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SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS OF URBAN DECAY IN OGBOMOSO, NIGERIA

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Abstract

Uncontrolled urbanization in the Global South increasingly triggers severe urban decay, yet its systemic dynamics in secondary cities remain under-researched compared to major megacities. This study evaluates socio-economic and environmental factors of urban decay in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was used for obtaining primary data from questionnaires and interviews from 384 respondents in the households in ten political wards. Nearly 80% of dense, "Brazilian-style" tenement housing suffers severe, long-term structural fatigue and habitability failures. There is a significant lack of infrastructure, with 60.16% of respondents reporting no drainage and 78.39% having no formal waste management systems, which leads to open burning of waste. The findings were statistically significant at a very high level when tested using inferential statistics (Chi-square and Ordinal Logistic Regression), where there is a strong significance between the relationship of low socio-economic status (income and education) with poor housing quality, which created localized poverty traps. But the level of crime is still very low as a result of high levels of social cohesion. This dynamic indicates that secondary city decline is not only physical, but also systemic, institutional, and rooted in socio-economic constraints. The study recommends targeted public funding through urban renewal grants, to increase paved drainage, to have municipal waste collection, and participatory community-based land management. The study suggests that sustainable revitalization must involve a combination of infrastructure development and social cohesion in the local community to create sustainable community resilience.

Keywords: Urban, Decay, Vulnerability, Infrastructure, Adequacy.

Introduction

Urbanization is one of the most significant demographic and spatial transformations of the twenty-first century. Across the world, cities continue to expand as a result of population growth, rural-urban migration, and economic opportunities (United Nations Human Settlements Programme [UN-Habitat], 2022; United Nations, 2019). While urbanization has contributed to economic development, technological advancement, and improved access to services, it has also generated numerous challenges, particularly where the pace of growth exceeds the capacity of urban infrastructure and governance systems. One of the major consequences of uncontrolled urban growth is urban decay, which manifests in the deterioration of the physical, social, economic, and environmental conditions of urban areas (Salem et al., 2024). Urban decay is characterized by declining housing quality, aging infrastructure, environmental degradation, increasing poverty, social disorganization, and a reduction in the overall quality of urban life (Chen et al., 2024).

The problem of urban decay is particularly pronounced in developing countries, where rapid urbanization often occurs without corresponding investments in housing, infrastructure, environmental management, and urban renewal programmes (UN-Habitat, 2022; Cobbinah & Aboagye, 2017). The increasing population in many cities in the Global

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South has put high demands on the available resources, leading to higher density of housing, insufficient public services, inadequate waste management systems, and environmental degradation (UN-Habitat, 2022). Weak urban governance, limited financial resources, and ineffective implementation of planning regulations have further contributed to the deterioration of many urban neighbourhoods (Abass & Kucukmehmetoglu, 2021; Alade et al., 2021).

Across Africa, the rapid growth of urban centres has created significant challenges for sustainable urban development. Many African cities are characterized by inadequate housing conditions, poor sanitation facilities, inefficient drainage systems, traffic congestion, and environmental pollution (UN-Habitat, 2022). The persistence of poverty and unemployment in many urban areas has further contributed to the decline of residential neighbourhoods and the deterioration of urban infrastructure. Consequently, urban decay has become an important planning concern because of its implications for public health, environmental quality, economic productivity, and social well-being (United Nations, 2019).

In Nigeria, the challenges associated with urban decay have become increasingly evident as cities continue to experience rapid population growth and spatial expansion. Factors such as rural-urban migration, increasing housing demand, weak enforcement of development control regulations, inadequate infrastructure provision, and limited investment in urban renewal programmes have contributed to the deterioration of many urban environments (Bakare, 2024; Olajide & Lawanson, 2022). Urban decay in Nigerian cities is reflected in dilapidated housing, deteriorating infrastructure, poor environmental sanitation, inefficient waste management practices, inadequate drainage systems, and declining living conditions. While considerable scholarly attention has been devoted to major metropolitan centres such as Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt, Kano, and Abuja, comparatively less attention has been given to medium-sized cities despite their growing importance in the national urban system (Ogunnaike et al., 2025).

One of such cities is Ogbomoso in Oyo State, Southwestern Nigeria. The town has grown in both population and geographical size because of its strategic location, commercial activities, and the presence of educational institutions like Ladoke Akintola University of Technology. However, there are some residential neighbourhoods in the city that can be seen as having suffered urban decay, especially in the Ogbomoso South Local Government Area, Ogbomoso (Olaoye et al., 2025; Morakinyo et al., 2024). These include poor housing conditions, poor infrastructure, poor waste management practices, environmental pollution, poor drainage systems, and poor neighbourhood quality (Adewoyin, 2024). Furthermore, growing socio-economic problems like poverty, joblessness, and lack of basic urban amenities have compounded the vulnerability of residents and their neighbourhoods' deterioration. Housing condition remains one of the most visible manifestations of urban decay in the area, reflecting the combined effects of inadequate maintenance, aging structures, environmental neglect, and socio-economic constraints (Ifediora, 2021).

Although studies (for example, Abasilim et al., 2025; Kasim et al., 2025; Ogunkan et al., 2025; Adetayo et al., 2024; Agbonifo, 2022; Alade et al., 2021) have examined urban decay and environmental deterioration in major Nigerian cities, there is limited empirical evidence on the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of urban decay in medium-sized cities such as Ogbomoso. Furthermore, insufficient attention has been paid to the interactions between residents' socio-economic conditions, housing quality, infrastructure provision, and environmental quality in shaping patterns of urban decay. Understanding these relationships is essential for developing effective planning interventions and sustainable urban renewal strategies.

This study therefore, examines the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of urban decay in residential neighbourhoods of Ogbomoso South Local Government Area, Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study assesses the socio-economic characteristics of residents, evaluates housing conditions and the physical condition of housing units, examines the condition of infrastructural facilities and environmental quality, and analyses the relationships between socio-economic conditions and environmental degradation within the context of urban decay. The findings of the study are expected to provide empirical evidence for urban planners, policymakers, and local authorities in formulating targeted urban renewal programmes and sustainable development strategies for medium-sized cities in Nigeria. The study also contributes to the growing

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body of knowledge on urban decay and neighbourhood deterioration in African cities.

Conceptual Framework and Literature Review

The Concept and Multi-Dimensional Nature of Urban Decay

Hutton (2025), pointed out that urban decay is the gradual deterioration of a once-functioning urban area, that is, a complex series of physical decay, economic stagnation, social disintegration, and environmental degradation. Marin Maureira (2023), argued that urban decay has been underscored recently on its multi-scalar nature, in which spatial events are interconnected systemically. Khumalo (2023), noted that urban decay is usually examined on three closely related fronts: social decay, with high unemployment, rising crime levels, educational gap, and weak social cohesion; economic decline, including low levels of investment, falling property values, business closures and a mismatch between low-income residents and employment; and physical or environmental decline, which can be seen in shabby homes, decaying infrastructure, poor waste management, and chronic pollution.

