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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Risky behaviours among commercial motorcycle riders in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.

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Abstract

Objectives:

We examined risky behaviours among the commercial motorcycle riders in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.

Methods:

It was a community based cross sectional study. The instrument used in collecting data was a semi-structured interviewer administered questionnaire. Information collected included socio-demographic characteristics, risky behaviours, registration of the motorcycle, driver's license, lecture on road safety and involvement in road accidents. Data was analyzed using stata 12 software. Proportions were determined and statistics presented in tables.

Results:

A total of 111 commercial motorcyclists were recruited with a mean age of 37.0±10.2 years. Overwhelming majority (97.4%) of the commercial motorcyclists in Ogbomoso engaged in commercial motorcycling as a secondary job. Only 27.0% of them use crash helmet always and majority of them (83.0%) carry more than one passenger at a time while 14.7% of the riders admitted to drinking alcohol before riding. Majority (75.7%) of the riders learned how to ride from their friends and only 18.9% had valid driver's license.

Conclusion:

Commercial motorcycle riders in Ogbomoso engage in so many risky behaviours such as, overloading, non use of crash helmets and riding on trunk A roads.

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INTRODUCTION

The use of motorcycles for public transportation in Nigeria began in Calabar, the capital of Cross River State in early 1970s and by 1980s it had gradually spread to other parts of Nigeria (Oladipo et al, 2012). The rapid rate of urbanization in the face of inadequate means of transportation was one of the factors responsible for the use of motorcycles for public transportation (Oladipo et al, 2012). The high level of unemployment also made a lot of people to join the business of commercial motorcycling (Adekunle et al, 2013). This form of transportation was accepted by many people because of its ability to take passengers to their door steps, manoeuvre their way through traffic congestion and reach areas where other forms of commercial transportation cannot reach because of bad roads (Oladipo et al, 2012; Ngim et al, 2007; Okojie et al, 2003; Yunusa et al, 2014). The government also was not left out in the spread of the use of motorcycles as a means of public transportation because in the process of

empowering the unemployed youths some governors, local government chairmen including some members of the parliament distributed motorcycles to unemployed youths for them to use as a means of livelihood.

The use of motorcycles for public transportation in Nigeria also brought with it an increase in the number of road traffic accident involving motorcycles with the riders as well as the passengers sustaining various degrees of injuries ranging from head injury, limb injuries, blunt abdominal and chest injuries (Adekunle et al 2013). These injuries come with associated huge socio-economic consequences to the injured, their families and the society at large (Adekunle et al 2013). Human factors, vehicular conditions and the state of Nigerian roads are some of the reasons that have been adduced for the unacceptably high rate of road traffic accidents involving motorcycles in Nigeria. In this study we examined the risky behaviours among the commercial motorcycle riders in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.

Study Area

Ogbomoso is a rapidly expanding city situated in Southwestern Nigeria, 100 km north of Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State. The population was estimated to be approximately 801,389 in 2006. The indigenous people belong to the Yoruba ethnic group whose primary vocation includes farming and trading. Ogbomoso is one of the main gateways to the northern region of Nigeria. The Ilorin-Ibadan trunk, a federal road that serves this purpose facilitates interstate transportation of goods and is bound by the Central Business District (CBD) in the city. The major means of intra city transportation is the commercial motorcycle and taxi. There are many motorcycle parks in Ogbomoso but they are grouped into north and south associations. Each of the associations meets once a month at a designated centre.

Materials and Methods

This study was carried out in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria and it was a community based, cross sectional descriptive study. Data was collected on the meeting day and at the meeting venue of each of the associations. Detail information was given to the members about the study, after which consent was obtained from them. Those that gave consent were randomized using simple random sampling technique and a total of 111 commercial motorcyclists were selected. The data for the northern association was collected on the 4th March, 2014 and a total of 65 commercial motorcyclists were selected while that of the southern association was collected on 8th April, 2014 and a total of 46 commercial motorcyclists were selected. Data collection was carried out using a semi-structured, interviewer administered questionnaire with the help of twenty student nurses in training who served as research assistants and had gone through a training session on how to administer the instrument. Information collected included socio-demographic characteristics, risky behaviours, registration of the motorcycle, driver's license, lecture on road safety and involvement in road accidents.

