

## THE IMPACT OF URBAN GROWTH ON REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF AKURE METROPOLIS, ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract:** The paper posits that the impact of urban growth could be understood from regional development perspective, using Akure metropolis, Ondo State, Nigeria as a case study. The first stage in the collection of primary data involves the reconnaissance survey of the study area, followed by the random administration of 25 questionnaires in each of the six identified quarters. Secondary data were also adopted, while data were descriptively and inferentially analyzed. The research revealed that one of the major causes of urban growth is employment opportunities, while the impact of urban growth on employment has not been satisfactory. The paper has found out that the impact of urban growth on economic activities was very good, whereas it was insignificant on infrastructural development. The research shows a fair impact of urban growth on health status, the paper also shows a positive relationship between urban growth and social vices. It was further revealed that the impact of urban growth on the standard of living and on the urban sprawl was fair and fairly significant respectively. The impact of urban growth on housing was not satisfactory. The paper shows that birth control measures could be adopted in mitigating the regional adverse effect of urban growth. It was further recommended that, in order to ensure urban tranquility, livability, socio-economic advancement and sustenance, government should create more employment, prioritizing increase in government expenditure and adequate security provision should be endeavoured.

**Key words:** Urban growth, Regional development, Impacts, Akure metropolis

### INTRODUCTION

Urbanization refer to the process of coming together of human population, the multiplication of such centers of human agglomeration and the enlargement in size of each centre of human concentration. The growth and decline of urban areas as an economic phenomenon is inextricably linked with the process of urbanization. Measurement of urban growth rests on the definition of urban area' which is not standard throughout the world involving area variation according to countries and differs even within the same country depending upon the nature of local jurisdictions and how they might have changed over time. Economic Geography literature has emphasized how an economy can become differentiated into an industrialized core (urban sector) and an agricultural 'periphery' that is, urban concentration is advantageous due to the fact that the population benefits from the greater variety of goods produced and may be sustained because a large population in turn generates greater demand for those goods (Krugman, 1991; Bloch et al., 2015).

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Rapid urban growth is responsible for many environmental and social changes (Herman, 2009, 2010), it is noted that rapid growth of cities often strains their capacity to provide basic amenities. Amenities such as energy, transport facilities, education, health care, portable water supply, sanitation and physical securities which are required to sustain and keep urban environments functioning efficiently has to be competed for. It is noted that reduced government spending on maintenance and provision of services has turned some environment in Akure to massive slum with serious environmental problems and widespread poverty. With more and more people preferring cities as their choice of settlement, the challenges lies not in stemming this tide of migration, but in planning, managing and governing our cities better, to improve quality of life and living standard. While urban planning is a dynamic activity that works to improve the welfare of people and their communities by creating more convenient, equitable, healthful, efficient and attractive places for present and future generations (American Planning Association, 2006).

The evolution of cities involves an admixture of natural increase (excess of fertility over mortality), internal migration and international migration. In Africa expansion and population growth led to high demand from the environment and ultimately struggle for more land and local rancor and war. However, poverty which is seen as 'widespread and continuous in Africa is worsening by rapid population growth (Fagbohunka, 2010).

### **Conceptual Issues/Literature Review**

Nevertheless, the city growth in the developing nations of the world is associated with absence of economic development capable of explaining or justifying it (Bairochi, 1989; John, 2005). It has been observed that efforts could be made to decelerate growth of cities. This has been demonstrated in France through migration to rural areas near many of the major cities (Chapius and Brossard, 1989). The united Nation Human settlement program (UN Habitat) has identified social polarization as an indirect but crucial determinant of contemporary patterns of segregation of people and land use around the world. Lack of urban facilities is one of the most pressing problems in Nigeria cities (Lee, 1989; Lee and Anas, 1989).

According to the UN methodology, and following the convention in Nigeria, settlements with a population of 20,000 or more are classified as urban; all state capitals are included. Previous to British rule, urbanization tended to concentrate in the north and southwest, and the southeast had a predominant rural character (Abumere, 1994). It is impossible to predict how population densities will change, but in general rates of urban expansion have exceeded rates of urban population growth in West Africa (Angel, 2012).

