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EFFECT OF FUEL SUBSIDY REMOVAL ON THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN JALINGO METROPOLIS, TARABA STATE

SHIMBURA GARKOYEBA; UMAR USMAN DAUDA; & MAI-LAFIA, JERRY SAMAILA

Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences, Taraba State University Jalingo – Taraba State

Corresponding Author:

garkoyebashimbura@gmail.com

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Abstract

The study investigated the effect of fuel subsidy removal on the transportation system in Jalingo Metropolis, Taraba. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. A sample size of 70 commuter transporters was obtained from a population of 7 licensed motor parks. An oral interview, coupled with a structured coded sheet, served as the instrument for data collection. The gathered data were examined using simple percentage calculation. The analysis revealed that the subsidy positively effects the transport system and contributes to its effective functioning. Conversely, the removal subsidy adversely affects the transportation system by decreasing the revenue rate and the number of long-distance transport vehicles, as well as reducing the duration for which vehicles are maintained to ensure they are roadworthy. In light of these findings, the study advocates for a comprehensive strategy that integrates targeted support, investment in infrastructure, capacity development, and collaboration among stakeholders. This is deemed crucial for addressing the challenges arising from fuel subsidy removal and for ensuring the transportation sector's sustainability and resilience. By implementing these recommendations, government can mitigate the adverse effects of subsidy removal on passengers and transporters while fostering a more efficient, inclusive, and sustainable transportation system.

Keyword: Subsidy, subsidy removal, Transport system, Nigeria.

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Introduction

Fuel subsidy removal has been a contentious issue in Nigeria, eliciting debates and discussions across various sectors of the economy, particularly in relation to its effects on the transportation system. Nigeria, a country heavily reliant on petroleum products for its transportation needs, has historically implemented fuel subsidies as a means to alleviate the economic burden on its citizens. However, the removal of fuel subsidies has far-reaching implications, particularly within the transportation sector, which plays a pivotal role in the country's socio-economic dynamics. Nigeria, being the largest oil producer in Africa, has paradoxically struggled with providing affordable and efficient transportation services to its populace. In Nigeria, the transportation system is mainly reliant on roads, as most of its population depends on vehicles powered by diesel and petrol for both commuting and transporting goods. As a result, alterations in fuel prices and availability have a direct impact on the transportation network, affecting mobility patterns, costs, and overall accessibility.

Nigeria's choice to eliminate fuel subsidies is influenced by multiple factors, such as financial pressures, economic reforms, and the necessity of rationalizing government expenditures. In the past, fuel subsidies have imposed a considerable burden on the nation’s finances, redirecting resources that could have been used for essential infrastructure development and social initiatives.

As a result, successive administrations in Nigeria have sought to tackle the issue of fuel subsidies, but these efforts have often faced pushback from the public due to worries about possible negative impacts on living standards and inflation. The impact of abolishing fuel subsidies on Nigeria's transport system has been the subject of thorough examination by both academics and policy-makers. As stated by Oni, Folarin, & Ali (2018), the elimination of fuel subsidies caused transportation costs to rise immediately, which in turn increased fares for commuters and raised transport operators' operational costs. This rise in transportation costs disproportionately affects low-income earners, who heavily rely on public transport for their daily activities. Moreover, the increased cost of fuel translates to higher operating costs for commercial vehicles, which may result in reduced profitability for transport businesses. In addition, eliminating fuel subsidies affects the transportation system's efficiency and reliability. Transport operators, faced with increased fuel costs, might turn to cost-saving strategies like cutting back on vehicle maintenance or overloading vehicles in order to enhance earnings. This might jeopardize passenger safety and worsen road congestion, further disrupting traffic flow and increasing environmental pollution.

Beyond the immediate effect on transport costs and operational dynamics, the elimination of fuel subsidies also fosters structural transformations within the transport sector. As noted by Owoeye & Sanusi (2020), consumer preferences are shifting towards

alternative modes of transportation like motorcycles and tricycles, which are viewed as more fuel-efficient and economical in the absence of fuel subsidies. This shift not only affects the demand for conventional transport methods but also presents regulatory challenges as informal transport services become more prominent in the absence of a strong public transportation infrastructure. Hence, it is necessary to determine the actual impact of these changes on the economy in relation to the transportation system. Consequently, this study concentrates on how the elimination of fuel subsidies affects Nigeria's transportation system.

