

Ibadan As A Gasping City: A View of Urban Slums

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Abstract. This study examines the key factors affecting urban sustainability in Ibadan, Nigeria, with a focus on slum communities. Using a cross-sectional survey design, the research aims to identify statistical relationships between sustainability and variables such as access to clean water, healthcare, education, poverty levels, environmental degradation, and employment opportunities. Data were collected from four purposively selected slum communities—Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado—using a multistage sampling technique, resulting in a sample size of 400 respondents. A structured questionnaire was administered to measure indicators related to basic services, environmental quality, and socio-economic conditions. Descriptive statistics and cross-tabulation were used for data analysis. The findings reveal that healthcare access, poverty, environmental degradation, limited educational opportunities, and unemployment are significant challenges in these communities. Poor healthcare services, high poverty levels, inadequate waste management, and environmental pollution contribute to socio-economic difficulties. The study concludes that addressing these challenges requires multi-dimensional strategies, including improved infrastructure, poverty alleviation programs, stronger environmental policies, enhanced education systems, and greater employment opportunities. Collaborative efforts from both government and private sector stakeholders are essential for fostering sustainable development in Ibadan's slum communities.

Keywords: Ibadan, slums, urban sustainability, poverty, healthcare, education, employment, environmental degradation, urbanization.

1.0 Introduction

Rapid urbanization in developing countries has intensified debates around sustainable city management, social inequality, and urban resilience. In Nigeria, these challenges are particularly evident in rapidly expanding metropolitan cities where population growth has outpaced infrastructure development. Understanding how historical urban development interacts with present socio-spatial realities is therefore critical to addressing contemporary urban challenges. This study is situated within this debate by examining Ibadan as a case that reflects broader urban transformation dynamics in southwestern Nigeria.

Ibadan matters as a research site because it represents a convergence of historical prominence, rapid demographic expansion, and persistent urban inequality. While existing studies often emphasize macro-level urban growth statistics, fewer studies interrogate how historical patterns of urban development contribute to present-day spatial concentration of informal settlements and infrastructural stress. By focusing on Ibadan, this study responds directly to ongoing scholarly debates on sustainable urban development, planning failure, and socio-economic vulnerability in African cities.

Among the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria, Oyo State is a prominent state in the South-West geopolitical zone. The state covers an estimated land area of approximately 28,246.264 km², with a population of about 6,182,172 people based on the most recent national census (National Population Commission, 2010). The capital of Oyo State is Ibadan, which is one of the largest and most populous cities in Nigeria, alongside Lagos and Kano.

Ibadan holds significant historical importance as a former centre of trade and industry during the pre-colonial and colonial periods. It was once the commercial hub during the cocoa and

rubber agricultural boom, largely due to its strategic connectivity through road networks from Lagos and railway lines from northern Nigeria. The city also served as the capital of the former Western Region of Nigeria and hosts notable landmarks such as the first skyscraper (Cocoa House), Nigeria's first university, and the first television station, alongside several early manufacturing establishments, many of which are now defunct (Oyo, 2025).

Metropolitan Ibadan consists of eleven local government areas (LGAs), comprising five urban and six semi-urban LGAs. The five urban LGAs; Ibadan North, Ibadan North-East, Ibadan North-West, Ibadan South-East, and Ibadan South-West, are characterized by high population density and extensive informal settlements. The study concentrates on three LGAs; Ibadan North-East, Ibadan South-East, and Ibadan South-West, due to their pronounced slum conditions.

Within Ibadan North-East LGA, wards such as Beere, Olorunsogo, Oje, and Oke-Irefin exhibit significant slum characteristics. In Ibadan South-East LGA, slum-prone wards include Esu Awele, Eleta, Agbongbon, Bode, and parts of Oke-Ado. Similarly, areas such as Oja Oba, Orita Merin, and parts of Idi-Arere in Ibadan South-West LGA demonstrate high levels of infrastructural deficit and housing congestion (Oyo, 2025).

As a rapidly expanding metropolitan capital, Ibadan increasingly faces infrastructural decay, environmental stress, and socio-economic vulnerability, which have earned it the description of a “gasping city.” These characteristics make Ibadan a suitable empirical setting for examining contemporary urban challenges within the broader discourse on sustainable urban development in Nigeria.

