

Property value of houses with cemeteries, its psychological and health impact at lagelu local government, Ibadan, Oyo state, Nigeria

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Abstract

As human populations and their subsequent anthropogenic effects increases, the nation's elderly population expected in the coming decades and the disposal of corps will drastically increase., it is expedient a quick study is carried out to evaluate the property value of houses with cemeteries, its psychological and health impact in Lagelu Local Government, Ibadan, Nigeria. One hundred and fifty questionnaires were structured and administered on tenants, landlords, private and other government structures taking into cognizance buildings with evidence of tomb with the adoption of Stratified sampling technique. Lagelu Local Government was further divided into 6 randomly selected political wards. The research finding proved that building with tomb(s) was observed in one out of three houses especially in the interior location of Lagelu Local Government which could be attributed to lack of public cemetery in the location. Outsized 10-40% price devaluation in the property value of houses with cemetery during buying, selling or renting of the properties was reported by respondents and observable repeated waterborne disease with typhoid and dysentery the prominent among it. Also, there were other demerits such as Psychological disturbance especially to children without an up-bring in the local government. Thus, it can be concluded that indiscriminate siting of burial ground within the resident showed a negative impact on the property value thereby causing a devaluation of the price of a property, increased the environment degradation with widespread water borne disease incident such as typhoid among the inhabitant of Lagelu Local Government.

Keywords: property value, psychological effect, health impact, cemeteries or tombs

1. Introduction

As human populations and their subsequent anthropogenic effects increase, there are limitless adverse environmental and health impacts. One rarely addressed source of contamination that poses risks is the disposal of corpses. This is a long recognized problem with evidence of negative effects dating back to the 1800s (Bachelor 2004). There are five ways to dispose of a cadaver: burial in the ground, burial at sea, entombment, cremation and exposure to the elements without burial (Dent 2002 Dent *et al.*, 2004) ^[4, 5]. Concurrent with the dramatic increase in the nation's elderly population expected in coming decades will be a need to dispose of large number of our dead. This issue has religious, cultural and economic salience, but is not typically considered a planning problem. Although cremation rates are rising in the Western World, burial is projected to remain the preferred alternative for the majority of the Nigerian populations and urban space for cemeteries is limited in many communities (Jones 2010 ^[9], Oladele and Abiodun 2013) ^[12, 13]. Appraisal Institute (2002) ^[2]. defined real property as all interests, and right inherent in the ownership of physical real properties, the bundle of rights with which the ownership of the real estate is endowed. In some instances, real property is defined by statute and synonymous with real estate. Tyrväinen, and Antti (2000) ^[18]. opined that in any urban setting properties are expected to appreciate in value from time to time but regrettably he identified some human activities on land like indiscriminate sitting of burial ground within the urban neighborhood as factor aiding urban slum and land value depreciation (Olanrele 2014 ^[15]. and Egunleti, I.O. 2008) ^[7]. However,

Akomolede (2006) ^[1]. identified the following as some of the transactions taking place on land. These include land sales and purchase, property Mortgage, Environmental landscaping and mapping, Property and environmental development, property management, compulsory land acquisition, land use economy, property valuation, and a host of others, Hence the need for proper planning for the disposal of the dead (Neckel *et al.*, 2017) ^[10]. Essentially, as population demographics change, environmental concerns intensify, and demand for urban space grows, future land use decisions will have to balance diverse set of social, cultural and environmental expectations, including taking into account burial practices (Olajide, S.E. 2006) ^[14]. From time immemorial, it has become Nigerian culture to bury their dead within the residential neighborhood without taking into consideration the consequences it would have on the environment in general and property business or evaluation in particular (Turajo *et al.*, 2019) ^[17]. For instance researches had shown that underground and pipe waters could be polluted where such water is exposed to the graves (Thomson 2009) ^[16]. When death occurs in our society, it is invariably a sad event; however the decaying of the corpse and beliefs about death make the presence of the dead person among the living unacceptable. Throughout history, almost all societies have employed different practices of disposing off the dead and one such form is cemetery or burial ground (Chakravarty 1967, Basmajian and Coutts 2010) ^[3]. In the western part of Nigeria, tradition demands that chiefs are not buried in public cemeteries but in secret locations preferably at home (Ogbuagu, 1989) ^[11]. This practice emanated from the belief that opposing

