



POPULATION GROWTH AND URBAN RENEWAL PROGRAMMES IN UYO AND IKOT EKPENE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS OF AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT: *The study attempts to assess the effects of Population Growth on Urban Renewal Programmes in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Objectively, the study examines the causes and dangers of population growth on urban development policies, and how urban population growth rate could be reduced for sustained urban renewal programmes. The study employed elimination by substitution theory postulated by Udom Sunday Daniel to discuss the different measures of creating a balance between population growth and urban renewal programmes thus enhancing the quality of urban programmes and livelihood through the generated dividends of urban renewal opportunities. Data were collected using descriptive and survey techniques and the sample size consisted of 357 returned questionnaires from the 400 administered. The findings reveal that population growth does affect urban renewal programmes causing speedy decay and dilapidation of urban centres, thus the study encouraged rural development targeted at reducing urban migration. The findings further revealed that urban renewal projects should be planned in a linear balance to absorb the projected population. The study however recommended public-private partnerships for a sustainable urban renewal programme and participation towards enhancing livelihood through job creation and economic opportunities. Finally, the study recommends population registration centres for reliable population data planning and development as it will help to align population growth with urban renewal strategies, concluding that research on population growth, trends and dynamics on urban renewal/development be intensified as this will help to unveil other challenges of urban renewal advancement.*

KEYWORDS: Population, Growth, Urban, Renewal, Programmes.



INTRODUCTION

Population growth according to Ben (2023) and Daniel (2015) is the magnitude or rate at which the population of an area increases during a specific period. It has to do with how the number of people in a given place increases over time, as well as the proportion of new people added to the existing number already in the area. To Ben (2023), growth in a population is the number of persons added to a population at a period due to natural increase and net migration expressed as a percentage of the population.

It has been observed that Nigeria's population (Ben, 2023; Daniel 2015; Jack 2000) growth rate has outscored that of other populations in Africa.

Table 1: African Population Countries

S/N	Country	Population (2023)	Yearly change	Net change	Density (p/km ²)	Land Area (km ²)	Fertility rate	Urban pop %
1.	Nigeria	223,804,632	2.41%	5,263,420	246	910,770	5.1	54%
2.	Ethiopia	126,527,060	2.55%	3,147,136	127	1,000,000	4.0	22%
3.	Egypt	112,716,598	1.56%	1,726,495	113	995,450	2.8	41%
4.	Dr. Congo	102,262,808	3.29%	3,252,596	45	2,267,050	6.1	46%
5.	Tanzania	67,438,106	2.96%	1,940,358	76	885,800	4.6	38%
6.	South Africa	60,414,495	0.87%	520,610	50	1,213,090	2.3	69%
7.	Kenya	55,100,586	1.99%	1,073,099	97	569,140	3.2	31%
8.	Sudan	48,109,006	2.63%	1,234,802	27	1,765,048	4.3	35%
9.	Uganda	48,582,334	2.82%	1,332,749	243	199,810	4.4	29%
10.	Algeria	45,606,480	1.57%	703,255	19	2,381,740	2.8	75%

Source: *World Meter, 2023*

The above is therefore why Nigeria is referred to as the most populous country in Africa and 7th in the world population.

Population growth has been observed to have caused a series of challenges to planning and policy implementation in Nigeria. In a study documented by the United Nations (2001), it is observed that efforts of governments in developing countries to feed their people and also provide quality social services for them are being frustrated by rapid population growth. This growth however defected the provision of improved human social services (survival) programmes associated with poor medical services, an esthetical environment, slums and poor sanitation practices which to a large extent have barred the rate of urban renewal programmes of government. Population growth should be and migration stated is caused by traditional practices and beliefs of the divinity of children.

Categorizing a place as an urban area is a factor of the population density as well as the provision of improved social services facilities. Urban renewal strategy is a process of urban growth which is achieved through rapid and improved changes in urban land for purposes such



as market stalls, road construction and traffic control, housing/residential areas, parking space, recreation centres, hotels, etc.

The rapid change on urban lands through government policies and programmes of renewals/giving the area a new look have influenced the population growth rate and that of the properties available as well as services put together by values attracted to the area. Urban renewal however is considered as an integral part of global focus on sustainable development (United Nations, 2020). Nigeria's experiences have shown that human settlements in third-world countries have had to contend with numerous burdens of a rapidly growing population and unplanned developments, principally because of continuous rural-urban migration, increased birth rate and reduced level of mortality, strengthened by the provisions of modern medical facilities to both infant and other age categories.

