

Regional Bus Passenger Awareness: Roles of SCCC, Passenger Rights and Obligations

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Abstract

This paper presents the findings of a study assessing regional bus passengers' awareness of the existence of the Sumatra Consumer Consultative Council (SCCC) and its roles. It aimed to increase bus passengers' awareness and encourage a clear sense of their rights and obligations. It involved the SCCC and police officers, bus passengers, bus operators and other road users in the city of Mbeya. An intensive literature survey, questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data, which were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17. The key roles of the SCCC are to educate bus passengers regarding their rights and obligations, to represent bus passengers in the regulation of laws for transport services and to protect the interests of bus passengers. The rights to information, safety, redress and compensation, among others, are the formal rights for bus passengers that SCCC promotes. The awareness of and attitudes towards SCCC, its roles and the rights of regional bus passengers showed remarkable growth trends compared with the SCCC study conducted in 2011. The findings are robust and could be used when reviewing strategies regarding the rights and obligations of bus passengers.

Keywords: Regional Bus, Bus Passenger, Bus Operator, Compensation, Safety, Redness

1. Introduction

The rights of passengers encompass very long history that began in the USA in the 1960s under President Kennedy (SCCC, 2011). Worldwide, governments involve themselves in regulating passenger transport under various regulatory authorities. The intents behind this involvement include ensuring safety in the transport sector, meeting community needs, protecting the environment and infrastructures, and balancing the needs of all passengers and transport providers (NSW Government, 2012). Various problems encountered in the passenger transport sector throughout the world, regardless of the transport mode, have led most stakeholders to establish measures to ensure that passengers are aware of their rights and enforce them accordingly. Some transport providers were able to discriminate because passengers were ignorant of their rights in the transport sector (Commission of the European Communities, 2010). Various passenger rights, such as the right to compensation and complaint, were established to provide equality to all passengers and transport providers in all transport modes (Louise Butcher, 2015). Different authors have tried to explain various passenger rights to raise the awareness of passengers and the public as whole that in all modes of transport, passengers have similar rights, but these rights are implemented differently under different conditions and environments (European Commission, 2011).

At present, passenger rights are a topic of great concern worldwide for all transport modes. Many efforts have been made to protest the mistreatment of passengers. The protection of passengers' rights has taken a prominent place in the laws and policy governing the transport sector. The European transport policy of 2010 puts the users of transport systems at the heart of transport policy, regardless of the mode of transport (i.e., road, rail, air, inland and maritime), and specific new measures were established to help passengers both know their rights and enforce them; rules were established for each transport mode separately while ensuring that all passengers have the same high level of protection regardless of the transport modes they are using (Marin Jasenko, 2011).

The rights of passengers in each transport mode are similar, but the authorities that regulate them may vary. In Tanzania, for example, the Surface and Marine Transport Regulatory Authority (SUMATRA), Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority (TCAA), and Tanzania Railway Limited (TRL) are some of the regulatory authorities in the transport sector; each institution serves a unique role. The TRL is responsible for regulating the railway transport system in Tanzania under the supervision of SUMATRA; passengers' interests in railway transport are protected and represented by the SCCC. Regarding air transport, the government decided to establish the TCAA, which began to operate as the regulatory authority for air navigation in November 2003 (TCAA, 2003); to protect the interests of air transport consumers and passengers in Tanzania, the government, under the supervision of the TCAA, formed the Tanzania Civil Aviation Authority Consumer Consultative Council (TCAACCC) to facilitate and protect consumer rights and interests without disregarding the interests of transport providers in the air transport industry in Tanzania (TCAACCC, 2006). SUMATRA is responsible for regulating surface and marine transport services to ensure that transport services are safe, plentifully available, and maintain high-quality and standardized services at an appropriate cost (SUMATRA, 2011). The authority was established

under Act. No.9 of 2001 to regulate surface and maritime transport services in an effective and efficiency manner (SUMATRA, 2001). The Act came into the implementation stage on 15 August 2004 as per Government Notice No.297 and was published on 20 August 2004 (SUMATRA, 2012). SUMATRA established the SCCC under Section No.29 of Act No. 9 to directly address passenger issues. However, the SCCC was first introduced on 13 February 2004 and was officially announced on 17 October 2005 (SCCC, 2011).

