RURAL – URBAN DIFFERENTIAL IN HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS IN NIGERIA: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE.

E. C. NWOGU AND I. S. IWUEZE

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses housing characteristics according to rural – urban locations in Nigeria. The ultimate objective is to examine the factors influencing housing needs and housing provision which may be relevant in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of future housing programmes and policies. Secondary data drawn mainly from the 1981/82 NFS, 1991 Population Census, the 1990, 1999 and 2003 NDHS were analysed using simple descriptive statistics. The results show that housing situation in Nigeria is characterized by acute shortage of housing and housing facilities; especially in the rural areas and over-use of the available ones, among others. Some of the constraints to provision of housing identified include lack of sustained effort at rural development, difficulty in land acquisition, adverse demographic, socio-economic and cultural conditions within and outside the country and paucity of accurate and reliable data on housing needs and housing provision among others. Demographic characteristics are the major determinants of housing needs of a population. Therefore, a conceptual framework, representing the perceived relationship between population variables and housing needs has been proposed. This could enhance the planning and implementation of appropriate programmes and strategies for provision of housing and housing facilities for both the rural and urban residents.

KEYWORD: Expressions: Housing, Household, Population variables, Overcrowding, Urbanization.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the basic needs of man is housing and the provision of decent and adequate housing has been acknowledged as an integral part of social responsibilities. Housing refers not only to physical structures but includes all necessary services, facilities, equipment and devices needed or desired for physical and mental health and social well-being of the family and individual [Ohadike (1988)]. In other words, housing means more than the construction of standard dwelling units. The primary purpose of housing is to provide shelter, privacy and security for the occupants. Housing also provides the occupants access to income and employment, raises efficiency of other investments and increases productivity through the effects which improved housing condition has on morbidity and health, labour stability etc. Housing serves as a centre of a family's total residential environment, a focus of economic activity, a symbol of achievement and social acceptance, as element of urban growth and income distribution. Housing engenders stable family life, enhances social identification and prestige and reduces such social vices as juvenile delinquency, moral laxity, criminal propensities and hooliganism [Koshoni (1978), Nwagwu (1985), Ohadike (1988) and Hanson (1992)].

Poor nutrition and poor housing are major causes of high morbidity and mortality among the poor in the developing countries. Diseases and low expectation of life are associated with poor housing, overcrowding, poor drainage, water supply, bathing and toilet facilities, poor waste disposal arrangement and development of slums and uncontrolled settlements. Ohadike (1988) quoted Edwin Chadwick (1842) as saying that the improvement in health that accompanied improvement in housing and sanitation in Western countries during the industrial revolution occurred long before most of the effective treatments for diseases were discovered.

In recognition of the importance of decent and affordable housing for every human being, the United Nations organized the Habitat Conference of Vancouver in 1976 and declared 987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH). In line with the objective of that conference, individual countries have been taking some steps to improve the housing conditions and needs of their citizens. In Nigeria, provision of housing facilities has been receiving increasing attention from both the States and Federal Governments [NPC (2004a)]. From almost a total neglect of the housing sector in the first two National Development Plan (NDP) period 1965 to 1974, government moved to the 1972 National Housing Programme which planned to build 59,000 housing units in Lagos and 4000 in each of the remaining eleven State capitals then. In the third NDP (1975 – 1980), the Federal Government budgeted the sum of ₦2.6 billion for housing and accepted housing development as part of its social responsibilities. Government's specific strategies include direct construction of housing units for letting at subsidized rates, expansion of credit facilities to enhance private housing construction and increased investment in domestic production of building materials. Government also planned to provide 40,000 housing units per annum from 1979 to 1983 and budgeted the sum of ₦1.9bn for housing in the fourth NDP (1980 – 1085). The 1991 new National Housing Policy provided for a mandatory National Housing Fund requiring all Nigerians earning at least ₦3000.00 per annum to contribute $2\frac{1}{2}$ percent of their monthly incomes for housing.

