

INITIAL IMPRESSION ON STRI SHAKTI SCHEME – A PUBLIC SURVEY



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What is the “Stri Shakti” Scheme?

- The Andhra Pradesh government has introduced free bus travel for all girls, women, and transgender persons domiciled in Andhra Pradesh under a new scheme called “Stri Shakti”.
- The scheme was launched on 15 August 2025 (Independence Day) across the state.
- The scheme is one of the promises of the current government under its “Super Six” welfare commitments.

What kinds of buses & routes are covered?

- The free travel benefit applies only to certain classes of state-run buses (APSRTC / AP Public Transport) and within certain service categories:
- **Covered bus categories:**
- Palle Velugu (rural / village-level service)
- Ultra Palle Velugu
- City Ordinary service
- Metro Express service
- Express service

Excluded/not covered: Non-stop services, interstate or cross-state buses

- Super luxury, ultra deluxe, AC, or “deluxe” services may also be excluded (depending on the rules)
- Some ghat road sections had initial exclusion or restrictions (though after feedback, many ghat route services were later included)
- In practice, about 74% of the APSRTC fleet (roughly 11,449 buses in total, so around 8,458 buses) are designated to offer free travel under this scheme.

Eligibility & How to Avail

Who is eligible: Girls, women, and transgender persons who are domiciled in Andhra Pradesh

- The beneficiary must carry valid identity proof (Aadhaar, voter ID, ration card, etc.) to show state residency.
- **Procedure:**
You do *not* need to submit an application in advance.

- When boarding the bus, present your identity proof and request a “zero-fare ticket” from the conductor.
- The conductor will issue a zero-fare ticket under the scheme.
- Later, the government will reimburse APSRTC for the revenue lost due to these zero-fare tickets.

Key details on passenger usage

- Within the first 30 hours of the scheme's launch on August 15, 2025, around 12 lakh (1.2 million) women used the service. The number rose to nearly 47 lakh (4.7 million) in the first four days.
- Usage continued to increase in the weeks following the launch. Approximately 6.5 million women availed free travel within the first six days, and over 6 crore (60 million) women used the scheme within the first month.
- The scheme significantly increased the overall occupancy ratio of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (APSRTC) buses. According to a September 2025 report, the average occupancy ratio rose from 69% to 74% across the fleet. The 8,400 buses eligible for the scheme saw an even higher average occupancy of 80%.
- The proportion of women passengers increased to 60%, a significant jump from less than 40% before the scheme's implementation.
- Data from APSRTC shows higher women passenger numbers on rural "Palle Velugu" and Express services. Usage is lower on city routes like "City Ordinary" and "Metro Express" in cities like Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam.
- The Andhra Pradesh government has reimbursed the transport corporation for the cost of the zero-fare tickets issued under the scheme. About ₹25 crore was reimbursed in the first six days, and ₹243 crore was the subsidy for the first month.

Key Figures

- **Estimated annual budget ₹1,942 crore.**
- **In addition to this, launched ‘Auto Drivers’ Sevalo’ scheme in October and a sum of ₹15,000 will be credited to the bank accounts of 2,90,669 beneficiaries annually under the scheme keeping in view the impact of the ‘Mahila Shakti’ free bus travel scheme on their livelihood.**

And the scheme is expected to reduce travel costs, enhance mobility for education, employment, and healthcare, and promote social inclusion. Since the scheme has been newly introduced, it is crucial to capture the **initial impressions of different stakeholders** - including beneficiaries (women and transgender commuters), non-beneficiaries (male passengers and others), as well as APSRTC conductors and drivers. Understanding their feedback will help identify **early benefits, practical challenges, implementation gaps, and suggestions** for better service delivery. The survey will generate valuable insights for policymakers, transport authorities, and the public about the effectiveness and social impact of the scheme.

Objectives of the Survey

1. **To assess the awareness and accessibility** of the Stri Shakti Scheme among intended beneficiaries.
2. **To evaluate the initial benefits** experienced by women and transgender passengers in terms of cost savings, convenience, safety, and mobility.
3. **To examine perceptions of non-beneficiaries** (such as men and general passengers) regarding the impact of the scheme on public transport usage, seating availability, and crowding.
4. **To study the perspectives of APSRTC conductors and drivers** on operational challenges, workload, and passenger response.
5. **To identify gaps and areas for improvement** in implementation, so as to strengthen the scheme's effectiveness.

