A STUDY ON CAB SERVICES AS A MODE OF INTRA-CITY TRANSPORTATION IN COIMBATORE.

*S.Birundha, Full-time Ph.D research scholar, Sri G.V.G. Visalakshi College for women, Udumalpet-642128,TamilNadu.

**Dr.C.Pushpalatha, Associate Professor, Sri G.V.G. Visalakshi college for women, Udumalpet-642128, TamilNadu.

Abstract: Using cab services for intra-city travel have become the growing new trend of people living in cities. A gradual change is witnessed by shifting from other modes of transportation towards cab services. As city people have different modes of transport facilities, this study aims to identify the factors that people consider before choosing a mode of transport for travelling within the city and the various reasons that attract people towards cab services. People from central and east Coimbatore city limit has been taken for the study. The results of the study revealed that availability of service at doorsteps is the main attraction of people towards cab services and safety is the most important feature considered by respondents before selecting a mode of transportation for travelling within the city.

Keywords: Intra-city transportation, cab services, preference, travel.

INTRODUCTION:

People living in cities have learned to overcome the realities of urban transportation like crowded and congested roads, outrageous car maintenance charges, and steep parking tickets. This gradual shift in preference has been evidenced from the increase in preference of passengers towards cab services. Cabs have made the travelling purpose easy and comfortable for the city people. A taxicab, also known as a taxi or a cab, is a type of hired vehicle with a driver, used by a single or group of passengers to go around the places of their choice. It alleviates the commuting and transportation problems of the city people and increases accessibility. The amenities provided by cab service providers have increased in recent times and it has enhanced the comfort in travelling within the city. Reasonable fares, greater convenience and advance booking has made the cab services a popular and a preferred mode of transportation in cities. Approaching bus and other modes of transportations might not be always in accordance with the preference of individuals. In such situations, cab services have been found to be a favourable and hassle-free mode of transport.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

City population is increasing day by day as people from villages and sub-urban areas largely move towards cities because of the abundant opportunities it provides. As like other cities, it is also relevant for Coimbatore. Coimbatore being the second largest city in the state, consists of industries, educational institutions, hospitals and other service sectors and it is also emerging as an important IT hub of Tamil Nadu. Transportation plays a tectonic role in Coimbatore. Regarding transportation, the city is served by Coimbatore international

airport, railways, other modes of inter and intra-city transportations. Large number of people in the city travel daily for work, shopping and other social reasons. Traffic congestion and traffic snarl-up has become inseparable parts of city travel. Travelling within the city is characterized by slower speeds, longer trip times and increased vehicular queuing. Road Infrastructural development works have also crippled the traffic movement in the city. All these have made a gradual shift in the mindset of people to seek convenience in intra-city travel. Among various modes of intra-city transportation, people have started to give preference to cab services because of the convenience it provides. Though cab services provide convenience, people also have apprehensions about cost of service, safety and security. Since people have a varied choice of intra-city transportation, the present study attempts to identify the factors which influence the passengers to choose a mode of intra-city transportation and in particular the cab services.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Shanthi D, Venkatasalam A & Muthudinesh P (2018) ascertained the role of innovativeness that influenced the consumers in the selection of cab services. From the study it was found that, consumers who move towards innovativeness preferred to adopt new technology like using apps for booking cabs and other services. The study found that redemption of coupons was the most important motivating factor for using cab services and more middle aged adults were using cab services when compared to other age groups. Among the innovative factors considered in selecting cab services, advertisement on social network was ranked first followed by spot booking on app, discount, festival offers, online booking, coupons, free wi-fi and security through Global Positioning System. The study concluded that the consumers in the modern world were found to be both innovative and at the same time price sensitive too. Therefore providing coupon redemption would help to retain existing customers and attract new customers.

Jiameng Zhang, Jing Li and Shengyun Lu (2016) attempted a study on factors affecting the demand for the taxi in Zheijiang, China. The study revealed that among the factors that influence customers in choosing a car booking app, discounts offered by the app was considered to be the most important factor followed by time needed for driver's responses to passenger's orders, drivers punctuality and types of cars operating under the app. The study further added that majority of the respondents would demand for taxis more, if the concentration level of driving by the taxi drivers is high and as the consumers were found to be less familiar with good social purposes of taxis; it had the least impact on the demand for taxis.

Abdul Wahid Khan, Ambika Jangid & et. al (2016) conducted an empirical research on factors affecting customer satisfaction in the taxi service market in India. Structural equation modeling was done in the study to identify the significant factors that lead to customer satisfaction. Price, professionalism, car, convenience and responsiveness were taken as the variables of SERQUAL model for taxi industry. The study revealed that, out of five attributes, price of hiring a cab, professionalism of driver, easiness of booking and responsiveness of cab service providers were considered to be the most important attributes in the taxi market. The study also used

structured equation modeling to identify the overall customer satisfaction on the basis of driver professionalism, car condition and convenience. From the observations, the study concluded that driver professionalism and convenience had significant impact on overall customer satisfaction. The study further added that, in general, the customers assumed the car to be in good condition and so it did not constitute a differentiating factor.

