

OPINIONS OF END USERS AND TRANSPORT PROFESSIONALS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF ROADS IN EKITI STATE, SOUTH-WEST, NIGERIA

Ogunleye Olusesan Sola, PhD

Department Of Geography And Planning Science,
Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria

Abstract

Transport, the movement of people, goods and services is so key and important in the socio-economic development of any region or nation. To this end, government at all levels is always conscious of the need to provide efficient and effective transportation system for their teaming population. This they do by committing huge amount of money to the provision and maintenance of transport infrastructures. Despite these efforts of government, the transportation situations of developing countries and Nigeria in particular are nothing to write home about. The limited and scanty transportation facilities provided are performing below the expectations of the reasons why they are provided. Hence, this work on the opinion of end-users and Transport professionals on the performance of roads in Ekiti State was designed to gather the opinion of the these categories of people on how best the roads in Ekiti State, Nigeria allow for efficient movement of people, goods and services. Data for this study was collected through the use of questionnaire administered on 600 respondents' tagged end-users selected from six Local Government Areas spread across the three senatorial districts in the state. Sixty (60) same questionnaires were also administered on Transport Professionals to get their opinion on the performance of roads in the study area. Simple percentages and tables were used to analyse data. The study revealed that congestion along major roads in some cities in the study area is a major concern for motorists. Furthermore, findings revealed that the frequent occurrence of road traffic accidents in the study area is a major concern for motorists. The study recommended dualization of major roads in urban centers in the study area, discouragement of under aged driving along Ekiti roads and provisions of adequate security for life and property along Ekiti roads to enhance their better performance.

Keywords: End-users, Professionals, Roads, Transport

Introduction

Transportation which is the conveyance of people, goods and services from one geographical location to the other is as old as man. It is very key and important in the life of man that he can virtually do anything meaningful without it. Transport provides access to work, markets education, health care and recreational centres all over the world. According to Arosanyin (1998) and Peter et al (2003) transport facilitate our social interaction, support our economy and even our competitiveness. In their assertion of the importance of transport in the day to day running of the society, Adefolaju (1981) and Olayemi (1980) opined that the provision of transport facilities and services is very crucial to the economic political and cultural life of any nation because people cannot do without collecting, assembling and distributing things in space. With this in mind, government at all levels in both the developing and the developed world have decided to pay more attention to the transport sub-sector of the economy by making sure that substantial amount of money is budgeted for the provision and maintenance of transport infrastructures. This they believe will enhance the socio-economic development of their countries.

It is worthy of note that government at all levels have paid more attention to the road mode of transport because of its uniqueness and advantages over other modes. For example, road transport has the advantage of universality of access, door-to-door service, and acts as a compliment to other modes of transport. Above all, a very large percentage of the populace uses this mode of transport for the day to day running of their business (Sunday 2011).

According to Peter et al (2005), the United Kingdom government sought E180 billion to improve the conditions of all users of Britain's roads. Likewise in India, in order to meet the supply of raw materials for improved industrialization, the government in her 5th Development plan spent 20 percent of the development funds on transport (Aronsanyin, 1998). In Nigeria, the federal and state governments have shown more seriousness in the finance of road infrastructure. For example, the federal government of Nigeria in the federal executive council meeting of Wednesday, 30th, November 2005 approved an amount of seven billion naira for road projects on Abia, Taraba, Enugu, Zamfara, Osun and Kwara States (The Punch, December 1, 2005). In the same vein, the federal government's commitment to road and bridge construction from May 1999 to December 2005 according to the Federal Ministry of Works stands at N401 101, 289.62 for a project span of 14,632.24km (The Punch, May 29 2006). The contract for the construction of the second Niger bridge has just been awarded to Julius Berger construction company by the federal government of Nigeria.

On Ektii roads alone, the federal government claimed to have spent N20.1 billion to complete federal roads. The roads are Ado-Igede roads, Igede – Itawure road, Ifaki – Ikole – Omuo – Kogi State border road, and limited rehabilitation of Ado – Otun – Kwara State border road (The Punch May 22, 2006). At the state government level, various road construction projects have been completed and commissioned at one time or the other while others are still under construction, for example government claimed to have spent over N3 billion on road construction preparation for the presidential visit on May 18 and 19, 2006. (The Punch, May 1, 2006).

