

A STUDY OF THE NEW TREND TOWARDS ONLINE BUS TICKET BOOKING

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ABSTRACT

Today passenger bus transport has come to a new age where passengers are preferring online platforms for bus ticket booking. After, covid 19 pandemic trend toward online bus ticket booking has increased drastically. This paper reviews literature available on bus ticket booking and the changing scenario towards people moving more towards the online bus booking platforms or websites. Researcher explains that the factors like age, gender and occupation are influencer factors for showcasing increasing trend towards online bus booking frequency. Bus ticket booking has witnessed an impressive growth towards online bus booking in the 20th century and post the pandemic the trend of online booking is upward moving too. Customers nowadays would not visit an operator shop or even an agent but directly search their requirement on an online platform for deciding which time, which service to choose from as options are many on the online portals. Gone are the days of making phone calls or travelling across the city to book a ticket. Also there were days where there used to be no seats available and passengers used to travel standing for an overnight journey. Now as almost all operators use an online medium for communication to get their seats across to the customer the available inventory of seats can be easily viewed and booking can be carried out most efficiently.

Keyword: E-ticket, passenger, Transport, e enabled, customer satisfaction, bus booking frequency

Introduction:

The advent of new technology and social media has seen an ever-rising trend for the Transport sector overall. People want to go to new places for religious reasons, Touring aspects and sometimes for Business purposes. But initially, say half a century back such was not the trend. Most of the people then had a major income which was enough to fulfil the needs only of a big joint family. The only money saved was spent once a year over a visit to the native place with hardly any consideration to the luxury aspects in travel.

But as we say change is inevitable, this trend had to change too. More and more people started shifting from the poor/lower middle class to Middle Class and Higher Middle Class eventually which puts the figure to approximately 60% of the total population. This class has an ever-increasing demand for seeing new places, travelling for work or even visiting places for religious aspects.

Today, the Passenger Transport industry is on the rise again and has changed dramatically with the overwhelming appearance of social media platforms creating new opportunities to progress and attract the customer through facilitated communication and empowered guest engagement. It can only be seen as something positive for the passenger transport industry as it has so much to offer. It is still on a rise and provides a way to increase profits.

In today's era of e-commerce, passenger bus booking has become an ease for passengers. Most of the bus operators have developed their apps for bus booking. Also there are many online portals which have various offers and discounts to attract customers 365 days for bus bookings. Passengers visit these websites of the operator directly or through the online portals and get information on their travel thus completing the booking process and leading towards the journey planned. E enabled bus ticket management provides for bus seat reservation, seat selection and cancellations (Nikhil Pal,2020)

Transport Industry in India

A crucial foundational element for a nation's development is the transport and logistics industry. India's transportation system has seen a substantial transformation during the 1990s. The demand for transportation increased at an annual rate of 10% in the 1990s, but during the past ten years it has increased in tandem with the rising Indian GDP. This expansion raised demand for almost all transportation services. As a percentage of the overall value of commodities, the cost of logistics services is projected to be 14% of the GDP annually. In

emerging economies, these expenses often account for 6% to 8% of GDP. Indian logistics costs are thought to be the highest in the world with this number.

Therefore, in order to lower operating expenses, enhance customer satisfaction levels, and boost the sector's competitiveness in international markets, it is vital to manage it more professionally. Another reality is that India's transport and logistics sectors use a significant amount of energy, particularly petroleum products. With the expansion of the economy and population, this share rises even further in India. Due to a growth in the need for freight and passenger transportation, urbanisation and rapid industrialisation also result in higher consumption. The urban population of India has grown dramatically during the past 50 years, from 62 million in 1951 to 285 million in 2001, growing at an average rate of 3% annually. In addition, increased income and government liberalisation initiatives speed up there are more cars, two- and three-wheelers, buses (both public and private), urban rail networks, and there is more demand for leisure travel. However, the transport and logistics sector in India still confronts issues due to its infrastructure, environmental pollution, rising traffic density, laws, and other systemic inefficiencies. This is true even though the country's population and economy are both growing.

