



Public Awareness Campaigns and Road Safety Compliance among Commercial Drivers in Chikun Local Government Area, Kaduna State: A Study of Radio Corps Marshal Program

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Abstract

Road traffic crashes (RTCs) remain a major public health and developmental challenge globally, with low- and middle-income countries bearing the greatest burden. It is on the basis of this that this study assessed the influence of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme on road safety compliance among commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State between 2020 and 2025. Specifically, the study examined level of awareness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme among commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State; and also identified the extent to which the Radio Corps Marshal Programme has influenced compliance with road safety regulations among commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna the Guided by Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory, the study gathered both primary and secondary data using a descriptive survey design. Findings revealed that while awareness of the programme was relatively high, actual compliance with road safety regulations remained inconsistent. Exposure to the programme improved knowledge of traffic rules and shaped positive attitudes toward safe driving, but behavioural change was constrained by economic pressures, weak enforcement, and institutional challenges. The study concludes that the Radio Corps Marshal Programme has contributed to raising awareness and influencing attitudes but requires stronger integration with enforcement, improved message delivery, and enhanced stakeholder collaboration to achieve sustained compliance. The study recommends strengthening the programme's content, expanding its reach, and combining public education with consistent enforcement to reduce crashes and improve passenger safety.

Keywords: Road traffic crashes, Commercial drivers, Radio Corps Marshal Programme., Public awareness campaigns, Road safety compliance.

1. Introduction

Road traffic crashes remain one of the most pressing public health and developmental challenges worldwide. Despite advances in vehicle safety technology, road engineering, and traffic management systems, they continue to cause unacceptable levels of mortality, disability, and economic loss. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2023) estimates that approximately 1.19 million people die annually from road traffic crashes, while between 20 and 50 million sustain non-fatal injuries, many resulting in permanent disabilities. Beyond the human cost, crashes impose substantial economic burdens through healthcare expenditures, productivity losses, property damage, and disruptions to economic activities. Recognizing this, the United Nations incorporated road safety into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Target 3.6, which seeks to halve global deaths and injuries from road traffic crashes, and Target 11.2, which promotes access to safe, affordable, and sustainable transport systems (United Nations, 2015). Achieving these targets remains especially challenging in low- and middle-income countries where structural and institutional constraints persist.

Low- and middle-income countries account for more than 90 percent of global road traffic fatalities despite possessing only about 60 percent of the world's registered vehicles (WHO, 2023). Nigeria mirrors this disproportionate burden due to its overwhelming reliance on road transportation, which accounts for over 90 percent of passenger and freight movement (FRSC, 2024). This dependence has simultaneously increased public exposure to road traffic risks. Data from the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) indicate that thousands of crashes are recorded annually, with excessive speeding, dangerous overtaking, overloading, distracted driving, fatigue, driving under the influence, poor vehicle maintenance, and violations of traffic regulations consistently ranking among the principal causes (FRSC, 2024). These unsafe practices highlight that the challenge extends beyond infrastructure deficiencies to issues of driver behaviour, risk perception, and compliance with road safety regulations.



While improvements in infrastructure and stricter enforcement remain essential, contemporary research emphasizes that sustainable reductions in road traffic crashes depend equally on influencing road users' behaviour through education and effective communication (OECD/ITF, 2022). Public awareness campaigns have therefore become central pillars of modern road safety strategies. Such campaigns aim to inform, persuade, and motivate individuals to adopt safer driving practices by increasing knowledge of traffic regulations, improving attitudes, strengthening risk perception, and encouraging voluntary compliance.

Among available communication channels, radio remains one of the most effective media for road safety campaigns in Nigeria. Despite the rise of digital platforms, radio continues to enjoy extensive reach due to its affordability, portability, accessibility in both urban and rural areas, and ability to reach audiences regardless of literacy level. Commercial drivers constitute a significant audience, as many routinely listen to radio programmes while driving, waiting at motor parks, or resting between trips. Radio's ability to broadcast in English and indigenous languages further enhances its effectiveness in communicating with diverse audiences.

