

## **Perception of Passengers and Employees Towards the Quality of Bus Service in Punjab**

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### **Abstract**

This paper describes the perception of passengers and employees towards the quality of bus service offered by bus transporters in Punjab. For this purpose four hypothesis were formulated to check their reasons of liking and disliking for their preferred bus transport system. Data for the said research survey was acquired through the commuter interview from 300 passengers and 100 employees. Questionnaires contained both types of information regarding demographic details and questions regarding reasons for liking and disliking of bus services by passengers and employees. It was found that there is significant difference between the reasons of liking by passengers and employees for the preferred bus transport. And further, there was also a significant difference between the reasons of disliking of preferred mode of transport in public and private sector bus transport by passengers and employees. Lastly, it was concluded that there is wider scope to improve the quality of bus service in both the sectors.

### **Key Words**

Perception, Service Quality, Transportation etc.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Punjab is compactly inhabited in the planes and construction of roads, and there is an advantage of using bus services in Punjab. In Punjab, the bus transport industry is catering to the needs of the people for traveling within and out of the state. The transportation of passengers in Punjab is being handled by the public sector as well as the private sector. It can be in many forms such as long routes,

short routes, fixed routes, non-scheduled routes, by mini buses, medium-size buses and large-sized A.C. and non-A.C. buses covering, urban, semi-urban and rural areas. Over the period of time, there has been a significant change in the pattern of bus services in the state of Punjab. Considering these changes, the present paper attempts to study the overview of perception of passengers and employees toward the quality of bus service in Punjab.

### **OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

The main objectives of the study are :

1. To analyze the perception of passengers regarding public and private sector bus transport service in Punjab.
2. To analyze the perception of employees regarding public and private sector bus transport service in Punjab.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This paper describes the perception of passengers and employees toward the quality of bus service offered by bus transporters in Punjab. The study is based on primary data for the purpose; a sample survey was conducted with the help of structured questionnaires. Two questionnaires were designed separately for the passengers and employees. A sample of 300 passengers and 100 employees were selected on convenient basis from the state of Punjab. For the purpose of study, four hypotheses were formulated to check their reasons of liking and disliking for their preferred bus transport system. The data available from the surveyed questionnaire was processed and analyzed. The software used was SPSS, which produced the appropriate testing material for the verification objectives mentioned. Mann - Whitney U statistics was used to assess the difference of opinion among the groups for their liking or disliking i.e. for the four hypothesis. There was categorization of the employees surveyed i.e. public and private bus transportation company's employees and passengers surveyed were from both rural and urban areas of the region. The respondents were further divided according to the categories of gender, age, education, occupation, while job experience was assessed among employees and customers were assessed additionally for their income groups and travel distances.

### **Assessment of the Quality of the Service by the Public and Private Transportation**

This section measures the quality of service by the public and private sector transporters to the passengers. The assessment of this section evaluates the two major objectives of the research study i.e. comparison of quality of service by

the public and private sector transporters and assessment of employees and passengers perception regarding quality of the services provided.

In the survey questionnaire for both employees and passengers, both were assessed on two similar questions i.e. reasons for the liking and disliking of preferred transportation system. Sixteen reasons were categorized for the liking and disliking of preferred transportation in which seven were for disliking and nine reasons were for liking of the preferred transportation system. The surveyed respondents were assessed on the discussed reasons by ranking procedure by giving least rank to the most desired reasons of the question. The following hypothesis was drafted for the assessments of the reasons of liking or disliking,

**H<sub>01</sub> : There was significant difference between the public and private transportation preferred passengers for their liking of transportation services**

The following Table 1 gives the summary statistics for the reasons of liking among public and private sector transport user passengers for their choices.

**Table 1**  
**Analysis of the Public and Private Transporters User Passengers for Their Reasons of Liking**

Reasons – Liking	Mean Ranking Score		Mann-Whitney Test
	Public	Private	P value
Inexpensive Services	1.88	6.25	< 0.05*
Quick Services	1.02	2.69	< 0.05*
Lower Risks of Road Accidents	2.44	6.88	< 0.05*
Cleanliness of Interior, Seats and at Bus Stops	6.61	1.11	< 0.05*
Higher Comfort Level in Buses	6.95	1.96	< 0.05*
Availability of Shelters and Benches at Stops	4.16	8.11	< 0.05*
Staff Behaviors Towards the Commuters	7.56	7.61	> 0.05
Reputation and Goodwill of the Bus Operators	5.32	5.12	> 0.05
Technology Adoption	5.97	4.06	< 0.05*

\* Represents level of significances at 5% level of significances

The assessment of the Table 1 showed that there was significant difference of opinion among public and private user commuters for their reasons of liking

towards the preferred mode of transportation system except on the issues of staff behavior towards the commuters and reputations and goodwill of the bus operator, as both types of commuters rank them lower on their list of priorities for choosing particular services and there was significant difference in rankings of these two reasons by both types of commuters.