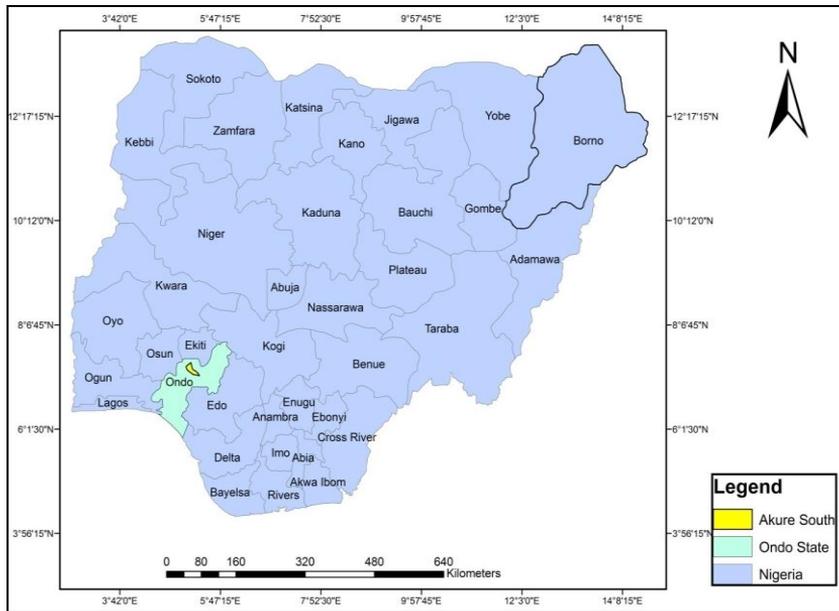
While rural-urban migration contributes to urban growth, the significance of urban natural increase and reclassification due to rural densification have been widely underappreciated while the role of rural-urban migration has likely been overstated in Nigeria, and indeed in sub-Saharan Africa more generally (De Brauw et al., 2014; Jedwab et al., 2014; Fox 2014).

This process of growth and urban change integrates a diversity of settlements, ranging from housing estates, educational facilities and industrial sites to unplanned residential developments on urban fringes progressively incorporating peripheral peri-urban (and rural) settlements (Ogu, 2009). While there are a number of accounts describing the changes that Nigerian urban structures are undergoing at a national level (Falade, 2009; Bijimi, 2013; Olujimi, 2009), most of the analyses of contemporary urban expansion have tended to use a specific city as a case study, from which they have derived generalizations of transformations occurring at the national level (Ade and Afolabi, 2013; Alabi, 2009; Aguda and Adegboyega, 2013; Tofowomo, 2008; Atu et al., 2008; Ajala and Olayiwola, 2013; Isma'il et al., 2010; Oriye, 2013; Ujoh et al., 2010).

