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Analysis of Public Transport Service Quality and Satisfaction of Customers in Kogi State

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Abstract
This research made a descriptive analysis of Public Transport Service Quality and Satisfaction of Customers in Kogi State. The study ascertained the differences between the perceived PTS and the expected PTS by Customers in Kogi State. Survey research design was used based on the quantitative nature of the study. Kogi State was the focused area relative to PTSQ. The study selected the sample of three hundred and sixty two (362). The technique adopted is multi-stage. The analysis of data was achieved using descriptive statistics. Paired-samples t *test was also used. Findings showed that expected reliability in public transportation service is more than the perceived reliability in public transportation service; the perceived frequency of PTS fall short of the expected frequency of PTS (that is, the perceived service frequency is low compared to the expectation of the Customers on the public transport service in Kogi State); perceived fare level is higher than the expected fare level of PTS in Kogi State; and that perceived safety in PTS is low compared to the expected safety in PTS.*

Keywords: Public Transport, Service Quality, Customers' Satisfaction, Reliability, Safety

1. Introduction

Public Transport Service (PTS) is inevitable in Kogi State. The use of PTS is subject to economic deficiency of the poor in Kogi State. It is no doubt that majority of people have no economic power to afford private cars. Customers' demand for PTS becomes very high. The understanding of this made Mammo (2010) to add that the demand for PTS is above its supply. This is evident during the yuletide period or weekends from very long line up or crowd of people along the roadsides in Kogi State. The increased demand of Public Transport Service Quality (PTSQ) has induced the National Union of Road Transportation Workers (NURTW) to engage in readjustment of their

decision regarding commercial transportation in Kogi State.

Unfortunately, NURTW is observed to have focused decision on average cost of transportation service rather than investment in the areas (such as information, training, quality assurance and so on) that can improve the transport service quality and enhance satisfaction of users in Kogi State. In order to serve customers' specification, (Richter, Friman & Gärling, 2008a, 2008b) quality investments that really raise the perceived service performance regarding these attributes constitute an important issue. Fellesson and Friman (2008) argued that the provision of knowledge of satisfaction by policymakers is quite paramount and also the operational managers in the public transport system must provide valuable information.

Though, in transportation, decision making process is a mixture of public input, technical assessment and political evaluation which lead to a selection of policies, projects, and programs that meet the vision of the future. The combination of these factors can sometimes result in problems. Meanwhile the customers are at the receiving end. The decision making process and its outcome influence the transportation service. It is observed that individual drivers have absolutely little influence on customers' service. Palmer and Cole (2009) uphold that service in transportation through some form of exchange satisfies an identified consumers' need.

In transport research, Hensher (2007) believed that satisfaction only gained research attention from a policy perspective. The task of quality assurance should be strategically decentralized, rather allowing the decision of NURTW to override in issues around transport service in Kogi State. In their study, Barabino and Di Francesco (2016) also argued that "the quality process requires the involvement of all stakeholders: current and potential users interested in the satisfaction of their service desires" (p. 819). The fact is that PTSQ and satisfaction issues affect the PTS users in different ways. The dimensions of customers satisfaction in relation to the dimensions of PTSQ is observed important. Based on the dimension of this study's variables, the term 'perceived' will be used. The perceived satisfaction and customer's experience speaks audible about PTSQ in Kogi State. Friman and Fellesson (2009) expressed that "the underlying assumption is that there is a direct link between the actual transport service and the customer's perception of it.

PTSQ appears to face heavy problems in Kogi State. The problems are associated with inability to meet the service demand of customers, convenience, reliability, safety, travel time, fare level and dissatisfaction of customers. The PTSQ is expected to be high and considerable to the customers in Kogi State. The actual PTSQ in Kogi State is low. Abdullah, Jan and Manaf (2012) advocated the need to evaluate service quality in this regard.

Satisfaction of customers emerges when the passengers' expectations reached equilibrium with the actual PTSQ (in terms of safety, convenience, reliability and so on).

