

MUSIC ON WHEELS: ASSESSING THE POSITIVE IMPACT OF SONIC VIBES ON TRICYCLE RIDERS/COMMUTERS IN IKORODU, LAGOS.

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Abstract

To many, music is the life-wire of the society. Therefore, engaging the prowess of this sonic phenomenon in societal adaptation and navigation assumed subconscious routine among thriving populace. Thus, this research set out to investigate the overall impact of musical sounds and music in general on tricycle (popularly known as keke marwa) riders in Ikorodu area of Lagos. The aim/objective of this research investigation is to unravel or demystify the extra-ordinary how music boost the morale, inspire, motivate, entertain the life of the popular keke rider in the Ikorodu area of Lagos. This is in addition to how they use music to attract passengers, relief stress and reduce excessive thinking while on wheels. In achieving this objective, the researcher visited numerous tricycle parks in the research location, sampled the opinion of more than 100 tricycle riders via asking them the simple question of – what does music do for you in the course of riding your tricycle on daily basis? Expectedly, the respondents (tricycle riders) responses confirm pre-research assumptions by way of affirming the all-encompassing prowess of music in aiding them in the course of their daily hassles. In the field, tricycle riders were seen playing music while most passengers appreciated it. Conclusively, the researcher in submission to the reality on ground, thus affirm that music plays a vital role in the life of tricycle rider, in the course of their commercial activities.

Keywords: Music, Role, Tricycle, Commercial, All-Compassing, Impact, Navigate.

Introduction

“If music be the food of love, play on!” those were the words of William Shakespeare in his book titled *The Twelfth Night* (1623). From time immemorial, the fundamental implications of musical works and musical cultural realities in global societies as well as community development helped to a greater extent in shaping various cultures. The African society extends and expands these influences across numerous communities as music is perceived as a fundamental communal instrument of general communication, mobilization, socialization, divination, consultation, and inspiration among other things. The advent of technological advancement has deepened access to musical works. A development that is evident in our everyday lives.

Currently, almost every electronic and or technological gadget is equipped with the ability to play music or respond with musical sound. From phones to radios and to even advanced-tech-doors and windows, ambient or classical music can help promote a more relaxed driving experience through its soothing sounds, and reduced stress have been linked with increase spatial awareness

and decreased stress level, transforming your driving environment into one with reduced risks of aggressive driving while improving road safety overall (www.bautistaleroy.com). This is not excluding wrist watches, head phones, I-pod, computers, televisions, laptops, palmtops and all manners of flying machines including tolls for children. Contemporary technological developments come with music in its DNA. As in, musical enabled software is in compatible alliance with most 21st century technologies. To the point that even our streets are inundated with music works at different distant interval especially in our major cities.

As it were, these technological developments are not limited to the above gadget but deeply entrenched in automobiles. Currently, almost every automobiles product has the ability to play music. cars, lorries, caterpillars, trailers, both big and small as well as bicycles, motorcycles as well as tricycles among others. The tricycle which is the center focus of this research currently play a pivotal role in the transport system of the Nigeria society. This automobile is seen almost at every motor park, market places, bus terminals, road sides of major streets in the metropolis conveying people and goods. These tricycles are in their thousands especially within Lagos state; and Ikorodu Area-One of the administrative areas in Lagos state, is a major hub of tricycle activities as they are seen moving around the area in their thousands. The tricycles surprisingly are driven by both men and women though the percentage of men riders is about 90% while the population of female riders is about 10%. However, the number of female riders continues to increase. As it were, close observation showed that most of these tricycle- 'keke' – as it is popularly called, are equipped with the electronics or technological device such as CD player, MP3 devise, mobile phones etc. that enables them to play music.

The presence of these music enablers inside the 'keke' are most times obvious and sometimes funny the setting inside the tricycle. This is due to the fact that some of them have big music speakers that are connected to CD players while others make use of their mobile phones and many others use the MP 3 devise. While some music from this automobile is low in volume, others are extremely loud and can be heard from a distance. This is the reality on ground in the research location. Honestly, the lofty place of music in our immediate and extended society cannot be over-emphasized.

