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# Local responses to the unified metropolitan transport authority in Kochi, India:

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Research Report

Title: Local Responses to the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority in Kochi, India: Subversion, Adaptation and street-level bureaucrats

Course code:

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Plagiarism Declaration

I hereby declare that this is my original work and has not been copied or citied without relevant referencing.
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# Abstract

*This research interrogates the meaning, genealogy and local interpretations of the proposed Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority in Kochi, India. The methodological approach is key in exploring the complex environment in which this policy is situated. The centrality of relationships and narratives in this research meant that rich interactions with local actors and an evaluation of my own positionality as an 'outsider' guided the research process. Three core thematic areas revealed three distinct findings. The first is that policy genealogy at the local level is produced both through its history and through dynamic alliances between stakeholders of varying power. The perception of power in choosing to form policy networks alters the meaning of the policy in discourse and as a document. The second finding is that ideas travel from international 'spaces' to local 'places' through global, hegemonic circuits. Ideas from the Global North are easily able to land in the Global South and in turn shape the perceptions and decisions of local actors in Kochi. The third finding is that there are discrepancies between the rhetoric of policy in the form of meta-narratives and the way policy is enacted in practice. Stakeholders agree on the underlying promises that allow UMTA to gain traction but the agency and discretion of individuals means that policy practice is highly diverse. This process reveals contestations and negotiations for power at the local scale promulgating in changing forms of governance in Kochi. It can be stated that something unique is happening in Kochi which is illustrated in its dynamic policy landscape.*

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# Chapter 1: Introduction

*As soon as you get off the plane in Kochi it becomes evident that something different is happening, the airport is surrounded by thousands of solar panels and giant billboards boast that Kochi International Airport is completely solar powered. However, as I got closer to the city my perceptions began to change. Traffic was at a standstill and the concrete metro construction loomed above. Although designed to relieve congestion it was pretty clear that the only function it was serving was protecting motorbike riders from the torrential downpour. I had spent so many months thinking about transport in Kochi during and after my previous visit but my perspective began to change as my own judgements and preconceptions begun to fill my mind. I had decided that the metro was not the answer to Kochi's public transport question but I wondered if I was right (Fieldwork Journal, June 25 2017).*

As of the 1st of January 2018, a United Metropolitan Transport Authority (UMTA)[1] draft bill was given the nod by cabinet for the city of Kochi, India. The eventual promulgation of this draft bill would see the entire public transport sector, including buses, ferries, the metro, taxis and auto-rickshaws, combined under one umbrella organization with a single administrative system and most notably a single payment system. The new system will also use a Smartphone "app" and a smart card. This policy seeks to solve many problems in the city ranging from traffic and congestion to a lack of first mile and last mile connectivity. Kochi is an expanding city that is only able to sprawl north and south because of the ocean on its west and mountains on the east. Therefore, a conversation about public transport and urban development was much overdue.

At the time that the draft bill was approved by cabinet, I was in Kochi already working on a public transport campaign for the Centre for Public Policy Research (CPPR). The one year campaign aimed to increase the number of people using public transport in the city and was a response to the dramatic increase of the number of people using private vehicles leading to congestion and road accidents. CPPR is an important player in the policy landscape of Kochi and consults for both the public and private sectors. The organization is led by key figures in policy both in practice and in academia. It became clear to me that I was situated perfectly to question and understand what UMTA could mean for the city.

[1] Throughout the study, the policy is referred to as either UMTA or KMTA (Kerala Metropolitan Transport Authority). The policy is referred differently depending on the context it is spoken about and who is speaking.

From the beginning, it was clear that the policy was to some degree linked to the Kochi metro rail that was under construction and that the views on the policy were conflicting. The consultants I was working with hinted to the fact that the policy had not been successful in other cities and questioned whether it would be successful in Kochi. But the media seemed to be on board and news outlets reported positively on the newly drafted policy. I also began to draw my own conclusions on the topic, I had been on the metro and it was clear that it was underutilized. Even as an English-speaking tourist I had very easily and inexpensively been using the buses and ferries to get around, and if I was not convinced by the utility of the metro, why would the rest of the city be? There seemed to be a tension between the functioning of public transport on the ground and a grand idea of having a 'smart' public transport system, much in alignment with the Kochi Smart City Mission. This research questions where policies come from, who has the most power in their implementation and how local actors understand the same policies differently. The research questions how these factors influence the way in which policy changes cities for the people who live in them. The rationale behind this study is less about the consequences of integrating public transport but rather about the origin, development and uptake of the UMTA policy and how local actors interact with it. My status as an outsider means that I have a unique perspective of transport in the city and how it should look, thus offering a useful lens through which I can explore the perceptions of people closest to the policy. UMTA is an important case because it seeks to uncover a tension between the 'everyday city' (Simone, 2005), the experiences of people, and how people shape processes and a city shaped by governance structures and local, national and international institutions. The study is about understanding the context of Kochi and what UMTA means in this very specific context.

The aim of the study is to interrogate UMTA at the local scale, to understand where the policy came from and how it has been received by the local stakeholders interacting with it. The study seeks to explore whether something unique is happening in Kochi or whether this UMTA will see a similar fate to UMTA's in other Indian cities, forgotten and superficial. In achieving this aim, there are a set of objectives that must be reached. The first objective is to be able to narrate the story of UMTA because without a story, analysis becomes removed from reality. The second objective is to explore the complexity of the policy without simplifying it, there must be a movement towards understanding rather than definitive answers. The final objective is to fully understand my own positionality and the fact that just by inserting myself into the process I have altered the meaning of UMTA in some way. In order to understand UMTA in Kochi, I must first understand my own position and my own biases in interrogating

the policy and the people that formulate it. In order to achieve these objectives, I am able to move toward a set of research questions.

The central research question is:

What have been the interpretations and modes of implementation of UMTA by local urban actors in Kochi?

In answering this question a three sub-questions have been addressed:

- In what ways do local actors contribute to the continual development of UMTA and how the policy will ultimately look?
- What are the ideas that allow local actors to understand UMTA in a certain way and where do these ideas come from?
- How is UMTA instrumentalized by the individuals that interact with it at the local scale and is the policy instrumentalized differently by different actors?

In answering these questions and achieving the objectives the study is structured as follows. Chapter 2 is the literature review which acts as a toolkit in contextualizing the study and the basis of analysis for the findings. The conceptual framework, which further explains how I have deployed the literature in this study and how I have used key concepts has been incorporated into Chapter 2. Chapter 3 is the methodology section which is key in detailing how the study was conducted and as well as understanding my positionality. Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are the findings chapters and they have been structured according to theme. Chapter 7 draws all the analysis together to make a series of evidence-based conclusions.

The methodology section is just as critical to the outcome of the research study as the findings because the manner in which research is done affects the data that is collected. In undergoing this research I used a qualitative approach, relying primarily on semi-structured interviews with local stakeholders that interact with UMTA in Kochi. However, in attempting to understand the complex landscape in which I was working, I had to cast my net further, relying on more than my primary data. Secondary sources took the form of policy documents and most significantly media publications. By tracking media releases I was able to situate myself in the field before arriving in Kochi as well as keep up with the fate of the policy once I had left. This combination of tools allowed me to construct the story that forms the foundation of this study. The methodology section elaborates further on my own journey throughout this process and the centrality of my positionality as an ‘outsider’ (Merriam et al, 2001; Rubin, 2012).

This is important because I believe by going into the policy space as an outsider I was treated differently and in some ways was viewed as being more important than I was. I was forced to be deeply introspective in understanding what this meant for the outcomes of this study.

The Conceptual Framework draws from the literature review and acts as a foundation for how the rest of the study is structured. The three findings chapters are based on three umbrella themes that lead on from one another. The first chapter explores the genealogy of UMTA in two distinctly different ways, the chapter provides a clear picture of the policy's origins and the stakeholders that are most involved in its current creation. The next chapter, entitled travelling ideas, discusses how ideas travel from international spaces to local places to inform how local actors formulate individual perceptions and understandings of UMTA which ultimately affects how the policy is used. The final findings chapter discusses the difference between the underlying premise of UMTA on which all stakeholders agree, and the actual instrumentalization of the policy by local actors, which reveals deep differences between interviewed participants. The concluding chapter pulls all the findings together in order to address the aforementioned research questions and a higher level analysis.

## 1.1. Contextualization: Kochi, Kerala

Kochi is a city in the state of Kerala, which is located on the southwestern, Malabar Coast of India. Kochi is the economic hub of Kerala, as well as the most densely populated city within the state. Kerala has the 13th largest by population and has the 12th largest economy. However, by looking at demographic statistics it quickly becomes obvious that Kerala is different from other Indian states with larger populations and stronger economies. As per the 2011 Census, Kerala has lowest population growth rate in India, at 3.44%, the highest Human Development Index which was 0.712 in 2015, the highest literacy rate at 93.91%, the highest life expectancy at 77 years and the highest sex ration with 1084 women to 1000 men. Kochi is an interesting city and was the first colonized city in India, with occupation by the Portuguese in 1503. The city was later colonized by the Dutch and the British. Evidence of European colonization remains imprinted on the city, particularly on the island of Fort Kochi. Furthermore, the city of Kochi has historically been the ancient trade gateway to the hills of Kerala, which was revered by traders for the spices it produced (Praveen et al. 2015).

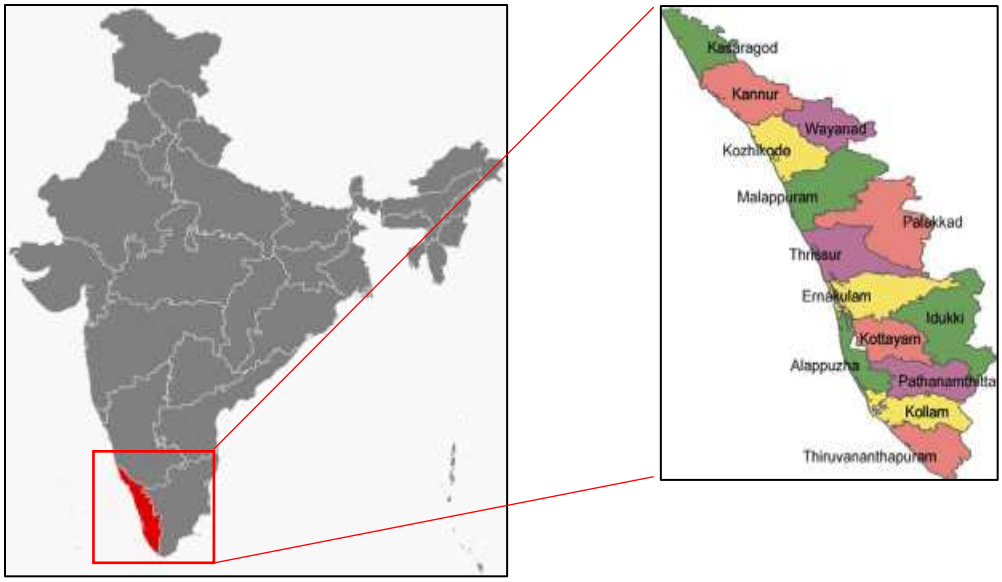



Figure 1: Map showing the location of Kerala on the Indian sub-continent

The city of Kochi was chosen for the site of this research because at the end of 2017, I spent 3 months working as a research interns for the Centre of Public Policy Research in Kochi. During this time, the organization was running a public transport campaign, and on the 1st of January, 2018, when the draft bill was given the nod by cabinet, I was asked to write an opinion piece on this policy landmark. While doing research on the bill, as well as talking to policy experts, I started to become interested in the policy. I then decided to submit a research proposal on the topic. The study was originally designed as a comparative piece, between the public transport system in Johannesburg and in Kochi, which I still believe has an interesting comparative lens, for the purpose of this research, Kochi became my primary field site. I spent 3 months in Kochi from November 2017 to February 2018, during this time, my research proposal was submitted and accepted by Wits University. The time was critical in understanding the landscape in which I was working, particularly in understanding the public transport system in its entirety. I then returned in Kochi in June 2018 for three weeks to further investigate UMTA through a semi-structured interview process. I returned to the field approximately 6 months after the UMTA draft bill was approved by cabinet, and by this time, there was no further development in the policy implementation process.

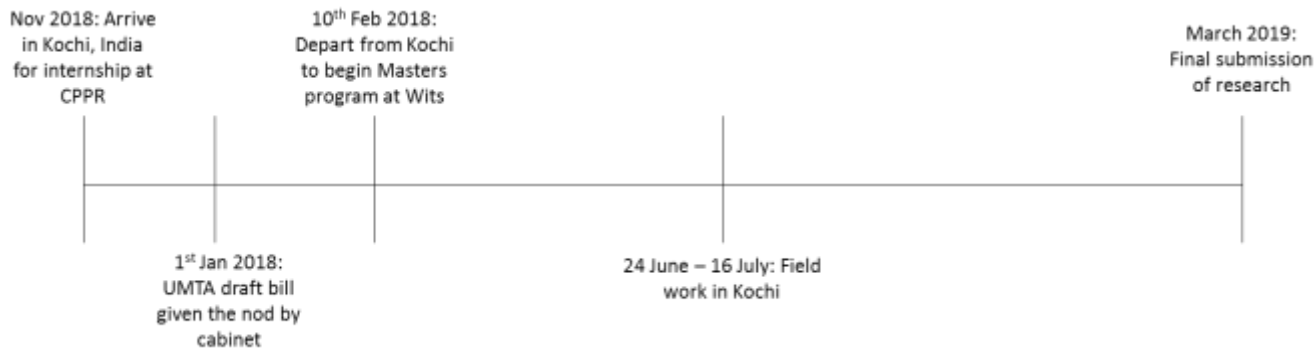



Figure 2: Timeline showing the dates of time spent in Kochi, Kerala

## 1.2. Urban Governance in India

The Indian Government is comprised of the Central, State and Local government, these different levels of government play differing roles in the policy development process. However, it must be noted that processes outlined in the constitution, do not necessarily reflect in the implementation of policy.

The constitution of India provides for a federal structure of states, this is evident in the dual government system, where there are two governments, the national or federal government and the government of each component state. Furthermore, there is a distribution of powers between the federal government and the states. Every power (executive, legislative and judiciary) is subordinate and controlled by the constitution. The courts have the final authority to interpret the constitution. The essential features of the policy process are essentially the same at the central and state government level, the legislature makes the laws, the executive implements the laws and the judiciary interprets them (Raju & Ravindra, 2016).

According to Vira and Vira (2005) it becomes obvious that urban policy, though officially a state subject, has for the greater part of India's independence been steered and organized by the central government which is increasingly important when understanding policy at the municipal level. According to the Indian Constitution, urban policy is a state government subject and without constitutional amendment, the central government does not have the power to pass legislation on urban issues (Vira & Vira, 2005). The central government can issue directives which states can follow if they choose. However, in spite of being empowered to do so, very few state governments have taken the initiative for policy making in urban areas. Therefore most policy that exists comes from the central government. Sivaramakrishnan (2011) expands on the debates around urban governance in Indian cities and argues that challenges within urban spaces cannot be dealt with under the general rubric of Union-State-Municipality. Under the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments, all settlements in the country are to be provided with a

governance structure – panchayats for rural areas and municipalities for urban. However, even in Kochi where a municipal corporation is set up, there is an inability to consider alternatives to hierarchical structures (Sivaramakrishnan, 2011). This is demonstrated by the fact that chief ministers enjoy the worldwide attention that their metropolitan cities receive and still consider them as falling exclusively within their domain (Sivaramakrishnan, 2011). Furthermore, proposals for a directly elected mayor who will have authority and accountability are ignored because the state leadership sees this as a potential threat (Sivaramakrishnan, 2011). Therefore, the literature highlights that urban governance and policy development in India remains centralized, regardless of a construction that prescribes otherwise.

### 1.2.1: Governance in Kerala: "The Kerala Model of Development"

In contextualizing Kerala as the site of research, it must be highlighted that many believe that there is something different happening in Kerala. Since the late 1970s, a number of international development scholars have highlighted a "model of development" specific to Kerala (Veron, 2001). This model has become distinctive over the past 5 decades in the ability of public action to bring about social development and improved living conditions, particularly for lower classes, in spite very low economic growth rates (Veron, 2001). Parayil (1996) states that although the intellectual roots of the Kerala Model of Development may be traced to internationally-developed theory, its content and ideological basis were locally developed and mobilized.

It is argued that the reasons for the exceptionality of the state can be found in a combination of the political, historical and social landscape. In 1957 Kerala's first Communist government was voted into power and this played a crucial role in setting the tone for Kerala's development experience (Steur, 2009), (Jeffery, 2016). Furthermore, the election of the communist party was significant because it was only the second time in the world that a communist government had been democratically elected (Kannan & Pillai, 2004). Kannan and Pillai (2004) outline three core landmarks of the Kerala Model. The first landmark is a continuous set of paradigm shifts including the democratic election of the communist party, an introduction of radical land reforms and expanding networks of social security, all of which lead to improved access to education and health care and an improved quality of life. The second landmark is described as the 'gulf boom' which occurred when a large scale migratory process began where skilled labour left Kerala to work in the gulf and send remittances back to their families, these remittances remain largely tax-free which are used to improve the remaining households quality of life. The third landmark is the participatory development process which emerges in the formation of locally run co-operatives. Kerala is India's most literate state and has consumed more newspapers per capita

than any other part of India, scholars and policy-makers attribute this to the Kerala Model (Jeffery, 2009). This becomes significant in discussions surrounding the media in Kochi.

Although the legislated movement towards decentralization in India has not as yet been taken up, it could be argued that something different happened in Kerala. Democratic decentralization is argued to have taken hold in Kerala in 1996 when a coalition of left parties led by the Communist Party of India – Marxist (CPI(M)) launched the "People's Campaign for Decentralized Planning" (Heller et al. 2007). Heller et al. (2007) state that significantly, the campaign created structures of participatory governance where none existed before. However, Heller pays more attention to the politics of the participatory process but does not explain what motivated so many people to participate in the campaign (Abers, 2003 ). Abers (2003) emphasizes that in achieving successful forms of empowering participatory governance, both state actors and ordinary people must be motivated to support and take part in forms of participatory governance. However, the question remains whether Kerala truly embodies something unique, or if instead follows very similar patterns from the rest of India.

The literature centering on the Indian experience enables the exploration of ideas such as the Kerala Model of Development and how it in turn interacts with literature on urban governance and decentralization. Heller et al. and Sivaramakrishnan provide very different accounts of urban governance in India. However, does the label of a unique state or premise of a model provide enough of a foundation to interrogate why policy in Kerala may be different to the rest of India?

# Chapter 2:
# Literature Review

## 2.1. Introduction

In general terms, a literature review performs two roles. The first is to situate the study in what has already been hypothesized, confirmed or explored; uncovering potential gaps. The second role is to collect a set of tools that can be used to construct the foundation on which analysis is built. This review does so by incrementally exploring themes that operate at a number of scales first globally and that eventually manifest at the level of the body.

The review is structured as a narrative, with each of the five sections leading to the next. I begin with the concept of "travelling ideas" (Tait & Jensen, 2007), a framework for understanding the movement and directionality of ideas. This framework enables the grounding of ideas in the spaces they are conceived and the places they land. By grounding ideas, there can be a more effective link to the formation and development of a singular policy. Policy is in part born out of the ability of an idea to 'land' in a particular place at a particular point in time and to be adopted and taken up. From its origin, a policy goes through a multitude of changes: what these changes are and why they occur relies on an effective methodology. One such method, pioneered by Foucault (1972), was that of policy genealogy which is useful in telling the story of policy evolution and change. Once the story of policy can be effectively told, the involved stakeholders can be uncovered and explored. The stakeholders that function in policy arenas continuously form and reform alliances which shapes both policy and governance structures. The ability of a local stakeholder to shape policy speaks to their role in governing the city. During the study of UMTA it becomes clear that there may be a discrepancy between rhetoric and practice. In understanding rhetoric and the underlying premise of UMTA, literature on meta-narratives is reviewed. However, the literature on policy practices, and individual agency, allows for an understanding of how individuals instrumentalize policy differently through the conceptualization of instruments and the techniques and tools used to enact agency. The last section of this literature review is fundamental in that it links the above literature to an Indian context. This is important in providing context and insight into the case study site and unique character of Kerala and a critique of urban governance in India.