Madhuwanthi , Ashu Marasinghe & et. al (2015) studied the factors influencing the travel behavior of consumers in choosing a transport mode in Colombo metropolitan area, Sri Lanka. The study attempted to identify the factors that affected the selection of transport mode for regular activities based on personal and travel based characteristics. The respondents were randomly selected and were equal to or more than fifteen years. Public bus and trains were considered as public modes of transportation and motor cycle, three wheelers, car, walk and others modes were considered to be the private modes of transportation in the study. Based on the analysis, the study found that, income, vehicle ownership rate, safety and comfort were the prominent factors influencing the travel mode choice in Combo metropolitan area in Sri Lanka.

Tazyn Rahman (2104) attempted a research study on organized radio taxi operation in Guwahati- A case study on "Prime cab", with the objective to identify the customer perception, various components contributing towards the customer satisfaction and to offer suggestions to improve the performance of the cab service. From the research study it was found that friends and relatives were the main source of information for prime cab services and on time reporting was the main factor influencing the customer to choose cab service and driver behavior was the least influencing factor. Majority of the respondents were regular customers of Prime cab service and nearly half of the respondents were customers who mainly used the service for airport pick up and drop out and most of the respondents were satisfied with overall services of cabs. The study concluded that collecting feedback from customers would help to gather customer experience and it would help to improve service quality. The study further added that Guwahati city was facing enormous parking problems and hence the cab services would have a positive impact towards its growth and expansion.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The specific objectives of the study are

- ➢ To analyze the factors influencing the passengers' choice of mode of intra-city transportation in Coimbatore city.
- ➢ To identify the reasons persuading the passengers towards cab services in Coimbatore city.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY:

- ➢ H_{01}: Gender does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.
- ➢ H_{02}: Age does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.
- ➢ H_{03}: Marital status does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.
- ➢ H_{04}: Educational qualification does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.
- ➢ H_{05}: Occupational status does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.
- ➢ H_{06}: Family Income does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.

> ➢ H_{07}: Number of earning members in the family does not influence passengers to prefer cab services within the city.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The data required for the study was collected from a sample 80 respondents using convenient sampling method. Initially the questionnaire was distributed to a sample of 90 respondents but only 80 questionnaires were completed in all aspects and taken for the final study. The respondents consisted of passengers who have been using cab services for more than six months in the study area. The study was conducted during the period August 2019-September 2019.The respondents of the study belonged only to Central Coimbatore and East Coimbatore as delimited by Coimbatore city Municipal Corporation. Statistical tools like percentage analysis, rank analysis and chi-square study was used for analyzing the data.

Table-1

Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Variables	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	37	46.25
	Female	43	53.75
Age(in years)	21-30	23	28.75
	31-40	28	35.00
	41-50	19	23.75
	Above 50	10	12.50
Marital Status	Unmarried	28	35.00
	Married	54	67.50
Educational Qualification	No formal education	2	2.50
	Upto school level	6	7.50
	Undergraduate	35	43.75
	Post Graduate	37	46.25
Occupational status	Student	7	8.75
	Private employee	11	13.75
	Government Employee	10	12.50
	Professional	8	10.00
	Businessman	18	22.50
	Homemaker	22	27.50
	Others	4	5.00
Family Income (Per month in Rs.)	Upto 40000	8	10.00
	40001-60000	17	21.25
	60001-80000	20	25.00
	80001-10000	22	27.50
	Above 100000	13	16.25
Number of earning members	1	23	28.75
	2	41	51.25
	3	16	20.00

Source: Primary data

The above table reveals that 53.75 percent of the respondents were females, 35 percent of the respondents belong to the age group of 31-40 years, 46.25 percent of the respondents are post graduates, 27.50 percent of the

respondents are homemakers, 27.50 percent of the respondents have a family income of Rs.80001-Rs.100000 per month and 51.25 percent of the respondents have 2 earning members in the family.

Table-2

Factors considered by respondents before choosing an intercity mode of transportation

Factors	Highly Considerable (5)	Considerable (4)	Neutral (3)	Slightly Considerable (2)	Not at all considerable (1)	Total Score	Rank
Safety	220	144	0	0	0	364	I
Cost of travel	90	196	24	10	0	320	III
Ease of travel	85	152	54	0	7	298	IV
Purpose of travel	85	172	30	0	10	297	V
Health condition	155	148	9	4	7	323	II
Weather condition	115	108	60	0	10	293	VIII
Place of destination	100	108	75	10	3	296	VI
Social status	130	136	0	16	12	294	VII
Time of the day	95	16	63	28	22	224	IX

The above table depicts that among various factors considered before choosing a mode of transportation within the city, safety has been ranked first with a score of 364, followed by health condition (323), cost of travel (320), ease of travel (298), purpose of travel (297), place of destination (296), social status (294), weather condition (293) and time of the day (224).

