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Information Needs and Seeking Behaviour of Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) Members, Yenagoa Branch, Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study sought to identify the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria (RTEAN) Members in Yenagoa Branch, Bayelsa State. The specific purpose of the study was to: examine the information needs of Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria; find out how Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria seek for needed information; determine the problems encountered by Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria while seeking for needed information; and proffer solutions to the determined problems of information seeking by RTEAN members. Four research questions were formulated to guide the study. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and the sample comprised two hundred and twenty (222) RTEAN members out of a population of 882 drivers registered in ten motor parks. A questionnaire was used to generate data for the study and the data generated were analysed using frequency tables and percentages. The park chairmen were used as research assistants to distribute and retrieve the copies of the questionnaire. The copies of the questionnaire were administered to those literate members who could respond to them. The result revealed that their most important information needs are; information on how to avoid accidents, where to get the best (superior) spare parts, and to know the most lucrative routes, while the most common strategies adopted to get information are through union activities, consulting friends and experts. Some of the problems associated with seeking information include time factors, illiteracy and the absence of information centres. Solutions were proffered on the basis of the findings of the study that government should establish information centres in the motor parks, as this will go a long way in making information readily available to these road transport workers, who also contribute to the national and state economy.

Keywords: Information Needs, Information Seeking, Information Sources, Information centres, Road Transport, Employee Association, Yenagoa, Nigeria

Introduction

Information performs a vital function within each day sports of a nation`s workforce. Commercial street delivery employees aren't an exemption, as all of us desires applicable and well-timed facts for each day sports and living. Accurate facts are the lifeblood that energises and propels the route of life of all people and their well-being in livelihood sustainability. Information behaviour of humans differs in line with the character in their responsibilities and different sports they have interaction in. Therefore, the look at of facts behaviour is important for unique instructions of people in society. The street transportation gadget in Nigeria money owed for the mass mobility of people, with business street delivery accounting for tens of thousands and thousands of lots of freight motion via way of means of street in line with annum (Aworemi, Abdul-Azeez, Adewoye & Oyedokun, 2009). This reliance on public transportation makes operators of business motors a vital issue of socio-monetary development (Chidi-Egboka, Bolarinwa & Awoyemi, 2015).

Like each different profession, RTEAN individuals have a manner of obtaining data at the same time as rendering offerings to hundreds of thousands of humans and setting up themselves via their respective associations. Commercial drivers represent a critical team of workers within the casual sector. They play a key function in making sure the motion of commuters from one area to the different. They are in the main younger and are for this reason capable of deal with the stressful nature of the job (Johnson, 2021).

Information is conceived as a critical aid that contributes immensely towards the improvement of a nation. Ideally, data brings approximately information, and an informed network is likewise an knowledgeable network. This means that a network cannot increase without information, and a network can simplest emerge as informed in the event that they

apprehend and use data as their device for improvement (Kamba 2009). Access to the proper data through industrial transporters can assist them to gather the skills, information and self-assurance to take part absolutely in day by day affairs. Moore (2007) referred to that “Information is a key contributor to the improvement of people and communities. People want data to increase their capability via schooling and training, to achieve business, to enhance their cultural experience, and to take manipulate in their day by day lives”.

Mooko & Aina (2006) aver that a data want arises whilst a man or woman feels elaborate state of affairs or data hole wherein his or her inner information and beliefs, and version of the surroundings fail to signify a route towards the delight of his or her goals. Help of the above, Okpala (2010) word that information seeking behaviour is an imbalance current between what someone is aware of and what the man or woman is meant to know. Aina (2004) is of the view that the data-searching for the behaviour of humans varies in step with their age, gender, occupation, location, schooling, publicity and enlightenment, faith or even culture. Furthermore, it's far argued that data wishes of humans in the equal country, business enterprise or the sort of organization someone belongs to will range due to the fact the extent of want for comparable data might also additionally range over the years and among folks or businesses of folks relying on quite a few elements, which include the demographics of schooling, age, social and financial backgrounds, or through the ones elements which might be aid-based, namely, availability of data, attention of availability, acquaintance with, and simplicity of use of data resources (Wilson, 2000).

