

## HOUSING CONDITIONS IN A SLUM AREA OF AJEROMI OKE-OJA, OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Housing is an inevitable aspect of human life in any society. Consequently, its condition has resultant effect on the general wellbeing of individuals. This study examined the housing conditions in Ajeromi Oke-Oja in Ogun State, Nigeria with the view of identifying and assessing existing housing facilities and building construction materials; methods of acquisition and maintenances as well as examining inhabitants' socio-economic status on housing conditions. Data collection methods used were questionnaire, personal observations and informal interview. Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted to administer 200 questionnaires among household representatives. Results were presented using both descriptive and Chi-Square statistical methods. The findings revealed that majority (about 70%) of the residents are low income earners with low financial capability to access desirable houses. Findings on housing facilities indicated that 54% of toilets were pit system and 80% of the bathrooms were traditional open roofed and enclosed systems. For the construction materials, houses were built using mud (57%) as wall materials and corrugated iron sheet (66%) as roof. Interestingly, about 50% houses were aged (61-99 years) and are mostly (47%) inherited structures that were poorly maintained (70%). Chi-Square results on statistical impact of inhabitants' socio-economic variables on housing conditions were significantly observed. However, only income level proved a key factor that influenced housing conditions ( $\chi^2 = 20.28, P < 0.00$ ). The study recommended that immediate actions should be taken to avert hazards as a result of the extant housing conditions.*

**Key Words:** *Building Materials, Conditions, Facilities, Housing, Inhabitants*

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### Introduction

Housing goes beyond just a structure, but comprises physical and psychological attributes that enhances human wellbeing, and gives comfort. Aribigbola (2008) and World Health Organisation (2004) noted that housing is human basic

need just like food and clothing. In fact, it is very crucial to man's welfare, survival and health (Fadamiro *et al.*, 2004). Moreover, housing is perceived as one of the indicators to measure people's standard of living and status in the society. Also, as a unit of the

environment, it had been argued to have considerable influence the health, efficiency, social behavior, satisfaction and general welfare of the community. Therefore, housing reflects societal cultural, social and economic values as well as seen to be very key historical evidences of civilization of a country (Olotuah, 2000). Apart from housing being stimulant of national economy development, Agbola (1998) posited that housing represents durable assets accounting for high proportion of country's wealth and commodity households spend greater proportion of their income. Housing conditions entail the totality of internal and external influences that impinge on inhabitants' well-being. This includes the life-support systems that makes housing unit to be comfortable for the inhabitants. Indeed, housing quality can be judged from physical appearance of buildings, taking into consideration, quality of walls, roofing materials, and other structural components of the house, facilities provided and environmental condition.

According to Agbola (2004), housing is an expensive economic product, which requires large capital outlay, and is usually outside the reach of most individual. Agbola and Kassim (2007) however viewed housing affordability as ability of potential housing consumer to translate his or her housing needs into effective demand. In other words, it is the percentage of the present income that a person or a family can afford to spend on housing. Toronto City Planning (2006) posited that "housing affordability relates the cost of housing to household income". However, housing affordability concept was introduced in Nigeria by the World Bank during the implementation of its sites-and-services and settlement

upgrading programmes. The introduction was borne out of the need to ensure that the programmes fulfilled its objectives of reaching target beneficiaries, and as well instil financial discipline on projects operators so as to ensure replicability (UN-Habitat, 2006).

Coker *et al.* (2007) opined that housing quality is closely related to housing standards and the quality of residential area mirrors urban development, planning and allocation mechanisms between socio-economic groups, but also shows the quality of life of the residents. This implies that housing condition has social, economic and environmental dimensions. Onibokun (1985) noted that housing quality encompasses structure and internal adequacies of dwelling units, availability of amenities, occupancy rate, neighbourhood conditions, and habitability of houses. This implies that quality of houses can be considered as highly valued attributes which enables it to meet users' needs. Features such as durability of construction materials, structural soundness, spatial adequacy, and availability of basic services such as water, sewerage, electricity, location, secured tenure are considered to be indicators of good quality housing (UN-Habitat, 2006).

