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Falsification of population census data in a heterogeneous Nigerian state: The fourth republic example

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This paper examines critically the controversy surrounding the recently concluded population census in Nigeria which came up between March 21 and 25, 2006. While population census is a deliberate attempt to enumerate people within a delimited territory at a specific time so as to determine their number, their contribution over the land area and their basic socio-demographic and economic characteristics, many of such exercises have been juggled especially in Nigeria. Many infallible proofs for several scores of years have been showing that census taking in Nigeria has been surrounded by deliberate falsehood with the intents and purposes to derive one benefit or the other from the government. The paper argues that the Nigeria's 2006 population census was no way different from the past falsified ones in Nigeria. The paper concludes that for an accurate population census in Nigeria, population census should not be used for allocation of governmental benefits.

Key words: Census, population, data.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In the field of political science and other disciplines, theories have become the means adopted for rigorous understanding of events. However, care must be taken in the selection of these theories to the applicability of events under consideration. In this paper, our theoretical framework is structural - functionalism. This theory had become a major framework for sociological research before it came to political science (Varma, 1996). In fact, as James Gregor pointed out, functionalism was imported from the disciplines of sociology and Anthropology (cited in Nwosu and Ofoegbu, 1986). The structural- functional analysis revolves round key concepts such as functions and structures. Function as generally used especially by scholars in political science refers to the contribution of an activity or patterns of behaviour to the maintenance of a system (social or political) in a given society.

However, it is important to distinguish between function as used above and dysfunction which refers to the negative contributions that lead to the breakdown of the system. Similarly, distinction is often made between manifest and latent functions. The manifest functions deal with patterns of actions whose consequences are both intended and recognized by the participants. A latent function deals with patterns of action whose conse-

quences are unintended and unrecognized by the participants. Structures as related to structural – functionalism refer to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions.

We shall at this juncture turn to the application of structural-functionalism to censuses in Nigeria. We have thus alluded to function above as referring to the contribution of an activity or patterns of behaviour to the maintenance of a system in a given society. The pattern of behaviour of many Nigerians towards population censuses in Nigeria had not and does not contribute to the maintenance of Nigeria's political system.

Even though Aluko revealed that an estimate of Lagos population was first made in 1789 (Aluko, 1965) and that subsequent head counts were embarked upon later, these censuses did not reveal the real population figures of Lagos. This attitudinal disposition was not in those days peculiar to Lagos as it extended to other tribes in Nigeria. At the beginning of population censuses in Nigeria therefore, there was unwillingness on the part of Nigerians to reveal the number of their children as they believed it was unlucky to do so.

This substantially deviated from the pattern of behaviour that can lead to the maintenance of a system

because this will not enable the government to estimate how much will be required for food, education, health, housing and welfare, settlement, industry, technology among others.

This behaviour changes later especially when census figures started to determine the numerical strength of the regions in the House of Representatives as well as determinant in the distribution of governmental benefits to these regions or states. For instance, it was the numerical strength of the Northern Region during the 1952/53 census that earned the region 174 representatives in the House of Representatives out of 312 Representatives. Eastern Region had 73, Western Region 62 while Lagos 3 (Bamgbose, 1998).

The structural arrangement within the Nigeria's political system is also compounding the system because the thirty-six states have been arranged in such a way that each of these states looks up to the Federal Government for the allocation of governmental benefits which in turn has been linked up to population figure of each of these states. Little does one wonder that these states are in serious competition of falsifying their respective figures in order to have more benefits from the Federal Government.

INTRODUCTION

Odewumi (2000) while referring to the 1970 United Nations Draft Recommendation on population census defined census as 'the total process of collecting, compiling, evaluating, analysing and publishing or otherwise disseminating demographic, economic and social data pertaining at a specified time to all persons in a country or in a well delimited part of a country' (Odewumi, 2000). Population census is a terminology now restricted to complete enumeration of human population legally conducted at regular intervals, often every 10 years. Enumeration of people is not a recent phenomenon. It dates back to antiquity and stands as the most important source of demographic data. Records have shown that census started as far back as 3,000 B.C. Ancient civilizations were not exempted from population census. This was why ancient civilizations such as Egypt, Persia, Babylonia, Greece, Rome, Japan and China among others found it expedient to embark on population census. Some of these ancient civilizations conducted census of their people for the purposes of military recruitment, collection of taxes or other tribute and for communal labour.