Despite Ibadan's historical prominence and rapid urban expansion, the city is increasingly confronted with intertwined environmental and infrastructural challenges that threaten its sustainability and livability. The core problem addressed by this paper is the absence of integrated, context-specific empirical evidence explaining how environmental degradation and infrastructural inadequacies jointly affect urban livability in Ibadan. Existing studies tend to discuss these challenges in isolation, leaving a gap in understanding their combined implications for sustainable urban development.

One of the most critical challenges facing Ibadan is environmental degradation, manifested through air and water pollution as well as ineffective solid waste management systems. These environmental problems have contributed to declining air quality and increased public health risks among residents (Enette & Achike, 2018; Iwara, 2018). Rather than merely describing these conditions, this study situates them within broader debates on urban environmental governance in rapidly growing African cities.

In addition to environmental concerns, Ibadan suffers from persistent infrastructural deficits. Despite its metropolitan status, the city lacks adequate and reliable access to essential services such as electricity, potable water, and efficient transportation networks (Filani et al., 2018). These shortcomings negatively affect residents' quality of life and constrain business operations, thereby limiting the city's economic potential (Jaiyeoba, 2019). Furthermore, rapid population growth has intensified pressure on existing infrastructure, leading to overcrowding, traffic congestion, and shortages of affordable housing.

This research contributes new knowledge by empirically examining the interactions between environmental degradation, infrastructural inadequacy, and population pressure in Ibadan, rather than treating them as separate urban challenges. By providing localized, evidence-based insights, the study advances understanding of how these factors collectively shape urban livability and sustainability outcomes in secondary African cities. The findings are expected to

inform urban planning strategies and policy interventions tailored to the socio-spatial realities of Ibadan and similar urban contexts in Nigeria.

2.0 Literature Review

Theoretical Underpinning

Social Exclusion Theory

Social Exclusion Theory examines the ways in which certain individuals or groups in society are systematically marginalized, denied full access to resources, opportunities, and participation in social, economic, and political life (Cedeño, 2023). This theory is relevant in the context of urban slums and poverty, as it helps to understand how individuals living in these areas experience exclusion from mainstream society, which contributes to their continued marginalization and poor living conditions (Mishra, 2024). The main idea behind Social Exclusion Theory is that exclusion is not only about the lack of material resources but also about the denial of social participation (Mela & Toldo, 2019). People who are excluded from society are often unable to access the opportunities needed to improve their lives, leading to cycles of poverty and inequality (Boardman *et al.*, 2022). In the case of urbanization and the formation of slums, Social Exclusion Theory helps to explain why certain groups are left behind as cities expand (Yekeen & Misnan, 2024). These groups often live in areas that lack basic infrastructure and services, such as clean water, proper sanitation, and affordable housing. As a result, they are pushed into informal settlements or slums, where they face continued exclusion from the benefits of urban growth (Shittu *et al.*, 2018). One of the key factors contributing to social exclusion in urban slums is limited access to quality housing (Adedeji, 2023). As cities grow rapidly, the demand for housing often outpaces the availability of affordable, formal housing. This forces many people to settle in overcrowded and poorly planned areas, where they live in substandard conditions without access to essential services (Yekeen & Misnan, 2024). The inability to afford adequate housing is a direct consequence of economic exclusion, as slum dwellers often have limited access to well-paying jobs or financial resources, making it difficult for them to secure proper living conditions (Abdulhadi *et al.*, 2024). Economic marginalization is another critical aspect of Social Exclusion Theory in urban slums (Abu-Hena *et al.*, 2018). Many slum dwellers are excluded from the formal job market due to a lack of education, skills, or discrimination (Asuquo, 2023). This results in low-income levels and limited economic mobility, trapping individuals and families in poverty. With few opportunities to improve their financial situation, these communities become increasingly isolated from mainstream society, contributing to the growth of slums and the continuation of urban poverty (Eke, 2023).

