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REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: IJAR-59783

Title: Free Bus Travel as a Pathway to Women's Mobility and Empowerment: Understanding Attitude and Continued Usage Intention towards Kerala's Priyadarshini Scheme through an Integrated TPBÂ–Perceived Value Model

Recommendation:

Accept as it is .....

Accept after minor revision.....

Accept after major revision .....

Do not accept (*Reasons below*) .....

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality		✓		
Techn. Quality			✓	
Clarity		✓		
Significance			✓	

Reviewer's ID: JPR-002

Detailed Reviewer's Report

1. **Relevance and Originality:** The manuscript addresses a relevant contemporary public policy issue concerning women's mobility, economic independence and social empowerment through free public transportation. The focus on Kerala's Priyadarshini Scheme provides practical and regional significance. However, the authors should clearly explain the research gap and distinguish the contribution of this study from previous research on free bus travel schemes in other Indian states.

2. **Title and Abstract:** The title is appropriate and reflects the major variables of the study. The abstract provides information about the objectives, sample size, methodology and major findings. However, the abstract requires language correction and better sentence construction. The final sentence is incomplete and should be revised to provide a clear concluding statement highlighting the research contribution.

3. **Literature Review:** The literature review covers relevant studies relating to perceived economic benefits, mobility freedom, service quality, safety and women's empowerment. Nevertheless, the discussion is largely descriptive. The authors should provide a more critical synthesis of previous studies, identify conflicting findings and clearly establish the research gap. Recent and directly relevant empirical studies should be incorporated.

4. **Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses:** The integration of Perceived Value Theory, Theory of Planned Behaviour and the capability-oriented mobility perspective is an interesting approach. However, the authors should provide stronger theoretical justification for the proposed relationships. In particular, the traditional TPB dimensions of subjective norms and perceived behavioural control are not included in

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the proposed model. The rationale for selecting only attitude as the relevant TPB component should be explained.

5. **Research Methodology:** The study uses primary data collected from 263 respondents across Kozhikode, Thrissur and Kollam districts. The multistage sampling approach requires further clarification, particularly regarding district-wise respondent selection and the use of convenience-based selection. The authors should specify the survey period, questionnaire scale, inclusion criteria, data collection procedure and ethical considerations.

6. **Demographic Analysis:** The demographic profile provides useful information about respondents. However, certain frequency and percentage values in Table 1 appear inconsistent. For example, the education percentages for undergraduate and postgraduate categories do not correspond to their reported frequencies. Similarly, some monthly income percentages require recalculation. The employment categories also need clarification because of repeated and overlapping category labels. The authors should verify and correct the entire table.

7. **Statistical Analysis and Measurement Model:** The study employs KMO, Bartlett's test, factor analysis, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, AVE and the Fornell–Larcker criterion. The reported reliability and convergent validity values are generally satisfactory. However, the authors should provide additional methodological details regarding exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, estimation procedures, statistical software and measurement model validation. Additional discriminant validity evidence, such as HTMT, may also strengthen the analysis.

8. **Hypothesis Testing and Interpretation:** All six hypotheses are reported as supported. The results indicate that social empowerment perception has the strongest influence on attitude ($\beta = 0.389$), while attitude has the strongest influence on continued usage intention ($\beta = 0.639$). However, the perceived safety relationship is relatively weak ($\beta = 0.105$, $p = 0.048$). The authors should discuss this marginal statistical significance carefully and provide a more critical interpretation of the practical implications of the findings.

9. **Discussion, Implications and Conclusion:** The managerial implications provide useful suggestions concerning passenger safety, service quality, accessibility, punctuality and infrastructure improvements. However, the discussion should compare the findings with earlier empirical studies rather than simply restating the statistical results. The conclusion should also acknowledge the study's limitations, geographical coverage, sampling constraints and opportunities for future research. The findings should not be generalised to all women passengers in Kerala without appropriate qualification.

10. **References, Presentation and Language:** The manuscript includes relevant academic references, but several references are duplicated, including Ajzen (1991), Lai and Chen (2011), Hanson (2010),

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Lucas (2012) and Zeithaml (1988). One reference contains an explicit editorial placeholder indicating that journal details need verification. All references should be checked for accuracy, completeness and consistency with the in-text citations. The manuscript also requires comprehensive English-language editing, correction of grammatical errors, consistent terminology and improved table formatting.