ASSESSMENT OF THE CHALLENGES OF URBAN TRANSPORTATION IN KATSINA METROPOLITAN, KATSINA STATE

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ABSTRACT

Urban centers are centers of large population concentration in both developed and developing countries due to increasing administrative, economic and social activities. As such these activities generate movement of people, goods and services. This paper assesses the urban transportation challenges in Katsina metropolitan, Northern Nigeria. Data for the research were generated through four focus group discussions with the stakeholders in the transport sector, the transporters comprising 10 in number in each group. Direct observational technique was also used to observe some of the challenges associated with urban transportation in the city. Descriptive qualitative analysis was used to analyze the data. The results have shown that within the period of study (December 2021 to June 2023) several challenges were faced by the inhabitants with some of them never experienced before. The challenges include scarcity and high cost of fuel, inadequate means of transportation, insecurity, construction of underpass and flyover and street trading and display of goods. The State Government made efforts in tackling the challenges but some of them still persist up to the present time. The inhabitants of the metropolitan on their part have responded in a number of ways to cope with the challenges. There is therefore the need for a comprehensive measure to tackle the challenges for improved transportation in the metropolitan.

Keywords: Assessment, urban, transport, challenges, metropolitan, Katsina.

INTRODUCTION

An urban area refers to towns, cities and suburbs which include the city itself, as well as the surrounding areas (NGS, 2022). Most inhabitants of urban areas are engaged in non-agricultural jobs and are therefore engaged in secondary and tertiary activities unlike in the rural areas. These activities make it necessary for urban inhabitants or dwellers to be constantly on the move from one part of the urban area to another which makes transportation an important component of urban socio-economic and administrative activities.

Urban transportation is defined here as the complex of various forms of transportation that move people and goods within the territory of a city and the immediate suburban zones and that perform work related to planning and provision of public service and amenities (Farlex, 2022). An effective urban transportation network is
essential in order to facilitate the commuting of people within the city and especially the everyday transport from their homes to their working places and vice versa (Science Direct, 2016).

Urban centers due to their large population, increasing economic and social activities are bound to face transport challenges in both developed and developing countries of the world. For example, in June 21st 2022, British railway workers strike brought travel chaos in the megacity of London. Many workers were unable to go to work as a result of the industrial action by the railway workers (Channels TV, 2022).

In the developing countries, more frequent and serious challenges exist with urban administrators struggling to overcome the challenges. Protests and riots over economic hardships and rising inflation have disrupted urban transportation for several days, in Sri Lanka’s capital Colombo from March 15th to November 14th 2022. One of the reasons for the violent protests was the shortage of fuel which has made urban transportation difficult. The 2019-2022 Chilean protests were caused by rise in public transportation fares that originated from the capital Santiago and spread to other parts of the country (Johanson, 2019). One of the impacts of the protests and riots was the closure of Santiago metro on the weekend of 19 – 20th October 2020 leading to serious transport disruptions.

Many developing countries have been facing serious challenges of urban transportation despite concerted efforts in expanding urban road networks, introduction of underground railways or metros, construction of fly-over, ring roads and underpasses and sea-links in coastal cities.

In Nigeria, urban transportation is presently facing several challenges which include traffic congestions, inadequate modes of transportation, poor road conditions, high rates of accidents, traffic robberies and insecurity among others (Simwa, 2022). Solanke (2013) has reported that Nigeria’s transportation system revealed a sector suffering from a warped developmental approach which is constituting overwhelming challenges to urban transportation. In the mega city of Lagos for example, most of these challenges are prevalent which recently prompted the state government to ban the use of motorcycle (popularly known as Okada) for public transportation in the 10 out of 20 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in August 2022 (PMT, 2022).

Also in Lagos, motorists and travelers going to Murtala Muhammad International Airport were stranded for several hours causing gridlock following blockade of the access road by students protesting the lingering strike of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) on September 19th 2022 (New Telegraph: 2022). In the northern city of Kano also several urban transport challenges exist such as traffic congestion which has persisted despite the construction of by-passes and underpasses along some congested section of urban roads. The State Government with effect from July 21st 2022 announced the ban on the operation of tricycles (popularly known as A Daida Sahu) after 10.00pm (Shuaibu, 2022). This ban was imposed considering the fact that the operations of commercial motorcycles have been banned for a couple of years.

