

Affordability and Cost Implications of Motorcycle Ride-Booking Services for Selected Students from Distant Communities Studying in Mendiola

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the affordability and cost implications of motorcycle ride-booking services among selected students from distant communities studying in Mendiola, Manila. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, data were gathered through a validated survey questionnaire administered to 105 purposively selected students from Centro Escolar University, La Consolacion College, National Teachers College, and San Beda University who regularly used motorcycle ride-booking services and traveled at least 30 minutes or more one way to school. The instrument measured demographic profile, commuting patterns, cost implications, and affordability perceptions; it showed good reliability for cost implications (Cronbach's alpha = 0.856), affordability level (Cronbach's alpha = 0.848), and the overall instrument (Cronbach's

alpha = 0.852). Data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Spearman's Rho correlation. Findings showed that most respondents were young adult female students living inside Metro Manila, commonly used motorcycle ride-booking once or twice weekly, and used jeepneys and LRT/MRT as main alternatives. Cost implications were high overall (grand mean = 3.21), particularly due to changing fares, peak-hour increases, and higher cost compared with traditional public transportation. Affordability concerns were moderate (grand mean = 3.14), with strong price sensitivity among students. Spearman's Rho revealed a statistically significant weak negative relationship between affordability and frequency of use ($r = -0.306$, $p = 0.002$). The study concludes that while motorcycle ride-booking services support convenience and time efficiency, their cost limits regular use among students with fixed allowances, emphasizing the need for student-friendly pricing, mobility partnerships, and institutional support.

Keywords: *affordability, cost implications, motorcycle ride-booking, Mendiola students, student commuters, transportation finance*

INTRODUCTION

Motorcycle ride-booking services have become an increasingly visible part of urban mobility in Metro Manila, particularly after the pandemic and in the continuing conditions of the new normal. In the Mendiola area of Manila, where several colleges and universities are located within a highly congested transport environment, many students use motorcycle ride-booking platforms as a faster and more convenient means of reaching school. These services help commuters avoid long traffic delays and reduce uncertainty in travel time, yet they also create financial concerns for students who depend on fixed allowances.

The research problem is especially relevant for students from distant communities. In this study, distant communities refer to locations requiring at least 30 minutes or more one-way travel time from the student's

residence to school. Students from these areas may choose motorcycle ride-booking services because they need speed, reliability, convenience, and safety when commuting to and from Mendiola. However, the higher and fluctuating fares of these services, including peak-hour and weather-related pricing, may affect their daily spending, budgeting decisions, and ability to allocate funds for food, academic materials, and other essential needs.

Previous global, national, and local studies have discussed ride-hailing adoption, service quality, safety, regulation, urban mobility, and commuter satisfaction. However, there remains limited research focused specifically on the affordability and cost implications of motorcycle ride-booking services for students studying in Mendiola who come from distant communities. This gap is important because student commuters have distinct financial constraints and transportation needs that differ from general urban commuters.

Guided by Rational Choice Theory, this study assumes that students make transportation decisions by weighing perceived benefits such as convenience, time savings, safety, and accessibility against costs such as fare amount, allowance constraints, and spending adjustments. The study therefore assessed students' demographic profile, commuting patterns, cost implications, affordability level, and the relationship between affordability and frequency of motorcycle ride-booking use. The results were intended to support more student-friendly transport decisions, institutional partnerships, and policy recommendations for affordable and accessible student mobility.

Literature Review

Motorcycle Ride-Booking, Urban Mobility, and Student Commuting

International studies show that motorcycle ride-booking and ride-hailing services are shaped by travel time, service quality, safety, and convenience. Irawan et al. (2021) found that university students used motorcycle-based ride-hailing services for urgent, long-distance, and school-related trips. Nguyen et al. (2022) also observed that motorcycle-based ride-hailing became useful in congested urban environments because it could offer faster and more flexible movement than private or traditional transport options.

Student commuting decisions are closely tied to lifestyle needs, school schedules, income level, and available transport alternatives. Munawar et al. (2022) showed that travel time, travel cost, and income significantly influenced students' commuting choices. These findings are relevant to Mendiola students because their commuting choices must balance punctuality, affordability, and convenience in a transport environment marked by traffic congestion and limited route efficiency.

In the Philippine context, Manaois et al. (2024) reported that students are frequent users of motorcycle taxi-hailing services because of convenience, availability, and perceived safety. Mango et al. (2023) distinguished conventional motorcycle taxis from non-conventional transport network vehicle services, showing how app-based motorcycle services have become integrated into the Philippine mobility system. These studies support the present study's focus on motorcycle ride-booking as a practical but financially consequential transport choice for students.

