

RESEARCH PAPER

A study on passengers preference towards KSRTC in Thrissur district

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ABSTRACT

Passenger bus transport nationalization process is only partial in Kerala. The share of KSRTC fleet in the State's total stage carriages is only about one-third as mentioned. These transport undertakings as public enterprises are conceived and organized to function as commercial enterprises engaged in economic activity involving huge outlays of public investment. Social and economic objectives of providing efficient and economical transportation facilities to the masses have been the prime consideration for bringing the passenger road transportation system under the umbrella of the state which was sought to be achieved by the road transport corporation act. The objectives of the study are to identify passenger preference towards KSRTC in Thrissur, analyze the quality of road transport service and to compare the customer preference of customers between KSRTC and other modes of transport. Data was collected from 60 respondents through purposive sampling. The findings was that majority of the passengers prefer KSRTC Majority of the passengers prefer KSRTC due to the low fare given by them and also the passengers are of the opinion that the punctuality of KSRTC buses are to be improved the most. One of the important suggestions was that the KSRTC can provide students concessions and other facilities for increasing the use of these buses by the youngsters. Government can make new routes to improve the reach and also make more income.

KEY WORDS : Passenger preference, KSRTC, Quality of service

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Public road transport system for the movement of passengers over short and medium distance is essentially based on bus services. It is a basic infrastructure and a public utility service that meets the travel needs of the general public connected with work, education, social purposes and entertainment purposes.

Passenger road transport sector is dominated by publicly owned State Road Transport Corporations or Undertakings in some states like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh etc., while in some other states like Kerala it is dominant only in certain areas of the state. About 80 per cent of the land passenger transport needs in India is met by the bus transport system (Kulkarni, 2000). These transport undertakings as public enterprises are conceived and organized to function as commercial enterprises engaged in economic activity involving huge

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outlays of public investment. Social and economic objectives of providing efficient and economical transportation facilities to the masses have been the prime consideration for bringing the passenger road transportation system under the umbrella of the state which was sought to be achieved by the Road Transport Corporation Act of 1950 of Indian Parliament which paved the way for the nationalization of the passenger road transport to a large extent leading to the formation of State Road Transport Undertakings or Corporations in almost all States in India. In this context this is a case study of bus-based public passenger transport system in Kerala. Consumer preference “is a marketing term meaning a consumer likes one thing over another. For instance, a trend may indicate consumers prefer using debit cards over credit cards to pay for goods”. Passenger Bus Transport nationalization process is only partial in Kerala. Kerala state road transport corporation (KSRTC) is one of the most used road transport system by the people of the state. The share of KSRTC fleet in the State’s total stage carriages is only about one-third as mentioned. However, in the long distance routes, *i.e.*, route lengths of about 150 km and more KSRTC has a fair monopoly in the State, with their Fast Passenger and Express Services, which have a higher fare structure than the mofussil or Ordinary services. Because of poor financial performance and the general dissatisfaction at the quality of the services of KSRTC, the extension of nationalization to more routes in the States in the near future appears to be difficult. Generally the public also do not view this proposition favorably, presumably because of the lower quality of service rendered by the KSRTC compared to others. The study focuses on the passenger preference in selecting KSRTC for travelling other than another mode of transport like train, private bus, taxis etc.

Objectives of this study:

- To determine the passenger preference towards KSRTC in Thrissur.
- To analyze the quality of road transport service provided by KSRTC in Thrissur.
- To compare the customer preference of customers between KSRTC and other modes of transport.

Scope of the study:

Movement of the people from one place to another

place and the increase in population resulted in heavy demand for quick, efficient transport services. Under these circumstances, there is every possibility for deterioration of the quality of services provided by transport industries because of healthy competition. This study focuses on needs and attitude of the passengers towards the use of the transport services. The main aim of this study is to throw light on the preferences of the passengers towards KSRTC and also to study the ways and techniques followed by KSRTC to retain existing passengers and also to attract new passengers.

Statement of the problem:

Vijayalakshmi (2001) did a study on the quality of passenger service provided by Maharashtra State Transport Corporation. The aim of the study was to find, whether the passengers in and around Pune, perceive the quality of service rendered by MSRTC as matching to their expectation. Mariamma (1993) had made a critical appraisal of the performance of the public passenger service system in Kerala. The aim of the study was to evaluate the performance of KSRTC in terms of productivity and financial indicators. The reasons for the accumulated losses in KSRTC were studied in depth. Low fleet utilization was the main reason for low productivity in KSRTC. Eboli and Mazzulla (2007) investigated service quality attributes important for customer satisfaction. Respondent were asked to rate the importance and satisfaction with 16 service quality attributes (availability, route characteristic, frequency, reliability, bus stop furniture, bus overcrowding, cleanliness, cost, information, promotion, safety on board, personal security, personnel, complains, environmental protection and bus stop maintenance). The result shows that the variable important for global customer satisfaction is service planning which is reflected in reliability, frequency, information, promotion, personnel and complaint. What were the expectations of the passengers towards the transport sector is explained by Sezhian *et al.* (2011) attributes later divided into 2 factors affecting the performance.

In spite of the above studies there has not been one which studies the passenger’s preference of KSRTC in Thrissur district in particular. The aforementioned indicates a research gap which this study sought to identify and so the study is on Passenger Preference towards KSRTC in Thrissur district.

METHODOLOGY

Data collection:

Primary data:

It can be collected by conducting surveys using questionnaires.

Secondary data:

It can be collected from books, journals, magazines, and internet and sample projects.

