

CHAPTER 11 TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION IN NIGERIA

Objectives

After studying this chapter, students should be able to:

- identify the major modes of transportation in Nigeria.
- draw maps of Nigeria showing road and rail transportation system.
- discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the different communication modes.
- state the problems of transportation in Nigeria.
- suggest solutions to transportation problems mentioned.

11.1 Definition

Transport can be defined as the movement of people, goods and services from one place to another while communication involves the passing of information from one person to another or from place to place. Transport plays an important role in the development of any society. It enables people to move from their houses to workplaces, markets, recreation centres etc. Transport makes it possible for goods to be moved from the industries to the market. The major modes of transport in Nigeria, their characteristics, advantages and disadvantages are highlighted in the next section.

11.2 Tracks and Footpath

In pre-colonial Nigeria, until the late 19th century, bush paths and rivers were the major modes of transport used by porters, animals and canoes. In the forest belt, private forms of transport consist of walking and canoe transport in areas with navigable rivers. The menace of tsetsefly prevents the use of animal transport in the forest areas. On the other hand, animals such as donkey, horse, camel and ox are used in the grassland areas.

11.3 Road Transport

The development of road transport started after the main rail lines were built. In Nigeria, roads were built to serve as feeder lines to the railways thereby extending their commercial hinterland. Roads were also constructed to connect various sections of the railway system to link important towns not served by the railways to the nearest railway station and to open up interior areas. The first road was constructed in 1905 from Ibadan to Oyo. Since then the road length has increased overtime. There are expressways with four to six lanes in some cities. The roads can be classified into three namely:

- (i) Trunk 'A' roads: These are built and maintained by the federal government.
- (ii) Trunk 'B' state roads
- (iii) Minor local government trunk 'C' roads

Road network is very dense in Western, South-Eastern and North central parts of the country. These coincide with areas of high population, industrial and commercial activities. Roads are utilized by pedestrians and motorists who drive motorcycles, cars, buses, trucks and trailers. The number of vehicles on the roads has increased gradually. Types of roads are paved (bituminous) and earth gravel roads. Road transport is dominated by private companies and individuals.

Advantages

- (i) It is flexible and provides door to door services.
- (ii) It is suitable for movement over short and medium distance for example intra urban movement.
- (iii) It is fast.
- (iv) Individuals can own a vehicle.

Disadvantages

- (i) Road construction and maintenance is expensive.
- (ii) It has limited carrying capacity.
- (iii) Accidents are common.

11.4 Railway

This is the first modern means of transportation. Railways were constructed during the colonial era to facilitate the movement of agricultural and mineral resources to the ports for shipment to Europe. Another reason was to enable the colonialist to govern the northern and southern parts of the country. The rail tracks were constructed between 1850 and 1910 with a total length of 3,600 km and narrow gauge. In 1912, the western railway was extended to Lagos. With the exception of Itakpe, Ajaokuta lines, the railways are operated by Nigerian railway corporation.

It consists of two main branches:

- (i) Western branch: Lagos – Nguru with an offshoot to Kaura Namoda
- (ii) Eastern branch: Port Harcourt – Maiduguri

The Itakpe-Ajaokuta line is a mineral line managed by a mining company that utilizes it. Railway terminals (where the line ends) are Iddo in Lagos,

Kaura Namoda, Nguru, Maiduguri and Port Harcourt. Rail junctions include Minna, Kaduna, Zaria and Kafanchan.

Importance of Railways

- (i) Movement of mineral resources from the interior to the ports for export.
- (ii) Movement of cash crops from places like Zaria to the ports for export.
- (iii) Distribution of imported goods from the ports inland.
- (iv) It links cities in the north to those in the south thereby fostering national integration.
- (v) Movement of people across the country for trade.
- (vi) It is cheap compared with other forms of transport.
- (viii) It can carry large number of passengers and bulky goods.

Disadvantages

- (i) It is very slow.
- (ii) It is expensive to construct and maintain.
- (iii) It is not flexible.
- (iv) It depends on road transport for traffic.

Problems of Railway System in Nigeria

- (i) The use of worn out locomotives.
- (ii) Competition from road transport which has diverted traffics from rail to road.
- (iii) Government neglect in favour of road transport.
- (iv) Poor management which lead to incessant strikes.
- (v) Inadequate funding.