Social Exclusion Theory can be used to analyze how the urban poor, particularly those living in slums, are excluded from accessing quality housing, employment opportunities, and basic services (Ayinmoro, 2018). This exclusion perpetuates their socio-economic hardships and limits their capacity to improve their living conditions, thereby exacerbating the cycle of poverty and informal settlement growth (Oladehinde *et al.*, 2024). Through a focus on inclusion, the theory also suggests potential strategies for improving the lives of slum dwellers, such as increasing access to affordable housing, job creation, education, healthcare, and social participation (Popogbe, *et al.*, 2023).

Empirical Review

Current literature on urbanization and slum development in Nigeria consistently emphasizes the role of rapid population growth, weak urban planning frameworks, and persistent socio-

economic deprivation in shaping informal settlements across both large metropolitan cities and emerging urban centres. Rather than treating slum formation as a city-specific anomaly, recent studies present it as a structural outcome of uneven urban development.

Makinde (2012) provides an early but foundational analysis of Ibadan's transformation from a historical Yoruba war camp into a rapidly urbanizing city. The study demonstrates that uncontrolled population growth combined with the absence of comprehensive urban planning has resulted in widespread slum proliferation. Poverty and infrastructural inadequacy are identified as reinforcing forces that sustain poor housing conditions, suggesting that slum formation is both a socio-economic and institutional challenge.

Extending this argument beyond Ibadan, Agbor et al. (2021) reveal similar dynamics in Ugep Urban, Cross River State, where rapid urbanization has intensified population density, overcrowding, and substandard housing conditions. Their findings confirm that poverty, rural–urban migration, and limited access to basic amenities are not location-specific but constitute recurring drivers of slum development across Nigerian cities. The prevalence of health risks and criminal activities further underscores the social costs of unmanaged urban growth.

More recent evidence by Oladehinde et al. (2024) deepens this understanding by empirically identifying the immediate physical and institutional factors sustaining slum conditions within Ibadan's residential core. Using the Relative Importance Index, the study highlights lack of tenure security, poor sanitation, unplanned development, and ageing housing stock as dominant contributors to slum persistence. These findings reinforce earlier arguments that slum formation is not merely the result of population pressure but also reflects long-term governance and housing policy failures.

Taken together, the literature indicates a convergence of views that slum development in Nigerian cities is driven by the interaction of rapid urbanization, poverty, infrastructural deficits, weak planning institutions, and housing informality. While earlier studies emphasize historical growth patterns, more recent works focus on measurable socio-economic and institutional determinants. However, despite this growing body of research, limited attention has been given to integrated, city-specific analyses that connect environmental conditions, infrastructure inadequacy, and population dynamics within a single empirical framework, particularly in Ibadan. This gap provides the basis for the present study.

3.0 Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to investigate key factors affecting urban sustainability in Ibadan, Nigeria. The design was chosen to enable the collection and analysis of measurable data, facilitating the identification of statistical relationships between sustainability and variables such as access to clean water, healthcare, education, poverty levels, environmental degradation, and employment opportunities. The research was conducted in Ibadan, the capital of Oyo State, located in the southwestern region of Nigeria. Ibadan is one of the largest cities in West Africa and is characterized by a mix of formal and informal settlements. A significant portion of its urban population resides in slum communities marked by overcrowding, poor housing quality, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to essential services. The target population comprised residents of slum communities within the Ibadan metropolis identified by urban planning agencies and previous empirical studies as environmentally and socio-economically vulnerable areas (Makinde, 2012; Oladehinde et al., 2024). Four slum communities; Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado, were purposively selected based on high population density, low socio-economic status, environmental risk

exposure, and prominence in previous urban studies. A multistage sampling technique was employed:

Stage One (Purposive Sampling): Selection of the four slum communities (Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado)

Stage Two (Systematic Random Sampling): Selection of households within each community using a fixed sampling interval derived from estimated household listings.

A total sample size of 400 respondents was proportionally distributed across the four communities based on estimated household population size to ensure representativeness. Primary data were collected through the administration of a structured questionnaire, which was designed to measure indicators such as access to basic services, environmental quality, poverty levels, education, and employment status. The questionnaire was pilot-tested in Agbeni slum community, which was not included in the main study sample, to assess reliability and validity. Necessary adjustments were made to improve clarity and internal consistency. Necessary adjustments were made to enhance clarity and ensure consistency. Ethical approval for the study was obtained from Lead City University Research Ethics Committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to questionnaire administration, and confidentiality of responses was assured. Data collected were coded and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 26. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents. To explore the distribution of responses across the four selected communities, cross tabulation was employed.