Moreover, the experience from most developing countries revealed that economic growth has not kept pace with urbanization and thus results in misappropriate spread of urban poverty, acute housing shortage and expanding slum neighbourhoods (Okoh, 2007). In line with the above, Olatubara (2007) stated that poverty issue amongst the poor are of varying dimensions. It was noted that, low earning power manifests in a variety of ways especially lack of

sufficient funds to procure housing. Problems faced by Nigerians are essentially connected with the increasing hardships they face in securing and retaining a residence. Such problems were identified to include arbitrary and outrageous increases in house rents, rapidly deteriorating urban environment and unguarded physical expansion of the cities.

Based on the foregoing, this paper assesses the housing conditions in Ajeromi Oke Oja, Ifo local government area in Ogun State, Nigeria. It analyzes the socio-economic characteristics of respondents; assess the building construction materials utilized; examine the housing facilities; and identify methods of property acquisition and maintenances.

#### ***Study Area***

Ajeromi Oke-Oja is a community in Ifo local government area (LGA) of Ogun State, Nigeria. The community is historically known to accommodate the descendants from the Owu and the Ake

dynasty. They are all referred to as part of the Egbas. Residents constituting about 85% are the Egbas, Aworis and Yewas, while the remaining 15% are dominated by the Ibos, Igedes (Benue State), Togolese and Benin. Ajeromi Oke-Oja is bounded in the north by Ewekoro LGA and to the south by Ado-Odo/Ota LGA. It covers about 1.2 hectares (Google Earth map). There are 430 buildings in the community that spread across the two political wards. The study area has an estimated population of about 5,000.

The community is mainly accessible by footpaths. While it grew from a traditional settlement, it had since developed as a clustered area. Most residential houses built along few road corridors have been converted to mixed use (both residential and commercial) purposes. There are three linkage roads namely: Coker, Ikorita and Aderenle Roads. Two of these roads linked the Lagos-Abeokuta Expressway and also serve as boundaries to the Ajeromi Oke-Oja (Figure 1).

