

Impact of SM Lipa Grand Terminal to the Travel Industry of Lipa City

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Abstract

This study was conducted to identify the effects of the recently established public terminal transport in Lipa City to its travel industry. Specifically, the study aimed to identify the availability and schedule of trips; to determine the effects of centralized public terminal transport to the commuters in terms of accessibility and convenience; to determine the security measures used to ensure safety of passengers; to identify the problems encountered by the passengers in the terminal and to present a proposed action plan for the improvement of the terminal. The researchers used descriptive evaluative method or descriptive design. Results showed that the buses and PUJs are still available during weekends which got the highest rank and weighted mean. Because of the high demand in public transport modes, schedule of trips are always available and the respondents are satisfied with it. As to assessment of accessibility and convenience, it is found out that the routing of public and private transport has a direct access to the terminal which got the highest rank and weighted mean. The terminal has all the availability of trips got the lowest rank but was also agreed by the respondents. The existence of security guards to ensure peace and order within the terminal is highly observed. The respondents are satisfied that there are safety measures implemented within the terminal in which the point of concentration is the safety of each and every passenger. There is no public assistance provided for persons with disabilities. The terminal is a public place so the risk of having problems is high.

Keywords: Travel Industry, Grand Terminal, Lipa City

INTRODUCTION

Transport is a vital component of development. Where a good transport infrastructure exists, people are better able to take advantage of a wide variety of economic opportunities, to increase their mobility, and improve their living standards. Transportation Management involves improving transportation options for recreational travel and reducing automobile traffic. Tourist travel has predictable patterns and needs, and often occurs in areas that have unique environmental and social features that are particularly sensitive to degradation by excessive automobile traffic (Mekuriaw, 2012).

The search for meeting unlimited goals on the development of the travel industry in Lipa city has led to an innumerable ways and methods. The government continuously finds the most effective methods that will help in the development of the travel industry of the place.

Bus stations and terminals are significant elements in the operation of bus service. Their design and location affect the efficiency of a transport system, and its impact on the road users. Some stations are regarded more as landmarks than as utilities, and as such are often of prestigious rather than practical design, which may detract

seriously from their efficiency.

Transport is an essential element of travel and tourism. Therefore, continued growth in tourism will depend on the increasing use of existing transport facilities, or a combination of the two. However, while the growth of tourism travel and tourism is associated with economic and other benefits to destinations, attention has been increasingly paid to the environmental costs of transport. That is, virtually all powered transport has an environmental impact in terms of pollution and use of non-renewable resources such as oil, and as a result, the issue of transport has become more significant within the context of sustainable tourism development (Sharpley, 2006).

The transportation industry is enormous, encompassing everything from municipal bus, subway, and commuter-train systems that get the people to and from work and school. Based on its significance, it is a matter of public policy for many local or, even, national governments, which are required to meet the transport needs of people and other issues as well as to reduce environmental externalities (Polhat, 2012). The travel and tourism experience of tourists are the ideas about tourism products start and end with transportation. That is why it is impossible to consider tourism without transportation. The development of transportation, transportation vehicles, infrastructure and using new technologies in this sector speed up the development of tourism (Mammadov, 2012).

Tourism is seen as leisure-oriented component of a continuum of mobilities that stretch from commuting and shopping through to what is usually categorized as migration. Such a representation of tourism clearly seeks to explicitly connect tourism not only with other discussions of mobility in the social sciences but also to integrate macro and micro scale understandings of mobility (Duval, 2007).

Rapid population growth and urbanization in Metro Manila and adjoining areas has brought about pressure on the existing public transport system. This greater metropolitan region is now referred to as 'Mega Manila'. The resulting urban pattern for the region is one where an increasing number of people live at the fringes of the metropolitan area but still need to travel to the city centers to work or study. In order to sustain economic growth and development and to protect the environment in the region, there is a need to increase mobility through the provision of an integrated public transport system. Strategic actions are necessitated in the areas model development, public transport database updating and policy reviews and updates. Finally, there is a need to operationalize various aspects of integration for better public transport development and management in Mega Manila (Tiglaio & Patdu, 2007).

