



An Autopsy of Housing Challenges in Urban Maiduguri

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Annotation

Housing challenge is no doubt among the greatest urbanization problems faced by most cities in the developing world. The nature and type of accommodation an individual lives in, indicates his ranking in the society. The focal point of this study, is to examine the housing challenges in Maiduguri urban, Borno State, Nigeria. The study adopted survey method of research through observation, questionnaire schedule and interviews with heads of households. A sample size of 200 respondents was purposively selected for this study while the simple random sampling method was employed in the selection of the four districts used in data collection. 200 questionnaires were randomly administered at an interval of 10 houses. Results indicated that majority of residents are tenants and are unhappy with the unhealthy environment they live in. The study recommended establishment of satellite towns, total removal of bottle necks in land acquisition, development of infrastructure to attract private developers amongst others.

Keywords: Housing; Accommodation; Maiduguri Urban; Urbanization; Borno State

Introduction

One of the greatest challenges faced by most urbanized cities has remained that of housing availability and affordability. Among the topmost human needs is a decent accommodation. Housing is adjudged the best indicator of one's standard of living and ranking in the society. The nature and type of accommodation an individual lives in, has a direct impact on his productivity and health. Nigeria, according to Ezeigwe [1], is the fastest urbanizing nation in Africa and is confronted with a plethora of urbanization problems; chief among which is housing. Problems associated with housing in Nigeria, has been worsened by poverty and increase in population. Available houses seem not to be enough as more and more people troop into cities in search of daily survival. A recent study by Okafor [2], stated that only 10% of houses in Nigeria are habitable, while an estimated 56-79% of Nigerians are without adequate shelter. In recent years, urban housing challenges have been on the front

burner of most environmental scholars, little wonder the year 2020 theme for World Habitat day was tagged "housing for all: a better urban future" in a bid to focus attention of environmental scholars on urban housing. This is so because most cities are congested, and with the geometric rise in world population, most cities of the world will become inhabitable. According to the United Nations habitat report, half of the world populations live in urban areas. Okupe [3] and Aluko [4], add that the rate of urbanization in developing countries was 25% in 1970. The figure rose to 37% in 1994 and is projected to be 57% by 2050.

Affordable housing encompasses not only the static structure, but the totality of environmental factors that make living acceptable and comfortable [5,6]. Since the last decade, housing shortages in Maiduguri capital city has been worsened by the Boko Haram insurgency, which ravaged several communities in northeastern part of Nigeria, with Borno State being the worst hit. Boko Haram was formed in

Maiduguri city, with its enclave located at Goni Kachallari, behind state lowcost housing estate. The sect was later dislodged from the city after years of intense guerilla fight with government forces, aided by scores of civilian volunteer fighters, now known as the Civilian Joint Task Force (Civilian JTF). The surviving sect members escaped into adjoining forests and bushes—regrouped and became violent. Since 2009, the insurgents have killed over 20, 000 people, sacked

and took over several towns, overran several military formations and established caliphates in several parts of the state. Owing to the insurgent activities, Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) have littered Maiduguri, thereby worsening housing challenges in the city. Since Nigeria's return to democracy in 1999, successive governors of Borno State have done their bits in the construction of housing estates to assuage the housing deficit in Maiduguri urban.

Chronology of Housing Units in Maiduguri Since 1999 (Table 1)

Year	Regime	Housing Units
1999-2003	Mala Kachalla	202 housing estate
		303 housing estate
2003-2007/2007-2011	Ali Modu Sheriff	505 housing estate,
		707 housing estate,
		1000 housing estate
		20 housing units in 27 local governments
2011-2015/2015-2019	Kashim Shettima	Legacy Housing Estate phase 1 & 2,
		Shettima Ali Monguno Teachers village housing estate
		400 housing units in each of the four (4) axis of Maiduguri
2019 till date	Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum	1000 housing units, Auno (under construction)
		1000 housing units, Monguno (under construction)
		50 housing units, University of Maiduguri
		Several other housing units still under construction.

Table 1: Chronology of Housing Units.

