

A Study on Passenger's Preferences in Express Trains (Air Conditioned Coaches) Boarding at Tiruchirappalli Junction

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Abstract

Consumer preferences vary with each service provided the level of satisfaction attained by each consumer differs at every stage of consumption. It is difficult for the marketers to satisfy all the consumers fully. But they can achieve it by improving the service quality and enhancing the standards of providing services. This paper throws light on the consumers preferences towards air-conditioned coaches in Express Trains from Tiruchirappalli Railway Station. The study focuses on measuring the level of satisfaction among the respondents travelling in A/C coaches and to provide valuable suggestions to improve the service quality and overcome the shortcomings. Financial performance of the Railway is linked with consumer and employee satisfaction. These three concepts are studied altogether in this paper and proper suggestions are provided for further development.

Key Words : Consumer preferences, Service Quality and passenger satisfaction.

Introduction

The activities of a company is associated with buying and selling of a product or a service. It includes advertising, selling and delivering products to people. People who work in marketing departments of companies try to get the attention of target audiences by using slogans, packaging design, celebrity endorsements and general media exposure. The four “ps” of marketing are Product, Place, Price and Promotion.

Consumer Behaviour

“Consumer behavior can be defined as “All psychological, social and physical behavior of all potential consumers as they become aware of, evaluate, purchase, consume and tell others about products and services”.

Consumer Preference

Consumer Preferences refer to certain characteristics of any consumer who wants to have goods or services to make it preferable to him. This could be the level of happiness, degree of satisfaction, utility from the products, etc.

Indian Railways

India is a land of diverse culture. Railways play a key role in not only meeting the transport needs of the country but also in binding together dispersed areas and promoting national integration. Indian Railways have emerged as the sinews / vigor of the Indian economy, and have reached out to bring together the great Indian family.

Indian Railways have been the prime movers to the nation and have the distinction of being one of the largest railway systems in the world under a single management. Railways, being the more energy efficient mode of transport, are ideally suited for movement of bulk commodities and for long distance travel. As compared to road transport, the railways have a number of intrinsic advantages. Railways are five to six times more energy efficient, four times more efficient in land use and significantly superior from the standpoints or environment impact and safety. Indian Railways, therefore, rightly occupy pride of place in the growth and development of the nation. Apart from normal trains connecting almost all parts of the country, the Indian Railways also runs special luxury trains like the Palace on Wheels, Rajdhani Express, Shatabdi Express, Fairy Queen etc.

Express Trains

Express trains are Regular Express Rail service of India. Express trains make small number of stops, unlike Passenger / Local trains. In some cases, trains run as express where there is overlapping local train service available, and run local at the tail ends of the line, where there is no supplemental local service. Because of their limited stops, these trains are able to obtain the highest speeds of any trains in India. An express train is one where the average speed, excluding halts, is greater than 36 km/h. including halts speed may sometimes fall into the region of around 20 km/h, for express trains.

Railways have been a vital component of the social, political and economic life of the country. Indian Railways transportation network has played an important key role, in weaving India into a nation. This net work has not only integrated markets but also people across length and breadth of the country. It has bound the economic life of the country and helped in accelerating the development of industry and agriculture. Better travel information boosts passenger satisfaction and helps transport operators to a stronger relationship with their passengers. The ability to offer a stress-free travel experience is critical in the quest to build passenger satisfaction. Providing accurate, real-time information plays a key part in achieving a better result. For transport operators, the ability to deliver

that information is now more important than ever. The satisfaction level of passengers depends on various factors such as fare, comfort, reliability; speed, safety etc, and the importance of these factors differ across various railway zones in India.

Statement of the Problem

Railways, being a public utility undertaking, have been bearing social burden in the form of loss on coaching services and loss on lower freight rates for food grains and other essential commodities. Though Rakesh Mohan Committee recommended Privatization, retrenchment of staff, independent Tariff Regulatory Authority, the then Railway Minister, Mr. Nithish Kumar, implemented strategies on cost reduction and focused on revenue earning measures by retaining state ownership.

