



The Impacts of Urban Planning Failures on Peri-urban Development in Port Harcourt, Nigeria

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Abstract Understanding why planning fails is one of the major challenges facing the planning profession in Africa and although there are no laid out methods for assessing planning failure, where failures exist, circumstances are there to tell how it occurred and the reason why. Although many planning scholars have focused more attention on developing a body of theory about why planning fails, there are still numerous cases of planning failure around us and this is what the study is aimed at unearthing. This study attempts an assessment of planning failure in the Port Harcourt city region by looking into the state of affairs of four peri-urban settlements. To these ends, this study was undertaken with the following study objectives; (i) Identify the factors responsible for planning failure within the peri-urban areas of the Port Harcourt City. (ii) Assess the efficacy of existing regulatory policies and institutions regarding land management in Port Harcourt. The research design utilized was the Concurrent Triangulation Multisite Mixed Methods Design. This approach involves collecting quantitative and qualitative data to corroborate findings. Data was collected via questionnaire administration and interviews with planning agencies and key informants from the peri-urban settlement (Land agents). In all, a total of 304 questionnaires were administered to respondents and the households were selected using systematic probability sampling while settlements were selected using purposive sampling. Findings suggest that planning failure occurred because of the absence of plans to regulate peri-urban development and the inefficiency of planning agencies in the city.

Keywords Settlements, housing development, policy, development control, planning agencies

Introduction

Most attempts to implement national urban policies in developing countries have failed. The causes of failure have been many (infeasible goals, poor implementation, poorly designed policies) but the most difficult problem has been the isolation of national urban policy from national economic planning and from the overall context of macroeconomic and sectoral policies [1]. National policy should not be equated with slowing down urbanization; if so, it will be ineffective in early developing countries and unnecessary in late developing and developed countries. It should not be defined largely as a primary problem, because the issue is not whether the primate city is too big but rather how primate city growth will be managed [1]. The resource costs of urbanization absorb a very high proportion of the available investment pool, but many of the policy implications are non-spatial (reducing standards, promoting savings) rather than spatial (changing the pattern of urbanization). Urban development should be treated as a horizontal slice cutting across almost all sectors rather than as a vertical sector in itself. This may require institutional reorganization at the central government level. Policy innovations should aim for much closer integration between urban development policy and national development planning and give less emphasis to independently conceived spatial policy [1].



Laidback planning regulation and rapid housing development on the fringes of some regional cities has formed a peri-urban planning "time bomb" [2]. This is due to the failure of governments in regulating regional and rural development. In addition, housing on the outskirts of growth areas is being pushed further away from the main city and existing public transport which creates a mosaic of subdivided farmland that poses as threat to food production. The challenge is that in the near future, if nothing is done to remedy the situation,

According to Buxton, the urban fringes will lose their rural landscape to a fragmented network of residential settlements due urban encroachment [2]. Studies undertaken in Australia also submit that the long-standing model of rezoning land for single-use, detached, low density housing is unsustainable. It is further suggested that governments should plan for denser and more diverse housing inside municipal boundaries to cater for growth. Stricter controls on the size of rural land for the construction of dwellings were also suggested, as people buying small land subdivisions on fertile land for residential development, threatens agricultural production, water quality and biodiversity. In this scenario, towns could accommodate more than enough houses to meet overall demand without extending to develop Greenfield fringe lands [2].

Another challenge with developing dwelling areas on urban fringes according to King is that people buying cheaper houses on urban fringes face unexpected costs due to poor access to infrastructure, public transport, and high fuel costs, which are likely to constitute half the weekly expenditure for low-income earners [2]. There is a social, economic and moral obligation to make sure communities are genuinely provided for. This will be a significant issue for the person, but also a cost for government and to society if the infrastructure is not there for people in need [2].

The question that lies before urban planners today is: what can be learnt from past planning experience? What should we do to be more efficient in implementing planning objectives?

Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is to examine the policies and strategies for managing growth within the peri-urban areas of Greater Port Harcourt City with a view to suggesting a framework for avoiding planning failure.

To achieve the aim of the study, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. Identify the factors responsible for planning failure within the peri-urban areas of the Port Harcourt City
- ii. Assess the efficacy of existing regulatory policies and institutions regarding land management in Port Harcourt.

Background information about the Study Area - Port Harcourt

Port Harcourt is the administrative and commercial capital of Oil rich Rivers State. It is a city with a lot of prospects for business activities and it also has a properly networked circulation system which has caused it to become known as a hub for business activities in the Niger Delta region and as one of the core industrial metropolitan regions in the nation. Due to the fact that it presents a lot of prospects for enterprising individuals from various parts of the nation, and also for the reason that there has been rapid migration into the city [3]. The Rivers State ministry for budget and planning situates the city's annual growth rate at over 5 percent.