The common goal of these housing interventions by successive governments in Borno State is to reduce housing deficit in the city with the practical strategy of facilitating low cost housing. Despite the impressive numbers of housing estates in Maiduguri, housing demand in the city far exceed available residential houses. The obvious shortfall in residential houses has given rise to the development of shanties, slums, squatters and overcrowding of available space. This paper therefore examined the housing challenges in Maiduguri urban. This was achieved by identifying the socio-economic characteristics of residents, current condition of their residences, current housing tenure and mode of access.

Materials & Methods

This research was conducted in Maiduguri urban, Borno State, Nigeria. Maiduguri is the capital city of Borno State, located in the northeastern part of Nigeria. The city is located between latitudes 11°46'18"N and 11°53'21"N and longitudes 13°02'23"E and 13°14'19"E. Maiduguri city

is adjudged the largest and most populous city in northeast Nigeria with a landmass of 50,778 km² and a population of 621,492 [7].

Data required for this study include but not limited to data on the housing problems experienced by residents, data on the socio-economic characteristics of respondents as well as information on the housing tenure system. The primary instruments and method of data collection for this study include a questionnaire, a photo camera, field observation, and interviews while the secondary data for this study were sourced from news papers, text books and other internet sources. Four (4) districts were randomly selected for this study. All 17 districts in Maiduguri urban were alphabetically arranged, and four districts randomly selected. The selected districts are; Gwange, Mairi Maisandari and Old Maiduguri. The sample size for this study was purposively pegged at 200. This is because the total population of residents in the districts couldn't be ascertained. A total of 200 questionnaires were randomly distributed to heads of households at an interval of ten (10) houses from each.

All 200 questionnaires were retrieved. Each questionnaire was coded and its responses carefully entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 21)

software. Results of the data analysis will be described in pie charts, bar charts and Tables (Figure 1).

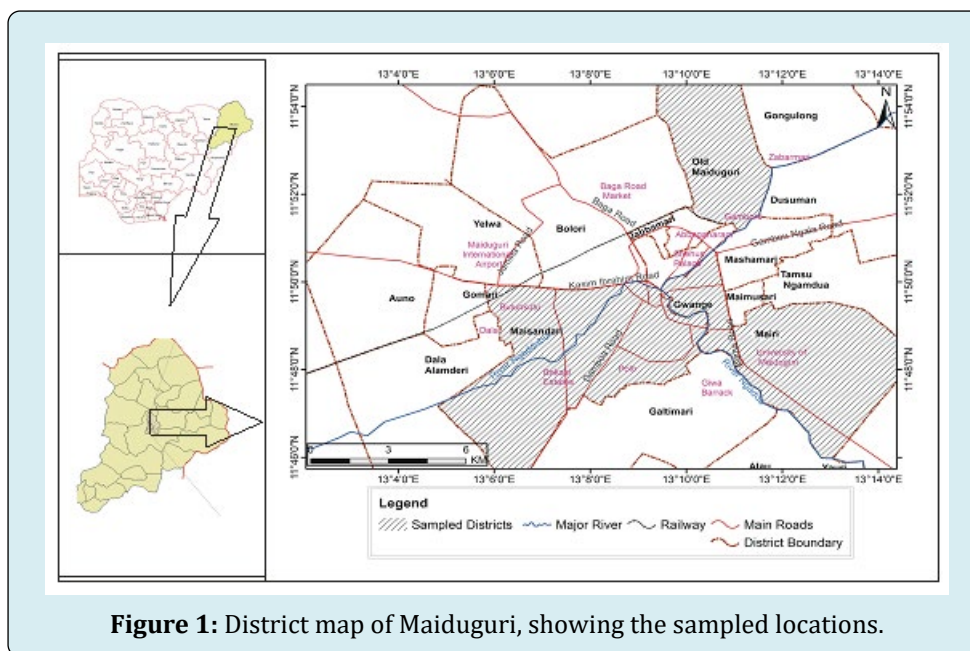


Figure 1: District map of Maiduguri, showing the sampled locations.

Results

Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	158	79
Female	42	21
Total	200	100
Age of Respondents		
20-30 years	34	17
31-40 years	68	34
41-50 years	56	28
51 and above	42	21
Total	200	100
Marital status of the Respondents		
Married	128	64
Widow/widower	32	16
Divorced	40	20
Total	200	100

Table 2: Distribution of Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents.

