A STUDY ON PASSENGERS SATISFACTION TOWARDS RAILWAY SERVICES

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ABSTRACT:
The study majorly focused on the passengers satisfaction towards railway services. The study was done in Chennai city. The researcher had done this study to understand the level of satisfaction of passengers towards services provided by the railway system and the problems faced by the passengers during their train journey. The majority of the respondents belong to female and age group of 20-30. From the t-Test, It is concluded that there is no significant relationship between gender of the respondents and their overall satisfaction towards basic train facilities. The researcher had suggested that The provision of better passenger amenities both in railway platforms and on trains should be one of the important objectives of Indian Railways and Railway stations should be connected more with other modes of public transport for easier mobility of the passengers. Intermodal linkages are to be made for the advantage of both the passengers and the railways. The researcher has given some insights to develop and improve the quality of services to satisfy the passengers availing railway services. The researcher conclude that passengers who travel regularly are satisfied with the services provided by the railways, but the passengers feel that services like ticket vending machines, drinking water facility can be increased.

1.1 INTRODUCTION
Railway is the principal mode of transportation for fright and passengers in India. Indian Railways has been a vital component of the social, political and economic life of the country. Indian Railways transportation network has played a key role in weaving India into a nation.
This network has not only integrated markets but also people across length and breadth of the country. It has bound the economic life of the country and helped in accelerating the development of the industry and agriculture.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Indian Railways is the major mode of transport in the country for passengers as well as freight due to its large network, number of trains, and affordability. On the industry front, it is the only player; hence, a monopoly has been created (which is legal). 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. Based on this above issues, the researcher has decided to focus this study on passenger satisfaction towards services provided by the Indian railways. The focus of this study is to analyze the managerial aspects of services rather than to study the technical and engineering aspects of the railway.

1.3 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The Railways has its own unique features and provides more services to the passengers. In order to compete with other modes of transport, it is inevitable for railways to accelerate the growth of passengers origination. This can be done by providing more quality services to them. Further, the opinion of the passengers towards the services provided by the Indian Railways will be quite different as they vary in socio-economic characteristics. It is essential for the Railway Authorities to know about the opinion of the passengers regarding the services offered to them in order to make future policies and provisions. Based upon the opinion of the passengers, their satisfaction level is decided. The Indian Railways can perform well only when the passengers are satisfied with the services they obtain. This study is conducted to understand the level of satisfaction of passengers towards services provided by the railway system.
1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To measure the level of satisfaction of passengers towards services provided by the railway system
2. To study the various problems faced by the passengers during their train journey.
3. To suggest few ways to improve the service quality offered by southern railways.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study is mainly focused on the satisfaction level of the passengers from the services offered by southern railways. Every aspect related to railway service like ticket availability, quality of travel, staff behavior, safety, timing etc are studied at different level of the research. The sample population is chosen from Chennai city. The research is mainly conducted to obtain the quality of the service provided by the southern railways.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study involves both the primary data and secondary data. The primary data is collected through questionnaire method and the source materials for secondary data are books, journals and internet. The data was collected by questionnaire method. The completed questionnaires were further checked for completeness and accuracy and only completed questionnaire in all aspects were taken for the study. Simple random sampling method was used in this study for selecting the sample size of 100 Respondents. In this study, the researcher has adopted various statistical tools such as t-test, ANOVA, percentage analysis method.

1.7 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kalaiselvi.Dr., Sandhya D.Athira (2017) made a study upon the satisfaction level and problems faced by the southern Indian passengers. The Indian Rail transportation is gaining importance day by day. With the increase of passengers, the Indian Railways has focused to extend its attention to satisfy the needs of passengers and made initiatives to improve the quality of service to enrich the satisfaction of passengers. Even though repeated attempt made
by the Railways to improve the quality of services, the result would not satisfied the passenger”s needs. It reveals that, continuous, comprehensive, lengthy intentional performance and attempts are essential to solve these problems.

Selvarani. C. Dr., Murugan. K (2017) tried to analyze the factors with its attributes for understanding satisfaction of passengers on service quality of Villupuram junction. The researcher contributes many service factors which are best suitable for railway to consider in future for satisfying the passengers in Villupuram. Since the quality of service is questionable railway try to improve core areas and deliver quality of services to the passengers this attempt from the part of railways will definitely retain the passengers in enjoying its services in future with reference to Villupuram junction. This study concluded that the passengers feel comfortable in train travelling totally this study was evaluating the passengers satisfaction towards railway. The service quality of the southern railway Villupuram passengers perspective is tried to analyze the factory with its attributes for understanding satisfaction of passengers on service quality from this study the researcher contribute many service factor which are best suitable for railway to consider in future for satisfying the passengers in Villupuram.

