

The Experiences of Public Transport Drivers with People with Disability in the City of Tshwane, South Africa

Babra Duri^{1*}, Rose Luke¹

1. Department of Transport and Supply Chain Management, University of Johannesburg, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Purpose: *Public transport drivers are an intermediary between transport infrastructure and passengers with disability. The purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives of public transport drivers on their encounters with passengers with disability, and the impact this has on public transport inaccessibility.*

Method: *A qualitative research approach was applied. A semi-structured interview guide was utilised to collect data from public transport drivers. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data and an inductive approach was followed to allow data to determine themes.*

Results: *The study found that public transport drivers operate under challenging conditions. The drivers' main issues and challenges are lack of training and knowledge on disability, negative attitudes displayed by passengers, and having to satisfy conflicting demands from both employers and passengers with disability. The conflicting demands are intensified by the lack of universally designed vehicles and infrastructure.*

Conclusion: *The actions of transport providers contribute to transport inaccessibility. The identification of issues and drivers' concerns in this study could help to enhance driver training, improve transport services and enrich inputs into public transport policies.*

Key words: *passengers with disability, public transport, transport barriers, public transport drivers, people with disability, attitudes*

INTRODUCTION

Accessible public transport enables the socio-economic participation of people with disability (Park & Chowdhury, 2018). The National Household Travel

* **Corresponding Author:** Babra Duri, Department of Transport and Supply Chain Management, University of Johannesburg, South Africa. Email: bmabumbo@gmail.com

Survey (NHTS) 2020 of South Africa reported that public transport is the main mode used by most households (Stats SA, 2021). The three main modes which constitute the public transport system in the City of Tshwane are mini-bus taxis, buses and trains, with mini-bus taxis as the most used and most available mode (Stats SA, 2021). However, many people with disability experience transport inequalities. Access to public transport is restricted by various factors which can be classified as structural, service quality, socio-demographic, institutional or psychosocial barriers (Bjerkan & Ovstedal, 2018; Oksenholt & Aarhaug, 2018; Park & Chowdhury, 2018; Kett, Cole & Turner, 2020).

Service delivery for passengers with disability who use public transport can be influenced by drivers' knowledge of and attitudes towards passengers with disability (Fast, 2019). Drivers' encounters with passengers with disability should be understood and their feedback incorporated in transport planning to provide transport services that meet the needs of passengers with disability.

This study focused on only three groups of people with disability – those with mobility, visual and hearing disability, as they are among the groups that face severe transport problems compared to other groups with disability (Bezyak et al, 2020). Mobility disability is a type of disability that affects the movement of the body (Bekiaris et al, 2018). To improve mobility, people with mobility disability can use mobility aids such as “wheelchairs, walking sticks, or crutches” (Vanderschuren & Nnene, 2021). According to Census 2011, in South Africa there are approximately 2.6% of people with mobility disability (Stats SA, 2014). Visual disability refers to the degree of sight loss, ranging from partial blindness to total blindness (Bekiaris et al, 2018). The sense of sight enables vision, giving the individual the ability to distinguish light and darkness, motions, colours, shapes and position (Ružičková, 2016). Depending on the degree of disability, some people with visual disability find it difficult to see images (Bekiaris et al, 2018). Worldwide, about one billion people are living with some form of visual disability (WHO, 2018), while in South Africa, there are approximately 900, 000 people with visual disability of some sort (Stats SA, 2016). People with hearing disability find it difficult to hear sounds or speech in the environment (Bekiaris et al, 2018). Hearing loss results in a loss of auditory information (Thorslund, Peter, Lyxell & Lidestam, 2013). According to the 2011 Census data, approximately 3.3% of the South African population has some form of hearing disability (Stats SA, 2016).

Public Transport Drivers

Public transport drivers play a critical role in public transport services (Brunoro, Sznelwar, Bolis & Abrahao, 2015; Fast, 2019; Abraham et al, 2021). Drivers may serve as part of a support system to people with disability in accessing public transport, enabling them to overcome existing barriers (Tillmann, Haveman, Stöppler, Kvas & Monninger, 2013; Oksenholt & Aarhaug, 2018). However, the literature reveals that some drivers' attitudes and behaviour clearly show a lack of understanding of the issues faced by people with disability. The drivers' attitudes and behaviour are widely documented as one of the most critical barriers to access public transport for people with disability (Tillmann et al, 2013; Bezyak et al, 2017; Oksenholt & Aarhaug, 2018; Park & Chowdhury, 2018; Fast, 2019; Owusu-Ansah, Baisie & Oduro-Ofori, 2019). Negative attitudes are classified as psychosocial barriers in literature (Ahmad, 2015; Park & Chowdhury, 2018).