Saleem & Alchalabi (2025), discovered that urban decay factors are examined in combination, often under the analytical prism of 'habitability,' which assumes that the level of satisfaction experienced by the occupants is a product of the 'harmonious interaction' between four subsystems: the dwelling unit, the surrounding environment, and institutional management. Vallebueno & Lee (2023), also noted that if any single subsystem fails, the process of decay increases rapidly. As a result, sustainable urban development frameworks are increasingly calling for a change from isolated large-scale redevelopments (which, in developing countries, are often not successful because of the lack of financing opportunities and weak governance) towards coordinated and participatory rehabilitation approaches that consider economic, social, and environmental aspects.

Urbanization, Sprawl, and Decay in Nigerian Cities

Nigeria is a typical country in the sub-Saharan region that is experiencing very high rates of urbanization, which have overwhelmed the capacity of cities to provide services for the ever-increasing population, leading to large-scale urban expansion, slum growth, and the swift deterioration of older residential areas (Ifediora, 2021; Omilusi, 2020). Rivera-Williams (2025), argued that this systemic decay is due to weak development control, poor enforcement of urban planning, land speculation, poor formal delivery of housing, and acute neglect of infrastructure. The region has been the subject of systematic reviews, and macroeconomic instability, housing crises, and deindustrialization are always among the main structural drivers of local blight (Ogunkan et al., 2025; Galadima, 2021). But most importantly, Olajide & Lawanson (2022), noted that, although the majority of past urban work in Nigeria has been on primary mega-cities such as Lagos and Ibadan, they highlighted the distress of secondary cities of medium size. These cities, however, have their own unique and unacknowledged traits, including the ongoing withdrawal of public investment from them to larger metropolitan areas, restricted local fiscal independence and the disintegration of the physical fabric of colonial-era or post-independence infrastructure (Meyer et al., 2026; He & Cai, 2026; Gastrow, 2024).

The Socio-Economic and Environmental Nexus

Wang & Liang (2025), noted that the core of this localised decline lies in a strong two-way relationship between the socio-economic status of residents and the environmental quality of their neighbourhoods. Ayumu & Ohakawa (2023), also pointed out that physical decay is often accelerated by low-income households that do not have the financial resources to maintain or upgrade their properties. It, in turn, leads to negative feedback: degradation of their local environment leads to a reduction in the value of property, less external investment in commercial development, and less relocation of middle-income households outward, which increases the spatial poverty traps in the area (Nzabirinda, 2025; Bryan et al., 2025). Agbonifo (2022), stated that this socio-environmental relationship is strongly manifested in the Nigerian urban context because of the common presence of informal settlements, which puts great pressure on the skeletal municipal services. There is a strong association between socio-economic vulnerability (low formal education, low income) and poor waste management, exposure to a toxic environment, and increased public health risk (Jagun et al., 2023; Deguen et al., 2022).

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Research Gaps and Justification for the Study

While a vast amount of literature exists on urbanization in Africa, there are certain gaps that call for a more localized study, both empirically and theoretically. On one hand, there is a huge deficit of knowledge about the structural conditions of medium-sized cities, where the majority of the national population resides, as a result of the overwhelming academic focus on megacities. Second, the literature often reports on socio-economic and environmental problems, but seldom identifies or critically examines the transactional, specific relationships between resident characteristics and specific environmental effects. Last but not least, most domestic research is less connected to new insights on the theoretical basis of urban political ecology and systems thinking, which considers environmental degradation not only as a physical phenomenon, but also as a socio-political phenomenon. This research directly fills these gaps by undertaking a rigorous empirical study on Ogbomoso South Local Government Area with the aim of giving insights into the secondary city dynamics, which will enable the development of targeted and realistic urban renewal policies.

Study Area and Methodology

Study Area

The study was carried out in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area of Oyo State in the south-western part of Nigeria with a view to exploring the socio-economic and environmental aspects of urban decay. Ogbomoso South is among the two Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Ogbomoso metropolis, and as such is a major secondary urban centre with notable administrative, educational, and commercial activities. The region was colonized by hunter-settler communities more than three centuries ago, and this area saw more rapid development after the establishment of Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) in 1990, which brought in students, workers, and businesses, adding to the pressure on pre-existing housing and infrastructure.

The study area is located between latitudes 7°10'N and 9°10'N and longitudes 2°10'E and 5°10'E, along the major Lagos-Ibadan-Ilorin trunk road (A1). It is located about 104km to the northeast of Ibadan and 57km to the southwest of Ilorin. The local government is made up of ten political wards, these are Akata, Alapata, Arowomole, Ibapon, Ijeru I & II, Ilogbo, Isoko, Lagbedu, and Oke-Ola, covering an area of approximately 68km². The population is estimated at 152,109 persons (2006 Census (100,379) x 2.1% growth per annum (World Bank, 2026)), making the area a typical medium-sized city in Nigeria in the midst of the rapid urbanisation trend.



