

## EFFECTS OF INSURGENCY ON ROAD TRANSPORTATION OPERATIONS IN NIGER STATE, NIGERIA.

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### Abstract

The rate of insurgency in Nigeria in general and Niger State in particular especially on the roads is of great concern to the governments and the stakeholders in the country. The fear of the unknown and whether someone will arrive at his/her final destination has become a mirage. Many refuses to travel again, some using alternative means such as rail and air transport, while several others now make the only essential journey. It is on this premise that this paper focuses on the effects of insurgency on road travel and freight transportation in, Niger state. Secondary information from reports on transport insecurity was analysed while 301 copies of questionnaires were administered using simple random sampling to passengers at seven major interstate road transport parks in Minna. Oral interview was also deployed to acquire information from park managers and operators of the various interstate transport service providers. Findings revealed that the safety and security of lives and goods were some of the important factors that determine the choice of transportation services. It was also revealed that increase in fare rates; waiting times and reduced patronage were the major effects of insecurity on interstate road transport service in Minna. The paper therefore recommends the overhauling of the security arms of the nation by recruiting more personnel, providing them with efficient weapons and incentives while the roads should be well maintained, lighted at night and equipped with cameras. Furthermore, efforts should be made to encourage the use of virtual technologies to reduce the need for travels, thereby reducing risk of attacks on roads.

**Keywords:** Insurgency, Road, Transport, Services, Operation

### Introduction

The provision of accessible road networks and the resultant impacts on the economy of the nation is a critical factor which cannot be over emphasized when meaningful development is a goal in view. The welfare of large number of Nigerians depends to a large extent on the ease of inter and intra mobility and accessibility (Ajiboye, 2011).

Transportation therefore is a central sector of any nation's economy in which other sectors depend on. This is because road network place significant role in the collection and exchange of goods and services, movement of people and goods, and demand and supply by overcoming space constraints.

Places that are located far apart are connected through effective transportation, thereby making possible transfer and exchange of people, goods and services from one geographical location to another. The advantages of transportation are many with tremendous impact on the socio-economic sector of any nation. The significant role of road transport in promoting development of any country can hardly be overemphasized due to the fact that it is a strong factor in all sphere of developmental projects while there is no developmental area in which transportation is not an crucial ingredient since there is always the need to collect goods, assemble, move, transfer and distribute them as well as move people and services from one geographical location to another (Ajiboye & Afolayan, 2009).

Transport is a key system that attracts huge investment, people, infrastructure, as well as economic development according to Ewetan & Urhie (2014). It has also attracted the attention from individual(s) or organisation that seeks to destabilise the government and peace of the country or even harm the economy. The road transport networks and overall systems are seen as soft target for attacks which has not only resulted in loss of lives and properties, right of freedom among others but has also succeeded in disrupting the economy of the nation and communities. Thus, some atrocious acts are carried out on the roads by notorious men thereby complicating the security threats to lives and properties (Ndubuisi-Okolo, & Anigbuogu, 2019).

Nigeria has been witnessing several cases of insurgency on her roads both in the rural

and urban areas, south and north, east and west Adegoke (2015). The insurgency includes the North Central Geo-political zone and Niger State in particular. The series of attacks on the roads has affected the easy movement of freights, people and the economy of Niger State greatly especially for a state with largest land area throughout the country (Niger State Government, nd).

Despite the effort of the governments and transport service providers across the world in battling with all the obstacles that is hindering the efficient and effective provision of transport systems such as high rate of accidents, armed robbery, banditry, kidnapping for ransom, terrorism, militancy and insurgency. These are common occurrences that are witnessed across the nation. Almost all sectors of the economy have been affected directly or indirectly by these attacks. The transport system has not been left out; rather, it has witnessed very high number of attacks.

The attacks on the road transport have been more frequent due to its level of usage, the flexibility of the mode, high coverage and accessibility. Road transport users on transit are often stopped, robbed and sometime kidnapped at gun point for ransom and in some cases killed; vehicles are seized and motor parks filled with passengers are sometime bombed resulting to loss of lives and properties. All these attacks affect road transportation and might lead to undesirable outcome as it might affect customers' expectation, satisfaction and even willingness to use transport services. The critical nature of the insecurity in road transport has made it an

important matter that needs to be studied in order to identify not only the impacts on the road freight transport system but also on its users and operators so as to identify and proffer possible solutions which can lead to minimizing the occurrences while saving lives and properties. Based on this, this study assesses the effect of insurgency on road freight transportation in Niger State.

## CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATIONS

### *Security and Insecurity*

For proper understanding of the concept of insecurity and its relationship with transportation, it is important to understand the concept of security. The issue of security has been identified as one of the major challenges faced by the world in the 21<sup>st</sup> century alongside climate change, poverty and inequality. Security is so important that different categories of people provide different definition based on their level of understanding and needs. Its importance is such that it serves as the basis of social contract for which citizens surrendered their rights to a government in exchange for survival and protection Adegoke (2015). Security has been said to involve the mechanisms employed to reduce, prevent, protect and resolve threats that originate from state, non-state and even economic conditions (Stan, 2005).

In defining and conceptualizing security, issues such “the absence of threats to peace, stability, national cohesion, political and socio-economic objectives of a country” have been areas of emphasis upon which most authors base their definitions (Ewetan and Urhie, 2014). This correctly summarizes the definition and scope of most scholars’ definition of security.

Afolabi (2009) have defined security as the feeling of being safe from harm, fear, anxiety, oppression, danger, poverty, defence, protection and preservation of core values and threat to those values. While Williams (2008) sees security as being commonly associated with the alleviation of threats to cherish values, especially those threats which threaten the survival of a particular reference object.

Two major school of thoughts to the concept of security, which are the traditional and the non- traditional. The traditional school of thought is of a realist constructs in which the reference objects is the state. It limits security to peace and prevention of conflict through military means. It defines security to mean safety from danger and from external attack or infiltration (Afolabi, 2009). This is evident in a paper written by Stephen & Walt, (1991) where security was defined as a study of threat, use and control of military force. The non-traditional school of thought goes further to widen the definition of security to not only include achievement of peace or prevention of conflict through military means. It argues that environmental, health, political, social and economic threats should all be considered as these sometimes can be more dangerous to lives and properties of individuals (Stephen & Walt, (1991).

Security is more than military security or security from external attacks. For many inhabitants in the developing countries, security is conceived as the basic level of the struggle for survival. Therefore, in order to provide an integrated African Security Assessment, the non – military dimension of security should be added. Henceforth, Ochoche (1997) observed that security as a

concept should be applied in its broader sense to include economic security, social security, environmental security, food security, equality of life security and technological security.

Beland (2005) see insecurity as the opposite of security or the absence of security. It has been defined to mean a state of fear or anxiety, being insecure, prone to danger or injury which tends to arise from the absence of concrete or alleged protection (Beland, 2005). Insecurity has also been defined as the state of being exposed to risk, harm, anxiety or danger. This was well summarized by (Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro, 2013) who defined insecurity from two perspectives. Firstly, as the state of being open or subject to danger or threat of danger, where danger is the condition of being susceptible to harm or injury. Secondly, as the state of being exposed to risk or anxiety, where anxiety is a vague unpleasant emotion that is experienced in anticipation of some misfortune.

### ***Human Security***

The concept of human security arises from the conventional security studies which centers on the security of the state. It is focused on how individuals can be protected from both traditional and non-traditional threats (Afolabi, 2009). An important belief in this concept is that peace and stability cannot be achieved within or among states when humans are deprived of security.

Human security has been defined by some to mean safety of people from violent and non - violent threat. It is a condition of being characterized by freedom from pervasive threat to people's rights, their

ability or even their lives. It calls to taking people as the point of reference rather than focusing on government or territorial protection (Afolabi, 2009). Human Security are characterized by seven dimensions namely

- a. Economic Security
- b. Food security
- c. Health security
- d. Environmental security
- e. Personal security
- f. Community security
- g. Political security

Economic security is a type of security that requires that there should be an assured basic income for individuals mostly from productive and remunerative work or from a publicly financed safety net. Food security demand that people should have physical and economic access to food. Health security requires that there should be a guarantee of minimum protection from diseases and unhealthy daily life. Environmental security aims at protecting people from short- and long-term effects of nature, manmade threats in nature and deterioration of natural environment. Personal security is focused on protection of individuals and people from physical violence either from the state or outside the state, which could be from violent individuals, sub-state actors or domestic abuse. Community security aims to protecting people form the loss of traditional relationships, values and from sectarian and ethnic violence. Political security guarantees protection of fundamental human rights of citizenry (Afolabi, 2009).

