

Colonial Rule and Urbanization of Ejigbo

Iyanda Kamoru Ahmed^{1*}, Umoize Stanley²

Abstract

The objective of this work is to study the urbanization of Ejigbo from 1914 to 1976 AD. A multi-disciplinary approach had been used in writing this thesis. Oral information was extensively used in cross checking written data. The rise of urban centers was an important factor of social life in colonial Nigeria. Before colonial rule, a number of urban centers existed in Nigeria, especially in the areas that make up northern and western Nigeria. Thus, some urban centers in colonial Nigeria were expansions of pre-colonial ones. A few positive effects of urbanization in colonial Ejigbo can be identified. Urban life brought Ejigbo people of different cultures and backgrounds together. They engaged in many mutually lucrative activities in the fields of commerce, industry and so on. In this sense, urbanization was a source of integration in Ejigbo. This integration even included marital links. Lasting friendships were developed among people of Ejigbo and these proved helpful to the integration efforts. Urbanization also encouraged the emergence and growth of institutions and practices that were totally alien to Ejigbo Town. The local government of Ejigbo aims to boost economic development through industrialization, likely leading to increased urbanization. Urban centers in Ejigbo are crucial for economic growth, necessitating a well-defined urbanization policy. This policy should focus on regional economic planning, utilizing provincial boundaries for organization. Additionally, towns should be classified based on revenue capacity to determine their autonomy and developmental responsibilities. Data collection and investment in infrastructure are also imperative for effective urban planning. Furthermore, Ejigbo's historical significance and its role as a hub for the Muslim community underscore the need for inclusive development strategies.

Keywords: Colonial rule, culture, urbanization, integration, population, development of Ejigbo town

INTRODUCTION

Prior to 1900, Britain had used trading companies to control the territory now called Nigeria. In 1899, Britain revoked the charter of the Royal Niger Company and began to rule Nigeria by herself. Initially, Britain did not intend to rule this territory as one country and divided the territory into three separate political units, namely:

- i. The protectorate and colony of Lagos with headquarters at Lagos.
- ii. The protectorate of Northern Nigeria with headquarters at Lokoja.
- iii. The protectorate of Southern Nigeria with headquarters at Calabar. In 1906, the territory was

divided into two political units:

- The colony and protectorate of Southern Nigeria with the capital at Lagos.
- The protectorate of Northern Nigeria.

In 1914, the protectorate of Northern Nigeria, and the colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria were amalgamated into one political unit called Nigeria. Lord Lugard divided the country into provinces and districts administered by residents and district officers. During this period of the First World War (1914–1918), Lord Lugard introduced a system of government known as indirect rule. The

*Author for Correspondence

Iyanda Kamoru Ahmed
E-mail: ogiyanhistonet@gmail.com

¹Senior Lecturer, Department of History and International Studies, Federal University, Gashua Yobe State, Nigeria

²Research Scholar, Department of History, University of Benin, Benin, Edo State, Nigeria

Received Date: January 31, 2024

Accepted Date: February 22, 2024

Published Date: May 17, 2024

Citation: Iyanda Kamoru Ahmed, Umoize Stanley. Colonial Rule and Urbanization of Ejigbo. *OmniScience: A Multi-disciplinary Journal*. 2024; 14(2): 1–7p.

emirs of Northern Nigeria also failed to stop the British from taking over their territory because their spears, bows and arrows could not prevail against the machine guns used by Lord Lugard.

Inevitably many educated Nigerians did not like British rule. First of all, they wanted British to allow educated Nigerians to take part in the government of this country. The great nationalist who did this was a man called Herbert Macaulay, who formed the Nigerian Democratic party to challenge the British [1].

