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# Population (Birth) Control: Virtue for Satisfying Classes of Consumers in Nigeria

Samson O. Ibidunni[a],*; Princess Thelma Heirsmac[b]

[a]Professor, Department of Business Administration, McPherson University, Seriki-Sotayo, Ogun State, Nigeria.
[b]Lecturer, Department of Business Management, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria.
*Corresponding author.

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## Abstract

The research study investigated how population (birth) control assisted satisfaction of classes of consumers in Nigeria. Relevant literatures with models and theories were employed to substantiate the variables used. With the adoption of Yard's formula at 95% confidence level and 5% error tolerance, two hypotheses were investigated using the survey methods by randomly selecting 1，129 respondents that made up the three classes of consumers in ten (10) Local Government Councils that gave the researchers support on the study in Lagos State. Alternative form validity of the instrument was measured at 0.65; while its reliability was measured at Cronbach's alpha of 0.70. Findings revealed (i) a strong correlation between population (birth) control and delivering satisfactorily the economic and developmental needs of consumers in Nigeria, and (ii) that manageable population growth rate will influence the rate of decay of infrastructure in Nigeria. It was concluded that population birth control helps to attain manageable population rates at the family levels and at the national societal level. Also that the standard of living of Nigerian families will improve tremendously, and healthy lives of families will aid the growth of income for better living. It was therefore recommended that governments, at all levels, should create awareness about danger of high birth rate, ensure that the costs of family planning programmes are highly subsidised; and availability and affordability of contraceptives are ensured to the generality of consumers.

**Key words:** Population (birth) control; Classes of consumers; Procreation belief; Family Planning; Manageable population.

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## INTRODUCTION

Between 1960 and 2014 A.D., Nigeria's population grew from 45.2 million to 173.6 million people (World Bank & U.S. Census Bureau, 2014) representing increase of 284.1% of the population. The procreation belief of the people generally was responsible for this high percentage increase. However, apart from the military government of 1985 to 1993 that tried to peg birth to maximum four children per family; no other government; since 1960, has ever made the move. Marketing, as an industry programme, is saddled with the responsibility of satisfying all classes of consumers wherever they are within the country; at all times. This study focuses on population birth control in order to ensure that the three grouped classes of consumers in Nigeria are relatively catered for in terms of satisfying their needs and improving their living conditions (Achumba, 2006). The size of population affects the levels of income, standards of living, and the rate of decay of infrastructure and other social amenities. Population keeps on growing but the expansion of infrastructure, and social amenities such as good and standard road network, electricity, pipe borne water, just to mention a few, were not planned alongside to cater for the growing population. There have been debates on population growth and socio-economic standard of the people, as scholars have concluded that pessimistic theories of population growth would empathise its short term adverse impacts; given the apparent fixity

of resources and diminishing returns. Optimistic theories would also take a long term perspective where the short run costs of population growth are counterbalanced by benefits (Boucekkine, Martinez, & Ruiz-Tamarit, 2012). Therefore this study seeks to consider two critical objectives: (i) to show that population birth control assist in satisfactorily delivery of economic and developmental needs of consumers in Nigeria; (ii) to ascertain the influence of manageable population growth rate of infrastructural decay in Nigeria.

The significance of this study is justified in the sense that all stakeholders in government will be able to develop appropriate policies that will ensure that every Nigerian is educated on the importance of population (birth) control, the relevance of family planning and the need for healthy living. The impact of population (birth) control would therefore be felt on classes of consumers in terms of Marketers' ability to effectively provide the needed products and services across the demographic ladders. Governmental agencies will be guided in providing infrastructure and social amenities to cater for their needs and wants of consumers. Both policy makers and marketers would work hand-in-hand to ensure the exploration of the endowed natural resources, the refining, distribution and commercialization of the finished products to the benefit of the common man; and the growth of the nation's gross domestic products (GDP). Private sector operators; including entrepreneurs (national and foreign) will be obliged to contribute their quota in the development of small and medium enterprises. Also, employment of labour (skilled and unskilled), in all sectors of the economy, is the gain which naturally transcends to improve standard of living of the citizenry. Moreover, the academics will be more in-tuned to study relentlessly on research to assist enthusiastic entrepreneurs and other industrialists to improve the nation's industrialization. Hence, this paper becomes imperative at this juncture to lay emphasis on the importance of population (birth) control for Nigeria, improvement of infrastructure and other social amenities to earn improved consumerism and economic development.

