

Satisfaction of Women Passengers Towards Vidiyal Scheme – A Study with Special Reference to Villupuram District

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Abstract: This study investigates the satisfaction levels of women passengers utilizing the Vidiyal Scheme in Villupuram District. The Vidiyal Scheme, an initiative aimed at enhancing transportation accessibility for women, provides affordable and secure travel options. The research focuses on understanding the perceptions, experiences, and challenges faced by women passengers who rely on this service. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from a representative sample of women who have used the Vidiyal Scheme in the district. The analysis reveals key factors influencing satisfaction, including the affordability, safety, punctuality, and comfort of the service. Additionally, the study highlights areas for improvement in service delivery, particularly in terms of frequency and infrastructure. The findings suggest that while the scheme has been beneficial in providing a secure mode of transport, there is room for enhancing the overall service quality to further meet the needs and expectations of women passengers. This study aims to contribute to policy recommendations for optimizing the Vidiyal Scheme and similar initiatives aimed at empowering women through better transportation systems.

Key words: Women Passengers, VidiyalPayanam Scheme, Bus travel, Zero Bus Ticket

I. Introduction

The Tamil Nadu government proposed a program in May 2021 that would allow women to travel for free on government-run regular-fare buses (for short trips up to 30 kilometers) throughout the state's cities and towns. When women ride these buses, they are given zero-tickets, which are tickets with no fare. In a previous study, the State Planning Commission (SPC) examined the effects it had on female users and their households in Chennai. The SPC carried out another study of these users in smaller towns and cities with varying economic backgrounds in response to recommendations made by the Honorable Minister of Transportation during a meeting when the SPC presented the research's findings.

Significance of the study

This study holds significant value in understanding the impact of the Vidiyal Scheme on the lives of women passengers in Villupuram District. Given that the scheme aims to provide women with safer and more affordable transportation options, assessing its effectiveness can offer valuable insights into how well it addresses the unique mobility needs of women, particularly in rural and semi-urban regions. The findings of this study will help policymakers, transportation authorities, and other stakeholders in identifying areas where the Vidiyal Scheme can be improved to ensure it better serves its intended purpose. By highlighting the factors that influence women's satisfaction—such as safety, accessibility, and comfort—this research will contribute to enhancing the quality of public transportation for women, thereby promoting greater gender equality in mobility. Additionally, the study's outcomes could serve as a model for similar transportation schemes in other districts, providing a framework for developing inclusive and effective public transportation systems that empower women.

Statement of the Problem

The Vidiyal Scheme, launched with the aim of providing safe, affordable, and reliable transportation for women in rural and semi-urban areas, plays a crucial role in enhancing women's mobility in Villupuram District. However, despite the positive intention behind the scheme, the level of satisfaction among women passengers remains an area of concern. Factors such as safety, comfort, affordability, and frequency of service are pivotal in determining the effectiveness of the scheme. There is limited research available that evaluates how well the Vidiyal Scheme meets the needs and expectations of women passengers in Villupuram District. This study seeks to identify the key factors influencing the satisfaction levels of women passengers using the Vidiyal Scheme, examine the challenges they face, and assess the overall effectiveness of the scheme in improving their transportation experience. The findings from this study aim to provide insights into areas requiring improvements, thereby contributing to the development of more efficient and women-centric public transport services.

Objective of the study

To analyze the awareness level of women passengers about the VidiyalPayanam Scheme.

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To Examine the Satisfaction level of women passengers about the VidiyalPayanam Scheme.

To offer suitable findings and suggestions relating to the study.

Sampling Frame and Data Collection

In this study Simple Random Sampling method is adopted to collect the data from the women passengers and totally 150 sample respondents were selected, the data collected and analyzed with the help of Percentage analysis method.

Primary data has been collected from the Women passengers with the help of Interview schedule method in Villupuram district and the secondary data has been collected from Journals, Articles, and Related Websites.

