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## **Traffic Robbery and Its Impact on Workers' Safety And Productivity: A Study of Lagos State**

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### ABSTRACT

The city of Lagos is popularly associated with Traffic congestion and has become a constant challenge, despite strategies and traffic regulations to manage the situation by relevant government agencies. This study investigated traffic robbery and its impact on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos State. The study adopted a descriptive research survey in conducting this study. Lagos state was selected for the research based on its attribute of being traffic prone especially on major highway or route. The study purposively selected Mile 2 area of Lagos state, because of the large number of workers that pass through the area and the frequencies of the traffic robbery that take place in that area. The researcher randomly selected and approached 200 workers waiting at bus stops and during traffic periods with questionnaire designed for the study. Data collected were analyzed using frequency and percentages and the hypothesis formulated using correlation and the result indicates that traffic robbery has significant impact on workers safety and productivity in Lagos. Base on this finding, the study conclusion and recommendations were made.

Keywords: Traffic robbery, workers' safety, productivity

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### Introduction

The city of Lagos is popularly associated with Traffic congestion and has become a constant challenge, despite strategies and traffic regulations to manage the situation by relevant government agencies. Despite the rigours associated with the traffic situation in Lagos state, the security situation is another issue that raises concerns. The insecurity situation often experienced when in traffic has been described as harrowing based on the activities of traffic robbers. These traffic robbers are usually hoodlums who seize the opportunity of traffic to perpetrate nefarious activities, and dispossess people of their possessions, and mostly resulting in an ugly encounter and some cases, death (Odit, 2021).

These increasing levels of criminality, such as robbery and burglary has been linked to modernization, improved technology, and increasing affluence (Galbraith, 1958); thus influencing the levels of violence in most cities. As was observed by Hasan (1993), the statistics on urban crime is an indication that in addition to the increasing frequency of violence, it is also becoming more heinous, especially in developing countries that boast of rapid growth, increasing population and unplanned cities, which cause people to live in uncomfortable spaces, and increases their tendency for conflict and violence.

The problem of traffic robbery negatively affects victims, thus the focus of this study is to assess the impact of traffic robbery on the productivity and safety of workers given the amount of time spent in trying to get to their destination safely, which plays a significant role on worker's productivity in an organization. Workers in the bid to avoid falling victims to traffic robberies leave for work or home later or earlier than usual, which in order to settle down and focus on work, during which they become tired and distracted with worry, thus making them less productive (Lupala, 2010).

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### STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

A popular feature of Lagos state is the endless traffic endured on a regular basis by road users, which ends up being a source of frustration to them. Besides the discomfort associated with traffic, there is also the issue of fear by commuters because of the increasing terror unleashed by traffic robbers. There have been reports of arrests of traffic robbers made in recent times, and from investigations made, these robberies occur at any time of the day. Areas in Lagos where these robberies frequently occur include, Mile 2, Oshodi, Costain Bridge, CMS, Orile, Gbagada and Mushin, as well as other heavy traffic routes. The modus operandi of these robbers is to confront road users by tapping on their windows while brandishing their weapons which forces them to wind down and be dispossessed of their properties. Refusal or failure to wind down often to lead to vehicles' window or windscreen being smashed and the victim harmed.

Given the surge in traffic robberies, which is no longer restricted to particular hour of the day, workers have become affected, as in the bid to avoid these attacks; they leave their homes later than usual or the workplaces earlier than usual. Most times workers tend to put off tedious activities till hours that enable them focus and cover up lost time, usually before office opening hours or after closing hours, but with the rise in robbery attacks, they find

themselves unable to work productively, as they also have safety concerns. To this end, this study investigates the impact of traffic Robbers on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state.

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### Research Objectives

Generally, this study assessed the Traffic Robbers and its impact on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state. Specifically, the study seeks to

1. Examine the impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety in Lagos state.
2. Determine the extent to which traffic robbery impacts on workers' productivity

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### Research Questions

1. What is the impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety in Lagos state?
2. To what extent does traffic robbery impacts on workers' productivity?

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### Research hypotheses

HO<sup>1</sup> There is significant impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state.

HO<sup>2</sup> There is no significant impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state.

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### Literature review

Armed robbery refers to a process that entails the forceful deprivation of the belongings of innocent individuals by one or more armed individuals with no recourse to the law (Elvis, Ngege&Funteh, 2021). Lagos residents' experience numerous cases of robbery in traffic where armed robbers target occupants in vehicles. Smash-and-grab robberies are commonplace, with thieves canvassing stopped vehicles for valuables by breaking the vehicle's window or simply reaching in and grabbing items while a vehicle stops in traffic. Victims usually cooperate if an armed attacker or carjacker approaches as resistance may incite violence (Nigeria Crime & Safety Report: Lagos, 2019).