However, with the growth in population and civilization, the importance of population grows bigger than it was in the time past. Unlike before, information on population is needed to deal with decisions which attempt to:

- 1) Estimate how much will be required for food, education, health, housing and welfare, settlement, industry, technology, others, in the light of material resources.

- 2) Identify population problems created as a result of trends and levels in living conditions to develop appropriate population policies.

- 3) Estimate targets in respect of manpower development and utilization conducive to the stage of the economy (Adamu, 1989).

In spite of the fact that population data represents an important substance of any country as it relates to planning, most of the developing countries are faced with problems that have been affecting accurate population data. Such include lack of technically qualified staff, lack of permanent organization charged with the collection of data, non-familiarity with socio-economic enquiries, poor transportation and communication facilities. Even though, most of the factors mentioned above have been reduced to the barest minimum in Nigeria, Ebigbola (1981) has concluded that while Nigeria can now boast of a large number of capable technical staff that can handle enumeration effectively, these staff have equally become torn in the flesh of population census in Nigeria, for they have been responsible for falsification of population figures.

The etymology of population census in Nigeria

The idea of population census is that, everybody is counted, but the fact remains that everybody cannot be counted; that is, a complete and accurate population census in any part of the world is impossible. However, in spite of this inherent difficulty, population census is necessary as Afolayan (1982) has once pointed out: 'Population constitutes a vital component of the resource base and the development potential of any country, (Afolayan, 1982). Fred (1988) similarly averred that: 'There is growing recognition of the complexity of the relationship between development and population' (Fred, 1988). President Obasanjo (2006) in the like manner concluded that: 'Census is indispensable to the nation's quest of sustainable development' (Obasanjo, 2006).

From the foregoing therefore, population census becomes a vital aspect of any nation, developed or developing. On the account of the increasing realization that population is a factor for planning and development, the Nigerian Government has over the years expended and exerted much in order to achieve a reliable census.

Though, Nigeria composed various state systems described as empires, caliphates, Kingdoms, Chiefdoms and village republics of varying territorial sizes was a British creation (Oyovbaire, 1981) having her boundaries delimited by the colonial administration was never having her population census initially on a nationwide basis. The British Government that colonized Nigeria thought it necessary to start this on a piecemeal basis. Therefore, as early as 1789, an estimate of the population of Lagos was made by an American sailor, Captain W. Adams, who put Lagos population at about 5,000. By 1815,

Lagos population was estimated to be about 11,000. By 1855, it stood at 20,000 and by 1861 when the British Government occupied Lagos, the population stood at 30,000 (Aluko, 1965). However, with the census Ordinance of 1863, census was still restricted to Lagos and following this, the first population census in Lagos under this Ordinance was in 1866 (Olusanya, 1989). This was after the cession of Lagos to Britain by King Dosumu. The 1886 population census was followed by that of 1868.

The population census of 1871 marked a new beginning in that, it started the commencement of decennial censuses in the country. This was repeated at ten-yearly intervals up to 1931. The 1871 population stood at 29,000; in 1881, it was 37,000; in 1891, 33,000; in 1901, 42,000; in 1911, 74,000; in 1921, 100,000 and in 1931, 126,000. (Aluko, 1965).

The Second World War prevented the Lagos population census of 1941, and so none was conducted until 1950 - 1951 when Lagos population was 272,000. Subsequent population censuses in Lagos have been giving Lagos population higher than that of 1789 estimate. However, population census as then was not limited to Lagos alone. Other parts of Nigeria experienced this practice. Thus in other parts of Nigeria, enumeration began in 1901 with Northern Nigeria having 10 million population.

With the Selbourne Committee which was appointed in 1898 to consider the future administration of Nigeria, the then Lagos colony was merged with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria (Okafor, 1981; Ballard, 1971). The resultant effect of this was that the 1911 census covered some parts of Southern Nigeria, a census which was organized from Government House, Zungeru. A difficulty to the complete enumeration of the Southern provinces was the fact that, most parts of the area had not been brought under the effective control of the colonial Government. It was as a result of this that the independent and the rebellious republican territories were not placed under neighbouring native rulers without the Governor's consent (Orewa and Adewunmi, 1983). It was on April 2, 1911 that population census in Northern Nigeria took place but was however defective. It was reported that, estimates of the Northern population were made on only a sheet of paper, and dispatched to the colonial office. Two years before the amalgamation, it was reported that the government of Lugard conducted census for Nigeria in 1912 (Onyekakeyah, 2007).