It is argued that the mere provision of universally designed vehicles is not sufficient to enable accessible transport (Tillman et al, 2013). To serve passengers with disability, drivers should be aware of the needs and rights of passengers with disability (Fast, 2019). Many public transport drivers are not trained and are unaware of the transport needs of people with disability, which creates significant transport barriers for people (Bezyak et al, 2017). However, some of the drivers' actions may be unintentional, especially towards people with disability that is not obvious. For example, a driver might not be aware that a person needs help to board the vehicle unless informed (Oksenholt & Aarhaug, 2018).

It is also important to understand the job demands of public transport drivers, which may affect service quality and accessibility. A driver's job is not only to drive but also to interact with passengers and deal with different kinds of situations during the transportation of passengers (Chaparro, Galilea, Muñoz & Poblete, 2020). Drivers have to satisfy conflicting demands of the employer and the passenger, as well as observe traffic rules and regulations, which may intensify their stress (Chen & Hsu, 2020).

Drivers interact with a diverse population of passengers with different needs (Brunoro et al, 2015); as such challenges are inevitable and, in some cases, drivers may not be able to meet the needs of all passengers. Stjernborg (2019) found that stressed drivers often pose transport barriers and create feelings of insecurity in people with disability. In South Africa, mini-bus taxi drivers work with daily revenue targets required by the taxi owners (Kett et al, 2020); given this scenario,

these drivers are more likely to work under pressure to meet daily revenue targets. Similarly, bus drivers work with a timetable and constantly deal with pressure to meet the schedule (Brunoro et al, 2015).

Understanding and acknowledging the importance of drivers can influence the quality of transport services offered (Chaparro et al, 2020) and improve the travel experiences of people with disability. Although many studies have considered barriers in accessing public transport from the perspective of people with disability (Park & Chowdhury, 2018; Stjernborg, 2019; Velho, 2019), little research has focused on transport barriers from the perspective of public transport drivers. The relationship between drivers and passengers with disability requires an understanding of the issues that drivers face in the course of performing their duties. To improve public transport services, drivers' encounters with passengers with disability should be understood, addressed and integrated into city policies.

Objective

This study aims to understand the perspective of public transport drivers on their encounters with passengers with disability, and the impact this has on public transport inaccessibility. To this end, three objectives were formulated:

- 1) To establish challenges encountered by drivers in providing transport services to the passengers with disability.
- 2) To explore the attitudes of drivers towards passengers with disability.
- 3) To determine whether drivers are aware of the needs of passengers with disability.

METHOD

Study Setting

The study area was the City of Tshwane, which is located in the Gauteng province of South Africa. It was chosen for the study partly due to the increase in the prevalence of people living with some form of disability between 2011 and 2016 (Stats SA, 2018). In the City of Tshwane, the main modes of public transport are mini-bus taxis, buses and trains (Stats SA, 2021). It is inevitable that many people with disability will experience problems in accessing public transport, given the lack of universally accessible transport infrastructure and services in South

Africa at large (Lister & Dhunpath, 2016; Morta-Andrews, 2018; Rivasplata & Le Roux, 2018).

Study Design

The research followed a constructivism research philosophy. The understanding or meaning of phenomena, formed through participants and their subjective views, make up constructivism research philosophy (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). A qualitative research method was considered to be the preferred method to collect data from drivers to add depth to reasons underlying public transport inaccessibility.

Study Sample

The non-probability purposive sampling method was used, meaning that “researchers intentionally select (or recruit) participants who have experienced the central phenomenon or key concept being explored in the study” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Drivers who were available and willing to participate in the study were intentionally recruited to provide valuable information. Table 1 shows the demographics of drivers who participated in the study.