The city started originally as a colonial administrative centre in 1913 covering an area of about 30,000 acres of land, although the area suitable for development was just about 13,000 acres in size. Since then, the city has witnessed colossal growth spatially growing further than its former border. The early development of the city was towards the southern hinge flanked by an area of mangrove however due to the unavailability of land for expansion in the south upcoming developers have concentrated their developmental activities in the direction of the northern hub which has a vast array of arable land [3]. Much of the growth taking place in the Northern axis is occurring at the periphery as indigenous rural communities are gradually being transformed in an uncoordinated manner to become part of the main city. Currently, The Port Harcourt metropolis covers an area of over 180,000 hectares. The city grew from a small population of 231, 632 in 1973 to a size of about 2 million at present [4]. This enormous increase in population is the foundation for the numerous challenges the city is facing today, making it one of the most congested metropolitan regions in the nation. The city has also been



areas of Port Harcourt have been prone to haphazard development and this is due purely to the fact that there are no plans in place to regulate what people do on land and this has resulted in some areas being exposed to flooding challenges and poor waste management practices [10].

Peri-Urban Concept

There is a serious challenge with theorising; the concept of peri-urban because it is beset with conceptual difficulties. In fact, many definitions that have been put forth in regard to defining the term peri-urban have emanated from different professionals with diverse backgrounds such as “planners, geographers, sociologists, economic development specialists, natural resource managers and agriculturalists” [11].

The term ‘peri-urban’ according to [12], has been utilized in defining ‘a place, concept or process’. ‘Peri-urban’ thus refers to “the urban fringe and the geographic edge of cities as a place; as a concept, it refers to an interface between rural and urban activities, institutions and perspectives” [11].

In defining peri-urbanization stated that; “it is a process whereby rural areas situated on the periphery of recognized municipalities transform progressively to become more urban in nature”. He further stated that “the peri-urban area is an area that is characterized by changes in neighbourhood economic/employment structures and a movement from an agrarian status to a more modern status with increased manufacturing accompanied by tremendous increase population and immigration, coupled with growing property rates in combination with a mix of land uses” [13].

Consequences of Unplanned and Unregulated Peri-Urbanisation as Identified by the PLUREL Project

On the basis of the outcomes obtained from the PLUREL (Peri-urban Land Use Relationship) projects, the most pressing negative externalities identified to result from peri-urbanisation are:

1. Rapid exploitation of land resources, loss of highly-productive farming land
2. Damage of fragile ecosystems and the fragmentation of the land
3. Reduction of open space, increase in travel time to alluring recreational regions, and undesirable ways of life
4. Increased reliance on individual vehicle, longer driving distances and travel time, more carbon emissions and air contamination
5. The rot of downtown neighbourhoods; social isolation and greater barrier between the rich and poor ranges [14].

In spite of the negative consequences, Nilsson also identified the following positive effects of peri-urbanisation, and they include:

1. Actualization of living preferences of the populace
2. Attractive and competitive urban environments under smart growth
3. Increased proximity for consumers to local food sources
4. More economic development for rural communities

Methodology

Research Methodology

Research Design

This section describes the major procedures that were used in carrying out the research.

This study is a multi-site mixed method case study that employed a Concurrent Triangulation Mixed-Method design. Using a multisite mixed methods approach, the study appraised four selected peri-urban settlements in the Port Harcourt Metropolitan region.

A Multisite Mixed Methods Approach

“a multi-site case study is a study that examines a distinct, present-day occurrence that is common to two or more naturalistic settings” [15].

A multisite mixed methods study “enables a researcher to mix or combine qualitative and quantitative research philosophies/paradigms, as well as methodologies, methods, techniques, approaches, concepts, and or language



into a single study with a view to achieving breadth and depth of understanding, and corroboration of findings” [16].

Concurrent Triangulation Mixed Methods Design

In this design, the quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same stage, that is, concurrently; however, emphasis was placed on the qualitative aspect. This method endeavours to devise, or clarify completely, the wealth and intricacy of human actions by learning about it from more than one perspective [17]. It also provides a more elaborate understanding of the ‘phenomenon of interest’ and this helps a researcher to gain a higher level of confidence in the conclusions generated by a study [18].

Population and Sampling

The study population has to do with the aggregation of elements from which the sample is drawn, while the sampling frame is the actual list of population elements from which a sample is selected. For this research, the target population includes residents from the four peri-urban settlements of the study area Rumuekini, Ozuoba, Atali and Ozuoba settlements. These four peri-urban settlements were selected purposively because it was not be feasible to study all peri-urban settlements, yet effectively answer the research questions.

