

Original Research Article

The Choice of Neighbourhood Environments Among the Local Community Setting in Ondo State, Nigeria

Abstract

Human social and community satisfaction has become vital among the local residents. This study examines the factor of neighbourhood choice and preference in a local community in the Ondo State, Nigeria. The study explored local residents' perception via 150 structured questionnaires. The findings showed that local residents' choice of environment hinged on the factor of safety, socio-economic and residents culture. Thus, the choice of the local community might not be the same with the urban residents.

Keywords: Community, satisfaction, neighbourhood, environment, culture, Nigeria.

Introduction:

The local residents' lifestyles and inhabitability comfort cannot be assessed without clear knowledge of their community environment. It has been opined that the human physical environment influences their satisfaction level (Coleman, 1990). However, the neighbourhood choice factors remain very significant in predicting the inhabitant lifestyles. (Ester C *et. al.*, 2015.; Seth G. B *et. al.*, 2021).

Roux (2003) suggested that for a clear understanding of choice of human environment, physical and social factors should be considered. The aforementioned was considered as basic to determine the choice of an environment. The author considers the environmental social factor to include the environment composition as providing the needed security or safety. Thus, it is the level of safety enjoyed within an environment that facilitates the inhabitant's cohesiveness and affinity to the community. The social community cohesiveness has significant influence of social norm (Coleman, 1990). Social norm encompasses the assessment of individual on inappropriate and appropriate attitudes, belief, behaviours and values.

The physical environment comprises of the tangible elements and features of an environment. It has potential influence on the social environment. The neighbourhood physical environment design and connectivity has influenced the social relationship that occurs within a community. Accessibility is crucial to human basic needs that encompass the environmental beautification, social facilities and

activities form vital tools of predicting the choice of environment (Humpel, *et al.*, 2002). The study conducted by Ball *et al.*, (2001) on residents' preference to associate in a desirable environment was found to be related with the basic social amenities' proximity to such area and the availability of pedestrian to aid the eco-sustainability.

Therefore, human beings do prefer to associate with the natural environment that provides needed social facility and aesthetically appealing (Oloruntoba, 2013). Aesthetic pleasant neighbourhood arena can be associated with the human choice of environment (Camona *et al.*, 2008). However, various research works have been conducted to assess the necessary factors responsible for human environment (Zhang, 2004; Ewing & Carveno, 2001; Freneman *et al.*, 1994). The factor of connectivity and human networking within a community was particularly considered vital in the choice of neighbourhood environment (Zhang, 2004; Andrew K. *et al.*, 2022). When the inhabitants have easy access to their daily activities and needs, they derive satisfactory feeling in the environment. Public spaces and green environment were recorded as part of the contributing factor of choice of human environment (Roux, 2003). This study geared to assess factors responsible for local community resident choice of environment.

The independent variables applied were symbolized as follow:

- | | | | |
|------|---------------------|---|----|
| i. | Security and safety | - | A |
| ii. | Social factor | - | B |
| iii. | Aesthetic | - | C |
| iv. | Accessibility | - | D |
| v. | Cultural factor | - | E, |

While the choice of neighbourhood environment symbolized as "CNE". Thus, the following hypotheses were raised:

Hi: Security & safety of the inhabitants positively influence their choice of neighbourhood environment

Hii: Social needs of inhabitants positively influence their choice of neighbourhood environment.

Hiii: Aesthetic look of the neighbourhood positively influence their choice of environment

Hiv:- Accessibility of the inhabitants to their daily activities positively influence their choice of environment

Hv:- Cultural factor of ~~the~~ inhabitants positively influence their choice of neighbourhood environment.

Methodology

This study considered a typical local community “ISUADA” in ~~the~~Owo Local Government Area of Ondo State, Nigeria. ~~A T~~total of 150 questionnaires ~~wasere~~ administered among the residents of the community to assess their perception on the choice of the environment. The choice of environment was assessed via five variables: security/safety, social factor, aesthetic, accessibility, and cultural factors. The administered questionnaires were analysed with SPSS.

