

ROAD SITUATION AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF KATSINA STATE, NIGERIA

Suleiman Iguda Ladan

Department of Basic and Applied Sciences, Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic, Katsina

E-mail: ladansulei@yahoo.com

Abstract

Road transportation is the most used means of transport in Katsina State as a large percentage of the population depend entirely on it. This paper attempts an assessment of the road transport situation in the state based on the road network, road quality, vehicular movement and other infrastructures. It was found that there are many problems facing road transportation in the State. These problems are multi-faceted and range from high traffic, bad condition of some roads, overloading, occurrence of accidents and others. Recommendations are made in order to ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and outside the State for economic growth and development.

Keywords: Road transport, economic growth, development

Introduction

As Nigerians celebrates 50 years of independence from Britain, there is the need to assess the critical sectors of the economy such as transportation in States of the Federation. This is with a view to examining the situation for overall economic growth and development. Transportation is essential in linking people, activities, and resources and in enabling the exchange of goods (trade) and ideas (information) (Waugh, 1995). The entire economy of a nation, region or State depends on its transport system. Road transportation in particular is the most dominant means of transportation in Nigeria.

Road transport is a form of land transport which involves the movement of people and goods by motor cars, trucks, buses, motorcycles and bicycles. It is the most popular means of transport (Areola, *et al* 1999). In Katsina State just like other States in Nigeria, there are different types of roads. These are Trunk 'A' roads owned and maintained by the Federal Government, linking the State with other State, There are

Trunk B roads, owned and maintained by the State Government linking local government areas with the State Capital. There are Trunk C' roads owned and maintained by the Local Government which connect the communities with the Local Government Headquarters (Ileje, 2004).

Katsina State is one of the 36 States of Nigeria (see Map 1). It lies approximately between Latitude 11⁰30' and 13⁰N and Longitude 7⁰ and 9⁰E covering an area extent of about 23,560km². Katsina State is bounded to the North by Niger Republic, East by Jigawa and Kano States, South by Kaduna State and to the West by Zamfara State (Babsal and Co, 1998). The State has a population of 5,801,584 based on the census 2006 final results (Leadership, 2009). This makes Katsina the fourth most populous State in Nigeria.

In terms of physical setting, Katsina State has a Tropical Continental climate with high mean annual temperature over 27°C, lower annual and single maxima rainfall (Ileje, 2004). The vegetation is Sudan Savanna type with short

scattered trees, shrubs and grasses. The relief is made up of land between 399-600 meters above sea level (Abegunde, *et al*, 1991).

The economy of the State is basically agrarian in nature with large percentage of the population involved in farming as full or part time occupation. The state is a major collection centre for cash crops such as cotton, ground-nuts and food crops such as maize, guine corn, millet and vegetables. Trading and commercial activities in the State involved weekly visits to different towns on market days. There is also a percentage of the population working in the States civil service. The economy of the State thus relies heavily on movement of people by road transport which is nearly the only means of transport for vast majority of the people of the State.

The aim of this paper is to undertake an assessment of the road transport situation in Katsina State for economic growth and development.

Methodology

The methodology for the study is the practitioner technique; using interview, unstructured dialogue and field work were used to obtain data.

A total number of three hundred and fifty (350) respondents were interviewed during a period of three months of October, November and December, 2010. Those interviewed are mostly indigenes of the State comprising of Students, Lecturers, Craftsmen, farmers and the general traveling populace.

These were engaged in interview and unstructured dialogue on the road network, condition of the roads/vehicular movement, problems of road transportation in the State and the suggested solutions.

Also interviewed are the officials of Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), National Association of Road Transport Owners (NARTO) General Hospital Katsina and the State Ministry of Works, Housing and Transportation. Also data on official accident record was collected from the State FRSC Command and the Accident and Emergency Unit of the General Hospital Katsina. There is also data on the Road Construction Projects awarded by the State Government.

Descriptive analysis as used in analyzing data obtained for the study.