Housing condition, especially in developing nations, is influenced by a number of factors. Some of these factors are discussed in Section 2. Some studies have also revealed that housing condition also depends on location (rural or urban). UN (1973) observed that the volume and types of housing in rural and urban areas may vary with varying levels of urbanization. This is because of differences in standards and requirements for housing and in the demographic composition of their population. Housing sector in urban areas is also closely related to such other aspects of urban environment as transportation, sanitary services and other public utilities. This, therefore, calls for proper coordination between housing programmes and planning for other facilities. While emphasizing on the differences in rural and urban housing requirements, Ohadike (1988) pointed out that while shortfall in housing stock may be a critical problem in urban areas, it may not be as critical in the rural areas as a problem of health and environmental degradation. Some have also argued that while the major problem in urban areas is the shortage of housing units with the associated overcrowding and squalid environmental conditions, the problem in the rural areas is

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largely that of poor quality housing reflected in unsafe and poor ventilated structures that are lacking services like portable water and electricity supply among others. The structures of the housing units in the rural areas is usually poor and lacks permanency, especially the roof that is mostly made of wood and thatch and the floor mostly made of mud, sand and animal dung. Rural houses also lack adequate number of rooms for sitting, sleeping, cooking and for domestic animals. Some times, these animals sleep in the same house as members of the households with all the possible menace to human health [Ohadike (1988) and FOS (1996)]. Sometimes the best that may happen is for the domestic animals to be housed in the kitchen. In this study, the status of housing and housing facilities in the rural and urban areas in Nigeria are examined in Section 3. In discussing the housing situation in Nigeria secondary data from the 1981/82 Nigeria Fertility Survey (NFS), 1991 Population Census and the 1990, 1999 and 2003 Nigeria Demographic and Health surveys (NDHS) as well as data from other supplementary sources were used. The data were analysed using simple descriptive statistics such as mean, percentages and cross tabulation. Demographic composition of the population is the basis for assessing housing needs. The relationship between population and housing facilities is greatly affected by the characteristics of the population. This relationship also helps to determine the type of data needed for effective planning and sustainable development. In Section 4, the nature of this relationship between population and housing needs has been examined and illustrated, among other recommendations.

2.0   FACTORS AFFECTING HOUSING CONDITON.

A number of factors have been identified to be responsible for housing situation in Nigeria, as in many developing countries. These include lack of adequate government attention to housing needs, lack of appropriate housing standards and master plan and poor enforcement of the existing ones. Others include lack of commitment towards the implementation of rural development programmes, difficulty in land acquisition, low household income arising from the general economic depression, high cost of building materials and labour, lack of accurate data for determining housing needs and adverse demographic characteristics (size, structure/composition, distribution and change over time). UN (1973), Ohadike(1988) and NPC(2004b) have acknowledged the adverse effects of lack of adequate government attention to housing needs in most developing countries. Ohadike (1988) observed that, apart from government's low investment into the housing sector, they have done too little to attract private investment and in terms of modifying the existing regulations to promote low-cost housing and self-help programmes in regulating rising urban land values, rents and housing construction costs. There are no completely satisfactory criteria for allocation of resources to housing. Housing has frequently been assigned a relatively low priority in the planning of social and economic development. UN (1973) attribute this situation to the low and slow rates of returns to the huge investments involved in residential construction and noted that this factor weighs heavily in developing countries where capital resources are limited.

In Nigeria Adeniyi (1978), Nwagwu (1985) and FOS (1996) noted that until recently Federal and State Governments have contributed little to the provision of residential houses for the

citizens. Positive government involvement in housing provision started in 1972 when the Federal Government voted ₦160m for housing in Nigeria's urban centres. In the 1975-1980 NDP Federal government budgeted for about 200,000 housing units for the citizens. However, only about 15 percent of this target figure was achieved at the end of the plan period. Furthermore, only about 20 percent of the planned target was achieved at the end of the 1979 - 1983 plan period. The housing programme of the fourth NDP (1980 – 1985), the 1991

National Housing Policy and the 1994 National Housing scheme failed because of a combination of political and socio-economic constraints. For example the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) introduced in 1986 raised cost of housing out of the reach of most Nigerians. Most Nigerians also, could not afford the mandatory contribution of 2.5 percent of their monthly salary required under the 1991 Housing policy due to low income while inflation nearly doubled the original prices of the houses in the 1994 National Housing scheme even before the construction started [FOS (1996)]. The cumulative effect of these unrealized housing targets is the acute shortage of housing units being experienced today. Various rural development programmes have been initiated but little or no efforts have been made to sustain them. The Directorate for Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) is one such programme initiated to address the problems of rural development but could not be sustained to achieve its objectives.

