ROAD TRANSPORT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS ON CUSTOMERS' SATISFACTION IN RWANDA

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Abstract

The present publication has as objectives to assess the ways in which passenger road transport management systems affect the passengers 'satisfaction in public transport and to find out the extent to which road transport passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the public transport companies in Rwanda. To achieve the results, respondents were asked about the commonly used management systems, how the management systems affect passengers' satisfaction and the extent to which they are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies. Using SPSS, qualitative and quantitative analyses were conducted to understand the patterns of responses and the relationships between the dependent and independent variables. The findings revealed that the different management systems have differently affected customers' satisfaction in the passenger road transport companies majorly through enhancing passenger comfort, timely departures and arrivals, facilitating passengers to appropriately plan for the journeys, and enhancing safety of passengers. Majority of the respondents were satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies, with only a relatively smaller number indicating that they are not satisfied with the services of the companies. Pearson's chi-square test of significance was conducted across the different socio-demographic variables and the results showed that passenger satisfaction does not significantly differ among the different demographic variables especially age, occupation, education levels and marital status ($P>0.05$). The management systems were found to affect passenger satisfaction through enhancing time management, service reliability, passenger comfort and safety. Satisfied passengers are an asset to the organization because they will ensure an improved image of an organization. Nevertheless, passenger satisfaction can only be achieved through heavy investment in assets and human resources of the companies and this call for adequate funds and trained personnel.

Keywords: Management, Management systems, Customer, customers' satisfaction

Introduction

The government passenger road transport companies in Rwanda have in the recent past been reported to be faced with issuses of inefficiency and poor performance, although the reasons for such performance gaps were not articulated (Ministry of Infrastructure, 2008). It is important to understand whether management systems affect the customer satisfaction of the road passenger transport companies in Rwanda. Although the level of passengers' satisfaction is highly subjective due to several factors influencing the opinions of passengers, since each passenger measures the satisfaction derived from the service experienced differently, some of the common indicators of satisfied passengers included: loyalty to the transport companies, consistency, comfort, safety, cleanliness, reliability, availability, cost in terms of money charged per route (Eboli & Mazzulla, 2016).

Since the 1950s, organisations have sought integration of their management systems to gain efficiencies and avoid duplication of processes across an organisation (Pall, 1987). In a management system, there is always need for a person in charge of the organizational processes to assist in understanding the cause of the problems as they arise. To understand the problem, comprehension of the work, management processes and the people is vital. A management system comprises any person or group of people making decisions about and taking action on a set of responsibilities, the work process for meeting those responsibilities, and the management tools for converting data from measurements of the work process into information for decision making (Kurstedt, 2002). Management systems integrate principles of human interaction with principles of processes, problem solving, and systems under the purview of the systems approach (Blanchard & Fabrycky, 1990).

Management according to Blanchard & Hersey (1982) is the process of converting information into actions and the conversion process in this case is called “decision making”. Note that decision making is in turn controlled by various explicit and implicit policies of behavior. If management is the process of converting information into action, then it is clear that management success depends primarily on the information chosen and execution of conversion (Kurstedt, 2002). The manager sets the stage for accomplishments by his choice of the information sources to consoder or ignore. When the manager has identified certain classes of information and information sources to carry the highest priority, success is then determined by the use made out of this information (Pall,

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1987). Every action point in the system is backed up by a local decision point whose information sources reach out into other parts of the organization and the surrounding environment. The manager receives information from management tools to enable decision making and generate actions from the decisions to affect the work flow and operations of his or her responsibility (Kurstedt, 2002). In the context of this study, management is used to refer to the activities of organizing, coordinating, planning, and controlling the organization's resources to guide the achievement of the organization's set goals, as to satisfy the concerned customers. However, the concept of management as decision making is also important considering the fact that a manager cannot accomplish tasks without influencing decisions (Blanchard & Fabrycky, 1990).

