Perspective of Neighbourhood Preference: A Study of Ilorin City, Nigeria

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Abstract

Previous studies have long-established a strong relationship between the neighbourhood and the kind of environment to which an individual has been exposed and life chances available to him. Attributes of neighbourhoods and the experiences provided have been found to affect people's capabilities in terms of their ideas, achievements in life, as well as their socio-economic development. This has made studies on neighbourhood preferences attractive. This paper is an attempt to identify the category of and preference for neighbourhoods by residents in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. Data used were collected through a systematic random sampling of 334 households with the aid of structured questionnaire. Descriptive analysis was used to analyse and present data. Findings of the study revealed that 38% of the households had preference for the high income residential neighbourhoods irrespective of ethnic background or level of income. That neighbourhood preference is not dependent on socio-economic status or background of individuals but on perception of the attribute of a neighbourhood. However, the study confirmed that the actual ability to reside in the preferred residential zone is highly determined by socio-economic factors such as the level of income. The study recommends re-creating the kind of layouts that exist in the high income residential zones in all other neighbourhoods within the city by stakeholders. However in the course of recreation, government should endeavour to embark on urban renewal projects in the core traditional area housing most of the low income neighbourhoods, though citizens participation must be garnered to ensure that government projects are supported by the ultimate end users.

Keywords: Environment, Neighbourhood, Preference, Residential zones, Urban.

Introduction

The importance of neighbourhood to city dwellers cannot be overemphasized. Where people live affects their health, economic, social and mental well-being. Abdulraheem, Olorunfemi and Muhammad-Lawal (2014) noted that the choice of a place of residence is an important marker of a person's social status. There is an increasing concern about the quality of life in modern towns and cities around the world hence, the increasing interest among built environment professionals and policymakers on how to measure those factors that influence neighbourhood choice by residents. Abdulraheem *et al.* (2014) further asserted that individuals with a varied cultural background may live in a neighbourhood and yet share similar views regarding environmental features. Some urban researchers such as James, Lisa, and Stafanie (2002) have argued that residents' preferences and evaluation of their neighbourhood vary as a result of the diversity in their senses of judgment as well as their individual lifestyles. Universally, improving the residential environment has become one of the fundamental goals of urban planners and policy makers, hence a motive for this research.

Whereas residential mobility and neighbourhood preferences impact on urban growth and change, neighbourhoods do not share the same level of infrastructure and environmental quality as well as the residents who reside in them (Julius & Ojeifo, 2007). Rapid urbanization coupled with the expansion of towns and cities in Nigeria has brought about continuing competition among people for the most desired locations. However, everyone cannot live where they would prefer to live due to several limiting factors. Nevertheless, availability of information on preference for neighbourhood and residential types has a lot of implication for planning and urban management. This study aims at examining neighbourhood characteristics and preference among the residents of Ilorin metropolis, Kwara state, Nigeria.

The objective of the Study is to identify and evaluate the available and preferred residential types and neighbourhood by households in Ilorin.

The Study Area

The location of Ilorin, Kwara State capital is on the intercept of Latitudes 8^0 30' and 8^0 50' North of the Equator and Longitudes 4^0 20' and 4^0 35' East of the Greenwich Meridian. The city serves as the link between the Northern and Southern parts of Nigeria. Oyebanji (1994) described Ilorin as the socio-cultural, religious and political meeting point of Nigeria. Bounded by Niger State to the North and Ifelodun L.G.A to the West, Ilorin shares a boundary with Oyo State on the Southern end (Fig.1). Situated 500km from Abuja the city has an approximate land mass of about 100sq km and is populated by diverse people with different cultural backgrounds (Kwara State Gazette, 1991) e.g. Yorubas, Nupawas, Baribas, Hausas, Gwaris, Kemberis and Fulanis. However, the population of the Igbos and people from the Eastern part of Nigeria has increased drastically in recent times. Indeed, tribal heterogeneity and cultural diversity are well pronounced in the state, to an extent that Ilorin can aptly be referred to as a microcosm of Nigeria (Unilorin Bulletin, 2012). The cultural plurality of Ilorin makes it easy for many Nigerians to find a niche within this dynamic city without much stress.
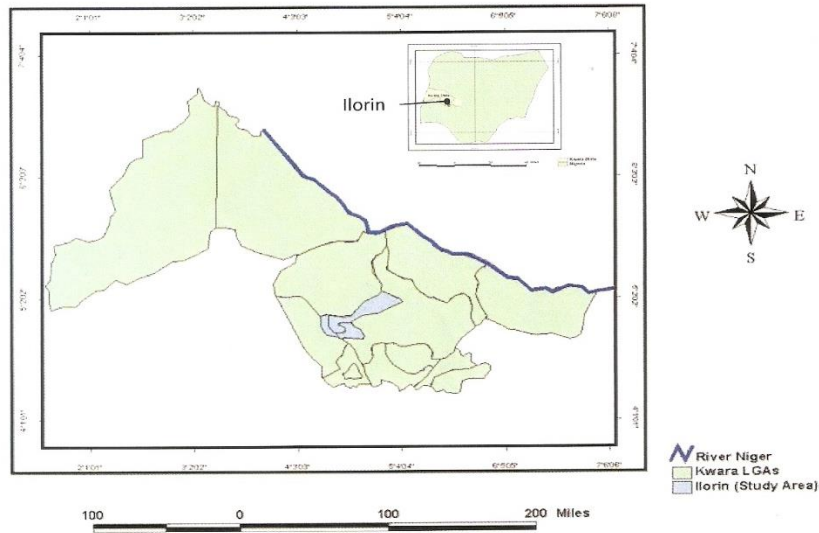
Figure1: Map of Kwara State Showing the Study Area (Inset: Map of Nigeria Showing Kwara State and Ilorin)
Source : Kwara State Ministry of Lands and Housing , 2009.

