Negotiating the control over transportation at the urban margins: dynamics in governance coproduction in informal mobility in Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) and Douala (Cameroon)

By
Vivien M. MELI
Team leader

22nd September, 2021
Outline of the presentation

• Research team
• Background and rationale
• Research problem
• Research objectives
• Research Methodology
• Expected deliverables
• Preliminary results
Project Team

- **Team leader:** Meli Meli Vivien, PhD, University of Dschang-Cameroon, melvivien_03@yahoo.fr
- **Cote d'Ivoire team**
  - Fokou Gilbert, PhD, Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques en Côte d'Ivoire (CSRS), Cote d'Ivoire, gilbert.fokou@csrs.ci
  - Kabran Estelle, PhD, Felix Houphouët-Boigny University-Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire /Centre Suisse de Recherches Scientifiques en Côte d'Ivoire (CSRS), estelle.kabran@csrs.ci
- **Cameroon team**
  - Lemouogue Josephine, PhD, University of Dschang-Cameroon, josechrist5@yahoo.fr
  - Tanougong Armand, Msc, University of Dschang-Cameroon, armand_tanougong@yahoo.com
Background and rationale

- Knowledge and representation of actors in urban transport governance:
  - A strong interest in the literature for formal and institutional actors and little interest in informal transport actors;
  - Focus on informal modes of transport such as minibuses, collective taxis, motorcycle taxis and the contribution of the various actors to the reconfiguration of public space;
  - Little interest in informal urban transport governance (organisation and interaction between urban transport actors), etc.
Background and rationale

The challenges of African cities:

• **Demographic challenge**: 1 billion inhabitants in African cities in 2040 (the total population of Africa in 2009)

• **Urbanization challenge**: Rapid urban sprawl with poor planning and decision making

• **Urban economy challenge**: Dominance of informal economy
Background and rationale

The challenges of African cities:

Urban sprawl: The cities of Abidjan and Douala have great similarities in terms of urban sprawl and transport supply.

In less than 40 years, they have more than doubled in floor area.
Research problem

Urban Sprawl

• *Urban margins and transport practices at the margins:*
  • Urban margin: geographical, social and symbolic space (territories, activities, beliefs, actions and logics of informal urban actors)
  • Margin in transport:
    • the logics and practices of actors resulting from strategies from below,
    • an expression of the vitality and creativity of the actors to contribute to the governance of transport, to improve the mobility offer in the city.
Background and rationale

Urban transport crises and governance challenge

- Transport needs far exceed the current supply, which is sometimes inadequate.
- Despite improvements, the supply remains limited to meet the needs of the growing urban population in terms of quality and quantity.
- Urban transport dominated by the informal economy sector with diverse stakeholders.
- Lack of policy coordination between different stakeholders (national and local or regional governmental level; private and informal actors; etc.).

Urban transport governance (which refers to the way in which different actors interact to make and operationalize decisions) is of key importance in African cities.
Background and rationale

• Challenges of urban governance:
  • Fragmented urban public (institutional) governance among a large number of governmental actors
  • Clear trend towards devolution of responsibilities to institutions at local and regional levels (decentralization)
  • Despite the importance of the informal sector, the informal actors are perceived as the perpetrators of urban disorder and chaos. But these actors are currently excluded from the governance of urban transport
  • Need to bring together key actors in urban governance in collaborative processes to jointly develop and implement new strategies
Research problem

• Co-production of governance:
  • A form of participatory transformation that involves bringing together multiple forms
    of expertise and knowledge, providing new or additional perspectives for managing
    complex policy issues
  • Recognition of the knowledge and expertise of the various participants, i.e. also those
    "non-invited" actors who participate in the creativity of transport and governance.

How could these marginal actors contribute to the (co-production of) transport governance in African cities?
Research objectives

• General objective
  • To assess the dynamics of peripheral urban transport actors in two African cities (Abidjan and Douala) evolving at the margins of government plans, activities and logics, in order to contribute to the co-production of urban transport governance in Africa.

• Specific objectives
  • Mapping informal transport activities and actors at the urban margins
  • Evaluate the role of urban transport actors at the margins in connecting people to goods and services, spaces and cultures in order to assess their contribution to urban transport governance
  • To define the determinants of an inclusive engagement of urban transport stakeholders in transformative interactions for the co-production of governance in order to improve qualitatively and quantitatively the mobility offer in African cities
Methodology

• A maximalist approach will be to collect data in the entire cities of Abidjan and Douala to document the urban and transport margins
  • Collection of cartographic data
  • Collection of institutional and organisational transport data
• A minimalist approach, in the form of case studies, will identify specific comparable areas of Abidjan and Douala for in-depth studies
  • Unregulated transport activities on the urban periphery
  • Informal water transport activities (Wouri river in Douala and Ebrié lagoon in Abidjan)
  • Informal transport (use of unmarked vehicles, especially in administrative centres)
• A multi-stakeholder workshop on the co-production determinants of governance in urban transport
# Methodology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Techniques to be used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maximumist</td>
<td>Mapping informal transport activities on the urban “margins”</td>
<td>GIS-based mapping of activities, questionnaire/interview (retrospective survey), Direct observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximumist</td>
<td>Mapping informal transport actors on the urban “margins”</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews; interaction mapping; stakeholder workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimalist</td>
<td>Evaluation of the contribution of actors at the margins to transport governance</td>
<td>GPS-based travel behavior survey; Key informant interviews; Direct observations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximumist</td>
<td>Defining déterminants of the co-production of governance in urban transport</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews; Stakeholder workshops  SWOT analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Preliminary findings

• Dynamic informal urban transport sectors characterised by a pronounced socio-technical creativity of actors (creation of new stations and stops, new transporation modes and practices)

• Increased presence of "uninvited" actors in informal urban transport in both cities despite governmental decisions limiting their activities

• Conflicts of interest and competencies between the central government and municipalities over the regulation of transport activities on the urban margins

• On the field,
Informal transport sites in Abidjan and Douala

Both in the city center and in the urban margins, in the cities of Abidjan and Douala, informal transport is operating.
Preliminary findings

Means of informal transport in Abidjan and Douala

- Diversivy means of informal transport both in Abidjan and Douala
- Informal urban transport dominated by mini-buses and tricycle in Abidjan and motorcycle taxis (ben-skin) in Douala
- Important use in Abidjan and Low use in Douala of water bodies for transport
Preliminary findings

Permanent presence of various actors

Communal presence and permanent interactions on the field between various actors of urban transports including: various informal actors of urban transport, municipality, police, and administration. This is an important perspective of coproduction of transport governance in Abidjan and Douala.
Thank you for your attention