Within this broader communication strategy, the Radio Corps Marshal Programme emerged as one of FRSC's flagship public enlightenment initiatives. Designed as an interactive radio programme, it educates motorists and the public on traffic regulations, responsible driving behaviour, crash prevention strategies, and the consequences of violations. The programme also provides opportunities for public engagement through discussions, interviews, and responses to road safety concerns, thereby strengthening communication between FRSC and road users. By combining information dissemination with behavioural persuasion, the programme is expected to enhance knowledge, shape positive attitudes, and encourage voluntary compliance. However, limited empirical evidence exists regarding its effectiveness in influencing commercial drivers' behaviour within specific local contexts.

Despite ongoing campaigns, unsafe driving practices persist among commercial drivers in Nigeria. Studies reveal poor seat belt use and risky behaviours such as drink-driving and mobile phone use while driving (Idris et al., 2013; Uhegbu & Tight, 2021). Awareness of road safety rules does not always translate into compliance. While the Radio Corps Marshal Programme may have increased awareness, it remains unclear whether commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area regularly listen to the programme, understand its messages, trust the information, or change their behaviour as a result. This uncertainty creates a research gap.

This study therefore assesses the influence of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme on road safety compliance among commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State between 2020 and 2025. Specifically, it examines the extent to which exposure to the programme has enhanced awareness of road safety regulations, influenced attitudes toward safe driving, and encouraged compliance with traffic laws. The study's significance lies in its potential to inform FRSC, transport unions, policymakers, and community stakeholders on the effectiveness of radio-based campaigns, thereby guiding strategies to reduce crashes and improve passenger safety.

1.1 Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Public awareness campaigns have long been recognized as essential instruments for shaping public behaviour and promoting compliance with safety regulations. Within the context of road safety, these campaigns are designed to inform, educate, persuade, and motivate drivers to adopt practices that reduce crashes and their consequences. They aim to increase knowledge of traffic rules, improve attitudes toward safe driving, strengthen risk perception, and encourage voluntary adherence to established standards. Road safety compliance itself refers to the extent to which road users voluntarily obey traffic laws and recommended practices such as observing speed limits, using seat belts, avoiding impaired driving, maintaining roadworthy vehicles, and

respecting passenger safety regulations. Although these requirements are clearly stipulated within Nigeria's traffic regulatory framework, evidence suggests that compliance among many motorists remains inconsistent, underscoring the importance of sustained awareness efforts (FRSC, 2024).

Radio has emerged as one of the most effective media for mass enlightenment in Nigeria. Despite the expansion of digital communication platforms, radio continues to enjoy extensive reach because it is affordable, portable, and accessible in both urban and rural communities. Its ability to broadcast in English and indigenous languages makes it particularly effective in communicating with diverse audiences. Commercial drivers constitute one of the largest audiences for radio broadcasts, as many routinely listen to programmes while driving, waiting at motor parks, or resting between trips. This makes radio a practical platform for disseminating timely information on traffic regulations, accident prevention, vehicle maintenance, and emerging road safety issues. The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) has capitalized on this by introducing the Radio Corps Marshal Programme, an interactive initiative designed to educate motorists and the general public on traffic rules, responsible driving behaviour, crash prevention strategies, and the consequences of violations. By combining information dissemination with behavioural persuasion, the programme seeks to enhance knowledge, shape positive attitudes, and encourage voluntary compliance (Nwagwu et al., 2020).

