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Paper: Transformability

An exploratory study on how technology makes changes in railway transportation in Sri Lanka

“Sri Lanka Railway” is one of the government departments of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka Government Railway operates the country’s railway network which includes 1449 kilometers of track and 333 stations. Under the prevailing situation, the railway transports over 86 million passengers and 1million tons of goods per year.

After analyzing the current railway system through questionnaires and interviews with passengers, Station Masters, and observations, it was clear that most of the work related to Sri Lanka Railway service is done manually. Most of the passengers are not satisfied with the services rendered by the present public railway transportation system and they are compelled to travel by roads which result in congestion during peak hours. Although the number of passengers using the railway is increasing, and the quantity of goods transported by the railway is becoming higher year by year, government railway seems to be running at a loss.

There are three specific objectives of this research: identifying the drawbacks of the existing railway service and resolving them by applying technology, providing suggestions to improve the public sector transportation by applying technology, providing passengers a quality service as well as streamlining the work procedure and identifying the ways which can bring additional revenue to the Railway Department by applying technology.

By this research study, the researcher was able to find the drawbacks of the current railway system and the ways in which the railway service could be improved to satisfy the challenging market environment.

The researcher also found some solutions like on-line tickets, unreserved ticketing system, automatic ticket machines, passenger reservation system, time table system, railway freight transportation, advanced cargo information system, short message service, railway signal and control system, railway smartcard, railway tour package, passenger information system, customer information system, railway yield management system, automatic ticket gates, railway CRM, railway facilities, tailor made reporting system for Station Masters, railway announcement system, etc.