LIVEABILITY STATUS ASSESSMENT OF SIX STATE CAPITALS OF THE SOUTH-SOUTH GEO-POLITICAL ZONE OF NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT
Liveability status of six state capitals of the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria was assessed using 2,380 sample size of households. A four-point rating scale was further used in presenting the resident's perceptions in tables and percentages after 2,380 copies of questionnaires were distributed to various household heads resident in the cities. These qualitative responses were further validated with the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and re-validated with the Tukey post hoc test (Multiple comparison of means) and the Least Significant Difference (LSD). Analyses were done on five major urban liveability indices as; housing, education, transportation, healthcare and recreation. Results are that out of the six state capitals studied, Uyo is the most liveable city comparatively speaking. Others ranged between high, low and very low. The index with the worst attention with regard to provision is healthcare. On the whole, the liveability status of the cities sampled, does not compare to international standards like those of the European cities as no statistically significant variation in the perception of residents across the cities was established. A firm policy formulation, implementation and enforcement of development control and effective land use design of the urban centers among others were recommended.

Keywords; liveability, perception, cities, south-south, Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION
Liveability, quality of life and sustainable development are sorts of new concepts coming on the heels of urbanization and demographic mobility. Cities the world over are experiencing over population and many urban governments have lost their carrying capacities owing to increasing urban poverty, inequality and uncontrollable rural-urban migration. The UN-Habitat (2008) states that 14% of Africa's inhabitants were urban by 1950, in 2000, it rose to 37.2% and it is expected to rise per year. According to UN (2002), the Nigerian city of Lagos, which had 665,000 inhabitants by 1963 (Salzano, 1997), rose up to 8.9 million in 2000 and is expected to become the world's 11th biggest city by 2015 with about 15million people.

As cities grow due to immigration “Pull' and “Push' effects, so does the living standard of their residents affected directly or indirectly. Most of these urban centres, the world over, particularly those of sub-Saharan Africa and precisely Nigeria are having poor liveability and low quality of life amongst the populace. Going by the Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) (2002) liveability ranking and Mercer's Worldwide quality of living (Survey) report (2010) and International Making Cities Liveable Newsletter (2014), it was discovered that most of the urban centres in Nigeria especially the study area fall far below the recommendations and survey reports on liveability factors, objectives, principles, indicators and ranking standards. Some of these liveability indices include; affordable housing, increase in transportation options, lower transportation costs, protection of the

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environment and addressing the challenges of climate in communities nation-wide.

Mercer's Quality of Living (2012), a press release on ranking of cities' liveability revealed that European cities such as Vienna in Austria is at the top and Baghdad at the bottom. Whilst also Singapore in Asia ranked highest in infrastructure (basic amenities provision) for residents, Port-au-Prince of Haiti ranked lowest. While Vienna has the world's best quality of living index. Zurich of Switzerland and Auckland of New Zealand ranked second and third best respectively. According to the 2012 survey by Mercer, Munich of Germany ranked fourth while Vancouver of Canada ranked fifth. Dusseldorf had sixth position and Frankfurt seventh (all of Germany) respectively. Geneva is eight, Copenhagen–ninth, Bern and Sidney of Australia tied to the tenth place. On the global scale, Mercer's (2012) ranking of cities identified the following with the lowest quality of living as: Khartoum of Sudan (Africa) at No 217, N'Djamena of Chad (Africa) 218; Port-au-Prince of Haiti (Dominican Rep) 219 and Bangui of Central African Republic (Africa) 220 and Baghdad of Iraq (Middle East) 221 as least liveable city in the world, using various liveabiltiy measuring standards. “The Economist” magazine which placed their ranking standards on business and economic issues selected five Australian cities, three Canadian cities and two European as their top ten. The first three being Vancouver of Canada, Melbourne of Australia and Vienna of Europe. Others like “Monocle”, a lifestyle magazine places their ranking criteria on social and economic circumstances for residents such as public health, infrastructure, and availability and ease of local transport in ranking their top liveable cities in 2010, where Munich, Copenhagen and Zurich are first, second and third respectively. Again, Forbes magazine used different criteria for ranking and measuring city liveabiltiy. Their focus was on unemployment, crime, income, growth, the cost of living and artistic and cultural opportunities, and it fell on “all American” cities such as Pittsburg in Pennsylvania and Trenton in New Jersey. The ratings show that many African cities are quite below the liveability standards including most Nigerian cities. For instance, due to poor standard of education and its infrastructure in Nigeria, it was estimated that a whooping N160 billion was spent by Nigerian parents on 71,000 children on education in Ghana alone, which is in the same West African Sub-region (Adesina, 2003).

