

**The Developmental Agency of Ethnic Migrants and the Phobia over  
Economic Domination: The Historical Experience in Katsina since 1903**

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**Abstract**

*Human migration has been a pivotal factor in development processes since antiquity. As groups migrate, they often coalesce around shared identity makers, with ethnicity being a primary identifier. When migrants settle in new areas alongside established communities, they inevitably become ethnic migrants, driven by the inherent logic of early settlement pattern. This paper explores the developmental agency of ethnic migrants in Katsina since 1903 when the phenomenon of migrants gained traction. It also dispels notions of economic domination. Through critical analysis, the paper argues that ethnic migrants have been strategic development partners, and concerns about domination should focus on entrepreneurial ethics rather than ethnic profiling. The findings of the paper show that ethnic group's commercial success stems from comparative advantages not ethnic affiliation. The findings further underscore the imperative of fostering cooperative relations amongst ethnic groups in the country to advance nation-building and herald national development. The research utilizes a historical methodology.*

**Keywords:** Ethnic migrants, Phobia, Economic domination, Katsina State

**Introduction**

The phenomenon of ethnic migrants emanates from internal migration. Migratory flows are historic human dispositions which are propelled by the unquenchable quest for better economic opportunities and prospects. In Nigeria, waves of migration whether in the pre-colonial, colonial or post-colonial eras were fecundated by the search for economic prospects. In the pre-colonial era, migratory trends were linked to legends of origin which involved tales of movements across landscapes. These migratory movements and human settlements evolved patterns of social formations and intergroup relations. In



fact, it was these movements that simulated societal transformations. The phenomenon of migrants therefore outdates the naissance of modern literacy and is as old as mankind. In the colonial era, migration led to transformations in urbanization. Effective colonial domination of territories in Nigeria became a fact as from 1900 sequel to the withdrawal of the Royal Niger Company's charter<sup>1</sup>. The development heralded enormous economic, social, and political alterations in the hitherto existing societal realities. For instance, the erection of administrative structures coupled with the evolvement of new nodal points as well as the construction of critical transport routes; the entrenchment of a cash economy combined with other colonial impetus to compel large scale migration of population to participate in the colonial economy. The transport infrastructure that was laid made contact between the different Nigerian community easy and expanded inter-group contacts. Migratory waves continued in the post-colonial era. The destination centers were mostly the industrial areas such as those in Lagos, Port Harcourt, Kano, Kaduna and so on. Administrative reorganization arising from the creation of States also provided opportunities for migrants across the ethnicities to cash on. The intergroup relations that spurted is mixed. In some respects, it has been conflict-ridden, in others, it has been mutually beneficial to both migrants and the host communities. Ethnic migrants have also been perceived as captors of economic spaces in their host communities rather than just development agents. The perception of ethnic migrants as captors of economic spaces is misplaced. Instead, migrant entrepreneurs leverage their unique strengths, entrepreneurial spirit, cultural networks, adaptability, and resilience to excel in business areas where they possess a comparative advantage. A pivotal question arises: do ethnic migrants function as catalysts for development or perpetuators of economic domination? This paper sets out to answer this fundamental question using the experience in Katsina since 1903. The discourse is sectionalized.

### Denoting the Area of Study

Katsina is one of the ancient Hausa states that flourished as a center of trade and learning. In fact Katsina society between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries is reported as being economically prosperous and an educational hub in relation to the other Hausa States. The greatness of Katsina during this time was attributable to three major factors namely; trade, scholarship and effective leadership. These factors earned it the unofficial title of *Sarkin Kasuwa* (the center of trade) of Hausaland; its exploits in education and scholarship were also remarkable<sup>2</sup>.

During the reign of Sarkin Katsina Muhammadu Korau, Katsina began to experience what could be described as effective central administration. The centralization of administration began with the relocation of the administrative headquarters from *Durbi Takushyi* to the present *Birnin Katsina*. The Emir's

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<sup>1</sup> Aboyade, O. (1966) *Foundation of an African Economy: A Study of Investment and Growth in Nigeria*, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, pp5-12.

<sup>2</sup> . Usman, Y.B. (1981) *The Transformation of Katsina (1400-1883): The Emergence of the Sarauta System and the Establishment of the Emirate*, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.

palace was then built strategically at the center of the Birni to serve as the seat of power<sup>3</sup>. It is important to note that the location of capitals during the pre-colonial era in Northern Nigeria was based on the availability of water and a topographical layout that could guarantee security. City gates were constructed to further fortify the capital. This initiative enhanced efficiency in administration and enthroned a favorable environment for trade.