The financial performance is always linked with passenger satisfaction and employee satisfaction. Innumerable research studies established that service quality has considerably improved owing to myriad turn around initiatives from the part of Indian Railways while passengers are the beneficiaries, and employees are the real providers of the services. Whereas passenger satisfaction is influenced by quality and behavior of employees. Only a satisfied employee can discharge his duties according to the expectation of passengers. Thus this study will be a complete one and only when their levels of satisfaction are totally analyzed. Therefore, the study is multi-dimensional which takes stock on the financial performance of Southern Railway in terms of revenue and expenditure, passenger satisfaction on improvement of service quality and the employees' satisfaction towards their work.

Significance of the Study

In today's competitive scenario, the concept of passenger satisfaction gets first priority as they have varied preferences. The Indian Railways should aim at not only satisfying the passengers but also focus on delighting them. The factors that affect customer satisfaction level are to be measured consciously so that necessary changes could be brought on the basis of passenger's preference. From the above review, the researcher found out that the earlier projects are dealt with service quality, satisfaction of the passengers and attributes of this Southern Railways. Hence the present research work on, "A Study on Passenger's Preferences in Express Trains (Air Conditioned Coaches) Boarding at Tiruchirappalli Junction", aims to fill the gap by analyzing the Awareness, Perception and level of satisfaction.

Objectives

- To study the demographic profile of the respondents, perceptions, motivating factors, and their level of satisfaction towards Air-Conditioned coaches in express trains among the selected sample respondents at Tiruchirappalli Junction.
- Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion.

Hypothesis

- There is a significant difference between the gender of the respondents and various dimensions of the passenger's level of satisfaction.
- There is significant relationship between service characteristics and passenger's level of satisfaction.
- There is significant relationship between physical aspect and passenger's level of satisfaction.

Research Design Methodology

This research is diagnostic in nature significance of statistical method applied to analyze the research objectives and it is based on descriptive research design. The study is based on Primary and Secondary data. Only 200 respondents were selected on the basis of convenience sampling method for this study. It is a non-probability sampling method under which the same is selected on the basis of researchers' convenience. Tiruchirappalli city is the selected area for the study. It is situated almost at the centre of the state, on the banks of River Cauvery and it is the fourth most populous city in Tamil Nadu.

Primary data has been collected from the respondents and tabulated for the purpose of analysis and the data have been scrutinized of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for analysis to draw the inferences. Percentages are used in data presentation for simplifying numbers, reducing all of them from 0 to 100. Chi-square (X^2) is based on Chi-square distribution and as a non-parametric test is used for comparing a sample variance to a theoretical variance. Responses of the respondents have been analyzed on the basis of weights as follows :

Opinion	Score
Strongly agree	5
Agree	4
No opinion	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Factor Analysis is a statistical method used to describe variability among observed, correlated variables in terms of a potentially lower number of unobserved variables called factors. Factor analysis is

related to Principal Component Analysis (PCA), but the two are not identical. Latent variable models, including Factor Analysis, use regression modeling techniques. There has been significant controversy in the field over the equivalence of otherwise of the two techniques. ANOVA is statistical analysis tool that separates the total variability found within a data set into two components: random and systematic factors.

Limitations of the Study

- The survey was limited to Tiruchirappalli junction only.
- The study is limited only to the passengers of Express trains of A/C coaches only.

