

**SOCIO CULTURAL DETERMINANTS OF SMOKING AND ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION
AMONG ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS IN ANAMBRA STATE:
A STUDY OF NATIONAL UNION OF ROAD TRANSPORT WORKERS (NURTW), AWKA**

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Abstract

This paper examined the socio cultural determinants of smoking and alcohol consumption among road transport workers in Anambra state. It is a cross sectional survey and the participants were drawn from the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) Awka Chapter. The questionnaire constituted the instrument for data collection for the study and participants in the study were selected using the simple random sampling technique. The social learning theory and the availability-proneness theory were adopted as the theoretical anchorage for the study. It was found among others that road transport workers in Anambra state drink alcohol to overcome boredom, avoid stress and to make them happy. It was also found in this study that road transport workers were influenced into drinking alcohol because of the availability of alcohol, peer group influence, influence from their families and the desire to cope with economic stress of day to day realities of life. The study also found that smoking makes people to feel good/high and that smoking of marijuana produces an endless calm and unassuming behaviour on them. Finally, it was observed that road transport workers smoke and drink alcohol because it is sweeter when they are taken together and it makes them feel good when they smoke and drink simultaneously. The study therefore recommended among others that commercial drivers should be monitored on the highways to ascertain the level of alcohol in their systems with a view to penalizing those of them who drink and drive. The study also recommended attitudinal change for members of the road transport workers through intensified sensitization with a view to curtailing the penchant for addiction especially while at work.

Keywords: Alcohol, Marijuana, Tobacco, Smoking and Drinking of alcoholic beverages

Introduction

In the United States, initiation of tobacco use often precedes initiation of alcohol use. In turn, initiation of alcohol use virtually always precedes initiation of marijuana use, which almost always precedes initiation of use of cocaine and other "hard" drugs (Kandel 1982; Robins and Przybeck 1985) cited in (Hawkins, Arthur and Catalano, 1995). It could be a possibility that the same sequence is maintained in Nigeria. However, it is not sacrosanct that tobacco initiation will often precede alcohol use either in Nigeria or elsewhere. Leon, Rendon, Garcia, Aizpuru, Pinto, Anitua and Diaz (2007:252) stressed that:

literature has paid attention to the combined use of alcohol and nicotine for several reasons: i) many alcoholics die from smoking-related illnesses (Hughes, 1995); ii) the combined, rather than single, use of these two substances may produce a multiplicative or synergistic increase in cancer rates, especially the oropharyngeal cancers (Bobo, 1989); iii) smoking may be a marker for alcoholism (Hughes, 1995); iv) until recently, alcoholism has been the main focus of cessation treatments because clinicians have been more preoccupied with the behavioural consequences of alcohol addiction and seem to have forgotten the health consequences of smoking in alcoholics (Hughes, 1996); and v) the discontinuation of one of these two substances may influence the use of the other.

Furthermore, Leon et al. (2007:252) argued that

Use of alcohol and tobacco may be related in two ways: i) intrapersonal linkage (alcohol drinkers usually smoke and vice versa) and ii) situational linkage (people who use alcohol and tobacco may use them together in the same situations) (Shiffman and Balabanis, 1995). To explain these links, genetic, coping, pharmacological, learning, personality and cultural factors have been proposed (Niaura and Shiffman, 1995; Bien and Burge, 1990; Room, 2004).

Substance dependence is a global problem facing many societies. Dependence on alcohol and smoking among adults and adolescents usually affects individuals, families, communities and societies. Drug use refers to the use of psychoactive substances. Some social researchers believe that alcohol consumption and smoking usually go together. There is a general belief that there is a relationship or link between smoking and alcohol drinking behaviour of individuals in the society. Studies on use of alcohol and tobacco clearly show that smokers drink and drinkers smoke (Hughes, Rose and Callas, 2000). According to information provided by the National Institute on Alcohol, Abuse and Alcoholism, between 80 and 95 percent of alcoholics smoke cigarettes, a rate that is three times higher than among the population as a whole. Data indicated that approximately 70 percent of alcoholics are heavy smokers (meaning that they smoke more than one pack a day) compared with just 10 percent of the general population.