Analysis was done using stata 12 software. Proportions were determined and statistics presented in tables

Results

A total of 111 commercial motorcyclists participated in the study. The age of the respondents ranged from 25 to 60 years with a mean age of 37.0 ± 10.2 years and the age group with the highest frequency (46, 41.4%) was 30-39 years. All the commercial motorcyclists were males and majority of them were married (96, 86.5%) while almost all of them were from the Yoruba ethnic group (110, 99.1%). Nearly all of them were Christians (100, 90.1%) and had at least secondary education (92, 82.9%). Overwhelming majority (94, 85.1%) of the commercial motorcyclists in Ogbomoso engaged in commercial motorcycling as a secondary job to supplement their income (TABLE 1). Less than one-third (31, 27.9%) of the commercial riders indulged in alcohol intake while 14.7% (16) of the riders admitted to drinking alcohol before riding. Majority (75.7%) of the riders learned how to ride from their friends and only 18.9% (21) had valid driver's license. More than one-half of the riders (69, 62.2%) registered their motorcycle with the government while 90.1% (100) have crash helmets (TABLE 3). Though, almost all of them (100, 90.1%) have crash helmet only 27.0% (30) of them use the crash helmet always and only 14.4% (16) have crash helmet for their passengers. Majority of them (78, 70.3%) have listened to lecture on road safety at one time or the other and more than one-third of them have book on highway codes (35, 31.5%) (TABLE 3). A total of 11 riders (9.9%) usually receive phone call when riding motorcycle while 9.0% (10) usually rides when it is raining. Majority of them (83.0%) carry more than one passenger at a time and 12.6% (14) engage in group riding. Less than one-third of the riders (19, 17.1%) engaged in stunting when riding and 44.1% have been involved in road traffic accident at one time or the other. One-half of the riders usually ply trunk A roads (56, 50.5%). Nearly (100, 90.1%) all of them usually give safety gap when on the road and 91.0% (101) usually check road signs when riding (TABLE 2).

TABLE 1: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Variables	Freq (%)
Age group	
20 – 29	21 (18.9)
30 – 39	46 (41.4)
40 – 49	28 (25.2)
50 – 59	9 (8.2)
>= 60	7 (6.3)
Mean Age = 37.0 ± 10.2	
Educational Status	
No Formal Education	4 (3.6)
Primary	28 (25.2)
Secondary	64 (57.7)
Tertiary	15 (13.5)
Marital Status	
Single	15 (13.5)
Married	96 (86.5)
Ethnicity	
Yoruba	110 (99.1)
Others	1 (0.9)
Religion	
Christianity	100 (90.1)
Islam	11 (9.9)
Primary Occupation	
Okada Driver	17 (14.9)
Other Jobs	94 (85.1)

TABLE 2: RISKY BEHAVIOURS

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (%)
ALCOHOL INTAKE	
YES	31(27.9)
NO	80(72.1)
ALCOHOL INTAKE BEFORE RIDING	
YES	16(14.7)
NO	93(85.3)
USE OF CRASH HELMET	
RARELY	39(35.2)
OCCASSIONALLY	42(37.8)
ALWAYS	30(27.0)
USE OF PASSENGER'S CRASH HELMET	
RARELY	100(90.1)
OCCASSIONALLY	8(7.2)
ALWAYS	3(2.7)
PHONE CALL WHILE RIDING	
YES	11(9.9)
NO	100(90.1)
RIDING IN THE RAIN	
YES	10(9.0)
NO	101(91.0)
GROUP RIDING	
YES	14(12.6)
NO	97(87.4)
STUNTING	
YES	19(17.1)
NO	92(82.9)

SAFETY GAP	
YES	100(90.1)
NO	11(9.9)
NO OF PERSANGER	
1	19(17.1)
2 AND ABOVE	92(82.9)
CHECKING ROAD SIGNS	
RARELY	2(1.8)
OCCASSIONALLY	8(7.2)
ALWAYS	101(91.0)
USUAL ROUTE	
TRUNK A	56(50.5)
TRUNK B	47(42.3)
BOTH	8(7.2)

TABLE 3: PARTICULARS OF MOTORCYCLE

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY (%)
OWNERSHIP	
SELF	103(92.8)
OTHERS	8(7.2)
MODE OF ACQUISITION(n=103)	
HIRE PURCHASE	25(24.3)
COOPERATIVE LOAN	25(24.3)
PERSONAL SAVING	53(51.4)
CRASH HELMET	
YES	100(90.1)
NO	11(9.9)
PASSENGER'S CRASH HELMET	
YES	16(14.4)
NO	95(85.6)
REGISTRATION OF MOTOCYCLE	
YES	69(62.2)
NO	42(37.8)
DRIVER'S LICENSE	
YES	21(18.9)
NO	90(81.1)
LECTURE ON ROAD SAFETY	
YES	78(70.3)
NO	33(29.7)
HIGHWAY CODE	
YES	35(31.5)
NO	76(68.5)

