

Assessment of Private Property Developer's Involvement in Urban Developmental Decisions in Kano Metropolis, Nigeria

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Abstract: This study assessed private property developer's involvement in urban development decision in metropolitan Kano. It is commonly acknowledged that private property developers provides over 90% of the properties in Nigeria, but despite this massive strides they are not involved in decisions making regarding urban development. Primary data for the study was acquired through administration of questionnaire to 127 property developers in Kano metropolis comprising of 114 private individuals and 13 corporate respondents. The major findings of the study reveals extreme negligible involvement of developers in almost all the aspects of urban development decisions such as access to land, infrastructural provision and housing finance. Respondents suggested involvement in the form of empowerment, collaboration, consultation, information sharing and active involvement by the government and urban managers. The study concludes by recommending collaboration between the government and private sector in order to boost the activities of private property developers in the spirit of Private-Public Partnership.

Keywords: private property, urban development, Nigeria, Private-Public Partnership

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that the property development industry consists of a large number of interrelating sectors linking the supply of land and building to

demand. The main members of this industry are the property developers and the builders, the property dealing companies and the financial institutions. This study focuses on the involvement of developers in urban growth and development decisions in Kano metropolis.

Property developers are key figures in the urban growth processes. This is mainly due to the fact that they make the initial decision to acquire land for development, either for sale, letting, or as owner-occupier [1-3]. It is justifiable to state here that, an empirical understanding of property development industry is critical for a full understanding of urbanization processes as well as a basis for effective urban planning. A focus on population growth and change is not enough to provide an understanding of urban growth and the form it takes, one must also understand the strategies of the actors who carry out urban development [4].

Given the fact that property developer's play a very vital role in the expansion of our fringes, a great deal of information needs to be known about their activities as well as their behaviour so that the diversity

exhibited by the developers in the development industry will provide us with not only a sound basis for effective understanding and classification of the industry but how their roles, decisions and behaviours impacts on the decisions and action of urban managers in enacting polices that regulates the form and pattern of urban growth.

To understand and appreciate this vital industry, there is a need on the part of those who formulate public policy that guides and shapes urban development to understand the industry, the behaviour of its participants and the impact of public policies on its function. In a process as complex and costly as property development, where private participation is necessary, public policy based on partial or lack of knowledge will not only fail to produce necessary reforms, but create new problems with unintended side effects [5]. Furthermore, planners and other policy makers do not build cities and towns, rather cities and towns are mostly built by private/ public sector's interest and developers in particular. Thus planners have to acquire a sound understanding of the perspectives, actions and strategies of those city builders and this is something that is sadly missing in

the planning literature and research, particularly in Nigeria.

It is obvious that in order to ensure the realization of fair and balanced urban development; several sectors of society are impacted. Decision-making for equitable urban development ought to involve all those who will be affected by the decisions to be made. It must be recognized that all stakeholders' values and concerns are legitimate and should be taken into consideration. This is ensured by seeking deliberate and significant participation from all stakeholders [6]. It is on this premise that Roseland and Connelly [7] wrote that:

“Truly meaningful participation requires that all concerned and affected stakeholders are provided the information and resources they require to influence and contribute to the decision-making process and that planning and decision-making process must be designed and implemented to foster comprehensive stakeholder participation. The issues of who participates, when they participate and how they participate are critical to achieving fairness, efficiency, and stability in decision-making...Shared decision-making involves planning with stakeholders rather than for stakeholders”.

This paper aim at assessing involvement of private property developers in urban development policies, this is with a view of identifying areas where

the developers partake in decision making, infrastructural provision, their relationships with urban managers and policy makers final as well as the effect of all these on the outcome of the built environment.

The following specific objectives are hereby pursued. These are to:

- (i) Identify the major property developers and their socio-economic particulars in the study area,
- (ii) Identify the diversity in property development industry
- (iii) Gauge the extent of developer's involvement and participation in urban development process decisions,
- (iv) Examine the challenges and constraints they encounter in their relationship with urban managers,
- (v) Proffer recommendations in line with the findings of the study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

Kano state lies between latitude 10° 31' 41.14'N to 12° 34' 10.57'N and between longitude 7° 41'26.40'E to 9° 23' 17.50'E. Kano metropolitan area lies between latitude 11° 55' 23.93'N to 12° 3' 53.10'N and longitude 8° 27' 42.26'E to 8° 36' 41.62'E and is 1549 feet above sea level. The estimated area of Kano metropolis increased from 122.7 square kilometers in 1962 to 154.6 square kilometers in 1981, an increase of about 25% based on the average expansion rate of two square kilometers per annum [8] (Figure 1).

