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Chhatrapati Shahu Institute of Business Education and Research (CSIBER)
(An Autonomous Institute)
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Ph: 91-231-2535706/07, Fax: 91-231-2535708, Website : www.siberindia.edu.in

Email: sajmr@siberindia.edu.in, sibersajmr@gmail.com

A Study Of Passenger Satisfaction Towards Public Road Transport With Reference To Kolhapur Municipal Transport (KMT) Kolhapur.

Vinayak Shivaji Salokhe
[1]Research Scholar, Savitribai Phule Pune University, Pune.,
&
Prof. (Dr.) Omprakash Haldar
Head of the Department, Dr D Y Patil School of Management,
Charoli, Lohagaon, Pune

Abstract: For a developing nation like India to advance economically in the future, its transportation system must be in good working order. In accordance with the organization's policies and rules, providing public services entails attending to the demands of people or organisations that have an interest in the organisation. Satisfaction and passenger perception are related to one another. A user's perception of a service is an evaluation made after using it in comparison to his expectations and prior experiences. People select, arrange, and interpret data to create a meaningful impression of the outside world. Different persons can interpret the same input in diverse ways. Additionally, customer perception of public transportation services affects satisfaction. The major components of the study perception, expectation, service quality, and passenger satisfaction-were the focus of this article's literature review. The guiding principle emphasises SERVQUAL theory, related studies on customer satisfaction and service quality, service quality, customer expectations, and customer satisfaction. The study employed a descriptive methodology and reviewed some of the research on customer perception and satisfaction as well as strategies for improving the calibre of service in public transportation.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Service Quality, SERVQUAL.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Quality of human existence and the economic health of any nation depend heavily .on transportation. It is essential to the survival of business, agriculture, and the service sector. It facilitates the transfer of people and things from one place to another. For a developing nation like India to advance economically in the future, its transportation system must be in good working order. In accordance with the organization's policies and rules, providing public services entails attending to the demands of people or organisations that have an interest in the organisation.

Customer perception is a user's evaluation of a service after using it and contrasting it with what he had previously anticipated and experienced. People select, arrange, and interpret data to create a meaningful impression of the outside world. Numerous academics and researchers have examined consumer perceptions of service quality, finding that they are positively related to satisfaction and brand perception. (Barber, et al., 2011; Marinkovic, et al., 2014; Truong, et al., 2017).

According to one definition, "the customer's fulfilling response" is satisfaction. It's an assessment of whether a feature of a good or service, or the service product itself, gave (or still gives) a pleasurable level of consumption-related

satisfaction, including levels of under- or over-fulfilment (l 997, Oliver).

The three key areas of the study that this paper examined were service quality, customer perception, and expectation. The following key factors were particularly emphasised: l. Service Excellence, 2. Expectations of the consumer, 3. Customer Contentment, 4. Consumer satisfaction and service quality metrics connected to the SERVQUAL Model.

Service Quality: The performance, or profitability, of the service sector is thought to be significantly influenced by service quality. Service excellence both lures new clients away from rival businesses and encourages clients to make repeat purchases (Venetis & Ghauri, 2002; Wantara, 2015).

2..0 LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.1 Customer Satisfaction towards Services Quality of Public Transportation By Thian Wan Jun:

In his article, he examines consumer satisfaction with reference to the calibre of the public transportation service. On five dimensions, SERVQUAL was utilised as a measure of customer satisfaction. The most crucial elements that contribute to exceptional service quality are identified by this study. 200 sets of questionnaires were given out to participants in this study, and 80% of them were returned. The data in this study were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple linear regressions. According to Pearson Correlation, the five SERVQUAL components in this study show a favourable relationship with customer satisfaction. On the other hand, multiple linear regressions are used to foresee how the independent variable would affect the dependent variable.

2.2 Measuring the Satisfaction ofMultimodal Travellers for Local Transit Services in Different Urban Contexts: Marco Diana:

It goes without saying that a public transportation service needs to evaluate customer satisfaction, even beyond more immediate marketing objectives. This study aims to show how satisfaction measurements can be applied to obtain understanding of the relationship between individual attitudes, transportation use, and the urban environment. Nine metrics of urban transportation system satisfaction were found in a representative sample of Italian multimodal travellers (i.e. users of both private cars and public transport). Correlations and correspondence studies were utilised by researchers to show whether and now each feature is related to levels of usage of public transportation, as well as how the relationship is affected by the urban environment.

