

ACHIEVING OPTIMUM PROPERTY VALUES THROUGH URBAN SLUM CLEARANCE (A CASE STUDY OF MANGO ESTATE, ELELENWO, PORT HARCOURT)

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Abstract

Achieving optimum property values through urban slum clearance is the research topic, taking Mango Estate in Elenwo, Port Harcourt as the case study. The study aimed at maximizing profit on real estate investment especially residential housing with good location and better environmental standards. The researchers utilized both primary and secondary methods of data collection with structured questionnaire distributed to four categories of respondents which include Landlords, tenants, Town planners and Estate Surveyors and valuers. Current journal publications, published books, and other relevant materials were also consulted. The retrieved questionnaire were collated and analyzed using the tabulated method, percentages and chi-square to test the hypothesis therein. One of the key findings is that after the area has been cleared of slum property values is now increasing and the place is well secured and concluded that the area is attracting more developments and investors.

Keywords: optimum property values, urban, slum clearance

Introduction

Most housing decay and deterioration comes in various forms and their existence is more pronounced or evidence in densely populated parts of the city. Slum development in most cities of this part of the world is a serious one which calls for concern of different stakeholders. Available statistics has it that, in 2005, one person in six lived in a slum and with the present trend, the number will be one in four by 2025. According to Layi & Moruf (2007) stated that, if we must talk or achieve development, issues concerning slums development and how they are upgraded, revitalized and prevented from further decay should have a considerably high priority attention in

our various efforts at promoting development and peaceful living of humankind. An urban area generally grows in all facets of its features over time, accompanying the urban growth is the deterioration or degeneration of its basic amenities and infrastructure. Sequel to this growth and decay dynamism, the amenities and infrastructure that were hitherto considered adequate and best uses of the available land resource in the neighborhood are now found to be inadequate due to population pressure (Hari, 2006). This development triggers off the quest for improvement, rehabilitation, redevelopment, upgrading or renewal of the amenities and infrastructure to meet the yearning socio-economic and political demands, tastes, fashion and changing culture of the people.

Statement of the Research Problem.

Ordinarily, buildings are supposed to perform certain routine functions to man and society but the process of urbanization which means specific changes in the distribution and structures of population as well as sizes and character of settlements, their network has many sided relationship with slums formation. Truly speaking, the rapid rate of urbanization witnessed in the last century has produced more slums in major cities of the world including the study area where thousands of rural people moved into urban areas in search for greener pastures. This movement causes physical and monetary devaluation of properties, where the structures are blighted, defaced, high level of occupancy ratio, overcrowding, under supply of public amenities, bad road network, lack of proper waste disposal system, it reduces the life span of buildings, reduces the aesthetic of buildings, reduces the rental values of buildings and causing heat and all other unwholesome situations. Areas where slum is found present a pathetic situation, that is why this study centers on urban slum clearance in order to improve property values, environmental surroundings and the quantity of life in the area.

Aim and Objectives of the Study.

The aim of the study is to examine the usefulness of urban slum clearance on property values while the objectives of the study are;

- 1) To identify the causes of slum in the area
- 2) To identify the negative effect of slum on property values.
- 3) To identify the rental values of properties in the area before and at present.
- 4) To identify the types of residential properties in the area.

Research Questions

- 1) What are the causes of slums in the area?
- 2) What are the negative effect of slum on property values?
- 3) What are the rental values of properties in the area before and at present?
- 4) What are the types of residential properties in the area?

Research Hypothesis

H₀: There is no significant impact between urban slum clearance and rental values of residential properties.

The Study Area

The stretch of land called Mango Estate in Elemenwo was found to be a central market place where people of the area were trading in the olden days. The land extended from the major road leading to Woji - Slaughter axis sloping towards the river called Mini Osimini (salt water) by the

first bridge; from Eeelenwo round about, particularly on the left hand side. As former fishing settlement, when the fisher men and women left the place for other activities, as the city expanded, unplanned buildings were constructed by the urban poor alongside the batchers erected by those who were fishing there. After sometimes, the population kept increasing and because nobody was checking the activities going on in the place, slum formation becomes the order of the day. Mango Estate became known as a place without any good road, no electricity, make shift houses dominated the area, no proper waste disposal points, filthy environment, it has been a hide out for criminals, people are kidnaped and taken to the estate, young female children are raped, stealing of all kinds and other forms of atrocities are committed there. There was no value for properties within these periods.

