

An Overview of Proximity to Graveyards and Residential Property Rental Values in Bauchi State

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Abstract

The study was aimed at examining the influence of proximity to graveyard on rental values of residential properties in Bauchi metropolis with a view to enhancing the quality of urban life of tenants. To achieve this, the study identified rental values of residential properties in the study area. The study also assessed tenants' satisfaction with the neighborhood and tenants' willingness to stay in the neighborhood. The study used a quantitative research approach. The study collected data from 231 respondents through questionnaire administration. A simple random sampling technique was employed. The data were analyzed using frequency distribution tables, percentages, mean ranking and simple linear regression.. The study outcome indicated that tenants are satisfied with worship centers and amount paid as rent. Tenants are however dissatisfied with activities that take place around the cemeteries. The study through a simple linear regression analysis revealed that there is no strong relationship between proximity to cemetery and rental values of residential properties in the study area. By implication, proximity to cemetery is not a predictor of rental values in the study area. The study recommended constant supply of neighborhood amenities like electricity and water in the study area to improve rental values and enhance the quality of urban life of tenants.

Keywords: Cemetery, Graveyard, Property Value, Rental Values, Residential Property,

Introduction

Land uses such as heavy industries, cemeteries in addition to contagious diseases hospitals are believed to be situated at the urban fringe given that they are non-complementary to other type of land uses like residential, recreational and commercial. Such uses equally pose social, economic, environmental as well as sanitary problems to users (Verhoef & Nijkamp, 2002). In the world over, the existence of a cemetery in a neighborhood is viewed as influencing residential property values in two forms (Larsen & Coleman, 2010). In one way, closeness to cemetery is perceived as a positive externality particularly in places or areas where there is scarceness of open space (Anderson & West, 2006). From this

view point, cemeteries serve as a place to jog, walk and exercise. It equally serves as a place to carry out extra-curricular or outdoor activities. Furthermore, cemetery equally can function as a gathering place for various activities that require open space (Cathcart, 2008; Duerton, 2002). A quite typical example is Hollywood CA as it is non-profit group that sponsored screenings of a good number of the mid-century American movies at the flourishing and luxuriant ground of the Hollywood Forever Cemetery.

On the contrary, the presence of a graveyard in a neighborhood poses a severe pollution threat far-flung beyond imagination (Zhang, 2004). Existing burial grounds contaminate and pollute underground water resource; the nature of contamination differs substantially from pollution originating from conventional waste disposal. Badly maintained cemeteries or churchyards contaminate the neighboring ground water posing or causing serious health challenges to those who use or come into contact with the impure or contaminated water (Spongberg & Becks, 2000). Vezzani (2007) discovered that mosquitoes are mainly the most medically significant insect vectors of disease. A conclusion and inference were drawn that memorial parks are an excellent breeding ground for mosquitoes owing to the presence of water-filled containers, shelter and in some cases grass. There are other indicators which could be psychosomatic in nature; they could be considered as intangible attributes as they affect rental values of nearby residential properties. Such factors are not restricted to fear, superstition and insecurity. The view of a grave being dug or an internment and incarceration service can put a discouragement on a party being held in custody at a dwelling with a cemetery view. To some people, the view or staring of a cemetery or of tombstones may be upsetting. For others, knowing that the graveyard or necropolis is close may perhaps be disconcerting and disturbing. The aforementioned indicators are capable of decreasing rental values of neighboring residential properties.

According to Capels and Senville (2006), the existence of a memorial park or tomb in a neighborhood reminds inhabitants of their mortality. Its presence also increases noise pollution, traffic overcrowding, depriving most residents or dwellers of their privacy and similarly decreasing property values. Larsen and Coleman (2010), in their study, reiterated further that land use zoning policy ensures that cemeteries are located at the urban fringe; developers of residential properties in cemetery neighborhoods ensure they leave a buffer zone; and the residential properties in close proximity to cemetery are of low quality. The

implication and insinuation of these revelations is that cemetery and graveyard presence in a neighborhood is quite a negative externality.

The general state and condition of cemeteries in Nigeria is not the similar with those of cemeteries designated in other places. Cemeteries in Nigeria do not carry an exceptional design as obtained in other countries such as USA, Britain and China. It might be as a result of the belief or notion that once a person leaves this world, it would eventually be an issue between him and God. Therefore, it does not matter to the living. It could also be due to poor maintenance attitude or culture which eventually hampers the maintenance and management of those resting places or burial grounds. Whatsoever the case may be, cemeteries in developed and advanced nations are quite far better compare to those of developing or third world countries. This implies that their chances of affecting and influencing property values positively are higher compare to those of underdeveloped or developing countries like Nigeria.

In spite of this, the rate at which residential properties are being developed in cemetery neighborhoods in Bauchi metropolis is increasing every day and this is contrary to idyllic situation. The developed residential properties are not unoccupied; some of the dwelling occupants are not the actual owners of the properties but just tenants who are paying rent. Ascertaining the rental values of residential houses in the graveyard neighborhoods is very essential as it will go a long way in unraveling the mystery and justification behind the incursion of people into such stigmatized neighborhoods. An improved standard of living as well as the efficiency or effectiveness of the socio-economic undertakings of any particular society hinges on the availability and conditions of infrastructural facilities (Adebayo, 2006; Babarinde, 1998)

A quite recent development and happenings experienced in the study area is that residential property development is witnessing a remarkable and new dimension in the cemetery neighborhoods. This, however, is not quite far from the above assertion. A good number of residential properties situated at strategic locations shares fence with the cemeteries in many places. This indicates that the housing accommodations are much closed to such cemeteries. A sizeable number of the residential properties are being occupied by tenants who pay rent as earlier mentioned. The lingering question begging for answers is: does proximity to a cemetery affect rental values of abutting residential properties as well as the quality of urban life of such tenants?

The study in perspective only covers Bauchi metropolis for the reason that there are numerous cemeteries scattered and spread all over the metropolitan city. Some of these permanent resting places are quite in close proximity to residential properties. Furthermore, the study focused only on residential properties that are within the distance range of 10m to 200m away from the studied cemetery. This was actually adopted from Sivakumar and Vidhya (2015) empirical study. The aim of this study, therefore, is to examine the effect of proximity to cemetery on rental values of adjoining residential properties in Bauchi metropolis with a view to enhancing the quality of urban life of tenants in the study area.