### ***Insecurity in Nigeria***

Insecurity in Nigeria presents itself in different forms across the different states or geopolitical zones of the country. Violent attacks ranging from banditry, kidnappings, armed robbery, ambushes, killings, bombings, rape, rustling amongst others has been on the increase since 2011 (Ade, 2021). A report by Globalr2p (2021) showed that at least 35000 people have been killed by insurgents since 2009, 3188 persons were killed across Nigeria in 2019, while 4,556 and many others kidnapped in 2020 (about 43% increase in fatalities to that of the previous year (Ade, 2021). In the first six weeks of 2021, 1525 were reported to have also lost their lives to attacks by both state and non-state actors, while several others were kidnapped according to Ade, (2021).

2021 witnessed a sharp increase from the previous years, making it the deadliest in recent years. A report by Beacon Consulting Group (2021) put the total insecurity cases for the year as at November, 2021 to be 2,047 from which 7886 persons were killed and 4,275 were kidnapped. The report showed that there were more cases of insecurity (25%) in the Northwestern parts of the country and least in the Northeastern part (10%) with majority of the attacks being attributed to criminals or bandits, who were responsible for about 1,107 cases alone. The Northcentral region accounted for 19% of the attacks while the southwestern, south-south, and southeastern regions accounted for 17%, 14% and 14% respectfully.

### ***Transport Insecurity***

The transport is a system designed to aid the movement of people from one location to another, thereby overcoming space

constraints. Safety and security of passengers and goods is so important in transportation that it is believed that transportation has not taken place in the absence of these two elements. In transportation, the concept of safe arrival is a concept that states that transportation has not taken place until the passengers arrive at their destination safely. The safety here is not limited to the avoidance of injury or damage but rather encompasses absence of exhaustion by sickness, anxiety, discomfort or frustration. In an ideal system, passengers and cargos should be transported from one point to another without fear of attacks, damage, delay, diversion or even theft as these issues defeats the goal of transport is safe arrival. Therefore, a transport system plagued by insecurity and frequent attacks cannot be said to be a functional and safe transport system. Safe arrival of passengers or goods means peace of mind to the customer. This peace of mind is a quality which the customer is prepared, to pay good money or reasonable sum and make him satisfied with the service, the operating agency provide.

### ***Road Transport Insecurity in Nigeria***

Insecurity on road transport has been on the rise in Nigeria as kidnappings, armed robbery, ambushes and murder on the roads have become an almost daily occurrence. A report by Beacon Consulting Group (2021) shows that about 224 (10.9%) of the attacks carried out in the country were done on the road, from which 976 persons were kidnapped and 330 were killed. The roads therefore have become a death trap for the road users and an evergreen producer of potential victims for different non-state

actors who have turned some roads into hotspot for their terror activities.

### ***Causes of Road Transport Insecurity in Nigeria***

Several causes and factors that has led to insecurity in Nigeria have been put forward by different researchers. Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) for example summarized these causes or factors to include leadership/power tussle, unemployment/poverty issue, porous borders, weak security system, ethno-religious conflict, wrong perception between the public and government and lack of institutional capacity. All of these factors are important as they either have direct or indirect effect on all sectors of the economy including transportation. Those that are more specific to transport are explained as follows:

#### **1. Unemployment/Poverty**

Poverty and unemployment are one of the major factors that pushes people (especially youths) to crime. The rise in the level of unemployment and poverty have succeeded in pushing people to illegal activities such as kidnapping, robbery, child abduction, and other nefarious activities which they see as a way of making income. According to Adagba, Chijioke, & Innocent (2012) the level of povety is so high that a larger portion of the population fall under the category of the poor or of those in abject poverty. This was pointed out by Ndubuisi-Okolo and Anigbuogu (2019) in their study where it was stated that despite Nigeria's huge resource and oil wealth, majority of its citizen still live in poverty with over 70 percent of the population classified as being poor, of which 35 percent were living in abject poverty.

Some of those that carries out attack on victims and soft target are victims of poverty and unemployment who are brainwashed or forced toosee illicit activits as an alternative and a way According to Nwagbosa (2012) the failure of the government to provide employment and lower the level of poverty, as well as the inequitable distribution of wealth among ethnic nationalities has contributed to the rise in insecurity in the country.