Another problem is lack of housing standards and building codes. According to Ohadike (1988), the building codes in use in most developing countries are cumbersome to apply or completely out of date as most of them have not been modified and revised to reflect the present conditions. There are no appropriate building by-laws, zoning regulations and site planning. Where they exist, they are hardly enforced. The result is that so many towns are built without basic plans, overcrowded and lack basic services. The demolition exercise going on in Abuja and other urban centres as well as the rampant cases of collapsed buildings in various parts of the country could have been avoided if appropriate building regulation had been enforced.

Land acquisition, especially in urban areas is another major constraint to the realization of housing development. Ohadike (1988) had observed that many housing projects are unable to start when planned due to unavailability of land when it is needed. The cost of land acquisition has gone beyond the reach of most urban and rural dwellers. A Nigerian Head of State was quoted as having acknowledged that land acquisition is actually a very serious constraint to rapid expansion of housing in his 1977 / 78 budget broadcast. In Ghana, Hanson (1992) observed that there are more social and psychological attachments to land. As such, even when the landowners do not have the resources to develop their land they are unwilling to part with it. Besides the high cost of land acquisition, the processes of land registration and securing certificates of occupancy and building permit are very rigorous, slow and expensive. For example, under the Imo State Decree 3 of 1993, land registration, which cost about N21.00 in 1987, cost about N1000.00 in 1996 and about N1500.00 in 2000.

Poor household incomes and the rising cost of construction and construction materials also contribute to housing problem. The poor household income is as a result of the general economic depression and prevailing high interest loans. Various government loan arrangements have benefited the high -income and elite groups more than the low – income groups. In Nigeria the lending conditions and administrative procedure of many banks have been made so stringent, slow and frustrating that their services became difficult to secure by the Nigerian masses. FOS (1998) revealed that one major problem of housing had been associated with high interest rates on mortgage. Koshoni (1978) and NPC (2004b) also acknowledged lack of capital, among other factors, as the constraints to housing development.

The rising cost of building houses and of building materials is due to high inflation rates and the heavy reliance on imported or semi imported building materials. Koshoni (1978) noted that while efforts are being made to address other problems of housing in Nigeria, the shortage and high cost of building materials are likely to remain for a long time unless immediate solution is available. Till today, the problem has remained with us. Presently, a bag of cement costs about ₦1500.00, a bundle of corrugated roofing sheets costs

between six and eight thousand Naira while a trip of sand for construction of houses costs about ₦5000.00 within and around most state capitals in the Southeastern part of the Country. The labour costs of construct n, electrification, provision of water, toilet facilities, standard waste-disposal arrangement are quite exorbitant and beyond the reach of most Nigerians. Adeniyi (1978) observed that attempts to control the price of cement since 1965 appear not to have been successful as the price of cement keeps rising as a result of increasing demand for housing and other construction activities. The cost of other building materials and workmanship are not easily controlled given the increasing demand for building materials (most of which are imported) and the prevailing adverse economic condition.

Apart from the high cost of housing construction, the cost of renting accommodation is also very high. In most parts of the country, the cost of renting one room apartment ranges from about ₦1000.00 to more than ₦10000.00 per month. To rent a three-bed-room apartment, one needs a little less than ₦10000.00 to well over ₦20000.00 per month. Various rent control measures have failed to achieve their purpose because rent on any property is related to the initial cost and the consequent amortization rates [Adeniyi, (1978)].

