

TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES WITHIN THE TRADITIONAL WALLED CITY OF KANO

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Abstract:

This paper examines the nature of Kano walled city and challenges of intra-city transportation. The ancient city of Kano is presently an area facing serious transportation problems particularly in those areas that still retained the morphology of the pre-colonial setting, where buildings are built close to one another and structures are usually separated by narrow winding paths capable of accommodating only pedestrians, donkeys and horses. This narrow winding path renders the area inaccessible by cars and even at times by motorcycles causing serious social and economic stress on the residents of the area. The nature of the city being a commercial center also led to incidences of street hawking along the major roads within the city posing more problems to transportation. Commercial and domestic wastes are often disposed off by the side of the road and the fact that Government have not evolve a viable refuse evacuation policy led to almost the entire blockage of the causeway. A total of 360 residents of the city particularly those living along the major roads and those that live within the areas inaccessible by cars and other means of transportation were selected via Purposive sampling technique. The study reveals that the residents of the area are experiencing serious challenges due to the morphology of the area and also due to the narrow nature of most of the roads within the city. The study concludes by recommending ways to enhance adequate accessibility by embarking on intensive urban renewal programmes by the Government.

Key Words: Transportation, Challenges, Kano, walled City, Urban renewal.

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BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY:

Kano has been a more important commercial and administrative centre than any other Northern Nigerian city in pre-colonial, colonial and independent Nigeria (Urguhart 1977). Kano was founded around Dala Hill in the 9th century A.D., its spatial planning and development started with the building of the first city wall between 1095 and 1134, which started east of the Kurmi market near the Jakara stream. When eventually completed in about 1150, it encompassed such monuments as the Emir's palace, the central mosque, and the Kurmi market, which became the commercial nerve centre of the city. The expansion of the town was largely determined by the city wall, which was the symbol of defence and identity. The wall was extended by successive Kano rulers at various times. The city has a clearly identified focal centre, abounding wall and buildings of fairly uniform character occupying most of the land in-between. The city usually has a triple focus, these are the Emir's palace, the main city market (Kurmi market) and the grand mosque, often an imposing building rising high above the general skyline (O'Connor, 1983). The city is also divided into wards or quarters and these are further sub-divided into compounds. The houses are mostly made up of mud and narrow winding path (*Lungu*) run between compounds' wall often broken only by a single door way. Minor markets and small mosques are spread through the various wards (*unguwa*) and crafts industries are widely scattered so that for many people, residence and workplace are the same. The colonial contribution to the growth of Kano was largely concentrated in the new city outside the city wall.

The walled city up till today exhibits the morphology described above despite the changes brought about by modernisation and innovation diffusion within the walled city. Township road pattern runs towards the central mosque. This gave the town a general radial growth pattern. Development was organic and streets are narrow and winding conceived to accommodate only pedestrians, horses, donkeys and later, carts. There is homogeneity in the composition of the inhabitants. Many areas remained inaccessible due to the narrow winding paths meant for the pedestrians. Most of the structures in these areas are dilapidated and some are even collapse because of lapse in life span. All these pose a serious threat to effective and efficient transportation of goods and services in the study area. Several efforts were made by the state government to construct roads within the city in order to open up the area; this effort is always met by incessant resistance by the dwellers of the city. Where such road development occurs, poor property owners are often relocated

or resettled and the open up area now belong to the rich. There exist uptill today certain areas of the city that are only accessed by foot, bicycle and motorcycle thus, making efficient urban transport and renewal virtually impossible. The level of housing deterioration in such areas is high. Multiple collapsed and deteriorated properties are common sights in such places (Dankani and Shamaki, 2008).

The nature of built up environment in the walled city of Kano is so complex and unplanned thereby making it extremely difficult for intra urban transportation to be conducted smoothly. The present planning problems coupled with numerous cases of dilapidation and collapse of traditional buildings prevalent in the walled city is posing serious cause for concern for the urban environment. The financial cost of the renewal process and the attitude of the city dwellers towards any process that would attempt to take over or 'snatch' away their local land coupled with the financial situation and burdens on government as the sole provider of basic facilities and amenities makes urban renewal a difficult task in the walled city (Dankani, 2008).

