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An Empirical Study on Perception and Awareness Level of People Regarding Usage of BSRTC Bus Services: With Special Reference to Saran Bus Depot.

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ABSTRACT:

BSRTC serves the role of lifeline across the state of Bihar. Over past 59 years of its existence, it has proved to be a dependable mode of transportation in every nook and corner of the state. It has been providing safe, adequate, convenient and comfortable bus services to its passengers in most of the rural areas of the state. The environment has thrown up BSRTC to the challenges like productivity improvement, mark orientation and financial Engineering. BSRTC has been trying hard to face the new challenges through vigorously pursuing a process of Technical and managerial up gradation.

The purpose of this paper is to obtain a better understanding of the extent to which service quality is delivered by BSRTC to its passengers. In this context, the present paper attempts to give an over view of the perception of the passengers regarding service quality & facility provided under BSRTC & it highlights the general expectations of the passengers and also discuss various issues & challenges related to it. More ever it also provides suggestion for proper handling of those issues and challenges in BSRTC public transportation service.

KEYWORDS: BSRTC, Passengers Satisfaction, Transportation, Service Quality Instruments.

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INTRODUCTION

Transport plays greater roles for economic growth and social development of nations. Transportation in general, among other modes, and road transport in particular is the most widely used transport sector all over the world. The transport is playing an important role in the economic development of the country by creating employment opportunities and performing national economic activities. Transport is the channel of social and economic interaction involving the physical movement of people and goods. Transport is the life-blood of civilization and constitutes an important item of infrastructure for economic growth. "The significance of the Transport Sector lies not only in the specific services it renders, but even more, in unifying and integrating influence it exerts upon the economy, enhancing productivity, widening the market and introducing new stimuli to economic activity."

In order to measure how passengers perceive about the quality of public transport, there is some evidence from the literature that passengers perceive: that reliability, timing, frequency and fare, cleanliness and comforts, transport network and coverage which also includes the stoppages, safety issues and information system are considered to be important factors in order to evaluate the service quality. This trend of evaluating the customer requirements and delivering services according to customer requirements is now seen in the developing countries. This study aims to investigate the passenger's perception about the service quality of public road transport system in the Saran district of Bihar.

NEED AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The need or significant of this research is to know issues, or problems facing by the transportation community. The core importance of this study is to provide base for understanding the problems in transportation system. As usual passengers of BSRTC it is common for us facing problems while travelling in bus. The passengers are not satisfied with the service provided by BSRTC they started to raise voice against the department. We have seen many incidents regarding conductor's behavior problems, bus timings problems, and this all incidents motivated us to do this research. There is further scope for doing research on this transportation system. We can make an empirical or general research on BSRTC employee's perception and also on BSRTC management control system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In spite of the fact that transportation plays an important role in economical, cultural, industrial and social development of any nation, transport sector had not received due consideration of researchers in past.

Eboli and Mazzulla (2007) Measured customer satisfaction in the context of bus service on various factors including availability of shelter and benches at bus stops, cleanliness, overcrowding, information system, safety, personnel security, helpfulness of personnel, and physical condition of by stops. The report identifies the following elements at bus stations for efficient service shelter, waiting rooms and seating, doorways, stairways, escalators, signage and information displays, public address systems, and passenger amenities (including shelters, benches, vending machines, trash receptacles, lighting, phone booths, art, and landscaping).

Power J. D. and Associates Reports (2007) Customer satisfaction with transportation companies was measured across seven factors transportation of belongings, loading service, unloading service, optional coverage, estimate process, packing service, and insurance/damage claims. This implies that the quality of basic facilities and other supporting facilities were used as criteria for satisfaction.

Agrawal (2008) Identified employee behavior as the most important determinant of customers' (passengers) satisfaction with Indian Railway services. The author defined five categories of measures that wholly or partially reflect the passenger's point-of-view in transit services which are availability of transit service, service monitoring, travel time, safety and security, and maintenance and construction activity on passenger trips. In the literature, aspects such as reliability, frequency, travel time and fare level comfort and cleanliness network coverage /distance to stop and safety issues are all known to be important factors in customer evaluations of public transport service quality.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To understand and interpretation of the perception of the passengers of Saran regarding service quality of BSRTC.
- To know the awareness level of the passengers of Saran regarding facilities provided by BSRTC.
- To study the passenger's expectation towards BSRTC services.
- To suggest appropriate measures for improving services provided by BSRTC under study.

