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Artisanal Public Transport In Niamey: A Service That Has Become Essential For The Vitality Of A City

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Abstract
Sub-Saharan cities are relatively young and are undergoing rapid demographic and spatial growth, one of the consequences of which is the impact on population mobility. After independence, most of these cities had public passenger transport companies. In the 1980s, we witnessed the "gradual disappearance of large public companies following various restructuring plans or even liquidation". This led to the proliferation of various forms of small-scale passenger transport, including motorcycle cabs in Porto-Novo in the 1980s, Woro-Woro cabs in Abidjan in 1994, and Talladjé-Talladjé in the 1970s. The aim of this article is to determine the share of home-made collective transport in the mobility of households living in the outlying districts of the city of Niamey. We opted for a cross-sectional method involving a series of observations and a household survey on the mobility conditions of the population living in Niamey's outlying districts. Data processing was carried out using SPSS and Office Suite software. At the end of this study, it emerged that the population living on the outskirts of the city of Niamey is mainly made up of civil servants and shopkeepers, and that 47.99% of these households are captive to artisanal means of transport. Cabs dominate this supply, accounting for 68.18%. The 52.01% of households equipped with a means of transport mainly use motorized two-wheelers (62.73%), followed by cars (34.55%).

Keywords: artisanal public transport, periphery, peri-urbanization, city of Niamey, demo-spatial growth.

Introduction

Population mobility is at the heart of the debate on cities in the South. Sub-Saharan African cities, perhaps more than others, are experiencing major difficulties in this area. This is partly due to their dynamic spatial development. In Western cities, spatial sprawl is strictly linked to technical improvements in transport (Dupuy, 1995). Urban growth is therefore a consequence of progress in everyday mobility (NEWMAN, KENWORTHY, 1996). Cities in industrialized countries have undergone three major periods of expansion. The pedestrian city, with reduced sprawl; the public transport city, dominated by the railroads, with relatively limited sprawl along the axes; and finally, the diffuse motor city, with very high levels of sprawl (NEWMAN, KENWORTHY, 1996). In this context of cities in industrialized countries, "daily mobility and urban form present a strong link, both in their structure and in their dynamics" (WESTER, & AUDARD, 2017). This is not the case for relatively young sub-Saharan cities, which are experiencing rapid demographic and spatial growth (WESTER & AUDARD, 2017), without a consistent supply of means of transport.

After independence, most major sub-Saharan cities had bus companies that met households' daily mobility needs. In the 1980s, we witnessed the "gradual disappearance of large public enterprises following various restructuring or even liquidation plans" (Adoléhoumé, & Nagoné, 2002). The economic crisis resulting from the Structural Adjustment Plan (SAP) took its toll on most of these companies. The disappearance or weakening of these state-owned companies opened up a gap through which small-scale modes of transport rushed in to meet the population's pressing need for mobility. These included motorcycle cabs in Porto-Novo in the 1980s (Agossou, 2004) and Lomé in the 1990s (Guézéré, 2012), Woro-Woro cabs in Abidjan in 1994 (Aloko, 1999), and Talladjé-Talladjé in Niamey in the 1970s (Yayé & Motcho, 2012).

These artisanal means have gradually become the main supply in most sub-Saharan cities, and are a factor enabling the population to settle in areas quite far from the city center. According to Agossou, "without zemijans, urban sprawl or peri-urbanization would be inconceivable or would pose serious problems in the current context of Benin's economy". These motorcycle cabs are therefore the oxygen that fuels the spatial dynamics of Benin's cities and economy in Porto-Novo and Cotonou (Agossou, 2004).

In a paper published in 2002, Godard highlighted the share of small-scale transport in the public transport supply in certain sub-Saharan cities. In Abidjan, artisanal transport accounted for 44%, compared with 28% for institutional public transport; in Accra, Ghana, 74%, compared with 11% for institutional public transport; in Dakar, 72%, compared with 18% for institutional public transport; in Ouagadougou, 6%, compared with 1% for institutional public transport; and in Niamey, 30%, compared with 7% for institutional public transport. A particular feature of Ouagadougou and Niamey was the dominance of individual means of transport, with 75% and 59% respectively. As far back as the 2000s, artisanal means of transport were the mainstay of public mass transit provision. In the context of Niamey, with only five buses in circulation, the institutional offer represented by SOTRUNI has since dropped considerably, giving way to individual means and artisanal public transport. Cabs and Faba-Faba are the main means of small-scale transport in Niamey. By 2023, there were 10,300 red-headed cabs, 150 Bassora-Bassora (blue-headed) cabs and 612 Faba-Faba. To these main means of transport must be added a few relics of the Lazaret-Lazaret and the growing but illegal development of motorcycle cabs in some of the city's outlying districts. This predominance of small-scale means of transport is taking place against a backdrop of strong spatial expansion in the city of Niamey, whose spatial footprint has grown from 4,690 ha in 1984 to 33,100 ha in 2023, at an average rate of 728.46 ha/year (ILYASSOU, 2023). Based on the principle that "good mobility is an indicator of a well-functioning urban machine" (Aloko, 1999), what role does small-scale public transport play in the mobility of households living on the outskirts of the city of Niamey?

The aim of this article is to determine the share of artisanal collective transport in the mobility of households living in the outlying districts of the city of Niamey. We hypothesize that small-scale public transport (TCA) is an essential means of transport for households on the outskirts of Niamey.