Table 1: Distribution of Sample Size Across Selected Slum Communities

Slum Community	Estimated Population Size	Sampling Technique	Number of Questionnaires
Beere	High	Systematic random	120
Oja-Oba	Moderate	Systematic random	100
Mokola	Moderate	Systematic random	90
Oke-Ado	Lower	Systematic random	90
Total	—	—	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

4.1 Results

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Beere (100)	Oja-Oba (100)	Mokola (100)	Oke-Ado (100)	Total (400)
Sex					
Male	42 (42.0%)	67(67.0%)	38 (38.0%)	39 (39.0%)	186 (46.5%)
Female	58 (58.0%)	33 (33.0%)	62 (62.0%)	61 (61.0%)	214 (53.5%)
Age					

18–25	19 (19.0%)	15 (15.0%)	35 (35.0%)	20 (20.0%)	89 (22.3%)
26–35	28 (28.0%)	41 (41.0%)	22 (22.0%)	27 (27.0%)	118 (29.5%)
36–45	25 (25.0%)	23 (23.0%)	27 (27.0%)	21 (21.0%)	96 (24.0%)
46 and above	28 (28.0%)	21 (21.0%)	16 (16.0%)	32 (32.0%)	97 (24.3%)
Marital Status					
Single	35 (35.0%)	49 (49.0%)	28 (28.0%)	36 (36.0%)	148 (37.0%)
Married	40 (40.0%)	36 (36.0%)	48 (48.0%)	35 (35.0%)	159 (39.8%)
Divorced	8 (8.0%)	6 (6.0%)	10 (10.0%)	7 (7.0%)	31 (7.8%)
Widowed	17 (17.0%)	9 (9.0%)	14 (14.0%)	22 (22.0%)	62 (15.5%)
Level of Education					
No Formal Education	16 (16.0%)	10 (10.0%)	5 (5.0%)	7 (7.0%)	38 (9.5%)
Primary	11 (11.0%)	13 (13.0%)	9 (9.0%)	8 (8.0%)	41 (10.3%)
Secondary	45 (45.0%)	28 (28.0%)	36 (36.0%)	32 (32.0%)	141 (35.3%)
Tertiary	28 (28.0%)	49 (49.0%)	50 (50.0%)	53 (53.0%)	180 (45.0%)
Occupation					
Unemployed	31 (31.0%)	17 (17.0%)	22 (22.0%)	21 (21.0%)	91 (22.8%)
Self-employed	20 (20.0%)	30 (30.0%)	25 (25.0%)	19 (19.0%)	94 (23.5%)
Public Sector	26 (26.0%)	39 (39.0%)	33 (33.0%)	25 (25.0%)	123 (30.8%)
Private Sector	12 (12.0%)	8 (8.0%)	14 (14.0%)	27 (27.0%)	61 (15.3%)
Student	11 (11.0%)	6 (6.0%)	6 (6.0%)	8 (8.0%)	31 (7.8%)
Monthly Income					
Below ₦30,000	51 (51.0%)	33 (33.0%)	28 (28.0%)	48 (48.0%)	160 (40.0%)
₦30,000– ₦59,999	21 (21.0%)	38 (38.0%)	26 (26.0%)	19 (19.0%)	104 (26.0%)
₦60,000– ₦89,999	18 (18.0%)	17 (17.0%)	34 (34.0%)	16 (16.0%)	85 (21.3%)
₦90,000 and above	10 (10.0%)	12 (12.0%)	12 (12.0%)	17 (17.0%)	51 (12.8%)

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 presented the demographic characteristics of respondent. Out of the 400 respondents surveyed across the four communities, there was a slightly higher proportion of females than

males. 186 respondents were male, representing 46.5% of the population, while 214 respondents were female, making up 53.5%. Beere had 42 males and 58 females, Oja-Oba had 67 males and 33 females, Mokola had 38 males and 62 females, and Oke-Ado comprised 39 males and 61 females.

