

# Patronage and Physical Planning Implication of Public Toilets in Agege, Lagos, Nigeria

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## Abstract

This paper appraises the state of public toilets in Agege, Lagos, Nigeria. The paper reports findings from a research conducted by the authors. The objective of the study includes the examination of the socioeconomic characteristics of people patronising the toilets, and the condition of the toilets. A research instrument was designed to elicit data from various respondents identified. The sample size for the study was 327 respondents cutting across the research population identified. These respondents were selected through purposive sampling method, since it is difficult to identify usual patrons of the public toilets. Research findings show that the condition of most of the toilets was bad. In addition, it was discovered that locating the toilet was difficult as proper signposts were not in use. Deterrents to users of the public toilets include dirty environment, odour, flies and inadequate privacy. Suggestions proposed include enforcement of signposts, training of operators on the importance of adequate sanitation, upgrading of the toilet facilities and regular monitoring of private operators for compliance with sanitary regulations.

**Keywords:** Public Toilet, Agege, Sanitation, Sanitary Facilities, Signage.

## 1 Introduction

Toilet is a critical link between order and disorder and between good and bad environment as the need to urinate and defecate is irrepensible (Pathak, 1995). This has prompted many studies on public toilet provision and management. The work of Pathak (1995) demonstrated that proper public toilet provision and management can ameliorate public hygiene and sanitation concerns in a highly populated environment. Hence, Pathak (1995) posited that public toilets are important because lack of excremental hygiene is a National health hazard as our city could become “vast mass privy”.

Similarly, Ayee and Crook (2003) study in Accra and Kumasi, Ghana, revealed that lack of proper coordination and maintenance of public toilets has huge environmental and health implications (Ayee and Crook, 2003). Despite political intrigues and municipal failure, Ayee and Crook (2003) posited that locating hygienic and proper management of public conveniences will promote and safeguard public health. The need for inclusive, accessible and well managed public conveniences in the UK was the focus of Hanson (2004). Still in the UK, Greed (2006) decried the paucity of public conveniences due to closure, poor management which has resulted in disease transmission and disparate professional subculture which has clogged suit all needs and purposes in public convenience provision.

According to allAfrica.com (2011), a survey by WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for water supply (JMP) tasked for monitoring progress towards MDG target 7c on drinking water and sanitation described open defecation as the “riskiest sanitation practice” (allAfrica.com, 2011). WSP (2012) study revealed that 34 million Nigerians practice open defecation. Open defecation as a result of lack or unimproved sanitary facility has considerable social costs, loss of dignity and privacy or risk of physical attack and sexual violence may not be easily valued in monetary units (WSP, 2012). The study further revealed Nigeria lost US\$3.5 million (N455 billion) annually due to poor sanitation. In order to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDGs) 7 on water, sanitation and sustainable hygiene by 2015, Nigeria needs to build more than 8,000,000 public conveniences (Asabia, 2009).

Many Nigerians depend on unfiltered, untreated water that might have been exposed to waste for drinking, cooking and washing thereby increasing susceptibility to infirmities like cholera and dysentery (Osinubi, 2003). Moreover, diarrhoea ailments have been confirmed as the second highest cause of infant mortality in the country (Asabia, 2009). Water and Sanitation Program (WSP, 2012) desk study in Nigeria showed that faecal contamination of the environment is the root cause of an annual average of 5,400 cases of cholera affecting Nigeria. The work of Osinubi (2003) on urban poverty in Agege showed that 73% of the residents use pit toilet and 72% are either getting drinking water from a well or buying it coupled with open defecation and urination, looming huge health implications abound.

According to WSP-. Africa (2004) improperly managed human excreta are a major threat to public health and the environment, unless properly managed; human waste is the source of both widespread diseases and loss of civic and personal dignity and value (WSP\_AF, 2004). The resolution of the Lagos State Government to build more public toilets to fight cholera became necessary because unhygienic method of excreta disposal, inadequate sanitary facilities, poor drainages and indiscriminate disposal of waste account for about 20% of

under-five mortality (Asabia, 2009). It is in the realization of the paramount benefits of public conveniences that warranted the State Government to approve and commission 100 solar-powered toilets for communities across Lagos (WASH, 2009). The Lagos State Government stated that lack of toilet facilities and open defecation in different Lagos communities informed the State Government's decision to provide these facilities.

The present state of lack of quality and inadequate away-from-home toilets in a hustling and bustling environment like Lagos and other parts of the country might have compelled 34 million Nigerians to practice open defecation "depositing about 1.7million tonnes of faeces into the environment annually," (WSP, 2012). Furthermore, Awosiyan (2011) pointed out that a corporal law has been enacted by the Lagos State to majorly stem the tide of open defecation, urination and unhygienic behaviour in the public. No doubt, Lagos State is clean under the present administration, but its effort to maintain the culture has been a serious battle, perhaps, because of the limited number of usable public toilet facilities.

