B.PAC MOBILE
SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY FOR ALL

B.PAC and DULT released findings from Bengaluru Livelihood Cyclist Survey Report

The aim of this survey was to understand the challenges faced by the livelihood cyclists and their travel patterns, the important motivators for use of cycling as mode of transport

Bengaluru, Sept 30, 2021:
Bangalore Political Action Committee (B.PAC) in collaboration with the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT), today, released a report on Livelihood Cyclists Survey. The report highlighted the needs and requirements of the cyclist while he/she is riding the cycle across the city, to understand their concerns regarding traffic on the roads, parking facility and other infrastructure.

Cycling is one of the most sustainable modes of transport with zero dependence on fossil fuels, zero emissions making it an affordable transport option. Bicycles have always played an important role in the informal sector, especially in supporting the livelihood and mobility among urban poor. It is an easy transport option and allows people to carry out their business with low expense outlay making it accessible to people who work for security agencies, household service providers, delivery companies, vendors and individuals like factory workers, sweepers, newspaper distributors, petty shops service boys and others. Bicycles can play a significant supportive role in providing better and equitable access to jobs and economic activity, providing livelihoods, increasing school enrollments, gender empowerment and enabling a faster access to health facilities.

There is a huge technology gap across all product segments, making cycles manufactured in India, uncompetitive in terms of price, safety and quality. Also, there's a perception that cycling is unsafe and is a poor man's mode of transport, which is also one of the reasons why cycling is not a preferred mode of transport as incomes rise. Bengaluru is no exception to this trend.

Cities are complex economic machines which depend on various strata of workers to keep it running. Out of these, a major portion of this system is supported by the lower-income groups who depend on cycle/walk to commute daily for work. As a result, ensuring that the streets are safer to minimise their burden from potential medical expenses or loss of life while commuting is a matter of utmost importance to the city.

The survey had 604 respondents who were chosen at random from each of the 8 zones across the city of Bengaluru. The survey was conducted with the help of a questionnaire, which was designed by B.PAC in collaboration with DULT. The survey questionnaire includes basic information on the livelihood cyclists, their travel pattern, challenges and encouraging factors for cycling.

The respondents for the survey were from the low-income group. The sample target was broadly categorized into two groups-

- 1.Livelihood cyclists
- 2. Non-Bicycle user (likely to use for livelihood)

Below are key highlights from the survey:

- Livelihood Cyclists

1. Concentration of livelihood cyclists

Livelihood cyclist respondents were majorly found in **Bommanahalli, Bengaluru South, Bengaluru West and Mahadevapura Zones** of Bengaluru.

2. Using cycle as primary mode of transport

Over 96% respondents used bicycles as a primary mode of transport. 73% use bicycles for the entire commute and only 27% use it as the first and last mile mode of commuting.

3. Monthly income v/s the total cost per month for all modes of transport

92% of the respondents whose monthly income is less than Rs 5000 spend upto Rs 500 per month for all modes of transport combined.75% of the respondents with monthly income Rs 5000 to Rs 10000 spend upto Rs 500. whereas only 65% respondents with monthly income more than Rs 10,000 spend upto Rs 500.

4. Ownership of cycle

Nearly **94% of respondents owned cycles while 6% hired** it on a rental basis for commuting to their workplaces.

5. Frequency of cycle usage for transportation

96% of the respondents used their cycles daily to commute. The frequency of cycle usage for daily commuting was highest among unskilled workers at 100% and lowest among skilled workers 93%.

6. Reasons for using cycle for transportation

84% of the respondents cited "saving money" as one of the main reasons for using cycles while less than 26% cycled to work for its health benefits.

7. Distance of residence from primary job location

Around 72% respondents had to travel for less than 4 Km by cycle from their residence to their primary job locations.

8. Distance covered for Sales and Marketing/ Delivery (SMD) jobs

95% of the respondents with SMD jobs travelled within 8 Kms everyday (0 to 4 Kms -73% and 4 to 8Kms - 22%) while around 5% had to travel more than 8 Kms by cycle.

9. Challenges faced while cycling

62.13 % of the respondents **cited absence of proper infrastructure and dedicated cycling lanes as the major concern** while 13% feel upset at the unruly behaviour of other drivers. Other worries included probability of theft of their cycles (19%) and bad weather (32%).