Process of selection

Many multisite case studies are confronted with the issue of deciding how to select study sites (peri-urban settlements) and recognizing appropriate criterion for deciding on study sites. In utilizing a mixed methods approach for site selection, consideration was given to several factors that were considered to be important for the study. The peri-urban settlements for the study were selected purposively based on the following criteria;

- i. Size of peri-urban settlement
- ii. Settlement pattern
- iii. Distance from the city centre, location (vis-à-vis existing road networks, natural resource/feature).
- iv. Another reason for selecting these settlements is because they fall outside the current development corridor of Greater Port Harcourt

In the site selection plan, the study aimed for variation across sites in terms of settlement characteristics [19]. The study includes peri-urban settlements from a variety of situations that are important for understanding the factors responsible for changes in these settlements. Thus, our sample included peri-urban settlements that were varied across several relevant factors as mentioned in the selection criteria.

The final sample size of four settlements selected for the study is in line with the number recommended for multisite, mixed method case studies (4-12 sites) [20]. Pettigrew (1990) as cited in [20] recommended identifying “polar sites” for a multi-site mixed methods study, whereby a researcher selects cases that demonstrate high and low performance on the indicators of interest.

Sample Size

Cochran Sample size determination formula was used to determine the sample size and the following results were obtained.

Table 1: Summary of samples per settlements

S/N	Settlement	Population in 2002	Projected population 2016	No. of households	Sample size
1.	Rumuekini	6943	10502	1750	91
2.	Eliozu	1682	2544	424	78
3.	Atali	3318	6330	1,055	88
4	Ozuoba	10134	15329	2,190	92
	Total	16128	34705	5419	349

Source: Field Survey, September 2016



Sampling Procedure

First of all, the streets in each of the settlements under study were listed and selected using purposive sampling. After all the streets were listed, five (5) streets were identified and selected from each of the four peri-urban settlements using the stated technique.

After the streets to be surveyed were selected, the buildings in each street were listed.

Listing entails obtaining the following attributes for each building

- i. Numbering the buildings
- ii. Using a small sample of the buildings, the average number of households per building was determined.
- iii. Using a small sample of dwelling units, determine the number of persons per household
- iv. Selection of buildings to be studied, using the Systematic random sampling technique.

Data Source and Instrumentation

Two sources of data; Primary and Secondary were used in the study. Primary sources include;

- i. Key informants interviews
- ii. Questionnaires (structured and unstructured)
- iii. Qualitative survey/structured direct observation
- iv. Photographs
- v. Secondary sources include;
- vi. Secondary examination of past research data/Official documents

Key Informants interview

This study integrated key informant interviews of individuals tasked with the responsibility for physical planning in Rivers State and of managing urban development. This included; the directors of the development control Units in the Ministry of Urban Development and Physical Planning and the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority, a Registered Town Planner in the Plan Approval units of the Ministry and the Authority, and local land agents for the four settlements selected as study sites. The main reason for engaging key informants in this mixed methods study is because key informant interviews are qualitative in-depth interviews that help in collecting important information from a variety of respondents; who have first-hand information about issues in a community under study. In other words, engagement of community experts, with their in-depth knowledge and understanding, can provide valuable insight on issues and the character of problems and also give suggestions that will provide answers to questions or pressing issues. The major technique used in this study for the interview of key informants was Face-to-Face Interviews.

Response Rate

Non-response occurred in data collection during the administration of questionnaires for households because a total of three hundred and forty nine questionnaires (349) were initially sent to residents of peri-urban settlements around Port Harcourt. However, of these, forty-five (45) were considered non-response because they were either partially completed, with major sections black or not returned at all. Therefore, three hundred and four (304) questionnaires were considered to be valid for this study because they were considered useable. With a total of 304 questionnaires returned and useable out of 349, the response rate was 87.11%. Retrieval rate by settlement: Rumuekini – 91.2%, Elioazu – 79.5%, Atali – 79.6%, and Ozuoba – 96.7%

Discussion of Findings

Table 2: Desirability of Sprawl

Responses		Frequency	Percentage
Valid N=304	Yes	95	31.3
	No	209	68.8
Total		304	100.0

Source: Field Survey, December 2016



Results related to whether respondents are satisfied with the outward spread of Port Harcourt into neighbouring unplanned communities show that majority; approximately 69% are not satisfied with the spread while 31% are.

Perception of Sprawl

Referring to Table 2, we can see that 69% of the respondents reported that the sprawling of Port Harcourt into unplanned neighbouring settlements was not considered a good thing. This was because it was accompanied by lots of other problems such as flooding and waste management problems and poor service/infrastructure provision since there are no plans to guide development. However, due to a mix of other factors such as cheap rent, ease of access to land and the ability to own personal property, they had to put up with the negative challenges. Others reported that the major reason why they don't really complain was because these settlements afforded them proximity to their place of work and worship (from open ended questions).