It was further assessed that the major reasons of liking for the public transport among commuters were Quickness (1.02), Inexpensive Services (1.88) and Lower Risks of Accidents (2.44) whereas in comparison to that private transport commuters have different choices i.e. Cleanliness of Interior, Seats and at Bus Stops (1.11), Higher Comfort Level in Buses (1.96) and Quickness (2.69).

After that, among public transport commuters the reasons of liking were availability of Shelters and Benches at Stops (4.16), Technology Adoption (5.97), Cleanliness of Interior, Seats and at Bus Stops (6.61) and Higher Comfort Level in Buses (6.95) while on other hand among the private transport commuters it were Technology Adoption (4.06), Inexpensive Services (6.25), Lower Risks of Accidents (6.88) and Availability of Shelters and Benches at Stops (8.11).

**H<sub>02</sub> :** There was significant difference between the public and private transportation preferred passengers for their disliking of transportation services.

**Table 2**  
Analysis of the Public and Private User Passengers for Their Reasons of Disliking

Reasons – Liking	Mean Ranking Score		Mann-Whitney Test
	Public	Private	P value
Longer Waiting Times	3.87	2.96	< 0.05*
Overcrowded	5.01	3.88	< 0.05*
Low Frequency	1.22	1.36	> 0.05
Slowness of Vehicle	2.29	6.14	< 0.05*
Unreliable Service	3.12	5.15	< 0.05*
High Fare	5.56	6.89	< 0.05*
Poor Accessibility to Bus Stops and Stations	6.78	2.05	< 0.05*

\* Represents level of significances at 5% level of significances

The assessment of the above Table 2 showed that there was significant difference of opinion recorded among the importances to the reasons of disliking

of particular transport services by the commuters except for the single reason of low frequency as both public and private transport user commuters complained of that and they had ranked it as the most major reason of disliking otherwise they had reported their own choices of disliking at different ranks.

It was analyzed that among public transport user commuters after low frequency of their buses as major reason of disliking they had reported slowness of the vehicle (2.29), unreliability of services (3.12), longer waiting times (3.87), over crowdedness (5.01), high fares (5.56) and poor accessibility to bus stops and stations (6.78). On the other hand, private transport user commuters reported the same reasons but their priority reasons were different from those of the private sector users i.e. poor accessibility to bus stops and stations (2.05), longer waiting times (2.96), over crowdedness (5.01), unreliability of services (3.88), slowness of the vehicle (5.15) and high fares (6.89). It was inference that high fares were least assumed problem for both the types of commuters in using services of transportations.

**H<sub>03</sub> :** There was significant difference between the public and private transportation employees for their liking of their transportation services

The following Table 3 gives the summary statistics for the reasons of liking among private and public sector employees.

**Table 3**  
Analysis of the Public and Private Transporters Employees for Their Reasons of Liking

Reasons – Disliking	Mean Ranking Score		Mann-Whitney Test
	Public	Private	P value
Inexpensive Services	1.26	8.78	< 0.05*
Quick Services	4.03	1.35	< 0.05*
Lower Risks of Road Accidents	2.22	6.79	< 0.05*
Cleanliness of Interior, Seats and at Bus Stops	8.11	4.81	< 0.05*
Higher Comfort Level in Buses	6.88	4.13	< 0.05*
Availability of Shelters and Benches at Stops	1.97	8.11	< 0.05*
Staff Behaviors Towards the Commuters	6.02	5.83	> 0.05
Reputation and Goodwill of the Bus Operators	2.96	2.67	> 0.05
Technology Adoption	8.89	1.98	< 0.05*

\* Represents level of significances at 5% level of significances

The assessment of the Table 3 showed that there was significant difference of opinion recorded among public and private sector transport employees for their reasons of liking of their own transport systems.