The measures adopted by State Government across the federation clearly showed the numerous challenges facing urban transportation in Nigeria. One of the various modes of transportation such as motorcycles and tricycles are used for
criminal activities. Furthermore, with rapid population growth, rural urban migration and inadequate urban transport planning by the governments means the challenges are growing making urban life difficult.

The objectives of the paper are to examine urban transport situation in Katsina metropolitan, explain its challenges and highlight the measures adopted by the state government in responding them and recommend appropriate measures to tackle them in the metropolitan

Need for the research

Few studies have been conducted on urban transportation in the study areas in spite of the dynamic nature of the road transport systems in the metropolitan. The last one and a half years (December 2022 to June 2023) have witnessed unprecedented challenges that have affected road transportation in the metropolitan. There is the need for a research that will identify, explain the challenges, and measures adopted towards tackling the challenges for the socio-economic development of the metropolitan.

The research is needed by policy makers in the State to learn from the challenges that residents will face during the execution of major road projects (such as the underpass project) without proper planning on how to cushion the impacts of the projects during the period of execution. One of the few studies was by Ladan (2012) that focuses on the policy issues for sustainable urban transportation in Nigeria with particular reference to Katsina metropolis, Katsina State.

Literature Review

Several studies have been conducted on urban transportation challenges in Nigeria over the years. Solanke (2013) study revealed that urban transportation challenges in Nigeria include traffic congestion, parking difficulties, occurrence of accidents and environmental pollution. In most cities, majority of the urban population depend on public transportation for their mobility which is dominated by the private sector (Solanke: 2013). Ibrahim and Mohammed (2016) appraise the available road network in Kano metropolis in relation to their nature, spatial distribution, and connectivity and accessibility index. The study revealed that inadequate road maintenance culture and weak development control measures are the major challenges facing road transport network performance and development in Kano metropolis.

Ladan (2017) studied the policy issues for sustainable urban transportation in Nigeria using Katsina metropolis as a case study. The findings revealed that urban transportation is facing challenges such as gradual buildup of congestion along major roads, frequent occurrence of accidents, public transport inadequacy, poor street lightening at night among others.

Emunike and Ibe (2010) examined the position of driver attitude as a major causative factor in traffic congestion in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study found out that there are different manifestation of driver attitude that precipitate congestion. These include excessive speeding, frequent and unsafe lane changing, failure to show signal, tailgating, failure to yield to right of way, disregard of traffic officers, road rage, aggressive use of horns and headlight driving against traffic and creating multiple lanes (Emenike and Ibe: 2019).

Ali and Agu (2019) investigated traffic management strategies and problems resulting from traffic congestion in the 9th Mile Corner Ngwo, Enugu State Nigeria. The study revealed that low connectivity of network of roads in the areas, lack of traffic facilities, inadequate traffic offices, inadequate parking spaces, increase in
private car ownership and land use pattern are the factors of poor traffic management (Ali and Agu: 2019).

Adebayo et al. (2019) assessed the influence of Road Transport Safety Standardization Scheme (RSTSSS) on freight transport crashes in Lagos metropolis, Nigeria. The study revealed that freight transport accidents are still on the increase even after the introduction of the scheme. The study recommended more awareness and wide publicity about the scheme in Lagos and Nigeria at large (Adebayo et al., 2019). Also in the megacity of Lagos, violations of traffic rules posed a serious challenge to urban transportation. It was in response to this challenge that the State Government confiscates and auctions vehicles belonging to the violators as was the case on September 14th 2022 (Akoni, 2022).

Ibrahim and Mohammed (2016) appraised the available road networks in Kano metropolis in relation to their nature and spatial distribution, connectivity index, accessibility index of the urban terrain and functional wellbeing. The study showed that inadequate road maintenance culture, presence of pot-holes on some roads and weak development control measures are the major challenges facing road network performance and development in Kano metropolis.

