

Urbanism and Crisis
Management in Nigeria

Urbanism and Crisis Management in Nigeria

Essays in Honour of Professor Akin Mabogunje

Edited by

**Isaac Olawale Albert
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Preface

Professor Tajudeen Akanji, *fspsp*
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The manuscripts which engendered this book were included in what my Administration inherited from that of Professor Isaac Olawale Albert when I succeeded him as the Director of the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies(IPSS), University of Ibadan, in August 2018. Like a few other ongoing activities of the Institute, the responsibility thus became mine to coordinate the completion of the book and ensure its public presentation. The toughest of the responsibilities was how to generate the financial resources to publish the book. It has taken about one year to deal with all of the issues. But here we are; now very much happy to reach the stage where the public can now read the interesting issues raised in this book. This gives my colleagues and I much joy. By this publication IPSS has demonstrated as it was its wont, the capacity to add to the existing body of knowledge of the University of Ibadan and far beyond. I am grateful to all the people who made this possible.

Some preliminary remarks about the Institute for Peace and Strategic Studies(IPSS) are necessary in order to put the story of the publication in the right historical perspective. The Senate of the University of Ibadan established the Institute in 2015 to provide world-class scholarship in Peace and Strategic Studies with particular focus on Africa. The Institute brings together some existing peace-related Courses in the university. One of these programmes, i. e. the Msc. Strategic Studies Programme of the university's Department of Political Science, is as old as 1994. Our MA and PhD programme in Peace and Conflict Studies came out of the Academic Link between the Universities of Ibadan and Ulster (Northern Ireland) in 1996. The first batch of students for the Programme started their courses in Year 2000. The Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (the defunct CEPACS) of the university started its Professional Masters degree programme in Refugee and Humanitarian Studies at about the same time while the Professional Masters degree programme of the Department of Geography in Disaster and Risk Management came later. All of these programmes were merged in 2015 to form IPSS. This therefore makes one of the most multidisciplinary programmes in the university today.

The book *Urbanism and Crisis Management in Nigeria* captures many of the issues that were taught under the different programmes of IPSS: Urban Risks and Disasters, Urban Conflict and Conflict Management as well as the social, economic, political and environmental aspects of Strategic Studies. This book joins the long list of several others written in-house for teaching the Courses over the years. These publications can be accessed easily in our Publications Section and they support other Peace and Conflict Studies programmes across Nigeria. The other universities request for them from time to time for the use of their students and Accreditation Programmes.

The publications are given to our students on annual basis largely to motivate them to appreciate the African dimensions and contexts of the global issues they are introduced to in the course of their studies. We do this deliberately to challenge the obvious global misunderstanding of some issues in contemporary African development. We consider it our responsibility to tell the African story the way it should be told otherwise our Graduates may end up as conveyors of ideas that would contribute too little to shaping and reshaping the future of the African continent. Our publications help us to tell our African story in a manner that directly speaks to our local experiences. IPSS intends to publish more of such publications (books, journals, training manuals and monographs) this year and in the years to come.

However, I consider *Urbanism and Crisis Management in Nigeria* as a book outside the ordinary. The book is not just published to quench our thirst for telling our African story or generating more books for teaching our Courses. It was published to honour one of the greatest scholars ever produced by the University of Ibadan: Professor Akin Mabogunje, who is widely recognised as one of the promoters of Urban Studies in the world. He was and still is a big city planner. His academic works and professional acumen have brought great honours to Nigeria and the University of Ibadan where he spent the greatest part of his academic life. Even after retiring from the University, he has continued to provide support services to the university and mentor the young ones. Professor Albert's interest in Urban History took roots from Professor Mabogunje. Albert remembers him as one of the senior colleagues who helped to shape the historic Urban Management and Urban Violence in Africa research projects that IFRA did in the 1990s. What is called "Peace and Conflict Studies" in the University of Ibadan today emerged from that project.

Dr. Taibat Lawanson, the second Editor of this volume who came all the way from the University of Lagos to support our publishing tradition in IPSS, was groomed into becoming an outstanding urban planner by the publications of and her contacts with Professor Akin Mabogunje. Albert and Lawanson had met at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center in Italy in 2016 to begin work on this book project. IPSS is happy to partner with them on the project. I appreciate their efforts.

The agreement reached with the Editors is that the resources generated from this publication would be lodged into a Dedicated Account to celebrate Professor Mabogunje continuously. IPSS identifies with this noble position and does promise to work with other relevant stakeholders to ensure the success of this Initiative.

April 2019

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CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Public Utilities, Population Growth and Dynamics of Urban Development in Owerri, 1927-1977

Ononiwu A. Oparah

Introduction

Public utilities and population growth are essential indication in evaluation of any urban centre and its *faubourgs*. Generally, urbanism in Nigeria predates British colonisation, for instance, the history of urbanisation in northern part of the country was well elucidated by Clapperton in 1829, Barth in 1857 and Leo Africanus in 1896 where the writers describe the wealth and economic activities of Kano, Katsina, Kanem, Bornu, Sokoto, and Gummel as a result of their involvement in trans-Saharan trade. Similarly, to the Western Nigeria of Yorubaland, Johnson (1921) states that many of the towns came into existence as early as the 7th and 8th centuries about the same time that some northern towns were flourishing (Uyanga, 1982:1). On the other, development of towns as urban centres in the hinterland of the Eastern region had been more recent and was closely associated with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the British colonial rule. The colonial administrative effect on the nature of urban development in Nigeria could be summarised in terms of two factors – the integration of the country and the establishment of network of rail communication. Studies have shown that these two factors had tremendous impact on export crops and trade development, as well as on the development of port cities and new administrative centres (Uyanga, 1982: 2&3). Similarly Mabogunje (1968: 17) earlier stated that urbanisation process in Nigeria preceded the arrival of the British colonial government and that the rapid rate of urban development has not been uniform everywhere in the world. The study also makes a distinction between the process of urbanisation and the resulting structure of individual urban centres. Also, Falola (1989: 213) on his article “The cities” posits that cities as product of urbanisation are neither colonial nor post-independence phenomena in Nigeria. He argues that the growth of the trans-Saharan trade and trade contacts with other parts of West Africa sustained the grassland cities of Katsina, Yelwa, Zaria and Kano. Additionally, the 19th century Jihad was cited as being responsible for the decline of a few towns while favoring expansion of others such as Sokoto. In the south, trade with Europeans from the 15th century onward promoted the rapid expansion of the towns such as Lagos, Ijebu Ode, Benin and others which directly benefited

from the contact (Falola, 1989: 214).