This study covered PTS in Kogi State. It focused on Ankpa, Idah, Bassa, Igalamela and Ibaji. The registered commercial cars in the State were covered. The objective of the study was to address the deviation between expected PTSQ and actual PTSQ in Kogi State. The study specifically:

i. Ascertained the PTSQ dimensions and perceived Customer's satisfaction in Kogi State.

ii. Investigate the differences between the perceived PTSQ and the expected PTSQ by Customers in Kogi State.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The PTSQ has different dimensions. Studies of (Dabholkar, Shepherd & Thorpe, 2000; Abdullah, Jan & Manaf, 2012) noted that 'these are 'tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy'. The satisfaction of Customers may occur given that PTCs assure safety, considerable fare level, comfort and reliability). Frequency, travel time and reasonable fare level (Tyrinopoulos & Aifadopoulou 2008), comfortability (Eboli & Mazzulla, 2007) is salient in PTSQ. Figure 1 shows that reliability, service frequency, fare level, comfortability and safety are best measures of perceived PTSQ.

The reliability of PTSQ may be attributed to the healthy position of the commercial car and the accessibility of transport services. Service frequency has more to do with convenient transit options. The subject of appropriate fare level has everything to do with fair sum of money charged on Customers (that measures the value of the service).

Figure 1 shows that the variables are likely to have effects on Customers' satisfaction. Morton et al. (2016) expressed that the overall measure is linked to Customers' satisfaction. Napitupulua, Sihombingb, Napitupuluc & Pardede (2020) also established that customer trust has nexus with consumer satisfaction. Meanwhile, the figure 1 shows a likelihood of relationship between PTSQ and Customer's satisfaction. PTSQ is a determinant of customer's satisfaction. Quality is thus a vital component of customer's appraisal in public transport. Cronin, Brady and Hult (2000) added that a 'number of frameworks which position the concepts in alternative formations which tend to situate quality of service as the deepest level of abstraction and customer satisfaction as an intermediate concept'.

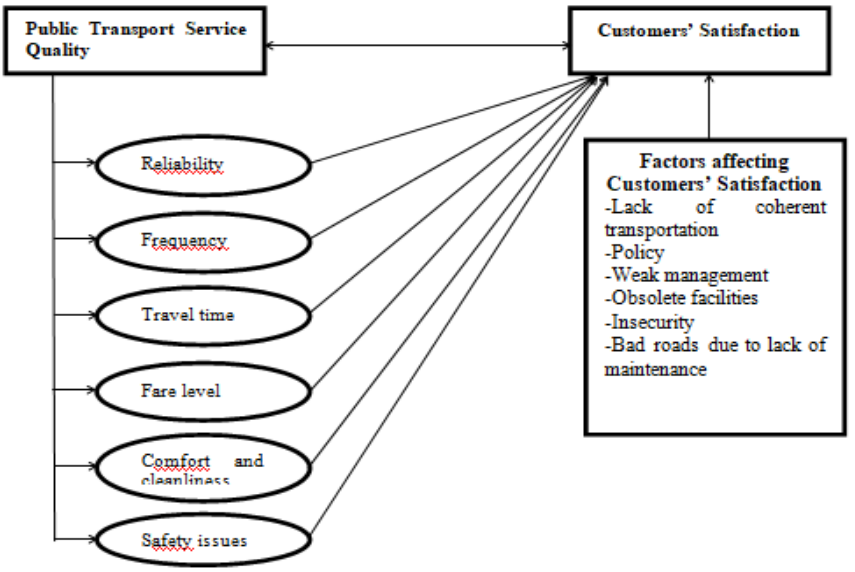

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
Sources: Hensher et al. (2003); Eboli and Mazzulla (2007); Fellesson and Friman (2008); Tyrinopoulos and Aifadopoulou (2008); Eriksson et al. (2009).

However, there are observed challenges facing road transportation in Kogi State. Similar among these is complex traffic pool, which is largely dominated by privately owned vehicles, disobedience of the traffic rules and the existence of terribly bad vehicles on the road. These challenges establish unbearable congestion. These aforementioned problems have negative implication on both customers' satisfaction and the socio-economic development of the state at large. It is no doubt that the problems create a backdrop on the achievement of quality transportation service in Kogi State. Barabino and Di Francesco (2016) advocated that more work needs to be carried out to support the monitoring of the quality of transportation service by taking into account the views of all stakeholders regarding these problems.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study used Prospect Theory. The prospect theory was propounded by Kahneman & Tversky (1979). The prospect theory is absolutely descriptive in nature. Burböck (2014) states that prospect theory assumes that "all of the alternatives an individual faces are reduced to a series of prospects that are evaluated independently of an S-shaped value function".