Methodology

Survey Type: Quantitative and qualitative descriptive survey.

Tool: **Structured and pre tested Google Form questionnaire with closed-ended and open-ended questions.**

Respondents

- **Beneficiaries** (women and transgender commuters availing free travel).
- **Non-beneficiaries** (male passengers, occasional travelers not using free bus services).
- **Bus staff** (APSRTC conductors and drivers operating in covered routes).

Sampling Method: Convenience and purposive sampling (targeting users of APSRTC services in students' native villages).

Sample Size: 159

Data Collection: Responses through Google Forms supplemented by field interactions

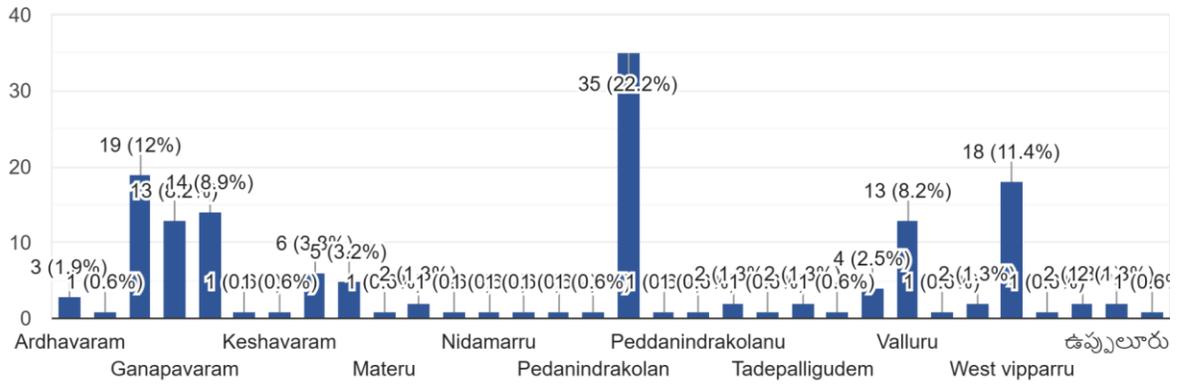
Analysis: Descriptive statistics (percentages, charts) for quantitative data; thematic analysis for open-ended responses.

Time Frame: Conducted from 15 September 2025 to 30 September 2025.

Analysis of Survey Responses

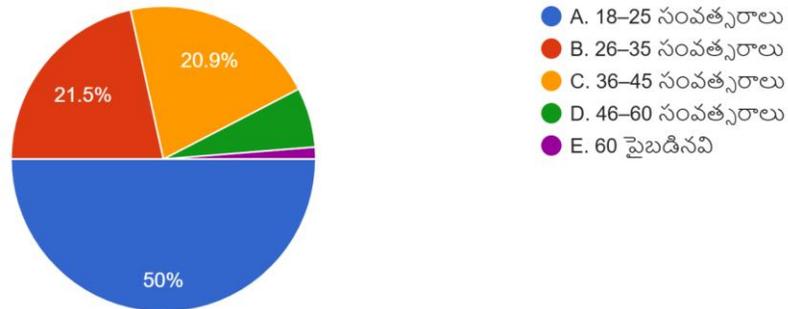
1. Respondent's Village (గ్రామము)

158 responses



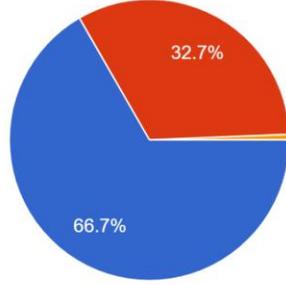
3. మీ వయస్సు ఎంత? / What is your age group?

158 responses



4. మీ లింగం ఏమిటి? / Your gender?

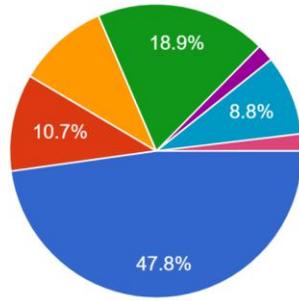
159 responses



- A. మహిళ / Female
- B. పురుషుడు / Male
- C. ఇతర / Other

5. మీ వృత్తి ఏమిటి? / Your occupation?

