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A Study on Private Bus Passengers Behaviour With Special Reference to Bangalure City

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Abstract:
The transport system provides the basic infrastructure and it affects the economic activities of the country. The transport sector in India is divided into passenger and freight. The passenger services are available in both government private of bus category. At present private sector owns majority of the buses compared to government. In Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka also the private transport players dominating the passenger's transportation market, especially if the travelling distance is more than 250 KM. Initially consumers (passengers) have been attracted with the facilities and service given by private bus operators. With the increasing competition and other policy issues, the private bus operators are implementing peak load pricing strategy.
This pricing strategy is unexpected and unjustifiable to any passenger and even unbearable to them. And the facilities and service are same. Therefore a study has been made by the researcher to bring out the passengers behavior with peak load pricing by private operators with reference to Bangalore city in the state of Karnataka . By using judgment random sampling technique, 110 respondents were selected as sample size and information gathered through interview method. The outcome of the research has shown very interesting results such as customers' dissatisfaction on Government failure to control the Private Bus operators and the price exploitation, in connection with their no alternative to avoid the services.

Introduction:
India is witnessed high growth and demand in travel industry due to urbanization, population growth and rising incomes of individuals. The demand is very high in Bus passenger market and India ranks among the top-10 in the whole world in bus segment; Buses take up over 90 percent of public transport in Indian cities (Pucher, Korattyswaroopam and Ittyerah 2004). The operators include both public and private, especially the private operators are playing pivotal role with 92.87 percent of total buses in 2015 of this segment.
Karnataka is one of the largest metropolitan in India and hub of information technology (IT), information technology and enabled services (ITES) sectors and pharmaceutical industry and a centre for Transport industry. The city of Bangalore has well developed bus routes which connect it with all the major cities and towns of the country and it consist of three national and five state highways. Both Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) and Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) are running different varieties of buses to all parts of India and it is place as initiative and developments like first double ducker bus.

These two Road Transport Corporations are implementing IT initiatives. Those have helped for online passenger reservation system, GPS based vehicle tracking system and some are under pipeline. The APSRTC have 1840+ agents and KSRTC consist of 1692 agents and these are spread across different locations in the country. But last few years they are facing a stiff competition from Private Bus Operators'. From last two decades the Private Bus Operators are dominating the bus passenger market in around Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka States. The Private Operators are targeting long journey trips; it begins from 250km and is up to 650km. According to some unauthorized report approximately 1450 Private bus operators are available in Bangalore city alone.

Government Vs Private Buses

The table.1 represents the number of buses in ownership across the Private sector and Government sector in India between the fiscal year of 2002 and the fiscal year of 2015.The total number of buses owned by both government and private are increasing gradually during the period 2002 to 2015 .The number of buses owned by the private sector was 520.3 thousand in 2002 and the share of private sector in total buses owned in India was 81.94 percent in 2002.The number of buses owned by the private sector was 1830 thousand in 2015.It is increased by 422 thousand as compared to 2010. The number of buses owned by the public sector decreased during the period from 2003 to 2007.But it is increasing during the period from 2008 to 2015.The share of private sector in total buses owned in India has increased in successive periods during 2002 to 2015.The Compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of number of private buses is very high (10.16%) compare to government buses which has only 1.57 percent .It says that there is significant growth of private buses in between 2002 to 2015 throughout the country.

Table 1: Comparisons of Government and private buses owned across India from FY 2002 to FY 2015(in thousands)

Year	Government	Private Buses	Total
2002	114.7(18.06%)	520.3(81.94%)	635(100%)
2003	114.9(15.95%)	605.9(84.05%)	720.8
2004	111.4(14.51%)	656.2(85.48%)	767.6
2005	113.3(12.69%)	779.4(83.30%)	892.7
2006	112.1(11.3%)	879.9(88.69%)	992
2007	107.8(7.99%)	1242.5(92.01%)	1350.3
2008	113.6(7.96%)	1313.6(92.04%)	1427.2
2009	117.6(7.92%)	1368(92.08%)	1485.6
2010	118.8(7.78%)	1408.3(92.22%)	1527.1
2011	130.6(8.14%)	1473.2(91.86%)	1603.8
2012	131.8(7.86%)	1544.7 (92.14%)	1676.5
2014	140.1(7.43%)	1746.7(92.57%)	1886.9
2015	*140.5(7.13%)*	1830.3(92.87%)	1970.8
CAGR	1.57%	10.16%	9.10%

Source: Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

Note: All figures are in thousands, CAGR-Compound annual growth rate.