Studies have shown that urban development is not new in Nigeria especially in northern and western part of country. Besides, it could not be absolutely correct to situate Owerri with similar position with other part of Nigeria during colonial rule. Specifically, urban development in Owerri as studies have divulged is peculiar in the sense that the setting up of the British colonial government paved the way for emergence of urban centres in the area (Oparah, 2015). On the one hand, such development that brought public facilities and increase in population growth altered the village settlement pattern of the environs. On the other, availability of these facilities triggered off rural urban migration that populated Owerri town. Nevertheless, issues related to urban menace such as congestion, sewage/refuse disposal, increase rate of crime, housing problem and prostitution formed the core challenges of urbanisation in Owerri during this period.

More importantly, this chapter aims at investigating how these developments created a different atmosphere in the town categorised as a third class township (Mabogunje, 1968:113, NITP, 2014:12) during colonial period that distinguished the centre from that of rural settlements.¹ Due to the indispensable nature of public utility during the period, the colonial authorities and Shell BP contributed in no small measure to the installation of facilities that had resultant effects on the population growth and development of Owerri as an urban centre. As Obiegbu (1992: 134-5) declares, availability of these facilities, for example, water and electricity always serve as a bait for rural-urban migration as young people of working age, especially; leave the rural settings in search of a better life in the cities. Consequent upon this, the chapter seeks to examine the availability of water, electricity, impact made from various quarters in providing such facilities, process of population growth, challenges of urbanisation and dynamics of urban development in Owerri, from 1927 to 1977.

Methodology/Research Objectives

The methodology adopted in the process of writing this chapter is historical method that relied on archival materials and corroborated with oral sources. The research objectives are to state clearly the availability of water and electricity (public utilities) in Owerri, illustrate the process of population growth of the area and examine the changing patterns of the town, especially at the dawn of postcolonial Nigeria.

Conceptual Clarifications

Public Utility

Public utility could be taken as organisation that maintains the infrastructure for public services with forms of public control and regulation ranging from local

community-based groups to statewide government monopolies. The term public utilities can also be referred to set of services provided by organisations, consumed by the public such as water, electricity, natural gas, sewage, telephone, transportation, etc. (*New York Times*, 2015). Also, public utilities are those business undertakings which provide necessary services to the society. For example, the undertaking dealings with the supply of water, electricity, gas, transport, etc. all covered under public utility services (Agarwall, 2016). Hawtrey (2016) views public utilities as “a service in which a tendency to a local monopoly necessitates the intervention of a public authority to define the interest of a consumer”. In addition, Roper (2016) was of the view that public utility is any undertaking that meets the need or inconveniences of a considerable section of the public and that places undertakings in a position justifying the imposition of control in return for monopolistic or other privileges in sections such as electricity, water, power, transport, etc.

Population Growth

Population growth could simply mean an increase in number of people that reside in a particular region, area, zone, town or city (Reece *et al*, 2014). Population growth as argued by Shackman *et al* (2017) in a developing urban centre leads to faster depletion of resources, its prediction is difficult and not evenly distributed throughout the world but with the highest growth rates in Africa south of Sahara and the lowest in Europe. The global population has grown from 1 billion in 1800 to 7 billion in 2012. It is expected to keep growing and estimates have put the total at 8.4 billion by mid-2030 and 9.6 billion by mid-2050 (Population Reference Bureau, 2014). Wagner and Mikesell (1962) perceive cities as prime mover of urban area and larger settlement whose population consists of a good degree of representative of secondary/ tertiary livelihood that are more differentiated from those of peasant or nomad settlements. To Wagner and Mikesell (1962), urban development provides cities the possibility of a rise not only in the manner of its population growth, but also in material and cultural level.

Urban Development

The concept of urbanisation, urbanism, urban development and city varies from the ideas of some scholars. For example, according to Lodha (2010), the word “urban” originated from the Latin word *surbanus* and *urbs* meaning a town in contrast to rural. Urbanisation could be viewed as the process of an increasing concentration of people in towns; increase in the percentage and in the number of people residing in a particular area (Stamp, 1970: 442), that area could be referred as urban settlement (Lodha, 2010: 112). Lodha conceptualises development in relation to urbanisation as a process of improvement in the material conditions of the people through a diffusion of knowledge and technology in a populated area. To this study,

development is concerned with a country's economic, social and demographic conditions when it is laced with urbanisation.

Smythe (1960) clearly states that many of the towns taken as urban centres lack the basic services and functions which constitute the criteria of an urban area in Europe, and their population is often dominantly agricultural, working in the surrounding countryside. According to this study, they are closely related to the "urban village" of the Spanish *meseta* or the Hungarian plain, than to the normal Western European urban area (Smythe, 1960: 143). He posits that Nigerian city does not provide in kind and degree many of the services and facilities associated with western cities such as; sewage system, street lighting, municipal power plants and water supply, paved streets and sidewalks, parks and playgrounds, police and fire protection, public health inspection and supervision, hospitals, libraries and schools. For example, a city as large as Akure (38,858) in 1952 might be without electricity; Benin (53,753) without street lights; Kano (130, 173) with no public library (Smythe, 1960: 144).

Obiegbu's (1992) study views urbanisation in modern sense as a term that has to do with the availability of certain infrastructure such as good roads, water supply and electricity. He points out that in the absence of these facilities, many urban areas could be no more than glorified villages. However, these facilities are seen as the main inducement for rural-urban migration as young people of working age in particular leave the rural settings in search of a better life in the cities (Obiegbu, 1992: 134).

Above all, from different viewpoints examined, urban development means different thing to different people. On the one hand, African modern concept of urbanised area might be tailored mainly on the provision of some facilities such as good roads, electricity, pipe-borne water and other facilities. On the other, in other parts of the world especially in northern hemisphere, availability of these facilities do not necessarily make a place an urban area, because they are simply public facilities other than factors used as yardstick for considering what constitutes a city. In this regard, the West laid more emphasis on population growth as a major determinant and characteristic of an urban area.

Therefore, for the purpose of this study, the concept of urban development and urbanisation incorporate both the availability of public utilities such as; water and electricity in a particular area and its population growth.

Water Supply

The 1914 Owerri provincial annual report stressed the importance of the need for good water supply in the town by stating that "from the nature of soil it is uncertain how deep wells would be useful in providing supplies of pure water". Also, in this same report, I.C Maxwell emphasised on the need of water supply and advised that "it should be taken in hand under expert supervision".² The essential nature of

water during this period made it imperative for the District Officer to consider it as a matter under Owerri township laws. As at the year 1927, attempts were made to safeguarding two major sources of water supply in Owerri. It should be noted that before well sinking commenced, sources of water supply in Owerri were primarily based on two main rivers, the *Nwaorie* River coming from the north and *Otamiri* River flowing towards the South-West of Owerri. The aquifers of these rivers were good because they are fresh water especially that of *Otamiri* River.

