

## INVESTIGATING URBAN RENEWAL LITERACY OF ILE-IFE RESIDENTS IN OSUN STATE

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### Article Info

**Keywords:** Investigation, environmental problems, urban renewal literacy

### DOI

10.5281/zenodo.13928894

### Abstract

This study investigated the level of urban renewal literacy among Ile-Ife residents, Osun State. The study adopted a survey research design. The two local government areas (Ife Central Local Government and Ife East Local Government) in Ile-Ife were selected. A purposive sampling technique was used to select Sabo from the Ife Central Local Government and Lagere from the Ife East Local Government in Ile-Ife. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 residents (104 female residents and 46 male residents) in Ile-Ife. One instrument: Residents' Urban Renewal Literacy Test ( $r=0.76$ ) was used for data collection. Data collected for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage score, and inferential statistics from the t-test. The results revealed that residents had an average urban renewal literacy level. Furthermore, there was no significant difference between male and female residents' urban renewal literacy levels ( $t = -.411$ ;  $df=148$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that government and community stakeholders should sensitize people on urban renewal program. Workshops and seminars should be organized for government agencies to educate them on different strategies that will help them perform their duties. The government should involve stakeholders and community residents in its urban renewal plans so that they can comply as expected.

### Introduction

Environmental degradation is a problem for everyone because they affect everyone. The manner in which environmental degradation occurs varies with the proportion of damage. It needs serious effort to make individuals understand and aware of their personal contributions against environmental destruction so that negative environmental behavior can be reduced or prevented. Two major things that seriously damage the

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environment are individual attitudes and behaviors toward it. The behavior and attitude of an individual are due to conditions such as ignorance, irresponsibility, injustice, and an inhospitable environment, among others (Oyekanmi, 2021).

The World Bank (2006) observed that ignorance has been a serious hindrance to finding solutions to environmental problems: ignorance on the part of governments and the public. Yet, understanding the causes and effects of environmental damage is very important. The most important things that humans cannot neglect for their personal survival are the environment and forest ecosystems because of their importance to humans. Health, safety, and survival are things that are drivable from the environment through human relationships with the environment (Foskett & Foskett, 2004). In the current circumstances where the environment is being abused by corporate bodies and individuals generate more dangers for all living things on earth, this reflects the lack of or insufficient environmental education of people.

Adubi, Agbanigo, and Omojowerun (2006) observed that the major causes of environmental problems in Nigeria are environmental policies that ignore the inputs of indigenous people. Madsen (1996) asserted that for any environment to be well protected and restored, commitment, awareness, and knowledge are necessary. Madsen explained that it is essential for members of the public to know environmental problems.

However, the world, including Nigeria, is generally facing one type of environmental problem. These include: deforestation, erosion, bush burning, global warming, noise, air and water pollution, toxic wastes, solid wastes, oil spillage, floods, and desertification (Oyewale, 2015). In both rural and urban communities, epidemic outbreaks are commonly caused by environmental deterioration. Heaps of refuse with unpleasant odors are the features of our urban communities in areas covered in this study, such as “Sabo”, “Lagere”, “Ilare”, among other places in Ile-Ife. Most urban communities, especially indigenous areas lack public toilets, leading to the littering of the environment with human excreta.

The monthly environmental sanitation exercise being observed in Osun State and other states in the country underscores the importance of environmental education in our society, as it is not properly carried out because refuse gathered is still being dumped on the streets for refuse collectors to pack. Many of these do not get removed and are dumped into streams and rivers, which later result in flooding and erosion of neighboring areas. Other environmental problems in Ile-Ife include refuse collection and disposal, burning of refuse, deforestation, bad roads, and unplanned structures.

Governments at the state and local levels in Osun State have embarked on various projects to alleviate these problems. Efforts were made to alleviate the problem of waste disposal; unfortunately, this was without success. It was discovered that people are not really educated about the importance of environmental cleanliness. To solve this problem, Ogbeni Rauf Aregbesola, one of the past governors in the state, carried out Urban Renewal literacy programs such as planting trees and flowers along the major roads of urban communities in the state and beautifying the environment. Moreover, the current administration in the state does not deviate from activities of the past administration with regard to urban renewal literacy.

The major reasons for urban renewal are to ensure that the scarce land resources allocated in urban areas are properly utilized for the land resources available to be maximally used in line with the standard of planning design (Nelson, 1988). A major factor moving along with urban growth is the environmental deterioration of infrastructure and amenities in urban areas. The likely end of most urban areas is when those amenities and infrastructure that have been seen as adequate and as well available to the best use are beginning to be found to be otherwise. This development found in urban areas leads to the pursuit of rehabilitation, improvement,

renewal redevelopment of infrastructure and amenities to meet economic and socio-political demands, as well as meeting the needs of the ever-changing culture of people in terms of taste and fashion (Oyekanmi, 2021).

