

Title of Article: Combating Housing Poverty: Behavioural and Environmental Adaptation Mechanisms

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Abstract: Housing poverty, which manifests in lack of clean and healthy environment, lack of adequate amenities and infrastructures, severe overcrowding and insanitary environment has been the feature of most urban centres in developing nations. This has been reported by many researchers as the culminating effect of urbanization. Rural-urban drift has been the predominant cause of urbanization both in the developed and developing countries. Migration from the rural areas to the urban centres in search of employment has always prompted the need for very cheap accommodations which are mostly got in the inner city. As a result, the amenities that are meant for few people are overstretched resulting into inadequacies of housing. This paper takes a critical look at the “adaptation theory” as it relates to Oke-Foko, an indigenous, traditional setting in Ibadan, Nigeria core area. It examined those behavioral and environmental modification techniques that were employed to reduce the negative effect of the environment. A case study approach was employed to elicit response from the household heads of the houses involved. A total of 200houses (depicting 10% of the houses in Oke-Foko) were examined through observation and questionnaire to note the physical modification features present and the characteristics of the residents respectively. 192 questionnaires were found to be valid. The paper affirms that there is deficiency in housing and consequent adaptation techniques employed to reduce its effect. It therefore suggests a two prong approach in dealing with the situation. This involves housing modification and redevelopment programmes where residents are the main actors on the one hand, and an improvement in the socio-economic status of the dwellers, especially by introducing Home Based Enterprises (HBEs) and ‘Esusu’ contribution as forms of adaptation, on the other hand.

Keywords: Housing, Poverty, Core Area, Adaptation, Ibadan