

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGIOUS PLACES IN METROPOLITAN KANO NIGERIA

Ibrahim Badamasi Lambu

Department of Geography, Kano University of Science and Technology, Wudil Kano Nigeria
iblambo@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study is survey by design aimed at assessing the socio-economic effects of religious places of worship to the inhabitants of metropolitan Kano state. Geographical Information System (GIS) tools were used in mapping out the religious places for interpolation and krigging. Religious leaders, followers of religions and other stakeholders who derive means of livelihood were interviewed. The study discovered that the two main religions Islam and Christianity exist in the area with random pattern for the former and cluster for the later in terms of distribution. Quite sizable numbers of people are employed directly and indirectly in the places of worship like cleaners, watchmen, sells of religious books and cassettes, similarly, hawkers and teachers of religious schools are attached to the places of worship. Problem of congestion, low sanitary habit and pollution are some of complain raised by some respondents. The study suggests that socio-economic activities in the worshipping places need to be regulated and monitored to ensure safety, convenience and even the decency of the noble places of God.

KEYWORDS: Religion, mapping, interpolation, socio-economic, GIS and worship.

INTRODUCTION

Religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to a sacred things set apart by those who adhere to it within a define place of worship (Lambu 2012). Different physical environments and geographies create different landscapes that can only be understood through studies (Yusuf 2009). One important aspect of a society's culture is the relationship between human and environment. Religious landscapes to a greater extent explain both man to nature and man to environment relationship. This is because a healthy economy requires all persons view one another with dignity, not as object of exploitation. Religion calls for people to respect the divinity in each human being, regardless of a class or cultural background to view one another with prosperity. In fact religion recognizes the divinity of the humans in the economic sphere when it advocates free competition, protection of property rights, and encourages people to share and behave well toward one another. Religion of whatever their form, can have major social impacts in some societies, of course in some religions any social impacts they have may be secondary or incidental to their main declared aim of relating people to God (Lambu 2012b and Ashafa 1982).

This research is not concerned with the theological aspect of religions but social economic impacts of religious places in the study area. In other word, the study is interested at how religion impacted on the socio-cultural standard of the people living in the area. Such study can be of benefit to both Government and individual in planning and framing of feasible policy that are in harmony with culture (religion) and norms of the people that the policy may affect.

Studies on cultural geography (that include religion, polity and economy) are grossly lacking as the area suffered dormancy due to shift of

focus toward material resources like mining, agriculture and commerce (Lambu 2012b). Therefore the study will not only fill the existing gap but will encourage further researches. It would help both Government and Public to understand the socio cultural component of the environment for better understanding of our culture. Data on religious activities and behaviours are needed for social planning that can aid formulation of relevant social rules especially now that religion becomes a global issue (Brunn 2012 and Lambu 2012c). The study is going to provide answers to some ambiguities like where and how are the religious places distributed in metropolitan Local Government Areas? What religious activities are taking place in the study area? And what are the effects of religious places in the study Area?

The Study Area

Kano metropolis is the second largest industrial and commercial centre in Nigeria. It is therefore experiencing a rapid growth rate. In 1932 the population was estimated to be only 83,000. Urban Kano has been subject to rapid growth since 1952 and exorbitant growth from 1958 onwards. The area housed the ancient pagan shrine of Dala hill (Tsumburbura diety), the Muslim dynasty (emir's palace) and Christian missionaries (Nasara) especially at Fagge and Nasarawa LGAs. The name is derived from Nasara (white man while the plural is Nasarawa i.e. the colonialist) who settled at the Governmet Reserved Area (GRA) at the eastern part of the town ship. Nassarawa Local Government is among the eight Local Government areas that make up Kano metropolis, it is located in the eastern part of the city. It bordered Gezawa, Tarauni and Kumbotso Local Government areas in the east. Finally the study area shares border with Ungoggo Local Government Area in the North and to the West with Fagge and Municipal Councils.