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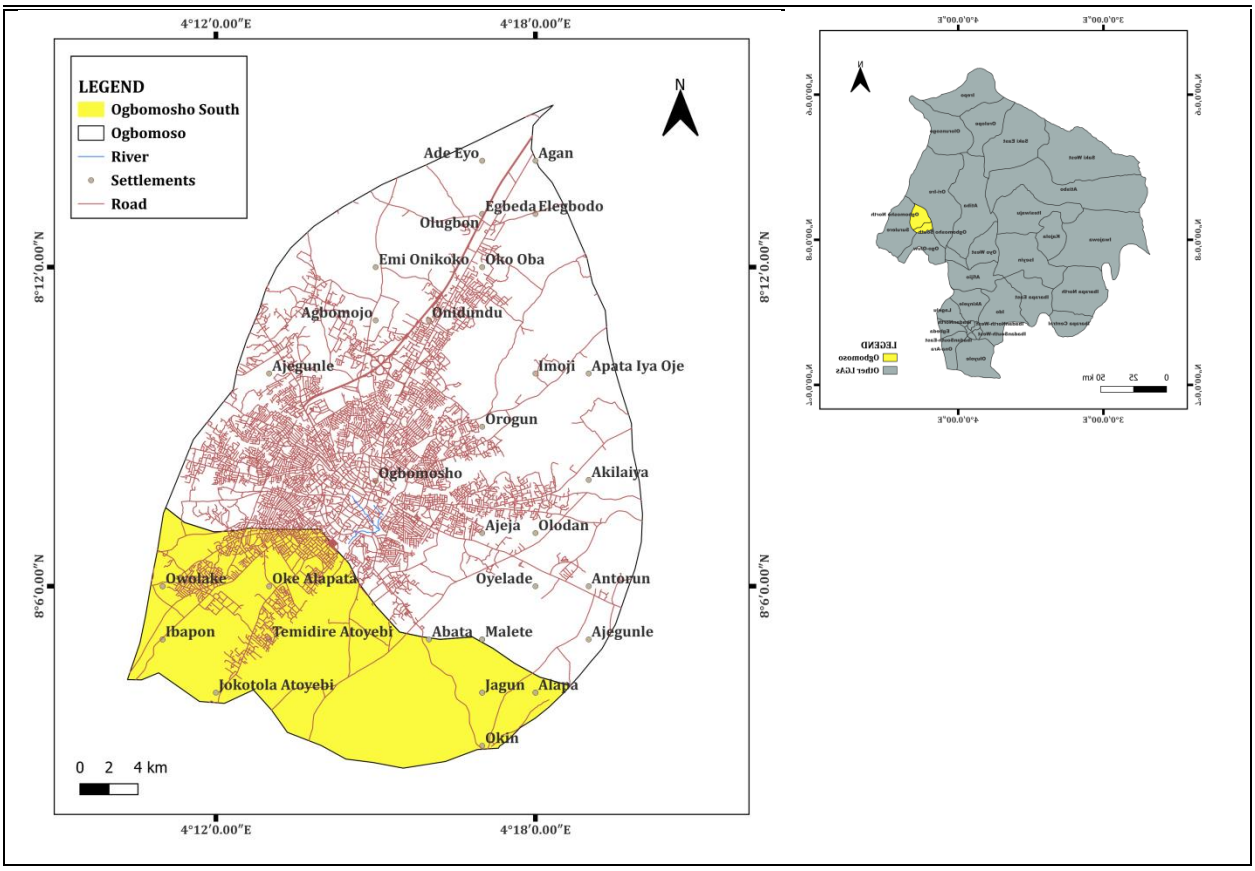


Figure 1. Map of Nigeria showing Oyo State and the study area.
Source. Authors' design, 2026.

The topography of the study area is undulating with basement complex rocks and in the derived savannah vegetation zone. It has a tropical wet and dry climate with an average annual temperature of 26.2ºC and an annual rainfall of 1,247 mm. These environmental conditions, along with the geology, create problems like seasonal flooding, inadequate drainage of soils, and the problem of scarcity of water during the dry season, which will worsen the environmental degradation if proper infrastructure is not available. The study area is predominantly residential, with a blend of traditional compound houses and old Brazilian-style buildings with some small-scale commercial activity. Trading, crafts and handicraft making, small-scale industries, and civil service jobs are significant factors in the local economy. The area, however, like many older secondary cities in Nigeria, is characterized by high rates of urban decay, evidenced by poor quality and substandard infrastructure, environmental degradation, and compromised public services (Ogunkan et al., 2025; Alade et al., 2025). This indeed makes Ogbomoso South a case study of the dynamics of urban decay, which is not restricted to metropolises.

Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey research design that involved a mixed methodology of quantitative and qualitative approaches. This design was thought to be most appropriate for the study of socio-economic and environmental aspects of urban decay in a residential context. Based on the aforementioned, two major hypotheses were formulated and tested: (H_1) There is a significant relationship between the socio-economic characteristics of the residents (income and education) and the condition of the housing in the study area, and (H_2) There is a significant relationship between the socio-economic status of the residents and their perception of the infrastructure and environmental condition in the study area.

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The primary data were collected by structured household questionnaires, direct field observation, key informant interviews, and documentation using photographs. Secondary data were obtained from academic journals, Government documents, maps, census data, and literature on urban decay and urbanization available in Nigeria. The structured questionnaire was the main tool used to collect data and was structured into four sections that addressed the socio-economic attributes of the respondents, the type of housing, the perceptions of environmental conditions, and the evaluation of infrastructural facilities. This was complemented by an observation checklist to note the physical status of buildings, roads, drainage facilities, and waste disposal practices; and photographs to document the visual signs of urban decay.

The study population comprised the household heads and household inhabitants of the ten political wards in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area. A multi-stage sampling was used to select a sample of 384 respondents. This included the systematic sampling of all political wards, proportional allocation by political ward based on population distribution, and simple random sampling of households within the selected political wards (see Table 1). One adult household member (typically the head of household) was interviewed in each of the buildings chosen. Descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and means were used to analyze the quantitative data first.

The hypotheses were then tested by inferential statistical techniques. In particular, the Chi-square test was used to explore associations between categorical variables, and Ordinal Logistic Regression Analysis was used as the main method to determine the nature, strength, and statistical significance of the relationships between the socio-economic variables (independent variables) and indicators of urban decay (housing condition and environmental quality; dependent variables). The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to perform all the statistical tests at a 0.05 level of significance. Qualitative data were gathered through field observations and photographs and were analysed thematically to provide context and explain the quantitative data.

Table 1. Questionnaire Administration (Sample Frame)

S/N	Selected Political Wards	Population (NPC, 2006)	Projected pop. to 2026 (2.1% g. r.., World Bank, 2026)	Percentage (%) pop.	No. of Questionnaire per wards
1	Akata	11,373	17,234	11.33	44
2	Alapata	13,842	20,976	13.79	53
3	Arowomole	9,114	13,811	9.08	35
4	Ibapon	18,600	28,186	18.53	71
5	Ijeru I	9,134	13,841	9.1	35
6	Ijeru II	5,470	8,289	5.45	21
7	Ilogbo	7,820	11,850	7.79	30
8	Isoko	7,840	11,880	7.81	30
9	Lagbedu	8,271	12,534	8.24	32
10	Oke-ola	8,914	13,508	8.88	34
Total		**100,379**	**152,109**	**100**	**384**

Source: *NPC, 2006, World Bank, 2024.*

Chi-square Test of Independence

The Chi-square (χ^2) test of independence was used to determine if there is a significant association between two categorical variables. In this study, the Chi-square test was used to examine associations between categorical socio-economic characteristics (e.g., income, education, employment status) and categorical aspects of urban decay (e.g., housing condition, perceptions of infrastructure and environmental conditions).

The formula for the Chi-square test statistic is given by:

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$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{R} \sum_{j=1}^{C} \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}}$$

Where:

- O_{ij} represents the observed frequency in the cell at row $i$and column $j$of the contingency table.
- E_{ij} represents the expected frequency in the cell at row $i$and column $j$of the contingency table.
- R is the number of rows in the contingency table (categories of the first variable).
- C is the number of columns in the contingency table (categories of the second variable).

The expected frequency (E_{ij}) for each cell is calculated as:

$$E_{ij} = \frac{(\text{Row Total}_i) \times (\text{Column Total}_j)}{\text{Grand Total}}$$

Where:

- Row Total$_i$ is the sum of observed frequencies in row i.
- Column Total$_j$ is the sum of observed frequencies in column j.
- Grand Total is the total number of observations.