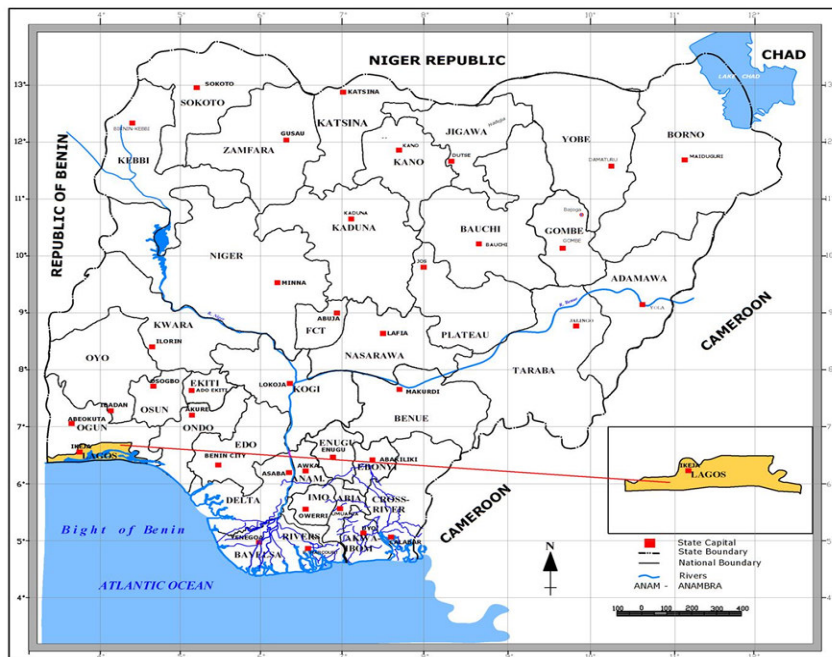
The decrepit and unhygienic state of Lagos public toilets had made the Honourable lawmakers to call out for urgent improvement (Eromosele, 2012). According to the report, the Lagos House of Assembly cautioned that the dysfunctional and poor sanitary conditions of most public toilets in the metropolis could result in the spread of diseases. This research was therefore carried out to examine prevailing physical condition of public conveniences in an emergent mega-city of Lagos using Agege as a case study with a view of proffering ways of improvement for sustainable public toilet and virile environment. The followings came out as the research questions of this study, these are;

- i. What are the socioeconomic characteristics of public toilet users in the study area?
- ii. What are the conditions of these facilities?