The District Officer on 28 May, 1927 complained to the medical officer of what he referred to as inappropriate use of *Nwaorie* River by the indigenous people in Owerri town and the danger such act could portray the government station close to the river. He stated as follows:

I find that cassava has been rotted in the stream (Nwaorie River) about 100 yards above where the drinking water is obtained. Though it might be possible to prevent this close to the Station, there would still be a risk of pollution for higher up, where accumulation of dirt would be washed in by rain. I gather you agree that, from the coincidence of the cassava season and the gastric troubles of the Station, it is highly probable that the latter are attributable to cassava products in the water. If you concur I propose to ask for a well in the Station and that in the interim tanks and guttering be fitted to the corrugated Iron roofs to collect rain water.³

From the above explanations, it could be inferred that up to 1927, the colonial government was still making use of *Nwaorie* River as one of its major sources of water supply in Owerri. Secondly, as at the month of May 1927, well as a source of water supply in Owerri was yet unavailable in the government station. It is equally possible that the gastric trouble in the station mentioned above could be as a result of contaminated water fetched from *Nwaorie* River due to the soaking of cassava in that river.

In response to the above complaint, the Medical Officer granted the request of the District Officer by providing well as an alternative source of water supply in the government station. This new source of water supply began to attract people to the government station premises. As a result of this scenario, on 6 October, 1927 the District Officer issued a notice to the general public and copied same to the district clerk, postmaster, dispenser, corporal and warder for onward implementation. The notice reads thus: "the road in front of the Assistant District Officer's quarters and the Resident's Rest House is not to be used by people fetching water . . . but the path at the back. Such traffic must pass the Residency to the cross roads, or by the path from the Police lines to the water".⁴

Henceforth, well sinking became a major source of water supply in Owerri government station, the town and its environment. However, the year 1938 saw a tremendous increase on the number of wells available to the people for more improved sources of water supply. W.F.H Newington's handing over notes to A.E.

Cook in 1938 illustrates that Owerri native administration had dedicated about £9000 for a period of three year programme of fifty (50) wells. The programme was expected to finish in December or January 1939 when the water Engineer would be moving to Aba.⁵ The water Engineer, Mr. W.R.W. Ferguson proceeded on leave and to be relieved by Mr. C.C Graham, foreman in the Geological Survey Department. By the time Mr. Graham resumed duty, he was asked to submit a report illustrating the number of wells sunk at that period, and many that were about to be constructed, how many were in the course of construction, and how many left to complete the programme of fifty wells.⁶ Inclusively, adequate measures were put in place to ensure the maintenance of these wells. For example, the Senior Geological Engineer Mr. H.A. Cochran who was in charge of well maintenance informed the assistant district officer that £200 would be required for maintenance during 1939/40, also that permanent "travelling gang" would have to be employed under the control of a leading sinker of the department, whose salary was reimbursable to the government by the native administration.⁷ In a similar development, available record reveals that the government also decided to sink a well in the Roman Catholic Mission hospital compound at Emekuku for the use of the mission.⁸

The report of the advisory committee on Town Planning further proposed that Owerri government station, for geographical reasons should move to a site within government reserved area on a ridge about 1½ miles to the north-west, that would be dependent on a pipe-borne water supply.⁹ What could be deduced from this point is that supply of pipe-borne water was first installed at the Owerri government (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 27) before getting to the town from 1958 to 1962. By the year 1958, the system of water supply in Owerri had shifted from well water to that of pipe-borne water supply. Although, only a limited segment of the population was served with house connection, majority of the populace fetched their water from public taps.¹⁰

In another development, the advisory committee on town planning and housing in 1944 maintained the hard line of European segregation in Owerri and encouraged such to continue. The committee advised thus:

European segregation is at all times desirable, and that such reservation should always be on the flank of a layout. We wish to avoid such circumstances as have existed in Owerri, where the native population must pass through the European reservation to the water supply.¹¹

What could be ascertained from the above is that, throughout colonial period, colonial government did not see anything wrong in segregation of the indigenous people by making sure that they (Europeans) never lived together with the indigenous people. For this reason, it became normal for colonial government of British to continue with the tradition of segregation throughout colonial period, virtually in

all the places colonial rule manifested. The political elite in Nigeria inherited this abnormality at independence and equally retained the *status quo* such that restricted zones commonly refer as government residential areas (GRAs) could be seen in every town in Nigeria that experienced colonialism in its domains.

However, it was not until 1958 that the Eastern region development programme of 1958 to 1962 considered the need for a project on "Urban Water Supply" in Owerri and other urban areas in the Region. The programme provided for about £335,000 in 1958 for new installations to be carried out by Eastern Nigeria government during the next three-year period. The regional government was to utilise £325,000 of the money in providing the first phase of urban water supply installations for Owerri, Ikot Ekpene, Uyo, Nnewi, Okrika and Orlu.¹² Earlier on, a previous Eastern region Development Plan of 1955 to 60 made provision for Owerri Hospital water supply at the amount of £4,100.¹³ By so doing, these development plans brought the last phases of urban water supply by colonial government agencies to an end for the last facet of colonial rule in Owerri.

Shell D'archy Exploration Company and Public Facilities in Owerri

The short stay of Shell D'Archey Exploration Company (Shell BP) between 1946 and 1963 had immense contribution to development of Owerri as an urban area in the then Owerri Province. The arrival of Shell BP in Owerri was in two phases, first was in 1939 and the second journey was in 1946. However, oil exploration is critical to the settlement of Shell BP in Owerri in the 1940s. The company first discovered oil in Imo area at Iho-Ikederu, Owerri outlying district.¹⁴ There was every indication that this discovery made at Iho-Ikeduru might have precipitated the second coming of the company in 1946 and the establishment (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 27) of its headquarters at Owerri in the year 1953.

From the year 1946 many things began to change, such that two years after the arrival of Shell BP in 1948 there emerged the first town planning of Owerri. From all indications, the arrival of H.I.P Wetheral from Calabar province to Owerri as a district officer was responsible for the coming of Shell BP into Owerri during this period. Subsequently, Mr. Mann in 1948 as the District Officer facilitated the town planning of Owerri, hence, the arrival of Shell has an impetus to economic and social development of Owerri.¹⁵ With the presence of Shell BP, the town became an emerging urban centre. However, as the company began to build its headquarters in 1953, it boosted economic growth resulting in residential expansion, market reconstruction, and a new motor park.¹⁶

Actually, the first comprehensive early plan of Owerri town was prepared (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 27) in 1948 by Mr. Tetlow, a British Town Planning Adviser to West Africa, for colonial authorities in charge of Owerri district. It should

be remembered that due to the growing nature of Owerri town population and its environs, G.G Shute as Chief Commissioner, Eastern Province in 1940 issued a directive to the native administration surveyor through the district officer that the latter should liaise with health authority to carry out a survey of Owerri and draw up a proper layout plan.¹⁷ Meanwhile, this order from G.G Shute was not implemented until 1948 when the then district officer engaged the service of Mr. Tetlow, to draw up what could be regarded as the first attempt of Owerri town planning. Subsequently, in 1977 a post-colonial comprehensive master plan was carried out by Messrs. Fingerhuth and Partners of Zurich (Switzerland), a brain child of the then Military Governor of new Imo State, Commodore Godwin Ndubuisi Kanu signed on 25 May, 1976.

