

A Tourist Experience at the Passenger Train of the Vitória-Minas Railroad

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Abstract

Due to consecutive political decisions and governmental actions nationwide, the supply of rail passenger transport in Brazil is mainly focused in the urban rail transport present in some populous metropolitan areas. There are rare examples of trains carrying long distance passengers and a few tourist trains that operate short stretches and, not always, have regular frequency. One of the railway sections that has passenger trains, daily and regularly is the Vitória-Minas Railroad, operated by the company Vale, which links the capitals Vitória-ES and Belo Horizonte-MG. This study is based on an exploratory-descriptive research, which used the participant's observation technique, in order to achieve the objective of registering the experiences of a passenger-tourist, lived by the researcher, when carrying out the aforementioned route. As a result, it was detected that although the passenger service was offered to serve the region's residents and constitute a factor that promotes regional development, it also presents characteristics that can be enjoyed by tourists and tour operators.

Keywords: Rail transport of passengers; Railway tourism; Tourist services; Vitória-Minas Railway; Regional development.

Resumo

Uma experiência turística no trem de passageiros da Estrada de Ferro Vitória a Minas

Em razão consecutivas decisões políticas e ações governamentais em âmbito nacional, a oferta de transporte ferroviário de passageiros no Brasil se concentra, principalmente, no transporte férreo urbano presente em algumas áreas metropolitanas populosas. Há raros exemplos de trens que transportam passageiros de longa distância e alguns poucos trens turísticos que operam trechos curtos e, nem sempre, tem frequência regular. Um dos trechos ferroviários que conta com trem de passageiros, diários e regulares é o da Estrada de Ferro Vitória a Minas, operado pela empresa Vale, que liga as capitais Vitória-ES e Belo Horizonte-MG. Este estudo constitui-se em uma pesquisa exploratória-descritiva, que empregou a técnica de observação participante, para concretizar o objetivo de registrar as experiências de um passageiro-turista, vividas pelo pesquisador, ao realizar o referido percurso. Como resultado detectou-se que apesar do serviço de passageiros ser oferecido para atender moradores da região e constituir-se em um fator que promove o desenvolvimento regional, ele também apresenta características que podem ser aproveitadas por turistas e por operadoras turísticas.

Palavras-chave: Transporte ferroviário de passageiros; Turismo ferroviário; Serviços turísticos; Estrada de Ferro Vitória a Minas; Desenvolvimento regional.

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Resumen

Una experiencia turística en el tren de pasajeros de la Ferrocarril Vitória a Minas

En consecuencia de consecutivas decisiones políticas y acciones gubernamentales a nivel nacional, la oferta de transporte ferroviario de pasajeros en Brasil se concentra, principalmente, en el transporte férreo urbano presente en algunas áreas metropolitanas populosas. Hay raros ejemplos de trenes que transportan pasajeros de larga distancia y algunos pocos de trenes turísticos que operan tramos cortos y, no siempre, tienen frecuencia regular. Uno de los tramos ferroviarios que cuenta con tren de pasajeros, diarios y regulares es el de la Ferrocarril Vitória a Minas, operado por la empresa Vale, que conecta las capitales Vitória-ES y Belo Horizonte-MG. Este estudio se constituye en una investigación exploratoria-descriptiva, que empleó la técnica de observación participante, para concretar el objetivo de registrar las experiencias de un pasajero-turista, vividas por el investigador, al realizar dicho recorrido. Como resultado se ha detectado que a pesar de que el servicio de pasajeros es ofrecido para atender a los residentes de la región y constituirse en un factor que promueve el desarrollo regional, también presenta características que pueden ser aprovechadas por turistas y por operadores turísticos.

Palabras clave: Transporte ferroviario de pasajeros; Turismo ferroviario; Servicios turísticos; Ferrocarril Vitória a Minas; Desarrollo regional.

INTRODUCTION

Brazil's rail transport began in the 1850s with the creation of railroads through the country due to the idealization of the entrepreneur Irineu Evangelista de Souza, known as the Baron of Mauá. These railroads expanded along with the growth of coffee production and had as its main objective to transfer agricultural production from the interior of the country to the ports, aiming to export (Palhares, 2002).

In this period, the creation of railroad lines for the flow of agricultural production and mineral extraction was common in countries such as Argentina, South Africa and Brazil, known for their exporting economies, and which made use of railway corridors to promote economic leverage. However, the growth of Brazilian railways was characterized by the regulations' institutional disorder and the lack of planning in the network, which led to the creation of railroads with different types of gauges, and which, nowadays, makes it impossible to fully integrate the national modal (Fraga & Castro, 2012; CNT, 2013).

