

IMPACT OF WOMEN FREE BUS OPERATION INTAMIL NADU STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION (TNSTC) ON TAMILNADU

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Abstract

In this research paper described the impact of women free bus operation in Tamil Nadu State transport corporation (TNSTC) in Tamil Nadu. After the government's announcement of free bus travel for all women, most of the women passengers are likely to shift from private to government buses. Women who are travelling through other modes of transport may also prefer to travel by government buses. As per the ITDP survey, 77% of women transit by walk, cycle and public transport. Either they lost a job as they couldn't afford to travel long-distance anymore due to bus fare hike. Many chose to work nearby their home for lower wages, hence, it results in lower household income, income disparity, labour shortage, gender discrimination, domestic violence, a lower standard of living, lower accessibility and availability. In one word-socio and economic loss of the household and to the state in general. Result in free bus operation give multiple benefits across the state both in terms of standard of livelihood and affordability, as well as raise in per capita income per women. The main intention behind this scheme is to increase the work participation rate of women and promote public transportation.

Introduction

Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Limited (TNSTC) is fully owned and operated by the Government of Tamil Nadu. Until 1997, the transport corporation was divided into 21 divisions which was later merged to form eight divisions. TNSTC owns 321 depots and five workshops with a combined fleet strength of 21,678 buses. Tamil Nadu has become the third state in India to make public bus transport free for women after Delhi and Punjab. In developing countries like India public sector bus operation is lifeline as it transports more people from one place to another place be it urban, semi urban, Rural areas. Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation Limited (TNSTC) is a public transport bus operator in Tamil Nadu. It is the largest government bus transport corporation in India. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister on May 7, 2021, announced a scheme that enables all working women in the State to travel free of cost in government-owned city and town buses. The main intention of this scheme is to increase the work participation rate of women and to promote public transportation. Providing fare-free public transport (FFPT) is not a new idea; it has precedents. The FFPT debate started several decades ago and some of the developed nations have been experimenting with it either fully or partially for quite some time now. It is partial in some countries for specific groups like students and senior citizens or during specific periods like off-peak time and weekends. Luxembourg was the first nation to make its entire public transportation free to all.

II Significance of the study:

Tamil Nadu government is attracting attention with experts stating that it will not only boost ridership but also change the lives of the women and boost the economy of the state. Hailing the new government's decision to make bus travel free for women Institute for Transportation and Development Policy (ITDP) says women bus commuters highlighted affordability and safety as their biggest concerns. "They have less access to personal motor vehicles than men and are more dependent on public transport. Free public transport can empower women—give them greater access to jobs and education—and make them more productive members of the society,"

In economic Terms, we should call Free bus ride for women and Transgenders" an investment to boost the state economy. As per the ITDP survey, 77% of women transit by walk, cycle and public transport. Either they lost a job as they couldn't afford to travel long-distance anymore due to bus fare hike. Many chose to work nearby their home for lower wages, hence, it results in lower household income, income disparity, labour shortage, gender discrimination, domestic violence, a lower standard of living, lower accessibility and availability. In one word-socio and economic loss of the household and to the state in general. Result in free bus operation give multiple benefits across the state both in terms of standard of livelihood and affordability, as well as raise in per capita income per women.

HISTORY OF TAMIL NADU STATE TRANSPORT CORPORATION (TNSTC)

The Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation (TNSTC) is the public transport bus operator of Tamil Nadu. It operates buses along intra and interstate bus routes, as well as city routes. Realizing that mobility was

the kingpin in economic and industrial development, the Government of Tamil Nadu embarked upon massive direct investment in Road Transport Sector in 1972 by forming four Road Transport Corporations, named after the four great Tamil dynasties - Chera, Chola, Pandiya and Pallava. Chola Roadways Corporation (CRC) commenced its operations in Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli Districts on 1st March 1972. Its headquarters in Kumbakonam. Chera Transport Corporation Limited was incorporated as a Company on 17.02.1972 and its commenced its services on 01.03.72. It was catering to the needs of passengers in Coimbatore, Erode and Nilgiris districts. Anna Transport Corporation Limited, Salem was established on 15th February 1973 with 45 buses with assets of the State Transport Department in Salem and Dharmapuri districts. The Anna Sathya Transport Corporation Limited started its operation in Dharmapuri District with headquarters at Dharmapuri effective from 01.04.1987 by taking over the assets and liabilities transferred from the Anna Transport Corporation limited on bifurcation.

