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Perception of Housing Quality by Residents and Non Residents of Ibara Housing Estate, Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria

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This study examined the perception of housing quality by residents and non residents of Ibara housing estate, Abeokuta. Data for the study were obtained from both primary and secondary sources. The questionnaire targeted the residents and non-residents and was administered using systematic random sampling method on household heads living in one out of every fifth (5th) house located in the identified three (3) zones in the study area: staff quarters, corporation quarters and site and services residential area of the housing estate selected, and likewise for the non-residents. A total of 85 residents household heads were selected, likewise 85 non-residents (relatives and friends of the residents) were also selected for questionnaire administration. Both descriptive and inferential techniques of data analysis were employed. The study established that the condition of the building elements (roofs, walls, floors windows, doors, toilets/bathrooms, lighting and ceiling) was perceived by the residents to be of good condition (4.21). While the non-residents perceived it to be fair in condition (3.25). Also, residents and non-residents of the estate were fairly satisfied with facilities and services in the estate (3.65 and 3.39 respectively). The dwellers and non-dwellers of the housing estate were satisfied with their dwellings and its environment (3.78 and 3.18 respectively). The paper advocated the need for involvement of the public in housing provision decision since they are the beneficiaries, as this will go a long way in the provision of more quality housing that will meet the people's need and aspiration.

Keywords: housing, housing quality perception, residents and non residents, Ibara housing estate

Introduction

Housing (adequate shelter) is recognized world-wide as one of the basic necessities of life and a pre-requisite to survival of man (Agboola, 2004, UN–Habitat, 2006; Anofojie and Adeleye, 2011). Rapoport (2001) defines housing as a system of settings within which a certain system of activities takes place and therefore housing is more than the dwelling, the neighbourhood and its environmental quality profiles become important. In the traditional African setting, in particular, housing is, in fact, one of the greatly cherished material properties.

However, providing qualitative housing is a concern, not only of individuals but also of governments. Researches (Mabogunje, 2002; Aribigbola, 2005; Olayiwola et al, 2005; Lawanson, 2006; UN–Habitat, 2006; Jiboye, 2010) have shown that decades of direct government interventions, both locally and internationally, in the housing sector have not been able to combat the problems of insufficient quality in housing. This is more serious in developing countries and Nigeria is not an exemption. Nevertheless, despite recorded failures, academics and professionals still invest much interest.

In Nigeria, the problem of insufficient quality housing persists in urban and rural areas. The crisis is more serious in urban areas as most people live in poor quality housing and unsanitary environments. This is because of high population growth due to incessant rural-urban migration and rapid urbanization, which manifests in homelessness, overcrowding and growth of slums (Mabogunje, 2002; Lawanson, 2006; Olotuah, 2006; Adeleye and Anofojie, 2011). In addition, the deplorable quality of housing in Nigeria reflects in the predominance of structurally unsound, functionally obsolete and substandard houses in the urban and rural areas (Mabogunje, 1975; Olotuah and Adesiji, 2005).

To curtail housing shortage, the need for continuous state intervention through public housing provision was adopted. This has resulted in the construction of various mass housing estates in urban centres for all income groups. However, Oni (1988) asserts that the assessment of housing need by the various governments in Nigeria has concentrated in the number of dwelling units needed, playing down on the importance of quality and the satisfaction of would-be residents. This manifests in the mismanagement and misuse of housing estates, thereby accelerating the rate at which they degenerate. In effect, because built-up structures degenerate in quality with age and obsolescence, the high rate of neglect and consequent deterioration of housing have made blight and lack of residents' satisfaction common features in many public housing estates in Nigeria. However, if good quality housing implies its

possession of good attributes, then the reality of housing situation in Nigeria is below ideal.

In the light of the afore-mentioned and the fact that low quality housing and blighted environments are inimical to the general wellbeing and quality of life of people, there is therefore the need to appraise the perception of residents and non residents of Ibara housing estate, Abeokuta on the quality of their housing as this will go a long way to ensure the provision of quality and functional housing that will meet the need of the people.