The Brazilian railway system began to decline in the 1920s with the global crisis that affected the export of coffee and with the new directions that the industrialization of the country imposed on the political bodies. In the 1950s the railroads decline was intensified with the creation of public policies focusing on road transport, which intensified the competition between these two sectors of transport, considering both freight and passengers. Thus the railway modality lost revenue and promoted a reduction on investments in infrastructure (tracks and stations) and equipment modernization. (Palhares, 2002; CNT, 2013).

Forty years later, the railway mode resumed its operation in Brazil after the implementation of incentive and privatizations policies in the 1990s as its main

objective was fixed on the export of minerals and bulk (Palhares, 2002; Fraga & Castro, 2012).

The passengers transport through the railway modal is represented, for the most part, by the urban transport on rails, of short route (Lohmann, Fraga & Castro, 2013). Urban railways are constituted by metropolitans trains, subways, monorails, light rail vehicles (VLTs), trams and funiculars. (Fraga & Castro, 2012; CNT, 2016). In addition to trams and funiculars, urban rail transport:

[...] is generally of little importance from the tourist point of view when compared to medium and long-distance passenger rail services. This is mainly because its operation is restricted to the large metropolitan centers, in which the passengers usually move within their usual environments of coexistence. (Palhares, 2002, p. 284-285)..

The other portion representing rail passenger transport is, for the most part, intended for the tourist segment. They are small and medium-sized railroads routes geared to scenic and historical journeys, which generate nostalgic feelings for tourists and are usually performed in panoramic cars. They are also transports seen as its own tourist attraction (Palhares, 2002; Allis, 2006; Fraga, 2011). These lines are predominantly located in the Southeast and South regions of the country (Brasil, MT, 2015).

Only two regular long-distance rail lines operate in Brazil for passenger transportation, the Carajás Railroad (EFC) and the Vitória-Minas Railroad (EFVM), both operated by the Vale company, its focused on the transportation of ores, but that also value the transportation of passengers as a regional development promoter and, but don't consider the tourist aspect of the train or the route. (Fraga, 2011; Vale, 2017a; Vale, 2017b). According to Fraga and Castro (2012), the shortage of long-distance passengers trains in Brazil may induce the triggering component of the tourist experience, which is intent at the "rarity" of the service.

EFVM is a railroad connecting the iron ore mines of Minas Gerais to the Tubarão Port Complex in Vitória's Metropolitan region, Espírito Santo. The railroad had its first stretch inaugurated in the year 1904 and its conclusion occurred around the 1940s. It was nationalized in 1942 and became controlled by Companhia Vale do Rio Doce. In 1997 the state-owned company was privatized and, in 2007, it changed its name to Vale. Currently the railway is about 900 km long and carries about 115 million tons of iron ore and 27 million tons of other cargoes per year (Vale, 2017b).

EFVM also offers passenger transportation, which began operations when the railroad was inaugurated in 1904. Passengers were transported in wooden cars along with a cargo composition. This was modified with the nationalization of the railroad, where the passengers happened to be transported in unique compositions. By the 1950s the wooden cars were replaced by steel ones and in 2014 Vale acquired two new modernized passenger trains (Vale, 2017b).

Analysing the EFVM passenger train as one of the only long-distance passenger trains in the country, offers a debate by setting the research problem: Is the EFVM passenger train route a tourist experience? Since Fraga (2011) emphasizes that the use of passenger trains, it is not exclusive to tourist use, it can provide a

valuable tourist experience to their passengers. Therefore the general objective of this work was fixed in:

Provide an account of the researcher experiences in the course of the EFVM passenger train as a tourist.

To meet the general objective, the following specific objectives have been established:

- Make photographic records;
- Describe the train, track and stations infrastructures;
- Describe the services offered to passengers, and;
- Indicate the elements that favor the tourist experience and those that harm it..

METHOD

The present work is a result of an exploratory-descriptive research, according to Veal (2011) researches in this category intend to inquiry about the state of an object and describe its most relevant characteristics. It has an exclusively qualitative character because it does not employ any method of quantification or sampling, and was made possible by the technique of participant observation, whose precepts aim at the scientific researcher observation at the moment in which he participates in the events seen as object of study (Veal, 2011).

The participant observation was held between October 13 and 14, 2017, during the prolonged national holiday of Our Lady Aparecida, which began on Thursday, October 12. To do so, the researcher made the purchase of economic rates' train tickets via the internet at the value of R\$ 42,00 for the section between Pedro Nolasco Station and Governador Valadares Station, and R\$42,00 for the section between Governador Valadares Station and Belo Horizonte Station, boarded a plane on Thursday (12) from São Paulo-SP to Vitória-ES, and on this day he met the Capixaba capital, as well as the Vale Railway Museum, which is close to the boarding for the railway section, object of this report.