As a result of this, four Nigerians were appointed into the legislative council to help in making laws for the country. Three of these members were elected to represent Lagos colony, and the remaining one for Calabar. For his work Herbert Macaulay is regarded as the father of Nigerian nationalism. The next group of nationalists included Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe, Ernest Ukoli, Chief Nyong Esseini, Chief Awolowo, Professor Eyo Ita, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello and Abubakar Tafawa Balewa. All these nationalists became very famous during the 1916–1940. The coming of Chief Obafemi Awolowo to Ejigbo and Chief Akintola were noted during the reign of Oba Emmanuel Oyetunde Mogbesola II, (1940–1971) [2].

The nationalist formed political parties, which agitated for changes in the constitutions of 1922 and 1947. The emirs of the north and the obas of the west were allowed to rule their people directly under native law and custom. In Eastern Nigeria where there were no chiefs as powerful as either the Emirs or Oba, Lord Lugard appointed warrant chiefs to rule clans. Unfortunately, as most of the warrant chiefs did not come from traditional ruling house, there was a lot of dissatisfaction in Eastern Nigeria about British rule. This was one of the reasons for the women's riot of 1929, known in history as Aba Riot. Indirect rule was a system of government in which the British administrators rule the people of Nigeria through their Emirs, Oba and Warrant Chiefs, It can be noted that it was during this period that Oba Bello Oyedemi ruled in Ejigbo [3].

This was between (1916 and 1940). His reign influenced a lot of changes in Ejigbo. It was during his time, the road linked Ejigbo and Ede in 1917. Also, in 1927 there was construction of Ejigbo-Oko-Ogbomoso Road. This influenced the coming of the missionaries, traders and Islamic scholars into Ejigbo.

Action group played vital role in political awareness in Ejigbo through the vital role played by Chief Obafemi Awolowo and Chief Akiritola from Ogbomoso.

It was during this time there were constitutional reforms in Nigeria. These parties together forced British to grant the following constitutions and made reforms [4].

Sir Arthur Richards Constitution of 1946.

- i. The Machpherson Constitution of 1951.
- ii. The Littleton Constitution of 1953–1954.

These constitutions had great effects on urbanization of Ejigbo because of the political activities then in Ibadan spread to Osogbo, Iwo, Ogbomoso, Oyo, Ede and Ejigbo. As a result of the activities of these renowned nationalists, British granted Nigerians greater participation in the government of the country. Between 1957 and 1959, the western region, the eastern region and the northern region of Nigeria became self-governing. This was during the reign of Oba Emmanuel Oyetunde Mogbesola (1940–1971) [5].

In October 1960, Nigeria became independent, and last British Governor General Sir James Robertson left Nigeria. Nigeria was still under the tutelage of British because of privy council, until 1963, Nigeria became Republican. It was during the reign of Oba Emmanuel Oyetunde Mogbosola II, 1940–1971, the independence of Nigeria had great effect on urbanization of Ejigbo in all ramifications policy toward Ejigbo's development.

The advent of Nigerian independence in 1960 brought her a greatly expanded level of governmental activities. The post-war commodity boom and the creation of commodity marketing boards had led to large capital reserves, which were quickly drawn upon in a flurry of post-independence development. The pre-independence events were also felt in Ejigbo because of the political activities in the neighboring towns, like: Iwo, Osogbo, Ogbomoso, Ife and Ilesa. The benefit of this situation was that a large amount of public investment had been made in urban development in Ejigbo during this period. This was during the reign of Oba Emmanuel Oyetunde Mogbosola II, the 28th Ogiyan of Ejigbo. He ruled from 1940 to 1971. In 1954, the secretary for the council then was Mr. Tella, A.A. He was said to be a hardworking man since 1954. Ejigbo became a district and the district became Ejigbo Local Government in 1976 [6].

It was during this time that top civil servants and policy makers resided and worked in Ejigbo. Also, most of these policy makers did not come from Ejigbo. Their allegiances were to their hometowns. Later, their connection with Ejigbo was a comfortable existence within the town, and they have no need to concern themselves much with their hometowns as before, because they later affiliated themselves through marriage. Finally, the norms and aspiration of many of these policy making focused on rapid progress toward achieving the sophisticated levels of industrialized towns like: Ibadan, Lagos, Osogbo and Ogbomoso, and away from the traditional socio-economic system. This approach was reflected in the large amounts of money spent on the physical development of the Divisional Teachers College established in 1953 [7].