In Rwanda transport infrastructural services comprise of the road transport, which until now is the main form of passenger and goods transportation, with a network of about 14,000 km corresponding to a road density of 0.53 km/km². Of the 14,000 km of the road network in Rwanda, 1,000 km are paved while the remainder is marram with quality varying from smooth hard surfaces with drainage to rutted, extremely uneven tracks passable only with a four-wheel drive vehicle (Africa Development Bank Group, 2013a). Most of the main towns in the country are connected by paved roads and the condition of these roads has until recently been very poor, with numerous pot-holes and vehicles often driving on the dirt verges since these were deemed smoother than the road itself (African Development Bank Group, 2013a). There are about 30 licensed operators providing inter-city passenger transport in Rwanda and regional transport follows the same pattern as for road freight transport (Rwanda Transport Development Agency, 2012). Individual operators and companies provide capacity for 72,264 passengers for public transport services in Rwanda (African Development Bank Group, 2013a). Out of the total supply capacity, individual operators are the dominant providing 70% of the total seat capacity using vehicles of 18 seats and below.

The bus services in Rwanda are generally fragmented among numerous operators with buses ranging from 18 seaters to 66 seaters, and approximately 75% leave the terminals full. The public transport fares within Kigali is fixed at 300 Rwf/km but often ranges between 200 Rwf to 250 Rwf depending on the route travelled; and between 1,000 Rwf to 3,000 Rwf from Kigali to other major cities and towns in the country. This relatively changes for

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international routes ranging between 4,000 Rwf for shorter routes to 30,000 Rwf for longer routes (African Development Bank Group, 2013a). The distance in terms of time between one destination to another varies often ranging between 10 minutes to 6 hours within the Rwanda and 7 hours to 17 hours for destinations such as Dar- es-salaam in Tanzania (African Development Bank Group, 2013b). The average time a bus spends at the terminal before it fills up depends on the destination, time of the day and day of the week and the economic activities at the destination but this often ranges between 10 minutes to 2 hours. Apparently, there is no one accepted mode of payment for transport services, but three main modes of payments operate concurrently, i.e. cash, cards and use of machines, although the use of cash is still widely used.

Problem statement

The reports (Ernest & Young, 2011a; Ministry of Infrastructure, 2008) indicate that the passenger transport services are inefficient and costly, characterized by congestion, absence of operation timetables, inadequate standards, and uncoordinated services, highly profit-oriented coupled with absence of mechanisms leading to less regard to service quality and customer care. Most passenger road transport services emphasize access at multiple stops which is done at the expense of mobility and buses wait to fill up before setting off from the terminus. Some of the consequences have been low revenue returns (Ernest and Young, 2011b; African Development Bank Group, 2013a), poor vehicle servicing and repairs resulting in vehicle breakdowns, poor passenger handling, less buses at terminals and unavailability of bus services on some routes. There is thus scanty information on the existing management systems in the road transport companies and how these affect the customer satisfaction of these companies. The study thus questioned the cause of this inefficiency and poor customer satisfaction of public transport companies and the purpose of this study were to determine whether the management systems affect clients' satisfaction of the passenger road transport companies in Rwanda. It was important to understand the different management systems and the ways in which these management systems have affected the customer satisfaction of these transport companies in Rwanda.

Methods

The study adopted cross-sectional research design which was used in setting the study, determining the section of the population to participate in the study and analysing the data through determining association and

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causation of the study variables (Thisted, 2006; Gorstein et al. 2007). The population consisted of employees of passenger road transport companies and clients of these transport companies. Transport companies employees included: conductors, drivers, mechanics, cashiers, supervisors, accountants and managers educated to the levels of primary school education and Master's degrees.

Systematic, stratified random, purposive and convenient sampling techniques were used to select the sample. Systematic random sampling was used to select three (2) public transport companies (RITCO, Horizon and KBS) out of the twenty (20) companies (See Table 1) and involved selecting every 9th company. Since the study population was stratified into different categories (KBS, Horizon and clients), stratified sampling technique was used to select the sample size from these different strata.

Table 1: Private transport companies in Rwanda

No	Company Name	No	Company Name
1	Rugari Express	11	Excel Tours and Travel Agency
2	Gasabo Travel	12	Impala Express
3	SOTRA Tours (Society of Transport)	13	Volcano Express
4	International Express	14	African Tours Express
5	Omega Car Express	15	ATRACO (Common Transport Agency)
6	Capital Express	16	Belvedere Lines
7	Kigali Safaris Express	17	RITCO (Rwanda Interlink Transport Company)
8	Matunda Express	18	Kigali Bus Services (KBS)
9	Horizon Express	19	Yahoo Car Express
10	Virunga Express	20	Stella Express

Source: Field data 2013

For this study, a sample size of 539 was selected from two transport companies of KBS and Horizon and from among the clients of these transport companies. From KBS and Horizon transport companies, 186 respondents were selected from the 350 total employees of KBS (211) and Horizon (139) transport companies (See Table 2).