159 responses

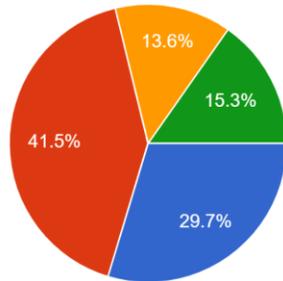


- A. విద్యార్థి/విద్యార్థిని / Student
- B. వ్యవసాయం/వ్యవసాయ కూలీ / Farmer/Farm worker
- C. దినసరి కూలీ / Daily wage worker
- D. గృహిణి / Homemaker
- E. చిన్న వ్యాపారం/దుకాణం / Small business/shop
- F. ఉద్యోగం / Employee
- G. ఇతర / Other

Analysis of the Opinions of Beneficiaries (Women & Transgender, Sample Size - 118)

1. ఉచిత బస్ పథకం ప్రారంభం తర్వాత మీరు ఎంత తరచుగా బస్ ఉపయోగిస్తున్నారు? / How often do you use APSRTC buses after the scheme started?

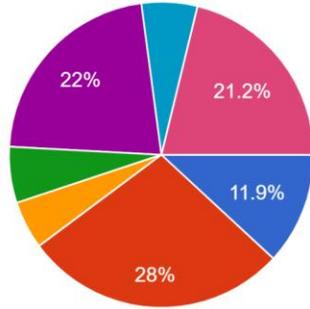
118 responses



- A. ప్రతిరోజు / Daily
- B. అప్పుడప్పుడు / Occasionally
- C. చాలా అరుదుగా / Rarely
- D. అసలు కాదు / Never

2. బస్ వినియోగంలో ముఖ్య కారణం ఏమిటి? / What is your main purpose for travel?

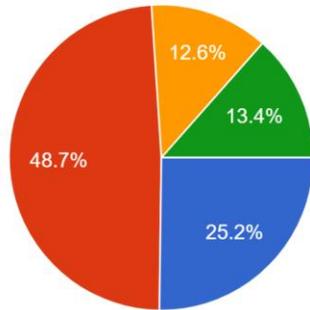
118 responses



- A. ఉద్యోగం / Work/Job
- B. విద్య / Education
- C. మార్కెట్/కొనుగోలు / Shopping/Market
- D. ఆరోగ్య సేవలు / Health visits
- E. కుటుంబ/సామాజిక సందర్శనలు / Family/Social
- F. ఇతర / Other
- Not Applicable

3. పథకం వల్ల మీ ఖర్చు ఎంతవరకు తగ్గింది? / By how much have your travel expenses reduced?

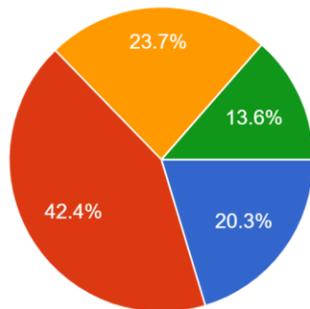
119 responses



- A. చాలా తగ్గింది / Reduced a lot
- B. కొంత తగ్గింది / Reduced somewhat
- C. తగ్గలేదు / No change
- Not Applicable

4. ఈ పథకం వల్ల మీరు స్వతంత్రంగా సౌకర్యంగా ప్రయాణించగలుగుతున్నారా? / Has the scheme improved your independence in travel?

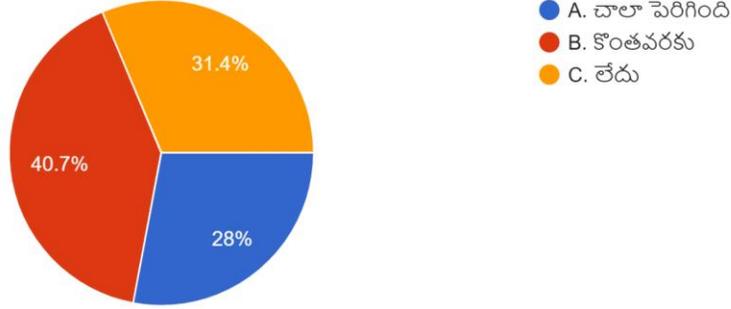
118 responses



- A. అవును, చాలా / Yes, a lot
- B. అవును, కొంత / Yes, somewhat
- C. కాదు / No
- Not Applicable

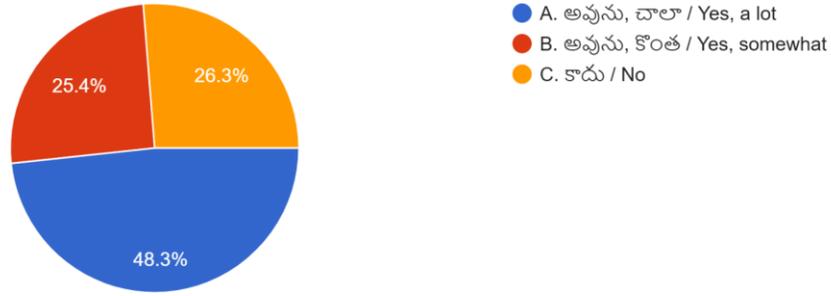
5. ఈ పథకం అమలులోకి వచ్చిన తరువాత మీ ప్రయాణాల సంఖ్య పెరిగిందా?

