



AN ANALYSIS OF MOSQUES WEDDING CEREMONIES IN METROPOLITAN KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The spatio-temporal documentation and researches related to changes pertaining the cultural processes such as landscape, naming and wedding ceremonies among Hausa ethnicity of Kano State is lacking and grossly inadequate. The study aimed at ascertaining the state of wedding ceremonies in Kano state. Identification of major changes temporally, causes of the changes and the consequential implication were unveiled. Five local government areas were sampled randomly with twenty respondents in each for the study. Interview is used as instrument for data collection. The data obtained were analyzed using Simple statistical tool. The study revealed that, the rate of changes in wedding ceremonies is higher in the urban space presently than ever in the history of the areas like that of naming ceremony. Packing space, convenience, Sectarianism, socio-economic status, breakage of extended family are among the causes of the changes. The family ties and relationship that such gathering promote among the community and family members are threatened. Wedding and naming at mosques overtake house-frontages with high magnitude. The cultural and socio-economic impact of home based ceremonies are lost such as inter personal contact, exchange of gifts, transactions and feeding of the needy alleviating poverty. Culture turn is needed in areas of ceremonies among the community as revealed by the study. The study recommends that, coherent attitudes unity and participations should be encouraged by the community elders. Public-Private partnership should be encouraged towards developing naming ceremonies as cultural heritage in order to diversify the economy of Kano.

Keywords: *Weeding, poverty, Religion, Culture, Community*

INTRODUCTION

Ceremony is a fundamental element of culture and an important yardstick of local, regional and ethnic identity. It portrays other elements of cultural heritage beyond conveying physical messages needed for its production and consumption. These include gatherings, folklore, religion, language, familial bonds, social structures, celebrations and ceremonies, landscapes, to name but a few. However, despite all that is known about importance of wedding, there still remains a dearth of consolidated research on the wide diversity of changes and its heritage attributes and contexts. This paper aims to fill this void by appraising what is known about wedding from a heritage perspective and to examine and evaluate the existing shift concepts and practices related to matrimonial practices, intergenerational traditions, sustainable cultural or indigenous rituals, and many more heritage elements as they pertain to practices. The nature of the content will appeal to a wider academic interest in the fields of tourism, geography, cultural studies, anthropology and sociology. In most societies especially in Africa, religion usually struggles to display presence and prestige; hence the proliferation of landmarks in different parts of our societies forming cultural mosaics (Lambu, 2014). Wedding and naming ceremonies across Nigeria's geographical zones are known to have demonstrated a thorough response to the culture, religious sect and socio-economic milieu in which the two occur. The

change of place of social gatherings signify culture change that need closer view to find out why and where it happened This response illustrates the fact that ethnic and cultural characteristics are constantly changing, in some places much faster than the others and also varies across spaces and culture (Lambu, 2014). There are variation in Cultural processes from area to area for different reasons as opined by Nwoye (2014) that naming ceremony consists of cutting of the placenta and the umbilical cord, the seclusion and the purification as well as the circumcision rites which involve both boys and girls, although circumcision of girls depend on the cultural background of the family or community.

Hausa wedding and naming ceremonies are mostly based on Islamic rites due to strong influence of religious attachment. The reason is due to the high Islamization of the culture where greater percentage of people belongs to Islamic faith. It is not as time consuming or expensive like for other ethnic groups in the southern Nigeria particularly Igbo or Yoruba where the gatherings is determined by the levels of serious preparation. The study will bring to light the causes and implications of cultural changes like wedding on the general wellbeing of the society. It's going to provide information on dynamics that are occurring as well as their causes to enable the society to handle, manage and plan its today and the future.

The description of the study area

Kano State lies approximately between latitudes $10^{\circ} 30'N$ and $12^{\circ}37'N$ of the Equator and longitudes $7^{\circ} 40'E$ and $9^{\circ} 23' E$ of the Greenwich Meridian. It has an estimated land size of 20,280 km^2 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2010) with a population of 9,401,288 (2006 census). It is some 900 Kilometers from the

edge of the Sahara desert and some 1,140Km away from the Atlantic Ocean. The state shares boundaries with Jigawa state from the North and East, from the west and southwest it borders Katsina and Kaduna states respectively. From the extreme south east it borders Bauchi state. The state is made up of forty-four (44) Local Government areas (LGAs) (Figure 1).

