

CHAPTER 3

OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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CHAPTER 3

OBJECTIVES & RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 GENESIS

Public utility systems have gained considerable importance in every country. Although recently the British Govt. has favoured privatisation of some of these systems, almost all the public utilities in our country are owned by Govt., Semi Govt., or Govt. Undertakings. The characteristic of such utilities is that, they are service oriented. The effectiveness and efficiency of such system rests therefore, entirely on its personnel.

3.2 SELECTION OF TRANSPORT UTILITY

The scope of the present study is restricted only to passenger transport. Since it is an integral part of the day-to-day life of cities and towns. The daily life of several lakhs of people starts with a long or short journey. An office goer, a factory worker, a student, or an entrepreneur uses some or the other modes of transport, and the cheapest being the municipal transport. In short, the promptness of such a transport system directly or indirectly reflects the industrial and personal productivity.

3.3 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In view of the above considerations, the present study was undertaken with reference to a local transport undertaking in a city. It was intended to select Pune Municipal Transport Corporation, which is the only city transport service in Pune city. The reasons for selecting pune city for the study are mentioned below. A detailed study on various issues in the administration of the undertaking was done. The implications of the policies and the administration on the operative staff namely the drivers and conductors, who are the pillars of the organisation in rendering the services to the public, was analysed by administering a questionnaire covering wide range of issues to the selected drivers and conductors.

3.4 SELECTION OF CITY

Bombay and Pune are the two most important cities in Maharashtra State. The Bombay city transport is managed by BEST undertaking which is well known for its size, efficiency and integrated system. However, when one considers Pune Municipal Transport services one observes lot of hue and cry about its efficacy and timeliness.

Besides, Pune has been known historically from the times of Maratha regimes. Considerable development in the field of education and culture took place in the British Rule. After the independence the development of Pune was significant and alround. The rapid growth not

only in the heart of the city but in the outskirts through modern means of communication, railway system, growth of industrial estates and labour colonies, development of educational and research institutes have multiplied the population of Pune city to manyfolds. It is the second largest city in Maharashtra State. It is needless to point out the importance of city passanger transport in this city.

It has been reported at times in local newspapers and magazines that the services rendered by the Pune Municipal Transport are not upto the expectations of the commuters.²³⁻²⁵ The existing system seems to be operating at the saturation point resulting in overloading and overutilising of buses, nonavailability of buses due to improper maintenance and repairs, etc.

The Report of Association of State Road Transport Services on operational efficiency and economic viability of Pune Municipal Transport has concluded that though the operations are economic viable, it is necessary to use some quantitative models to solve scheduling difficulties besides purchase of new buses.²⁶

However, it would be unwise to look only from the financial point of view. It is utmost important to judge the effectiveness and efficiency on the timeliness and courtious service provided by the transport personnel to the public at large. This entirely rests on its administration and the organisational climate besides infrastructural

facilities. Since all these have direct bearing on the mentality and behaviour of the operative staff, mainly drivers and conductors.

Therefore, the scope of the present study was further narrowed to understand the personnel administration of Pune Municipal Transport and its implications on the operative staff. It is expected that such a study would investigate the problems and difficulties of the drivers and conductors which would give insight not only to reduce their problems but the commuters problems as well. Thus, it will improve the passenger transport service in the city.

3.5 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the present study are listed below.

- {1} To study the organisation structure and the personnel administration system in Pune Municipal Transport undertaking.
- {2} To understand personnel policies, rules and practices, their impact and the awareness about these among the operative staff.
- {3} To study different dimensions such as selection, promotion, training, working hours, working conditions, and other environmental problems.

- {4} To understand the labour and welfare facilities made available to the employees and their needs.
- {5} To examine the nature of grievance settlement procedure, code of conduct, indisciplines and their causes, disciplinary actions, and labour turnover of drivers and conductors.
- {6} To study the overall co-ordination and communication system in day-to-day operations which has direct bearing on services rendered to commuters.
- {7} To suggest the remedial measures to improve the passenger service and the image of the organisation.

3.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data was collected about the personnel administration, policies, rules and regulations and related statistics from various departments, office records, files and annual reports.

The primary data was collected with the help of detailed questionnaire covering different points such as personal information, recruitment and selection, training,

workers education scheme, wage and salary, leave benefits, promotion, welfare facilities, housing, union matters, grievance handling procedure, disciplinary actions and other problems and difficulties of drivers and conductors.

A questionnaire was designed, which was administered on trial basis to 25 drivers and conductors at different points such as bus stand, terminals, pick-up centres and depot. Based on the feed back received, the questionnaire was modified accordingly, and finalised.

The finalised questionnaire was administered to the drivers and conductors of Pune Municipal Transport undertaking. The questionnaire is shown in the Appendix. The questionnaire was translated into Marathi for the understanding of drivers and conductors to facilitate their responses.

The total number of drivers and conductors in Pune Municipal Transport are estimated to be 1175 and 1140 respectively. However, actual figures were very difficult to trace and the management also expressed its inability due to lack of proper records. Thus, from the total sample of 2315 estimated drivers and conductors, it was proposed to take 10 percent, that is 230 (115 drivers and 115 conductors).

The questionnaire was distributed to the drivers and conductors on a random basis from three depot namely, Swargate, Narveer Tanaji Wadi, and Kothrud. Since the drivers and conductors are supposed to work and report at different times i.e. from 5 A.M. to 11 P.M. It was rather difficult to distribute the questionnaire to them. Therefore, the researcher went to these depots at different times and distributed these questionnaire.

However, unfortunately the responses from the drivers and conductors were far from satisfaction. Only 84 respondents have replied to the questionnaire. The reasons for the poor response are as under.

- 1] The fear among the employees especially, temporary drivers and conductors for action which may be taken by the management or union if they disclose any thing against them.
- 2] Strong opposition by one of the two unions namely, Pune Municipal Kamgar Sangh, affiliated to INTUC, forcing the respondents not to reply.
- 3] Lack of time and interest among the drivers and conductors.

When the initial interest was very poor, the researcher discussed the matter with the then General Manager. The General Manager along with the Personnel Manager convened meetings with the union office bearers (PMKS) and tried to prove the importance of the study and its benefit to the organisation, employees and public. Accordingly, though very reluctantly, the union office bearers gave their consent to conduct the study. However, there was no significant improvement in the responses.

Therefore, the General Manager has arranged to give a special room for personally filling the responses of the respondents. This arrangement also had limited success.

Finally, the researcher contacted the drivers and conductors at different places such as employee colony, canteen, rest places, workers education centre, and on routes. Initially every respondent was taken into confidence and then the researcher filled in the responses personally. This ensured free and frank exchange of opinion and information and a major hurdle in data collection was removed.

3.7 LIMITATIONS

The present study and the findings reported in this dissertation has following limitations.

- 1) In view of the large sample, 2315 drivers and conductors, due to time constraints the researcher has selected 10 percent of the sample.
- 2) Out of the selected sample of 230 only 84 drivers and conductors have responded to the questionnaire due to fear of job, union pressures, lack of interest and insufficient time available at their disposal.
- 3) In view of the reasons mentioned above, the findings reported in the thesis need to be accepted with care and caution.