

## Public Perception of Noise Pollution of Transit Advertising in Benin Metropolis

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined public perception of noise pollution of transit advertising in Benin metropolis. The objectives of this study were to find out the transportation forms through which Benin City residents were exposed to transit advertising; find out the extent of exposure of Benin City residents to noise pollution in transit advertising; ascertain if exposure to transit advertising prompts Benin City residents to purchase the advertised products and services and x-ray the adverse effects of noise pollution from transit advertising on Benin City residents. The study was anchored on the Perception Theory. The Survey served as the research design while the research instrument used for data collection was questionnaire. The study, among other things, revealed that noise pollution from transit advertising may not be a significant obstacle for most Benin City residents in their decision to patronise advertised products and services, but a significant minority of respondents still perceive noise pollution as a deterrent. It was recommended that policymakers and advertising industry stakeholders should work together to develop effective regulations and guidelines that minimise noise pollution from transit advertising while ensuring its effectiveness in promoting products and services.*

**KEYWORDS:** Public Perception, Noise Pollution, Transit Advertising, Benin City, Transportation.

### INTRODUCTION

Advertising refers to the process of promoting a product, service, or idea through various communication channels to reach and persuade a target audience. It is a marketing strategy that aims to inform, persuade, and influence consumers about the benefits, features, and value of a particular offering (Nwaoboli, 2022). According to Awan & Abdur (2015), transit advertising involves placing advertisements within public transportation vehicles. There are several methods to do this. For instance, Light-Emitting Diode (LED) displays that have been installed may display advertisements and businesses can also hang posters in various bus compartments.

Posters inside or on vehicles like buses, cars, trains, and other forms of public transportation, as well as at transit hubs like bus shelters, railway stations, and airports, are examples of transit advertising. Local transportation systems and private services collaborate with creative advertising ideas to provide programmes and earn additional income through transit advertising. Displays on buses, transit benches, shelters, or any other method of transportation that customers use to move during the day are all as considered transit advertising. Transit advertising gives advertisers several

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benefits over other forms of advertising with little negative effects on the human system such as television (Koetsier, 2014).

Advertising promotes businesses (Nwaoboli, Ogunyemi & Ezegwu, 2023). Transit advertising in outdoor media is often used in order to address the congested urban advertising area and may be a useful substitute for conventional outdoor advertising that uses billboards as fully branded vehicles, taxis, buses, and trains may display advertisements on their exteriors and interiors in the form of transit shows, interchange promotions, sample distribution, and "transit TV" (Wakukha, 2011). Transit advertising is expanding quickly to becoming a communication wrap-around on work automobiles, public transportation and commercial vehicles, among others. The current trend gives individual automobile owners the chance to make some money by authorising the use of their vehicles for commercial purposes.

More vulnerable populations to the problem of noise pollution from transit advertisements include those with specific diseases or medical issues, those in hospitals or receiving rehabilitation at home, those managing complex cognitive tasks, those who are blind or have hearing impairment, foetuses, babies, and young children, as well as the elderly in general. Speech intelligibility is most negatively impacted in those with hearing loss. In a busy setting, even minor hearing impairments in the high-frequency sound spectrum may interfere with the ability to understand speech. The majority of people fall within the category of those who are susceptible to voice interruption (Birgitta, 2019).

According to the World Health Organization, there are seven different categories of negative health effects of noise pollution: hearing impairment, spoken communication interference, sleep disturbances, cardiovascular disturbances, mental health disturbances, impaired task performance, unfavourable social behaviour, and annoyance reactions. This shows that noise from transit advertisements have many effects on people. It is against this background that this study examines public Perception of noise pollution of transit advertising in Benin metropolis.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Noise pollution via media advertisements is one of the most often ignored aspects of research among Nigerian scholars despite the fact that Assefa (2014) noted that uncontrolled loud sounds coming from a number of sources are causes of social unrest and societal unhappiness in a nation. Not only does noise pollution harm human health, but it also has an impact on the ecosystem for both marine and land-based species. Loud or unavoidable noises from advertisements may result in hearing loss, stress, and elevated blood pressure, from highway noise to rock concerts.