Dabo and Yunus (2020) examined the spatial pattern of road transport facility management in Katsina Local Government Area (LGA) Katsina State. The results revealed a dispersed pattern of roundabouts within the study area with nearest neighbor ratio of 1:3 and Z score value of 2.9. The study recommended the use of geospatial technology for efficient management of road transport facilities.

Onakola and Olajide (2020) discussed the current problems and challenges facing the Nigerian transportation systems which affect their contribution to the economic development of the country in the 21st century. The study revealed that predominant use of road transportation over the other modes which has resulted to environmental pollution and high frequency of road accidents.

Abdulhafiz et al (2020) analyzed the spatial and temporal concentrations of emissions from road transport in Kaduna metropolis, Kaduna State. The study showed that carbon monoxide emissions are beyond the permissible limits and concluded that exposure to the emissions could have cumulative negative impacts on the health of the urban residents.

Koko et al (2023) studied the challenges of the 21st century urbanization in northern Nigeria’s largest city, Kano. The study identified the city’s challenges to include problems of urban mobility and traffic congestion which also contributed to air pollution.

From the literatures reviewed it can be observed that most of them focused on urban transport challenges and problems in major urban centers of Lagos, Port Harcourt, Enugu and Kano. Only one of the studies (Dabo and Yunus, 2020) focused on Katsina LGA. This study is examining the urban transport challenges in Katsina metropolitan, Katsina state, northern Nigeria. From December to June 2023, a period of one and half years, the metropolitan has witnessed unprecedented transport challenges that were never experienced in the past. It is based on these unprecedented challenges that the paper is examining the situation and proffering measures to tackle the challenges.

Study Area

The study area is Katsina metropolitan that is the capital of Katsina State created on September 27th 1987 from the defunct Kaduna State. The urban area is located on
latitude 12°55’ to 13°13’ north of the equator and longitude 7°31’ to 7°40’ east of Greenwich Meridian, lying 173.42kms along the federal highway from Kano to Maradi in Niger Republic (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2023). Large part of the metropolitan is also the headquarters of Katsina LGA, one of the thirty four (34) LGAs of Katsina State.

The population of the urban area is estimated at 524,000 with a growth rate of 3.76% in the year 2023 (Macrotrends, 2023). From 2011 to date (2023), the population of the urban area is noted to be growing due to the movement of people displaced by banditry into the metropolitan (Ladan and Danjuma, 2023). This growth in population has resulted in the sharp rise in the spatial growth rate in virtually all directions with a corresponding expansion of road transportations noted since 2017 (Danjuma, 2017).

In terms of occupation, a sizeable number of the inhabitants are civil servants as the metropolitan is the state capital. Trading and business activities are also major occupations with growing number of commercial shops, supermarkets and other establishments. Other inhabitants of the metropolitan are engaged in urban farming and cattle rearing. All these are economic activities that lead to an increase in the movement of people by road transportation in the metropolitan.

In terms of physical setting, the old city is built on a spur of land between the two water courses of Rivers Ginzo and Tilla that flow in a worth easterly directions. The climate type is tropical continental with short wet season and long dry season. Maximum daily temperatures can reach between 35°C – 42°C in April during the dry season. Mean annual rainfall for the metropolitan is between 635 – 762mm (Ibrahim and Halliru, 2022). The vegetation type is Sudan savannah with short trees and grasses. Over the years most of the natural and man-made vegetation have been altered by human activities through deforestation.

The old city previously surrounded by a city wall covers an estimated area of 18km2 bounded by the River Ginzo and Tilla on the east, north and south (Danjuma, 2019). Katsina metropolitan comprises areas within the city wall and the development area that stretch out to areas encircled by the ring road. The areas within the 42km Katsina city ring road built by Katsina State Government comprise Katsina metropolitan. This metropolitan area can be seen in figure 1 below.
Methodology

One of the methods of data collection is the use of focus groups to discuss the challenges of urban transportation in Katsina metropolitan. This method of focus group discussion is adopted so as to reach most of those involved in urban transportation in the metropolitan. Most of the people of the metropolitan feel free to discuss challenges than to fill or complete a questionnaire. Twenty (20) persons in four groups each were involved in the group discussion from among commercial motorcycle operators, commercial tricycle operators, private car and motorcycle owners and pedestrians/members of the public. This means that twenty persons each from the four groups that make up eighty (80) participants were involved in the group discussion. The discussions were held on different days within the period of December 2021 to June 2023. The questions discussed by the participants are on how would they describe urban transportation in the metropolitan, what are the challenges of urban transportation, measures adopted to respond to the challenges, what are the recent efforts of the State Government in tackling the challenges and what measures would they suggest towards tackling the challenges.

