

## A STUDY ON PASSENGERS ATTITUDE TOWARDS RAILWAY SERVICE IN THOOTHUKUDI

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### ABSTRACT

The Indian railway is one of the largest and busiest rail networks in the world. It is an important form of public transportation in the country. The social and economic development of the country also depends to a large extent upon Indian railways and for future development. In addition to larger capacity and modern technology trucks that offer advantage of high speed, reliability and lower unit cost in its own way. Thus, the railways need to substantially improve the quality of service, customers focus and service profile to meet the challenges of more intense competition in the transport market. In view of the above, the Indian railways is expected to provide safe, fast and comfortable service at reasonable prices and good behavior towards passengers; it should also focus towards amenities provided and the service profile that meets changing customers' requirements. Hence, the Indian railways are expected to change its insides, aiming provision of high quality service in line with the changing atmosphere and hectic competitions and maintain and increase the share through market research. So, a study on the attitude of the passengers towards Indian railways about the services and other amenities provided is felt, resulting in the present research work.

**Keywords:** customers focus, passengers attitude and services.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Transport plays an important role in the economic development and social emancipation of a society. An effective transport system is vital for economic well-being and quality of life, because food, health, education and employment are generally available if there are adequate

means of moving people, goods and ideas. Transportation is one of the tools required by civilized men to bring order out of chaos. It reaches every phase and facet of our existence viewed from every stand point-in social, economic and political. It is unquestionably the most important industry in the world Transport system provides the basic infrastructure without which other economic activities cannot grow and flourish. Indian Railway has been a great integrating force during the last 100 years. It is the basis of the economic life of the country and helps in accelerating the development of industry and agriculture. Southern Railway, in its present form, came into existence on 14th April 1951 through the merger of the three state Railways namely Madras and Southern Mahratta Railway's the South Indian Railway, and the Mysore State Railway.

## 2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To measure the level of satisfaction of the passengers about the services offered by the Indian railways.
2. To identify the problem faced by the passengers while booking tickets online and in person/ over the counter.
3. To study if facilities provided in trains are adequate and effectively maintained or not and know the grievance redressal procedures.
4. To offer suggestions to improve the conditions of service offered by railway.

## 3. HYPOTHESIS:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between occupation and basic amenities offered by railways to the passengers

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between gender and ordinary ticket fare

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation.

## 4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study is completely based on the passengers' attitude towards the services offered by the Railway. The scope of the study is limited to the study period. The passengers included in the study are confined to the passengers who were traveling in the trains during the study period. The scope of the study is limited to the regions under the Southern Railway. The study deals with the various issues of service dimensions like facility, system, value added services, price, safety, passenger perspective and service expectations which are crucial elements of services marketing of rail transportation. A customer study was conducted to assess the levels of service quality, passenger satisfaction and dissatisfaction with all type of services available at the Railway stations.

## 5. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aamna Shakeel Abbasi, Wajiha Khalid, Madeeha Azam and Adnan Riaz (2010), have found that the customer expectations regarding the services is the most dynamic verb in the lexis of customer satisfaction is 'to improve'. Hence the railways like other industries is realizing the significance of customer centered philosophies with the overall goal in terms of customer satisfaction, Determinants of Customer Satisfaction in Hotel Industry of Pakistan, European Journal of Scientific Research.

Rainald Borck and Matthias Wrede [2007] in their study analyzed the commuting subsidies with two transport modes. The purpose of the study was to analyze the redistributive effect of commuting subsidies in a monocentric city with two income groups and two transport modes The study

revealed that with the three distinct areas, where the rich use public transport in the centre and cars in the suburbs, while the poor live between those groups and use public transport.

## 6. AREA OF THE STUDY

The study has been conducted in the area of Thoothukudi among the passengers who use Indian railway service.

### 6.1 SOURCES OF DATA

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the passengers in Thoothukudi using Questionnaire. Secondary data were collected from Books, Journals, Reports and Websites.

