

Perception of Hazards and Risks in Road Utilization as Space for Social Ceremonies in Indigenous Residential Area of Ogbomoso, Nigeria

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Abstract : A road is a path established over land, especially prepared way between places for the use of pedestrian, riders, and vehicles: a hard surface built for vehicles to travel on. The social, economic and health importance of roads in any community and nation cannot be underestimated. Roads provide access to properties and they also provide mobility which is ability to transport goods and services from one place to another. In the residential zones of many indigenous cities in Nigeria, roads are usually blocked for social ceremonies. Road blocked for ceremonies as used in this study are a temporary barrier across a road, used to stop or hinder traffic from passing through to the other side. Social ceremonies that could warrant road blockage include marriage, child naming, funeral, celebration of life's achievement, birthday anniversary etc. These activities are likely to generate environmental hazards and their attendant risks. The assessment of these hazards and risks in residential zones of indigenous cities in Nigeria becomes imperative. The study is focused on Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. The town has two local government councils namely Ogbomoso North and Ogbomoso South. Urban tracts that are easy to identify are political wards in the absence of land use segregation, houses numbering and street naming. The wards that had residential having a minimum of 60% of their land use components were surveyed and fifteen out of twenty wards identified in the town were surveyed. The study utilized primary data collected through questionnaire administration. The three major road categories (Trunk A-Federal; Trunk B- State; Trunk C-Local) were identified and trunk C-Local roads were purposively selected being the concern of this study because they are the ones often blocked for social activities. The major stakeholders interviewed and the respective sampling methods are residents (random and systematic), social ceremony organizers (purposive), government officials (purposive) and road users namely commercial motorists and commercial motor cyclists (random and incidental). Data analysis was mainly descriptive. Two indices to measure respondents' perception were developed. These are 'Hazard Severity Index' (HSI) and 'Relative Awareness Index' (RAI). Thereafter, policy implications and recommendations were provided.

Keywords : road, residential zones, indigenous cities, blocked, social ceremonies

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