Review of Related Literature

- **Kelley and Storey (2000)** Mention that changing passenger preferences, improved competitive offerings, and emergence of new technologies often drive firms to introduce new services and improve existing service offerings as in the case of railways: the on-line ticket booking, enquiry, passenger status check-up etc.
- **Gleave S. D., (2000)** Railway passenger's service quality valuation was carried out between December 1999 to June 2000, by the organization named Steer Davies Gleave of London.
- **Amit Dinakar, Dipayan Chakravarthy, Prashanth Yadav, Rajeesh Kumar, Sudip Sharma (2001)** Analyzed issues which require urgency are matching passenger requirements, operating like a commercial organization, focusing on its core competency and empowering employees to take quick decisions.
- **Jamal, Naser and Sureshchandar (2002)** Research suggest that service quality is positively associated with passenger satisfaction. Companies understand that service will have its impact on passenger's satisfaction.
- **Swedish Railway (2002)** was facing bankruptcy due to poor management. Since then, the company has taken so many market-focused strategies. It has identified various passenger groups and their needs and then developed various products and services to satisfy as many travelers as possible. The Asian Development Bank and the Chinese government have employed Chakra Infrastructure consultants Private Ltd, in March 2008 to study and analyze the **Chinese railways** turnaround strategies to improve the quality of passenger servicing, to encourage passengers to buy private wagons and to reform existing transportation planning according to market demand.

- **Disability Rights Commission (2003)** This research has found that train travel was seen as the worst mode in terms of making travel arrangements, information during the journey and availability of wheel chair spaced and priority seating for disabled people.
- **Transport Issues in England (2003)** This research found that reactions to rail high light variability in experience across the country. Words used to describe an ideal railway were: clean, comfortable, informed, on-time, reliable, spacious, modern, cheap, punctual, fast, integrated, and more staff.
- **Blomer Ruyter and Ghauri (2004)** They critically examined the relationship of service quality with passenger loyalty and indicate that they are positively associated.
- **Yavas, Bekenstein and Stuhldreier (2004)** The service quality was linked with the behavioral outcomes as word of mouth, complaint, recommending and switching. It was also found that service quality is related to complaint behavior.
- **Arpita Mukherjee and Ruchika Sachdeva (2004)** In their article mention that the Railways investigated the developments in rail transport sector both globally and in India, in the context of GATTs 2000 negotiations.
- **Krishna Veni L. and Sangeetha Ghosh (2005)** About the performance of Railways reveals that along with increase in Gross Traffic Receipts and net Traffic Receipts, the working expenses have also been increasing after 1990.
- **Balakrishnan K.P, (2005)** The railways proved as a potential sector for drawing economic and developmental benefits in various countries. But less emphasis has been given to the improvement of the railways sector, especially the railway services of Southern Railway.
- **Agarwal V.K, (2006)** Opined that some measures taken have eroded the passengers' confidence and suggested the setting up of Tariff Enquiry Committee, Dedicated freight corridors and High speed passenger corridors.
- **Sudhir Kumar and Shagun Mehrotra (2007)** Observed that the transformation in Railways occurred through economies of scale and the strong political leadership of Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav, through distinct approaches and swift accomplishment.
- **Ankit Gupta and Vidya Bhatt (2007)** Focused on turn-around strategies and the possibilities of

privatizing Indian Railway by making a comparison with the British Railways.