Study Area

Abeokuta town is situated on the east bank of the Ogun River, around a group of rocky outcroppings that rise above the surrounding wooded savanna. It lies on the main railway (1899) from Lagos, 48 miles (78km) south, and on the older trunk road from Lagos to Ibadan; it also has road connections to Ilaro, Shagamu, Iseyin, and Ketou (Benin).

Abeokuta was founded about 1830 by Sodeke a hunter and leader of the Egba refugees who fled from the disintegrating Oyo Empire. The town was also settled by missionaries (in the 1840s) and by Sierra Leone Creoles, who later became prominent as missionaries and as businessmen. Abeokuta's success as the capital of the Egbas has a link in the Lagos-Ibadan oil-palm trade which led to war with Dahomey (now Republic of Benin).

Ibara housing estate is owned by the government of Ogun State, Nigeria. It was built in anticipation of the creation of the State in 1976 to accommodate the Civil/Public servants transferred to and employed at the then emerging Ogun State Capital as staff quarters in Abeokuta. The total land mass of the housing estate is 97.20 hectare of land. The housing estate is situated within Abeokuta South Local Government Area of Ogun State. It was expected to be maintained and managed by the Housing Corporation established by the owner state.

The housing estate was divided into three zones namely: staff quarters zone which contain one hundred and eleven (111) three bedroom bungalows, corporation quarters zone which consists of 8 buildings and 16 three bedroom flats and site and services zone which contain 297 buildings that are bungalows, blocks of flats, terrace, semi-detached and duplexes. Commercial activities are present within the housing estate like bank, shopping complex, retail shops, and eatery. Also notably in the estate are infrastructure like schools, electricity supply though erratic in nature; water supply, places of worships, health facilities and waste disposal management. The only recreational facility present in the estate is Abeokuta sport club which open to its registered members. The roads in the estate are tarred though there are neither sidewalks nor pedestrian walkways and street lights are not functioning and the area is not landscaped.

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Ratcliffe (1978) refers to housing as one of the components of planning since it gives shelter, security, privacy, investment and personal identity. With the exception of food, housing ranks highest amongst man's basic needs in the Nigerian Fourth National Development Plan (1981 – 1985), and goes beyond simple shelter to include utilities and community services such as energy, water supply, access roads, sewerage, refuse disposal facilities and the likes.

Adeleye (2012) asserts that the classification of housing depends on the number of rooms, existing comfort, form and the place where found. Agbola (1998) describes housing as an issue that touches on the life of individuals as well as that of a nation. As such, he ascribes great importance to the role played by housing in endangering human comfort by both nature and society. In addition, he stresses that housing which is a combination of characteristics provides a unique home within any neighbourhood, describing it as an array of economic, social and psychological phenomena. Jiboye (2004), therefore, asserts, "If the concept of housing is understood to represent the aforementioned expressions, then, housing designs and planning consideration should involve not only the physiological responses to the enclosed environment, but also the socio-cultural responses emanating from the socio-economic and cultural norms of the users. In this regard, all the ancillary services and community facilities, which are necessary for human wellbeing, including environmental and social services, personal safety and security, which are also essentials for housing should be provided."

In recent decades, there has been an increasing emphasis on the housing sector by different governments of the less developed countries (LDCs). Yet the sufficient and good quality provision of this basic need elude a high proportion of the population of these countries (Abiodun, 1985b; Olayiwola et al, 2005; National Housing Policy, 2006). Housing is a basic human need. The understanding of its concept, as well as its components that provide for good quality, as is germane to this study is evaluated.

Housing Quality

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2005) defines quality as the standard of something when compared to other things like it; how good or bad something is. Afon (1998) asserts that quality cannot be considered differently from the process by which it is considered. Thus, standards in

housing are a measure of acceptability at a given time, place, in a given set of cultural, technological and economic conditions.

According to Weldemann and Anderson (1985), planners and designers have used several criteria over the years to evaluate housing quality. These include:

- economic criteria such as the relationship between rent and income;
- physical criteria such as the integrity of the dwelling and the present plumbing fixtures;
- social criteria such as the incidence of diseases and the degree which overcrowding of housing occupies.