#### **2. Weak Security System**

Inadequate equipment for the security arm of the country in terms of weapon and expertise is a major cause of insecurity in the country (Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro, 2013). This is in addition to poor attitudinal and behavioural disposition of security personnel. In many cases, security personnel assigned to deal with given security situations on the roads lack the expertise and equipment to handle the situations in a way to prevent them from occurring. Also presence of ethno-religious and comunal sentiments as well as personal interest have contributed to the sorry state of security in the country. Thus, instead of being national watch dogs and defending national interest and values, and protecting people from harm by criminals, they soon become saboteurs of government effort, by supporting and fuelling insecurity through either leaking vital security information or aiding and abetting criminals to acquire weapons or to escape the long arm of the law (Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro, 2013).



## METHODS AND MATERIALS

The study was descriptive in nature. Both primary and secondary types of data were gotten from both primary and secondary sources respectively. Primary sources were the passengers and operators while secondary sources were journals as well as published articles and reports. Using a population of 1231 representing average daily users of interstate service. A sample size of 301 was arrived at using Taro Yamen's formula and simple random sampling method was used to administer the questionnaires carrying questions on socio economic characteristics of passengers, importance of security of passengers and goods were distributed to passengers while oral interviews were carried out with operatives and passengers to determine the impacts or effects of insecurity on quality of service rendered. Results from questionnaires are presented in charts while responses from the interviews are itemized and explained. Information from reports were analysed and explained using percentages and frequencies.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### **Insecurity in North Central Nigeria Roads**

From the report of Beacon Consulting (2021), it was discovered that there were about 42 cases of insecurity on the North Central roads in 2021 where about 254 lives were affected. 183 were kidnapped while 71 were killed in a span of 11 months (January to November). Results showed that the civilians have been the most affected of the various groups of people on the northcentral roads where about 90.7% of the attacks targeted civilians. Other groups studied were the security forces, criminal and bandits who were the least affected by the attacks. This is not surprising as criminals, bandits and other unidentified gunmen were the major perpetrators of the attack claiming responsibility for more than 75% of the total attacks. Of the seven states studied, Niger and Plateau states had the highest number of attacks in the region with each having 8 (18.6%) cases of attacks on road users, Nasarawa and Kwara both had 7 cases while FCT had 6, Kogi, 5 and Benue, 1. Making Niger and Plateau roads the most insecure roads in the North Central region.

## Socioeconomic Characteristics of Inter-State Road Users in Minna, Niger State Gender of Passengers

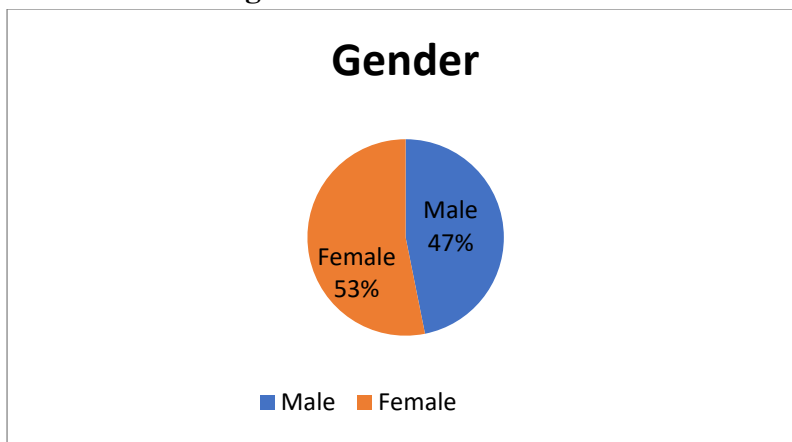


Figure 1. Gender of Passengers  
Source: Author's Survey (2021)

Figure 1. above shows that majority of the passengers were female having 53% and male with 47%. This implies that females use the interstate transport service more than men which also means that there are more females traveling from Minna to other states than there are men. This study had focused on interstate services without consideration of the type of vehicle used, the above result shows that women travel more to other states than men irrespective of the type of vehicle.