Interestingly, Tetlow's plan of 1948 had very much been followed in the alignment of the existing roads and buildings in Owerri up to 1977. Unfortunately, when Shell BP moved its headquarters to Port Harcourt in 1963, Owerri sank to a near state of relative oblivion.¹⁸ The implication is that, with the exit of shell BP from Owerri, economic fortune of the town began to dwindle. Besides, Shell BP residential expansion actually commenced soon after 1946 and by 1949 the company's buildings were housing not only European colonial officers and Shell members of Staff but also Some Catholic priests who lived in the quarters. In demonstration of this, Okere (2012: 103) recalled how he accompanied Fr. Patrick McMahan, the then Principal, Holy Ghost College, Owerri in 1950 several times to Shell Quarters for Fr. MacMahon's "beloved game of Golf and the subsequent parties they had in that white citadel of opulence". Presently, majority of the oil company's residential quarters are now parts of Alvan Ikoku Federal College of Education (now Alvan Ikoku University of Education) as office blocks and staff quarters. In addition, the National Museum Owerri is currently located in this Shell camp quarters established between 1949 and 1953.¹⁹

Electricity Supply

The establishment of Shell BP headquarters in 1953 had significantly fostered the growth of Owerri as a cosmopolitan urban centre, not only to Owerri government station and its residential areas but also to the residence of Owerri town. It provided alternative source of water supply (pipe-borne water), electricity for the population of the town. Although, provision of electricity in Owerri did not spread at the same time in the two major areas of government residential and Owerri town but was carried out gradually. The areas marked as government reserved were inhabited both by government flag station, government residential buildings for European personnel and Shell Camp quarters. As a result of the nature of settlement pattern at government reserved areas, it was easy for Shell BP to connect government quarters and its flag station with electricity (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 31) as

soon as generation of power commenced in 1956. The programme introduced as *A Ten-Year plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria, 1946* encouraged provision of facilities (pipe-borne water and electricity) to rural areas for every district's town and country planning to consider as a matter of importance by ensuring better standard of living and greater rural attractions. More so, to discouraged further inflow of massive population of people from the country side into the towns with the attendant consequences of squalor, unemployment and crime.²⁰ However, this provision as regards to electricity for entire Owerri district was only properly carried out in the postcolonial era. For instance, rural electrification in East-Central State commenced around 1974 in Owerri division for extension of electricity to rural areas in and around Owerri, while the second phase of the project kicked-off between 1984 and 1987.

Other areas exclusively controlled by the colonial administration such as Government Secondary School, Owerri and its staff quarters were connected with electricity in 1958. It was in the same year 1958 that government of Eastern region made provision for electric wiring of Government Secondary School, Owerri with the tune of £1,500.²¹ It is important to note that the generation of power during this period in Owerri was largely carried out by the oil company, may be, as part of its social corporate responsibilities.

The main town of Owerri was connected with electricity in 1958 from Shell BP power station. The population of the town that enjoyed this electricity was mainly those living in the town, including the five villages of Owerri town (Owere Nchi Ise) namely Amawom, Umuororonjo, Umuodu and Umuonyeche.²² When the company left from Owerri to Port Harcourt in 1963, it adversely affected the level of electricity distribution to the town because the native administration government could barely sustain power generation from Shell BP power station.²³ It was not until 1974 that the programme "Rural Electrification of East Central State" extended electricity to contiguous parts of Owerri town and its rural fringes.²⁴

Populaton Growth in Owerri

The population growth enumerated in Owerri during the period was captured in various census reports of 1931, 1952-53 and 1963. However, rural-urban migration was a common feature that boosted population growth of Owerri during this period. The establishment of colonial rule, provision of social amenities and employment opportunities served as a stimulus for mass migration from the rural areas to Owerri metropolis. As a result of this, Owerri town created a sense of attraction from different quarters and became a cynosure of a new way of life within the district. As the people were commonly receptive to the new idea propelled by colonial administration; individuals from all corners of Owerri migrated to the town. In most cases, economic opportunity is usually one of the reasons for rural-urban

migration such as employment opportunities in different sectors. To buttress this point, Obialo (1999: 86) reiterates that one of the most important factors affecting population growth or decline in a particular settlement is migration. He re-emphasises that migration is mostly triggered by economic opportunities in the urban centres. The search for white collar jobs have also fostered mass wave of rural urban migration.

For instance, in Owerri during colonial period unskilled labourers were also needed for the construction of new government stations, police quarters, prison buildings, clerk offices, native administration buildings and roads. Some labourers worked as domestic servants (*boyi-boyi bekee*) to Europeans working in Owerri as government officials and priests.²⁵ With such huge activities going on in Owerri, exchange of goods and services of all kinds went on in the town. The scenario served as a catalyst that stimulated market expansion, thereby making the native markets a daily activity.

Migrants From Other Areas

Other migrants who were non-Igbo such as the Hausa and Yoruba migrated to Owerri, also, foreigners mainly working as European personnel or missionaries migrated to Owerri during this period. For example, as early as 1928 Hausa settlement already existed in Owerri and was officially recognised as such. As time went on, by the year 1935 the settlement was formally referred as Hausa quarters and by July 1938 Owerri slaughter house opened within this quarters of Hausa settlement. There was equally good number of Hausa migrants doing business at Amakohia-Ikeduru market few kilometers from Owerri town.²⁶ Good number of Yoruba population were also in Owerri during the colonial era such that a Yoruba name, Rotibi was given to a street connecting the popular Douglas road with Royce road in Owerri town. Till date, both the Hausa quarters and Rotibi Street are still visible at the area mapped out by colonial authorities in 1948 town planning. Also, up to this present period, the Hausa quarters is popularly known and called *Ama Awusa* (Hausa Settlement) in local dialect by the indigenous people.²⁷

It was only in 1931, I believe, considerable attempt was made to carry out what appears like a comprehensive census of the population of Owerri province and other provinces in Nigeria that included the natives of Nigeria, native foreigners and non-natives.²⁸

Table 1 shows the 1931 population figure of Owerri Province of six divisions namely Aba, Ahaoda, Bende, Degema, Okigwe and Owerri in 1931.

The table indicates based on the population census of 1931, Owerri recorded a total number of 455,293 as the most densely populated area in the province, followed by Okigwe with a total number of 441,324 headcounts. In the area of square miles covered, Degema division recorded the largest number with total square miles of

Table 1

Province	Division.	Area in square miles	Number of Towns	Number of Villages	Population				Total
					Adults		Non-Adults		
					Male	Female	Mal	Female	
Owerri	Aba	827	4	312	45880	49,122	25653	25,653	146,308
	Ahaoda	2,026	17	263	55025	61,960	39543	38,939	195,467
	Bende	965	25	214	62160	74,639	37281	45,903	219,983
	Degema	4,574	8	138	35574	42,711	28440	34,809	141,534
	Okigwe	937	84	87	128,532	130,934	95658	86,200	441,324
	Owerri	1,045	78	81	132,677	139,235	90572	92,809	455,293

Source: PX/HIA Census of Nigeria, 1931. Vol.1.NAI, p.98.