However, some reports, research, among other news outlets have at one time or the other de-emphasized the use of music in commercial automobiles. Their position is that when a driver or rider on motion, and music is playing especially on loud volume, it could lead to lack of focus on the part of the rider or the driver. In fact, some accident cases were reported to have been causes by lack of focus on the part of the driver due to the 'distraction' caused by loud sounding music in the vehicle or the car involved.

However, the obvious reality in the research location speaks otherwise. In some tricycles, the music speakers were bigger than the seat of the rider. Also many passengers expressed joy in the experience. The relevance of this research transcend a singular perspective. the society need to know how this development is interestingly affecting, influencing as well as impacting the lives tricycle riders consciously and subconsciously. these impact will be discussed in short paragraphs below:

Morale Booster

They claim that the music they play is a huge source of morale booster for them. Some said after they might have collected enough their of money, they play music to forget their sorrows and pain. Others play music to forget the frustration they face at home from people around them, and the music they play helps them to forge ahead despite unpalatable realities around them or surrounding them.

Inspiration/Motivation

Many 'keke' riders draw inspiration from music to enable them to do the job. Navigating the ever busy roads and street of Ikorodu can sometime be frustrating owing to the incessant gridlocks that are a constant experience, among other things. Responses from our research participants show that these tricycle riders seriously depend on music for motivation to do their job. Music inspires them to keep moving, keep striving for success and also to keep thriving in the economic angle of the commercial equation. When the sound of music hit their soul, coupled with the lyrical content that speaks to their spirit by way of assurance of a better tomorrow, they are spurred to action. To them, the music they play, though differ, inspires and or motivates them to also face the numerous challenges they encounter with some passengers, security officials, traffic wardens, tricycle ticketing officials, as well as their fellow tricycle riders, who sometimes constitute hindrance to them.

Less Thinking

Most tricycle riders patronize the instrumentality of music to reduce excessive thinking. This development is due to issues ranging from family problems, issues with spouse, debts, health, among others. To them, music on wheels removes their mind from trending issues of life. Many claim it helps them to focus on their job. Thinking possess the power distract an individual from realities on ground because it takes control of the mind in that the person can be present somewhere yet absent in activeness. They then become passive of day dreaming in the means of others. Thinking can be destructive especially non constructive once. Therefore, for a commercial tricycle rider in this category, the power of music in helping him or her to concentrate on the commercial activity is non-negotiable.

Entertainment

Most commercial tricycle riders actively engage music in their day-to-day commercial activities for the sole purpose of entertainment. They use the music to entertain themselves as well as their passengers. Research has shown that most passengers enjoy this development and most times personally request for it. This factor is also being used by tricycle rider to attract passengers that are drawn by the sound of music especially when they are sometimes competing for passengers- knowing that most passengers prefer tricycles that are dishing out sweet and soul soothing musical sound. Entertainment being one of the uses of music is engaged in this regard for the purpose making the passengers on transit feel relax and also help the rider to also enjoy his job. Music in the act of entertainment is always the desire of many especially in African society.

Stress Relief

Every day in the life of a typical Lagosian is full of stress. Tricycle riders are not stress proof in this regard. The hassle filled busy roads of Ikorodu town are huge source of stress for commercial 'keke' rider as they jostle for the available spaces on the busy road to navigate their business on daily basis. These riders are stress ridden. Research has shown that they mainly use the instrumentality of sweet sound (music) for relieving of daily stress. Unfortunately, stress has been identified as one of the main causes of illness and has eventually led to some death incident in most extreme cases when not taking care of.

Tricycle rider find solace in the music to help ease the weight of stress faced from bad roads. Bad roads are a major source of stress for commuters on the streets of Ikorodu town. Most of the roads are in bad condition though visible effort is been made to address huge society challenge as it relates to research location. Another cause of stress is the frequently over-crowded roads and streets in the area.