The role of transport in the development of towns and cities cannot be overemphasized. According to Pederson (1980) cited in Filani (2000),

“Cities are creatures of transportation. Cities do not feed themselves. They live on food from rural areas. Once inside the city the food must be distributed, waste must be collected and removed. To pay for food, urbanites must work. Urban industries require raw materials. Manufactured products must be distributed. People must move about to make these activities possible. Cities were therefore not possible until transport allowed the movement of people and goods.”

Cities therefore function through the complex network of transport systems. The more complex the city, the more complex the transport needs. The effect of transport in the city may not be observed from the point of view of movement to satisfy urban needs. The effect becomes infact more manifest in the changing morphology of the city itself. Transport is not a separate sector of the economy, but a web of communications that joins other sectors together. it is unique

because it contributes to the success or failure of nearly everything in the environment (Filani, 2000)

Despite the importance and strategic relevance of the traditional city as key actors in the city's history and development, the inner cities are often ignored by urban managers due to its perceive planning problems. Several efforts were made by the state government to construct roads within the city in order to open up the area; this effort is always met by incessant resistance by the dwellers of the city. Where such road development occurs, poor property owners are often relocated or resettled and the open up area now belong to the rich. Moreover, government is not so keen in partaking in the renewal of those parts of the city. This could be attributed to the poor environmental situation and planning of the city centre as well as high level of compensation associated with acquisition of land or property from the city dwellers. It is on the basis of the above that this study aim at examining the transportation challenges within the traditional walled city of Kano.

The specific objectives for this study are:-

- i. to examine the morphology of the walled city
- ii. to identify the major means of transport within the city
- iii. to assess the efficiency or otherwise of the means of transportation within the city
- iv. to uncover the implication of the means of transportation on the livelihood of the residents of the area
- v. to identify the role of urban managers in curtailing these challenges

STUDY AREA:

Kano state lies between latitude $10^{\circ} 31' 41.14''\text{N}$ to $12^{\circ} 34' 10.57''\text{N}$ and between longitude $7^{\circ} 41' 26.40''\text{E}$ to $9^{\circ} 23' 17.50''\text{E}$. Kano metropolitan area lies between latitude $11^{\circ} 55' 23.93''\text{N}$ to $12^{\circ} 3' 53.10''\text{N}$ and longitude $8^{\circ} 27' 42.26''\text{E}$ to $8^{\circ} 36' 41.62''\text{E}$ and is 1549 feet above sea level. The estimated area of Kano metropolis increased from 122.7 square kilometers in 1962 to 154.6 square kilometers in 1981, an increase of about 25% based on the average expansion rate of two square kilometers per annum (Na'Abba, 2002 and see figures 1.1 and 1.2).

For many centuries, Kano has been the largest and most influential commercial town in the Sudan zone. The settlement is probably over one thousand years old and was first situated on the vicinity of Dala Hill, the source of iron, which the inhabitants smelted and fabricated (Urquhart. 1977). The Kano chronicle records the first king of Kano as Bagauda whose ascension was stated to be in the year 999 AD. The 19.2 square kilometer of the city walls were completed by the twelfth century. See Fig. 1.2

The establishment of a British military administration in 1903 introduced a new focus outside and to the east of the walled city. This had very little immediate effect upon the trend of physical development, but no doubt acted as a catalyst for development by non- Hausa people in the later years. However, up to 1904, the trading community exclusively resided within the city walls, with the market as the single strong positive focus.

The continued influence of the colonial administration and the eventual attainment of Nigeria's political independence in 1960, which led to series of administrative decentralization in the country further established Kano as a political and commercial centre in the country. This phenomenon resulted into the tremendous growth and expansion of metropolitan Kano in both population and spatial terms

According to Marafa, 1991 cited in Na'abba, 2002,

'By the time colonial masters came in early 20th century, what constitute Kano and virtually encompassed by the wall was contained within 17.5sq kilometres. Today metropolitan Kano (made up of the declared urban area in accordance with the Land Use and Allocation Committee) is contained within 60 sq.km., while the built-up metropolitan Kano is contained within 40 sq. km'.