Despite the concentration of huge amount of money in the construction and provision of good road network infrastructure in Nigeria, the structure of road networks in this part of the world remained unacceptably low and skeletal. The poor condition of the roads had continually contributed to their poor performance in the movement of people, goods, and services (Stephen 1998, John et al 2005). Bearing in mind that roads network, when constructed, are supposed to perform the essence of their construction in the first instance, government of the developed countries of the world have recognized that attention should be shifted from mere network provision to performance measures. Hence, many agencies of government have been established, not only to provide services to the people, but also, to get feedback on the need for improvement. Poister (1997) opined that these agencies of government are always mandated to draw strategic plans with goals and objectives such that they will be able to provide answers to increasing pressures from the users of roads that are publicly funded (Pickrell and Neumann, 2004). The US Federal Highway Administrator (FHA) and the Transport Research Board (TRB), the organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2010), Austroad and the Transportation Association of Canada (TAC 2001) are examples of agencies established to facilitate feedbacks on the level of service delivery in developed countries of the world. In recent times, attention of scholars is shifting to research in performance measures as it is believed that government agencies alone should not be left alone in getting feedback from the users of roads. Peter et al (2005) demonstrated this paradigm shift in his work on differing perspectives of road users and service providers on Britain's roads where he revealed from the survey of the general public, transport professionals, drivers and operators of the freight and bus industries that the problems perceived by the general public as being the most serious from their experiences on Britain's roads, were high cost of travel, inconsiderate and aggressive drivers on the roads, poorly maintained roads surfaces and environmental problems. The fact that attention is now shifting to the measurement of performance of transportation network in the developed world is an eye opener to the government of the developing

countries and even researchers in transportation studies. This paper on opinions of end-users and transport professionals became necessary to fill the noticeable gap of pursuity of empirical works on performance evaluation of transportation networks in developing countries of the world in general and Nigeria in particular.

The Study Area

The study area is Ekiti State Nigeria which lies between longitude 4°45' and 5°45' East of the Greenwich Meridian and Latitudes 7° 15¹ and 8° 15¹ North of the Equoator. It lies south of Kwara and Kogi State as well as East of Osun State. It is bounded in the south by Ondo State. Ekiti State was created on the 1st of October, 1996. The state carved out of old Ondo State covers the former twelve Local Government Areas that made up the Ekiti zone of the old Ondo State. However, Ekiti State on creation took off with sixteen (16) Local Government Areas having had additional four carved out of the old ones. .Ekiti State has a land area of 6,353 km. Ekiti State is in the Southwestern Region of Nigeria. It has sixteen (16) Local Government Areas. (Ekiti State Government, 2006)

Ekiti State has a fairly undulating plain, it lies within a beautiful area underlined by pre-Camb rian rock group. Its landscape consists of ancient plains broken by steep sided out crop rocks which occur singularly or in group of ridges. The most notable of these rocks are found in Efon Alaaye, Ikere-Ekiti and Okemesi Ekiti. Climatically, the state falls entirely within Koppen's A climatic belt. It enjoys tropical climate with two distinct seasons, these are the rainy season (April-October) and the dry season (November March). Temperature is almost uniform throughout the year. It ranges between 21⁰C and 28⁰C with relatively high humidity. The state enjoys an average of 1400mm annual rainfall. The tropical rain forest exists in the south, while the guinea savanna occupies the northern peripheries. (Ekiti State Government, 2006). The high amount of rainfall received in the state to some extent affects the durability of the roads when constructed. Since most of the roads are not provided with drainage system, culverts and standard bridges, most roads are liable to flooding when rain falls thereby compounding road transport system in the state.

Ekiti State has a total of 2,384212 people according to the provisional population census figure released after the 2006 population and housing census exercise. (Ekiti State Government, 2006). The people of Ekiti form one of the largest ethnic groups in the Yoruba nation. Ekiti's are culturally homogenous and they speak a dialect of Yoruba language known as Ekiti. The homogenous nature of Ekiti confers on the state some uniqueness among the states of the federation.

Infrastructural, the state is lacking, The state of electricity, portable water, refuse disposal system is still below average. The state of the road

networks in the state is still very poor. Although work has commenced on a couple of the state roads in recent times, most of the federal and local government roads are in deplorable conditions thereby making some communities to be badly linked. This is hindering socio-economic and political activities of the people.

Research Method

Data for this study was gathered from the primary source with the use of a well structured and validated questionnaire. The questionnaire on performance of road networks in Ekiti State was administered on respondents in six selected Local Government Areas in the state. Two Local Government Areas were selected from each of the three senatorial districts in the state. Precisely from Ekiti North Senatorial District; Ikole Local Government Areas and Moba Local Government Areas were selected, from Ekiti central senatorial districts, Ado Ekiti and Ekiti West Local Government Areas were selected and from Ekiti South Senatorial District, Ekiti East and Ise/Orun Local Government Areas were selected.

