

Public Enlightenment in FRSC Operations in Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges

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Abstract

Public enlightenment is the function of the public education office of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) in Nigeria, which is one of the twelve critical and top management offices of the corps. Through the activities and programs of the public enlightenment as usually carried out by the corps; FRSC, the drivers particularly the commercial drivers, other motoring members of the public as well as the road users are sensitized, enlightened, educated and are made aware of the road safety measures and practices and how best to use the roads to avoid road traffic crashes and its attendant loss of lives and properties. Using various platforms, such as leaflets, handbills, fliers, seminars, workshops, driver's improvement courses just to name but a few, the motorists and other members of the motoring public are constantly being educated on the dangers or menace of over speeding, over loading, drunk driving, one way driving, wrongful overtaking, driving under the influence of drugs and the likes. The drivers are also educated through these mediums on road traffic signs, signals and markings which are regulatory (mandatory or prohibitive), informative and warning in nature. Such information like the need to procure a genuine and valid driver's license from a recognized road safety driving schools and the consequences of not having a driver's license are equally taught using any of these fora. The essence of all these is to ensure a safe motoring environment and to mitigate or prevent road traffic-related crashes on the Nigerian roads. Using descriptive and historical methodology, the paper therefore explores the prospects of public enlightenment in FRSC operations in Nigeria as well as the challenges confronting the corps public education office in actualizing its mandate. Apart from the literature materials consulted, oral interviews were conducted to capture the theme of the study. The paper also highlights some measures that would address these observed challenges in a bid to create a safe motoring environment and reduce road traffic crashes/carnage in Nigeria.

Key Words: Public Enlightenment, Drivers-Motoring Public, Road Traffic Crashes/Accidents, FRSC and Nigeria

Introduction

The years preceding the establishment of FRSC or road safety in Nigeria witnessed an unprecedented high level of carnage on the Nigerian highways. So many lives were wasted and lost that it was difficult if not almost impossible to quantify, and property worth billions of naira were equally destroyed during that dark period in history. According to Jatau (2018: ix), it was even more pathetic and devastating to discover that most of the persons consumed by highway crashes were young people in their active, prime and most productive age.

The idea behind the establishment of the corps; FRSC was therefore inspired by the desire to reduce to the barest minimum the wanton destruction and waste of human lives and property and to create a safer road culture and a healthier road traffic environment for the mobility of persons, goods and services. To a large extent, Jatau (2018: ix) observes that the FRSC has justified its existence by its commitment to the execution of its responsibilities as enshrined in its statutory mandate. Thus, the operations of FRSC have led to a quantitative reduction of road traffic crashes and its concomitant loss of lives and property which was fast depleting the nation's manpower and material resources, thus, not undermining the potential for socio-economic development. This feat was however achieved not only through the efforts of the uninformed personnel of the corps along with its voluntary arm, the special marshals but to a reasonable extent through public enlightenment of the corps public education office who has taken up the challenge with relentless vigor to conquer a traffic war that has been holding the country hostage for years.

The public enlightenment objective was developed based on the consideration that 80% of drivers in Nigeria were partial or outright illiterates (Agunloye, 1989). Affirming to this, Balogun (2006:100), notes that only 50% of Nigerians are presently literate in spite of the importance of education in driving. The manifestation of this low level of literacy according to him is captured by his words below:

Believe in charms as protection against accident or road accident Immune Delusional Syndrome (RAIDS); low maintenance culture; traffic lawlessness particularly by the political class; riding motorcycles while wearing 'agbada' or without helmet, women sitting astride on motorcycles; the idea of not reporting accident or road traffic crash cases to the law enforcement agencies for record purposes keeping....

In addition to the above, over-speeding, over-loading, drunk-driving, reckless driving or driving against traffic, wrongful over-takings, one-way driving, smoking and driving, use of mobile phones while driving, wrongful parking are some of the areas low level of education or literacy have manifested among the drivers and the motoring public and these are partly responsible for many of the road traffic crashes that occurs on the Nigerian roads which in some cases had led to loss of lives and material waste. Against this background, the need for sustained aggressive public enlightenment cannot be over-emphasized. The massive role that motoring plays in the daily lives of Nigerians just like in any other country of this world calls for regular public enlightenment for both the young and the old, the educated and the uneducated alike with the primary intentions of reducing road traffic crashes on the nation's roads.

