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Assessment of the Problems and Prospects of Housing Quality on the Living Condition of Residents of Ikere-Ekiti, Nigeria

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Abstract: **This study assessed the problems and prospects of housing quality on the living condition of residents of Ikere-Ekiti, Nigeria. Data for this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. Results from this study showed that, majority of the housing units in the study area are in need of major repairs and rehabilitation. Also, it was discovered that, drainage facilities within neighbourhood in the study area are comparatively good. However, there is need for the existing drainage facilities to be improved upon. This study therefore concludes that, existing government policies should be renewed and reinvigorated to address the issue of design, location and infrastructural facilities in the study area.**

Keywords: **Assessment, Dwelling, Housing, Problems and Prospects.**

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Olanrewju and Adesanya (2013) opined that housing is a basic human need in all societies and fundamental right of every individual. As a unit of the environment, it has profound influence on the health, efficiency, social behavior, satisfaction and general welfare of the community. It reflects the cultural, social and economic values of a society, as it is the best physical and historical evidence of the civilization of a country and a reliable measure or indicator of economic development (Jiboye, 2009). Ajayi and Omole (2012) asserted that housing is a combination of characteristics for the purpose of providing a unique home within a given neighborhood, thus, it is an array of economic, social and psychological phenomenon. The state of housing available to the people in any nation is a fairly accurate reflection of the quality of life in that country. Adedeji (2004) observed that the society ascribed great importance to the role housing plays to bring about human comfort and that the importance of providing adequate and quality housing in any country cannot be overstated nor disputed in time and space. Listokin et al. (2007) also opined that housing has become a critical component in the social, economic, cultural and political development of man.LA

There is a dearth and high cost of urban land, and high cost of housing, which is often in short supply and out of the economic reach of the majority of the urban households (Oladapo and Olotuah, 2007). The urban centres are populated by a large mass of people on low wage and who face irregular employment. This segment of the urban population is indeed poor and is constrained to limited, insufficient, crowded shelter and a generally degraded environment. These are the urban poor who are subjected to a life characterized by precarious conditions of nutrition and health, little or poor material possessions (Olotuah, 2010). Olotuah and Ajenifujah (2009) stated that most urban centres in Nigeria are characterized by high densities of buildings, the crowding of large numbers of people into those buildings, inadequate spaces for open air between houses, poor health, substandard housing, and acute environmental and sanitary problem.

1.1 Statement of the Research Problem

Housing is a priority for the attainment of living standard and it is important to both rural and urban areas. Unlike developing countries, habitable housing is more accessible to all categories of people including the poor and the needy in advanced countries as a result of subsidies from the government. Although studies have shown that the problem of housing is universal, it is however more critical in less developed countries (Olotuah and Bodadoye, 2009). Housing need in Nigeria increases day by day, whereas the vast majority of the population lacks the wherewithal to make effective demand on housing. The private sector, which is the major supplier of housing in Nigeria, faces a number of problems inhibiting it from meeting the ever increasing needs. The public sector has fared badly in housing provision. A major reason for the debacle in past public sector programmes in housing is traceable to inadequate knowledge of the nature, scope and dimension of the housing problems in both the rural and urban areas of the country and to the myopic and narrow concept of the housing needs of the Nigerian populace.

Olotuah (2010) observed that many houses in Nigeria's urban centres were located in environments that were considered unsanitary. Most housing schemes in Nigeria do not take into consideration the need for effective and functional range of environmental services and amenities such as access roads, proximity to healthcare and educational facilities, recreational centres as well as effective sewage and solid waste disposal systems at the initial stages of developments. While the quality of the existing stock is also under a heavy study in terms of design and desired functions including satisfactory livable neighborhood, 87 percent of the existing stocks are accumulations which are frameworks and that do not meet the minimum quality requirements (Daramola, 2004).

