

Implications of Population Growth on the Quality of Life of City Dwellers in Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria remains the most populous country in Africa and the seventh globally. The country has estimated population of 198 million. The recent World Population Prospect predicts that by 2050, Nigeria will become the third most populated country in the world. The country's average annual population growth rate is 6.5 per cent without commensurate increase in social amenities. Currently, Nigerian cities host wide spread poverty, under-employment, unemployment and insecurity. Ideally it is the duty of the state to regulate population growth in accord with economic development. In most post-colonial formations like Nigeria, policies made to regulate population growth have not been successful in terms of moderating the population growth vis-à-vis economic growth. Thus, the Act of the National Assembly which made it legal for a married woman to procreate 4 children only was defeated by the culture and religion of the people. This article investigated the incidence of population explosion in Nigeria and its implication on the quality of life of the city dwellers in 2019 and beyond. Specifically, the research investigated the causes and consequences of population growth in Nigeria. The study is a qualitative research and it relied on the Marxist theory of the post-colonial state. It found that the culture and religion of the people has rekindled the population increase in Nigeria. Consequently, the paper made cogent recommendations on the ways to bridge the gap between population explosion and economic growth.

Keywords: Population growth, City Dwellers, Quality of Life, Enugu, Nigeria.

Introduction

Population is the total number of persons or people living within a geographical area at a particular time (Anyawocha, 1993). Population control is the planning for and controlling of the number of people in a place to a manageable size. In other words, it is the practice of artificial modification of the rate of growth of a human population. The most common form of human population control is the limiting reduction of the human birth rate Ebingha & Eni (2015). Indeed, one of the challenges facing developing countries, which Nigeria is one, is how to solve the problems of rapid population growth. Essentially, this challenge is more worrisome in city areas where the population is fast growing while necessities of life are fast declining. The rapid population growth in most developing formations such as Nigeria, had led to economic and social problems. Such problems include low per capital income, shortage of

food, unemployment, under-employment, overcrowded cities, kidnappings, insurgency, poverty, armed robbery, banditry.

The World Resources Institute predicts that the global population will increase by 34% by the year 2050, augmenting the earth's population by 2.3 billion humans (Choppin, 2009). A study carried out by Eager, (1973) indicates that a stunning 90% of population increase will occur in the developing world which Nigeria belongs. The need to enhance development process in the developing countries is now critical considering the rapid population growth. In

Nigeria, birth control policy was formulated but poor implementation diminished the efficacy of such sound policy. Thus, over the years, the population of Nigeria has increased rapidly. Statistics show that Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh globally. In 1960, Nigeria's population was 45.2 million people; in 2014, the population rose to 178.5 million people (United Nation's, 2015). In 2019, the population was estimated to be about 200 million people (NBS, 2018). The irony is that the rapid population growth is not in accord with national development, thereby putting the quality of lives of city dwellers in jeopardy.

Ideally, it is the duty of the state to regulate the population growth and ensure the sustainable maintenance of the quality of its population. In its effort to ensure equity between her population and economic prosperity, Nigeria had participated in international population conferences. According to National Population Policy (2004) Nigeria participated in the Arusha Tanzania, 1984 conference which was held in preparation for the world population conference in Mexico. At the Arusha conference, Nigeria reported that its population was growing at a faster rate than the rate of food production. This observation was repeated at the Mexico 1984 World Population Conference. Among other resolutions/agreements reached at the Mexico Conference was for countries that were yet to develop population policy to do so without further delay. In response to this global treaty, the Federal Government of Nigeria on 4th February 1988 approved the National Policy on Population for Development, Unity, Progress and Self-reliance. The population policy objective encouraged each couple to have four children through the use of contraceptives and other birth control measures, but the policy resulted in an increasing population growth rate (Lambo 2004). Studies assessed the implementation of the 1988 policy and found that the objectives and targets were not achieved (Adekunle & Otolorin 2000). The evaluation of the policy targets and objectives in the light of the 1995 and 2000 benchmarks revealed that the 1988 National Population Policy failed due to

an underestimation of the huge financial resources required for implementation, corruption, lack of political will and political instability.

Many years after the implementation of 1988 population policy, the emergent of new activities such as the 1991 National Population Census, 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 1999 HIV/AIDS summit in Abuja, Nigeria; it was discovered that the population control mechanisms were not successful. Hence, looking at the population situation in Nigeria as presented by the United Nations show a reverse situation as the population continues to grow astronomically to the detriment of national development.