I. Materials and methods

1.1. Type of study

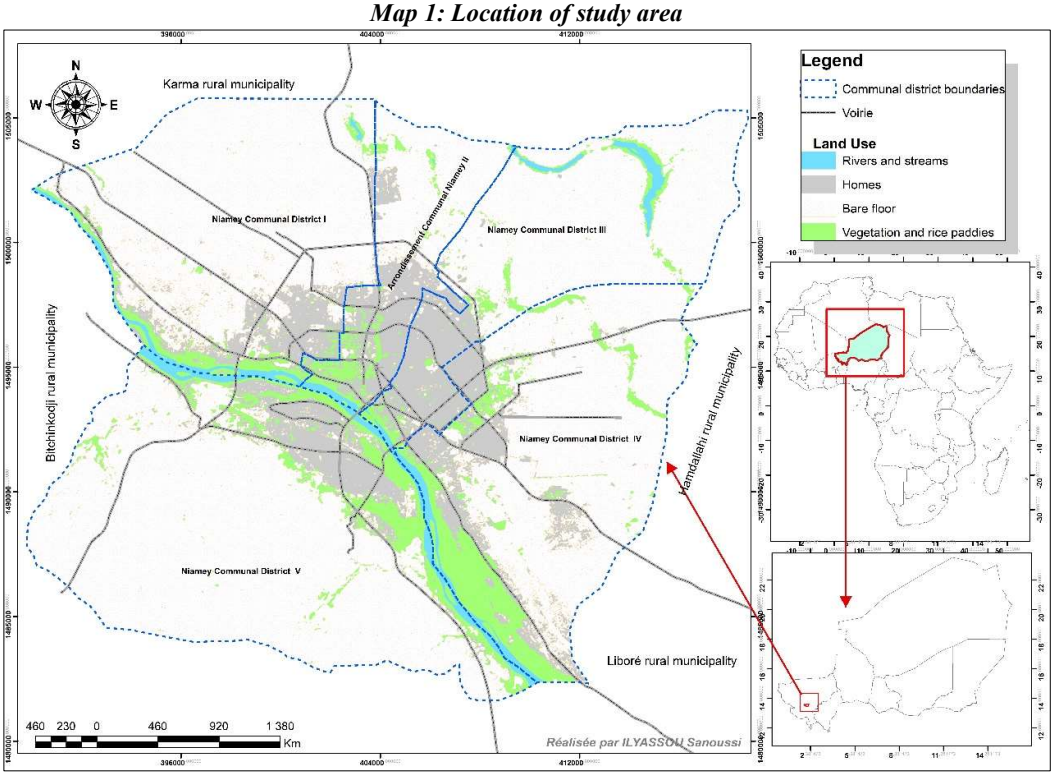
This is a descriptive cross-sectional method on the mobility habits of the population in the outlying districts of the city of Niamey, which took place from March to June 2023. It is a study sequenced by an exploratory phase followed by the preparation and collection of primary data in the field. It was conducted within the broader framework of a doctoral thesis.

- Presentation of the study area: Niamey, a city straddling the river

Situated between 13°28' and 13°35' North Latitude and 2°03' and 2°10' East Longitude, Niamey is located on the left bank of the River Niger, on a plateau with an average altitude of 220 m, overlooking the alluvial plain on the right bank, which lies between 180 and 250 m above sea level (Motcho, 2020). The left bank plateau supports four of the city's five communal districts, thanks to its favorable topography for human settlement. The right bank of the river, made up solely of the Niamey V communal district, has also seen renewed interest since the construction of the Kennedy Bridge in 1970 and the completion of the second and third bridges in 2010 and 2021, which have opened up this communal district, which accounts for a large proportion of the land available in the Niamey region.

The City of Niamey, which is also an autonomous region whose geographical boundaries are those of its region, covers an area of 255 Km², or 25,500 ha (Motcho, 2020). In the field and on satellite imagery, its surface area exceeds 50,000 ha.

Map 1: Location of study area



1.2 Collection tools and sampling

- Household survey of people living in outlying districts

To conduct this research, we carried out an exploratory study consisting of a wide-ranging observation of the city's outskirts in order to physically identify them. Following this exploration, we developed data collection tools based on our research hypotheses. We drew up a survey questionnaire for people living in the outlying districts, a second questionnaire for drivers of small-scale public transport and interview guides for the various people in charge of the services involved in mobility in the city of Niamey.

- Sampling

The study focused on the peripheral districts of the five communal districts of the city of Niamey. The periphery is defined by all the districts in the peripheral ring proposed by Motcho (Motcho, 2020). In fact, he subdivides the city of Niamey into four zones: the central city, the pericentral zone, the intermediate zone and the peripheries. The outskirts are characterized by spatial discontinuity (Motcho, 2020) based on four factors: the military camps, the boulevard Tanimoune (100m wide)/green belt (1km wide), the morphology of the terrain (badlands) and finally the River Niger, which separates the Niamey V communal district (AC). The only exception to this delimitation is that we do not consider the entire Niamey V communal district as a periphery, but rather its most recent districts. On the basis of this definition, we have identified the following neighborhoods per communal district:

Table 1: Distribution of the number of outlying districts in the city of Niamey by CA

Communal district	Number of outlying districts
Niamey I	16
Niamey II	07
Niamey III	05
Niamey IV	21
Niamey V	04

Source: National Directory of Localities (RGP/H, 2012)

Population projections by the INS are only made at the level of communal districts. The population of outlying districts is therefore difficult to assess. In this context, we opted for a sampling method that does not depend on the sampling frame. We therefore chose the formula