2.3 What Influences Satisfaction and Loyalty In Public Transport? A Review Of The Literature: Dea van Lierop, Madhav G. Badami & Ahmed M. EI-Geneidy

Retaining users of public transit is a challenge for many municipalities. It is essential to comprehend the elements of public transportation that affect users' adherence to the system in order to create complete policies aimed at retaining riders. This essay summarises the literature on the variables that affect patronage and satisfaction with public transportation. According to research findings, the service factors most closely associated with satisfaction include on-board comfort and cleanliness, operator courtesy and helpfulness, safety, punctuality, and frequency of service. Loyalty is correlated with passengers' opinions of value for money, on-board safety and cleanliness, interactions with staff, and their

perceptions of public transportation's reputation and commitment.

2.4 Perception Of Public Transport Quality Of Service Among Regular Private Vehicle Users In Madrid, Spain: Juan de Ona, Esperanza Estevez, Rocio de Ona:

Utilizing public transportation instead of a personal vehicle helps reduce city traffic congestion. Limiting the use of personal vehicles or implementing measures that increase people's satisfaction with public transportation are two ways to achieve this modal shift. Numerous studies have indicated that the quality of a service affects customer satisfaction, which affects behaviour toward the service; nevertheless, the majority of these studies have mostly focused on users of public transportation. This study's objective is to identify the critical variables that affect how private vehicle owners see Madrid's public transportation systems (Spain). The ordinal logit models were tested using an online panel survey with a sample size of 500 frequent private vehicle users. The results demonstrate that Madrid people are satisfied with public transportation, with regularity, speed, and intra-modality being the most important aspects for users of private vehicles. All segments require high frequency, but the majority also require high speed and inter modality. A segment study has shown characteristics that, while not usually noteworthy, are significant for particular segments. Two criteria (accessibility and individual space) were not found to be significant in any segment, which was an additional noteworthy 'finding. The results of this study can be used to develop' strategies and recommendations for persuading more individuals to take the bus or train instead of their cars.

2.5 Modeling The Satisfaction Of Bus Traffic Transfer Service Quality At A High-Speed Railway Station: Xiaoyun Cheng,' Yu Cao,' Kun Huang,' and Yuejiao Wang'

Bus transit is one of the most often used modes of transportation at high-speed railway (HSR) stations. To enhance the effectiveness of the high-speed railway and boost system utilisation, it is essential to conduct a rational and scientific assessment of the current bus traffic transfer service. This article 'examines the experience of passengers transferring between' buses and provides a framework for evaluating the current bus traffic transfer service. According to the viewpoints of passengers, elements that affect passenger satisfaction during the bus transfer process at high-speed train stations include convenience, comfort, safety, service, and economy.

A structural equation model is used to look into the relationships between bus transfer service, passenger perceived value, and passenger satisfaction. At the Xi'anbei Railway Station, a questionnaire survey of passengers boarding buses was conducted to calibrate the model. This study looks at how observable variables and latent variables are related in the measured model, how exogenous variables affect endogenous variables in the structural model, and how passengers' socioeconomic features affect their pleasure. The results of the structural equation model study indicate that cost and convenience, with bus ticket preference policy and transfer distance being the most significant, are the factors most strongly influencing customer contentment.

3.0 Data and Method:

The current study is both descriptive and diagnostic in character. A well-structured questionnaire was created to gauge the passengers' perceptions of and satisfaction with the KMT bus services in order to get the fullest possible first-hand information

on the research problem. More efforts were made to determine whether the transportation services offered by KMT Bus Service Kolhapur were adequate or lacking.

The public transportation bus service is provided by Kolhapur Municipal Transport (KMT). Which mostly serve the Kolhapur city, the neighboring suburbs, and the villages within 15 kilometers. The universe consists of passengers who used to take KMT buses frequently, seldom, and sporadically for. various purposes within the boundaries of the company's operational routes. Results and Discussion:

4.1 Socio-economic characteristics of the passengers :

Passengers' socioeconomic characteristics, such as age, place of residence, gender, level of education, occupation, frequency of use, and total household income, were examined. 39.00% of respondents in the 15-25 year old age group and 26.00% of respondents in the 26-35 year old age group made up the entire sample of respondents. According to this data, the first two age groups account for 65.0% of the entire sample population. A factor in determining how passengers view KMT's service quality is where they live. Additionally, it will determine whether a public transportation system is required for daily activities. Two types, namely urban and rural, have been taken into consideration in this study. The table shows that 32.19 percent of respondents were from rural areas, and 67.81 percent of respondents were from urban areas.