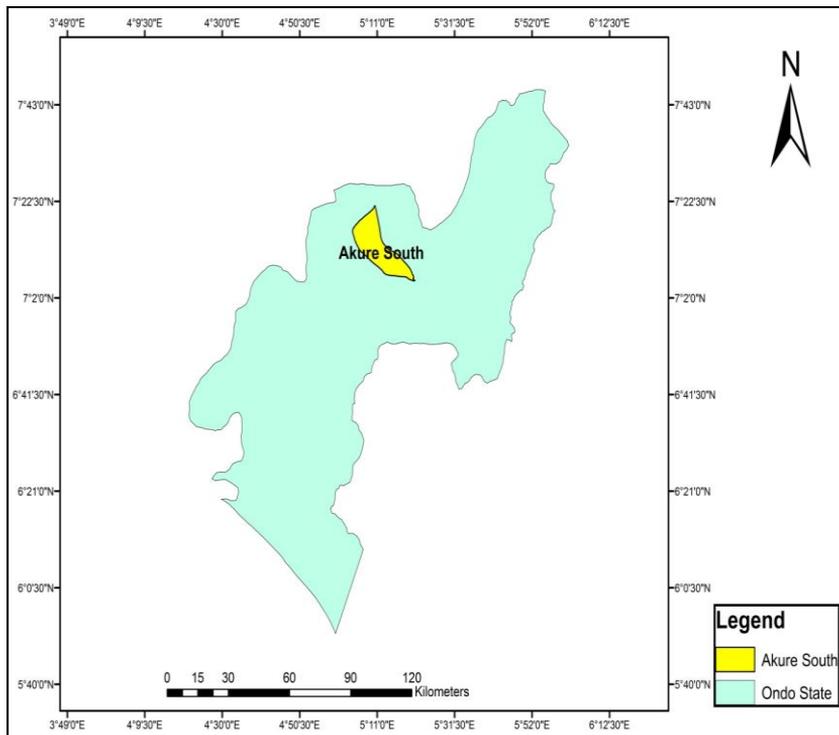
### **THE STUDY AREA AND METHODS**

Akure is located approximately 700 kilometers south west of Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria and about 350 kilometers to Lagos the former capital of Nigeria. The city is located within Ondo State in the south western part of Nigeria. It is located within the tropical rainforest region of

Nigeria where rainfall is high throughout the year. It lies approximately on latitude  $7^{\circ}15'$  North of the equator and longitude  $5^{\circ}15'$  East of the Greenwich.



**Figure 1.** Map of Nigeria showing the location of Ondo State  
 Source: Africa map library 2014



**Figure 20.** Map of Ondo State showing Akure South  
 Source: Africa map library 2014

The people of Akure are hardworking, studious and very articulate and industrious and serious minded people who are mixed in economic activities, some are civil servants, bankers, farmers and engineers while the women are majorly involved in commercial activities like trading and tailoring. The population of the city grew from 38, 852 in 1952 to 71,106 in 1963 (National Population Census, 2010). The 1991 national population census recorded the population of Akure as 239,124. But the unofficial calculated population was estimated at 556, in 2015.

The collection of primary data involves the reconnaissance survey of the study area. Six quarters (6) including Ijoka, Oke-aro, Ijomu, Oba Adesida, Ijo mimo and Ala quarters, were identified for the purpose of easy administration of questionnaires, twenty five (25) questionnaires were randomly administered in each of the quarters, making a total of 150 questionnaires. Secondary data were also adopted, while data were descriptively and inferentially analysed.

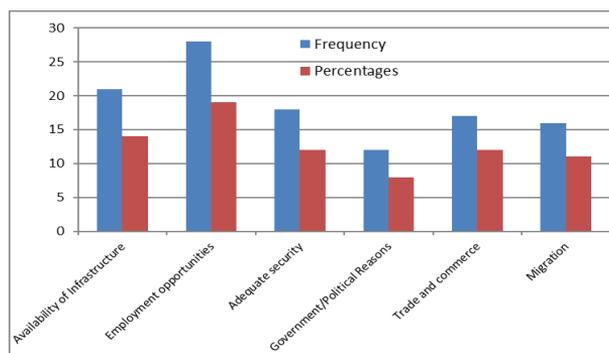
## FINDINGS

**Table 1.** Demographic Characteristic of Respondents

**Data source:** field survey, 2017

<b>Sex</b>	<b>Number of respondent</b>	<b>Percentage %</b>
Male	103	69
Female	47	31
<b>Age (in years)</b>		
<20	04	03
21-30	20	13
31-40	33	22
41-50	48	32
51-60	27	18
60+	18	12
<b>Education Status</b>		
No formal education	30	20
Primary education	41	27
Secondary education	47	32
Tertiary education	20	13
Others	12	08
<b>Occupation</b>		
Farming	77	51
Civil servant	14	09
Trading	22	15
Artisan	18	12
Others	19	13
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
< N 10,000.00	05	03
N10,000-25,000	23	15
N26,000- 40,000	61	41
N41,000-N55,000	28	19
>N55,000	33	22

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents, 103 (69%) are males, while 47 (31%) are females. Also, 04 (03%) respondents are less than twenty years, whereas 48 (32%) are between 41 and 50 years. Another, 47 (32%) respondents have secondary education, while 30 (20%) have no formal education. Furthermore, 77(51%) respondents are farmers, whereas 14 (09%) are civil servants. Also, 5 (03%) respondents receive monthly income of less than N10,000.00, while 61 (41%) receive monthly income of between N26, 000 and N40, 000.00.