By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, Katsina made remarkable trade connections with North Africa up to Maghrib and Hijaz. Trade routes interconnected the major trade centers up to Kumasi, in the present day Ghana. These trade routes made Katsina a strategic trading post in Hausaland. Katsina also had trade routes that connected the South through Gwanja-Kumasi-Salaga. Birnin Yawuri-Yandoto<sup>4</sup>. The point is that by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Katsina was strategically located and benefitted immensely from the trade opportunities that trade routes enabled. And the major commodities of trade were salt and kolanuts. Yahya gives vent to Katsina's economic importance when he states that:

...Katsina joined the universal community of international commerce, ideas and politics, camel caravans began to cross the Sahara from Ghadames, Tripoli, and Tunis southward to Katsina and brought prosperity as well as Islamic learning. Katsina became the *SarkinKasuwa* (the chief of market) of the Hausa<sup>5</sup>.

It bears adding that Katsina along other Hausa States produced numerous agricultural commodities, textiles, leather goods and other items which were high in demand throughout the Saharan. Trade with North Africa also facilitated the spread of Islam in the region and Katsina was privileged to be one of the Hausa States to have early contact with Islam in the region. The proliferation of Islamic schools among other factors led to the emergence of indigenous scholars who were known throughout the Muslim parts of Africa. Learning centers like Gobarau, Yandoto, GUGA, Sabuwar Kasuwa and Masanawa developed. These centers made Katsina an intellectual hub in Hausaland. This fact is well acknowledged by European explorers and colonial officials. Islam was to a large extent established as a State religion in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century and therefore became Katsina Society's cultural and spiritual identity<sup>6</sup>. These trends continued throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> up to the 18<sup>th</sup> centuries.

The turning point in the history of Katsina began in the 19<sup>th</sup> century sequel to the 1804 jihad which affected Katsina in profound ways and generated many upheavals especially in the political, economic and social spheres. For instance, when Katsina was captured by the jihadists in 1808, there were three Jihad leaders from the State who were recognized by Sokoto and mandated to take

<sup>3</sup> . Usman, Y.B. (1981) *The Transformation of Katsina (1400-1883)*...

<sup>4</sup> . Aliyu, N. (2011) "Katsina City-Wall (GanuwarKatsina): The History of a Monument, its Preservation and Collapse c. 1436-2008, *MA Dissertation (History)* UsmanDanfodiyo University, Sokoto, July.

<sup>5</sup> . Yahya, D. (2012) "The Role of History in Nation Building, Bridges Across missing Linkages" Department of History , Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

<sup>6</sup> .Yahya, D. (2012) "The Role of History in Nation Building, Bridges Across missing Linkages"...

charge of the revolution in State. They were Ummarun Dallaje, Muhammad Na Alhaji and Ummarun Dumiya. Although Ummarun Dallaje was appointed as the Emir of Katsina by Sokoto, his area of influence was limited to Karaduabain and large part of the eastern plains. The other two jihad leaders, Malam Muhammad Na Alhaji and Ummarun Dumiya carved their own areas of influence. These three leaders even divided the State capital into three parts. The balkanization of spheres of influence undermined the central administration that existed prior to the Jihad<sup>7</sup>. The vortex implication of this was felt more in the economic sphere because it affected economic prosperity. Thus, the Jihad distorted not only the political fabric of Katsina society but also impeded economic prosperity.

The disarticulation also triggered power struggles. For instance, the Korau ruling family did not give up power peacefully. They staged several attacks from Maradi to reclaim their throne. The rebellion is labeled in intellectual circles as Maradi revolt or rebellion. Muhammad Dankasawa from the fallen Korau family was invited by the rebels to lead them. Others like Dantunku also posed a serious challenge to the new establishment in Katsina. After succeeding in having control of the Maradi area, Dankasawa established himself as Sarkin Katsina of Maradi which means that a new Katsina was created in protest<sup>8</sup>.

Political instability continued until the coming of the British in 1903. While Kano and Sokoto prospered economically during this period, the economy of Katsina experienced a downturn. The recession was due in large part to the power struggles that the Jihad ignited. It is therefore for this reason that Lovejoy indicates that; the town (Katsina) declined rapidly and all the principal foreign merchants migrated to Kano<sup>9</sup>. The Tuaregs for example, transferred their salt market to Kano<sup>10</sup>. Though some of the merchants remained in Katsina, the tempo of economic activities was at a low ebb. This history is important in appreciating why Katsina was not an attractive destination for migrants in the early part of colonial rule. In the colonial era, Katsina was structured as an emirate under Kano province. By 1924, Katsina and Daura existed as divisional administrations under Zaria province. In 1934, Katsina province which was a merger of Katsina and Daura divisions was created. In the post-colonial era, Katsina existed as part of Kaduna State and only became a full-fledged State in 1987 following another round of State creation. The opportunities that these administrative reorganizations offered attracted migrants to the area in streams.

