



# An Analysis of Housing Problems in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja, Nigeria

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## Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

## Article Information

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## ABSTRACT

The paper focuses on Analysis of Housing Problems in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT); Abuja. A total of 491 Questionnaire were collected and subjected to descriptive statistical analysis. Also, focus group discussion (FGDs) involving seven (7) people in each council area to represent each target group to talk about housing problem in their place of abode. The study reveals that (66.3 percent) of the respondent have their water from unsafe sources, (44.2 percent) of the respondent have their toilet facilities not conducive for hygienic living, (83.5 percent) respondent method of disposal are not officially approved and (46.4 percent) respondent pay between ₦2,000 – ₦4,000 for facilities (water, electricity) in their accommodation. Therefore, for the FCT to meet the standard of being one of the best urban centers in Africa, efforts must be made by the Federal Government, Federal Capital Territory Authority (FCTA), Mortgage institutions and private individuals in reducing these housing problems.

*Keywords: Migration; urbanization; population growth; housing; push-pull factors; environmental condition.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is a global phenomenon and is a process of spatial concentration of urban

populations that is premised on some basic push and pulls factors called urban transformation forces [1] classified the urban transformation forces into three processes thus;

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- (a) Natural increase in population
- (b) Rural-urban migration
- (c) City annexation into surrounding rural areas (areal expansion).

These processes explain urban growth. However, [2] asserted that proportional increase in the population of urban dwellers is largely due to transformation forces of rural-urban migration and area expansion. It is also, observed that as population increases the urban centers increase and emerges.

In Nigeria, by 1952 National Population Census; the population of Nigeria was put at 30.4 million, out of which 3.237million people were living in 56 urban centers, [3]. A city was then regarded (defined) as settlement that harbored 5,000 people. The classification criterion for an urban center was increased to a threshold population figure of 20,000 during the 1963 National Population Census. The 1963 census indicated that the population of Nigeria had increased to 55.67 million people out of whom 10.6 million people were then living in 183 cities and towns that constituted 19.1 percent of the total population [4]. The 1991 National population Census gave the population of Nigeria at 88.5 million, and it shows that Nigeria urban population had risen by 36.3 percent with 359 urban centers existing in the country then [5]. [6] estimated the total population of Nigeria at 115 million and speculated that Nigeria urban centers must have risen to 600 . This is confirmed by the result of the 2006 population census that indicated the total population of Nigeria to be 140,542,032 [7].

From the foregoing, it is observed that compared to the growth rate of about 3 percent for the total population, the urban population in Nigeria over the last three decades has been growing close to about 5.8 percent per annum. This is amongst the highest urban growth rates in the world due mainly to migration from the rural to urban areas. For instance, Lagos a former capital of Nigeria is growing in size by more than 10 percent per year, which will make it the third largest city in the world by 2020 [8]. Also, Abuja is contesting with Lagos as the fastest growing city in the country. By 1991; the population was 378,671 [9]. In 2006, the population increased to a total of 1, 406, 239 [10]. This is largely due to migration [11].

According to [12] the influxes of migrant into the Federal Capital Territory are from the following sources:

- i. The massive transfer of civil servants to the FCT as a result of the immediate relocation of the seat of power from Lagos to Abuja.
- ii. The trooping in huge numbers of unemployed Nigerians searching for greener pastures.
- iii. The influx of private entrepreneurs to render services to the government.
- iv. The influx of displaced victims of ethno-religious and communal crisis in the neighboring states.
- v. The influx of artisans, bricklayers and construction workers.

However, the explosive growth of the FCT has greatly accelerated housing problems. Therefore, this study attempts to identify the problems of residential housing in the FCT.

[13] identifies over-crowding, poor and inadequate social amenities, unsatisfactory and unwholesome environmental conditions, absence of open space, over-crowding of buildings, inaccessibility within the residential areas and in the scarcity and high cost of building as indicators of poor housing conditions.

The rapid urbanization in most urban centers has resulted in poor layout of building with inadequate roads between them and inadequate drainage and provision for refuse evacuation.

[14] asserted that demand for urban services in Nigeria has grown over the years, but the overall quality and coverage of public services have deteriorated. It can be deduce that rapid population growth due to migration may lead to housing problems in the FCT. This the study will examine.

## 2. DATA AND METHODS

The sampling techniques used involve selecting three Area Councils, out of the six Area Councils in the FCT. It involves arranging the Area Councils alphabetically. And using purposive sampling technique, the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Area Councils were selected as most infrastructural facilities are located in AMAC and Gwagwalada Area Council being the first seat of administration in the FCT. While Kwali is one of the Area Council recently created. Using the 2006 census figure of the selected Area Councils, 0.05% of the population was selected as the respondent.

