

Urban Transportation in Northern Nigeria: An Exploratory Study of Commercial Motorcycle (*Achaba*) Transport System in the Socio-economic Growth and Development of Katsina Metropolis, 1987–2012

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Abstract

Commercial motorcycle (*Achaba*) enterprise has been and still remains one of the major means of livelihood for many unemployed or even the employed citizens in Northern Nigeria. Through a historical methodology, the paper examined the roles of *Achaba* in the economic growth and development of the Katsina metropolis from 1987 to 2012. However, the major argument of the paper is that, *Achaba* is central to the provision of self-employment for thousands of people being an impetus for youth empowerment. Besides, many unemployed youths and retirees have found gainful engagement in this enterprise. In addition, some of those who are employed in government still engage in the business either as owners or riders in order to augment their regular income with whatever they were able to make from the business. The paper further argued that the business had pulled out a lot of people from destitution and despondency more than has ever been witnessed in this part of the country. Over the years, since it employed a large number of Nigerian citizens, many were able to sustain their families, built houses and enrolled their children to standardized schools. The paper undoubtedly concluded that, commercial motorcycle operators had contributed to government Internal Generated Revenue (IGR) through registration for plate numbers and licenses for motorcycle operators. In fact, the activities of the motorcycles operating for commercial purposes led to the emergence of quite a number of other small scale and medium enterprises which indeed made *Achaba* of great socio-economic value to individuals and Katsina government.

Introduction

Since the independence of Nigeria, urban transportation has been one of the key things that enhanced empowerment among Nigerian youths, adults and elderly men and women, especially the Commercial Motorcycle Transportation which is popularly known and called *Achaba* in the metropolitan cities, urban centers and villages of Nigeria particularly in the Northern region like Katsina metropolis, which is the central focus of this paper. This was because over the years, commercial motorcycle kept experiencing growth and developments unlike what was obtained in other cities of Northern Nigeria such as Kaduna, Kano, Damaturu, Maiduguri, Yola, Bauchi, where such commercial means of transportation were banned from functioning due to Boko Haram, Fulani Herdsmen terrorist and bandits activities who often used such means of transportation to attack citizens and non-citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) residing in those states or cities. Besides, most scholars¹ who wrote on this field overlooked this aspect of historical memory that had aided the reduction of poverty through an increase in the standard of living of citizens, increased the state Internal Generated Revenue (IGR) and boosted small scale and medium enterprises associated with motorcycles. Therefore, this paper is aimed to fill the gap left by such scholars considering the role of this means of transport in the socio-economic growth and development of Katsina metropolis.

Worthy of note here is that, Katsina metropolis has been the ancient city of Katsina Kingdom later Katsina Emirate, Colonial headquarters of Katsina province, then a local government headquarters since 1976, until September 23, 1987 when it ascended the role of a state capital owing to the state creation of Katsina State from the defunct Kaduna State. By the sudden status of the change, it was observed that the small settlements around Katsina metropolis started growing rapidly and the rate of growth was unprecedented between the specified periods of 1987 to 2012. Indeed, during the political era from 1999 to date, the growth appeared to have doubled, the movement of Katsina indigenes who were civil servants in the then Kaduna State and others who were non-indigenous to Katsina, led to the sudden upsurge of population in Katsina metropolis to spill over for settlements around Katsina metropolis. This led to spontaneous emergence, growth and the development of settlements in the sub-urban area. This development continued to pose very serious mobility problems for those living in the new establishments. Some of the early sub-urban settlements around Katsina metropolis that sprang up in the eighties included: *Sabuwar Unguwar Kofar Kaura, Abbatuwa, Rahamawa, Janbango, Dutsin Safe Low Cost, Kwado, Kambarawa, Modoji, Koramar Nayalli, Nasarawar Matawalle, Filin Polo, Tudun 'Yan lihidda* among others. *Achaba* solved the mobility problems for these people living in the areas mentioned above. In addition to the settlements within city-wall of Katsina metropolis, Government Reserved Area (GRA), Kofar *Marusa* Lay-out, *Dutsin Safe Low cost* etc. Yet serious attention had not been paid to this aspect of the commercial transport system. It is this neglected theme that prompted the researchers to embark on the reconstruction of the roles of *Achaba* in Katsina metropolis.

