

Full Length Research Paper

Menace of illegal motor parks in Nigerian urban environment: Example from Ilorin city

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Parking lots are areas designated and fixed by the authority of city's management or its agents to ease inter and intra-transport systems for long or short journey passengers. Parking lot is an essential part of the transport system; it plays a crucial role in the management of traffic and congestion. But where these lots are not authorized they become illegal parking. Illegal parking lot forms one of the major problems that makes traffic situation frenzied in some Nigeria cities. Most roads in Nigeria cities are narrow, helix and lack pedestrian lanes (Asiyanbola and Akinpelu, 2012). These challenges at times make them potently tainted with traffic holdups and traffic congestion. There are cases of double parking along these narrow roads thereby causing traffic clogging. Current problems emanate from few availability of parking facilities along the transportation routes or where they are designated and fixed; the transporters misused, abused or abandoned them, just as in the case of Ilorin metropolis. This work examines the menace of on-street illegal parking within Ilorin metropolis, Nigeria. Both primary and secondary data which were collected in 2013 were used in the study. Among the issues examined in the study are the situation of existing parking facilities along the transportation routes; perception of road users (drivers and passengers) about motorist's parking behavior and the effect of on-street illegal parking in the area. Policy implications are discussed in the paper.

Key words: Parking lots, on-street illegal parking, parking facilities, transportation routes, metropolis, traffic clogging, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Cities are the engine of sustainability of any country as they are the sources of economic growth and development, but the environmental implications of such growth and development need to be thoroughly managed to suppress its consequences which are copious and hazardous. Ilorin city and the capital of Kwara state, is one of the major cities in Nigeria today and its growing strength in both socio-economic relationships is

commendable (Ahmed, 2013). However, the city is potently polluted with inadequate parking space, emergence of mini inter-urban motor parks and garages in both nooks and cranes of the city as well as illegal motor parks. The menace of this un-authorized parks occasionally resulted into free-fight among road users include drivers, motor cyclists and pedestrians in some places around the city hub (Ahmed, 2013).

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Figure 1. A typical legal park in Ilorin city Nigeria.

This work examines the menace to which inception of illegal parks and its attendance effects have on socio-economic and movement of people of Ilorin in the recent time. Many roads in Ilorin like; Maraba in old Jebba road, Ipata-Gambari road, Agaka-Ojaoba road, Baboko-Ojaitun road, and Taiwo-Sawmill road, to mention but a few, constitute a keystone on the will of economic development of these areas if we talk of un-authorized motor parks. The areas are known to be the hub of economic growth of the city, most of the adjoining land uses of these areas have legal garages but these garages have been abandoned and the nearest road that provide access to pedestrians and vehicular transportation for inter and intra movement of vehicles are now being used as illegitimate parks (Ahmed 2013).

The role of transport in our daily activities cannot be overemphasized and without it, the necessities of life would be difficult to achieve. As wonderful as the role of transport may be in our daily activities, it has been noted to possess myriads of negative effects. This is why in the literature, transport is described as the maker and breaker of the cities. Ogunsanya (2002) confirmed how transport has built cities over the years in some cities/urban areas in Nigeria and how it has gradually destroyed them. Cities function as commercial and industrial centres worldwide where buses, trucks and cars move goods and passengers in and out, on daily basis. Motor-park-lots are vital to ensure people have access to goods and services which they need by road sides or at commercial boulevards. They play a significant role in city's economy. Parking becomes a necessity when one recognizes the fact that urban centres are characterized by interrelated and complex

land use activities which requires well-planned and efficient performance of the transportation system.