When examining the age distribution, the largest group of respondents fell within the 26–35 years age range, accounting for 29.5% of the total population. Within this group, Beere had 28 respondents, Oja-Oba had 41, Mokola recorded 22, and Oke-Ado had 27. The 18–25 years age group constituted 22.3% of the respondents, with 19 from Beere, 15 from Oja-Oba, 35 from Mokola, and 20 from Oke-Ado. Meanwhile, 24% of the respondents were aged 36–45 years, including 25 from Beere, 23 from Oja-Oba, 27 from Mokola, and 21 from Oke-Ado. 24.3% of the respondents were 46 years and above, distributed as 28 from Beere, 21 from Oja-Oba, 16 from Mokola, and 32 from Oke-Ado.

Marital status data revealed that 37% of the respondents were single, with Beere contributing 35, Oja-Oba 49, Mokola 28, and Oke-Ado 36 individuals. Married respondents made up 39.8% of the total, with 40 from Beere, 36 from Oja-Oba, 48 from Mokola, and 35 from Oke-Ado. Furthermore, divorced individuals represented 7.8% of the population, including 8 from Beere, 6 from Oja-Oba, 10 from Mokola, and 7 from Oke-Ado. Lastly, widowed respondents accounted for 15.5%, distributed as 17 from Beere, 9 from Oja-Oba, 14 from Mokola, and 22 from Oke-Ado.

Educational attainment was another critical demographic factor. Respondents with tertiary education formed the largest group at 45%, with Beere recording 28, Oja-Oba 49, Mokola 50, and Oke-Ado 53. Secondary education was the next most common level, representing 35.3% of the respondents. These included 45 individuals from Beere, 28 from Oja-Oba, 36 from Mokola, and 32 from Oke-Ado. Primary education accounted for 10.3% of the total, distributed as 11 from Beere, 13 from Oja-Oba, 9 from Mokola, and 8 from Oke-Ado. Finally, 9.5% of the respondents had no formal education, with 16 from Beere, 10 from Oja-Oba, 5 from Mokola, and 7 from Oke-Ado.

In terms of occupation, public sector workers represented the largest segment at 30.8%, comprising 26 respondents from Beere, 39 from Oja-Oba, 33 from Mokola, and 25 from Oke-Ado. Self-employed individuals followed, accounting for 23.5% of the total. These included 20 from Beere, 30 from Oja-Oba, 25 from Mokola, and 19 from Oke-Ado. Unemployed respondents made up 22.8%, with 31 from Beere, 17 from Oja-Oba, 22 from Mokola, and 21 from Oke-Ado. Private sector workers constituted 15.3%, including 12 from Beere, 8 from Oja-Oba, 14 from Mokola, and 27 from Oke-Ado. Students were the smallest group, representing 7.8%, with 11 from Beere, 6 from Oja-Oba, 6 from Mokola, and 8 from Oke-Ado.

Regarding monthly income, 40% of respondents earned below ₦30,000, comprising 51 from Beere, 33 from Oja-Oba, 28 from Mokola, and 48 from Oke-Ado. Those earning between ₦30,000 and ₦59,999 accounted for 26%, including 21 from Beere, 38 from Oja-Oba, 26 from Mokola, and 19 from Oke-Ado. Respondents earning between ₦60,000 and ₦89,999 represented 21.3%, with 18 from Beere, 17 from Oja-Oba, 34 from Mokola, and 16 from Oke-Ado. Finally, 12.8% of the respondents earned ₦90,000 and above, distributed as 10 from Beere, 12 from Oja-Oba, 12 from Mokola, and 17 from Oke-Ado.

