



AN ASSESSMENT STUDY OF THE MUMBAI PASSENGERS' PERCEPTION ON SERVICES UTILISED DURING THEIR TRAVEL BY KONKAN RAIL

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Abstract: Konkan Railway runs along the Indian west coast parallel to Arabian Sea and Western Ghats. It is an extremely beautiful and scenic route running from Maharashtra till Karnataka. The route and rail line are made and operated by Konkan Railway Corporation. The present study aims to find out opinion of passengers towards availability of tickets and punctuality of Konkan railway and to know the perception of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway. The data was collected from 100 passengers of Konkan railway who reside in Mumbai suburban area i.e., Borivali to Bandra. Structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. Both open ended and close ended questions were asked. The findings of the study reveal that passengers are overall satisfied with the services of Konkan Railway.

Key Words: Konkan Railway, Passengers' Perception, Mumbai, Service, Travel

1. INTRODUCTION

The Konkan Railway was the missing link between India's commercial capital - Mumbai and Mangalore. Now it is 756 km line which connects to 3 states – Mumbai, Goa and Karnataka. (erail.in). Its length through Maharashtra is 361 kilometers (224 mi), through Karnataka 239 kilometers (149 mi), and 156.25 kilometers (97.09 mi) through Goa. (wikipedia.org)

Some of the achievements of Konkan Railway

- Computerized Reservation Centers (PRS) facility started at India Post Honnavar on 27.01.2015. At present there are 21 PRS locations over Konkan Railway.
- To provide reservation facility to the passengers in their city another Town Booking Agency started at Malvan in Sindhudurg district on 26.07.2015. at present there are 17 TBAs over Konkan Railway.

- In an endeavour to provide better customer services and to make the journey more pleasurable, Konkan Railway has launched yet another service-oriented scheme to provide a unique experience for rail passengers in Konkankanya & Mandovi Express trains. The service provides attractive and utility products for sale to passengers travelling by Konkan Railway. This unique service was enjoyed up till now only by air travelers or through E-shopping. Now Konkan Railway passengers can also enjoy the pleasure of feeling the products & shopping right at their place of seat whilst their journey. Recently the services are extended in 11 more trains over KR section on experimental basis.
- In co-ordination with State Tourism Department training was imparted to 904 taxi / rickshaw drivers and motorcycle pilots regarding information / importance of nearby tourist places, etiquette and safe driving to encourage the tourism in Konkan region & over Konkan Railway
- At Madgaon video wall of size 10 ft X 8 ft is being provided for display of information for guidance of passengers.
- Passenger helpline number is made functional
- CCTV Video Surveillance system installed at Five stations (Khed, Chiplun, Ratnagiri, Kankavali and Sawantwadi)
- Voice based Public Grievance Registration System has been commissioned

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The paper titled **“Passengers’ perception and Persuasion on Railway Transport system of Tripura”** aims to study the perception and persuasion of the railway passengers of Tripura (Churaibari-Garjee) on railway services. The primary data was collected through consecutive sampling method from 21 functional railway stations of Tripura who are used to travel by passenger trains. The findings of the study state that most of the passengers travel for work purpose followed by family matters and frequency of travel is monthly followed by weekly. Most of the passengers found to be neutral to dissatisfied with condition of toilets, quality of water, cleanliness in train, sanitation facility and on train security service. The problem faced by passengers is related to bathroom followed by pick pocket. **(Roy, Barman, & Mitra, 2019)**

The paper titled **“A study on passengers’ perception and satisfaction towards services offered by Southern Railways in Coimbatore Junction”** aims to study passengers perception and satisfaction towards on-boards and off the board services offered by Southern Railway. The primary data was collected using questionnaire. Convenient sampling method was used for selecting samples. Study was confined to period of January 2014 to April 2014. The findings of state that passengers find trains are punctual as they arrive and depart on time. Passengers are very satisfied with the speed of the Southern Railway. **(Saravanan & Gandhimathi, 2014)**

The paper titled **“A study on passengers perception towards Indian Railways with special reference to Hubli Junction”** aims to know perception of the passengers about the quality service by the Indian railways during the journey and know their satisfaction from various amenities at Hubli junction. The secondary data was collected from Indiastat.com from 2012-2018. Primary data was collected through survey method from

90 respondents from Hubli junction who were about to commence the journey. The findings of the study state that most of the respondents travel for tourism followed by employment. They use express train and prefer Non-AC coach. Regarding the amenities provided in Railway coaches, the passengers ranked first to Fan/Light/Mobile charging facility followed by second rank to availability of water in the coach. Regarding amenities provided on Hubli railway station, first rank is given to Safety and security in the railway station followed by second rank given to Signage and coach indication boards. (Patted & Biradar, 2020)