Most geographical research on spatial variations on the quality of life, living conditions as well as housing quality in recent times have focused majorly on the developed nations of the world owing to their ability to ration population growth in tandem with available resources to maintain an equilibrium and social equity. One of the primary objectives of sustainable development as contained in the Brundtland Report of 1987 relates to ways of ensuring a better quality life for everyone, now and for generation to come (NAHA, 2006). This entails a process of building our communities so that we can live comfortably by providing lasting and secure livelihoods which minimize resources depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruptions and social instability (Douglass, 2008; Jiboye, 2009). Since housing occupies a central position in the sustainable urbanization agenda in Nigeria and other developing nations; and also since African traditional family housing unit constitutes a significant component of the urban housing stock, there is the need to ensure its adequacy in order to facilitate a better quality life as well as maintain stable urban communities. In the study area, most housing decay and deterioration come in various forms and their existence is more evident in densely populated parts of the town. Some of the characteristics include inadequate and deficient facilities, obsolete buildings, filthy environment, and non-availability of sewer, hence, human excreta and wastewater end up in rivers, streams, canals, gullies and ditches untreated.

Hence, it is pertinent for this research work to be carried out which tend to bridge the gap in knowledge, complement existing literature in this regard and also provide a different approach by which the living conditions of residents on both rural and urban communities, regionally, nationally and globally can be bettered through the provision of good quality housing units thus guaranteeing improved living conditions at large.

1.2 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research work is to assess the problems and prospects of housing quality on the living condition of residents of Ikere-Ekiti, Nigeria. However, the specific objectives are to:

(i) identify the problem of housing quality and living conditions of the people in the study area;

(ii) evaluate the factors responsible for housing problem in the study area;

(iii) examine how best, improvement in housing quality can increase housing quality on the living condition of residents of Ikere-Ekiti, Nigeria;

(iv) determine possible solutions or remedial measures to the problems identified in the study area.

1.3 The Study Area

1.3.1 Location

Ikere Ekiti, the headquarters of Ikere Local Government Area of Ekiti State is located between latitudes $7^{o}30^{1}$ and $7^{o}35^{1}$ North of the Equator and longitudes $5^{o}10^{1}$ and $5^{o}15^{1}$ East of the Greenwich Meridian. Ikere-Ekiti covers a total land area of

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346.5 kilometers square. The town lies within the Precambrian crystalline basement complex rock of Southwestern Nigeria (Aturamu, 2012).

Figure 1: Ekiti State within Nigeria

Source: GIS Spatial Nigeria Limited (2022)

1.3.2 Accessibility

Ikere Ekiti is situated in the southern end of Ekiti State, bounded in the north by Ado-Ekiti Local Government Area, in the west by Ekiti South West Local Government Area, in the east by Ise-Orun Local Government Area and in the south by Ondo State. Ikere Ekiti marks the southern boundary between Ekiti State and Ondo State.

1.3.3 Settlement Pattern

The settlement pattern of the study area followed the linear pattern as buildings advanced through transport routes. Houses are built along the roads and they keep extending from the interiors to the exteriors. The type and nature of the houses differ according to location as old houses are located around the town centre while newer and high class buildings are located near the transport routes and at the outskirt of the town.

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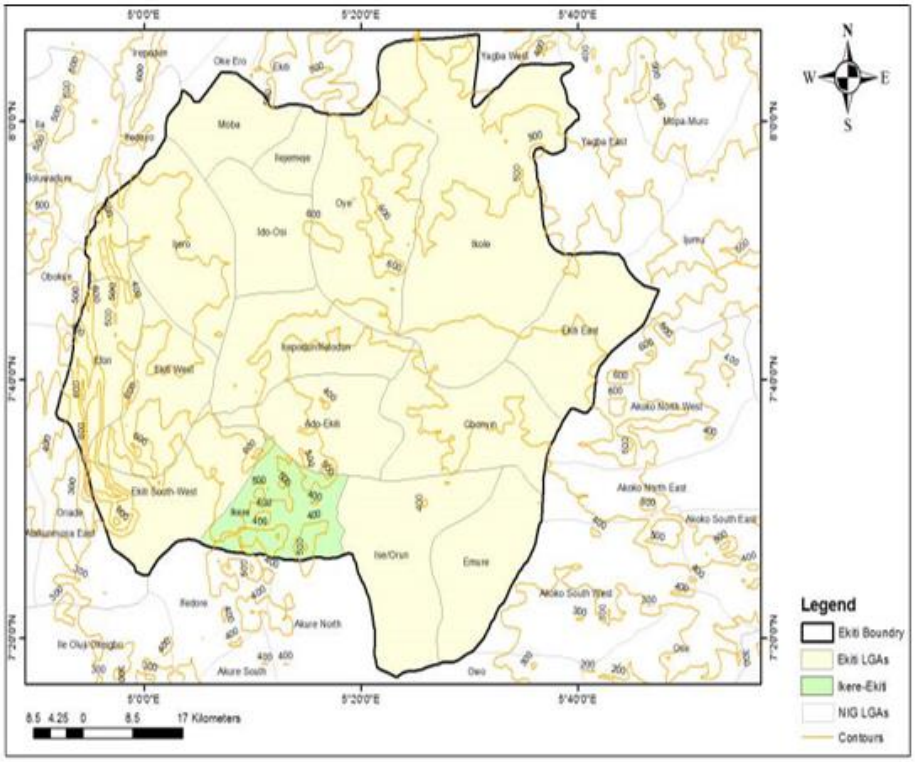

