

**THE ROLE OF MINIBUS-TAXIS IN ROAD TRAFFIC
OFFENCES, ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS, VIOLENCE
AND CRIME:**

A CASE STUDY OF THE MAFIKENG MUNICIPALITY

BY

NORTH WEST UNIVERSITY



A33641200168354C

ZACCHEUS PULAFELA NKO

A RESEARCH DISSERTATION

Submitted to the

Faculty of Commerce and Administration

North West University - Mafikeng Campus

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

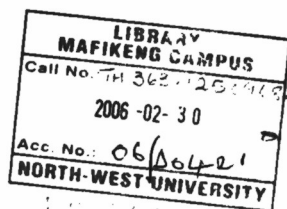
For the degree of

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MBA

AUGUST 2005

SUPERVISOR : DR M.P. MAAGA



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my deepest appreciation to my promoter, Dr M.P. Maaga, from whom I learnt much in the preparation and completion of this research project.

My indebtedness goes to God, the Almighty who stood by me in my academic endeavours and spheres of life.

Furthermore, I wish to thank my parents and all those people whose help I enlisted in the realization of my goal.

Finally, special acknowledgement is due to my family – my wife Honey, and our three children, Wapalo, Lesego and Atisang without whose love, patience and encouragement, this project would never have seen the light of the day.

DECLARATION

"I declare that the dissertation for the degree of Masters of Business Administration at the North West University, Mafikeng Campus hereby submitted, has not previously been submitted by me or any other person for any degree at this or any other university, that it is my own work in design and execution and that, all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged"

III

ABSTRACT

A few years ago bicycles, buses and trains were the main mode of transport for the movement of indigent persons and goods in the study area of Mafikeng. From the late seventies, with the advent of taxis everywhere, these established modes of transport diminished to an extent that, in this recent study, well over 90 percent of the 200 interviewed commuters, were shown to be affirmed regular minibus – taxi passengers. It has been proved by this research and others that the taxi industry, provides passengers with a relatively comfortable and acceptable transport system.

However, an increase in vehicle ownership and the flourishing taxi business, have complicated and compromised road traffic with resultant complex and serious problems of traffic safety to road congestion and related violation of the road rules by reckless taxi drivers. Unparalleled deaths and expenses resulted from delays, accidents and incidental violence, a situation which is detrimental to the sustainable development of the capital's economy, road users and destroyed properties.

If the Mafikeng society is to continue in stability, certain essential tasks need to be put into operation. If the city fails, society may disintegrate or change its form drastically. A certain degree of order and stability are essential for the survival of the social system.

The study therefore, recommended, inter alia, that a prerequisite be set rigorously, to guide and educate members into the acceptable ways of society, so as to empower and ease the burden of the police and legal systems in keeping a firm check on any deviation from traffic safety and that, the aim and objectives of taxi associations, primarily be on the improvement of services provided by its members to the public.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE	PAGES
1.1 Introduction	1 – 2
1.2 Statement of the Problem	2
1.3 Objectives of the Study	3
1.4 Significance of the Study	3
1.5 Literature Review	3 – 8
1.6 Assumptions	8
1.7 Dependent and Independent Variables	9
1.8 Research Design	9
1.8.1 Sampling	9
1.8.2 Data Collection	9
1.8.3 Data Analysis	10
1.8.4 Limitations of the Study	10
1.9 Ethical Consideration	10
 CHAPTER TWO	
2. Literature Review	11
2.1 A rising vehicle sales	11 – 12
2.2 Traffic Control	12 - 13
2.3 Motor Accidents and Fatalities	13 – 14
2.4 The Escalating Cost of Traffic Accidents and Road Death Toll	14 – 15
2.5 Alcoholism Costs South Africa Dearly	15 – 16

2.6	Speeding Motorists and Majority of Accidents	16 – 17
2.7	The State and Drunk Drivers: Seizure of Vehicles	17
2.8	“Arrive Alive” can take your vehicle: Case Study	18 -19
2.9	Rough Road Ahead for Taxis	19
2.10	Taxi Owners Slam Impounding	19 -20
2.11	Taxi Associations put its Foot Down on Overloading	20 – 21
2.12	Mafikeng Municipality Taxi Associations	21
2.13	The Metropolitan Council: Roads and Passenger Transport Services	22 – 23
2.14	Life and Death Struggle on South Africa’s Road	23
	2.14.1 Badly equipped and substandard ambulances	23 – 24
2.15	Critical Road Network	25 – 26
2.16	President Thabo Mbeki’s Plea to Road Users – New Year Address	26 – 27
2.17	Conclusion	27

CHAPTER THREE

3.	Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent Taxi Passengers	28
3.1	Statistical Techniques and Analysis of the Data	28
3.2	Demography	28
	3.2.1 Residential area of the respondents	29
	3.2.2 The distribution of respondent taxi passengers according to Gender	29 – 30
	3.2.3 Population distribution of respondents	30 – 31
	3.2.4 Age distribution of the respondent taxi passengers	31 – 32
	3.2.5 Educational Level	32 – 33
	3.2.6 Employment Status	33 – 34

3.3	Conclusion	34
-----	------------	----

CHAPTER FOUR

4.	Identity of Road Traffic Offences	35
4.1	Identification of Traffic Offences	35 - 36
4.1.1	Over-speeding	36 - 37
4.1.2	Un-roadworthy Vehicles	37 - 38
4.1.3	Reckless and Negligence Driving	38 - 39
4.1.4	Overloading of Passengers	39
4.1.5	Physical and Verbal Aggression	39
4.1.6	"Others" Taxi Commuters-Cum-Cyclists	39 - 40
4.2	Conclusion	40

CHAPTER FIVE

5.	Causes of Road Traffic Accidents	41
5.1	Annual Statistics	41
5.2	Gruesome Taxi Accident	42
5.3	Causes of Road Traffic Accidents	42 - 44
5.4	Facts About Road Accident Fund (RAF)	44 - 45
5.5	Chi-Squared Inferential Statistic	45 - 51
5.6	Conclusion	51

CHAPTER SIX

6.	Discussion, Conclusions and Recommendations	52
6.1	Discussions	52 - 53

6.2	Conclusions	53
6.3	Recommendations	54

REFERENCES	55 – 57
-------------------	---------

APPENDICES

Questionnaire

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Mafikeng as the capital of North West Province provides many services for its population and the surrounding towns and villages. Facilities and services for the movement of persons and goods are designed and coordinated in the city's transportation plan. As towns and cities grow larger, a number of problems arise. One of the most common problem is traffic congestion. With more and more people owning cars and minibus-taxis, the roads in the cities and towns become so busy that the traffic comes to a complete halt. Public transport begins to suffer. Such congestion leads to delays, accidents and expense (Punnett and Webber, 1992:42).

Traffic offences occupy a unique position in the South African society, [and Mafikeng as a city is no exception] because unlike ordinary crimes that are chiefly restricted to a specific group of people, all groups in society are involved in traffic offences at some time or the other. It is a type of national crime in which the otherwise law-abiding individual participates without necessarily jeopardizing his prestige and status in society (Cloete and Conradie, 1984:3).

The minibus-taxi industry originated in the late seventies due to inadequate bus and train transport for black people, who lived far away from their place of employment.

The minibus-taxi appeared on the scene and today it is an established mode of transport on the country's roads. The minibus-taxi industry is strongly established as an integral part of the South African passenger transport system. This industry provides passengers with a relatively comfortable and acceptable transport system. Many problems are, however, caused by minibus-taxis mainly as a result of their unsafe road usage and the violence that prevails in the industry. As a result, the traffic authorities are confronted with numerous problems, which are specifically related to the violation of the road rules.

Road traffic accidents are an equally serious problem in which minibus-taxis are involved and, which factor causes a large number of road deaths, it is also a common occurrence with far-reaching consequences. An accurate estimation of the number of minibus-taxis is extremely difficult. It can be hypothesized that there has been an enormous increase in the number of legal as well as illegal minibus-taxis (Goldstone 1993:19).

