

Assessment of the Impact of Population Growth on Social Services in Urban Areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, Nigeria (2015-2022)

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of population growth on social services in Urban Areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, Nigeria, from 2015 to 2022. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature and secondary data, the study reveals that rapid population growth poses significant challenges to social services, including education, healthcare, and infrastructure. The findings highlight the need for measures to control rapid population growth and improve social services. The study recommends investing in social amenities, improving infrastructure, and providing population education and sensitization programs. The research contributes to the existing body of knowledge on population dynamics and social services, informing policy decisions aimed at improving the lives of urban residents in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

Keywords: Impact, Population Growth, Social Services, Urban Areas, Cross River State, Akwa Ibom State, Policy

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

The rapid growth of urban populations in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria, has significant implications for social services. Between 2015 and 2022, these states experienced notable changes in population dynamics, which impacted the provision and accessibility of essential services such as education, healthcare, sanitation, and infrastructure. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2020), the world's urban population is projected to increase by 2.5 billion by 2050, with Africa being one of the fastest-urbanizing regions.

In Nigeria, urbanization has been driven by factors such as rural-urban migration, natural population growth, and economic opportunities (Okonkwo, 2019). Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, in particular, have experienced rapid urbanization due to their strategic locations, economic activities, and infrastructure development (Ering & Akpan, 2018). However, this rapid urbanization has put pressure on social services, leading to challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, healthcare shortages, and educational strain (Adepoju, 2020).

The impact of population growth on social services is a complex issue that requires a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play. As noted by Cohen (2017), population growth can have both positive and negative effects on economic development, depending on factors such as infrastructure, institutions, and policy frameworks. In the context of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, it is essential to examine the relationship between population growth and social services to identify opportunities for improvement and sustainable development.

This study aims to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on urban development and population dynamics in Nigeria by exploring the relationship between population growth and social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states. Through examining the challenges and opportunities associated with population growth, this study seeks to inform policy decisions aimed at improving social service delivery and promoting sustainable development in these states.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The rapid population growth in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria, has precipitated a myriad of challenges in the provision and accessibility of social services. As the population continues to swell, the demand for essential services such as healthcare, education, sanitation, and infrastructure has outpaced the capacity of existing systems. This mismatch between demand and supply has resulted in a plethora of problems that threaten the well-being and quality of life of residents.

One of the most pressing issues is the inadequacy of infrastructure. The rapid urbanization in these states has placed immense pressure on existing infrastructure, including roads, water supply, and sanitation systems. The consequences are far-reaching, with residents facing difficulties in accessing basic necessities like clean water and sanitation facilities. According to the World Bank, inadequate infrastructure is a major constraint to economic growth and development in Nigeria, with an estimated 60% of the population lacking access to reliable electricity and sanitation facilities (World Bank, 2019).

The healthcare sector is another area that has been severely impacted by population growth. The growing population has increased the demand for healthcare services, but healthcare facilities in these states are often under-resourced and inadequately equipped to meet the needs of the population. This has resulted in poor health outcomes, including increased morbidity and mortality rates. A study by the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research found that healthcare facilities in urban areas of Nigeria are often overcrowded and lack essential medical equipment and supplies, further exacerbating the challenges faced by residents (Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, 2020).

The education sector has also been strained by population growth, with overcrowded classrooms and a shortage of educational resources affecting the quality of education in these states. This has significant implications for the future of the youth in these states, as they may not have access to the quality education they need to succeed. According to UNICEF, Nigeria has one of the highest rates of out-of-school children in the world, with many children unable to access quality education (UNICEF, 2019).

Furthermore, the increased waste generation and inadequate waste management practices in these states have contributed to environmental degradation and health risks. The Environmental Rights Action notes that poor waste management practices in Nigeria's urban areas have led to significant environmental and health problems, including the spread of diseases and contamination of water sources (Environmental Rights Action, 2020).

The consequences of these challenges are far-reaching and have significant implications for the well-being and quality of life of residents in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states. It is imperative that policymakers and stakeholders take immediate action to address these challenges and ensure that social services are adequate to meet the needs of the growing population.

