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Evaluating Residents' Perception of Residential Land Allocation and its Impact on Housing Needs in Ado Ekiti, Nigeria

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Abstract

Housing is a vital requirement for the survival of a man. However, it is still very inaccessible in most developing nations, with Nigeria not an exception. This study investigates the residents' perception of the land allocation process in meeting housing needs in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. Three estates were purposely selected for the study. They include GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension, GRA Ijan Road, and GRA Iworoko Road, all in Ado-Ekiti. Two hundred thirty-seven questionnaires were distributed which 233, representing 98%, were retrieved. Simple percentages were utilized to analyze allottees' perceptions of the Land Allocation Process, while challenges related to the process were evaluated using the Kruskal-Wallis test. The findings show that most respondents perceived the land allocation process as inefficient, with only 42.86% considering it efficient and significant delays extending beyond six months for most applications. The findings suggest that the impact and importance of each challenge vary depending on the location. Favouritism and nepotism are seen as a major problem in GRA Ijan Road and GRA Iworoko Road, ranking highest in both areas, while it is less of a concern in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension. The significant difference (chi-square = 30.805, p = .000) indicates a varied perception of this challenge across the areas. Misappropriation of responsibilities is perceived differently across the areas

(chi-square = 7.047, p = .029), while bribery and corruption show significant variation, with the highest concern in GRA Iworoko Road (chi-square = 7.483, p = .024). This research contributes to understanding the role of land allocation in mitigating housing shortages and offers insights for policymakers to enhance the effectiveness of housing delivery in Ado-Ekiti.

Keywords: Ado Ekiti, Land Allocation, Residents' Perception, Housing Need, *Nigeria*

Introduction

The importance of housing to the survival of man cannot be overemphasized. Despite this, housing is not easily accessible to the masses due to the daily increase in the rate of urbanization and population (Moore, 2019). Housing serves as the main link to residential land, and its availability and demand directly affect the supply and demand for residential land (Crump, 2002; Monk & Whitehead, 1996). The demand for housing in most developing countries has surpassed the supply in the urban areas, threatening the sustainable growth of cities and the welfare of the citizens (UN-Habitat, 2003). The rate of urbanization in Nigeria, a developing nation, is high. This high rate of urbanization, coupled with the increase in population, has contributed to the increased search for accommodation and unending pressure on the country's housing infrastructure (Ogunbodede, 2008). Population growth and housing needs are major challenges in many developing countries, including Nigeria, as the shortage of housing significantly impacts the population. Despite the commitment of the government at different levels to solving housing issues, there is still a nationwide shortage of affordable housing units (Ugochukwu & Chioma, 2015). This is evident as Nigeria's housing deficit estimate has risen from 15 million in 2015 to 28 million in 2023 (Ibiwumi et al., 2015; Federal Government of Nigeria, 2024). The government has introduced various programs to address the issue of inadequate housing in Nigeria, particularly in Ekiti State. Some of these programs include the Shagari Housing Estate (now referred to as Federal Estate) at Oke-Ila, the Bawa Housing Estate in the Opopogbooro area, the Ekiti Housing Estate at Oke-Ila, the Fayose Housing Estate along Afao Road, and the Irewolede Housing Estate along Ilawe Road, all located in Ado-Ekiti. These initiatives aim to tackle the housing shortages in the state, yet the problem persists. Among the problems responsible for the housing deficit in the state and in Nigeria at large is the issue of land allocation. Many people struggle to obtain land for housing development, particularly through government land allocation (Ayotamuno & Ekaka, 2017).

Land allocation is a type of land management strategy that allows for the redistribution of land so that it is available to all citizens, regardless of race or ethnicity. This is consistent with the goal of the Land Use Act, which is to stop land speculations, ensure easy management and ownership of land, ensure easy accessibility to land by the government, standardize land tenure, reduce disputes, and facilitate equitable access to land for both public and private uses (Mabogunje, 2010; Land Use Act (1978). Accessibility to land is an important factor in addressing housing needs. Even though everyone has a right to government land allocation, there are still certain accessibility issues that prevent people from adequate housing (Akujobi, 2016).

While significant attention has been given to housing issues, there is a lack of focus on the challenges of land accessibility, which create major barriers to providing homes. Consequently, it is crucial to evaluate the land distribution process in Ado Ekiti, as its effectiveness will help reduce the housing deficit in the state. This study will assess recipients' perceptions of land allocation and investigate the related challenges. The study will address these constraints with a view to allowing equal access to land in Ekiti State, as expected to be applicable to Nigeria as a whole.

