A Review on the Models of Compliance with Residential Development Standards in Nigeria

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Abstract

The necessity to check the trend towards chaotic and slummy urban development and to organize the provision of needed urban facilities in the context of rapid urbanization has been a main concern of government in Nigeria. The aim of this paper is to review models of compliance with residential development standards and therefore, propose a simple and comprehensive model of compliance with development standards in Nigeria, which can be achieved by identifying the factors affecting compliance with residential development standards in Nigeria. For this purpose, a broad literature review has been carried out on the factors affecting compliance. Various group of factors, such as socioeconomic characteristics, administrative/management practices and the clarity of the residential standards have been identified as the factors affecting compliance with residential development standards.

Keywords: Development standards, compliance, developers

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Introduction

Residential standards can be considered as the integration of the relevant legal, managerial and technical tools or instruments intended to protect, control, preserve and distribute land usage for the common benefits of the entire society, as well as protecting the nature, feature and spatial organization of buildings to promote functional and aesthetic values of the whole facilities or neighborhoods. Therefore, compliance is the setting of limits, specifications and standards for residential development (Arimah & Adeagbo, 2000). The researcher further notified four characteristics of compliance to standards which are significant in the understanding of compliance to residential standard.

In Nigeria, growing intensities of urbanization and its associated problems have a tendency to query the efficiency and therefore the significance of current urban development and planning regulations. These tremendous increases in the rate of urbanization have consequently given rise to many socioeconomic and management problems. These problems involved congested and spatially disorganized homes, spread and development of unapproved buildings which do not comply with the required residential standards, which also resulted in to air and water contaminations, health and sanitation problems, failure of waste discarding procedures and systems, water and power supply difficulties and dirty environmental settings. This problem has been aggregated by the continuous growing level of poverty in the urban cities in Nigeria, which gave rise to the domination of the informal sector taking the largest percentage of residential property development Arimah and Adeagbo (2000).

The continuous prevailing position of the informal part of urban centers, in Nigeria, also implies that in reacting to the present housing deficiency and housing demand, housing development, land acquisition, sourcing of fund, etc., are expected to occur outside the approved regulatory setting. The major consequences of this are usually the continuous spread of unauthorized developments.

Therefore, to cope with the problems of unauthorized development and ensure a pleasant growth of urban centers, there is the need for a reevaluation of residential development standards/regulations in Nigeria. This is in line with the recommendations of researchers such as Arimah and Adeagbo (2000), Alnsour and Meaton (2009), which requires countries to reexamine and, if needed, occasionally fine-tune development and building regulatory frameworks, bearing in mind their human settlements and socioeconomic and environmental policies. Furthermore, regularly revisit and reassess development standards/regulations, legal processes and planning systems that are obstructive, exclusionary and expensive to comply with. Similarly, improve, approve and impose suitable frameworks, models and bye-laws for land use, planning and development standards that are established on skillfully recognized threat and exposure assessments.

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Methodology

The methodology used in this work is purely qualitative, which involved a thorough review of related literature on factors affecting compliance with development standards. This has been achieved based on the formation of two research questions. First is, what are the factors affecting compliance with development standards. Second is, what is the conceptual framework for solving the problem of noncompliance with development standards. In order to achieve this, more than 110 papers were consulted and reviewed. However, only 30 papers from reputable journals were selected for thorough review, in order to identify the critical factors affecting compliance with development standards.

Literature Review

It is a known fact that issues on noncompliance with residential standards have always been popular especially in the developing countries but very few empirical researches has been found in the literature. It is important to carry out an overview of the related literature to discover the tools and parameters used by many researchers in order to cope with the problem of noncompliance with residential standards.

An Overview of Factors Affecting Compliance with Residential Development Standards

Gough, (1996) worked on the nature of construction of residential building by means of self-help. He measured the ability of household to develop a self-help residential dwelling looking at the availability of building materials in terms of production and distribution which also affect the cost. The researcher concluded that most of the self-help residential property developers do not have adequate access to standard building materials in the developing countries, and mostly the cost is not easily affordable to them. Alternatively, substandard materials are used instead. This leads to low quality of the entire structure due to noncompliance with the standards. Consequently, Gough (1996) concluded that inadequate access to, and cost of building materials are two major factors that affect the ability of the self-help residential property developer to comply with the required standards. However, this work had succeeded in achieving a good objective, but it could have been more efficient if the researcher considered the socioeconomic nature of the developers such as access to finance which may have positive or negative impact on the developersø ability.