For numerous reasons, Lagos residents are besieged by robbers, who operate audaciously in traffic stops and this has evoked fear as these traffic robbers take advantage of traffic jam caused by road construction workers and tanker drivers along major roads to wreak havoc. Commuters waiting at bus stops and pedestrians are not exempted as their handbags and phones are snatched by robbers on motorcycles. Major routes popularly known for traffic robberies in Lagos include the Apongbon Road bridge, Oshodi-Anthony axis, Ikorodu Road, Mile 2-Ojo expressways, Oshodi-Isolo expressway among others (Oditia, 2021).

According to Soze (2021), there are three methods by which these robberies are executed.

**Violent robberies:** these operations are audacious and may be accompanied by breaking vehicle windows and windscreens to create panic and fear in victims and other road users. The assailants are usually on or more armed individuals that move from vehicle to vehicle brandishing guns, machetes or objects that can inflict injuries or cause damage to vehicles. Vehicle occupants are compelled to hand over their possessions either at gunpoint or while being threatened with other assault weapons. The assailants carry out the crime before running off into the dark or hopping onto waiting motorbikes.

**Distraction technique:** this mostly happens in single-occupant vehicles where something happens to distract the unwary driver such as a member of the gang walking by the side of the vehicle and trying to attract the driver's attention, while another approaches from the other side and seizes any visible valuable thing within reach like bags, laptops, phones, etc.

**The thief in the night technique:** the assailant sneaks up on unsuspecting vehicle occupants in a smash-and-grab operation. The success of this technique depends on occupants being too exhausted to notice the assailant sneak upon them.

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### Effects of traffic robbery on productivity and safety

Some individuals, who have experienced traffic robbery on their way to work, leave for work later than they usually do, so that the roads are free from traffic and they do not fall victims again. This gives them less time to settle in before work commences fully (Adejumo, 2021). Traffic robbery incidents may be traumatizing experiences for workers and may lead to the development of mental health problems or heighten existing ones, such as psychological distress, acute stress disorder, major depression and post-traumatic stress symptoms (Giorgi et al., 2015; Mucci et al., 2015). Victims may also avoid taking routes where a robbery incident took place and look for alternate routes that may be longer and cause lateness to work.

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### Empirical review

Pavićević and Bobic (2011) studied the psychological difficulties of victims of armed robbery and possible consequences on their work ability. The study sample comprised 109 workers from post offices, gas stations, cashiers in stores and lottery ticket offices. Findings revealed that acute stress disorder occurred in all subjects after armed robbery with a majority starting outpatient psychiatric treatment within the first week. PTSD was found to be a permanent condition in 27% of the subjects, while 5% lost their ability to work.

In a longitudinal study by Giorgi et al. (2015) to analyze how exposure to robbery contributes to the onset of psychological distress symptoms and job dissatisfaction over time. Data was collected from a sample size of 513 participants, using a two-wave panel design, in which employees filled in a

questionnaire between 48 hours and 1 week after robbery (T1) and 2 months after robbery (T2). Results revealed that robberies have long term effects on victims and that there is a concurrent association in which psychological distress leads to job dissatisfaction.

Patricio (2020) carried out a study to investigate how potential offenders and victims interact particularly the robbery of bus drivers, which is a common crime in cities throughout the world. The study exploited the timing of a major reform instituted in the public transportation sector in Chile and detailed administrative data on crime incidents. Findings indicated a significant decline in crime after a technological innovation that abolished cash transactions on buses was implemented and a strong link between victim's incentives, presence of cash and crime.

## Theoretical framework

### *The Routine Activity Theory (RAT)*

The routine activity theory assumes that for crimes to occur, three elements must converge in time and space which are a likely offender, a suitable target and the nonexistence of a capable guardian (Cohen and Felson, 1979). The theory explains the rise in traffic robbery and is based on the likelihood of the offender to be focused on the other elements (Savard, 2018). The target could be a person or an object as the offender is most interested in anything that is visible, accessible, does not weigh so much and is of value. The guardian in this theory is not necessarily the police or any law enforcement agent but anyone whose proximity and presence can prevent a crime from taking place such as a coworker or bystanders (Savard, Kelley & Merolla, 2017). The absence of a guardian exposes a target to the risk of criminal attack.

## Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research survey in conducting this study. Lagos state was selected for the research based on its attribute of being traffic prone especially on major highway or route. The study purposively selected mile 2 area of Lagos state, because of the large number of workers that pass through the area. The area is also notorious for criminal activities, amongst which is the incidence of traffic robbery. The researcher randomly selected and approached 200 workers waiting at bus stops and during traffic periods. Questionnaire was used in obtaining data from these respondents which was then analyzed descriptively using mean and frequency.

## Data analysis and discussion

Demographic data

**Table1: Gender**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid FEMALE	130	65.0	65.0	65.0
MALE	70	35.0	100.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0		

Table1 above shows that 65% of the respondents were female while 35% were male. This shows that there were more female respondents than male.

**Table.2: Highest educational qualification?**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid OND/TECHNICAL/NCE	58	29.0	29.0	29.0
B.SC/B.A/HND OR EQUIVALENT	99	49.5	78.5	78.5
MASTERS DEGREE	43	21.5	100	100.0
Total	200	100.0		

Table 2 above shows that 29% of the respondents offered OND/technical/NCE for highest educational qualification, 49.5% offers B.SC/B.A/HND or equivalent while 21.5% had master degree.

**RQ1: What is the impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety in Lagos state?****Table 3: Impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety in Lagos state**

RQ1	ITEMS		SA	A	D	SD	% in agreement
1	Traffic robbery causes the development of mental health problems in workers	F	110	70	10	10	90.0
		%	55	35	5	5	
2	Traffic robbery causes workers to experience a loss in their resources with regard to their working conditions such as their personal safety at work	F	150	49	0	1	99.5
		%	75	24.5	0.5		
3	Traffic robbery traumatizes workers and makes them paranoid	F	127	70	1	2	98.5
		%	63.5	35.0	0.5	1.0	
4	Traffic robbery often leads to workers being afraid to take a step for fear of endangering their own safety or personal belongings.	F	99	89	10	2	94
		%	49.5	44.5	5.0	1.0	
5	Workers are unable to exercise their freedom of movement for safety concerns due to traffic robbery	F	77	119	1	5	98.0
		%	38.5	59.5	0.5	2.5	

The Table above presents the respondents opinions on the impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety in Lagos state. The responses elicited from the respondents showed that for each of the variables in the table above, more than 95% are in agreements that traffic robbery has negative impacts on workers safety.

**RQ2: To what extent does traffic robbery impacts on workers' productivity?****Table 4: The extent to which traffic robbery impacts on workers productivity**

RQ2	To what extent does traffic robbery impacts on workers' productivity?		SA	A	D	SD	% in agreement
6	Workers are always in a perpetual state of fear which limits their development	F	117	70	0	3	93.5
		%	58.5	35	5	1.5	
7	Traffic robbery leads to loss of human resources	F	150	49	0	1	99.5
		%	75	24.5	0	0.5	
8	Workers perceive threat to their working conditions due to traffic robbery	F	127	70	1	2	98.5
		%	63.5	35.0	0.5	1.0	
9	Traffic robbery affects workers' psychological well-being and job satisfaction.	F	99	89	10	2	94.0
		%	49.5	44.5	5.0	1.0	
10	Workers tend to experience more serious resource depletion, which may result in a reduced capacity to manage everyday work demands as a result of traffic robbery	F	77	119	1	5	98.0
		%	38.5	59.5	0.5	2.5	

The study as indicated on the table above shows the extent to which traffic robbery impacts on workers' productivity. As indicated in the table above, more than 93% of the respondents are in agreement to the statements in the table indicating the traffic robbery have great negative impact on workers' productivity to a large extent.

#### Test of Hypotheses

**H1: There is significant impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state.**

**H0: There is no significant impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state.**

**Table 3: Traffic robbery and workers' safety and productivity**

Variables	Mean	SD	N	Df	r	P	Remarks
Traffic robbery	3.9120	0.2044	200	198	-0.045	0.255	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
workers' safety and productivity	3.7950	0.3640					