Public transport has been a hot issue in social economic and political settings particularly since the mid 20th Century in Sri Lanka, although it does not seem to be taken as a part of a comprehensive vision of a sustainable livelihood approach. The inseparable linkage of public transport with the sustenance of livelihoods especially of the lower income categories needs to be envisaged at depth and any policy forum should essentially take their views and suggestions into account if such policies are to be led to viable solutions (Chularathna, 2007).

Mobility is largely dependent on existing transport and related infrastructure in so far as it is allied with the actual propensity for mobility, the amount of the time needed to travel from origin to destination, and the level of existing competition serving one or more destinations from a point of origin (Duval 2007).

This will be useful in policies for the thoroughfare in the future as well as the present. With regards to

reliability in other main roads of the country, as well as in any other city, the methodology can be easily followed and applied. The only limitation comes with a lack of tools to refine a ranking system—in the absence of boarding and alighting data, the criteria may need to be refined using other means that will suit the area under consideration. This also provides the added advantage of being able to tailor a policy to answer specific needs of other cities (Antonio & Icasiano, 2006).

Congestion is a conventional problem faced by many transport modes and terminals. In addition to the usual responses based on providing additional capacity, there has been an array of nodal strategies to cope with congestion. Since supply chains are closely integrated entities, freight transportation systems are increasingly reflecting this reality. The challenge remains about improving intermodal as well as transmodal movements. While the intermodal issue received a lot of attention, transmodal imperatives have somewhat been neglected in spite of their strategic importance. Although several aspects of this integration can be considered as capital investment issues, others require a higher level of modal collaboration (Rodrigue, 2006).

The rich interaction capabilities of public terminals can make them more convenient to use than small personal devices, such as smart phones. However, the use of public terminals to handle personal data may compromise privacy. They present a system that enable users to access their applications and data securely using a combination of public terminals and a more trusted, personal device. The system provides users with capabilities to censor the public terminal display, so that it does not show private data; filters input events coming from the public terminal, so that maliciously injected keyboard/pointer events do not compromise privacy; and enables users to view personal information and perform data-entry via their personal device. A key feature of the system is that it works with unmodified applications. The results arising from a pilot usability study based on this implementation are presented (Sharp, 2007).

Bus stops and bus terminal have clean and proper waiting area for travel. Bus drivers, conductors and dispatchers are reliable in giving travel information to travelers. Bus terminals do have an existing information section. There is a systematized unit of transport personnel assisting the passengers. The entrance is wide enough and is accessible for all types of passengers and vehicles (Carandang, 2013).

The main reason of putting up a Grand Terminal is due to increase in population, increase on the number of vehicles and previous location of the terminal that causes overcrowding. There is a need for the advancement on the transport industry in Batangas City. The effects of the Grand Terminal brought a great opportunity for the transportation business as the passenger increase in tourist arrival in Batangas City. There is a need for an effective management, facilities, and services to further improve the operation of the Grand Terminal for the benefit of Batangas City, its people and visitors (Magluyan, 2013).

Terminals, however, are also very important points of transfer between modes. Buses and cars deliver people to airports, trucks haul freight to rail terminals, and rail brings freight to docks for loading on ships. One of the main attributes of transport terminals, international and regional alike is their convergence function. They are indeed obligatory points of passage having invested on their geographical location which is generally intermediate to commercial flows (Slack, 2007).

If buses are utilized efficiently, it should not be necessary for them to spend much more time at bus stations than is required for loading and unloading. The requirement to park large numbers of buses for long periods between trips is often a reflection of inefficiency or excess capacity in the industry. Although it may be unavoidable

able at off-peak times if there is a significant difference between peak and off-peak service levels.

An alternative is to allocate routes to terminals in such a way that every route crosses the city centre before reaching its terminal. This may increase passenger convenience, but may also increase the level of traffic congestion, and requires a greater number of buses to provide an equivalent service.