On the following day (13), the researcher began the participant observation when he went to Pedro Nolasco Station in Cariacica-ES, at the Metropolitan Region of Vitória, to board at 07:00 a.m. on the EFVM passenger train, the only daily train departure near Vitória-ES. The first stretch which lasted 06:06 hours, was held until the city of Governador Valadares-MG, where the researcher planned to arrive. The overnight stay in Governador Valadares was chosen because of the long duration of the complete route that is estimated at 13:30 hours, which could cause excessive fatigue, because the train does not offer cars with beds, and it could generate any interference in the impartiality of the research.

On Saturday (14) at 01:14 p.m., the researcher continue his trip on the train, boarding at Governador Valadares, in another composition from Vitória bound for Belo Horizonte-MG. This section lasted 7:16 hours and the researcher stayed in the capital of Minas Gerais on Sunday (15) to evaluate the Belo Horizonte Railway Station, and in the evening he boarded an airplane to return to São Paulo.

It is important to emphasize that even the fare class purchased by the researcher was economic, it was possible to walk and evaluate all the cars of the compositions, since the transit of people between the cars is authorized and encouraged through the sound announcements made during the trip.

Following are the characteristics of the EFVM, the route, the railway and the rail stations visited, then the equipment and services of the used passengers compositions (trains) are analyzed. Finally, a tourist potential analysis is made under the theories of Palhares (2002), Cooper et al. (2007) and Fraga (2011), who advocates transport as tourist attraction from the moment a scenic offer and nostalgic feelings through historical rescue become available. It is emphasized that tables and figures are used throughout the text to gather and reveal data and photos, recorded in the field, illustrating the information reported.

EXPERIENCE AS PASSENGER-TOURIST AT EFVM

For further understanding this chapter is divided into EFVM website, route, stations visited.

EFVM website

Vale has an online portal for the three passenger railways it operates: the Vitória-Minas Railway, The Carajás Railway and the Ouro Preto-Mariana Tourist Train (Vale, 2017a). When selecting the EFVM, it opens a separate page intended exclusively to information pertinent to this train.

The EFVM passenger train webpage is divided into four main pages (Vale, 2017c). The first page provides general information about the train, such as the cultural activity schedule, traveler tips, a price and time calculator, online interactive games and a souvenir train image download area.

The page called routes brings a speech about the route of the train. There is an interactive map where the visitor can click on some stations of the route to receive information about the city, with texts and videos, as well as external links that directs to selected city halls webpages (Vale, 2017d). At the bottom of the page, it is possible to find information on physical points of ticket sale, online shopping and travel tips.

On the page called travel information, the site offers information on how to travel with comfort and safety (Vale, 2017e). There is also a frequently asked questions area, which is divided by themes such as tickets purchase, tickets changes, boarding the train and food on board. At the bottom of the page there is an information sheet from the Customer Care Service (SAC) called Alô Ferrovias!, a free telephone number with 24 hours service and accessible for the hearing impaired.

On the page named as know our fleet it is possible to find videos about Vale and EFVM, as well as about the use of entertainment and food on board (Vale, 2017b). At the bottom of the page there's information on the particularities of all train cars, such as the economics, executives, special, cafeteria and restaurant, as well as the cultural car and the environmental car, which will be discussed later in this study.

Almost all web pages go to Vale's reservation page. This is a page marked as safe in the browsers used for the reservation. It is possible to choose from three options of trains that Vale operates, indicate the origin and destination, the

round trip, or one way, the dates of the trip, the classes (economic, executive or wheelchair) and the quantity of desired passages. There is also the possibility of purchasing passes with benefits assured by Law, such as the Elderly Benefit, the Disabled Pass, the Youth Ticket for Low Income and the Pass for babies and toddlers. The specificities of each passage with its benefits described at the Vale Use Rules Primer (2017f).

