

Riskscapes and Sexscapes: the Socio-Spatial Dialectics of Brothels in Ogbomoso, Nigeria

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Abstract

The state of anomie in cities has induced several sociological problems that are place and space specific. Against this background, the study assesses the socio-environmental effects of brothels in Ogbomoso, Nigeria. The study identifies the social and environmental characteristics of brothels, evaluate the behavioral attitudes of residents in the selected neighborhoods including morals, culture, norms, values, etc, and assess relationships between existence of brothels and the moral/ behavioral attitudes of residents in their neighborhood. Both the primary and secondary data were used. A structured questionnaire was administered to 67 respondents, pro-rata at the ratio of 17:17:33, in the three zones at each of the seven brothel areas. The study thus used a multi-stage sampling procedure. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Chi-square and ANOVA were used to explain the difference in the characteristics of resident between and among the zones on the one hand and among the brothel areas on the other. Linear regression analysis was used to explain the relationship between environmental characteristics and social behavior of the residents. The study observed that there is a reliable relationship ($R = .973$) between the location of brothels and socially unacceptable behavior among residents. This observation do not differ significantly among the brothel areas but among the zones; indicating the distances from brothels. The study thus recommends an aggressive planning that incorporates sociological considerations in the ordering of the use of land.

Keywords: Riskscapes, Sexscapes, Brothels, Environmental Characteristics, Social Behavior

Background to the Study

The urbanization borne anomie and anonymity in cities, magnified by the socio-cultural pluralism; that has triggered monumental backlog in acceptable social living in the cities begs serious attention. The sociological impairment in our urban centers has been linked with neighborhood characteristics and spatial differentiation (Henry L. Tischler, 1990, Akers *et al*, 2011). Elements of the built environment can create conditions for either positive or negative social determinant of living. One of such conditions is brothel. The superlative cohesion of denser urban areas is indicative of a higher influence of brothels on its host community. At no other time in history has incest, child sexual abuse been more publicly reviled, creating moral panics (Cohen, 1973 pp9) fuelled by both media and political attention, creating a perception in society that sexual predators are everywhere and that children are no longer safe (Hayes, 2012). For real physical and psychological safety in residential areas, attention needs being given to the issue of brothels.

Neighborhoods have been found to be important for fostering social networks that can influence behavioral attitude and norms, a place where the process of adaptation of an individual into an environment takes place (Mead, 1972, Morello, 2001). This establishes that a neighborhood transcends a physical unit to include a socio-cultural economic and religious environment built into a physical space (Akinlaye, 1996). Most scholarly work on the environment emphasizes on the physical features while over simplifying its other aspects. The preponderance of socially unacceptable land uses like brothels is an evidence of inadequacies in city ordering. Brothel presence alone is a despicable advertisement for sex. Such advertisement has been recorded to liberalize the meaning of sex, compelling many to use sexual advent as a recreational pastime (Carpenter and Hayes, 2012). Values of morality are fast disappearing, shifting and changing every passing year. The massive social change should be blamed on a composite of factors all of which relates to one or other aspects of the environment

Cities have grown without guide (Obateru, 2003). Unguided cities have created '*riskscapes*'. The term '*riskscapes*' have been applied to high risk, low income geographic settings that have a disproportionate burden of inequitable planning, zoning, neighbourhood stressors, unhealthy land uses and limited access to health promoting resources (Morello, 2001). Distressed neighbourhoods or *riskscapes* are typically characterized by physical negativities and incivilities including vandalism, prostitution, drug trafficking, and other gang related activities (Cubbins *et al* 2005), early sexual initiation, multiple sex partnership, unwanted pregnancies, abortion

and high mortality (Akers *et al*, 2011). Such places are usually not well lit, not very accessible, etc, and they are the most convenient place for miscreants and crime perpetrators. They also cause nuisance to the neighborhood inhabiting it, such as noise pollution and drug trafficking. The preponderance of the resulting *riskscapes* encourages the proliferation of *sexscapes* which found expression in brothels.

The impacts of a brothel can be great. At this time when STD/HIV/AIDS is endemic and the governments of the world are spending huge resources to combat the disease, why should there be an organized breeding place certified by the same government at doorsteps of her virile citizens? STDs through brothel may break down virile labor power leading to a fall in Gross National Product (GNP). This could make the country's economy to decline since the youth are the backbone for economical productivity of the country and they usually fall victims of brothels.