The Emergence, Growth and Development of *Achaba* in Katsina Metropolis

Commercial motorcycle² transport system popularly known as “*Okada*,” “going,” “*Kabu-kabu*,” or “*Achaba*” across the various Nigerian villages, urban centres and cities, is one of the major informal sectors that provides employment opportunities in different spheres of small scale and medium enterprises. Although at the moment, no one could precisely state when and how it originated, but it was often traced to Calabar, Cross Rivers State (South-South of Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria) in the early 1970s where it was used first for commercial services (purposes) grew after the nationwide retrenchment of civil servants in 1975/1976 and then late 1980s – during the economic downturn in Nigeria where it was accepted as a public mode of transportation for inter-rural and rural-urban movement as well as within urban or cities.³ On the other hand, some claimed it was Lagos, the former administrative capital of Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) with the name “*Okada*” nickname after an *Okada* Airline⁴ because it could maneuver through the heavy traffic of Lagos and take passengers to their destinations in a timely manner.⁵ Consequently, this enterprise spread across different states and local government cities and rural areas of Nigeria.

Nonetheless, in the case of Katsina metropolis, the emergence, growth and development of the *Achaba* is traced to the creation of Katsina state and with Katsina metropolis sustained as the state capital in 1987 which led to demographic changes and expansion of settlements⁶ coupled with the difficulty to get access to conventional means of transportation and failure to have adequate intra-urban transport services (such as the Federal and States Urban Mass Transit and Taxi Cabs)⁷ for people to move in and out of Katsina metropolis. In fact, commuters often waited for long periods for commercial vehicles to convey them in or out of these areas. Hence, to sustain multi-various urban activities, other smaller transport systems (in this case motorcycles) were on the ground, commuters had to adapt to that in order to satisfy their intra-urban movements.⁸

Of equal importance, prior to this development, sources revealed that, high inflation caused by the military administration of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB) under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) in 1986 which led to sack the unfortunate mass of federal and state civil servants of which *Katsinawa* (Katsina indigenes) were also affected in Nigeria.⁹ This had also made the victims to embark on *Achaba* entrepreneurship as an alternative to their source of livelihood and to raise their standard of living.¹⁰ This made civil servants as the first group of people who started the *Achaba* business. In fact, those civil servants (junior staff) who were not affected by SAP equally engaged in the *Achaba* business either after working hours or before going to work.¹¹ Besides, they constitute the major population of the *Achaba* operators at the initial stage before unemployed *Katsinawa* youths and other Nigerians and Niger Republic national migrant youths (Christians and Muslims) took over and still sustained it to-date. Other factors that accelerated the *Achaba* business was the Poverty Alleviation Programs in 2001 in which the state government through the National Poverty Eradication Program has been providing motorcycles to the teeming unemployed youths to make them to be self-employed. In 2003, some politicians also gave out

motorcycles to the youths in order to redeem their campaign promises or to attract support. More so, *Katsinawa*, non-*Katsinawa* as well as some organizations also bought motorcycles and distributed them out to the youths, for daily or weekly returns. For instance, ₦ 300 to 500 naira per day fetching ₦ 9,000.00 – 15,000.00K a month.¹² It is indeed a lucrative small scale business. The lucrative nature of the business coupled with the high increase in importation of used and new motorcycles into Katsina metropolis, led to the high purchase of motorcycles and participants in the business.¹³ Generally, the *Achaba* operators derive reasonable profits from their operations. Most of the operators claimed that they make an average of about ₦ 400.00 to 700.00K on a daily basis after satisfying all other expenses. The lucrative nature of the business had made motorcycle transport to grow into a big industry in the Katsina metropolis. This indeed made the *Achaba* proliferation to be high. Coupled with that, the *Achaba* operators ply virtually every route including the highways. They cover distances ranging from a few kilometers to a distance as far as 2 to 6 kilometers. The availability and flexible price made the *Achaba* affordable to the vast majority of the people that utilized it as a means of commuter transportation.¹⁴ In its early operation in Katsina metropolis, the *Achaba* operators charged less than half of what taxis charged (50 kobo, but today minimum is ₦ 30 to 50.00K in most cases for *Achaba* while KEKE-NAPEP (tricycle) ₦ 50 upwards). They even beg people waiting for a taxi to ride their motorcycle.¹⁵ As a result of this *Achaba* began to compete with taxi drivers. *Achaba* operators could reach any nook and cranny of the town at a price often considered reasonable by the commuters compared to even today's KEKE-NAPEP (tricycle).

It's pertinent to note that, initially, in Katsina metropolis, the motorcycles used for *Achaba* business include "Suzuki 100," "Suzuki 120," "Kawasaki" and "Yamaha." Between 1992 and 2002, used motorcycles were imported from overseas (Japan and Korea) and people started buying them for commercial purposes and personal uses. Motorcycles such as "Suzuki (Ladies) 50", "Suzuki 90," "Suzuki 120," "Honda Electric 125," "Windy," were also used for commercial purposes. Similarly, new motorcycles were imported from China such as "Zonshen," "Nanpang," "Lipan," and "Jincheng." Currently, the most commonly used motorcycle for public transportation in Katsina metropolis is "Jincheng" because of its durability and low fuel consumption.¹⁶ Although from 2015 to 2019, "Bajaj", an Indian made motorcycle came to replace Jincheng as the most widely used for *Achaba*.