Sometimes the area experience human traffic. The population of Ikorodu town is currently increasing on daily basis. This development is due a lot of people moving to that area because of factors best known to them. Another cause of stress for these tricycle riders is the unending rancor between 'keke' riders and the agbero cancer that would not give them rest. These agberos constantly pop out from almost every corner asking for money different reasons and different persons. These and other factors are a huge source of constant stress for the average tricycle rider in Ikorodu town, Lagos state. So music to them is a soothing force usually employed by these riders deals with the enormous stress they encounter in the course of their commercial activity.

Attraction Strategy

Some tricycle riders claim that the strategy behind music sound in their 'keke' is the chief purpose of attracting passengers to patronize their trade. This is important because thousands of tricycles are everywhere jostling for available passengers. Hence, some go the extra mile to attract commuters to their 'keke'. They call it business strategy. So, it's clear that tricycle riders employ the instrumentality of sweet sound (music) for different positive reasons. However, there is a caveat submission on the contrary view on the above submissions as regard the usage of music in tricycles in the research location. Research shows that some tricycle rider does not play music in their tricycle. According to them, it can lead to some unpalatable experiences such as lack of focus.

Lack of Focus

As the saying goes, 'anything that has a good side also has a bad side'. Research have shown that playing music especially very loud, can make the tricycle rider to lose focus on the road and that it can lead to some unpalatable experiences that includes accident and eventually lead to death in rare cases. Some 'keke' riders forbid it this same reason—that it will not allow them to focus on the road. Music is a powerful force that easily captivates the human mind and controls it. So, if a tricycle rider lacks the ability to manage this influential power of music, he or she may endanger his or her life as well as the lives of the passenger on board.

The above points give credence to the relevance of this research investigation because most misconceptions and some abuses in this regard, are based on the fact most people lack the adequate information or knowledge about the use of music in tricycle. The relevance thereof surpasses the adverse side. Music plays important roles in the day-to-day life of almost everybody including human activities, in a typical African society. however, wisdom must be applied in its application.

Literature Review

Music has the propensity to optimise a driver's mental state and thus improve both their concentration and vehicular control (Karageorghis et al.(2021). As it were, music on wheels have not escaped the meticulous sight of researchers. According to Ojiokor, Ifeoma C. et al. (2019), "the emergence of In-vehicle ICT system in the 1970s has helped people to listen to news, recorded music of even listen to audio live streams while driving. These became possible as radios and stereo became fitted as standard features in many cars today.

The growth of these features which included radios, stereos, compact discs, tape recorders and the MP3 players greatly revolutionized in-vehicle entertainment systems and the availability of variety of music sources, hence, the opportunity for self-selected music listening while driving has increased." The above assertion confirms and affirmed position of central discuss of this research investigation. The advent of musical gadgets and technological devices crafted to enable music play in in-vehicle experience scenario, underscores contemporary societal realities.

Ojiokor et al (2019), further posits that “the most commonly cited reasons for listening to music while driving were its benefits for relaxation and concentration. The survey indicates associations between possession of ‘no claims’ on motor insurance and a preference for silence.” As interview respondents rightly confirmed, music provides some sort of relaxation for these tricycle riders. They claim that the soothing sound of music help some of them to concentrate in the course of their commercial activity. While this is going on, the passengers on the other hand are entertained. This development is expressed in form of head-wagging, seat-dancing, sing-a-long expression among others. In subscribing to the position, Unal (2013), affirmed thus “it is also being influenced by music or other organized sounds from the vehicle audio or video systems in a way that the listener responds to it behaviorally either in form of sing along, sit dance and other physical gestures which show communication between the listener and auditory stimuli.” Unal’s assertion confirms earlier submission of musical influence on rider/driver/passenger transit motion experience.