Efficient routing can minimize the number of routes which must terminate in busy central areas, while efficient scheduling and regulating of departures can minimize vehicle waiting times. Provided there is no excess capacity in the system, no more than two or three vehicles on any one route need be waiting at the central terminal point at any time, so that disruption to traffic can be minimized. Some say that it is helpful to them and some say that the old setting is far better than compared today's. The use of proper instructions in this study had due importance as it shows ways that will make the new system acceptable to the respondents.

The success or failure of this new innovation cannot only be attributed to the government and the management but also to the large extent of cooperation and understanding from both the drivers and passengers. Showing up good attitude toward the matter solicit active cooperation of the respondents and it is highly probable that the process of being used to it will follow.

For this reason, the researchers hope to know the effects of this Grand Terminal to the transport industry not only in Lipa City but also to the nearby towns and its municipalities. The researchers also hope to determine the extent of acceptability of this new system as an alternative to improve the travel industry in Lipa City.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to identify the effects of the recently established public terminal transport in Lipa City to its travel industry. Specifically, it will identify the availability and schedule of trips, determine the effects of centralized public terminal transport to the commuters in terms of accessibility and convenience, determine the security measures used to ensure safety of passengers, identify the problems encountered by the passengers in the terminal, and propose an action plan for the improvement of the transport system.

METHOD

Research Design

The purpose of this study is to determine the status of the extent of acceptability and effectiveness of the SM Lipa Grand Terminal. The researchers used a descriptive evaluative method or descriptive design. As Shuttlesworth (2008) have defined, descriptive research design is a valid method for researching specific subjects and as a precursor to more quantitative studies.

Participants

The researchers utilized the passengers within Lipa City. They were taken on the basis of quota sampling considering that the terminal doesn't have an exact number of population. However, the researchers arrived to have 50 numbers of commuters to be the respondents.

Instrument

In order to gather data, the researchers constructed self- prepared, structured questionnaire. It consists of categories related to the subject. The first part asks the respondent's profile in terms of the sector where they belong. Part 2 questions their extent of reactions in using the terminal. This part provided questions which are answerable by a check (/) mark. It uses likert scale where 4 is the highest as fullest extent, 3 as full extent, 2 as limited extent, and 1 as the least extent.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data for this research was collected using a survey questionnaire. The survey was created using suitable questions modified from related researches and individual questions formed by the researcher. They assured confidentiality of their survey sheets since the identities are not important. The researchers also understood that people's consciousness may also affect their honesty and effectiveness in answering the survey, and so, the researchers gave them the option of being anonymous. After gathering all the completed questionnaires, total responses for each item were obtained and tabulated.

Data Analysis

After the collection of the questionnaire, the answers were tallied, tabulated and analyzed using different statistical treatment.

Weighted mean and Ranking was used in identifying the availability and schedule of trips, determining the effects of centralized public terminal transport to the tourists in terms of accessibility and convenience, determining the security measures used to ensure safety of passengers and identifying problems encountered by the tourists in the centralized public terminal. Ranking was also employed; this refers to descriptive statistics that shows positioned importance of an item.

The researchers used number 1,2,3,4,5,6... to show the degree of importance where 1 signifies the most important and the last number signifies the least. The results were analyzed and interpreted using the Statistical Version 17.0 which is a statistical analysis software package.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Assessment on the Availability and Schedule of Trips (N=50)

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The Centralized Public Terminal provides continuous availability of bus trips.	3.46	A	2.5
2. Every town or municipality of Batangas has specific PUJs available for the commuters.	3.40	A	5
3. Buses and PUJs are still available during weekends.	3.60	SA	1
4. Trips of buses are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.	3.46	A	2.5
5. Buses arrive and depart on time.			
6. They follow their proper schedule.	3.44	A	4
Composite Mean	3.47	Very Much	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 –Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 –Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 –Disagree (D)

1.00 – 1.49 –Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 1 presents the assessment on the availability and schedule of trips. It can be seen from the table that the respondents agreed that there is available and schedule of trips in the centralized/grand terminal in Lipa City having a weighted mean of 3.47. All the items yield high mean ranging from 3.40-3.60 interpreted as “Agree”.

