

# Residential Area Dissonance in Ikot Ekpene Urban, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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## Abstract

The paper examined residential area dissonance in Ikot Ekpene Urban, Akwa Ibom State Nigeria. Data were obtained through the administration of a questionnaire. A total of 500 households were systematically sampled for questionnaire administration. Frequency counts were used in analysing the determinants of residential area dissonance, and the relative dissonance index (RDI) was also employed to determine levels of residential area dissonance. Spearman's ranked correlation and factor analysis was used to assess the relationships between socio-economic variables and residential area dissonance. It was noted that the major determinants of residential area dissonance were the inadequacy of basic facilities and utilities, insecurity and long distances between home and workplaces. The spearman's ranked correlation indicated a positive relationship between income level, household sizes and age with residential area dissonance, subjecting the socio-economic characteristics of respondents to factor analysis, it was found that income and age could explain 34.115% and 31.807% of respondents' residential area dissonance respectively. The RDI of Ikot Ekpene urban was found to be 2.72 on a scale of 5, which shows that residents are marginally dissatisfied with their residential area, on this premise; it was suggested that facilities that are capable of improving the livability of the area should be provided and security institutions should be equipped and strengthened. Community-based security groups could also be set up to complement the efforts of the state actors. On dissonance coping strategy, the majority of respondents (48%) intended to move out of their current neighbourhood to others that were better serviced.

**Keywords;** Dissonance; housing, residential area, housing satisfaction, housing environment

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## I. Introduction

Housing has been conceptualized in various ways by scholars. In its basic meaning, housing is more than mere shelter. It encompasses the totality of the residential environment that man uses for shelter. It is a structure that is highly needed for man's physical, mental health and social well-being (Ajom *et al.*, 2022; Eteng *et al.*, 2022). Housing is the totality of the residential neighbourhood and environment or micro-district including the physical structure, all necessary services, facilities, utilities and apparatus for the total health and social well-being of the individual and family in the neighbourhood. The residential area in which a structure is situated is of utmost importance even more than the structure itself because it carries the bundle of goods which will be enjoyed by the inhabitants of the housing units therein. Regrettably, it is near impossible for a resident to be satisfied maximally with a given residential area due to pre-conceived housing aspiration.

Residential area dissonance refers to the gap between the residential area currently being occupied by an individual and that which the individual would have loved to live in ideally. In general, urban planning seeks to create a sustainable and liveable environment through the ordering and re-ordering of land uses and the provision of basic infrastructure to enhance the well-being of people. This is why studies on drivers of residential area dissonance are apt to the profession as residential areas are seen as a micro-unit of planning where other things evolve. Studies on residential area dissonance/ satisfaction help in assessing the success of a public-sector, private-sector, or joint housing project, help policymakers to understand the factors of intra-urban housing mobility and to determine the type of public and/or private efforts (financial and human) that are to be invested in the improvement of a residential environment, and such investments are to be prioritized based on the resident's perceptions of inadequacies in the existing amenities in their area (Afon, 2006)

. This paper aims to examine the relative residential area dissonance level of respondents in Ikot Ekpene Urban. To guide the research the following are the research questions;

1. What are the major determinants of residential area dissonance in Ikot Ekpene Urban?
2. What is the relative Dissonance index of respondents in Ikot Ekpene Urban?

3. What is the relation between socio economic characteristics of respondents and their relative dissonance level?
4. What are the residential area dissonance coping strategies in the study area?

## **II. Literature Review**

Residential area dissonance is defined as the incongruence in terms of land use patterns between the neighbourhood type in which an individual is currently residing and the individual's preference structure regarding such characteristics of the residential environment. This definition links residential area dissonance directly to one dimension of residential satisfaction, which can be seen as a product of the congruence between the actual residential environment and the subjects' opinions about what this environment should look like (Schwanen and Moktarian, 2004).

At least three types of factors explain the existence of residential area dissonance; those relating to residential preferences; those that are associated with the residential choice process; and those that have to do with dynamics in the life course and attitudes of individuals. Residential area dissonance may also result from the fact that residential choice is a household decision, and housing preference structures may vary across individuals within the same household. Disagreement about the importance of features of the residential area among household members may lead to residential type mismatch in the level of the individual or even the household (Schwanen and Moktarian, 2004). Further, the extent of dissonance may be associated with the size and heterogeneity of the choice set of housing alternatives available in the residential choice process. The trade-off between housing attributes becomes more complicated as the constraints on choice are larger.