## 1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the past years, population (birth) control has become increasingly necessary in Nigeria, as its growing population strains already limited resources, and the decaying social amenities. Nigeria, with its current demographics and without intervention, is set to double its population of 173.6 million people in the next 20 years at a growth rate of 5.2% and poverty rate of 46% as at 2013 (World Bank, 2014). Nigeria has one of the highest maternal mortality ratios (MMRs) in the world, and has resulted in the preponderance of young people in the population; more than 40% of these are currently under 15 years of age (Mandara, 2012). In the last thirty years thereby, low level of family planning is a major factor influencing the population growth rate in Nigeria, which is due to a culture that is largely supportive of big family size, misconception about family planning methods, poverty, and low levels of female education.

Population control leads to manageable populate rate; with family planning as its major method. According to the US Agency for International Development (USAID) family planning comprises activities that enable couples to determine whether, when, and how often to have children (USAID, 2011). Contraception is typically the primary component of family planning programmes, but programmes often include medical, educational and social activities. Family planning has profound health, economic and social benefits for families and communities, including protecting the health of women by reducing high-risk pregnancies, protecting the health of children by allowing sufficient time between pregnancies, reducing abortions, and creating opportunities for education, employment, full participation in society, protecting the environment and stabilizing population growth (Heil et al., 2012).

The family planning movement began in 1950's with the launching of national family planning programmes in developing nations around the world. Large families are the norms in developing nations, as the thought pattern was to ensure enough children to survive childhood and later contribute to the economy of the households and care for the parents when aged. Development brings about a decrease in mortality; and this resulted in dramatic increase in population growth (World Bank, 2014) in Nigeria. Efforts to curtail it by providing free family planning services have not been successful. Table 1 below depicts the population growth data as estimated by the World Bank up to 2050 A.D.

**Table 1**
**Estimated Population Growth by Year, 2050**

| Continents | Population size (million) | | | Absolute change 2005-2050 | Percent change 2005-2050 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (1960) | (2005) | (2050) | | |
| Asia | 1,699 | 3,905 | 5,217 | 1,312 | 34 |
| Europe | 604 | 728 | 653 | -75 | -10 |
| Latin American and Carribean | 219 | 561 | 783 | 222 | 39 |
| North Africa | 67 | 191 | 312 | 121 | 63 |
| North America | 204 | 331 | 438 | 107 | 32 |
| Oceania | 16 | 33 | | 15 | 44 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 226 | 751 | 1692 | 941 | 125 |
| World | 3,024 | 6,465 | 9,076 | 2,611 | 40 |

Source: Ncube. (2012). *World Health Organization Journal Paper.*

Table 1 above shows the estimated population growth size of the various continents in the world. On proper analysis of the table, Sub-Saharan Africa has the highest number of percentage change and it will not be far-fetched to assume that Nigeria is the contributing nation with the present 173.6 million people expected to double in the next 20 years (World Bank, 2014). The following diagrams below describe the projected change in real GDP and consumer prices, annual GDP growth and current account balance.

