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**The Effects of Urbanward Migration on the Residential Sector in Ilorin Metropolis Kwara State of Nigeria**

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**Abstract**

The percentage of people living in urban areas compared with those in the rural counterparts is on the increase in Nigeria. This astronomical growth has been largely attributed to the ineffectiveness of the various rural development strategies being introduced by successive governments with a bid to improve living conditions of the rural populace thus, encouraging mass influx of people into few cities in the country. The creation of state capitals and local government headquarters compounds the problem of inflow of people and apparently seemed to have adverse effects on orderliness and healthy urban environment. The study aimed at examining the influence of urban-ward migration on the residential sector of Ilorin, capital city of Kwara State, Nigeria. The sample size was 60 consisting of upper, middle and lower income groups. In this study, the household constitutes the unit of observation. Data was derived from residents by adopting a combination of systematic and stratified sampling techniques in the administration of questionnaire which was the main research instrument. One made use of descriptive statistics to analyse the data. The study showed that urban-ward migration has perpetuated high room occupancy ratio as evidenced in Okelele (1:3.60); Agbooba (1:3.40) and government reservation area (GRA) has the least (1:1.47). The ratio of household per room is high in Gaa Akanbi (1:4.80), (1:3.40 and Oko-erin ((1:3.30). As regards inter-house spacing, the buildings that are at close range 0-5 metres apart are Molete (86.2%), Surulere (54.5%) and Okealuko (77.3%) areas. Indeed, few buildings are found within a range of 11-15 metres apart except for Okealuko

(4.5%) and none in Molete area. The housing facilities are generally inadequate except for pit latrine in Molete (53.3%) and sewage disposal in Surulere area (45.5%). There is emergence of sub-standard houses and slums in Oke-aluko, Molete and Okelele areas. On the basis of the findings, one recommends among other things, government should make concerted efforts through relevant agencies such as Kwara State Town Planning Authority (KSTPA), and the city municipal council towards effective physical planning of the residential units not only in the study area but also master-plan for the entire country at large. Moreover, the government can embark upon building of low cost houses for the low income earners and possibly introduce resettlement scheme with a view to putting a lasting solution to urban housing congestion.

**Key words:** Migration Urban Residence Population Planning Policy

### **Introduction**

Perhaps one of the most spectacular features of modernization and development processes of the post-independence period has been the increasing mass-movement of the people into the few urban cities from the rural areas. It involves a continuous inflow of people of diverse origin from different parts of Nigeria into the urban centres. Indeed, no part of this country is exempted from this social phenomenon that is, urban-ward population mobility. We are putting our necks into a crucial issue and getting more compounded and that is the over-stretching urban infrastructural facilities. The problem is not peculiar to African cities but also developing countries are facing the same challenges. However, as the World Development Report (2009) had remarked that almost all affluent countries had similar problems some 100 years ago. Although it is possible to tackle the problem, it is not an easy task as it demands for a large-scale improvement in infrastructure. Nigerian population is believed to have risen steadily from an initial estimated 2.8% in the 1960s, 3.3% in the 1990s and

3.5% in recent years (NPC, 2006). Although a steady decline in the growth rate is believed to have been in progress in the 1990s, the rate is still relatively high for rapid socio-economic development (Isiugo-Abanike, 2003). The population growth rate of 3.3 per cent per annum suggests a doubling time of 22 years (Okolocha, et al, 1998). The reality of this scenario might not necessarily be with the absolute size of the population but more importantly, with the implications of the growth rate for the future in terms of provision for necessities of life such as food, housing, clothing, education and health for the growing population.

Of recent, (Akinyele, 2005) remarked that about one quarter of a million people move into Lagos annually and the net-gain of population in the metropolis of Lagos is about 200,000 people annually. The result of this continuous mobility of people into the urban centres without a corresponding increase in housing supply and other infrastructural facilities is the perpetuation of a decaying urban quality of environment in terms of slums. Slum could be defined

as an over-crowded squalid neighbourhood. World development report (2009) viewed slum as a building or group of buildings or area characterized by over-crowding, deterioration, insanitary conditions or absence of essential facilities which, because of these conditions or any of them endanger the health, safety or morals of the urban community. The problem is further compounded by the incapacitation of the governments to formulate an effective policy for a drastic check of this trend with a view to salvaging our existing urban centres from an impending environmental disaster such as the Asa annual flood that often engulfed all buildings along its valley, Ogunpa flood in Ibadan, the State capital of Oyo State, Rima flood that truncated major access road to Usmanu Danfodiyo University Sokoto in 2010 and a host of others.

