

# Residents' Socio-Economic Characteristics as Drivers of Housetypes in Ogbomoso, Nigeria

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## Abstract

The function of housing is first and foremost to provide houses to families and other households, housing is therefore an important urban survival strategy. And this has made socio-economic status of family or individual to always play an important role in the choice of housing especially in urban centres.

In this study a sample of 400 houses emerged from the survey of houses conducted from the pre-colonial, colonial and sub-urban residential areas of Ogbomoso.

The study examined the social, economic, demographic characteristics of the residents in the housetypes as drivers of these housetypes in Ogbomoso, Nigeria.

The study revealed that 40.3% of the sample were family houses, where residents were of multiple ownership status and who by reason of their kith and kin relationship did not pay rents and they belonged to the low-income category. 34.3% of the sample were rooming houses where residents also belonged to the low-income category and majority were renters in the house.

The study concluded that family and rooming houses were predominant in Ogbomoso. The study corroborated the fact that poverty is the central and dominant problems of the poor in developing country, and their low earning power manifests in a variety of ways especially in lack of sufficient funds to procure housing, and as a results the rental housing sector has been and will continue to be the major provider of the bulk of housing for the low income households.

**Keywords:** drivers, household, housetype, poverty, urban, family house, rooming house, income

## 1. Introduction

Housing is an important urban survival strategy. It offers protection as well as a place to lie down, security and privacy. The function of housing is first and foremost to provide houses to families and other households (Mulder & Lauster, 2010). Housing is the basis for all human activities, every person is affected in his day to day activities by the type of house in which he or she lives in (Agbola & Adegoke, 2007). Housing is seen as a social requirement and the United Nations' Universal declaration on human right recognizes housing as a basic human right.

Housing is developed in several forms of tenure. It can be developed for owner-occupier, for social rented sector and for private- rented sector (Golland & Gillen, 2004) Throughout the world, three principal types of tenured accommodation are common; they are owner-occupied dwellings, social rented dwellings and private rented dwellings (Hugo & Duncan, 1993). But housing ownership is believed to confer exchange value, opportunities to raise cash through renting of the house and a base for urban accumulation for present and future generations (Schlyter, 2003).

Easy availability and affordability of housing may make it easier for people to form households and families, whereas difficult access to housing may hamper it (Mulder & Lauster, 2010). But affordability of housing is income dependent, as it is defined as the percentage of the present income that a person or a family can afford to spend on housing: Affordability is further explained as the ability to back up a desire for housing units with adequate financial resources such that other basic needs like food, transportation, education, health among others

do not as a result suffer. Among the indices of measuring housing needs of human beings is affordability, while the commonest measure for housing affordability is the house price-to-income ratio, that is how many year's income is needed to purchase or build a house. But the level of poverty in developing countries of the world, Nigeria inclusive has led to severe difficulties in affordable housing. Issues of poverty and the low earning power of the poor in cities of developing countries have adversely affected housing. Income in some sense determines the type of housing for every social class of people.

Olatubara (2007) posited that it would be erroneous to think that all households would need housing on an owner-occupier basis, this is because we have different income levels, and he found out that the rental housing sector has been and will continue to be the major provider of the bulk of housing for the low-income households in cities of developing countries. He concluded that the housing problems of the developing world are primarily resultant effects of generally poor income.

Levels of income and some other socio-economic characteristics such as education, occupation, age and sex across the residential areas of Ogbomoso city were used to analyse what determines or acts as drivers of households, families or individuals to reside in a type of house.

The study revealed that 40.3% of the sample were family houses where residents were of multiple ownership status and they did not pay rents, of course majority could not afford rent and that is why they are living in family houses. 34.3% of the sample were rooming houses where residents belonged to the low-income category and majority were renters.

13% of the sample were single houses on one lot occupied by one family or (single family dwelling) where residents were of owner-occupier status and majority belonged to the medium income category. 11.3% of the sample were apartment, where residents belonged to the medium-income category and majority were civil servants. Just 1.3% of the sample were duplexes where residents belonged to the high income category and senior civil servants.

## **2. House Types**

Houses generally contain household and families which could be large or small. Human activities take place within the confines of the walls of a house, and this has made a house an indispensable item in human existence and family formation. Mulder and Lauster (2010) opines that easy availability and affordability of housing may make it easier for people to form household and families, whereas difficult access to housing may hamper it.

