The Journal of Social Sciences Research
ISSN(e): 2411-9458, ISSN(p): 2413-6670
Vol. 7, Issue. 4, pp: 169-176, 2021
URL: https://arpgweb.com/journal/journal/7
DOI: https://doi.org/10.32861/jssr.74.169.176

Academic Research Publishing Group

Original Research Open Access

Commuter Care Management and Sustainability of Road Transport Firms

Usoro A. A. (Corresponding Author)
Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria
Email: oredolaabeni@yahoo.ca

Dadiowei O. M.
School of Commerce and Management, Bayelsa State Polytechnic, Bayelsa State, Ekeremor, Nigeria

Etuk I. U.
Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

Esu B. B.
Department of Marketing, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

Ogbang C. E.
Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

Ele A. A.
Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria

Article History
Received: 12 July, 2021
Revised: 29 August, 2021
Accepted: 8 September, 2021
Published: 13 September, 2021

Abstract

To be a going concern, road transportation firms like other organizations have to go beyond the usual goal of just making a profit to always keeping their commuters satisfied with the nature of services rendered to them. This study examined commuter care management and the sustainability of road transport firms in the South-South region, Nigeria. The study sought to investigate two dimensions of commuter care specifically waiting for time and employees' attitude and the influence of these on commuter referrals and retention respectively. A Cross-sectional survey was carried out where data were collected using a structured questionnaire. A sample size of three was used for the transportation companies while a sample size of 329 was used for the commuters. The simple linear regression statistical tool was used in analyzing the data through the aid of the E-View 19 statistical package. Findings from the study revealed that there exists a significant positive influence of waiting time on commuter referrals and of employee attitude on commuter referrals. It was therefore recommended that management of road transport firms should ensure that commuters do not wait for too long before the take-off time, they should make sure vehicles are serviced, fuelled and take off as at when scheduled; employees should also be constantly trained to ensure their attitude to commuters are appropriate.

Keywords: Commuter care; Waiting time; Attitude; Sustainability.

1. Introduction

Road transportation companies have been floated for more than seven decades in Nigeria, but have often gone into oblivion with time. In the eastern part of Nigeria names such as Ojukwu Transport Limited and "Abasi De" were well known in the 1960s, "Inyangette Motors" in the 80s, and Roadtune Motors in the 90s. In present times, road transportation business in Nigeria involves both the private (ownership by individuals) and the public (ownership by governments). The focus of this study is on privately owned mass road transport firms. Some privately owned transportation companies include Chisco Motors, Peace Mass Transit (PMT), God is Good Motors (GIGM), G. Agofure Motors (GAM), Sunny Eru Motors (SEM), Calculux, To & Fro, Delkings amongst others. These privately owned, often family run, long distance road transport service producing firms have become part of the Nigerian history. The rate at which they are established have increased and it appears that the rate at which they fold up has also not reduced. Some appear to be tagging along with patronage ebbing out as time goes by.

These firms seem to go through the product life cycle quickly. They are established, they become a household name among commuters, shortly complaints by commuters begin, and shortly they are winding up. No known private road transportation firm has celebrated fifty years of existence. The reasons proffered for this trend are varied. From interactions with commuters, it was gathered that many transport companies do not care how long commuters spend in their facilities before their departure or take off time, employees act rudely to commuters, vehicles are overloaded with luggage and passengers, on-board experiences are unsatisfactory, vehicles are not well maintained, seating arrangements are not comfortable thereby causing body pains to commuters after the journey and bus terminals of the transport companies are often an eyesore.

Road transportation companies have a purpose of making valuable services available to its customers, and by so doing make profit and also ensure sustainability. Before this millennium Nigerian road transportation industry tended to be a demand driven market. Presently though with the influx of entrants into the industry, rivalry between these companies has turned out to be fierce. In order for the organizations to have competitive edge, there is need for them to spot the needs and expectations of their commuters and strike an alignment between their customers' perceived expectations in terms of the services provided and the actual services delivered to them, which is the crux of commuter care management. The transport firms now seem to have a tougher obligation to satisfy their commuters in order to make them remain loyal to the firm and also refer others to the firm for sustainability as now there are a lot of options commuters can choose from.