**Figure 3.** Causes of Urban Growth  
**Data source:** field survey, 2017

Figure 3 shows that, out of 150 (100%) respondents; 28 (19%) agreed that one of the major causes of urban growth is employment opportunities, while 10 (07%) opined population growth. Another, 21 (14%) respondents asserted availability of infrastructural facilities, contrary to 12 (08%) who believed that government/ political reasons is the cause of urban growth. Also, 18 (12%) agreed adequate security, whereas 13 (07%) believed that the status of the study area as a capital city is the most important cause of its (urban) growth.

**Table 2.** The Impact of Urban Growth on Employment  
**Data source:** field survey, 2017

Impact on Employment	Frequency	Percentages
Very satisfactory	23	15
Satisfactory	32	21
Fairly Satisfactory	21	14
Not satisfactory	56	38
No Effect	18	12
Total	150	100

Table 2 reveals that 56 (38%) respondents believed that the impact of urban growth on employment has not been satisfactory, while 18 (12%) opined no effect. Another, 32 (21%) agreed that the impact of urban growth on employment is satisfactory, contrary to 21 (14%) who opined fairly satisfactory.

**Table 3.** The Impact of Urban Growth on Economic Activities  
**Data source:** field survey, 2017

Impact on Economic Activities	Frequency	Percentages
Excellent	29	19
Very Good	55	37
Good	22	15
Fair	23	15
Poor	21	14
Total	150	100

Table 3 shows that 55 (37%) respondents believed that the impact of urban growth on economic activities is very good, contrary to 21 (14%) respondents who opined poor. Also, 29 (19%) respondents agreed to the excellent impact of urban growth on the economic activities, whereas 23 (15%) opined fair.

Table 4 reveals the impact of urban growth on infrastructural development. Out of 150 (100%) respondents, 39 (26%) agreed insignificant impact of urban growth on infrastructural development, whereas 19 (13%) opined no effect. Another, 35 (23%) respondents believed that urban growth has a fairly significant impact on infrastructural development, while 23 (15%) agreed significant impact.

Table 5 depicts that 54 (36%) respondent's opined a fair impact of urban growth on health status, while 8 (05%) agreed an excellent impact. Also, 35 (23%) respondents believed that the impact of urban growth on health facilities is good, contrary to 14 (09%) who opined no effect.

Table 6 reveals that, 76 (51%) respondents agreed that the impact of urban growth on social vices is positive, whereas 45 (30%) believed that it is negative. Another, 29 (19%) respondents agreed that urban growth has no impact on social vices.

**Table 4.** Urban Growth and Infrastructural Development

Data source: field survey, 2017

Impact on Infrastructure	Frequency	Percentages
Very Significant	34	23
Significant	23	15
Fairly Significant	35	23
Not Significant	39	26
No Effect	19	13
Total	150	100

**Table 5.** The Impact of Urban Growth on Health Facilities

Data source: field survey, 2017

Impact on Health Facilities	Frequency	Percentages
Excellent	08	05
Very good	17	12
Good	35	23
Fair	54	36
Poor	22	15
No Effect	14	09
Total	150	100

**Table 6.** The Impact of Urban Growth on Social Vices

Data source: field survey, 2017

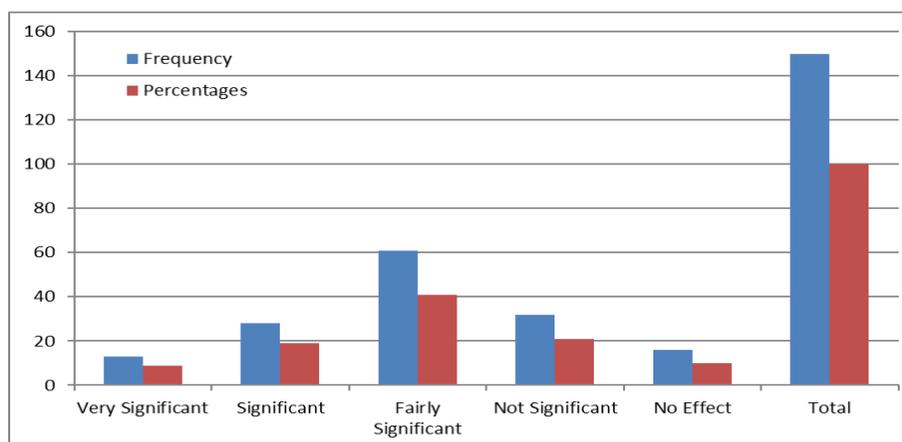
Impact on Social Vices	Frequency	Percentages
Positive	76	51
Negative	45	30
No Effect	29	19
Total	150	100

