

*Full Length Research Paper*

## Road traffic accident: Human security perspective

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The objective of this study is to assess road traffic accident based on human security perspective. In this study, an attempt is made to analyze the causes, contributing and determinant factors, and effects of road traffic accident with regard to its over all linkage with human security. The study tried to explore how road traffic accident is a human security threat in the contemporary world. Methodologically, this study employed descriptive qualitative approach. Relevant data were collected from secondary sources such as academic literatures, reports, and policy and research documents. The finding of the study revealed that multiple factors contributed for the incidence of road traffic accidents mainly the human factors (road users' error), environmental factors, and vehicle defect factors. The study found that road traffic accident is a human security threat with multifaceted effects on the economy of households and the national economies of states especially in the developing countries. It has negative effect on food security, which affects access to basic food; on the health security, which could cause of mortality, illness (pain and grief and suffer) and disability; on the physical security or safety of the individuals and on the social interactions of victims and their families. The study concludes that road traffic accidents have multifaceted effects on human security and little attention is given to the problem, despite the fact that the increase of road crashes from time to time especially in developing countries of the world.

**Key words:** Road traffic accident, human security, threat.

### INTRODUCTION

Road traffic accident is a global problem. Every year at the global level about 1.3 million people lose their lives, and about 20 to 50 million people injured (WHO, 2013). These injuries and deaths have huge influence on victims' families, employment, communities and states they belong.

According to the World Health Organization (2013) report, low and middle-income countries have higher rates of road traffic accidents. They account for about 90% of the total fatalities despite the fact that they have

only about 32% of the global motor vehicles. The World Bank (2013) report cited in Meirmanov (2014) estimated that by the year 2020, annual road traffic fatalities will increase by 80% in developing countries. These countries have shown an increase in deaths and disabilities from road traffic accidents since the 1980s. High income countries (HICs), on the other hand, recognized the magnitude of the problem since 1970s, and have been working towards promoting road safety situations, and raising awareness among road users

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(Persson, 2008; Kubitzki, 2012).

Road traffic accident is the major socio-economic problem of developing countries, especially those in Africa (Chen, 2009; WHO, 2009; United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, ((UNECA)), 2009). Economically, the cost of road accidents is estimated 1% of Gross National Product (GNP) in low-income countries, 1.5% in middle income countries and 2% in high-income countries (WHO, 2004). WHO (2009) estimates that global economic losses due to road traffic injuries are close to US\$ 518 billion annually.

Low-income and middle-income countries account for US \$65 to 100 billion, which is more than the total annual amount they received in development aid (Aderamo, 2012; UNGA, 2008). These costs include both loss of income and the burden placed on families to care for their injured relatives. The estimated cost of the GNP in most African countries, for example, in Ethiopia range from about 0.8% and 1% in South Africa to 2.3% in Zambia and 2.7% in Botswana to almost 5% in Kenya (Odero et al., 2003; WHO, 2004).

Socially, road traffic death leads to profound human sorrow and death, which is directly and indirectly a loss of developmental resources of any country. This is because, it makes people disabled, loss of their properties, human rights violation, loss of safety and basic freedoms, and reduces access to sustainable prosperity. Due to the reason that this study argues road traffic accident is the human security threat, which seriously affects its components such as food security, economic security, personal security, community security as well as health security.

However, the human security threat of road traffic accidents have not been fully recognized, and has not yet well studied as compared to other threats of human security such as HIV/AIDS and violent political conflicts, though it is one of the most frequent causes of human death and loss of properties. Hence, the issue of road traffic accident (RTA) is worthy of investigation. The central focus of this study is to assess how road traffic accident is a human security threat based on the human security perspective. The immense upshot and frequent occurrences of road traffic accidents and its effect on individual lives and livelihood of people and countries aspiration to development are the central factors that motivated the writer. The writer is, therefore, motivated to write this academic paper stemmed from the raise of road traffic accident and its effect on human security.