Research Gap Identification

It is worthy of noting that scholars are quite relentless in their effort to conduct research on various attributes as well as indicators that affect residential property values. Larsen and Coleman (2010) conducted an empirical study on cemetery proximity and single-family residential house price in Greene County of Ohio state in the USA. Their study adopted quantitative survey and eventually collected data on sales transactions for residential houses in close proximity to four different cemeteries. The results of the study established that two of the cemeteries in perspective had no significant effect on single-house price within the vicinity of the area. Whereas the house prices of the other two residential apartments in close proximity to the graveyard had fallen and decreased in value due to the presence of the burial ground. Similarly, Akinbogun (2015) carried out an empirical study on modeling residential tenants' choices with a grave as a negative externality in Akure, Nigeria. The study employed quantitative and qualitative surveys as a methodology. The outcome of the study indicated that the rental value of residential properties close to a graveyard decreased by 15% to 20%. In the same vein, Chin, Chau and Nug (2004) examined the effect of burial ground view on close by house prices in Malaysia. The study findings indicated that graveyard view is a penalty throughout property boom periods.

The above review of past empirical studies established the fact that there has been a great deal of researches on an assortment of externalities that influence rental values of nearby residential properties. However, the aforementioned studies had some discrepancies in one way or the other. For instance, Akinbogun (2015) who examined graveyard as a negative externality when ascribing rental value to a property had failed to capture other variables like neighbourhood facilities availability and tenant satisfaction which are capable of affecting rental values.

Despite that, considering just a neighbourhood where there are cemeteries may perhaps not produce a convincing result without taking into account of other indicators of real estate prices. As for Larsen and Coleman (2010), their study was conducted in USA which is a country in a different continent and equally more advanced than Nigeria. Consequently, it is quite difficult to generalize their findings. Another setback to the study was that the authors exclusively focused on capital values at the detriment of rental values. The other studies too have limitations ranging from employment of few samples, wrong analytical tools to lack of clarity.

Therefore, none of the above mentioned studies has been able to examine and investigate the influence of proximity to cemetery on rental values of adjoining residential properties with particular emphasis to tenant satisfaction with the neighbourhood as well as their willingness to stay in the neighbourhood. Also, the focal point of most of the studies was capital values and not rental values. Finally, a study of this nature, in its entire ramification, has never been conducted in Bauchi metropolis. It is against this back-drop that the study deems it necessary to examine the influence of proximity to cemetery on rental values of residential properties in Bauchi metropolis. The research questions that this study seeks to answer are: To what extent do the tenants become satisfied with proximity to cemetery in the study area? Are tenants willing to stay in close proximity to cemetery in the study area? What is the effect of cemetery on rental values of adjoining residential properties in the study area?

Empirical Review of Previous Studies

Location and Residential Property Values

As far as the built or housing industry is concerned, a number of scholars had attempted on various occasions to evaluate, assess, ascertain and appraise the effect of location attribute on the values of residential properties. Few of such distinguished and prominent scholars in this area of study comprise of Aluko (2011). His empirical study was focused and centered on the effect of location and neighbourhood characteristics on residential housing prices in Lagos metropolis, Nigeria. His empirical study was aimed at examining and ascertaining the virtual role of residential house location in addition to neighborhood attributes on house prices.

Data for the study were further collected from both primary as well as secondary sources. The study area was subdivided into eight strata based on the sixteen local

government areas of Lagos state. The target population stood at 135,820 residential households. A total of 1,500 questionnaire copies were administered to the respondents using systematic and simple random sampling techniques. Descriptive in addition to inferential statistics were incorporated to interpret and analyze the study data. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and multiple regression models were employed to test the variations and changes in the values of properties at various residential locations in the study neighborhood. Property value determinants such as location attribute, neighborhood amenities and structural attributes were further used as the independent variables, while house prices as dependent variable.

The outcome of their study showed that the entire study variables have a quite significant variation. The findings further revealed that there is a spatial variation effect of location and neighborhood attributes on residential house prices. Their analysis also indicated that when small number of geographical housing units is considered, then invariably, location and neighborhood characteristics are more significant on house price formation compare to large ones. There is no explicit justification for the sample size of their study and this is capable of questioning the reliability of the result.

Kiel and Zabel (2008) equally carried out a quite related study on the impact of location on house prices. They used hedonic pricing model to design the concept of 3L, meaning location, location, and location. The results of their findings equally concurred with that of Aluko (2011) which established that different geographical locations have changeable significant impact on house prices. Their study further revealed that the main concern of people is on location and neighborhood variables when it comes to determining housing prices. Anthony (2012) examined the effect of residential location on real estate prices. The study used Artificial Neural Network model (ANN) to establish an association between the variables. Their study further investigated and evaluated the extent or degree to which location attributes as well as environmental factors influences house sale prices. The study considered a population sample of 1,442 of residential houses in the city of Valencia in Spain. Forty three 43 variables from both the internal and external features of the houses were equally analyzed. The outcome of the study findings, not surprisingly, indicated that residential location has an over bearing influence on residential house prices.

Ivy and Ernest (2013) also estimated the effect of location on house value in their study. Their main focus was on the impact of location attribute and structural elements or components of residential housing on rental values of adjoining dwelling properties in Accra metropolitan area of Ghana. Data collection approach was based on building components, such as: number of bedrooms and availability of facilities as well as amenities within the dwellings across the three different residential locations in the study area. The residential locations include: East Legion, Osu and Chorko. The residential neighborhoods were picked from the low density, medium density to high density residential areas respectively. This was done based on residential zone classification by Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). A sample size of 100 households was selected for the study from the three locations earlier mentioned.

The data were collected by means of administering questionnaire to the tenants who are occupying the rental apartments. Direct observations as well as personal interview in the selected areas were equally done with the ultimate aim of validating the screened data. Two-way contingency table was further used to analyze the relationship between the variables considered pertinent for the study. The study equally adopted analysis of variance (ANOVA) as an analytical tool or technique to assess and estimate whether there is a significant mean rental differences across the three locations. Pearson's 'R' correlation coefficient and Chi-square value was computed to test the significance of the association or relationship among the variables. Furthermore, Cramer's V was used to verify and confirm the strength of the association. The results from the findings of the study revealed that the influence of location on residential property values is quite statistically significant.

The result further indicated a significant influence of dwelling features and attributes like number of bedrooms, availability of facilities (bathroom along with toilets) as well as availability and presence of amenities (electricity in addition to water supply) on rental values of residential houses. The above mentioned studies focused on the influence of location on residential housing prices. None of the studies attempted to examine location in the light of non-conforming land uses such as cemeteries, dump sites, landfills, among others. These unexplored factors equally constitute intangible attributes that affect property value. Based on this affirmation, the results of the findings of such previous studies cannot be 100% reliable.