Fekade (2000) stated that the major cause of noncompliance with residential standards is related to spontaneous demographic factors. This has been revealed in his work, õDeficits of formal urban land management and informal responses under rapid urban growth in Tanzaniaö. It includes the natural population growth resulting from high birth rate, rural urban migration and in-migration. The researcher explained that the situation has been worsened by poor economic performance, political and social instability and institutional degeneration, in most of the developing countries. These stimulated people to move from rural to urban centers in search of better living conditions, job opportunities and social infrastructure. Fekade (2000) showed that other factors include land speculations and hoarding which in turn lead to informal subdivision and fragmentation of land, making it impossible for the developer to comply with plot area regulations. However Fekade (2000) only concentrated on demographic factors, which measure

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the rate of increase in the number of people living in a particular area in relation tom the capacity and pattern of the living environment. His work could have been more convincing if he had included the socioeconomic factors, administrative practices and the suitability or relevance of the residential standards.

Rakodi (2003) asserted that even though there are other actors whose role is required towards a successful compliance with residential standards such as public awareness, commitment and personnel training, but the most important factor that ensures compliance with standards is good governance. This will ensure an effective and efficient urban development control and management. Similarly, Rakodi (2003), did not look at the possibility that the demographic factors can affect compliance with standards, which could have made his work more efficient. He only focused on the quality of governance and some other administrative factors.

Few et al (2004) also agreed that rural urban migration is major factor affecting compliance with residential standards in Sao Paulo Brazil. The researcher further lamented that most of these migrants move in to the cities in search of better job and living conditions and therefore cannot afford to acquire or rent a formally developed residential house, due to lack or absence of a regular income. The only option is to use substandard materials and informal locations for their development, in order to be closer to their sources of earnings or any other economic goal. Few et al (2004) showed this as one of the reasons for illegal subdivision of a formal residential dwelling. The work of Few et al (2004) could have been much more sufficient to cover the situation in almost all the developing countries, if it had included socioeconomic characteristics of the developers and the practices of the development authorities as mentioned by other researchers.

Kombe (2005) in his work assessed the issues noncompliance by looking at the government efforts in form of development policies, such as provision of subsidized housing and low cost housing for rentals. He showed that the continuous increasing poverty on the side of the local and central government discouraged the potential improvement in the standards and living condition of people and thereby encouraging the proliferation of informal residential developments. Based on the findings of Kombe (2005), poverty is the major cause of noncompliance with residential standards in most of the developing countries. Although Kombe (2005) considered poverty which is widely known as one of the factors of noncompliance, his work could have been more convincing if he had included administrative practices and some of the socioeconomic factors such as household size etc.

Arimah and Adeagbo (2000) focused on planning standards, building standards and zoning regulations, the research also divided its case study area in to high, medium and low densities. In his research, the standards, such as setbacks (front, back/rear, and sidesø setbacks), minimum sizes of windows and doors, quality of standard building materials in roofing, walls and floor finishes, were used as variables to measure the abilities of the respondents to comply with residential standards in the three levels of density areas. The research outcomes suggested that compliance differ between high, medium and low depending on the socioeconomic characteristics of the developer and the influence of the administrative practices on the developer. Although, Arimah and Adeagbo (2000) had really explored the factors of compliance with standards, but he had only restricted his research variables to socioeconomic elements, administrative practices and the clarity of residential standards, without looking at the

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demographic factors which are also very important factors to be considered while measuring degree of compliance with standards.