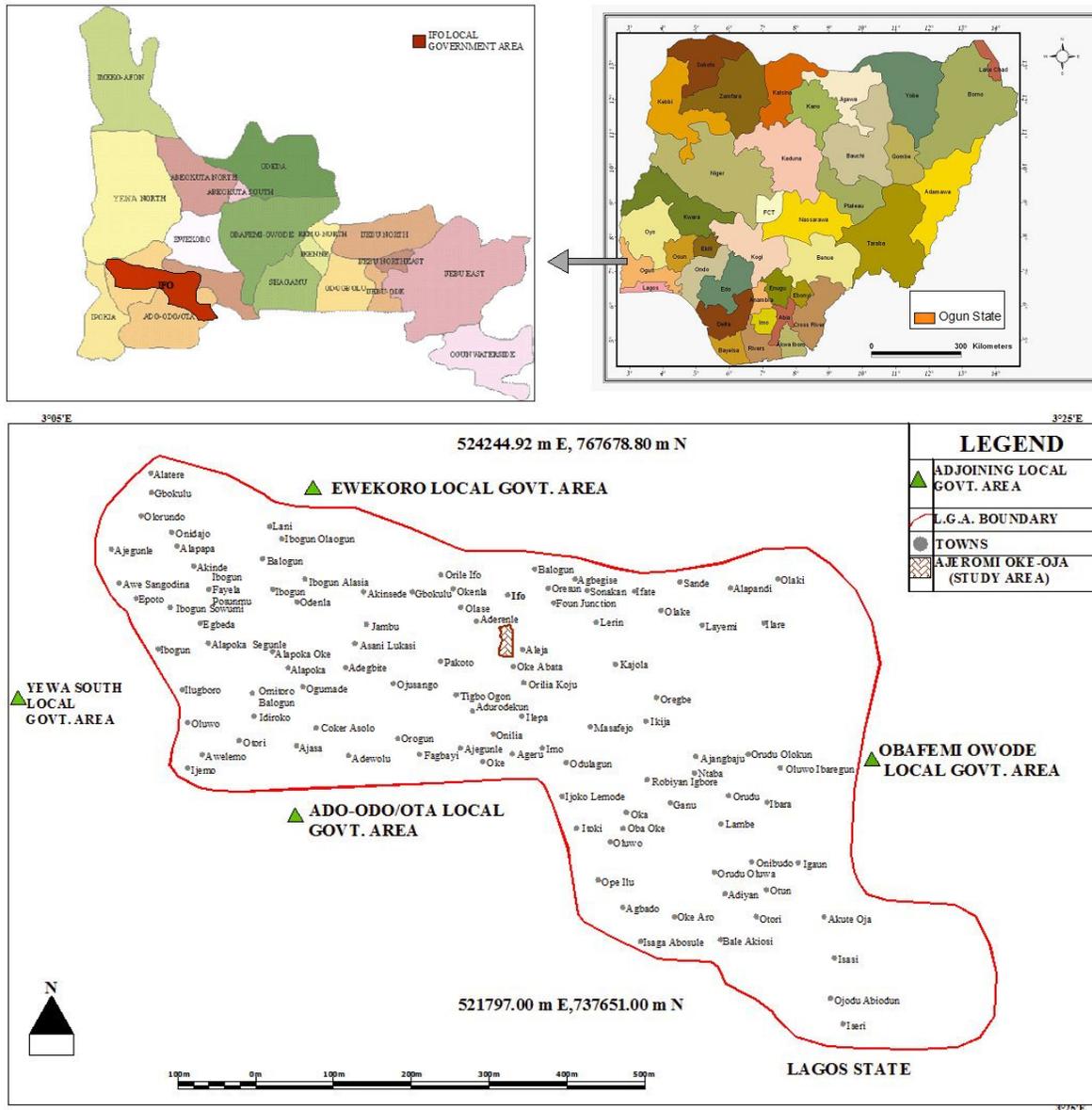


Figure 1: The Study Area within the context of Ifo Local Government Area

**Methodology**

Data were obtained through both primary and secondary sources. The primary methods of data collection are questionnaire, observations and informal interview. The questionnaire was structured into four sections. Section one sought information on socio-economic characteristics of residents whereas section two entails information on

housing characteristics (facilities). While section three covers information on household threshold and materials, the last section details information on property acquisition/tenure system and maintenance.

Multi-stage sampling technique was used for the study. At the first stage, the study area was stratified into strata based on political wards. The next stage

involves the use of systematic-random sampling technique to administer 200 questionnaires with 100 questionnaires sampled from each political ward. The sampling was carried out at an interval of every two buildings and a representative of the selected household was picked for the study.

**Results and Discussions**

**Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents**

Table 1 summarises the socio-economic profile. About 39.0% of the respondents were male while 61.0% were female. 35% and 22% of respondents were between the age of 21-40 years and 41-50 years respectively. While

respondents between ages 51-60 years were 40%, those above 61 years were 8%. From the age distribution, shows that majority of the residents are of working age, thus suggesting they are capable of earning income to meet their needs. The income level from Table 1 shows that respondents with income level below ₦15,999 were 27%, 40% earned between ₦16,000-₦50,999, 23% are within income range ₦51,000-₦99,999, and 10% earning above ₦100,000. With 67% of respondents earning below 60,000 (\$150) monthly, the results imply that Ajeromi Oke-Oja residents belong to low income group. This result will have implication for housing affordability and its subsequent maintenance.

Table 1: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	78	39
	Female	122	61
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Age Distribution	20 Years and Below	10	15
	21 – 40	56	35
	41 – 50	44	22
	51 – 60	74	40
	61 and above	16	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Income Level	₦15,999 and Below	54	27
	₦16,000-₦50,999	80	40
	₦51,000-₦99,999	46	23
	₦100,000 and Above	20	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

**Housing Facilities**

Table 2 presents the housing types and buildings facilities focusing on toilet, kitchen and bathroom. 50.5% of the building are bungalow (Brazilian Type) otherwise called *face-to-face* as in Nigerian local parlance. 21.5% are storey building, 4% are block of flat houses and 17% are traditional compound houses.