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Traffic safety is a complex and serious problem in the Mafikeng Municipality whose shortcoming defies preventive measures in ensuring the greatest degree of safety for the road users. Traffic offences and accidents are a daily occurrence and the traffic safety problem is meeting with a limited success. What this study intends to investigate through commuters as respondents, is the role of minibus-taxis in road traffic offences, accidents, crime and violence in the Mafikeng Municipality area.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Improved and feasible mode of transportation by minibus-taxis is critical if the Municipality of Mafikeng is to ensure and to remain a safe haven for road users. Specific research objectives are therefore, to:

- 1.3.1 Identify road traffic offences;
- 1.3.2 Find out causes of road traffic accidents;
- 1.3.3 Detect incidental violence to road traffic problems;
- 1.3.4 Establish incidental crimes to road traffic problems and
- 1.3.5 Recommend measures to help minimize and get rid of the untenable situation of road traffic problems.

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study has grown out of the concern for the role of chaotic situation of minibus-taxis that is detrimental to the economy and the wholesale loss of citizens' lives. The revelation and outcome of this study may be adopted by the authorities, including road traffic personnel, students, academics and others interested in the study of road safety and related challenges.

1.5 LITERATURE REVIEW

Minibus-taxis form an established mode of transport that caters for the interest of largely black urban passengers. In 1994 there were 244 238 registered taxis in South Africa, the

largest taxi association recognized by the National Transport Commission in 1997 was the South African Black Taxi Association (SABTA) founded in 1979.

Soon after the recognition of SABTA, the South African Long Distance Taxi Association (SALDTA) was established in 1997 to take care of the interests of the long distance passengers (AA Road Traffic Safety Foundation, 1997:2, 9 and City Press, 1994:10).

Today, many taxis numbered in thousands are, however, unregistered despite the concerted efforts made by provinces to recover control of the situation. In 1993, there were approximately 480 different associations which operated on local, provincial and national levels. These associations were more often in serious conflict with one another with the resultant contribution to unsafe road usage. The behaviour of violent, insensitive and uncaring characteristics among a considerable number of taxi drivers is a major contributing factor to the reckless and untenable situation perpetrated in the minibus-taxi industry (Maharaj, 1994 and Goldstone 1993:23).

Goldstone (1993:15,103) concluded in his investigation regarding the manner in which taxis were driven, that road users are daily confronted by over-loaded taxis, which are often not in good conditions. Reckless drivers try to reach their destination quicker to endanger, not only their lives, but also that of their traumatized paying commuters.

Drivers display aggressive driving techniques by excessive speeding, dangerous overtaking, U-turns, parking and driving off, done with little respect for other road users.

Goldstone adds that crimes in the taxi industry constitute among others, violence, attempted murder, murder, arson, serious assault, intimidation and malicious damage to property. Goldstone attributes these social problems to urbanization, which requires increased transport facilities for the growing masses of people, unregistered operators, problematic free market system, and inadequate business practices by the taxi operators and taxi drivers.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs distinguishes five basic needs one of which, according to this motivation theory, is security. We need protection against anything that threatens our existence. According to the functionalist perspective, if society is to continue, certain essential tasks must be accomplished. If they are not, society may disintegrate or change its form substantially. The theory assures that, a certain degree of order and stability are essential for the survival of social systems. With differing and conflicting values (as it is the case in the Matikeng Municipality), there would often be pulling in different directions and pursuing incompatible goals, and thus disorder and disruption may result (Sullivan, 1980:20)

Prerequisites such as socialization (guiding and education) of members into the ways of society and effective social control over disruptive behaviour, have to be met, therefore,

the police and legal systems are mechanisms to control disruptive behaviour that might threaten the stability of the social order. There should be equilibrium-maintenance of balance or a steady state, in which members of society remain in the same relationship with one another.

One could imagine what society would be like if there were no principles governing behaviour. From this view, law is a body of legal principles based on social norms that are widely shared by members of society. The primary purpose of law is to preserve the social order by protecting people and their property, and preserving a valued way of life.

Crime is, therefore, a social problem to the extent that it disrupts the smooth and efficient functioning of society, and in an extreme situation, threatens the very existence of society. From the functional perspective, crime results from structural flows in society (Sullivan, 1980:20,572, and Haralambos, 1993:10).

The taxi industry provides passengers with a relatively comfortable and acceptable transport system. However, the industry suffers under serious problems. Such problems are caused mainly by the careless operation of taxis, which result in unsafe road usage. As a result of this problematic situation, authorities are troubled by traffic violations of prescribed rules.

Mafikeng, as the study area, is the capital and the executive seat of the North West provincial government. It provides many services to its population. As towns and cities grow larger, a number of problems arise. One of the most common is traffic congestion. Not taking into account the incoming taxis from Botswana, Zeerust, Lichtenburg, Vryburg and the outlying villages, the researcher, on the 19 November 2004, counted 159-parked taxis at Station Road taxi rank and 65 taxis at Mega City taxi rank.

The local count of taxis thus taken, was in exclusion of the then operating and criss-crossing taxis estimated to be over 100 on the inner-city roads.

With more and more people owning cars and operating taxis, the roads in cities, e.g. Mafikeng, become so busy that the traffic sometimes comes to a complete halt. Such congestion leads to delays, accidents and expenses. Cloete and Conradie in 1994(1, 2:1984) stated that there were 240,000km of road network as well as vehicles numbering nearly 4, 6 million in South Africa. They added that this development had brought about a fundamental change in the appearance of the country and the community and had created serious safety traffic problems.

Traffic safety, as stated above, is a complex issue that influences every facet of the community, which means that a defective system could have serious consequences for each member of the community. Three main factors within the broad framework of ambient factors contributing towards the issue, influence traffic safety directly, are the road user, the vehicle and the road.

The degree to which South Africa is reliant upon motorized traffic is reflected in the large number of traffic accidents in the country. Not only does this have a detrimental effect on the economy, but it also claims lives of citizens who are either on the threshold of or in the midst of their most productive years.

The Minister of Transport, Jeff Radebe, reported on the (Sunday Times, 5:21/11/2004) that a radical shake-up of the public transport is on the cards. Minibus-taxis would be fitted with new safety features in April 2005. The government intends doing away with taxis which are hazardous to the traveling public through fine-tuning safety specifications to safeguard the taxi industry which transport 68% of all commuters daily in South Africa. The Minister promised a 'jacking up' of public transport systems, more especially, on the taxi industry, whose major advantage is that it is the only industry where Africans are in control.

1.6 ASSUMPTIONS

Continued and disorganized defective operation of minibus-taxis could have serious consequences for both the economy and road users, while preventive measures, such as education and guidelines, as well as strict legislation, could meet with visible success.

1.7 DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT VARIABLES

The dependent variable here is the state or incidence of road traffic related problems, which are caused and influenced by the independent variable/predictor variable due to the behaviour of the minibus-taxi drivers, road users, operation of the unroadworthy vehicles and poorly maintained motor roads.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study will use survey research with a questionnaire as research tool designed to find out views of minibus commuters in respect of road traffic related problems.

1.8.1 Sampling

Sample sizes larger than and less than 500 are appropriate for most research (Sekaran, 2003:1992). A sample size for this study will be determined from the counted, mostly 15-seater taxis (159 at Station Road and 65 at Mega City) equals to 224 times 15 giving us a total of 3,360 commuters. For this small-scale study, a reasonable sample not too large or too small, would be 200 respondent commuters whose opinion will be sought through the survey questionnaire

1.8.2 Data Collection

To collect opinions from taxi commuters, primary data will be collected through questionnaires, while secondary data will be obtained by using relevant sources to the study.

1.8.3 Data Analysis

For qualitative data on analysis of themes from objectives of the study (1.3) will be processed as sub-problems to solve the main problem (topic) piecemeal. Quantitative data will be statistically treated by the way of tabulation and graphical presentation (Leedy, 1980:50, 57 and Babbie, 1983:256).

1.8.4 Limitations of the Study

The scope of this survey study covers only the Mafikeng Municipality area and does not purport to be applicable to other Municipalities or the rest of the North West Province.

1.9 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Deceiving people is unethical and works against the principles and integrity of social research. Research often requires that people reveal personal information about themselves, information that may be unknown to their friends and associates; therefore, no one should be forced to participate. There should be no revealing of information that would embarrass respondents. Anonymity, confidentiality of people's responses should be respected (Babbie, 1983:451-456).