Another factor that influences housing situation and perhaps a major determining factor are adverse demographic characteristics of the population. Large household size, according to UN (1973) and NPC (2004b) is a characteristic of developing countries arising from high rate of population growth and the type of family and social organization prevalent in Africa. And the higher the rate of population growth, the faster the rate of increase in housing needs. Currently, the Nigerian population is estimated to be growing at the rate of about 2.9 per cent per year [NPC (2004b)]. This high rate of population growth is as a result of high level of fertility in relation to mortality and migration. In Nigeria, available evidence shows that fertility level is quite high and much higher in rural than urban areas [NPB (1984), FOS (1992) and NPC (1998. 2000 and 2004)]. The required size of dwelling unit of a household increases with the birth and growth of children and later decreases when children leave home and marriages dissolved through death of one spouse, divorce or separation (UN 1973)]. Nuptiality variables such as number of persons marrying, the age at which they marry and marital stability affects housing needs directly and indirectly. UN (1973) has noted that apart from those of unmarried persons living by themselves, new housing needs normally arise at the time of marriage. Fertility level, which ultimately leads to population growth, depends to a large extent on these nuptiality variables. In Nigeria, marriage is early, universal and highly stable. These, coupled with low use of modern methods of contraception, have kept fertility level and population growth rate high and therefore, increased the housing needs.

Available evidence from NPB (1984), FOS (1992), and NPC (1998, 2000 and 2004) indicates that the adverse fertility, nuptiality variables and contraceptive use are worse in the rural than urban areas.

Migration, especially rural to urban, affects housing needs through its influence or redistribution of population. Rural-urban migration may be attributable to the concentration of administrative, commercial and industrial activities as well as social amenities in a few urban areas. The 1970 industrial survey by FOS revealed that more than 75 per cent of all industrial establishments in Nigeria were sited in the then 12 state capitals. This concentration of activities in few urban areas creates a feeling of job availability in those areas. This, in turn, leads to rapid urban population growth and the consequent housing shortage. This movement affects mainly those in the age range 15 – 44 years. This high concentration of population in the reproductive age range coupled with high fertility rate is responsible for high urban population growth rate. Migration, especially rural-urban, affects the size, structure and distribution of population and hence the housing needs.

Other demographic, social, economic and cultural characteristics also affect the housing needs of a society indirectly through their influences on the population size, structure, distribution and growth. About 50 percent of Nigeria population is under 18 years of age. The African socio-cultural organization places on the heads and income-earners of households the responsibility of accommodating them, even when they have started to work. This, according to Nwagwu (1985), may mean that demand for housing is minimized. However, this may also lead to unusually large household sizes. Ohadike (1988) noted that the fact that this high-density living does not usually lead to any serious social disruption means that the situation may continue to exist as far as the socio-cultural factors which nurture the extended family system persist and as long as the resources for development of housing to the required level and standard remain scarce. The quantity and quality of housing needs of a household also change with changes in the characteristics of the members. For instance, increases in the levels of education and income status of members may lead to increase in the housing needs of the household.

Political stability, weather conditions and distribution of social infrastructure, industrial, commercial and administrative activities also affect housing needs through their influences on population redistribution and on components of population change. The perceived concentration of employment opportunities in few urban centres has led to high concentration of population in the age bracket 15 – 44 years in them. This carries along with the problems of the population of the reproductive age group and housing needs. Adverse economic and weather conditions and political instability have also led to immigration of illegal aliens into Nigeria, mostly, from neighbouring ECOWAS countries, thus worsening the housing situation in the country. Many Nigerians and these illegal immigrants could be seen using uncompleted houses, the base of flyover bridges and pavements of public buildings as their shelter.

3.0   HOUSING SITUATION IN NIGERIA

Available evidence shows that housing situation in Nigeria, like in most developing countries, is characterized by acute shortage of housing units, deterioration of available ones and poor housing and environmental conditions, especially in the rural areas. The shortage of housing units is manifested in overcrowding, over-use of available social amenities, development of slums and uncontrolled settlements, large population living in uncompleted buildings, under flyover bridges and pavements of public buildings. Deterioration of existing structures arose because of lack of maintenance, high incidence of utilization, environmental degradation and poor quality of building materials [UN (1973), Ohadike (1988), Hanson (1992), NPC (2004b)]. These problems have existed for a long time but have worsened in the recent times as a result of adverse demographic, socio-economic and political conditions. From the results of the 1972 / 73 survey of housing conditions in ten selected urban centres in Nigeria, Adeniyi (1978) observed that at least 41 percent of the surveyed households lived in one room apartment while the mean number of persons per room was at least two in all except Iwo and a mean household size of 3.5 persons. Ohadike (1988) quoting the 1977 / 78 sample surveys in Addis Ababa and Lagos, Nigeria, stated that over half of the households in Lagos lived in one room while the per capita rate ranged from over two rooms per household in the better-off districts to just a little over one room in others. The survey also revealed an average occupancy rate (number of persons per room) of 3.7 persons per room.