This study seeks to examine the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, with a view to identifying opportunities for improvement and sustainable development. Through exploring the complex relationship between population growth and social services, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the challenges faced by residents and policymakers in these states.

1.3 Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to examine the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria, with a view to identifying opportunities for improvement and sustainable development. The specific objectives of this study are:

1. To assess the current state of social services: To evaluate the availability, accessibility, and quality of social services such as healthcare, education, sanitation, and infrastructure in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.
2. To examine the impact of population growth: To investigate the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, including the challenges and opportunities that arise from rapid urbanization.
3. To identify gaps in service delivery: To identify gaps in social service delivery and areas where improvements can be made to meet the needs of the growing population.
4. To explore opportunities for sustainable development: To explore opportunities for sustainable development and improvement in social service delivery, including innovative solutions and best practices that can be adopted to address the challenges posed by population growth.
5. To provide recommendations for policymakers: To provide recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders on how to improve social service delivery and promote sustainable development in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

By achieving these objectives, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the complex relationship between population growth and social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, and to inform policy decisions aimed at improving social service delivery and promoting sustainable development.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study on the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria, is significant for several reasons:

Contribution to Knowledge: This study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge on the complex relationship between population growth and social services in urban areas. By exploring the challenges and opportunities that arise from rapid urbanization, this study will provide valuable insights into the dynamics of population growth and its impact on social services.

Policy Relevance: The findings of this study will be relevant to policymakers and stakeholders in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, as well as at the national level. The study's recommendations will inform policy decisions aimed at improving social service delivery and promoting sustainable development in urban areas.

Improved Service Delivery: By identifying gaps in social service delivery and areas where improvements can be made, this study will contribute to improved service delivery in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states. This will have a positive impact on the well-being and quality of life of residents.

Sustainable Development: This study's focus on sustainable development will contribute to the achievement of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being).

Informing Urban Planning: The study's findings will inform urban planning and development strategies in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, ensuring that urban areas are designed and developed to meet the needs of the growing population.

Benefiting Vulnerable Populations: By examining the impact of population growth on social services, this study will contribute to the identification of strategies to benefit vulnerable populations, including women, children, and the elderly.

Masters-Level Research: As a master's-level research study, this work will demonstrate the application of theoretical knowledge and research skills to a complex problem. The study's findings and recommendations will contribute to the academic discourse on population growth, urbanization, and social services.

Overall, this study's significance lies in its potential to contribute to improved social service delivery, sustainable development, and the well-being of residents in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, Nigeria.

1.5 Scope and limitations of study

The scope of this study is to examine the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States in Nigeria between 2015 and 2022. The study will focus on key social services such as healthcare, education, water and sanitation, and transportation.

The study's geographical scope is limited to urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, and the temporal scope covers a period of 7 years (2015-2022). The study's thematic scope is focused on understanding the relationship between population growth and social services, with a view to identifying challenges and opportunities for improvement.

However, this study has some limitations. One of the limitations is the potential lack of availability of accurate and up-to-date data on population growth and social services in the study area. Additionally, the study's findings may not be generalizable to other states or regions in Nigeria, and the use of a specific research design or methodology may also be a limitation. Furthermore, the study's timeframe may not capture long-term trends or impacts of population growth on social services. Despite these limitations, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, and to inform policy and decision-making in this area.

2.0 Literature review and theoretical framework

This section provides a comprehensive review of existing research on the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria. The literature review will cover several key themes, including the theoretical framework, overview of population growth and socio-economic development, assessing the current state of social services, examining the impact of population growth, exploring opportunities for sustainable development, empirical review, and identifying gaps in service delivery.

The theoretical framework for this study will be based on the Demographic Transition Theory and Sustainable Development Theory, which will provide a foundation for understanding the complex relationships between population growth, social services, and sustainable development.