Field visits were made in several occasions to observe some of the urban transport challenges in the metropolitan while...
moving on foot, motorcycle, tricycle and motor vehicles. A map of the study area was sourced from the study by Ibrahim and Halliru (2022) which were used to describe the study area and some of the road network in the metropolitan.

Secondary sources of data were collected through desk research from conference papers, environmental reports, journal articles and internet sourced materials. The data collected from the primary and secondary sources were collected, edited and analyzed through descriptive qualitative analysis in form of the percentages, tabulations, and pictorial evidences of some of the challenges of urban transportation in Katsina metropolitan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Urban Transportation in Katsina Urban Area

On the research question of how would the participants describe urban transportation in the metropolitan large percentage of the participants to the focus group discussion described the urban transport as fairly good based on a number of factors which are highlighted below

The mode of transportation is predominantly by road with no railway or water transport. The road network could be described as radial in nature as it moves from the city center from a roundabout near the Emir of Katsina Friday mosque. From there the road moves on different directions to exit the city through the eight main city gates. The busiest among these roads is the Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB) Way that moves out to Kofar Kaura. The next busy road is the Ahmadu Bello Way that moves out at Kofar Kwaya to Dutsinma road. This road is followed by Nagogo road that passes through Kofar Durbi to the GRA and Daura road. The other five roads that exited the city through the gates are also busy roads especially in view of the development of new residential areas outside the city gate. Most of the roads within the old city are dotted with speed bumps to serve as speed breakers to motorists especially commercial motorcyclists who were observed to be engaged in the habit of over speeding causing accidents.

Different forms of transport such as motor vehicles, tricycles, motorcyclists, bicycles and pedestrians uses the roads on daily basis for their socio-economic activities. The peak periods are morning hours (8.00 – 10.00am) when students, workers, traders etc. go to their various destinations. Other peak periods include afternoon when primary and secondary schools closes (1.00 – 2.00pm). The evenings when workers close from work and the central market closes is another peak period (5 – 6pm).

Over the years since the creation of Katsina state in 1987 and making of Katsina city as the state capital successive governments have made efforts to develop the road transport infrastructures in response to the increasing population and economic activities. The developments include construction of new roads, dualization of some busy roads, expansion and rehabilitation of roads, construction of a ring road and the recent construction of under passes and flyover.

Challenges of Urban Transportation in Katsina Metropolitan

The results obtained from the focus group discussion are varied on the research question what is the most prevalent urban transport challenge in the metropolitan, Therefore the discussions below from numbers 1-5 are based on the data collected from the focus group discussions on the urban transport challenges in Katsina metropolitan.

1. Scarcity and high cost of fuel:
A sizeable percentage of participants in the group discussion (37.50%) indicated that the most prevalent challenge is scarcity and high cost of fuel, that is premium motor spirit (PMS) otherwise referred to as petrol. The scarcity within the period under study was present for most of the year 2022. During the period of the scarcity transport owners spent long hours on the line waiting to buy fuel at government approved rates at the four Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Mega stations in the metropolitan. In most of the fuel stations, there was a rowdy atmosphere due to the large number of people gathering to buy the fuel. In one of such instances, a fire inferno occurred at the entrance of Dandagoro NNPC mega station which led to the burning of over fifty (50) motorcycles. During that period, some fuel stations opened at night to sell fuel at exorbitant rates to black marketers in jerry cans who then re-sold to members of the public at exorbitant rates also. By October 2022 – another period of scarcity commenced following the reported flood incidence that halted movement of petrol tankers to the State and Northern Nigeria in general. The scarcity continued up till 2023, the first quarter. Fuel scarcity use to be severe in Katsina metropolitan as some of the marketers smuggle some of the fuel to the neighboring Maradi region of Niger republic. Fuel scarcity negatively affects urban transportation as it creates shortage of means of transport and increases the cost of commuting.

