

ASSESSMENT OF BUILDING REGULATIONS COMPLIANCE IN IREWON COMMUNITY, IJEBU-ODE, OGUN STATE

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Abstract

Planning as a distinct field of public administration seeks to protect public interest and development through regulatory powers. The extent of the achievement of this regulatory role can be potentials or impediments towards sustainability or otherwise, of the built environment. This study assessed the level of compliance to building regulations in Ijebu-Ode with the objectives of revealing the level of awareness of the people on building laws and regulations, their perception of building regulatory activities and the level of achievement of building rules and regulations. A sample of 205 buildings was selected from a population of 2,052 buildings, representing 10% of the total number of buildings in the study area. Data collected on the study revealed that 26.5% of the buildings complied with building regulation on the premise of building approval while the remaining 73.5% of the buildings did not comply. It was also confirmed that building regulations is a factor of environmental sustainability. However, lack of public awareness and participation in planning and implementations of rules, high cost of permit fees, cumbersome process of obtaining permits and extortion from the Officials are impediments towards sound building regulation. Massive awareness campaign, public participation in policy/plan making and implementation, poverty alleviation, affordable permit rate, jack-up in monitoring and control; and provision of all tools and incentives needed by the control officials were recommended for a better and sustainability built environment through adequate building regulations.

Keywords: Planning, Building Regulations, Public Awareness, Participation, Sustainable Built Environment.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The role and need for physical planning in any society has long been given its due recognition all over the world. Literature has shown that functional planning is necessary to ensure

orderliness within the human environment (Wahab, 1991; Oyesiku, 1998 and Agbola, 2007). The urban activity system is often a complex one and the interactions of these activities such as economic, socio-cultural, residential, institutional, industrial, municipal services and others often compete and conflict against each other. Most often than not, human society is susceptible to incompatibility of uses and conflict of preference either at a point in time or over a period of time, hence the need for planning regulations to resolve these conflicts. Therefore, planning as a distinct field of public administration seeks to protect public interest through regulatory power. The role of physical planning regulations in any society cannot be overstated.

Development regulation is a very important activity necessary for the well-being of the society. According to Wahab (1991), the main objectives of development control is to regulate the growth of a town in a planned manner. He cited Chapin (1965) to have identified five major issues in land development, that is, health, safety, economy; convenience and amenity. Development control is needed to ensure that proposed buildings, their relationship to each other and to open spaces are regulated (Wahab, 1991).

Meanwhile, town planning regulations most times has not enjoyed public acceptance and cooperation and this has always constituted an impediment to effective physical planning. According to Oyesiku (1998) and Oso (2005), strong resistance, violence and non-compliance to regulations have been recorded by physical planning officers and these among others have been factors causing haphazard development that characterised many of the urban areas. It has been noted that among the causes of this resistance and non-compliance are lack of public awareness of the planning laws and regulations; public misunderstanding of town planning activities; and in some cases failure of the planners to protect the public interest and carry them along in their activities.

Due to the above, the need for the populace to comply with planning regulations activities has been far removed from their consciousness. The consequence of which are haphazard development, non-functional society, unhealthy environment and general problems of sustainability. It is in this direction, that this study is prompted to assess the level of compliance to building regulations in Irewon, a peri-urban community of Ijebu-Ode in Ogun State. This is done with the objectives of revealing the level of awareness of the people on the planning regulations of the State and the extent of compliance to these regulations.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Millions of people live in sub-standard and sub-human environments plagued by slum, squalor and grossly inadequate social amenities. In recent time, the increasing rate of deterioration of the environment is becoming worrisome and studies have thus recognised that low level of awareness on the part of the people, absence of effective programmes for development control among others, are responsible for this menace. Despite the leading role of planning in the use and management of the environment, its comprehensiveness, multi-dimensionality and base in the public interest; urban and regional planning has remained far removed from popular public consciousness.

It is also surprising that many members of the public are yet to be aware of the various planning laws regulations and therefore most times often alarmed, resentful and bewildered of these regulations. Most attempts by urban planning agency officials to achieve healthy cities especially through development control often bring them face to face with high level of non-compliance, lack of understanding and at times hazards and dangers. Insults and abuse by developers have also been recorded. This and many more have impeded development control activities and have been documented as one of the reasons for shanties and slums that characterised most towns of the developing countries. It is this direction that this study attempts to examine the level of compliance to planning regulations in the study. This is capable of exposing experts and other stakeholders to the level of awareness of the people on planning regulations and their level of compliance or otherwise with planning rules and regulations.

