



An Assessment of the Efficacy of Local Authorities' Developmental Bye-Laws as Instrument to mitigate Building Collapse in Southwest, Nigeria

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Abstract. One persistent problem in the nation is the terrible tendency of building collapses. This has hampered the advancement of infrastructure and resulted to fatalities, property destruction, and financial losses for Nigeria. The purpose of this study was to assess how local governments' building codes and development bylaws affected the number of building collapses in Nigeria. The pertinent literature on the subject was examined. To improve the research's findings, the Ogun State Urban Regional Planning Law of 2008 and the 2010 Lagos State Urban and Regional Planning and Development Law, which is used in conjunction with the National URP law, were also examined. As a research tool, structured questionnaires were used; 48 were distributed, and 41 (85.4%) were returned.

The gathered data were shown and explained. According to the research project, building collapses in Nigeria might be decreased if policymakers and the government focused more on the problem of upholding developmental bylaws, made sure that these laws are updated to reflect the global trend of urbanization, and so forth. According to the survey, project managers should get familiar with the prerequisites for obtaining permissions and approvals. Developers should be made aware of the significance of local development bylaws, building regulations, and the code by the local authorities. Local authorities should also set up guidelines to incentivize new developers to follow building regulations and bylaws, as well as to construct safety precautions to lessen the likelihood of collapses in Nigeria.

Keywords: Building collapse, Developmental bye-laws, Local authorities, Setback, URP law.

1. Introduction

Even while building collapses occur frequently worldwide, they are more frequent and catastrophic in developing nations. In the course of this country's development, the frequency of building failures and collapses as well as the extent of the losses in terms of lives lost and property destroyed are growing increasingly concerning (Fayomi et al., 2022). Indeed, in Nigeria, even the average citizen is increasingly accustomed to seeing buildings collapse (Ibrahim, 2013).

Building collapse is a result of residents' desperate attempts to escape horrible landlords who treat them like second-class citizens. Developers, both reputable and not, are also motivated to make quick profits on their investments, which can lead to situations where rules are willfully or carelessly broken, compromising standards and endangering lives.

Regretfully, it is assumed that lawlessness flourishes in Nigeria. Because of this, people construct buildings without the required authorizations—such as a building permit, authorized design, survey, required soil test, and so forth—and estates appear without approved layout plans or emergency plans. More than 60% of structures in the nation are thought to fit into these categories (Ibrahim, 2013). In addition to the previously mentioned reasons for building collapse, the Nigerian element emerges as a significant concern.

Corruption, lawlessness, and our belief that any engineer or expert in the built environment may take on any kind of responsibility in a building process without having the fundamental knowledge needed for it are just a few of the ways that Nigerian influence the building business. Greed and the propensity to cheat in almost every area, from the quantity we take on to the subpar materials and job quality, are manifestations of corruption. Given the prevalence of civil law disobedience in Nigeria, the situation in the construction sector is undoubtedly the same. Because of this, lawlessness thrives on our disregard for building standards and hurried development.

There are a number of issues to deal with in the building sector, including the usage of unskilled labor, inexperienced professionals, professionals who cross-carpet to lucrative specialist roles where they lack the necessary abilities, ignorance, and an abundance of quacks (Ede, 2010).

One possible reason for building failures could be: The development control authority's inadequate funds. Insufficient funding causes physical planning programs to face significant setbacks in comparison to other economic sectors. The government at the three tiers misinterprets the development control authorities and agencies as revenue-generating entities in their context, rather than viewing urban and regional planning activities and programs as social services.

The public is "illiterate" about physical planning programs due to the Federal Housing Authority's lack of public education campaigns on these topics. This causes them to create unlawful arrangements in order to further their own interests without taking into account the consequences of their actions. A development cannot be successful and effective without the support of the public. This is due to the fact that people are always willing to support any activity as long as they are informed and have advance awareness about it (Ogundele et al., 2011).