Since the post-independence era, the desperation for survival and quest for a better way of life among Nigerians soared higher every day, month or year. One of such causes is the austerity measure adopted in mortgaging the Nigerian's quality of living in order to secure International Monetary Fund (IMF) loan by the then Military Government of the 1980's (Mberu and Pongou, 2010). The programme's effect on the Nigeria's currency was its devaluation and consequently the payment of lower wages to workers and professionals. This brought about massive brain drain owing to low liveability index, environmental, economic and social qualities of living. The key drivers of emigration according to (Mberu and Pongou, 2010) include; higher wages in destination countries, secure employment (job security), career advancement and training, access to best technological facilities, conflicts and insecurity arising from political and economic circumstances at home.

Best Nigerian doctors and nurses emigrated to the Middle East and the

United States and South Africa in the 90's. World Bank Development Prospects Group (2007) estimated migration rate of 36% Nigeria's in tertiary institutions, with 13.6% physicians and 11.7% nurses. United Nations Human Development Report, (2010) states that an estimated 1,127,700 Nigerians are in diaspora as against unascertained figures gulping up to 20million. The incessant attacks and unrests owing to politically and religiously induced communal clashes in most parts of the country and the terrorist insurgent group called “Boko Haram” have thrown most parts of the country especially those of Maiduguri, Jos and their surrounding towns and villages into great insecurity, thus exacerbating the unliveability index in the country. As such, quality of life generally has grown worse. And due to the massive insecurity and unrests, Nigerians resorted to seeking asylum abroad. Total registered asylum application to 17 countries according to United Nations Center for Human Settlement (2008) was about 12,573. Greater percentage was to Europe in adopting several crude and illegal means to travel out of the country while some by risky stowaways, aboard ships and other unsafe vessels and overcrowded local rickety boats which have led to the death of many Nigerians.

For instance, the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported in 2008 that 59,000 Nigerians travelled to North Africa without valid document in a bid to crossing to Europe. The figure spread out to be 8,000 in Morocco, 16,000 in Algeria, 20,000 in Libya and about 15,000 in Mauritania. Through this crude process of illegality, over 10,000 precious Nigerian souls suffered casualties and died in transit between 1999 and 2002. Those who managed to cross over to Italy and Spain were constantly molested, jailed and often repatriated again into the same “fire” of unliveability from which they attempted to run.

In densely populated neighbourhoods with people living in close proximity to each other, disease transmission becomes rampant. For reasons of lack of clean safe drinking water coupled with inadequate sanitation and waste evacuation, environment-related health risks are suffered by residents. UN-Habitat (2006) states that in the developing world, up to 80% of all environment-related diseases are attributable to lack of clean safe drinking water. Diseases like diarrhoea is said to be the greatest water-borne disease and it is seen to be a great burden in the developing world. It is described as a silent killer of the slums. Another disease breeding ground in communities with poor liveability conditions is overcrowding. This type of surrounding with congested housing and poor transportation and health facilities breeds a lot of communicable diseases such as respiratory infection, tuberculosis, and meningitis.