48.5% houses observed less than 3 metres setback to the road, 34% were between 4-5 metres, 14% of the houses were 6 metres, and 7% have above 7 metres as setback. Results indicate almost half (48.5%) of the houses do not observe setback, which is an important requirement of the Building Plan Regulations as operational in Ogun State.

This implication of non-adherence to planning standards is evident in the ventilation and provision of ancillary services. See Plate 1 for a typical example of building not adhering to the planning standards.

Results on toilet types as revealed in Table 2 show that 26% of the toilets are bucket water latrine system, 7.5% uses bush system, 54% of the houses uses pit system while 12.5% of the houses uses water closet. This implies residents relied on old methods of disposing their sewage. With only 12.5% using modern

methods, the sanitation system of the community is threatened, hence not auguring well for public health.

Table 2 further revealed that 33% of the bathrooms were open roof system, 52.5% is enclosed roof system, 6% are of standard system without water, 2% has standard system with water. Concerning the kitchen facilities, 33% were of corridor system, 27.5% were local system, 25.5% makes use of general system kitchen, 8% were standard system with water.

Table 2: Housing Types and Facilities

Category	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Type of Housing	Bungalow (Face-to-Face)	101	50.5
	Storey Building	43	21.5
	Block of Flat	8	4.0
	Traditional Compound	34	17.0
	Others	14	7.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Building-Road Setback	Less than 3 Metres	97	48.5
	4-5 Metres	68	34.0
	6 Metres	28	14.0
	7 Metres	17	14.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Types of Toilets	Bucket Water Latrine	52	26.0
	Bush System	14	7.0
	Pit System	108	54.0
	Water Closet	25	12.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Types of Bathroom	Open Roof System	66	33.0
	Enclosed System	104	52.0
	Standard System Without Water	16	6.0
	Standard System With Water	4	2.0
	Others	14	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>	
Types of Kitchen	Corridor System	66	33.0
	Local System	54	27.0
	General Backyard System	52	26.0
	Standard System	16	8.0
	Others	14	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>	

It was also observed that the open drainage system at Ajeromi Oke-Oja is in poor condition due to decay in the construction material used. In addition, the drainage is grossly blocked by waste

materials, thus hindering the flow of waste water. This undoubtedly would serve as breeding ground for diseases vectors like mosquitoes, cockroaches and flies.



Plate 1: Poor building setbacks and poor drainage system at Ori Slab and Oke Oja

### ***Housing Materials***

Data gathered on buildings wall materials indicate that 56.5% were built of mud, 1% were of burnt brick and 39% sandcrete wall materials, thus supporting Ajeromi Oke-Oja as a traditional settlement. Also, 13% of the houses have cracked walls, 25% were at various dilapidating state, 50.5% have walls that are fair and 11.5% accounted for building with good walls (See Plates 2 and 3 show houses in dilapidated state with noticeable cracks on walls). Table 3

revealed that 65.5% of the roof materials were corrugated iron sheet, 23% were asbestos, 3% were aluminum, and 2.5% were of concrete slab. Again, shows that 47.5% of the roof materials were at various degree of rusty state, 8% were sagging, 28% were leaking, 0.5% were partly blown away, and 11.5% are good (see Plate 3 for condition of building roof). 56% buildings are in poor condition, 38.5% fair and 4.5% of the buildings are in good conditions.

Table 3: Housing Materials

Category	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Type of Wall Materials	Mud	113	56.5
	Burnt Brick	2	1.0
	Sandcrete	78	39.0
	Others	7	3.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Wall Conditions	Cracking	26	13.0
	Dilapidating	50	25.0
	Fair	101	50.5
	Good	23	11.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Types of Roof Materials	Corrugated Iron Sheet	131	65.5
	Asbestos	46	23.0
	Aluminium	6	3.0
	Concrete Slab	5	2.5
	Others	12	6.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Status of Roof	Rusty	95	47.5
	Sagging	16	8.0
	Leaking	56	28.0
	Partly Blown Off	10	0.5
	Appropriate	23	11.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Building Conditions	Poor	112	56.0
	Fair	77	38.5
	Good	9	4.5
	Very Good	2	1.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>