The table I shows that 63.00 percent of the respondents are male, and the remaining 37.00 percent of the respondents are female. It is clear from the table that the majority of the respondents are male who has been using the KMT bus service. But there is always a misconception that females always prefer to travel by public transport than males. Therefore this observation under study utterly opposite to the general belief. Educational qualification of selected sample passengers from Kolhapur for the KMT bus service. Table indicates that 28.35 percent of respondents are PostGraduate, 26.80 percent of respondents are Graduates, 20.88 percent of respondents are Under Graduate, 11.06 percent of the respondents who are H.S.C qualification, and the remaining 6.44percent of the respondents are up to S.S.C. qualified. It is clear from the table that most ofthe respondents who belong to graduate and postgraduate qualifications have been using the KMT Bus service. This study's outcome rejects the' misconception that highly qualified people will least prefer to travel by public transport like KMT. This outcome will boost up the confidence level of KMT management, and they can design the strategies accordingly.

Table I shows the annual personal income distribution of the selected sample of Kolhapur passengers regarding KMT commuters. The table shows that 32.43 percent of respondents belonging to the personal yearly income Up to Rs.1 lakh, 15.97 percent of respondents belonging to no income, I 0.81 % of respondents belonging to the annual personal income up to Rs.2 lakhs, 13.02 percent of respondents who are members of the annual personal income up to Rs.3 lakhs and the remaining 27.76 percent of respondents who are members of the annual personal income of Rs.4 lakhs and above. It is clear from the table that the majority of respondents who are members of the annual personal income up to Rs. I lakh are using the KMT bus service.

Table l indicates that out of 388 survey respondents, 29.00 percent of respondents are regular travelers of the KMT public transport. There is 16.00 percent of the survey respondents belong to the rare usage category, 9.00 percent of the

respondents belong to once in month category, and 13.02 percent of respondents belong to once in the week category. There is 33.00 percent of respondents who use it occasionally. This implies that only 29.00 percent of respondent passengers on regular mode use the public transport facility and 16.00 percent of the survey respondents prefer to travel by KMT rarely. Therefore management of KMT should focus on these two segments for attracting and converting rare usage groups of passengers to regular user groups with the help of marketing strategy.

Table: 1 Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Characteristics	Frequency
1 Gender	Male (63 %) Female (37%)
2 Age	>35= 66 %, 36 to 55= 30 %, 56<=4 %
3 Education	Primary = 18 %, Secondary =21 %, Territory 40%
4 Income	1 Lakh: 32.43 %, 2 Lakh: 10.81 % , 3 Lakh: 13.02 % , 4 < : 27.76 %, No income: 15.97
5 Occupation	Student: 39 %, Employed : 45 %, Other 16 %
6 Area	Urban = 63 %, Rural = 37 %
7 Frequency of Usage	Daily: 28.01 %, Occasionally 55 %, Rare 16.46%

4.2 Descriptive Analysis:

The analysis focuses on the expectations and perceptions of different personal profile factors of passengers toward the Kolhapur Municipal Transport (KMT) Bus Service's tangibility, responsiveness, reliability, assurance, and empathy.

Passenger Views The main surveys were conducted to find out what passengers thought about key parameters. Five dimensions have been used to categorise forty-one traits, and the levels of relevance, expectations, and perception for each have been noted. Additionally, the passengers' opinions on KMT's general level of service were recorded. The data from the main surveys underwent a thorough analysis, which is detailed in the section that follows.