Good quality housing standards are essential and basic to planning. These, not only ensure the safety and wellbeing of people but also promote beauty, convenience and aesthetics in the overall built-up environment. Good quality housing means more than a roof over one's head. It also means adequate privacy; adequate space, physical accessibility; adequate security, security of tenure, structural stability and durability; adequate lighting, heating and ventilation; adequate basic infrastructure, such as water supply, sanitation and waste-management facilities; suitable environmental quality and health-related factors; and adequate and accessible location with regard to work. All of these should be available at an affordable cost and should be determined together with the people concerned (Payne, 1977; Lewin, 1981; Olotuah, 2006; UN – HABITAT, 2006).

However, poor housing has repercussions across a whole range of other aspects of life, such as employment, as housing not only fulfils the basic human physical need for shelter but also satisfies social requirements. A house provides a centre for an individual and the basis for family life, emerging as an important symbol of social standing and aspirations. Thus, the fulfillment of housing quality needs is a complex process. A good housing, therefore, must possess a general layout of good appearance, and comply with the general customs and habits of the people without which it may turn into a slum (Adeniyi, 1972; Lucas, 1990; Azubuike and Nkanginiemu, 1999; Sholamith, 2000; UNICEF, 2001).

However, past and current housing programmes have not paid adequate attention to housing quality (Onibokun, 1982 cited in Oni, 1988). Thus, inadequacies exist in housing. These inadequacies are treated under the following sub-topics: housing suitability, housing habitability, tenure security and freedom from crowding.

Goodman (1978) considers three indicators of housing quality: financial burden, crowding, unit and neighbourhood quality. His focus was on housing demand-type variables that influenced housing quality based on the premise that 'housing supply type variables are controlled by design. The determinants of housing quality in the Goodman studies were assumed to be; income, family size, education and race.

Perception of Housing Quality

Perception is defined as the process of attaining awareness or understanding of the environment by organizing and interpreting sensory information. All perception involves signals in the nervous system, which in turn result from physical stimulation of the sense organs (Wikipedia, 2012). Since the beginning of man, everyone has different perceptions of e.g. the environment, but these perceptions are also an expression of the time, context and culture each individual lives in.

Man's perception of the environment is considered so fundamental that it becomes the main point of departure for any analysis of man-environment relations. A perception approach to man environment relations recognizes that for each objective element and relationship in the biosphere, there are many perceived elements and relationships as seen and understood by different people and at different times and places. Man reaches decisions and takes action within the framework of his perceived sets of elements and links rather than any externally defined "objective set". The understanding of resident's perception provides better information on their reaction to issues which may lead to more enlightened decision of the policy maker.

Housing Habitability

Housing habitability refers to the physical condition of dwellings (structurally, internally and externally); the existence of basic household amenities (such as cooking, washing and heating facilities); and the condition of the environment surrounding the home. It also comprises the social, behavioural, cultural and personal characteristics of the inhabitants and the nature of the institutional agreement under which the house is managed (Raven 1976; Onibokun 1998, Nandinee, 1999; Ayo, 2007, Jiboye, 2004, 2008).

In describing the physical conditions of dwellings, Nandinee (1999) asserts that the structural adequacy of housing is an important indicator. He investigated the determinants of structural adequacy as an attribute of housing quality. The essential components of habitability are that the house (and environment where relevant) is healthy to live in, is energy efficient (takes less energy to build and operate), and is resource efficient (uses fewer non-renewable resources and makes efficient use of renewable resources.

Housing Satisfaction

According to Ogu (2002), the concept of residential satisfaction is often adopted to evaluate resident's perceptions of their housing units and the environment. However, housing satisfaction is influenced by many factors in the system and socio-economic characteristics of the occupants. These factors may include: age, marital status, number of children and family size, socio-economic status, income, education, employment and welfare, length of residency, housing physical characteristics, satisfaction with housing physical condition and management services, social participation and interaction, past living conditions and residential mobility as well as future intention to move.

Housing satisfaction is a complex attitude (Satsangi& Kearns, 1992). It encompasses satisfaction with the dwelling unit and satisfaction with the neighbourhood and the area (Onibokun, 1974).

