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Yudi Motorcycle Stunt Riding Phenomenon among Muslim Youth in Gombe Metropolis: A Qur'anic Evaluation

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Abstract

Risky motorcycle displays on public roads raise concerns about safety and social responsibility, yet the relationship between social recognition and Qur'anic ethics in Gombe's *Yudi* practice remains underexamined in the comparative literature reviewed. This study examined the practice and its implications through a Qur'anic ethical framework. The qualitative study drew on semi-structured interviews with 12 participants: eight male Muslim riders aged 17–25 years, two traffic enforcement officers, and two clinicians. Interviews were audio-recorded with verbal consent, transcribed, translated where necessary, and thematically analyzed. The findings were subsequently interpreted through principles concerning life, intellect, property, and road users' rights. Riders linked participation to peer recognition and digital visibility, while five of the eight reported nonmedical substance use in connection with stunt riding. Clinicians and officers described injuries, risks to other road users, motorcycle damage, and enforcement difficulties. These accounts were not independently verified using clinical records, crash records, or platform data. The ethical analysis emphasized harm prevention, responsible resource use, humility, and respect for shared public space. The study proposes religious community education alongside proportionate enforcement and safety services. It contributes a contextual ethical interpretation of *Yudi* that connects participants' accounts with Qur'anic principles, while leaving causal relationships and intervention effectiveness undetermined.

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Keywords: Motorcycle Stunt Riding; Muslim Youth; Qur'anic Ethics; Road Safety; Gombe Metropolis

INTRODUCTION

Motorcycles support mobility and livelihoods in Gombe, but their use also raises questions of road safety and shared responsibility. Research among commercial motorcyclists in Gombe State has examined health and traffic safety concerns, while a Nigerian study in Oyo State associated younger age with poorer safety practices (Inuwa et al., 2017; Olumide & Owoaje, 2015). These studies provide relevant background; their occupational populations should not be treated as equivalent to young people performing celebratory stunts. A recent systematic review likewise demonstrates the breadth of research on commercial motorcycle crashes and injuries while leaving the specific social organization of Gombe's Yudi displays outside its primary scope (Kiwango et al., 2024).

In the local usage described in this study, Yudi or Yan UD refers to young riders associated with UD motorcycles, particularly the Haojue UD series. The practice discussed here involves wheelies, high-speed riding, scraping motorcycle components against the road to produce sparks, and weaving through public traffic or spectators. Participants situated these displays around Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, wedding escorts, and political celebrations. The focus is the reported conduct of the interviewed riders, rather than a characterization of Muslim youth or festive gatherings generally. No population estimate or trend in the frequency of Yudi activity is established.

Motorcycling research distinguishes behavioral violations from errors and identifies multiple interacting risk factors rather than a single explanation for crashes (Elliott et al., 2007; Vlahogianni et al., 2012). Studies of young riders also suggest that riding behavior warrants attention alongside demographic characteristics and attitudes (Sumit et al., 2021). For celebratory displays, the social meaning of risk may be especially relevant. Experimental research indicates that peer presence can influence adolescent and young adult risk taking, although those findings do not directly establish the mechanisms operating among Yudi riders (Chein et al., 2011; Gardner & Steinberg, 2005).

Digital recognition and substance use introduce further questions. Sherman et al. (2016) demonstrated peer endorsement effects in a controlled social-media task; this offers a possible interpretive comparison rather than direct evidence about TikTok stunt riding.

Nigerian studies have separately documented psychoactive substance use and alcohol consumption among commercial motorcyclists (Alti-Muazu & Aliyu, 2008; Ogundipe et al., 2020). Such studies justify examining riders' accounts carefully, but their prevalence estimates and clinical implications cannot be transferred to the present sample.

The gap addressed here lies at the intersection of these concerns. The comparative studies cited above examine motorcycle safety, social influence, or substance use, but do not explain how Yudi participants and local stakeholders describe the practice or how those accounts may be evaluated through Qur'anic ethics. The article brings interview material into dialogue with principles concerning the protection of life, intellect, and property, together with humility and the rights of road users. This is a contextual contribution, not a claim that faith-based education has already been shown to reduce Yudi activity. Evidence from faith-based health programs supports examining such organizations as potential partners, while its transfer to road safety requires evaluation (DeHaven et al., 2004).