Also, 67% of the respondents that live in rented property reported that they paid an annual rental value which is relatively cheap when compared to other parts of the city. This goes further to strengthen the reason why a majority of the respondents had to cope with the negative consequences of living in unplanned peri-urban settlements. Also, 39% of the respondents reported that they do not have a development permit as shown in Figure 2 which indicates that the control of new developments in these settlements are laid-back hence the attraction of people into the regions and the result is that it will lead to planning failure since there are not enough facilities to accommodate the population influx into these settlements.

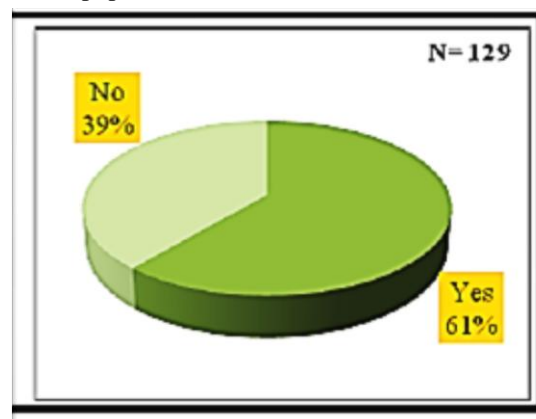


Figure 2: Development Permit Source: Field Survey, September 2016

Facilities and Services

As we can see from Table 3, a majority of the respondents sampled reported that they had access to electricity (76.3%) while the rest (23.7%) reported that they do not have access to electricity and most of the residents without access to public power supply are those that reside mainly in Rumuekini and Ozuoba which is also an indication of planning failure. Only 2.3% claimed they had access to public water supply and it came from a segment of those who reside in Atali which also supports the idea of planning failure.

Table 3: Facilities and Services

RESPONSES		ELECTRICITY		PIPE-BORNE WATER	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Valid	Yes	232	76.3	7	2.3
	No	72	23.7	297	97.7
Total		304	100.0	304	100.0

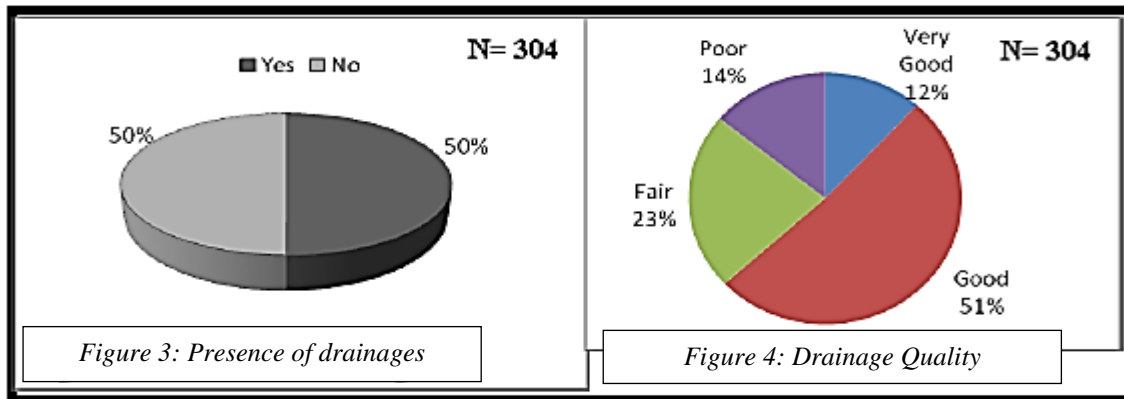
Source: Field Survey, September 2016



Settlement Characteristics

Drainage

Referring to figure 3, we can see that only 50% of the streets sampled have drainages, the other 50% did not. This has serious implication especially as it relates to flooding since this is a region that experiences a lot of rainfall. It will also have a negative impact on the durability of any road being constructed in these areas, in that this will reduce the life span of the roads because they will be prone to erosion. While Figure 4 shows that amongst the streets that have drainages, 12% were in very good state while 51 %t were considered to be in good state. Of the remaining 37 %, those that were fairly good make up 23% and those in poor state, 14%. Results from interviews also provided more insight into this as some of those interviewed reported slight flooding (flood risk) due to poorly maintained roads with no drainages or lack of proper drainage systems to deal with excess run off when it rains. Also, in some of the neighbourhoods sampled, respondents reported that it was difficult to access their homes or the main road during heavy.



Accessibility

Figure 5 show that less than 50% of roads were in good working condition (good-28% and very good-13.5%) while those that were below average constitute 59% of the roads in the area.