### **Study Area**

Ever before the intrusion of the British on the Yoruba land, there existed a powerful traditional council consisting of the Obas and High Chiefs that handled matters relating to disputes and orderliness in their respective jurisdiction (Adigwe, 1978; Eluwa, 1998). The study area had an historical wall but dilapidated that served as fortress and stronghold for refugees during the inter-tribal wars. However, emergence of the colonial administration reinforced rapid socio-economic transformation of the area. It was founded as one of the provincial headquarters linked by railways and roads to facilitate evacuation of agricultural produce from the area. As colonial administrative centre, the infrastructural facilities such as schools, colleges, hospitals and health centres put in place served as centripetal force attracting people from diverse origin into the study area, who initially came either to serve as railway staff or job seekers. This singular factor accounted for the rise in population and physical growth of the city.

At independence, the study area was administered as part of the defunct Northern region and which accounted largely for its marginalization and backwardness in terms of socio-economic development. However, the

military junta then, under Major General Yakubu Gowon with the 12-state political structure, Kwara State was carved out of the defunct northern region in 1967. Ilorin became the State Capital of Kwara State under the military leadership of Lt. Col. David Bamigboye as the first Military State Governor. With this new political development, the study area experienced astronomical increase in administrative, industrial and commercial activities which in turn led to influx of people from different parts of Nigeria as it enhanced creation of job opportunities for many Nigerians. Moreover, this singular political development ushered in expansion of infrastructural facilities as well as reinforcing the existing structures in education, health, recreation, public utilities and transport.

The influx of people continued to over-stretch the available socio-economic infrastructural facilities such as housing demands, water supply and power consumption thereby resulting in over-crowded squalid neighbourhood particularly in areas such as Suru-lere, Agbo-oba and Oke-Aluko areas. Nwokocha, (2006) remarked that rapid rate of population growth has contributed to pressure on land for housing, educational, commercial and transportation land uses.

The predominant people in the study area are the Yorubas that traced their origins from Ile-Ife, Osun State and the defunct Oyo Province. However, there are other peoples such as the Fulanis, Hausas, Igbos and Ebiras from Kogi State. The study area is generally known for peaceful co-existence with people of diverse origin hence labelled as 'State of Harmony'. The friendly posture of the traditional ruler, the Emir of Ilorin encouraged people to settle down and possess landed properties which in turn served as enabling environment for prospective immigrants into the study area.

The cumulative effect of the afore-mentioned points was that in no distant time the study area has already provided features for which the term urban slum appears to be appropriately used. These traits are called sociological indicators because of their relationship with issues affecting human beings. The issues at stake are high room

occupancy ratio, inadequate inter-housing space, perpetual moral decadence, inadequate housing, social facilities and health impairment.

### **Methodology**

A reconnaissance survey was conducted into the study area with a view to familiarizing with and ascertains the problems confronting the residents in the area. Moreover, it was to make some spot assessment of the housing conditions and the mode of life in general.

#### **Data Selection**

The data required for the study was carefully selected to reflect the true position of housing conditions in the study area and they include:-

- (i) Data relating to number of persons occupying a room
- (ii) Number of households in a room
- (iii) Relative distance in between the buildings (expressed as a percentage of the total area.
- (iv) Housing facilities within the residential area.

#### **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

The research instrument was the well-structured questionnaire which was presented to experts in estate management in order to validate the instrument and it has assisted in collecting responses from individual residents in the study area. The questionnaire was found to be reliable at confidence coefficient of 95%. The unit of observing was the household. The head of the house hold was chosen and where he was not available, the senior most within the household was chosen as representative of the household. In all, a total of 60 households were interviewed as part of the sample. The study adopted a combination of systematic random sampling and stratified techniques involving classifying the residents into upper, middle and lower income groups. In each of the stratum, a sample of 20 households was taken and seemed to be representative of the population in each layer.

#### **Methods of Data Analysis.**

The study employed descriptive statistical technique to analyse the data. The data were tabulated to observe the behaviour of variables

in terms of similarities and differences. In addition, it involved calculation of central tendencies such as mean, averages and percentages.