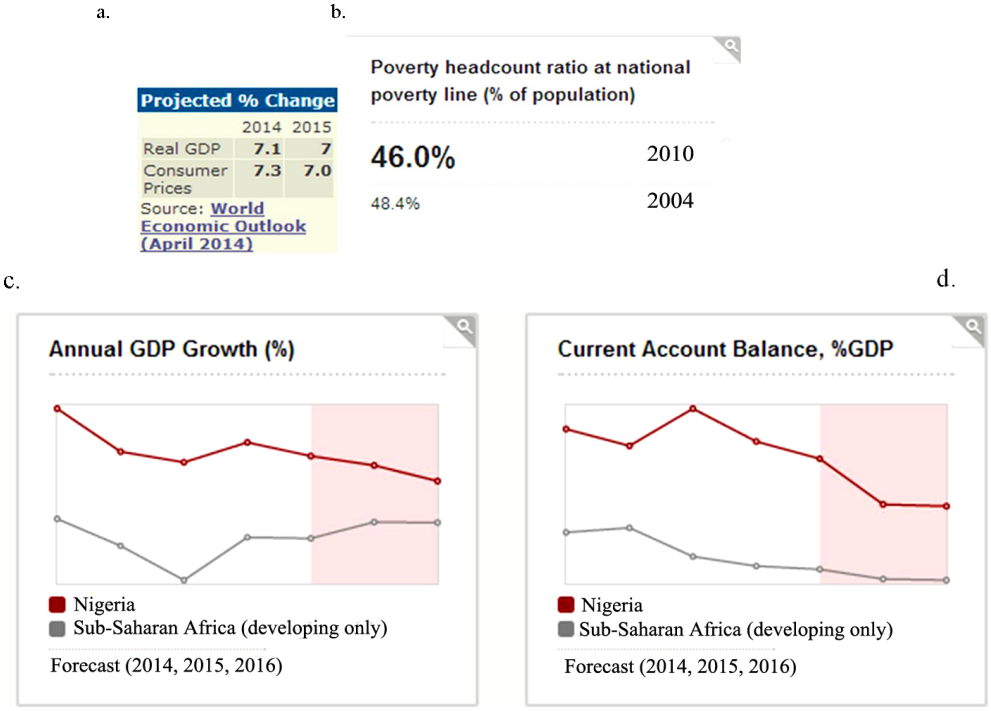


**Figure 1**
**Projected Change in Real GDP and Consumer Prices, Annual GDP Growth and Current Account Balance**
Source: World Bank Economic Outlook, April, 2014.

The diagrams in Figure 1a, b, c, d above show the projected change to occur between 2014-2016 in Nigeria in comparism with Sub-Saharan Africa in general; showing that the population may not be commensurate with how government might like Annual GDP to rise, but its favourable that poverty levels have dropped by 2% and should drop as birth control is regulated, When this happens, growth will occur in the Nigerian economy. Hence, meaning that the growth signifies improved standard of living of consumers, and increased purchasing power.

## 2. A BRIEF SUMMARY OF CLASSES OF CONSUMERS IN NIGERIA

Abioye (2014) identified three major social classes as upper, middle, and lower classes.

Upper Class Consumers: Given the country's large population, the upper class consumers make up 18% of the population, with purchasing power and annual incomes of over N21m, that is, $100,000, which puts them in the modest affluent class.

Middle Class Consumers: According to the survey, the middle class consumers were increasing and adding to economic growth in Nigeria. The survey reported that the "middle class consumers had clear aspirations for spending their newly created wealth and highly optimistic about personal prosperity, such as their appetite to travel, invest, grow their wealth and buy luxury goods. The emerging middle class has considerable growth, which is currently at 22% of the population.

Low-Class Consumers: In Nigeria, the low class consumers constitute 60% of the population. This figure is quite high a number, assuming we calculate 60% of 173.6 million Nigerians. Nigerians in this class have an average expenditure of $5,000 and below further indicates the average standard of living is really low. This is as a result of households having too many mouths to feed such that they cannot afford to feed well, and if 60% of consumers in Nigeria fall under the lower-level category, then it shows that the level of consumerism in Nigeria is low. Table 2 below shows the summary of classes of consumers in Nigeria.