The high cost of fuel started following the increase in the pump price of petrol from N165 to N179 per litre which took effect from July 19th 2022. This was as a result of the privatization of the NNPC from government owned to a private liability company. Another increase was witnessed on May 29th 2023 as a result of the “no more subsidy” speech of the newly elected President Tinubu. Many petrol stations in the metropolitan closed, refusing to sell to motorists while those selling increased the price to N350 per litre. On May 31st 2023, the price was hiked to N560 per liter following the total deregulation by the NNPC Plc. On June 1st 2023, few vehicles, motorcycles and tricycles were plying the roads in the metropolitan as a result of the increase in price (Abba, 2023). There was the sudden increase in transport fares by commercial motorcyclists and tricyclists by as much as 40 – 50%. The travelling or commuting public especially students and workers groaned as a result of the soaring fares (Daily Trust, 2023). Some of the commercial motorcyclists and tricycles parked their vehicles due to the hike as they observed that they may not make profit.

2. Inadequate means of transportation

Others involved in the focus group discussion indicated that the challenge that affect them most is inadequate means of transportation (22.50%) A number of factors were noted to be responsible for inadequate means of transportation in the metropolitan. One of them is the increase in the population of the metropolitan which is not commensurate with the availability of means of transportation. One of the routes that for a long time has been suffering from this challenge is the Ahmadu Bello Way to Dutsinma road linking National Filling Station Roundabout to Kofar Kwaya to Dutsinma road. This route has concentration of students commuting due to the location of four tertiary institutions. The institutions which consist of two universities, one College of Education and a Polytechnic do not provide adequate bus service to their students. The absence of taxis and private buses also means that there are limited means of public transport except for commercial motorcyclists and tricycles. The state transport service known as
Katsina State Transport Authority (KTSTA) does not provide services within the metropolitan which compound the challenge.

The recent fuel scarcity that resumed in October 2022 has also led to the inadequate means of transportation. This was because even the commercial motorcycles and tricycles that provide services are not on the roads but on the fuel queue most of the day waiting to purchase fuel. For example, on October 24\textsuperscript{th} 2022, large members of student estimated at forty in number were waiting at the Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic Katsina main gate for means of transport to return home in the city after lectures.

The hike in the cost of fuel at the end of May 2023 has further compounded the challenge as some personal motorcar owners have parked their cars to be using the already inadequate public forms of transportation. Some commercial motorcycles and tricycles have restricted their movements and abandoned some routes due to the hike in the fuel price. This has further made the means of transportation inadequate as passengers wait for a long time for transport services.

3. Insecurity

Insecurity is the most prevalent challenge to 17.50\% among those engaged in the focus group discussions. This is because Katsina metropolitan like most of the urban centers in Nigeria as facing insecurity which has affected transportation. One of the forms of insecurity that has been bedeviling Katsina State in general for over a decade is banditry. Though, the metropolitan even as a LGA does not share boundary with Zamfara State, there are instances of bandit’s incursions into the metropolitan (Ladan and Danjuma, 2023). This incursions since the year 2020 has made it necessary for the State Government to include the metropolitan among areas affected by the banditry. The State Government on August 31\textsuperscript{st} 2021 issued the security challenges containment order as a measure of containing the banditry. Item 7 of the containment order re-enforced the ban on the operation of commercial tricycles and motorcycles during certain hours of the day (KTSG, 2021). The ban created shortage of these means of public transport from 10.00pm to 6.00am during the time it lasted. There were serious allegations that security agents particularly the police were using the ban for extortion. One week into the ban, the state House of Assembly called on the State Government to lift the ban as it was not effective in containing banditry and should be lifted. The ban was totally lifted in January and April 2022 though there was a temporary lifting to allow for Eid-el-Maulid celebrations and holy month of Ramadan. The ban was reinstated in August 2022 after the month of Ramadan suspension. Also as part of the containment order commercial motorcyclists were mandated to be wearing reflective jackets for proper identification. This did not go down well with the motorcyclists as they staged protests against the order on March 15\textsuperscript{th} 2022.