### **Data Analysis and Discussion**

In this section, data were analysed and depict the effects of urban-ward migration on the residential sector in the study area.

#### **Room Occupancy Ratio**

The urban residential stress which reflected the urban way of life, a room is regarded to be over-crowded where the space available for each occupant is less than four square metres or the equivalent of two persons to a man. By implication, if there are 10 persons in a large room with each person occupying a space of four square metres, the room is not over-crowded (Findley, 1997). This undue emphasis on space treats the issue of over-crowding with simplicity.

In recent times, a remarkable indicator of urban residential stress all over the world is room occupancy ratio. Stress in this regard is measured by a high level of persons per room, which more often than not is detrimental to the well-being of the individuals (Findley, 1997). Although this definition is quite acceptable in the general context, the application is most appropriate to the African family which supports high room occupancy ratio, their well-being notwithstanding.

As against the universally accepted ratio of 1:2, over 60 percent of the residents in the study area lived more than two to a room. The Okelele residential area with 1:3.60 persons per room recorded the highest number of room occupants, seconded by Agbo-oba areas with 1:3.45, while government reservation area (GRA) attracted the least number of room occupancy ratio of 1:1.47 In connection with the definitional difficulties attached to the world 'well-being' the residents of the high density areas of Okelele, Agbo-oba and Oke-Aluko offered accommodation to relatives and town-mates expressed the manageability of such cramped residences since it does not adversely affect marital relationship, besides the fact that tradition encourages such bond of

unity especially when one is far away from home.

**Table-1** Average Number of Persons per Room

Residential Areas	Occupants Per Room
Molete	1:3.52
Surulere	1:3.10
Oko-Erin	1:3.42
Okelele	1:3.20
Odo-Okun	1:3.14
Aiyetoro	1:2.11
Mubo	1:3.0
Agbo-oba	1:3.45
Oke-Aluko	1:3.40
Maraba	1:2.53
Gaa-Akanbi	1:2.38
Government Reservation Area (GRA)	1.1.47

Source: field survey, 2011

**The Ratio of Household per Room.**

Within the dwelling unit, the ratio of room per household was greatest around Oko-erin (1:4.30) and Gaa Akanbi (1:4.80) a household occupied about four rooms. This relationship could be associated with its old, unattractive structures, with more or less single family pattern which does not encourage ternary. Other areas where a household occupied about three rooms include areas such as Okelele (1:3.70), Mubo (1:3.40), Aiyetoro (1:3.80), Maraba (1:3.10) and Agbo-oba (1:3.24)

In these areas, there are littered traditional structures before the construction of modern residential houses, and of recent are the multi-family flats. There are areas with comparatively low household occupants per room such as the government reservation area (GRA) having a ratio of (1.2.0), and Oke-aluko (1:2.47). These areas are occupied largely by the medium income earners, and professionals who due to the scarcity of commercial houses have converted some of the residential units into warehouses and business outlets. Generally, the high density residential areas are characterized by low income earners whose educational attainment was mainly the primary education. The

statistical breakdown showed that 15.4% had no formal education, 41.2% acquired primary education while about 21.3% had secondary education. The further analysis showed about 22.1% had post secondary education.

**Table-2** Ratio of Household per Room.

Residential Areas	Household Ratio Per Room
Molete	1:2.53
Surulere	1:2.14
Oko-Erin	1:4.30
Okelele	1:3.70
Odo-Okun	1:2.26
Aiyetoro	1:3.80
Mubo	1:3.40
Agbo-oba	1:3.24
Oke-Aluko	1:2.47
Maraba	1:3.10
Gaa-Akanbi	1:4.80
Government Reservation Area (GRA)	1:2.0

Source: field survey, 2011

**Inter-House Spacing.**

An often neglected indicator of urban residential stress is the lack of environmental space and spacing between residences. Dwelling units that lack play spaces are usually considered to be substandard. Although the clustering of residences appears to be acceptable in that it expresses communal ties among Nigerians in particular and Africans in general, it has equally helped to promote over-crowded and huddled up environments (Makinwa and Adebusoye, 1997). The arguments in support of such squalid environments centred on the fact that the fear of thieves or ethnic conflicts make congestion desirable as an instrument of security.

This line of argument may be accountable for the observable nesting together of building's initially in Oke-aluko area with 77.3% and of recent in Molete area where about 86% of the buildings are spaced at less than 5 metres from one another. An alternative explanation may be high cost of building plots which does not encourage vast ownership of plots.