CHAPTER TWO

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to conceive the research topic in a way that permits a clear picture, some background information is necessary. This literature review, therefore, focuses on issues that have relevance to the study at hand- the role of minibus-taxis in road traffic offences and related problems.

Familiarizing oneself with practical or theoretical issues relating to a problem area, often helps to generate ideas and focus on a research topic. The following selective readings, current newspaper reviews and excerpts help to bring the designated research study into sharper focus and also assist in attacking a research problem (Bless and Higson-Smith, 1995:22; Polit, 1991:87; Leedy, 1980:64).

2.1 A RISING VEHICLE SALES

A recent business review featured in the national newspaper carried a report that the motor industry is on track for the best since 1980s. Low interest rates have increased car sales into yet another indication that South Africa's economy is alive and well. Vehicle sales in June 2004 rose to 38188, a 27% increase in the same month last year.

If this trend continues, the motor industry is well on its way to recording its best performance figures since the early 1980s. New car sales are a barometer of economic

performance. The year 2004 could prove to be the best in the history of the industry if sales in all sectors continue to rise by double digits, resulting in positive economic performance barometer.

An expanding economy, strong consumer and business sentiment and enhanced overall new vehicle affordability, coupled with attractive sales incentives, will support further growth. Don Robertson (Sunday Times, 4/7/2004:1) concludes his article by stating that "private consumption has a very strong influence in the vehicle market... passenger car sales were 25 904, the highest since June 1978".

2.2 TRAFFIC CONTROL

Traffic control in modern towns and cities is an inevitable mechanism of social control, as it exists for the supervision of people, goods or vehicles to ensure efficiency and safety. Concern with traffic control has risen whenever people and their vehicle have become concentrated. Traffic on the roads has become a paramount concern because of the tremendous increase in the use of motor vehicles. The number of vehicles has increased dramatically and their speeds have increased as more powerful engines are used and better roads are built.

It is with this traffic-related problem in mind that a system of traffic-control devices exist such as, traffic signals and prohibitory and mandatory signs; warning devices, to alert

drivers of hazardous or unusual road conditions; and guidance devices, to give drivers route and other pertinent information (The New Encyclopedia, Vol II, Traffic Control, 2003:888).

2.3 MOTOR ACCIDENTS AND FATALITIES

Fatalities from motor accidents keep jumping up. The rapid increase in fatalities is due to the fact that a very large percentage of motor accidents are caused by drivers who lack Clear-headedness at the wheel and those drivers who are under the influence of alcohol. (Collier's Encyclopedia, Vol 20, 1972:330).

Research shows that more than one out of every four drivers of vehicles (26, 6%) in South Africa, have an alcohol-involvement when they drive. Annually, thousands of people are killed, maimed or injured in traffic accidents. A number of these accidents occur as a result of negative attitudes towards the use of roads and a deficient knowledge of traffic rules and regulations.

Too many people die unnecessarily, persons who could make a positive contribution to the development of South Africa. Setting factors such as the vehicle and the road aside, man as a road user is, in fact, the only factor capable of taking decisions. Quite frequently road accidents are not in fact "accidents" but rather wanton acts committed by an irresponsible person.

The problem of road safety is, in the first place, a problem of man in his society, a social problem. The traffic situation is a social matter in which man reveals a certain code of behaviour towards his fellowman (Du Plooy, 1984:17).

2.4 THE ESCALATING COST OF TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS AND ROAD DEATH TOLL

The economic implications of motor accidents in the Republic of South Africa indicate an enormous financial loss for the country. The total cost of accidents during 1980 ran in to R1 261 million. This was calculated in terms of all the possible contribution cost factors. Against this staggering amount, only R4, 3 million was spent on road safety - a mere 0,34% (Du Plooy, 1984:17).

Every year in South Africa, around 10 000 people die and another 150 000 are injured in road traffic accidents. Chilling figures are recorded over the festive season holidays. The human loss is traumatic but the economic cost is huge. The bills for police and emergency services, damage to vehicles and property and lost output, cost to the country is an estimated R12 billion per annum.

The North West premier, Ms Edna Molewa, in her special message for the festive season, pleaded and urged all road users to remain careful on the road during the festive season and throughout the New Year. She concluded her message with an appeal. "For many

families, the festive season will leave in its wake, pain and agony, unless all of us decide to act responsibly on the road” (The Mail 10/12/2004:10, 16).

The table below, provided by the Provincial Information Centre, has a category of road users as well as crashes and fatalities

Fatal (accidents: periods 1 December 2002 to 31 December 2002- Provincial Information Centre: 07 January 2003)

PROVINCE	ROAD USER STATUS			TOTAL	
	Drivers	Passenger	Pedestrians	Crashes	Fatalities
KwaZulu-Natal	53	77	92	178	222
Gauteng	52	37	105	164	194
Western Cape	45	70	52	116	167
Mpulanga	33	43	32	85	108
North West	29	31	33	81	93
Free-State	19	47	26	62	92
Limpopo	29	23	23	60	75
Northern Cape	10	17	12	32	39
Eastern Cape	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

The table above is an adaptation from the Provincial Information Centre, emphasizing fatal accidents during the period from 1 December – 31 December 2002. The table above is not part of the series of Tables which are shown on page 28 starting with Table 1.

2.5 ALCOHOLISM COSTS SOUTH AFRICA DEARLY

Road-related alcoholism puts a strain on the already overstretched health system.

Department of Health warned all the stakeholders.. The spokesperson, Mabotha, said that

a survey showed that in South Africa's major cities, 39% of trauma patients breathed alcohol above the legal driver's limit. Of these cases, 73% are road-related (The Star, 23/12/2004:3).

A woman with a history of drunk-driving offences has become the second person in the country, forced to hand over her car after it was declared an instrument of crime. The woman's car was taken after it was proved that she had driven it while under the influence of alcohol on several occasions (The Star, 23/12/2004:1).

2.6 SPEEDING MOTORISTS AND THE MAJORITY OF ACCIDENTS

Speeding motorists are blamed for the majority of accidents in the country. Traffic authorities and law enforcement agencies issue more than 2000 speeding tickets a day. Wendy Watson, the director at the Department of Transport, said that motorists and road users were ignore the seriousness of the problem. "People tend to be driving quicker this year. The fatalities per crash have increased this year (2004) and 70% of crashes are caused by drivers who travel above the speed limits. People need to drive at legal speeds".

Drivers who travel above speed limits, were named in local and national newspapers to have been caught by traffic authorities exceeding the 200km/h mark. The major problem mostly cited as causing most accidents is excess speeding, coupled with people driving under the influence of alcohol.

With fines differing from province to province, law enforcement authorities are picking up people who travel over 120km/h. Some named speedsters were fined R3, 000 and the former Miss South Africa was fined R10, 000 for doing over 180km/h (The Star, 21/12/2004:4). Two drivers were fined a total of R34, 000 for speeding on the N2 on the Kwa Zulu- Natal south coast (The Citizen, 13/12/2004:3).

Some festive season's worst traffic offenders - reckless drivers who have been caught doing speeds of up to 244km/h expressed regret at their death-defying speeds (Sunday Times, 19/12/2004:1).

2.7 THE STATE AND DRUNK DRIVERS: SEIZURE OF VEHICLES

As many as 34 pedestrians, drivers and passengers die every day on South African roads. Asset Forfeiture Unit (AFU) now targets motorists with previous traffic convictions in the past three years who had drunk-driving cases with aggravating circumstances such as culpable homicide, collisions or speeding.

One such affected driver is reeling from shock after becoming the first South African facing drunken driving charges to have his vehicle confiscated (Sunday Times 14/11/2004:1). Prosecuting authorities are getting tough on motorists in an effort to clamp down on speeding and reducing the road death toll (The Star, 22/12/2004:3).

2.8 "ARRIVE ALIVE" CAN TAKE YOUR VEHICLE: CASE STUDY

The situation of reckless driving is so serious that the state with its organs, namely, Arrive Alive and the Assets Forfeiture Unit (AFU) is working on a project which will confiscate the vehicles of people who are repeat offenders, using their vehicles to commit crimes.

Arrive Alive fully supports this initiative which will ensure that the most dangerous drivers in South Africa, will lose their vehicles. This forfeiture action will reinforce the message that the government is serious about road safety and about the lives of people who are victims of these risk-takers.