### Ethnic Migrants: A Conceptual Scheme

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<sup>7</sup>Rabiu, B.A. & Azaigba, K.T. (2023) "British Conquest of Katsina: Explaining the Circs" in Sifawa, A.A. et al (eds.) *The Military, State, Society and Security in Nigeria*, Sokoto, Department of History, Sokoto State University, p.400.

<sup>8</sup> . Rabiu, B.A. & Azaigba, K.T. (2023) "British Conquest of Katsina: Explaining the Circs" ...p.401.

<sup>9</sup> . Rabiu, B.A. & Azaigba, K.T. (2023) "British Conquest of Katsina: Explaining the Circs" ...p.401.

<sup>10</sup> .Lovejoy, P.E. (1980) *Caravans of Kola: The Hausa Kola Trade, 1700-1900*, Zaria: Ahmadu Bello University Press.

By ethnic migrants we make reference to a group of people with a common ancestral trace who have moved from their ancestral base which is a homeland to places where they are regarded as settlers within a nation-state. As a demographic concept, it connotes cultural elements that migrants exhibit in areas they move to. Furthermore, ethnic migrants denotes a primary place of origin, ancestry, cultural identity which compels the blending of ethnicities, cultures, or identities in an adaptive form to cope in a new environment<sup>11</sup>. Thus, the flow of ethnic migrants is a direct consequence of migration patterns and processes. The definition of who is a migrant is contested and as a result there is no universally acceptable definition. For instance, whilst migration is generally used to refer to movement of people from one place to another, a distinction is also drawn between immigrants (people who are, or intend to be settled in their new country) and migrants (people who are temporarily resident). It bears observing that in both categories, the question of temporariness and permanence is fluid and could appear in both cases. Nonetheless, the International Organization for Migration<sup>12</sup> couched an operational definition which has gained traction across scholarly jurisdictions. A migrant is defined in terms of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently and for a variety of reasons. This definition is instructive and covers the variegated dynamics of migrations. It also suits our purpose in this exposition.

As migrants move, they form identity constructs to project group interests so as to cope with the vagaries of the new environment. Migrant ethnicity is therefore deployed to organize around a common platform of ethnicity. It is worth adding that, ethnicity is often deployed descriptively to refer to the micro and macro levels of group identity<sup>13</sup>. As a term, it denotes a shared identity which is projected using the compass of a communal group affiliation. The communal group affiliation is then used to contain fears, anxieties and threats. Very importantly, it also performs the function of mobilizing and galvanizing migrants towards a set ethnic objective. Osaghae<sup>14</sup> intones that individuals invoke group identity as an ethnic strategy in a competitive setting. Burgess<sup>15</sup> points out that ethnic groups are the sine qua non of ethnicity. He explains further that the meaning of ethnic group is a group whose members differentiate themselves from others on the basis of certain common objective criteria like language, culture and territory, and subjective criteria like the myth of common origin. Burgess's argument does indicate clearly that ethnicity is a pedestal for ethnic mobilization.

<sup>11</sup> .The definitional elements of ethnic migrants are well captured in extant literature. See for example, Alavi, H. (1989) "Politics of Ethnicity in India and Pakistan", in *Sociology of Developing Societies*, London, Macmillan; Albert, I. O. (1994) "Urban Migrant Settlements in Nigeria: A Historical Comparison of the Sabon Garis in Kano and Ibadan, 1893-1991". PhD Thesis, University of Ibadan.

<sup>12</sup> . International Organization for Migration (2019), *The UN Migration Agency*.

<sup>13</sup> . Migrant ethnicity and ethnic migrants are used interchangeably to refer to the micro and macro level of group identity.

<sup>14</sup> Osaghae E. Eghosa (1994) *Trends of Migrant Political Organization in Nigeria, The Igbo in Kano*, Ibadan: IFRA.

<sup>15</sup> . Burgess cited in Osaghae E. Eghosa (1994) *Trends of Migrant Political Organization in Nigeria*, ...p.7.

The cohesiveness and influence of an ethnic group in a competitive setting depends to a very large degree on its size. This explains why ethnic groups seek to evolve platforms that make the ethnic strategy competitive and impactful. The formation of associational ethnicity is often for the purpose of galvanizing a common front. The point being made is that ethnic associations are an amalgam of sub-groups which is often differentiated by dialect, cultural or religious similarities, and proximity or common problems<sup>16</sup>.