Results of more recent surveys shown in Tables 2.1 and 2.2 do not show any substantial improvement in the housing situation in Nigeria. As Table 2.1 shows, about 49 percent (50.9 in the rural and 45.5 in the urban areas) of the surveyed households in the 2003 NDHS had at least five

members. The percentages with at least five members decreased from about 56.4 percent (57.5 in the rural and 50.1 in the urban areas) in the 1981/82 NFS to about 50.1 percent (50.9 in the rural and 48.4 in the urban are 's) in the 1999 NDHS. The mean household size is about fiv_ (5.1 in the rural and 4.7 in the urban areas) persons from the 2003 NDHS and at least five in all the surveys. Mean household size remained higher in the rural than the urban areas in all the surveys. From the 2003 NDHS occupancy rate (number of persons per room) is about 3.3 persons. It is higher in the rural (with about 3.6 persons) than urban areas (with about2.9 persons per room). Occupancy rate has remained more than 3 three persons per room from the 1990 NDHS to the recent surveys except the1999 NDHS. The lower figure of 2.5 persons per room (2.3 in the rural and 2.7 in the urban areas) recorded in the 1999 NHDS may be attributable to under enumeration. From the 2003 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS) the percentage of households with at least five members is about 38.0 (43.3 in the rural and 31.7 in the urban areas). This represents a substantial drop from the figure of more than 72 per cent observed by Hanson (1992) from the 1984 Ghana census. The estimate of the mean household size for Ghana from the 2003 GDHS is about four persons (4.3 in the rural and 3.6 in the urban areas). Adeniyi (1978) reported occupancy rates of 1.2 person for Brazil and 0.6 person for USA per room in 1970 and a mean household size of 2.6 for India in 1971. When compared with these figures from other countries and the United Nations standards, the figures for Nigeria indicate a high degree of overcrowding especially in the rural areas. According to UN (1973), a density of one person per room is ideal while a density of three or more persons per room amounts to overcrowding. Mean household size is higher in Nigeria than even India with the highest rates of population growth.

Apart from the high degree of overcrowding, available evidence also shows that housing facilities and conditions in Nigeria are substandard. A substantial percentage of the population, especially the rural residents, still lack safe drinking water, electricity, toilet facilities and standard waste disposal arrangement [Adeniyi (1978), Ohadike (1988),and NPC (2004a and (2004b)]. The World Housing survey of 21 African cities in 1970 revealed that the percentage of city population living in slums and uncontrolled settlements ranged from as low as 20 percent in Benghazi to as high as 75 percent in Ibadan, Nigeria, 77 percent in Magadiscio and 90 percent in Yaounde and Addis Ababa [Ohadike (1988)].

The results of the recent survey shown in Table 2.2 indicate a wide disparity in availability of household facilities between the rural and urban areas. Available evidence from the 2003 NDHS shows that the dominant source of water for both urban and rural areas is well. However, while about 32.9 percent of households in urban areas had access to piped water, only about 8.5 percent of households in the rural areas satisfied their water needs from other sources, which include spring, River/Stream, pond, lake, dam and rain water. These other sources served as the main sources of water for most households in the rural areas until the 1999 NDHS, when Well took over as the main source of water for most households. However, these other sources have remained the main source for large percentages of households in the rural areas till today. The hazards to which the health of the rural residents is exposed are quite high. With regards to electricity supply, the results of the surveys indicate that electricity is available to about 84.9 percent of urban households and about 33.8 percent of rural households. While the percentage of households with electricity in urban areas increased from about 77.8 in the 1981/82 NFS to about 84.9 in the 2003 NDHS, the percentage with electricity in the rural areas increased from about 8.9 in the 1981/82 NFS to about 33.8 in the 2003 NDHS. The implications of this for rural industrialization and

Table 2.1: Distribution of Household (Hhld) size in Nigeria and Ghana by Location (Rural – Urban) and Time.