Plate 2: Wall conditions of a building, at the Ikorita axis



Plate 3: Roof condition of a building, at the Aderenle axis

**Housing Acquisition and Maintenance**

Table 4: Housing Acquisition and Maintenance

Category	Classifications	Frequency	Percentage
Property Acquisition	Inherited	93	46.5
	Purchased	27	13.5
	Rented	52	26.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Land Title	Certificate of Occupancy	11	5.5
	Deed of Occupancy	25	12.5
	Deed of Sub-lease	20	10
	Customary Right of Owner	41	20.5
	Purchase Receipt from Owner	103	51.5
	Allotment Letter	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Age of Building	20 Years and Below	10	5.0
	41-60 Years	57	28.5
	61-99 Years	94	47.0
	100 Years and Above	39	19.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Maintenance of Building	10 Year and Below	8	4.0
	11-20 Years	11	5.5
	21 Years and Above	40	20
	None of the Above	141	70.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>
Types of Maintenance	Partly Faced Lift	26	13.0
	Renovation	12	6.0
	Remodeling	18	9.0
	Total Re-design	3	1.5
	None of the Above	141	70.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4 shows analysis related to acquisition and maintenance of buildings. It revealed that 46.5% of respondents built on inherited land, 13.5% purchased the land, 26% rented the house and 14% were leased. The results indicate that majority of the housing owners inherited the property being a traditional settlement. Results on evidence of ownership revealed that respondents constituting 5.5% has certificate of occupancy, 12.5% has deed of occupancy, 10% has deed of sub-lease, 20.5% has customary right of ownership, and 51.5% obtained purchase receipt from owners. The results suggest that

property owners are migrants who bought their properties from indigenes. However, despite an indigenous settlement, it is evident that residents possess at least a document as an evidence of ownership.

The results on age of buildings revealed that, 5% were 20 years and below, 28.5% fell within the range of 41-60 years, 47% were 61-99 years and 19.5% were above 100 years. The predominance of old buildings as implies that the study area is an ancient settlement. With regards to building maintenance as presented in Table 4, 4% were maintained within the last 10 years, 5.5% between 11-20 years, 20% received

maintenance within 21 years and above, but 70.5% have not been maintained. Of the proportion of buildings maintained, results show that 13% were partly face lifted, 6% were renovated, 9% of the

buildings were remodeled, 1.5% were totally re-designed, while 70.5% of the buildings were not maintained. Plates 4 (a and b) shows existing state of water facility critical to housing.



Plate 4(a): Well water source along erosion channel, at the Ori Slab axis

Plate 4(b): Well water source at the Eyin Oja axis

Further investigations on possible association between inhabitants' socio-economic characteristics and their choice of housing condition (type) revealed that: about 80% of the males against 24.36% of females reside in the traditional house and/or bungalow face-to-face type of building which perhaps are of poor standard and lacks several needed facilities (see Plates 2, 3 and 4). In the case of ages, over 80% of respondents aged between 51 and 60 years live in the traditional house and/or bungalow face-to-face type of buildings, indicating that majority of the residents are not within the active age group. Proportion of the respondents that reside in traditional house and/or bungalow face-to-face type

of buildings among holders of different educational status were: no formal education (44.44%); primary education (88.89%); secondary education (71.43%); and tertiary education (23.33%). Proportion of respondents in the various income status revealed:  $\leq$  ₦15,999 (92.59%); ₦16,000-₦50,999 (98.75%); ₦51,000-₦99,999 (34.78%) and  $\geq$  ₦100,000 (0.00%). In the same vein, proportion of respondents belonging to the various occupational status that resides in traditional house and/or bungalow face-to-face type of buildings revealed that self-employed (29.85%); civil servants (28.00%); unemployed (77.18%); and students (95.24%) (Table 5).

