

Urbanization and the Emergence of New Commercial Activities in Kano Metropolis, 1960-2019

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Abstract

Urbanization is not a new phenomenon in Kano Metropolis. However, following the attainment of independence in Nigeria in 1960, coupled with the creation of states in 1967 by the military administration of General Yakubu Gowon, Kano Metropolis being the capital city and the commercial nerve center of the state, continued to experience urbanization process. This paper found out that urbanization process was associated with various developments, such as population growth, spatial expansion as well as the development of new commercial activities amongst others.

Keywords: Urbanization, New, Commercial, Activities, Kano Metropolis.

Introduction

This paper examines urbanization and the emergence of new commercial activities in Kano Metropolis from 1960 to 2019. Kano Metropolis experienced urbanization process during the period under review due to a number of factors such as environmental, demographic, economic and government policies. The urbanization process was associated with numerous developments such as population growth, spatial expansion of the city as well as development of new commercial activities amongst others.

The Area of Study

The area of study is Kano Metropolis. By 2012, this area was made up of eight local government areas namely; Dala, Fagge, Kano Municipal, Gwale, Nassarawa, Tarauni, and parts of Kumbotso and Ungogo Local Government Areas. Kano Metropolis is lies between latitudes 11.85° N and 12.17° N and longitudes 8.39° E and 8.67° E.¹ Kano Metropolis is one of the largest cities in Nigeria demographically and economically.

¹ Liman Muhammad Abubakar, 'A Spatial Analysis of Industrial Decline in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria'(PhD Thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, 2015), 41.

An Overview of Urbanization in Kano Metropolis, 1960-2019

Urbanization is not a new phenomenon in Kano because the city experienced urbanization in the pre-colonial and colonial periods. Similarly, the city experienced urbanization during the period under review. Urbanization in Kano Metropolis was facilitated by factors such as trade and commerce, state creation, hospitality of the people of Kano which attracted migrants in search of greener pastures and other economic opportunities, as well as increase in birth rate and decline in death rate. These factors led to urbanization in Kano Metropolis as shown through population growth and spatial expansion. The table below shows the population of Kano Metropolis, 1963-2015.

Table1.1: Population of Kano Metropolis, 1963-2015

S/No.	Year	Figure
1.	1963 (Census)	250,000
2.	1983 (Official Estimation)	900, 000
3.	1991(Census)	1,579, 721
4.	2006 (Census)	2, 826,307
5.	2011(Projection)	3,357,434
6.	2015 (Projection)	4,555,447

Source: Kano state Government, Statistical Year Books, 1972, 1983, 1996 and 2006 and Projections

From the table above, it can be seen that the population of Kano Metropolis has increased from 250, 000 in 1963 to 4,555,447 in 2015. This shows an increase of 430, 5447 over a period of 52 years. By this figure, Kano Metropolis became one of the largest cities not only in Northern Nigeria but also in the West African sub region. This occurred due to the arrival of migrant groups as well as increase in birth rate and decline in death rate as a result of the availability of nutritious food and modern medical facilities.

Spatial expansion of the metropolis is another indicator of urbanization process in the city. Increase in population due to increase in birth rate and decrease in death rate as well as the arrival of migrant groups to the city, created demand for accommodation which led to establishment of more housing units in various locations of the metropolis. For example, housing units were established in areas such as Ja'en, Sharada, Danladi Nasidi Housing estate, Farawa, 'Yan Kaba, Badawa, Kurnar Asabe, Rijiyar Lemo, Bachirawa, Kabuga, Rijiyar Zaki, Bandirawo housing estate, Amana Housing estate, and Kwankwasiyya housing

estate amongst others.² This has shown that Kano Metropolis has spatially expanded during the period under review.

The Emergence of New Commercial Activities in Kano Metropolis, 1960-2019

The growth of the Nigerian economy especially during the 1970's which came about as a result of the oil boom, influenced the growth and expansion of Kano Metropolis. Kano was already an economic nerve centre in Northern Nigeria even before the oil boom era and it maintained its position during this period. Following the emergence of the oil boom era and the introduction of import substitution industrialization in the 1970s, Kano Metropolis became a catchment area for the distribution of capital and consumer goods. This development led to the emergence of new markets in Kano Metropolis. This is because the three popular markets in Kano Metropolis, namely: Kurmi, Sabon Gari and Kantin Kwari have over the years experienced expansion in the volume and value of trade. These markets also became congested due to increase in population and the number of people conducting business in the markets. This led to the emergence of new markets otherwise known as specialized markets in the metropolis.³ The new markets that emerged include the following: Kofar Wambai Market, Kofar Ruwa Market, Yankaba Market, Yan Lemo Market, Yan Awaki Market, Yan Katako Market, Dawanau Market and Singer Market amongst others. These markets were termed as specialized markets in view of the fact that they specialized in the sale of specific products. Most of these markets owe their origins from the Sabon Gari and Kantin Kwari markets.