More and again, on-street parking is a form of parking that involves all metered and unmetered parking lots along the road sides. It is temporary driving a vehicle or maneuvering a vehicle in a certain location for different purpose e.g. commercial purposes. On-street parking exists as a result of non-availability of space for off-street parking and it is known as nearest to destination routes. On-street or surface parking are located and developed on a place of vacant land. On-street parking tends to be safe where they are available, and in case whereby charges are been paid for each parking space occupied. Otherwise, it is unsafe especially where parking is on-street kerbs and where they are not under control by the government regulations or its agents. Motor park in the past was designed for reason of prestige to promote government's or a company's image and to give the passengers a feeling of well being and safety in their new destinations. Parking is one of the experiences that people have when traveling to a destination and it plays a crucial role in managing traffic and congestion as it is generally recognized that town center depends on a rapid turn-over of parking to meet the demand for short-stay visit. Well-situated and affordable parking is believed to be a sign of welcome to a new area, but the case is contrary in the case of Ilorin city. It is highly discouraging that parking has become a serious problem that confronted the road users in Ilorin city environment (Figures 1, 2, 3).

Legal parks refer to areas specify as parking space for inter and intra- transportation systems within a city or town and are approved by the government and its



Figure 2. Example of an illegal park in city of Lagos, Nigeria.



Figure 3. An arrow shows a street Illegal Park in Ilorin city causing a traffic clogging. Congestion is showing through Author's screen in the hold-up.

agencies which includes; the Federal Road Safety Corps (Ahmed, 2013). However, an area allotted as motor parks which is not served as a moderate breather or not approved by the government/agencies is regarded as 'Illegal Park' (Nathaniel et al., 2013). While in Ilorin at present, people are not having good access to organized motor parks and nearest parking lots or kerbs in the city, and this causes a lot of problems such as; traffic clogs,

poor traffic flow, hold-up, among others (Tables 1 and 2). Current and other related problems are;

- Lack of parking space on major roads
- Lack of parking meter/parking ticket where there are parking lots,
- Narrowed major and feeder roads
- Bad constructed roads with attainable pot holes

Table 1. Legal and authorized motor parks around Ilorin city.

S/No	Park	Location	Route
1	Ajasse-Ipo/Offa	Offa-Garage Area	Offa/Osogbo
2	Kaiama	Oloje-Garage Area	Okuta/Kaiama-Baruten Area
3	Lagos/Ibadan	Saw-Mill Area	Lagos
4	Jebba	Maraba Area	Jebba/Minna
5	Kano/Kaduna	Akerebiata (New)	Kano/Jos
6	Lokoja/Abuja	Offa Garage	Okene/Abuja/Onitsha-Eastern Area
7	Kaduna/Sokoto	New Garage/Park Akerebiata/Sobi Road	Yawuri/Sokoto/Kaduna
8	Ogidi	Oko-Olowo Junction	Igbeti/Saki/Igboho & Kaduna/Abuja/ Kano-Northern Area

Source. Author's Compilation 2014.

Table 2. Illegal/unauthorized motor parks in Ilorin.

S/no	Park	Location	En-route
1	Saw-mill	Odota	Ilorin-Lagos
2	Oja-Tuntun	Baboko(Abdul Azeez road)	Ogbomoso
3	Queen Elizabeth	AP Petrol Station-Surulere	Ilorin- Ibadan-Lagos
4	Bata Shop	Agaka	Gambari/Ogbomoso
5	Isale Oja	Oja-Oba	Onisha/Portharcourt
6	Adifa	Oja-Oba	Oke-Oyi/Jebba
7	Palace Cinema	Okeita	Afon/Amoyo/Idofian
8	Gambari Junction	Gambari	Shao/Babanloma/Jebba
9	Shao Garage (Old)	Ode Sanda	Shao/Bacita/Jebba
10	Opomalu-Junctio	Emir's road	Lagos
11	Oja Ipata	Okesuna	Oke-OyiAgbeyangi
12	Obbo road	Off-Taiwo road	Ibadan/Lagos
13	Railway junction	Total Petrol Station(Emir's road)	Onisha/Calabar/P-harcout
14	First bridge (Asa)	Emir's road	Lagos
15	AP petrol	Murtala Way	Abuja/Kaduna/Kano/Jos
16	Challenge Bookshop	Murtala Way	Lokoja/Okene/Abuja
17	Keystone Bank	Unity road	Lagos
18	IBTC Bank	Unity road	Lagos
19	Opposite Ijaiya House	Offa Garage Road	Kaduna/Kano
20	Sango	Kulende Estate Junction	Lagos
21	Tanke Oke-Odo	Tanke	Ibadan/Lagos/Onisha/Calabar/Port-Harcourt
22	Pipeline Road	Tanke	Abuja
23	Tanke-Opposite Tower Hotel	Tanke	Abuja
24	On-the-bridge park	Unity Road	Ibadan-Lagos

Source. Author's compilation (2014).