Literature Review
Defining Neighbourhood

Neighbourhood is a term often used to describe the sectors of urban or rural places such as cities, towns and villages. Berk (2005) defined a neighbourhood simply as the vicinity in which people live. The motives for communal living are usually for economic, sociological and psychological reasons. Jørgensen, Knudsen, Arp and Skov (2016) revealed that social differences seem to be connected to different types of attachment to neighbouhood, that the individuals in the highest and lowest socioeconomic positions display the strongest connection to neighbourhoods, and the strongest preference for neighbour relations and local community. Indeed Neighbourhoods usually have some specific social or physical characteristics distinguishing them from the rest of the settlement, while they vary in population and density. According to Duany *et al.* (as cited in Bender, 2015), the size of a neighbourhood is limited, so that majority of the population is within walking distance of its centre where needs of daily life are easily satisfied.

Tunde (2013) reiterated that neighbourhoods offer facilities for transit stops, work places, police posts, retail community events and leisure activities in addition to providing places for primary and post primary education. The streets provide alternate routes to most destinations for both vehicles and pedestrians (Duany *et al*., 2003). Furthermore, the development of neighbourhood is often incremental in form or pattern and therefore one finds a mixture of large and small houses, shops, restaurants, offices, informal activities and so on. Civic buildings such as schools, multipurpose halls, museums, mosques, and churches are often placed at the open playground while parks are also provided for the residents' use. James *et al.* (2002) affirmed that life chances of individuals and families can be influenced greatly by the condition of the neighbourhoods. The attributes of, and experiences provided by a neighbourhood, have profound effects on a person's capability and his idea about what can be accomplished (Yusuff, 2016). Indeed, it has been stated that neighbourhoods where poor people concentrate isolate their residents from the resources and networks they require to

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attain their full potentials. This, by extension deprives the larger community of the human capital resource of such neighbourhoods. A good neighbourhood should create a better environment for safety, health, aesthetics, comfort and general welfare of the inhabitants.

Impact of Neighbourhood Environment on Residents

The quality of life of residents of any given neighbourhood depends on socio-economic, environmental and cultural factors, as well as physical conditions and spatial characteristics of such neighbourhood. Mohammad, Michal, Tiina and Marketta (2015) revealed that inhabitants of neighbourhoods with a larger percentage of green surroundings had a greater perception of neighbourhood stability than did the residents of neighbourhoods with a smaller percentage of green surroundings. However, Okusipe (as cited in Yusuff, 2016) reported that the urban physical environment of cities in Nigeria has been shaped continually by land use planning, zoning and development control without adequate concern for sustainability and environmental quality. City layout and aesthetics, land use patterns, population and building densities, transportation and ease of access of residents to basic goods, services and infrastructures affect the liveability of settlements. Results of a research conducted by Adamu (2012) revealed that environmental quality and condition of many Nigerian urban areas is below desirable standard and by implication, greater number of households in those areas lack good quality houses, clean and safe neighbourhoods that provide amenities which ameliorate the stress of urban living. Nevertheless, it has been confirmed that provision of good housing has profound influence on the health, efficiency and wellbeing of any community (Onokerhoraye, 1984). Parks and green spaces are aspect of the environment that makes it attractive likewise the presence of peaceful, crime-free and clean surroundings. Studies have revealed that

the conditions of any given neighbourhood go a long way in shaping individual outcomes (Tunde, 2013). The fact is that people want to live in decent neighbourhoods and to have their children grow up in a safe environment because growing up in an unhealthy neighbourhood could reduce the life chances of those children (Clark *et al.*, as cited in Daramola, 2016). Consequently, attention to the environmental quality of neighbourhoods and the impact it might have on the wellbeing and health of residents is increasing.

