

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

The auto rickshaw is one of the most common and convenient means of transport in India. It plays a major role in connecting short distances where buses and other vehicles are not easily available. Auto rickshaws help the public to travel quickly and comfortably within towns and cities at affordable rates. In Kerala, especially in Kannur District, this mode of transport is very popular and provides daily livelihood to a large number of people.

The people who drive auto rickshaws mostly come from middle and lower-income groups. For many of them, driving an auto is not just a job but their main source of income for supporting their families. This work requires long hours and great effort every day. Though it gives them independence and flexibility, the income earned often remains uncertain. The drivers face several challenges such as rising fuel prices, maintenance costs, and irregular demand.

In Taliparamba Municipality, a large number of people depend on auto rickshaw driving as their main occupation. The town is busy with schools, markets, and offices, and auto rickshaws are an essential part of daily transportation. The livelihood of the drivers depends on the number of trips and passengers they get each day. Their economic condition is linked closely to local demand, traffic rules, and fuel expenses. Despite their importance in local transport, their living conditions and welfare often receive very little attention.

The socio-economic status of these drivers reflects their living standards, income levels, education, health, and access to welfare facilities. Studying these aspects helps to understand the difficulties they face in their daily life. It also shows how this occupation contributes to the local economy by providing employment and transport service to the community.

Hence, this study focuses on the socio-economic status of auto rickshaw drivers in Kannur District with special reference to Taliparamba Municipality. The study aims to analyse their living conditions, income, savings, health, and working environment. This background provides a clear understanding of why it is important to study this group of workers who play a vital role in urban life but continue to live with limited social and economic support.

Objectives of the study

- To study the demographic profile of auto rickshaw drivers in Taliparamba Municipality.
- To analyse the income, expenditure, and living conditions of the drivers.
- To examine the working environment and employment conditions of auto rickshaw drivers.
- To identify the major problems and challenges faced by the drivers in their occupation.

Limitations of the Study

- The study is limited to the area of Taliparamba Municipality only and does not cover other parts of Kannur District.
- The sample size is restricted to sixty respondents due to time and resource limitations.
- The study is based mainly on the information given by the respondents, which may not always be fully accurate.
- Some respondents were hesitant to share personal financial details such as income and savings.
- The study period was short, so seasonal changes in income and work pattern could not be fully observed.
- The findings are based on percentage analysis only, and no advanced statistical tests were used.
- External factors like fuel price changes and local transport policies were not studied in detail.

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