Proximity to Graveyard/Cemetery and Residential Property Values

There is paucity and scarcity of literature on studies concerning effect of cemeteries on rental values of neighbouring residential properties. Akingobun (2015) in his study on modelling residential tenants' preference with a graveyard as a negative externality in Akure found that greater part of the tenants would guard their social welfare by willingness to pay (WTP) 10% higher than the open market value of a property devoid of a graveyard. Parameter estimates discovered that preference or predilection varies with particular reference to different locations of a burial ground or graveyard within a residential neighbourhood. The above mentioned study adopted choice modelling to elicit or educe responses from various respondents.

The model's distribution of keenness or willingness to pay (WTP) estimates established that a residential property with a graveyard close by would lose between 15% and 20% of its rental value. The study was, however, limited to the impact of a graveyard on rental values. Therefore, the above findings of the study cannot be compared to that of cemetery as it is more advanced in its entire ramifications. To some people, occupying a property with a grave is not an issue particularly if such a grave is carrying an excellent architectural design. The generalization of the findings is an issue particularly in a society where it is understood and believed that the dead cannot exist or live in isolation from the living.

This study shall, therefore, beam its search light on the positive or negative effect of cemeteries as a whole on rental values of adjoining house prices. This is more revealing and quite significant than examining only a grave. This study adopted simple linear regression analysis which considers various attributes that give rise to property values. Another study conducted by Nita et al (2013) on land use consequences of evolution of cemeteries in the Bucharest metropolitan area of Romania. The study used the 1975 edition of the cadastral plans which has an average resolution of 0.5m. The study further employed the 2008 edition of aerial images which has an average resolution of 0.5m. The distance between each one cemetery and Bucharest was estimated in meters.

They were measured by external margin of the cemetery to the Bucharest administrative limit. To extract data concerning residential areas adjoining cemeteries, a polygon just about the edge of cemeteries was then constructed with 50m buffer distance (that is, safety area for cemeteries after the Ministry of Health

in 1997). From the resultant buffer, by means of polygon in polygon analysis, divergent categories of land use in the area were eventually extracted: economic activities, residential surfaces, forestry and aquatic surfaces. The outcome of the study showed that the expansion of cemeteries has produced sensitive consequences for environmental quality, most especially in certain areas near the Bucharest city. Consequently, land conversion of other uses to cemeteries owing to their extension or else new establishments was approximately 116.57 ha, more often than not from agricultural land with medium as well as high productivity.

Cemeteries, which previously represented an exurban and suburban land use in Bucharest metropolitan area, have eventually become an internal land use in various settlements. This pattern is a characteristic of mainly localities with a considerable increase in scattered and speckled built-up areas. In a similar study conducted by Ivy and Ernest (2013), it was discovered that the unplanned and spontaneous expansion of built-up areas has eventually dissolved the safety distances noticeable between peripheral land uses and residential to other sensitive or insightful land uses. According to their empirical study, the expansion and spreading-out of cemeteries has created sensitive consequences for environmental quality as well. The consequences have not been evidently mentioned and this posed is a serious puzzle for readers. To resolve this puzzle, it is very important that this existing study establishes its findings explicitly without omitting anything and should equally be presented in an unambiguous form.

Graveyard View, Death-Related Facilities and House Price

Chin et al. (2004), in their study in Malaysia, proved that graveyard view is a penalty or punishment on nearby amenities. However, their results indicated it was more glaring during boom period compares to normal or else slump period. The study measured two sets of single family-house transaction records. The justification was to eventually make a comparative analysis of the changes or variation in weigh down carried by different attributes prior and subsequent to the Asian financial crisis.

The initial or first record was based on the year 1996 event, while the other was based on the year 1998. Their findings revealed that the penalty conceded by graveyard view is 7.8% more in 1996 compares to 1998. The implication of the study result is that graveyard view is quite unwanted and undesirable by people in Malaysia prior to the outbreak of Asian financial crisis. Another study by Ho (1999) and Tse and Love (2000) on the effect of graveyard view on property

values in Hong Kong confirmed and validated the findings of Chin et al. (2004). The study uncovered that graveyard view generates penalty to house prices. The two studies further established that graveyard view is a negative neighborhood externality. Furthermore, the results of their hedonic model revealed that graveyard view equally produced a negative effect on residential house price.

It has been established from the previous studies that graveyard view is considered as an unattractive, unpleasant or unappealing view and is eventually unwelcome or undesirable by the majority of Chinese (Yeun, 2005). They, therefore, hardly come to terms with this sort of view from their place of residence. The word “death” is an outrage abomination to most Chinese people. All obtainable means is exhausted by them just to have nothing to do with the word “death” in their daily life. They keep away from touching it, staring at it and even discussing it in everyday life. The broad-spectrum belief, particularly during Lunar New Year is that uttering the word “death” is capable of bringing bad fortune for the entire year.

In Hong Kong alone, all careers that have connection to death (for instance, working in the cemetery or funeral ground) are unwelcome and undesirable by most of Chinese. Highly knowledgeable people and clergy men repudiate to enter such careers. Based on the edifying effect as mentioned earlier, Chinese people do not want to have a touch on anything related to “death”. For instance, the number “four” sounds similar to “death” in Chinese pronunciation or accent.

A person can easily observe and notice that floor level connected with “four” is completely shunned away in many recently constructed residential buildings in Hong Kong. It is for the reason that developers understand and are fully aware that the number “four” generates penalty to the residential house price. It was, therefore, rejected by a good number of Hong Kong people. Consequently, the negative effect of graveyard view on adjoining real estate prices in Chinese society becomes greater compared to other nationalities.

Rodin and Salvoy (1989) asserted that health and illness can basically be regarded as physical matters. On the other hand, it is generally assumed that behavioral science contributes robustly to an understanding of physical health as well as illness. Hence, one can categorically state that graveyard view may perhaps not affect individual’s physical health straightforwardly. On the other hand, it may perhaps affect them psychologically in the first instance, and

eventually injure their physical health subsequently. The terrible feeling when they are viewing or facing the grave is a psychosomatic effect that more often than not evokes naturally as well as simultaneously.

In a nutshell, a Chinese man feels uncomfortable and sorrowful when staring at a grave. If the effect is severe, it would eventually affect their psychological health and subsequently their physical health. Zooming or narrowing down to the Nigeria context, particularly in cities where cemeteries are located in close proximity to residential properties, people do occupy such properties and equally go about their daily normal business. Does this contention mean that Nigerians unlike their Chinese counterpart consider death as a fate that awaits humankind? Does this assertion pointed out that people have no problem with living in close proximity to a cemetery that houses the dead?