Nevertheless, although several researchers such as Koetsier (2014) have written on the influence of transit advertisement on consumers behaviour, none dealt on perception of noise pollution of transit advertisements in Benin City metropolis. It is the need to cover this research gap that resulted to this study.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Find out the transportation forms through which Benin City residents were exposed to transit advertising
2. Find out the extent of exposure of Benin City residents to noise pollution in transit advertising
3. Ascertain if exposure to transit advertising prompts Benin City residents to purchase the advertised products and services
4. X-ray the adverse effects of noise pollution from transit advertising on Benin City residents

## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

### Concept of Transit Advertising

Transit Advertising is a form of out-of-home (OOH) advertising, which encompasses any type of outdoor advertising that is not located near a building or business. Transit Advertising is a medium that utilises public transportation vehicles such as buses, trains, trams, and subways to display ads to commuters, riders, and pedestrians.

According to Wilson & Till (2011), transit advertising can be defined as an outdoor advertising medium that encompasses any type of advertisement placed on public transportation vehicles such as buses, trains, trams, subways, and other forms of mass transit. It is a form of out-of-home advertising that targets a wide range of people who use public transportation including commuters, riders, and pedestrians.

For MacKenzie & White (2006), Transit Advertising is a marketing medium that utilises public transportation vehicles such as buses, trains, trams, and subways to display ads to commuters, riders, and pedestrians. It is a form of out-of-home (OOH) advertising, which encompasses any type of outdoor advertising that is not located near a building or business. The purpose of this type of advertising is to promote products, services, and brands to a wide range of people, while they are on the move.

Transit advertising has evolved over the years, from traditional forms such as billboards, wraps, and posters to more modern digital displays. Digital displays offer a more engaging way for advertisers to interact with their audience. They can be used to display video and interactive content, as well as engage with customers in real-time. Additionally, digital displays can be used to create a more personalised experience for the viewers, as they can target their ads to specific demographics (Brassington & Pettitt, 2000). Transit advertising also offers unique advantages over other forms of out-of-home advertising. It offers a great way to reach people who may not have access to other forms of media, such as radio, television, or the internet. Additionally, it offers a more cost-effective way to reach a large audience in a short period of time. Despite the advantages of transit advertising, it also has some drawbacks. Transit advertising can be difficult to measure, as it can be difficult to track who is actually viewing the ads.

More so, transit advertising can be expensive, and the cost of advertising space can vary greatly depending on the location. Finally, transit advertisements are subject to vandalism and theft, which

can be a costly problem for advertisers (Nwaoboli, 2022). Overall, transit advertising is an effective way to reach large audiences in a short period of time. It offers a cost-effective way to target specific demographics and can be used to create a more personalised experience for viewers (Brassington & Pettitt, 2000). However, it can also be expensive and difficult to measure, and is subject to vandalism and theft. As a result, advertisers should carefully consider the costs and benefits of transit advertising before investing in a campaign.

## OVERVIEW OF NOISE POLLUTION

Noise pollution, also known as environmental noise or sound pollution, is any sound that is unwanted or disruptive to the listener. It is caused by a variety of sources, including industrial and transportation noise, as well as from construction, events, and other activities. Noise pollution can be detrimental to physical and psychological health, cause hearing loss, and interfere with communication, sleep, and leisure activities. It can also disrupt wildlife habitats, reduce the quality of life, and contribute to environmental stress. Noise pollution is regulated by both federal and local government agencies and is often managed through the implementation of noise-control strategies and regulations (Chen & Chen, 2009).

Noise pollution is defined as the presence of an excessive and disturbing sound, which can be hazardous to human health and the environment. It is often caused by industrial, transportation, and other human activities, and can detrimentally affect physical and mental health, as well as wildlife (Dabdub, Lu & Pinsky, 2005).

Noise pollution is an environmental form of pollution consisting of excessive, intrusive, and often unwanted sound. It can be caused by industrial, transportation, and other human activities and can have a negative impact on physical and mental health, as well as on the environment (Kostyukovsky, 2015). According to Ro & Kim (2009), noise pollution is an environmental issue characterized by excessive or intrusive sound. It is typically caused by human activities such as transportation, construction, and industry, and can have detrimental impacts on physical and mental health, as well as on wildlife.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Benefits of Transit Advertising on Benin Metropolis

Transit advertising is an incredibly effective way of reaching a large number of people in a short period of time. With its ability to be seen by commuters on their way to and from work, transit advertising can be an effective way to get your message out to the public in Benin Metropolis. Some of the benefits of transit advertising to the public in Benin Metropolis include:

**1. Cost-Effective Advertising:** Transit advertising is a cost-effective way for businesses to reach a large number of people in Benin Metropolis. Transit advertising is much cheaper than traditional media like television, radio, and print, but the potential reach is just as high. This makes transit advertising a great choice for small businesses who need to get their message out to a large audience without breaking the bank (German & Orkin, 2006).