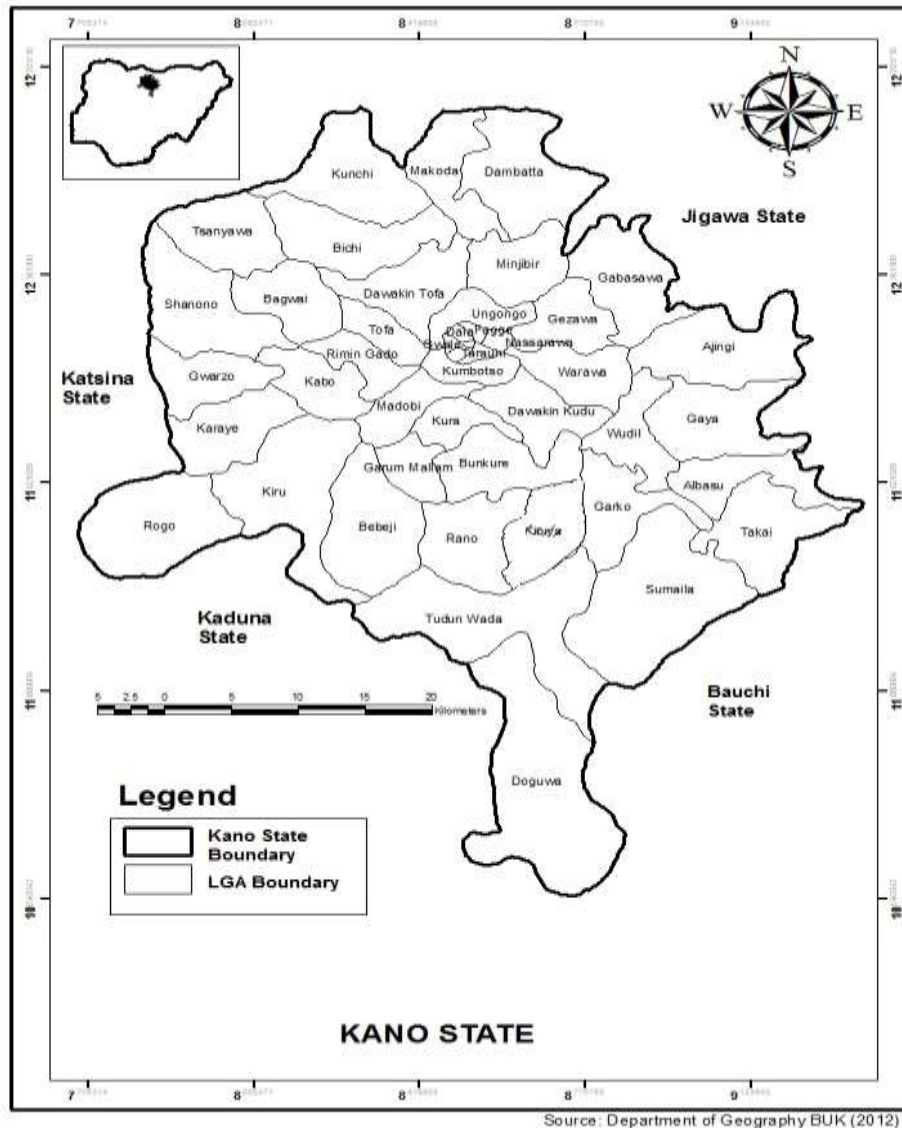


Fig. 1. Map of Kano State

The area is characterized by rocks of the Basement Complex of pre-Cambrian age to the west and south, and the Chad formation to the northeast. The relief can be described under three types which are found in three zones. These are the south and southeastern highlands, the middle and western high plains and the northeastern low Chad plains. The first two types are part of the High plains of Hausa land and the third is part of the Chad

plains (Olofin, 2008). The geologic process of pediplanation has made it possible for the older granites to give way for flat terrain or simply plain-lands in this area, while the pockets of hills all around Kano are merely residual beacons of that natural washing (Barau, 2006). A dry land plain like that of Kano offers a good opportunity for human settlement, agriculture, grazing, accessibility and mobility of people and materials as compared

with that of rocky, marshy, sandy or thickly vegetated areas (Barau, 2006).