1.1 Statement of Problems

In certain states in Southwest Nigeria, the efficacy and efficiency of local authorities' construction restrictions and developmental byelaws as a measure to lessen the threat of building collapse is still unknown. Even with these laws and regulations in place, there are still many instances of buildings collapsing, which raises questions about how well these rules and regulations are understood, applied, and enforced. In Southwest Nigeria, the study is to determine whether Local Authorities' developmental byelaws are effective in curbing the threat of building

collapse and to pinpoint any shortcomings or difficulties that may be preventing the byelaws from being successfully implemented in the region.

1.2 Aim and Objectives

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of development byelaws and regulations issued by local authorities in a few chosen states in Southwest Nigeria as a tool to prevent building collapse.

The specific objectives were:

- To assess the current regulations and byelaws for development that local authorities in Southwest Nigeria have put in place.
- To evaluate how well local government enforcement of these byelaws and regulations is going.
- To determine the obstacles local government faces when putting development byelaws and regulations into effect and keeping them up to date.
- To propose recommendations for improving the effectiveness of local authorities' developmental byelaws and regulations in mitigating building collapse in Southwest Nigeria.

1.3 Justification of the Problem

In Nigeria, building collapse is a serious problem that results in the loss of human life, property, and financial resources. In order to protect public safety and welfare, it is imperative that the causes of building collapse are looked into and addressed. This research study seeks to provide insights and recommendations for minimizing building collapse and improving building construction and building delivery standards in Nigeria by evaluating the efficacy of the local byelaws. The implementation and enforcement of development-related byelaws and regulations pertaining to building production are primarily the responsibility of the local authorities.

In order to help policymakers and regulatory bodies develop and amend regulations to improve building safety standards, it will be helpful to understand the effectiveness of these byelaws and regulations as well as the mechanisms by which they are enforced. This will aid in the creation of evidence-based policies and regulations that will prevent building collapse in Nigeria.

The protection of Nigerians' lives and welfare is the main driving force behind this research project. When

innocent lives are lost in building collapses, families and communities can experience great sorrow and suffering. In order to promote safety, lessen human suffering, and prevent the destruction of expensive property, investments, and infrastructure—all of which can have detrimental long-term effects on the local economy—a review of the effectiveness of the developmental byelaws enacted by the local authorities is intended. In order to support Nigeria's economic growth and development, the evaluation of regional developmental byelaws and regulations intends to make the built environment more resilient and sustainable.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The following factors led the researcher to choose Lagos State and Ogun State in Southwest Nigeria as the study areas:

High Incidence of Building Collapse:

Because of their political and economic importance, the states of Lagos and Ogun may have an impact on national policy decisions. These states have a high population density and are known for their quick urbanization and building. By concentrating on these states, the study can offer insights into the particular difficulties local governments in these locations confront and suggest focused strategies to reduce the risk of building collapse.

1.5 Availability of Data and Resources

When compared to other Nigerian states, Lagos and Ogun States have comparatively greater data and resource availability. Developmental byelaws are put into effect and enforced by well-established municipal administrations in these states. These states' data, records, and experience will make it easier to evaluate the efficacy of developmental byelaws thoroughly and give a more realistic picture of Nigeria's overall position.

1.6 Representation of Urban Centres:

Lagos and Ogun States, two of Nigeria's most important metropolitan centers, serve as a good example of the difficulties and complications associated with urban development. Building collapse-related challenges in other urban areas of the nation can be addressed by extrapolating and applying the findings from these states. Better knowledge of the larger context of preventing building collapse in Nigeria would be made possible by this study.

1.7 Potentials for Policy Impact:

Due to their importance in both politics and the economy, the states of Lagos and Ogun may have an impact on national policy decisions. The conclusions and suggestions drawn from the research study carried out in these states have the potential to be significant and have an impact on the creation and execution of national policies, resulting in more thorough and efficient steps to prevent building collapse and uphold development control in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

The Impacts of Local Authorities Developmental Byelaws in reducing Building Collapse in Nigeria
Construction regulation authorities, also known as local authorities, are generally established in every nation to regulate and enforce the mechanisms on the application of the Building Code in the construction industry, curb uncontrolled and unchecked physical planning of buildings and construction, and harmonize construction laws found in statutes that may contradict each other (Ikejide, 2011).