Furthermore, the essence of this study is not an exhaustive description of road traffic accidents (RTAs), but to give a critical analysis on its causes, contributing and determinant factors, effects and its threat to human security. This is because; the term human security has begun to appear in academic works in the recent times and is the subject of new research projects. This study begins with the basic conceptual frameworks of road traffic accident and human security. Then after, it discusses the causes of, contributing and determinant

factors, effects and the overall linkage of road traffic accident with human security.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper used qualitative research approach. The qualitative approach was helpful in organizing literature review (document analysis). This is because, qualitative research approach is appropriate to understand issues such as event like traffic accidents and other activities from the participants' point of view in context-specific settings (Kothari, 2004; Creswell, 2009). Hence, this approach was helpful to examine and analyze how traffic accident is a human security threat. The data were collected through secondary research tools. Secondary data such as relevant literatures, government policy documents, laws, proclamations and annual reports were reviewed and analyzed.

### Road traffic accident and human security: Conceptual frameworks

#### *Road traffic accident defined*

Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (2004) defined road traffic accident (RTA) as:

“an accident which is a random, and multi-factor event always preceded by a situation in which one or more road users have failed to cope with the road environment”.

The Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), defined road traffic accidents are:

...those which occur on a way or street open to traffic, which resulted in one or more persons being killed or injured and in which at least one moving vehicle was involved. These accidents, therefore, include collisions between vehicles, between vehicles and pedestrians, and between vehicles and animals or fixed obstacles (UN, 1997 Vol. XLII).

Similarly, Fanuel (2006) defined traffic accident as any vehicle accident occurring on a public highway that is, originating on, terminating on, or involving a vehicle partially on the highway. These accidents include: collisions between vehicles and animals, vehicles and pedestrians, or vehicles and fixed obstacles. Single vehicle accidents, in which one vehicle alone (and no other road user) involved, are also included. Agbeboh and Osabuohien (2013) also defined RTA as an unplanned occurrence of auto crash that may result in injuries, loss of lives and properties.

#### *Human security: A Paradigm shift of national security*

The concept of security has long been interpreted narrowly and traditionally: “as security of territory from external aggression and protection of national interests in

foreign policy as well as global security from the threat of a nuclear holocaust" (UNDP Human Development Report, 1994).

The first major statement concerning a new concept related to human security appeared in the 1994 Human Development report of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The UNDP Human Development report indicated human security as a milestone publication in the field of human security, with its argument that ensuring "freedom from want" and "freedom from fear" for all persons is the best way to tackle the problem of global insecurity (UNDP, 1994).

Human security is a concept regards the security of individuals and the security of communities, combining human rights with development (Repez and Postolache, 2012). It is an emerging paradigm shift from the traditional notion of national security to security of the individual. It argues the proper reference and focus of security is the individual rather than the state. This is from the assumption that human security perspective is a people-centered view of security is also necessary for national, regional and global stability. In short, it is individual based security.

According to Sen (2000), the concept of human security emerged from multi-disciplinary understanding of security involving a number of research fields, including development studies, international relations, strategic studies, and human rights. For him, human security focuses on the individual right to personal safety, basic freedoms, and access to sustainable prosperity. He added human security is both a system and a systematic practice that promotes and sustains stability, security and progressive integration of individuals within their relationships to their states, societies and regions.

According to the UNDP (1994), human development report, human security has two main aspects. First, it means safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression. Second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions like road traffic accidents in the patterns of daily life-whether in homes, in jobs or in communities.

According to the UNDP (1994), human development report, the concept of human security comprises seven elements/components. These elements/components are called the seven non-traditional security elements of human security:

1. Economic security (e.g., freedom from poverty);
2. Food security (e.g., access to food);
3. Health security (e.g., access to health care and protection from diseases);
4. Environmental security (e.g., protection from dangers such as environmental pollution and depletion);
5. Personal security (e.g., physical safety from things such as torture, war, criminal attack, domestic violence, drug use, suicide, and traffic accidents);
6. Community security (e.g., survival of traditional cultures and ethnic groups as well as the physical

security of these groups); and

7. Political security (e.g., enjoyment of civil and political rights, and freedom from political oppression).

### **Road traffic accident: A global problem**

Road traffic accident is one of the contemporary leading human security threats because it is the global socio-economic crisis. Currently, it has been ranked 9th leading cause of mortality, morbidity, diseases burden, in terms of disability adjusted life years (DALYs) lost globally (WHO, 2013).

As many studies indicated road traffic accident by 2020 is expected to be the third major killer and largest leading cause of death and disabilities after human immunodeficiency virus infection and acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and Tuberculosis (TB), which will replace the current third ranking disease perinatal (Augustus, 2012; WHO, 2013). According to WHO (2013), the increased rate of fatal road traffic accidents worldwide has been attributed to population explosion and increased motorization especially in the developing countries (Table 1).