- Abandoned heaps of sand for building and construction
- Inadequate orientation to road users that is, motor cyclists/tri-cyclists (Okada riders),
- Parades of advertisement by different individual/organization on the major roads,
- Un-organized legal motor parks
- Legion of traders on the highway/major roads displaying wares.

The explanation so far on the roles being played by transportation in the city anywhere in the world denotes that transportation is a potent to influence any city growth and development. But on the contrary, what is being witnessed today in the emerging city like Ilorin and many others in Nigeria, is beleaguered by mobility problems, and this is what Ogunsanya (2002) declared as "negative externality" or "maker or breaker of the cities". In Ilorin,

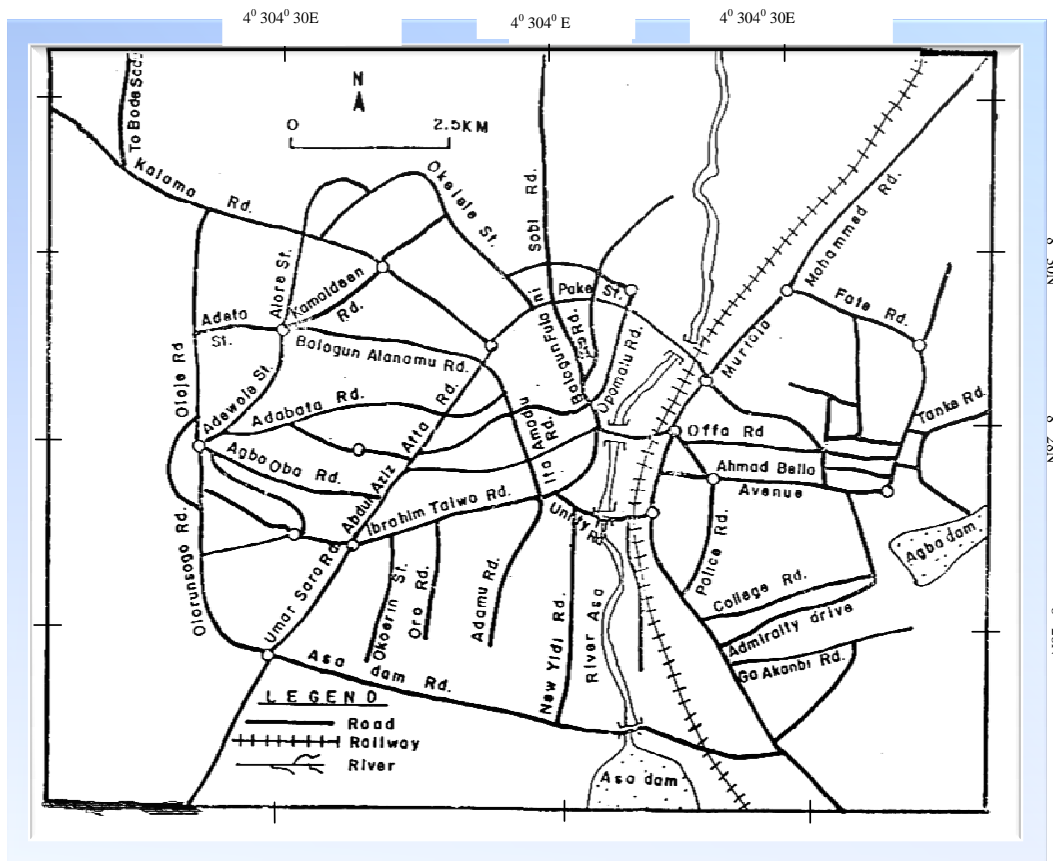


Figure 4. Major roads arteries in Ilorin city, Nigeria (2013). **Source:** Ministry of Land survey, Ilorin Kwara state, Nigeria.

