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SATISFACTION LEVEL OF TNSTC BUS PASSENGERS' WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TIRUCHIRAPPALLI CITY

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Abstract

The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation have a place of importance in the Road Transport Sector in Tamil Nadu. They perform very vital road in the daily life of millions of our country men. The study focus on what factors are most important in explaining different level of satisfaction regarding passengers with consider to TNSTC in Tiruchirappalli City and various Problems faced by such passengers and to provide suggestions to overcome the problems in the study area. Though there was considerable improvement in the overall operational performance and the level of passengers satisfaction, there financial position of TNSTC had been far from satisfactory, The overall satisfaction of the Passengers on Tiruchirappalli Public Bus Transport is below average and authorities have to look into devices immediately to improve the quality of service on the items on which more than one third of passengers expressed 'bad' satisfaction. These items include on board security, safety from accidents, seat availability in buses, cleanliness in bus stops and buses and ticket prices. Based on the findings some suggestions are proposed for policy recommendations.

Keywords: Passengers' Attitude, Passengers Satisfaction, Passengers' Experience.

Introduction

It is a fact that no bus transport business can exist without passengers. In every bus transport service related businesses, there is a need to develop relationship with the passengers and with the service providers to satisfy passengers' day-to-day service quality requirements. The owners of the different bus transport industries compete with each other to offer maximum satisfaction to passengers. Thus passengers' satisfaction, a business term is a measure of how services are supplied by an

industry to meet passengers' expectation. Passengers' satisfaction is an indefinite and conceptual term, the meaning of which will vary from person to person and services to services. Measurement of passengers' satisfaction is too difficult since it is related to the psychological state of mind.

An attempt is made in this study to have better understanding of passenger attitude and the level of passengers' satisfaction towards services provided by both public and private sector bus transport

industries. In addition to this, a brief report is made about the existing services, delivery of services, how far the passengers avail those services and the reasons if any for their preference of particular industrial services. It is a fact that no bus transport business can exist without passengers. In every bus transport service related businesses, there is a need to develop relationship with the passengers and with the service providers to satisfy passengers' day-to-day service quality requirements. The owners of the different bus transport industries compete with each other to offer maximum satisfaction to passengers.

Thus passengers' satisfaction, a business term is a measure of how services are supplied by an industry to meet passengers' expectation. Passengers' satisfaction is an indefinite and conceptual term, the meaning of which will vary from person to person and services to services. Measurement of passengers' satisfaction is too difficult since it is related to the psychological state of mind. An attempt is made in this study to have better understanding of passenger attitude and the level of passengers' satisfaction towards services provided by both public and private sector bus transport industries. In addition to this, a brief report is made about the existing services, delivery of services, how far the passengers avail those services and the reasons if any for their preference of particular industrial services.

Review of Literature

Geographical factors such as population, environment, economics and culture are among the factors that influence the bus operation service provided. The types and features of urban bus services may differ from rural bus services where coverage routes, fare system and fleet depend on the local needs (Rohani et al., 2013; Sham, Samsudin, & Rahman, 2013; Sham, Soltani, Sham, & Mohamed, 2012).

Commonly, in much urban and rural area, public transportation system deals largely with issues and problems encountered with transportation services, operation, infrastructure and facilities (Ariffin & Zahari, 2013).

The Urban and Rural areas in India are no exceptions in facing the same issue. Contrary to urban areas, public Bus System in

rural areas, for example, is good and more functioning as a mode assisting in reducing automobile dependency to preserve the geo-culture and sustaining the regions (Patrick & Roseland, 2014).

Although an extensive approach of transformation programs in urban public bus services is very much needed, the situation may be different for rural areas, with a small population and diverse activity locations (Ariffin & Zahari, 2016).

Any attempt to provide a new bus operation in the rural area to increase the ridership would be a challenge. Besides the ridership issue, there are also occurrences of an issue on operation and management such as limited capital to upgrade the service system among the operator. This scenario may be common to any urban and rural Public Bus Service in Tiruchirappalli City. Low ridership and the old system of public bus service may exist for many years servicing inter City or door to door routes to the rural passengers.