The degrees of freedom (df) for the Chi-square test of independence are calculated as:

$$\text{df} = (R - 1)(C - 1)$$

Ordinal Logistic Regression Analysis

In this study, Ordinal Logistic Regression Analysis was the primary method to assess the nature, strength, and statistical significance of relationships between socio-economic variables (independent variables) and indicators of urban decay (housing condition and environmental quality, as dependent variables). The model estimates the cumulative probability of an outcome falling into a particular category or below. For an ordinal dependent variable with $k$categories, an ordinal logistic regression model estimates $k - 1$cumulative logits. The general form of the cumulative logit model is:

$$\text{logit}[P(Y \leq j)] = \ln\left(\frac{P(Y \leq j)}{1 - P(Y \leq j)}\right) = \alpha_j - (\beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \cdots + \beta_p X_p)$$

Where:

- Y is the ordinal dependent variable (e.g., housing condition, environmental quality).
- j represents the j-th category of the dependent variable, for $j = 1,2, \ldots, k - 1$.
- $P(Y \leq j)$ is the cumulative probability that the dependent variable Yfalls into category $j$or below.
- α_j are the intercept terms (or cut-points) for each cumulative logit, where $\alpha_1 < \alpha_2 < \cdots < \alpha_{k-1}$. These intercepts vary for each cumulative probability.
- $X_1, X_2, \ldots, X_p$ are the independent variables (e.g., income, education, employment status).
- $\beta_1, \beta_2, \ldots, \beta_p$ are the regression coefficients associated with each independent variable. A key assumption of the proportional odds model is that these coefficients are constant across all cumulative logits.

1. **Results and Discussion**

Socio- Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

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Figures 2 - 7 highlights the socio-economic profile of the respondents, including sex, age, marital status, educational attainment, occupational distribution, and monthly income. The study sets a baseline of vulnerability and capacity of the local population.

Figure 2 below indicates a relatively balanced but male dominated gender distribution amongst the respondents in the sampled households. Most of the respondents (209, 54.43%) were males. One hundred seventeen-five women answered (45.57%). The high proportion of male dominance in response frequency is due to the traditional leadership of the household in the Southwestern Nigeria, but the small statistical difference makes it impossible to rely on the concept of male leadership alone as a basis for urban renewal.

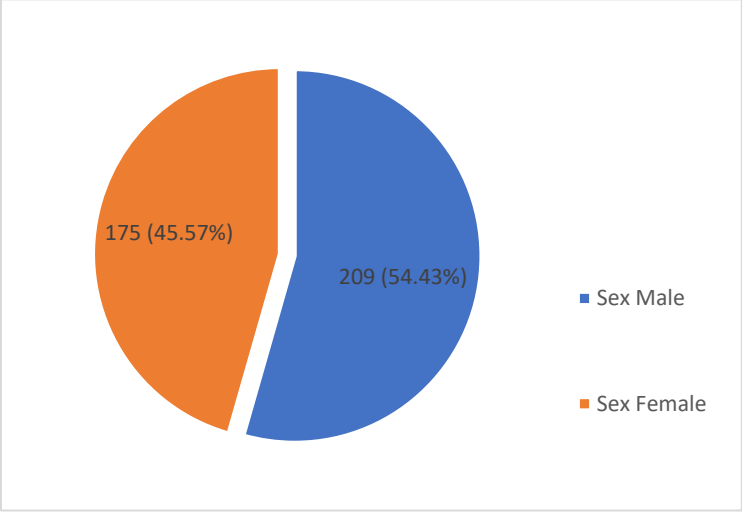


Figure 2. Gender of Respondents
Source. Authors' Work, 2026

The age structure of the respondents (Figure 3 below) indicates a mature and economically active population with a high proportion of middle-aged people. Most of the respondents fall into the age band of 31-45 years accounting for the total of 183 respondents (47.66%) of the sample. The next category is 46-60 years, with 104 persons (27.08%). The elderly population aged 61 year and above is the largest group with 16.93% (65 respondents) while the smallest group is the youth population aged 18-30 years with 8.33% (32 respondents). The age distribution shows that the majority of the respondents are aged between 31 and 60 years (nearly 75%) representing the prime working age group of the Municipality. The study area is over 44% mature and elderly people, creating a stable, but physically and financially vulnerable population that cannot afford to pay for major structural retrofits on ageing buildings. Meanwhile, the lack of young adults (18-30) suggests a brain and youth drain in large cities as the younger population migrates to larger cities for better economic prospects. This out-migration brings with it an older, less economically vibrant population to face an increasingly poor physical environment.

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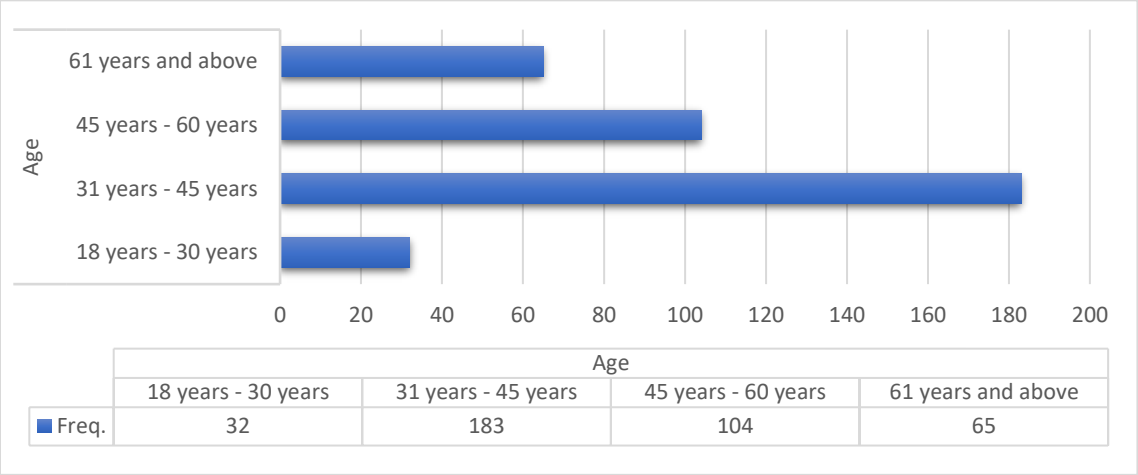


Figure 3. Age of Respondents
Source. Authors' Work, 2026

Figure 4 below shows that the marital status of the respondents is largely married (247) representing 64.32% of the respondents. Single persons with a 20.05% (77 respondents) make up the second largest group. Widowed persons (39 respondents) and divorced persons (21 respondents) form the vulnerable marital groups making 10.16% and 5.47% respectively. Prevalence among married respondents reflects the existence of well-established family units with a high dependency ratio, reducing disposable income in the face of immediate survival needs (food and education) and thus compromising home maintenance and private waste management. Furthermore, 15.63% of the respondents were widowed or divorced, which corresponds to vulnerable single-headed households, particularly elderly widows who are very vulnerable to urban poverty traps. These residents have no funds available for them to repair their crumbling roofs, walls, or drainage and are therefore experiencing a compounded financial burden, and are adding to localized physical blight.

