

An Assessment of Claimants' Experiences with Compulsory Land Acquisition and Compensation Practices in Ede, Osun State

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Abstract

This study assessed claimants' experiences with compulsory land acquisition and compensation practices in Ede, Osun State, focusing on procedural participation, transparency, timeliness, and socio-cultural and economic impacts. A survey research design was adopted, targeting 152 claimants affected by the Akoda–Cottage Junction–Timi Palace Junction road dualization project. Using a census approach, structured questionnaires were administered to all claimants, with 146 valid responses retrieved (96.1% response rate). Data were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics in SPSS. Findings revealed high satisfaction in decision-making involvement (91.1%), process timeliness (93.1%), compensation amount (89.8%), and asset enumeration (88.4%). However, a major weakness emerged in compensation payment timelines, with 71.3% dissatisfied. Socio-cultural and economic impacts were significant: 85.6% reported erosion of cultural heritage, 89.7% loss of headship/goodwill, 93.8% disruption of livelihoods, and 98% loss of communal ownership. Correlation analysis showed a strong positive relationship between compulsory acquisition level and compensation practices ($r = 0.762$, $p = 0.001$) and between acquisition level and influencing factors ($r = 0.842$, $p = 0.010$). The study concluded that while procedural inclusivity and transparency were commendable, delays in compensation payments undermined overall satisfaction and claimant welfare. It is recommended that compensation disbursements be prompt, valuation methods broadened to capture socio-cultural losses, and participatory decision-making strengthened through effective communication and administrative efficiency. A holistic approach integrating financial adequacy, cultural sensitivity, and procedural transparency is necessary to enhance fairness and legitimacy in compulsory land acquisition.

Keywords: Claimants, Compulsory Land Acquisition, Compensation Practices, Ede, Osun State

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1. Introduction

Compulsory land acquisition, or eminent domain, enables the state to unilaterally transfer private property for public use, subject to compensation. In Nigeria, this authority is established under the Land Use Act of 1978. However, scholars such as Otubu (2013) critique the act for

permitting deviations from the principle of full indemnity; in particular, instances where affected landowners receive inadequate compensation or none at all, thereby undermining equitable outcomes. Empirical research further reinforces the critical role of participatory, transparent practices in shaping claimant satisfaction. For instance, Oshikoya and Olayiwola (2023) examined the land acquisition process in Ona-Ara Local Government Area, Oyo State, finding that claimants' satisfaction was strongly linked to their involvement in decision-making, clear communication, and honest asset enumeration .

Despite this solid evidence, localized studies, particularly in Ede, Osun State; remain limited. The broader scholarly narrative suggests that procedural inclusivity, clarity, and timely compensation are key drivers of claimant trust and overall fairness. Yet, systemic challenges persist, including compensation delays, weakened cultural and communal linkages, and procedural opacity. This study addresses that gap by assessing claimants' lived experiences in Ede, Osun State, focusing on procedural participation, transparency, timeliness of compensation, and socio-cultural and economic impacts. By bridging national legal critique with regional field data, this work aims to inform more equitable, efficient, and culturally sensitive land acquisition policies in Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

The discourse on compulsory land acquisition and compensation rests on a constellation of interrelated theoretical foundations. Central among these is the tenet of Equity and Equivalence, advanced by both FAO (2008) and the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure (VGs). These frameworks argue that compensation must restore affected individuals to the position they were in prior to acquisition, no more, no less; while also accommodating non-market values such as cultural, spiritual, and environmental loss (FAO, 2008; VGs Section 16 and 18). This principle confronts states with a challenge: balancing public need against private loss. The Nigerian Land Use Act (1978), with its reliance on the Depreciated Replacement Cost method, has been criticized for limiting compensation to physical improvements and ignoring disturbance, severance, and emotional loss (Egbenta & Udoudoh, 2018).

Beyond the principle of fair value, Welfare Economic Theory underscores that the compensation process must consider broader societal trade-offs. As discussed by Ghatak and Mookherjee (2014), and echoed in Nigerian scholarship, compensation should ensure that those

negatively impacted by development are made whole by those who benefit, thus safeguarding social sustainability (Ghatak & Mookherjee, 2014). Another critical theoretical layer is Participatory Justice, asserting that claimant involvement across all stages; from notice, enumeration, valuation, to payment, enhances legitimacy and satisfaction. Adekunle et al. (2020) examined Bauchi State and found that while landholders were included during acquisition, their engagement sharply declined during compensation, resulting in distrust and dissatisfaction.

