

How Far Is Too Far? The Facts And Figures on Human Population in Kano State

Ahmed Maigari Ibrahim

ABSTRACT: The phenomenal increase in human number in Kano state, Nigeria, like in many other areas of the developing nations, has raised numerous questions, issues, and challenges that generally revolve around finite supply of basic life supporting resources, economic development and environmental quality. Some of these questions, among others, include: how far in terms of carrying capacity and how is too far in terms of facts and figures. The focus of this paper therefore is to offer answers to these questions based on Kano State perspectives, which is the most populous state in Nigeria and the most densely populated area in Africa South of the Sahara. The discussion, however, is based on the adapted version of Maigari (2012) which describes human population in terms of provision, prospect, prosperity, and posterity (the 4 integrated Ps).

I. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenal increase in human number in Kano state, Nigeria, like in many other areas of the developing nations, has raised numerous questions, issues, and challenges that generally revolve around finite supply of basic life supporting resources, economic development and environmental quality. Some of these questions, among others, include: ‘how far’ in terms of carrying capacity and ‘how is too far’ in terms of facts and figures. The focus of this paper therefore is to offer answers to these questions based on Kano State perspectives, which is the most populous state in Nigeria and the most densely populated area in Africa South of the Sahara. The discussion, however, is based on the adapted version of Maigari (2012) which describes human population in terms of provision, prospect, prosperity, and posterity (the 4 integrated Ps).

The Provision

Demographic profile of Kano state shows it is a center of rapid population growth with a dynamic population size, composition and distribution that goes along with the historical and cultural development of the defunct former Hausa States. In the pre-colonial times population growth was relatively low with less than one percent annual growth rate and a density of about 1 - 4 persons per Km². From the 1930s to date, however, population grew exponential with little variation around the ‘Kano Closed-settled Zone’, moderate in the southwards and wide variation in northwards. As reported by Maigari (2012) the annual growth rate in 1931 was 1.5%, it rose to 2% in 1952, 2.5% in 1991 and 15 years later (from 1991 to 2006) it had increased by 3.34%. The details are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Population Growth in Kano, 1931 - 2006

Census Year	Total Pop.	Growth Rate	Density/Km ²
1931	2,438,844	1.5	53.3
1952	3,396,350	2.0	74.2
1962	4,832,609	2.4	105.5
1991	5,810,470	2.5	273.09
2006	9,383,682	3.34	441.03
2013	29,050,081	3.34*	1,365.33

Source: After Maigari, 2012 * = Estimate

From Table 1, it is quite evident that the population size of Kano state has gone far above what Thomas Malthus (1766 - 1834) had predicted that ‘... population would double itself after every 25 years...’ Over less than a century, the population size in Kano state had increased from 2.4 million in 1931 to about 9.3 million in 2006 (even after the creation of Jigawa State from Kano State) and about 29.1million in 2013 (estimate based on 3.34 annual growth rate). This has not only confirmed Malthus (1798) prediction, but also lowers the extent of re-multiplication to less than 5 years and further magnifies the power of population in terms of growth rate.

Another remarkable issue is the population - land ration; which has been the focus of many scholars such as David Ricardo, Karl-Marx, Neo-Malthusian, and Boserup (1965) etc and environmentalist. With a total land area of 21,276.87Km², Kano state had in 1991 contained an average of 273 persons per square kilometer but in 2006, the density had increased by about 1.6 times (over 150%) with a density of about 441/Km². The current estimate (2013) shows a density of about 1,365 persons per square kilometer; increased by about 3.1 times (over 300%).

The Prospect

The age and sex structure of population in Kano state depicts the unique outlook of the state. About 47% of the population aged 0 – 14years, 48% 15 to 59years, while the remaining 5% 60years and above. This entails not only the youthful nature of the population but also its vulnerability to rapid growth. Moreover, the sex ratio is moving concurrently between male and female with a slight difference of 1.6% in 1991 and about 2.5% in 2006 (See Table 2). Thus the sex distribution index (number of males per 100 females), depicts an inconsiderable excess of males in the state.

