Urbanization, Urban Poverty, Slum and Sustainable Urban Development in Nigerian Cities: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract

Urbanization, Urban Poverty and Slum are often connected, and posed major challenges to developed and developing nations alike, but these challenges are more pronounced in developing nations among which Nigeria is not immune. Urbanization has been a major demographic trend in Nigeria and most especially in the major cities across the country in last half of the century because of the relative increase in both social and economic development that is presently resulting in the uncontrolled population growth of Nigerian major cities, some of which are manifesting in the unnecessary pressures on available infrastructure, environmental degeneration, traffic congestion, housing shortages and high level of crimes. Urban Poverty equally posed a great challenge to urban sustainability in Nigeria because most of the poor in the cities suffers social exclusion, unemployment, homelessness, lack paid income and vulnerability to environmental risks and poor health, while the end result of these challenges and manifestations are the growth of slums, squatters settlements, shacks, dirty run down housing that are already becoming permanent structures in major cities of Nigeria. This paper embarks on comprehensive literature review on urbanization, urban poverty, slums and available statistical figures and relates these issues to Lagos, Kano, Port-Harcourt, Onitsha and some other cities in Nigeria, because these are the cities that faces these challenges the more, where there exist housing shortage in quantitative form, environmental pollution, traffic problems, huge pressure on existing infrastructure such as water supply, electricity supply, healthcare facilities, bad roads, high level of criminal activities, kidnapping, high level of unemployment among others and while at the same time, examined the factors responsible for these challenges in the urban centres. However, practicable recommendations are proffered as to the interrelation and opportunities that can be harnessed among these challenging issues, so as to ensure sustainable urban development in Nigeria as a nation.

Keywords: Urbanization, Urban Poverty, Slum Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

In the 21st century the numbers of people living in cities will progressively increase (Gomez and Salvador, 2006). The calibration or measurement of the level of urbanization, as well as urban growth, also differs, similarly, while there is consensus that cities are not the same thing as urban centres, there is no internationally accepted definition of a city. Indeed, there is little consensus about the definition of urban, therefore an understanding of the level of urbanization or its scale in developing countries is challenged not only by such definitional differences but also by the lack of reliable data, because developing countries generally do not have reliable or updated data on population distribution since many do not conduct regular censuses (Giok and Kai, 2008). Africa and Asia together will account for 86 percent of all growth in the world's urban population over the next four decades, adding that this unprecedented increase will pose new challenges in terms of jobs, housing and infrastructure. Africa's urban population will increase from 414 million to over 1.2 billion by 2050, while that of Asia will soar from 1.9 billion to 3.3 billion. The largest increase in urban population are expected in: India, China, Nigeria, USA and Indonesia, over the next four decades, India will add another 497 million, China – 341 million, Nigeria – 200 million, USA – 103 million, and Indonesia – 92 million to their urban population (UNPD-DESA, 2011).

Urban areas are central to the demographic, economic and environmental challenge of the 21st century (UN and UNCHS, 2010), however in many developing countries like Nigeria rural-urban migration is the major contributor to urbanization. A key determinant of migration is the income differential between rural and urban regions (Gilbert and Gular, 1992). Africa's urban transition is partially accompanied by economic growth derived mainly from non-agricultural value-added, the growth is largely un-sustained, and far below the level required to significantly reduce poverty levels, as urban areas sprawl at the cities' peripheries, the core areas break down with the burden from increasing demand for social services, which consequently become homes of the poor, and the sites and sources of environmental pollution (Kessides, 2005). The ultimate end results of unguided rapid urbanization rate are slums formation in the cities and the periphery of the urban centres. The true pictures of the challenges of big cities in Nigeria, such as: Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt, Kano and Benin presents a number of problems that are worthy of mentioning and assessing. These are unnecessary pressure on

available public infrastructure, urban degeneration, slum/squatter formation, overcrowding the available substandard housing, lawlessness, high level of crime/vices, and encroachment/invasion of peri-urban lands and absence of government presence in such areas.