10. Unsafe locations for livelihood cyclists

The most unsafe locations cited by livelihood cyclist respondents are **Hoodi circle, ITPL Main Road, Kundalahalli Junction, Bellandur Signal and Sarjapur Main Road** which are congested and witness dense traffic.

11. Willingness to use cycle for transportation

A whopping majority of the respondents (97%) were willing to use cycles as their primary mode of transport everyday if it were made safe and convenient.

12. Encouraging factors for using cycle

Better streetlights, dedicated cycle lanes and parking emerged as the top three factors that would encourage them to use cycling as their primary mode of transport.

79.28% of the respondents cited **better streetlights as extremely important/very important.** 45% felt dedicated cycle lanes were extremely important/very important. 25.06% felt the need for exclusive cycle parking spaces in markets and offices.

- Non-Bicycle user (likely to use for livelihood)

1. Modes of transport use for daily commute

70% of the non-bicycle users rely on BMTC buses for their daily commute whereas only 1% rely on the metro.

2. Reasons for not cycling

There were slight differences in the concerns expressed by women regarding cycling as compared to men. When women non cyclists were asked the reason for not cycling, about 71% opined that they feel unsafe while cycling in traffic with motorists whereas in case of men, 73% cited lack of infrastructure as the reason for not cycling.

3. Encouraging factors to shift towards using cycle

Non cyclist respondents also had similar reasons as encouraging factors for cycling - namely better street lighting and parking.

- 70% said better street lighting was extremely important/ very important
- 48% cited designated cycle lanes as extremely important/ very important
- 26% of them felt exclusive cycle parking spaces in markets and offices as extremely important/very important

Key Recommendations

- Budgetary allocation for making streets safer for cycling
- Better street lighting, safer junction crossing, better enforcement of lane discipline and designated parking areas for bicycles are encouraging factors to shift from motorized transport to cycling.
- Budgetary allocation for communication that educates citizens on health and environment benefits of cycling
- Changing the narrative from cycling perceived as a “poor person’s commute mode” to an “aspirational mode of commute”
- Special schemes to encourage women to cycle
- Special schemes for affordable ownership of bicycle

The report release was followed by a panel discussion wherein the panalists brainstormed on probable solutions from insights of the report.

While speaking on the release of survey findings ***Ms. Revathy Ashok, Managing Trustee & CEO, B.PAC*** said " This section of society, namely the livelihood cyclists spend almost 10% of their income on commuting, hence good incentive schemes coupled with a good communication strategy, focus on safety, good street lighting, better design of major junction crossings and enforcement of lane discipline must support any infrastructure development for cycling to be successful".

Commenting on the report release ***V. Manjula, IAS, Commissioner, DULT*** said " We need more carriage way for cycles than motor vehicles. Need of prioritising cycles over motor vehicles and also added cycling training for women is something DULT is looking for and along with govt. seva sindhu portal which is now open to encourage public bike sharing agencies".

Prof. Ashish Verma from IISC said " Integration of public transport for longer distance will add more cyclists on road by adding parking near stations and provision of some cycles in coaches.

Sudeept Maiti from WRI recalled a study done in 2018 which compares male and female cyclists said, women cyclists experience 4times more than men of unruly behavior of other motorists.

Sharing his views Sathya Sankaran, Bicycle mayor, Bengaluru said they are looking forward for active mobility act by DULT which enables my 15min city and also added businesses in Bengaluru could sponsor the cycles for employees as a bonus which would encourage more cyclists on road.
Click here to access to the Livelihood Cyclist Survey - https://bpac.in/b-mobile/livelihood-cyclists-survey/

ABOUT B.PAC
Bangalore Political Action Committee (B.PAC) is a non-partisan citizen's group that aims to improve governance in Bengaluru and to enhance the quality of life of every citizen. B.PAC is specifically targeting good governance practices, integrity and transparency in all arms of the government, improving the quality of infrastructure in the city, identification and support of strong candidates for public office at all levels of governance in Bengaluru city.

B.MOBILE is B.PAC's mobility initiative that works on research, policy advocacy, stakeholder awareness in the areas of sustainable mobility, shared/pooled mobility, non-motorised transit, para transit including related planning and infrastructure needs for providing seamless and integrated first, middle and last mile connectivity to citizens of Bengaluru. Our goal is to push for sustainable mobility for all by encouraging the use of public transport and disincentivizing the private vehicles usage. (https://bpac.in/b-mobile/)

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