



## **Urbanization of Rural Areas and the Risk Factors: A Case Study of Five Local Government Areas in Oyo State, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Urbanization is the transformation from traditional practices into a more modern way in line with development and technology. It entails the migration of people from remote, semi-rural areas to more developed areas in terms of availability of basic life's necessities. This process is a form of modernization known as urban drift rooted in global industrialization and technological advancement. It is in a nut-shell, modernization. With urbanization the society becomes more advanced technologically and the use of machinery in most cases, replaces many workers that were needed to work on farms, in factories, and construction sites. There is on the other hand, increase in productivity, desire for education, healthy competitiveness and better lifestyle. Hindrances to urbanization result in lack of development in such affected areas. This finding indicated that where people still have strong links to the old primitive ways of life and tradition there will be no adequate provision of infrastructure such as good roads, standard schools, good water, electricity and health facilities in the areas. The method of survey was through the use of questionnaire of consenting adults in these rural communities with the usage of cluster sampling technique, a total of 500 respondents were chosen out of 700 in which 300 men and 200 women participated. Data was collected through the information sought on the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, life style and the problem they are passing through as a result of lack of development. Factors hindering urbanization in the five local Government areas in this study were critically reviewed. Paramount causative factors from the results were the conscious deprivation by community leaders and continuation of primitive practices has consequential negative effects resulting in shortage or lack of modern facilities, scientific medicine and social amenities.

**Keywords:** Urbanization, Transformation, Traditional, Rural area, Urban Areas, Nigeria.

## **1. Introduction**

By the definition in The American Heritage dictionary (2005), urbanization is the process by which cities grow or by which societies become more urban and according to Encyclopedia Britannica (2008), urbanization is the process by which large numbers of people become permanently concentrated in relatively small areas, forming cities. The Census Bureau for the 1990 census in Nigeria defined rural area as a place comprising of all population and housing units of people outside urbanized areas (Bureau of the Census 1995).

Significant cultivation and sale of food and other agricultural products take place in the rural areas. However, large proportions of industrial services in terms of production, processing, distribution do take place in the urban areas (Shucksmith 2012). Since the advent of urbanization of early 1980 in Oyo state many young people were compelled to migrate to the urban areas to boost the economy due to shortage of urban workers.

Urbanization has influenced industrialization and has resulted in the migration from the rural to urban areas. This indirectly has affected the rural economy adversely as well because not many young people want to be village farmers. In as much as the rural dwellers economies were derived from urban areas and there is always an increase in food demand as result of growth in the cities, therefore, the high demand of foods for consumption by urban populations does help the rural dwellers to generate more income. However, there has not been any transformation on agricultural systems and practices that can assist rural areas to develop economically.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1. Study Area**

In view of the multi-dimensional nature of the concept of rural settings in these five Local Government areas in Oyo state, there seems to be no unique framework for analyzing their problems, all community works are on flexible joint action of the traditional rulers and aged farmers in the areas. There are no other easy solutions to bring a change to living a better livelihood than going to the urban areas to be able to enjoy the basic amenities.

The survey was carried out in villages in 5 Local Governments within Oyo State, Nigeria. Population of rural dwellers and different activities going on in these areas constitutes the basis of the study. The topographic nature of the area and the large land space was part of the criteria for selection of these Local Government areas.