The climate of the study area is the tropical wet and dry. The movement of the Inter-Tropical Discontinuity (ITD) gives rise to two seasons (wet and dry seasons). The wet season lasts from May to mid-October with a peak in August while the dry season extends from mid-October of one calendar-year to mid-May of the next.

The soil of Kano according to Essiet (2014) is derived from the two main geological formations; The Basement complex and Chad formation. The Basement Complex rocks are quite variable in size and composition and include schists, shales and granites among others. The soils formed over the Basement Complex rocks are relatively well structured and possess sufficient depth to permit the cultivation of most staple crops. The soils on the Chad Formation, on the other hand are poorly structured and excessively drained. They are derived mostly from the Aeolian parent materials.

The vegetation of Kano State is the semi-arid savannah. The Sudan Savannah is sandwiched by the Sahel Savannah in the north and the Guinea Savannah in the south. In the pre-industrial age the savannah was described as the zone that provides opportunity for optimal human attainment. This was because it was rich in faunal and floral resources, it is suitable for both cereal agriculture and livestock rearing, and the environment is relatively easy for movement of natural resources and other goods. The situation has changed as the savannah has been degraded by human activity and global warming leading to periodic draught (Kano State Government, 2007).

Methods of data collection

This section explains issues surrounding data such as types, sources, instruments of data collection, Population and sampling techniques, data collection and analysis of the data. The study being cross sectional in nature adopts survey research method to elicit information on the objectives of the study. It's a mixed method research involving qualitative and quantitative methods of approach to data collection, presentation and analysis as it has concerns with humans and environment

Types and Sources of Data

The types of data in this paper includes quantitative and qualitative data. Number of occasions that's the wedding, gifts and expenses are held quantitative. On the other hand, qualitative data includes preferences, choices and likeness of places of wedding between mosques and homes.

Population and Sample

Gwale, Dala, Fagge, Tarauni and Nasarawa Local government Areas (Figure 2) are the entire catchment area to this research. Respondents are going to be individuals from 10 years and above who are capable of making or taking a decision of likes and dislikes over wedding issues.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

Religious leaders, praise-singers, brides, grooms family and friends at various wedding places are to be interviewed on their level of preference, choice and perception on wedding venues, impact of the changes, causes and prospects. Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with various categories of people like hawkers and common persons on their preferences as well as the implications of the changes, these two instruments were adopted for data collection.