Long before now, driving was historically a job for the illiterates who had very little knowledge about many things concerning driving such as the vehicles, the road and other factors. Most of the knowledge of the drivers were through trial and error, which were mostly expensive. The saving grace at that time was that people were more cautious. Drugs of higher quality or grade than palm wine were not available to alter the driver's mood, perceptions and mental state. The sanctity of life was also sacrosanct in those days. Because illiteracy was rife, Highway Code was mainly theoretical and scanty. The population of vehicles and drivers were very moderate; thus, enlightenment information was passed from person to person with ease and efficiency. Driving apprenticeship was quite long and discipline for any error committed by the learners was usually severe. The propensity to speed or rush was curtailed by the limited engine capacity, coupled with bumpy, dusty and slippery roads (Idowu, 2006:136).

However, Idowu (2006:137) also observes that the contemporary situation differs dramatically and drastically. Thus, the inventions of fast-moving automobile-cars, the propensity to over-speeding and over-loading, the availability of tarred, good or motorable roads, the increase in the population of vehicles and drivers among other present challenges have all contributed in no smaller measure to the occurrence of road traffic crashes with its consequence waste of valuable material resources and the loss of human lives.

It is based on the above reasons that the FRSC designed so many public enlightenment programs, strategies and platforms through which the drivers are reached; educated and enlightened so as to reduce the spate of road traffic crashes and its attendant carnage/fatalities on the Nigerian roads. These programs ranges from motor park rallies, drama sketches, free distributions of Highway Codes, leaflets and handbills to the motorists and the general public. This also includes seminars, workshops, and conferences, driver's improvement courses, road safety school/NYSC clubs, safety tips/education on newspapers and magazines columns (print media platforms), radio and television (electronic media), billboard adverts, print and electronic media adverts, partnership with special marshals and other governmental and non-governmental agencies charged with the responsibility of ensuring safety on the Nigerian roads, and as well as through the Corps Marshal Annual Conference among others. Through all these platforms, the motoring public as stated by Jatau (2018:35) are educated to conceive the efforts of FRSC as striving towards improving their safety and security rather than misinterpreting it as those of another oppressive, repressive and corrupt government agency created to extort and exploit the drivers and the motoring public. Moreover, these approaches are based on the recognition of the imperatives of communication. In this regard, local dialects are sometimes adopted for such moments for grassroot and expanded effect and in order to achieve the desired results.

FRSC: Establishment and Statutory Mandate

The FRSC Establishment Act, 2007 made provision for the Commission and the Corps. Based on this therefore, it means that the acronym FRSC, has two different meaning or interpretation; The Federal Road Safety Commission and the Federal Road Safety Corps. The Federal Road Safety Commission is charged with the responsibility for road safety related policy making, appointment of suitable persons as officers of the corps at the various levels, promotion and disciplining of officers, except the Corp Marshal who is also a member of the commission and who was appointed by the president. The commission is headed by the Chairman.

The Corps, on the other hand is the operational tool of the commission which executes and enforces the commissions policies across Nigeria. Members of the Corps are the uninformed or regular personnel as well as the volunteer staff also known as the Special Marshals who are always on the Nigerian roads performing road traffic and road safety duties which includes public enlightenment, persuasion, subtle force or enforcement and

prosecution where and when necessary. The Corps is headed by the Corps Marshal and Chief Executive (Niniola, 2022:25-26). At the management level, the Corps comprises of 12 Corps offices and 8 departments that are domiciled at the FRSC National Headquarters, Abuja. In order to carry out its organizational goals, there are 12 zonal commands superintending over 37 states commands including the FCT Abuja. There are also close to 300 unit commands spread across various local government areas in the country. This is excluding Zebra, Out-posts, the newly created Area Commands as well as Station Offices domiciled in many of the local governments across the country (Jatau, 2018:33-34).

The Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) which is the lead agency in road traffic administration and safety management in Nigeria came into existence in view of its importance and relevance in the prevention and mitigation of Road Traffic Crashes/Accidents (RTC/A). This became imperative because of several losses of human lives and properties as a result of the spate of road traffic crashes that followed the influx of auto mobiles in the country during the period of oil boom and its attendant economic growth in the 70s and 80s.

