

**PERCEPTION TOWARDS WOMEN EMPOWERMENT SCHEMES IN TAMILNADU
STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION LIMITED, COIMBATORE**

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ABSTRACT

Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Ltd. (TNSTC) is a government owned public transport bus operator in Tamil Nadu, India. The vast majority of public transportation is funded and operated by local government authorities. Mobility is the prerequisite to accessing goods and services, such as health, jobs, education and leisure. Women face more restrictions to mobility and their travel patterns differ from those of men due to their differences in needs and tasks. While public transportation comes in many forms, it can be defined as a system that moves people from one area to another in an efficient, affordable manner. Women face different challenges when it comes to mobility, whether it is inclusion, safety, accessibility or entering the workforce in the transport sector. Hence, this study has intended to analyse the perception towards women empowerment schemes in Tamilnadu State Transport Corporation Limited, Coimbatore. This study followed research design is descriptive method. For this objective, the researcher has chosen 82 women passengers who are travelling in TNSTC, Coimbatore through random sampling method. A structured questionnaire has been administered among population to collect the required information related demographic profile and their perception towards women empowerment schemes by 5 points Likert scaling method. The collected data are entered in Microsoft Excel 2019 and analyzed by performing the statistical techniques namely percentage analysis, mean score, standard deviation and ANOVA with the help of SPSS 22.0. The analysis illustrated that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who belong to 41-50 years of age group, opined as providing valuable service, felt as playing dynamic role at women empowerment schemes and travelling for personal work in TNSTC, Coimbatore.

Keywords:

Women Passengers, Public Transport, Tamilnadu State Transport Corporation Limited, Women Empowerment Schemes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Public transportation is a form of local travel that enables more people to commute together along designated routes. Typical examples of types of public transportation include buses, trains, and trams. High-speed rails, airlines, and coaches dominate public transportation between cities. Transportation is an essential component of human life as well as any country's economic life. Commerce, agriculture, and the service industry all rely on it to survive. It aids in the movement of people and objects from one location to another. Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Ltd. (TNSTC) is a government owned public transport bus operator in Tamil Nadu, India. It operates Intercity bus services to cities within Tamil Nadu, and from Tamil Nadu to its neighbouring states. It also operates town busses from major cities and towns of Tamil Nadu to its neighbourhoods. A well-functioning transportation network is a must for a rising country like India's future economic progress. Public services can be described as the provision of services or meeting the needs of individuals or groups with an interest in the organization while adhering to the organization's rules and procedures. The challenges women face when it comes to mobility are inclusion, safety, accessibility or entering the workforce in the transport sector. Women tend to make more and shorter trips, at more varied times. They use public transport and walk more than men. This often leads to higher expenditures due to the fact that public transport is often based on tariffs that charge per trip, in contrast to time-based charging. Transport definitely plays a significant role in ameliorating or exacerbating the social conditions of women, particularly

those who are poor. And it is proven that as women's incomes increase, differences in travel behaviour between men and women decrease.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In view of Naveen Bangalore Ramu and Anjula Gurtoo, (2019) displayed that timely service, women-friendliness, ticket price affordability and service to price satisfaction were common to passengers from Europe and India whereas significantly impact commuters' perceived service value devised as overall satisfaction. Specifically, external tangibles such as clean drinking water, clean bus stops were however significantly more important for passengers in Europe, while handling of luggage was a more appropriate tangible for passengers in the Indian context. The result from Vinayak Shivaji Salokhe and Omprakash Halder (2022) assumed that due to rise in fuel prices and rise in air pollution people were preferring to travel by public transport system in urban and rural part of the countries in the world. Additionally, the functional aspect had a significant impact on customer satisfaction and required more attention in order to improve it. Hence, the main factors that contributed to a better degree of satisfaction were frequency, pricing, punctuality and trip time.