The SCCC, under the umbrella of SUMATRA, is responsible for creating links between passengers, passenger transport providers, SUMATRA itself and the government and for facilitating the fight against passenger mistreatment. The SCCC since was established strives to reduce the mistreatment of passengers on surface and marine transport services (SCCC, 2011).

Although the SCCC aims to educate passengers about both their rights and their obligations, a good number of regional bus passengers passively complain about the poor services offered by some transport service providers. Perhaps this is an indication that regional bus passengers do not have a clear awareness of who is responsible for responding to the problems passengers encounter in the prevailing transport sector (Guardian, 2011). Some complaints include passengers being left by bus operators on roads before they reach their destination (Weebly, 2015) and being unaware or only vaguely aware of the existence of the SCCC and its roles in promoting passengers' rights, which has no doubt led to increases in passengers mistreatments and accidents (SCCC, 2011).

The SUMATRA (2007) study of road accidents in mainland Tanzania showed that the activities of the SCCC were not well known by Public Service Vehicle (PSV) operators and road users; consequently, it was recommended that promoting the roles of road users and establishing hotlines for passengers would enable them provide feedback to SUMATRA free of charge if they wish to forward a complaint to the SCCC. The passengers' limited awareness of the roles of the SCCC indicated that little had been done to educate the public about the SCCC and its roles.

The SCCC (2011) conducted a baseline study to investigate transport users' awareness of the existence of SCCC. The results showed that 59% of the respondents were not aware of the SCCC, 37% were aware of the SCCC, and 4% showed no responses. It was also indicated that 46.26% of those who were interviewed were aware of their rights, 51.48% were not aware, and 2.9% had no responses. The results implied that many passengers were neither aware of the SCCC nor its roles in promoting the rights of passengers.

This study aimed to assess regional bus passengers' awareness of the existence of the SCCC and its role in promoting the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey. Based on stakeholder opinions, the study also aimed to establish recommendations for increasing regional bus passengers' of awareness and attitudes towards their rights and obligations during and after a journey.

The specific objectives of this study were to identify the key roles of the SCCC in promoting the rights of regional bus passengers, to identify the formal rights of regional bus passengers that the SCCC promotes and to examine the extent to which regional bus passengers are aware of the SCCC and its role in promoting rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey.

An intensive literature survey, questionnaires and interviews were used to answer the three key research questions: What are the roles that the SCCC plays in the promoting the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey? What are the formal rights of regional bus passengers that the SCCC promotes? To what extent are regional bus passengers aware of the SCCC and its role in promoting the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey?

The findings of the study are expected to increase regional bus passengers' awareness of the existence of the SCCC and help them develop clear attitudes towards their rights and obligations; furthermore, the findings aim to guide the SCCC's development of courses and strategies regarding the rights and obligations of regional bus passengers during and after a journey.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Study area

The study was conducted in Mbeya city, where regional bus passengers were easily contacted; the regional bus operators and other road users were located at Mwanjelwa, Airport and Kabwe. The study also involved the SCCC and police officers in Mbeya city.

2.2 Research design and sampling methods

In acquiring samples that were representative of the population, simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used. The simple random sampling technique assumes that every respondent (whether a regional bus passenger, bus operator or any other road user) had an equal chance of being selected. The purposive sampling technique was used to collect data from the SCCC and police officers who were assumed to hold a clear understanding of the regional buses' operational services. Interviews were used to obtain relevant information from the SCCC and police officers. Secondary data were extracted from SCCC documents retrieved

on the SUMATRA website.

