

## **Growth and Development of Autorickshaws in Kolkata Municipal Corporation Area: Enigma to Planners**

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**Abstract :** Transport is one of the most important characteristic features of Indian cities. The physical and societal requirements determine the selection of a particular transport system along with the uniqueness of road networks. Kolkata has a mixed traffic of which Paratransit system plays a crucial role. It is an indispensable transport system in Kolkata mainly because of its size and service flexibility which has led to a unique network character. The paratransit system, mainly the autorickshaws, is the most favoured mode of transport in the city. Its fast movement and comfortability make it a vital transport system of the city. Since the inception of the autorickshaws in Kolkata in 1981, this mode has gained popularity and presently serves nearly 80 to 90 percent of the total passenger trips. This employment generating mode of transport has increased its number rapidly affecting the city's traffic. Minimal check on their growth by the authority has led to traffic snarls along many streets of Kolkata. Indiscipline behavior, violation of traffic rules and rash driving make situations even worse. The rise in the number and increasing popularity of the autorickshaws make it an interesting study area. Autorickshaws as a paratransit mode play its role as a leader or a follower. However, it is informal in its planning and operations, which makes it a problem area for the city. The entire research work deals with the growth and expansion of the number of vehicles and the routes within the city. The development of transport system has been interesting in the city, which has been studied. The growth of the paratransit modes in the city has been rapid. The network pattern of the paratransit mode within Kolkata has been analysed.

**Keywords :** growth, informal, network characteristics, paratransit, service flexibility

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