Effect of Culture on Urban Public Housing Non-Occupancy: A Case Study in Ondo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Housing has been ranked high among other basic human needs but its inadequacy and inability to respond to user satisfaction remains a reoccurrence. This paper examines users’ satisfaction as a determinant of occupancy in urban public housing (UPH) in the context of Ondo State, Nigeria, through the window of culture. Through literature review, this study emphasizes that cultural issues cannot be neglected in the design and planning process if user satisfaction is targeted. Three public housing estates have been chosen as case study. A 5 Point Likert Scale questionnaire was administered in the study area. Quantitative research methods were used to analyse the feedbacks from the respondents in order to derive findings. SPSS version 14 was used as a tool for quantitative analysis. Different statistical methods were carried out to validate the data. Through Factor analysis, five cultural variables conformed to those identified from literature review. However, only two of the five, identified as Kinship Issues, and Food Habit passed the significance test meaning users are satisfied with these issues with current design and planning of UPH. The other three variables namely Socialization/Privacy, Relaxation, and Identity were found not to be addressed enough in design and planning. User dissatisfaction has the potential to lead to non-occupancy, a phenomenon the government cannot afford to let exist if it tries to use its limited resource on housing to its full potential. Therefore, these three cultural issues should be seriously considered.

Keyword: Urban public housing, Non-occupancy, Culture, User Satisfaction, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

This paper is developed in the context of a section of Nigerian culture. The intension is to prevent increasing non-occupancy in Nigerian urban public housing. Non-occupancy is a phenomenon whereby already delivered housings are not accepted and occupied by the public. Considering the limited resources of Nigerian Government in the Housing sector, non-occupancy can be considered a significant issue to be addressed. This paper posits that public housing in Nigeria will be delivered to suit the taste of the citizens as designs will be made to
respond to the culture of the people for whom it is intended. By so doing, Nigerians will appreciably occupy such public housings.

1. BACKGROUND

Nigeria is the most populous African country with a population of over 150 million (NPC, 2006). The percentage of the country’s citizens living in the urban centres has significantly increased from year to year. In the 1930s only 7% of Nigerians lived in urban centres, 10% in the 1950s, and 20% in 1970s, also in 1980s and 1990s, 27% and 35% respectively lived in the urban centres (Okupe, 2002).

Housing problem by this influx of people into the urban centers has become very much pronounced in the face of the crowded population as the population growth rate in Nigeria urban centers had been 5.8%. From this data, about 43% of Nigerians totaling approximately 62.22 million people lives in the cities (UN-Habitat, 2007). With this huge population in the urban area, urban housing problem has become increasingly acute.

According to Ademiluyi (2010), housing provision in Nigeria started before the country’s independence in October 1, 1960. Among the major steps towards solving Nigerian urban housing problems are:

i) The 1928 establishment of the Lagos Executive Development Board (LEDB) which was authorised to clear slums, reclaim land, and to develop residential and industrial estates.

ii) In 1956, Nigerian Building Society (NBS) was set up to provide housing loans to the Nigerian populace.

iii) In 1986, the National Site and Services Scheme (NSSS) was formed to make provision for serviced plots of land for residential purposes (Ademiluyi, 2010; Kabir and Bustani, 2009).

1.1 Housing Trends in Nigeria

As mentioned earlier, housing provision started long before the nation’s independence of 1960, in which LEDB was created to clear slums, reclaim land and develop residential and industrial estates. NBS was made to provide loans to the Nigerian populace for housing purposes and NSSS was to provide site and services with all necessary facilities such as access roads, line drainage, sewage system, water supply and electricity in the well laid-out plots of land and these were to be done in all the 36 states of the Federal Republic of Nigeria including Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) (Ademiluyi, 2010; Kabir and Bustani, 2009).

Also the National Prototype Housing Program (NPHP) under the Federal Ministry of Works and Housing (FMWH) that was created to make the idea of NSSS to be realized by the design and construction of prototype houses on serviced plots of land. And at the state levels, State Housing Corporations (SHC) was set-up in order to provide affordable housing to the people.