AN OVERVIEW OF SARAN BUS DEPOT

Saran bus depot was established in November 1959. It belongs to Muzaffarpur Zone, its Regional Office is also Muzaffarpur. This zone includes Saran, Darbhanga, and Muzaffarpur bus depots. In the past, the regional office of Saran bus depot was in Chhapra under which Siwan and Gopalganj used to come, but in the absence of the staff the regional office was turned to Muzaffarpur. There is currently no sub-depot of Saran bus depot. From here 27 buses are operated every day, out of which 4 buses (52 seaters) are old and 23 buses (32 Seaters) are new, which are being run from 9th June, 2017. About 2700-3000 passenger travels daily from Saran bus depot, including job holders, students, business men, farmers and others. Total 120 employees are working here, of which 18 staff are permanently, 42 employees are contractual and 60 drivers and conductors are hired from Nishant Enterprises who are given 300/Rs per day for drivers and 247/Rs per day for conductors are given on the daily wages base. The overtime allowances are not given to them. Presently buses of BSRTC of Saran depot are earned 28-30/Rs. per kilometer by maintaining all expenses. The depot is giving 8 to 9 lakh rupees per month to the corporation that means financial position of Saran bus depot is very good.

PASSENGER'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS BSRTC BUS SERVICE

The construct of perceived value has been identified as one of the most important ingredients for gaining competitive advantage and the most important indicator of repurchase intentions has defined perceived value as the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product based on perceptions of what is received and what is given. Perceived value represents the discrepancies between perceived benefit and perceived cost. Perceived value have been shown to have effect on satisfaction, customer loyalty and other important outcomes. The factors that affect service quality of the system of BSRTC services in Bihar include punctuality, cleanliness, toilets and safety of passengers. This section of study draws an introspective analysis on the level of perception of the passenger's towards the service offered by the Saran bus depot of BSRTC.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Type of Research: This research is an empirical in nature.

Population: Passengers of BSRTC in the Saran bus depot.

Selection of samples: 200 respondents were selected from the passengers of BSRTC of Saran.

Sampling Unit: For this study the respondents was the passengers of BSRTC of Saran.

Sampling Technique: Stratified random sampling methods have been used for the study.

Tools of Data Collection

Primary data:

The primary data have been collected using a structured questionnaire as well as personal interview method.

Secondary data:

The secondary data have been gathered from the published sources, survey, websites, journals and working papers.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY:

- The study confined only to 200 respondents.
- The study has been conducted only in Saran District.
- Study of awareness and perception of the passengers is only based on sample size.
- The findings are based solely on the information provided by the respondents and there is a possibility of biased results.

DATA INTERPRETATION

The survey results are organized as follows. In the first section, the demographic profile of respondents is presented. Where 200 people respond is taken into consideration and their perception regarding usage of BSRTC bus service is analyzed.

Table No. 1 : Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Category	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage
Age	18-35	60	30
	36-60	90	45
	Above 60	50	25
	Total	200	100
Gender	Male	160	80
	Female	40	20
	Total	200	100
Occupation	Employees	50	25
	Farmers	30	15
	Business Men	70	35
	Other	50	25
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The Table.1 reveals the demographic profile of the respondents. On the basis of demographic profile we can make the following analysis.

Table No. 2 : Availability of Buses at Scheduled Time

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	160	80
No	40	20
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

As per the analysis 80% of respondents responded that buses are available at scheduled time. Only 20% of respondents are replied that buses are not available at scheduled time. Lot of thing is there to do when it comes to the matter of availability of buses at scheduled time.

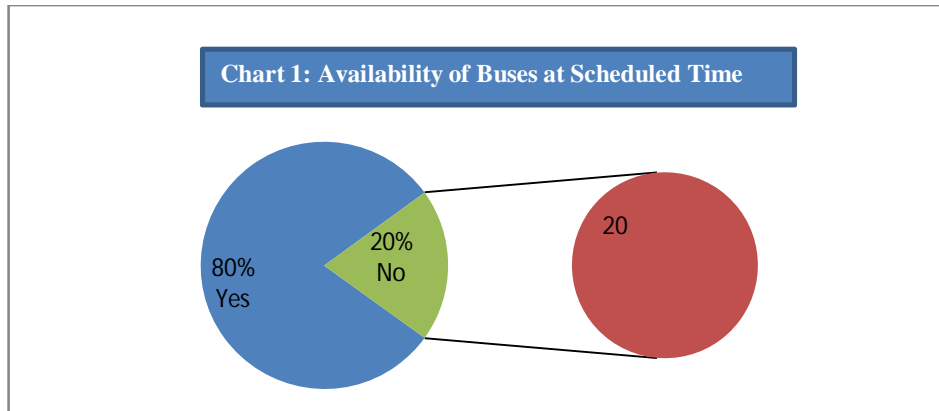


Table No. 3 : Giving Stops at Each Bus Stand

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	104	52
Some buses only	50	25
No	46	23
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

