

Assessment of Building Regulations Enforcement and Housing Development in Calabar South-Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined the building regulations enforcement and housing development in Calabar South. It also involved assessing the quality of buildings and their compliance with minimum building standards as enshrined in the Cross River State building regulations of 1984 as amended in 1987. Three hundred (300) questionnaires were administered to capture information such as building regulations enforcement activities on housing quality, buildings with and without approval from 2008 to 2014, and materials used in building and types of structures. The analysis using the Product Moment Correlation Coefficient revealed that there is a relationship between building approval and quality of housing. This implies that most of these buildings were built without planning permission. The study shows that about 114 buildings from the selected Streets were built from 2008 to 2014 without obtaining planning permission and many of which are substandard and semi permanent whereas, only 86 buildings were erected with planning permission within the same years. Although, many of the housing built without approval were found to be standard with materials such as concrete blocks, aluminum roofing sheets and good finishing, appropriate setbacks, building lines and space coverage with those that obtained approval before development making a total of 125. The paper, therefore, recommends among others a policy frame work that would help improve enforcement activities in the Local Government Area. This will help improve the situation of the area.

KEY WORDS: Building Regulations, Enforcement Activities, Development Control, Housing Quality, Housing Development, Compliance and Building Standards.

1.INTRODUCTION:

As cities all over the world becomes the centre place of contemporary development and as land becomes more scarce and inaccessible for requisite development purposes the quest for rational supply to regulate or control its use becomes more compelling, this is the rationale for the involvement or enactment of various land use regulations designed to safe guard, conserve, disburse and regulate the use of land for the interest of the overall public (Adeyeye, 2010). Such laws include zoning regulations, building regulations, density control, land acquisition laws, effluent discharge law, among others.

In Cross River State for instance, building regulation as part of the Town and Country Planning Law of 1984 as amended in 1987 is the tool used in housing development control. The building regulation set out the minimum standard required for the construction of new buildings and the renovation of existing ones. Cross River state building regulation is enforced by building regulation officers. However, enforcement involves approval of the proposed design and construction of the building, followed by regulation inspection as the work proceeds on site.

The major problem with urban development in Nigeria is ineffective development control enforcement. Apart from the issue of urban sprawl, many Nigerian towns are characterized by incompatible land uses which are caused by uncontrolled development. The town planning authorities are charged with the responsibility of controlling development in the urban and rural areas. They are handicapped by many problems ranging from poor funding to corruption and undue influence from top officials in government.

In Calabar South, many buildings have been constructed without approved building plans and layouts, most of these buildings erected were built with substandard materials without taken the building codes and regulations into consideration. As a result of this non-compliance with the building codes and regulations, illegal structures sprang up every day and open spaces are lost and many parts of the development areas are without access, there is abuse and misuse of land bringing incompatible land uses together, houses are built without compliance with setbacks, building lines, coverage and proper orientation. This calls for proper amendment of the building regulations enforcement and housing development as well as proper monitoring and controlling of every development by the development control team in the area. However, the main thrust of this paper is to assess the impact of building regulations enforcement on housing development in Calabar South – Nigeria.

2. AIM AND OBJECTIVES:

- i. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of building regulations enforcement activities on housing quality in Calabar South. The specific objectives are:
 - ii. To examine the characteristics of physical structures in Calabar South.
 - iii. To assess the standard and quality of buildings in the city.
 - iv. To examine the building regulations enforcement activities and building plan approval in Calabar South.
 - v. To analyse the relationship between building regulation enforcement activities and housing quality in the study area.
 - vi. To recommend measures to ensure compliance with building standards and regulations in Calabar South.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW;

According to Odugbemi, (1993) building regulations in any urban or rural area are deeply rooted in the development process of the built environment in countries of the world. In Nigeria, before the emergence of the Town and Country Planning Law of 1946, the traditional rulers in the different regions controlled development according to the traditional ways of environmental regulation measures. Ola (1977) also observed that “regulation of development” was historically based on native law and custom. However, the first ever known form of development control regulation in the country was through the 1963 town improvement ordinance in Lagos. Other development control regulations that came in before 1946 had similar orientation in their development in which they restricted enforcement of modern planning regulations within Lagos city area and more importantly, to the Government Reservation Areas (GRA). The 1928 Town Planning Ordinance only ameliorated the situation of haphazard development with the establishment of Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB). The Lagos executive development board through the ordinance was much concern with stem clearance in Lagos Island and housing schemes in Surulere, Ikoyi and Apapa, Lagos (Odugbemi, 1993).