**Table 2**
**The Summary of Classes of Consumers in Nigeria**

| Upper class | Middle class | Lower class |
|---|---|---|
| 18% | 22% | 60% |

Source: Abioye (2014).

## 3. RELEVANCE OF POPULATION CONTROL

### 3.1 Poverty Reduction

It has become self-evident that the rapid growth in population of Nigeria has exacerbated the issue of poverty, especially as underemployment is already high. Food security is a major concern and the undeniable boost in the number of poor people, and in the increase of the lower level classes of consumers. The existence of a strong correlation between household poverty and childbearing is in no doubt at this present era, and population control, through fertility decline and birth control could prove advantageous. Households with many children are more likely over time to become poor and less likely to recover from poverty than families with only a few children. The importance of effective family planning programmes and laws can bridge the gap between rich and poor people and make a powerful contribution to poverty reduction in Nigeria.

### 3.2 Environmental Sustainability

Developing nations with high population growth are not able to successfully exploit the nation's resources as there is a struggle for the limited resources, and the growing disparity between the rich and the poor families, and the percentage of the low level consumers is greater than the high and middle level consumers put together in Nigeria. Low level of technology is another challenge militating against developing the country's social amenities needed by the growing population to support their struggle for a better living. Suffice to say that Nigeria still relies on foreign technologies and personnel to develop most of its road networks, electricity, sophisticated buildings, transportation systems, just to mention a few. Although it has been argued that the so-called middle level consumers in Nigeria, when compared against middle level consumers in advanced nations, are to be categorised as low level consumers (Ibidunni & Ogundele, 2013).

### 3.3 Theory Supporting Control of Population Growth

Malthusian theory of population by Thomas Robert Malthus in 1798 argued for population checks in order to avoid population growth outgrowing food output growth. From the review of literature above, the following hypotheses were propounded:

Hypothesis 1: ($H_{01}$) Population (birth) control does not assist in satisfactorily delivery of economic and developmental needs of consumers in Nigeria.

Hypothesis 2 ($H_{02}$) Manageable population growth rate will not influence the rate of infrastructural decay in Nigeria.

## 4. METHODOLOGY

Considering the population of the study, simple random sampling was used to select the three classes of Upper, Middle and Lower consumers respectively; using Yard's formula with 95% confidence level and 5% error tolerance. Alternative form validity of the instrument was measured at 0.65; while its reliability was measured at Cronbach's Alpha of 0.70. The following secondary data were gathered from ten (10) of the Lagos State Local Government Councils that co-operated with the researchers to use their land-use, streets allocation, and utilities records. Table 3 below shows data on land-use, streets allocation and utilities charges to consumers.

**Table 3**
**Data on Land-Use, Streets Allocation and Utilities Charges to Consumers**

| S/N | Name of local govt council | Upper class | Middle class | Lower class | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Agege L.G | 8 | 32 | 60 | 100 |
| 2. | Badagry L.G | 2 | 22 | 120 | 144 |
| 3. | Epe L.G | 5 | 14 | 100 | 119 |
| 4. | Eti-Osa L.G | 80 | 8 | 75 | 163 |
| 5. | Ikeja L.G | 45 | 55 | 60 | 160 |
| 6. | Ikorodu L.G | 30 | 25 | 80 | 135 |
| 7. | Kosofe L.G Council | 4 | 20 | 110 | 134 |
| 8. | Lagos Island L.G | 30 | 45 | 40 | 115 |
| 9. | Ojo L.G | 6 | 47 | 111 | 164 |
| 10. | Surulere L.G | 42 | 40 | 84 | 166 |
| | Total | 252 | 308 | 840 | 1400 |
| | % contr. | 18% | 22% | 60% | 100% |

Sources: Ten Lagos State Local Government Councils Records, 2015.