Statement of the Problem

The removal of fuel subsidies in Nigeria has led to increased transportation costs and rates, effecting various sectors like distribution, handling, and production. While subsidy removal may have economic and political merits, its social consequences, including the burden on citizens and lack of alternative energy infrastructure, are severe. Corruption risks persist in subsidy allocation, requiring careful policy implementation. Ultimately, a balanced approach is needed to address both economic concerns and social welfare needs, especially for vulnerable populations and rural communities. However, there are several effects this subsidy removal could have on the level and rate of mobility and as a result affecting economic growth of Nigeria. This is one of the major challenges that subsidy removal could have on the citizen of Nigeria. It is as a result of this challenge that this study is focus on investigating the Effect of fuel subsidy removal on transportation system in Nigeria.

The movement of people and commodities throughout Nigeria, including Jalingo, is influenced by the transport system, which is an essential aspect of daily life. Historically, the purpose of fuel subsidies has been to stabilize gasoline prices and lower the cost of transportation for the general public. However, removing the incentives leads to catastrophic consequences. The effect of removing fuel subsidies in the short run is an increase in transportation costs and transportation rates, which directly and indirectly affect the costs of physical distribution, material handling, marketing, logistics and overall production. In the middle run, the citizenry struggles to adjust for the market competition to surface and in the long run, market competition is expected to lower the price of fuel.

Objectives of the Study

The major aim of the study is to ascertain the effect of fuel subsidy removal on transportation system in Nigeria. Specifically, the objective is to ascertain.

i. The rate at which passengers travelling flood motor park before and after subsidy removal in Jalingo metropolis.
ii. The Numbers of commuter per day before and after subsidy removal in Jalingo metropolis.

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iii. The effect of subsidy on the performance of transporters in Jalingo metropolis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A subsidy is, by definition, a measure designed to help consumers reduce their expenses for goods or products (Adebiyi, 2011). As per the Academics Dictionary of Economics (2006), a subsidy is defined as a monetary incentive provided by the government to an industry aimed at reducing the price of its products and enhancing its competitiveness. This may be provided as a counterbalance to the imposition of customs duty by the government of an importing country. Fuel subsidy is a government discount on the market price of fossil fuel to make consumers pay less than the prevailing market price of fuel (Ovaga and Okechukwu, 2022).

According to Adeniran & Adetayo (2016), a subsidy is any action that maintains the prices consumers pay for goods or products below market levels, while keeping the prices producers face above market levels. He claims that subsidies can manifest in various forms. Some subsidies directly affect price. This encompasses subsidies, tax cuts and exemptions, or price regulations. As stated by Smith (2021), a subsidy refers to government-provided financial assistance aimed at reducing the cost of goods or services, promoting certain industries, or fulfilling social or economic goals. A subsidy is a form of financial assistance, either directly or indirectly provided by the government, to producers or consumers. This support aims to promote the production, consumption, or distribution of specific goods or services considered beneficial for the public (Jones & Lee, 2019).

Theoretical Framework

Social welfare state theory

The study is anchored on social welfare state theory propounded by William Beveridge in 1942. Theory posits that the government has a responsibility to provide basic economic security and social services to its citizens. This includes things like unemployment benefits, healthcare, education, and housing assistance. This implies that there is a need for government to make provision of subsidizing products and service for the consumers in other to better social life and living.

Theoretical Studies

Rate Which Passengers Travelling Flood Motor Park Before and After Subsidy Removal

Transportation subsidies are a significant tool employed by governments worldwide to influence passenger behavior, alleviate financial burdens, and promote accessibility to public transportation systems. However, the decision to remove subsidies often sparks considerable debate, particularly concerning its effect on various stakeholders, including

passengers. In this context, assessing the rate at which passengers travel to flood motor parks before and after the removal of subsidies emerges as a crucial research endeavor. Passenger behavior can undergo significant changes due to the elimination of subsidies for transport services, with fare adjustments and the overall cost being the main drivers of this phenomenon. Research carried out across various socio-economic contexts offers important understanding of how passenger travel patterns change when subsidies are withdrawn. For example, studies have shown that eliminating transportation subsidies can result in an instant rise in fare prices, thereby impacting passenger mobility patterns and preferences (Ajide, Ibrahim, & Opeyemi, 2019).