The authors Francesco Filippi et al. (2013) revealed that more than competition and liberalization were needed to improve public transport services and the users' positional disadvantage must be reduced and lack of power remedied. Also, users should be empowered to influence the service, which will give flexibility to the system and foster bottom-up development. In addition, they can become partners in the design and innovation of public services and entrepreneurs in the exploitation of new services. In case of Tamilselvi and Bandita K. Panda (2021) observed that Ola did not have any women representative in the decision-making level and M Auto also had interest towards the environment along with women empowerment thus fulfilling the parameters for effective development process. Further, there is always a supply demand for women chauffeurs and it is the responsibility of the service providers, government and society as a whole to accept changes and also to frame development models in such a way that it has to be long term.

3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

TNSTC has provided several services to people and also started online booking facilities to book bus tickets between major cities served by TNSTC. TNSTC comprises a diverse array of categories, which include Mofussil Services, Town Services, MTC, Ghat Services, Inside State Services (Express), and Outside State Services (Express). Recently, the government announces free travel facilities for all women including working women, Transgender and girls who are pursuing higher education in ordinary fare city buses operated under the control of the Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation since 2021. In general, women specific barriers to safe public transport include fear and experiences of sensual harassment and violence while accessing and using public transport. Also, overcrowding, lack of space and information, delay or unreliable public transport services have a disproportionately higher impact on women than men. Considering this point of view, the researcher aimed to analyze the perception towards women empowerment schemes in Tamilnadu State Transport Corporation Limited, Coimbatore.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the demographic profile of the selected passengers of Tamilnadu State Transport Corporation Limited, Coimbatore.
- To analyze the perception towards women empowerment schemes among selected passengers in the study area.

5. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

- There is no significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes with regard to their age group.

- There is no significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes with regard to their opinion towards playing dynamic role.

6. RESEARCH METHODS

This study followed research design is descriptive and survey method. This study has administered a well-structured questionnaire to collect the required information about the demographic profile and perception towards women empowerment schemes in Tamilnadu State Transport Corporation Limited, Coimbatore by utilizing 5 points Likert's scale technique.

For this study, the sample size has covered of 82 women passengers via random sampling method. The collected sample data are entered into Microsoft Excel and analyzed by using the statistical tools such as percentage analysis, mean score, standard deviation and ANOVA through SPSS 22.0 software.

7. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Demographic Profile and Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes

The following table displays the demographic profile and perception towards women empowerment schemes of the selected women passengers as given below.

Table 1: Demographic Profile and Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes

No.	Variables Name	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Mean
1	Age Group			
	• Upto 30 Years	20	24.4	3.58
	• 31 - 40 Years	13	15.9	3.46
	• 41 - 50 Years	28	34.1	3.76
	• Above 50 Years	21	25.6	3.17
	Total	82	100.0	
2	Providing valuable service			
	• Yes	45	54.9	3.54
	• No	37	45.1	3.48
	Total	82	100.0	
3	Playing dynamic role at Women Empowerment Schemes			
	• Yes	29	35.4	3.65
	• No	53	64.6	3.26
	Total	82	100.0	
4	Travelling Purpose			
	• For working	10	12.2	3.57
	• For studying	22	26.8	3.50
	• Personal work	34	41.5	3.70
	• Others	16	19.5	3.10
	Total	82	100.0	

- The above analysis exposes that 24.4% of the women passengers are upto 30 years aged, 15.9% of the women passengers are belong to 31-40 years, 34.1% of the women passengers are 41-50 years aged and 25.6% of the women passengers are above 50 years aged.
- The analysis illustrates that 54.9% of the women passengers opined that providing valuable service in TNSTC and 45.1% of the women passengers are opined that not providing valuable service in TNSTC, Coimbatore.

- The analysis observes that 35.4% of the women passengers opined that playing dynamic role at women empowerment schemes in TNSC and 64.6% of the women passengers are opined that not playing dynamic role at women empowerment schemes in TNSC, Coimbatore.
- The analysis infers that 12.2% of the women passengers are travelling for working, 26.8% of the women passengers are travelling for studying, 41.5% of the women passengers are travelling in TNSC for personal work and 19.5% of the women passengers are travelling for other purposes.