200 questionnaires were randomly administered to respondents and all were retrieved. This indicates 100% response rate. The results in Table 2 shows that 79% of the respondents are males while 21% are females. This further lays more credence to Sabiu, Zainol and Abdullahi [8] assertion that adult females in northern Nigeria are strictly secluded, thereby making the male gender socially more active than the female. The result also supports the view of Zakaria [9] which stated that the culture of northern Nigeria is based on deep rooted patriarchy that characterizes the male gender as the head of every household. The results also indicates that majority of the respondents (34%) are within the ages of 31-40 years, while 21% of the respondents are above the age of 51. This shows that the study population is youthful and is of the productive age. The study also revealed that 128 respondents which translate to 64% of the study population are married, while 16% and 20% are widow/widower and divorced respectively. The result for educational qualification show that majority of respondents (44%) have at least, the basic primary school education. 32% have secondary school education, while 9%, 2% and 13% have a Bachelors degree certificate, post graduate degrees and Tsangya system of education respectively.

Number of Living Rooms

The indigenous people of Maiduguri are majorly from the Kanuri tribe and are mostly Muslims. Abubakar [10] stated

that there is also the existence of pockets of smaller tribes in the city such as Shuwa Arab, Hausa, Marghi, Fulani and Bura. The dominant feature in the culture of the Kanuri tribe is having large family sizes. This culture is religiously backed up—as the Islamic religion allows an adult and capable male to marry as many as 4 wives [11,12]. This culture of large family sizes has also impacted on the architectural layout of houses in the city. Most houses in the middle and high income areas are usually built to be spacious with several living rooms to accommodate the large family. This study sought to find out the average number of living rooms occupied by the respondents as depicted in Figure 2.

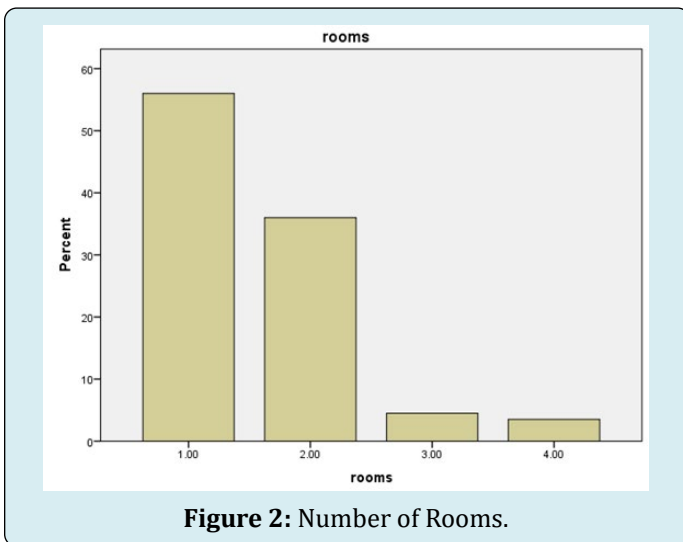


Figure 2: Number of Rooms.



Figure 3: Legacy housing estate, Bulunkutu, Ngomari-Airport, Maiduguri.

The analysis depicted in Figure 2 indicates that 56% of the respondents, which forms the majority, live in 1, 2 or 3 bedroom apartments. Similarly, 36% of respondents reported that their house has between 4-6 rooms, while 5% and 3% of respondents stated that they live in apartments with 7-10 room and 11 rooms and above respectively. The researchers while on fieldwork observed that respondents living in 1-3 bedroom apartments are mostly the low and

semi-middle class, while apartments with 4-6 rooms are occupied by the middle class of the society. Residences with 7-10 and 11 rooms and above are occupied by high class of the society (Figure 3).

Housing Tenure

As earlier stated, housing is the second most important means of livelihood after food. The importance of quality accommodation cannot be overemphasized. Housing tenure as defined by England shelter factsheet is the legal status under which people have the right to occupy their accommodation. The two most common types of housing tenure types are private ownership and rent. But for this study, after an extensive field observation, we expanded housing tenure to suit the culture and people of Maiduguri, and therefore came up with three housing tenure types: Private ownership, rent and family house. For the benefit of the readers, family house in this paper is explained as a situation whereby an adult male, together with his wife and children occupy a section of his parent's house. This is a common practice in Maiduguri. Parents with large houses, give their newly married son a part of the house to live with his wife pending when he gets enough funds to get his own accommodation. Figure 4, shows the analysis of responses on housing tenure type by respondents.