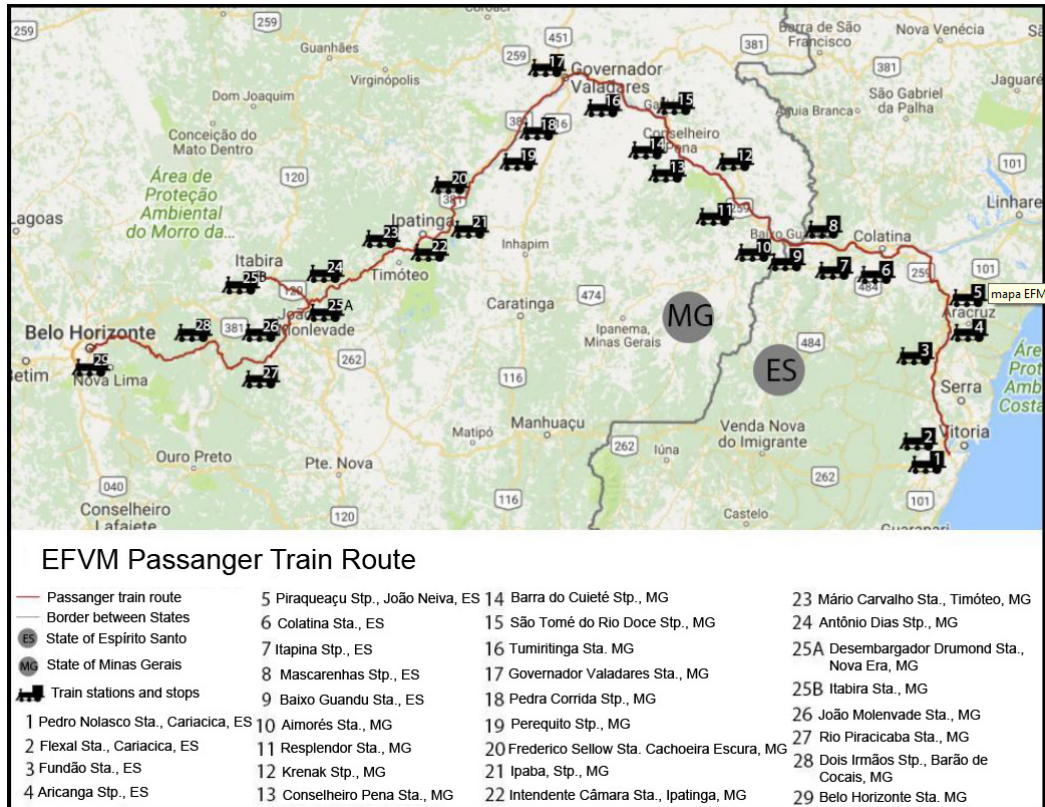
After the tariff calculation, a summary of the ticket is present and a virtual reading and agreement of the Rail Transport Agreement is requested. To continue, the visitor needs to register in the system, with their contact information. The passenger identification occurs, and the choice of a seat in a car already pre-selected by the company becomes available. The ticket payment is made by credit card, and it can be split up to 5 times, with minimum installment of R\$ 20,00. An electronic voucher is sent to the e-mail address informed and it carries the description that it is necessary to exchange the voucher for a physical ticket at the station on the day of boarding, with at least 30 minutes advance of the train's departure.

Route

The EFVM passenger train travels a total distance of 664 km, passing through cities of Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais States. There are two trains that run the route daily. At 7 a.m. a train departs from Pedro Nolasco Station in the municipality of Cariacica, in the Metropolitan Region of Vitória, ES, while at 7:30 a.m. another train departs from Belo Horizonte Railway Station in Minas Gerais. Around 1:40 p.m. the trains cross each other in the region near Pedra Corrida Station, MG, moment announced on the train's information speakers. If there are no delays, the train arrives at the final station at night, at 8:10 p.m. in Belo Horizonte and at 8:30 p.m. in Cariacica, and then, on the next day, the route will be reversed.

The passenger can board and exit the main trains in 17 stations, and 18 different mineiras and capixabas cities along the route, while stations are those that have ticket windows for sales and stops only lead to boarding and landing. In total there are 29 disruptions in 28 municipalities, as shown in Figure 1, prepared by the researcher based on information collected in the field and on Vale's (2017c) website.

Figure 1 - EFVM Passenger Train route map



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

In addition to the two main trains, Vale has an auxiliary train that runs the route between the stations of Desembargador Drumond, MG and Itabira, MG. It is a train of few cars and it does four daily departures, with schedules similar to the main trains, in order to attend to the great flow of travelers between the localities. The researcher only made the trip on the two main trains, not evaluating the auxiliary train.

The landscape during the course is differentiated according to its scenic character. During most of the way the train margs the Doce River, and after the Intendente Câmara Station, MG, the train begins a curving path in the slopes of the Minas Gerais hille (Figure 2). with several steep slopes and tunnels.

Figure 2- Scenic landscape that permeates EFVM

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Near the city of Belo Horizonte, the train makes a planned stop of 15 minutes, it was announced that the train was leaving the operational control center of Vale in Vitória and entering the operational control center of Belo Horizonte. This center of Belo Horizonte controls the trains in the Ferrovia Centro Atlântica, which has a gauge size of 1,60m (Vale, 2017d), so the passenger train would not, in theory, be compatible with the gauge size of this railroad, since the EFVM has a metric gauge (Vale, 2017d), with distances between rails of 1,00m, being their cars and wagons adapted to this gauge only.

This obstacle was circumvented by the implantation of a mixed gauge, are three parallel tracks that carry trains of the two gauges, proven by Figure 3, the researcher witnessed the two gauges when walking through the city of Belo Horizonte.