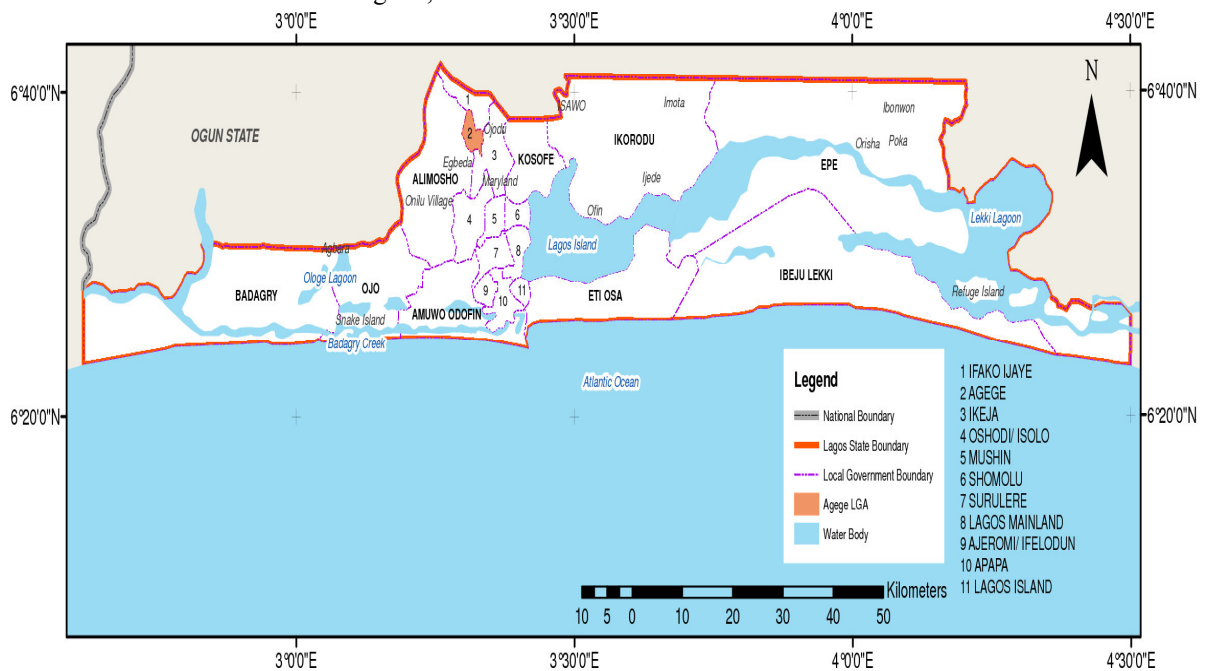
## **2 The Study Area**

Lagos is one of the mega cities in Africa which is located in South Western Nigeria on the west coast of Africa, within latitudes 6°23' N and 6° 41' N and longitudes 2° 42' E and 3°42' E. Agege is in metropolitan Lagos, an area covering 37% of the land area of Lagos State is home to over 85% of the state's population. The rate of population growth is about 275,000 persons per annum with a population density of 2,594 persons per square km. In a United Nation's study of 1999, the city of Lagos was expected to hit the 24.5 million population mark by the year 2015 and thus be among the ten most populous cities in the world (Lagos State Government, 2006). Lagos' share of Nigeria's GDP is 12% valued at USD 29 Billion from USD 18 Billion in 2005. It has 80% of country's industrial / commercial activities, 45% of national electricity consumption and 50% of petroleum products consumption (Lagos State Ministry of Economic Planning and Budget, 2004).

Agege Local Government was adopted as the study area due to the fact Agege is a densely populated and multi-ethnic Local Government of Lagos (Olukoju, 2006). Within Agege Local Government are Local Council Development Areas making Agege one of the biggest and most populated LGA in Lagos. Moreover, According to the Statutory Government Agency, Ministry of Environment (M.O.E) in 2012, Agege Local Government has the highest number of public toilets in the state with 28 operational across its geographical extent. Agege Local Government has a population of 461,743 comprising of 238, 456 males and 23,287 females (National Census, 2006). These figures, however differ from the one reported by the state itself representing 1,033,064 i.e. 564,239 and 468,825 male and female respectively, and a projected population of 1,247,974 at growth rate of 3.2% in 2012 (Lagos Bureau of statistics, 2011). This population is heterogeneous in nature in that it consists of diverse ethnic groups in Nigeria and outside Nigeria, cutting across different income levels.



**Figure 1: Map of Nigeria Showing Lagos State**  
 Source: Federal Government of Nigeria, 2008



**Figure 2: Map of Lagos State Showing Agege the Study Area**  
 Source: Adopted from Ministry of Physical Planning and Urban Development, 2006

### 3 Research Methodology

The Ministry of Environment document on public toilets in Agege revealed that there are 28 located public conveniences in the study area. The 28 public toilets were located across commercial areas in markets, shopping complexes and Motor Park and in residential areas of Agege. In all, 16 and 12 public toilets are located in residential and commercial areas respectively. There was an absence of records of patronage of users across the 28 located facilities.

Therefore, the sample size for the purpose of this study was determined via a periodic count. Periodic counting days of Monday, Wednesday and Saturday were chosen and between the hours of 12pm-6pm. The average calculated within a period of two months of February and March 2012. The enumerated average total is 3270.

However, in order to have realizable and manageable size, the sample size of 10% was considered. In other words, in each of the public toilet, 10% of the enumerated users were sampled. The 10% of the 3270 enumerated users amounted to 327 users. The 327 sample size was the number of respondents sampled for the study. This was the number of questionnaires administered for users. However, the questionnaire administration was conducted in each of the locations during the months of October and November 2012 within the hours of 12pm – 6 pm. The month of October and November was selected for the questionnaire administration because during these periods economic activities are at its peak and hence occasioned public toilet usage.

The house of 12pm-6pm was chosen for counting and administering questionnaires because the majority of the users would have used their private toilets in the morning before leaving their house. Hence, by these periods of the day, it is believed that their body system would need these facilities to empty what have been consumed in the morning and day time. Moreover, the hot weather conditions during these hours in the hustling and bustling Lagos would have discomforted these people to seek for sanitary attention which these facilities provide. Additionally, the huge presence of the Hausas and Muslim faithful whose praying time(s) fall within these periods visit these sanitary facilities for ablutionary purpose as permitted by their religion.

The questionnaire served as the major instrument used for the collection of data. The research questionnaires were administered to respondents using purposive sampling technique to ensure that the interested sample populations were given a questionnaire to elicit responses based on their willingness and opinion regarding the questions. The questionnaires were given out and collected on the spot. This ensured a hundred percent (100%) returns of questionnaires.