Table 1: Nigeria Population History (1990-2019)

YEAR	POPULATION	GROWTH RATE
1990	94,398,550	2.63 %
1991	96,851,391	2.60 %
1992	99,338,947	2.57 %
1993	101,868,776	2.55 %
1994	104,449,091	2.53 %
1995	107,088,955	2.53 %
1996	109,794,737	2.53 %
1997	112,569,853	2.53 %
1998	115,417,873	2.53 %
1999	118,343,461	2.53 %
2000	121,351,477	2.54 %
2001	124,445,829	2.55 %
2002	127,630,609	2.56 %
2003	130,913,884	2.57 %
2004	134,307,403	2.59 %
2005	137,822,312	2.62 %
2006	141,464,657	2.64 %
2007	145,235,257	2.67 %
2008	149,134,093	2.68 %
2009	153,161,414	2.70 %
2010	157,315,944	2.71 %
2011	161,597,706	2.72 %
2012	166,005,536	2.73 %
2013	170,528,460	2.72 %
2014	175,146,252	2.71 %
2015	179,838,974	2.68 %
2016	184,635,279	2.67 %
2017	189,559,502	2.67 %
2018	194,615,054	2.67 %
2019	199,805,437	2.67 %

Source: United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs: Population Division (2019).

The growing concern over the quality of life of city dwellers in post-colonial formations like Nigeria has become more explicit in recent years. Policy makers and researchers have increasingly engaged in understanding social and economic problems of urban communities. Prominent among the outcomes of stakeholders is that urban cities in Nigeria are not getting better, especially in the provision of infrastructural and social amenities. The absence of these basic amenities affects the residents' quality of life (Adewumi & Olayika (2017).

The major task of this article is to investigate the control obstacles to and consequences of population growth in Nigeria and its implication on the quality of life of the city dwellers in Nigeria and Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria in particular.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Decades ago, the link between population increase and socioeconomic development has occupied the interest of researchers. However, little has been done in terms of implications of urban population growth and the quality of life (QoL) of city dwellers in Enugu State, southeast Nigeria. Meanwhile, quality of life is a standard level that consists of the expectations of an individual or society for a good life. These expectations are guided by the values, goals and socio-cultural context in which an individual lives. It is a subjective, multi-dimensional concept that defines a standard level of emotional, physical, material and social well-being. It is the degree to which an individual is healthy, comfortable and able to participate in or enjoy life events within the arena of health care. Quality of life is the general well being of an individual (Meule, Fath, Real, Sutterlin, Voggele and Kubler, 2013). The World Health Organization (WHO, 1997) defines quality of life "as the individual's perception of their position in life in terms of culture and value system in which they live and also in relation to their goals, expectation, standards and concern". According to Foo (2000), Quality of life is explained as individual overall satisfaction with life. From the definitions, quality of life is viewed as a broad ranging concept that is affected in a complex way by a person's physical health, psychological state, level of independence and their relationships to salient features of the environment. It focuses on all facets of life which includes: cultural, social, environmental, physical, health and the local value systems.

In Nigeria, it has been established that unregulated population growth and unplanned urban cities by government are linked to millions of city dwellers in Nigeria perceiving their quality of life as generally negative. Nnoli (2016) stated that the alarming increase in urban

population in Nigeria is connected to the neglect of rural areas. According to him, “rural Nigeria is getting worse without the urban cities getting better”. He observed that despite the deteriorating quality of life in the city, most of Nigeria city dwellers prefer remaining urban poor than relocating to the villages.

According to the United Nations (2018) report, 55% of the world’s population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to rise to 68% by 2050; with about 90% of this increase taking place in Asia and Africa. Also, the 2018 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects produced by the Population Division of the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UN DESA) reports that future increases in the size of the world’s urban population are expected to be highly concentrated in a few countries. Together India, china, and Nigeria will account for 35% of the projected growth of the world’s urban population between 2018 and 2050. Indeed, the future of Nigeria’s population growth is worrisome. Specifically, the unregulated population increase in Nigerian cities is becoming critical with its grave consequences. The recent World Population Prospect predicts that by 2050, Nigeria will become the third most populated country in the world; hosting a projected population of 390 million. Consequently, it is further projected that by 2050, India, China, Nigeria, will have 416, 255, 189 million urban dwellers respectively (UN DESA 2018).