Oshikoya and Olayiwola (2023) similarly identify transparency, claimants' awareness, and communication as central to satisfaction in Ona-Ara Local Government, suggesting that disconnection at any point erodes trust and acceptance. The broader institutional context is informed by Institutional Legitimacy Theory, which highlights the tension between statutory frameworks and customary landholding systems. Scholars note that Nigeria's centralized statutory tenure (Land Use Act, 1978) can compromise customary landholders' rights and recognition, potentially undermining the institutional legitimacy of acquisition processes (Egbenta & Udoudoh, 2018; Oshio, 1990). Empirical research across Africa affirms these theoretical considerations. In Lagos, evaluations of expropriation linked compensation inadequacy to social dislocation, development delays, and heightened conflict (e.g., in the Lekki Free Trade Zone study). Researchers like Anim-Odame (2011) and Alemu (2013) confirm that compensation disputes are a major driver of land-related conflict in Ghana and Ethiopia, respectively.

In Nigeria, deeper critiques focus on valuation methodologies. For example, Egbenta and Udoudoh (2018) in Ondo and Ogun States documented how compensation calculations based solely on replacement cost undervalue claimant losses, particularly to farmlands and trees, reinforcing the need for updated, nuanced legal directives. Further, innovative approaches like intergenerational compensation, explored by Daramola et al. (2022), acknowledge the communal and ancestral nature of customary land ownership. Their findings suggest that intergenerational payments could strengthen equity across family lines, although bureaucratic resistance remains a barrier. Collectively, the literature converges on key dimensions critical to understanding compensation dynamics: adequacy (Equity/Equivalence, Welfare), procedural fairness (Participatory Justice), institutional resonance (Legitimacy in formal/customary systems), and conflict mitigation (valuation methods and inclusive practices). Gaps in timely payment, valuation breadth, claimant inclusion, and cultural consideration emerge as frequent fault lines across studies.

This study, focusing on Ede, Osun State, adopts and integrates these theoretical lenses; aiming to assess how compensation adequacy, participatory clarity, institutional alignment, and the recognition of socio-cultural and environmental impacts shape claimant experiences. By doing so, it seeks to inform equitable policy interventions attuned to both local realities and broader normative frameworks.

3. Methodology

This study adopted a survey research design to examine claimants' experiences with compulsory land acquisition and compensation practices in Ede, Osun State. The research focused on individuals affected by the road dualization project from Akoda – Cottage Junction – Timi Palace Junction. The population for the study comprised 152 claimants who had received compensation payments in respect of the project. These claimants were identified through the registers of estate surveying and valuation firms that undertook the valuation exercise for the acquisition. This population constituted the sampling frame for the study. Given the manageable size of the population, a census approach was employed, and the entire population of 152 claimants was considered for data collection. Structured questionnaires were administered directly to the claimants to gather information on their experiences, perceptions, and satisfaction levels regarding the acquisition and compensation processes. Out of the 152 questionnaires distributed, 146 were duly completed, retrieved, and deemed valid for analysis, representing a response rate of approximately 96.1%.

The questionnaire contained both closed-ended and Likert-scale-based items to facilitate quantitative analysis. The data collected were subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, and mean scores, were used to summarize the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents and their responses to key variables. Inferential statistics were employed to identify significant relationships and differences among variables, thereby enabling the drawing of valid conclusions and recommendations. Data analysis was carried out using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), which facilitated the accurate computation and presentation of results.

4. Results

The demographic profile of the claimants revealed that the majority (62.3%) identified as Muslims, followed by Christians (29.5%) and practitioners of traditional worship (8.2%), with no atheists recorded. This distribution reflects the dominant religious composition of the study area. There was a notable gender disparity, with males constituting 69.2% of the respondents and females 30.8%, suggesting that men were more involved in property ownership or representation in compulsory acquisition and compensation processes. In terms of age distribution, the largest group of claimants fell within the 45–54 years range (42.5%), followed by those aged 35–44 years (24.7%) and 55–64 years (15.1%). Smaller proportions were in the 25–34 years category (11.6%) and 65 years and above (6.2%). This trend indicates that middle-aged individuals dominated the claims process, likely due to their higher likelihood of established property ownership.