### 6.2 SAMPLING DESIGN

The sample technique for this study was convenient sampling method. In this study 120 respondents were selected and their response was selected and their response was collected using the questionnaire. Questionnaires collected from respondents were of great source of information.

Category	No. of respondents
Male	44
Female	76
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>

## SAMPLE DESIGN

### 6.3 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

A few hardships were faced while conducting the research such as:

- Sample chosen for the study is only 120 passengers so it is not a representative for the country as a whole.
- The source of data for the study was primary data with the help of self administered questionnaire. Hence, the chances of unbiased information are less.
- Time and economic constraint is one of the important limiting factors. It took more time to get back the filled in questionnaire.
- The research of the study is subject to the attitude and opinion of the respondents.

### 6.4 PROFILE OF THE STUDY

#### History of Indian railways

No one can deny the part the British played in creating the Indian Railways. They envisioned it, planned it, engineered it and instructed the poor Indian laborers how to build it. Coming to that, there is a common misconception that the British “gifted” India the Railways. Nothing could be more wrong. The British did not build the Railways out of love for India or seeing the need to “prosperity” vast masses of poor Indians. They could not have cared less. They needed to govern this huge, disconnected and diverse country efficiently and to do so, they needed stuff to be moved around the country quickly. Like mail of the Empire, troops for war against native princes and to subdue rebellions and of course the plethora of officials who were ruling the country. They saw how hugely successful the Railways were in England and decided

that India with its vast hinterlands and huge population was perfect for them to build an extensive Railway network using which they could exploit the country to the maximum. They saw the railways as a tool to consolidate their power and control over the Indian population. Letting the local populace use the trains was just a generosity extended by them.

### Indian Railways

Following independence in 1947, India inherited a decrepit rail network. About 40 per cent of the railway lines were in the newly created Pakistan. Many lines had to be rerouted through Indian Territory and new lines had to be constructed to connect important cities such as Jammu. A total of 42 separate railway systems, including 32 lines owned by the former Indian princely states existed at the time of independence spanning a total of 55,000 km. These were amalgamated into the Indian Railways. In 1952, it was decided to replace the existing rail networks by zones. A total of six zones came into being in 1952. As India developed its economy, almost all railway production units started to be built indigenously. The Railways began to electrify its lines to AC. On 6 September 2003 six further zones were made from existing zones for administration purpose and one more zone added in 2006. The India Railway has now sixteen zones.

## 7. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Relationship between occupation and basis amenities offered by railways to the passengers

#### Null hypothesis:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between occupation and basic amenities offered by railways to the passengers.

#### Alternative hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between occupation and basic amenities offered by railways to the passengers.

**Table 1**

### One way ANOVA for basic amenities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation

Particulars	Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
cleanliness on platforms	Between Groups	3.427	4	.857	.574	.682
	Within Groups	171.773	115	1.494		
	Total	175.200	119			
security at station and platforms	Between Groups	2.392	4	.598	.656	.624
	Within Groups	104.908	115	.912		
	Total	107.300	119			
drinking water arrangements	Between Groups	6.588	4	1.647	1.772	.139
	Within Groups	106.879	115	.929		
	Total	113.467	119			
waiting rooms	Between Groups	11.197	4	2.799	5.306	.001
	Within Groups	60.670	115	.528		

	Total	71.867	119			
retiring rooms & cloak room	Between Groups	7.095	4	1.774	2.326	.061
	Within Groups	87.705	115	.763		
	Total	94.800	119			
seating, fans and lighting facility	Between Groups	.398	4	.099	.106	.980
	Within Groups	107.969	115	.939		
	Total	108.367	119			
pay and use toilets	Between Groups	1.758	4	.440	.416	.797
	Within Groups	121.542	115	1.057		
	Total	123.300	119			

**Source: Primary data**

The responses of the people relating to basic amenities offered by railways to the passengers are presented in this table 5.9. The result indicates that the p value is less than 0.05 for the statement ‘waiting room ‘facility indicating the rejection of null hypothesis, whereas for all other statement the p value is greater than 0.05 indicating the acceptance of null hypothesis. This shows that there is no significant relationship between occupation and statement relating to basic amenities for all the factors except the waiting room facility.