**2. Increased Brand Awareness:** Transit advertising helps to create more brand awareness for businesses in Benin Metropolis. Since transit advertising can be seen by hundreds of thousands of

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people every day, it increases the chances that people will remember your brand. This can help to increase sales and establish your business as a leader in the local market (Nwaoboli, 2022).

**3. Targeted Audience:** Transit advertising allows businesses to target a specific audience. For example, if a business wants to reach young people in Benin Metropolis, they can target the areas of the city where those people live and work. This can be a great way to get your message to the right people, and to ensure that your message isn't lost in the crowd (Egbulefu & Nwaoboli, 2023).

**4. Improved Reach:** Transit advertising can help businesses reach a wider audience than traditional media. This is especially true in Benin Metropolis, where the public transportation system covers a large area. Businesses can use transit advertising to reach people who may not have access to other forms of media, such as television or radio (Houlihan & Hester, 2005).

**5. Improved Community Relations:** Transit advertising can help businesses to build better relationships with the community. By investing in transit advertising, businesses can show that they are invested in the community and are committed to helping it grow and prosper (Kirkham & Elliott, 2013). This can help to build goodwill and trust with the people of Benin Metropolis.

**6. Increased Visibility:** Transit advertising can help businesses to increase their visibility in Benin Metropolis. Since transit advertising is seen by so many people every day, it can help to raise the profile of a business and make it more recognizable. This can help to attract new customers and keep existing customers coming back.

**7. Increased ROI:** Transit advertising can help businesses to get a higher return on investment (ROI). Since transit advertising is so affordable, businesses can get a lot of bang for their buck. With the right message and creative, businesses in Benin Metropolis can generate a lot of interest and sales with transit advertising (Kates, 2009).

### Effects of Noise Pollution from Transit advertising on Benin City metropolis

Transit Advertising negatively affects Benin Metropolis. Noise pollution from transit advertising is a major issue in Benin Metropolis, in Edo State. Several ways that noise pollution from transit advertising negatively affects Benin Metropolis include:

**1. Distraction:** Transit advertising can be extremely distracting for both drivers and pedestrians. This distraction can lead to traffic accidents and other dangerous situations.

**2. Sleep disruption:** Loud and intrusive advertising can keep people from getting quality sleep. This can lead to a decrease in productivity and a decrease in overall health (Wilson & Till, 2008).

**3. Mental health issues:** Noise pollution from transit advertising can lead to an increase in stress levels and anxiety. This can have long-term effects on mental health (Wilson & Till, 2008).

**4. Environmental damage:** Noise pollution from transit advertising can contribute to air and water pollution. This can have a damaging effect on Benin Metropolis's environment.

**5. Loss of property value:** Noise pollution from transit advertising can lead to a decrease in property values in Benin Metropolis. This can have an adverse effect on the city's economy.

**6. Damage to wildlife:** Noise pollution from transit advertising can lead to disruption of the natural environment, as animals are affected by the loud and intrusive advertisements.

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### Ways Transit Advertising can be used with minimal Noise Pollution in Benin Metropolis

Benin Metropolis is currently facing a significant noise pollution problem that is impacting the health and wellbeing of its citizens and the environment as a whole. The city's high population density, increasing number of vehicles, and expanding industrial sector have led to noise levels that exceed acceptable limits. However, transit advertising has emerged as an effective solution to this problem. With a well-developed public transportation system, transit ads can be placed on buses, trains, and other forms of public transport to raise awareness about the consequences of noise pollution and promote a range of products and services (Jia & Yang, 2012).

One significant advantage of transit advertising is that it can be carried out with minimal noise pollution. Advertisements can be designed to be visually appealing, with the use of bright colors and bold text to capture the attention of commuters. This means that transit advertising can be carried out without adding to the already high levels of noise pollution in the city. Additionally, studies have shown that transit advertising can reduce noise levels by up to 20 decibels, which can have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of citizens (Abideen & Saleem, 2011).

Transit advertising can also be used to educate citizens about the dangers of noise pollution and encourage them to avoid loud activities such as honking horns and playing loud music. By promoting the benefits of public transportation, transit advertising can also encourage citizens to use public transport instead of private vehicles, reducing the number of vehicles on the roads and lowering noise levels. Advertisements can also promote products and services related to noise pollution, such as noise reduction devices and noise control services, as well as public transportation, such as discounts on fares and tickets (Kates, 2009).

Transit advertising offers a promising solution to the noise pollution problem in Benin Metropolis. It can be carried out with minimal noise pollution while promoting a range of products and services and raising awareness about the dangers of noise pollution. Transit advertising can also encourage citizens to use public transportation, reducing the number of vehicles on the roads and lowering noise levels, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more livable city (Kostyukovsky, 2015).