The pilot study titled “**Passengers’ Perceptions of Railway Safety**” aims to identify the passengers’ perceptions of railway safety, with emphasis on the internal safety and potential safety improvements. The data was collected by a purpose-designed survey in Swedish at four train routes covering urban and rural areas in Sweden, between July and August 2015. The sample size was 243 passengers (age 18-79 years). The findings of the study reveals that safe storage of luggage was perceived by passengers as the most pressing problem. However, high-frequency travellers perceived less safety problem as compared to low-frequency travellers. (Forsberg, Holgersson, & Bodén, 2017)

The paper titled “**Passengers Perception of Service Providers at Railway Platforms in India: A Comparative Analysis**” aims to measure satisfaction level of passengers from different platform-based amenities and service providers at railway platforms in India. The observation method was applied to make list of amenities on railway platforms. 23 amenities were identified and divided under five broad categories. Primary data was collected through questionnaire. The findings of the study state that overall satisfaction level of NCR catering is maximum. Regarding book stalls, Sarvodaya Sahitya delivers maximum satisfaction to the passengers. Sulabh Sauchalay provides maximum satisfaction to the passengers. ATMs have maximum satisfaction level. Passengers also have maximum satisfaction from drinking water and other facilities. (Ojha, Upreti, Malhotra, & Parasar, 2019)

3. RESEARCH GAP

Through review of literature it is found that many researches are done on the topics related to passengers’ perception towards railway services. Researcher did not come across any research related to passengers’ perception on services utilised during their travel by Konkan Rail. So the present research is an attempt to fill up this gap.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1) To find out opinion of passengers towards availability of tickets and punctuality of Konkan railway
- 2) To know the perception of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway

5. HYPOTHESIS STATEMENTS

H_0 = There is no significance difference between educational qualification and perception of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway

6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.1 Type of Research

Descriptive research design is used where focus is on survey and fact finding enquiries through structured questionnaire about passengers' perception about services of Konkan Railway.

6.2 Area of study:

The research is conducted in Mumbai suburban area i.e. Borivali to Bandra.

6.3 Sampling method

The sampling technique followed was convenience sampling method where samples which are conveniently available for the researcher are considered for data collection.

6.4 Target Population and Sample size

The target population is the passengers who travel by Konkan railway and sample size is 56.

6.5 Type and Source of Data

The present study is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data was collected through structured questionnaire. Open ended and close ended questions were asked to get the answers which are related to the objectives of the study. Respondents were sent Google form questionnaire on their mobile phone (whatsapp) and requested to fill the same. Secondary data is collected from various websites.

6.6 Statistical Tools Use:

Graph is used to present the data so that data is displayed and understood easily. Kruskal Wallis test is used for hypothesis testing.

7. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Fig. 7.1 Gender of Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Female	29
Male	27

Source: Primary Data

The above graph shows gender of respondents. 29 respondents were females and 27 respondents were male.

Fig. 7.2 Age of Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Less than 20 years	10
21-30 years	16
31-40 years	14
41-50 years	11
51-60 years	3
More than 60 years	2

Source: Primary Data

The above graph shows age of respondents. 10 respondents were less than 20 years of age, 16 were in the age group of 21-30 years, 14 were in the age group of 31-40 years, 11 were in the age group of 41-50 years, 3 were in the age group of 51-60 years and 2 were above 60 years.

Fig. 7.3 Educational Qualification of Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Upto SSC	1
HSC	7
Graduation	28
Post-Graduation	20

Source: Primary Data

The above graph shows educational qualification of respondents. 1 respondent was studied upto SSC, 7 were studied upto HSC, 28 were studied upto Graduate and 20 were studied upto Post-Graduate.

Fig. 7.4 Occupation of Respondents

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Employed / Job	27
Housewife	2
Retired	1
Self-employed / Business	6
Student	20

Source: Primary Data

The above graph shows occupation of respondents. 27 respondents were employed/into job, 2 were housewife, 1 was retired, 6 were self-employed / into business and 20 were students.

Fig. 7.5 Frequency of travelling by Konkan Railway

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Monthly	3
Few times a year	16
Once in a year	24
Never Travel	13

Source: Primary Data

Out of 56 respondents, 3 respondents said they travel by Konkan Railway monthly, 16 said few times a year, 24 said once in a year and 13 said they never travel by Konkan Railway.

Fig. 7.6 Reason for traveling by Konkan Railway

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Vacation	25
Family functions	8
Leisure / Tourism	8
Pilgrimage	2

Source: Primary Data

Out of 43 respondents, 25 said they travel by Konkan Railway for vacation, 8 said for family function, 8 said for leisure / tourism and 2 said for pilgrimage.

