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EFFECTS OF ROAD EXPANSION ON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT IN ISALE-AKE AND OKE-ITOKU AREAS OF ABEOKUTA, OGUN STATE.

[1]Elesin, Ganiy Olanrewaju, [2]Olajide F. O. Salako and [3]Elesin, Islamiat Folashade
[1]Department of Urban & Regional Planning, The Federal polytechnic, Ilaro.
[1]olanrewaju.elesin@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng; princealesh4real@gmail.com.
[1]08054580021; 08036979349.
[2]Department of Transportation Planning & Management, The Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro.
[2]fatai.salako@federalpolyilaro.edu.ng; 08083774040.
[3]Physical Planning Unit, The Federal Poly, Ilaro.
[3]elesinfolashade@gmail.com; 08074938331.

Abstract

This study investigates the impact of road expansion on housing development in Oke-Itoku and Isale-Ake areas of Abeokuta, Ogun State, Nigeria. Abeokuta, the capital city of Ogun state, experiences rapid urbanization, expansion of road networks which has significant implications for land use, property values, and urban growth. The study utilized both primary and secondary sources of data via the administration of questionnaires, and personal interview. Convenience sampling technique was used to administer 145 questionnaires in proportion of 81 and 64 questionnaires to Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku residents respectively. Findings revealed that road expansion has led to an increase in housing demand and property values, contributes to displacement and socio-economic shifts, particularly in Oke-Itoku area of Abeokuta. In addition, discrepancies in planning regulation adherence were observed in the study area. It recommended that greater community engagement and compliance measures are needed to support sustainable urban growth. These insights provide valuable information for urban planners and policymakers in managing infrastructure development and housing policies in growing Nigerian cities. Also, this study contributes valuable insights into the interplay between road infrastructure and housing dynamics, offering recommendations for sustainable urban planning in rapidly growing Nigerian cities

Keywords: *Development, Housing, Property Value, Road expansion, Urbanization*

1.0 Introduction

Roads serve as the primary transportation routes in cities across the globe and are essential for economic growth. In Nigeria, for example, road infrastructure projects often encounter delays, insufficient funding, or abandonment, which affects housing accessibilty and urban growth patterns (Ogunleye, 2014). Roads as transportation infrastructure not only improve mobility within communities but also support society's socio-economic needs by providing access to essential services like hospitals, schools, and workplaces (Pradhan & Bagchi, 2013). Notably, enhanced market access via roads boosts local productivity and wages, encouraging the shift from subsistence to cash crop farming and diversifying household income sources (Aggarwal, 2018; Mu & Van De Walle, 2011). Overall, these factors contribute to improved living conditions for those residing near roads. In other

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words, as roads are expanded, they bring about various spatial changes within cities. In peri-urban areas, road expansion often leads to greater land consumption, primarily for residential and complementary uses, as economically advantaged groups move into these areas due to improved job access and new opportunities, thereby increasing the density of development (Woltjer, 2014). Moreover, road developments can transform residential patterns, creating distinct differences in property types. As observed by Aseidu and Arku (2009), affluent residences often line the main roads, while lower-income housing is relegated to the outskirts, sometimes resulting in gated communities as wealthier residents seek to separate themselves from poorer populations.

In most urban areas, road construction is a significant socio-economic undertaking. Roads are long, narrow stretches of land specially prepared with hard, level surfaces for travel. Since 1941, much of Nigeria's resources have been dedicated to general development, including housing projects, water supply, telephone services, and construction and expansion of road networks. Road construction has since become one of the country's most important infrastructural projects due to its role in facilitating the movement of people and goods between locations. A well-connected road system fosters interaction between settlements, leading to both physical and economic growth in the area, which, in turn, boosts property values. According to Oni (2007), property and land prices tend to rise in areas with developing transportation networks and decline in regions lacking such improvements, as cited by Goldberg (1970). In cities experiencing transportation advancements alongside strong population and economic growth, property and land values see significant increases. Every citizen has a stake in this investment, though the government bears primary responsibility for maintaining, constructing, and managing roads. As Knapp (1998) explains, property location and values are closely linked. Urban transit systems have a significant effect on property attributes, with accessibility and travel time to other areas being key factors that influence physical accessibility.