Passenger Transport

Out of the various modes of transport namely Airways, Seaways, Railways and Roadways, maximum people in India travel by Roadways. Roads include all modes i.e. Two-wheeler, Cars and Buses. Out of these Buses have the lowest per kilometre cost per passenger. Also, space required for 3 passengers in a auto rickshaw or 4 passengers in a car is more compared to 40 passengers travelling in a bus. Moreover, the cost aspects also promote the Bus Industry for transporting passengers from one place to another. It can be called the most viable means available for passenger transport in India. Nevertheless, we find not much being done for uplifting this field of Bus transport in India. With ever increasing fuel pricing and taxes, this sector sees a slow death for small private operators.

Literature Review

Mathew (1964) government regulations manage transportation in many different ways, some of which directly affect the development of size. The effectiveness of the transport sector is reliant on these government regulations in general and the public utilities sector in particular.

Bhatnagar (1971) transportation would be an important factory both domestically and internationally. The expansion and development of different means of transportation in India in the years to come would be a different game play and state run transport would have to buckle up for a greater customer base. This in turn would be a boost to the nation's economy.

Sharma (1975) Rajasthan transportation had a lot of future prospects which needed to be culminated into a good Transport system. Lot of issues were coming to the fore which could be further analysed based on the situation, and dealt with to make Transportation in Rajasthan favourable.

Patankar (1978) urban transportation deals with travelling of people within the city.. Special attention also needs to be given to the operational productivity and efficiency of STUs. The road transportation industry in India would only prosper with planning that prioritises productivity and provides all-encompassing answers to the difficulties associated with urban mobility in emerging nations.

Khan (1980) a kaleidoscope of India's transportation infrastructure and management system also hinting the ever changing scenario of transport in India. Keeping with the systems approach, a model for an extensive transport system and transport planning was developed. Along with the benchmark data for transport management, offered was an analytical analysis of various important areas.

El-Mezawie (1982) the business form of organisation performs better on practically all significant metrics. The exchequer immediately should reduce taxes by at least 60% and make provisions for periodical ticket revisions every two years, failing which, subsidies to me were made as a routine activity.

Natrajan (2020) various factors influence e-ticketing when it comes to finding the service quality. Factors such as ease of use, web composition, refund policy, customer care and satisfaction play an important role when it comes to delivering good quality service to the customers. Factors that might have been neglected earlier find importance in today's business of transportation.

Satyanarayana (1985) costs and revenues of transportation are linked in some way or the other. The Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation's (APSRTC) organisational structure is vast. The capital structure, financial and personnel policies, and management information systems (MIS) of APSRTC are also in place which may be a form of cost. The cost of service for road transportation solely depends on the size of the fleet, the condition of the vehicles, and the length and condition of the road. The size of the motor transport unit is the key variable affecting the cost of operations of the motor transport business in Andhra Pradesh.

Jain (1986) the macro level transportation operations in India before and after independence are very different. The challenges and future of road transportation in addition to its socio-economic relevance play an important role in boosting efficiency of the transport system across all areas.

Mantri (1985) the transportation infrastructure needs to be improved and that transportation planning has to be adjusted as a crucial component of national planning. Planning must be done well since, as the population grows, so will the requirement for transportation.

Gawli (2013) the various services offered by MSRTC namely ordinary, Parivartan, Asiad, Shivneri, Sheetal and city bus services are operational. Two levels of economic reforms was the duration of this study.

Barkavi (2013) passengers rely on parameters like avoid overcrowding, improve the maintenance and good behaviour of the crew members. While booking a service a customer would look out for these factors as they go a long way in customer bookings.

Kraft (1971) the capacity of the transport system has been put into focus. Economic development of a region will be influenced by the capacity of the transport system it has. Insufficient capacity of transport systems will create bottlenecks and may eventually retard the region's growth.