A total of six hundred (600) questionnaires were administered on the end-users comprising of motorists, drivers and pedestrians using multi-stage and systematic random sampling techniques.

Moreover, a total of 60 same questionnaires administered on end-users were equally administered on transport professionals (i.e. professionals saddled with the responsibilities of constructing and maintaining road networks in the state). These agencies are the Federal Roads Maintenance Agency (FERMA) and the Ekiti State Ministry of Works and Transport. Thirty (30) questionnaires were administered on engineers and planners in each of the agency to gather their opinion on the performance of road networks in Ekiti State. Scoring was done on each of the questionnaire and scores were collated and thoroughly processed. Simple percentages and tables were used to analyze and present data.

Data Analysis And Discussions

As noted before two sets of people (the end-users and the transport professionals) were used to gather information on the performance of roads in the study area. A total of 596 questionnaires out of the six hundred (600) copies issued out were returned, a recovery rate of 99.3%, likewise all the sixty (60) copies of questionnaires rolled out for transport professionals were returned, a one hundred percent (100%) recovery rate. The socio-economic characteristics and the opinion of these sets of people are presented as follows.

Table 1: Occupation, Level of Education and Gender of Respondents

Variable	Groupings	Frequency	Percentage	End-users	Percentage
Occupation	Employed at home	01	1.7	42	7.1
	Employed Elsewhere	51	85.0	407	68.3
	Students	07	11.6	73	12.2
	Unemployed	01	1.7	41	6.9
	Retired	00	00	33	5.5
	Total	60	100%	596	100%
Level of Education	Primary	00	00	22	3.7
	Secondary	09	15.0	158	26.5
	OND/NCE	13	21.7	203	34.1
	Degree	34	56.6	158	26.5
	Postgraduate	04	6.7	55	9.2
	Total	60	100%	596	100%
Gender	Male	44	73.3	459	77.0
	Female	16	26.7	137	23.0
	Total	60	100%	596	100%

Source: Author’s Compilation, 2013.

Table 2: Age, Place of Residence, and Income of Respondents

		Professionals			
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Age	Under 21-years	02	3.3	40	6.7
	21-40years	42	70.0	463	77.7
	41-60years	15	25.0	64	10.7
	61 years& above	01	1.7	29	4.7
	Total	60	100%	596	100%
Place of Residence	City	33	55.0	163	27.3
	Town	26	43.3	357	59.9
	Village	01	1.7	76	12.8
	Total	60	100%	596	100%
Income band per month	Less-than N10,000	02	3.4	34	5.7
	N10,000- N19,999	13	21.7	128	21.5
	N20,000- N29,999	08	13.3	249	41.8
	N30,000- N39,999	08	13.3	139	23.3
	N40,000+	24	40.0	22	3.7
	Total	60	100%	596	100%

Source: Author’s Compilation, 2013.

A total of twelve (12) likely problems that could be faced by an average road user in Ekiti State were listed out, and used as peoples problems on Ekiti roads. Respondents (End-users and transport professionals) were asked whether the issue was 1 – not a problem, 2 – minor problem; 3, -significant problem sometimes, 4 –significant problems most of the time, 5 – very significant problem sometimes and 6 – very significant problem most of the times. The responses of people to each of the items are shown on table 3 below. **Table 3**

Variable	Groupings	Frequency End-Users	Percentage	Frequency Professionals	Percentage
Congestion	Not a problem	90	15.1	02	3.3
	Minor problem	85	14.3	06	10.0
	Significant problem some times	84	14.1	05	8.3
	Significant problem most times	34	5.7	10	16.7
	Very significant problem some times	167	28.0	14	23.3
	Very significant problem most of the time	136	22.8	23	38.3
	Total	596	100%	60	100%
Packing facilities	Not a problem	81	13.6	07	11.7
	Minor problem	93	15.6	03	5.0
	Significant problem some times	51	8.6	06	10.0
	Significant problem most times	65	10.9	03	5.0
	Very significant problem some times	164	27.5	24	40
	Very significant problem most of the time	142	23.8	17	28.3

	Total	596	100%	60	100%
Poor sign posting	Not a problem	60	10.1	03	5.0
	Minor problem	79	13.3	05	8.3
	Significant problem some times	40	6.7	03	5.0
	Significant problem most times	134	2.5	04	6.7
	Very significant problem some times	112	18.8	20	33.3
	Very significant problem most of the time	171	28.6	25	41.7
	Total	596	100%	60	100%