Affordability, Cost Implications, and Transportation Decision-Making

Affordability is a major determinant of transportation choices among students who depend on limited allowances. Agpaoa et al. (2024) found that transport modernization and related fare changes affect commuting students in the University Belt, while CHED (2024) reported that many Metro Manila students devote a significant portion of their student budget to transportation. These findings suggest that transport affordability is not only a mobility issue but also a financial management concern.

Rational Choice Theory, associated with Becker (1962), explains that individuals choose among alternatives by comparing costs and perceived benefits. Applied to this study, students may continue using motorcycle ride-booking services when the benefits of speed, convenience, and safety outweigh the financial cost. However, when fares increase or budget constraints become stronger, students may reduce usage or shift to lower-cost modes such as jeepneys, trains, buses, or tricycles.

The relationship between affordability and usage is therefore expected to be complex. Students may be price-sensitive but still use ride-booking services when alternatives are unavailable or when punctuality and safety are urgent concerns. This explains why affordability can influence frequency of use without fully determining it.

The present study contributes by empirically testing this relationship among selected students from distant communities studying in Mendiola.

Service Quality, Safety, and Regulatory Considerations

Service quality affects students’ willingness to use motorcycle ride-booking services despite higher fares. Nguyen-Phuoc et al. (2021) reported that booking-app quality and post-booking service quality influence continued use and positive word-of-mouth among ride-hailing passengers. In the Philippines, Ong et al. (2024) likewise emphasized service quality dimensions in motorcycle taxi transportation, showing that responsiveness, assurance, reliability, and customer satisfaction are important to commuter decisions.

Safety and regulation also shape the perceived acceptability of motorcycle ride-booking. Kraft et al. (2023) emphasized the risks associated with motorcycle travel and the importance of road safety and emergency accessibility. Latonero et al. (2024) examined the viability of motorcycle taxis in Metro Manila and highlighted the need to assess service quality and safety features. These concerns matter for students because lower-cost transportation is not always preferred when it does not meet perceived safety, convenience, or reliability needs.

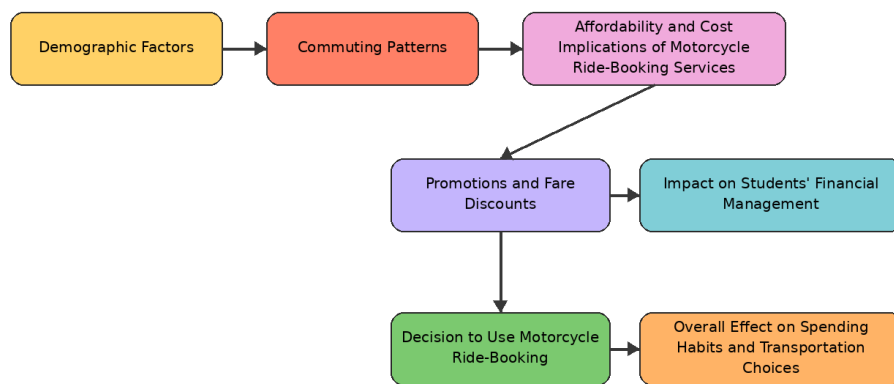
Regulatory and institutional responses are important because motorcycle ride-booking services operate within a transport system where students are financially vulnerable. Guillen et al. (2024) noted the challenges of formalizing motorcycle taxi transport network services in the Philippines. The literature therefore supports recommendations for clearer fare structures, student discounts, transport partnerships, and mobility policies that recognize students’ need for safe, affordable, and efficient transportation.

Synthesis and Conceptual Framework

The reviewed studies consistently show that motorcycle ride-booking services are valued because they reduce travel time and increase mobility flexibility, especially in congested cities. However, they also create affordability concerns, particularly for students with limited allowances. The literature suggests that student usage is shaped by demographic profile, commuting patterns, fare levels, service quality, safety, promotions, and the availability of cheaper alternatives.

The conceptual framework used in the study shows that demographic background and commuting patterns influence students’ affordability and cost perceptions. These perceptions affect interest in promotions, financial management, and the decision to use motorcycle ride-booking services, which ultimately influences students’ spending habits and transportation choices. The framework guided the study’s analysis of how affordability is related to the frequency of use among students from distant communities studying in Mendiola.

Conceptual Framework



Source framework variables: demographic background, commuting patterns, affordability/cost implications, promotions, financial management, usage decision, and general effect.