Alnsour and Meaton (2009) concluded that compliance with residential standards is of different levels between place to place and house to house due largely to the fact that there are differences in the socioeconomic characteristics of the housing owners/developers. The researcher has found and categorized the factors affecting compliance with residential standards in to socioeconomic characteristics such as household income, household size, finance and public awareness. The administrative practices, such as administrative culture, monitoring and enforcement, finally, the uncertainty of the residential standards. The findings showed that only public awareness that is at a reasonably good level. However, other factors such as household size, income, financial accessibility, including some of the municipal practices such as monitoring and enforcement, have been found to have on the ability of the developers to comply with the residential standards. However, the author had dwelled only on socioeconomic, administrative and policy aspects without looking at the demographic factors such as rural urban migration natural population growth and migration, which are known to have an impact on the compliance with residential standards, this model may not be able to extract precisely the factors of compliance in most of the developing countries.

Similarly, it has also been established from literature that Sarkheyli (2012) moved further to look in to the root causes of factors affecting compliance and finally produced a model using level of awareness, economic motives and level of income as key factors of noncompliance. Figure 2.2 presents the model developed by Sarkheyli (2012)

Sarkheyli (2012) investigation of the reasons for noncompliance with (FAR) floor area ratio regulations in Tehran. The study found that the most significant factors for noncompliance with FAR regulations are level of awareness, economic motives and income level. Sarkheyli (2012) added that some developers do not comply with standards due to the low level of awareness with the importance of compliance or impact of violations. While, some fail to comply with standards for economic motives or profit maximization. Some others violate due to their low level of income. Sarkheyli (2012) also focused on the socioeconomic aspect without considering the nature of residential standards and the demographic factors. This model also, will not be sufficient in solving the problem of noncompliance with residential standards in most of the developing countries.

Gyau, Awuah, & Hammond, (2014), verified the hypothesis that lack of public awareness or ignorance about the benefits of compliance with the residential development standards and the negative impacts of noncompliance with the standards, significantly determines the rate of compliance with the development standards, using a firsthand data from a community in Ghana. The findings of the research disprove the hypothesis showing that contraventions with the development standards were generally found to be intentional in the case study area. It also showed that high rate of compliance was only found among the elites due largely to the need to present evidence of compliance to derive some benefits such as loans. Therefore the recommendation of the research shows that development policies and regulation should entail the use of persuasive methods to achieve high rate of compliance.

However, the author used only one factor, which is public awareness/ignorance, to measure the rate of compliance. This factor is not the only factor that determines the rate of compliance in

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most of the sub-sahara Africa and developing countries. The research could have been efficient if it had considered the administrative practices, demographic factors and other socioeconomic factors such as family sizes, family income and provision of financial facilities. All these are very significant to determine the rate of compliance with development standards.

Therefore, Arimah and Adeagbo (2000), Alnsour and Meaton (2009) and Sarkheyli (2012) concentrated heavily on socioeconomic factors, administrative factors and the nature of the residential standards without taking in to consideration the issue of demographic factors, such as natural population growth, high birth rate, rural-urban migration and in-migration, as it affects compliance with residential standards especially in Africa and developing countries.

Hence, this research is going to focus on the socioeconomic factors, administrative factors, the uncertainty of residential standards, in addition, and the demographic factors. The model developed by the recent research is going to be modified by including demographic factors.

Factors Affecting Compliance with Development Standards

Socioeconomic Characteristics

According to Alnsour and Meaton (2009) four key factors have been identified, which have been categorized under this set of factors, these factors are very significant in the study of unauthorized residential development. They include size of household, household income, low level of public awareness and inability to gain access to housing finance. Arimah and Adeagbo (2000) identified factor such as poverty, illiteracy and public apathy as most important factors that are directly related to noncompliance with residential standards. Appiahence,(2002) also found that poverty is the major cause of nonconformity to residential standards. Zegarac (1999) asserted that the main cause of nonconformity to residential standards is uneven economic development, which usually gives rise to low income and lack of accessibility to finance.

4.2 Management/ Administrative Activities

Alnsour and Meaton (2009) viewed this as the main duties of the administrative department and government authorities. Three key factors were also identified under this category; these are the administrative culture, monitoring and enforcement. Similarly, the work of Kapoor and Blanc (2008) as mentioned by Sarkheyli (2012) showed that investments in illegal residential development are rapidly growing in countries where land transactions have been highly distorted by poor management and administrative activities. This means that administrative activities contribute immensely to the decay of the urban environments. The work of Zegarac (1999) contributed significantly in identifying administrative factors which encourage the growth of unauthorized residential developments. These include abandonment of supervision of constructions, poor financial policies, no demolition of informal buildings and the absence of proper initiative for individual housing.

