

Dr. Adetokunbo O. Ilesanmi - The Legacy and Challenge of Public Housing Provision in Lagos, Nigeria

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This paper is based on an evaluation of public housing provision through the Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC), which is utilized as a case study to examine and discuss the legacy and challenge of public housing provision in Lagos, Nigeria.

The paper reviews the existing literature on public housing and the role of the state, including an overview of housing research in Nigeria. It describes the context of Lagos, as an emerging mega-city. It also examines housing development through the LSDPC which was established in 1972 as the government institution for public housing provision. Specific attention is given to housing during the first civilian administration (1979-1983) which emphasized low-income housing. The period represents the most dynamic in the legacy of public housing provision in Lagos State. Primary qualitative data was derived from structured interviews conducted on key officers of the corporation. Quantitative data was obtained through questionnaire administration on a systematic sample of 806 household-heads from a sampling frame of 8,060 housing units, based on a purposive sample of eight LSDPC estates.

Findings indicate decreasing emphasis on low-income housing and increasing commercialization. However, the survey shows residents responding satisfactorily to the physical and social environments of their housing. The majority perceived access to their housing to be equitable and the housing density of their blocks and estates to be tolerable; and about 60 percent reported satisfaction with their estates and apartments. These findings are at variance with the popular notion of public housing as both physically inadequate and socially inequitable.

The paper in conclusion makes a case for mixed public housing schemes, given enhanced institutional frameworks, innovative public-private partnerships and home-ownership schemes. The tendency toward total neglect of low-income housing provision is considered inequitable and undesirable.

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