

## Determinants of Households' Residential Districts' Preferences within Metropolitan City of Ibadan, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT** The study examines the determinants of households' residential district preferences within the metropolitan city of Ibadan. Variables considered as determinants, based on households' survey and used for appraisal in this study include quality of the environment in terms of good layout, availability of infrastructural facilities like good roads, water supply, quietness, peace and adequate security etc; socio-cultural activities; accessibility to place of work; mere chance- like occupying the only vacant place/ plot; security of land ownership; and affinity to place of birth / need to live close to relatives. The analysis is based on statistical estimation and conclusions are based on the results obtained from these estimations. Our findings indicate that different category of residential density district of the city has distinct set of households' residential districts preferences peculiar to it, hence broad generalizations for the whole city could be erroneous.

### INTRODUCTION

Residential areas have generated a lot of researches. Investigations have been carried out on their structure, form and composition (Herberts and Stephens 1960; Mabogunje 1962; Abiodun 1976; Aguda 1994; Sanni 1997). Various residential areas have been identified and efforts have been made to explain the level of provision of social facilities and amenities in various residential density areas (Olatubara 1994; Sanni 1983). Various scholars have also used level of living to study residential areas of many African cities (Abiodun and Boateng, 1987; Ogunjumo and Olatubara 1997). From empirical studies, diverse reasons have been proposed to explain why residents prefer some residential districts to the others. For instance, while Cervero and Duncan (2002), Handy (1996), Schwanen and Mokhtarian (2003), Sermons and Seredich (2001), and Srinivasan and Ferreira (2001) found strong relationships between individual's travel pattern and residential location preference, (Kauko 2006) identified 'the functionality and spaciousness of the house itself' as the most significant determinant. Croft (2003), on the other hand, identified the rating of existing facilities, especially, schools for the children. In his opinion, 'where particular areas or schools gain poor reputations (for any reason), attracting a mix of pupils becomes more difficult. If residential areas are avoided because of the reputation of

their schools, demand amongst families for the available residential space lowers...'.

A household's decision to choose a particular residential district could be due to socio-economic, cultural, administrative or purely psychological factors (See Ogunjumo and Olatubara 1997). Urban residential location models indicate that the determinants of households' choice of residence include income of the household making the choice, family size, population density, rent and transport cost (Alonso 1964; Mirth 1969). Empirical studies have also shown the influence of workplace on residential location (Quingley 1985; Blackey and Follain 1987). Berry and Rees (1969, cited in Ogunjumo and Olatubara 1997) believe that the household's position in social space affects its choice of dwelling location and housing space. The general tendency of the poor people to live near the Central Business District (CBD) while the rich stay at the outskirts of the city has also been well documented. Also well documented in the literature is the general tendency of people to segregate based on income. The spatial segregation based on income has been shown not to be very significant in Africa. For instance findings of Abiodun (1990) have shown that some particular or ethnic groups concentrate in certain parts of Nigerian cities. Studies also document that the rich and the poor co-exist in many parts of Nigerian cities. Lee (1975) is of the opinion that often times, a migrant's destination (within

the city) is chosen before decision to move is made at all. Wilson (1987) introduced 'sorting' concept to explain the tendency of people to segregate in neighbourhoods, based on either race social or economic class. In his opinion, in choosing residential district, every individual or household 'sorts' the whole community for the residential district that suits his or her racial, social or economic status. Wilson (1987) then developed a 'Sorting Model' to measure the extent to which neighbourhood segregations are due to sorting. Bruch (2004) found that sorting process explains much of the racial and economic segregations in the neighbourhoods of Los Angeles County.

Demko and Briggs (1971) observed that for an individual seeking residential allocation, his residential area evaluation starts with cognition when people identify the salient features of residential areas. This is followed by preference formation when the perceived level of salient characteristics are weighed and combined into preference rating that describes the overall desirability of each location.

Though preference ratings guide residential choice, personal and financial considerations often preclude selection of the preferred location (Preston, 1982). Longley and Wrigley (1984) attempted to apply residential preference measurement to incorporate district preference and indifferent zones with seating preferences. Olatubara (1994) used residential preference factor to investigate residential location choice. He used stepwise multiple regression analysis to investigate the significance of a number of socio-economic and environmental variables such as age of respondent, sex, housing quality, income, and some distant variables. He discovered that all these variables only explained 15.83 per cent, implying that these variables are low predictors of residential district preference factor. He therefore concluded that preference cannot be adequately externally determined and direct questions of actual preference of a household therefore become imperative.

In most of these studies, the whole city is studied as a unit and findings are generalized for the whole city. This approach has the tendency of glossing over sectional peculiarities within the city, which could be of great interest to researchers on human environment. For instance, while previous studies have established high degree of correlation between factors like income, occupation status, level of education of the head of the head of households and quality of the

residential area, concrete explanations have not been offered for the determinants of households' residential districts preferences in Nigerian cities.

