

# ***THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES***

## **The Socio-Economic Challenges Of Road Accident Among Motorcyclists In Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract:**

*This empirical study primarily aims to examine the social and economic challenges of road accidents among motorcyclist in Ile-Ife with the following objectives to identify the causes of road traffic accident among motorcyclists, find out the socio-economic effects of motorcycle accidents on the victim and investigate the way forward to reducing accidents among motorcyclist's in Ile-Ife and Nigeria at large because it is the same situation everywhere. The study was carried out in Ife Central local government in Ile-Ife with using the random sampling technique to select 1000 motorcyclists sample size. The semi-structure questionnaire was administered to the respondents, also both primary and secondary data sources of data collection was explored. The Epi Info statistical package was used to analyze the data.*

*Findings showed that all the respondents have heard of road traffic accidents via motorcycles (87.0%), about 78.0% of the respondents have one time or the other involved in road traffic accidents by motorcycles, 95.0% of them will be willing to attend seminars on how to prevent road traffic accident and said that road traffic accident cause harm to the victims such as drug abuse, illiteracy, over speeding and reckless driving, bad road and death to mention but few.*

*The study concluded that since motorcycles is now the major means of transportation in most African nations, government and all the stake holders should rise up timely to its unending challenges in all communities. It recommended that all the stakeholders and the traffic staff and FRSC have an effective workable synergy that will assist them to discharge their duties to minimize road traffic accidents via motorcycle inspite of the condition of the community and Nigeria at large.*

**Key words:** Mortality, Motorcycle, FRSC, Developing nations and Road traffic accident

### **1.Introduction**

In numerous cultures, especially in developing nations and most especially Nigeria motorcycles form one of the modern transportation systems. For instance, according to the Taiwanese government, for example, the number of automobiles per ten thousand population is around 2,500, and the number of motorcycles is about 5,000 (Liren, 1996). In places such as Vietnam, motorcycle use is extremely high due to a lack of public transport and low income levels that put automobiles out of reach for common people, (Ghee, Silcock, Astrop, and. Jacobs, 1997).

Road Accidents are extremely common and the injuries suffered by those involved can vary greatly from minor whiplash to fatal injuries. In some countries including Nigeria, motorcycles and their riders are an inseparable part of traffic and consequently safety of riders should be taken into the account just like other users of roads. (Fouracre, and Jacobs, 1977), identified road traffic accidents (RTAs) as a major cause of disability and death all over the world particularly in the developing countries like Nigeria. World Health Organization (WHO) has also recognized RTAs as a major problem. Motorcycle injuries and mortality are different in different countries depending on the use of a helmet. In Pakistan for example, thousands of people die every year as a result of road traffic accidents. A huge number of these deaths take place among motorcyclists. Studies has shown that countries where the use of helmet is not mandatory or if this rule was repealed the number of fatal injuries or death due to it increased many fold.

According to Balogun and Abereoje (1992), Road traffic accidents (RTAs) are common in Nigeria. Seventy seven percent of all admissions into one emergency medical centre in Lagos were due to road traffic accidents. Pregnant mothers could also be involved in road traffic accident. Morbidity or mortality can occur in the foetus and/or the mother. The mandatory use of seat belts by drivers and front seat passengers was just introduced in January 2003, in Nigeria. There is however, no legislation for wearing crash helmets

by riders or passengers of motorcycles yet until last year (2010). It is very sad to discover that in most cases, the para-military on road do not take any serious action against those who violate this law once the motorcyclists settle them with N20-N50. There is also limited data on the incidence of significant foetal or maternal injury as a result of road traffic accidents in pregnancy.

In Nigeria, Oluwasanmi, (1993), for example, a fivefold increase in traffic-related fatalities was observed over the last few years. African and Asian countries, with relatively low vehicle densities, are experiencing substantially higher fatality rates per 10 000 vehicles than the industrialized European and North American states (Jacobs and Sayer, 1983; WHO, 1984). Traffic crashes also impact on the economy of developing countries at an estimated cost of 1–2% of a country's GNP per annum, as a result of morbidity, mortality and property-related costs (Fouracre and Jacobs 1976; Jacobs and Sayer 1983; WHO 1989; Asogwa, 1992; Sosin, Sacks, and Holmgreen, 1990).

## 2. Methodology

A total of one thousand motorcyclists were selected using the random sampling technique. Ife central local government area was purposively selected for this study because it is the main city of the community where this business really thrives. The semi-structure questionnaire method was adopted to elicit information from the respondents. Data were analysed using one of the modern statistical package Epi Info.