**Relationship between gender and ordinary ticket fare**

**Null hypothesis:**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between gender and ordinary ticket fare

**Alternative hypothesis:**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between gender and ordinary ticket fare

**Table 2**

**Independent sample t test for gender and ordinary ticket fare**

Statement	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T value	P value
Ordinary ticket fare	Male	44	3.3182	.82892	2.979	0.004**
	Female	72	2.8889	.70322		

\* Significant at 5% level

Table 5.11 shows the independent sample t-test that compares the gender of the respondents and ordinary ticket fare. There is a statistically significant difference as determined by the value of t 2.979, where the p value is 0.004 (p < 0.05) and this indicates that null

hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that there is significant relationship between gender and ordinary ticket fare.

### Relationship between facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation

#### Null hypothesis:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation.

#### Alternative hypothesis:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** There is a significant relationship between facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation.

**Table 3**

#### One way ANOVA for facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation

Source of variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.503	4	2.126	3.402	.011
Within Groups	71.864	115	.625		
Total	80.367	119			

\*significant at 5% level

Table 5.14 shows the one way ANOVA that explores the facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation. There is a statistically significant difference between groups as disclosed by the value of  $F=3.402$  where the p value is  $0.011(p<0.05)$  and this indicates that the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation.

### LEVEL OF SATISFACTION IN THE SERVICES OFFERED BY RAILWAY TO THE PASSENGERS

The passengers are travelling atleast 5 hours in the train. So they expect cleanliness on platforms, security at station and platforms, drinking water arrangements, catering services, availability of ladies coaches, medical assistance during emergencies, modern amenities, mobile charging facilities, recreation facilities and facilities for physically challenged persons. Hence to know about the level of satisfaction in the services offered by railway to the passenger's analysis have been made.

**TABLE 4**

Statement	HS	S	N	DS	HDS	Total	Mean score	Rank
Cleanliness on platforms	16 (80)	4 (16)	60 (180)	22 (44)	18 (18)	338	2.82	VIII
Proper maintenance of coaches	2 (10)	20 (80)	62 (186)	32 (64)	4 (4)	344	2.87	VII
Security in trains	10 (50)	12 (48)	56 (168)	30 (60)	12 (12)	338	2.82	VIII

Watering arrangements	2 (10)	18 (72)	62 (186)	32 (64)	6 (6)	338	2.82	VIII
Catering services	6 (30)	16 (64)	48 (144)	44 (88)	6 (6)	332	2.77	XI
Availability of ladies coaches	10 (50)	26 (104)	32 (96)	48 (96)	4 (4)	350	2.92	IV
Medical assistance during emergencies	8 (40)	24 (96)	44 (132)	34 (68)	10 (10)	346	2.88	VI
Modern amenities	12 (60)	22 (88)	52 (156)	32 (64)	2 (2)	370	3.08	III
Mobile charging facilities	6 (30)	26 (104)	68 (204)	14 (28)	6 (6)	372	3.1	II
Recreation facilities	8 (40)	18 (72)	52 (156)	32 (64)	10 (10)	342	2.85	V
Facilities for physically challenged persons	14 (70)	64 (256)	28 (84)	10 (20)	4 (1)	431	3.59	I

**Source: Primary Data**

The above table 5.16 reveals the respondents level of satisfaction in the services offered by railway to the passengers using likert's technique. It is observed that facilities for physically challenged persons has highest mean score of (3.59) and is therefore ranked first, followed by the mobile charging facilities (3.1) which ranked second, and modern amenities (3.08) is ranked third, followed by availability of lady coaches with the mean score of 2.92 which is ranked fourth, followed by medical assistance during emergencies with the mean score of 2.88 which is ranked fifth, followed by proper maintenance of coaches with the mean score of 2.87 which is ranked sixth, followed by recreation facility with the mean score of 2.85 which is ranked seventh followed by cleanliness on platform security in trains and watering arrangement all having a mean score of 2.82 which is ranked eighth and catering service facilities with the mean score of 2.77 which is ranked ninth according to the level of satisfaction in the services offered by railway to the passengers.