The commuter care management dimensions for this study are: terminal waiting time and employee attitude to commuters. Sustainability of the firms is measured by referrals by and retention of commuters. This study seeks to investigate the influence of commuter care management on road transport firms' sustainability in the South South region of Nigeria.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Commuters have a wide range of choice in the transportation industry to select from according to their taste, experiences and expectations. Therefore, management of transportation companies has a serious task of continually offering services to enhance their commuters' satisfaction if they are to have patronage. Some commonly identified problems or issues associated with the management of transport companies which often results to commuter dissatisfaction are : waiting for a long period of time by commuters before taking off from the terminal, lack of expected care and attention to commuters, bus driver and conductor bad attitude towards commuters, poor environmental hygiene of the transport company's terminal, poor maintenance of the vehicles' interiors and exterior and bad in-transit experience such as being left stranded by the transport firm when a vehicle breaks down.The focus of this study is to determine the influence of commuter care management on road transport firms' sustainability.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Customer Service or Commuter Care

Road transportation is part of the daily schedule of many persons individuals and the key means of transportation in Nigeria (Tran and Kleiner, 2005). It is very important for the survival of a modern society (Ali, 2010). This is so because people engage in vehicular movements from one place to another for a number of purposes such as, education, business, social engagements, pleasure and tourism.

One of the reasons why many commuters are putting across complaints against the management of the transport companies is the perceived poor commuter care. No one articulated this better than Hirmukhe (2012) argued that, the demands of commuters are rising daily. Commuter expectations are more than services and processes offered. Hlabiso and Mugozhi (2016), postulated that poor commuter care is common among transport companies and leads to low customer satisfaction and the many complaints against the industry. Abdullar and Talip (2013) concord with this stand by listing a variety of complaints such as not arriving on time, unfair transport fares, uncomfortable seats, poor on-board experience, overloading, unsatisfactory commuter care, poor vehicle maintenance and regular vehicular breakdowns. The newspapers are rife with stories of the appalling experiences of commuters. These shortcomings lead to low commuter satisfaction in the industry. Kuveya (2004) also adumbrated that customer complaints showcase poor customer care in the industry. These complaints must be strategically handled and commuter care enhanced.

2.2. Commuter Care and Road Transport Firm Sustainability

Commuter care or customer care are those strategies which can be employed by management of the transport companies to attract and retain customers. This Kuveya (2004) opined to be the matching up of commuter expectations and commuter experiences. Surprisingly, there appears to be absence of zeal in transport company managers to tackle these complaints. This has therefore culminated in the tendency for commuters to continually shop for the transport firm to patronise. Zairi (2000), explained that it is obvious that many businesses have in a bid to advance become customer focussed by adopting customer care strategies.

The essence of concerted customer care is customer retention and loyalty. Customer care differentiates (Macaulay and Cook, 1995). According to Holloway and Mobbs (1994) customer care is a key factor in developing competitive advantage. The thrust of customer care is the achievement of sustainable customer satisfaction. Macdonald (1995), referred to this when he opined that business success and sustainability depends on strategies and processes that are customer focussed. This is possible when customer satisfaction drives all activities, services or products, thus aiding profit making and firm sustainability (Kuveya, 2004). A firm is successful when it can boast of sustainability, in other words when it is a going concern.

A customer focused transport company will be cognizant of the fact that improving service quality will bring in more patronage (Eboli and Mazzulla, 2007). This study concentrated on two aspects of commuter care management namely waiting time and employee attitude to commuters.

2.3. Waiting Time and Commuter Referrals

Waiting time is referred to as the actual period of time a commuter spends in the park before the take off time. For this study, it is the period of time from when a commuter arrives at the terminal financially committed and ready

to travel and the time at which the vehicle commences the journey. On the other hand, commuter referral is the positive commendations of a transport firm by a commuter to other prospective commuters.

Most commuters are not happy or comfortable when they spend a long time in the parks waiting for the vehicle to get filled up and for the loaders to load all luggage before leaving for their respective destinations. Commuters before leaving their homes have a target relating to time. Therefore, if they spend more time in the park than the expected time, they become discouraged and dissatisfied. But in the reverse scenario where they take off in due time or before the expected time, such commuter would be satisfied with the transport company in terms of the waiting time and this can make such commuter to come again and/or directly or indirectly advertise the transport company to other travellers, thus enhancing commuter retention and referrals.

