

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND THE E ENABLED BUS TRANSPORT SERVICES IN INDIA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

An e enabled service is one which uses the internet to do business or carry out a task which finally would be delivering output for better customer serviceability and in turn easing the task of an operator and customer at large. The bus transport service has for long been a topic of debate. We have seen bus operators running a day to day cash run business back in the 1990's where there was no internet and so availability of seats, rest stops, amenities and the likes were not the priorities of passengers but only reaching from one place to the other was. Similar to a mobile phone owner in the 1990, only making calls was contrary to today's smart mobile phones with so many features. Came 2000 with a digital platform for passengers and operators to do business online and the line 'Customer is the King' started gaining importance in the Bus Transport Service Sector too. This paper addresses this bus transport service sector in India.

Keywords: E-enabled business, Bus transport, Passenger road transport, unorganized, SERVQUAL, customer satisfaction

Introduction

Customer satisfaction is a metric used to assess a company's customers' level of satisfaction with its goods, services, and capabilities. Information about customer satisfaction, such as surveys and ratings, can assist a business in deciding how best to adjust or improve its goods and services (Jain 2020). Customer satisfaction must be the organization's core objective. This rule is applicable to every division of a company, including industrial corporations, retail and wholesale businesses, government agencies, service providers, and non-profit organizations (Kumar 2021). Customer satisfaction is "the number of customers or the proportion of total consumers whose reported experience with a business, its products, or its services exceeds specified satisfaction targets," according to Paul Farris in his book Marketing Metrics. In reality, the Marketing Accountability Standards Board has approved this term as the accepted definition of customer pleasure. More significantly, there are two consequences to Farris' definition. It first makes it clear that customer happiness is more than simply an ethereal idea. It can be given a number. Second, they discuss specific satisfaction objectives. "A person's sense of pleasure or disappointment that arises from comparing the perceived performance or outcome of a product with his or her expectations," according to Philip Kotler, is what constitutes customer satisfaction.

This study was conducted to better understand customer satisfaction dynamics in the context of the e-enabled bus transportation industry. A review of the literature was done as part of the investigation. The same, as well as the research gap, are presented in this work.

E enabled

An e-enabled business model is a company's strategy for operating a successful online business. Companies in all sectors are going online to increase their visibility in the market. Post the pandemic major businesses have taken the online routes of selling their products or services. This has helped garner larger market share and in turn increasing profitability for the companies. There are virtual shops or even nowadays the concept of a cloud kitchen for example which sells products without any physical presence whatsoever. Companies choose e-enabled business models in order to get economies of scale. For a more sustainable business, there should be a trade-off between the two physical and online models of doing business.

Passenger Road Transport in India

Most people in India use the roads out of the other modes of transportation, which include air, sea, rail, and road. Two-wheelers, cars, and buses are the types of transportation on roads. Buses are the ones with the lowest cost per passenger mile out of all of these. Additionally, compared to 40 persons riding in a bus, more space is needed for 3 passengers in an autorickshaw or 4 passengers in a car. Moreover the fuel consumption of a car or an auto rickshaw will be considerably high as compared to a bus in terms of more fuel being burnt in a car or an

auto rickshaw. If 40 persons are considered 10 cars would be required for transporting them and if an auto rickshaw is considered 13 would be the requirement. Additionally, financial considerations support the bus industry in terms of moving people from one location to another. It might be said to be the most practical method of passenger transportation in India. The lower and middle class have their dependence maximum on the bus transportation system. Depending on the various categories available like Non Ac Seater buses, Ac Seater buses, Non ac Sleeper buses and Ac Sleeper different sections of society choose their way of travel in India

However, there is not much done to advance India's bus transportation industry. The Passenger Bus Transportation industry is being marginalized. Majority of the private bus operators are small fleets and there is not much they can do to make their voice reach the concerned. Small private businesses in this industry are dying off slowly due to increasing taxes and tolls and rising fuel prices.