The literature review will examine the existing research on population growth and socio-economic development, including the overview of population growth and socio-economic development, assessing the current state of social services, examining the impact of population growth, and exploring opportunities for sustainable development. An empirical review of existing studies will also be conducted to inform policy and practice. Finally, the literature review will identify gaps in service delivery and areas where further research is needed to inform policy and practice. By examining the existing research and identifying gaps, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the complex relationships between population growth, social services, and sustainable development in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, Nigeria.

2.1 Theoretical framework

This study is grounded in two fundamental theories that provide a framework for understanding the complex relationships between population growth, social services, and sustainable development. The Demographic Transition Theory, first proposed by Warren Thompson in 1929 and later expanded by Frank Notestein in 1945, explains the transition from high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates as a country develops from a pre-industrial to an industrialized economy. This theory outlines four phases of demographic transition, from

high birth and death rates to low birth and death rates, resulting in a stable population (Thompson, 1929; Notestein, 1945).

The Demographic Transition Theory is relevant to this study as it helps to understand the demographic dynamics at play in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria. However, critics argue that the theory assumes a linear progression through the phases, which may not be applicable to all countries, and overlooks the impact of external factors, such as globalization and government policies, on demographic trends.

The Sustainable Development Theory, popularized by the Brundtland Commission's report "Our Common Future" in 1987, emphasizes the need for development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This theory encompasses three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental, and highlights the importance of balance between economic growth, social equity, and environmental protection (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987).

The Sustainable Development Theory is crucial to this study as it provides a framework for evaluating the impact of population growth on social services and the environment in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, Nigeria. By applying these two theories, this study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the complex relationships between population growth, social services, and sustainable development in the study area.

2.2 Literature review

2.2.1 Overview of Population Growth and Socio-Economic Development

Population growth and socio-economic development are intricately linked, with each influencing the other in complex ways. In many developing countries, rapid population growth poses significant challenges to achieving sustainable socio-economic development. According to Bloom and Canning (2003), population growth can lead to increased economic growth, but it also puts a strain on resources, infrastructure, and social services.

In Nigeria, population growth has significant implications for socio-economic development. The country has one of the largest populations in Africa, with a growth rate of 2.6% per annum (World Bank, 2020). This rapid growth poses challenges for the government in providing essential services, such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. As Becker (1993) notes, investing in human capital, particularly education and health, is crucial for driving economic growth and reducing poverty. However, rapid population growth can hinder progress in these areas by increasing the demand for social services and infrastructure.

The Demographic Transition Theory, proposed by Thompson (1929), suggests that as countries develop economically, their population growth rates decline. This theory provides a useful framework for understanding the relationship between population growth and socio-economic development. However, the relationship is complex and context-dependent, requiring careful consideration of various factors, including institutional frameworks and policy interventions (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012).

Empirical evidence on the relationship between population growth and socio-economic development is mixed. While some studies have found a positive relationship between population growth and economic growth (Simon, 1981), others have reported a negative relationship (Ehrlich, 1968). The impact of population growth on socio-economic development depends on various factors, including the quality of governance, investment in human capital, and the effectiveness of policy interventions.

In conclusion, the relationship between population growth and socio-economic development is complex and multifaceted. Understanding this relationship is crucial for developing effective policies and interventions to promote sustainable development and improve the well-being of populations in developing countries like Nigeria.

2.2.2 Assessing the Current State of Social Services in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States

The current state of social services in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states reveals a complex landscape of challenges and opportunities. Social services encompass a broad range of essential public services, including healthcare, education, waste management, electrification, roads, and other infrastructure.

Healthcare: The healthcare sector in both states faces significant challenges. In Akwa Ibom State, there is a pressing need for improved funding of healthcare projects, with a focus on primary healthcare development and recruitment of medical personnel (USAID State2State Activity Report, 2022). The USAID State2State Activity and Civil Society Organizations have urged the government to prioritize funding for healthcare projects, citing low actual releases to these projects compared to administrative sectors (Civil Society Organizations Report, 2022).

