MARKET TRADERS AND INTER-GROUP RELATIONS IN JOS MAIN MARKET, 1975-2023

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Abstract

The focus of the paper is on the market traders and inter-group relations in Jos Terminus market to the overall socio-economic expansion of Jos metropolis. Trade and markets were and are still important components of the economy of Jos. The thrust of this paper therefore is to locate how the economic activities in Jos main market (Terminus Market) induced the cooperation and interaction of different ethnic groups in the metropolis. The work shows how trade influences development in the area. The paper examines the features and impact of inter-group relations among diverse traders in Jos. Hence, there are different mechanism of inter-group relations religion, language, inter-ethnic marriages, and education e.t.c, market centre as a medium or instrument of inter-group relations will be the focus of this study with particular reference to Jos main market. The methodology of this research was oral interviews with Jos main market traders and officials. Secondary sources were also considered in the cause of the study. The first part of the work is introduction, section two is on conceptual issues, while section three looks at the description of Jos city, part four gives brief background on Jos main market and its major challenge, section five explains the socio-economic impact of Jos main market on migrant groups and host community in connection with the traders and the relationships they enjoined among one another, and conclusion.

Introduction

The social boundaries of modern Nigerian State are often conceptualized as artificial creation. This characterization got considerable acceptance against the background of the fallout of the Berlin conference of 1884 that separated the various ethnic groups that is found within the colonial state. Although Nigeria was a product of the 1914 amalgamation that brought the Northern and Southern protectorates together, the people in the pre-colonial times were not strangers to one another as they were linked by blood or descent, trade and commerce,

friendship, and conflict. Prominent among the Nigerian ethnic groups are the Hausa and Fulani, Yoruba and Igbo. It has been argued that 'the economic and political stability of any community depends on the extent of the relationship that existed with its migrant community.[1]The waves of human migration which had been a feature in the settlement pattern of the pre-colonial societies of Nigeria had brought many changes in the ways of life of many communities.[2]In such a case, the newcomers have to adjust or even adapt to their new environment.[3]

Though a number of works exited on Jos main market and migrant groups in Jos metropolis.[4] But the roles of migrant traders in promoting inter-group relations have received little attention. It is for this reason any many more that in this work attention has been given to market traders and inter-group relations in Jos Terminus Market 1975-2023.

Conceptual Explanations

To put the focus of this paper in its appropriate context, some concepts deserve clarification. These are market, traders and inter-group relations.

Market: according to Musa market can be referred to as a place where contacts are made between buyers and sellers or meet in a specific day or period that is, market days to exchange both goods and services. This means that, market served as a major network in the entire economic process by providing an avenue for both producers and consumers. Musa further stated that market can be a place of public gatherings of buyers and sellers meeting at appointed places or at regular intervalshad been found to be important element of the social

[1]For details consult the works of I. Salisu, 'Igbo Migration and Inter-Group Relations in Gusau Town C. 1927-1996' M. A. (History) Dissertation, UDUS, 2012, P. 2. See also O. Ikime, *Groundwork of Nigerian History*, Ibadan, Heinemann Educational Books Plc, 1980, P.12. See A. F. Usman, 'Perspective on Igbo Migration to Gusau in the Twentieth Century' in A. I. Yandaki, I. M. Jumare and M. T. Usman (eds.), *Mahdi Adamu in the Practice of History: Hausaland and Beyond*, Zaria, A.B.U. Press Limited, 2018, P. 207.

[2]See A. F. Usman, 'Perspective on Igbo Migration to Gusau in the Twentieth Century' in A. I. Yandaki, I. M. Jumare and M. T. Usman (eds.) ------P. 207

[3]For more see A.F. Usman, 'Inter-Group Relations in Gusau: A Case Study of Yoruba and Hausa C. 1920-1996', Ph.D (History) Thesis, UDUS, 2003, P.29