It is worthy to state here that, the growth and development of *Achaba* from 2000 to 2007 had impacted significantly on the movement of people in Katsina metropolis. It provided easy movements to commuters such as civil servants, students, strangers, businessmen and women. Similarly, between 2008 and 2012, *Achaba* served as an important means of transportation to commuters most especially students in the town. The re-introduction of co-education (male and female students in same secondary schools) by the Katsina State government increased the number of students in the town. As a result, even the School bus service provided by the government to transport female students in the metropolis was inadequate and difficult to get.¹⁷ As such, these students resorted to riding

Achaba for easy movement from their houses to schools and also used it when coming back from the schools to their respective houses after closing time.

The Socio-Economic Contributions of Achaba Enterprise in Katsina Metropolis

Therefore, having seen the emergence, growth and development of *Achaba* in Katsina metropolis, this section focuses on economic and socio-political contributions of *Achaba* in Katsina metropolis.

The Transport network is one of the important features of transport development of many nations. Besides, road transport fares of both passengers and freight traffic has been on an upward trend.¹⁸ The economic contributions of *Achaba* in Katsina metropolis are in the emergence of different small scale and medium enterprises which are stated below.

Emergence of Motorcycle Dealers

The first entrepreneurship that emerged as a result of the *Achaba* was the motorcycle dealers whom in the 1980s were only few, but from 1987 to 2017 their number increased to more than 40.¹⁹ These dealers sold both brand new and second hand/fairly used motorcycles bought from *Oyingo, Apapa, Costain, Alaba* and *Oladipo* in Lagos, which they imported into Nigeria from countries like Japan, South Korea, and India. Through such businesses, many more dealers, retailers and wholesalers emerged in the Katsina metropolis or its environs at different locations. For instance, *Muhammadu Dikko* Way adjacent *Korau* Cinema there are *Dan Sabo* and *Lema Rafukka*, then *Alhaji Salale Dankwari* located on IBB Way. Others are in the old Katsina Motor Park IBB Way with dealers like *Mai Mutunchi* Trading Company owned by *Malam Mammam Mai Gwanjo* and *Abdulmummini Yandakai* followed by *Himma* Trading Company at *Ahmadu Bello* Way, *Sabon Layi* owned by *Makudawa* and Sons.²⁰ These dealers employed a lot of youths as security men, sales agents, machine assemblers, and rewires on daily wages while some were paid salary at the end of the month. More so, these dealers established many other branches with their boys whom they only go to supervise periodically. Thus, through the business, many people in Katsina metropolis were able to buy/purchase a motorcycle for their personal use in order to ease the cost of mobility while the majority did so for commercial purposes. This made the State government to generate lots of revenue (IGR) through plate numbers (which was ₦ 4000.00 but now cost 8,000.00). With the high number of motorcycles in the metropolis and to ensure security of lives and properties, the government made Red colour plate numbers for commercial users while Blue colour for personal users. In fact, today, the *Achaba* provided for more than 40 to 50% of youth employment working or earning a living. Therefore, stopping it is aggravating the rate of poverty and unemployment in the metropolis.

Spare Parts Merchants

Spare parts dealers were another occupation that had grown by virtue of opportunity created by the *Achaba* enterprise. This is because, before the emergence and growth of *Achaba* in the 1980s, the motorcycle spare parts dealers

were dominated by the Igbo people of Nigeria with people such as “Larry” at *Gwabron Gida*, Jomo near *A. D. Saude*’s house and Yellow opposite *Alhaji Abdu Fari* house. Consequently a number of *Katsinawa* engaged in the business of motorcycle spare parts with people like Late *Alhaji Shehu Sullabawa* and *Alhaji Lawal Goshi* all behind Katsina Central Police Station.²¹ Thus, between 1992 and 2012, there were then 60 Igbo and *Katsinawa* selling both new and old/used motorcycle spare parts in order to serve the increased demand of the parts. Prominent among the dealers were A. S. Motorcycle spare parts and Ambros International at *Kofar Durbi* – off *Usman Nagogo* Road. Others were *Alhaji Sa’idu* Mai Kayan Kekuna Kangiwa and *Aljahi Aminu Bakin-Kasuwa* at *Kofar Durbi* Garage then Malam *Mannir Marnar Gangare* at *Kofar Sauri*. All these people used to buy the spare parts from Lagos and Nnewi town in Anambra State of Nigeria. In almost all these shops, the dealers had apprentices of which some were their children while some were not. But the interesting thing is that, with time these apprentices were trained and sent-forth to establish their own enterprises within the metropolis or beyond the environs while their boss (*Ubangida*) remained the suppliers of the commodities they needed.