In the event that commuters become fulfilled with the waiting time, they will progressively be fulfilled with the transportation organization (Naik *et al.*, 2010). Regardless of the fact that estimating the waiting time may be problematic, it can be measured in terms of commuter's satisfaction. Both want and perspective on client has a noteworthy influence in consumer referrals (Afzal *et al.*, 2013). A commuter makes decision about execution of patronage as regards waiting time based on his observation, perspective and experience. An aspect of the waiting time is the waiting area. The quality and comfort of the waiting environment helps to curb the worries of a commuter (Baird and Collias, 2014). Monroe (2012), contended that commuter desires and fulfilment have a connection with waiting time fulfilment. Clients will in general show different responses when they visit the transportation organization. Walter *et al.* (2010), expressed in their investigation that in order for road transportation companies to attract more customers, the management of transportation companies should endeavour to reduce the waiting time of commuters or better still, have a fixed departure time frame just as it is done in the aviation industry.

Mittal (2016), studied the impact of waiting time on customer satisfaction in India. The objective of the study were two-fold, first, to ascertain the determinants of overall waiting time, in addition to know the influence of waiting time on customer satisfaction. A survey method was used to elicit data from respondents which was later analyzed through the use of correlation analyses and multiple regression analyses. The results from the study showed that waiting time determinants such as waiting time to receive ticket, waiting time for other passengers to arrive, waiting time comfort, waiting time before seating in the vehicle were all significant predicators of customer satisfaction while overall satisfaction with waiting time and seating comfort were not significant predicators of customer satisfaction. Mittal (2016) concluded that the study proves that waiting time of customers is a vital aspect of customer satisfaction in the transportation industry therefore, operators in the service industries should as a matter of importance take the issue of waiting time seriously if they are to improve customer satisfaction in terms of loyalty, referrals, turnover and retention.

Polas *et al.* (2018), studied the influence of waiting time on customers' satisfaction in transport firms, Malaysia. The aim of the study was to determine the effect of waiting time on customer satisfaction. A survey research method was used to get data from respondents. 165 customers were randomly selected at the transport firm in other to investigate the bond amidst waiting time and customer satisfaction. The data collected were questioned with correlation analyses statistical tool. Findings from the research showed a positive significant relationship amidst waiting time and customer satisfaction in the transportation firm. Therefore, the study concluded waiting time has major inherent impression on customer satisfaction in the transport industry.

Employee attitudes in transportation business

Employees' attitude explain the interpersonal interactions among commuters the vehicle drivers, conductors and loaders (Goddard, 2016). Attitudes are the tendency to react favourably or unfavourably to an object, person, institution, or event (Ajzen, 2005). In the context of this study, we see employee attitude as the behaviour that employees that is, drivers, conductors and loaders exhibits towards the commuters prior to take off and while on transit. Attitudes can be decomposed into explicit and implicit elements, both different but related (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). Implicit attitudes indicate an individual's expectation or evaluation of another individual's circumstances based on former experiences, stereotypes, or other influencing evaluation (Greenwald and Banaji, 1995). While, explicit attitudes are self reporting (Ajzen, 2005). According to Banaji and Greenwald (2013) though people believe they have egalitarian implicit biases but people truly want to believe they are egalitarian, but research shows that even people with explicit egalitarian beliefs still showcase implicit biases and biased behaviour. Individuals have stereotypes which show up in behaviour in transit as in other places, including the social interactions between bus operators and their commuters (Kahn and Davies, 2011).

There are some attitudes showcased by bus drivers of transportation firms which include among others over speeding, smoking, operating phones or making and receiving calls while driving and unfriendliness to commuters on board. Attitudes in respect of transportation, especially the ones that influence commuter satisfaction have become current research subject matter (Heinen, 2016).

The Sunday Mail of 27th April 2014 reported Nyathi observed that Kombi drivers have made Harare a true maze of passages where commuters are picked indiscriminately. Unfortunately this attitude has been observed on Nigerian roads also. Asiyanbola (2007), Aderamo (2010), Ashiedu in Nwachukwu (2014) concurred when they pointed out recurring cosmopolitan transport problems as drivers' attitude before and while on transit, prolonged waiting times for buses, traffic jam and polluted environment.

