

Enhancing Governance in the Electric Rickshaw Market *A Case Study of Jaipur*

Background

The Rajasthan State Electric Vehicle (EV) Policy of 2022 aims to achieve a 30 percent share of EVs in all new registrations within the three-wheeler category by 2030. This goal is pursued through incentivising the adoption of electric three-wheelers. Leveraging the inherently entrepreneurial and socially inclusive nature of electric rickshaws, a just socio-economic clean transition in the last mile connectivity segment could be achieved.

Electric rickshaws offer a clean and cost-effective solution for last-mile connectivity while also stimulating job creation and entrepreneurial endeavours. With the backing of appropriate regulations, they have the potential to develop a sustainable socio-economic landscape, paving the way for a transformative shift in mobility paradigms.

Ambiguities within regulations about licencing, permits, and operational guidelines pose formidable barriers to entry for operators. The inconsistent enforcement of these regulations exacerbates the problem, resulting in legal uncertainties and operational disruptions. Addressing the regulatory and standardisation issues is paramount to fostering a conducive environment for sustainable growth in the e-rickshaw sector. As the e-rickshaw market expands, several challenges come to the forefront, warranting careful consideration and strategic planning.

The proliferation of e-rickshaws, especially in densely populated urban centres, has exacerbated traffic congestion and its associated challenges. Resolving the regulatory issues is paramount to unlocking the full potential of e-rickshaws. Case-specific studies are essential to comprehensively grasp the potential benefits and challenges inherent in e-rickshaw adoption. This project enables tailored interventions in local markets, facilitating the implementation of more effective strategies to address regulatory concerns and optimise the e-rickshaw ecosystem.

Objectives

Bring forth regulations in the e-rickshaw market that ensure the growth of the stakeholders as well as the greening of last-mile connectivity without overburdening the city transport infrastructure. The focus is on developing a case study for Jaipur City that recommends stakeholders and local authorities introduce effective regulations while keeping the interests of commuters and operators intact.

- **Socio-economic mapping of e-rickshaw drivers and their passengers**

A socio-economic mapping of e-rickshaw drivers and their passengers would provide invaluable insights into the local market landscape and demography. Mapping of e-rickshaw passengers would help in understanding the rationale behind the popularity of e-rickshaws in Jaipur.

- **Understanding the benefits of e-rickshaws**

The study aims to elucidate the multifaceted advantages offered by e-rickshaws, encompassing their role in local youth employment, retention of the labour force, and provision of supplementary income opportunities for part-time drivers. Moreover, the inherent features of e-rickshaws, such as user-friendly operation, make them particularly conducive to promoting gender inclusivity, warranting further exploration. Moreover, the study will scrutinise potential benefits for passengers and the environment.

- **Understanding the policy and regulatory ecosystem surrounding e-rickshaws**

One of the study's central focuses will be on examining the policy and regulatory framework surrounding e-rickshaws. This includes an analysis of Central Government policies like FAME and CMVR, as well as state-level initiatives such as the State EV Policy, alongside any pertinent city-specific regulations and schemes

aimed at bolstering the adoption of e-vehicles, including e-rickshaws.

- **Identifying the issues with e-rickshaws**

Furthermore, the study will engage in comprehensive discussions with state and local authorities to address a range of issues about e-rickshaws, encompassing concerns such as traffic congestion, unregistered vehicles, and lack of age determination regulations, safety considerations, and vehicle body modifications.

- **Drafting tailored recommendations for various stakeholders in the e-rickshaw sector**

Drawing from the primary data and insights, the study will generate actionable recommendations tailored for policymakers aimed at effectively promoting e-rickshaws. Emphasis will be placed on proposing measures that can be swiftly implemented, as well as those suitable for medium and long-term adoption, to facilitate the sustainable advancement of the e-rickshaw sector.

Activities

The project will adopt a mixed-methods approach that will help identify and analyse the challenges and prospects of developing a resilient ecosystem for E-Rickshaws. Primarily the Research, Advocacy, Networking & Capacity Building (RANC) model will be followed for implementation.

- Secondary literature review of central, state and city-level policies and regulations on E-Rickshaws, similar research reports, market forecast reports, etc., for identifying the scope for interventions.

- A comprehensive series of consultations will be arranged with diverse stakeholders, including but not limited to the State Transport Department, E-Rickshaws Associations, City Development Authority, Manufacturers, Dealers, and more. The aim will be to develop an in-depth understanding of regulatory frameworks, ongoing initiatives by relevant agencies, and the on-ground challenges.
- A survey aimed at e-rickshaw operators, to craft a comprehensive case study that highlights the regulatory and operational challenges they encounter in their day-to-day activities.
- A survey aimed at e-rickshaw commuters focused on the popularity of e-rickshaws and the experiences of the commuters, including their sense of safety with e-rickshaws.
- The quantitative and qualitative data generated from the aforementioned exercises will be analysed to observe a refined array of information on several aspects surrounding e-rickshaws.

Outcomes

- A comprehensive report will be prepared incorporating recommendations for different categories of stakeholders and policymakers for introducing a regulatory framework in this market to sustain a growth trajectory.
- The findings from the report will be presented to policymakers to obtain their support for the effective implementation of the suggested recommendations. There will be a Report launch through a dissemination programme where stakeholders will be invited for a dialogue exchange.
- Plausible implementation of the recommendations can tackle the challenges faced by e-rickshaw drivers and improve the commuter experience along with effectively regulating the e-rickshaw sector.