Table 5: Socio-Economic Characteristics and Housing Type and Condition

Socio-Economic Variables	Traditional House & Bungalow face-to-face		Flat in a Block & Storey building		Total	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	59	75.64	19	24.36	78	100.0
Female	83	68.03	39	31.97	122	100.0
Total	142	71.00	58	29.00	200	100.0
<b>Age Distribution</b>						
≤ 20 years	7	70.00	3	30.00	10	100.0
21-40 years	16	28.57	40	71.43	56	100.0
41-50 years	35	79.55	9	20.45	44	100.0
51-60 years	64	86.49	10	13.51	74	100.0
≥ 61	5	31.25	11	68.75	16	
Total	127	63.50	73	36.50	200	100.0
<b>Educational Status</b>						
No Formal Education	24	44.44	30	55.56	54	100.0
Primary Education	16	88.89	2	11.11	18	100.0
Secondary Education	70	71.43	28	28.57	98	100.0
Tertiary Education	7	23.33	23	76.67	30	100.0
Total	117	58.50	83	41.50	200	100.0
<b>Income Level</b>						
≤ ₦15,000	50	92.59	4	7.41	54	100.0
₦16,000-₦50,000	79	98.75	1	1.25	80	100.0
₦51,000- ₦99,999	16	34.78	30	65.22	46	100.0
≥ ₦100,000	0	0.00	20	100.00	20	100.0
Total	145	72.50	55	27.50	200	100.0
<b>Occupational Status</b>						
Business/Self Employed	20	29.85	47	70.15	67	100.0
Civil/Public Servant	7	28.00	18	72.00	25	100.0
Student	35	77.78	10	22.22	45	100.0
Unemployed	60	95.24	3	4.76	63	100.0
Total	122	61.00	78	39.00	200	100.0

Table 6 portrays statistically significant variations in the observed impact of inhabitants' socio-economic variables on housing condition. The results of the chi-square tests conducted revealed that only the income level shows a significant impact on housing conditions ( $\chi^2 = 20.28$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p < 0.00$ ); observed apparent impact of other socio-

economic variables on the choice of housing type and condition was not statistically significant. This implies that the choice of inhabitants' housing type and condition was significantly influenced by the income level of respondents of Ajeromi Oke-Oja community in Ogun State, Nigeria (Table 6).

Table 6: Chi-Square Test

Variable		Socioeconomic Variables				
		Gender	Age Distribution	Income Level	Educational Status	Occupational Status
Choice of housing type and condition	$\chi^2$	2.12	7.63	20.28	8.85	10.63
	Df	1	4	3	3	3
	Significance	0.11	0.13	0.00	0.08	0.07

**Conclusion and Recommendation**

The study analysed housing conditions in slum area of Ajeromi Oke-Oja in Ogun State, Nigeria. Results showed that majority (67%) of the residents belong to low income group earning below ₦60,000 (\$150) monthly, which confirms residents low financial capacity to access desirable housing . Again, housing facilities such as bathrooms, toilets and kitchens are of low quality and therefore do not measure up to a standard expected of housing in this contemporary time. Results show that water closet are available in only 12.5% houses, standard bathroom system are present in 8% houses and standard kitchen system in only 8% are reflections of the existing housing situation in the study area. In addition, facilities including drainage system and water supply in a state of disrepair.

Furthermore, mud as wall construction material, is predominant accounting for about 57% of the buildings at Ajeromi Oke-Oja, though 39% of buildings used sandcrete block. About 66% of the buildings utilized corrugated iron sheets as roofs while 47.5% of building roofs were in a rusty state.

Majority (46.5%) inherited the building, residents possess various documents as proof of ownership. Certificate of occupancy that is most recognized by the Nigerian Law (Land

Use Act 1978) is possessed by only 5.5%. Moreover, housing maintenance was low with only about 29% of buildings received one form of maintenance since they were constructed. This is disturbing considering the age of buildings where 95% had been built at least 40 years ago.

Based on the findings, it is evident that the status of housing condition being experienced calls for immediate action to avert imminent health hazards. The study area should be designated as planning area requiring upgrade. Regeneration programme that would encompasses rehabilitation, renovation, economic revitalization and conservation is recommended. It is noteworthy that such programme should involve the residents extensively. While effective public enlightenment strategies are to be rigorously pursued, emphasis should be on educating the public on the need to inculcate maintenance culture not only about their buildings alone but their environment as a whole. This we believe will help achieve a healthy and habitable community.

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