In 1977, the Federal Mortgage Bank of Nigeria was created to finance housing developers in the country with low interest rates. Also in 1991, the National
Housing Program (NHP) and National Housing Fund (NHF) in 1992 were put in place to monitor housing development in the housing sector of the country’s economy and funding developers through self-loans respectively. Despite all the efforts of the government through various programs of mass housing delivery and establishments of all the Finance Institutions in an attempt to achieve adequate housing, far less of the required housing stock to overcome its shortage could be achieved (ibid).

1.2. Housing Delivery Schemes in Nigeria
There have been basically three different types of housing delivery scheme in Nigeria. These are Public, Private, and the Public-Private partnership schemes.

1.2.1. Public Housing Delivery Scheme
The Public Housing Delivery Scheme is the type of housing delivery scheme that was solely embarked upon by the government. This was initiated in an attempt by the government to provide quality and affordable housing for the citizens and to prevent people from living in substandard, deplorable and unhygienic environment (Ademiluyi, 2010). This delivery system was under the government housing policy scheme established in 1991. Figure 1a shows samples of public housing in Nigeria.

![Figure 1: Examples from, a) Public Housing Projects in Nigeria, b) Private Apartments in Nigeria delivered through Private Developers, c) Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Housing Delivery Scheme (Source: google.ng)](image)

1.2.2 Private Housing Delivery Scheme
The private housing delivery scheme is the biggest scheme among others. In this particular scheme, individuals, households and communities who planned to provide affordable and quality houses for private use, or small scale builders, firms, commercial estate developers/agencies and private developers that do housing businesses are personally responsible. This is because they have no access to financial institutions’ fund or bank loans except by collateral or personal savings (Onibokun, 1990). Still, without argument it was formally accepted that the private housing delivery scheme has over the years delivered about 90% of Nigerian housing stock (FRN, 1991) (Figure 1b).

1.2.3. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Housing Delivery Scheme
This is the type of housing delivery in which the government/public collaborate with the private sector in the delivery of quality and affordable housing for the people in the society, that is, to the civil servants and the general public (Figure

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This formation is made up of the Federal or State government, as the case may be, the housing agencies, multi-national housing finance institutions, private commercial housing developers, and commercial banks as well as primary mortgage institutions (PMIs) (Ibem, 2011).

2. HOUSING OCCUPANCY

Housing Occupancy is operationally defined in this paper as the state at which a delivered housing project is occupied for continuous usage either through rent or outright purchase. Public housings, delivered by the government mainly address the low-income and medium income groups in the society. This is because the cost involved in owning a house is not always an easy task for people belonging in such categories. It therefore becomes a responsibility as well as a liability for the government to provide quality and affordable housing for such groups of people. Therefore the expectation from the government should be that such housing would be occupied.

To get a housing occupied, Olatubara (2007) was of the opinion that it is essential for housing providers to ensure that the culture of the people for whom housing is been provided be considered. This he said should include careful and sympathetic design, various options to choose from, and provision of necessary facilities. Otherwise there will be rejections and non-occupancy in public housing, even in the face of housing shortage.

2.1. Non-Occupancy

Non-occupancy in housing is the state at which already delivered housing is never occupied. It is the situation whereby already delivered housing are not consumed or occupied by the targeted group of people in a society. Thus the housing is not utilized despite the public fund expended on it. Figure 2 is an example of urban public housing in Ondo State, Nigeria, that have been completed and commissioned since June 26, 2006 but yet to be occupied.