Apart from the new markets that emerged in the metropolis, other forms of commercial activities thrive in the area. These economic activities were essentially new in the area and they include the following: Hotels, Restaurants and Super Markets/ Departmental Stores. These are examined in details.

² Bello Sule, 'Architecture, Culture and the History of Urbanization in Nigeria: Perspectives from the Ancient City of Kano, (Presentation, Nigerian Institute of Architects, Ilorin, 2014), 22.

³ Abdussalam Ibrahim Khalil, 'The Fortune of Two Cities: Effects of Intermodality on Urban Expansion and Socio-Economic Integration in Kano and Jos, *Kano Journal of History* 1, no.1 (2014):134.

Hotels in Kano Metropolis

Hotel business is another new commercial activity that emerged and developed in Kano Metropolis. The need to establish hotel business in Kano Metropolis owned by Kano State Government was championed by the administration of Governor Muhammadu Abubakar Rimi in the 1980s following the administration move to establish the Magwan Water Restaurant. This project was however neglected by subsequent administrations in Kano State. As such the project was never completed because it was abandoned half way. Therefore, in view of the fact that Kano Metropolis remained the major commercial hub of Northern Nigeria where traders from different parts of the Nigeria as well as various parts of neighboring countries such as Chad, Cameroon and Niger came to conduct trading activities made hotel business necessary. As a result of this, private entrepreneurs quickly seized the opportunity and established numerous hotels in Kano metropolis in order to accommodate traders, customers, government personnel as well as visitors and tourist who came to Kano.⁴ Following this, the number of hotels in Kano Metropolis continued to increase during the period of study. The table below shows the list of hotels in Kano Metropolis.

⁴ Interview with Mr. Obi Sunday, aged 65, Kano, 13th July, 2020.

Table. 2 List of Registered Hotels Established in Kano Metropolis, 2000-2009

S/ N	NAME OF HOTELS	ADDRESS	YEAR ESTABLISHED	MODE OF OWNERSHIP	NO. OF STAFF
1.	Green Palace Hotel	No. 17 Badagry Road, Kano	2003	Share holding	60
2.	Farhan Guest Palace	No. 16 Sultan Road Kano	2008	Private	120
4.	Al-Jazeera Hotel	No.33 Gashash Road behind Daula Hotel Kano	2008	Private	33
5.	Motel De Opera	No. 62 Hadejia Road Kano	2001	Private	21
6	Horizon Hotel	No. Milla Road, Kano	2007	Private	26
7.	The Fountain Inn	No. 11 Bompai Road	2008	Private	30
8.	Nuru Guest Inn	No. 1 Abdu Bako Way, Kano	2004	Private	6
9.	Hamco Hotel Ltd	No. 78/80 Na,ibawa Zaria Road, Kano	2005	Private	30
10	Royal Park Guest Inn	No. 35R Kazaure Road, Bompai Kano	2004	Private	8
11	Miyetti Guest House	No.10B Ahmadu Bello way,kano	2005	Private	15
12	Nassarawa Guest House	No. 314 Lamido Rd.	2000	Private	.
13	Tower Hotel	No. 64 Aba Rd. S/Gari Kano	2006	Private	-
14	Mairabo Hotel	No. 25/26 Atike Rd. S/Gari, Kano	2005	Private	-
15	Procure Hotel	No. 8 Farm centre, Kano	2009	Private	20
16	Badala Guest	Aston Road	2009	Private	25

.	Palace				
17	Great Palace	Aston Road Bukavu Barracks	2009	Private	29
18	Samir Palace	Aston Road	2009	Private	25
19	Hills and Valley	Kwanar Dawaki	2001	Private	18
20	Dennis Hotel	67. Atike Rd S/Gari Kano	2006	Private	9
21	Sunshine Hotel	64980053	2004	Private	16
22	Redezenvos Hotel	31. Atike Rd S/Gari Kano	2009	Private	5
23	Fedmdo Hotel	No. 63A Apple Avenue	2004	Private	10

Source: Kano State Government, Statistical Year Book, 2013.