Data Analysis

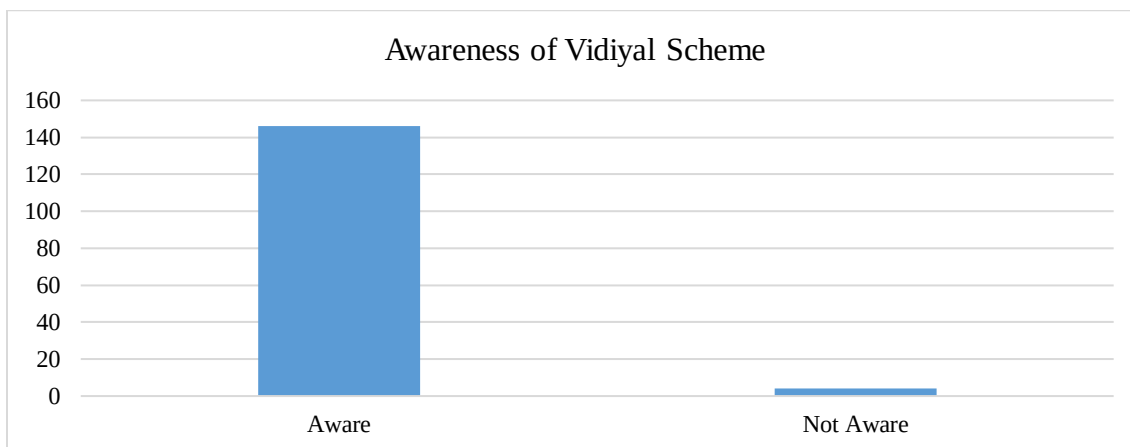


Chart No. 1 Awareness Level about VidiyalPayanam Scheme to the Women Passengers

Chart No.1 shows that, majority of the Women passengers are aware about the VidiyalPayanam Scheme.

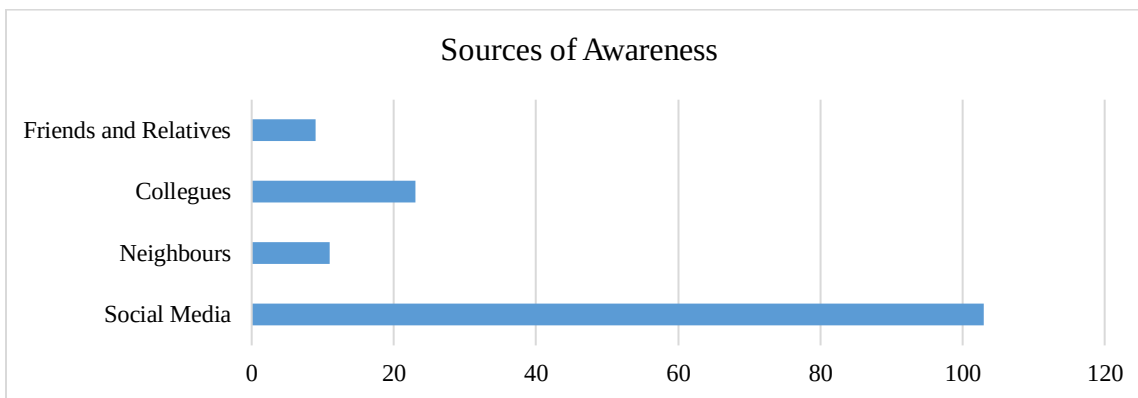


Chart No. 2 Sources of Awareness about the VidiyalPayanam Scheme to the Women Passengers

Chart No. 2 depicts that majority of the Women passengers are known about the Vidiyal Payanam Scheme through Social Media.

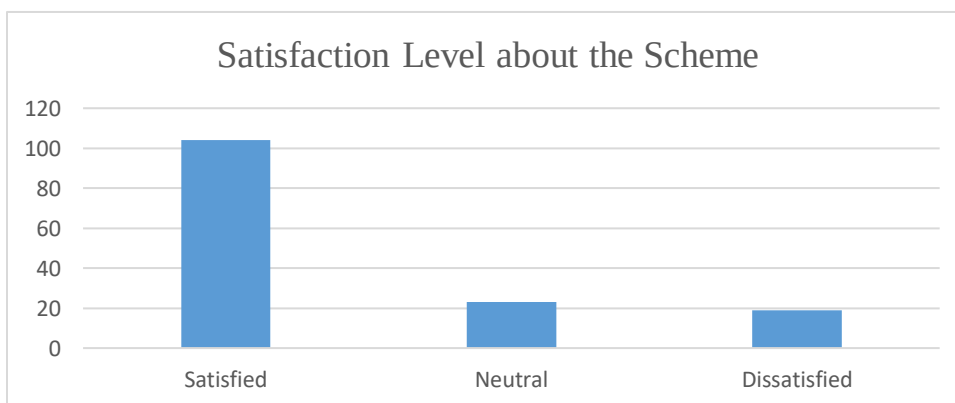


Chart No.3 Passengers Satisfaction Level about the “Vidiyal Scheme”