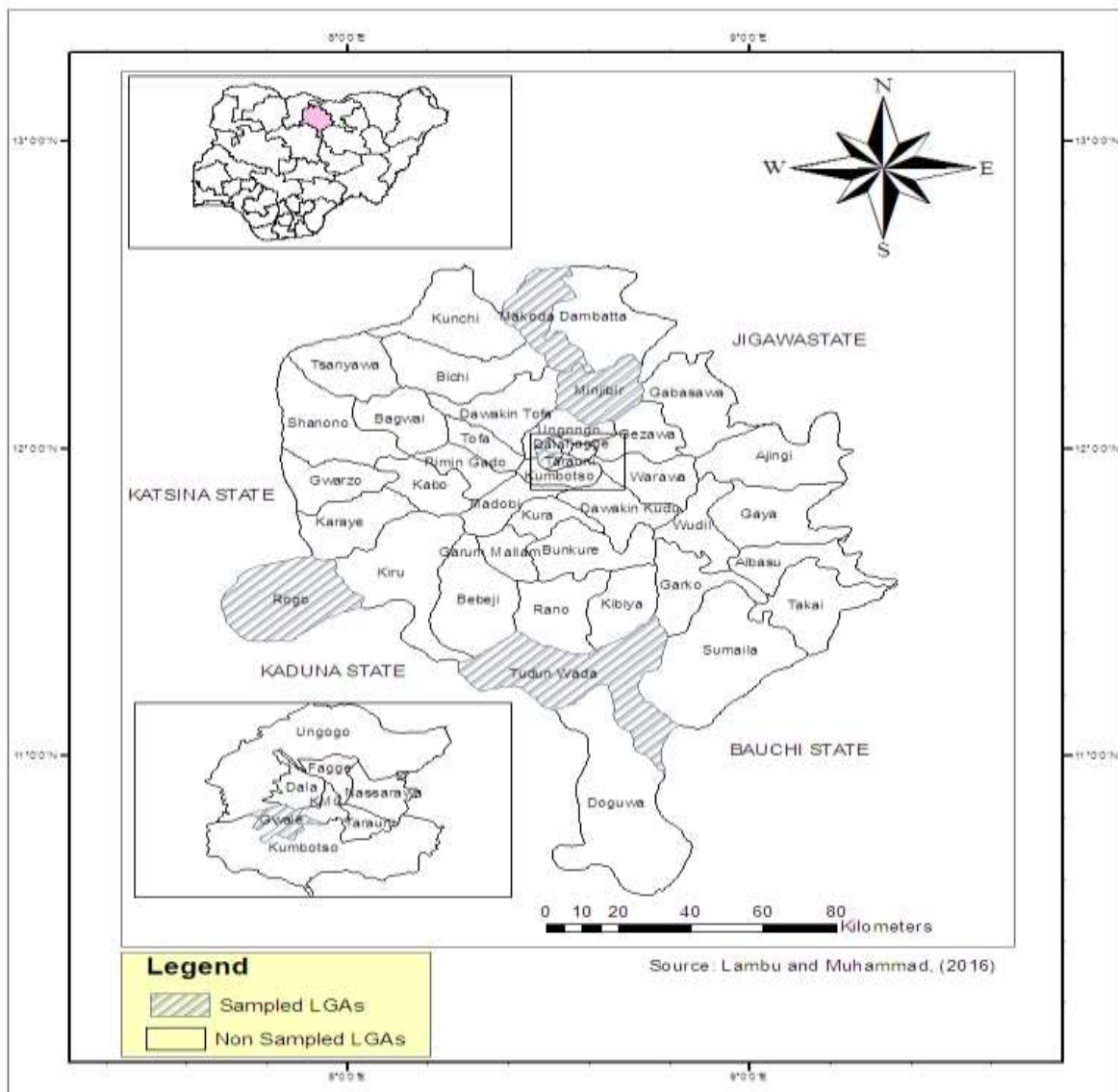


Fig. 2: Sampled Local Government Areas

The shaded areas in Figure 2 show the sampled Local government area where the study was conducted. The random sampling paves way for pair representation in the state where distant areas were covered.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Changes in wedding ceremonies

Based on the findings of the study from those interviewed, the study revealed that, the changes in the wedding ceremonies occur mostly around the suburban areas than inside the core city. High costs of living as well as increased urban poverty make

many to shift toward performing wedding ceremony at mosques due to its low level of financial commitment than home-made gathering. This spatial variation occurs due to the fact that, affinity to culture is stronger and respectful in the core city than suburban areas (I.e. Norman's land). However, within the rural areas the changes increase as one moves from the core of rural areas to the peri rural areas due to adoption of city culture by the core rural areas, as a result of housing the seat of local government administration and most of the traditional title holders of the local government as well as availability of social services.

Table 1 Number of ceremonies in mosques and homes

Localities	Mosques	Homes	Total
Urban	98%	2%	100
Suburban	34%	66%	100

Source: Field work 2016

Naming prayers or ceremony at mosques in the urban Kano dominate home frontage by significant percentages. Conversely, in the rural areas, the culture is still active where many people conduct the congregation at their home frontage.