This present study attempts to use direct questions of actual preferences of a household to identify and analyse the determinants of households' residential districts' preferences in Ibadan metropolitan region and similar urban centres.

The working hypothesis of this research is that each category of residential density district of a city has distinct set of determinants of households' residential district preferences peculiar to it

## METHODOLOGY

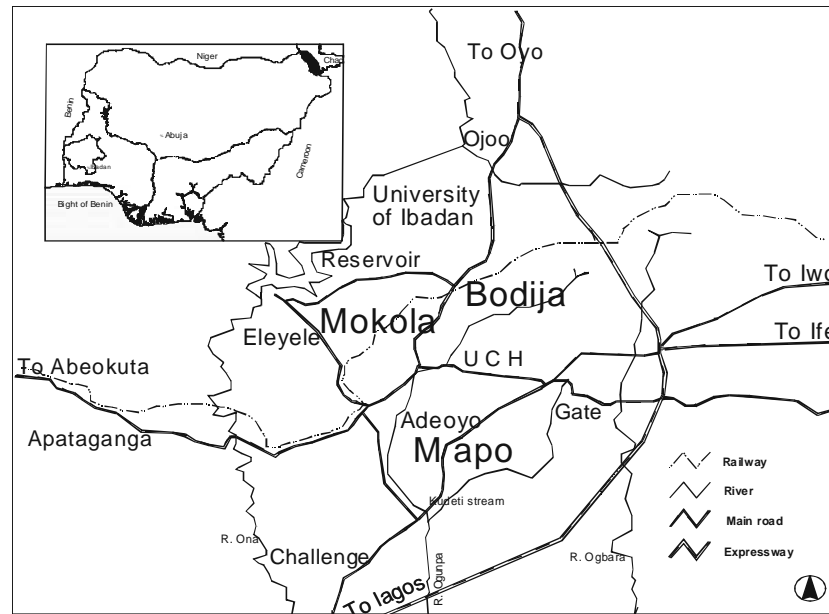
In carrying out this study, residential areas of the city of Ibadan were classified and divided into three distinct density zones – low, medium and high. An area was randomly selected to represent each residential density zone. Areas chosen were Ogunmola-Oranyan-Oke Dada-Mapo area of the traditional core of Ibadan (tagged 'Mapo' in this article), Mokola, and Bodija Estate to represent high, medium and low-density areas respectively (Fig. 1).

In each area, a 'block' comprising between 50 and 100 houses was randomly chosen to represent the area. A one hundred percent (100%) sample of buildings in each 'block' was then carried out. One household was sampled per building. Household

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This result represents a basis to further examine how households choose their residential districts in the city. It is necessary to identify the factors which households claim for locating at particular residential districts (Table 1).

In Ibadan metropolis, ethnicity as a socio-economic variable seems to be very significant in affecting a household's neighbourhood preference, in particular as regards their perception of neighbourhood safety. The perception of neighbourhood safety varies between the indigenes (natives of Ibadan) and migrants (non-indigenes of Ibadan). A close look at table 2 reveals that for migrants their perception of safety is a crucial determinant of where they choose to live. Hence they make up the greatest percentage (45%) of those who



**Fig. 1. The site of Ibadan city**  
(Source: Akinyemi, 2000)

choose to live in the residential neighbourhood they perceive as always safe. On the other hand, indigenes are residing more in Mapo (which they

perceive as always safe) than any other neighbourhood probably because they were born and bred in this inner city core.

**Table 1: Households' Residential District Location Factors**

Location factor	Residential Districts						Total	
	Bodija		Mokola		Mapo		No	%
	No	%	No	%	No	%		
Well planned area/ quietness/ Peaceful and Safe/ Well organized	33	86.8	16	35.6	7	9.0	56	35
Free Accommodation/Residing in family House/close to family compound/ grew up in the district	1	2.6	8	17.8	47	60.2	56	35
Only vacant place/plot/free plot to build on	0	0	14	31.1	13	16.6	27	16.5
Close to work place	0	0	7	15.5	10	12.8	17	11
Security of land ownership	4	10.6	0	0	0	0	4	2
Cheap accommodation	0	0	0	0	1	1.3	1	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (1999)

**Table 2: Neighbourhood safety by ethnicity**

Perceived safety	Mapo		Bodija		Mokola		Total	
	Migrant	Indigene	Migrant	Indigene	Migrant	Indigene	Migrant	Indigene
Always safe	7(6%)	32 (29%)	26 (24%)	5(5%)	38 (35%)	2(2%)	71(45%)	39(25%)
Daytime Only	0	12 (63%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	3 (16%)	2 (11%)	4 (3%)	15 (10%)
Not safe	1(4%)	19 (66%)	3(10%)	5(17%)	0	1(4%)	4(3%)	25(16%)

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (1999)

### Overview of the City of Ibadan

From table 1, the most important determinants of residential district preferences within Ibadan metropolitan city are factors that deal with the quality of the environment (35%) and those that are socio-cultural in nature (35%). Among factors that deal with quality of the environment, such reasons as well-planned area with necessary infrastructural facilities such as good roads, water supply etc that make a place conducive for living, were highly regarded. Other factors such as quietness, peaceful environment and being well organized in addition to adequate security were part of this consideration. Among socio-cultural factors, such reasons as being accommodated free or in the family compound were highly regarded. Other factors such as closeness to family compound or growing up in the district were part of this consideration.

