

INTERCITY BUS TERMINALS

**STUDY OF PASSENGER FACILITIES IN
MACHAKOS BUS STATION, NAIROBI**



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE AND
ENGINEERING

SCHOOL OF THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE
AND BUILDING SCIENCE

MUDONGI MAURICE GEORGE

B02/0804/2011

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DECLARATION

This Thesis is my original work and has not, to the best of my knowledge, been presented in any university for the award of a degree or any other academic qualification.

AUTHOR: Mudongi Maurice George (B02/0804/2011)

Signature:..... Date:.....

This thesis is presented in the 2016-2017 academic year in partial fulfilment of the examination board requirements for the award of the Degree of Bachelor of Architecture, University of Nairobi.

Tutor: Arch. Githitu Mahinda

Signature:.....Date:.....

Year Coordinator: Arch. E. O. Abonyo

Signature:.....Date:.....

Chairman, Department of Architecture and Building Science: Arch. Musau Kimeu

Signature:.....Date:.....

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ABSTRACT

Urban areas across the globe are growing at a high rate. The existing infrastructure, such as in the transport sector are therefore strained and continuously need improvements. Efficiency in the modern urban areas can therefore be achieved by keeping systems at par with modern technological developments and able to meet needs of the growing population.

My study focused on Nairobi, the capital City of Kenya. Public transport is the most viable mode with regards to the population size and income structure of the residents. However, the facilities that support the public modes of transport do not meet the demand and do not offer the desirable levels of service. This research therefore seeks to investigate the condition of one of the long distance bus facilities in Nairobi, the Machakos Country bus Station to understand how the transport services are conducted within the station, and then deduce possible remedies for the challenges experienced by passengers.

This study needed an understanding of passenger facilities for public transport. I therefore review existing documentations on public transport and passenger facilities. The review involved a broader overview of public transport in developing countries as it is the setting within which Nairobi lies. I also looked at the informal public transport sector because a large market share in Nairobi is served by informal operators and finally review literature in a sustainable transport system to understand how an ideal system would be structure for Nairobi.

A bus terminal is an important component of a transport system serving as a point of passenger concentration, point of passenger dispersion, point of loading and unloading passengers, point of modal interchange, accommodates waiting passengers and vehicles, accommodates facilities and amenities for passengers and bus crew, place of documentation of the journey (ticketing), provides an information system and a component that integrates various systems of transportation.

This research also discusses the different types of bus terminals; the Intercity bus terminals, airport-city bus terminals, Urban-Sub-urban bus terminals and suburban-interstate bus terminals. Intercity bus terminals have been identified in this thesis as the ones with the most elaborate passenger facilities with highest levels of service. The intercity bus terminals should therefore meet passenger expectations in terms of the time it takes to document the journey, convenience, and comfort.

This thesis discusses the planning, design and operation of a bus terminal with a focus on safety and security, wayfinding and service information, comfort and convenience and visibility as the main parameters that influence the experience of passengers at a bus terminal. The study mainly relied on secondary information to outline the above parameters and discuss in detail how they apply in passenger facilities. The established parameters were also used to analyse two precedent case studies.

The literature review and the precedent case study analysis therefore gave guidelines on how to undertake primary data collection from the empirical case study, Machakos bus Station in Nairobi. The secondary information was also used as reference to analyse the findings from the empirical case study and to give recommendations on how to improve the passengers service facilities.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

For many years, urban areas have been growing in all parts of the world. In recent times, the rate of urbanization has been and is still very high in most countries. Several factors lead to the high rate of urban population growth. Urbanism is also perceived to be modern and smart way to live.

With continuous growth of urban population, the factors that attract people into urban centres start being strained and occasionally there is need for their improvement to cope with the growth in their use. Keeping these support factors in balance with the growth in their use is what modern cities strive to achieve endlessly.

One of the factors that support urban activities is the transport system. Cities worldwide can be rated based on the efficiency of their transport system. All aspects of urban life rely on transport. People in formal employment must be transported to work, those in the commercial sector have to transport their merchandise from source to the market, producers and manufacturers need to transport inputs needed for the production and must transport the products to the market, urban people in general need transport to get to the places of recreation and people are connected between cities and their rural homes by transport.

Efficiency of a transport system in any urban area determines general growth and the quality of life of its people. Cities all over the world work towards achieving the most efficient transport

system that meets the demand all the time. It is therefore important that urban authorities prioritize transport matters for them to achieve their development goals.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The city of Nairobi is experiencing rapid population growth. Being in Kenya which is a developing country, public transport system is the most viable because it is economical with regards to infrastructure requirement compared to private transport system. Public transport system is mainly structured to serve passengers. It is therefore important that the system is operated, facilitated and maintained with consideration for best quality of service for the passengers. However, the public transport in Nairobi is not in the best condition to provide services that focus on passengers to assure reasonably high standards.

A public transport system is made up of various components, among them are the roads, terminals and the vehicles. All these components must be balanced for efficiency of transport service. The number of vehicles for intercity public transport in Nairobi is rising in response to the increase in demand. However, the facilities for passenger services remain in poor condition and therefore not able to facilitate quality service for public transport users.

This research is therefore intended to study the current condition of passenger facilities in Machakos Country Bus Station in Nairobi city, and come up with proposals that can help to improve service quality and experience for the passengers it serves.

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- i. To study the condition of passenger facilities in Machakos Country Bus Station.
- ii. To evaluate the efficiency of service delivery to passengers in the station.
- iii. To propose possible improvements that can better the quality of service and experience of passengers at the bus station.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Nairobi has a high population that continues to grow. Apart from meeting the urban transport needs of city commuters, it also acts as a national node for inter-city and upcountry transport. Long distance and local urban passengers therefore all need to be offered quality services and assured of best experience at the bus terminals.

There are some improvements on the road infrastructure in Nairobi. The public transport vehicles have increased mainly because they are provided by the private sector who are motivated by the increased demand to buy more buses. In this case therefore, the two major components of the public transport system are being improved to meet the increasing demand, but the services at the terminals which complement these other two components are not to desirable standard. This study is therefore meant to study and propose measures that can be taken to ensure that passenger service at the Machakos Country Bus Station in Nairobi are of best quality to satisfy the users.

1.5 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- i. What is the current condition of passenger facilities in Machakos Country Bus Station?
- ii. How efficient is service delivery to passengers in the bus station?
- iii. What are the possible improvements that can make the quality of service and experience for passengers better at the station?

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This study will only cover passenger facilities as a component of Machakos Country Bus Station. Insecurity at the bus station may limit the use of digital equipment like camera and smart phone in taking photographs and voice recording. The limited time of about six months may not be adequate to study the passenger facilities and service processes at the bus station in detail.