The findings of this present study would answer this question as well. This study shall be considering the effect of cemeteries on the rental values at varying distances which was not captured in the above mentioned studies. In line with the above findings, Lee & Ho (1999) conducted an empirical study in Taipei to ascertain the attitudes in the direction of some of the undesirable facilities, such as crematories, funeral parlors and cemeteries. Their findings were in line with the aforementioned studies as there is significant relationship between cemetery and house price.

Chen (2002) and Liao (2005) had conducted empirical studies on how Chinese people attempted to abstain from living in the neighbourhood of death-related facilities. The authors established that dwellings in close proximity to funeral parlours, crematories, and cemeteries generate horrific fortune. The study results revealed that cemeteries ought to have a negative effect on in close proximity to residential property values. In view of the fact that only few studies have been conducted in this regard, it is difficult to take a stand. This calls for further investigation to ascertain the actual association between the variables.

Guttman et al. (2012) examined the effect of environmental shock or distress from newly established crematory operations on neighboring residential property values in Rawlins and Wyoming in the United States respectively. The studies employed Hedonic Pricing Model (HPM) to analyze a set of data. These data include: neighborhood attributes, sales prices, location attributes, structural characteristics, distances from the crematorium and the atmospheric emissions

from the crematorium. The outcome of the studies indicated that nearness to the crematorium estimated in both direction and distance has statistically significant decrease in property value. A loss of between 0.3 and 3.6 per cent of average sale price was observed for every one-tenth mile closer to the crematory.

Correspondingly, Simon et al. (2001) investigated the effect of environmental impact of oil pipeline split or rupture on residential house price in Maryland. Data were obtained from sales transaction of 2,300 single-family houses previous to and subsequent to the spill. The outcome indicated a willingness to pay (WTP) 10% less than the open market value of uninfluenced property located or situated in the interior of the oil community. Furthermore, for residential property situated at the waterfront, a sharp decrease in the sale value was experienced; however, there were no sufficient sales data to the statistical significance at 90% confidence level as a matter of fact.

Proximity to Churches and Residential House Prices

There are quite few empirical studies on the influence of Churches on rental values of residential properties. Iroham and Oloyede (2010) as cited by Usman and Wan Zahari (2016) conducted an empirical study on the influence of neighborhood churches on residential house prices in Ota of Ogun State in Nigeria. The living faith church which is among the largest Pentecostal churches in the world over was considered as the study area. The data used for the study were the sales transactions of residential houses surrounded in the area before as well as after the construction of the church. The study employed descriptive statistics in analyzing the data obtained for the study.

The study, therefore, conducted a comparative analysis on the sales prices of residential houses abutting the Church vicinity, before and after its establishment. The study findings revealed that presence of the Church in the neighborhood had a significant influence on surrounding residential houses. The most excellent analytical tool for a study of this nature is inferential statistics. These analytical tools include hedonic pricing model which is tested to be the most effective way of analyzing data of this kind. The house is being considered as a bundle of goods and services that are termed as housing attributes. The attributes would eventually be regressed with distance from the dependent variable. Also the study failed to explain in simple terms the various housing attributes that constitute house prices. This renders the validity of the result questionable.

In the same way, Babawale and Adewunmi (2011) carried out an empirical study on the effect of neighborhood Churches on residential property values in selected adjoining areas of Lagos metropolitan city. The study, eventually, considered a sample of three denominational Churches situated in different areas of Lagos. The hedonic pricing model which is the most suitable and well acceptable tool for establishing an association between independent and dependent variable was employed and operationalized through regression analysis. The three denominational churches sampled for the study comprised of: the Mountain of Fire and Miracle Ministry in Onike, Deeper Life Bible Church in Gada and the Christian Pentecostal Mission in Ajao Estate. In each of the study area in question, distance from Church premises was further divided into three zones: A, B and C with a distance of 50 meters, 100 meters and 150 meters respectively.

In each of the zones under consideration, questionnaires were administered to 50 heads of households. Purposive sampling technique was adopted in view of the fact that only occupiers of apartment flats, with house rent contracted within the last two (2) years prior to the time of the survey, were the target study respondents. Consequently, a total of 450 questionnaire copies were, therefore, administered to all the nine (9) zones. The outcome of the study indicated that the presence of big Churches in the midst of nearby residential neighborhoods has a negative influence on house prices.

The study, conversely, reported that with the presence of very sophisticated positive externalities abutting the big Churches, the negative influence posed by the existence of big Churches on house prices in many residential neighborhoods may be neutralized. The study, thus, needs more to be desired given that the number of denominational Churches in Lagos, which is a cosmopolitan city, is much. Churches are being viewed as religious properties which are a special property just like cemeteries. This study would adopt a number of the approaches mentioned in the above studies, using a different dimension anyway.

Ho (1999) conducted an empirical study on the effect of Church view on surrounding residential property prices in Hong Kong. Owing to the nature of property development in Hong Kong, high premium is being placed on view. The scarcity of land in the study area has prompted vertical property development rather than horizontal development as the latter takes place where there is vast land. Consequently, most of the existing buildings in the city are high-rise developments and this, eventually, places high premium on pleasant view. The

data for the study were obtained from transaction records of Tsing Yi Garden which is a residential estate. The data were obtained from the period between 1991 and 2004. A total of 1, 502 property transaction records across the selected samples was considered for the study. The Tsing Yi Garden has actually three types of view, namely; Church view, building view and open view. Their study further adopted hedonic pricing model to analyze the data obtained.

The study, therefore, focused on the Church view. The study outcomes, eventually, revealed that Church view has a significant positive impact on the value of close by residential properties. The implication of this finding is that residential properties, with a Church view, command higher value compared to those that are lacking such a view. Their findings further revealed that people are willing to pay more premiums for the mere fact of enjoyment of a Church view. Therefore, the neighborhood Churches are not a nuisance that decrease residential property values but to a certain extent increase such values in Hong Kong.

A Church view that is having either a positive or negative impact on the value of adjoining residential properties depends entire on location as well as perception of the dwelling people. Given that in Hong Kong alone, a Church is having a positive effect, this might perhaps not be the case in other world metropolitan cities. For that reason, the result of their study cannot be generalized. The worth or values of the neighboring residential properties cannot be the same at different and varying distances. This has not been considered in their study. Therefore, it would have been appropriate if cemetery view and not just church view had been considered in the analysis of the result. The study shall, therefore, bridge this unfilled gap left by the aforementioned study.