Table 1: Demographics of Drivers

Name	Age	Gender	Type of Driver
Driver 1	50	Male	Bus
Driver 2	47	Male	Bus
Driver 3	61	Male	Bus
Driver 4	41	Male	Mini-bus taxi
Driver 5	29	Male	Mini-bus taxi
Driver 6	36	Male	Mini-bus taxi
Driver 7	45	Male	Mini-bus taxi
Driver 8	38	Male	Mini-bus taxi
Driver 9	47	Male	Mini-bus taxi
Driver 10	42	Male	Bus

This study only focused on three groups of people with disability – those with mobility, visual and hearing disability, as they are among the groups that face severe transport problems compared to other groups with disability (Bezyak et al, 2020).

Data Collection

A semi-structured interview guide was utilised to collect data from public transport drivers. The interviews for drivers were carried out at mini-bus taxi ranks and bus stations in Pretoria during off-peak hours, from Monday to Friday, in May 2021. The process of data collection would start by the researcher introducing herself, then informing potential participants about the study and asking whether they were interested in participating. They were informed that participating in the study was voluntary and they could withdraw at any time and without giving any reasons. They were assured that their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential. All those who agreed to participate gave their consent orally and were thanked the same way. No incentives were offered for their participation.

Data Analysis

Data was mainly captured in writing, as many drivers were not willing to have their responses audio-recorded. MAXQDA 2020 software for quantitative and qualitative data analysis was used. An inductive approach was followed so as to allow data to determine themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) define inductive analysis as “a process of coding the data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher’s analytic preconceptions”. According to Bryman and Bell (2017), thematic analysis is most appropriate for studies which consider people’s opinions, experiences, knowledge or values. The current study conducted thematic analysis using the process developed by Braun and Clarke (2006): (1) familiarisation with the data, (2) coding, (3) generation of themes, (4) reviewing of themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) writing up the narrative of the data.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the study was granted by the Department of Transport and Supply Chain Management Ethics Committee of the University of Johannesburg. This research adhered to all the ethical research requirements as per the University’s policy on ethical clearance certification. Most drivers were not willing to give formal consent (signatures); therefore, an informal consent form was used. All the drivers who agreed to participate gave verbal consent. The researcher also explained to the participants that there were no correct answers and their responses would be kept anonymous and confidential.

RESULTS

The six themes derived from the analysis are as follows: (1) organisational procedures; (2) travel assistance; (3) attitudes of passengers with disability towards drivers; (4) challenges experienced by drivers; (5) attitudes of drivers towards passengers with disability; and (6) training and awareness.

Theme 1: Organisational Policies and Procedures

Organisational policies and procedures guide the work that is carried out by drivers. Restrictive policies can create unintentional barriers for passengers with disability. In this study, although written organisational policies and procedures could not be obtained, given below are some of the issues that emerged from discussions with drivers.

“We are not allowed to help people who have disability. But some passengers, who are willing to help, do that. People who use wheelchairs are at the mercy of other passengers” (Driver 3).

This response suggests that passengers who use wheelchairs need to travel with their assistants. Another participant mentioned that drivers are not allowed to help passengers with disability, especially those who use wheelchairs.

“My company policy is that a person with a disability should have a travel assistant who will help him or her (those in wheelchairs). Drivers are not allowed to help them because sometimes you try to help them and they fall, it will be your fault. When they fall, they will claim money from the company for compensation” (Driver 1).

Most excerpts illustrated that many drivers could not help passengers in need of assistance in boarding and alighting because many transport providers are not prepared to take responsibility in the event that a driver gets injured or injures a passenger.

Theme 2: Travel Assistance

Depending on the type of disability, some passengers with disability need to access transport with travel assistants. Some of the issues discussed by interviewees were about travel assistance.

“... they are unable to help themselves, they need my help, whereas during peak hours it's difficult to help them because other passengers are going to work, and they are not allowed to board the bus” (Driver 4).

The response from Driver 4 conveys his perception that the needs of other passengers going to work are more important than those of passengers with disability. In addition, he seems to think that passengers with disability do not work. The response of Driver 4 also suggests that perhaps passengers who need travel assistance are left behind at bus stops.

Another driver mentioned that passengers with disability should be accompanied by a travel assistant.

“Basically, a person with a disability should have someone to help them” (Driver 1).

The responses of Drivers 2 and 3 mention the driver’s role.

“... normally, my job is to drive, we do not help people with disabilities. But sometimes other passengers help them to get in” (Driver 2).

“...no, we are not allowed, some passengers who are willing to help do that” (Driver 3).

These two responses suggest that passengers with disability who need travel assistance depend on other passengers in the event that they are travelling without helpers.