$n = z^2 \times p (1 - p) / m^2 d$

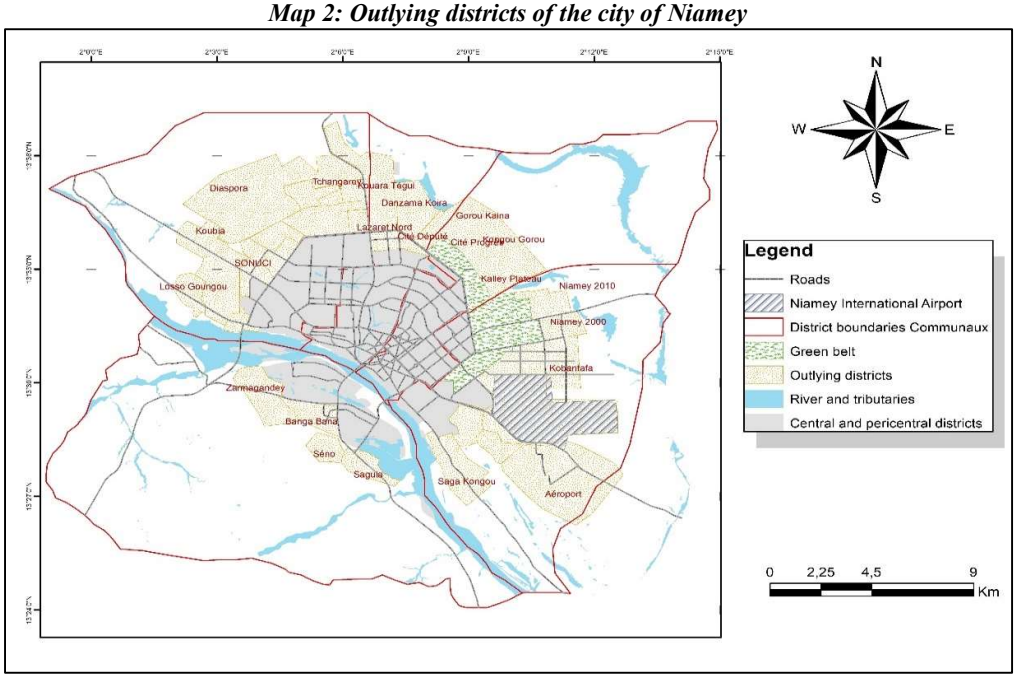
To determine our sample, we opted for a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%, with :
n = sample size ;
z = confidence level according to the reduced centered normal distribution (for a 95% confidence level, z = 1.96) ;
p = estimated proportion of the population exhibiting the characteristic (we'll use p = 0.5, which corresponds to the worst case, i.e. the widest dispersion)
m = tolerated margin of error (we'll take the proportion to within 5%).
Numerical application will give us a sample size of :
$n = (1.96)^2 \times (0.5)(1-0.5) / (0.05)^2 = 384.16$
Or n = 384.16
We have rounded off our sample to 400 households to be surveyed in the five (05) communes of the city of Niamey, with 80 households per commune.
Table N°1 shows that the Niamey V communal district has only four outlying districts, so we consider this figure to be the base per communal district, giving us twenty (20) districts to survey
.

Table 2: Breakdown of selected neighbourhoods by Communal Arrondissement

Communal district	Selected districts
Niamey I	*Tchangarey ; Koubia ; Diaspora ;Lossogoungou*
Niamey II	*Danzama Koira ; Cité député ; Kouara Tégui ; Nord Lazaret*
Niamey III	*Cité progrès ; Kalley plateau ; Gorou Kaina ; Kongou Gorou*
Niamey IV	*Aéroport ; Niamey 2010 ; Kobantafa ; Saga Goungou*
Niamey V	*Saguia ; Zarmagandey ; Banga Bana ; Seno*

Source : ReNaLoc update (RGP/H, 2012)

Map 2: Outlying districts of the city of Niamey



- Data processing

Data collected using KoboCollect software were analyzed using IBM SPSS 26 data processing software to generate graphs and percentages.

1. Results

The analysis of the mobility habits of the inhabitants of the outlying districts of the city of Niamey brings out socio-demographic characteristics which will enable us to understand them better. The most important results are presented in this section.

1.1. Socio-demographic features

The city of Niamey is characterized by strong demographic growth. From the general population and housing census (RGP/H) of 1977 to that of 2012, the population of the city/region of Niamey rose from 1,026,848 hbts. At the end of 2013, this population was estimated at 1,449,801 hbts, representing an average annual increase of over 32,500 hbts.
Table N°3 below shows the demographic progression by communal arrondissement based on the 2012 RGP/H.

Table 3: Demographic trends by RGP/H municipal district from 2012 to 2023

Year	ACNI	ACNII	ACNIII	ACNIV	ACNV	TOTAL
2012	210 020	246 898	163 175	274 484	132 271	1 026 848
2023	296 526	348 594	230 386	387 542	186 753	1 449 801
Number of households 2023	49 421	58 099	38 398	64 590	31 126	49 421