According to the analysis 52% of respondents responded that it is rare that buses are giving stop at each bus stand. It is a kind of breach of tradition as there is a rules regards to local buses must give a stop at each bus stand based upon the condition. 25% people replied that only in the exceptional case where buses are giving stop at each bus stop.

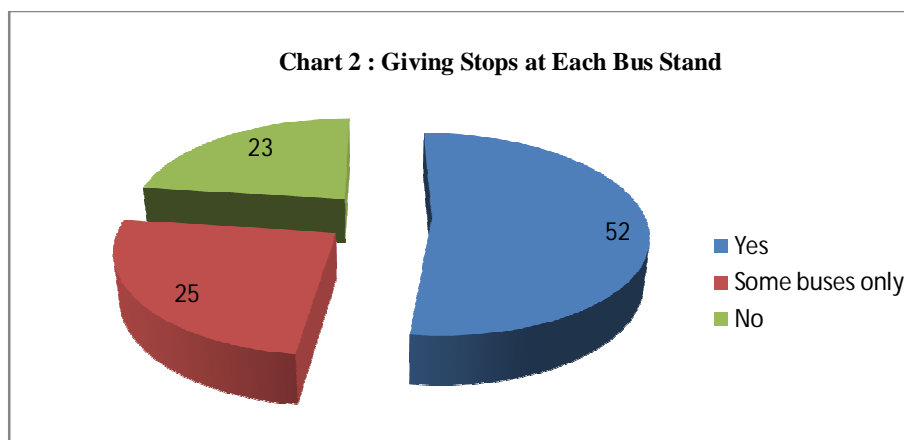


Table No. 4 : Feel Secure in Travel

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	130	65
No	70	35

Total	200	100
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Source: Primary Data

The table 4 shows that 65% of respondents feel their self security while traveling in BSRTC. But remaining 35% of respondents feel they are unsecured it may because of lack of basic safety facilities and negligence of traffic rules & regulation by drivers.

Table No. 5 : Overload of Passengers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	110	55
Yes Some time	40	20
No	50	25
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The analysis reveals that 55% of respondents responded that the BSRTC buses usually carry the passengers more than its seating capacity. It happens because of the bus crews are penalized or warned by traffic inspectors in case of lower revenue realization. This motivates them to make overload of passengers. The 20% of respondents replied as some time buses are overloaded with passengers it is because of buses are not in scheduled time.

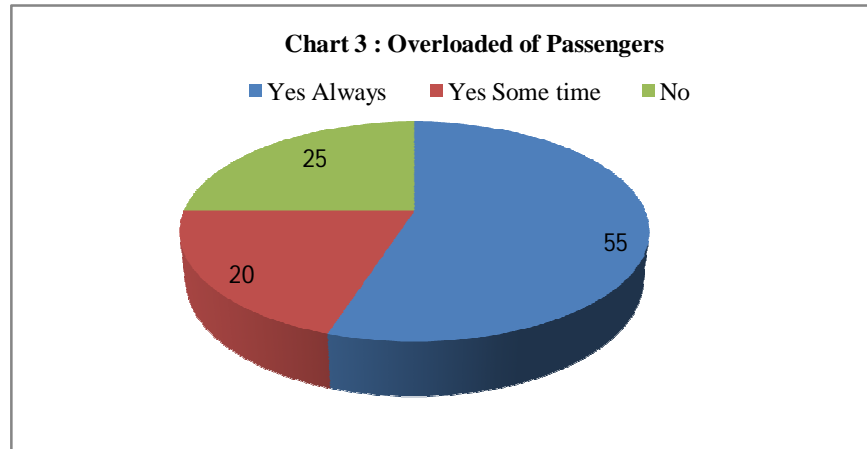


Table No. 6 : Less Reservation Seat for Women

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	150	75
No	50	25
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The Table 6 shows that 75% of respondents responded that the seat reservation for woman's is not sufficient compared to the population of woman passengers. But 25% of respondents agreed as it is sufficient.

