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Research Article

ATTITUDE OF PASSENGERS TOWARDS RAILWAY SERVICE - A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO CHENNAI BEACH TO TAMBARAM SUBURBAN TRAIN SERVICE

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A R T I C L E I N F O

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A B S T R A C T

The Indian Railway is one of the largest railway networks in the world. It is nearly transporting fifteen million people and more than two tones of freight every day. The revenue from Indian suburban railway services contributes a sizeable portion of earning to the government. Metropolitan cities in India have suburban railway network connecting very important part of land transportation through the people. Suburban railways provide facilities to the people through their services which includes, low fare, comfortable journey, speed, security of the passengers, ticket availability, and coaches to the passengers. The passengers' opinion and attitude of railway services has been obtained from select passengers through a questionnaire and necessary suggestions has been given based on the present research work.

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INTRODUCTION

Chennai has a complex railway network. The system uses Electrical Multiple Units (EMUs) operating on Alternating Current (AC) drawn from Over-Head Cables through the catenary system. The total system spans around 900 km of which only 286 km have dedicated dual tracks for suburban EMUs, the rest share tracks with other trains and are called Mainline EMUs (MEMUs). As of 2013, the suburban sector has 580 services, including 250 in the Beach–Tambaram section, 240 services in the Central–Tiruvallur section, and 90 in the Central–Gummidipoondi. As of 2015–2016, 1.76 million people use the suburban train services daily. This includes 500,000 in the Beach–Tambaram section, 350,000 in the Central–Tiruvallur section and 100,000 in the Central–Gummidipoondi section. This is a 13.2 percent increase over the previous year. A total of 65 stations in the suburban section have cycle stands.

Chennai has a fairly extensive suburban Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) service. It was in the 1920s that the then British Government felt the necessity of connecting the northern part of the city, which was mainly commercial, with the chiefly residential southwestern parts. In 1928, work began on constructing two Meter Gauge (MG) lines connecting the harbour with the southern suburb of Tambaram to run services using steam locomotives.

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In early 1930, however, the government decided to electrify the lines, including the mainline starting from Egmore. The plan to electrify railway lines in Madras was first initiated in 1923 by Sir Percy Rothera, an agent of the South Indian Railways. This was on account of the city's rapid expansion, with largely agricultural areas such as Saidapet, St. Thomas Mount and Tambaram developing into residential quarters. Plan to build a new line between Beach and Egmore and two lines between Egmore and Tambaram was announced as part of the suburban remodeling initiative of South Indian Railways. By March 1931, the construction works were completed, and The First Electrically Operated Rail Service in Madras Began on 2 April 1931 between Madras Beach and Tambaram, which became the earliest metre gauge to be electrified in the country. It was launched by Sir George Fredrick Stanley, the then governor of Madras, who at the opening ceremony was reported to have said that the new train services would transform "desolate south Madras into burgeoning garden cities".

However, the suburban services were opened to the public only a month later on 11 May 1931. The section was electrified on 15 November 1931, with the first MG EMU services running on 1.5 kV DC. The Madras Electricity Supply Corporation, which powered the railway lines, was aided by sub-stations in Egmore and Meenambakkam. Soon, the number of trains shuttling passengers was increased to 45 a day, running every 10 minutes at peak hours, and every 30 minutes, otherwise. The running time between Madras Beach and Tambaram stations, which was 2 hours until then, was

reduced to 49 minutes. The train service was made available from 4:00 in the morning up to 12:00 at night.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Vanniarajan.T and A.Stephen, (2012)[1], "Railqual and passengers Satisfaction: an empirical study in Southern Railway". This article identifies the attributes which passengers use to evaluate the service quality of Indian railways and develops a comprehensive instrument namely RAILQUAL. The linkage between Railqual and passengers' satisfaction is also evaluated by the data collected from the passengers of Southern Railways. The important railqual factors identified by the passengers are reliability, assurance and empathy. The railqual factors on the passengers' satisfaction and image of the Indian railways are its reliability and empathy. The study concluded that the intangible aspects of service performance of Indian railways have a strong, direct and positive effect on the passengers' favourable attitude and image.

