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## **IMPACT OF POPULATION GROWTH ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF AKWANGA TOWN, NASARAWA STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the impact of population growth on the physical and economic development of Akwanga Town. Key issues in the research were causes of population growth impact of population growth on the physical and existing infrastructures and the relationship between population growth and economic development Questionnaires were administered to three hundred and fifty respondents. The data was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics and Pearson Correlation Co-efficient (P. CC). The findings revealed that migration, fertile land for agriculture, cultural and religious beliefs were among the factors responsible for population growth in the study area. The degradation of the biodiversity, increased solid waste and pollution were the impact of population growth in Akwanga town. There were positive relationships between population growth and small scale business (+1.02) and investment on housing and hospitality (+ 1.08). It was agreed that there are negative relationship, between population and unemployment (+1.89) and a negative relationship between population and resources (-0.42).*

**Keywords:** *Impact, Population, Growth, Planning, Socio*

## **Introduction**

There are people in different parts of the world. The concentration and composition of people across different regions of the world Nigeria inclusive are not the same just as they are not static. That is, human population is dynamic in nature.

However, existing data has shown that human population is on the increase with its attendant impacts on the environment. For example, United Nations, puts the world population around 2.6 billion people in 1958, 5 billion people in 1887, and 7 billion in 2011. United Nations World Population Prospect Division (2015), projected that the world population will increase by more than one billion in the next 15 years reaching 8.5 billion in 2030, and to increase further by 9.7 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion by 2100. Based on the projections, it has been revealed that sixty percent of the world population growth between now and 2050 is in Africa. Africa has the highest rate of population growth among major areas growing at a pace of 2.55 percent annually in 2010-20 15. A rapid population increase in Africa is expected even if there is drastic decline in fertility levels in the near future due to the already existing young people on the continent who will reach adulthood in Doming years and have children of their own. The United Nations Population Projection growth rate (2015), observed that the human population is on the increase and predicted that by 2050, the bulk of the population will take place in Africa of the addition 2.4 billion projected between 2015 and 2050. By this, ii was estimated that 1.3 billion would be added in Africa. 0.9 billion in Asia and 0.2 billion in the rest of the world. In terms of global population distribution, United Nation Population Division(nd) held that sixty percent of the world population lives in Asia (4.4 billion), 16 percent in Africa (1 .2. billion), 10 percent in Europe, 9 percent in Latin America and the Carribean and the remaining 5 percent in Northern America and Oceania. China (1.4 billion) and India (1.3 billion) remaining the two largest countries of the world both with more than I billion people, representing 19 and 18 percent of the world's population respectively. In Nigeria, relevant data has shown that Nigerian population has been on the increase at the alarming rate. The Federal Office of Statistics put the population of Nigeria to only 18.72 million in 1921 it rose to 30.4 million in 1952 and 55.6 million people in 1963. National Population Commission said that the census data of 1991 shows that Nigerian population was around 80.5 million while the

projections for the year 2000AD suggests a doubling of the population between 20-25 years. Also, statistics from the 2006 census revealed that Nigerian population stood at 140, 003, 542 (NBS 2009). World internet Stats (2017), said that Nigeria is the seventh most populated among the top ten most populated countries of the world with about 191 million people with an area of about 923,768sqkm. Premised from the above, National Population Commission (NPC) (2006). revealed that the Nasarawa State has a population of about 1.8 million people with projections of about 2.5 million people in 2016 and a total land area of about 27.117sqkm. The projection is a clear indication that the population of Nasarawa State is on the increase.

