



DATA BASED IMPACT OF URBANIZATION ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND HEALTH QUALITY IN NIGERIA: LAGOS CITY AS A CASE STUDY.

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ABSTRACT

Urbanization in Nigeria and in Lagos State; one of the biggest states in Nigeria, in particular has affected its resident's health adversely and this may have had an effect on the present reduced average life expectancy of Lagosians to 52.2 years. Currently, available data have shown that only less than 5% of its population are 60 years and above. This research reports on the adverse impact of urbanization and various steps that can be taken to ameliorate these impacts in Nigeria with a focus on Lagos state, Nigeria as a case study. Findings shows that urbanization has adversely impacted the health of inhabitants of the places reviewed and has grossly increased the public health problems in such urban areas. This project uses mixed methods research design with a broad range of data-collection methods across all the 20 local government areas in Lagos Nigeria. Questionnaire, Household surveys, Snowball sampling, Focus group, Direct observation, Photography, documentary review and policy document analysis were used in the data collation. This study establishes the direct connection between urbanization and its severe negative environmental impacts, including pollution, deforestation, wetland destruction, severe traffic congestion, erosion and flooding, urban sprawl, slum and squatter settlement, heat island and aesthetic degradation, which have had dire consequences on both human, environment and other living organisms. The study advocates policies that improve the socio-economic conditions of the urban poor and promote their better health. Results from this study encourages urban dwellers and Nigeria as a nation to become better informed about the challenges that may arise when urbanization occurs in their regions without the required social and infrastructural support.

Keywords: Urban land expansion; Rural Area; Management; Urban Area; Urban poor; Migration; Urbanization.

Introduction

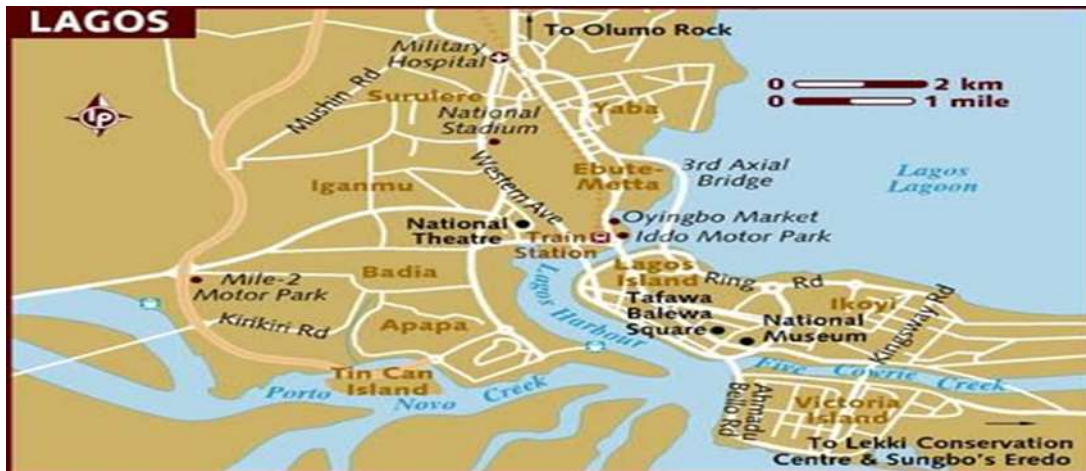


Figure 1; Map showing the study area

Lagos (Ìlú Èkó (Yoruba): Èkó) is a mega city with an estimated population of over 24million in 2022 and a total land space of **999.6 km²** (385.9 sq mi) meaning Lagos is over populated so the demand for accommodation is daily on the increase and yet more people keep moving into Lagos due to the many opportunities it offers the occupants. Urban environments tend to offer greater access to education and increased job opportunities, both of which can improve health. However, “urbanicity” the characteristics of a locality being urban—also often leads to a more sedentary lifestyle, less access to fresh foods (‘food deserts’) and more access to processed food with a poor nutritional profile, and, especially in poorer developed countries, more crowded living situations with greater chance for unsanitary conditions. Over the years, Lagos has witnessed urban growth, relating to its physical configuration, population and socioeconomic composition of its population. Lagos witnessed unprecedented population growth and largely unplanned urban expansion, from its original lagoon setting to encompass a vast expanse of mostly low-rise developments, including as many as 200 different slums ranging in size from clusters of shacks underneath highways to entire districts. By this, the majority of the population live in informal settlements and make their daily living through informal economic activities.

Carbon emissions from urban areas increased even faster than urban land expansion, resulting in a significant increase in the carbon intensity of built-up areas. Increasingly, the perception and discourse toward urbanization and environment is shifting from challenges and problems toward opportunities and solutions. From the policy perspective, cities and urban issues are receiving increasing attention in international policy processes. The UN Sustainable Development Goals includes an urban goal as one of the 17 final goals. Because of their vital role in climate mitigation and adaptation, cities have become front-stage actors since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Paris Climate Agreement in 2015.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the interconnectedness of contemporary challenges, and the need for comprehensive and participatory approaches to address them. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has adopted the same lens to understand the security challenges of individual cities. Building inclusive societies by focusing on city safety and resilient governments lies at the heart of UNODC's work at the urban level.