4,574, seconded by Ahaoda with 2,026 square miles covered, while Owerri division had the third largest number of square miles covered with total number of 1,045. Okigwe recorded the highest number of towns covered with a total number of 84 Towns, followed by Owerri with 78 Towns and Bende with 25 Towns. Female adults' population maintained the lead in all divisions of Owerri province, while in non-adults population, only Ahaoda and Okigwe recorded higher number against females.

Table 2 shows the 1953 census population of Owerri Province and Division with land areas in square miles, the number of males and females as at June, 1953.²⁹

Table 2

Province and Division		Land Areas in Square Miles	Total Population		
			Both Sexes	Males	Females
Owerri	Aba Division	960	396,217	200,376	195,841
Province	Bende	829	322,258	144,384	177,874
	Division				
	Okigwe	587	442,751	214,018	228,733
	Division				
	Orlu	408	356,282	159,107	197,175
	Division				
	Owerri	1,085	560,895	260,511	300,384
	Division				
	Total	3,869	2,078,403	978,396	1,100,007

Source: Population Census of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1953. NAI, p. 24.

From Table 2, Owerri recorded highest number of population in the province with a total number of 560,895 followed by Okigwe, Orlu, Aba and Bende in that order. Female populations were of greater number in all the divisions with the exception of Aba. Aba recorded more male population than that of female with a difference of 4,535.

Table 3 shows the 1953 Urban Population of Owerri Province by sex and selected age groups.

Table 3

Provinces and Selected Towns		All Ages			Age Group			
					15-49		50 and Over	
Owerri Province	Towns	Both Sexes	M	F	M	F	M	F
	Aba	57,788	36,656	21,132	21,183	10,535	246	104
	Oguta	14,761	8,015	6,746	4,458	3,432	448	472
	Owerri	9,331	5,301	4,030	3,135	2,237	204	172
	Total	81,879	49,972	31,907	28,776	16,204	898	748

Source: Population Census of the Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1953. NAI, p. 46.

Table 3 illustrates urban populations of selected towns in Owerri province, that is, Aba, Oguta and Owerri. Aba recorded the highest number of both sexes with a total population of 57, 788, followed by Oguta and Owerri as the least. In the age bracket of 50 and above, Oguta recorded the highest number of both male and female population; Aba was the second on male and least on female, while Owerri was the second on female and the least on male urban population of 50 and above.

Table 4 shows the enumerated figure of Owerri urban as at the year 1963.

Table 4

Owerri Urban	Amawom	10,039
	Umuororonjo	2,977
	Umuodu	3,214
	Umuonyeche	1,405
	Hausa and Yoruba	4,180
	Govt. Station	4,202
	Total	26,017

Source: Population of Localities in Imo State, 1963-1992. SAI, p. 76.

Table 4 only focused on inhabitants of Owerri town as at 1963 and did not cover the entire Owerri.³⁰ It illustrates the population growth of the town and identified only Hausa and Yoruba as the major ethnic nationalities domiciled in Owerri town but did not separate the two ethnic groups for a better clarification of the numeric strength of each group in Owerri town. The 1963 enumeration indicated that Owerri Urban figure had increased up to 26,017 as against 9,331 of 1953 urban population (Table 3). The population captured for Owerri Urban comprises of four villages of Owerri town (Amawom, Umuororonjo, Umuodu and Umuonyeche), Hausa-Yoruba and Government Station only.

Challenges of Urbanisation in Owerri

The development of Owerri as an urban centre during colonial period equally had its challenges that were visible and could be viewed as common problems associated with many colonial settlements. The most prominent of these problems and challenges that affected urban Owerri include the issue of congestion, sewage, refuse disposal, increase rate of crime, housing problem and prostitution.

For instance, congestion as the most dominant problems virtually affected many urban centres at any giving period. In this regard, Owerri could not be an exception. For example, in 1944 the colonial government identified congestion in the town as a major cause of ribbon development encountered in Owerri. In this remark, colonial authorities argued as follows:

ribbon development specially in Owerri has been allowed to occur along the main roads, impeding traffic, causing danger to life and limb, and making the provision of public services, such as running water, lighting, etc. in future almost impossibly expensive.³¹

Similarly, colonial government equally acknowledged that such cases of ribbon development were not confined to Africa, but experiences even in the United Kingdom had shown where in some areas public utility services were strained almost to a breaking point by ribbon development.³²

From clear indication, by 1944, congestion as one of the challenges of an urban centre had become a serious problem to both native administration and colonial government in Owerri.

Sanitary conditions, which became problem of Owerri urban was given adequate attention in 1934. The authorities made certain provisions for proper hygiene of the developing town. In this regard, laws were enacted to ensure good environmental health of the town. For example, regulations such as “Bye-laws for Third Class Township Owerri” were introduced to regulate the government flag station and, which were extended to the town including residential, commercial, slaughter houses and market environs in 1935.³³ Hence, the sanitary bye-laws were promulgated

and implemented throughout colonial period at Owerri, especially on market areas, slaughter houses and government flag station.

In the case of sewage disposal, under-servicing or overloading of the bucket system of toileting was perceived as a method that could result in outbreak of disease and contamination of water or drainage systems which would also affect the soak-away pits thereby polluting the water (Obialo, 1976: 17). Nonetheless, provision was made near Lake *Nwebere* (part of present day Imo State University premises) for disposal of human waste generated in Owerri town.³⁴ Chief Obialo expressed that as the Chief town planning officer for Imo State, his office through the support of the State government provided what they referred as “Septic Tank Incentive” to the town dwellers as a way of encouraging house owners to install septic tanks to their toilet system in 1976.³⁵ Also, proper refuse disposal system was handicapped before due to unsuitable location of refuse collection point. But by the year 1976 provision was made to ameliorate the devastating condition of refuse dumping along the streets, streams or ravines within the town (Obialo, 1976: 18). The implication of this is that up to 1976, some of the town dwellers in Owerri urban were still using bucket system of toileting. In addition, there was no enough suitable refuse disposal system in the town up to 1976. However, post-colonial master plan of Owerri which came into effect in 1977 and took into consideration the matters relating to sewage and refuse disposal by making adequate provision to that effect.