Table 2.0 Tangibles Satisfaction:

Sr No		Mean	Max	Min	Std Deviation	Rank
1	Ambianceofthe Bus	3.49	5	1	1.080201	I
2	Seatsreservedforwomen/physically challengedpersonsandseniorcitizens.	3.38	5	1	1.189244	II
3	The dress of staff is neat and thoughtful.	3.38	5	1	1.050693	III
4	Leg-space in buses.	3.32	5	1	1.127481	IV
5	Buses are well maintained.	3.06	5	1	1.176222	V
6	Buses are well cleaned.	3.04	5	1	1.19458	VI
7	Availability of seats.	3.00	5	1	1.132804	VII
8	Bus shelters.'	2.91	5	1	1.143428	VIII

9	Seating facilities at the bus stand	2.90	5	1	1.156757	IX
10	Bus time table at the bus stand	2.87	5	1	1.177955	X
11	The environment is clean and hygienic.	2.79	5	1	1.147565	XI
12	Equipped with modern technology.	2.63	5	1	1.125666	**XII**
13	Composite Variable Score	**3.07**	**5**	**1**	**0.839201**	

Table 2 indicates 12 attributes are associated with the quality of public transport servicetowards passenger satisfaction. Bus ambiance ceiling height (3.49) followed by the reservation of the seats for women and old age passenger second highest mean score (3.38)and bus stands are equipped with modern technology has the lowest mean score of2.63. The overall mean score of the composite variable tangible satisfaction was 3.07.

Table 3 Reliability Satisfaction

Sr.	Item	Mean	Max	Min	Std deviation	Rank
1	Easilybookaticket	3.39	5	1	1.128082	I
2	Thebusesrarelybreak downonthe road	3.17	5	1	1.112639	II
3	Seatsreservedforwomen/physicallychallenged persons, senior citizensareoccupiedbythedeserving Passenger.	3.12	5	1	1.2341	III
4	Thetimetableerror-free.	3.07	5	1	1.128377	IV
5	Reach thedestinationona Schedule.	3.04	5	1	1.152606	V
6	KMT buses follow the Time (Punctuality)	2.99	5	1	1.190002	VI
7	Composite VariableScore	**3.13**	**5**	**1**	**0.907161**	

Source: Analysis of the Survey data

As indicated in Table 3 , among the six items in the reliability satisfaction dimension offacilities and services attributes of public transport regarding KMT, the mean score of existing ticket booking system mean score (3.39) and buses rarely break down mean score (3.17). Punctuality, timetable, and travel time had the lowest three mean scores, 2.99,3.04, and 3.07, respectively. The overall mean score of the composite variable Reliabilitysatisfaction was 3.13.

Table 4.0 Responsiveness Satisfaction

Sr.	Item	Mean	Max	Min	Std Deviation	Rank
1	The staff is always willing to help passengers	3.33	5	1	1.100311	I
2	Satisfy passenger's requests right the first time	3.22	5	1	1.082892	II

3	Prompt and accurately responsive to passengers	3.22	5	1	1.078334	III
4	Announcement inside the bus is effective & guide the passengers	3.22	5	1	1.138336	IV
5	Clarity of announcement	3.2	5	1	1.112933	V
6	Timely and efficient service.	3.19	5	1	1.131355	VI
7	Inform people about the change in prices in advance	3.09	5	1	1.212431	VII
8	Inform people about a change in the timetable in advance	2.89	5	1	1.210383	VIII
	Composite variable score	**3.17**	**5**	**1**	**0.92419**	

Tabled indicates 08 responsiveness satisfaction attributes are associated with the quality of public transport service towards passenger satisfaction. Staff willingness to help passengers has the highest mean score (3.33) followed by satisfying the passengers request at the first time with a second highest mean score (3.22) and timely and efficient service, communication of the changes in the time table has the lowest mean scores 3.19, 3.09 and 2.89 respectively. The overall mean score of the composite variable responsiveness satisfaction was 3.17.