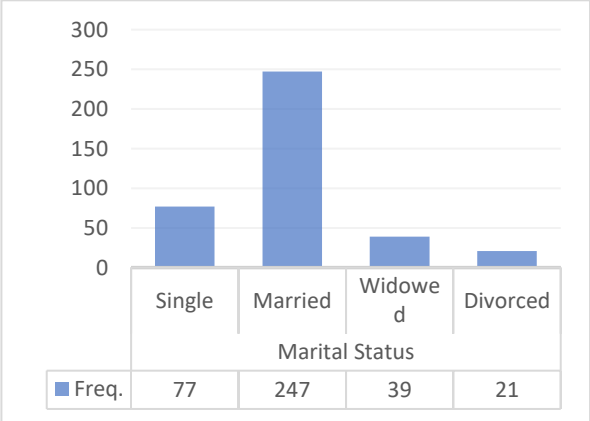


Figure 4. Marital Status of Respondents
Source. Authors' Work, 2026.

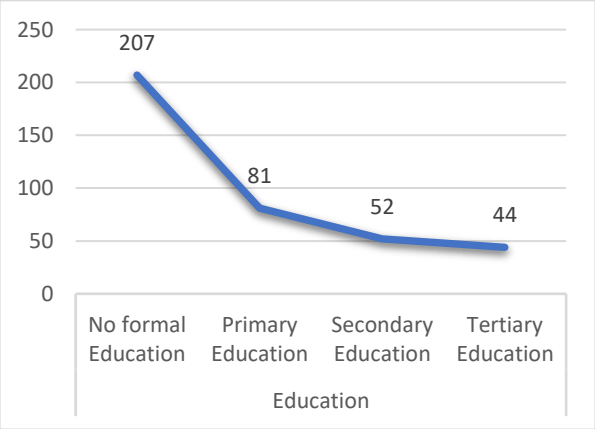


Figure 5. Education of Respondents
Source. Authors' Work, 2026.

The educational profile of the respondents (Figure 6 above) shows that there is a considerable lack of formal schooling in the area of study. A total of 207 persons, or 53.91% of the sample, have no formal education. 21.09% of the respondents (81 individuals) have primary education only, and 13.54% (52 individuals) have secondary education. The smallest share of the sample is tertiary education graduates with 11.46% (44 people). An acute educational shortfall leads to urban decay and environmental degradation in the study area, with exactly three-quarters of the population (75.00%) having only primary education or less.

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The occupational data confirm a highly localized and informal economy. The major occupation in the study area as shown in Figure 6 below, is trading, with 173 respondents accounting for 45.05% of the sample. 24.22% (93 respondents) are artisans such as mechanics, tailors, carpenters and 27.08% (104 respondents) are informal and formal civil servants. Explicit unemployment is low at 3.65% but close to 70% of the population is engaged in the informal trading and artisan sectors hiding high levels of underemployment.

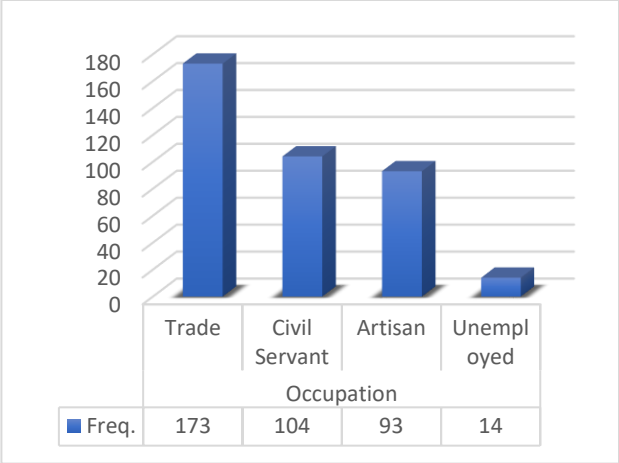


Figure 6. Occupation of Respondents
Source. Authors' Work, 2026.

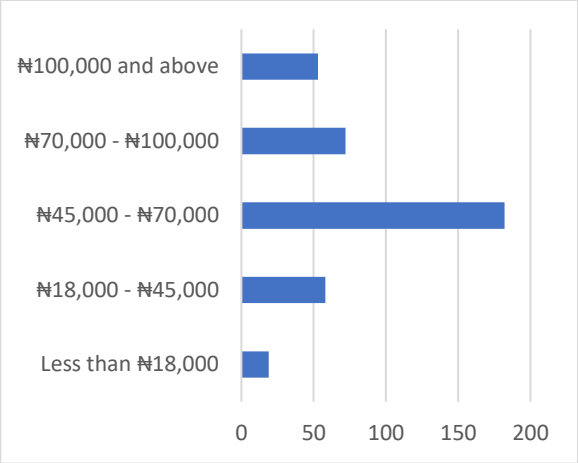


Figure 7. Monthly Income of Respondents
Source. Authors' Work, 2026.

The income distribution of the respondents (Figure 7 above) shows a high level of economic vulnerability and urban poverty. The vast majority of the population lives in low-to-middle income bounds, descriptively. Most of the respondents earn between ₦45,000 and ₦70,000 per month. This represents 47.40% of the sample (182 respondents). 15.10% (58 respondents) earn between ₦18,000 and ₦45,000, while 4.95% (19 respondents) earn below ₦18,000. At the higher end, 18.75% (72 respondents) earn between ₦70,000 and ₦100,000 and only 13.80% (53 respondents) earn ₦100,000 and above. More than 67% of residents earn ₦70,000 or less monthly, with families left with no financial elasticity for capital-intensive property repairs."

Housing Characteristics and Quality

Table 2 shows the results for the structural and physical dimensions of housing in the study area, which is a clear manifestation of the physical aspect of urban decay. The study maps vulnerability of the built environment through key housing indicators such as building type, structural age, physical condition, tenure status, and occupancy density.

The architectural styles (types of building) reflect an area dominated by traditional and high-density housing. The most common typology is the "Brazilian" tenement building, built room-by-room, and it represents 191 units or 49.74% of the sample. The next category is the modern self-contained apartments or flats with 22.14% (85 units) of the total number of buildings. The traditional family compound houses constitute 14.06% (54 units). Other or unclassified buildings constitute 12.24% (47 units), and a small minority of 1.82% (7 units) did not respond.