Despite differences in socio-economic status, there is a desire to construct a place where individual families or groups can express a sense of identity and develop social and personal relationships, and this has made a home or a house an integral element of human existence.

Residents' satisfactions have been found to be related to socio-economic status and socio-economic status influences house types (Stokol & Altman, 1982). It is also a general belief that wealthier individuals are better placed to provide themselves with houses that meet standards and are most satisfying.

Gifford (1996) revealed that each home/house has thousands of characteristics that have some impact on satisfaction, behaviour and well being, that apart from these characteristics each house also exhibits certain influences like the social, personal, cultural and physical influence which affect our preference and satisfaction in the choice of certain dwelling forms or types.

Regardless of all these characteristics and influences on the choice or type of a house; there are many forms of residences across or within single culture, and their common element is that they are physical structures which as human beings we cannot do without.

This study of housetypes provides an in-depth exposition about the types of houses in the study area and how the socio-economic characteristics act as deciding factors in the choice of the types. The houses were classified into types by tenure, form of building, number of households and the organization of space. The reason for selecting these criteria was to be able to capture the socio-physical qualities of the houses. Rooming and family houses which were preponderance in the study area are described below.

### **2.1 Rooming House**

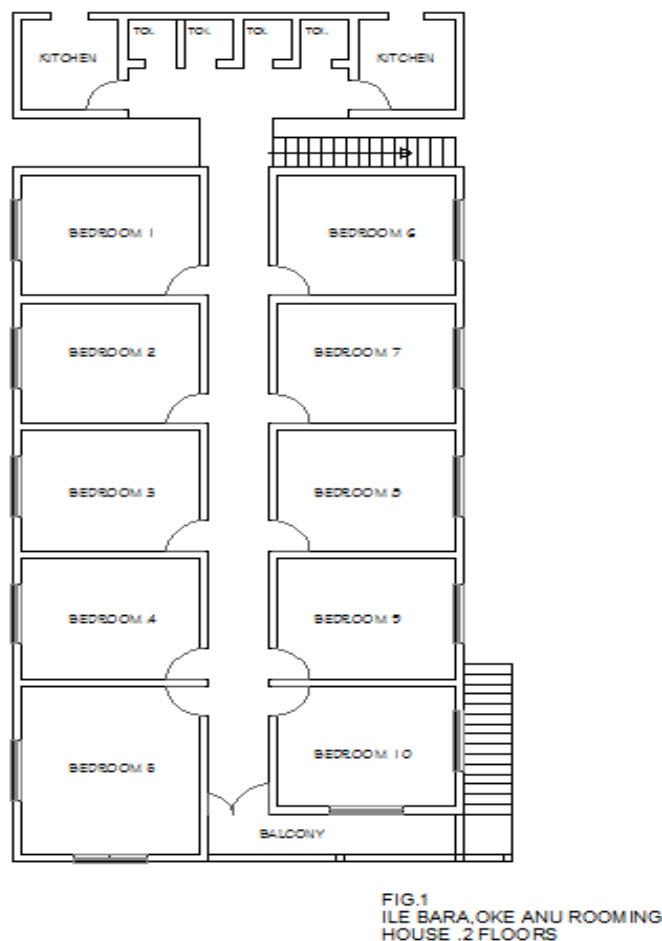
Rooming houses are occupied by more than one family. Rooming houses are by definition building, which are divided into separate rooms for rentage by individual tenants. In all the urban centres and villages in Nigeria, this housetype has become a dominant type. The reason for this among other things is that, it is a form of housing which provides rental accommodation at reasonable cost for the large immigrant population in the rapidly expanding cities. In its most common form, the rooming houses have numerous rooms arranged in linear form on

both sides of an access corridor.

A typical rooming house has all spaces within the main building under one roof and all the rooms are treated alike. A bedroom is the same as a parlour. The internal spaces are generally multi-functional. Bedrooms serve the obvious sleeping purpose and could also double as a reception area and dining space. This is because the rooms are individually rented out to different families.

In some instances, the bedroom could also be partitioned by using a curtain. In this case, the head of the family takes his meal in the room (one of the partitions) while children and wife take theirs either in the kitchen or in the portion of the passage adjoining their bedrooms. Where a family rents two rooms, one of the room serves as a bedroom and the other as a parlour. Basically, the parlour is for the reception of guests and it doubles as a spill-over sleeping area for some members of the family.

