

Factors Influencing Customer Satisfaction with Different Services Provided by the Transportation Industry

Preeti^{1*} & Dr. Kiran Bala²

¹Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Punjabi University Patiala, Punjab.

²Assistant Professor in Commerce, Mata Sundri University Girls College, Mansa, Punjab.

*Corresponding Author: preetial1381999@gmail.com

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Abstract

Customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, service adoption, and long-term competitiveness are all strongly impacted by customer happiness, which has become a key component of organisational growth in the transportation industry. The study examines the key factors that influence consumer satisfaction in a variety of transportation contexts, such as roads, trains, airlines, and maritime services. To identify the main factors influencing customer satisfaction, a secondary method was used to gather information from the government websites, industry reports and consumer feedback analysis and various research papers. The results showed that, although price and dependability are key factors in public transportation, comfort as well as premium facilities are crucial in air travel and luxury travel, while safety and sustainability has become universal issues in a post-pandemic and environmentally friendly period. The study concludes that the transport businesses need to take a comprehensive, customer-centred approach that maintains a balance between operational effectiveness, creativity, and social responsibility. The study recommends that the transportation sector should improve in the use of technology, providing employee training, improving comfort features, ensuring open communication, and incorporating sustainable practices.

Keywords: Transportation, Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, Technological Advancement, Loyalty.

Introduction

Transportation is important for the growth of the economy, society, and arts. It encourages the free flow of individuals and goods, encourages trade, promotes tourism, promotes nations. Modern life has an interconnected connection with transport, from daily travels to worldwide trips. The transportation sector includes a variety of services like taxi services, buses and trains, train services, and warehousing. In order to bring in and engage customers, service providers need to recognise and address the factors that influence user happiness in light of the growing diversity of services and customer expectations. Satisfaction has an impact on societal mobility patterns as a whole in addition to willingness to utilise and suggest services (Linh et al. 2021). However, increasingly modernisation and technological advancements, along with the growing globalisation of markets, have raised consumer expectations to previously unknown dimensions. In comparison with previous transport services, which were largely assessed on their capacity to offer practical mobility, modern consumers expect dependability, comfort, safety, affordability, and modern experiences. Supporting billions of customers globally, the transport sector is an important basis of social and economic progress. The emergence of competitive alternatives,

such as private operators and taxi service, puts pressure on public transport networks to provide services that both meet and beyond the expectations of their customers. Customer satisfaction in distribution and transportation is impacted by a number of variables that show communication, performance, and service quality. Three main aspects were responsibility in product delivery, high-quality customer service, and effective communication. These three criteria together consider fifteen important satisfaction measures (Muangpan, 2022).

Customer satisfaction promotes transportation shift, word-of-mouth reputation, and recurring companies, all of which help to reduce traffic and promote sustainability (Abude et al. 2023) & (Tikhe et al. 2023). Maintaining professional customer service, keeping customer service standards, and creating a suitable relationship with the customer are all ongoing processes that are essentially beneficial to both parties. Customer loyalty and satisfaction, as well as how they see the new standards and services provided, need both get continuously assessed (Hajduk et al. 2022). Knowing the complex factors that affect customer satisfaction has become essential for transportation authority's looking to increase utilisation, decrease dependency on private vehicles, and accomplish environmentally friendly mobility goals. In the transportation sector, which includes public buses, railways, and expanding transportation services, customer satisfaction is a key determinant of service utilisation, passenger loyalty, and efficiency in modern public transportation systems (Chan et al. 2021) & (Pawlasova, P. 2015). Therefore, in the transportation industry, customer happiness is now a key factor in determining organisational success rather than a secondary issue. Because dissatisfied customers may easily move to competitors, leave online unfavourable reviews, and affect public opinion, customer satisfaction is an important organisation goal. The challenge for service providers is realising that customer happiness is a complex concept that is influenced by transportation-related emotional, psychological, and environmental elements in addition to price and efficiency.

Literature Review

HU (2009) aimed to quantitatively measure the quality of urban public transport services and identify the factors leading to customer dissatisfaction, thereby guiding service providers toward quality improvement. The research methodology involved building a customer satisfaction evaluation model, specifically focusing on urban public transport characteristics and utilizing the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP). The study analyzed Tianjin's transportation services. The study found the factors affecting the level of bus service satisfaction index.