The chronological profile of the housing stock indicates a very old built environment. The 11–20-year age group has the largest proportion of residential buildings, with 254 buildings or 66.15% of the total sample. Buildings that are less than 10 years old make up 17.45% (67 buildings) of the total, while those that are 21-30 years old make up 10.94% (42 buildings). 2.34% (9 buildings) are over 30 years old, and 3.13% (12 buildings) did not specify age. In the study area, close to 80% of the housing has experienced environmental weathering for more than a decade, leading to the residential core being subjected to structural fatigue under severe tropical conditions.

Table 2: Housing Characteristics and Quality

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage

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Type of Building	Brazilian	191	49.74
	Flats	85	22.14
	Compound	54	14.06
	Others	47	12.24
	No response	7	1.82
	Total		
		384	**100.00**
Age of Building	Below 10 years	67	17.45
	11 - 20 years	254	66.15
	21 - 30 years	42	10.94
	31 years and above	9	2.34
	No response	12	3.13
	Total		
		384	**100.00**
Condition of Building	Structurally Sound	312	81.25
	Dilapidating	67	17.45
	Dilapidated	5	1.30
	Total		
		384	**100.00**
House Ownership	Rented	159	41.41
	Owner-Occupier	172	44.79
	Inherited	47	12.24
	Squatting	6	1.56
	Total		
		384	**100.00**
Household size	1 - 3 people	34	8.85
	4 - 6 people	61	15.89
	7 - 9 people	176	45.83
	More than 9	113	29.43
	Total		
		384	**100.00**

Source. Authors' Work, 2026

The results of the current physical condition of the buildings indicate that most of the buildings are operational, but many of the buildings show obvious signs of structural failure. In particular, a total of 312 buildings (i.e., 81.25% of the sample) are found to be structurally sound. And 17.45% (67 buildings) are in active deterioration and show signs such as cracked walls, leaking roofs, peeling plaster etc. Few but significant 1.30% (5 buildings) are buildings that are in severe disrepair and present an immediate safety hazard. While the buildings are mostly still in good structural condition, an 18.75% disrepair rate is a dangerous tipping point in urban decay.

The level of non-owning tenants and owner-occupiers is quite close in household tenure analysis. The highest number of responses were from owner-occupiers (44.79%, 172) and this was followed closely by formal renters (41.41%, 159). HFP 12.24% (47 respondents) and informal squatting a small 1.56% (6 respondents). Many owner-occupiers, even those who want to, are unable to afford to maintain their homes due to low income. While on the rented property side, landlord/tenant conflicts arise over maintenance fees, on the inherited family home side, the problem is inherited family homes are in a fragmented ownership gridlock.

The data on occupancy density shows a very high issue of extreme overcrowding in the residential study area. Small households (1 to 3 persons) and medium-sized households (4 to 6 persons) make up a small proportion of the respondents (34 persons or 8.85% and 61 persons or 15.89%), respectively. On the

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other hand, the majority group is large families (7 – 9 persons) with 45.83% (176 respondents). Moreover, 113 households (29.43%) have more than 9 persons, reflecting high spatial pressure and the high level of residential congestion (more than 75% of all surveyed households have more than 9 persons).

Infrastructural Facilities and Adequacy

The infrastructural facilities available and in good working condition in the study area is presented in Table 3, which gives a clear picture of the environmental quality and structural deterioration in the neighborhood.

The results indicate a significant deficiency in stormwater and greywater treatment. As many as 60.16% (231 respondents) claim that drainage facilities are absent in their immediate neighborhood, with a mere 39.84% (153 respondents) having access to some form of drainage channel. Among those with drainage, the qualitative ratings are predominantly negative, with 23.18% (89 respondents) rating it as very poor and 33.07% (127 respondents) rating it as poor. The drainage condition is found to be substandard by 56.25% of the community. 22.66% (87 respondents) describe it as average, and the minor fractions describe it as good (8.07%) or very good (13.02%). Tropical storm water runs down unprotected streets because of poor drainage, eroding soil, and weakens the foundations of buildings.

The result also shows almost complete collapse of formal sanitation services of waste management in the study area. A staggering 78.39% of the population (301 respondents) state that they have no access to organized waste management facilities while a small minority of 21.61% (83 respondents) report these services to be available. For quality, more than half of the respondents rate the existing services as poor, with 24.22% (93 respondents) choosing very poor and 26.30% (101 respondents) choosing poor. Meanwhile, 32.29% (124 respondents) of the respondents rate the services as average, while only 8.33% (32 respondents) and 8.85% (34 respondents) rate the services as good and very good, respectively. With no municipal waste collection, nearly 80% of this densely populated area has no choice but to dump, burn, or clog waterways with garbage.

Table 3: Infrastructural Facilities and Adequacy

Facility	Availability				Condition									
	Yes		No		Very Poor		Poor		Average		Good		Very Good	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Drainage	153	39.84	231	60.16	89	23.18	127	33.1	87	22.66	31	8.07	50	13.02
Waste Management	83	21.61	301	78.39	93	24.22	101	26.3	124	32.29	32	8.33	34	8.85
Water Supply	297	77.34	87	22.66	35	9.11	21	5.5	83	21.61	152	39.58	93	24.22
Electricity Supply	312	81.25	72	18.75	51	13.28	77	20.1	183	47.66	47	12.24	26	6.77
Road	129	33.59	255	66.41	79	20.57	92	24.0	129	33.59	61	15.89	23	5.99
Recreation Facility	72	18.75	312	81.25	147	38.28	71	18.5	97	25.26	63	16.41	6	1.56
Open Space	33	8.59	351	91.41	197	51.30	84	21.9	57	14.84	33	8.59	13	3.39

Source. Authors' Work, 2026

The result indicates that water infrastructure exists, yet most of the services are not always of good quality. Most (77.34% = 297 respondents) reported that they have a water supply (either private hand-dug wells or boreholes or public water points) and 22.66% (87 respondents) reported they have none. The quality of the water infrastructure is relatively positive: 39.58% (152 respondents) said their water supply was good and 24.22% (93 respondents) said it was very good. This means 63.80% of the community has a favorable view of their access to water. In contrast, 21.61% (83 respondents) rate it as average, 5.47% (21 respondents) as poor and 9.11% (35 respondents) as very poor. There is no centralized municipal tap

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network, only private wells and boreholes tapping localized groundwater.

The results also reveal that out of all the infrastructure options highlighted, the physical coverage of electricity is best. 81.25% of the respondents (312 respondents) reported that they are connected to the power grid, and 18.75% (72 respondents) reported that they are not connected. But the rating of this service is primarily average: nearly half of the sample (183 or 47.66%) rated the power supply as average only. This is in contrast to 20.05% (77 respondents) who gave it a rating of poor and 13.28% (51 respondents) who gave it a rating of very poor. This means that a combined 33.33% suffer from unreliable service. Just 12.24% (47 respondents) and 6.77% (26 respondents) give their power supply a rating of good or very good.