Urban renewal is a process of refining neighborhood through total transformation of the environment, renovation, demolition of old structures, building of modern structure and as well as provision of modern infrastructure. Agbola, (1987) defined urban renewal as a process of total redevelopment of a community in which the community concerned wants changes in the area of re-fashioning in terms of rebuilding some aspects of the community's physical structure so that the community can address the different problems it is facing successfully. Urban renewal programs and philosophy tend to have the following outcomes: Ensuring total clearance of housing and slum areas to eradicate inadequacy in the housing system as well as the substandard housing system, finding lasting solutions to housing shortages by creating enough housing production for community development, ensuring comfortable living environments through enabling decent homes and ensuring total eradication of social vices in the environment (Oyekanmi, 2021).

Therefore, the components of urban renewal include city expansion, redevelopment, comprehensive road development, redesigning, and beautification of settlements layouts, upgrading facilities and public goods and services, repair, construction, and sitting of drainage systems within urban centers, and enforcing slum upgrading and city development. Urban renewal activities also involve landscaping, that is, the beautification of public spaces and spaces in urban communities throughout the state. This also involves the physical planning and structural organization of building in the urban communities of the state. These include the removal of shanties, that is, the illegal building of shops, the packing of vehicles along major roads, street trading, and a host of other environmentally illegal activities.

The Act of renewal of 1954 placed much emphasis on the renewal of existing residential areas but did not support the total removal of these houses. In the process of urban renewal, there is a need for local agencies to set out a plan of action for community renewal to learn how to remove slums in some areas. Forceful removal of slums has been widely criticized and considered counterproductive to bringing about required sustainable urban renewal. People who were sent out from the Maroko slum due to total clearance exercise underwent by Lagos government were subjected to poverty because there was no form of compensation for them (Oyekanmi, 2021)

The worsening of urban centers has been properly explained in the findings of Dimuna and Omatsone (2010) as a development that stands out as a willful act but cannot be corrected. It requires joint effort from different sides to bring about a kind of renewal of deteriorated urban areas in order to reflect the standard level of civilization at the point of renewal. It has been noted that citizen efforts along with public institutions can address the damaging impact or uncontrollable surge of urbanization on urban existing cities (Dimuna & Omatsone, 2010; Egolum & Emoh, 2017). Direct government intervention is essential, although every citizen must also be supported. Therefore, this study examined the level of urban renewal literacy among Ile-Ife residents in Osun State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The world, including Nigeria, is generally facing one type of environmental problem. Environmental problems in Ile-Ife include refuse collection and disposal, burning of refuse, deforestation, bad roads, and unplanned structures. Governments at the state and local levels in Osun State have embarked on various projects to alleviate these problems, but they have failed. It was discovered that people are not really educated on the importance of environmental cleanliness. As a way of addressing this problem, past and present governments in Osun State carried out programs on Urban Renewal literacy. Urban renewal has to do with refining

neighborhood through total transformation of the environment. Therefore, this study the level of urban renewal literacy among Ile-Ife residents in Osun State.

### Research Questions

1. What is the level of residents' urban renewal literacy?

### Hypothesis

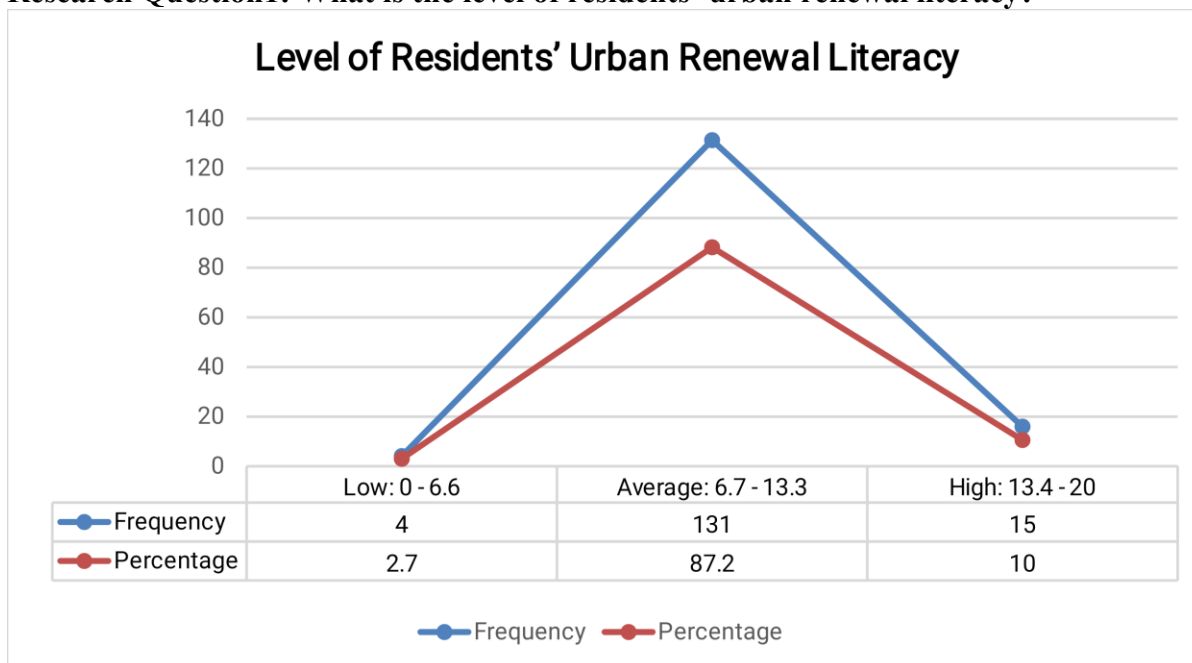
H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between male and female residents' urban renewal literacy levels.

### Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design. The two local government areas (Ife Central Local Government and Ife East Local Government) in Ile-Ife were selected. A purposive sampling technique was used to select Sabo from the Ife Central Local Government and Lagere from the Ife East Local Government in Ile-Ife. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 residents (104 female residents and 46 male residents) in Ile-Ife. One instrument: Residents' Urban Renewal Literacy Test was used for data collection. The face and content validity of the instrument were determined by three experts in Social Studies Education. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering it to 30 residents in areas that were not part of the areas selected for this study. The test re-test method was used, and a coefficient of 0.76 was obtained. Data collected for the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics of frequency count, percentage score, and inferential statistics from the t-test

### Results

**Research Question1: What is the level of residents' urban renewal literacy?**



The summation of the scores of the 150 residents who took the urban literacy test was 1,769. To determine the level of residents' urban renewal literacy. The summation divided by the total number of participants yielded 11.8 (approx.). This is over twenty, which is the maximum expected score. From this finding, we can deduce that the residents of Ile-Ife had an average level of urban renewal literacy.

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference between male and female residents' urban renewal literacy levels.

**Table 1: Difference in urban renewal literacy levels between male and female residents**

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	t	df	p-value	Remarks
Male	46	53.3696	2.49763	-.19774	-.411	148	.668	Not sig.
Female	104	53.5673	2.80348					

Table 1 shows the difference between male and female residents' urban renewal literacy levels using an independent samples t-test analysis. The results indicate that there was no significant difference between male and female residents' urban renewal literacy levels ( $t = -.411$ ;  $df=148$ ;  $p>0.05$ ). This implies that gender did not affect residents' urban renewal literacy levels.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The results showed that residents of Ile-Ife had an average urban renewal literacy level. This is similar to the findings of Mimi (2003) and Ugras (2008), who found significant community participation in urban renewal activities. The importance of community members' involvement in finding solutions to urban renewal problems in their communities as concerns for urban renewal is not an innate attribute but developed through nurturing role modeling education and life experiences. This is contrary to the finding of Jackson (2005), who reported that people's urban renewal literacy level was high because they understood their actions and choices that are affecting the urban centers.

The results revealed that gender did not cause a variance in residents' urban renewal literacy levels. This is in line with the findings of Eni and Abua (2014), who reported that gender did not influence urban renewal knowledge about males and females. This may be attributed to the activities of males and females in the area in which both genders participated in the same community activities or programs. This is contrary to the findings of Hade (2014) and Ugras (2008), who in their separate studies on urban renewal found that gender influenced learning activities on urban renewal. Furthermore, Oyekanmi (2021) revealed that gender had a significant main effect on residents' knowledge. This implies that residents' gender influenced their knowledge of urban renewal activities, as male participants displayed higher knowledge of urban renewal activities than female participants.

### **Conclusion**

This study has revealed the level of urban renewal literacy of Ile-Ife residents in Osun State. Based on the findings, the study provides a better understanding of whether gender did not cause a variance in residents' urban renewal literacy levels. It can be concluded from this study that regardless of residents' gender, their urban literacy level can increase.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are recommended:

Government and community stakeholders should sensitize people on urban renewal program. Workshops and seminars should be organized for government agencies to educate them on different strategies that will help them perform their duties. The government should involve stakeholders and community residents in its urban renewal plans so that they can comply as expected.

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