The amalgamation of the Southern and Northern protectorates into the federation of Nigeria by Lord Lugard in 1914 provided the impetus for a national census in 1921. This made population enumeration to become much wider in scope and more elaborate (Olusanya, 1989). It was divided into two parts- The Township census and The Provincial census. The Township census was considered to be fairly complete while the provincial one was a complete failure. With the 1921 population census, the

figure for the Northern provinces was 10.26 million while that of the Southern provinces stood at 8.37million. In 1931, another attempt was made at knowing the population of Nigerians. Prior to the 1931 population census, there were separate census organizations for both the southern and northern provinces of Nigeria. But, the 1931 census was centrally planned with the appointment of Mr. S.M. Jacob as the Government statistician (Maduagba, 1987).

With the 1931 population census, the population of the southern provinces was given as 8,493,000 while that of the Northern provinces was 11,435,000. There was not much growth in population between 1921 and 1931. Many reasons were given for this experience. The first was the severe economic depression of the early 1930s. The second was that three years before, a poll-tax had been introduced in the Eastern provinces which led to rioting in Owerri and Calabar provinces for fear that it might be extended to women. Third, only a few places were actual enumerations conducted. Fourth, the colonial administrators lacked expertise in census taking. The outbreak of the Second World War disrupted the decennial censuses which began since 1871; that is, the conduct of election in years ending with "1". This in essence meant that no population census came up in 1941. In this wise, the 1952 - 1953 population census was regarded as the first modern, national and carefully planned census in Nigeria (Tijani, 1990; Adepaju, 1981).

Prior to the one conducted between 1952 and 1953, there had been one conducted in Lagos in 1950. The Lagos population census was first taken as a trial to test the suitability of the new methods to be used because for the first time in the history of population census in Nigeria, there was a house-to-house census covering the whole country. Ten years later from 1952, precisely in 1962, there was another population census, which was regarded as the first post-independence census. The 1962 population census was designed to reduce the inherent difficulties in the past Nigeria's population censuses. Thus, efficient publicity machinery was mounted to ensure a complete coverage. In this wise, Nigerians were exhorted to ensure that they were counted as the census would form the basis for revenue allocating, provision of amenities and representation in both the regional and federal legislatures' elections of 1964.

The refusal of the government to accept population census of 1962 prompted the 1963 population census which took place late that year. However, its planning and conduct were never left to the then respective Regional Governments as the case was in 1962. Instead, the Federal Government set up a Central Census Board which consisted of representatives of the Federal and Regional Governments, under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister. Even though each Region arranged the enumeration of its population, census inspectors were provided by the Census Board. The population which was

accepted at a meeting of the National Economic Council in Lagos in May 1964 put the population at 55.66m; but as controversies had dotted the past censuses, the 1963 population census was not accepted and this resulted into another one being conducted in 1973.

Thus while it is true that the country suffered from 30 months of civil strife, by the end of the war in 1970 precisely on October, 1970, the Federal Military Government announced its National Programme (Adigwe, 1978; Oluleye, 1985; Dare, 1974; Dare 1975). The programme was meant to set the country on a sound footing. It was within this programme that was embedded the national population census of 1973. A substantive amount of money was voted by the military for the conduct of the election. In spite of this preparation, there was another population census in 1991. The Babangida Administration realized the need to conduct population census.

The administration regarded census as one of the pillars for stable Third Republic. To this end, The National Population Commission (NPC) was established and charged with the following responsibilities:

- 1) To undertake the enumeration of the nation's population periodically through census, sample survey etc.
- 2) To establish and maintain the machinery for continuous and universal registration of births and death.
- 3) To prepare and maintain a national frame for the delineation exercise for census and sample survey.
- 4) To collect, collate and publish data on migration statistics.
- 5) To research and monitor the National Population policy and set up a National Population Information Data Bank.
- 6) To arrange for the appointment and training of enumerators and all other categories of staff of the National Population Commission.
- 7) To provide information and data on population for purpose of facilitating national planning and economic development.
- 8) To advise the federal government on population and other population related programmes and problems.
- 9) To disseminate information and educate the general public about the work of the National population Commission (Momoh and Adejumobi, 1999).

The Commission made elaborate preparations for the census exercise which was conducted between 29 and 31 October, 1991 which result was released in 1992 with a population of 88.5 million with Lagos State being the most highly populated state in the country with 5.685 million people.

