A STUDY ON PASSENGER SATISFACTION TOWARD RAILWAY SERVICES IN TIRUNELVELI

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ABSTRACT

Indian Railways is one of the largest and busiest rail networks in the world, operating over 68,000 kilometers of track and serving millions of passengers every day. Established in 1853, it has played a pivotal role in the economic and social development of India.   The study mainly focused on the satisfaction level of Train passengers at Tirunelveli Railways. The descriptive and analytical research design has been applied to the present study. The researcher used a convenience sampling method to identify the respondents for the present study. The researcher selected 70 railway passengers from Tirunelveli. The researcher has used both primary and secondary data for the present study. The researcher concluded that improving passenger satisfaction in railway services involves focusing on multiple aspects of the travel experience, from ticketing to the overall journey and post-trip services. Here are some key areas to consider for enhancing passenger satisfaction: Punctuality, Comfort Cleanliness, Customer Service, Accessibility, Ticketing, and Pricing: Safety, Wi-Fi, Food Options, Digital Services, and Station Facilities.

Keywords: Rail Passenger Satisfaction, Customer Service, Pricing, Safety

INTRODUCTION

Indian Railways is one of the largest and busiest rail networks in the world, operating over 68,000 kilometers of track and serving millions of passengers every day. Established in 1853, it has played a pivotal role in the economic and social development of India. The railways not only facilitate the movement of people but also carry a significant portion of freight, making it an essential part of India's transport infrastructure. With more than 1.3 million employees, Indian Railways is one of the largest employers in the country. The network connects remote rural areas with major urban centers, providing affordable and accessible transportation to people from all walks of life. The diverse range of services includes long-distance trains, suburban

services, and luxury trains like the Palace on Wheels. Indian Railways has continually evolved over the years, integrating modern technologies, improving passenger amenities, and focusing on sustainability. It has undertaken several ambitious projects to modernize its infrastructure, such as high-speed rail corridors, electrification of tracks, and the introduction of semi-high-speed trains like the Vande Bharat Express.

OBJECTIVES

1   To Analyze the demographic factor of Railway passengers in Tirunelveli
2   To Analyze the customer satisfaction of Railway passengers in Tirunelveli

METHODOLOGY

The study mainly focused on the satisfaction level of Train passengers at Tirunelveli Railways. The descriptive and analytical research design has been applied to the present Study. There are Eight Taluks in Tirunelveli district. Such as Tirunelveli, Palayamkottai, Ambasamudram, and Nanguneri, Radhapuram, Manur, Cheranmahadevi, Tisaiyanvilai. The researcher used a convenience sampling method to identify the respondents for the present study. The researcher selected 70 railway passengers from Tirunelveli. The researcher has used both primary and secondary data for the present study. The following statistical tools were used to analyze and interpret the data Percentage Analysis and Weighted Average Method.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"The Southern Railway headquarters at Chennai, Tamil Nadu is one of the earliest zones of Indian Railways". The objective of their study is to explore the problems faced by the daily railway passengers. Convenience random sampling is used in their study and the research is based on the survey method. Based on their present study, the following suggestion was made to improve the services of the Indian Railway **Mahima Johnson (2019)**. The researcher concluded that the availability of power, responsiveness of railway staff, safety and security, digital display, and individualized attention were revealed to be the most significant factors of satisfaction among the passengers **Kalaiselvi.A. et. al(2017)**. The objectives of the study are to analyze the travel factors influencing the passengers of Southern Railways. The study was conducted using non-probability sampling techniques and the convenience sampling method was adopted because

the sampling size was unknown. The main purpose of the study is to know the satisfaction level of the passengers of the passengers on the services provided by the Southern Railways **Anbupriya.D. & Subadra. S., (2016).** The researcher analysis paper deals with the factor of service quality and demonstrates the model."SERVQUAL" is a good approach that has been researched and its impact on the analysis of client satisfaction, expectations, and perceptions is highlighted **Arash Shahin (2016)**. The researcher entitles is a 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 **Maheswari and Dinesh Kumar (2016).**

TOOLS WITH ANALYSIS

Table No: 1

Demographic Profile of the Railway Passengers

S. No	Gender	Number of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	17	24
2	Female	53	76
	Total	**70**	**100**
S.NO	**Age**	**Number of the Respondents**	**Percentage**
1	Below25	16	23
2	25-35Years	39	56
3	35-45Years	10	14
4	Above45	5	7
	Total	**70**	**100**
S.No	**Educational qualification**	**Number of the Respondents**	**Percentage**
1	Higher Secondary	13	18.57
2	UG	35	50.00
3	PG	16	22.86
4	Illiterate	6	8.57
	Total	**70**	**100.00**
S. No	**Occupation**	**Number of the Respondents**	**Percentage**

S. No		Number of the Respondents	Percentage
1	Students	18	26
2	Employee	35	50
3	OwnBusiness	9	13
4	UnEmployed	8	11
	Total	**70**	**100**
S. No	**Income**	**Number of the Respondents**	**Percentage**
1	BelowRs.10000	33	47
2	Rs.10000-Rs.20000	15	21
3	Rs.20000-Rs.30000	13	19
4	AboveRs.30000	9	13
	Total	**70**	**100.00**
S. No	**Purpose of Travelling**	**Number of the Respondents**	**Percentage**
1.	Office/Business purpose	6	8.6
2.	Vacation	25	35.7
3.	Tour	20	28.6
4.	Others	19	27.1
	Total	**70**	**100.0**

Source: Primary data

A Table 1 reveals that out of 70 respondents, 76 percent of the respondents belong to females and 24 percent of the respondents belong to males. Hence, the majority of the respondents belong to females of gender.