warriors might exhume the body of the chiefs and that could mean defeat or embarrassment to the town or traditional area (Olajide and Abiodun 2013) [12, 13]. However, this practice have been flawed and currently, not only chief are buried at home but anybody. Corpses are now buried indiscriminately in homes, front and back gardens without any recourse to the effect this practice have on the environment (Olajide and Abiodun 2013) [12, 13]. If precaution is not taken now, there is the potential of an outbreak of epidemic. In most parts of Nigeria, water is distributed through PVC pipes in the ground. Most often the pipe breaks either through pressure from vehicular traffic or even severe hot weather condition. These burst pipes do remain unattended to for days and bacteria are transmitted through the broken pipes to sources of use by the general public.

On the other hand, most Nigerians where pipe borne water is not forthcoming depend mostly on underground water in form of well, boreholes, steam water supply and the likes (Gbadegesin and Olorunfemi, 2007) [18].

These sources of water supply have tendencies to come in contact with the remains of the corpse which directly or indirectly cause water contamination. Cemetery, a place for institutional burial practice, has special meaning and importance for both the dead and the living (Dian 2004; Guttman *et al.* 2012). While groundwater is considered the most resilient source of drinking water across most of Africa, a lack of adequate management of household and industrial waste disposal in many expanding urban centers is a growing challenge (Wang and Hao 2012). This attitude of burying the dead within residential building makes property transaction more difficult. It is in the view of the above, that the researchers have poised to work on property value of houses with cemetery, its psychological and health impact.

Methodology and Procedure

For all intents and purposes, a preference was giving to Lagelu Local Government as a case study due to the evident of several noticeable cemeteries within the building and the sample size of one Hundred And Fifty (150) was well thought-out suitable for the research. Hence, one Hundred and Fifty questionnaires were administered on the residents of different neighborhoods within the local government putting into consideration the political wards so as to minimize being biased. Effort was made to retrieve completely field 135 out of the total number of questionnaire administered. The analysis carried-out on the research and the drawn conclusions were made based on the retrieved questionnaires. Stratified sampling technique was considered appropriate while data were sourced through reconnaissance survey, personal observation, one on one interview, administration of questionnaires and use of published and unpublished documents. Data were presented and analyzed through the use of Tables, Charts, and the use of descriptive statistics respectively

Research Findings and discussion:

The 135 fully completed questionnaires were sorted into the randomly selected six (6) political wards and further analyzed to validate the presence of cemeteries (tombs) in the building and to ascertain the frequency of this tombs in the building and wards. The research findings showed that occupant of Lagelu Local Government especially in the old settlement such as Lagun and Ejioku had the highest frequency of tombs located within building while Ajara and Arulogun ward had the minimal reoccurrence. This can be seen in figure 1 which proves that Lagelu local governments especially the core settlement are found burying their corps with the building.