3.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Building regulations is essential and its role in ensuring a sustainable environment cannot be overstated. Akinsola and Fatokun (2012) pointed out that the Building Regulations guides the operations of the building industry by defining particular materials, methods of erection as far as quality and standards are concerned, including the use of any specified materials or methods of erection or compliance with any specification, standard specification, code of practice or standard method.

Building regulations has been adjudged as one of the tools of development control. Falade (2010) cited by Ude, Umen and Ukwunna (2017) noted that Development Control exist in order to regulate, in the public interest, the development and use of land, and therefore, pointed out that Town Planning Authority's Building Regulation is a legal document guiding development control

operations in Nigeria. It was observed that Development Control was initiated and later created by Nigeria Urban and Regional Planning Law of No 88 of 1992 to ensure orderliness in planning of cities and towns by stipulating permissible standards for all aspect of planning activities to ensure that land is properly allotted and use in a manner that eliminates conflicts.

Adeniran (2009) cited by Sodiya (2016) observed that a clear difference exist in the building control and development control activities, although the two are mutually exclusive of each other. He pointed out that building control involves imposition of continuing requirement on owners and occupiers of buildings including which were not, at the time of their erection, subject to building regulation, while the development control deals with the proposal by the developer, in order to achieve a sustainable built environment.

Ude, Umen and Ukwunna (2017) observed that the Town Planning Authority's Building Regulation for locating physical development in the interest of the general public seems a difficult task for local developers to comply with, and that it is now a common sight to see buildings under construction bearing all manner of red paint inscription directing developer to stop all construction work until they reconcile with the relevant town planning authority with respect to the adherence to the planning law.

Arimah and Adeagbo (2002) cited by Ude, Umen and Ukwunna (2017) argued that urbanization has escalated urban poverty and strengthen the role of informal sector in urban development, and that the consequences of urban poverty on quality housing is that most housing accommodation affordable to low income group will be such that fall short of minimum building standard prescribed by the Town Planning Regulation. It was concluded that the active demand for the poorly constructed housing is due to its affordability and patronage by a particular class in the urban society which encourages the production of such buildings.

Akinmoladun and Oduwaye (2004) cited by Sodiya (2016) observed that the urban landuses are physical manifestation of socio-economic, cultural, political and environmental forces, shaping the use of land in the urban area, while Kadiri (2007) cited by Sodiya (2016) observed that the dimension of urbanization in most developing countries and even the developed countries, is expressed as population agglomeration, with consequential pressure on the urban space.

Due to the above, Achi (2001) observed that urban spatial organization in Nigeria and economic and political transformation taking place in the society is creating changes in values, taste and intensity of demand for urban space. On the other hand, the emerging new urban areas are featuring principles of spatial organization in isolation from the vital sense of community and sensitivity to aesthetics and cultural identity are lacking. All this has given rise to sporadic urban growth with resounding implications that necessitate adequate physical planning regulation and development control which is this study seek to investigate the extent to which it has been achieved in the society using Irewon community as case study.

4.0 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Site: Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area (LGA) is one of the 20 LGAs in Ogun State. Ogun State within Nigeria context is located in the South-Western part of the country; bounded in the north by Oyo and Osun States, in the east by Ondo State, in the south by Lagos State and the Atlantic Ocean and in the west by the Republic of Benin. Ijebu-Ode LGA covering an area of 82,986.62 hectares (i.e 5.07% of the Ogun State total) is located approximately between longitudes $3^{\circ} 55'$ E, $4^{\circ} 6'$ E and latitudes $6^{\circ} 42'$, $6^{\circ} 54'$ N. Usually referred as the socio-economic center of the Ijebu division of Ogun State, Ijebu-Ode LGA is bounded in the west by Odogbolu LGA, in the east by Ijebu North-East and Ijebu-East LGAs, in the north by Ijebu-North LGA and south by Lagos State. Ijebu-Ode is an ancient community (the administrative and traditional center of Ijebu-land) in Ogun State, Nigeria. Ijebu-Ode has since the colonial era positioned itself as the most important community in Ijebu-land.

The role of Ijebu-Ode as painted above has made the community to attract population from within and outside the State beyond the capacity of the town. Due to this, development has spread to its hinterlands bringing about the several peri-urban settlements; among which are Irewon, Latoogun, Adefisan, Idomila, Imowo, Ijari, e.t.c. Among these settlements, Irewon which is the community chosen for this study is prominent for its rapid development and more spread-out. It is situated at the end of Ijebu-Ode town towards Ibadan and it is adjudged a major destination for migrants and non-indigene seeking land for development. The characteristics of Irewon made it a fast growing community where investigation of compliance to planning regulations can be carried out, hence, the choice of this settlement for this study.