## 2.2. Travelling ideas

If policy is to be analyzed, explored and understood as living, fluid and ambiguous then its story must be told from the beginning. The basis of "travelling ideas" as a concept is that very often the story starts with an idea that was conceived at some distant location and has "bounced" across the globe until being taken up in a specific context (Healey, 2013). Although the process of movement is important, the concept of 'travelling ideas' also enables a critique of who creates these ideas and the directionality of their movement. The broad theme of 'travelling ideas', or more specifically transnational flows of ideas, is useful in three distinct ways, briefly mentioned here and discussed in detail in the forthcoming sections. The first is it acts as a tool to conceptualize the words 'space' and 'place' which are critical in grounding the movement of ideas around the globe. The second is that it presents three theories that can be deployed to understand exactly what happens between the time an idea is conceived to when it 'lands', namely Circuits of Knowledge, Actor Network Theory (ANT) and Interpretive Policy Analysis (IPA). These theories act as a foundation for exploring the hegemony of idea flows, the vectors ideas use to travel and the significance of stakeholders in the circulation of ideas. The third is that it sparks a critical debate about the nature of Southern urban scholarship and its own ability to travel.

### 2.2.1: Space, Place and Scale

In exploring the ways in which ideas travel, it is useful that these ideas are conceptualized as having a distinct point of transmission as well as a point where the idea is received. In other words, there must be an appreciation of the contexts in which ideas are produced and absorbed (Tait & Jensen, 2007). Healey (2013) uses the phrase 'centre of calculation' to speak about the origin of ideas and argues that these ideas then float around an 'ether' of 'good ideas'. As an alternative to the intangibility of a 'centre' and 'ether', Tait and Jensen (2007) focus on the link between travelling ideas and the concepts of space and place. 'Space' is viewed as being formed out of the relations between things, rather than an abstract container of things. This relational approach makes us see how ideas are grounded in a particular location, thus turning this location into a "place" (Tait & Jensen, 2007). Therefore, Tait and Jensen (2007) emphasize the spatial dimension of the ways ideas travel. Space can be understood as the site where ideas are formulated and place can be understood as the geographic location where the idea ends up. These conceptualizations of space and place enable us to attach a directionality to the flow of ideas. There are inherent tensions between ideas conceptualized in 'international spaces' and those conceptualized in 'local places' (Tait & Jensen, 2007). The concept of 'international spaces' does not embody a geographic location, but rather a space where powerful global players such as the World Bank

or United Nations (UN) create ideas that are based on their conceptualization of international best practice. This study conceptualizes these spaces as the top tier of an idea formulating hierarchy (McFarlane, 2009). 'Local places' on the other hand are physical localities such as cities or municipalities where actors develop ideas based on their own particular contexts, based on what can be observed in a city at a given point in time (Tait & Jensen, 2007).

Scalar hierarchies are important in the discussion of travelling ideas because scale is not necessarily a vertical hierarchy that runs from the global to the body. McFarlane (2009) uses the case study of Slum Dwellers International (SDI) to illustrate that scalar hierarchies can be produced by local actors in order to privilege the local over the global. SDI leaders construct scaler transivities that reflect their priorities as they increasingly engage with global advocacy. This case study illustrates the fundamental nature of scale in that although local lessons are critical to knowledge production, these lessons need global advocacy to travel.

### 2.2.2: Theorizing travelling ideas

The second useful point of travelling ideas is the vectors ideas use to travel and the significance of stakeholders in the circulation of ideas (Healey, 2013). Three theories offer insights into how this may take place: Circuits of Knowledge, Actor-Network Theory (ANT) and Interpretive Policy Analysis (IPA) (Healey, 2013). All three of these theoretical approaches form a foundation for the analysis of policy, however, it is important to draw out both their useful and limiting qualities. Circuits of knowledge places interest in how transnational flows play out at a global scale. Roy (2009) and Watson (2009) argue that 'global circuits of knowledge' are shaped by 'globalizing forces' and the associated political and economic struggles. Although there are obvious global players in transnational travelling ideas such as the United Nations (UN), these are not the only circuits that allow ideas to travel (Healey, 2013). Other networks include political networks, professional networks and digital networks of various kinds. Peck and Theodore (2010) state that on this global scale of knowledge production, there should be a focus on mobility and mutation rather than transit and transaction. Knowledge should not be produced and duplicated in different localities purely because of where it was produced but the focus should rather be on where it is absorbed. In paying attention to context, knowledge should be fluid rather than static. This theory or approach is useful in that it draws attention to the fact that hegemonic knowledge circulates in global spaces rather than local places. This approach draws attention to the debates within urban literature about the character of cities of the Global South.

In moving away from a more macro point of analysis, ANT allows the tracing how some ideas have influence over large distances and some do not because of the strength of connections between actors (Tait and Jensen, 2007). The theory is useful in that it considers how authority for new concepts or ideas is generated through the creation of networks of interested parties. By enrolling said parties into a recognition of the value and importance of a new concept, it accumulates power, it becomes active and is able to act-at-a-distance from the site it was conceived (Healey, 2013). Law (1992), who writes poetically and emotively about this theory emphasizes that it is concerned with the mechanics of power. He states that the actor-network theory is a theory of agency, a theory of knowledge and a theory of machines. ANT is useful in that it emphasizes the significance of both human and non-human actors in circulating ideas around the globe (Healey, 2013).

Gonzalez (2011) further unpacks the importance of people as idea vectors and uses the concept 'policy tourism'. There is the recognition of the importance of conference-going and fact-finding trips in the mobility of ideas. The experiences of professionals who visit cities to learn from their policy successes resemble a 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 2002). There is a sense of being taken out of the ordinary which fosters the belief that anything can happen and that bringing a new idea to your own context will be successful (Gonzalez, 2011). Therefore local actors are not only passive recipients of idea flows but also actively engage in the creation of networks and the movement of ideas. Gonzalez and Urry highlight that people also travel extensively around the globe and take ideas with them.

Finally, Interpretive Policy Analysis (IPA) focuses on the experiences of individuals in the molding of travelling ideas and what happens when they 'land' (Healey, 2013). This approach emphasizes that ideas can flow about in ways that are not necessarily attached to networks but rather feed into a 'climate' of concepts, techniques, argument, metaphors and storylines which people draw down into a particular situation (Healey, 2013). There is an interest in policy 'cultures' and the regulation of access to such 'cultural knowledge'. This approach aids in the exploration of what happens when international ideas come to land in new, local environments. The approach may be limiting in understanding how ideas travel, but it certainly allows a better understanding of why they land.

### 2.2.3: Hegemonic flows of ideas

Thus far, this section has discussed where travelling ideas start and where they land, the theories deployed to understanding the journey and will now outline the significance of travelling ideas in the context of this study. Ideas are able to travel hegemonically because of the environment in which they are developed as well as the networks that transport them. Gonzalez (2011) emphasizes the role of

institutionally and socially constructed environments through which policy ideas flow and recognizes the uneven power relationships between actors engaged in these processes. Interestingly, it is argued that hegemonic ideas lose their power at their site of creation before they lose power in faraway places where they are not suitable. Watson (2009) uses the example of master planning to illustrate this pattern. Although master planning has been phased out in the Global North, where it was initially conceived, it remains deeply embedded in cities of the Global South. Master planning has, almost everywhere, carried with it, a particular vision of the 'good' city and states that urban form is shaped by a concern with aesthetics, efficiency and modernization (Watson, 2009).

The hegemony of idea flows in the context of urban studies is materialized in a specific understanding of what a city should be. This manifests in the global city paradigm (Sassen, 2001; Castells, 2002), but also in the dualism between world-class cities and third-world cities (Robinson, 2002). Robinson (2002) argues that these categories lead to many cities outside the west falling off the map. The experience of a small group of Western cities has come to define a global understanding of city-ness. Cities of the South are judged in terms of an embedded acceptance of this 'world city-ness'. Although there are extensive counterarguments from southern urban scholarship in response to this global city/world city paradigm (Robinson, 2006; Robinson, 2002; Simone, 2005), Sivaramakrishnan (2011) confirms the existence of the global city paradigm in Indian cities. There are many other conceptualizations of city-ness in urban literature, but does the 'ordinary city' (Amin & Graham, 1999), 'the everyday city' (Simone, 2005) or 'the creative city' (Landry, 2012), allow for any real change on how policy-makers and local stakeholders conceptualize their own cities. This is a question this study seeks to interrogate.

The body of literature surrounding the broad theme of travelling ideas has enabled a useful conceptualization of where ideas form and where they end up with the terms 'space' and 'place'. These words gain meaning once scale is adequately acknowledged. The three theories presented provide a useful lens for analysis in different ways, however Actor-Network theory is particularly useful in the acknowledgment of the importance of human and non-human actors as vectors for travelling ideas. The hegemony of ideas as they circulate is significant to acknowledge in this literature review because although there is an acknowledgement of widespread debates surrounding urban theory in the Global South, it too has limited capacity to travel to the local scale.

## 2.3. Genealogy: a methodological framework

The policy process, or the policy's life span is a complicated one to track, understand and explore. Many scholars grapple with the conceptualization of policy, its definition, its different stages and the actors that create and shape it (Ball, 1993), (Codd, 1988), (Gale, 2001, 2003). Although these debates provide a useful point of departure in analyzing policy they are slightly limited in understanding the journey of a policy. Understanding this journey requires the deployment of a well-grounded methodological framework, and this is why genealogy is of such significance in this study. Genealogy remains the central point of departure throughout the study as it allows for the understanding of how policy developed in the past and how it is currently developing through relationships and alliances. Multiple theories can be used to understand the ways in which policy has developed, namely policy transfer theory (Bennet, 1991), Policy Mobility theory (McCann, 2013) and policy translation (Mukhtarov, 2012). Therefore, the use in this big idea of genealogy is that it is a method which allows us to tell the complicated story of policy. Gale (2001) uses the term storying policy to illustrate how we discuss policy not only in its timeline but in the way it moves and the people that allow it to move.

### 2.3.1: Multiple methods

There are many different angles one can take in telling the story of a policy. Gale (2001) outlines three methods which are designed to guide policy analysis, which are policy historiography, policy archeology and policy genealogy. In effect, all of the three lenses are different ways of storying policy and it is important to acknowledge the existence of all three in defending the choice of policy genealogy as the primary approach in this study.

Policy historiography is concerned with hegemonic moments in time (Gale, 2001) and allows the analysis of policy to be attached to particular dates. The approach asks 1) what were the issues within a policy domain in the past and how were these issues addressed. 2) What are the issues presently and 3) what is the nature of change between past and present issues. Historiography has shortfalls in that it ties the policy to its timeline and does not make space for the significance of human actors in the policy development process, but it does point to the value in hegemonic dates in understanding the story. Gale (2001) states that policy genealogy is coupled with social actors' engagement with policy which immediately points to the usefulness of the method. Carney and Bista (2009) conceptualize policy genealogy as a contestation and negotiation between positions that are fundamentally irreconcilable. Genealogy takes at its opening premise that alliances and stakeholders are in constant negotiation and these negotiations shape the meaning and functioning of the policy. This approach asks 1) how policies

change over time and 2) how temporary alliances are formed and reformed around conflicting interests in the policy development process. Significantly, Gale (2001) states that interests in 'policy' seem to gravitate toward policy historiography whereas interests in 'policy production' (formulation and implementation) tend to gravitate toward policy genealogy. This study is focused on how the UMTA policy is formed and in turn to understand what the consequences of implementation might be and so has adopted a genealogical framing.

Policy archeology conceptualized by Scheurich (1994) is concerned with the conditions and rules that regulate policy formations. However Gale (2001) builds more deeply on this methodology and states that the following questions are central in policy archeology: 1) why do some items appear on the policy agenda where others do not. 2) Why are some policy actors more central than others and 3) what regulates the interaction of the actors that are involved. Although the roots of the method's name imply a deep institutional excavation (which would be beyond the scope of this study), the questions asked are useful in further developing a methodological framework, even if it takes the label 'genealogy'.

### 2.3.3: Storying policy

Genealogy provides a method for understanding policy as a story but in order to tell the story, more tools are needed. To tell this story, one has to understand the different ways in which policy is able to evolve both in its physical form and as a discourse. Reviewing the literature allows of the development of an effective framework for understanding the way policy changes over time. Wood (2014) argues that it is necessary for policy to circulate across the globe and aligns with Healey (2013) in that local actors determine when and how to adopt these circulating forms of knowledge. Although this clear link between policy genealogy and travelling ideas is critical, it must be given more grounding with the exploration of theories. There is extensive literature debating the travelling of policy, this review will outline conventional approaches to understanding policy development as well as alternative approaches that allow for a more in-depth analysis of UMTA.

There are different conventional approaches to understanding the genealogy of policy such as policy transfer (Bennett, 1991), (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000), (Stone, 2004) and policy mobility (Wood, 2015), (McCann, 2013). Policy transfer theorists are concerned with policy-oriented learning between transnational actors and are primarily focused on the involvement of outside actors, specifically actors that are removed from a given context, such as international consultants that come in without extensive knowledge of local contexts. Dolowitz and Marsh (2000) discuss the various vectors of policy transfer, from international to local, and question whether processes of policy transfer are voluntary or coercive

or both. Although the inclination may be to reject this theory in its heavy focus on the role of international actors, it cannot be ignored that these actors play a critical role in the policy process.

More recent literature gravitates toward policy mobility theory (Wood, 2015), which acknowledges that both supply and demand is necessary for the circulating of policy ideas (McCann, 2013). McCann (2013) emphasizes that the mobility of policy has two sides. The supply side is embodied by the conviction held by policy boosters that by telling the stories of their success, they can improve cities across the globe. However, on the demand side, there are motivations and conditions that lead certain policy actors to be receptive to and actively pursue policy models from elsewhere. Policy mobilization does not occur through the replication of prepackaged "solutions" but through a "complex sociospatial process of emulation and transmission that has uneven consequences for cities and cannot be easily separated from the context from which they spawned" (McCann, 2013: 20).

Although there is use in the above conventional approaches to understanding the formation of policy, an alternative is presented in the concept of policy translation (Mukhtarov, 2012). The evolution of the concept of 'translation' comes from the focus on the micro level and the processes of communication between actors in the policy process, to the meso level, the interaction in an organization, to the macro level, the spread of ideas from countries and jurisdictions. Policy translation occurs when the travelling of policy ideas leads to the creation of new meanings in the context that the policy lands (Mukhtarov, 2012).

The primary function of genealogy is its position as a method of analysis, the literature surrounding the concept allows for its effective use in understanding the different dimensions of UMTA's story. In storying policy, this study will make use of policy transfer theory, policy mobility theory and policy translation, as all three theories provide a lens in viewing how UMTA has moved between stakeholders, government hierarchies and institutions.

## 2.4: Governance

'Travelling ideas' and the methodological foundation of policy genealogy and the emphasis on networks and human relationships points to changing modes of governance in policy arenas. The broad idea of governance and the exploration of the literature surrounding governance is useful because it enables a movement beyond the binaries of government and civil society. There is extensive literature on governance in its various conceptualizations, with some of it static and unhelpful: 'good governance' (Santiso, 2001), 'urban governance' (Gilbert, 2015), (Pierre, 2005) and 'good urban governance'

(Hendriks, 2014), these terms are unhelpful in that they are only descriptive and themselves emulate from the Global North, they do not embody how forms of governance are continuously changing. Some of the conceptualizations around governance are interesting and thought-provoking such as the connection between governance and the creative city (Healey, 2004). However, the use in governance is not in the multitude of debates surrounding it but in how it can be used as a tool to understand interactions and networks in the policy process. Governance as a broad or all-encompassing idea allows a more extensive exploration of who shapes the policies that will inevitably influence and shape the face of the city. Although, as stated above, the debates may not be important, a brief definition of governance will be outlined.

Governance cannot be equated to government and Ballard (2017) states that the concept of governance draws attention to the fact that authority is plural rather than singular. Spheres of authority are shaped and contained by one another. Governance does not manifest in structures but rather in relationships (Ballard, 2017). This broad definition of governance in all its forms acts as a strong foundation for the further exploration of the literature.

### 2.4.1: Networks and relationships

In linking governance to the policy process, networks become central. Networks are needed both to formulate policies and ensure their implementation but also in creating sites of authority. Le Gales (2001) states that there is a decreased salience in state regulation, therefore allowing for the interaction of a much larger number of actors at different levels of authority. The development of these new sites of authority lies in the formation and strength of networks. Le Gales (2001) argues that policy networks bridge the gap between politics and policies. These networks are new forms of governance and reflect a changed relationship between state and society. Therefore, some scholars argue that policy networks are akin to governance networks and state that the emergence of policy networks are a direct result of changes in governance structures. Policy networks emerge for a number of reasons including the dominance of organized actors in policy-making, the fragmentation of the state and the blurring of boundaries between the public and private sectors (Kenis & Schneider, 1991). In this discussion it must be noted that the government, in its traditional form, still holds considerable power in policy processes.

The structure of networks is relevant because policy networks are a key part of the context that shapes the success or failure of governance systems (Henry, 2011). Policy networks are self-organizing structures and are influenced by both formal and informal institutions, some stakeholders are formally mandated to work together, such as KMRL and the Kerala state government. Some policy actors may

form network links outside mandated relationships to better accomplish their policy goals (Henry, 2011), for example the Auto-rickshaw unions and KMRL or KMRL and the media. In understanding the significance of these networks, Henry (2011: 362) poses a fundamental question: "how do ideological similarity, ideological dissimilarity, and perceptions of power influence policy actors' choices of who to network with?"

Governance looks at multiple agents and their ability to shape the city through a variety of processes and decisions. These agents come together – coalesce and contests – part of the power games that are played are over policy and its implementation. Powerful groups in the city have more ability to influence and shape, but there are also fluid arrangements in which actors collaborate or oppose each other – so policy networks should be seen as a sub-set or as a way in which tactics of the urban actors are deployed.

### 2.4.3: The politics of the Governed

In further understanding the connection between policy and governance, the idea of governmentality (Chatterjee, 2004) is outlined. This is because a policy may have the ability to shape the way a society may behave, or at least have the potential to. Chatterjee (2004) explores the idea that populations are governed differently, for example in India, the way in which middle classes are governed is very different from the way in which the poor are governed. Chatterjee theorizes two spheres of society which are fundamentally at odds: civil society is constructed on equality, freedom and a recognition of rights and is conceptualized from a western point of view. Chatterjee states that most citizens in the Global South are only rights-bearers in name and they are not considered full members of civil society by the state. They have to be looked after or controlled by the government agencies and they are in a certain political relationship with the state, this group is in a domain lying between civil society and state (Mannathukkaren, 2010). The concepts of political and civil society emerges from the idea that there is an inherent paradox in the ideal of equal citizenship, and Chatterjee (2004) argues that in attempting to overcome inequalities, they are instead perpetuated and produced. Members of civil society are able to deal with the state and they are able to participate in decision-making processes, in this sense these are members of society that are able to shape policy in some way. Alternately, political society, which makes up most of society, are only temporarily and ambiguously rights-bearing citizens. They cannot deal with the state on the grounds of universal ideals, as their livelihoods are built on the circumvention of the formal law. Therefore, political society cannot fully exist as citizens (Ehmke, 2011). This notion brings to question who policies are designed for and how preconceived mandates can affect authority structures

once a policy is legislated. This literature review acknowledges the concept of governmentality (Lemke, 2002), this idea is embodied by the notion that the 'art of government' is to shape subjects' values, desires and habits so that people internalize what is required of them, essentially negating the need for discipline. In drawing relevance to this study, the theorization of civil society and political society is important given a lack of discussion of the urban poor and at times a denial of their existence. Therefore, there are people clearly removed from the realm of civil society.