In contemporary times due to rapid population growth, industrialization and urbanization, it is obvious that rapid motorization become increasing than ever before in developing countries. This leads to high pressure on the transport network in general and on road system in particular. This has been also resulted to growth rates of traffic accidents, which in turn, has contributed for the growing number of deaths and injuries which negatively affect human lives. As compared to other causes of death in developing countries, deaths and injuries from road accidents are becoming high.

In Africa, for example, the severity of road traffic accidents is higher than rest of the world. According to the WHO (2013), Africa has shared the world's highest death rate per population that is, 24.1 per 100,000 of the population, even though data are not correctly reported. This is because, many vulnerable road users are involved, poor transport conditions such as failure to use seat belts, overcrowding, and hazardous vehicle environments (*ibid*). The lack of pre-hospital and hospital emergency care after accidents makes the outcome of car accidents in Africa the worst (Abraham et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the poor reporting system has also masked the magnitude of the problem in the continent. However, Africa accounts for nearly 20% of global road deaths, while having less than 2% of all vehicles. On the other hand, high-income countries have more than half of all registered vehicles but face only 8.5% of all fatalities annually (UNECA, 2009).

Moreover, in Africa road users, which are pedestrians, pedal cyclists and public transport passengers are the most vulnerable and affected groups of road accidents. This is due to their high participation in traffic systems. Pedestrians account for the highest and prime proportion

**Table 1.** Rank order of disease burden of disability adjusted life years (DALYs) for the ten leading causes of the global burden of disease from 1990 to 2020.

Rank	Leading cause of disease or injury in 1990	Rank	Leading cause of disease or injury by 2020
1	Lower respiratory infections	1	Ischemic heart
2	Diarrhea	2	Unpopular major depression
3	Perinatal	<b>3</b>	<b>Road traffic crashes</b>
4	Unpopular major depression	4	Cerebrovascular
5	Ischemic heart	5	Pulmonary
6	Cerebrovascular	6	Lower respiratory infections
7	Tuberculosis	7	Tuberculosis
8	Measles	8	War
<b>9</b>	<b>Road traffic crashes</b>	9	Diarrhea
10	Congenital Anomalies	10	HIV

Source: WHO (2013) report on road traffic injury prevention, Geneva.

of road fatalities in nearly all African countries, for example, ranging between 31% in Zimbabwe and 51% in Ethiopia (Fanuel, 2006). Passengers ranked second, which accounting for 32 to 46%. Pedestrians and passengers altogether represent over 90% of all road deaths in Africa. Drivers account for a small share of fatalities of less than 10 per cent, except in South Africa, which has the largest share of driver fatalities, which is 22% (*ibid*).

### Causes of road traffic accidents

Every accident is not usually attributable to a single cause, but to a chain of unique multiple factors associated with the road and environment deficiencies, vehicle defects and road user errors.

In most cases especially in developing countries, traffic police associate traffic accidents with a single most important cause on the spot of accident and do not list the multiple factors. This usually lead to what is called in logic oversimplified fallacy where a single event is associated with a single important cause. However, many studies show there are many factors that cause road traffic accidents. Most scholars classified the causes of road traffic accidents into three major components of the road traffic system: human factors (road users' error), environmental factors and vehicle defect factors.

For example, Fanuel (2006) explained that there are many factors that resulted to road accidents. For him, many factors include: driver distraction such as fiddling with technical devices, talking with passengers, eating while driving, dealing with children or pets in the back seat; driver impairment by tiredness, illness, driving while using alcohol or drugs, both legal and illegal; mechanical failure including flat tires or tires blowing out, brake failure, axle failure, steering mechanism failure; road conditions including substances on the road surface; making the roads slick; road damage including pot holes

and speed exceeding safe conditions such as the speed for which the road is designed, the road condition, the weather, the speed of surrounding motorists. The factors that are mention in Fanuel (2006) can be deduced to the aforementioned three listed factors.