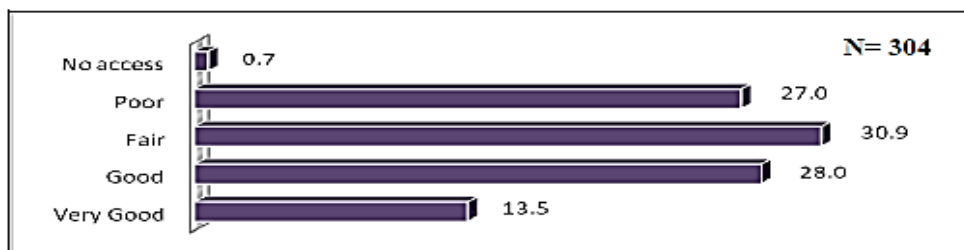


Figure 5: Road Conditions (Source: Field Survey, September 2016)

Perception of settlement quality

On the basis of the results from figure 6, it is clear that most of the respondents perceive of their surrounding as being conducive for them, irrespective of the non-availability of some of the basic facilities required to live well.

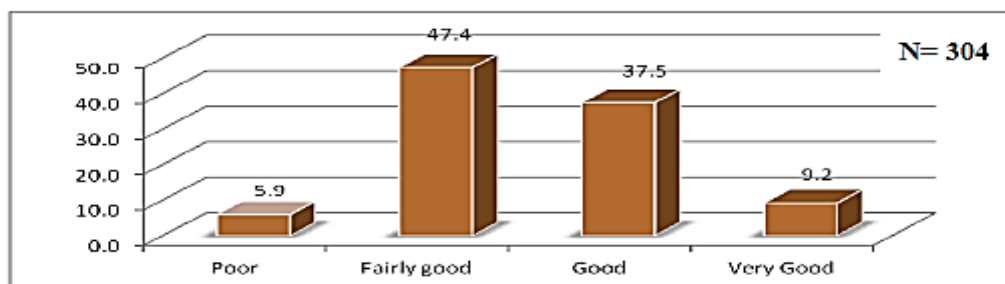


Figure 6: Perception of settlement Quality (Source: Field Survey, September 2016)



Assessment of Regulatory Policies, Development Controls and Land Management Practices

In answering the question: How efficient are the existing regulatory policies and institutions in regulating land management in Port Harcourt?

The following areas were appraised.

Building Permits/Approval

Respondents (Owner Occupiers) when asked if they possessed building permits or approval gave the following responses. Majority, 61% reported that they had while 39% reported that they did not (see Fig. 2). However, there is still an indication of poor development control because 39% is not a small proportion, considering the number of buildings that would have been developed by this number of respondents. Of those who reported that they possessed a development permit, a majority, 44% said it took them between 1-2 years for the process to be completed while 29% reported that it took a period between 3 months and a year to complete theirs. Only 27% reported that their development permit was issued within a period of less than three months. These developers that reported that their development permit was issued within a period less than three months would likely be those whose buildings were completed a long time ago. The reason being, that the administrative procedures and bottlenecks in the Planning Agencies in Port Harcourt make it practically impossible to obtain permits within a short-term period. The consequence of this is that many developers simply ignore the process and go ahead to build and this has created a high intensity of unregulated buildings around the periphery of the city today. Plate 1 supports this assertion and highlights the absence of planning in the peri-urban settlements.

Awareness of Building Control Measures

Results presented in figure 8 show that a majority, (75%) reported that they were aware of building control measures while 25% reported that they were not aware. Those that were not aware attributed it to low public awareness on development control issues by the planning agencies. This shows that existing policy campaigns have not had impacts on the developers in the peri-urban settlements.



Plate 1: Building Constructed without Setbacks at Rumuekini

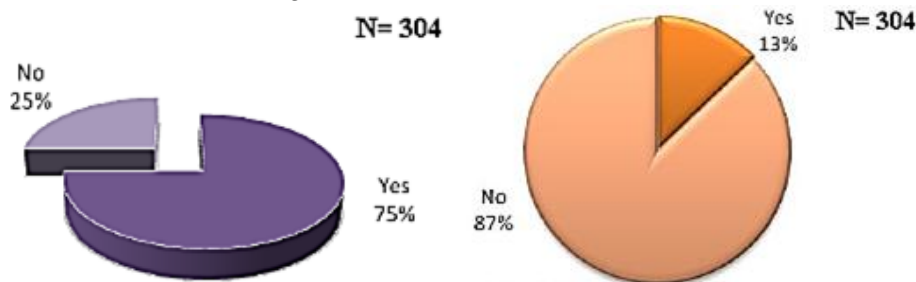


Figure 7: Awareness of Building Control Measures Figure 8: Satisfaction with Development Control Activities



Residents Satisfaction with Development Control activities

The study shows that only 13% of the respondents were satisfied with development control activities around their neighbourhoods. Most (87%) reported that they were not satisfied and this indicates a poor perception of most respondents towards development control in the study areas.