Fonseca et al. (2010) aimed to identify service quality determinants and their impact on public transport commuter satisfaction, explore the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, and understand market perceptions. The study used a qualitative case study approach to investigate a European metro company's usage of its service. The data was collected through interviews, focus groups, and company reports. The research aimed to understand reasons for using the service, satisfaction factors, and service characteristics. The study identified reliability, security, speed, comfort, and punctuality as the most important quality dimensions for public transport services. Despite literature suggesting a distinction between quality and satisfaction, the study found that satisfaction dimensions for the company were identical to service quality. Customers have a greater tolerance for service failures.

Islam et al. (2014) investigated that customer satisfaction factors in Sintok, Kedah, Malaysia's public transportation industry, focusing on service quality. It aims to improve service delivery and design, contribute to academic and business understanding of customer satisfaction and service quality. The study surveyed 300 bus commuters to examine the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction using a 5-point Likert scale. Data analysis included Pearson correlations and regression, controlling for demographic factors and utilizing primary and secondary data. The study found that service quality, access, availability, time, and environment positively influence customer satisfaction. Services had the highest response rate at 95.8%, followed by access at 90.6%, time at 87.4%, availability at 85.8%, and environment at 83.7%. The study suggested that bus service providers should prioritize five service quality dimensions: personnel behavior, service frequency, reliability, and waiting times, to improve customer satisfaction and attract new ones, enhancing productivity and performance.

Mouwen (2015) investigated that the objective of the study was to enhance the understanding of Public Transport (PT) customer satisfaction drivers by employing a methodology that considers various complex interactions. The key findings of the study indicates that service attributes like on-time

performance and frequency are paramount, and customer characteristics play a significant role. The study suggested that both generic and targeted policies, particularly those focusing on service frequency and vehicle upgrades, can effectively boost satisfaction, providing valuable insights for Public Transport Authorities (PTAs).

Pawlasová (2015) identified the significant factors influencing customer satisfaction with public city transport specifically within the conditions of the Czech Republic. The objective of the study was to understand which aspects of public transport service quality contribute most to overall passenger satisfaction. The study utilised factor analysis and the Varimax method to categorize variables based on their mutual relationships, structural equation modeling (SEM) was also applied. The findings revealed that several factors significantly influence passenger satisfaction with public city transport. The logistic parameters such as service continuity and frequency were identified as major influencers and service-related aspects including information rate, station proximity, and vehicle cleanliness also played a large role in shaping passengers' satisfaction. These elements collectively emerged as key drivers of customer contentment in the Czech public transport context. The study suggested that improving service continuity, frequency, information provision, station accessibility, and vehicle cleanliness would enhance passenger satisfaction.

Ibrahim et al. (2020) investigated the factors influencing user satisfaction with rail-based public transport and to identify recommended strategies for improving user satisfaction and increasing ridership. The research methodology involved a comprehensive review of existing literature and the application of the Delphi approach. The Delphi method was used to identify definitive service factors through an iterative process involving expert opinions, assessing nine themes and 34 sub-themes. Ultimately, 14 themes and 29 sub-themes were identified as key service factors influencing passenger satisfaction. The findings revealed that nine primary factors are availability of service, accessibility of service, ticket or pass, information, travel time, customer service, comfort, safety, and image have a definite correlation with public rail transport passenger satisfaction. The study suggested that providers should develop services that are efficient, physically accessible, and meet passenger needs, ensuring cleanliness, comfort, affordability, trust, and safety.

Tyrinopoulos & Antoniou (2020) examined the key determinants, factors, and motivators that influence the use, adoption, and satisfaction of various transportation systems from the perspective of end-users, specifically commuters and travellers. The findings revealed that the public transport was primarily influenced by service reliability, especially for individuals commuting for work, in case of taxis, driver professionalism, convenience of booking, and price are the main factors affecting customer satisfaction. Comfort, cost savings, and time savings are identified as the primary common factors that most positively impact the service quality of shared mobility options. Shared autonomous vehicles are anticipated to further enhance these encouraging factors, despite existing safety concerns. The future adoption of urban air mobility is expected to be largely driven by time savings, followed by convenience and service reliability. The study suggested that to enhance adoption and satisfaction across transportation systems, efforts should focus on improving the identified key factors for each mode. For instance, public transport should prioritize reliability, taxis should emphasize professionalism and booking convenience, and shared mobility services should continue to improve comfort, cost-effectiveness, and time efficiency, while addressing safety concerns for emerging technologies like shared autonomous vehicles. For urban air mobility, highlighting time savings, convenience, and reliability will be crucial for future market acceptance.

