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THE BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT OF BUS RAPID TRANSIT DRIVERS' TRAINING IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined the impact of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) drivers' training on commuters and other road users. Fifty (50) commuters and fifty (50) drivers were selected to participate in the study and they were selected from about seven (7) bus stops along the CMS to Ikorodu BRT corridor for two days- 3rd and 4th of December 2021 at the peak periods. It was confirmed that BRT bus drivers were always trained quite often to tackle stress on the job, to relate with commuters politely even while they are under pressure and to also remain calm in unpleasant situation they may find themselves, either due to the stress that other road users put them into especially through the actions of unauthorized bus drivers entering into the BRT lanes and causing hindrance of the flow of traffic on the BRT special lanes. It was also revealed that the passengers also can cause a state of distress for the bus drivers, thereby increasing their tendency of being aggressive on both the passengers and other road users. It was therefore recommended that traffic officers should be stationed on the special BRT lanes to ensure that there is continuous traffic flow on the special BRT lanes, the training of BRT drivers by the critical stakeholders involved should be made mandatory and well publicised and finally that drivers should work on themselves and maintain perfect composure at all times.

Keywords: BRT drivers training, Behavioural Impact, Commuters, Stress Management

1. Introduction

Globally, the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system has been reported to be one of the most popular and efficient mode of transportation adopted by urban cities with a population of medium to large size (Jiang, Zeras and Mehndiratta, 2012). The BRT system was set up to compliment other transport modes in moving passengers from one point to the other. The BRT system was conceived in the city of Chicago in 1937 (Maeso-Gonzalez, and Perez-Ceron., 2014). Later on, special bus lanes or segregated lanes were made manifest in 1966 and in 1972 in St. Louis (USA) and in Lima (Peru) respectively. Buses driving on these special

lanes were high capacity vehicles that provided mass transit services to passengers in cities with high population to enable lesser cost and travel time. The benefit of less travel time associated with these buses increased their popularity (Kathuria, 2016). Thus, other cities such as Sao Paulo, New York, Bogota, Paris, Lagos and so on implemented the BRT system.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) was implemented during the late 20th century and appeared as a major urban transportation method in the first decade of the 21st century (Deng and Nelson, 2011). The Bus Rapid Transit System is a system that can increase transit ridership in both developing and developed



countries of the world, it incorporates features such as running ways, vehicles, stations, fare collection systems, operations control systems, intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and passenger's information systems (Wirasinghe et al. 2013; Levinson et al. 2002), and the driver is associated with most of them.

African's first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) scheme began operations on March 17, 2008, in Lagos, Nigeria called "BRT-Lite", it is a form of the BRT system, but it is not of the highest specification like the TransMilenio in Bogota or the Brisbane South East Busway, both of which cost about \$6 million per kilometer. This new form of the BRT scheme is aimed at delivering a transport system that will meet the needs of local users, while improving citizens' quality of life, economic efficiency, and safety within a clearly defined budget.

The Bus Rapid System in Lagos State, Nigeria is regulated by LAMATA and currently operated by Primero Transport Services. (Ehidiemen, 2015). They operate on twenty-six routes and recently lowered fares from along Ikorodu to TBS corridor because of the present realities (Oladele, 2021). The BRT also recently activated digital electronic payment system using access control system too which was launched by the former State Governor of Lagos State.

This Bus Rapid Transit System was designed to transport persons to their places of work conveniently at the shortest possible time, eliminating all unnecessary delays on the road; and this agenda is being achieved through creation of special lanes for the BRT buses called "BRT lanes"; this does not mean

that the BRT buses do not share lanes with other buses or vehicles though. This proper management of the BRT buses is commendable in a society like ours facing several challenges and at the same time, we must be aware that BRT buses still faces some problems and one of such problem is the behavior of its bus drivers towards other road users.

Lagos traffic is peculiar and unique. It is characterized by long queue of vehicles. It is not uncommon to spend hours in traffic on a typical day in Lagos. This situation hits harder on road users who depend on mass transportation operated by vehicles that could be held in traffic for hours before arriving at bus stops. Thus, passengers at bus stops wait for long hours to board buses to their destinations. This situation can be frustrating and injurious to health. Scenarios where passengers rush for seats on available buses could be motivated by this situation. Thus, this ugly picture may have necessitated the Lagos State government to seek and provide better alternatives for commuters in Lagos State.

Recklessness among the BRT bus drivers have reportedly been an issue in recent times, as it was observed that the drivers have no regard for the traffic laws as they always feel threatened by unauthorized vehicles entering into their lanes, these unauthorized buses may peradventure breakdown or be involved in a crash thereby causing delay and frustrating the major objective of constructing special lanes for the smooth operation of the bus rapid transit scheme.