The High Court has recently ruled that the AFU can take away the vehicle of a man in a Karoo town that has three serious convictions: one in March 2004, when he was more than three times over the legal limit for alcohol, another in April 2004, when he was caught exceeding the speed limit by 57,5% (189km/h), and smelled of alcohol four days later with his blood test clocking 4,6 times over the legal limit for alcohol. The vehicle was removed from the owner on the 12th November 2004.

According to the General Manager, Land Transport Regulations, Wendy Watson, this person is a danger not only to himself, but his family and all road users. "He has lost the right to use his vehicle on our roads, due to his lack of responsibility and we hope that when his court cases have been heard, he will lose the right to drive at all".

Watson reiterated, "We are confident that the knowledge, that the people would forfeit their vehicles will change the behaviour of some of the hard-core violators of the law on our roads. Road crime is serious. It costs over 12,000 lives and more than 48,000 serious injuries each year, this is a drain on the economy and it has immeasurable results in terms of pain and suffering. Drastic measures must be taken to ensure that the innocent no longer suffer as a result of the dangerous behaviour of few individuals (The Mail, 10/12/2004:18).

2.9 ROUGH ROAD AHEAD FOR TAXIS

Taxis have not been excluded in the government's clamp down on the reduction of road traffic chaos. This action has been further confirmed by Arrive Alive spokesperson, Wendy Watson, who said that the government might introduce a speed limit of 100km/h for all minibuses and light delivery vehicles (LDVs) in the year 2005 to curb the number of road deaths involving these vehicles (Daily Sun, 24/12/2004:2).

2.10 TAXI OWNERS SLAM IMPOUNDING

In the wake of the strict control measure of seizure of vehicles of unbecoming motorists, taxi drivers operating from Shoshanguve to Dr George Mukhari Hospital north of Pretoria, claimed that they were victimized by the North West Province traffic officers.

Drivers said that when their taxis are impounded on the M17 road next to Medunsa, they were taken to Ipeleng in Mabopane in the North West Province. One taxi owner said that between 10 and 20 taxis were impounded every week. He said they “are not against the North West traffic officials manning road blocks but it is wrong for them to take our impounded taxis to the North West. Medunsa and Mukhari Hospitals are both in the Gauteng Province and impounded vehicles must be taken to Pretoria”.

Ipeleng Traffic Department responded by saying, “Only the ground belongs to Gauteng, but the M17 road that runs past is maintained by the North West provincial government” (Daily Sun, 30/11/2004:10).

2.11 TAXI ASSOCIATION PUTS ITS FOOT DOWN ON OVERLOADING

“Arrest wicked taxi drivers on the spot”. That is the plea to cops from the Alexandra Taxi Association (ATA). The association says that it has had enough of drivers who will not listen and overload taxis. The drivers do it for idradi - the practice by which the drivers pocket extra cash from each trip because he has more passengers than he is allowed.

This plea follows a gruesome taxi crash on a major Johannesburg highway in which 22 people crammed into a 16-seater taxi died in a fiery inferno. ATA told the Daily Sun that taxi drivers caught overloading, should not only be issued with traffic fines, they should also be arrested and dragged before court, they should also lose their licenses.

Further advice was that “if you are in an overcrowded taxi being driven by a lunatic, phone the Department of Transport at 086 1400 800 for the cops to stop the driver who could kill you at any second” (Daily Sun, 14/12/2004:10).

2.12 MAFIKENG MUNICIPALITY TAXI ASSOCIATIONS

The principal city of North West, Mafikeng, boasts eight taxi associations (TA's), namely Bophirima Long Distance, Mafikeng – Montshiwa – Mmabatho, Seweding, Magogwe United, Southern Amalgamated, Ramogalo and Ramatlabama and North West Transport.

The main aim and objectives of taxi associations are primarily the improvement of services provided by its members to the public and these include,

- To ensure fair labour practices by all its members, thereby promoting the interests of all member's employees;
 - To take the necessary steps to preclude any misconduct on the part of any of the association's members or drivers;
 - To promote the interests of passengers and structures to enable passengers to communicate dissatisfaction with respect to the transport facilities or service operated under the association; and
 - Fostering good working relationships with government and other associations.
- (North West, Extraordinary Provincial Gazette, Vol 243, 18/2/2004:4).

2.13 THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL: ROADS AND PASSENGER TRANSPORT SERVICES

The constitution prevails in the powers and duties set out for metropolitan councils. Metropolitan councils take into account the development and priorities as determined by the local councils. Development plan incorporates metropolitan land use, transport planning which include the construction and maintenance of arterial roads, roads with significant traffic volumes and roads used extensively by traffic.

Local councils go by the principles of Batho Pele (People First) guidelines which describe what national departments and provincial administrators are required to do when service delivery is at stake. The metropolitan councils consider within their ambit the construction and maintenance of arterial roads, and roads forming major transport corridors. Inevitably, this dispensation caters also for the provision and regulation of passenger transport services, the co-ordination of passenger transport services and the provision and control of public transport facilities. (Municipal Administration: A Handbook, 1997:417,418).

A message from the Executive Mayor- Councilor M.W. Mohulatsi of the Central District Municipality (Ditsobotla, Ratlou, Zeerust, Mafikeng and Tswaing Municipalities) included in his message, the District's mission and vision as follows: "to improve the standard of life for all communities and build a better life for all by being the leading Municipality promoting excellence through competent service delivery mechanisms".

The Mayor's key development objectives and strategies comprised transport - to prepare an integrated transport plan for the District; roads and storm water - to upgrade the existing road network, drainage systems, emergency service, fire and ambulances (Taxi Time, November 2004:10).

2.14 LIFE AND DEATH STRUGGLE ON SOUTH AFRICA'S ROADS

In spite of all what Municipalities are trying to achieve through competent service delivery, there are still cries and appeals for better service delivery. One such plea reported by The Star (14/16/2004:7) comes from a letter writer, Ross, who says that the simple truth is that our roads are inadequate for the constantly increasing number of vehicles and will become ever more so.

Ross cites commercial and residential development and wonders how the existing and already-choked road network will cope. He also mentions lack of traffic lights for safe access, causing chaotic situation when traffic lights fail. The traffic officers at peak-hour duty at intersections, do a fantastic job, but he wishes that they could be there at all times.

2.14.1 Badly equipped and substandard ambulances

Nationally, there is only one ambulance per 26,000 and one paramedic for every 51,000 both public and private combined. Most local councils responsible for running ambulance service on behalf of their provinces are desperately short of ambulances and

properly trained staff. One paramedic for 15 years recalled how he tried in vain, to rescue the passengers of an overturned taxi but had to work against the efforts of a badly equipped and substandard ambulance.

These incidents and many others, highlight the critical state of the country's under funded, understaffed, and ill-equipped emergency services. A study by the Health Systems Trust found that, in KwaZulu-Natal, an ambulance took on average, two hours and 42 minutes to arrive at the scene of an accident, while in the North West, the response time is 1 hour 53 minutes. The study condemned the ambulances and the response times as pathetic. Seventy percent (70%) of the people who die from injury and trauma, die at the roadside because pre-hospital care is substandard and overburdened.

Pumzile Papu, Cape Town's assistant director of emergency medical services, admitted that the city was battling to cope over holiday season (Sunday Times, 19/12/2004:5). Mathys Moss provides the graphics on page 25.

Graphic: Matthys Moss

(Sunday Times, 19/12/2004:5)

PROVINCE	Paramedics Ratio Per Person	Average Response Time (Ambulance)	Ambulance Ratio Per Person
Eastern Cape	1:168,775	2 hours 18 minutes	1:21,223
Free State	1:184,416	1 hour	1:18,442
Gauteng	1:26,411	1 hour 42 minutes	1:32,174
KwaZulu Natal	1:39,453	2 hours 41 minutes	1:27,151
Limpopo	1:157,485	2 hours 1 minute	1:46,712
Northern Cape	1:224,837	55 minutes	1:9,227
North West	1:146,441	1 hour 53 minutes	1:34,613
Western Cape	1:28,389	1 hour 30 minutes	1:21,869
Mpumalanga	1:202,769	2 hours 7 minutes	1:26,812

2.15 CRITICAL ROAD NETWORK

Man as a road user, vehicles and the conditions of the road are crucial factors likely to determine traffic-related crisis in South Africa. The gist of the matter here is the condition of poor and unsafe roads as a contributing cause of traffic road problems. Recently, Mpumalanga Premier, Thabang Makwetla, said that all available funds would be used to overcome 10 years of poor delivery on the province's critical road network. Makwetla, who delivered the keynote address at a provincial road indaba in Nelspruit,

said many secondary and tertiary roads in the province remained in a bad condition, creating a poor image of Mpumalanga for visitors and resulting in a high safety risk.