Another form of insecurity that is persistent is the theft of motorcycles and motorcars in the metropolitan. The theft of motorcycles is much more prevalent as it occurs at public places such as markets, schools, banks, hospitals and even at mosques when the owner parks for prayers. There are also instances where thieves kill or injure motorcyclists in an attempt to steal the motorcycles. The theft of motorcars is carried out by armed robbers especially in residential areas at the outskirts of the metropolitan. For example a gang of 15 armed robbers attacked the house of a businessman to rob two cars a Toyota and a Mercedes Benz along Mani road on November 20\textsuperscript{th} 2022 (Ladan and Danjuma, 2023). In another example, a gang of armed
robbers stormed the premises of Government Day Secondary School Kofar Yandaka Katsina injuring the security man and stealing four cars parked at the premises on March 24th 2022.

4. Construction of underpasses and fly-over projects

Construction of the underpasses and fly-over projects most prevalent challenge to 12.50% of those engaged in the focus group discussion. The construction of two underpasses at Kofar Kaura and Kofar Kwaya were initiated by the State Government as a solution to the prevalence of traffic congestion especially during rush hours in the mornings and evenings. It is pertinent to recall here that the study by Ladan in 2012 noted the gradual buildup of congestion along major roads in the metropolitan. A decade later, the magnitude of the congestion increased necessitating government intervention. The first and second underpass projects at Kofar Kaura and Kofar Kwaya roundabouts were flagged off by the State Governor on November 25th 2021 at the cost of N5.8 billion (Sardauna, 2022). The third project which was a fly-over at Sarki Abdulrahman road GRA Katsina was flagged off on June 1st 2022 at the cost of over N4.3 billion (Enna, 2022). An announcement was made to the public and motorists to use alternative routes following the blocking of the roads to permit the construction projects.

The challenges started on the first day when a motorcyclist unaware of the blockade ran into an obstruction that led to his death. This occurred as a result of inadequate publicity of the road projects. The construction company awarded the projects failed to upgrade the alternative routes for the use of motorists. The results was that the routes became uncomfortable to move on as they were bumpy, rugged, water logged and even flooded (See figure 2). Some commercial motorcyclist reduced their working hours due to body pains experienced while moving on the alternative routes. Some car owners even parked their cars till after the completion of the project to reduce the difficulties of using the alternative routes. The blocking of the roads to permit the projects led to increasing danger to pedestrians. There were accidents along some of the alternative routes that suddenly became busy as pedestrians attempted to cross the roads. Some residents along such alternative routes blocked the routes while others placed obstructions to slow down motorists to reduce the accidents. Furthermore, there was serious traffic congestion along some of the alternative routes which were narrow and could not accommodate the traffic. This caused serious delays and make movement difficult as there was no any official from the construction company or the road safety corps to direct the traffic as witnessed on November 11th 202 at Kofar Kaura, Farin Masallachi junction.

Urban commuters groaned during the projects as the cost of transportation increased as a result of blocking of the major roads to permit the construction work. For example, from Shararrar Pipes to Gidan Dawa a distance of 5km a passenger pays N120 – N150. But with the underpass project diversion, tricyclists had to go round the straight route and passengers had to pay N250 to N300, an increase of 100%. Though the projects were completed in January and May 2023, the cost of transportation remained high and unchanged due to fuel scarcity and high cost of fuel. On July 3rd 2023, one of the underpasses was flooded following a heavy downpour and the underpass had to be closed for one week to permit emergency repairs to prevent further flooding.
5. Street Trading and display of goods

Street trading is the most prevalent challenge affecting 10.00% of those engaged in the focus group discussion. Street trading is the display of goods for sale along roads and spaces/pavements designated for pedestrians to walk on. This type of trading is prevalent in the inner city and immediately outside the city gate or Ganuwa in Hausa language. This type of trading also occur in situations where markets are found along major roads and as the market grows and expands traders displays their goods on the road or streets. Ahmed (2015) noted that street trading and illegal motor-parks in Nigerian urban roads contributed to the challenges of traffic holdings and traffic congestion. Street trading becomes a challenge to urban transportation as it narrows the road hereby impeding smooth flow of traffic. It also occupies the spaces where pedestrians walk along the road forcing them to step down on the road thereby causing accidents.