Another distinguishing feature of rooming house is the location of the utilities or services at the back of the house, these utilities are completely detached as outhouses. The services which consist of the toilet, bathroom and kitchen are used by all the tenants. It is a house-type that usually accommodates multiple families because of its forms. From the survey of house-type, 34.3% of the samples were rooming houses occupied by multiple families. See Figure 1 for a typical rooming house.



TYPICAL PLAN FOR GROUND AND FIRST FLOOR PLAN

Figure 1. Typical plan for ground and first floor plan

## 2.2 Family House

Family house as the name indicates is a house occupied partly or solely by persons whose rights of residence derive directly from common ancestry with the owner who usually is an ancestor. It represents in a physical entity the power and cohesion of the extended family system, one of the many features of extended family life

which survived in West Africa.

As indicated by (Amole et al., 1993) there are two forms which family houses take in Yoruba cities, they are family house having a central courtyard and family house of rooming housetype

Family House-courtyard type represents the more traditional lifestyle in West Africa and Yoruba city, it is associated with the extended family system and by implication with the indigenous forms of house form. The need for large number of rooms to accommodate the extended families is a major determinant of this houseform. A dominant feature of this traditional house is the built-in central courtyard. The central courtyard provides privacy while still offering a climatically, open air environment, and it is particularly suitable for communal lifestyle noted with meetings for which family houses are renowned.

The courtyard houseform has been in existence before 1930, and it usually consists of rooms arranged around one or more courtyards or impluvia with verandah overlooking the courtyards, see Figure 2. Our study revealed that 40.3 percent of the sample were family houses, and this is an indication that ogbomoso is an indigenous city essentially, though now embracing modernisation.

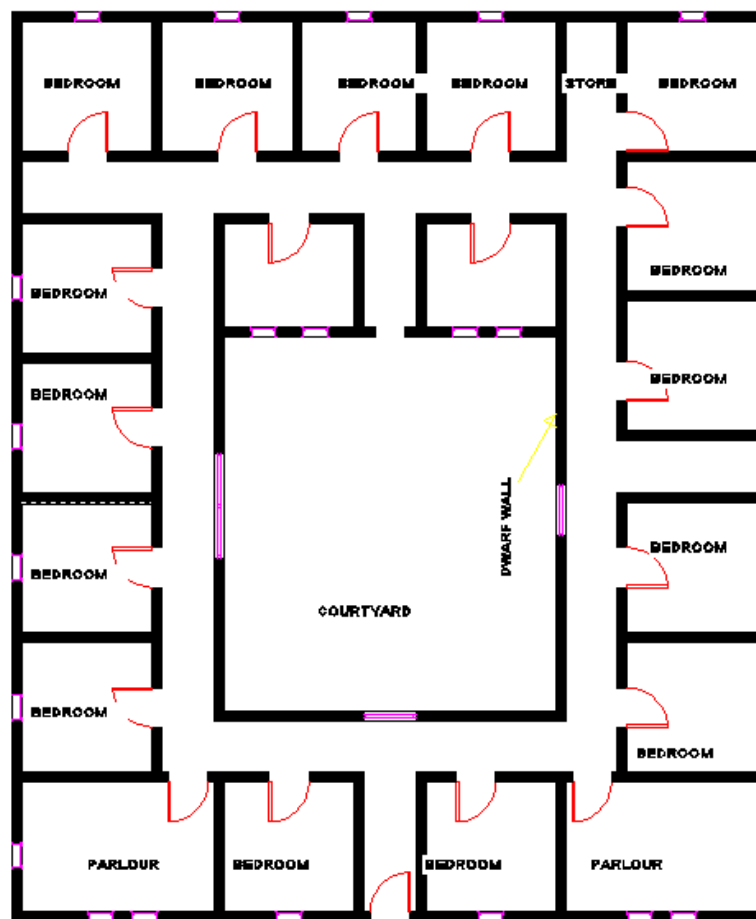


Figure 2. Ile Kangu

### 2.3 Family House-Rooming Type

This second form is a rooming house, a form adopted by some Yoruba as a family house. This type became prominent during the 1930s when earnings from cocoa, palm oil etc. allowed relatively a young man who inherited a share in the family compound to establish his own house into which some of the family members moved with him. The house typically consists of a set of rooms arranged along a central hall. The hall serves important function in the running of the house and provides space for working and storage as well as for overnight accommodation for visitors. The back of the house generally contains a kitchen, latrine and general service area, but in houses where the central hall is narrow, there could be a rear courtyard where many of the

hall's functions are carried out. From the survey, 30.3% of the samples were family houses. This means that 161 houses of the sample were family houses, but out of the 161 family houses, 65.21% that is 105 were family houses with courtyard, while 34.8% that is 56 were family houses with rooming typology