Engine Oil Dealers

Similarly, the number of engine oil dealers and retailers increased to serve the increasing number of commercial motorbikes in the metropolis. This was because prior to the growth and development of *Achaba* business, engine oil dealers were not many. Engine oil could be purchased only in the Fueling Stations and shops that sold automobile spare parts. Later engine oil dealers such as “Abu oil,” Kofar Guga, “*Alhaji Abu Mai Gafai oil*”, *Gambarawa* emerged. Others included “Mobil”, opposite I. B. S. House and Rafindadi road respectively.²² Consequently, between 1993 and 2012, a number of engine oil dealers emerged at different locations to serve the increasing number of *Achaba* operators in the town. These dealers included “*Sanusi Oil*”, *Sauki daga Allah* near Kofar Durbi Gate, “*Babangida Oil*”, opposite Korau Cinema, Nagogo road. “Abu Kasim Oil”, near Katsina General Hospital, Kofar Sauri road, “Mohammed Kabir Oil”, Opposite Madattai Mosque, Kofar Marusa road, and “Abdulrashid Pro”, Marnar gangare. Between 2004 and 2012, a large number of youths and adults joined the business. As a result, there were a number of engine oil retailers at different roads in the metropolis mostly found close to petrol filling stations and the Petroleum Street Hawkers (Bumburutu).²³

Road-Side Mechanics

Road-side mechanics were also increasing daily by virtue of opportunity created by *Achaba* business in Katsina metropolis. Road side mechanics existed even before the advent of *Achaba* business in the metropolis. People used to take their personal motorcycles for repairs at different garages located in the metropolis. The growth and development of *Achaba* business in Katsina town led to the increase in the number of many garages in the town. With the creation of Katsina State in September 1987, a new site at *Kofar Durbi* was given to the motorcycle

mechanics in the town. The earliest mechanics to open garages on this new site included “*Malam Sani Chabi*”, “*Alhaji Ummaru Sanda*”, “*Malam Sabi’u Bakanike*”, “*Malam Sani Baka*”, *Filin Samji* and “*Alhaji Jibrin*.”²⁴ This garage popularly known as “*Kofar Durbi garage*” is one of the largest and well known garages in Katsina town. The above named mechanics employed a number of people as apprentices to serve as assistants and help them in their business. In this garage, the mechanics not only repaired but also sells second hand motorcycles such as “Suzuki 100, Suzuki 120, Yamaha, Kawasaki, Suzuki Ladies (50 & 80), Jincheng, Nampang, Zonshen”, etc. Between 1993 and 2012, this garage developed and expanded greatly with over 150 mechanics. As a result, people from different locations came for apprenticeship and later spread to other places within or outside the town to form their own garage.²⁵

Besides Kofar Durbi garage, there were other garages within the metropolis of Katsina where *Achaba* operators took their motorcycles for servicing and repairs. For instance at *Marnar gangare Unguwar yari- Kofar Yandaka* road, a number of garages emerged. In these garages, there were a number of mechanics who rendered services and repair motorcycles. However, the increase of *Achaba* business and importation of used motorcycles from abroad between 1992 and 2002, led to the high demand of road side mechanics to serve the increasing number of *Achaba* in the metropolis. This made some of those who used to assist their masters in servicing and repairing commercial motorcycles at different garages to become independent and form their own garages and be found in most of the major and feeder roads of the metropolis. As a result, a number of mechanics emerged at different locations in the town. These mechanics include among others, “*Malam Nasiru*,” “*Malam Danfulani*,” at *Marnar gangare garage*, “*Alhaji Sade*,” “*Malam Danbaba*,” at *Rafindadi garage* behind *Abdu Fari garage*, “*Gambo Bakanike*” at *Batsari Motor Park, Kofar Yandaka*. “*Alhaji Lawal Tsigi*” at *Kangiwa*, “*Abashe Bakanike*”, *Gambarawa*, and “*Malam Abbati*,” behind *Arabic Teacher’s College, Kofar Kwaya*.²⁶ Thus, each of these mechanics employed the services of two or more youths to assist them and also learn the business as apprentices.