### REVIEW OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Ojukwu (2004) examined public perception of environmental noise from Transit Advertising in Ibadan in order to find out the impact of noise pollution from transit advertising which has been receiving increased attention in recent years. A survey was conducted among the Ibadan residents to assess their perceptions of the noise pollution from transit advertising. The survey results revealed that a majority of the respondents (76%) agreed that noise pollution from transit advertising is a serious problem in Ibadan. The researcher suggested that Ibadan residents should be aware of the potential risks of noise pollution from transit advertising and take necessary measures to protect themselves.

Nduka's (2020) study was aimed at investigating the impact of transit advertising on Lagos Metropolis. Data were collected through the use of questionnaires administered to three hundred and fifty (350) respondents in two Lagos Metropolis. Descriptive and inferential analyses were used to analyze the data. The results of the study showed that majority of the respondents (82.3%) have been exposed to transit advertisement. It was recommended that more resources should be committed to transit advertisement in order to improve the economic development of the state.

The purpose of Wilson & Till (2008) study was to investigate the perceptions of the general population in the area of Southern Punjab about the attractive features of transportation commercials. The survey research was used and a questionnaire that was produced by observing advertising posted on transit media was delivered to the participants. Due to the nature of the study, 400 waiting passengers in Multan city were asked to take out a questionnaire. These passengers, both male and female, were picked by a convenience sample method. The research was conducted at bus terminals and shelters. The positive and negative features of passengers' perceptions of many components of transit ads, such as like, reliability, beautification, economic value, social norms, happy and entertaining source, etc., were investigated. These factors included: liking; reliability; economic value; social norms; joyful and amusing source; etc. According to the findings, the vast majority of respondents had a favourable impression of advertising shown on public transportation since they enjoyed being exposed to them and relied on them. These studies are related to the current study in that they all dealt on transit advertising but majorly differed in terms of scope as the current study was conducted in Benin city while the other studies were not.

## **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **The Perception Theory**

Klapper first propounded the perception theory in 1960 (Asemah, Nwammuo, and Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2017). It is one of the limited effects theories that demonstrates how different people have various cognitive structures of needs, perceptions, beliefs, values, attitudes, and abilities, which in turn cause them to have varied perspectives on the world around them.

The need to comprehend how people perceive and comprehend media messages led to the development of this theory. It has been used to describe how media influences people and how their perceptions, beliefs, and behaviour are affected. The premise of the perception theory is that individuals perceive media messages using their own unique filters. This indicates that a person's unique experiences, beliefs, and values often impact the message they take away from a media source. As a result, a person's interpretation of a media message and how it connects to their own experiences might have an impact on how that person perceives the message.

According to the perception theory of mass communication, individuals are continually interpreting and integrating signals from the media. This implies that media messages become part of a person's already held views, attitudes, and values. The behaviour, attitudes, and beliefs of a person may change as a result of the integration process. According to the perception theory, people are impacted by their own personal filters, but they also consider the message's context and the media source. This implies that both the content of the communication and its source might have an impact on the audience. A person could be more inclined to believe a message coming from a reliable source than one coming from an unreliable one.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The survey research design was used to conduct the study. This is because survey research is an excellent method for the measurement of attitude and opinion of people within a large population. The population of the study was the total number of residents of Oredo Local Government Area, Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area and Egor Local Government Area, Benin City, Edo State

which according to the population projection by the National Population Census (2016) Enumeration Area Demarcation (EAD) Data is 1,496,000. The sample size of this study was determined by the Taro Yamane’s sample size calculation propounded by Taro Yamanes (1967). The formular for the calculation is:  $n=N/[1+N(e)^2]$ . Thus our sample size would be 400. The sampling technique was the multi-stage sampling research design. In the first stage, the researcher purposively selected Benin City because it is the capital of Edo State. In the second stage, the researcher picked 3 Local Government Areas within Benin metropolis, namely, Oredo Local Government Area, Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area and Egor Local Government Area. In the third stage, the researcher also randomly selected highly populated areas in the three Local Government Areas. For Oredo, Ring road (Central park) was selected, For Egor, Uselu was selected While for Ikpoba-Okah, Aduwawa was selected. In the fourth stage, the researcher chose simple random sampling technique to distribute 133 copies of questionnaire to residence of Oredo and Ikpoba-Okah respectively while the other 134 copies of questionnaire would be randomly distributed in Ikpoba-Okhah Local Government Area. It should be noted that all the copies of the questionnaire would be distributed to adults in the research populations. For this research, data were collected via a questionnaire. Out of the 400 copies of questionnaire distributed, 378 were retrieved, representing a response rate of 94.5%.