### 3. Methodology

The primary data were obtained using structured questionnaire and personal physical observation of the housetypes, characteristics of the houses and access to services. Socio-economic characteristics were important to this study because status influences house types. The variables examined during the survey included age, sex, marital status, tenure status, educational status, occupation, household size, income and category of income.

A total number of (400) four hundred questionnaire was administered. In order to distribute the 400 questionnaire, a ratio of 3:2:1 was employed respectively for the pre-colonial, colonial and sub-urban residential areas. This was done in line with the generally believed pattern of population distribution within residential areas as indicated by Adeboyejo and Onyeonwu (2002).

In administering the questionnaire, the major street in a given area was identified, the first building was randomly selected, with subsequent unit at interval of every fifth building. Maximum of five questionnaire was administered in an area. The four hundred houses that emerged represented the sample. The total number of questionnaire administered was recovered. This is due to the fact that the questionnaire were filled and collected on the spot.

In cases where the respondent was not willing to fill the questionnaire on the spot, a new selection was made. The data generated from the questionnaire constituted the quantitative data which were analyzed empirically.

### 4. Results

For the purpose of this study, the variables examined for socio-economic characteristics included educational status, occupation, income and category of income. The socio-economic characteristics of the residents in the different residential districts/zones of Ogbomoso were examined. This was done through description, interpretation and the use of frequency distribution and percentages.

From the survey of the house type, 40.3% of the sample were family houses, followed by 34.3% of rooming houses, and 13% were single houses on one lot occupied by one family, 11.3% were apartment and only 1.3% were duplexes as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of house types in Ogbomoso

| S/No | House type                                           | Frequency | Percentage |
|------|------------------------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1.   | Family Home                                          | 161       | 40.3%      |
| 2.   | Single House on one lot occupied by one family       | 52        | 13%        |
| 3.   | Apartment in a building with more than one apartment | 45        | 11.3%      |
| 4.   | Duplex                                               | 5         | 1.3%       |
| 5.   | Rooming house (Face-me-I-face-you)                   | 137       | 34.3%      |
| 6.   | Total                                                | 400       | 100        |

The distribution of these house types in different residential districts was analysed. The analyses revealed that majority of the family houses were located in the pre-colonial zones, while the majority of the rooming houses were located in the colonial residential districts. This distribution also revealed that the rooming houses which formed bulk of the rental houses were located in all the three residential districts, and this house type offered rental accommodation to all and sundry. After establishing the distribution of the house types in the different residential zones, the socio-economic variables such as occupation, educational status, income and income category of residents in the different residential zones were examined. The results are as presented below in Table 2.

Table 2. Distribution of house-type in the different residential zones

| S/No | Residential Zones | House Types  |     |                                                |      |           |      |        |      |               |       |       |      |
|------|-------------------|--------------|-----|------------------------------------------------|------|-----------|------|--------|------|---------------|-------|-------|------|
|      |                   | Family House |     | Single House on one lot occupied by one family |      | Apartment |      | Duplex |      | Rooming House |       | Total |      |
|      |                   | Freq         | %   | Freq                                           | %    | Freq      | %    | Freq   | %    | Freq          | %     | Freq  | %    |
| 1.   | Pre-Colonial      | 123          | 3.5 | 7                                              | 1.75 | 9         | 2.25 | -      | -    | 45            | 11.25 | 183   | 45.7 |
| 2.   | Colonial          | 39           | 9.8 | 28                                             | 7.0  | 11        | 2.75 | 1      | 0.25 | 57            | 14.25 | 136   | 34   |
| 3.   | Sub-Urban         | -            | -   | 17                                             | 4.3  | 25        | 6.25 | 4      | 1.0  | 35            | 8.75  | 81    | 20.2 |
|      |                   | 161          |     | 52                                             |      | 45        |      | 5      |      | 137           |       | 400   |      |

#### 4.1 Educational Status of Respondents

The majority of respondents who had no formal education at all are residents in the pre-colonial residential zone. The majority of residents who had tertiary education were found in the colonial and sub-urban residential zones in the rooming houses, single house on one lot and apartments. With this analysis, it seems that people whose level of education is above the secondary school level prefer the colonial and the sub-urban residential districts and the house-types common in them.