In this research, the factors influencing the satisfaction of the services will be studied to identify the difference or similarity between urban and rural public bus passengers' preferences in Tiruchirappalli City. It is an aim of this research to analyze the level of service quality of Public Bus Services through a Passengers' Satisfaction Survey before generalizing the issues existing in the System.

Meaning of Passenger

- ❖ A person traveling in a car, bus, plane, ship, or other conveyance, but not driving or helping to operate it.
- ❖ A passenger is a term broadly used to describe any person who travels in a vehicle, but bears little or no responsibility for the tasks required for that vehicle to arrive at its destination.

Statement of Problem

In the modern period, public bus transport services, being the most indispensable, help the people for mobility. Every human being or a passenger wants to avail better and comfortable travel. It is generally believed that services of the private sector transport agencies are better than the public sector. Hence, a comparative study is attempted to ascertain the performance of the public and private bus transport service industries in Tamil Nadu to test the belief

of the people and to find out the factors responsible for such kind of opinion.

Objectives of the Study

- ❖ To measure the level of satisfaction of Passengers of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Ltd with special reference to Tiruchirappalli City.
- ❖ To quantify the efficiency of the Bus Transport Facilities provided based on the survey conducted.
- ❖ To analyse the problems faced by the passengers of Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Ltd.

Collection of Data

The Passengers' Satisfaction and Aspiration Survey are deployed during the on-board survey. Standard questions about the respondent's background on age, ethnic, gender, group is asked to the respondents who make themselves approachable and volunteer to give feedback during the on-board survey. Systematic coding consisting of the category of respondent's background on Age, Gender, Income Group are applied and be filled up by the enumerators.

Research Methodology

The respondents were asked to fill the questionnaires at Three Main Bus Stops in the Tiruchirappalli City. The selected bus stop covers the buses connecting to Five Major

Local Destinations in the City i.e., Central Bus Stand, Main Guard Gate, Thuraiyur, Pettavaithalai, Manapparai. In total 250 respondents representing 50 from each destination were initially selected.

Out of these, 204 respondents were finally selected. The remaining Non-responsive questionnaires were rejected. The data represents satisfaction with the Conservative Bus System, which promote the quality of service and increase in numbers of TNSTC Bus Transport users in the future.

Findings of THE STUDY

Based on the Demographic Profile, the total respondents consisted of 82 women and 122 men.

- ★ Out of this, 50% of the respondents were in the age group of 18-30; 30% in 31-45 years; 14.7% in 46-60 years and the remaining 5% were in the age group of 60 and above years.
- ★ With regard to occupational structure, 37% of the respondents were students; 9% businessmen; 11% in the private sector; 1.9% self-employed; 26% government employees; 3% medical representatives; 0.9% farmers; 0.9% daily wage workers; 9% house wives and 0.9% were retired employees.

Table-1
Distribution of Satisfaction Responses

Category	Highly Satisfaction in %	Satisfaction in %	Average in %	Dissatisfaction in %	Highly Dissatisfaction in %	Mean
Over all Service	1.00	19.60	61.80	17.60	0.00	3.04
Frequency of Buses	2.90	39.20	39.20	16.70	2.00	3.25
Travel Time	5.90	31.40	47.10	14.70	1.00	3.26
Punctuality of Buses	2.00	36.30	36.30	23.50	2.00	3.13
Ticket Prices	2.00	8.80	50.00	36.30	2.90	2.71
Information about the Buses	0.0	4.90	8.80	22.50	63.70	1.55
Cleanliness in Bus Stops and Buses	0.0	17.60	46.10	35.30	1.00	2.80
Seat Availability in Buses	1.00	22.50	38.20	37.30	1.00	2.85
Safety from Accident	0.0	4.90	41.20	48.00	5.90	2.45