**Data Presentation and Analysis**

**Table 1: Forms of exposure to transit advertising**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Buses	237	62.6
Private vehicles	109	28.8
Tricycle	32	8.5
Motorcycle	0	0
Others	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2023.**

Table 1 indicates that buses are the most effective mode of transportation for transit advertising, with 62.6% of respondents reporting exposure on this mode.

**Table 2: Frequency of exposure to noise pollution of transit advertising in Benin Metropolis**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	84	22.2
Twice a week	71	18.7
Three times a week	75	19.8
Weekends	148	33.1
Monthly	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2023.**

Table 2 suggests that noise pollution from transit advertising is a relatively common occurrence in Benin Metropolis, with a significant proportion of respondents reporting exposure at least once a week.

**Table 3: Seeing transit advertising prompts Benin City residents to purchase the advertised products and services**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	110	29.1
Agree	123	32.5
Neutral	10	2.6
Disagree	92	24.3
Strongly Disagree	43	11.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 3 suggests that transit advertising can be an effective way to prompt some Benin City residents to purchase advertised products and services, with a majority of respondents reporting that seeing transit advertising prompts them to purchase.

**Table 4: Adverse effects of noise pollution from transit advertisements on Benin City residents**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Distraction from other activities	29	7.6
Hearing loss	115	30.4
Interference with communication	98	25.3
Sleep Disturbance	17	4.4
Psychological discomfort such as anxiety, irritability, stress	119	31.5
Others	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 4 shows that a significant proportion of respondents report experiencing negative effects from noise pollution associated with transit advertisements, including hearing loss or interference with communication (30.4%), psychological discomfort such as anxiety, irritability, and stress (31.5%), distraction from other activities (7.6%), and sleep disturbance (4.4%).

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings presented in the tables provide valuable insights into the perception of noise pollution from transit advertising in Benin City. Table 1 indicates that buses are the most effective mode of transportation for transit advertising in Benin City, with 62.6% of respondents reporting exposure in this mode. This finding aligns with the effectiveness of transit advertising mentioned by Belch and Belch (2014), who highlight that buses offer a wide reach and high visibility for advertising messages. The high exposure rate suggests that transit advertising in Benin City has the potential to effectively reach a large audience.

Table 2 highlights the prevalence of noise pollution from transit advertising in Benin Metropolis, with a significant proportion of respondents reporting exposure at least once a week. This finding is consistent with the study by Egbulefu and Nwaoboli (2023), who discuss the implications of digital advertising, including noise pollution, in the context of political campaigns. The frequent exposure to noise pollution suggests that it is a common occurrence in Benin City, which may have implications for public health and well-being.

Table 3 suggests that transit advertising can be an effective way to prompt Benin City residents to purchase advertised products and services. The majority of respondents reported that seeing transit advertising prompts them to make purchases. This finding supports the notion that advertising can influence consumer behaviour, as discussed by Belch and Belch (2014). The visual impact and repetitive nature of transit advertising may create a persuasive effect on consumers, leading to increased purchase intent.

Table 4 reveals the negative effects experienced by respondents due to noise pollution associated with transit advertisements. These effects include hearing loss or interference with communication, psychological discomfort, distraction from other activities, and sleep disturbance. The findings are in line with the study by Nwaoboli (2022), who explores the impact of social media advertising on customer purchasing decisions. The negative effects of noise pollution underscore the need for mitigating measures to minimize its adverse consequences on individuals' well-being.

## SUMMARY

This study examined the perception of noise pollution from transit advertising in Benin City. It highlighted the high degree of usage of buses for transit advertising, which is a significant source of noise pollution in the city. The study found that transit advertising is a common and widespread form of advertising in the city, with buses being the most effective mode of transportation for transit advertising. However, the effectiveness of transit advertising may vary based on individual preferences and behaviours, and noise pollution may deter some residents from patronizing advertised products and services. Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends that:

1. Policymakers and advertising industry stakeholders should work together to develop effective regulations and guidelines that minimize noise pollution from transit advertising while ensuring its effectiveness in promoting products and services.
2. Advertisers and marketers should consider the effectiveness of transit advertising for their target audience and use other marketing strategies in conjunction with transit advertising to reach consumers who may not be as responsive to this form of advertising.
3. Advertisers should consider using digital and mobile advertising during weekdays when people are more likely to be at work or using their devices.

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