Morphologically, Kano has ceased to be confined to its wall. The original city became a unit by itself and Fagge, Nasarawa, Sabon Gari, Gwagwarwa, Tudun Wada, Tarauni, Na'ibawa, Hausawa, Gyadi-Gyadi and Kurnar Asabe all grew in to distinct morphological unit.

This phenomenal growth (both real and anticipated) is the influence of the preparation of the Trevallion plan in 1963 with a view to setting a statutory framework that could guide, influence and control the development of metropolitan Kano. However, the desired goal could not be achieved due to lack of proper and effective implementation of the plan.

Presently, there is a lot of infilling going on as well as outward expansion into adjoining villages. Metropolitan Kano has been redefined vide Edict No. 15 of 1990. By the edict, Kano metropolitan area consists of all land within the radius of 32 km from Kurmi market. Thus, the metropolitan area includes;

- i. The Dala, Municipal, Nasarawa, Fagge, Tarauni, Gwale, Kumbotso and Ungogo Local Government Areas.
- ii. Parts of Dawakin Tofa, Gezawa, Kura and Rimin Gado Local Government Areas.

The edict further classifies all land within a radius of 16 kilometres from each Local Government headquarters outside Kano metropolis as urban land.

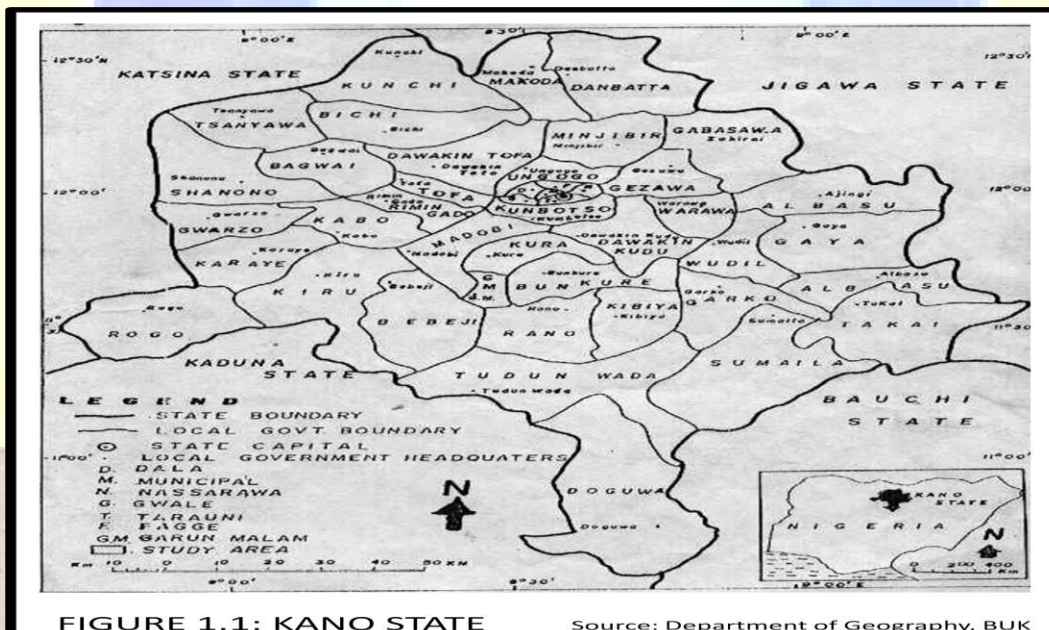
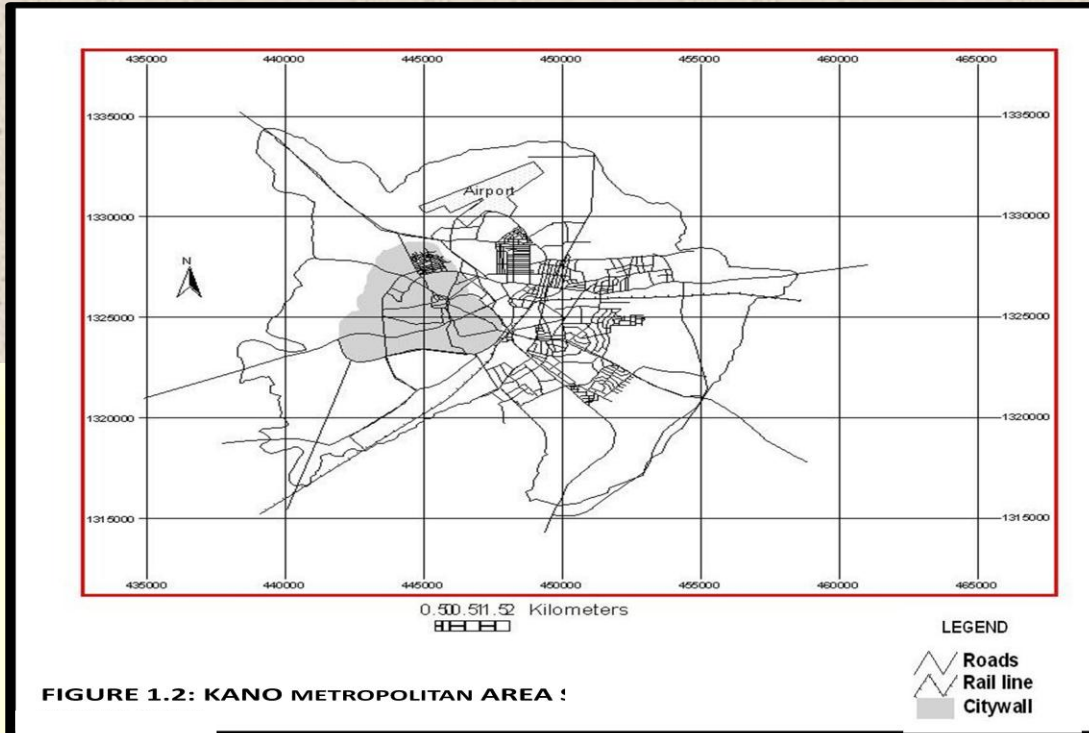