the population of new settlers into the city from other major urban areas is hectic due to incursion by a segment group of people most especially new comers moving away from the northern parts of the country as a result of occasion religious uproar and sectoral killings. Ilorin city, no doubt about it, is one of the peaceful living areas in Nigeria. However, the increase in the population of new arrivals is becoming more difficult to ease of traffic flow in the city as reflected in the increasing 'bumper to bumper' traffic experienced in the major junctions in Ilorin in recent time.

This work aims at examining the menace of illegal motors parks that are continually springing up in and around Ilorin city. The focus attention on the city which is now potently polluted with traffic holdups occasion with traffic clogging, scuttle accidents and/or free-fight between and among road users shall be the main objectives of the study.

The study area

Ilorin, the capital city of Kwara State is located on

Latitude $8^{\circ} 30'N$ and Longitude $4^{\circ} 33'E$, it lies in the plain of the South Western part of Nigeria. The city which lies along Lagos Kaduna highway is about 306 km from Lagos, 600 km from Kaduna and about 500 km from Abuja, the Federal capital city of Nigeria. At present, the city of Ilorin cuts across three Local Government Areas namely Ilorin West, Ilorin East and Ilorin South Local Government Areas, and it has about twenty political wards. The evolution of Ilorin began with the early traditional areas built up around the township centre (Aderamo, 1990). The creation of Kwara State in 1967 and the choice of Ilorin as the state capital had resulted in its rapid population increase and area expansion.

Today, Ilorin city has witnessed more physical expansion and open-up of new road networks resulting in the city enveloping many of the smaller settlements surrounding it (Figures 4, 5, 6). Ilorin is very accessible both from outside and within the city, new roads are being constructed, while old ones are being rehabilitated, these accessibility roads are always clogged up when workers are going or returning from work. Ilorin population was projected with an annual growth rate of 2.84% (NPC, 1991) and at the 2006 head counts; the city