Empirical studies have shown that media campaigns can influence driver behaviour when they are properly designed, frequently delivered, and supported by enforcement. Hoekstra and Wegman (2011) and Phillips et al. (2011) found that campaigns are most effective when they combine persuasive messaging with visible enforcement measures. In Nigeria, however, studies reveal persistent gaps between awareness and compliance. Idris et al. (2013) reported that knowledge and use of seat belts among commercial drivers in north-western Nigeria were

below expected levels, despite their proven effectiveness in reducing crash injuries. Similarly, Uhegbu and Tight (2021) observed risky behaviours among road users in Abuja, including poor seat belt use, drink-driving, mobile phone use while driving, and poor compliance with child restraint practices. These findings highlight that awareness alone does not guarantee behavioural change, particularly in contexts where economic pressures, weak enforcement, and institutional challenges undermine compliance.

Commercial drivers face unique challenges that affect their adherence to road safety regulations. Their occupation is characterized by economic pressures, competition for passengers, demanding schedules, and prolonged driving hours, all of which encourage risky behaviours such as speeding, overloading, dangerous overtaking, and inadequate vehicle maintenance. These pressures often lead drivers to prioritize income generation over safety, thereby limiting the effectiveness of awareness campaigns. Weak enforcement of traffic laws further compounds the problem, as drivers may perceive that violations carry little risk of punishment. Institutional challenges, including limited resources for sustained campaigns and poor stakeholder collaboration, also reduce the impact of public awareness initiatives (FRSC, 2024).

The theoretical foundation for this study is Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory (1977), which posits that individuals learn behaviours through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. Applied to road safety, the theory suggests that drivers exposed to campaigns like the Radio Corps Marshal Programme can acquire knowledge of traffic rules, observe positive driving behaviours, and internalize attitudes that support compliance. However, for these behaviours to be sustained, reinforcement through consistent enforcement and social approval is necessary. The theory underscores the importance of combining education with enforcement and stakeholder collaboration to achieve lasting behavioural change. In this way,

the Radio Corps Marshal Programme represents not only a communication initiative but also a behavioural intervention grounded in established theoretical principles.

1.2 Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design which was considered appropriate for assessing the influence of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme on road safety compliance among commercial drivers. This design allowed the researcher to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from a representative sample of drivers, thereby providing insights into awareness levels, behavioural patterns, and perceptions regarding the programme. The descriptive approach was particularly useful in capturing the attitudes and practices of drivers in their natural settings without manipulating variables, thus ensuring that findings reflected real-world conditions.

The study was conducted in Chikun Local Government Area of Kaduna State, a rapidly expanding urban area that serves as a major transportation corridor linking Kaduna metropolis with Abuja and other neighbouring communities. The area was selected because of its high concentration of commercial transport operations, including buses, taxis, tricycles, motorcycles, and inter-city vehicles. This heavy traffic volume increases exposure to road crashes and makes Chikun LGA a suitable location for examining the effectiveness of road safety awareness campaigns targeted at commercial drivers.

The population of the study comprised commercial drivers operating within Chikun LGA under the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the Road Transport Employers' Association of Nigeria (RTEAN). These unions represent the majority of organized commercial drivers in the area, making them an ideal focus group for assessing compliance with road safety regulations. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure



that drivers from different categories of vehicles, such as buses, taxis, and motorcycles—were adequately represented. The sample size was determined using standard statistical procedures to achieve reliability and generalizability of findings.

Data were collected using a combination of structured questionnaires and key informant interviews. The questionnaire was designed to capture demographic information, awareness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme, exposure levels, compliance with road safety regulations, and perceptions of programme effectiveness. Interviews with union leaders, FRSC officials, and selected drivers provided qualitative insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with road safety campaigns. This mixed-method approach ensured that both numerical data and contextual perspectives were incorporated into the analysis.

Validity and reliability of the instruments were established through expert review and pilot testing. The questionnaire was subjected to scrutiny by academic supervisors and FRSC officials to ensure that questions were clear, relevant, and aligned with the study objectives. Reliability was tested using the test-retest method, which confirmed consistency in responses over time. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, with respondents assured of confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained before administering questionnaires or conducting interviews.