Survey methods: With primary and secondary data, were adopted. A well-structured questionnaire was developed to elicit information from the three classes of consumers across the Lagos State based on Abioye (2014) percentage classifications. That is 18% Upper Class, 22% Middle Class and 60% Lower Class Consumers respectively. However below is Table 4 showing alongside numbers of administered questionnaire, the rate of questionnaire responses.

**Table 4**
**The Rate of Questionnaire Responses**

| Classes of consumers | No of respondents | Percentages | Rate of useable questionnaire returns | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | % of resp | % to base |
| Upper class | 252 | 18 | 184 | 16.3 | 73.0 |
| Middle class | 308 | 22 | 273 | 24.2 | 88.6 |
| Lower class | 840 | 60 | 672 | 59.5 | 80% |
| | 1,400 | | 1,129 | 100 | 80.6 |

Pearson's product-moment Correlation coefficient was used to test the stated hypothesis I; while standard multiple regressions were used to test the stated hypothesis II. In order to achieve this, 1,400 copies of the questionnaire were administered to the three classes of consumers in the following order; 252 (18%) to Upper Class consumers, 308 (22%) Middle Class consumers and 840 (60%) Lower Class consumers. Of the 1,400 copies of the questionnaire administered, 1,190 (85.0%) copies were returned; while 1,129 (94.87%) copies, could be used; leaving 61 (5.1%) copies rejected due to improper filling. Of the 252 copies administered on the Upper Class Consumers, 184 (73.%) usable copies were returned, Middle Class Consumers with 308 copies had 273 (88.6%) useable response rate and Lower Class Consumers with 840 copies got 672 (80%) useable response rate. In other words, all the three classes' responses were justified to be used. The variables operationalized on the population (birth) control as independent variables (Y); were (i) family planning programmes, (ii) Limited number of affordable children, (iii) family healthy lives and (iv) manageable population growth rate. On the other hand, satisfying classes of consumers; as a dependent variable has (i) poverty reduction in Nigerian families, (ii) improved standard of living, (iii) growth in family income and (iv) rate of infrastructural decay in Nigeria.

## 5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

On demographic bases of the 1,129 respondents to the questionnaire, 816 (72.3%) respondents were male; while 313 (27.7%) respondents were female across the ten covered local government councils.

Using educational attainment, 206 (18.2%) respondents possessed Master Degree certificate, 414 (36.7%) respondents possessed University First degree, 389 (34.5%) respondents possessed Higher National Diploma Certificate while 120 (10.6%) respondents possessed other lower qualifications.

On family planning programmes being responsible for poverty reduction in Nigerian families, almost all; 1,106 (98%) respondents strongly agreed, while 23 (2.0%) respondents were undecided.

On the limited number of affordable children being responsible for the improved standard of living in Nigerians families, 605 (53.6%) respondents strongly agreed, 343 (30.4%) respondents agreed, 41 (3.6%) were undecided. However, majority, that is, 948 (84%) agreed to this finding.

On the family healthy lives contributing to the growth of the family income, it was a clear majority responses, that is, 1,092 (96.7%) respondents strongly agreed while 37 (3.3%) respondents agreed to the assertion.

On the manageable population growth rate influencing the rate of infrastructural decay in Nigeria, 540 (47.8%) respondents strongly agreed, 289 (25.6%) respondents agreed, 86 (7.6%) respondents were undecided, 138 (12.2%) respondents disagreed, while 76 (6.7%) respondents strongly disagreed. This also shows that majority, that is, 73.4% respondents were in support of this manageable population for Nigeria infrastructural usage.

## 6. TEST OF HYPOTHESES

**Hypothesis 1:** ($H_{01}$) Population (birth) control does not assist in satisfactorily delivering the economic and developmental needs of consumers in Nigeria.

Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient was used to test for the population (birth) control as a virtue to satisfy classes of consumers in Nigeria.