Literature Review

Accessibility to Adequate Housing

Adequate housing goes beyond simply providing shelter (UN-Habitat, 1976). According to UN-Habitat (2014), housing is considered adequate when it meets seven essential criteria: security of tenure, availability of services, quality of materials, facilities, and infrastructure, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location, and cultural adequacy. The lack of adequate housing not only hampers development but also leads to various social and economic problems, including limited access to essential services, poor infrastructure, and unemployment (Mchunu & Nkambule, 2019). Consequently, inadequate housing hinders the creation of sustainable human settlements.

Since the 1940s, the right to adequate housing has been recognized as a fundamental human right (UN-Habitat, 2018; Pojani, 2019). This was reinforced during the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador, in 2016, and through the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2017). Specifically, SDG 11.1 emphasizes ensuring universal access to safe and affordable housing by 2030 (UN Habitat, 2016). However, with just about five years left to meet this goal, access to safe and affordable housing remains a pressing issue in urban development (United Nations, 2016; Wekesa et al., 2011).

Despite international attempts to solve the housing shortage, several obstacles stand in the way of providing adequate housing, especially in developing nations. Smith (2018) emphasizes the negative effects of insufficient housing policy on urban expansion and the pressing need for all-encompassing strategies to address the problems of housing scarcity and affordability. In urban areas with state-sponsored affordable housing initiatives, these programs are often limited to, awarded to, or preferentially allocated to prominent political figures instead of the economically disadvantaged (Agyemang & Morrison, 2018; Adegun & Olusoga, 2019; Sesan, 2023). As a result, finding adequate and affordable housing has become increasingly difficult, particularly for those with lower incomes (Garcia, 2020).

Land Allocation and Its Challenges

Land allocation is a process employed by the government to distribute the Right of Occupancy on land to individuals, groups, legal entities, or organizations. The process involves the leasing of land upon payment of a lump sum known as a premium and the annual payment of ground rent. Every individual is expected to have equal chances of accessing land. Under the Nigerian Land Use Act of 1978, this accessibility has been fruitful to a large extent concerning the public use of land (Otty et al., 2021). However, it seems to be further problematic when it comes to private development. The allocation process, often violating the Land Use Act, favours powerful individuals, political elites, and commercial developers, putting vulnerable and marginalized groups at a disadvantage (Okafor & Nwike, 2016).

The main factors that influence the allocation of urban residential land are well understood. These factors include population, housing prices, income, rent, mortgage loans, investment, the availability of affordable housing, GDP, employment, housing stock, and migration (Wang et al., 2023). Each of these plays a significant role in determining how land is allocated. By understanding these factors, countries can create more effective strategies for residential land allocation. However, for any plan to be successful, it is crucial to identify and address issues related to land allocation, which can only be achieved through effective governance.

Effective governance is vital for sustainable land use management, providing the regulations for land resource allocation (Bello, 2024). However, poor governance and ineffective land use policies have noticeable impacts across multiple sectors in Nigeria (Bello et al., 2022). Issues such as Corruption, inadequate infrastructure, a weak institutional framework, low public awareness, lack of political will, bureaucratic inefficiencies, lengthy administrative approval processes, and uneven market information have all been identified as barriers to effective land use management in Nigeria (Agbaje

et al., 2017). These challenges in land management often result in complications related to the provision of residential land in some countries (Feder & Feeny, 1991).

Nigeria has various policies to regulate land use, but corruption, poor enforcement, and lack of political will often undermine them. For instance, a reported case highlighted that, 6,000 square meters of property were preferentially allocated to senior officials of the National Assembly, certain members of the Federal Executive Council (FEC), and leaders of the dominant political party. This allocation occurred at the expense of the impoverished population (Sahara Reporters, 2019). Widespread corruption in land management agencies has led to the illegal allocation of land in protected areas for commercial use, resulting in significant harm to biodiversity, ecosystems, and indigenous communities (Transparency International, 2021). The Nigerian public service faces numerous corruption-related difficulties that limit its effectiveness and efficiency. Favouritism and nepotism, red tape, slow pace of work, a negative attitude toward work, misappropriation of responsibilities, bribery, and collection of bribes are some of the notable corruptions impeding the system (Ojo, 2019).