The FRSC like any other government agency is the product of statutory instrument/law, Decree and Act of Parliament. As a Decree, the FRSC was established as a para-military organization on the 19th February, 1988 via the promulgation of Decree 45 of 1988 as repealed or amended through Decree 35 of 1992 which gave it additional powers. At the inception, Decree 45 of 13th December 1988, empowered FRSC with the jurisdiction to monitor only the federal highways. However, this jurisdiction was increased and extended to cover all public highways through the amended Decree 35 of 1992. Through an executive cum judicial process, the two Decrees were encapsulated into an Act of Parliament and entrenched in the Laws of the Federation of Nigeria (LFN) in Part II Vide CAP 141 of 1990 as amended. Today, it is now known as FRSC Establishment Acts, 2007 as contained in the part of the Act. Under section 5 of this Act, the commission is empowered to make regulations for carrying out the objectives of this Act while section 15 empowers the corps to enforce the road traffic laws to cover all public highways in Nigeria. Meanwhile, section 10 sub-section 2 and 3 of the Establishment Act 2007 provides for the statutory functions of the corps or members of the corps which among others include the following:

- Preventing or minimizing road traffic crashes/accidents
- Clearing of obstructions on any part of the highways
- Providing or giving prompt attentions and care to victims of road traffic crashes
- Educating drivers, motorists and other members of the motoring public on the need to maintain discipline and safe driving culture on the highway
- Determining and enforcing speed limits for all categories of roads and vehicles
- Cooperating with bodies or groups or agencies engaged in road safety activities in order to prevent or mitigate road crashes on the highways etc.
- Conducting researches into the courses of road traffic crashes/motor vehicle accidents and methods of preventing or minimizing them by putting into use results of such researches
- Designing and producing driver's licenses and vehicle number plates for various categories of vehicle operators
- Standardization of highway traffic codes
- Removal and detaining for a reasonable length of time any vehicle that causes obstruction on the highway
- To endorse/puncture after conviction, any driving license indicating the offence committed by its holder
- Making regulations in pursuance of any of the functions assigned to the corps by or under this Decree (Jatau, 2018:28-30; Idowu, 2006:129-133; Lawal, 2022:113-114; Balogun, 2006:1-2; Onamusi, 2011:17; Oduche, 2014:18; Ibengwu-Mba, 2013:13, FRSC Establishment Act, 2007; FRSC Compendium, 2011:23-24).

The Concept of a Driver

The Nigerian Highway Code (2018:25) defines a driver as a person who operates an engine powered motor vehicle with four or more wheels. A driver is also a person above 18 years, with formal training in the technology of driving. He or she must have a learner's permit and has undergone training in a Driving School as recommended by the law. The driver like any other professional (the pilot, the ship captain) requires proper training to ensure competence. After proper training, it is expected that the driver would have been tested by a Certified Testing Officer, Vehicle Inspection Officer or Driver Testing Officers as it may apply in any of the states in Nigeria. Before being licensed to drive, it is expected that the applicant must have been subjected to Visual Acuity Test and if impaired, should get the vision corrected by using recommended eye glasses or by any other means. The driver like any other professional, should regularly attend training and retraining courses and get his vision checked regularly, once every two years. Any person driving on the roads that has not been trained, has not attended training and retraining/refresher courses, should consider himself/herself a potential danger/murderer on the road. Jumping into the vehicle to drive without adequate training and knowledge of the technology of driving is like giving a fully loaded rifle to a kid with the safety catch off. The result is that the kid will kill people or

himself (Onyedokun,2014:10). From the foregoing, it is obvious that a driver ought to be knowledgeable about issues of driving and need to be properly trained. BBC online (1988) as cited in Egonu (2011:27) however observes that; "... some accidents or road traffic crashes are attributed to drivers not taking sufficient care are not having adequate knowledge in the art of driving....". This view was also shared by the Nigerian Highway Code (2008:84) when it stated that "most road users are not knowledgeable on the rules of the road, as they are therefore likely to make faulty decisions or take actions that may result in dangers not only to themselves but to others". Aside this, according to Matthew, Amanda and Funke (2005:274-297), as cited in Ogwude (2010:7), the three dimensions of driver behaviour which include dislike for driving (which relates to distress or wrong), aggression and fatigue proneness have proved to be most predictive of stress which can consequently result to road traffic crashes. In a related vein, Groeger (2009) confirms this when he stated that the driver's behavior can be influenced by enduring tenderness for anger or anxiety as well as by transitory emotions (anger or fear) which can lead to danger/crashes on the roads.