Table 5 : Assurance Satisfaction

Sr	**Item**	**Mean**	**Max**	**Min**	**Std deviation**	**Rank**
1	The **travel fare** reasonably**.**	3.47	5	1	1.104516	I
2	**In-depth occupational knowledge** of their jobs.	3.36	5	1	1.080397	II
3	**Safe in their transactions with Staff** in the bus stand.	3.35	5	1	1.060668	III
4	KMT bus **drivers operate the Buses safely.**	3.34	5	1	1.110723	IV
5	KMT gives **priority to passenger safety.**	3.3	5	1	1.060046	V
6	**The staff** of KMT **in stills Confidence in the Passengers.**	3.29	5	1	1.100119	VI
7	**shorttraveltime**	3.19	5	1	1.139367	VII
8	KMTrunsa**ffici entnumberof busesin thecity**	3.16	5	1	1.110429	VIII
9	**Notafraid**ofbein g**pick-pocketed onthebus.**	3.14	5	1	1.117502	IX
	Compositevaria blescore	**3.19**	**5**	**1**	**0.878527**	X

A summary of the mean scores of attributes in the assurance satisfaction variable is shown in Table 5.61. The overall mean score for assurance satisfaction was 3.19. KMT's existing travel fare had a slightly higher mean score (3.47) than employee occupation knowledge (3.36), safety driving of the bus

drivers (3.34), and not afraid of pickpockets on the bus (3.14) while traveling and good no of buses in the city (3.16).

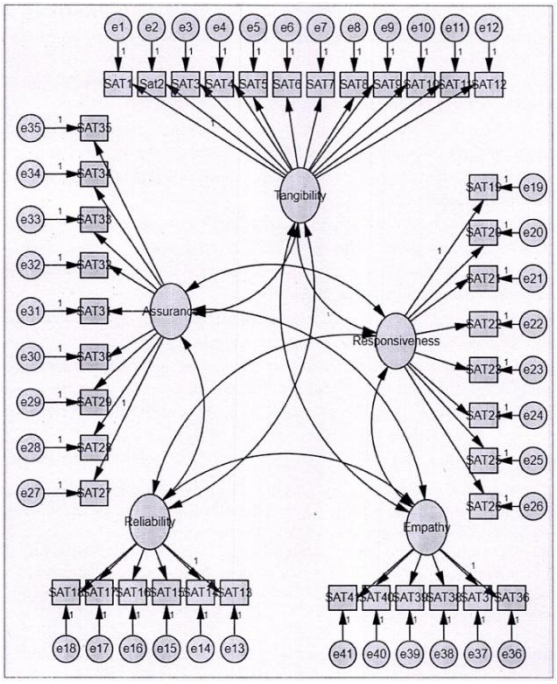
Table: 6.0 Empathy Satisfaction

Sr	Item	Mean	Max	Min	Std deviation	Rank
1	Itiseasytofind andaccessthebus Stand.	3.47	5	1	1.061444	I
2	Bus drivers and conductors are Willing to help passengers.	3.41	5	1	1.02512	II
3	Bus drivers and conductor shows courtesy to the passengers	3.36	5	1	1.052357	III
4	KMT operating hours are convenient to all their customers.	3.23	5	1	1.121691	IV
5	Getting information about the facilities and services of bus companies is easy.	3.19	5	1	1.126321	V
6	KMT always looks after the best interests of its passengers.	3.18	5	1	1.037688	VI
	Composite Score of the empathy variable	3.31	5	1	0.910813	

Source: Analysis of the Survey data

Table 6:0 indicates six empathy satisfaction attributes are associated with public transportservice quality towards passenger satisfaction. Easy to find bus stop has a highest mean score (3.47) followed by a bus conductor and driver are willing to help a passenger with the second highest mean score (3.41), and they show courtesy to the passenger, KMT always look after the best interest of the passengers has the lowest mean scores 3.19, 3. l 8respectively. The overall mean score of the composite variable empathy satisfaction was 3.31.

Figure 1.0: Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Model Fit)



Source: Primary Data Analysis

Conclusion:

The CF A result reveals scale prepared to assess the passengers' expectation and satisfaction is reliable and valid.

4.4 Findings based on Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA):

The confirmatory factor analysis results showed a marginal fit between the model and the data with regard to the studied data table because all threshold values are inside or nearly nearer to the cutoff value. Furthermore, statistical significance was revealed for each and every factor loading. Therefore, it can be said that the variables employed to evaluate perceived passenger expectations are appropriate for measuring the suggested concept.

Regarding percepti<;>n, the confirmatory factor analysis results showed that the mo~el and the data only barely fit together

because all of the threshold values were within or very close to the cutoff value in the studied data table. Furthermore, statistical significance was revealed for each and every factor loading.

