

1 The Effect of Socio-Economic Survival of Okada Riders on 2 African Cultural Values

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6

7 **Abstract**

8 This study investigated effects of socio "economic survival of Okada riders in Abeokuta
9 and Odeda Local Government Areas of Ogun State, Nigeria on African cultural values. The
10 study was carried out using the questionnaire method to elicit vital information from one
11 hundred respondents who were randomly- selected from ten Okada parks within Abeokuta
12 metropolis and Odeda township respectively. Simple percentage and t-test statistical tools
13 were used to analyse the data. The findings showed that Okada riding, though a lucrative
14 enterprise has its direct and indirect bearing on the cultural values of the society. The
15 recklessness that is associated with the business tends to erode certain cultural and moral
16 values including respect for other road users, respect for authority and elders within the
17 immediate environment. Majority of the riders engaged in the business because of the pressing
18 need to survive and sustain their families. Furthermore, most of the riders did not take the
19 necessary safety precautions, they used foul languages and drank alcohol even during business
20 hours and these reasons have been identified as major causes for their recklessness. In
21 Conclusion, Okada business is lucrative and can add to the Nigerian economy rather than
22 constituting a menace. Riders should be given adequate training on societal ethics.
23 Citizenship education should also form part of the training to be conducted for those
24 intending to get into the trade. They should be encouraged to register properly at zonal and
25 state levels. Moreover, the Federal, State and Local governments authorities should set up
26 regulatory bodies empowered to monitor their activities and mode of operations.

27

28 **Index terms**— okada riders, socio "economic survival, African cultural values.

29 **1 Introduction**

30 Nigeria is a country endowed with unquantifiable natural and human resources. Paradoxically, a greater number
31 of the population suffer from lack, poverty and diseases, all of which have been further compounded by endemic
32 corruption and submergence of cultural values. The quest for survival economically and socially has driven many
33 Nigerians into various jobs including riding of commercial motorcycle popularly known as 'Okada' business. Thus,
34 hundreds of okada riders barely trained and untrained; usually flock the roads of major cities and townships as
35 well as rural areas carrying luggages and conveying people to their destinations. Okada business has contributed
36 to easy movement of people not only in the rural areas where there is poor network of roads but also in the cities
37 where there are traffic hold-ups with its attendant consequences. These include accidents, increasing incidences of
38 the use of okada for nefarious activities like robbery and the likes. Much has been said and written on these vices
39 but little attention has been paid to the submergence of much cherished African cultural values of sacredness
40 of life, respect for authority and elders, responsible and orderly behaviour in the conduct of okada riders. It is
41 against this background that this study is set out to investigate effects of socioeconomic survival of Okada riders

5 OKADA (COMMERCIAL MOTORCYCLE)

42 on African cultural values. This paper examined the concept of cultural values in relation to Okada business as
43 a means of survival and its contributions to the development of the Nigerian economy.

44 2 II.

45 3 Cultural Value System

46 Values reflect individual and collective interests of groups of people living in a society and every society is open
47 to conflicting values subject to several possibilities -opportunities and threats induced by change or innovation.
48 From Bassey Andah's perspective, values, reveal themselves in social relations manifesting severally or uniformly
49 in groups existing within a society. By implication, every group may share same value system but individual
50 response, adherence and attachment to such values is subject significantly, to relative meanings and differences
51 existing within diverse groups. The incidence of globalisation and technological innovations brought by it has
52 created mixed blessings through opportunities opened for modifications of behavioural patterns and projection
53 of diverse possibilities of elimination, replacement and restructuring within the social context ??Andah, 1992:9).

54 Lending credence to this background, Oloruntimehin (2010:8;17) succinctly described the study of culture as
55 " largely the study of continuities " and advocated for a revision and revival of value systems in Africa to lay a
56 solid foundation for sociocultural and institutional framework upon which our socio-economic development can
57 be based. This is because real culture refers to the values and norms that N Global Journal of Human Social
58 Science Volume XII Issue X" IV Version I(D D D D)

59 A Year a society professes to believe (www.CliffsNotes.com). While culture is believed to accommodate both
60 tangible and intangible aspects of a society, its distinctive contribution can be understood from its peculiarity.
61 Camilleri cited by Babawale(2007) expressed this uniqueness in this extract:

62 The peculiarity of a given culture is a function of its distinctiveness as it relates to its impact on the attitudes,
63 aspiration, motivations, representations, skills and behaviour of the people celebrating some and discarding others
64 (2007:9). To this end, the latter attenuates his belief that culture can distil the past to serve as a basis for the
65 present and a guide for the future ??Babawale, 2007:9) A major segment of traditional African education reflects
66 certain cultural values which include: respect for life, respect for the elderly, honesty, moral uprightness, dignity of
67 labour, sense of belonging, communalism, responsible living among others (Emeka, 2010). These, values, though
68 by no means exhaustive; are very important and are cherished virtues, not only for Nigerians, but Africans in
69 general. Apart from values determined by the society, individual members of the community also pursue or
70 sometimes ignore virtues of integrity, dignity of labour, hard work and enviable personal achievements within the
71 society. This situation reveals an intertwining relationship between values desired by individuals at the micro
72 level and those desired by the society at macro level (Aduradola, 2004). Cultural values, which are of great
73 significance and relevance to this study are the values of sacredness of life, respect for life, authority and elders.

74 4 III.

75 5 Okada (Commercial Motorcycle

76 Business)

77 Okada, one of the major means of transportation in Nigeria, refers to commercial motorcycles. The motorcycle
78 riders carry passengers from one place to another for a fee. Okada riding is popular business and it is widely used
79 by members of the public. Its role in the Nigerian society cannot be over-emphasised. Okadas, because of their
80 low cost of purchase, fuel efficiency and ability to travel on roads that (cars) cannot easily go to or places that
81 they cannot get to, have become invaluable in a country that is bedevilled with shortage of taxi cabs, buses, a
82 weak mass-transit system, poor state of the roads and inadequate access roads to rural areas which causes traffic
83 congestion. In particular, various sets of people in the society including, government workers, students, traders
84 and business people find okada business a great relief from the congested traffic situations that are sometimes
85 common sight during the rush hours in the morning and afternoon when schools and offices close.

86 Unfortunately, the rise of okada commercial enterprise has been accompanied by increased levels of high-risk
87 behaviours and accidents on Nigerian roads. As a result, both the riders and the business have come under heavy
88 attack culminating in legislations restricting or prohibiting their operations in some Nigerian cities. Okadas, like
89 all motorcycles elsewhere, have a far higher rate of causing crippling and fatal accidents per unit of distance than
90 automobiles. Such accidents, ??ffoaro (2009) aptly stated, are usually caused by the fact that many okada riders
91 are either untrained or unlicensed, while majority do not pay attention to road signs or other motorists on the
92 road. Moreover, some of them operate their business under the influence of alcohol and they carry more than the
93 stipulated number of passengers, while the law enforcement agents sometimes overlook their offences once they
94 have been bribed.

95 It is a truism that education is dependent on the culture of the society for its content. Thus, it is through
96 the educational process that a man can be equipped to live in his society. However, the process of education
97 can be facilitated largely through the transmission of culture-ethical considerations and moral uprightness. The
98 implication is that a man's level of education will determine how much of societal or cultural values he possesses
99 and manifest. Although the influences and impacts of other agents of socialization cannot be over looked,
100 nevertheless, the place of formal education cannot be undermined.

101 Observation shows that majority of okada riders do not imbibe societal values and this has resulted into their
102 inability to live by and preserve cherished values. The riders are engrossed in their desire for survival in order to
103 make ends meet not minding the process by which they survive. According to ??ffoaro (2009):

104 Okada people have become a constant menace and an embarrassment to civilization and civility. They call car
105 owners names. They use vexatious slang that belongs to the crudest form of social discourse. They are gossip
106 merchants. They are touts atop roving motor cycles... This study shares the view of Dollard et al expressed in
107 their frustration-aggression theory which states that frustrations can create aggressive inclinations... (Berkowitz,
108 1989). Frustration is a state that sets in, if a goal-oriented act is delayed or thwarted. The instigation remains even
109 though the chances of realization are constrained by interfering influences. Under these frustrating conditions,
110 aggressive behaviour is stimulated to an extent that corresponds with the intensity of the instigation and the
111 degree of blockage of goal attainment. Aggression on the other hand can be defined as the deliberate violation
112 of an organism or an organism substitute. It is primarily

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115 Year directed towards the cause of frustration but may be redirected towards any other people or objects.
116 It can be subsumed from this theoretical base that the Okada riders are significantly frustrated by the harsh
117 economic conditions coupled with the problem of unemployment and corruption. The manifestation of their
118 frustration can only be directed towards other road users, their passengers and the authority in the form of a
119 display of aggressive behaviour like the use of foul languages and other anti-social activities.