Data Analysis and Findings

Statistical test ~~was conducted~~, and the EFA ~~wasere~~ conducted to check ~~the~~ reliability of the variables. The Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.70 was set as a benchmark range from approximately (0.600 – 0.900) as suggested by George *et al.*, (2007).

KMO value was generated to ascertain the variable number of adequacy. The correlation coefficient derived to check the validity of the variable in the model. Having high value of KMO suggests ~~s~~ the variable number adequacy, about 32%. Adjustable R-Square value of the variance in the dependable variable could be predicted from the dependent’s variables (Table 1.0).

Table 1.0

Regression Significant R² and AR²

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R-square	Std. Error of Estimate	Sig.
1	0.60	0.334	0.312	0.600	
Regression	-	-	-	-	0.01

Table 2.0 Coefficient of correlations

Variable	Me-an	Std. Dev.	Cranbach’s Alpha	Coefficient of correlations				
				A	B	C	D	E
Choice of Environment	3.42	0.840	0.752	0.04	0.03	0.21	0.04	0.01
A	2.51	1.016	0.784	-	-	-	-	-

B	2.71	0.91 4	0.814	0.42* *	-	-	-	-
C	2.72	1.48 2	0.741	0.81* *	0.61* *	-	-	-
D	2.60	1.01 4	0.784	0.782 **	0.54* *	0.50* *	-	-
E	2.52	0.94 2	0.821	0.801 **	0.51* *	0.42* *	0.53 **	-

Predictor (constant) A, B, C, D and E dependable variable: Choice of neighbourhood environment CNE.

Summary of Results

Table 3.0 Results and hypothesis

Hypothesis	Hypothesized	Sig.	Result
A	Security and safety	0.04	Supported
B	Social factor	0.03	Supported
C	Aesthetics	0.21	Not supported
D	Accessibility	0.04	Supported
E	Cultural factor	0.01	Supported

Discussion and Conclusions

The study recommended high correlation between the independent variables. The correlation ranged from 0.42 to 0.81 as shown in Table 2.0. The high significant level reflects that the constructs were capable to explain the neighbourhood choice of environment as supplemented by the high Alpha value. However, security and inhabitant safety was exhibiting good significant level of 0.04 along with the accessibility factor having the same significance level of 0.04. The social factor of the respondents in the area exhibited high significance level of 0.03 while cultural factor associated with the inhabitants exhibited significant level of 0.01 having the highest significance value. The aesthetic factor of the inhabitant in the study area exhibited significance level of 0.21 having the weakest value of significance. Considering the aforementioned, it is obvious that the factor of neighbourhood environment can be accessed via the projected variables. Hence, the study established that the choice of neighbourhood environment is highly associated with the culture of the inhabitants. This finding can be linked with the high interest of the local community in the culture and norms as reflected in the traditions. As such, the

inhabitants in local community attached strong affinity to their cultural supporting environmental factors. The social factor equally considered vital in selecting the local inhabitant choice of neighbourhood environment. This factor cannot be separated from the high influence of culture that associated in their social life and activities. The social activities among the local dwellers rally around their immediate neighbourhood environment. Therefore, the environmental elements and features in their neighbourhood should be considered in making their choice of environment. Thus, security and safety along with the accessibility were both relevance indetermining the choice of local dwellers in the study area in respect to their environment. This implies that local inhabitants do prefer to reside in an environment secured and reasonable accessible to their daily engagements as a factor in the choice of neighbourhood environment. Aesthetic does not show to have positive influence on the local inhabitant choice of their neighbourhood environment in the study area. This can be associated to the fact that the local dwellers attached little or no tangible importance to the beautification of their environment unlike it is applicable in the urban centres where beauty and aesthetic features are celebrated. This study shows that the choice of neighbourhood environment among the local dwellers hinged on the inhabitants' factors of culture, social, security/safety and accessibility. This study had some shortcomings such as consideration of limited respondents as it considers only single local community. Hence, we suggest that further research should be encouraged to encompass several local community settings for wider scope and result.

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