Table 3: Access to Clean Water

Question	Response	Beere	Oja-Oba	Mokola	Oke-Ado	Total
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1	I have easy access to clean and safe drinking water.	Strongly Disagreed	30	25	12	10	77
		Disagreed	45	40	39	33	157
		Agreed	15	20	28	38	101
		Strongly Agreed	10	15	21	19	65
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
2	Water supply in my community is regular and reliable.	Strongly Disagreed	38	32	26	21	117
		Disagreed	45	43	35	31	154
		Agreed	10	15	24	33	82
		Strongly Agreed	7	10	15	15	47
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
3	Adequate public water facilities are available.	Strongly Disagreed	40	35	29	24	128
		Disagreed	39	42	31	35	147
		Agreed	11	16	28	32	87
		Strongly Agreed	10	7	12	9	38
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
4	Water quality is safe without treatment.	Strongly Disagreed	36	30	28	22	116
		Disagreed	33	40	36	32	141
		Agreed	22	18	22	32	94
		Strongly Agreed	9	12	14	14	49
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
5	I experience frequent waterborne diseases.	Strongly Disagreed	25	22	20	15	82
		Disagreed	40	43	35	38	156
		Agreed	26	28	30	32	116
		Strongly Agreed	9	7	15	15	46
		Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the results presented in Table 3, access to clean water was a common challenge across the four communities of Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado, with Beere and Oja-Oba showing the most significant dissatisfaction. In Beere, a majority of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with statements on easy access to safe drinking water, the reliability of the water supply, and the availability of adequate public water facilities. Similarly, Oja-Oba faced widespread concerns about water quality, with many respondents disagreeing that their water was safe without treatment. Mokola's responses were more balanced, with some respondents indicating satisfaction, although issues such as inadequate water facilities and unsafe water persisted. Oke-Ado showed relatively better access and quality, with a greater proportion of respondents agreeing that water supply was reliable and water quality was acceptable, though some concerns about infrastructure and waterborne diseases remained.

Despite varying levels of satisfaction, all communities expressed significant concerns regarding the adequacy of public water facilities and the safety of drinking water without treatment. The issue of waterborne diseases was less prevalent, but still a concern for some respondents, especially in Beere and Oja-Oba. Oke-Ado showed slightly better conditions compared to the other three communities, all respondents highlighted critical areas for improvement in water access, quality, and infrastructure.

Table 4: Access to Healthcare

S/N	Question	Response	Beere	Oja-Oba	Mokola	Oke-Ado	Total
1	There is a health facility within walking distance from my home.	Strongly Disagreed	18	29	24	23	94
		Disagreed	35	41	44	52	172
		Agreed	42	27	25	14	108
		Strongly Agreed	5	3	7	11	26
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
2	I am able to afford healthcare services when needed.	Strongly Disagreed	27	33	29	37	126
		Disagreed	38	45	33	28	144
		Agreed	25	19	21	17	82
		Strongly Agreed	10	3	17	18	48
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
3	The healthcare services in my area are of good quality.	Strongly Disagreed	41	47	39	32	159
		Disagreed	32	34	41	47	154
		Agreed	15	9	13	15	52
		Strongly Agreed	12	10	7	6	35
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
4	Healthcare facilities in my area are well-equipped to handle emergencies.	Strongly Disagreed	31	26	30	24	111
		Disagreed	39	41	46	39	165
		Agreed	20	21	17	22	80
		Strongly Agreed	10	12	7	15	44
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
5	The government provides adequate healthcare services in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	44	52	36	34	166
		Disagreed	31	28	38	42	139
		Agreed	18	10	17	16	61
		Strongly Agreed	7	10	9	8	34
		Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In Table 4, access to healthcare services across Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado reveals significant challenges. In Beere and Oja-Oba, respondents expressed widespread dissatisfaction with the proximity and affordability of healthcare facilities, as well as concerns over the quality of healthcare services. Many respondents from both communities also disagreed that their healthcare facilities were well-equipped to handle emergencies. Mokola respondents also expressed dissatisfaction, particularly about emergency care facilities, but there was some balance in the responses regarding the quality of healthcare services. Oke-Ado showed relatively more positive feedback, especially regarding the accessibility of healthcare services and government-provided healthcare, though concerns about affordability and emergency care persisted.

Across all communities, there was a general sentiment of dissatisfaction with the affordability of healthcare services, with many respondents indicating that they could not afford services when needed. The quality of healthcare services was also a concern, with many respondents strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with statements about the adequacy of healthcare facilities and their ability to handle emergencies. While Oke-Ado reported relatively better access and satisfaction, significant challenges remain in all communities regarding healthcare accessibility, affordability, and quality, suggesting a need for improvements in these areas to meet the needs of the residents.

