



A STUDY ON THE FACTORS INFLUENCING AND
AFFECTING SATISFACTION OF THE RAIL
COMMUTERS AT TIRUCHIRAPPALLI JUNCTION
RAILWAY STATION, TIRUCHIRAPPALLI

Sowmya¹

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Cauvery College for Women,
Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, India.



ABSTRACT

The whole organization of industries, commerce trade and impact of Tourism rests on the fine establishment of transportation. An effectual transport system is a prerequisite for the economic progress of a country which thereby removes the Hindrance of Place. The economic growth in India over the last two decades has increased demand for all transport services, particularly land transport through road and rail. Transport also plays a major role in supplying raw material to the manufacturing concerns and in moving the finished product to the required destination.

KEYWORDS: *Tourism, Transportation, Railways, Commuters, Passengers, Road Transport.*

INTRODUCTION

There are different modes of transport that includes rail, road, air and water. Rail transport mainly uses locomotives; where road transport is performed using cars, buses, two wheelers and other similar carriers.

In land transport, railway had the monopoly before the coming of the motor transport. Railway advancement took place in India in the 19th century. There were a few railroads during those days. Its development was very slow due to the unawareness

of its benefits. The development of railways is one of the landmarks in the progress of human civilization. Railways are the cheapest and quickest means of transport. It covers long distances and carries heavier types of goods. It is the central "heave system" in the economy of a nation. It helps in the starting and running of industries throughout the world. It helps in greatly trade. Through railways movement of goods for workers, movement of raw materials to feed the machines and the movement of

finished products to the markets are possible. It is of great help to agriculturists that the utilities of perishable goods are increased and urban and rural areas are brought close in contact. It strengthens the defense of a nation.

The Southern Indian Railway Company was established in 1853 with Tiruchirappalli as its headquarters. In 1859, the company constructed its first railway line that connected Tiruchirappalli with Nagappattinam. At present, Tiruchirappalli is an important railway junction in Tamil Nadu and is a separate division of the Southern Railway. Rail transport is more important to the people for travelling. It is more convenient to upper and lower class people. Hence the less has made an attempt to explore and examine the perception and satisfaction level of the rail passenger

Now-a-days the importance is known by all and the development of the railways has increased. In the current era railways are used for transportation of goods and passengers. Earlier only selective crowd would avail the service, but now a days all classes of people are using the rail services due to the comfort and the affordable prices. Compared to the earlier days there is a drastic change in the Railways sector. The improved standard of living has increased the economic status of people who are willing to spend on transport services considering the comfort of their travel

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Without the help of transport there is no option for the movement of people, good or services to the desired destination. In the transport facility rail transport is one of the convenient and fair means of transport, but now a day the services render by the railways are getting fluctuated. People have started to analyse the quality of services provided by the railways and also have started to raise questions when their expectations are not met. There are commuters who are satisfied with the services rendered and on the other side there are commuters who evaluate the quality of the services provided by the railways. Thus the researcher has made an attempt to study the perceptions of the Rail commuters regarding the services rendered by them. The study is confined to the data collected from the commuters who have availed the rail service at Trichirappalli City Corporation. The study is confined to the passengers who have availed the rail services and boarded from Tiruchirappalli Junction.

1.5 OBJECTIVES

1. To analyse the socio - economic status of the rail passengers at Tiruchirappalli Junction.
2. To examine the factors discriminating the satisfied and the dissatisfied commuters.
3. To analyse the level of satisfaction of the rail commuters -both the service quality in the the train and the service at the station.

1.6 HYPOTHESIS

- * There is no discrimination between the satisfied and the dissatisfied commuters.

1.7 SAMPLING DESIGN

For the purpose of the study 100 passengers have been selected by convenient sampling method. The questionnaire was collected from the commuters who have availed the service from Tiruchirappalli Junction station. Compared to the other stations at Tiruchirappalli City Corporation, Junction Railway station is the most populated.

1.8 ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data is subjected to statistical analysis with simple percentage, chi-square test and discriminant Function analysis that were used to interpret the framed objectives. Statistics and analysis of various figures relating to the passengers satisfaction are given in different statement and column diagrams, bar diagrams, pie diagrams. The questionnaire reliability is checked with the cronbach alpha score in SPSS package version 20 which revealed a reliable score of 0.871.

1.9 AREA OF STUDY

The railway station located about 3km from Tiruchirappalli Junction Railway station. It is under the administrative control of the southern railways Royal Southern Hotel, Hotel Mayas and emina Hotel offer accommodation near the railway station. Tiruchirappalli railway station is a major railhead of the southern railways. Both meter gauge and broad gauge services are available. There is a tourist information cell at the station to help the visitors. The central bus station is at a stone's throw from the station. For local travel tourist taxis are extensively available nearest airbase is Tiruchirappalli airport, about 7 km from the city. This study has been undertaken to know and analyze the factors that influence the passengers' satisfaction at Tiruchirappalli Junction Railway.