In 1953, this Divisional Teachers College admitted students from Iwo, Ede, Osogbo and Ogbomoso. The establishment of Divisional Teachers College increased the tempo of urbanization in Ejigbo. Prince Oladepo Oyetunde said that it brought awareness and physical development of the town.

Ejigbo Town Planning Authority

In statutory forms, Ejigbo Town Planning Authority was well established. It was governed by a board comprised of private individuals and ex-office members from several of the governmental agencies involved in the town's development. The authority was empowered to control the standard by which land was sub-divided and arid buildings were erected to make an over-all master plan for the town and detailed development plans for smaller areas such as; Apola, Songbe, Isundunrin, Ado-on, Ilawo, Masifa, Inisa, Ijimoba, Afake, Aye, Agurodo, and Ola. These were under the district council and under Ejigbo local government.

The town planning division of the Ministry of Lands and Housing had supervisory powers over the Ejigbo Town Planning Authority. The inter relationship between the two agencies was much stronger than that dictated by role of the division, since the latter had provided the professional staffing for the authority and had done most of the authority's design work, including the master plan under preparation. Thus, the problems of the authority described above were also the problems of the town planning division [8].

The town planning division had not formulated a comprehensive policy for urban development within the state. Its policies as evidenced in practice seemed to be oriented to modern or western type of development. There was no indication that the division had attempted to formulate a strategy for coping with the problem of indigenous urban areas. Thus most of its work for the Ejigbo Town Planning consisted of layout designs for low-density residential areas. The role of Western State Ministry of Lands and Housing had been in allocating of resources for developing roads, parks, housing and institution in the town.

Local Government Reforms and Urbanization of Ejigbo

Ejigbo Local Governments enshrined many radical innovations which brought about a revamping social structure. The aim was to bring the government closer to the people and give them opportunity to participate in decision making and any other matter affecting their lives.

The new reforms were designed to make appropriate services and development facilitate the exercise of democratic self-government. Furthermore, the reforms were a device through which members of the public could be involved in local development thus mobilizing human and material resources [9].

Ejigbo is charged with the following functions: markets and motor-parks, sanitary inspection, public conveniences; registration of births, licensing and regulations of bicycles and the vehicles, advertisement, naming of roads, streets and numbering of plots, buildings, collection of vehicle parking charges: collection of property rates and other designated revenue resources.

The members of the council concentrated on policy making and in ensuring accountability of the local government staff for the proper execution of such policies and programmes.

Co-Operative Societies and Urbanization of Ejigbo

The co-operative societies are a movement aimed to help the members in social development. The resources and wealth of the people are geared towards the welfare of its people. The policy initiated is to promote and the growth of co-operatives as an instrument of socio-economic development in Ejigbo.

Also, as socio-economic business organization, it embraces agricultural and other producers, processing and marketing and consumers in the area of distribution. The policy of the people has been to encourage the establishment of public distribution system of essential consumer goods at reasonable prices through co-operative consumer shops. In the wake of this programme, co-operative societies such as cooperative thrift and credit societies in 1975 and 1976 received a good boost and impetus to combat the evil effect of inflation.

There are over twenty primary agricultural co-operative societies operating in Ejigbo. These societies provided the requisite production inputs such as fertilizers and credit to small and medium scale farmers in Ejigbo and other towns like: Masifa, Isundumrin, Ola, and Agurodo. The co-operative societies contributed to urbanization of Ejigbo by improving the level of small and medium level farmers. In 1976, the total numbers of farmers in the society were more than 50.

In 1976, co-operative societies planned to re-organize local craft industries on co-operative basis. The co-operative societies provided the resources to procure raw materials, wages and marketing and service facilities in order to resuscitate the dying local craft industries in Ejigbo Local Government [8].

