auto-rickshaws are the solution available to bridge the gap between transportation and personal vehicles. Auto-rickshaw called tuk-tuk, is the main source of income and job opportunities. Thirty million citizens depend on it daily, three million job opportunities are provided by this and six million citizens consider this profession as a main source of income in Egypt (Ahmed et. al. 2022). A study done by Rahim et.al (2013) found that battery-powered auto rickshaws have positive impacts on income, social status, comfort and environment, and reduces unemployment in Rajshahi, Bangladesh where it was one of the major problems. Auto-rickshaw reduces this problem near about two percent in Rajshahi city, Bangladesh. The authors further found that air pollution was a great threat for human health where auto-rickshaw transportation reduces this threat there.

The research revealed that tuk-tuks have resulted in detrimental impacts on the social, environmental, traffic, and economic aspects of the Egyptian community. Approximately 49 percent of tuk-tuk operators fail to adhere to the regulations and laws established by the government. The safety rates inside the tuk-tuk compared to public transportation found higher. Despite, Tuk-tuks are a major source of income for owners, leaders, technicians, merchants and dependent families in Egypt. The high rate of unemployment among young people in slums area, the low cost of purchase, and the non-compliance of fees or taxes by the owner of the tuk-tuks to the Egyptian governments, this leads to very high spread (Ahmed et. al. 2022). In Baglung, whenever there were 20-25 autos, auto- drivers were satisfying due to high income and there was easier for their livelihood, but now, there are 98 autos with unhealthy competition and less income there. So, regulations and laws need to be established by the government.

Auto-rickshaws play a significant role in urban transportation and reduce unemployment rates providing self-employment opportunities (Rahim et al, 2013). Auto-rickshaw drivers adopted this profession hoping for a decent income. They are also faced challenges like health, infrastructure and other modes of transportation related issues. Opportunity cost, family size and operational expenses found influencing drivers' income. Battery operated auto-rickshaws now have gained popularity owing to their affordability and comfort (Tigari & Santhosh, 2020). Research related to environmental, traffic, social, and economic impacts of the auto-rickshaw on Egyptian roadways done by

Ahmed et al. (2022) concluded that 71.17 percent of users are offended by auto-rickshaw tariffs, 59.33 percent of passengers are dissatisfied with the age of auto-rickshaw drivers, 33 percent are afraid of traffic accidents, and 72 percent completely reject the presence of auto-rickshaws on roads. The financial benefits from operating an auto-rickshaw are rapid, short-lived, and do not necessitate prior experience. These compact vehicles can carry two to three passengers. Now, it is spread in many cities around the world, but they are in developing condition. In Nepal, it has been cheap and comfortable transportation in both urban and village urban areas.

Tigari & Santhoshi (2020) examine the socio-economic and working conditions of auto-rickshaw drivers in Nepal. The study found that auto-rickshaws are the convenient way of transportation and play a crucial role in travelling under the informal economy of the service sector. Those who are involved in the auto-rickshaw profession are not highly qualified in education, though they are leading an honest life within their society and partially involved in other works. He further mentioned that the auto-drivers faced many issues in the working environment, such as health issues, a lack of traffic regulation, a lack of infrastructure facilities, and unhealthy competition between city buses and two-wheelers, which affected their regular earnings.

In auto-rickshaw profession, there occurred irregular income patterns, precarious working conditions and the absence of legal protection (Ojha, 2024). The study found socio-economic condition of auto-rickshaw driver very miserable and poor, no job security and welfare provisions, high proportion of auto rickshaw driver mainly belonged to backward castes. Illiteracy was found common feature due to low income and poverty. According to the feedback from participants, there are several accidental risks present in the workplace. The working conditions for auto-rickshaw drivers were deemed unsatisfactory (Ojha, 2024). Occupational satisfaction can be understood as an overall sentiment regarding one's job or as a collection of attitudes related to different elements of the occupation. Kovach (1977), French (1982), and Tziner and Vardi (1984) describe occupational satisfaction as an emotional response to various factors associated with work, including compensation, supervision, working conditions, and the nature of the work itself.

Students and farmers have greatly benefited from this eco-friendly vehicle, which is relatively low-cost. E-rickshaws have also become a practical and affordable transportation option for farmers, who now use them to transport their produce to market

(Kathmandu Post, May 4, 2018). Thus, it is observed that majority drivers of auto-rickshaw use shuttle system and found creating congestion on the roads of city. One study further found that 53 percent of driver's education is up to primary level; most of the drivers are found between 20-40 years of age and 60 percent of drivers have only one earner in their family (Bhayji & Jayesh, 2018). Finally, the conclusions drawn by the findings of these collective authors also support the findings of this research. The findings indicated that auto driving occupation generate stress but do not significantly impact job satisfaction. Earnings are variable and reliant on employee performance; however, job satisfaction positively influences employee performance significantly, while job stress also positively affects employee performance through the lens of job satisfaction.

Conclusion

The auto rickshaw driving profession has a positive impact on livelihood variables in Baglung Bazar. The study found that all drivers were male, mostly married, aged between 30 and 40 years, with basic education up to the eighth grade. They typically had 4-6 family members and had chosen this profession in the study area. Dalits were found to be creating self-employment opportunities for their livelihood, which was motivating for others in their community. The socio-economic condition of workers in this field was found to be satisfactory, with sixty percent of auto rickshaw drivers earning between Rs. 30,000 to 50,000 per month. In Baglung Bazar, most auto rickshaws were petrol-based and drivers had invested more than five lakhs in them from cooperative sources. The driving profession was found to be most profitable during Chaite Dashai and Mahotsab.

The study also revealed that a high proportion of auto rickshaw drivers belonged to Dalit castes, influenced by factors such as marital status, education, and family size. The P-value ($p = .000$ for all t-tests) indicated significant changes in livelihood variables such as income, consumption, health, education, loan repayment, saving, and investment before and after involvement in the profession. Common challenges in this profession included health issues, road safety risks, lack of proper parking, traffic obstacles, legal challenges, financial vulnerability, societal undervaluation, lack of insurance for vehicles, and limited medical facilities. Income is not constant but is dependent upon workers' performance; yet job satisfaction directly contributes positively to employee performance in large ways, whereas job stress indirectly benefits employee performance with respect

to job satisfaction. Similarly, regarding the saving and spending on education, there is found moderate correlations impending significance for their livelihood.

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