It was analyzed that among public sector employees the first six major reasons for liking was inexpensive service (1.26), availability of shelters and benches at stops (1.97), lower risks of accidents (2.22), reputation and goodwill of the bus operators (2.96), quick services (4.03) and staff behaviors towards the commuters (6.02) whereas opposite to that among the private operators the six major reasons of liking were quick services (1.35), technology adoption (1.98), reputation and goodwill of the bus operators (2.67), higher comfort level in buses (4.13), cleanliness of interior, seats and at bus stops (4.81) and staff behavior towards the commuters (5.83). The two reasons of liking i.e. staff behavior towards the commuters and reputation and goodwill of the bus operators was ranked higher among both the types of employees and their ranking was not significantly different for these two reasons while for above discussed reasons they were the priority reasons but ranked differently by both types of employees. Among the lower ranks given to the reasons of liking was higher comfort level in buses (6.88), cleanliness of interior, seats and at bus stops (8.11) and technology adoption (8.89) among the public transport employees whereas among the private employees it was lower risks of accidents (6.79), availability of shelters and benches at stops (8.11) and inexpensive service (8.78).

**H<sub>04</sub> :** There was significant difference between the public and private transportation employees for their disliking of their transportation services

**Table 4**  
Analysis of the Public and Private Transporters Employees for Their Reasons of Disliking

Reasons – Liking	Mean Ranking Score		Mann-Whitney Test
	Public	Private	P value
Longer Waiting Times	4.45	1.96	< 0.05*
Overcrowded	2.02	2.73	< 0.05*
Low Frequency	1.24	4.02	< 0.05*
Slowness of Vehicle	3.15	5.91	< 0.05*
Unreliable Service	5.06	4.97	> 0.05
High Fare	6.15	1.11	< 0.05*
Poor Accessibility to bus stops and stations	6.95	6.89	> 0.05

\* Represents level of significances at 5% level of significances

The assessment of the above Table showed that there was significant difference of opinion recorded among public and private sector transport employees for their reasons of disliking of their own transport systems.

It was analyzed that among public sector employees the first four major reasons for disliking were low frequency of their buses (1.24), overcrowdedness (2.02), slowness of the vehicle (3.15) and longer waiting times (4.45) whereas opposite to that among the private operators the four major reasons of disliking was high fare (1.11), longer waiting times (1.96), overcrowdedness (2.73) and low frequency (4.02). As few reasons were similar among the major reasons for the disliking of the employees of both categorizations, but significance was obtained due to the different ranking of the similar reasons among private and public employees. On the issue of unreliability, both types of employees were similar on ranking i.e. 4.97 - 5.06 and there was no significant difference among private and public transport sector employees. Similar results were also obtained on the reasons of poor accessibility to bus stops and stations as ranks for both types of employees were in range of 6.89 - 6.95 which was not significant. High fares (6.15) were ranked low by the public sector employees whereas slowness of vehicle (5.91) was ranked lower by the private sector employees for their disliking.

#### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. There was significant difference of opinion among public and private bus transport passengers for their reasons of liking and disliking towards the preferred mode of transportation system.
2. There was a significant difference of opinion recorded among public and private sector transport employees for their reasons of liking and disliking of their own transport systems.

#### **CONCLUSIONS**

1. The public transport was more preferred as compared to private sector transport by passengers on account of quickness, inexpensive services and lower risks of accidents.
2. Private transport passengers have different choices i.e. cleanliness of interior, seats and at bus stops, higher comfort level in buses and quickness as compared to the public sector.
3. Public transport user commuters, after low frequency of their buses as major reason of disliking, had reported slowness of the vehicle, unreliability of services, longer waiting times, overcrowdedness, high fares and poor accessibility to bus stops and stations.

4. Private transport passengers disliked the services of preferred mode of transport due to poor accessibility to bus stops and stations, longer waiting times, overcrowdedness, unreliability of services, and slowness of the vehicle and high fares. It was inferred that high fares were least assumed problem for both the types of commuters in using services of transportations.
5. Public sector was preferred as compared to private sector transport by employees on account of inexpensive service, availability of shelters and benches at bus stops, lower risks of accidents, reputation and goodwill of the bus operators, quick services and staff behaviors towards the commuters.
6. Private bus transport operators were preferred as compared to public sector transport services on account of quick services, technology adoption, reputation and goodwill of the bus operators, higher comfort level in buses, cleanliness of interior, seats and at bus stops and staff behavior towards the commuters.
7. Employees disliked the services of public sector bus transport as their preferred mode of transport for four reasons, that were low frequency of their buses, overcrowdedness, slowness of the vehicles and longer waiting times.
8. Private operators were disliked for the four major reasons, that were high fares, longer waiting times, overcrowdedness and low frequency. As few reasons were similar among the major reasons for the disliking of the employees of both categorizations, but significance was obtained due to the different ranking of the similar reasons among private and public employees.