Theoretical Underpinning

It is worthy to note that Lancaster's (1966) theory of consumer's demand forms the theoretical foundation for this study. The author documented composite goods whose utilities and satisfaction are not just based on the goods themselves but rather the personal "characteristics" of such goods, that is, its composite attributes. Hence, the consumers make their purchasing decision in terms of the number of goods, their characteristics as well as per unit cost of each characteristic. A typical illustration is when people make preference of a car; they would think about the different attributes of the car, such as enhanced safety, fast acceleration, increased prestige and attractive styling. The above theory would fit this study. This is because rental values of residential properties are ascertained

not merely by the housing unit itself. But rather, it is being determined by other attributes such as location, infrastructural facilities and satisfaction level with the neighborhood characteristics.

History has it that Lancaster was the pioneer scholar to examine hedonic utility; however, he did not mention anything concerning pricing models. Rosen (1974) was the earliest to present a theory of hedonic pricing. Rosen's argument and analysis was that an item can be valued or priced by its features and characteristics; it follows that, an item's total price can be well thought-out as a summation of price of individual homogeneous attributes. Furthermore, each attribute has a distinctive implicit price or worth in an equilibrium market. This means that an item's price or worth can be regressed on the characteristics to measure and determine the manner in which each characteristic exclusively contributes to the overall or general composite unit price. The theory can fit into this study in that rental values of residential properties are calculated with particular emphasis to certain attributes which collectively and together constitute such values.

Methodology

Research Design and Approach

The study employed exploratory/descriptive design. As asserted by Polit, Beck and Hungler (2001), exploratory design is employed when a new research area is being investigated or else when little is known concerning an area of interest. It is incorporated to investigate detailed account of a phenomenon and other issues connected to it. Therefore, it is employed when there is a small number of or no earlier studies to refer to or rely upon in order to predict an outcome. Hence, the design suits and fits this current study in the sense that only little is known regarding what is being researched in the study area.

The study, equally, applied quantitative approach which is most suitable and appropriate for survey research within the purview of data analysis. Non-experimental (Survey) strategy was also used given that the study incorporated field survey in order to gather quantitative data. Sequence of questions is being posed to the sampled respondents; the responses gotten from the respondents are then summarized in percentages, frequency distribution tables and some relevant statistical tools such as correlation and regression analyses.

Research Reasoning

The study employed deductive reasoning. This reasoning works from general principles to more specific. It is occasionally called a “top-bottom” approach way of thinking. It uses arguments or opinions based on laws, rules as well as accepted principles. This kind of reasoning applies general theories, postulations and principles to arrive at a specific conclusion and inference. The deductive reasoning had been incorporated in this study in that the Lancaster’s (1966) theory of consumer’s demand was adopted.

Population and Sampling

The target populations for this study were the tenants occupying residential properties in close proximity to the identified cemeteries given that they are in a better position to elicit the correct responses for a good analysis. The sample frame that forms the entire population for this study was six hundred and fifty (650) rented residential properties in the study area. They are equally within a given distance range from 10m to 200m away from the cemetery. The sample frame was arrived at through a house to house identification during preliminary survey in 2020.

The sample size for the study was two hundred and forty two (242) residential properties situated within the vicinity of the cemeteries in the study area. This was equally based on Bartlett et al. (2001) table for determining sample size of a finite population. Simple random sampling technique was used for the study. In this case, residential properties that are in close proximity to the identified three cemeteries (that is, Fadaman Mada, Yelwa and Jahun) were selected. They were all within the adopted distance range between 10m and 200m.

Instrument of Data Collection

The data were collected through questionnaire administration. The questionnaire copies were administered to respondents in the study area. The respondents eventually filled in and returned back the questionnaires for analysis. The research questionnaire was based on a five-point likert scale of “Very satisfied, Satisfied, Undecided, Dissatisfied, and Very dissatisfied”. Different items were listed for respondents to rate how satisfied they are with them.

In order to achieve the aim set out for this study, data were collected from respondents by means of a structured questionnaire which was administered to them. The data were collected between the month of June and July 2020. The

questionnaire copies were administered to respondents (tenants occupying residential properties) in the study area by the researcher himself and other three field assistants. The breakdown of how the questionnaire copies were administered and retrieved is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Analysis of Questionnaire Administered and Retrieved

S/No	Questionnaire	Number	Percentage
1	Administered	300	100
2	Retrieved (response rate)	258	86.0
3	Not retrieved	42	14.0
4	Valid	231	77.0
5	Invalid	27	9.0

Source: Field Survey (2020)

The number of questionnaire copies that were administered to the respondents was quite above the sample size. The sample size arrived at for this study was two hundred and forty two (242) residential properties located within the vicinity of the study area. In order to take into consideration of eventualities like incomplete and non-responses, three hundred (300) questionnaires were then administered to the respondents. Two hundred and fifty eight (258) questionnaires which certainly represent the response rate of 86% were returned or retrieved for analysis.

Forty two (42) questionnaires were, however, not returned. This, therefore, constitutes 14% of the total number shared. The non-return of some of the questionnaire copies would be attributable suspicious nature of some of the respondents as they look at the research as a way of getting information from them and eventually the information would be used for tax collection. It would equally be attributable to the ignorance nature of some of the respondents that instead of exposing their ignorance, they prefer not returning the filled questionnaire

This kind of response rate is inevitable in survey research. This is because most people are adamant and obstinate when it comes to eliciting responses to a questionnaire. This manner prevails in the midst of some people whether educated

or else uneducated; as such it was not unexpected that twenty seven (27) questionnaires for the duration of sorting were found to be invalid. Some were not even completed, while others were not correctly filled in. This, therefore, represents 9% of the total number of questionnaires administered. Hence, valid questionnaires stood at two hundred and thirty one (231), representing 77% of the total number of questionnaires administered.

Reliability Test Results

The internal consistency of the constructs was tested by means of the Cronbach’s Alpha. Cronbach’s Alpha reliability coefficient usually ranges between 0 and 1. Moreover, George and Mallery (2003) formulated the following rules of thumb; $\alpha \geq .9$ -Excellent, $\alpha \geq .8$ - Good, $\alpha \geq .7$ - Acceptable, $\alpha \geq .6$ - Questionable, $\alpha \geq .5$ - Poor, $\alpha < .5$ - Unacceptable. The reliability result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Result of Reliability Test of Constructs (Pilot Study)

S/No	Construct	Cronbach’s Alpha	Remark
1	Satisfaction	.811	Good
2	Willingness	.873	Good
3	Proximity	.782	Acceptable

Source: Authors (2020)

The entire three (3) constructs were eventually subjected to internal consistency test by means of Cronbach’s Alpha (α). The results produced were as shown in table 1 above. Proximity produced an acceptable α of .782. Furthermore, satisfaction and willingness produced a good α of .811 and .873 respectively. The results of the pilot study, therefore, revealed that the entire constructs under consideration were reliable.