Table No. 7 : Misuse of Reserved Seat

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes Always	184	92
Yes Some time	10	5
No	6	3
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

According to the analysis 92% of respondents responded that the passengers are misuses the reservation seats which belong to different categories of people like handicap, women and old age people etc. The passengers will not leave their seat when its real beneficiary comes. It shows that now a day the man has loosing ethics. Only 3% of people replied that there is no misuse of reservation seats.

Table No. 8 : Aware of First Aid Box Facilities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	180	90
No	20	10
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The analysis reveals that 90% of people responded that they are aware about first aid box facilities in BSRTC buses but still 10% of respondents are not aware at all regarding this facility it is because of many buses this facility not adopted properly.

Table No. 9 : Aid Box Serve the Purpose

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	170	85
No	30	15
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The Table 9 shows that the respondents who have an awareness regarding first aid box facility out of them 85% of respondents responded as it serves its purpose and the remaining 15% of respondents responded it is not useful. In most of the buses the first aid box is not adopted in proper manner. It shows the negligence of duties and irresponsibility of depot officers.

Table No. 10 : Behavior of Conductors

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Sometimes good	80	40
Every time good	40	20
Sometime bad	50	25
Every time bad	30	15
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

According to the analysis 25% of people do feel that behavior of conductor is sometimes bad; it is mainly because things will not be same everyday as a conductor. People will have different issues at the time of their journey in bus. Moreover 40% of people responded that conductor's attitude will be good sometime. But 15% people feel that attitude of conductor is negative every time as they will be encountering him at bus.

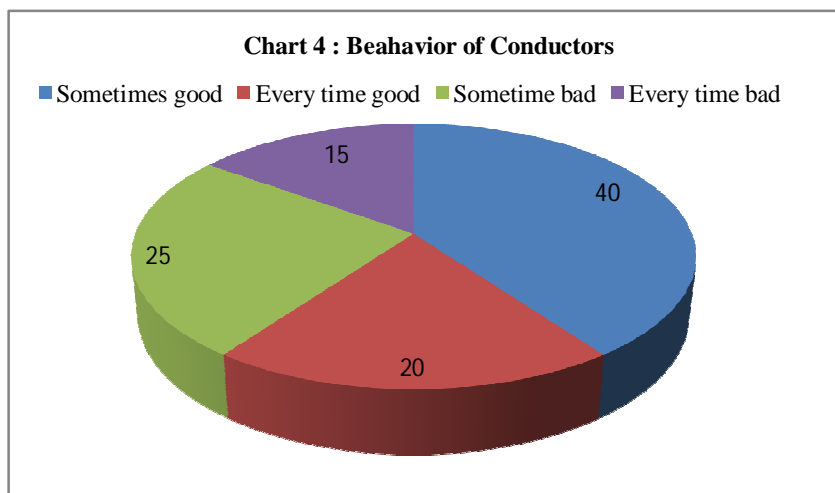


Table No. 11 : Providing Proper Changes of Money

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes Always	170	85
Yes Some time	24	12
No	6	3
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The Table-11 shows that 85% of people agree that conductors are always providing proper change of money while taking bus tickets but 12% of people are disagree with this point they responded as sometime they suffered loss due to not get change of money. Only 3% people responded they do not get any change while taking tickets in BSRTC bus.

Table No. 12 : Aware About BSRTC Facilities

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	190	95
No	10	5
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

According to the analysis 95% of respondents are aware about different kinds of facility provided by BSRTC such as Seniority pass, Handicap pass, Students and daily commuters pass, online booking system, festivals services etc. But still 5% of respondents who was traveling with BSRTC bus were unaware about facilities of BSRTC.

Table No. 13 : Misuse of Bus Passes

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	120	60
No	80	40
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The Table-13 shows that there is any instance where bus pass is misused. 60% of people responded ‘Yes’. Remaining 40% people are responded ‘No’. It is worried sign that moreover one fourth of people replied that bus pass is misused in many instance. It is kind big blow to the BSRTC authority as it is already struggling to get rid of losses. There is a need of effective will power to control this kind of unethical work.

Table No. 14 : Passengers Traveling Without Bus Pass or Ticket

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	20	10
No	180	90
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The study revealed that 90% of passengers traveling in buses with bus pass or ticket and only 10% local passengers are travelled without ticket or bus pass occasionally.

