

# Transport and travel behavior mauritius tourism essay

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### **3. 1 Introduction**

Transportation is an essential component of the economy influencing the development and welfare of the population (Rodrigue et al). Efficient transportation system provides economic and social prospects and benefits which cause positive multiplier effects such as better accessibility to investment, markets, and employment (Rodrigue et al). Mauritius has experienced the most remarkable economic growth and has one of the highest standards of living among the African countries. This led to the high mobility of passengers as more people have acquired cars and started to use them to commute to work (OECD 2006).

### **3. 2 The situation of road networks in Mauritius**

In Mauritius, the main form of land transport is road networks. There is road access to all parts of the island. The harbour situated in Port Louis and the airport in Plaisance supply for external transport. There is a main motorway that runs from the north to the south connecting all areas of activity (Menon 2004). Mauritius is a small island of 1, 865 sq km with a total of 2 020 km of roads. These include main roads, secondary roads, motorways and other types of roads. Figure 1 shows the percentage of roads in each category. In 2009, paved roads were noted to be 98% of total roads in the island. Figure 1 Roads in Mauritius(Source: OECD 2006)

#### **3. 2. 1 Types of roads:**

##### **Paved roads**

Paved roads are those surfaced with crushed stone (macadam) and hydrocarbon binder or bituminized agents, with concrete, or with

cobblestones, as a percentage of all the country's roads, measured in length (Index Mundi).

## **Motorways**

These are specially designed for motor traffic, which does not serve properties bordering on it, and which has separate carriageways for the two directions of traffic and are separated from each other.

## **Main Road**

Main road is a major road for any form of motor transport.

## **Secondary Road**

It is a road supplementing a main road which is usually wide enough for two-way traffic at moderate or slow speeds. Table 1 shows the development of the road networks from the year 1981 to 2011. It can be noted that new roads are still being constructed and maintained

Table 1 Road Network, 1981-2011

## **Year**

## **Length of roads (km)**

## **Motorways**

## **Main roads**

## **Secondary roads**

## **Other roads**

19811, 7812783857733919821, 7812783857733919831,

7812783857733919841, 7812783857733919851, 7832784057733919861,

7832784057733919871, 7832784057733919881, 8012985657733919891,

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8012985657733919901, 8012985657733919911, 8312988657733919921,  
8312988657733919931, 8812988658238419941, 8972990258238419951,  
8993190258238419961, 9053190258239019971, 9053190258239019981,  
9103690258239019991, 9103690258239020001, 9264491058239020012,  
0006095059239820022, 0006095059239820032, 0157595059239820042,  
0207595559239820052, 0207595559239820062, 0217595559339820072,  
0287596259339820082, 0287596259339820092, 06675100059339820102,  
08075101459339820112, 112821035595400Source: CSO

### **3. 3 The regulatory bodies**

There are several regulatory institutions in Mauritius that are responsible for better formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy measures for an efficient transport system. These include:

#### **The Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping(MPI&TS)**

The public infrastructure division of the MPI&TS is in responsible for the implementation of Road, Bridge and Government Building infrastructural projects. It is also accountable for improvements to existing road infrastructure and to construct new roads. It has under aegis different units that are responsible for the planning, designing, monitoring and regulating of transport in the country. These are the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit, Road Development Authority and the National Transport Authority.

#### **The Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit (TMRSU)**

The Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit is the Government body responsible for road infrastructure. It oversees the technical and security

aspects of the road planning regarding road markings, sign posts. It also implements traffic management schemes for a safe, reliable and secure traffic on the roads. The TMRSU is also liable for the installation of road equipments, collection of data on road accidents and monitoring of automatic traffic counters.

### **The Road Development Authority (RDA)**

The Road Development Authority operates under the aegis of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping. The Authority is responsible for the continuous care, maintenance and improvement of motorways and main roads. Road Development Authority is responsible to provide a cost efficient mobility in comfort and safety for the Mauritian population; to plan, design and supervise the construction of roads intended to be designed on motorways and main roads.

### **The National Transport Authority (NTA)**

The National Transport Authority (NTA) is a department operating under the aegis of the Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport and Shipping. It was established under the Road Traffic Act in 1980 and has, as main objective, the regulation and control of road transport in Mauritius. It fulfills its role of regulator of public transport through Traffic Wardens. NTA is also responsible to take disciplinary actions against holders of public service vehicle licenses in case of offences.

## **3. 4 The transport service providers**

Bus is the main source of public transportation in Mauritius. Public transport is also provided by taxis. They are more comfortable means of travel and are

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found in almost every corner of towns and villages. There are 6354 taxi (NTA 2012) licensed throughout the island to cater for the travel needs of the people. However, buses are the most economical way of travelling. Different bus transport companies, either privately or publicly owned, exist to serve the island. They operate everyday, but with a different frequency for weekends and public holidays. The bus services cover the whole island with 220 bus routes. The bus agencies operate under a road service license provided by the National Transport Authority (NTA). The demand for public transport in Mauritius is largely met by one public corporation and four private companies and individual operators grouped into cooperative societies as shown in table 2 for the year 2012. Table 2 Transport Service Providers

## **Bus Operators**

### **Fleet(Buses)**

National Transport Corporation 540 United Bus Service Ltd 349 Triolet Bus Service Ltd 191 Rose-Hill Transport Ltd 91 Mauritian Bus Transport Co

Ltd 30 Individual Operators Above 800 Source: CSO On the other hand, it can be noted that the service quality of public buses is poor and some of the problems which can be noticed while travelling are: The buses are slow and uncomfortable. Some are overloaded during the peak hours. Drivers skip bus stops when they are full and are affected badly by traffic congestion. Broken down buses are often spotted along the roads. These factors discourage people from using public transport and shift to public transport. According to Rughooputh et al (2007) this arise from the fact that the former mode is generally considered to operate with low productivity levels, poor frequency and technological inadequacy

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### **3. 5 Car ownership**

The economic success of the past decades has brought about a high propensity of car ownership among the Mauritian people for their travel needs (Menon 2004). One of the most important factors that accounts for the rise in car ownership is undoubtedly the growth in population and the high literacy rate nearing 90%. Thus, between the period of 1979 to 2012 the population of Mauritius has witnessed a growth of approximately 25. 1% from 966, 863 to 1, 291, 456 (CSO). In the same period the number of car ownership has increased from 25, 960 to 147, 733 (NTA). The high literacy rate in the country with free education is a contributory factor that encourages people to live a life of high expectation. Figure 2 shows the number of private car registered in the year of 1979 to 2012. Figure 2 Car Ownership, 1979-2012 Source: CSO

With rising car ownership and road length, traffic congestion has today spread almost all over the island. However, its effect is more severe in the city of Port Louis as the chief area of activities (financial, commercial and services) is focused in Port Louis and the areas surrounding it. The Motorway (M1) connects the south to the city centre while the Northern parts are connected through the Motorway (M2). The St Jean Road - Port Louis is joined through the (A1) road and The Central Flacq Road - Port Louis is linked to (A2) road. Congestion is severe during the peak hours (there is a morning peak between 06 30-09 00 and an evening peak during 16 30- 19 00) in Port Louis because of the amount of work trips entering the city (Menon 2004). Traffic congestion is a big concern in Mauritius and the estimated cost of congestion totals MRU 2 billion per year (Rughooputh et al 2007). Traffic congestion is having heavy impact on the

economy, on productivity and on the environment. Therefore, some projects in the pipeline to overcome the stringent problem of congestion are: The construction of the Ring road at Port Louis which would vary the access to the City Centre from different angles instead of a few limited accesses that frequently lead to serious traffic jam. The construction of the Terre Rouge-Verdun to provide an alternative connection between the North and South to help ease road traffic especially along the South-Centre-North route. The construction of the Dream Bridge linking Cassis to Roche Bois. Still, the long term solution to congestion is the introduction of Light Rail Transit (LRT). According to Halcrow Fox, the introduction of the LRT along the line of the former railway between Curepipe to Port Louis will provide a fast, modern and attractive transport system for mass transit and discourage the use of private car. Moreover, Menon (2004) recommended the maximization of public transport use, rather than private cars to gain access to the city centre of Port Louis with better quality of buses and improved commuter facilities can solve the problem of congestion to some extent.

### **3. 4 Free Transportation System**

Free transport was introduced in September 2005 to enable schoolchildren, pensioners and persons with disabilities to use bus services free. The free transportation system costs about Rs 600 m rupees per year and till now it has cost Rs 3. 5 billion to the government. Bus owners are subsidized on a daily basis an amount of Rs 11 000 per bus irrespective of the number of students and old pensioners they actually transport. However, the Minister says that 208 complaints were recorded and 124 owners of private buses would not receive benefits anymore because they have not complied with <https://assignbuster.com/transport-and-travel-behavior-mauritius-tourism-essay/>



the conditions of free transport. The senior citizens can travel anywhere for free while students can use bus services with zero cost from their places of residence to their respective schools only. No fare is charged to a child under the age of 3. Students, senior citizens and disabled persons are provided with travelling cards issued by the NTA and Ministry of Social Security respectively so that they are allowed to enjoy free transportation.