Khurshid *et al.* (2012), are of the persuasion that in the bid to get as many clients as possible, drivers become reckless, so accidents happen which undermine commuters feeling of safety. Furthermore they added that infrastructures such as terminals are unclean as litter, sputum and urine are carelessly and openly discarded, producing a stench which makes commuters waiting period unpleasant. Nwachukwu (2014), in his contribution opined that most transport vehicles being minibuses do not have sufficient legroom or ceiling heights for standing.

Another notable cause of lack of customer satisfaction mostly is the lack of a trailer for commuters' luggage. So, the commuter may have to carry his things on his laps in transit or it is stuffed beneath seats further reducing legroom. In addition buses with seats built for three commuters are often occupied by four or more. Also, reliability is betrayed when road transport vehicles drivers because of lack of passengers fail to complete the journey but compulsorily move their commuters to other buses while in transit.

In summary, these attitudes portrayed by drivers of the transportation firms can either retain or pursue existing commuters. When attitudes or behaviours are positive to a commuter, such commuter is likely to stay and keep patronizing the company, on the other hand, when bus drivers portrays negative attitude that endangers, discourages or makes a commuter feel dissatisfied, there is a tendency that such commuter will leave and stop patronizing such transportation company. That is why often times, people say," I can never go on a journey again with that transport company."

3. Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored theoretically on the RATER theory as well as the Planned Behaviour theory.

3.1. The Rater Model Theory

This model emanated from service management. Using factor analysis the author initially listed ten influencers of service quality, which were thereafter reduced to five and later made popular through the mnemonic aid as the Rater Model. The acronym stands for:

Responsiveness - readiness to assist and respond to needs of customer

Assurance – the power/ skill/knowledge of personnel to stimulate trust and confidence

Tangibles – infrastructures, machinery, workers appearance.

Empathy - the degree of care and customised service rendered.

Reliability – dependability and accuracy of services (Tanghe, 2012).

This model evolved from the serviqual model and therefore can be used in analysing challenge of commuter care management in producing commuter satisfaction in transportation firms. Includable in the service gaps bedevilling road transport firms are: long waiting periods, lack of empathy reflected as lack of expected care and attention to commuters, employees' attitude that does not inspire assurance, the poor conditions of road transport companies' terminus and vehicles, dissatisfying on-board experience amongst others. The ability of operators of road transportation firms to respond, assure, provide appropriate (tangibles) facilities, empathise and be reliable (RATER) are measures of the commuter care management of such firms.

3.2. The Theory of Planned Behaviour by (Ajzen, 1985)

This theory has its roots in the Theory of Reasoned Action. Recently this is a major social psychology theory on the place of attitudes and intentions in purposeful and conscious behaviours that have been used in studying travel behaviour (Rowe *et al.*, 2016). The Theory of Planned Behaviour is composed of an individual's attitude, their observed behavioural control, as well as the subjective norms of society which together influence the individual's intention, determining the ultimate behaviour. The theory has been applied in studies of choice of mode of transportation (Collum and Daigle, 2015; Gardner and Abraham, 2008), and driver's speed and risk-taking (Musselwhite *et al.*, 2014).

Drawing from the Theory of Planned Behaviour, attitudes portrayed by drivers of the transportation firms can either retain or pursue existing commuters. When attitudes or behaviours are positive to a commuter, such commuter is likely to stay and keep patronizing the company, on the other hand, when bus drivers portrays negative attitude that endangers, discourages or makes a commuter feel dissatisfied, there is a tendency that such commuter will leave and stop patronizing such transportation company.

James (2010), postulated that one satisfied customer tells his or her feelings regarding services enjoyed to five other customers while one dissatisfied customer tells his or her feelings and experiences to ten other customers and that will create a bad impression among existing as well as new customers about the transportation company. In other words this determines the planned behaviour of commuters. That is to say, when a transportation company meet or render services that are above the expectation of their customers, one customer can be multiplied by referrals to many thereby increasing the customer base of the transportation company, while on the other hand, if the management of the transportation company performs or delivers below their customer expectation, one existing customer can leave with ten other persons which in turn will reduce the customer retention and referral of the transportation company.

4. Research Questions and Hypotheses

The questions this study seeks to answer are:

1. Does waiting time significantly influence commuter referrals in road transportation firms?
2. Does employee attitude significantly affect commuter retention in road transportation firms?

The null hypotheses to be tested are stated below:

Ho_1: Waiting time does not significantly influence commuter referrals in road transportation firms.

Ho_2: Employee's attitude does not significantly affect commuter retention in road transportation firms.