### Age of Passengers

Table 1. Age of Passengers

Age Range	Frequency	Percent
18-30yrs	89	29.6
31-40yrs	103	34.2
41-50yrs	94	31.2
51-60yrs	15	5.0
<i>Total</i>	301	100.0

Source: Author's Survey (2021)

It was discovered that majority of the passengers (39.6%) were within the age range of 31- 40 years, while 34.2% were within the range of 41-50years, followed by those within the age range of 18-30 years which was 29.6% and lastly those within the range of 51-60yrs whom were only 5%. This implies that the interstate public transport services are mostly patronized by youths and adults within the range of 18 to 50 years. This result implies that people above 50 tend to travel less using public transport services which might be as a result of unsatisfying level of service or discomfort.

### Occupation of Passengers

Table 2. Occupation of Passengers

Occupations	Frequency	Percent
Civil servant	64	21.3
Student	52	17.3
Self-employed	116	38.5
Privately employed	29	9.6



Retiree	36	12.0
Others	4	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Author’s Survey (2021)

Table 2. above revealed that most of the passengers (38.5%) were self-employed, followed by the civil servants who were 21.3%, then the students who were 17.3%, then the retirees with 12%, the privately employed with 9.6%. Other occupations were only 1.3%. This implies that majority of the passengers were self-employed which largely comprises of traders and business persons. This therefore means that the major reason for the use of interstate services are for business or trade purpose as shown in table 4.7 below.

### Passengers’ Marital Status

**Table 3. Marital Status of passengers**

<i>Marital Status</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Single	120	39.9
Married	181	60.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Author’s Survey (2021)

Table 3. above shows that 60.1% which is the majority, are married while 39.9% are single. This implies that majority of interstate travels are done by married people

### Passengers’ Income Level

Table 4. Level of Income

Monthly Income Level	Frequency	Percent
less than N50,000	249	82.7
N50,000-N100000	40	13.3
N100,001-N150,000	9	3.0
N150,001 - N200,000	3	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Author’s Survey (2021)

Table 4 above shows the level of income of the users of interstate public transport services in Minna. It was revealed that majority of the users earn less than N50,000 monthly, which amounts to about 82.7% of the users studied. 13.3% had an income level within the range of N50,000 to N100,000, 3% earned between the range of N100,001 to 150,000 while just 1% earned more than 150,000. Which implies that the interstate transport is mostly used by people who do not earn enough to own a personal vehicle or used due to its affordability as compared to using private vehicles which will require high cost of maintenance.

### Level of Education of Passengers

Table 5: Level of Education

<i>Highest Level of Education</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Primary	44	14.6
Secondary	60	19.9
University	91	30.2
Post-Graduate	12	4.0
Diploma	77	25.6

no formal education	17	5.6	required to look to improving their services to attract both parties.
<i>Total</i>	<i>301</i>	<i>100.0</i>	

Source: Author’s Survey (2021)

From table 5. above, which shows the highest level of education of the passengers, 4% of the passengers had post-graduate degrees, 30.2% were degree holders, 25.6% had diploma, 19.9% had only secondary school certificates, while 14.6% stopped at primary education. 5.6% had no formal education. Having high rate of educated individuals using this service implies that their taste and level of satisfaction will be different from does with lower education. Operators are

### Importance of Security to Road Users

The passengers are the users of the transport services and they are in the best position to identify factors they consider important in assessing the quality of service of a particular transport industry. Their willingness to use a service depends on a lot of factors, one of which is the level of security provided or available. Figure 1 and 2 below sheds light on how important the passengers takes the issue of security of lives and properties respectively.