The independent variables that made up the population (birth) control in this study were carefully categorized while dependent variables of satisfying classes of consumers were also appropriately categorized in Table 5 below:

**Table 5**
**Correlations**

| | | Population (birth) control | Satisfying classes of consumers |
|---|---|---|---|
| Population (birth) control | Pearson Correlation | 1 | .782(**) |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 |
| | *N* | 1,129 | 1,129 |
| Satisfaction of Classes of consumers | Pearson Correlation | .782(**) | 1 |
| | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | |
| | *N* | 1,129 | 1,129 |

Source: Author's Field Survey (2015).

### 6.1 Interpretation of Result for Hypothesis 1

From Table 5 above, the relevance of the independent variables, that is, population (birth) control to the dependent variables' position investigated using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient revealed a significant relationship between the dependent and independent variables. A strong correlation between the use of population (birth) control and satisfying classes of consumers in Nigeria was revealed at [$r$=.782, $n$=1129, $p$<0.005]. The use of population (birth) control negated our hypothesis 1 when compared with satisfaction of classes of consumers in Nigeria. Hence, we rejected the null hypothesis that asserted that population (birth) control does not assist in satisfactorily delivering the economic and developmental needs of classes of consumers in Nigeria, and accepted the alternative hypothesis that claimed population birth control as a virtue satisfying classes of consumers in Nigeria. The findings show their value, 0.782, to be above 0.5; which indicated a strong correlation between population (birth) control and the satisfaction of classes of consumers in Nigeria. From the results of the hypothesis testing, we can say that satisfaction of classes of consumers in Nigeria has strong relationship with the population (birth) control measure by the government. The result of this research was corroborated by Cleland et al. (2012): Population control via family planning in countries with high birth rates would contribute substantially to human empowerment, achievement of universal and long term environmental sustainability, thereby leading to better standard of living which in turn affects the economic condition of the various classes of consumer in Nigeria.

**Hypothesis II**: ($H_{02}$) Manageable population growth rate will not influence the rate of infrastructural decay in Nigeria.

Standard multiple regression was used to generate results that indicated how well the variables representing manageable population growth rate.

### 6.2 Interpretation of Result for Hypothesis II

**Table 6**
**Computation and Interpretation of the Coefficient of Multiple Determinations $R^2$ for Hypothesis Two Model Summary**

| Mode 1 | *R* | *R* square | Adjusted *R* square | Std. errror of the estimate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | .789(a) | .622 | .600 | .23426 |

*Note.* a Predictors (constant).
Source: Authors' Field Survey (2015).

Table 6 above is the model summary showing how much of the variance in the dependent variable (influencing the rate of decay on infrastructure and other social amenities in Nigeria.) was explained by the model (which included manageable population growth rate adopted as independent variables). In this case, the *R* square value is .622, and it also expressed variation between the independent and dependent variables which in our model culminated to 62.2% of the decaying.

Table 7 below shows the determination of the multiple regression equation for the data on Hypothesis Two.

**Table 7**
**Coefficients (a)**

| Mode 1 | Unstandardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficient | *T* | Sig | Collinearity statistics | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *B* | Std. error | Beta | Tolerance | VIF | *B* | Std. error |
| | .767 | .109 | .375 | 7.047 | .000 | .978 | 1.023 |
| Family planning programmes are responsible for poverty reduction in Nigerian families. | .132 | .026 | | 4.975 | 000 | | |
| Limited number of affordable children is responsible for the improved standard of living of Nigerian families. | .110 | 0.36 | .239 | 3.067 | 0.003 | .913 | 1.096 |
| Family healthy lives contribute to growth in family income. | .174 | .032 | .424 | 5.388 | .000 | .898 | 1.114 |
| Manageable population growth rate will influence the rate of decay on infrastructure. | .163 | .041 | .303 | 4.000 | .000 | 968 | 1.033 |

*Note.* a. Dependent variable: Combined performance
Source: Authors' Field Survey (2015).