Similarly, studies conducted by Hobbs (1979), Adler (1987), ECA (1989) and Tsumokawa and Hoban (1997) indicated that the main causes of road traffic accidents, among the major include: driving under the influence of alcohol or/and drug; driving recklessly, drive without due regard for other road users, lack of driving experience; driving above the speed limit (over speeding); failing to observe traffic signs; negligent pedestrians crossing or walking on the wrong side of the road and rushing into the roadway; roads unsuitable for motor vehicles such as narrow road, low quality surfaces, lack of non-motorized paths, undefined crossing sites, dangerous curves, intersections; poor visibility, lack of sidewalks; lack of proper signs, signals, markings, intersection layout and control, and mechanical defects of vehicles such as brakes, lights, etc.

According to Silcock (1991) and Ogden (1996), over speeding causes more road traffic accidents than other related factors. Many countries reports show speeding is the principal cause of fatal crashes, being responsible for up to 40% of the total road fatalities (WHO, 2013). Many accidents are occur at higher speeds for the fact that vehicles become less stable and the driver and other road users have less time to react. Hence, as the speed of the vehicle increases, the severity of accident also increases. The survival rate also decreases as the collision speed of the vehicle increases, and the death risk of road users is also get higher (Fanuel, 2006; WHO, 2013).

### Major contributing factors of road traffic accident

This section focuses on the identification of the

contributory and determinant factors that lead to road traffic accidents. For the purpose of this paper, the contributing factors of road traffic accidents are discussed under the following three major factors: human factors, vehicle factors and environmental factors.

### **Human factors**

Human factors are the leading most prominent contributing factors of road traffic accidents. Most investigations have revealed that 70 to 80% of all traffic accidents are due to human error, of which drivers' errors takes the majority of the blames especially in developing countries (Fanuel, 2006; WHO, 2013). Human factors (road users' error) include all the drivers and pedestrians related factors. Large number of injuries and deaths that occur on the road are as the result of driving errors while abilities to do so are impaired by alcohol or drugs, lack of experience, lack of attention etc. (WHO, 2013).

### **Vehicle factors**

Vehicle related factors are other contributory and determinant factors in the occurrence of many road traffic accidents particularly in developing countries like Africa. Fanuel (2006) argues that vehicle factors like defects in mechanical and technical, lead significantly to road crashes. This is because; mainly related to the lack of regular maintenance, of which defective tires and brakes occur most frequently. It is not only the improvement in the standards and design of vehicles that matters, but also adequate maintenance of the vehicle during its working life is also the matter (WHO, 2013). In developing countries, most of the vehicles are old fashioned and second hand (mostly used) with lack of regular maintenance

### **Environmental factors**

Environmental factors are also other determinant factors of road traffic accidents. The factors are related to the design, lighting, and surfacing of roads that can affect injury and bad weather and poor road conditions (Fanuel, 2006). In developed countries, here are continuous efforts to meet the safety standards of road situations through safety audit during the planning, designing, and operation stage. Although road network is expanding fast and rapid motorization in the developing world like Africa, the efforts to meet the safety standards of roads situations through safety audit during the planning, designing, and operation is at the beginning stage. According to Hobbs (1979), many accidents in developing countries occur because the facilities provided do not adequately allow for the range of individual requirements of separate

groups of road users particularly the pedestrians.

## **Effects of road traffic accident on human security**

### ***Economic effect***

Road traffic accidents are claiming the lives of millions of people and caused destruction of property leading to social and economic crisis (Peden et al., 2004). The impact it has caused on human, physical and financial capital is huge. It is a posing challenge to national development efforts of many countries. Several studies have shown road traffic accidents seriously affect national economies and lead to decrease in gross domestic product (GDP) growth of countries.

The national macroeconomic growth may also be affected by road crashes because it may change the pattern in government expenditure, which may have to shift away from more profitable investment resources towards social and health care provisions (Chen et al., 2003).

For example, providing medical services to those injured is high burden on national economy particularly the burden of road casualties on medical sector resources. The medical costs of accidents range from at-scene to recovery, or death, and include first aid and rescue services (ambulance), hospital costs (food and bed, operations, x-rays, medicines, doctors' services) and rehabilitation costs (treatment and prosthetics) have negative impact up on the national economy as well as on the income of the individual victims and their families (ibid).

Road traffic injuries caused a heavy burden not only on global and national economies but also on household income of the victims and their families. Many families are driven deeply into poverty because of the loss of economically active group (mostly refers to the young people who are the bread winners of their families). In addition, the added burden of caring for members disabled by road traffic injuries has huge negative impact on the economy of the victims' families (Söderlund et al., 1995).

