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A Study on Customer (Passenger) Satisfaction towards Railways Transportation Services with Reference to Coimbatore City

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A B S T R A C T

This study investigates the usage of online payment in small scale enterprises in Coimbatore city and how it influences digital financial inclusion in the study area. It also indicates how online payments are effective and efficient to small scale enterprises. It will also reveal the challenges they face in implementing and utilizing these systems. In this study it aims to identify the different modes of system, used in small scale enterprises. The research will employ a mixed methods approach, including surveys and interviews to collect data from small scale enterprises in Coimbatore city. Keywords- Digital financial inclusion, small scale enterprises, online payments utilization.

Keywords: railway service, Customer satisfaction, consumer preference

1. Introduction of the study

Transportation is a very essential factor for the economic development because in the current scenario a proper transportation facility forms part of a good logistics. Transportation has always had a direct impact to the growth of the economy because the economy is continuously getting dependent on the increasing capacity and the rationality of the transport. Railway transportation is a means of conveyance by which passengers and goods (or) cargos are transported using special purpose wagons, high capacity wagons, bigger train loads, closed circuit rakes which facilitates round the clock operations with a significant focus to render customer satisfaction. Indian Railways is the best economical transportation that is suitable for long distance traveling and movement of bulk cargos. Having said this, Southern Railways is considered to be one of the best zones in the I ndian Railways. This study mainly aims in understanding the passenger's level of satisfaction in terms of service quality offered by the Southern Railways and also to investigate the passengers experience on the service quality rendered by the Southern Railways. This research mainly focuses on the Service Quality rendered in Tier – 1 cities like Chennai, Coimbatore, Bangalore, Hyderabad etc. For the purpose of this study 194 responses were effectively captured by applying convenient sampling method and hypotheses are being tested and suitable interpretations are made thereupon.

2. Statement of the problem

A In India most of the people are preferring railway transportation due to low cost convenience. Satisfaction is based on the perception of passengers on various services offered by the rail system. To offer customized services, it is essential to understand the expectations and perceptions of the passengers with regard to quality of services offered by the rail system.

The railway passengers are facing a lot of problems. The majority of problems are unavailability of tickets through online booking, punctuality, handling of complaints, quality of travel, facilities in trains. So it is attempt of making them aware about the services available and satisfaction level of passengers in railway stations. It is our major and utmost responsibility to prove visually the services provided to the passengers by the southern railways.

3. Objectives of the study

- To measure the satisfaction level of passengers on services provided by the rail system.

- To explore the problems faced by the railway passengers.

- To identify important factors determining service quality of railway platforms that leads to passenger satisfaction.

- To find out the problems faced by the passenger regarding E-ticketing.

4. Scope of the study

The study is mainly focused on the satisfaction level of the passengers from the service offered by southern railways. Every aspect relate to railway service like ticket availability, handling of complaints, staff behavior, safety, timing etc.,are studied at different level of the research.. The research is mainly conducted to obtain quality of the service proving by the southern railways.

5. Research Methodology

The methodology of the study includes:

- Data collection

- Sample size

- Area of study

- Statistical tools

5.1 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTIONS

Since the study has been undertaken to study „**The Passenger's satisfaction towards Railway services**" in Coimbatore city, by using both primary and secondary data.

- **Primary data**

For the analysis of the '**Passengers satisfaction towards Railways service** data were collected from the respondents through questionnaire. The data were relating to the personal profile of sample respondents, hygiene issues, staff behavior, punctuality, booking of online ticket availability.

- **Secondary data**

For analyzing **The passengers satisfaction towards railway service**, secondary data were collected from various sources like newspapers, journals, magazines, articles and websites.

5.2 SAMPLE SIZE

A data were collected from 150 respondents through questionnaire in Coimbatore Taluk. Out of 150 questionnaires has been fit for analysis, so sample size is 150. The convenient sampling method is used.

5.3 AREA OF STUDY

This study about the study on customer (passenger) satisfaction towards railway transportation.

5.4 STATISTICAL TOOLS

The collected information were reviewed and considered and consolidated into a master table for the purpose of analysis. The data were further processed by using statistical tools.

