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DISCERNMENT AND CONTENTMENT LEVEL OF PRIVATE TRANSPORT OPERATORS ABOUT BUS BODY BUILDING IN TAMILNADU

Dr. S.M.UVANESWARAN

Professor and Head , Department of Business Administration(MBA), K.S.R College of Engineering
(Autonomous),Affiliated to Anna University- Chennai, KSR Kalvi Nagar, Tiruchengode – 637215,

ABSTRACT

Motor vehicle manufacturing had its earliest origins in carriage building and laterally developed as chassis and body builds. One of the first integral type bus designs combining the body and chassis was the Route master. In the 1980s, many minibuses were built by applying bus bodies to van chassis, so called 'van derived' buses. In the 1990s, bus manufacture underwent major change with the push toward low-floor designs, for improved accessibility. Some smaller designs achieved this by moving the door behind the front wheels. The automobile industry in India is currently rapidly growing with an annual production of over 4.6 million vehicles, and vehicle volume is expected to rise greatly in the future. The majority of private bus transport operators build the bus body with the ATAL coach factory at Karur which is located in Tamilnadu. Apart from these, commuters also wish to travel in the private bus apart from govt bus services due to the attraction of interior and exterior as well as safety of travel. A survey has been conducted about Discernment (Perception) and Contentment (satisfaction) level of Transport operators about Bus Body Building. For this purpose the Bus transport owners of Karur, Erode, Salem and Namakkal district were taken as sample of this study. This paper highlights the satisfaction level of private transport operators in bus body building by ATAL Coach at Karur and also provides the opinion about services rendered by the coach factory.

KEY WORDS: Transport Operators, Bus Body, Manufacturing, Perception and Satisfaction

Introduction

Transport in the Republic of India is an important part of the nation's economy. Since the economic liberalization of the 1990s, development of infrastructure within the country has progressed at a rapid pace, and today there is a wide variety of modes of transport by land, water and air. In the interim, public transport remains the primary mode of transport for most of the population, and India's public transport systems are among the most heavily used in the world. India's rail network is the 4th longest and the most heavily used system in the world, transporting 8224 million passengers and over 969 million tonnes of freight annually, as of 2012. The automobile industry in India is currently rapidly growing with an annual production of over 4.6 million vehicles, and vehicle volume is expected to rise greatly in the future.

Types of construction

There are three basic types of bus manufacturer are (a)Chassis manufacturer - builds the under frame in a body-on-frame type construction,(b) Body manufacturer - builds the coachwork a body-on-frame type construction and (c)integral manufacturer - builds entire buses, often using no under frame at all .



Bus Bodywork

The bus body builder will build the body onto the chassis. This will involve major consideration of Usage, Seating capacity, Staircase position/design (double-decker buses) and Number and position of doors. Bodywork is built for three general uses as Bus, Dual Purpose and Coach. Bus bodywork is usually geared to short trips, with many transit bus features. Coach bodywork is for longer distance trips, with luggage racks and under-floor lockers. Other facilities may include toilets and televisions. A dual purpose design is usually a bus body with upgraded coach style seating, for longer distance travel. Some exclusive coach body designs can also be available to a basic dual purpose fitment. In past double-deck designs, buses were built to a low bridge design, due to overall height restrictions.

Specialist builders

Specialist builders may also produce bodies for executive, sleeper bus, tour bus, airport bus or school bus uses, with special features for these uses. Builders may also adapt standard designs for these uses, and especially for Para transit use. In Israel, due to terrorist attacks on buses, general bus builders have developed armoured buses, and are investigating controlled boarding systems. Armoured buses are also used for prisoner transport.

ATAL COACH

ATAL Coach are the designer and manufacturer of high quality, cost effective bus bodies and it was established in the year . It is one of the leading companies engaged in bus body manufacturing and supplying to various private organizations across the state. **ATAL Coach** has been successfully fulfilling the growing demands of several leading Transport Corporations in Tamil Nadu. They are the suppliers and manufacturer of buses, mini buses, luxury buses, bus body parts, spare parts, bus bodies, automobile bus body builders etc. **ATAL Coach** initially started with a monthly production capacity of 40 –50 buses. In this company total number of employees 25& workers are should be appointed on the basis of yearly contract. One quality control staff should be verifying the bus bodies' quality.