Eeelenwo as peace loving people evicted all those who were living there and sand filled the estate, this activity took some years before allocating plots to individual owners. Some families utilized their own and others sold theirs. The development in the estate now is commendable and people are living happily without any molestation by hoodlums. The underdeveloped plots are yielding high values (appreciating) and the developed houses rental values increasing. Though, the properties are majorly residential and commercial. The estate is located on latitude 4° 41' 16'N and longitude 7° 3' 40' E bounded on the North by Woji, on the South by Eeelenwo health centre and Palace road, on the West by Chinda Estate and the East by Playground. Two seasons exists in the area, the rainy and dry season. The soil types are mainly alluvium and clay while the vegetation is mangrove forest but over taken by Nypa Palms. Mango estate like every other estate enjoys land and river breeze, its sloppy nature does not allow stagnant waters, accommodates magnificent residential and commercial buildings, churches, hospitals and clinics, markets, schools and very interesting environmental features and a police post or station for the security of life and properties.

Literature Review

Okoroigwe (2010) opined that poor housing condition is not only an eye sore to urban areas and its dwellers but has caused variety of diseases which are hazardous to the general living conditions in our cities, because such conditions need to be improved upon or eliminated in our residential estates or neighborhood. According to Abiodun (1985) asserted that slums are areas of social breakdown and high delinquency and that the slum areas usually provide for the local or rural migrants. He further mentioned that slums household is one lacking one or more of the following indicators; access to improved water, access to improved sanitation facilities, sufficient living area, structural quality and durability of dwellings and security of tenure.

Therefore, Bell (1999) described slum as a densely populated area usually urban area marked by overcrowding, dirty run-down housing, poverty and social dis-organization. Dekor (2012) defined slum as an overcrowded area of a city in which the housing is typically in a bad shape. Onwuchekwa (2010) stated that before a house could be regarded as habitable for human beings, it must be in good conditions, adequate stability, free from leverages, good internal arrangement, natural lightening, satisfactory good drainage and sanitary condition of environment. This further explains that any building or living environment that does not have these standards is unfit for human habitation and can best be described as slum.

Causes of Slums in Urban Environment

The problem of slum development particularly in core areas of urban setting possess great concern to real estate investors as it negatively affects property values.

- Rapid rural – to – urban migration
- Economic stagnation and depression
- High unemployment rate
- Poverty
- Low income
- Informal economy
- Poor planning
- Social conflicts and natural disasters
- Little or no subsidized housing

Negative Effects of Slum in the Area

Lack of low cost housing, subsidize housing and maintenance of existing housing unit can propel slum formation and effects which includes

- Over-crowding
- Wider spread of diseases
- Poor water quality
- Degrading environment
- Rise in number of crimes due to social inequality
- Increased mortality rate
- Reduced physical appearance of properties
- Reduced rental passing of properties
- Discouraging the minds of prospective buyers or tenants
- Lack of amenities and environmental facilities
- It affects individual development, level of intelligence and social interactions.

Some Characteristics of Slums

Slums are associated with poor sanitation due to lack of proper garbage and sewage disposal

- Houses in slums are very cheap since they are of poor quality and that attracts low income earners including criminals.
- Slums are associated with high crime rate
- Houses in slum are very close to each other and are unplanned.
- Slums do not have enough supply of water and power due to their location on the edge of cities (Arimah, 1996)
- Many people living in slum are unemployed and that gave rise to overcrowding (Okeke, 2002).

Major Causes of Urban Decay

- **Wear and Tear:-** the situation where over-crowding, over use, encroachment on facilities without maintenance is another cause of slum formation (Akindare, 2011).
- **Poor quality of the original construction:-** This is the case where some building materials used in the construction of buildings are interior, poor and substandard. They are most times poorly put together by personnel that are not trained in the profession. This could be the reason for collapsed buildings in the country (Bello & Bello, 2008).

- **Lack of Home Amenities and Environmental Facilities:-** Most houses lack amenities such as electricity, water, kitchen and toilets. The absence of these makes the house uncomfortable for dwellers and making the house substandard.
- **Financial Incapability of Dwellers:-** This occurs because low income dwellers cannot afford decent accommodation in any part of the city, is another reason for slum formation. The low income earners think of how to take care of their families more importantly than any other thing. Therefore, one can say that poverty is one of the factors responsible for the development of slum in developing countries (Olawepo, 2010).
- **Lack of Integrate Planning:** This occurs when the urban center are planned in isolation of the rural areas. This will cause rural – urban migration that will in turn cause slum in some parts of this city (Doc kery & Pope, 1994).