Results and discussion

Based on the data collected the following results were obtained which were discussed below

Road transport in Katsina State

Katsina State has an adequate network of roads across the length and breadth of the State as all the local government Areas of the State totaling 34 are accessible by road. The network of roads can be seen on Map 1. These include the west to east road from the border town of Jibia to Katsina to Mashi-Daura-Zango-Baure road covering a distance of nearly 200km. There is the North to south road from the border village of Dankama to Kaita to Katsina to Kurfi to Dutsin-ma to Kankara to Bakori to Funta covering a distance of around 250kms. There is also the Katsina Charanchi Kankia-Yashe road leading to Kano State. This same road at the Yashe junction links to Malumfashi, Kafur, Danja to kaduna State. These roads are Federal and State Government owned.

In terms of intra city roads, the state capital, Katsina is well served with roads while there are Township Roads Dualisation Projectx in Daura, Dutsin-ma, Malumfashi, and Funtua (MWHT, 2009). There are also many road construction projects awarded by the State

Government which will further improve the road network as it links different rural settlements. These road construction contracts can be seen on the table below

Table 1: Some Road Construction Projects Executed by the Shema Administration (2007-2010)

S/No	PROJECT	BENEFICIARIES	STATUS
1	Construction of Katsina Township Roads Phase VI	Katsina Metropolis	Completed
2	Construction of Karfi-Kuringafa-Tsiga Road	Malumfashi, Bakori and Kafur LGA	Completed
3	Dualisation of Malumfashi township roads	Malumfashi Local Government Area	Completed
4	Dualisation of Daura township roads	Daura Local Government Area	Completed
5	Dualisation of Dutsin-ma township roads	Dutsin-ma Local Government Area	Completed
6	Construction of Kurfi-Batsari roads	Kurfi and Batsari Local Government Areas	Completed
7	Construction of Mashi-Birnin Kuka road	Mashi Local Government Area	Completed
8	Construction of Batsari-Jibia Road	Batsari and Jibia Local Government Areas	Completed
9	Construction of Kankara-Ketare-Gora and Malunfashi-Ketare Roads	Kankara and Malumfashi Local Government Areas	Completed
10	Construction of Kankia and Ingawa Township Road	Kankia and Ingawa Local Government Areas	Completed

Source – MWHT, 2010

The State Government has so far spent N37.7 billion on road constructions presently (KTSG, 2010). Besides, Local Government Councils also construct feeder roads in their areas. For example Batagarawa Local Government has recently constructed a 21km Feeder road from Barawa to Dabaibayawa (FMR, 2009).

In the case of quality of the roads in the State, some of the roads are good motorable roads especially the township roads, roads linking local government areas and others within the

State. However, some roads are in bad condition and thus need Government attention. For example, the Yamel-Dutsi-Ingawa-Kusada-Yashe road which was built over 30 years (during the Old Kaduna State) is now in dilapidated condition causing accidents (FMR, 2009). The road is important as it is the gateway of Daura Zone to the Southern part of the State. The Katsina-Kankiya road is bumpy due to many patch work along the road. The Tudu-Yartsamiya road (52km) off Dutsin-ma-Kankara road is untarred and hence difficult to

move with vehicles. There are also many rural feeder roads that are not comfortably motorable during the rainy season.

In Katsina State about 95% of the population of 5.8 million uses road transport. This means an increase vehicular movement due to the rising population and economic activities such as weekly village market days. The vehicles that move on the roads are owned by private individuals, commercial outfits, companies, institutions and the State Government. The State Government has transport parastatal, the Katsina State Transport Authority (KTSTA). KTSTA has many vehicles that transport people and their goods to towns within and outside the State at a subsidize rate.

KTSTA has introduced Long Distance Vehicles Programme and Schools Bus Programme in the three Senatorial Zones of the State namely Katsina, Daura and Funtua (KTSG, 2009). This is to further expand its services to the people of the State. Local Government Councils in the State are also involve in provision of vehicles for transportation. For example on 10th February

2009, five (5) mass transit buses were commissioned in Baure Local Government. Other local governments that already have mass transit buses include Batagarawa, Jibia.