Management of New Developments

The study showed that most respondents (82.9%) perceived the actions of planning agencies in regards to the management of new developments as being reactive, while 7.2% perceived them to be pro-active. The remaining 9.9% reported that they had no idea (Table 4).

Respondents, who said actions towards managing new developments in Port Harcourt, are reactive pointed out the following reasons; government lack of interest in the state of the surroundings of peri-urban neighbourhoods; this they attributed to the fact that the government only intervenes when structures have been wrongly erected and completed (in other words, actions are only taken after a development has posed threat to lives and the environment). Others attributed it to the fact that so many quacks are engaged to do the work of development agencies.

Table 4: Management of New Developments

		Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Valid	Proactive	22	7.2	7.2
	Reactive	252	82.9	90.1
	No idea	30	9.9	100.0
	Total	304	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, September 2016

ted them average. Only 1.6% rated them high. This indicates that their impacts are not felt by residents of peri-urban settlements. Respondents when asked to give reasons for the low rating accorded agencies responsible for development control within the study area, majority (98.4%) gave the following reasons; lack of awareness of policies/requirements for controlling development in the area (Fig. 10). Others indicated the problem of standards not being followed in the way most houses are set up because proper town planning codes and practices are not enforced, especially where the government and the affluent are involved; lack of uniform width for roads which they also attributed to bad development control. The respondents reinforced their opinion by stating that officers of the planning authorities do not visit their neighbourhoods, except when people report activities which are believed to create nuisance in the area. In other word, they allow land developers to erect structures without proper supervision and planning even when this is very necessary in newly developing areas. This is evident in the fact that too many buildings lack proper setbacks and do not even fall within building lines (Plate 3 further illustrates this).

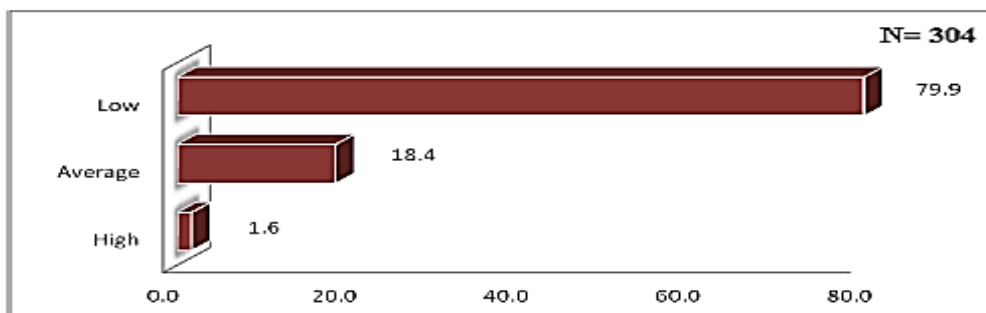


Figure 10: Rating of Planning Agencies

(Source: Field Survey, September 2016)



Comments

The comments are open ended sections in the survey instrument where respondents were asked to express their opinion about issues as it related to the failure of planning. This part was analyzed by the researcher who went through all the comments with the aim of pulling together relevant information through the technique of textual analysis. The discussions below will be based on the relevant points that were selected.

Factors responsible for unauthorized housing development in the peri-urban settlements

Respondents when asked why they think there are numerous unauthorized housing development in peri-urban settlements gave the following responses; the low level of awareness of the general public with respect to Town Planning administration and development control and management guidelines, the belief that the law can be circumvent when developing property, the rising demand for housing due to population explosion, corruption in the Town Planning system and lack of enforcement of Town Planning laws, high property development bills, Non-enforcement of the Rivers State Planning law, difficulty in obtaining C of O- (Delay in the issuing of C of O and building permits due to bureaucratic bottle necks), double standard and lack of full support by the government, Lack of urban planners and professionalism in city planning in the government service, the failure on the part of government/planning agencies to carry out their work well and a lack of development monitoring.

Stakeholders in Development Control Agencies

The interviews with various stakeholders in the Ministry of Urban Development and Physical Planning and the Greater Port Harcourt City Development Authority provided insights into the challenges faced by the agencies in the performance of their duties. Both agencies highlighted that they were grossly understaffed. They also stated that they were ill-equipped and poor funding, lacked proper legal backing (the Rivers State Physical Planning Law No. 6 of 2003) has not been implemented, too much bureaucracy in the plan approval process, non-compliance from developers and hostilities towards development control officers, already haphazardly built up communities, insecurity, and community interference with enforcement. In response to how the situation can be improved, the town planning officers interviewed stated partnership with communities in the development of comprehensive neighbourhood layout plan design to guide future development, engagement of whistle blowers, enforcement of the requirements of the Rivers State physical planning law, effective public enlightenment of building codes, accumulation of up-to-date data on developed and undeveloped properties on the city's periphery, re-zoning of the land at the periphery and the use of advanced cadastral techniques. An analysis of the interview results obtained from the stakeholders of the development control agencies made it clear the weak development control activities at the peri-urban areas of the city in not just a function of the unwillingness of the planning bodies to perform their functions but that of being incapable because they were not really equipped to carry out their duties/functions. It also made it clear that the agencies are not well funded and that they even lacked the man power to regulate development activities with both agencies combined having less than fifty professional to monitor and regulate physical developments in the entire state. For there not to be planning failure, these agencies need to be properly restructured and re-oriented towards efficiency.

