

CITY CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT: SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS IN IKOT EKPENE URBAN, AKWA IBOM STATE, NIGERIA

Victor Umoren¹ and Victoria Essien²

^{1,2}Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Environmental Studies,
University of Uyo, Uyo, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Purpose: Redevelopment and relocation procedures in Nigerian cities frequently benefits the government and also helps in the proper control of positive development of a city. This study assesses the city centre redevelopment and its socio-economic implications in Ikot Ekpene urban. The study was restricted to the Central Business District of Ikot Ekpene urban.

Design/methodology/approach: To achieve this, the study was restricted to the Central Business District of Ikot Ekpene urban. This involves the core area of about 14,000 m² and expanded area of about 3 km² from the city centre. A sample size of 400 respondents was taken from the projected population of the study area by the application of Taro Yammane sample size technique. A total of 400 questionnaires was administered using both simple random and purposive sampling technique to respondents in the study area. Percentages and Relative Satisfaction Index (RSI) was used to analysed the level of satisfaction by the respondents.

Findings: The result revealed that there is positive relationship. The RSI indicated that 75.75% respondents were satisfied with the redevelopment project in the city centre, 17.17% partially satisfied and 7.08% were not satisfied with the redevelopment project. The study revealed the redevelopment of the city centre therefore represent a strong revitalization strategy in an overall land use planning.

Originality/value: The study recommends the introduction of the concept of pedestrianisation, disembarkation point and a lot more which will lead to a total transformation of the study area. The city centre redevelopment effort into a public square is a good thing to happen in the study area.

Keywords: Redevelopment; city centre; socio-economic; relative satisfaction index; implications.

1. INTRODUCTION

Redevelopment can be described as a focused attention in a city neighbourhood aimed at reversing deteriorating trends. Redevelopment has been identified as one of the most effective ways to foster private investments into run-down neighbourhoods or

¹victorumoren@uniuyo.edu.ng

deteriorated areas of a city plagued by social, physical, environmental or economic conditions. Thus the injection of new ideas and capital into a run-down neighbourhood is a principal benefit of redevelopment (Koebel and Squires, 1990).

Also human activity on redevelopment attracts a variety of questions, answers to which throw much light on the process. The first two such questions have been given answers in our first two paragraphs above. This includes what is redevelopment and what benefit accrue from it?

In U.S. urban redevelopment and residential displacement by public action has occurred in four periods in 1945 – 1954, 1955-1963, 1964 – 1974 and 1975 – 1984. The prevailing emphasis in each of these periods was slum clearance, clearance for public housing, commerce and “market-rate” housing national promotion of social change and neighbourhood movements and redevelopment of central business district.

In Nigeria, the earliest known case of urban redevelopment took place at the eve of independence, when the German Town Planner Zimmermann was consulted by the colonial governor, to leave a legacy in his name, this was in 1958 (George, 2009). This led to the development of Tinibu Square and Tafewa Balewa Square – Lagos. This was done by government fiat, and it led to the development of the Surulere housing layout.

The first ever government planning efforts in independent Nigeria was again at Lagos as a metropolis. This time by the United Nations for Technical Assistance, Department of Economics and Social Affairs. The study group was led by Dr. Otto Koenigsborger a German (Tesco-Kotzi, 1974). The terms of reference of the study stated that all the development projects in metropolitan Lagos should be considered in the context of the overall needs of the area. A fully coordinated development scheme was proposed.

In 1970, the government of South Eastern State, did commission a firm of Romania Engineers and City planners to propose a Master Plan for the development and redevelopment of Calabar and other towns of the state including Ikot Ekpene. The groups came together under the name of Tesco- Kotzi Consulting Engineers under the leadership of Professor C. K. Polonyi (Tesco-Kotzi, 1974)

These neighbourhood effects or externalities can be positive or negative. To overcome these impediments government must actively promote redevelopment, either through public development or through public assistance of private redevelopment (Koebel, 1996). Physical decline and the necessity of redevelopment are never-ending challenges for built communities. The evidence of declines is numerous in Nigerian cities and is spreading to inner suburbs (Koebel, 1996). No matter how great the need, urban reinvestment aid redevelopment, is neither certain to occur nor certain to succeed. There are serious challenges and impediments to inner-city redevelopment.