Sheeba A, and Kumuthadevi, K (2015) analyzed those facility factors including amenities provided south Indian Railways and its variables to determine the satisfaction of the passengers. From this study the researcher contribute many service factors which are best suitable for Railways to consider in future for satisfying the passengers in Kerala. Since the quality of services is questionable, Railways try to improve the core areas and deliver quality of services to the passengers. This attempt from the part of railways will definitely retain the passengers in enjoying its services in future.
The maximum respondents (76%) are female in comparison with male respondents (24%).

The researcher determines the factor to identify the respondent’s satisfaction towards railway services under gender perspective.

Majority of 58% of the respondents belong to the age group of 20-30 years, 34% of the respondents belong to the age group of below 20 years, 6% the respondents belong to the age group of above 40 years and 2% of the respondents belong to the age group of 30-40 years.

1.9 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Testing of Hypothesis

**Ho:** There is no significant relationship between gender of the respondents and their overall satisfaction towards basic train facilities.
**Ha:** There is significant relationship between gender of the respondents and their overall satisfaction towards basic train facilities.

**Table 2**

*Result of the t-Test on Gender and Overall satisfaction of the Respondents towards basic train facilities*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender of the respondents</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>Inference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>17.75</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>19.22</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>3.270</td>
<td>0.074</td>
<td>Accepted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Computed Data*

From the above table, it is clear that P value is greater than 0.05, Therefore the Null Hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between gender of the respondents and their overall satisfaction towards basic train facilities.

**1.10 SUGGESTIONS**

On the basis of the information obtained from the Passengers, some salutary suggestions are made by the researcher for enhancing better customer service and more efficient functioning of the Indian Railways.

- It has been found out in the analysis that most of the passengers are not satisfied with catering. Quality of food should be improved and variety of items should be introduced. To make the service of catering uniform, all trains should be attached with pantry car facility.
• The provision of better passenger amenities both in railway platforms and on trains should be one of the important objectives of Indian Railways.

• There should be coordination between Railway protection force, police, railway authorities and public for protecting the commuters.

• Railway stations should be connected more with other modes of public transport for easier mobility of the passengers. Intermodal linkages are to be made for the advantage of both the passengers and the railways.

• It is better to provide seat reservation in general compartments for ladies rather than the insecure ladies compartments. Assistance and facilities for disabled and elderly should be enhanced and special compartments may be arranged with assistance to facilitate easier transit.

• The purpose of demarcation line drawn on the platform is not known to many people and is also not visible at most of the stations. Public announcement about the yellow line drawn on the platform should be made compulsory to avoid the inconveniences caused by the fellow passengers and visitors of the passengers.

• Drinking water can be provided in every coach. A plastic tank can be fixed in the compartments to serve the needs of the passengers of that compartment. The tanks have to be filled up with pure water at important junctions.

• It is noted that Self-Printing Ticket Machine has been already introduced in Indian Railways. This facility must be equipped in many more stations in the study area so that the passengers can get rid of the problem in getting manual journey tickets.

• The introduction of increased number of automatic ticket vending machines will relieve the passengers of the rush in the platforms. Also, there is a need for increased number of ticket counters with well trained staff to facilitate speedy delivery of tickets especially during peak hours.
1.11 CONCLUSION

The Indian Rail transportation is gaining importance day by day. With the increase of passengers, the Indian Railways has focused to extend its attention to satisfy the needs of customers and made initiatives to improve the quality of service to enrich the satisfaction of passengers. Even though repeated attempts have been made by the Railways to improve the quality of services, the results have not completely satisfied the passenger’s needs. This reveals that, continuous, comprehensive, lengthy intentional performance and attempts are essential to solve these problems. Accordingly, the researcher has given some insights to develop and improve the quality of services to satisfy the passengers availing railway services.

The image of Railways depends on its personality, perceptions of the passengers and the quality of the services offered. There are certain aspects towards which the respondents have positive feelings and there are others towards which the respondents have negative feelings. So it is very difficult to say in a single word as to state whether the Indian Railways has positive or negative images. But it is understood from the evaluation of the passengers that the negative aspects need the attention of the Indian railways.

REFERENCES:
