

Inclusive Transportation in Canada

Name:

Course:

Institution Affiliation:

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Abstract

The difference in our capabilities, health conditions and economic statuses have been marginalized for long especially in the transport system all across the world. As a result of the large size of Canada, the effects have more consequences making many of those who are affected feel left out both in the social and economic opportunities. The study therefore analyzes the transportation system and policy in Canada in an attempt to identify the main challenges experienced by the affected groups of people. Additionally, the research is also meant to find the possible solutions that can be utilized to solve the problem thereby making every Canadian citizen feel equally considered and appreciated.

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Introduction

Transportation being among the major infrastructure that plays a role in the development of any nations gets a lot of financing both from the government and other bodies as it connects all parts of a country and hence allows circulation of both commodities and people. Canada is among the largest nations in the world have invested so much focus and capital on its transportation system to ensure that all its areas are accessible. Since time in history, Canada has overcome many challenges that hinder the growth in its transportation system especially the geographical condition of the country thereby connecting most of its communities by rail, road and air network. Notably, Canada in this sector is far much different from other nations around the world as both the ownership and management of the sector is mainly dominated by private investors. This has played a major role in its growth as privatization leads to accountability and better management and more importantly it leads to rapid growth as a result of enhanced competition. Additionally, its rapid growth especially in the urban areas has resulted from the urge to satisfy the needs of the large population since about 75% live in the cities. Also, to the south, it borders the United States which have invested a lot of resources in transportation and this motivates the government to fund more resources in the transportation sector to ensure that they keep up with the competition to encourage more investors into their country. On the other hand, it can be noted that even though most of the countries have invested a lot in this sector, only a few of them have ensured a balance to cater for the disabled, elderly and the less privileged in the society. Every country therefore should develop policies that govern the sector to ensure that all citizens can equally access the transportation system to ensure free movement of people to their destination of choice.

Literature Review

Transport challenges experienced by people living with disability.

Transportation is an extremely basic necessity to most people living with disabilities as most of them have to commute frequently especially to medical facilities for their check-ups and treatment. Over the past few decades, the various organizations and bodies that govern the people with disability to ensure that their rights are also observed, have raised concern from their successive polls across Canada. The report from the survey indicates that despite the continuous growth in the transportation sector of the country, it is still an issue of concern as most of those living with disability have reported problems during their movement. Additionally, the report indicated that the most affected group are those with severe disabilities and those who cannot afford private transportation. This issue therefore required urgent action as it affects more than 60% of those living with disability in Canada (Jacobs, 2018). One of the major issues that have raised great concern across Canada includes the availability of paratransit (Rode, Floater, Thomopoulos, Docherty, Schwinger, Mahendra, & Fang, 2017). Even though there are policies that require transportation to be availed to all disabled persons, most do not readily get the services as very few of the common means of transport have ensured the development of their transport system to accommodate the disabled. On the other hand, the government have not disbursed enough resources for the purchase of the paratransit to ensure they are readily available to offer transportation whenever one is in need. To solve this challenge, there is the need for the concerned bodies and organization to ensure that they pressurize the government more to ensure there is the purchase of more paratransit which should be distributed across the nation especially to the rural areas since they are more affected. Additionally, there is the need to request help from external bodies, well-wishers and donors to assist in purchasing and maintaining the daily

functioning of these machines as this would help reduce the high dependency on government for finance.

Secondly, since the transportation system in Canada is dominated by the private sector, they are more focused on making a profit to remain competitive and functional in the market. This leads to most companies ignoring the need to invest in paratransit as that would be a burden to the company as special equipment have to be fitted (Jacobs, 2018). Additionally, most investors withhold the availability of the paratransit since most people living with a disability would opt to hire private cars other than using the public means of transport and this great source of income to them especially from those who have more severe disabilities. To curb this, the government needs to develop regulations and policies that ensure that those living with disabilities are not exploited as a result of their condition by setting a fixed charge per distance for the disabled. Additionally, they should develop a strategy to ensure the policy that requires all public transportation systems to be fitted with at least one equipment for the common types of disabilities is strictly followed to ensure their free movement without having to rely on the paratransit (Jacobs, 2018). Additionally, the government should channel more resources to the innovation and technology sector to encourage the development of various equipment and gadgets that would allow the free movement of people living with disabilities.