Planning is concerned with land use organization and land allocation ensuring that development is in the right place at the right time (Fryer, 1993). Planning stops development that are prejudicial to the community interest; that which is in the wrong place or in the wrong manner" (Obateru, 2003). Brothels are omitted in city design probably because of social sustainability, but they spring up anyway. This leaves us with some questions: who orders this development? who orders the use of land in the community and who is in charge of its environmental usage? Is it the politician, land valuers, planning professionals or others? Should brothels be part of our designs and in what form – residential or commercial?. How intense are the effects of brothel on both the people and the environment. These and many more questions about the topic is the concern of this study. The study thus investigates both the social and environmental impacts of brothels on residential neighborhoods. This is with a view to make relevant suggestions towards neighborhood composition and land use enforcement.

Methodology

This study used a multi-stage sampling procedure which involved: purposive, stratified and random sampling techniques. The known brothels were located on the map of the city. Using the brothel as the center, three strata of concentric zones were drawn round it with radius extending by 100m (A zone), 200m (B zone) and 400m (C zone) respectively which is ratio 1:1:2. A questionnaire was administered to 67 residents in each of a brothel-neighborhood and was shared to each according to their size ratio i.e 17:17:33 respectively. The variation in the length of the radii is to be able to significantly test if distance to brothel influences moral behavior. If the presence of brothel affects the moral life of nearby residents then, its effect would be great, greater and greatest in zones C, B and A respectively.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Chi- square and ANOVA were used to compare the effect of brothel on the residents of the different concentric zones around the brothel. Correlation analysis was used to explain the relationship between the variables of moral behavior and the existence of brothel in the affected neighborhood. Regression analysis was used to identify the most

Social Disorganization Theory.

The theory was developed by Chicago school. It relates to ecological theories taking a backseat to the psychological explanation of crime. Linking crime rates to neighborhood ecological characteristics, the theory opined that youth from disadvantaged neighborhoods were participants in a subculture in which delinquency was approved behavior acquired in a socio-cultural setting, through a process of interaction. It then follows that, residential location is a key determinant of social behavior. The theory thus established that, crime is largely a product of unfavorable conditions in certain communities (Larry Gaines and Roger Miller) linked to constantly elevated levels of high school dropouts, unemployment, deteriorating infrastructure and single parent homes. But the ecological characteristics of a neighborhood are highly dependent on elemental composition of the area. This is why components of the environment which may have negative social pathology such as brothels should be investigated to know how much they contribute to social disorganization.

A persons thinking process and attitudes are construed by the interaction between his situation and behavior. (Thomas and Znanieski 1918-1920). Attitudes are innate but stems from a process of acculturation. Cities are environments governed by many forces of Darwinian evolution i.e concentration, dispersion, ecological niches. When an organized area is invaded by a new element such as brothels, there would be competition which gives rise to succession or accommodation which results in re-organization. (Park and Burgess, 1925).

Social disorganization theory and cultural transmission theory says: criminality is a normal response by normal individuals to abnormal conditions. Social disorganization was endemic to urban areas which were the only places the new arriving poor could afford to live. Areas characterized by high rate population turnover, state of anomies and ethnic diversity. In the study, there were four major findings: juvenile delinquency were consistent with an ordered spatial pattern and are inversely proportional to the distance to city center, the identical spatial pattern is revealed by indexes of other social problems, spatial pattern of delinquency shows no connections to

nationality change in inner city and that becoming delinquent occurs through a network of interpersonal relationships involving families, gangs and the neighborhood (Clifford Shaw and Henry D. McKay, 1942).

Results and Discussion

It is important to say at this outset that there were seven locations where brothel had existed in the city but today, only two are functioning. The reason for the extinction of the five brothels according to the survey is largely the changes that occurred in the physical development and outlook of the area. Such changes include addition of commercial and residential developments and road construction among others. This fact alone testifies to the relationship between the physical attribute of an area and the accommodation of brothels. The known brothels are: *Ikenga*, *Born-Best*, *don Paradise*, *Sharp corner*, *Idera de*, *plastics Motel* and *Batola*. However, only *Born-Best* and *Sharp corner* were functioning as at the time of the survey.