Both open-ended and closed-ended questions were used according to the respondent's circumstances to enhance correct responses. Open-ended questions were used with those who had ample time to participate during the study, such as the regional bus passengers, bus operators and other road users, while closed-ended questions were used with those who had minimum time to respond, such as the SCCC and police officers.

2.3 Population inquiry and sample size

The study involved one SCCC officer and one police officer. Fifty regional bus passengers were sampled for data that were used to examine the extent to which the passengers were aware of the SCCC and its roles.

Table 2.1.1: Sample Size

S/N	Category of respondents	Number of respondents	Actual	Percentage
1	Regional bus passengers	50	46	92%
2	SCCC and police officers	6	2	33.33%
3	Regional bus operators	10	8	80%
4	Other road users	20	20	100%
5	Total	86	78	88.4%

Ten bus operators were sampled for data that were used to determine the appropriate time to provide education concerning the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey, and twenty commuters were sampled to represent other road users. The sizes of the actual respondents are indicated in Table 2.1.1.

3. Data analysis and discussion of findings

The data were ethically edited to meet the desired settings of the study. A descriptive statistical tool known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 17 was used to analyse the data. The data were converted into percentages of respondents and are presented in summary tables. The responses of the bus operators were separated from those of the regional bus passengers and other road users; similarly, the responses of the SCCC officer were separated from those of the police officer. The appropriate measures of central tendency, such as the highest responses (modes), were determined and conclusions were drawn from the sample statistic.

3.1 Responses of the regional bus passengers

3.1.1 Gender of the regional bus passengers

Regarding the responses of the males and females to the survey questions, it is clear that there were more 76.1% male respondents than 23.9% female respondents. This may have been because males are more involved in businesses than females and therefore travel more often.

3.1.2 Age of the regional bus passengers

Regarding the ages of the respondents, 13% of the respondents were aged 17 to 23 years old, 80.4% were aged 24 to 35 years, and 6.5% were over the age of 35 years. This variation may be explained by the fact that people aged 24 to 35 years are often more energetic and thus more likely to move from place to place in an attempt to avoid poverty, unlike older adults.

3.1.3 Occupation of the regional bus passengers

Table 3.1.1: Occupation of Regional Bus Passengers

S/N	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Students	5	10.9%
2	Employed	15	32.6%
3	Businesspeople	23	50.0%
4	Farmer	3	6.5%
5	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.1 indicates that most of the respondents were businesspeople 50% who travelled using regional buses to procure products. The other passengers were employed personnel, farmers or students whose travel is more or less seasonal.

3.1.4 How often do you use regional buses to travel from one region to another?

Table 3.1.2: Regional Bus Passengers' Trips per Month

S/N	Trips per Month	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fewer than 3 trips per month	31	67.4%
2	3 to 5 trips per month	9	19.6%
3	6 to 10 trips per month	3	6.5%
4	11 to 15 trips per month	3	6.5%
5	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.2 indicates that regarding the number of trips the passengers took per month, 67.4% took at

most 3 trips per month, 19.6% took between 3 and 5 trips per month, 6.5% took between 6 and 10 trips per month, and 6.5% took between 11 and 15 trips per month. On average, most of the respondents took fewer than two trips per month.

3.1.5 *Are you aware of the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey?*

Table 3.1.3: Aware of Passenger Rights

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	38	82.6%
2	No	8	17.4%
3	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.3 indicates the responses of the regional bus passengers: 82.6% of the respondents had a clear awareness of the rights of regional bus passengers, while 17.4% were not aware, possibly because of a lack of education or infrequent travel.