Besides motor vehicles, other major movement on the roads is the commercial motorcyclists especially within urban and semi-urban areas. They also transport people and goods in areas that are not accessible to motor vehicles due to lack of motor able roads. They commercial motorcycles have played an important role in transportation across the State. They are however involved in many accidents that occur on township roads especially in the State capital, Katsina. Statistics obtained from the Accident and Emergency Department of Katsina General Hospital have shown that during a period of three weeks (in June, 2010) an average of 10 accidents occur in every day in Katsina metropolis which were brought to the hospital for treatment. Out of this 33% are children, 12% old people and 65% are the youth/middle aged. The official Accident data involving motor vehicles in the State can be seen on the tables below:

Table 2:2006 Accident Data in Katsina State

Month	Number of Accidents	Number of people injured	Number of people dead
January	16	29	11
February	15	22	11
March	16	20	10
April	17	19	9
May	22	38	19
June	13	16	11
July	12	24	14
August	17	53	10
September	21	20	26
October	19	20	24
November	19	20	24
December	17	51	15
TOTAL	204	332	184

Source: FRSC Records

Table 3: 2007 Accident Data in Katsina State

Month	Number of Accidents	Number of people injured	Number of people dead
January	14	35	19
February	26	35	19
March	18	42	15
April	16	27	16
May	32	57	25
June	37	55	22
July	27	100	38
August	32	100	38
September	29	93	39
October	35	32	21
November	27	30	25
December	33	48	17
TOTAL	326	654	294

Source: FRSC Records

Table 4: 2008 Accident Data in Katsina State

Month	Number of Accidents	Number of people injured	Number of people dead
January	22	109	26
February	24	64	29
March	34	65	49
April	22	34	12
May	16	44	18
June	22	37	20
July	14	13	16
August	13	08	16
September	21	25	26
October	18	21	35
November	18	21	35
December	15	26	20
TOTAL	239	452	282

Source: FRSC Records

From the tables above it can be deduced that the year 2007, there is higher number of accidents, people injured and people dead than in 2006 and 2008. This can be explain as the year 2007 was an election year that led to a lot of vehicular movement within the State. The number of casualties in terms of those injured and dead has increased from 2006 to 2008. There is high number of dead in all the years.

Filani and Gbadamosi (2007), ranked Katsina State as number 1 in fatality. This situation of high fatality figures is due to drivers driving more recklessly and more trucks and articulated vehicles which are more frown to accident occurrence (Filani and Gbadamosi, 2007).

There are the presence infrastructures that are necessary for a functional and efficient road transport system. This includes Motor Parks and Bus Stops. In the State Capital there is the Katsina Central Motor Park, NARTO Motor Park and other within the metropolis. All other Local Government Areas have motor parks. There are few bus stops even in the capital due to absence of passenger routes.

In the main towns of the State, there are street lights to provide lightening at night. However, the erratic electricity supply experienced in the State means that they do not perform their function. Thus major township roads are in darkness which makes motoring uncomfortable. In the case of signposts, some exists on township roads while others along the roads have been covered with political posters or removed for use. This is the case with signposts in the Southern parts of the State such as Kankara Local Government. The signposts are important as they show road signs to drivers to ensure safe driving along the roads.

Problems of road transportation in Katsina State

Road Transportation in Katsina State like any other State in the Federal has many problems, some of which are peculiar to the State. These include

- a) High traffic of people and goods:- There is high traffic of movement of people and good on the road of the state. This is because there is no alternation means of transportation such as the railways which could have reduced the traffic. An efficient railway linking the State capital and major towns could have reduced the use of trucks and other heavy duty vehicle which are frown to accidents. The railway in Katsina state
- b) Bad condition of some roads:- The condition of some roads in the state is not favourable to comfortable journey (Abdulrahman, 1999) These road are characterized by pot holes, erosion and to some extent age. Examples include Dutsi–Ingawa–Kusada–Yashe road, Katsina–Kankia, Tudu–Yartsamiya road and Jibia- Kaura Namoda (Zamfara state). These roads and others across the State are in need of rehabilitation.
- c) Overloading of passengers and goods:- Commercial vehicle in the State overloading passengers and goods in their vehicles. Interview conducted with FRSC officials have reveal that this is a major problems as passengers traveling from Katsina to Batsari and Katsina to Daura were not only over loaded insides the vehicle but even loaded inside the boot ! Passengers on Peugeot J-5 buses from Katsina to Kano suffer due to the tight seating positions inside such vehicle as a result of overloading. These same J-5 buses were also overloading with goods (provision, plastics, textiles etc) on a return journey back to Katsina. Others involved in overloading their vehicle include rice transporters, fuel wood transporters, timber transporters etc. Tires can boast due to overloading and when accidents occur, it can be fatal.
- d) Occurrence of accidents:- this is also one of the major problem of roads transportation in the State. While accidents are common in many States of the federation that Katsina state is worrying due to the high fatality rate. The causal factors are many which terminates in Funtua, leaving the bulk of the state un-serviced (Sirika, 2006).