FIGURE 1.1: KANO STATE

Source: Department of Geography, BUK



Source: GIS Lab, UDUS

METHODOLOGY:

In the conduct of this study, data was sought through two major sources. Primary data were obtained through the administration of questionnaire to the residents of the walled city. The questionnaire was designed to acquire and elicit responses on a range of issues such as, how respondents get access to their homes, what means of transport do they normally used to transport themselves/goods to their respective homes, how efficient is/are such means of transportation as well as challenges confronting efficient and effective transportation within the walled city. Secondary data were sourced from published materials, such journals, textbooks, internet and any relevant published materials.

— Respondents for this study were selected using purposive sampling techniques. Purposive sampling can be defined as a type of non-probability sampling, where the investigator merely hand-picks those cases or population considered to be typical or which are likely to possess the desired set of information or characteristic for inclusion into the sampling (Obikeze, 1986). The operation of the purposive sampling technique employed here, involves the identification of those respondents that particularly lives within the walled city as well as those that commute to the city almost on daily basis. Emphasis was placed on those respondents who live within the narrow alleys of the

walled cities and those that owned cars. A total of 360 respondents were selected via the sampling method stated above.

Data were presented in the form of tables showing frequencies and percentages, following each table was the descriptive analysis of the findings. Similarly Likert scale was used to depict the opinion of respondents on the efficiency or otherwise of transportation within the walled city.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:

This section analyses the responses obtained from the 360 sampled respondents selected via purposive sampling technique.

Data in Table 1 attempt to discover the area of residence of respondents. 82% of the respondents live within the traditional walled city while the remaining 19% resides outside the walled city. The essence of including those respondents that live outside the walled city is for the study to have an insight into the challenges both the residents and non residents of the city experiences. This will surely indicate the magnitude and the extent to which the challenges affect both respondents.