For the purpose of this study and to achieve accuracy in processing collected data, the use of computer aided Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 17.0 version was used. Two broad techniques of data analysis were carried out in order to comprehend and explain the result of the findings. The first of the techniques is the univariate analyses in the form of tables and charts. The second technique is the bivariate analysis, which is used to measure the relationship between two variables. In this case, the Pearson correlation test was used to provide the basis for testing hypothesis. In this study, it was used to measure the relationship between the condition of public toilets and the problems faced by users while using the toilets.

The following hypothesis was tested in this research work:

- 1 Ho: There is no significant relationship between the condition of public toilets and the problems faced by users while using the facilities in the study area

#### **4.0 Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings**

##### **4.1. Socioeconomic status of public toilet users**

The general overview of sexes of respondents in Table 1 showed that the number of females interviewed outnumbered their male counterpart in commercial areas. The females accounted for 65.5%, while males accounted for 34.5%. This statistical evidence represented the opposite outcome in residential areas. However, this outcome is in tandem with the assertion of Greed (2004) that if one walks around a shopping centre and does a mental count, women are likely to outnumber men in the ratio 13:7 (65%-35%) in shopping areas.

Researchers such as (Cavanagh, and Ware, 1991); (Booth, Darke, and Yeandle, 1996) Booth et al, 1996, (Greed, 2005) and (Drewko, 2007) have opined that women were particularly in need of public toilets in commercial areas for privacy especially at the time of menstruation and post-natal discharges. The above scenarios are indication of reliability of elicited information. Further observation concurred with Ayee and Crook (2003) and Toubkiss (2010) that these facilities also serve for users living in poor, densely populated and deprived neighbourhoods where no or a few private toilets are in place. Overall, out of the 327 respondents, female user accounted for 52.9% and male users accounted for 47.1%.

The age distribution of users revealed that in all, out of the 327 surveyed, 30.9% of the respondents fall within the age bracket of 18-27 years, 33.6% was within the age of 28-37 years, 27.2% were within the age of 38-47 years, 5.2% were within the age of 48-57 and 3.1% were found to be above 58 years. The bulk of the respondents i.e. 91.7% fall between the age group of 18-47 years old and can be referred to as youthful adults and fall within the working age bracket.

These categories of adults are capable of engaging in all manners of economic activities in a demanding environment in order to eke out a living or meet ends. It can also be inferred that the age bracket of 18-37 which amounted to 64.5% could be among the 52.9% females aforementioned. These females are within the menstruating and child bearing age and hence according to Drewko (2007) are conscious of their privacy, especially at the time of menstruation and post-natal discharges which these sanitary facilities offer them away from home. Generally, the age structure of respondents lends credence to the fact that they are mature enough to understand the subject matter and give reliable information.

Investigation into the occupational status of the users of public toilets in Agege areas as shown in Table 1 revealed that self-employed accounted for 27.5%, those engaged in trading activities amounted to 46.2%, while 14.1% were civil servants, 8% accounted for students and 4.3% claimed to be unemployed. The majority of

respondents which amounted to 46.2% were engaged in trading. These group of respondents came from the markets that adore Isale-Oja environs, Sango areas, the railway line and along old Abeokuta road among others where goods such as pepper, tomatoes, onions, vegetables, garri, rice, fish, meat, cooking oils and others are sold which comprises the major stable food consumables among average Lagosians. Students which represented 8% were engaged in economic activities such as hawking, shop attendants and other menial jobs or assisting their parents or guardians' financial status to meet up with the harsh economic demands of highly urbanised hustling and bustling city of Lagos. It is imperative to note that these sanitary facilities provide succour when nature calls for all categories of occupation.

The average monthly income of sampled users of public conveniences in Agege as shown in Table 1 indicated that 31.8% were earning less than the minimum monthly wage of ₦18, 000. These sets of persons can be inferred to be the petty traders and hawker along the market area as evidenced along the railway line whose meager income cannot afford rented shops in these highly commercialized areas and meagre income earners in poor residential areas. The majority earners earn between ₦ 18, 000- ₦34, 000 with 43.7% while 23.9% earn between ₦ 35, 000 - ₦54, 000 and a meagre of 0.6% earned between ₦ 55, 000- ₦74, 000. A closer observation reveals that there are higher income earners in commercial areas than in residential areas. These higher earners are those who afforded the rents of shops and offices at Abiola, Asade and Aluminum village complexes for their business. Generally it can be perceived that every respondent have the financial power to patronize these sanitary facilities.