Households are often bonded to certain locations by the various ties of family members, jobs, and attachments to housing units and neighbourhoods. The strength of these attachments may be measured as the degree of satisfaction or dissonance expressed. Dissonance arises as the housing fit is altered by family cycle changes. For example, a new birth may necessitate an additional bedroom, or conversely, the house may seem larger after the last child is of age and decides to leave home.

Residential area dissonance often leads to the thought of moving out of the neighbourhood, but it is not a sufficient condition for mobility (Deane, 1990). Residents often attempt to make their situation and aspiration pictures as congruent as possible by changing either their aspirations or their environment. Adjustments in aspirations may involve a change of use or change of attitude towards the residence, such that the dissonance level is reduced even when there is no change in the environmental parameters. Any dissonance coping strategy that involves changes in the environmental parameters (including change of location) is often termed active adjustment. Adaptation may be through mobility or structural conversion. Aspiration changes are psychic and quite difficult to capture while changes in the environment are empirically evident adjustments and rather easily measured as housing changes or alterations.

Numerous researchers have shown that housing preferences vary not only with household structure and income but also with lifestyles and personality factors. Because residential preferences play a central part in residential area dissonance, it is logical to infer that factors affecting residential location preferences are also associated with the existence of residential area dissonance. Empirical findings on factors affecting residential preferences are summarized as follows: The determinants of residential area preferences within Ibadan metropolitan city according to Sanni and Akinyemi (2009) are factors that deal with the quality of the environment and those that are socio-cultural in nature. Among factors that deal with the quality of the environment, such reasons as a well-planned area with necessary infrastructural facilities such as good roads, water supply etc that make a place conducive for living, were highly regarded. The study also revealed that each category of residential areas in Ibadan had a distinct and peculiar arrangement of determinants of residential district preferences and that broad generalization of such determinants should not be done for the whole city.

Udoh (2020) in his work on housing and environmental quality in rural Akwa Ibom State, found out that the majority (78%) of households were dissatisfied with water source and quality, and frequent flooding made 76% of respondents to be dissatisfied with their residential area, poor waste disposal and management, drainage system and mice/ pest infestation were also main causes of residential area dissonance.

Etim (2015) examined determinants of residential area preference in Ikot Ekpene urban. The study showed that access to land determined largely the future choice of residents. In order of dominance, the serenity of the environment accounted for the second largest percentage (24.5%) only bettered by access to land (25.25%) Closeness to the workplace (21.5%), Availability of basic facilities (12%), security (10%) and family ties (6.75%) were seen as minor determinants of residential area preference in Ikot Ekpene urban. It was inferred that residents believed that with a good road network and mass transit schemes in place, there will be no need to live near workplaces since they can access such places easily, also government should ensure the provision and maintenance of basic facilities and utilities in the town.

It is believed that the socio-economic status of a household plays a major role in the quality of their housing satisfaction or dissonance. A Socioeconomic characteristic is a term used to stratify a population according to the interplay of social and economic factors. It may also be defined as a measure of an individual's

place within a social group based on various factors, including income and education (Hwang et al, 1999). According to Okpoechi (2018), the socio-economic factors that significantly affect housing satisfaction among the middle-income group in Owerri are income, nature of employment, and socialization habits. Other factors like family size, family structure and level of education were found not to be significant determinants of housing satisfaction among this group. Previous researchers have found linkages between housing (dis)satisfaction and factors like age (Varady and Preiser, 1998), family structure (Theodori, 2001), education, income, employment status, length of residency, and physical characteristics of the house (Yeh, 1972). Additionally, fulfilled housing preferences have also been shown to predict the quality of life (O'Connell *et al.*, 2006). This follows that notwithstanding the subjectivity of housing satisfaction, it is still a very important predictor of the overall quality of life of housing residents.