Data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, and mean scores to summarize responses. Tables and charts were employed to present findings in a clear and accessible format. Qualitative data from interviews were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and insights. This combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis provided a comprehensive understanding of the extent to which the Radio Corps Marshal Programme influenced awareness, attitudes, and compliance among commercial drivers in Chikun LGA.

1.3. Study Area Context

Chikun Local Government Area in Kaduna State has undergone significant transformation over time. Originally part of the larger Kaduna metropolis, it was established to improve administrative efficiency and has since experienced rapid urban expansion driven by population growth, residential development, and commercial activities. Its proximity to Kaduna city has made it a vibrant hub of socio-economic life and an important gateway for inter-state travel and commerce.

Geographically, Chikun is strategically located along major transportation corridors linking Kaduna with Abuja and neighbouring communities. The area combines urban and peri-urban settlements, with diverse socio-economic activities ranging from agriculture and trade to industrial operations and services. This mix of traditional livelihoods and modern occupations underscores the central role of transportation in daily life.

Road transport dominates mobility in Chikun, with commercial buses, taxis, tricycles, motorcycles, and inter-city vehicles operating extensively. The heavy reliance on road transport increases exposure to traffic risks. Road infrastructure includes highways, feeder roads, and local streets, but many are poorly maintained, contributing to congestion and unsafe driving conditions. These infrastructural challenges highlight the need for effective road safety interventions.

Road safety administration is coordinated primarily by the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC), supported by state and local authorities. The FRSC enforces traffic laws, conducts patrols, educates motorists, and implements safety campaigns. Local transport unions such as the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the Road Transport Employers'

Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) also play roles in regulating driver behaviour. However, weak enforcement, limited resources, and economic pressures on drivers continue to undermine safety efforts.

Public awareness campaigns have been introduced locally to complement enforcement measures. These include sensitization programmes, union-led initiatives, and media-based interventions. The Radio Corps Marshal Programme stands out as a flagship initiative, using interactive radio broadcasts to educate drivers and the public on traffic rules, responsible driving, and crash prevention. While awareness has improved, behavioural change remains inconsistent, pointing to the need for stronger integration of campaigns with enforcement and stakeholder collaboration.

1.4 Data Presentation and Analysis

1.4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents in Chikun Local Government Area revealed important patterns that shaped the study's findings. The majority of commercial drivers surveyed were male, which reflects the gender composition of the transport sector in Nigeria. Most respondents fell within the economically active age bracket of 25–45 years, suggesting that road safety campaigns must target drivers who are in their prime working years. Educational attainment varied, with some drivers having completed secondary education, while others had only primary education or no formal schooling. This variation in literacy levels underscores the importance of using radio broadcasts in both English and indigenous languages to ensure inclusivity. Years of driving experience ranged widely, with many respondents having more than five years in commercial transport operations. However, attendance at formal driving schools was relatively low, indicating that a significant proportion acquired their skills

informally. This lack of structured training may contribute to inconsistent compliance with road safety regulations.

1.4.2 Awareness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme

The study found that awareness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme was relatively high among commercial drivers. A majority of respondents reported hearing about the programme through radio broadcasts, particularly while driving or waiting at motor parks. The programme was recognized as a source of information on traffic rules, safe driving practices, and accident prevention. However, awareness did not always translate into regular engagement. Some drivers admitted to listening only occasionally, while others reported that they were aware of the programme but had not followed its content closely. This suggests that while the programme has achieved visibility, its reach and consistency of engagement remain limited.

1.4.3 Exposure Levels and Compliance with Road Safety Regulations

Exposure to the programme varied significantly among respondents. Drivers who listened regularly reported improved knowledge of traffic rules and greater awareness of safe driving practices. They acknowledged that the programme helped them understand the importance of seat belt use, speed management, and vehicle maintenance. However, compliance with road safety regulations remained inconsistent. Economic pressures, such as the need to maximize income, often led drivers to prioritize passenger loading and trip frequency over safety. For example, some respondents admitted to overloading vehicles or speeding in order to make more trips within a day. Weak enforcement of traffic laws further contributed to lapses in compliance, as many drivers perceived little risk of punishment for violations. This gap between knowledge and practice highlights the limitations of awareness campaigns when not reinforced by strong enforcement mechanisms.