- **Confederation of Indian Industry (2007)** presented a paper in the International Railway Conference, New Delhi, analyzing the Cost structure Earnings, Operating ratio and wagon turnaround time over a period of twenty years.
- **Power and Associates Reports J.D., (2007)** This study would help the policy makers to monitor, control and improve their service at the International level.
- **Eboli and Mazzulla (2007)** Measure passenger's satisfaction in the context of bus service on various factors including availability of shelter and benches at bus stops, cleanliness, overcrowding, information system, safety, personnel security, helpfulness of personnel, and physical condition of bus stops.
- **Power and Associates J.D, (2008)** Also measures passenger's satisfaction with high-speed and dial-up Internet service providers based on five factors: Performance and Reliability, Cost of Service, Passenger's Services, Billing Offerings and Promotions.
- **Jham and Khan (2008)** In another study of passenger satisfaction with banking services, it appears that factors of passenger satisfaction are traditional (basic) facilities, convenience, behavior of employees, and the environment of the bank.
- **Vanniarajan and Stephen (2008)** The literature also shows that researchers have identified the attributes that passengers use to evaluate the Service Quality of Indian Railways as Reliability, Assurance, Empathy, Tangibles, and Responsiveness.
- **Agrawal (2008)** Identifies employees behavior as most important determinant of Passenger's satisfaction with Indian Railway services.
- **Sudhir Kumar (2009)** The then Railway Board Chairman, initiated new measures to increase operating efficiency by separating old and new type wagons and production of higher capacity air brake wagons engines, avoiding the practice of accepting less than train load, introducing the concept of point-to-point examination of trains, producing high power diesel, electric locomotives by phasing out steam locomotives and prioritizing electrification of railway routes.
- **Sonne (2009)** Study on Passenger's satisfaction from consultant services identified various factors including perceived competence of the consultant and the attitude of consultants toward the passenger during the service production process.
- **Railway Report (2009)** It explored the revenue strategy of railway passenger transport, increasing rail demand by improving multimodal information ticketing and the impact of delays on passenger train services.
- **Sandip Gosh Hazra (2010)** They critically examined the strength of association between Service quality, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty and customer commitment, and also to explored the differences in perception.
- **Ngatia (2010)** A survey to public transport users was conducted in the city of Nairobi. The proposed Structural Equation Model allowed elucidating the inter-relationship between the observed variables and unobserved variables and their impact on the overall commuters' satisfaction.
- **Pranay Patil (2012)** The Indian Railways (IR) network connects areas across the length and breadth of the country was measured.
- **Vanniarajan, T. and Stephen, A. (2012)** "Railqual and passenger's Satisfaction : an empirical study in Southern Railway". This article identifies the attributes which passenger use to evaluate the Service Quality of Indian railways and develops a comprehensive instrument namely RAILQUAL.

Analysis and Interpretations

Out of 200 respondents, 80.5 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of below 30 years; 19.5 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 31-60 years. It is inferred that majority of the respondents are age group of below 30years. Out of the 200 respondents, 57 per cent of the respondents are male and the 43 per cent of the respondents are female. It is inferred that majority of the respondents are male as per gender. Out of the 200 respondents, 68.5 per cent of the respondents are unmarried and the remaining 31.5 per cent of the respondents are married. It is inferred that majority of the respondents are unmarried as per marital status. Out of 200 respondents, 60.5 per cent of the respondents have dependents with two in their family; 39.5 per cent of respondents are having one dependent. It is inferred that majority of the respondents have two dependents in their families. Out of 200 respondents, 61.5 per cent of the respondents are salaried; 28.5 percent of the respondents are professionals and the remaining ten per cent are business men. It is inferred that majority of the respondents are salaried employees. Out of 200 respondents, 58.5 of the respondents earn a monthly income of Rs. 21000-50000. 33 per cent of the respondents earn a monthly income of below

Rs. 20000 and the remaining 8.5 per cent of the respondents earn a monthly income of above Rs. 50000. It is inferred majority of the respondents earn a monthly income that of Rs. 21000-50000. It is observed that out of 200 respondents, 45.5 per cent of the respondents prefer occasional service; 36.5 per cent of the respondents rarely prefer service of railways; 17 per cent of the respondents prefer weekly service and remaining 1 per cent of the respondents prefer daily service. It is inferred that nearly half of the respondents prefer occasional service of railways. It is observed that out of 200 respondents, 75.5 per cent of the respondents prefer to travel in train for personal reasons. 15 per cent of the respondents prefer to travel for employment purpose; 5.5 per cent of the respondents prefer to travel for tour and the remaining 4 per cent of the respondents prefer to travel for study. It is inferred that majority of the respondents prefer to travel in train for personal reasons. It is observed that out of 200 respondents, 50 per cent of the 100 respondents prefer the 2 tier A/C class for their travel. 30 per cent of the respondents prefer 3 tier A/C. 20 per cent of the respondents prefer the A/C chair car class for their travel. It is inferred that majority of the respondents prefer the 2 tier A/C class for their travel. It is observed that out of 200 respondents, 44 per cent of the respondents travel for 2-4 hours; 37.5 per cent of the respondents travel for above 10 hours; 18.5 per cent of the respondents travel for 8-10 hours. It is inferred that majority of the respondents travel for 2-4 hours minimum per day.