7.2 Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes in TNSC

This section has discussed about the perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC, Coimbatore. For this study, six statements have been developed about perception towards women empowerment schemes and computed by using 5 points Likert's scaling method.

It is revealed from the analysis that among the six categories of perception towards women empowerment schemes, they noticed that 'service satisfaction for free service' with the mean score and standard deviation of 4.07 and 0.90 respectively followed by 'women friendliness' with the mean score and standard deviation of 3.83 and 1.04 respectively.

7.3 Testing of Hypothesis (ANOVA)

This section has analyzed that the relationship between the demographic profile of the selected passengers and their perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC, Coimbatore. In order to analyse the relationship between selected independent variables and perception towards women empowerment schemes, a hypothesis has been developed and tested by using ANOVA.

Age Group and Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes

H₀: There is no significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes with regard to their age group.

Table 2: Age Group and Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes (ANOVA)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	4.283	3	1.428	6.548	0.001*
Within Groups	17.006	78	0.218		
Total	21.289	81			

Note: * – Significant at 1% level

It is illustrated from the ANOVA that the 'p' value is lesser than 0.05 therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, there is a significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC with regard to their age group.

Opinion towards Playing Dynamic Role and Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes

H₀: There is no significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes with regard to their opinion towards playing dynamic role.

Table 3: Opinion towards Playing Dynamic Role and Perception towards Women Empowerment Schemes (ANOVA)

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	'p' value
Between Groups	2.801	1	2.801	12.121	0.001*
Within Groups	18.488	80	0.231		
Total	21.289	81			

Note: * – Significant at 1% level

It is confirmed from the ANOVA that the 'p' value is lesser than 0.05 accordingly the null hypothesis is rejected. So, there is a significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC with regard to their opinion towards playing dynamic role.

8. FINDINGS

- It is assessed from the analysis that most (34.1%) of the women passengers are 41-50 years aged. It is found that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers belong to 41-50 years of age group.
- It is showed from the analysis that most (54.9%) of the women passengers opined that providing valuable service in TNSC. It is identified that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who opined as providing valuable service in TNSC.
- It is mentioned from the analysis that most (64.6%) of the women passengers opined that not playing dynamic role at women empowerment schemes in TNSC. It is noted that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who felt as playing dynamic role at women empowerment schemes in TNSC.
- It is pointed out from the analysis that most (41.5%) of the women passengers are travelling for their personal work. It is proved that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who travelling in TNSC for personal work.
- It is examined from the mean score analysis that among the six categories of perception towards women empowerment schemes, they noticed that 'service satisfaction for free service' and 'women friendliness' with the mean score of 4.07 and 3.83 respectively.
- It is revealed from the ANOVA that there is a significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC with regard to their age group.
- The 'F' test analysis showed that there is a significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC with regard to their opinion towards playing dynamic role.

9. SUGGESTIONS

- It is found that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers belong to 41-50 years of age group. So, the staff of TNSC should understand all age categories of women's mobility and ensure their empowerments in public transport.
- It is identified that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who opined as providing valuable service in TNSC. Hence, it is suggested that the bus conductor should behave friendliness, pleasant and helpful manner with women passengers to enhance their empowerment in TNSC.
- It is noted that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who felt as playing dynamic role at women empowerment schemes in TNSC. Thus, TNSC should develop inclusive mobility services and empower women in the public transport sector.
- It is proved that maximum level of perception towards women empowerment schemes is perceived by passengers who travelling in TNSC for personal work.
- Hence, TNSC should confirm the safety of women passengers in transport and may promote various empowerment services to them.

10. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to analyze the perception towards women empowerment schemes in Tamilnadu State Transport Corporation Limited, Coimbatore. The public transportation plays a critical role as a means to human being commute between different places through providing good service quality. This study pointed out that there is a significant difference in mean perception towards women empowerment schemes in TNSC with regard to their age group and their opinion towards playing dynamic role.

Therefore, TNSTC should integrate different modes of transport according to cost, efficiency and convenience as well as should improve women empower and infrastructure in the transport sector.

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