Theme 3: Attitudes of Passengers with Disability towards Drivers

One interviewee gave an account of how some passengers with disability react to drivers.

“I feel pity for them. But many are rude and arrogant. They should accept their condition first and maybe they feel let down by other previous drivers they had bad experiences with. If one driver treated them bad, they think that all the drivers are all the same. When it comes to people who have disability, they are short-tempered, aggressive and rude. Even when the driver comes out of the seat to help them in, they don’t want” (Driver 1).

This response reflects that passengers with disability are probably not happy with drivers. Driver 1 perceives that passengers with disability have a preconception that all drivers do not treat passengers with disability well.

Theme 4: Challenges Experienced by Drivers

Drivers deal with different groups of passengers, and challenges would be inevitable. While some challenges are beyond the driver’s control, others can be avoided or managed.

“The only challenge is that you have to drop them exactly where they are going. You cannot transfer them into another taxi, because it’s hard for them to get into a taxi and then get out” (Driver 4).

This response reflects on the inaccessibility of public vehicles to some passengers with disability. One of the challenges is that mini-bus taxis are not designed to accommodate passengers with disability, especially those who use wheelchairs. Some drivers are not willing to provide transport services to people in wheelchairs.

“Loading a person using a wheelchair and the wheelchair takes too much time, so the company does not want us to spend so much time at bus stops” (Driver 2).

Driver 2 suggests that the vehicles do not have the necessary equipment to assist in the boarding and alighting of passengers who use wheelchairs. Without appropriate infrastructure, it could be difficult for drivers to assist passengers who use a wheelchair to get in and out of vehicles. Similarly, another driver mentioned that it is time-consuming to help passengers who use wheelchairs.

“During peak hours I do not carry people with wheelchairs because it takes too much time to load a wheelchair and put the passenger inside the vehicle. I will not make a lot of money if I carry people with wheelchairs and miss my target for the day” (Driver 6).

Driver 9 mentioned how passengers who use wheelchairs may impact on the daily revenue targets.

“The taxi owner does have rules on carrying passengers with disabilities. But I work with daily targets, so if I carry a person in a wheelchair, they will occupy a paying seat on vehicle. I can only carry a person in a wheelchair during off peak” (Driver 9).

Drivers are concerned about the extra time required to stop and pick up a person in a wheelchair. Many people in wheelchairs take a lot of time to board transport, which may be unfair to other people with disability. Passengers with visual and hearing disability may not need strenuous physical assistance to board and alight from vehicles. Although passengers with visual disability need guidance, drivers may find it less strenuous to help them.

Theme 5: Attitudes of Drivers towards Passengers with Disability

The study found that some drivers empathise with passengers with disability and are aware that they should be treated with respect and dignity. However, some of the actions of drivers do not necessarily match the sentiments expressed during the interviews.

“You know, a person is a person, people who have disability are also human beings; we must treat them properly. I have humility...”(Driver 8).

“I think they also deserve to be treated like everybody, they need that special treatment” (Driver 10).

One driver was of the opinion that people with disability are not problematic passengers most of the time.

“Most of the time they are not difficult” (Driver 4).

Some drivers understand the frustrations of passengers with disability to some extent.

“Sometimes when you are heartbroken or coming from work, someone has treated you badly, so when coming to the taxi you continue being angry at other people, your mind is still thinking about what happened” (Driver 7).

Some drivers help passengers with disability, while some others are not helpful.

“We are able to help people in wheelchairs as we do have time to do it, unlike other taxis which pick and drop passengers; they would be chasing after passengers so they won’t stop for people in wheelchairs or who need help to get into the taxi” (Driver 5).

Drivers need to be supported so that they can better understand the difficulties faced by passengers with disability and provide satisfactory and improved services.

Theme 6: Training and Awareness

The discussions with the drivers brought out some of the key issues concerning training and awareness.

“Our company does not train drivers on how to handle passengers with disabilities, except a few drivers who drive dedicated buses which carry passengers with disabilities” (Driver 1).

Most drivers reported that they are not trained to handle passengers and are unaware of some of the needs of passengers with disability.

“I have never been trained to handle passengers with disabilities” (Driver 4).

“Where I was working previously, we did some training but at this company I am now at, they do not train drivers on how to handle people with disabilities” (Driver 10).