Redevelopment according to California Redevelopment Association is a process created to assist city and country government to eliminate blight from a designated area and to achieve desired development, reconstruction and rehabilitation including but not limited to residential, commercial and industrial uses and retail. Redevelopment is one of the most effective ways to foster private investment into deteriorated area plagued by social, physical, environmental or economic conditions. Through redevelopment a project area will received focused attention and financial investment to reverse deteriorating trends, create jobs, revitalize the business climate, rehabilitate and add to the housing stock which would not otherwise occur.

It is imperative that the situation in the city centre has to be replaced through public action. This started earlier, the very investments cities need to attract development which can result in displacements. Such displacements can harm the residents forced them to relocate and would appear to be a legitimate matter of public concern.

Akwa Ibom State government under the maxim of providing public infrastructure to ease traffic congestion in Uyo, its capital did undertake the development of what has come to be known as Ibom Plaza (Uyo Master Plan, 1988). The Ikot Ekpene city centre redevelopment scheme, is the second of such public-sector driven proposals in the state. This study generally aims at assessing the socio-economic implications of city centre redevelopment in Ikot Ekpene urban in order to create a better city centre in the State.

1.1. Problem Statement

The post-civil war politics had down played the strategic importance of Ikot Ekpene. The seemingly indifference on the part of government to the injection of public funds into the development of infrastructure encouraged the departure of the big European companies in search of more vibrant locations. These are other less emphasized factors occasioned by the realignment of political, economic and social spheres encouraged a slump in the socio-economic activities in the system area.

The continuous political restructuring in the country beginning with the 1976 local government reforms, and the state creation exercise in 1987 has reformed the status of Ikot Ekpene. This has led to increased prosperity for workers which in turn have stimulated retail consumption. Ikot Ekpene is located at an intersection connecting the cities of Aba and Umuahia to Uyo, and Calabar as well as Abak and Itu. At the same time, physical deterioration has become apparent among the abandoned warehouses of the big European companies. The Federal prisons at the city centre was becoming a misnomer disturbing the psyche of the citizenry.

The tenement and working class cottages along Abak road and the prisons staff-quarters are all at various stages of dilapidation. The environmental infrastructure such as storm drains are all sited. Many of the buildings were constructed hastily, while some with poor quality materials have all become obsolete. Equally, the road network in the area is chaotic and too narrow for the volume of traffic thereby creating traffic bottlenecks in the city centre. The scenario is nothing short of a slum, but over 65% of all transportation activities are located within this area and bludgeoning percentage of retail trading takes place too.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Redevelopment is one of the most effective ways to foster private investment into deteriorated areas plagued by social, physical, environmental or economic conditions. Through redevelopment effort the affected area will received urgent attention and financial investment to reserve the deteriorating trends, create employment, revitalize the business climate, rehabilitate and add to the housing stock which would not otherwise occur.

Redevelopment refers to a complex demolition of highly blighted neighbourhood and the re-use or reconstruction of cleared land for the implementation of new projects. It involves the processes of displacement and resettlement of affected slum dwellers, laying out of the new neighbourhood as well as reconstruction of housing units. The major criticism against redevelopment is that apart from the problem of displacement, break-up of family relationship and destruction of workplace in relation to home arrangement, outright clearance of slum is known for eating deep into government's budgets such that other equally essential services are neglected (Egunjobi, 1983, 1987).

Okpala (1986) recognizes the prevalence of slums in Nigeria urban centres and associates this with the generation of water and deterioration of the environments that are attendant effects of high concentration of people, uncontrolled growth and development, poor planning and implementation.