Flowing from the expression of ethnicity is the phenomenon of associational ethnicity which is essentially organization based ethnicity. Put simply, associational ethnicity is ethnic association. Many of the ethnic associations are based in urban centers and are deployed in articulating group interest especially when in competition with other ethnic groups. In Africa, a typical example of associational ethnicity are tribal unions. The historicity of its evolution is traceable to the colonial era when people moved from rural areas to cities in search of opportunities. Ethnic associations exist as interest groups with articulated ethnic objectives. Ethnic associations are often rated on the bases of size of membership and scale of organization. These parameters are indicative of the degree to which interests are expressed. Ethnic associations also take the form of pan-ethnic associations which are organized on a nation-wide stretch with branches in major cities. Pan-ethnic associations have broader objectives and seek to extend the frontiers of ethnic solidarity<sup>17</sup>.

Ethnic associations are also defined in terms of declared objectives and actual operations. Some have political objectives, others are cultural groups. Still others combine both social and economic objectives. It is worth stating that associational ethnicity is voluntary and not everyone from a particular ethnic group joins. In sum. Associational ethnicity reinforces ethnic loyalties and identities as well as entrench in-group cohesion. When associational ethnicity matures, ethnic empires emerge as administrative pivots of leadership. Osaghae<sup>18</sup> defines migrant ethnic empires as a peculiar and advanced form of associational ethnicity in which relatively permanent migrants usually in distant cities from their homelands decide to pursue their constitutive interests through the (re)creation of centralized political authority. Migrant ethnic empires involve traditional loyalties and ties which have a "king" or "Chief" at the center. Such emergent empires bring together migrants from related such-groups to forge a new unity based on cultural and customary practices. It is a higher grade ethnic association. In Katsina, as in all ethnic Diasporas in Nigeria, there are numerous ethnic associations many of which have evolved ethnic empires of some sort. Across Katsina, the dominant ethnic migrants are of Yoruba and Igbo ethnic stock. Though the minority ethnic groups in Nigeria are also represented but in much smaller numbers, too few to constitute a central pole of analysis.

<sup>16</sup> . Green, L.H. (1974) "Migration, Urbanization and National Development in Nigeria", in S. Amin, ed. *Modern Migration in West Africa*, London, Oxford University Press.

<sup>17</sup> . Osaghae E. Eghosa (1994) *Trends of Migrant Political Organization in Nigeria*...p.5

<sup>18</sup> . Osaghae E. Eghosa (1994) *Trends of Migrant Political Organization in Nigeria*...p.6.

### **Between the Developmental Agency of Ethnic Migrants and the Phobia over Economic Dominance: The Historical Experience in Katsina**

The debate on the role of migrants in development is not new. Much of the debate is often on the migrant factor in international migration especially the impact of remittances on development. For instance, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has couched four issues that link migration and development. The four multifaceted and mutually reinforcing issues are stated thus:

- (a) Driven by lack opportunities at a local level, migration has long been considered an essential strategy for improving individual and social well-being and expanding one's possibilities for development. Poverty, instability, lack of access to education or other basic services are only some of the factors that can push individuals to migrate;
- (b) Migration can also be seen as an outcome of enhanced development because , as development takes place and income level rise, so too does migration, with people having more resources and therefore more ability to migrate;
- (c) As a contributor to development, migration can result in better employment opportunities for the individual, higher incomes, and can open possibilities for acquiring or improving skills and knowledge. Very often, however, these gains are negated by poor working and living conditions, lack of access to basic services, discrimination and other human rights violations. At the house hold/family level, migration of family members often help those remaining behind to increase their family income and improve healthcare and educational opportunities, with negative consequences including increased dependency on remittances, and separated families;
- (d) Migration can also be an inherent consequence of development-related initiatives, such as the effects of trade, evolution of agriculture, urbanization or other trends and policies that lead to migration or displacement<sup>19</sup>.

The above outlined issues generally highlight why people migrate to areas of opportunities and the developmental agency of migration. Though the focus of the IOM is on international migration, the framework is also relevant in explaining and making extrapolations on internal migrations. For context, our interest in this paper is not to join in theoretical extrapolations on migration but to provide practical experiences on the developmental agency of ethnic migrants and explain the context in which economic dominance emerges as well as the nature of the phobia.

It is indisputable that migrants are catalysts of development. As explorers and exploiters of opportunities, ethnic migrants convert products of innovation into developmental goods and services. And as opportunities are exploited, areas of comparative advantage emerge and migrants with the entrepreneurial wherewithal tend to dominate some economic spaces or business areas. This attitude is an entrepreneurial tendency which cannot be delinked in a capitalist

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<sup>19</sup> . *International Organization for Migration* (2019)...



economy. Therefore, whilst migrants contribute to development, they also seek areas of comparative advantage. This tendency has often sparked ethnic tension; it is however apposite that it is understood in terms of the dynamics of entrepreneurship in a capitalist system. Bako in an inaugural lecture on "The Igbo Factor in the History of Intergroup Relations and Commerce in Kano" expressed phobia over perceived economic domination by the Igbo migrant group. He states inter alia:

... searching for economic power and dominance make the Igbo to be desperate and aggressive. Desperation is what makes them to not only be disliked by host communities in several of the areas of their dominance in Northern Nigeria but pushed some young Igbo into criminal activities... because of ethnic solidarity. Igbo traders gradually marginalized or even displaced large number of Hausa traders...<sup>20</sup>

Bako's extrapolation on the Igbo migrant ethnicity in Kano, the State with the highest concentration of ethnic migrants of Igbo extraction in Northern Nigeria has since been criticized as an attempt at ethnic profiling and Igbophobia<sup>21</sup>. Our interest here is to provide a context for understanding perceived economic domination by migrant ethnic groups. It is instructive to note that, in any capitalist context and competitive setting, monopolistic tendencies are common entrepreneurial behaviors. It is therefore not based on ethnic affiliation but a capitalist tendency. The vortex point here is that, as ethnic groups interact in a competitive setting, they also seek areas of influence based on their comparative advantage whilst also contributing to development. In fact, one of the goals of associational ethnicity is to organize and competitively gain group advantage. Thus, aside playing a developmental function, migrants also seek to leverage their distinctive entrepreneurial advantages to monopolize economic spheres. Azaigba in the case of the Igbo migrant community in Gboko notes that:

Being mostly traders, the Igbo pioneered trading in strategic spheres which has significantly contributed to making Gboko an urban town. For example the Igbo pioneered trading in building materials, motor spare parts, pharmaceuticals, timber, electrical materials, etc... field observations have also indicated a domineering presence of the Igbo in the economy of Gboko. In fact, virtually every line in Gboko main market is dominated by Igbo traders dealing in a variety of essential goods. Outside the market, the Igbo operate stalls, shops in all corners of the town. As traders, the Igbo have helped in generating revenue for the development of Gboko through payment of taxes and levies.

<sup>20</sup> .Bako, A. (2024) "The Igbo Factor in the History of Intergroup Relations and Commerce in Kano: Opportunities and Challenges" Inaugural Lecture , p.39.

<sup>21</sup> . See, Odinkalu, A, Chidi, (2024) "History, Hissy Fits, and Hatchery about the Igbo", <https://thenigerialawyer.com>.; Idemobi, Ellis, (2024) "Prof Ahmed Bako's Inaugural Lecture: Exploits in Intellectual Shallow Thinking", Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University; ObasiEmeka (2024) "Bako, The Bandit Historian", *Saturday Vanguard*, September, 21.p.23.



A sizeable percentage of the overall internally generated revenue in Gboko comes from taxes and levies paid by the Igbo<sup>22</sup>.

Thus the developmental agency of migrants and the disposition to leverage entrepreneurial advantages are but two sides of ethnic migrants.

The historical experience in Katsina since the advent of colonial rule indicates that ethnic migrants have progressively made developmental interventions in their host communities across the State. In a field study of local governments with reasonable concentration of ethnic migrants such as those in Dutsin-Ma, Funtua, Malumfashi, and Bakori, it was found that they impacted chiefly the economic and educational spheres of the State especially in assisting the evolution of urban centers and human resource development. For a proper grasps of their developmental interventions, it is important to isolate the local governments for analysis. For clarity, all the local governments studied were burgeoning urban centers before there were made local governments in the post-colonial era.

#### **Dutsin-Ma Local Government**

Dutsin-Ma is located in the Sudan Savannah zone of Central Katsina State. It is relatively bounded by Safana, Kurfi and Charanchi to the North, Kankia to the East and Matazu local government to the South. Dutsin-Ma is located within the sandy zone<sup>23</sup>. The Land mass is suitable for the cultivation of grains like maize, millet and cotton. Based on the present state of knowledge, it is not clear when Dutsin-Ma was founded. However, a number of narratives based on oral traditions have been expressed. Three contending views dominate extant literature on the area. The first view argues that Dutsin-Ma was founded prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century jihad by a man called "Ma" who settled near the giant rock which lies at the center of the town. According to this view, "Ma" was one of the Maguzawa people of Birchi known as Kaina Fara located some sixteen kilometers to the north of Dutsin-Ma town. The term "Dutsi" means rock in Hausa. Literally, Dutsin-Ma means Ma's rock. A second view contends that "ma" came from Egypt in 1888 and settled in the area because of variety of animals that inhabited the giant rock. The hunting potentials of the people of the area attracted other hunters and travelers. The third view traces the establishment of Dutsin-Ma to the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The town was said to have been founded as a result of mass migration by Agadasa people from Agadas in the present Niger republic in 1728. This view argues that "Ma" was among the immigrants who settled near the rock. The naming of the area after "Ma" was in recognition of his pioneering role.