Out of 70 respondents, 23 percent of the respondents are Below 25 years, followed by 56 percent of the respondents are 25-35 years and 14 percent of the respondent are 35-45 years and 7 percent of the respondents are above 45.Thus, the majority of the respondent belongs to 25-35 years (56) years of age of the respondents.

Table reveals that 18.57 percent of Respondent had Higher Secondary,50 Percent of Respondents had Under graduate degrees and 22.86 Percent of Respondents had a Post graduate degree and 8.57 percent of respondents were illiterate. Hence, the majority of the respondents belong to Under graduate degree of educational qualification.

Out of 70 respondents, 26 percent of the respondents are student's 50 percent of the respondents are employees, 13 percent of the respondents are Own Business and 11 percent of the respondents are un-employed. Hence, it can be said that the majority of the respondents belong to the occupation Employee.

The above table concluded that out of 70 respondents, 47 percent of the respondent income level is below Rs. 10,000, 21 percent of the respondent monthly income level is Rs. 10,000-20,000, 19 percent of the respondent income level is Rs.20000-Rs. 30,000, 13 percent of the respondent income level is above Rs.30000. Hence, it can be said that the majority of the respondent's income level is below Rs.10,000.

The table found that 8.6 percent of the respondents train travel for Office/Business Purposes, 35.7 percent of the respondents train travel by Vacation, 28.6 percent of the respondents train travel by Tour, and 27.1 percent of the respondents train travel and for others reasons. Hence, it can be concluded that the majority of the respondent travel by the purpose of traveling for Vacation Purposes.

SATISFACTION LEVEL OF RAILWAY PASSENGERS

The Researcher has identified seven Satisfaction levels of the Railway. They are Cleanliness / Waiting room, Security, Drinking Water Facility, Fare, Maintenance of Coaches, Catering Service, Mobile Charging Facility.

The researcher has used to find out the weighted average for measuring the Satisfaction level of Railway passengers. The Table 2 shows the actual score of Satisfaction Level of Railway.

Table No: 2

Actual Score Satisfaction level of Railway

S.No	Particulars	HS	S	N	DS	HDS	Total
1	Cleanliness /Waiting Room	5	25	9	22	9	70
2	Security	11	24	11	15	9	70
3	Drinking Water Facility	10	17	25	14	4	70
4	Fare	15	24	18	9	4	70
5	Maintenance of Coaches	19	19	12	13	7	70
6	Catering Services	13	15	16	18	8	70
7	Mobile Charging Facility	4	20	12	29	5	70

Source: Primary Data

(HS- Highly Satisfied, S- Satisfied N- Neutral DS- Dissatisfied HDS- Highlydissatisfied)

Table 2 discusses the actual score gained by each statement of Satisfaction. The researcher has given the actual score in the descending order from 5-1 (5- Highly Satisfied, 4- Satisfied, 3-Neutral, 2-Dissatified, 1-Highly Dissatisfied).

Mean Score = $\dfrac{\text{Total Weight Score}}{\text{Total Respondents}}$

Table No: 3

Weight Score and Mean Score of Satisfaction level of Railway

S. No	Particulars	Weight					Total	Mean	Rank
		5	4	3	2	1			
		Weight Score							
1.	Cleanliness /Waiting Room	25	100	27	44	9	205	2.93	VI
2.	Security	55	96	33	30	9	223	3.18	IV
3.	Drinking Water Facility	50	68	75	28	4	225	3.21	III
4.	Fare	75	96	54	18	4	247	3.53	I
5.	Maintenance of Coaches	95	76	36	26	7	240	3.43	II
6.	Catering Services	65	60	48	36	8	217	3.1	V
7.	Mobile Charging Facility	20	80	36	58	5	199	2.84	VII

Source: Primary Data (Computed Table)

Table 3 points out that the Passengers satisfaction level of Railway 1st satisfaction level is "Fare", 2nd satisfaction level is "Maintenance of Coaches",3rd satisfaction level is "Drinking Water Facility", 4th satisfaction level is "Security", 5th satisfaction level is "Maintenance of Coaches", 6th satisfaction level is "Cleanliness /Waiting Room", 7th satisfaction level "Mobile Charging Facility".

CONCLUSION

Improving passenger satisfaction in railway services involves focusing on multiple aspects of the travel experience, from ticketing to the overall journey and post-trip services. Here are some key areas to consider for enhancing passenger satisfaction **Punctuality**: Ensure trains run on time and provide real-time updates during delays. **Comfort**: Offer comfortable seating, ample legroom, and proper climate control. **Cleanliness**: Maintain a high standard of cleanliness on trains and in stations. **Customer Service**: Train staff to be helpful and responsive, enhancing the travel experience. **Accessibility**: Make services accessible to passengers with disabilities. **Ticketing**: Offer easy-to-use booking systems, including mobile apps and kiosks. **Pricing**: Use transparent and competitive pricing with discounts for frequent travelers. **Safety**: Ensure visible security measures and emergency protocols on trains and at stations. **Wi-Fi**: Provide free Wi-Fi and charging stations for passengers on long journeys. **Food Options**: Serve quality food and drink, especially on longer trips. **Digital Services**: Use apps for ticket booking, train tracking, and customer feedback. **Station Facilities**: Improve station facilities, such as waiting areas and restrooms.

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