Research Methodology

This study is descriptive and concentrates on customer satisfaction towards the enabled bus service sector. As a part of the study available literature that the researchers could access from various sources is collected and reviewed. As most of the passenger road transportation services in India are unorganized and are not collectively addressed due to the large number of small fleet operators, an effort is made to represent all such aspects and literature related to all such factors is brought together through this paper for achieving the stated objectives.

Research Objectives

1. To identify gaps in existing research on e enabled bus transport service in India.
2. To gain new insights about the research topic from previous studies.

Literature review on Customer Satisfaction

Ulimaz (2020) there is a relationship between service quality and cost relation and the rise in consumer happiness. The five aspects of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy are also used to measure service quality, while an indication of fairness of ticket price, fair price policy, ethical ticket price policy, and acceptable ticket price policy are used to measure price. Customer satisfaction is positively impacted by both pricing and service quality.

Ejem (2021) road transportation is one of the economic engines since it links producers and consumers. Customer dissatisfaction in the industry is a result of the road transport system's poor and inept administration, which has hampered the growth of the Nigerian economy and social activities. Road transportation and customer satisfaction are consequently crucial for the movement of goods and persons from the standpoint of the passengers. According to the study's findings, regular vehicle and road maintenance as well as the provision of high-quality customer services are needed to please commuters who frequently utilize the roads in order to increase customer satisfaction and, consequently, economic activity.

Situmorang (2018) the sharing economy encourages people to share resources and create economies that are more effective. The sharing economy is anticipated to expand quickly and develop into a very attractive business model in Indonesia. The internet transportation business concept is currently one of Indonesia's most active sharing economies. Experience and happiness play a big role in moderating the relationship between eCRM and customer loyalty in online transportation. Results reveal that the link between eCRM, customer satisfaction, and loyalty fully mediates the customer experience.

Switala (2019) the assessment of consumer needs of logistics service providers revealed a substantial correlation between service performance and customer satisfaction, which served as the impetus for their research on logistics customer service (LSPs). The purpose of the report is to determine which service performance components are significant to clients that purchase logistics services in Poland and merit LSP investment. The respondents found that expanding flexibility and raising the bar for customer service were less important. Yet, discriminant analysis revealed that even with the assumption of a delayed delivery, great satisfaction with logistics outsourcing can be attained should invest in elements that produce above-average customer satisfaction, such as improved operational flexibility and service levels, including pro-environmental activities, if they want to stand out in the logistics service market. These include cost reduction and service time improvements, but also factors that increase customer satisfaction.

Hengsadeekul (2018) the key variables impacting the caliber of bus service and customer satisfaction in private businesses' bus services from Phnom Penh to Poipet were included. Through the SERVQUAL 5 dimensions, including tangibility, reliability, assurance, empathy, and responsiveness, it researches and analyzes customer expectations of bus service quality. Participant data was gathered in order to examine the connection between

customer happiness and the five elements of service quality. Service operators should first focus on understanding customer needs and expectations before implementing an appropriate service strategy to meet customer needs.

Hajduk (2022) the relationship between service providers and consumers as well as a network of transportation and communication infrastructure are necessary for the growth and operation of the global economic market. Transport is a technological method for moving people, things, or energy over long distances. For logistics activities in the field of products turnover to be completely functional and effective, understanding the logistics system and its procedures is crucial. Customer loyalty, satisfaction, and perceptions of the given services and defined criteria should all be continuously assessed. The perception of the rules by which the consumer is governed is demonstrated through a customer satisfaction survey. The methods for gauging client satisfaction in terms of the caliber of transportation services are showcased.

Vlachos (2018) transport service managers must have a suitable and sophisticated analytical framework in order to optimize resource allocation and raise customer satisfaction. In order to address various conceptual and methodological issues with Importance-Performance Analysis, this study suggests a new analytical framework called "Importance-Performance-Impact Analysis". Transportation managers can better allocate resources than IPA to increase customer satisfaction by using the IPIA table and IPIA matrix.