In admire of records in information-seeking behaviour, Olobunmi (2017) recommend that the “Information behaviour of humans differs in keeping with the character in their responsibilities and different sports they have interaction in. Therefore, the observe of records behaviour is crucial for one-of-a-kind lessons of people withinside the society”. Accordingly, Wilson (1999, 2000) cited that, information seeking behaviour includes "the ones sports

someone might also additionally have interaction in whilst figuring out their personal desires for records, trying to find such records in any way, and the use of or shifting that records. Information seeking behaviour has been described as the methods and way a character use to gather and discover records for knowledge, his/her personal use, updating and improvement. Information-seeking behaviour is purposive in nature and is a final result of a want to meet a few objectives. In the path of in search of, the character might also additionally have interaction with humans, head to head or electronically (Wilson 2000). Thus, records in search of behaviour are the dispositions and strategies exhibited via way of means of humans whilst searching out records which is also a feature of the popularity of one`s records desires as perceived via way of means of him/her and that which propels him/her to utilize records offerings and assets to meet such perceived desires.

RTEAN is a network of humans with like minds, equal interests, and comparable information needs and shows a comparable sample of information seeking behaviour. Because business drivers represent a vital body of workers withinside the casual sector, societal reliance on public transportation has made operators of business cars a vital factor of socioeconomic development. Therefore, this study investigates the information needs and seeking behaviour of the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to look at information needs and seeking behaviour of Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study is to:

- I. Examine the information needs of the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

- II. Find out how the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria seek needed information
- III. Determine the problems encountered by the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State, Nigeria while seeking needed information
- IV. Proffer solutions to the determined problems of information seeking by RTEAN members.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

- I. What is the information needs of the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa?
- II. How do the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members seek needed information?
- III. What are the problems the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members encounter in trying to get needed information?
- IV. What are the solutions to the identified problems of the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in seeking information?

Literature Review

Olubunmi (2017) investigated the information behaviour of commercial taxi drivers in Saki, Nigeria. A survey design was adopted. Thirty-five taxi drivers were interviewed. The drivers had a variety of information needs, ranging from general information to specific information about their jobs. Interpersonal sources of information, which include discussions with friends, colleagues, and family members, were the preferred sources of information. They listened to the radio and watched television, but at a very minimal level. The low educational status of

the drivers was identified as a major cause of their reliance on interpersonal sources of information. The taxi drivers shared information among themselves during meetings, relaxation periods, and casual discussions. The use of the Internet to seek and share information was rare among the drivers.

Methodology

The design employed for the study is a descriptive survey. This design is considered appropriate considering the area of coverage and the large population involved in the study. The population comprised of all Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members in Yenagoa metropolis. Field statistics shows that the number of members in the parks stands at eight hundred and fifty-one, from Central Motor Park Ekeki, Edepie Roundabout Motor Park, Opolo Market Motor Parks, Peace Mass Motor Park, Ekeki/Etegwé, Sunny Eru Motor Park (Edepie), De-Prize Motors (Kpansia), God is Good Motors (Kpansia), Bob-Izua Motors (Edepie), G. Agofure Motors (Edepie) and Big Joe Motors (Edepie). The sample size was three hundred (300) respondents selected using a random sampling technique. The studied Motor Parks' chairmen, used as research assistants, administered and retrieved the completed copies of the questionnaire from the respondents. Two hundred and twenty-two (222) copies of the completed questionnaires were considered useable. Frequency count and simple percentages were used for data analysis.