Most of the payments should be when bus delivered or otherwise maximum one month credit period time. Bus bodies design's inner side should be standard and outside body designs are customized by bus owners. A bus body building work should be finished within 25-30 days. They building bodies only buses, recently advertisement vehicle bodies also manufactured. They give 2years guarantee for government buses written in bonds and other parties 1 year guarantee for water leakages, sealing repairs only. The following are the different types of body coaches in Atal coach

Super deluxe passenger buses	Video passenger coaches	Deluxe coaches	Luxury tourist buses
Super deluxe college coaches	Deluxe school coaches	Luxury buses	Deluxe bus
Deluxe school buses	Super deluxe tourist coaches	Tourist buses	Deluxe buses coach
Luxury school coaches	Super deluxe coaches		

There are different stages in manufacturing a vehicle as structuring of vehicle, wood work, wiring work, ceilings work, sheet metal work, door works, tailoring, fitting and painting.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The majority of private bus transport operators are located in the Kongu districts (Erode, Karur, Salem and Namakkal) are changing the bus models once in a year and they are very much eager to change as per technology advancement of automobile industry and also the expectation of the commuters. Apart from these, many private bus body builders are started to attract this type of



competition without having any brand image for the company. But Atal coach being quality brand with a good brand image in the bus body building industry now; it is facing more competition from different brands in the market of these districts. This paves a way to conduct a survey based on these issues.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the demographic factors of the respondents.
- To assess the Operation of Transport Vehicles.
- To identify the Quality and Payment methods.
- To find out the satisfaction level of passenger from the transport owner's.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The study reveals the size of the market of transport bus body building which will be helpful for the company to expand its market and increase its getting orders in different areas of the state.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design was adopted for this study is exploratory descriptive design. This project is designed to identify the perception and satisfaction level of transport owners about bus body building in Atal Coach, Karur.

SAMPLING DESIGN

SAMPLING UNIT

The target population is the private bus transport operators (customers) who regularly preferred to build the bus body in Atal Coach are considered for this study.

SAMPLE SIZE

All the customers of Atal coach were taken as sample size of 20 customers and they are identified from the selected districts as the Private bus transport operators.

SAMPLING AREA

Four district were taken for this study especially Erode ,Karur,Salem and Namakkal .

PERIOD OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted from September 2014 to December 2014. Each district was separately surveyed on one to one basis with the help of the Transport Association members.

SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The list of Private Transport operators relating to the four districts were collected from Bus/Lorry Transport Association in each district and it is cross verified with the Atal coach company that the those Transport operators will build the bus body with them based on this Census method is employed for determining the samples from the total population pool.

TYPES OF DATA AND DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

Both primary and secondary data were used to accomplish the objectives. The primary data are used to collect information from the private bus transport owners through Questionnaire. The Pilot study was conducted with five respondents to find out the validity of questionnaire and with the help of research supervisor well structured questionnaire was prepared. The secondary data were collected



from Magazines, Newspapers, Company Websites, Transport Corporation, Bus/Lorry Owners Association, institute of urban transport, Central Institute of Road Transport and Transport Research institute.

STATICAL TOOLS

In this study, the statistical tools like simple percentage and Chi-square test was applied to find out the problem of the research.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The study is undertaken only in 4 districts; hence the information does not resemble the overall market condition.
- Only 20 bus owners are available in the study area, it may be bias for the study.
- Response of questionnaire may not be accurate because the answers are based on the mood and understanding level of the bus owner and some response collected from the manager of the company.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

SIMPLE PERCENTAGE METHOD

I. Demographic factors

Table 1
Gender of Respondents

Sl. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	17	85
2	Female	3	15
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 85% of the respondents are male and 15% of the respondents are female

Table 2
AGE GROUP OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No	Age Group (years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 30	0	0
2	30– 45	4	0
3	46– 60	14	70
4	Above 60	2	10
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 70% of the respondents are aged between 45-60 years, 20% of the respondents are aged between 30-45 years and 10% of the respondents are aged above 60 years.



Table 3
EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF THE RESPONDENTS

Sl. No	Education Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Upto school level	13	65
2	UG	7	35
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 65% of the respondents are qualified upto school level, 35% of the respondents are qualified graduates .

Table 4
INCOME LEVEL OF THE TRANSPORTS

Sl. No	Income Level (Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 1lakh	2	10
2	1-3 lakhs	9	45
3	3-5 lakhs	5	25
4	Above 5 lakhs	4	20
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 45% of the respondents are having an income of 1-3lakhs per month, 25% of the respondents are having an income of Rs.3-5lakhs per month, 20% of the respondents are having an income of above Rs.5lakhs per month. 10% of the respondents are having an income of below Rs.1lakh per month.

Table 5
Wages and maintenance for transport management

Sl. No	Wages and maintenance (Rs)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 50000	1	5
2	50000-100000	7	35
3	100000-150000	4	20
4	Above1500000	8	40
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 40% of the respondents are spend wages and maintenance above 150000 per month, 35% of the respondents are spend wages and maintenance between 50000-100000 per month, 20% of the respondents are spend wages and maintenance between 100000-150000 per month. 5% of the respondents are spend wages and maintenance below 50000 per month.