It is interesting to note that findings from studies on smoking and alcohol consumption show that people who drink heavily are likely to smoke heavily. However, alcohol has a close dependent effect on smoking urge even among light smokers. The strong association between smoking and alcohol drinking among adults may be attributed to the fact that both alcohol use and tobacco use share similar socio-cultural factors. It has been observed that several factors influence the initial and continued use of tobacco and alcohol among adults. These factors include traditional beliefs, family socialization, peer influences, social stereotyping of alcohol, advertising alcohol and tobacco and availability, economic factor, sex and gender and as a coping strategy to pressures in life.

Some scholars believe that individuals are more likely to smoke and drink alcohol if their parents, siblings and friends smoke and drink (Gritz et al. 1998; Flay et al. 1998; Mittelmark et al. 1987; Conrod et al. 1992). It is necessary to note that family is a basic agent of socialization where the culture is transmitted from generation to generation. The family has a tremendous influence on the beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviour of an individual. It then implies that in situations where parents drink alcohol and smoke, there is a likelihood that their children may learn these drinking and smoking behaviour from them as a result of the fact that they have been socialize into that practice. It is noteworthy that today's children will be tomorrow's adult. In view of this, members of NURTW who drink and smoke may have learnt such behaviour from their family members when they were growing up.

Peer influence is another social factor which can influence drinking and smoking behaviour of members of the society. Peer group is a very strong agent of socialization which has an overwhelming and tremendous impact on the attitudes, beliefs and value system of adolescents. Adolescence stage as we know is a stage where young people become very adventurous and wish to experience new attitudes and want to conform to the rules of the group. Peer pressure may influence an individual's drinking and smoking behaviour. In a study conducted by Douglas (2006) in Grenada, it was observed that 77% of the respondents who use marijuana did so to experiment with the drug during the socialization with friends. The findings indicate that selective peer group interaction and socialization has the most powerful impact on drug use. Young people tend to associate based on their similarities of lifestyles. This factor is also applicable to the road transport workers who smoke and drink alcohol. In their own case, some members may learn and imitate other members who are involved in these behaviours.

Demographic factors have also been associated with adolescent smoking and drinking and may contribute to the relationship between smoking and drinking among adults. In relating gender to alcohol and tobacco use, most research studies have shown that males are more likely than females to report current and frequent smoking as well as current and frequent drinking (Kann, 1998; SAMHSA, 1998). Conrad et al (1992) in their review of multiple studies on teen smoking observed that lower socio economic status

consistently predicted smoking onset among teens. According to D'Onofrio (1997), alcohol use was also disproportionately concentrated among economically disadvantaged youth. Economic factor such as unemployment may contribute to use of alcohol among members of the society. In an in-depth interview conducted in three communities in Grenada, it was discovered unemployment influences people to use drugs due to frustration which they experience (Douglas, 2006). According to him, these individuals who are unemployed can be seen sitting idly on a daily basis and they resort to using drugs as a valued pastime activity.

Also, some market practices such as advertising, pricing and availability strongly influence the use of alcohol and tobacco among users. Advertisements on alcohol and tobacco portray smoking and drinking as fun activities that people do to relax and socialize. Television shows and films have effectively built up associations between smoking and glamour. Advertising usually promotes smoking and drinking and also makes positive associations with brands.

Alcohol consumption and smoking have negative and adverse effects on public health and social cohesion. Individuals who depend on substance persist in the use of substance in spite of the fact that they are aware of the harm, they usually have the desire to continue to use tobacco and alcohol and find it difficult to avoid smoking and drinking. There are certain dangers that are associated with smoking. Effects of smoking on individuals include cancer, heart disease, respiratory illness, impotence, ulcers, fertility problems, etc. Evidence suggests that the longer the onset of smoking is delayed the less likely that someone will become addicted (US Department of Health and Human Services (1994). Similarly, research has shown that habits established earlier on affect health-related outcomes in later life (HBSC Briefing Series: 2). These habits may also affect the health of road transport workers who are the subjects for this research. According to Lamkin and Houston (1998), smoking affects other behaviours, for example, young smokers are three times more likely to use alcohol and eight times more likely to use cannabis than non-smokers.

