

**RELEVANCE OF ADULT EDUCATION ENLIGHTENMENT CAMPAIGN IN ROAD SAFETY
AMONG INTERSTATE COMMERCIAL MINI-BUS DRIVERS IN NIGERIA**

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Abstract

Road Traffic Accident (RTA) is a worldwide problem which has recorded with millions of injuries and death Morbidity. Death from RTA in African continent is on the increase with overwhelming economic and social consequences. In Nigeria, for instance, 3 billion naira is lost to RTA every year. Besides, 13% of the country's Gross National Product (GNP) is spent on this problem. This loss undoubtedly is a causal factor for the socio-economic underdevelopment of the country. Nonetheless, people affected by RTA suffer neglect. The causes of (RTA) in Nigeria are multi-factorial, including driver-related factors These factors that have to do with drivers put in about 57% of RTA, hence the focus of the paper. They relate to drivers and other road users the factors include over-speeding, drunken driving, distraction, driver's fatigue and disobeying traffic rules. Previous studies have focused more on publicity campaign for causes, consequences and avoidance with little emphasis on road safety education that are grounded on the principle of behavioral change. This paper therefore examines the relevance of Adult Education Enlightenment campaign in road safety education, in reducing risky driving behavior among interstate minibus drivers in Nigeria. It is recommended that the intervention could be used to improve risky driving behavior among inter minibus drivers in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Adult education, Alcohol ,Road traffic accident, Over-speeding, Under development*

Introduction

Transport is essential to the daily living of man all over the world. Without transport, exchange of commodities, people and ideas cannot take place and economies cannot grow (National Bureau of Statistics NBC, 2012). Nonetheless, the existence of an effective modern transport system can open many doors and bring about development. Undoubtedly, the benefits of motorisation come with a price which is characterised by extremely high and rapidly rising traffic accidents that have taken a wider dimension, most especially in developing countries like Nigeria. Road traffic accident (RTA) is a worldwide problem which has recorded millions of injuries and deaths. The World Health Organisation (WHO, 2013) stated that injuries from road traffic will by 2025 have become the third foremost cause of disability and the fifth foremost cause of death by 2030. The causes of road accidents in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa are multi-factorial, including driver-related issues, roadway and vehicle. The blend of the three factors can also cause road accidents. Driver-related issues contribute to about 57 per cent of RTAs and 93 per cent either alone or in combination with other factors (Murray & Lopez, 2009). The driver-related factors in RTAs are all the issues that relate to drivers and the road users. These may

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also include the behaviour of the driver, such as driving when distracted by self-induced conditions like taking drugs and or alcohol, speeding, getting oneself distracted with the use of cell phone, communicating with passengers, listening to loud music, fatigue and disobeying traffic rules.

Driving under the influence of alcohol is a major cause of road accidents. According to UNICEF (2001), records drunken driving accounts for the death of 480,000 deaths and injury to 20 million persons yearly (Adebayo, 2012). In most developing countries, almost 20% of fatally injured drivers have high concentration of alcohol in their blood after testing. On the contrary, studies in developing countries like Nigeria shown that between 33% and 69% of seriously injured drivers and between 8% and 29% of non-serious injured drivers had consumed alcohol before their accident (Global Road Safety Partnership, 2007). In Nigeria, drunken driving is common among commercial drivers (Ibrahim, 2012). Drinking of Alcohol, sometimes soak with cannabis reduces concentration level when driving (Harrison & Fillmore, 2011). However, the use of both substances alcohol and cannabis are more severe (Hartman & Huestis,2013).

Recently, distraction during driving has come to be identified as another factor that contributes to RTA. To Elander and French (2011), distracted driving has to do with paying reduce or no attention to activities that are critical for safe driving. This broadly implies that the driver fails to allocate sufficient attention to the driving task in comparison with tasks that compete for attention. Commercial vehicle driver distractions can include physical distraction like eaten, making an attempt to pay C.D or radio, drinking manipulating dashboard controls. Auditory factors have to do with listening to music or cognitive activities have to do with talking to passengers. The potential for a particular form of distraction to increase accident risk depends on a number of factors, including reduce of driving competence posed a distracted behaviour, the frequency with which the distraction occurs, and duration of the distracted behaviour (Agwu. 2010).