The Premier referred to a recent survey by the Tshwane University of Technology, in which the province's response to issues raised by business in 1995 was assessed. There was a call at that time for the Department of Works, Road and Transport to formulate a strategy to upgrade and maintain the road network. The pledge by the premier to improve roads stems from recent increased economic activity that has led to enormous pressure being placed on the existing provincial roads network, leading to huge costs in terms of maintenance and rehabilitation.

The summit addressed by the premier was attended by professional bodies, including the Development Bank of Southern Africa, Sasol, Escom, institution of higher learning and taxi associations. (The Star, 10/12/2004:16).

2.16 PRESIDENT THABO MBEKI'S PLEA TO ROAD USERS – NEW YEAR ADDRESS

Among important aspects President Mbeki addressed in his New Year Address, the President said, "All spheres of government – local, provincial and national, have intensified interventions to improve the effectiveness of the Arrive Alive road safety campaign.

The government is very concerned that too many of our people are dying and sustaining permanent injury unnecessarily because of incidents on our roads. I once again appeal to every road user, both drivers and pedestrians, to respect this Season of Goodwill.

This goodwill must mean that we take all the measures necessary to protect the health and life of all road users, including ourselves. Our country is confronted by the serious problem of drug and alcohol abuse. This is one of the primary causes of accidents on our roads, affecting both drivers and pedestrians. We must therefore take the rule very seriously: don't drink and drive". (Sowetan, 31/12/2004:9).

2.17 CONCLUSION

In a piecemeal manner, this chapter has captured and emphasized variables germane to the study. Quiet frequently, wanton acts by irresponsible road users have been cited, inter alia, delete disobedience of road traffic rules, overloading, speeding and drunk-driving, as causes of the massacre of too many people who die unnecessarily. In this comprehensive review of secondary sources, the stress has been on the relatedness of sources that are collateral to the research topic.

CHAPTER THREE

3. DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENT TAXI PASSENGERS

Randomly selected subjects, as units of analysis for this survey investigation comprised 200 respondents drawn from Mafikeng's population of 259,478 male and female persons (Statistics South Africa, Mafikeng Census 2001).

A questionnaire, as a measuring instrument, with both structured and unstructured question items was used to gather used information between the 1st to 8th February 2005 from respondents. The procedure followed a systematic action, which measured expressed attitudes of study subjects against all core items of the questionnaire.

3.1 STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In this research, quantitative data was subjected to descriptive and inferential statistical analysis, while qualitative data was subjected to thematic analysis throughout all aspects of the research survey questionnaire.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHY

The demographic structure of a community is an important indicator which was used, inter alia, as a defining tool, to inform the study of the demography of the units of analysis.

3.2.1 Residential area of the respondents

It was crucial in this study, as in most studies, that a study area of respondents be identified. In table 1 below, respondents indicated residences as urban, peri-urban and rural Mafikeng areas.

Table 1. Residential areas of respondent taxi passengers

RESIDENTIAL AREA	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Urban	160	80
Peri-Urban	20	10
Rural	20	10
Total	200	100

Earlier in this study, it was mentioned that minibus-taxis are an established and integral part of the South African passenger transport system, which caters for the largely black urban passengers. This assertion is confirmed by the majority of 80 percent that is shown for urban passengers while peri-urban and rural passengers has 10 percent each according to Table 1 above.

3.2.2 The Distribution of respondent taxi passengers according to gender

It is established that the majority of passengers who board taxi industry are commuters who, for them, work is viewed as a central aspect of their lives. Work for these people, determines their daily activities and the rhythm of their days. For them, work largely

determines their class and status in the social structure (Stiltanen, 1984:23). Table 2 below provides gender distribution.

Table 2. *The distribution of respondents according to gender*

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Male	120	60
Female	80	40
Total	200	100

The male majority represented by 60 percent of taxi passengers in Mafikeng, generally, may be indicative of male dominance over the 40 percent working women who face problems in the corporate world, whose problems range from discrimination and marginalisation in the workplace. Table 2 may also be regarded as an index of sex-ordered division of labour.

3.2.3 Population distribution of respondents

Societies in the contemporary world are filled with population groups where majority-minority relations occur and, where different population groups are free to participate in the basic institutions of society and associate with the members of the dominant group (Rissodes, 1991:189 and Toby, 1985:92). Table 3 shows population groups.

Table 3. *The distribution of respondents according to population groups*

POPULATION GROUP	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
African	180	90
White	-	-
Coloured	20	10
Asian	-	-
Other	-	-
Total	200	100

Table 3 shows Africans in Mafikeng as a 90 percent majority group of passengers who are largely catered for by the taxi passenger transport system. Other respondents in the study were 10 percent Coloureds.

3.2.4 Age distribution of the respondent taxi passengers

Age is an important factor in this study, as it gives an indication of age distribution of taxi passengers who are the chief units of analysis for this study.

Table 4. *Age distribution: of the respondent taxi passengers*

	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
20 Years or younger	10	5
21-24	10	5
25-29	20	10
30-34	80	40
35 or over	80	40
Total	200	100

In table 4 age distribution of passengers is indicated as 5 percent each for both 20 years and younger; and 21 – 24 age range. Age category 25 – 29 is 20 percent while ages 30 – 34, and 35 or over are represented by 80 percent of units of analysis who responded to the questionnaire.

3.2.5 Education Level

Education is a crucial factor for development, since it promotes economic growth and enables the socialization of new members of society into the dominant political and cultural value system. Many educators talk about humanizing the human being to help man become all that he can, using his potential to develop, to create and help his fellow men with his standard of enlightenment (Webster, 1990:199).

Apart from the parental home, the school is the principal social institution that the child or adult is in contact with, for any length of time.

Table 5. *Percentage distribution: Educational level of the respondent taxi passengers*

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
No schooling	40	20
Primary education	40	20
Secondary education	80	40
Tertiary	40	20
Total	200	100

Table 5 above indicates the following percentages of educational level of taxi passengers who participated in the study: Respondents who answered “no schooling” were represented by 20 percent while respondents with primary education also registered 20 percent. Forty (40) percent of respondents indicated that they have secondary education while 20 percent was noted for respondents with tertiary education.

3.2.6 Employment Status

“Marx believed that work provided the most important and vital means for people to fulfill their basic needs, their individuality and their humanity. By expressing their personality in the creation of a product, workers can experience a deep satisfaction” (Haralambos and Holborn, 1993:312).

Table 6. *Percentage distribution of employment status of respondent taxi passengers*

EMPLOYER STATUS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Employed	60	30
Self-employed	2	1
Unemployed	110	55
Job-seekers	28	14
Total	200	100

Government statistics and other sources indicate that employment has reached higher levels than at any time since the Second World War. Employment statistics in Mafikeng shows that the majority of respondents (55 percent) are unemployed while only 30 percent are employed. The lowest percentage is one percent for the self-employed and 28 percent respondents who are job seekers.

3.3 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this section was to present a demographic profile of the respondents in respect of the residential area, gender, population distribution, educational level and employment status.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. IDENTITY OF ROAD TRAFFIC OFFENCES

The Road Transportation Act, 1977 (Act. 74 of 1977) as an Amended Act, 1977 (Act of 1997) stipulates, inter alia, a code of conduct, disciplinary and grievance procedures for associations, to promote the interests of passengers and develop structures and procedures to enable passengers to communicate dissatisfaction with respect to the transport facilities or service operated under the Association.

4.1 IDENTIFICATION OF TRAFFIC OFFENCES

In the section for an identity of road traffic offences, respondents were requested to answer "Yes" or "No" from a given variety of offences common to their areas as indicated in Table 7.