Research Methodology

The methodology adopted is a mixture of literature review through articles, research papers, books and also by questionnaire method. Customers who book tickets online provide the primary data, which is collected via a well-designed inquiry schedule. Out of the people who responded to the survey, 407 insightful responses were gathered. Customers were given the opportunity to evaluate the service providers in that particular field by answering questions about how different users responded to bookings on an online platform. The study's goal was to identify responses that satisfied this need for purchasing bus tickets online. By conducting a descriptive study using a simple random sampling technique, it is possible to analyse the factors that support and influence people's decisions, confirm their ideas for service improvement, and uncover the motivations behind their desires. The information gathered is then used to develop suitable tools and possible recommendations.

Objectives

1. To find association between gender, age, education and income of online bus booking services with the booking frequency.
2. To find the importance of e-enabled bus booking platforms.

Data Analysis

This section deals with association between various aspects like gender, age, education and income to find its relation with online bus booking frequency. The frequency distribution is given in the table below.

Association between Gender and Online bus booking frequency

The following table shows data collected on males and females those book through an online portal

	Booking Frequency			Total
	5 to 10 times	More than 10 times	Rarely	
Male	65	68	84	217
Female	44	45	101	190
Total	109	113	185	407

Table 1: Booking Frequency as observed for Males and Females

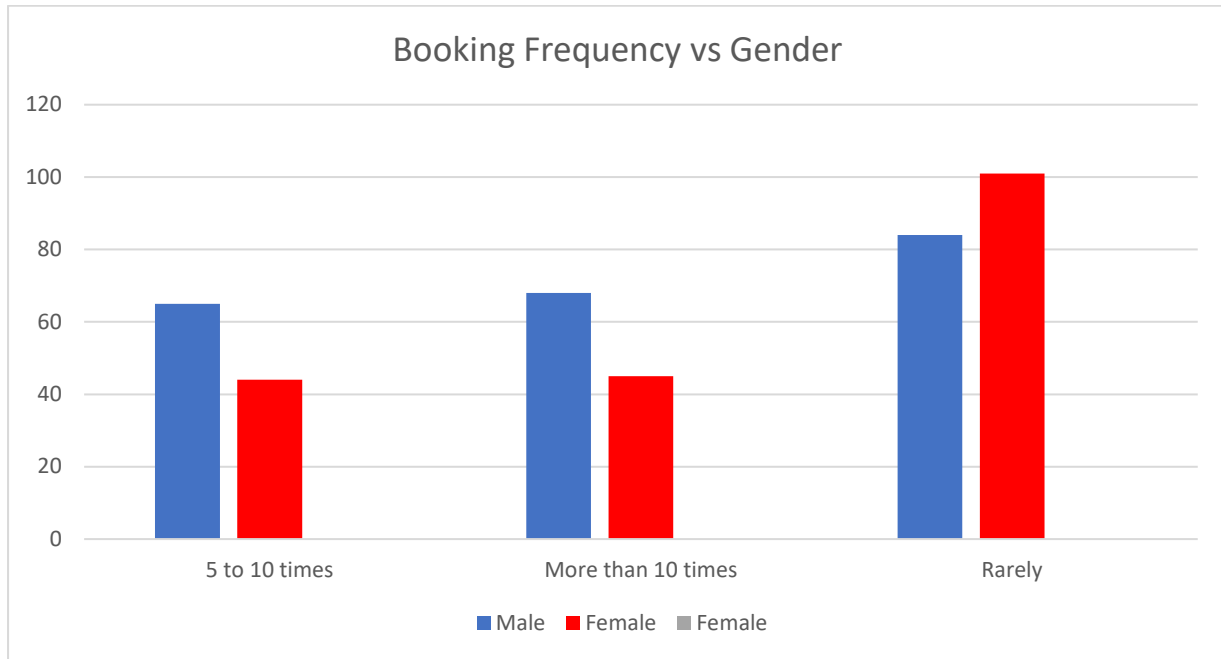


Chart 1: Booking Frequency vs Gender

Interpretation: The association between gender and online bus booking frequency of a respondent was found to be significant. Males were more prone to book tickets online as per the study which was a trend observed from the study. Also women were rarely seen booking tickets online which also suggested a low frequency of women booking tickets through an online portal.