The local transport system is found to be under high physical stress by analysing the network. The respondents who reported that there are no functional motorable roads in their vicinity was 66.41% (255) and the respondents who reported that they have functional motorable road was 33.59% (129). The qualitative status of the roads varies with 20.57% (79 respondents) of the roads rated as very poor, 23.96% (92 respondents) as poor, and 33.59% (129 respondents) as average. At the other end of the spectrum, 15.89% (61 respondents) and 5.99% (23 respondents) consider the road infrastructure to be good and very good, respectively. The poorly networked roads in the study area are eroded and unpaved, affecting commercial transport operators, causing high cost of transportation and separating certain parts of Ogbomoso South from economic opportunities offered by the municipality.

The result further validates the nearly nonexistence of social infrastructure in the study area. Of these, 81.25% (312 respondents) report that there are no recreational facilities in their neighborhoods at all, and a small 18.75% (72 respondents) say that there are recreational facilities in their neighborhoods. Quality is rated poorly by the few with access. 38.28% (147 respondents) rate the condition as very poor, and 18.49% (71 respondents) as poor. The combined percentage of those who view these spaces negatively is 56.77%. 25.26% (97 respondents) rate these spaces as average, 16.41% (63 respondents) as good, and a tiny 1.56% (6 respondents) as very good. The complete absence of recreational facilities is evidence that the municipal zoning codes have completely ignored the social and public health needs of the residents.

The result also indicates that the environment is highly congested with very little undeveloped land left. The majority of the respondents (351 respondents or 91.41%) reported that there are no open spaces in their neighborhoods, whereas only 33 respondents or 8.59% stated that there is open land. Of those that report any open spaces, over 70 percent rate the state of those spaces as poor, with 51.30 percent (197 respondents) rating them as very poor and 21.88 percent (84 respondents) rating them as poor. Meanwhile, 14.84% (57 respondents) rated them average, 8.59% (33 respondents) good, and 3.39% (13 respondents) very good.

Environmental Conditions

Table 4 shows the operating conditions and environmental management practices in the study area, and shows the ecological stress and social stability of the neighborhood. The study tracks the behavioral and situational metrics such as how residents dispose of waste, how often water is scarce, and how many road surfaces are paved, as well as local crime patterns, to map how residents interact with their immediate environment. This data set provides information on the predominant survival strategy and physical conditions at each of the sampled units. It shows how the lack of institutional support in the city enables people to adopt unsustainable environmental practices which lead to the deterioration of their neighborhoods, while at the same time the community keeps a strong social fabric.

The outcome shows that domestic waste management behaviour is highly related to informal localized disposal practices because there is no centralized municipal service. Open-air burning is the most common method and the method most used by more than half of the population, that is, 223 households or 58.07% of the sample. 63 households (16.41%) dispose their refuse at neighbourhood dumpsite, 57 households (14.84%) dump their refuse in open space. The formal waste management options are very limited, with the government waste collectors operating in a small proportion of 4.69% (18 households) and private waste collectors operating in 1.04% (4 households).1.82 % (7 households) use scavengers who collect their wastes, and 3.13 % (12 households) depend on other means.

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Table 4: Environmental Conditions

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Method of Waste Disposal	Burning	223	58.07
	Dumpsite	63	16.41
	Scavengers	7	1.82
	Private Waste Collector	4	1.04
	Government Waste Collector	18	4.69
	Open Space	57	14.84
	Other	12	3.13
	Total	**384**	**100.00**
Water Scarcity	Yes	67	17.45
	No	317	82.55
	Total	**384**	**100.00**
Road Condition	Tarred	138	35.94
	Untarred	246	64.06
	Total	**384**	**100.00**
Crime Rate	Non-existent	181	47.14
	Ocassional	192	50.00
	Rampant	11	2.86
	Total	**384**	**100.00**

Source. Authors' Work, 2026

The results indicate that a large majority of the population has relatively stable access to water resources. Most of the respondents (317, 82.55%) do not face systemic water scarcity, while a small share (67 respondents, 17.45%) reported that water scarcity is a constant problem in their households. This indicates that most of the year, water availability is stable without centralized municipal infrastructure. The result also confirms that the study area is dominated by unpaved roads. 64.06% of the respondents (246) marked unpaved roads in the immediate access road network, while nearly 2/3 of the internal transport network was also marked as unpaved. On the other hand, 35.94 per cent of the sample (138 people) reside on a paved/tarred road. It means that there is a huge lack of lasting municipal road infrastructure throughout the study area. Paved roads are not as prevalent in the neighbourhoods as they are in other areas of the city, and a major driver of physical neighbourhood decay is the prevalence of unpaved roads (64.06%). During the rainy season, unpaved earthen roads become eroded by the heavy rains and are used by a large number of pedestrians, leading to the formation of deep potholes, heavy ruts and water-logged areas.

Table 4 demonstrates that there is a relatively stable and secure social environment within the study area. Happening occasionally is the characterization of local crime with half of the respondents (50.00% or 192 individuals) giving this answer, and an additional 47.14% (181 individuals) giving a totally non-existent answer for local crime in their residential zones. By comparison, relatively few people (2.86% or 11) see crime as a serious problem in their community in general. The study area, blighted and in disarray, defies traditional urban theory by having high levels of social cohesion and low crime rates.

Relationship Between Education, Income, and Housing Condition

It is clear from Table 5 below that as levels of education go up, the percentage of respondents with 'Sound' housing conditions increases and the percentage with 'Dilapidated' or 'Dilapidating' conditions decreases. For example, 75.73% of people with 'No formal' education live in 'Sound' housing compared to 100% of people with 'Tertiary' education. On the other hand, 22.82% of 'No formal' education are living in 'Dilapidating' housing while 0% of 'Tertiary' education are living in 'Dilapidating' housing.

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Table 5: Relationship Between Education, Income, and Housing Condition

Education vs. Housing Condition			
Education	**Dilapidated**	**Dilapidating**	**Sound**
No formal	3	47	156
Primary	2	17	68
Secondary	0	3	42
Tertiary	0	0	46
Total		384	

Income vs. Housing Condition			
Income	**Dilapidated**	**Dilapidating**	**Sound**
<18k	1	7	6
18k-45k	1	21	48
45k-70k	3	32	140
70k-100k	0	5	58
>100k	0	2	60
Total		384	

Source. Authors' Work, 2026

This is also the case for income, as can be seen in Table 5, with the higher income groups reporting a higher level of 'Sound' housing. For instance, 42.86% of those with incomes less than 18k live in 'Sound' housing while 96.77% of those with incomes exceeding 100k do so. In contrast, the rate of 'Dilapidating' housing is the lowest at 50.00% in lowest income and raises to 3.23% in highest income. This indicates that there is a strong positive relation between income level and housing quality.