According to Aluko (2000) Land control techniques fall into one of three classifications firstly, positive action by government, utilizing government and financial resources. Secondly, negative action by government utilizing government power to restrain or otherwise direct private land use and development activities and thirdly, government action that include both positive and negative elements. The positive techniques are providing infrastructure, land acquisition, financing of development and use of tax incentives. The negative techniques consist of prevention of illegal developments, slum clearance or squatter removal, values freezing and taxation. The measures that contain both negative and positive elements include the planning process, as the control device as well as public and private development instructions.

In carrying out development control function, some sub-units are created by planning authorities. The functions carried out include initiation and implementation of planning schemes and control of development using such measures as plan approval, stop development and demolition where necessary

(URP Law, Decree No. 88, 1992). In Nigeria, the most common land development control or regulations are zoning/master plan, sub-division and building regulations. Zoning according to Oyesiku (1997) is the way in which physical development is guided in any particular community through government policy and allows government to regulate and control the use of land. Zoning according to law is the demarcation of a city by ordinance and the establishment of regulations to govern the use of land (TOPREC, 1994). It is an attempt to organize and systematize the growth of urban areas by setting up categories, classes or districts of land in the community prescribing the use to which land and buildings may be put and applying uniform restriction on the shape and placement of buildings.

Layout and subdivisions are meant to control development by establishment of standards such as plot size, street improvement and other requirement in more detail than the zoning plan (URP Law, Decree No. 88, 1992). Building regulations are ways in which new structures are to be built and materials to be used. They may also be applied to maintenance and improvement of existing buildings. The main objective of building regulations is that of securing social acceptable minimum standards. It is one of the most common methods of controlling land development in cities.

According to Odewumi (2010), development control is one of the measures applied by physical planning agencies particularly; the local planning authorities to ensure that development plans are approved before construction on the plots designed for such development. It aimed at enhancing environmental quality, improved housing condition and development, privacy in residents and free flow of air around the buildings. Development control measures also help in regulating physical development and settlement with an intension of creating conducive and orderly development of good physical structures for living.

Agbe (2010) also states that controlling development in our urban settlement is crucial to the health of our city dwellers. Olabori, (2007) argue that development control is seen as a mechanism put in place to maintain standards and reduce the negative effect that accompanies physical development. Control development serves as an important regulator of settlement growth and a quality of conducive environment for living, working and recreation. Without development control, the exercise of Town Planners as expert of spatial management will be in jeopardy (Enyenwa, 1994). The review of various literatures on building regulations enforcement activities and housing development has shown a useful insight into what is expected from the study. Therefore, this study is out to assess the impact of building regulations enforcement activities on housing development in Calabar South- Nigeria.

4. MATERIALS AND METHOD:

This research was conducted in Calabar South Local Government Area of Cross River State–Nigeria. Primary and secondary methods of data collection were employed. Primary sources of data employed in the study were questionnaire administration for first hand information to ascertain the impact of building regulations enforcement on housing quality in Calabar South Local Government Area and quality of housing classified standard whether with or without approval. Secondary sources of data employed in the study were text books and journal articles on the subject matter as well as records of approved plans from 2008 to 2014 in town planning department, Calabar.

Data on the impact of building regulations enforcement activities on housing quality in the study area, in terms of buildings with and without approval from 2008 to 2014, materials used, and type of buildings were captured on the questionnaire. Three hundred (300) copies of questionnaire were distributed in Calabar South Local Government Area. The stratified random sampling was adopted in this study. Respondents were interviewed in order to assess their views on the impact of building regulations enforcement activities on the quality of buildings in the study area. However, descriptive statistics and the Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient were employed in the analysis.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 1: Analysis of the type of buildings in the study area.

Buildings types	No of Respondents	Percentage
Traditional compound	159	54
Bungalow	130	43
Storey buildings	11	3
Others	-	-
Total	300	100

Source: Data Analysis, 2015.

The table above shows the analysis of the type of buildings in the study area. The table therefore, reveals that traditional compound buildings and bungalow buildings which have the highest number were predominant.

Table 2: Analysis of the structural types in the study area.

Structural types	No	Percentage
Detach	202	67
Semi Detached	95	32
Terrace	3	1

Source: Data Analysis, 2015.

Table 2 above shows the analysis of the structural types in the study area. The table shows that Detach structures are predominant in the area.