Nassarawa Local Government is among the densely populated local government in Kano metropolis with estimated figures 596,669 people, (National population commission 2006). Hausa-Fulani are the dominant ethnic group (making the indigenous Muslims' population) of 99.5% attached to Islamic faith (Paden 1973). Other ethnic groups like Igbos, Yoruba, Nufe, Babur and the likes (strangers from both southern and northern part of the country) are living in the area mainly conducting business. Among this people many practice different religion at a particular point of worship, Mosque for Islam and Churches for Christianity. It is an area that composed of people from different religious backgrounds and different cultural backgrounds for example it composed of people practicing Islam as their religion and Christianity while in terms of culture the study area composed of Hausa, Yoruba, Igbo and many other tribes from different part of the country. Therefore there is need to know whether these religion and their places of activities affect the economy of the people and their social life.

RESEARCH METHODS

It is a cross sectional survey research that seeks respondents' views about the contribution of religious places. Two types of data are used in the study which includes quantitative and qualitative types of data. Quantitative data in this study includes number of mosques and churches; number of graveyards and cemeteries, religious schools etc. while Qualitative includes data on religious behaviour such as preferences and value judgment etc. Two sources of data are used throughout this research work. Researcher constructed data (Primary source of data) which were sourced from survey, interviews, use of questionnaires and Global Positioning System (GPS). On the other hand, documented source of data (Secondary data) were sourced from existing literatures, textbooks, journals, documented reports etc especially information on past beliefs. In this study, the research population consists of adult believers of Islamic and Christian faiths. Religious issues are too sensitive that only adults can be interviewed with minimum ethical breach. The sample size comprises of eight LGAs but Nasarawa LGA is conveniently sampled due to its heterogeneity of population. The study purposively sampled the leaders of various beliefs, sects and denominations as well as learned religious scholars and officials of religious organizations in each religion. 20% of religious places are covered by the interviews from the list by random selection of folded numbers assigned to the list given by the religious organizations (Picking with

replacement) while discussing the responses gathered for validation.

The 20% is considered adequate to represent the entire population (Lambu 2011c). About 60 respondents were interviewed from different religious sects like Kadiriyah, Tijjaniyah, Izalat, Catholics, Protestants and pentecostals. Purposive sampling has to be adopted for in-depth interviews with the Imams, Priests, and leaders of sects and denominations for various reasons. It is a non probability sampling that is very useful and appropriate in at least three situations (Neuman, 2003 & Adamu, 2006); namely, in a unique case that is informative, in a difficult-to-reach specialized population or a particular case that needs thorough investigation which are all applicable to this study. Issues related to religious values are not only sensitive but technical in nature hence needing expertise in theology and physiognomy of religion. In a trial study on religious values and preferences, many followers in both Islam and Christianity appear to be completely ignorant about religious values and preferences in religion hence adopting purposive sampling proved not only realistic but the only way out to ensure success and genuineness. In Islamic faith, each Friday mosque has mosque committee that constitutes a body of renowned personalities of Islamic knowledge. In Christianity the organization of churches made provision for strong church council which is made up of erudite people of religious knowledge. In-depth interviews with leaders and learned followers of Islamic and Christian religions as well as eminent religious scholars met at the Friday mosques, churches, Cemetery, and religious institutions in the study area represent various blocks, sects, factions or movements and religious organizations. The religious leaders are the right people who have access to all or most of information pertain to their places of domain (more than ordinary followers) and can respond on the subject in their own frame of reference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Global Positioning System (GPS) used in picking the coordinate points of religious places and the interpolation outcomes are presented first before the survey result that captures responses from the cross section of believers of Islam and Christianity. The coordinates are converted from degree minutes and seconds (DMS) to radians using GEOCAL software for easier exportation to ARC GIS as text delimited. The points are displayed on a digitized map of the study area as depicted on figure 2 below. The advantage of interpolation among others includes its ability to display the pattern of spatial distribution exactly as it is on the ground.