Figure 1. *Conceptual framework of the study*

METHODS

Research Design

The study employed a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design. The descriptive component was used to describe respondents' demographic profile, commuting patterns, cost implications, and affordability level. The correlational component was used to determine the significant relationship between affordability level and frequency of motorcycle ride-booking use among selected students studying in Mendiola from distant communities.

Research Locale

The study was conducted in the Mendiola area of Manila, a major academic area within the University Belt. The participating institutions were Centro Escolar University, La Consolacion College, National Teachers College, and San Beda University. The locale was selected because students in these institutions come from various areas inside and outside Metro Manila and experience daily transportation challenges associated with traffic congestion, travel time, and commuting costs.

Participants and Sampling Technique

The participants were 105 college students who studied in Mendiola, lived in distant communities, and regularly used motorcycle ride-booking services. Distant communities were defined as residences requiring at least 30 minutes or more of one-way travel time to school. Purposive sampling was used because the study required respondents who had direct experience using motorcycle ride-booking services. The distribution of respondents by institution was 30 from Centro Escolar University, 16 from La Consolacion College, 44 from National Teachers College, and 15 from San Beda University.

Research Instrument

The researchers used a structured survey questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale. The questionnaire included sections on demographic profile, commuting patterns, cost implications, and affordability level. The Likert scale ranged from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with mean intervals interpreted as follows: 1.00-1.74, Strongly Disagree; 1.75-2.49, Disagree; 2.50-3.24, Agree; and 3.25-4.00, Strongly Agree.

The instrument was reviewed by the research adviser, three expert validators, and a data analyst for comprehensiveness, relevance, content validity, and language clarity. Reliability testing showed good internal consistency: the cost implications scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha of 0.856, the affordability level scale obtained 0.848, and the overall instrument obtained 0.852.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data were collected through Google Forms to ensure accessibility and wider participation. Before answering the survey, respondents were informed about the purpose of the study, their rights as participants, and the voluntary nature of participation. The survey link was distributed to eligible students who met the study criteria. Completed responses were checked, encoded, and prepared for statistical analysis.

Data Analysis

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the demographic profile and commuting patterns of the respondents. Mean and standard deviation were used to assess the cost implications and affordability level of motorcycle ride-booking services. Spearman's Rho correlation was used to determine the relationship between affordability level and frequency of use. The relationship was interpreted using the study's correlation guide, and significance was determined using the reported p-value.

Ethical Consideration

The study observed voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and responsible data handling. The survey included data privacy consent and consent provisions for respondents who required assent or guardian consent. Respondents were informed that participation was voluntary and that their answers would be used only for academic research purposes. Data were reported in aggregate form to protect individual identity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

The sample consisted of 105 students from selected Mendiola institutions. Most respondents were young adults aged 19-24 years, were female, were fourth-year or third-year students, resided inside Metro Manila, and received monthly allowances mostly between Php3,001 and Php7,000. This profile shows that the study captured the transportation experiences of students who were active commuters and who had to manage transportation expenses within limited monthly allowances.

Table 1. *Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents*

Profile variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	16-18 years old	7	6.7%
Age	19-21 years old	40	38.1%
Age	22-24 years old	41	39.0%
Age	25 years old and above	7	6.7%
Gender	Female	72	68.6%
Gender	Male	31	29.5%
Gender	Prefer not to say	2	1.9%
Year level	First year	12	11.4%
Year level	Second year	11	10.5%
Year level	Third year	34	32.4%
Year level	Fourth year	48	45.7%
Residence	Inside Metro Manila	93	88.6%
Residence	Outside Metro Manila	12	11.4%
School	Centro Escolar University	30	28.6%
School	La Consolacion College	16	15.2%
School	National Teachers College	44	41.9%
School	San Beda University	15	14.3%
Monthly allowance	Below Php3,000	21	20.0%
Monthly allowance	Php3,001-Php5,000	31	29.5%
Monthly allowance	Php5,001-Php7,000	36	34.3%
Monthly allowance	Above Php7,000	17	16.2%

The dominance of female respondents and upper-year students may reflect the available respondent pool and should be considered when interpreting generalizability. Still, the distribution across four institutions and varied allowance levels provides useful insight into how students from different backgrounds experience motorcycle ride-booking affordability. The finding is consistent with studies indicating that students often use ride-hailing services because of convenience, speed, and perceived safety, while also weighing costs against limited allowances.

Commuting Patterns of the Respondents

Motorcycle ride-booking services functioned mainly as a supplementary mode of transportation rather than the dominant commuting option. Most respondents used these services once or twice per week, while daily use was relatively low. A large portion of students experienced travel time of more than 30 minutes, confirming the relevance of the distant-community criterion. When not using motorcycle ride-booking, respondents mainly used jeepneys and LRT/MRT.