**safety and security of people carried**

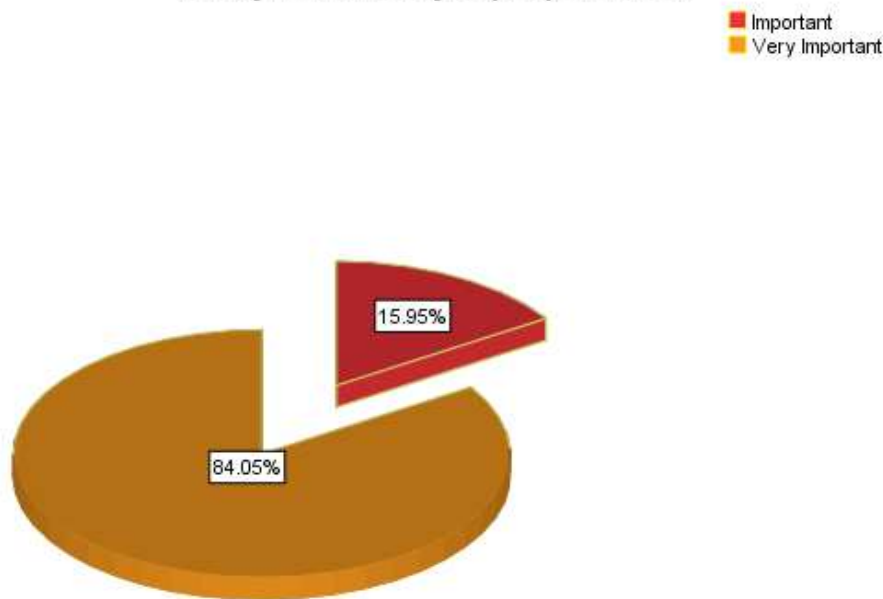
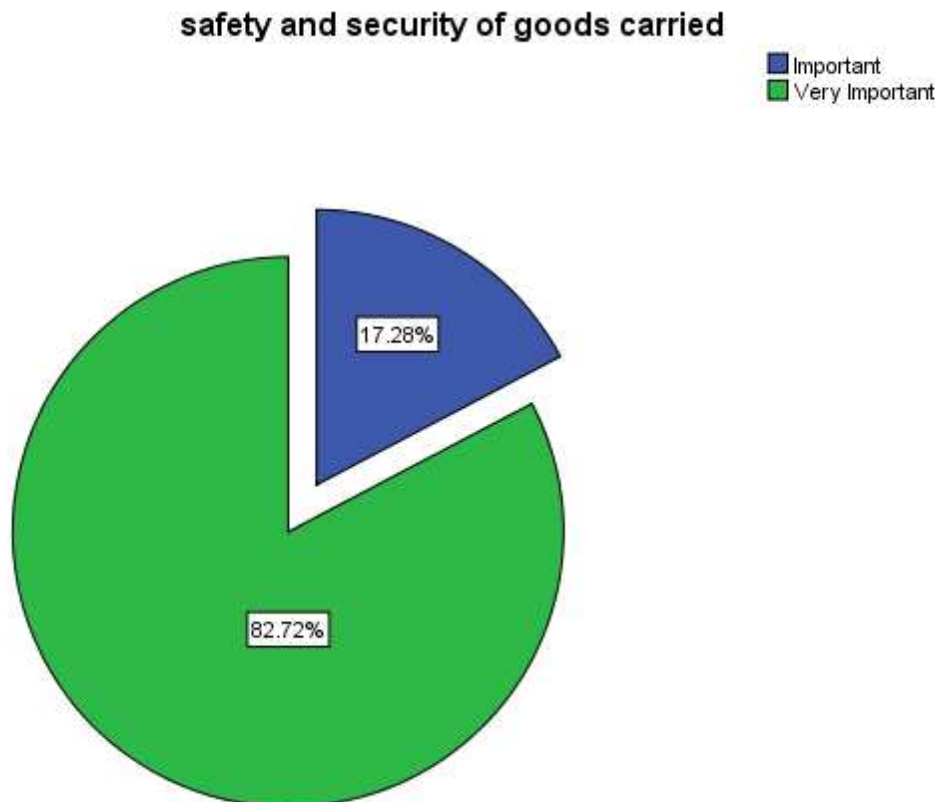


Figure 2. Importance of safety and security of passengers carried to passengers

Figure 2 above shows the level of importance of security and safety of interstate transport service to passengers. Results shows that safety and security of passengers in the use of interstate transport, is of paramount importance to its users.

Passengers studied all responded with important or very important to the question ask as 84.05% of the passengers viewed security to be very important variable that determines quality of service while 15.95% viewed it as important.



*Figure 3 Importance of goods safety and security to passengers*

Figure 3 which shows the result of the level of importance of safety and security of goods to passengers is unsurprisingly not different from the result in figure 1. All of the users studied all agree that safety and security of goods is just as important as the safety and security of passengers as 82.72% viewed it as very important and 17.28% viewed it as important. These results further strengthen the fact that security is a very essential element in transportation that should not be overlooked. Its deficiency therefore will affect the quality of service rendered, which can further lead to unwillingness of the passengers to use the services.