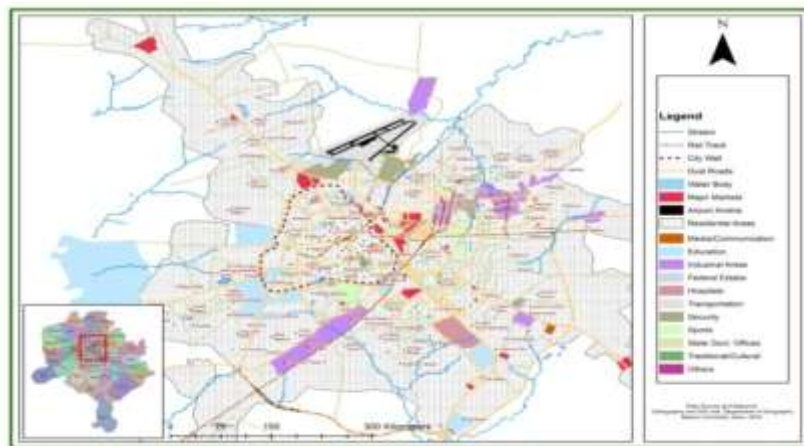


Fig-1: Map of Kano Metropolis

For many centuries, Kano has been the largest and most influential commercial town in the Sudan zone. The settlement is probably over one thousand years old and was first situated on the vicinity of Dala Hill, the source of iron, which the inhabitants smelted and fabricated [9]. The Kano chronicle records the first king of Kano as Bagauda whose ascension was stated to

be in the year 999 AD. The 19.2 square kilometer of the city walls were completed by the twelfth century.

Methodology

In the conduct of this study, a combination of purposive sampling procedure and 'Snowball' sampling techniques were adopted. The operation of the purposive sampling technique employed here involves the identification of major property developers who are

known to the Kano State Urban Planning and Development Agency (KNUPDA) on the basis of their previous property development in the study area. Similarly, attempt was made to acquire developer’s names and address from any available association of developers. The names collected from the field in this way and KNUPDA were compared in order to avoid duplication of names. These names served as the initial sample frame and the snowballing technique was employed on the basis of the list of names.

The ‘Snowball’ technique entails asking the first interviewee to name other developer(s) known to him who could be included in the sample. The same applies to subsequent developers.. The essence of this was to ensure that no other major private property developer was left out of the list.

This list was then used as the sampling frame from which developers are selected using Purposive sampling technique. In doing so, care was taken to ensure that developers in all the Kano’s metropolitan area are represented in the sample of the respondents.

"Snowball" technique was also employed here, because of the fact that it is one of the best ways of reaching those developers who usually prefer to operate without much publicity [10]. It also provides a way of introducing the researcher to other developers by the developers themselves. In this study this method surely enhanced the co-operation of the sampled developers.

A total of 127 (114 private individuals and 13 corporate) property developers were selected through the methods stipulated above.

Questionnaire was designed to acquire general and specific information on level of involvement of

property developers in major urban development decisions by the urban managers. Such information includes Socio-Economic characteristics as well as level of involvement or lack of it with respect to developmental decisions such as access to land, finance, physical planning as well as other inputs they could offer. The questionnaire was both evaluative and analytical.

In addition to the above stated methods of data collection, the researcher relied heavily on secondary sources such as published and unpublished materials of KASEPPA; journals (including, e-journals) newspapers, articles, textbooks, and the Internet,

Tools of Analysis and Techniques of Data Presentation

In analysing the responses to the questionnaire statistical tables showing frequencies and percentages were used. Tables were followed with the descriptive analysis of our findings. Figures such as line graphs, histograms, bar chart, pie chart were used to depict the flow of phenomena.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Economic Characteristics of respondents

Investigation into the nature of the organization of sampled respondents revealed that 90% of respondents operate as individual property developers and 10% as private corporate developers (Table 1). It is relevant to state here that majority of the property developers in the study area operate as individuals rather than firms and/or real estate developers and agents as in the case of Euro-American and Australian cities [11-13]. The nature of organization employed by property developers will surely dictate their objectives/motives; decision making processes as well as the overall performance of the developer.