Table 2. *Commuting Patterns of the Respondents*

Commuting characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Ride-booking frequency	Once or twice a week	64	61.0%
Ride-booking frequency	3-4 times a week	30	28.6%
Ride-booking frequency	5-6 times a week	2	1.9%
Ride-booking frequency	Daily	9	8.6%

Travel time	Less than 10 minutes	25	23.8%
Travel time	10-20 minutes	31	29.5%
Travel time	21-30 minutes	6	5.7%
Travel time	More than 30 minutes	43	41.0%
Alternative transport	Bus	10	9.5%
Alternative transport	Jeepney	46	43.8%
Alternative transport	LRT/MRT	42	40.0%
Alternative transport	Tricycle	4	3.8%
Alternative transport	Walking	3	2.9%

The results suggest that students reserve motorcycle ride-booking for situations where speed, urgency, or convenience outweighs cost. This supports previous findings that student commuters use motorcycle-based ride-hailing for urgent or school-related travel while still relying on cheaper public transport when available. The continued use of jeepneys and rail systems also shows that traditional public transportation remains important for students with fixed allowances.

Cost Implications of Motorcycle Ride-Booking Services

The respondents agreed that motorcycle ride-booking services created cost implications, with a grand mean of 3.21 and standard deviation of 0.76. Students strongly recognized that fare rates change depending on distance and weather conditions, that ride-booking increased their monthly spending, and that peak-hour increases affected their travel budget. These findings indicate that dynamic pricing and fare variability are central sources of financial pressure.

Table 3. *Cost Implications for Students Using Motorcycle Ride-Booking Services*

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Fare rates change depending on distance and weather conditions.	3.56	0.678	Strongly Agree
Using motorcycle ride-booking has increased overall monthly spending.	3.47	0.721	Strongly Agree
Peak-hour fare increases affect travel budget.	3.43	0.758	Strongly Agree
Motorcycle ride-booking is more expensive than other public transport options.	3.41	0.703	Strongly Agree
Financial management is affected by the rising cost of motorcycle ride-booking.	3.25	0.718	Strongly Agree
Budget is adjusted or money is borrowed at times to afford transportation.	2.64	0.878	Agree
Grand Mean	3.21	0.76	Agree

Although students acknowledged that motorcycle ride-booking is more expensive than traditional transport, they also viewed convenience as partly justifying the higher cost. However, agreement that transportation costs reduce spending on other needs and make saving difficult shows that the services affect financial management. This finding aligns with studies noting that motorcycle ride-booking can be preferred for convenience despite being more expensive than conventional public transportation.

Affordability Level of Motorcycle Ride-Booking Services

The affordability assessment produced a grand mean of 3.14 and standard deviation of 0.64, interpreted as Agree. This indicates moderate affordability concerns. The highest-rated statement showed that students would use motorcycle ride-booking services more often if fares were slightly lower. Students also strongly agreed that the services are usually used only when cheaper options are unavailable and that fares are more expensive than what most students can afford compared with jeepneys, buses, or tricycles.

Table 4. *Affordability Level of Motorcycle Ride-Booking Services*

Indicator	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Students would use motorcycle ride-booking more often if fares were slightly lower.	3.46	0.707	Strongly Agree
Motorcycle ride-booking is usually an option only when cheaper transportation is unavailable.	3.38	0.789	Strongly Agree
Fares are more expensive than what most students can afford compared with jeepneys, buses, or tricycles.	3.33	0.660	Strongly Agree
Fare increases have made these services less affordable for students.	3.26	0.665	Strongly Agree
Services are fast and convenient enough to justify the fare paid.	3.16	0.622	Agree
Fares fit within the regular weekly or monthly student budget.	2.82	0.794	Agree
Services remain affordable enough for regular student use.	2.82	0.757	Agree
Grand Mean	3.14	0.64	Agree

The results reveal a tension between perceived value and financial limitation. Students appreciate the service quality and convenience of motorcycle ride-booking, yet they remain sensitive to fare increases and budget fit. This confirms that affordability is not simply whether students can pay for a ride once, but whether they can use the service regularly without compromising other needs.

Relationship Between Affordability and Frequency of Use

Spearman's Rho correlation showed a statistically significant weak negative relationship between affordability level and frequency of use. The correlation coefficient was -0.306 with a p-value of 0.002. This means that as affordability concerns increase or perceived affordability decreases, students tend to use motorcycle ride-booking services less frequently. However, the weak strength of the correlation suggests that cost is not the only factor shaping usage decisions.

