



A Comparative Study on Consumer Perception of Service Quality of Public and Private Transportation in Tenkasi Taluk

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ABSTRACT

Transport plays an important role in every stage of human civilization. The development of various sectors of the economy largely depends on transport. The road transport is the most primitive mode of transport. Road transport plays an important role in the economic development of the country. It is the most convenient transport within cities and towns. The general objective of the present study is to compare the consumer perception on service quality of public and private transport services in Tenkasi Taluk. The main aim of the study is to know the perception of passengers towards reliability, convenience and comfort, backup service and luggage and bus fare of public and private transport. The size of the sample of the study was selected as 120 passengers. Out of the size of the sample of the study, the researcher divided the respondents as 60 passengers from public transport and another 60 passengers from private transport. It is found that the majority of the passengers of public and private transport are moderately satisfied with the overall service quality of public transport and private transport.

KEY WORDS: Transport, consumer perception, service quality, public and private transport

INTRODUCTION

Transport plays an important role in every stage of human civilization. The development of various sectors of the economy largely depends on transport. In modes of transport, transport industries find changes and introduce different types of vehicles in road transport. Private transport services are one among them. This service has been assuming growing significance not only among rural folks but also among town

dwellers. This enshrining role played by private transport services is due to two distinct features namely service in unserved rural areas and reasonable fares. As far as India is concerned, the rural population has less transport facilities when compared to the urban population. But after the introduction of private transport services, it gives the interior coverage to villages and it has a pivotal role to play. But the private transport services meet the needs of these poor people.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

No transport business can survive without satisfying the needs of the passengers. In general, compared with other modes of transport, bus transport and its services are more indispensable, convenient and very easy to access. In certain situations, bus transport may suit with the needs of the passengers and facilitate more in all aspects. It carries the people from one place to another place to enable the people to carry out their day to day activities and business. Therefore bus transport and its service quality is very important and plays a vital role in the day to day life of the general public. Bus transport services are as similar to central nerves system of a human body. Bus transport connects different levels of people and it aids the people to have and to build their business contact, celebrate festivals and in many other ways. Passengers tend to use their private transport due to lack of satisfaction they derive from the services of public transport. In this study an attempt has been made to study the passengers' perception towards service quality of public transport and private transport services in Tenkasi Taluk.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the present study is to compare the consumer perception on service quality of public and private transport services in Tenkasi Taluk. The following are the specific objectives of the study.

- (i) To study the difference in consumer perception of service quality of public and private transport among the different socio economic conditions of consumers.
- (ii) To determine the reasons for using public and private transport.
- (iii) To suggest measures to provide better public and private transport services

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The approach of the study is to look from the angle of the passengers who travel through public and private transport. This approach is very useful to the society. The study mainly covers the perception of passengers towards the services offered by the public and private transport and reasons for using public and private transport. The main aim of the study is to know the perception of passengers towards reliability, convenience and comfort, backup service and luggage and bus fare of public and private transport.

HYPOTHESES

The following hypotheses were framed for the study.

- There is no significant difference in perception towards reliability of public and private transport among different age group of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk.

- There is no significant difference in perception towards convenience and comfort of public and private transport among different educational qualification of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk.
- There is no significant difference in perception towards backup service and luggage of public and private transport among different occupation of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk.
- There is no significant difference in perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among different monthly income of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk.

METHODOLOGY

Primary and secondary data have been collected from different sources and used for analysis. Secondary data required for the study have been collected from various publications. Primary data was collected through a well-structured questionnaire prepared by the researcher.

SAMPLING

All the people have been using public and private transport in the society except those who have personal car. Hence the researcher decided to select the respondents as those who are not having the personal car. Keeping in mind all the constraints the size of the sample of the study was selected as 120 passengers. Out of the size of the sample of the study, the researcher divided the respondents as 60 passengers from public transport and another 60 passengers from private transport.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ✓ This study covers only Tenkasi Taluk.
- ✓ Passengers have provided necessary information for some questions from their memory and experience whose accuracy is not satisfactory.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table 1: Reason for using Public Transport

Sl. No	Reasons	Total Score	Average Score	Rank
1	Unable to drive	2940.6	49.01	IV
2	Unavailability of parking facilities for own vehicle	3028.8	50.48	III
3	Avoid driving in the traffic	3412.8	56.88	II
4	Public transport is the cheapest option	3525.6	58.76	I
5	Public transport is the fastest option	2578.8	42.98	V
6	Public transport is the most reliable option	2446.8	40.78	VII
7	Don't own a vehicle	2533.8	42.23	VI

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows that majority of the sample passengers had given first rank to public transport is the cheapest option and the next majority of the sample passengers had given second rank to avoid driving in the traffic. Table further shows that the sample passengers had given the third rank to unavailability of parking facilities for own vehicle. It is clear from the table that the sample passengers had given the last rank to public transport is the most reliable option.