Electricians Popularly Known and Called Rewires

Apart from road-side mechanics, another business that developed as a result of the *Achaba* was the electricians who were popularly known and called rewires. This occupation equally contributed to the economic development of Katsina metropolis. This is because prior to growth and development of the *Achaba* enterprises there were only few electricians/rewires/technicians in the area of study. Such as “*Jafaru rewire*” and “*Dantukuri rewire*” all at *Ahmadu Bello way* near *Abdu Fari’s House*.²⁷ But subsequently other people joined the business having seen the economic wisdom of the rewire, especially between 1993 and 2000 with people like “*Hamza Rewire*,” “*Musa rewire*,” and “*Isa rewire*” at *Marnar Gabas*.²⁸

Thus, each rewires/technician employed the services of 2 or more youths to assist in the business. Some parents also sent their children to the technicians to learn the business, especially after school hours and during weekends, of which after the apprenticeship, the parents opened a place for their Children to become

self-reliant or independent. As a result of that, between 2002 and 2012, there were more than 70 rewires located especially at *Unguwar Yari-Kofar Yandaka* road, *Rafin dadi* round about, *Kofar Marusa* road, and then *Kofar Durbi* garage which had the largest number of motorcycle technicians.²⁹

Vulcanizing Business

Vulcanizing business is another prominent business that had grown and developed as a result of the development of *Achaba*. Initially, this occupation was not regarded as a full-time occupation because those who engaged in it did so after coming back from their farms or other businesses. The earliest vulcanizers in the 1980s included “*Sani Faci*” at one-way Sabon Layi, and “*Ibrahim Mai Faci*” near A. D. Saude’s House at IBB Way Katsina.³⁰ However, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the number increased tremendously. This was because these people regarded this business as a full-time occupation. Example of such were “*Kabir Mai Faci*” popularly known as “*Kabiro*” at old Katsina Central Market Motor Park, IBB Way and “*Sufiyanu Mai Faci*” at *Masanawa* road.³¹

It will interest you to note that, between 1995 and 2012, a number of people, both Adults and Youths got themselves engaged in the vulcanizing business. These vulcanizers were found in both major and minor roads in Katsina town. For example, on Nagogo road alone, from Kofar Durbi to Katsina Central Mosque, there were more than 20 vulcanizers. Then from Unguwar Yari to Kofar Yandaka there were also more than 10 vulcanizers. It is important to note that, the vulcanizers took vulcanizing business as a full-time occupation and equally relied on it for the sustenance of their families. Besides, each person employed the services of 1 or 2 youths whom they trained and within some period of time, they also established themselves. This had gone a long way in empowering many Katsina people to be self-reliant. Coupled with that, the vulcanizers complimented their business with the sales of second-handed motorcycle tubes, tyres and wheels. All these credit goes to the emergence and growth of *Achaba* business in Katsina metropolis.

Petroleum Street Vendors (Bumburutu)

Petroleum street vendors known in Hausa as *Yan Bumburutu* was another occupation that developed by virtue of the opportunity created by the *Achaba* enterprise. Initially, the *Yan Bumburutu* came into being as a result of the incessant shortages of petroleum in the early 1990s but subsequently their number increased as a result of the *Achaba* operators demand for petroleum in Katsina metropolis. Sources revealed that, the *Yan Bumburutu* first emerged at Kofar Kaura, Mobil IBB Way, at Gambarawa and Kofar Guga. In fact, even married women participated in the business. For example, they kept petroleum inside Jerry-cans and drums at their houses in order to sell.³² However, from 2000 to 2012, “*Bumburutu*” (Street Vendors) business became one of the most patronized business by the youths, to the extent that no road, no matter how small that didn’t have any petroleum street hawkers in Katsina metropolis. An Example of such roads and streets are the IBB Way, Nagogo road, and Ahmadu Bello Way. With this business, the youths and adults sustained families, paid their children’s and younger one’s school fees and

equally established other alternative businesses.³³

Patronage of Petty Business

Patronage of petty business such as seat cover makers, ‘*Yanleda*, seller of stickers and motorcycle washmen were enterprises that emerged as a result of the *Achaba* enterprises. Starting with the seat cover makers, even though they existed long before the advent of the *Achaba* enterprises, seat cover making, became an attractive business between 2003 and 2012 with over 200 people engaged in it and located along all the major roads of the metropolis like IBB Way, Nagogo road GRA and Yahaya Madaki Way.³⁴ These people used leathers and yards made from cotton and wool of different colours and designs to sew the seat covers. Some seat covers looks like Hyena skin, Leopard skin, Cat skin, Guinea fowl skin etc. These seat covers were taken to spare parts dealers, ‘*Yanleda*’ and sellers of stickers, which enabled them to generate lots of income.³⁵ In the case of the ‘*Yanleda*, it was also an occupation that employed many youths and adults. They were stationed at different locations in kiosks especially at Ahmadu Bello Way – Sabon Layi and Yahaya Madaki Way waiting for the *Achaba* operators who were the majority of their customers. These ‘*Yanleda* used poly-bags to cover some parts of motorcycle seat, fuel tanks, trafficators and shock absorbers in order to avoid scratches and fading as well as to make the motorcycle to always look new and attract the attentions of the riders and customers.³⁶