Urban decay is not peculiar to developing countries alone, it is a universal phenomenon which exists in varying degrees from place to place and country to country. In other words, urban slums are a worldwide problem. Urban renewal refers to the redevelopment and or rehabilitation of the older parts of towns and cities, including their central business districts. It is highly associated with housing improvements of the poor.

Operationally, it is intricately linked with issues of blight, deterioration, housing standards declining tax base, property values (Onokerhoraye and Omuta, 1986). And general obsolescence in cities, particularly traditional cities in the developing countries, which may have had long experiences of colonial rule and urbanization before the introduction of modern development planning.

2.1. The Dynamic System Concept

A system functions as a whole with the interaction of several sub-systems. All the sub-systems of the system are interconnected and interdependent to each other, and form a system. If one of the subsystems of the system is defunct or functions with higher degree (taking lead role during its function) or partly function, its effects can be visualized in the entire system over a period of time. In some cases, the system may not function at all, while some cases the system may function but with many disturbances or smooth functions of the system may be paralyzed (Sonar, 2008).

System theory is an outgrowth of the concept of general system theory and cybernetics (Jothimoni, 1997). It is more of a practical philosophy of solving problems in societal systems. It suggests a holistic approach in defining the problem, designing the change and evaluating the design and known as design methodology.

3. THE STUDY AREA

Ikot Ekpene urban is known throughout the country as "The Rafia City". The urban area is located between latitude 5°08" and 5°75" North of the Equator and longitude 7°39" and 7°45" East of the Greenwich Meridian. It lies on the North-Western flank of Akwa Ibom State. Its position makes it the economic gateway to Akwa Ibom State. The area covers a total of 48.31 sq.m (125 km²) (Nair, 1972). It serves as a nodal point linking Abia State and Cross River State.

The area has two seasons the dry season and wet season. The dry season start from November to March, whereas rainy season starts from April to October annual rainfall is about 337.8mm around the month of June and July with maximum precipitation. Relative

humidity falls between 80 – 100% in the afternoon. The mean annual temperature of the study area is 30.1°C or 80 Fahrenheit and highest temperature occurs between February and April (Udo, 1970). The subject is known as a regional centre of commerce with notable exports of palm products especially palm oil, kernel, raffia product made from raffia fibre. Some of the products from the raffia fibre include but not limited to shoes, bags, caps, office files jacket vests, hats, mats etc. other notable products of the area include carvings, masks and sculpture

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The sources of data for this research include both the primary and secondary sources of data collection. However, a total of 400 respondents were adopted as the sample size for the study derived from a projected population of Ikot Ekpene urban of 55,062 (NPC, 2006). These comprises of the population of those areas that were within the 3 kilometre radius from the city centre where the redevelopment exercise occurred.

Taro Yamane formula was used to arrive at the sample size, (Uzoagulu, 1998).

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

A total of 400 questionnaires were administered using both simple random and purposive sampling techniques. The questionnaires were administered to residents in the four (4) major roads in Ikot Ekpene urban (Aba road, Uyo road, Abak road and Umuahia road). It was assumed that members of the population have identical characteristics needed for the investigation. Therefore, any member of the population within the confines of Ikot Ekpene urban were eligible to be chosen for the interview.

Data collected were subjected to statistical analysis. Two (2) types of statistical analysis were employed for the data analysis. The first was the simple descriptive statistics and the second was inferential statistics. The simple statistics involved frequency count and percentage scores. Those percentages were derived from the frequency count on all responses obtained.