However, customer's expectation on the quality of transport service is

often on the high side. In the satisfaction context, "the negative deviation from the frame of reference, expectations, should have more strength in the satisfaction level judgment than the equal amount of potential outcomes on the attribute performance" (Burböck, 2014). The diminishing sensitivity in the context of satisfaction means that, at high (low) levels of service quality, positive (negative) performance should not affect satisfaction as dramatically as it does at lower levels of performance. This development is similar to the diminishing returns hypothesis in classical economics. The relationship between transportation service quality and customer satisfaction is explained by the characteristics of the prospect theory, and this can be verified empirically.

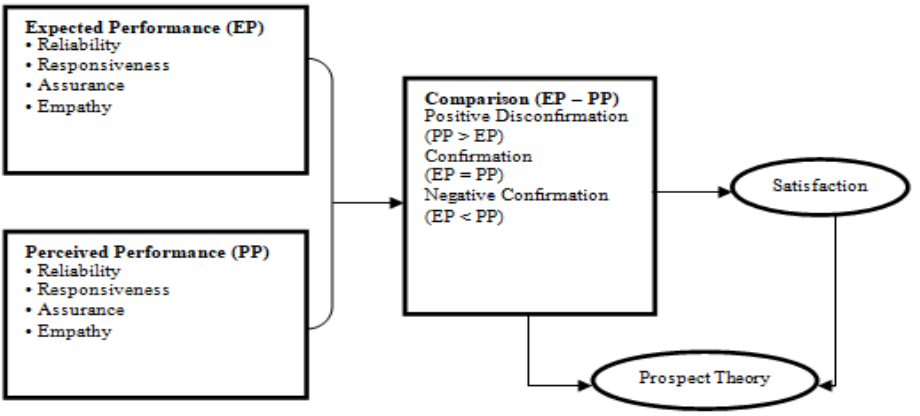

Figure 2: Model of Relationship between Service Quality and Satisfaction
Source: Burböck (2014).

The theory is very important to this study because it identifies the lacuna between two dimensions of performance (expected and perceived performance) that may likely shape satisfaction. The theory therefore clarified that positive disconfirmation occurs when expected performance is below average and perceived performance seemed higher. Also, negative confirmation occurs when the reverse is witnessed. Whichever way it appears, these dimensions affect performance. For this study, it is believed that customers expect that higher level of transport service quality positively correlates with the value they sacrifice.

2.3 Empirical Review

Olorunfemi and Adeniran (2020) examined the influence of road transport quality on urban dwellers' satisfaction in Kogi state, Nigeria. The

researchers used the survey research design. They used correlation matrix for analysis. Their finding showed that the state of the road network influences the per-trip transport charge. They also found that timely response of road maintenance and sub road infrastructure maintenance has an influence on the transport rate charge per trip.

Amrapala and Choocharuku (2019) conducted a study on perceived service quality and commuter segmentation of informal public transport service in Bangkok, Thailand. They aimed to explore user subgroups characterized by attitudes through an Exploratory Factor Analysis followed by commuter segmentation through Cluster Analysis. They used survey research design. They used Ordinal logistic regression for analysis. Their finding revealed that perception towards service quality affect customers' overall satisfaction.

Eniola and Dada (2018) conducted a research on how satisfied the commuters are with the public mass transit (PMT) services in Kogi State. They also gathered data through survey. They analysed the data using descriptive statistics. They found that commuters are frequently dissatisfied with the availability of public mass transit.

Atomode and Majekodunmi (2016) intended to find out about the operational and service efficiencies of the public transport in Lokoja. In lieu of this, survey was carried out. They generated data through the survey, and analyze the data using simple descriptive statistics. They found that Public transportation is operated solely by private persons who use low occupancy vehicles (cars and space buses) for intra-state travel. An average of N300 ($1.523) loading fee is charged per trip by the terminal operators. They also found that the major purpose for trip making by passengers was for business, trade, work and school.