Urban Development Challenges in Colonial Period

Owerri as an emerging town in the 1930s was not without records of crimes, especially at the heart of the city. Available record shows that miscreants and thieves operated in the town such that arrests were made and imprisonment also followed suit. It should be remembered that as early as 1913 there was a functional Prison in Owerri, although, the prison buildings could not be regarded as structures with durability. But by 1919, durable Prison houses with cement and roofing had been constructed in Owerri and expanded between 1936 and 1942 by the colonial authorities.³⁶ It was on record that in 1940 arrest of people alleged to be miscreants were made in Owerri market by European agent of SCOA, from Oguta.³⁷ Nevertheless, prison buildings in Owerri during this period were not meant only for thieves, robbers and their likes but also for “tax evaders”.

The challenges posed by inadequate housing in the township made it imperative for colonial administration to commence construction of buildings in Owerri as early as 1918 to curb the effects of inadequate housing. Besides, houses built during this early stage were not only residential, it included administrative blocks too.³⁸ Housing problems in Owerri for example, were not overwhelming like in other places where African quarters featured in its housing scheme and pattern of

settlement (Obialo, 2005: 36). What featured prominently with regards to housing were native administration quarters where indigenous members of staff engaged in the service of colonial government lived. By this period, priorities were given to the building of European residential and Native administration quarters as regards to housing. As time went on, colonial government demanded from the council in 1940 “that step should be taken to layout Owerri town in accordance with an approved plan”.³⁹ But this directive was not followed until 1948 when the then district officer employed the service of Mr. Tetlow to carry out the planning of layout of Owerri town. Nevertheless, as problems of insufficient housing and space became a reality in the town, control measures were put in place earlier in 1927 by way of issuing Squatters Licences to prospective squatters both on building and land.⁴⁰ Subsequently in 1955 serious attention was given to the expansion of Junior Service Quarters including its repairs to make the quarters more accommodating.

Equally, cost of housing during this era was closely monitored and controlled by colonial authorities in Owerri. In demonstration of this, Senior Surveyor’s Office wrote to the Senior District Officer of Owerri concerning maintenance of junior service quarters as follows: “I understand the building is on loan from you . . . in the meantime it seems that the quarters will have to be patched up and as they are on loan I understand you were responsible for their maintenance.”⁴¹ It should be acknowledged that while colonial government controlled cost of housing in Owerri that of regulation was mainly concentrated on government owned staff quarters (both European and Native quarters). On the other hand, individuals who owned properties such as houses became potential landlords and rented such properties to prospective tenants with little control from colonial authorities on squatters and tenancy rate. It was not until 1963 that a residential layout was framed in the name of “Ikenegbu Layout Planning Scheme”. Additionally, between the year 1963 and 1977, frantic efforts were made by the authorities to provide adequate housing through various schemes that saw the establishment of good number of layouts, to ameliorate the challenges emanated from shortage of housing in Owerri.

Owerri as a growing urban centre during colonial period could not be said to be devoid of prostitution. Therefore, the challenges posed by the act of prostitution viewed as an immoral behavior (by some opinions) were equally visible in the town. Although, overtime the act of prostitution have been regarded as one of the oldest profession on earth. In a simple term, prostitution could be perceived as engagement of an act of sexual intercourse in exchange for something tangible in return, be it money or material things. However, scholars (Naanem, 1991 and Mfon, 2012) have argued elsewhere that the capitalist structures of colonial economy also further increased the wave and propelled prostitution to the point of being commercialised in the areas where colonial enterprise held sway, hence, commercial sex work. In the light of this, prostitution known by the locals as *akwunakwuna* became common in Owerri as the area continued to develop into township during colonial rule and after.

At the last phase of colonial rule in Owerri, from 1950, presence of young girls regarded as prostitutes (commercial sex workers) began to feature in the affairs of the town. By the year 1957, it was no longer difficult to locate prostitutes at a particular place in Owerri town, especially within the vicinities close to the two hotels (Star Hotel and Welfare Hotel) operating in the town. It has been argued that the second coming of Shell BP in 1946 as noted earlier and the building of its headquarters in 1953 in Owerri might have influenced the increase act of prostitution as this was the same period the two hotels became operational in Owerri.⁴² What could be derived from this is that the coming of the oil giant boosted economic status of the town that in turn had a resultant effect on social lifestyle of people living within the urban centre. As result of this scenario, interested men who have the economic means began to patronise the enterprise (prostitution) and sustained it as well.

Dynamics of Urban Development in Owerri

At the dawn of independence, the changing nature of urban development in Owerri was reinvigorated with great enthusiasm in 1963. Nevertheless, the exit of Shell BP in 1963 by way of moving its headquarters to Port Harcourt ended a chapter in urban development of Owerri. This is because before now, Shell BP had made significant impact on the developmental process of Owerri urban through its contribution to the provision of buildings, water and electricity in government reserved areas where its headquarters was situated and subsequently extended such to Owerri town. Consequently, Owerri as an emerging urban centre began to dwindle and only retained its administrative headquarters status without enough economic means to forge forward.⁴³

Interestingly, as the exit of Shell BP marked an end of an era, another epoch was opening in development of Owerri urban area. This new changing pattern was stimulated by two major events, that is, the location of advanced teachers training college in 1963, later became Alvan Ikoku College of Education (now Alvan Ikoku Federal University of Education) and the establishment of a modern shoe factory, which boosted economic development of the town.⁴⁴ Thereafter, the framing of Ikenegbu Layout Planning Scheme in 1963, planned as a residential neighbourhood area with its own community services was an added fillip to these dynamics. Subsequently, the government residential area (GRA) planned in 1965 and reviewed in 1970, followed by the formations of Ikenegbu Extension and Bethany Layout respectively in 1973 (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 27) gave the town a viable outlook. The period between 1963 and 1977 was energising and reviving as far as urban development is concerned in Owerri town, because these changes that occurred were perceived as a means of exciting private investment in the town.

The year 1976 saw the policy initiation of a comprehensive town planning of

Owerri as a second phase of post-colonial urban development plan. This time, adequate measures were put in place to decongest and expand the old town due to sudden population upsurge that emanated from the creation of Imo state on 3 February, 1976. It was alleged that more than 10,000 civil servants of Imo State administration moved into Owerri immediately after creation of the state. And eventually generated an additional population of at least 200,000 inhabitants (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 7). Thus, it became necessary to have a post-colonial comprehensive master plan of the city and this led to the *Owerri Master Plan: Twin City of 1977*. The twin city comprised of the old city planned in 1948 by Mr. Tetlow that lies at the junction of two rivers (*Nwaorie* and *Otamiri* River), while the new city was lying across west side of *Nwaorie* River popularly called New Owerri.

Before the commencement of 1977 master plan, Owerri lay at the intersection of six major roads of regional importance and almost all the infrastructural development had occurred on the eastern side of *Nwaorie* River flowing mainly to the direction of Aba-Douglas-Hospital road. Besides, the main market, Owerri commercial centre, was also located along Douglas road. These places formed the core of Owerri urban (town) together with the four traditional villages. Other residential areas arranged around the old town in a centric layout existed as at 1977 were Okigwe road layout, the two state housing schemes (Prefab and Aladinma Housing Estates), federal low cost housing scheme (Trans-Egbu), Onitsha road layout, Works layout and Ugwuorji layout (Fingerhuth and Partners, 1977: 28).