Figure 2: Ikere Ekiti Local Government Area within Ekiti State

Source: GIS Spatial Nigeria Limited (2022)

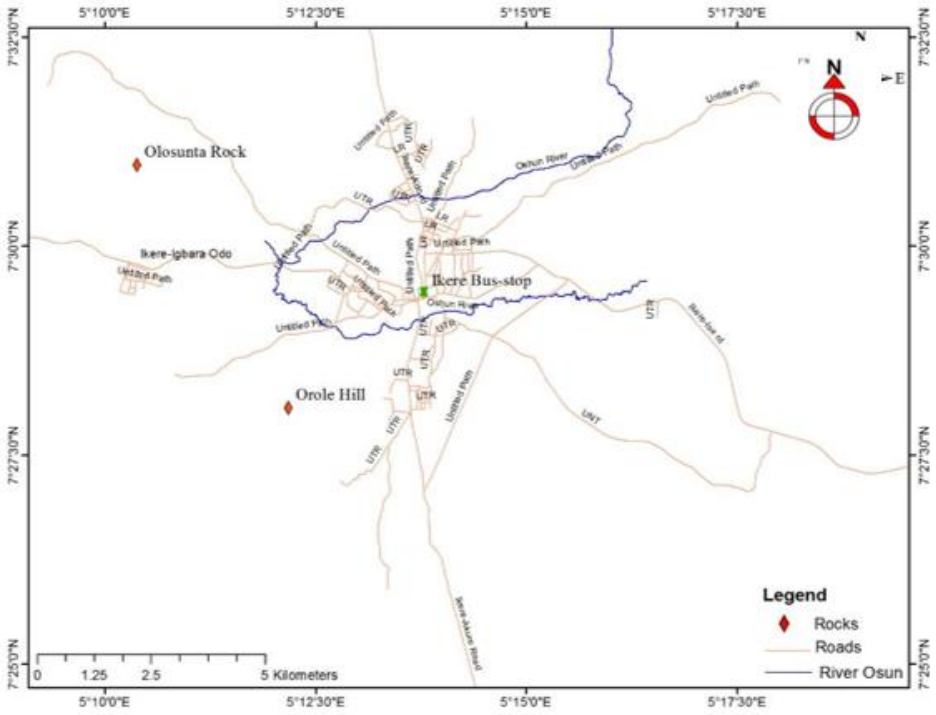

Figure 3: Relief and Geographical Landscape

The landscape and the topography of the area are hilly and mountainous with several elongated outcrops of igneous and metamorphic complexes. The *Olosunta* and *Orole* hills, both steep-sided hills, are the two major hills in the town, located at the Northern and Southern parts of the town respectively.

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1.3.4 Historical Background of Ikere-Ekiti

Ikere-Ekiti like other Yoruba towns and cities originated from Ile-Ife. The first family to reside in the town was the Aladeselu's who were farmers and had their settlement in the centre of the present city (around Odo-Oja to Post Office area).

1.3.5 Economic Activities

Ikere-Ekiti used to be major collecting point for cocoa, it also serves as an agricultural trade centre and some of the major agricultural produces commonly grown include yam, cassava, rice, maize, palm-oil and kernels, okra, pumpkins among others.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Housing is a basic human need in all societies and a fundamental right of every individual. As a unit of the environmental, it has a profound influence on the health, efficiency, social behavior, satisfaction and general welfare of the community (Olanrewaju and Adesanya, 2013). More than it is always recognized; housing plays a more critical role in a country's welfare as it affects not only the well-being of the citizenry but also the performance of other sectors of the economy.