Policy Issues

In the process of assessing the efficiency of existing policies in managing the emergence of developments within the peri-urban areas in Port Harcourt, the Rivers State Physical Planning Development Law No 6. of 2003 and the Land Use Act of 1978 were carefully examined.

Provisions of the Law - Development Control provisions in the Certificate-of-Occupancy

(C of O)

An examination of the Land Use Act of 1978 reveals that a valid Certificate of Occupancy contains legal conditions that can serve as guide for implementing effective physical development control within any given area. According to [21] some of the important common conditions include the following;



First, the law requires plot holders or occupiers to erect or complete structure on their allotted plots within a specified period (2 years) from the date of the issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy, and that the structure must be in accordance with the approved building plans from any planning agency or authority [21].

Second, it also stipulates that plot holders are not permitted to erect or build any other buildings or structures other than those approved to be developed on their allotted plots; they are also not permitted to make any alterations to the buildings to be erected or buildings already erected on the allotted plot except approval is obtained from the state urban development agency or any agency (ies) authorized to perform the stated function [21];

Third, the law specifies that plot holders or occupiers are not permitted to transfer the Right of Occupancy granted them or any part thereof to another person in any of the following ways; sale, mortgage, assignment, sub-lease or gift and so on without securing the consent of the Governor of the state or the Surveyor-General [21-22];

Forth, it stipulates that the Governor of a state or any other public officer authorized by the Governor in his or her behalf have the right to access freely and to inspect any property specified in a C of O, at any reasonable time of the day without any hindrance [21-22].

Finally, the law specifies that plot holders or occupiers are required to pay other stipulated fees or charges for the issuance of certificates for the survey, preparation, and execution of the Certificate of Occupancy, and building plan approvals [22]. The above conditions, if properly managed will create a conducive environment for a litigation-free land administration system in any state or city within the country and also enhance proper development management [21].

The Challenge with the Land Use policy

Hitherto, there is no land use policy in Rivers State to complement the Land Use Act of 1978 so as to facilitate plan implementation and usher in land reform. This in essence has become a limitation to physical planning in the state over the years. The fact being that the Land use act fails to recognise customary land right which still determines much of the practices in land holdings especially in the peri-urban areas. This land management gap in the city land administrative system creates dual land rights in the state which allows ample room for developers to violate building codes or guidelines.

The Rivers State Physical Planning Development Law No 6. of 2003

The challenge with this law is that thirteen years after its enactment, the major requirements of the law are yet to be implemented. This has serious consequences for physical planning and development control because the delay in the implementation of the law creates a situation where attempts at controlling new developments and the demolition of illegitimate structures within the city and its environs constitute irregularity since they are not in accordance with due process and turn out to be a violation of human rights. Since the law was meant to enhance the physical planning of the state and provide for development control, it is needful to put in place the machinery that would facilitate the realisation of these goals such as the setting up the Urban and Regional Planning Board, local planning authorities, Urban and Regional Planning Fund, the Urban and Regional Planning Tribunal and the formulation of the State Urban and Regional Planning Policy.

Summary of findings

The research survey has brought to light several points that will be briefly looked at in this section and the points can be divided into five parts:

First: major factors responsible for planning failure and problems in the peri-urban areas of the Port Harcourt Metropolis; second: perceptions of sprawl, third: efficacy of existing regulatory policies and Institutions regarding land management in the peri-urban areas of Port Harcourt.

The socio-economic factors that motivated the rapid influx into peri-urban settlements, leading to planning failure as identified in the study include; limited supply of affordable housing in the main city, cheap land for various land uses and cheap accommodation in the peri-urban settlements, proximity to work place, improvement in transport systems and infrastructure (good connectivity with other parts of the city), meager



living circumstances and absence of prospects for paid employment in rural areas and the desire to own personal property.

Institutional factors identified include; weak government regulations/inefficiency of government to guide urban development in a proper way, absence of zoning plan master plans and area plans to guide urban growth and poor development management by development control agencies (GPHCDA and MUDPP).