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Table 2: Sample size selection

Category of respondents	Public Transport Company	Private Transport Companies		Total
	RITCO	Horizon	KBS	
Management	8	3	3	14
Drivers	46	30	41	117
Conductors	51	25	33	109
Mechanics	33	11	16	60
Supervisors	10	10	14	34
Sub Total	*148*	*79*	*107*	*334*
Clients	205			205
Total				**539**

Source: Field data 2013

Using convenient sampling, 205 clients of the transport companies, identified at the bus terminals in Kigali, Gatuna, Karongi and Nyagatare were selected.

Findings

Road transport companies' management systems and customers' satisfaction

The findings addressed the road transport companies' management systems and the ways in which the management systems of the road passenger transport companies have enhanced customers' satisfaction. They revealed that the different management systems have differently affected customers' satisfaction in the passenger road transport companies majorly through enhancing passenger comfort, timely departures and arrivals, facilitating passengers to appropriately plan for the journeys, and enhancing safety of passengers. When the respondents were asked the extent to which they are satisfied with the services of the road transport companies, the results indicated that they were satisfied, with a relatively smaller number of the respondents indicating that they are not satisfied with the services of the companies.

As indicated in Table 3, passenger comfort as a way in which the management systems affect the passengers' satisfaction was reported by 21 (14%) of public transport company respondents, 49 (26%) respondents from the private transport companies, and 55 (27%) respondents from the clients. The aspects of passenger comfort that were mentioned included: spacious seating arrangements, cleanliness, and adjustable seats among others. Therefore, transport companies that advocate for these facilities generally promote passenger satisfaction.

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Table 3: Ways in which management systems affect the passengers' satisfaction in Rwanda

Responses	Respondents					
	Public		Private		Clients	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Passenger comfort	21	14	49	26	55	27
Timely departures and arrivals	41	28	33	18	28	14
Appropriate planning for journey by passengers	32	22	41	22	34	17
Safety of clients	37	25	35	19	38	19
Customer care and handling	17	11	28	15	50	24
Total	148	100	186	100	205	100

Source: Field data 2013

Of the 539 respondents that participated in the study, timely departures and arrivals were reported by 41 (28%) from the public transport company, 33 (18%) from private transport companies, and 28 (14%) of the clients. Furthermore, appropriate planning for the journey by passengers was another way in which management system enhances passengers' satisfaction as reported by 32 (22%) of the respondents from the public transport companies, 41 (22%) from private transport companies, and 34 (17%) from the clients. 37 (25%) of the public transport respondents, 35 (19%) of the private transport companies respondents and 38 (19%) of the clients reported customers' safety is enhanced through: instituting seatbelts, onboard announcements, discouraging and controlling drink and drive practices among drivers and conductors, fatigue management, training, rewards and incentives for best drivers, automobile purchasing and disposals, repairs and maintenance and implementing speed governors.

Customer care and handling was also reported as another important way in which management systems enhance passenger satisfaction by 17 (11%) of the public transport companies respondents, 28 (15%) of the respondents from private transport companies and 50 (24%) of the respondents from the clients. This implies that customer handling and care were mostly observed in the private transport companies than in the public transport companies.

Extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies in Rwanda

In order to understand the ways in which management systems affect customers' satisfaction, the employees of public and private transport companies and clients to

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the transport companies were asked to indicate whether they are very satisfied, satisfied or not satisfied with the ways in which management systems affect the customers' satisfaction. Very satisfied was better than satisfied which was also better than not satisfied. Their responses are summarized in Figure 1 which presents the respondents views regarding the extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies in Rwanda. The majority of the respondents - 54% revealed that they were satisfied with the services provided by the transport companies. These were followed by 27% who were very satisfied and only 19% who were not satisfied with the services. Furthermore, analysis across the three categories indicate that in the "very satisfied" category, majority of the respondents (34%) who were very satisfied were from the private transport companies. Among those in the "satisfied" category, the majority of the respondents (54%) were the clients and among those in the category "not satisfied" majority (53%) of the respondents were from the public transport companies. The above analysis is an indication of the low efforts attached by the public transport companies towards ensuring passengers' satisfaction revealed by 53% of the public transport companies' respondents reporting that most of their clients are not satisfied with their services.