Worldwide estimates are that one billion people are living in either slums or squatter settlements, and this includes one third of the world's urban population (UNDP, 2005). Urban Slums on the other hand, it was observe that the complex process of urbanization in developing countries sets the context for the issues of slums and squatter settlements have formed, an effort has been made to provide reliable and updated data, but success has been fraught with difficulties involving the comparability of data among cities, as well as accurate representation of the diversity of situations faced by squatter and slum developments, particularly in terms of the characteristics of these settlements and their situations (Giok and Kai, 2008). In Nigeria the failure of successive administration has neglected the plight of the poor for a very long time, which has made the poor to look for cheap accommodation where available hence, the failure of governments in the urban areas has led to the formation of slums in Nigeria's major cities. One of the disturbing features of rapid urbanization in Nigeria has been the formation and development of slums in urban centres, many of these slums are developing as rapidly as the city itself, consequently leading into urban poverty. Since there is no consensus definition of urban poverty

This paper however provide an overview of the conceptual and empirical issues in urbanization, slums, urban poverty, and critically looked at the challenges abounds, while practicable suggestions were made as to provide a rationale for sustainable urban development policies are suggested in addressing the present and future cities of Nigeria.

2. Urbanization

Urbanization simply refers to the expansion in the proportion of a population living in urban areas is one of the major social transformations sweeping the globe, it represent the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas with population growth equating to urban migration (Misilu, Nsokimieno, Chen and Zhang, 2010). Urbanization and city growth are caused by a number of different factors including rural urban migration, natural population increase, and annexation. Because rates of natural increase are generally slightly lower in urban than in rural areas, the principal reasons for rising levels of urbanization are rural-urban migration, the geographic expansion of urban areas through annexations, and the transformation and reclassification of rural village into small urban settlements (Barney, 2006).

Cities are currently home to nearly half of the world's population and over the next 30 years most of the 2 billion plus person increase in global population is expected to occur in urban areas in the developing world. This represent a significant departure from the spatial distribution of population growth in the developing world that occurred over the past 30 years, which was much more evenly divided between urban and rural areas. The level of world urbanization today and the number and size of the world's largest cities are unprecedented. At the beginning of the twentieth century, just 16 cities in the world-the vast majority in advanced industrial countries contained a million people or more. Today, almost 400 cities contain a million people or more, and about 70 percent are found in developing world (Nigeria inclusive), by 2007 for the first time more people were living in cities and towns than were living in rural areas and by 2017, the developing world is likely to have become more urban in character than rural (United Nations-Habitat, 2003).

However, in Nigeria, the proportion of the Nigerian population living in urban centres in the 1930s, and 10% in 1950, by 1970, 1980 and 1990, 20%, 27% and 35% lived in the cities respectively, over 40% of Nigerians now live in urban centres of varying sizes (Olotua and Bobadoye, 2009; Okupe, 2002). The explosive rates of growth have not have not only progressively complicated and exacerbated inter-related problems of human settlements and environment, but have also greatly accelerated poverty (Oladunjoye, 2005).Nigeria as a developinng country appear to be facing a more rapid rate of urbanization, mainly as a result of rural-urban migration, Lagos is among the world fastest growing cities in the world with a population of 10,788,000 in the year 2010 (UN-Population Division,2011), also (see Table 1) which shows the population projections of major Nigeria's cities, this table 1 shows that the urban population in Nigeria's cities are rising generally from 1985 to 2010, and the projection still continue with steady growth till 2025.

Table 1: Cities in Nigeria, Population (thousands '000)

City/Yrs	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Aba	48	70	102	144	193	258	344	430	484	551	630	721	836	1015	1252	1529
Benin-City	49	62	83	113	163	233	335	480	689	845	975	1124	1311	1591	1955	2377
Enugu	60	75	108	144	163	211	281	350	394	461	547	649	775	953	1178	1439
Ibadan	450	493	570	668	809	980	1186	1436	1739	1993	2236	2509	2855	3418	4165	5028
Ilorin	114	143	179	222	268	323	389	457	515	572	633	700	788	948	1169	1428
Jos	31	47	69	103	152	224	331	438	493	547	604	666	748	899	1108	1355
Kaduna	35	53	99	173	266	408	628	853	961	1069	1184	1311	1476	1768	2167	2633
Kano	123	257	229	343	542	855	1350	1861	2095	2339	2602	2895	3271	3902	4748	5724
Lagos	325	468	762	1135	1414	1890	2572	3500	4764	5983	7281	8859	10788	13121	15826	18857
Maiduguri	50	68	105	156	216	300	416	531	598	651	700	752	827	985	1213	1482
Ogbomoso	132	169	247	333	378	428	485	549	622	704	798	904	1039	1256	1545	1884
Onitsha	74	91	129	171	195	224	257	294	337	418	533	681	867	1088	1346	1642
P. Harcourt	60	88	135	198	266	358	482	604	680	845	1091	1407	1807	2264	2782	3371

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economics and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospect (2011).