A total of 510 questionnaire representing 0.05 percent of the total population of the selected three Area Councils out of the six Area Councils

in the study area were administered. The distribution of questionnaires was based on using the house numbering of the 2006 population and housing census. This was provided in the Enumeration Area which was obtained from the National Population Commission (NPC) Abuja. Using purposive sampling technique, one EA for each Area Council was selected. Furthermore, starting from the first building in the selected EA using systematic sampling techniques; at intervals of every fifth building in each street; the households was identified and one person (the head of household) was the respondents to the structured questionnaires. In the situation, whereby the fifth building is not a residential house; the next building was selected. This is aimed at achieving a greater efficiency and accuracy. However, only 491 questionnaires were returned for analysis. Data collected were processed using Epi/Info computer software for data entry and SPSS computer software for data analysis. Frequency distributions tables were used for descriptive statistical analysis. Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) which is a participatory method in providing input regarding the topic was used. Three (FGDs) were conducted, one for each area council. It involves bringing seven (7) people to represent each target group to talk about the housing problems in their place of abode.

The target groups represent a particular occupation namely teacher, construction worker, farmer, factory worker, civil servant, artisan and drivers. They were selected using random sampling techniques.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In other to analyse the problems of housing in the FCT, the distribution of households by main source of water supply is discussed. Table 1 indicates the distribution of respondents by main source of water supply. It reveals (33.7. percent) of respondents have their sources of water from safe sources, while (66.3 percent) get their water from unsafe sources. The unsafe sources include

water vendors, rainwater, river/stream and well. This suggests that a significant population of the FCT have their source of water from unsafe sources. And so resident may be exposed to disease/illness related to contaminated water. This result is not unexpected as at least 170million still do not have access to ready source of safe drinking water [15]. This is supported by the United Nations Development Programme in its annual Human Development report, urges that 1.1 billion people do not have safe water [16].

Table 2 shows distribution of respondents by main type of toilet facilities. The table reveals that (44.2 percent) have their main type of toilet facilities not conducive for hygienic living, while (55.8 percent) of the respondent has their main type of toilet facilities for hygienic living. The hygienic living toilet facilities include water closest and toilet facilities in other dwellings. This is expected as the FCT is an emerging urban centre. However unhygienic toilet facilities poses serious problem to health situation of the resident of the FCT. And this is responsible for poor sanitation. Poor disposal of human waste is responsible for many sanitation related diseases and intestinal worms [17].

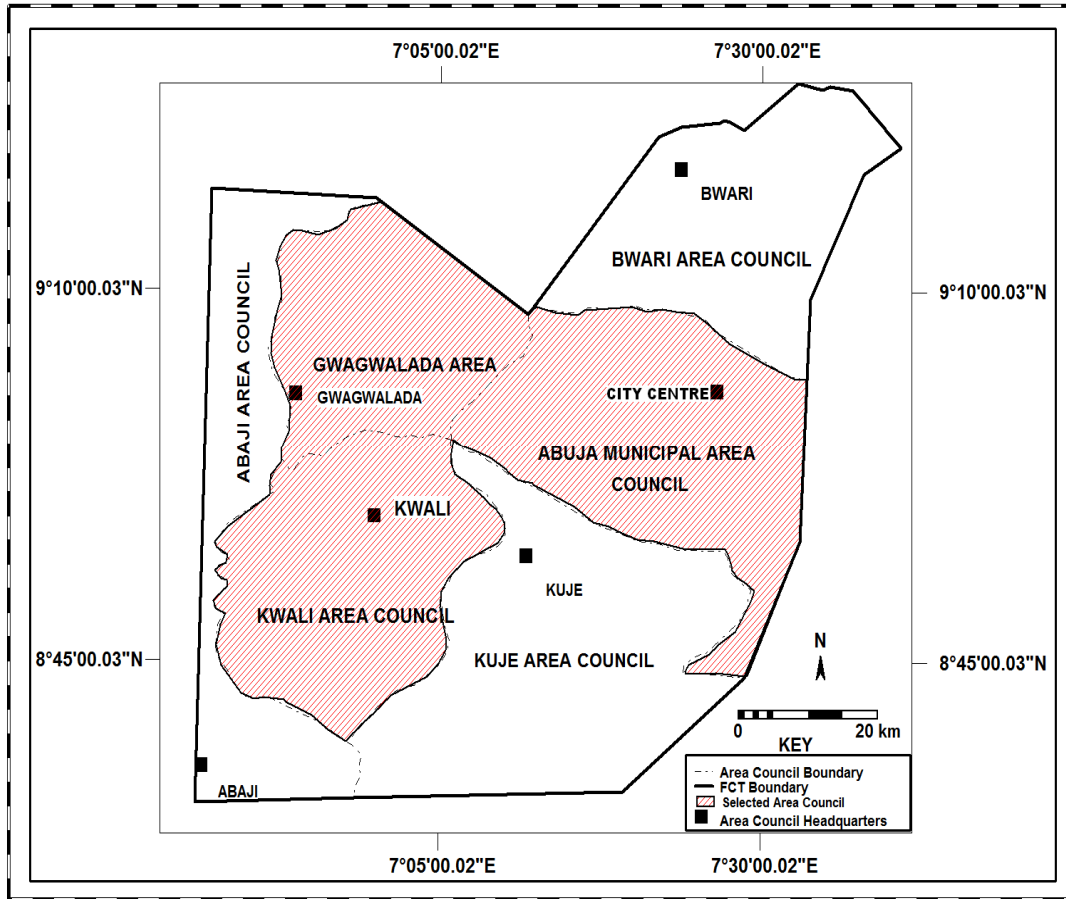
The result is not unexpected as resident cannot afford accommodation with available toilet facilities due to high rent for houses in the FCT. This correlates with studies that explains rent as a determinant of housing affordability and quality [18].