## 3. Findings

All the respondents 1000 (100.0%) said Yes, they have heard of road traffic accidents mainly caused or involve motorcycle. This means that road traffic accidents through motorcycle is a common phenomenon common to all community, it is not a new thing to all the respondents even though some may not have been involved in it but then they have heard about it probably through media or advert. It also indicates that the level of road traffic accidents is high in Ile-Ife that explains the reason why all the respondents said they have witness it in one way or the other. And this has in most cases lead to clashes of different degrees as affirmed by 870 (87.0%). This means that most of road traffic accidents lead or result into clash between those involved, both parties may want to be claiming right, no one may want to accept blame in order not to be responsible for damages or bear the fault to repair anything that is destroyed.

Options	No	Percentage (%)
Yes	780	78.0
No	220	22.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1: If Respondents Was At Any Time A Victim Of Road Traffic Accident On Motorcycle

Table 1 show that majority of the respondents 780 (78.0%) maintained Yes, they have been victims of road traffic accidents via motorcycle while 220 (22.0%) said they have not been victims of road traffic accidents through motorcycles. This indicates that most of the respondents have one time or the other recorded accident on motorcycle. It also means that motorcycle is a major, cheaper, relatively faster and accessible means of transportation in Ile-Ife and Nigeria at large.

Options	No	Percentage (%)
Yes	950	95.0
No	50	5.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2: Whether Respondents Will Be Willing To Attend Seminar On The Prevention Of Road Traffic Accidents If Organized?

Table 2 shows that majority of the respondent said Yes, they will be willing to attend seminar on the prevention of road traffic accidents anytime while only 5.0% said No, they will not be willing to attend any seminars. This implies that most of the respondents will want solution be proffer to the indiscriminate road traffic accidents in Ile-Ife and Nigeria at large.

Options	No	Percentage (%)
Illiteracy / language barrier	80	8.0
Impatient among road users	95	9.5
Lack of consideration for one another	80	8.0
Over speeding and reckless driving	114	11.4
Drug abuse by okada riders	125	12.5
All of the above	239	23.9
Bad condition of the motor vehicle	77	7.7
Bad road	105	10.5
In experience in driving	85	8.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3: Causes Of Motorcycle Road Traffic Accidents

Table 3, on the major causes of motorcycle road traffic accidents in Ile-Ife. Most of the respondents 239 (23.9%) agreed that all the itemized causes are responsible for motorcycle road traffic accidents in Ile-Ife and Nigeria at large, 125 (12.5%) said it is drug abuse that cause motorcycle accident, 114 (11.4%) said it is over speeding that lead to accidents and lots more. This implies that all the above listed are the major causes of motorcycle road traffic accidents anywhere in the nation. No single cause is peculiar to a place or a person except drug abuse which is the most common thing among cyclists in the southwest. The drugs are called different names such as sepe, paraga,

Illiteracy and language barrier are other serious causes of motorcycle accident but it is very unfortunate that people did not give it the needed attention. These two causes are mostly found among secondary schools dropout from urban areas, they migrate to the urban areas and pick okada riding as a career because of their background and lack of good exposure; they fail to obey the road traffic. Also, because these set of young boys do not have quality educational background, they cannot communicate with their passengers even when they warn them against reckless riding and over speeding, such warnings are misinterpreted.

Options	No	Percentage (%)
Yes	958	95.8
No	42	04.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4: Do You Think Road Traffic Accident Causes Any Harm To Its Victim?

Table 4 is on if road traffic accidents causes any harm to the victim of motorcycle accident. Most of the respondents 958 (95.8%) affirmed Yes, motorcycle accidents cause harm to the victims while only 42 (4.2%) said No, it does not cause any harm to the victims. This implies that most or higher percentage of the road traffic accidents in Ile-Ife and Nigeria at large lead or cause serious harm of various degrees to the victims depending on the nature of the accident such as depending on the rider, the road and the speed. These variables determine the level of harm done to those on the motorcycle when the accident occurs. In some cases, some of the victims are rendered useless socially and even economically. In the sense that some might not be able to interact or mix with people any more while some become dependant for life.

Options	No	Percentage (%)
Broken bones of any parts of the body	130	13.0
Head injury	56	5.6
Mental problem	50	5.0
Death	115	11.5
Amputation of any part of the body	121	12.1
All of the above	528	52.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5: Resultant Effects Of Road Traffic Accident Through Motorcycle?