The conflicting views notwithstanding, a melting pot of all the views expressed is that Dutsin-Ma was founded by "Ma". However, where 'Ma' migrated from

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<sup>22</sup> . Azaigba, K.T. (2018) "The Migrant Factor in the Development of Spaces: The Role of Igbo Migrants in the Emergence of Gboko as an Urban Town, 1932-2018", *VUNA Journal of History and International Relations*, Vol.2, No.3, p.222.

<sup>23</sup> .Azaigba, K.T. (2017) "The Igbo Factor in the Development of Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, 1976-2017" *Ilorin Journal of History and International Studies*, Vol.7, No.2. p.181.

remains a subject of much speculation. From a small settlement Dutsin-Ma has grown up to a burgeoning commercial center. Dutsin-Ma is also an emerging educational center. Currently it is host to a Federal university and a college of education amongst several secondary and primary schools<sup>24</sup>. The backward and forward linkages that these institutions engender in terms of business opportunities continues to attract migrants to the area.

The transformation of Dutsin-Ma into an urban setting is partly influenced by the activities migrant ethnic groups like the Igbo and Yoruba. The activities of these ethnic migrants are noticeable especially in the commercial sphere and educational advancement. For example, being mostly traders, the Igbo pioneered trading in motor-spare parts, building materials, pharmaceuticals, and development of technical knowledge in critical service oriented businesses like welding and fabrications, automobile repairs, electrical installations and so on. The Yoruba took a lead in printing and establishment of private schools as well as health centers. In fact, the Igbo culture of apprenticeship was deployed as a mechanism for transferring informal knowledge to indigenous apprentices particularly in business specialties that the Igbos comparatively enjoyed more advantages or had a head-start. It is worth stressing that the Igbo, through their culture of entrepreneurship transferred technical skills particularly in automobile repairs to the indigenous artisans and in the fields of metal welding and fabrication<sup>25</sup>. Some of the schools established by the Igbo, Yoruba and Tiv in Dutsin-Ma include; Mariamoh Ajiri International School, Superlight Model school, Damy Preparatory schools, Precious Thoughts School. The Catholic Church in Dutsin-Ma populated mostly by ethnic migrants also established St Mary's Catholic School. In the health sector, Dr, Abdulmajeed Oyeniyen, a Yoruba, operates a very functional health facility known as Premier Clinic. Most of the hotels and guest houses in Dutsin-Ma before the Sharia crisis of the year 2000 were operated by the Igbo<sup>26</sup>. The crisis led to mass exodus of ethnic migrants from the town and closure of many businesses especially those in the hospitality sector. Though the population of ethnic migrants in Dutsin-Ma is very low in relation to the host community; they have made valuable interventions in development in both service delivery and infrastructural improvements. This suggests that had the number of ethnic migrants been higher, there would have been even more significant developmental strides.

### **Funtua Local government**

Funtua local government is also the headquarters of the Katsina South senatorial district. The local government is strategically centered and serves as a link junction to several urban centers. The colonial railway that passed through Funtua extending from Zaria to Kaura Namoda in 1927 provided impetus for migration to the area<sup>27</sup>. Like the other waves of migration in

<sup>24</sup> . Azaigba, K.T. (2017) "The Igbo Factor in the Development of Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, 1976-2017" ...

<sup>25</sup> , Azaigba, K.T. (2017) "The Igbo Factor in the Development of Dutsin-Ma, Katsina State, ...

<sup>26</sup> .Interview, Charles Odeligo., Dutsin-Ma, 5/9/2024; Samson Igwe, Dutsin-Ma, 10/9/2024; Oladimeji Jacob Sunday, Dutsin-Ma, 22/9/2024.

<sup>27</sup> . Wycliff, S. & Ameh, H.G., (2023) "The Impact of Christian Missionary Activities on Funtua Town of Katsina State since 1935", *Kaduna Journal Of Humanities*, Vol. 7, No. 1.

Northern Nigeria, the Yoruba and the Igbo topped the ethnic demography of migrant communities in Funtua. The phenomenon of migrant ethnicity became prominent in the colonial era when Funtua emerged as an important cotton production station. The development pulled European firms and indeed ethnic migrants to the area in significant numbers. Many of the ethnic migrants came as employees of European firms, traders, and staff of the railway corporation and others as laborers<sup>28</sup>. The establishment of the British Cotton Growers Association (BCGA) Ginnery first in Zaria and its extension to Funtua simulated commercial activities and Funtua became a major destination point for ethnic migrants. In fact, European trading companies such as John Holt, G.B. Olivand, Tangelakis and company, P.Z, UAC, and many more operated branches in Funtua<sup>29</sup>. Furthermore, the Second World War created shortfalls in expatriates and because the Yoruba especially, had a head-start in Western education, they took advantage of existing vacancies and were employed as colonial Staff. Other ethnic migrants were engaged as drivers, stewards, cooks and so on. These ethnic migrants were and are still engaged in several ventures ranging from technical services, establishment of schools, health centers and entrepreneurial engagements in the hospitality sector. The table below contains a list of some of the businesses established by ethnic migrants in Funtua.