Characteristics	1981/82 NFS		1990 NDHS		1991 CENSUS		1999 NDHS		2003 NDHS		2003 GDHS	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Household size	Percentage of Households											
1	7.1	11.3	9.2	16.2	12.5	18.9	11.2	11.4	9.8	14.9	17.5	24.5
2	11.0	12.3	9.6	12.7			11.0	11.9	11.5	12.7	11.3	14.2
3	11.5	12.7	12.7	12.9	38.9	38.0	12.8	13.7	14.2	14.0	13.1	14.2
4	12.8	13.5	13.2	12.2			13.8	14.6	13.4	12.8	14.5	15.4
5+	57.5	50.1	55.3	46.1	48.6	43.1	50.8	48.4	50.9	45.5	43.3	31.7
Mean Hhld size	6.0	5.1	5.6	4.8	5.1	4.7	5.1	4.8	5.1	4.7	4.3	3.6
No of persons perHhld	NA	NA	3.2	3.4	NA	NA	2.3	2.7	3.6	2.9	NA	NA
No of Households	7164	1446	4844	1649	1104 8584	6861 121	5334	2313	462 7	2598	3381	2870

Table 2.2: Distribution of Households (Hhld) in Nigeria and Ghana by Housing Facilities, Rural - Urban Locations and Time

Housing Facility Facility	1981/82 NFS		1990 NDHS		1999 NDHS		2003 NDHS		2003 GDHS	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
(a) Souce of water										
Piped Water	12.2	67.4	11.7	63.3	13.2	49.8	8.5	32.9	10.8	72.5
Well	38.4	25.3	34.9	22.2	44.0	38.9	55.4	47.7	56.9	18.6
Others	47.3	5.8	53.3	14.5	41.7	10.1	35.9	19.7	32.3	8.9
(b) Electricity Use Yes	8.9	77.8	8.6	82.4	27.9	84.3	33.8	84.9	24.1	76.9
No	88.6	20.6	91.4	17.6	70.9	14.9	66.0	15.0	75.8	23.1
(c) Type of Toilet										
Flush	1.3	20.1	2.1	29.9	4.3	30.6	6.7	28.7	1.7	21.2
Pit : Traditional	54.4	49.5	62.2	60.4	56.7	46.4	56.9	55.6	54.0	26.7
Ventilated					5.2	8.8	1.9	5.5	13.5	40.8
Bucket / Pan	0.8	17.1	0.3	1.5	0.1	0.3	NA	NA	0.2	4.5
Others / None	41.3	11.7	35.5	8.1	32.2	12.9	34.3	10.1	30.6	6.7
(d) Flooring Material										
Cement	NA	NA	46.9	72.6	45.6	67.1	39.6	47.4	71.5	54.5
Earth / Sand / Mud	NA	NA	50.6	7.1	44.8	9.8	43.6	9.9	17.8	3.2
Animal Dung	NA	NA	1.1	0.5	4.6	1.5	3.6	0.4	2.4	0.1
Carpet / Others	NA	NA	1.4	19.6	3.9	20.4	12.9	41.0	8.2	42.2
(e) Cooking Fuel Electricity	0.7	2.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.1	0.5	0.1	0.6
Gas	1.4	5.1	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.4	15.3
Kerosene	12.1	60.8	NA	NA	NA	NA	12.1	53.4	0.4	1.3
Firewood/Coal / Others	83.5	30.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	87.7	44.9	98.0	82.7

NA = Not Available

migration in Nigeria are quite obvious. Many industries can hardly thrive without electricity supply. The dominant toilet facility in both the urban and rural areas is the pit toilet (traditional and ventilated) from all the surveys. While the percentage using flush toilet in urban areas increased from about 20.1 in the 2003 NFS to about 28.7 in the 2003 NDHS, in the rural areas, it increased from about 1.3 percent in the 1981/82 NFS to about 6.7 percent in the 2003 NDHS. More than 34 percent of rural households had no toilet facility, thus resorting to the use of bush, field, river and other unauthorized places as their toilets. The situation improved only slightly from what was observed in the surveys before the 2003 NDHS. The health risk associated with this is quite high. From the results of the 2003 NDHS also, the flooring materials are cement for most (about 47.4 percent) households in the urban centres and Earth/Sand/Mud for most (about 43.6 percent) households in the rural areas, cooking fuel is firewood/coal for most (about 84.4 percent) of households in the rural areas and kerosene for most (about 53.4 percent) households in urban areas, although the use of firewood/coal is also very popular. This picture shows no improvement over what was observed in the 1981/82 NFS, the 1997 / 98 General household survey by FOS and the 2000/2001 FOS/ILO/SIMPOC National Modular Child Labour survey.