Before the removal of subsidies, passengers often enjoy the benefits of reduced fare rates, which may incentivize increased travel frequency and patronage of motor parks. However, the post-subsidy removal scenario presents a starkly different landscape, characterized by heightened fare prices that may deter some passengers from utilizing motor park services. It has been shown empirically that changes in passenger behavior of this kind can have a considerable effect on the operational dynamics of motor parks, resulting in variations in passenger numbers and income sources (Aina, 2018). Furthermore, eliminating subsidies could worsen current inequalities in transportation access, especially for low-income communities. Social exclusion and marginalization issues may worsen for vulnerable groups, including those with economic disadvantages, as they encounter increased difficulties in finding affordable transportation options (Olorunniwo, 2020).

As a result, it is crucial to comprehend the speed at which passengers move to flood motor parks pre- and post-subsidy removal in order to clarify the wider socio-economic effects of changes in transportation policy. The cost of transportation impacts the economic situation of the continent. Omotosho (2019) created a Keynesian new model to observe the impact of global oil prices on retail prices, discovering that with subsidies, inflation tends to decrease and the exchange rate depreciates in the short term. Obasi et al. (2017) reported that their research revealed that the extensive corruption in the oil sector transformed into the impoverishment of average Nigerians.

Moreover, they stated that, in contrast to the situation in Ghana, the Nigerian government did not make preparations for mitigating the impact of fuel subsidy removal before actually implementing it. According to Panou and Proios (2015), the affordability of transport is essential for meeting basic life needs. The affordability of transport enhances access to medical services, education, social interactions, and opportunities. The affordability index revealed that transportation costs can impact the quality and quantity of mobility options. People with low and medium incomes are impacted by transportation costs. The cost of transportation raises the expenses and fees associated with all other goods, and the resulting ripple effect will be significant for the economy.

Although transportation costs tend to raise the costs of other commodities, it has certain benefits.

As opined by Panou and Proios (2015) transportation cost forces people to limit their traveling, reduces parking, congestion and environmental pollution. There was a postulation that three component variables are responsible for transportation cost viz: ownership cost, auto use cost and transit use cost. Transportation cost seems to reduce as kilometer covered increases. According to Panou and Proios (2015), the transportation affordability index demonstrated that disadvantaged individuals are deprived of opportunities via transport, highlighting its significance for economic activities. The cost of travel is raised by fuel wastage and delays caused by factors such as re-routing, the state of logistics vehicles, the quantity of vehicles on the road, route congestion, road conditions, right-of-way disputes, and the condition of other vehicles on the road (Somuyiwa & Adepoju, 2018). As stated by Gao et al. (2019) and Rushton et al. (2010), transportation costs can be classified as fixed costs (standing), variable costs (running), and overhead costs.

Numbers of Commuter Per Day Before and After Subsidy Removal

Evaluating the daily count of commuters prior to and following the withdrawal of transportation service subsidies is a crucial investigation for comprehending the effects of such policy modifications on passenger mobility trends and broader transportation dynamics. Subsidies are essential in molding commuter behavior, affecting aspects like fare affordability, choice of transport mode, and frequency of travel. Consequently, the removal of subsidies precipitates significant shifts in commuter numbers, with far-reaching implications for transportation systems, infrastructure utilization, and socio-economic equity. Investigation into the effects of subsidy removal on commuter numbers offer valuable insights into the complex interplay between policy interventions and passenger behavior. Prior to the elimination of subsidies, commuters frequently took advantage of reduced fare rates, which could encourage more frequent travel and greater use of public transportation services (Kabir, 2018). However, in the scenario following the removal of subsidies, a different situation emerges where elevated fare prices discourage some commuters from opting for public transport (Ayinde & Olanrewaju, 2020). As a result, the number of commuters may vary as passengers reevaluate their travel options and adjust to the new economic circumstances. Empirical evidence indicates that eliminating subsidies can result in a decrease in commuter numbers, especially among economically vulnerable populations. Commuters with low income, who are affected more than others by fare hikes, might turn to different means of transport or cut back on their travel altogether (Mogaji & Fakoya, 2019). This development highlights the necessity of taking into account the equity implications of removing subsidies, as this could worsen