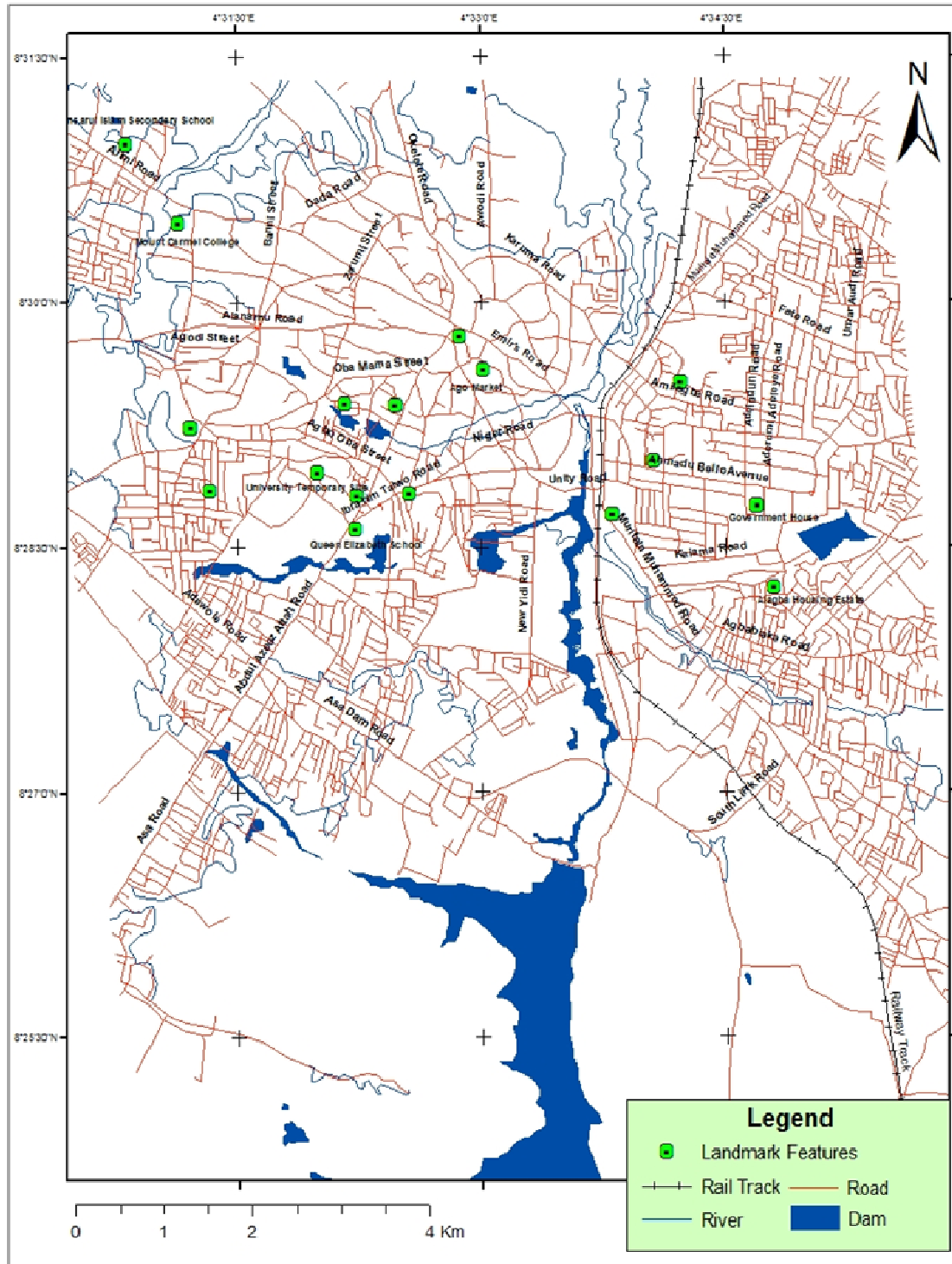


Figure 5. Major roads arteries in Ilorin city, Nigeria (2013). **Source:** Ministry of Land survey, Ilorin Kwara State Nigeria.

has reached 766,000 by population (NPC, 2006).

Although, Ilorin developed as an administrative centre both economic and social activities have greatly influenced its growth in recent times. The major occupations of

the indigenes are farming, pottery making, and weaving. There are also a greater percentage of the people who engaged in trading activities, while others are self employed in various other areas such as mechanics,