Table 5. *Relationship Between Affordability Level and Frequency of Use*

Variables	Correlation coefficient	p-value	Interpretation	Remarks
Affordability level of motorcycle ride-booking services and frequency of use	$r = -0.306$	0.002	Weak negative correlation	Significant

The result leads to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Affordability is a meaningful factor in students' transportation decisions, but necessity, convenience, punctuality, perceived safety, and lack of viable alternatives also influence usage. The finding explains why students may still use motorcycle ride-booking despite affordability challenges: in some situations, the benefit of arriving on time or avoiding traffic may outweigh the financial cost.

Proposed Student Mobility and Affordability Support Plan

Based on the findings, the study recommends coordinated actions among students, parents, schools, transport network companies, and regulators. The support plan focuses on budgeting, cost-sharing, student discounts, institutional partnerships, and policy support for safer and more affordable transport options.

Table 6. *Proposed Student Mobility and Affordability Support Plan*

Stakeholder/Area	Basis from Findings	Recommended Action	Expected Outcome
Students	Cost implications and price sensitivity were evident.	Prepare monthly transport budgets, monitor peak-hour pricing, and consider cost-sharing with classmates from similar routes.	Improved financial planning and reduced transport-related budget strain.
Parents/Guardians	Students may reduce spending on other needs or adjust budgets for transport.	Discuss realistic commuting costs and provide guidance on safe and necessary use of ride-booking services.	Better family support for student mobility and budgeting.

Schools/Universities	Students use ride-booking for access to Mendiola institutions.	Explore institutional agreements with transport providers for verified student discounts or limited-schedule fare support.	More accessible student transport options.
Transport Network Companies	Students would use services more often if fares were lower.	Offer student fare schemes, loyalty programs, prepaid ride packages, or off-peak discounts for verified students.	More student-friendly and predictable pricing.
Regulators/LGUs	Affordability and safety are intertwined policy concerns.	Study student discount mechanisms, fare transparency, and transport voucher possibilities for student commuters.	Fairer, safer, and more inclusive student mobility.
Future Researchers	Affordability explained only part of usage frequency.	Test interventions and examine links between transport access, attendance, academic performance, and student well-being.	Stronger evidence for mobility policy and student welfare programs.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that motorcycle ride-booking services provide important mobility benefits for students from distant communities studying in Mendiola, but these benefits are accompanied by notable financial implications. Most respondents used the services only once or twice weekly and continued to rely on cheaper public transportation such as jeepneys and LRT/MRT, indicating that motorcycle ride-booking functions mainly as a supplementary or situational commuting option rather than a full replacement for traditional transport.

The respondents recognized high cost implications, especially from fare changes caused by distance, weather conditions, peak hours, and higher rates compared with traditional public transport. Although students viewed the convenience and speed of ride-booking as valuable, the cumulative cost affected their financial management, spending priorities, and ability to save. Affordability concerns were moderate overall, with strong evidence of student price sensitivity.

The statistically significant weak negative relationship between affordability level and frequency of use shows that affordability influences student usage patterns, but it does not fully determine them. Students continue to use motorcycle ride-booking services when convenience, punctuality, safety, or lack of cheaper alternatives becomes more important than cost. Thus, the study contributes evidence that student mobility in Mendiola involves a practical balance between financial limitation and transportation necessity.

Recommendation

Students should develop realistic monthly transportation budgets that account for peak-hour pricing, bad-weather fare increases, and emergency trips. They may also explore cost-sharing arrangements with classmates who travel along similar routes and should compare ride-booking costs with available public transport options before deciding on regular use.

Parents and guardians should maintain open communication with students about actual transportation expenses and the situations that require higher-cost commuting options, such as late classes, safety concerns, or lack of reliable public transportation. This can help families provide appropriate financial guidance while supporting student safety and attendance.

Schools and universities in the Mendiola area should consider student mobility initiatives such as partnerships with ride-booking platforms, verified student discount schemes, coordinated transport information drives, and emergency transport support for students from distant communities. These initiatives may reduce the financial strain of commuting and improve student access to school.

Motorcycle ride-booking companies should consider low-fare structures, loyalty rewards, prepaid student packages, or discount windows for verified students, especially during class-related peak periods. Fare transparency and safety improvements should also be strengthened to increase student trust and service fairness.

Regulatory agencies and local government units may examine the feasibility of student discount policies, transport vouchers, or institutional mobility support programs similar to discounts provided in traditional public transportation. Future researchers may expand the study to other university districts, use larger and more balanced samples, compare multiple transport modes, and examine the effect of transportation affordability on attendance, punctuality, academic performance, and student well-being.

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