5. Methodology

The research design used was survey research design. The survey is Cross-sectional that is, the respondents were the commuters of PMT, GIG and GAM. Namely in Calabar capital of Cross River State where Peace Mass Transit head office is situated, Warri in Delta State where G. Agofure Motors has its headquarters and Benin capital of Edo State where the headquarters of God is Good Motors is sited. These transport companies were chosen because they are major transport firms known for providing service in this region and because they have terminals in over half of the six states in the region.

The population of registered transport companies that plies the region was twelve. The respondent population for the study is unknown but included PMT, GIG and GAM commuters that is passengers boarding or travelling with the selected transport companies. The sample size given the unknown total population of the commuters is determined with the Topman formula. The formula is: $n= Z2pq/e^2$

Where n= sample size required

Z= the value of Z-score associated with the degree of confidence selected

p= probability of positive response

q= probability of negative response

e= the error margin

To achieve this, a pilot survey was done at first where a random sample of ninety commuters was interviewed. Sixty-five of them agreed that they patronize at least one of the three transport companies while twenty-five of them said otherwise. Therefore, the proportion of those who patronize at least one of the transport companies is 65:90 (here p=65/90) whereas the proportion of commuters that don't patronize any of the transport company is 25:90 (i.e. q=25/90). Using this proportion and Topman's formula, the sample size was calculated thus: $n = Z2pq/e^2$

Where,

Z= 1.96 (value from Z-score table at 90% degree of confidence)

p = 65/90 = 0.7

q = 25/90 = 0.3

e = 5%; $e^2 = 0.0025$

n = (1.96)2 *0.7*0.3/0.0025

= 3.92*0.7*0.3/0.0025

= 0.8232/0.0025 = 329

The breakdown of the sample size of commuters for each of the three (3) companies studied was done using the non-proportional sampling technique. So, 110 copies of questionnaire were distributed to the commuters of PMT and GIG each. GAM sample size was 109, in total 329 copies of questionnaire were administered. The selection of respondents was by random sampling. The questionnaire was administered to a respondent randomly once they purchased a ticket to travel with any of the transport companies being studied.

The questionnaire as designed had twofold sections: A and B. Section A elicited bio data information while Section B had important questions focused on the research questions, hypotheses and the objectives of the study. The questions were styled using Likert like five-point scale format. Answers to the questions were Strongly Agree (SA), Agree(A), Undecided(U), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Model equation for the first hypothesis was:

$$CR= f (WT)..... (1)$$

The equation format was;

$$CR = b_0 + b_1WT + U_t..... (2)$$

Where,

CR = Customer referrals, WT = Waiting time, b_0 = constant term and U_t = error term

Equation for the second hypothesis was

$$CT = f (EA)…….....…….(3)$$

The equation format is;

$$CT = b_0 + b_1EA + U_t.....…….(4)$$

Where

CT= Customer retention, EA = Employees' attitude, b_0 = constant term and U_t = error term

6. Results and Discussion

In analysing Hypothesis one using the equation in the model above WT (waiting time) was regressed on CR (commuter referrals). Thus from a careful examination of the regression results and related statistics as illustrated in Table 1 the following facts emerged; the coefficient of the constant term is 3.65 and the associated t-value is 15.95. The constant term is significant at 5 percent level, implying that holding the independent variable constant, the dependent variable will increase by 3.65 percent, all things being equal. The regression coefficient of WT (waiting time) carries a positive sign and the t- value is justifiable at 5 percent level of significance. This implies that a 1 percent change in waiting time will instigate a 0.13percent increase in commuter referrals. This is confirmed by the P-value of the t-statistic for WT, which is 0.0049. This implies that waiting time influence commuter referrals in the selected transportation companies. The a priori test is in line with the findings that waiting time influence commuter referrals in transportation firms across the country. The R^2 of 0.615 is instructive and indicates a good fit for the

model. Simply put, about 61 percent of the total variation in commuter referrals (CR) is accounted for by waiting time (WT) in the estimated model, leaving about 39 for those variables not captured in the model.

The value of Durbin Watson (DW) statistic is 2.159. The tabulated DW at 5 level of significance using 322 observations indicated that lower limit of Durbin Watson statistic is 1.758 while the upper limit is 1.779. The calculated value (DW) = 2.159 is greater than the upper limit (Du) = 1.779, hence, there is no proof of auto-correlation in the estimated model.