3.1.6 *If a journey is cancelled or delayed and bus operators refuse to pay financial compensation to a passenger, where should a passenger report such a case?*

Table 3.1.4: Report Cancellation or Delay of a Journey

S/N	Authority	Frequency	Percentage
1	SCCC	22	47.8%
2	Driver association	2	4.3%
3	Police station	14	30.4%
4	1 and 3	1	2.2%
5	1, 2, and 3	7	15.2%
6	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.4 shows that 47.8% of the respondents said that the problem should be reported to the SCCC, 2.2% said to the SCCC and the police station, 4.3% said to the driver association, 30.4% said to the police station only, and 15.2% showed no responses. The findings indicate that good number of the passengers were not aware of the roles of the SCCC.

3.1.7 *Where does education concerning the rights of regional bus passengers take place?*

Table 3.1.5: Place of Passenger Education

S/N	Place of passenger education	Frequency	Percentage
1	Driving school	3	6.5%
2	Bus terminal	5	10.9%
3	Magazine, newspaper Or television	4	8.7%
4	Schools or college	2	4.3%
5	Internet	2	4.3%
6	SCCC offices or police stations	16	34.8%
7	All of the above	2	4.3%
8	1,2,3, and 4	7	15.2%
9	4,5 and 6	3	6.5%
10	Total	44	100.0%

Table 3.1.5 indicates that 34.8% of the respondents said information about passenger rights was provided in the SCCC offices or police stations, while 80.9% mentioned other places, such as at colleges and driving schools, in magazines, at the bus terminal and on social media.

3.1.8 *Do you know anything about the SCCC?*

Table 3.1.6: Aware of Existence of SCCC

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	35	76.1%
2	No	11	23.9%
3	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.6 indicates the regional bus passengers' responses regarding their knowledge of the SCCC. This survey question prompted different responses: 76.1% of the respondents were aware of the SCCC, but 23.9% were not. Some of the respondents who had heard of the SCCC were not aware of its roles; consequently, only 15.2% of those who were aware of the SCCC were able to name the three key roles of the SCCC, while the rest could only name one role. This finding implies that these respondents did not have a clear understanding of the roles of the SCCC.

3.1.9 Who is responsible for protecting the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey?

Table 3.1.7: Responsible to Protect Passenger Rights

S/N	Authority	Frequency	Percentage
1	SUMATRA	40	87.0%
2	Police	3	6.5%
3	1 and 2	3	6.5%
4	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.7 indicates that 87% of the respondents thought that SUMATRA through SCCC was responsible for protecting the rights of regional bus passengers; 6.5% thought police officers were responsible, while 6.5% thought that both police officers and SUMATRA were responsible. This implies that many passengers were aware of who is responsible for protecting their rights.

3.1.10 Have you ever reported any of your complaints about abuse of the rights of regional bus passengers to the SCCC office?

Table 3.1.8: Report Complaints of Passenger Abuse

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	20	43.5%
2	No	26	56.5%
3	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.8 indicates that 43.5% of the respondents had reported their complaints to SCCC officers using different methods, while 56.5% did not report their complaints to the SCCC. Among those who reported complaints to SCCC, 15.2% called the SCCC's toll-free numbers, 2.2% wrote text messages to SCCC offices, 2.2% went to the SCCC offices directly; the rest 8.7% did not indicate how they reported their complaints to the SCCC. In total, only 34.8% indicated the manner in which they reported their complaints to the SCCC.

3.1.11 Did you know that regional bus passengers have the right to safety during and after a journey?

Table 3.1.9: Aware of Right to Safety

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	44	95.7%
2	No	2	4.3%
3	Total	46	100.0%

A good number 95.7% of the regional bus passengers were aware of their right to safety during and after a journey, as indicated in Table 3.1.9, while 4.3% were not aware.

3.1.12 Did you know that regional bus passengers have the right to information before, during, and after a journey?

Table: 3.1.10: Aware of Right to Information

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	36	78.3%
2	No	10	21.7%
3	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.10 indicates that 78.3% of the respondents were aware of their right to information, while 21.7% were not aware. This implies that a good number of the regional bus passengers had a clear understanding of their right to information.