II . Operation of Transport Vehicles

Table 6
Number of buses operated by the respondents

Sl. No	Present buses operating	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below5 buses	6	30
2	6-15 buses	12	60
3	16-25 buses	2	10
4	Above 25 buses	0	0
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 60% of the respondents are present operating no. of buses 6-15, 30% of the respondents are present operating no. of buses below5 , 10% of the respondents are present operating no. of buses16-25.

Table 7
Type of passenger bus operated by the respondents

Sl. No	Passenger bus type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Mini bus	2	10
2	Tourist bus	2	10
3	Route bus	16	80
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 60% of the respondents having passenger bus type Route buses, 10% of the respondents having passenger bus type mini buses and another 10% of the respondents having passenger bus type tourist buses.

Table 8
Type of bus model build by the Transport owners

Sl. No	Passenger bus type	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Ordinary model	7	35
2	Deluxe model	10	50
3	Super deluxe model	3	15
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 60% of the respondents bus model is deluxe model, 35% of the respondent bus model is ordinary model and 15% of the respondents bus model is super deluxe model.

Table 9
No. of employees working in the transport

Sl. No	No .of employees	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 10	1	5
2	11-20	9	45
3	21-30	3	15
4	Above 30	7	35
	Total	20	100



From the above table it is inferred that the 45% of the respondent's no. of employees are between 11-20, 35% of the respondent's no. of employees are above 30, 15% of the respondent's no. of employees are between 21-30 and 5% of the respondent's no. of employees are below 10.

III. Quality and Payment methods

Table 10

Mode of Placing an orders for bus body building

Sl. No	Placing order	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Letter	0	0
2	E-mail	12	60
3	Directly	8	40
4	Others	0	0
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 60% of the respondents are placing order using by email and 40% of the respondents are placing order by directly.

Table 11

Selection of design for vehicle body building

Sl. No	Design selection	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Standard	9	45
2	customize	11	55
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 55% of the respondents are customizable to select their vehicle design.

Table 12

Variation of Charges in bus body building

Sl. No	Body building charges	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Standard	9	45
2	Customize	11	55
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 55% of the respondents are customizable to charged their bus body building.

Table 13

Credit period allowed by Atal coach

Sl. No	Credit period	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Below 15days	9	45
2	16-30days	10	50
3	31-45days	1	5
4	Above 45days	0	0
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 50% of the respondents are get credit period of 16-30days, 45% of the respondents are get credit period of below 15 days from Atal Coach.



Table 14
Period of payment from placing an order to delivery of bus

Sl. No	Payment intervals	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	11	55
2	No	9	45
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that the 55% of the respondents having facility for interval payments in Atal coach .

Table 15
Awaiting period for delivery of buses

Sl. No	Awaiting period (days)	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	15-20	0	0
2	21-25	8	40
3	26-30	12	60
4	Above 30	0	0
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 60% of the respondents buses are delivered with in 26-30days , 40% of the respondents buses are delivered with in 21-25days.

Table 16
Warranty period for bus bodies

Sl. No	warranty period	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	1 year	17	85
2	2 years	3	15
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 85% of the respondents having one year warranty for their bus bodies and 15% of the respondents having 2 years warranty for their bus bodies.

Table 17
Mode of payments

Sl. No	Payment method	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Cash	0	0
2	Cheque	18	90
3	Drafts	1	5
4	Net transfer	1	5
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 90% of the respondents are paying their payments in cheque and 5% of the respondents are paying their payments in drafts and net transfer.



Table 18
Buses Building orders in a year

Sl. No	Bus orders in a year	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	below5 buses	16	80
2	6-10 buses	3	15
3	11-15 buses	1	5
4	Above 15 buses	0	0
	Total	20	100

From the above table it is inferred that 80% of the respondents are placing no. of buses orders in a year below 5 buses,15% of the respondents are placing no. of buses orders in a year 6-10 buses and 5% of the respondents are placing no. of buses orders in a year 11-15buses.

IV. Satisfaction Level of Passenger about interiors

Table 19
Satisfaction level of Passengers

Satisfaction Level Parameters	Highly Satisfied (No.of Respondents & %)	Satisfied (No.of Respondents & %)	Moderately Satisfied (No.of Respondents & %)	Dissatisfied (No.of Respondents & %)	Highly Dissatisfied (No.of Respondents & %)
seat space	6 (30)	9 (45)	4(20)	1(5)	0(0)
safety precaution	6 (30)	11 (55)	3 (15)	0 (0)	0(0)
sound system	9 (45)	5(25)	4 (20)	2 (10)	0 (0)
emergency exit	6 (30)	9 (45)	5 (25)	0(0)	0 (0)
Step height	3 (15)	7 (35)	7(35)	3(15)	0 (0)
Door locks	3(15)	11(55)	4(20)	2 (10)	0(0)
window glass space	0(0)	10(50)	7(35)	3(15)	0(0)
Design	6 (30)	6 (30)	8 (40)	0(0)	0(0)
Free air space at the top	3(15)	6(15)	8(30)	3(40)	0(0)
Handles safety	3(15)	9(45)	6(30)	1(5)	1(5)
Luggage Carrier	3(15)	6(45)	9(30)	2(5)	0(0)
Mirror points	5 (25)	7 (35)	5(25)	3(15)	0(0)