Research Hypothesis : 1

- **Null Hypothesis (H₀)** : There is no significant association between the service of railways and proper maintenance of coach.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)** : There is a significant association between service of railways and proper maintenance of coach.

Services of Railways	Proper Maintenance					Total	Chi-square test
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Highly Dis-satisfied	Dis-satisfied		
Daily	0	2	0	0	0	2	P = 42.418 df=12 Sig.= 0.00
Weekly	8	24	2	0	0	34	
Occasional	26	36	24	5	0	91	
Rarely	9	24	38	0	2	73	
Total	43	86	64	5	2	200	

Sources : Primary Data

Research Hypothesis : 2

- **Null Hypothesis (H₀)** : There is no significant association between age of the respondents and extra coaches available during festival seasons.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H_a)** : There is a significant association between age of the

respondents and extra coaches available during festival seasons.

Age	Extra coaches during festival season					Total	Chi-square test
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Highly Dis-satisfied	Dis-satisfied		
below 30	16	65	22	9	49	161	P = 15.199 df=4 Sig.= 0.04
31-60	2	15	15	0	7	39	
Total	18	80	37	9	56	200	

Sources : Primary Data

Inference

The calculated value of Chi-Square Test is 15.199 which is greater than the table value 14.8602. Therefore the Null Hypothesis is not accepted and alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is concluded that there is a significant association between age of the respondents and extra coaches available during festival seasons. Hence the research hypothesis is accepted.

ANOVA

Travelling Class and Air Conditioner Coach

Travelling class

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.742	4	1.936	4.182	.003
Within Groups	90.258	195	.463		
Total	98.000	199			

Travelling class

Tukey HSD ^{a,b}			
Air conditioner coach	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Highly Satisfied	39	1.8974	
Neutral	69	2.0725	
Satisfied	61	2.0820	
Highly Dissatisfied	25	2.3200	
Dissatisfied	6		3.0000
Sig.		0.313	1.000

Inference

The one way ANOVA was done to test the hypothesis with the variables taking travelling class of the respondents as dependent variable and air conditioned coach as independent variable. The satisfaction level differs among the various classes' people of travelling in trains. In Tukey test, people travelling in a A/C coach different satisfaction levels that are generated under the first subset. Whereas people travelling coach in A/C have different satisfaction level with second subset. The test yield the significant result F (4,195) 4.182, p=0.003. Hence it is inferred that there is a significant difference

between travelling class and satisfaction level of the respondents.

Factor Analysis

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.833
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Sig.	.000
		.000

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's	Alpha Based on	Standardized Items N of Items
.974	.974	40