Table 2: Population Structure in Kano State by Sex and Age: 1991 to 2006

State	1991 Census					2006 Census					
	T. Pop.	Male	%	Female	%	T. Pop.	Male	%	Female	%	
Kano	5,810,470	2,958,736	50.9	2,851,734	49.1	9,383,682	4,844,128	51.6	4,539,554	48.4	
		1991 Census			2006 Census						
Age	T. %	Male %	Female %		T. %	Male %	Female %				
0 – 14	42.8	22.1	20.7		47	25.1	21.9				
15- 59	50.8	26.5	24.3		48	24.8	23.2				
60+	6.4	3.9	2.5		5	2.7	2.3				
Total	100	52.5	47.5		100	52.6	47.4				

Source: 1991 & 2006 Census Data

Another glaring prospect of population in Kano state is the spatial distribution of people across the state. The population is unevenly distributed; there exist a great variation between urban and rural areas and also between north and south of the state. The highest number of the population is concentrated in Kano metropolis which comprises; Municipal Council, Dala Gwale, Nasarawa, and Tarauni LGAs, followed by what Tiffen (2001) described as the inner areas (immediately adjacent to the city; Kumbotso and Ungoggo). The density, as well thins out from the Central part (such as D/Kudu, Gezawa and Gaya) to the Outer areas of Rano, Bichi and Danbatta (See Figure1).

This observed pattern of distribution, therefore showcase three main issues. First, it entails among other things, the level at which rural urban migration is going on in the state. Kano being the centre of commerce, acts as a ‘central place’ which according Von-Thunen’s theory of central place; growth, density and development starts from the central places and diminishes towards the hinterland. Table 3 highlights some of these observations. Secondly, the distribution pattern further portrays the index of carrying capacity in Kano state. Thirdly it seemingly suggests the magnitude of the challenges facing the entire state.

Table 3: Spatial and Temporal Distribution of Population Density in Kano State

Sectors	1931	1952	1962	1991	2006
Kano Metro	2459	-	-	2481	19,200
Inner District	146	230	275	972	1,763
Central District	123	205	245	313	551
Outer District	47	72	84	156	204

Source: Census Data

The Prosperity

Educational attainment and productive labour force are the basic indices that highlight the affluence level of people or community; as they stimulate innovation and economic growth and development. The level of educational attainment in Kano state is the reincarnation of that of Northern Nigeria. Formal Western education is generally low in contrast to Islamic education which is generally high in most Muslims dominant communities. The 1952 Census indicated that less than one percent (0.8%) of the population aged seven years and above was literate in Roman Scripts. In 1991 the situation had greatly improved; about 43% of males and 38% of females aged 12 – 14 years attained primary school, while the gross primary schools enrollment was 67.4% and 16.7% secondary schools. Also, the 2006 Census shows school enrolment in the state has further improved; about 51.4% of the population aged 6 years and above attained school from nursery to higher levels with a significant difference between Males (29.3%) and Females (22.1%). The detail is presented in Table 4a&b.

Table 4a: Percentage Distribution of Educational Attainment 6 Years and Above

Educational Status	Kano State		
	Male %	Female %	Total %
None	21.4	24.6	46
Nursery and Above	31.5	22.5	54
Total	52.9	47.1	100

Source: Census, 2006

Table 4b: Population Enrolment in Schools: Nursery to Postgraduate Levels

Sex	Total	None	Nursery	Primary	JSS /Modern School	SSS/SEC /TTC	OND /NCE	University Graduate/HND	Post Graduate	Other
Male	3,815,650	1,543,189	540,642	433,963	312,085	636,338	155,635	89,424	28,363	76,011
Female	3,398,298	1,778,064	444,000	377,417	208,016	447,414	54,525	24,803	7,230	56,829
Total	7,213,948	3,321,253	984,642	811,380	520,101	1,083,752	210,160	114,227	35,593	132,840

Source: Census, 2006

It is evident therefore; the trend of educational development in Kano state is vehemently encouraging and will surely deliver a sound labour force in the near future. Currently there is adequate supply of both skilled and non-skill labour in the labour market of the region, with the exception of medical professionals, which the state depends on other parts of the country for supply. In Kano metropolis, for example, there is excess supply of non-skill labour which invariably affects its price. According to Maigari (2012), the cost of a day man-work (8 hours; 8.00am to 4.00pm) is generally chief, it ranges from =N=500.00 to =N=2,000.00, while wages and salaries of casual workers ranges from =N=6,000.00 to =N=20,000.00 per month.