Thus, in a liveable community, programmes, policies and practices increase cooperation, interaction and exchange between people of different generations. Liveable communities provide services that allow individuals of all ages to survive and thrive. In a truly intergenerational community, residents of all ages have ample opportunities to share their expertise and resources, and to support each other and their community. The above serves as a guide to those at the local level, community leaders, residents, students, and more to identify new ways to address community challenges, implement programs that enhance lives across all generations and create a liveable and positive environment for community members.

There is no doubt that Nigeria as a nation is experiencing rapid urbanization which

has brought about various socio-economic, cultural and environmental problems, particularly, degradation of the physical urban environment which exists in the nature of loss of biodiversity and green-house warming, desertification, degradation of agricultural land, air and water pollution, environmental decay, slums, overcrowding, housing congestion, crime and violence, and several other demanding situations (Ogunleye, 2005; Jiboye 2011a; Daramola & Ibem, 2010). Considering the challenges posed by the diverse problems associated with urbanization and the need for sustainable development in Nigeria, urgent step is required on the part of government in particular and other stakeholders responsible for urban development, through effective governance to control the rate at which urban population and the spread of cities increases. Also, effort is required to control the decline in the quality of urban infrastructure as well as improve the overall standard of living of the people in Nigeria.

Materials and Methods

Study Area

The study area which comprises the six states of the South-South region and their capitals fall within and around the Deltaic region of the Niger River which is located in the south-south geo-political zone of the Nigerian nation. The states comprise Bayelsa, Rivers, Akwa-Ibom, Cross-River, Edo and Delta states (BRACED). All the six states lie across the coast of Southern Nigeria and are bounded by the Bight of Benin (fig.1). Whilst Edo state is located at the extreme western end as no. 1, Delta state is no. 2, then Bayelsa state is no. 3, Rivers state no. 4, Akwa-Ibom is no. 5 and Cross-River state which is no. 6 lies also at the extreme eastern end of the region. A brief city by city description of the study area is as shown below;

Benin City is the capital of Edo State. The 2006 National Population Census estimates revealed that it has a population of 1,147,188 and it is located on co-ordinates, 6° 20' 00" north and 5° 37' and 20" east.

Asaba is the capital of the oil rich Delta state of the Niger Delta. It has by 2006 population census an estimated figure of 149, 603 residents. It is located at the western end of the great River Niger. Asaba is a link between eastern and western parts of Nigeria. Asaba town also lies at 6° north of the equator occupying an area of about 300 square kilometers.

Yenagoa is the capital city of Bayelsa state. It has a population size of 24,335 people according to 2006 population census estimates. Geographically, it is on an altitude of 56m above sea level.

Port Harcourt is the fourth state capital, which is the capital of another oil rich state of Rivers State. Port Harcourt has a total urban population of 1,382,592 people with reference to the 2006 population census estimates. It has a total area of 360 square kilometers.

Uyo, the capital of Akwa-Ibom State has an area of 115 km2 and a total metropolitan population of 554,906 persons as reported by 2006 census population estimates.

Calabar, the capital of Cross River State has an urban population of 371,022, according to 2006 census figures. It has an area of 406 square km with co-ordinates of 4°37.00" north and 8° 19.30" east.