Muangpan (2022) explored the factors and indicators that contribute to customer satisfaction specifically concerning transportation and distribution services within an online shopping company. The study aimed to identify the key elements that influence how Chinese customers in Thailand perceive these services. The data was collected from the Chinese customers. The findings indicate three factors such as responsibility of product and delivery, customer services and customer communication. The study suggested that by focusing on these factors, online shopping companies can aim to create a competitive advantage and increase their market share.

Bhuiyan et al. (2023) aimed to identify the factors that influence passengers' satisfaction with transportation quality in Bangladesh. The data was collected from 450 respondents out of 416 found valid for analysis. The study utilized a convenience sampling method and SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) approach to examine various factors, including the condition of the vehicle, fare, staff service,

security, schedule, number of vehicles, services for women, and types of buses, alongside passengers' satisfaction. The findings revealed that the vehicle's condition and passengers' security are the most significant factors impacting satisfaction. Additionally, the vehicle's fare and the service provided by staff also significantly influence passengers' satisfaction. The study suggested that transportation owners, policymakers, and the government should use these insights to improve transportation service quality.

Abeywickrama & Danthanarayana (2024) aimed to comprehensively assess and elucidate the supply-side determinants that significantly impact passenger satisfaction with long-distance expressway bus services in Sri Lanka. The study used a purposive sampling technique for data collection. The sample data of the study was with exploratory factor analysis. The study identified six salient supply-side factors influencing passenger satisfaction such as service quality, comfort, accessibility and convenience, safety and security, cost, and customer service. The study suggested that several improvements, including upgrading the bus fleet, maintaining cleanliness, optimizing scheduling, enhancing reservation systems, implementing staff training, improving safety measures, ensuring fair pricing, enhancing customer service, raising passenger awareness, and encouraging innovation to ultimately improve expressway bus services, attract more passengers, and build a reliable public transport system.

Srinivas et al. (2024) aimed to explore how customer satisfaction and service quality are perceived in Indian Railways, identify the factors that significantly influence passenger experiences. The study used both extensive literature and empirical data, that was collected through a structured questionnaire from 305 respondents in Vijayawada, with analysis conducted using ANOVA. The findings revealed that punctuality and staff behavior were significant influencers of customer satisfaction, while amenities like seating comfort and digital services had less impact. The study also identified elements such as punctuality, cleanliness, ticketing procedures, staff behavior, and overall service reliability was crucial. The study also highlighted the importance of customer-centric strategies, staff training, and infrastructure improvements.

Herawati & Putri (2025) aimed to analyze the factors influencing such as service quality, price, facilities, and safety on customer satisfaction with Trans Jakarta bus services. The study utilised a quantitative approach and explanatory research methods. The data was collected from 200 respondents with the help of questionnaire. The study used analytical techniques including validity and reliability tests, classical assumptions, multiple linear regression, t-tests, F-tests, and the coefficient of determination (Adjusted R²). The findings indicated that price, facilities, and safety significantly impact customer satisfaction, while service quality does not show a significant influence. The study found that all four variables significantly influence customer satisfaction, explaining 51.2% of the variability in satisfaction. The study suggested that Trans Jakarta management should prioritize price, facilities, and safety as strategies for service improvement.

Akram et al. (2025) examined the key factors influencing customer perceptions, such as punctuality, cleanliness, pricing, and staff behavior impact on customer loyalty and market position. The data was collected from 200 passengers and 50 employees. The study utilised quantitative approach and SERVQUAL model. The findings of the study revealed that punctuality and staff behavior are significant factors that impact customer loyalty. However, the study also identified concern regarding fare transparency and service inconsistencies within Niazi Express. The study suggested that enhancing service quality can lead to improved customer retention and strengthen the company's competitiveness in the market by enhancing operational efficiency, providing better training for employees, and refining fare policies to boost satisfaction and market competitiveness.