The earlier a person begins drinking alcohol, the more likely he or she is to establish a lifestyle pattern that includes drinking and the associated higher risk of negative health outcomes (Hawkins et al., 1997). For adults and adolescents, cannabis is the most widely used substance after alcohol and tobacco (Hibell, et al., 2000 & Johnston, et al., 1999). According to Bobo and Husten (2000), researches indicate that socio cultural factors influence the initiation and continued use of alcohol and tobacco among adolescents and adults. For instance, adolescents were found to be more likely to smoke if their parents, siblings or friends smoke (Bobo & Husten, 2000). Unger and Chen (1999) found that adolescents whose parents, siblings or friends smoke are more likely to smoke at an earlier age than other adolescents. Similarly adolescents' alcohol use is associated with drinking by peers, parents or siblings (Bobo & Husten, 2000). In view of the aforementioned problems, these research questions were formulated to guide this study.

- 1) What are the socio cultural factors that influence smoking and drinking among members of NURTW, Awka in Anambra state?
- 2) What is the relationship between smoking and alcohol drinking behaviours among members of NURTW, Awka in Anambra state?
- 3) What are the effects of smoking and alcohol drinking behaviours on members of NURTW, Awka in Anambra state?
- 4) What are the possible solutions to tobacco smoking and alcohol drinking behaviour of members of NURTW, Awka in Anambra state?

Theoretical Orientation

This paper is anchored on the social learning theory and the availability-proneness theory.

Social learning theory was propounded by Bandura (1977). The theory holds that behaviour is moulded by rewards and punishment, or reinforcement. Past and present rewards and punishments for certain actions determine the actions that individuals continue to pursue. Reward and punishment structures are built into specific groups. By interacting with members of certain groups or social circles, people learn definitions of behaviours as good or bad. It is in the group setting, differentially for different groups, where reward and punishment take place, and where individuals are exposed to behavioural models and normative definitions of certain behaviours as good or bad.

Social learning theory has a clear-cut application to smoking and alcohol consumption amongst road transport workers in Awka. It proposes that smoking and consumption of alcohol can be explained by differential exposure to groups in which the behaviour is rewarded. These groups provide the social environments in which exposure to definitions, imitations of models, and social reinforcements for smoking and consumption of alcohol take place. The definitions are learned through imitation and social reinforcement of them by members of the group with whom one is associated (Akers et al., 1979). Social

learning theory then proposes that the extent to which smoking and consumption of alcohol will be sustained or avoided depends on the extent to which the behaviour has been differentially reinforced over alternative behaviour and is defined as more desirable (Radosevich et al., 1980. Social learning theory however fails to explain why some people neither drink alcohol nor smoke in spite of being in environment where these behaviours are seriously undertaken.

Availability-proneness theory was propounded by Smart in 1977. Most simply stated, the availability-proneness theory of smoking and alcohol consumption involves the proposition that smoking and consumption of alcohol occurs when a prone individual is exposed to a high level of availability. Smart (1977) argued that the availability of or ease of access to smoking and alcohol consumption varies enormously as does proneness to smoking and alcohol consumption for social or psychological reasons. Tendencies to smoke and consume alcohol should vary directly with both availability and proneness and the two should sum to create an addiction tendency. This suggests that both availability and proneness need not be high for all smokers and drinkers. Where availability is excessively high, the level of proneness required among users could be lower than in situations of low availability. Where an individual’s psychological or social proneness is very high, he or she may abuse the substances in situations in which availability is low (Smart, 1977).

Treatment of smokers and drinkers of alcohol would be successful only where large reductions are made in availability or proneness. Where relapses occur after treatment they should be in situations in which a return to earlier levels of availability or proneness is made. Continuation of smoking and drinking should occur whenever availability and proneness remain constant and acceptable to the user or abuser. In general, this two-factor availability-proneness theory makes use of much published research, integrating it into propositions which take account of many of the findings. The theory has some similarities to the vulnerability-acceptance theory of alcoholism adopted by Jellinek (1960) years ago but many differences as well. Unfortunately the theory has not had a large-scale independent test and has some weaknesses as well as some strength into regular contact with smoking and alcohol consumption in work situations.

The social learning theory and the availability proneness theory are relevant, suitable and appropriate for this study. The two theories were adopted as the theoretical framework for this study because they explain fully the phenomenon at hand. The socio learning theory may be applicable to this study in view of the fact that some road transport workers may have learnt smoking and drinking behaviours from other members of their association. Similarly, the availability proneness theory also addresses the issue of road transport workers who smoke and consume alcohol due to the fact that these drugs are always available in the motor parks.