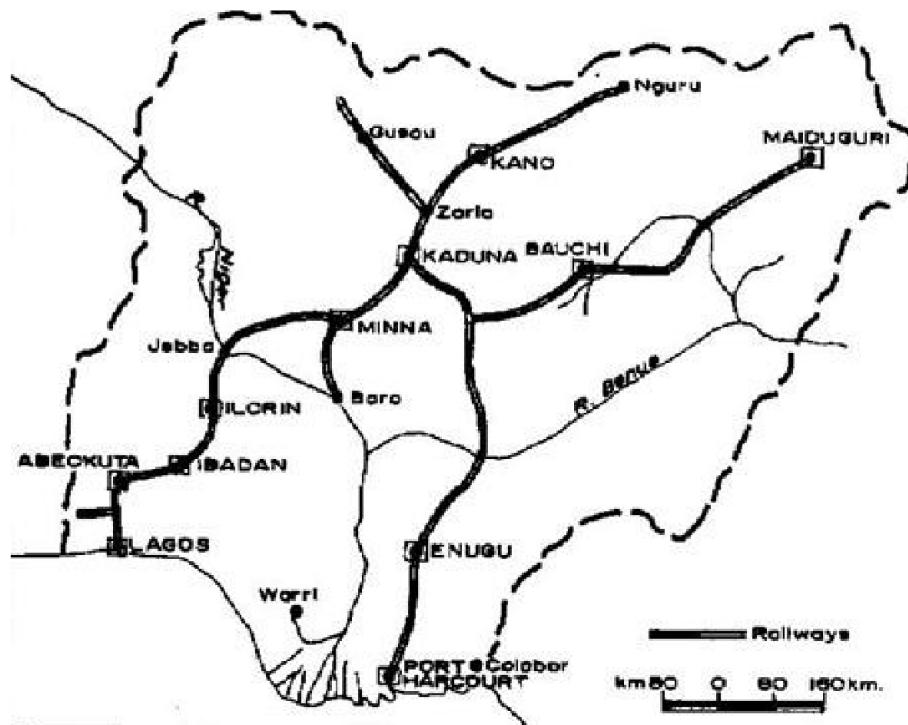


Fig. 11.2: Railway lines in Nigeria

11.5 Water Transport

Water transport can be classified into two:

- (i) Inland waterways
 - (ii) Ocean waterways
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- (i) **Inland waterways:** This involves movement of people and goods on rivers (Rivers Niger, Benue, Cross), lakes (Chad and Kainji), creeks and lagoons. This is an old mode of transport used before railways and roads were developed. Vehicles used include boats, canoes, barges, rafts and ferries. Major river ports include Calabar, Jebba, Lokoja, Onitsha and Makurdi.
 - (ii) **Ocean waterways:** This involves movement of people and goods on international waters using ships. About 90% of Nigeria's imports and exports are transported through the sea and ocean waters. Major

seaports include Lagos, Port Harcourt, Calabar, Burutu and Warri. Activities on the ports are managed by the Nigerian Ports Authority. The types of ship include ocean liners (used to transport passengers and mails), tankers (used to carry liquid product such as petroleum), container vessels (carries dry bulk cargo in containers), cargo vessels and tramp cargo vessels.

Advantages of Water Transport

- (i) It is the cheapest mode of transport of bulky goods over long distance.
- (ii) The waterways do not require construction.
- (iii) It is used for international trade.
- (iv) It is relatively safe.

Disadvantages

- (i) Port construction requires huge funds.
- (ii) It is slow.
- (iii) It can be affected by storms.
- (iv) Cost of acquiring a ship is high.
- (v) Rapids and waterfalls on rivers hinder navigation.
- (vi) Volume of water in rivers fluctuate with the seasons. During dry season, rivers are shallow which affect navigation.
- (vii) Most rivers are short.
- (viii) Silting of rivers affect river transport
- (ix) Presence of water weeds on rivers hinder navigation

11.6 Air Transport

Commercial aviation began in Nigeria in May 15, 1946 with the West African Airways Corporation. The WAAC was disbanded in 1958 giving rise to the Nigeria Airways. The number of airports, airlines and traffic (passenger and goods) have increased overtime. These types of services are provided by the airport namely:

- (i) Domestic service: Movement within the country.
- (ii) International: Movement between Nigeria and other countries.

Domestic services are provided by both domestic and international airports. Domestic airports include Ibadan, Jos, Calabar, Ilorin. International airports are located in few towns namely Lagos, Port Harcourt, Abuja and Kano. The names of the airports are:

- (i) Muritala Mohammed Airport (Lagos)
- (ii) Aminu Kano International Airport (Kano)
- (iii) Abuja International Airport
- (iv) Port Harcourt International Airport

Both local and international airlines provide services in Nigeria. International airlines include British Airways, Lufthansa, Swiss Air, while local airlines include Arik, Virgin, Chanchangi and Dabo airlines.

Advantages of Air Transport

- (i) It is fast.
- (ii) Planes can fly across lakes and rivers.