Chart No. 3 shows that the majority of the women passenger are satisfied with the VidiyalPayanam Scheme

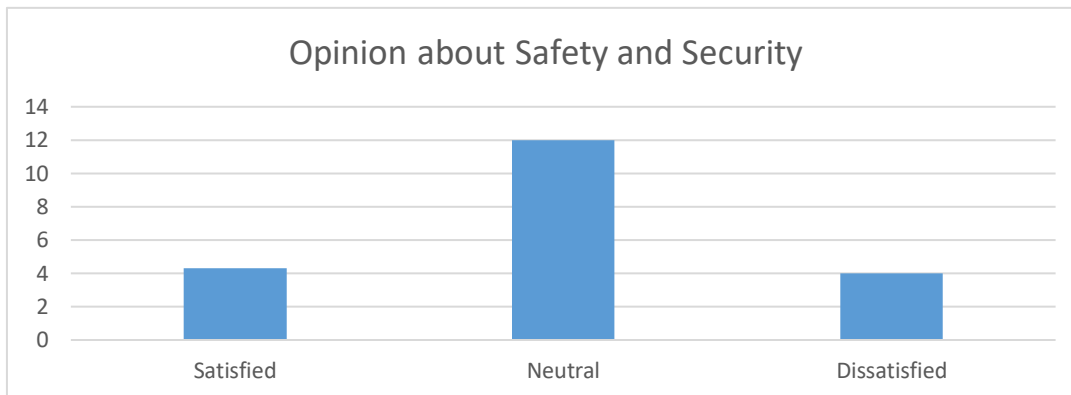


Chart No. 4

Passengers opinion about Safety and Security of Vidiyal Payanam Scheme

Chart No. 4 depicts that majority of the Women Passengers are opined that Satisfied about the Safety and Security of Vidiyal Payanam Scheme.

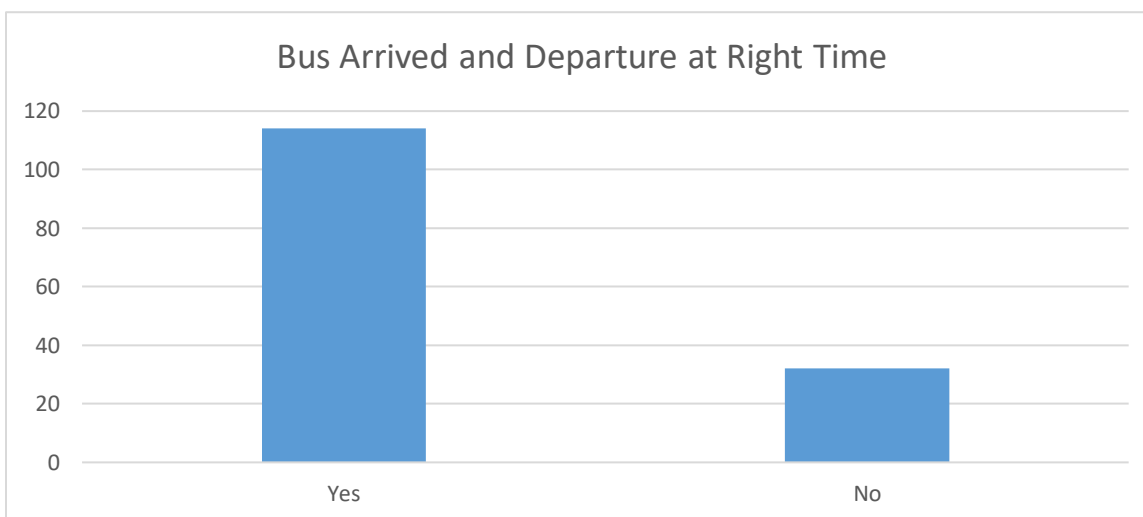


Chart No.5

Passengers Opinion about Timing of Bus arrived and Departure

Chart No. 5 expressed that most of the Passengers said that, Bus arrived and Departure at the right time, but some passengers said bus not departure and arrived at the right time.