The role of local government is vital as this is the layer of government closest to the people, and it often has significant decision-making and spending power. Accordingly, recognizing that the future success of the SDGs resides in large part in cities, UNODC is determined to contribute to the "localizing" of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for urban policy-makers and planners, particularly those residing in the Global South. Urban Safety Governance Approach aims to make urban environments safe, inclusive and resilient by addressing the multi-causal factors of violence, crime and insecurity. The approach ensures that crime prevention and community safety strategies, policies, and programmes are tailored to meet grassroots needs and take account of the interface between global crime threats and local vulnerabilities. In addition to strengthening the role of cities in dealing with crime and violence, it also

emphasizes on building resilience of communities by addressing structural issues such as corruption and lack of transparency, and in providing a space free of drug use, terrorism and organized crime. Unfortunately, for a majority of Lagosians, it seems improbable to attain these quite relatively low figures, simply because, both living and working conditions set-in present-day Lagos produce one major thing, unabashed and unabating STRESS, and expectedly, an even lower life expectancy for Lagosians.



Plate 1; Gridlock at Oyingbo Market.

Methods.

The sampling procedure was both systematic and random in nature mainly survey was taken across Lagos, We made use of different methods the specific procedures or techniques used to identify, select, process, and analyze information about the case study is detailed below.

Questionnaire; Prepared 100 questions in line with our objectives, distributed the questionnaire to 225 people in Lagos.

Household surveys; We visited some household and did oral interviews with about 32 persons in total and their responses were recorded.

Snowball sampling; Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Lagos contributed immensely to this research work and provided some relevant materials for our research work.

Focus group; Interviews were conducted for some students at Urban and regional planning department where some of our questionnaires were also answered.

Direct observation; The principal investigator grew up in Ikeja area of Lagos state and so well familiar with Lagos metropolitan having lived there for over 20years and travelled the lengths of Lagos. His wealth of experience was an added advantage to the study.

Photography; Scenes photographs are presented as proofs for this study.

Documentary review and policy document analysis; Documentary review and policy document analysis were intensely done using the university and online libraries to authenticate our findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following tables represented the analysis of the responses gotten from the residents of Lagos within the different local government in Lagos as regards the impact of urbanization with a detailed view in Lagos state megacity and its different Local Government Areas.

Table 1: What is responsible for rapid urbanization in Lagos?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Non-respondent	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
All of the above	1	1.0	1.0	4.0
Availability of opportunities	23	23.0	23.0	27.0
Industrialization	27	27.0	27.0	54.0
Influx of immigrants	16	16.0	16.0	70.0
Large population of educated people	2	2.0	2.0	72.0
Security	3	3.0	3.0	75.0
Social life	24	24.0	24.0	99.0
The interest of foreigners	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

The rapid urbanization in Lagos state is been influenced by a lot of factors as majority of the participants (27 %) said its due to industrialization.

Table 2: Lagos traffic has greatly affected my health quality; Do you agree?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Non-respondent	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
Maybe	7	7.0	7.0	10.0
No	5	5.0	5.0	15.0
Yes	85	85.0	85.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

Lagos state traffic has been identified by majority of the participants (85 %) to have health impact on the residents of Lagos state.

Table 41: In Lagos <5 % live above 60years do you agree?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Non-respondent	2	2.0	2.0	2.0
Maybe	37	37.0	37.0	39.0
No	27	27.0	27.0	66.0
Yes	34	34.0	34.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

CONCLUSIONS

In Lagos state, urbanization process has created severe negative environmental impacts, such as pollution, deforestation and wetland destruction severe traffic congestion, erosion and flooding, urban sprawl, slum and squatter settlement, heat island and aesthetic degradation, which have had dire consequences on both human, environment and other living organisms. In order to be on the desirable path to sustainable environmental management, urbanization process should be controlled and managed effectively, without exceeding the carrying capacity of the environment. This can be achieved by fashioning rural development strategies, which could reduce rural-urban migration. In addition, other anthropogenic activities, which have negative impact on the environment, should be effectively and efficiently managed. Air, water and land pollution is most widespread and potent in the more industrial part of Lagos such as Oshodi, Mushin, Lagos Island, Ikeja, Ilupeju, Mile 2 and Mile 12 area.

This is due to the anthropogenic activity in these locations. Quantitatively, there is dearth of data on pollution in Nigeria. Lagos, despite being a megacity of note, still suffers from an infrastructural deficit; the speed of influx is not compensated with accelerated development typical of a megacity and this quite explains the jungle-like jostle for virtually everything, mostly, space.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There are two broad long-term strategies necessary for the mitigation of the negative impact of urbanization in Lagos state and in Nigerian cities in general.

These strategies include:

1. Stemming the tide of rural-urban migration via rural development programmes.
2. Managing Lagos traffic.

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