Contradictions and controversies in Nigeria's population census: From colonial to post colonial

The British Government that colonized Nigeria thought it

necessary to introduce population Census in Nigeria but attitudinal dispositions of many Nigerians and politicization of population censuses have been resulting into a series of undercounts and unnecessary data falsification. From the inception therefore, censuses in Nigeria have been experiencing credibility crises. A number of disagreements have arisen over the conduct of population censuses which have been threatening Nigeria's unity. The Political Bureau appointed by the Babangida administration was aware of the problematic nature of Nigeria's population census when it remarked that:

"An overview of the Nigerian political experience since independence in 1960 shows clearly that among the many issues that have created great anxiety and brought the country to the brink of collapse has been the attempt at obtaining an accurate count of the country's population. The potency of the issue as a source of confusion and a national discord is underscored by the fact that attempts made by civilians (1962 - 1963) and the military (1973) were greeted with the same degree of cynicism, suspicion and controversies and had to be cancelled (Political Bureau Report, 1987)".

Thus while the Bureau's report actually described the situation with Nigeria's census from 1960, the problem goes beyond 1960. Beginning with 1789 population census which was the first census in Nigeria and other population censuses that followed such as those of 1815, 1855, 1861, 1866 and 1868, 1871, 1881, and 1891 were restricted to Lagos. Such head counts were not extended to other parts of the country. Many methods were used for enumeration; besides, enumerators in 1881 were paid by the head count that is, according to the number of people each of them recorded. Mr. H.N Thompson an officer in charge of the 1931 census in Lagos however summarized why the population census restricted to Lagos were inaccurate when he said that:

"There is no doubt that the entire Lagos census has been more or less inaccurate, and the reasons for this are not far to seek. Census taking depends for its success above all, on the willing co-operation of the people counted, and that co-operation is extremely difficult to obtain in Lagos".

The people of Lagos, also in common with most Nigerian tribes, are reluctant to reveal the number of their children as they believe it is unlucky to do so (Everybody's Guide, 1990).

Things were no better in 1901 as the figures arrived at were not wholly accepted. The then government compounded the whole problem by resorting to specimen areas in selected parts of the country which were used as

an index for estimating the total population of Nigeria. By 1906, the Lagos colony was merged with the protectorate of Southern Nigeria and this political arrangement brought about the 1911 population census which was intended to cover the whole country. This effort did not materialize as insurrections in the north and hostility in the south besmeared the exercise. The 1911 census therefore had a limited coverage. In all, house-to-house count only took place in eleven main parts, while only estimates of population were made for the rest of the southern provinces and the entire Northern protectorate. Mr. R.K Floyer, the census officer in the Eastern Region between 1952 and 1953 however reported that the 1911 enumeration in the eastern provinces was only carried out in Calabar, Bonny, Opobo, Degewa and Brass. Dr. P.A Talbot who conducted the 1921 census in Southern Nigeria claimed that the 1911 population census figures were given for the sake of information.

The post amalgamation census took place in 1921 at both the Southern and Northern Nigeria. Dr Talbot who was in charge of the Southern Nigeria census claimed that the result was inaccurate. Mr. Meek who conducted the Northern Nigeria population census revealed the inaccuracy of 1921 enumerations in that area when he said that:

“Whilst it is not pretended that the counts made for the natives in the provinces was anything more than approximately accurate, the statistics nevertheless furnish a great amount of valuable information (Everybody's Guide, 1990)”.

The 1931 population census was another exercise in futility. It was conducted to ensure an improvement of the 1921 exercise. But rather than achieving this objective, the enumeration suffered severe setbacks: counting of persons took place in a very few places; it was poorly financed; and very few administrators were deployed from census duties to perform anti-locust activities. Brooke put the inaccuracy that confronted the Southern Nigeria population census in this manner:

...the census of southern provinces finally became a mere compilation of existing data and the result was only a provisional character (Everybody's Guide, 1990).

Rather than the controversy surrounding censuses in Nigeria to abate, the structure of government especially the composition of the Federal House of Representatives made it more complicated. Census became a political weapon. The various ethnic groups who never initially saw population enumeration as a source of political power turned around to see it in that way. Elaigwu (1986) like many others agreed that 'Census in Nigeria is a political issue' (Elaigwu, 1986). Census figures determine the relative numerical strength of each state in the Federal Legislature. Besides, this constituted membership of each council and the distribution of government

amenities.