Understanding the Concept of Public Enlightenment

The public education enlightenment office is one of the 12 corps offices of FRSC, and as the name implies, it is saddled with the responsibility of interpreting the policies and ideas of the Corps, FRSC and as well as educating and enlightening the members of the public on them. The reactions to, compliance with and perception of the general public about traffic rules and regulations is therefore a test of the efficiency of this office. The Corps Public Enlightenment Office (CPEO) has some basic responsibilities which according to Onamusi (2011:20) are stated as follows:

Orientation, Sensitization, enlightenment and education of the public on the proper and safe use roads, facilitations of information dissemination among members of the corps, provision of traffic alerts, publications and supply or distributions of relevant books or texts and other materials that will promote the cooperate image of the Corps.

The term public refers to the people who are in contact with you, your product and services. They are the people for whom you exist, without them you cannot be (Lawal,2022:347). In relation to this study, it is seen by Hornby (2010:1184) as being connected with ordinary people in the society in general. It is also used to refer to all the people in a city, country, town and so on. Or that which concerns or belongs to everyone/all. Enlightenment on the other hand is also defined by Hornby (2010:487) as knowledge about and understanding of something or the process of understanding something or making somebody understand it. In other words, enlightenment can be described as the process of making somebody to have the knowledge of something and to be aware of what he or she does not know before. It is informative and educative and devoid of the state of ignorance of a particular idea, subject, discipline or something.

Public enlightenment therefore can be defined as a conscious effort made to get the public to be aware of a particular public policy or regulation. It can also be seen as an attempt to bring the import of a government policy or decision to be understood by the populace. It is all about making the masses understand why a regulation or policy was made. It also enables the masses to see how a policy is meant to operate, who should enforce the policy and what are the possible advantages or disadvantages of obeying or disobeying the law or rule. It brings the governed to appreciate what their government has in mind or their benefits. The same applies to the institution's counterpart. Public enlightenment helps the people become active participants in governance; enabling them to constructively question the policies and positively accepting the benefits thereof. It does not only teach them what government wants them to know but helps the people come to terms with why they should obey the laws of the land and accept the punishment meted out to offenders of the laws.

Public enlightenment makes policy implementation easy as the populace are aware of why the rules are made for their own good. It gives the government a chance to reach the governed with their policies. It gives the people the chance to actively participate in the implementation of government policies and programs. It makes the populace see government policies as their own, to defend them and to buy into them. It makes the enforcement of government policies very easy because the people understand the import of the policies and sanctions and punishments that follows the disobedience of such policies.

The primary objective of public education is to teach, inform and reach out to the citizens on certain issues of national interests. The cardinal purpose is education and enlightenment. According to Achic (2008:28) cited in Olubori (2019:1), education is the imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning at a school or similar institution, while enlightenment is a process by which a person begins to learn from the known to the unknown. This underscores why the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC); as the nation's lead agency on road safety management and traffic administration embraces public education as one of its core values towards achieving attitudinal change among road users in the country. This is further justified by section 3(C) of the FRSC

Establishment Act, 2007 which outlines the numerous statutory functions of the corps to include " to educate drivers, motorists and other members of the public generally on the proper use of the highways" Hence, in carrying out its statutory role in educating the nation (drivers, road users and the motoring public) on safety and traffic management, this act of robust public enlightenment cannot be over emphasized.

Public enlightenment plays a key role in the operations of FRSC especially in the quest to realize its statutory mandate which is to reduce or prevent the spate of road traffic crashes on the Nigerian roads. In FRSC, public enlightenment is meant to educate, inform and equip the motoring public and the drivers with the necessary skills, driving techniques and knowledge of road safety issues with a view of ensuring safe motoring environment and healthy driving culture.

Mediums of Public Enlightenment in FRSC Operations in Nigeria

According to Balogun (2006:102) and Jatau (2008:34-40), below are the mediums or methods in which public enlightenment are organized and are carried out by FRSC in a bid to mitigate and prevent road traffic crashes and its associated consequences.