The literature reviewed under the broad umbrella of governance is useful in that it allows a more holistic view of who governs the city and who in the city is governed. This review drew out interesting points of connection between governance and policy processes such as networks and knowledge production.

## 2.5: Agency and Practice

In order to fully understand policy in practice, it must be acknowledged that in policy spaces, meta-narratives exist (Bernstein, 2002). Policy can be used instrumentally to not only achieve what it is meant to do but to also leverage a wider/broader/other agenda. In addition, the way that policy is "sold" or marketed often revolves around the use of metanarratives, both of which require some degree of rhetoric and may mark a distinction between rhetoric and practice.

A meta-narrative is constructed by rhetoric which artfully argues why a policy is important and how it will change the city or address a specific urban challenge. Although there is something very attractive about indisputable ideas and the romanticized rhetoric that accompany them, in practice policy serves different purposes in different contexts. Once a policy lands, once it is legislated, the discrepancies between rhetoric and practice begin to reveal themselves. Policy in practice and the literature surrounding this broad idea is important because it enables an exploration of what policy will mean in once implemented and we can start to unpack how much practice diverts from the idea sold. This literature review will first outline bodies of work that embody meta-narratives that have relevance to this study. The section will then go on to discuss the significance of the individual in policy implementation and finally will explore the relevance of instruments, techniques and tools in how policy is instrumentalized at the local scale.

### 2.5.1: Meta-narratives and Grand ideas

In understanding meta-narratives and grand ideas in the context of this study, key phrases or case studies will be extracted from literature surrounding 3 'indisputable ideas', namely integrated public transport, newness and innovation and environmental sustainability. Grotenhuis et al. (2007) discuss

integrated, multi-modal public transport and seamless travel information provision, they use phrases such as time-saving, convenience and a more 'attractive' transport system. The case study of Hong Kong or Singapore (Luk & Olszewski, 2003) is usually used to cement the idea of integrated transport. What makes the idea indisputable is the evidence that is able to back it up, in this case the transport system in Singapore.

The second meta-narrative is around the Smart city of the future (Batty et al, 2012) where cities and ICT's have been merged with traditional infrastructure, coordinated and integrated using new digital technologies. There is a notion of the city as a laboratory for innovation, where there is a focus on quality of life and a new form of democratic governance (Batty et al, 2012). A grand narrative of a city where all problems can be solved with technology becomes part of policy discourse, particularly in Indian cities and particularly in Kochi.

The third is around the sustainable mobility paradigm (Banister, 2008), a meta-narrative emphasizing the importance of transport systems that are environmentally, economically and socially sustainable. Although these ideas are attractive and can be used to market policy, they do not account for the way ideas manifest in reality. These grand ideas are important because they come from somewhere, they are difficult to dispute because they work elsewhere in the world.

### 2.5.2: Prescriptions and Discretion

In connecting the concept of agency to the discrepancies between policy and practice, Hoag and Hull (2017) explore the term discretion: the leeway provided to bureaucrats to interpret how and when to apply a rule. Lipsky (1980) shows that discretion (or agency) is not a betrayal of the universal rule but rather a necessary artifact of bureaucratic practice. Furthermore, rules (or policy prescriptions) can never be separate enough to account for the myriad of possibilities of context and additional 'rules' have the opposite of their intended effect. Instead of ensuring generic practice, these rules multiply the different types of practices that can be deemed legitimate interpretations of the rule. This brings to question whether personal interests or biases of bureaucrats intervene upon decision making (Hoag & Hull, 2017). The notion of personal interests remain central to this study because of the fact that there will always be an interplay between power and practice, but the ability to enact an action is not enough in the policy implementation process. There are complex sets of ideas that shape how policies are understood by different individuals and therefore a complex set of implementation strategies. This points to the fact that even if there is one overarching 'grand narrative', it begins to dismantle because of the agency and discretion of the individual. The fact that bureaucrats are people should be accepted

as a basic premise – they are themselves members of the society in which they operate (Hoag & Hull, 2017).

### 2.5.3: The politics of instrumentality

By using the agency of the individual to understand the discrepancies between rhetoric and practice, we are better able to understand and explore the different ways that individuals will use policy for their own benefit. Policy instruments are studied in order to better understand the linkages between policy formation and policy implementation and to gain insights into policy decision-making processes (Howlett, 1991). Furthermore, policymakers are seen to be responding to many different external factors when selecting a particular technique by which to obtain policy goals (Howlett, 1991). Lascoumes and Le Gales (2007) distinguish between an instrument, a technique and a tool. The instrument is conceptualized as a type of social institution, the technique as a concrete device that operationalizes the instrument and the tool as a micro-device within a technique. Public policy instrumentation reveals a fairly explicit theorization of the relationship between the governing and the governed (Lascoumes and Le Gales, 2007). Instruments at work are not neutral devices: they produce specific effects, independently of the objective pursued, which structure public policy according to their own logic (Lascoumes & Le Gales, 2007).

The literature on policy implementation and interpretation acts as the foundation for interrogating the grand narratives that embody much of the policy process. If we can separate rhetoric from practice, the role of the individual becomes clear. Agency and discretion of individuals and the street-level bureaucracy play a big role in creating both policy and governance networks. The exploration of this literature allows the creation of lens to interrogate the ways in which policy is instrumentalized by different individuals. This is particular importance because the policy has not been legislated as of the completion of this study.

## 2.6. Conclusion

The usefulness of this literature review is in the ability to draw out points of connection within the different themes. Although each body of literature contributes to the analysis of the findings in different ways, there are some running themes that are important. The first is the emphasis on human interactions that play a role in all phases of a policies life span. The second is the importance of interactions and networks in their ability to enable ideas to flow, their contribution to the physical shaping of policy (its genealogy) and the way they allow for the formation of governance structures. The

third theme is linkages with urban governance and how these linkages can be contextualized within Kerala. The extensive review of literature allows for the construction of a conceptual framework which better enables me to illustrate how the literature will be used in the analysis of the data.

## 2.7. Conceptual Framework

### 2.7.1. Introduction

The core question that is explored in this study is how local stakeholders have responded to the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority draft bill for the city of Kochi. This question is explored in three parts, the first is in exploring how mobilities of knowledge contribute to the perceptions of UMTA at the local scale. The second is understanding how policy is developed at the local scale and hence the meaning of the policy in Kochi. The third is answering how policy is instrumentalized by different stakeholders and how this reflects on the perceptions of UMTA in Kochi. In exploring and discussing these sub-questions, a conceptual framework is constructed. The framework outlines the key variables that are under study (stakeholders, the policy itself, and the external actors that allow the policy to exist) and maps the presumed relationships between these variables. The purpose of the conceptual framework is to explain how concepts from the literature have allowed me to analyze the data and present my findings.

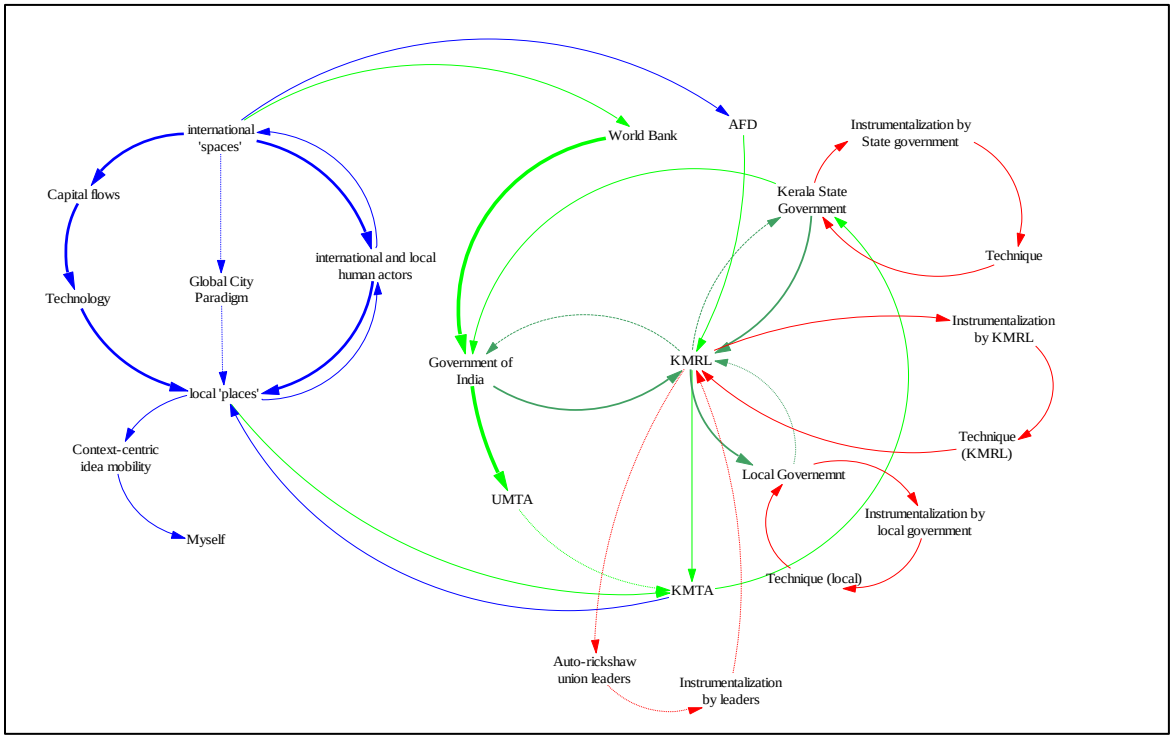


Figure 3: Diagram visually representing the conceptual framework on which this study is constructed.

The framework shows a separation of 3 core sets of variables and uses directional arrows to illustrate the relationship between these variables. The blue circuits embody the theme of travelling ideas (Tait & Jensen, 2007; Healey, 2013), the green circuits illustrate the genealogy of the Kerala Metropolitan Transport Authority (KMTA) (Gale, 2001) and the red indicates the process whereby the instrumentalization of UMTA can be understood with respect to each stakeholder, or groups of stakeholders (Lascoumes & Le Gales, 2007). The conceptual framework deploys useful concepts from the literature review and explains how they are used in this study and what they allow me to do in terms of analysis of the findings.

## Travelling ideas

Ideas travel to inform decision-making and to shape perceptions of policy at the local scale. Actor Network Theory (Healey, 2013) most significantly allows for conceptualizing travelling ideas through both human and non-human actors, therefore through capital flows as well as through the literal travel of consultants and policy stakeholders. The theory allows for an analysis of how ideas travel from international spaces to local places. Furthermore, the use of both thick and thin lines illustrates that hegemony of idea flows (Watson, 2009), although ideas are able to flow in many directions, those coming from the Global North travel with more strength than those from the Global South. Ideas can also move because they have been institutionally embedded, this study uses the Global City Paradigm (Sassen, 2001) to understand the different ways in which ideas travel to local stakeholders. Ideas may travel from international spaces to local places and then inform understandings of policy or ideas may flow directly into the policy production process and be circulated within the policy production space.

## Genealogy of KMTA

The travelling of ideas influences how policy is perceived as well as how it is constructed. This framework uses the concepts of policy mobility (McCann, 2013), policy transfer (Stone, 2004) and policy translation (Mukhtarov, 2012). The different concepts are illustrated in the diagram in the weight of the lines. Policy mobility theory illustrates how demand to integrate transport results in the supply of policy consultants from international spaces.

The dark green circuits illustrate how local stakeholders and their biases allow for the shaping of policy or the shaping of the city. The genealogy of policy is understood as a process of negotiation and contestation (Gale, 2001) and the forming and reforming of temporary alliances. The type of line

illustrates the directionality of power in the negotiation process, the central and state government have more power than KMRL and KMRL has more power than local government in the policy development process. Therefore, the negotiations within these relationships are important because it indicates a changing form of governance in the city through policy networks (Kenis & Schneider, 1991). Ideological similarities or dissimilarities and perceptions of power may affect who policy actors choose to network with and why they make these choices (Henry, 2011).

## Policy Practices

The red circuits indicate how local actors instrumentalize KMTA or rather how actors think the policy should be instrumentalized. The concept of discretion (Hoag & Hull, 2017) is fundamental in that individual actors make decisions in accordance with their own biases about both the policy and the space in which the policy will be enacted.

Lascoumes and Le Gales (2007) emphasize the ability of instruments in the creation of policy, this framework is based on the same conceptualization of instrumentality. An instrument is a type of social institution, therefore the instrument in question not simply UMTA as a document but the entire policy arena that UMTA plays out in, its development, the ways it is understood and the relationship between actors that function in the arena. Therefore in understanding how UMTA is perceived or understood by local actors, UMTA will be constructed as a social institution, the space its story plays out in (all circuits in green). Furthermore, techniques are significant as they embody how instruments are operationalized. A tool is a micro device within the category of techniques.

# Chapter 3: Methodology

## 3.1. Introduction

This study seeks to tell the story of a policy through the people that interact with it at the local scale. Although this story is central, the process of how the research was conducted will inevitably shape how this story is told. Therefore, in narrating a very complicated story, the methodology of knowledge acquisition is of equal value. The aim of this chapter is to justify and explain the use of a specific method and the chosen approach taken in this study.

The chapter first justifies the use of qualitative research as the basis for data collection and the ways in which this approach complements the study. I will then go on to explain the site, this is important because it has been conducted outside of South Africa, and the reasoning behind this choice must be clarified. Once justifying the location of study, I will unpack the methods of data collection and data analysis. As part of the data analysis section I will explain how I have remained connected to the site once I left and came back to South Africa. In my acknowledgement of policy as a fluid subject matter, I have made efforts to remain connected to the process. The last section of the methodology chapter I will discuss the significance of my own positionality and how my own perceived reality affected the data collection process.

## 3.2. Qualitative Research

The investigation of policy in an unfamiliar city brings with it immeasurable complexity and chaos. My first instinct might have been to quantify the chaos, to ground the chaos in numbers and statistics. However, in a study about process and narratives, my own process should be centered. Therefore, instead of quantifying the chaos, I have chosen to attempt to understand it, even if just in a very small way.

“The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world” (Merriam, 2002: 3).

Qualitative and Quantitative research methods are both instruments used to understand a certain kind of reality and arguably they can both be used by any ideology. The difference between the two approaches is in the kind of story that seeks to be told. Qualitative research is better at accessing

multiple narratives and expressing messiness whereas quantitative research is more effective in finding a definitive conclusion. I have chosen qualitative research tools because in the context of this study, reality is not an agreed upon phenomenon, there is no definitive answer, particularly in looking at Indian cities through a South African lens. There are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality which are in flux and change over time (Merriam, 2002). There are 4 core characteristics of qualitative research that justify its use in this study. The first is that understanding is central to the research process, research is carried out by understanding the meaning people have constructed about their world and their experiences. Patton (1985) states that this understanding is an end in itself. As stated above, understanding is core to retelling stories. The second characteristic is that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and data analysis. Although the human instrument has shortcomings and biases, these shortcomings, if acknowledged, are the basis of the ability of researchers to make a significant contribution through their research. My own biases and how these biases shaped my interactions with participants formed a significant proportion of my findings. In short my own perceptions played a part in how I understood the policy and the people I spoke to. The third characteristic is that the process is inductive, my research question probes an exploration and does not warrant a right or wrong answer. Lastly, qualitative research is descriptive, words are used to draw conclusions instead of numbers. The process of using words is key given that this study aims to tell a story in the process of reaching various conclusions (Merriam, 2002).

I used a qualitative approach with some elements of ethnography considering that I was trying to find out about how UMTA was understood by stakeholders (including myself) and how these understandings were fluid. I acknowledge that my own insertion into the reality that UMTA exists has changed my results and I draw on these changes to understand the ideas that formulated UMTA as well as how the policy is interpreted at the local scale. This was the best approach as it allowed me to attach some degree of understanding to an extremely chaotic process.

Leading up to the interview process, I cast my net wide in order to understand the space I was attempting to investigate. Policy documents became key in situating the study and guiding the interview process. I comprehensively went through policy documents published by the central government, paying particular attention to the National Urban Transport Policy and the operational document for UMTA. These documents were compiled by the Ministry of Urban Development. Although the content of these documents is significant, I was also looking for who was involved in compiling the document, references to other cities and hints at opinion rather than fact. On top of formal policy documentation I

also scanned media publications, this was an important source of information before my fieldwork and during the process of writing-up. Media reports were also useful in compiling timelines and understanding when UMTA first starting appearing in Kochi.

## 3.3. The Site: Kochi, Kerala

At the beginning of my fieldwork, Kochi was not an entirely new environment for me. I had previously spent 3 months in Kochi working as a research intern for the Centre of Public Policy Research, from November 2017 to February 2018. During this time I worked on a public transport campaign that aimed to increase the number of people using the public transport system in the city. While I was doing my internship, the UMTA draft bill was passed. It was not the passing of the draft bill that sparked my interest but the enormity of engagement with issues of public transport from multiple stakeholders. During the campaign I attended meetings with the mayor in her office, civil society meetings in government buildings and was at events that were covered extensively by the media. Throughout this large-scale engagement there seemed to be little discussion of the recently passed draft bill that would potentially change the face of the city, this discrepancy was particularly evident in the media. After the completion of my internship, I returned to develop my research proposal in Johannesburg and in June 2018 I spent 3 further weeks conducting field work.

## 3.4. Data Collection

Leading up to the interview process, I cast my net wide in order to understand the space I was attempting to investigate. Policy documents became key in situating the study and guiding the interview process. I comprehensively went through policy documents published by the central government, paying particular attention to the National Urban Transport Policy and the operational document for UMTA. These documents were compiled by the Ministry of Urban Development. Although the content of these documents is significant, I was also looking for who was involved in compiling the document, references to other cities and hints at opinion rather than fact. On top of formal policy documentation, I also scanned media publications, this was an important source of information before my fieldwork and during the process of writing-up. Media reports were also useful in compiling timelines and understanding when UMTA first starting appearing in Kochi.

### 3.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

During the course of three weeks, I conducted 9 semi-structured interviews, each interview lasting between 30 minutes and an hour. The aim was to conduct interviews within three broad spheres:

people affiliated with the bureaucracy, high-level employees of Kochi Metro Rail Limited and auto-rickshaw union leaders. Initially this study was interested with the interpretations of street-level bureaucrats, however, it soon became clear that the local government had next to no power or influence over the development or implementation of the UMTA draft bill and it was stated multiple times that members of Kochi Municipal Corporation would not have knowledge of the UMTA draft bill in any capacity. This finding made talking to a member of the local government all the more interesting.

While working in an environment that was unpredictable, it was important to construct interviews in such a way that they could be flexible and enable a conversation to flow. As a consequence, I utilized a semi-structured interview technique, with a set of themes that I wanted to discuss with each respondent. This method is effective because there are two fundamental components to this type of interview, the first is what the participant said which is transcribed and the second is how the participants responded, how they acted during the interview which is all compiled in field notes.

### 3.4.2: Finding Participants

While still in South Africa I began reaching out to friends and colleagues and telling them about my research. I emailed D. Dhanuraj, the director of CPPR and he was excited to talk to me as we had engaged in discussions around UMTA while I was in Kochi the first time. I did not attempt to set up interviews before arriving in Kochi because I was well aware of the environment I would be working in and I knew that people changed their schedules frequently and it was better to talk to people over the phone rather than over email. The most important preparation I could do was secure a starting point which was CPPR. I did experience difficulty in securing interviews but surprisingly, what was not difficult was access to contacts. Finding the right people was easy but getting them to agree to speak to me proved to be more complicated. The first interview I secured once arriving at CPPR was with a research associate at Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL), who I had met at a civil society engagement during my internship. She was then able to put me in contact with two other high-level employees. A snow-ball effect started to emerge as I was able to ask one of these officials to put me in contact with auto union leaders and someone was able to send me a list of numbers. However, having these numbers was not enough to secure interviews.

