



Assessment of residential satisfaction in public housing in Ogun State, Nigeria



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A B S T R A C T

Keywords:

Residential satisfaction
Public housing
Turnkey
Public–private partnerships
Core housing
Shell stage

This study assessed residential satisfaction in public housing in Ogun State, Nigeria. It was based on a questionnaire survey conducted in housing estates constructed using the Turnkey, Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs), Core Housing and Shell Stage strategies between 2003 and 2009. Data were collected from 452 household-heads and analysed using descriptive statistics, factor and categorical regression analyses. The result shows that the respondents were generally dissatisfied with their housing conditions, but satisfaction levels were higher with dwelling unit features than neighbourhood facilities and services. Differences in socio-economic status and dimensions of evaluation of residential satisfaction were observed among the respondents across the strategies. The satisfaction levels were also higher among mortgage holders than renters and in the Core and Shell Stage houses where residents participated in the development of their houses than in the Turnkey and PPP houses, where completed houses were acquired. The three strongest predictors of residential satisfaction were adequacy of thermal and visual comfort and security; sizes of living and sleeping areas in the residences; and management of the housing estates, respectively. The study suggests that residential satisfaction and indeed quality of life of low- and middle-income residents can be enhanced through the provision of basic social amenities and infrastructural facilities in public housing schemes, and implementation of participatory and mortgage-based housing policies in Nigeria.

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Introduction

The provision of satisfactory housing that meets government prescribed standards of quality and users' needs, expectations and aspirations has always been the goal of every public housing programme in Nigeria. The UN-HABITAT (2006) report however noted that in the past few decades, despite governments' laudable efforts, public housing has failed to achieve this goal in the country. In view of this, Fatoye and Oduami (2009) suggested that for housing sector to improve the quality of housing it produces, it must explore and understand users' needs and expectations as well as the extent to which such needs and expectations are met through regular performance evaluation. Teck-Hong (2011) shares similar view by noting that one possible way to meet household's housing needs is to examine factors which account for residents' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their housing conditions. These views no doubt underscore the need for studies on residential satisfaction in the

quest to provide housing that meets the daily needs, expectations and preferences of the occupants.

Residential satisfaction has been a subject of investigation by scholars and researchers in the field of housing. On the one hand, it has been defined as a measure of residents' satisfaction with both their housing units and the neighbourhood environment (Gaster, 1987; Hashim, 2003; Kaitilla, 1993; Ogu, 2002), and on the other hand, it has also been viewed as an assessment of the extent to which the current housing environment of residents is meeting their needs, expectations and aspirations (Mohit, Ibrahim, & Rashid, 2010; Salleh, 2008). Therefore, several existing studies on the subject (including Ibem & Amole, 2012; Jiboye, 2009; Liu, 1999; Mohit & Azim, 2012; Mohit et al., 2010; Salleh, 2008) are devoted to the assessment of the extent to which people are satisfied or dissatisfied with their housing conditions, while others (Galster, 1987; Jaafar, Hasan, Mahamad, & Ramayah, 2006; Jiboye, 2010; Salleh, Yusuf, Salleh, & Johari, 2012; Tech-Hong, 2011; Ukoha & Beamish, 1996) focus on the factors that influence residential satisfaction in the different countries. Firstly, findings of these studies help us to understand the importance of housing characteristics, housing unit support services, neighbourhood environment and management aspect of housing as well as the socio-economic and demographic

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characteristics of residents in residential satisfaction. Secondly, they contribute to extending our knowledge of the housing needs and preferences of people and how they evaluate their housing environment in a given context. Lastly, these studies also help us to know that factors within and outside the housing domain have significant influence on residential satisfaction.

Despite these insights provided by the existing studies, there is yet little or no consensus in the literature on the general pattern of residential satisfaction and the specific factors that influence it across various socio-economic groups in the different countries and cultures. Also, there is a paucity of empirical literature on the differences in residential satisfaction between residents of housing constructed using different strategies, especially in the developing countries. This is because the influence of such factors as housing acquisition process (housing delivery strategies and methods of acquisition of housing by residents) on residential satisfaction has largely been unexplored by researchers. The differences in socio-economic and demographic characteristics of residents, tenure options, housing quality standards, housing acquisition process as well as values and meanings people attach to their residential environment in different countries and cultures, suggest that there could be differences in satisfaction between residents in houses provided using different strategies and those acquired through different processes in a particular country, region or locality. Therefore, this study examined residential satisfaction in public housing provided using the Turnkey, Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs), Core Housing and Shell Stage strategies in Ogun State Southwest Nigeria between 2003 and 2009. The hypotheses put forward and tested in this study are: (i) there is significant socio-economic differences between residents in housing provided using different strategies between 2003 and 2009 in the study area (ii) the residents of public housing constructed within the period under review are generally satisfied with their housing conditions (iii) the residents' socio-economic attributes and housing characteristics have significant influence on the levels of satisfaction with their housing conditions, and (iv) housing acquisition process has influence on residential satisfaction in the study area. It is hoped that this study will bridge some gaps in the literature on the subject and contribute to public housing policy and development in Nigeria.