Factors that Influence Neighbourhood Desirability

The decision of a household on whether to move or not, the choice of a suitable destination within affordability and the ability to actually relocate are the primary issues that often govern residential location or relocation. Mohammad *et al.* (2015) in their study verified a close association between the characteristics of built environment (i.e., density, destination accessibility, and green area) and the preferences residents had for their neighbourhood. Residing in a good residential neighbourhood has several advantages, but it is uncommon to have a neighbourhood that has all the good characteristics, and this explains why different people choose different kinds of neighbourhoods to live in (Adamu, 2012). It has been argued that the choice of a particular neighbourhood is majorly the result of the desire to live in a specific type of dwelling, taking into account its tenure, size and price (Lina Bergstrom, Maarten Van Ham & David Manley, 2010). Mixed ethnic neighbourhoods are seen crucial for achieving social cohesion (Phillips 2006; Brown **as cited** in Susanne & Brit 2015). Social cohesion refers to the bonds or the 'glue' that hold people together in society, particularly in the context of cultural diversity. In line with spatial assimilation theory, there seems to be a widespread belief that people interact with those living nearby (Park 1926; Peach as cited in Susanne & Brit 2015). Nowadays most

people are concerned with the safety of their home and family when choosing of where to live, because of the high crime rate in many cities. A good neighbourhood to such homes must have lower incidences of thefts, burglaries etc. Neighbourhoods that are characterized by improved accessibility, proximity to means of public transportation, shopping, places of worship, recreational areas and schools are often in demand. According to Galster (as cited in Fajimi, 2011) the closer a resident is to an unwholesome neighbourhood; the more likely it is that he will be affected by it. The study further established that there are push and pull factors that determine the reason why residents live in a certain neighbourhood. The choice of neighbourhood can also be a function of, but not limited to, availability of employment, business opportunities, access to education, cultural or recreational opportunities and microeconomic factors such as disposable income, and access to finance. People also prefer associating with natural and aesthetically appealing environment. Lina *et al.* (2010) in their work observed that the choice of a particular neighbourhood is equally influenced by the desire to live in a specific type of dwelling. Neighbourhood characteristics such as reputation, status, population composition and location are also important factors that residents take into consideration in making neighbourhood choices.

Materials and Method

Data was gathered from both the primary and secondary sources. The study adopts a survey investigation approach. Oshungade (2013) recommended that surveys should be based on random sampling and not on judgment or purposive sampling. While noting that random sampling is based on sampling theory, detailed planning and execution of sample survey, he also confirmed that parameters obtained from random sampling with adequate sample size are close representation of the target population.

Four field assistants and one facilitator were employed to assist the researcher in the administration, collection and collation of questionnaire forms. This was however done sequel to the proper training of the assistants who were recruited on the strength of their educational qualification and knowledge of the locality. Two of the field assistants hold the Higher National Diploma degree while two had Ordinary National Diploma degree. However, the facilitator had a Master's degree (all in the social sciences). The training of the field assistants took two days.

A reconnaissance survey of the selected neighbourhoods was conducted in order to gather firsthand information on the peculiar characteristics of the neighborhoods, familiarize the field assistants and researcher with the study area and make visual observations that would assist during the main field work. Using the facts gathered during the reconnaissance survey, the entire study area was sub-divided into four zones. Criteria used were proximity of one neighborhood to the other, income level of the inhabitants in each zone, internal homogeneity of the areas, the residential types and neighborhood characteristics. The zones carved out as study area by the researcher were labeled as:

A.   **Zone H - High Income Earners Residential Area** Fate, Agba Dam, Mandate Estate, Adewole Estate, Central Bank of Nigeria (C.B.N.) Quarters, Government Reserved Area (GRA)
B.   **Zone M- Medium Income Earners Residential Area** Niger Street, Taiwo, Harmony Estate, Gaa-Akanbi, Agbo-Oba, Offa Garage, Unity, Post Office, Irewolede Estate, Oloje Estate
C.   **Zone L - Low Income Earners Residential Area** Abayawo, Zango, Baboko, Agbaji, Adangba, Pakata, Eruda, Isalekoto, Ita Merin, Ita Amo, Ode - Alfa Nda, Popo – Giwa, Alagbado, Kuntu, Idi – Ape, Kulende Estate

D. **Zone C - Combined (Mixed) Income Residential Area** Asa-Dam, Oko-Erin, Sabo-Oke, Osere, Tanke, Basin

Minimum Sample Size

In gathering relevant information for the purpose of this research work, Census data and figures would have been the most useful but it was not available in the detailed chronological presentation that would be valuable for this study. An alternative means of gathering reliable and relevant data was thus employed in the form of structured questionnaire. To validated the questionnaire and determine the minimum sample size for the study, it became very necessary to carry out a pilot survey.