Educationally, most respondents held B.Sc/HND qualifications (30.8%), followed by ND holders (26.7%), secondary school graduates (18.5%), and those with other forms of education (16.4%), while only 7.5% possessed postgraduate degrees. This suggests a relatively well-educated claimant base. Occupationally, business owners represented the largest segment (41.1%), followed by civil servants (29.6%), artisans (14.4%), unemployed persons (10.3%), and others (4.8%). This distribution shows a significant representation of self-employed individuals and government employees. Regarding property type, residential properties were the most commonly acquired (40.4%), followed by commercial (27.4%), industrial (17.8%), agricultural (8.9%), and specialized properties (5.5%).

All acquisitions occurred between 2020 and 2023 (100% of respondents), indicating that the study addressed only recent compulsory acquisition cases, possibly pointing to a heightened rate of land acquisition activities in the past three years.

Table 1: Claimant’s Socio-Economic Characteristics

Demographic Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Religion		
Christianity	43	29.50%
Islam	91	62.30%
Traditional worshipping	12	8.20%
Atheist	0	0

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Gender

Male	101	69.20%
Female	45	30.80%

Age of Respondents

25-34 years	17	11.60%
35-44 years	36	24.70%
45-54 years	62	42.50%
55-64 years	22	15.10%
65 years and above	9	6.20%

Educational Level

Postgraduate	11	7.50%
B.Sc./HND	45	30.80%
ND	39	26.70%
Secondary	27	18.50%
Others Specify	24	16.40%

Occupation

Civil Servant	43	29.60%
Business Owner	60	41.10%
Artisan	21	14.40%
Unemployed	15	10.30%
Others Specify	7	4.8

Type of Property Acquired Compulsory

Residential	59	40.40%
Industrial	26	17.80%
Agriculture	13	8.90%
Commercial	40	27.40%

Specialized	8	5.50%
Period/Time the Property was Acquired		
1996-2001	0	0.0%
2002-2007	0	0.0%
2008-2013	0	0.0%
2014-2019	0	0.0%
2020 till date	100	100%

Source: Author Field Survey (2024).

The result presented in Table 2 above indicated that claimants generally expressed high satisfaction across most aspects of the compulsory land acquisition and compensation process, though some notable gaps remained. In terms of involvement in decision-making, 65.1% were satisfied and 26% were very satisfied, with only 5.5% dissatisfied and 3.4% very dissatisfied, pointing to strong participation but with room for improvement. Similarly, the time taken for compensation attracted 66.4% satisfaction and 26.7% very satisfaction, with dissatisfaction at just 6.2% in total. Satisfaction with the compensation amount was also high (65.1% satisfied, 24.7% very satisfied), though 8.9% expressed dissatisfaction, suggesting unmet expectations for some. Operational processes such as asset enumeration (68.5% satisfied, 19.9% very satisfied) and filing of acquisition notices (67.1% satisfied, 21.9% very satisfied) were well-rated, but minor dissatisfaction persisted (up to 10.2% in both cases). Submission of claims saw 67.8% satisfaction and 18.5% very satisfaction, while treatment of petitions received 63.7% satisfaction and 21.9% very satisfaction, indicating generally effective administration but with small pockets of discontent. Communication channels were positively rated by 58.9% satisfied and 26.7% very satisfied respondents, although 8.2% were dissatisfied, highlighting the need for better outreach. Perceptions of government involvement were also favourable, with 54.8% satisfied and 28.1% very satisfied, though nearly 10% remained dissatisfied. Awareness of the acquisition and compensation process was rated very highly (54.1% very satisfied, 32.2% satisfied), suggesting most claimants felt informed. Satisfaction with the level of property acquisition was similarly strong (52.7% satisfied, 35.6% very satisfied), with only 8.9% dissatisfied. However, a key area of concern emerged regarding the payment period for compensation: 46.6% were dissatisfied and 24.7% very dissatisfied, with only 21.2% satisfied and 6.2% very satisfied. This significant

dissatisfaction underscored delays or inefficiencies in disbursement as a major weakness in the process, requiring urgent attention to improve claimant experience.