The district bus services operated by the erstwhile Tamil Nadu State Transport Department were separated on 15th September 1975, and formed as the district wing of Pallava Transport Corporation Limited. The area of operation of this Corporation was Kanchipuram and Tiruvannamalai Districts. The Pandiya Roadways Corporation Limited came into existence from 17.01.72. All the Roadways Corporation limited was renamed as Tamil Nadu State Transport Corporation on 01.07.97.

Table 3.18 Numbers of Routes

Type of Routes	Numbers
City /Town	5,986
Mofussil	4,172
Ghat	374
Total	10,532

Source: TNSTC Government of Tamil Nadu 2020

Source: Chairman's cell Report, Transport Department, Fort St. George, Chennai

S.No	Name of the Corporation	Date of Commencement	Principal Area of Operation
1	Metropolitan Transport Corporation Ltd.,	01.01.1972	Chennai
2	TSTC, Madurai Division I Ltd.,	17.01.1972	Madurai
3	TSTC, Coimbatore Division I Ltd.,	01.03.1972	Coimbatore
4	TSTC, Kumbakonam Division I Ltd.,		Kumabakonam
5	TSTC, Salem Division I, Ltd.,	01.03.1972	Salem
6	TSTC, Madurai Division II Ltd.,	15.02.1973	Thirunelveli
7	TSTC, Villupuram Division I Ltd.,	01.04.1974	Villupuram
8	TSTC, Villupuram Division II Ltd.,	16.01.1975	Villupuram
9	TSTC, Coimbatore Division II Ltd.,	16.01.1975	Erode
10	TSTC, Kumbakonam Division III Ltd.,	01.12.1982	Karaikudi
11	TSTC, Madurai Division III Ltd.,	01.03.1983	Nagercoil
12	TSTC, Kumbakonam Division II Ltd.,	01.04.1983	Trichy
13	TSTC, Madurai Division IV Ltd.,	01.04.1983	Dindugal
14	.,TSTC, Salem Division II Ltd.,	01.04.1985	
15		01.04.1986	
16		01.04.1987	Dharmapuri
17		01.04.1992	Kanchipuram
18	TSTC, Villupuram Division III Ltd	01.10.1993	
	State Express Transport Corporation Ltd.,	28.11.1995	Inter-state
			Pudukottai
	TSTC, Kumbakonam Division IV Ltd.,	01.05.1997	Viruthunagar
	TSTC, Madurai Division V Ltd.,		

III Objectives

- To analyse the performance of women free bus operation
- To examine the complications faced by women passengers
- To Find out the Satisfaction level of women passengers

IV Review of literature

Balasubramani&sundarkodi (2021) in this research paper authors explain the innovative scheme of free bus travel and how it benefited the people and sparked to empower the women in the male centric society. Free bus travel scheme has given the free travel to all women in Tamil Nādu. This scheme has increased the women's mobility and their savings. Tamil Nadu Government is being a role model for implementing the innovative free schemes for entire India. They conclude in this scheme free bus travel for women Directly or indirectly enhance the women status and empower the women society.

Gabriel kreindler & Dev patel (2019) in this study they explained free bus travel for women policy is unique in the world in terms of its scope, and it is a valuable opportunity to learn about the determinants of women's mobility constraints and safety in public transportation. This study will analyse the short run impact of the launch of the policy on several measures of women's travel behaviour as well as on measures of safety on buses. The data will be collected through an initial household baseline survey as well as repeated telephone surveys. In addition, data ridership separately by gender through direct observation in selected bus stops.

Narendra shah (2022) In his research paper "challenges faced by women in public transport" explained the women in modern world has a changing perspective. Many women are working outside their homes to support their families and using the local transport to reach destinations. This study will also analyse the uses of public transport in men and women. Women's reasons for travelling generally differ from men's the purpose, frequency, and distance of their trips are also different and conclude women needs for safe, efficient, sustainable mobility.