DISCUSSION

The study focussed on passengers with mobility, hearing and visual disability. However, the results revealed that critical issues mainly concern passengers with mobility disability, especially those who use wheelchairs. To confirm that the interviewees had understood the questions and the interviewer had understood the answers, eight follow-up telephone interviews were conducted to clarify further information pertaining to passengers with vision and hearing disability. The drivers' responses could not give conclusive evidence on the challenges that are faced when providing services to passengers with visual and hearing disability. There are two possible reasons for this:

- 1) Passengers with visual and hearing disability generally do not encounter many difficulties in boarding and alighting from vehicles. Compared to passengers with mobility disability, it seems easier to help passengers with visual disability as they only require guidance. Passengers with mobility disability may require the physical assistance of a driver or a travel assistant in boarding and alighting from vehicles.
- 2) Drivers do not see people with hearing and vision disability as passengers needing help. As such, this may indicate a lack of understanding of the needs of different groups of passengers with disability.

Organisational Policies and Procedures

Some of the findings on organisational policies and procedures are in line with research done in Kumasi, Ghana, which elaborated that bus drivers seldom stop for a person in a wheelchair as they consider it time-consuming (Owusu-Ansah et al, 2019). Organisational policies and procedures which do not allow drivers to carry passengers with disability are discriminatory, yet access to transport should be a right for everyone (Lucas, 2011; Cepeda, Galilea & Raveau, 2018). In

the case of South Africa, transport is not acknowledged as a basic human right (Lucas, 2011). This is also common in other developing countries (Cepeda et al, 2018; Kett et al, 2020). There is no explicit right to transport in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). Although some policies and procedures seem unfair and harsh, some could be designed to protect the drivers.

Unlike passengers with visual and hearing disability, there is a risk that a driver could hurt himself/herself while lifting a wheelchair or assisting a passenger to board or alight from the vehicle, as well as hurting the passenger. However, there are insurance policies which cover passenger liability and public liability. In South Africa, transport companies should also be registered in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act 130 of 1993 (COIDA) to cover the driver in case of unexpected events. If the transport companies do not cover themselves against unforeseen incidents, they may face lawsuits if a passenger is hurt or injured.

Travel Assistance

Different groups of people with disability require different forms of assistance as well; there are unique needs within the group itself (Park & Chowdhury, 2018). The findings in this study suggest that passengers who use wheelchairs require assistance in boarding and disembarking from vehicles and there is a need to travel with a travel assistant. As mentioned, passengers with hearing disability generally do not need physical assistance to get into a vehicle, but a person in a wheelchair usually needs physical help to get into and out of a vehicle. Although passengers with hearing disability can travel independently, assistance may be needed to communicate destinations (Green, Mophosho & Khoza-Shangase, 2015), while passengers with visual disability may need help in navigating spaces (Oksenholt & Aarhaug, 2018). People with hearing disability may avoid asking for assistance because of communication difficulties and the stigma associated with the disability (Green et al, 2015).

Due to lack of accessible transport infrastructure in the City of Tshwane, travel assistants play a vital role for passengers with disability, especially for those who cannot travel independently and those who use wheelchairs. In some cases it is beyond drivers to assist passengers with disability, while in other cases drivers are not willing to help. Perhaps the situation would be better if the existing transport infrastructure in the city was universally accessible. However, the literature portrays a different picture. Research done in New Zealand reveals that

despite the availability of universally accessible transport infrastructure drivers can be insensitive to the needs of people with disability (Park & Chowdhury, 2018). Other developed countries such as the UK and Sweden with universally accessible infrastructure also have these problems (Stjernborg, 2019; Velho, 2019).

Attitudes of Passengers with Disability towards Drivers

Previous research reveals that many drivers have negative attitudes towards people with disability (Ipingbemi, 2015; Bombom & Abdullahi, 2016; Abraham et al, 2021). However, there is little research reflecting the attitudes of passengers with disability towards drivers. The findings suggest that drivers and passengers with disability often struggle to communicate effectively. There are various reasons why passengers with disability might have negative attitudes towards drivers; for example, unsatisfactory services, previous bad treatment from drivers, prejudice and lack of training of drivers. Anger displayed by passengers with disability could be a way of communicating that they are receiving bad treatment (Ching & Chan, 2020). It could be argued that respect should be mutual; therefore, passengers with disability and drivers should respect each other. According to the Department of Transport (2020), to be treated with dignity and respect, it is essential for people with disability to show respect to drivers. However, some situations are aggravated by lack of or inadequate driver training.