Road accident is a cause of all kinds of costs that is, both property and human loss. For example, it leads to loss of means of transportation and fresh expenditure for purchasing new vehicles or repairing damaged ones. The property damage costs also include repairs and replacement of infrastructure components and vehicle parts, which are also include generated charge during the period of damaged vehicles are out of service. These scarce resources could be used more profitably elsewhere (Bitew, 2002).

The human cost is the other consequence of road traffic accident. It is the pain, grief and suffering, which is added to the overall estimate of crash costs, which affects the national economy and the economy of the

victim families. The pain, grief and suffering also have adverse effects on the quality of life of the individual victims. The human value which reflects pain, grief, and suffering, termed human costs is recommended to add to the total costs for each severity of crash. The amount to be added could be considered as a social objective which effects on the quality of life (*ibid*).

### Health problem

Road traffic injuries and deaths are a growing public health problem worldwide. Studies have shown that road traffic injuries are major cause of death and disability globally, with a disproportionate number occurring in developing countries (Banthia et al., 2006 cited in Oduro, 2012). It is one of the most leading health problems along with diseases such as Diarrhea, Malaria, HIV/AIDS and Tuberculosis especially in low and middle income countries (WHO, 2013).

The psychosocial impact of road traffic accident on victims is another consequence. According to WHO (2013) and Agbeboh and Osarumwense (2013) road traffic injuries accounts for 30 to 86% of the trauma admissions to hospitals in low income and middle income countries. It is a major cause of premature mortality and injuries, people often suffer from physical pain and emotional anguish that is beyond any economic compensation (*ibid*).

Thus, as road traffic injuries are the major public health challenges in the contemporary world, comprehensive and holistic efforts are required to reduce through effective and sustainable prevention and management mechanisms particularly in the developing world.

### Social effects

The social impact of road traffic accidents is also widespread. It restricts social interactions because the victims feel unsafe, inferiority, aloneness, inabled and economically dependent on their family and community. The loss of lives, damage to property and the sorrow it leaves in human mind are profound (Peden et al., 2004). It caused heavy cost to society especially when loss of able bodied men and women who would have been involved in productive economic activities, loss of intellectuals, loss of resources to government and families, loss to insurance companies and damage to properties, etc. are inestimable (Agbeboh and Osarumwense, 2013).

### Road traffic accident: A human security threat

Human security is faced with threats of different nature. For example, threats among others include violent conflict

(war), terrorism and traffic accidents, which take the lives of millions of people around the globe. Road traffic accident is a human security threat through its direct and indirect implications.

Chen et al., (2003) argue road traffic accident ranks among the gravest human security challenges the twenty-first century face. It is one of the most serious threats that the world confronts today like terrorism, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis etc. This is because, it is the premature and unnecessary loss of life perhaps the greatest insecurity of human confronted by millions of people across the globe who are who are suffering from road traffic accidents. This undoubtedly makes road traffic accident is one of the serious threats to the survival of human beings around the world and is one of the greatest contemporary human security threats.

Road traffic accident has worsening effect on society. It claims the largest harm of human life and tend to be the most serious problem all over the world (Anh and Dao, 2005). It affects many sectors of society: individuals, families, communities and countries. Victims of fatal road accidents die on the scene or in hospital. Survivors also suffer from different types of injuries and disabilities, which can affect their quality of life. As these victims suffer, their families and communities will suffer too; they sometimes carry the burden of caring for the victims. This in turn, victim countries will struggle in which the loss of manpower (*ibid*).

The human insecurity implication of the road traffic accident is not only limited to human lost but also a challenge for human because it is the violation of human rights such as the right to personal, community, economic and health securities. For example, it is against the physical security of the victims and diminishes their quality of life. Hence, this study argues that road traffic accident especially, in developing countries, where covered more than 90% of the problem, which affects almost all of the sub-categories of human security components outlined in the 1994 UNDP Human Development Report.

### Road traffic accident and economic security

Road traffic accidents affect economic security by causing disability (physical loss) or might be illness, which has negative economic impact on the individual, family and national income especially in the developing countries. Victim families can drive deeply into poverty by loss of their active economic productive age group. The added burden of caring for members disabled by road traffic injuries has huge impact on the economic security of the victims and their families too.

Among the economically active age group, road traffic injuries are the third most important cause of death in developing countries (Söderlund et al., 1995). It is not only limited to the crash victim(s) disability but also limit

the number of work days lost either to recovery or to average retirement age in the case of medical treatment. Even some of those injured will not return to their jobs and may also lose their jobs and will also spend additional time looking for new employment (search for other jobs).