Table 2: Reason for using Private Transport

Sl. No	Reasons	Total Score	Average Score	Rank
1	Unable to drive	3172.8	52.88	III
2	Unavailability of parking facilities for own vehicle	2863.2	47.72	IV
3	Avoid driving in the traffic	3354	55.90	II
4	Private transport is the cheapest option	3430.8	57.18	I
5	Private transport is the fastest option	2691	44.85	VI
6	Private transport is the most reliable option	2530.8	42.18	VII
7	Don't own a vehicle	2776.8	46.28	V

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 reveals that majority of the sample passengers had given first rank to private transport is the cheapest option and the next majority of the sample passengers had given second rank to avoid driving in the traffic. Table further shows that the sample passengers had given the third rank to unable to drive. It is clear from the table that the sample passengers had given the last rank to private transport is the most reliable option.

Age and Perception towards Reliability of public and private transport

Passengers of different ages have been traveling in the public and private transport and they are satisfied towards reliability at different levels. In order to study the relationship between perception of passengers towards reliability of public and private transport and age, 'Two way ANOVA' test is attempted with the null hypothesis as, "there is no significant difference in perception towards reliability of public and private transport among different age of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk". The result of 'Two way ANOVA' test for perception towards reliability of public and private transport among different age of passengers is presented in table 3.

Table 3: Perception towards Reliability of public and private transport among different age group of passengers

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p Value
Levene's Test		9, 110		0.986	0.456
Corrected Model	174.283 ^a	9	19.365	0.832	0.588
Intercept	36481.626	1	36481.626	1568.070	0.000
Type of transport	1.173	1	1.173	0.050	0.823
age	79.561	4	19.890	0.855	0.494
Type of transport * age	85.597	4	21.399	0.920	0.455
Error	2559.184	110	23.265		
Total	49620.000	120			
Corrected Total	2733.467	119			

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 reveals that since the p value of perception towards reliability of transport among different age of passengers is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards reliability of transport among different age of passengers. Hence, age is not

a significant variable in perception towards reliability of transport. Further the table reveals that since the p value of perception towards reliability of transport among different type of transport is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards reliability of transport among different type of transport. Hence, type of transport is not a significant variable in perception towards reliability of transport. Interactive effect of age and type of transport in perception towards reliability of transport reveals that since the p value is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards reliability of transport among different type of transport among different age groups of passengers. Hence, age and type of transport are not the significant variables in perception towards reliability of transport.

Educational qualification and Perception towards Convenience and Comfort of public and private transport

Educational qualification of the passengers has relationship with perception towards convenience and comfort of public and private transport. In order to study the relationship between perception of passengers towards convenience and comfort of public and private transport and educational qualification, ‘Two way ANOVA’ test is attempted with the null hypothesis as, “there is no significant difference in perception towards convenience and comfort of public and private transport among different educational qualification of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk”. The result of ‘Two way ANOVA’ test for perception towards convenience and comfort of public and private transport among different educational qualification of passengers is presented in table 4.

Table 4: Perception towards Convenience and Comfort of public and private transport among different educational qualification of passengers

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	df	F	p Value
Levene's Test			12, 107	2.157	0.019
Corrected Model	228.823 ^a	19.069	12	0.678	0.769
Intercept	35626.464	35626.464	1	1266.806	0.000
Type of transport	55.037	55.037	1	1.957	0.165
Educational qualification	139.443	23.240	6	0.826	0.552
Type of transport * educational qualification	54.768	10.954	5	0.389	0.855
Error	3009.169	28.123	107		
Total	73757.000		120		
Corrected Total	3237.992		119		

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 shows that since the p value of perception towards convenience and comfort of transport among different educational qualification of passengers is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards convenience and comfort of transport among different educational qualification of passengers. Table further shows that since the p value of perception of passengers towards convenience and comfort of transport among different type of transport is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards convenience and comfort of transport among different type of transport. Interactive effect of educational qualification and type of transport in perception towards convenience and comfort of

transport reveals that since the p value is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards convenience and comfort of transport among different type of transport with different educational qualification.

Occupation and Perception towards Backup service and Luggage of public and private transport

Occupation of passengers has relationship with perception of passengers towards backup service and luggage of public and private transport. In order to study the relationship between perception of passengers towards backup service and luggage of public and private transport and occupation, 'Two way ANOVA' test is attempted with the null hypothesis as, "there is no significant difference in perception towards backup service and luggage of public and private transport among different occupation of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk". The result of 'Two way ANOVA' test for perception towards backup service and luggage of public and private transport among different occupation of passengers is presented in table 5.