Table 3. Educational status of respondents

| S/No | Educational Status         | Residential District       |      |               |      |                               |      |       |      |
|------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------|---------------|------|-------------------------------|------|-------|------|
|      |                            | Sub-urban residential zone |      | Colonial Zone |      | Pre-colonial residential zone |      | Total |      |
|      |                            | Freq                       | %    | Freq          | %    | Freq                          | %    | Freq  | %    |
| 1.   | No Formal Education        | 2                          | 0.5  | 23            | 5.8  | (35)                          | 8.8  | 60    | 15   |
| 2.   | Primary School Drop Out    | -                          | -    | 10            | 2.5  | 19                            | 4.8  | 29    | 7.3  |
| 3.   | Completed Primary School   | 8                          | 2.0  | 9             | 2.3  | 40                            | 10.0 | 57    | 14.3 |
| 4.   | Completed Secondary School | 28                         | 7.0  | (44)          | 11.0 | 58                            | 14.5 | 130   | 32.5 |
| 5.   | Tertiary Education         | (37)                       | 9.3  | (45)          | 11.3 | 13                            | 3.3  | 95    | 23.8 |
| 6.   | Others                     | 6                          | 1.5  | 05            | 1.3  | 18                            | 4.5  | 29    | 7.3  |
|      | Total                      | 81                         | 20.3 | 136           | 34.2 | 183                           | 45.7 | 400   | 100  |

#### 4.2 Occupation of Respondents

Occupation was also another important socio-economic factor used in this study to examine the choices of house type by residents. This was because the income level of residents depended to a large extent on the type of occupation they were engaged in. The occupation distribution of the respondents in the different residential zones is presented below.

Table 4. Occupation distribution of respondents

| S/No | Occupation     | Residential Districts |      |          |       |              |      |       |      |
|------|----------------|-----------------------|------|----------|-------|--------------|------|-------|------|
|      |                | Sub-Urban             |      | Colonial |       | Pre-Colonial |      | Total |      |
|      |                | Freq                  | %    | Freq     | %     | Freq         | %    | Freq  | %    |
| 1.   | Farming        | 4                     | 1.0  | 7        | 1.8   | 14           | 3.5  | 25    | 6.3  |
| 2.   | Trading        | 7                     | 1.8  | 51       | 12.8  | (82)         | 20.5 | 140   | 35   |
| 3.   | Teaching       | 19                    | 4.8  | 7        | 1.8   | 14           | 3.5  | 40    | 10   |
| 4.   | Artisan        | 8                     | 2.0  | 20       | 5.0   | (46)         | 11.5 | 74    | 18.5 |
| 5.   | Civil Servants | (26)                  | 6.5  | (33)     | 8.3   | 13           | 3.3  | 72    | 18   |
| 6.   | Others         | 17                    | 4.3  | 18       | 4.5   | 14           | 3.5  | 49    | 12.3 |
|      | Total          | 81                    | 20.3 | 136      | 34.27 | 183          | 45.7 | 400   | 100  |

The distribution shows that the bulk or majority of the traders and Artisans who after completing their secondary school education got engaged in one form of trading or learnt a vocation were residents of family and rooming

houses in the pre-colonial residential districts. And majority of the civil servants were located in the colonial and sub-urban residential districts, in the rooming, apartment and the single house on one lot occupied by one family house types.