Ikejide (2011) asserted the above goals of local authorities and then provided evidence to support his claim by outlining the effects of their developmental bye-laws when they are used effectively in construction projects. Reducing building collapse in Nigeria is one instance where these influences or effects of developmental bye-laws and regulations issued by local authorities may have been predicted. Among the possible effects are the following:

- Preventing unqualified contractors from entering the building industry easily and from spreading throughout it.
- Cases of corruption in the building sector being eliminated.

Enhancement of the formalities and protocols involved in the building plan approval process.

- Promotion of requiring the participation of licensed professionals in the construction process, including both architects and builders.

2.1 How Local Authorities Developmental Bye-laws and regulations can help reduce Building collapse in Nigeria

The best defense for any development proposal continued to be the upholding of local and regional planning laws. It is also intended to act as a yardstick for all citizens to make sure that their neighborhood develops in a way that prevents slum development, guarantees their personal safety, and sustains the city

for both present and future uses. Governments and legislators must make sure that the nation's laws are updated to support the present global trend of urbanization and devote greater attention to the issue of enforcing the nation's physical planning rules and regulations (Enisan & Ogundiran, 2014).

The following are some ways that Local Authorities Development Bye-laws can lessen building collapse in Nigeria, per Nathaniel (2016):

A national standard for planning must be established. We may never reach the "promised land" in terms of the environment unless we adapt our native norms, which are flexible and adaptable to the realities of shifting societal preferences, technological advancements, economic conditions, and tastes. A committee may be established by the Nigerian Institute of Town Planners to research and develop a set of national standards.

By offering thorough development guidelines, the standards ought to be implemented from the very beginning of the design process. Our comprehensive designs ought to provide site-specific information like building lines, setbacks, percentage coverage, the range of building heights that is allowed, the kind and regularity of decorating, etc.

Planning standards should receive a lot of media attention in order to sensitize the public in a reasonable and sufficient manner and reduce conflicts when negative and final enforcements are implemented.

To ensure that planners have sufficient knowledge of design details, departments of urban and regional planning must teach urban design intensively.

While new developments may be subject to the strict application of planning standards, structures constructed without approval that can be corrected or modified to comply with standards may be given a reasonable amount of leeway.

Law court judges ought to receive sufficient training to reduce the amount of pointless injunctions they issue. However, in accordance with the provisions of the Nigerian Urban and Regional Planning Law, it is advised that the Urban and Regional Planning Tribunal be established in each of the Federation's States.

Human rights advocates and non-governmental organizations, particularly those that employ planners, ought to be adequately apprised of the significance of upholding planning law in order to reduce their

inclination toward confrontation and malice when uneven developments are approved.

It has been observed that the laws and ordinances required to establish the desired environment cannot be enforced by planning authorities on their own. Therefore, in order to improve capacity building and functionality, it is crucial that planning authorities seek out teamwork and collaboration with other relevant fields (Aluko, 2011).

The work is almost burdensome or done haphazardly since planners and planning agencies frequently dabble and double up into filling the void left by other professions like transportation and landscape design. Considering this, planning authorities ought to consult with and hire additional experts in the field of land.

Members of the Executive branch of government should also be employed by planning authorities in monitoring capacities. These units include sanitary inspectors and Special Forces, which are used to combat indiscipline and quickly arrest violators of environmental laws.

Planning agencies ought to be duty-bound and refrain from accepting bribes in any form (Aluko, 2011).

The local authorities' development bye-laws listed below are recommended by Omole & Akinbamijo (2012) and may lessen the frequency of building collapses in Nigeria.

Both the land and planning laws should be incorporated and integrated so that they could adequately supplement one another for the benefits of the society.

Along this line, people should be more educated and enlightened on the use of laws in regulating, guiding and directing their landed properties for the benefits of all and sundry.

Government should have complete authority over land use regulations in nations like Nigeria, where human demands—such as the need to use land—continually exceed the amount of land that is available. For the time being, this appears to be one of the best opportunities available.