It was also important to understand whether the respondents socio-demographic variables affect passengers' satisfaction and the results indicated that majority of the respondents aged 21-30 years and 51-60 represented by 66.7% and 57.1% were satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies compared to other age groups (See Table 4).

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Table 4: Age of respondents and the extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies

Respondents			Extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies			Total
			Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	
Age of respondents	21-30	Count	9	48	15	72
		% within Age of respondents	12.5%	66.7%	20.8%	100.0%
	31-40	Count	28	37	16	81
		% within Age of respondents	34.6%	45.7%	19.8%	100.0%
	41-50	Count	17	19	4	40
		% within Age of respondents	42.5%	47.5%	10.0%	100.0%
	51-60	Count	1	4	2	7
		% within Age of respondents	14.3%	57.1%	28.6%	100.0%
	61 and above	Count	1	3	1	5
		% within Age of respondents	20.0%	60.0%	20.0%	100.0%
Total		Count	56	111	38	205
		% within Age of respondents	27.3%	54.1%	18.5%	100.0%

Source: Field data, 2013

The possible reasons for such findings could have been the modern art technology and new buses operated KBS Company which operates most routes in Kigali. As a result, most youths in the age group 21-30 found the services rather appealing and were thus satisfied. Similarly, the old age group 51-60 could have been satisfied by the moderate speed of the buses operated by Horizon and RITCO transport companies which link Kigali and other rural districts of Rwanda. Besides, the responses from other age groups were also supportive of these findings represented by 47.5% aged between 41-50 and 45.7% aged 31-40 years (Table 4).

Regarding gender, the results revealed a slight differences in the responses among males and females regarding the extent to which passengers were satisfied with the services provided by the transport companies (56.4% females compared to 52.8% males who were satisfied) and 32.3% males and 19% females who were very satisfied) with the services provided by the road transport companies (Table 5).

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Table 5: Gender of respondents and passengers' satisfaction with the services provided by the road transport companies

Respondents			Extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies			Total
			Very satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied	
Gender of respondents	Male	Count	41	67	19	127
		% within Gender of responses	32.3%	52.8%	15.0%	100.0%
	Female	Count	15	44	19	78
		% within Gender of responses	19.2%	56.4%	24.4%	100.0%
Total		Count	56	111	38	205
		% within Gender of responses	27.3%	54.1%	18.5%	100.0%

Source: Field data, 2013

Nevertheless, it should be noted that there were more males that were very satisfied with the transport services (32.3%) compared to 19.2% females who were very satisfied. The seemingly significant difference among males and females that were very satisfied with the services can be attributed to the few numbers of females (15) compared to males (41).

Management systems used in the road transport companies and the extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies. The management systems in the road transport companies were correlated with the extent to which passengers are satisfied with the management systems in the transport companies. The results revealed that more of the passengers seemed to be very satisfied with In-vehicle management systems (60%), automobile purchasing and disposal (57.1%), speed governors (44%), seatbelts (37.5%), repairs and maintenance 36.4%) and communication systems (33.3%) compared to other management systems (See Table 6). This was due to the fact that the passengers attributed the safety of the buses and the conduct of the drivers and conductors to the In-vehicle management systems as these systems were understood to assist in monitoring the way the driving behaviours. Similarly, automobile purchasing and disposal systems in most of these companies were perceived to ensure that buses in sound conditions are used as opposed to dilapidated buses where the companies lack automobile purchasing and disposal policies.

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Management systems used in the road transport companies	**Count and percentage**	**Extent to which passengers are satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies**				**X^2 values P≤0.05**
		Very satisfied	**Satisfied**	**Not satisfied**	**Total**	
Speed governors	Count	11	10	4	25	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	44.0%	40.0%	16.0%	100.0%	
Capacity management	Count	7	14	5	26	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	26.9%	53.8%	19.2%	100.0%	
Repairs and maintenance	Count	4	5	2	11	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	36.4%	45.5%	18.2%	100.0%	
Automobile purchasing and disposal	Count	8	4	2	14	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	57.1%	28.6%	14.3%	100.0%	
In-vehicle management systems	Count	9	4	2	15	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	60.0%	26.7%	13.3%	100.0%	0.000
Seatbelts	Count	6	4	6	16	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	37.5%	25.0%	37.5%	100.0%	
Briefing	Count	2	7	2	11	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	100.0%	
Time management	Count	2	2	6	10	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	20.0%	20.0%	60.0%	100.0%	
Formal stages for picking passengers	Count	3	7	1	11	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	27.3%	63.6%	9.1%	100.0%	0.05
Passenger comfort	Count	2	17	1	20	
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	10.0%	85.0%	5.0%	100.0%	
Fatigue management	Count	0	18	1	19	