The pilot survey conducted to test the research instrument and determine the minimum sample size for the study involved a total of 80 copies of the questionnaire forms and a survey which lasted for 5 consecutive days. Based on the result of the pilot survey, a minimum sample size was determined using the formula proposed by Snedecor and Cochran (1967 adopted by Jimoh 1988). The pilot survey provided an opportunity to test the research instrument, familiarize more with the study area. It made the researcher to become aware of the likely future challenges in the course of the major survey. In addition, it helped to highlight some ambiguous questions which the researcher had to recast while it enabled the researcher know more about the disposition of residents in each neighbourhood zone. Most importantly, the researcher was able to determine a basis for calculating an appropriate sample size for the entire study area.

Many well-known formulas, using either the z-distribution (Snedecor & Cochran 1989) or the t-distribution (Sokal & Rohlf 1995) are available for calculating sample size at different levels of statistical power when testing differences in means with two independent samples. The simplest formula to use is based on the z-distribution (Gerow, 2009). In order to determine the minimum sample size for the purpose of investigation, the formula proposed by Snedecor and Cochran (1967), Jimoh, 1988) was applied to the five days reading from pilot survey.

The **Snedecor and Cochran formula** (1967) adopted by Jimoh (1988):

$L = 2 \sigma \sqrt{n}$ (n= size of preliminary survey)

$n = (4\sigma^2/L^2$ at 95% level of probability).

$n = (6.6\sigma^2/L^2$ at 99% level of probability).

Where;

      n = minimum sample size.

      σ= standard deviation.

      L = limit of accuracy of estimated mean.

The reading from the pilot survey is summarized below:

Zone	Limit of Accuracy of Estimated Mean	Minimum Sample Size	Estimated No of Questionnaire
H	$L = 2 \times 0.748 / \sqrt{16} = 0.374$	$n = 6.6 \times 0.56^2 / 0.374^2$	**15**
M	$L = 2 \times 0.92 / \sqrt{16} = 0.46$	$n = 6.6 \times 0.92^2 / 0.46^2$	**26**
L	$L = 2 \times 0.4 / \sqrt{14} = 0.213$	$n = 6.6 \times 0.4^2 / 0.2132$	**24**
C	$L = 2 \times 2.06 / \sqrt{17} = 0.999$	$n = 6.6 \times 2.06^2 / 0.999^2$	**28**

      TOTAL = **93 Questionnaire forms /per day**

The Snedecor and Cochran's formula was applied to determine the minimum sample size and in order to calculate the appropriate number of days that would be ideal for the major survey based on the minimum sample size, we arrived at approximately 18 days.

H	$L = 2 \times 0.748 / \sqrt{5} = 0.669$	$n = 6.6 \times 0.75 / 0.669$	**8.30**

M	$L = 2 \times 0.92 / V5 = 2.24$	$n = 6.6 \times 0.92 / 2.24$	1.11
L	$L = 2 \times 0.4 / V 5 = 0.667$	$n = 6.6 \times 0.4 / 0.667$	8.30
C	$L = 2 \times 2.06 / V 5 = 3.685$	$n = 6.6 \times 2.06 / 3.69$	0.32
	TOTAL		**18.03 Days**

Based on this number of days, the mathematical formula of direct proportion was employed to finally arrive at a total number of 334 copies of the questionnaire which was prepared, representing the appropriate minimum sample size for this research. 303 copies of the questionnaire forms were successfully administered through the systematic random sampling survey method while 31 copies were returned uncompleted out of a total of 334. An oral interview was also conducted at random where there was need to confirm some statements or answers supplied on the questionnaire forms.

Analysis of data on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the respondents was done through the use of descriptive statistics such as graphs, frequency analysis and tables and charts. Among data gathered in order to achieve the desired research objectives included data on socio-economic profile of household heads, family size, types of residence and categories of neighbourhoods available to households.