Table 7. *Percentage distribution of identification of traffic offences*

The following "Yes" responses drawn from participants are as follows:

OFFENCE	"YES"	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Speeding over the legal limit	X	60	30
Operating an un-roadworthy vehicle	X	60	30
Reckless and negligent driving	X	10	5
Overloading of passengers	X	10	5
Physical or verbal aggression	X	10	5
(Others) ill-treatment of cyclists	X	10	5
Total		160	80

The following "No" responses drawn from participants are as follows:

OFFENCE	"NO"	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Overtaking on a barrier line	X	8	4
Stopping at "no stopping area"	X	8	4
Unnecessary hooting	X	8	4
Failure to produce driver's license	X	8	4
Unlicensed/Unregistered motor vehicle	X	8	4
Total		40	20
1 & 2 Grand Total		200	100

YES and NO responses

4.1.1 Over-speeding

One of the most cited offences (30 percent) was a concern to the effect that taxi drivers practise dangerous **speeding over the legal limit** of 60 kilometers per hour and 120 kilometers per hour.

One irate response from a reader of *Motoring* January 2004:17, who had lost a son, remarked that "many of our loved ones are killed by macho South African attitude and blinkered, speeding idiots" who drive over the limit in a built-up area, populated by pedestrians and cyclists.

The motor journalist of *Motoring* proceeds by saying that his “problem is the way speed limits are enforced in this country, with the focus often clearly on income generation rather than saving lives”.

Speed traps are not there during the week when workers safety would be endangered by speeding vehicles, but on weekends when workers are not there. South Africa’s high road death statistics account for 10,000 annual road deaths that are on the high in South Africa, yet most of the Transport Department’s resources (80 percent) go into speed trapping which is only 20 percent of the overall traffic problems.

4.1.2 Un-roadworthy Vehicles

The other frequently mentioned offence (30 percent) was the operation of **unroadworthy vehicles**. “The City Press, 2/1/2005:1, carried an article on a taxi with “no lights, no door lock, cello lock: Gauteng’s taxi from hell”. It was described as a death trap that is the most unroadworthy taxi found in Gauteng that festive season. The taxi did not have an accelerator pedal. Instead, it had a solid wire attached directly to the engine, and the driver controls acceleration by pulling the wire with his hand.

Part of the roof was sealed with celloptape, no lights were functioning, and wheels did not have the full number of wheel nuts. To top it all, when it was impounded on December 5, it was overloaded. The passengers were shielded from the road by a self-made door-locking system, described by traffic officers as dangerous in the event of fire. Tyres of this overloaded and dilapidated taxi were wobbling dangerously”.

Owners of taxis that are unroadworthy pay a fine of R1 200 and their licence discs are withdrawn until their vehicles are in good condition and fully roadworthy.

According to the standard code of conduct of taxi drivers, the Amended Road Transportation Act of 1977, among others, stipulates that:

- Drivers must adhere to the rules of the road and obey all laws in respect of the driving and roadworthiness of vehicles on public road; and
- Drivers may not operate a vehicle for public conveyance while such vehicle is unsafe or unfit to be operated.

4.1.3 Reckless and Negligence Driving

Third in the list of the most commonly cited offences (10 percent) was **reckless and negligent driving**. A case of “deadly phone call” was reported in the Sowetan (12/2/2005:5) of a taxi driver who killed four passengers while speaking on his cellphone.

If only the taxi driver had not taken that call on his cellphone, four of his passengers might still be alive. The driver glued to his phone, did not notice the stationary truck parked under the bridge. His taxi ploughed into the truck with such force that it wedged under the giant vehicle.

In this instance, the applicable Road Transportation Act stipulates the following::

- Taxi operators must have an agreed and clear understanding with their drivers regarding control measures for driver performance;

- Drivers must, at all times, treat passengers with dignity, respect and courtesy and take great care to ensure the comfort and safety of passengers; and
- Drivers may not operate a vehicle for public conveyance while being unfit for any reason to operate such vehicle safely.

4.1.4 **Overloading of Passengers**

Another concern raised by 5 percent of passengers, just like those mentioned above, was the illegal **overloading of passengers** which practice does not augur well for safe motoring in South Africa.

4.2.5 **Physical and Verbal Aggression**

Physical and verbal aggression was frequently mentioned by 5 percent of the respondents against taxi drivers. It is required, according to the Act in question and the philosophy of Batho Pele (People First), that drivers must, at all times, treat passengers with dignity, respect and courtesy and take great care to ensure their comfort and safety.

4.1.6 **“Others” Taxi Commuters – Cum – Cyclists**

Under the list of items in the questionnaire mentioned as “Others”, taxi commuters who occasionally ride bicycles were noted as a 5 percent of respondents in the study who reported that they had suffered both physical and verbal aggression at the hands of taxi drivers who disregarded that a bicycle is also classified as a vehicle.

According to Cycle Safe. *Bicycling* (10 November 2004), cyclists are extremely vulnerable road users and often the victims of road rage and carelessness. The need to

protect and educate both cyclists and motorists about safety, has been highlighted by the behaviour factor in improving road safety, to create and nurture an attitude of mutual respect and awareness of both cyclists and motorists.

The following are “NO” responses drawn from participants. In all instances of the five (5) categorized offences, four (4) percent of respondents answered in the negative on items they do not deem or recognise as offences commonly committed by taxi drivers in their areas.

Each of these indicators received a four (4) percent “NO” response:

- Overtaking on barrier line;
- Stopping at “no stopping area”;
- Unnecessary hooting to attract passengers; and
- Failure to produce driver’s license
- Unlicensed / unregistered motor vehicle

4.2 CONCLUSION

This particular chapter highlighted instances of offences commonly perpetrated by taxi drivers as indicators of road traffic problems and safety risks often endured by commuters.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. CAUSES OF ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Almost every kind of endeavour engaged in by man is subject to risk. Concern with controlling traffic has arisen whenever people and their vehicles have become concentrated. Traffic on roads has become of paramount concern because of tremendous increase in the use of motor vehicles and increased accidents (Collier's Encyclopedia, Vol 20:323 - 324).

5.1 ANNUAL STATISTICS

"Death toll on roads rises", was an article covered by the Daily Sun newspaper dated 17/1/2005:3. This latest report on road death toll, gave a statistical overview that thirty – six more people died on South African roads last December than in the same month in 2003, a figure which the Department of Transport confirmed.

"The figure rose from 1, 194 to 1, 230, while the number of total crashes increased from 973 to 985" the Department said. Traffic volumes increased by 6, 25 percent over the same period, and the number of registered vehicles increased by 4 percent. "Given these statistics, one would have expected a similar increase in road crashes", the Department said.

5.2 GRUESOME TAXI ACCIDENT

“Families face horror of identifying burnt relatives”, was a caption of the Sunday Times, Metro, 19/12/2004:6. The only way the victim’s relatives could identify their relative’s horribly burnt body was by a black shoe she still had on her left foot.

The burnt-out taxi, lying on its side, contained 11 people, including the driver who were burnt beyond recognition after a taxi accident on the southbound side of the M1. “The bodies were totally unrecognizable”. Table 8 below is indicative of the causes of road traffic accidents.

5.3 CAUSES OF ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS

Table 8. *Percentage distribution of causes of road traffic accidents*

CAUSES OF ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Speeding over the legal limit	100	50
Overloading of passengers	40	20
Reckless and negligent driving	30	15
Operating an unroadworthy vehicle	12	6
Drunken driving	10	5
Stopping at “no stopping area”	8	4
Total	200	100

A majority (50 percent) of the respondents answered that **speeding over the legal limit** is to blame for most causes of fatalities from taxi accidents that keep jumping up. The rapid increase in fatalities is due to the fact that a very large percentage of accidents are caused by **speeding drivers who lack sobriety at the wheel**.

Traffic authorities and law enforcement agencies issue more than 2, 000 speeding tickets a day. **Overloading of passengers**, cited by 20 percent of respondents, was shown as another cause accountable for the increasing number of accidents. Every year in South Africa, about 10,000 people die and another 150,000 are injured in road traffic accidents.

Fifteen (15) percent of the targeted people mentioned **reckless and negligent driving** as another cause behind the rising level of road traffic accidents. Non-fatal injuries, many of which result in partial or total permanent disabilities, reach staggering figure every year. The economic loss of such accidents, runs into millions of rands and includes loss of wages and future earnings, medical fees, hospital expenses, administrative and claim settlement costs of insurance.