According to Shuaeeb (2013), Nigerian urban centres are currently experiencing a disconnection between the provision of infrastructural facilities in the urban areas and the growing populace which despite diverse policies and programmes by successive governments in the last two decades are still at a crossroad. Importantly, there has been an inadequate provision, supply and maintenance of infrastructure to meet the population demands across Nigeria's Urban Settlements. Urban renewal requirements according to Olubodun and Elsin (2018) will continue to be an important issue for all tiers of government in Nigeria since the need for it will not stop soon but rather on the increase because of the challenging rate of the population.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

As noted earlier Population growth, urban renewal development and growth are integral parts of the global focus on sustainable development. According to UNDESA (2015), rapid urbanization is one of the most remarkable developments in the world today and to the UN (2020) fifty-four per cent (54%) of the world's population lives in urban areas; a proportion that is expected to increase to 66% by 2050.

A projection by UNDESA (2015) reveals that urbanization together with the rate of growth of the world's population could add another 2.5 billion people to urban populations by 2025, with close to 90% of the growth in Asia and Africa. According to Daniel, Udousoro and Effiong (2023), population growth will be attracted by the opportunities available in urban areas and because of this, people will continue to be attracted to areas where social services are available with intentions to alleviate their social needs; investments burden as well as reducing the burden of unemployment.

Performances of urban renewal projects suffer a series of challenges as a result of an incomparable population caused by the influx of migrants on the available social facilities, relocation of residents for temporary living, issues relating to displacement of population as effects of urban development, psychological and sociological trauma on the displaced population, refusal to or poor payments of compensation to people by government, are some of the challenges of urban development (Ben, 2023).

Mboho, Udousoro and Udo (2014) have attributed failed urban renewal programmes to ineffective planning, monitoring, and evaluation of development strategies and wrong timing of the programmes strategies. The researchers opine that urban renewal programmes when



objectively designed and effectively monitored ensure adequate implementation with sustained development and enhance livelihood among the peoples of Akwa Ibom State.

Population growth has recorded detrimental effects on urban renewal projects and thus Adejugbe (2004:9) in Daniel (2016:6) remarks:

When the population increases more rapidly than the food supply, it becomes detrimental to economic and social development such that there will be little or no time to adjust the economy for development. Population according to Malthus will therefore continue to eat up any gain in economic development and these may lead to adverse effects on society; except some measures are put in place to address it.

This study holds that the above scenario is currently the situation in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas where population growth has been on the increase and has alarming effects on urban renewal projects in the area which therefore requires urgent attention and the least poses negative consequences of imbalance ratio between population growth and urban renewal programmes in the study area.

On the strength of the above and with the available data of population growth against government efforts to solve the social needs of the people in urban areas, this study hopes to assess the effects of population growth on the provisions of urban renewal projects in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas and therefore make recommendations based on the findings to solve the problems/issues identified in the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Principally, the study will examine the effects of population growth on the provisions of urban renewal projects in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State.

Specifically, the study shall;

- 1) Identified the causes and dangers of population growth in urban areas and projects.
- 2) Identify the rate of population growth and the effects on urban renewal projects in the area of study.
- 3) Identify how population growth in urban areas could be reduced or managed to enhance urban renewal programmes in the study area.



LITERATURE REVIEW

POPULATION GROWTH; AN OVERVIEW

Human settlements and urban centres in developing countries are marked by a growing population rate and the burdens of rapidly growing and unplanned developments, attributed to uncontrolled rural-urban migrations (Olubodun and Elesin, 2018). This is why according to Nnamani and Chilaka (2012), years after the government came up with different social services programmes, the living standard of Nigerians is yet to improve which (evidenced by the 2023 UN reports). The reports indicate that 11.9% of the world population living in extreme poverty are identified to have lived in Nigeria with the threshold of 1.90 US Dollars a day as the index.

Observably, with the present statistics, it is expedient to note that the 2006 population of Nigeria will double by 2026.