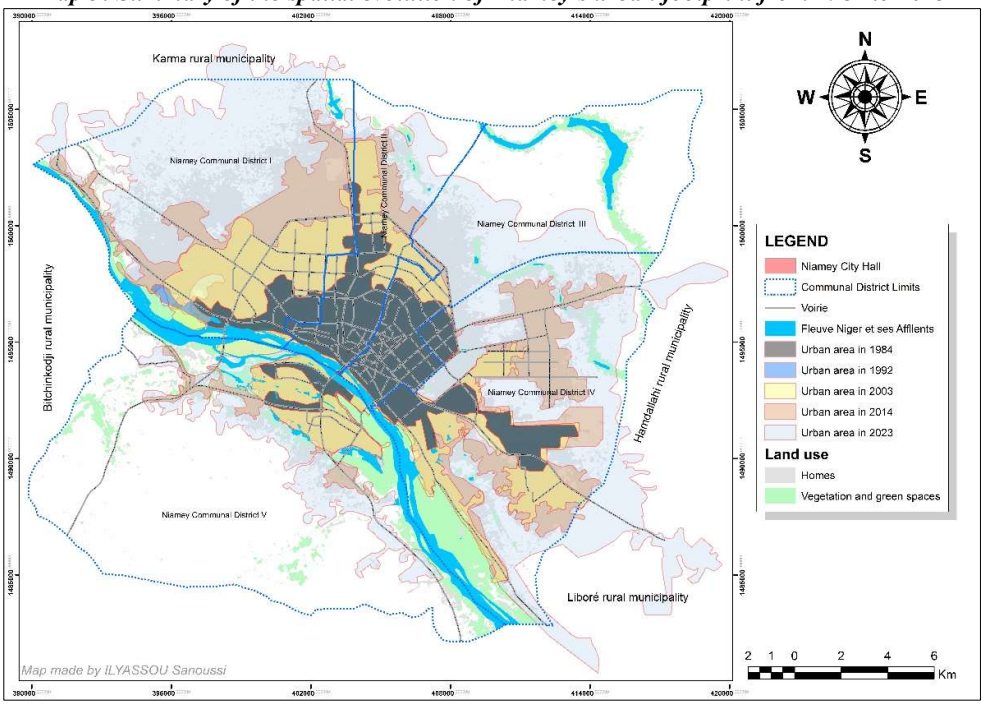
Source: Projected population in 2023 by Communal Arrondissements based on 2012 RGP/H

One of the consequences of this strong demographic growth is the city's spatial expansion, which has led to a strong peri-urbanization of the city, inducing mobility habits that differ from those of the population living in the city's central and peri-urban rings.

1.2. Spatial dynamics of Niamey from 1984 to 2023

From 1984 to 2023, the city of Niamey experienced very strong dynamics. Its spatial footprint grew from 4,690 ha to 33,100 ha at an average rate of 728.46 ha/year. This growth reached cruising speed between 2014 and 2023, when the surface area increased from 15,500 ha to 33,100, doubling its footprint in less than ten years (ILYASSOU, spatial analysis 2023). Map 3 below shows the different ages of the city and the evolution of its spatial footprint.

Map 3: Summary of the spatial evolution of Niamey's urban footprint from 1984 to 2023



1.3. Characteristics of public transport supply in the city of Niamey

Artisanal public transport is defined as opposed to organized institutional transport. In Niamey, the Niamey Urban Transport Company (SOTRUNI) represents the institutional offer. By the end of 2023, this company will only have five (05) buses in circulation in the whole of Niamey (National Land Transport Manager). This is a drop in the ocean of 33,100 ha covered by the city of Niamey. The population's natural need for mobility has led to the proliferation of several small-scale means of transport in the city. Means of transport linking the city center to certain outlying districts have disappeared or are in the process of doing so. These include Talladjé-Talladjé, Lazaret-Lazaret and others. The Bassora-Bassora, on the other hand, are still holding out. They have been supplanted by other, more perennial models, notably the Faba-Faba, which developed like wildfire from the 2000s onwards, competing strongly with the red-headed cabs that have been in demand since the 1960s.

Niamey city authorities currently recognize three types of public transport: red-head cabs, Faba-Faba cabs and Bassora-Bassora blue-roof cabs. In addition to these three types, there are a few relics of the Lazaret-Lazaret and the growing development of motorcycle cabs and tricycles, the former in the outlying districts and the latter linking the outskirts to the city's markets.

The three types of transport services recognized by the city can be divided into two more or less distinct groups: on the one hand, scheduled services organized along well-defined routes, departing from the vicinity of markets and other structuring infrastructures; and on the other, so-called rally services that criss-cross the city blindly in search of hypothetical customers.

Figure 1: Faba-Faba line Wadata - Niamey axis 2000

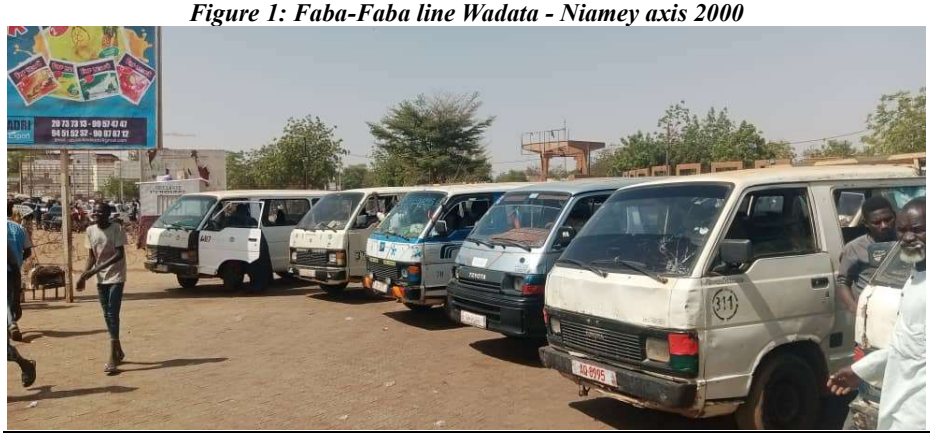


Figure 2: Bassora - Bassora line

Figure 3: Red-headed line cab

Source : ILYASSOU, 2024

- Rally cabs

City cabs, or cab tête-rouge, are one of Niamey's main urban transport services. They can be recognized by the red roof of their vehicles. Sedan-type bodies dominate, with an average age of 26 (mobility survey of TCA drivers).