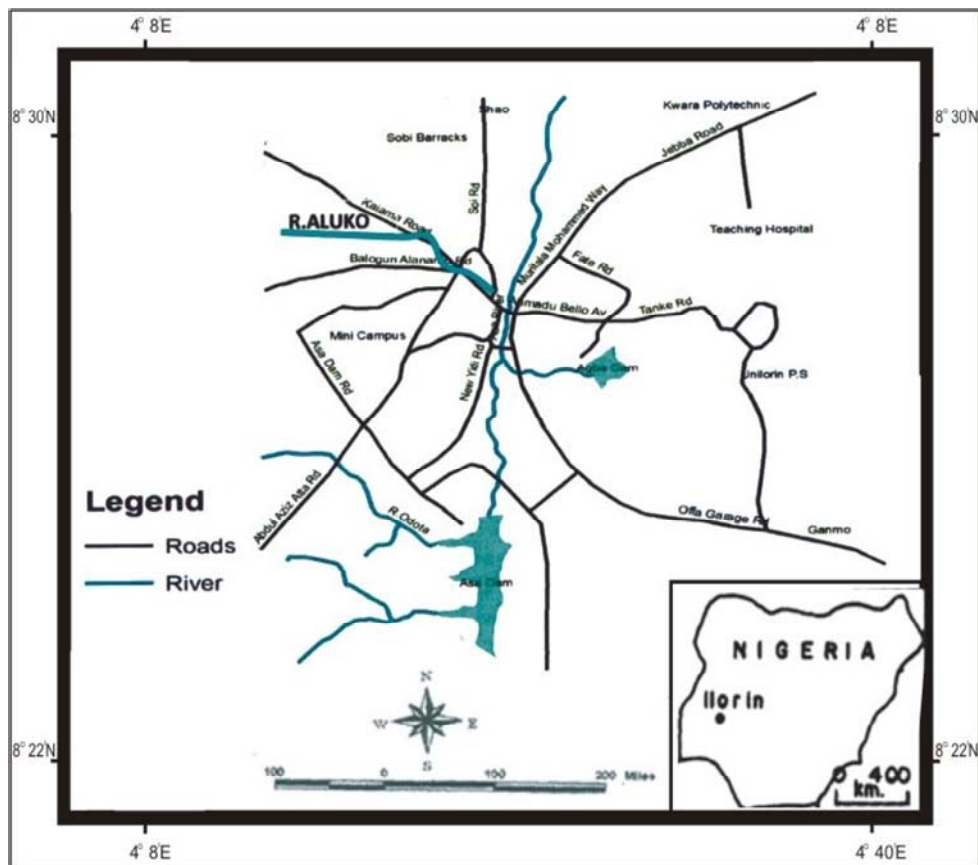


Figure 6. Map of Ilorin city, Nigeria. Source: Ministry of Land Survey, Ilorin Kwara State Nigeria.

carpentry, artisans among others.

METHODOLOGY

The methods employed for this work are highlighted below: In the first place, reconnaissance visits were carried out by the researcher on different locations within city of Ilorin for on-spot evaluation in order to update information collected from the secondary data source. Primary data were directly collected through the use of structured questionnaires in line with the objectives of the study and this complement with the on-spot assessment mentioned above. The structured questionnaires were administered to two major set of transport operators- the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW), the Road Transport Employer's Association of Nigeria (RTEAN), while verbal to verbal interviews were carried out among Government Agencies/officials - such as the police/traffic control officers in their various duty-posts in selected road junctions around Ilorin city to obtain information on poor parking spaces that usually caused on-street parking problems when they are at work. Apart from this, parking space inventory and parking concentration survey was carried out to obtain information on total length and width on city roads, and other road characteristics were simultaneously carried out in order to obtain information on the number of and the classes of vehicles parked at on-street parking spaces at the period of 30 min interval. This was done between 8 to 10 am and 3 to 6 pm, these are peak periods of traffic congestion

where workers are on the roads for a daily job and periods of their coming back home, and this runs from monday through friday and saturday through sunday (Tables 3, 4, 5).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

On-street parking facilities where available, includes kerbs, bus-stops and pay parking lots for commercial motors and car parks for private cars all which are not totally found around Ilorin city especially pay parking lots. It was discovered that only few bus-stops are found in streets/roads in the city of Ilorin thereby causing traffic congestion, hubbub and in some occasions resulted into accident. In some areas within this city there are narrow roads/streets which lack pedestrian lanes. There are cases of double parking along the narrow roads or by, at the kerb's spaces thereby causing traffic congestion; this was due to the non-availability of off-street parking lots in the city areas. Also, there are no parking bays or loading bays for transit vehicles such as taxis and buses either to pick up loads or unload goods and passengers along the routes. Consequently, drivers resort to haphazard parking which not only erodes the aesthetic values of the road

Table 3. Parking concentration and Volume of Parking Survey on selected areas in Ilorin city. Monday traffic count from 7.00 - 5.00 pm.

Location	Period	Bus	Private car	Taxicab	Motorcycle	Truck	Total
Saw-mill –Ojaoba	Morning	98	221	317	33	55	724
(Abdulazee-Attah road)	Evening	117	298	404	37	43	899
Oja-Tuntun- Taiwo	Morning	55	94	88	26	32	295
Road (Baboko Area)	Evening	37	46	41	18	29	171
Taiwo Oke-Unity	Morning	142	181	154	18	111	606
Road (Wahab Folawiyo)	Evening	134	162	139	11	97	543
Sango-Post Office	Morning	512	445	477	123	99	1656
(Old Jebba Rd)	Evening	492	399	442	109	61	1503
First bridge-Opomalu	Morning	122	228	532	267	85	1234
(Emir's Road)	Evening	151	249	504	241	56	1201
Post Office-Offa	Morning	377	486	324	250	112	1549
Garage (Offa Rd)	Evening	497	333	397	447	122	1796

Source. Author's field work.