Nubi (2000) noted that among other things, housing is one of the three basic needs of mankind and it is the most important for the physical survival of man after the provision of food and clothing. Adequate housing contributes to the attainment of physical and moral health of a nation and stimulates the social stability, work efficiency which invariably impact positively on productivity as well as the development of individuals. It is also one of the best indicators of a person's standard of living and his place within the society. Housing both in units or multiple forms is a significant component of the physical form and structure of a community while the human and family contents of the house is part of the spirit of life and prosperity of the society (Olayiwola, Adeleye and Ogunsakin, 2005).

Theories of Spatial Pattern of Urban Residential Land use

Housing attributes give the city it's most visible physical structure, as the nature of residential buildings often to a greater extent determines the shape of the city (Muth, 1969; Sada, 1975; Pritchard, 1976; Drakakis-Smith, 1981; Brueckner and Coiwell, 1983). The residential pattern of urban centres is Usually influenced by a lot of factors including the prevailing policies on land use control and land tenure system as well as the socioeconomic development prevailing at the time. Since the spatial pattern of residential attributes might influence the prices of housing therefore it could also influence preference and choice behaviour. An understanding of the spatial pattern of the city helps in expanding the knowledge of housing preference dynamics as a social process influenced by the contending forces of demand and supply that characterize the urban housing market. Attempts at understanding the structure of the city date back to the early decades of the 19th century.

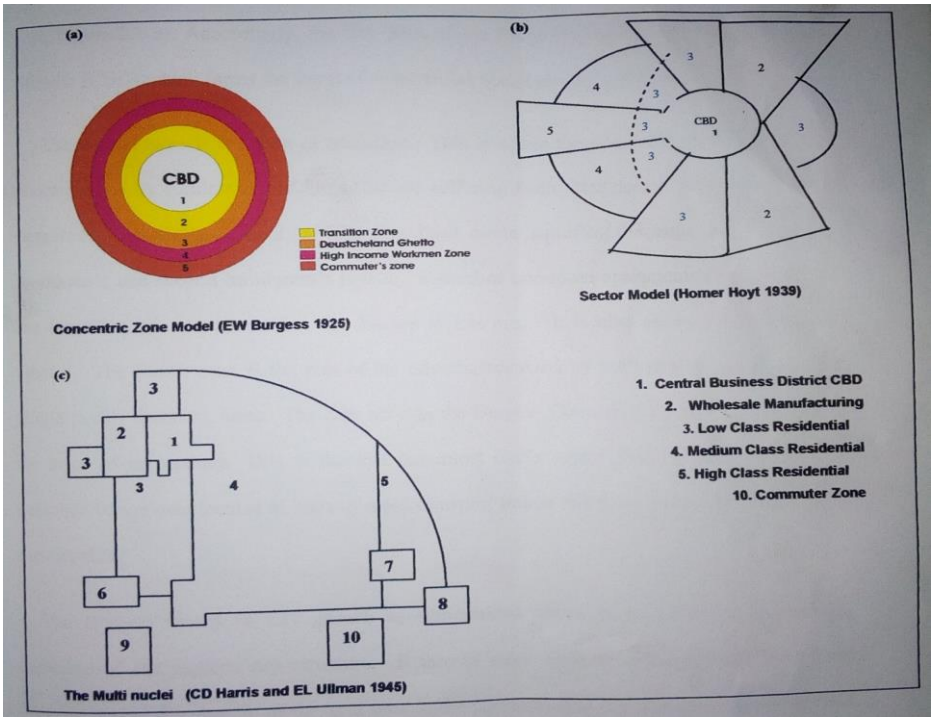

Figure 4: Theories of the Spatial Pattern of Urban Residential Land use

Homer Hoyt framed his theory of city growth, arguing that a particular kind of urban land use locates and remain in a particular sector of the city. For instance, industries tend to locate and situate according to him in one sector, high class residential buildings in an opposite sector and working class housing in the intermediate sectors. This model latter became the model for the estate construction in both developed and emerging countries of the developing world. The Hoyt's Sector theory, otherwise known as the Wedge Theory, was based on a research conducted in some American cities into residential rent patterns. The sector model accounts for the importance of transportation routes on the growth of an urban area. Homer Hoyt maintains that expansion along a specific axis of transport usually takes the form of similar types of land use, which are in agreement to a pattern of sectors rather than the set of circles as canvassed by Burgess earlier.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study employed descriptive survey design in gathering data. In this regard, questionnaire administration was used in data collection. Considering the cost and time, the total population cannot be sampled, thus, the purposive sampling technique was employed in eliciting the information from the study area.