- a. Motor-park rallies involving driver's association and passengers teaching them how to avoid accidents or what to do in case of road traffic crashes. Motor-park rallies are also conducted to enlighten commercial vehicle drivers on various aspects of safety ranging from defensive driving, overtaking drills, first aid drills as well as lessons on basic vehicle parts and their functions. In other instances, rallies could be conducted for special targets like educating the motorcyclists on the advantages of safety helmet, reflective jackets, riding boots or articulated vehicle drivers on the necessity for vehicle based on safety accessories like fire extinguishers and triangular caution signs.
- b. Use of leaflets, handbills and fliers: During rallies, these are being used to convey message which are distributed to the motorists and the general public. The messages are often couched in catchy and witty phrases such as: Drive to Stay Alive, Do Not Be an Accident Statistics among others. The messages are also blended to capture the mood of the seasons. For example, only the Living celebrates and so on.
- c. Drivers Improvement Courses: This includes driver targeted lessons which are often adopted as Driver's Improvement Courses which is referred as Diploma Certificates in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. This also includes public enlightenment programs extended to driver's training in various organizations and institutions. This also includes establishment of the model driving school to train drivers and its trainers.
- d. Use of posters, billboards, rhymes, songs, slogans and advertisements in print and electronic media. For instance, newspaper and news magazines are known to have provided regular columns by which issues on road safety and developments in the transport industry are communicated to the motoring public through the electronic media; road safety messages are also disseminated to people of different social classes and orientation. This helps to reach wider targets/audiences including the general public.
- e. Church Advocacies/Use of Religious Clerics/Platforms: In expedient case of festive occasions, religious clerics are approached to preach road safety sermons in their churches and mosques in order to avoid road carnage which often trails the yuletide such as Christmas, New Year, Easter, and Eid Celebrations and so on.
- f. Seminars and Workshops: These platforms are always utilized to brainstorm on issues of road safety and accident prevention. Useful deliberations and suggestions emanating from such avenues are further documented in communiques which assist the management to formulate policies on traffic management and safety measures.
- g. Literary campaign emphasizing the value of the Highway Code as a safety guide and as an international safety reference document. The Nigerian Highway Code was translated into five major Nigerian languages. It was also translated into Arabic, printed in large quantities and are available to drivers who are equally encouraged to use it as a dependable road traffic guide.
- h. Literacy Campaigns in Primary and Secondary Schools: This program was deemed very necessary by the corps because these schools are where the young people could be taught the rudiments of basic crash prevention. Because of this reason, road safety as a subject was included into the education curriculum of these schools.
- i. Road Safety Clubs are also one of the mediums through which the public enlightenment office educates the members of the public and the drivers on road safety matters. These clubs organize lots of activities to propagate the road safety message, but were not engaged for highway patrol duties, neither were they engaged for the apprehension of traffic offenders.
- j. Through the platform of Special Marshals, seminars and workshops are also organized to educate and enlighten the drivers and the members of the public on diverse aspects of road safety issues.
- k. Other miscellaneous mediums of public enlightenment include: special campaign targeted at truck drivers or parts of vehicles, Corps Marshal Annual Conference which provided a platform for social interaction and exchange of ideas amongst the staff, among others.

Public Enlightenment Efforts of FRSC towards RTA/C Reduction in Nigeria

Balogun (2006:103) observes the following to be the various ways and efforts so far made by the Corps, FRSC towards reducing Road Traffic Crashes/Accidents (RTC/A) and its associated fatalities and waste of economic goods on the Nigerian roads.

