

# A Study on Passengers Satisfaction towards Indian Railway Services (With Special Reference to Madurai City)

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### Abstract

India is one of the largest countries in terms of geographical size, which requires efficient means for long-distance transportation. Public transport, being the primary mode of transport, remains a powerful yardstick to measure the overall development of a nation. Among the various modes of transport, Railways are one of the biggest modes of passenger transport in the world. The Railway passenger services face long term competitive threats from airlines, luxury buses, personalized transport, and improved public transport. To compete with other modes of transport, it is inevitable for railways to accelerate the growth of passenger's origination. It is essential for the railway authorities to know the opinion of the passengers regarding the services offered to them to make future policies and provisions. Having this drive in mind, the researchers have undertaken a study about the services provided by the Indian Railways along with its objectives to analyze the passengers' preferences, satisfaction, limitations, and perceptions towards the same. Every aspect related to railway services like ticket availability, quality of travel, employee behavior, safety, timing, and other relevant aspects is analyzed at different levels of the research. As passenger satisfaction is chosen to be the concept for this research, elements that allow passengers to feel satisfied with offered services are also mentioned in the theoretical part. The scope of this project is limited to passengers of Madurai city.

**Keywords:** Earmarking, Reservation, Amenities, Obviating, Pantry Car and Luggage Rack

### Introduction

The Indian Railway is one of the largest railway networks in the world. Indian Railways is India's national railway system operated by the Ministry of Railways. Indian Railway runs more than 20,000 passenger trains daily, on both long-distance and suburban routes, from 7,349 stations across India. Most premium passenger trains like Rajdhani, Shatabdi Exp run at a peak speed of 145 km/h (90 mph), with Gatiman Express between New Delhi and Jhansi touching peak speed of 160 km/h (99 mph). A suburban railway provides various facilities to the people, such as low fare, comfortable journey, speed, the security of the passengers, ticket availability, and coaches to the passengers.

### Statement of the Problem

As the population of the country increases day by day, and the majority of the people opt for railway services based on their affordability. Still, railways are far more important in most the human lives.

The researchers, by giving due consideration to this fact, want to analyze on the provision of Railway services and the perception about such services from the passengers and this being the concept underlying the study, the main focal point is that to know the role played by the Indian Railway services in the lives of its passengers.

### Scope of the Study

The study deals with the provision and evaluation of passenger amenities and the services rendered to the passengers by Indian railways. The study mainly focuses on the satisfaction level of the passengers from the services offered by Indian railways. The scope of this project is limited to passengers of Madurai city.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To know the services provided to the passengers by the Indian railways.
2. To know a perception of respondents about various services provided by the Indian Railways.
3. To identify the most preferred services so that these can be strengthened to optimize passenger satisfaction.
4. To estimate the overall satisfaction level of passengers in the Indian railways.

### Methodology of the Study

This study is descriptive and analytical and adopts a survey method for its study. This study depends mainly on the primary data collected through the well-structured questionnaire among the respondents. During the period of study, all relevant published information is collected; formal and informal discussions are conducted with the passengers.

**Primary Data:** Primary data is the information collected directly from the respondents. It is firsthand information. Primary data is collected from passengers who use railway services.

**Secondary Data:** Secondary data are data that has already been collected by someone. Secondary data is collected from books, journals, websites, and newspapers.

**Period of the Study:** The period of the study is 2019-2020.

**Sample Design:** The sampling technique adopted is the Simple Random Sampling technique.

**Statistical Analysis:** Simple techniques such as Percentage, Bar diagrams, Mean, Garret Ranking, and Likert Scaling were applied using SPSS 11.0 software package in various factors of Indian Railways services for the determination of associations between the groups and other components.

### Limitations of the Study

The study is mainly based on the information collected from the respondents, and the factors given by them are subjective.

The study mainly covers Madurai city, so it may vary in other cities and after some time.

### Analysis and Interpretation

#### Demographic Features

The respondents comprise 36% of the respondents who belong to the age group 20-40 years avail more services offered by the Indian railway when compared to the other age group of people. It is found that 53% of the respondents are female respondents and 43% of the respondents are male respondents. 25% of the respondents are unmarried. It was identified that 20% of the respondents are under graduates and Diploma Holders. 20% of the respondents are students, and 5% of the respondents are other categories. It was observed that 33% of the respondents have an annual income of above Rs.15001-25,000 had highly availing railway services.

**Table 1: Availance of Indian Railway Services**

Title	Category	Frequency	%
Availance of Indian railway services	Daily	40	40%
	Weekly	13	13%
	Occasionally	12	12%
	Once in a year	16	16%
	Twice in a year	19	19%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source:** Primary Data

From Table 1, it is observed that 40% of the respondents utilize the Indian railway services daily, and 12% of the respondents utilize occasionally.

**Table 2: Purpose of Travel**

Title	Category	Frequency	%
Purpose of Travel	Education	12	12%
	Employment	20	20%
	Personal	16	16%
	Emergency Situation	14	14%
	Business	12	12%
	Tourism	18	18%
	Others	8	8%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

From Table 2, it was found that 20% of respondents travel for employment purposes and 8% of the respondents for other purposes.

**Table 3: Types of Passenger Train**

Title	Category	Frequency	%
Types of Passenger Trains	Passenger	17	17%
	Express	30	30%
	Superfast	36	36%
	Others	17	17%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

From Table 3, it was concluded that 36% of the respondents frequently use a superfast train and 17% of the respondents use passenger trains and other types of trains.