From the above table it is inferred that the 30% of the respondents are feel highly satisfied about the seat space table, 30% of the respondents are feel highly satisfied about the safety precaution, 45% of the respondents are feel highly satisfied about the sound system, 10% of the respondents are feel dissatisfied about the sound system,25% of the respondents are feel moderately satisfied about the emergency exit,15% of the respondents are feel highly satisfied and dissatisfied about the step height,15% of the respondents are feel highly satisfied about the door locks, 15% of the respondents are feel dissatisfied about the window glass space,15% of the respondents are feel highly satisfied



and dissatisfied about the Free air space at the top, 30% of the respondents are feel moderately satisfied about the luggage carrier and 15% of the respondents are feel dissatisfied about the mirror points.

Chi-square Test

Table 20

Satisfaction Level of Monthly turn over and bus body building per annum

Bus body building per annum Turnover(Rs)	Below 5buses	6-15 buses	16-25 buses	Total
100001-300000	3	1	0	4
300001-500000	12	1	1	14
Above 500000	1	1	0	2
Total	16	3	1	20

Null hypothesis : There is no significant difference between Monthly turn over and bus body building per annum.

Alternate hypothesis : There is significant difference between Monthly turn over and bus body building per annum.

Level of significance : 5%

Degrees of freedom : (r-1) (c-1)
 = (3-1) (3-1)
 = 4

$$\chi^2 = \sum \left(\frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \right)$$

Calculated value $\chi^2 = 0.525$

Table value = 9.488

CONCLUSION

Since the calculated value is less than Table Value, we accept Null Hypothesis and there is no significant difference between monthly turn over and bus body building per annum.

FINDINGS and SUGGESTIONS

FINDINGS

- Majority (85%) of the bus owners are male members in the study area.
- The maximum level (70%) of age group in 36-45 years in the study area.
- 65% of the respondent's educational qualification is up to school level in the study area.
- Nearly 45% of the respondent's income level is Rs 1-3 lakhs in the study area.
- Majority 80% of the bus owner's passenger bus type is route buses in the study area.
- 50% of the respondent's type of bus model is deluxe model in the study area.
- 60% of respondents use e-mail placing their bus body building orders in the study area.
- Nearly 55% of respondents are select their bus body design in customized option based .
- Nearly 55% of respondents are selecting their bus body design charges in customized option based in the study area.
- 50% of respondent have 16-30 days credit period allowed by the Atal coach.



- Maximum 95% of respondent are not received any special offers from Atal coach .
- 70% of the respondent is received cash discount for their earlier payments from Atal coach.
- Nearly 60% of respondent's buses should be delivered within 26-30 days in bus body building.
- The maximum 85% of respondents buses' warranty period is one year in the study area.
- 70% of respondents are received service offers in warranty period from Atal coach.
- 90% of respondent's mode of payment through only cheque in the study area.
- Nearly 80% of the respondents are yearly placing number of bus body building below 5 buses in Atal coach.
- The maximum (55%) of respondents' opinion about comfortable of bus body is satisfied in this study.

SUGGESTION

- ✓ Low level of income earned transport bus owners are not selecting their bus body building Atal coach , because the bus body building charges may be high.
- ✓ In Atal coach, have to give more important to body builds for mini and tourist route bus transport owners .
- ✓ Atal coach bus body builders can concentrate on ordinary and super deluxe bus models.
- ✓ The standard cost for bus body and design charges have to be developed by the Atal coach to attract mini bus owners.
- ✓ Atal coach's credit period is very short term (i.e) less than 30 days and it can be extended to 60 days or payment may be different intervals.
- ✓ Company can provide special offers to their customer to get more orders.
- ✓ Atal coach's bus body buildings warranty is less than one year and it should be extended to 3 years which support the company to give assurance for the quality.
- ✓ Atal coach may create chances to transport owners for placing their bus body building through letter, direct by forming different standard models.
- ✓ Transport owners satisfaction level would be increased by way provide high quality of bus bodies.
- ✓ Earlier payments cash discount percentage would be increased (i.e) more than 5 percentages.

CONCLUSION

Atal coach being the quality of bus body building and good image in field of bus manufacturing .Now - a – days its facing more competitors from different bus body builders in that area. This survey study helps to improving their quality of product, retaining customers and also attracting perspective customers in the bus body building in the market and also its support the bus body builder to enhance their quality and service satisfaction in the Kongu region.

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