



Passengers' perception on state express transport corporation (SETC) and Tamil Nadu state transport corporation (TNSTC) Ltd in Cuddalore District

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Abstract

Bus transportation service cannot continue to exist without satisfying the passengers' requirements. Generally, when it is compared with other modes of transport, bus transport services are more indispensable, suitable and very easy to access. In certain circumstances, bus transport may suit with the needs of the passengers and make possible more in all aspects. It takes the people from one place to another to facilitate the people to carry out their day to day activities. Hence bus transport facility with quality service is very essential and plays very important function in the day to day life of the common people. Bus transport services provide unity, building a good relationship among the different levels of people. It reaches every bus stop and bus stand on time to pick up and drop the passengers wherever they want to go on its route. The main objective of this research study is to evaluate the satisfaction level of the passengers who uses SETC and TNSTC transport service in Cuddalore district. This analysis provides an obvious outlook about the opinion of the passengers on the quality of bus service towards SETC and TNSTC in the study area.

Keywords: customer, transport, quality of service, SETC, TNSTC, destination, satisfaction and passengers

Introduction

State Express Transport Corporation (SETC) formerly known as Thiruvalluvar Transport Corporation is a state owned transport corporation which runs long distance mofussil services exceeding 300 km and above throughout the state of Tamil Nadu and major cities in neighbouring states of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka and the Union Territory of Pondicherry whereas Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC) Limited., is a public transport bus operator in Tamil Nadu. It operates public transport bus service in many cities of Tamil Nadu with the exception of Chennai, where the public transport bus service is operated by the Metropolitan Transport Corporation (formerly known as Pallavan Transport Corporation), sometimes known as the MTC, is the agency that operates the public bus service in Chennai, India. SETC Ltd provides one of the most affordable public transports to 2 lakhs passengers per day. For more Comfort and Luxury to the travelling public, SETC introduced 310 Ultra Deluxe Buses with 36 seating capacity with air suspension and pollution free system to Inter & Intra State routes.

TNSTC and SETC use custom made buses built on Ashok Leyland and TATA supplied chassis. Air conditioned buses for intra city routes in Chennai are supplied by Volvo. All divisions have individual own coach building units. TNSTC and SETC Bus fares were priced about 10 – 15% lesser than the private buses. Tamil Nadu state government operates various types of buses such as Town buses and low floor buses operated on intercity routes, Mofussil buses operated between major cities, Delux buses operated between major cities and Ultra delux coaches with recliner seats operated between important commercial centres to major cities. SETC operate Air conditioned buses with many facilities from all district headquarters to Chennai. Most of the people

who use the bus transport belong to middle class and below poverty line. Tamil Nadu government render the quality bus transport service at affordable cost to two lakhs passengers per day though the corporation meet losses.

The crew of SETC was suitably trained to behave politely with passengers. Since beginning this Corporation has always maintained Cordial relations with passengers. In order to ensure comfortable travel, the vehicles are being halted at proper places for refreshment. The stoppage of buses at these motels gives sufficient break in monotony during journey and it helps to ease the strain of passengers. SETC permits Cancer and TB patients to travel on concessional fares from their native place to the nearest Government Hospital for taking treatment. Public information counters have been functioning in the main bus stands of this Corporation throughout Tamil Nadu. Set up of public grievance cell exclusively to monitor and implement the suggestions made by the public. All the public grievances have been computerized effectively.

Perception involves a number of steps and it begins to undertake them as soon as the message is released from the source. The steps represented in the exhibit reveal the whole process of perception. Perception or sensitivity varies from person to person. Different people make out different things at a similar situation. A passenger is a term broadly used to describe any person who travels in a vehicle, but bears little or no responsibility for the tasks required for that vehicle to arrive at its destination. Passengers perception are widened through a variety Passengers' Past experience, Interactions with SETC, TNSTC, recommendations from friends and colleagues and reviews by reliable sources.

Statement of the Problem

The population size and movement of the passengers from

one place to another is rapidly increased every day. All transport industries are trying to give good quality of service to the different levels of people to satisfy the needs of passengers. SETC Ltd provides one of the most affordable public transports to 2 lakhs passengers per day for more Comfort and Luxury to the travelling public. TNSTC Ltd renders the quality bus transport service at affordable cost to two lakhs passengers per day though the corporation meets losses. TNSTC introduces new buses every year with various facilities to satisfy the passengers to all districts of Tamil Nadu including Cuddalore. The bus transport industries introducing more number of buses with highly advanced features to fulfil the needs of the passengers every year. There is a huge gap between the population growth, passenger expectation and the services quality which is offered by the transport. But the bus transports are not enough to satisfy the satisfaction, expectations and preferences which lead to dissatisfaction among the passengers. So it is necessary to take this topic for the present study - Passengers' Perception on the SETC and TNSTC Ltd in Tamil Nadu by ensuring the service quality offered by the both bus services in Cuddalore district.

Objectives of the Study

1. To Study the quality of service rendered by the SETC and TNSTC Ltd., in Cuddalore district
2. To analyze the perception of passengers towards SETC and TNSTC Ltd. in Cuddalore district
3. To examine the satisfaction level of bus passengers towards SETC and TNSTC Ltd., in the study area.