Variable	Groupings	Frequency End-Users	Percentage	Frequency Professionals	Percentage
Poor lighting	Not a problem	89	14.9	03	5.0
	Minor problem	34	5.8	02	3.3
	Significant problem some times	58	9.7	05	8.3
	Significant problem most times	81	13.6	14	23.3
	Very significant problem some times	170	28.5	14	23.3
	Very significant problem most of the time	164	27.5	22	36.8
	Total	596	100%	60	100%
Poorly maintained roads	Not a problem	34	5.7	00	0.0
	Minor problem	32	5.4	02	3.3
	Significant problem some	43	7.2	05	8.3

	times				
	Significant				
	problem most				
	times	56	9.4	05	8.3
	Very				
	significant				
	problem some				
	times	191	32.0	19	31.7
	Very				
	significant				
	problem most				
	of the time	240	40.3	29	48.4
	Total	596	100%	60	100%
Pedestrian	Not	a			
facilities	problem	55	9.2	01	1.7
	Minor				
	problem	57	9.5	01	1.7
	Significant				
	problem some				
	times	90	15.0	04	6.6
	Significant				
	problem most				
	times	79	13.6	09	15.0
	Very				
	significant				
	problem some				
	times	123	20.5	24	40.0
	Very				
	significant				
	problem most				
	of the time	192	32.2	21	35.0
	Total	596	100%	60	100%
Slow	Not	a			
moving	problem	90	15.1	02	3.3
vehicles	Minor				
	problem	95	15.9	04	6.7
	Significant				
	problem some				
	times	93	15.6	11	18.3
	Significant				
	problem most				
	times	99	16.7	09	15.0
	Very				
	significant				
	problem some				
	times	130	21.8	15	25.0
	Very				
	significant				
	problem most				
	of the ti	89	14.9	19	31.7

		Total	596	100%	60	100%	
Variable	Groupings	Frequency End-Users	Percentage	Frequency Professionals	Percentage		
Accident Risk for Vehicle Occupants	Not a problem	57	9.6	02	3.3		
	Minor problem	73	12.2	01	1.7		
	Significant problem some times	43	7.2	00	0.0		
	Significant problem most times	101	16.9	07	11.7		
	Very significant problem some times	152	25.6	12	20.0		
	Very significant problem most of the time	170	28.5	38	63.3		
	Total		596	100%	60	100%	
	Flooding of major roads	Not a problem	71	11.9	03	5.0	
Minor problem		67	11.2	07	11.7		
Significant problem some times		41	6.9	04	6.6		
Significant problem most times		73	12.3	07	11.7		
Very significant problem some times		146	24.5	21	35.0		
Very significant problem most of the time		198	33.2	18	30.0		
Total			596	100%	60	100%	
Careless packing and dangerous driving		Not a problem	55	8.7	02	3.3	
	Minor problem	42	7.1	03	5.0		
	Significant problem some times	49	8.2	04	6.7		
	Significant problem most times	73	12.2	09	15.0		
	Very significant problem some times	167	28.0	15	25.0		
	Very significant problem most of the time	213	35.9	27	45.0		
	Total		596	100%	60	100%	

Width of the road	Not a problem	102	17.1	06	10.0
	Minor problem	31	5.2	06	10.0
	Significant problem some times	61	10.2	04	6.7
	Significant problem most times	57	9.6	03	5.0
	Very significant problem some times	156	26.2	22	36.7
	Very significant problem most of the time	189	31.7	19	31.6
	Total	596	100%	60	100%
Crime and security risk of road users	Not a problem	89	14.9	04	6.7
	Minor problem	69	11.6	03	5.0
	Significant problem some times	85	14.3	07	11.7
	Significant problem most times	76	12.7	09	15.0
	Very significant problem some times	129	21.6	15	25.0
	Very significant problem most of the time	148	24.8	22	36.6
	Total	596	100%	60	100%

Source: Author's Compilation, 2013.