Yadav (2025) investigated how various determinants influence customer satisfaction and transport mode choice. The study utilised both existing literature and case studies. The study identified the Key factors such as service quality, negotiation power, reliability, port traffic, and technological advancements like tracking facilities. The study emphasized the significance of service quality, reliability in intermodal transport, effective port traffic management, environmental impact, safety, security, and technology integration (e.g., real-time tracking) in shaping customer perceptions and satisfaction.

Objectives

- To determine the main factors influencing customer satisfaction with different modes of transportation.

- To examine how service quality, cost, safety, and technological innovation influence customer experiences.
- To assess secondary sources and literature, on transportation service satisfaction.
- To outline the practical strategies that transportation companies could use to boost customer satisfaction, loyalty, and competitiveness.

Research Methodology

The study uses a secondary data methodology by using information from government publications, market research studies, consumer satisfaction surveys, transportation sector reports, and peer-reviewed academic journals. Airlines, railways, buses, and freight has been compared in order to find common aspects as well as different satisfaction criteria that were particular for every mode. The use of secondary data guarantees a thorough and fact-based comprehension of trends, difficulties, and best practices. The approach is focusing on thematic analysis of factors affecting customer satisfaction.

Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction

- **Service Quality and Reliability**

Customer satisfaction is primarily based on the quality of the services. Features including organisational effectiveness, cleanliness, ease of reserving tickets, and responsiveness are essential. Mismanagement, cancellations, or delays directly damage trust and discourages future consumption. Reliability is considerably diminished, for instance, by frequent train or airline delays.

- **Safety and Security**

Everyone expects safety, and that expectation cannot be compromised. In addition to following regulations, consumers look for towards indicators of safety like current facilities, security cameras, knowledgeable employees, and available networks of communication in case of an emergency. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, health safety measures have also been introduced into this dimension. The top priorities of transport users are consistently safety and security. Cost considerations are frequently balanced by factors that affect satisfaction, such as adopting safe driving habits, following the law, and taking precautions to protect passengers. As standards rise, cleanliness, handicapped accessibility, and the whole comfort environment become more and more essential.

- **Affordability and Value for Money**

Affordability has a significant effect on choices, particularly in the areas where prices are high. Satisfaction is only influenced when there is perceived value for money, fair pricing, and the lack of additional costs. As long as high service quality is provided, customers are more likely to accept higher rates. The degree of satisfaction is significantly influenced by perceived value and cost-effectiveness. Customers expect ticket prices and charges only when it matches to the level of service. The ability to combine both affordability and quality, maintain consistency in price structures even when there are fluctuations in the market, and implement transparent pricing policies all are essential for favourable consumer attitudes.

- **Comfort and Convenience**

Seating arrangements, temperature management, toilets, food, and entertainment facilities are all examples of comfort. Convenience elements include simplicity of luggage handling, cooperation with last-mile connection, and accessibility to stations or airports. All of these factors combine to shape the entire trip.

- **Staff Behavior and Customer Care**

Social interaction has a big impact on happiness. Professional, friendly, and responsive worker conduct can improve customer satisfaction even when there are service interruptions. In contrast, inefficient staff behaviour frequently dominates otherwise effective processes.

- **Technological Integration and Innovation**

The expectations of the customers have been changed due to technological improvements. Demands for biometric authentication, mobile applications, real-time tracking, online booking platforms, including AI-driven support services are rising for all types of transportation. Transparency, effectiveness, and ease are all enhanced through technology.

- **Environmental and Social Responsibility**

Customers are choosing an increasing number of sustainable service providers as environmental consciousness rises. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs, waste management, eco-friendly automobiles, and lower emissions all enhance consumer loyalty and brand reputation.

Findings and Discussion

In the transportation sector, financial, service-related, and interpersonal factors all affect customer satisfaction. Key factors include convenience and service quality, facility including cleanliness, booking ease, and efficiency. Accurate documentation, effective problem solving, and subsequent assistance are the important indicators of satisfaction in maritime transportation. Customer perceptions of the last-mile service are impacted by the delivery rider's punctuality, manners, awareness of direction, and product quality. Loyalty is positively influenced by available prices, clear information, and accommodating terms for payments. Trust and frequent use are also influenced by safety procedures, obvious health precautions, and environmental responsibility. Transparency and convenience are improved by digital integration. Staff professionalism and empathy plays a significant role in problem solving and influencing brand views. Convenience and responsive practices should be prioritised in order to turn satisfied customers into devoted supporters, since the whole customer experience is frequently the result of interrelated service characteristics.