From the table above, out of the twenty three hotels that appeared on the table, twenty hotels whose numbers of staff were indicated have provided employment opportunities to Five Hundred and Six persons in Kano Metropolis, from 2000 to 2009. Looking at the nature of ownership of the hotels, it was discovered that the hotels were privately owned by individual entrepreneurs. This shows that hotel business was another new commercial activity that was patronized by various investors in Kano Metropolis. However, the number of hotels presented in the table above did not represent the total number of hotels in Kano metropolis. This is because according to a research report conducted by Kano Urban Planning and Development Authority (KNUPDA) in 2010, there were One Hundred and Two hotels in Kano Metropolis.⁵

Restaurants and Food Canteens in Kano Metropolis

Restaurants and Food Canteens are also other commercial activities that developed in Kano Metropolis. Prior to the establishment of modern restaurants and food canteens in Kano Metropolis, it was the hotels and local food suppliers that provided the traders and visitors of Kano metropolis with needed food.

⁵ KNUPDA (2010) "Unpublished Report on Inventory on Hotels and Recreational Facilities in Kano Metropolis", Pp.13-16.

However, the emergence of restaurants and food canteens brought the idea of food supply in a modern way. This is because customers were served with varieties of food in a healthy and hygienic condition. The table below shows the list of restaurants and food canteens in Kano Metropolis.

Table1. 3 Lists of Registered Restaurants in Kano Metropolis by 2012

S/N	NAME OF RESTAURANT	LOCATION	REMARK
1.	Pin Peacock	Bompai Road	Operational
2.	Pounded Yam and Co.	Lodge Road Kano	Operational
3.	Hongfu Restaurant	By Nassarawa Hospital	Operational
4.	Palace Restaurant	Race Course Road	Operational
5.	Green Park Restaurant	Audu Bako Way	Operational
6.	Al-Amir Restaurant	Club Road	Operational
7.	Al-Sultan Restaurant	Audu Bako Way	Operational
8.	Balangu Restaurant	Civic Road Way	Operational
9.	Continental Chiken	Ahmadu Bello Way	Operational
10.	Al-ghadir Restaurant	Audu Bako Way	Operational
11.	Al-Diwan Intercontinental Restaurant	11A Bompai Road	Operational
12.	Mac Bannas	Audu Bako Way	Operational
13.	Spices Restaurant	Magajin Rumfa Road	Operational
14.	De Recipe Kitchen	France Road	Operational
15.	Ten 05	Post Office Road	Operational
16.	Mr. Biggs	Niger Street	Operational
17.	Dunkin Peppe	Igbo Road	Operational
18.	No. One Restaurant	Zoo Road	Operational
19.	Jelly Restaurant	-	Operational
20.	Fahad Restaurant	Aminu Kano Teaching Hospital Road	Operational
21.	Al- Nasiha Restaurant	Hotoro Tsamiyar Boka	Closed
22.	Yahuza Catering Services	State Road	Operational
23.	Chikenza Restaurant		Operational

Source: Kano State Government, Statistical Year Book, 2012.

Super Markets / Departmental Stores in Kano Metropolis

Another commercial activity that developed in Kano Metropolis is the Super Market or Departmental stores business. Various entrepreneurs in Kano

metropolis decided to engage in the development of this commercial activity. As such, they selected some locations in Kano Metropolis and established these supermarkets or departmental stores. These super markets brought goods to the door steps of the customers in various locations in Kano metropolis. This is because as these super markets and departmental stores were established most of the people of the areas where these markets and stores were established reduced patronizing the major markets that sold similar products. These super markets and Departmental stores contributed significantly to the development of commercial activities in Kano Metropolis. This is because they provided their customers with various products, which they needed; they also provided employment opportunities to the people, as well as revenue to the government.⁶ The table below shows the list of Super markets / Departmental stores in Kano Metropolis.

⁶ Interview with Nura Muhammad Gambo, aged 27 Years, Kano, 11th July, 2020.

Table1. 4 List of Some Super Markets/ Departmental Stores in Kano Metropolis, 2004-2019

S/No	Name	Year Established	Type of Products Sold	Location	Number of Employees
1.	Sabuwar Singer Store	2004	Food Stuffs	Gadon Kaya	15
2.	Marsad Super Store	2006	Food Stuffs, Drinks and Cosmetics etc.	Tarauni Quarters	15
3.	Sahad Stores	2008	Food Stuffs, Drinks, Cosmetics etc.	Zoo Road	45
4.	Marhaba Super Market	2008	Food Stuffs, Drinks Cosmetics etc.	Rijiyar Lemo Quarters	5
5.	Nahdy Super Market	2011	Food Stuffs, Drinks, Cosmetics etc.	Gwarzo Road	7
6.	Farhan Kitchen and Furniture	2011	Kitchen Utensils and Furniture	Gwarzo Road	9
7.	Alpen Stores	2014	Islamic Medicine and Perfumes etc	Gwarzo Road	50
8.	Ado Bayero Mall	2014	Varieties of Products such as Food Items, Textiles, Soft Drinks	Zoo Road	50 Top Level