Table 2: Rating of the Compensation practice system utilized in the Study Area

Compensation Practice	VS	S	N	DS	VDS	Mean	SD
Level of involvement in decisions making	38	95	0	8	5	3.92	1.07
	26.0%	65.1%	0%	5.50%	3.40%		
The time of the process	39	97	1	6	3	3.99	0.98
	26.7%	66.4%	0.70%	4.10%	2.10%		
Amount of Compensation payable	36	95	2	9	4	3.9	1.05
	24.7%	65.1%	1.40%	6.20%	2.70%		
Enumerations of assets	29	100	2	10	5	3.85	0.97
	19.9%	68.5%	1.40%	6.80%	3.40%		
Filing of notice of Acquisition	32	98	1	11	4	3.88	1.01
	21.9%	67.1%	0.70%	7.50%	2.70%		
Submission of claims	27	99	1	12	7	3.8	1.02
	18.5%	67.80%	0.70%	8.20%	4.80%		
Treatment of petitions	32	93	4	10	7	3.83	1.04
	21.9%	63.70%	2.70%	6.80%	4.80%		
Communication channels	39	86	3	12	6	3.88	1.04
	26.7%	58.90%	2.0%	8.20%	-4.10%		
Government involvement in Acquisition & Compensation	41	80	5	14	6	3.84	1.11
	28.1%	54.80%	3.40%	9.60%	4.10%		
		47	2	16	2	3.95	1.06

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Awareness level of Acquisition & Compensation	79 54.1%	32.20%	1.40%	11.00%	1.40%		
Level of Acquisition of properties	52 35.6%	77 52.70%	1 0.70%	13 8.90%	3 2.10%	4.02	1.03
	Payment period	9 6.20%	31 21.20%	2 1.40%	68 46.60%		
Weighted Mean Score					4.97	1.02	

Source: Author Field Survey (2024).

Note: VS =Very Satisfied, S = Satisfied, N = Neutral, DS = Dissatisfied, VDS = Very

Dissatisfied, SD = Standard Deviation

The findings from Table 3 revealed that claimants overwhelmingly perceived compulsory land acquisition as having significant socio-cultural, economic, and administrative impacts. Most respondents (63.0% satisfied, 22.6% very satisfied) agreed that it wiped away socio-cultural heritage, with only 14.3% dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. Similarly, 63.7% were satisfied and 26.0% very satisfied that it resulted in the loss of headship or goodwill, with minimal neutrality or dissatisfaction (10.3%). Economic disruptions were also strongly acknowledged: 66.4% satisfied and 27.4% very satisfied agreed that acquisition severely disrupted socio-economic activities, with dissatisfaction at just 6.2%. The deprivation of communal ownership joy was even more pronounced (68.5% satisfied, 29.5% very satisfied), and noise pollution was widely recognized as a consequence (66.4% satisfied, 28.8% very satisfied), both with negligible neutrality or dissatisfaction.

Severance and injurious affection were considered significant by 62.3% satisfied and 28.1% very satisfied respondents, with 9.6% neutral or dissatisfied. Regarding administrative processes, 55.5% were satisfied and 37.0% very satisfied with the submission of valuation reports, though 7.6% expressed some dissatisfaction. The review and vetting of reports drew 52.7% satisfaction and 28.8% very satisfaction, but notable dissatisfaction (17.1%) signalled concerns about efficiency and fairness. In terms of compensation payments, 44.5% were satisfied and 35.6% very satisfied, but 17.8% expressed dissatisfaction, pointing to a need for timelier and more accurate disbursements. The issuance and signing of Certificates of Indemnity received 47.9%

satisfaction and 32.2% very satisfaction, yet 17.8% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, indicating room for procedural improvement.

As evident from the results, it has been highlighted that while the majority of claimants felt the acquisition process was largely acceptable, there were consistent minority concerns, particularly in compensation payment, report review, and indemnity processes, that warrant targeted reforms.