While Decree No. 88-091/PCMS/MT/T of March 10, 1988 enshrines their legal recognition and provides a framework for their exercise, this mode of transport dates back to the 1960s with an estimated 80 vehicles in 1967 (Yayé, 2014). Since then, their number has risen steadily, reaching 10,300 by the end of 2023 (Niamey City Transport Department).

These red-headed cabs are one of the city's main means of transport. They circulate blindly around the city in search of customers. Their numbers are highest during the morning and afternoon rush hours, due in particular to the high demand from civil servants and schoolchildren, as well as some early-morning traders.

- Transport by line

This category is made up of two sub-categories: Faba-Faba, which are organized exclusively for line haulage, and cabs (red heads and blue heads), which are also organized for line haulage, but with the freedom to run rallies.

Faba-Faba is a mode of transport that emerged in the 2000s on the initiative of an economic operator by the name of Habibou Falla. He initially began operations in 1999 with two 70-seat buses authorized by the city of Niamey. Subsequently, other operators followed suit, including Elhadj Djouma. This dynamism led to the introduction of 19-seater Toyota Hiace minibuses, with a total of 23 vehicles in 2000. At that time, they only served the Grand Marché - airport district via the Talladjé district This experiment took place outside any union framework, but was legally authorized by the city of Niamey. It was not until 2004 that the Bus Drivers' Union (SYNCOBUS) was created. The creation of this union gave a new dynamism to Faba-Faba, which gradually opened other routes with the authorization of the city of Niamey, reaching a total of 650 minibuses by the end of 2023.

- Artisanal mass transit services

Artisanal public transport is dominated by red-headed cabs, officially estimated at 10,300 vehicles, followed by Faba-Faba mini-buses with 612 vehicles, and Bassora-Bassora with 150 vehicles. However, these figures for 2023 conceal another reality. In fact, these figures express the vehicle fleets whose identification numbers (door number conditioned by a green license valid for one month). This license is withdrawn and put back on the market for non-payment. This procedure creates two situations: on the one hand, there are operators who pay monthly even if their vehicle is immobilized, and on the other, there are those who clandestinely continue to use their number twice, even though it has been withdrawn for non-payment. In the field, these figures remain very relative.

The municipal authorities do not establish the evolution of the artisanal transport fleets. All they have is current data. We had compiled the data on the basis of reports, briefs and articles on the subject. However, these data have the merit of coming from the same sources at the time they were compiled.

Cabs have a capacity of five seats including the driver, and minibuses have a capacity of twenty seats including the driver and apprentice. A summary capacity calculation shows the number of people each mode can carry, as shown in table 4 below.

Table 4: TCA fleet and transport capacity

Vehicle type	Number	Capacity (Person)	Number of people transported in one lap
Red-headed cab	10 300	4	41 200
Faba-Faba	612	18	11 016
Bassora-Bassora	150	4	600

Source : Niamey City Transport Department

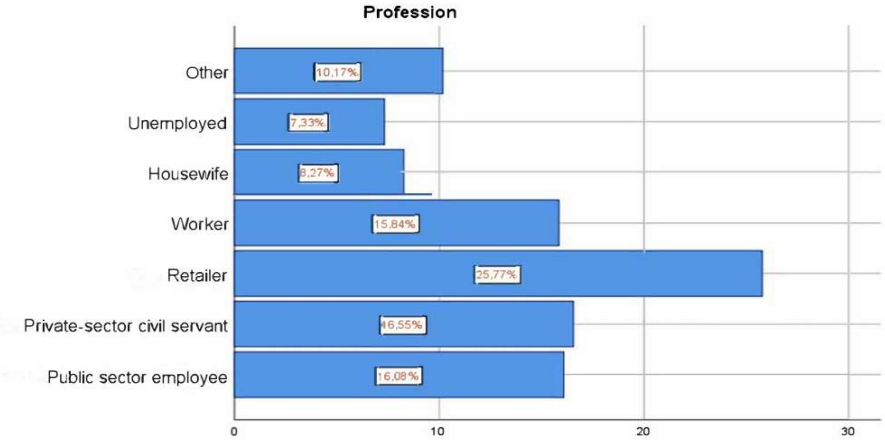
Cabs therefore carry 3.7 times more people than Faba-Faba, even though their number is almost 17 times higher.

1.4. A highly heterogeneous population

The population of Niamey's outlying districts is characterized by its heterogeneous composition. This diversity is due to the very nature of these neighborhoods. Some outlying but relatively old neighborhoods have a population whose settlement dates back several decades. This is particularly true of the Kouara Tégui recasement district, which dates back to the 1990s, and certain villages that have been swallowed up by the city, such as Saga, Seno, Saguia and Tondibya, which are now an integral part of the city of Niamey.

A multitude of professional profiles characterize this population. The merchant profile dominates with 25.80%, followed by private-sector civil servants with 16.55%, public-sector civil servants with 16.08% and blue-collar workers with 15.84%. Chart 2 shows the socio-professional structure of household heads. Taken together, civil servants account for almost a third of the population, or 32.63%.