The Database: According to goggle imagery derived from goggle earth (goggle earth, 2018) and ground-truthing carried out, Irewon consists of 2,052 buildings. The total number of buildings in the study area constitutes the sampling frame while 10% of the total number of buildings which constitutes 205 houses was decided for sampling. Subsequently, random sampling approach was employed to select the 1st building, and every other building was systematically selected. This appears plausible since there are traits of homogeneity in habitability in this study area. Also, a top official and two assistant planning officers of Ijebu-Ode Zonal Planning Authority were interviewed. For the purpose of data analysis, descriptive statistics was utilized.

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A total of two hundred and five (205) buildings were sampled in the Study Area, for the purpose of assessing the building regulation compliance. Assessment was carried out on: building coverage, front set back, rear setback, side setback, setback from the main building to the center of the road, ventilation and the plot size. Data on the existing Town Planning Regulations in Ogun state was collected for the purpose of comparing the operational regulations with the observed situation of residential development in the study area. The data collected on the Town Planning Regulations in Ogun State on residential buildings is presented in Table 1 while the data on the compliance level of residential buildings in the study area is presented in Table 2.

Table 1: Town Planning Regulations in Ogun State on Residential Buildings

Component of Residential Building Development	Standard
Building Coverage	Maximum of 50% of the Total Area
Setback from the building line to the wall fence	Minimum of 6 meters
Rear Setback	Minimum of 3 meters
Side Setback	Minimum of 3 meters
Setback from the main building to the center of the road	Minimum of 12 meters
Ventilation	Cross Ventilation
Plot size (High Residential Density)	18 × 36

Source: Ogun State Urban and Regional Planning Law, 2005

Table 2: Compliance level of Residential Buildings to the Ogun State Town Planning Regulations in the Study Area

Compliance	Building Coverage	Setback from the building line to wall fence	Rear Setback	Side Setback	Setback from the main building to the center of the road	Ventilation	Plot size
YES	54	57	58	55	50	53	50
NO	151	148	147	150	155	152	155
Total	205	205	205	205	205	205	205

Source: Researchers' Field Survey June, 2018

Data collected on the compliance level to the Ogun State Town Planning Regulations on Residential Buildings in the Study Area as shown in Table 2 revealed that 26% of the buildings complied with the regulations, while the remaining 74% are non-compliance to the regulations. The study area is a Peri-Urban settlement with a characteristic of high potential for residential development, owing to the high rate of urbanization in Ijebu Ode, Ogun State. The need to absorb the pressure imposed by urbanization has resulted in housing development of different dimensions in the study area. A major resultant consequence of the low level of compliance to the regulations is the emergence of sporadic development which is not in line with the planning goals.

6.0 CONCLUSION

Compliance to building regulations is key to environmental sustainability, hence, the need for continual assessment of housing development is imperative. The study area has demonstrated a very high level of non-compliance to residential building regulations, which in turn has manifested in sporadic development. The pressure exerted by urbanization is a major factor considered in this research owing to the fact that it is a Peri- Urban settlement with high potential to absorb the pressure of housing in all its ramifications. An urgent attention is necessary to address

the issue of low compliance to these regulations, in order to avoid the negative consequence of urban slum in the nearest future.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Intensive development control activities should be embarked upon by the Planning Authority in charge of the study (that is Ijebu Ode Zonal Planning Authority). The need for public enlightenment on the advantages of the compliance to various building regulations is essential for achieving a sustainable development, which is largely to the inhabitants' advantage. Public enlightenment in this regard should be to involve all the community leaders and the other stakeholders whose involvement will bring positive change within the context of building regulations compliance.

It is very important to properly equip the authority to effectively perform their statutory role in development control activities. Hence, the state government should provide an enabling environment for efficient and effective operation of development control. However, the need to appraise the effectiveness of development control in Nigeria is essential, owing to the ever increasing population, particularly in the urban areas, with the ever increasing demand for housing and the poor state of the economy both at the micro and macro levels. A transformation in development control activities is desirable to achieve an environment that can stand the test of time. Inspection before building approval, inspection during building construction, inspection after construction and the issuance of certificate of building regulation compliance are stages to be considered in the building approval process.

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