Operating an un-roadworthy vehicle was quoted by 6 percent of respondents as another basis for accidents. The Road Transportation Act, 1997(Act 5 of 1977) specifies that taxi operators must conduct their business with due care for the safety of the public. They must ensure that their vehicles are clean and roadworthy at all times and kept in

good order and that, taxi drivers may not operate a vehicle for public conveyance while such vehicle is unsafe or unfit to be operated.

Drunken driving was included in the list of causes of taxi accidents by 5 percent of concerned respondents. Alcohol and other related drugs are an appalling menace and destroyer of human lives today. People under the influence of alcohol suffer from physiological and physiological effects. Physiologically, alcohol deadens the higher brain centres. People's reactions and perceptions are seriously affected (Roux, 1956:409,201).

White (1942:338), stated that every year, millions upon millions of gallons of intoxicating liquor, are consumed. Millions and millions of dollars are spent on buying wretchedness, poverty, disease, degradation, lust, crime and death. The liquor seller deals out to his victims, that which corrupts and destroys the mind and body.

Stopping at "no stopping area" as one of the causes of road traffic accidents was cited by 4 percent of respondents as a road nuisance with an endangering value.

5.4 **FACTS ABOUT ROAD ACCIDENT FUND (RAF)**

Road accident victims or their dependants may lodge a claim with the RAF within three years of an accident. In the case of hit-and-run accidents, claims must be submitted within two years of the accident.

Of the 78, 000 claims finalized by the RAF in the 1998/99 financial year, almost 15, 000 claims, (19 percent) were rejected and received no compensation.

Bad news for road accident victims is that road users will need insurance to cover the shortfalls in the RAF. The RAF which falls under the Ministry of Transport compensates victims of accidents caused by negligent motorists, as well as, the dependants of those killed in such accidents

Payments by the RAF for general damages, pain and suffering, loss of life and disability will be limited to R100, 000 per claimant and will be payable only to claimants who have suffered a serious injury (Road Accident Fund Status Report, 2000:7 and Sunday Times, 30/1/2005:11).

5.5 CHI-SQUARED INFERENCE STATISTIC

The data for chi-square is the reduced sample of 71 questionnaires, a very small sample, which requires 2 by 2 contingency tables. It is not necessary to display the descriptive frequencies which were only used to assess validity of contingency tables.

Before we could test for the association between demographics and research questions, from exploring demographics, it was necessary to combine categories so that each should have two categories, for example, in residence peri-urban and urban were combined. Age

was in two categories, less than 30, 30 and above. Education in two categories (no schooling and primary education) into the first category and the second category (secondary education and tertiary education). Employment combined employed and self-employed into the first category, while the second category combines unemployed and job-seekers. All research questions were divided into two categories. Chi-square was calculated on two by two contingency tables.

Table 9. *Residence (See Table 8 on page 40)*

Traffic Offense	Chi-Square	P-Value	5% Sig
2.1 Overloading of passengers	8.11	0.004	Sig
2.2 Overtaking on barrier lines	0.403	0.526	Not
2.3 Speeding over the legal limit	7.748	0.005	Sig
2.4 Stopping at "no stopping area"	0.538	0.463	Not
2.5 Unnecessary hooting to attract passengers	0.015	0.903	Not
2.6 Reckless and negligent driving	2.581	0.108	Not
2.7 Failure to produce driver's license	0.047	0.829	Not
2.8 Physical or verbal aggression	1.351	0.245	Not
2.9 Unlicensed/unregistered motor vehicle	2.784	0.095	Not
2.10 Operating an un-roadworthy vehicle	5.417	0.095	Not

In the residence we see that the *overloading of passengers* and *speeding over the legal limit* are the only significant offences since their P-Values are less than the level of significance ($\alpha = 5\%$) at 0.004 and 0.005 respectively. This means that, if we could do a thousand survey sample, we will only make a mistake of concluding that residence is not associated with items 2.1 and 2.3 four or five times. That is, there is an overwhelming strong significant over thousand experiments. We can significantly conclude that urban residence differ in their perception to *overloading* and *speeding*. The difference is apparent in the majority of rural residents 96% against 71% of urban residence in overloading, while in speeding, it is 98% against 77%. These differences are not just per chance. The least insignificant difference is the item 2.5 about hooting with a p-value of 0.903, where 63% against 65% shows proportions not significantly different from zero. Table 10 below has reference.

Table 10. *Gender*

Traffic Offence	Chi-Square	P-Value	5% Sig
2.1 Overloading of passengers	0.113	0.737	Not
2.2 Overtaking on barrier lines	0.407	0.524	Not
2.3 Speeding over the legal limit	0.519	0.471	Not
2.4 Stopping at "no stopping area"	0.593	0.441	Not
2.5 Unnecessary hooting to attract passengers	1.15	0.284	Not
2.6 Reckless and negligent driving	1.754	0.185	Not
2.7 Failure to produce driver's license	0.104	0.747	Not
2.8 Physical or verbal aggression	0.476	0.49	Not
2.9 Unlicensed/unregistered motor vehicle	0.008	0.927	Not
2.10 Operating an unroadworthy vehicle	1.999	0.157	Not

In gender all offences are not significant, because all the P-values are greater than the level of significance ($\alpha=5\%$). Chi-squared data is presented in Table 11.

WU
LIBRARY

Table 11. Age

Traffic Offence	Chi-Square	P-Value	5% Sig
2.1 Overloading of passengers	1.334	0.248	Not
2.2 Overtaking on barrier lines	0.021	0.886	Not
2.3 Speeding over the legal limit	0.158	0.691	Not
2.4 Stopping at "no stopping area"	0.076	0.782	Not
2.5 Unnecessary hooting to attract passengers	0.178	0.673	Not
2.6 Reckless and negligent driving	1.503	0.22	Not
2.7 Failure to produce driver's license	0.904	0.342	Not
2.8 Physical or verbal aggression	0.864	0.353	Not
2.9 Unlicensed, unregistered motor vehicle	0.235	0.628	Not
2.10 Operating an unroadworthy vehicle	8.186	0.004	Sig

The only offence which is of significance, is operating an unroadworthy vehicle, since it is less than 5% significance level. 72% of the less than 30 say "yes" while only 38% of the 30 and above say "yes" to this offence.

Table 12. **Education** (See Table 5 pp33)

Education is not significant with any offence item, they are above 5% significance level.

Traffic Offence	Chi-Square	P-Value	5% Sig
2.1 Overloading of passengers	0.236	0.627	Not
2.2 Overtaking on barrier lines	1.319	0.251	Not
2.3 Speeding over the legal limit	1.497	0.221	Not
2.4 Stopping at "no stopping area"	0.046	0.829	Not
2.5 Unnecessary hooting to attract passengers	0.581	0.446	Not
2.6 Reckless and negligent driving license	1.058	0.304	Not
2.7 Failure to produce driver's	0.008	0.927	Not
2.8 Physical or verbal aggression	0.417	0.518	Not
2.9 Unlicensed/unregistered motor vehicle	1.298	0.255	Not
2.10 Operating an unroadworthy vehicle	1.335	0.248	Not

Table 13. *Employment (See Table pp34)*

Traffic Offence	Chi-Square	P-value	Sig
2.1 Overloading of passengers	3.476	0.062	Not
2.2 Overtaking on barrier lines	5.419	0.02	Sig
2.3 Speeding over the legal limit	2.473	0.116	Not
2.4 Stopping at "no stopping area"	0.23	0.632	Not
2.5 Unnecessary hooting to attract passengers	1.859	0.173	Not
2.6 Reckless and negligent driving	0.406	0.524	Not
2.7 Failure to produce driver's license	1.523	0.217	Not
2.8 Physical or verbal aggression	2.288	0.13	Not
2.9 Unlicensed/unregistered motor vehicle	0.013	0.909	Not
2.10 Operating an unroadworthy vehicle	0.343	0.558	Not

Under employment, there is only one observation that is significant which is overtaking on barrier lines.

5.6 CONCLUSION

After all these appear to be rather chance significances, and further careful study may do probe the groups, using focus group interviews. However, the use of inferential statistics, in a rather exploratory fashion, has highlighted some difference of perception in the few items of some demographic variables, like residence. In addition on question 5.1 of unscrupulous taxi drivers is indicated 27% of the respondents.