[4]One of the most prominent works on migrant groups in Jos metropolis is that of Dele J. Olu, U.M. Abdullahi, B.S. Adedeji and U.I. Musa, 'The Diaspora Community in North Central Nigeria and Peaceful Co-existence: A Study of Yoruba Migrants in Jos Metropolis, 1915-2020' *YobeJournal of Humanities and Social Science: A Publication of the Dept. of History Yobe State University*, Damaturu, Vol.1, No. 2, 2021, PP. 313-322, There is also that of S.G. Egwu, Ethnicity and Citizenship in Urban Nigeria: The Jos Case, 1960-2000' Ph.D (Political Science) Thesis, UNIJOS, 2004, P.115

and economic landscape and their study is essential to any real understanding of the life and work of many African communities.[5]Adelamo asserts that markets play a very vital role in the economic life of the people. They are essential in the chain of commodity distribution. Markets strengthen the economic base of a town and sustain the tax base of the local authority. Most roads and streets are the means of transportation coverage for markets.[6]

Okewande holds that a market is a place where transactions for the exchange of goods and services take place. In other words, a market is an institutional arrangement that brings buyers and sellers into a very close contact. However, the term market may not refer to a place though the word market conjures a picture of stalls grouped together probably on one day each week in a town or village. The roles of a market are not only limited to the distribution of goods and services, but they are also 'a channel through which the products of the farmers and artisans flow to the ultimate consumer'. Markets also stand as the centre of numerous other social activities like the formation of associations. Among such social activities are for example the association of Tomatoes sellers, and association of potato sellers. Today, markets depend on efficiency of communications. This is as a result of technological and scientific development around the world. Market serves as a glue that binds people of different backgrounds together. A market is a financial system of unification.[7]

Vagale argues that markets are not only economic institutions but also serve as social entities. They forge links between people of diverse ethnic groups, racial backgrounds, and cultural traits. They also serve as meeting places for social-cultural, religious, and political activities. Markets provide a physical setting for interaction between urban and rural cultures.[8] Market as a centre of exchange developed as the society and its economic activities increase. The need for exchange arises and grows as the society moves from an agrarian economy and self-sufficiency to an economy built

[5]For more see K. Musa, 'Market Institution: Impact Study of Gujungu and Maigatari Markets on the Economy and Society of Jigawa State, *Journal of Humanity and Social Sciences*, …..P. 285

[6]A. I. Adelamo, S*mall Urban Centres in Nigeria's Development Strategy; The Role of Rural Market Centres*, Ibadan, African Studies, 1979, PP. 128-130

[7] For more see O. T. Okewande, 'Market, Marketing and Advertisement' in T. Falola and A. A. Akinyemi (eds.), *Culture and Customs of the Yoruba*, Texas, Pan-Afrcan University Press, 2017, PP. 553-554

[8]See I. R. Vagale, *Anatomy of Traditional Markets in Nigeria: Focus on Ibadan City*, The Polytechnic, Ibadan, Town Planning Development, 1973, P. 7.

around division of labour, industrialization, and urbanization. During the agrarian economy, people were largely self-sufficient. They produced their own food, their cloths and built their houses as a result of lack of marketing process, because exchange was very minimal. But later, marketing concept and division of labour began to unfold, people began to produce more than they needed or could consume thereby giving birth to exchange of goods and services. Hence, production above consumptions necessitated the need for exchange among human existence.[9] Market constitutes a source of revenue generation as well as one of the means of measuring business expansion and growth or otherwise. To traders market serves as a centre in which traders find their means of subsistence through profit generation.[10]

Traders: are individuals who engage in buying and selling of stocks for themselves or institution. Or somebody who engages in the buying and selling of financial assets in any financial market, either for themselves or on behalf of another person or institution. Traders can work for a financial institution, in which they trade with the company's money and credit and are paid a combination of salary and bonus. Alternatively, traders can work for themselves which means they are trading with their own money and credit but keep all the profits for themselves. Traders engage in commerce, meaning that they make a living buying stocks, bonds and selling them at a profit.[11]

Inter-Group Relations: according to Muajama, inter-group relations mean the interaction between different groups from different backgrounds, historical experience e.t.c. Different people can interact with one another through various ways. These include economic, social and political dimensions.[12] Olu and Adedeji assert that inter-group relations refer to the interaction which takes place between members of different groups and societies who come in contact with one another. It pertains to the symbolical or face to face interaction between

[9]See I. I. Alhaji, 'The Role of Ega Market in the Economic Development of Idah, 1500-2013' *Ilorin Journal of History and International Studies*, Vol.8, No. 1, 2018, PP. 154-155

[10]For more on market consult the work of A. A. Jido, 'An Assessment of Security Arrangements in Sokoto Central Market' (P.G.D.M. Management Studies), UDUS, 1999, PP.3-4.