118 responses



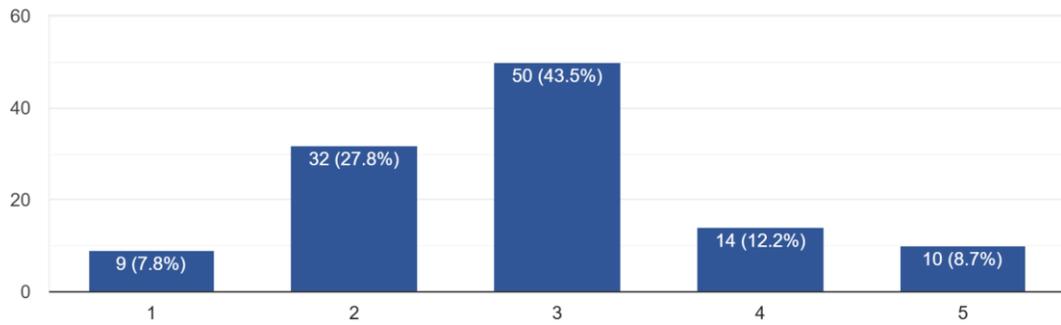
6. ఈ పథకం తరువాత అవసరం లేకపోయినా మహిళల ప్రయాణాల సంఖ్య పెరిగిందని కొందరు అభిప్రాయపడుతున్నారు. దీనికి మీ స్పందన ఏమిటి?

118 responses



7. మీరు "స్త్రీ శక్తి" పథకాన్ని ఎలా రేట్ చేస్తారు? / Overall, how would you rate the Stree Shakti scheme?

115 responses



Average rating (2.86)



Thematic Analysis of Suggestions

1. Transport Infrastructure & Service Improvements

- Increase in Bus Numbers & Routes
Many respondents suggested adding more buses and extending routes, especially to rural areas.
Example: There is no bus in my village, a bus should be arranged.
- Special Services
 - Dedicated buses for students and women.
 - Night services for safety and convenience.
 - More government school/college buses.
- Supporting Infrastructure
Suggestions for new bus stands and better road facilities.

2. Target Beneficiaries of the Scheme

- Students & Old Age People Only
A strong majority felt the scheme should be restricted to students and elderly persons.
Example: "Only students and old age people should get free bus service."
- Universal vs Restricted Access
Some wanted the scheme to continue for everyone, while others said it should be limited to specific groups (students, elderly, poor).

3. Financial Aspects

- Ticket Pricing Instead of Free Buses
Several respondents suggested reducing ticket prices instead of providing free buses.
Example: "Instead of free buses, ticket rates should be reduced."
- Economic Burden
Concerns were raised about unnecessary government spending and the financial burden on the state.
Example: "Unnecessary schemes should be avoided so that people do not bear the financial burden."

4. Women Empowerment & Safety

- Safety Measures
Strong demand for CCTV cameras in buses for women's safety.

- Self-employment & Skill Development
Calls for loans, subsidies, training, and market support for women's self-employment.
- Supportive Facilities
Suggestions for creches, daycare centers, and safe infrastructure so women can work comfortably.

5. Governance & Implementation Issues

- Transparency & Accountability
Need for a transparent system in beneficiary selection and fund utilization.
- Smart Cards
To prevent misuse of the scheme, some suggested introducing smart cards.

6. Alternative Priorities Suggested

- Some respondents felt that instead of focusing on free bus services, the government should prioritize:
 - Road construction
 - Healthcare improvement (Arogyasri accessibility)
 - Education development
 - Farmer services

Summary of Findings

- Majority View: Increase bus numbers, continue scheme for students and elderly.
- Divergent Views: Some opposed the free bus scheme, preferring ticket price reduction instead.
- Key Concerns: Women's safety (CCTV), rural connectivity, misuse prevention (smart cards).
- Alternative Suggestions: Focus on roads, healthcare, education, and livelihood development.