3.1.13 Did you know that after an accident, a passenger should receive redress from the bus owner?

Table 3.1.11: Aware of Right to redress

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	19	41.3%
2	No	27	58.7%
3	Total	46	100.0%

Table 3.1.11 indicates that 58.7% of the respondents were not aware that regional bus passengers have the right to redress from bus owners when accidents occur during a journey, while 41.3% were aware of this right.

3.2 Responses of the regional bus operators

3.2.1 Gender of the bus operators

Table: 3.2.1 Gender of Regional Bus Operators

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	8	100.0%
2	Female	0	0%
3	Total	8	100.0%

Table 3.2.1 indicates that all of the responding bus operators were males, probably because female bus operators are few in number.

3.2.2 Age of the regional bus operators

Table 3.2.2: Age of Regional Bus Operators

S/N	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	17-23 years	0	0.0%
2	24-35 years	4	50.0%
3	36 years and older	4	50.0%
4	Total	8	100.0%

Table 3.2.2 indicates that 50% of the respondents were from first age group of 11 to 23 years old and the other 50% of the respondents were from the second and the third age groups, which included people aged 24 to 35 years old or over 35 years old.

3.2.3 Do you have any idea which authority is responsible for disseminating information regarding the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey?

Table 3.2.3: Responsible of Passenger Education

S/N	Authority	Frequency	Percentage
1	Police	1	11.1%
2	SCCC	2	22.2%
3	Police, SCCC and driver association	5	66.7%
4	Total	8	100.0%

Table 3.2.3 indicates that 66.7% of the respondents said that education regarding regional bus passengers' rights is provided by the SCCC, driver associations and the police station; 22.2% said only the SCCC office was responsible, and 11.1% said only the police station was responsible. This indicates that almost 67% of the regional bus operators knew where education regarding rights of regional bus passengers is available. Nevertheless, most of the bus operators said that they received education regarding the rights of regional bus passengers through driving schools courses, magazines, newspapers, transport safety television programmes, social media, SCCC offices and police stations.

3.2.4 Do you regularly educate passengers about their rights, either at a bus terminal or on the bus during a journey, and how often do you do so?

Table 3.2.4 Education at Bus Terminals

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	3	33.3%
2	No	5	66.7%
3	Total	8	100.0%

Table 3.2.4 indicates that 66.7% of the respondents did not regularly promote the rights of regional passengers, while 33.3% regularly promoted those rights. As a result, it was difficult for passengers to develop a clear understanding of their rights and obligations during and after a journey.

3.2.5 In your opinion on and experience with the transportation industry, do regional bus passengers have a clear understanding of their rights and obligations during and after a journey?

Table 3.2.5: Awareness of Regional Bus Passenger Rights

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	3	33.3%
2	No	5	66.7%
3	Total	8	100.0%

Table 3.2.5 indicates that 33.3% of the respondents said that the regional bus passengers are aware of their rights and obligations, but 66.7% said that the regional bus passengers are not aware of their rights and obligations as a result of illiteracy, a lack of education or not attending or listening to seminars that are regularly conducted by the SCCC.

3.2.6 Do you agree with the methods that the SCCC uses to educate passengers about their rights, and what are your opinions?

Table 3.2.6: Agree with Methods SCCC Uses to Educate Passengers

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	3	33.3%
2	No	5	66.7%
3	Total	8	100.0%

Table 3.2.6 indicates that only 33.3% of the regional bus operators did supported the methods that the SCCC uses to promote the rights of regional bus passengers. However, 66.7% of the respondents did not support the SCCC's educational methods, but promptly suggested that lasting cooperation between the SCCC, bus

operators and other stakeholders should always be emphasized and that government supports to the SCCC should be extended to meet the SCCC's actual budget.

3.3 Responses of other road users

3.3.1. Gender of the other road users

Both males and females participated in the survey; males accounted for 55% of all road users, and females accounted for 45%.