The reliability could perhaps be in view of the fact that the instrument was subjected for vetting and correction by the thesis supervisors as well as other specialists, experts and scholars that are within and outside the department. Notwithstanding the result of the reliability test, the pilot study, however, underwent certain challenges which comprise: suspicious from the respondents, language barrier, confidentiality issue, non-availability of respondents at the time of visits and others. Nevertheless, the aforementioned challenges were well and fully addressed in the main analysis of the retrieved data.

Normality Test

According to Pallant (2011), descriptive statistics provide information concerning the distribution of scores on continuous variables (skewness and kurtosis). This information becomes necessary if these variables are to be used in parametric statistical techniques such as correlation, regression, and analysis of variance (ANOVA) among others. The test was necessary for this study since one of the research questions involves regression analysis.

To use parametric statistical techniques for analysis, the underlying assumption is that the distribution of the data set must be normal. It must not skew too much to the right or left and must be mesokurtic (normal distribution without much peakedness or flatness). To comply with this assumption, the study conducted the test and the result produced an acceptable range (-006 to -1.598). Details can be found in Table 3 below.

Table 4: Normality of the Data

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
IF1	231	3.36	1.222	-.341	.160	-1.029	.319
IF2	231	3.27	1.225	-.240	.160	-1.077	.319
IF3	231	3.16	1.199	-.365	.160	-.874	.319
IF4	231	2.70	1.144	.193	.160	-.925	.319
IF5	231	3.29	.981	-.628	.160	-.103	.319
IF6	231	4.16	1.021	-1.596	.160	1.356	.319
IF7	231	2.33	1.118	.311	.160	-1.122	.319
IF8	231	2.29	1.223	.514	.160	-.927	.319
TS1	231	3.33	1.250	-.451	.160	-.995	.319
TS2	231	3.23	1.259	-.287	.160	-1.100	.319
TS3	231	3.03	1.053	-.445	.160	-.625	.319
TS4	231	2.75	1.118	.189	.160	-.843	.319
TS5	231	3.14	.893	-.571	.160	.171	.319
TS6	231	3.11	.778	.137	.160	1.413	.319
TS7	231	4.21	.934	-1.598	.160	1.875	.319
TS8	231	2.64	1.122	-.084	.160	-.845	.319
TS9	231	2.67	1.117	.149	.160	-.720	.319
TS10	231	2.61	1.200	.280	.160	-.845	.319
TS11	231	2.15	1.163	.647	.160	-.650	.319
TW1	231	3.69	1.137	-.849	.160	-.114	.319
TW2	231	3.71	.981	-.615	.160	-.050	.319
TW3	231	3.78	1.125	-.747	.160	-.340	.319
TW4	231	3.88	1.101	-.922	.160	-.006	.319
TW5	231	3.06	1.292	-.049	.160	-1.046	.319
TW6	231	3.63	1.107	-.850	.160	.010	.319
TW7	231	3.76	1.245	-.990	.160	.040	.319
PC1	231	2.90	1.176	.122	.160	-.835	.319
PC2	231	2.66	.978	.394	.160	-.521	.319
PC3	231	3.08	1.222	.130	.160	-1.020	.319
PC4	231	2.68	1.060	.172	.160	-.676	.319
PC5	231	2.79	.983	.400	.160	-.195	.319
PC6	231	2.54	.963	.354	.160	-.019	.319

PC7	231	2.61	1.082	.482	.160	-.328	.319
PC8	231	2.44	.998	.586	.160	.161	.319
PC9	231	2.29	1.034	.360	.160	-.724	.319
PC10	231	3.38	1.238	-.401	.160	-.905	.319
Valid N (listwise)	231						

Data Analysis Technique

Data concerning tenants' satisfaction with cemetery neighborhood in the study area were presented and analyzed by means of mean ranking in addition to standard deviation. Research data on tenants' willingness to stay in close proximity to cemetery in the study area were equally analyzed using mean ranking in addition to standard deviation as a matter of fact.

Furthermore, data on the influence of proximity to cemetery on rental values of adjoining residential properties in the study area were analyzed using simple linear regression. Simple linear regression is used when examining the relationship between a quantitative outcome variable (dependent variable) and a single explanatory variable (independent variable) as asserted by Pallant (2011). Therefore, proximity to cemetery was used as the independent variable and rental values as the dependent variable in the regression analysis.

Results and Discussions

Tenants' Satisfaction with Cemetery Neighbourhood

Mean ranking scale was used for analysing information on whether the respondents are contented and comfortable with living in a neighbourhood that is in close proximity to graveyard. The results are as presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Tenants’ Satisfaction with Cemetery Neighbourhood

Tenant’s Satisfaction with Neighborhood Externalities	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Worship centers	4.21	.934	1 st
Electricity supply from public main	3.33	1.250	2 nd
Water supply from public main	3.23	1.259	3 rd
Neighbourhood schools	3.14	.893	4 th
Amount paid as rent	3.11	.778	5 th
Access roads	3.03	1.053	6 th
Shopping centers	2.75	1.118	7 th
Nuisance caused by visitors	2.67	1.117	8 th
Recreational facilities	2.64	1.122	9 th
Activities around the cemetery	2.61	1.200	10 th
Neighbourhood crime	2.15	1.163	11 th

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Going by the result in Table 4 above, worship centers have a mean value of 4.21 which is the 1st in the mean ranking; this reveals that tenants are quite satisfied with it. Tenants were equally satisfied with electricity supply as it occupies 2nd position with a mean value of 3.33. Water supply was ranked 3rd with a mean value of 3.23. This further indicated that tenants were satisfied with it. It can be deduced from the finding of this study that tenants were satisfied with the neighborhood schools. This is with a mean value of 3.14 and is equally the 4th in the ranking. Moreover, amount paid as rent was ranked 5th with a mean value of 3.11. This indicates that tenants are well satisfied with it.