The following questions were then asked to guide this study:



1. Are the BRT bus drivers trained to withstand stress and unpleasant situations that may be a cause by other road users or unauthorized buses plying the BRT lanes?
2. Are they exhibiting positive trait in managing crisis that may be caused by other road users?
3. What is the perception of commuters on the bus drivers?

2. Methodology

This research is a survey type which utilized both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Data were sourced from both primary and secondary sources in order to identify gap in research and acquire the necessary data for research analysis. Furthermore, the study utilized the combination of purposeful, random sampling techniques. These techniques were adopted to determine if the training given to

2.1 Study Area

The study area for this research or what we can also refer to as the observation site for this study was CMS Bus-Stop on Lagos Island, Bariga Local Government Area in Lagos through to Fadeyi, and Ketu all the way to Ikorodu Garage. It is an expressway way that runs on a 24.5 kilometer stretch of 4 lanes on either way. Ikorodu road crosses other major expressways with great relevance to connectivity and mobility. Thus, Ikorodu road was considered by Lagos

the BRT bus drivers are impactful. The first stage of the data collection was that of the observation of drivers and commuters' behaviors, while the second stage was then dedicated for the interview of both the drivers and the commuters at the different bus stations. The field survey was done between the 3rd and 4th of December, 2021. The study area was visited at the peak hours, specifically between 6.00am-10am for these two days.

State as one of the first major roads for the construction of BRT lanes and bus/stops. This is because the road serves as a mop-up of passengers transiting from other major expressways such as Lagos/Ibadan expressway, Ikeja, Ojota, Apapa, Oworonshoki expressway. Also, due to the purpose of connectivity on Ikorodu road, road users usually experience traffic congestion along the road especially during the early morning rush hours and the evening rush hour period.