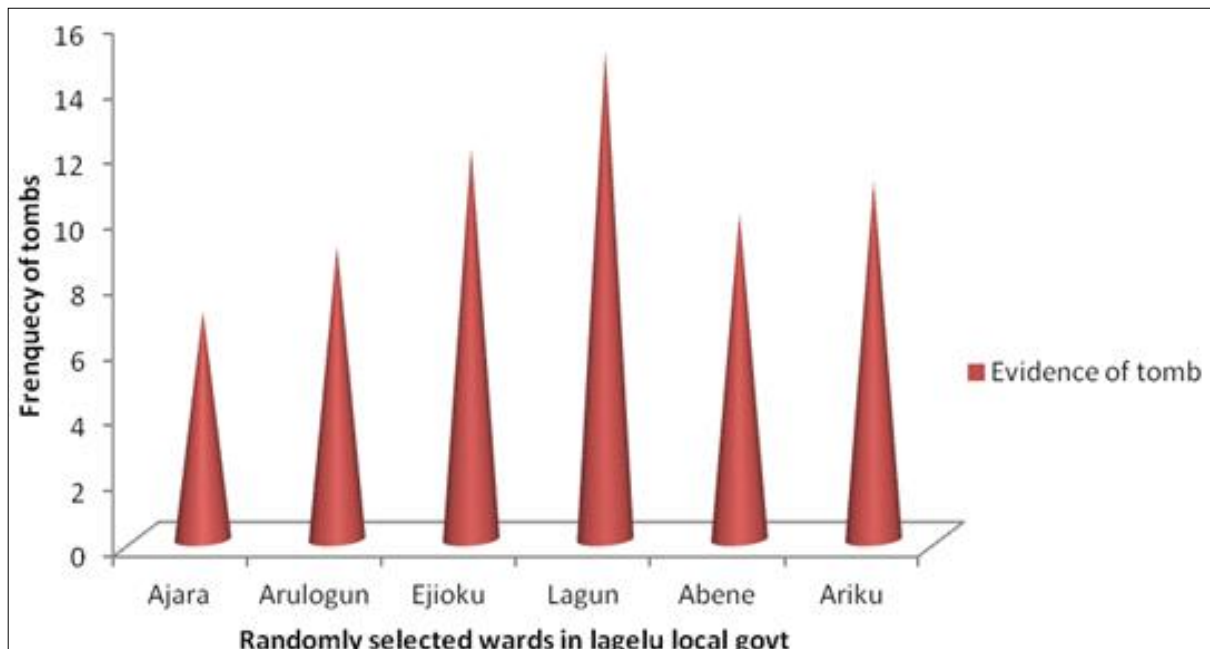


Fig 1: The Chart showing the frequency of tombs in randomly selected twenty five (25) houses in six (6) wards of Lagelu Local Government.

From the result of the analyses carried-out from the respondents, it was observed in Table 1 that the percentage of ‘choice of place of burial’ within the building was higher compared to

ther choice of places of burial which attest to the fact that majority of the inhabitant of lagelu local government have a preference of burying their dead within the vicinity of the house with an alarming rate of 62%.

Table 1: the findings in table one showed the frequency and percentage of the choice of place of burier

Choice of place of burial	Frequency	Percentage
Public/community burial ground	30	22.0%
Place of death	85	62.0%
Within the building/house	15	11.0%
No preference	3	2.2%
Indifferent	2	1.4%
Total	135	

Note: 135 out of 150 questionnaires were retrieved after

distributions.

The research finding Table 2 provide reasons for the respondent’s choice of place of burial being within the house premises with 65% of respondent reportedly believed it is their culture to bury their dead within the building whereas 23% respondents believed it was their religion while 10% believed it was a way to honor the dead. No preference and Indifference amounted to 2% and 1% respectively.

Table 2: Reason for burying the dead within the building as a choice of place of burial?

Reason for burying dead within a building	Frequency	Percentage
Cultural	55	64.7%
Religion	19	22.4%
Honor to the death	8	9.3%
No preference	2	2.4%
Indifferent	1	1.2%
TOTAL	85	100%

Note: 85 out of 135 respondents preferred ‘within the building’ as their choice of place of burial

Figure 2 showed the deduction in percentage considered by respondents when buying or renting an apartment of a house with cemetery in the building. 64 respondents will have a preference of 20% reduction from the real value price of the building if they will consider acquiring the properties whereas over 37 respondents will prefer a 10% deduction in price. Over 20% respondent will not go into negotiations rather they

will forfeit the building for an alternative building without tomb. Similar findings was observed with the rent with 57 respondent forfeiting the house in search of another, where other respondents will accept a considerable cut of 50% reduction from the actual rent price. This research finding proves of the devaluation of properties as a result of our cultural and religious belief of burying dead within the building.