**Table-3** Spacing between Buildings.

Distance (Metres)	Molete	Suru-Lere	Oke-Aluko
0-5	86.2	54.5	77.3
6-10	13.8	27.3	18.2
11-15	0	18.2	4.5

Source: field survey, 2011

The only ugly aspect of the spacing of buildings in the study area is the complete absence of the many services considered essential for the orderly development of an urban space. There is virtually no space for the development of recreational facilities required for the city's young and teeming population. The amusement park located along unity road is insufficient to serve the entire city of Ilorin with an annual population growth rate of 5.1% (NPC, 2006) and an alarming population influx. In addition to the problem of over-crowded residences, there is also the difficulty of presently creating open spaces for efficient urban management since it would entail the enormous destruction of the much needed substandard residences. This large scale rehabilitation has made physical planning and urban development very difficult.

**Housing Facilities**

This is yet another distinctive indicator of urban residential stress. It is depicted by the willingness of people to either live in houses that lack some basic housing facilities or to occupy uncompleted dwelling units as a measure to free themselves from already over-crowded dwelling units. This tendency to occupy uncompleted residences is responsible for the lowering poor standard of buildings in most Nigerian cities today. In Molete, and Oke-aluko areas, there was evidence of inadequate sewage disposal system with 22.7% and 31.8% respectively except for Surulere with an average of 45.5%. Of all the residences included in the field survey, Molete area has (47.6%), Surulere (27.4%) and Oke-aluko (25.0%) have flush toilets respectively. Both Surulere and Okealuko are poorly served with flush toilets. Molete area is having more of the pit latrine (53.5%) than either Surulere (27.3%) or Okealuko (19.2%). On the average the study area is served with compound taps with Molete (34.5%), Surulere (43.4%) and

Okealuko (21.1%) respectively.

**Table-4** Facilities in Houses

Facilities	Molete	Suru-Lere	Oke-Aluko
	% of residence obtainable	% of residence obtainable	% of residence obtainable
Sewage disposed system	22.7	45.5	31.8
Pit latrine	53.5	27.3	19.2
Shower bath	36.2	16.5	47.3
Compound tap	34.5	43.4	22.1
Flush toilet	47.6	27.4	25.0
Others	52.4	-	47.6

Source: field survey, 2011

But generally speaking, the study area does not have adequate infrastructural facilities. This view was supported (Adefila, 2006) in his study of spatial inequalities in infrastructural development in Plateau State. There is evidence to show that with such poor housing facilities one is surprised to understand that tenants still scramble for and canvass for the highest bidder in securing accommodation. This inadequacy of some basic housing amenities such as tap water, flush toilets and cross-ventilation are obvious symptoms of urban residential stress. In Molete area, a public tap serves about 53 households while at Suru-lere and Oke-Aluko areas the ratio is 1:49 and 1:15 households to a tap water respectively. In addition to the harmful effect of living in residences with obvious insufficient housing facilities, there is also the issue of sub-standard housing. It is not uncommon to find very poor and incomplete dwelling units in strategic locations in the study area.

**Health Impairment**

Over-crowdedness often leads to the incidence of communicable diseases especially in terms of epidemics. Nwokocha (2006) indicated that pneumonia cases in over-crowded households are much higher than that of non-crowded areas. This incidence of over-crowded residences could be attributed to the frequent

occurrence of malaria, cholera and other related diseases often experienced by residents. The analysis of malaria attack in the study area revealed that 51.8% and 43.2% in Molete and Oke-Aluko areas respectively were incessant victims. This finding supports the claim of Olaleye et al (2006) that centre-city high density areas accounted for a disproportionate number of hospital admission for various diseases.

### **Recommendations**

The study revealed many of the problems confronting urban residential areas in terms of inadequacy of rooms for the teeming immigrants from the neighbourhoods. In this regard, government at all levels should allocate resources in favour of low income earners that could not afford to build houses of their own. The idea of mounting political propaganda such as 'housing for all by the year 2000' and only to discover that nothing is done at the end of the tenure should stop henceforth. But one has to make realistic statement backed with action and genuine spirit to help the poor masses.