Driver fatigue is another form of driving distraction behaviour and often common among commercial vehicle drivers who have to travel a long distance. Most faulty decisions that result in RTA are attributable to ignorance on traffic regulations and procedures. Studies (Shinar et al., 2001) on Nigerian commercial vehicle drivers" behaviour at traffic signals and pedestrian crossing indicated that the drivers tend to be less discipline than in any other countries. Adebayo et al., (2011) also attest to the fact that that many (commercial vehicle) drivers display irrational behaviour while driving. However, some factors have been identified to influence safety driving behaviour, particularly, among inter-state commercial minibus drivers. The most prominent factors are drivers psychological characteristics such as knowledge and attitude.

More specifically, the commercial driver's decision of violating the regulation comes from his knowledge and attitude towards the rules and acceptance of the rules. Driver's knowledge and behaviour are influenced by a variety of factors, including experience and educational attainment.

Educational attainment is an important factor influencing safety driving behaviour. Studies such as Dobson et al., (2009) and Shinar et al., (2001) have differently investigated and concluded that education plays a significant role in driving, especially in relation to speed limit. Dobson et al., (2009), in particular, observes that men and women with adult education enlightenment programmes were more careful than others.

In Nigeria, poor knowledge and attitude towards safety driving behaviour are the major contributing factors for many crashes particularly among commercial minibus drivers (Asenime et al., 2005). Following these observations. Several researchers in the country have suggested adult education enlightenment programme crusade for road safety (Johnson & Adebayo, 2011). Generally, some states have created awareness through adult education enlightenment programme by organizing special programmes to improve the skills and knowledge of the commercial mini bus drivers.

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Multimedia-based road safety education (MBRSE) is more active strategy that could be applied to assist such drivers. In this study, MBRSE consists of several materials such as video slides, films shows, documentary, posters, handbills and general discussions (lectures) on road traffic rules and regulations, dangerous driving, over speeding, light traffic signs, non-use of seat belt, use of cell phone while driving, drunken driving, route violation, driving under unusual or emergency situation and handling emergency situations. Multimedia-based safety education is not expected to solve RTAs among commercial minibus drivers but form a component of health promotion framework for preventing injuries and could be used at the interpersonal level. Therefore, this study intends to discuss from Nigerian perspective, economy and social burden of road transport accidents, drivers risky driving behaviour and road traffic accidents, traffic accident prevention strategies and empirical studies on road safety education and safety behaviour.

Drivers' risky driving behaviour and road traffic accidents

Alcohol consumption before or during driving is one of the foremost causes of RTAs. Incidentally, RTAs caused by alcohol consumption between 2010 and 2020 increased from 38% to 60% (National Highway Traffic Administration, 2021). Other risky behaviour which has long been known to cause accidents while driving include eating, chatting with passengers, and so forth. There are other contexts in which distractions happen: for instance, a phone conversation while driving, or other occasions where sudden and unexpected situations which require highly focused attention appears (like a situation where an object suddenly drops on the road). Drivers often fail to notice such rare events; in situation where they notice, time might be insufficient for them to react. Most defective decisions that end in motor vehicle crashes are attributable to ignorance of traffic regulations and procedures. All ill-informed road users portend a crash waiting to happen, often with fatal consequences (Gbadamosi, 2004). Existing studies such as Dixey (2005) and Gbadamosi (2004) on the behaviour of road users at traffic signals and pedestrian crossings have shown that the users in developing countries seemed not to be as disciplined as road users in developed countries. The studies revealed that drivers in the developing countries hardly stop for pedestrians at uncontrolled pedestrian crossing; and they rarely use such crossing compared to. Drivers in developed countries. Gbadamosi (2004) indicated relatively high proportion of drivers in developing countries, crossing continuous "no over-taking" lines and not stopping at stop symbols even when traffic were near. However, the connection between the discrepancies in behaviour and RTAs has not been determined. The effect suggests that road safety actions such as road signs and markings which is not self-imposing may be much less effective unless they are integrated with advertising, enforcement campaigns and training programmes (Gbadamosi, 2004).

The role of alcohol to an increased danger of RTAs has been well recognized for many years. For instance, Gantz and Henkle (2002) observed that studies and epidemiological surveys, carried out in developed countries have discovered that the presence of blood alcohol concentration (BAC) in drivers has increased the hazard of their involvement in RTAs. However, the negative impact of drunk driving to blackouts, euphoria, poor co-ordination, balance impairment, poor judgement, impaired memory and slow reaction among commercial drivers was summarized by Osita (2010) as the causes of RTAs.