[11]https://www.investopedia.com.

[12]See O. G. Muojama, 'Globalization and Inter-Group Relations in Nigeria' in C.B.N Ogbogbo, R.O. Olaniyi, O. G. Muojama (eds.), *The Dynamics of Inter-Group Relations in Nigeria Since 1960: Essays in Honour of Obaro Ikime at 70*, Ibadan, BW Right Integrated Publishers Limited, 2012, P. 156

people and between different societies.[13] Sheriff and Sheriff perceived inter-group relations as a state of friendship or hospitality, cooperation, or competition, dominance or subordination, alliance or enmity, peace or war between two or more groups and their respective members. They view a group as a social unit consisting of a number of individuals who stand in role and status relationship to one another and who possess a set of values or norms of their own to regulate their behavior towards each other in matters affecting them.[14]

Afigbo argued that inter-group relations presuppose contact and interaction between groups each of which has an identity to make some impute into the relationship. He emphasized that there are variations in natural endowments, comparative and absolute advantage as well as ethno-cultural and political peculiarities and idiosyncrasy of people. In his opinion, despite these differences and group atomization, the various ethnic groups have much to share, especially trade. Afigbo identifies reciprocity of interaction as a critical element of inter-group relations in Nigeria. He maintains that whichever way it manifests, it is a two-way process of interaction which involves giving and taking in a way and manner that is generally supportive of the social formations involved.[15] Inweregbu, believes that as one is born into an identifiable cultural environment, he acquires predispositions that are consistent with his culture through association with members of his culture. Thus, the individual grows and acquires the attitude, values and stereotypes prevalent in his culture. She argues that stereotypes whether negative or positive are very harmful because they among others take away one's ability to treat each member of a group as an individual. It is based on this fact that groups in power come to rationalize war, religious intolerance and economic oppression.[16]

Ajayi and Alagoa hold that inter-group relations among the various Nigeria communities predate the imposition of colonial hegemony in Nigeria. Through a combination of archaeological findings and oral evidence, they demonstrate how geographical

[13]For Detail Account on Inter-Group Relations in Nigeria consult the work of Dele J. Olu and Babajide S. Adedeji, 'Okun Women and the Development of Sokoto Metropolis Since *1970' Ilorin Journal of History and International Studies,* Vol. 8, No. 2, 2018, P. 127.
[14]See M. Sheriff and C. W. Sheriff, *Social Psychology,* Oklahoma, University of Oklahoma Press, U.S.A, 1969, P.88

[15]A. E. Afigbo, *The Igbo and Their Neighbours: Inter-Group Relations in South-Eastern Nigeria to 1953*, Ibadan, University Press, 1975, P.18
[16]See A. Inweregbu 'Stereotypes and Inter-Ethnic Interactions in Nigeria: A Psychological Perspective' in O. Akinwumi et'al (eds.), *Inter-Group Relations in Nigeria During the 19th and 20th Century, Makurdi, Aboki* Publishers, 2006, P. 39.

factors compelled the ethnic groups to interact with one another in trade and exchange relationship. They observe that there were social movements, north to south, west to east, east to west and south to north. They posit that the Niger-Benue system with its delta to the south provided a big water way uniting widely separated groups through the exchange of goods. Thus, market networks and trade routes developed overtime and various sanctions were used for the control of these trade networks and regulations of inter-group commerce.[17]