Approaches/Techniques of Urban Renewal

In line with the topic of this study, when an area is undergoing decay, it means the location is begging for renewal to maintain its healthy status. So there are procedures to handle such which includes:

- **Rehabilitation:** This refers to repairs, and upgrading of facilities to acceptable standard. It applies to individual houses and public estates including the surrounding environment.
- **Renovation:** This is considered a light exercise of repairs, repainting, replastering, replacement and amending of windows, doors and plumbing works, etc.
- **Redevelopment or Total Clearance:** This involves a comprehensive demolition and the complete redesigning and rebuilding of areas as well as the resettlements of population. This approach is used when the level of decay and deterioration is very high (Nubor, 2018).
- **Economic Revitalization:** This is where employment of the people is involved. This is to say, the moment the people are employed, they will eat, think and remember that they have to live in a decent housing and environment.

Major Identified Urban Problems

Living in an environment exposes one to some of the problems that need to be attended to, such problems include:

- Shortage of housing accommodation that results to overcrowding.
- Urban slums
- Lack of adequate housing
- Deficiency in the provision of public services and facilities.
- Absence of open spaces
- Over built-up areas and congestions
- Disease and squalor
- Poor road connectivity (Agbaeze, 2003).
- Unsanitary and blight environmental conditions

Urban Slum Clearance and its Effect on Property Values

Though, it is believed that practically slum clearance is capital intensive and time consuming considering its processes to actualize the scheme. But when completed, it brings a lot of benefits to the society.

- It eradicates or reduces crimes
- It brings a lot of improvements on the quality of human life
- It generates short and long term employment
- Investors are attracted to invest in the area
- More houses are built and older ones renovated
- Roads are reconstructed to enhance faster economic distribution
- The physical and rental values of properties are increased tremendously.
- The general environmental surroundings appear immaculate (Afalayan, 2006).
- People tends to adhere and appreciate better ways of managing their waste (Azubuike, 2000)

Types of Residential Properties

These are properties that are suitable for living.

- **Tenement Houses:** According to Udechukwu (2006) these are residential buildings in high density areas let in rooms. Generally referred to as “face me I face you” it also has several rooms each serving as an accommodation unit within a single building with shared convenience.
- **Block of Flats:** There are self-contained residential accommodation units within a building block. It must be on one floor forming a complete residence. Flats are of varying categories, such as modern purposed designed prestige flat in low density area and the converted type in high density area.
- **Detached Bungalows:** This is a separate development standing apart, it is not attached to any other house and usually on a land large enough to provide a garden, additional parking space and a boys quarter.
- **Duplex:** This is a dwelling house divided so as to accommodate two facilities with separate kitchen and bathroom including separate living areas and entrances. They are usually occupied by higher income earners (Eby, kitchen & Williams, 2012)
- **Boys Quarter:** These are small buildings located at the rear of the main building. It contains a kitchen, convenience and living units for service staff.

Methodology

The design to be used for this study is the descriptive survey design, because the study is aimed at collecting data on achieving optimum property values through urban slum clearance and describing the data collected through questionnaire in a systematic manner. The population of the study consists of landlords, Town Planners, tenants, Estate Surveyors and Valuers. Through concise interview, the researchers’ were told that the estate harbours three hundred and ten (310) inhabitants by a property owner currently. The Taro Yamen’s formula will be used to determine the sample size. Tables and the percentage method shall also be employed in data analysis alongside the Chi-square statistics in testing the hypothesis formulated in the body of the work. Though, secondary sources of data will also be consulted to enable the study to be completed on time. The Taro formula is stated thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample

N = Population of the study

e = Level of significance

I = Constant.

$$\frac{30}{1+310(0.05)^2} = \frac{310}{1+310(0.0025)} = \frac{310}{1+0.0775} = \frac{310}{1.775} = 175$$

Results and Analysis

Table 1: Questionnaire Administration and response Rate

Respondents	Distribution	Retrieved	% Response
Landlords	56	22	27.5
Tenants	68	26	32.5
Town Planers	20	14	17.5
Estate Surveyors & Valuers	31	18	22.5
Total	175	80	100

Source: Author's Field Work, 2025

This table clearly explains numbers of questionnaire distributed to various categories of respondents and numbers collected. Landlords were given 56 copies, retrieved 22 representing 27.5%, tenants representing 32.5%, town planners representing 17.5% while estate surveyors and valuers representing 22.5%. This means that, all the respondents responded well to the questionnaire.

Table 2: Causes of Slum in the Area

Causes	(O)	(E)	(O – E)	(O – E) ²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
Poor planning	32	26.7	5.3	28.09	1.0521
Poverty/Low income	28	26.7	1.3	1.69	0.0632
Rural Urban Migration	20	26.7	6.7	44.89	1.6813

$$\chi^2 = 2.797$$

H₀: There is no significant possibility that all these are causes of slum in the area.