Other changes that occurred by 1976 could be understood within the area of sewage and refuse disposal. At the earlier period, sewage disposal was by bucket system in the older parts of Owerri town, excluding government residential areas (Government Station and Shell Camp Quarters) and but at the recently developed areas of Ikenegbu layout, the two State Housing Schemes, the Works layout, Ugwu Orji layout, Onitsha road layout and Federal low cost housing at Trans-Egbu, septic tank system were made available as an alternative to bucket system. Gradually this system completely wiped out the bucket system as the dominant way of sewage disposal.

More so, new impetus was added to the growing environment of Owerri urban vicinity by the establishment of Industrial development centre at Owerri in 1963. The centre was sponsored as a joint effort of the Eastern Nigeria Ministry of Commerce and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), with the help of ILO as instructor.⁴⁵ In another development, the section of urban water supply equally gained a new lease of life through the commissioning of two new urban water schemes in 1963 estimated at about £487,829 for Owerri and Ikot Ekpene Urban Centres.⁴⁶ Other developmental changes occurred in the area of establishment of hotels and banks in Owerri. For example, Imo Concord Hotel (five-star hotel) was established at New Owerri, off Port Harcourt road by the Government of Imo State.

Before 1986 Imo Hotels, a privately owned business also came into operation to collaborate Imo Concord Hotel operating in the leading urban neighbourhood of the State.⁴⁷ Banks such as Corporative Bank of Eastern Nigeria Limited, African Continental Bank Limited, First Bank Nig. Limited, Union Bank Nig. Limited, Nigeria Agricultural Co-operative Bank, Pan African Bank Nig. Limited, Federal Mortgage Bank Limited, United Bank for Africa Ltd, Capital Finance Coy., Ltd (Loan Financing) and Nigerian Acceptances Limited (Stock Broker) became operational in Owerri town.⁴⁸ It is important to state clearly here that the ten banks listed did not commence operations at the same time, for instance, it was only Corporative Bank of Eastern Nigeria and African Continental Bank that were rendering banking services as at 1963 in Owerri.

Other areas such as road maintenance and construction of new ones also contributed to the dynamics of urban development in Owerri during post-colonial era. As at 1976, conditions of roads in Owerri urban were declared unsatisfactory because the paved roads of Douglas Road, Okigwe road, Mbaise road, Onitsha road, Wetheral road, Orlu road and Aba road were experiencing heavy traffics due to constant use of motor transports plying on these roads. In a modest bid to remedy the situation, invitation to tender was issued for the construction of Owerri urban roads phase I in 1977, while that of phase II was made public in the official Gazette of Imo State in 1981. The new roads to be constructed for the second phase were roads in old Owerri urban including major culvert on *Otamiri* River (10.40 km), roads in Ikenegbu Layout (12.30 km) and roads in the two State Housing Estates (12.20 km).⁴⁹

Conclusion

The paper has examined the contributions of colonial government and Shell BP in the provisions of public utilities, process of population growth and the changing nature of Owerri as an evolving town, from 1927 to 1977. The study divulged that town planning of Owerri as a third class township did not take off early as expected upon the issuance of directive by the then Chief Commissioner, Eastern Province to the district officer in 1940. However, this only became possible in 1948 when the then district officer engaged the services of Mr. Tetlow to draw up the first plan for Owerri Township. Later on, a robust and more elaborate post-colonial plan was carried out by *Fingerhuth and Partners* in 1977. Specifically, master plan of 1977 saw the restructuring of Owerri into two sections, the first section being known as Old Owerri Town (Mr. Tetlow's plan of 1948), while the second phase was referred to as New Owerri, thus, Owerri Twin City.

The contribution of Shell BP was felt not only in the area of buildings, provision of water and electricity but also on health related matters. For instance, in 1957 the medical department of Shell BP fumigated government quarters, especially the

Junior Service Quarters against malaria epidemics in Owerri. The number of houses that benefited from this anti-malaria scheme was thirty three in number, for junior service quarters alone.⁵⁰

The study also revealed that the dynamics of Owerri urban development at the dawn of independence was a matter worth reckoning. This is because the changing nature of the town came with great enthusiasm, which resuscitated the life of town dwellers and prospective ones during the post-colonial period. Generally, the level of changes that took place between 1963 and 1977 propelled the process of urban development in Owerri to a level that could be regarded as commendable.

Conclusively, the establishment of colonial government in Owerri and the coming of Shell BP boosted population growth of Owerri town. This in turn stimulated expansion of the town in the area of layouts for housing and accommodation with provision of water and electricity. It could be appropriate to state that the provisions of public facilities in Owerri as an urban settlement during the period led to increase in population growth and the changing settlement pattern, became a threshold in the development of Owerri as an urban centre.

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Endnotes

- 1 OWDIST7/1/4, File No. Ow-2776. Bye-Laws, Third Class Township, Owerri (1935) National Archives, Enugu (NAE).
- 2 CSE 12/1/343, File No. E.P 1308/2. Owerri Provincial Annual Report (1914). NAE, 38.
- 3 OWDIST 9/13/1, File No. 12/1927. Owerri Township Matters (1927). NAE, 13.
- 4 OWDIST 9/13/1, Owerri Township Matters . . . NAE, 14.
- 5 OWDIST 9/18/16, File No. 21/38. Vol.3, Handing Over Notes of Mr. W.F.H Newington,