It must be noted that all of my participants were completely fluent in English, however phone conversations proved to be difficult. The diagram below tracks the connections between the various participants. I found it necessary to expand my initial sampling boundaries and spoke to someone involved in Kochi Smart City Mission as well as a member of the media. These were not random

participants, they were chosen as a result of both the role of Kochi Smart City and the role of the media in the interpretation and development of the UMTA draft bill.

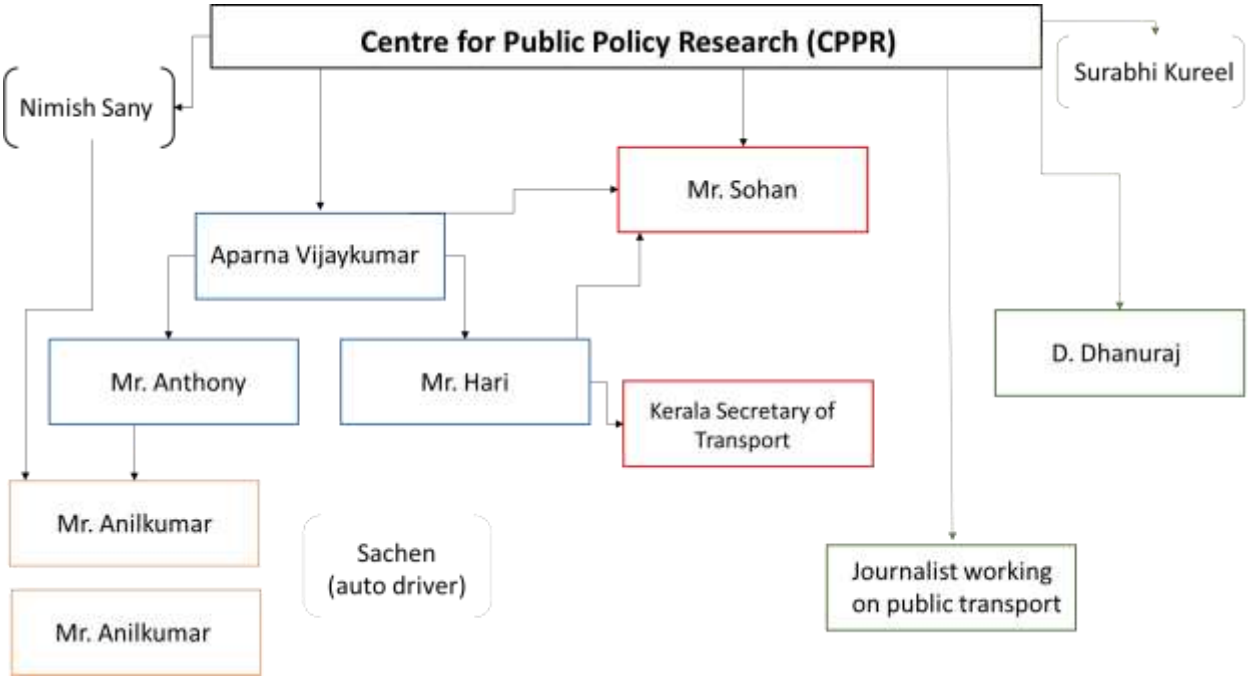



Figure 4: A mind map indicating the interview participants and how I was able to set up subsequent interviews through connections

### 3.4.3 Participants

I will briefly outline who the participants are and where the interviews took place, Figure 4. summarizes this information and illustrates how I have grouped the participants. The figure also highlights how I was able to secure new interviews by asking for assistance or guidance at the end of interviews. The arrows show how I was linked to the different participants. As stated above my point of reference was CPPR and I started most of my days at their offices. I officially began the interview process at the KMRL offices where I spoke to Aparna Vijaykumar, Mr. Anthony and Mr. Hari. Aparna works out of the KMRL offices but is a transport researcher for World Resources Institute (WRI) so she was able to give responses that were less biased than the other two men. I interviewed 2 high-level KMRL employees, which I felt was sufficient to understand the involvement of KMRL in the development of UMTA. During these interviews, I asked three sets of questions, firstly I asked about UMTA in its entirety and what the policy was trying to achieve. I then asked about the role KMRL was playing in the policy development process, and finally what the perceived role of the government was, both at the local and state level. However, it must be noted that the two interviews unfolded in very different ways. Mr. Anthony is a consultant for KMRL, during the interview there was a young intern present who was able to assist in any

miscommunication that arose out of language barriers. Many students in India studying urban development are required to do internships in their field. It was disappointing that the intern did not ask any of her own questions because it would have been interesting to get her perspective on UMTA. I directed some questions at her but her role was mostly to clarify any words or concepts when Mr. Anthony could only think of the Malayalam version, this happened when he was speaking about smart phones and "apps". Mr. Hari is a general manager at KMRL and is playing an integral role in the development of UMTA within KMRL. The interview with Mr. Hari was interrupted numerous times which pointed to the fact that he was important and had a leadership position within the organization.

When speaking to leaders of the auto-rickshaw societies, I spoke to three men in the Bharatiya Mazdoor Sangh (BMS) union. The BMS union is led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the largest political party in India. There are four main auto-rickshaw unions in the city and initially it was my plan to speak to representatives from each union, however this was not possible given time limitations. Mr. Anthony gave me numbers for all the leaders but when I attempted to call they hung up the phone on hearing my request. Two of the men I spoke to have the same last name, Mr. Anilkumar, both are leaders within the union and have a role in the auto-rickshaw co-ordination committee[2] (The Society). One man spoke in English and the other in Malayalam. The English-speaking man translated all Malayalam conversations. Sachen is a driver for the union and he was also present in the interview although he did not say much. He offered to drive me back to CPPR offices and spoke to me informally about the industry in general which was very useful in understanding the leadership dynamics of the union as well as how they interact with the rest of the city. During this group interview, there was more of a communication gap and hence the interview was less structured, the questions asked revolved around perceptions of UMTA and the new Auto Union 'Society' in the city, as well as the relationship the unions had with KMRL. While speaking informally to Sachen, my primary aim was to understand how the unions worked in the city and how these unions contributed to the structure of Kochi's public transport system.

Many previous participants spoke about Mr. Sohan and he is considered a central person for an UMTA discussion. Mr. Sohan is the ex-mayor of Kochi and now works for the Fort Kochi Co-Operative Society. The role of the co-operative society is to develop various parts of the city, The Fort Kochi branch is concerned with the development of tourism and is based in the tourism hub of the state. This interview was invaluable because it provided me with insights of a street-level bureaucrat and is significant

[2] The new auto-rickshaw co-ordination committee will be discussed at length in Chapter 7

because it highlighted that the municipal government was not a part of the formal UMTA development process. This was my longest interview and it was where I was able to get the most detail about UMTA.

My next interview required me to travel to Trivandrum[3], the capital city of Kerala, to meet with the Kerala Secretary of Transport. It was clear that the secretary was very busy and spent a lot of the time reading from the actual UMTA draft bill which meant that he answered some of my questions using the actual document rather than his own opinion or interpretation of the document. To set up this interview I sought the help of Mr. Hari from KMRL, he gave me the transport secretary's email address and said I could use his name as a reference. My colleagues said that securing this interview was a longshot as government officials very rarely even look at their emails. A few days later I received a response that requested me to come to Trivandrum the next day. I would not attribute this to luck but rather to my positionality as an outsider, this became more obvious once I arrived at the government offices and I was escorted to the office of the transport secretary.

I did not originally plan to interview a member of the media but other participants spoke about the centrality of the media in UMTA and the Kochi Metro. Furthermore, the media has played a role in the public perception of UMTA, especially considering most media coverage favours KMRL and the construction of the Kochi Metro which re-enforces the idea that UMTA and the Kochi metro are inextricably linked. The journalist I spoke to asked that I not mention his name in this research report.

D. Dhanuraj, my last formal interview, is the director and founder of CPPR and is an expert in public policy and transport policy in the city. I interviewed him last to get a better idea of what was happening in the city and what his own opinions of UMTA and KMRL were.

The names in open brackets indicate that the conversation was informal and was not recorded. Nimish Sany is a colleague at CPPR and knows a substantive amount about transport in the city. Surabhi Kureel is a consultant for Kochi Smart City Mission, the offices are directly adjacent to the KMRL offices. She asked that I not record the interview but allowed me to take notes. This conversation was useful in understanding where the Smart City Mission was situated within the larger discussion and she gave me documents outlining the genealogy of UMTA (published online).

[3] Trivandrum is a 5 hour train ride from Kochi.

## 3.5. Thematic analysis

Throughout all of my interviews I made detailed notes which aided me in the transcription process. The transcription of the interviews was difficult at times because I spoke to most of my participants in noisy environments. It was raining heavily throughout the duration of my fieldwork and the noise it created made it difficult to hear participants. All interview venues had loud fans which also affected my ability to hear the participants. Once I finally had all my transcriptions I was able to analyze the data. I coded the information by looking for similar words or phrases which led to the construction of themes, a method based on 'thematic networks' literature.

The data has been analyzed thematically and makes use of thematic networks in order to organize and explore the data. This approach has also been useful in organizing the chapters. Thematic networks organize the extraction of three groups of themes, namely basic themes, organizing themes and global themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001). This approach involves an inward analysis in that the basic themes are outlined first through coding techniques. Basic themes derive directly from the text, they are simple premises that characterize the text. On their own, these themes don't mean anything but together they make up the second group of themes which are called organizing themes. Organizing themes are more abstract and they are principles on which the global theme is based. The global theme embodies the smaller themes. In the context of this study, the global themes are policy genealogy, travelling ideas, and the instrumentalization of policy.

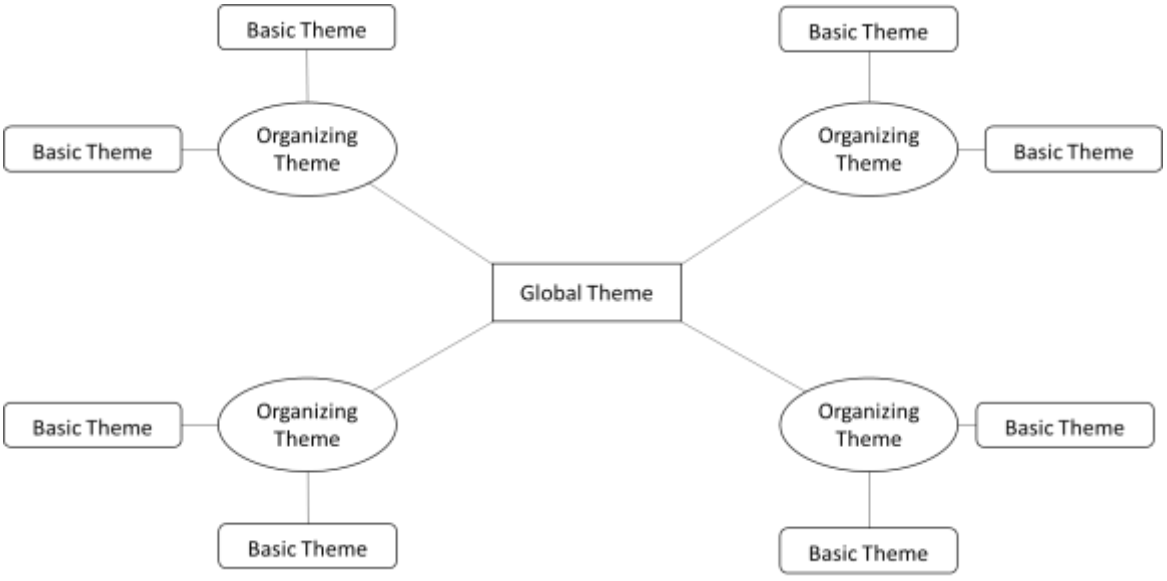



Figure 5: A spider diagram indicates how themes are organized in the construction of thematic chapters (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

### 3.5.1. An evolving approach

The analysis section of the thesis has proven to be a major indicator of personal growth. In the last stages of the thesis write-up I began my career in the research sector. In gaining work experience I also gained access to people and was exposed to different forms of writing and analysis. This is important to note in the methodology section because it has contributed to the writing of this report. The use of a 'sticky-note' technique[4] proved invaluable in tracking my thoughts and telling the story of UMTA. The ability to organize my own ideas was imperative in a study focused on understanding ideas as a field of research. Therefore, although my method of analysis is firmly rooted in thematic networks, my approach to writing has evolved with my own journey in entering the world of work.

### 3.5.2. Staying Connected

My time spent in the site conducting interviews was limited and therefore it remained critical throughout the analysis and write-up process to maintain some kind of connection with participants and the continuing formation of UMTA. Remaining connected was primarily achieved with the use of social media, which is particularly relevant in India when communication is so intertwined with smartphones and the internet, particularly with the pervasiveness of WhatsApp. I was added to a WhatsApp group which has the primary function of serving as a discussion forum for public transport in Kochi, many of my interview participants are very active on the group. This enables me to get a sense of what is happening in the transport sector in real time for the duration of my study and to stay connected with participants and discussions when I am no longer able to be in the field. Furthermore, Twitter has remained a useful platform for contextualizing my data as I am able to get a more extensive idea of how people interact with various groups of stakeholders, such as KMRL. These social media platforms also serve the critical purpose of allowing me to track UMTA, I am able to get up to date information on the policy and how it is perceived by different groups of people. It is important to note that I have not used social media as a form of data collection but rather as a way to contextualize my analysis. The use of digital platforms to monitor the field builds onto a body of literature that uses the concept "digital ethnography" and Murthy (2008) argues that researchers can no longer afford to sidestep digital tools such as social media in the future. The author draws further attention to the networking side of social networking; this study is largely built on the multiple dimensions of networks and network building and making use of online platforms for networking is a useful tool.

[4] The technique involves using stick-notes to track idea flows but writing only one idea on each sticky-note. This is a technique that changed the way I was able to write to be more concise.

## 3.6. Limitations and Challenges

As anticipated, time was a major limitation in this study as I was not able to spend an extensive amount of time in the field. However, throughout the fieldwork component of the study, there were also limitations that were out of my control. The first was that I could not speak to as many local government officials as I would have liked. The local government was for the most part completely removed from the policy development process and in order to keep my research focused, it soon became clear that it would be unwise to spend excessive amounts of time tracking down local government officials, especially considering the time and energy needed to organize an interview in the environment in which I was working. Therefore, I found it most constructive to spend more time with the people that were able to speak extensively about their experience with the policy.

Further issues emerged from a lack of time which was that this study does not include responses from the public, important considering that this would be an indicator to the pervasiveness of the rhetoric surrounding UMTA. The reason the public was not surveyed was due to time and funding constraints. An alternative to speaking to the public was interviewing a journalist and analyzing newspaper and media articles, the media would be the main information channel from the government and KMRL to the public and therefore served as a useful alternative, not in understanding the views of the public but understanding the content that may inform these views.

## 3.7. Positionality and Gender

Gaining access to participants was difficult, however, an interview that I was not able to secure proved to be hugely significant to my research process and made me think critically about my positionality. My time in Kochi was coming to an end and I had finally made contact with a lawyer and auto-rickshaw union leader through WhatsApp. I had sent out WhatsApp's to the people who would not take my calls. However this single reply "meet me tomorrow at 4" was the only one I would get which was very obviously missing a location. While running around the business district of the city and calling everyone I could think of I realized that I had assumed the lawyer I was to meet was a man when in fact she was a woman. In asking for a man with the same surname I was sent to multiple different offices. This made me question why I had made this assumption, it had not even crossed my mind that she was a woman, with the very fact contributing significantly to my confusion in trying to track down her office.

My positionality was fluid and differed from interview to interview, in some I was a scholar and in some I was perceived to be an activist, come to learn about innovations in Kochi and bring them to South Africa. However, my position as a woman proved to be the most interesting to me. The thing that struck

me during all of my interviews with men was that I never felt any degree of discomfort. I recall an interview in which I was the only woman in a room with 4 men. I did not know these men but I never felt that I had put myself in a precarious position even though I was in a different country, and in a part of the city I was unfamiliar with. At the end of the interview, one of the men I had interviewed came out onto the street with me and made sure I got a rickshaw back to the office from where I was working. My positionality as a young foreign woman provoked a response of concern or worry for my safety, although I was capable of finding my own way back to CPPR, it seemed the older men were concerned for my safety and well-being. This finding aligns to work done by Rubin (2012) in India when she speaks of a 'paternalistic attitude' she picked up from older Indian men.

Furthermore, I found my positionality as a foreigner important, as it became clear that many of the interviews I secured were only possible because of my status as an 'outsider'. There was an advantage to being an outsider, Rubin (2012) states that many participants she interviewed in India did not require her to prove she was a student, there was an inherent trust in the reason she was there. I felt that my participants assumed I was there for something important because I was foreign, some asked where I was studying but most accepted what I told them during introductions. An example of the advantage of being foreign was my interview with the Secretary of Transport. I had sent an email to his office and my colleagues had warned me that I should not expect a response, as he is very busy. However, to my surprise I received a reply a couple of days earlier confirming an appointment with him. In understanding the complexity of these feelings, I looked to literature and theories around insider/outsider literature. Especially because there were times where being an 'outsider' was to my detriment as the researcher, which was illustrated by language barriers. Although all my participants spoke English, I felt the interviews could have been more in-depth and rapport could have been built more effectively if I was able to converse in Malayalam. Early discussions surrounding insider/outsider status assumed that the researcher was either an insider or an outsider and that each status carried certain advantages and disadvantages. However, more recent discussions have revealed that this boundary between the two statuses is not always clear and that there is often a degree of fluidity involved (Merriam et al. 2001). Furthermore, literature on positionality, power, knowledge construction and representation in qualitative research is central. The notion of positionality rests on the assumption that a culture is more than a 'monolithic entity' to which one belongs or not. We can be insiders and outsiders to a particular community of research participants at many different levels and at many different times (Merriam et al. 2001).

Following the discussions within the literature on 'outsider' status, I will reflect in more detail about my own movement between and within the spaces of 'insider' and 'outsider' status. My 'outsider' status, stemming from being from a different part of the world, was advantageous in gaining access to government employees, as mentioned above. Once I arrived in Trivandrum to see the transport secretary, I was escorted to his office, and was permitted to wait inside even though he was not yet there. In many ways this made me feel uncomfortable, and feelings of imposter syndrome crept in. It must also be noted, that I was working outside of tourist spots, and my positionality as a white woman was unusual in many of the spaces I was investigating. On the opposite side of the spectrum, there were times where I was not an outsider, because of the fact that I had spent time in the city 6 months prior. Being based at CPPR with friends and colleagues, in some ways as an 'insider', enabled me to set up interviews with the unions, which would have been impossible otherwise. Furthermore, all the contact details I received stemmed from people working with me at CPPR. Therefore, without in some ways being able to situate myself as an insider, I would not have been able to effectively set up interviews.

### 3.7.1. Perceptions and the importance of words: A South African Lens

My positionality is also central because of the lens through which I perceived the city I was studying and the concepts I brought with me to a new space. I began my fieldwork using concepts such as 'informality' or 'power struggles' which did not resonate with participants. What I had conceived as informal both from living in South Africa and from my background reading did not apply in Kochi. The people of Kochi believe the city is a place of equality and functionality and my conceptualization of things was extremely divergent from that of my participants. A more grounded example of this divergence emerged upon my inquiry of the urban poor, almost all participants refused to speak about this issue in any real detail. I asked many people about slums or informal settlements in the city and the response remained that they did not exist even though a quick google search uncovered a large slum of immigrants in the heart of the city. This points to a very different conceptualization of the poor and their role in urban spaces.

Further than the meaning of words, this study was shaped in that I was using a South African lens to understand how UMTA was perceived and instrumentalized. My initial interest in the South African taxi industry, drew me to further understand what UMTA meant for auto-rickshaw unions, a parallel I drew from South Africa. Using a South African lens to understand Kochi and the public transport system, contributed to the focus of the study, because it allowed me to be more critical of policy processes and the functioning of the urban infrastructure. I became more and more interested in the auto rickshaw

unions and was able to look at them as more than a component of public transport, as they are seen by inhabitants of the city. Therefore, using a different lens contributed to a more in-depth understanding of the auto industry, but also required me to adjust to the difference between my own preconceived notions of how things were working and how things were actually working in reality.