In Katsina urban area, there are several areas where street trading poses a serious challenge to transportation. One of such places is Filin Bugu where a weekly market that operate on Tuesdays and Fridays draws traders from villages outside Katsina who display their goods on the road. Many motorists avoid the Filin Bugu road linking Masanawa with Chake or Kofar Guga road. During field visit to the market on a Friday, many traders were seen engaging in trading on the sides of the road displaying their goods. There was even a sign post erected by the police indicating no parking and another sign post with the inscription “Ana maxan yadda kuma anan” in Hausa language which literally means “It is forbidden to sale anything here” (See figure 3).

Another road near this road is the Kofar Soro, Kofar Guga road along which the old Katsina market was located. Some of the shop owners here were seen moving out some of their goods out of the shops placing them on the pedestrian pavements as a form of display to attract customers. According to one of the traders who has a shop along the road an accident occurred on Friday...
June 16th 2023 where a motorcyclist pushed a pedestrian. Another road where street trading is rampant is the Kofar Marusa to Kiddies International School roundabout. A local market operates daily along this road and traders display their goods on the streets. In addition a motor park, a healthcare center, and private clinic are found along the road further congesting it. During visit to along the road, many vehicles, motorcycles and tricycles lined up to pass while many pedestrians were trying to either cross the road or move along including elderly persons. Local volunteers were seen trying to manage the traffic and the pedestrians around 6.30pm. Figure 3 below shows the Filin Bugu road on a Friday which is a weekly market day.

Fig. 3: Street trading and display of goods at Filin Bugu market on Friday June 30th 2023.
The figure 4 below shows the participants responses on the urban transport challenges in Katsina metropolitan.

![Figure 4: Participants' responses on the urban transportation challenges in Katsina metropolitan](image)

### Recent efforts of the state government towards tackling the transport challenges

The State Government has made a number of efforts towards tackling the transportation challenges facing the urbanization:

i. In February 2023, Governor Masari convened a meeting with the Independent Petroleum Marketers Association of Nigeria (IPMAN) in a move to end the lingering fuel scarcity. Again following the “no more subsidy” speech of President Tinubu, Governor Radda gave 24 hour ultimatum to fuel stations to open or risk total closure.

ii. The State Government has completed the two underpasses and one flyover road projects on time to ease traffic congestion and the challenges arising from the blockade of some busy roads due to the construction. This completion was quite contrary to the expectation of the vast majority of the population of the State.

iii. In a move to provide adequate means of transportation the State Government has encouraged private entrepreneurs to provide taxi services that were hitherto not available. One of the entrepreneurs was Dan Gurup Investments that has launched ten taxi cabs on September 25th 2021.

iv. The State Government has established the Katsina State Safety and Road Traffic Authority (KASSROTA) to regulate movement of motorists and operations of commercial motorcyclists and tricyclists thereby ensuring safe and sustainable urban transportation.

v. In a move to decongest Batsari road section of the city, the State Government has begun the construction of an ultramodern bus terminal at Dandagoro village along Kano road. There is also a move to relocate motor parks found...
immediately outside the city gates at Kofar Guga, Kofar Durbi, Kofar Marusa and Kofar Yandaka to further decongest the city and allow smooth flow of traffic.

vi. KASSAROTA has commenced deploying personnel at strategic points in the metropolitan to regulate traffic thereby preventing the occurrence of accidents during festive periods such as Eid el fitr, Eid el adha and Maulaud el Nabiyi.

vii. The Katsina State Command of the Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) continued to sensitize road users on over speeding, overloading, reckless driving, wrong overtaking and drug abuse at Katsina Central Motor Park in another effort to ensure road safety during the festive periods.