Social and Environmental Characteristics of Brothel Area.

They have names that are either funny or inviting, most of which are non-local or a corruption of English words. Out of all, only two were found functional while the rest five have either migrated or become defunct. The most probable reason for brothels disappearance may be that the former site have become too open and accessible. On the one hand, this encourages commercial activities that force the rent up beyond what the prostitutes can afford and on the other hand it discourages the patronage of customers who are unwilling to be seen at the socially unacceptable place. The brothels are at a hidden and poorly accessible spot where customers may hide from the public sight.

For ease of interpretation, the data; most of which were collected in ordinal ranking scale were normalized into interval scale through a process reminiscent of the Likert scaling. The sum of weights which is the transformed ordinal scale for each variable are presented on table 1. A cursory glance at the table gives the impression that, for most part, there are generally low environmental quality in the three zones sampled, however, houses that are closest to the brothel has relatively poor structural and environmental characteristics. The sum of weight observed for the quality of building type (47), design (45), the condition of roof (44), wall (54), floor (48), ceiling (42), Window and door fittings (51) etc are all lower compared to values corresponding for other zones.

Building used for brothel could either be bungalow (63.2%) or storey (36.8%). Buildings used are old (59% are more than 20 years old) and of low quality housing type and material. Most of the buildings are usually used for beer parlor and drawn on it is a lady that is nude. They lack adequate set back or air spaces. Facilities such as water supply, electricity, waste disposal facilities, sewage and sewerage systems, open space, etc were absent or inadequately provided. Most of the brothels were found in run down places of the city or town where the circulation is very poor. The brothel at Sabo – “Sharp Corner” is a bit accessible by a narrow road and without parking facilities. It is due to its location in a very high density area at nodal point of the town. Noise (83.5%), solid waste dump (72.1%), property abandonment (69.7%), air pollution (69.1%) parking problems (57.4%) and poor landscape among others were reported to be a significant source of disturbance in the neighbourhood.

Facilities, utilities and services inadequacy is a general problem in the city. However, the lack of or inadequacy of these infrastructures was observed to be more pronounced in the area closer to the brothels compared to other zones. Road accessibility is the poorest among the facilities investigated (33). Intuitively, brothel practices are unacceptable to the prevailing culture of the city. To encourage patronage therefore, brothels practically needs obscure places, where customers have opportunities to hide their cars and other identity. Poor accessibility may be the reason for inadequate waste disposal since the place may be inaccessible to waste collectors. There is no significant difference in the incidences of electricity and water supply across the three zones.

Table 1: Socio-Environmental Characteristics of Brothels

SN	Variables	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3
1	Building Type	47	79	99
2	Building Design	45	68	82
3	Roof Condition	44	54	78
4	Wall Condition	54	59	82
5	Floor Condition	48	62	67
6	Ceiling Condition	42	59	67
7	Window and Door Fittings	51	67	68
8	Quality of Open Space	36	58	63
9	General Sanitation	39	56	63
10	Privacy problem	38	59	61
11	Bare Landscape	74	66	51
12	Refuse Dump	83	69	72
13	Abandoned Properties	82	78	83
14	Parking Problem	92	67	71
15	Air Pollution	91	64	66
16	Adequacy of Electricity	38	47	58
17	Adequacy of water Supply	49	56	59
18	Adequacy of Road/accessibility	33	81	97
19	Waste Management	29	59	52
20	Drug Trafficking	88	56	44
21	Indian Hemp Consumption	92	51	57
22	Violence	121	71	48
23	Robbery/Stealth	89	64	52
24	Police Arrest	54	56	48
25	Crime	95	72	66
26	Promiscuity	122	89	71
27	Early sexual initiation	98	72	61
28	Juvenile Dating	97	91	66
29	Juvenile Pregnancy	92	77	59
30	Abortion	78	67	56
31	Alcoholism	109	86	71
32	Smoking Habit	101	79	62
33	Visitation to Brothel	72	81	54
34	Nude Dressing	82	79	75
35	Poor Education	68	56	44
36	Poverty	101	82	45
37	Frustration	103	77	51
38	Property Value Decline	107	78	69
39	STD/HIV	77	89	72
40	Moral Corruption	103	86	69
41	Vulgar Languages	123	83	67
42	Sexual Harassment	76	84	57

Source: Author's Field Survey, 2013.