Regarding the study area (Akwanga). National Population Commission revealed that the population of Akwanga Local Government was 107,957 thousand people in 1991 and 113,430 in 2006. However, factors responsible for population growth were also investigated upon. In view of this, Bhatta (2010), asserted that rapid growth of urban areas is the result of two key population increase factors viz: (i) the natural increase in population and (ii) Migration. Natural population growth results from excess of births over deaths due to improvement in Medical Services, advancement in public health and increase in food production and environmental sanitation. Migration is another factor that causes population changes. Migration implies the movement of individual, family or group of people to a new place away from their community of origin; it could be within a country or between countries for the purpose of taking up permanent or semi-permanent place of abode either willingly or unwillingly. Bhatta (2010), observed that in many settlements, migration occurs in different forms and degrees: intercontinental i.e. between continents, intercontinental (between countries on a given continent) and interregional (within countries). The World Bank's Migration and Remittances FactsBook (2011) listed the following Migration figures for the year 2010: Total number of immigrants: 2 15-8 million of the world population. in 2013, the percentage of international migrants worldwide increased by 33% with 59% of the migrants moving towards the developed world such as the U.S.A, Germany, France which could result to population increase. The World Bank's report estimates revealed that in 2010, 16.3 million amounting to about 7.6% of migrants were globally described as refugees.

The United Nations Population Fund (2008) revealed that the Northern hemisphere has witnessed a higher proportions of increase in the number of migrants since 2000. which amounted to about 32 million compared to the Southern hemisphere which experienced about 25 million migrants. By this, it has resulted to population increase on the migrants' new destinations and global humanitarian crises in recent limes. The impacts of population growth on development are multi-dimensional. Civilization and industrialization are the major factors responsible for the movement of people resulting to population increase. "In recent times, many Nigerian urban center for example Kano, Kaduna. Warr, Abuja, Rivers, Ibadan, Lagos, Port-Harcourt, Enugu. Jos and Benin City are said to have experienced substantial migration of people from across different regions of the country and world searching for more conducive condition, leading to population increase causing unorganized growth in such urban areas, rapid urban growth and development has lead to series of problems such as urban congestion, uncondusive, housing facilities, improper environmental sanitation. Unemployment, crimes, deforestation for energy and social vices, making the urban areas unsafe for the people living in cities" Cohen (2006).

### **The Study Area**

Akwanga being a nodal town lies at the southern lower limit of Jos Plateau State in Central Nigeria. Latitudinally, Akwanga lies between 8°5' and 9°00'. On the other hand, Akwanga situates between longitude 8°15' and 8°30'. it is one among the thirteen Local Government Areas in Nasarawa State and is within the northern senatorial district. Akwanga has a land area of about 768km<sup>2</sup>. With reference to her neighbours, Akwanga shares boundary with Nasarawa Eggon in the southern axis with river Ubbe as it natural boundary. To the west, Akwanga is bounded by Kokona Local Government. In the north, Akwanga is bounded by Sanga Local Government in Kaduna State with Ungwar Makama River which marked the natural demarcation while in the eastern part it shares boundary with Wamba Local Government having NumaGona River (River Wamba) which gives another natural boundary.

### **Method of Data Collection**

Both primary and secondary sources were used in collecting the data. Questionnaires were administered in conducting this research. The instrument

(questionnaire) used in collecting the data contained Linkert Scale rating scale designed for information to be provided to answer research question one and two which include agreed, strongly agreed, disagreed, strongly disagreed and undecided while two points Linkert scale of agreed and disagreed were used to collect data concerning research question three.

### Techniques for Data Analysis

Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS Version 21) was used in analyzing the data collected. Mean and standard deviation was used in analyzing the data in research question one and two while Pearson Correlation Coefficient (PCC) was used in analyzing the relationship between population increase and economy development in research question three.