Challenges Experienced by Drivers

The findings in this study indicate that drivers find it time-consuming to assist passengers who use wheelchairs. These findings are consistent with the findings from research done in Ghana by Owusu-Ansah et al (2019). Drivers are concerned about the time they waste when they stop to pick up a person in a wheelchair. Many passengers who use wheelchairs take more time waiting to board transport which may be unfair to passengers with disability. Lister and Dhunpath (2016) found that passengers who use wheelchairs typically spend about two hours waiting for transport. Passengers with visual and hearing disability are not significantly affected since they do not need strenuous physical assistance to board and alight from vehicles. Passengers with visual disability need guidance which may seem less strenuous to drivers.

Attitudes of Drivers towards Passengers with Disability

It was found that some drivers help passengers with disability while some are not helpful. The findings also reveal that there is lack of infrastructure for boarding

and disembarking which makes it difficult for drivers to assist passengers with mobility disability. To some extent, some drivers understand the frustrations of passengers with disability.

Training and Awareness

The study findings reveal lack of awareness and knowledge of disability among drivers in the City of Tshwane. Training of transport personnel on disability needs may increase drivers' sensitivity to passengers with disability and improve quality of service. According to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, 2006), Article 4, governments have a responsibility "to promote the training of professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities in the rights recognised in the present Convention so as to better provide the assistance and services guaranteed by those rights".

Lack of training for drivers is not only found in developing countries but also in developed countries such as the US (Bezyak et al, 2017). It is a common problem across cities in different countries. Fast (2019) points out that difficulties arise when drivers do not have social interacting skills. In addition, Fast (2019) emphasises that social interacting skills are more important than other skills or knowledge.

The drivers in the City of Tshwane did not seem to understand the issues faced by passengers with disability, thereby contributing to the creation of barriers in accessing public transport. According to Park and Chowdhury (2018), "well-trained drivers can help people with disability feel more confident to use public transport". Without proper training, there is also a high risk of drivers hurting passengers with disability, either unintentionally or deliberately. In South Africa, the skills development and training of drivers is one of the challenges associated with the mini-bus industry (Mhlanga, 2017).

Limitations

A small sample was used to gather data on the encounters between drivers and passengers with disability. Generalisable conclusions could therefore not be drawn from the analysed data. The lack of generalisability is acknowledged as a limitation of this study and future research may address this issue by using probability sampling method and larger samples.

The study focus was on drivers of buses and mini-bus taxis, yet there are also drivers for other modes of transport services, for example, Uber drivers and

metered taxi drivers. Their encounters with passengers with disability could be equally important. Therefore, future studies could include drivers for different modes of transport that provide services to people with disability.

Implications

Many studies on disability and transport barriers have only focused on the perspectives of passengers with disability. This study creates a unique perspective by also considering the perspectives of the drivers who operate the services on the ground and are therefore able to describe the day-to-day problems faced in the course of their work, bridging the gap between passengers with disability and managers of the transport service. Based on the finding that most drivers are not trained to handle passengers with disability, training of transport personnel should be made a priority. Disability awareness among transport providers and their drivers may change their perceptions of passengers with disability. Transport issues and drivers' concerns established in this study could help to enhance driver training, improve transport services and enrich inputs into public transport policies.

CONCLUSION

This research is one of the few studies focusing on the encounters of public transport drivers with passengers with disability. The relationship between drivers and passengers with disability is crucial as it contributes to the travel experience of passengers with disability. However, the driver-passenger relationship is often overlooked in public transport. The drivers constantly need to cope with compelling and conflicting job demands. For example, in this study, some transport providers do not allow their drivers to carry passengers with disability during peak hours, yet some drivers acknowledge that passengers with disability should be treated the same way as other passengers. Both drivers of buses and mini-bus taxis stated that it was time-consuming to help passengers who use wheelchairs. At the same time it was unexpected that drivers expressed compassion for passengers with disability, as previous research reveals many drivers' negative attitudes. Although some drivers appeared to have empathy and humility towards passengers with disability, their actions do not match and often seem insensitive, for example, leaving behind passengers who use wheelchairs at bus stops. Therefore, drivers' encounters with passengers with disability should be understood and incorporated in transport planning to provide transport services that meet the needs of passengers with disability.

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