In addition to these occupations was the sticker selling. The sellers of sticker’s were of two categories - there were those who are stationed at one place closed to the ‘*Yanleda*. The second category usually roam about in the metropolis and sometimes stayed closed to the ‘*Yanleda*,’ food selling centers, fuel stations, for relaxations and businesses. These sellers of sticker’s sold different kinds of stickers to the people, most especially commercial motorcycle operators.³⁷ Some stickers contain the pictures of some important figures, *Hausa* Indians and American films actors and actresses, European footballers, wild animals, and some stickers contained inscriptions such as wise sayings and proverbs, caution stickers etc. Further to this were the motorcycle washers who were never in existence but due to emergence of the *Achaba* enterprise many youths patronized it as their full-time job. Couple with that, the state government through the Shema Craft Village had trained many youths into this occupation and supplied them with necessary equipment to enable them establish their own personal business instead of depending on government for everything. Consequently, between 1999 and 2012, there were more than 300 people in the business, found across major streets and the roads of Katsina metropolis. All these credit goes to the emergence and growth of *Achaba* business in Katsina metropolis.

Food Selling Centres

The food selling centres were one of the mini-market places developed as a result of the *Achaba* business. The food selling centers, which were hitherto very small in number had increased consistently to meet up with the demand of the

teeming *Achaba* operators in the metropolis. Food selling centers were founded at different locations in the metropolis. In the late 1980's, the prominent food selling centers in Katsina metropolis included that of "Hajiya Mary Mai *Abinchi*" *Sabon Layi* followed by "*Gidan Raga*" popularly known as "*Mai Abinchin Yan Ghana*", Shaiskawa quarters, owned by "Hajiya Umma Yar Ghana."³⁸ The *Achaba* operators usually frequent these Food Centers for their breakfast, lunch and dinner.³⁹ Between 1990 and 2012, other food selling centers established in the metropolis, included "Hajiya Ladidi Mai *Abinchi*", *Rafindadi* road. "*Hajiya Binta Mai Abinchi*" *Sabuwar Kasuwa*.⁴⁰ In the above food selling centers, large numbers of both adults, young males and females were employed to serve as stewards, cleaners, security, drivers etc. Besides the above, other house wives within the wards of Katsina metropolis engaged themselves in the food selling business and majority of their customers were *Achaba* operators.⁴¹

Socio-Political Contribution of the *Achaba* Enterprise

Nonetheless, having seen the economic contributions, this section will focus on the socio-political aspects.

In terms of the socio-political contributions, *Achaba* business provided an atmosphere for political activities, i.e. they played a role in conveying political parties, political candidates or their supporters to political rallies or any form of political gatherings. Sometimes, they were hired for hours, a day or even a week. Their services were rendered always and anytime.⁴² No political interest demonstrated by Amalgamated Commercial Motorcycle Riders and Owners Association of Nigeria (ACOMORAN), and based on the research conducted, none of the executive members had ever contested for any political election in Katsina metropolis. Their involvement in politics is mostly restricted to voting during elections. Investigations showed that, they were more committed to their business than engaging in party politics.⁴³ However, the ACOMORAN is a strong body that was created in 1986 to manage the affairs of *Achaba* transportation in Katsina with the primary objectives of protecting the rights of its members, activities as well as represent them in every respect.⁴⁴

Achaba operators and (ACOMORAN) supported every government in Katsina from inception, be it military or democratically elected government. For democratic governments, they gave support irrespective of political party. *Achaba* operators and their Association avoided partisan politics, even though they may belong to a political party individually. They were publicly neutral. However, as members of the association, which was an affiliate of the National labor Congress (NLC), they participated in social gatherings, for example, May Day rallies and workers day rally. They also participated in NLC protests or strikes over constant increase in fuel prices.⁴⁵