3. Research Methodology

Measures of the variable mentioned in the research problem are gathered and analyzed using a set of techniques and procedures known as research design.

Research data (primary data) were obtained from building production professionals who are directly involved in the creation, production, and enforcement of building bylaws at local governments in Lagos and Ogun states in order to obtain pertinent and trustworthy information. Because other government buildings lack the necessary number of building professionals, only local government headquarters were chosen for this study. Four different local government headquarters were selected at random and consulted in each state. The purpose of this is to ensure that all local governments in both states are fairly represented. In each local government, six different professionals were then consulted as responders. This was done in order to obtain trustworthy findings from the study project.

3.1 Sample Size

For the study, a sample size of forty-eight (48) respondents—builders, town planners, architects, structural, mechanical, and electrical engineers—was utilized. Each of the six respondents mentioned above was chosen at random from four separate local governments in Ogun and Lagos states in that order.

3.2 Sampling Techniques

In order to gather data for this study, a mixed-methods strategy incorporating qualitative and quantitative techniques will be used. To choose the respondents, the stratified random sampling approach was applied. Stratified random sampling involves the division of the population into smaller groupings known as strata. To obtain the necessary samples from each stratum, basic random sampling is then used. Simple random sampling is a quantitative research strategy that operates on the tenet that members of a target population are selected so that each has an equal probability of being chosen and that each decision is made independently of the other.

3.3 Research Instrument

Questionnaires were administered as the instrument used to collect data for this study. For the sake of clarity, the questions were posed in straightforward language. Additionally, they were made in a closed-ended format, requiring respondents to check the blanks as they were completed. Additional data for this study was acquired from textbooks and journals.

4. Data Collection, Presentation and Interpretation of Results

4.1 Data Collection

Surveys with closed-ended questions that were structured provided the data used in this study. 41 questionnaires, or 85% of the sample, were retrieved and used for the study. The questionnaires were given to 48 building professionals working in local governments in the states of Ogun (Abeokuta South, Abeokuta North, Ado-odo otta, and Obafemi Owode) and Lagos (Shomolu, Agege, Ijaiye Ojokoro, and Alimosho LGAs). Builders, architects, town planners, structural, mechanical, and electrical engineers are among the experts.

4.2 Data Presentation

The presentation and analysis of study data for potential conclusions takes place here. The presentation of data must be done so impartially while awaiting editorial interpretations or comments. (Onyemaechi, 2015) Proper numbering, titles, and citations should accompany the analytical tables.

The information gathered for this study was shown in tables. While some tables display the entries as a percentage, others provide the analytical data and ranking of specific items. All are intended to provide a detailed display of the gathered data.

Table 4.1: Results of response to questionnaires administered

Questionnaire	Number	Percentage (%)
Administered	48	100
Returned	41	85
Used for the study	41	85
Not used for the study	07	15

Source: Researcher, 2023.

Interpretation: The questionnaire response rate is displayed in Table 4.1. A tool of 48 structured questionnaires was administered. 41 questionnaires, or 85% of the 48 that were given to different professionals in the built environment, were retrieved and used for analysis.

Table 4.2: Personal information of respondents.

Demographic information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	38	93
Female	3	7
Total	41	100
Profession of respondents		
Architect	7	17
Builder	5	12
Mechanical Engineer	8	19
Structural Engineer	6	15
Town Planner	9	22
Electrical Engineer	6	15
Total	41	100
Educational qualification of respondents		
ND	1	2
HND	29	71
B.sc	11	27
M.sc and Above	-	0.0
Total	41	100

Source: Researcher, 2023.

Interpretation: Table 4.2 above shows data on personal information of respondents. The variables under consideration are the respondents' gender, occupation, and level of education.