Neighborhood Types in Ilorin

The neighbourhoods within the study area were categorized based on observations made by the researcher during the reconnaissance survey. The population density of each zone could also have been used as criteria for categorization, but the researcher chose the level of income because it was observed that most inhabitants reside in neighbourhoods where their income could sustain annual rent paid on apartments or rooms in such areas. For ease of understanding, the major characteristics of each of the zones are as detailed below;

(a) Zone H – Residential Zones:

The very highly educated civil servants, politicians and business men who are high income earners and wealthy enough to afford most of the basic comforts and luxuries of life reside in this zone. These residential areas are clean and quite with adequate green covers and are generally owner – occupier. Lush trees, shrubs and beautiful flowers are abundant in this area in comparison with other zones in the city. Houses here are built on large and spacious compounds with tall fence cordoning them. The areas are well planned with adequate infrastructure, site and services and absence of open gutters and refuse dumps. Architectural designs of buildings are very modern and can be compared to those present in other developed nations. The road network and refuse disposal methods are modern and good. This area includes the exclusive Government Reserved Area (G.R.A.), which initially housed the colonial masters but later converted to residence for the high class government workers and the wealthy families (See Plates 1.1 to 1.2).
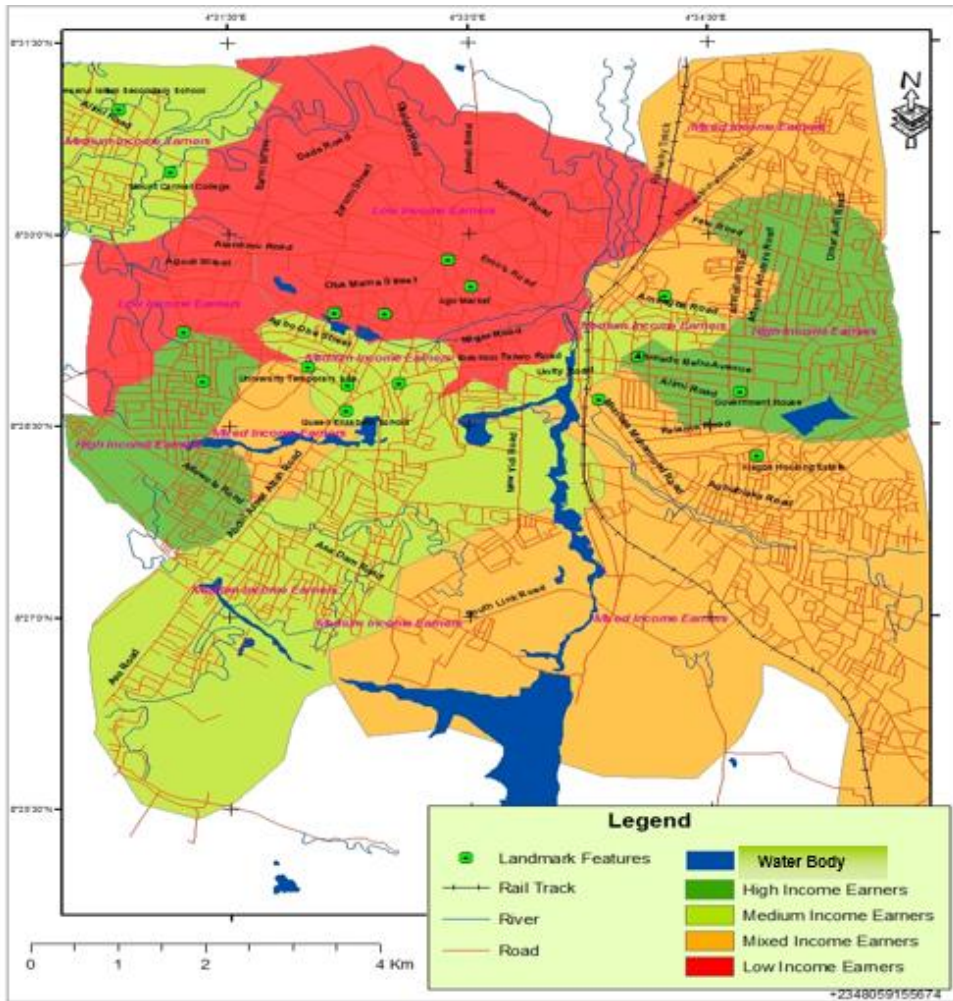
Figure 3.1: Subdivision of Residential Zones in Ilorin According to Income *Level*.