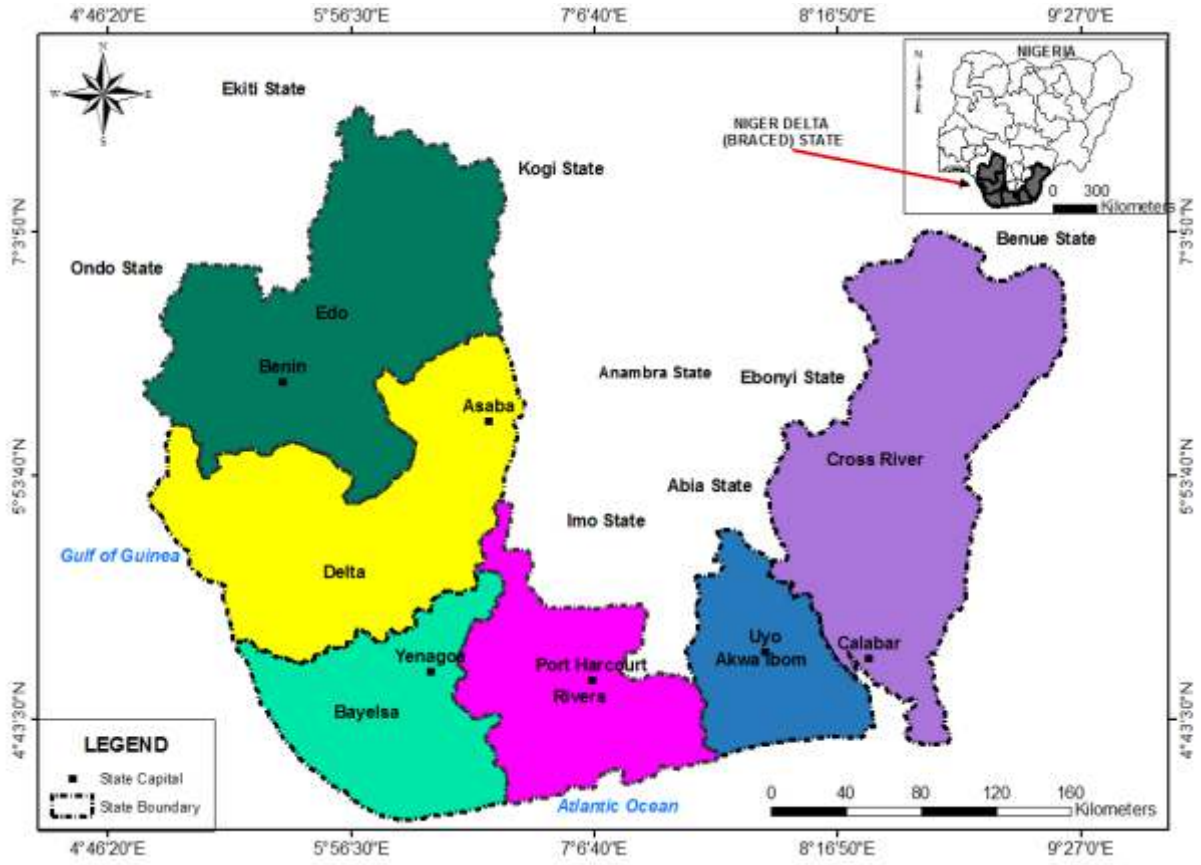


Fig. 1: Study Area

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The stratified random sampling technique was applied in each of the six state capitals. In each capital, 30% out of the total household population was selected to determine the total sample size. According to Uzoagulu (1998) 10% is regarded as an appropriate sample for populations of 5,000 and above. Further to this, the household population as a unit of inquiry in each state capital was used as an index for getting the final sample size in each case (see tables 1 and 2). Following that, the Taro-Yamane's formula (Baridam, 1995) was applied on each city's household population as shown in the following model;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where; **n = Sample size sought**
N = Total population
1 = Constant
e = Level of significance or margin of tolerable error

Table 1: ***2006 census projection to 2014 for household population***

S/N	State	Capital (urban centre)	2006 Urban Population	State Growth Rate	2009 Figures	2012 Figures	2014 Projection	Households Population = Population / 4.4
1	Edo	Benin City	1,147,188	2.7	1,242,641	1,310,649	1,419,702	322,659
2	Delta	Asaba	149,603	3.2	164,428	180,724	192,475	43,744
3	Bayelsa	Yenagoa	24,335	2.9	26,514	28,888	30,588	6,952
4	Rivers	Port Harcourt	1,382,592	3.4	1,528,465	1,689,730	1,806,585	410,587
5	Akwa-Ibom	Uyo	554,906	3.4	613,452	678,175	725,075	164,790
6	Cross-River	Calabar	371,022	2.9	403,218	439,224	465,174	105,721
	TOTALS		3,629,646				4,639,599	1,054,453