Table 4. Parking concentration and Volume of Parking Survey on selected areas in Ilorin city. Wednesday (Mid-week) traffic count from 7.00am-5.00pm.

Location	Period	Bus	Private car	Taxicab	Motorcycle	Truck	Total
Saw-mill –Ojaoba	Morning	67	121	321	24	46	579
(Abdulazee-Attah road)	Evening	101	281	330	31	39	782
Oja-Tuntun- Taiwo	Morning	33	77	75	22	39	246
Road (Baboko Area)	Evening	23	39	33	11	20	372
Taiwo Oke-Unity	Morning	99	93	111	12	91	406
Road(Wahab Folawiyo)	Evening	97	132	112	09	84	434
Sango-Post Office	Morning	399	301	352	89	75	1216
(Old Jebba Rd)	Evening	300	343	397	92	59	1191
First bridge-Opomalu	Morning	89	154	392	254	78	967
(Emir's Road)	Evening	100	222	489	190	55	1056
Post Office-Offa	Morning	342	401	367	211	93	1414
Garage (Offa Rd)	Evening	478	301	388	420	98	1685

Source. Author's field work.

way and city structure but also constitutes risks to lives and properties. Also, motorists suffer stress in searching for parking space at destinations or when private vehicle owners looking for areas to buy needed items within shopping or market centers. The areas where this situation usually lead to serious traffic congestion at peak hours of the day include; Post office area of Ilorin, Maraba Garage areas, Ipata area, Oja-Oba area and opposites of Challenge Bookshop. Lack of loading or parking bay in these points always leads to illegal on-street parking by motorist which has already reached crisis proportion in the areas. Roadside hawking and trading along these roads reduce road - lane capacity. Rapid increase in the number of motor vehicles in these areas has always made the areas inaccessible and

reduced the traffic speed and thus increasing traffic congestion as well as longing journey time within trans-urban inter and intra movements.

More of the findings also revealed the effects of Vehicular Concentration Survey Volume (VCSV) in various locations in Ilorin city, for instance, as a result of lack of parking space and large movement of vehicles from Sango area to Post office especially in peak period of Monday morning show a total number of 1656 vehicles passed through these city road. While Post office-Offa garage road have 1549 vehicular concentration survey volume. In the same Monday and at the same period, Saw-mill to Oja-Oba has a lighter traffic movement which was 899. In the evening and again, Post office to Offa garage has 1796 vehicular movement (highest so far)

Table 5. Parking concentration and volume of parking survey on selected areas in Ilorin city. Sunday (week-end traffic count from 7.00 - 5.00 pm.

Location	Period	Bus	Private car	Taxi cab	Motorcycle	Truck	Total
Saw-mill –Ojaoba	Morning	19	52	118	91	2	1967
(Abdulazee-Attah road)	Evening	252	96	225	122	3	698
Oja-Tuntun- Taiwo	Morning	299	95	223	88	9	714
Road (Baboko Area)	Evening	226	113	265	111	15	730
Taiwo Oke-Unity	Morning	346	103	335	128	4	916
Road (Wahab Folawiyo)	Evening	441	88	378	210	7	1124
Sango-Post Office	Morning	380	98	196	75	8	757
(Old Jebba Rd)	Evening	460	143	189	66	18	876
First bridge-Opomalu	Morning	363	99	258	71	33	824
(Emir's Road)	Evening	241	192	376	65	25	899
Post Office-Offa	Morning	169	83	413	77	6	748
Garage (Offa Rd)	Evening	278	88	375	62	8	811

Source. Author's field work.

Table 6. Response of respondents to effects of on-street parking.