Plate 1.1: Wall Fence around Private Residence H

Plate 1.2: Good Road Network in Zone H

(b) Zone M – Residential Zones:

Zone M is residence for the medium income earners, who could be classified as the educated middle class, civil servants, business men or traders. There is a concentration of the regular 2/3 bedroom bungalows while tenement storey buildings are also common. The environment is generally well maintained, though not as clean as Zone H (Plates 1.3 and 1.4) but with wider roads than those in Zone L. The houses usually have in-built taps and water cistern toilets facilities. Infrastructure exist for pipe-borne water supply, but often times, water does not run from these taps and residents can be seen moving around with carry jerry-cans and buckets to fetch water from nearby boreholes or hand-dug wells.

Plate 1.3: Open Refuse Dump Site in Zone M

Plate 1.4: Blocked Drainage in Zone M.

c) Zone L – Residential Zones

This area houses majority of the low income earners. Main features of this zone are high density buildings closely spaced, basically built with mud or plastered mud. Buildings exist mostly of the old traditional architecture. Hand dug well is the commonest source of water except for a few bore holes sunk by the government. The layout is not planned but follows the old traditional pattern with narrow roads and foot paths. Pit latrine is the most common form of toilet facility available, while open gutters and large heaps of refuse are common. One prominent characteristic of this zone is the complete absence of walled fence around individual houses unlike in the high income residential zone. (Plate 1.5and 1.6)

Plate 1.5: Road Network in Zone L

Plate 1.6: Houses in some parts of Zone L.

d) Zone C - Residential Zones

This zone combines features of two or three zones earlier mentioned. Therefore it was labelled "Combined" Residential Zone. This particular neighbourhoods have a relative mixture of all types of income groups (Low, medium and High). There isn't any clear-cut demarcation between the different residential areas, housing the different income groups (Plates 1.7 and 1.8)

Plate 1.7: Residential Type in Zone C.

Plate 1.8: Road Network in Zone C

Field Survey

During the main field survey, each field assistant was assigned to a particular zone. Administration of questionnaire took place between 5pm - 6pm daily, because based on knowledge of the study area and previous pilot survey result; the researcher knew that was the most probable time for most household heads to have returned home from their various places of work or other outside engagements. Once the 1 hour time period was accomplished, the interview stopped to continue the following day. The experience gathered through the pilot survey assisted in the successful conduct of the main field survey. The systematic random sampling method was used. (Burton, 1970) recommended a one in fifteen household for an urban centre of comparable size as Ilorin, and his was used along the main streets of the entire study area. The first house was picked at random along the designated street. Thereafter every fifteen household was sampled in a systematic manner. Out of a total of 334 households that were selected for this study, 303 households provided useful data. Simple percentage distribution was adopted in the analysis relating to investigations of neighbourhood preferences in Ilorin. The data gathered for the 18-day survey period for all the zones was then collated for further analysis.

Results and Discussion
Gender of household Heads

Eighty-two percent of household heads are male while eighteen percent are female as in cases of widows, divorcees and separated couples (Table 4.1). This finding also affirms the popular believe that in Africa, a man is always the head of the household since the male folks also form the largest percentage of the household heads in Ilorin.

Table 4.1: Gender of Household Heads.

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	**247**	**81.5**
Female	56	18.5
Total	303	100.0

Level of Education

Research result indicates that more than half, precisely 51.2% of the respondents possess either a Bachelor of Arts degree (B.A.), Bachelor of Science degree (B.Sc.) or Higher National Diploma (HND), in addition to about 29% who possess either a National Certificate of Education (NCE), or Ordinary National Diploma (OND) certificates. Out of the remaining 10%, about 6% possess only Quranic education while 4% are holders of a Master of Science, Arts or Doctor of Philosophy Degree. (Figure 4.3
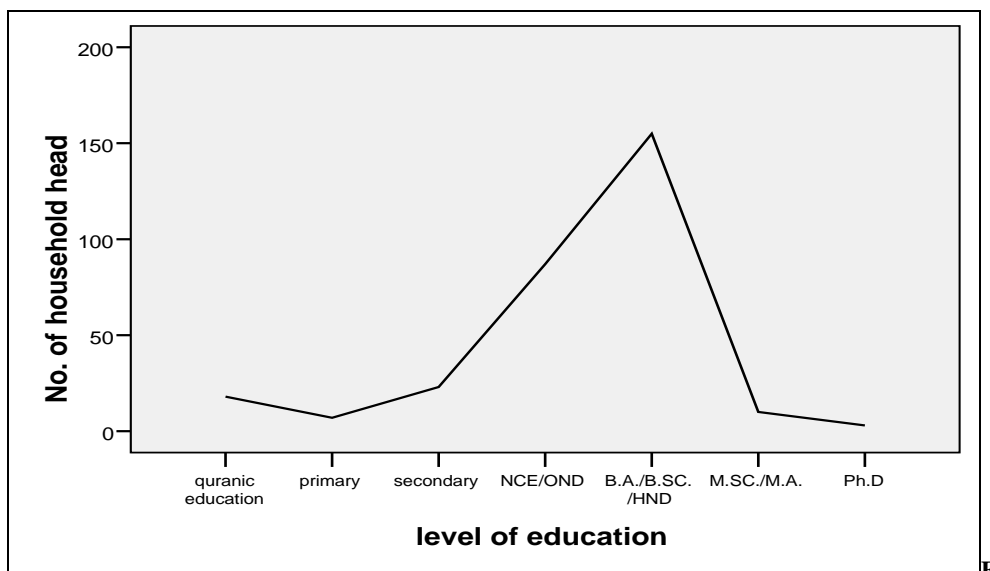
igure 4. 1:   **Level of Education of Household Heads.**