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	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	.0%	94.7%	5.3%	100.0%
Incentives	Count	1	14	2	17
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	5.9%	82.4%	11.8%	100.0%
Drink and drive monitoring	Count	0	1	1	2
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Training	Count	0	1	2	3
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Communication	Count	1	2	0	3
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	33.3%	66.7%	.0%	100.0%
I do not know	Count	0	1	1	2
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Total	Count	56	111	38	205
	% within Management systems used in the road transport companies	27.3%	54.1%	18.5%	100.0%

Source: Field data, 2013

Seatbelts were perceived to enhance the safety of the passengers and thus the respondents were very satisfied represented by 37.5%. The perceived importance of repairs and maintenance by the passengers made them feel very satisfied (36.4%) arguing that repairs and maintenance are crucial to the concept of safe arrival.

Discussion, conclusions and recommendations

The findings revealed that the management systems have affected customer satisfaction largely through facilitating timely departures and arrivals and enhancing safety of passengers; and the passengers were generally satisfied with the services provided by the companies. Management systems have enhanced customers' satisfaction through timely departures and arrivals which saves time and money among the traveling public. Timely departures and arrivals enable passengers to easily connect with other transport means to get to their final destinations and conduct their businesses and catching up with other buses. The results are consistent with findings of Fellesson and Friman (2008)

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which identified factors enhancing customer satisfaction in order of importance as: speed, comfort, ease and safety.

Publishing the company information through flyers, leaflets and notices pinned on the company office notice boards enhances appropriate planning for journeys. It helps passengers to determine the arrival time at the bus terminal and points of embarkment and disembarkment. These findings concur with a study done in Italy which concluded that service planning which is reflected in reliability, frequency, information, promotion, personnel and complaint (Eboli & Mazulla, 2009). However, other studies report that travel and traveller's characteristics contribute little to customer satisfaction, and that customer satisfaction is higher when the number of passengers is less, the trip frequency is less, the traveller is older and a woman (Friman, 2004).

Regarding safety of customers, most clients base their travel decisions on the frequency of accidents or no accidents and safety of property in the bus. Companies associated with frequent accidents and theft of properties is avoided unless there are no other service providers on the route. Associated with are the companies with old and dilapidated vehicles since age of the vehicle is linked to occurrence of accidents. A study by UK department of trade & industry (2013) also support these results arguing that security issues such as pick pocketing are some of the factors that determine the passengers' choice of the transport company to travel with. However, the study found that although the management systems have helped enhance the safety of clients, some aspects of safety are still missing in the transport companies' buses such as head rests on seats for long traveling buses, absence of clearly communicated passenger safety measures on board, absence of first aid kits and the dos and the don'ts for passengers on board among others.

Practicing good customer care and handling through welcoming passengers at the ticketing offices and in the buses, assisting passengers with heavy luggage and assisting to direct passengers who are not certain of their destination points were identified as vital. The above results are supported by the results of a study that was done by Fellesson & Friman (2008) where attributes like reliability, frequency, comfort, information, driver behaviour, and cleanliness featured prominently as key elements of passenger satisfaction. The way in which employees treat the customers, reliability of the service, simplicity (e.g. the clarity and availability of information) and recovery when something goes wrong are all significant factors. Note that if the

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service is not available when and where customers expect it, there is a shortcoming in reliability, which will result in dissatisfaction.