While, published World Prospect Report on Nigeria in both (Table 2 and 3) indicates that the annual urban population growth rate is 3.87 percent, this urbanization rate has resulted in a total urban population of 77,629 million or 49.0 percent of the total population (UN-Population Division, 2011). The implications and incidence of this rapid population growth in urban centres has created, unnecessary pressure on the available public infrastructure, deplorable urban environment, severe housing problems resulting in overcrowding, slums formation, inadequate dwellings, outright homelessness, high level of unemployment, environmental pollution, solid waste management and urban poverty which is also an ugly incidence of the urban centres, which often than not affects the daily consumption of the slum dwellers and urban poor.

Table 2: Nigeria Urban Population ('000) in Percentage (%)

Indicators	1950	1955	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Urban Population ('000)	3867	5,085	7,422	10,294	13,024	16,632	21,592	27,326	34,418	42,733	52,383	63,969	77,629	93,620	112,159	133,108
Percentage Urban (%)	10.2	12.3	16.2	20.1	22.7	25.5	28.6	31.8	35.3	38.8	42.4	45.8	49	52.1	55	57.9

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economics and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospect (2011).

Table 3: Nigeria Urban Annual Growth Rate (%)

Indicators	1950-1955	1955-1960	1960-1965	1965-1970	1970-1975	1975-1980	1980-1985	1985-1990	1990-1995	1995-2000	2000-2005	2005-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	2020-2025
Urban Growth Rate(%)	5.48	7.56	6.54	4.7	4.89	5.22	4.71	4.62	4.33	4.07	4	3.87	3.75	3.61	3.42

Source: Population Division of the Department of Economics and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, World Population Prospect (2011).

3. Slums

As the world's cities absorb tremendous increase growth in human population, housing and public services in these areas have not kept pace, particularly in lees developed countries where overall population growth is more pronounced and urban crowding is most severe. The resulting challenge of the rise in informal urban settlements is becoming a central concern for governments and for those interested in poverty alleviation (Davis, 2004; Neuwirth, 2005; Mitlin and Satterthwaite, 2004). The formation of slums and squatter settlements is not inevitable; this is evident in the varying proportions of the population living in such types of settlements in cities in the developing world (Giok and Kai, 2008).

In 2002, a group of slum experts in Nairobi defined a slum as a contiguous settlement where the inhabitants are characterized as having inadequate housing and basic services, and representing an area that is often not recognized and addressed by the public authorities as an integral part of the city (UN-Habitat, 2003). While urban slums are a growing concern and visual eye sore for cities in less developed countries, it is important to remember that slum-type areas existed in urban settlements since the dawn of cities. Indeed, less than a hundred years ago, during the height of industrial revolution, most of the major urban areas in Europe and North America

had significant and blighted slums. At the turn of the new century, more than three-fourths of urban dwellers in the least developed nations in the world reside in slums (UN-Habitat, 2003). Slums are neglected parts of cities where housing and living conditions are appallingly lacking, slums range from high density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights, sprawling at the edge of cities. Some are more than fifty years old, some are, land-invasions just underway. Access to urban land for housing has been a major issue for the vast majority of poor families in most developing countries in the last decades (Bayram, UZUN et al, 2004).

Around one-third of the urban population in developing countries-nearly one-billion people lives in slums, between year 2000 and 20210, the number of slum dwellers increased by six million every year, and more than 70 percent Africa's urban population lives in slums. The proportion of sub-Saharan population living in slums was estimated to be 199,540,000 representing 61.7 of the cities' inhabitants (UN-Habitat, 2007). However, the proportion of slum inhabitants in Nigeria in the year 2005 represents 60.1 to 70.0 of the total urban population of 63,969,000 (UN-Habitat, 2009). The resultant effects of these results are severe pressure on public infrastructure and services, severe housing shortage, high cost of accommodation where available, formation of slums, shanty squatter settlements, environmental decay, inadequate access to education; health, and non-availability of government presence.