Net Monthly Income of Household Heads

The average monthly income of households in Ilorin falls between ₦60,000 and ₦ 30,000. About one out of every two household (50.5%) earn ₦ 30,000 and below monthly in addition to a smaller percentage (11%) that earn between ₦61,000 and ₦90,000 monthly (Table 4.2). Nevertheless, the average monthly expenditure varies between ₦31, 000 and ₦ 60,000 for majority (44%) of households in Ilorin.

Rent Per Annum

Survey results revealed that the average annual rent paid by households range between ₦30, 000 and ₦ 60, 000 per annum (Table 4.3). Though 30% of the residents indicate they pay no rent at all, because they live in their family houses or own house. Fifteen percentage (15%) of respondents pay rent of between N61,000 to N100,000 per year. Only very few families (3%) live in apartments where the annual rent paid is between N101, 000 to N150, 000 or above N200,000 per annum.

Table 4: 2   Net Monthly Incomes of Household Heads.

Rent	Frequency	Per cent	Valid Percent	Cumulative %
Less than 30,000	153	50.5	50.7	50.7
31,000-60,000	101	33.3	33.4	84.1
61,000-90,000	33	10.9	10.9	95.0
91,000-120,000	11	3.6	3.6	98.7
above 120,000	5	2.0	1.3	100.0
Total	303	100	100.0	

Table 4.3:   ***Household Rent per Annum***

Annual Rent (N)	Frequency	Percentage
30,000 - 60,000	**157**	**51.8**
61,000 - 100,000	45	14.9
101, 000 -150,000	7	2.3
151,000 - 200,000	1	.3
Total	210	69.3
Live in own or family house (pay no rent)	93	30.7
Total	303	100.0

Residential Types Preferred by Households in Ilorin

The objective of this section was to examine households in Ilorin and identify their most preferred residential type. The researcher tried to elicit response from the respondents through a survey question which goes thus: "If you had to choose, what type of residential accommodation would you prefer to live in most"?

The options available to choose from were:
(a) One bedroom or 2 bedrooms (self-contained).
(b) 3 or 4 bedroom flat.
(c) Duplex.
(d) Semi-detached house or 3/4 bedroom storey building.
(e) Mansionnette
f) Others

The results of the study showed that most people (62%) preferred the 3 or 4 bedroom bungalow/flat as residential accommodation they would want to live in (Table 4.4). About 23% showed strong preference for the Duplex residential type. Results also showed that all the respondents that chose the Duplex accommodation type were the Igbo ethnic group in Ilorin. The researcher was able to deduce this fact by isolating and finding the total number of all positive responses to a particular type of accommodation. In a nutshell, could it be affirmed that ethnic background has a strong influence on taste and preference for particular types of dwelling? This could be an area for future research.

Only about 5% of respondents preferred to live in the semi-detached / 3 or 4 bedroom storey buildings while 5% showed strong preference for one/two bedroom self-contained dwelling units. The mansionnette residential type has the lowest popularity; only 2% of the entire population sampled indicated preference for this residential type.