Table 3: Analysis of the wall materials used in the study area

S/NO	Wall Materials	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Wattle and Dub	9	2
2	concrete blocks	212	71
3	Earth Blocks	73	24
4	Wood materials	4	2
5	Zinc	2	1
	Total	300	100

Source: Data Analysis, 2015.

Table 3 above shows the analysis of wall materials used in the study area, about 9 (2%) structural materials were wattle and dub, 212 (71%) were concrete blocks, 73 (24%) were earth blocks, 4(2%) were wood materials, and 2 (1%) were zinc. However, this means that concrete block structures were predominant in the study area.

Table 4: Analysis of Roofing materials used in the study Area.

Roofing Materials	No of respondents	%
Zinc/Alluminium	284	95
Abestos	-	
Thatch	16	5
Others	-	
Total	300	100

Source: Data Analysis, 2015.

Table 4 above shows the analysis of roofing materials used in the study area, the table reveals that zinc/Aluminum were roofing materials that are generally used by developers in roofing their structures.

Table 5: Analysis of the total Number of buildings with and without approval and Number of Standard Buildings from 2008 to 2014 for the 10 Selected Streets in Calabar South.

S/N	Street Name	Number of Approved Building plan	Number of Unapproved Building plan	Number of Standard Buildings
1	White House	9	11	13
2	Ekpo Abasi	8	12	11
3	Edgerly	9	11	12
4	Afokang	7	13	10
5	New Airport	11	9	14
6	Goldie Street	14	6	16
7	Amikautu	7	13	15
8	Atamunu	6	14	12
9	Palm Street	10	10	13
10	Jebs road	5	15	9
	Total	86	114	125

Source: Data Analysis, 2015.

The Table 5 above shows the total number of buildings that were granted approval before development as 86, those built without approval as 114 and those classified as standard buildings with all facilities available as 125. This means there are buildings that are classified standard which were developed without planning permission. The reason is that such buildings were developed with necessary facilities and appropriate setbacks as well as space coverage. However, acquisition of planning permission has no effect on development of standard housing in the study area.

Table 6: Analysis of the total Number of buildings with and approval from 2008 to 2014 and Number of Standard Buildings for the 10 Selected Streets in Calabar South.

S/N	Street Name	Number of Approved Building plan	Number of Standard Buildings
1	White House	9	13
2	Ekpo Abasi	8	11
3	Edgerly	9	12
4	Afokang	7	10
5	New Airport	11	14
6	Goldie Street	14	16
7	Amikautu	7	15
8	Atamunu	6	12
9	Palm Street	10	13
10	Jebs road	5	9
	Total	86	125

Source: Data Analysis, 2015.

The Table 6 above shows the total number of buildings erected from 2008 to 2014 with approved planning permission and those developed within this period but built to standard and in conformity as

regards to adequate and appropriate facilities as well as coverage area and setbacks and some of which have no planning permission before development.

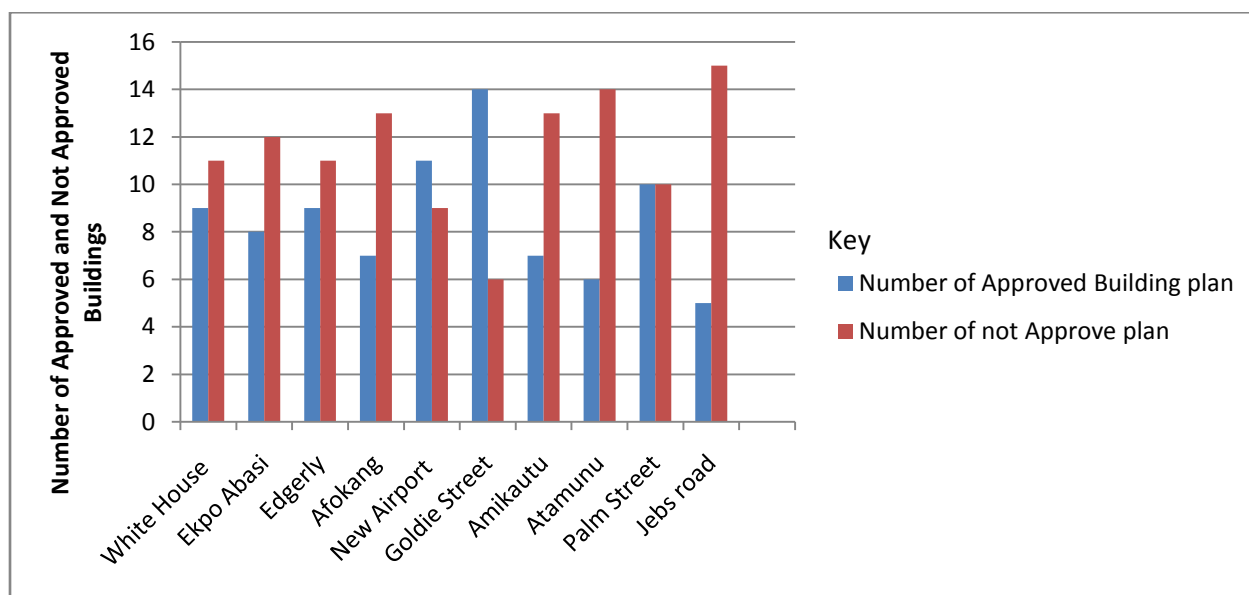
Table 7: Analysis of the total Number of buildings with and without approval from 2008 to 2014 for the 10 Selected Streets in Calabar South.