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- Assistant District Officer to Mr. A.E Cook, District Officer (1938). NAE, 13.
- 6 OWDIST 9/18/16, Handing Over Notes of Mr. W.F.H Newington . . . NAE, 13.
 - 7 OWDIST 9/18/16, Handing Over Notes of Mr. W.F.H Newington . . . NAE, 14.
 - 8 OWDIST 9/18/16, Handing Over Notes of Mr. W.F.H Newington . . . NAE, 14.
 - 9 CSE 1/85/9793, File No. 19655/5/C.6. Advisory Committee on Economic Development and Social Welfare, Owerri Provincial Committee: Town Planning and Housing (1944). NAE, 3.
 - 10 Interview with Sir Emma Ofurum, b. 1929, Owerri Town, 30 May 2015.
 - 11 CSE 1/85/9793, Advisory Committee on Economic Development . . . NAE, 4.
 - 12 Eastern Region of Nigeria: Development Programme, 1958-1962. Enugu: Eastern Region Official Document No.2 (1959). NAE, 24.
 - 13 Eastern Region Development Plan, 1955-60. Enugu: Government Printer. NAE, 58 and Eastern Region of Nigeria: Revised Development Programme, 1958-62. Official Document No. 13 (1960). NAE, 7.
 - 14 Interview with Sir Emma Ofurum, also Interview with Oha B.O Anukam, b. 1939, Owerri Town, 4 June 2015.
 - 15 Interview with Sir Emma Ofurum and Interview with Oha B.O Anukam.
 - 16 Interview with Sir Charles E. Oparah, b. 1939, Umuoma-Nekede, Owerri, 1 January, 2017. Sir Charles was trained as a Typographical Draughtsman with the Shell BP at Owerri between 1957 and 1958.
 - 17 MINLOC 6/1/415, File No. 18224. Inspection Notes: Owerri Province-Oratta Clan. NAE, 1.
 - 18 Profile on Owerri Municipal Council, Imo State (2007). State Archives of Imo (SAI), 1.
 - 19 Field work: 5 June 2015, some of the buildings at the Shell Camp Quarters bear the inscription "1949" on their outer surface till date.
 - 20 *Ten-Year Plan of Development and Welfare for Nigeria, 1946*. Lagos: Government Printer (1946). NAE, 4.
 - 21 Eastern Region of Nigeria: Development Programme, 1958-1962 . . . NAE, 17.
 - 22 Profile on Owerri Municipal Council, Imo State (2007). SAI, 2.
 - 23 Interview with Sir Emma Ofurum.
 - 24 Report of The Committee on Rural Electrification in East-Central States. Enugu (1974). NAE, 2-5.
 - 25 Interview with Oke Nze Godwin A. Oparaike, b. 1924, Umuoma-Nekede, Owerri, 6 January, 2014. Oke Nze Oparaike was engaged in the service of Colonial officers as a Steward from 1940 to 1960.
 - 26 OWDIST 9/14/93, File No. 104/1928. Owerri Government School, New Buildings Site.(1928), NAE, 2. OWDIST 7/1/4, File No.Ow-2776.Bye-Laws, Third Class Township, Owerri. (1935), NAE, 43 and OWDIST 9/18/16, Handing Over Notes of Mr. W.F.H Newington . . . NAE, 16.
 - 27 Field work: 29 May 2015, the Hausa quarters is still located at Owerri-Nekede road by Douglas road in Owerri town. The place till date remains a popular bus-stop known as *Ama Awusa* (Hausa Settlement) by Douglas road, Owerri Town.
 - 28 PX/H1A, Census of Nigeria. 1931. Vol.1. London: Crown Agents for Colonies (1933).

- National Archives, Ibadan (NAI), 98.
- 29 PX/H2D, Population Census of the Eastern Region of Nigeria (1953), NAE, 16-42.
- 30 Population of Localities in Imo State, 1963-1992 (1993), SAI, 76.
- 31 CSE 1/85/9793, Advisory Committee on Economic Development . . . NAE, 4.
- 32 CSE 1/85/9793, Advisory Committee on Economic Development . . . NAE, 4.
- 33 OWDIST 7/1/4, File No. 2776. Bye-Laws, Third Class Township, Owerri. (1935), NAE.
- 34 Interview with Chief D.C. Obialo, b. 1934, Owerri Town, 1 June 2015.
- 35 Interview with Chief D.C Obialo.
- 36 CSE 1/85/6275. File No. E.P 12582 Vol. 1. Owerri Prison-1913-1919, NAE and CSE 1/85/6276. File No. EP. 12562. Vol. 2. Owerri Prison-1936-1942, NAE.
- 37 CSE 1/85/8999, File No. E.P 18483. Arrest of People in Owerri Market by European Agent of SCOA, Oguta. (1940), NAE.
- 38 OWDIST 9/4/4, File No. 36/18. Buildings-1918, NAE.
- 39 MINLOC 6/1/415, File No. E.P 18223. Owerri Market, Owerri Province (1940), NAE.
- 40 OWDIST 9/13/1, File No. 12/1927. Owerri Township Matters. (1927), NAE.
- 41 OWDIST 10/1/557, File No. 1792 Vol. 111. Junior Service Quarters, Owerri Division-Maintenance. (1955), NAE.
- 41 Interview with Oha B.O Anukam.
- 42 The view projected here concerning the condition of Owerri after the exit of Shell BP is held by many in Owerri. Such views could be seen in the followings: Fingerhuth and Partners. (1977) *Owerri Master Plan Twin City*, Imo State of Nigeria, Owerri, *Profile on Owerri Municipal Council*, Imo State, 2007 and Interview with Chief D.C Obialo. Chief Obialo was the Chief Town Planning Officer of Owerri under East-Central State and assumed same position as Chief Town Planning Officer for Imo State when it was created in 1976. He was the Imo State representative during the partnership of Owerri and Zurich that brought in *Fingerhuth and Partners* as a firm that carried out post-colonial planning of “Owerri Master Plan: Twin City” in 1977. He was also a Director of World Bank Projects for Low Cost Housing Estate in Old Imo State. Post-Colonial Town Planning of Owerri was commissioned by Commodore Ndubuisi Kanu, the then Military Governor of the new Imo State, signed on the 25th day of May, 1976, three months after Imo State was created on 3 February, 1976.
- 44 Briefs on Imo State, Nigeria. Owerri: Information Division, Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sports. 1980. SAI, 9. Note: Alvan Ikoku College of Education received UNESCO Technical Assistance for the first five years of its existence.
- 45 Progress Report: Eastern Nigeria Development Plan, 1962-68. Enugu: The Government Printer (1964), NAE, 28.
- 46 Progress Report: Eastern Nigeria Development Plan, 1962-68 . . . NAE, 30.
- 47 Briefs on Imo State, Nigeria. Owerri: Research, Documentation & Publishing, Min of Information (1986) SAI, 8.
- 48 Briefs on Imo State, Nigeria...1980, SAI, 15.
- 49 *Official Gazette*, Imo State of Nigeria. January, 1981, NAE, 281.
- 50 OWDIST 10/1/557. Junior Service Quarters . . . NAE, 907-910.

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Oral Interview

Name	Occupation	Age	Place of Interview	Date
Anukam, B.O (Oha)	Retired Civil Servant	76	Owerri Town	4 June, 2015
Obialo, D.C (Chief)	Retired Civil Servant/Town Planner	81	Owerri Town	1 June, 2015
Ofurum, E. (Sir)	Retired Journalist	86	Owerri Town	30 May, 2015
Oparah, C.E (Sir)	Trained Typographical Draughtsman/Retired Insurance Practitioner	78	Umuoma-Nekede, Owerri	1 January, 2017
Oparaike, G.A (Oke Nze)	Retired Public Servant	90	Umuoma-Nekede, Owerri	6 January, 2014

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- CSE 1/85/6276, File No. E.P 12562.Vol. 2. Owerri Prison-1936-1942.
- CSE 1/85/8999, File No. E.P 18483, 1940. Arrest of People in Owerri Market by European Agent of S.C.O.A, Oguta.
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