Sample design:

The sample of thirty is taken from the population of the city of Thrissur district with the perception that they also shows the same nature of the population.

Sampling methods:

Sampling used in the study is non random sampling.

Sampling size:

The survey is conducted by collecting data through questionnaires from 60 respondents who had travelled in KSRTC.

Data collection tools:

Questionnaire and interview

Limitations of the study:

- This study focuses only on public bus transport corporation *i.e.* KSRTC
- The researcher focuses and collects the data only from the respondents who are able to understand and to give their answers for the questions asked for this research work.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- Majority of the passengers prefer to travel using railways for long journey.
- Majority of the passengers prefer KSRTC due to the low fare given by them.
- Majority of passengers are of the opinion that the punctuality of KSRTC buses are
- Most of passengers (64%) rarely get information

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Male	36	60
Female	24	40
Total	60	100

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	60	100
No	Nil	Nil
Total	60	100

Frequency of availing KSRTC services		
Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	16	13
Weekly	14	23
Occasionally	22	37
Rarely	12	20
Very rarely	4	7
Total	60	100

Purpose of the journey		
Purpose	No. of respondents	Percentage
Study	16	27
Employment	26	43
Household matters	10	17
Touring	8	13
Total	60	100

of the reason for detainment, approximate time of departure etc. when KSRTC buses are usually detained.

- Majority of passengers have an opinion that public nuisance is the main offence faced by them in KSRTC.
- Most of the passengers are of the opinion that the internal space and sitting arrangement in KSRTC are uncomfortable.
- 66 per cent of the passengers are of the opinion that the price charged by KSRTC for their various services is reasonable.
- 57 per cent of the passengers are not satisfied with the routes covered by KSRTC.
- 79 per cent of the passengers have not used KSRTC mobile application for booking tickets.
- Majority of the passengers do not prefer KSRTC to others.
- Out of the 30 respondents, 37 per cent travel by KSRTC buses occasionally.
- Most of the respondents avail the services of KSRTC buses for employment purposes.

Table 5 : Classification on the opinion of passengers in the case of long journey

	Rank 1		Rank 2		Rank 3		Rank 4	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
KSRTC	4	7%	10	17%	18	30%	28	47%
Private bus	12	20%	14	23%	18	30%	16	26%
Car	20	33%	16	27%	14	23%	10	17%
Railway	24	40%	20	33%	10	17%	6	10%
Total	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%

Table 6 : Preference of KSRTC to other modes of transport

	Rank 1		Rank 2		Rank 3		Rank 4		Rank 5	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Low fare	22	37%	18	30%	8	13%	6	10%	6	10%
Comforts	4	6%	6	10%	10	17%	16	27%	24	40%
Speed	18	30%	14	23%	12	20%	8	13%	8	13%
Security	4	7%	8	14%	16	27%	20	33%	12	20%
Reliability	12	20%	14	23%	14	23%	10	17%	10	17%
Total	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%

Table 7 : Classification on the basis of improvement in passenger amenities

	Rank 1		Rank 2		Rank 3		Rank 4	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Comfort	14	23%	12	20%	16	27%	18	30%
Convenience	8	13%	6	10%	22	37%	24	40%
Safety	16	27%	20	33%	12	20%	12	20%
Punctuality	22	37%	22	37%	10	17%	6	10%
Total	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%	60	100%

Table 8 : Classification on the basis number of passengers getting concession in fare

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Yes	18	30
No	42	70
Total	60	100

Table 9 : Classification on the basis of information regarding the detainment of KSRTC buses

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Always	2	4
Frequently	4	5
Rarely	18	31
Very rarely	20	33
Never	16	27
Total	60	100

Table 10 : Classification regarding offences faced by passenger in KSRTC bus

	No. of respondents	Percentage
Public nuisance	18	31
Seat cornering	8	14
Theft of property	16	25
Others	18	30
Total	60	100

Table 11 : Classification on the basis of comfort in KSRTC		
	No. of respondents	Percentage
Strongly agree	8	12
Agree	12	20
Neutral	22	37
Disagree	18	31
Total	60	100

Table 12 : Classification on the Price charged by KSRTC for their various services		
	No. of respondents	Percentage
Very high	4	5
High	4	8
Reasonable	24	39
Low	16	27
Very low	12	21
Total	60	100

Table 13 : Classification on the basis of crowding in KSRTC		
	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	20	33
No	40	67
Total	60	100

Table 14 : Classification on the satisfaction of passengers on the routes covered by KSRTC		
	No: of respondents	Percentage
Yes	26	43
No	34	57
Total	60	100

Table 15 : Classification on the booking of tickets through mobile application		
	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	21
No	48	79
Total	60	100

Table 16 : Classification on the behaviour of conductors		
	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	48	81
No	12	19
Total	60	100

Suggestions:

- Government can alter the present situation of KSRTC by changing the seating alignment and they can modify the bus.
- Government can make new routes to improve the reach and also make more income.
- KSRTC can also implement more buses in busy

routes where rushing can be solved.

- To increase the security KSRTC can install safety measures such as emergency alert and CCTV.
- KSRTC can provide students concessions and other facilities for increasing the use of these buses by the youngsters.

Conclusion:

The purpose of the study was to analyze the passenger preference towards KSRTC in Thrissur district. The respondents are so supportive so as they provided accurate and faithful information about their experience with KSRTC. The study was so satisfactory as it is related with the day to day activities of the common man. Government can alter the present situation of KSRTC by changing the seating alignment and they can modify the bus, make new routes, implement more buses, increase the security, police assistance, students concessions and other facilities for increasing the use of these buses by the youngsters.

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