

Technical Report White Paper: Risks of Passengers Overloading in Urban Public Transport in Bahir Dar City

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the risks of passenger overloading in urban public transports in Bahir Dar City, Ethiopia. The main purpose of this study was to communicate the problem of passenger overloading in urban public transport in Bahir Dar City and thereby to show the possibility of negative impacts associated with overloading of passengers in urban public transportation. The author of this study has not employed the data collected by questionnaire, interview, and focus group discussion, rather the researcher's personal observation was used. The study encompasses contents like reviewing of related literature on the area under discussion, description of the situation of urban public transportation in Bahir Dar City, the possibility of negative impacts of passengers overloading in urban public transport and the possible suggestions or recommendations to curb the risks of excess passengers on public transport vehicles.

KEYWORDS

Bahir Dar City, Overloading, Passengers, Public Transport

INTRODUCTION

Urban transport provides mobility of the people, goods, access to employment, education, shopping, health and entertainment opportunities. Despite this, in many emergent cities of developing countries, the state of road based public transport services does not serve the mobility needs of the population adequately. This is due to inadequate infrastructure and its sub-optimal use, lack of integration between land use and transport planning, traffic congestion, absence of improvement or little improvement in city bus services and related problems. These factors collectively encourage a shift to more personalized modes of travel (Pojani & Stead, 2015).

Passenger overloading on public transport refers to the significant number of people sharing a limited space while using a public transport service (Abkowitz & Tozzi, 1987). Worldwide people invest in quality control programs in order to assess and improve the services provided to the passengers in public transport (Yannis, et al, 2008). However, overloading of passenger in public transport is a serious problem in many countries across the world because it incurs huge costs in terms of life, property and maintenance of vehicles. The importance of controlling overloading passengers cannot be ignored because it helps to reduce deaths and casualties as the findings show that excessive passengers are one of the major causes of many deaths and casualties when accidents occur (Kilavo et al, 2013). The extra passengers who will definitely not have seat belts on are more likely to sustain injuries or even deaths.

According to WHO (2018) global status report on road safety, the number of annual road traffic deaths has reached 1.35 million. Road traffic injuries are now the leading killer of people aged 5-29 years. Ethiopia is one of the worst road traffic accident records in the world. Addis Ababa, the capital city of Ethiopia takes the lion's share of the risk having higher number of vehicles and traffic and the cost of these fatalities and injuries has a great impact on the socio-economic development of the society (Andrew, 2004).

Risks of Passengers Overloading in Urban Public Transport: Bird Eyes View

Bahir Dar (Amharic: ባሕር ዳር, *Bahār Dar*, “sea shore”) is the third largest city in Ethiopia, next to Addis Ababa and Dire Dawa and has a population of 348,429 people. It is the capital of Amhara Regional State in Ethiopia. The city is located 578 km northwest of Addis Ababa, an elevation of 1 840 meter above the sea level. It is distinctly known for its wide avenues lined with palm trees and range of colorful flowers. It is one of the leading tourist destinations in Ethiopia, with a variety of attractions in the nearby Lake Tana and Blue Nile river.

In the City of Bahir Dar, public transport service is providing by government and privately-owned vehicles. The common form of public transportations in the city includes: city bus (owned by government), Bajaji (three-wheel rickshaw) and taxis which are owned by privates.

Passengers overload (in excess of the capacity mentioned in the registration certificate) on public transport vehicle is a normal practice in Bahir Dar city. The

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