Nwachukwu (2014) assessed passenger satisfaction with intra-city public bus transport services in Abuja, Nigeria. To achieve this, he used survey research design. Data obtained were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and principal component and regression analyses. His finding shows that passengers were not satisfied with the public bus transport services in Abuja.

Oña and Oña (2014) focused on quality of service in public transport based on customer satisfaction surveys. They adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach. Their study found that there is an increasing concern for a better quality of service in the public transport (PT) sector and that there is better understanding of the factors affecting service quality (SQ) in PT organizations and companies.

Eboli and Mazulla (2007) investigated service quality attributes

important for customer satisfaction with a bus transit service in Cosenza, Italia. Respondent were asked to rate the importance and satisfaction with 16 service quality attributes (bus stop availability, route characteristic, frequency, reliability, bus stop furniture, bus overcrowding, cleanliness, cost, information, promotion, safety on board, personal security, personnel, complains, environmental protection and bus stop maintenance). The result shows that the latent variable important for global customer satisfaction is service planning which is reflected in reliability, frequency, information, promotion, personnel and complaint.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study is qualitative in nature; thus survey research design was used. Two methods (participation and questionnaire administration) facilitated the survey. These methods reduced bias in the process of data supply. Also, high level of inaccuracy in data supplied by customers was achieved.

3.2 Population of the Study

Kogi State was the focused area relative to PTSQ. The state is in the Northcentral of Nigeria. The state is widely known for her confluence (River Niger and Benue). Babatimehin, Ayanlade, Babatimehin and Yusuf (2011) stated that the State lies between latitudes 7^0 30^0 'N and 8^0 10' N and Longitudes 6^0 01'E and 7^0 50'E, covering an area of about 27,747 km^2. (p.142). Among the 21 local governments of the State, Ankpa, Idah, Bassa, Igalamela and Ibaji were selected. This is because there is long overdue unaddressed transport service and customer satisfaction issue in these areas. Ankpa Local Government has 480 cars (with 2880 regular customers); Idah Local Government has 175 cars (with 1050 regular customers); Bassa Local Government has 144 cars (with 864 regular customers); Igalamela Local Government has 155 cars (with 930 regular customers); and Ibaji Local Government has 184 cars (with 1104 regular customers). All the cars are registered for commercial transport service in the State.

3.3 Sample Size

The study selected the sample of three hundred and sixty two (362). This was determined through the method adopted by Bartlett, Kotrilik and Higgins (2001). The margin error of 0.05 (and t= 1.96) was considered appropriate, and has been used widely in scholarly researches.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The technique adopted is multi-stage. This is because respondents were divided into groups and clusters. Sequel to this, Bowley (1926) Proportional Allocation Method was applied. The formula is thus:

$$n1 = \frac{n(n1)}{N} \quad \ldots\ldots 1$$

Where n = Overall sample size; n1 = Population; N = The Total Population Thus, 152 questionnaires were administered in Ankpa; 56 questionnaires were administered in Idah; 46 questionnaires were administered in Bassa; 49 questionnaires were administered in Igalamela; and 59 questionnaires were administered in Ibaji.

3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

The researcher utilized questionnaire to obtain the data needed on Public Transport Service Quality and Customers' Satisfaction in the study area. The study was premised majorly on the use of the primary data for scientific verification. PTSQ was measured on the scale of Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1988) using variables such as reliability, service frequency, fare level, comfortability and safety. The items used by Parasuraman *ibid* in measuring the variables are 22 (on the scale of 5-points).

3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The analysis of data was achieved using descriptive statistics. Paired-samples *t*-test was used. Paired-samples *t*-test is appropriate because two related sample means were compared. The difference scores are assumed to follow a reasonably normal distribution, especially with respect to skewness.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1: Showing the Years of Experience

Responses		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Below 1 Year	16	5.5	5.5	5.5
	1-2 Years	12	4.1	4.1	9.6
	2-4 Years	21	7.2	7.2	16.8
	4-6 Years	88	30.1	30.1	46.9
	6-10 Years	92	31.5	31.5	78.4
	10-15 Years	51	17.5	17.5	95.9
	Above 15 Years	12	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	**292**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The table 1 above shows years of PTS experience of respondents. It is observed that 16 respondents (5.5%) have the experience below 1 year; 12 respondents (4.1%) have the experience of 1 to 2 years; 21 respondents (7.2%) have the experience of 2 to 4 years; 88 respondents (30.1%) have the experience of 4 to 6 Years; 92 respondents (31.5%) have the experience of 6 to 10 Years; 51 respondents (17.5%) have the experience of 10 to 15 years; and 12 respondents (4.1%) have the experience above 15 years. Majority of the respondents in the study area has the experience of 6 to10 years in PTS. This implies that the respondents have good understanding of the subject matter.