4. Urban Poverty

There is no consensus definition of urban poverty, but two broad complementary approaches are prevalent: economic and anthropological interpretations, conventional economic definitions use income or consumption complemented by a range of other social indicators such as life expectancy, infant mortality, nutrition, the proportion of household budget spent on food, literacy, school enrolment rates, access to health clinics or drinking water, to classify poor groups against common index of material welfare alternative interpretations developed largely by rural anthropologist and social planners expand the meaning of poverty and expand the definition to encompass perceptions of non-material deprivation and social differentiation (Wratten, 1995; Satherthwaite, 1995a).

Some approaches were identified to defining poverty, Ruggeri, Saith and Stwart (2003) single out *the monetary approach, the capacities approach, the social exclusion and participative approach*. The **monetary approach**, defines poverty as a decline in consumption or income and is based on a poverty line and is most commonly used, it revealed the limitations of the monetary perspective in defining poverty and has contributed to a more. The *capacities approach*, rejects monetary income as the sole measure of wellbeing, which was defined as the freedom of individuals to live a life that allows people to fulfill their capacities, it aimed at individual identifying their capacities and fight poverty so as to improve their capacities. The *social exclusion approach* studies the structural characteristics of society, which engender processes and dynamics that exclude individuals or groups from full social participation, it makes particular reference to distribution of opportunities and resources needed to overcome exclusion, and promotion of inclusion in both the labour market and social process. The participatory approach is the one that the poor define poverty based on their own analysis of personal reality, by including aspects they consider to be significant. From this point of view, overcoming poverty entails empowering the poor (Ruggeri, Saith and Stewart, 2003; Arriagada, 2003).

Poverty could be seen from another five dimensions of deprivation: personal and physical deprivation experienced from health, nutritional, literacy, educational disability and lack of self-confidence; dimension of economic deprivation drawn from access to property, income, assets, factors of production and finance; dimension of social deprivation as a result of denial from full participation in social, political and economic activities; dimension of cultural deprivation in terms of access to values, beliefs, knowledge, information and attitudes which deprives the people the control of their own destinies and dimension of political deprivation in terms of lack of political voice to partake in decision making that affects their lives (Aku et. al., 1997).

The paper focused its attention on urban poverty which literarily signifies absence of urban poor to basic infrastructure, employment, inability to earn paid job and poor quality of the environment of this vulnerable group of the urban centres. Like slums urban poverty is something that people believe they can easily defined in terms of household income, for example, the proportion of a city's household who are earning less than what is needed to afford a basket of basic necessities, or living on less than US$ 1 or US$ 2 a day. Monetary measures of poverty have been used in many countries they do not capture the multidimensional nature of poverty (Amis, 1995; Baulch, 1996; Chambers, 1997)

5. Challenges of Urbanization, Urban Poverty and Slums in Nigeria's Cities

Some of the challenges of urban centre today as a result of high rate of urbanization are numerous, interrelated and complementary to that of urban poverty and slums, they are;

Lead to the outward movement of expansion of cities and result to change in the land use in which the rich in the urban centre buy up the virgin agricultural land for residential and commercial purpose, thereby creating negative effect for the environment in the form of clearing the buffer zone that is design to assimilate urban pollution and affect the health of the people.

Lead to environmental hazard such as traffic and industrial pollution thereby affect ambient natural air quality.

Posse great challenge to good urban sanitation, because most cities do not have public toilets, so also the urban slum, hence may create outbreak of epidemics to the urban centres.

Lead to unmanageable high unemployment level and create limited access to employment opportunities which could eventually lead into high level of crimes, political thuggery, vices and prostitution.

Lead to proliferation of slums, shanty shacks and squatter settlement which could equally be disastrous to sustainability of the urban centres, thereby creating limited access to healthy environment.

Leads to little or no social protection (safety net) for slum dwellers, thereby make them vulnerable to urban poverty.

Leads to unmanageable sold waste hence result into environmental decay and degeneration that could be hazardous to urban dwellers' health.