Figure 3 - Mixed gauge in Belo Horizonte

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Throughout the course, one noticed in conversations between the passengers, as well as in his own conversations with passengers, that they consider the passenger train as a modality of transport, without adding a tourist value by the experience of the trip. Many were making short journeys between cities on the train route and not their full route. This confirms that the train is used for the transit of the region's residents and influences the local economy. For those passengers who made the full journey between the capitals of the two states, the train is seen as a good option for transportation, because of its inexpensive ticket, even if the journey time is longer than other means of transport, as described in Table 1, based on data from Vale (2017c), the bus tickets comparative website ClickBus (2017) and the air tickets comparative website Decolar (2017).

Table 1 - Prices and travel time comparison between rail, road and air modalities.

Vitória, ES - Belo Horizonte, MG Route		
Modal	Price	Travel duration
EFVM train	R\$73,00	13h30
Bus	R\$ 100,00 ~ R\$105,00	9h30
Airplane	R\$ 180,00 ~ R\$270,00	1h15

Source: Adapted from Vale (2017c), ClickBus (2017) and Decolar (2017)

It is worth noting that the researcher witnessed a delay related to the time of arrival in Belo Horizonte, it arrived in the city around 8:30 p.m., 20 minutes after the expected time. This happened due to a stop in the middle of the route, announced in the information system as a failure in the freight train located in front of the passenger train, it was informed that arrangements were being made for the liberation of the railroad and the consequent continuity of the trip. In total there were 15 minutes of train parked. In the first stretch between Cariacica and Governador Valadares there were no delays and the landing was authorized at 1:06 p.m. at the station, as planned.

Visited stations

Due to the overnight planned by the researcher, three stations along the way were visited and analyzed, described below:

Pedro Nolasco Station, Cariacica-ES

As previously mentioned, the Pedro Nolasco station is located in Cariacica, in the Metropolitan Region of Vitória, ES. (Figure 4). The station is accessible by public transport only by intercity buses. It was witnessed that most part of the taxi drivers and other drivers in the region know about the station existence, but they are unaware of the passenger train destination that operates there.

The station is modern, wide and clean, but lacks an efficient visual information. Several people seemed lost as what to do. For those people who bought the ticket online it was necessary to withdraw the physical ticket from the train, upon presentation of the purchase voucher and an official identification document. A station staff member was stationed in the middle of the hall, to distribute these already printed passages, there was no visual or sound information about this fact.

There were sound announcements that indicated the fully capacity of the train for that day, There was no sale of tickets for that train about to depart, but the ticket office was open for the purchase of tickets for other days. Tallis were heard among people hoping to buy tickets for that day, but decides to take the bus trip instead.

The boarding platform is accessed through four gates, separated by type of passage: one for online sales and priorities, two for face-to-face sales of economy class, and one for business class. The train is larger than the platform, so when it stops, not all wagons are accessible directly. Cars from the economy class and the disabled have direct access on the platform. Those of the business class have their access to the train made with an aid of retractable benches that help them ascent to the car.

Figure 4 - Pedro Nolasco Station, Cariacica - ES



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Governador Valadares Station-MG

The Governador Valadares Station is located in the center of the city (Figure 5), and the disembarking is performed by a gate at the end of the platform, outside the main terminal.

When disembarking, there are several taxis for the transport service in the city. When walking around the region near the arrival time of the trains, it was not possible to find a reasonable offer of taxi fares. There were people approaching to offer transportation to Vitória or Belo Horizonte through cars and vans, these people look for those who could not board the train due to their crowdedness, the legality of the offer of these services is questionable.

For the boarding, the same procedure of exchanging tickets for those who bought it online is adopted, the tickets were previously printed and were distributed by a station staff member. Sound announcements of train stocking were also heard, there was no more selling tickets for that day.

Access to the platform is released at 12:45 p.m., about 20 minutes before the arrival of the train. professionals indicate in which platform position the car, pointed in the ticket, will stop. There is a yellow security strip, demarcated on the ground to avoid people approaching the rut of the rails, the employees verbally reprimanded those who surpassed the yellow line without proper authorization. In this station the platform carries the whole extension of the train.

Figure 5 - Governador Valadares Station-MG



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Belo Horizonte Railway Station-MG

The landing at the Belo Horizonte station is messy due to the large number of people, being the total capacity of the compositions approximately 1.100 people. The platform provides access to the disabled, the first business and economy cars. As for the other passengers the arrival is done through auxiliary retractable structures.

The station is small (Figure 6) and is congested due to the large number of people disembarking, the movement of cars, taxis and people approaching passengers at the exit of the station. The access road to the station is narrow and normally paralysed with the large number of people.

Figure 6 - Belo Horizonte Station-MG

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Near the boarding and arrival times, local residents advise not to walk around the station area due to their high degree of public insecurity, but when walking through the region, it was possible to notice police forces carrying out rounds around the area.