1.10 METHODOLOGY

Information has been collected through primary as well as secondary sources. For the purpose of collecting primary data questionnaire were collected from 100 respondents that were administered in person. The secondary method of data collection has also been used to gather data from journals, books, newspaper and e-information.

2. ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

2.1 Analysis of The Demographic Profile of the respondents:-

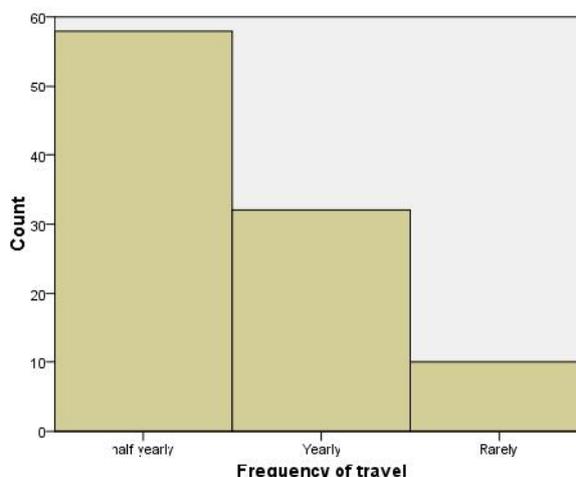
For an in-depth analysis the sample respondents are to be categorised according to their socio economic profile. This reveals the basic profile of the respondents which is henceforth used in further analysis of the objectives.

Demographic profile of the Rail commuters

Demographic profile	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	49	49%
	Female	51	51%
Age	<20	12	12%
	21-40	54	54%
	41-60	34	34%
Occupation	Student	12	12
	Private employee	18	18
	Business	38	38
	Housewife	32	32
Monthly Income	10001-20000	10	10
	20001-30000	33	33
	30001-40000	43	43
	Above 40001	14	14
Purpose of visit	Academic	6	
	Business	18	18
	Family visit	44	44
	Leisure	32	32
Frquency of travel	Half yearly	58	58
	Yearly	32	32
	Rarely	10	10
Travel class	A/C coach	24	24
	first class	76	76
Mode of purchase	Online	48	48
	Direct purchase	52	52

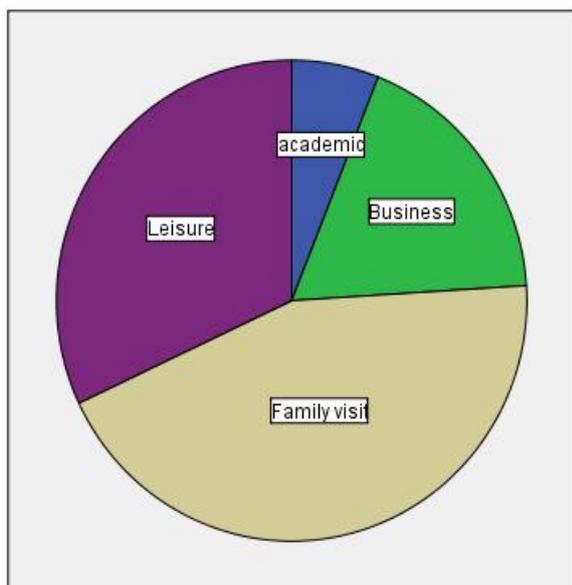
From the collected data it is revealed that majority (51 percent) of the respondents are female and 49 percent of them are male. From the collected data most of the respondents are in the age group between 21-40, 34 percent are in the age group 41-60 and 12 percent were below 20 years of age and are students.18 percent of the respondents are private employees,38 percent are into business and 32 percent are housewives. Income also plays a major role in persuading the commuters to choose their mode of transport. It was found that of majority(43 percent)the respondents earn monthly income between 30001-40000 ,33 percent of the respondents earnings are between 20001-30000 and 14 percent earn above 40001 and only a meagre of 10 percent earn below 20000.