Housing delivery is often related to this phenomenon, and it is not a common occurrence in the society. But in Nigerian public housings, this phenomenon has been observed. Therefore, housing delivery and non-occupancy is believed to have very complex relationship.
The delivery of adequate and quality urban public housing in Nigeria like most other developing nations has become an illusion to the people and the government. Every governmental approach to achieve this for the well-being of its citizenry has yielded no significant results. Thus the urban dwellers have not been able to obtain or access acceptable housing for over two decades. The Nigeria housing situation is full of several inadequacies in form of quality which has made some of them unacceptable to the populace and has culminated to non-occupancy of urban public housing in the country (NHP, 1991; Jiboye, 2009; Oladapo, 2006).

In the attempt to deliver acceptable urban public housing therefore, relevant factors that determine the housing satisfaction of the people should not be overlooked by the government (Onibokun, 1973; Ebong, 1983). Occupants’ housing needs and preferences are supposed to be considered in the design and development of housing rather than the developers’ standard, otherwise non-occupancy of urban public housing will continue in Nigeria.

2.2. Abandonment in Housing
The phenomenon of Non-occupancy is closely related to another similar phenomenon namely, Abandonment. Abandonment in housing is a voluntary decision of someone or group of people to give up the use of an already occupied housing. An abandoned house could be defined as giving up a house either because of lack of financial power to keep it or because of its lack of flexibility to accommodate the changing housing needs of the households that result in moving out (Seek 1983). It can also result in if the lifespan of the building nears to its end. This does not mean there is a vacancy of such a house for occupancy (Sternlieb et. al., 1974; Keenan et. al., 1999).

2.3. Difference between non-occupancy and abandonment
From above therefore, non-occupancy of housing is the situation whereby newly delivered housing in a particular location or community is not utilized contrary to the providers’ expectation that they will be used due to shortage of housing in an area. On the other hand, abandonment of housing is the situation in which housing that had been used over a period of time is either permanently vacated or temporarily been unused. Therefore, abandonment may not raise a serious issue as non-occupancy because there might still be some way in case of the former to get it occupied whereas non-occupancy poses the threat to be vacant forever. Therefore, there seems to be a significant need to study the reasons behind non-occupancy.

3. ROLE OF CULTURE
From the studies so far, there is no strong evidence that cultural issues were addressed enough in the design process of housings in Nigeria. Echoing with Olatubara (2007), in their analysis of housing needs from all over the world, Altman and Chemers (1980), emphasized that family houses should satisfy both the individual needs of the inhabitants as well as the social needs with relationship
with the community. That brings in the importance of culture in the designing of housing. Culture has its intangible elements such as people’s beliefs, perceptions, values, customs, norms and behaviors. The concept of these intangibles appears in the designs of objects in the physical environment as physical artifacts (Macionis and John, 2010). Architecture and built environment is no exception. Architecture and culture depends on each other and cannot be separated (Rapoport, 1969).

Culture is also that which differentiates a set or group of people from the other groups (Hofstede, 1980). It is a system that beliefs in and accepts the same opinion about a particular issue (Geertz, 1973). Therefore, culture is the way of life that is exhibited by a set of people in a particular environment or community which transcend from one generation to another over certain issues including housing and its environment. According to Rapoport (2000), culture identifies a particular group or tribe of people from another. Culture in Nigeria is amazingly diverse in various intangibles such as in the people’s dressing, art, music, dancing, festival, cooking, politics, religion, spoken languages etc. When it is interpreted to its physical artifacts created by that society such as in housing, it reflects the culture of particular groups of people as well. However, the problem is, when housing is delivered in a scale like in public housing in Nigeria, how many and how much of these intangibles are paid attention, and how the diversities are addressed still remain to be answered.