Table1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-Economic Characteristics	Frequency	%
Nature of Organization		
Corporate	13	10%
Individual	114	90%
Duration In Property Development		
1-10 Years	29	23%
11-20 Years	54	43%
21-30 Years	28	22%
Above 30 Years	13	10%
Reasons For Developing Property		
Owner Occupier	34	12%
Sale	127	44%
Rent	127	44%
Type of Property Developed		
Residential	36	28%
Commercial	25	20%
Both (Residential and Commercial)	66	52%

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2015

To have an insight into the nature of involvement of developers in property development, there is a need to examine the length of period respondents have been engaged in property development. This will provide us with vital information about their length of experience and transformation or changes they may have undergone over the years in the course of property development.

From Table 1 it is clear that majority (43%) of the respondents have been engaged in property development for period of 11 – 20 years, while 23% and 22% of the respondents have been practicing property development for a period between 1-10 years and 21-30 years. This finding is not surprising considering the fact that Kano metropolis apart from been the commercial nerve center of Northern Nigeria has been undergoing massive development due to population growth. For instance, in 1952, the total population in Kano metropolis was 127,000, the population increased to 295,432 in 1963, 760,000 in 1973, 1.5 million in 1991, 2,932,000 by the year 2010 and it is expected to reach about 3,752,960.00 by the year 2020 based on the 2.8 annual growth rate [14]. Similarly, residential land use has increased by 41.94% while agricultural land used declined by -36.26% [15]. Experience has shown that expansion or growth of towns or cities is a product of population increase. The growth in population coupled with economic growth will result in mass development/redevelopment and rehabilitation of properties to accommodate the increasing number of migrants into the city.

Respondent's response to the reasons why they engaged in property development shows that 34% develop for sale and rent while 12% built for owner occupation or their relatives or children. Property development despite been a capital intensive venture is a lucrative business because property values particularly in the developing countries are constantly rising due to absence or imposition of lower taxes on properties. Developer's motivation for profit makes him to engage in real estate transaction usually for sale or letting or for all of these and hardly cases of loss are encountered. Similar findings were noted by Clawson, [16]; Litchfield; [16] Mamman, [16] and Dankani, [2, 3]

Investigation into the nature of property the sampled respondents develops indicate that 52% claimed to develop both residential and commercial properties, those who built only residential properties accounts for 28% and 22% are those that who built commercial properties only. Further analysis reveals that these respondents developed hundreds of these properties within Kano metropolitan area:

Assessment of Involvement in Urban Development Decision:

Respondent's response to whether they are involved in urban developmental decision reveals that the whole respondents claimed they were not involved in land allocation decision, infrastructural provision decision and financial provision decision. While 93% and 86 % of the respondents claimed they were not involved in issues related to legislation decision and overall urban growth and development decisions respectively.

Table 2: Involvement in Urban Development Decision

Involvement	Yes	No	(% Yes)	(% No)
Land Allocation Decision	0	127	00	100
Infrastructural Provision Decision	0	127	00	100
Legislation on Urban Development	9	118	07	93
Financial Provision Decision	0	127	00	100
Urban Growth and Development Decision	18	109	14	86

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2014

From the foregoing it is obvious that involvement of property developers in urban development decision in Kano Metropolis can be described as minimal or very low. Urban managers simply formulate and implement policies without having inputs from one of the most important stakeholder in urban development that is the property developers. One can rightly argue urban managers and decision makers do not build towns or cities, rather

cities and towns are mostly built by private sector's interest and developers in particular. There is a serious need for developers to be engaged in urban development decision because of their diverse nature of operations, strategies and actions which ultimately enhance the built environment. This involvement is one of the basic objectives of Private- Public Partnership (PPP).

Table 3: Implication(s) of Non Involvement

Implication	Frequency	%
Misconception of Govt. Policies	127	15
Emergence of Unplanned Environment	113	12
Misunderstanding Peculiarities of Communities	104	12
Lack of Synergy and Mutual Understanding	127	15
Stagnation of Property Development Industry	124	14
Corrupt Practices and abuse of power	102	11
Poorly developed land and property Markets	118	14
Loss Revenue	36	04
Other Implication(s)	23	03
	874	100

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2014

Property developers in Kano are of the belief that their non involvement in decisions regarding urban growth has massive implication not only on their production functions but also on the policies, decisions as well as the objectives of urban managers. In this vein, 15% of the respondents are of the view that their non involvement in urban development decisions led to misconception of government policies and their intent. 14%, 12% and 11% of the respondents are of the opinion that their non involvement results in stagnation of the private property development industry, emergence of unplanned environment and corrupt practices and abuse of power respectively. Furthermore, 4% of the respondents cited loss of revenue to the government as part of the consequence of their non involvement while 3% cited other implications such as misplacement of priority and misconception of infrastructural needs of the society.

