

## **ABSTRACT**

Road safety in highways is one of the main transportation problems faced by developing countries such as Kenya. The objective of the Thika Highway Improvement Project, which commenced in late 2009 and completed in November 2012, was to enhance smooth mobility with limited number of road traffic accidents.

This study sought to assess the impact of the improvement of the superhighway on road safety. This is done with regard to occurrence of road accidents before, during and after construction of the road. The study also ought to investigate the different safety measures and facilities which have been provided with the aim of road safety. To realize the study, the 1.5 km section between Pangani interchange and Muthaiga footbridge was selected along the Thika highway as the study area and for analysis. Statistical data on road accidents were collected at the Pangani Divisional Police Station, traffic department.

The data collected were from 2006 – 2008, 2010 – 2012 and 2018 – 2020 to cover the periods before, during and after construction respectively. The data collected was analyzed and relationships between road traffic accident and different Parameters such as time of the year, vehicle involvement, severity, number of accidents etc., discussed. Conclusions were drawn from the analysis and discussions regarding road traffic accidents trends before, during and after improvement of the road and availability of the road safety measures and facilities along the study area.

The analysis revealed that generally, there was a decreasing trend in the number of road traffic accidents. NMT facilities such as footbridges, footpaths and cycle tracks were also observed to have been constructed after the road improvement. Cars were also found to be the cause of most of the accidents of which, most are between vehicles and pedestrians. Though the number of accidents reduced from the time before construction to the time after improvements were made, there are still cases of road traffic accidents being recorded today.

Recommendations were therefore made that road safety awareness campaigns should be conducted and more traffic regulations enforced to improve on safety on the road. During data collection, most data were incorrect and incomplete. It was therefore recommended that the traffic police department together with other authorities in charge of accidents e.g., NTSA, counter check their recorded data and store them safely in computers.