Types and Sources of Data

The data used in the study can be categorized into two. These are the primary and secondary data. However, for many reasons and contrast with studies from advanced economies that make use of census data, this study relied absolutely on data from field survey.

Population of the Study

According to the National Population Commission census report (NPC, 2011), the population projection for Ikere-Ekiti, which is the study area, has a total population of 147,355 people. Based on the population projection, 5% of the population was sampled in the study area, thus, making the number of respondents (target population) to be 880 (Eight Hundred and Eighty) in all.

Research Instrument

The basic research instrument of data collection for the study is the questionnaire which is a tool for gathering information that is not available from published sources. The study used a well-structured questionnaire to elicit the information needed for the study.

Validation of Research Instrument

Thus, to ensure validity of the questionnaire, a comprehensive pilot testing was conducted prior to the fieldwork proper in order to achieve the desired result and also, to ensure that the final questionnaire addresses the set out objectives of the treatise and include all variables of interest for a robust analysis.

Sampling Procedure and Techniques

The purposive sampling technique was employed in the acquisition of information from the study area. Sampling is simply the technique of selecting a representative part of a population of study or number of observations for the purpose of determining the characteristics of the whole population.

Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire was divided into two sections to address the objectives set out in chapter two. Questions on the socio-economic characteristics of respondents such as age, sex, marital status, employment, religion, income and wards were contained in the first section of the questionnaire, while the second section contains questions on the housing quality (physical structure of buildings) quality of the facilities in the house, accessibility, aesthetics, toilets, kitchen, bathroom, electricity, refuse disposal and water supply.

Methods of Data Collection

In order to achieve an effective and meaningful research work, the study relied absolutely on primary data from the field survey and complemented it with secondary sources such as information obtained from the internet resources like Google search engine, textbooks, published and unpublished literatures, newspaper and others.

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Methods of Data Analysis

The data obtained on the field were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics techniques. Frequency distribution and percentage, correlation, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and the student's *t*-test were used to analyze the data collected. Specifically, the Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 23 and Microsoft Excel software were used to generate tables and graphs from the data.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Size of Household of the Respondents

Household size of 1 to 3 people has 6.6 percent, 56.1 percent with 4 to 6 people followed by 9.1 percent with household size of 7 to 9 people, while 18.2 percent have household size of 10 and above. This implies a preponderance of households with 4 to 6 persons per housing unit. Depending upon the nature of residential unit being occupied variously by these households, the room density may be pre-emptied from this emerging fact. Thus, the household size distribution in the study area is considerably very high, with over 50 percent of the household surveyed having 4 to 6 people in a dwelling unit, and as such impact negatively on general living condition of the residents.

Table 1: Size of Household of Respondents

Household Size	Frequency	Percent
1-3	183	16.6%
4-6	357	56.1%
7-9	150	9.1%
10 and above	190	18.2%
Total	880	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Types of Houses of the Respondents

According to Table 2 the type of houses lived in by the respondents shows that 41.1 percent of the respondents lived in a bungalow (rooms with shared facilities such as toilet, kitchen and bathroom) while 15.7 percent lived in duplex, 28.7 percent lived in storey building, residents living in traditional houses are the least with 14.5 percent. The implication of this is that the higher the number of people living in a house, the higher the pressure on facilities which can result into dissatisfaction amongst occupants, overuse and consequently the breakdown of vital facilities within households.

Table 2: Types of House of the Respondents

Type of House	Frequency	Percent
Bungalow	291	41.1%
Duplex	179	15.7%
Storey Building	236	28.7%
Traditional Houses	174	14.5%
Total	880	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork 2022

Number of Household using Kitchen Facility

The result of data analysis on Table 3 signifies the number of households or families sharing the same kitchen facility. 35.7 percent of the respondents disclosed that one household use their kitchen facility, 19.1 percent for two households, 14.1 percent for three households, 9.2 percent for four households and 13.6 percent for five households and 8.3 percent for six and above household. This implies that a sizable portion of the study area still make use of kitchen facilities with other households in which the use of firewood and charcoal is the preferred source of energy. Also, many of the buildings have their kitchens located at the backyard usually in an unhygienic environment, some right inside their rooms and others make use of the common passage available in their buildings.