Jos Metropolis

Jos is located on a mountainous plateau that rises more than 1,000 metres over the surrounding plain. To the south and south-east, the plateau falls off into savannah lowlands. The region is of scenic beauty, with gigantic rock formations arising from the plains. Given its high altitude, Jos offers a temperate climate and has long attracted both foreign visitors and retired elites. Its surroundings are known for its hillsides, spectacular waterfalls, and wild-life parks. Until the situation changed in 2001, it was also known for its relatively harmonious commercial relations. Jos lies in the centre of the country, at the juncture of the predominantly Muslim north and Christian south.[18] The main ethnic groups in Jos are the Berom, the Anaguta, the Afizere, the Igbo, the Yoruba, and the Hausa-Fulani. The Berom, Anaguta and Afizere are recognized as the main indigene groups in Jos and are predominantly Christians. Owing to their long residence in Jos, many Hausa-Fulani in the city refer to themselves as Jasawa (people of Jos). The name is meant to distinguish them from the Hausa-Fulani population in the State farther to the north.The term Jasawa is also used for political representation of the Hausa in Jos. The Fulani have mostly remained cattle herders and their grazing routes often take them beyond plateau state. The majority of the population in plateau are Christians, although accurate religious break downs are lacking. Within the centre of metropolitan Jos, Muslim Hausa-Fulani seem to constitute the majority.[19]

Jos LGA was divided into Jos North LGA and Jos South LGA, with headquarters in Bukuru. The city of Jos has expanded

[17]For more on this see J. F. A. Ajayi and E. J. Alagoa, 'Nigeria Before 1800: Some Aspects of Economic Development and Inter-Group Relations' in O. Ikime (ed.), *Ground Work of Nigerian History*,…..P 235.

[18]J. Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*, Geneva, Geneva Declaration Secretariat, 2011, PP. 16-19.

[19]J. Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*……..PP. 16-19

beyond Jos North and has largely merged with Bukuru into one urban centre. The census of 2006 estimated the population of Jos North LGA at 429,300 people. Jos South and Jos East were less populated, with 306,716 and 85,602 inhabitants, respectively. A more recent estimate puts the number at more than one million inhabitants for the Jos-Bukuru urban complex. The Nigerian Census of 2006 recorded a total population of 3,178,712 for all the 17 local Government Areas that made up Plateau State. Given the city's strategic position, Jos has long served as a communication centre between the north and south of the country. Decades ago, Jos also served as a major rail and highway hub. The city has long housed the headquarters of several Christian and Islamic organizations. It was an important location for Christian missionary activities for the entire north of Nigeria and even housed the West African Headquarters of several missionary societies. As a relatively young city in close proximity to the northern urban centres, it lacks more established Muslim traditional orthodoxies and has attracted Muslim reform movements.[20]

According to Olu and Adedeji et'al, Jos was officially founded in 1915 as a tin transportation camp and its early history was closely linked to the prosperity of the tin mining industry. The movement of the administrative headquarters in 1915 from Naraguta to Jos marked the beginning of its growth.[21]The Berom and other indigene groups argue that the city was founded on land that belonged to them as the native people of the plateau. The Hausa-Fulani contest this claim and hold that the city was established on 'virgin land' that belonged to no body. The indigene population on the plateau consisted of mostly farmers with little interest in tin mining. Some indigene groups were hostile to the influx of Nigerian migrants and Europeans. During the 1940s, the Berom attempted to disrupt mining operations to prevent further destruction of farmland. The mining industry attracted migrant workers from all over Nigeria.[22]

However, by the mid- 1940s, more than 200 mining camps had been built on the plateau and the miner population exceeded 40,000. The Hausa consisted of the most numerous ethnic

[20]J. Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*…….PP. 16-19

[21]Dele J. Olu, U.M. Abdullahi, B.S. Adedeji and U.I. Musa, 'The Diaspora Community in North Central Nigeria and Peaceful Co-existence: A Study of Yoruba Migrants in Jos Metropolis, 1915-2020' P.313