range from human factors, mechanical factors and road conditions. These factors can be seen on the table below showing accident from roads in

Katsina State. The table was obtained using table 2, 3 and 4 and the discussions with the FRSC Katsina State Command Officers.

Table 5: Accident from roads in Katsina State.

S/N	NAME OF ROAD	DISTANCE	MAJOR CAUSE OF ACCIDENT
1	Katsina–Mashi- Daura road.	80 km	Road condition (sharp bends), human factor (over speeding)
2	Katsina-Kankia road.	60 km	Road condition (bumpy road, sharp bends low bridges, pot-holes)
3	Katsina-Batsari road	48km	Human factor (overloading, over speeding by J-5 buses) mechanical factor (old vehicles)
4	Dutsi–Ingawa-Kusada-Yashe roads	90km	Road condition (bad road with pot-holes).
5	Katsina-Dutsin-ma	65km	Human factor (over speeding, reckless driving, inadequate road signs)

Source: - FRSC Records, 2009.

Furthermore the use of motorcycle for commercial transport has increased the rate at which accidents occur on the State roads especially township roads.

usually wait endless for commercial buses to convey them back, some even resort to trekking to the town.

e) Inadequate commercial vehicles: - There are inadequate commercial vehicles such as taxis and commuter buses in towns across the state. Taxis are inadequate even in the State capital and as such many people (even married women) have no alternative than to ride the commercial motorcycles. This problem reduces convenience and exposes passengers to dangers of accident that is not covered by any medical scheme. (Abdulrahman, 1999).

f) Unstable fuel supply:- fuel as the backbone of any motorized transportation but in Katsina state fuel supply is highly unstable. This is during ceremonial periods like Sallah, Christmas and New Year. The recent nation wide fuel scarcity that occurred after the Easter holidays, in April 2009 hit the State hard. During that time fuel stations in the State capital sell one litre of petrol at N120-N140 as against the approved rate of N65. This caused a lot of hardships to the people as the cost of transportation increases. Traders find it difficult to travel to buy goods and sell at reasonable price while workers find it difficult to go to work. This persisted for almost two months in the State. In the neighboring State of Zamfara announcements were

The problem of inadequate commuter buses mainly affects passengers on the Katsina city – Batagarawa route which has the concentration of students and workers. The Students of Katsina Islamic University, Federal College of Education Katsina and HUK Polytechnic

made on radio informing people to go to certain fuel stations and buy fuel at the approved rate of N65. This was not done in Katsina State.

g) Attitudes of the people: - These are attitudes of the people that constitute problems to road transportation in the State. This was revealed by the FRSC officials. Many people are not ready to obey the law concerning road safety such as using seat belt for motor vehicles and safety helmet for motorcycles. There is also arrogance and resisting arrest of the FRSC officials. There is in discriminate parking of vehicles along major roads which disrupt free flow of traffic. There is also reckless driving by some individuals especially the under aged which cause accidents.

h) Climatic factors: - There are some climatic factors that posed a problem to road transportation. Heavy rains wash bridges along roads, for example two bridges were washed away by heavy down pours in Bindawa Local Government on 15th July 2008. Heavy rains also cause erosion at the edge of it tarred roads and makes motoring difficult on some roads during the rainy season.

The Northern part Katsina State experiences Harmattan haze during the dry season from

December to February. The haze reduces visibility making it difficult for drivers to see far. For example some drivers had to use head lights at the day time due to haze on Saturday, 28th February 2009 along Katsina–Kankia road.

(i). Movement and use of some vehicles - The movement of long trailer vehicles belonging to Afdin Ventures Limited Katsina from Maradi (Niger Republic) to Jibia to Katsina to Kankia and Kano carrying heavy loads posed serious danger to other road users causing fatal accidents. For example, in June 2010 these vehicles caused a ghastly accident which claimed the lives of 18 people. They caused accidents by harassing other road users with their speedy movement, covering the road and disobeying traffic regulations.