Methodology

The study is located in Awka. Awka is the capital of Anambra state which was created in 1991. Many government and non government institutions are located in Awka including Nnamdi Azikiwe University. In the olden days, the people of Awka were engaged in blacksmithing. The total population of the study is one thousand one hundred and fifty members of the National Unions of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) in Awka as contained in the organization’s membership register as at May 2015. This population constituted the sampling frame from which a sample size of 101 respondents was randomly selected. The major source of data for this study is the structured questionnaire. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Distribution of respondents’ views on why people drink alcohol

Responses	Frequency	Percent
To overcome boredom	4	4.0
To avoid stress	25	24.8
To make me happy	53	52.5
To make me feel high	14	13.9
just a habit	1	1.0
because others are drinking it	1	1.0
I don't drink alcohol	2	2.0
No response	1	1.0
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

In table 1, 4(4%) of the respondents said they drink alcohol to overcome boredom, 25(24.8%) of them drink alcohol to avoid stress, 53(52.5%) of the respondents take alcohol to make them happy while 1(1%) of the respondents say the drink alcohol as a habit and because others are drinking it. This implies that majority of the road transport workers in Awka drink alcohol to make them happy.

Table 2: Factors influencing drinking of alcohol among road transport workers in Awka

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Availability of alcohol	18	17.8
Peer group influence	32	31.7
Family influence	7	6.9
Drinking helps to cope with economic stress.	34	33.7
Nobody	1	1.0
All of the above	3	3.0
I don't drink at all	2	2.0
No response	4	4.0
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From table 2, it could be seen that 18(17.8%) of the respondents said availability of alcohol influenced them to drink it, 32(31.7%) of them said peer group influence made them drink alcohol, 7(6.9%) of the respondents drink alcohol due to influence from their families while 34(33.7%) of the respondents said drinking of alcohol helps them to cope with economic stress. This implies that majority of the road transport workers in Awka drink alcohol due to peer group influence and also to cope with economic stress which is biting hard in the country.

Table 3: Factors influencing smoking among road transport workers in Awka

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Smoking makes people to become conscious of themselves and society.	4	4.0
It makes people feel good and high	38	37.6
Advertisement of cigarettes	3	3.0
Marijuana smoking produces an endless calm and unassuming behaviour on people	18	17.82
I don't smoke	1	1.0
No response	37	36.6
Total	101	100.0

In table 3, 4(4%) of them said smoking makes people to become conscious of themselves and society, 38(37.6%) of them opined that smoking makes people to feel good and high, 3(3%) of the respondents said advertisement of cigarettes influenced them to smoke while 13(12.9%) of them said marijuana smoking produces an endless calm and unassuming behaviour on people. The implication of this is that most of the road transport workers in Awka smoke in order to feel good and high.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents' views on whether or not people smoke and drink alcohol the same time

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	43	42.6
No	39	38.6
No response	19	18.8
Total	101	100.0

Survey,
It could

Source: Field 2015

that 43(42.6%) of the respondents affirmed that they smoke and drink alcohol the same time while 39(38.6%) of them said they do not smoke and drink the same time.

be seen in table 4

Table 5: Distribution of respondents' views on why people smoke and drink alcohol at the same time

Responses	Frequency	Percent
It is sweeter	14	13.9
it makes me feel good	34	33.7
it makes me sleep quick	1	1.0
I drink alcohol only	2	2.0
I only smoke	3	3.0
No response	47	46.5
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

In table 5, 14(13.9%) of the respondents said it is sweeter, 34(33.7%) of them said it makes them feel good while 1(1%) of the respondents said it makes him sleep quickly. It follows therefore, that most of the road transport workers in Awka feel good when they smoke and drink alcohol the same time.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents' views on whether or not alcohol consumption influences smoking behaviour

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	37	36.6
No	45	44.6
No response	19	18.8
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It is shown in table 6 that 37(36.6%) of the respondents said alcohol consumption influence their smoking behaviour while 45(44.6%) of them said it does not influence their smoking behaviour. It implies that alcohol consumption does not totally influence smoking behaviour among road transport workers in Awka. This paper identified the consequences of smoking and drinking behaviours among road transport workers in Awka. These are shown in tables 7 and 8 respectively.