**Table 4: Class of Travel**

Title	Category	Frequency	%
Class of Travel	Second class	8	8%
	Sleeper	21	21%
	AC Chair car	11	11%
	First class	15	15%
	AC 3-Tier	13	13%
	AC 2-Tier	15	15%
	AC First class	17	17%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

From Table 4, it is found that 21% of the respondents travel in the sleeper class, and 8% of the respondents travel in second class.

**Table 5: Mode of Ticket Booking**

Title	Category	Frequency	%
Mode of Tickets booking	At Booking counter	26	26%
	Through agents	32	32%
	IRCTC website	32	32%
	Any others	10	10%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Primary Data

From Table 5, it was found that 32% of the respondents book tickets through agents and the IRCTC Website and 10% of the respondents use other ways of booking tickets.

**Table 6: Concession in Ticket Booking**

Title	Category	Frequency	%
Concession in ticket booking	Yes	48	48%
	No	52	52%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>
If Yes, tick the type of concession you are availing	No	52	52%
	Sportsman	4	4%
	Senior citizen	10	10%
	Diseased person	2	2%
	Teacher / Students of school / colleges	2	2%
	Ex-Service men/ army / navy / air force	9	9%
	Family members of military / air force / navy personnel	7	7%
	Government award winners	4	4%
	Physically challenged	5	5%
	Government servants	5	5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100%</b>	

Source: Primary Data

From Table 6, it was concluded that 52% of the respondents do not avail of any concession, and 48% of the respondents avail the concession in the process of ticket booking.

**Table 7: Passengers Preference Towards Indian Railway Services**

Particulars	Total	Mean Score	Garret Rank
Less cost and Affordable	5859	58.59	1
On time arrival and Departure	5461	54.61	2
Customer friendly services	5185	51.85	3
Pantry Car	4880	48.80	7
Safe and Secured	5183	51.83	4
Convenient and Comfortable	4907	49	6
Proper maintenance of sanitation	5142	51.42	5
No traffic congestion	4739	47.39	8
Accessibility to various venues from station	4226	42.26	10
No maximum limit for luggage	4359	43.59	9

Source: Primary Data

From the Table 7, it can be explained that the item “Less cost and Affordable” ranks first in the opinion of the respondents, and “Accessibility to various venues from station” ranks tenth in the opinion of the respondents.

**Table 8: Passenger’s Satisfaction towards Indian Railway Services**

Particulars	Mean Score
Berths and toilet facilities	3.26
Availability drinking water	3.01
Proper working of electrical compliances	2.83
Facilities for physically challenged person	2.96
Inside ambience	2.58
Parking space outside	2.67
Mobile charging facilities	2.62
E-booking facilities	2.87
Festival offers	2.69
Summer specials	2.46
Tatkal services	2.72
Trolley services	2.87
Clock room/waiting room	2.52
Working hours of reservation counter	2.75
Information accessibility	2.48
	<b>41.29</b>
Clean toilets	1.94

Platform cleanliness/placement of dustbins and its regular disposal	2.49
Cleanliness on railway track	2.59
Adequate water facilities	2.68
Regular washing of bedsheet and towels	2.57
	<b>12.27</b>
General safety of passengers	2.62
Safety of belonging	2.64
Provision of CCTV camera	2.69
Applicability of apps	2.81
Foot over bridges (FOBS)	2.38
	<b>13.14</b>
Affordability of price	2.67
Quality of the items	2.74
Quantity of items	2.62
Timely delivery	2.78
Variety of items	2.67
	<b>13.48</b>
Behavior of railway employees	2.77
Emergency helpline for passenger	2.71
Response to phone enquiry	2.57
Services by railway police department	2.78
Services TTE coach attender	2.73
	<b>13.56</b>

Source: Primary Data

The above table 8 states that the passenger’s level of satisfaction towards Indian railway services is the highest concerning the basic facilities, and it is less regarding the hygienic conditions.

The comfort of the Passengers: About the comfortability in Indian railways, the study says that special trains that were introduced to clear the extra rush during the festival days are higher with a mean score of 3.74, availability of separate coaches for disabled persons with easy entering is well displayed with a mean score of 3.64 and complaint books and suggestion box are always available at the station is lowest with a mean score of 3.19, Self-help Trolley is always available for use with a mean score of 3.16.

### Suggestions

1. More focus on quality food items, basic facilities, hygienic, and safe environment has to be improvised in the station.

2. The numbers of general compartments have to be increased to reduce the overcrowding in the trains.
3. The authority has to take the necessary step to cut down ticket prices because most of the rail passengers are middle-income group people.
4. The availability of sufficient and clean water should be ensured.
5. The sophisticated waiting room services need to be maintained, and the charge can be considerably reduced for the sake of all the passengers.
6. Installation of CCTV cameras in every compartment, touch screen system for inquiries (working condition), ticket checking at the train doorstep, and provision of television and audio systems at an increased rate would facilitate the management in a more systematic way to run the trains in a cost-effective way and to reduce the crimes both at state and national level.
7. Regular cleaning of the toilets is a great need of the hour expected by almost all the passengers.

### Conclusion

The empirical study is a contribution to identify the factors that determine passenger satisfaction in railway services and the quality of services provided by the Central Government in the city of Madurai. Accordingly, this research gives some insights to develop and improve the quality of services to satisfy the passengers in a better way concerning rail transport.

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