Calculated $\chi^2 = 2.797$

The value will be at 5% degree of freedom

$$(C - 1) (R - 1)$$

$$(n - 1) (3 - 1) = 2$$

$$(2, 0.05) = 5.99$$

Decision Rule: The Calculated value 2.797 < 5.99 tabulated value, H₀ will be accepted and H₁ rejected that these are not all the causes of slum in the area.

Table 3: Negative effects of slum on property values

Effects	(O)	(E)	(O – E)	(O – E) ²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
Degrading environment	30	20	10	100	5.0

Overcrowding	12	20	8	64	3.2
Reduced physical and rental passing of properties	32	20	12	144	7.2
Spread of diseases	6	20	14	196	9.8

$$X^2 = 25.2$$

H_0 : There is no significant effects of slum on property values.

Calculated $X^2 = 25.2$

The value will be at 5% degree of freedom

$(C -) (R - 1)$

$(n - 1) (4 - 1) = 3 (3, 0.05) = 7.82$

Decision Rule: The calculated value $25.2 > 7.82$ tabulated value, H_0 is rejected and H_1 accepted that there is significant effects of slum on property values.

Table 4: Rental Values of Residential Properties in Mango Estate Before

Types of property	Rental passing PA	Monthly payment
Batchers	4,800	400
Make shift	7,200	600
Single room	8,400	700

Source: Author's Field Work, 2025

This table explain vividly when the area was still regarded as slum. Bachers attracts four hundred naira monthly which amounted to four thousand eight hundred naira annually, makeshift houses went for six hundred naira monthly and in one year totaling seven thousand two hundred naira while single rooms seven hundred naira and in one year gives eight thousand four hundred naira.

Table 5: Rental values of residential properties in Mango Estate at present.

Categories	Rental Passing PA
1 Bedroom	₦450,000
2 Bedroom	₦550,000
3 Bedroom	₦700,000
Duplex	₦1,200,000

Source: Author's Field Work, 2025

This table demonstrates the current prices of rented accommodation in Mango Estate Elelenwo, Port Harcourt. It happened as a result of slum clearance, careful planning, model buildings and other infrastructural facilities including security.

Table 6: Types of properties in the Area

Types of properties	(O)	(E)	(O - E)	(O - E) ²	$\frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$
Tenements	-	-	-	-	-
Selfcontain	14	16	2	4	0.25
1 Bedroom	21	16	5	25	1.625
2 Bedroom	22	16	6	36	2.25

3 Bedroom	18	16	2	4	0.25
Others	5	16	11	121	7.563

$$X^2 = 11.94$$

H_0 : There is no significant impact between slum clearance and rental values of residential properties.

Calculated $X^2 = 11.94$

The values will be at 5% degree of freedom

$(c - 1)(R - 1)$

$(n - 1)(5 - 1) = 4(4, 0.05) = 9.49$

Decision Rule: The calculated value $11.94 > 9.49$ tabulated value, H_0 will be rejected and H_1 accepted that there is significant impact between slum clearance and rental values of residential properties.

Discussion of Findings

1. The study demonstrated that there are more causes of slum in the study area. From the analysis, calculated value is less than the tabulated value.
2. Discovering further, the negative effects of slum on property values is enormous than the positives looking at the values calculated and tabulated.
3. That in the chosen location, before now, no meaningful development took place and properties at that period command no optimum values.
4. That after the slum clearance, property values increased optimally, security of lives and properties guaranteed, model buildings were erected and the environment neatly demarcated with infrastructural facilities.
5. Testing the hypothesis using chi-square statistics, urban slum clearance has positive impact on rental values of residential properties because the calculated value is higher than the tabulated value.

Recommendations

1. Property owners and tenants should imbibe the spirit of maintaining their buildings and also regulate the number of persons living in an apartment to safeguard the facilities therein.
2. Enforcement of code of conduct in the built environment.
3. Adequate compensation to the owners of dispossessed properties marked for clearance.
4. Parks and open spaces should be preserved and protected to enable residential properties sustain or regain its values.
5. There should be the involvement of private public partnerships in the process of urban slum clearance.
6. To take on the process of urban renewal, government should fund the programme.

Conclusion

For an area to experience decay and degeneration, it suggests that there has not been proper maintenance and that present a very serious environmental challenges in most Nigerian cities. The task of urban slum clearance must be pursued and accomplished to bring our substandard urban cities environments to the standard that supports sustainability. Based on that, the renewed urban area would not only ensure attractiveness and aesthetically pleasant, cozy, and

serene environment, but also enhanced socio-economic development, safe, secure, healthy and quality of life for both the present and future generations.

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