Figure 4: Population distribution by occupation



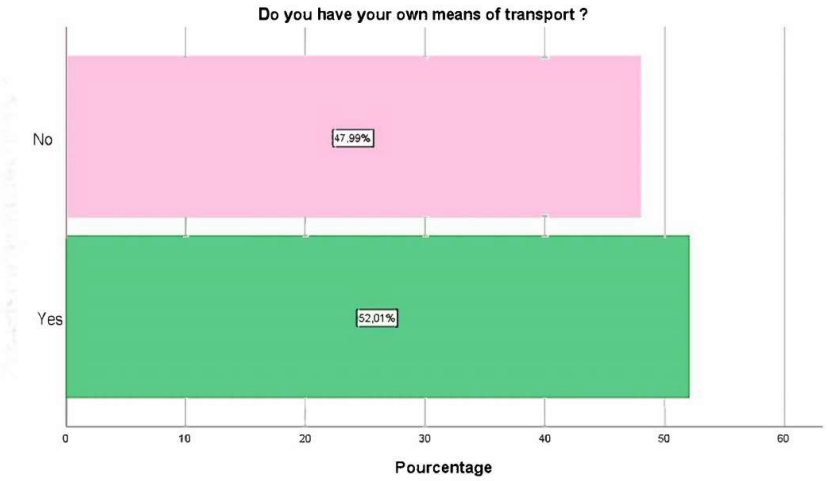
Source: Household survey 2023

1.5. Mobility conditions of household heads

Their location on the outskirts of the town means that many of them have to travel long distances to get to their place of work. In a context where SOTRUNI's institutional services are virtually non-existent, these people have to get around on their own. Having a means of transport is therefore an ideal to which they aspire. It's also a prerequisite for daring to move dozens of kilometers from their place of work.

Our household survey reveals that 52.01% of households have their own means of transport, as shown in graph N°5. The remaining 47.99% of households rely on handicrafts and walking.

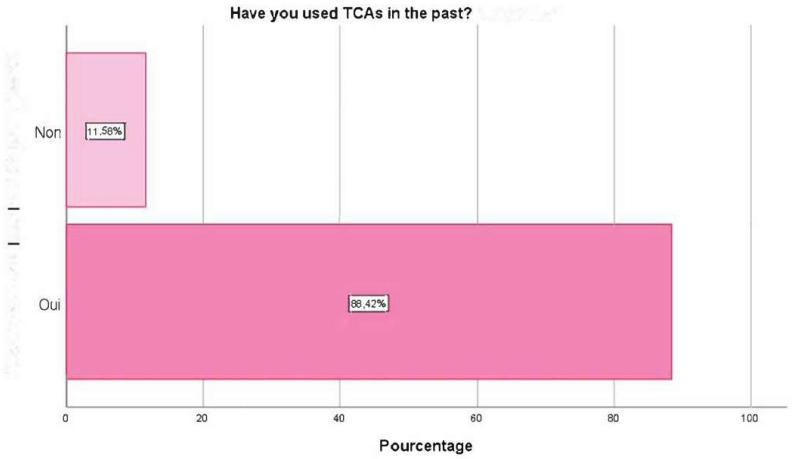
Figure 5: Breakdown of households according to whether or not they have a means of transport



Source: Household survey 2023

In addition, 88.42% of those who have a means of transport admit to having already used artisanal means of transport, as shown in figure N°6 below.

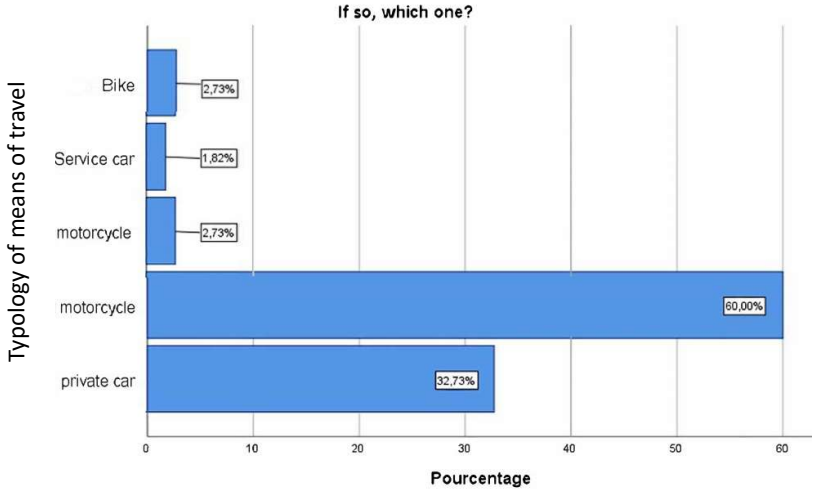
Figure 6: Percentage of household heads who have y used TCA in the past



Source: Household survey 2023

This shows that small-scale public transport has played, and will continue to play, a major role in the mobility of the population of Niamey's outlying districts.
If we consider the household motorization rate, which takes into account only four-wheel motorized vehicles, we get a motorization rate of around 19.96%. Figure N°7 below shows the proportions of different means of transport used by heads of household. The proportion remains dominated by personal motorcycles, with 60% (62.73%) of all motorcycle types, followed by personal cars, with 32.73% (34.55%) of all car types.