Education: Education is another critical social service that requires attention. In Cross River State, research highlights the importance of strategic planning in higher education administration to stimulate effective service delivery (Obi, 2018). Akwa Ibom State's education sector has also received attention, with efforts to improve the sector's roadmap and investments from individuals and organizations (Akwa Ibom State Government Report, 2020).

Waste Management: Waste management is a significant challenge in both states, with inadequate infrastructure and services leading to environmental degradation and health risks (Nzeadibe, 2017). Effective waste management requires a multi-faceted approach, including investment in infrastructure, public education, and community participation.

Electrification: Access to reliable electricity is essential for economic development and social well-being. However, both states face significant challenges in providing adequate electrification, with many communities lacking access to electricity (Oyedepo, 2012). This has far-reaching implications for economic development, healthcare, and education.

Roads and Infrastructure: The state of roads and infrastructure in both states is another critical area of concern. Poor road conditions and inadequate infrastructure hinder economic development, increase transportation costs, and limit access to social services (Akinyemi, 2019). Investment in road infrastructure and other public works is essential for promoting economic growth and improving the quality of life for residents.

The current state of social services in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states reveals a complex landscape of challenges and opportunities. Addressing these challenges will require a concerted effort from government, civil society, and the private sector to prioritize funding, improve infrastructure, and promote community participation. By working together, it is possible to improve the delivery of social services and promote sustainable development in both states.

2.2.3 Examining the Impact of Population Growth in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States of Nigeria

The rapid population growth in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states has significant implications for the social, economic, and environmental development of the regions. As the population grows, the demand for essential services such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure increases, putting pressure on existing resources (NPC, 2020). According to the National Population Commission, the population of Nigeria is projected to continue growing, with significant implications for the country's development trajectory.

The economic impact of population growth is multifaceted. On one hand, a growing population can provide a large workforce, driving economic growth and development (Bloom & Canning, 2003). However, rapid population growth can also lead to increased unemployment, poverty, and inequality, particularly if the economy is not growing at a sufficient rate to absorb the growing workforce (World Bank, 2020). The World Bank notes that sustainable economic growth requires a balance between population growth and economic development.

The social Impact of population growth is also significant. The increasing demand for social services such as healthcare and education can put pressure on existing infrastructure, leading to shortages and decreased quality of services (Federal Ministry of Health, 2019). Furthermore, rapid population growth can lead to increased competition for resources, exacerbating social tensions and conflicts (Okonta, 2018). Effective management of population growth is crucial to mitigating these challenges.

Population growth also has significant environmental implications. The increasing demand for natural resources, such as land, water, and energy, can lead to deforestation, pollution, and degradation of natural habitats (Nzeadibe, 2017). This can have far-reaching implications for biodiversity, climate change, and human well-being.

The impact of population growth in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states is complex and multifaceted. While a growing population can provide opportunities for economic growth and development, it also poses significant challenges for social services, infrastructure, and the environment. To mitigate these challenges, it is essential to implement effective population management strategies, invest in social services and infrastructure, and promote sustainable development practices.

2.2.4 Exploring Opportunities for Sustainable Development in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States

Sustainable development is a critical aspect of ensuring that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. In Cross River and Akwa Ibom states, there are several opportunities for sustainable development that can be explored. The development of renewable energy sources is a key opportunity for sustainable development in the region. Nigeria has significant potential for solar, wind, and hydroelectric power, which can be harnessed to reduce dependence on fossil fuels and mitigate climate change (Oyedepo, 2012). Investing in renewable energy can also create jobs and stimulate economic growth.

Sustainable agriculture is another critical area for sustainable development in the region. By adopting sustainable agricultural practices, farmers can improve crop yields, reduce environmental degradation, and promote food security (Adeola, 2019). This can also help to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods in rural communities.

The region's natural attractions, such as national parks and wildlife reserves, can be developed for eco-tourism, generating income and creating jobs while promoting conservation of natural resources (Ewah, 2018). Eco-tourism can also help to preserve the region's cultural heritage and promote cross-cultural understanding.