From the above table it is observed that the reliability of coefficient alpha (α) for 40 item is 0.974 (Scale range between 0.00 to 1.0) which shows the reliability of the given Factor. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Approx. Chi-Square) 0.000. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy 0.833. The test is based on a Chi Square transformation of the determinant of the correlation matrix. The Chi Square value shows that the variables are appropriate for factor analysis. A higher value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic indicates that the sample is adequate to explain the correlation between the pairs of variables with the other variables.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	20.397	50.992	50.992	20.397	50.992	50.992	11.319	28.298	28.298
2	2.272	5.679	56.671	2.272	5.679	56.671	7.442	18.605	46.903
3	1.953	4.883	61.554	1.953	4.883	61.554	4.421	11.053	57.957
4	1.680	4.201	65.755	1.680	4.201	65.755	3.119	7.798	65.755
5	1.302	3.255	69.010						
6	1.246	3.114	72.124						
7	1.021	2.554	74.678						
8	.975	2.437	77.115						
9	.870	2.175	79.290						
10	.814	2.036	81.326						
11	.778	1.945	83.270						
12	.670	1.676	84.946						
13	.573	1.433	86.379						
14	.524	1.311	87.690						
15	.498	1.245	88.935						
16	.487	1.217	90.153						
17	.428	1.070	91.223						
18	.402	1.004	92.227						
19	.373	.934	93.161						
20	.316	.791	93.951						
21	.288	.720	94.672						
22	.280	.700	95.371						
23	.250	.626	95.997						
24	.223	.557	96.554						
25	.206	.516	97.070						
26	.191	.477	97.547						
27	.142	.356	97.903						
28	.136	.341	98.244						
29	.107	.268	98.512						
30	.102	.255	98.767						
31	.087	.218	98.986						
32	.076	.190	99.176						
33	.072	.180	99.356						
34	.062	.155	99.511						
35	.051	.127	99.639						
36	.045	.112	99.750						
37	.039	.098	99.848						
38	.031	.079	99.926						

This table shows you the actual factors that were extracted. The Factors are extractable from the analysis along with their eigen values, the percent of variance attributable to each factor, and the cumulative variance of the factor and the previous factors.

Factor 1 account for a variance of **20.397** which 50.992% of the total variance.

Factor 2 account for a variance of **2.272** which is 56.671% of the total variance.

Factor 3 accounts for a variance of **1.953** which is 61.554% of the total variance.

A factor 4 account for a variance of 1.680 which is 65.755% of the total variance.

It can be interpreted that 40 variables are now reduced to 4 components or factors contributing 65.755% of the total variance.

S.No	Rotated Component Matrix ^a	Component			
		1	2	3	4
1	Extra Coaches during Festivals	.870			
2	Working Condition Fans Lights	.774			
3	Sound Proof	.763			
4	Catering Services	.758			
5	Catering Service	.746			
6	Enough Handles To Hold	.728			
7	Proper Maintains	.715			
8	Rest Room Facilities	.688			
9	Notice Display	.682			
10	Curtain Screen	.657			
11	Security	.641			
12	Water Bottle Stand	.633			
13	Comforts	.607			
14	Comfortable Bedding	.606			
15	Ventilation inside Coach	.592			
16	Sleeping Seating	.555			
17	Carriage Cleaning	.554			
18	Second A/C Reading Lamp	.540			
19	Warning Board	.515			
20	Chain Cook				
21	Inside Free Coach				
22	Proper Cleaning				
23	Medical Assistance		.769		
24	Flooring Interior		.755		
25	Comfortable Seats		.746		
26	Bedspreads		.713		
27	Mobile /Lap Charging Facilities		.677		

28	Air Conditioner in Coaches		.647		
29	Luggage Racks		.620		
30	Magazine Racks		.561		
31	Water in Rest Rooms		.539		
32	Seat number and Display Boards		.536		
33	Windows				
34	Space for Passenger in trains			.683	
35	Information during journey			.602	
36	Air Conditioner			.585	
37	Rest room Facilities			.517	
38	A/C Cooling effect				
39	Convenience				
40	Lighting Facilities				.774

Inference

It is possible to see items with large loadings on several of the unrotated factors, which makes interpretation difficult. In these cases, it can be helpful to examine a rotated solution. The Rotated Factor matrix makes it simple for taking decision. Factor 1 has profound association between variable factors one to nineteen; factor 2 has affiliation between twenty three to thirty-two loading factor, factor 3 has affiliation between thirty- four to thirty-seven factor, factor 4 has relationship between forty loading factor. With the help of this table, we can categorize each statement depending upon the factor loadings and are shown in table. If above table is observed carefully, it can be found that highest loading of each variable is categorized under each factor.