3.3.2 Age of the other road users

Respondents of different ages were involved in the survey to ensure a more representative sample for the study; the first group comprised people aged between 17 and 23 years, the second age group comprised those aged 24 to 35 years old, and the third group comprised those aged over 35 years. The findings indicate that 40% of the respondents were from the first age group, 45% were from the second age group and 15% were from the third age group. This discrepancy may have arisen because people aged 17 through 35 years are more energetic and thus more likely to move from place to place in an effort to fight poverty.

3.3.3 Occupation of the other road users

Table 3.3.1 Occupation of other Road Users

S/N	Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
1	Student	5	25.0%
2	Employed	5	25.0%
3	Businessperson	7	35.0%
4	Farmer	3	15.0%
5	Total	20	100.0%

Table 3.3.1 indicates that 35% of the respondents were businesspeople, 25% were students, 15% were farmers, and the others 25% were employed personnel.

3.3.4 Do you have any ideas regarding the rights of regional bus passengers?

Table 3.3.2: Aware of Regional Bus Passenger Rights

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	20	100.0%
2	No	0	0%
3	Total	20	100.0%

Table 3.3.2 indicates that all of the respondents had some idea regarding the rights of regional bus passengers.

3.3.5 Do you know anything about the SCCC?

Table 3.3.3: Aware of Existence of SCCC

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	10	50.0%
2	No	10	50.0%
3	Total	20	100.0%

Table 3.3.3 indicates that 50% of the respondents were aware of the SCCC, and other 50% were not aware of the SCCC.

3.4 Responses of the SCCC and police officers

3.4.1. Gender of the SCCC and police officers

Table 3.4.1 Gender of SCCC and Police Officers

S/N	Gender	Frequency	Percentage
1	Male	2	100.0%
2	Female	0	0.0%
3	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.1 indicates that two officers were contacted; one was from the SCCC office and the other was a police officer from the regional road safety police station, both in Mbeya city.

3.4.2 Age of the SCCC and police officers

Table 3.4.2: Age of SCCC and Police Officers

S/N	Age	Frequency	Percentage
1	17-23 years	0	00.0%
2	24-35 years	0	00.0%
3	36 years and above	2	100.0%
4	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.2 indicates that the SCCC and police officers were over 35 years old, an age that could be

associated with good experience in a particular field.

3.4.3 When does education concerning the rights of regional bus passengers take place?

Table 3.4.3 Time of Passenger Education

S/N	Time	Frequency	Percentage
1	Before and during the journey	2	100.0%
2	After the journey	0	0.0%
3	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.3 indicates that the question of the optimal time for providing education about regional bus passenger rights of was vital for identifying appropriate times for educational efforts. The findings show that both the SCCC and police officers felt that education should occur before a journey at the bus terminal or during a journey on the bus because at those time points, the educational efforts would reach real passengers.

3.4.4 Is there an SCCC office at the bus terminal?

Table 3.4.4: SCCC Offices at Mbeya Bus Terminal

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	0	0.0%
2	No	2	100.0%
3	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.4 indicates that both the SCCC and police officers said that there was no SCCC office at the Mbeya bus terminal; thus, the SCCC officers were not closer to the regional bus passengers than the police officers were.

3.4.5 Do passengers always complain about challenges they face from regional bus operators regarding their rights during and after a journey?

Table 3.4.5: Reported Passengers' Complaints per Day

S/N	Complaints per day	Frequency	Percentage
1	Fewer than 50	2	100.0%
2	Above 50 and below 60	0	0.0%
3	More than 60	0	0.0%
4	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.5 indicates that on average, fewer than 50 passengers reported their cases within a day.

3.4.6 Are there any regulations or laws pertaining to compensation for death, personal injury, or the loss of or damage to a passenger's luggage during a journey?