The study therefore aims to examine the reported motivations and consequences of Yudi stunt riding among the interviewed Muslim youth in Gombe metropolis, interpret the findings through Qur'anic and related Islamic ethical sources, and develop proportionate implications for community education and road safety. It distinguishes participants' accounts, normative interpretation, and proposed responses so that the limits of each remain clear.

METHODS

Design and participants

The study used a qualitative interview design with a subsequent normative analysis of the reported practices. Twelve participants were interviewed in Gombe metropolis: eight active male Muslim Yudi riders aged 17–25 years, two traffic enforcement officers, and two clinicians. The officers represented the Federal Road Safety Corps and the traffic division identified in the study as part of the Gombe command. The clinicians worked at Gombe Specialist Hospital. Table 1 summarizes the sources of interview evidence. The accounts from different professional positions provide complementary perspectives; they do not constitute independently verified crash or clinical data.

Table 1. Interview participants and evidentiary scope

Participant group	n	Contribution
Active Yudi riders	8	Accounts of participation, recognition, digital visibility, and substance use; male Muslim participants aged 17–25 years.
Traffic enforcement officers	2	Accounts of public-road risks and enforcement difficulties; one FRSC officer and one traffic-division officer.
Clinicians	2	Clinical recollections of injuries and burdens affecting riders and other road users; not a review of patient records.

Interview procedures and language

Semi-structured interviews with riders were conducted in Hausa; interviews with officers and clinicians were conducted in English. Interviews were audio-recorded after explicit verbal consent, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English where required. Participant labels distinguish the accounts without identifying riders by name.

Analysis and reporting

Interview material was subjected to thematic analysis and presented descriptively. The reported themes concern peer recognition, digital prestige, substance use, perceived consequences, and enforcement constraints. Thematic analysis provides a framework for interpreting patterned meanings in qualitative material (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Interview reports from riders, officers, and clinicians are compared where they address related concerns, without treating agreement as proof of causation or incidence.

The subsequent normative analysis relates the interview themes to selected Qur'anic passages and the Islamic sources cited in the discussion. Verse references identify the relevant passages in The Qur'an (n.d.); their ethical application is expressed through paraphrase rather than unattributed English translation. The framework considers protection of life, intellect, and property, humility, and restraint from harming other road users. This interpretive stage is separate from the thematic reporting of interviews and does not constitute an intervention evaluation or an individual legal ruling.

Ethical considerations

Participants were informed that their accounts would be used for research and their identities would be protected. Riders are designated A–H, and officers and clinicians A–B within their respective groups. The study reports verbal consent for audio recording. The extracts omit the riders' neighborhood and exact-age labels to reduce indirect identification in a small, socially identifiable group.

The reported age range begins at 17 years. The methodological account does not specify an institutional ethics approval or age-specific consent arrangements. Nigerian guidance on children's participation in health research addresses age-appropriate assent, parental or guardian permission, and committee-approved exceptions; the requirements applicable to this study depend on the competent institutional review body (National Health Research Ethics Committee, 2016).

RESULTS

Peer recognition and pressure during celebrations

Riders described celebratory displays as opportunities for visibility and approval. Rider B contrasted ordinary riding with the attention associated with Sallah, the locally used term for Eid celebrations:

On normal days, nobody looks at you when you ride fast on a UD. You are just like any other rider who is looking for a daily bread. But during Sallah, when you clear the road, lift the front tyre, and balance the bike on one wheel while the crowd is shouting your name, you become a king. Boys respect you and girls cherish you. If you do not ride in such manner, no one cares about you.

Rider E described wedding displays and the pressure to suppress visible hesitation:

Friends, young ladies and all people watch your exhibition. They are attracted by styles like "zubure" (making the bike stand vertically) and "sha shara" (scraping metal parts against the tar to generate sparks). Your friends totally detest fear and caution. If they notice that you are a little bit scared and nervous, you are mocked as coward and you will be excluded from future events.

These accounts identify recognition and anticipated ridicule as reported features of participation. They do not establish that all spectators endorse the displays or that these motives are shared by every rider. The terms zubure and sha shara describe, respectively, a near-vertical motorcycle display and the scraping of metal against the road to generate sparks, as explained in the interview material.