CHAPTER SIX

6. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter six draws the themes of the research together by looking, in particular, at some key features that made up this study and then proceeds to discuss, conclude and finally proceeds to offer recommendations.

6.1 DISCUSSIONS

It is quite clear from the outcomes of this study that Mafikeng as the burgeoning capital of the North West Province, fairly provides facilities and services for the movement of persons and goods in the city transportation plan.

Mafikeng like any other growing capitals, has a number of problems which, among others, comprise traffic congestions attributable to more people and, a much younger generation of car-owing and an increasing number of minibus-taxi owning entrepreneurs. This emerging phenomenon in heavy traffic leads to unprecedented delays, accidents, incidental violence, deaths and expense.

Obviously, the minibus-taxi industry forms a crucial part of the Mafikeng passenger transport system providing indigent commuting masses with a relatively affordable transport system.

By looking at a range of identified traffic offences resulting in the chaotic situation of taxis in the study area, it is apparent that the situation is detrimental to the economy due to the often-reported loss of lives of residents and properties.

Several researchers in similar studies have also indicated that the perpetrators who cause accidents are more and more inclined to anti-social behavior. Traffic offences occur daily and traffic safety problems are meeting with a limited success.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

Annually, hundreds of people are injured, maimed or killed in various traffic incidences caused by a negative attitude of taxi drivers in the Mafikeng Municipal area. Continued and disorganized defective operation of minibus-taxis do have a serious consequence for both the economy and road users.

Quite frequently, road accidents are not in fact “accidents” but rather wanton acts committed by uncaring and inconsiderate person. Traffic safety is a complex and serious problem in the Mafikeng Municipality which shortcomings defies preventive measures in ensuring the greatest degree of safety for the road users. As a result, the traffic authorities are confronted with a variety of problems, which are specifically related to the violation of the rules of the road. For this specific reasons, the primary purpose of law should serve to preserve the social order by protecting people and their property as a preservation of values way of life.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- That inadequate transport facilities for the growing masses of people be increased
- That an on-going development be initiated both in infrastructure and the extension of Mafikeng main thoroughfare including rehabilitation of various roads and expansion of roads.
- That the taxi associations see to it that taxi operators offer better working conditions, livable salaries, reduced working hours and a holiday now and then for the taxi drivers, and that a driving school academy be established to equip drivers.
- That the authorities step up law enforcement to ensure that only bona fide licensed taxi operators have access to the opportunities in the taxi industry.
- That a special Mafikeng traffic court be set up with adequate legally trained staff and a head of prosecutors to decide on cases timeously
- That vehicles of repeat offenders, with aggravating circumstances, be seized and confiscated, and that offenders be not allowed renewing registration before settling outstanding amounts.
- That the aim and objectives of taxi associations be primarily the improvement of services to the public and to promote the interest of passengers to enable passengers to communicate dissatisfaction with respect to the transport facilities or services they receive.

References

1. AA Road Traffic Safety Foundation, 1997, Pretoria
2. Babbie, E(1983), *The Practice of Social Research*, Wadsworth California
3. Batho Pele (People First) Principles, 1998
4. Bless, C and Higson-Smith, C (1995), *Fundamentals of Social Research Methods: An African Perspective*, Juta Kenwyn
5. Citizen, 13 December 2004:3
6. City Press, 17 February 1994:10
7. City Press, 2 January 2005:14
8. Cloete, M.G.T and Conradie, S.M (1984), *Introduction to Traffic Science*, Butterworth, Durban
9. Collier's Encyclopedia (1972), Vol 20: 323- 324, 330. Macmillan , New York
10. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, No 108 of 1996
11. Cycle safe, *Bicycling* 10 November, 2004
12. Daily Sun, 26 May 2003:3
13. Daily Sun, 5 June 2003:17
14. Daily Sun, 24 December 2004: 2
15. Daily Sun, 17 January 2005:3
16. Du Plooy, H.G (ed), (1984), *Safe Road Usage: A Teacher's Secondary School Manual*, NRSC, Pretoria
17. Goldstone, G.A (1993), *Commission of Enquiry on the Operation of Taxis in South Africa*, Pretoria
18. Haralambos, M and Holborn, M (1993), *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, Collins, London
19. Kreitner, C and Kinicki, A (1995), *Organizational Behavior* Irwin, Chicago
20. Leedy, P (1980), *Practical Research Planning and Design*, MacMillan, New York

21. Maharaj, G.L (1994), Ministerial Speech, Safety on Dur Road
22. Municipal Administration: A Handbook, (1997), Craythorn
23. Motoring, January 2004
24. Punnett, N and Webber, G (1992), Towns and Cities, MacMillan, London and Lippincott, P
25. Polit, F (1991), Nursing Research: Principles and Methods, Hungler, New York
26. Reader's Digest: Use The Right Word, (1973), London
27. Reader's Digest: Oxford Complete Wordfinder, (1993), London
28. Rissodes, D (1991), Comparative Societies: Social Types and their Interrelations, Prentice Hall, New Jersey
29. Road Accident Fund (RAF) Status Report: 2000:7
30. Roux, A.S (1956), Alkolisme, J.L. van Schaik, Pretoria
31. Sekaran, V (1992), Research Methods for Business, John Wiley, New York
32. Sullivan, T (1980), Social Problems: Divergent Perspectives, Willey, New York
33. Sowetan, 31 December 2004:9
34. Sunday Times, 11 July 2004:1
35. Sunday Times, 21 November 2004:3
36. Sunday Times, 10 December 2004:3
37. Sunday Times, 19 December 2004:1
38. Sunday Times, 30 January 2005:7
39. Statistics South Africa, Mafikeng Census 2001
40. Stiltaner, J and Stanworth, M.A (1984), A Critique of Sociology and Politics, Hutchinson, London
41. Taxi Time, November 2004:10
42. The Mail, 10 December 2004:18

43. The Road Transport Act, 1977 (Act 74 of 1977)
44. The Road Transport Act, 1997, act 5 of 1997
45. The Road Transport Act, Amended Act, 1997 (Act of 1997)
46. The New Encyclopedia. Vol 11:888, Traffic Control, London
47. The Star, 22 December 2004:16
48. The Star, 19 December 2004:5
49. The Star, 22 December 2004:16
50. Toby, J(1990), Contemporary Society: An Introduction to Sociology, Wiley, Sydney
51. Webster, S (1990), Introduction to the Sociology of Development, Macmillan, London
52. White, E.G, (1942), The Ministry of Healing, Pacific Press, California

APPENDICES

QUESTIONNAIRE

THE ROLE OF MINIBUS-TAXIS IN ROAD TRAFFIC OFFENCES, ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS, VIOLENCE AND CRIME: A CASE STUDY OF MAFIKENG MUNICIPALITY.

1. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

1.1. Residence

Mafikeng Urban	Mafikeng Peri - Urban	Mafikeng Rural
----------------	-----------------------	----------------

1.2. Gender

Male	Female
------	--------

- 1.3. Population: African -----
White -----
Asian -----
Coloured -----
Other (specify) -----

- 1.4. Age 20 years or younger -----
21 - 24 -----
25 - 29 -----
30 - 34 -----
35 or over -----

1.5. Highest educational qualification

- 1.5.1 No schooling -----
1.5.2 Primary education -----
1.5.3 Secondary education -----
1.5.4 Tertiary education -----

1.6. Employment status

Employed	Self-employed	Unemployed	Job-seeking
----------	---------------	------------	-------------

4. **INCIDENTAL VIOLENCE TO ROAD TRAFFIC PROBLEMS**

"Drivers must at all times treat passengers with respect and take great care to ensure their comfort and safety"

- a. Describe any physical or verbal violence you have seen or experienced as a taxi passenger.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

5. **INCIDENTAL CRIMES (SERIOUS MISCONDUCTS) TO ROAD TRAFFIC PROBLEMS**

- a. "Incidentally, unscrupulous taxi drivers commit crimes on our roads".

Tick Yes or No as your response.

YES _____ NO _____

If "Yes", describe briefly any serious violation you are aware of as a result of an unprincipled taxi driver.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