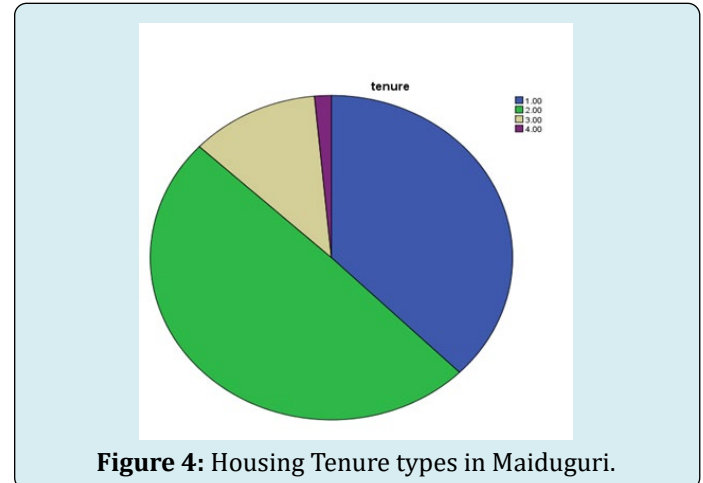


Figure 4: Housing Tenure types in Maiduguri.

The results from Figure 4 shows that majority of the respondents (50%) live in rented apartments, 38% of the respondents, indicated that they are the owners of their apartments while 12% of the respondents alluded to the fact that they live in family residences. However, there was a 100% response rate as to whether respondents living in rented apartments were willing to own their own houses. Similarly, interactions with respondents living in family houses revealed that most of them have plans to go secure their own apartments and leave the family house for privacy sake, while a few saw no need to seek accommodation

elsewhere and insisted on remaining in the family house (Figure 6).



Figure 5: Crowded bungalows with poor aesthetics at Gwange district.

Mode of Access

Most government housing policies is to encourage affordable housing as well as private home ownership. Home ownership according to Elsinga and Hoekstra [13], leads to greater housing satisfaction and boosts one's self esteem. This position is also shared by Rohe, Zandt and McCarthy [14], Bloze and Skak [15] and Rohe and Stegman [16]. From the previous analysis, it was indicated that 38% of the respondents affirmed ownership of their residences. These categories of respondents were further probed on how they acquired their residences. Mode of access in this study refers to how owners acquired their property. Figure 6 reports the home owner's mode of access (Figure 6).

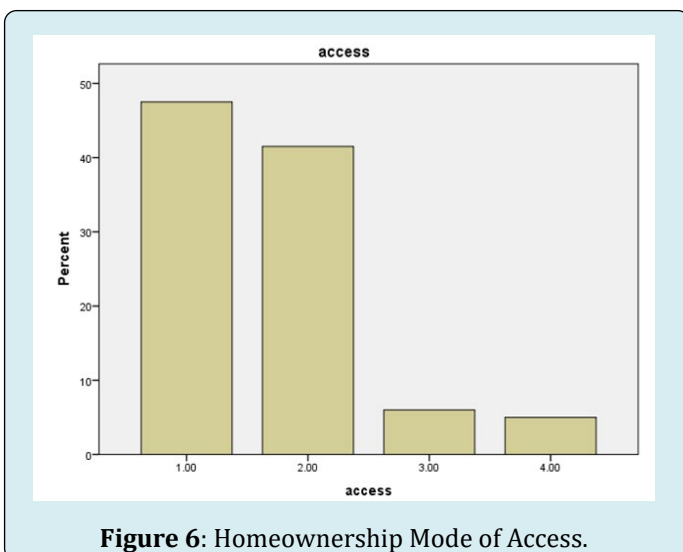


Figure 6: Homeownership Mode of Access.

The results shows that 48% of the homeowners purchased their residences from their savings, 41% self developed the property, indicating that they previously had an undeveloped land, while 5% and 6% got their houses through inheritance and gifts respectively.