The dwelling tenants were equally satisfied and comfortable with the existing access roads which have a mean value of 3.03 and also occupied 6th position in ranking. The tenants, however, were dissatisfied with the following: Shopping centers was ranked high as it occupies the 7th position with a mean value of 2.75. Furthermore, nuisance caused by visitors occupies the 8th position with a mean value of 2.67. The tenants were equally not satisfied with recreational facilities as it has a mean value of 2.64. It was equally ranked in the 9th position. Activities around the cemetery had a mean value of 2.61 which is the 10th position in the ranking. Finally, neighborhood crime occupies 11th position with a mean value of 2.15. The tenants were equally dissatisfied with it. It can, therefore, be inferred

that there are some pockets of criminal activities taking place within and around the concerned neighbourhoods.

Tenants' Willingness to Stay in Close Proximity to Cemetery

The data concerning tenants' willingness to stay in close proximity to a cemetery were equally analyzed by means of descriptive statistics (mean ranking). The result of the analysis was presented in Table 5 below.

Table 4: Tenants' Willingness to Stay in Close Proximity to Cemetery

Willingness	Mean	Std. Deviation	Rank
Develop acquired land	3.88	1.101	1 st
Acquire land	3.78	1.125	2 nd
Render community service	3.76	1.245	3 rd
Recommend the neighborhood for others	3.71	.981	4 th
Stay longer	3.69	1.137	5 th
Invite relatives and friends	3.63	1.107	6 th
Move out and Relocate Somewhere	3.06	1.292	7 th

Source: Field Survey (2020)

Based on the findings in Table 5 above, willingness to develop acquired land in the neighborhood was ranked 1st in position, given that it has a mean value of 3.88. This is followed by willingness to acquire land in the neighborhood as it was ranked 2nd in position owing to the fact that it has a mean value of 3.78. Furthermore, willingness to render community service was ranked 3rd as it has a mean value of 3.76.

Moreover willingness to recommend the neighborhood for others ranked 4th as it has a mean value of 3.7. Furthermore, willingness to stay longer assumes the 5th position with a mean value of 3.69. Additionally, willingness to invite relatives and friends occupies the 6th position in the mean ranking, due to the fact that it has a mean value of 3.63. Finally, willingness to move out of the neighborhood has the least mean value of 3.06 and, therefore, it was ranked 7th.

Effect of Cemetery on Rental Values of Adjoining Residential Properties

In order to answer the third research question, a simple linear regression was adopted to examine the influence of the independent variable (proximity to

cemetery) on the dependent variable (rental values). The result is presented in Tables 6 and 7 below.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.072 ^a	.005	.001	.783

a. Predictors: (Constant)

b. Dependent Variable

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.736	1	.736	1.201	.274 ^b
	Residual	140.415	229	.613		
	Total	141.152	230			

a. Dependent Variable: Rental Value

B. Predictors: (Constant), Proximity

Table 6 above displays information about how the two variables (proximity to cemetery and rental values) relate to each other. The above model is made up of the predictor variable (proximity to cemetery) which is being employed to predict the outcome variable (rental values). The value in the R column represents the correlation between the two variables. In this case, it is being depicted as $R=0.072$. This indicates that there is no strong relationship and association between the two variables.

In the same vein, R^2 indicates the proportion of variation in the outcome variable (rental values) that can be explained by the predictor or explanatory variable (proximity to cemetery). Furthermore, $R^2=0.005$ which indicates the variance in the data that can be explained by the variable proximity to cemetery is not significant statistically.

In Table 7 above, analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test if proximity to cemetery as a predictor variable is a significant predictor of the outcome variable (rental values). As the significance value is more than $p = 0.05$, it is obvious to say that the regression model does not significantly predicts rental values. The

result indicated that proximity to cemetery is not a significant predictor of rental values in the study area as shown in the model below.

$F(1,229) = 1.201, P > 0.05$

Discussion of Results

Research Question 1: To what Extent do the Tenants become Satisfied with Proximity to Cemetery in the Study Area?

The first research question sought to assess how satisfied tenants, who stay in close proximity to cemetery, are with the neighborhood. The result in Table 4 revealed that tenants were satisfied with worship center which was ranked highest in the mean ranking. The reason is quite understandable and apparent; Nigerians being a religious people do not play with the establishment of worship centers. If one navigates the nook and cranny of Nigeria, he will realize that even in places where other infrastructural facilities are not available, edifice are being constructed to serve as worship centers. Additionally, tenants were equally satisfied with electricity supply from the public main as it was ranked 2nd. Preliminary investigation revealed that the supply was not steady but it is a bit better than what was obtainable in the past.

Tenants were also satisfied and comfortable with water supply on the account that apart from the public main, there are other alternative sources of what supply such as privately owned boreholes and wells. Schools proliferate and abound in the neighborhood. The tenants disclosed that they are quite satisfied with them. As a matter of fact, the quest and pursuit for formal education in Nigeria can never be overstressed. The resultant effect of this is manifested and evident in the establishment of more schools on a daily basis.

The established schools do not lack population for the mere reason of daily enrolment. However, the quality of such neighborhood schools was not ascertained and assessed as it is outside the coverage and scope of this study. Moreover, tenants were equally satisfied with the amount paid as the rents charged are quite moderate: not too high and not too low. The study area has a good quality road network; as such, the study findings revealed that tenants were quite satisfied with the access roads in the neighborhood. However, maintenance activities in some of the minor streets need to be worked on.

The findings further revealed that tenants were dissatisfied with shopping centers in the neighborhoods for the mere fact that rather than big shopping malls, what

was obtainable are more often than not provision stores which cannot house and serve all the shopping needs of the populace. In view of the fact that shopping malls, supermarkets, shoprites and the likes are mostly found in the main markets in the study area and to some extent away from the cemetery neighborhoods, money is spent on transportation whenever there is need for a big shopping. The nuisance normally caused by those who visit cemetery affects tenants, particularly those who live very close to the cemeteries. As a result, they expressed dissatisfaction with it.

Tenants were equally dissatisfied with the recreational facilities, activities that take place within and around the cemeteries as well as neighborhood crime. This is very apparent as it is easier said than done for humans to come to terms with the veracity and reality of death. Therefore, the findings of this study corroborated with the work of Chin *et al.* (2004) as it revealed that graveyard view is a penalty and thereby affect rental and capital values of residential properties negatively. The current study established that occupiers of residential properties were not comfortable with various activities that take place within and around the cemetery particularly burial as well as memorial services. The noise made by wailers and sympathizers and the grave digging which is sighted by those living very close to the cemetery all make them very uncomfortable.