**P<0.05**

Table 3 shows that the relationship between traffic robbery and workers' safety and productivity is significant at  $P < 0.05$ , 198 degree of freedom with a negatively low correlation coefficient at  $-0.045$ . Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that traffic robbery has significant on workers' safety and productivity. It is important to note that certain areas in Lagos, such as Mile 2, Oshodi, Costain Bridge, CMS, Orile, Gbagada and Mushin, as well as other heavy traffic routes are known as the most unsafe areas in Lagos state. Tales of robbers affecting innocents' road users on daily basis and dispossessing them of their possession leaving them stranded. Refusal to cooperate with them usually lead in harming the victims. It is important to note that safety is everyone business. Workers prefer working in places where their safety is guaranteed. Unfortunately, most of the route that leads to offices, especially those within the suburb of Lagos has to leave their houses very early to get to their places of work. Because of traffic robbers some employees who usually leave earlier now leaves their homes a bit later to improve their safety. This result in their getting late to office resulting to low productivity; and those who insist on taking the risks ended up being attacked and are traumatized for the rest of the day. In either case, workers' safety is jeopardized leaving them traumatized. According to Giorgi et al (2015) and Mucci et al (2015) revealed that those who experience traffic robbery develops mental health problems or heighten existing ones, such as psychological distress, acute stress disorder, major depression and post-traumatic stress symptoms, which directly or indirectly affect their productivity. Victims may also avoid taking routes where a robbery incident took place and look for alternate routes that may be longer and cause lateness to work.

#### Conclusion and recommendations

Lagos state is characterized by endless traffic that the workers are meant to experience and endure on daily basis leading to indescribable frustration and discomfort. The situation is worsening because of the increasing terror unleashed by traffic robbers. This group of criminals uses guns and other weapons in broad day light to attack innocent commuter and take away their belongings. There have been reports of arrests of traffic robbers made in recent times, and from investigations made, these robberies occur at any time of the day. Effects to Areas in Lagos where these robberies frequently occur include, Mile 2, Oshodi, Costain Bridge, CMS, Orile, Gbagada and Mushin, as well as other heavy traffic routes. The modus operandi of these robbers is to confront road users by tapping on their windows while brandishing their weapons which forces them to wind down and be dispossessed of their properties. Refusal or failure to wind down often to lead to vehicles' window or windscreen being smashed and the victim harmed. This study investigated the impact of traffic Robbers on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state. The result of this study indicated that traffic robbers have significant negative impact on workers' safety and productivity in Lagos state. Based on this result, the following recommendations are proposed to use hard technologies such as CCTV, stress lighting, metal detectors and ignition interlock system to prevent traffic robbers operation through monitoring. The study also recommends the used of software technologies like threat assessment instruments, bullying ID protocol, profiling potential offenders, and facial recognition software to use in line with CCTV. Apart from hard and software technologies, the study recommends the use of improve police protection devices, improved weapons, computers in squad cars, video in patrol cars, crime mapping, among other activities.

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**APPENDIX**  
**TRAFFIC ROBBERS AND ITS IMPACT ON WORKERS' SAFETY AND PRODUCTIVITY: LAGOS CASE STUDY**  
**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

Dear Respondent,

I am carrying out a study on "Traffic Robbers and its impact on workers' safety and productivity: Lagos Case study" and you have been chosen to be part of the study. This questionnaire is only for academic purposes. Kindly select the response which applies to you and all information will be kept confidential

**SECTION A:**

**Gender:** Male ( ) Female ( )

**Education qualification**

- a) OND/NCE ( )  
 b) B.Sc./ HND ( )  
 c) M. Sc./MBA ( )  
 d) Others ( ) Specify.....

**SECTION B:**

Instructions: Please tick (√) as appropriate where

SA = Strongly Agree (SA), A = Agree, D = Disagree (D), SD = Strongly Disagree (SD)

**Key: Strongly agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1).**

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
<b>RQ1</b>	<b>What is the impact of traffic robbery on workers' safety in Lagos state?</b>				
<b>1</b>	Traffic robbery causes the development of mental health problems in workers				
<b>2</b>	Traffic robbery causes workers to experience a loss in their resources with regard to their working conditions such as their personal safety at work				
<b>3</b>	Traffic robbery traumatizes workers and makes them paranoid				
<b>4</b>	Traffic robbery often leads to workers being afraid to take a step for fear of endangering their own safety or personal belongings.				
<b>5</b>	Workers are unable to exercise their freedom of movement for safety concerns due to traffic robbery				
<b>RQ2</b>	<b>To what extent does traffic robbery impacts on workers' productivity?</b>				
<b>6</b>	Workers are always in a perpetual state of fear which limits their development				
<b>7</b>	Traffic robbery leads to loss of human resources				
<b>8</b>	Workers perceive threat to their working conditions due to traffic robbery				
<b>9</b>	Traffic robbery affects workers' psychological well-being and job satisfaction.				
<b>10</b>	Workers tend to experience more serious resource depletion, which may result in a reduced capacity to manage everyday work demands as a result of traffic robbery				