Table 1: Resident of Respondents

Response	Frequency	%
Within the walled city	294	82
Outside the walled city	66	18
Total	360	100

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Investigation into the nature of transportation owned by sampled respondents indicates that 47% own cars, 36% own motorcycles and bicycles owners accounts for 10% of the respondents. From the finding it is evidently clear that some respondents owned more than one means of transportation. Some respondents asserted that despite owning cars they also own motorcycles which they usually use to penetrate narrow areas of the city. Similarly, respondents

that lived within the narrow allies of the city stated that they were compelled to own motorcycles so as to commute easily to the main road from where they board their vehicles or join commercial vehicles and they attribute this to the distance between their homes to the main road.

Table 2: Means of transportation owned by respondents

Response	Frequency	%
None	27	07
Bicycle	39	10
Motorcycles	146	36
Cars	189	47
Animals	0	0
Total	401	100

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Table 3 indicates the area where respondents who owned cars park their vehicles while in the walled city. The finding indicates that majority of the respondents that lived within the walled city (60%) and those that lived outside the city (82%) park their vehicle along the main road. Similarly, 16% of respondents that lived within the city and 18% that lived outside the city claimed the park their vehicles around any available open spaces they found in the city. Furthermore, 13% and 12% of respondents that lived within the city claimed that they normally parked their vehicle in garages (they own or rent) and premises of schools within the city. The implication of this finding is that those that park along the main roads constitute the majority and they most often contributes to the massive traffic congestion within the city as their vehicle hinders efficient movement of vehicles, good and services along the main road. Investigation into the width of some selected roads within the city indicates an average width of 3.5 meters. This clearly indicates that the roads are narrow for vehicles moving from two different directions. This clearly indicates that parking along main roads compound the problem commuters experience within the walled city.

Table 3: Where Respondents owning cars parked their vehicle in the walled city

Response	Residents of the walled city		Respondents living outside the walled city	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Along the main road	103	60	14	82
Garage	24	13		
Schools	21	12		
Open spaces within the city	27	15	03	18
Total	172	100	17	100

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Investigation into the exact location of walled city respondent's residence reveals that 81% lives within the narrow alleys and 19% lives along the main road. Similarly, analysis of data in Table 5 shows the distance in meters between the main road and respondent's residence. 28% cited 100-150 meters as the distance between their residence and the main road. 11% and 22% cited 150 and above meters and 20-50 meters respectively.

Table 4: How respondents access their residence

Response	Frequency	%
Residence is within the Narrow Alley	239	81
Residence is along the main road	55	19
Total	294	100

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Table 5: Average distance between the main roads to the residence of respondents living within the city

Response	Frequency	%
Along the main road	55	19

Less than 20 meters	31	10
20-50 meters	64	22
50-100 meters	23	08
100-150 meters	87	28
Above 150 meters	34	11
Total	294	98%

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Analysis of data in Table 6 shows how respondents transport bulky goods within the walled city. 38% claimed they use self/hired labour, 21% uses wheel barrows, 4% uses animals and 11% use cars. This findings clearly shows that the use of wheel barrows and hired labour is necessitated by the fact some part of the city are not accessible to cars and other big vehicles. Some respondents cited examples with building materials. They alleged that due to the location of their residence viz a viz the morphology of the city building materials are often off-loaded far away from their residences and they later move them to the site in piece meal using wheel barrows, labourers and at times donkeys. Investigation into the average width of some selected narrow alleys shows that majorities are between 1.5 – 2.5 meters and this hinders efficient movement of people, goods and services.

Table 6: How respondents transport bulky goods within the walled city

Response	Frequency	%
Self or Hired labour	189	38
Wheel Barrow	108	21
Bicycle	32	06
Motorcycles	94	19
Cars	55	11
Animals	23	04
Total	501	99%

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Respondents view on the efficiency of the transportation within the city shows that majority (67%) rated it as very inefficient, and 27% as inefficient. This signifies that transportation within the walled city is cumbersome and highly inefficient particularly if one considers the status of the city as a centre of trade and commerce and how the population of the city grows overtime. For instance, in 1952, the total population in Kano city was 127,000, the population increased to 295,432 in 1963, 760,000 in 1973, 1.5 million in 1991 and it is expected to reach 3,132,000 by the year 2015 based on the 2.8 annual growth rate (NPC, 2007). Experience has shown that expansion or growth of towns or cities is a product of population increase. The growth in population coupled with economic growth will result in massive demand for provision of goods and services and hence the need for efficient transportation means.