Ironically, while countries like India and China are aggressively working to ensure positive quality of life of urban dwellers in 2050 and beyond, Nigerian government is doing practically nothing to rejuvenate the decaying social amenities in the cities in the midst of growing urban population. Indeed, it is predicted that by 2050, Nigerian cities will experience acute shortage of social amenities like job opportunities, hospitals, electricity, tap water, good road network, transportation, etc.; and the quality of life will be at the lowest ebb.

Theoretical Clarification

This study is predicated on the analytical and explanatory framework of the Marxist theory of the post-colonial state as enunciated, developed and used by scholars like Alavi (1972), Saul (1974), Ake (1985), Ekekwe (1985) and Ibeanu (1998) to examine the nature and character of states in the periphery. The Marxist theory of the post-colonial state arose as counteract to the Western/Liberal paradigmatic explanation of the state, which argued that the state is an independent force and a neutral entity that cater for the welfare of its citizens. Rather, the Marxist persuasion argued that the state is a product and expression of the

irreconcilability of class contradictions and antagonisms. Accordingly, the state arose as a powerful force, standing above the society and saddled with the responsibility of mediating and moderating the class struggle in order to keep them within the bounds of law (Engels, 1884; Lenin, 1918). Overtime, the state in peripheral formations has absconded from this assumed role and, rather, positioned itself as a committee for managing the common affairs of the bourgeoisie and dominant class while subjugating the working class (Marx & Engels, 1848). Here, the state expressed its preference for the dominant class over the subjugated class by enacting, executing and adjudicating laws that sustains and intensifies the oppression and exploitation of the latter. Using the Marxian theory to explain the study, the state in Nigeria is a direct instrument for primitive accumulation by its managers. Thus, public officials in Nigeria, translate public office into private estate for personal gratification. This explains why public officials responsible for implementation of the 1988 population control policy in Nigeria translated the position into opportunity to enrich themselves materially. In addition, officials in-charge of national borders compromises their positions and permit migrants to enter the country illegally. It is against the background of the theory of the post-colonial state that it can be appreciated why most impressive policy measures, including population policy in Nigeria cannot be successful.

This paper is an attempt to foster knowledge in understanding indicators that affect quality of life of city dwellers in Enugu State, Nigeria. The information can also be valuable both as an historic document and also contribute as a guide to inform decisions about the development of urban cities in future. Based on the above, this study provided answers to the following research questions: who are the residents within the Enugu urban dwellers? What are the available facilities in the urban city of Enugu State? What is the condition of available facilities? What is the state of the peoples' quality of life within Enugu urban cities? What can be done to enhance the qualities of life of the city dwellers within Enugu State?

Data and Methods

The study was carried out in Nigeria. Specifically, data was collected from Enugu State, South-east Nigeria. Nigeria has a population of about 200 million people. It has about 350 groups; the three dominant ones are the Hausas, Ibos and Yorubas (NPC & ICF International 2014). Each of these ethnic groups holds on to their unique cultural identity irrespective of their

location within the country and their educational advancement. The Hausas are predominantly Moslems while Igbos and Yorubas are mainly Christians with few traditional religion faithful. Culturally, monogamy and polygamy are practiced in Nigeria. Gbadebo (2018).

Enugu State is one of the 36 states in Nigeria. The state has a projected population of 4.3 million, with about 1.9 million living in three designated metropolis in the state (National Population Census, 2016). The city areas include Nsukka Urban, Enugu North, Enugu South and Enugu East urban cities. The city areas are approximately 35 km from Enugu (Capital City of Enugu State). Majority of the settlers in these urban cities are of the Igbo ethnic group. It is an emerging industrial area. To collect the primary data, every tenth building in the urban areas (10%) was selected using systematic sampling. The selection was done in a winding manner, because of the building arrangement in the study area. This brought the sample size to 205 respondents. Questionnaire was administered on household representative person who is eighteen (18) years and above. The questionnaire was administered in a condition of complete privacy between the researcher and the respondents. Information obtained from the questionnaire includes residents' socio-economic characteristics, socio-demographic data, condition of facilities and residents' perception of various aspect of life used in measuring quality of life. A total of 157 questionnaires were properly retrieved and analyzed.