Table 2: Population of Nigeria, Akwa Ibom State, Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas 2006 and 2023

Country/State/Local Govt. Area	2006	2023	%
Nigeria	144.3m	223,804,632	2.41
Akwa Ibom	3,920,208	5,780,581	3.4
Uyo	309,573	1,329,000	5.06
Ikot Ekpene	143,077	423,000	4.10

Source: NPC report 2023

It is pertinent to note that the above data indicates a triple population growth of Uyo and Ikot Ekpene. Within the frame of analysis, it revealed that the growth index has tripled itself even before a gap of twenty years (2026), thus putting serious pressure, incapacitating, stressing and further dilapidating the urban renewal facilities of the government. Studies by Ujo (2007), also reveal that the most contending problems of urban renewal programmes in Nigeria are compounding challenges of population growth sandwiched by conflicting population figures and data as well as implementing policies relating to population growth like education, land tenure, park and market space, housing, water supply and electricity etc without reliable population data, making urban review to remain an illusion. Thus creating a balance between population growth and urban projects rate has remained at the crossroads for two decades.

Also, worthy of mention is the fact that growth in population is linked with increased birth rate, and population replacement or migration has affected the provision of quality urban renewal programmes, affirming Odusina's (2011) postulation that where there is a population explosion, there is a tendency that such growth will influence the capacity of the area and ratio of service provided.



Urban Renewal Objectives and Challenges

Urban renewal has become a key theme in developing countries and the most remarkable in world development. Urban renewal according to Oyinloye, Olamiju and Popoola (2017) started as a concept of urban redevelopment and with an American concept whose origin could be traced to the Housing Act of 1949, originally designed to clear and restructure land use in the inner city which have grown into slums and thus replace it with a comprehensive programme of new residential and non-residential development.

Onokerhoraye and Omuta (1994) in their studies of Urban renewal in America, urban renewal refers to the redevelopment and/or rehabilitation of older parts of towns and cities, while in Britain, it is associated with the desire for housing upgrading and reform which is embarked especially in the interest of the urban poor, with the aim of resolving urban problems and replace it with lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental conditions of an area that has been subjected to change.

Urban renewal has become a 'catch-all' for other strategies and social planning such as that of the revitalization of downtown industrial redevelopment for job creation, population management, replacement, filtration and relocation, town extension and creation of new towns. It could thus be said that urban renewal aims at improving the physical, social, economic and ecological sections of urban areas through various government programmes of reinvestment, redevelopment, rehabilitation, conservation and heritage preservation. It could not at this juncture be drawn that the main essence of embarking on urban renewal by the government are: restructuring and replanning of concerned urban areas, designing more effective and environmentally-friendly local transport and road networks within the concerned urban areas; promoting and timely maintenance as well as rehabilitation of a building in need of repair; preserving building sites and structures of historical, cult or architectural values and creating centres of attractions for tourism for investment and economic development as well as providing a more open space for parks, tourism, recreation purpose-built housing for groups with special needs and community welfare facilities among others (URS, 2011).

UNDESA (2015) in the studies of urban growth, opined that 54% of the world's population lives in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 66% by 2050". The projections show that urbanization combined with the overall growth of the world's population could add another 2.5 billion people to the urban population by 2050, with close to 90% of the increase, in third-world countries (especially in Africa and Asia) and therefore demands an urgent attention to address the inadequacies of the growth margin.

Harnessing Population Growth and Urban Renewal

Population to Daniel, Udousoro and Effiong (2024) is an important issue of concern. This is so because according to the authors' population in terms of its size and composition has a far-reaching implication for change, development and quality of life in society. According to Ottong (2010), the population is an asset, a resource for and a prime beneficiary of development and a major determinant of national and international attraction for investment. Population exerts a marginal influence on the nation's socio-economic planning and development format.

According to Ben (2023), Nigeria is one of the Third World Countries where the phenomenon of population growth and the study of the environment (Urban renewal) should be examined together. Urban renewal programmes of government should be aligned with population



estimates based on birth and attractions of migration. That is government policies and programmes of urban renewal should be deliberately linked with population growth rate to close the gap between overuse, traffic decay,⁸⁷ etc, since the two are inextricably inseparable. The reason is that the human population depends entirely on the environment for varying and unending social, economic and political activities and the environment on the human population to survive. However, with the current population estimate of 229, 159, 217 (June 2024) of Nigeria with an increasing growth rate of 2.39% against the 2023 population estimate (223,804,632) and a 2.41% increase from 2022 (218,541,212) estimate, it behoves on government to pair or plan its urban renewal project in line with population projections for a period of 10 years. This it is believed will help the programme to accommodate the population for a period of 15 years devoid of decay before renovation and re-expansion of the area.

