

Federal Road Safety Corps and Administration of Road Safety in Benue State

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Abstract

The purpose of the Federal Road Safety Corps in Nigeria is to make highways safe and ensure safety on our roads is guaranteed. In view of this the trajectory of the paper was to investigate; Federal Road Safety Corps and Administration of Road Safety in Benue State. The paper was guided by three objectives and questions. The theoretical framework used in the paper is Skinner's behavioural theory of 1950. The theory assumes that accidents generally are caused by individuals as a result of recklessness. Methodologically, the study depended on both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were based on a self-designed questionnaire and Key Informant Interview (KII) while the secondary sources were obtained from text books, journals, internet and other documents relating to the Federal Road Safety in Benue State. Findings show that, the Federal Road Safety Corps was established in Nigeria in 1988, with the core mandate of ensuring that over speeding and bad state of vehicles which result in road accidents are curtailed. It is also evident that the FRSC to a large extent is struggling to tackle the safety of roads in Nigeria and Benue State in particular. Its challenges include poor remuneration, corruption, lack of effective working conditions/tools, poor leadership as well as inadequate publicity. The study amongst other things recommends that the Federal Road Safety Corps adopts a more proactive and community-engaging approach by increasing its visibility and accessibility within the locals. Also, provision of standard working environments/tools and effective leadership be enhanced.

Key Words: Administration, Corps Federal, Road, Safety

Introduction

The overdependence on roads poses great challenges both to the government in its onerous task of ensuring safety on the roads and the citizens or road users whose lives are daily put at risk on account of the inevitability of human and vehicular movement on roads (Heidi, 2015). A number of factors have been attributed to road crashes and accidents with its attendant consequences in terms of damages to properties and loss of lives to road users and bystanders. Aside from the poor state of roads in the country, most of the issues that affect the safety of road users are manmade and manifest themselves in the forms of poor driving skills, poor knowledge of road signs, disobedience to traffic rules and regulations, drunk driving, over speeding, poorly maintained vehicles, among others (Odero, 2021).

The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999) in Section 14(2b) proclaims unequivocally that the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government. One important aspect of this security is the safety of road users. The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) of Nigeria was established in 1988 via Decree No. 45, later codified as the FRSC Act Cap 141, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (1990). The creation of the Corps was necessitated by the rising number of road traffic crashes and fatalities in the country. Before its formal establishment, there was no comprehensive federal agency responsible for road safety management and enforcement (Ogunbodede, 2012).

One of the major concerns of any nation's transportation sector is how to curb road traffic accidents and the growing number of deaths and injuries as a result of road accidents is a global phenomenon that all countries of the world are grappling with. This situation is not different even in Nigeria. As Heidi, (2015) reported, road traffic accidents were the leading causes of deaths by injury and the tenth leading cause of death globally. Now, it makes up a surprisingly significant portion of the world-wide burden of ill health.

Though successive governments in Nigeria since 1960 have attempted to promulgate laws to control traffic behavior, the observance and enforcement of these traffic rules and regulations have been lax on the part of drivers, other road users and enforcers. Hence there was no concrete and sustained policy action to address road safety questions as Balogun (2019) buttresses that the nation had no coordinated attempt at ensuring safety on Nigerian roads until 1988 when the Federal Military Government of Nigeria under General Ibrahim Babangida enacted a decree establishing the Federal Road Safety Corps. It is a federal

government institution vested with the legal duty of overseeing the administration of road safety network in Nigeria. It was founded in 1988, and operates in the 36 states of Nigeria including the federal capital territory Abuja. When the federal road safety commission (Federal Road Safety Corps) (FRSC) of Nigeria was commissioned in 1988, the institution became solely vested with the statutory obligation for road safety management and administration in Nigeria. The statutory functions include: Making the highways safe for motorists and other road users as well as checking road worthiness of vehicles, recommending works and infrastructures to eliminate or minimize accidents on the highways and educating motorists and members of the public on the importance of road discipline.