Note: *The population of the six urban centres as drawn from the 2014 population (projected) was determined using the* ***4.4*** *persons per household composition figure as stipulated by UNCHS report (2010).*The following table shows the sample size to be used for data collection in this study;

Table 2: Sample sizes of households population in the study area

S/N	State	Capital (urban centre)	Projected 2014 Census figs	Household Population	Taro-Yamane's 30% reduction	Urban order by population size
1	Edo	Benin city	1,419,702	322,659	399	2nd
2	Delta	Asaba	192,475	43,744	398	5th
3	Bayelsa	Yenagoa	30,588	6,962	386	6th
4	Rivers	Port Harcourt	1,806,585	410,587	399	1st
5	Akwa Ibom	Uyo	725,075	164,790	399	3rd
6	Cross River	Calabar	465,174	105,721	399	4th
	Totals			1,054,453	2,380	

Methods of Data Analyses

Data on the various liveability indices as perceived by the respondents were first subjected to a four-point rating scale of Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L) and Very Low (VL) before presenting them in tables, frequencies and percentages after distributing 2,380 copies of questionnaires to the respondents (table 2). Conclusions were drawn from the percentage ratings as summarized in the tables following respondents' perceptions on various liveability indices as housing, educational facility provision, transportation, health care and recreation. Conclusions from the percentage ratings were further subjected to inferential statistical analyses using the one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to validate the veracity of their statistical significance at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Tables 3 and 4 show the qualitative percentage perception responses of the household heads of the respective six state capitals on the identified liveability indices in the study area.

Table 3: Respondents' Perspective on Liveability Status

Capital	1 – Housing					2 – Education					3 – Transportation				
City	V.H	H	L	V.L	**Total**	V.H	H	L	V.L	**Total**	V.H	H	L	V.L	**Total**
Benin	8.333	27.47	14.29	3.279	**53.37**	34.78	28.21	2.597	9.524	**75.11**	9.091	4.348	23.08	31.03	**67.55**
Asaba	50	23.08	8.571	4.918	**86.57**	8.696	6.41	23.38	33.33	**71.82**	27.27	5.797	19.78	27.59	**80.44**
Yenagoa	-	3.297	17.14	39.34	**59.78**	-	5.128	27.27	42.86	**75.26**	18.18	5.797	21.98	27.59	**73.54**
PH	-	3.297	14.29	40.98	**58.57**	30.43	29.49	3.896	-	**63.82**	36.36	31.88	7.692	-	**75.94**
Uyo	41.67	20.88	17.14	6.557	**86.25**	-	5.128	33.77	14.29	**53.18**	9.091	26.09	10.99	13.79	**59.96**
Calabar	-	21.98	28.57	4.918	**55.47**	26.09	25.64	9.091	-	**60.82**	-	26.09	16.48	-	**42.57**
Total	**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**		**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**		**100**	**100**	**100**	**100**	

Table 4: Respondents' Perspective on liveability cont'd

Capital	4 - Health care					5 – Recreation				
City	V.H	H	L	V.L	**Total**	V.H	H	L	V.L	**Total**
Benin	-	7.5	21.43	13.16	**42.09**	11.11	5.634	37.74	14.29	**68.77**
Asaba	14.29	5	17.86	21.05	**58.2**	-	2.817	9.434	41.07	**53.32**
Yenagoa	-	7.5	19.64	21.05	**48.2**	-	4.225	11.32	42.86	**58.4**
PH	85.71	60	2.679	-	**148.4**	44.44	28.17	9.434	-	**82.05**
Uyo	-	10	20.54	18.42	**48.96**	33.33	35.21	7.547	-	**76.09**
Calabar	-	10	17.86	26.32	**54.17**	11.11	23.94	24.53	1.786	**61.37**
Total	100	100	100	100		100	100	100	100	