Development according to theorists like Daniel, Udousoro and Effiong (2024), and Mboho and Udoh (2018) should be a human focus, and anything devoid of this should not be considered as development. Drawing strength from this perspective urban renewal could therefore be sum as follows; an effective and efficient mechanism for the productive functioning of cities especially in third world countries like Nigeria and towards the stimulation of economic growth for the achievement of sustainable human development (Saviour, Udom and Clement, 2024). Urban policy formulation evaluation and implementation should serve as a guide in absorbing population changes, development and management for the well-being of the populace and rural migration control (Willie, Mboho and Udom, 2023; Kingdom, Wisdom, Udom and Edidiong, 2024).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Elimination by Substitution Theory

The elimination by substitution theory postulated by Udom Sunday Daniel has it that the elimination of a variable can be performed by substituting the value of another variable in an equation. The theory is borrowed from mathematical/statistical analysis of elimination by substitution and is employed to discuss a linear social situation which progresses from one stage to another in a single series of steps that are sequential to another.

In this case, the theory is used in placing a balance between population growth and urban renewal programmes. The linear social situation in this study involves appraising urban renewal programmes in line with the population variables of the area. That is urban development should be in line with a corresponding projected rate of population increase attracted by the values of urban transformation through migration and improved health facilities and services.

The substitution involves the replacement of unplanned and decayed urban facilities with a new urban designed programme, extension and redevelopment; as well as population growth with planned birth control, urban expansion city and rural development to curb rural-urban migration and rural excesses as well as pressure on the urban centres (Kingdom, Wisdom, Udom and Edidiong, 2024), thus absorbing population growth and other urban challenges like that trafficking, social services strata and decay, unemployment, sanitation hazards and criminal activities in the area. Where the above is attended, the geometric population projection of Thomas Malthus will be overcome by the composite strategy.



SOME URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS IN UYO AND IKOT EKPENE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA 2000-2004 ARE ATTRIBUTED AS ATTRACTIONS OF POPULATION GROWTH IN THE AREAS

UYO

1. Ibom Plaza/Dualization of Oron Road, Ikot Ekpene Road, Aka Road – Nung Udoe, and Nwaniba Road.
2. Ikot Okubo flyover/Idoro Road
3. Ekom Iman flyover
4. Akpan Andem market which replaces the Uyo main market
5. Ring Road 3, stadium Road, Godswill Akpabio International Stadium
6. Tropicana Shopping Mall, Uyo Regional Market
7. AirPort
8. Water fountain roundabout at Oron Road, Mbiabong plaza.
9. Motor parks and Timber markets
10. Shelter Afrique Housing Estate

IKOT EKPENE

1. Ikot Ekpene Plaza
2. 3-star hotel
3. Uyo – Ikot Ekpene Road/drainage system
4. Ikot Ekpene Correctional Centre

These projects have attracted more people to the area ever since the implication of these programmes than the expected dividends. Migration to these areas has caused a serious challenge to the utilisation and effectiveness of the renewal goals. More people have moved to those areas because of their attractions in tourism, investment and other social services.



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY/ANALYSIS

The design adopted for this study is the descriptive and survey research method which were used in assessing the causes, effects, rates and dangers of population growth on urban renewal programme in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas and also to identify how population growth could be to curb its challenges and urban renewal sustained.

The survey strategy gave insight into the current rate of population growth while descriptively determining the significant differences between relevant variables in the study area, making it possible to proffer necessary recommendations for urban renewal.

Data were generated from primary and secondary sources via field survey (questionnaire) and observation as well as existing literature. The research population were purposively selected from Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas with 357 returning the questionnaire; with two hundred respondents; (200) from each of the local government areas and analyses through the use of the Likert scale, bar and pie charts with 357 return questionnaire.

Table 3: Has population growth in any way affected urban renewal/development programmes?

Response	F(Uyo)	F(Ikot Ekpene)	Total	%	Degree Score
Strongly agree	83	78	161	45.1	162.4
Agree	69	70	139	39.2	141.1
Undecided	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	15	16	31	8.7	31.3
Strongly disagree	15	1	26	7	25.2
Total	82	175	357	100%	360