1.4.4 Perceived Effectiveness of the Programme

Respondents generally agreed that the Radio Corps Marshal Programme had succeeded in raising awareness and shaping positive attitudes toward road safety. Many noted that the programme improved their understanding of traffic regulations and encouraged safer driving practices. However, perceptions of effectiveness were mixed. While the programme was seen as valuable, behavioural change was limited. Drivers emphasized that knowledge gained from broadcasts did not always translate into practice due to external pressures such as competition for passengers, demanding schedules, and weak enforcement. Some respondents argued that without consistent reinforcement from traffic authorities, the programme's impact would remain largely educational rather than transformative.

1.5 Challenges Affecting Effectiveness

Several challenges were identified as limiting the programme's effectiveness. Irregular broadcasts and limited coverage reduced the consistency of message delivery, meaning that not all drivers were exposed to the programme regularly. Economic constraints faced by drivers, such as the need to meet daily income targets, often undermined compliance with safety practices. Weak enforcement of traffic laws created an environment where violations were common and rarely penalized, thereby reducing the perceived importance of compliance. Institutional challenges, including inadequate resources for sustained campaigns and poor collaboration among stakeholders, further reduced the impact of the programme. Respondents also noted that some messages were too generic and did not adequately address the specific realities faced by commercial drivers in Chikun LGA.

1.5.1 Strategies Suggested by Respondents

Respondents proposed several strategies to enhance the effectiveness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme. These included strengthening the content to make it more practical and relatable, expanding coverage to reach more drivers, and increasing the frequency of broadcasts to ensure consistent exposure. Many emphasized the need to integrate awareness campaigns with consistent enforcement measures so that drivers not only understood safety rules but also felt compelled to comply. Greater collaboration between FRSC, transport unions, radio stations, and community stakeholders was also recommended to reinforce messages through multiple channels and ensure sustained behavioural change. Some respondents suggested tailoring messages to address specific challenges faced by commercial drivers, such as fatigue management, overloading, and competition for passengers. By combining education with enforcement and stakeholder support, respondents believed that the Radio Corps Marshal Programme could achieve greater effectiveness in promoting road safety compliance among commercial drivers in Chikun LGA.

1.6 Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study reveal a clear gap between awareness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme and actual compliance with road safety regulations among commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area. While awareness levels were relatively high, with many drivers acknowledging that they had listened to the programme and understood its messages, compliance remained inconsistent. This awareness–compliance gap suggests that knowledge alone is insufficient to drive behavioural change. Drivers may be informed about traffic rules and safe practices, but external pressures and contextual realities often prevent them from translating this knowledge into consistent action.

Economic pressures emerged as a major factor influencing compliance. Commercial drivers operate under demanding schedules and intense competition for passengers, which often

compels them to prioritize income generation over safety. Practices such as speeding, overloading, and neglecting vehicle maintenance were frequently linked to the need to maximize daily earnings. Weak enforcement of traffic laws further compounded this problem. Many drivers perceived that violations carried little risk of punishment, which reduced the incentive to comply with regulations. This finding aligns with earlier studies that emphasize the importance of combining awareness campaigns with strong enforcement measures to achieve meaningful behavioural change (Hoekstra & Wegman, 2011; Phillips et al., 2011).