1. Simple percentage analysis

2. Rank analysis

3. Chi – square analysis

6. Review of Literature

➢ **Gomadheeswaran and Sivakumar (2014)[1]** entitled study on '`passengers" satisfaction towards railway services with special reference to Coimbatore junction". The main objectives of study are to analyze the passengers" satisfaction of various services provided by the Indian railways. There are 100 respondents have been used this study. ANOVA, coefficient of correlation and simple percentage are the statistical tools used in this study. The study concludes or reveals that the respondents totally dissatisfied the railway service in Coimbatore junction. Such as unauthorized vendor, beggars, cleanness of compartment and food etc.

➢ **Vimal kumar** and **Jitin (2015) [2]** in their study, A study on passenger satisfaction towards Railway services with reference to Coimbatore Junction tells that transport is the movement of people, animals and goods from one location to another location. Transportation infrastructure assumes a great in developing countries because every sector depends on the suitable transportation. The main objective of the study is to

explore the problem faced by the daily passengers. There 100 respondents have been in this study with the help of convenient random sampling. This study is concluded that

- **D. Anbupriya, Dr. S. Subadra (2016)**[3] entitled study on "Passengers satisfaction towards railway services. Objective of the study is to identify the travel factors influencing the passengers of southern railways. There are 400 out of 460 respondents have been used this study satisfaction of service quality were analyzed using various tools and ANOVA was used to identify the significant difference concludes or reveals that the totally responds considered positivity, that would be a strong environment to the passengers and railways.

- **Maheswari** and **Dinesh kumar (2016)**[4] entitles study on „amenities provided by southern railways". The objective of the study is to know the profile of Indian Railways and the facilities provided to them by the railway. The sample size decided for the study was 200 and analyzed using statistical tools like chi-square. The result of the study reveals that proper measures have been taken for the problems faced by the passengers.

- **Gomadheeswaran and Sivakumar (2014)**[5] entitled study on 'passengers" satisfaction towards railway services with special reference to Coimbatore junction". The main objectives of study are to analyze the passengers" satisfaction of various services provided by the Indian railways. There are 100 respondents have been used this study. ANOVA, coefficient of correlation and simple percentage are the statistical tools used in this study. The study concludes or reveals that the respondents totally dissatisfied the railway service in Coimbatore junction. Such as unauthorized vendor, beggars, cleanness of compartment and food etc.

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7.1 Research gap

A research gap is a question or a problem that has not been answered by any of the existing studies or research within your field. Sometimes, a research gap exists when there is a concept or new idea that hasn't been studied at all. Sometimes you'll find a research gap if all the existing research is outdated and in need of new/updated research.

The previous research papers were explained the lack of services rendered by the railway transportation. This study focus on satisfaction of passenger at railway station, platforms and ticketing process. Additionally there is need explore the problems faced by the passengers. So this research will provide valuable insight towards the passenger satisfaction awareness in Coimbatore

8. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Analysis of Data is a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modeling data with the goal of discovering useful information, informing conclusions, and supporting decisionmaking. Data analysis is a process for obtaining raw data and converting it into information useful for decision-making by users. Data are collected and analyzed to answer questions, test hypotheses or disprove theories.

Statistician John Tukey defined data analysis in 1961 as: "Procedures for analyzing data, techniques for interpreting the results of such procedures, ways of planning the gathering of data to make its analysis easier, more precise or more accurate, and all the machinery and results of (mathematical) statistics which apply to analyzing data."

The following tools were used:

- Simple Percentage method

- Chi-square analysis

- Ranking analysis

8.1 Chi-Square Test Analysis

A CHI-SQUARE is a statistical tool commonly used for testing the independence and goodness of fit. Testing independence determines whether two or more observations across two population are dependent on each other. Testing for goodness of fit determines if an observed No of Respondents distribution matches a theoretical distribution.