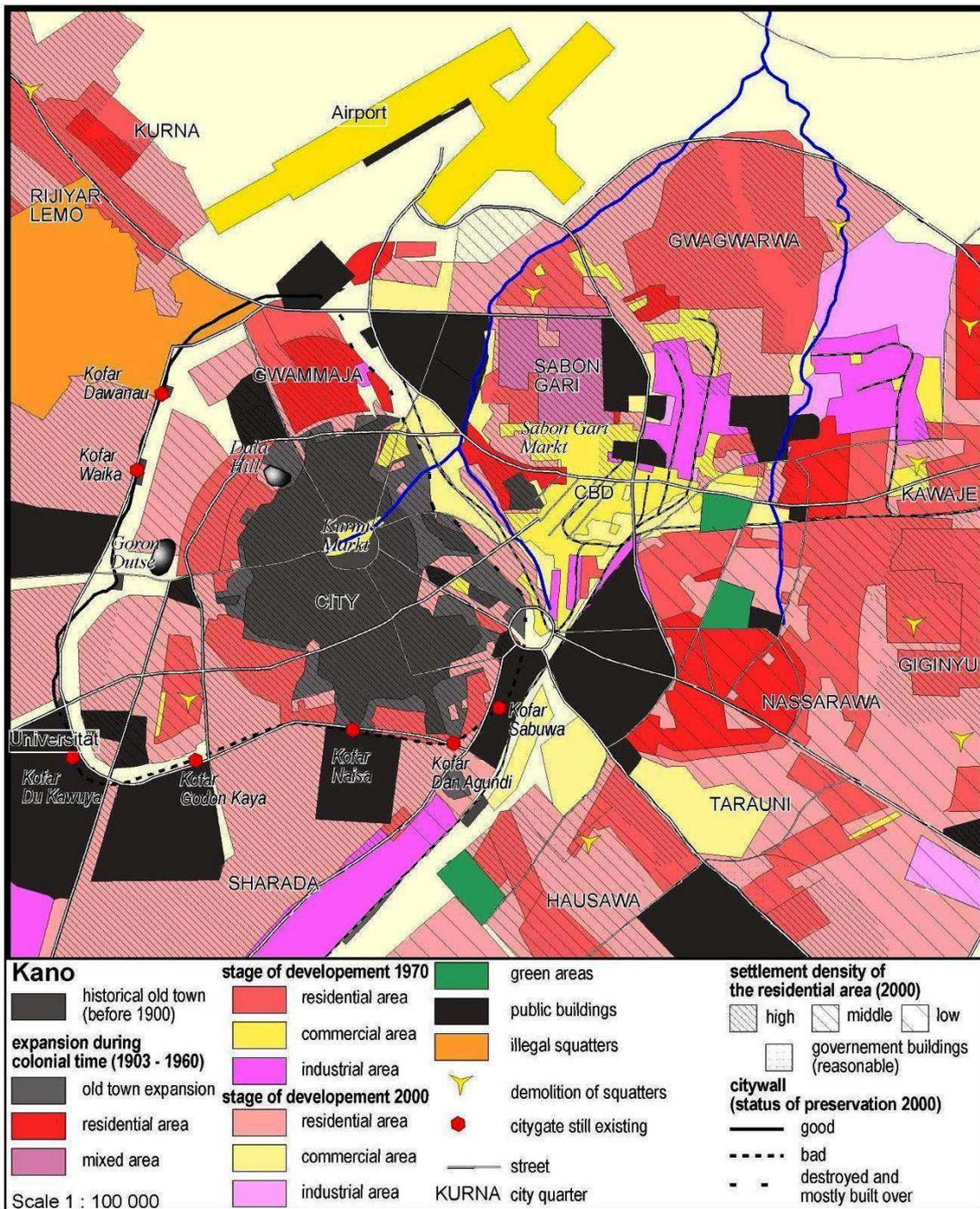


FIGURE 1: THE MAP OF KANO METROPOLIS