Another major challenge that leads to the failure in achieving accessible and readily available transportation system for the disabled includes the lack of a common body that would help to create a network that unites the disabled individuals, their medical facilities and the transportation system. The creation of such a body would ensure that it stores all the records of every disabled person and hence are aware of when they are required to travel thereby connecting them to the paratransit transportation system. Additionally, it would also help in

saving the operational cost of the system as they would connect all those who need to travel on a certain day to be channeled together (Rode, Floater, Thomopoulos, Docherty, Schwinger, Mahendra, & Fang, 2017). This would also make it easy to track the locations with more disabled people and hence channel more vehicles to the area. Notably, it would play a major role in ensuring that the vehicles are equipped with the right equipment to handle the various types of disability to ensure the comfort of every person. To achieve all this, parliament needs to set a committee and allocate finance which would govern the formation of this body as it is the only easy way that the country would satisfy the transportation need of people living with disability without having to drain too many resources on a single project (Jacobs, 2018). The creation of such a body is also beneficial as it would in turn create more employment for those people living with disability as they should be given a bigger share in running the body.

Transportation challenges experienced by low-income earners in Canada

Even though there are several other groups that are not favoured by the transportation system in Canada such as the elderly, women and immigrants, the low-income earners within the country become extremely affected. To some of the low-income earners living in rural areas, it becomes a challenge for them to transport the products they farm to the urban areas where there is a ready market. These challenges arise since the most common mode of transport for the low-income earners is the road and it is not cheap enough for some (Bista, Hollander, & Situ, 2020). Additionally, it does not favour those producing in small quantities as they cannot afford to hire a private vehicle to transport their goods. Additionally, most of the low-income earners mainly produce food products that are highly perishable and cannot afford air transportation to avail their commodities in the market on time (Allen, & Farber, 2019). To solve this, there is a need

for the government to fund more resources to Rail Canada to ensure it diverges its destinations to even smaller towns to connect the rural areas to the city. Additionally, since buses are the only channel through which one can access the smaller towns if they are not driving, the government should ensure to work with the bus owners such as Greyhound to charge affordable prices to those farming in the urban areas to deliver their products.

Secondly, since most of the public means of transport especially the buses and train operate on schedules, it brings inconveniences to most people as they have to wait for long hours to travel as they cannot afford a taxi. This forces low-income Canadians to alter their travelling plans to the time assigned by the city's public transportation system for departure (Allen, & Farber, 2019). Such a challenge hinders the general aim of ensuring the free movement of people to any destination. The only solution to this is to encourage more investors into the market to ensure that the buses and other modes of transport are available at all time at an affordable price.

Thirdly, some of those low-income earners working in cities, opt to use cycling as their mode of transport to and from their location of work to save on the transportation cost. They also face great challenges as there are designated routes as to which the bicycles should follow as they are not allowed to access all parts of the cities. This makes it tedious as some even have to walk especially those working in the city centres where bicycles are not allowed (Jahangiriesmaili, Roorda, Bachmann, & Allen, 2018). As a result, these employees become less productive since they consume too much energy to access their work locations. There is therefore the need to ensure the improvement of road infrastructure to ensure that cycling pavements are build all over the cities to ensure that the bicycles can access all areas. Notably, the government can opt to offer public buses that are considerably cheap from the locations where the bicycles are parked to various work locations.

Additionally, most of the low-income earners spend a lot of their income on transportation since those who work in the cities have to live in semi-urban areas where the cost of living is much cheaper. Earlier, it was assumed that the investment in road and other transport infrastructures was aimed at improving the livelihood of the poor but research indicates that if it is not properly managed the transportation system of a country may end up impoverishing those it was meant to help (Jahangirismaili, Roorda, Bachmann, & Allen, 2018). There is therefore the need for the government to create standardized travel charges as the country may seem to have a high-rate employment rate yet still record a high rate of poverty. Even though Rail Canada is the third largest and records the fourth largest volume of transportation, there is the need to even diversify it to the small towns as it is the only means of transport that can be easily regulated to offer the services at a cheaper price. Additionally, there is the need to ensure that the formation of classes in bus travel to ensure that some of the ticket and transit passes are cheaper to make travelling cost from and to the city more affordable to the low-income earners (Allen, & Farber, 2019).

Conclusion

Even though a larger population in Canada live in cities, the rural population still plays a major role in the growth of the nation and there is the need to eliminate the isolation that is created by distance, terrain and poverty. Therefore, even though we view other basic needs as more important than the transportation system, it opens the channel to employment, markets, better healthcare and economic opportunities. It is also evident that a mismanaged transport system would not only lead to rural isolation but also imprison those living with disability and low-income earners. There is therefore the need for the Canadian government to create more bodies to help in governing and guiding the transportation system to ensure they identify the challenges

that are faced by the common citizen. In doing so, they will identify the situations that need government interventions to ensure that the citizens are not exploited as they travel every day to improve their livelihood. Notably, the review of Canada on poverty implication on rural and urban transport indicated that growth of the transportation system does not only allow free transportation but also create a major field of employment. Therefore, for any country to achieve its development goals, they first need to focus on the transportation systems to ensure they create a network that connects all its areas and also favours all level of people living within its borders.

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