The context of study

Ogun State is one of the six States in Southwest Nigeria. It is next to Lagos and Kano in terms of concentration of industries and has the highest number of Universities in the country. It is therefore not surprising that between 1991 and 2006 the population of the State grew from 2,333,726 to 3,728,098 (*Ogun State Regional Development Strategy, 2008*) and current estimates indicate that by 2025 its population figure will rise to about 9.3 million and 6.5 million representing around 70% of the total population will be urban dwellers (*Ogun State Regional Development Strategy, 2008*).

Suffice it to say that since the creation of Ogun State on April 1, 1976, the rate of urban population growth has outstripped housing supply. As at 2007, the housing supply deficit in the State was put at 240,000 units, and the *Ogun State Regional Development Strategy (2008)* has predicted that by 2025 an additional 1.55 million housing units will be required to meet the growing housing need in the State. Therefore, in a bid to narrow this huge housing supply gap, several public housing schemes have been underway in the State. Public housing schemes in this context represent housing projects constructed either solely by government agencies or in partnerships with the private sector organizations. A survey by *Ibem (2011)* revealed that efforts by government in Ogun State to provide housing for the residents were concentrated in urban

centres and that four main housing delivery strategies: the Turnkey, Core Housing, Public–Private Partnerships (PPPs) and Shell Stage were used to provide over 1000 housing units for the different socio-economic groups in the State between 2003 and 2009.

Examination of the operations of each of these housing delivery strategies shows that the Turnkey strategy which is also known as 'build and then sale' involved the construction and marketing of completed housing units by the government, while in the PPP Strategy, government provided land to corporate private sector housing developers to construct houses for public acquisition under a joint-venture partnership agreements. Houses provided in both the Turnkey and PPP Strategies were acquired by members of the public either through mortgage or outright purchase. The Core Housing Strategy involved the construction of one-bedroom Core housing units by the government in the Workers' Housing Estate. The Core houses were allocated to low- and middle-income public sector workers under a mortgage arrangement with an amortization period of between 10 years and 25 years. During this period, beneficiaries can upgrade the dwelling units to 3-bedroom apartments as their income status improves. On the other hand, in the Shell Stage Strategy, the sub- and super structures of housing units were constructed by the government after which the 'Shell houses' as they are called were acquired through outright purchase by interested members of the public who then finished the houses according to their taste. The uniqueness of each of these housing delivery strategies as seen in the level of participation of the residents in the development of the housing units and the modes of acquisition of the houses, suggests that there could be a significant difference in the socio-economic characteristics of the residents in the houses and their levels of satisfaction. Therefore, in the Nigerian context, Ogun State is considered to be ideally suited for the current research, which among other things compared residential satisfaction across the different housing delivery strategies.

The review of literature and conceptual framework

Studies on residential satisfaction serve various purposes, including the assessment of residents' present housing conditions, needs and preferences (*Kaitilla, 1993; Salleh, 2008*) and their quality of life (*Caldieron, 2011; Galster & Hesser, 1981; Lee & Park, 2010*); the level of success or failure of housing projects (*Liu, 2003; Mohit & Nazzyddah, 2011*) and project quality (*Lara & Bekker, 2012*). They also help in improving our understanding of housing adjustment and mobility behaviours of residents (*Fang, 2006; Lu, 1998*). Thus, it can be inferred that even though those who conduct research on residential satisfaction have different rationales and objectives, studies on residential satisfaction promote better understanding of the key sources of satisfaction or dissatisfaction among residents, factors that influence their satisfaction levels and how they are most likely to react in the event that they felt dissatisfied with their housing conditions. According to *Fang (2006)*, this information is important in informing housing policy and planning intervention.

From the review of literature, we found that a number of theoretical and conceptual approaches have been put forward by different authors and researchers in a bid to understand and explain residential satisfaction. *Galster (1987:540)* however noted that most studies on residential satisfaction are based on two contrasting empirical approaches: purposive approach and the actual-aspiration gap approach. In the former, *Canter (1983)* and *Galster (1985)* argued that people are seen to have goals and specific objectives directed towards achieving such goals, and that the extent to which one's residential environment is perceived to be facilitating the achievement of his/her goals is seen as an indication

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