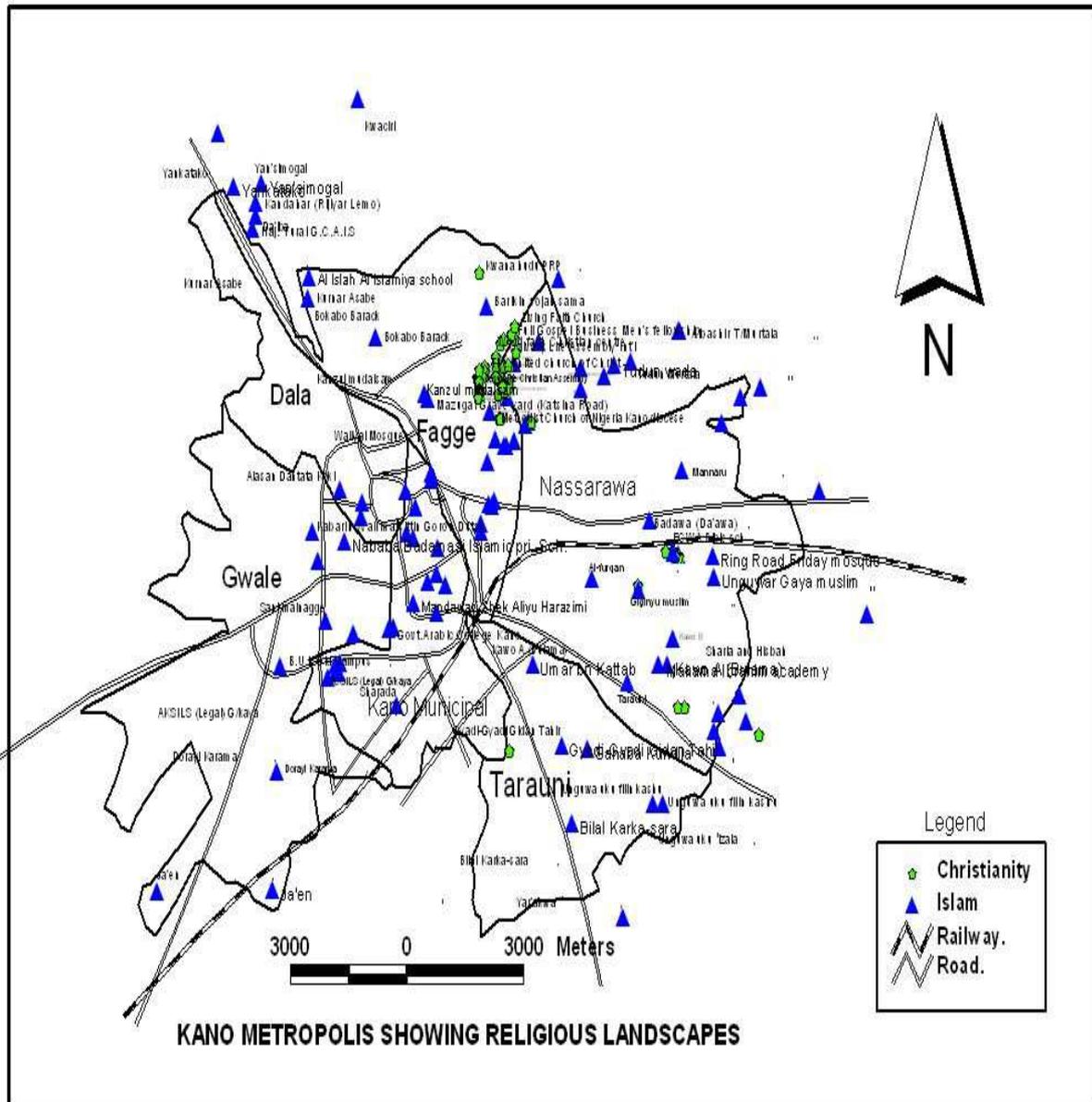
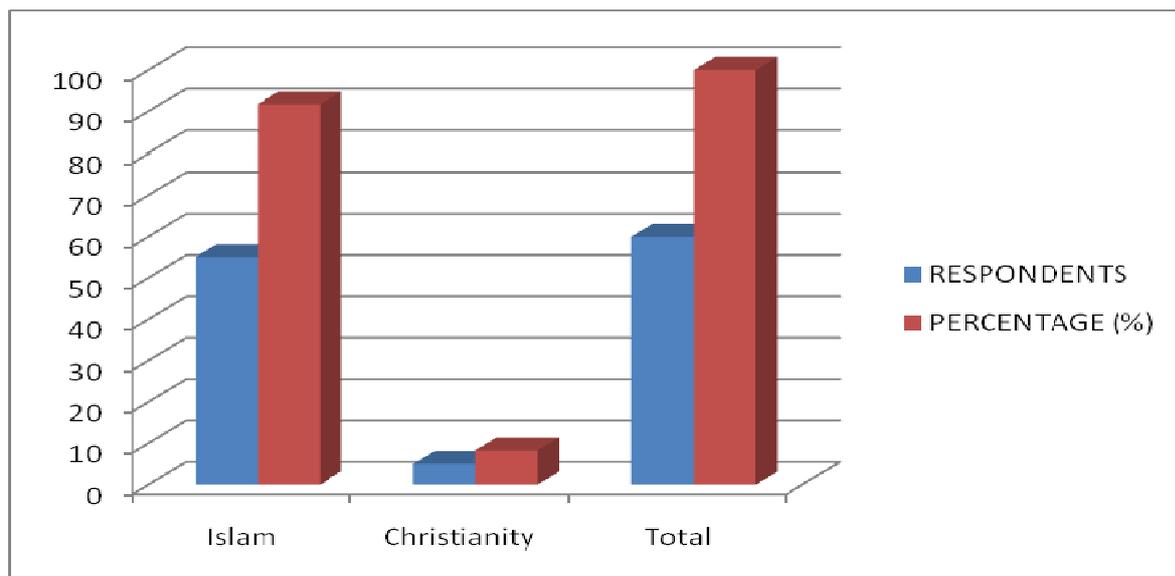