Based on the existing population under the 1951 Constitution the 136 elective seats of the House of Representatives were allocated in these proportions: Northern region, 68; Western Region 34; and Eastern Region 34 (Tamuno, 1970). It should be pointed out that the north which asked for 50% of the membership of the national legislature which amounted to 68 seats been given was less than its own share going by its more than 55% of the total country's population (Yakasai, 2002). However, with the 1952-3 census, Northern Region had 174 of the 312 seats; Eastern Region, 73; the West 62; and Lagos 3. It was against this background of over zealousness of the value of a census that the 1962 population census was held.

In spite of the publicity that attended the 1962 population census, its results did not please the Northern Nigeria. This resulted into a controversy between the leaders of the North and those of the South (Osadebay, 1978). The Federal Census Officer stated in his report that the figures recorded throughout the greater part of Eastern Nigeria during the census were inflated. He had this same claim for the western Nigeria. It was amidst the tension created by the census that the Prime Minister announced the cancellation of the whole exercise. A repeated exercise was ordered for in 1963 and the figures announced evoked a great deal of controversy which greatly threatened the country's unity.

Since the previous censuses in Nigeria had been marred by cases of inflated figures, as early as 1972, arrangements for another population census in 1973 became finalized. The figures though admitted as the most thorough head count anywhere in the world were greeted by a number of protests. Chief Awolowo became the first national politician to publicly reject the 1973 census when he claimed that the figures were absolutely unreliable. The 1973 census became the 'last straw' factor that led to the demise of Gowon's administration. Gowon's successor, General Murtala Muhammed declined to use the controversial 1973 population census. Instead, the 1963 population census continued to be used. The indignation over the 1973 population census had not been totally erased from the political board of Nigeria before the Babangida administration conducted the 1991 population census. This was contentious and acrimonious. It became the most controversial and maligned exercise (Salaudeen, 2004). The figures showed that the population of the northern states had surged by 62% from 1963 figures to 47 million, the East by 50% to 18 million the West rose by 10% over a period of 30 years.

The 2006 population census and its attendant controversies

The British tradition of enumeration, that is, decennial enumeration, a kind of population census ending with the

year "I" had since been incorporated into Nigeria population system since 1871. Following this tradition, the head count of 2006 was first due in 2001, but this was shifted to 2002 and later to 2005 ostensibly because of the 2003 general elections. But rather than conducting it in 2005, it was later shifted to between 21 and 25 March, 2006. These incessant shifts notwithstanding, President Obasanjo had by November 2001 inaugurated the National Population Commission with the major mandate of conducting an accurate, reliable and credible census for the country.

In pursuance of a reliable and credible census, the Commission designed methodology and incorporated new techniques and the most modern technology for conducting the census. Thus for the first time, 2006 census employed the use of Geographical Positioning System (GPS) and Satellite imageries to carve out geo referenced Enumeration Area maps, OMR/ICR/OCR machine readable forms to record information, Automated Fingerprint Identification System (AFIS) to read fingerprints and thereby detect multiple counting and as well as Geographic Information System (GIS) used to store the 2006 census result (Obasanjo, 2006).

Presenting the result of the 2006 census to the President, the President of the National Population Commission Chairman, Alhaji Samaila Makama assured the nation that, the census was conducted with considerable transparency and confidentiality. Declaring the result, President Obasanjo stated on January 9, 2007 that Nigeria's provisional population as at March 2006 stood at 140,003,542. (See appendix 1 for the breakdown).

However, hell was let loose with this announcement of the 2006 census with captions in Nigerian Dailies such as: '...It is tinted with political permutations' (Onyeka-Ben, 2007), 'Delay in release gave room for manipulation' (Adim, 2007), 'Census 2006: matters arising' (Akerelle, 2007) 'Lagos' and the fallacies in national census figures' (Kolapo and Faloseyi, 2007). The list was indeed inexhaustible. All of them pointed to the fact that the census was a ridiculous exercise. The former Lagos State Governor, Senator Ahmed Tinubu expressed his displeasure at a book presentation entitled *Errors, Miscalculations and Omissions: The Falsification of the Lagos census figures* when he stated that:

We can afford a recount throughout the country. We want a recount in Lagos State. This is the height of corruption: falsifying census figures just to please some people. No amount of adjustment done to the figure can make it right. The figure is totally rejected. We have enough support and funding from the United Nations and the European Union. So let's have a recount. (Tinubu, 2007).