Table 5: Perception towards Backup service and Luggage of public and private transport among different occupation of passengers

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	df	F	p Value
Levene's Test			17, 102	1.283	0.218
Corrected Model	112.211 ^a	6.601	17	1.033	0.430
Intercept	9872.792	9872.792	1	1545.096	0.000
Type of transport	5.135	5.135	1	0.804	0.372
occupation	61.841	7.730	8	1.210	0.301
Type of transport * occupation	27.517	3.440	8	0.538	0.825
Error	651.756	6.390	102		
Total	13952.000		120		
Corrected Total	763.967		119		

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 clearly exhibits that since the p value of perception towards backup service and luggage of transport among different occupation of passengers is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards backup service and luggage of transport among different occupation of passengers. Table further clearly exhibits that since the p value of perception towards backup service and luggage of transport among different type of transport is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards backup service and luggage of transport among different type of transport. Interactive effect of occupation and type of transport in perception towards backup service and luggage of transport reveals that since the p value is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards backup service and luggage of transport among different type of transport with different occupation.

Monthly income Perception of passengers towards bus fare of public and private transport

In order to study the relationship between perception of passengers towards bus fare of public and private transport and monthly income, 'Two way ANOVA' test is attempted with the null hypothesis as, "there is no significant difference in perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among

different monthly income of passengers in Tenkasi Taluk”. The result of ‘Two way ANOVA’ test for perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among different monthly income of passengers is presented in table 6.

Table 6: Perception of passengers towards bus fare of public and private transport among different monthly income

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Mean Square	df	F	p Value
Levene's Test			11, 108	2.426	0.010
Corrected Model	239.034 ^a	21.730	11	3.603	0.000
Intercept	6019.056	6019.056	1	998.107	0.000
Type of transport	131.142	131.142	1	21.747	0.000
Monthly income	42.915	8.583	5	1.423	0.222
Type of transport * monthly income	15.536	3.107	5	0.515	0.764
Error	651.291	6.030	108		
Total	8427.000		120		
Corrected Total	890.325		119		

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 reveals that since the p value of perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among different monthly income is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among different monthly income. Further the table reveals that since the p value of perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among different type of transport is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. It shows that there is a significant difference in perception towards bus fare of public and private transport among different type of transport. Interactive effect of monthly income and type of transport in perception towards bus fare of transport reveals that since the p value is higher than 0.05, the null hypothesis is accepted. It shows that there is no significant difference in perception towards bus fare of transport among different type of transport with different monthly income.

Suggestions

The following suggestions made by the researcher to improve the service quality of public and private transport.

- (1) The bus halting places must be properly planned and bus shelters with seating facilities should be constructed. They must be properly maintained and be provided with passenger information.
- (2) The city streets must be constructed with wider pavements, free of obstructions and be devoted for convenient use of passengers of all ages paying emphasis to the needs of disabled, elderly persons, women and children.
- (3) Continuous awareness programmes to educate passengers on traffic rules and regulations, responsibilities of passengers and motorists as well as the places and persons to whom complaints and requests be made must be carried out using mass media and other appropriate communication methods through which a greater number of passengers could be reached.

(4) Passengers have especially recommended that those reckless drivers of public bus services and other motorists who purposely violate traffic rules and regulations must be fined. If the current laws are not adequate the authorities must introduce new laws to control the indisciplined behaviors of motorists.

(5) Programmes must be implemented to develop a good relationship between the conductors, drivers and the passengers of public bus transport. Particular attention should be paid to change the attitudes of private bus conductors towards the passengers.

CONCLUSION

Passengers tend to use their private transport due to lack of perception they derive from the services of public transport. In the study area, the service quality of public transport is very poor compared with private transport. Private transport attracts the rural passengers by seating arrangements, TV and other facilities. In this study, passengers perception with public transport and private transport services in Tenkasi Taluk has been investigated. Among the sampled passengers, the results indicate that the majority of the passengers of public and private transport are moderately satisfied with the overall service quality of public transport and private transport. Among the sampled passengers of public transport, majority had given first rank to public transport is the cheapest option and the next majority of the sample passengers had given second rank to avoid driving in the traffic and the sample passengers had given the last rank to public transport is the most reliable option. Majority of the sample passengers had given first rank to private transport the cheapest option and the next majority of the sample passengers had given second rank to avoid driving in the traffic and the sample passengers had given the last rank to private transport is the most reliable option.

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