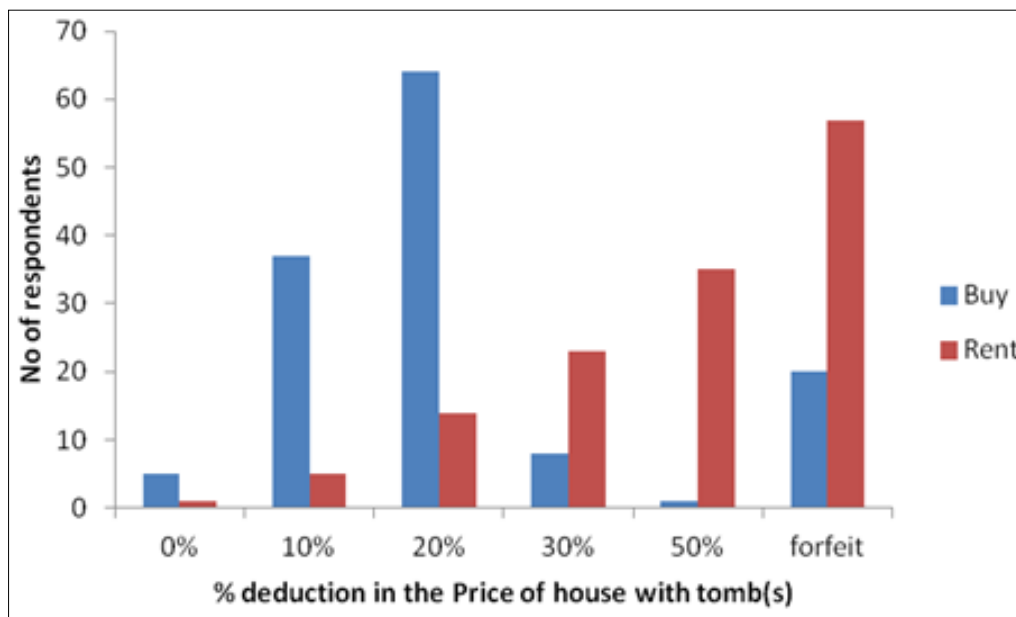


Fig 2: The Chart showing the percentage reduction of buying and renting a house with tombs in randomly selected six (6) wards of Lagelu Local Government

Figure 3 showed the deduction in percentage considered by respondents when selling an apartment of a house with cemetery in the building. 52 respondents will have a preference of 10% and 20% reduction from the real value price of the building if they will consider selling the properties at due time whereas over 11 respondents will

prefer a 30% deduction in price due to the presence of the tomb as a factor. 10 respondents will not negotiations a reduction in the actual price believing the presence of tomb has nothing to do with the price of a house. While other respondents prefer to forfeit the building for their aged parent rather than selling it as at a giveaway price.