The study also reveal that the transportation customer satisfaction is multifaceted, dependent on the circumstance, and ever-changing. When travellers as well as premium service users place a higher value on comfort and individualised experiences, short-distance travellers put affordability and punctuality first. With digitalisation no longer considered an additional benefit but more as a necessary service component, technological integration has become a multifaceted expectation. Long-term commitment and confidence are increasingly shaped by sustainability and safety. Customers who care about the environment are drawn to companies that implement pollution offset programs or railroads that install energy-efficient equipment. Similarly, in urban markets, bus operators who prioritise digital ease and reasonably priced comfort gain with a competitive edge. The discussion indicates that transport companies need to achieve a balance between customer-centric innovation and operational effectiveness. For this fulfilment of changing expectations, investments in technology, staff training, infrastructure, and environmental programs are needed.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A variety of interconnected aspects, including service quality, safety, affordability, comfort, technology, and environmental responsibility, influence customer satisfaction in the transportation industry. As competition increases, service providers need to go beyond providing the basic services and embrace a comprehensive strategy that serves the needs of their customers first. With the aim to increase customer satisfaction, providers should prioritise convenient and error-free services, fast and effective communication, as well as continuous digitisation, while simultaneously preserving effective customer support and environmentally friendly operations. In an environment that is changing quickly, transportation businesses may strengthen customer happiness, ensure loyalty, and establish great brand identities by putting these strategies into practice.

Recommendations

- **Enhance Reliability and Punctuality:** To minimise delays and interruption in services, it is necessary to invest in reliable infrastructure, predictive maintenance, with effective scheduling systems. Efficient transport services boost customer retention, foster confidence, and lessen consumer dissatisfaction. While optimised scheduling maximises accurate arrivals and departures, predictive maintenance proactively addresses problems to prevent failures and provide users with a smooth travel experience.
- **Strengthen Safety Protocols:** Operational reliability and passenger protection are guaranteed by careful attention to safety regulations. Customers feel confident and their trust in the system is maintained when there is free communication during emergencies or service interruptions. Vehicle inspections, driver education, emergency availability, and public health initiatives are all included in safety, which helps create a safe travel environment that customers greatly value.

- **Optimize Pricing Models:** Affordability and service quality are maintained by reasonable and fair pricing. Various customer categories and consumption patterns can be accommodated by flexible pricing models, such as differential pricing or stratified structures, which improve perceived value. Customer pleasure and loyalty are fostered by transparency on the pricing structure and any adjustments, which also decreases confusion and boosts customer trust.
- **Improve Comfort and Accessibility:** The travel experience has been significantly improved by additions in onboard facilities, hygiene, climate control, and seating comforts. Assure accessibility by providing simple access to individuals with disabilities and by building stations and cars to meet the range of needs. In addition to promoting convenience, improved connection across various forms of transportation also reduces the strain and stress of travellers.
- **Invest in Staff Training:** It is important for primary employees to have professional, empathy, as well as cultural relevant abilities. Appropriate training improves problem solving skills, complaint handling, as well as interpersonal communication skill, all of which have a direct effect on customer satisfaction. Additionally, well-trained employees increase the brand's reputation and create a friendly environment, particularly when dealing with different passengers.
- **Accelerate Digital Integration:** Real-time service notifications, digital payment options, and an increase in mobile-friendly booking platforms all contributed to make a better customer experience. By providing customers with immediate and reliable information, such technological innovations improve the process of important connections like purchasing tickets and requesting help. Personalised experiences and effective customer service are also made possible with the help of technology.
- **Adopt Sustainable Practices:** Reducing waste, using renewable energy, and switching to eco-friendly cars all help transport services to meet the growing environmental concerns of their customers. Programs for public conservation support, corporate social responsibility and enhance public opinion. Such initiatives can help achieve worldwide environmental targets while differentiating providers in a competitive manner.
- **Encourage Customer Feedback Mechanisms:** Apps, surveys, and workstations are examples of accessible feedback systems that enable ongoing tracking of customer satisfaction along with service excellence. In addition to identifying areas for improvement, continuous feedback gathering and quick action promote a customer-centric culture. Showing that feedback results increase customer loyalty and trust.

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