existing inequalities in transportation access and affordability. Moreover, fluctuations in the number of commuters prior to and following the removal of subsidies can impact the use of transportation infrastructure and the availability of services. Passenger volumes at motor parks, train stations, and bus terminals can vary, resulting in difficulties with capacity management and resource allocation (Ojo & Ogunleye, 2019). Additionally, transportation operators may face uncertainties regarding revenue streams and operational sustainability in the absence of subsidy support.

Commuter numbers in the wake of subsidy removal are affected not only by fare pricing dynamics but also by more extensive socio-economic factors and policy contexts. For example, the presence and ease of access to alternative means of transport—like owning a private vehicle, using ride-hailing apps, or relying on informal transport systems—can influence how commuters react to the withdrawal of subsidies (Oyedepo & Adewale, 2018). Similarly, enacting complementary measures—like enhancing infrastructure, providing fare subsidies for those with low income, or encouraging eco-friendly transport options—can lessen the negative impact of subsidy removal on commuter numbers (Olatunji, 2020).

Effect of Subsidy on the Performance of Transporter

The influence of subsidies on transporter performance is a complex aspect of transportation economics that includes various dimensions, such as operational efficiency, financial sustainability, and service quality. As financial incentives offered by governments or other organizations, subsidies can have a substantial impact on the operating environment for transporters, influencing their revenue streams, cost structures, and overall business viability.

The performance of transporters includes various metrics, such as revenue generation, cost efficiency, service reliability, customer satisfaction, and environmental sustainability (Amoako Tuffour, 2020). The effect of subsidies on these performance indicators differs based on factors like subsidy design, implementation methods, and market dynamics.

A crucial facet of how subsidies influence transporter performance is their contribution to enhancing financial viability and operational stability. Transporters can rely on subsidies as an essential revenue source, especially in sectors marked by low profit margins and significant operational expenses (Adeyemi & Aderanti, 2019). Subsidies allow transporters to sustain service levels, invest in fleet modernization, and expand route networks by offsetting operating expenses or providing direct financial support, thereby improving overall performance and competitiveness.

Furthermore, subsidies can have a significant effect on the pricing dynamics in the transportation market, influencing demand patterns and revenue for transporters. Measures such as fare reductions or stabilization, induced by subsidies, can boost

passenger demand, resulting in higher ridership and revenue for transport providers (Ogunleye & Adebola, 2018).

Conversely, the removal or reduction of subsidies result in fare hikes, which deter some passengers and potentially reduce transporter revenues. Consequently, the design and implementation of subsidy policies play a crucial role in mediating the effect on transporter performance. However, the relationship between subsidies and transporter performance is not solely determined by financial considerations. Subsidies can also affect service quality and operational efficiency, thereby influencing customer satisfaction and market competitiveness. For example, funding designated for infrastructure investment or fleet modernization efforts can increase service reliability, decrease travel times, and enhance passenger comfort, thus strengthening transporter performance (Nwosu & Igwe, 2019). Likewise, subsidies designed to encourage environmentally sustainable practices—like adopting cleaner technologies or making modal shifts—bolster the long-term viability of transporters by lowering operating costs and reducing regulatory compliance burdens (Owoeye & Adewale, 2020).

Moreover, the impact of subsidies on transporter performance goes beyond immediate financial and operational factors to include broader socio-economic and environmental outcomes. Subsidies are crucial for fostering inclusive access to transportation services, especially for marginalized populations and underserved communities (Ajayi & Adebayo, 2020). Subsidies help achieve social equity goals and promote economic growth and improved mobility by ensuring that transportation options are affordable and accessible. The impact of subsidies on transporter performance is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that includes various aspects, such as financial viability, operational efficiency, service quality, and socio-economic equity.