Findings And Recommendations

Findings

From the opinion of both end-users and transport professional on the performance of roads in Ekiti State, it is evident that:

- 1 Congestion along major roads in some cities especially the state capital Ado-Ekiti is a major concern for motorists.
- 2 Parking problems along major roads in the urban centres in the state is also a major problem.
- 3 Inadequate marking of roads i.e. warning signs informative signs and regulatory signs are poorly provided along some roads in the state.
- 4 Poor lighting of the major roads is equally a major concern for motorists. The epileptic supply of electricity by the Power Holding Company of Nigeria has always allowed the roads in both the rural and urban centres of the state to be poorly lighted during the night. This singular fact is contributing in no small measure to the rate of accidents and robbery on the major highways in the study area.
- 5 Accident is a major problem along the roads in Ekiti State. Statistics from the Federal Roads Safety Commission, the Nigerian Police and the Ekiti State University Teaching Hospital show that there is high rate of occurrence of accidents in the state. It is evident from this study

that both the condition of roads and human factors are the primary cause of accidents on Ekiti roads.

- 6 It is also evident from this study that the roads in Ekiti State are under performing in the area of adequate parking facilities and adherence to rules and regulations guiding parking of vehicles in major cities in the state.

Moreover, dangerous driving is a major concern for both motorists and pedestrians in the study area. Underage driving, drunk driving, dangerous overtaking and careless driving is very prominent along the roads in Ekiti State.

- 7 Crime and security risk of road users is also a major problem along major roads in the study area. In recent times, the case of day light robbery along major roads especially along urban-rural roads in the state is disturbing and alarming. Most times, people are not too sure of their safety while traveling along these roads.

Recommendations

- i. Dualization of major roads that is on-going in the city of Ado Ekiti the state capital should be taken seriously and completed without further delay. Some other major towns in the state such as Ikere Ekiti, Ikole and Ijero Ekiti should enjoy dualization of their major roads that Ado-Ekiti is currently enjoying.

Moreover, other urban minor roads in Ado-Ekiti would be rehabilitated. A major ring road that will take care of through – traffic (traffic that has nothing to do with Ado metropolis) should be constructed so as to further decongest the city.

- ii. Roads in the state should be properly marked. The various warning signs, informative signs, and the regulatory signs should be provided adequately at appropriate locations along roads.
- iii. Under aged driving, drunk driving, and dangerous driving should be discouraged along the roads in the study area. The police and the Federal Roads safety Corps should step up their activities in the state.
- iv. All categories of roads Federal and State and Local Government roads in the state should be visited and rehabilitated to enhance socio-economic development in the state.
- v. Security of life and property along major and minor roads in the state should be a priority of the law enforcement agencies. Efforts should be made to allay the fears of travelers along the roads of Ekiti of possible attacks by robbers. The Nigerian Police should intensify their patrol of the major and minor roads in the state.
- vi. Agencies of government that will get feedback on the performance of roads should be established at both the federal and the state levels as obtainable in the developed countries of the world.

References:

- Adefolalu, A.A. (1981): “Intra Urban Transport Services in Lagos: Spatial Expansion and Concomitant Problems in Lagos”. *Occasional Paper* Department of Geography, University of Lagos, Nigeria.
- Arosanyin, G.T, (1998): “Determinants of Transport Output in Nigeria”. *Journal of Transport Studies* 2(1), 69-75
- Ekiti State Government (2006): “Ekiti State in Brief” *Ekiti State Diary*.
- John P.; Nusha, K.; Naha, M.; and Neenu, I. (2005): “Urban Transport Crisis in India” *Transport Policy*. Vol. 12., No. 3., Pp. 185-198
- Olayemi, O.A. (1980): “Intra-City Person’s Travel in Metropolitan Lagos Study of Commuting in the Fast Growing Capital of a Developing Country”. *Geo-Forum*. Vol. 8, No. 1.
- Peter, B., Jo, B., Neil, P. and Annette, P. (2005): “The Differing Perspectives of Roads Users and Service Providers”. *Transport Policy* (12) (4) Pp. 334-344.
- Pickrell, S. and Neumann, L. (2001): “Use of Performance Measures in Transportation Decision Making”. *Performance Measures to Improve Transportation Systems and Agency Operations*. Washington D.C. National Academy Press.
- Poister, T. (1997): *Synthesis of Highway Practice 238: Performance Measurement in State Department of Transportations* Washington D.C., National Academy Press.
- Stephen, N. (1998): “Rural Areas: The Accessibility Problem” in Brain, H. and Richard, K. (eds). *Modern Transport Geography Second Revised Edition* London, John Willey & Sons Ltd. Pp. 185-215.
- Sunday, E.U. (2011): “Nigerian Road Infrastructure: Options for Transformation” *Zenith Economic Quarterly* (6) (1), Pp. 47-57.
- The Punch Newspaper (2005, December 1).
- The Punch Newspaper (2006, May 1).
- The Punch Newspaper (2006, May 22).
- The Punch Newspaper (2006, May 29).