[22]J. Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*…….PP. 16-19

group that worked in the mines. Significant numbers of Igbo, Yoruba and members of smaller tribes also migrated to Jos during the same period. Those who had received a western education in the south of Nigeria served within the colonial administration. Others worked as craftsmen. Under British rule, the city of Jos was divided into the Government Reserved Areas for Europeans and other foreigners, the township for educated southern Nigeria clerks and other Europeans and the native town mainly for Hausa migrant workers.[23] Jos has borders with Bauchi State in the North-East, Kano State in the North, Kaduna State in the North-West. In the South it has boundary with Akwanga, Lafia in Nassarawa State and Shendam, Langtang, Wase Local Government Areas of Plateau State. Jos is the second highest highland in Nigeria after the Mambilla Plateau (1,800M). The highest temperatures are recorded in the months of March-May each year while the lowest temperatures are between December and January (harmattan months).[24] Rains generally starts in late April or early May each year and stop in October. Rainfall is heaviest between July and early September. During this period the soil is frequently waterlogged and unsuitable for farming activities. The soils are developed from volcanic rocks. The soils are shallow, yellow, mottled and poorly drained clay loam soil on weathered basalt. The vegetable consists of grasses with scattered trees and bushes which are mostly of the fire-resistant species.[25]

According to Shut, Colonel Laws, who led the European occupation of the Plateau in 1903, claimed that a small hill village called 'Guash' occupied the present location of Jos. Hausa traders who arrived later, supposedly mispronounced Guash for Jos, the name by which the town is today known. The original native village of Guash was founded by the Afizere people of the Jarawa tribe, who are sometimes called Afizere of Jos or Jarawa Jos.[26]

An Overview on Jos Main Market (Terminus Market)

Jos main market was constructed by the first military administrator, Police Commissioner Joseph Deshi Gomwalk soon after Plateau State was created in 1975. Oral evidence

[23] J. Krause, *A Deadly Cycle: Ethno-Religious Conflict in Jos, Plateau State, Nigeria*…….PP. 16-19

[24] See L.S.O. Ene and O.O. Okoli, *Potato Production in Jos Plateau State*, Umuahia, National Root Crops Research Institute, 1995, P. 1.

[25] See L.S.O. Ene and O.O. Okoli, *Potato Production in Jos Plateau State*, Umuahia, National Root Crops Research Institute…. PP. 1-4

[26] See T.T. Shut, 'The Settler-Indigene Phenomenon and the Plight of Ethnic Minorities in Jos' *Jos Journal of Minority Studies (JMS)*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2003, PP.43-44.

revealed that the project went beyond his 4-year administration due to the complexity and vastness of the market which led to him handing over its completion to Chief Solomon Lar in 1979 who was the first civilian governor of the state. The market took a large sum of taxpayers' funds and loans from banks which ran into billions of Naira before its completion in 1985. The Jos main market was commissioned by then Head of state General Muhammadu Buhari during the reign of military governor Samuel Atikum.[27]

Okoye an Igbo trader and a migrant from Nkanu West L. G.A, Enugu State believed that the huge complex accommodated at least 3,500 traders and had an open space at the base of the market which was meant to accommodate at least 2000 shops. The market also had provision for a police station, fire service station, post office, warehouses, banks and car parks. The market had a unique design which made it one of the most attractive shopping centres in the state and made the Federal Government regarded it as one of the major tourist attractions in the country. In February 2002, a mysterious fire outbreak occurred in the massive complex leaving the building nothing more than rubble after 2 days of effort by the state fire service to put it out. Josterminus market served for about 16 years until it was destroyed by the fire outbreak, was left in ruins after it could not provide a return on capital invested in it by the government. Later in 2014 what was left of Jos main market saw further destruction after it was destroyed by more than one Boko Haram bomb blast.[28] According to Hajia Nafisat a prominent trader and Yoruba trade woman she states that:

> the Jos ultramodern market used to be known as the biggest, organized indoor market in West Africa and once served as an international centre for trade and commerce. With an elegant architectural design. The once great and unique structure that stood as a symbol of pride and achievement to the people of Plateau State has today become an eyesore. Now surrounded by large umbrellas of small-scale traders, wheelbarrow pushers, jamboree of bus drivers and their conductors as well as heavy traffic,

[27]This Information was derived from Malam Sabo Adamu, 60 Years, Trader, Jos, 3rd January 2023. Malam Sabo is the current General Secretary of Plateau State Traders and Markets Association.

[28]See Mr. Divine Okoye, 52 Years, Traders, Jos, 3rd January 2023.