Debabrata Das, Subhash Datta and Sharfuddin [2007][2] conducted a study on "Importance of Metro Rail in Public Transport Network: A case study of Delhi". The researcher attempts to devise a model to map a few of the most strategic location of Delhi using the available modes of public transportation i.e. bus and metro rail, based on distance, time and cost constraints. The Floyds' algorithm determines the most optimum mode of travel between any two locations. In the research they found to avoid congestion, best possible alternative route that should be taken as metro route at peak hours, and in case of travel cost consideration, metro route has higher travelling cost in comparison to bus route. They had suggested cost minimization can be possible by reducing waiting time and restructuring the travelling cost in case of metro rail**.**

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the socio economic background of suburban Railway Passengers.
- To measure the passengers attitude and satisfaction towards services offered by suburban Railways.
- To suggest suitable measure for improving the suburban railways services in the study area.

Hypothesis of the Study

There is no association among the Demographic profile of the respondents and their overall opinion about the facilities in the Suburban Train with Chennai Beach to Tambaram

METHODOLOGY

This study is both descriptive and analytical in nature. It covers both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected from the passengers of Chennai Beach to Tambaram Train Services, through a well Questionnaire. The secondary data were collected from standard books, journals, magazines, newspaper and website.

Sampling Design

The present study is an empirical research based on survey method. The study is confined to the suburban Railway namely **(Chennai Beach to Tambaram).** The study is based on primary data collected through structured questionnaire from 250 Passengers were approached out of which 213 respondents provided complete information. The sample size is 213, in suburban railways a (Chennai beach to Tambaram) train services in Southern Railway. The respondents for the study were selected by convenient sampling method.

Tools Used for Analyses

In order to analyze the data collected from the respondents the researcher has applied statistical tools with the help of SPSS. The tools applied are as follows:

- Simple Percentage Analysis
- Annova

Period of the Study

The study period covers four month from March 2017 to July 2017

Limitation of the Study

The following are the Limitation of the Study.

- Due to time and economic constraints of the research, number of respondents has been limited to 213.
- The study mainly covered the Suburban Railway Services in (Chennai Beach to Tambaram).
- The research of the study is subject to the attitude and opinion of the respondents

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Many studies argue that there is a de-correlation of demographic characteristic of passengers and their attitude. In order to give a detail description on demographic factors and their experience on the railways services, the researcher has applied simple percentage analysis as stated in the below consolidated table.

Table 1 Frequency showing Demographic profile of the respondents

S.No	Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
	Gender Wise Respondents		
1	Male	138	64.8
2	Female	75	35.2
	Total	**213**	**100**
	Age Wise Respondents		
1	Below 18 years	19	8.9
2	18 – 25 years	84	39.4
3	25 – 35 years	58	27.2
4	35 – 45 years	23	10.8
5	Above 45 years	29	13.6
	Total	**213**	**100**
	Educational wise classification		
1	Illiterate	10	4.7
2	SSLC	63	29.6
3	HSC	99	46.5
4	Graduate	30	14.1
5	Post graduate	11	5.2
6	Others	0	0
	Total	**213**	**100**
	Occupation Wise Classification		
1	Student	69	32.4
2	Business	24	11.3
3	Salaried	70	32.9
4	Professional	29	13.6
5	Others	21	9.9
	Total	**213**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Inference

From the above table 1 it is found that the sample unit consists of 64.8 percent (138) of the respondents are male, the sample

unit is dominated by male passengers. and age wise respondents, it is understood that out of 213 respondents 39.4 percent (84) of the respondents come under the age group of 18 – 25 years, and educational wise classification, it is known that among 213 respondents, 46.5 percent (99) of the respondents are HSC level, and occupation wise classification that, it is revealed that nearly 32.9 percent (70) of the respondents are salaried people.