Public Housing

Public housing refers to a form of housing provision, which emphasizes the role of the State (government and its agencies) in helping to provide housing, particularly for poor, low-income and more vulnerable groups in the society (Van Vliet, 1990). It has taken varied forms in different geographical contexts and other descriptive terms are sometimes used in its place – such as social housing, state-housing, state-sponsored housing, welfare housing, non-profit housing, low-cost housing, affordable housing, and mass housing.

Two broad approaches to public housing have been identified: Government-provided housing and Government-sponsored housing (Power, 1993). Public housing programmes have been criticized for failing to provide quality, affordable and adequate housing units to target population in most developing countries (Mukhija, 2004). Yet studies have indicated that governments in developing countries are not relenting in their efforts at addressing the problem of providing adequate, affordable and sustainable housing.

Methodology

Data for this study were derived from both primary and secondary sources. Pilot study and validation from the Ogun state housing corporation revealed that Ibara housing estate consists of three zones. Staff quarter's zone comprises one hundred and eleven (111) housing units; corporation quarter's zone comprises eight (8) housing units while the site and service zone comprises two hundred and ninety seven (297) housing units. For questionnaire administration a systematic random sampling technique was adopted in which one out of every fifth housing unit was sampled in each zone i.e. 20%. For the residents 20% from staff quarters zone, 20% from corporation quarters zone and 20% from site and service zone was sampled, likewise the non-residents. The survey instrument was pre-tested by random interview of one respondent from each of the quarters.

Therefore, for the residents 23, 2, 60 (85) questionnaire were administered within the staff quarters, corporation quarters and site and service zones respectively by face to face interview. For non-residents, 85 respondents were randomly selected for the purpose of questionnaire administration in the identified housing zones. Household heads or any other adult willing to respond was interviewed per housing unit. However, for the non-residents, the housing estate respondents were asked to give addresses of their relatives and intimate friends that frequent the selected houses who may live very close to the estate.

Table 1: Calculated Number of Buildings in the Housing Estate

S/N	Zones	No. of buildings in the estate	20% of buildings in the estate	Selected number of houses
1.	Staff quarters	111	22.2	23
2.	Corporation quarters	8	1.6	2
3.	Site and services	297	57.4	60
	Total	416	83.2	85

Source: Ogun State Housing Corporation, Ibara Housing Estate, Abeokuta and author's computation, 2012

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze collected data. These are the simple frequency and percentage tables. Also, the Likert scale was used to rate residents' perception on a five point scale. The scale used the following responses: very bad, bad, fair, good and very good. Each response was coded as follow: very bad = 1, bad = 2, fair = 3, good = 4, and very good = 5. Also, scale used to determine the level of satisfaction of respondents with facilities was: Highly Dissatisfied (HD), Dissatisfied (D), Fairly/just satisfied (FS), Satisfied (S) and Highly Satisfied (HS).

Each coded response was multiplied by number of respondents, which gave the Weighted Value (WV). The Summation of the Weighted Values

(∑WV) was divided by number of respondents (n) to arrive at each component Mean Weighted Value (MWV). The Mean of Mean Weighted Value (MWV) was then obtained by dividing Summation of Mean Weighted Value (∑MWV) by total number of infrastructure or building elements (y) surveyed in the study. This gave the overall conditions. Thus,

MWV = ∑WV/n, where n = population of respondents.

Overall condition = Mean of MWV = ∑MWV/y, y = total number of variables.

Results

Condition of buildings in the Estate

The condition of a building is a very important determinant of the level of satisfaction a resident's will have with his accommodation. Therefore, presented in Table 2 are residents' views of conditions of building elements in their houses. It was established that roofs, walls, floors, windows/doors, toilets/bathroom, lighting and ceiling were rated to be good by the respondents (4.25, 4.29, 4.27, 4.12, 4.19, 4.14 and 4.19 respectively). Indeed, the overall condition of buildings in the study area was rated good (4.21). From the result above, it would not be out of place to say that buildings in the estate were perceived to be in good condition by the residents.

Moreover, non residents of the estate opinions were sampled on the housing condition in Ibara housing estate, from the result shown in Table 1b, it was discovered that they express a contrary opinion to that of the residents. Information derived from the non residents revealed that roofs, walls, floors, windows/doors, toilets/bathroom, lighting and ceiling were rated to be fair (3.25, 3.29, 3.27, 3.12, 3.19, 3.14 and 3.19 respectively). Similarly, the overall condition of buildings in the estate was also rated as fair (3.25).