Bus stop condition	7.80	2.00	26.50	49.00	14.70	2.39
On Board Security	2.00	2.90	17.60	69.60	7.80	2.22
Driver and Conductor Attitude	2.90	27.50	62.70	5.90	1.00	3.25
Bus Comfort	3.00	21.80	50.50	23.80	1.00	2.99

Table-2
Correlation Analysis

Variable	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	13
Over all service	1	0.803	0.936	0.791	0.869	-0.371	0.883	0.790	0.653	0.293	0.131	0.962	0.982
Frequenc y of buses	0.803	1	0.952	0.977	0.572	0.502	0.719	0.740	0.370	-0.009	-0.005	0.852	0.840
Travel time	0.936	0.952	1	0.916	0.708	-0.527	0.795	0.754	0.465	0.063	-0.017	0.964	0.937
Punctualit y of buses	0.791	0.977	0.916	1	0.660	-0.475	0.807	0.850	0.518	0.178	0.204	0.786	0.861
ticket prices	0.869	0.572	0.708	0.660	1	0.228	0.974	0.911	0.940	0.726	0.588	0.701	0.909
Informati on about the buses	-0.371	-0.502	-0.527	-0.475	-0.228	1	0.306	0.341	0.066	0.148	0.080	0.413	-0.411
Cleanline ss	0.883	0.719	0.795	0.807	0.974	-0.306	1	0.975	0.906	0.656	0.570	0.739	0.946
Seat availabili ty in buses	0.790	0.740	0.754	0.850	0.911	-0.341	0.975	1	0.885	0.662	0.642	0.643	0.889
Safety from accidents	0.653	0.370	0.465	0.518	0.940	-0.066	0.906	0.885	1	0.912	0.825	0.425	0.735
Bus stop condition	0.293	-0.009	-0.063	0.178	0.726	0.148	0.656	0.662	0.912	1	0.953	0.022	0.393
On board security	0.131	-0.005	-0.017	0.204	0.588	0.080	0.570	0.642	0.825	0.953	1	-0.131	0.274
Staff behavior	0.962	0.852	0.964	0.786	0.701	-0.413	0.739	0.643	0.425	0.022	0.131	1	0.916
Bus comfort	0.982	0.840	0.937	0.861	0.909	-0.411	0.946	0.889	0.735	0.393	0.274	0.916	1

The data from Table-2 shows that eleven of the specific service quality attributes have a significant positive relation

with overall satisfaction ($p < .001$). This means that when satisfaction with a specific service quality attributes increases, overall satisfaction

increase too. While, staff behavior, bus comfort, travel time cleanliness in the bus stops have the highest correlation with the overall satisfaction of the bus service, information about the bus arrival and departure, bus stop condition, on board security has the least correlation with the overall service.

Discussion

The research findings indicate that it is not enough that people reach their destination cheap and quick, but it also involves certain qualitative factors that are difficult to measure, which are of great significance for how passengers experience their trip such as comfort, convenience etc. They are however difficult to measure by objective means, such as monetary values. The survey data, the bus comfort has the highest correlation (98.2 %) with overall satisfaction with the bus service. It is closely followed by staff behavior with a correlation of 96.2 % with the overall satisfaction

Conclusion

A good Public Transport System must be easy, fast, safe and also affordable. Tamil Nadu has a well-established transportation system which connects all parts of the state. The bus fare in Tamil Nadu is the lowest among all the various states in the country. The present study revealed the level of satisfaction of

passengers on information about bus routes and timings. However, most of them have either moderate or low level of satisfaction towards the services of TNSTC. Maintenance of buses, efficient crews and congenial relationship with the passengers were the main requirements to promote the level of satisfaction of passengers towards the services of TNSTC. To summarize, the overall result show that service quality attributes influences overall customer satisfaction in using public bus transport. The service quality could be evaluated and improved by analyzing single attributes but also by analyzing factors based on several attributes. The overall aim is to public bus transport an attractive, satisfied, and marketable mode of transport.

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