Peak Load Pricing:

The Peak Load Pricing is the pricing strategy wherein the high price is charged for the goods and services during times when their demand is at peak. The peak load pricing is widely used in the case of non-storable goods such as electricity, transport and telephone. It was originally conceived as applying to monopolies and public sectors, it is now spread to private sectors also. Bus Transport operators are using this pricing policy to gain more revenue in peak time and to cover for off peak period.

Need for the study:

Due to peak load pricing, bus ticket fares are increases twice or more than actual fare at peak time more over in vacations and festival seasons. This pricing strategy is unexpected and unjustifiable to any passenger and even unbearable to them. And the facilities and service are same. In this view, a study has been made by the researcher to bring out the passengers behavior with peak load pricing by private operators with reference to city in the state of Telangana

Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the study are

1. To study and analyze socio-economic profile of the respondents.
2. To know the passengers traveling experience in Private Buses.
3. To examine the passenger satisfaction towards Private Bus transport services in Bangalore City
4. To know the passenger behavior on peak load strategy adopted by Privatebus operators.

Research Methodology:

The data has been collected from important boarding points in Bangalore city. The judgment random sampling technique was employed and 110 respondents were selected as sample size and information gathered through interview method .The minimum travelling distance taken from boarding point is 251km. The survey provides detailed characteristics of bus passengers and Likert 5point scale is also using to know the respondents satisfaction and opinion on peak load pricing strategy.spssv21 is used to analyze the data and statistical tools used for analyses are Mean, Standard Deviation and Friedman Test.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS*:*

The study results of the socio economic profile of the respondents have been shown from table 2 to 6. The socio-economic profile of the respondents has been examined based on some factors such as age, gender, material status, educational qualification and income.

Age is an important factor which decides customer preferences, awareness and the level of satisfaction. It also decides the passenger's expectation on convenience, comfort and safety and security. From the above table.2 it is found that 59.2 percent of the passengers belong to the age group between 21-40 , followed by 20.0 percent in the age between 41-60,, 12.5 percent represent the age below 20 and 8.3 percent is represented by the aged passengers above 60.

Table 2: Age Group of the Passengers

Age Group		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Below 20 yrs	13	11.81	11.81	11.81

21-40	66	60	60	71.81
41-60	21	19	19	90.9
Above 60	10	9	9	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0	

The table 3 has shown the gender of the respondents. It is observed that majority of the respondents belong to 'male' category i.e. 58.3 percent and remain 39.2 percent belong to 'female' category

Table.3: Gender of the Respondents

Gender		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Male	70	63.63	63.63	63.63
	Female	40	36.36	36.36	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

The present study divides the marital status of the respondents in three distinct groups namely married, unmarried and others .Others includes divorcees and lives in relationship. From the table.4, it is found that 70.8 percent are married, 26.7 percent are unmarried and with the impact of modern culture, the reaming respondents i.e. 2.5% belong to other category.

Table 4: Marital Status of the Respondents

Marital status		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Married	75	68.18	68.18	68.18
	Unmarried	32	29.09	29.09	97.27
	Others	3	2.72	2.72	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

The educational qualification of the respondents consists of illiterate, SSC, graduation.PG and other qualifications such as ITI, diploma. From the **table.5**, it is observed that majority (57.5%) are graduates, followed by PG(19.2%) and interestingly few are from illiterate(4.2%) and SSC (4.2%).

Table 5: Educational qualification

Educational qualification		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Illiterate	5	4.54	4.54	4.54
	SSC	5	4.54	4.54	9.09
	Graduation	64	58.18	58.18	67.27
	PG	20	18.18	18.18	85.45
	Others	16	14.54	14.54	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Household Income is also an important part of socio-economic factor. This factor is also divided in to 4 groups that are, the respondents whose level of income is upto2 lakh, more than 2 lakhs, to 4 lakhs and 4 lakhs to 6 lakhs and above 6 lakhs (see table 6). The frequency distribution is also given in the

table in a proper order. Out of the total respondents, 10.8 percent of passengers belong to the first category of income group i.e. less than 2 lakh and 40.8 percent are at the second level of income category i.e. more than 2 lakhs to 4 lakhs and 29.2 percent and 18%of passengers or the passenger are belongs to the 3rd and 4th level of income group i.e. 4 lakhs to 6 lakhs and above 6 lakhs respectively

Table 6: Total annual household Income (in Rs.)

Total annual household Income (in Rs.)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	up to 2,00,000	13	11.81	11.81	11.81
	2,00,001- 4,00,000	41	37.27	37.27	49.09
	4,00,001- 6,00,000	33	30	30	79.09
	Above 6,00,000	23	20.90	20.90	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

BASIC INFORMATION SEARCH ABOUT TRAVELLING IN PRIVATE BUSES

The basic information search about travelling in private buses has been studied on various factors and the results of the study have been shown from table 7 to 12.

