

Identifying the factors affecting the commuter satisfaction on Public Transport Service: A case study on Government and Private Bus Services in Sri Lanka

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The increase in the travel demand and preference for using private vehicles creates traffic jams in urban areas of many countries. Currently, most of Sri Lankans living in urban areas prefer using private transport modes to public transport services. This phenomenon reveals us that there is a problematic situation in the commuter satisfaction on public transport service in Sri Lanka. Main objectives of this study were to construct a composite index to measure the commuter satisfaction level (CSL) and to identify the factors affecting the CSL. Using the cluster sampling method, a sample of hundred and twenty (120) commuters were recruited from four bus routes namely: Kandy (Route No. 01), Matara (Route No. 02), Anuradhapura (Route No. 15) and Embilipitiya (Route No. 03). A questionnaire based interview method was used to collect data. A specific composite index construction methodology based on multiple corresponding analysis was applied to measure the CSL and one sample t-test was used to test the CSL. Further, multiple regression analysis method was used to identify the significant factors affecting the CSL. Distributions of both government and private commuter satisfaction indices (CSI) were right skewed with median values of 24.74 and 12.09 respectively. Results of ttests suggested that government commuters had a lower dissatisfaction level while private commuters had a higher level of satisfaction. According to regression models, safety, professionalism and information were significant factors on the CSL for government transport services. However, safety and professionalism were only significant with private transport services. With regard to recommendations, more buses should be arranged during peak hours to facilitate passengers while promoting the use of existing touch travel card system. Further, it is important to provide more comfortable buses, establish proper transport policies to avoid travel time delays, control the unnecessary sound generated by radios and televisions, display bus time tables at bus halts in different routes for the convenience of the commuters and improve the quality attributes of the service more than the physical facilities.

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