Thus, there is not only lost working time to take into account, but also reduced income after resuming employment. The lost output should also take into account of income lost by care takers. When someone in a poor family is injured, the whole family gets involved; those on daily wages may lose their job, children may not go to school and older members may spend less time caring for infants (*ibid*).

Road traffic accident may cause economic insecurity for ordinary people at the household level. This is because, households affected by road traffic accidents are likely to experience a reduced earning capacity and decreased productivity as member are unable to work, or are tied down to caring for the affected family members (Chen *et al.*, 2003). Moreover, road traffic accidents at the same time generates new costs such as funeral expenditure costs, legal costs, administrative cost, medical costs, and so forth (*ibid*). In addition, households may also face serious problems to cope economically with such health shocks. Such consequences are serious threats of economic security of households.

Unlike many other global problems of human security threats, road traffic accident affects not only the young and the old, but also the economically productive segments of the population and the economic elites including business elites, managers, skilled labor, academicians, students, and so forth. This means, the economy will face direct costs because of higher contributions to employees' pensions, as well as loss of life, disability and medical benefit schemes (Anh and Dao, 2005). Simultaneously, there are also lots of indirect costs for economic income resulting from increased absenteeism, additional recruitment and training of new personnel to replace the sick (disabled) or deceased personnel (*ibid*).

The property damage cost of road traffic accident also severely affects the economic security of individuals and the national economy of countries. The property damage such as repair, replacement of infrastructural components and vehicle parts, which are generated during the period of damaged vehicles are out of service have huge impact on the income of the victims and on the national economies (Chen *et al.*, 2003).

### **Road traffic accident and food security**

Road traffic accident is a threat of food security because it causes loss of bread winners and reduces the capacity and ability of people that could produce food, thereby can limit the access of certain individuals and groups to

access basic food. This may lead victims to malnutrition. In other words, the negative impact of road traffic accidents on food security is huge because it attacks exactly those capacities that enable people to resist famine. It kills young adults, especially women – the people whose labor is most needed, which in turn, the family will be hungry (Hassan, 2010). For example, a person with disability because of road accident may decrease his/her performance, activity and productive capacity of producing food as compared with he/she was no normal, which in turn, people may starve because of lack of food, and face food insecurity. It may also causes loss of labor force that could produce food for themselves and their families. Thus, these conditions may the source of famine and hunger, which are the central threats of food security.

### **Road traffic accident and personal security**

Around the globe, people who are affected by traffic accident face severe abuse, some of which are physical and psychological violence which is commonly called direct violence (Galtung 1964).

In the worst case scenario, such physical and psychological violence can lead to the premature death and injuries of persons. The physical and psychological violence of people because of road traffic accident are the personal security threats. It caused the physical violence such as injuries (usually disability) and deaths. Death is the end of human function and production and is the major consequence of physical loss of human live permanently, while injuries may be temporal and permanent.

According to the WHO (2004), “deaths from road traffic injuries account for around 25% of all deaths from injury”. The other personal security threat of road traffic accident is disability. The victims of head and spinal injury may be unable to return to their normal lives. They may even require full care all the time (*ibid*). Physical disability varies in harshness. Lose of physical health means loss of productive capacity. The sorrow, pain and grief caused to victims are another personal security threat, which affects the personal welfare of the victims and their families too. This also caused mental, physical and psychological impact on both personalities of the victims and their families (Hassan, 2010).

### **Road traffic accident and health security**

Road traffic accident is a health security threat because it increases the number of people seeking health services. The impact of such an overstretching of resources means that many road traffic accidents patients may face many health problems especially when they arrived at hospital lately in their illness cycle (Anh and Dao, 2005).

Moreover, other patients' curable illnesses may not have the access to hospitals especially in developing countries. The costs for providing medical care are also rising. This also led to scarce medical resources and an increased demand for health care services, which has a negative impact on the supply of medical services (Hassen, 2010). These indirect effects of the problem, in conjunction with the large number of people dying annually as a direct result of the illness, make the global road traffic accidents one of the world's most pressing contemporary health security threats.