Response of the Residents of the Urban Area to the Challenges

The residents have responded in a number of ways to the transport challenges as outlined below:

i. Following the increase in the pump price of petroleum and the subsequent increase in transport fares, many residents of the urban area have reduced their movement preferring to commute only when it is necessary.

ii. Some car owners that use their cars to go to their offices have parked them following the increase in the cost of petroleum as they can no longer afford to fill their tanks at least twice in a month before salary of next month is paid.

iii. Some residents have resorted to trekking on foot to cover short distances rather than taking a means of transport that will charge them some money. Other residents have devised a method of trekking to cover some distance and then they will then take a means of transport such as motorcycle or tricycle. This is a means of reducing the cost of transportation that has recently increased.

iv. In response to the theft of motor cars and motorcycles, car owners have increased the security of their cars, so also the motorcycle owners, some of who even sleep in the same room with their motorcycles to avoid theft. Security guards and designated parking spaces have been provided in public places such as banks and institutions of higher learning where theft of motorcycles is rampant.

v. Some residents prefer to use alternative routes to their destinations rather than use or follow along roads that are congested due to the menace of street trading and displaying of goods on pedestrian pavements.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are offered towards tackling the challenges of urban transportation in Katsina urban area.

i. The Federal Government and the Nigerian Labour Congress (NLC) should convene a meeting to discuss the increase in the pump price of petroleum and its impacts on the workers and the general public with a view to reducing the price to the pump price to N400 per liter. This is important as the present price has hindered transportation thereby affecting the socio-economic development of the metropolitan.

ii. The State Government through the KTSTA should provide buses, tricycles and motorcycles that will be used for urban transportation at subsidized rates to cushion the effects of the recent increase in the pump price of petroleum and reduce the inadequacy of means of transportation within the urban area.

iii. The State Government should encourage the private sector to invest more in urban transportation through
the provision of buses and cars to be used as taxis as obtained in other urban centers in Nigeria. Once provided they can focus on the popular routes that are more affected by inadequate means of transportation.

iv. Adequate preparation should be made by the State Ministry of Works, Housing and Transport including the construction company in the case of another underpass or flyover road construction project. This is necessary in order to avoid the challenges experienced during the execution of the recent projects as explained in this paper. This can be done through adequate publicity, the rehabilitation of alternative routes, deployment of adequate personnel at strategic points etc.

v. The Nigerian Police Force Katsina State command should increase the size of its personnel with a view to deploying them at the hotspots where vehicle and motorcycle thefts are rampant and to arrest the criminals involved. Those arrested should be speedily tried in a court of law and punished appropriately to serve as a deterrent to others.

vi. Katsina State Urban and Regional Planning Board should carry out an enlightenment campaign to educate the public on the dangers of street trading and displaying goods on the road pavements posed to urban transportation. After the enlightenment period of say 3-6 months a ban on street trading and displaying of goods on road pavement should be enforced.

vii. Urban markets located along roads should be relocated to areas that are more spacious where they do not cause traffic congestion. In addition, the planned relocation of motor parks away from the city should be carried out with a view to decongesting the affected areas.

CONCLUSION

Worldwide urban centers function as administrative, commercial, educational and industrial centers. In order to perform these functions, an efficient form of urban transportation is desirable to move people and goods from one place to another on daily basis. In some of the urban centers in developing countries road transport alone which has proved inadequate in meeting the transport needs of the people. This led to the introduction of surface and underground trains or metros and various forms of water transportation for coastal cities. In Nigeria, most of the urban centers are facing serious transport challenges especially as they rely heavily on road transportation which is facing serious challenges. In Katsina urban, the period under study (December 2021 to June 2023) has witnessed unprecedented challenges never experienced in history. The challenges include fuel scarcity and high cost of fuel, inadequate means of transportation, insecurity due to banditry and theft, construction of underpasses and flyover and street trading and displaying of goods. The State Government is making a number of efforts in tackling the challenges but the efforts have not yielded the desired results. The residents in turn have responded in a number of ways to reduce the impacts of the challenges on their lives and socio-economic activities. In view of this there is the need for the State Government and the private sector to cooperate and adopt comprehensive measures towards tackling the challenges for improved socio-economic development of the metropolitan.
REFERENCES


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