Conceptual Clarifications

Road Safety

Road safety refers to the strategies, measures, and practices designed to prevent road users from being killed or seriously injured on roadways. It encompasses infrastructure design, vehicle safety standards, education, enforcement of traffic laws, and emergency response systems. Road safety aims to minimize the risks and consequences of accidents for drivers, passengers, pedestrians, and cyclists. It involves the prevention and mitigation of road traffic injuries and fatalities through systematic efforts that include road design, vehicle standards, and education programs (*World Health Organization, 2020*).

One critical component of road safety is traffic management. Traffic management involves organizing and regulating the movement of vehicles and pedestrians to maximize safety and efficiency on roadways. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), effective traffic management strategies include implementing speed limits, managing traffic flows, and establishing dedicated lanes for certain types of vehicles, such as bicycles or buses, to reduce the likelihood of collisions and congestion.

Administration

The term "administration" originates from the Latin word *administere*, meaning to care for or manage the affairs of others. It is broadly understood as a collective activity involving cooperation and coordination to achieve specific goals or objectives. The meaning of administration can vary depending on its context. In this sense, administration is an activity mainly concerned with the means which also requires cooperation as well. According to Simon, Smithburg, Thompson

cooperative if it has the effects that would be absent if the cooperation did not take place. Thus, administration can be defined as “the complete effort of the group to control, guide, and adapt to accomplish the pre-determined goals.

Administration is a process of organizing and coordinating resources, people and activities to achieve specific goals, it involves planning, decision-making and the implementation of rules and policies in various contexts such as government, business, education and other organizations or institutions.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical frame work suitable for this work is Behavioural theory. The theory has its roots in classical conditioning that was formalized by B.F. Skinner in the late 1950s. Skinner believed that all behaviours, including factors are caused by the people in the society. This theory minimized the influence of mental explanations of language behavior as well as the negligence of human beings on some necessary procedures that ought to have been followed. According to Skinner, behavior is modified or changed through forming associations with certain stimuli in the environment. A major tenet of Behavioural theory is operant conditioning which suggests that the likelihood of a behavior occurring is increased or decreased as a result of reward and punishment. Relating this theory to the road safety corps in Nigeria could be that, most accidents are caused due to poor attitudes and behaviours of the people, such as over speeding, use of mobile phones while driving, lack of use of seatbelts as well as drunk driving.

Behavioural theory can be effectively applied to the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) and accident reduction efforts. By understanding and influencing the behaviour of drivers and other road users, the FRSC can implement strategies that encourage safer driving practices and reduce the incidence of road accidents.

Relevance of the theory to the study

Despite its critiques, one of which is that behaviorism focuses solely on external behavior and overlooks the influence of internal cognitive processes, behavioural theory remains relevant to the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) as it centers on the safety of the roads in Nigeria. Its relevance can be seen in the following ways: Learning and Environmental Influence: Understanding how individuals learn driving behaviours and how the environment influences their actions is crucial for designing effective road safety interventions. The FRSC can use behavioural theory to develop strategies that leverage environmental factors and educational programmes to promote safer driving practices.

Predictability and Control: Behavioural theory's emphasis on predictability and control aligns with the FRSC's goal of reducing road accidents through targeted interventions. By identifying the antecedents and consequences of risky driving behaviours, the FRSC can implement measures to predict and control these behaviours more effectively. While behavioural theory may not address all aspects of road safety challenges; it can complement other theoretical frameworks and approaches. By integrating behavioural interventions with structural, legislative, and community-based strategies, the FRSC can develop comprehensive road safety initiatives that address the multifaceted nature of the problem.

Statutory Functions of the Federal Road Safety Corps in Nigeria

The statutory functions of the Federal Road Safety Corps are outlined in the FRSC Establishment Act, CAP F19 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004. These functions guide the corps in its effort to ensure safe road usage, reduce accidents and maintain order on Nigerian roads.

