ESSENTIALS/FUNDAMENTALS OF THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING PROCESS AND SOCIOECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS

BY

SMOOTH TAMARA-EKIA SIMON

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DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL

ENGINEERING

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

AFE BABALOLA UNIVERSITY, ADO-EKITI.

EKITI STATE, NIGERIA.

**ABSTRACT**

Planning for effective development in the various sectors of Nigeria is a herculean task. Especially in the aspect of transportation which forms avital part of living. Transportation systems in Nigeria over the years and since independence has continued on a relatively slow pace and experienced a lot of problems. Inadequacies in this sector has grossly affected urban centers across the nation and as such greatly influenced the country economic and social growth.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

The socio-economic impact of transport policies is becoming a key issue in transport economics. Major transport projects – namely in the infrastructure domain cause substantial consequences and changes not only in the transport system, but in the economy, in the social context, as well as in the environment. Apart for the latter impact, whose assessment routines appear relatively easier to set up, both the economic and social impact are subject to assessment procedures which are often obscure to most stakeholders and even to decision makers. The reliability and trustworthiness of these practices is often questioned, due to some well-known technical and methodological problems. Moreover, they seem to forget the institutional context in which the transport policy is expected to take place. Indeed, the close link between the institutional context and the transport system is often underestimated or just ignored. As a result, transport planning and policies happen to face a lack of consensus largely depending on the “distance” between the technical routines for the socio-economic impact assessment, on one side, and the community with its values, rules and institutions, on the other side.

**CHAPTER TWO**

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

The term “impact” is intended as the scenario expected once a proposed project or intervention has been implemented. Therefore, the impact assessment aims at comparing (at least) two different situations, for example the one expected to occur once the project has been implemented and the option of no intervention (the so-called “do-nothing” solution), in order to estimate the positive or negative effects of the project. A number of different impacts can be considered, for example: fiscal, economic, demographic, social, transport, environmental impacts. Nevertheless, they are usually grouped into three main categories: economic, social and environmental impacts. Assessment will then assume a different name depending on the impact being evaluated: social impact assessment, economic impact assessment, environmental assessment, integrated impact assessment and so on. The purpose of this paper is to focus on the socio-economic impact. It depends from the fusion of two out of the three main impact categories mentioned above. Scientific literature does not agree on an unambiguous definition for such impact assessment According to the most established definition (Canter, Atkinson and Leistritz, 1985), socio-economic impact assessment aims at estimating those effects which characterize and influence the community’s social and economic well-being, and may be grouped in the following categories: economic-demographic impacts; public service impacts; social impacts; fiscal impacts; quality of life. The authors deliberately exclude environmental impacts, although they also influence human environment, since they are more properly

evaluated through specific analytical tool (which normally form specific impact assessment methodologies, such as EIA - Environmental Impact Assessment). According to this definition, economic-demographic impacts mainly concern changes in the economic system (growth or decline of cities and regions, location patterns of firms, prices of goods and services, level of income), in the employment (labor market structure, employment and unemployment rates), in demography (variables such as age, gender, death rate, rates of school attendance and education, migrations. Public service impact involves: services in education, health care, security and defense, garbage system, water, energy, and so on. Social impact concerns land use patterns (households, firms, public services such as hospitals, schools, public parks).

**CHATPTER THREE**

**METHODOLOGY**

Transport systems world over in developed or developing countries face variety of problems which many studies have failed to take cognizance of. Some studies are rather particular instead of holistic and as such neglect of wider range of problems in relationship with other suffice. But urban transport problems are not best solved in a piecemeal fashion. Intimate and inseparable interrelationships exist between transport and geographic locations. Thus, any realistic solution to urban transport problems must take into consideration the interdependence between the form of a city and its transport system. Innovative solutions must be implored to effectively handle matters involving transportation. Besides, urban transport problems, like other city problems in developing countries require innovative solutions Gaurav, Young and Khisty (1998)suggested three policy strands involving practices, innovations and sustainable development and emphasized that the three strands could substantially reduce economic, environmental and social costs of some of the negative trends and impacts of urban transportation systems in developing countries. Additionally, caution must be exercised by developing countries in learning from the mistakes made in developed countries such as the United States and to develop solutions specific to their own needs as opposed to simply copying approaches used by developed countries. A major cause of traffic problems in Nigeria is the city structure which predates the advent of automobiles. Structural pattern of the roads, especially in the traditional areas of the city and the unplanned growth and haphazard land-use distribution, impose serious constraints on movement and the facilities provided. Therefore, there is need for a comprehensive understanding of the structural pattern of an urban area and the traffic carrying capability of the roads in order to tackle its transportation problems.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**RESULTS**