**Table 1.** Selected List of Educational Institutions and Businesses established by Ethnic Migrants in Funtua

S/N	Name of Education Institution/Business	Location
1.	Wisdom International School	GRA, Funtua
2.	Focus International School	Sokoto By-Pass
3.	Truth International School	Along Monunu road, Funtua
3.	Salahuddeen Memorial College	Mai Ruwa Road Funtua
4.	Funtua Capital Academy	Makera Area
5.	Zee Alpha International School	GRA , Funtua
6.	King Kids International	Dutsen-Reme
7.	Unity International School	Tafoki road, Funtua.
8.	Nakowa Hospital	Ungwar Dahiru, Funtua
9.	Shuk Shuk Restaurant	Behind Jaiz Bank, Funtua
10	Bistith Hospital	BCGA. Funtua
11.	SaukiUltra-Modern Hospital	Along Zaria road, Funtua
12.	Abbey Hospital	Along Jabire, Funtua

<sup>28</sup>. Interview, Nura Ismail Abdulazeez, Funtua, 29/7/2024; Ibrahim Abdulrasheed, Funtua, 29/7/2024; Joshua Adejwon, 29/7/2024.

<sup>29</sup> .Wycliff, S. &Ameh, H.G., (2023) The Impact of Christian Missionary Activities on Funtua Town...

13.	IyaAmala restaurant	Along Zaria road.
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Source: Field Study, 2024.

The table above contains only a selected list of businesses owned by ethnic migrants in Funtua local government. It also indicates the contributions made by ethnic migrants to the development of Funtua. It suffices to add that ethnic migrants pioneered a lot of technical services and evolved an apprenticeship system that saw the training of indigenes of Funtua as panel beaters, motor electricians, painters, and motor mechanics. The involvement of an apprenticeship system served a useful purpose in the transfer of technology to the host community. It bears stating also that there are business areas that have witnessed some sort of domination by ethnic migrants. For instance, the Igbo and Yoruba had domineering presence in automobile repairs, gold smiting, iron bending, bricklaying, carpentry, electrical repairs, welding and cloth making. Again, this evidence suggests that domination of economic spheres is an entrepreneurial attitude and reality. It is not based on ethnic affiliation as it is sometimes misconstrued.

#### Malumfashi Local Government Area

Malumfashi local government has an area of 674 square km and a population size of 182,920 based on 2006 census<sup>30</sup>. The indigenous people are predominantly Hausa-Fulani. The local government is bounded by Muasawa local government to the North, Kankara local government to the West, Gwarzo local government in Kano State to the East and Bakori local government in the South. It is not clear when the first set of ethnic migrants moved into Malumfashi. However, as in the other local governments in Katsina, the phenomenon of migrant ethnicity began in earnest during the colonial era. The colonial economy that was entrenched created economic opportunities and the different Nigerian communities began to move to areas where they could participate in the colonial economy and obtain the much needed cash which was a lifeline. In Malumfashi, the Yoruba and the Igbo topped the chart of migrants who moved into the area. They came in mostly as employees of colonial companies. As their numbers increased, they organized themselves into associational ethnicity bearing different names such as Ijesha Progressive Union, Ogbomosho Union, Ijebu Union, Igbo community Welfare Association, Igbo Community Development Association, and so on<sup>31</sup>. Some of the ethnic unions reflected the different dialects within the ethnic group structure. There were also Pan-ethnic associations that had a national spread. Aside catering for the interests of members in terms of providing loan facilities, settling disputes, and other community support services, they also impacted the host community in diverse ways.

**Table 2.** Chairmen of Igbo Community Association in Malumfashi, 1975-2024

S/N	Name of chairman	Tenure
1.	Moses Okonkwo	1975-1983

<sup>30</sup> , *National Population Commission, 2006 Census, Abuja.*

<sup>31</sup> . Interview, DaudaTunde, Malumfashi, 27/9/2024; Chukwuma Dennis Uzuakpunwa, 27/9/2024.

2.	O. E. Udegbonam	1983- 1989
3.	Chinedu Onah	1989-1993
4.	B. B. Modu	1993-1997
5.	H. Ilechukwu	1997-2001
6.	Emmanuel Okfaleke	2001-2005
7.	Silas Iwegbunam	2005-2009
8.	Maduka C. Maduka	2009-2017
9.	Okechukwu Jinawa	2017-Date.