- I. Making the highway safe for motorists and other road users.
- ii. Educating motorists and members of the public on the importance of discipline on the high way.
- iii. **Vehicle Inspection and Certification:** The FRSC conducts inspections to ensure that vehicles on Nigerian roads are road worthy and comply with safety standards.
- iv. **Designing and Enforcing Road Traffic Rules and Policies:** The corps formulates and enforces policies related to road safety, including traffic flow management and road usage guidelines.
- v. **Conducting Traffic Research and Data Collection:** The FRSC gathers, analyses, and disseminates road traffic data to guide policy formulation and research on road safety.
- vi. **Rescue Operations and Emergency Response:** the FRSC provides emergency rescue services to road traffic accident victims; ensuring prompt medical attention is given.
- vii. **Coordination of Road Safety Stakeholders:** The corps collaborates with various government agencies, non-governmental organizations and international bodies on road safety initiatives.
- viii. **Speed Limit Enforcement and Regulation:** The FRSC ensures the implementation and enforcement of speed limit devices for private and commercial vehicles to enhance safety.
- ix. **Public Enlightenment and Traffic Discipline:** The FRSC conducts campaigns to instill traffic discipline among road users through media engagements and educational programs.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design to obtain data. The survey

the large number of respondents expected to cover. Another justification is based on the fact that, the survey method helps to accumulate information from individuals at low cost, more so, it allows generalization to be made on a wider population of the sample under study, it is also a useful tool for verifying theories.

Population of the Study

The population of the study was drawn from the 194 staff of the Federal Road Safety Corps Benue State and 291,618 motorists and road users from the three senatorial districts of Benue State who have at one point or the other been victims of or witnesses to road accidents.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size of the study is determined using Taro Yamane formula of 1967. This no doubt is based on the targeted population of 291,812. The formula is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = The Sample Size Sought

N = The population of the study

I = The constant

e = The level of significance (0.05)

$$n = \frac{291,812}{1 + 291,812 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{291,812}{1 + 291,812 * 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{291,812}{730.53}$$

$$n = 400$$

Proportionate Allocation of Sample Size

Federal Road Safety Corps Staff	194	$\frac{80 \times 400}{291,812}$	= 10
Drivers of Benue North- West	97,412	$\frac{97,412 \times 400}{291,812}$	= 133
Drivers of Benue North-East	97,206	$\frac{91,206 \times 400}{291,812}$	= 125
Drivers of Benue South	97,000	$\frac{97,000 \times 400}{291,812}$	= 132

Method of Data Collection

The study relied on both primary and secondary sources of obtaining information. The secondary sources were obtained from text books, journals, articles, newspapers, magazines and the internet. The primary source was however obtained at the Federal Road Safety Command, Benue state chapter with the use of a self-designed questionnaire filled by the staff of the Federal Road Safety Corps, Benue State command. As well as drivers and residence of Benue state randomly selected to fill the questionnaire with a specific focus to be designed and filled by the staff of federal road safety corps. Benue State command as well as the residents of Benue State and drivers will be randomly selected to fill the questionnaire with a specific focus on the Federal Road Safety Corps and administration of road safety in Benue state.

An Assessment of the Federal Road Safety Corps and Administration of Road Safety in Benue State

What is the perception of motorists on the effectiveness of the Federal Road Safety Corps in Benue State

Table 1: The hand bills distributed by FRSC have greatly enlightened me on the importance of discipline on roads and highways

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Highly effective	142	37.4
Fairly effective	204	53.7
Not effective	4	1.1
Undecided	30	7.9
Total	380	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2024.

The table above, shows that 142 respondents representing (37.4%) were of the opinion that the strategies used by FRSC on the proper use of highway is highly effective, 204 respondents representing (53.7%) said it is fairly effective, 4 respondents representing (1.1%) said it not effective while 30 respondents representing 7.9% were undecided. Therefore, majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the strategies used by FRSC on the proper use of highways are fairly effective.

Table 2: Various lectures given by FRSC officers have greatly increased the motorist's knowledge of the highway codes of conduct.

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	142	37.3
Agree	204	53.7
Undecided	00	00
Disagree	14	3.7
Strongly agree	20	5.3
Total	380	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2024.