Hideous places encourages nefarious and illegal activities such as drug trafficking (88), Indian hemp consumption (92), violence (121), robbery (89), other crimes (95), promiscuity (122), early sexual initiation (98), juvenile dating (97) and juvenile pregnancy (92). Therefore, area closest to brothels relatively exhibits more of these characteristics compared to other zones. However, the difference in juvenile dating, juvenile pregnancy and robbery is not statistically different at 95% confidence level. In the same vein, abortion rate was observed to be similar to all the zones sampled. Police arrest was observed to be lower in the area closer to the brothels compared to the rest. This may imply that though there are visible illegal activities in the area, the chance of arrest is very low in the zone. This explains why criminals would prefer the zones even if they are not interested in brothel patronage. This factor principally explains 'riskscares' as an annex of 'sexscapes' Alcoholism (109) and smoking (101) is rife at riskscares. Brothels all have drinking arenas where alcohol is taken and smoking is done freely. This probably spurs moral corruption in residents nearby (103) compared to

others. As a result, vulgar talks (123), nude dressing (82) and sexual harassment (76) become the order of the day around the place. Sexual harassment and patronage to the brothel were observed to be of higher incidence in the middle zone compared to others. Culturally sensitive, informed and religious people detest living close to the brothels and would not want to raise their children in such an environment. This suggests why property value decline (107), poor education (68) poverty (101) and general frustration (103) were observed to be higher in the zone.

Table 2: ANOVA Test of Difference in Brothels Influence among the Sampled Zones

SN	Variable	F value	P. Value	Remark
1	Ever Visited brothel	2.939	.009	There is significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.
2	Under-aged Sex Experience	2.017	.126	There is no significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.
3	Hemp Smoking	2.346	.001	There is significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.
4	Teenage pregnancy	1.180	.006	There is significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.
5	Drug Trafficking	6.677	.004	There is significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.
6	Public Fight	0.115	.003	There is significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.
7	Incidence of Police Arrest	7.323	.003	There is significant Difference in Brothel's influence within and among the sampled zones.

Source: Author's Computation, 2013.

Many behavioral problems are not brothel area specific. This is probably because visitation to brothel is not also area specific. In the study, there is no significant difference within and among zones in the incidence of visitation to brothels. The situation is similar on the issue of under-age sex experience and teenage pregnancy. Some social ills can however be associated with the presence of brothel. For instance in the study, the incidence of hemp smoking, drug trafficking, public fight and incidence of police arrest have higher incidence in some zone compared to others. The implication of this may mean that zones closer to the brothel feels the negative social impacts.

Factor derivation.

The forty three scaled variables were subjected to factor analysis. Four factors were generated but two were considered residual. Two factors therefore emerged namely Environmental Characteristics index (ECI), and Social Behaviour Index (SBI).

Table 3: Factor Derivation

SN	Variables	ECI	SBI
1	Building Type	.994(3)	
2	Building Design	.995(2)	
3	Floor Condition	.999(1)	
4	Ceiling Condition	.999(1)	
5	Quality of Open Space	.994(3)	
6	General Sanitation	.999(1)	
7	Privacy problem	.979(4)	
8	Bare Landscape	.916(8)	
9	Abandoned Properties	.999(1)	
10	Parking Problem	.907(9)	
11	Air Pollution	.939(7)	
12	Adequacy of Electricity	.956(6)	
13	Adequacy of water Supply	.999(1)	
14	Adequacy of Road/accessibility	.999(1)	
15	Waste Management	.873(10)	
16	Drug Trafficking		.969(10)
17	Indian Hemp Consumption		.950(12)
18	Violence		.980(7)
19	Robbery/Stealth		.982(6)
20	Promiscuity		.987(5)
21	Early sexual initiation		.975(8)
22	Juvenile Dating		.940(13)
23	Juvenile Pregnancy		.998(2)
24	Abortion		.999(1)
25	Alcoholism		.994(4)
26	Smoking Habit		.998(2)
27	Nude Dressing		.996(3)
28	Poor Education		.999(1)
29	Poverty		.982(6)
30	Frustration		.999(1)
31	Property Value Decline		.959(11)
32	Moral Corruption		.999(1)
33	Vulgar Languages		.973(9)
34	Closeness to brothel	.978(5)	

Source: Author's computation, 2013.