Effect of on-street parking	Transport operators	Commuters	Government agencies	Others	Total frequency(%)
Traffic clog up	56	20	4	20	100
Accident	35	40	2	23	100
Traffic delay	14	60	5	21	100
Restrict Movement	5	10	4	81	100
Fight/hubbub	18	10	1	71	100

Source. Author's field work.

and followed by Sango to Post office which was 1503 respectively. The effects of all these movements of vehicles are felt more by those who are not only going to a destination but those who wanted to do transactions along these major road arteries but have no authorized parking lots to stay for awhile (Table 3).

There was little difference on the Mid-week (Wednesday) where in the peak period of vehicular movement in the morning from Sango to Post office vehicle counts attained 1216 and Post office to Offa garage depicted 1414, whereas, Oja Titun to Taiwo showed a lower vehicular movement which was 246. But in the evening, Post office to Offa garage have another higher vehicular movement/concentration of 1685 followed by 1216 Sango to Post office (Table 4) respectively.

On Sunday (weekend period) Saw-mill to Oja-Oba have 1967 due to movement of people to churches along these routes and is followed by Taiwo-Oke to Wahab Folawiyo (Unity) road which showed 916 volume of vehicles concentration. In the evening periods and the same roads witnessed more volume of vehicles concentration with 1124 when compared with Emir's road from Post office with 899 Vehicle Counts Survey (Table 5).

Problems of illegal Parks in Ilorin city.

There are sequences of problems commonly appended to parking lots- legal or illegal/unauthorised from the past and to recent time in Ilorin city. Ironically, most of these problems are partly caused by the governments or its agencies and/or partly caused by transport operators. The proliferation of parks in some nooks and crannies of Ilorin city with little or no proper administration and this made it difficult for other roads users and/or commuters to patronize the authorised and legal parks where they were located in the city. Major complaints arise from the authorized parks that; before commuters/travellers board their vehicles it takes long time than necessary, this makes it preferable for them to patronize some mushroom parks that spring up all over the places and which make journey more faster (Ahmed, 2013). Also, the mushroom parks get their passengers cheaply and this situation is really affecting the smooth running of the authorized parks. This problem apart, the activities of criminals in and around some legal parks are becoming notorious. The adjoining roads and the premises of the legal parks are a 'no-go' area the moment it is dark and at early

morning of the day. It is always being the case when you see all manner of criminals and pickpockets harassing innocent passengers.

The beauty in any city is not only found on its organized space to ease accessibility to various locations of desired requirements by effective transportation system, but it is also found in motor parks/parking lots where people use for both inter and intra urban transportation systems (Ahmed, 2013). Unfortunately, the arrangement and use of space is not properly organized in major urban centers in Nigeria and Ilorin in particular. However, in Ilorin at present time, people are not having good access to the organized motor parking lots and garages in the city, and this causes a lot of problems which few of them are just mentioned.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The following are important solution towards the improvement of the chaotic parking situation in the Ilorin city of Nigeria.

- Provision of bus-stops and kerbs for commercial motors and parking lots for private motors.
- Provision of pedestrian walkways and pedestrian overhead bridge crossing at appropriate location.
- Provision of designated and specified park for different vehicles plying different routes as well as off-street parking for inter-city transport.
- Re-organization of market system so that all forms of street-hawking and roadside selling must be totally scratched-off, while the government should provide a ready-made alternative place for commercial activities.
- Strict enforcement of traffic rules and regulations in the area which would involves law enforcement agent to be compelled to do the works with pride and more elements of efficiency and submissiveness in which vehicle found on illegal traffic routes should be punished according to the rules of law.
- Provision of parking guidance system that will cater for parking of vehicle during the peak hours of the city.
- The efficient movement of people and goods are vital task and upon it rest the quality of life as observed in the literature; there is no escape from transport because immobility perpetrate poverty. It affects smooth flow of traffic and causes traffic congestion, lateness to work, accident and hampering other economic activities.
- Pay - parking serving space must be provided for road users on number of hours they use in the lots, this has been the practice in advanced world, and it equally serves as one of the methods of traffic control.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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