

**ASSESSING THE COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY
OF NIGERIA AMONG RESIDENCE OF BWARI AREA COUNCIL OF FCT ABUJA
AND ITS IMPLICATION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

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ABSTRACT

Population constitute a very important resource for development and when it is managed well it can be a catalyst for any meaningful development. The FGNI in its effort to control the rapidly growing population of Nigeria (2.5%) put in place a National Population Policy of Nigeria (NPPN) in 1988 and 2004 which stipulates four children per woman. This research is aimed at assessing the level of awareness of Nigerians of the policy and the extent to which they have complied. The research used the survey design and adopted 300 as the sample population and the method for collecting data was through questionnaire using the random sampling technique. The findings of the research revealed that 91.3% of the respondents are literate, 82% have ever heard of the NPPN and 70%, have 1-4 children. Most of the targets of the NPPN aimed at birth control have not been achieved by 2021. The researchers recommended that: efforts be made by government to sustain

the progress made. An agency of government must be charged with the responsibility of sustaining awareness campaigns. Religious leaders should be involved in the awareness campaign. Adequate funding of the implementation agencies will form the bases for sustainability.

Key Words: Assessing, Compliance, Residents, Resource, Sustainable Development.

INTRODUCTION

Population policy in Nigeria was never considered to be a serious issue that needed attention until the post 1980's. Prior to that time the oil boom provided large revenue to government and so they never knew that population would later become a problem that necessitated the establishment of a population policy.

Population planning is anchored on the concept of population and resources; the Malthusian theory which states that resources are exhaustible while population continues to grow if not checked through birth control. The 1988 National Population Policy of Nigeria (NPPN) has a provision which states that each woman should have four children. This was necessary because the high growth rate has already become a serious problem to government. If the growth rate of 3% continues, Nigeria's population that was 31,797,000 in 1950 would be 233,557,691 in 2025.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM Many findings by different researchers state that population is a very important resource for any meaningful development if controlled and well

managed but if it far exceeds the available resources there will be danger of insufficient food, high pressure on infrastructure, health facilities, schools etc. In such a situation a country faces the crisis of very slow development or even stagnation. The Nigerian Government in 1988 came out with a NPPN aimed at controlling the population growth rate. The level of awareness of the policy among Nigerians is low and if nothing is done to increase the awareness the targets set by the policy may not be realized. It is against this backdrop that the researchers went to assess the level of awareness and compliance with the policy. The research questions that guided the study are;

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What is the level of awareness of the people of Bwari Area Council on NPPN
2. What is the level of their compliance to the NPPN?
3. What is the implication of the level of awareness on population growth?

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to assess the compliance of the residents of Bwari Area Council with the

National Population Policy. In order to achieve the above aim the objectives shall be:

1. Assess the level of awareness of the residence of Bwari on the NPPN.
2. Assess the level of compliance of the residence of Bwari on NPPN.
3. Identify the number of children per respondent.
4. Determine the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

HYPOTHESES

The study shall adopt the Null (Ho) hypothesis in testing relationship between the variables

1. There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on NPPN across wards in Bwari Area Council.
2. There is no relationship between the number of children of residents of Bwari and their level of educational qualification.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Malthusian theory is the theoretical framework upon which this paper was written. Rev. Thomas Malthus in 1798 wrote an essay on population in which he formulated a theory of interrelationship between population and social change and economic resources. He postulated three propositions; firstly, the means of subsistence, determines the increase in population. Consequently, population consistently increases with available means of survival and thirdly, checking population

involves producing misery or vice. He further opined that the power of a population growth superseded the power of the humans to produce subsistence i.e. population grows at geometric rate while resources e.g. food grows at arithmetical rate. According to (Ojo, 2002), Thomas Malthus predicted that the geometric power of population growth and the arithmetic power of food production predicted a future when humans would have no resources to survive. Although Malthus was criticised for not seeing the contribution of technological advancements in food production yet many nations came to terms with the reality that they must formulate population policy that would guide their population growth. In 1960, Nigeria population was 41,551,000 and by 1985 it had doubled to 81,555. By 1988 Nigeria had seen the need for a population policy. According to Turnwait et al (2017), regardless of Nigeria's position in the recent global population ranking, the nation did not perceive the need for a population policy until the 1980's when the government realised that population is a problem.