### **III. Conceptual framework**

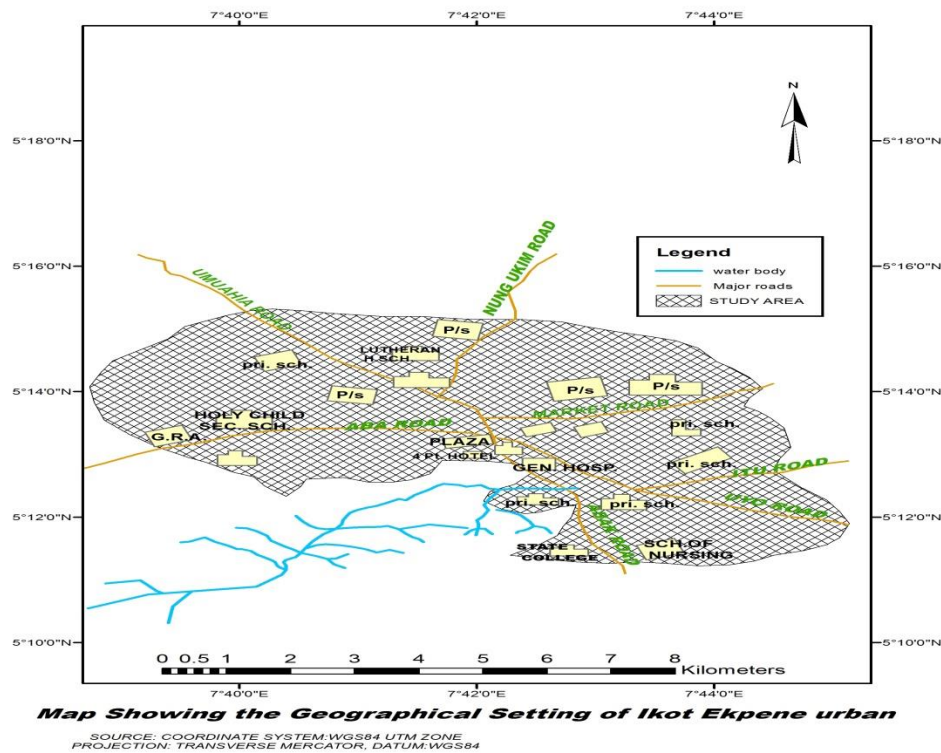
Actual-aspiration gap approach, the conceptual framework developed by Marans and Rodgers (1975), postulates that people have a perception of the main attributes of their physical environment. These attributes are then evaluated against their aspirations (i.e., the environmental amenities people hope they will be able to enjoy). In this sense, residents are seen as having a cognitive construct of reference conditions for each particular salient feature of the residential environment. Given an environment, then, the quality and quantity of the environmental feature implied by the reference point are dependent on individual self-assessed needs and aspirations (Michelson, 1976). The assessed needs and aspirations are also dependent on individual objective social and economic attributes. If the existing situations of the residential environment are not in congruence with (a reasonable portion of) the reference conditions, an affective state of dissonance is manifested. There is often a gap between aspirations and what the environment offers. If and when this happens, residents often try to reconcile the incongruence by adopting several coping strategies. This includes lowering housing aspirations, increasing spending to modify the housing unit and moving to another residential area that they believe could meet their aspirations (Afon, 2006).

### **IV. Materials and Methods**

#### **Study Area**

IkotEkpene urban extends from Latitudes 5°08' to 5°12' North of the Equator and longitudes 7°38' to 7°45' East of the Greenwich meridian. Ikot Ekpene urban is known as the "Raffia City". The area is an historic town in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. It is the second most populated urban centre in Akwa Ibom State after Uyo the State capital. It is also the political and cultural capital of the Annang ethnic group. IkotEkpene urban is made up of eight (8) settlements, these are IkotAbia Idem, IkotObongEdong, AbiakpolkotEssien, IkotEkpene, UrukUso, Ifuhu, GRA and Ibiakpan Akan Anwan (NPC, 1991). The population figures of Ikot Ekpene urban is 131, 292, projected based on 1991 census data using 3.4% growth rate. The area has retained some of its traditional values such as male heading families, and relatively large households though it has also acquired a series of urbanism such as having a younger population; most of who are economically active, attain tertiary education status and have moderate income levels. Ikot Ekpene urban is located in an oil palm belt. Consequently, the people have palm oil and kernel extraction as their major occupation. Other economic activities in the area include farming, trading, artisan, carpentry, mechanic and vulcanizing work. A handful of the populations are civil servants.