Empirical Studies

It is worth mentioning that numerous empirical studies have been carried out by researchers regarding the impact of gasoline prices on Nigeria's economy. Nwosa (2012), for example, conducted research into the connection between the price of domestic fuel and several macroeconomic variables in Nigeria during the period from 1986 to 2011. Data analysis was conducted using vector auto-regressive (VAR) and vector error correction (VEC) models. The findings indicated a one-way causal relationship from domestic fuel price to short-term interest rate for pairs of variables that are integrated of the same order but do not co-integrate. The VEC model also demonstrated that for pairs of variables that are co-integrated and of the same order, there is a causal relationship from domestic fuel prices to inflation rates in both the long and short term. In light of these findings, it is crucial for the government to approach the removal of fuel subsidies and the liberalization

of the petroleum industry's downstream sector with caution, particularly regarding the rise in gasoline prices (Nwosa & Ajibola, 2013).

Hui-Siang et al. (2011) conducted another study examining the connection between domestic petrol prices and Malaysia's 10 main economic sectors, utilizing quarterly data from 1990 to 2007. Using a vector error correction model, the research discovered that fuel prices were only correlated with the agriculture, trade, and services sectors. Furthermore, the study indicated that in the long term, fuel price continued to be the main variable for these three economic sectors, as evidenced by the significant coefficient for the error correction term (ECT) in the sectoral equations. The study also discovered a unidirectional causality running from the mining sector to fuel price through the standard Granger causality test. Finally, the generalized variance decomposition (GVDCs) test showed that some of these sectors over a longer period are influenced by the fuel price.

Ehinomen and Adeleke (2012) performed a study on the distribution of petroleum products in Nigeria from 1960 to 2007. The research showed that the distribution of petroleum products in the country is troubled by complex issues, which can result in shortages of petroleum products, increased product prices, and disputes over product pump prices. The authors proposed that the downstream activities of the oil industry be fully deregulated to enable complete involvement from private sector players and entrepreneurs in product distribution, thereby enhancing sector effectiveness. As effectiveness is enhanced, operational cost will be cut down with a resultant reduction in the price of petroleum products that will be beneficial to all stakeholders in the industry.

METHODOLOGY

Research methodology: The descriptive survey research design was used for this study. This research design is one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be representative of the entire group (Nworgu, 2015). The survey design specifies how such data will be collected and analyzed.

Area of the Study: The study is conducted in Jalingo metropolis, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Population of the Study: The population of the study consisted seven (7) licensed commuters park in Jalingo L.G.A. of Taraba State. The list of the parks are as follows, Wukari park, Baissa park, Donga Park, Mararaba park, Jalingo Park, Bauchi Park, Taraba State Transport company (TSTC).

Sample size and sampling techniques: A random sampling technique was used to select 10 commuter transports each from the 7 licenced commuter parks, given a total of 70 sample size of transporters.

Instrument for Data collection: A structured coded sheet captioned Effect of fuel subsidy removal on transportation system in Nigeria, A study of Jalingo metropolis", coupled with

an oral interview, was used to collect data from the respondents. The coded sheet was divided into two sections A and B.

Section 'A' sought personal information about the respondents while Section B reflects on the grading of respondent's responses based on the oral interview.

Method of Data Collection: A coded sheet and oral interview was used to collect information from the respondents. The instrument for data collection was administered by the researcher with the help of two research assistants. A period of 3 days was used for the data collection.

Method of Data Analysis: The study utilizes simple random statistical analysis for the quantitative data, ensuring a thorough and accurate interpretation of numerical information. Data collected were analyzed using simple percentage.