Puzzled by the released population figures Ayodele (2007) had this to say

If you take into consideration that between Kano and

Jigawa that make up the old Kano which population is about the same as that of Lagos in 1991 now has a population of 13,732,331 against Lagos 9,013,534, it would be seen that the result of the 2006 Census leaves so much issues begging for answers (Ayodele, 2007).

The arguments and counter arguments surrounding the 2006 population census have been revolving around both Kano and Lagos states. Thus from the released population census results, Kano state had 9,383,682 while Lagos had 9,013,634 (See appendix 1). From the figures released, it was adjudged that Kano state is having the highest population. The figure released for Lagos by the National Population Commission did not correlate with any available social parameters such as birth rate, number of houses and physical structures in a given area, vehicular density, children immunization, waste generation, school population and the cosmopolitan nature of the state through which population can be determined.

Available data shows that the number of children immunized in Lagos state in 2004 was 3,289,560, in 2005 it was 3,219,676 while in 2006 it was 3,186,195 (See appendix 2). Besides, the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated a figure of about 16 million for Lagos state based on the result of children immunized from 2000 to 2006. Lagos as at the 2006 census was having 26,000 Enumeration Areas and going by the National Population Commission (NPC) manual indicating that 500 - 1000 people should reside per Enumeration Area in an urban city/state. With an average of these figures which stands at 750 people per Enumeration Area, then the population of Lagos state should be about 19,500,000 (750 x 26,000) (Kolapo et al., 2007).

Again, the released figure for the Lagos State by the NPC stood at 9,013, 534. This is actually far less from what the total number of the residents should be. There are twenty Local Governments in the state and going by the total number of both male and female, this should stand by 17,552,942 (See appendix 3). This data was gotten from the similar census conducted by Lagos state itself.

On the other hand, the released 2006 population census showed that 'Kano has the largest population' and that 'North has more population than South' (Muogbo et al., 2007). However, since 1990, Nigeria has been subjected to a cycle of polymorphous violence which has generated thousands of internally displaced persons. Most cases of these violence occurred in the Northern states. Bauchi state experienced a state of mayhem in 1991; Kano state experienced a religious riot in 1991. Conflict ensued between the Junkun and Tiv communities in Taraba state in 1991. There was the Zango-Kataf crisis in 1992 in Kaduna state. This was followed by the Bassas and Egbura conflict in 1997. Kano state also witnessed another crisis in 1999, Chamba-Kuteb crisis in Taraba state in 2000, Kaduna religious crisis in Kaduna

state in 2000, Damboa religious crisis in Borno state in 2000, Nasarawa state communal clash in 2001, Tafawa Balewa and Bongoro crisis in Bauchi state in 2001, Jos mayhem in 2001, Kano riots of 2001, Tivs-Jukun crisis of 2001, the Wase crisis area of Plateau state in 2001, Kaduna mayhem in Kaduna state in 2002, the Adamawa state inter-ethnic clash in 2003, the Plateau state crisis in Plateau state in 2004, Kano mayhem in Kano state in 2004, the Kwande, Benue state political crisis in 2004 (J. Bamgbose, Ph.D Thesis University of Ibadan) and many others.

In all these cases in the North, thousands of people had died while many had left the north for their downward journey to the south. For examples, the Kano state 1991 mayhem displaced 10,000 people, the 1997 Bassas and Egbura conflict displaced 100,000 Bassas, while about 3,000 souls lost their lives, the 1999 Kano state crisis displaced over 10,000 southerners and many lost their lives, the Kaduna crisis of 2000 displaced many Kutebs from Takum living many dead, the Damboa Borno state crisis displaced many people, the Chamba Kuteb Taraba state crisis resulted into the death of many thousands and a number of people were displaced, the Jos Plateau state crisis of 2001 resulted into many death. In fact, the list is inexhaustible. There had been daily movements of people from the north to the south for one benefit or the other. There is no doubt that this exodus of people following different crises in that part of the country and besides, the crave for employment have reduced the northern population and for the results of most of the areas to be more than many states in southern Nigeria must be taken to have a hidden agenda for the purpose of being at advantage over other locations especially the southern part of the country.