Source: Field Study, 2024.

**Table 3.** Chairmen of Yoruba Community Association in Malumfashi from 1993 to Date

S/N	Name of Chairman	Tenure
1.	Augustine Adeyeye	1993-2000
2.	Joshua Adeniran	2000-2006
3.	Thomas Anjeoni	2006-2013
4.	Abdulrahim Abdulkarim	2013- Date

Source: Field Study, 2024.

The tables above indicate that the Igbo and Yoruba ethnic migrants are organized into associational ethnicity. Though these ethnic associations are voluntary, the point need be made that majority of the ethnic migrants are members of their ethnic unions.

**Table 4.** List of Schools and Health Facilities established by Ethnic Migrants in Malumfashi

S/N	School/Hospital/Business	Address	
1.	Godiya International Nursery/Primary School	TudunBala, Malumfashi	
2.	Great Ambassadors International Secondary School	Behind NITEL, Malumfashi	
3.	Aunty Ladi Nursery/Primary and Secondary School	Along BCGA road, Malumfashi	
4.	Malumfashi Clinic and Maternity	Along Funtua-Yashe Road opposite PHC, Malumfashi	
5.	Albarka Clinic Malumfashi	Hali Cinema, Malumfashi	
6.	Shamic Global Link Investment Company	Bcga Road, AlhajiAbule Mosque Malumfashi	
7.	The Apostolic Nursery/Primary School	Soranji, Malumfashi	

Source: Field Study, 2024.

In addition to the schools and health facilities listed in the table above, ethnic migrants in Malumfashi are also engaged in a variety of trade types such as carpentry, photography, mechanics, house wares, Western clothes, motor mechanics, welding and fabrication, sale of food condiments and so on. Intergroup relations in Malumfashi has largely been cordial and there are several intermarriages between ethnic migrants and the Hausa-Fulani indigenous community.

### **Bakori Local Government**

Bakori local government is situated in the southern part of Katsina . Though it had long existed as a district, it became a local government in 1989. The local government covers an area of about 679 square kilometers with a population strength of about 641, 576 based on the 2006 population census<sup>32</sup>. The close proximity of the local government to Funtua and Zaria where the railway traversed and cotton production as well as trading gained much traction, the area also attracted ethnic migrants especially those of the Yoruba stock. They migrated in small streams but with time the number grew. Aside the Yoruba, there are other ethnic migrants in Bakori such as the Igbo, Igala, and some minor ethnic groups. But the Yoruba are the dominant migrant ethnic group in the area. The ethnic migrants are involved in trading activities such as sales of kolanuts, European clothes, motor mechanics, spare parts, rewiring and so on. Others function as school teachers and health personnel<sup>33</sup>. Despite the relatively low number of ethnic migrants, they have impacted the host community in several spheres. For example, schools such as Premier International School, Bakori Academy and Alhekima International School are owned by the Yoruba. Health centers like Bakori clinic and Maternity, Aisha Memorial Clinic are also owned by proprietors of Yoruba extraction<sup>34</sup>. The population of the Igbo and other ethnic migrants is particularly low and their residency in the area has been more temporal than permanent.

### **Conclusion**

The paper provided a reportage on research findings from four selected local governments in Katsina with the most numeric of ethnic migrants. Although historical records show that various Nigerian communities had interactions prior to colonial rule, research reveals that significant ethnic migration within Nigeria gained momentum during the colonial era. This surge in migration was largely facilitated by the development of extensive transportation networks, particularly the construction of railways, which enabled easier movement and connectivity across the region. Communities where the railway traversed and those in close proximity to the rail infrastructure experienced more in-flow of ethnic migrants. Also, the construction of a cotton ginnery in Funtua simulated much migration to the area and other parts of southern Katsina. The extension of colonial administrative structures also brought in streams of ethnic migrants who were engaged by the colonial administration as staff. The paper argued that though the population of ethnic migrants in the local governments studied

<sup>32</sup> . *National Population Commission, 2006 Census, Abuja.*

<sup>33</sup> , Interview, Tunde Ade, Bakori, 6/7/2024.

<sup>34</sup> Interview, Mohammed Bakori, Bakori, 6/8/2024,

is low which reflects the general pattern across Katsina; ethnic migrants in the area have made very strategic contributions to development. In fact they pioneered a plethora of businesses and evolved apprenticeship systems for transfer of technical knowledge to their host community. This is suggestive that had the number of ethnic migrants been more, Katsina would have witnessed greater development. On the question of economic domination, the paper contended that domination of business areas is an entrepreneurial ethic that arises from the fact that some ethnic groups enjoy comparative advantages in certain areas that they have better competitive skills. Therefore, it is not an ethnic disposition but an entrepreneurial ethic that is found in all capitalist ecosystems.