> terminus market is indeed a lost glory. The once prestigious and gigantic structure which used to house merchants of all kinds is now surrounded by temporary stalls that have extended to the main roads, creating an alternative market despite efforts of members of the Task Force. Even with its congestion and heavy traffic, the market's location still remains one of the few neutral grounds within Jos metropolis where both Muslims and Christians, of different ethnic groups feel free to buy and sell goods.[29]

Emphasizing this point Mark and Peter observe that:

> Jos main market was recognized to be the largest market in the sub-Sahara Africa, in terms of area utilized before the 2002 fire incidence, when reduced it to a ghost of its former glory. The market now takes place around major roads within the centre of the city.[30]

However, after the fire outbreak, the administration which was then headed by Senator Joshua Dariye set up a committee of inquiry to find out the causes of the inferno but till date, no report of the committee has ever been seen. Based on the known economic potential of the market, expectations were that succeeding state administrations would make efforts towards the reconstruction of the market, but nothing has been done. The former governor Jonah Jang attempted to relocate the traders to satellite markets on the outskirts of the metropolis like Rukuba, Bukuru, and Faringada but the traders refused and opted to instead build makeshift shops around the rubble of the burnt market. Governor Jang made a proposal to demolish the remnant of the market, evacuate it and replace it with a shopping mall of modern and international standard but, his proposal failed.[31] Funmi a Yoruba trade woman from the current State of Oyo maintains that the Jos terminus market

[29]Hajia Nafisat Olaiya, 90 Years, Trader, Jos, 4th January 2023

[30] See C. Mark and P. Peter, *The Plateau State Profile Jos*, Fab Anieh Nigeria Limited, 2015, P. 498

[31]Malam Sabo Adamu, 60 Years, Trader, Jos, 3rd January 2023

now has clusters of shops erected by traders the foot of the now ruined market while other traders take on the streets to display their wares for sale contest the use of the road with vehicles. The market structure that was a tourist attraction in Jos is now a nightmare to the government and citizens alike as the ruined stores serve as hideouts that provide accommodation for criminals in the metropolis, drug addicts, robbers, and rapists e.t.c.[32]

List of Some Exco Members of Jos Main Market Authority 1985-2023

Name	Designation	Tribe
Alh. Bala Abdullahi	Chairman	Hausa
Mal. Mammuda Ahmed	Vice Chairman	Hausa
Mr. Nelson Sokwaibe	Secretary	Igbo
Mr. Pius Okafor	Chairman	Igbo
Alh. Hamza Shitu	Vice Chairman	Yoruba
Alh. Lawal Danmaisule	Secretary	Hausa
Abdulrahman Jimoh	Chairman	Yoruba
Mal. Yakubu Hamza	Vice Chairman	Hausa
Rabi'u Abdullahi	Secretary	Hausa
Mal. Mustapha Bako	Chairman	Hausa
Alh. Yahaya Galadima	Vice Chairman	Hausa
Mal. Zakariya Sale	Secretary	Hausa

Source: Mal. Sabo Adamu, 60 Years, Trader, Jos, 3rd Jan. 2023

Mal. Hassan Muhammed, 65 Years, Trader, Jos, 6th Jan. 2023

What is apparent from the table above is that migrant traders have occupied leadership positions in Jos main market authority. A body set up to administer the day-to-day affairs of the market and to checkmate and supervise the activities of the traders. The officials were responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the market and settlement of disputes among the various traders.

Market Traders and Inter-Group Relations

Naturally, each ethnic group has its peculiar historical tradition about their composition and existence, and no community or society is independent of itself, rather it has to relate in one way or the other with other societies or groups for development.[33] Although, the historical relationship between migrant groups and Jos hosts has been in existence even before the Jos main market was built. The establishment of the market by the State government has further enhanced and engendered

[32]Madam Funmi Abdulrasheed, 55Years, Trader, Jos, 4th January 2023

[33]See B. M. Aliyu, 'AHistory of Kolanut Trade in Sokoto City: C. 1900-2014', M. A. (History) Dissertation, UDUS, 2015, P. 49

socio-economic ties among the ethnic groups.[34] With the establishment of the Jos main market and its subsequent expansion, traders were attracted to take up shops. Alhaji Abdulkareem Raji was one of the earliest migrant traders who had occupied some shops in the market. He was believed to first come to Jos during colonial administration and resided in Anguwar Rukuba Area. He was a prominent kolanut trader, came from Ilorin central, Kwara State. Raji was one of the esteemed Yoruba men who started activities in the market. He later became a popular contractor, died in Jos but buried in his hometown.[35]