Road pattern has played an important role in forming the settlement pattern of the area as the tendency to build houses close to the road has led to a linear settlement pattern. Traditional buildings of simple structure constructed with local materials have gradually been displaced by sandcrete blocks and corrugated metal sheets upon sawn timber and cement plastered wall. Most houses are put into mixed use and set out in a haphazard manner. The use of inferior, poor and sub –standard building materials coupled with the fact that these materials are poorly put together with low level technology greatly lowers the performance of this facility. The health consequences occasioned by the inadequate housing conditions on the urban population has gained notoriety (Akpabio, 2010).



### V. Methods

Ikot Ekpene urban is made up of eight (8) settlements. These are Ikot Abia Idem, Ikot Obong Edong, Abiakpo Ikot Essien, Ikot Ekpene Town, GRA, Uruk Uso, Ifuhu and Ibiakpan Akan Anwan (NPC, 1991). With reference to the National population policy (1998), to acquire the number of households in a settlement, the projected population figure is often divided by the estimated average household size of six.

The Taro Yamane formular was used in deducing the sample size. The formula is as follows;  $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$  Equation 1

Where:  $n$  = sample Population,  $N$  = finite population,  $e$  = the level of significance,  $1$  = constant  
 However, application of the formula resulted in 400 but the sample size was increased to 500 for a wider coverage. To arrive at the sample size for each settlement, the number of households in each settlement will be divided by the sum of the households in the study area, and then multiplied by the total number of sample size of 500. The systematic random sampling was used in selecting the households which questionnaire were administered in each village.

The variables that lead to residential area dissonance were analyzed using frequencies, The respondents' level of dissonance in relation to their residential area condition was evaluated in terms of Relative dissonance Index (RDI) on a five –point scale. Very dissatisfied (5), dissatisfied (4), indifferent (3), satisfied (2) and very Satisfied (1). The RDI was calculated using the formula;

$$RDI = \frac{5N_1 + 4N_2 + 3N_3 + 2N_4 + 1N_5}{N_1 + N_2 + N_3 + N_4 + N_5}$$

**Where:**  $N_1$  - Number of respondents who indicated “very dissatisfied”,  $N_2$  - Number of respondents who indicated “dissatisfied”,  $N_3$  - Number of respondents who indicated “indifferent”,  $N_4$  - Number of respondents who indicated “satisfied” and  $N_5$  - Number of respondents who indicated “Very satisfied”

The relationship between socio-economic characteristics and residential dissonance index of respondents was investigated using the spearman’s ranked correlation. Factor analysis was later used to reduce the data to two variables.

### VI. Findings and Discussions

**Table 1: Determinants of Residential Area Dissonance in Ikot Ekpene Urban**

S/n	Factor	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Inadequacy of basic facilities/utilities	160	32%
2.	Insecurity within the area	128	25.6%

3.	Distance to workplace/school	116	23.2%
4.	Housing condition	96	19.2%
		<b>500</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Field Survey, 2023**

Table 1 shows the major determinant of residential area dissonance among respondents is the inadequacy of basic facilities and utilities in the area. 32% of respondents decried the erratic nature of the power supply, poor drainage network and poor methods of waste disposal. This is in tandem with the assertion of Ajom *et al* (2022) that in the determination of locations for residential housing development, the place of urban infrastructure cannot be over-emphasized in that the availability of infrastructure such as water, electricity, telecommunication systems, waste disposal system and roads all promote land use development and increase property values in an urban area. This is because property demand in districts that have the needed infrastructure is always higher than in areas where there is a shortage in infrastructure.

The insecurity in Ikot Ekpene urban is gradually becoming alarming, 25.6% of respondents experienced residential area dissonance because they were not certain of the security of their lives and properties. Key drivers of crime include poverty, migration, unemployment, endemic drug abuse, small arms and light weapons trafficking and incessant political violence (Usip and Ayadu, 2022). It should however be noted that the rise in insecurity in urban centres is a global phenomenon hence the need to adopt best practices to curtail it. These include the deployment of urban surveillance systems, technology and GIS in security planning and the use of community-based security groups. The town planning agencies can exert a direct influence on crime reduction by delineating territories, reducing or increasing accessibility by the creation or elimination of boundaries and circulation networks, and facilitating surveillance by the citizenry and the police (Adamu, 2022). 23.5% of respondents were not satisfied with the distance to their workplace/school while 19% of respondents stated the condition of their housing as the cause of their residential area dissonance. This goes to show that housing is more than a mere shelter, as 81% of factors causing residential dissonance were external to the dwelling unit itself.