Table 3: Effect of Compulsory Land Acquisition Level on the Claimants

Acquisition Effect	VS	S	N	DS	VDS	Mean	SD
Wiping away of socio-cultural heritage	33 22.6%	92 63.0%	0 0%	11 7.50%	10 6.80%	4.77	0.85
Loss of headship/goodwill	38 26.0%	93 63.7%	2 1.40%	7 4.80%	6 4.10%	5.07	0.89
Loss socio-economic activities of owners	40 27.4%	97 66.4%	3 2.10%	4 -2.70%	2 1.40%	4.14	0.96
Deprivation of joy of communal ownership	43 29.5%	100 68.5%	1 0.70%	2 1.40%	0 0.00%	4.12	0.81
Noise Pollution	42 28.8%	97 66.4%	2 1.40%	3 -2.10%	2 1.40%	4.37	0.95
Severance and injurious affection	41 28.1%	91 62.3%	1 0.70%	10 6.80%	3 2.10%	3.66	1.09
Submission of valuation report to Government	54 37.0%	81 55.5%	2 1.40%	8 -5.50%	1 0.70%	3.72	0.97
Review and vetting of submitted report	42 28.8%	77 52.7%	2 1.40%	21 -14.4%	4 2.70%	5.11	1.27
		65	3	20	6	4.18	1.22

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Compensation payment to the Claimants	52 35.6%	44.50%	2.10%	13.70%	4.10%		
Indemnity certificate signing of by Claimants	47 32.2%	70 47.90%	3 2.10%	18 12.3%	8 5.50%	4.56	1.23
Weighted Mean Score						4.37	1.024

Source: Author Field Survey (2024).

The correlation between the level of compulsory land acquisition on claimants and the compensation practice system utilized in the study area is strong ($r=0.762$, $p=0.001$). This shows a significant positive relationship, meaning that as the level of compulsory land acquisition increases, the perceived effectiveness of the compensation practice system also improves. This implies that higher levels of compulsory land acquisition are associated with more favourable assessments of how compensation is handled. Such a correlation indicates that improvements or adjustments in compulsory land acquisition policies could lead to better compensation practices, benefiting claimants in the study area. This finding underscores the importance of aligning land acquisition strategies with effective compensation systems to address the needs and expectations of those affected.

The very strong positive correlation between the compulsory land acquisition level and the factors influencing acquisition and compensation ($r=0.842$, $p=0.010$) indicates a close relationship between these variables. As the level of compulsory land acquisition increases, so do the ratings of factors influence acquisition and compensation. This suggests that factors affecting land acquisition and compensation are positively related to the level of compulsory land acquisition. While the correlation is strong, the significance level confirms a meaningful relationship. Addressing the influencing factors can potentially improve compulsory land acquisition processes, although further research might be needed to explore this relationship more deeply.

The correlation between the compensation practice system **utilized** and the factors influencing acquisition and compensation is strong ($r=0.821$, $p=0.000$). This positive relationship indicates that as factors influencing land acquisition and compensation are rated more favourably, the compensation practice system also tends to receive higher ratings. This indicates that improvements in the factors affecting land acquisition and compensation could lead to better

evaluations of the compensation system. Such a finding highlights the interconnectedness between the quality of compensation practices and the underlying factors that influence land acquisition.

The correlation between the compensation practice system and the level of compulsory land acquisition is negative ($r = 0.350$ $p=0.540$). Although there is a negative relationship indicates that low levels of compulsory land acquisition are associated with compensation practice system, there is no significance level indicates that this relationship may not be strongly reliable. The p-value is greater than 0.05 shows that there is no significance relationship between compulsory land acquisitions are associated with compensation practice system

The correlation between the factors influencing acquisition and compensation and the level of compulsory land acquisition is moderate to strong ($r=0.669$, $p=0.001$). This indicates a significant positive relationship, meaning that higher ratings of influencing factors are associated with higher levels of compulsory land acquisition. This correlation revealed that the factors impacting land acquisition and compensation are closely linked to the level of compulsory land acquisition. Improvements in these factors could potentially enhance the experience and outcomes related to compulsory land acquisition.