Therefore, it can be seen that while the residents rated the condition of buildings in the estate to be good, the non residents perceived it to be fair.

Table 1: Residents' perception on the condition of buildings in the estate

S/N	Building elements	Rating and Weighted Values					SWV	MWV
		1 VB	2 B	3 F	4 G	5 VG		
1.	Roofs	-	-	7	50	28	361	4.25
2.	Walls	-	-	5	50	30	365	4.29
3.	Floors	-	-	8	46	31	363	4.27
4.	Windows/doors	-	2	14	41	28	350	4.12
5.	Toilets/bathrooms	-	2	8	47	28	356	4.19
6.	Lighting	-	-	16	41	28	352	4.14
7.	Ceiling	-	1	11	44	29	356	4.19
	Total							29.45
	Mean of ∑MWV = 29.45/7 = 4.21							

Non residents' perception on the condition of buildings in the estate

S/N	Building elements	Rating and Weighted Values					SWV	MWV
		1 VB	2 B	3 F	4 G	5 VG		
1.	Roofs	-	-	7	50	28	276	3.25
2.	Walls	-	-	5	50	30	279	3.29
3.	Floors	-	-	8	46	31	277	3.27
4.	Windows/doors	-	2	14	41	28	265	3.12
5.	Toilets/bathrooms	-	2	8	47	28	271	3.19
6.	Lighting	-	-	16	41	28	266	3.14
7.	Ceiling	-	1	11	44	29	271	3.19
	Total							22.45
	Mean of ∑MWV = 22.45/7 = 3.25							

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2012

Residents' level of satisfaction with facilities within the houses/estate in the study area

Data on residents' levels of satisfaction with facilities within the houses/estate in the study area presented in Table 2 established that the residents of Ibara housing estate indicated that they were satisfied with size/space in their buildings (4.01); ventilation in their buildings or apartments (4.22); space of living room/bedroom and space of bathrooms and toilets (4.09 and 4.02 respectively). Meanwhile, Security and safety of lives and properties, living conditions in the estate, space of toilets, functionality of bathrooms and toilets, design of buildings, refuse disposal/management, general state of road, general state of drainage system, general state of electricity supply, general state of water supply, general state of health facilities, general state of schools, general state of recreational facilities, management – residents relationship and the overall housing environment were ranked: 3.86, 3.98, 3.95, 3.98, 3.82, 3.98, 3.09, 3.62, 3.41, 3.09, 3.56, 3.29, and 3.78 (fairly/just satisfied) respectively. However, the residents perceived their level of satisfaction with the housing estate to be fair (3.65).

Non Residents level of satisfaction with Ibara housing estate

In line with the objective of this study, non residents of the estate were also interviewed on the level of their satisfaction with Ibara housing estate. Data has revealed that majority of the respondents used to visit the estate almost on a daily basis because of work, to visit family and friends and to recreate. To this end, Table 3 presents information on non residents' levels of satisfaction with Ibara housing estate. It was established that only ventilation in the apartment was ranked highest: 4.67 (highly satisfied). However, non residents were fairly satisfied with security and safety of lives and properties (3.71), living conditions in the estate (3.64), size/space of building in the estate (3.70), space of living room/bedroom, space of bath and toilets and functionality of bathrooms and toilets (3.47, 3.91 and 3.84 respectively).

In addition, the non residents were equally fairly satisfied with design of buildings in the estate (3.78), general appearance of the estate (3.71), general state of roads (3.77), refuse disposal/management (3.75), general state of schools (3.05) and overall estate environment (3.18). Meanwhile, they were dissatisfied with: general state of electricity supply (2.84), general state of water supply (2.38), general state of health facilities (2.16), general state of recreational facilities (2.88) and management – residents' relationship (2.85). Consequently, the non-residents were fairly satisfied with Ibara housing estate (3.14).

Table 2: Residents' level of satisfaction with Ibara housing estate.