## 3.8. Conclusions

In undergoing this research process I used a qualitative approach, using semi-structured interviews as my primary data collection tool and various secondary sources such as policy documents and the media to further situate myself in the city. The methodology is more than a chapter in a report, it served as a way to document my journey in Kochi and a platform to discuss interesting experiences that although were not necessarily 'findings', still perform an integral role in the analyzing of data and the compiling of this study. My positionality was not just a paragraph in a chapter but rather something I could actively engage with to improve the quality of my research.

# Chapter 4:
# Genealogy of UMTA

## 4.1. Introduction

*"Genealogy attempts to understand the present by tracing back the ways in which certain ideas emerged at particular times; how particular ideas were accepted and found form in terms of the legitimate ways of talking; and how other ideas were excluded, marginalized, or dismissed"* (Carney & Bista, 2009: 194).

The policy process is fluid and consistently changing and in order to understand this process, a dynamic story needs to be told. The aim of this chapter is 'storying' policy in order to understand it in its entirety as well as how it may affect the broader environment in which it is situated. UMTA is an interesting policy because it exists simultaneously in two different policy spaces, it exists as a national policy that has been transferred (unsuccessfully) through the governmental hierarchies by the central government, and also exists as a policy that has been designed at the local scale through horizontal processes. This chapter will situate UMTA and its genealogy by first discussing what has already happened and will then explore what is currently happening that is continuously shaping how UMTA will ultimately look in Kochi. Understanding the continuous development of UMTA, is presented through the interrogation of alliances between KMRL and the state and local government.

The literature that acts as the foundation of this chapter can be separated into two parts. The first, on which the entire chapter is based on is the understanding of genealogy as a methodology (Gale, 2001). Policy genealogy allows for the exploration of relationships and alliances in the development of policy rather than just an understanding of the policy itself (Gale, 2001; Henry, 2011). Secondly, the literature allows for the differentiation between how UMTA has moved through different spaces through different actors. Policy transfer (Stone, 2004) enables an understanding of how policy moves vertically through government hierarchies. Policy mobility (McCann, 2014) allows for an understanding of why policy is able to move from one space to another and policy translation (Mukhtarov, 2012) allows for the understanding of policy as something that changes while it moves and that there is a continual creation of new meanings.

## 4.2. The story of UMTA

My first interaction with UMTA was when it was first passed as a draft bill in Kochi at the very beginning of 2018. However, before understanding how it is developing and evolving, there must first be an in-depth understanding of how UMTA first came into existence in India. In understanding how UMTA in Kochi has come to exist, it must be acknowledged that there is a difference between UMTA, a national government policy, and the Kerala Metropolitan Transport Authority (KMTA), a policy developed in the Kochi. However, there is a link between these two processes.

### 4.2.1. Origins of UMTA

The history of UMTA is a complicated one and this study does not aim to uncover every moment in this history but rather the significant moments, moments that contribute to how Kochi's UMTA looks today. The story of UMTA begins before the turn of the century when there are utterances of integrated transport in Hyderabad in 1988 and in the Greater Guwahati area in 1999 (MoUD, 2014). However, these utterances fall away and fail to gain any real traction at the local scale. The first pivotal turning point in the history of UMTA is the Government of India's release of the National Urban Transport Authority in 2006 which stated that all million-plus cities in India needed to establish an UMTA (MoUD, 2014). Although the policy is written into legislation by the central government, there is limited buy-in to the policy at the local scale.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "the National Urban Transport Policy that was brought out in 2006 clearly says that every city should have an UMTA, that's called the Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority, we call it UMTA. But none of the cities took it up very seriously."

Mr. Sohan's description of the policy transfer process is further evidenced in the below diagram which shows that after 2006 there was limited uptake of the UMTA prescription.

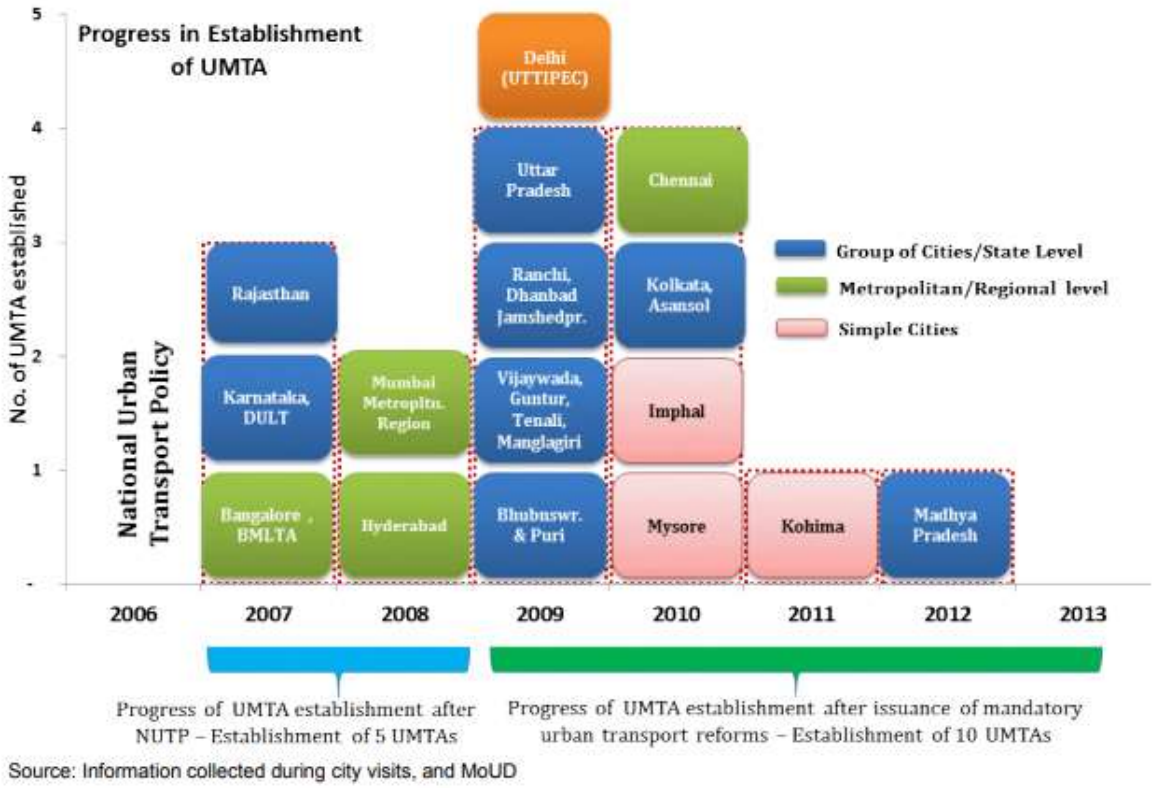



Figure 6: Graph indicating the establishment of UMTA as a response to central government policy prescriptions (MoUD, 2014)

The next turning point came in 2009 when the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM) stated that in order to receive bus funding, all million plus cities were required to establish an UMTA. The JnNURM was a massive city-modernization scheme launched by the Government of India under the Ministry of Urban Development (Sivaramakrishnan, 2011), it was launched in 2005 and ended in 2014.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "Later, a few years after [the NUPT], the [urban renewal] mission was launched, it was called the JnNurm, Jawaharal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission. So one of the conditions created in the JnNurm was that…the [money/funding] of the transportation component of that scheme was that it is a 50:50 scheme for a city like Cochin [Kochi]. In smaller cities you get 70:30. 70 from the central government, 30 from the state and the municipality. Here, because they classified us as a bigger city and we are a smaller city, we [then have to] chip in 50 % [the state government and municipalities] its 50:50. So, to [get] that 50%, one of the conditions was that every city should have a Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority, it was mandated. But then, to hail these funds, nobody took it very seriously. Many

states and many cities, they form and continue and UMTA but they did not legislate, they just [had] a government order."

Mr. Sohan emphasizes that these key dates are important and begins to explain why these policy prescriptions have been ineffective in guiding the integration of transport in Indian cities. Although there appears to be limited buy-in to these central government policy prescriptions, there must still be acknowledgment that the central government remains key in understanding UMTA in its present form.

Sarah: "So [UMTA] is controlled by the Central government?"

Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "Yes, central government. The state government is legislated under it. So nobody legislated, everybody just formed an UMTA to send to central government. Then they can ask [for] the money."

Therefore, in many ways tracking UMTA over time provides very valuable information about how the policy is able to move, or in this case not move. As of 2014, 8 years after the publication of the NUTP recommendation and the introduction of the urban transport reform, only 15 UMTA's had been established, even though there were 53 urban agglomerations with million-plus populations (MoUD, 2014). Using the theory of policy transfer and its focus on external actors is useful in understanding why UMTA has been limited in its ability to move from the central government to the local scale.

### 4.2.2. UMTA in Kochi

The emergence of UMTA in Kochi has taken a very different trajectory from that of other Indian cities. Kochi was not one of the cities that responded to central government prescriptions in 2006 or 2009. Instead the policy emanated independently at the local scale. There are different stories that detail the course of events that lead to the passing of the UMTA draft bill in Kochi. These stories will be woven together with other forms of evidence to construct a complete story of UMTA in Kochi.

| Date | Stakeholder | Influence | Source |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2010 | Mr. Sohan | Writes book on integrated transport, UMTA is the first recommendation | (Sohan, 2018) |
| 2011 | Cochin Municipal Corporation | Recommends an UMTA | (Sohan, 2018) |
| 2012 | Cochin Municipal Corporation | Pushed an UMTA project to the Kerala state government | (Times of India, 2012) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2013 | KMRL | Formally recommends UMTA | (MoUD, 2016) |
| 2013 | ADF | ADF proposes funding for the metro | (CODATU, 2014) |
| 2014 | CODATU | UMTA workshop | (CODATU, 2014) |
| 2016 | GoI (MoUD) | Releases operational document for UMTA in Kochi | (MoUD, 2016) |
| 2018 | Kerala government | Draft bill given the nod by cabinet | (The New Indian Express, 2018) |

Table 1: Table to summarize key dates in the development of an UMTA in Kochi.

There is differing information as to who or when UMTA was first introduced into the city. The first story states that UMTA is first introduced to Kochi in 2013 by KMRL, who was appointed as the nodal agency responsible for the development of the policy. The story is told through government documents (MoUD, 2016, interviews with KMRL employees (Mr. Anthony, 2018; Mr. Hari, 2018) and a formal recommendation from KMRL. The second story is told my Mr. Sohan, he does not say that he was responsible for the introduction of UMTA to Kochi but he says he was the first one to discuss the policy[5] back in 2010. Mr. Sohan remembered "In the book I have 12 programs of action. The number one item was to form an UMTA, at that point in time nobody had even heard of UMTA."

He also states that in 2011 the Kochi Municipal Corporation recommended that an UMTA is introduced to the city. Interestingly a newspaper article echoes that the Kochi Municipal Corporation is responsible for UMTA in Kochi and they pushed the policy to the state government in 2012 (a year before the recommendation came from KMRL). The fact that this information was excluded or dismissed by formal structures is significant because it shows us that policy often has many different stories about its genesis. Although Mr. Sohan was probably the first person to discuss UMTA in Kochi, he has not contributed to shaping of the formal policy process, which makes his influence doubtful. It is important that both stories are presented, however the aim of outlining the contested genealogy is to understand that there were most likely different interests and forces that shaped UMTA but it seems that KMRL had the greatest capacity for this. Therefore, this study chooses to use 2013 as the official introduction of UMTA into Kochi, a process initiated by KMRL. In 2013 and 2014, international actors began to influence the policy, the significance of this input will be explored in greater detail in the following chapter.

[5] The book is titled Affordable and Viable Transport for the city of Kochi. Mr. Sohan offered to send me the book and although I reminded him many time since, I have not received a copy. The book is unavailable online/

In 2016, the central government along with other international organizations enters back into the development process in the publication of a detailed operations document for UMTA in Kochi, entitled *Final Operations Document for Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority in Kochi* (MoUD, 2016). The document outlines the guidelines and procedures for the establishment of UMTA in Kochi. It is structured in two parts, the first part is called 'pre-operationalization' and is focused on the structure of the draft bill and the 'operationalization' part is focused on the UMTA board and the selection of a CEO. The document states that it was compiled at the request of Kochi city, however it has minimal mention of KMRL. Over the next two years it is presumed that KMRL alters the document significantly, evidenced by the appointment of the MD of KMRL as the CEO of UMTA. In 2018, the UMTA draft bill was handed to the national general assembly by KMRL and was approved. The further process of legislation is beyond the scope of this study however at the time of this study's completion, the draft bill is yet to be formally legislated by the Kerala State Government.

The genealogy of UMTA up until the present has been understood in two parts, the first is UMTA at the national scale and secondly UMTA in Kochi. The national policy is relatively easy to follow, however UMTA in Kochi is far more complex and this section aimed to give a broad background rather than intricate details. Although both of these processes occurred at different times, they are linked in that Kochi's UMTA cannot exist in isolation from the national policy. The policy was initially transferred from central government to local government but the process depicted above can be better understood as a process of policy translation (Mukhtarov, 2012). The policy has in essence travelled to the local scale but it has been interpreted in different ways and it means something very different to what was originally prescribed in 2006.

## 4.3. Alliances in the policy production process

The story of UMTA is best explored through the dynamic relationships between the stakeholders responsible for formulating the policy (Mukhtarov, 2012). Using genealogy as a tool for analysis is grounded on how the policy has changed over time and the forming and reforming of alliances is the most effective way of illustrating this change (Gale, 2001). The alliances that will be further discussed are between Kochi Metro Rail Limited and the different hierarchies of government, namely the Kerala State Government and the local government. Although the central government plays a role in this process, in their construction of policies and guidance documents, I was not able to interview representatives from the central government and therefore cannot adequately evaluate alliances. All of these stakeholders play multiple roles in the policy process, however this study uses a narrower lens in

understanding their interaction. In this context, the state government is positioned as the agent that formalizes the policy process through legislation, the transport secretary and potentially chairperson of UMTA acts as the state government representative. The local government or Kochi Municipal Corporation is an agent that is best suited to understand Kochi and has been positioned as a representative for the city. In understanding the alliance, Mr. Sohan, the ex-mayor, will be the actor referred to. Lastly and centrally is KMRL, the nodal agency for the development of UMTA. Mr. Hari and Mr. Anthony, employees of KMRL, best represent how KMRL alliances are formed. This section aims to understand these stakeholders as single entities, although there is an inherent acknowledgment of the fact that they are shaped by individual biases as well as a multitude of external pressures, such as travelling ideas. These alliances illustrate the changing forms of governance in the city (Ballard, 2017) and the intersection between policy networks and governance networks (Kenis & Schneider, 1991).

### 4.3.1. KMRL and the Kerala State Government

As stated above, KMRL is a public sector company with the government of India and the Kerala government having equal equity in the company. The alliance between KMRL and The Kerala State Government is primarily built around the state having equity in the company but is also built around the development and eventual implementation of UMTA in Kochi. The alliance is formed because that government needs the knowledge and expertize of KMRL to prepare the UMTA bill and KMRL needs the government to legislate and ultimately implement the policy that they have developed. Together they achieved the passing of the draft bill in the assembly, however the fact that the draft bill has not as yet been legislated calls the strength of this alliance into question. This section seeks to understand how this alliance has affected the genealogy of UMTA through its phases of stability and strain.

Mr. Hari, a KMRL manager who has extensive influence on UMTA described the alliance by saying "[KMRL] are just assisting the government, they need somebody to steer [UMTA]. So Kochi Metro has taken [this task on] on a voluntary basis. It is for the government…since we are [a] government agency we thought of taking the responsibility to prepare the bill. [KMRL has done this], now it is up to the government to implement UMTA." Mr. Hari goes on to explain that KMRL submits recommendations that "come from a professional opinion, a scientific opinion" but that "the government [has] full power to change UMTA." Therefore the alliance is formed around the fact that KMRL has expertize in transport planning but ultimately the power to implement lies with the Kerala state government. The nature of this alliance is further outlined by the Transport Secretary who emphasizes the importance of KMRL

working closely with the Kerala government. KMRL relies on the government to implement UMTA but also requires support for the Metro to function effectively in the city.

> Transport secretary (2018): "[KMRL] will be responsible for building the metro but unless we are able to direct the [various agencies], they will not listen. For example, the motor vehicle department, they will only listen if the [Kerala State] government says [it]."

An alliance is formed between KMRL and the State government around the development and implementation of UMTA. However, it is significant that the alliance originated before the UMTA discussion in Kochi because it allowed for the selection of KMRL as the nodal agency, by the state government. A nodal agency that will directly benefit from an integrated transport system that leads all passengers to the metro. Mr. Sohan says that "the referee should be independent. KMRL [has] one of their members as the referee, [KMRL] should not be on the UMTA." He emphasizes that because the metro is one of the 'players' they should not be responsible for the development of the policy. The alliance between KMRL and the state government allows for this conflict of interest to occur.

It is clear that the formation of this alliances has and will affect the outcomes of UMTA, but it must also be noted that this alliance is not always stable. Evidence will be presented highlighting the two ways in which this alliance is placed under strain. The first is that the state government has given the UMTA bill limited priority and the second is that KMRL and the state government are functioning in vastly different environments, for the state government, UMTA is not only a practical decision but a political one.

There were two perspectives as to why UMTA has not gained any traction when the general assembly meets, the Transport Secretary, diplomatically said: "They got an ordinance form earlier but unfortunately they have to go through various discussions, there are a lot of changes and consultation with our stakeholders which is required and then modifications [need to be made]. Then [the draft bill] has to go through the law department, it should have [been] passed last time but unfortunately we did not have enough time in the assembly." However, a journalist had a more controversial view, noting "I think it's not as much as a priority for the government. In the last session they ought to have considered it but something else came up." The delay in the assembly, which could be attributed to a lack of priority given to passing the bill, could speculatively alter the genealogy of UMTA. The longer the delay, the more likely it is that KMRL will alter the draft bill to make it more attractive to the state government, considering the pressure on KMRL for UMTA to be legislated. Pressure created because for the planned phases of the metro to be sanctioned, an UMTA must be legislated.

There is a further distancing of the alliance between the state government and KMRL in that UMTA will be applicable for the whole state and not just Kochi.

> Transport Secretary (2018): “this bill will be applicable for the rest of the state also, in Kochi there will be an UMTA but in each city it will be different, Trivandrum will have another, officials are different, there are two more metros we are building in Trivandrum and Calicut. They are planning a lite metro, there is a different authority in each city”.

The Transport secretary’s statement hints to the development of a more generic policy that applies to Kerala rather than to Kochi. This evidence points to the distancing in the alliance between KMRL and the state government. However, there is also space for alliances to be reformed around the construction of new metros in Kerala. There could be a potential for KMRL to extend to the rest of the state.

One can assume that these alliances can take a series of different directions once they are put under strain, they can potentially breakdown completely with UMTA never being legislated and KMRL not given the permission to build the next phases of the metro, or alternatively the alliance can be reconciled in a common vision for the city. Individuals within KMRL and the state government understand the city and how it should look in very similar ways (Henry, 2011), they share the same ideology in that the city needs to modernize through the implementation of a ‘smart’, integrated transport system. The second direction seems most likely in that KMRL has received so much support thus far. The alliance is reformed in a similar vision for the city and that ultimately they are both interested in integrating the public transport system. It is significant to note that these changing and fluid alliances are an integral part of the policy genealogy process.

### 4.3.2. KMRL and local government

The discussion surrounding the alliance between KMRL and the local government is a preliminary one as the alliance has not yet been fully formed and its formation is relatively superficial. However, the very fact that the alliance is weak is interesting. KMRL has only interacted with the Kochi Municipal Corporation because of the fact that the corporation is responsible for land acquisitions in the city (Dhanuraj, 2018). Thus the interaction between the two stakeholders in relation to UMTA is very limited.