Another earliest prominent trader who occupied one of the shops at Akwanga Hall in Jos Terminus market was Mr. J. David an indigenous trader from Langtang North Local Government Area of Plateau State, he engaged in different business activities in the market. David also sold provision items in other lines of the market.[36] Another earliest businessman who rented shops in the market was Mr. Henry Eze Jonah the M.D of Eze Shoes Enterprise, an Igbo trader who came to Jos in 1982 from Imo State and first resided in Anguwar Rogo Area an Hausa dominated area, brought to Jos by his elder brother, was involved in the sales of shoes, clothes, bags and inner wears, had number of shops at Awe Hall, Langtang Hall and Akwanga Hall respectively.[37]

Other famous earliest prominent tradesmen in Jos main market include among others: Alh. Olayiola Gbadamosi the managing Director of Olayiola Gbadamosi and Co Limited. A Yoruba trader from Ogbomoso town of present-day Oyo State. Olayiola had all his kids in Jos and they took over the business after his death. He was a successful dealer in provision business. Mr. M.A. Onigbende and Mr. S.A. Onigbende popularly known as Onigbende senior and junior from Ogbomoso the current state of Oyo, were prominent traders or dealers who were well-known all-over Jos metropolis. Chief Solomon Olugbodi a Yoruba migrant who came to Jos during the Nigerian civil war in 1967 and became the chairman of Yoruba community Development Association in Jos, died in Jos in 2020, was also into provision business. Mr. John Adebowale, arrived Jos in 1969 served his elder brother for 5 years and became independent. Adebowale was into the sales of shoes and slippers, from Ogbomoso, first resided at No.

[34]Hajia Nafisat Olaiya, 90 Years, Trader, Jos, 4th January 2023
[35]Hajia Nafisat Olaiya, 90 Years, Trader, Jos, 4th January 2023
[36]See Mr. J. David, 65 Years, Trader, Jos, 5th January 2023
[37]Mr. Henry Eze Jonah, 70 years, Trader, Jos, 5th January 2023.

14/17 Bucher line Jos later moved to Anguwar Rukuba Area, Jos. And Mr. Nelson Sokwaibe an Igbo trader, one of the earliest migrants who served as a secretary Plateau State Traders and market Association. Nelson is a member Board of Trustees Arewa Traders Association. Oral interviews revealed that some of the Yoruba traders were exporting items like pepper, onions, tomatoes and irish e.t.c. from Jos to southwest and in return brought back kolanut and biter kola.[38]According to Jonah:

> Before 2001 when the major inter-ethnic crisis began in Jos, there was rapport and peaceful co-existence among Igbo, Yoruba, and Hausa traders in the market. They traded together in unity and were patronized by buyers of different ethnic groups. He further stated that within the market there was a building for Christian tradersfellowship at one hand, and on the other hand, a mosque centre for Muslim prayers.[39]

Items of trade mostly sold by Igbo traders included shoes, school bags, cloths, carpet, curtains, books, electronics and food stuffs like gari, beans, rice, ugu, palm oil, egusin, fish and so on. Articles of trade for Yoruba traders within the market included plastic plate, plastic and metal buckets, slippers, pots, cups, spoons, provision business and clothing's like lace, wrappers and so on. The Hausa traders were largely involved in Jewelries like necklace, earrings, wristwatch, cosmetics, provision stores, secondhand clothes, wall clock, umbrella, sunglasses, transistor radio, electrical appliances like television, radio, water heater, fridges, water dispensers, fans and various types of useful items. They were and are still into the sales of leather products for female and male such as bags, belts, slipperse and purse. Some were into and are still into bureau the change. These migrant traders and some members of the host played significance roles in meeting the needs of the general populace in Jos metropolis and other surrounding states. Some indigenous traders were into the sales of irish,