The Posterity

The posterity of population in Kano state can not be separated from the issues and challenges that evolved from its provision, prospect, and prosperity (the 3-Ps) discussed above. Going by the conventional Malthusian and Boserupian literatures, Kano state and indeed the entire Kano region by now would have been cut in the vicious circle of ecological degradation. However, with proper and adequate management of population - resources issues and the accompanying challenges, it has now been established that smooth transition to posterity in the state and around Kano Close-Settled Zone in particular is ensured.

In response to rapid population growth that characterized the state, people and communities pursue two main adjustment mechanism; agricultural intensification and economic diversification strategies. These to say the least raised land productivity, sustain and boost small holder agriculture, sustain large families and avoided degradation scenario. According to Robert et. al. (1993), agricultural intensification refers to the intensive use of land in Agro-pastoral production for maximum output in order to meet the demand of teaming population under careful management, which is both economically and ecologically sustainable. A study by Mortimore (1993) in Kano Close-settled Zone from 1964 to 1984 on the Intensification of Pre-urban Agriculture revealed that 'the Kano triple system of crop, livestock and tree husbandry has survived intact the pressure of urbanization... that the functional relationships between these three elements are stable ecologically and economically, and that rather than damage the sustainability of the system, the increasing dense population has chosen to diversify out of primary production'. Similarly tree density has been stable over a decade at about 15/ha as against what was obtained in the 1960s; about 0.8/ha (Cline-Cole et al., 1990). Integration of trees in to the farming system in form of farm forestry has been the main reason. Farmers in the Kano Closed-settled Zone, in particular, owned and invest in trees, thus every tree on farmland has its owner; who either plants it, nurses it, inherits or purchased it. Thus tempering with farmland trees is considered as an act of trespass and punishable in the court of law.

Moreover, it has been demonstrated that increasing population density in the region has affect land positively; as increasing scarcity (value) of land in the region promotes investment both in conservation and yield-enhancing improvements (Mortimore and Tiffen, 1995). Also, Maigari (1998) observed that farmers in Kano region and indeed Northern Nigeria, perceived land as a precious resource which provides the source of family livelihoods, a prestigious commodity and an asset material that form linkage from one generation to another. As such they invest on their landholding in order to transmit it in good condition to their future generation.

On the other hand, in order to reduce pressure off agricultural land the able work force in the region diversifies income sources through pursuing numerous livelihood options at household level. A study by Maigari (1998) revealed that by combining crop production, livestock rearing and numerous off-farm activities (an average of 6 options per household unit), households in rural areas of Gezawa achieved a sustainable livelihood. Usually the income generated from off-farm options are either spent on food or re-invested in farming input or livestock, so also the income from livestock is reinvested on the other options if food security is guaranteed.

The Standard Scenario

From the above periscope on the facts and figures of human population in Kano state which Maigari (2012) described as integrated '4-Ps' (Provision, Prospect, Prosperity, and Posterity), it is clear that, the growth and distribution pattern have demonstrated that, the relationship between land and human resources could be sustained under careful management. As postulated by Adam Smith (1723-1790) that, the size and structure of population are indicators of prosperity of a country, population growth in Kano state stands as a path way to the healthy economy of the state. Thus, the assertion of Adam Smith (1776) that 'if people are prosperous they will have more children and real wages would increase as the demand for labour increases' could be valid in Kano state for two main reasons. First the teeming population in Kano state has provides adequate market for goods and services produced in the state and beyond. It has facilitates numerous opportunities for trade and specialisation, and stimulates surplus production and economies of scale in infrastructural development.

Secondly, it has yielded enough labour forces for the take up of all developmental activities in the state and the nation at large. Currently, over 70% of the people inhabiting within Kano metropolis draw their livelihoods off agricultural production. This to say the least promotes higher level of social and physical organization as demonstrated by high investment in health, housing, transport, and education. The growing proliferation of private hospitals and clinics, rental houses and private school in Kano metropolis alone is a testimony to the multiplier effect of population growth in Kano state.