Table7: Distribution of respondents' views on the major effects of smoking

Responses	Frequency	Percent
It causes health problems	40	39.6
It waste ones money and resources	12	11.9
It pollutes the environment	1	1.0
Loss of honour and integrity in some societies	5	5.0
It leads to depression	4	4.0
I don't know	10	9.9
No response	29	28.7
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Information in table 7 shows that 40(39.6%) of the respondents believe smoking causes health problems, 12(11.9%) of them said it wastes ones money and resources, 1(1%) of them opined that it pollutes the environment, 5(5%) of them said it leads to loss of honour and integrity in some societies, 4(4%) of them said it leads to depression while 10(9.9%) of them said they do not know the effects of smoking. It has to be stated at this point that many of the road transport workers in Awka knew that smoking causes health problems.

Table 8: The distribution of the respondents' views on major effect of drinking alcohol

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Drunkenness	22	21.8
Malnutrition as a result of loss of appetite	9	8.9
Waste of resources	14	13.9
Loss of capacity and integrity	5	5.0
Violence and criminal behaviour	1	1.0
Health complications	21	20.8
No idea	22	21.8

No response	7	6.9
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Table 8 indicates that 22(21.8%) of the respondents see drunkenness as the major effect of drinking alcohol, 9(8.9%) of them are of the view that malnutrition as a result of loss of appetite is the effect of drinking alcohol, 14(13.9%) of them mentioned waste of resources as an effect of drinking alcohol, 5(5%) of them see loss of capacity and integrity as an effect of drinking alcohol, 1(1%) of the respondents maintained that violence and criminal behaviour is the effect of alcohol consumption while 21(20.8%) of the respondents believe that health complications is one the factors effecting drinking of alcohol among road transport workers in Awka.

Table 9: Distribution of respondents' views on whether or not smoking and drinking of alcohol affect their finances

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	70	69.3
No	30	29.7
No response	1	1.0
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It could be seen from table 9 that 70(69.3%) of the respondents affirmed that smoking and drinking of alcohol affect their finances while 30(29%) said it does not affect their finances. Finally, remedies of smoking and drinking behaviour were sought and details are as shown in table 10.

Table 10: Distribution of respondents' views on how the incidences of smoking and drinking of alcohol can be reduced among road transport workers in Awka

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Awareness creation on the dangers of smoking and drinking alcohol	29	28.7
Rehabilitation of smokers and drinkers	9	8.9
Attitudinal change	19	18.8
Enforcing legislations against driving under influences of one substance or the other	23	22.8
No idea	7	6.9
Government intervention through policies that will reduce the production of the substances	9	8.9
It is a personal decision	4	4.0
No response	1	1.0
Total	101	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2015

It is shown in table 10 that 29(28.7%) of the respondents believe that awareness creation on the dangers of smoking and drinking alcohol is one of the ways of reducing its incidences among road transport workers in Awka, 9(8.9%) of them see rehabilitation of smokers and drinkers as one of the ways, attitudinal change was given as one of the ways of reducing the incidences of smoking and drinking of alcohol among road transport workers in Awka by 19(18.8%) of the respondents while 23(22.8%) of the respondents believed it can be reduced by behaviour modification through counselling. Furthermore, 7(6.9%) of the respondents said no idea, 9(8.9%) of them said government should intervene through policies that will reduce production of the substances while 4(4%) said it is a personal decision.

Discussion of Findings

This study found that road transport workers in Anambra state drink alcohol to overcome boredom, to avoid stress and to make them happy. It was found in this study that road transport workers were influenced into drinking alcohol because of the availability of alcohol, peer group influence, influence from their families and the desire to cope with economic stress. This is consistent with (Johnson et al. 1984; Barnes and Welte 1986; Brook et al. 1986) cited in Hawkins, Arthur and Catalano (1995) who observed that family modelling of drug use behaviour and permissive parental attitudes toward children's drug use predict greater risk of

alcohol and other drug abuse. It also agrees with Ahmed et al. 1984 cited in Hawkins et al. (1995) who stressed that the more members of the household who use drugs, the greater is a child's risk of early initiation of use of that drug (Ahmed et al. 1984) cited in Hawkins et al. (1995). This finding is further corroborated by (Gritz et al. 1998; Flay et al., 1998; Mittelmark et al., 1987; Conrod et al. 1992) who maintained that individuals are more likely to smoke and drink alcohol if their parents, siblings and friends smoke and drink. The works of (Bobo and Husten, 2000; Unger and Chen (1999) also lend support to the finding that family and peer influences are predictors to smoking and drinking. This finding is consistent with Smart 1977 who stated that smoking and consumption of alcohol occurs when a prone individual is exposed to a high level of availability.

