



Empirical Study on Factors Responsible for Housing Project Abandonment in Nigeria: Bauchi Metropolis in Viewpoint

Muhammad Umar Bello^{1*}, Hamisu Abdullahi², Ahmed Yahaya Abdul³

¹ 1Department of Estate Management & Valuation, Faculty of Environment Technology, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. PMB 0248. Bauchi, Nigeria,

² 2 Department of Quantity Surveying, College of Environmental Studies, Waziri Umaru Federal Polytechnic, Birnin Kebbi, PMB.1034. Kebbi, Nigeria,

³3Department of Architecture, School of Environmental Sciences, Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola, Adamawa State, Nigeria.

*Corresponding Author

Abstract: *This paper investigated the likely problems resulted from the abandoned housing projects in Nigeria with special considerations to Bauchi metropolis as an emergent urban area. Abandoned housing projects are an alarming phenomenon that existed for decades in Nigeria. This occurred due to different factors such as, the poor quality control by regulatory agencies; the lack of access to credit facilities, inflations, corruption, communication gaps among the personnel, the cost of building materials, and the inability of clients to engage contractors or designers' capabilities, etc. The objectives of this research study were to determine the factors responsible for the abandonment projects, to identify the consequences of the abandoned projects. The adopted method was quantitative; the population of the targeted respondents was gotten through BSDB. The primary data was collected using structural questionnaires. 346 questionnaires were distributed across the study area, and 285 were retrieved. The primary data was analysed, and the discussion of the results revealed that the abandoned housing projects caused a lot of harm in the neighbourhood, like criminal hideouts and unsecured areas. It was revealed that inflation caused the housing project to be abandoned. It was concluded that the government should intervene through the implementation of housing development regulations, and concerned agencies should be alert most especially the Bauchi State Development Board on the economic capabilities of the intended homeowners. More again, other relevant agencies strictly implementing the condition for housing development should contain the rules for housing development. The individuals should be enlightened on the problems caused by these abandoned housing projects for the neighbourhood.*

Keywords: Housing, Abandoned Project, Construction, Government, Development

INTRODUCTION

Literature review

Many cities in Nigeria today, are full with buildings, roads, dams, and other developmental projects of magnitude which have been abandoned (Hanachor, 2012). (Adeniyi *et al.*, 2015; Nwachukwu, 1989) stated that the developmental projects are being abandoned in all tiers of the government

including: Local, State and the Federal Government. "Harley (1999) has defined abandoned as left behind, or left without care and protection and discontinued; to put an end or to terminate from doing something". (Dlakwa & Culpin, 1990; Ihuah & Benebo, 2014a; Nwachukwu, 1989) stated that the abandonment of a project refers to physical structures on which property taxes and mortgages are no longer paid, and for which the services are neither paid nor provided. Oluwaseyi Olalekan and Godwin Onajite (2017) observed that the abandoned housing projects referred to the empty properties which are in low demand. They are unoccupied, vandalized, boarded-up, deteriorated or those which have unmaintained grounds. Planning must be given considerable attention if the projects are to be absolutely executed (George, 1985; Morenikeji *et al.*, 2017; Yunusa, 2015). Construction activities are among the key indicators of economic development of a given nation (Adeniyi *et al.*, 2015; Elum & Momodu, 2017). A strong and prosperous economy is usually associated with an increase in developmental project activities, but in a very weak economy, the commonness of the project abandonment tends to be more rampant.