Similarly, the Relative Satisfaction Index (RSI) was used in rating selected attributes of a functional (sustainable) city as it relates to Ikot Ekpene urban, on a three-point scale. To calculate the RSI, the different levels were scored thus:

Satisfied (3) points, Partially Satisfied (2) points and Not Satisfied (1) point. The RSI for a particular attribute is calculated as:

$$RSI = \frac{3N_1+2N_2+1N_3}{N_1+N_2+N_3}$$

Where: N1 = Number of respondents who indicated “Not Satisfied”

N2 = Number of respondents who indicated ‘Partially Satisfied’

N3 = Number of respondents who indicated “Satisfied”.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Table 1 shows the questionnaire distribution and return rate in the study. A total of four hundred questionnaires were administered to respondents in the study area and a total of 396 of the questionnaire was returned. This indicated a response rate of 99% very high, this shows a high participation by the people considering the important of the project. Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents on city centre redevelopment.

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution and rate of return

Study Area	No. of Questionnaire Administered	No. Returned	No. Not Returned	Response Rate
Ikot Ekpene City Area	400	396	4	99%

The specific socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents considered in this study were sex, age, marital status, educational attainment, occupation and income. Table 2 indicates information with regards to the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents.

The sex determines the gender type of individual involves in the study which revealed that the number of male respondents interviewed in the study area was greater than the number of the female counterpart. This is indicated by 68.43% for males and 31.57% for female respondents. Age determines to some extent how mature an individual is to determine the implication of city centre redevelopment. The marital status indicates if individual is married or otherwise. The educational attainment level has some implications for the quality of labour requirement in any economy. The higher the level of educational attainment, the higher the quality of service expected from the person.

The occupation of the respondents actually involved the engagement of the respondents and this may determine the actual people affected in this programme. The income level has some implication as those displaced during the city centre redevelopment activities will affect their income generation. The study revealed that 68.43% of the respondents were males while 31.57% were female respondents. As indicated from the table above it is apparent that the domineering age group that was interviewed in the study area were those between the ages of 26-35 years and the least was those above 56 years of age. This is justified by 30.05% against 12.25% as presented above while 18-25 years had 23.99%, whereas 36-45 years had 15.91% and 46-55 years had 17.50%.

The study revealed that a total of 116 respondents representing 29.29% were single, 120 respondents representing 30% were married, while 81 respondents representing 20.46% were divorced and 79 representing 19.75% are widows. The educational attainment of the respondents revealed that 29.80% have primary education, 28.03 had secondary education, 19.75% had university/tertiary education while 12% had no formal education and 10% were for others. The study indicated that the most dominant occupation amongst the respondents was trading with 28%, the artisan had 25.26%, the unemployed respondents constituted 18.25%, while the public/civil servants had 13.8%, farming 10% and 4% of the respondents constituted others.

The income level of respondents in the study indicated that respondents with N11,000 - N20,000 income group had 28.75%, the group of N31,000 - N40,000 had 21.20%, those earning below N10,000 was 20.20% while N21,000 - N30,000 had 19.25% and N41,000 and above had 12.00%. The occupation and income level factors of respondents was mostly affected during the redevelopment programme.

Table 2: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents on city centre redevelopment

Variables		Respondents	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	271	68.43
	Female	125	31.57
	Total	396	100
Age	18-25 years	95	23.99
	26 – 35 years	119	30.05
	36 – 45 years	63	15.91
	46 – 55 years	70	17.50
	56 and above	49	12.25
	Total	396	100
Marital Status	Single	116	29.29
	Married	120	30
	Divorced	81	20.46
	Widowed	79	19.75
	Total	396	100
Educational Attainment	No formal education	48	12
	Primary education	118	29.80
	Secondary education	111	28.03
	University/tertiary	79	19.75
	Others	40	10
	Total	396	100
Occupation of Respondents	Farming	40	10.00
	Trading	112	28.00
	Artisan	100	25.26
	Public/Civil servants	55	13.89
	Unemployed	73	18.25
	Others	16	4.00
	Total	396	100
Income Level of Respondents	Below N10,000	80	20.20
	N11,000 - N20,000	115	28.75
	N21,000 - N30,000	69	19.25
	N31,000 - N40,000	84	21.20
	N41,000 and above	48	12.00
	Total	396	100