2.1a



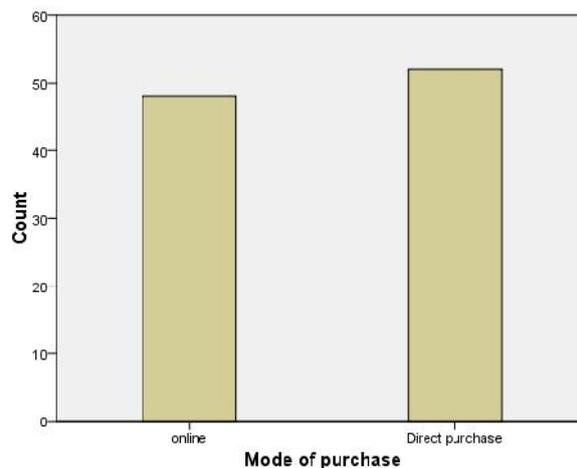
Every commuter has a certain reason for planning their travel. In this study it was found that majority (44 percent) have made their journey on a family visit, 32 percent of the respondents have travelled for leisure, 18 percent have travelled for their business and only 6 percent have travelled on an academic purpose. Majority of the commuters are found to be frequent travellers where 58 percent of the respondents have travelled once in six months. 32 percent have travelled yearly and 10 percent travel very rarely.

2.1b



Most of the respondents (76 percent) have opted for first class ticket and only 24 percent have travelled in A/C Coach. As technology has advanced rapidly, now a day's most of the transactions are done in Online. In the current era most of the travellers purchase their ticket in online. Likewise in this study also (48 percent have used e-services for booking their ticket and 52 percent of the respondents have directly purchased the ticket.

2.1c



2.2 Discriminant Function Analysis is adapted to examine the factors that discriminate the satisfied and the dissatisfied commuters:

The analysis undergoes three processes:-

- i) Validity of the model
- ii) Tests of Significance
- iii) Examining the factors contributing satisfaction

2.2.1 Validity of the model:-

Classification Results^{a,c}

Original Count	Satisfaction code	Predicted Membership		Total
		Dissatisfied	Satisfied	
Count	Dissatisfied	56	13	69
	Satisfied	6	25	31
Percent	Dissatisfied	81.2	18.8	100.0
	Satisfied	19.4	80.6	100.0

81.0% of cross-validated grouped cases correctly classified.

The above derived table shows that out of 69 Dissatisfied Commuters 56 is correctly classified and 13 are misclassified, and out of 31 satisfied

commuters 25 are correctly classified and 6 are misclassified. The overall percentage of the classified cases reveals 81.0 percent that shows the model to be fit.

2.2.2 Test of Significance

H0: There is no discrimination between the satisfied and the dissatisfied commuters

Wilks' Lambda				
Test of Function(s)	Wilks' Lambda	Chi-square	df	P Value
1	.660	39.689	5	.000

Eigenvalues				
Function	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Canonical Correlation
1	.515 ^a	100.0	100.0	.583

a. First 1 canonical discriminant functions were used in the analysis.

As the P Value is significant the null hypothesis is rejected proving the existence of discrimination between the satisfied and the dissatisfied commuters.

2.2.3 Examining the factors contributing satisfaction

Factors	Function
	1
seating comfort	.179
Neatness of the station	.002
Display of timetables etc.	.658
canteen facility	-.320
handling of complaint	.937

From the standardized canonical coefficients, it reveals that the commuters are satisfied with the handling of complaint followed by the display of timetables and then the seating comfort. Hence if the railways concentrate on the identified factors they will be able to delight the commuters and increase the level of satisfaction.

- ✦ Handling of complaint, display of timetables and Seating comfort are identified to be the factors influencing to increase the level of satisfaction of the commuter.

SUGGESTIONS

FINDINGS

- ✦ The commuters earning income between 40001-60000 and above 60000 tend to travel in A/C Coach.
- ✦ Most of the commuters are found to travel on a family visit and tour.
- ✦ Majority (61 percent) of the respondents are found to travel by Pallavan and have revealed a good satisfactory level of the services availed.
- ✦ A few commuters (34 percent) were not satisfied towards the cleanliness of the trains.
- ✦ Majority (54 percent) of the commuters were highly dissatisfied with the toilet facility.

- ✦ Suggestion Boxes can be kept inside the train to have a frequent analysis of the quality of services offered.
- ✦ Commuters were moderately satisfied with the catering facilities. The railways can improvise the food menu and try to have varieties.
- ✦ The seating arrangements can be re considered as there is less legroom between the seats.
- ✦ Strict measures should be taken on the employees who escape in fulfilling their duties loyally.
- ✦ An administrator only for the toilet incharge should be appointed to check the cleanliness of the toilets.
- ✦ Any rusted taps in the toilet should be changed and the neatness must be strictly maintained.

CONCLUSION

The major contribution of this study is identifying the factors contributing satisfaction of the commuters and the factors were found to be the handling of complaint, display of timetables and seating comfort. In order to improve the service quality, it is necessary to contact the customer regularly and assess their level of satisfaction. With the knowledge and experience of the rail commuters the service providers should identify the weakness and strengthen their positiveness and needed to concentrate more on being responsible. Overall it was found that the commuters were moderately satisfied with the services and hence the railway sector must take steps to delight the commuters with their services.

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