According to the table, 3 numbers have 7% of respondents who are female, and 38 numbers have 93% of respondents who are male. Architects make up seven figures in the table, representing 17% of the total respondents; builders, five figures, representing 12%; mechanical engineers, eight figures, representing 19%; structural engineers, six figures, representing 15%; town planners, nine figures, representing 22%; and electrical engineers, six figures, representing 15% of the total respondents. In conclusion, the table displays the professional's educational background: 1 number, or 2% of all respondents, has an ND, 29 numbers, or 71% of all respondents, have an HND, and 11 numbers, or 27% of all respondents, have a B.Sc.

Table 4.3: Local Governments Name, Number and Location.

State	LGAs Used for Study	Selected LGAs	Percentage of LGAs Selected
Lagos	Alimosho		
	Ijaiye Ojokoro	4	50%
	Agege		
	Shomolu		
Ogun	Ado Odo Ota		
	Abeokuta North	4	50%
	Abeokuta South		
	Obafemi Owode		

Source: Researcher, 2023.

Interpretation: Four local government areas in Ogun state and four local government areas in Lagos state were consulted, as shown in Table 4.3 above. When combined, both equal eight (8) local government districts at 100%. It also demonstrates that 50% of the eight local government areas chosen in both the states of Lagos and Ogun are reflected in the four (4) local governments in each state that were consulted.

Table 4.4: Importance of Local Authorities Developmental Bye-laws and Regulations.

S/N		5	4	3	2	1	R.I	RANK
1	Empowering planner to reasonably strike balances between the built and natural habitat to enhance health and safety of a city.	25	16	0	0	0	0.92	1
2	Maintaining livable environment.	23	18	0	0	0	0.91	2
3	Facilitating harmonious development by protecting a healthy economy and a sustainable environment.	22	19	0	0	0	0.91	2
4	Managing the risks of extreme events and disasters.	22	18	1	0	0	0.90	3
5	Ensuring adequate space, strength and stability of buildings, light, privacy, fire safety etc.	21	19	1	0	0	0.90	3
6	Determination of the size and locational	20	19	2	0	0	0.89	6

distribution of facilities in settlements.

7	Preservation of historic sites and open spaces.	18	23	0	0	0	0.89	6
8	Ensuring consistency and compatibility through zoning controls, negative externality and separation of incompatible land uses.	16	24	1	0	0	0.87	8

Source: Researcher, 2023.

Interpretation: Table 4.4 above demonstrates the critical role that development bye-laws play in enabling planners to improve a city's health and safety, preserving a livable environment, safeguarding a robust economy and sustainable environment, controlling the risks of extreme events and disasters, and guaranteeing that buildings have enough space. The minor significance of development bye-laws includes the location of facilities within settlements, the preservation of historic sites and open spaces, and the maintenance of consistency through zoning regulations.

Table 4.5: The Impact of Local Authorities Developmental Bye-laws and Regulations in Reducing Building Collapse in Nigeria.

S/N		5	4	3	2	1	M.S	RANK
1	Prevention of easy entry and penetration of unqualified contractors into the building Industry	35	6	0	0	0	4.85	1
2	Mandatory involvement of qualified professionals; building and design professionals for building works.	32	8	1	0	0	4.75	2
3	Improvement on the bureaucratic (administrative) requirements and procedures in approval of building plans.	19	21	1	0	0	4.43	3
4	Elimination of corruption cases in the building industry.	16	23	2	0	0	4.34	4

Source: Researcher, 2023.

Interpretation: Table 4.5 above demonstrates that one of the main effects of local authorities' development bye-laws in lowering building collapse in Nigeria is the prevention of unqualified contractors from entering the building industry and the requirement that qualified professionals be involved for building works. The local authorities' developmental bye-laws and regulations have a minor impact on the reduction of building collapse in Nigeria. These include the improvement of building plan approval procedures and the removal of corruption cases.

Table 4.6: Reducing Building Collapse in Nigeria using Local Authorities. Developmental Bye-laws and Regulations.