Additionally, there is a correlation between the passenger's age and the responsiveness and reliability dimensions. Punctuality, or the buses arriving and departing on time, is one of the key characteristics that influence passengers' decisions about the mode of transportation they will use. Under the reliability dimension, safety and security are also included.

How you interact with consumers and your propensity for problem-solving fall 'under the responsiveness dimension, both of which are related to passenger age. It can be seen from the table that expectations and education are related. Conclusion: Expectations vary as one's education progresses. The table above shows the relationship between education and the tangibility, reliability, and responsiveness dimensions. The expectations of educated and unskilled passengers are different.

5.0 Conclusion and recommendations:

With regard to Kolhapur, the current study aims to assess how customers perceive the quality of service provided by Kolhapur Municipal Transport (KMT). Conclusion: Kolhapur Municipal Transport (KMT) customers have the greatest expectations in terms of reliability, which includes KMT buses being on schedule, having few breakdowns, and being in good mechanical condition. Additionally, it takes into account the lowest expectations in terms of the empathy dimension, which includes the behaviour and helpfulness of the crew on board, simple access to information, and convenient bus schedules.

Clean & Hygiene: Since hygiene is important for everyone, KMT management should maintain cleanliness at bus stops and on board. KMT buses should also be tidy and clean. To maintain cleanliness and raise awareness, the Indian government is also putting it into practise through various projects like the Swatch Bharat Abhiyan, Clean India Green India, etc. KMT needs to improve on keeping the buses and bus stops tidily and spick-and-span. According to the results of the current study (see table 5.14), the level of satisfaction among passengers with the cleanliness of bus stops and noticeboards was extremely low. Therefore, KMT management must prioritise it for improved service.

Intervention of Modern Technology: Modern technology's intervention has become a necessity for every industry and service in the twenty-first century, including public transportation. The passengers consistently anticipate that they should board the bus with the least amount of effort and the most amount of technology. With relation to the current investigation, the researcher has discovered that KMT daily activities use modem technology to a limited extent. [n order to give better service, KMT bus management can use current technology, just like other service providers. This includes online ticket purchasing, mobile texting for arrival and departure notifications, and Android applications. All buses might have a radio station, a music system, or a video playing option to make the ride for the passenger stress-free and enjoyable.

Frequency & Maintenance: Buses should run consistently at set intervals. In order for public transportation companies to survive over the long term, it is imperative that buses be kept in good condition and equipped with all the essential amenities, emergency exits, enough seating, sanitary restrooms, and water facilities.

First aid facilities have to be made both in bus stations and in buses. The timetable boards showing timings of arrivals and departures of buses should be prominently displayed.

As we. are living in the digital world, it is recommended that the KMT management should initiate online notification of services with respect of timings and exact location through mobile application, messaging so that passengers can plan their journey accordingly.

Kolhapur Bus Transport (KMT) management should inform and create awareness about the services and facilities of KMT through print media, electronic media on regular basis as researcher has found that few people are aware about the services of KMT. Also it should focus on organizing campaign at school and college level regarding their schemes and benefits of usage of public transport. Which will help them in long run.

KMT should utilize the mileage of the virtues of public transport in young generation which will save our environment by reducing carbon dioxide emissions from personal vehicles. Carbon foot prints. ·

For frequent users of their transportation services, several foreign nations offer free wi-fi, free e-book reading, and a set percentage of monthly savings. We are confident that if KMT operates on these principles, it will draw a sizable portion of passengers from the younger generation. And if this young individual opts for the KMT rather than a personal vehicle, it will unquestionably lower the number of fatalities and near fatalities in road accidents brought on by speeding motorcycles and cars. Many innocent lives will be saved as a result of this.

The functional factor has a strong influence on "customer satisfaction. Public bus transport decision maker and provider could start to pay attention to increase public bus transport supply due to high number of travel demand especially in peak hour, shorter travel time of public bus transport with giving special line in order to avoid high congested road, and giving more value to the price that customer pays for their public bus transport service.

The most common and efficient technique to determine what the needs of the client are and how to meet those needs is to listen to their voice. Customers' satisfaction is already measured yearly in a number of locations across Europe. The United Kingdom likewise carried out a survey to determine what the public transportation users' needs were. The goal of research is to create a marketable and appealing public transportation. KMT management should establish friendly relationships with passengers by setting up meetings and doing frequent customer surveys.

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