3.1. Effects of culture on housing

According to Olotuah and Ajenifujah (2009), culture like other variables such as climate, economy, technology etc., should have a reflection on the housing of a group of people. Traditional houses invariably reflect that. For example, local materials and technology are used both as building and finish materials. Climate also can decide the shape built form. Cultural intangibles are reflected in space generation and space hierarchy etc. Moreover, culture is dynamic. The intangibles, and consequently, the physical artifacts can change depending on the changes of those variables including those of other cultures. As long as that physical artifact satisfies the way of life of a particular group of people, there is no conflict to accept them. When Housing is concerned as a physical artifact, those intangibles need to be satisfied through its forms and spaces (ibid). However, in a smaller society, there are more of those intangibles in common. When moving into a bigger society, these intangibles are shaped and re-shaped due to the demand of co-existence. Several of them may be suppressed or modified. Therefore, the number of common intangibles gradually reduces. When housing in the denser urban context is concerned, it can be argued that all traditional intangibles may not be reflected because of the demand for a sustainable larger society. However, as climate, economy, technology etc. are studied during the design process, culture can by no means be neglected; otherwise it is likely to ignite dissatisfaction (Gardi, 1973, as cited in Olotuah and Ajenifujah, 2009).
3.2. Housing Satisfaction
Designing housing as primarily a shelter, cultural issues may often be relegated to secondary. Most of the public housings occupied today in the world were not occupied because the houses, being culturally responsive, satisfied the occupants, but they were occupied as people needed basic shelter to be protected from natural and man-made adversity. Nigerian governments yearn to provide adequate housing for all. However, it seems that neglecting cultural issues may lead to dissatisfaction and hence undesirable situations such as non-occupancy even though there is still basic demand of shelter. That might well be a blow to the government who are trying to work on housing within its limited resources. Therefore, it seems that there is necessity to study user satisfaction on cultural issues in public housing estates in Nigeria. According to Lu (1999), the satisfactions of intending users need to be considered for any housing policy to be successful. Therefore, lack of satisfaction can be considered as a significant contributor to non-occupancy.

In search for the components of culture that leads to user satisfaction on housing, Francescato et. al. (1974) stated that the satisfaction of the inhabitants of housing is made up of individuals, physical features and their ultimate expectations from the physical environment. According to Rapoport (2001), worldviews, kinship and kinship relations, family structure, and social networks are cultural components believed to have influenced the satisfaction of housing. Jabareen (2005) is opining that culture is a determining factor on housing preferences in developing cities; and he refers to religious beliefs, attitudes towards women, political attitudes, social relations, kinship relations, and attitudes toward kinship as its major components.

There can be an endless list of such cultural components. However, in the context of Nigerian urban public housing and especially for this research focusing on Ondo State, Nigeria, a literature review was conducted in order to narrow down the list.

4. THE STUDY AREA
As mentioned, the study area for this research is Ondo State in Nigeria. Ondo State is one of the fastest growing and developing states in the country with a population expected to be around 4.1 million at the end of year 2012 on the basis of growth rate calculated in the year 2006 population census that showed the then state population at 3.4 million (20th of 36 states) made up of 1,761,263 males and 1,679,761 females. With the rapid population growth in Ondo State, housing problems has increased and the cities became more congested (NPC 2006).

Ondo State people have a pattern of life that is an embodiment of culture, the components of which ranges from local food habit, dressing, dancing, music, to wood crafts such as carved house posts and decorated doors. When turned to built form and space, several key features can be noticed from empirical observation. For example, the use of courtyard in traditional housing is very important to the people. Apart from climatic considerations, this use of courtyard as a place to meet shows the fact that living in the same house with ones relations and kinsmen.
is a culture that has been in use from ages by the people. The traditional housing culture of the Ondo people is such that children build their houses in the same compound with their parents when they are married as men, or extend their parents' house or the parents themselves extend their house to allow for more space for the new family. Also, people extend their personal houses for the reasons that their extended relations might be coming to live in the same house with them. All these were just because kinship relation is important in the housing of Nigerian people. As a consequence, large guest rooms are common in Nigerian traditional housing. They also cater for a space for relaxation, a feature common in Nigerian culture. Interestingly, despite the fact that the people accommodate different levels of relatives to live with them, they still maintain privacy to a good extent in their housing in terms of hierarchy and zoning.

