Urban Land Use Planning, Policies and Management in Sub Saharan African Countries: Empirical Evidence from Akure, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is one of the most rapidly urbanizing countries in Africa and the challenges that come with this, especially in the area of land use include rising cost of land, accessibility to land, uncontrolled and unguided and use and degradation, illegal conversion of land use, insecure tenure, and land shortages among others.

This has attracted international, national and local attentions. Attempts to meet the challenges facing the built environment in the country motivated the government to articulate and introduce some programs and policies as well as created institutions to control and manage urban land use. Despite the various efforts of government, individuals and agencies both locally and internationally to improve urban development and particularly those associated with land use conversion and management, land use problems particularly shortages and affordability still persist.
The paper was designed to proffer answer to the following questions:

What are the policies on land use planning in Akure?

What are the land use control measures/mechanisms to guarantee accessibility?

Are these policies adequate and effective?

What are the determinants and effects of public policies on people’s accessibility to land, costs of land, etc.

What are the constraints to land use planning in the city?
Data Sources

The data used in the paper was generated from a comprehensive survey of households’ characteristics, indicators of accessibility to urban land and its characteristics including costs, rents, and mode of accessibility to land, size and institutions responsible for managing land in Akure among others. The paper is based on primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected from direct interviews, personal observations and responses to questionnaires administered on selected land owners in Akure and heads of institutions, departments and agencies responsible for land use planning and management in the city. Secondary data were obtained from Ministry of Lands and Housing, Ondo State Development and Property Corporation, and Urban Planning Authority in Akure.
Method of data Collection

The basic data set for the paper was collected using a structured questionnaire administered to selected residents of Akure.

Systematic sampling technique was used to select buildings at intervals of every tenth building in the nine wards into which the city was stratified.

In all, a total of 1,266 questionnaires were administered on land owners.

The Heads of all agencies responsible for planning land use in Akure were interviewed.

Other relevant materials and data were sourced from published sources.
Method of Analysis

Frequency tables, percentages and regression analytic techniques were employed to explain and amplify the results of the research.

- Land use accessibility estimates was estimated using a sample of landowners selected in a field survey conducted.
- The landowner’s variables are constructed from the perspective of a reference individual, which is the individual filling out the questionnaire.
- The model specification includes characteristics of the reference person, sources and ownership of land and methods of land use management in Akure. Monthly income is constructed using only the individual landowners’ income and land accessibility variables.
- The interrelationships between land accessibility variables, household characteristics and land use characteristics (dependent and independent variables) were explored using the stepwise multiple regression analysis technique.
Results – Descriptive Analysis

Majority of land owners fall under the low income group

- Majority of the selected landowners acquired their plot from private individuals and land from public sources is very insignificant
- The cost of land appeared low because many land owners did not actually purchase their land especially indigene and those that has stayed long in the city. This findings underscore the role of families and communities in land use allocation and distribution.
- Ownership of layouts is significantly dominated by family, while the three tiers of government of federal, state, and local government did not contribute much to land plots in the study area.
- Acquisition appears simple because majority of land owners obtain their land from unofficial sources such as individuals and family. Thus, when land is purchased by people, they still need to perfect the title document by obtaining certificate of occupancy as specified by the Land Use Act. Besides, the fact that processing of this title document takes at least six months, it makes rooms for double payment for the same plot of land.
**Income of land owners in Akure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Cumulative Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Below 7,500</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,501-15,000</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>53.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15,001-25,000</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>70.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25,001-35,000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>80.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>35,001-45,000</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>88.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45,001-55,000</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>5.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>55,001-65,000</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>96.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above 65,000</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,032</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results-Regression Estimates

The results of the stepwise multiple regression analysis reveals that nine variables were selected as determinants of ownership of land in the study area. The entire nine variable selected by stepwise regression model accounted for about 66.5 percent of the total variation in land accessibility in Akure.

- From the results, the two most important variables explaining land ownership in the study area are the time of acquisition of land and ownership of layout plans. The regression result indicates that economic factors such as income of land owners, occupation and cost of land are not significant factors determining accessibility to land. Only education and marital status among social factors entered the regression model.

- The fact that time of acquisition of land, ownership of layout plan and original owner of land before present owners are selected by the regression analysis point to the fact that cultural factors such as family and community ownership of land are still very relevant and significant in explaining land use and accessibility.

- This fact is strengthened by the findings that majority of land owners obtain their land from private sources such as individuals, families and communities. This finding also shows that government land control mechanisms and policies have not much impact on land ownership, use and accessibility in the city.
Policy Consequences/Implication

- The above exposition and analysis of land use planning revealed that policies and land development control mechanisms existing in the city do not have much effects on land accessibility and ownership.
- Most land transactions and activities take place outside the formal land use planning mechanism.
- Informal sector land providers such as individuals and families are still very relevant in land use planning.
- There is a need to invigorate planning machinery and land management activity in Akure to incorporate and integrate all land use control and management agencies in the city and to introduce measures to guarantee effective and efficient land management in the city.
- There is the urgent need to review the Land Use Act of 1978 to integrate the socio-economic characteristics of the people that permit communities and families to have a say in land use planning and administration.
- There is the need to strengthen land use planning and management capacity in the city.
CONCLUSION

- The paper shows that land management and control tools are either not available or weakly implemented.
- The paper found land use activity to be disjointed and uncoordinated since several organizations and agencies are involved in land use without a coordinating agencies or an overall land use plan within which effective land use management can be undertaken.
- The paper concludes that for land use management to be effective, there is the need for an integrated land use approach. The present approach of disjointed and uncoordinated land use practices cannot be expected to provide the desired outcome of sustainable city development.