Table 2: Showing the Sex of Respondents

Responses		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Male	188	64.4	64.4	64.4
	Female	104	35.6	35.6	100.0
	Total	**292**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 2 above shows the gender of respondents. It is observed that 188 respondents (64.4%) were male; and 104 respondents (35.6%) were female. The implication of this is that majority of respondents in the study area were male.

Table 3: Showing the Marital Status of Respondents

Responses		**Frequency**	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Single	74	25.3	25.3	25.3
	Married	138	47.3	47.3	72.6
	Divorced	48	16.4	16.4	89.0
	Widow	13	4.5	4.5	93.5
	Widower	19	6.5	6.5	100.0
	Total	**292**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 3 above shows marital status of respondents. It is observed that 74 respondents (25.3%) were ingle; 138 respondents (47.3%) were married; 48 respondents (16.4%) were divorced; 13 respondents (4.5%) were widow; and 19 respondents (6.5%) were widower. The implication of this is that majority of respondents in the study area were married.

Table 4: Showing the Level of Education of Respondents

Responses		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No formal education	9	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Primary education	38	13.0	13.0	16.1
	Secondary education	156	53.4	53.4	69.5
	Tertiary	89	30.5	30.5	100.0
	education				
	Total	**292**	**100.0**	**100.0**	

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 4 above shows the level of education of respondents. It is depicted that 9 respondents (3.1%) have no Formal Education; 38 respondents (13.0%) were Primary Education Certificate Holder; 156 respondents (53.4%) were Secondary Education Certificate Holder; and 89 respondents (30.5%) were Tertiary Education Certificate Holder. It is opined that majority of respondents in the study area were Secondary Education Certificate Holder.

Table 5: Showing Descriptive Statistics of Customer's Satisfaction

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation
Transport service promptness	3.6507	1.16118
Confidence and trust	3.7774	1.14052
Transport service costs	3.6575	1.21807
Safety assurance on transit	4.0377	1.02643

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 5 above shows descriptive statistics of perceived Customer's satisfaction. The table indicates that transport service promptness (mean=3.6507; standard deviation= 1.16118), confidence and trust (mean=3.7774; standard deviation=1.14052), transport service costs (mean= 3.6575; standard deviation=1.21807) and safety assurance on transit (mean= 4.0377; standard deviation=1.02643) influence the perceived Customer's satisfaction. It is observed that safety assurance on transit strongly describes the satisfaction of customer in PTS.

Table 6: Showing Descriptive Statistics of PTSQ Dimensions

Dimensions	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perceived public transport reliability	2.1370	1.10687
Perceived public transport service frequency	1.8904	.97476
Perceived fare level of public transport	2.7089	1.03256
Comfortability using public transport	3.8664	1.11193
Perceived safety using public transport	3.7534	1.27929

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Table 6 shows results on dimensions of public transport service quality in Kogi State. The table shows that perceived public transport reliability (mean= 2.1370; standard deviation= 1.10687), perceived public transport frequency (mean= 1.8904; standard deviation= 0.97476), perceived fare level of public transport (mean= 2.7089; standard deviation= 1.03256), comfortability using public transport (mean= 3.8664; standard deviation= 1.11193), and perceived safety using public transport (mean= 3.7534; standard deviation= 1.27929) are dimensions of public transport service quality. It is observed that comfortability using public transport is the strongest dimension of PTSQ