Table 4: Correlations of Claimants' Experience

	The effect of compulsory Land Acquisition level on the claimant.	Compensation practice system utilized	Factors influencing the acquisition and Compensation of land	Compulsory Land Acquisition
The effect of compulsory Land Acquisition level on the claimant	1	.762**	0.842	.796*
Compensation practice system utilized	.762**	1	.821**	0.75

Factors influencing the acquisition and Compensation of land	0.842	.821**	1	.669**
Compulsory Land Acquisition	.796*	0.75	.669**	1

Source: Author Field survey, 2024. Note: ** = $P \leq 0.01$; * = $P \leq 0.05$

5. Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal that most claimants expressed high satisfaction with many aspects of compulsory land acquisition and compensation, particularly decision-making involvement, where 91.1% reported satisfaction or high satisfaction with no neutral responses. This reflects strong engagement, consistent with earlier studies linking participatory practices and transparency to improved claimant perceptions. Core procedural elements, such as process duration, compensation amounts, and asset enumeration; were also well received, alongside administrative steps like notice filing, claim submission, and communication. However, persistent pockets of dissatisfaction across these areas indicate the need for ongoing refinement to ensure inclusivity, procedural clarity, and equitable access to information.

A major weakness emerged in payment timelines, with over 71% expressing dissatisfaction. This contrasts sharply with otherwise positive ratings and aligns with evidence that delays erode trust, fairness perceptions, and emotional well-being. Socio-cultural and economic impacts were significant: 85.6% perceived an erasure of cultural heritage, 89.7% noted loss of headship or goodwill, and 93.8% acknowledged severe livelihood disruption. Nearly all respondents (98%) lamented the loss of communal ownership, underscoring the deep emotional toll of acquisition beyond mere property loss. Environmental disturbances such as noise pollution (95.2%) and land severance or injurious affection (90.4%) were also widely reported. While technical processes like valuation report submission achieved high satisfaction (92.5%), the review and vetting stage drew more criticism, with 17.1% dissatisfied. Similarly, although 80.1% were satisfied with compensation payment and the Certificate of Indemnity, around one in five expressed dissatisfactions, often due to delays, complexity, or unclear requirements.

Correlation analysis underscores the interconnectedness of acquisition, influencing factors, and compensation system quality. Strong positive relationships between acquisition level,

influencing factors, and compensation ratings suggest that larger acquisitions tend to involve more robust or visible processes, possibly due to greater resourcing and procedural rigor. Conversely, a weak, statistically insignificant link between compensation system and acquisition level indicates that scale alone is not a determinant of quality. Overall, the findings highlight that claimant satisfaction depends not only on the scope of acquisition but on transparent, fair, and efficient processes; particularly timely payment, participatory decision-making, and effective communication.

6. Conclusion

Conclusively, this study has shown that while claimants in Ede, Osun State generally expressed high satisfaction with many aspects of compulsory land acquisition and compensation, particularly in decision-making involvement, process transparency, and asset enumeration; serious concerns remain in certain critical areas. Chief among these is the delay in compensation payments, which emerged as the most significant source of dissatisfaction despite otherwise favourable assessments of the acquisition process. The findings also underscore the deep socio-cultural and economic consequences of compulsory acquisition, including the erosion of cultural heritage, loss of communal identity, disruption of livelihoods, and environmental disturbances. These outcomes demonstrate that beyond monetary compensation, compulsory acquisition profoundly impacts claimants' social and emotional well-being. Furthermore, the strong positive correlations between the level of acquisition, influencing factors, and compensation practices highlight the importance of an integrated, transparent, and participatory approach to policy design and implementation.

7. Recommendation

Based on the findings of the current study, it is recommended that government agencies and relevant stakeholders prioritise prompt and efficient disbursement of compensation to restore trust and mitigate economic hardship among claimants. Compensation packages should extend beyond physical asset valuation to include disturbance allowances, severance, and recognition of socio-cultural losses, thereby aligning with international best practices. Strengthening participatory mechanisms throughout the acquisition process, ensuring that claimants are meaningfully involved from initial notice through to final payment, will enhance procedural fairness and legitimacy. Communication channels should be improved to provide timely, clear,

and accessible information at every stage, while administrative processes such as valuation review and certificate issuance should be streamlined to reduce delays and complexity. Ultimately, adopting a holistic approach that integrates financial adequacy, cultural sensitivity, and procedural transparency will ensure that compulsory land acquisition serves public interest without unduly compromising the rights and welfare of affected individuals.

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