



Service Quality Measurement Of IRCTC With Special Reference To Kanjikkode Division

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Abstract

Nowadays service quality has a very high influence on customers' satisfaction. This study aims to put forth the evaluation of determinants of the passengers' satisfaction on service quality of IRCTC with special reference to kanjikkode division. IRCTC has great potential to grow and to draw economic benefits from its operations if their service quality is improved. As compared to other modes of passenger services the customers' satisfaction of Indian railway is low. Railway can perform only if the IRCTC provide quality service to customers at affordable rate with great quality. The various research studies reveals a number of dimensions regarding the service quality of Indian railway .Here five dimensions of service quality SERVQUAL were taken for analysing the service quality provided by IRCTC which is Tangibility, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance and Empathy. The result indicates that The physical infrastructure has the highest gap; this opined that the customer satisfaction is low as compared to other dimensions. It was found that IRCTC should provide better quality services in terms of tangibility and responsiveness.

Keywords:

servqual, passenger's satisfaction , tangibility , reliability

Introduction

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited were incorporated as a public limited company on September 27 1999 under the Companies Act 1956 and were granted a certificate of incorporation by the Deputy Registrar of Companies N.C.T. of Delhi and Haryana. The main services provided by IRCTC are Book Ticket, Foreign Tourist Booking, Connecting Journey Booking, and IRCTC TRAINS. Group Booking. Travel Insurance Claim Process, Cancel Ticket. E-tickets. Counter Ticket, PNR Enquiry, and Train Schedule, Track Your Train. The IRCTC was established on 27 September 1999, as a public sector undertaking completely owned by the Government of India through the Indian Railways. It is the only entity that is authorized to provide certain services to the Indian Railways,

including online ticketing, catering, and selling drinking water on trains and at railway stations. In May 2008, it was classed as a Miniratna public corporation, which allowed it a certain degree of financial autonomy. It is one of the Miniratna companies of Central Indian government. Prior to its inception, Indian railway passengers had little options for quality food while travelling. Passengers have to get off from trains at stations and buy sub-standard and unhygienic food available. The short halt at stations and the sudden surge in crowd at the stalls added to the travellers' panic. After the advent of IRCTC, pantry cars were introduced inside long or medium distance trains which catered to passengers by serving freshly cooked quality food, thus revolutionizing train travel in India. It pioneered internet-based rail ticket booking through its website, as well as from the mobile phones via Wi-Fi, GPRS or SMS. It also provides SMS facility to check PNR status and Live Train Status as well. In addition to e-tickets, Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation also offers I-tickets that are basically like regular tickets except that they are booked online and delivered by post. The tickets PNR status is also made available. Commuters on the suburban rail can also book season tickets through the website. It has also launched a loyalty program called Shubh Yatra for frequent travellers. Through this program, passengers can avail discounts on all tickets booked round the year by paying an upfront annual fee.

Literature review

Parasuraman et al. (1985) identified key determinants of service quality as perceived by service providers and consumers, namely, reliability, responsiveness, competency, accessibility, courtesy, communication, credibility, security, understanding, knowing the customer, and tangibility to formulate a service quality framework

Vanniarajan and Stephen (2008) explored the attributes that are used to evaluate the service quality of Indian Railways; which are reliability, assurance, empathy, tangibles, and responsiveness. It was found that passengers were moderately satisfied on these dimensions

Fazlina Waris et al. (2010) identified that the factors that most influence the good services were punctuality, frequency, speed, space, reliability, comfort, safety, train operations, services status.

Geetika, Shefali Nandan (2010) identified components of service quality of Indian Railways at Railway platforms on the basis of sufficiency of seating space, lighting, fans, drinking water and sanitation, clarity of announcements, reservation chart display, affordability of refreshments, quality of refreshments, security of self, security of luggage, behavior of porters, behavior of Railway staff, management of parking.