This study also found that road transport workers opined that smoking makes people to feel good/high. It also found that advertisement of cigarettes influenced them to smoke and smoking of marijuana produces an endless calm and unassuming behaviour on them. It was found in this paper that road transport workers smoke and drink alcohol because it is sweeter when they are taken together and it makes them feel good when they smoke and drink simultaneously. This is supported by Hughes, Rose and Callas, 2000 who observed that smokers drink and drinkers smoke. It also agrees with the information provided by the National Institute on Alcohol, Abuse and Alcoholism, in which it was found that between 80 and 95 percent of alcoholics smoke cigarettes.

This paper finds that smoking causes health problems, it wastes ones money and resources, it pollutes the environment, it leads to loss of honour and integrity in some societies and also leads to depression. The major effects of drinking of alcohol found in this study include drunkenness, malnutrition, waste of resources, loss of capacity and integrity, violence and criminal behaviour and health complications. This is corroborated by Okoza, J., Aluede, O. Fajoju, S. and Okhiku, I. (2009) who found that large doses of alcohol interfere with coordination and normal functioning of our senses, and often with tragic results for motorists. This finding is also in agreement with the study of Eneh and Stanley (2004) and Smith 1995 who found that drugs like alcohol and marijuana impairs the motor coordination, perceptual skills and reaction time necessary for safely operating an automobile or other machines. Marijuana also disrupts memory formation and interferes with immediate recall (Smith, 1995). It also agrees with (Chaiken and Chaiken 1990) cited in Hawkins, Arthur and Catalano (1995) in which it was found that drug use is also related to criminal and violent behaviour. Heavy use of alcohol and other drugs appears to increase risk for both commission and victimization of homicide and other acts of violence, as well as predatory crimes. It also agrees with Goldstein, Brownstein, and Ryan 1992 cited in Hawkins et al. (1995). This finding is consistent with Chaiken and Chaiken 1990; Nurco, Kinlock, and Balter 1993 cited in Hawkins et al. (1995) who found that involvement in criminal activity often precedes heavy drug use and that personality factors, situational factors, socio cultural factors, and the nature of the specific drug itself mediate the relationships among drug use, crime, and aggression.

Finally, this work found that ways of reducing the incidences of smoking and drinking of alcohol among road transport workers include awareness creation on the dangers of smoking and drinking alcohol, rehabilitation of smokers and drinkers and attitudinal change by behaviour modification through counselling. It was found that smoking and drinking on the highways could be reduced through enforcing legislations against driving under influences of one substance or the other and that government should intervene through policies that will reduce production of the substances that could be abused.

Conclusion

Consumption of alcoholic beverages and smoking of cigarettes and marijuana have become the day to day realities facing the members of the NURTW in Awka. This is more pronounced among the drivers in particular. The drivers are the people saddled with the onerous responsibility of conveying people from one location to the other on day to day basis. The safety or otherwise of the people they carry is in their hands. It is against this background that it becomes necessary that efforts must be put in place to guarantee the safety of commuters. The study examined the socio cultural factors influencing smoking and alcohol consumption among road transport workers in Awka with a view to proffering a lasting solution to the phenomenon.

Recommendations

In view of the findings made in this study, the following recommendations are made;

That government should put in place a mechanism for monitoring drivers on the highways to ascertain the level of alcohol in their systems. Drivers whose level of alcoholic content were found to be above the normal level deemed necessary for safety on the highways must be penalized accordingly.

The legislation on drunk driving and smoking should be strengthened and enforced to the latter. The law enforcement agents (especially the police and the federal road safety personnel) are therefore required to ensure strict compliance to the law.

Efforts should be put in place for attitudinal change for road users with particular emphasis on the drivers. This could be done through intensified sensitization using the media and other outlets such as workshops and town hall meetings.

Commuters should also be sensitized on what to do when they board vehicles. They must ensure that the drivers who will carry them to their desired destinations do not drive under the influence one substance or the other.

Finally, production and sales of these products should be regulated and restricted to ensure safety on the highways.

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