Conclusion

"The further the horizon, the perfect it becomes", this assertion could be the solution to the demographic enquiry in Kano state of "how far is too far?" and in deed any other area or community with similar background and/or feature. It is evidently clear that high population growth with a corresponding change in technology and means of production and sound population and environmental policies could lead to sustainable development. However, in order to fully realised the good benefits accompanying high population growth in Kano state and beyond, it is recommended that the established adaptation mechanisms should be improved and barked up with sound policies. Failure to address issues and challenges associated with population pressure or growth would lead to a precarious situation. As it has been established in some communities in Africa and Asia where population growth fails to keep pace with fundamental changes in economic organisation such as technology, investment, markets, etc, lead to backwardness and under development. One-third of the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa are heading towards such gloomier future (Ho, 1990; Barnes, 1990; Hansen, 1990; Muntgomery and Brown, 1990; etc.).

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Adam Smith (1776) *The Wealth of Nations*. Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009. © 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
- [2]. Barnes, F. Douglas (1990) "Population Growth, Wood Fuel, and Resources Problems" Acsadi, T. F. George, Johnson-Acsadi, G. and Bulatao, A. Rodolfo (Eds): *Population Growth and Reproduction in Sub-Saharan Africa, Technical Analysis of Fertility and its Consequences*, World Bank Symposium.
- [3]. Boserup E. (1965) *The Condition of Agricultural Growth*. Allen and Unwin, London. (Reprinted in 1993 by Earthscan, London)
- [4]. Cline-Cole R. A., Falola J. A. Main R. C., Mortimore M. J. Nichol J. E. and O'Reilly F. D. (1990) *Wood Fuel in Kano*. Tokyo United Nation Press.
- [5]. Hansen, Stein (1990) "Absorbing a Rapid Growing Labour Force" in Acsadi T. F. George, Johnson-Acsadi, G. and Bulatao, A. Rodolfo (Eds): *Population Growth and Reproduction in Sub-Saharan Africa, Technical Analysis of Fertility and its Consequences*, World Bank Symposium.
- [6]. Maigari Ahmed Ibrahim (1998) *Livelihood Options Under Intensifying Aridity in Northeastern Nigeria*. Unpublished PhD. Thesis, Department of Geography, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.
- [7]. Maigari Ahmed Ibrahim (2012) *Population Growth in Kano Region*. In A. I. Tanko and S. B. Momale Eds. Kano: Environment, Society and Development
- [8]. Malthus Thomas R., (1798) *Essay on the Principle of Population*. Microsoft ® Encarta ® 2009. © 1993-2008 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved.
- [9]. Mortimore, M. (1993) *The Intensification of Pre-Urban Agriculture: The Kano Close-Settled Zone, 1964 – 1986*. In B. L. Turner II, Goran Hyden, and Robert Kates Eds. *Population Growth and Agricultural Change in Africa*, University Press Florida.
- [10]. Mortimore, M. and Tiffen, Mary (1995) *Population and Environment in Time Perspective: The Machakos Story*, in Tony Binns Ed. *People and Environment in Africa*. John Wiley and Sons
- [11]. Muntgomery R. Mark and Brown, K. Edward (1990) *Accommodating Urban Growth in Sub-Sahara Africa*; in Acsadi T. F. George, Johnson-Acsadi, G. and Bulatao, A. Rodolfo (Eds): *Population Growth and Reproduction in Sub-Saharan Africa, Technical Analysis of Fertility and its Consequences*, World Bank Symposium.
- [12]. National Population Commission (2010) *Federal Republic of Nigeria 2006 Population and Housing Census, Priority Tables Vol. VII Population Distribution by Age, Sex, and Educational Attainment, State and Local Government Area*, NPC, Abuja Nigeria
- [13]. Nigeria (1955) *Population Census of the Northern Region of Nigeria, 1952 -1953 Census Superintendent Lagos*.
- [14]. Nigeria, NPC (1992) *Census News*, 3/1. National Population Commission Lagos.
- [15]. Nigeria, NPC (1998) *1991 Population Census of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Analytical Report at the National Level*. National Population Commission Lagos.
- [16]. Robert W. Kates, Goran Hyden, and B. L. Turner II (1993) *Theory, Evidence, Study Design*, in. B. L. Turner II, Goran Hyden, and Robert Kates Eds. *Population Growth and Agricultural Change in Africa*, University Press Florida.
- [17]. Tiffen Mary (2001) *Profile of Demographic Change in the Kano-Maradi Region, 1960 – 2000*. Drylands Research Working Paper 24