Housing is one of the necessities of life. In pursuance of any daily economic activity, there must be a resting place after the day's work. The federal mortgage banks and other related financial institutions should make collaborative efforts towards granting housing loans to eligible prospective customers by lowering the interest rates to the minimum. Indeed, all the strings often attached to credit facilities should be removed in order to create a wider accessibility to obtain loans for the purpose of constructing individual houses.

The low income house project often embarked upon by political leaders in each state of the federation is a right step in the right direction but the cost must be drastically reduced in order to enable the common man to take possession of a house. Moreover, it is reduce spatial inequality in living standards (Nwokocha, 2007; Adefila, 2008). The prices in most cases are largely beyond the reach of a poor or even middle-class worker. It is essentially built for the rich people in the urban area.

More importantly, each municipal council in their respective jurisdiction must be up and doing with respect to waste management services. As the urban population continues to grow so also is the wastes generated from homes, market places and industries would continue to increase. There is every need for such councils to be more efficient at disposing both solid and liquid effluents from the cities.

In addition, the Town Planning Authority should rise to its responsibility with regards to physical planning. Although, physical planning has not been embraced by all tiers of government in Nigeria, the local, state and federal governments have roles to play. We need master plan for the entire country and not just municipal areas alone. Both the physical and socio-economic planners should work together and see each other as 'two sides of the same coin' (NITP, 1997). This means that while the economic planner allocates resources for specific projects, the physical planner should be in the best position to locate sites for the projects and by so doing, the idea of localization of facilities in urban area would no longer arise. Moreover, it can help to stem the tide of rural-urban migration in this country.

### **Concluding Remarks**

Given the present complexities in our economy, coupled with other political and social-cultural influences; it becomes impractical to cater for the housing needs of the population presently lacking adequate lodging, based on the costing and uneven financial system (Iwayemi, 2006). This fact is pathetic though perilous and may be hard to accept. This thus brings in the question of affordability of housing where even the cost of adequate or proper housing is currently beyond the reach of most Nigerians. The challenge becomes not only to provide the houses but to make the houses affordable to the average Nigerians anywhere irrespective of one's location. This is one of the dangers in persistent urbanization that is prevalent in our cities.

There is need to create opportunities in the rural areas as a measure of control to check the



permanent influx of people from the rural areas into urban life. Of course, people cannot be stopped from moving from one part of their own country to another but they can be enlightened to understand the impact of such movement on the system, especially when it is too obvious that they do so for economic prosperity (Filani, 2005). If adequate needs are provided in these rural areas, urban drift would naturally be greatly reduced. When such drifts occur in the first place, the initial urban design becomes altered. The once efficient and moderately occupied schools soon become crowded, leisure parks may be even converted into homes for destitute; setting crime underway and at an increase, and then pollution becomes an issue to deal with.

Also there will be unplanned government spending like laying new sewer lines to contain the new pressure, even building new public toilets to accommodate the break-down of older ones, and fixing of water pipes, re-routing power lines to satisfy ever increasing consumer demand which may even affect distribution in future. Okunmadewa (2001) remarked that as long as rural areas remain as the root of most of the poverty and low-cost sources of potential advance as against the urban sector which is seen as having most of the articulateness, organization and power, there will always be a need for movement. Hence, the orientation and attitude of all must be changed towards a improved socio-physical and institutional infrastructures with time. The poor people too have become wiser and rational in their thinking and action over time. The government must genuinely place emphasis on developmental policies that would create a measure of sustenance for the lives at grass-root level. The rural communities need improved basic health care, all-weather roads for cheap and efficient mass transportation of goods and services as contained in the present seven-point agenda of President Good-luck Jonathan and should be re-emphasized.

There should be a policy initiated by government to locate certain category of small-scale industries in favour of the rural areas to discourage rural-urban drift which

creates pressure on available urban housing stock. All of these policies for change should be channelled through social mobilization which should be emphasized by agencies like the National Orientation Agency, Ministry of information and the mass media.

Corruption can cripple even the best laid plans (Okafor, 2005) hence; government officials responsible for change should inspire all to become judicious and accountable in all spheres of rural life, while shunning temptations to fraudulently inflate contract costs for parochial and egocentric gains. There should be functional and quality education which must be visible in the presence of schools with teachers, steady power, recreational facilities and a strong administrative structure within the rural communities such that they could equally have the feelings of the city life. It is believed in principle that if these social amenities are present in the rural areas, people will be rest assured of bright opportunities within immediate environment than elsewhere.

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