



# Determinants of Road Traffic Accident among Commercial Tricycle Riders in Borno State

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**Abstract:** *This article presents the findings of a qualitative interview study on the perceptions of psychoactive drug usage and road traffic accident risk among riders of commercial tricycles in Nigeria. 100 commercial tricycle riders were recruited using a purposive sample technique. Individual interviews conducted in-depth were used to gather data. The transcripts of the interviews were subjected to inductive and thematic analysis. The tricycle riders admitted to regularly using large amounts of both legal and illegal substances, such as heroin, alcohol, and cannabis. They linked drug use to work-related stressors such weariness, fatigue, and exhaustion. They understood that using psychoactive drugs while riding a trike can have negative impacts on eyesight, coordination, and navigational skills, all of which raise the likelihood of traffic accidents. reducing bribery, regular drug testing, and education*

**Keywords:** *Commercial tricycle riders, psychoactive drugs, road traffic accidents.*

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## Introduction

Road traffic accidents are a significant, albeit little-known, public health issue on a global scale. They are a major contributor to the worldwide burden of disease and a main cause of death and disability (Ameretunga, Hajar & Norton, 2006; Hazen & Ehiri, 2006; Nantulya & Reich, 2002). According to the Global Status Report on Road Safety, 50 million people get serious injuries and 1.3 million people die in traffic accidents each year (World Health Organization, 2015). Ninety percent (90%) of road traffic fatalities happen in low- and middle-income nations (WHO, 2015), and as these nations rapidly motorize and urbanize, the burden of traffic mortality is rising rapidly (Jacobs, Aaron-Thomas & Astrop, 2000). Africa has the highest rate of road traffic deaths worldwide, with an estimated 26.6 per 100,000 people.

Nigeria, with a population of more than 190 million, is the most populous nation in Africa. In terms of the number of vehicles and their ownership, it is seen as a "motorizing" nation (Trinca et al., 1988). In 2000, the World Health Organization (WHO) listed traffic accidents as Nigeria's sixth-leading cause of disability adjusted life years (DALYs) and eleventh-leading cause of death (WHO, 2004). With 33.7 accident fatalities per 100,000 people, Nigeria has the highest rate of fatalities in Africa (WHO, 2013). Due to underreporting and a deficient system of documentation and data retrieval, there is a dearth of trustworthy accident data in Nigeria (Asogwa, 1992). 5, 053 fatalities were reported by the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) in 2016, while the real numbers may be higher.

## **Methodology**

The study was carried out in Maiduguri, Nigeria, which serves as both the state capital and main metropolis of Borno State. In the last few decades, the city has experienced enormous growth, drawing residents from almost 20 local government areas displaced by insurgency. The population is expected to expand at a pace of 3.2% annually. The development of infrastructure and the provision of fundamental social amenities, such as water, power, sanitation, housing, healthcare, and transportation, do not keep pace with spatial expansion. Trade, services, and professional employment.

Individual interviews conducted in-depth were used to gather qualitative data. Open-ended interview questions were used; they were changed along the data collecting and processing process (Glaser, 1978). Two months were dedicated to recruitment and data gathering. Since the study is qualitative in nature and did not involve a specific field location other than Maiduguri metropolis, a non-systematic survey was used. Using purposive sampling, people were chosen from all throughout the city to participate. One hundred (100) commercial trike riders were found by the researchers in various parts of the city. They were informed of the study's goal, given reassurances of secrecy, and asked if they would be willing to participate. They ranged in age from 24 to 67 and were all male.

### **Data analysis**

The data underwent inductive and thematic classification and analysis. Data coding was done using inductive codes created by immersing oneself in the transcripts and previous themes that were represented in the interview guide (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Borkan, 1999). Key ideas and descriptions, especially those that emerged from immersion in the transcripts, served as the foundation for the codes (O'Leary, 2014). The themes that were generated both deductively and inductively served as the foundation for the manual data coding process, which required allocating primary and secondary codes to pertinent sections of every transcript of an interview (Campbell et al., 2013). Many iterations of the coding process resulted in the revision, expansion, and condensing of some codes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This is in order to improve the validity of the results and inter-coder reliability.