Table 2 Frequency showing attitude of the Respondents

S.No	Particulars	No of respondents	Percentage
Frequency wise classification			
1	Daily	134	62.9
2	Weekly	43	20.2
3	Occasionally	13	6.1
4	Rarely	23	10.8
	Total	**213**	**100**
Purpose of Journey Wise Classification			
1	Study	62	29.1
2	Employment	95	44.6
3	Touring	19	8.9
4	Others	37	17.4
	Total	**213**	**100**
Travel Classes Wise Classification			
1	First class	49	23
2	Second class	158	74.2
3	Vendors	0	0
4	Others	6	2.8
	Total	**213**	**100**
Concession Ticket Fare Wise Classification			
1	Yes	144	67.6
2	No	69	32.4
	Total	**213**	**100**

Source: Primary Data

Inference

From the above table 2 it is found that the sample unit consists of frequency wise classification out of 213 respondents, 62.9 percent (134) of the respondents are travelling in the train daily, and the passengers purpose of journey wise classification out of the 213 respondents, 44.6 percent (95) of the respondents are travelling in the train to reach their workplace in employment, and travel classes wise classification is out of 213 respondents, 74.2 percent (158) of the respondents are travelling in second class, and Concession Ticket Fare Wise Classification are out of 213 respondents, 67.6 percent (144) of the respondents says yes for availing concessions on train fare.

Table 3 Relationship between Demographic variables and Attitude of the respondents towards Sub urban Rail Services between Chennai Beach to Tambaram.

ANOVA

		One way Anova				
		Sum of square	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Age	Between Groups	2.791	4	.698	3.287	.012
	Within Groups	44.148	208	.212		
	Total	**46.938**	**212**			
occupation	Between Groups	4.108	4	1.027	4.987	.001
	Within Groups	42.830	208	.206		
	Total	**46.938**	**212**			
Types of Travel	Between Groups	6.837	2	3.418	17.901	.000
	Within Groups	40.101	210	.191		
	Total	**46.938**	**212**			
Availing concession	Between Groups	2.797	4	.699	3.295	.012
	Within Groups	44.141	208	.212		
	Total	**46.938**	**212**			

Source: computed data

Inference

From the above table, it is found that age group of the respondents (F=3.287, P=.012), occupation wise respondent (F=4.987, P=001), type of travel in the train (F=17.901, P=.000) and concession availing in the train services of the respondents (F=3.295, P=.012) are statistically significant at 5% level.

The mean comparison indicates that the passengers in the age group (35 – 45) Years, strongly agree for their attitude towards train services (Mean = 3.3961) where as the passengers in the age group 18 – 25 Years (Mean = 3.0886) do not have significant attitude towards railway services. The passengers in the occupation group" Business people" strongly agree for their attitude towards train services. (Mean = 3.5463) where as the passengers in the occupation group "Student" (Mean = 3.0821) do not have positive attitude towards railway services. The type of train classes group "First class", the passengers have positive attitude towards train services (Mean = 3.4853), where as the passengers in the type of travel in class group others (Mean = 2.5185) have negative attitude towards railway services.

In the train ticket concession group Senior Citizen are strongly agreeing for their attitude towards train services (Mean = 3.4052), where as the passengers in the train ticket concession group "Daily Ticket" (Mean = 2.8704) shows negative attitude towards railway services.

Suggestions

The present study highlights the factors such as improper maintenance, lack of Security, passengers' discomforts are contributing towards dissatisfaction of passengers towards sub urban rail services. Following suggestions are given to increase the passenger's satisfaction of sub urban Rail services.

1. Railways have to develop the maintenance of rails and stations.
2. Safety is to be focused intensively by Railway Protection Force (RPF) so as to provide security against theft, harassment etc.
3. As per the study, many travelers are travelling in second class compartments. Hence the Railway can take necessary steps to decrease the first class fares for comfortable journey. So that they can convert second class passengers into First class.
4. Coaches for women can be increased for safe and convenient journey.
5. Train stopping time can be increased to few minutes so as to avoid rush up into the compartments.
6. Amenities like mobile charging facilities, water facilities in stations, Dormitory facilities and Rest room facilities are to be renovated well in suburban railway stations.

CONCLUSIONS

Railways play as the comfortable mode of transport for millions of passengers in India. The service offering by Indian railways is vital for its growth. The satisfaction of the need of the passengers is important to compete with other mode of transport. The effect of the present study shows that the performance of railways is moderate. With the aim of making Indian railways more efficient few suggestions has been given.

By implementing the given suggestions the suburban rail passenger's satisfaction can be enhanced.

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