Conclusion

To conduct a comprehensive and reliable population census in Nigeria today has become a mirage. Census taking in a heterogeneous state like Nigeria has become a politicized exercise. Elite in respective states of Nigeria's federation have come to believe that they need to inflate census figures to place them at an advantage over others in revenue sharing and political representation. This perception has continued to deny Nigerians; a condition that prompted a renowned economist, Professor Aluko (1965) to ask again and again... 'how many Nigerians...' (Aluko, 1965).

However, the past experiences with population census in Nigeria, using population as the yardstick for the allocation of governmental benefits should be de-emphasised. Rather, government should ensure equitable distribution of resources. This will ensure a satisfactory living of all Nigerians and accurate population figures can be reached and falsification can be a thing of the past.

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APPENDIX 1

Breakdown of the 2006 census figures.

State	Males	Females	Total
Abia	1,434,193	1,399,806	2,833,999
Adamawa	1,606,123	1,561,978	3,168,101
Akwa-ibom	2,044,510	1,875,698	3,920,208
Anambara	2,174,841	2,007,391	4,182,032
Bauchi	2,426,215	2,250,250	4,676,485
Bayelsa	902,648	800,710	1,703,358
Benue	2,164,058	2,055,186	4,219,244
Borno	2,161,157	1,990,036	4,151,193
C/River	1,492,465	1,396,501	2,888,966
Delta	2,074,306	2,024,085	4,098,391
Ebonyi	1,040,984	1,132,617	2,173,501
Edo	1,640,461	1,577,871	3,218,332
Ekiti	1,212,609	1,171,603	2,384,212
Enugu	1,624,202	1,633,096	3,257,298
FCT	740,489	664,712	1,405,201
Gombe	1,230,722	1,123,157	2,353,879
Imo	2,032,286	1,902,613	3,934,899
Jigawa	2,215,907	2,132,742	4,348,649
Kaduna	3,112,028	2,964,534	6,066,662
Kano	4,844,128	4,539,554	9,383,682
Katsina	2,976,682	2,813,896	5,792,578
Kebbi	1,617,498	1,621,130	3,236,628
Kogi	1,691,737	1,586,750	3,278,487
Kwara	1,220,581	1,160,508	2,371,089
Lagos	4,678,020	4,335,514	9,013,634
Nasarawa	945,556	917,719	1,863,275
Niger	2,032,725	1,917,624	3,950,249
Ogun	1,847,243	1,880,855	3,728,098
Ondo	1,761,263	1,679,571	3,441,024
Osun	1,740,619	1,682,916	3,423,535
Oyo	2,809,840	2,781,749	5,591,589
Plateau	1,593,033	1,585,679	3,178,712
Rivers	2,710,685	2,474,735	5,185,400
Sokoto	1,872,069	1,824,930	3,696,999
Taraba	1,199,849	1,100,887	2,300,735
Yobe	1,205,003	1,115,588	2,321,591
Zamfara	1,630,344	1,629,502	3,259,845

Source: Muogbo O, Fagbemi S E and Subair G (2007) Kano has largest population in Tribune (Ibadan): January 10 pp.1 and 4.

APPENDIX 2

Number of children immunized in Lagos state

Year	Number of children immunized
2004	3,289,560
2005	3,219,676
2006	3,186,195

APPENDIX 3

Total population of Lagos state

Local Government	Male	Female	Total
Agege	564,239	468,825	1,033,064
Ajeromi-Ifelodun	723,644	711,651	1,435,295
Alimosho	1,099,656	947,370	2,047,026
Amuwo Odofin	301,012	223,959	524,971
Apapa	264,728	257,656	522,384
Badagry	187,427	192,993	380,420
Epe	153,360	170,274	323,634
Eti-Osa	460,124	523,391	983,515
Ibeju-Lekki	49,613	49,927	99,540
Ifako-Ijaiye	380,112	364,211	744,323
Ikeja	328,778	319,942	648,720
Ikorodu	364,207	324,838	689,045
Kosofe	527,539	407,075	934,614
Lagos-Island	461,830	398,019	859,849
Lagos-Mainland	326,433	303,036	629,468
Mushin	684,176	637,341	1,321,517
Ojo	507,693	433,830	941,523
Oshodi-Isolo	514,875	619,691	1,134,548
Somolu	517,210	507,913	1,025,123
Surulere	698,403	575,959	1,247,362
State total	9,115,041	8,437,01	17,552,942

Sources for Appendixes 2 and 3: Tinubu A, (2007). The Fraud in Lagos Census in Tribune (Ibadan) February 6, pp. 3 and 4