6. Sustainable Urban Development

Sustainable development idea was disclosed by the Brundtland commission's report "Our Common Future" (1987), it postulate that sustainable development is the kind of development, which satisfies the current needs without endangering the future generations to satisfy their own". This definition presented two essential concepts; the *concept of needs* especially the needs of the world' poor, which should be given priority and the *idea of limitations* arising from the effects of technologies and social structures on the ability of the environment to satisfy present and future needs.

The concept of sustainable development encompasses three fundamental approaches; *economic, environmental and social development* which are interrelated and complementary. Traditionally, the concept of sustainable development involves three equivalent components: environmental, economic, and social development; as well as three dimensions of wellbeing,; economic, ecological and social, and their complex interrelations. In other words, sustainable development is a certain compromise among environmental, economic, and social goals of community allowing for wellbeing for the present and future generations (Ciegis, Ramanauskiene and Martinkus, 2009). However, sustainable development can be used to make the citiesin Nigeria to be sustainable in the area of urbanization, urban poverty and slum because, all of these issue are interrelated and complimentary in nature and manifestations, besides the all these challenges have semblance of economic, environment and social approaches which can equally be used to harnessed the opportunities in these challenges and ensure a sustainable urban development of urban centres in Nigeria so that our actions or inactions today will not jeopardized the future generations.

7. Linking Opportunities of Urbanization, Urban Poverty and Slum with Sustainable Urban Development
7.1. Linking Economic Development of Sustainable Development with Rapid Urban Growth to Housing provision for the Slum Dwellers

Failure to turn the rapid rate of urban growth that has lead to slum and squatter settlements proliferation by long neglect of successive governments/administrations in Nigeria have failed to link economic development to sustainable housing provision that will be tailored to the needs and capabilities of the slum dwellers in order to ensure sustainable urban development so as not to jeopardizing the economic and environmental needs of the future inhabitants of Nigeria's cities.

7.2. Harnessing the Potentials of Different Ethnic/Tribal Groups Living in the Slum Areas because of Rapid Urbanization

The slum dwellers who are vulnerable to urban poverty, also serve as melting pots for the integration of different

tribal and ethnic/cultural groups, some of whom have gone out of slums to make good and sterling names for themselves and the country in the areas of entertainment, sport and politic. So therefore the negative environmental vices prevalence in the slum areas can be turn to positive achievements that will go a long way to create sustainable economically sound empowerments for the dwellers of these slums.

7.3. Paradigm Shift from Old ways of Implementing Government Policies
The government of Nigeria irrespective of political affiliation should ensure to pursue policies initiated by previous governments so that sustainable results can be achieved. Nigeria government should make fundamental shift away from policies and institutional arrangements that compete with the private sectors, and should focus instead on policies, programmes and institutions that promote efficient, sustainable, and broad based economic growth and job creation, most especially at the informal sector.

7.4. Creation of Synergy between the Urban Stakeholders and the Governments to foster Good Governance for Sustainable Urban Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies.
The simple fact that cities in Nigeria are growing rapidly, it shows that many urban poor still find ways to survive in the slum, hence, this survival indicate being extremely engage in earning a source of living no matter how demeaning such jobs are, and whether the cities themselves will be able to sustain these pressure on them, therefore, different stakeholders needs to combine strong and patient efforts to improve the environment positively. While, urban governance in this case simply refers to all embracing governance with sustainable development as its main focus.

7.5. Knowledge-Based Policy and Research Capacity Building
Results generated from research carried out on poverty reduction should be disseminated to the urban community and the urban poor/slums' dweller, so as to fashioned out ways of eradicating urban poverty in the slum areas through bottom-up approach where the so called vulnerable group of the urban centres will be carried along and be self-engaged in the long run. While funds donated to this group of people by the international NGOs can be distributed to the affected people without bias.

7.6. Sustainable People's Driven Poverty Alleviation Programme should be Introduce
As a matter of importance, governments in Nigeria should make a firm commitment to place poverty alleviation at the forefront of its development strategy, to provide effective resources management that can support a stable and growing economics that will bring about sustainable development in Nigeria's cities.

In conclusion the issues of urbanization, urban poverty and slum should be addressed and tackled headlong through sustainable development, so as to create an economy that will tackle unemployment, non-availability of public infrastructure, urban crimes/violence and homelessness, while a pollution free environment that will encourage healthy living can be inherited by the incoming generation.

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Biography

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