Also, a well-maintained road networks open up opportunities for people to improve their activities, thereby boosting economic operations and fostering connections between neighboring areas. In towns and cities worldwide, transportation and housing play a crucial role in physical and economic development. Cities with improved road networks, strong economic growth, and population increases tend to experience a

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rapid rise in property values. In contrast, areas lacking transportation improvements experience slower growth. Without a transformed road network, which is vital for physical and economic development, progress at the local, national, and global levels would be severely hindered (Oyesiku, 2002). Aderamo (2003) notes that road networks are crucial to urban development because they make different land uses accessible within urban regions.

Furthermore, road expansion involves widening existing roads or adding new lanes to manage increased traffic and improve transportation efficiency. This process is a key component of urban infrastructure development, aimed at boosting connectivity, easing congestion, and fostering economic activity in nearby areas (World Bank, 2020). Road expansion is particularly important in fast-growing cities where population increases and drives demand for better transportation systems. In many cities within developing countries, road infrastructure faces severe strain due to limited planning and rapid population growth. Consequently, governments frequently adopt road expansion as a strategy to alleviate traffic congestion and support urban development. However, these projects also impact the urban environment in various ways, influencing housing, economic activity, and social dynamics (Adebayo, 2019). In most developing countries, road expansion projects are viewed as essential for improving urban mobility, cutting travel times, and driving economic activity (Dawson, 2012). However, the relationship between road expansion and housing development is complex, as these projects can have both positive and negative effects on urban areas.

Moreover, housing development encompasses the construction, expansion, and improvement of residential buildings and communities to meet the shelter needs of growing populations. It is a vital aspect of urban planning, shaped by factors like land availability, infrastructure development, government policies, and market demand (Olotuah & Aiyetan, 2020). Adequate housing is not only a fundamental need but also a key indicator of socio-economic progress. Road infrastructure is crucial in shaping housing patterns, as enhanced transportation networks often attract more residential development to an area. Housing demand is driven by factors such as population growth, urbanization, and changes in household size (Aluko, 2011) and is closely tied to infrastructure improvements; better road networks make certain areas more accessible and appealing for housing investments (Salau, 2012). In the context of

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road expansion, housing development is impacted by factors such as land reallocation for transportation, rising land values, and changes in zoning regulations. As roads expand, housing demand along these corridors typically rises, leading to both formal and informal developments that influence urban structure and the dynamics of the housing market (Ibem, 2011; Egbu, 2021).

From the foregoing, road development can significantly impact the living conditions of residents in affected areas, bringing both positive and negative effects. Large-scale projects, such as highway construction, often alter the livelihoods of local residents through enhanced income opportunities and job availability (Xu & Xie, 2014). Road expansions contribute to a diverse urban population mix, blending original residents with new migrants and individuals from nearby communities (Won, Cho, & Kim, 2015). As redevelopment and renovation unfold at the parcel level, residents experience shifts in occupations, and new commercial ventures emerge in response to the stimulating effects of road infrastructure (Won et.al. 2015). This often improves local living standards by creating employment opportunities, as road developments attract entrepreneurial ventures that play a vital role in reshaping urban spaces (Won et.al. 2015). Enhanced connectivity from road development, whether in urban or rural areas, brings numerous benefits to residents. Improved roads enable rural households to engage more readily in labour markets, lower transportation costs for agricultural goods, and increase the frequency of transport options (Wiegand et.al. 2017). Additionally, high-traffic roads boost market opportunities for local businesses, including roadside vendors. However, major road improvements can also lead to higher prices for essentials such as food, fuel, and rent following the completion of highway projects (Farias, 2016). Therefore, this study is to investigate the effects of road expansion on housing development in Oke-Itoku and Isale-Ake areas of Abeokuta, Ogun State with the focus on taking inventory of the area affected by the road expansion exercise, assess the compliance of planning regulation within the affected areas, examine the roles of planning authority in the road expansion exercise and investigate the economic value of landed properties before and after the road expansion within the study area.