Table 7: T-test on Perceived PTSQ and Expected PTSQ

Variables	Mean Score (Std. Dev.)		T-test	P-value	Remark
	Perceived PTS	Expected PTS			
Reliability	2.1370 (1.10687)	2.1541 (1.10305)	1.716	.001*	Accept
Service Frequency	1.8904 (.97476)	1.9110 (.94829)	9.935	.001*	Accept
Fare Level	3.3870 (1.23142)	2.7089 (1.03256)	3.336	.001*	Accept
Comfortability	2.3630 (1.25114)	3.8664 (1.11193)	-4.488	.154	Reject
Safety	2.1062 (1.11797)	3.7534 (1.27929)	5.493	.018*	Accept

Source: Field Survey, 2020

With respect to the perceived PTS and the expected PTS by Customers in table 7, expected reliability in public transportation service (*M* = 2.1541, *SD* = 1.10305) is observed to be greater than the reliability in perceived public transportation service (*M* = 2.1370, *SD* = 1.10687). The difference is, however, statistically significant given the *T-test* = 1.716, *p* = .001. The gap between perceived PTS and the expected PTS in terms of reliability is not too wide. The results show that Customers perceive that the PTS dwindles and is not reliable enough.

On service frequency in table 7, the expected PTS has the mean score (*M* = 1.9110, *SD* = 0.94829) higher than the perceived PTS (*M* = 1.8904, *SD* = 0.97476). The difference is statistically significant given the *T-test* = 9.935, *p* = .001. The results show that perceived service frequency is low compared to the expectation of the Customers on the public transport service in Kogi State. The implication of the difference as shown by the T-test result is that Customers are (in most cases) often unable to get public transport on time at terminals or bustops or park when need arises.

The table 7 shows that perceived fare level scored higher on the mean (*M* = 3.3870, *SD* = 1.23142) than the mean score of the expected fare level (*M* = 2.7089, *SD* = 1.03256*)*. The difference is also statistically significant given the *T-test* = 3.336, *p* = .001. The difference is however a bit high. The results show that Customers perceive that the public transport fare level is on the high side. The expectation of the Customers regarding the public transport fare level is that the cost of using the public transport service should be lower than what is perceived or obtained.

Perceived comfortability with the mean score (*M* = 2.3630, *SD* = 1.25114) is lesser than the expected comfortability in the PTS (*M* = 3.8664, *SD* = 1.11193). Though the difference is statistically wide, but the result shows that the difference is statistically insignificant given the *T-test* = -4.488, *p* > .05.

Perceived safety in PTS (*M* = 2.1062, *SD* = 1.11797) is low compared to the expected safety in PTS (*M* = 2.1062, *SD* = 1.11797). The difference is found statistically significant given the *T-test* = 5.493, *p* = .018. The difference is a wide one. The results show that Customers' experience of safety in PTS falls short of what is expected.

4.1 Discussion of Findings

Findings show that expected reliability in public transportation service is more than the perceived reliability in public transportation service; the perceived frequency of PTS fall short of the expected frequency of PTS (that is, the perceived service frequency is low compared to the expectation of

the Customers on the public transport service in Kogi State); perceived fare level is higher than the expected fare level of PTS in Kogi State; and that perceived safety in PTS is low compared to the expected safety in PTS. Based on the result, the reliability of PTS in Kogi State is below expectation. Though the level of reliability of PTS in Kogi State is immeasurable, but it is quite evident that the drivers or transportation companies are not at their best to ensure the Customers' expected reliability in PTS. Also, frequency of PTS in Kogi State needs to be reviewed. The scientific verification shows that often Customers do not have PTS readily available when they are in need of it. There is increasing need for the drivers or transportation companies to work towards ensuring safety on the road. The Customers seem to have nurtured fear when they are using the PTS in Kogi State

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5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The perceived quality in PTS (reliability, service frequency and safety) is below the expectation of the customers. Only fare level in PTS is found to be below expectation. The implication of this is that customers are aware that the cost of using PTS is cheaper in Kogi State. The transportation policy in this regard seems to be favourable to the users of PTS in Kogi State. However, better policies must be formulated or reviewed to address the gap the between perceived quality in PTS and the expectation of the customers.

The study recommends that transport service providers should strike a balance between perceived PTS quality and the expected PTS quality in terms of reliability of PTS, transportation service frequency, fare level and safety. Reliability of PTS should be kept optimal enough, the possibility of obstructions in the transport service frequency should be averted, reasonable fare level should be set and more safety should be pursued. These are ways to meet the customers' expected PTS quality.

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