Decision: The null hypothesis (Ho_1) is declined while the alternate hypothesis (Ha_1) is accepted. This implies that waiting time significantly influences commuter referrals. Thus, waiting time is a major predictor of or significantly explains commuter referrals.

Table-1. Regression analysis of waiting time and commuter referrals in the selected road transportation companies in the South-South region of Nigeria.
Dependent variable: Commuter referrals (CR)
Independent variable: Waiting time (WT)

Dependent variable: CR				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CR	3.653165	0.228983	15.95386	0.0000
WT	0.129731	0.053067	2.444651	0.0049
R-squared	0.615131	Mean dependent var		4.204604
Adjusted R-squared	0.582599	S.D. dependent var		0.783862
F-statistic	15.97631	Durbin-Watson stat		2.159927
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000942			

Source: Statistical result from E-views 9.

From the results of the regression, it was found that waiting time significantly influence commuter referrals in the selected road transportation firms. The finding is equally in tandem with the views of Mittal (2016) who asserts that waiting time determinants such as waiting time to receive ticket, waiting time for other passengers do influence customer referrals. In the Nigerian setting time is often wasted by commuters in waiting to depart, there is a general lack of appreciation of the value of time coupled with lack of appreciation of the sovereignty of customers. Again the lack of will to litigate for damages gives the transport companies the impetus not to sit up and ensure maximal time management. Competition is presently the main factor brokering change in waiting time management by these firms to ensure commuters are so satisfied that they bring in new commuters.

In the analysis of Hypothesis two, the equation in the second model regressed employees' attitude (EA) on commuter retention (CT) as shown in Table 2. The coefficient of the constant term is 3.738 and the associated t-value is 15.896. The constant term is statistically significant at 5 per cent level, implying that holding the other variable constant, the dependent variable (commuter retention) will increase by 3.738 per cent. The regression coefficient of employees' attitude (EA) carries a positive sign and the t-value is statistically significant at 5% level of significance. This implies that a 1 percent change in employees' attitude will instigate an increase of 0.105 per cent change in commuter retention. This is confirmed by the P-value of the t-statistic for EA, which is 0.0539. This implies that employees' attitude influence commuter retention in the selected transportation companies. The a priori test is in line with the finding that employees' attitude influence commuter retention in transportation companies across the country. The R^2 of 0.6051 is instructive and indicates a good fit for the model. Simply put, about 61 per cent of the total variation in commuter retention (CT) is accounted for by employees' attitude (EA) in the estimated model.

The value of Durbin Watson (DW) statistic is 2.231. The tabulated DW at 5 per cent level of significance using 322 observations indicated that lower limit of Durbin Watson statistic is 1.75 while the upper limit is 1.77. The calculated value (DW) = 2.231 is greater than the upper limit (Du) = 1.77, hence there is no evidence of autocorrelation in the estimated model.

Decision: The null hypothesis (Ho) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. This implies that employee's attitude significantly influences customer retention. Thus, employees' attitude is a significant predictor of or significantly explains customer retention.

Table-2. Regression analysis on employee s' attitude and commuter retention in the selected road transportation companies in the South-South region of Nigeria
Dependent variable: Commuter retention (CT)
Independent variable: Employees' attitude (EA)

Dependent Variable: CT				
Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
CT	3.738758	0.235192	15.89661	0.0000
EA	0.105382	0.054506	1.933406	0.0539
R-squared	0.609518	Mean dependent var		4.186701
Adjusted R-squared	0.586972	S.D. dependent var		0.802833
F-statistic	13.73808	Durbin-Watson stat		2.231363
Prob (F-statistic)	0.000012			

Source: Statistical result from E-views 9.