Figure 2: Map of the Study Area Showing Distribution of Religious Places



Source: Field work 2012.

The chart shows that Islam is the dominant religion in the study area with highest percent then followed by Christian religion. Beside the two religions no any other religion is practiced in the study area. It has been observed that the Christians dominate areas like Badawa where they have the highest population. The population

of Muslim at Hotoro Kudu and Dakata is much greater than the remaining wards where they have 75% they become bracket in percent which confirms the lowest population of the Christians in the two wards. Kaura Goje has the highest number of Christians among the wards that are studied with 40%.

Table 2 Table showing Occupation of the respondents

OCCUPATION	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
Trader	37	46.25
Civil servant	22	27.5
Farmer	21	26
Total	80	100

Source: Field work 2012

The table above shows the occupation of the respondents in the study area. Among the people that are interviewed traders and civil servants accounted for 7 in 10 of all their religious activities and sales of commodities in the religious places. Most of the farmers are migrating from their rural areas to town and cities during dry season and depends on hawking in the religious places. The Traders sale religious books, traditional medicines, pure water, etc. while some of them owned commercial vehicles, motorcycles and bicycle

(Yan Haya) in which children are paying some amount from N10 to N100 for a single round beside the mosque. Observation during the study shows that majority of the Juma'at mosque have a very wide field around them where people make use of it for their economic and commercial activities. Among the four wards that are studied, trading is the major occupation of the people, Hotoron Kudu 45%, Kaura Goje 50%, Gwagwarwa 45% and Dakata 45% as indicated in table 2.