Digital visibility and anticipated escalation

Rider A connected the prestige of a display with its subsequent circulation on social media:

The admiration is not confined to the street crowd only. The real joy is when you wake up the next morning and your TikTok video has over 30,000 views, or when every fellow rider puts your marvellous ride on their WhatsApp status or Facebook platform with the caption 'Zaki' (Lion). It makes you want to try an even more dangerous styles at the next wedding so that your digital views will not drop.

The account describes perceived pressure to retain online attention by attempting more dangerous performances. The reference to 30,000 views is the participant's statement; platform analytics were not examined. The interviews do not establish financial earnings from the videos, the size of a wider online audience, or a causal effect of a platform's recommendation system.

Reported nonmedical substance use

Five of the eight riders linked stunt riding to nonmedical substance use intended to reduce fear or increase perceived confidence. The substances named in the interview material included tramadol, Exol-5 (also called Kala-Kala), diazepam, flunitrazepam, codeine, and a mixture referred to as Gadali. These are participant-reported names; the composition of street or brand-named products was not chemically verified. Rider D described the practice as follows:

Before the Sallah ride commences, we gather in an uncompleted building or other hidden places to prepare. You cannot lift a bike at 80 kilometres per hour on a crowded highway if your brain is clear. Your eyes need to turn red. When the Tramadol or Exol-5 or Gadali starts working, you do not see the crowd as human beings, you do not feel fear whatsoever, in fact, you do not believe that you can die. If you crash, you get up and keep riding because the drug blocks the pain until the evening.

The quotation records the rider's perceived experience. Its references to speed, pain suppression, and invulnerability were not independently measured. No toxicology, dose information, or clinical assessment of intoxication was reported. The finding concerns reported nonmedical use in this sample; it does not establish that all Yudi riders use substances or that every named medicine is illicit in all circumstances.

Reported injuries and burdens on other road users

The clinicians described treating severe injuries associated in their accounts with festive-period motorcycle displays. Clinician A referred to fractures, serious skin injuries,

head injuries, and amputations, stating, "During Sallah, our ward looks like a battlefield." Clinician B described injured spectators and pedestrians, difficulty meeting medical costs, and deaths reported before arrival at the hospital. These statements represent clinical recollections; no patient records, injury classifications, case totals, or independently verified links between individual cases and Yudi activity were analyzed.

The FRSC officer similarly reported crashes involving pedestrians, including children and older people, and damage to motorcycles used in displays. The interviews therefore identify concerns extending beyond participating riders to other road users and household resources. They do not quantify crash frequency, fatalities, the proportion of riders wearing helmets, or the monetary value of losses.

Enforcement difficulties

The traffic-division officer reported that some riders evaded officers through narrow streets and that peers sometimes obstructed enforcement, including by throwing stones. The officer also described pressure from influential adults seeking the release of detained riders. These are attributed accounts rather than findings verified against arrest, prosecution, or court records. They indicate perceived obstacles to enforcement without establishing that existing laws or particular agencies are generally ineffective.

DISCUSSION

Social recognition as an interpretive explanation

The riders' accounts suggest that Yudi displays function as occasions for acquiring status and demonstrating competence before peers. Rider E's account is particularly relevant because approval was accompanied by the possibility of ridicule and exclusion. This resembles the broader proposition that risk taking can become more attractive in a peer setting (Chein et al., 2011; Gardner & Steinberg, 2005). The comparison concerns a plausible social process, not a demonstrated neural mechanism in this sample. Age, livelihood, local celebrations, and community relationships also distinguish these interviews from laboratory experiments and studies of young riders elsewhere (Sumit et al., 2021).

Rider A's account extends recognition beyond the immediate audience to anticipated digital circulation. Sherman et al. (2016) provide evidence that visible peer endorsement can influence responses to online material, but their experimental setting does

not establish why the reported Yudi video received views or whether exposure caused later stunts. Here, the narrower contribution is the rider's description of escalating expectations. The absence of platform data and of accounts from viewers limits conclusions about audience influence, financial incentives, and the spread of the practice.

Substance use and safety interpretation

The five riders' reports make nonmedical substance use a substantive concern within the interviews. Nigerian research among commercial motorcyclists provides contextual support for examining psychoactive substance use and alcohol-related risks (Alti-Muazu & Aliyu, 2008; Ogundipe et al., 2020). Nevertheless, occupational samples in other cities cannot establish prevalence among Yudi riders. Nor can the present interviews separate the effects of substances from peer pressure, experience, riding conditions, or selection into stunt groups. Clinical assessment and product identification would be needed to evaluate specific pharmacological claims.