### Results and Discussion:

**Table 1: Causes of Population increase in Akwanga**

Causes	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean $\bar{x}$	Std $\sigma$	Decision
<b>Migration</b>	112	235	3	-	-	3.62	0.92	Accepted
<b>Fertile land</b>	78	191	44	33	4	3.73	0.78	Accepted
<b>Religious and cultural beliefs</b>	198	98	31	23	-	2.62	0.82	Accepted
<b>Not high fertility</b>	18	15	212	97	8	2.22	0.88	Rejected
<b>Medical facilities</b>	251	88	11	-	-	2.82	0.72	Accepted
<b>Cluster mean</b>						3.002	0.82	Accepted

Source: Field work 2020

From the table above, one hundred and twelve (112) people strongly agreed that migration was one of the factors causing population increase in Akwanga. Two hundred and thirty five (235) people agreed that migration is responsible for population increase in Akwanga and three (3) respondents disagreed. From the on-going, the table revealed that, migration was one of the key factors that brought about the population increase with a mean of 3.62. In conformity to this, Bhata, (2010), asserted that cities are known to be places where money, services and wealth are more concentrated and are perceived as where fortunes

are made with ease in social mobility thereby encouraging rapid population growth through migration.

The opinion of seventy eight (78) people strongly agreed that fertile land has caused population increase in Akwanga town, one hundred and ninety one (191) strongly agreed that population increase was cause by fertile land. Forty four (44) disagreed while thirty three (33) strongly disagreed and four (4) respondents were undecided on the issue of land fertility and population increase. It was also revealed through the study that the fertile land in the outskirts of Akwanga is also responsible for population growth with a mean of 3.73 and standard deviation of 0.78. The fertile land tend to motivate people from other places to come and settle in Akwanga to engage in agriculture and food availability. This is evident in the view of Krautkraemer J.A. (1994), which expressed that a huge increase in agricultural productivity and output during the agricultural revolution contributed to population growth. To this extend, fertile land for agriculture brings about food availability that could results to population growth.

On religious and cultural beliefs, one hundred and ninety eight (1 98) strongly agreed that religious and cultural beliefs were among the factors responsible or population increase, ninety eighty (98) agreed, thirty one (31) disagreed. twenty three (23) disagreed while none of the respondents was undecided. Religious and cultural beliefs were also believed to be among the factors responsible for population growth in Akwanga town with a mean of 2.62 and standard deviation of 0.82. This agrees with the view of Christian faithful embedded in the biblical injunction that they were giving dominion over the earth to be fruitful and multiply to replenish the earth (Genesis I :28),In the Islamic faith. They are allowed to marry up to four Wives creating the possibility of having many children. On the issue of fertility, eighteen (18) strongly agreed respondents to the statement that population increase in AKwanga is not caused by high fertility, fifteen (15) also agreed that population increase is not due to high fertility. Two hundred and twelve (212) people disagreed to the statement that population increase is not caused by high fertility, ninety seven (97) disagreed to the statement while eight (8) respondents were undecided. Importantly, it was also made known that high fertility is also causing population increase which gives a mean of 2.22 and a standard deviation of 0.88 denoting that the statement which stated that population increase is not caused by high fertility is untrue.

To conform that high fertility is responsible for population growth. Arnold (2004), opined that the rapid population growth in most especially the developing countries is due to the general improvement in life supporting factors in the 19th century which keeps infant mortality at low rate. Lack of proper education on contraceptives and unwillingness to adopt some birth control measures will result to uncontrolled fertility resulting to population growth and this is noticed among couples mostly in developing world James et al (2012).

On the basis of medical facilities and services two hundred and fifty one (251) strongly agreed that population increase in Akwanga town was caused by the existing medical facilities and services. Eighty eight (88) respondents agreed that population increase was caused by the existing medical and health services and eleven (11) people were undecided. None strongly disagreed and none was also undecided. It was said from the findings that the existing and improved medical facilities were also responsible for population increase. This is evident in the mean value of 2.82 of the statement which is in consonant with the view of Arnold (2004) which holds that in the 19th century, there is low infant mortality due to improved vaccination against small pox, disease eradication which brings long life expectancy with an eventual increase in population.