**8. FINDINGS**

1. It is inferred that passenger require more safety measures while travelling in the train.
2. It is depicts that passenger prefer E ticketing for booking their tickets for their travel.
3. It is inferred that connectivity problem is the major factor while booking tickets which have a mean score of 2.27
4. It is observed that 25 percent income is Rs.10,000 and below. Among them 33.3 percent prefer AC class, sleeper class and second class.
5. It is analysed from the one way anova that, there is no significant relationship between occupation and statement relating to basic amenities for all the factors except the waiting room facility.
6. From the analysis of one way anova, there is no significant relationship between occupation and statement relating to modern amenities for all the factors except

television and audio system, signage and coach indication boards and touch screen system.

7. It is concluded from the independent sample t test that, there is significant relationship between gender and ordinary ticket fare.
8. From the analysis of chi square test it's inferred that there is significant relationship between gender and opinion regarding ticket fare while travelling in the train.
9. From the analysis of chi square test it is depicted that there is significant relationship between gender and opinion regarding tatkal ticket fare while travelling in the train.
10. From the analysis of the one way anova it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between facilities offered by railways to the passengers and occupation.
11. As per the acceptance of the null hypothesis from the chi square test it results that the  $p = 0.052 (p > 0.05)$ , there is no significant relationship between experience in train travel and safety and security in the compartment.
12. It is observed from the 5 point likert's scale that facilities for physically challenged persons has highest mean score of (3.59) and is therefore ranked first, according to the level of satisfaction in the services offered by railway to the passengers.

## 9. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

1. Drinking water in trains has to be provided by railways to the passengers. A plastic tank can be fixed in the compartment to serve the needs of the passengers of that compartment. The tanks have to be filled up with pure drinking water at important junctions.
2. Suitable measures have to be taken to enhance the quality of fast food items sold in the pantry car and at refreshment stalls on platforms. This is with special reference to coffee and tea being sold by the vendors. Similarly the quality of the casserole meals has to be increased.
3. All the compartments of trains should have First-Aid boxes. These boxes should comprise antiseptic creams, lotions, pain relievers, cotton bandage, etc. The TIE should be in-charge of First-Aid box. The medicines in the box are to be replaced on expiry.
4. The window shutters especially the glass panes should be fitted properly in such a way that they are water leak proof. During rainy season passengers face lot of difficulties as the water spills on seats and sometimes the entire compartment gets wet.
5. In AC Chair Car seating arrangement should be modified, as it is inconvenient to sit so close to one another. Seats should be arranged in such a way that passengers have adequate leg space.
6. Separate reservation counter exclusively for ladies should be provided. According to the existing system, senior citizens, freedom fighters and passengers who reserve tickets through credit cards are issued tickets at one counter.
7. Sign boards should be fixed on platforms giving direction to passengers who get down from the trains. The boards may give directions to main gate or the exit point, enquiry counters, booking counters, reservation counters, etc.
8. Signboards indicating the coach number have to be fixed inside the compartment. This avoids confusion to passengers who move inside vestibule long distance trains. A board



comprising list of important doctors, hospitals with telephone numbers has to be fixed at an important location in the station.

## 10. CONCLUSION

The present study identifies areas for improving the quality of services being delivered by the Indian Railways. Indian Railway is one of the biggest transporters of passengers' traffic in the world. It is the second largest employer in the world after the China Military. The provision of passenger amenities is one of the important objectives of the Indian Railways both as business ethic and social obligation. The Indian Railways has realized that the mantra for making profit is passenger satisfaction through higher service quality. Hence, providing a continuous improved service quality and facilities can be the only way to ensure passengers loyalty in this globalized era of intense competition. Even though, a lot of appreciable works and services are done by the Indian railways' authority, still there is a wider scope for more improvement in their service quality. If the authority realizes the need for further enhancement of service quality offered by Indian railways, it will become the most profitable sector in the Indian economy in near future.

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