Another indicator of housing problem in the FCT is refuse collection and disposal system. Analysis of Table 3 indicates the distribution of households' methods of solid waste disposal. It reveals that (16.5 percent) of the respondent use public approved dump sites, while (83.5 percent) of respondents method of disposal are not officially approved. This is not unexpected as the FCT, Abuja has only three major approved dump sites known as the Gosa dump site and Bwari dump sites. This is responsible for unsatisfactory and unwholesome environmental condition [19].

**Table 1. Distribution of households by main sources of water supply**

Source	Frequency	Percentage
Pipe borne inside dwelling	19	3.9
Pipe borne outside dwelling	22	4.5
Water vendor	166	33.8
Well	150	30.5
Bore hole	124	25.3
Rain water	4	0.8
River/Stream	6	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, 2009



**Fig. 1. FCT Abuja, showing the selected area councils**

Source: Field survey, 2009

**Table 2. Distribution of respondents by main type of toilet facilities**

Type of toilet facilities	Frequency	Percentage
Water closet (WC)	210	42.8
Pit latrine	111	22.6
Bucket/Pan	4	0.8
Toilet facility in another (different) dwelling	64	13.0
Public toilet	78	15.9
Open bush	24	4.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, 2009

Also, inadequate provision for refuse evacuation is responsible for high incidence of pollution (water, air). According [20] estimates that 600 million urban residents in developing countries have lack of sanitation and no garbage collection.

More so, residents of the FCT tend to throw refuse anywhere just because they have no option of where to dispose their waste. The following opinion was noted during the FGD.

*"...we do not have specific place to throw away our dirt. And so, my dirt is usually thrown on the heap of refuse near my house. Government has done nothing about the heap of refuse. I have no option than to keep throwing my dirt there".*

(Charity, A. Teacher, Nyanya)

Table 4 shows the monthly payment made for facilities (water, electricity) in the accommodation

**Table 3. Distribution of households by method of solid waste disposal**

Method of disposal	Frequency	Percentage
Collected	119	24.2
Buried in household	18	3.7
Dumped at public approved dump sites	81	16.5
Dumped at unapproved dump site	150	30.5
Burnt by household	78	15.9
Others	45	9.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, 2009

**Table 4. Distribution of respondent by monthly payment made on facilities in the accommodation**

Monthly payment	Frequency	Percentage
Less than N 2000	130	26.5
N2,100-4,000	228	46.4
N4,100-6,000	81	16.5
N6,100-8,000	40	8.2
N8,100-10,000	7	1.4
10,000 and above	5	1.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>491</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey 2009

occupied by the respondents. Analysis of Table 4 reveals that majority of respondents (46.4 percent) pay between ₦2,100-N4000. This is an indication of housing problem as respondents will have to pay more for decent accommodation.

#### 4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The urban growth rate of 5.8 percent per annum in the last three decade is as a result of migration from rural to urban centres. This high rate of growth of population in the Federal Capital Territory is largely due to in-migration. It has been identified that unsafe water supply, unhygienic toilet facilities, unapproved dump sites and high payments for housing facilities (water, electricity) are the housing problem experienced in the FCT. It is therefore expedient for government and the private sector to be involve in the provision of quality housing and provision of additional approved dump site to meet the growing influx of migrants.

#### COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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