Out of the total respondents 120 in numbers, 17.5 percent of respondents are using the service providers for a period less than 2 years. 10.8 percent and 15.2 percent passengers are at the second level and they belong to the passengers who are using private bus transport services for 2-4 years.. The rest of the passengers i.e. 50.0 percent belong to the category of the passengers who are using bus transport services for more than 6years (see table 7).

Table 7: Since how long you have been using private bus transport services.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	less than 2 years	21	19.09	19.09	19.09
	2- 4 years	13	11.81	11.81	30.9
	4-6 years	21	19.09	19.09	50
	more than 6 years	55	50	50	100
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

Traveling distance is very important factor for the study and minimum distance taken is 251km .It is divided into four distinct groups that are, 251-350km, from 351 to 450 is second distinct groups, third group is from 451 to 550km and fourth group is more than 550km.Out of the respondents majority of them travelled in between 351to 400km i.e. 42.5 percent. It is followed by the first distinct group (251 to 350 km) with 30.8 percent (see table 8)

Table 8: Travelling distance from Bangalore

Travelling distance from Bangalore		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	251-350km	32	29.09	29.09	29.09
	351 to 450 km	46	41.81	41.81	70.9
	451 to 550 km	19	17.27	17.27	88.18

	More than 550 km	13	11.81	11.81	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

From the table.9 it is found that 44.2 percent of the respondents have 6-10 times of traveling experience and it is interesting 23.3 percent of the respondents have more than 15times travel experience by private Buses. It concludes that passengers are giving more preference to private Buses.

Table 9: Frequency of travel by Pvt. Buses (per year)

Frequency of travel by Pvt. Buses (per year)		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	upto 5 times	23	20.9	20.9	20.9
	6-10 times	50	45.45	45.45	66.36
	11-15 times	10	9.09	9.09	75.45
	More than 15 times	27	24.54	24.54	100
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

From the table10 has been study the purpose of the journey, it is observed that most of the respondents (63.3%) who are travelling in private Buses for personal use only and followed by holiday trip (25.8%) and as business purpose (10.9).

Table 10: Purpose of the journey

Purpose of the journey		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	personal	66	60	60	60
	Business	13	11.81	11.81	71.81
	Holiday trip	31	28.18	28.18	100.0
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

The table 11 has shown the type of buses preferred by the respondents has been studied. In the study the type of buses is divided into four distinct groups namely Non-A/C seater, A/C seater, Non A/C sleeper and A/C sleeper. According to the above table majority of the commuters(45.8%) are giving preference to A/C seater, in view of a pleasant bus ride to their preferred destination and unaffected by weather conditions outside the AC bus. It followed by non-A/C seater (38.4%)

Table 11: Which type of buses do passengers prefer mostly

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Non-A/C seater	41	37.27	37.27	37.27
	A/C seater	50	45.45	45.45	82.72
	Non A/C sleeper	6	4.45	4.45	88.18
	A/C sleeper	13	11.81	11.81	100
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

The table 12 has been reveals the study on the regular mode of bus tickets booking of the respondents. Passenger's mode to book bus tickets is divided in to three categories; these are online, travel agent and travels office. The researcher observed that passengers of Bangalore is giving at most priority for online booking, So, Most of the respondents (55.0%)are choosing online booking and they using ticket windows like Abhibus.com,redbus.com etc.

Table 12: Regular Mode to Book Tickets					
regular mode to book tickets		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	online	56	50.9	50.9	50.9
	Travel agent(by phone)	29	26.36	26.36	77.27
	Travels office	25	22.72	22.72	100
	Total	110	100.0	100.0	

CONCLUSION:

Based on the study it has been noted that the respondents (bus passengers) have expressed their happiness to use the private bus services , however they are stating that, lack of parking facilities, waiting rooms, security at boarding points and some time indecent behavior (due to consumed alcohol while in duty time) of staff (including driver) forced them to rethink about the usage of private bus services.

In addition to this most of the respondents have been expressing their dissatisfaction with the peak load pricing strategy adopted by Private Bus Operators in the Bangalore region, especially the factors like affordable ticket fare, customized ticket cancelation policy; though the ticket prices are increasing two or three times to actual fare there is no change in service quality as they expected. The final outcome of the research has shown very interesting results such as customers' dissatisfaction with the Government (APSRTC and KSRTC) bus operator's failure to control the Private Bus operators and the price exploitation, in connection with their no alternative to avoid the service on peak load days (such as festivals and holidays) .

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