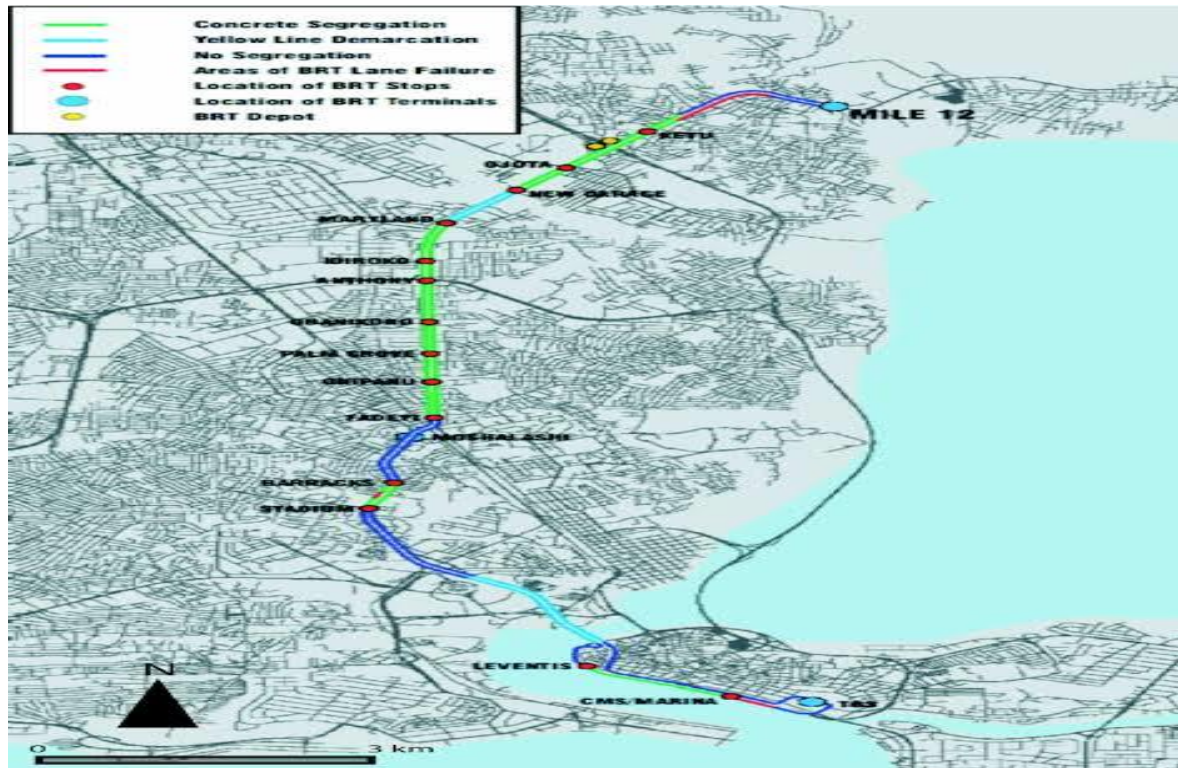


Fig 1. Study Area
Source: LAMATA, 2009

2.2 Data Collection

The participants of this study were majorly BRT bus drivers and the opinions of some commuters using the BRT transit scheme were also collected through interviews about their perception on BRT bus drivers' behaviors. The BRT bus drivers were asked questions relating to their training, their perception of other buses joining the BRT lanes, their perception about standing passengers on the BRT buses and also about their stress management level. The Researcher observed the BRT bus drivers who exhibited aggressiveness while driving and the situations that led to them being aggressive, the instrument for data collection were a notebook and a ball pen. Initially, the

researcher failed to disclose his objective to any of the drivers, he joined the bus as every normal commuter will do and began his observation, then at the end of each trip. The researcher then disclosed his objectives and purpose on the bus so as to further interview the drivers. 50 drivers were interviewed and 50 commuters also were interviewed due to contact time on each respondent, desire for accuracy and rich data collection during the process of collecting data for this study with the following distribution from the bus stops in the study area. The field survey was done between the 3rd and 4th of December, 2021. The study area was visited at the peak hours,



specifically between 6.00am-10am of these two days

Table 1. The study area bus stops and Number of respondents (Drivers and Commuters)

Bus-stops	Number of respondents (Drivers)	Number of respondents (Commuters)
CMS	5	7
Fadeyi	3	5
Barracks	2	3
Onipanu	3	7
Ketu	10	7
Mile 12`	12	6
Ikorodu	15	15
Total	50	50

Source: Fieldwork, December 2021

2.3 Data Processing and Analysis

The data was collected with the use of a structured questionnaire from the respondents, and was carefully entered into SPSS where the data was cleaned and checked for the quality. Descriptive statistics such as frequency count and percentage were

employed to answer the research questions. Images of BRT operations were taken at the BRT bus stops during the study to justify the researcher's discovery.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 BRT Bus Drivers' Training

Table 2 presents information on the regularity BRT drivers' training. It shows that 20 drivers which represent 37.7% of the total number of drivers that participated in this study reveals that their training holds once in a year, while the remaining 30 drivers representing 62.3% claim that their training holds twice in a year. The characteristics of bus driving and behaviors are very important for a reliable and safe

travel experience. Various elements can be used to evaluate bus driving behaviors, i.e speeding, delay time, and improper stopping (Chattaraj, A., Bansal, S., and Chandra, A., 2009). The essence of training BRT drivers is to always make the level of discipline high in terms of safety while driving. It was further investigated as to why the drivers are of different opinions on the questions asked and investigation revealed that the training



times are not consistent and while some drivers attend twice yearly when called upon some fail to do so because they have concluded within themselves that it should hold once. Existing researchers are in alignment with the above finding (Freeman et al., 2009; Parsons, Rollyson, and Reid,

2012) which shows that ineffective and inconsistent training provides drivers with less informative presentation coupled with inadequate opportunities to participate in activities led by an experienced behavior coach and for impossibility of getting best result in a skill of behavior training.

Table 2. Responses of the drivers on how often they have their training per year.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Once	20	37.7	40.0	40.0
Twice	30	62.3	60.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	
Total	50	100.0		

Source: Fieldwork December 2021

In addition, Table 3 shows the responses of the BRT bus drivers on some key important issues as concerning their training and also their condition of work. It shows the opinion of the drivers about the training and its importance on day - to - day activities on the job. On the importance of the training, majority (91%) see their training as important and very impactful, while minority (9%) doesn't see it as important. As regards the opinion of the drivers on stress management, majority (90 %) revealed that there are discussions on stress management while some (10%) didn't agree to this. So also, majority (60%) agreed that the training is impactful on their day-to-day activities in terms of behavior, while others (40%) didn't agree to this. In the aspect of ignoring the training impact due to some unpleasant

situation, most (72%) agreed to ignore the impact of training in this regard in the face of unpleasant situation or condition while on duty while few (28%) doesn't neglect the impact of the training in the face of unpleasant situation or condition. On the response on how the drivers feel when their colleague(s) is being maltreated on the road, some (44%) feels it is not their business to interfere or intervene in any maltreatment meted at their colleagues while (56%) was completely against the act of any maltreatment meted at their colleague(s). It can be concluded that majority of the drivers align with the training objectives and its impact and they appreciate the aims and objectives of the training.