2.0 Methodology

Primary and secondary sources of data collection were employed for the study. The data for this study were collected using both quantitative and qualitative

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methods to ensure that the strengths of one approach would complement the other. The quantitative data were gathered through the administration of a structured questionnaire, while qualitative data were collected through interviews with key stakeholders and personal observations. Due to non-cooperation on the side of inhabitants of the study area, the target population was determined by counting the number of buildings along the road in both study areas. A total number of 207 buildings were identified: 120 buildings in Isale-Ake and 87 buildings in Oke-Itoku using on-screen analysis with Google Earth. In addition, a convenience sampling technique was employed to select 145 individuals, for the study. This included 84 respondents from Isale-Ake and 61 respondents from Oke-Itoku. The use of convenience sampling was intentional, as it allowed the researcher to address specific research questions and gather insights that provide a thorough understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics.

3.0 Results and Discussion

- **Building Use**

Table 1 reveals the analysis of building use in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku with a significant difference in the distribution of various building types. In Isale-Ake, residential buildings constitute the largest portion, accounting for 42.9% (36 buildings), followed closely by commercial buildings at 34.5% (29 buildings). Mixed-use structures also represent a notable segment at 21.4% (18 buildings), while institutional buildings are minimal, comprising only 1.2% (1 building). In contrast, Oke-Itoku exhibits a higher preference for residential use at 62.3% (38 buildings), indicating a stronger inclination towards living spaces compared to commercial activities, which stand at 34.4% (21 buildings). Notably, there are no institutional buildings reported in Oke-Itoku, and mixed-use buildings are limited to just 3.3% (2 buildings). These findings suggest that Isale-Ake has a more diverse building use landscape, accommodating various functions, while Oke-Itoku is predominantly residential.

Table 1: Building Use

Building Use	Isale-Ake		Oke-Itoku	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Residential	36	42.9	38	62.3
Commercial	29	34.5	21	34.4
Institutional	1	1.2	-	-
Mixed Use	18	21.4	2	3.3
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**61**	**100.0**

Source: *Author's Field' Survey, 2024*

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- **House Ownership Status**

Table 2 presents data on house ownership status in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku and it reveals notable trends in property ownership. In Isale-Ake, most residents are tenants, comprising 58.3% (49 households), while freehold ownership is relatively low at 15.5% (13 households). Inheritance accounts for 22.6% (19 households), and purchased properties are minimal, representing only 3.6% (3 households). Conversely, Oke-Itoku also shows a dominant tenant status, with 72.1% (44 households), but the freehold ownership is even lower at 4.9% (3 households). Inheritance here is slightly lower at 19.7% (12 households), and purchases make up 3.3% (2 households). These findings indicate that both areas have a high prevalence of tenant occupancy, suggesting a rental market that may reflect economic constraints or a preference for flexible living arrangements. The findings illustrate a predominantly rental-based housing pattern within the study area.

Table 2: House Ownership Status

Status	Isale-Ake		Oke-Itoku	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Freehold	13	15.5	3	4.9
Tenant	49	58.3	44	72.1
Inheritance	19	22.6	12	19.7
Purchase	3	3.6	2	3.3
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**61**	**100.0**

Source: *Author's Field' Survey, 2024*

- **Number of Households**

Table 3 displays the distribution of households in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku which highlights significant differences in family structures within these communities. In Isale-Ake, most households fall within the 4-6 members category, comprising 54.8% (46 households), followed closely by the 1-3 members category at 42.9% (36 households). Households with 7-9 members are minimal, representing only 2.4% (2 households), and there are no households with more than 10 members. In contrast, Oke-Itoku exhibits a different trend, with a dominant 73.8% (45 households) in the 4-6 members category, but a significantly lower percentage of households in the 1-3 members category at just 13.1% (8 households). The 7-9 members category accounts for 11.5% (7 households), and there is a small presence of larger households, with 1.6% (1 household) having more than 10 members. These findings suggest that while both areas have a significant number of households with 4-6 members, Isale-Ake has a larger proportion of smaller households.