Analysis of the Opinions of Non-Beneficiaries (male passengers, occasional travelers not using free bus services, Sample Size - 55)

Opinion of Men

1. పథకం అమలు తర్వాత బస్సు ప్రయాణంలో మీరు ఏమైనా ఇబ్బందులు ఎదుర్కొంటున్నారా? / Did you face any issues while using free bus service?

55 responses

No
Yes
రద్దీగా ఉండడం
ఎదుర్కొంటున్నాం
కొన్నిసార్లు బస్సుల్లో అత్యధిక రద్దీ ఉండటం వల్ల సౌకర్యంగా ప్రయాణించలేకపోవడం.

Summary of Opinions

- **Main Issue:** Overcrowding (no seats, no space, difficulty boarding, elderly/children discomfort).
- **Service Gap:** Insufficient bus numbers, irregular timings, lack of night services.
- **Safety Concerns:** Overcrowding leading to conflicts, women's and passengers' safety at night.
- **Mixed Opinions:** While some see clear benefits (cost savings), others feel the scheme creates more inconvenience than comfort.

2. మహిళలకు ఉచిత బస్ పథకం గురించి మీ అభిప్రాయం ఏమిటి? / What is your opinion on this women's free bus scheme?

54 responses

Good

It's good

Useless scheme

It's good for all women's

విద్యార్థినులు, ఉద్యోగినులు, గృహిణులు వంటి విభిన్న వర్గాల మహిళలకు ప్రయాణ సౌలభ్యం కలుగుతోంది.

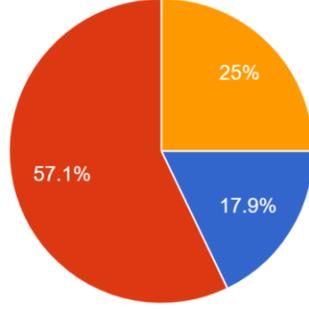
బాగానే ఉంది

Summary

- **Positive View:** The scheme is highly valued for reducing women's travel costs and encouraging their independence, particularly benefiting students, working women, homemakers, and rural women.
- **Negative View:** Criticism centers on waste of government resources, misuse, and inconvenience for men due to overcrowding.
- **Alternative Opinions:** Restrict the scheme to students/elderly/poor, or reduce ticket prices instead of full free travel.
- **Overall:** While there is strong appreciation for the scheme's **economic and social benefits for women**, male respondents highlight issues of **fairness, misuse, and operational challenges**.

3. ఈ పథకం వల్ల మీ కుటుంబాలకు ప్రయోజనం కలిగిందనుకుంటున్నారా? / Do you think this scheme has benefitted village households?

56 responses



- A. అవును / Yes
- B. కొంతవరకు / To some extent
- C. కాదు / No

4. ఈ పథకం వల్ల పురుషుల రవాణా విధానాల్లో ఏమైనా మార్పు జరిగింది? / Has the scheme changed the way men plan their travel?