The major road transport infrastructure in Nigeria consists of 32,000 km of Federal highways including seven major bridges across the Niger and Benue Rivers, the Lagos ring road, the third mainland axial bridge; 30,500km of state roads; and 130,000 km of local roads (Buhari, 2000). As at June1996, only 50% of the Federal roads and 20% of the State roads were in reasonably good condition and an estimated 5% of local rural roads freely motor able. The rehabilitation programmed carried out by the Petroleum Trust Fund (PTF) in the years 1996 to 1999 covered selected portions of the Federal roads totaling about 12,000 km, along with township roads in about 18 selected cities. Even this programmed however has now lost its steam. Meanwhile overuse and lack of maintenance are further eroding the quality of the rest of the Federal highway network.

A nation- wide survey was conducted by the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN)on the state of highways in the country in December 2002. The survey revealed that the road network, as at December 2002, was estimated at 194,000km. Most of the roads were in a bad condition, especially those in the South Eastern and North Western parts of the country. Some of the roads, constructed over 30 years ago, had not been rehabilitated even once, resulting in major cracks (longitudinal and transverse), depressions, broken down bridges and numerous potholes that make road transport slow and unsafe (CBN, 2002).

Faulty designs, lack of drainage and very thin coatings that are easily washed away, excessive use of the road network, given the underdeveloped nature of waterways and railways which could serve as alternative means of transport, absence of an articulated road programmed, and inadequate funding for road maintenance are reasons for the poor state of Nigerian roads. The effects of the inadequate maintenance and renewal of equipment and facilities is visible in all subsectors: inadequate condition of the roads and the need for their subsequent reconstruction; inadequate replacement and maintenance of vehicles, contributing to high social costs of atmospheric pollution, resulting in high operating costs. In turn, such excessive operating costs, by decreasing net operating revenues, make



timely replacement of vehicles difficult. Railways on the other hand, suffered lack of necessary resources to keep track, rolling stock and maintenance facility in reasonable conditions has led to a very serious deterioration of the railway system. Similar problems affect inland waterways affecting their ability to perform useful functions. According to Olomola (2003), inadequate provision of transport infrastructure and services provide a basis for explaining the incidence of poverty across various Nigerian communities in both urban and rural areas. The categories of transport problems that can be identified are: bad roads, fuel problem (high fuel price, shortage of fuel supply and consequential high transport cost), traffic congestion (long waiting time, bad driving habits, hold-ups), and inadequate high passenger capacity/mass transit vehicles. It is clearly established that inadequate transport facilities and services as well as the constraints imposed on the mobility and accessibility of people to facilities such as markets, hospitals and water sources have grave implications on deepening poverty levels. Thus, there is need for urgent policy measures to address the prevailing travel and transport problems. The vast majority of Nigerian national transport movements are performed through the road and air transport sub-sectors, with railway and inland waterways playing important, although secondary, roles. In the international transport, sea transport is the principal transport mode, while air transport, together with coastal shipping and road transport, as link with neighboring countries, are the principal passenger carriers. Today, road transport accounts for more than 90% of the country goods and passengers’ movements (Filani, 2002)

**CONCLUSION**

It seems that, so far, the most used and widespread impact assessment techniques largely fail to consider the interaction between the project and policies which are being evaluated and the institutional context in which they are expected to be implemented. This failure is possibly one of the major reasons for the gap frequently occurring between the evaluation of transport projects and policies and the degree of consensus coming from citizens and stakeholders.

Actually, current assessment procedures and impact-evaluation parameters do not match the institutional changes nor they account for them.

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