Problems of Urbanization in Ejigbo

There is enough information to show that there exists a problem in relation to housing in Ejigbo and that the magnitude of the problem is not much. Rapid urbanization coupled with a high population growth rate has seriously aggravated the shortage of dwelling units in Ejigbo resulting in overcrowding and high rent which made it difficult for people. The problem of rapid urbanization is the myth concerning the newly arrived migrant to Ejigbo. Some came from Ola, Isundunrin, Liesa, Osogbo, Iwo, Oko, even Ogbomoso. This myth holds that the migrant, lured to Ejigbo by the dynamic tempo of urban life and its economic potential is doomed to frustration and social problem due to lack of employment.

The urban poor cash income was insufficient to cover minimal standards of food, water, fuel, shelter, medical care and schooling. It can be noted that some lived in poor environmental conditions with the highest deficits of basic services. They suffered more from poor infrastructure in terms of ill health, lack of accessibility, high unemployment and under employment, poor access to credit, equipment/technology, and land, with a disproportionate of the burden falling on children.

Rapid growth has had a harmful effect on surrounding eco-system. Poor management of local government wastes—refuse sewage, the best example of this in Ejigbo was Sagan, an area in Ejigbo beside First Baptist Church, Oke-Balogun. Another problem was that of slaughter — houses untreated and often toxic liquid effluents into open gutters and streams made lives unsafe and dangerous. For

example, the slaughterhouse beside central Hotel Ejigbo, and the one beside Ansar-ud-Deen primary school, Ejigbo [4–8].

Recommendation

The town development as an organized activity by the inhabitants of Ejigbo, aimed of satisfying certain common needs in the process of creating a new structure, and adoption of new attitudes and skills. This section following the view of conception of urban development contained two essential aspects which should be distinguished.

The first one was the eco-technological aspect of Ejigbo in which ecological and technical factors were dominant in change (constructing roads, building schools and hospitals, etc.); the second one was the cultural dimension in which strict socio-cultural factors were dominant in change; among them, primarily was activating the people i.e., making them active participants in the town development i.e., programme planning and decision making in Ejigbo. As a result of this, urban development in Ejigbo should be in this manner.

Motivation and mobilization of people to provide most of their felt needs by themselves, minimum support from government making the people better in managing their own affairs by promoting effective community organization in the field of housing, education and transportation in order to raise the general standard of living.

The activities of the community development associations, the governmental agencies and the experts are to be considered. It is necessary that every adult from age of 16 years living in Ejigbo is expected to be a member of the area community development association. Factors such as religion, sex and race should not be a barrier from being a member for the wellbeing of the people and the rich variety of development activities in Ejigbo Local Government Area of Osun State, Nigeria [10].

CONCLUSION

If the policy of the local government in Ejigbo remains that of stimulating economic development through increasing industrialization, then we must expect a marked rise in the proportion of people who live in Ejigbo. The most important is that urbanization in Ejigbo is based on modern industrial technology which led to the emergence of towns in Ejigbo.

It is possible to surmise three axial belts where such developments can be expected within the town. These are the axial belts between Ejigbo and Ibadan in the west, between Ejigbo and Ibadan in the east and between Ejigbo and Ede in the north. Such concentrations of population could aggravate rather than resolve problems of equitable distribution of development throughout the town and this is why, more than at any other time in the history of Ejigbo, there is a great need for a clearly formulated urbanization policy. Such a policy must be based on the realization of the crucial role of urban centers for generating economic development within a given region. Thus, a positive urbanization policy must be part of a bigger conception of town economic planning. One idea is to focus on the major agricultural regions currently recognized and encourage industries in those areas that would have a significant multiplier effect on the local agricultural economy. In other words, industrial development in the town within each region should be largely oriented to the processing of raw materials from the region. However, because such economic regions have boundaries, which have never been of any administrative significance, another idea is to equate the planning regions with current provincial boundaries.

