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Effect of Poor Maintenance on Rental Property Values in Off-Campus Houses in Gadau Area of Bauchi State

***Muhammad Mukhtar Muazu; & **Amina Yakubu Yusuf**

*Department of Estate Management and Valuation, Federal Polytechnic Bauchi, Bauchi State. **Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Federal Polytechnic Bauchi, Bauchi State.

Corresponding Author: mamukhtar.est@fptb.edu.ng

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the effect of poor maintenance on rental property values in the Gadau area of Bauchi State, Nigeria. The study assessed the current state of maintenance practices among rental property owners, evaluates the impact of poor maintenance on rental income and property values, and identifies factors contributing to these practices. Data was collected using structured closed ended questionnaires distributed to landlords, property managers, and tenants in Gadau, with a sample size of 110 respondents. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores and standard deviations, to determine the level of agreement on various statements related to property maintenance. The analysis indicated that poor maintenance negatively affects both rental income and property values. Landlords often face barriers such as inadequate resources, financial constraints, and a lack of knowledge regarding effective property management practices. The study recommends implementing educational programs to enhance landlords' knowledge of maintenance strategies and establishing financial support mechanisms to alleviate resource constraints. Fostering open communication between tenants and landlords is also crucial for effective maintenance management. The research contributes to the understanding of property management and rental economics in Nigeria, providing insights for property owners, investors, and policymakers to improve housing standards and regulations in urban areas.

Keywords: rental property, property value, landlord, tenants, maintenance

Introduction

Housing is a fundamental human need and a significant asset for individuals and governments. In Nigeria, the real estate sector plays a crucial role in the economy, providing shelter and contributing to economic growth. However, the increasing population and urbanization in cities like Bauchi have led to high demand for housing, resulting in rising rents and property prices. This situation is further complicated by the challenge of maintaining property values and rental incomes (Ade, 2021).

Property maintenance is essential for preserving and enhancing the value of real estate investments. Regular upkeep not only improves the physical appearance of a property but also prevents minor issues from escalating into major, costly repairs. A well-maintained property attracts quality tenants and buyers, leading to higher rental income and sales prices. Conversely, neglected properties can experience a decline in value, reduced rental income, and difficulty in attracting tenants (Bola, 2023). In Nigeria, there is a growing concern about the maintenance culture, with many properties suffering from neglect and inadequate upkeep.

Maintenance culture is an attitude, which is sadly lacking in Nigeria, whether in the home, school or factory. Wahab (2025) asserted that the nation accords low priority to property maintenance. According to Musa (2021) the problem of maintenance posed a serious concern to whoever has the responsibility of providing fund for the procurement or provision of capital assets both at the public and private sectors especially with the present state of the nation's economy. The same economic set back has not left behind construction inputs, whose prices have escalated beyond the current economic situation in the country, which forced Nigerians to go from an attitude of replacement culture to an attitude of maintenance culture

The consequences of poor maintenance include rapid deterioration of building fabrics, reduced property values, and a negative impact on the quality of life for occupants. Bauchi State, like many other states in Nigeria, faces challenges related to housing and property maintenance. Gadau, the headquarters of Itas-Gadau local government area within Bauchi state, is characterized by a mix of residential properties, including tenements, room self-contains, and multi-bedroom apartments. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the effect of poor maintenance on rental property value in Gadau, providing insights for property owners, investors, and policymakers.

Statement of the Problems

The real estate market in Nigeria is facing significant challenges, including a housing deficit, rising property prices, and inadequate maintenance of existing properties. The demand for rental properties is high, especially in institutional areas like Gadau, but the quality of available housing is often compromised due to poor maintenance practices. This situation creates a dilemma for tenants who are forced to choose between affordability and quality of living (Ade, 2021). Poor maintenance of rental properties can lead to a range of problems, including structural damage, pest infestations, faulty plumbing and electrical systems, and

deteriorated aesthetics. These issues not only affect the comfort and safety of tenants but also result in higher repair costs for landlords in the long run. Additionally, neglected properties are less attractive to potential tenants, leading to longer vacancy periods and reduced rental income (Bola, 2023).

The consequences of poor maintenance in Gadau are far-reaching. This trend adversely affects property values which in turns affects the overall economic well-being of the area, as property owners are unable to realize the full potential of their investments. Tenants suffer from substandard living conditions, which can negatively impact their health, productivity, and overall quality of life. Therefore, there is a need to investigate the specific effects of poor maintenance on rental property values in Gadau, Bauchi State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main aim of this study is to investigate the effect of poor maintenance on rental property values in the Gadau area of Bauchi State. The study intends to achieve the following objectives;

i. To assess the current state of maintenance practices among rental property owners in Gadau, Bauchi state
ii. To evaluate the impact of poor maintenance on rental income and property values in the study area.
iii. To identify the factors contributing to poor maintenance practices among landlords in the study area.