Table 5 show the effects of motorcycle accidents among the people of Ile-Ife in Osun State and most likely in most communities in Nigeria. Majority of the respondents 528 (52.8%) maintained that all the stated effects characterized motorcycle accidents, 130 (13.0%) said broken bones of any parts of the body is the effect of road traffic accident, 121 (12.1%) of the respondents said it is amputation of any affected part of the body, 115 (11.5%) said it is death while 56 (5.6%) and 50 (5.0%) respectively said it is head injury and mental problem. This simply means that road traffic accidents through motorcycle can lead to any form of body or system damage/ or deformity for life. It is note worthy that any of the listed resulted effects of motorcycle accidents listed above is capable of rendering the victim incapacitated socio-economically except if the degree of the injury sustain is mild. Some of the riders caution their colleagues on the highway. The common warning is, "Ore so ra o, eni ba dele lo mo wa". Meaning friend be careful, he who gets home successfully at the end of the day is the best rider.

Options	No	Percentage (%)
Yes	829	82.9
No	171	17.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 6: Do You Support The Use Of Helmet?

Table 6 shows that most of the respondents 83.0% affirmed that yes, they support the use of helmet while 17.1% said No, they do not support its use. This means that almost all the respondents want people to use helmet in order to protect the Okada riders and the passengers they carry in the case of accidents to protect the heads of the actors. Those who said they do not want Okada riders to use helmet also made a good point especially in the southwestern part of the country. Not too long when the FRSC signed into law the compulsory use of helmet when all manners of stories began to sprang up in the west. Some people begin to use the helmet diabolically for money rituals. This actually might not be scientifically proved but it is indeed a known fact across the nation. As

whether or not the respondents will compulsory the use of helmet is they find themselves in position of authority, all the respondents 100.0% said Yes, if they are in position to correct problem of road traffic accidents they will not hesitate to actualize the correction. This means that none of the respondents will want to delay such projects or will want to deny the general public of such social welfare service in order to safe lives by reducing the rate of road traffic accident in the country at large.

#### 4. Discussion

Motorcycle as a major means of transportation in Southern (developing or poor) nations (Guy, 1985) cannot be over emphasized. The important of motorcycles are enormous; they are use to cross major boarders from Nigeria to another near by countries such as Niger and Benin Republic to mention few. The profession of Okada, Bike or Express (as popularly called across the nation) riding is practically gaining ground like a burning bush all over the country. This career does not exempt graduates of different disciplines in order to make ends meet; some use it to fend for themselves. Socio-economically, the career is indeed characterized with lots of risk ranging from minor injury to untimely death. Those with high level of injury end up amputating their legs or hands, some may ends up on crouches or paralysed totally. Those in any of these situations are out of operation, they cannot do anything to cater for their family any more. And the multiplier effects of such condition could lead their children to be member of any sub-cultures in their immediate community. This may shatter the future dream of the children. It should be noted that Okada riding as a profession has brought about increase migration from rural areas to urban cities. Regrettably, almost all the young and energetic males that suppose to till the soil in rural areas are now in the cities taking up Okada riding in most of cities of Nigeria. This act, has also contributed to the global food shortage witness recently. And it has bring about different social vices in the cities such as congestion, epidemic of all kinds, robbery, kidnapping and killing of innocent souls and money rituals.

#### 5. Conclusion

In order to conclude this article, Okada riding in developing nations most especially in Nigeria should not be taking as a major means of transportation competing with other safe ways of transportation but rather should complement other means of transportation such as the railway, cars, ships to mention a few. This can be attained only if the government at all tiers take up the socio-economic challenges that characterized the use of Okada as a means of transportation in Nigeria.

#### 6. Recommendations

The following steps suggested as recommendations to reduce to the barest minimum the case of road traffic accidents via Okada riding in Ile-Ife community and Nigeria at large:

- Enlightenment of the individual on road safety measure
- Use of helmet at each outing should be enforced
- Construction of new roads and rehabilitation of old roads
- There should be constant seminars or workshops for all okada riders on current issues about roads generally.
- Regulars check up or servicing for vehicles and motorcycles to ensure they are in good condition all the time before they are put on the roads.
- Okada riders should always obey the traffic rules
- All road users should be patience and highly disciplined
- Road traffic rules defaulters should be punished
- Other State government should borrow an leaf from Lagos State government by employing more hands to monitor the road users and traffic lights and
- All Okada riders across the country should be enforced to have what is called, "Okada riders license" for security purpose and proper identification.

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