The factors are labeled considering the strength of association with the variables. The coefficients between the statements and the factors are taken according to the statement affecting the factor. **Personal Factors** comprises of certain attributes such as Sound proof, Catering services, Proper maintenance, Rest room facilities, Notice board, Curtain screen, Security, Comforts. **Promotional Factor** comprises of certain attributes such as Medical assistance, Flooring interior, Height width length, Bedspreads, Mobile lap charge, Air conditioner in coach. **Stimulus Factor** comprises of certain attributes such as Air conditioner, A/c Cooling effect. **Store Factor** comprises of certain attributes such as Facilities of Air conditioner.

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

The major findings of this study are based on the hypotheses and selected variables related to the Passenger Preference in Express Trains (Air Conditioned Coach) Boarding at Tiruchirappalli Junction.

- Majority of the respondents (80.5%) belong to the age group of below 30years.

- Majority of respondents (57%) are female.
- Majority of respondents (68.5%) are unmarried.
- Majority of respondents (60.5) are with two dependents.
- Majority of respondents (61.5%) are salaried people.
- Majority (58.5%) of the respondents are in the income level between Rs. 21000-50000.
- Nearly half (45.5%) of the respondents prefer occasional service.
- Majority (75.5%) of the respondents could like to travel in train for personal reason.
- Fifty per cent of the respondents prefer the 2 tier A/C class for their journey.
- Period of the journey forty four per cent of the respondents travel for 2-4 hours per day.
- The findings from the Chi-square test infers, there is a significant association between the services of railways and proper maintenance of the coach.
- The finding from the Chi-square test infers, there is a significant association between age of the respondents and extra coaches available during festival seasons.
- The levels of satisfaction are different among the travelling class people. In Tukey test, people with travelling class have different satisfaction level who are generated under the first sub-set. Whereas people with travelling class have different satisfaction level with second sub-set.
- Factor Analysis is performed with 40 attributes and these attributes grouped into 4 dimensions. The dimensions have been labeled as personal factor, promotional factor, stimulus factor, store factor and post purchase factor which comes up to 61 per cent. The Reliability of co-efficient alpha (α) for 40 items is .974 (scale range between 0.0 to 1.0)

Suggestions

- ❖ Passenger coach inner ambience including rest room can be properly re-designed. Noise reduction, dust prevention and convenience for the disabled must be kept in consideration.
- ❖ The flush arranged in the rest room can be modified in such a way as to spill water all over the closet so that the miserable odor can be avoided.
- ❖ In A/C - Chair Car seating arrangement can be modified. Seats should be arranged in such a way that passengers have adequate leg space.

- ❖ Mineral water in trains can be provided by railways and at cheaper cost to fulfill the needs of the passengers.
- ❖ Railway management should be aware of quality of food given by the pantry and stall side. The drive is to be conducted to check the cost of the food by the licensed food provided, while serving various standard food items proprietary articles food products such as packaged drinking water, biscuits, cold drinks etc in the Railway Stations Air Conditioned Coaches.
- ❖ Every passenger can be intimated about the SMS number available for housekeeping service in train. A few selected trains can facilitate passengers to contact onboard staff through SMS or phone call for complaints related to cleanliness in coaches, restrooms and other problems faced during journey time.

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Conclusion

A well managed transport system proves to be a catalyst of socio-economic transformation. Transportation system is considered to be a de-facto barometer of social, economic, commercial and cultural advances. In the Indian perspective, rail transportation contributes substantially to the development process. In the process of bearing high social costs, Indian Railways have the problem of financial crunch which has been making an assault on their potentials of serving the socio-economic infrastructure. This makes it essential that Indian Railways should conceptualize marketing and innovate the strategic decision to activate the process of qualitative-cum-quantitative improvements. Indian Railways should enhance the quality of all the attributes of A/C coach to reach world class standards.

The Indian Railways should cater to the needs of the passenger's immediate wants as services to be enhanced and to help the passenger's to travel every day with good satisfaction.

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