120 **7 IV. Statement of the Problem**

121 The problem investigated in this study was the socio -economic challenges that results from the use of okada
122 riding and the undermining of African cultural values by okada riders in Abeokuta and Odeda Local Government
123 Areas of Ogun State, Nigeria. The post colonial era has initiated increasing incidences of socio economic problems
124 like unemployment, juvenile delinquencies, crimes and myriads of other problems as off-shoot of globalisation and
125 advanced technology. With this background, the indigenous philosophy which propels the socialization process
126 of making an individual grow into a responsible adult in the society has been submerged. With the influence of
127 political development and individual participation in the political or electoral process, the significance of survival
128 and accessibility for convenient means of movement (for humans and goods) coupled with the need to face biting
129 economic realities have been established. In the light of these growing concerns and stark realities, the new
130 wave of 'okada riding' can be identified as a communication medium for solving an observable challenge of youth
131 empowerment and economic need for survival.

132 A fundamental probe into the impact of culture on sustainable development paved way for the necessity of
133 providing an answer to the questions asked by Professor Babawale Tunde in which he stated categorically that
134 "Can we use culture as a stabilizing agent and an effective tool for arresting the tide of poverty, unemployment and
135 misery?" ??Babawale, 2007:7). This question opens a discussion for an assessment of the impact of socio-economic
136 survival on African value system. Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory identified five levels of human
137 needs. These include: Physiological, Security, Social, Esteem and Self -Actualizing needs. The physiological need
138 is at the lowest level and it embraces the needs for survival, which is the most basic and instinctive need in the
139 hierarchy. All other needs are secondary which implies that until the physiological needs are satisfied, the other
140 needs cannot be satisfied (About. com). However, issues of survival of an individual, a community or group
141 of people within the society are germane to the adherence or abrogation/ erosion of indigenous cultural values
142 upheld from time immemorial.

143 **8 a) Objectives of the Study**

144 The general objective of the study was to examine the effects of socio -economic survival of Okada riders on
145 African cultural values in Abeokuta and Odeda Local Government Areas of Ogun State, Nigeria.

146 The specific objectives include: i.
147 To identify the personal characteristics of Okada riders. ii.
148 To examine the influence of 'okada riders' attitude to African moral and cultural values. iii.
149 To determine the effect of Okada riding on the educational pursuit of youths and their need for survival. iv.
150 To identify the cultural values being affected by the disposition and attitude of okada riders.
151 v.

152 **9 Methodology a) Research design**

153 This research is a descriptive survey on the effects of socio-economic survival of okada riders on African cultural
154 values among selected okada riders in Abeokuta and Odeda Local Government Areas of Ogun State Nigeria.

155 10 b) Population and Sampling procedure c) Research Instru-
156 ment

157 The research instrument used was a set of questionnaire divided into two parts. Part one contains the demographic
158 characteristics of the respondents, while part two reflects questions that bother on the ways and manner through
159 which the okada riders carry out their business activities and how it affect societal, cultural values.

160 11 d) Method of Data Analysis

161 Simple percentage was used to analyse the data on demographic information, while t-test method was used to
162 test the hypotheses.

163 12 Global

164 13 Results and Discussion

165 14 a) Analysis of Data

166 Table 1 : Demographic Characteristics of Respondents.

167 Source : Field Study

168 15 Year

169 respectively. This implies that those involved in the business are from the economically active age, mainly youths
170 and middle-aged men. A higher percentage of respondents (68%) were married, 32% were single; 56% practiced
171 polygamy, while 44% practiced monogamy. Forty percent (40%) of them were Christians, 9% are pagans, while
172 51% were Muslims. This could account for the percentage of those practising polygamy as against those practising
173 monogamy. Moreover, 37% of the respondents have between 1-3 dependents, while 36% have between 4 and 5
174 dependents, 15% have between 5-7 dependents, while 12% of them have dependents above the specified number.