Table no 1

Table showing the relationship between the age and offences faced

AGE/ OFFENCES FACED	NO COMPLAINTS	PROPERTY SNATCHING	PUBLIC NUISSAN CE	SEAT CORNERING	THEFT	Total
21 to 30	16	17	19	23	14	89
31 to 40	3	2	4	3	1	13
Above 40	2	2	1	1	2	8
Below 20	4	9	11	8	8	40
Total	**25**	**30**	**35**	**35**	**25**	**150**

Interpretation

In the above analysis the calculated value (0.16340) is than the value (21.026) at the level of 5% significance. Hence hypothesis is accepted thus, there is no significant relationship between age and offences faced.

Table no 2

Table showing the relationship between the occupation and purpose of train travel

OCCUPATION/PURPOSE	Business	Employed	Professional	Student	Grand Total
Educational purpose	1	4	6	19	30
Official/ business purpose	8	18	10	9	45
Personal	4	7	4	9	24
Vacation	7	3	2	39	51
Grand Total	**20**	**32**	**22**	**76**	**150**

INTERPRETATION

In the above analysis the calculated value (3.376) is than the value (12.59) at the level of 5% significance. Hence hypothesis is accepted thus, there is no significant relationship between occupation and purpose of tr ain travel.

8.2 Ranking Analysis

A ranking is a relationship between a set of items such that, for any two items, the first is either 'ranking higher than', 'ranked lower than' or 'ranked equal to' the second. In mathematics, this is known as a weak order or total pre order of objects. It is not necessarily a total order of objects because two different object s can have the same rating. The ranking themselves are totally ordered, for example, materials are totally pre ordered by hardness, while degree of hardness are totally ordered. By reducing detailed measures to a sequence of ordinal numbers, ranking make it possible to evaluate complex information according to certain criteria. Thus, for example, an Internet search engine may rank the pages it funds according to an estimation of their relevance, making it possible for the user quickly to select the pages they are likely to want to see. Analysis of data obtained by ranking commonly requires non-parametric statistics.

Table No: 3

Table showing the ranking of railway station and platform

S. No	FEATURES	HS	S	N	DS	HDS	TOTAL	RANK
1	Information	51	104	93	28	45	321	5

2	Cleanliness	23	110	153	60	30	376	2
3	Refreshment	32	80	186	44	25	367	4
4	Toilet facilities	24	92	156	80	40	392	1
5	Availability	34	94	129	60	55	372	3

Interpretation

The above table depicts that the toilet facilities is ranked first and its followed by cleanliness, availability, refreshment, and information.

Table No.4

Table showing the ranking of ticketing process

S.no	Factors	Excellent	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very poor	Total	Rank
1	No. of ticket counters	42	118	99	36	35	330	4
2	Attitude of ticketing staff	32	136	11	32	25	236	5
3	Efficiency of ticketing staff	28	108	168	28	25	357	2
4	Self service	31	114	120	68	25	358	1
5	Information provided by the staff	36	104	126	36	53	356	3

Interpretation

The above table depicts that the self service is ranked first and its followed by efficiency of ticketing staff, information provided by the staff, no.of ticket counters, attitude of ticketing staff.

9. Findings and Suggestions

Adoption of online payment among small scale enterprises has increased substantially. Recently many of the banks make an option to e-payment and attracts customer over e-payment. The many apps have been launched for electronic transactions are also a reason for developing of e-payment. There are some new findings from a survey among 150 respondents which shows that,

- ➢ 61% of the respondents are female in the category of gender.
- ➢ 60% of the respondents are under the age group of 21 to 30.
- ➢ 51% of the respondents are student.
- ➢ 37% of the respondents are Above 15001.
- ➢ 46% of the respondents are other town/ urban centre.
- ➢ 40% of the respondents are A few times a year under the category of frequency of train travel.
- ➢ 53% of the respondents are non air conditioned class under the category of preferred class.
- ➢ 51% of the respondents are E-ticketing under the category of purchase of ticket.
- ➢ 48% of the respondents are very high under the category of ticket fare.
- ➢ 30% of the respondents are official/ business under the category of purpose of travel.
- ➢ 31% of the respondents are automatic cancellation if waitlisted tickets under the category of problems in e-ticketing.
- ➢ 31% of the respondents are passenger seating capacity.
- ➢ 36% of the respondents are less than 1 hour under the category of average time travel.
- ➢ 46% of respondents are reserved ticket holding.