The clinicians' and officers' accounts point to possible harms affecting participants and bystanders, but their convergence does not replace a record-based injury study. Research identifies multiple determinants of motorcycle injury, including rider behavior and contextual conditions (Kiwango et al., 2024; Vlahogianni et al., 2012). The present findings should therefore guide questions for subsequent research and prevention rather than supply crash rates or attributable risks. Helmet use is a defensible component of injury prevention on the basis of review evidence, while wearing a helmet does not make high-risk public-road displays safe (Liu et al., 2008).

Protection of life and responsible interpretation of harm

The Qur'anic evaluation begins with the obligation to protect life. Qur'an 2:195 addresses spending in God's cause and avoidance of destruction; its immediate context should remain visible when the passage is applied to contemporary conduct (The Qur'an, n.d., 2:195). Al-Sa'adi (2001) provides an exegetical basis for considering the wider ethical significance of destructive conduct. Applying this principle to dangerous riding is an interpretive extension: the verse does not refer specifically to motorcycles, and an assessment must consider foreseeable harm and the circumstances of the action.

Qur'an 4:29 connects the protection of life with restrictions on wrongful appropriation of wealth (Al-Qurtubi, 2006; The Qur'an, n.d., 4:29). In the present context, the ethical concern is deliberate exposure of oneself and others to preventable danger. It

does not follow that every fatal stunt is suicide. The traditions cited in Sahih al-Bukhari 5778 and Sahih Muslim 109a concern intentional self-killing (Al-Bukhari, 2002; Muslim, 2007). Recklessness and suicidal intent are distinct, and these interviews cannot establish the latter or justify a theological judgment about a deceased individual.

This distinction also matters for communication about qadar, or divine decree. Responsibility for precaution can be discussed without attributing fatalistic beliefs that the reported interviews do not establish. Kayani et al. (2012) show that fatalism and receptiveness to road-safety messages can be examined empirically in a particular setting; their Pakistani study does not establish the beliefs of Muslim youth in Gombe. Religious education should therefore explain responsibility carefully rather than presume a uniform belief system or stigmatize injured riders.

Protection of intellect and responsible use of property

The protection of intellect, hifz al-aql, provides a normative basis for examining conduct that undermines judgment and responsibility within a broader account of the objectives of Islamic law (Al-Shatibi, 2011). Qur'an 5:90–91 addresses intoxicants and their destructive effects on religious and social life (Ibn Kathir, 2000; The Qur'an, n.d., 5:90–91). Its application here concerns the reported pursuit of impairment or disinhibition for dangerous riding. It should not be expressed as a categorical judgment on all medical uses of the named substances or as proof of a particular rider's intoxication.

Qur'an 17:26–27 and 7:31 address wastefulness and excess (The Qur'an, n.d., 17:26–27, 7:31). In conjunction with the discussion of responsible resource use in Ibn Ashur (1984), these passages support considering the foreseeable loss of a motorcycle and the burdens imposed on others. The analysis concerns avoidable destruction and irresponsible expenditure linked to harmful activity. It does not imply that every expenditure on fuel, repairs, celebration, or lawful recreation is wasteful. Neither a precise motorcycle price nor a monetary estimate of household loss is established by the interviews.

Humility and the rights of other road users

Qur'an 31:18 discourages contempt and boastfulness (The Qur'an, n.d., 31:18). This provides a relevant ethical question when public recognition depends on conduct that intimidates or endangers others. Nevertheless, seeking approval does not by itself establish a person's inner arrogance. The analysis evaluates the reported practice and its implications

for mutual respect rather than assigning a moral identity to all participants or to Muslim youth generally.

The tradition on the rights of the road identifies restraint from harming others among the obligations associated with occupying shared space (Al-Bukhari, 2002, hadith 2465; Muslim, 2007, hadith 2121a). This provides a more precise basis for considering obstruction and danger than categorizing every public road as a waqf. Jabir's (2017) study of road encroachment offers a related Islamic jurisprudential discussion, but its Palestinian legal context does not establish Nigerian traffic law. Responsibility, restitution, and sanctions in Gombe must be determined through the applicable legal and institutional processes.