Preference between Mosques and Home ceremonies in the state

There many causative factors behind the changes of Ceremony from Public or Open spaces to Mosques in Kano state. Among all the factors religious, economic and affinity to culture are the major reasons for the preference between home and mosques ceremonies. The results from interviews and FGD show dissimilar pattern of preferences between rural and urban areas as depicted in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

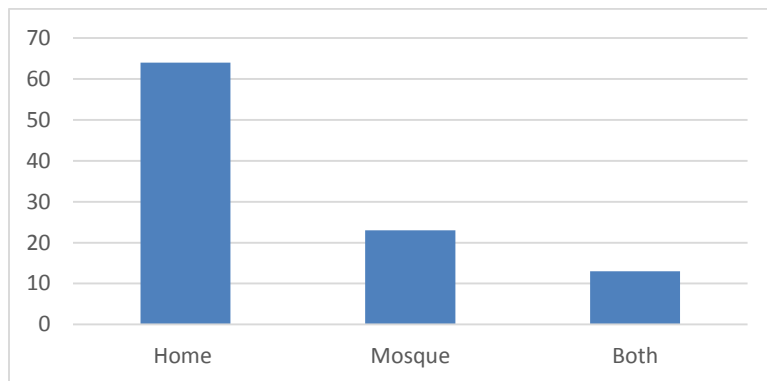
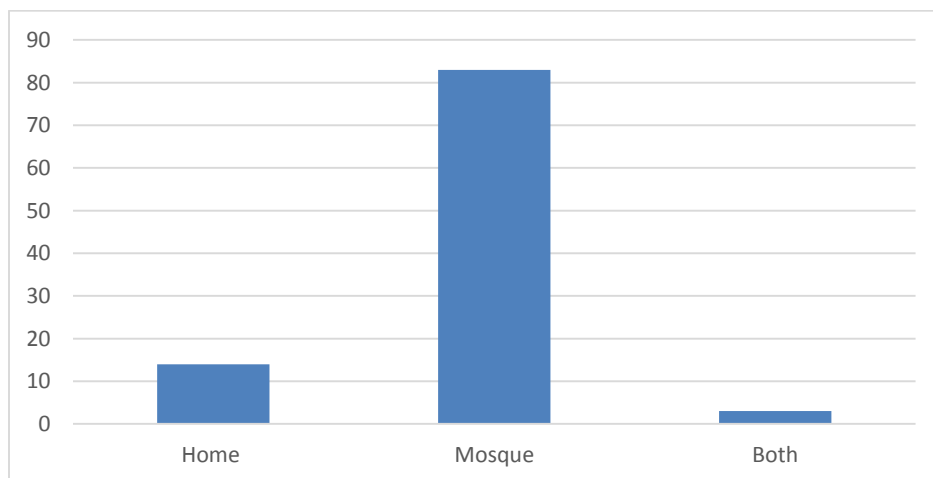


Fig. 3: Preference of venue for wedding in the core city areas

From various interviews conducted, the respondents were coded into percentages to show the level of preference among various interest groups. In the rural areas, people are more concerned

with the ancient culture than their urban counterparts who are ready to accept change with minimum reservations.



- Fig. 4. Preferences of ceremony at suburban areas

Perception on wedding through FGD with some group of respondents in the urban area shows contrary opinions with their rural counterparts.

- On the religious perspective, the respondents revealed that, they prefer mosques than open space /home wedding ceremonies. According to them, they are trying to stick to the teaching of Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) in all their doings, because most of His gathering were conducted in his mosque which is the centre where people gathered. They also revealed that, mosque is not meant for only prayers, it also serves as a social centre where most of the activities are taking place. There is sectarian bias toward

preference of ceremony where Izala sect has 100% support while Darika is divided based on the situation of economy or location

- On the economic reasons, some of the respondents confirmed that, ceremonies at mosques required little or no financial implications, especially in the Sunni mosques where distribution of Cola nut and Sweet to the participants is being discouraged as well as giving money to Imam that lead the ceremonies and even where Cola nut and Sweet are distributed the financial requirement is little when compared with the home naming ceremonies(Plate 1)



Plate 1: Mosque Ceremonies.