Table No. 15 : Satisfaction Level of Passengers

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	40	20
Satisfied	100	50
Dissatisfied	60	30
Total	200	100

Source: Primary Data

The analysis reveals that the satisfaction level of passengers regarding traveling with BSRTC bus. The core objective of BSRTC is providing effective, safe, environmental and commuter friendly solutions to the traveling public who use BSRTC buses but as per above data only 20% of respondents are highly satisfied with service provided by BSRTC. The 50% of respondents are just satisfied and remaining 30% of respondents are dissatisfied with its service. It shows that the BSRTC was not maintaining any standard with providing service in local bus.

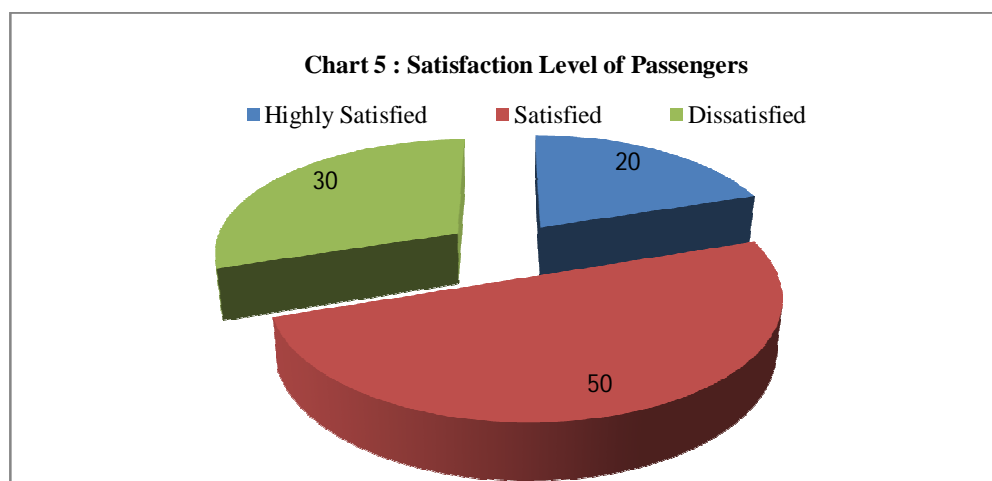
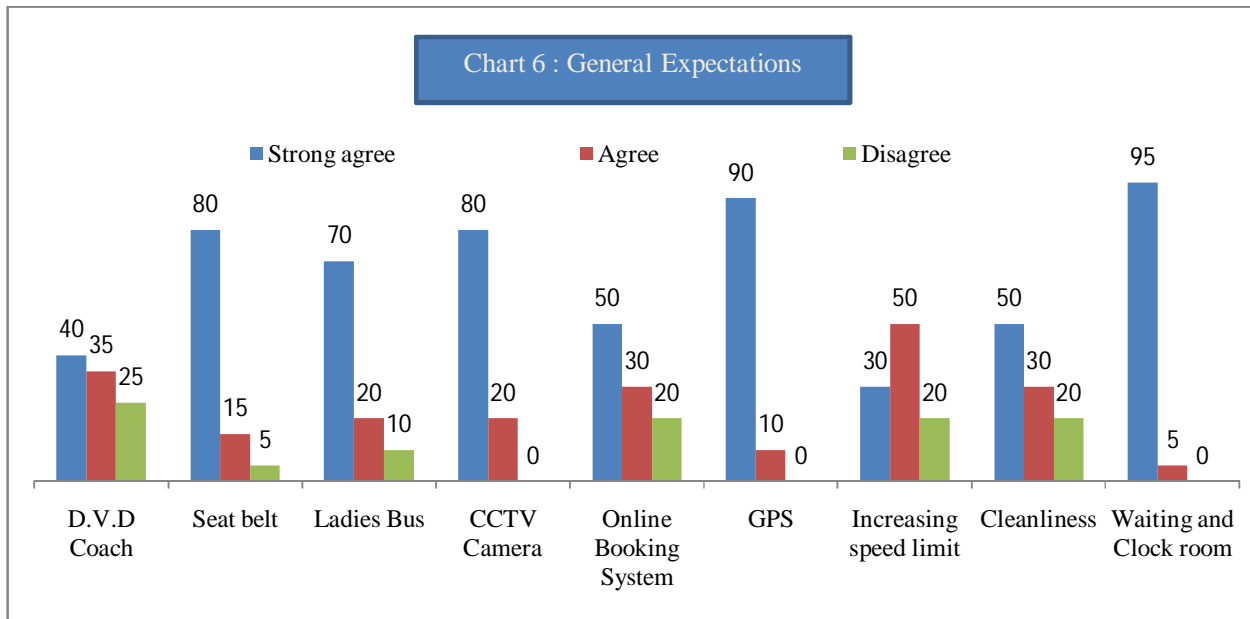