**Table 2: Dissonance Levels of Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Very satisfied	123	24.6	24.6	24.6
Satisfied	145	29.0	29.0	53.6
Indifferent	71	14.2	14.2	67.8
Dissatisfied	69	13.8	13.8	81.6
Very dissatisfied	92	18.4	18.4	100.0
Total	500	100.0	100.0	

Source: Statistical Computations, 2023

Relative dissonance index:

$$RDI = \frac{5N_1 + 4N_2 + 3N_3 + 2N_4 + 1N_5}{N_1 + N_2 + N_3 + N_4 + N_5}$$

$N_1 = 92, N_2 = 69, N_3 = 71, N_4 = 145$  and  $N = 123$

$$= \frac{5(92) + 4(69) + 3(71) + 2(145) + 1(123)}{500} = \frac{1362}{500}$$

$$= 2.72$$

The relative dissonance index of respondents with regards to their residential area in Ikot Ekpene urban is 2.72 on a scale of 5. This means that currently respondents are marginally dissatisfied with their residential area.

**Table 3: Correlation between Socio economic characteristics and Residential Area Dissonance**

➔ **Nonparametric Correlations**

[DataSet2]

			Correlations					
	Dissonance	Income	HouseholdSize	MaritalStatus	Age	Sex		
Spearman's rho	Dissonance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.618**	-.228**	.103*	.515**	.251**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.010	.000	.000
		N	500	500	500	500	500	500

Source: Statistical Computations, 2023



From the spearman’s ranked correlation analysis done with the help of SPSS, the correlation coefficient between residential area dissonance and socio- economic characteristics like income, household size, marital status, age and sex was 0.618, -228, 0.103, 0.515 and 0.251 respectively. The socio-economic variables were subjected to factor analysis. The result showed that age and income were undermining variables influencing the residential area dissonance of respondents. Income and age explained 34.114% and 31.807% respectively of variation in respondents’ residential dissonance levels. (See Appendix)

The analysis shows that higher income levels are related positively with higher dissonance levels (0.618) this further validates the assertion of Goodall (1972) that as income rises housing behaves as a superior good, for the household spends proportionately more of its increased income on purchasing larger and/ or better residential areas. Higher household sizes correlated negatively with residential area dissonance(-228), this could be attributed to the likelihood of those with large family size owning their residential units and not just renting, single individuals(.103) were found to be more dissatisfied with their residential area than the married and widowed. The elderly were more dissatisfied than the younger once, while males were more dissatisfied than females.

**Table 4: Residential Area Dissonance coping Strategies in Ikot Ekpene Urban**

Coping Strategies	Frequency	Percent
Increase spending on housing improvement	80	16%
Moving to another residential area	240	48%
Adapting by reducing housing aspiration	180	36%
	<b>500</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4 shows that 16% of respondents will like to spend more in order to improve their housing condition, 36% of respondents agreed that they will reduce their housing aspirations so as to adapt comfortably to the current housing condition, majority of respondents 48% asserted that they are likely to move to another housing unit where their aspirations can be met. This infers that there is a high tendency for intra-urban mobility in Ikot Ekpene Urban.

### VII. Conclusion

This paper examined residential area dissonance in Ikot Ekpene Urban, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The determinants of residential area dissonance were identified as inadequate facilities/utilities, high insecurity rate and long distances to commute to workplaces/schools. These factors help to lower the livability level of the area hence it was found that the residential dissonance index of respondents was 2.7 measured on a scale of 5. This portrays that residents were marginally dissatisfied with their residential area currently, if nothing is done to address this, intra-urban housing mobility rates will be on the rise as stated by the majority of respondents who regarded such measures as a dissonance coping strategy. The relationship between socio-economic variables and housing dissonance was also investigated, however, income and age were found to be highly correlated positively with residential area dissonance.

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