51 responses

వచ్చాక ప్రయాణ చేయడానికి అనుకూలంగా ఉంది

ఇదివరకు ఫ్యామిలీ తో బైక్ మీద వెళ్ళేవారు ఇప్పుడు సింగిల్ గా వెళ్ళున్నారు

Yes

జరిగింది

అవును మార్చేసింది

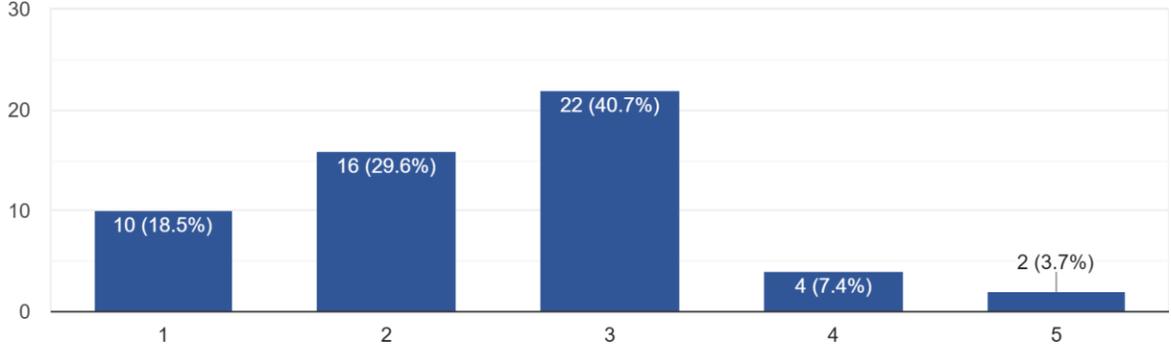
బస్ ఎక్కడం కొంతా తగ్గింది

Summary

- **Major Change:** Shift of men from public buses to motorcycles, cars, autos, and cabs due to overcrowding.
- **Secondary Effect:** Travel planning changes (adjusting time, reducing bus use).
- **Challenges:** No seats, extra expenses, reduced comfort for men.
- **Neutral/No Effect:** Some men reported no significant changes in their travel.
- **Mixed Sentiment:** While some acknowledged benefits for women, men largely viewed it as causing inconvenience to their own travel.

5. మీరు “స్త్రీ శక్తి” పథకాన్ని ఎలా రేట్ చేస్తారు? / Overall, how would you rate the Stree Shakti scheme?

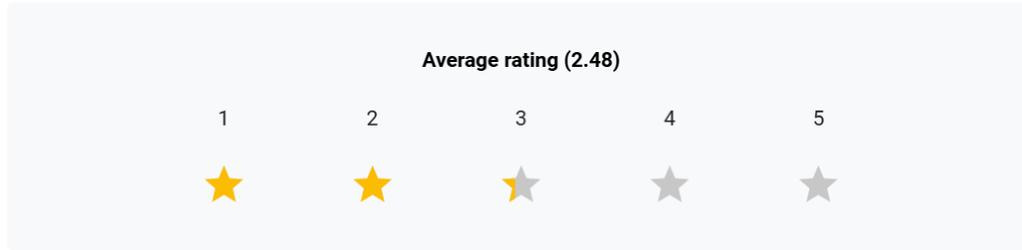
54 responses



5. మీరు “స్త్రీ శక్తి” పథకాన్ని ఎలా రేట్ చేస్తారు? / Overall, how would you rate the Stree Shakti scheme?

[Copy chart](#)

54 responses



6. భవిష్యత్తులో ఏ మార్పులు చేయాలని మీరు సూచిస్తారు? / What changes do you suggest for improving this scheme?

49 responses

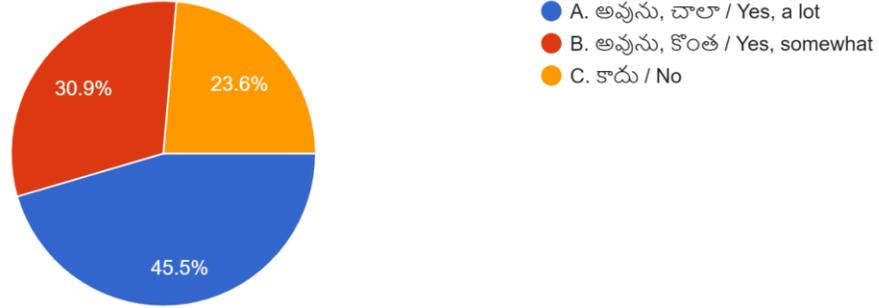
- ఆరోగ్య సంరక్షణ
- Increase in bus's
- విద్యార్థులకు వృద్ధులకు
- సీసీ కెమెరాలు
- Gents ki kuda free gaa esthe baguntundhi
- అవును మహిళలకి ఫ్రీ బస్ కాకుండా టికెట్ ధర కొంతా తగ్గించి పెడితే బాగుంటుంది
- Free bus thiseyali ani korukuntunna
- పెత్తీ (గ్రామానికి బస్సు) సౌకర్యం ఉండాలి

Summary

- **Most Common Demand:** Increase buses, improve rural coverage, reduce overcrowding.
- **Eligibility Focus:** Restrict free bus mainly to **students, elderly, poor women**; some want men included.
- **Financial Angle:** Replace free travel with reduced ticket rates; avoid unnecessary government spending.
- **Safety Measures:** Install CCTV cameras, provide special support for vulnerable women.
- **Alternative Concerns:** Consider economic support for auto/cab drivers and focus on education/social needs.

7. ఈ పథకం తరువాత అవసరం లేకపోయినా మహిళల ప్రయాణాల సంఖ్య పెరిగిందని కొందరు అభిప్రాయపడుతున్నారు. దీనికి మీ స్పందన ఏమిటి?