Materials and Methods

For this study, a purposive (probability) sampling technique was adopted to select three estates based on their representation of different stages of development. This was done based on the level of development of the estates to ensure the possibility of a comparative analysis of the three selected estates. The selected estates were GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension, GRA Ijan Road, and GRA Iworoko Road, all in Ado-Ekiti. A random Sampling Technique was employed to select respondents from the chosen estates. The sample size was determined using Yaro Yamane's formula, considering a 5% margin of error. The number of developed plots in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension, GRA Ijan Road, and GRA Iworoko Road was 179, 115 and 288, respectively, totalling 582 (Researcher's House Enumeration). Data collected for the study were through questionnaires administered to the target population in the study area.

Data Analysis

The findings from the questionnaire conducted with the allottees were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The perception of the allottees towards the Land Allocation Process in the study area was examined using simple percentages. Additionally, the challenges related to the Land Allocation Process were assessed using the Kruskal-Wallis test. The results were presented in tabular format for clarity.

Results and Discussion

Socio-Economic and General Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-economic characteristics of respondents are important for evaluating their suitability to provide insights into the discussion topic. Key factors to consider include age, gender, education, and occupation. This is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Socio-Economic and General Characteristics of Allottees / Occupiers of Government Residential Estates in Ado-Ekiti

Socio-Economic and General Characteristics	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension		GRA Ijan Road		GRA Iworoko Road	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Age						
Below 30 Years	8	11.0	6	5.3	1	2.1
31- 40 Years	39	53.4	53	46.9	23	48.9
41 – 50 Years	17	23.3	41	36.3	17	36.2
Above 50 Years	9	12.3	13	11.5	6	12.8
Total	*73*	*100.0*	*113*	*100.0*	*47*	*100.0*
Gender						
Male	47	64.4	72	63.7	38	80.9
Female	26	35.6	41	36.3	9	19.1
Total	*73*	*100.0*	*113*	*100.0*	*47*	*100.0*
Education						
Primary	-	-	6	5.3	-	-
Secondary	11	15.1	29	25.7	13	27.7
Post-Secondary	62	84.9	78	69.0	34	72.3
Total	*73*	*100.0*	*113*	*100.0*	*47*	*100.0*
Occupation						
Civil Servant	46	63.0	64	56.6	28	59.6
Entrepreneur	27	37.0	27	23.9	11	23.4
Artisan	-	-	22	19.5	8	17.0
Total	*73*	*100.0*	*113*	*100.0*	*47*	*100.0*

Source: field survey, 2024

The study revealed that the majority of the allottees in the three selected residential estates were between 31 – 40 years, representing 53.4%, 46.9% and 48.9% respectively. The percentage of the allottees/occupants who were within the age bracket of 41-50 years represents 23.3%, 36.3%, and 36.2%, respectively, as opined by the respondents in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension, GRA Ijan Road and GRA Iworoko Road, respectively. The gender distributions of the respondents also revealed that the majority of the respondents were males, representing 64.4%, 63.7%, and 80.9%, respectively. This therefore showed that most of the respondents were of age and male, contributing to the quality of the data collected.

The age and gender distributions of the respondents relative to their educational qualifications revealed that the majority of the respondents in the selected residential

estates in Ado-Ekiti have the required educational training. The respondents of GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension mostly have post-secondary education, representing 84.9%. Furthermore, 69.0% of the respondents in GRA Ijan Road also have post-secondary degrees, and 72.3% of the respondents in GRA Iworoko Road have post-secondary degrees, such as polytechnic and university degrees. This implies that the set of respondents is well educated. Hence, their opinion on the impact of land allocation in addressing housing needs in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria, to assess government contribution through land allocation in reducing housing deficit in Ado-Ekiti can be adequately relied on.

Perception of the Allottees on the Land Allocation Process in the Study Area

The research examined the perception of the allottees on the land allocation process and procedure in the study area. The opinions of the respondents are presented in Table 2

Table 2: Perception of the Allottees on the Land Allocation Process in the Study Area

Perception	Location	Yes (%)	No (%)
There is no delay in securing the government's land allocation	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension	31.5	68.5
	GRA Ijan Road	31.9	68.1
	GRA Iworoko Road	34.0	66.0
	Overall	***32.2***	***67.8***
The land allocation process is transparent	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension	43.8	56.2
	GRA Ijan Road	42.5	57.5
	GRA Iworoko Road	42.6	57.4
	Overall	***42.9***	***57.1***
The land allocation mode in Ado-Ekiti is first-come, first-served	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension	12.3	87.7
	GRA Ijan Road	15.0	85.0
	GRA Iworoko Road	21.3	78.7
	Overall	***15.5***	***84.5***
There is equity in the calibre of people enjoying land allocation in Ado-Ekiti	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension	34.2	65.8
	GRA Ijan Road	40.7	59.3
	GRA Iworoko Road	14.9	85.1
	Overall	***33.5***	***66.5***
Land allocation significantly influences housing needs in Ado-Ekiti	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension	32.9	67.1
	GRA Ijan Road	31.0	69.0
	GRA Iworoko Road	6.4	93.6
	Overall	***26.6***	***73.4***
The government's current Land Allocation intervention is effective	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension	17.8	82.2
	GRA Ijan Road	30.1	69.9
	GRA Iworoko Road	27.7	72.3
	Overall	***25.8***	***74.2***

