INVESTIGATING EFFECTIVENESS OF SPEED CAMERAS IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES
THE NIGERIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Major studies on road safety in Africa have confirmed speed related collisions as a major contributory factor to road safety crisis. The call for the introduction of traffic surveillance cameras as a measure to check speeding violations in an African country like Nigeria is strong but controversial.

Objective To review the effectiveness and appropriateness of speed cameras as an intervention measure for reducing road crashes in Nigeria.

Method Speed Camera initiatives of Surrey Safety Camera Partnership-UK, Strathclyde Safety Camera Partnership-Scotland and Mobile Safety Camera Units of Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership were studied. Their efficiency, prerequisite facilities for implementation and relationship with the judiciary were noted.

Analysis The study revealed that speed cameras are useful in reducing road casualties and that uninterrupted power supply was a fundamental requirement for its efficiency. Collaboration between the judiciary and road safety regulating agency was necessary for data interpretation and acceptance. In Nigeria, acceptance of e-documents as evidence by the Judiciary is still at its incubating stage.

Conclusion The epileptic nature of power supply in most parts of Africa would render speed cameras ineffective. Speed cameras will make the most sense when African countries have addressed the sad issue of incessant power interruption and non-acceptance of e-documents as evidence in law courts. Otherwise, speed camera initiative will be a colossal waste of resources.