When asked if the local government will have a seat on the board of UMTA? Mr. Anthony, who is a consultant working for KMRL said, “Yes, local government and local groups.”

This response is interesting in that it indicates that the experts within KMRL equate an alliance with local government with an alliance with local groups and civil society. This emphasizes that KMRL does not see local government as a representative of the state in the policy development process. The alliance is built on KMRL's perception that there should be involvement at the local level but this seems almost entirely superficial as no such intervention have been put in place. In posing the question "does the local government have much power", the responses from three stakeholders were aligned in that the local government has no power in the development of UMTA. Mr. Hari answered shortly with, "No, they are only a member in the committee." The other two participants gave reasoning behind the lack of involvement with the transport secretary stating that "[The Kochi municipal corporation] may not be aware of so many things…local bodies are not involved in transport planning." The journalist echoed these sentiments and said "[The local government] are cut off from whatever is happening. Trivandrum is the capital."

The evidence above emphasizes the limited role played by local government in the development of UMTA. Alliances are formed based on perceptions of power (Henry, 2011), and it is clear that there is a universal perception in Kochi that the Corporation has limited ability to enact power. Therefore, although this alliance will be formed and reformed around the implementation stage of UMTA, it is clear that the local government has been removed almost completely by the policy development process. It could be concluded that by removing the local government from the development of UMTA, KMRL will have a greater role to play in its implementation, even though it has been emphasized that KMRL will step back once the policy is legislated.

## 4.4. Conclusions

There are different ways in which to explore the genealogy of policy and although tracking UMTA through linear time acts as a critical foundation for further discussions, it requires policy to be viewed and conceptualized as static. Therefore, a far more effective way of understanding the genealogy of UMTA is by acknowledging that the policy is alive, fluid and ambiguous and in order to understand this fluidity, personal relationships and alliances become critical. The ways in which alliances are formed, strained and ultimately reconciled defines the policy and how it is interpreted and eventually implemented. A key conclusion of this chapter is that KMRL perceives the State Government to have more power than the local government in the development of a local policy. This is interesting given a perceived movement towards decentralization in Indian urban governance and particularly in Kerala (Heller et al, 2007; Sivaramakrishnan, 2011).

# Chapter 5:
# The Travelling of Ideas

## 5.1. Introduction

The story of policy goes beyond its original birth, the moment ideas were conceived and then shared. Policy narratives and specifically the story of UMTA is embedded in a far broader history, a history formed by ideas that are continuously circulating around the globe at different speeds to form the foundations of different policies and the different ways that it is understood and interpreted (Healey, 2013). The ideas and discourses that form the foundation of policy initiation act as the point of departure in understanding UMTA and the way it has been interpreted at the local scale by a variety of stakeholders as seen in the previous chapter. However, ideas do not travel with equal strength and with equal power (Gonzalez, 2011; Healey, 2013; Tait & Jensen, 2007). Therefore the question is not only concerning what ideas travel, but how they travel, why they travel and where they travel from. The aim of this chapter is to understand how international policy ideas landed in India and in turn shaped policy and the ways in which local actors interpret it. International ideas travel through human and non-human actors (Healey, 2013), they travel actively and passively (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000) and they travel in many directions. This chapter explores in detail another important aspect of the genealogy of UMTA, the international influence. The chapter examines first how international actors landed in Kochi through international aid and then will discuss how these ideas are cemented through institutionally embedded ideas. Finally, the chapter will outline the significance of individuals in enabling ideas to travel but ultimately argues that hegemonic idea flows are guided by powerful international players.

The findings in this chapter engage with a wide body of literature but there are three distinct ways in which this literature helps to understand the travelling of ideas from 'the urban international' to the body. The first is in the differentiation of space and place and the movement beyond understanding these concepts as words to understanding them as geographies (Tait & Jensen, 2007). The second way in which the literature is useful is in the theoretical understanding of travelling ideas, drawing particularly from Actor Network Theory in its emphasis on human and non-human actors in the circulation of ideas (Healey, 2013). The potential of people to internalize ideas either passively or actively is central in understanding the findings. The centrality of the individual is used to understand how ideas arrive in India and why they resonate (or don't). The third conclusion from the literature that

is fundamental to the discussion is the hegemony of idea flows (Watson, 2009) and why some ideas travel or resonate and why some don't. The literature is useful given that the participant group is not homogenous and there are many different interpretations of the ideas that surround UMTA, but what is most interesting is where there is agreement.

## 5.2. The Urban International

The first section of this chapter aims to explore what has enabled international ideas to land in Indian cities and how these processes happened. This section is constructed in two parts, the first is in understanding the significance of global capital flows and the second is in exploring institutionally embedded hegemonic ideas such 'World-class City-ness (Robinson, 2002). In this argument, there must be an acknowledgement that ideas can be transferred through both voluntary and coercive pathways (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000).

### 5.2.1. Capital flows and the French Aid Agency

There are various different ways that international ideas travel to the local scale and in understanding this process there are core actors that must be discussed. There are so many different actors and processes that influence how we think, but I choose to explore the significance of key international players from the Global North and how these players and their ideas land in Kochi. What is important here is the international actors that influence the transport policy arena in Kochi. There are three core actors that have made an impact on this policy space, which are CODATU (a French NGO), the French Development Bank (AFD) and to a lesser extent the German Development Bank (KFW). It is difficult to apply a historiography (Gale, 2001) methodology to understanding when these actors arrived in India because there are different accounts of when key events happen. However, from the knowledge I had access to, tangible interventions from the above actors happened relatively recently. AFD first enters the picture in 2013 with the promise to extend the Kochi Metro by 11 km with a 175 million euro loan, a loan that takes up to three years to avail itself. However it is not just this funding that makes AFD central to the story, it is the influence on the development of an UMTA in Kochi.

In 2014 the influence of the French becomes more obvious in the introduction of CODATU, a French-based non-profit organization aimed at promoting international exchanges between the various players in the transport and urban mobility sector (CODATU, 2014) through an UMTA workshop which was well covered by the local media. The workshop was accompanied by a report which starts to reveal how international actors are able to carry ideas to local places. The first few sentences of the CODATU (2014)

report are significant, the report states that CODATU is based on experience sharing between 'the developing countries and old industrial countries'. It states that experts facilitate 'knowledge transfers' in order to enhance urban mobility systems worldwide, citing London, Paris, Singapore and Vancouver. Therefore, French actors enact their own mission in Kochi through the promise of international aid for the Kochi metro and workshops for a sustainable transport system.

International aid is an interesting indicator in the discussion of travelling ideas in three definitive ways. The first is in the perception held that international players are more experienced and their ideas more useful than those that are generated locally.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "In 2011, the [Kochi Municipal Corporation] commissioned an UMTA and said that the necessary steps would be need to be taken to form an UMTA. So it was the French Aid Agency, they were the ones supporting the [formation]…so there was a meeting in Uttar Pradesh…I attended this meeting and we prioritized regulatory assistance for forming an UMTA because we did not have experience."

International ideas that travelled through the AFD had resonance at the local scale because of the perception that local government does not have enough experience to design policies for the cities they govern. This perception is well documented even though there is a persistent push from policymakers for decentralization (Heller et al, 2007). Although Mr. Sohan says that the Kochi Municipal Corporation commissions UMTA, there is a perception that it cannot be properly formulated without international consultants. This evidence is echoed by the fact that even though UMTA was in discussion as early as 2011, it did not gain traction until international actors stepped in years later. Furthermore, these international actors are able to carry ideas to local places through the promise of innovation and improvement.

> Mr. Anthony (KMRL consultant, 2018): "We are also aiming to get AFD funding to replace the whole fleet of private buses into hybrid or electric or something like that…We are working with KFB and AFD, one German agency and one French Agency – they are jointly funding this."
>
> Journalist (The Hindu, 2018): "they make the coaches, they bring the technology."

These quotes show that there is a perception that AFD is bringing something new to Kochi, something material that will improve the way the city works. Both Development Banks bring with them more than rhetoric and even still, more than money, they bring tangible change. The promise of electric vehicles, along with this the promise of a sustainable public transport solution. Therefore, although international

actors are able to transport ideas with their reputations, they are also able to bring something material to the city. The metro coaches are designed and made from technologies brought in from overseas. The metro stations and coaches look like something you would see in the Global North. The connection between these ideas and their influence on both the metro and UMTA is significant and ideas also travel through materiality.

The second way in which international ideas are able to change what happens at the local scale is through organizations like CODATU. Like the AFD and KFW, these ideas do not travel passively from international spaces to local places, it is a very active process. The 2014 workshop in Kochi is important because although it was positioned as an information sharing platform, the influence of CODATU went far further than this. International actors and the ideas they shared were ultimately absorbed into policy.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "[Elias George] is a senior bureaucrat in the government and was the managing director of Kochi Metro Rail. He was made chairman of the UMTA and they powered him to make the bylaws for legislation. So with the assistance of CODATU, he made the bylaws."

CODATU brought more than guidance or the expertize of consultants, it must be acknowledged that they brought ideas, which in short embody the notion that what has been done in Europe should be emulated in cities such as Kochi. The workshop was not just a platform for 'knowledge transfer', it paved the way for bylaws, therefore shaping UMTA in a direct way. Therefore, the physical infiltration of AFD and CODATU, through workshops, legislative guidance and the introduction of technology, acts as evidence for the ways in which international ideas are able to land effectively and resonate at the local scale. However, it must be noted that even the most critical of local actors such as Mr. Sohan local allow for the landing of these ideas, demonstrating the third way in which international aid allows for international ideas to land. In our interview I asked Mr. Sohan about his own perceptions of AFD.

> Sarah: "I have been hearing a lot about the French Aid Agency, why have they been lending so much money to Kochi Metro Rail Limited?"
>
> Mr. Sohan explained, "that's how the global capital moves"

His response is important because it emphasizes that international aid moves in a very specific direction. His sentiments reflect that the international aid and the effect it has on developing cities is just a part of the world we live in. It must be accepted and not questioned.  It is not simply that a highly globalized

world enables capital to move but the implication that 'global' capital emerges from the global North and moves to the global South. Therefore, in this way ideas like capital are not circulated but move in a relatively hierarchical way from international spaces to local places and that this directionality is not interchangeable. Global capital remains detached from the reality of urban places and the consultants and aid agencies that transport ideas to these places are not interested in learning about the contexts of cities: 'best practice' and the global city vision is deeply embedded in the policy world. The fact that it is taken as given that international players know best means that the context of cities and the opinions of those who know them best are often not taken into consideration.

The centrality of AFD and CODATU in the circulation of policy ideas is significant because it points to shifting processes of governance in the city and that spheres of authority surpass even the central government (Ballard, 2017). The concept of 'governmentality' (Chatterjee, 2004) may be important because although these actors guide policy and run workshops, the idea that these consultants know best is already embedded and changes the way policy actors respond to UMTA.

Therefore, although international players were only in Kochi for a relatively short amount of time, they enabled international ideas to travel passively through the notion that French consultants know best and actively through the development of policy by-laws and technology. This section does not only make the argument that international ideas travel with strength but rather that local actors are so ready to accept these ideas as truths, regardless of the consequences.

### 5.2.2. World-class city-ness

Ideas travel passively and actively. Some ideas travel through human actors such as consultants or non-human actors such as capital or technology but some ideas travel in completely different ways. Hegemonic ideas travel because they are institutionally embedded, they have been accepted as truths over time and although challenged in academia, they have a strong-hold at the local scale. Hegemonic ideas travel and become embedded to guide the perceptions of local stakeholders. This section argues that ideas surrounding 'city-ness' are based on the dualism between large western cities (world-class or global cities) and developing cities (third-world cities). It is argued that local stakeholders in Kochi see the city as striving towards the former category and away from the latter. Hegemonic idea flows enable us to understand why Kochi is so receptive and so ready to accept ideas from France and Germany. Although stakeholders all had very different ways of conceptualizing the city and conceptualizing how the city should be and should look, almost all participants used the same model as the end goal. It became clear that the notion of the world-class city (Robinson, 2002) was deeply embedded in the

consciousness of the people responsible for the development, and ultimately the implementation of UMTA in Kochi. Evidence of the embeddedness of the 'world-class city' ideal is presented in the way European cities are used to describe how transport systems should work. The way in which Mr. Hari speaks about British influence on cities of the Global South shows that he draws from experiences from abroad.

> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018)**:** "When we heard about Johannesburg, we thought that there would be some [British influence], we thought that the British would have cultivated a few things, that there would be good planners, good transport, but this is not there. [Does] good planning exist in Johannesburg, something like an UMTA?"

Mr. Hari goes on to describe UMTA in relation to other cities regularly considered 'global cities' or 'world-class' cities. Therefore, the idea that Kochi needs to emulate Europe to be successful is deeply embedded.

> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): "Recommendations for UMTA come from a professional opinion, a scientific opinion, this is [the same] for any other metropolitan transport authority, which we see either in Singapore, London or Paris…In many countries or cities there is only one agency, even for Singapore and Dubai."

Mr. Hari states that what he considers good transport is cultivated by Europeans and what works in these countries should work in cities in the Global South. Interestingly Mr. Sohan used the term global city which drew my attention.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "we will never be a global city, we have a tiny city, Delhi has got 1163 Lakh[6] people, and we have 6 lakh. We always think we are something big. The idea of wider roads is foolish, it doesn't solve the problem, and this doesn't happen in the old towns in Europe. None of them are widening their roads."

Mr. Sohan dismisses the concept or rhetoric of the 'global city' and he equates this concept to size, this points to the fact that conceptualizations challenging the 'global city' paradigm (Sassen, 2004) or a world-class urban vision have not landed at the local scale. Mr. Sohan is definitely most likely to critique international ideas, evidenced by his track record in advocating for the use of Kochi's existing transport infrastructure but he still goes on to use European towns as the model for a successful city and how a

[6] A Lakh is a unit in the Indian numbering system and is equal to one hundred thousand (100 000)

city should work. This example is particularly interesting because the widening of roads is indeed a useless solution in Kochi but the reasoning should not be tied to the fact that it is not done in some European towns. The reason behind policy-makers not widening roads in Europe would be very different from why this would also be an ineffective idea in Indian cities. In my analysis, I began to look carefully for clues that pointed to the embeddedness of the 'global city' even though I did not expect participants to use the same terminology as I do. The transport secretary is central to the legislative shaping of Kochi and therefore the ideas that guide his decision-making are important.

> Transport Secretary (2018): "The master plan should be there for each city and the mobility plan should be in general."

The use of the term 'master plan' points to an urban vision emanating from the Global North and it is argued by many southern urbanists that the master plan no longer holds value to cities in the South where vastly different dynamics are at play (Watson, 2009). The transport secretary goes on to talk about what a single command and control system means, this will be one of the core outcomes of the legislation of UMTA.

> Transport secretary (2018): The Smart City will [act] as a command and control for all departments…Each department will have their people there so integration becomes much easier. In fact I saw in Portugal, most of these cities have command and control centers. They can monitor and give direction to people in the field."

Significantly, the transport secretary has visited Portugal and therefore he is also travelling outside Kochi to collect the ideas that inform his understanding of cities, he can therefore be considered a Policy 'tourist', who often seek confirmation of views they have formed before their trip and then bring back ideas to their localities (Gonzalez, 2011). This speaks directly to Urry (2002) who explores the resemblance between a 'tourist gaze' and the experiences of policy-makers who visit other countries. There is the sense that being taken out of the ordinary makes a place become more exotic, a place where anything can happen. Therefore when the transport secretary goes to Portugal and sees a command and control centre he believes it is something that must be able to work in his own city.

It is clear that stakeholders with very different mandates agree that an international model of best practice can be used to shape policy processes in Kochi. These findings are in agreement with Sivaramakrishnan (2011) who states that Indian cities seek to move toward a global city paradigm rather than away from it. These ideas have not travelled through international human actors or through policy

prescriptions but rather travel because they have been institutionally embedded over many centuries to inform thinking and decision-making of local actors living in the present.

## 5.3. Directionality of Idea flows

I have discussed the ways in which ideas travel from international spaces to local places but there must be further investigation into the directionality of idea flows. As a final note, an argument exists that there is the potential for ideas emulating from local places to form the foundation for policies in other localities across the globe. The argument that ideas can travel from local places to inform policy in other cities is unpacked and explored by understanding the role of individuals in circulating ideas (Tait & Jensen, 2007). However, it soon becomes clear that individuals are significant vectors for the movement of ideas in an idealized reality but evidence suggests that circuits of knowledge require strength from international spaces to gain traction in policy spheres.

### 5.3.1. Individuals as idea mobilizers: Kochi to Johannesburg

During an interview with Mr. Hari, the general manager of urban transport at KMRL, it became clear that personal connections and networks were central in mobilizing local ideas. Throughout the interview it became clear that his aim was not only to explain the intricacies of the policy to me but also to ensure that the policy could be enacted elsewhere in the world. In this process, I as the researcher, became central, and as the interview unfolded I was repositioned by Mr. Hari from a student from South Africa to a vector that would enable the idea of UMTA to travel half way around the globe to Johannesburg.

> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): “Apart from your academic interest…someone will have to be the initiator. An initiator for change.”
>
> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): “What I would request is [that you present] a similar concept to UMTA in Johannesburg. That should be your first thing, without concentrating on anything else, one aim, an organization like the metropolitan transport authority and this authority should include a focus on land patterns.”

The statement reveals that Mr. Hari believes that UMTA as an idea can be emulated in Johannesburg and that the idea can travel from locality to locality. Mr. Hari continues to look for similarities between Johannesburg and Kochi which emphasizes that he believes context is important and does not push the idea of an UMTA simply because he believes it will work in Kochi. He asks about the population, the population density of Johannesburg and inquiries about the structure of the local government. This is

significant because it highlights the importance of ideas that circulate at the local level and the centrality of local knowledge. Mr. Hari shows that although he believes I can take the idea of UMTA to Johannesburg, he is also concerned with how Johannesburg may be very different from Kochi. The above conversation with Mr. Hari speaks to the significance of Actor Network Theory and the importance of human agents in the circulation of ideas around the globe (Healey, 2013), (Tait & Jensen, 2007).

It must be acknowledged that in participating in the interview process and writing this report I have indeed enabled the idea of UMTA to travel to Johannesburg. Therefore, in some ways Mr. Hari's goal of seeing UMTA (as an idea) travel has been realized, even if it is in a very small way. In the process of being included as a vector for idea mobilization I have essentially altered and influenced my own findings. This is important because it enables a differentiation between travelling ideas and travelling policies. I cannot enable a policy to move to Johannesburg but I can move an idea. The strength of this idea and the traction it has is however questionable.

### 5.3.2. Hegemonic circuits of knowledge

Although Mr. Hari positions me as an agent of change in enabling UMTA to travel to a different continent, what becomes interesting is his further elaboration on how exactly the idea of a metropolitan transport authority will travel from Kochi to Johannesburg. Again international actors are introduced back into the picture, the World Bank and AFD are evidently deeply intertwined in the development of UMTA and what the policy will ultimately mean to the city of Kochi.

> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): "The World Bank has a very strong urban transport [sector]. Approach the World Bank, and request them to share their expertise…They will fund and we will also facilitate you with some connecting points."
>
> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): "The only thing is you need to strike a balance, when on a personal level you are approaching the World Bank, asking them to can you help my city. Then you will go back and ask the mayor and [inform them] that you spoke to the World Bank…if anyone tries to do a standalone project it is set up to fail, unless you bring a complete network and ecosystem then it will fail."

Although the intention of Mr. Hari remains to enable UMTA to travel from Kochi to Johannesburg, it starts to become clear that this cannot happen without the input of 'international spaces' or 'global advocacy' (Macfarlane, 2009; Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000). The World Bank quickly emerges as a means to

strengthen the policy idea. If I want UMTA to exist in Johannesburg, I must ensure I can form relationships with these international actors. Mr. Hari believes that Johannesburg can emulate the process Kochi has followed but not without the help of international actors.

> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): "Meet government officials [in Johannesburg] and say in Kochi you have a program, this is a city-to-city co-operation agreement, so the mayor of Johannesburg can sign this agreement with the city of Lyon…I will provide connections to these people. You be the connecting point and rush into the mayor's chamber, be bold."