Table 3.4.6: Aware of Regulations of Passenger Compensation

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	2	100.0%
2	No	0	0.0%
3	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.6 indicates that the officers were aware of regulations or laws pertaining to compensation for death, personal injury, and the loss of or damage to a passenger's luggage during a journey.

3.4.7 What methods do you use to educate regional bus passengers regarding their rights and obligations during and after a journey?

Table 3.4.7: Methods of Educating Regional Bus Passengers

S/N	Methods	Frequency	Percentage
1	Regular, organized seminars at terminals	0	0.0%
2	Different journals, newspapers, and magazines	0	0.0%
3	Social media	0	0.0%
4	(1,2 and 3)	2	100.0%
5	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.7 indicates that the officers used regular organized seminars in bus terminals; different journals, magazines and newspapers; and social media to educate passengers regarding their rights and obligations during and after a journey; thus, a good mix of the three methods could make these educational efforts more successful.

3.4.8 Are there any regulations or laws that guide regional bus operators' efforts to educate passengers about their rights before and during a journey?

Table 3.4.8: Aware of Regulations/Laws that Guide Bus Operators

S/N	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	2	100.0%
2	No	0	0.0%
3	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.8 indicates that there are regulations and laws that guide regional bus operators' efforts to educate passengers regarding their rights and obligations. The SCCC and police officers suggested that if bus operators were providing passenger rights education, it was imperative, and such efforts should receive appropriate reinforcement.

3.4.9 What challenges do you encounter in the course of promoting the rights of regional bus passengers?

Table 3.4.9: Challenges Faced By the SCCC and Police Officers

S/N	Types of challenges	Frequency	Percentage
1	Financial problems	0	0.0%
2	Insufficient human resources	0	0.0%
3	Passengers' conservative attitudes	0	0.0%
4	Poor government support	0	0.0%
5	1,2,3 and 4	2	100.0%
6	Total	2	100.0

Table 3.4.9 indicates that the SCCC and police officers encountered some challenges, such as financial problems and insufficient human resources, passengers' conservative attitudes toward their rights and obligations, reduced government support and insufficient support from the public. Consequently, both officers claimed that such circumstances have forced them to work in a very disappointing manner that has led to unsatisfactory efforts to disseminate information regarding the rights and obligations of regional bus passengers.

3.4.10 What are the roles of traffic officers in promoting the rights of regional bus passengers?

Table 3.4.10: Roles of Traffic Officers

S/N	Roles	Frequency	Percentage
1	To educate passengers about their rights	0	0.0%
2	To protect passengers' rights	0	0.0%
3	To redistribute the SCCC magazine	0	0.0%
4	1 and 2	2	100.0%
5	Total	2	100.0%

Table 3.4.10 indicates that protecting regional bus passengers and educating them regarding their rights are key roles of traffic officers. They also suggested that a wider range of regional bus passengers could understand their rights and obligations as passengers if traffic officers were more committed to their role of educating regional bus passengers about their rights and obligations during a journey on buses or at the bus terminals.

4. Summary, conclusion and recommendations

4.1 Summary

The goal of the study was to assess regional bus passenger's awareness of the existence of the SCCC and its roles in promoting the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey. The study was conducted in Mbeya City.

Forty-six regional bus passengers, eight regional bus operators, one SCCC officer, one police officer and twenty other road users were involved. Both simple random and purposive sampling techniques were used to select potential respondents. An intensive literature survey, questionnaires and interviews were used to collect the data, which were analysed using a descriptive statistical tool known as SPSS 17.

The findings indicate that a good number of the passengers at the Mbeya bus terminal were using regional buses to travel from one region to another. The survey showed that 71.6% of the regional bus passengers were males, and 23.9% were females, while 55% of the other road users were males, and 45% were females. All of the regional bus operators were males.