In the second hypothesis tested, it was found that employees' attitude significantly affects commuter retention in the selected road transportation companies in the south southern part of Nigeria. This finding is in consonance with the views of Goddard (2016) who argued that attitudes and behaviours exhibited by bus drivers such as over speeding, use of phone while on transit, smoking or drinking while driving, not having a good rapport with commuters on board while on transit, not being polite to commuters, unfriendliness among others all influence customer satisfaction. The findings are also supported by Oladipo (2018) who explained that behaviours portrayed by bus drivers influence commuter satisfaction. Therefore, the researcher concluded that training and proper orientation should be given to the bus drivers in order to educate them on ways to relate with commuters on board while on transit in order to keep and retain their customers instead of them leaving the transport company. This shows that the attitudes and behaviours exhibited by employees of the transport firms have a significant influence on customer retention. The result gotten from the analysis indicates that employee attitude highly affects customer retention positively. In addition to this, some responses showed that commuters are not fully satisfied with the manner in which employees of the transport firms behaves and this can make such commuter not to retain his or her patronage. Behaviours such as drivers not abiding by speed limits thereby endangering the lives and properties of commuters, acting in an unfriendly manner to commuters, not being polite in dealings with commuters and when drivers do not abide by driving rules when driving would discourage commuters, therefore, such acts should not be encouraged.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the outcome of the analysis of data in this study, in view of the hypotheses tested, it can be concluded that commuter referrals can be influenced by waiting time. Second conclusion emanating from the second hypothesis tested is that employees' attitude influences commuter retention.

Recommendations

This study recommends that the management of road transport firms should ensure that commuters do not wait for too long before the take off time, they should make sure vehicles are serviced, fuelled and take off as at when scheduled. Furthermore the problem associated with waiting time can be curbed by having and keeping a fixed time frame for departure. The waiting area should be kept clean and the waiting time entertaining.

Preliminary training and refresher training of the employees -drivers, conductors, loaders, ticket sellers and any other employees that attend to commuters on how to give quick responses to commuter issues, keep transit vehicles tidy, show courtesy and consideration to commuters must be mounted at all times. Provisions should be made for forwarding complaints and erring employees promptly, adequately, appropriately punished as deterrent. Employees should be made to wear name tags for easy identification by commuters and quick bonding.

References

Abdullar, A. A. and Talip, R. M. (2013). Rapidkl bus service in city centre, kuala lumpur, malaysia: An epitome of good service? *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 3(4): 333.

Aderamo, A. J. (2010). Transport in Nigeria: The case of Kwara State. *African Economic and Business Review*, 8(1): 19-40.

Afzal, S., Bojesen, S. E. and Nordestgaard, B. G. (2013). Low 25-hydroxyvitamin D and risk of type 2 diabetes: a prospective cohort study and metaanalysis. *Clinical Chemistry*, 59(2): 381-91.

Ajzen, I. (1985). *From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behaviour. In J. Kuhl & J. Beckmann (Eds.), Action control: From cognition to behaviour. Berlin, Heidelber.* Springer-Verlag: New York. 11-39.

Ajzen, I. (2005). *Attitudes, personality, and behavior (2nd ed.). Maidenhead, Berkshire, England.* Open University Press: New York.

Ali, A. N. (2010). An assessment of the quality of intra-urban bus services in the city of Enugu, Enugu State, Nigeria. *Journal of Theoretical and Empirical Research in Urban Management*, 6(15): 1-57.

Asiyanbola, R. A., 2007. "Intra-urban transportation, gender and psychological distress in developing countries: Nigeria." In *Paper presented at PRIPODE Workshop on Urban Population, Development and Environment Dynamics in Developing Countries, June 11–13 Nariobi, Kenya.*

Baird, D. G. and Collias, D. I. (2014). *Polymer processing: principles and design.* John Wiley and Sons: New York.

Banaji, M. R. and Greenwald, A. G. (2013). *Blindspot: Hidden biases of good people.* Delacorte Press: New York.

Collum, K. K. and Daigle, J. J. (2015). Combining attitude theory and segmentation analysis to understand travel mode choice at a national park. *Journal of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism*, 9: 17–25. Available: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jort.2015.03.003

Eboli, L. and Mazzulla, G. (2007). Service quality attributes affecting customer satisfaction for bus transit. *Journal of Public Transportation*, 10(3): 21-34.

Gardner, B. and Abraham, C. (2008). Psychological correlates of car use: A meta-analysis. Transportation Research Part F. *Traffic Psychology and Behaviour*, 11: 300-11. Available: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2008.01.004. Copus ID: 144217698

Goddard, T. (2016). *Theorizing bicycle justice using social psychology Examining the intersection of mode and race with the conceptual model of roadway interactions. In Bicycle justice and urban transformation: biking for all?*: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group: London, New York.

Greenwald, A. G. and Banaji, M. R. (1995). Implicit social cognition: attitudes, self-esteem, and stereotypes. *Psychological Review,* 102(1): 4–27.