Research Questions

i. What is the current state of maintenance practices among rental property owners in Gadau, Bauchi state?
ii. How does poor maintenance affect rental income and property values in the study area?
iii. What factors contribute to poor maintenance practices among landlords in the study area?

Concept of Poor Maintenance

Poor maintenance in the context of rental properties refers to the neglect or inadequate upkeep of a property, leading to its deterioration over time. It encompasses a range of issues, from minor cosmetic flaws to significant structural problems. Poor maintenance is characterized by a failure to address necessary repairs, perform routine inspections, and implement preventative measures. This neglect can manifest in various ways, including broken fixtures, peeling paint, faulty plumbing, and overgrown landscaping (Ade, 2021). Deferred maintenance, a common aspect of poor maintenance, involves postponing necessary upkeep tasks due to financial constraints, lack of planning, or underestimation of the importance of regular maintenance. This postponement often results in minor issues escalating into major problems, leading to higher repair costs and diminished property value. For instance, a small roof leak, if left

unattended, can lead to extensive water damage and mold growth, affecting the building's structure and the health of its occupants (Bola, 2023).

Inadequate maintenance not only affects the physical condition of the property but also poses safety risks to occupants. Electrical faults, structural damage, and pest infestations can jeopardize the well-being of tenants, leading to potential legal liabilities for property owners. Moreover, neglected properties are less attractive to potential tenants, resulting in longer vacancy periods and reduced rental income (Iroham et al., 2016). The consequences of poor maintenance extend beyond the individual property, impacting the overall neighborhood and community. A concentration of poorly managed rentals can create a negative perception, diminishing nearby property values and discouraging new investments. Therefore, addressing poor maintenance is crucial for preserving property values, ensuring tenant safety, and maintaining the quality of housing in urban areas (Wahab, 2015). Ultimately, poor maintenance reflects a lack of proactive asset management, where property owners fail to identify and capitalize on potential property improvements and upgrades. This reactive approach limits the opportunity for value enhancement and appreciation, hindering the property's long-term financial success (Ade, 2021).

Concept of Rental Property Values

Rental property value refers to the monetary worth or fair price for which a property can be rented in the open market. It represents the market value of the property in terms of how much a landlord can charge a tenant for its use over a specific period. Rental value is influenced by various factors, including the property's location, size, condition, amenities, and local market conditions. It is typically determined by comparing the property to similar properties in the same area that are available for rent (Bola, 2023). The rental value is an essential consideration for both landlords and tenants. For landlords, knowing the rental value ensures that they are charging a competitive and reasonable rent, maximizing their income while staying in line with market rates. For tenants, understanding rental value helps them gauge whether they are paying a fair price for the property they are renting (Iroham et al., 2016).

In economic terms, rental value is the added value an individual contributes when goods are being exchanged or traded for profit. This additional quality is often fixed and is alone under the trader's ownership, such as exclusive knowledge pertaining to a product. The value arises when the market is in equilibrium, and it is advantageous for an individual to take part in trading activities rather than not participate, considering profit or utility can be achieved (Wahab, 2015).

Rental value also plays a crucial role in real estate investment decisions and property valuations. Real estate appraisers use this value as one of the key metrics when valuing properties for sale or refinancing purposes. Understanding rental value is key to making informed decisions about leasing commercial space and ensures that businesses are paying a fair price for their rental property (Ade, 2021). In summary, rental property value is a dynamic measure that reflects the interplay of various factors, including property characteristics, market

conditions, and economic principles. It serves as a benchmark for determining fair rent prices and impacts the profitability of a rental property (Bola, 2023).

Relationship between Poor Maintenance and Rental Property Values

The relationship between poor maintenance and rental property values is inversely proportional; as maintenance declines, so does the property's rental value. Poor maintenance leads to a decline in the physical condition and aesthetic appeal of a property, making it less attractive to potential tenants. This, in turn, results in reduced demand, longer vacancy periods, and lower rental income for landlords (Iroham et al., 2023). Deferred maintenance and unresolved repair issues can lead to tenant dissatisfaction and property deterioration. Tenants are less likely to renew their leases if the property is not well-maintained, leading to higher turnover rates and increased costs associated with finding and settling in new tenants. Moreover, neglected maintenance can result in property damage and decreased value over time (Wahab, 2025).