**Table 1: Socio-Economic Characteristics of Public Toilet Users in Agege**

	Commercial	Residential	Total	Commercial	Residential	Total
<b>Sex</b>	<b>Percentage</b>			<b>Frequency</b>		
Male	34.5	65.4	47.1	67	87	154
Female	65.5	34.6	52.9	127	46	173
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>327</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>Percentage</b>			<b>Frequency</b>		
18-27	28.9	33.8	30.9	56	45	101
28-37	33.0	34.6	33.6	64	46	110
38-47	29.9	23.3	27.2	58	31	89
48-57	6.2	3.8	5.2	12	5	17
58 above	2.1	4.5	3.1	4	6	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>327</b>
<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Percentage</b>			<b>Frequency</b>		
Self Employed	27.8	27.1	27.5	54	36	90
Trading	56.2	31.6	46.2	109	42	151
Civil servant	10.8	18.8	14.1	21	25	46
Student	4.1	13.5	8.0	8	18	26
Unemployed	1.0	9.0	4.3	2	12	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>327</b>
<b>Monthly income (₦)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>			<b>Frequency</b>		
Less than18000	24.7	42.1	31.8	48	56	104
18000-34000	41.8	46.6	43.7	81	62	143
35000-54000	32.5	11.3	23.9	63	15	78
55000-72000	1.0	0.0	0.6	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>327</b>

Source: Author's field work, 2012

## 4.2: Users' Perception of Public Conveniences in Agege.

### 4.2.1 Awareness of the Existence of Public Toilet

Awareness is vital to patronage (Drangert and Greed, 2010). The respondents' response is overwhelmingly expressed in Table 2. The table revealed that when respondents in commercial areas were asked if they know of public toilet, 95.9% responded yes while 4.1% said no. The implication of this is that concerned authority can utilize this information in ensuring that adequate and quality public toilets are located appropriately within market, shopping and motor park areas which according to Greed and Daniels (2002), is vital to the local economy.

Having the knowledge of public toilet is also very vital among users in residential areas. 96.2% of the respondents acknowledged this fact while 3.8% were not aware of public toilets' existence. The 3.8% respondents can be inferred to be the first time users among the visitors in these neighbourhoods. As noted by Ayoade (2003), many people are moving on daily basis to our cities such as Lagos. The overwhelming yes I know of public toilet before now validates Greed (2004) assertion that public conveniences are important urban infrastructure. Summarily, 96% of the users affirmed yes responses to knowing public toilets before and only 4% are unaware of public toilets.

**Table 2:** Knowledge of the Existence of Public Toilet

Response	Commercial	Residential	Total	Commercial	Residential	Total
<b>Yes</b>	95.9%	96.2%	96.0%	186	128	314
<b>No</b>	4.1%	3.8%	4.0%	8	5	13
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	194	133	327

Source: Author's field work, 2012

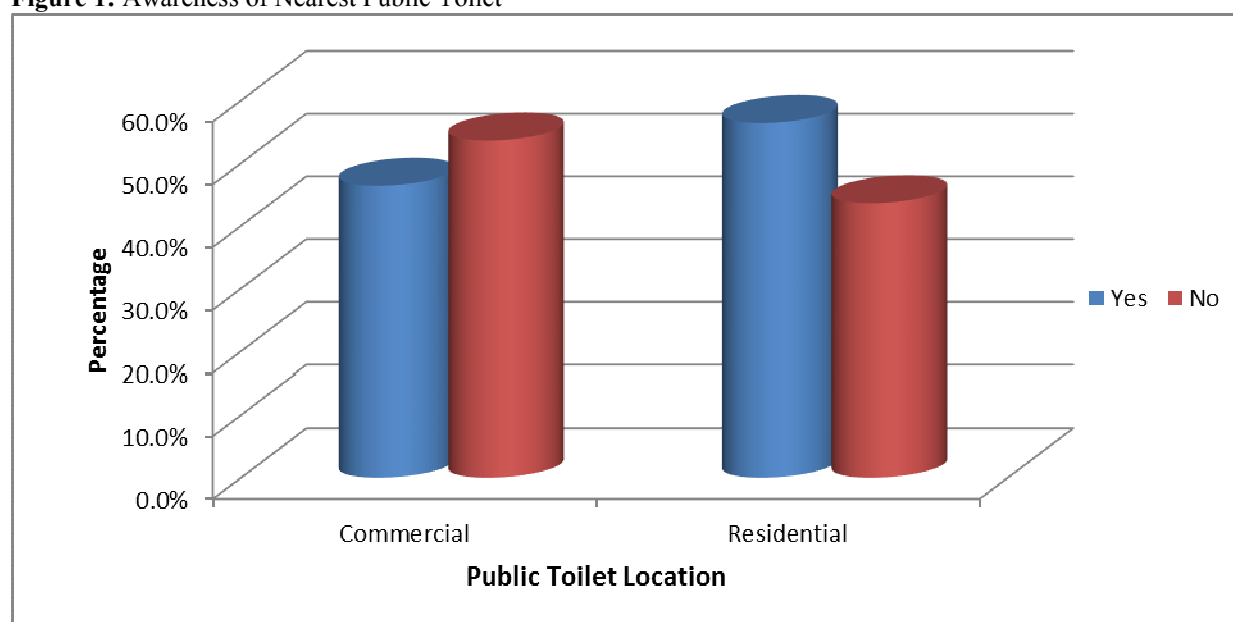
### 4.2.2 Awareness of the Nearest Public Toilet

The rationale of this question is that it helps the researcher to identify if the people know where public toilets are in relation to the area where the survey is being conducted. This is important for many reasons. It is depicted in Figure1 that 46.4% said they know the nearest public toilet while 53.6% are unaware of the next or nearest public toilet in commercial areas. The reverse is almost the case in residential areas where 56.4% admitted knowing the nearest public toilet while 43.6% are unaware of the next or nearest public toilet.