**Table 2: Impacts of Population Increase**

Impact	SA	A	D	SD	U	Mean $\bar{x}$	Std $\sigma$	Decision
<b>Biodiversity</b>	208	133	-	-	9	3.42	0.77	Accepted
<b>Increase waste generation</b>	97	237	9	7	-	3.78	0.72	Accepted
<b>Environmental pollution</b>	13	7	92	238	-	2.34	0.89	Rejected
<b>Soil erosion</b>	235	87	12	16	-	2.23	0.87	Accepted
<b>Electricity and pipe-borne water supply</b>	208	137	5	0	-	3.22	0.88	Accepted
<b>No impact on accommodation</b>	21	8	272	41	8	2.29	0.88	Rejected
<b>Cluster mean</b>						2.77	0.69	Accepted

Source: Field work (2020)

Men cut off point of 2.50

From table 4.3, Two hundred and eight (208) people strongly agreed that population increase has affected the biodiversity in Akwanga town. One hundred and thirty three (133) were of the opinion that population increase had impact on the biodiversity, none disagreed and strongly agreed while nine (9) of the respondents were undecided. It was revealed through the findings that population increase has seriously affected the biodiversity in Akwanga with a mean and standard deviation of 3.42 and 0.71 respectively. This showed that population growth in conjunction with human resource usage has degraded the natural ecosystem. Ehrlich (1996), asserted that the interconnected symptoms of environmental degradation are all clearly related to human population growth and resource utilization.

Ninety seven (97) of the responses strongly agreed to the fact that increased solid waste generation was due to population increase, two hundred and thirty seven (237) agreed that solid waste generation in Akwanga was caused by population increase and nine (9) respondents disagreed. Seven (7) of the respondents strongly disagreed while none was undecided. On the basis of waste generation, it was also revealed from the findings that the heap of solid wastes found in different locations in Akwanga was due to population increase. Problems such as poor waste management in most cities in developing countries are typical resulting to environmental pollution in different forms. With this, waste generation, and its poor management has serious adverse implications for human health (Leitman, 1994). Tumba, (1995), opined that there is poor management of wastes in urban centers where some are burnt or deposited in open land or dumped in drains or rivers constituting environmental problems. On the statement that population increase has no significant impact on environmental pollution, it has a mean value of 2.34 below the mean cut of point of 2.50 which was rejected. On the contrary, the findings revealed that population increase has impacts on environmental pollution and climate change. Watson (1998), expressed that the earth's climate has consequently warmed by about one-half degree centigrade this century due to human activities as a result of population increase with its attendant impacts on pollution. On population, the figures from the table showed that thirteen (13) people opined that population increase has no impact on pollution, seven (7) people agreed that population increase has no impact on pollution, ninety two (92) respondents disagreed on the statement that population increase has no impact on pollution



while two hundred and thirty eight (238) strongly disagreed to the statement while none was undecided. Two hundred and eight (208) strongly agreed that population increase has affected the supply of electricity and pipe borne water in the study area, one hundred and thirty seven (137) agreed that population has affected the supply of electricity and pipe born water, five (5) of the respondents disagreed. The statement that soil erosion in Akwanga town is not due to population increase was not true having a mean value of 2.23 below the mean cut-off point of 2.50. On the other hand, it showed that population growth has impacts on the soil erosion recoded in Akwanga town and other parts of Nigerian cities. Ofomata (1978), in Nigeria, it was estimated that a total area of about 78.61km<sup>2</sup> (70%) of it is affected by erosion in the eastern part of the country due to increased human activities and population increase. In the findings, it showed that the epileptic power and pipe burn water supply in item 15 is due to population increase with a mean value of 3.22 above the cut-off mean point of 2.50. This showed that the inadequacy of power supply and other infrastructures is due to the population increase which makes it difficult to meet the demand of the population terms. Onibokun (1987) confirmed to this through a survey carried out in some Nigerian cities which revealed that the available infrastructure in urban centers are in short supply and in declining quality where some areas have no access to basic infrastructure such as electricity, pipe borne water and other relevant and related facilities. Twenty one (21) strongly agreed that population increase has no impact on the cost of accommodation in the study area, eight (8) people agreed, that population increase has no impact on accommodation; two hundred and seven two (272) disagreed on the statement that population increase has no impact on the cost of accommodation in the study area while forty one (41) respondents strongly disagreed and eight (8) respondents were undecided. Interestingly, the findings also revealed that the statement that population increase has no impacts on the accommodation facilities was rejected due to its mean value of 2.29 below the mean cut-off point of 2.50. In contrast, it showed that population increase has significant impacts on the accommodation facilities in the study area and this is elaborated in the view of Adedibu (1 998), population growth has caused overcrowding housing situation in urban areas most especially in developing nations (Nigeria) where the occupancy ratio in highly populated cities is about 6.5 per household resulting to pressure on the household facilities such as bathrooms, toilets and