The station is connected to the city's public transport network through the subway system and the BRT bus system of the municipality.

TRAIN CONFIGURATION AND SERVICES

As explained previously, Vale uses two trains for the mais route in EFVM, for this report they will be called train 1 and train 2. Train 1 is composed of 19 cars (wagons) plus the locomotive machine, has a total capacity for 1.065 passengers. The train 2 is formed by 22 cars plus the locomotive, with a total capacity of 1.122 passengers.

Train 1 is made up of the following layout: 1 locomotive machine, 1 generator car, 4 business class cars, 1 cafeteria/kitchen car, 1 restaurant car, 1 special car adapted for disabled people along with a space for the train staff and 11 economy class cars.

Train 2 is made up of: 1 locomotive machine, 2 generator cars, 5 business class cars, 1 cafeteria/kitchen car, 1 restaurant car, 1 special car adapted for disabled people along with a space for the train staff, 11 economy class cars and 1 environmental car.

Following are description relating to each car modality of the passenger train, as well as the services presented on board, which have been visited and experienced by the researcher.

Machines and generators

The locomotive machine (Figure 7) that transports the EFVM passenger train uses biodiesel burning as the driving force to pull the composition (Vale, 2017b). It is aided by a generator car on train 1, and two generators cars on train 2 for power supply to the other passenger cars.

Figure 7 - EFVM passenger train locomotive



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Business cars

The business cars are configured with 57 seats each, arranged in three rows. (Figure 8) They are blue seats, wide, with pneumatic inclination and foot rests. Each seat has sound systems, lighting and individual power sockets. Luggage can be packed in the compartments above the seats or on the shelves at the rear of the car. All cars have gender-separated toilets located outside the seat space, but accessible through a push-button door and automatic closing. All cars in this class have air conditioning.

Figure 8 - EFVM passenger train business car

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Cafeteria and restaurant cars

The cafeteria and restaurant cars work together, they are managed by the out-sourced Bom Gosto company. The cafeteria is connected with the kitchen that prepares the food to be served throughout the train. The cafeteria provides ready-made food to those who go to the service desk. (Figure 9) All sales are charged in cash due lack of connection for operation of credit and debit card machines. At certain times a queue was formed to buy food in the cafeteria due to a delay in the operation of the box, which alleged the lack of money for change.

Figure 9 - EFVM passenger train cafeteria car

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

The restaurant wagon has tables with two and four seats, with a total capacity of 70 seated passengers, plus two wheelchairs. (Figure 10) The passenger can sit down and consult a menu to order: snacks, meals, salads, desserts and drinks. The request is made to a waiter who then heads to the kitchen to perform the dish. Payment in cash is made at the time of order. The car has background music and audible warnings indicate that passengers can only remain seated within 20 minutes after receiving the request, in order to serve all passengers.

Figure 10 - EFVM passenger train restaurant car



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Sales carts run through the corridors of the whole train. The onboard service serves savory, sweet and prepared drinks and fast consumption items. These trolleys remain in the aisles between the rows, but do not stop the people's traffic. Those responsible for the food services collect orders for lunch dishes that are priced R\$ 14.00, it is served with rice, beans, chicken and pasta. It is available from 11.30 am and delivered to the person's seat if requested. Payments are also made only in cash. Sound announcements indicate that the food service on board is paralyzed 20 minutes before arrival at the station of Governador Valadares and is resumed 20 minutes later, this is due to the change of shift of the teams.

Special car

The special car is intended for passengers with physical disabilities and their companions. It has 4 seats adapted to receive wheelchairs and another 8 seats for companions. (Figure 11) At the back of the car there is a unisex adapted toilet and the entrances of the car have lifts for easier boarding.

Figure 11 - EFVM passenger train special car

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

This car is also shared by the staff working on the train, there is a room for workers, a resting room and another for the head of the train, with visual designations on the door of each room.

Economy cars

Economy class cars have 75 seats each, arranged in four rows (Figure 12). They are green seats, with mechanical inclination, but without a place to rest the feet. Passengers have access to electrical sockets that are arranged on the walls and are shared by two seats, these sockets have a good functioning on both trains. Luggage can also be packed in the compartments above the seats or on the shelves at the rear of the car. All cars have toilets separated by gender and located outside the space of the seats, but accessible through a door with push button and automatic closing. All cars in this class have air conditioning.