Okwy (2013 March, 26) reported that the minister of land, housing and urban development of Federal government stated that one million houses would be constructed yearly. But, these resulted in the abandoned houses. The Minister of Power, Work and Housing, Babatunde Fashola reported a lot of the abandoned mass housing across the country (Adegboye, 2017 April, 4). Mustapha (2017, September 18) reported that the real estate association developers in Nigeria have been committed to comprehensively collate and manage the data for planning and decision making related to the preconstruction, construction and post construction activities in the nation's real estate sector. To curb the number of the abandoned projects in the country, the government should intervene with regulations that can make use of locally made building materials affordable and accessible to the prospective or intending house owners. Nigeria as a nation with over one hundred and eighty million people (180,000,000) is among the leading economies in Africa with many abandoned projects estimated in billions of naira, and it is critically ridiculous that Nigeria blessed with unlimited resources and potentials to experience such degree of the project abandonment. These abandoned projects have had significant effects in the social settings. It is imperative to look inward, and examine the factors responsible for the project abandonment in this society critically.

Bauchi metropolis has not been an exception from this occurrence of the abandoned projects (Aliyu, Kasim, & Martin, 2011). Housing projects development in Bauchi metropolis has not been captioned or recorded, and many major cities in Nigeria have been distinguished, because there have not been housing records in the country (Mustapha, 2017, September 18). However, all the major cities in the country are full of the abandoned housing as indicated by (Adegboye, 2017 April, 4). According to Ishiyaku *et al.* (2014), the mass housing development in Bauchi has not conformed the expectations of the users. This has been the common issue that has been prevalent in the construction arena throughout the country.

Objectives of the study

This research study intended to investigate the factors that led the construction projects to be abandoned through the following stated objectives.

1. To determine the factors responsible for the abandonment projects.
2. To identify the consequences of the abandoned projects.
3. To suggest the possible solutions to the problems of the abandoned projects in Nigeria.

This research work has been very noteworthy because the abolition or decrease in the rate of the abandonment of the building project would provide and improve the housing for all especially low-income earners, reduce the rate of the unemployment in the country, and create the employment opportunities for the relevant professionals in the built environment and construction industry, reduce the waste of fund, human and materials resources on the part of the client, as well as, improve

the physical and socio-economic development of the country amongst the others. The abandoned housing projects have been considered as a sign of ill economic development. Furthermore, the abandoned housing projects have been a great concern to the building owners and other stakeholders (Oluwaseyi Olalekan *et al.*, 2017).

Causes of Abandoned Projects

Abandoned projects can be best described as the physical structures that their property tax, development levy and many other taxes are no longer paid to the authorities, and they also served as hide-outs for criminals. Projects that have been started at an earlier date, but their construction work was not provided for a reason or it was stopped have been considered as abandoned, such projects are not limited to the buildings alone; roads, industrial structures, bridges, factories, dams, electricity, communication projects and so on are equally on the list. A study by (Sonuga, Aliboh, & Oloke, 2002) showed that a good number of building projects were initiated with good intentions, but were abandoned at different stages of the design and construction process. Some reasons advanced by (Adediji *et al.*, 2013; Osabuohien, 2014; Otairu *et al.*, 2014; Sonuga *et al.*, 2002) for failed construction projects include: the incorrect estimation; the bad location; the lack of available skilled personnel; the inadequate planning; the poor risk management; the misunderstanding of the work requirement; the poor quality control by the regulatory agencies; corruption and the communication gap among the personnel. Other factors included the cost; the developer and the contractors; the inability of the clients to engage the contractors or designers' capability to do the work; the failure on the part of site engineers and other relevant professionals.

Consequences for abandoned projects

Likely problems caused by the abandoned housing projects in Nigeria were highlighted by (Dimelu *et al.*, 2016; Olusegun & Michael, 2011; Saad, 1988) as criminals' hideouts, development of slums, social vices, shortage of social amenities, insecurity and shortage of accommodation distinguished by such areas. Ozo (1990) opined that the low cost housing project abandonment would affect the availability of the affordable housing for the masses. These are the problems associated with the abandoned housing that created disasters to the occupied apartments (Ihuah *et al.*, 2014b). Generally, the social menace in most neighbourhoods has been originated in areas full of the abandoned housing projects (Maina, 2013). Nigeria has been distinguished by many abandoned housing projects of billions of US dollars because of many factors such as criminal hide-outs, raping sites, drug abuse areas, hooligan joints, etc. The problems associated with the abandoned housing project to neighbourhood have been enormous (Ngoka, 1979; Shehu *et al.*, 2014). Social vices have been experienced in the neighbourhoods, and slums were manifested in the abandoned housing project environments.