According to the 2003 GDHS, about 48.3 percent of the surveyed households had electricity and about 39.2 percent had piped water. About 10.7 percent used flush toilet, about 41.5 percent used traditional pit toilet while about 21.8 percent used bucket/pan, bush and field or had no toilet facility at all. Before this survey Hanson (1992) had observed that the housing situation in Accra Metropolitan Area (AMA) was characterized by critical negative factors such as deterioration of both the building fabrics (due to poor quality building materials); deterioration of the infrastructure due to poor maintenance and high incidence of utilization and environmental degradation. The cooking for most households in both rural and urban areas in Ghana is firewood/coal from the 2003 GDHS.

4.0   SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION
From the foregoing, it is clear that housing condition in Nigeria is substandard. Housing units are overcrowded especially in the rural areas. Mean household size is more than five, while occupancy rate is more than three persons per room. Quality of housing facilities in Nigeria is quite low. Most households in the rural areas do not have access to safe drinking water, electricity and standard toilet facilities. Flooring materials for most households in the rural areas are earth, sand, mud and animal dung. Contrary to the observations by NPC (2004b) and Ohadike (1988) both shortfall in housing stock and substandard housing facilities are more critical in rural than urban areas. These expose the rural populace to serious health hazards. Cooking fuel for most households in the rural areas and for a substantial percentage of households in the urban areas is firewood/coal. This poses serious danger to the aforestation Programme of the governments.

The low standard of housing conditions in Nigeria has widely been associated with adverse demographic characteristics of the population among other factors. As earlier noted in Section 2, population size, structure/composition, distribution and change affect both the quantity and quality of housing need. Therefore, to address the housing problems in Nigeria there is need to address the adverse demographic characteristics. To achieve this there is also the need for proper planning. This calls for determining housing stock and housing distribution in relation to the population. The perceived relationship between population characteristics and housing needs, already discussed in the last three paragraphs of Section 2, has been summed up in a conceptual framework shown in Figure 1.

Housing stock in an area is determined by considering the number, sizes and distribution of available housing units in the area, excluding army barracks, police quarters, prisons and hostels. The size of a house may be measured by the number of rooms in the house. The distribution of housing units is by rural-urban residence, income status and related characteristics. Growth of housing units may be assessed by looking at time series data on the number of housing units.

The household is the basic unit in the determination of housing needs of any society. The overall characteristic of a population (size, structure/composition, distribution and change) or the housing needs is a combination of the characteristics and housing needs of the constituent households. In fact, some of the methods often used to obtain projections of housing needs of a society are based on households. Housing deficit can be determined by considering the number of households per house, number of rooms per household, number of persons per household, number of persons per room and number of persons per house or by comparing these ratios with the UN recommended standards of mean occupancy rate of 2.5 persons per room and average of six rooms per house [Hanson (1992)]. Other indicators of shortage of housing units include number of persons living in substandard housing units – (uncompleted buildings, under flyover bridges, pavements of public buildings etc), development of slums and uncontrolled settlements and waiting lists of applicants for housing [UN (1973), Ohadike (1988) and Nwagwu (1985)].

A look at the availability or otherwise, of safe drinking water, Electricity, standard toilet facilities and drainage and waste disposal systems may help to assess the quality of

housing units. Other indicators of quality of housing units include quality of building materials used for the construction of the houses and replacement and rehabilitation of old and absolute housing units and facilities. Furthermore, households' housing preferences are of great importance. Responses to the question, "If you could choose the type of housing unit to live in what would that be?" may help to determine the level of unsatisfied quantity and quality of housing needs.