55 responses



Analysis of Opinions of Bus staff (APSRTC conductors and drivers operating in covered routes, Sample Size - 31).

1. పథకం ప్రారంభమైన తర్వాత ప్రయాణికుల సంఖ్య పెరిగిందా? / Has the number of passengers increased after the scheme?

31 responses

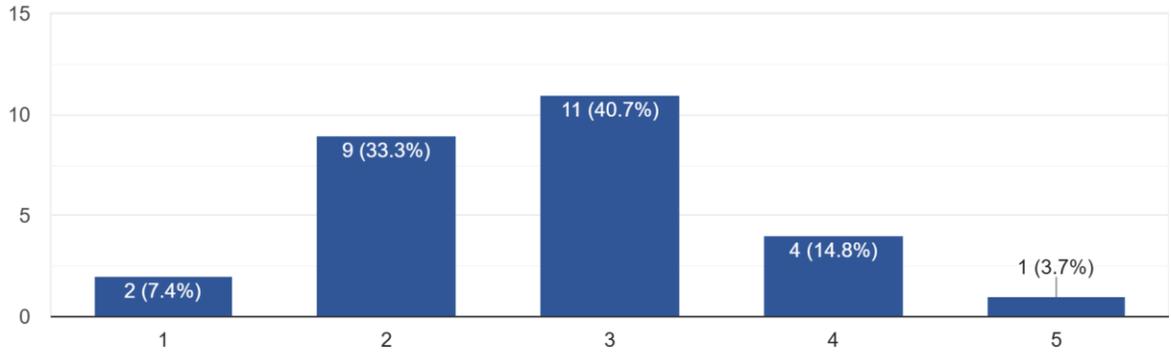


Summary

- **Top Concerns:** Reduce work hours, manage overcrowding.
- **Safety & Discipline:** Ban smoking, drinking, and mobile use during duty.
- **Professional Behavior:** Encourage polite communication with passengers.
- **Technology Use:** Introduce digital ticketing to track free passengers and reduce manual work.
- **Structural Improvements:** Increase bus fleet, limit free travel eligibility to reduce staff burden.

5. మీరు “స్త్రీ శక్తి” పథకాన్ని ఎలా రేట్ చేస్తారు? / Overall, how would you rate the Stree Shakti scheme?

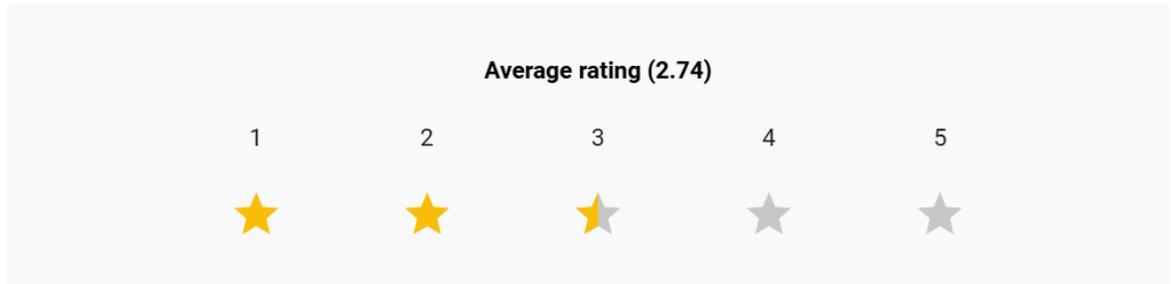
27 responses



5. మీరు “స్త్రీ శక్తి” పథకాన్ని ఎలా రేట్ చేస్తారు? / Overall, how would you rate the Stree Shakti scheme?

[Copy chart](#)

27 responses



6. . భవిష్యత్తులో ఏ మార్పులు చేయాలని మీరు సూచిస్తారు? / What changes do you suggest for improving this scheme?