Materials and Methods

The study was a quantitative approach in nature; the questionnaire was employed as a means of data collection instrument. The population of the targeted respondents was gotten through SDB. The sample size was 346 respondents, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table (1970) was used to arrive at the sample size value with the confidence level of 95% and margin error of 5%. 346 questionnaires were distributed. 245 questionnaires were retrieved. This represented more than 70% of the total questionnaires.

Results

The results of the study were brought forward to explain the number of questionnaires which were distributed and retrieved, as presented in the table below.

Table 1. Questionnaire Administered

Total Questionnaire administered	Questionnaire retrieved	Percentage
346	285	82%

Table 2. Demography of the respondents

Gender		Percentage
Female	66	23%
Male	219	77%

Discussion

From the table 1 above the number of the total questionnaires retrieved was 285 which was 82% of the total questionnaires administered. The questionnaires were validated by the professionals and lecturers in the faculty of the Environmental Technology of Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. The convenience of distributing the questionnaires arose by giving them through community leaders within the abandoned housing projects. Simple random sampling was used as a technique for questionnaire distribution. The study area was covered in terms of the abandoned housing project. In the stage in which the project was not considered as important, the overall project was the area of investigation of this research study.

Table 2 above highlighted the demography profile of the respondents. The males were 77% and female 23%, this showed that males were participating more in construction than their female counterparts in Bauchi. Married individuals were largely affected by this phenomenon because they have been the people mainly concerned and in desperate needs of the affordable accommodations (Dyb, 2016; Hopper et al., 2017). Even though, the single ones might also be in need, but in most of these societies married people have been the victims of these phenomena (Shdaimah, 2009). Females in the construction within Bauchi metropolis were faced with uncountable problems of housing project abandonment, this assertion was conformed with the study carried out by (Gao *et al.*, 2017). The absence of social housing has triggered the fashion for housing demand in urban cities (Olanrewaju et al., 2016). High mortgage payment also attributed to the abandoned housing project (Olanrewaju *et al.*, 2016) which was in conformity with the study of (Achour *et al.*, 2015). Academic literatures have outlined that the abandoned housing projects in Nigeria has been the result of the poor budget implementation (Olanrewaju, Tan, & Lee, 2017). Another aspect leading to the abandoned housing projects was the lack of access to credit facilities, this was in consonant with the results of (Ogu, 1994) and (Sule, 1981). There was a clear difference in the housing pattern that led to the abandonment of the housing projects (Ozo, 1990; Sanchez, 2016). It was evident that the majority of the individuals faced one or more problems of housing development because of numerous obstacles (Adeoye, 2016; Daniel & Hunt, 2014; Morenikeji *et al.*, 2017). This was the result of the study conducted by (Mohit & Iyanda, 2016). Many empirical studies showed that the abandoned housing projects occurred due to many tangible and intangible factors (Ihuah *et al.*, 2014b).

Conclusion

Conclusion drawn here substantiated the outcomes of the previous studies that housing project abandonment has been caused by many factors which are tangible and intangible. And, as it was mentioned earlier that has depressed the economic situation of the country and increased the rate of the phenomenon. Like other states in the country, Bauchi metropolis has not been an exception.

Concerned agencies should be alerted most especially the Bauchi State Development Board (BSDB) on the economic capabilities of the intended homeowners. More again, other relevant agencies like, Bauchi State Ministry of Housing and Environment (BSMH&E) strictly implementing the condition for housing development should contain the rules for housing development. The individuals should be enlightened on the problems caused by these abandoned housing projects for the neighbourhood. Generally, the professionals and academia should come up with resolution that may curb this phenomenon so that sanity would be restored to the normalcy. So, the level of abandonment would be reduced to the barest minimum.

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