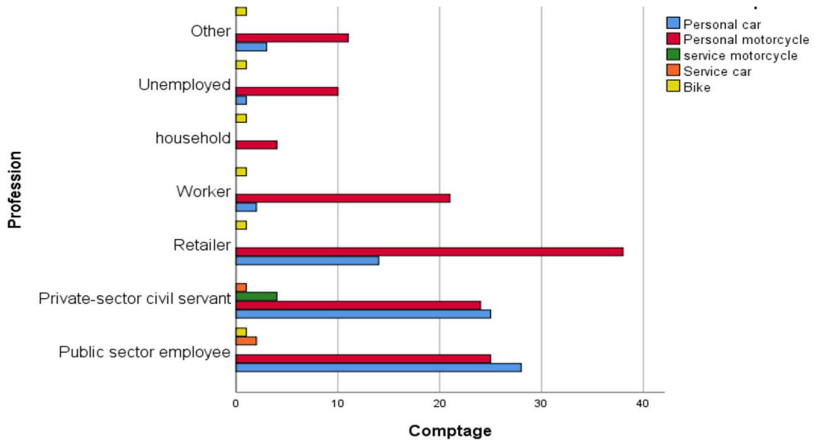
F Figure 7: Type of transport used by head of household



Source: Household survey 2023

Bicycle use is therefore very marginal, at less than 3%. If we relate the means of transport used to the profession, figure N°8 shows that civil servants in the public and private sectors use cars the most, with a share of 53%, followed by shopkeepers with a share of 25%. Shopkeepers are the profession that uses motorcycles the most, with 37%, but taken together, civil servants (public and private sectors combined) outnumber them with almost 50%.

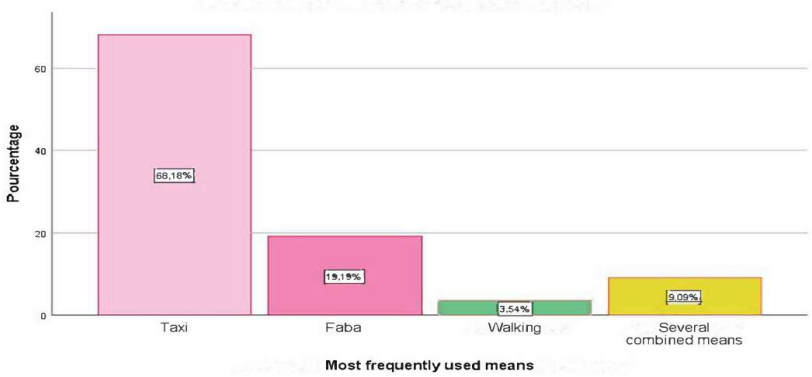
Figure 8: TCA used by occupation of household head



Source: Household survey 2023

As mentioned above, 47.99% of household heads have no means of transport. For their mobility, they rely on walking and traditional means of public transport, mainly red-headed cabs and Faba-Faba. Cabs remain the means of transport most used by the population, as shown in figure N°9 below. Indeed, this figure shows that 68.18% of these heads of household use cabs as a means of transport; walking is very much in the minority with 3.54%.

Figure 9: Means of transport used by those who have no means of transport

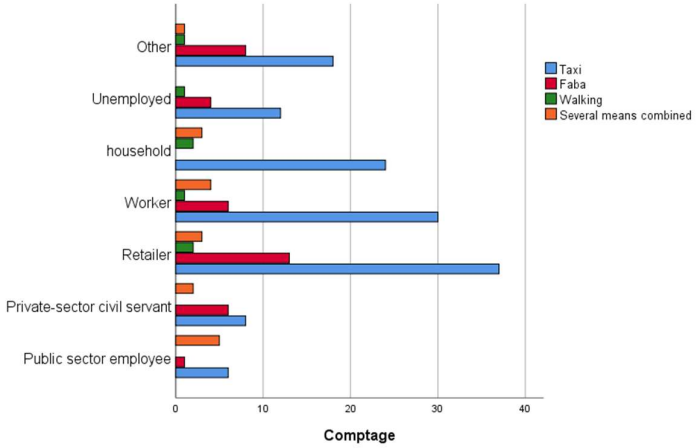


Source: Household survey 2023

Figure N°9 also shows that SOTRUNI buses are not used, and that cabs are used more than three times as much as Faba-Faba.

To highlight the link between the means of transport used by the head of household and his or her profession, and by cross-tabulating these two variables, figure N°10 confirms that cabs are the most widely used means of transport, and that they are used by all socio-professional groups, as well as Faba-Faba, with the exception of housewives. However, public sector employees make little use of Faba-Faba as a means of transport.

Figure 10: Means used by profession of head of household

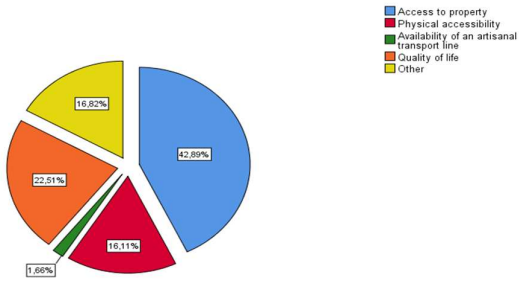


- *Source : Household survey 2023*

- Factors influencing household relocation to outlying areas

Access to property is the main reason why households settle in the outskirts of Niamey. It is the main reason for 42.79% of heads of household, as shown in figure N°11. Urban amenity also plays an important role, accounting for 22.70%.

Figure 11: Reasons for moving to outlying neighborhoods



Source: Household survey 2023

The availability of an artisanal transport line serving the neighborhood is a negligible factor in the decision to settle in outlying neighborhoods. However, it remains a means of influence for more than a third 89.83% of heads of households who know that their settlement area is served by an artisanal transport line.

The city center is one of the main destinations for these outlying populations, with 51.07% of heads of household having the city center as one of their main destinations.