The use of Peugeot J-5 buses has also led to the loss of many lives. The drivers of these buses over speed and are reckless and when the vehicles are involved in accidents, it easily catches fire, thereby burning the occupants. For example, 11 people were burnt and died when a J-5 collide with another vehicle along Katsina-Kano road on 15th January,2011. Along the road burnt J-5 buses could be sighted which clearly indicates how easily it get burnt. In some neighboring States this bus is called *Ashana* in Hausa meaning matches due to its fire frown nature.

Recent developments on road transportation in Katsina State

The following developments have been noted recently on road transportation in Katsina State.

- i) More roads were built and commissioned to link settlements. For example Batsari – Jibia road (43km), Karfi – Kuringafa - Kankara road (43km) and some others under construction.
- ii) There is the engagement and use of more traffic wardens on the urban roads in the State. This has assisted in easing movement on the roads especially in the State Capital, Katsina.
- iii) There is a programme on the State Radio Service (A Kiyaye dai

- Mataifiya) and FM Companion Radio (Hattara) aimed at cautioning road users and travelers in the State.
- iv) Accident Victims have started receiving assistance from concerned citizens. For example concern citizens of Mashi Local Government on 13th March, 2009 donated materials to victims of a road accident that claimed seven lives and injured many on Mashi-Mani road.
- v) International Day for the Remembrance of Accident Victims (marked on 2nd Sunday of November yearly) has started to be marked in Katsina State. Last year's activities include visit to wards in hospitals and offering of gift by FRSC officials and the State First Lady.

Conclusion

Road Transportation is an important form of transport for the people of Katsina State as they largely depend on it. Based on the assessment of the road transport situation in Katsina State attempted by this paper, one may argue that the situation is fair. There is thus the need to maintain and further expand the public road network in Katsina State and develop an effective rural road network programme to improve communication and enhance commercial activities in the State (Bugaje, 2007). Furthermore, there is the urgent need to reduce the accident rate in the State, so as to ensure safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and outside the State. From this study, it can be observed that there are many problems facing road transportation in Katsina State, However, most of these problems arise because road transport is virtually the only means of transportation for people and

goods. There is therefore the urgent need to provide an alternative means of transportation such as railways to enhance economic growth and development of the State in particular and the nation in general.

References

- Abdulrahman, I.R. (1999) – Transportation in Katsina State: Problems and Prospects. A paper presented at Seminar Series of Hassan Usman Katsina Polytechnic
- Babsal and Co. Limited (1998) – *Katsina State Environmental Action Plan: Final Report*. FEPA under World Bank Assisted Programme. Babsal and Co. Ltd Ikeja, Lagos.
- Bugaje, U (2007) – *Policy Document for Democratic Transformation of Katsina State. A Handbook* Katsina: Action Congress Gubernatorial Campaign Organization.
- Filani, M.O. and Gbadamosi, K.T. (2007) – “Spatial and Temporal Pattern of Road Traffic Accident in Nigeria: 1970-1995”. *The Nigerian Geographical Journal*, Volume 5 No. 1. 2007. The Nigerian Geographical Association
- Federal Road Safety Commission (2009) *Accident Data for Katsina State 2006-2008* Katsina: PRS Department FRSC Katsina State Command.
- Ileoje, N.P (2004)-*A New Geography of Nigeria*. Fifth Edition, Lagos: Longman Nigeria Plc.
- Katsina State Government (2009)-*Two Years of Shema Administration*. Katsina: Ministry of Information, Youth, and Culture.
- Katsina State Government(2010) - Katsina Government Projects May,29-August 2010

Kaduna: Timex Communications Nigeria Limited.

presented at the Katsina State Development Summit March 2006.

Sirika, H.A. (2006) -“Development of Transport and Tourism Infrastructure for the Purpose of Exploiting Agricultural and Tourism potentials of Katsina State “A paper

Waugh.(1995)-*Geography An Integrated Approach* Second edition. Thomas Nelson and Sons Limited Surrey, England