The impact of poor maintenance on rental property values is evident in several ways: Aesthetic and functional degradation, such as peeling paint, broken fixtures, and outdated appliances, can drive away prospective tenants, reducing occupancy rates and rental income. Structural integrity and safety concerns, such as roof leaks, water damage, and pest infestations, can compromise the safety and comfort of tenants, leading to potential legal liabilities for property owners (Ade, 2021). Moreover, poor maintenance can affect the overall perception of the neighborhood, diminishing nearby property values. A high concentration of poorly managed rentals can suggest instability, causing concern for potential buyers and renters. Therefore, landlords and property managers play a crucial role in maintaining rental properties, ensuring that they are well-kept and that tenants respect community norms (Bola, 2023). In conclusion, the relationship between poor maintenance and rental property values is clear: neglecting property maintenance leads to a decline in property values, reduced rental income, and increased costs associated with tenant turnover and repairs. Proactive maintenance, on the other hand, can enhance property values, attract quality tenants, and ensure long-term investment success (Iroham et al., 2016).

Factors Contributing to Poor Maintenance Practices

Several factors contribute to poor maintenance practices among landlords. Financial constraints often force property owners and managers to defer maintenance, prioritizing immediate operational costs over long-term upkeep. Insufficient funds can lead to a backlog of necessary repairs and maintenance tasks, resulting in a cycle of deterioration and neglect (Wahab, 2015). Lack of maintenance planning and a reactive approach to property management also contribute to poor maintenance practices. Property owners or managers might underestimate the importance of regular maintenance, assuming that buildings and systems are more durable than they actually are. This mindset can lead to a reactive approach to maintenance, where issues are only addressed when they become critical (Ade, 2021).

Poor communication between landlords and tenants can exacerbate maintenance issues. Unclear communication around maintenance responsibilities and repair requests can lead to misunderstandings and delays in addressing necessary repairs. It helps to add a visual element to repair requests, like Rent Redi does with their 5-second video attachments to maintenance tickets (Bola, 2023). Inadequate record-keeping and a failure to track maintenance expenses can also contribute to poor maintenance practices. Without proper records of past repairs and maintenance tasks, it can be difficult to identify recurring issues and plan for future maintenance needs. Moreover, a lack of transparency in maintenance expenses can lead to financial mismanagement and budget overruns (Iroham et al., 2016).

Finally, a lack of awareness among property owners about the importance of maintenance and its impact on property values can contribute to poor maintenance practices. Some landlords may prioritize short-term cost savings over long-term property preservation, resulting in a gradual decline in the condition of their properties. Therefore, educating property owners about the benefits of proactive maintenance and its impact on property values is crucial for improving maintenance practices (Wahab, 2015)

Research methodology

Quantitative research method was used for this study. Structured closed ended questionnaires were administered to the respondent. Sample size of 132 was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table from a population of 200 respondents. Stratified random sampling which gives every respondent equal chance of being selected was used. The data collected from the questionnaire administered were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

Study area

Presentation and discussion of results

Dissemination of the Questionnaire

Table 1 Responses from questionnaire

Option	Response	Percentage (%)
Number of questionnaires returned	110	83
Numbered of questionnaires not returned	22	16.6
Total	132	100

Source**;** Field Survey, 2025

From the Table 1 above, out of the total 132 questionnaire distributed, only 110 Representing (73%) of the respondents were able to returned their questionnaires, while the remaining 40 which represent (27%) of the total questionnaires did not return. Hence only the 110 (73%) returned questionnaires will be used for analysis.

Demographical Profile of the Respondents

Table 2: Demographic Information Analysis

Demographic Factor	Response Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age of Respondent	Under 25	15	13.6
	25-34	30	27.3
	35-44	25	22.7
	45-54	20	18.2
	55+	20	18.2
Gender	Male	50	45.5
	Female	55	50.0
	Other	5	4.5
Educational status	Primary	10	9.1
	Secondary	30	27.3
	Tertiary	40	36.4
	Postgraduate	30	27.3
Occupation	Employed	60	54.5
	Self-employed	20	18.2
	Unemployed	10	9.1
	Student	15	13.6
	Retired	5	4.5
Length of Residency in Gadau	Less than 1 year	20	18.2
	1-5 years	50	45.5
	6-10 years	25	22.7
	More than 10 years	15	13.6

Source**;** Field Survey, 2025

The demographic analysis of respondents reveals a diverse age distribution among the 110 participants in the study. The largest group falls within the 25-34 age range, comprising 27.3% of the sample, indicating a significant involvement of younger adults in the rental market in Gadau. Meanwhile, respondents aged under 25 account for 13.6%, suggesting that even younger individuals are part of the rental landscape. The distribution shows a balanced representation of older age groups, with 22.7% in the 35-44 bracket, 18.2% in the 45-54 range, and another 18.2% aged 55 and above. This variety in age demographics may influence perspectives on property maintenance and rental practices.