The traditional housings are often built to have large number of rooms to cater for polygamous family that is largely practiced by the people. Equally, sizable living rooms are made to be part of the houses for purposes such as extended family meetings, society meetings, wedding engagement ceremonies etc. This large number and sizable rooms are also to provide privacy within the house for the occupants.

Kitchen, as an essential part of every housing is also considered as an important element in the housing culture of Ondo State people. This is simply because there are some local foods that people eat regularly that require special kind of large spaces for its preparation. Moreover, large number of people eats from the same table at the same time due to large family structure or family relations. Kitchen location and size are therefore important in the housing culture of the people.

Traditional housing in Ondo State is the same as in the South-Western part of Nigeria and similar to most West African countries (Amole et. al., 1993). Most houses in this area are one storey building with entrances in the front and an exit at the rear side. Housings are often designed to have rectangular courtyards, which usually comply with the shape of the house, with a verandah overlooking the courtyard through which the occupants enter into their rooms. Opened courtyard also was found to aid the ventilation of the rooms with the window openings positioned on by the doors to the rooms. Common kitchen, toilets and bathrooms are always located at the rear side of it. Large kitchens and storages are provided in housing because of the large number of people that are to eat in the house. Kitchen sometimes are separately built unattached to the house so also are toilets and bathrooms. However, with all those similarities, households are keen to have some identifiable elements that can be recognized by the community. This can be expressed through its strategic location, or in the form of decorative elements.

Summarizing them, this study comes up with five significant cultural components that might have strong effect of user satisfaction. They are as follows:

1. Kinship issues
2. Socialization vs. Privacy
3. Food Habit
4. Relaxation
5. Identity

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1. Sample selection and Data collection
Out of the twenty-three (23) urban public housing estates in Ondo State of Nigeria, there are twelve (12) low income and six (6) medium income public housings estates in the six urban centers of the state. The rest five are the high income class housing estates which are not investigated in this study. To have a proportionate distribution, two housing estates from the low income estates, and one from the medium income housing estates were chosen randomly. The low income housing estates are Federal Low-Cost Housing Estate (Shagari Village), Akure, and Ondo State Low-Cost Housing Estate, Otapete, Owo. For the medium income housing estate, Ondo State Housing Estate, Oba-Ile in Akure North was selected. Therefore, the sample, which represented around one-sixth of the population of twelve estates, proved to be adequate according to formulas stated by social science researchers (Jiboye, 2010; Adetokunbo, 2010).

For effective data collection, a structured questionnaire was prepared on the basis of the five major components of culture identified through literature, which were considered as independent variables. User satisfaction was considered as the dependent variable. Each component was spread along a group of item variables, answers of which through a 5-Point Likert scale were hypothesized to provide data on user satisfaction. The household heads of the randomly selected houses were given the responsibility to respond to the questionnaire. A total of 100 houses were chosen for the sample.

5.2. Data analysis

5.2.1. Descriptive Analysis
The cluster bar chart shown in Figure 3 is the graphical illustration of the entire demographic variables of the respondents shown together for a quick view. Table 1 summarizes them in numerical form. A reliability test was done at the beginning. ANOVA test was carried out in order to detect any differences among the means of the three groups in the sample. Exploratory Factor Analysis was used to factorize the items with values suppressed below 0.4. Finally, regression analysis was done in order to find out the significant relationship between the factors and the dependent variable (i.e. user-satisfaction). All of these were carried out using SPSS software (version 14).
Table 1: Summary of the Demographic Variables of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Descriptive</th>
<th>Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>1 if male; 2 if female</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>1 if 21-45; 2 if 46 and above</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marital status</td>
<td>1 if single; 2 if married; 3 if divorced</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>1 if Christianity; 2 if Islam; 3 if Traditional</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational status</td>
<td>1 if high school; 2 if Bsc; 3 if postgraduate</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment status</td>
<td>1 if civil servant; 2 if self-employed; 3 if retired</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency status</td>
<td>1 if owner-occupier; 2 if tenant-occupier</td>
<td>1.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length of stay</td>
<td>1 if 1-10; 2 if 11-20; 3 if 21 and above</td>
<td>1.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.2. Factor Analysis

Factor analysis is a method to quantitatively measure relationship between qualitative data (Berkoz and Kellekci, 2006). Table 2 shows the exploratory factor analysis of the items used. 5 factors were extracted with Eigenvalue set at 1. The result shows the item variables those had factor loading more than 4. Items having less that that value were deleted.