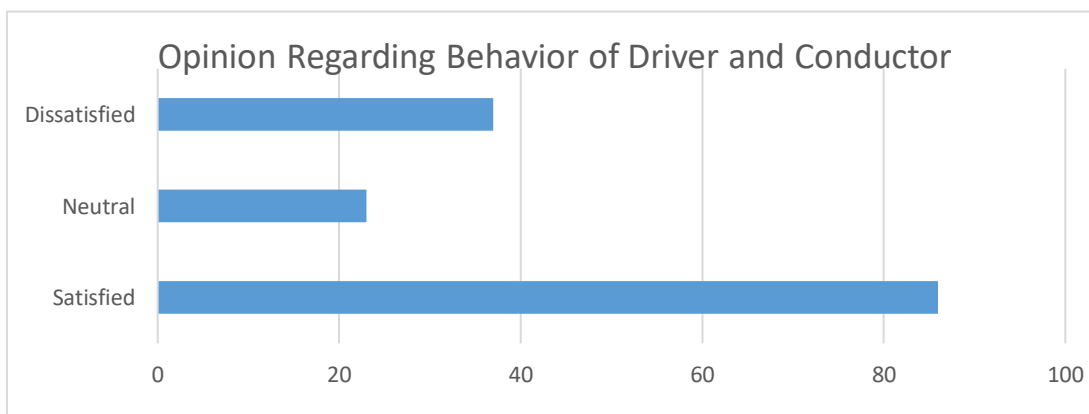


Chart No. 6 Passengers Opinion regarding Behavior of Driver and Conductor

Chart No.6 depicts that, Passengers Opinion regarding behavior of driver and conductor, in this most of the passengers are satisfied about the behavior of driver and conductor, and some of them are opined that some conductors and drivers are behaving rudely.

II. Findings of the Study

Women passengers generally expressed satisfaction with the increased accessibility to public transportation, particularly in rural and underserved areas. The Vidiyal buses, which operate during convenient hours, were seen as a safer alternative to traditional public transport, which often posed safety concerns.

While the scheme was appreciated, there were reports of occasional delays, overcrowding during peak hours, and instances of buses not following the scheduled timings. These operational shortcomings led to inconvenience, especially for women who depended on punctual transportation for daily routines.

The majority of respondents reported positive experiences with the conductors and drivers, appreciating their courteous behavior. However, a few passengers noted instances of rude conduct or improper behavior, which can tarnish the overall experience of using the service.

Passengers pointed out the lack of adequate support services, such as help for differently-abled women or those with children, when boarding or alighting the buses. Additionally, there were suggestions to provide more assistance during peak hours.

The scheme was viewed as affordable by most women, enabling them to save money compared to private transportation options. The lower fare structure was particularly appreciated by women from lower-income households, contributing to their financial independence.

Suggestions relating to the Study

Increasing awareness about the Vidiyal Scheme through pamphlets, posters, and social media platforms is essential. An informative app or SMS service could also be developed to provide real-time updates on bus arrivals, schedules, and availability of seats.

Regular training programs for drivers and conductors on how to deal with women passengers respectfully and professionally could help in improving the overall passenger experience. It's crucial to maintain high standards of conduct and professionalism to ensure the safety and satisfaction of women passengers.

To address overcrowding, the frequency of buses during peak travel times (morning and evening) should be increased. This would ensure smoother commutes and reduce the stress experienced by passengers due to overcrowding.

The Vidiyal Scheme should enhance its operational efficiency by ensuring that buses adhere strictly to their schedules. Timely arrival and departure would reduce the stress and inconvenience faced by women passengers, particularly those relying on the service for work or school.

Expanding the coverage area of the Vidiyal buses to remote and underserved regions of Villupuram district would help cater to more women. Introducing additional routes that connect major hubs, such as markets, educational institutions, and health centers, would enhance the scheme's utility.

III. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Vidiyal Scheme has proven to be an essential and beneficial transportation initiative for women in Villupuram District, offering enhanced accessibility, safety, and affordability. The scheme has positively impacted women's mobility, particularly in rural and underserved areas, by providing a reliable and secure mode of transport. While most women passengers expressed satisfaction with the scheme's features, such as women-only spaces and affordable fares, there are still areas for improvement, including addressing operational issues like delays and overcrowding. By expanding the network, improving communication, and incorporating feedback from passengers, the Vidiyal Scheme can further enhance its services, ensuring that it continues to meet the evolving needs of women in the district and serves as a model for similar initiatives elsewhere.

Reference

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