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper had indeed established the fact that *Achaba* enterprise had played a significant role on the Katsina metropolis in the period under review. In addition to the fact it provided general mobility, it had provided

the increasing number of population in the metropolis, coupled with growth and expansion of quite a numbers of enterprises which alleviated poverty and unemployment rate. But despite, it consequently led to the rural-urban migration which led to increase in the demand for residential accommodation to meet the teeming population. The environment is also polluted with smokes (i.e. carbon monoxide (CO)) and noise which has serious health effects. On the other hand, violation of traffic regulations and road accidents, and criminal activities (theft, robbery, molestation, patronage of brothels, drug abuse and trafficking) have increased which pose a great threat the safety of lives and property of Nigerian in the metropolis.⁴⁶ Couple with that, Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen terrorists used to disguise themselves as the *Achaba* operators and kidnapped citizens and foreigners in the metropolis. This made the government in 2003 and 2012 to restrict *Achaba* operations between 6:00am to 9:00pm and similarly in January, 2020 between 6:00am to 7:00pm.

Endnotes

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2. A motorcycle or motorbike is a two wheel motor vehicle. Motorcycle design varies greatly to suit a range of different purposes: long distance travel, commuting, cruising, sport including racing, and off-riding. Motorcycle are mainly a luxury good in the developed world, where they are used mostly for recreation, as a lifestyle accessory or a symbol of personal identity. In developing countries, motorcycles are overwhelmingly utilitarian due to lower prices and greater fuel economy. However, in the 21st century, the motorcycle industry is mainly dominated by the Chinese motorcycle industry and by Japanese motorcycle companies. In addition to large capacity motorcycles, there is a large market in smaller countries and produced in china and India. A Japanese example is the 1958 Honda Super Cub, which went to become the biggest selling vehicle of all time, with its 60 millionth unit produced in April 2008.

- Today, this area is dominated by mostly Indian and Japan companies.
3. See Oladipo, O. O. "The Development and Impact of Motorcycle as a Means of Commercial Transportation in Nigeria." Access July 15, 2012. 231-232 from www.liste.org/journals/index.php/rhss/view/2395 and Sararinkuka, A. A. "The Role *Achaba* (Commercial Transportation) in the Economic Development of Katsina Town, 1987–2012." M.A (History) Dissertation, BUK, Kano-Nigeria, 2015. 53-53.
 4. *Okada* is the name of a village in Edo State of Nigeria. Gabriel Egbinedion, one of Nigeria's first known millionaires and the father of Lucky Egbinedion, former Governor of the State hail from *Okada* village. In the eighties, his millions led him to establish the first airline in Nigeria known as *Okada* Airline. For more see Abari, Y. "The Origin of the Word "*Achaba*." Access July 15, 2011. 1 from www.newstower.org.
 5. Festus, M. O. and Joy, N. C. "Dangers Associated with Commercial Motorcycle Transportation: Implication for Adult Education in Nigeria" *Journal of Education and Practice*, Volume 5 Number 37, 2014:15-16.
 6. Such as *Sabuwar Unguwa, Filin Polo, Sabuwar Unguwar Abbatoir, Tayoyi, Tudun Yanlihidda, Dutsin safe* low-cost etc.
 7. Ogunbodede, E. F. "Urban Road Transportation in Nigeria from 1960 to 2006: Problems, Prospects and Challenges." Access June 17, 2012. 8-9 from www.ajol.info/./8865.
 8. Abdussalam, I. K. "Transportation and Transformation in Jos, C.1900 – 1966AD." PhD (History) Thesis, BUK, Kano-Nigeria, 2010. 72-73.
 9. The people therefore, started to convert their personal motorcycle for public commercial transport system to complement the existing public transport system.
 10. Dikko, I. Age 48. *Achaba* Operator and Chairman Amalgamated Commercial Motorcycle Riders Association of Nigeria (ACOMORAN) Katsina State. Interviewed at his shop, Adoro, Katsina metropolis on June 17, 2008; Armaya'u, K. Age 55. An Early *Achaba* Operator. Interviewed at his shop place opposite Old Katsina Motor Park IBB Way on October 22, 2012; Ibrahim, B. Age 39. Dealer of Motorcycles. Interviewed at his office, Kofar Kwaya, Katsina on October 22, 2012 and Lawal, A. Age 45. Former *Achaba* Operator. Interviewed at Sararinkuka, Katsina on October 24, 2012.
 11. Sani, S. Age 43. Chairman Taxi Association KTSTA Branch. Interviewed at Kofar Yan'daka, Katsina on October 24, 2012 and Armaya'u cited above.
 12. Kofar Sauri, H. Y. Age 42. Interviewed at Yammawa junction near Katsina General Hospital, Katsina-Nigeria on December 29, 2012 and Lawal cited above.
 13. Yakubu, S. Age 45. Former *Achaba* Operator. Interviewed at Adoro, Katsina-Nigeria on May 25, 2012.
 14. Armaya'u and Sani.
 15. Oladipo, "The Development and Impact of Motorcycle as a Means of Commercial Transportation in Nigeria." 234-235.
 16. Ibrahim and Dikko.
 17. Sani, Insp. Y. Age 50. Nigeria Police Force Office. Interviewed at Crime Division CPS Katsina, Katsina-Nigeria on March 13, 2012 and H. Muhammed, Age 39. FRSC Officer, Rescue Division, Katsina State Command. Interviewed at his