Source: field survey, 2024

The analysis of respondents' perceptions on the land allocation process in Ado-Ekiti indicates a significant procedural bottleneck, as 67.8% of respondents believed there was a delay in securing government land allocations. This suggested that the current system might have been cumbersome or inefficient, causing frustration and hindering timely access to land. In terms of transparency, 67.1% of respondents felt that the land allocation process was not transparent. This perception indicated a need for greater openness and accountability in the process to build trust among the citizens and ensure that the allocation procedures were clear and fair.

The effectiveness of the land allocation mode in terms of first-come-first-served was another major concern, with 84.5% of respondents viewing the current system as ineffective. This high percentage pointed to potential inefficiencies or inadequacies in the method of land distribution, suggesting that the existing procedures might not have been meeting the community's needs effectively. Equity in the enjoyment of land allocation was also perceived negatively, with 66.5% of respondents believing that the process was not equitable. This indicated a disparity in how land allocation benefits were distributed among the population, which could lead to dissatisfaction and perceptions of unfairness in the community.

When considering the impact of land allocation on housing needs, 73.4% of respondents felt that it did not significantly influence housing needs in Ado-Ekiti. This finding suggested that the current land allocation practices were not effectively addressing the housing demands of the community, pointing to a potential misalignment between land distribution and housing policy goals. Additionally, 74.2% of respondents believed that the government's current land allocation interventions were ineffective. This highlighted a need for more effective policies and practices, as the current measures appeared to be falling short in addressing the issues related to land allocation and housing needs.

In a nutshell, the findings underscored a substantial level of dissatisfaction with the land allocation process in Ado-Ekiti. Delays, lack of transparency, ineffectiveness, inequity, and insufficient impact on housing needs were key areas for improvement. These insights were crucial for informing policy reforms aimed at enhancing the efficiency, fairness, and effectiveness of land allocation to better address housing needs in the region.

Challenges of the Land Allocation Process in the Study Area

The various challenges associated with land allocation in the selected areas were further examined. The various opinions of the respondents in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension, Ijan Road, and Iworoko Road have been examined and the Kruskal-Wallis test was conducted to ascertain any differences in the opinion of the respondents. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Kruskal-Wallis Test on the Challenges of the Land Allocation Process in the Study Area

Challenges of the Land Allocation Process in the Study Area	GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension			GRA Ijan Road			GRA Iworoko Road			Kruskawalis Test		
	Mean	Std. Dev	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev	Rank	Chi Square	Df	Asymp.sig
Favouritism and Nepotism	3.4384	.98582	4th	4.1504	1.10374	1st	4.1277	1.03456	1st	30.805	2	.000**
Bureaucracy	3.1781	1.30536	9th	4.1062	.81682	2nd	3.6383	1.05141	6th	24.557	2	.000**
Delay	3.7671	1.27498	2nd	3.5575	1.30205	5th	3.6809	1.35304	5th	1.445	2	.486
Negative attitude toward work	2.3425	1.26072	13th	2.7788	1.21548	12th	2.4894	1.48723	9th	5.537	2	.063
Misappropriation of Responsibilities	2.7260	1.48380	12th	2.7080	1.38668	13th	2.1064	1.32261	13th	7.047	2	.029**
Bribery and Corruption	2.8767	1.35344	10th	3.0442	1.52004	9th	3.5745	1.47065	7th	7.483	2	.024**
Inadequate facilities and Infrastructure	3.4247	1.51765	5th	3.9027	1.22449	4th	4.1277	1.19085	1st	7.721	2	.021**
Road and Accessibility	3.8630	1.22831	1st	4.0531	1.17139	3rd	3.9149	1.29933	4th	1.373	2	.503
Land Size	3.3288	1.17916	6th	3.2743	1.31100	7th	2.3191	1.33687	10th	19.801	2	.000**
Topographical features	3.1918	1.24340	8th	3.4336	1.09280	6th	4.1064	1.06799	3rd	19.468	2	.000**
Public Restrictions	3.2740	1.35667	7th	2.8850	1.45008	10th	2.2979	1.17797	11th	13.994	2	.001**
Price	3.6575	1.20438	3rd	3.1858	1.26455	8th	2.5106	1.42756	8th	20.552	2	.000**
Legal Right	2.7671	1.31783	11th	2.8053	1.26673	11th	2.1489	1.23321	12th	9.472	2	.009**