S/N	Variable	Rating and Weighted Values					SWV	MWV
		1 HD	2 D	3 FS	4 S	5 HS		
1.	Security	1	1	23	44	16	328	3.86
2.	Living conditions in the estates	-	1	14	55	15	339	3.98
3.	Size of space in your building	-	-	22	40	23	341	4.01
4.	Ventilation in your building or apartment	-	-	10	46	29	359	4.22
5.	Space of living room/bedroom	-	-	18	41	26	348	4.09
6.	Space of bathroom	-	1	19	42	23	342	4.02
7.	Space of toilet	-	-	25	39	21	336	3.95
8.	Functionality of bathrooms and toilets	-	-	22	37	25	339	3.98
9.	Design of building	-	2	31	30	22	325	3.82
10.	Parking space/parking lots	13	11	14	19	19	248	2.91
11.	Refuse disposal/management	11	13	15	34	9	265	3.09
12.	General state of roads	-	2	30	39	12	308	3.62
13.	General state of electricity supply	2	4	52	23	1	269	3.09
14.	General state of water supply	-	6	32	30	15	303	3.56
15.	General state of health facilities	2	13	24	30	12	280	3.29
16.	General state of schools	3	4	29	39	7	289	3.40
17.	General state of recreational facilities	12	13	17	20	19	264	3.10
18.	Management – residents relationship	1	8	30	18	25	304	3.57
19.	Overall housing environment	-	2	26	35	20	322	3.78
	Total							**69.34**
	Mean of ∑MWV = 69.34/19 = 3.65							

Table 3: Non Residents' Satisfaction with Ibara Housing Estate.

S/N	Variable	Rating and Weighted Values					SWV	MWV
		1 HD	2 D	3 FS	4 S	5 HS		
1.	Security	3	4	23	29	24	316	3.71
2.	Living conditions in the estates	2	3	21	46	11	310	3.64
3.	Size of space in your building	2	1	21	47	12	315	3.70
4.	Ventilation in your building or apartment	-	-	19	44	29	397	4.67
5.	Space of living room/bedroom	-	-	17	43	23	295	3.47
6.	Space of bathroom/toilet	-	1	18	43	21	333	3.91
7.	Functionality of bathrooms and toilets	-	2	20	42	19	327	3.84
8.	Design of building	1	2	24	35	21	322	3.78
9.	General appearance of the estate	4	-	17	49	13	316	3.71
10	General state of roads	2	3	14	49	15	321	3.77
11.	Parking space/parking lots	10	28	17	15	13	242	2.84
12.	Refuse disposal/management	1	8	32	27	14	291	3.42
13.	General state of electricity supply	8	20	35	12	7	236	2.77
14.	General state of water supply	5	21	32	10	13	248	2.91
15.	General state of health facilities	9	36	19	11	7	217	2.55
16.	General state of schools	5	14	34	19	10	261	3.07
17.	General state of recreational facilities	14	24	17	17	8	221	2.60
18.	Management – residents relationship	4	8	39	19	6	243	2.85
19.	Overall housing environment	3	8	35	23	11	271	3.18
	Total							64.39
	Mean of ∑MWV = 64.39/19 = 3.39							

Conclusion and Recommendations

Housing Quality is a product of subjective judgment (Anantharajan, 1983; Olayiwola, 1997; Sholamith, 2000). Housing quality therefore results from the overall perception of residents. The study has examined the housing quality perception by residents and non-residents of Ibara housing estate, Abeokuta and it has been established that contrary opinion exist on the perceived housing quality by both the residents and non residents. Although, the condition of the buildings was perceived by the residents to be good, the non-residents are not so enthusiastic about the condition of houses in the estate. Even as there is disparity in the perception of the residents and non-residents of the estate about quality, residents and non-residents were fairly satisfied with the estate infrastructures and services.

Therefore, to enhance the perception and satisfaction of the estate by residents and non-residents, it is incumbent that the housing estate be upgraded by the government to make it more aesthetically pleasing and more habitable. Moreover, in the provision of more housing estates in the future, there is the need for public participation right from the design stage to the implementation stage. This is because for any development scheme or programme not to fail, the beneficiaries must be consulted and be part of every phase of the implementation and development of the programmes. In this respect, all stakeholders comprising residents' representatives and other target groups should be adequately consulted to forestall the reoccurrence of failure.

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