Disadvantages of Air Transport

- (i) It is expensive to construct airports.
- (ii) Accidents are fatal.
- (iii) Only the rich can afford it

- (iv) It can be affected by bad weather.

11.7 Pipelines

Pipelines are used to transport liquid and gaseous commodities such as crude oil and natural gas and water. The development of pipelines started in 1950 when Oloibiri-Bonny pipeline was started. Pipelines are constructed to link oil fields to refineries and refineries to oil depots in the country for example Warri – Kaduna pipeline.

Advantages

- (i) It is the safest means of transporting liquids and gas.
 - (ii) It is not prone to accidents except if there are leakages.

Disadvantages

- (i) Laying of pipelines is expensive.
 - (ii) Leakage of pipelines causes environmental pollution.
 - (iii) It is difficult to detect and replace broken pipes.

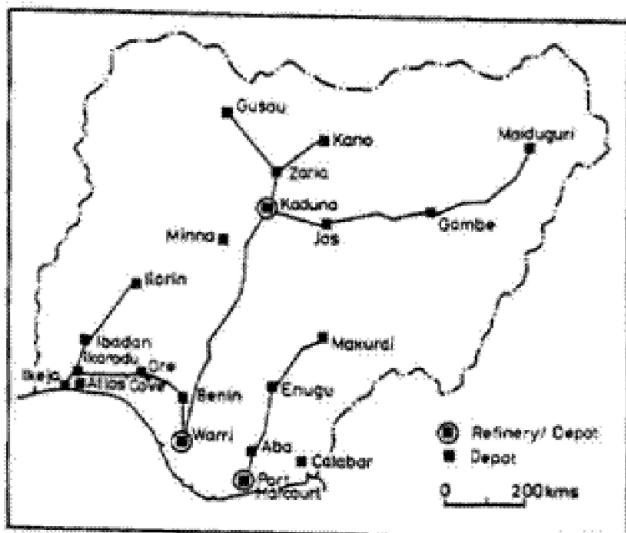


Fig. 11.5: Pipeline network in Nigeria

11.8 Problems Of Transport

A. Human Factors

1. Inadequate capital: Inadequate funds affect the construction of roads, airports etc. and their maintenance.
2. Poor technical know-how: Inadequate personnel with expertise to operate the means of transport affect their efficient performance.
3. Inadequate spare parts: Spare parts are usually imported at high costs. As a result, vehicles are worn out and old.
4. Poor management: Lack of efficiency in the modes of transport is caused by poor management and corruption.
5. Non adherence to rules and regulations by drivers on roads.
6. Poor maintenance of vehicles, planes, rail tracks etc.
7. Congestion on roads and seaports.

B. Physical Factors

8. Roads and railways are expensive and difficult to construct across highlands.
9. Rapids waterfalls and shallow waters in rivers hinder navigation.
10. Flooding of roads hinder road transport as bridges are destroyed and roads are flooded.
11. Activities of armed robbers on roads and pilfering of goods at seaports by port ‘rats’ affect safety on roads and ports.

Solutions

1. Private public partnership will increase provision of funds for the various modes of transport.
2. Implementation of national transport policy to achieve coordination and avoid competition.

3. Supervision of construction of projects to ensure use of good materials.
4. Maintenance of roads, railways and ports.
5. Use of mass transit in urban centres will reduce road congestion.
6. Dredging of rivers that are silted.

11.9 Communication In Nigeria

Communication can be defined as the transfer of information from one person to another. Communication network can be classified into two: mass media and private network. Mass media are means of communication that enable the transfer of information to a large number of people at the same time such as newspapers, radio, television and internet while private network include postal and telephone which involve communication between one person and another or a group of people. Communication network are radio, television, newspapers, postal services, telecommunication and internet.

- (i) **Radio:** This is the communication network with the widest coverage. Due to its low cost, hardly is there any home without a radio. Radio transmission started with the establishment of the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria in 1979. It was responsible for broadcasting on short wave or powerful medium wave for effective reception in more than one state at any point in time. As a result of the federal government's commitment to development, private radio stations were granted licence to operate in the country. Some of those in operation include Africa Independent Television (AIT), Degne Broadcasting Network (DBN), Slash FM, University of Ibadan Radio, etc. In addition each of the 36 states has its own radio station.