The findings of this study validate and confirm the work of Olujimi (2010) who conducted a study on housing satisfaction in low cost residential areas. The study revealed that factors influencing the level of satisfaction on housing need are neighborhood facilities and the neighborhood itself. These facilities include: playgrounds, public transport, and multipurpose hall. Others are parking areas, safety as well as facilities for the disabled. When these facilities are not put in place, there is lack of satisfaction on the part of the residents. The current study revealed that tenants were not satisfied with the recreational facilities and this in congruence with Olujimi's (2010) empirical study.

Research Question 2: Are Tenants Willing to Stay in Close Proximity to Cemetery in the Study Area?

This research question sought to ascertain the willingness of tenants to stay in close proximity to a cemetery. Based on the result presented in Tale 5, willingness to develop acquired land was ranked first in the mean ranking. The implication is that those who are landholders in the neighborhood are willing and keen to carry out development on such lands. This could perhaps be due to the daily increase in

the housing demand of people. Willingness to acquire land was ranked second in the mean ranking.

It is, therefore, the dream, yearning, aspiration and desire of a good number of people to become landholders and property owners. This is essential as it uplifts individual's prestige and status in the society as buttressed by Udechukwu (2006). Furthermore, in most communities in Africa, one's position influence, affluence and power is being determined by the number of land and landed properties he owns. The abovementioned or aforesaid reasons might perhaps be the justifications why residents of the neighborhoods are willing to such acquire land.

Moreover, the willingness to render community service was ranked third in the mean ranking. This connotes that quite a number of the study respondents had lived in the neighborhood for a longer period of time. This equally signifies that they are willing to embark on any community service which can eventually bring about development in the neighborhood. Tenants were also willing to recommend the neighborhood for others to stay longer, to invite relatives and friends into the neighborhood. Despite this, some tenants were, however, willing to move out of the neighborhood and relocate somewhere if opportunity comes. This is not surprising as some people find it hard to come to terms with the veracity of death.

The findings of this study refute and challenge the work of Akinbogun (2015) who conducted a study on modelling residential tenant's choice and preference with a grave as a negative externality in Akure. His findings revealed that greater part of the tenants would protect and shield their social welfare by willingness to pay (WTP) 10% above the open market value of a property devoid of a grave. This denotes that the tenants were not willing to stay close to a graveyard. In the current study, the tenants were willing to live in the cemetery neighborhood and even invite or encourage others to join them as well. This may perhaps be due to the different cultural along with religious orientations. It might equally be due to the presence of infrastructural facilities in the neighborhoods.

Research Question 3: What is the Effect of Cemetery on Rental Values of Adjoining Residential Properties in the Study Area?

The aim of the study was to examine the influence of proximity to cemetery on rental values of residential properties in the study area with a view to enhancing the quality of urban life of tenants in the study area. To achieve this, a simple linear regression analysis was conducted. The findings were presented in Tables 6 and 7. Furthermore, the value in the R column represents the correlation between

the two variables (proximity to cemetery and rental values). $R=0.072$ indicates that there is no strong relationship between the two variables (proximity to cemetery along with rental values). Moreover, R^2 indicates the proportion of variation in the outcome variable (rental values) that can be explained by the predictor or explanatory variable (proximity to cemetery).

$R^2=0.005$ which indicates the variance in the data that can be explained by the variable proximity to cemetery was not significant statistically. The implication of the result is that proximity to cemetery is not a significant predictor of rental values in the study area. This finding confirmed the work of Lee (2010) who assessed the influence of proximity to leisure and sport facilities on residential house prices in Taiwan. His findings revealed that no strong relationship exists between leisure and sport facilities proximity and house prices. The outcome of the study equally validated the work of Larsen and Coleman (2010) to some extent and, however, different and distinctive in another perspective.

Their study was on proximity to cemetery and single-house prices in USA. Four different cemeteries were considered. Two of the cemeteries had no effect on single-house prices, whereas the other two cemeteries affected single-house prices negatively. ANOVA was used to test if proximity to cemetery as a predictor variable is a significant predictor of the outcome variable (rental value). As the significance value was more than $p = 0.05$, it was obvious to report that the regression model does not significantly predict rental values.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In its quest to examine the effect of proximity to cemetery on rental values of adjoining residential properties, the study data were analyzed by means of mean ranking, standard deviation and simple linear regression analysis. The results indicated that residents are comfortable and satisfied with the cemetery neighborhood. The respondents equally disclosed that they are willing to stay in the neighborhood amidst the cemetery as indicated by the majority of the dwellers with the exception of few. The regression result revealed thus, $R=0.072$. This indicated that there is no strong relationship between proximity to cemetery along with rental values of nearby residential properties in the study area. Furthermore, $R^2 =0.005$ indicated the variance in the data that can be explained by the variable. Consequently, proximity to cemetery was not quite significant statistically. What this implies is that proximity to cemetery is not a predictor of rental values in the study area.

In conclusion, proximity to cemetery has no significant influence on rental values of surrounding residential properties in the study area. By implication, it can be deduced that proximity to cemetery is not a predictor of rental values of neighboring residential properties in the study area. In view of the fact that there is availability of neighborhood utilities, facilities and services in the study area, the negative influence of proximity to cemetery as was shown in previous literatures is neutralized. Despite the fact that the outcome of the study established no strong relationship and association between proximity to cemetery and rental values of close by residential apartments, some of the activities that take place within and around the cemetery were frowned at by residents living in such neighborhoods. The perimeter fence of cemeteries in the study area should be of reasonable height just like those of stadia. This would prevent and hinder the inhabitants from directly catching sight of activities that take place there.

In spite of the fact that proximity to cemetery has no strong influence on rental values of adjoining residential properties in the study area, a buffer zone of at least 200m should always be created between cemeteries and residential properties/ This would go a long way in avoiding underground water pollution and other negative effects which take a longer time to manifest. Cemeteries house the dead and therefore should be given face lift through good maintenance practice in the study area and other similar neighborhoods.

Future Research Opportunities

It is worthy to mention that this area of study cannot just be exhausted in a scurry. As such, the following areas of research could perhaps still be explored further. These unexplored areas include

- i. The influence of proximity to cemetery on capital values of adjoining residential properties in Bauchi metropolis and beyond.
- ii. The impact of proximity to cemetery on the quality of urban life of residents.
- iii. The effect of proximity to cemetery on rental and capital values of other property types such as, commercial, industrial and agricultural properties.
- iv. The current study could equally be replicated in some parts of Nigeria, other than Bauchi metropolis, to ascertain the reliability of the results obtained.

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