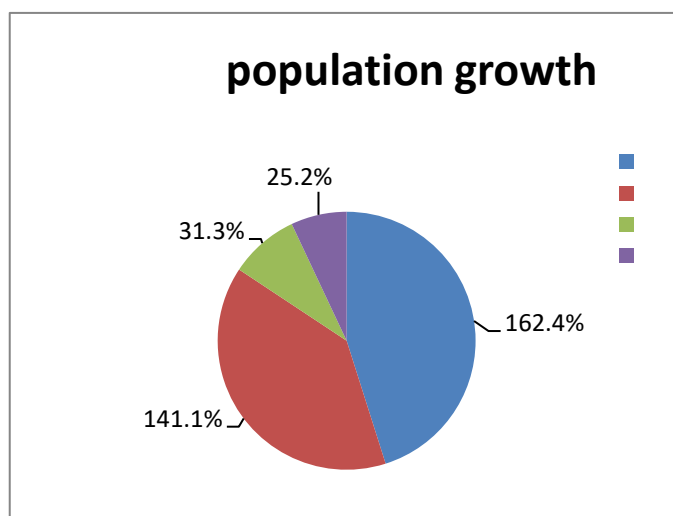




Table 4: Could urban renewal be sustained if planned in linear balance with population growth?

Response	F(Uyo)	F(Ikot Ekpene)	Total	%	Degree score
Strongly agree	100	84	184	51.5	185.4
Agree	68	81	149	41.7	150.1
Undecided	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	7	10	17	4.8	17.3
Strongly disagree	7	0	7	2	7.2
Total	182	175	357	100%	360

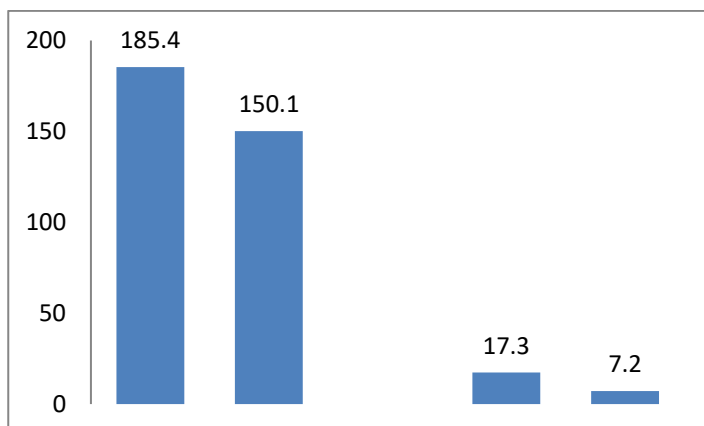
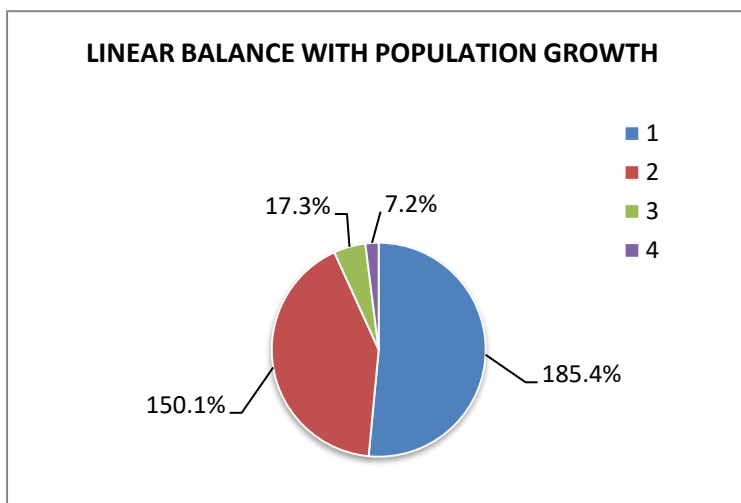
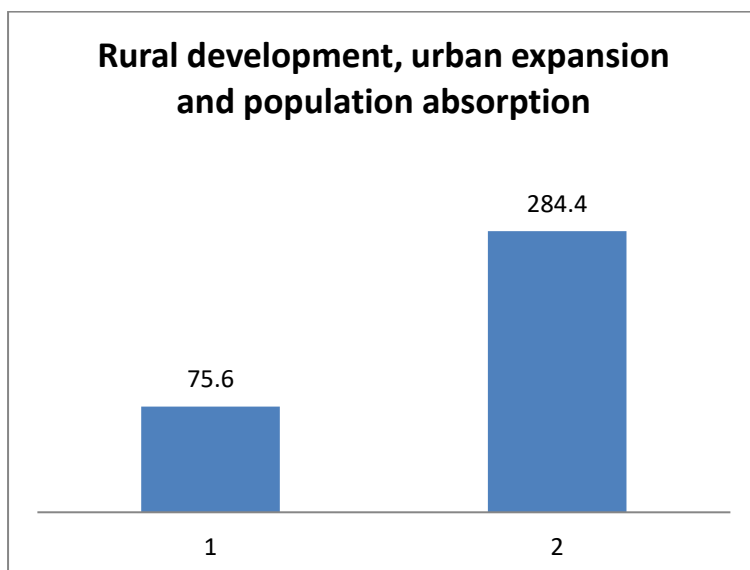
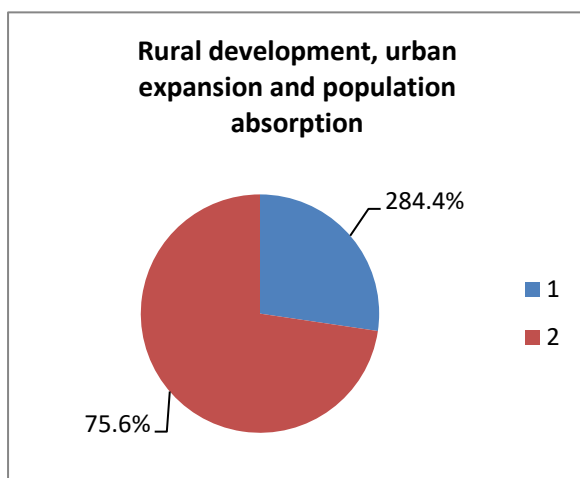