Table 2. Relationship between reported themes and the ethical interpretation

Reported concern	Ethical reference	Scope of interpretation
Exposure to injury	Qur'an 2:195; 4:29	Avoid foreseeable harm; no inference that a crash establishes suicidal intent.
Use of substances to suppress fear	Qur'an 5:90–91; protection of intellect	Address deliberate impairment; do not equate all therapeutic medicine use with intoxication.
Motorcycle damage and financial burdens	Qur'an 17:26–27; 7:31	Consider avoidable destruction; no unverified monetary loss estimate.
Prestige and intimidation	Qur'an 31:18	Encourage humility and respect; do not infer every rider's inner motive.
Danger or obstruction to others	Al-Bukhari 2465; Muslim 2121a	Respect shared-road rights; legal consequences require competent determination.

Community and policy implications

The findings support developing a coordinated response that addresses recognition, safety, and access to help. Imams, Islamic teachers, parents, wedding organizers, and youth representatives could collaborate with traffic officers and clinicians on messages about protecting life, avoiding impairment, respecting pedestrians, and using protective equipment. Friday and Eid sermons, educational circles, and wedding assemblies offer possible settings for such engagement. These proposals retain the article's emphasis on Islamic institutions while recognizing that evidence from general faith-based health programs does not demonstrate effectiveness for Yudi prevention (DeHaven et al., 2004).

Communication should pair ethical reflection with practical action: planning orderly wedding escorts, discouraging dangerous displays, facilitating clinical referral for problematic substance use, and creating opportunities for youth recognition through

socially valued activities. Content creators and peer leaders could promote safety and avoid rewarding performances that endanger bystanders. Platform moderation, where relevant, should follow the platform's rules and lawful reporting procedures; the interview data do not establish monetization or justify indiscriminate removal of all motorcycle content. Wider evidence on road-safety campaigns supports evaluating campaign design and outcomes rather than assuming that publicity alone changes behavior (Phillips et al., 2011).

Enforcement should be lawful, proportionate, consistent, and accompanied by due process. The officer's account warrants attention to reported interference, but it does not justify unverified allegations against particular people or proposals for physical punishment. Any restriction, vehicle impoundment, community service, or compensation must rest on applicable law and a competent decision. Parents and community leaders can support fair procedures while protecting young people's rights. Drug-related responses should combine appropriate investigation with confidential assessment and treatment access, rather than infer criminality from a reported product name.

Limitations and future research

The study draws on eight male riders and four professional stakeholders in one metropolis. It cannot represent all Yudi participants, Muslim youth, or motorcycle users. Limited reporting of recruitment, fieldwork timing, and the analytical audit trail restricts appraisal of credibility and transferability, which depend on transparent qualitative reporting (O'Brien et al., 2014; Tong et al., 2007). Self-report, recall, social desirability, discussion of potentially unlawful conduct, and translation may have shaped the material. There were no independently analyzed crash records, clinical records, direct observations, or platform analytics. The study also does not establish that the perspectives of nonparticipating riders, pedestrians, female community members, or dissenting participants were systematically examined.

The normative interpretation is bounded by the passages and sources considered and is not an exhaustive jurisprudential review. Proposed educational and enforcement measures were not tested. Future research should combine documented qualitative procedures with appropriately approved participation, compare stakeholder and nonparticipant perspectives, and examine injuries using suitable record-based designs. A subsequent community intervention could assess feasibility, acceptability, protective practices, and injury-related outcomes while distinguishing changes in reporting from

changes in harm. No causal or prevalence inference should be drawn from the present interviews.

CONCLUSION

The interviewed riders described Yudi stunt riding in Gombe through peer recognition, digital visibility, and, for five of the eight riders, reported nonmedical substance use. Clinicians and enforcement officers described injuries, burdens on other road users, and obstacles to enforcement. These accounts provide a local qualitative basis for ethical analysis, but do not establish population prevalence, causal effects, or verified injury totals. The Qur'anic evaluation emphasizes protection of life, intellect, and property, humility, and respect for shared roads. The article contributes a contextual connection between reported practices and these ethical responsibilities. A coordinated response involving Islamic institutions, youth and family engagement, clinical support, and proportionate enforcement warrants development and evaluation.

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