The table above shows that a total of 142 (37.3%) strongly agreed, 204 (53.7%) agreed; while 14 respondents representing (3.7%) disagreed, 20 (5.3%) strongly disagreed and none of the respondents were undecided. Thus, from the analysis above, it is evident that various lectures given by the FRSC have greatly increased motorist's knowledge on the highway code of conduct as about 204 respondents agreed to the position of the question. A participant suggested that the FRSC's focus is primarily on enforcement rather than public education: "From what I've seen, the FRSC is more interested in catching and punishing traffic offenders than actually teaching people how to be safe on the roads." (FGD participant/male/27 years old).

Objective two: What are the Public Awareness Programmes of the Federal Road Safety Corps on the use of Roads in Benue State.

Table 3: The Federal Road Safety Corps from time to time Checks the State of Roads in Benue State

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	124	32.6
Agree	208	54.7
Undecided	4	1
Disagree	6	1.6
Strongly disagree	38	10
Total	380	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2024.

The table shows that 124 (32.6%) respondents agreed, 208 (54.7%) respondents strongly agreed while 4 (1%) were undecided, 6 respondents (1.6%) disagreed and 38 (20%) strongly disagree. From the analysis above it shows that the majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the Federal Road Safety Corps from time to time check the nature and educate people about the roads in the state.

Table 4: Adequate Jingles are played on Radio and Television Stations by the FRSC Public Enlightenment Unit to Caution Road Users on how to use Roads and Highways

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	203	53.4
Agree	114	30
undecided	6	1.6
Disagree	17	4.5
Strongly Disagree	40	10.5
Total	380	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

The table above shows that 203 respondents representing (53.4%) strongly agreed, 114 respondents representing (30%) agreed, 6 (1.6%) were undecided, 17 respondents (4.5%) strongly disagreed and 40 respondents representing (10.5%) were undecided. From the analysis above it shows that, adequate jingles are played on radio and television stations with the aim of cautioning road users on road safety.

Table 5: Federal Road Safety Corps is Faced with the Challenge of Limited Resources and Funding

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	238	62.6
Agree	124	32.6
Undecided	00	00
Disagree	10	2.7
Strongly Disagree	8	2.1
Total	380	100

Source: Field work 2024

The table above shows that, out of 380 respondents, 238 respondents representing (62.6%) strongly agree while 124 respondents representing (32.6%) agree, none of the respondents were undecided while 10 respondents representing (2.7%) disagree and 8 respondents representing (2.1%) strongly disagree. Therefore, majority of the respondents were of the opinion that FRSC is faced with the issue of limited resources and funding. As 238 respondents strongly agreed on the position of the question asked.

Table 6: Federal Road Safety Corps is faced with the problem of limited visibility and accessibility within Local Areas and deplorable roads in the state

Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	108	28.4
Agree	202	52.3
Undecided	00	00
Disagree	20	5.3
Strongly disagree	50	13.2
Total	380	100

Source: Fieldwork, 2024.

The table above shows that 108 (28.4%) strongly agree, 202 respondents (52.3%) agree while none of the respondents went for undecided, 20 respondents representing (5.3%) disagree and 50 respondents representing (13.2%) strongly disagree. From the analysis above, it shows that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the Federal road safety corps in Benue state lack publicity and accessibility.

Discussion of Findings

Objective one of the study was based on the public awareness/enlightenment programs of the FRSC in Benue State. The paper highlights the Federal Road Safety Corps' (FRSC) commitment to public enlightenment as a core strategy for promoting safer road usage in Benue State. The findings indicate that the FRSC employs diverse approaches to educate road users, positively shaping their behaviors and improving road safety.

Objective two is anchored on: perception of motorist on the effectiveness of the Federal Road Safety Corps FRSC and public enlightenment programs in Benue State. Four questions were asked in respect to this objective. The findings from the research indicate a perception of the Federal Road Safety Corps' (FRSC) public enlightenment strategies and their effectiveness in promoting road safety. The data suggests that FRSC's initiatives are somewhat effective but leave room for improvement in various areas. A significant majority of respondents (53.7%) described the FRSC's strategies as “fairly effective,” with 37.4% considering them “highly effective.” However, a small percentage found them ineffective or was undecided. This highlights an overall positive impact but also points to gaps in achieving broader effectiveness.