Variables that load highly and the rank of their communalities are shown on table 3. Other variables that have low communalities were expunged to make the table sizable. In essence, in the order of ranking, adequacy of road accessibility, high incidence of abandoned structure, water supply, general sanitation, floor condition, building design, building type etc are the variables to be considered first in the explanation of environmental characteristic index. In the same vein, abortion, poor education, frustration, moral corruption, juvenile pregnancy, nude dressing, alcoholism, promiscuity etc are the variables to be considered first in the explanation of social behaviour index.

Relationship between Environmental Characteristics and Social Behaviour

Taking social behaviour index as the dependent index and environmental characteristics index as the independent, the former was regressed on the latter. The result is presented on table 4.

Table 4: Regression Result

Model	Dependent	Independent	R	R ²	F	P. value	B		P value
1	SBI	ECI	.973	.948	18.109	.147	a	7.009	.000
							ECI	.973	.000

Source: Author's computation, 2013.

The coefficient of correlation is .973 and the coefficient of determination is .948. With F value of 18.109 and P value of .147, there is a reliable relationship between the two indices but not statistically significant at alpha of .05. In other words; in consonance with the tenets of environmental determinism and social disorganization theories it may be said that, residents' social behavior is highly dependent on features of their environment.

However, there may be other factors involved in the shaping of social behaviors left unaccounted for outside the features of the environment, especially the ones listed in this study. In other words, environmental characteristics has significant influence on the social behavior of residents in an environment, but there will be other factors that influences social behavior that were not included in the data collected for this study or which may not be environmental in nature. Calibrating the model therefore, using the general regression equation:

$y = a + bx$, where:

y = Social behavior Index (SBI), the dependent variable

a = constant

b = regression coefficient

x = Environmental Characteristics Index (ECI) the independent variable i. e

$SBI = 7.009 + (.973) ECI$ i. e

$SBI = 7.009 + .973 (ECI)$

This implies that, for a unit degeneration in the component of environment in the order that they have been listed on table 3 (factor derivation), there is going to be a corresponding degeneration in the social behaviour of the residents in such environment taking the social behaviours in the order of listing on table 3. In other words, when acceptable social behaviour is desired, eliminating each social vice in the ranked order, the quality of the environment should be improved keeping all other factors constant.

Planning implication

What is where of brothels is an imperative for the healthy, efficiency, functionality, safety and the general livability of residents; which is the whole essence of urban and regional planning. (Keeble, 1969). Existence of brothel in residential neighborhoods simply negates the essence of planning

Presence of brothel booms safety hazards. It may be an hideout for the miscreants such as robbers. A despicable advertisement of sex encourages obsession, disease proliferation and moral corruption. Town planners are supposed to expunge physical or social development that are prejudicial to physical, social economic and psychological development of the residents (Obateru, 2003). The question is, does town planning see brothels as dangerous land uses? If yes, is there an established way of controlling the sitting of such uses at least away from populated neighborhoods where they are often found? brothel would certainly have physical, social, economic and psychological impacts that contributes to the development of the adjoining land uses in the neighbourhood where it is sited. This will go a long way determining how to advice on location of uses such as brothel by town planners.

Recommendation

- Brothels should be eradicated from our residential neighborhoods since it has no positive contribution to the environment
- In lieu of the above, brothel could be located in a special zone within commercial land use, where it would be properly monitored. Since, it is a form of (buying and selling) commercial land use is preferred in a segregated red-light district where brothel users and occupiers are charged high fee for license and operation. This will however, increase the revenue of the society and eventually may discourage the patronage of brothel users, frustrate prostitutes who shall be making less profit and make possible a natural closure of brothel in our society. This gives hope of restoring moral sanctity in neighborhoods where children can grow with alleviated fear of moral degenerations.

Conclusion

The study have been able to establish that there is incidences of moral decadence in Sabo and Oke Isoko areas of Ogbomoso which are mostly associated with the presence of brothel in the area. The negative effects of existence of brothel can be seen in all zones A, B and C (i.e 100m, 200m and 400m) away from brothel. To this effect, the study has recommendations that have worked in different parts of the world where prostitution is legalized and can work in Nigeria if well controlled and maintained.

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