It can be noticed from the table that buses and PUJs are still available during weekends which got the highest rank having a mean of 3.60 and was strongly agreed by the respondents. However, the lowest in rank and was agreed by the respondents is every town or municipality of Lipa has specific PUJs available for the commuters having a weighted mean of 3.40.

This implies that because of the high demand in public transport modes, the terminal always provides an available schedule of trips and the respondents are satisfied with it.

Table 2. Effects of Centralized/Grand Terminal Transport to the Tourists in terms of Accessibility and Convenience (N=50)

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. The public terminal is accessible to majority of the commuters.	3.56	SA	3
2. The public terminal’s location is easy to find.	3.58	SA	2
3. The routing of public and private transport has a direct access to the terminal.	3.60	SA	1
4. The public terminal has all the availability of trips. (Ex. from Batangas going to Manila and other places in CALABARZON – PUB,from the terminal to other parts of Batangas – PUJ)	3.40	A	9
5. There are available stores or food establishments inside the terminal.	3.46	A	7.5
6. There are restrooms existing in the terminal premises.	3.50	SA	5
7. Information office is widely accessible to the public.	3.48	A	6
8. There is enough space for the commuters in the waiting area.	3.54	SA	4
9. Occurrence of arrangement of vehicles according to their destination for the convenience of the passengers.	3.46	A	7.5
Composite Mean	3.51	A	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 –Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 –Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 –Disagree (D)
1.00 – 1.49 –Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 2 presents the effects of the Grand Terminal to the tourists in terms of accessibility and convenience. As can be seen from the table, it is agreed that the Grand Terminal is very accessible and convenient to the respondents. All the items yield a high mean ranging from 3.40-3.60 which is interpreted as “Agree”. It can be gleaned from the table that the routing of public and private transport has a direct access to the terminal which got the highest rank having a mean of 3.60, the respondents also strongly agreed that the terminals location is easy to find which got the second to the highest rank having a mean of 3.58, and the terminal is accessible to majority of the commuters which got the third rank having a mean of 3.56 and was strongly agreed by the respondents.

However, the lowest rank but was also agreed by the respondents is that the terminal has all the availability of trips having a mean of 3.40. The respondents also agreed that there are available stores or food estab-

lishments inside the terminal and that the occurrence of arrangement of vehicles according to their destination for the convenience of the passengers both got the second to the lowest rank having a mean of 3.46, and that the information office is widely accessible to the public which got the third to the lowest rank having a weighted mean of 3.48.

This implies that the respondents are somehow satisfied with the services that the terminal provides. Majority of the respondents has signified their full extent of acceptability as it became easier for them to travel from one place to another. The terminal has the complete facilities that the public would need compared to the former place of the terminal so in terms of accessibility and convenience, it is more acceptable to them. It is good to note that the composite weighted mean which is 3.51 equivalents to “agree” which is an indication of customer satisfaction.

Table 3. Security Measures used to Ensure Safety of Passengers (N=50)

Indicators	WM	VI	Rank
1. There is a proper waste disposal inside the public grand terminal premises. / Waste management is highly restricted in the area for the sake of the passenger's health.	3.36	A	4
2. Safety is a point of concentration for the students.	3.40	A	3
3. There are medical assistance for the sick, elders, and disabled persons.	3.30	A	5
4. Existence of security guards for peace and order.	3.60	SA	1
5. Presence of the Transportation Development and Regulatory Office (TDRO) officers in the area for traffic control.	3.44	A	2
Composite Mean	3.42	A	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 –Strongly Agree (SA); 2.50 – 3.49 –Agree (A); 1.50 – 2.49 –Disagree (D)

1.00 – 1.49 –Strongly Disagree (SD)

Table 3 presents the security measures used by the terminal to ensure the safety of the passengers. It can be noticed in the table that there are security measures that is being used by the terminal to ensure the safety of the passengers. All the items yield a high mean that is ranging from 3.30-3.60 which is interpreted as “Agree”.

As can be seen from the table the existence of security guards to ensure peace and order within the terminal is highly observed which got the highest rank having a mean of 3.60 and was strongly agreed by the respondents. However, the lowest rank and was agreed by the respondents is that there is medical assistance for the sick, elders, and disabled persons having a weighted mean of 3.30.