In terms of their educational background, 30% of the respondents had no primary school education, 42% had primary education, 21% had secondary education while only 6% had National Certificate in Education / Ordinary National Diploma (NCE/OND) and 1% had Higher National Diploma / Bachelor of Science or Arts (HND/BSC). Majority (69%) of okada riders worked full-time, while 31% claimed to work only on part-time. About half (51%) of them had between 4-6 years experience in the business, 22% claimed to have between 1-3 years of experience, while 27% agreed to have obtained between 7-9 years of experience in the business. Only 3% of the respondents got their motorcycles from the government, 32% purchased theirs through loan, while 43% of them are on hire purchase; 15% work on shift, while 7% of them actually purchased theirs themselves. 6. Is the training related to Okada-riding? 00 100

184 Table 2 indicated that 96% of the respondents agreed that they belong to an association, 85% of the respondents
185 agreed that they make enough money to sustain their families, 78% agreed that Okada business was very lucrative;
186 while 63% of them were of the opinion that the business was flexible and afforded them other opportunities.
187 The implication of this finding is that okada riding is an organised business venture and that majority of the
188 respondents were in the business for socio-economic survival. Table 3 showed that 88% of the respondents did
189 not obtain driver's license, 72% do not use helmets, while 79% did not have helmets for their passengers. Quite
190 a few of the respondents (21%) agreed to have been involved in one form of accident or the other, while 79%
191 agreed otherwise. The implication of this is that, though they are aware of safety precautions, a sizeable number
192 of them do not adhere to it.

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195 Year 4 revealed, that about 78% of the respondents agreed that they have special language they use among
196 themselves, 63% used foul and abusive languages on other road users, while 33% use foul language on their
197 passengers. Furthermore, 72% of okada riders agreed that their association emphasized that they should have
198 respect and good human relations with their passengers and other road users as virtues entrenched in their code
199 of conduct.

However, 68% of them agreed that it is possible to refrain from the use of foul languages, while 32% agreed otherwise. This finding indicated that majority of the respondents showed disrespect to other people and to constituted authority as they refused to obey their Association's order to have respect and good human relationships with other road users and their passengers. Table 5 showed that 61% of the respondents take alcohol, 28% of them even agreed to taking alcohol during business hours, 43% of them smoke, while 22% agreed that drinking of alcohol affects their relationship with their passengers.

17 HYPOTHSES t critical t value Decision

207 1. There is no significant relationship between commercial okada riders and moral /cultural values.
208 1.860 0.187 Rejected 2. There is no significant relationship between okada riding and educational pursuit.

209 1.812 0.0017 Rejected 3. There is no significant relationship between okada riders and their level of education.

210 **18 Results of T-Test Analysis**

211 Table 6 revealed that all the null hypotheses were rejected indicating that there were significant relationship
212 between okada riders and moral/ cultural values, educational pursuit, their level of education and respect for
213 human life and good human relations. By implication, the study showed that the attitudes of commercial okada
214 riders did not portray any respect for African morals and cultural values. Okada riding negatively affect the
215 educational level and pursuit of the respondents. Furthermore, the hypothesis that the major cultural values
216 that are being affected are the respect for human life and sense of good human relations is accepted as t-value
217 gave 5.186 with t-critical 1.859 at 0.05 level of probability. The implication of this is that, there is a significant
218 relationship between okada riding and respect for human lives and sense of good human relations.

219 **19 VII.**

220 **20 Discussion of Findings**

221 One of the findings of this study was that okada riding is an organised business venture and that majority of the
222 respondents were in the business for socioeconomic survival. In fact most of them were so desperate to the point
223 of obtaining their okada from loans or hire purchase. This is in line with Abraham Maslow Hierarchy of Needs
224 Theory which identified the needs for survival as the most basic and instinctive need in the hierarchy.

225 Findings further revealed that Okada riders' attitude did not portray African cultural and moral values. This
226 was seen in their use of foul and abusive languages on other road users not minding their age and status and their
227 outright disobedience to their Association's constitution. These attitudes negate the much cherished African
228 cultural and moral values. This finding further lends credence to Offoaro's (2009) assertion earlier quoted in
229 this study. A probable explanation for the use of foul languages and the riders' disrespect for social values and
230 authority could be found in the frustrationaggression theory of social conflict. The harsh economic realities/
231 conditions coupled with the problem of unemployment and the need to survive were enough reasons to cause
232 frustration and trigger aggression which is manifested in the use of foul and abusive languages, show off disrespect
233 and disobedience to authority. Furthermore, the use of alcohol by many of the riders even during business hours
234 could account for another reason for their rude or disrespectful behaviour. Proximity of their garages to alcohol
235 sellers or drinking spots might be responsible for their drinking habits, which eventually influence their behaviour
236 negatively.