Source: Author's Compilation, (2015)

To validate a statistically significant variation using the ANOVA model as represented above, the ho is presented thus; there is no statistically significant variation in the perception of residents on some liveability indices as housing, education, transportation, healthcare and recreation.The analysis and discussion are made from the table below

Table 5: ANOVA Result

City	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F-cal	Sig.	F-tab
Between groups	2796.131	5	559.226	1.576	.205	2.62
Within groups	8515.029	24	354.793			
Total	11311.160	29				

From the above table, at 5 degrees of freedom and 0.05 level of significance, F-cal = 1.576 while F-tab = 2.62. Since F-cal value of 1.576 is less than the tabulated value of 2.62 at 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was not rejected. The conclusion therefore is that there is no statistically significant variation in the perception of residents on housing, education, transportation, healthcare and recreational facilities as liveability indices in the study area. This was further validated with the Tukey Post Hoc Tests (Multiple Comparisons of Means and Least Significant Difference (LSD). The multiple upheld the above result while the LSD showed variations in the perceptions of residents in Port Harcourt and Calabar with p-value of 0.016 while Benin and Port Harcourt significantly varied at 0.10 level of significance with p-value of 0.052.

This result is at variance with the European cities survey (2013) where 28 cities across Europe showed high satisfaction levels with liveability indices as provided by government. Since the qualitative perceptions as the four point rating scale titled between high and low, the ANOVA result holds it consistent across the six state capitals. On housing provision, the result is below the demands of the city dwellers but the situation is worst is in Calabar followed by Uyo and Yenagoa while Port Harcourt and Benin shared the same point (table 3). On the other hand, some residents reported that it is high in places like; Benin, Asaba, Uyo and Calabar. The case of education rather presents an opposite picture as Benin, Port Harcourt and Calabar residents believe it is high. The provision of education in places like; Uyo, Yenagoa and Asaba is low. Transportation facility provision is fairly high in places like; Port Harcourt, Calabar and Uyo (plate1) while results show that it is low however in cities like; Benin, Yenagoa and Asaba.



Plate 1: A master piece of Highway Engineering in intersects and freeways in Uyo City



Plate 2: Eze-Ugboma Road off Nnnebisi Road, Asaba

There is a low to very low provision of healthcare across the cities. This is evident in (table 3) while recreational facility provision ranged between high with Uyo ranking highest and low with Benin being the worst.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Low, inadequate, improper and wide differentials in the provisions of basic urban facilities which do not compare to those of international standards make most cities less liveable. However in the Nigerian context and in sub-Saharan Africa, crushing poverty and least access to better living conditions all combine to wreck a sustainable havoc on the populace. The situation as shown in this work does not compare favourable to those of EU nations as the indices speak. The resultant effect of this lopsided provision of urban basic facilities is that massive migration (urban-urban and rural-urban) will take place wherever the opportunities look better. Also with this influx, there seems not to be a sustainable planning framework that will make provisions for the attendant spill-over effects. In that way, settlements continue to degenerate infrastructurally, environmentally and economically since pressures are piled on the already existing ones. On the average, the situation in Uyo city seems better than all others comparatively speaking and if the cities are in such deplorable state, what is the fate of the suburbs and rural areas which are part of the general system? In this regard therefore, basic public infrastructure must as a matter of government policy be well maintained, periodically monitored to ensure their functionality and feed-back on vandalism, breakdown and abandonment of any for sustainability and improved effect on the quality of life of the urban residents and beyond. Government must try to apply the UN guidelines for good governance by being accountable, truly democratic and visionary to ensure equity in the provision of facilities. There should be a firm policy formulation, implementation and enforcement of rules and regulations to ensure proper development control and effective land use in design and planning of the urban centres to enhance better liveability status.

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