Table 3a Table showing Educational status of the respondents

EDUCATION STATUS	Number	Percentage (%)
Primary	11	13.75
Secondary	22	27.5
Tertiary	19	23.75
Qur'anic	28	35
Total	80	100

Source: Field Work 2012

Table 3b Table showing spatial variation of Educational status

Educational status	Gwagwarwa	K/Goje	Dakata	Total
Primary	29	11	20	60
Secondary	26	15	19	60
Tertiary	30	9	21	60
Qur'anic	25	19	16	60
Total	110	54	76	240

Source: Field work 2012

The tables (3a and 3b) above shows that there is low level of illiteracy in the study area in which most of the people are attending primary, secondary, tertiary or Qur'anic school. Primary and secondary school attendant are 40% while tertiary 23.75% and Qur'anic 35percent. The table indicates that 80percent of the people in the study area are attending schools in different level of education. Kaura Goje and Dakata ward have the highest percent of people going to Qur'anic schools while Hotoron Kudu and Gwagwarwa wards have the highest percent of people going to tertiary schools. Gwagwarwa ward has the highest number of pupils at primary level of education.

Table 4 Table showing socio economic Impacts of Religious places in the study area

IMPACTS (Negative)	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)	Socio Economic impacts (Positive)	Number of respondents	%
Noise Pollution	14	17.5	Watchmen/Cleaners	21	26.25
Traffic Congestion	13	16.25	Sales of religious books	19	23.75
Crowdedness	13	16.25	Sales of Date fruits	23	28.75
Refuse waste	16	20	Snacks	17	21.25
Total	80	100	Traditional medicine	80	100

Source: Field work 2012

The table above shows the impacts of religious places in the study area both economically and socially, where as religious places provide employment opportunities to people around it. It may likely exceed in the next following 5 to 6 years about 40% as people are migrating from rural areas to urban areas. Beside the positive impacts other negative impacts are observed like crowdedness and pollution are 33.30% as well as congestion and dirty of the environment 36.25percent, it has been observed that the religious places services an important role to the people living around the areas especially during congregation. Apart from socio-economic contribution, religious places serve other functions such as preaching, wedding, naming and thank-giving and religious ceremonies. Spatially, mosques and churches are located at vicinity of people so the two serve as mini-markets while grave yards and cemeteries attract less socio-economic values where only the gravers and coffin-makers and in some cases watchmen are employed therein. Religious schools are pure market places as children eat, drink and even make leisure especially during breaks as well teachers and supporting staff got jobs to earn living.

Table 5 Table showing different tribe of the respondents

TRIBE	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
Hausa	31	38.75
Yoruba	15	18.75
Igbo	12	15
Kanuri	3	3.75
Fulani	19	23.75
Total	80	100

Source: Field work 2012.

The table shows the percentage of people of different tribe that reside in the study area, about five tribes were identified where Hausa and Fulani are the dominant tribes with 61.50% Kanuri and Igbo are the tribes that have the lowest percent respectively. It has been observed that all the tribes are mixed up in the study area and no any crisis have been noticed between the tribes.

CONCLUSION

Man engages in works that can help in gaining means of livelihood at times even places like mosques and churches, grave-yards, cemeteries and religious schools. The socio-economic activities that are taking place continue to support and benefit their economy and means of livelihood. Any decline or reduction in the socio-economic role of these places may spell doom to many families who are dependent on these places for livelihood and daily sustenance. It can be concluded that religious places are directly related to socio-economic wellbeing of sizeable number of people that are directly and indirectly being employed and sustained by various

livelihood option. The study concurs in strong term with (Lambu 2012c) that religion; polity and economy are offspring of culture where one affect the other and operates simultaneously across space over time.

In view of these laudable contributions, there is need for proper maintenance of religious places in term of their sanitary condition and vigilance against all forms of immoral acts that may tarnish and affect the nobility of the places. The types of sales, location, positioning and timing of display need to be handled with restraint so that the primary role of the places are not impaired or disturbed.

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