The next major determinant of households' residential district preferences within Ibadan metropolitan city is, in reality, not a free factor. About seventeen percent (17%) of the households simply occupy where a vacancy existed. This constrained locational factor is especially significant where the choice of residence is limited as is currently the case in Ibadan, Lagos, Port Harcourt, Warri and few other state capitals. It is however very unlikely that households would be contented with such residences, which are transitional. This implies that households would move at the next available time. Other factors accounting for less than 14% given for choosing residential areas in metropolitan city of Ibadan are closeness to work place (11%), security of land ownership (2%) and cheap accommodation (0.5%).

### Comparative Analysis of Residential Districts

As stated earlier, the three residential density zones in Ibadan are Bodija (low density), Mokola (medium density), and Mapo (high density). The first, Bodija, is a well-planned, well-laid-out and well-maintained medium-/high-income residential neighbourhood. Mokola, on its part, is a first generation suburb of Ibadan. Recently up-graded by a World-Bank Assisted Project, the neighbourhood is, to a reasonable extent, moderately maintained. The third neighbourhood, Mapo, in the traditional core of Ibadan, is not planned and neglected.

When these residential districts are analysed separately, peculiar and distinct emphasis on different factors are brought to light (Table 1). From Table 1, great differences appear in the determinants of households' preferences for different residential density districts. This is most glaring when Bodija and Mapo are compared and contrasted. For instance, in Bodija, the most important determinant, accounting for 86.8% of households' choice of this district, deals with environmental quality. Security of land ownership accounts for 10.6 percent of households' choice of this district. The last factor considered here is socio-cultural (2.6%). On the other hand, socio-cultural factors are the most important determinant of households' residential district preferences in Mapo, and accounts for as high as 60.2 percent. Trailing second (17%) is 'chance' factor where households simply occupy where a vacancy existed. Other factors listed in this district, in descending order of importance, are closeness to work place (13%), environmental quality (9%), and cheap accommodation (1.3%). The position of determinants of households' residential district preferences for Mokola is somehow between the extreme polarizations displayed by Bodija and Mapo.

In Mokola, environmental quality still maintains a narrow lead (35.6%) over 'chance' factors (31.1%). Other important factors in this neighbourhood are cultural factors (17.8%) and nearness to work (15.5%). It is worthy of note that the study reveals that need to be close to place of work does not play a prominent role in choice of residential district in the city of Ibadan. Dispersed nature of business and employment opportunities in different nodes in the city could be responsible for this. Another factor could be the relative ease of moving through the city.

To check whether the tendency observed above is significant or accidental, a Chi-Square ( $\chi^2$ ) test was conducted on the results obtained from the households in table 1 (See Appendix). Since the computed  $\chi^2$  (223.08) is greater than the table value (21.026), the study shows that broad generalizations of determinants of households' residential district preferences could not be done for the whole city, as each category of residential district has distinct and peculiar set of determinants of households' residential district preferences.

## CONCLUSIONS

This article has investigated the determinants of households' residential district preferences within an urban area. The study has revealed that much of the residential districts choice decisions in the city by owe much to sorting, as individuals and families sort out the districts that best suit their social and or economic class. This is more apparent since the research has revealed that each category of residential density district of the city has distinct and peculiar arrangement of determinants of residential district preferences and that broad generalizations of these determinants could not be done for the whole city. It is also revealed the high esteem in which environmental quality and socio-cultural factors are held among households.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings, the following specific recommendations are made:

- Efforts should be made to bring about significant improvement in the environmental quality of residential areas, especially in the traditional and other obsolete parts of the city.
- Since most of the new development will take place at the outskirts of the city, concerted efforts should be made to prepare comprehensive plans for the whole city-region that will help prevent piece-meal approach that is at present in vogue, and make adequate provision for circulation and other facilities and services in the whole region.

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## APPENDIX

In carrying out the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test, the following hypotheses were proposed:

- $H_0$ : Determinants of households' residential district preferences are uniform throughout the city.
- $H_1$ : Each category of residential density district has distinct set of determinants of house-holds' residential district preferences peculiar to it.

## Decision Rule

Accept  $H_0$  if computed  $\chi^2$  is less than the table value or reject  $H_0$  if computed  $\chi^2$  is greater than the table value. The calculated value of  $\chi^2 = 223.08$  At 0.05 level of significance and degree of freedom of 12, table value of  $\chi^2 = 21.026$

Since computed  $\chi^2$  (223.08) is greater than the table value (21.026), Reject  $H_0$