AN APPRAISAL OF 1988 & 2004 POPULATION POLICIES OF NIGERIA

The first Nigeria's population policy was in 1988 which was the aftermath of the oil boom of the 70s which resulted into rapid population growth. The government's major target in the policy was to alter the reproductive behaviour of Nigerians. This was to be achieved through

the protection of the health of mother and child; to reduce the proportion of women who get married before the age of 18 years by 50% by 1995 and by 80% by 2000. By the year 1995 the government intended to extend the coverage of family planning service to 50% of women of child bearing age and 80% by the year 2000. Similarly, to reduce the number of children a woman is likely to have during her lifetime, to 4 per woman by the year 2000 and reduce the present rate of population growth from about 3.3% per year to 2.5% by 1995 and 2.0% by the year 2000 (Federal Republic of Nigeria 1988:13-14). In addition, there was advocacy by the government for the use of contraceptives among women of child-bearing age. The policy was aimed at reducing fertility rate of women in order to improve the quality of life of all women consequently all Nigerians. A Nigerian Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) was carried out in 2013 on awareness and use of contraceptives among married women across geo-political zones in Nigeria. Findings from the survey showed that 38% of women in the SW were aware, 29% in SE, 28% in SS, 3% NE and NC 16%.

Although the awareness was still low but still higher than the period when the policy had not been promulgated. (NDHS data (NPC & ICP 2009).

Religion influences fertility and family size. Some religions support polygamy and do not limit the number of children. According to Caldwell (1987:427), traditional African

religious values have sustained high fertility and large family size.

NATIONAL POPULATION POLICY

FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT As a follow up of the UN; MDG for sustainable Development that Nigerian government adopted a National Policy on Population for sustainable Development in 2004 with an end date for 2015 for most of the targets. It was aimed at improving the living standards of Nigerians by addressing the complex interrelationships between population and development. The interventions were on nine thematic areas which are health, environment, education, communication, population dynamics, youth and adolescents, socio-cultural barriers and legal support, population and development planning and population statistics. The targets of the NPP was 2015 but even by 2017 most of the targets were not achieved, According to HPT policy Brief 2017 the target for population growth rate was 2% but by 2013/14 the growth rate was 3.2%. The expected total fertility rate declined by 2015 was 4.38 but by 2014 it was 5.5.

METHODOLOGY

The study design used the survey type that involves the use of questionnaire to collect data from respondents on the assessment of the compliance to NPPN among Bwari residents. Main sources of data were primary and secondary. The primary source of data was the Questionnaire method. Both husbands and

wives were randomly selected on household bases to find out their different opinions on the level of compliance to the NPPN. The data was collected through random sampling method. Bwari area council has 10 wards out of which six were randomly selected representing 60%. The population projection of Adults in Bwari area Council as at 2016 was projected to be 118, 533 by the (NPC). The sample population was 300. The secondary sources were Journals and books. Analysis of data was carried out using SPSS version 23.0. Descriptive statistics

involving frequencies were also used in interpreting the result. ANOVA, and Independent T-test were used for the test of two hypotheses.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This section deals with the responses from the respondents in the selected six wards of Bwari area council. Table 1 presents the level of education of the respondents.

Table 1: Level of Education of Respondents According to Wards

S/	Level of		Ushafa			Shere		Bwari		Dutse		Igu		Total		
N	Education		No		Kudur u No	No		No		No	%	No	%	No	%	
			%		%	%		%		%		%		%		
1.	No	Formal	6	12	0	5	10		0	0	4	8		25	8.3	
		Educ.			0	10	20									
2.		FSLC	7	14	2	13	2	4	1	2	6	12		31	10.3	
					4	26										
3.	GCE/SSE										10	20		57	19	
			2		14	8	11		12							
			4.0		28	16	22		24							
4.		Tertiary	35	70	34	24	27		37		30	60		187	62.3	
		Educ.			68	48	54		74							
	Total		50		50	50	50		50		50	100		300	100	
			100		100	100	100		100							

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 1 shows that 62.3% of the respondents have tertiary education, 19% has

20% which is the highest number of have O level GCE/SSCE, and 10.3% have respondents with

no formal education. The FSLC as their highest educational high literacy level of the respondents is qualification while 8.3% has no formal likely responsible for high compliance to the education in Bwari area council. Among the NPPN as presented in Table 1. wards Dutse has 74% of its respondents with tertiary education while Bwari ward

Table 2 presents the level of awareness on NPPN among the respondents.

Table 2: Level of awareness on National Population Policy among Respondents

Response	Ushafa		Kuduru		Shere		Bwari		Dutse		Igu		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	37	74	38	76	41	82	49	98	33	66	42	84	240	80
No	13	26	12	24	9	8	1	2	17	34	8	16	60	20
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

Table 2, shows that 80% of the respondents in Bwari area Council are aware of the NPPN. Among the wards, Bwari ward accounts for the highest (98%) of the respondents while Dutse accounts for the lowest (66%). Table 3 presents the level of compliance of the respondents.

Table 3: Compliance to the National Population Policy of Nigeria

Response	Ushafa		Kuduru		Shere		Bwari		Dutse		Igu		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Yes	32	64	35	70	36	72	40	80	24	48	47	94	214	71.3
No	18	36	15	30	14	28	10	20	26	42	3	6	86	28.7
Total	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	50	100	300	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

According to table 3, 71.3% of the respondents have complied with some parts of the policy such as four children per woman, use of family planning methods.