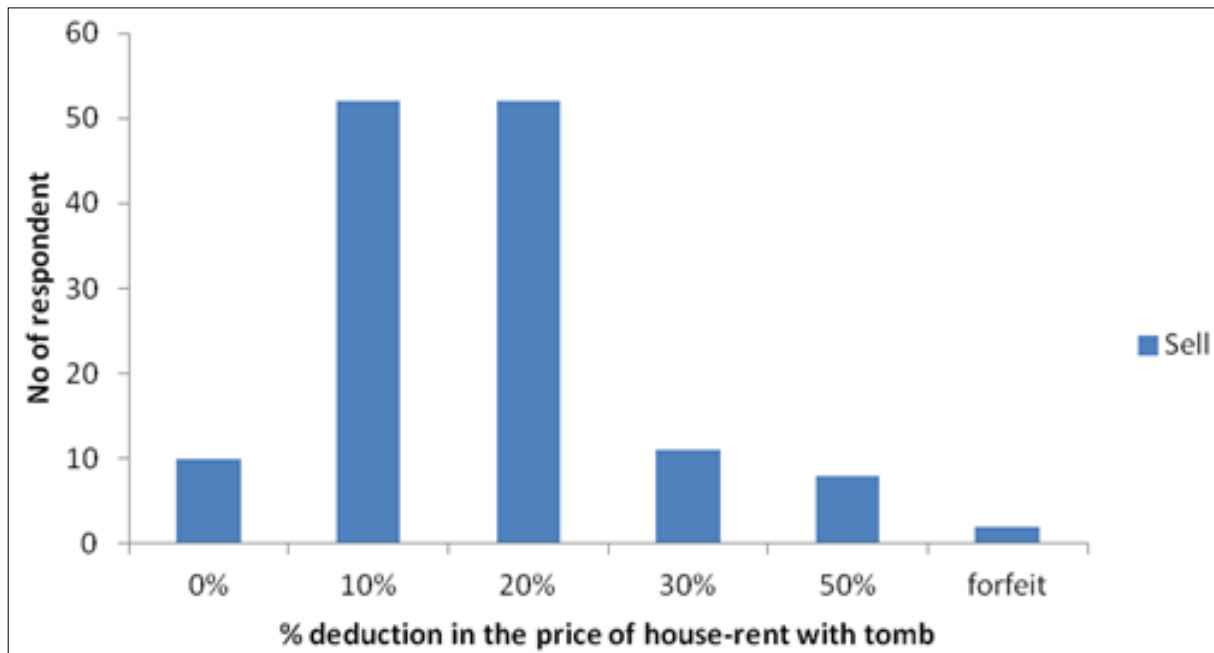


Fig 3: The Chart showed the percentage reduction of selling a house with tombs in randomly selected six (6) wards of Lagelu Local Government

With the human populations especially in Nigeria on the increase, the subsequent anthropogenic effects is also on the increasing side, thus, there will be increase both in the acquisition and purchase of landed/house properties and at the same time mortality (Dian 2004;). Cemetery, a place for institutional burial practice, has special meaning and importance for both the dead and the living (Guttman *et al.* 2012).

While groundwater is considered the most resilient source of drinking water across most of Africa, a lack of adequate management of household and industrial waste disposal in many expanding urban centers is a growing challenge (Wang and Hao 2012).

Based on observation during administration of the questionnaires and from the respondents, it was evident that there were no considerable distance between tombs and water source in the building, this was obvious in building with wells being their major source of water supply for several domestic uses. From the findings it was clearly seen that most of the respondent drink and bath from the same source of water and thus, some of the respondent have been diagnose of water borne diseases severally with a considerable high percentage of typhoid and dysenteries amongst other water borne diseases. Many of the respondents are yet to see any harm in burying their dead within a water source.

Many of the respondents whose base and foundation has been within the environment believe there is not relationship between having tombs within the building and psychological impact whereas, children with urban base that found them self-relocated to the local government experience a psychological challenge especially when they are left alone at night and it generated nightmare alongside. Academically, respondents believe it only occurs within a short while but with time got adjusted to the routing and are now stable.

Conclusion

From all research findings, it can be concluded that

indiscriminate siting of burial ground within the resident showed a negative impact on the property value thereby causing a devaluation of the price of a property. It also revealed the fact that digging tombs within residential neighborhood especially close to a water source has increased the environment degradation with widespread water borne disease incident such as typhoid among the inhabitant of Lagelu Local Government.

Recommendation

An enlightenment program should be brought up by the government to educate the populace of Lagelu Local Government of the adverse effect posed by burying the dead within the building and also to build a community cemeteries to discourage this menace so as to maintain a sustain environment.

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