Data Analysis and Results

The result of the study is presented below:

Table 1: Motor Parks used in the Study

s/n	Institution	Q-Dist	Q-Retrieved	Percentage
1	Central Motor Park (Ekeki)	50	46	92%
2	Edepie Roundabout Motor Park (Edepie)	60	51	85%
3	Opolo Market Motor Parks	50	34	68%
4	Sunny Eru Motor Park (Edepie)	20	11	55%
5	Peace Mass Motor Park (Ekeki/Etegwé)	20	20	100%
6	De-Prize Motors (Kpansia)	20	9	45%
7	God is Good Motors (Kpansia)	20	11	55%

8	Bob-Izua Motors (Edepie)	20	15	75%
9	G. Agofure Motors (Edepie)	20	17	85%
10	Big Joe Motors (Edepie)	20	8	40%
	Total	300	222	74%

Table 1 shows that 46(92%) of the respondents were from Central Motor Park Ekeki, 51(85%) from Edepie Motor Park, 34(68%) from Opolo Market Motor Parks, 11(55%) Sunny Eru Motor Park, 20(100%) from Peace Mass Motor Parks, 9(45%) from De-Prize Motors, 11(55%) from God Is Good Motors, 15(75%) from Bob- Izua Motors, 17(85%) from G. Agofure Motors and 8(40%) Big Joe Motors, all in Yenagoa. Out of 300 copies of the questionnaire distributed, 222(74%) were found useable for the study.

Table 2: Gender of the Respondents

s/n	Gender of Respondents	Male	Female
1	Sex	222	Nil
	Total	74 (100%)	Nil (0%)

Table 2 shows that total of 222 (74%) of the respondents from all the studied motor parks were Male. This is in consonance with Ozioko & Eke (2010) in a study of commercial motorcycle operators in Nsukka, and Afolabi (2003) which studied commercial drivers in Oyo State, that majority of their respondents were Male.

Respondents' Age

Table 3. Percentages of respondents' age

s/n	Drivers Age	Respondents	Percentage
1	20 – 25	15	6.75%
2	26 – 30	41	18.47%
3	31 – 50	108	48.65%
4	51 +	58	26.13%
	Total	222	100%

Table 3 shows that 15 (6.75%) of the respondents were in the age bracket of 20-25years, 41(18.47%) 26-30years, 108(48.65%) 31-50 while 58(26.13%) were in the bracket of 51+ years. This gives a picture of most of the Road Transport Employee Association of Nigeria members being in their youth age. This finding is in line with Johnson (2021) which stated that “commercial drivers constitute an important group of workers in the informal sector. They play

a key role in ensuring the movement of commuters from one place to the other. They are mostly young and are thus able to cope with the demanding nature of the job”.

Academic qualification of the respondents

Table 4. Percentage of responses on academic qualifications of respondents

s/n	Academic Qualification	Respondents	Percentage
1	Ph.D	--	--
2	Master	--	--
3	Bachelor/HND	79	35.6%
4	OND/Diploma	38	17.1%
5	WAEC/NECO/GCE/SSCE	105	47.3
	Total	222	100

Table 4 above shows that 79(35.6%) of the respondents were Bachelor’s degree/High National Diploma holders, 38(17.1%) holds OND/Diploma, while 105(47.3%) were WAEC/NECO/GCE/SSCE holders. This show that many graduates from tertiary institutions in Nigeria today, are making do with whatever they can lay their hands on to eke out a living and sustain their livelihood. The finding also reveals that a lot of Nigerians, after their secondary education, go into any profession, skilled and unskilled to make ends meet. Anele (2012) noted that the energetic and young ones have gone to the cities in search of any job they can make a living from. Sowunmi (2015) also supported that “the reality today is that graduates are also involved in commercial bus driving to keep body and soul together and meet up with their daily needs”. “In the recent times, one of the richest men in the world, Alhaji Aliko Dangote placed a vacancy advert through one of his conglomerates seeking to employ graduates as truck drivers”.