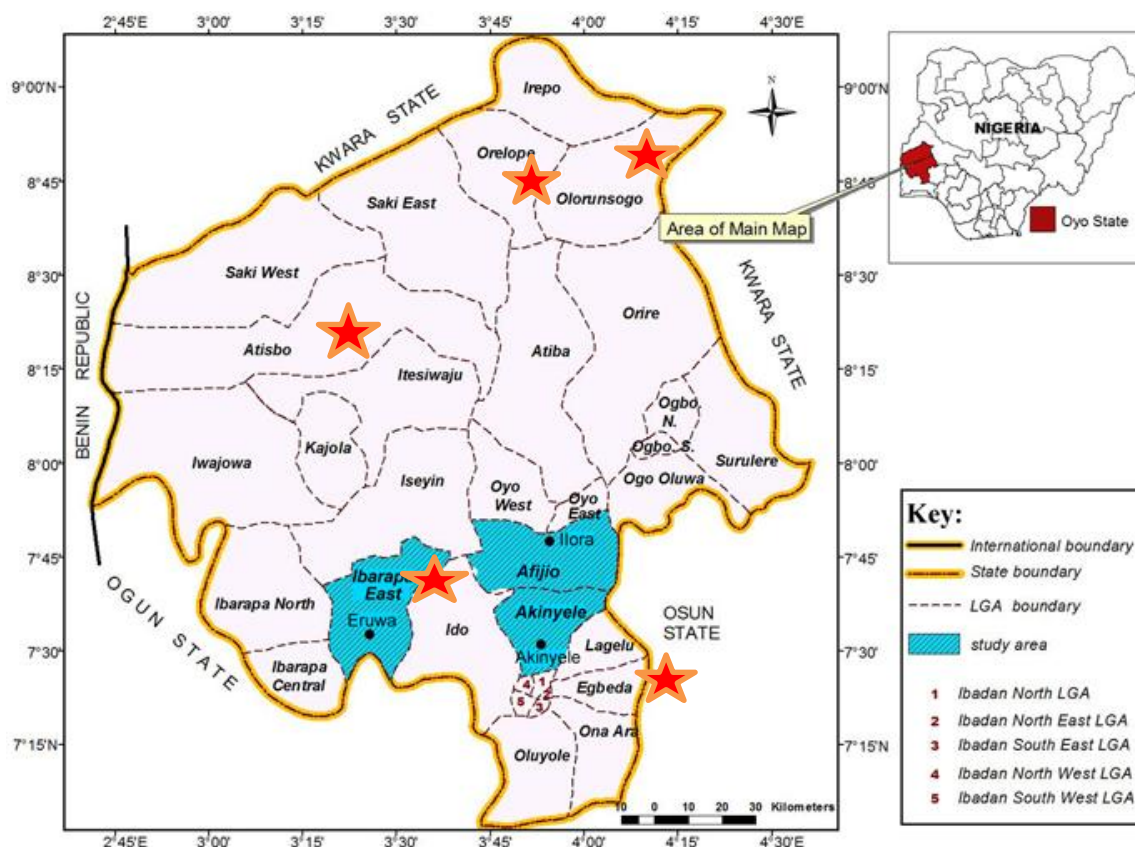
### **2.2. Data Collection and Analyses**

The methodology adopted involved both men and women adults for the collection of information on gender, marital status and other social economic characteristics were used to determine the influenced of urbanization or rural urban drift on the rural dwellers. A well-structured questionnaire was designed to obtain relevant information from 700 respondents. However, a total of 500 were chosen through stratified sampling techniques. The descriptive statistics was used in the analysis of data. The statistics include frequency count, percentages and the chi-square was used as the inferential statistics.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

The five Local Government selected had large land mass for farming and other agricultural purposes and were less populated. The survey was conducted where the topographic condition has favored cultivation of major cash crops in the state. Crops such as cassava, maize, plantain, palm tree and yam were notably cultivated. Also livestock farming and trading were other occupation engaged in by dwellers in these areas as major economic activities as summarized in Table 1.

**Figure-1.** Map of Oyo State, Nigeria with the studied Local Government areas.



Source: Gbadegesin et al (2013).

From the Table below, the residents in these areas were predominantly the Yoruba-speaking people and more than 80% of the population of the communities was rural areas, ruled by traditional chiefs with each of the Local Government headed by the elected Chairman. Traditional attachment to land, which has been valued an inheritance from their ancestors has made it difficult for land to be given out to support development in these Local Government areas. The low density population of been attributed to migration to urban areas to avoid difficulties and harsh environmental conditions. Polygamy illiteracy and joblessness are other prevalent characteristics in these communities.

**Table-1.** Population and economic activities of the study areas

| Local Government | Area(km <sup>2</sup> ) | Population | Economic activities                             |
|------------------|------------------------|------------|---|
| Olorunsogo       | 1,069km <sup>2</sup>   | 81,759     | Farming, Fruits cropping and trading            |
| Ibarapa East     | 1,218km <sup>2</sup>   | 101,092    | Farming, Livestock and trading                  |
| Egbeda           | 191km <sup>2</sup>     | 281,573    | Farming, Fruits cropping and trading            |
| Orelope          | 917km <sup>2</sup>     | 104,441    | Farming, Livestock and trading                  |
| Atisbo           | 2,997 km <sup>2</sup>  | 110,792    | Farming, Fruits cropping, Livestock and trading |

Source: NIPOST, 2009

From Table 2 below, the results it could be deduced that majority of the respondents from the combined Local Government areas studied, 54% of male dwellers were above 50 years while percentage of female dwellers in the same age group was 52% with overall average of 53% in all. Those at the mid-age of 40-50 years accounted for 20% of combined population pool while an average

of 15% was between 30 and 40 years and only very few which was 12% of the total population pool were below 30 years of age.