IMPACT OF WOMEN FREE BUS OPERATION IN TNSTC:

The contribution of women to the overall development of a state is essential in the current changing socio-economic environment, the need for the transportation is essential for women to get higher education, to go to work and to become self-employed in order to meet the economic needs of the family. It is important to highlight women's contribution, the rate of women who work in Tamil Nadu is a great deal of work. According to the 2011 census, women's contribution to the work is 31.8 percent and the contribution of men is 59.3 percent. It is necessary to make women's contribution to make the role of women in order to ensure that women and men in economic aircraft are well known. providing safe travel for women travelling for professional education and promoting public transportation will be conducive to the socio-economic needs of women. In this context, it has been stated that the government is mandating that all women, including students studying in ordinary fare city buses operating under the control of state transport corporations in Tamil Nadu, be allowed to travel free of charge and without a bus pass.

i. Economic Growth of state:

Tamil Nadu free bus travel for women is attracting the attention of experts across the country which will not only increase women's travel but also change the lives of women and boost the economic growth of the state. As per the official data, the percentage of working women population is comparatively low in Tamil Nadu. Although the women operated their businesses from home and did not themselves undertake travel to markets to sell their products or to purchase raw materials, the increased ease with which partners could come to their doorstep and easier and less expensive access to markets helped their businesses to flourish. According to the 2011 census data, working women contribute only to 31.8% of the work participation rate while men account for 59.3% of the work participation rate increasing the work participation rate of women will enhance the growth of the Economy.

ii. Increased women travel:

The increase in women's participation in the workforce has led to a pronounced effect on the economy across the world. In India, women and girls constitute 50 percents of the urban population According to a press release issued by the government of Tamil Nadu, about 28 lakh women travel for free on town buses every day. Before implementation of the scheme 16 lakh women across Tamil Nadu used to travel in town buses daily. At present it has increased by almost 75 per cent. The number of women traveling has increased significantly as a result of being allowed free travel, it seems. 22,500 buses are operated by state transport corporations across the state. Downtown buses only ten thousand. There are 3,439 downtown buses in Chennai and 6,640 downtown buses in other parts of the state. Women can travel for free on all white board buses except express, low-floor luxury buses, refrigerated buses and minibuses. There are 4000 such white board buses operating in Tamil Nadu.

iii. Facilitates women Empowerment:

Improving women's access to safe transport is fundamental to closing the gender gap in employment. Women tend to compromise on education and job for travel expense, resulting in women earning less than man. Significantly women are discriminated in terms of wages, employment and labour divisions. Also, limited money for travel makes women compromise on hospital visits affecting their health. Free bus ride does favour women to get better access to public spaces, resulting in women empowerment.

iv. Women safety and security:

Women would be provided safe and secure travel in public transport to facilitate their higher education needs and contribute economically which would uplift their socio-economic status and growth of the Economy. Safe public transit for women and girls is reliable, easy to use, and flexible. Women. A majority of women claimed that public transport is somewhat safe and found it unsafe only at night. Public transport is being high changed for free, women can now travel across many parts of the country. It provides the women financial security, as well as safety to them as more women will travel in public transport.

V. Better medical assistance and care

Many females that belong to rural areas are not able to access quality medical services because of their low income as only the expenses incurred on travelling from one city to another on regular basis for check-ups and appointments disbalances the family budget so they prefer the services in the home town only despite the quality of service provided. So, this scheme ensures that at least the cost incurred on travelling can be cut down and women can get quality treatments and this will ensure a better state of their health.

Benefits of scheme:

- In fact, it is very useful for college students, women who want to study, women who want to get social knowledge housewife's who do small business at home.
- For women who do self-employed.
- Those who think the small business can start at home.
- Think for free training courses to think about when time is available.
- For women who travel half an hour for a salary of one thousand or two thousand and work at the next house.
- For low –wage women who work in clothing stores, small businesses as cleaners .and builders.
- For women waiting for their husbands to go home to their mother a few km away.
- For mothers who take their children to the government hospital.
- For women who take their children to school every day.
- There is no doubt that this scheme is a rapture for women who are preparing to go to work thinking that their husband's income is not enough at home and will help them to buy something for their children apart from these the scheme is very use to for women fishermen and farmers. The growth of country the growth of a state measured by the growth of women. It can be seen as one of the various programs for the advancement of women

Conclusion

Empowering women to participate fully in economic life across all sectors is essential to build stronger economics, achieve internationally agreed goals for development and sustainability, and improve quality of life Also, there have been a number of initiatives involving women in road construction and maintenance schemes. These schemes offer wage opportunities for poor rural women. In addition, women's motivation to engage in entrepreneurship activities and the growing acceptance of women in markets provide an incentive for women to take a vested interest in the improvement and maintenance of roads and transport facilities as they need safe and effective transport to run their businesses. The ease and safety of travel can encourage greater numbers of women to take wage employment that requires them to commute or travel.

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