Table 2: Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Variables</th>
<th>Factor loading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with members of extended families matters</td>
<td>.84 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with people from the same ethnicity matters</td>
<td>.84 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with people from the same cultural background matters</td>
<td>.83 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with people from the same religious belief matters</td>
<td>.74 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with your immediate family members matters</td>
<td>.66 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/P</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is enough privacy in the layout of the unit</td>
<td>.78 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unwanted visitors are not allowed in your unit</td>
<td>.71 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Setbacks to the road are adequate</td>
<td>.42 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2.3. Regression Analysis
From the multivariate regression analysis, users-satisfaction (STF) was described as a function of independent variables that supported the cultural components of Urban Public Housing (UPH). The correlations between STF and the 5 variables were shown in table 3. It also shows the inter-relationship between the independent variables.

Note: STF: User-satisfaction, **: p ≤ 0.01

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Dev.</th>
<th>Alpha</th>
<th>K</th>
<th>SP</th>
<th>FH</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>p value</th>
<th>adjusted $r^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>1.126</td>
<td>0.973</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S/P</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>3.770</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>0.82**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FH</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>2.930</td>
<td>0.707</td>
<td>0.71**</td>
<td>0.86**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.094</td>
<td>0.935</td>
<td>0.77**</td>
<td>0.65**</td>
<td>0.76**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>3.480</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>0.85**</td>
<td>0.92**</td>
<td>0.90**</td>
<td>0.76**</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: K: Kinship Issues, S/P: Socialization/Privacy, FH: Food Habit, R: Relaxation, I: Identity
the study area as they jointly have a significant level of \( p \leq 0.000 \) with an adjusted \( r \)-square value (\( r^2 \)-adj) about 63.2\% showing that the dependent variable can be predicted from the independent variables. Therefore, the correlation with each variable became the key to explain the data. From correlation analysis, all the independent variables showed significant correlation between each other at \( p \leq 0.01 \) (Table 3). However, housing satisfaction (STF) as the dependent variable showed significant correlation with only two of them (At cut-off point as 0.5), namely Kinship and Socialization/Privacy. However, the latter did not show enough significance (\( p \)-value 0.11). The other three variables i.e. Food Habit, Relaxation, and Identity did not show strong correlation, but Food Habit proved to be highly significant (\( p \)-value 0.00). The other too, namely Relaxation and Identity showed neither strong correlation nor high significance. Therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis for the three variables (FH, R, and I) that users are satisfied with them.

Based on the collective contributions of the tested variables influencing the housing satisfaction of the respondents, this result therefore suggests that it is necessary to improve on the cultural variables of socialization/privacy, relaxation, and identity through design and planning. Otherwise, there is a possibility that Urban Public Housing (UPH) may lead to non-occupancy.

CONCLUSION

This study tries to infer two major issues. Firstly it tries to establish the significance of cultural issues to users in Urban Public Housing in Nigeria. Secondly, it suggests which cultural variables need to be addressed more at the design and planning level of UPH. It concludes that at the design and planning level, the issues of Socialization/Privacy, Relaxation, and Identity should be given more concentration in order to achieve user satisfaction. User satisfaction is the key to occupancy. Nigeria at this stage of its development cannot afford to have non-occupancy in Urban Public Housing. Therefore, these cultural issues need to be taken care of. Future studies on other strong variables such as Climatic responsiveness, Economical viability or other sustainability issues can complement this study in order to overcome the issue of non-occupancy.

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