1. The establishment of the Special Marshal Unit (SMU), in all the commands/formations of FRSC across the local governments in the country, to assist the regular paid, creates more awareness and ensure the participation of private and public sector. Its establishment takes into consideration high traffic flow, land mass, road network as well as diverse background of human resources and interest groups. The activities of the special marshals just like their counterpart regular marshals also help to mitigate or prevent the occurrence of road traffic crashes.
2. Use of Marked-Vehicles: The use of aqua-marine vehicles of FRSC helped to distinguish the Corp's vehicles from others and deter intending offenders. Moreso, FRSC patrol activities which span 0600hrs-1800hrs every day of the week has helped to ensure constant presence of the personnel on the roads which to an extent serves as a check against potential traffic crashes. Again, the kilometer covered has grown from 200,00km at inception to nearly 800,000km daily. With this, a wide range of Nigerian roads are covered especially with the creations of more unit commands in the contemporary time. In this regard, FRSC has 12 zonal commands, 37 operational sector commands and close to 300 unit commands that spreads across the local governments throughout the country with the aim of bringing sanity and order to the Nigerian highways.
3. The establishment of road safety clubs at state and local government levels across the country plays a vital part for the public enlightenment office to achieve its mandate of reducing road traffic crashes to the barest minimum. These clubs are introduced at all levels of education so that everybody will be road safety conscious. It is even introduced into the school curriculum in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions respectively.
4. Introduction of Uniform Licensing Scheme: This was introduced to curb the increase/upsurge in Road Traffic Crashes/Accident (RTC/A). As part of this, road worthiness, validity tag, vehicle identification scheme, enhanced driver's license, certificate of title, vehicle inspection scheme, model driving school and the rest, help not only to publicize the efforts of FRSC at reducing RTA but ensures its acceptance at international level vis-à-vis the recovery of stolen vehicle and vehicle data bank.
5. Partnership with states and local government, charitable individuals, private sector or non-governmental agencies, voluntary organizations, parents/teacher's associations including relevant stakeholders like the Police, Ministry of Transport, Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA), Vehicle Inspection Office (VIO), National Union of Road Transport (NURTW), National Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO), Road Transport Employers Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) and so on are platforms that are used to persuade drivers to drive carefully, educate children on safe road use as well as are used to reform the motoring public and enforce traffic rules and regulations.
6. The FRSC has its formations in twelve operational zones, thirty-seven state sector commands including the FCT Abuja, close to three-hundred-unit commands spreading to all the local governments throughout the country. This helps in ensuring effective patrols and monitoring of all the nooks and crannies of the country and also help to bring sanity to the Nigerian roads. Various offences, penalty points and appropriate and deterrent fines have been listed on the FRSC booking sheet to further convict and enlighten the offender against repeating the same offence.
7. Through the public enlightenment office, the corps has been able to advise the government to construct and carry out palliative measure on the Nigerian roads. Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA) has been helpful in this regard. There is also public campaign for the compulsory installment of speed limiters by commercial drivers, and the use of seatbelt, helmet, reflective jacket and compulsory driver's training and education.

Prospects of Public Enlightenment in FRSC Operations

The Federal Road Safety Corps, FRSC, was established among all, to help prevent or greatly reduce road traffic crashes on Nigerian roads. Where the crashes occur, the corps is meant to help the victims of such crashes stay alive by promptly attending to the victim(s) with first aid and taking them to a nearby medical center or hospital where the victim(s) can receive proper medical attentions and treatment. From the above primary statutory duty, it is obvious that the corps has much to do with interacting with the public to make the policy thrust of preventing road traffic crashes a reality. This means that FRSC has to educate and enlighten the public on what to do to prevent crashes. Based on this, Ugwumba (2024) captures the prospect of public enlightenment in FRSC operation during the researchers' interactive session with him.

1. One of such prospects is that preventing road traffic crashes will entail talking to the road users on how best to use the roads. Face to face explanation on the importance of government policies and the benefits the populace stand to derive from such policies, have been the most primitive form of public enlightenment even though it has always been the costliest and the most tedious and time consuming. Road shows, radio and television programs and motor-park rallies are veritable avenues for reaching the populace on any matter of general interest. This is one of the reason the corps must keep on talking face to face to the masses. The need for person-to-person explanation is strengthened by the fact that most members of the society are not enlightened enough to depend on

electronic forms of mass information dissemination and that is one of the reasons to adopt all forms of public education/enlightenment in promoting FRSC operations.

2. Another aspect of the prospect is that the public enlightenment is needful in the operations of FRSC because the motoring public must also know that when they fail to use the roads properly, there are sanctions they must face. This means that the public enlightenment must also include what constitutes traffic offences and the sanctions/fines they attract. For example, driving dangerously is contrary to safe road usage principles, therefore, it attracts a fine of #50,000. The road user must also be taught that dangerous driving is considered more likely to cause a crash and, in the process, lead to crash-related injuries or death.

3. The third aspect is that the public must also know the work the corps does and why, to enhance their cooperation and compliance with the demands of the rules that govern the use of the roads. This is necessary for compliance and appreciation's sake. If the road users are aware that the FRSC operatives are on the road for the safety of the road users, they will naturally obey them and appreciate the corps the more. This is still needful in the areas of curbing mob actions against the operatives and prevention of negative insinuations against the operatives.

4. The corps also needs the public enlightenment for collaborative efforts from other government agencies. This is true because public enlightenment will also help other government agencies and the general public to understand what the corps does and perhaps give the corps the needed collaboration. For example, medical centers and medical practitioners must be aware of the operational styles of the corps so that when operatives bring crash victims to them, they will attend to the victims promptly in order to help the corps attain the 50% reduction in fatalities associated with crashes.