Discussion

The age of the commercial motorcycle riders who participated in this study ranged from 25 to 60 years with a mean age of 37.0 ± 10.2 years and the age group with the highest frequency was 30-39 years. This finding is not surprising because this mean age belongs to the most productive age group of the population and the people in this age group are usually willing to take any risk in order to make ends meet. In addition, they are also the group who has the energy demanded by this job because commercial motorcycling is quite demanding and requires expending a lot of energy. This finding is similar to what was found in Benin, Nigeria (36.4%) but different from what was found in Igbo-ora and Zaria where the mean age were less than 30 years (Alti-Muazu et al, 2008; Adogu et al 2009; Iribhogbe, 2009; Amoran et al, 2005-2006) . All the commercial motorcycle riders that participated in this study were all males. This finding is in agreement with the finding of most of the studies done in Nigeria (Oladipo et al, 2012; Adekunle et al 2013; Iribhogbe et al, 2009; Oginni et al, 2007) and one of the reasons for this is that commercial motorcycling is regarded as a male job in this country and especially in Ogbomoso where the study was carried out. In addition, most females will not be able to meet up with the energy demanded this occupation.

It was discovered from this study that majority (86.5%) of the commercial motorcyclists who participated in this study were married. This finding is not unexpected because many of the riders are engaging in commercial motorcycling because of their low income and the pressure to provide for the needs of their families. So they found commercial motorcycling an easy way out to make ends meet and this was also noted by Oni et al (2011) in their study on motorcycle riders in Lagos.

Furthermore, most of the commercial motorcyclists (82.9%) that were educated did not have more than secondary school education and this explained the reason why they engage in commercial motorcycling because with their low level of education they will not be able to compete for better job opportunities. The level of education found in this study is similar to what Ogunmodede et al (2013) and Yunusa et al (2014) found in their studies in Oyo State and Kaduna State, Nigeria respectively.

We found out that most of the commercial motorcycle riders that participated in the study were artisans who also engaged in commercial motorcycling as a way of increasing their income. This is now a common practice among the artisans, they prefer to engage in commercial motorcycling instead of resting when they are less busy.

Although, 27.9% of the commercial riders indulged in alcohol intake but only 14.7% of the riders admitted to drinking alcohol before riding. Although, It has been established that the use of alcohol contributed greatly to the occurrence of road traffic accident in Nigeria, the proportion of the rider engaging in it is low in Ogbomoso when compared with what obtains in Benin (Amoran et al, 2005-2006) (39.4%), Lagos and Ile-Ife (Oginni et al, 2007) (30.0%).

Moreover, majority (75.7%) of the commercial motorcyclists learn how to ride from their friends, this may be as a result of unavailability of the driving school for the motorcyclist in Ogbomoso. Even, if available many riders will still consider it a waste of money and time going to a driving school to learn how to ride motorcycle. This finding is in agreement with what was found in Lagos and Ile-Ife by Oginni et al (2007) and Zaria by Mu'awiyah et al (2012). It is therefore not surprising why just 18.9% of them have a valid driver's license in Ogbomoso.

It is therefore surprising that more than one-half of the riders (62.6%) registered their motorcycle with the government while 90.1% have crash helmets. This may not be unconnected with the enforcement of the law of motorcycle registration and use of crash helmet by the Federal Road Safety Commission of Nigeria. They registered their motorcycles and purchased the crash helmets in order to avoid payment of fine.

It is also amazing to discover that despite the fact that almost all (90.1%) the commercial motorcyclists have crash helmets just only 27.0% of them use the crash helmet regularly. This goes a long way to confirm the fact that many of them do not understand the reasons why they should use crash helmet, they only bought the helmet to avoid payment of fine. This finding is similar to what Achigbu et al (2013) found in Enugu, Nigeria where they discovered that only 21.3% of the riders use crash helmet regularly. In addition, the small number of the riders (14.4%) who have crash helmets for their passengers is another reason that shows that the riders do not understand the reason why crash helmet should be used when riding motorcycle.

It was discovered that majority of them (70.3%) have listened to lecture on road safety at one time or the other and more than one-third of them have a book on highway codes. This may not be unconnected with the activities of Federal Road Safety Commission in reducing accident on Nigeria roads.

A lower proportion 9.9% of the riders usually receive phone call when riding motorcycle while 9.0% usually rides when it is raining. Majority of the riders (83.0%) carry more than one passenger at a time and this may not be unconnected with the motive of making more money within shortest possible time without considering the safety of themselves and that of the passengers. The fact that almost half (48.6%) of the riders purchased their motorcycles through hire purchase or cooperative loan is another reason for the overloading that is very rampant among the commercial motorcyclist in Ogbomoso because many riders want to make enough money within shortest possible time so that they can meet up with the payment of their loan.

Conclusion

It was discovered from the study carried out that the commercial motorcycle riders in Ogbomoso engage in so many risky behaviours such as, overloading, non use of crash helmets and riding on trunk A roads.

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