5.1. Socio-economic Implications

The study revealed that quite a number of residents living within the Ikot Ekpene city centre were displaced from their original places of residence and relocated to other places assigned by the government and also compensated accordingly. The number of demolished structures were forty-six (46) which consists of 17 commercial buildings, 1 prison yard, 1 local government secretariat and 27 residential buildings. Using a household size of 6 people to calculate the population of displaced dwelling residence and household size of 3 for the commercial buildings, the population of displaced residents were calculated thus:

Residential:

Household size = 6 people
 No. of residence = 27
 Therefore, population = $6 \times 27 = 162$ people

Commercial:

Household size = 3 people

$$\begin{aligned}\text{No. of commercial} &= 17 \\ \text{Therefore, population} &= 3 \times 17 = \mathbf{51} \text{ people}\end{aligned}$$

The total population of displaced people becomes 51 added to 162 people which gives **213** people. The population of both the prison yard and the local government secretariat were not analysed because the buildings are owned and operated by the government and compensation payment not relevant. Taking into consideration the number and percentage of the displaced residents in the redeveloped area, 213 people (0.38%) of the entire population in the study area. The relocation of the Federal prisons from the city centre to the out-skirt of the town will assuage the psychological feeling of a city in bondage with the establishment project.

The poor housing facilities that strung along the streets demolished and compensation paid to the few families that own them enable them relocate out of the city centre. This will mean the building of a new spare and auto-repairs workshop at an appropriate location outside the city. The redevelopment activities is a conscious and deliberate effort made to rearrange the road networks in the city centre. This is to reduce vehicular traffic into the city centre and encourage pedestrianization. This definitely will reduce vehicle/pedestrian conflict and competition for road space. The action was quite necessary to reinvent the city centre for a better growth and socio-economic development.

Table 3: Respondents satisfaction to redevelopment

Response Option	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Fully satisfy	300	75.75
Partially satisfied	68	17.17
Not satisfied	28	7.08
Total	396	100

$$\begin{aligned}N_1 &= 28 \\ N_2 &= 68 \\ N_3 &= 300 \\ RSI &= \frac{3 \times 28 + 2 \times 68 + 1 \times 300}{28 + 68 + 300} \\ RSI &= \frac{84 + 136 + 300}{396} = \frac{520}{396} \\ RSI &= 1.31\end{aligned}$$

The above table 3 indicated the result of respondents rating of their satisfaction levels with the city centre redevelopment project. It is evident from the table that most respondents within the sample population were generally satisfied with the government redevelopment efforts. This is indicative by a percentage of 75.75% as against 17.17% who partially supported the redevelopment effort and 7.08% who do not support the redevelopment effort.

As this study has analysed it is unavoidably evident that quite a number of residents living within the Ikot Ekpene City Centre will be displaced from their original places of residence and relocated to other places assigned by the government and adequate compensation paid. The development of Ikot Ekpene city centre therefore represent a strong revitalization strategy in an overall land use planning. Apparently, physical decline makes redevelopment, a necessity for cities and investments is needed to reverse declining incomes and loss of middle-class population

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study has noted a number of issues relating to the socio-economic implications of redevelopment of Ikot Ekpene city centre and having carefully identified the present state of the city centre. The population of the people that was displaced by the redevelopment project and the benefits of the redevelopment effort. The redevelopment action has promoted the city centre functionality by introducing the concept of pedestrianization in the study area. This definitely will reduce vehicle pedestrian conflict and competition for road space.

The new disembarkation points outside the city centre be encouraged to help transporters and travellers operate in a more comfortable environment. The city centre redevelopment effort into a public square is a good thing to happen in the study area in a couple of years' time, Ikot Ekpene will attend a century since the first local government in Nigeria was established. If these recommendations are adopted it will lead to a total transformation of the area to modern city square.

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