[38] Pa. John Adebowale, 75 years, Trader, Jos, 6th January 2023, see Mr. Nelson Sokwaibe, 70 Years, Trader, Jos, 6th January 2023

[39] Mr. Henry Eze Jonah, 70 years, Trader, Jos, 5th January 2023.

millet, maize, guinea corn, yam, sweet potato, and perishable items like tomatoes, pepper, onions, e.t.c.[40]

Okwuidegbe[41] and Olu etal[42] unanimously argued that the diaspora community became significant as the internal trade grew in volume and value. Fabunmi made extensive research on trade, he pointed out that trade and commerce provided excellent evidence indicating that, in this area, inter-group contact, and integration were promoted. We agree with the premise that no group of people can survive in isolation. Trade promoted cultural fusion and constituted a factor affording an assessment of the extent of penetration in an area by outsiders.[43] However, the dynamics of trade in the integration of the people of Nigeria through exchange of goods and the immigration of merchants to markets outside their native areas and their eventual settlement as well as their social integration have been the major antecedent for inter-ethnic settings across the nation. Thus, trade has continued to mobilize people and products across the various parts of Nigeria without regard to ethnic, state, regional or religious barriers.[44]

Interestingly, inter-group relationship has some impacts most especially in trading which include the stimulation of favorable cultural exchanges. For example, Igbo and Yoruba traders in Jos main market have learnt to speak Hausa language, Hausa traders have also learnt to speak Yoruba and other ethnic languages. Also, many Hausa traders eat *eba, akpu, amala* and *ewedu* soup while their Yoruba counterpart crave for *tuwo* and drink *fura* and *kunu*. The popular Berom delicacy known as *goate* has been cherished by the migrant groups. Jos main market was full of migrant communities who formed settled communities of occupational specialist. The economic relationship had led to inter-ethnic marriages among different ethnic groups. A good example was Alhaji Yakubu Hamza, Hausa market trader who came to Jos in 1986 from Kano. He married an indigene of Plateau in 1988 few years after his arrival, the marriage was blessed with nine children among

[40]Mr. Henry Eze John, 70 years, Trader, Jos, 5th January 2023.
[41]See L. F. Okwuidegbe, 'From Migrant Workers to Traders: A History of the Igbo Trading Diaspora in Sokoto C. 1920-1967', M. A. (History) Dissertation, UDUS, 1986, P. 48.
[42]See Dele John Olu etal, 'Perspectives on Yoruba Migration to Mangu Town in the 20th Century' *Journal of Multi-Disciplinary Studies: A Publication of Institute for Peace Studies and Conflict Management (IPSACM), Taraba State University, Jalingo, Nigeria*, Vol. 4, No. 6, July 2022, P.136
[43]For More see M. O. Fabunmi, 'Inter-Group Relations Amongst the Riverine Communities of the Upper Middle Niger and Kabi Valley, 1500-1806 AD' PhD (History) Thesis, UDUS, 1989, P. 29.
[44]See B. M. Aliyu, 'A History of Kolanut Trade in Sokoto City: C. 1900-2014', M. A. (History)

whom is Buhari and Sani who are also involved in trading activities. The marriage is also blessed with grandchildren. This and several others are concrete evidence of the impact of the market in promoting inter-group understanding and in fostering unity. Jos main market was a factor of closer cooperation among the diverse ethnic groups inhabiting the market.[45]

Conclusion

This paper clarified the concepts of market, traders and inter-group relations. It has shown the relevance of Jos main market as an instrument of inter-ethnic cooperation. It has indicated some prominent trades men and women in Jos main market whose economic activities did not only lead to the expansion of the market alone but to the development of Jos metropolis in general. The research pointed out the history and location of Jos and factors that motivated migrant traders to the area. A brief history of the market was also narrated in the work. The summation is that the establishment of the market has helped immensely in bringing different ethnic groups together in Jos metropolis and in making different items of trade available not only to Jos inhabitants but people of other adjoining regions or states. Finally, what made this study different from other articles on Jos main market is that it pinpointed the fact that the market served as medium or mechanism for inter-group relations.

[45]Muhammed Kabiru Abubakar, 60 Years, Trader, Jos, 6th January 2023.