5. Continuous public enlightenment is still needed to keep the public abreast with not just what the FRSC does but also what she intends to do. The motoring public and indeed, the general public must always know what the government is doing to help the public live lives to the full without being killed or maimed on the roads. The vision and mission of the corps, the goals and objectives the corps aspires to attain and the future of the corps as envisioned by the policy makers are also communicated to the general public on a need-to-know basis through public enlightenment activities.

Challenges of Public Enlightenment in FRSC Operations

Just like every other endeavour of life which is established for the good of the people, there are challenges which public enlightenment in FRSC faces. According to Wushishi (2004), the challenges include:

1. It is costly: Going on air with a public enlightenment strategy involves money. Even when monetary budget has been made, the budget is hardly enough for the various media house and personnels that are involved. This makes it hard for the corps to carry out much of the enlightenment campaign as would be needed.

2. Another challenge the Corp faces in the area of public enlightenment is that public enlightenment is a continuous program. Almost everything that has to do with the operations of the corps goes with the public enlightenment. The public needs to be aware of the corps modes of operation, they need to know every new policy that has to do with their welfare on the road. This means that the corps will have to continuously expend money and other resources to keep the program going. This in other words means continuous spending.

3. The next challenge is that the aspect of public enlightenment which is not so money consuming but quite tedious, time and energy consuming and not very effective in achieving the desired goals.

4. The fourth one is that the target audience does not show much interest in the information disseminated. People show much apathy to matters of public interest. Nigerian road users do not attach much importance to the free public enlightenment activities of the Federal Road Safety Corps just because the corps does not charge money for the information. On the other hand, the public pays little or no serious attention to FRSC public enlightenment programs because they do not make any direct gain from listening to the programs and most drivers are always busy with their driving business for the gain of it and thus pays less attention to road safety issues as preached by public enlightenment program of the corps.

5. The last challenge we shall consider here is that members of the motoring public believe that road traffic crashes just occur no matter how careful the road users are. They think that the public enlightenment programs of the FRSC do not usually help. They also think that most of the fatal crashes/accidents that claim lives cannot be prevented, but must occur.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The economic boom or growth that followed oil exploration, exploitation and exportation in the 70s and 80s led to massive influx of automobiles and increase in vehicular movement in and around the country. This occurred without a commensurate import of good and healthy driving culture and without a lead agency in road traffic administration and safety management on the Nigerian roads. The consequence of this was the upsurge in road traffic crashes/accidents and its attendant increase in the spate of fatality or carnage as well as the destruction of economic goods and properties worth millions of naira at that period in history. This led to the establishment of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC) on the 18th February, 1988, with its operative arm known as the

corps/uniform personnel. The corps is therefore charged with the task of road traffic crashes and its associated consequences. It is in view of this that the public education office of the corps was created and saddled with the obligation of enlightenment and sensitization of the motoring public and the drivers on issues concerning over-speeding, drunk-driving, wrongful overtaking, among others with the aim of preventing the spate of traffic crashes and its associated fatalities. However, there are several observed challenges as noted in this work that are militating against the efforts of the public enlightenment office of the corps in its bid to make sure that the Nigerian roads are safe to the entire road users. Against this backdrop, this paper therefore recommends the following as the way forward:

- The drivers and the motoring public should take heed of the messages conveyed by the public enlightenment office in FRSC jingles and advertorials
- The drivers and other road users must obey all traffic rules and regulations whenever they are on the road whether the members of the corps or other law enforcement agents are there or not.
- There should be adequate funding of the public enlightenment programs and activities. The corps should make serious efforts to partner and solicit funds from public spirited individuals, charitable individuals/agencies, non-governmental organizations and international bodies to sponsor public enlightenment programs that bother on drivers and motoring public.
- Every driver should make his/herself available for refresher or retraining courses as has always been organized by the public enlightenment offices of the FRSC spread across various commands in the country. Moreover, they should endeavor to obtain the Nigerian Highway Code.
- The drivers and the motoring public who are the targeted audience of public enlightenment should show interest on safety programs and activities. They should pay attention to every program aimed at reducing road traffic crashes.
- Public enlightenment should be a continuous thing. It should be done on a constant basis and not only during the festive period like Christmas, New Year, Easter, Eid Celebrations and so on. Because it has been discovered that drivers are always in a hurry to make more money during these periods thereby ignoring traffic rules and regulations which eventually leads to road traffic crashes. But with regular reach out to the drivers and motoring public, they are kept abreast of road safety issues, programs and activities that helps to reduce the possibilities of road traffic crashes at these periods.

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