Review of Literature

Substantial reviews of literature are available with reference to customer Perception but only very few attempts have been made so far to study the Passengers' Perception on SETC and TNSTC Limited in Tamil Nadu. A number of text books, articles published in various national and international journals, published and unpublished M.Phil./Ph.D. dissertation has made available the essential theoretical background for the study.

Methodology

Collection of Data

Cuddalore district comprises 10 taluks which are Bhuvagiri, cuddalore, Kattumannarkoil, Panruti, Kurinjipadi, Thitakudi, Srimushnam, Veppur and Virudhachalam. For the present study there were 200 sample passenger were chosen on the basis of taluk in Cuddalore district; i.e., 20 sample passengers were chosen from each Taluk. The type of data collection taken up for the study was both Primary and secondary source of data. The primary data was obtained from those passengers by way of questionnaire and face to face conversation at their convenience. Sometimes the researcher spent hours together on travel to collect the data raw from the passengers to strengthen the findings of this study. The primary data was collected from March 2019 to April 2019. The secondary data have been collected from the records of Tamil Nadu transport Corporation, reference books, news papers, research articles in the related journals, and also from different web sites.

Tools for Analysis

For the present study the primary data obtained from the respondents were arranged tabulated and used different

statistical tools such as Percentage analysis, Trend analysis, ANOVA and 't' test were applied for the analysis to get the results.

Limitations of the Study

This study is subject to certain limitations. Due to time and other restraints the size of the sample was confined to 200. The survey was conducted only in Cuddalore District from the selected passengers for the study during the period from March 2019 to April 2019. Hence the results were obtained from this study may not be applicable for any other area and period.

Findings of the Study

- It was found that 58% of the male passengers and 42% of female passengers.
- It reveals that 65% of the passengers were regularly availed bus service to go to schools and colleges.
- It depicts that 38% of the passengers were students, 32% of passengers were employees and the remaining passengers were others.
- It is found that 80% of the passengers are belonging to middle income and lower income group.
- 85% of the passengers avail the services of TNSTC and SETC for personal and family affairs, education and hospital purposes.
- It is found that 72% of the passengers felt that the bus charges are affordable. Rest of the 28% of passengers felt that the bus charges are not affordable. Thus it is understood that the majority of passengers accept for the fare charged in the public transport.
- 75% of the passengers were felt that mostly the buses are overloaded, 85% of them felt that seating arrangement is not properly allocated for physically challenged people, senior citizen, expectant women and children.
- 36% of the passengers found that the journey is not satisfied due to the road condition (i.e. damages), and speed breakers on the road.
- 72% of the passengers were felt that the buses are reaching the destination without delay / on time and the remaining 28% of passengers felt that the buses are delayed on arrival and departure due to the poor condions of the buses.
- Provisions for shelter to protect the passengers from rain, sun - 16% of the passengers feel that the shelters protect them from sun, rain, etc. In addition to this, the balance 84% of the passengers felt that the shelters don't protect them from sun, rain, etc.
- 84% of the passengers felt that they are satisfied with the push back seat, sleeper/semi sleeper/ toilet facility/mobile alert to the passengers in SETC.
- 65% of the passengers felt that covered parking facility for cars and two wheelers, cleanliness, medical facility on road, drinking water facility, women and child care – feeding room for women, police control room, roaming bus schedule and wifi facilities are not available at the bus terminus.
- 75% of the passengers felt that cloak room and emergency exit are not available.
- 70% of the passengers felt that they are not satisfied on surface of road, safety, happiness, speed and speed breakers.
- Poor road condition, bad driving due to overtime duty

compelled by the authorities

Recommendations

- People should be educated and motivated to use public transport to reduce the pollution, traffic jam, cost, etc.
- People should be treated kindly by the conductors and drivers of TNSTC Ltd., especially aged people, school students and college students.
- GPS tracking and special app facility may be provided to TNSTC and SETC for the welfare of passengers.
- Bus-pass for school and college goers at free of cost to be issued on time unless and otherwise the previous years pass have to be considered until the new bus pass issued to the students.
- Awareness on signals may be given by conducting awareness programs at schools, colleges and at some public places to ensure the safe journey and reduce the accidents and death rate.
- The services like push back seat, sleeper, semi sleeper and mobile alert to the passengers may be extended to TNSTC.
- It is inferred that the shelters are not maintained properly and advisable to construct the required shelter to protect the passengers and their vehicles from sun, rain etc.
- Provision of more number of buses to cover interior places and remote village areas. This also should be done during peak hours of travel to avoid over crowd and accidents due to that.
- The conductors need to bring more “coins /change” to return to the passengers instead of using cruel words.
- Proper maintenance of buses and bus stands should be required to retain the existing and attracting the new passengers for the survival of transport industries in the long run.
- Rash driving has to be avoided and the drivers should stop the bus close to the bus stop and not in the middle of the road or elsewhere.
- Revision of ticket fare in air-conditioned buses may be implemented to suit all economic classes.

Conclusion

This article is focused on the passengers' Perception on SETC and TNSTC Ltd in Cuddalore District. The opinion of the researcher about the service, service quality of the transport industries to the passengers is not possible to satisfy all the needs and expectation of the passengers. But there should be some productive and healthy rivalry in the transport industries. The transport industry should give good quality services to the public on future oriented and maintain some ethics in their activity to achieve their goals. The transport service sector should make available service quality with ethics and social responsibility to give better service to the passengers to get satisfaction at maximum level by executing the above recommendations in Cuddalore District.

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