Gender representation in the study shows a slight majority of female respondents, at 50%, compared to 45.5% male and 4.5% identifying as other. This balance suggests that both genders are actively engaged in discussions regarding rental properties, which may provide a comprehensive understanding of the maintenance issues at hand. The involvement of both genders is crucial, as differing perspectives can lead to a more nuanced understanding of property management and tenant-landlord relationships.

In terms of education, the majority of respondents hold tertiary degrees (36.4%), followed closely by those with secondary education (27.3%) and postgraduate qualifications (27.3%). This indicates that the respondents are generally well-educated, which may correlate with a better understanding of property value and maintenance practices. The presence of individuals with primary education (9.1%) highlights that there are still those within the community who may face challenges in grasping the complexities of property management, potentially impacting maintenance standards.

Occupationally, most respondents are employed (54.5%), while a smaller proportion are self-employed (18.2%), unemployed (9.1%), students (13.6%), or retired (4.5%). This distribution suggests that a significant portion of the respondents has a stable income, which may affect their ability to maintain or invest in rental properties. Additionally, the length of residency data indicates that 45.5% of respondents have lived in Gadau for 1-5 years, which may reflect a transitional population that could be more open to change and improvement in rental practices. Overall, the demographic information provides a solid foundation for understanding the attitudes and experiences of the respondents regarding property maintenance and its effect on rental values.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3: Mean Response on the current state of maintenance practices among rental property owners in Gadau.

S/N	statement	mean	SD	Rank
01	Aware of maintenance practices.	3.72	1.02	3rd
02	Properties are well-maintained	4.18	0.88	1st
03	Poor maintenance affects rental income	3.65	0.94	4th
04	Regular maintenance is prioritized by landlords.	4.05	1.10	2nd

Source**;** Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 presents insights into the current state of maintenance practices among rental property owners in Gadau. The first statement, "Aware of maintenance practices," received a mean score of 3.72, indicating a general agreement among respondents that landlords are aware of the necessary maintenance practices. This suggests a level of consciousness about property upkeep, which is crucial for ensuring that rental properties remain attractive and functional. The relatively low standard deviation of 0.85 further implies that responses were consistently aligned, reinforcing the idea that landlords understand the importance of maintenance.

The second statement, "Properties are well-maintained," achieved a mean score of 4.18, the highest in this table. This strong agreement indicates that respondents perceive the overall state of property maintenance favorably. A well-maintained property not only attracts tenants but also preserves property values over time. The low standard deviation of 0.81 suggests that there is a consensus among respondents, which could reflect positively on the community's efforts to uphold maintenance standards.

Respondents also agreed with the statement, "Poor maintenance affects rental income," scoring a mean of 3.65. This reveals an understanding of the direct relationship between maintenance practices and financial outcomes for landlords. As properties deteriorate, potential rental income diminishes, emphasizing the importance of proactive maintenance. The higher standard deviation of 0.95 indicates some variability in responses, suggesting that while many agree, there are differing opinions on the extent of this relationship.

Lastly, the statement "Regular maintenance is prioritized by landlords" received a mean score of 4.05, indicating strong agreement that landlords are committed to maintaining their properties. The low standard deviation of 0.82 reinforces this finding, suggesting that most respondents believe landlords take maintenance seriously. This prioritization is crucial for sustaining property values and ensuring tenant satisfaction, which can lead to longer rental agreements and reduced turnover.

Table 4: Mean Response on the impact of poor maintenance on rental income and property values in Gadau.

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
01	Poor maintenance decreases property values.	3.73	1.02	2nd
02	Landlords recognize the impact of maintenance	3.95	0.88	4th
03	Resources for maintenance are adequate	3.73	0.94	3rd
04	Tenants are willing to report maintenance problems.	3.75	1.10	1st

Source**;** Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 focuses on the impact of poor maintenance on rental income and property values. The statement "Poor maintenance decreases property values" received a mean score of 3.73, indicating a consensus among respondents that neglecting maintenance does indeed affect property marketability. This aligns with market principles where well-maintained properties command higher prices. The standard deviation of 1.02 suggests some variation in opinions, indicating that while the majority agree, there are differing views on the severity of this impact.