Source: field survey, 2024

The Kruskal-Wallis test results highlight significant differences in how various challenges associated with the land allocation process are perceived across the three study areas: GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension, GRA Ijan Road, and GRA Iworoko Road. These findings suggest that the impact and importance of each challenge vary depending on the location. Favouritism and nepotism are seen as a major problem in GRA Ijan Road and GRA Iworoko Road, ranking highest in both areas, while it is less of a concern in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension. The significant difference (chi-square = 30.805, p = .000) indicates a varied perception of this challenge across the areas. Bureaucracy is perceived as a significant issue in GRA Ijan Road (ranked second) and somewhat in GRA Iworoko Road (ranked sixth). At the same time, it is less problematic in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension (ranked ninth). The significant variation (chi-square = 24.557, p = .000) highlights the differing impact of bureaucratic hurdles.

Misappropriation of responsibilities, though generally ranked low in importance, shows significant differences (chi-square = 7.047, p = .029), indicating it is perceived differently across the study areas. Bribery and Corruption, ranked 7th to 10th across the areas, vary significantly (chi-square = 7.483, p = .024), with the highest concern in GRA Iworoko Road. Inadequate facilities and infrastructure are seen as a more severe problem in GRA Iworoko Road (ranked first) compared to the other areas. The significant differences (chi-square = 7.721, p = .021) reflect varied levels of infrastructure adequacy. Land size has significant differences (chi-square = 19.801, p = .000) in perception, being more prominent in GRA Egbewa 3rd Extension compared to the other areas.

Topographical features show significant differences (chi-square = 19.468, p = .000), suggesting this issue is particularly concerning in GRA Iworoko Road, affecting land allocation there more than in other areas. Public restrictions vary significantly (chi-square = 13.994, p = .001), indicating it is a more pressing issue in some areas compared to others. The cost of land shows significant variation (chi-square = 20.552, p = .000) in importance, affecting the study areas differently. Legal rights also show significant differences (chi-square = 9.472, p = .009), with lower rankings across all areas but varied in perception.

Conclusively, the significant differences in the perception of these challenges across the study areas underscore the need for location-specific interventions. Issues such as favouritism, bureaucracy, misappropriation of responsibilities, bribery and Corruption, inadequate facilities, land size, topographical features, public restrictions, price, and legal rights impact the land allocation process differently depending on the area. Addressing these challenges effectively requires understanding the unique circumstances and priorities of each area.

Recommendation and Conclusion

The importance of adequate and equitable distribution of land through land allocation processes and procedures to the individual, government, economic growth, and development is never in doubt, based on the numerous benefits and importance of adequate access to land in enhancing housing needs. The study thus examines the impact of land allocation in addressing housing needs in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria, to assess the government's contribution through land allocation in reducing the housing deficit in Ado-Ekiti, Nigeria. The study, amongst other things, examined the perception of the allottees on the land allocation process and the challenges of the land allocation process. The study revealed the perception of the respondents regarding the land allocation process in the study area. The study revealed that the process is not transparent and is often associated with undue influence. It is thus important that the Land Use Allocation Committee in Ado-Ekiti, as well as the State Government, take adequate measures towards ensuring and enhancing a transparent land allocation process.

Despite the several issues and challenges associated with land allocation in Ado-Ekiti, the study noted that these obstacles and challenges are surmountable if the necessary

recommendations and solutions are implemented through adequate policies and programs aimed at improving equitable distribution and access to land in Ado-Ekiti.

Recommendation

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the land allocation process:

- Transparency and accountability in land allocation should be improved. Implementing transparent, merit-based procedures and enforcing anti-corruption measures will reduce favouritism and bribery. An independent body should oversee and address grievances in land allocation.
- Public awareness and participation should be increased. Educating citizens about the process and their rights will promote transparency. Community participation will ensure local needs are met.
- Equitable land distribution should be promoted. Ensuring fair distribution, especially for marginalized groups, and reserving land for affordable housing will improve access for low-income families.

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