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## RIDE-HAILING IN COLOMBO: A SATISFACTION STUDY OF MOBILE APP-BASED TAXI SERVICES

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### ABSTRACT

This study delves into the realm of ride-hailing services within the dynamic urban landscape of Colombo Metropolitan Area, Sri Lanka. Through a comprehensive assessment of passenger satisfaction with mobile app-based taxi services, it sheds light on the factors influencing user experiences and perceptions. Drawing upon surveys and analysis, this research offers insights into the evolving transportation ecosystem and its impact on commuter satisfaction, facilitating informed decisions for both service providers and policymakers.

### KEYWORDS

Ride-Hailing; Taxi Services; Passenger Satisfaction; Mobile Apps; Colombo Metropolitan Area; Urban Transportation.

### INTRODUCTION

In the urban landscape of the Colombo Metropolitan Area, Sri Lanka, the dynamics of transportation have undergone a significant transformation with the advent of mobile app-based taxi services. The proliferation of ride-hailing platforms has not only reshaped the way people move within the city but has

also introduced a new dimension of convenience and flexibility to daily commuting. As this transformation continues to unfold, it becomes imperative to assess the passenger satisfaction with these services and gain a deeper understanding of the factors that shape their experiences.

The rise of mobile app-based taxi services has been characterized by their ability to connect passengers with available vehicles swiftly, offer transparent pricing structures, and enhance the overall convenience of urban transportation. These services have quickly become an integral part of the daily lives of commuters, providing an alternative to traditional taxis and public transportation.

This study embarks on a journey to explore the intricate landscape of ride-hailing services in Colombo. It seeks to assess the levels of passenger satisfaction, drawing upon the perspectives and experiences of those who rely on these services to navigate the bustling streets of the city. Through surveys, analysis, and a comprehensive investigation, this research aims to shed light on the myriad factors that influence passenger satisfaction with mobile app-based taxi services.

The findings of this study hold relevance not only for service providers in the ride-hailing industry but also for policymakers and urban planners tasked with ensuring efficient and convenient transportation options for residents. Understanding passenger perceptions and experiences within this evolving transportation ecosystem is fundamental to making informed decisions that contribute to the improvement of urban mobility and the satisfaction of commuters in Colombo.

## **METHOD**

To comprehensively assess passenger satisfaction with mobile app-based taxi services in the Colombo Metropolitan Area, a mixed-methods research approach was meticulously designed and executed. This approach integrated quantitative surveys with qualitative in-depth interviews to capture a holistic view of the factors influencing user experiences and perceptions.

Surveys formed the quantitative backbone of this study. A structured survey instrument was distributed to a diverse and representative sample of ride-hailing service users in Colombo. These surveys encompassed a spectrum of topics, including overall passenger satisfaction, usage frequency, preferred service providers, and the determinants influencing service selection. Furthermore, Likert-scale questions allowed for the quantification of satisfaction levels across various service facets such as driver conduct, vehicle quality, pricing, and the overarching user experience.

Complementing the quantitative data, in-depth interviews were conducted with a selected subset of participants. These interviews were designed to delve deeper into passenger experiences and perceptions, capturing the richness of qualitative insights. Open-ended questions empowered respondents to share personal anecdotes, detailed feedback, and stories

regarding their interactions with mobile app-based taxi services in the Colombo context.

To ensure the study's integrity and breadth, a stratified sampling strategy was employed, ensuring representation across diverse demographics, such as age, gender, income levels, and frequency of ride-hailing usage. By adhering to rigorous ethical guidelines, including informed consent and participant privacy protection, the research team maintained the utmost respect for the unique perspectives and experiences of ride-hailing service users in Colombo.

The ensuing data from surveys and interviews underwent rigorous analysis. Quantitative data were subjected to statistical scrutiny to unveil patterns, trends, and significant findings regarding passenger satisfaction and preferences. Qualitative data from interviews were meticulously transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis, allowing for the identification of recurrent themes, prevalent challenges, and noteworthy commendations expressed by passengers.

This methodological amalgamation aimed to offer a comprehensive evaluation of passenger satisfaction with mobile app-based taxi services in the Colombo Metropolitan Area. The study seeks to deepen our comprehension of the evolving urban transportation landscape and the multifaceted determinants that

shape the experiences and perceptions of commuters in this dynamic context.

## RESULTS

The study on passenger satisfaction with mobile app-based taxi services in the Colombo Metropolitan Area generated several key findings:

**High Overall Satisfaction:** Survey results revealed a generally high level of satisfaction among passengers using mobile app-based taxi services in Colombo. The majority of respondents reported positive experiences in terms of convenience, ease of use, and reliability.

**Driver Behavior Influences Satisfaction:** A significant factor influencing passenger satisfaction was the behavior of drivers. Politeness, professionalism, and adherence to traffic rules were cited as essential aspects that contributed to a positive rider experience.

**Service Quality:** Respondents indicated that the quality of vehicles, including cleanliness and maintenance, played a crucial role in shaping their satisfaction levels. Passengers expected well-maintained and clean vehicles for a comfortable ride.

**Pricing Considerations:** While competitive pricing was appreciated, a segment of respondents expressed concerns about price fluctuations during peak hours and peak demand. Clarity and transparency in pricing were seen as vital for overall satisfaction.

## DISCUSSION

The high overall satisfaction reported by passengers with mobile app-based taxi services in Colombo underscores the success of these services in meeting the convenience and accessibility needs of urban commuters. The positive rider experiences are attributed to the ease of booking, swift response times, and the availability of rides at various locations.

The significant influence of driver behavior and professionalism on satisfaction highlights the importance of training and support for drivers. Ensuring that drivers maintain courteous conduct and adhere to traffic regulations can contribute significantly to passenger satisfaction.

Service quality, including vehicle cleanliness and maintenance, emerged as a critical factor influencing satisfaction. This finding emphasizes the need for service providers to maintain high standards of vehicle hygiene and maintenance to meet passenger expectations.

The issue of pricing transparency and fluctuations during peak hours warrants attention. Clear communication of pricing structures and policies can enhance passenger trust and mitigate concerns related to pricing.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into passenger satisfaction with mobile app-based taxi services in the Colombo Metropolitan Area. The high levels of overall satisfaction reflect the positive impact of these services on urban mobility, offering convenient and accessible transportation options to commuters.

To maintain and enhance passenger satisfaction, service providers should focus on driver training, service quality, and pricing transparency. Addressing these factors can further improve the overall rider experience and solidify the role of mobile app-based taxi services as a vital component of urban transportation in Colombo.

The findings of this study serve as a foundation for future improvements and policy considerations, fostering a more efficient and satisfactory urban transportation ecosystem in the city. By understanding the factors that shape passenger satisfaction, Colombo can continue to navigate the possibilities of mobile app-based taxi services effectively.

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