Table 6: Chi-square Test Results

Relationship	Chi-square Statistic	p-value	Degrees of Freedom (df)
Education vs. Housing Condition	20.2044	0.0025	6
Income vs. Housing Condition	37.5845	9E-06	8

Note: A p-value less than 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship.
Source. Authors' Work, 2026

For Education vs. Housing Condition, the Chi-square value is $\chi^2(6) = 20.2044$, and the p-value is 0.0025. The p-value (0.0025) is less than the conventional 0.05, therefore, the null hypothesis of independence is rejected. These suggest that there is a statistically significant relationship between education level and housing condition. This is confirmed by the descriptive analysis (Table 6) where a higher level of education is associated with more 'Sound' housing and a lower level of education is more likely to be found in 'Dilapidating' or 'Dilapidated' housing. Likewise, the Chi-square test statistic for Income vs. Housing Condition was $\chi^2(8) = 37.5845$, p-value = 9E-06 (or 0.000009). The very small p-value indicates that there is likely a strong association between income and condition of the home. As in the descriptive results (Table 6), it is clear that those in the higher income brackets are significantly more likely to live in 'sound' housing, while those in the lower income brackets are significantly underrepresented in this type of housing.

Socio-economic Factors and Environmental Conditions

Table 7 synthesizes the results from both the Chi-square tests of independence and the logistic regression analyses, providing a concise overview of the relationships between socio-economic factors and various environmental and infrastructure conditions in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.

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Table 7. **Socio-economic Factors and Environmental Conditions**

Relationship	Chi-square Statistic	Chi-square p-value	Chi-square Significance (0.05)	Logistic Regression Coefficient	Logistic Regression p-value	Odds Ratio (Logistic Regression)
Income vs. Access to Formal Waste Management	19.2119	0.0007	Significant	0.5309	0	1.7005
Educational Level vs. Waste Disposal Behavior	118.296	0	Significant	1.1867	0	3.2764
Occupational Sector vs. Drainage Availability	27.1278	0	Significant	0.5326	0	1.7033
Income vs. Access Road Condition	42.3649	0	Significant	0.6964	0	2.0064

Source. Authors' Work, 2026

The significant result of $p < 0.05$ indicates that there is a statistically significant association between the two categorical variables. In the context of logistic regression, this means that a positive coefficient means that the log-odds of the dependent or outcome variable increase with increasing independent variable, socioeconomic predictor. The directional effect is confirmed by the logistic regression p-value, which is below 0.05, showing a significant coefficient. Finally, the practical significance of this relationship is expressed by the Odds Ratio, which is the ratio between the odds of the outcome occurring and an increase of one unit on the independent variable and the odds of the outcome occurring and an increase of one unit on the independent variable not occurring: For example, an Odds Ratio of 1.7005 means that a one-unit increase in the independent variable corresponds to a 70.05% increase in the odds of the outcome occurring.

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study have shown that urban decay is a complex socio-political and physical process in the secondary city context of Ogbomoso South. The demographic profile shows that the heads of household are concentrated at the lower end of the socio-economic spectrum, less educated, and engaged in the informal sector with a very limited budget. Such constraints affect their ability to invest in property maintenance. This is in line with the results obtained by Kasim et al. (2025), which stated that socioeconomic status is a direct influence on the environmental conditions of housing in the traditional cities of the south-western part of Nigeria. Lack of youth engagement also indicates a tremendous brain drain, as the community lacks its most important demographic group to lead the local revitalization.

High-density "Brazilian" typologies are even more dominated, with 49.74%, and physical blight is exacerbated by the aging of buildings. This is consistent with the findings of Donget et al. (2023) that demonstrate the structural fatigue of traditional core residential zones and that they are not protected in modern planning. High occupancy rates of over 75% of the households with 7 or more people, as reported here, placed serious strains on shared resources. This fits with Vallebueno and Lee's (2023) theory of "habitability," which suggests that when building management breaks down, so does the environment.

This study has pointed out some of the infrastructural problems, such as the deficiency of drainage and organized waste management indicating a critical shortfall of public investment. The findings are consistent with the observation of Olajide and Lawanson (2022) regarding the emergence of the neoliberal city in Nigeria, where the mid-sized cities are no longer prioritized, and only the primary megacities like Lagos are considered. This means that secondary municipalities are left to deal with crumbling infrastructure on their own. This has resulted in extreme environmental practices such as open-air burning (58.07%) and open space dumping which pose a great health risk to the public. This is in line with Jagun et al. (2023) studies that associated low levels of formal education and financial vulnerability to hazardous waste self-disposal in developing countries. Crucially, tests of inference showed a strong

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two-way relationship between socioeconomic status and neighborhood quality.

The results of the chi-square and regression models indicate a significant association between income, education, housing conditions and access to basic services. This results in a spatial poverty trap as described by Adams (2024), where external investment is deterred by property depreciation and middle-class flight. This leaves low-income people in poor areas. But this is very unusual when compared to the urban deficit theories. This social resilience demonstrates that there are separate social buffers present in secondary cities that can provide the basis for participatory urban renewal. It validates the need for integrated solutions to urban decay in these areas that address both physical and economic dimensions.

Conclusion

This study evaluated the socioeconomic and environmental dimensions of urban decay across residential neighborhoods in Ogbomoso South Local Government Area, Nigeria. The results indicate that there is a widespread problem of physical blight, which is reflected in the old 'Brazilian' tenement buildings, high levels of overcrowding, and structural decay. Lack of public infrastructure, including almost no waste management, drainage, or paved access roads, exacerbates this decay. All these deficiencies compel citizens to engage in unsustainable practices such as open-air burning. The results indicated that the urban decay in medium-sized Nigerian cities is due to physical decay and systemic inadequacies in investments in public infrastructure.

The empirical analysis also shows that neighborhood deterioration is linked to neighborhood socioeconomic status. The results of inferential modeling showed a direct relationship between income and formal education, with housing conditions and infrastructure. This puts low-income households in a vicious cycle of living in sub-standard conditions. But the study also shows that even when the community is very physically degraded, the social cohesion and crime rate remain high. This is evidence that the problem of secondary city decline is not only spatial, but also institutional and economic, and can be overcome by tapping into the trust of local communities.

Accordingly, it argues that the government should provide more targeted public financing for medium-sized cities by providing urban renewal grants and low-interest-rate credit for property repairs. Secondly, municipal wastes need to be collected, and paved drainage channels need to be expanded to prevent environmental degradation and damage to building foundations. Third, local governments need to create participatory and community-based land-use management systems that harness social cohesion to manage land infrastructure and reduce neighborhood conflicts. Finally, Nigeria needs collaborative planning models that unite government, academia, and local communities to scale up these upgrades and achieve long-term community resilience across the nation's secondary cities.

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