RESULTS

Table 1: The rate at which passengers travelling flood motor parks before and after subsidy removal

S/N	Variable	Responses Before subsidy	Responses After subsidy (%)
1	Ver high	80(24%)	**55(16.8%)**
2	High	60(18.4%)	**46(14.1%)**
3	Medium	30(9.2%)	**15(4.6%)**
4	Low	25 (7.6%)	**5(1.5%)**
5	Very low	5(1.5%)	**5(1.5%)**
	Grand Sum total	326	

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Table 1 shows that respondents agree that before the subsidy there were very high number of passengers travelers flooding the park which accounted for 80(24%) traffic inflow. Some of the respondent agree that the traffic inflow was 60(18.4%), some said that passenger's inflow was on a medium level (30(9.2%) while some others agree that the traffic flux was low 25(7.6%) and as very low (5(1.5%) respectively. Looking the responses, it is evident that the number of those who said that passengers traffic inflow is much higher as compare those that agreed its very low.

On the other hand, after the subsidy remover, the level of passengers traffic influx reduced drastically to 55(16.8%) as responded by the respondent. Some f the respondents also said that the reduction was 46(14.1%), some said it went down to 15(4,6%), 5(1.5%) and 5(1.5%) which is indicative of medium reduction, low and very low respectively. The drastic reduction was could be attribute to the removal of fuel subsidy which makes it difficult for passengers to travel as compared to when there was subsidy. This implies that there is a significant impact of subsidy removal on passenger behavior at motor parks.

Table 2. The Numbers of commuter per day before and after subsidy removal

S/N	Variable	Responses Before subsidy (%)	Responses After subsidy (%)
1	Number of commuters per day was Very High	95(25.6%)	**60(16.2%**
2	Number of commuters per day was High	79(21.3%)	**43(11.5%)**
3	Number of commuters per day was not to high Medium	67(18.1%)	**27(7.2%)**
	Grand sum Total	371	

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

Table 2 shows that before the subsidy remover, the number of passenger influx was 95(25.6%), 79(21.3%) and 67(18.1%) respectively. But after the fuel subsidy removal, there was a drastic decline to 60(16.2%), 43(11.5%) and 27(7.2%) respectively. This is indicative of the high negative effect of fuel subsidy removal.

Table 3: The Impact of Subsidy on the Performance of Transporters

S/N	Variable	Responses Before subsidy (%)	Responses After subsidy (%)
1	The rate at which we maintain our vehicle to be road worthy has per weekly has reduced	90(19.6%)	**55(12.0%)**
2	The cost of transportation has also increased massively	70(15.3%)	**37(8.1%)**
3	The level of revenue we make per day as also reduced drastically	80(17.5%)	**23(5.0%)**
4	The number of vehicles that travel long distance journey per day has reduced	85(18.5%)	**17(3.7%)**
	Grand sum Total	457	

Source: *Field Survey, 2025*

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When it comes to the performance level of the transporter as result of fuel subsidy removal, Table 3 indicates that before fuel subsidy removal 90(19.6%) of transporter respondent agree on constantly ensure they maintain their vehicles to be road worthy, 70(15.3%) said that the cost of transportation did not affect their performance negatively rather there were positive level of performance, 80(17.5%) said that their revenue generation was enough to care for the vehicle maintenance and 85(18.5%) agree that the number of vehicles that travel long distance journey per day from their park increased. On the contrary, after the removal of fuel subsidy, there were massively 55(12%) decline in their rate of vehicle maintenance, the cost of transportation increased massively and their revenue generation reduced to 23(5.0%) which as also affected the number of long-distance vehicle travel from their park to 17(3.7%).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Prior to the removal of the subsidy, it was observed that there was a high volume of passenger traffic and an influx. This points to a considerable increase in the number of passengers using motor park services with varying frequency. Nonetheless, after the removal of the subsidy, passenger traffic decreased noticeably across all categories. The reduction was especially notable given that very high fell to 16.8%. The drop in passenger traffic is linked to the elimination of fuel subsidies, which probably raised travel costs for passengers, affecting their behavior and leading to a decrease in demand for transportation services.