Fig. 7.7 Mode of Booking tickets of Konkan Railway

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Railway portal / website / IRCTC	36
Railway counters / offline	3
Agents	4

Source: Primary Data

Out of 43 respondents, 36 respondents said they book ticket by Railway portal / website, 3 said they book at railway counters and 4 said they book tickets through agents.

Fig. 7.8 Opinion about Konkan Railway ticket fare

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Very High	4
High	3
Moderate / Reasonable	35
Low	1

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 4 respondents have opinion that ticket fair of Konkan Railway is very high, 3 said ticket fare is high, 35 said ticket fare is moderate / reasonable and 1 said ticket fare is low.

Fig. 7.9 Opinion about availability of Konkan Rail tickets during season

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Satisfactory	6
Neutral	12
Dissatisfactory	14
Very Dissatisfactory	11

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 6 respondents are satisfied with availability of Konkan Railway tickets during season, 12 said they are neutral, 14 said they are dissatisfied and 11 said they are very dissatisfied.

Fig. 7.10 Opinion about availability of Konkan Rail tickets during off-season

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Very Satisfactory	4
Satisfactory	18
Neutral	14
Dissatisfactory	6
Very Dissatisfactory	1

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 4 respondents are very satisfied with availability of Konkan Railway tickets during off-season, 18 said they are satisfied, 14 said they are neutral, 6 said they are dissatisfied and 1 said very dissatisfied.

Fig. 7.11 Opinion regarding the punctuality of Konkan train service

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Highly Satisfied	1
Satisfied	25
Neutral	14
Dissatisfied	3

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that 1 respondent is highly satisfied with the punctuality of train service, 25 said they are satisfied, 14 said they are neutral and 3 said they are very dissatisfied.

Fig. 7.12 perception about services of Konkan railway

Particulars	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral / Not sure	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Catering services / Food	20	0	21	1	1
Toilet facility	1	15	16	6	5
Drinking water facility	1	20	16	3	3
Berth / Coaches	3	28	8	4	0
Mobile Charging facility	7	26	8	2	0
Security	16	0	20	3	4
Medical facility	1	13	23	5	1
Number of unreserved coaches	2	12	21	7	1
Air-conditioned coaches	7	28	8	0	0
Facilities for Handicapped person	2	21	19	1	0

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that respondents are neutral followed by highly satisfied with catering service / food and security in Konkan Railway. Respondents are neutral followed by satisfied with toilet facility and facility for handicapped people. Respondents are satisfied with drinking water facility, berth / coaches, mobile charging facility and air conditioned coaches. Respondents are neutral about medical facility and number of unreserved coaches. So overall it can be seen that respondents are satisfied with services off Konkan Railway.

Fig. 7.13 Would you like to continue travelling by Konkan Railway in future?

Particulars	No. of Respondents
Yes	43
No	0

Source: Primary Data

The above table shows that all 43 respondents who travel by Konkan Railway said that they would like to travel by Konkan Railway in future.

8. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H_0 = There is no significance difference between educational qualification and perception of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway

Kruskal Wallis Test - Test Statistics

	Catering services / Food	Toilet facility	Drinking water facility	Berth / Coaches	Mobile Charging facility	Security	Medical facility	Number of unreserved coaches	Air-conditioned coaches	Facilities for Handicapped person
Chi-Square	1.672	1.362	1.392	3.656	6.003	9.877	2.013	1.551	3.577	1.909
df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Asymp. Sig.	.643	.714	.707	.301	.111	.020	.570	.671	.311	.591

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Educational Qualification

Kruskal Wallis test is applied and the result shows that p-value is more than 0.05 for all the factors considered under perception of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway except security factor. So the null hypothesis is accepted i.e. **there is no significance difference between educational qualification and perception of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway. Educational qualification does not affect satisfaction of passengers towards service quality of Konkan Railway. Satisfaction level is same towards service quality of Konkan Railway (except security factor) for all the passengers having different educational qualification.**

9. LIMITATIONS

- 1) Sample size of 56 is a limitation; the findings may differ with higher sample size.
- 2) The study is limited to satisfaction of passengers from Konkan Railway services only.
- 3) Responses given by respondents may be biased.

10. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that most of the respondents use services of Konkan Railway once in a year followed by few times in a year. Their purpose of travel is vacation. Their mode of booking tickets is Railway portal / website / IRCTC. Respondents find Konkan Railway fare is moderate / reasonable. They are dissatisfied with availability of Konkan Railway Tickets during season and satisfied with availability of Konkan Railway Tickets during off-season. They are found satisfied regarding punctuality of Konkan train services. Overall they are found satisfied with the services of Konkan Railway and they would like to continue travelling by Konkan Railway in future.

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