Years of Experience of the Respondents

Table 5. Percentages of responses on years of experience of respondents

s/n	Years of Driving Experience	Respondents	Percentage
1	1 – 5	32	14.4%
2	6 – 10	28	12.6%
3	11 – 15	87	39.2%
4	16 – 35	75	33.8%
	Total	222	100%

From the results presented in table 5 above, 32(14.4%) of the respondents were in the bracket of 1-5years of working experience, 28(12.6%) 6-10years, 87(39.2%) 11-15years, while 75(33.8%) had 16-35years working experience.

Table 6: The Responses on Types of Information Need

S/N	Types of Information needed	Frequency	%
1	Where to get good spare parts	222	100
2	Where to get good mechanics	222	100
3	How to own a personal vehicle for transport business	222	100
4	How to avoid accidents	187	84.2
5	Information about police/FRSC cheek points	185	83.3
6	Where to get cheap fuel during periods of scarcity	185	83.3
7	Information on traffic regulations	180	81.1
8	Information on the more lucrative routes to ply	157	70.7
9	Where to obtain vehicle particulars and driving license	150	67.5

Table 6 shows that Where to get good spare parts 222(100%), Where to get good mechanics 222(100%), How to own a personal vehicle for transport business 222(100), ranked highest on the scale as indicated by the respondents. This is followed by, How to avoid accidents 187(100%), Information about police/FRSC cheek points 185(83.3%), Where to get cheap fuel during periods of scarcity 185(83.3%), Information on traffic regulations 180(81.1%). Information on the more lucrative routes to ply 157(70.7%) and Where to obtain vehicle particulars and driving license 150(67.5%) brought up the rear.

Table 7: Ways of Seeking for Needed Information

S/N	How they seek information	Frequency	%
1	Union activities	222	100
2	Waiting bay gathering and discussion	217	97.7
3	Reading newspapers and FRSC publications	192	85.3
4	Consulting friends	185	82.2
5	Discussion with family members/neighbours	185	82.2
6	Listening to radio news and programmes	185	82.2
7	Consulting with experts	174	77.3
8	Browsing the Internet	123	54.6
9	Watching and listening to TV programmes	47	20.8
10	Visiting library and information centres	Nil	Nil

Table 7 shows the responses of the respondents on how they seek for needed information. Union activities 222(100%) ranked the highest, followed by Waiting bay gathering and discussion 217(97.7%), Reading newspapers and FRSC publications 192(85.3%), Consulting friends 185(82.2%), Discussion with family members/neighbours 185(82.2%), Listening to radio news and programmes 185(82.2%), Consulting with experts 174(77.3%), Browsing the Internet 123(54.6%), Watching and listening to TV programmes 47(20.8%), while Visiting library and information centres with no score, brought up the rear.

Table 8: Challenges to Seeking Needed Information

S/N	Problems of Seeking Information	Frequency	%
1	Unavailability of information centres in and around the parks	222	100
2	Time factor	221	98.2
3	Literacy level	209	92.8
4	Lack of interest to search for information	198	88.0
5	Inadequate skills in using smartphone to access information	187	83.1
6	High cost of newspapers/magazines	117	52.0
7	Network failure	42	18.6

It is evident from the table that one of the major problems RTEAN members encounter while seeking for information is Unavailability of information centres in and around the parks 222(100%), Time factor 221(98.2%), Literacy level 209(92.8%), Lack of interest to search for information 198(88.0%), Inadequate skills in using smartphone to access information 187(83.1%), High cost of newspapers/magazines 117(52.0%) Network failure 42(18.6%)

Table 9: Solutions to the Identified Problems

S/N	Solutions	Frequency	%
1	The State Library Board should establish reading rooms at different central locations for easy access	222	100
2	RTEAN members should devote enough time (take time off) to find needed information	202	89.7
3	Government should provide information units for commercial transport workers in motor parks	202	89.7
4	State information providers/FRSC should be organizing workshops in collaboration with RTEAN to educate them about their vocation, regularly.	185	82.2

Table 9 gave an insight into the necessary solutions that could be employed to address the problems encountered by the RTEAN members while seeking for the information they need. All the respondents 222 representing (100%) indicate that Public libraries should establish reading rooms at different central locations for easy access, 202(89.7%) RTEAN members should devote enough time (take time off) to find needed information, 202(89.7%) indicated that Government should provide information units for commercial transport workers in motor parks, while 185(82.2%) were of the opinion that State information providers/FRSC should be organizing workshops in collaboration with RTEAN to educate them about their vocation, regularly.