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Table 3: Household Number

Household No	Isale-Ake		Oke-Itoku	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1-3	36	42.9	8	13.1
4-6	46	54.8	45	73.8
7-9	2	2.4	7	11.5
Above 10	-	-	1	1.6
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**61**	**100.0**

Source: *Author's Field' Survey, 2024*

- **Household size of the Respondents**

In table 4, the analysis of household sizes in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku reveals distinct patterns regarding family composition. In Isale-Ake, a striking 96.4% (81 households) consists of 1-5 members, indicating a predominance of smaller households. Conversely, only 3.6% (3 households) fall within the 6-10 members category. This trend suggests a strong preference for smaller family units in Isale-Ake, potentially reflecting lifestyle choices or economic factors that favor fewer dependents. In Oke-Itoku, the situation is somewhat different, with 88.5% (54 households) in the 1-5 members range and notable 11.5% (7 households) comprising 6-10 members. The higher percentage of larger households in Oke-Itoku may indicate a greater inclination towards extended family living arrangements or an influx of larger families. These differences have important implications for community planning and resource allocation.

Table 4: Household size of the Respondents

	Isale-Ake		Oke-Itoku	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1-5	81	96.4	54	88.5
6-10	3	3.6	7	11.5
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**61**	**100.0**

Source: *Author's Field' Survey, 2024*

- **Communication of planning regulations to residents before the road expansion**

Table 5 reveals the survey results on the communication of planning regulations to residents prior to road expansion, with a significant disparity between Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku. In Isale-Ake, a substantial majority of respondents, 91.7% (77 individuals), reported that planning regulations were communicated to them before the road expansion, indicating a strong engagement and transparency in the planning process while only 8.3% (7 individuals) indicated that they did not receive any communication regarding these regulations. In Oke-Itoku, the situation is remarkably different, with only 65.6% (40 respondents) confirming that they were informed about the planning regulations. As much as 34.4% (21 individuals) reported a lack of communication, highlighting a significant gap in the dissemination of

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information in this area. These findings suggest that while residents of Isale-Ake are well-informed about planning regulations, some residents in Oke-Itoku may feel excluded from the decision-making process regarding road expansion. This disparity could lead to potential conflicts or dissatisfaction among Oke-Itoku residents, as the lack of communication may result in misunderstandings about the implications of road expansion on their properties and community. Effective communication strategies should be implemented in Oke-Itoku to enhance community engagement, ensure residents are well-informed, and foster a collaborative environment in future urban planning initiatives.

Table 5: Communication of planning regulations to residents before the road expansion

	Isale-Ake		Oke-Itoku	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	77	91.7	40	65.6
No	7	8.3	21	34.4
Total	**84**	**100.0**	**61**	**100.0**

Source: *Author's Field' Survey, 2024*

- **Adhering to Planning Regulations during the Road Expansion Exercise**

Table 6 shows the results regarding adherence to planning regulations during road expansion in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku which reveals a significant difference in compliance perceptions among residents. In Isale-Ake, a considerable 83.1% (64 respondents) believe that the planning regulations communicated to them were adhered to during the road expansion, suggesting a strong sense of compliance and effective implementation of the regulations. Conversely, 16.9% (13 individuals) expressed that the regulations were not followed. While in Oke-Itoku, the perception of adherence is somewhat lower, with 70% (28 respondents) affirming that the planning regulations were followed during the road expansion. However, a notable 30% (12 individuals) reported that the regulations were not adhered to, indicating a higher level of concern regarding compliance compared to Isale-Ake. These findings suggest that while a majority in both areas feel that the planning regulations were generally respected, Oke-Itoku residents exhibit more Skepticism about compliance. The lower confidence in adherence in Oke-Itoku could stem from inadequate communication or engagement during the planning process, which may lead to feelings of disenfranchisement among residents.

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Table 6: Adhering to Planning Regulations during the Road Expansion Exercise

	Isale-Ake		Oke-Itoku	
	Frequency	**Percentage**	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Yes	64	83.1	28	70.0
No	13	16.9	12	70.5
Total	**77**	**100.0**	**40**	**100.0**

Source: *Author's Field' Survey, 2024*

4.0 Summary of Findings

The findings from this study reveal significant insights into the demographic composition, planning compliance, housing development, economic impacts, and challenges faced by the communities in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku due to the road expansion. Key findings are summarized as follows:

- A notable difference in planning regulation compliance was observed between Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku. Residents of Isale-Ake reported a higher level of communication about planning regulations prior to the road expansion, which likely contributed to higher compliance and satisfaction levels. Conversely, residents in Oke-Itoku felt less informed and displayed more skepticism regarding regulatory adherence. The variance in communication and adherence suggests a need for improved engagement and transparency, particularly in communities like Oke-Itoku, where a lack of information may foster distrust toward planning authorities.
- The road expansion had distinct impacts on housing development in the two areas. Isale-Ake saw a more significant decrease in housing development, with a shift towards commercial and high-rise buildings as opposed to residential properties. This trend was less pronounced in Oke-Itoku, where a balanced increase in commercial and mixed-use developments was observed. The findings indicate that road expansion has contributed to a transformation in local land use, with commercial spaces taking precedence over residential development, potentially impacting housing availability and affordability in the future.
- A sharp increase in property values was recorded in both areas, although more pronounced in Isale-Ake. This trend aligns with the introduction of improved infrastructure, accessibility, and the growth of commercial areas. While higher property values can contribute to economic prosperity, they may also create affordability challenges for long-standing residents. Factors influencing these changes, such as improved infrastructure, increased accessibility, and commercial growth, were significant in shaping the economic landscape of these communities.
- The study identified several problems associated with road expansion, primarily displacement of residents,

noise pollution, loss of property value, and increased traffic congestion. In Isale-Ake, displacement emerged as a predominant issue, reflecting the strict enforcement of planning regulations and demolition of non-compliant structures. Oke-Itoku faced additional challenges, particularly concerning loss of property value and increased traffic congestion. The overall negative impact was felt by most residents, underscoring the social costs of road expansion and the need for more inclusive planning approaches that minimize disruptions to community life.

5.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

The study on the eeffects of road expansion on housing development in Isale-Ake and Oke-Itoku axis of Abeokuta reveals a significant relationship between infrastructure development and urban growth. Road expansion has positively influenced housing development by improving accessibility, stimulating real estate investment, and increasing the desirability of areas along the expanded routes. As new roads enhance connectivity, previously underdeveloped areas become attractive for residential development, contributing to urban sprawl and altering housing market dynamics. However, while the positive effects of road expansion on housing development are evident, the study also highlights challenges such as potential displacement, increased property costs, and environmental degradation. These concerns underscore the need for careful urban planning and regulatory oversight to ensure that the benefits of road expansion are equitably distributed and do not exacerbate social inequalities or environmental risks.

Based on the results of the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- **Comprehensive Urban Planning:** The government and urban planners should prioritize the creation of integrated urban development plans that anticipate the long-term effects of road expansion on housing, land use, and population distribution. These plans should include zoning regulations that strike a balance between residential, commercial, and industrial development, ensuring sustainable growth while accommodating the increasing demand for housing and services.
- **Affordable Housing Initiatives:** To prevent the displacement of low-income residents as property values rise, policies should be introduced to support affordable housing along newly expanded roads. These could include providing incentives for developers to build low-cost housing in key areas, ensuring that all income groups can benefit from urban development without being pushed out by gentrification.

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- **Environmental Sustainability:** Road expansion projects must be accompanied by thorough environmental assessments to minimize any negative effects on local ecosystems. Incorporating sustainable practices, such as green spaces, proper drainage systems, and efficient traffic management, will help mitigate the risks of urban sprawl and pollution, fostering an environmentally friendly urban environment.

- **Infrastructure and Social Services:** As housing development accelerates due to road expansion, it is essential to plan for the necessary complementary infrastructure. This includes providing schools, healthcare facilities, water supply systems, and public transportation options to meet the needs of a growing population. Ensuring these services are in place will help prevent the strain on existing resources and promote a higher quality of life for residents.

- **Community Engagement:** Authorities must engage local communities in the planning and decision-making processes to ensure that their needs and concerns are adequately addressed. This approach helps mitigate the negative social impacts of development, such as displacement and loss of livelihoods, and fosters community support and ownership of development projects.

By implementing the above-mentioned recommendations, Abeokuta can strike a balance between leveraging the benefits of road expansion for economic growth and addressing the challenges that arise from such developments. This approach will ensure sustainable, inclusive, and equitable urban growth benefits all residents.

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