Vijetha S. Shetty (2014) focused the consumers' perspectives towards IRCTC's e-ticketing services. This study showed that the consumers' perception towards IRCTC e-ticketing services is positive; however there are some glitches which need to be overcome. They concluded that IRCTC can improve by focusing on overcoming technical glitches, enhancing more user friendly interface, with comprehensive plans to tie up with more banks and to offer new services in new areas, constantly innovating in tune with new age websites and providing a positive and enriching customer experience. With the focus on digital inclusion with everyone having access to technology, a new paradigm will be set altogether in which IRCTC will have to strengthen its forte of rail ticketing and operate successfully.

Objective of the study:

1. To assess the level of service quality provided by IRCTC and customer satisfaction.
2. To study the outcome of the service quality dimensions to see which dimension is more effective.

Research methodology

100 respondents were chosen for the study the data was collected through structured questionnaire. The research design is descriptive in nature. Convenient random sampling technique was used. Mean score, servqual analysis; five point likert scales were used as tools for analysis in the study

Analysis

Table 1: frequency of journey

	frequency	percent
Regularly	32	32.0
Weekly	46	46.0
Monthly	12	12.0
A few times in a year	10	10.0
total	100	100

The majority of passengers (46%) preferred their frequency of journey is weekly.

Table 2: Gender status of passengers

	frequency	percent
Male	68	68.0
female	32	32.0
total	100	100

The above table depicts that out of total respondents are male category and 32% of respondents are female.

Table 3: Types of tickets reserved

Per journey	43	43.0
Weekly	27	27.0
Monthly	21	21.0
Annual	9	9.0
total	100	100

Above analysis revealed that most of the passengers are chosen their ticket per journey. Remaining 27% booked weekly tickets and rest of them are booked their ticket monthly or annual when they required.

Table:1

Mean score of 22 statements				
attributes	expectations	perceptions	gap (E-P)	% of satisfaction
IRCTC has modern looking equipment & infrastructure at stations	5.91	3.34	2.57	56.51%
IRCTC reservation is convenient for the user	5.83	3.17	2.66	54.37%
IRCTC employees should be well dressed and appear neat	5.84	3.31	2.53	56.68%
IRCTC online reservation money transaction facility is good	5.98	3.42	2.56	57.19%
IRCTC should provide their services at the time they promise to do so	5.67	3.35	2.32	59.08%
When passengers have problems, IRCTC should be sympathetic and reassuring	5.67	3.96	1.71	69.84%
When passengers have problems, IRCTC should be sympathetic and reassuring	5.84	3.2	2.64	54.79%
When IRCTC promise to do something by a certain time, they should do so	5.91	3.4	2.51	57.53%
IRCTC adheres to punctuality of Trains	5.71	4.35	1.06	81.44%
. IRCTC should be expected to tell passengers exactly when services will be performed	5.81	3.98	1.83	68.50%
It is realistic for passengers to expect prompt service from employees of IRCTC	5.79	3.14	2.65	54.23%
IRCTC employees always have willingness to help the passengers	5.84	3.11	2.73	53.25%
Even if too busy IRCTC employees respond to passengers request promptly	5.78	3.17	2.61	54.84%
. Passengers should be able to trust the IRCTC employees	6	3.39	2.61	56.50%
Passengers should be able to feel safe in their transactions with the IRCTC	6.16	5.23	0.93	84.90%
The IRCTC time table is a comprehensive Indian Railways time table, which provides all information about running trains.	5.65	2.77	2.88	49.03%
IRCTC provides food facility in an affordable price	5.73	3.02	2.71	52.71%
IRCTC should be expected to give individual attention to passengers	5.29	4.47	0.82	84.50%
It is realistic to expect IRCTC to know what the needs of their passengers are	5.66	4.66	1	82.33%
It is realistic to expect IRCTC to have their passengers' interest at heart	5.77	3.36	2.41	58.23%
IRCTC should be expected to have operating hours convenient to all their passengers	5.83	3.17	2.66	54.37%
Do you satisfied with IRTC's	5.97	3.16	2.81	52.93%