In accordance with the Road Safety Act (2007), the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) embarked on "Don't Drink and drive" campaign in an effort to build-up towards ensuring a zero tolerance level in road safety across the country, especially during "ember" months. The operation is carried out to ascertain strict compliance with road traffic rules and regulations among the road users in the country. More importantly, this adult education enlightenment programme takes place in major motor parks across the country. "Don't drink and drive" campaign is an advocacy programme in collaboration with the Guinness Nigeria Plc and the Nigeria Breweries Plc. The

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primary aim of adult education enlightenment campaign is to dissuade drivers from driving and drinking so as to reduce the incidence of alcohol-induced road accidents in urban cities in Nigeria.

Traffic Incident Prevention Strategies

In recent times, the FRSC personnel deliver lectures on various road safety tips. Specifically, the FRSC officials, in line with FRSC Act (2007), carry out advocacy at motor parks to discourage over speeding and overloading. The adult education enlightenment programme in conjunction with the public information department of the FRSC in collaboration with the leaders and selected members of the Nigeria Union of Road Workers to finalize arrangement for talks and demonstration on the impact of overloading. The talk is preceded with showing of road safety films that highlights the danger inherent in over speeding to the participants. Road safety posters were distributed to drivers, cyclist and other road users. This effort at the motor park is followed by the placement of advertorials on the pages of newspapers on the need to desist from any form of overloading and the danger inherent in it. However, fines are imposed on errant drivers and other road users who violate the stipulated number of passengers they are expected to carry at a time. However, overloading of vehicles by commercial drivers is a major source of RTAs in the southwestern Nigeria (FRSC, 2009).

Rain affects not only the roads but vehicle and vision. Driving at night time, driving, under the reflection of the sun, driving in the smoke requires extra concentration, discipline, care and consideration (Elliot, 2009). Realizing the adverse effects of weather on RTAs, the FRSC carries out discussions on systems the commercial drivers can successfully use to drive vehicles during special weather. Talk and demonstration were given on the weakness of driving at night, in the rain, murky weather, and so forth. During motor park rallies, commercial drivers were drilled on how to drive safely and defensively before they embark on a trip.

Some of the safety tips to adhere to while driving in the rain include but not limited to turning on the headlights to improve vision, maintaining a good gap between you and the vehicle in front, reducing speed hereby sighting the brake lights of vehicles ahead. The Adult Education Enlightenment Programme, Commercial drivers were encouraged to avoid driving at night, check the threading of their tyres as properly maintained tyres provide the necessary grip needed on the wet roads, replace old and brittle wiper blades and pull off the road when other vehicles cannot be seen at a safe distance, especially when there is a thunder-storm, heavy rainfall or foggy weather. However, the aspect of the FRSC public enlightenment programme centres on condition of the light, highway condition, a vehicle's condition and weather condition. Ibrahim (2012) presented that this aspect of the campaign or talks on the subject emphasizes on never to claim the right of way because it may claim lives. The lecture series on this subject is rounded off with film shows and drama sketches on various subjects taught during the lecture series. Quinby and Maycook (2006) maintained that one of the factors to RTAs in developing countries like Nigeria is lack of defensive driving techniques.

Aside from the FRSC education on how drivers should carry out a daily vehicle checks such as checking of water, oil, battery, fan belt, tyres, wipers, horn, light, brake inspection are very important (Agwu, 2010). Commercial drivers are also taught how to extinguish different types of fires oxygen, heat and fuel form the fire triangle. The demonstration shows the required fire extinguisher for different types of fire. Class A fire has do with freely burning materials like textile, paper and wood. To quench this class of fire, water in the form of spray or jet is required. Class B types of fire has do with flammable substances like petrol, paint and grease. To quench this class of fire requires the use of liquid foam extinguisher carbon-dioxide, dry-chemical powder (DCP), or dry sand is good. Class C types of fire involves liquefied petroleum like propane, butane etc. they are quenched with DPC and carbon dioxide fire extinguisher. Class D types of fire involving zinc, metals, magnesium, require DCP

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fire extinguishers. Dry powder and liquid gas are the two types of fire extinguishers. The prescribed units and sizes are as follows:

Approved Fire Extinguisher for Vehicles

Vehicles	Unit Required (Unit)	Size (kg)
Articulated	2	9
Lorries	2	6
Luxury buses	2	6
Medium buses	1	2
Light goods van	1	1
Taxis	1	1
Cars	1	1