Pearson's chi-square test of significance was conducted across the different socio-demographic variables using SPSS and the results showed that passenger satisfaction does not significantly differ among the different demographic variables particularly age, occupation, age, education levels and marital status ($p>0.05$). The above findings are in agreement with a study by Awasthi et al. (2011) who found that service quality management enhances customer satisfaction translating into stable revenue collections. The authors argue that understanding behavioural intentions of public transport passengers is important, because customer loyalty is seen as a prime determinant of long-term financial performance. Occupation of respondents was correlated with the ways in which management systems affect passengers' satisfaction with the services provided by the transport companies. Chi-square test results indicate that there was a statistically significant difference between occupation of respondents and ways in which management systems affect passengers' satisfaction ($p<0.05$). However, the Pearson's chi-square analyses from other variables: age, marital status, and education level generated were negatively correlated with the ways in which management systems affect passengers' satisfaction with the services provided by the transport companies ($p>0.05$) implying that these variables do not affect the respondents' views.

Majority of the passengers were satisfied with services provided by the road transport companies in Rwanda. The services included: timely arrivals, facilities at the stages for picking and dropping passengers, cleanliness of the buses, customer care and handling by the drivers and conductors, the mode of driving, comfortability of spacious and adjustable seats. In Ghana a study by Aidoo et al. (2013) found that the majority of the passengers were satisfied with similar services in addition to waiting time at the terminal for bus, shelter at the bus station, bus convenience, behaviour of the bus driver and conductor, and traffic safety record (Aidoo et al., 2013). This level of satisfaction with the services by the clients is influenced by the different management systems which were implemented by the transport companies including: speed governors, passenger comfort, timely departures and arrivals, safety measures and customer care. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it is in most cases difficult to satisfy all the customers of a service and as a result, the existence of 19% who indicated

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that they were not satisfied should always be expected.

Pearson's Chi-square test of significance was conducted to understand whether age and gender of respondents affect passenger satisfaction and the results were not statistically significant revealed by $p>0.05$. The above results contradicts the results of a study in Ghana which found that higher proportion of both male and female passengers (79% and 77% respectively) rated the bus service quality to be good or excellent (Aidoo et al. 2013). However, another study done by Van Hart (2012) in Netherlands found that women were more satisfied with the frequency and timetable information compared to men, although there was no statistically significant difference among men and women regarding the level of satisfaction with the transport services at a probability level of 0.05.

The statistical analyses using Pearson's chi-square tests of significance were also run between the occupation, marital status, education levels, and the extent to which respondents were satisfied with the services offered by the transport companies. The results showed that variables did not affect the extent to which passengers were satisfied with the services provided by the road transport companies ($p>0.05$). This is consistent with a study in Germany assessing tourists' satisfaction with public transport in Munich where the satisfaction with public transport was independent from most demographic variables except for the country of residence and ease of use (Le-Klähn, 2013). The results showed that there was a slight connection between tourists' country of residence and their satisfaction with the public transport.

The majority of the passengers were very satisfied with the services provided by the transport companies. Contrary to the findings of this study, Friman (2004) found that despite quality improvements in public transport in Sweden, passengers were not satisfied with transport services offered by the companies. Another study done in Indonesia by Budiono (2009) found that a small number of participants (24 out of 171) were satisfied with public bus transport, and none of the participants was very satisfied. In Rwanda, this study found that repairs and maintenance policy propels most companies to institute a schedule for repairing the vehicles before they breakdown. The respondents contended that when bus drivers, cashiers, supervisors and conductors are trained in communication skills, they are often better able to communicate effectively amongst each other and with the passengers. To confirm whether the management systems affect passengers' satisfaction, Pearson's chi-

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square test of significance revealed that there is a statistically significant association between the management systems and passengers' satisfaction ($p<0.05$).

The study concludes that road transport companies' management systems which exist in public companies include: in-vehicle management systems, automobile purchasing and disposal, safety and maintenance and communication systems were instrumental in enhancing customer satisfaction. This has been through ensuring vehicles are in sound conditions thereby reducing the extent and frequency of accidents on most roads in the country. Besides, the use of these systems has saved most transport companies huge amounts of losses which would have been incurred on old and dilapidated vehicles that would require frequent repairs and maintenance and high fuel consumption thereby enhancing revenue generation. The majority of the customers were very satisfied with the services provided by these transport companies owing to clean buses, timely departures and arrivals, fewer accidents, and generally good customer care services provided by the companies.

The study recommends enhancement of customer comfort by installing adjustable seats with adjustable head rests especially for long-haul vehicles to reduce fatigue and discomfort especially for long journeys. Related to this, is the need for the companies to consider overhauling all the old buses especially from intercity routes. They were of the view that such buses should operate in Kigali City or other short routes because of their old wagons which are a risk to the passengers.

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