- (ii) **Television:** Television gives a visual impression of an activity or of the person transferring information unlike the radio which transmits only the voice of the speaker. The Nigeria Television Authority (NTA) is the first television station in the country. It was established in 1977 through the fusion and take over of some state owned stations by the federal government. There are about 40 branches and network centres located in the state capitals and some big towns. These include NTA 2 Channel 5 and Channel 10 both in Lagos. There are also state government owned television stations and private stations such as Channels Television, Muhri International Television (MITV), Silver bird etc. Satellite services are also operated by AIT, Channels etc.
- (iii) **Newspapers:** This involves the printing of information on paper. The first newspaper called 'Iwe Irohin' was published by the Church Missionary Society between 1842 and 1885 in Abeokuta. Currently, Nigeria has hundreds of news publications as dailies, weeklies, periodicals and journals published by both the government (such as Daily Times, New Nigeria, Sketch), and private owned press (such as the Guardian, This Day, Vanguard and the Nation). Some government owned dailies are no longer in circulation e.g. Sketch. The major advantage of newspapers over radio and television is that the papers can be stored and the information retrieved at any time.
- (iv) **Postal Services:** The Nigerian post office was established to transfer mails from one person or location to another. Other services rendered by post offices include sales of stamps, vouchers etc. There are post offices in all the states and cities. The advantage of sending information by post is that it is confidential. Private

companies such as DHL, also provide postal services and deliver goods to people in various locations.

- (v) **Internet:** This is a recent network which involves the transfer of information through the satellites. Internet makes it possible to send information to people in any location on earth. The volume of information that can be transferred is unlimited. However, this service is limited to urban centres. Its use is limited to people who have access to computers and phones with internet facilities.
- (vi) **Telecommunication:** The Nigerian Telecommunication was established to provide telephone services in the country. Due to its limited coverage, high cost of operation, inefficiency and improved technology in the country, private companies now provide telephone services through mobile phones. These companies include MTN, Globalcom, Etisalat, Zain etc. They have network in all the states. People in urban and rural areas have access to telephone service through these networks

11.10 Problems of Communication

1. Installation and maintenance of equipments involve high cost of money.
2. Inadequate skilled manpower.
3. Most of the communication networks are concentrated in urban centres thereby limiting the transfer of information to rural areas.

11.11 Importance of Transport and Communication

1. Movement of goods and services: Transport makes it possible for goods and services to be transferred from one place to another.
2. Enhances inter-regional trade: Trade between north and south, urban and rural areas is made possible through transport.

3. Diffusion of ideas and technology: Communication networks transmit education programmes that improves our ideas and knowledge on issues.
4. Movement of people: Transport makes it possible for people to move from their homes to workplaces, shopping centres for recreation etc.
5. Opens up areas: Transport opens up remote areas.
6. Promotes national integration: Movement of people from one city, village or state to another promotes integration.
7. Provides employment: Vehicle drivers, construction workers and administrative staff obtain employment in transport industry.
8. Generate revenue to government through vehicle registration etc.
9. Create access to natural resources in swamps, forests and dry areas.

Summary

- Transport can be defined as the movement of people and goods and services.
- The modes of transport in Nigeria are tracks and footpaths, road, rail, water and air.
- Communication can be defined as the transfer of information from one person to another. Communication network can be classified into two: mass media and private network.
- Communication network are radio, television, newspapers, postal services, telecommunication and internet

Objective Questions

1. Which of these was used during pre-colonial period?
 - A. Bush path
 - B. Roads

- C. Air transport
 - D. Pipeline
2. Roads were developed primarily to
- A. move people
 - B. move raw materials
 - C. serve as feeder lines to railways
 - D. provide income to government
3. The first road was constructed in
- A. 1965
 - B. 1935
 - C. 1945
 - D. 1905
4. Which of these vehicles can be easily owned by an individual?
- A. car
 - B. train
 - C. ship
 - D. plane
5. The terminus of the western branch of the railway is located in
- A. Ekiti
 - B. Ilorin
 - C. Lagos
 - D. Maduguri
6. The most common railway gauge in Nigeria is
- A. broad gauge
 - B. narrow gauge
 - C. standard gauge
 - D. wide gauge
7. Which of these is used for intra-urban trend?
- A. road

- B. inland watering
 - C. Air
 - D. cableways
8. Which of the following is the most widespread communication network in Nigeria?
- A. Internet
 - B. Television
 - C. Radio
 - D. Postal services
9. Which of these television stations has the widest coverage in Nigeria?
- A. NTA
 - B. Silverbird
 - C. AIT
 - D. Channels
10. Transport development is limited mainly by
- A. Inadequate capital B. Poor industrial development
 - C. Bad weather D. Limited trade activities

Essay Questions

1. State the advantages and disadvantages of rail transport.
- 2a. On a sketch map of Nigeria, locate and name
 - (i) Two domestic airports
 - (ii) Two international airports
 - (iii) One town where each in (i) and (ii) can be found.
3. List five importance of transport to the economy of Nigeria.
- 4a. On a map of Nigeria, locate and name
 - (i) two inland ports
 - (ii) two seaports

- b. State five problems of river transportation.
- 5. Explain five problems of transport development in Nigeria.