Heinen, E. (2016). Identity and travel behaviour: A cross-sectional study on commute mode choice and intention to change. Transportation Research Part F. *Traffic Psychology and Behaviour,* 43: 238–53. Available: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trf.2016.10.016

Hirmukhe, J. (2012). Measuring internal customers' perception on service quality using servqual in administrative services. *International Journal of Scientific and Research,* 2(3): 45-54.

Hlabiso, G. and Mugozhi, F. (2016). Customer satisfaction and commuter transport services aquandary: A Case Study of Zimbabwe Commuter Omnibus Transport Services. *Greener Journal of Business and Management,* 6(2): 057-65. Available: http://doi.org/10.15580/GJBMS.2016.2.072016121

Holloway, B. and Mobbs, D. (1994). Customer focus groups: Developments in health care. *The TQM Magazine,* 6(2): 13–17.

James, W. (2010). Public transport policy implementation in South Africa. *Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management,* 8(1): 124-34.

Kahn, K. B. and Davies, P. G. (2011). Differentially dangerous? Phenotypic racial stereotypicality increases implicit bias among ingroup and outgroup members. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations,* 14(4): 569–80.

Khurshid, R., Naeem, H., Ejaz, S., Mukhtar, F. and Batool, T. (2012). Service quality and customer satisfaction in public transport sector of Pakistan: an empirical study. *International Journal of Economics and Management Sciences,* 1(9): 24-30.

Kuveya, T. (2004). *Public relations and customer care.* Zimbabwe Open University: Harare.

Macaulay, S. and Cook, S. (1995). The implications of customer service initiatives for human resources professionals. *Training for Quality,* 3(1): 23-28.

Macdonald, J. (1995). Customer care is not good enough. *The TQM Magazine,* 7(4): 5–8.

Mittal, A. (2016). The influence of waiting time on customer loyalty towards multi-stage services. *Journal of Consumer Research,* 2(1): 322-40.

Monroe, N. (2012). Multiple identities and travel mode choice for regular journeys. Transportation Research Part F. *Traffic Psychology and Behaviour,* 15(5): 514–24.

Musselwhite, C., Avineri, E. and Susilo, Y. O. (2014). Legitimising risk taking: Articulating dangerous behaviour on the road. *Transportation Planning and Technology,* 37(1): 62–82. Available: https://doi.org/10.1080/03081060.2013.844905

Naik, A., Gantasala, F. and Prabhakar, R. M. (2010). Service quality in the public service. *International Journal of Management and Marketing Research, Mauritius,* 3(1): 34-41.

Nwachukwu, A. A. (2014). Assessment of passenger satisfaction with intra-city public bus transport services in Abuja, Nigeria. *Journal of Public Transportation,* 17(1): 99-119.

Oladipo, A. (2018). Analysis of customer satisfaction in public transport in Ibadan, Oyo state: A study of Ajumose Mass Transit. *Journal of Public Transportation,* 17(1): 85-98.

Polas, M., Rahman, M. and Hayash, A. (2018). The impact of waiting time towards customer s' satisfaction in fast food establishments: Evidence from Bangladesh. *Journal of Business and Management,* 20(5): 11-21.

Rowe, R., Andrews, E., Harris, P. R., Armitage, C. J., McKenna, F. P. and Norman, P. (2016). Identifying beliefs underlying pre-drivers' intentions to take risks: An application of the Theory of Planned Behaviour. *AccidentAnalysis and Prevention,* 89: 49–56. Available: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2015.12.024

Tanghe, J., 2012. "The rebirth of the SERVQUAL gaps model in service design." In *SerDes, 2012 Conference Proceedings, the 3rd Service Design and Service Innovation Conference, 8-10 February, Espoo, Finland (No. 067) Linkoping University Electronic Press.* pp. 273-75.

Tran, T. and Kleiner, H. B. (2005). Managing for excellence in public transportation. *Manage. Res. News,* 28: 154-63.

Walter, U., Edvardsson, B. and Öström, Å. (2010). Drivers of customers' service experiences, a study in the restaurant industry. *Managing Service Quality,* 1(2): 20-25.

Zairi, M. (2000). Managing customer dissatisfaction through effective complaint management systems. *The TQM Magazine,* 12(5): 331-35.