Table 7: How efficient is transport within the city

Response	Frequency	%
Very efficient	04	01
Efficient	17	05
Inefficient	97	27
Very inefficient	242	67
Total	360	100

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Several factors were identified to pose a serious challenge for transportation within the walled city. 18% of the respondents cited the morphology of the city, 21% attribute it to street hawking and commercial activities, 18% to indiscriminate parking along the main road and another 11% to dumping of waste along major roads.

Table 8: What are the major challenges confronting efficient and effective transportation within the city

Response	Frequency	%
The morphology of the city	239	18
Street hawking/commercial activities	274	21
Narrow alley separated by open gutters	105	08
Congestion within the city	293	23

Indiscriminate parking along the main road	236	18
Indiscriminate dumping of waste	149	11
Total	1296	99

Author's fieldwork, 2010

Data in Table 9 reveals ways through which the challenges facing transportation within the walled city can be improved tremendously. 18.9%, 17.7% and 15% of the respondents cited expansion of existing road network within the city, creation of specified parking space and decongestion of the inner city as ways to improve transportation within the city respectively. Furthermore, 8.9% suggests the banning of movement of heavy vehicles particularly during the day time, while another 15.2% suggests provision of specified dumping sites for refuse.

Table 9: Ways to enhance transportation within the city

Response	Frequency	%
Expansion of existing roads	356	18.9
Banning of street hawking	324	17.2
Creation of specified parking space	332	17.7
Covering of open gutters	89	4.7
Decongestion of the inner city	283	15.0
Banning the movement of heavy vehicles during the day time	168	8.9
Provision of specified dumping site for waste	286	15.2
Others (Specify)	37	1.9
Total	1875	99.5

Author's fieldwork, 2010

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

This paper reveals the challenges of transportation in Kano walled city. The paper identifies that there are many factors responsible for inefficient transportation within the traditional walled city of Kano. One of the major challenges is posed by the morphology of the traditional city. Uptill

now certain part of the city still retains the morphology of the pre-colonial period. This is not surprising due to the fact that most of the colonial development took place outside the walled city. Narrow alley still remains the only means of accessing some wards and quarters within the city and at time could be as long as over 2-3 kilometers. The implication here is that some areas cannot be easily accessible particularly in the event of emergency such as fire incidence, collapse of building and host of other emergencies. Furthermore, the study also recognizes that the massive increase in population experienced by the city increases the number of vehicles moving round the city and this result in indiscriminate parking of vehicles along major roads leading to incidence of massive traffic congestion. Similarly Kano been a centre of commerce also experiences high incidence of street hawking. Some traders display their wares along the main road thereby further narrowing it and thus hindering smooth movement of vehicles and goods. The fact that there is inadequate waste dumps within the city results in massive dumping of waste by the road sides thereby blocking most part of the road and hindering free movement of people and goods around the city. The overall implication of all these calls for massive urban renewal programme within the city so as to open up the city and also ensuring easy flow of goods and services in and out of the city. It is in the light of this that the following recommendations were put forward:-

1. Government should commit itself to the urban renewal programs (particularly, the construction of new roads as well as expanding the existing ones) in both financial and planning terms.
2. The public bodies saddled with the responsibility of urban planning and renewal should at a matter of necessity commence on the process of decongesting the wall city by buying off dilapidated property or acquiring collapse properties compulsorily while at the same time devise mechanisms through which adequate compensation should be paid to the affected persons.
3. There is a need for massive awareness and sensitization campaign to enlighten the general public on the importance of urban renewal programs so as to ease their resistance and enhance their cooperation.
4. Public bodies in charge of urban development should ensure constant measuring of the quality and life span of dwellings and properties as well as projecting and

- forecasting the housing stock to be required in the future. This would surely serve as a panacea to the major problems in the walled city by serving as a kind of blue print for the renewal program.
5. Street hawking and indiscriminate dumping of waste along major roads should be banned and appropriate commercial areas and specified dumping sites for waste should be adequately provided.

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