Investing in human capital development is also critical for sustainable development in the region. Through providing access to quality education and healthcare, individuals can acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to drive economic growth and development (Becker, 1993). This can also help to reduce poverty and inequality.

Infrastructure development is another key area for sustainable development in the region. Investing in roads, bridges, and other infrastructure can improve access to markets, healthcare, and education, and promote economic growth (World Bank, 2020). This can also help to reduce transportation costs and improve the competitiveness of businesses in the region. By harnessing these opportunities, Cross River and Akwa Ibom states can promote sustainable development and improve the well-being of their citizens. Effective implementation of sustainable development strategies will require a collaborative effort from government, civil society, and the private sector.

2.2.5 Empirical Review of Population and Social Services

A comprehensive empirical review of population and social services reveals a complex relationship between population growth and the provision of social services. Several studies have

investigated this relationship, providing valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with population growth.

Healthcare: A study by Adeyemi, Adebayo, and Adegoke (2019) examined the impact of population growth on healthcare services in Nigeria. The study used a cross-sectional design and collected data from 1,200 households in Lagos State. The findings revealed that population growth led to increased demand for healthcare services, resulting in overcrowding and decreased quality of care. The study recommended that policymakers prioritize investments in healthcare infrastructure and personnel to meet the growing demand for healthcare services.

Another study by Oleribe, Oladipo, and Olaitan (2018) investigated the effect of population growth on healthcare outcomes in Nigeria. The study used a retrospective cohort design and analyzed data from 10,000 patients in Abuja. The findings revealed that population growth was associated with increased morbidity and mortality rates, particularly among children and the elderly. The study recommended that policymakers implement targeted interventions to improve healthcare outcomes, particularly for vulnerable populations.

Education: A study by Okebukola, Olatoye, and Oluwatayo (2020) examined the impact of population growth on education services in Nigeria. The study used a survey design and collected data from 2,000 teachers and 5,000 students in Ogun State. The findings revealed that population growth led to increased demand for education services, resulting in overcrowding and decreased quality of education. The study recommended that policymakers prioritize investments in education infrastructure and personnel to meet the growing demand for education services.

Another study by Adetunde, Ibraheem, and Adebayo (2019) investigated the effect of population growth on educational outcomes in Nigeria. The study used a correlational design and analyzed data from 1,500 students in Ilorin. The findings revealed that population growth was associated with decreased academic performance, particularly among students from low-income backgrounds. The study recommended that policymakers implement targeted interventions to improve educational outcomes, particularly for disadvantaged populations.

Infrastructure: A study by Akinyemi, Adeyemi, and Olusola (2019) examined the impact of population growth on infrastructure development in Nigeria. The study used a regression analysis and analyzed data from 20 cities in Nigeria. The findings revealed that population growth led to increased demand for infrastructure, including roads, water, and sanitation. The study recommended that policymakers prioritize investments in infrastructure development to meet the growing demand for services.

Social Protection: A study by Nwosu, Nnamani, and Okoro (2020) investigated the effect of population growth on social protection programs in Nigeria. The study used a qualitative design and collected data from 500 households in Enugu State. The findings revealed that population growth led to increased vulnerability to poverty and inequality, particularly among women and children. The study recommended that policymakers implement targeted social protection programs to mitigate the effects of population growth on vulnerable populations.

The empirical review reveals that population growth can have significant impacts on social services, including healthcare, education, infrastructure, and social protection. Policymakers must consider these impacts when developing policies and programs to address population growth and promote sustainable development.

2.2.6 Gaps in Literature

Despite the extensive research on population growth and social services, several gaps in literature exist. These gaps highlight the need for further research to fully understand the complex relationship between population growth and social services.

Limited Focus on Specific Regions: Many studies have focused on national-level data, with limited attention to specific regions or states. For instance, few studies have examined the impact of population growth on social services in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, highlighting a need for more region-specific research.

Lack of Longitudinal Studies: Most studies have used cross-sectional designs, providing a snapshot of the relationship between population growth and social services at a single point in time. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine the dynamics of this relationship over time and to identify trends and patterns.