Table-3

Factors influencing the respondents to prefer cab services

Factors	Highly Influential (5)	Influential (4)	Neutral (3)	Slightly Influential (2)	Not at all Influential (1)	Total Score	Rank
Preplanning of travel	190	116	36	0	0	342	V
Service at door step	330	40	12	0	0	382	I
Transparency of tariffs	90	52	99	0	16	257	X
Availability of travel bill	35	16	24	14	54	143	XIII
Sophisticated travel	200	72	45	0	7	324	VI

No parking problem	165	68	69	12	0	314	VIII
Emergency situation	225	128	9	0	0	362	II
Trustworthy	190	140	21	0	0	351	IV
Discount and offers	175	84	36	24	0	319	VII
Ease of booking	230	108	21	0	0	359	III
24*7 service	100	108	33	22	11	274	IX
Social status	85	104	24	14	22	249	XI
Popularity	15	72	96	48	3	234	XII

Among factors influencing to prefer cab services, service at doorstep is ranked first with a score of 382, followed by emergency situation(362), ease of booking(359), preplanning the travel(351), trustworthy(342), sophisticated travel(324), discounts and offers(319), no parking problem(314), 24*7 service(274), transparency of tariffs (257), social influence(249), popularity (234)and availability of travel bill (143).

Table-4

Results of Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Chi-square test		Degrees of freedom	Result
	Calculated value	Table value		
H_{01}: Gender and preference towards cab services within the city.	11.30	5.99	2	Rejected
H_{02}: Age and preference towards cab services within the city.	23.27	12.59	6	Rejected
H_{03}: Marital status and preference towards cab services within the city.	9.74	5.99	2	Rejected
H_{04}: Educational qualification and preference towards cab services within the city.	4.16	12.59	6	Accepted
H_{05}: Occupational status and preference towards cab services within the city.	6.70	21.01	12	Rejected
H_{06}: Monthly income of the family and preference towards cab services within the city.	23.64	15.51	8	Rejected
H_{07}: Number of earning members in the family and preference towards cab services within the city.	14.09	9.49	4	Rejected

Based on the results of the hypotheses testing, it is evident that except educational qualification, all other factors namely gender, age, marital status, occupational status, monthly income and number of earning members in the family significantly influence the customer to prefer cab services for travelling within the city.

CONCLUSION:

Every customer has diverse attachment consideration towards a particular mode of urban transportation. The present study assessed the factors that persuade the passengers towards cabs in Coimbatore city. Service at doorstep was the most influencing feature and availability of travel bill was the least influencing factor regarding cab preference in the study area. To provide standard service to the passengers, cab service providers need to conduct timely surveys and cater to the changing needs of the users. Importance must be placed on customer-oriented behavior to improve the usage of cab services among the people in Coimbatore city. Safety need to be given priority and introduction of innovative products or services with potential for need fulfillment and safety considerations of the passengers would increase the share of cab services in the urban transportation.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH:

The study is limited to only central and east Coimbatore and so the results cannot be generalized for the entire city. Since the results are confined only to a particular study period, its results might change in future. For further studies, it is suggested to do a comparative study of preference pattern of customers towards cabs services among different regions as divided by Coimbatore city Municipal Corporation. The study can also be extended by making an analysis of customer preference towards various modes of urban transportation.

Bibliography:

Journals:

➤ Shanthi, D., Venkatasalam, A & Muthudinesh, P. 2018. A study on factors influencing the customers in selection of cab services. *International Journal of Intellectual Advancements and research work*, 6 (2), 857-860.

➤ Jiameng Zhang, Jing Li & Shengyun Lu. 2016. Factors affecting the demand for the taxi- evidence from Zheijiang, China. *Review of Integrative Business and Economics Research,* 5(4), 379-394.

➤ Abdul Wahid Khan, Ambika Jangid,Ankit Bansal,Maruthappan S., Shiven Chaudhary, Vinay Tyagi & Purba H. Rao.2016. An empirical research on factors affecting customer satisfaction in the taxi market in India. *Journal of Entrepreneurship and Management,* 5(3), 46-53.

➤ Madhuwanthi, R.A.M., Ashu Marasinghe, Janaka Rajapakse, R.P.C., Asanka D. Dharmawansa & Shusaku Nomura.2015.Factors influencing to travel behavioron transport mode choice-A case of Colombo metropolitan area in Sri Lanka. *International journal of Effective engineering,*15(2),63-72.

➤ Tazyn Rahman. 2014. Organized sector radio taxi operation in Guwahati- A case study on "Prime cab". *International journal of Advance and Innovative research,*1(1),19-25.

Books:

➤ Ramachandran, M. (2015).*Reforming Urban Transport in India: Issues and Best practices.* Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, COPAL Publishing group.

➢ Dilip Halder (2006).*Urban Transport in India: Crisis and Cure.* Bookwell Publications. Daryaganj, New Delhi.

➢ Michael Meyer & Eric J Miller (2001). *Urban Transportation Planning*. McGraw-Hill Higher Education. Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Websites:

www.researchgate.net

www.googlescholar.com

www.slideshare.net