From the above output, the regression equation is

$$y = 0.767+0.132x_2+0.110x_2+0.174x_3+0.163x_4$$

Table 7 above shows which of the variables included in the model contributed to the prediction of the dependent

variables. The study was interested in comparing the contribution of each independent variable; therefore beta values were used for the comparison. The table also seeks to explain which of the variables was making statistically significant unique contributions to the model. Looking at the Sig. column in the table, it reveals that variables of manageable population growth rate made unique and statistically significant contributions to the rate of decay on infrastructure and other social amenities; hence, we rejected the null hypothesis which states that manageable population growth rate will not influence the rate of decay on infrastructure in Nigeria. Table 8 below reveals the determination of whether the model is useful for predicting the responses for hypothesis two.

Table 8 showing the determination of whether the model is useful for predicting the response for hypothesis two.

a Predictors: (Constant), the Family planning programmes are responsible for poverty reduction in Nigerian families, Limited number of affordable children is responsible for the improved standard of living of Nigerian families, Family healthy lives contribute to growth in family income and manageable population growth rate will influences the rate of decay on infrastructure.

**Table 8**
**ANOVA (b)**

| Mode 1 | Sum of squares | *df* | Mean square | *F* | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Regression | 6.143 | 4 | 1.536 | 27.984 | .000(a) |
| Residual | 61.82 | 1,124 | 0.055 | | |
| Total | 67.963 | 1,128 | | | |

*Note.* b. Dependent variable: Influencing the rate of decay on infrastructure and other social amenities.
Source: Authors' Field Survey (2015).

Table 8 above shows the assessment of the statistical significance of the result. This satisfied the null hypothesis that multiple $R$ in the population equal 0. The model in this table reaches statistical significance of (Sig=.000) and significance level at $a$ =0.05 rejection region. We reject null hypothesis if $p$-value=0.05. From the ANOVA table (Test statistics and $p$-value) above, $F$ = 27.984, and $p$-value < 0.001. Since $p$-value < 0.001=0.05, we rejected the null hypothesis. At the $a$ = 0.05 level of significance, there existed enough evidence to conclude that the predictors were useful for predicting the not influence the rate of decay of infrastructure in Nigeria. Therefore the model is useful and we rejected the null hypothesis which stated that manageable population growth rate cannot influence the rate of decay of infrastructure in Nigeria. The alternative hypothesis ($H_2$) was therefore accepted; meaning that manageable population growth rate will influence the rate of decay of infrastructure in Nigeria. This result was supported by research finding of African Development Bank, (2014), that claimed that manageable population can play an important role in urbanization rates, falling poverty levels, improved business environment and technological innovation in the sense that it will boost economic growth through effective distribution of the country's resources, reduce poverty levels through smaller households, middle class expansion, stabilise the business climate, and reduce balance of trade deficits and restrictions, thereby pushing for economic growth.

## CONCLUSION

From the findings of the hypotheses above, the following conclusions were deduced:

i. Population (birth) control helps to attain manageable population rates at the family levels and the national societal level.

ii. Majority of the respondents, not less than 84% agreed to the use of family planning programmes as measures to curb high population in the family and nation.

iii. It was also agreed that the standard of living of Nigerian families will improve tremendously, and healthy lives of families will aid the growth of income for better lives.

iv. With the achieved manageable population in the society, it could be concluded that government will be able to provide infrastructure and other social amenities to the tastes of the citizenry.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following points are recommended:

i. Governments at all levels, Federal, states and Local have to take the issue of population control seriously by creating awareness, discouraging high birth rate particularly among the illiterates all over the country.

ii. Government should ensure that the costs of family planning programmes are highly subsidised to the affordability of the very low income classes of consumers in Nigeria.

iii. Government should ensure availability of different family planning programmes at all times, at every health centre with minimum efforts by families and at close range to people's residence.

iv. Policy makers and other stake-holders should make Nigerians to see the significance of how few populations will enhance the judicious use of infrastructure and other social amenities adequately and comfortably.

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