

Perspective of Neighbourhood Preference: A Study of Ilorin City, Nigeria

Abdulraheem Maimuna O.¹, Olorunfemi Jacob F.², Ajibade Lanre T.²
& Agava Yusuf H.³

¹Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Ilorin, Nigeria.

²Department of Geography and Environmental Management, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

³Department of Estate Management, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria.

abdulraheem@unilorin.edu.ng

Abstract

Previous studies have long-established a strong relationship between the neighbourhood and the kind of environment to which an individual has been exposed and life chances available to him. Attributes of neighbourhoods and the experiences provided have been found to affect people's capabilities in terms of their ideas, achievements in life, as well as their socio-economic development. This has made studies on neighbourhood preferences attractive. This paper is an attempt to identify the category of and preference for neighbourhoods by residents in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. Data used were collected through a systematic random sampling of 334 households with the aid of structured questionnaire. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse and present data. Findings of the study revealed that 38% of the households had preference for the high income residential neighbourhoods irrespective of ethnic background or level of income. That neighbourhood preference is not dependent on socio-economic status or background of individuals but on perception of the attribute of a neighbourhood. However, the study confirmed that the actual ability to reside in the preferred residential zone is highly determined by socio-economic factors such as the level of income. The study recommends re-creating the kind of layouts that exist in the high income residential zones in all other neighbourhoods within the city by stakeholders. However in the course of recreation, government should endeavour to embark on urban renewal projects in the core traditional area housing most of the low income neighbourhoods, though citizens participation must be garnered to ensure that government projects are supported by the ultimate end users.

Keywords: Environment, Neighbourhood, Preference, Residential zones, Urban.

Introduction

The importance of neighbourhood to city dwellers cannot be overemphasized. Where people live affects their health, economic, social and mental well-being. Abdulraheem, Olorunfemi and Muhammad-Lawal (2014) noted that the choice of a place of residence is an important marker of a person's social status. There is an increasing concern about the quality of life in modern towns and cities around the world hence, the increasing interest among built environment professionals and policymakers on how to measure those factors that influence neighbourhood

choice by residents. Abdulraheem *et al.* (2014) further asserted that individuals with a varied cultural background may live in a neighbourhood and yet share similar views regarding environmental features. Some urban researchers such as James, Lisa, and Stafanie (2002) have argued that residents' preferences and evaluation of their neighbourhood vary as a result of the diversity in their senses of judgment as well as their individual lifestyles. Universally, improving the residential environment has become one of the fundamental goals of urban planners and policy makers, hence a motive for this research.