### **Impact of Insecurity on Inter-State Road Transport Service**

1. **Reduced Patronage:** Operators at the interstate parks have noticed a decline in the level of patronage. Fewer passengers now travel to others state due to the spike in insecurity on the roads especially those leading to other states. The fear of being kidnapped or killed especially on routes plagued by insecurity have deterred passengers from using the interstate services. Serious cost-benefit analysis is now done by passengers to determine whether the need to travel outweighs the risk of possible attack during trip.
2. **Longer Waiting Times:** Reduced patronage of the interstate transport services has often led to increase in waiting times at the park. Vehicles

take longer to get occupied which in turn disrupts the schedule of travel especially in parks that stick to schedule.

3. Increased Fare rates: Increased journey time, reduced patronage as well as extortion of money from drivers by security officials who ought to provide security are factors that are said to have led to the increased in fare rates. Operators and drivers are now forced to charge more in order to cover operating and extortion cost.
4. Longer Journey Times: Interstate transport service providers are most times faced with the option of taking an alternative route which are deemed safer. These routes are usually longer and sometimes very bad due to the nature of the roads which are filled with potholes.
5. Late night travels: Park operators who offer night travels have been forced to reschedule their services to avoid journeying late at night. Their experiences with such travels have discouraged them as it is believed the probability of getting attacked at late hours are higher than during the day. This is also coupled with the fact that getting passengers at that time is difficult as most have the same fear.
6. Loss of Quality Personnel: Abduction and death of drivers resulting from attacks during trips have put some interstate service providers at loss. Fewer drivers are now available to provide the needed experience to comfortably transport

the passengers from points of origin to destination.

7. Loss of Vehicles due to damage/destruction during attacks or theft have led to a reduction in the number of vehicle available for interstate transport service
8. Finally, overall quality of service is greatly reduced due to the reduced level of overall satisfaction arising from fear of becoming victims of attacks, high fare rates and potential loss of lives and properties.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to mitigate the impact of insecurity on transportation in general and quality of transport service specifically, the following recommendations are given.

1. Providing security at terror hotspots: security officials should be strategically placed at areas on the road that are prone to attack to help deter insurgents and confer a sense of security on the passengers. In areas where there are deficiencies, more officials should be provided to bolster the ranks of the security forces.
2. Employment and empowerments: Employment opportunities should be provided and people should be empowered by government to reduce idleness or joblessness which might push people to carry out heinous crimes.
3. Proper road maintenance: corrective and preventive maintenance practice should be carried out regularly to fill potholes, seal cracks and fix damaged complimentary facilities. Bad road

has been identified as a reason for accidents and also aiding attacks.

4. Investment in virtual technology: The government and private organizations should look towards investing in technology to reduce the need for travels. Encouraging virtual conferences, classes and meetings will help reduce the need for people to put their lives on the road. While this might affect the transportation industry, its benefit outweighs the cost, as safety of lives is of paramount importance in transportation. Transportation has only taken place when destination is reached safely and a threat to this safety and security destroys the objective of transportation.
5. Investing in other means of transport: Improving and investing on rail transport will help reduce the pressure on road transport and provide better alternatives for users who feel unsafe using the roads.
6. Roads should be fitted with Close Circuit Television (CCTV) to enable a continuous monitoring of the roads. Deployment of CCTV cameras to strategic positions will help in keeping track of what is happen or has happen on a particular road. This can aid in investigations and tracking of suspects or lost and stolen vehicles on the road.
7. There should be enlightenment and encouragement for road users on the importance of using Global Positioning System (GPS) on vehicles. More awareness and use of the GPS trackers in vehicles will

help in improving security condition as stolen vehicles can be easily tracked and culprits apprehended. Tracking devices or chips can also be placed on ID cards or other less conspicuous items which victims can place on their bodies when kidnapped to aid tracking and subsequent rescue operations. The importance of the GPS tracking device should be considered and more effort should be made to encourage its use and development.

8. Intelligent devices should be developed and implanted in vehicles such that vehicle users can press buttons that automatically and instantly sends distress signals to nearest security post carrying information of the vehicle and approximate location in order to aid swift response to attacks and dangers.

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