The results point to a considerable effect of subsidy removal on passenger mobility patterns, suggesting that travel behavior is changing in response to fluctuations in fuel prices. Such insights are vital for comprehending the wider effects of policy changes on transportation demand and for formulating strategies to tackle potential challenges that may arise from these changes. This underscores the adverse consequences of eliminating fuel subsidies for the number of passengers at motor parks. Prior to the removal of the subsidy, there were relatively high passenger numbers, but these numbers fell drastically afterward. This decline underscores the challenges faced by passengers in accessing transportation services following the removal of subsidies. This finding agrees with the finding of Owoeye & Adewale, (2020) who said that subsidies aimed at promoting environmentally sustainable practices, such as the adoption of cleaner technologies or modal shifts, enhance the long-term viability of transporters by reducing operating costs and regulatory compliance burdens.

The removal of the fuel subsidy also adversely affected transporters' performance levels. Prior to the removal, transporters conveyed assurance regarding the upkeep of their vehicles, with a notable fraction indicating favorable revenue outcomes and a rise in the frequency of long-distance vehicle travel. However, following the removal of the subsidy,

vehicle maintenance rates declined, transportation costs rose, and revenue generation decreased. As a result, there was a reduction in the number of long-distance journeys made by vehicles from motor parks. This finding aligns with the conclusion of Adeyemi & Aderanti (2019), who stated that subsidies can be a vital revenue source for transporters, especially in sectors with thin profit margins and high operating costs.

In summary, these results highlight the intricate relationship among subsidy policies, passenger behavior, and transporter performance within the transportation sector. They underscore the necessity for policymakers and stakeholders to thoroughly evaluate the consequences of eliminating subsidies and to take action to lessen adverse effects on both passengers and transporters.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The impact of the fuel subsidy removal on the transport sector has been like opening a can of worms, bringing about unforeseen consequences for both commuters and operators. As transportation costs soar, residents in Jalingo Metropolis find themselves caught between a rock and a hard place, struggling to make ends meet while trying to navigate the challenges of reduced mobility and increased fares. While some have resorted to walking as their primary means of getting around, others have cut back on their travel, like birds in a cage, feeling trapped by their financial limitations. The public transport system, once a lifeline for many, has become more of a burden, forcing people to rethink their daily routines and stretch their budgets thinner than ever before. Despite the strain, there is a silver lining in the call for government intervention, as the people look to policymakers to lend a helping hand in stabilizing the sector. As the saying goes, "When the wind blows, the cradle rocks", it's clear that without thoughtful, balanced policies, the effects of the subsidy removal could leave long-lasting ripples in the transportation sector, affecting not just the wallets but the very fabric of daily life for many residents

Based on the findings of the study it is recommended that;

i. Comprehensive approach that combines targeted assistance, infrastructure investment, capacity building, and stakeholder collaboration is essential to address the challenges posed by fuel subsidy removal and ensure the sustainability and resilience of the transportation sector. By implementing these recommendations, governments can mitigate the adverse effects of subsidy removal on passengers and transporters while fostering a more efficient, inclusive, and sustainable transportation system.
ii. To ease the economic burden on low-income earners, a gradual phase-out of fuel subsidy removal by the government is required along with cash transfers to the selected vulnerable group of the population, which would cushion the shock and ensure that disposable income is not drastically reduced.

iii. The government should come up with certain initiatives to support the operators, such as fuel subsidies or tax rebates, that would enable them to operate efficiently so that a halt in the reduction of vehicle fleets can be restored to regular transport services for the benefit of commuters and operators alike.
iv. Policies that reduce the impact of transportation costs on household budgets should be prioritised. This could include promoting affordable alternatives like shared transport options and encouraging investments in non-motorised transport to ease the financial burden.
v. Promotion of Public Transport is recommended. This would be through a public education campaign showing the advantages of public transportation, thus encouraging more people to try public transport, subsidization and/or fare reduction to make public transport within reach of the greater population.
vi. Government should collaborate with employers and educational institutions to investigate flexible working and learning arrangements, such as homeworking or staggered hours of work and school, which would reduce the need to travel frequently and ease pressures on transport systems.
vii. The government should design a holistic policy response that would contribute to addressing the compounded challenges faced by its residents, from the immediate cost of transport to wider socio-economic effects. This will involve support for public transport operators, further investment in alternative modes of transport and targeted financial relief for affected communities.

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