Table 3. Frequency Distribution on the Drivers Opinion concerning their training and day to day activities

Items	Number of Drivers (Yes)	Number of Drivers (No)	Percentage of Drivers (Yes)	Percentage of Drivers (No)
Is attendance at the training important?	43	7	91%	9%
Are there discussion on stress management at the Training?	45	5	90%	10%
Would you agree that the training is impactful on your day to day activities on the job?	30	20	60%	40%
Would you say you tend to neglect what have been discussed in training due to some unpleasant condition of the road?	36	14	72%	28%
Do you feel good when you have someone maltreat fellow bus driver on the road?	22	28	44%	56%

Source: Fieldwork, December 2021

3.3 Commuters perception on BRT drivers

Table 4 shows the opinion of the commuters on the BRT bus drivers. Many (56%) of them see the bus drivers as being reckless and aggressive. From Table 4, it can also be seen that a reasonable number of the commuters (44%) also see the drivers as not been aggressive and not reckless, this opinion shared by the commuters was based on their personal experience since they have been using the scheme on what they perceive to be aggressive or not. It was also revealed that majority (56%) of the commuters affirmed

that the BRT drivers don't build good relationship with the commuters in terms of mutual respect, while some (44%) believe that the BRT drivers have mutual respect for commuters that ply this corridor. Table 4 again revealed that the BRT don't put the standing passengers into consideration, some (44%) of the commuters agreed to this while most (56%) of the commuters does not see the drivers of BRT putting to consideration the standing passengers. Also, the drivers' aggressive actions were revealed as some



(40%) of the commuters do see the drivers as being aggressive while working and Majority (60%) didn't see the driver as being aggressive.

Lastly, as indicated on Table 4, majority (58%) of the commuters do see the BRT drivers as always defending their actions whether they are right or wrong while some (48%) commuters do not subscribe to the fact that the drivers do defend their actions whenever it has been taken either rightly or wrongly. From the above analysis, it was revealed that the perception of the commuters to the BRT drivers is not a good one as there are all indications that the

commuters are not satisfied with the disposition and services of the BRT drivers. It was further observed that those passengers that are always getting a place to seat on the bus will always enjoy their ride compared to those who could not get a seat and thereby complaining about the drivers and the scheme in general. This agrees with the submission of Okuagbe, Adamu, Iyase and Owokolo (2015) about the challenges faced by commuters using the BRT in Lagos with an indication that commuters satisfaction in patronizing the BRT are mostly affected by security of the buses and behavior of the drivers as seen in their attitude.

Table 4. Frequency Distribution on Commuters perception on the Bus drivers

Items	Number of commuters (Yes)	Number of commuters (No)	Percentage of commuters (Yes)	Percentage of commuters (No)
BRT Drivers are Reckless	28	22	56%	44%
BRT drivers don't build good relationship with commuters	28	22	56%	44%
Drivers don't consider standing passengers	22	28	44%	56%
Drivers act aggressive towards other bus drivers	20	30	40%	60%
Drivers always want to defend their actions	29	21	58%	42%

Source: Fieldwork, December 2021

The images below indicate the operation of the BRT drivers in terms of recklessness and impatience, which is a major behavioral deficiency on their part, and the violation of

other transport vehicles on the BRT corridor, which is one of the causes of seamless traffic flow on the BRT corridor



Plate 1
BRT bus on their special lane



Plate 2
Standing passengers on the BRT bus



Plate 3
Yellow bus (Danfo) on the BRT Lane



Plate 4
BRT buses colliding with each other due to Impatient and recklessness

4. Conclusion

For this study, observations were made to identify the behaviors of the drivers of the BRT buses which made commuters see them as being aggressive, the commuters were interviewed and also the drivers were also interviewed. The result of the analysis revealed that it is due to the unpleasant

situations on the road most especially due to the non-compliance and behaviors of unauthorized buses on the BRT lanes that leads to the frustrations and aggressiveness of the BRT bus drivers.

5. Recommendations

It is highly recommended that the agency in charge of traffic enforcement should be consistent in ensuring effective compliance

to traffic rules and regulations that need to be done especially on the BRT corridor. Also, there should be consistency in the training exercise and it should be given wide



publication so as for the drivers not to claim that they are not aware of the training exercise. In same vein, only authorized vehicles must be permitted to drive on the special bus lanes. The presence of traffic patrol officers and vehicles may deter unauthorized use of the lanes. The vehicles that are allowed to use the lanes should be clearly stated with appropriate reason for such and made known to the public with

visible emphasis. Everything needed to be put in place for the bus drivers to be comfortable on the job should be put in place and of importance, in this regard, is the compulsory off days i.e once in a week for the BRT drivers, for mental calmness and conservation of energy for seamless delivery of goods and services.

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