The study also engaged in the use of non-participant observation to observe the availability, and condition of facilities that improve quality of life in the metropolis. Data analysis for the questionnaire was done using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). This involves the generation of simple percentages and mean indices. Residents expressed their opinion on the condition of available facilities using one of five point Likert scales of 'very good' (VG), 'good' (G), 'neither good nor bad' (NGNB), 'bad' (B), and 'very bad' (VB). In other to measure the residents perceived condition of the infrastructural facilities, a guide termed Facility Condition Index (FCI) was developed. To arrive at FCI, the following procedures were adopted:

A weight value of 5,4,3,2, 1 were respectively attached to 'very good' (VG), 'good' (G), 'neither good nor bad' (NGNB), 'bad' (B), 'very bad' (VB). Summation of Weight Value (SWV) which is the addition of the product of the number of responses to each infrastructure and the respective weight value attached to each rating.

The index for each infrastructure was arrived at by dividing the Summation of Weight Value (SWV) by the total number of responses. This is mathematically demonstrated thus: $SWV = \sum x_i y_i$ (1) Where: SWV= Summation of Weight value; x_i = number of respondents to rating i ; and y_i = the weight assigned to a value ($i=1, 2, 3, 4, 5$). The index for each identified infrastructure thus takes a value of between 5 and 1. The nearer the value to 5, the better the condition that residents attached to such infrastructural facilities under consideration. SWV was then divided by the number of respondents to arrive at each facility FCI.

Measurement of Quality of Life was done using a modified version of *The Jacksonville Community Council, Inc. QOL System* (Richard D. Young, 2006). In order to measure the residents perceived level of satisfaction on the different QoL indicator, an index termed Household Quality of Life Index (QLI) was developed using a 5 point Likert scale. To arrive at QLI, the methods used in the computation of FCI were adopted.

Having determined the rating for each facilities and QoL indicators, a single question was used to measure respondents' overall condition of all the facilities and that of the quality of life indicators. Respondents were asked to express answer using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied). Using the same procedure highlighted above, the analyses of the ratings indicated by household head from the Likert's scales adopted evolved into an index called "Facility Condition Index" (FCI) and Quality of Life Index (QLI).

Causes of population increase in Nigeria

The post-colonial Nigeria is grappling with the problem of population explosion without equal economic development. This is as a result of unsuccessful population control measures of the past. The population trend is presently affecting the quality of life of the inhabitants, particularly the city dwellers in Nigeria, including Enugu State. The under mentioned are the factors that inspire population growth in Nigeria.

- Religious belief is one of the leading factors that encourage population increase in Nigeria. Traditional religion in Nigeria places no restrictions on the number of wives a man can marry. Thus, a traditional religion faithful marries as many as ten wives or more and each wife produces 6 to 7 children. Also, the Islamic religion in Nigeria equally promotes large families with the encouragement of early marriage and polygamous family system with unrestricted procreation of children. The Christian religion in turn prohibits the most

effective forms of contraception and most are anti-abortion. Also, the custom of the people that children are free gift from God and procreating children should not be restricted by any legislation accounts for population increase in Nigeria.

- Male-child preference is another reason why population is on the increase. In Nigeria male babies are more valued than female ones. If a female baby is born into a family, the couple continues attempts until they get a male child. In the process, a couple procreates many babies while searching for a male child.
- Cultural influence. In Nigeria, children are mostly a source of social security for the elderly. It is culturally believed that the more children one has the more one enjoys old-age social security. The rich man in Nigeria produces 4 children; the gateman produces 15 children. This is because the rich man takes social security in his wealth; whereas the gateman takes social security in his many children.
- The current economic downturn and low level in family planning has contributed to increased birth rate in Nigeria. Due to increasing poverty in the cities, married couples only find comfort when they have intimate relationship with one another. The resultant effect is usually more children.
- Another cause of population explosion in Nigeria is the rate of single motherhood. Most ladies in Nigeria find it unnecessary to get married. Hence some of them prefer having children out of marriage.
- The current economic downturn in Nigeria has led to increase in the number of sex workers. These prostitutes practice unprotected sex. In the process, unwanted pregnancy becomes rampant.
- Again, the porous nature of Nigeria borders is a source of population growth in Nigeria. Nigeria operates the most unprotected international borders in the world. Thus foreign nationals come into the country illegally and these illegal aliens add to the already overstretched population capacities in the city centers.