Association between age and online bus booking frequency

The following table shows the age of people booking through an online portal

		Booking Frequency			
		5 to 10 times	More than 10 times	Rarely	Total
Age	18 to 22	19	47	56	122
	23 to 27	42	29	61	132
	28 to 35	32	33	41	106
	35 and above	15	4	28	47
Total		108	113	186	407

Table 2: Booking Frequency as observed for different Age groups

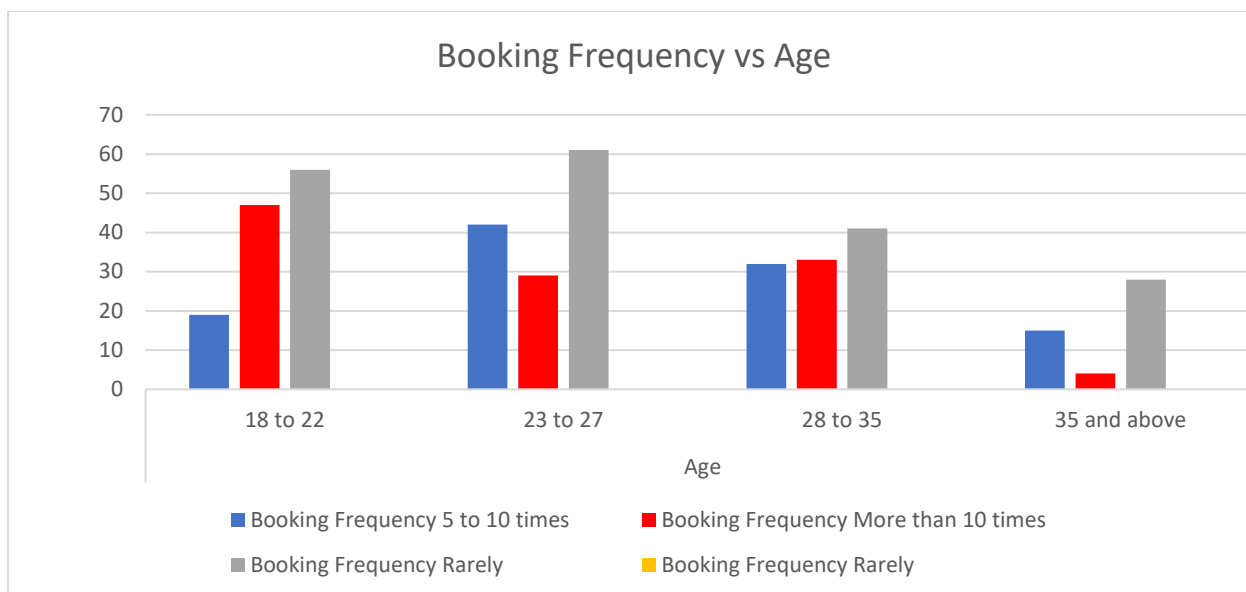


Chart 2: Booking Frequency vs Age

Interpretation: The association between age and online bus booking frequency of a respondent was found to be significant. Age group 23 to 27 and 28 to 35, that is two sub groups number 2 and number 3 are more prone to book their bus online then the age group 18 to 22 and likewise 35 and above. Also can be noticed that the age group 18 to 22 as may be they have become tech savvy are showing a growing trend towards booking online bus tickets through an online portal.