Table 5: Rural development, urban expansion and population absorption

Response	F(Uyo)	F(Ikot Ekpene)	Total	%	Degree score
Strongly agree	140	142	282	79	284.4
Agree	42	33	75	21	75.6
Undecided	0	0	0	0	0
Disagree	0	0	0	0	0
Strongly disagree	0	0	0	0	0
Total	182	175	357	100%	360





SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Findings from Table 3, reveal that 45.1% of the respondents strongly agree to the fact that population growth does affect urban renewal development programmes in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene LGA, 39.2% (agree), 8.9% (disagree) while 7% (disagree) that population growth does affect urban renewal programmes causing speedy decay and dilapidation of urban centres. The analysis shows a link between population growth and urban development in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas of Akwa Ibom State. Unless there is a corresponding investment in rural development to reduce rural-urban migration, population growth in urban centres will make the area deficient of development and transformation Saviour, Udom and Clement, 2024: Daniel, Udousoro and Effiong, 2024). The findings further indicated that the population where it outgrows urban facilities will strain the purpose to which it was provided causing its devaluation and not allowing it to attain its optimal purpose.

In Table 4, the analysis indicates that urban renewal projects when planned in linear balance will absorb the projected population. The findings show that 51.5% of the population strongly agree to the fact that for an urban renewal project to survive, it must have been planned in line with the population growth rate of the area; 41.7% agree to this submission as postulated. The disagree population (6.8%) is insignificant as against 93.7% of the population that agrees with this position, the findings affirm the postulation of the elimination by substitution, the theory that where urban reveal is planned in accordance with population projection, the project will be sustained and population control, while 4.8% and 2% disagree and strongly disagree respectively.

Table 5 discusses the effects of rural development and urban expansion on population absorption. The findings show 79% (strongly Agree) and 21% (agree), that when the government embark on rural development programmes that are people's oriented, it will reduce population growth by reducing the attractions of rural-urban migration, and also reveals that public-private partnership will boast sustainable urban renewal programmes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the fact that population growth impinges on urban removal strategies in Uyo and Ikot Ekpene Local Government Areas. The study recommends the following:

1. Research on population growth, trends and dynamics of urban renewal/development should be intensified. This will unveil other challenges of urban renewal advancement in the study area as well as proffers ways of curbing them.
2. There is a need to build population registration centres in all political wards. This will help the government generate reliable population data for planning development programmes and projections. This effort will help align population growth with urban renewal strategies, enrich the sanitation system, reduce traffic and accommodate the population as well as attract investors, and tourists, and create jobs. This should be in line with the postulate of the elimination by substitution which anchored the study.
3. The government should institute rural development policies with a periodic renewal strategy to assess their effectiveness and enhance rural infrastructural development



projects as well as the extension of income-generating avenues to rural communities in order to improve the quality of life of rural people, create new cities and by so doing reduces migration to urban centres.

4. The study strongly recommends public-private partnerships for sustainable urban renewal programmes and enhanced livelihood through job creation and economic opportunities.

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