The third objective is to examine the impact of Policies of the Federal Road Safety Corps on accident reduction in the state. When asked if the FRSC has been effective in making policies to reduce accidents, majority

of respondents, 204 (53.7%), strongly disagreed, and 142 (37.3%) disagreed, emphasizing the perceived ineffectiveness of the FRSC in addressing accident related issues in Benue State. Only 3.7% strongly agreed and 5.3% agreed.

Generally, the study examined the perception of motorists regarding the effectiveness of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Benue State. Findings suggest that while the FRSC has made notable efforts in public enlightenment and road safety awareness, there remain areas for improvement. Additionally, respondents largely agreed that FRSC frequently checks road conditions in the state, with 54.7% strongly agreeing and 32.6% agreeing. Moreover, the FRSC's use of radio and television jingles to caution road users was widely acknowledged, as 53.4% of respondents strongly agreed, and 30% agreed that these efforts contribute to safer driving behaviors. These findings underscore the FRSC's active role in public awareness campaigns, even though some respondents expressed concerns that enforcement takes precedence over education.

Despite these positive perceptions, significant challenges affecting the FRSC's efficiency were identified. A major challenge is limited resources and funding, with 62.6% of respondents strongly agreeing that this constrains the agency's effectiveness. Additionally, visibility and accessibility issues were highlighted, as 52.3% of respondents agreed that the FRSC faces difficulties in reaching certain areas, compounded by poor road conditions. This suggests that infrastructural limitations and insufficient funding hamper the FRSC's ability to operate optimally in Benue State.

Lastly, the study explored the effectiveness of FRSC policies in reducing accidents. A considerable number of respondents (53.7%) strongly disagreed, while 37.3% disagreed that the FRSC has been effective in implementing accident reduction policies. This indicates a general dissatisfaction with policy measures, suggesting the need for improved strategies in curbing road accidents. While the FRSC's efforts in road safety awareness and public enlightenment are acknowledged as beneficial, significant gaps remain in policy impact, funding, and accessibility. Addressing these challenges would enhance the effectiveness of the FRSC in promoting road safety in Benue State.

Conclusion

The study examined the perception of motorists regarding the effectiveness of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Benue State. Findings suggest that while the FRSC has made notable efforts in public enlightenment and road safety awareness, there remain areas for

frequently checks road conditions in the state, with 54.7% strongly agreeing and 32.6% agreeing. Moreover, the FRSC's use of radio and television jingles to caution road users was widely acknowledged, as 53.4% of respondents strongly agreed, and 30% agreed that these efforts contribute to safer driving behaviors. These findings underscore the FRSC's active role in public awareness campaigns, even though some respondents expressed concerns that enforcement takes precedence over education.

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Recommendations

Based on this study on Federal Road Safety Corps and Administration of Road Safety in Benue State, the following recommendations are made:

The Federal Road Safety Corps should adopt a more proactive and community-centered approach by increasing its visibility and accessibility within local communities. This may include regularly organizing training sessions, town hall meetings, and outreach programs in collaboration with local stakeholders, such as motor parks, transport associations, and community leaders.

Provision of Standardized Equipment: Adequate and standardized enforcement equipment should be supplied to all Federal Road Safety Corps units in Benue State. Collaborative efforts between the government and private organizations can ensure these resources are provided, enhancing the FRSC's ability to manage traffic and reduce accidents.

Strategic Recruitment: Recruitment of qualified personnel for various roles within the FRSC is crucial. This ensures effective team collaboration and alignment with job-specific responsibilities, ultimately enhancing road safety efforts;

Enforcement of Regulations: Emphasizing traffic rules and the consequences of non-compliance should be a recurring activity. Various media channels, books, and pamphlets can be used to ensure widespread understanding.

Stakeholder Collaboration: Regular consultations with stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, road users, and traffic management bodies, can foster the development of more effective accident reduction strategies.

Data Management: Improved training on accident data management for FRSC staff is essential. Accurate, up-to-date, and universally accepted data will help assess effectiveness and identify areas needing improvement;

Road Safety Education should be enhanced: Integrating road safety into school curricula can instill proper road usage habits from a young age. Efforts should be intensified to ensure its implementation across all schools in Benue State.

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