Association between occupation and online bus booking frequency

The following table depicts the trend of occupation with online bus bookings

	Booking Frequency			total
	5 to 10 times	More than 10 times	Rarely	
Student	42	51	84	177
Working professional	58	54	84	196
Self employed	5	8	16	29
Housewife	3	0	2	5
Total	108	113	184	407

Table 3: Booking frequency for different occupations

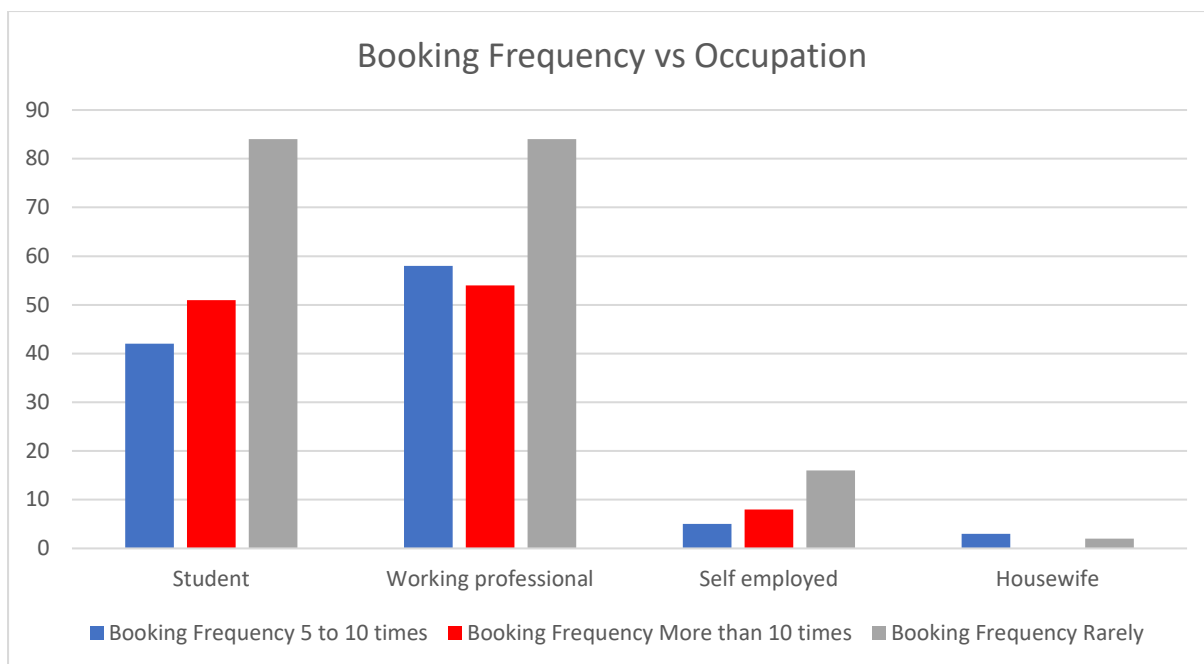


Chart 3: Booking Frequency vs Occupation

Interpretation: The association between occupation and online bus booking frequency of a respondent was found to be significant. Students and Working professionals are more prone to book their seats on a bus online than the self employed category. In contrast, a housewife was found to have the least frequency when it comes to booking tickets online.

Findings

From the study it is found that out of the total male sample 61.29% male book tickets online which is higher than females booking online tickets considering only 46.8% females book tickets online.

Also the age group of 28 to 35 having a total percentage 61% were more likely to book their tickets online followed by the age groups 23 to 27 and 18 to 22. This age group is more tech savvy so they want their tickets booked online may be one of the reasons.

If seen occupation wise, the student sample with 47% followed by working professional 43% were more prone to book online. The need to travel due to education to different places or due to work for this section of society may be students or working professions are alike. On the other hand the self employed and housewife category are rarely seen booking online tickets.

Conclusion

As road transport is the most sought after means of transport and with the increasing travel need, bus travel is the most accessible of all the different modes. Also, today most of the customers are preferring online bus ticket booking as the cash based system is rarely used. Passenger transport has changed in the past few years. Especially, after Covid 19 pandemic, online bus booking has increased a lot as the customers get to check and book tickets online at the easy of their home avoiding large queues at booking centres and also the entire inventory of seats can be seen and booked thanks to online bus portals like redbus, makemytrip, abhibus, paytm etc. Through literature review and analysis, it is found that Gender, Age and Occupation emerge as significant factors for usage of online bus book platforms. Bus booking frequency for all these factors has a significant impact on gender, age and occupation.

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