kitchen. Some of the poor migrants of the urban and populated areas who cannot afford better accommodation may settle in places that are vulnerable to environmental disasters such as flood (Olurumfemi and Raheem, 2007).

**Table 3: Relationships between Population Increase and the Economic Development.**

Items	Agreed	Disagreed	.r *	Decision
Population increase and small scale business	237	113	+1.02	Accepted
Population and unemployment	260	90	+1.89	Accepted
Population and resources	10	250	-0.42	Rejected
Population and investment	247	103	+1.08	Accepted

Source: Field work (2020)r\*

Two hundred and thirty seven (237) respondents agreed that there was a relationship between population increase and small scale business in Akwanga town and one hundred and thirteen (113) respondents disagreed. This agreed with the view of Katzen (1998) which slated that small scale business strive in area with the high population because of high aggregate demand resulting to high market.

Two hundred and sixty (260) agreed that there was a relationship between population and unemployment in the study area while ninety (90) respondents disagreed. It was revealed that there was a strong relationship between population increase and unemployment with the correlation mean value of +1.89. This is reflected in the opinion of Akin, (2016) which stated that population growth could result to unemployment due to limited job opportunities to commensurate with the growing population and even those who are employed face the risk of being rendered unemployed due to the retrenchment of workers as a result of economic recession that might be associated with population growth.

One hundred (100) respondents agreed that population increase has no relationship with resource availability while two hundred and fifty (250) agreed. The findings from table 4.4 did not confirm to the fact that there is no relationship between population increase and the available resources on to its weak correlation value of -0.42.

Two hundred and forty seven (247) respondents agreed that investment on housing and hospitality centres in Akwanga is related to population increase while one hundred and three (103) respondents disagreed with a negative correlation coefficient mean value of -0.42. On the contrary, the findings revealed that population growth has relationship between the rich and the poor in term of income resulting to inequality causing the poor to bear most of the eventual adverse effects of environmental and economic degradation. Todaro (2003) opined that real consumption and per capita income will surely increase but lower in poor families in an economy with increasing population. Von Thunen, 1875 asserted that increasing population can affect fertile agricultural land resource due to urban growth.

Two hundred and forty seven (247) respondents agreed that investment on housing and hospitality centers in Akwanga was related to population increase while one hundred and three (103) disagreed with correlation coefficient mean value of +1.08. The findings showed that, people build houses for rent and hotels in Akwanga due to high demand for accommodation from the increasing population. This is also proven in the view of Kautilya (350BC), opined that a large population is a source of political, economic and military might of a nation. This also confirm to the fact in the opinion of Dupreel (1977), observed that an increasing population would spur rapid innovation and development to solve problems, whereas a stable population would be complacent and less likely to progress.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

Migration is one of the key factors that causes population increase in Akwanga town. It is caused by the available facilities which attracts people to settle in Akwanga town. Improved health facilities is also responsible for population increase in Akwanga town. It helps in reducing infant mortality and increase life expectancy. Population increase has also increased the level of investment in housing and hospitality centres in Akwanga due to its high demand. It is also concluded that population increase is responsible for the unemployment rate in Akwanga Local Government.

Population increase has affected the biodiversity and soil erosion within Akwanga town. Issue of increased solid waste generation and management and

environmental pollution are the consequences of population increase. It was also concluded that the small scale business that are flourishing in Akwanga is due to population increase.

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