Sun (2021) few have looked into supplementary services related to minimizing the negative aspects of hotel location. The diversity of transportation amenities as a marginal stimulus, drawing on the development of a probability model, presents an econometric model that assesses the effect of transportation amenities on customer satisfaction. This association is moderately influenced by the type and mode of passengers' satisfaction. From the perspective of the three-factor theory, transportation facilities are a fundamental aspect for business travelers but an exciting

Yarmen (2020) numerous scholars have conducted considerable research on the perceptions and behaviors of passengers of public transportation. Research on the WOM of passengers using public transportation is, however, lacking. Thus a WOM model for Indonesian public transportation was found necessary to be used to fill in the gaps in the literature. The theories of planned behavior, customer satisfaction, and personal norms are all incorporated into the paradigm. More specifically, attitude, subjective norm, moral norm, and environmental norm all have a direct and significant impact on WOM. Additionally, perceived quality has an indirect impact on WOM through attitude. On the other hand, contentment, perceived behavioral control, and perceived service quality do not directly and significantly affect WOM.

Sirajudeen (2019) various problems are encountered by the passengers of Tiruchrappalli while traveling in the town buses of Tamil Nadu state transport corporation. Various measures can be adopted to reduce the problems to increase the service quality towards passengers traveling in such buses. The passenger perception towards service quality is identified.

Literature Review on Passenger Road Transport

Mashur (2019) there is some linkage between e-CRM, e-service quality, and e-loyalty on e-customer satisfaction and e-loyalty. The results of a sample of 167 users of online bus reservation services show that customer loyalty and happiness are significantly impacted by the quality of the e-service.

Jiménez (2019) in order to assess the quality of the public transportation system service in the Mexican city of Morelia was the objective. The SERVQUAL model, which has five aspects, was used on a sample of 392 respondents who had, on average, used bus transportation services for 15 years. Results indicate a medium level of perceived quality and a large difference between the expected and the obtained service, which directly affects a user's degree of happiness.

Rathour (2018) an effective public transportation system fosters egalitarian, sustainable, and safe urban mobility. The impact of Vadodara's public transportation on the city's urban mobility is assessed. The current realities of Vadodara's public transportation system with the overall goal of offering solutions and outlining actions that should be made to maximise urban mobility is the main concern of assessment.

Bagade (1980) in public transportation projects, passenger comfort comes first. Building bus terminals, storage sheds, and other transportation-related infrastructure requires capital investment and must receive enough consideration in the capital expenditure plan. While there may not be much room for product development in the

bus transportation sector, there is plenty of room for field research. According to the author, a separate department for field research should be justified as being a crucial component.

Mantri (2002) provides solid evidence to demonstrate that 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.

Selvachandran (2018) there are service quality elements in the public transport system which must be identified. These service elements are important from the viewpoint of the operator to increase the level of service quality with less cost.

Research Gap

Though the Passenger Bus Transport Sector has grown tremendously, the service provided by such a vast industry is always questionable. There has not been found any studies that provide most recent data on customer satisfaction for passengers using such bus transportation services. As a result, it is necessary to give a thorough analysis of the relevant literature to comprehend the studies done so far. Also the study examines the present situation on the Passenger Road Transport as Transportation by bus is an important mode of travel in India with special importance to Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction

Conclusion

Researchers have expanded the concept of SERVQUAL with models like AIRQUAL. Similarly authors have written about the concept of Voice-of-the-Customer (VOC). However, measurement of customer satisfaction for e-enabled transportation services is relatively on the lower side. Research in bus transport is also limited in relation to the overall research on transport services. Additionally, studies with Indian contextual settings are quite less. Hence this research was undertaken with the objectives of studying the existing operating pattern and industry dynamics of unorganized passenger bus transport services in India, studying e-enabled business model of passenger road transport as the future of passenger transportation services in India, exploring customer satisfaction from the bus transport services and developing a service quality measure towards gaining customer satisfaction. Higher service quality will also gain a higher customer satisfaction index and thus help the operator to garner higher profits in the process. The passenger bus transport industry is an unorganized sector and hence the future scope of study and work can be carried out on a large scale.

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