This implies that the terminal considers the safety and security within the terminal as an important aspect in management. The respondents are satisfied that there are safety measures implemented within the terminal in which the point of concentration is the safety of each and every passenger.

Table 4. Problems Encountered by the Tourists in the Centralized Public Terminal (N=50)

Problems Encountered	WM	VI	Rank
1. There are numbers of children roaming around the terminal asking for money.	1.98	S	5.5
2. There are not enough city buses or other means of transport to take them from the terminal to other destinations within the city.	2.02	S	4
3. There is a high level of humidity within the place.	1.98	S	5.5
4. During the peak hours, crowdedness creates discomfort for users as the system copes with a temporary surge in demand.	2.22	S	3
5. There is lack of enforcement of pollution and environmental standards.	2.34	S	2
6. There is no public assistance provided for persons with disabilities.	2.62	O	1
7. There are obstructions and illegal structures along the way.	1.94	S	7
Composite Mean	2.16	S	

Legend: 3.50 – 4.00 –Always (A); 2.50 – 3.49 –Often (O); 1.50 – 2.49 –Sometimes (S); 1.00 – 1.49 –Never (N)

Table 4 presents the problems encountered by the tourists in the centralized public terminal. It can be noticed on the table that the passengers also have problems with regards to the terminal. All items yield a low mean that is ranging from 1.94-2.62 with a verbal interpretation of “Sometimes”.

It can be gleaned from the table that there is no public assistance provided for persons with disabilities which got the highest rank having a weighted mean of 2.62 and were often experienced by the passengers and the lack of enforcement of pollution and environmental standards which got the second to the highest rank having a mean of 2.34 which were sometimes experienced by the passengers.

However, the lowest rank and was sometimes experienced by the passengers is that there are no obstructions and illegal structures along the way having a mean of 1.94. The respondents sometimes experience that there are number of children roaming around the terminal asking for money and that there is a high level of humidity within the place both having a weighted mean of 1.98.

This implies that the passengers sometimes encounter problems within the terminal. The terminal is a public place so the risk of having these kinds of problems is high. The respondents are not satisfied with the way the ventilation of the place is considered and how the pollution and crowdedness during peak hours is handled.

Table 5. Proposed Action Plan to Improve the Transport System

Key Result Area	Objective	Strategy/Activity	Person Responsible
Passenger Convenience	To fill in the absence of medical assistance for the sick, elders, and persons with disabilities	They may provide medical facilities for passengers with disabilities.	Administration

Key Result Area	Objective	Strategy/Activity	Person Responsible
Environmental Impacts	To improve the enforcement of environmental standards.	They may implement rules regarding pollution and proper waste disposal and may put signs of environmental reminders.	Administration
Passenger Convenience	To minimize the crowdedness in the terminal during peak hours.	They may add more seats in the waiting area so the passengers can relax while waiting for another PUJ/PUB.	Administration
Availability of Trips	To have available trips to every town and municipalities near Lipa.	They may consider increasing the number of transport modes that operates in the terminal and may lower the operating fee for the public transport modes.	Administration Transport Operators
Passenger Convenience	To have more available stores and food establishments inside the terminal.	They may consider adding more food stalls and stores inside the terminal and not so high rental fee for the stores.	Administration

CONCLUSION

The respondents agreed that SM City Lipa Grand Terminal has available schedule of trips. The terminal presents positive effects in terms of accessibility and convenience denoting its high level of consideration to the needs and convenience of the public in using the terminal. Security measures were used to ensure safety of the passengers. Tourists sometimes experience problems within the premises of the terminal.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The terminal may have available PUJ's for the commuters of every town or municipality in Lipa. The terminal may have to expand the availability of trips to other destinations. It may have medical facilities/assistance for the sick, elders, and persons with disabilities. Public assistance desk may be provided by the administration. Action plan may be implemented to help in the improvement of the terminal. Another research may be conducted to evaluate the performance of the terminal and to present its impacts in the following years.

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