> Mr. Hari (KMRL General Manager, 2018): "Get connected to Sytral, from Sytral to AFD Paris"

Therefore, although the interaction with Mr. Hari highlights the capacity of ideas to move from city to city, and the significance of idea sharing at the local scale, the arguments begin to disintegrate with the involvement of the World Bank and the French Aid Agency. Even though Mr. Hari in many regards hints to his own 'ownership' of UMTA as an idea, he acknowledges that the idea's mobility and circulation depends on the influence of powerful, external actors. Therefore, even though the movement of ideas from local places to other local spaces would hold a lot of value in building sustainable urban policies, in reality this is not how ideas move, a sentiment echoed by McFarlane's (2009) discussion of grassroots social movements such as SDI.

## 5.4. Conclusions

This chapter discusses the travelling of ideas from international spaces to local places through the influence of development banks as well as institutionally embedded ideas of what cities should look like. Although there is an acknowledgment of how ideas travel through individuals, this chapter fundamentally argues that hegemonic ideas travel in a very specific direction, from international spaces to local actors. However, what is most interesting is how these ideas are received and absorbed. The input from AFD and CODATU is received with open arms, evident in the metro's funding and the attendance of workshops. The materiality of the transfer of these ideas is evident in the city. The ideas that travel on their own are also well-received at the local scale and it is clear that the 'world-class' city vision is alive in Kochi, not only in the movement towards a Smart City but in the views of local stakeholders. These ideas impact how UMTA has been developed, how it will be implemented and how meaning has been attached to the policy. Ideas that have travelled from international spaces have shaped what UMTA is and how it has been viewed by the people interacting with it. This chapter concludes that international players have heavily shaped policy in Kochi, both in the formation of UMTA

and through creating the evidently embedded idea of a world-class city. Although it is clear that international ideas have shaped UMTA and its ability to resonate, it is also significant to highlight that there are other ways in which ideas travel. The very nature of conducting research in another country contributes to the travelling of ideas, even if there is the acknowledgement that ideas move weakly from local places without facilitating from powerful global actors.

# Chapter 6:

# Instrumentalization of UMTA

## 6.1. Introduction

In the analysis of policy, the discrepancy between rhetoric and practice is a critical area of analysis. The previous two chapters, focused on ideas and genealogy, have told the story of policy ideas and their mobility and the origins and the alliances that have led to this point, being that there is a difference between the rhetoric surrounding UMTA and the way the policy is used by local stakeholders. This chapter aims to illustrate the difference between rhetoric and practice through the narratives of the individuals that see and interact with UMTA at the local scale. There is a fundamental difference between the ideas surrounding UMTA and the reasons the policy resonates for individual local stakeholders. In moving from the idea of policy to its instrumentalization, this chapter will begin with an exploration of UMTA and the meta-narratives that embody it. At the level of rhetoric, UMTA is indisputable in its promises and most interestingly stakeholders agree on its underlying premise. This indisputable idea will be explored through 3 major themes, namely integrated transport, newness and innovation and the promise of relieving urban congestion and creating environmental sustainability. These themes represent what UMTA means as an idea and in general there is much agreement amongst stakeholders. However, on closer inspection, it becomes clear that the stakeholders have very different ideas of how UMTA will actually be used on the ground and each participant had a very different vision for UMTA. This is explored through conceptualizing UMTA as an instrument. The chapter will present the varying ways in which KMRL, the government and the auto union leaders instrumentalize UMTA.

These different visions and biases emphasize the critical nature of the individual and their agency in the development of policy (Hoag & Hull, 2017; Lipsky, 1980). These discrepancies are particularly interesting given that we are not looking at implementation, but rather envisioned implementation because UMTA has not been passed through the assembly (at the time of handing in). In this chapter, UMTA is conceptualized as an instrument and there is an exploration of the various ways that this instrument is used and the tools that are deployed to use it. KMRL uses UMTA to increase its ridership and sanction the next phases of the metro, the state government instrumentalizes UMTA to re-centralize power and subvert local authorities, the local government uses the policy, or rather the premise of the policy to

advocate for the mobility of the urban poor and the auto-rickshaw union leaders use the policy to leverage relationships and secure benefits in order to survive a changing city. Therefore, the individual accounts from participants embody the discrepancies between the rhetoric of UMTA and what UMTA means on the ground.

The surrounding literature is useful in three core ways: the first is in the construction of meta-narratives, all-encompassing grand ideas that exist at the macro-scale and are hence difficult to dispute; second, is the conceptualization of the individual in the policy production space and the fact that people, depending on their ability to network and hence govern, not only have differentiating power but their actions are also guided by biases. Therefore discretion is useful in understanding the role of individuals in policy processes (Hoag & Hull, 2017). The third way the literature is useful is in its ability to clarify the idea of an instrument (Lascoumes and Le Gales, 2007). In the literature an instrument is conceptualized as a social institution, therefore it assists in understanding UMTA as more than a policy document but something that is constructed by society and hence can be constructed differently by different members of a society. A technique is a means to use this instrument, how the instrument is operationalized in a given situation. This operationalization occurs through the use of various tools, in some instances, this micro scale of analysis is beyond the scope of this study.

## 6.2. The Indisputable Idea

The meta-narrative behind UMTA and its promises can be positioned as indisputable and this is how the policy gains strength. The travelling ideas and the story of UMTA come together to form multiple grand ideas that allow a policy to land in a given place. Without indisputable promises, in the sense that they are difficult to argue against or oppose, the policy cannot gain traction and cannot move through the hierarchies of government, either vertically or horizontally. The intertwined theme throughout the unpacking of this indisputable idea is the uncanny agreement between stakeholders that in most other instances would disagree.

### 6.2.1. Integrated Public Transport

Integrated transport promises urban dwellers a public transport system that allows them to travel from their doorstep to their final destination while only using public transport, which at face value is affordable, convenient and good for the environment (MoUD, 2016). UMTA allows “different transport networks to work complementarily to provide smooth and seamless connectivity” (MoUD, 2016: 14). This idea is difficult to argue with, particularly given that there are numerous “aspirational’ cities like

Singapore that are able to achieve this effortless mobility. All interviewed participants were sold on the idea of an integrated public transport system.

> Mr. Anthony noted that "The reasoning of the bill is to streamline the activities related to urban transport. At present around 20 acts are there to control different activities in the city and about 13 agencies are also involved. To streamline these activities, to reduce the repetition and to bridge the gaps, that is the aim of UMTA."

Mr. Anthony's response is significant because it not only speaks to his commitment to the integration of public transport but also to the overriding premise that UMTA will act as an all-encompassing solution to the cities transport and planning challenges. Therefore, although on paper UMTA may have detailed guidelines, as an idea it is a powerful solution to a multiplicity of the city's problems. Other participants go on to make similar generalized statements about UMTA as a problem solver. Even the ever-skeptical media noted, "they are looking to make the city better." (Journalist, 2018) and the experts agreed, "It aims [for] a holistic approach to the city" (Ms. Vijaykumar, 2018).

Therefore the policy becomes more than a 'rule-book', instead it is seen as an approach, and a tool that has the potential to change the face of Kochi well into the future. This perception is not solely held by KMRL, but also Mr. Sohan, an active criticizer of the metro, who stated "as an alternative to the metro, there should be integrated transport…my suggestion was to have the railway line."

Mr. Sohan went on to speak extensively about connecting the railway lines with the water ways in Kochi. This is significant because this diverts from the metro's narrative but still emphasizes the indisputable idea of integrated public transport. What illustrates the idea's indisputability is the fact that even stakeholders that are fundamentally at odds with each other are able to agree on it.

### 6.2.2. Newness and innovation

The second dimension of the indisputable idea that embodies UMTA is that of innovation and the introduction of technology. UMTA is sold as a smart card, as an "app" and the ability to integrate your phone with your mobility. This dimension is of particular importance given that Kochi was voted one of India's 100 Smart Cities. Therefore, in many ways UMTA becomes intertwined with the promise of a modern city, and although an idea heavily critiqued by southern urban scholars, in its connection to colonial urban planning (Datta, 2015), it may be attractive to people living in cities that may find challenging to move around in.

The idea according to Mr. Anthony is for: “The city of Kochi has to change the [transport] ticketing system to a single, common card…cell phone companies have already agreed with access bank to provide a Kochi 1 card for transportation.” The movement to a single ticketing system that will be connected to your cell phone and your bank eliminates long lines and waiting for change on short trips. Furthermore, Mr. Anthony boasted that “800 buses have already been fitted with automatic vehicle tracking devices, GPS. A better plan of the journey route is already in trial. There is an app, the app is called Chello.”

And there is the promise of the installation of a Global Positioning System (GPS) into public transport vehicles, which the Transport Secretary pointed to the value of “GPS [in public transport vehicles] so we can monitor which direction vehicles are going and whether the timing is correct. You will know when your bus is coming.”

Therefore, the introduction of GPS-tracking and smart phone apps embodies a promise of a more efficient and better service for commuters. There is attraction to using new technology and the sense that “If there is no UMTA…then new things cannot happen” (Mr. Anthony, 2018).

The promise of newness and innovation strengthens the ideas and rhetoric surrounding UMTA links into ideas of modernity and the attraction of innovation. The significance of this in Kochi is emphasized by a journalist who repeatedly stated that “Kochi is techno-savvy.” The alignment with the future and forward-thinking enables the policy to gain traction with local stakeholders

### 6.2.3. Congestion and Environmental Sustainability

The third dimension of the grand narrative on which UMTA stands is the promise of saving the environment through decongesting of the city. The environmental dimension of UMTA or more accurately the premise of environmental sustainability is heavily tied to the Kochi Metro. When questioned about the environmental aspects to the future urban transport system in Koch, the Journalist replied: “that is forestation to compensate for the 1500 trees they cut [down] for the metro, 400 for the linement and 1000 for the construction.”

The environmental aspect of the metro is significant because of the fact that UMTA is inextricably linked to the metro. This dimension of the indisputability of policy speaks to how the metro, and UMTA, hopes to gain support from the public hooking onto a number of tropes about environmental sustainability

Mr. Anilkumar (BMS Auto Union Leader, 2018): “[The metro] will introduce electric autos, the electric autos are coming. They will be pollution free.”

Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): “use public transportation as a tool to decongest the cities, we call it decentralized development. In the process another thing happens, people come to the city and earn a lot of money, then go back to their village and spend it there.”

Mr. Anthony (KMRL Consultant, 2018): “[UMTA] addresses the traffic on the roads and reduces the congestion and reduces accidents.”

The promise of reducing pollution as well as decreases road traffic accidents speaks to how the policy is positioned for the public. Civil society would not necessarily know about the intricacies of UMTA and the power dynamics at play but they can relate to promises that affect their lives. In Kochi, as in much of India, the air and noise pollution is something that you are reminded of every time you set outside. As is the same for traffic, people spend hours in traffic on a daily basis and although the public may not care about policy development and implementation, they can align to a cause that affects them personally. However it must be noted that a buy-in to this promise is reflected in the use of the metro and not necessarily an alignment with UMTA.

It is important to further explore these ideas, particularly because their mobility is central to this study. There is clear evidence that these are the components of UMTA that are deployed to allow the policy to gain traction at the local scale.

### 6.2.4. Dismantling the meta-narrative

Although it is clear that the ideas surrounding UMTA are strong ones, understanding individual narratives and individual agency is critical in understanding what UMTA means on the ground (Hoag & Hull, 2017; Lipsky, 1980). Hence we uncover the discrepancies between policy rhetoric and the utilization of policy at the local scale. However, the stakeholders interacting with UMTA do not all have the same power to contribute to or implement the policy. Therefore, understanding the involved stakeholders in the process is fundamental to understanding the different ways in which UMTA is instrumentalized to achieve a certain outcome for certain individuals, agencies and institutions.

## 6.3. Instrumentalization of UMTA

This section of the chapter explores the argument that each stakeholder, or groups of stakeholders see UMTA very differently and in turn use the policy in different ways, through different techniques and

tools (Lascoumes and Le Gales, 2007). Therefore, once we start viewing the policy as an instrument, rather than an idea, the meta-narrative supporting it begins to breakdown. This chapter will discuss how KMRL, the different levels of government and the auto unions use UMTA and will then go on to describe the process of Instrumentalization. Namely the tools and techniques used by each group of stakeholders. In understanding how stakeholders instrumentalize UMTA, there is an emphasis on the actions of individuals and their ability to make decisions using their discretion (Hoag & Hull, 2017).

It must be noted that AFD is not included in the below discussion because they were not interviewed and my understanding of their involvement is constructed through documents and third party accounts. Therefore, although I acknowledge the in-depth influence of AFD on UMTA, I believe that this has been adequately discussed in Chapter 4.

### 6.3.1. KMRL

The role of KMRL in the development of the UMTA draft bill is as the nodal agency. There is no argument that the company is central to this process of policy development. However, it becomes clear from further discussions with participants that the objective of KMRL as UMTA's nodal agency is not only to ensure a sustainable public transport system for the city of Kochi. The ways in which KMRL instrumentalizes UMTA is two-fold. The first is to increase the ridership of the metro and the second is to sanction the next phases of the metro. However, this goal cannot be carried out passively, particularly given the fact that UMTA has not yet been passed in the assembly. Therefore, there are techniques and tools used to instrumentalize UMTA and it is clear that for KMRL the media is central.

In my living in Kochi it became immediately clear that the metro had a low ridership. The beautiful stations, easy access and clean trains clearly were not attracting much of the city's population, this was not surprising given the city's function bus system. The journalist I interviewed claimed that "[the metro] was expected to have 3.3 lakh passengers daily but now they are having 40 000[7]. So hopefully once the full stretch is completed the 40000 should climb to 80000." I spoke to friends about this and they pointed out that the expense of the metro made it a 'special occasion activity' or for wealthier business people travelling from outside the city or higher income earners. Interestingly, not unlike the Gautrain.

This low usership, combined with the responses of many participants points to the fact that KMRL is using UMTA to solve the problems inhibiting its future survival. The Transport secretary stated that "we

[7] In January KMRL reported that 50 000 people use the metro daily

need to integrate other modes into [the metro], we are talking about transit-oriented development, and you are bringing the people to the metro, bringing people from various bus stops towards the metro"

The Transport secretary goes on to say that "they will get more ridership once they are integrated with other modes". This is reaffirmed by Mr. Anilkumar, an auto-rickshaw union leader, "metro is planning to extend to the city buses and water metro, from any destination we can easily reach a metro station that is what they are planning". It is never explicitly stated by KMRL employees that UMTA can be used to increase ridership. They use indisputable ideas such as integration, efficiency and technological advancement to overshadow the reasoning behind KMRL's significant investment in developing UMTA.

The second way in which UMTA is instrumentalized by KMRL is in the sanctioning of the next phases of an already underutilized metro. The metro's second phase is currently under construction and there is a proposal to extend it in another 2 phases. Both Mr. Anthony: "The sanction of this Kochi Metro is with UMTA. UMTA has to be implemented within one year." And the journalist agreed "UMTA is mandatory for getting sanctions for future extensions, until now it was not. As per the 2016 Metro policy, UMTA is a prerequisite for future extensions or new metros".

Mr. Anthony emphasizes that Kochi Metro cannot go ahead without the UMTA, this draws back into the power of the central government in the policy implementation process. Although an important point, it is noted that the construction of the metro begun far before any discussion of UMTA in Kochi.

The media has also been seen to have played a part in the process of understanding how UMTA has been instrumenalized by KMRL.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "The basic requirement to have a high-cost metro is 30 lakhs [population]. That is what the National Transport Policy was saying. Unless [the population] is 30 lakhs a metro is not viable, it is not needed. In spite of that, they used their power at the centre [central government] and used that to have the metro here."
>
> Sarah: "So who was responsible for this decision?"
>
> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "The state government and the media. The media is the first culprit.

This is significant because it emphasizes that KMRL are not a single entity working for their own agenda, there are many other stakeholders that have bought in to the metro project. Mr. Sohan goes on to explain the strength of sensational writing in the media and states that "everybody wants big projects".

The Deccan Chronicle (2019) says "while noting that the first-of-its kind prepaid card was rolled out in Kochi and extended in buses in record time, the chief secretary observed that a host of big projects is planned for the city." The purpose of the article is to sell the idea of an entertainment park in one of the metro stations. This coverage of UMTA and KMRL sells a certain picture to the public, one of grandeur and one of fun. The article's opening line "Want to swing around like Spider-Man or experience zero gravity in a 360-degree environment?" emphasizes that KMRL projects along with UMTA are covered from a very specific angle. Furthermore, the New Indian Express (2018) discusses UMTA and says "once the UMTA act comes into existence, it will be easy to implement the single ticketing system." This is interesting because it implies that the only roadblock in a seamless transport system is UMTA, even though legislation has not inhibited the metro until now.

Highlighting the role of the media in the policy process is important because at this early stage of the policy process, where it has not yet been implemented, the media acts as the only channel of communication between involved stakeholders and the public. It becomes immediately clear that the media outlets hold a biased stance on the metro, which too points to the deeply embedded power dynamics within the society[8]. It is clear that there is a close relationship between the media and KMRL which is evident in the fact that any published articles are positive and they shed the government in a negative light, not KMRL. When speaking to a member of the media, a journalist who almost exclusively reports on the public transport system, it becomes clear that as individuals, the media may not be as pro-KMRL as the newspapers portray. It appears that journalists are assigned to cover particular sectors of the city, the journalist I spoke to said he was assigned to KMRL. One can speculate that there is a collaboration between the publication and KMRL. Alternately, there is an underlying premise that KMRL is a powerful body that should not be publically criticized.

> Sarah: "Do you think [the metro] is a positive idea?"
>
> Journalist (The Hindu, 2018): "Yes, definitely, but whether there were alternatives at a lesser cost, that the transportation experts will have to say."

However, the bottom line is that KMRL has begun the process of instrumentalizing UMTA without the draft bill needing to be passed in the assembly. The promise of seamlessly integrated transport has been sufficient in the sanctioning of the second phase of the metro which is already under construction. Furthermore, and most significantly, the stronghold on the media enables KMRL to maintain public buy-

[8] These power dynamics which seem divert from the previously described 'Kerala Model' is important

in for the metro. This is particularly significant given the high proportion of news outlets and newspaper readers in Kerala. Therefore, KMRL as an entity, as well as the individuals working on UMTA, have instrumentalized the policy to increase ridership and sanction further construction and the techniques used are a stronghold on the media. The ways in which KMRL instrumentalizes UMTA illustrates how KMRL is able to govern the city without permission from the government.

### 6.3.2. The state: Subversions of Power

What has become clear in the previous two chapters is the centrality of the government and the different levels of government in understanding the development and manifestation of policy. This section will focus on the constructions of power, social justice, personal relationships and the notion of connectivity. It is important to distinguish between the central, state and local government. Although the central government was not part of the interview process, this is where UMTA is primarily conceived and developed as a physical document. The discussion surrounding the state will be divided into two sections: The state government and the local government. The idea of power and knowledge is critical in the understanding of the dynamics at play in the instrumentalization of policy within government.

**The State Government**

In order to understand how UMTA is instrumentalized at the level of state government, there must be a broader understanding of the significance of this level of government as a site of power and of UMTA as a site of power. The data reveals two critical findings, the first is that the state government stands to gain power from the implementation of this draft bill, even though the ultimate objective is perceived to be decentralization. The second is related to the technique of Instrumentalization is the reliance on the policy as a document, rather than the discourses that surround it.  In understanding processes of power in this context, it must also be acknowledged that the entire state government of Kerala is being represented by one man, the Transport Secretary. Therefore, the findings must be attached to an individual that forms part of a larger group. The Transport Secretary acknowledged that when the Bill is passed “I may be the chairman of the committee” and that future changes and promotion may accrue: “the motor vehicle department as of now. RTA is responsible for timetable concessions and route rationalizations in the city, the RTA is chaired by the district collector. This power will go to UMTA but the collector is still a member…Instead of doing it at a district collector level, at a lower level, this is taken higher.”