Though positive realities abound in the usage of music among tricycle, the realities of negative outcomes also abound. According to Dibben & Williamson, (2007) and Brodsky (2002), “in-vehicle music communication has a lot of positive and negative consequences physically, psychologically and physiologically depending upon the user, his state of mind and circumstance of his environment (roads). The state of mind of a tricycle rider plays a vital role in determining the outcome of his in-vehicle music listening decision. While some derive excitement in engaging music aid their transit business. According to Stutts, Reinfurt, Staplin & Rodman (2001), “listening to music while driving could be gratifying on the one hand and hold some implications on the other hand for driving performance and safety.”

Music may act as a distraction and the presence of nay music will in effect, decrease productivity. Although, distraction may appear to have a negative meaning, in reality, distraction can either be positive or negative (Mitchell & MacDonald, 2006). Alluding to earlier postulation, and evidently affirmed by research respondents, music helps in distracting the mind of the average tricycle rider from the worries, sorrows, frustrations, and everyday struggle and stress of life. To them, it is a positive distraction that acts like a psychological and emotional therapy; a strong sources of motivation to which they look up to for succor at this time of our national life.

For many people, listening to music while driving can reduce stress, improve mood, and make long drives feel shorter. This is especially helpful for new drivers who might feel nervous or anxious behind the wheel. Calming music cam help them focus better on the road and improve their overall confidence (<http://noyelling.con.au>). According to Morteza Ghojzadeh et al (2023), “many studies have assessed the effect of music on driving. However, their results are very scattered and contrary...driving quality is affected by the driver’s attention, performance, and response. The way that people react also depends on their mood, and since music can change the listener’s mood, it affects the quality of driving. The effect of listening to music while driving, however, may be controversial.

Additionally, listening to music can enhance not only the driver’s driving quality but also their physiological performance. This is because listening to music while driving is effective in controlling stress, calming emotion, and preventing driver drowsiness. According to research, listening to music while driving can affect a driver’s behavior in both favorable and unfavorable ways. Studies shows that listening to favorite music while driving might make you feel happier and more optimistic overall, which can result in safer driving practices. Similar to this, listening to

music you like can have a favorable impact on your conduct, improving focus and reducing lane drifting. To guarantee optimum focus and alertness while operating a motor vehicle, it is crucial to select the appropriate genre of music. Listening to familiar music while driving can have a positive impact on your driving behavior. When you listen to songs that you know and love, it creates a sense of familiarity and comfort, reducing stress and promoting relaxation behind the wheels. Familiar music can also evoke positive memories and emotions, further enhancing your overall mood and focus on the road (www.fleetntsi.com).

Cumming et al (2001) in Barbara et al (2018) asserts thus “Alternatively, several studies note that musical features (particularly volume and tempo) help improve performance, particularly during driving car-following tasks.” The above positions are testaments of realities on ground in the research location. This is because tricycle rider confidently asserts that music “jinjas” them to work. The word “jinja”, as used in local parlance in Nigeria societies, represents inspiration and or motivation. When a typical Nigerian says something is him or her, it means the thing is spurring or inspiring or stirring the fellow to do something or more of what he or she is doing. So music on wheels, can impact, determine, undermine, motivate, induce, intoxicate, evoke, as well as influence to a great extent, transit outcomes among commercial tricycle riders in Ikorodu area of Lagos state.

Studies have found that listening to pleasant and emotionally appealing music can activate the reward centers of our brain, leading to positive emotions and a better mood while driving. This can be especially helpful during long drives or in heavy traffic, where frustration and boredom can set in...it is important to choose music that is enjoyable and not overly stimulating or distracting when driving (www.mountainverdict.com). ‘keke’(tricycle) riders in Ikorodu area of Lagos state of Nigeria, in their numbers testified that the sweet sound of music is key to overcoming the numerous challenges they face on daily basis in the course of carrying out their legitimate commercial transit activities in the research area. Though elements of caution must be taken to avoid abuse or excesses on the part of the tricycle operators and the overbearing passengers in peculiar cases, underscoring the relevance of music in ensuring the smooth operation of the subjects of the research is paramount. Most operators are educated and does manage the music on wheel for maximum positive impact.