Hygiene and Environment

There is a popular saying that cleanliness is next to Godliness. The environment where an individual lives has a direct impact on his health and productivity. Poor housing conditions, has the tendency of breaking down the physical and mental health of an individual. This assertion is strongly supported by Krieger and Higgins [17]. They stated that poor housing conditions are associated with a wide range of health concerns, ranging from respiratory infections, asthma and mental health problems. Bonnefoy [18] adds that the immediate housing environment and the neighborhoods represent an everyday-landscape, which can either support or limit the physical, mental, and social well-being of the residents. Studies have shown that many health problems is directly linked to either the materials used for the construction of the building, the architectural design of the building or the equipments installed in the building (Figure 7).



Figure 7: Entrance to an overcrowded dilapidated apartment at Old Maiduguri district.

Though, buildings located in swampy areas, on river channels or around refuse dumps is quiet common in Maiduguri urban. Residents also have a role to play, to ensure that their surroundings are clean and habitable. Some houses (as exemplified in Figure 7) though located in a clean neighborhood, has been left to decay by the joint negligence of the landlords and also by the unhygienic lifestyle of the tenants (Figure 8).

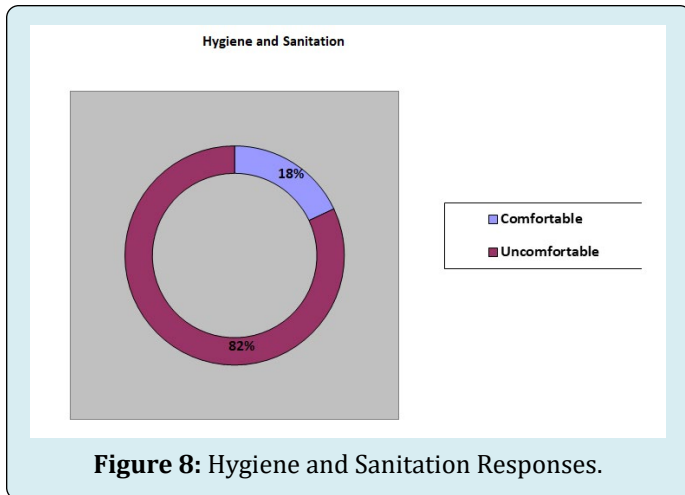


Figure 8: Hygiene and Sanitation Responses.

The analysis in Figure 8, shows that 82%, which is an overwhelming majority are totally uncomfortable with the sanitary conditions of their immediate environments and neighborhoods, while 18% affirmed their comfortability with the sanitary conditions of their immediate environments. Interviews with the heads of households also indicated that majority intend relocating to houses located in a more serene environment. While some of them blamed the landlords for the poor sanitary conditions of the houses, some others blamed the tenants and government [19,20].

Conclusion

The radicalization of the Boko haram sect, has led to an unimaginable level of bloodshed, kidnapping, arson and other associated criminal activities in Borno state. The singular activities of this murderous sect, has led to a mass exodus of people from ravaged communities into Maiduguri city. The high rate of forced migration and its attendant population rise, triggered urban expansion in the state capital. This has resulted to an increase in the demand for accommodation, as well as other accommodation challenges in the capital city. This paper has attempted to examine housing challenges in Maiduguri urban. The expose from this study clearly indicates that there is indeed housing inadequacy in Maiduguri urban. Most residents of the city live in rented apartments. Residents are unsatisfied with the hygienic conditions of their surrounding and will therefore wish to relocate to better houses. Similarly, most of the respondents are tenants and live in 1-3 bedroom apartments.

➤ **From the foregoing, this paper therefore recommends as follows:**

- Government should set machinery in motion to attract investors in the housing sector to augment effort of government. Infrastructural facilities such as access roads, electricity, proper drainage, efficient

waste collection system, etc should be in place for the development of quality houses.

- This paper also strongly suggests the development of satellite towns in the suburbs with quality roads linked to the main town. This will reduce the accommodation pressure in the city.
- Government agencies such as Borno state Geographic Information Service (BOGIS), Borno State Environmental Protection Agency (BOSEPA) as well as other sister agencies should be fully mobilized to carry out proactive duties such as mapping of all residential landuse in the city, demolition of unapproved buildings, regular inspection of buildings, ensuring that new buildings are constructed with quality materials.
- Government should ensure that all bottle necks in the process of land acquisition by private individuals be removed immediately.
- Government should also ensure that new estates and those under construction are allocated to deserving members of the public and not hijacked by politicians and a privileged few.

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