Source: FRSC Archives, 2011

Adult Education Enlightenment Campaign and FRSC activities at the motor park also cover commercial drivers' enlightenment on the importance of the use of good tyres, the use of valid tyres, and dislike of used or expired tyres, how to decode the four digits on the tyre and the capacity in terms of weight and air. The first two digits refer to the month, while the last two digits means the year of production. On different occasions at the motor parks, the FRSC facilitators educate commercial drivers on the need to prepare for unforeseen circumstances. Overall, the public enlightenment programmes with the support of commercial drivers and other users are to reduce crashes by thirty percent and fatality by twenty percent in the urban cities in the southwestern part (Agwu, 2010), the Adult Education enlightenment programme on good safety measure is one of the strategies to achieve action on road safety. He presented that using and perfecting this strategy of advocacy without enforcement would help change the bad behaviour of commercial drivers and other road users, as it has been identified as the main source of RTA in the country.

Empirical studies on Road safety education through Adult Education Enlightenment Programme and Safety Behaviour

More specifically, there are previous studies which confirm that road safety education enhance safety behaviour of drivers. Elliott and Armitage (2009) tested drivers' behaviour by selecting randomly three hundred participants to examine their effectiveness with speed limits. Other related studies in this regard include Elliot et al., (2003), However, Elliot et al., (2003) discovered that theory of planned behaviour variables accounted for 32% of the unique variance in drivers' speeding attitude, measured 3 months later, and that intention and perceived behaviour control were each significant independent predictors.

Extant studies have also considered relationships between attitudes, crash involvement, and rule violations during driving, which differs according to the diverse ways in which attitude is qualified. Such studies include Macmillian (2009) who examined competitive and aggressive driver attitudes, and discovers that males, in general had appreciably higher convictions for road offences and higher numbers of road accidents. Likewise, Adebayo and Johnson (2011), examined attitudes towards high and low-risk violations and discovered that those drivers who regularly commit traffic offences have a positive attitude towards committing these offences.

Other studies related to attitude and risky driving behaviour include, Elander et al., (2011), Quimby and Watts (2006), Hakkanen and Sunmola (2000), Verwey and Zaidal (2000). Dixey (1999) and Okafor et al., (2014) described highway safety education as the consciously training all road users in appropriate and lawful behaviour on public roads and highways. The basis of road safety education involves improving the awareness of road traffic

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lands and highway code, road signs comprehension and signals of traffic. Other cardinal principles centres on awareness of one's responsibility while driving, according respect to other highway users and traffic control officers and their directions, to encourage concern for the safety of all road users and effectiveness in driving. It is lack of traffic education that are responsible for road transport problems (eg. Traffic injuries) in Nigeria. However, improper co-ordination among the three elements, namely, the driver, the motor vehicle and the highway are more often lead to road accidents in Nigeria (Oladimeji & Chika, 2011).

Globally, road safety education through Adult Education Enlightenment Programme is meant for behavioural change. It is part of the measures meant to enforce the three rules which form the basis of any road safety policy on the behaviour of road users, including avoiding over speeding, avoiding drinking while driving and using the safety belt, and the need for them to be obeyed. The negative impacts of drunken driving have been summarized by Osita (2010) to include poor coordination balance impairment, poor judgment impaired memory and slow reactions among commercial drivers.

The realization that RTIs were on the increase brought about the introduction of strategies such as road safety education to prevent injuries and fatalities which result from alcohol – impaired driving (WHO, 2013).

Conclusion and Recommendation

On the whole, the commission is established with the objectives of improving road safety and effectiveness. This is achieved through Adult Education Enlightenment Campaign Programmes. The main objective of road safety campaign through Adult Education programmes is to deter drivers from unsafe driving behaviour through advocacy for instance by providing information to drivers on the aftermaths effects of over-speeding and driving under the influence of drugs). Such campaigns are prevalent in the country, but drivers, particularly commercial bus drivers continue to regard, for example, speeding and driving under the control of drugs as socially acceptable behaviours. Smoking, drinking and driving against the official speed limit persist as the norms among this group of drivers. The explanation for this ineffectiveness of the road safety campaigns is possibly because they are often based on instinct rather than being grounded in the principle of behaviour change. It is on this basis that the study seeks to look at the effects of multimedia-based road safety education on knowledge and attitude to safe driving behaviour of interstate commercial mini but drivers in Nigeria.

The paper therefore, recommends that government should encourage exploration of adult education enlightenment programme as a feasible intervention programme for improving knowledge and attitude of commercial minibus drivers towards safety driving behaviour.

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