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Table 3: Number of Household using Kitchen Facility

Number of Household using Kitchen	Frequency	Percent
1	314	35.7%
2	168	19.1%
3	124	14.1%
4	81	9.2%
5	120	13.6%
6 and above	73	8.3%
Total	880	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Method of Waste Disposal

Indicated in Table 4 is the method of waste disposal by the respondents in the study area. 74.5 percent of the respondents dispose their refuse by burning within the residential areas, 14.1 percent benefit from the services of government approved waste disposal agencies, 5 percent through private collectors, 1.6 percent dispose their refuse within the surrounding bushes and available spaces while 4.8 percent indicated that they make use of other means of disposal aside from the methods stated above. This indicates that the state of waste disposal in the study area is generally archaic, absurd and unconventional despite efforts of government at maintaining a clean environment and curbing indiscriminate disposal through the creation of Waste Management Board and other forms of enlightenment campaign aimed at creating an enabling environment for all and sundry. The resultant effect of burning as a preferred method of waste disposal as observed in the study area is the gradual destruction of the ecosystem and air pollution within the residential areas. Similarly, heaps of dumpsites around dwelling units will also provide comfortable breeding grounds for pests, rodents and mosquitoes thereby exposing residents to grave dangers.

Table 4: Method of Waste Disposal

Method of Waste Disposal	Frequency	Percent
Burning	416	74.5%
Government Agency	150	14.1%
Private Collector	110	5.0%
Bush (Available Space)	95	1.6%
Others	109	4.8%
Total	880	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Respondents Perception on Sharing of Toilet Facility

According to Table 5 below, 54.3 percent of the respondents reported that they share toilet facilities in their houses while 45.7 percent do not share toilet facilities. In light of this distributional pattern, it is revealing that the availability of toilet facilities in houses within the study area were grossly inadequate.

Table 5: Respondents Perception on Sharing of Toilet Facility

Respondents Perception on Sharing of Toilet Facility	Frequency	Percent
Yes	459	54.3%
No	421	45.5%
Total	880	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

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Availability of Electricity

Information as presented in Table 6 reveals that 65.7 percent of the respondents in the study area have electricity facilities in their houses while 34.3 percent indicated they do not have. This suggest that many of the housing units in the study area are not illuminated and where households are connected to electricity facilities, irregularities in supply has always been the complaint. The implication of these is that most residents in this area are without modern facilities for comfort, hence, productivity and living conditions is comprised.

Table 6: Availability of Electricity

Availability of Electricity	Frequency	Percent
Yes	509	65.7%
No	371	34.3%
Total	880	100.0%

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

The study attempted to identify the major indicators of housing quality and living conditions in Ikere-Ekiti Local Government Area of Ekiti State. Although research efforts as regards quality of housing have proliferated in the last decades, the issues have continued to wear different togas and colours over time. Hence the decision to assess the importance of housing quality and living conditions in Ikere-Ekiti is highly timely.

5.2 Recommendations

Since empirical analyses in the study have revealed that housing quality and living conditions reflect more of neighbourhood characteristics, it is thus recommended that:

i. primary mortgage institutions should be introduced to give out loans to individuals to build their own houses with low interest rate and long gestation or maturity period. In the light of this, housing loans should be given to government workers with the money paid back instalmentally into government coffers or deducted from their monthly take home which will be for a reasonable period of time between 15 to 20 years.

ii. Existing government policies should be reviewed and reinvigorated to address the issue of design, location and others that may relate to infrastructural provision, city-center development and new communities. Integrated rural development is thus imperative in this instance. This should involve the location of educational and health institutions in the rural areas, provision of infrastructural facilities as well as the development of rural housing, which will serve to improve the general living conditions of the rural populace.

iii. It has been discovered that to meet the demand for housing, the government alone cannot provide sufficient housing units for all and sundry. Therefore, the involvement of the private sector should be encouraged to compliment the effect of the government.

iv. Slum upgrading and redevelopment as urban renewal strategies should be vigorously pursued. This is essential because more residents of the neighbourhoods in the core areas of the city are culturally attached to the land and it is impracticable to embark on total clearance and resettlement programmes. Slum upgrading is done to solve the housing problem by transforming illegal dwelling into legal ones, thus improving the housing and living conditions of the dwellers.

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