Discussion

It is evident from the study that the RTEAN members like any other group in the society need information. The findings revealed that they need information on how to avoid accidents, where to get the best spare parts, more lucrative routes, information about police or road safety checkpoints so as to avoid such areas, information on traffic regulations and where to get fuel during periods of scarcity, among others. This finding is in settlement with Ozioko and Eke (2010) which stated Maslow (1970) said that there are exclusive kinds of human wishes which include self-actualizing, esteem want, love and belonging wishes, protection wishes and mental wishes. These exclusive wishes are pondered within the findings of this take a look at.

On how this institution of human beings move approximately in search of for statistics, it become discovered from the take a look at that they achieve this through their union's activities, consulting friends, consulting experts, through GSM/smartphone conversation, paying attention to radio news, touring ingesting joints/beer parlours, looking tv and analyzing a few guides on visitors policies amongst others. Unfortunately, they do now no longer a lot go to general public libraries at the same time as in search of for statistics. The

locating concurs with that of Ozioko and Eke (2010) at the reasserts of statistics and statistics in search of behaviour of human beings in enterprise and different vocations.

The finding similarly discovered a few issues those operators come upon at the same time as in search of for his or her wished statistics. The issues diagnosed consist of illiteracy, that is because of the terrible instructional background, time issue as a lot of them can't spare any time to search for what they want, community failure, and lack of information of computer/net use. This is in collaboration with that of Afolabi (2003) and Cerevo (2004) who said that the issues of statistics in search of should do with economic, social environment, occupational and infrastructure issues. Also, Olah (2008) agreed that illiteracy is another hassle that hinders their knowledge of the policies of the street and popular visitors' policies. Unavailability of public libraries and statistics centres, abnormal strength deliver is a number of the issues they come upon. Perhaps, due to the fact a lot of them aren't properly knowledgeable, they do now no longer admire the want for a public library and the significance of touring the library to search for statistics they will want.

A method counselled become that authorities must set up statistics centres withinside the motor parks, as this may move a protracted manner in making statistics effortlessly to be had to those street delivery workers, who additionally make a contribution to the country wide and kingdom economy. Furthermore, public libraries must be organizing workshops thru which the drivers could be knowledgeable on their vocation. It became additionally counselled that authorities must set up information centres. These pointers agreed with what Afolabi (2008) said that organizing workshops/seminars via way of means of the federal and kingdom governments, and personal people and companies could assist them to lessen the hassle of illiteracy. It additionally agreed with the Tide editorial (2008), which said that infrastructure centres must be supplied via way of means of authorities to beautify the lives of her citizens.

Conclusion

Information is for all and all want facts for day by day sports and living. The significance of facts to all can't be over stressed. This look at has checked out the facts desires and facts in search of behaviour of RTEAN individuals in Yenagoa, Bayelsa State. The findings were revealing in addition to interesting. This has proven that everyone or institution withinside the society have their very own atypical facts desires and the manner they pass approximately getting such wanted facts. In this look at, it's been discovered that those RTEAN individuals want facts totally on a way to keep away from street accidents, in which to get the high-quality spare parts, understand the high-quality routes and approximately police or street protection, take a look at factors in an effort to keep away from them. However, the authorities and the general public libraries can assist ameliorate the issues by organizing workshops and establishing an order of infrastructure including information centres and reading rooms at strategic centres.

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