#### 4.3 Monthly Income of Respondents

It is believed that wealthier individuals are better placed to supply themselves with houses/homes that meet their standards and they are more satisfied. Based on this belief, the incomes of respondents who were civil servants in the sample were examined and analysed. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 5 below

Table 5. Monthly income of respondents

| S/No | Monthly Income         | Residential Districts |      |          |      |              |      |       |      |
|------|------------------------|-----------------------|------|----------|------|--------------|------|-------|------|
|      |                        | Sub-Urban             |      | Colonial |      | Pre-Colonial |      | Total |      |
|      |                        | Freq                  | %    | Freq     | %    | Freq         | %    | Freq  | %    |
| 1.   | Between N7,100-12,268  | -                     | -    | 5        | 6.9  | (10)         | 13.8 | 15    | 20.8 |
| 2.   | Between N13,291-31,444 | 7                     | 9.7  | (23)     | 31.9 | 3            | 4.2  | 33    | 45.8 |
| 3.   | Between N32,785-59,755 | (19)                  | 26.4 | 5        | 6.9  | -            | -    | 24    | 33.3 |
| 4.   | Total                  | 26                    | 36   | 33       | 45.7 | 13           | 17.9 | 72    | 100  |

Residents whose monthly income were between N32,785-N59,755 formed the majority of residents in the sub-urban residential district, while those whose monthly incomes were between N13,291-31,44 constituted the majority in the colonial residential districts.

Residents whose monthly incomes were between N7, 100-12,268 that is, the low income earners constituted the majority occupying pre-colonial districts.

#### 4.4 Category of Income of Respondents

In order to be able to capture the category of incomes of all the respondents, including those who were not in the civil service, the respondents who were not in the civil service were asked the category of income in which they fell into. The income categories quoted by them are tabulated in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Category of income of respondents

| S/No | Category of Income | Residential Districts |      |          |      |              |       |       |      |
|------|--------------------|-----------------------|------|----------|------|--------------|-------|-------|------|
|      |                    | Sub-Urban             |      | Colonial |      | Pre-Colonial |       | Total |      |
|      |                    | Freq                  | %    | Freq     | %    | Freq         | %     | Freq  | %    |
| 1.   | Low-Income         | 5                     | 1.5  | 15       | 4.6  | (90)         | 27.4  | 110   | 33.5 |
| 2.   | Middle Income      | 27                    | 8.23 | (70)     | 21.3 | 15           | 4.6   | 112   | 34.1 |
| 3.   | High Income        | (35)                  | 10.9 | (58)     | 17.7 | 5            | 1.5   | 98    | 29.9 |
| 4.   | Others             | -                     | -    | 3        | 0.9  | 5            | 1.5   | 8     | 2.4  |
| 5.   | Total              | 67                    | 10.4 | 146      | 44.5 | 115          | 35.17 | 32.8  | 100  |

As expected, the majority of the respondents who were of low-income category were residents in the pre-colonial residential districts, dominated by family and rooming houses. This category of residents was of multiple owner status in family houses where by virtue of their kith and kin relationship would not pay rent, and also renters in the rooming houses where the rents were affordable in relation to their category of income.

Also, the majority of respondents who were of the high and middle income category were residents in the sub-urban and colonial residential districts in house types such as apartment, duplex and single house on one lot occupied by one family.

This analysis corroborates the fact, that rental housing in form of rooming houses is providing the bulk of housing for the low income category, apart from the free housing in family houses.

## 5. Conclusion

The role of housing in human survival can not be overemphasised. Housing offers protection, it provides a place where one can lie down, it provides security as well as privacy. In short, housing is a basis for all human activities;

every person is affected in his day to day activities by the type of house where he lives. Even the United Nations' Universal declaration on human rights recognises housing as a basic human right.

Throughout the world, three principal types of tenured accommodation are common namely: owner-occupied dwellings, social rented dwellings, and private rented dwellings. This study was concerned with survey of houses in Ogbomoso, a city in Nigeria.

Generally houses in Ogbomosho were classified as follows: family house, single house on one lot occupied by one family, apartment in a building with more than one apartment, duplex and rooming houses. The analysis revealed that 40.3% of the houses were family houses, 34.3% were rooming houses, 13% were single houses on one lot occupied by one family, 11.3% were apartments, while 1.3% were duplex.

The analysis also revealed that majority of the residents in the family and rooming houses were of low-income category and residents in the apartments and single house on one lot occupied by one family belonged to middle income category while the bulk of residents in duplexes belonged to the high income category and were senior civil servants.

This study also revealed that socio-economic characteristics such as occupation, educational status, monthly income and income category of respondents, and household size determined the choices of house types.

The study further revealed that large families were residents in rooming and family houses, while small families were residents in houses such as duplexes, apartments and single house on one lot occupied by one family.

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