			etc		
9.	Iyami Stores	2014	Food Stuffs and Kitchen Utensils	B.U.K Road	5
10.	Umar Stores	2015	Food Stuffs, Drinks and Cosmetics	Mandawari Sabon Titi	14
11.	Masama Super Store	2016	Food Stuffs, Drinks and Cosmetics	Rijiyar Lemo	15
12.	Garba Karfe Investment	2016	Textile Materials and Blouse	Gwarzo Road	25
13.	Sufi Mart	2017	Food Items and Household Items	Tarauni	25
14.	Haifa Furnitures	2019	Furnitures	B.U.K Road	5
15.	Fulais General Enterprises	2019	Furnitures	B.U.K Road	4
16.	Almadina Stores	2019	Food Stuffs and Cosmetics	Kurnar Asabe	15
Total Number of Employees					304

Kano State Government, Statistical Year Book, 2013 and Author's Fieldwork 2018 and 2019

From the table above it can be seen that from 2004 to 2019 sixteen super markets were established in Kano Metropolis. These super markets have provided employment opportunity to Three Hundred and Four employees. This is a novel contribution to the development of the economy of Kano Metropolis.

Establishment of Banks and Financial Institutions in Kano Metropolis

In view of the development of commercial activities in Kano metropolis, various commercial Banks found Kano metropolis a suitable place for their activities. As

a result of this, Kano Metropolis witnessed the proliferation of commercial banks. The table below shows the list of commercial banks and their branches in Kano Metropolis, from 2009 to 2013.

Table1. 5: Commercial Banks and Number of Branches in Kano Metropolis, 2009 – 2013

S/N	NAME OF BANK	NUMBER OF BRANCHES BY YEARS				
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
1	Jaiz Bank	-	-	-	1	2
2	Access Bank Plc	1	1	1	8	8
3	Citi Bank Nigeria Limited	1	1	1	1	1
4	Diamond Bank Nigeria Plc	3	3	3	5	5
5	Eco Bank Nigeria Plc	3	3	3	13	13
6	Enterprise Bank	4	4	4	4	4
7	Equatorial Trust Bank Plc	1	1	1	-	-
8	Fidelity Bank Plc	4	4	4	4	4
9	First Bank of Nigeria Plc	14	14	14	15	15
10	First City Monument Bank Plc	2	2	2	2	7
11	Fin Bank Plc	7	7	7	5	-
12	Guaranty Trust Bank Plc	5	5	5	6	6
13	Intercontinental Bank Plc	16	16	11	-	-
14	Key Stone Bank (Bank PHB)	7	7	7	8	8
15	Mainstreet Bank (Afribank)	10	10	10	10	10
16	Skye Bank Plc	4	4	4	4	4
17	Stanbic IBTC Bank Plc	2	5	6	6	6
18	Standard Chartered Bank Nig. Plc	1	1	1	1	1
19	Sterling Bank Plc	6	6	6	6	6
20	Union Bank of Nigeria Plc	10	10	10	11	11
21	United Bank of Africa Plc	16	16	14	15	15
22	Unity Bank Plc	20	20	25	25	25
23	Wema Bank Plc	1	1	0	-	0
24	Zenith Bank Plc	9	10	11	11	11
TOTAL		157	162	161	161	162

Source: Kano State Government, Statistical Year Book, 2013, p. 105-106

From the table above it can be seen that there were 157 branches of commercial banks in Kano Metropolis in 2009. This number increased to 162 in 2010, which indicated an increase of 5 branches over a period of one year. However, the number of bank branches declined to 161 in 2011, which shows a decrease of 1

branch. The number of bank branches remained 161 by 2012. The number of bank branches in Kano Metropolis increased to 162 in 2013. These bank branches were located in various locations of Kano Metropolis and they carried out their activities on daily basis. The presence of commercial banks is an important indicator of urbanisation. This is because these banks have facilitated the development of economic activities and upgraded the status of Kano Metropolis to comparable status with any other city in Nigeria and beyond. These banks have also enjoyed high patronage because of the various commercial activities in Kano Metropolis.

Conclusion

The paper examined urbanization and the emergence of new commercial activities in Kano Metropolis. It has argued that increase in population of Kano Metropolis led to the increase in the number of markets and the emergence of new commercial activities such as hotels, restaurants, super markets and departmental stores as well as banks and other financial institutions. These commercial activities have provided employment opportunities to the people of the metropolis as well as revenue to the government of Kano state.

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