Service				
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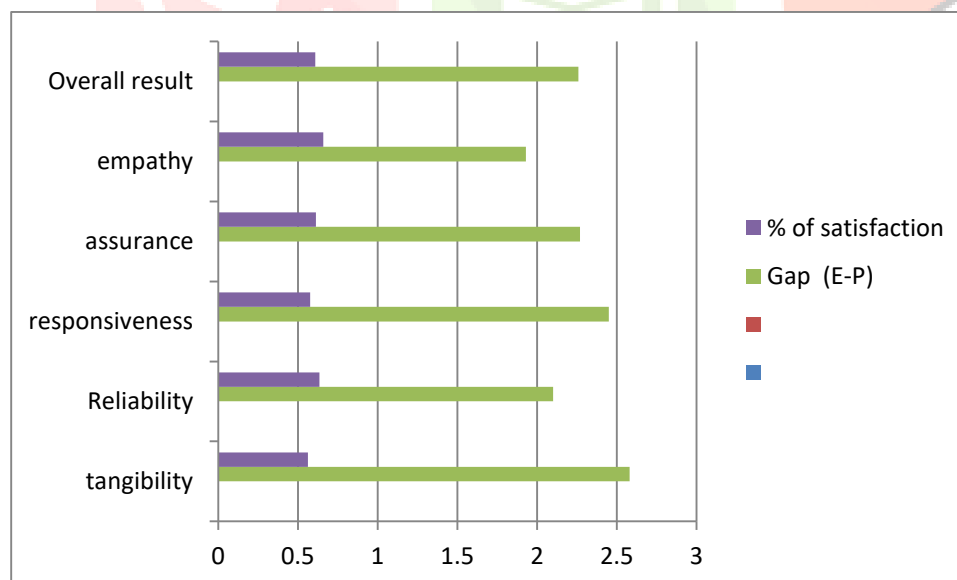
The above table implies that the expectation, perception of respondent regarding different attributes including modern looking equipment and infrastructure at all stations ,IRCTC reservation is convenient for the user, IRCTC employees should be well dressed and appear neat, IRCTC should provide their services at the time they promise to do so, When passengers have problems, IRCTC should be sympathetic and reassuring, When IRCTC promise to do something by a certain time, they should do so, It is realistic for passengers to expect prompt service from employees of IRCTC, etc. Here the gap between expectations and perception has been calculated and percentage of satisfaction of different respondent regarding the above said attributes has also been calculated.

Table 5.2 Mean scores of five dimensions

dimensions	expectations	perceptions	Gap (E-P)	% of satisfaction
tangibility	5.89	3.31	2.58	56.19%
Reliability	5.76	3.652	2.10	63.40%
responsiveness	5.80	3.35	2.45	57.75%
assurance	5.88	3.60	2.27	61.22%
empathy	5.70	3.76	1.93	65.96%
Overall result	5.80	3.53	2.26	60.86%

Average mean has been calculated for analysis of gap for the various dimensions namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy .To analyze the service quality of service industries, the main element is customer's expectations i.e , how to meet customers' expectations.

Percentage of satisfaction and gap under major service quality measurements



Conclusion:

Service quality is one of the crucial factors for determining customer's satisfaction as well as for success full existence of a business. In these paper respondents has been enquired about the service quality of IRCTC with reference to kanjikkode railway division. The results indicate that a larger gap has been found in Tangibility and Responsiveness dimensions of service quality. So that the present study suggest that IRCTC should provide better quality services in terms of tangibility and responsiveness. For the improvement of competitiveness of IRCTC service quality Tangibility is one of the important factors to be concluded and The IRCTC needs to be competitive in terms of service because passengers demanding better service. On the basis of critical analysis of variables of 'satisfaction' the lowest gap is found in empathy that means the satisfaction is highest in this dimension and The passengers are relatively more satisfied with the assurance of IRCTC. The improvement of those aspects with highest gap will help in improving the service quality gaps and ultimately will improve the competitiveness of IRCTC

Limitations of the Study

- **Insufficient sample size for statistical measurement.**
- **Time and cost constraints.**
- **The survey has been conducted in kanjikkode division only. It may not reflect the public opinion at large.**
- **The biasness of the respondents may affect the result of the study**

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