**Table-2.** Total Population and Age distribution of the respondents

| Age      | men | %   | women | %   | Total | Total % |
|----------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|---------|
| Below 30 | 25  | 8   | 35    | 18  | 60    | 12      |
| 30 – 40  | 55  | 18  | 20    | 10  | 75    | 15      |
| 40 – 50  | 60  | 20  | 40    | 20  | 100   | 20      |
| Above 50 | 160 | 54  | 105   | 52  | 266   | 53      |
| Total    | 300 | 100 | 200   | 100 | 500   | 100     |

Source: Fieldwork data 2013.

As the fact remains that urbanization is affecting the level of livelihood in the rural areas. The percentage of single household and able bodied men and women especially youths have migrated to the urban areas to avoid the burden of extended families and their aged parents as often the case in most rural dwellers in Nigerian today.

From Table 3, it was shown that 40% of the respondents were married and were below population average. However, the percentage of married women far exceeded those of married men by 35% probably due to polygamous practice. Twenty percent of women were divorced with 16% for men while greater percentage (21%) of the men was widowed in comparison to 5% for women. The factors responsible for these cases are many and could be information for further research.

**Table-3.** Marital status of selected respondents

| Marital Status | Men | %   | women | %   | Total | Total % |
|----------------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|---------|
| Single         | 100 | 33  | 60    | 30  | 160   | 32      |
| Married        | 90  | 20  | 110   | 55  | 200   | 40      |
| Divorced       | 48  | 16  | 20    | 20  | 68    | 13      |
| Widowed        | 62  | 21  | 10    | 5   | 72    | 15      |
| Total          | 300 | 100 | 50    | 100 | 500   | 100     |

Source: Fieldwork data 2013

The majority of the respondents were farmers and traders as shown from the study as shown in Table 4. It was also revealed that 11% of the total respondents were self-employed while 13% were working in Government offices in the local areas, 11% of the respondents were job seekers with men accounting for 40% and 8% were women. The effect of this was that more men were dependent on family members or others rural dwellers to survive and that is why criminal cases are common since they were unemployed.

**Table-4.** The summary of occupational status of respondents

| Job description    | Men | %   | Women | %   | Total | Total% |
|--------------------|-----|-----|-------|-----|-------|--------|
| Farmers            | 130 | 44  | 30    | 15  | 160   | 32     |
| Traders            | 55  | 18  | 110   | 55  | 165   | 33     |
| Government workers | 40  | 13  | 25    | 12  | 65    | 13     |
| Self employed      | 35  | 12  | 20    | 10  | 55    | 11     |
| Job seekers        | 40  | 13  | 15    | 8   | 55    | 11     |
| Total              | 300 | 100 | 200   | 100 | 500   | 100    |

Source: Fieldwork data 2013

From the above, it could be deduced that lack of money and jobs were responsible for urban migration drive. Most unfortunately, with inadequate preparation by Government for the absorption of the influx, rural dwellers in desperation and in search of better standards of living, on getting to the cities, engage in crimes and violence. For instance in some areas in Oyo State crimes such as aggravated assault have risen more than 50% percent in the state capital , Ibadan since the evolution of urbanization in Oyo state. Beggars menace among urban dwellers, including children has become problem in many cities as a result of adverse effects of urbanization on the rural dwellers.

In Oyo urbanization has resulted to rise in poverty level in the rural areas and many of these impoverished individuals who have moved from rural areas to the city face homelessness, hunger and lack of good health care. An increase in violence and crimes, such as robbery, domestic abuse etc, resulting from unbearable conditions and lack of support for the rural dwellers became prevalent. This observation corroborates the findings of Okali *et al.* (2000) in their study of rural-urban interaction in southeastern part of Nigeria. They observed that social groups that enhance both economic and social relationship which exist in urban centers are now being found in rural settlements, but not as formalized as those in urban centers. The implication of this observation is the important role of social groups in rural transformation in the country.

#### **4. Summary and Conclusion**

Lack of money and jobs has driven most unfortunate rural dwellers to desperation of going to the cities and engage in useless activities. For instance in some areas in Oyo state crimes such as aggravated assault rose by 40 percent in the mid-1980s the trend which has increased tremendously. Beggars including many old women and children left the rural areas and became problem in many cities.

Lack of development has a positive correlation with the neglect of rural areas. Rural neglects brings negative consequences such as exodus of rural dwellers to urban areas, with resulting problems of unemployment, crimes, prostitution, child labor, insecurity, money laundering, bribery, poverty, proliferation of shanty living areas, spread of diseases, and overstretching of the facilities and infrastructures in the urban areas. However, there is need for government to formulate and carry out thorough implementation of economic development plans and programs that will provide employment, housing, education, improved health care facilities among other things specifically for the urban poor.

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