Among the wards, Igu ward accounts for the

highest (94%) while Dutse ward accounts for the lowest (48%) of those who have complied. Table 4 presents the number of children per respondents by wards.

Table 4: No of Children of Respondents by Wards

No of Children	Ushafa		Kuduru		Shere		Bwari		Dutse		Igu		Total	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
1 - 4	37	80.4	43	87.8	32	71.1	26	52	32	68.1	38	77.6	208	72.7
5 - 9	5	10.9	5	10.2	11	24.5	13	26	11	23.4	9	18.4	54	18.9
10 - 14	4	8.7	1	2.0	2	4.4	9	18	1	2.1	1	2.0	18	6.3
15 - 19	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	2	0.7
20& above	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	6.4	1	2.0	4	1.4
Total	46	100	49	100	45	100	50	100	47	100	49	100	286	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

According to Table 4, 72.7% of the respondents have 1-4 children which shows a high level of compliance to the policy of one woman to four children. Among the wards, Kuduru accounts for the highest (87.8%) respondents while Bwari accounts for the lowest 52%.

Table 5 presents the ages of the respondents at married. The table shows that 42.3% of the respondents got married between ages of 20 – 25yrs and 24% got married between the ages of 26 – 30.

Table 5: Ages at Marriage of Respondents

Age at marriage	No	%
20 – 25yrs	127	42.3
26 – 30yrs	72	24.0
31 – 35yrs	31	10.3
36 and above	13	4.3
Total	300	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

This suggests that most of them got married after secondary school or after tertiary

education. Education is said to play very important role in the number of children couples have.

NPPN awareness, but this is only limited to Kuduru, Bwari and Igu. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the level of

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference in the level of awareness on National Population Policy across wards in Bwari Area Council.

Table 6 shows the ANOVA result of residents' responses in Bwari Area Council of Abuja. The test value known as Population Policy Awareness was calculated as a composite variable by summing variables 6, 7 and 18. The F-ratio test which signifies the Between Groups sum of squares divided by the Within Groups mean square gave a result of 4.669. That is F-ratio (5, 294) at $p < 0.05$ is significant at $p = .000$. The multiple comparisons of mean score differences across wards in Bwari area council have been calculated. The multiple comparisons show that between Ushafa and Kuduru, Bwari and Igu, there is significant difference in the opinions of the residents with respect to national population policy awareness. This is so because the mean differences (I-J) are less than 0.05 alpha level. However, this is not so for Shere (0.897) and Dutse (0.518) where the mean differences are greater than 0.05. This implies that although there is significant difference in the opinion of the residents of Bwari Area Council as a whole with respect to

awareness on National Population Policy be rejected.

across wards in Bwari Area Council should

Table 6: ANOVA of Residents' Responses on National Population Policy Awareness Amongst Wards in Bwari Area Council

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	13.947	5	2.789	4.669	.000
Within Groups	175.640	294	.597		
Total	189.587	299			

Hypothesis 2:

There is no relationship between the number of children of residents of Bwari and their level of educational qualification.

Table 7: Model Summary of the Relationship between Number of Children of Residents in Bwari Area Council and Educational Qualifications

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.393 ^a	.154	.151	.758	.154	54.378	1	298	.000

Table 7 shows the summary of the relationship between number of children of residents in Bwari Area Council and their educational qualifications. The relationship is represented by $R = .393$. This means that there is correlation between the educational qualifications of the residents and the number of children they have. This value is moderately

high and significant at $F(1, 298) = .000$. The R^2 which depicts the coefficient of determination represents the percentage variance accounted for by the interaction of educational qualification on the dependent variable. This represents a change of 15.1%.

a. Dependent Variable: 10

Table 8: Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients ⁷⁹	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	2.463	.153		16.073	.000
4	-.325	.044	-.393	-7.374	.000

Table 8 further confirms this result. The ttest carried out on the dependent variable shows that the calculated t-value = -7.374 in absolute terms. This value is greater than the critical table value of 1.648 at $p < 0.05$ alpha level. This means that there is significant relationship between the number of children of residents of Bwari and their level of educational qualification. Therefore the hypothesis should be rejected.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this research show that a greater part of the NPPN has been achieved by the residents of Bwari Area Council. This has been explained by the high level of awareness and compliance to the policy among residents of Bwari Area council due mainly to high level of literacy. Over 90% of the respondents are literate in which 62.3% have tertiary education. Majority of them have less than four children which is in accordance with the fertility rate policy of one wife four children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research, the following recommendations were made.

1. Although the level of awareness of the NPPN and compliance is high, efforts

must be made by government to sustain the progress made.

2. An agency of government must be charged with the responsibility of sustaining awareness campaign on the whole policy to the grassroots and people that comply should be given some rewards.
3. Religious leaders should be involved in the awareness campaign because it is easier for them to persuade their followers.

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