Methodology

To accentuate research outcome, the following process was employed to guarantee excellent research finding. In executing this research, the researcher, who is resident in the location, visited various tricycle parks in the area to sample the opinion of about 100 tricycle riders popularly known as ‘keke’riders. The parks were located in Sabo area of Ikorodu, Ikorodu garage, blessed park-along Itokin road, ile-gboba bus stop area, and ‘keke’ loading point at ayangburen market main gate. The research samples were all men between the age of 30-65 years of age. The question was simple and straight forward: how does playing music impact you in the course of doing your ‘keke marwa’ business?

The instrument engaged was android phone, a pen, and a sheet of paper for writing. But the pen and sheet of paper did most of the job. The qualitative research method involves interviews sections where questions are asking to elicit responses from research sample. It includes structured and unstructured interview questions as well as observation method. The approach was the favorite for this research because the researcher needed to ask the research sample question(s) on an individual basis so as to elicit responses (opinion) based on research objective(s). one

question was asked each respondent and a follow-up question becomes necessary depending on the response from the first and major question of the endeavor.

Researcher could not have used another because these are busy men always on the move. In fact, that is why the opinion sampling question was just one. Most of them were first apprehensive, thinking that the researcher was a government agent. The first step was to approach the tricycle rider (either in their tricycle waiting for their turn to load passengers or as they are calling passenger or as they are dropping and picking new passengers, introduce myself (intention inclusive). Second step was to ask them the main interview question of what music does for them in the course of their commercial activity on daily basis and sometimes ask a follow-up question depending on the reaction to the first question. The third step was to note down their reaction or response(s) to the question(s). The fourth step was usually words of appreciation mainly from the researcher, and a good bye from both side.

Result

The research data analysis is thus presented in the costume of qualitative research data analysis format. After the field work, research finding confirmed the pre-research assumption with respect to research outcome. The responses were group into 7 subheadings namely: moral boost, inspiration/motivation, less thinking, attractional value, entertainment, stress relief, and lose of focus.

Firstly, research finding shows that 80% of research samples responded in the affirmative. Affirming that music plays a major role in their day-to-day commercial transit business helping them to over stress, forget their personal frustrations, encouragement, relief stress due to unfavorable work condition, entertain themselves as well as their passengers, stir them up to go beyond their limit in terms of daily achievement. Still in this regard, passengers were seen enjoying the beats of sweet sound oozing from musical devices attached to the various tricycles. Indeed, research show that the instrumentality of music was also a means to attract passengers to join some of those tricycles especially when there is shortage of passenger and tricycle riders are competing for available commuters.

Secondly, researcher could not find woman tricycle riders that were playing music in their tricycle and were willing to grant interview. Hence only men riders were sampled. Also some respondents had a different view on music; stating that they do not play music in their tricycle base on the fact that it can cause loss of focus for them.

Thirdly, surprisingly, the researcher encountered a tricycle rider that boldly declared that he does not like music. Therefore, he does not play music in his tricycle. When asked why? He simply replied, nothing! This was an exceptional response.

Conclusion

Objectively, the main aim and objective of this research was to investigate the comprehensive impact of music on tricycle rider in Ikorodu axis of Lagos state. This objective was prime throughout the process. Drawing from the outcome of the research adventure, the researcher can confidently affirm that music plays a vital role in maintaining sanity on our roads to a great extent. This submission is confirmed by subjects of research that alluded to the fact that music helps them psychologically, physiologically, emotionally and commercially etc. However, there

are minor findings that suggest otherwise, the dominance of the positive impact of music on research subjects is overwhelming.

The significance of this noble adventure is that it opens the eyes of the masses to understand why most tricycle (popular known as 'keke') riders are almost addicted to playing music as they engage in their transit business. Secondly, the research stresses the need to embrace music because it has the potential to relieve stress, which is a major health challenge among the locals in the research location. Thirdly, the importance of playing music on tricycles far outweighs the downside.

These findings can help different arms of government to make laws and policies that will not jeopardize the usage of music in automobiles; owing to the fact the positive impact of music to humans and their daily activities cannot be over-emphasized.

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