In all, out of the 327 respondents, almost half representing 49.5% do not know the nearest public toilet while the remaining 50.5% can locate the next or nearest public toilet on their own. The above scenario can be attributed to lack of publicity or signage of public toilets in the study area. The researcher noticed that the locations of these sanitary facilities make it difficult for new users to find in the study area.

Consequently, Greed (2005) opined that public conveniences should be proudly placed in the open and not hidden but thoughtfully designed. Asabia (2009) stated that toilet facilities must be located where the need is great to guarantee maximum impact and patronage to ensure cost recovery. Hence, Greed (2005) submitted that people find toilets where they traditionally and intuitively expect them to be located for easy access without confusion or fear.

**Figure 1:** Awareness of Nearest Public Toilet



Source: Author's field work, 2012

#### 4.2.3 Using of Public Toilets before Among Respondents in the Study Area

This question helped to identify that respondents use these located facilities. This assumption is validated by analysis shown in Table 3. The respondents indicated that 94.8% of them have used the public toilets before while only 5.2% admitted of not using these facilities before in the commercial areas. In the residential areas of the study area, 80.5% have used public toilets before while 19.5% claimed they have not used these facilities before the research was carried out. The revelation that majority of the respondents overwhelmingly admitted to have used public toilets in the residential areas validates Ayee and Crook (2003) position that public toilets are the main facility in sanitation delivery for people in low income, densely populated or informal settlement areas.

Generally, the significant patronage of public toilets among respondents across the study area which accounted for 89% as against 11% who are first time users attest to Greed (2005) claim that public toilets are important infrastructure for the functioning of the city as a whole. Moreover, Lack of public toilet forces men to sometimes use public spaces creating serious health and environmental issues, especially for the people living in that area (Akhter, 2013). This might have occasioned the unplanned springing up of these sanitary facilities across the residential areas of Agege in order to cushion the effects of indiscriminate urination and defecation as well as monetary gains for the operators.

**Table 3:** Using of Public Toilet Before

Response	Commercial	Residential	Total	Commercial	Residential	Total
<b>Yes</b>	94.8%	80.5%	89.0%	184	107	291
<b>No</b>	5.2%	19.5%	11.0%	10	26	36
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	194	133	327

Source: Author's field work, 2012

#### 4.2.4 Means of Finding Public Toilet among Users in Agege

Information on how to find these sanitary facilities is very essential to the need of users especially in hustling and bustling environment like Lagos. The 89% of the respondents that acknowledged using public toilet before were further probed on how they found the facilities. This research found out that in commercial areas, 55.2% admitted they needed to ask others for direction in order to locate the facilities when pressed while 44.8% of the users accessed these facilities through their local knowledge. In residential areas of the study, 11.2% of users asked others to find out where public toilets are located for usage while 88.8% had no problem in finding public toilets in their neighbourhood because of their local knowledge.

Overall, 39.5% respondents were able to find public toilets when the need arises by asking others for direction while 60.5% of the users had no problem finding these sanitary facilities because of their local knowledge. The above scenario where the need be users would have to ask others for directions to these facilities is not the most ideal way because some people may find it awkward to ask for the way to a public toilet (Greed and Drangert, 2010).

The absence of signage or advert in finding public toilets in these areas has both environmental and medical implications. According to Greed and Drangert (2010) some men may choose to pee in the open instead of asking while women tend to hang on till they get home which may strain the bladder and cause pelvic injury. The use of signage is very important as it depicts how to find available public conveniences (Greed, 2004, Drangert and Greed, 2010). According to Department for Communities and Local Government (2008), Public information on the location of facilities is essential in order to maximise awareness of them and encourage their use via signage. Visible signs are a simpler and more effective way of informing the public about the location of public toilets (Greed, 2005).