The residential type preferred by residents of Ilorin city is the three/four bedroom flat. It would be expected that neighbourhood preference by the inhabitants will follow this medium trend, but this study revealed that it does not.
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Table 4.4:   ***The Most Preferred Residential Type***

Type of Residential Accommodation	Frequency	Percent
One or two bedroom self-contained	16	5.3
Three/four bedroom flat	**188**	**62.0**
Duplex	69	22.8
Semi-detached or Storey building	24	7.9
Massionnete	6	1.9
Others	---	---
Total	303	100.0

The results showed that out of 303 households, 116 of them (38%) had preference for the high income residential neighbourhoods (Table 4.4). The level of preference for the medium income zones and combined zone were almost the same. About 23% of the respondents had preference for medium income neighbourhoods while 22% had preference for the combined residential neighbourhoods. Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents had strong preference for the low income residential neighbourhood (Table 4.4). In a rather strange development it was observed that 98% of residents of the low income neighbourhood had no intention of moving to any other neighbourhood other than the neighbourhood where they presently live. When probed further (oral interview) on if they were forced to change residence, they maintained that their preference would still

be for other areas within the neighbourhoods accommodating the low income earners (Zone L). The reasons adduced for such a resolution by respondents, included responses such as "we understand our people", "we are happy" or "we are comfortable". This response is in contrast to that of the 68% of the residents living in either the medium or combined residential zones, who indicated future ambition to relocate to other residential zones other than where they presently live. Could this be a confirmation of the saying that the poor are usually happier and more contented than the rich members of the society? Or could it be the effect of the communal living pattern widespread in the low income neighbourhoods enhanced by absence of walled fenced cordoning individual residence? This could be left for future research.

Table 4.5: Most Preferred Neighbourhood in Ilorin Metropolis

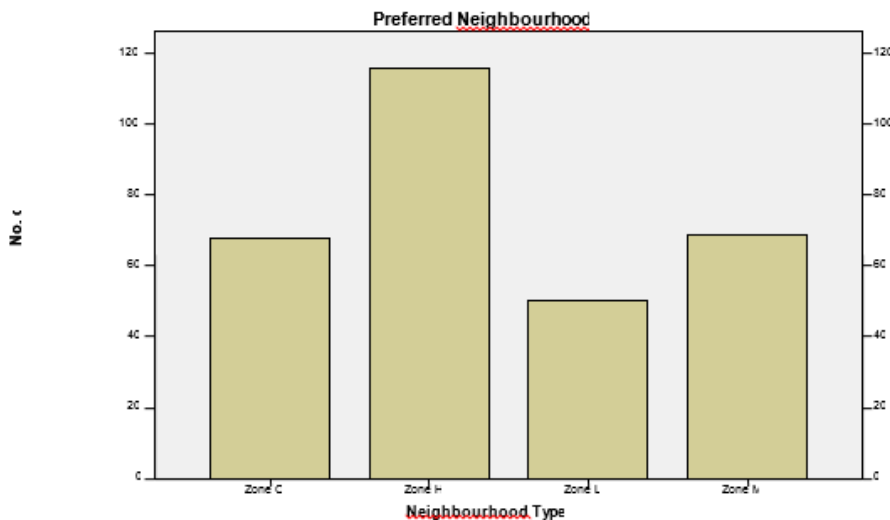| Neighbourhood Zones	Frequency	Percent
Zone C (combined)	68	22.4
Zone H (high income)	116	38.3
Zone L (low income)	50	16.5
Zone M (medium income)	69	22.8
Total	303	100.0

Figure 4.2: Preferred Neighbourhood by Households in Ilorin.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Findings of this study revealed that irrespective of ethnic background or level

of income, the high income residential neighbourhood is the preferred place to live by majority of residents. In other words, environments close to nature, clean and beautiful, home that is spacious surrounded with adequate green cover in the form of trees, shrubs, lawns, flowers and green areas. This is how neighbourhoods in zone H appear. More importantly, the study also revealed that neighbourhood preference is not dependent on socio-economic status but on perception of the environmental attributes and quality of a neighbourhood.

The following actions are hereby recommended;

▪ Concerted efforts should be made government and stakeholders to re-create the kind of layouts existing in the high income residential zones in all other neighbourhoods within the city especially areas that are being newly developed.

▪ In the course of recreating, urban renewal projects should be embarked upon by the government targeting the low income neighbourhoods in the core traditional areas, but efforts should be made to preserve the traditional character of this area, since the natural and cultural heritages are great features that must be preserved for the sustainability of renewal projects. In addition, citizen participation in these projects should be encouraged via massive campaign and sensitizations of the populace by government and non - governmental organization, to ensure that projects implemented are supported by the ultimate end users and not abandoned or to wrong.

▪ Creation of green open spaces and enforcement of urban planning standards is needed to replicate the high income residential neighbourhood type in all parts of the city. This offers a means of peaceful getaway to residents from the bustle of city life. It would may reduce the incidences of violence, insecurity and youth unrest which has gradually infiltrated daily existence in the once peaceful traditional area of Ilorin.

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