The effectiveness of radio campaigns in shaping attitudes was evident in the study. Respondents acknowledged that the Radio Corps Marshal Programme improved their knowledge of traffic rules and encouraged positive attitudes toward safe driving. Radio's accessibility, affordability, and ability to broadcast in multiple languages made it a powerful tool for reaching commercial drivers. However, while the programme succeeded in raising awareness and shaping attitudes, its limitations in achieving behavioural change were clear. Drivers often reverted to unsafe practices due to economic constraints, weak enforcement, and institutional challenges. This underscores the reality that awareness campaigns, though valuable, cannot achieve sustained compliance in isolation.

The limitations of the programme in achieving behavioural change highlight the need for stronger integration with enforcement and stakeholder collaboration. Irregular broadcasts and limited coverage reduced the consistency of message delivery, while inadequate resources and poor institutional coordination weakened the programme's overall impact. Respondents emphasized that without reinforcement from traffic authorities and unions, the programme's influence would remain largely educational rather than transformative.

When compared with other studies and global best practices, the findings of this research are consistent with broader evidence. International studies have shown that media campaigns are

most effective when combined with visible enforcement and supportive institutional frameworks (OECD/ITF, 2022). In Nigeria, similar challenges have been documented, with awareness campaigns often failing to produce sustained behavioural change due to weak enforcement and economic pressures (Idris et al., 2013; Uhegbu & Tight, 2021). The Radio Corps Marshal Programme therefore reflects both the strengths and limitations of media-based interventions in road safety governance.

1.7 Conclusion and Recommendations

1.7.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study assessed the influence of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme on road safety compliance among commercial drivers in Chikun Local Government Area, Kaduna State, between 2020 and 2025. The findings revealed that awareness of the programme was relatively high, with many drivers acknowledging exposure through radio broadcasts. However, compliance with road safety regulations remained inconsistent. While the programme improved knowledge of traffic rules and shaped positive attitudes toward safe driving, behavioural change was constrained by economic pressures, weak enforcement, and institutional challenges. Respondents recognized the programme's value but emphasized that awareness alone was insufficient to ensure sustained compliance.

1.7.2 Conclusion

The Radio Corps Marshal Programme has contributed significantly to raising awareness and influencing attitudes toward road safety among commercial drivers. Its use of radio as a medium ensured accessibility and inclusivity, particularly for drivers with limited formal education. Nevertheless, the programme's effectiveness in achieving behavioural change was limited. Knowledge gained from broadcasts did not consistently translate into safer driving

practices, largely due to external pressures and weak enforcement mechanisms. The programme therefore represents an important but incomplete intervention in road safety governance.

1.7.3 Policy Recommendations

To enhance the effectiveness of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme, several policy measures are recommended. First, the content of the programme should be strengthened to make it more practical, relatable, and tailored to the realities of commercial drivers. Second, coverage should be expanded and broadcasts made more frequent to ensure consistent exposure. Third, awareness campaigns must be integrated with consistent enforcement of traffic laws so that drivers not only understand safety rules but also feel compelled to comply. Fourth, stakeholder collaboration should be enhanced, involving FRSC, transport unions, radio stations, and community leaders to reinforce messages through multiple channels. Finally, economic pressures faced by drivers should be addressed through supportive policies, such as improved working conditions and incentives for compliance.

1.7.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This study contributes to knowledge by providing empirical evidence on the effectiveness of radio-based public awareness campaigns in influencing road safety compliance among commercial drivers in Nigeria. It highlights the strengths of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme in raising awareness and shaping attitudes, while also identifying the limitations that prevent sustained behavioural change. The findings underscore the importance of integrating education with enforcement and stakeholder collaboration in road safety governance.

Suggestions for Further Studies

Future research should explore the long-term behavioural impacts of the Radio Corps Marshal Programme, particularly in relation to crash reduction statistics. Comparative studies across different local government areas and states would provide broader insights into the programme's effectiveness in diverse contexts. Further studies could also examine the role of other media platforms, such as television and digital channels, in complementing radio campaigns. Additionally, research into the socio-economic factors that influence compliance among commercial drivers would help design more targeted interventions that address the root causes of unsafe driving practices.

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