Drivers, Dealers and Destinations

Vikram Roulette

The Vikram, a quintessential shared transport option in Kanpur, has been a reliable mode of transportation for the residents for decades. Known for its iconic green color and availability for short-distance travel, the Vikram ecosystem is deeply intertwined with the local transportation. Despite its popularity, the system faces challenges that threaten its sustainability, efficiency, and potential for growth. The project aims to explore the life cycle of the Vikram auto, examining the vehicle's impact on different stakeholders and identifying disruptive challenges that can reshape its future.

Interviewing
Stakeholders: Excerpts

Drivers
"Bohot anand aata hai hamein Vikram chalane mai"
"Achcha nahi lagta ab"
"Battery rickshaw sab kharab kar raha hai"
"Modi-Ji ne theek nahi kiya ye"

Dealer
"Ab toh kam ho raha hai Madam...battery wale chal rahe hai bohot"
"Manufacturing se hi nahi aata ab"

Painter
"Saal mai ek Vikram 1-2 baar hi aata hai"
"Bohot kharab haal mai aate hai"

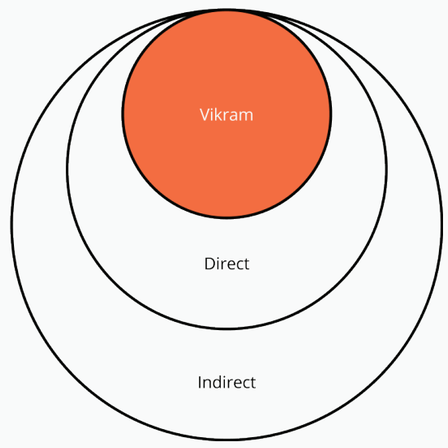
Customers
"Agar mai directly bhi pahuch sakta hu, toh mai Vikram kyu hi lunga"
"Hamein toh best lagta hai, harr jagah mil jaata hai"

Repairmen
"Arey ham toh poora engine bana detein hain, ab parts nahi milte na"
"Denting, painting ke liye bhi alag dukaan hai poora"

Understanding
Stakeholder Ecosystem

Direct Stakeholder
Drivers
Customers
Dealers
Repairmen
Painters
Manufacturers
Owners

Indirect Stakeholder
Non-customers
Scrap Dealers
Local Community
Government
Regulatory Bodies



Life Cycle Analysis

Manufacturing Phase

Components & Materials
Steel, plastic, rubber, glass

Environmental Impact
High, due to steel processing

Manufacturing
Local workshops, low-tech methods

Challenges
No adherence to emission standards; lack of mass production

Outcomes
Higher pollution, variable quality, limited cost efficiency

Operation & Usage Phase

Primary Function
Short-distance shared transport

Efficiency
CNG = lower emissions;
diesel = higher costs and emissions

Challenges
Stop-and-go driving reduces fuel efficiency

Maintenance
High costs, lack of upkeep, reduced efficiency

Economic Impact
High fuel and maintenance costs, reduced profits

Competition
E-rickshaws reduce utilization and revenue potential

Maintenance & Repair Phase

Maintenance Frequency
Frequent breakdowns due to poor quality; local repair shops or service centers used

Environmental Impact
Significant waste from repairs (used oil, tires, scrap metal); often not disposed of responsibly

Economic Impact
High maintenance costs burden drivers, impacting earnings

Vehicle Condition
Poor maintenance leads to higher emissions and lower passenger satisfaction

End of Life

Disposal
Scrapped or sold for parts

Recycling
Steel body recycled; plastics and rubber often discarded

Environmental Impact
Steel recycling reduces footprint; hazardous materials pose risks

Economic Opportunity
Potential revenue from recycling and resale of parts; underutilized due to lack of infrastructure and awarenes

Findings

Vikram's discontinuation has led to a scarcity of parts. Dealers face reduced sales, and repairmen struggle to find parts, resorting to makeshift repairs or fabricating parts themselves

Drivers report that income has stagnated due to competition, and they are unable to attract new customers. Customers and non-customers prefer other modes of transport due to noise, inefficiencies, and limited flexibility

Frequent breakdowns, particularly with tires and engine parts, increase operational costs and reduce daily earnings. Maintenance has become a daily concern due to the age of the vehicles

Repairmen are concerned about Vikram autos becoming obsolete. There's an emotional connection to these vehicles, which has made it difficult for stakeholders to accept the shift to newer models like e-rickshaws

Problems

Scarcity of parts due to the vehicle's discontinuation

Stakeholders Impacted:
Dealers, Repairmen

Operational inefficiencies, low customer volume, competition with e-rickshaws and auto-rickshaws.

Stakeholders Impacted:
Drivers, Customers, Non-customers.

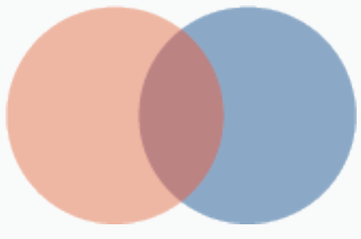
High repair costs, frequent breakdowns, unavailability of parts.

Stakeholders Impacted:
Drivers, Repairmen, Painters

Transition to newer models is hindered by the lack of supply, leading to prolonged use of outdated vehicles.

Stakeholders Impacted:
Drivers, Dealers

Areas Identified
Problem Segregation



Major Problem Areas
Revenue Challenges
Environmental Concerns
Operational Efficiency & Competition

Minor Problem Areas
Market Reach & Distribution
Manufacturing Quality & Obsolescence
Customer Experience

Both
Maintenance & Repair Costs
Vehicle Obsolescence & Sustainability

Problem Statements

Driver Dependency and Resistance to Change
The drivers' emotional attachment to the Vikram autos, along with their limited ambition and reluctance to seek alternative livelihoods, is stifling innovation and adaptability within the ecosystem. This dependency creates an unwillingness to diversify their income sources, making them vulnerable to shift in the local transportation market.

Customer Experience and Preference Misalignment
Customers continue to use Vikram autos mainly due to their availability and affordability, yet they find them uncomfortable, noisy, and less efficient compared to modern transport alternatives. This misalignment between customer expectations and actual service quality is reducing the appeal of Vikram autos, leading to the decline in demand.

Environmental and Regulatory Non-Compliance
Vikram autos lack adherence to modern environmental standards in both manufacturing and operational phases, contributing significantly to local pollution. The absence of regulation in waste disposal during repair and end-of-life phases increases the environmental impact and creates health hazards for communities near disposal sites.