**Table 7.** Urban Growth and Standard of Living

Data source: field survey, 2017

Impact on Standard of Living	Frequency	Percentages
Excellent	23	15
Very Good	25	17
Good	32	21
Fair	56	38
Poor	14	09
Total	150	100

Table 7 depicts the impact of urban growth on the standard of living, 56 (38%) respondents opined fair, while 14 (09%) agreed that the impact of urban growth on standard of living is poor. Furthermore, 23 (15%) respondents agreed an excellent impact of urban growth on standard of living, whereas 32 (21%) opined a good impact.



**Figure 4.** Urban Growth and Urban Sprawl

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Figure 4 shows that 61 (41%) respondents believed that urban growth has a fairly significant impact on urban sprawl, while 13 (09%) agreed very significant. Also, 32 (21%) respondents agreed an insignificant impact of urban growth on urban sprawl, contrary to 16 (10%) who opined no effect.

Table 9 reveals that 49 (33%) respondents believed that the impact of urban growth on housing is not satisfactory, while 14 (09%) agreed it has no effect. Another, 45 (30%) respondents believed that the impact of urban growth on housing is fairly significant, whereas 19 (13%) opined very satisfactory.

**Table 9.** The Impact of Urban Growth on Housing

Data source: field survey, 2017

Impact on Housing	Frequency	Percentages
Very satisfactory	19	13
Satisfactory	23	15
Fairly Satisfactory	45	30
Not satisfactory	49	33
No Effect	14	09
Total	150	100

**Table 10.** Control Measures on the Adverse Effect of Urban Growth

Data source: field survey, 2017

Control Measures	Frequency	Percentages
Birth Control	48	32
Deportation of Non- Indigene	02	01
Creation of More Employment	31	21
Government Expenditure Increase	33	22
Adequate Security	36	24
Total	150	100

Table 10 shows the various respondents view concerning control measures which could be adopted in mitigating the regional adverse effect of urban growth. Out of 150 (100%) respondents, 48 (32%) opined birth control, while 36 (24%) agreed adequate security. Furthermore, 33 (22%) believed that government should increase its expenditure, whereas 2 (01%) respondents agreed deportation of non-indigene as a measure of control on the adverse effect of urban growth.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

What constitutes an 'urban' area is conceptually and practically ambiguous, urban settlements are demographically large, relatively densely populated, built-up areas. Urban growth could be a positive symbol of socio-economic advancement, but in most of the developing countries, the rates of growth have not only progressively compounded and exacerbated inter-related challenges of human settlements and the environment, but have also greatly catalyzed poverty.

The research revealed the following as the causes of urban growth; availability of infrastructural facilities, government/ political reasons, trade and commerce, migration, capital city, population and natural increase, and the employment opportunities which happened to be the most dominant. It was also vivid that the impact of urban growth on employment has not been satisfactory, this lends credence to the fact that population increase tend to have negative relationship with employment availability. The paper has found out that the impact of urban growth on economic activities was very good, in real sense people tend to agglomerate in regions with buoyant economy and economic activities. Therefore, wide varieties of goods and services are readily available for man's consumption in such situation.

Also, the impact of urban growth on infrastructural development was insignificant; this perhaps as a result of competition and strain on the available facilities. The research shows a fair impact of urban growth on health status and a positive relationship between urban growth and social vices. It was further revealed that the impact of urban growth on the standard of living and on the urban sprawl was fair and fairly significant respectively. The impact of urban growth on housing was not satisfactory, it must be noted that in many urban areas adequate housing is usually a dominant problem as it does not corroborate with those opportunities available. The paper shows that birth control measures could be adopted in mitigating the regional adverse effect of urban growth. It was further recommended that, in order to ensure urban tranquility, livability, socio-economic advancement and sustenance; government should create more employment, prioritizing increase in government expenditure and adequate security provision should be endeavoured. The government should embark on development policy with the aim of developing a dynamic system of urban settlement that will promote efficient urban and regional development and ensuring improved standard of living.

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