- Fading of extended family causes the preference of Mosques ceremony than Home. Extended families in Kano community were known to be the pillars that bind the family into one through assistance and participation in the one affair's. As such, where breakage of the Gandu family occurred every member of the family became independent on its own and take decisions alone. This makes most of the people to prefer mosque ceremonies than homes, since home naming ceremonies require finance and now less assistance is expected than was obtainable before, therefore they prefer mosques which require little or no financial burden.

- On the other hand, among those preferring home ceremonies, are those that give affinity to culture. To them religious affiliation or economic status does not influence their preference to mosques ceremonies. They stated that, their forefathers, fathers and community elders did their ceremonies at home because of its advantage over mosques ceremonies which include; it serve as an avenue for establishing relationship among the family members, friends and well-wishers, respect for family elders, it also serves as a means for assisting the poor people with what to eat, inculcate the culture of open space/home gathering to younger generations, promote the economic activities of small and petty traders among others (Plate 2)



Plate 2: Home Naming Ceremonies

The implication of the changes on cultural development in the state.

The preference of mosque over open space/home ceremonies has a number of implications as identified by the study.

- a) Socio-economic: On the socio-economic implication of mosque wedding ceremonies is that, praise-singers who receives gift and the small/petty traders that engage in selling Cola nuts, Sweets and snacks are seriously affected by this change. This is because, before people use to buy a bag of Cola nut or half of the bag and carton(s) of sweet for distribution during the home ceremonies, but as a results of this change few people now patronize such people especially in the urban centre. Even the local Hawkers who sell traditional items and locally made sweets are affected.
- b) Poverty Alleviation: Whenever there is home ceremonies, poor or less privilege people benefit from it by getting their break-fast and even in some cases their launch as well as getting assistance from the privileged ones that will sustain them to some period. This prevents them from begging on the street and from house to house. But because of these changes, such benefits are no longer obtainable by such people particularly in the urban areas and therefore become more vulnerable to poverty.
- c) Promotion of Culture: Culture is the way of life that shows ones identity. People of Kano were well known with their culture which makes other people to appreciate their culture. But with these changes the cultural identity of the community is affected with the

side lining of the as Praise-singers, local musicians and cultural dances/displays.

- d) Proper tracking: Many people interact with other people for many years at their working places, public gathering, religious congregation and their business space without knowing their origin or where they reside. With the culture of ceremonies at homes, many people know the origin or true residence of persons. But with these changes it becomes difficult to know the identity and origin of one another, thereby leading to the decay or loss of people identification.

General perception on ceremonies in the state.

Generally, many respondents opined that home/open space ceremonies promote peace and unity among the members of the community and need to be promoted by public in order to sustain the Culture of Hausa community cultural heritage. Even some religious leaders (especially lower income earners) are not happy with the changes because many people are not giving proper tribute if such ritual at mosque. Many described the new attitude as misery or stinginess so that people cannot serve food, sweet and cola to the attendants. *"In the past, if there are many weddings in the localities, one can get break-fast and live the little at home for children but we are in the era of WAYO !"* as commented by a respondent. The change in place of ceremonies created mix reactions and feelings among respondents based on individual perception.

CONCLUSION

Mosque wedding ceremonies are more acceptable in the suburban centers than in the core city community though with variations as the practice differs across wards in the areas due to variations of sects, economic status, breakage of extended family and affinity to culture are the major factors that influence the changes. Majority of the respondents believed that home/open space ceremonies promote peace and unity among the members of the community and need to be promoted by public in order to sustain the Culture of Hausa community since pre-colonial period.

RECOMMENDATION

Cultural changes need to handle with caution because both cultural landscape and cultural processes are part of cultural heritage that people cherish, respect and adore hence the consequences may spell doom if care is not taken. Both government and individuals need to safeguard and maintain the noble heritage especially the ones that have significant impact on the society.

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