Insufficient Attention to Vulnerable Populations: While some studies have examined the impact of population growth on vulnerable populations, such as women and children, more research is needed to fully understand the effects on these groups. Additionally, other vulnerable populations, such as the elderly and people with disabilities, have received limited attention.

Limited Exploration of Policy Interventions: Few studies have examined the effectiveness of policy interventions aimed at addressing the challenges associated with population growth and social services. Further research is needed to identify effective policy strategies and to inform evidence-based policymaking.

Methodological Limitations: Some studies have methodological limitations, such as small sample sizes or limited data quality. Further research is needed to address these limitations and to provide more robust and generalizable findings.

Limited Integration of Multiple Sectors: Most studies have focused on a single sector, such as healthcare or education. Further research is needed to examine the inter relationships between multiple sectors and to identify integrated solutions to address the challenges associated with population growth. By addressing these gaps in literature, further research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the complex relationship between population growth and social services, and inform effective policy interventions to promote sustainable development.

3.0 Methodology of the study

This study employs a literature review-based approach, analyzing existing research and secondary data to examine the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom States.

3.1 Literature search and review

A comprehensive review of existing literature on population growth and social services was conducted, including: Academic journals, Books, Government reports and Reputable sources. The literature review aimed to identify key themes, trends, and findings related to the impact of population growth on social services.

3.2 Analysis of secondary data

Secondary data from government reports, statistical agencies, and other sources were analyzed to provide insights into population trends and social services in the study area.

3.3 Synthesis of findings and recommendations

The findings from the literature review and secondary data analysis were synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of population growth on social services. Recommendations were developed based on the study's findings, aiming to inform policy decisions and improve social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

4.0 Findings

The findings of this study are based on a comprehensive review of existing literature and secondary data on population growth and social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

4.1 Impact of population growth on social services

The literature review revealed that rapid population growth in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states has significant implications for social services, including:

- Increased demand for education and healthcare services
- Pressure on existing infrastructure, such as roads, water, and sanitation
- Challenges for policymakers to provide adequate social services

4.2 Challenges and Opportunities

The study identified several challenges and opportunities for improving social services in urban areas, including:

- Inadequate funding and resource allocation
- Inefficient service delivery systems
- Opportunities for innovative solutions, such as technology-enabled services
- Need for community engagement and participation

5.0 Conclusion

This study has examined the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas of Cross River and Akwa Ibom states. Based on a comprehensive review of existing literature and secondary data, the study has identified significant challenges and opportunities for improving social services.

The findings of this study highlight the need for policymakers and stakeholders to prioritize measures to address the impact of population growth on social services. This includes investing in infrastructure, improving service delivery systems, and promoting community engagement and participation.

Ultimately, this study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on population dynamics and social services, and provides insights that can inform policy decisions and interventions aimed at improving the lives of urban residents in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 Policy recommendations

1. **Invest in Infrastructure:** Increase investment in infrastructure, such as roads, water, and sanitation, to support the growing population.
2. **Improve Service Delivery:** Strengthen service delivery systems, including healthcare and education, to meet the needs of the increasing population.
3. **Promote Community Engagement:** Encourage community engagement and participation in planning and decision-making processes.
4. **Data-Driven Decision Making:** Use data and research to inform policy decisions and interventions.
5. **Integrated Planning:** Adopt integrated planning approaches that consider the interlinkages between population growth, social services, and economic development.

6.2 Academic recommendations

1. **Further Research:** Conduct further research on the impact of population growth on social services in urban areas.
2. **Interdisciplinary Approaches:** Encourage interdisciplinary approaches to studying population dynamics and social services.
3. **Capacity Building*:** Build capacity for research and data analysis in institutions and organizations working on population and social services issues.
4. **Knowledge Sharing:** Facilitate knowledge sharing and dissemination of research findings to policymakers, practitioners, and other stakeholders.

These recommendations aim to inform policy decisions and academic research, ultimately contributing to improved social services and well-being for urban residents in Cross River and Akwa Ibom states.

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