Table No. 16 : General Expectations

Facilities	Strong agree	Percentage	Agree	Percentage	Disagree	Percentage
D.V.D Coach	80	40	70	35	50	25
Seat belt	160	80	30	15	10	5
Ladies Bus	140	70	40	20	20	10
CCTV Camera	160	80	40	20	0	0
Online Booking System	100	50	60	30	40	20
GPS	180	90	20	10	0	0
Increasing speed limit	60	30	100	50	40	20
Cleanliness	100	50	60	30	40	20
Waiting and Clock room	190	95	10	5	0	0

Source: Primary Data

As per the analysis the level of general expectations of passengers. Out of 200 respondents the passengers who just strong agree for fixing DVD coach, seat belt, to operate specially ladies buses, increasing the speed limit of bus, install CCTV camera and GPS, develop online booking system, to make waiting and clock room and cleanliness also in BSRTC buses is 40%, 80%, 70%, 30% 80%, 90%, 50%, 95% and 50% respectively. And rest is agreeing for all.



FINDINGS

Major findings of the study are:

- 95% of people are aware about different kinds of facilities provided under BSRTC such as seniority pass, handicap pass, student and daily commuters pass, online booking system and festivals services etc.
- The study reveals that 80% of respondents replied that the buses are available at scheduled time. But 52% people responded as it is rare that buses are giving stop at each bus stand.
- It is found that 55% of respondents responded that the BSRTC buses usually carry the passengers more than its seating capacity.
- The analysis reveals that 75% respondents respond that the seat reservation for women's is not sufficient and 95% of respondents replied that the passengers are misuse the reservation seats like handicap, women and old ages people etc.
- According to the analysis 90% of people aware about first aid box facility while 35% of people feel that it do not serve its purpose.
- The study reveals that moreover 40% of people responded that conductor's behavior is good sometime, But 15% of people feel that attitude of conductor is negative every time as they will be encountering him at bus, when 50% of respondents are just satisfied and remaining 30% of respondents are dissatisfied with its services.
- The study reveals that most of the passengers are aware and strong agree about various services like seat belt, special ladies buses, CCTV Camera, online booking system and GPS in BSRTC buses is 80%, 70%, 80%, 50% and 90% respectively.

SUGGESTIONS:

The researcher has got lots of loopholes in BSRTC services for attracting the passengers, so some suggestions have been given:

- BSRTC should provide better services to the passengers in the comparison of private bus operators.
- In order to make buses to reach in time the proper accountability system should be adopted and the bus crew should be loyal to their responsibility or the department should try to guide bus crews in ethical manner.
- The corporation should be installed CCTV camera, GPS system, seat belt etc for the security point of view of the passengers.
- To build and make cleanliness, better waiting room, clock room, separate toilets for ladies and gents and canteen facility also provided by the corporation for the passengers of saran bus depot.
- In the absence of adequate driver and conductors of buses are not operated at schedule time. So driver and conductors should be recruited permanently not hired from human Consulting agency.
- Online booking system or e- ticketing should be developed like railways and private bus operators.
- In order to increase the satisfaction level of the passengers the bus crew should behave in co-operative, pleasant & helpful manner with passengers.
- The corporation should tie up with Taxi Company like Ola, Cab etc for providing the facility of those passengers who belong from remote areas.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of the above study, the researcher conclude that about 95% of the passengers are aware of services provided by BSRTC, but the passengers are dissatisfied with that service and have a negative perception of their BSRTC. The BSRTC will have to improve its services and provide modern services to its passengers so that the perception of travelers towards the corporation can be changed and its development. There is strong culture in BSRTC organization that “passenger's satisfaction is most important” but lot of thing is there to do when it comes to the matter of the passengers satisfaction. First of all the bus crews are supposed to behave in a co-operative, pleasant and in a helpful manner with passengers but in practical only financial goal of the corporation assessed, but behavioral aspects

of crew is not assessed. In order to achieve success in maintaining standard service the BSRTC should try to add more potential as well as qualified workers.

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