Figure 12 - EFVM passenger train economy car

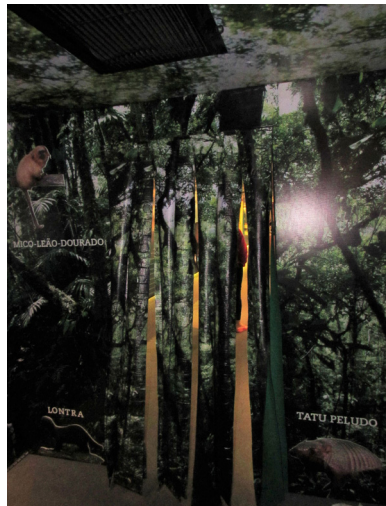
Fonte: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Environmental car

During the course on train 2, the audio information system of the composition informs passengers about the activities of the “Environmental Car” inviting for visitation. To access this car the passenger has to walk to the end of the train, after the economic car number 11. The sound system also informs passengers to watch out for their landing stations when visiting the environmental car, since it has a sound system of its own, resulting in the loss of other train ads by its visitors.

When visiting the environmental car it is noted two areas. The first one, located in the front area of the car, depicts the ecological environment of the Atlantic Forest, with photographic representations of the fauna and flora of the biome, as well as sound representations of the car (Figure 13).

Figure 13 - First environment of the EFVM passenger train environmental car



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

The second environment of the car has a wide area, where there is an educational service monitor that guides activities involving car visitors and an interactive presentation located on the walls of the car, which involves activities with information about sustainable habits, renewable energy, 5 R's (reduce, rethink, reuse, recycle and refuse) and colored separation for garbage collection (blue: paper, red: plastic, green: glass, yellow: metal and gray: non-recyclable) (Figure 14).

Figure 14 - Second environment of the EFVM passenger train environmental car

Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

The monitor reported that the car was formerly known as the “Cultural Wagon” and had educational workshops for children on the train. It also had a children’s library for reading books on the premises. This cultural wagon was put out of circulation for a remodeling. The environmental car, which opened two days before the visit (October 12, 2017), celebrates children’s day, has no children’s library, but offers recreational and educational activities for children and expanded its purpose to also attract adults.

Onboard services

Safety, cleaning and onboard service

The train has a team of two guards from the outsourced company, Prosequir, who carry out the continuous round of the cars and are activated by radio in the event of any incident requiring intervention.

Also as security actions, warnings are periodically announced for passengers to keep their tickets with them throughout the trip, for parents to take care of their children on board, to be aware of personal belongings and to be aware when moving around in the train in order to avoid accidents and possible thefts or robberies.

In addition, during the total journey, four pass revisions were announced and held, where onboard attendants check all passengers’ tickets, addressing those sitting in their respective locations and those who are traveling through the composition. Failure to submit a ticket may result in the purchase of a new ticket or the possible expulsion of the train.

The onboard service is carried out by Realma’s outsourced employees, who are responsible for receiving and directing passengers to the right seats, answering questions about them, and making sound announcements on the train, also assisting in boarding and disembarking passengers, selling tickets for those who embarked on stops that do not count with a sale point outside. Some seats in specific cars are reserved for these people who realize the purchase of the passage aboard the train.

Realma employees also clean the train, sweeping the floors of the cars and picking up the trash between the seats, separating recyclable waste from the non-recyclable. In addition, all cars have appropriate cans for selective collection (Figure 15).

Figure 15 - EFVM passenger train waste collection bins



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Communication and information system

Communication with the user aboard the train are performed by visual boards, sound announcements, wireless onboard entertainment system and information monitors.

The visual signs indicate in which car the passenger is on or while driving the category of the composition and the number of seats inside each car (Figure 16). They also indicate emergency exits, fire extinguishers, toilets, door-opening buttons, and risk-of-touch locations. In addition, the cars have maps with the route of the train as well as the distance in kilometers between each station.

Figure 16 - EFVM passenger train luminous indication of the economy car 3



Source: Willi Jardim Costa Klink, 2017.

Stops and stations of the route are announced about 5 minutes in advance, as well as the maximum stop time at the station and on which side of the composition the doors will open. At some stops only a few train doors are opened in certain cars, this is due to the small size of the platforms of the stations, for this, there are announcements for the passengers to go to the right car. At all stops along the way, there are warnings for passengers to take care of the gap between the train and the platform.

The wireless onboard entertainment system is configured while accessing an internal network of the train through electronic devices via wi-fi. This system offers internet connection, but it is intermittent during the route, and access is possible only when the train enters urban centers, and even then the connection has low speed. Problems with the internet connection are mentioned on the opening page of the entertainment system, and because of this, a dedicated entertainment channel is offered, where it is possible to watch nine institutional videos about Vale, EFVM and its passenger train, 11 recordings of concerts by national and international artists and 34 international films, with voice overs in Portuguese and with subtitles in the same language. This option operates with quality throughout the course, not getting any connection oscillation.

The train also has an entertainment system through information monitors. Each passenger car in business and economy class has nine monitors attached to the top of the car. These monitors display videos and movies from the train's own entertainment channel, and in economy class movies are shown with open audio, while in business class the monitors are silent, and the audios of the displayed video can be accessed through the outputs headphones present in each armchair.