S/N		5	4	3	2	1	M.S	RANK
1	Government and policy makers should pay more attention to the issue of enforcement of developmental bye-laws in the country.	26	15	0	0	0	4.63	1

2	Local Authorities developmental bye-laws need to be harmonized across the country.	27	12	1	1	0	4.58	2
3	Government should ensure that developmental bye-laws in the country are updated to serve the current trend of urbanization in the world.	22	19	0	0	0	4.53	3
4	Local planning authorities should be loyal to duty avoiding bribe whatever form it may appear.	23	17	0	1	0	4.51	4
5	Local Authorities' developmental bye-laws should be applied from the design stage of building production in order to give designers information about building lines, set-backs, percentage coverage etc.	21	19	0	1	0	4.46	5
6	Wide publicity should be given to local authorities developmental bye-laws to reasonably and sufficiently sensitize the public on its importance.	19	22	0	0	0	4.46	5
7	Buildings built without local authorities approval should be inspect by the authorities in charge and also subjecting them (those buildings) to corrections and modifications to meet with the requirements in the developmental bye-laws.	22	17	1	1	0	4.46	5
8	Local planning authorities should seek for team work and collaboration with other relevant fields in order to enhance the functionality of buildings.	22	16	2	1	0	4.43	8

9	People should be more educated and enlightened on the use of laws in regulating, guiding and directing their landed properties for the benefits of all and sundry.	18	22	0	1	0	4.39	9
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Source: Researcher, 2023.

Interpretation: As Table 4.6 above illustrates, a significant contribution to the decrease in building collapse in Nigeria comes from government attention to the enforcement of developmental bye-laws and regulations. The government's efforts to ensure that developmental bye-laws are updated, the harmonisation of bye-laws and regulations throughout the nation, and the commitment of planning authorities to their jobs have a moderate impact on the decline in building collapse in Nigeria. Building collapse in Nigeria can be reduced by applying developmental bye-laws from the design stage, widely publicizing them, correcting buildings that violate them, collaborating with local authorities and other relevant fields, and educating the public about their application. However, there is very little impact of educating the public on the application of developmental bye-laws.

5. Conclusion

The study evaluated how local authorities' developmental bye-laws—which prohibit unqualified contractors from entering the building industry easily, require the involvement of qualified professionals in building work, streamline the bureaucratic processes involved in approving building plans, and eradicate corruption cases in the building sector—affect the reduction of building collapse. These results are consistent with what (Ikejide, 2011) asserts.

This study looked into how the following local government development bye-laws could be used to lessen building collapse: The nation's policy makers ought to prioritize the enforcement of its developmental laws and regulations, encourage local authorities to harmonize their bylaws, ensure that the laws are updated to accommodate the current global trend of urbanization, and hold local planning authorities accountable for their actions by forgoing any kind of bribery. Furthermore, developmental laws and regulations ought to be implemented from the building production process's design stage, with extensive publicity provided to local authorities to raise awareness. the public about its significance, local planning authorities should work with relevant fields to collaborate on improving building functionality, and people should be more aware of how

laws are used to regulate and guide landed properties for the benefit of all. Buildings constructed without the approval of local authorities should be subject to alteration or adaptation, as the case may be. The findings are in agreement with the recommendations of Nathaniel (2016) and Aluko (2011).

6. Recommendations

The following actions are advised in order to decrease building collapses in Nigeria:

- Local authorities ought to inform newly hired professionals and clients about the significance of their development bylaws;
- Local authorities should also set up guidelines that could motivate professionals and new development clients to apply laws and regulations to the designs and developments they are proposing;
- Local Authorities should make sure that designs submitted for approval are thoroughly examined to make sure they comply with the current development bye-laws and regulations of the local authorities;
- Local authorities should make sure that all construction-related buildings, including those undergoing maintenance and demolition, are completed in accordance with the applicable local authority development bylaws and regulations;
- To continuously address new and increasingly difficult issues with the nation's settlement setup, the government should make sure that developmental bye-laws are kept up to date;
- Professional associations in the built environment ought to impose legal obligations on their members, requiring them to carry out their varied projects in accordance with the development bylaws and regulations that local authorities have in place.
- In Nigeria, it is hoped that justice will be served and the threat of building collapse will be eradicated if the aforementioned

recommendations are appropriately implemented nationwide.

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