21 responses

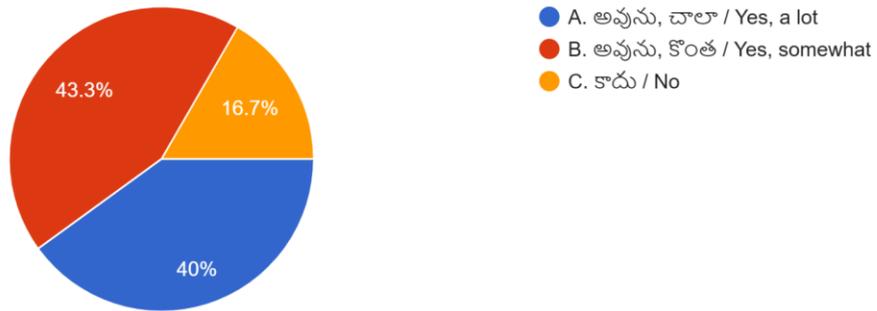
Tickets rate decreasing
బస్సుకి లెక్కప్రకారం ప్రయాణం చెయ్యాలి.
సామాజిక అభివృద్ధి
Free bus Petta kodathu petta
Only for old person's
బస్సుల సంఖ్యను పెంచి అధిక రద్దీ నీ తగ్గించాలి
Nothing

Summary

- **Targeting:** Limit free rides to students and elderly; some want men also included.
- **Capacity:** More buses and strict passenger limits to tackle overcrowding.
- **Ticketing:** Replace free travel with reduced fares or partial subsidies.
- **Operational Adjustments:** Introduce women-only buses/seats for better management.
- **Mixed Views:** Some support continuation as it is, while others oppose free travel entirely.

7. ఈ పథకం తరువాత అవసరం లేకపోయినా మహిళల ప్రయాణాల సంఖ్య పెరిగిందని కొందరు అభిప్రాయపడుతున్నారు. దీనికి మీ స్పందన ఏమిటి?

30 responses



Achievements

The Stri Shakti scheme has clearly expanded access to public transport for women and transgender persons, leading to significant cost savings, higher ridership and a greater share of women passengers. The scheme also appears to boost education and employment opportunities for women, particularly in rural areas.

Challenges and Trade-offs

The increased ridership has led to overcrowding, strain on the bus fleet and inconvenience for men. The state must balance the progressive objective of supporting women's mobility with the practical considerations of bus capacity, funding sustainability and fair access. Without additional buses or modifications, crowding may push more male passengers towards private vehicles, undermining the goal of promoting public transport.

Recommendations

1. **Expand and optimize bus services:** Increase the number of buses, particularly on rural and high-demand routes, and extend routes to underserved villages. Introduce women-only buses on certain routes.
2. **Targeted eligibility and cost sharing:** Limit free travel to students, elderly and low-income women; provide reduced fares or partial subsidies for other women and men. Use smart cards to verify eligibility, record journeys and prevent misuse.
3. **Improve infrastructure and safety:** Install CCTV cameras on buses, provide women-only seating sections, and upgrade bus stands and road conditions. Offer training and support for bus staff to maintain professional conduct and handle increased workloads.
4. **Complementary empowerment measures:** Combine free transport with programs for women's education, skill development, self-employment and social protection.
5. **Monitoring and feedback:** Establish mechanisms for continuous feedback from passengers and bus staff. Regularly assess occupancy, revenue and quality of service to fine-tune the scheme and ensure that it meets its objectives without imposing undue burdens on the public or the transport system.

Conclusion

The Stri Shakti free bus travel scheme represents a bold initiative to promote gender equity and social inclusion in Andhra Pradesh. Early evidence shows high utilization and positive impacts on women's mobility and autonomy. However, the scheme also exposes challenges related to funding,

capacity and fairness. Addressing these issues through targeted eligibility, service expansion, digital ticketing and complementary empowerment programs will be crucial to ensuring that Stree Shakti delivers long-term benefits for all segments of society.

INITIAL IMPRESSION ON STREESHAKTI SCHEME - ☆

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Section 1 of 4

INITIAL IMPRESSION ON STREE SHAKTI SCHEME – PUBLIC SURVEY

ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ ప్రభుత్వం ఆగస్టు 15, 2025 నుండి "స్త్రీ శక్తి" పథకం కింద రాష్ట్రంలోని మహిళలకు ఉచిత బస్ ప్రయాణాన్ని అందిస్తోంది. గ్రామాల్లో ఈ పథకం పట్ల ప్రజల అభిప్రాయం, లభ్యదారులు, సాధారణ ప్రజలు, శ్రైవర్ణ మరియు కండక్టర్ల (ప్రాథమిక దశ - నెల రోజులు) అనుభవం తెలుసుకోవడానికి ఈ సర్వే రూపొందించబడింది.
"Government of Andhra Pradesh has launched the *Stree Shakti* scheme on 15th August 2025, offering free bus

★ Survey Responses

References

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