In further support of this view is the belief that provinces, as units of organization, could provide a better basis for stimulating major developmental efforts among local population based on their common historical association and their strong sense of belonging together. It is obvious that these two ideas are not irreconcilable, and a group of provinces can be organized into an economic region. However, in order that the town may perform efficiently their function as growth points of the economy, it would be

necessary to review the nature of their management. As a first step in this direction, it is suggested that the previous colonial system of classifying urban centers should be revived. The class of a town this time should be based on its revenue raising capacity. This, in turn, should decide the nature of its responsibilities, the scale of its administrative machinery, the range of decisions which it can make and the type and size of infrastructural investments which it can have. Thus, a large town with an equally large annual income should be accorded greater autonomy to plan its own economic growth, while smaller towns or large cities with small revenue — base should be nurtured gradually to enable them to take over an increasing range of activities necessary for their growth and development. Town should be upgraded as they attain given levels of annual income, this being used along with other yard sticks of administrative efficiency.

Revenue—raising capacity is clearly fundamental to the range of functions towns can perform, and the government should encourage urban centers to seek ways and means of achieving this. Property rating is one such means, which has so far not been tried by most urban centers. Another method is for governments to make it possible for cities to borrow from industrial development or other banks a certain proportion of the capital required for particular local projects, provided they can raise the rest locally by their own effort.

One final area of major policy decision is that of data collection. No planning can proceed without the data necessary for knowing even the most elementary facts about the urban areas and the country as a whole. The present study has suffered immensely from its dependence largely on the 1952 census reports. It has been difficult to describe growth rate patterns in Ejigbo because of an absence of vital statistics.

Ejigbo has been very important since the pre-colonial days. This also extends to the recent time. The town was made the headquarters of a District Council in 1954. The Council is now referred to as a local Government and called Ejigbo Local Government by 1976 reform.

This gives room for description and analysis of the town (Ejigbo) with other towns in terms of road linkage. As described earlier, the town is a little central, it links the north via Ogbomoso Road and the south through Iwo Road and the east on Ede Road.

The growth of the Muslim community can be noted in Ejigbo. The rapid growth of Islam both in size and status, marked the turn of the nineteenth century as the era when Islam in Ejigbo reached a high watermark in urbanization of Ejigbo.

In the course of its growth Islam had been exerting considerable influence in Ejigbo. It had widened the scope of its connections and enriched the content of its culture. Altogether, it had provided an elevating civilization. As an alternative to the Colonial Western civilization introduced during this period, the Muslim civilization was particularly beneficial, as it better preserved local values and dignity. Moreover, being open to Western ideas, it offered society a cultural synthesis richer than anything previously available.

REFERENCES

1. Marzluff JM, Alberti M, Bradley G, et al. *Urban Ecology: An International Perspective on the Interaction between Humans and Nature*. New York: Springer Science+Business Media, LLC; 2008.
2. Mabogunje AL. Urbanization in Nigeria. A constraint on economic development. *Econ Dev Cult Change*. 1965 Jul 1; 13(4, Part 1): 413–38.
3. Emezi HO. *Nigerian population and urbanization, 1911-1974: A bibliography*. UCLA: James S. Coleman African Studies Center; 1975. Available from: <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/82w1w85t>.

4. Anene JC, Brown GN, Dike KO. Africa in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: A handbook for teachers and students. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press; Nelson; 1966.
5. Harvey D. Social processes and spatial form: an analysis of the conceptual problems of urban planning. In Pap Reg Sci Assoc. 1970 Dec; 25(1): 46–69. Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer-Verlag.
6. Clark D. Interdependent urbanization in an urban world: An historical overview. Geogr J. 1998;164(1):85-95. doi: 10.2307/3060547.
7. Short JR. An introduction to urban geography. Routledge; 2017 Oct 12.
8. O'Connor A. The African City. Routledge; 2013 Jan 11.
9. Gottdiener M, Hohle R, King C. The new urban sociology. Routledge; 2019 May 17.
10. Lewis R. yT Bibliographical Studies, Vol. 6. Edited by TW Freeman. London: Mansell, 1982. 156 pp. 21-5 x 275 cm. np ISBN 07201 16643. Looks at twenty.