As it relates to the desirability of sprawl, the study revealed that most respondents were in favour of sprawl because it affords them the opportunity to still be part of the city and enjoy the urban way of life at relatively low costs. It also provided them the opportunity to own property. The survey results on the attitudes of the respondents towards sprawl highlighted the fact that there was relative apathy from the respondents towards the agencies responsible for the management of sprawl. This was obvious in the general lack of the aspiration to abide by the procedure necessary get their property approved since most participants were of the view that the processes were too cumbersome. Others felt the procedures were too expensive and discouraging. However, the findings on awareness of development control policies showed that most of respondents had adequate knowledge of the development control procedures and implications even if some felt these policies were not well implemented. Others also felt that the implementation of these policies were some worth lopsided, giving preference to a few powerful and privileged folks.

Findings on the environmental quality and character of the peri-urban settlements reveal that most of the settlements were not planned and this is a strong indication of planning failure. Adherence to building codes such as minimum setbacks and conformity to building lines were also defective in many areas. Finally, most parts of the settlements were deficient in basic infrastructural/ services such as good roads, drainages, power supply and waste management services and some parts were also prone to flooding. The study results on the institutions/agencies facilitating and regulating the process of land acquisition and development reveal that these agencies were buffeted with a myriad of inadequacies and challenges which limited their ability to effectively perform their functions. A summary of these problems include; lack of plans to guide development in peri-urban settlements even when the Port Harcourt Master Plan of 1975-2003 stipulated that these settlements were to serve as dormitory towns to accommodate spill over population from the main city, non-compliance by developers, poor funding of the agencies, inadequate logistics, and delay in the issuance of C of O, intimidation by touts and community interference in development control functions, weak policy backing, corruption, inadequate staffing and that of undue interference by influential and over bearing public office holders.

Findings on the efficacy of existing policies regarding land development within the peri-urban areas in Port Harcourt indicates that even though the laws have adequate provision that would aid in achieving sustainable land use management, because they are not adequately implemented, there is so much room for the abuse of land resources which unavoidably lead to clustered settlements, the proliferation of informal settlements and poor environmental conditions due to lack of basic infrastructural facilities.

The factors that contributed to the problems were a system failure that underlies the situation and these can be summarized as follows; inability of successive governments to manage urban growth in Rivers State, the government laissez-faire attitude towards the formulation and implementation of state land development and land registration/land use laws. This also includes the lack of lay-out plans that specify what each area is designated for, lack of a clearly defined settlement development policy and urban policy (that is, the policy framework for the management of urban development/growth, limited urban planning and implementation, lack of rural economic opportunity that drives people to migrate to peri-urban areas, lack of societal understanding of the direct and indirect impact of land use change and development in peri-urban lands, and economic growth and consumption/massive land acquisition for speculative purposes.

On the basis of the above circumstances, there is the need to plan the land uses in Port Harcourt Metropolis and especially the peri-urban areas in such a way that life within the peri-urban areas of the city will be a delight.

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of the research findings, conclusion and recommendations were made.

In keeping with the study aims, the results highlighted the need for planning agencies to be more proactive in the performance of their functions and the handling of growing peri-urban settlements. It also buttressed the fact



that planning agencies need to properly educate the populace on planning related issues and engage more professional Town Planner so that development control will be more effective and impactful. Likewise, there is need to increase the awareness of the citizenry, community leaders and developers to the need to be more involved in planning decision as this goes a long way in curbing excesses in the land management system by making the needs and aspirations of the people known. What's more, it documented the situation in most peri-urban settlements, highlighting the need for plans to guide further development, intervention and the improvement in the provision of basic infrastructure. Finally, it made contributions in terms of strategies and practices that can be employed to improve the condition of our peri-urban settlements with the aim of enhancing orderly growth in the future.

Recommendations

Finally, the following recommendations were made;

- i. The setting up of zonal offices of the agencies in peri-urban settlements and other areas where developers can access relevant information easily. That is, agencies of the government should work towards being more customer-friendly and also do all to meet the customers where they are.
- ii. Standards should be upheld, and well publicized so that people are aware of them. There should also be no exceptions to the rule during implementation- laws on land use and development control should be enforced.
- i. The planning authorities should invest in modern technology (use of GIS) so that developments can be monitored and controlled effectively; proper expert systems should be adopted and integrated within the state policies as passed by the house of Assembly of the state.
- ii. Strict zoning of land use
- iii. The agencies should engage the services of qualified planners and not quacks.
- iv. More proactive measures should be implemented for new neighbourhoods and an excellent monitoring mechanism for already built up neighbourhoods.
- v. Proper planning of new neighbourhoods and proper education on the need for the planning of new neighbourhoods and the management of already built up areas.
- vi. Use the media to inform and educate the public.
- vii. The procedure for obtaining permit should be streamlined.

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