237 Findings further showed that most of the riders had little or no formal education. The implication is that
238 okada riding serves as a distraction for youths from their educational pursuits. Most of them accepted that the
239 business is lucrative and as such, they see it as a quick way of making money for survival rather than wasting
240 their time going to school or pursuing education/ training.

241 **21 VIII.**

242 **22 Conclusion**

243 The findings of this research, has shown that Okada riding, though a lucrative enterprise has its direct and
244 indirect bearing on the cultural values of the society. Okada riding as a profession involves everyday interaction
245 with other road users, passengers and the society at large. The recklessness that is associated with the business
246 tends to erode certain cultural values including respect for life, authority and elders within their immediate
247 environment.

248 Furthermore, it has also revealed that while attitudes of okada riders affect moral and cultural values, it also
249 affects educational pursuit of the riders. The business however, preaches sacred respect for human lives and also
250 respect for the association's constitution. It can also be further established that majority of the riders engage in
251 the business because of the pressing need to survive and sustain their families. However, it was revealed that most
252 of the riders did not take to necessary safety precautions. Thus, they are perceived as being reckless. Moreover,
253 most hospitals in Nigeria have several reported cases of accidents caused by okada business.

254 On the use of language by okada riders, it has been established that the profession is identified with vexations
255 and foul language usage, which affect other road users and they cause unnecessary traffic nuisance. Apart from
256 this, most of the riders drink alcohol even during business hours and this has been identified as the major
257 cause of their recklessness. Year campaigns through the Mass media and public orientation activities through
258 paid advertisements/ announcements, songs, jingles, drama or use of pictures displaying societal expectations,
259 cultural values, importance of education/ training and safety instructions for okada riders and users. 4. Use
260 of stickers, handbills and bill-boards or outdoor adverts should be adopted to communicate safety messages to



Figure 1:

1

revealed that all respondents were males. This implies that okada riding is a male-dominated profession. Furthermore, 20% of them were

between ages 21-30, 53% were between the age of 31-40, 15% were between age 10-20, while only 9% and 3% are between the age of 41 -50 and 50 -above

Figure 2: Table 1

2

Questions relating to reasons for embarking on the business.

	Yes	No
	%	%
1. Do you belong to any association as a result of your profession?	96	04
2. Do you make enough money to sustain your family?	85	15
3. Is Okada business very lucrative?	78	22
4. Does the business afford one of other opportunities?	63	37
5. Are you undergoing any training programme presently?	09	91

Figure 3: Table 2 :

3

Questions relating to safety of okada-riding	Yes%	No%
1. Do you possess any driver's license?	12	88
2. Do you wear helmet while riding your Okada?	28	72
3. Do you have helmet for your passengers?	13	87
4. Have you had any form of accident while riding your okada?	21	79

Figure 4: Table 3 :

4

Questions relating to language use.	Yes%	No%
1. Do you have special language/slang you use among yourselves?	78	22
2. Do you use foul and abusive languages?	46	54
3. Do customers complain about your attitudes?	56	44
4. Do you use foul languages on traffic users?	63	37
5. Do you use foul languages on traffic officials?	33	67
6. Do you use foul languages on your passengers?	72	28
7. Does your Association emphasize respect in your operations?	68	32
8. Is it possible for you to refrain from the use of foul languages?	65	35

Table

Figure 5: Table 4 :

5

Questions relating to respondents social attitudes	Yes%	No%
1. Do you drink alcohol?	61	39
2. Do you drink during business hours?	28	72
3. Do you smoke?	43	57
4. If yes, does it affect your relationship with your passengers?	22	78
5. Is there any drinking spot around your garage?	48	52

Figure 6: Table 5 :

6

Figure 7: Table 6 :

Figure 8:

22 CONCLUSION

261 members of the public. 5. Registration of okada riders on zonal and state basis and the issuance of rider's permit
262 will go a long way to curb the menace and institute control mechanism on the riders. 1 2 3 4 5

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⁵. Communication strategies should be employed to create awareness or public enlightenment

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