Consequences of population growth and its implications on the quality of life of city dwellers

The consequences of population growth in Nigeria are huge and the repercussion on the

quality of life of city dwellers is dire. These are:

- Due to population influx, it has become increasingly difficult for families in the cities to meet their daily needs. Under the economic hardship; and in order to meet the daily household basic needs, parents and guardians forcefully engage their under-aged children and wards in mobile street sales in major streets in cities. It is common to find many under-aged children selling sachet water, soft drinks and edibles along the streets in major cities in Nigeria. The picture below shows a child street hawker in Enugu metropolis.



Figure 1: under-aged child-hawker in Enugu Metropolis.

- Urban Poverty is one of the consequences of rapid population growth in Nigeria. Due to uncontrolled rural-urban migration, the cities are over populated. The available public facilities can no longer cope with the overwhelming urban population. The implication is poor living standard of urban dwellers and the attendant social vices such like armed robbery, kidnappings, prostitution, internet crimes, and many others.
- Another consequence of rapid urban population in Nigeria is the collapse in the existing social amenities. There is virtually non-existent of social amenities,

including good drinking water, good road, electricity, health facilities, housing and a host of others. In Enugu State, families depend on private arrangement for their water needs as can be seen from figures 2 and 3 below.

Figure 2: Picture of Privately-operated water tanker discharging water for a house- hold in Enugu, Southeast Nigeria.



Figure 3: Ground Well (source of water) owned by a house hold in Enugu State, Southeast Nigeria



Discussion

This study established that bad governance; emigration for greener pastures; increasing unemployment, poverty; absence of positive development; are connected to poor quality of life of city dwellers in Nigeria. According to the UN perspective, Nigeria population is growing faster than social development. Thus, people are getting poorer; less job opportunities in the city areas since the population is doubled in every 25 to 26 years; the impact of government effort in provision of jobs is not felt; largely because great number of unemployed people depend on the few that are employed.

Nigeria has been tagged the world capital of poverty. Ethnic and religious crisis are manifestations of population explosion without adequate planning; the rate of national income, the GDP, is slower than the population growth for innovative policies to stem the tide of demographic disaster we experience. Today the population explosion affects traffic jam in the cities because of many vehicles on the road with poor road network. In Nigeria, an average rich man produces 4 children but the gateman produces 15 children. This is because the rich man takes insurance in his wealth; while the gateman takes pride in the number of his children for his social security in his old age.

The study established that increase in baby mothers is fundamental to population surge in Nigeria. For example, underage girls giving birth to babies out of marriage are rampant. There is also policy gap in checking population growth; thus, there is need for family planning blueprint. The Federal Government of Nigeria has family planning policy in place; but it is not enforced. Unfortunately too, population control policy is not available at both the state and local government levels where the population growth is remarkable. Furthermore, religion should not be a barrier to population control to both Christians and Moslems in Nigeria. Iran, Italy examples, has 70% fertility reduction policy (contraceptives). One man marrying many wives is a major cause of population explosion in Nigeria. This should be discouraged. In one of the researcher's interview on why there are many urban poor families; the response was that: "people here are poor not because they are many but are many because they are poor". Government must aggressively step up the economy for the benefit of the citizens.

Conclusion

Arising from the findings, the study concludes that the urban quality of life was poor as residents enjoyed a very low level of satisfaction with key quality life indicators especially on availability of portable drinking water as city residents absolutely depend on private water supply by water tanker suppliers and privately sunk wells in their respective homes. This is as a result of insufficient and bad condition of indispensable infrastructure related to these key quality of life indicators. Furthermore, the economic condition of the city dwellers was poor based on the fact that very few respondents were living comfortably on the average monthly income while more than half of the population was living on income below poverty line in Nigeria. It was observed that government neglect of urban settlements in Nigeria is a reflection of the above problems.

The study recommends that government should quickly and deeply get involved in the provision of employment and other life-giving infrastructure for the good of urban city dwellers in Nigeria. Investment in human capital and establishment of industries by government will generate job opportunities for the jobless youths. Housing estates at affordable rate should be provided by government to avoid urban slum.

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