- ➢ 24% of the respondents are seat cornering.

- ➢ 37% of the respondents are very good.

- ➢ 44% of the respondents are moderate.

- ➢ Majority of 44% of the respondents are moderate.

Suggestions

- Drinking water facility should be installed in the platform and timing of the train should be punctual.

- Offences like thefts should be controlled in the railway platform and while travelling. .

Conclusion

The contribution of this study is to identify the satisfaction level of the passengers towards the railway services. With increase number of passengers the railways should improve their services to satisfy more number of passenger"s needs. According to this study improvements like cleanliness, quality food etc., have to be maintained properly. Awareness about the UTS (Unreserved Ticketing System) ticket booking should be widely given to the passengers to attract them where they can book tickets in ten minutes. From this to conclude that necessary steps to be taken to increase the satisfaction level of enlarged passengers by improving the existing services in Railways.

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Annexure

1. Name :

2. Gender

  o Male

  o Female

3. Age

  o Below 20

  o 21 to 30

  o 31 to 40

- o Above 41

4. Occupation

- o Student
- o Employed
- o Business
- o Professional

5. Monthly income

- o Below 5000
- o 5000 - 10,000
- o 10,000 – 15,000
- o Above 15000

6. Where do you live in?

- o Meteropolitan zone
- o Other town/ urban centre
- o Rural zone

7. How often do you travel by train?

- o Daily
- o Weekly
- o Monthly
- o Few times a year

8. Which type of class do you prefer?

- o Air conditioned class
- o Non air conditioned class

9. Which method do you prefer for getting tickets?

- o Ticket counter
- o E – ticketing
- o Post office

10. What is your opinion regarding ticket fare?

- o Very high
- o High
- o Moderate
- o Low
- o Very low

11. What is your purpose of travelling?

- o Official / business purpose
- o Vacation
- o Educational purpose
- o Tour
- o Personal

12.   How would you rate our railway stations and platforms?

Factors	100%	75%	50%	25%	0%
Information					
Cleanliness					
Refreshment facilities					
Toilet facilities					
Available assistance					

13.   How would you rate our ticketing process?

Factors	Excellent	Good	Neutral	Poor	Very poor
No. of ticket counter					
Attitude of ticketing staff					
Efficiency of ticketing staff					
Self service					
Information provided by ticketing staff					

14.   How would you rate our trains?

Factors	100%	75%	50%	25%	0%
Comfort					
Punctuality					
Cleanliness					
Storage facilities					
Train staff					
Facilities for physically challenged					
Food and beverage offer					

15.   What are the difficulties faced by you in E- ticketing?

o   Service charges

o   Automatic cancellation if waitlisted tickets

o   Change in name and hearing stations

o   Connectivity problems

16.   Select the problems which makes you discomfort?

o   Train delay

o   Cancellation train

o   Passenger seating capacity

o   Pantry can service

o   Entry of unauthorised vendors and beggars

17.   What is the average time travel?

o   Less than 1 hour

o   1 to 5 hour

o   More than 5 hour

18.   What is the nature of your ticket?

o   Season ticket holding

o   Unreserved ticket holding

o   Reserved ticket holding

19.   How would you rae the railway transport is low fare comparing to other transport?

o   Excellent

o   Very good

o   Good

o   Satisfactory

20.   How would do you rate cancellation charges?

o   Very high

o   High

o   Moderate

o   Low

21.   How would you rate the bookings of tickets through IRCTC?

o   Highly satisfied

o   Moderate

o   Dissatisfied

22.   Which type of offences do you faced during train journeys?

o   Public nuissance

o   Seat cornering

o   Theft

o   Property snatching

o   No complaints faced such as

23.   What is your opinion regarding amenities in train?

o   Mobile charging facility

o   No.of ladies coaches

o   Water facilities

o   Cleanliness

24.   Which form of the ticket do you genrally carry in train?

o   Excellent

o   Good

o   Average

o   Poor

o   Very poor

25.   According to you how much would you rate the services of railway transportation?

o   Mobile ticket

o   Printed E-ticket