2. Discussion

This article highlights four main findings. Firstly, the population of peripheral districts is heterogeneous, but dominated by civil servants in the public and private sectors (32.63%), followed by shopkeepers (25.77%). Secondly, almost half of heads of household are captives of small-scale public transport, with a rate of around 47.99%, and 88.42% of the 52.01% who have their own means of transport admit to having used the TCA in the past. Thirdly, individual household means of transport are dominated by motorized two-wheelers (62.73%), followed by cars (34.55%). Fourthly and lastly, shared cabs are the main means of transport used by households with no means of transport, with a proportion of 68.18%.

- A peripheral population dominated by the middle class

Niger's middle class of young civil servants and shopkeepers dominates peri-urbanization. The 32.63% of civil servants and 25.77% of shopkeepers, i.e. 58.40%, make up the bulk of household heads. This is a significant result, which explains the fairly high level of motorization. It reflects the country's relative socio-economic and political stability over the past two decades, which has enabled the emergence of a sizeable middle class.

- A supply dominated by the artisanal sector

For more than a decade, SOTRUNI (Niamey Urban Transport Company) has had an insignificant fleet. It currently has just five buses in circulation. The artisanal sector dominates the market, with 10,300 rally and line cabs, 612 line-haul Faba-Faba minibuses and 150 line-haul Bassora-Bassora cabs. While SOTRUNI has been unable to reinvent itself and maintain its former hegemony, artisanal transport has been able to adapt to the needs of the population. For example, Talladjé-Talladjé and Lazaret-Lazaret have outlived their usefulness (Hadiara & Motcho, 2012), and have given way to Faba-Faba, which has more capacity and is more aggressive, and Bassora-Bassora, which continues to serve other districts

that are a continuation of its "territory" (Hadiara & Motcho, 2020). This is a reality for most major West African cities, such as Porto-Novo in Benin (Agossou, 2004) and Lomé in Togo (Guézéré, 2008), with the predominance of small-scale transport dominated by motorcycle cabs. Back in 2002, Godard (2008) found that in cities such as Abidjan (44%), Algiers (56), Accra (74%), Dakar (72), Dar Es Salam (81%) and Nairobi (55%), artisanal transport was the main mode of transport, followed by individual modes. The city of Niamey had an artisanal transport share of 30%, mobility being dominated by individual modes (59%), with institutional public transport accounting for only 7% of supply. In the case of Niamey, there has been a clear increase in small-scale transport, which has risen to 47.99%, an increase of 17.99% in twenty years.

- A high rate of individual means of transport for heads of household

52.01% of households have their own means of transport. However, this percentage conceals a wide disparity. Two-wheelers account for 62.73% (32.63%) of all means of transport used in the suburbs. Cars account for 34.55%, or 17.97%. Motorcycles are therefore by far the most widely used means of transport for heads of household. Their affordability and flexibility, enabling them to adapt to the nature of outlying areas (Agossou, 2004), (Guézéré, 2008), is one of the factors behind their use in these outlying districts. Their weight in the motorization rate shows that they are an essential factor in peri-urbanization in the city of Niamey. This shows a certain similarity with the cities of Lomé (Guézéré, 2008), Porto-Novo (Agossou, 2004) and Korhogo (Adonon and al., 2020).

The 47.99% of households with no means of transport rely most heavily on small-scale transport (87.37%). The rule of three gives us a proportion of 41.93% for artisanal means of transport, followed by motorcycles with 32.63% and cars with 17.97%.

Taken together, artisanal transport thus represents the main offer with 41.93%. Artisanal public transport is therefore an essential means of mobility for this population, even if it is not one of their main settlement criteria. This dependence on this mode highlights the role it plays in the process of peri-urbanization in the city of Niamey. Above all, they are a means of supporting the city's urbanization process by facilitating access to the city for a significant proportion of households lacking individual means of transport. These results are in line with those of Kassi (2012), Guézéré (2012) and Agossou (2004), who believe that urbanization in Abidjan, Lomé and Porto-Novo would be hampered by the absence of these traditional means of transport. These include motorcycle cabs and motorcycles in Lomé, motorcycle cabs in Porto-Novo and four-wheeled artisanal transport vehicles such as Gbakas and Wôrô Wôrô in Abidjan.

- Cabs top the list of artisanal means of transport

Red-headed cabs and Bassora-Bassora line cabs make up the main offer of artisanal collective transport with 68.18%, followed by Faba-Faba with 19.19%. This predominance of cabs can be explained by several key factors. These include the image of the Faba-Faba in the population's unconscious, which considers it to be a mode used by the poor, the promiscuity that makes it attractive and the insecurity of its property. Added to this is the rigidity of this mode of transport, which is a scheduled service and therefore does not go door-to-door. Red-headed cabs, on the other hand, are more flexible and offer better travel conditions than Faba-Faba.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to demonstrate that small-scale public transport plays an essential role in the mobility of the population in outlying districts, and thus contributes to the construction of these areas. The method adopted was based on a household survey carried out as part of a doctoral research project.

The main results show that public transport does indeed play an essential role in the mobility of the population of Niamey's outlying districts. Thus, 41.93% of the population of these peripheral areas are captives of artisanal public transport in the city of Niamey, whose overall motorization rate of 52.01% remains dominated by motorized two-wheelers at over 62.73%. Our initial hypothesis that artisanal public transport plays an essential role in the urbanization process in the city of Niamey is confirmed, in line with the work of Kassi on informal transport in Abidjan, Agossou on motorcycle cabs in Porto-Novo and Guézéré's work on motorized two-wheelers in Lomé.

This article constitutes an opening for a study on the form of influence exerted by artisanal public transport in the phenomenon of periurbanization in the city of Niamey. We intend to address this subject in our next article, linking it to the city's diachronic spatial dynamics.

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