**Table 4:** Means of Finding Public Toilet Among Users in Agege

Response	Commercial	Residential	Total	Commercial	Residential	Total
<b>By signage from others</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
<b>Local Knowledge</b>	55.2%	11.2%	39.5%	107	12	119
<b>Via advert</b>	44.8%	88.8%	60.5%	77	95	172
<b>Total</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	184	107	291

Source: Author's field work, 2012

#### 4.2.5 Problem Faced by Users While Using Public Toilet in Agege

This question gives insight to probable deterrents to users of these sanitary facilities. Figure 2 showed that in commercial areas, 35.6% admitted that dirty environment was their major concern. This issue is not only the fault of operators of these public toilets but a collective responsibility as noted by Afon et al (2006), the general environmental sanitation behaviour of open space users like the markets are in very poor state. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that 32.0% of the users' perceived odour and flies emanating from the facilities as another concern. Lack of privacy which accounted for 20.6%, posed concerns for users. This is quite understandable because most of the doors in the public toilets are either not available or in disrepair or there are makeshift

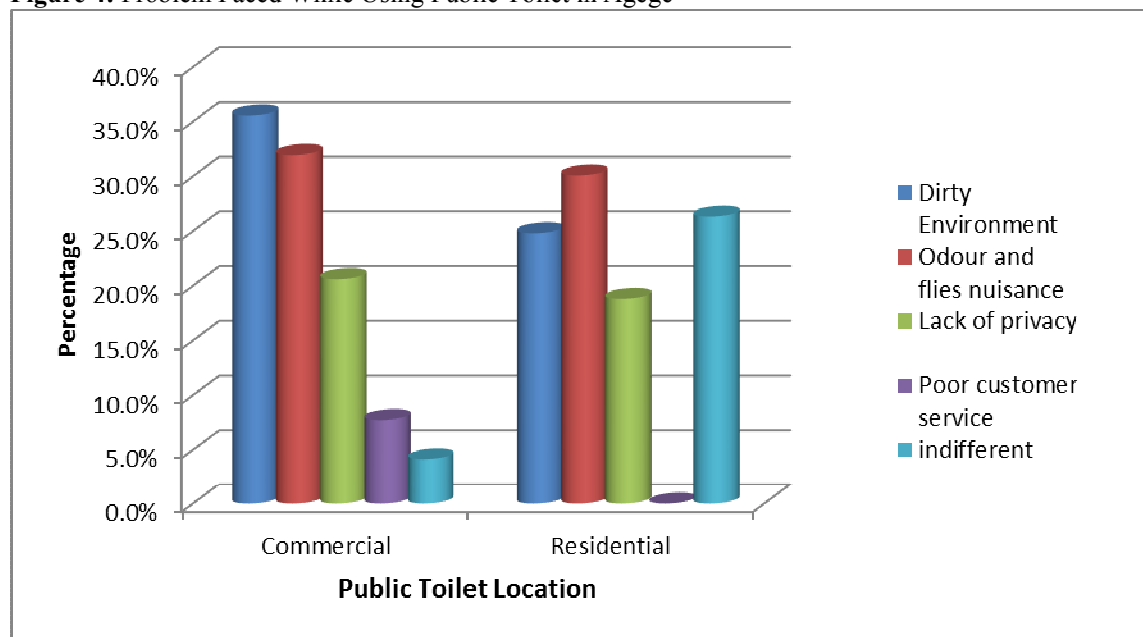
clothes/tarpaulin to cover the entrances.

The absence of signs of gender users or demarcation for separate male and female users makes intruding into ones privacy while inside the facility inevitable. Moreover, the intending user have to ask if someone is using a particular room or the one using the room have to signify to intending users in order for their privacy to remain invulnerable. Respondents who were indifferent to the listed problems accounted for 4.1%. In residential areas, the same scenario played out as the analysis established that 24.8% admitted that dirty environment was their major concern. 30.1% of the users perceived odour and flies emanating from the facilities as another concern. Lack of privacy which accounted for 18.8%, posed concerns for users. The poor customer services recorded 11.3%. Respondents who were indifferent to the listed problems accounted for 15%.

In all, out of the 327 surveyed users, dirty environment accounted for 31.2%. This is not good because Greed (2006) asserted that dirty environment adds to the insalubrious, unhygienic image of the public toilet and facilitate germ transmission. Odour and flies nuisance amounted to 31.2%. However, as noted by WSTF (2009), in order to prevent malodour, infections and diseases, public sanitation facility and its surroundings have to be kept very clean and as dry as possible; good housekeeping and maintenance are the vital elements for achieving an odourless public toilet. More so, sanitizer and cleaning detergent are lacking in most of the facilities. Water is used for cleaning and as Nwachukwu (2008) noted, the only sanitizer used is kerosene. Lack of privacy which accounted for 19.9% posed concerns for users, poor customer services recorded 4.6%. The operators' human relationship is quite commendable but poor service delivery need to be improved. Respondents who were indifferent to the listed problems accounted for 13.1%.

Despite all the above problems, users continued patronage of public toilets in these areas are as a result of different economic activities they engaged in and these sanitary facilities remained the only dignified means of answering natures call. No wonder, WSP - BNWP (2008) stated that on-sites facilities public and community toilets will continue to have an important role to play in urban areas for the foreseeable future and their effective management is a huge challenge.