These monitors also inform about the tourist activity linked to the train route, since, when a movie is not shown at the moment and the train approaches a certain stop, a small video with historical, demographic and tourist curiosities of the mentioned. The train also transmits other tourist information to its passengers, such as the display of informative videos of the Vale Tourist Train, which runs the route between the cities of Ouro Preto and Mariana in Minas Gerais. There is also an informative video of the Museum of Vale, located in the municipality of Vila Velha, in the Metropolitan Region of Vitória, ES, which transmits a little of the history of EFVM. In addition, in the passenger car, several advertising boards are displayed with the purpose of promoting tourism in the State of Espírito Santo.

As a final announcement of the train, when entering the city of Belo Horizonte, passengers are required to check their belongings and take care of the gap between the train and the platform when disembarking, for this, they ask to remain calm during the arrival since the time for action will be enough for everyone to exit safely. Finally, they announce that it was a pleasure to have all the passengers on board and that they expect to receive them again in the near future.

ANALYSIS - IS IT RAIL TOURIM?

This mean of transport aims to promote mainly regional development by serving as a mode of connection between the cities of Espírito Santo and Minas Gerais mentioned in Figure 1.

The EFVM passenger train consists of a cheaper mean of transport compared to other modes that offer routes between the endpoints of the railway. However, if a comparison is made between travel time by train, plane and bus, of regular trade routes, the monetary difference is not so advantageous, as shown in Table 1.

However, it is observed that the train is one of the few transportation options between municipalities of the interior of the two states that it traverses, which should explain the fact that the passages are exhausted in most of the embarkation and disembarkation stations. This reinforces the importance of passenger train as a factor that promotes local and regional development because it functions as a link between people and business.

The participant observation made it possible to verify that the majority of the passengers understand the train only as a means of transportation, without having any relation with its tourist potential. In addition, he did not notice the presence of foreigners, families or individuals with cameras or who had characteristics of tourists, people who are not in a region of habitual residence, as was the case of the researcher.

It should be noted that the passenger train is valued by its operator, Vale, since it offers this service daily and it has priority on the railroad in front of the cargo compositions.

The outsourced services are suitable for offering a safe, comfortable and with relative punctuality. Armchairs are considered to be comfortable and provide good accommodation, entertainment is adequate and suits different age groups, the on-board service is varied, but it has a small structure to suit all passengers, security is effective and the ads are enlightening about the rules of the train and the organization held for the stops along the route. However, all information is provided only in the Portuguese language, which can be considered as a limiting factor to attract foreign tourists.

The scenic beauty of the route is an important attraction for tourists. The train travels through landscapes of the Rio Doce valley and the Minas Gerais hills, which are unique and can not be seen if the route is done by another type of transportation. It is also commendable the incentive given to the tourist qualities of the cities that the train crosses in its route, by exposing informative videos in the onboard entertainment system. Other elements experienced in the trip and which are of interest for leisure and tourism are: the educational service offered in the Environmental Car, the orientation on the selective collection, the dissemination of the Tourist Train of Vale, between Ouro Preto and Mariana and the Museum of Vale in Vila Velha.

Lastly, the tourist value of nostalgia is added to this transport, since the railway mode had years of glamor in antiquity and today is a rarity in the national territory and, therefore, the EFVM passenger train constitutes, among the only two possibilities, a long-distance railway travel experience in Brazil.

In view of the above, the EFVM passenger train is a tourist attraction because it promotes the possibility of appreciation of the scenic character of the route and also provides the nostalgic feeling to those who use it, since it rescues the history of the train and the cities in which it passes, through the offer of videos in their service of communication and entertainment on board.

However, this modal presents certain negative points that deserve to be mentioned because they interfere in the quality of the tourist experience. As an example, it was observed that the stations of great movement of passengers (for example Pedro Nolasco and Belo Horizonte) are not comfortable for the passengers because of the great flow of people. The internet sale also promotes the rapid exhaustion of the available tickets in the different configurations which can collaborate with the alternative transport offer at the entrances of the stations.

FINAL REMARKS

The work was completed as proposed by providing an account of the experiences of the researcher during the course of the EFVM passenger train. For this purpose, photographic records were presented to help illustrate the reality presented by this service. Also described were the infrastructure of the train, its routes and the stations visited, as well as the services offered to passengers. Finally, an analysis was made of the potential of the EFVM passenger train as a tourist attraction, by describing the elements that favor it and undermine it.

It is believed that it is important to develop new works that can materialize the critical analysis of a researcher in the area of tourism who experiment a tourist experience.

This space opened by the Revista Turismo em Análise to add to the Brazilian scientific literature reports that may serve, in the future, for historical and comparative studies, that will allow evaluating the evolution of companies, businesses and tourist attractions that operate in Brazil.

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