Lack of Clarity/Uncertainty of Residential standards

Rakodi (2001) defined uncertainty as no availability or inadequacy of knowledge about residential standards. Kironde (2006) looks at uncertainty as multiplicity and complexity of information about residential standards. Ogu (1999) viewed uncertainty as lack of clarity and ambiguous nature of the residential standards. Arimah and Adeagbo (2000) said it is a situation where the standards do not respond to the local issues, needs and aspirations of the community.

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Fekade (2000) said when the standards are already outdated, alien/imported and inappropriate to meet the present day challenges. This means that lack of clarity and uncertainty of the residential standards means when the standards are irrelevant to the local and current issues and do not lead to the achievement of the desired goal due to their expensiveness or irrelevance.

Demographic Factors
According to Tsui & Farh, (1997) demography can be defined as the study that deals with the increase (birth and immigration) and decrease (death and emigration), of wide-range of social groups of people built on race, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin. In essence, population increases due to natural population growth, as a result of high birth rate, rural-urban migration and immigration. Fekade (2000) stated that demographic factors that encourage the growth of informal residential buildings in most of the developing countries include the natural population growth, rural-urban migration and immigration. Kombe (2005) also argued that population increased rapidly in urban centers of the developing countries as a result of rural-urban migration and immigration. This produce pressure on the existing housing stock and the social infrastructure, causing most of the migrants to resort to an illegal way of housing provision.

Proposed Conceptual Framework
Figure 1: presents the proposed conceptual framework which will be used to investigate the factors affecting compliance with residential development standards in Bauchi metropolis, Nigeria. Revisiting the research questions in the earlier section of this paper, are, what are the factors affecting compliance with development standards and what is the conceptual framework that can be used to solve the problem of noncompliance with development standards. The research framework contains answers to these research questions. Four group of factors were identified as factors of compliance, during the literature review in the previous section.
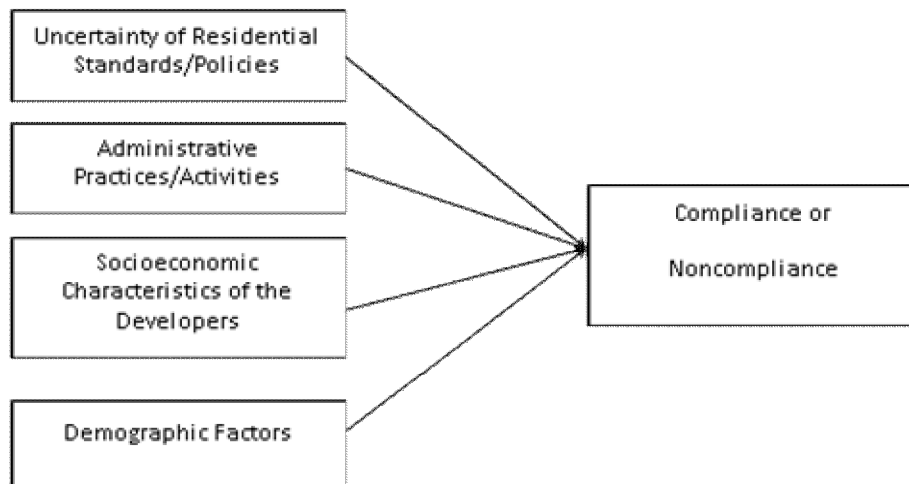

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework for Factors Affecting Compliance with Residential Development Standards.

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These groups of factors are also identified and summarized as the uncertainty/lack of clarity of the residential standards, administrative practices, socioeconomic characteristics of the developers and the demographic factors.

Conclusion

In this paper, a conceptual model for factors affecting compliance with development standards is presented. This has been achieved by identifying the various factors affecting compliance with development standards. Based on the literature review, this paper concludes that there are four groups of factors affecting compliance with development standards. Hence, further investigation is required to show whether all these factors contribute significantly to noncompliance with standards in the case study area. This paper has been limited to only publish articles that were accessible during this work. However, this has established the limitation of this work and therefore the interpretation of this model.

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