**Figure 4: Problem Faced While Using Public Toilet in Agege**



Source: Author's field work, 2012

#### 4.2.6 Condition of public toilet in Agege

The public toilets in most locations in Agege were found to be poor in both physical and sanitary condition. Users' ratings of condition of public toilets in the study area as depicted in Table 5 showed that only 10.4% are considered very good. Public toilet facilities considered good among users amounted to 9.2%, fair condition accounted for 26.9% while the majority of users rated 53.5% of the public toilets in Agege poor.

According to (World Toilet Organisation, 2003), clean toilets are often seen as the hallmark of a gracious society because the hygiene conditions of toilets are important in promoting health and well-being among citizens.

However as noted by Van der Geest and Obirih-Opareh (2006), the unsanitary conditions in and around most of public toilets are consequences of poor or dilapidated infrastructure for liquid waste management, inadequate funding for maintenance, poor sanitary habits and deficient management of existing toilet facilities. Van der Geest and Obirih-Opareh (2006) also argued that some people defecate and urinate in empty spaces



because of the untidiness of the toilet facilities (Van der Geest, and Obirih-Opareh, 2006). It has been proven that improvement in the sanitary condition of public toilets facilities attract higher volume of paying customers, resulting in more revenue (UNDP, 2010).

**Table 5:** Condition of Public Toilet

Rating	Commercial	Residential	Total	Commercial	Residential	Total
Very good	7.3%	13.5%	10.4%	12	22	34
Good	12.2%	6.1%	9.2%	20	10	30
Fair	27.4%	26.4%	26.9%	45	43	88
Poor	53.1%	54%	53.5%	87	88	175
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	164	163	327

Source: Author's field work, 2012

#### 4.3 Correlation of Variables

The present states of the physical and unsanitary conditions of public toilets in the study area are apparently a concern to the users. In order to establish a statistical affirmation, The Pearson's correlation test was used to determine the level of significant relationship between the condition of public toilets and the problems faced by users while using the toilets.

**Table 6:** Correlation Matrix

		Condition of Public Toilet	Problems Faced by Users
Condition of Public Toilet	Pearson Correlation	1	-.594*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.046
	N	327	327
Problems Faced by Users	Pearson Correlation	-.594*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.046	
	N	327	327

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)\*.

**Source:** Author's computation, 2012

From Table 6, the r-value -0.594 indicates a negative direction of moderate correlation, although the bigger the r-value the better. This implies that the condition of the public toilet is negatively correlated with the problems faced by users while using it, i.e. as the condition is improved the problems faced by users while using it is decreased and vice versa. The "\*" means we can reject the null hypothesis (Ho). In conclusion, the research hypothesis was supported. The condition of the public toilet correlate significantly with the problems faced by users,  $r = -.594$ ,  $p < .05$ . Therefore, the Ho is rejected and the Hi which states that there is significant relationship between the condition of public toilet and the problems faced by users while using the toilets is accepted.

#### 5 Conclusion and Policy Guidelines

The socio-economic characteristics of public toilet users in Agege have shown that these sanitary facilities are vital in improving local economy and alleviating deprived neighbourhoods of undignified means of answering nature's call. It also showed that are patronized by all categories of occupation, male and female, the young and the elderly alike.

The study revealed that there is high knowledge of public toilet in the study area but appropriate means of locating these important infrastructures are lacking. The locations of these sanitary facilities make finding them difficult for the need be users without having local knowledge or asking people. The meager State government built public toilets is not strategically located, not publicized, without scenery, aesthetically not pleasing and surrounded with filthy environment which invariably limit usage.

The privately owned public toilets were located without any know conformity. Most of these public toilets are product of afterthought without guideline. Some of them are makeshift structures, others are either shops converted to public toilets or semi-structures on set-backs. It was discovered that there were no land earmarked for public toilets in the area. This made some landlords who noticed the growing need of public toilets services occasioned by huge human and vehicular presences as a result of economic interactions and paucity of toilet facilities in deprived neighbourhoods to provide toilet services for money making only.

Various human activities created in the quest to achieve a higher level of development and economic dependence has led to the misuse of the urban spaces in the study area. Moreover, there exist lack of functional relationship among the various land uses with a view to ensuring that services are available and accessible to all conveniently and efficiently in a sustainable manner. Furthermore, lack of proper coordination of physical planning activities and public toilets within the study area, have resulted into an unpleasant quality of the environment. It is therefore suggested that there should be placement of directional signages, training of

operators and hygiene campaign. In addition, the government of Lagos State should initiate and step-up a massive upgrading of the public toilets. Also there should be regular monitoring and review of officers involved as well as putting in-place customer feedback mechanism.

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