S/N	Street Name	Number of Approved Building plan	Number of not Approve plan
1	White House	9	11
2	Ekpo Abasi	8	12
3	Edgerly	9	11
4	Afokang	7	13
5	New Airport	11	9
6	Goldie Street	14	6
7	Amikautu	7	13
8	Atamunu	6	14
9	Palm Street	10	10
10	Jebs road	5	15
	Total	86	114

Source: Town Planning Department, MLH, Calabar, 2015.

Table 7 above shows buildings with and without approval developed as at 2008 to 2014. The total numbers of buildings approved from 2008 to 2014 were 86, while those without approval and developed illegally were 114.

Figure 1: Bar chart showing the statistical information of buildings with and without approval in the study area derived from Table 7.



The above bar-chart shows the statistical information on buildings with and without approved plans. The blue bars show the number of approved buildings against their respective Streets. The red bars show buildings without approved plans against their respective Streets.

The findings show that a lot of buildings erected in the study area were temporary/semi-permanent. Most of these structures are developed illegally without taking the planning standards and building regulations into consideration and also without town planning approval. More so, the findings further shows that 71% of the wall materials used in the study area were concrete blocks, and also 95% of the roofing materials were Aluminum and zinc. The analysis again, shows that in all the streets under study, only 86 buildings were built with approval from the town planning authority and 114 buildings were built without approval while 125 buildings were classified standard and quality housing from 2008 to 2014.

The result further revealed that there is a significant relationship between building approval and housing quality in Calabar South. The calculated value = 2.83 was found to be greater than the tabulated value (t) = 3.18 at 0.05 significant level and degree of freedom at 9. This resulted to the acceptance of the alternate hypothesis.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (1).The study recommends that the State Government in collaboration with the Town Planning Department in the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, Calabar should create public enlightenment through seminars and workshops on the importance of complying with building regulations activities and obtaining planning permission before developing.
- (2).Town Planning officers should be better equipped in terms of manpower and logistics to carryout enforcement of building regulations. Also legislation should be passed by the government to enable planning authorities' carryout building regulations enforcement activities without fear and favour.
- (3).The study also recommends immediate action of increasing enforcement activities and demolition of structures where necessary to enforce compliance with the planning standards in order to eradicate conflicting uses in the study area.
- (4)Finally, developers should also be encouraged to acquire loans from mortgage intuitions such as banks, insurance and even private lenders to develop standard structures in the study area. This will help reduce the level of substandard structures which were built without approval in Calabar South.

7. CONCLUSION:

This study is aimed at assessing the impact of building regulations enforcement activities on housing quality in Calabar South-Nigeria. The study reveals that 86 buildings were developed with approval from the town planning authority, 125 buildings developed to standard and 114 buildings were developed illegally without approval from 2008 to 2014. Correlation analysis was used in the test of hypothesis and the result shows a significant relationship between building regulation enforcement activities and Housing quality in Calabar South, the calculated value = 2.83 was found to be greater than the tabulated (t) = 3.18 at 0.05 significant level and degree of freedom at 9. The study therefore, concluded that building regulations enforcement activities restricted many developers from developing permanent buildings in the study area. That is because; most buildings were not developed to standard which may be subjected to demolition at any time. Hence, building regulations is seen as constraint to many developers in the study area.

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