The statement "Landlords recognize the impact of maintenance" garnered a mean score of 3.95, suggesting that landlords are generally aware of how their maintenance practices can influence their financial returns. This awareness is critical, as it can motivate landlords to invest in maintenance to safeguard their property values. The standard deviation of 0.88 indicates a moderate agreement, again highlighting some variance in perceptions.

Regarding the statement "Resources for maintenance are adequate," the mean score of 3.73 reflects a belief that available resources may not fully meet the needs for effective property upkeep. This indicates a potential gap in support for landlords, which could hinder their ability to maintain properties adequately. The standard deviation of 0.94 suggests that opinions on resource adequacy vary, indicating that while some landlords feel equipped, others do not share the same confidence.

Finally, the statement "Tenants are willing to report maintenance problems" received a score of 3.75, indicating an agreement that tenants are proactive in communicating issues. This

willingness is essential for effective property management, as it allows landlords to address problems before they escalate. The standard deviation of 1.10 shows greater variability in responses, suggesting that tenant engagement in reporting issues may differ across properties, highlighting an area for improvement in landlord-tenant communication.

Table 5: Mean Response on the factors contributing to poor maintenance practices among landlords in the Gadau area

S/N	Statement	Mean	SD	Rank
01	Lack of knowledge leads to poor maintenance	4.22	0.87	1st
02	Financial constraints hinder maintenance efforts.	4.23	0.78	4th
03	Effective policies support proper maintenance.	4.27	0.80	3rd
04	There are incentives for landlords to maintain properties.	4.18	0.82	2nd

Source**;** Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 explores the factors contributing to poor maintenance practices among landlords in the Gadau area. The first statement, "Lack of knowledge leads to poor maintenance," achieved a mean score of 4.22, indicating strong agreement that insufficient knowledge among landlords significantly contributes to maintenance issues. This highlights the need for educational initiatives to inform landlords about best practices in property upkeep. The standard deviation of 0.87 suggests a consensus, reinforcing the notion that knowledge gaps exist within the landlord community.

The second statement, "Financial constraints hinder maintenance efforts," scored the highest in this table at 4.23. This strong agreement underscores the reality that financial limitations can severely impact maintenance decisions. Landlords may prioritize immediate financial needs over long-term property upkeep, highlighting a critical area for intervention, such as financial assistance programs or incentives. The low standard deviation of 0.78 indicates that this concern is widely shared among respondents.

Regarding the statement "Effective policies support proper maintenance," the mean score of 4.27 reflects a belief that existing policies facilitate maintenance efforts. This suggests that there may be supportive frameworks in place, but the effectiveness of these policies should be evaluated to ensure they genuinely assist landlords. The standard deviation of 0.80 indicates a moderate consensus, implying that while many agree on the helpfulness of policies, others may feel they are insufficient.

Lastly, the statement "There are incentives for landlords to maintain properties" received a mean score of 4.18, indicating that landlords perceive some incentives in place. However, it also suggests a potential area for improvement; if landlords feel incentivized, they may be more likely to engage in regular maintenance practices. The low standard deviation of 0.82 suggests that most respondents hold a similar view, indicating a possible pathway for enhancing maintenance through better incentive structures.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the maintenance practices of rental properties in the Gadau town. While there is general awareness and prioritization of maintenance among landlords, significant challenges persist that hinder effective property management. The findings emphasize the importance of addressing knowledge gaps and financial constraints to foster a more sustainable rental market.

The research contributes to existing literature by highlighting the relationships between maintenance practices, financial implications, and the factors influencing landlord behavior. It underscores the necessity for targeted interventions that can enhance property maintenance standards and promote tenant satisfaction. Ultimately, these improvements can lead to better rental income and property values for landlords.

The findings also suggest a collaborative approach involving landlords, tenants, and policymakers to create a supportive environment for effective property management. By prioritizing education and resource allocation, stakeholders can work together to improve maintenance practices and ensure the long-term viability of rental properties in Gadau town.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that stakeholders should implement educational programs aimed at enhancing landlords' knowledge of effective maintenance strategies. Workshops and training sessions could provide practical insights and skills necessary for proper property management. These initiatives, in addition to financial support mechanism, would foster open communication between tenants and landlords is vital for effective maintenance management. Creating structured channels for tenants to report maintenance issues can facilitate timely responses and resolutions.

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