Furthermore, traffic accident reduces access to medical resources thereby has caused health insecurity. This is because the number of people seeking medical resources gets higher and higher because of the frequency of road traffic accidents. When the number of people need medical resource is increased, the medical resources will be scared. It also affects access to a healthy diet, employment and recreation can be restricted. Moreover, households and individuals of victims will be affected emotionally.

Another serious human security threat of road traffic accidents is psychological problems, which can have a substantial impact on the victims of road traffic accidents and on their families. It causes feelings of discrimination, exclusion and depression particularly among the older people (Health Education Authority 2000 cited in Crombie, no year). This may also lead victims to stigma of illness. Many studies focus on psychiatric disorders that result from road traffic accidents. Some of these studies discuss the short and the long term consequences for those survivors. Victims and their families, especially the young children may have mental problems after road traffic accidents. Victims can lose their meaning of life and lose attachment to their surrounding environment (Hassan, 2010).

### **Road traffic accident and community security**

Road traffic accidents are one of the community security threats, which seriously affect the psycho-social relations of the victims with rest of their families as well as their communities. They may face difficulties to freely interact with others. It may disturb the relationship between the victims with their families and communities. This is because the victims may feel like as if they are excluded and discriminated from their families and societies. They may also feel inferiority and aloneness. They may also feel less achiever and economically dependent on others (Onakomaiya, 1991). These may lead victims to simply expose to abuse and sexual exploitations in order to ensure their survival in the absence of family support; they are often left to exchange sexual services in return for vital goods such as shelter, food, physical protection and money (Hassan, 2010).

Furthermore, families and communities may lose their

leaders. This leads to family disintegration and separation of members. Consequently, they may face different problems like sexual violence and become victims of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and other sexual transmitted diseases. In addition, they may engage to criminal activities like theft and robbery etc. (Agbeboh and Osabuohien, 2013).

### **Conclusion**

Road traffic accident is becoming one of the pressing human security threats. It is claiming the lives of millions of people, and caused destruction of property leading to social and economic crisis of households. The impact it caused on human, physical and financial capital is huge.

It is also challenge to national development efforts directly or indirectly affects the national economy of countries and households because it caused loss of the economic active population. The economic cost due to road traffic accident is the loss of income and the burden placed on families to care for their injured relatives. The human cost and the pain, grief and suffering it leaves immense. And, the pain, grief and suffering have adverse effects on the quality of life of the individual victims and their families. It also affects the social lives of all sectors of society including individuals, families, communities and countries. This means, the increasing number of road traffic accidents means increase of damage on human security.

Road traffic accident is a serious threat to the human security components. It causes economic insecurity by causing disability (physical loss) or might be illness and has a negative economic impact on individual, family, and national income. It is also a threat of food security which affects access to basic food at all times. This is because, it affects the capacity and ability of victims not to produce enough food to ensure their food security. It is a serious health security threat which could cause of mortality, illness and disability. The major health problems that make threat to their health security include: death and being disabled, illness (pain and grief and suffer). It is also one of the community security threats which seriously affect the family treatment to the victims. This is because; it can lead families to stigma of the illness and are more vulnerable to malnutrition. It is also a serious personal security threat, which caused physical and psychological violence such as death and injuries of millions of people.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations addressed here present some options for policy implications. These include practical interventions to minimize the level of impact of road traffic accident on human security. To that end, the following

recommendations are in order:

1. In view of the gravity of road traffic crashes and injuries in developing countries like Africa, experience of best practices from developed countries should be borrowed.
2. Police control of speed and drunk driving must be intensified on the highways to stem the high incidence of traffic fatalities and injuries;
3. Governments should have national road safety policies and strategies.
4. Governments should allocate adequate financial and human resources to ensure road safety strategies.
5. governments should create regular public education programmes on road safety should be mounted and adopted in all states of the federation. Awareness rising programs should be increased. Awareness creating activities should be given to all people about the cause and effects of traffic accident on human lives and property damage. Therefore, continuing, comprehensive and holistic awareness creation programs should be conducted regularly.
6. Coordination works among stakeholders should be improved. Traffic concerned bodies and the larger public should work cooperatively in general and cooperation and coordinating activities.
7. Governments should flow and control driving training centers whether they give enough training skills and knowledge to trainee. Moreover, vehicle training centers should be owned and controlled by government because private vehicle training centers are working only for sake of maximizing profit without regarding for measuring and assessing skill, knowledge and ability of the trainee (drivers).

## CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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