

CHAPTER 2

PASSANGER TRANSPORT A VITAL PUBLIC UTILITY

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PASSANGER TRANSPORT - A VITAL PUBLIC UTILITY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Among all the public utility systems, transport is a great public utility service which has been recognised centuries ago. Transport - the de-facto barometer of economic, social and commercial progress has transformed the entire world into one organised unit.⁸ It carries the ideas and inventions to the public; and has considerably contributed to the evolution of civilization. Though the demand for transport is not so fundamental in human nature as the demand for essential commodities, yet it is an indispensable part of the culture, as the hallmark of civilization.⁹ Economic and commercial importance of the greatest magnitude, is now-a-days, attached to the development of transport.¹⁰ The transport industries which undertake nothing more than the mere movement of persons and things from one place to another, have constituted one of the most important activities of men in every stage of advanced civilization. Infact, the whole structure of industry and commerce rests on the well laid foundation of transport.¹¹

The significance of transport (comprising railway, road, water and air) in the field of economics is very great as it is related to production, exchange, distribution and consumption of wealth. Today the

entire economic life of the people of a country depends upon transport services from the production of raw materials to the distribution of finished products. Transport cost being an element of the cost of production, enters into the selling price of commodities; and thus, it affects consumption to an appreciable extent. An improvement into the technique of modern transport has considerably increased the wealth of the society through the development of trade and commerce. In the present days, a transport service is either nationalised in the interest of the public or is controlled by the State or any statutory body.

The collective demand for transport of an organised society with a high standard of living may be exceedingly strong as the demands for primary and essential commodities depend on efficient system of transport. It must be noted that if transport service is not adequate the public would suffer.

2.2 PROBLEM OF MASS TRANSPORTATION IN CITIES

The trend towards urbanisation has been gradually increasing in underdeveloped countries like India, because urban areas are powerful gravitational nuclei, due to such overriding factors as increasing employment opportunities, city amenities like ready availability of electric power, water, transport, housing, education, medical facilities, banking facilities, strong police administration and opportunity of enjoying the pleasures of sophisticated city life. The

extent of urbanisation increases year by year. The density of population as a result also increases per square kilometer.

Urbanisation, though one of the symptoms of economic betterment, has caused serious transport bottlenecks in the growing cities. The industrial prosperity and advancement in economic activity have resulted in continuous and enormous increase in demand for mass transportation system in Indian cities. The heavy demand for mass transportation results from the following.

1. Low level of indigeneous production of cars and other automobiles.
2. Rapid increase in population and increasing migration of population to cities from rural areas.
3. High inflationary conditions
4. People with moderate income cannot afford to have their own vehicle

As a result, the number of people taking recourse to bus transportation has been continuously increasing.

Though some guidelines can be taken from experiences from the developed countries, for solving the problems of mass transportation in Indian cities only original studies alone can help in streamlining the flow of traffic and eliminating congestion and confusion on the roads.

In many important cities in India mass transportation system plays an important role in carrying a major part of traffic load, its capacity, however, is less than adequate, for meeting the ever increasing demand for city bus transportation. During the peak hours people have to wait for considerable time before getting into the bus. Inadequacy, inefficiency, overcrowding and inconvenience involved in the use of service are the obvious consequences.

In many cities, master plans have been prepared for land development of urban areas and also the road development and the town planning schemes have been worked out on a comprehensive basis. However, the mass transportation planning is neglected and when town planning authorities fail to realise that transport interest are required to be consulted at the earliest stage and every stage of town planning and road development, provision of timely and economical mass transportation is difficult.

The network of transportation system in Indian cities like Pune has been the result of personal guesswork and experience without any support of scientific traffic studies. "Concentration of People's" activities in certain parts of the city makes trips on the lean side uneconomical. Planning of the traffic and transportation system is difficult because of the sprawling nature of the city and inadequacy of funds for maintenance of additions to buses. This makes the supply

of bus service lagging behind the demand and creates an acute problem of immobilities of urban-population.¹²

In cities, where there are many operators plying buses in urban areas, there is a competition of unhealthy nature. There are many bad practices found; such as cutting trips short to suit the traffic flow, indiscriminate stopping to pick the passengers, overspeeding, etc. As a result, regular control of services is difficult. There is also a considerable delay in the movement of the buses in the concentration areas because mixed traffic is not properly segregated, and adequate traffic control devices are not effectively used and traffic rules effectively enforced. The bus transportation systems in most of the cities do not function efficiently and the outmoded buses plying on the roads do not offer satisfactory service.

2.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Folz and Lyons¹³ have presented a method for measuring and comparing the service quality and productivity of municipalities and find that several factors, subject to managerial control are important in explaining why some cities are more productive than others.

Garry¹⁴ has stressed how active voluntary citizen involvement appears to be the critical dimension of all coproduction research. The

coproduction enhances municipal service quality levels, stabilizes budgets and improves bureaucratic responsiveness.

A survey of ²⁷ 358 local Government finance officers shows that budgetary information is actually used in management decision making and has contributed to productivity improvement in at least some departments. Premchand¹⁵ has raised several issues related to the Government budgeting and productivity and suggested various measures.

The causes of absenteeism in American business organisation are reported to be due to drug abuse and alcoholism. It is estimated that the cost of absenteeism to American business is much more than \$ 60 billion per year.¹⁶

Responses from 122 municipalities indicate a wide variety of appraisal techniques being used to assess managerial performance. However, less than two third use any kind of formal documented system.¹⁷

Kemp and Sale¹⁸ have demonstrated how creative and innovative human resource management practices like multi-year labour agreements, multi-jurisdictional bargaining, regional salary surveys and internship program, can solve Government's difficulties to meet public services.

On the other hand, Sunderrajan¹⁹ concludes that factors like policy, process, structure or behaviour of people do not necessarily

affect effectiveness or productivity of an organisation, measured in terms of profits, turnover or manpower turnover.

It has been studied that the administrators and non-administrators in public sectors have very different occupational compositions and contrasting patterns of compensation.²⁰ While administrators remain overpaid relative to private sector counterparts, and non-administrators are underpaid relative to their counterparts. Moreover, public wage differentials vary substantially in sign and magnitude from industry to industry. The results thus, indicate that no simple, homogeneous government differential exists.

²¹ Tax has demonstrated that the bargaining power of recognised unions achieve larger increase in total compensation than those of the unrecognised organisations in municipal departments. A study in an Airline indicated that market comparisons and wage contours provide the strongest predictors of pay satisfaction.²²

The above citation reveals that various issues are involved in personnel administration. In view of this the present work was undertaken to study different issues in personnel administration in a city passenger transport undertaking, namely Pune Municipal Transport. The objectives and the scope of this study is discussed in the next chapter.