The emphasis from the transport secretary that he may be the chairman of the UMTA committee is important because UMTA as an entity will have significant power. Furthermore, an interesting finding is the subordination of the district collector. This is an extremely prestigious position within local government and takes many qualifications to even be considered for the position[9]. The idea that there is power attached to UMTA is further echoed by other participants, however what remains central is that the Transport Secretary equates this to his own power or to that of his government.

Ms. Vijaykumar and others agreed with what may happen "This Metropolitan Transport Authority is quite a political decision…the MTA bill looks at the handling of funds and there is a lot of power in the Authority which transcends a lot of institutions in the city"

> Journalist (The Hindu, 2018): Once UMTA comes, the body of authority will get a lot of power.
>
> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "When I started disagreeing there wasn't allowed discussion on this. I said no this is not the right thing, and [the state government] said that my voice would be heard. But in spite of that it was not"

It must be noted that when conducting the interview with the transport secretary, the conversation remained almost entirely connected and underpinned to the actual draft bill document. He had the most recent draft bill in front of him and used it to directly answer my questions, even when I was looking for more personal answers. Therefore, the findings reveal that individuals in the state government see UMTA as an instrument to re-centralize governmental power and that this is achieved through the technique of legislation. The tool used in this process of Instrumentalization is the policy document itself.

**Local Government**

At the level of local government, something different is happening, UMTA is instrumentalized for the greater good. However, before exploring this instrumentalization further, it must be reiterated that for the most part the local government has been removed from the policy development process. As discussed earlier, Mr. Sohan is central in understanding UMTA at the local scale. What becomes more interesting is how UMTA is instrumentalized by Mr. Sohan (although, because of the forces of power at

[9] Through informal conversations with colleagues I was better able to understand the role of the district collector in the city. There are two local leaders in the city who are the mayor and the district collector. The mayor is elected into the position and therefore has public support. However the district collector has to pass various exams and have particular qualifications to get this job. The current district collector of Ernakulum is K Mohammed Y Safirulla

play, his Instrumentalization is not yet recognized).[10] However, it reveals the significance of personal relations of those in power closer to the ground and changing forms of governance. The key finding is that Mr. Sohan instrumentalizes UMTA, or integrated transport, to address the mobility of the poor. The technique he uses to achieve this goal is challenging wider policy conversations. The tool used is the publishing of a counter-document. The focus on social justice and the mobility of the urban poor was very rarely discussed with other stakeholders. Mr. Sohan highlights the fact that the urban poor are removed from a public transport system that is centred on an expensive metro service.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "they don't realize the harm they are doing to the people, especially the poorer people, it is them who need public transport, for their livelihood, for their education…for old people to see their relatives"

Mr. Sohan's focus on the mobility of the urban poor points to the significance of local level input in the policy development process and the validity of processes of decentralization. Therefore, at the local scale, it is clear that the perceived purpose of UMTA is to integrate the public transport system and to address the affordability of public transport and the mobility of the poor. Mr. Sohan challenges the sentiments of KMRL and their influence on UMTA. He argues that: "as an alternative to the metro, there should be integrated public transport" and doubts the necessity of the system at all, noting that: "The metro comes [on the same route] as the railway line…There is a double track railway line, two national motor ways…all these railways, water ways [that already exist] and these can be very useful for the public transport system"

Mr. Sohan speaks about existing transport infrastructure as the viable pathway for integrated public transport in the city. The tool Mr. Sohan uses in the Instrumentalization of UMTA is the publishing of a counter-document. The document is published with the assistance of a director of RITES, which is a Government of India enterprise, therefore, he is able to publish through stakeholders existing within the state.

> Mr. Sohan (ex-mayor, 2018): "I said I will write it in black and white and then publish it. In this document, I gave an alternative. It was titled Affordable and Viable Transportation for the people of Kochi. So luckily I could get it edited by a person called C. Raju who was a director of

[10] It cannot be emphasized enough that the way in which Mr. Sohan uses, or better wants to use UMTA, cannot be seen to reflect on the entirety of local government.

> RITES[11]. He was also the chief leader of corporate railway, which is the biggest railway project that independent India has taken up."

The ability for local government actors to form connections both with people on the ground and with powerful clientele, enables these actors to function as activists within the state. The term activist is used because Mr. Sohan is attempting to change the way the city operates to better assist the poor, even though his opinions regarding UMTA were initially disregarded. Although the policy production process is complicated, the divergence in sentiments of central, state and local government is evident.

### 6.3.3. Auto-rickshaw unions

Although auto-rickshaw unions are not central to the policy production or policy implementation process, this does not mean that leaders have not been able to instrumentalize dimensions of UMTA to achieve their vision for the city and for the future of the auto-rickshaw industry. The auto-rickshaws in Kochi are in themselves interesting, however the scope of this study only allows for a brief background. There are 4 auto-rickshaw unions in the city, each of which is aligned with a political party. Each union has set auto-rickshaw stands where only specific drivers may wait (Anilkumar, 2018). Currently the auto-rickshaw industry in Kochi is undergoing major changes in its structure. All Auto-rickshaw unions will join to become one society called the auto-rickshaw co-ordination committee and there is a direct connection between UMTA and the newly created society because this society will be managed by the MD of KMRL and the autos are required to confirm with the integration of public transport. Autos will be based at metro stations and will all be loaded on to the same app as the rest of the transport. The union leaders do not instrumentalize UMTA as a policy but instead instrumentalize this 'society'.

> Mr. Anilkumar (BMS Auto Union Leader, 2018): "the co-ordination committee consists of all trade unions, under the metro management, Mr. Hanish, ex-collector and now he is the MD of Kochi metro."

> Journalist (The Hindu, 2018): "the society is one of the components of the UMTA, they formed the society so they can deal with just a few trade union leaders"

Initially, it was not clear why the deeply politicized auto-rickshaw union leaders would be interested in forming a society and potentially losing their respective power. However, the reasoning behind this unfolded during the data collection process. There are various benefits in the formation of an auto-

[11] RITES: Rail India Technical and Economic Services

rickshaw society and it is clear that the society (as an extension of UMTA) is instrumentalized to benefit auto drivers and to enable the industry to compete with e-haling services like Uber and Ola.

> Mr. Anilkumar (BMS Auto Union Leader, 2018): “if the driver is a member, he will get a petrol card that will help him to reduce the price of [operating]…we are trying to get insurance benefits”
>
> Journalist (The Hindu, 2018): “a common purpose”

The union leaders are concerned with the people they represent and a society better positions them to provide benefits and in turn secure their power. Although the auto-rickshaw society was initially perceived as a subversion of the power of the auto-rickshaw union leaders, on closer inspection it is clear that this is not the case.

> Transport Secretary (2018): “Kerala Model of Uber. Same IT platform for auto-rickshaws. So we provide the platform and they can compete with Uber. We are building the capacity so they can compete with the biggest multinational companies”

Competing with Uber and strengthening the auto-rickshaw industry is central to the vision portrayed by the auto-rickshaw union leaders. The vision for UMTA by the auto-rickshaw union leaders is to strengthen the industry by providing drivers with better benefits and enable them to compete with multinational companies such as Uber and Ola. Interestingly, the tool deployed in achieving the objective of integrated transport is by forging a strong relationship with KMRL. There is a lot of buy-in for the metro from the auto-rickshaw leaders.

> Sarah: “What is your relationship with Kochi Metro Rail?”
>
> Mr. Anilkumar (BMS Auto Union Leader, 2018): “it is a good relationship”
>
> Sarah: “What is your opinion of the metro?”
>
> Mr. Anilkumar (BMS Auto Union Leader, 2018): “presently it is running at a loss but in the future it will improve…there is a lot of traffic in Kochi, there are many congested areas and vehicles are heavy. To get from one destination to another, it will take [hours], but using the metro, it will only take 20 – 25 minutes.”

> Mr. Anilkumar (BMS Auto Union Leader, 2018): “The metro will provide [electric autos] free of cost and there will be charging points at the [stations]…In 5 years these autos will be an asset to the society.”

Therefore, it is clear that the tool/technique deployed in achieving the auto-rickshaw leader’s vision for an integrated transport system is through using KMRL and constructing a good relationship with them, even though at first glance it may seem that the metro may pose a threat to the auto-rickshaw industry.

## 6.4. Conclusions

The previous two chapters have discussed the genealogy of UMTA and how travelling ideas have landed in Kochi from international spaces to construct the ways in which local actors attach meaning to the policy. This chapter explores the intertwined meta-narratives that allow UMTA to land and resonate in Kochi. The grand narratives of integrated transport, innovation and sustainable mobility solutions are able to have traction with all local stakeholders but on further inspection it is clear that local stakeholders use the policy for their own needs. Individual biases and the fact that local stakeholders deploy discretion leads to very different lenses through which UMTA is viewed and hence used in the city. KMRL seeks to use UMTA to increase ridership and sanction the next two phases of the metro, this evidence breaks down the grand idea that UMTA is solely for the improvement of the city. The state government uses UMTA to re-centralize power, significant given that the policy is sold as an instrument to decentralize decision-making and planning in Kochi. The local government uses UMTA as a tool to advocate for the mobility of the urban poor, something that was not discussed by any of the other stakeholders. The auto-rickshaw union leaders use UMTA to survive a changing city and compete with multinational corporations such as Uber. What is significant in this analysis is that power is central in this discussion, stakeholders with less power are less likely to see the consequences of their instrumentalization. KMRL has more power than the local government and in this particular setting appears to have more power than even the state government, evident in the continued construction of the metro regardless of the legislation of UMTA. There is a shift in forms of governance in Kochi, this shift comes from tensions between powerful groups and ultimately from UMTA itself.

# Chapter 7: Conclusions

The final chapter of this study will begin with a summary of the story that this study has sought to tell. The story of UMTA is fluid and complex but in attempting to tell it, the findings are able to resonate to a greater degree. With the story as a point of departure, the chapter will go on to draw out key conclusions from each of the thematic findings and will in turn link these conclusions to a higher level analysis. This acts as an exploration of the significance of this study not only in the context of policy analysis, but in the ways in which cities of the South develop in the future.

## 7.1. The story

The central research question addressed in this study is: What have been the interpretations and modes of implementation of UMTA by local urban actors in Kochi? This question addresses an end goal, what happens at the end of the policy production process? In addressing this question, the summarized story of UMTA must be told.

The effectiveness of a narrative has been discussed at length in this study, both in the findings section and in the methodology, and therefore it is fitting that at the end I am able to tell a story. UMTA is born in India in 2006 through the publication of the National Urban Transport Policy by the central government. The policy does not initially land at the local scale and the central government hopes the promise of funding, through the JnNurm, will create more buy-in of the policy and the idea of integrated transport in Indian cities. However, there remains limited buy-in at the local scale with only 15 regions establishing UMTA's. International players become more influential in policy mobility process and the World Bank initiates a movement towards a sustainable transport system at the national level. These interactions at the national government level lay the foundation for an integrated transport discussion in Kochi. This set the scene for what was to happen in Kochi. In 2013, KMRL formally recommends an UMTA for Kochi and begins to work closely with international development banks to shape both the policy and their own metro project. Therefore, in Kochi, the metro and UMTA remain inextricably linked. With KMRL as the nodal agency and the power of the Kerala State government, a Kochi-specific UMTA is realized in the city. On the 1st if January 2018, all the networks, relationships and alliances become

material as the draft bill is passed by the general assembly and is awaiting legislation from the Kerala State Government.

## 7.2. Thematic conclusions and higher-level analysis

The research process and analysis has revealed three sets of conclusions which can in turn be indicators for larger phenomenon in the study of cities and governance in the Global South.

### 7.2.1. Genealogy: Alliances

Using genealogy as a methodology (Gale, 2001) seeks to answer the question regarding the impact of local actors in the production of UMTA in Kochi. The genealogy chapter aims to unpack the story of UMTA which is summarized above but it also seeks to investigate how the genealogy of UMTA is formulated separately from the policy's timeline and critical dates. The chapter unpacks the alliances that form and reform between involved stakeholders. In drawing a conclusion from the chapter, there are two core alliances that are shaping the genealogy of UMTA, the alliance between KMRL and state government which is centered on a mutual benefit, the state government requires the expertise and knowledge of KMRL and the KMRL needs the state government to legislate and implement the policy. The alliance between KMRL and the local government is significant because it revolves around subversions of power. In conclusion, local actors contribute to the continual development of UMTA through the forming and reforming of alliances and the creation of policy networks. These alliances and policy networks form around perceptions of power which heavily influences the way in which the city is governed (Henry, 2011).

At a higher level of analysis the theme addressed under genealogy opens up a discussion about how policy evolves and how different factors have different effects on how the policy begins to look. These results point to the fact that policy production at the local scale is more powerful than when policy is developed by national governments and then transferred through governmental hierarchies to the local scale. People shape policy, and more specifically the way in which people interact with each other shapes policy. Policy is built on the ability for networks and connections to be formed around particularly ideologies or a similarity in interests. These networks are also formed around the perception of power and how power can be enacted in cities. Two fundamental conclusions can be drawn under this thematic discussion, the first is that the analysis of policy should focus on the local scale and all its complexities rather than compartmentalizing the phases of policy into dualisms such as policy production vs. policy implementation. This study illustrates that's these dualisms do not exist in analyzing a policy that exists in a grey area, it is continuously shaped by the people interacting with it

but has not yet been legislated and therefore implementation remains speculation. Instead policy is produced or developed in the ways it evolves, in the actors that interact with it and in how it is perceived to be implemented. The second conclusion is that human interactions and policy networks are critical in the ability of a policy to land amongst local stakeholders. UMTA remained a superficial measure in all other Indian cities and something different happened in Kochi, this uniqueness can be attributed to the unique dynamics of and relationships between local stakeholders.

### 7.2.2: The way ideas travel

The genealogy chapter leads to the theme of travelling ideas. Travelling ideas embodies the process of ideas or knowledge circulating around the globe in different ways, at different speeds and to different locations (Healey, 2013; Tait & Jenson, 2007). The alliances between actors allow the policy to become material, but we now need to account for how perceptions of the policy are formed. In concluding, it is clear that two core ideas have travelled to Kochi to inform the production and interpretation of UMTA. The first is that international experts know more or have more capacity than local actors to construct and enact policy. This idea travels actively through capital flows, international aid as well as through human actors such as foreign consultants. The belief that the knowledge of international actors is superior has been embedded in the consciousness of local stakeholders.

The second idea that guides the understanding of local actors is that western cities act as a template for how Kochi should work and should look. I have referred to this as world-class city-ness. This conclusion is drawn from how local actors conceptualize and understand city-ness by using a model that is only enacted in a small group of western cities (Robinson, 2002). In conclusion, hegemonic idea flows allow particular urban ideas to travel in particular directions and it is clear that ideas move with the most strength from the Global North to the Global South, in this case from France to Kochi. Although, as argued by Southern Urbanists, we should use different conceptualizations for cities (Robinson, 2002; Simone, 2005), these debates have not landed in Kochi. Local stakeholders are guided by a vision of a modernized world city and therefore, these ideas inherently affect how local stakeholders understand and ultimately use UMTA.

The theme travelling ideas becomes all the more significant if these conclusions are applied to the development of urban spaces in the Global South in general. Although there is more and more literature produced from southern urbanists about how we plan for the future of these cities, these debates remain largely in academia. Knowledge has only selectively circulated to the local level. Ideas travel in various ways, in various forms from the Global North to the Global South and the knowledge that lands

is deeply embedded in western ideology. This conclusion is significant because if local actors are guided by western ideology and have a specific vision for the city is inherently in agreement with global interventions it means that platforms for negotiations and contestation in the policy arena is reduced. The local actors that are able to shape cities according to their own context, are still heavily influenced by international spaces.

### 7.2.3: Instrumentalization and the Individual

The first two chapters lead to the important story told in the instrumentalization chapter. UMTA is instrumentalized by different stakeholders in vastly different ways even though all local stakeholders agree on the central premise of UMTA: integrated public transport, newness and innovation and environmental sustainability. This chapter explores the discrepancy between the grand ideas UMTA stands on and how the policy is actually instrumentalized by local stakeholders. In summary, KMRL instrumentalizes UMTA to increase the ridership of the metro and to sanction the next phases of construction. The state government instrumentalizes UMTA to re-centralize its own power through utilizing the power that UMTA comes with. The local government, although removed from the development of UMTA, instrumentalizes the premise of UMTA (integrated transport), for the mobility of the urban poor. I think it is worth re-emphasizing that the only stakeholder concerned with the urban poor is the most removed from the policy development process. Finally, the auto-rickshaw union leaders use the auto-rickshaw 'society' to band together in order to have access to certain insurance benefits. The leaders also use UMTA to compete with e-haling services such as Uber and therefore it can be concluded that the union leaders use UMTA to survive a continuously changing city-scape. Therefore, the policy is instrumentalized in vastly different ways which can be attributed to individual biases and the ability of local stakeholders to use their discretion in making decisions. This is important because it highlights the complexities of implementing a policy that means vastly different things to the people responsible for its implementation.

Understanding the instrumentalization of policy is important because it allows for the understanding of humanness in the policy process. Human beings have their own biases, their own discretion that allows us to make decisions. These biases are formed by a multitude of external and internal factors and they influence what policy means beyond documents, prescriptions and guidelines. The promises made by policy are built on meta-narratives and indisputable ideas, but in understanding the long-term effects of policy, we must look at how local actors perceive the purpose of the policy. Local government wants to use policy for social development and to address the mobility of the urban poor, but if governments fail

to decentralize (Sivaramakrishnan, 2011), local individuals that wish to use policy to aid the functioning of the city for the people living in it will never be adequately acknowledged. This discussion comes full circle to address the consequences of a tension between what the city means for the people living in it and the fact that cities are shaped by governments, institutions and international ideas.

Uncovering discrepancies between rhetoric and practice is important to the policy production process because although rhetoric is what enables a policy to gain traction, what happens in practice is what shapes the city into the future.

## 7.3. Closing comments

In pulling all these conclusions together, the genealogy of UMTA is constructed both on fluid alliances between local stakeholders and the ideas that have travelled to allow these stakeholders to understand the policy in certain ways. In turn these constructed perceptions are responsible for how UMTA is instrumentalized in the city. This research explores a different approach to analyzing policy that centres the local scale, and more specifically centres individuals as humans rather than as symbols of the institutions they work for.

The way in which policy is understood and instrumentalized at the local scale is important in a federal government system, because ultimately policy must be legislated by the central and state government, which has not yet been done for UMTA. However, the fact that policies can be instrumentalized without legislation shapes the functioning of urban spaces and how they are governed. In the policy development process, local government systems are critical, but it remains clear that decentralization processes, although written into the constitution, are not fully implemented. The local government, and the local bureaucracy do not have power in shaping policy or legislating it, but these bodies continue to govern urban spaces through their interpretations and perceptions of policy. Therefore, local processes remain critical in understanding the genealogy of policy, the landing of ideas and how these ideas shape how policy is used.

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Appendix [redacted]

**SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING**
**HUMAN RESERCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

**CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE**
**PROTOCOL NUMBER:** SOAP058/07/2018

| | |
|---|---|
| **PROJECT TITLE:** | Local responses to the proposed Unified Metropolitan Transport Authority in Kochi, India: subversion, adaptation and street-level bureaucrats |
| **INVESTIGATOR/S:** | Sarah Elizabeth Reeves (Student No: 1907025) |
| **SCHOOL:** | Architecture and Planning |
| **DEGREE PROGRAMME:** | Masters of Urban Studies (MUS) |
| **DATE CONSIDERED:** | 12 February 2019 |
| **EXPIRY DATE:** | 12 February 2020 |
| **DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE:** | Approved |

**CHAIRPERSON**
(Professor Daniel Irurah)

**DATE:** 14-02-2019

cc: Supervisor/s: Margot Rubin

**DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATORS**

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to endure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure to be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

**Signature** **Date**

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