## **Results**

The city's commercial trike riders frequently take psychoactive drugs, according to data from interviews. Most respondents claimed that a large number of commercial trike riders frequently use psychoactive drugs while operating a vehicle. The minority (11.6%) stated that psychoactive drug usage was not frequent. None of the panelists categorically denied that riders of commercial tricycles take psychoactive drugs. When asked to give a ballpark estimate of the percentage of trike riders who use drugs and drive, the participants replied that it was between 60% and 85%. Most participants (67%) and the majority of participants (82%) reported using psychoactive drugs on a frequent basis while riding.

Commercial trike drivers use a range of psychotropic substances, both legal and illegal. Additionally, participants noted that among transportation workers, caffeinated beverages—also referred to as "energy drinks"—are becoming more and more popular. We discovered that people who ride commercial tricycles often drink coffee-based beverages to refuel their energy and stamina, which are depleted throughout the journey. They also take drugs including tramadol, rohypnol, and codeine, as well as tobacco, cannabis, crack cocaine

(Charlie), heroin, and other substances. For drinking, cannabis is either smoked or soaked in the local gin. Similar to energy drinks, cannabis is supposed to give the necessary strength and endurance for the tiresome task of riding a tricycle.

Interview transcripts provide insight into the factors that influence commercial trike riders' use of psychoactive drugs. Numerous individuals reported that they began using psychoactive drugs as a result of peer pressure from other trike riders. Fatigue, stress, and tiredness were the main causes of psychoactive drug use among tricycle riders due to work-related dangers. According to the participants, they take medicines to relieve stress and regain energy. Transport workers frequently experience fatigue and stress (Bekibele et al., 2007). Interview transcripts also reveal that psychoactive medications are frequently suggested to new hires as antidotes for exhaustion and stress.

The participants acknowledged that using psychoactive drugs increases the chance of having a car accident. They said that because psychoactive drugs have a detrimental impact on driving behavior, their usage increases the risk of accidents. When asked about these impacts, the majority of participants indicated that psychoactive drugs had an impact on the tricycle rider's ability to safely negotiate the road. They claimed that drugs interfere with the body's natural processes, which has an impact on a rider's capacity to operate a vehicle safely.

They added that using drugs, especially alcohol, might cause a number of physiological changes that impair riding, such as anxiety, uneasiness, trembling, and weakness. Participants informed us that because the rider would be unable to successfully maneuver traffic, there would be a very high chance of getting involved in an accident while riding.

Narratives also emphasize the impact of medications on eyesight. Participants expressed the opinion that using psychoactive drugs impairs a rider's capacity to see the road clearly and perform well. They made the point that having clear view of the road is necessary for safe riding, and that a rider with poor vision runs a very high danger of getting into an accident. Some of the participants shared their personal experiences with us, stating that when a motorcyclist is high on psychoactive drugs, he might not see pedestrians, oncoming cars, or traffic signs clearly. It was stated that as the rider would be unable to travel safely in such conditions, accidents would result.

When asked which drugs affected riders the most, participants said that cannabis (49%) and alcohol (68%) had the greatest effects. Additionally, they noted that the amount of a medicine used determined its effects ("if you take a little, it may not give you trouble, but taking much is dangerous"). Significant amounts of psychoactive drug use raise the possibility of a car accident. A significant percentage of participants (21%) stated that they had previously been in an accident as a result of driving while under the influence of psychoactive drugs, primarily alcohol.

## **Conclusion**

For their everyday needs, the vast majority of Nigerians depend on commercial transportation. Human factors have an impact on the safety of commercial transportation, most notably impaired driving due to alcohol and other psychoactive substance use. Traffic accidents are more likely to occur when someone is driving while under the influence of alcohol or other substances (DUI). However, the majority of policies and initiatives addressing traffic infractions like DUI are founded on the opinions of experts. The opinions of the

transport workers themselves are not given much weight. Lay perspectives could enhance and maximize the efficacy of programs and policies. According to the opinions expressed in this article, the use of psychoactive drugs by commercial trike riders is associated with risks related to their jobs, such as stress, weariness, and exhaustion, and it impairs their ability to ride.

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