Proper planning for housing development has been hampered, not only in Nigeria, by paucity of accurate and reliable data on population characteristics and housing. Nwagwu (1985) recalled that the decree setting up the Federal Mortgage Bank makes provision for research into all facets of housing industry including monitoring of effectiveness or otherwise of government housing policies and programme, rent edicts, urban and suburban land etc, but regretted that this has not been implemented. Ohadike (1988) observed that any published figures on housing are only estimates. And in Africa, the estimates have no sound statistical database to strengthen their predictive value. Therefore, a well planned and organized collection of data on the population and housing needs in Nigeria, perhaps following the given conceptual framework may provide a sound basis for addressing the housing problems in Nigeria.

Furthermore, a more deliberate and sustained effort at rural development is needed to save our rural populace from the health hazards to which they are constantly exposed by substandard housing conditions. Perhaps, more of such organizations as DFRRI whose main objective is to address the problems of rural development may have to be resuscitated or established.
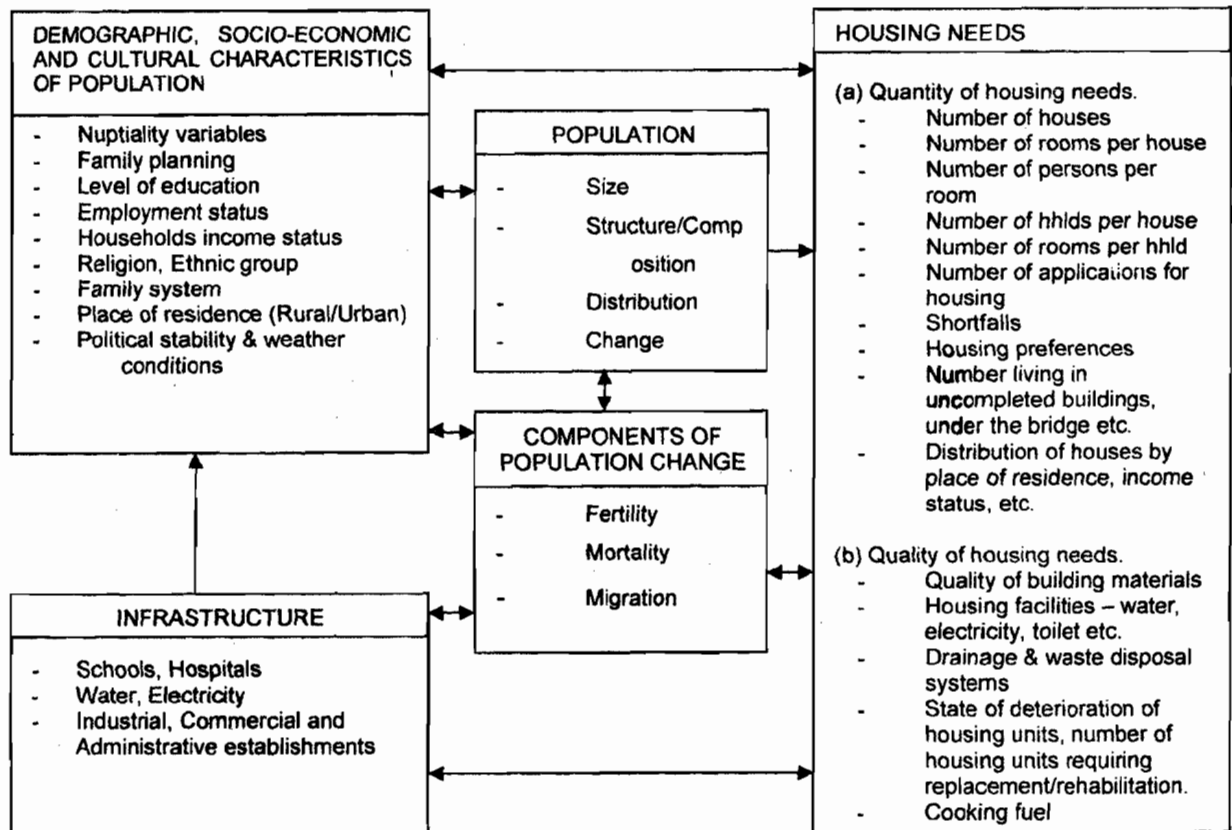

Fig. 1: Perceived Relationship between Population and Housing Needs.

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