- office on March 10, 2013.
18. Dan-Asabe, A. U. “Kano Labour and the Kano Poor, 1930–1990.” PhD (History) Thesis, BUKN, Kano-Nigeria, 1996. 382-383; Olarewaju, S. A. “The Nigerian Road Transport System.” In Falola, T. and Olarewaju, S. A. (eds.). *Transport System in Nigeria*. New York: Maxwell School of Citizenship & Public Affairs, Syracuse University, 1986. p. 51 and Madugu, Y. U. “Commercial Buses and Economic Growth in the Kano Metropolis, 1967–2000: An Assessment.” In Ahmad, S. B. and Abdussalam, I. K. (eds.). *Resurgent Nigeria Issues in Nigerian Intellectual History. A Festschrift in Honour of Dahiru Yahya*. Ibadan: University Press Plc, 2011. 213-225.
 19. Ama, Alhaji A. Age 68. A Businessman. Interviewed at Unguwar Yarima, Katsina-Nigeria on August 11, 2015.
 20. Maichanji, M. A. Age 25. A Motorcycle Dealer. Interviewed at Tayoyi Yahaya Madaki Way, Katsina-Nigeria on November 21, 2012 and Ibrahim, B. Age 39. A Motorcycle Dealer. Interviewed at Kofar Kwaya, Katsina-Nigeria on October 2, 2012.
 21. Kauye, Alhaji. Age 37. A Motorcycle Mechanic. Interviewed at CPS Kofar Soro, Katsina – Nigeria on January 10, 2013 and Wycliff, S. “A History of Igbo-Migrant Community in Katsina Metropolis, 1903–2011.” M.A (History) Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria-Nigeria, 2016. 136-144.
 22. Kabir, M. Age 36 years. Interviewed opposite Madattai Mosque Kofar Marusa, Katsina-Nigeria on December 29, 2012.
 23. Armaya’u.
 24. Mage, L. Age 30. A Motorcycle Mechanic. Interviewed near late Hamza Usman’s House, opposite Katsina Central Mosque on January 12, 2013.
 25. Bulu, M. Age 29. A Motorcycle Mechanic. Interviewed at Marnar gangare, Katsina – Nigeria on November 27, 2012.
 26. Bulu and Mage.
 27. Lawal cited above.
 28. Rewire, K. Age 31. A Rewire. Interviewed at Kofar Durbi Garage, Katsina-Nigeria on December 22, 2012.
 29. Amadu, L. Age 38. A Rewire. Interviewed at Kofar Guga-Chake Junction, Katsina-Nigeria on November 14, 2012.
 30. Yakubu, S. Age 45. Former *Achaba* Operator. Interviewed at Adoro, Katsina-Nigeria on May 25, 2012.
 31. Kofar Sauri, H. Y. Age 42. Interviewed at Yammawa junction near Katsina General Hospital, Katsina-Nigeria, December 29, 2012.
 32. Amadu, L. Age 38. Petroleum Street Vendors. Interviewed at Kofar Guga-Chake Junction, Katsina-Nigeria on November 14, 2012.
 33. Armaya’u.
 34. Mage and Bulu.
 35. Mage and Bulu.
 36. Interview with Alhaji Kauye, Mage and Bulu.
 37. Faka-faka, A. I. Age 30. Interviewed at his business place near late Hamza Usman’s House, opposite Katsina Central Mosque on January 12, 2013.
 38. Mai Abinchi, Hajiya U. (Marry Yar Ghana). Age 63. Food Seller. Interviewed near Modibbo’s Mosque, IBB Way Katsina – Nigeria on November 10, 2012.

39. Mai Abinchi.
40. Mai Abinchi.
41. Mai Abinchi.
42. Interview with Dikko.
43. Dikko.
44. Sani.
45. Dikko.
46. Federal Road Safety Corps (FRSC) Katsina Command, Statistics of *Achaba* Commercial Operators Accidents in Katsina Metropolis, 1998–2012 and Nigerian Police Force (NPF): Katsina metropolis – Sabon Gari Police Station Crime and Traffic Management Authority Report on Robbery between January 2004 and December 2004.