Approximately 80.5% of the regional bus passengers were aged 24 to 35 years old, 13% were aged 17 to 23 years old, and the rest 6.5% were older than 35 years old. In comparison, 50% of the regional bus operators were aged 17 to 23 years old, and the others 50% were 24 to 35 years old; none were older than 35 years. Both the SCCC and police officers were older than 35 years, while 40% of the other road users were aged 17 to 23 years old, 45% were aged 24 to 35 years and 15% were over 35 years old.

The following key roles that the SCCC plays in promoting the rights of the regional bus passengers

were identified: first, educating passengers about their rights and obligations during and after a journey; second, representing regional bus passengers regarding the laws regulating bus passengers' transport activities; and third, protecting the interests of bus passengers. The findings showed that 76.1% of the regional bus passengers were aware of the SCCC, while 23.9% were not aware. Some respondents might have heard of the SCCC but were not aware of its roles; consequently, only 15.2% of those who were aware of the SCCC could name all three of its key roles, while the rest could only name one. This finding may imply that some respondents did not have a clear understanding of the SCCC's roles, either because of poor cooperation from SCCC officers, a lack of education or the passengers' unwillingness to attend or listen to SCCC seminars. The findings differ from the results of a study the SCCC conducted in 2011, which showed that only 37% of the respondents were aware of the existence of the SCCC, while 59% were not aware, and 4% showed no response. In comparison, our results suggest remarkable growth trends.

Regarding the formal rights that the SCCC promotes, the findings indicate that 82.6% of the regional bus passengers who responded to the questionnaire were aware of their rights during and after a journey. Of these, 78.3% were aware of their right to information, 95.7% of their right to safety and 41.3% of their right to redress. In comparison, 28.24% were not aware of any rights of regional bus passengers. Other indicated formal rights of regional bus passengers that the SCCC promotes were the right to compensation 43.8%, the right to rapidly accessible systems for handling complaints 43.5%, and the right to non-discriminatory access to transport and the rights of disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility.

4.2 Conclusion

The findings of this study differ from those of the study that the SCCC conducted in 2011 regarding a baseline investigation into transport users' awareness of the existence of the SCCC. That study showed that only 46.26% of the respondents were aware of their rights as passengers, while 51.48% were not aware, and the others 2.9% showed no response. The SCCC (2011) study generalized the answers of respondents from various places in the country; in contrast, this study implicitly considered only regional bus passengers at the Mbeya bus terminal. The findings indicate that, the key roles that the SCCC plays are to educate bus passengers regarding their rights and obligations, to represent bus passengers in the regulation of laws for transport services and to protect the interests of bus passengers. The formal rights that SCCC promotes are the rights to information, safety, redress and compensation. Other rights are the right to rapidly accessible systems for handling complaints, the right to non-discriminatory access to transport and the right of disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility. In general, the findings indicate that regional bus passenger's awareness of and attitudes towards the SCCC, its roles and the rights of regional bus passengers has grown remarkably since the SCCC study in 2011. Therefore, concerning the recommendations in Subsection 4.3, the findings are sufficiently robust to be used as guidelines when reviewing strategies regarding the rights and obligations of regional bus passengers during and after a journey.

4.3 Recommendations

Based on the opinions of regional bus passengers, regional bus operators, other road users, and SCCC and police officers, the following recommendations were established.

Videos programmes concerning the key roles of the SCCC should be shown at the bus terminals or on buses. Additionally, the SCCC should publish more advertisements in magazines, newspapers and mass media to provide various sources of education concerning the rights and obligations of regional bus passengers during and after a journey.

SCCC offices should be located at the regional bus terminals throughout the country so that passengers can be easily reached before and after a journey, to make it easier for passengers to report complaints to the council, and to facilitate education concerning the rights of regional bus passengers.

SCCC should establish a clear method that will enable them to cooperate with bus operators and bus owners to promote the rights of regional bus passengers during and after a journey. This would take place through regular seminars with bus operators at bus terminals.

SCCC should provide various seminars about the rights and obligations of regional bus passengers in the community areas to raise passenger's awareness of SCCC and its key roles.

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