An in depth look into the repercussion of sidelining property developers in urban development decision shows that government and urban managers are at the receiving end of this exclusion. For instance respondents will resort to informal land market to acquire land and this would lead to massive land speculation by developers. The ugly incident of land fragmentation could be linked to difficult access to development land as well as entrenched corruption and abuse of power the implication therefore is the developers will not have full grasp of the intent of policies and decisions of government and civil servants might use this to seek for gratification or engaged in corrupt practices. This will ultimately result in lack of synergy between government and private development industry.

Table 3: Prioritization of areas where respondents needs involvement

Area	Very Significant	Significant	Undecided	Insignificant	Very Insignificant
Access to Land	127(100%)	0 (0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Infrastructure	106(83%)	21(17%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Financial Issues	114(90%)	10(8%)	3(2%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Tax waivers	104(82%)	11(9%)	1(1%)	8(6%)	3(2%)
Building Material Prices	98(77%)	21(17%)	3(2%)	5(4%)	0(0%)
Policy formulation	111(87%)	08(6%)	0(0%)	5(4%)	3(2%)

Source: Author's Fieldwork, 2014

Likert scale was used here to determine the significance of involvement of respondents in various aspect of property development. Respondents' prioritization of areas where they need involvement reveals that the entire respondents (100%) view involvement in the area of access to land as very significant. In property development land is the most vital 'commodity' because all aspect of the development revolves around land. The developer needs to acquire land regularly to maintain a production flow of dwellings and other properties and to retain the full employment of his labour force and other factors of production. This land needs to be suitable for the types of

dwellings or properties that the developer specialises in building, and this must be purchased in excess of a price that allows the developer to make profit having regard to anticipated building cost and the sale price of the finished products. In the study area and Nigeria at large access to land has been clearly explained by the 1978 Land Use Decree. Land can be allocated to an individual or corporate body by the Government either through statutory or customary allocation of right of occupancy. The 1978 Land Use Decree vested all rights in land in urban areas in the Federal Military Governor on whose behalf and with whose express consent all grant of rights; interest in land would be made henceforth [1,

19]. The process of land allocation by the state nowadays is entirely tortuous, lengthy, expensive and full of so many bottlenecks which often compel individuals to resort to the informal land market in order to acquire land [1]. The emergence of the informal land market was borne out of the failure of the government to provide sufficiently land for development and the increasing pressure and demand for land.

Similarly, 83% of the respondents ranked involvement in infrastructural provision decision as very significant while 17% ranked it as significant. 90%, 82% and 77% of the respondents ranked involvement in financial decision, tax waiver and determination of building materials prices as very significant. Same goes to involvement in policy formulation with 83% of the respondents.

Infrastructural provision is one key area that needs serious collaboration between urban managers and property developers. The Infrastructural report of Nigeria just like any third world country is nothing to write home about. The housing situation is in a sorry state both quantitatively and qualitatively [20-23]. Most infrastructures are now decayed and need repair, rehabilitation or replacement. Government is the system that plans, organizes, controls and supervises the people who are resident in an area in other for all to have conducive-environment for living and a sense of belonging. Governments have the power to put in place all measures that it deem fit will make an environment beneficial for living for everybody and one of this measure is involvement of property developers as stake holders in urban development decisions.

Finance is very crucial in property development. Without a steady flow of finance, all other factors of property development cannot be assembled. Finance is needed to purchase land, building materials, construction equipments and even payment of labourers. The focus on finance has, however, been very prominent for obvious reasons. This is because housing provision requires huge capital outlay, which is often beyond the capacity of the medium income/low income groups [24]. It is noteworthy to state here that

private individual and corporate agencies have for long time been providing bulk of the houses in our rural and urban area. The Federal Office of Statistics, Lagos in 1983 acknowledged that private sector developers account for 83% of urban housing [25]. Private developers both in the individual and corporate sectors are not financially equipped to supplement the effort of the Federal Government in housing delivery. The various institutions and programmes created by the government to ensure adequate provision of housing or mortgage finance have not live up to expectation. Despite all these interventions and huge investments in housing provisions since the colonial times and to date, Nigeria’s housing problems still remain intractable. In fact, access to decent shelter has worsened for increasing segments of the urban population particularly low and medium income earners in Nigeria. All these are the product of inadequate financial provision in housing delivery in the country.

Even though taxes on residential and commercial properties are not so exorbitant, developers are of the opinion that tax waivers such as one granted to importers and telecommunication companies should be extended to property developers so that their production functions could be enhanced.

Given the recurring issue of high cost of building materials, it is appropriate to discuss this issue further by examining the trend in building material cost. The rise in the cost of building materials and construction cost began after the civil war and other major increases coincide with the award of Udoji salary increase and mismanagement of the economy during the last civilian administration as well as during the period of the Structural Adjustment Programme (S.A.P), where sharp rises in prices of building materials and construction cost were recorded [3]. The causes for high cost of building materials include:

- a) High demand for building materials arising from the post Civil War reconstruction, creation of states and the oil boom.
- b) Inefficient distribution system aggravated by middlemen and high transportation costs coupled with monopoly of importation and distribution of materials, e.g. cement.

Table 4: Nature of Involvement required by Respondents

Nature	Frequency	%
Empowerment	123	23
Involvement	117	22
Collaborative	102	19
Consultative	112	20
Informative	89	16
	543	100

Source: Author’s Fieldwork, 2014

Respondents were asked to state the kind of involvement they required from the urban managers and they responded as follow; 23% of the respondents prefer their involvement to be that of empowerment. These aspects of involvement enable property developers to be able to make decision regarding the operation of the industry. 22% wanted to be involved, that is to work directly with urban managers so that their concerns and aspirations are consistently understood, appreciated and considered. Furthermore 19%, 20% and 16% of the respondents required that their involvement in developmental decision should be collaborative, consultative and informative respectively. By collaborative, developers partner with government and urban managers at each stage and aspect of decision making including coming up with a preferred solution or initiatives. Consultative involvement entails obtaining feedback on decisions and alternative approaches. Informative involvement dwells around engaging in provision of balanced and objective information to assist urban managers understand, appreciate developers problems, opportunities, challenges and ways of finding solutions to mitigate the challenges facing property development industry.

Going by the above responses, property developers in Kano metropolis are in dire need of partaking in urban development decisions. Private individuals and corporate agencies have for long time been providing bulk of the houses in our rural and urban areas. The Federal Office of Statistics, Lagos in 1983 acknowledged that private sector developers account for 83% of urban housing [25].

The fact that neither the private developers nor the government can adequately deal with the enormous demand for housing and infrastructural provision in Nigeria, calls for a collaborative efforts in the form of Public-Private Partnership (PPP). Fiszbein and Lowden [26] define PPP as “the pooling of resources (financial, human, technical and intangibles such as information and political support) from public and private sources to achieve a commonly agreed goal”. It has also been defined as a collaborative effort among public, private and third sector organizations based on mutual trust, a division of labour and a comparative advantage in the sharing of responsibilities, risks and benefits [27-31].

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is apparent from the findings of this study that majority of property developers in Kano metropolis are not involved in urban developmental decisions. Government and urban managers considers formulation and implementation of urban development decisions as the prerogative of the government. This perception needs to be changed in view of the recognition of past and present contribution of the private developer sector

to the national housing development. They need to be mobilized, organized and motivated in line with the overall organizational structure of the housing-delivery system so as to achieve the much needed synergy that would boost orderly property development in the study area. Emphasis ought to be placed on access to land, infrastructural provision and access to finance. The study has also elaborated that non involvement of property developers in urban development related decisions results in non accomplishment of most government policies because a key stakeholder has been excluded.

The following recommendations are meant to enhance the active participation of developers in the provision of property as well as involving them in urban development decisions:

- i. Government should as a matter of urgency make land easily available to the developers through the formal land market so as to discourage the patronage of the informal land market and curb excesses of land speculators
- ii. Providing and extending necessary site and services facilities to vacant lands in order to make such areas developable by attracting the attention of developers,
- iii. Providing of easy access to sources of finance at favourable terms to developers by setting up/effective funding of building societies and primary mortgage institutions (P.M.I). The setting up of this P.M.I will surely relieve the F.M.B.N from retail lending to developers and allow the F.M.B.N to serve as wholesale lender to P.M.I.;
- iv. Government should place emphasis on monitoring, co-ordination and evaluation of its policies so as to ensure effective participation of developers and success of the policies;
- v. Public developers should liaise with individual and corporate developers so as to form a kind of partnership (public –private partnership) that will enable one to complement the effort of the other in the provision of properties in the study area;
- vi. To understand diversity in property developer behaviour there is a need to adopt a performance based approach that clearly sets out objectives, together with a facilitative style of interaction that aims to help the developer achieve their dream and at the same time aims to produce socially and environmentally desirable outcome.

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