Table 5: Poverty Status

S/N	Question	Response	Beere	Oja-Oba	Mokola	Oke-Ado	Total
1	The majority of people in my community live below the poverty line.	Strongly Disagreed	7	12	17	9	45
		Disagreed	25	30	38	45	138
		Agreed	44	41	31	29	145
		Strongly Agreed	24	17	14	17	72
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
2	There is a lack of government support for the poor in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	9	6	11	12	38
		Disagreed	33	37	32	41	143
		Agreed	42	44	39	28	153
		Strongly Agreed	16	13	18	19	66
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
3	Many people in my community struggle to meet basic needs such as food and shelter.	Strongly Disagreed	17	14	22	11	64
		Disagreed	41	39	45	42	167
		Agreed	29	30	21	27	107
		Strongly Agreed	13	17	12	20	62
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
4	Poverty in my community is caused by limited access	Strongly Disagreed	11	4	8	7	30
		Disagreed					

	to employment opportunities.						
		Disagreed	25	29	35	38	127
		Agreed	42	45	43	35	165
		Strongly	22	22	14	20	78
		Agreed					
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
5	The lack of access to clean water and sanitation contributes to poverty in my community.	Strongly	16	10	19	8	53
		Disagreed					
		Disagreed	27	31	42	49	149
		Agreed	38	37	30	28	133
		Strongly	19	22	9	15	65
		Agreed					
		Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the result presented in table 5, the majority of respondents across the four slum communities, including Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado, acknowledged the widespread poverty in their areas. Many agreed that a significant portion of the population lived below the poverty line, with Beere and Oja-Oba showing the highest levels of agreement. A large number of respondents also identified the lack of government support and limited access to employment opportunities as primary causes of poverty. Additionally, many residents pointed out the lack of access to clean water and sanitation as contributing factors to their poverty.

However, when it came to the struggle to meet basic needs such as food and shelter, responses varied, with less consensus among the communities. Beere and Oja-Oba had higher levels of agreement on the poverty-related challenges compared to Mokola and Oke-Ado, which indicated some differences in experiences and perceptions of deprivation. The results suggested a recognition of systemic issues driving poverty in these communities, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions addressing both employment and basic service access.

Table 6: Environmental Degradation

S/N	Question	Response	Beere	Oja-Oba	Mokola	Oke-Ado	Total
1	My community experiences frequent environmental pollution.	Strongly	13	23	17	15	68
		Disagreed					
		Disagreed	37	34	41	48	160
		Agreed	34	32	32	30	128
		Strongly	16	11	10	7	44
		Agreed					
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
2	Waste management practices in my community contribute to environmental degradation.	Strongly	9	7	5	6	27
		Disagreed					
		Disagreed	35	31	41	46	153
		Agreed	37	42	48	32	159

		Strongly Agreed	19	20	6	16	61
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
3	Industrial activities in my community have caused environmental degradation.	Strongly Disagreed	7	14	9	6	36
		Disagreed	29	33	41	42	145
		Agreed	44	45	34	38	161
		Strongly Agreed	20	8	16	14	58
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
4	I feel that environmental degradation negatively impacts my quality of life.	Strongly Disagreed	9	7	6	9	31
		Disagreed	31	33	39	38	141
		Agreed	47	43	37	36	163
		Strongly Agreed	13	17	18	17	65
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
5	There are sufficient government policies in place to address environmental degradation in my area.	Strongly Disagreed	34	25	38	26	123
		Disagreed	41	39	34	37	151
		Agreed	19	28	18	28	93
		Strongly Agreed	6	8	10	9	33
		Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the result presented in table 6, environmental pollution was a significant concern across the four slum communities, with respondents in Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado agreeing that their communities experienced frequent environmental pollution. While the majority agreed, the extent of agreement varied, with Beere and Mokola showing higher levels of concern. Furthermore, waste management practices were also seen as a contributing factor to environmental degradation, particularly in Oja-Oba and Mokola, where many respondents acknowledged inadequate waste management systems. Industrial activities, particularly in Beere and Oja-Oba, were perceived to be a major cause of environmental degradation, further emphasizing the pressing need for proper waste management and regulation of industrial activities.

On the impact of environmental degradation on their quality of life, the majority of respondents across all communities acknowledged the negative effects it had on their daily living conditions. However, despite these concerns, many respondents felt that government policies addressing environmental degradation were insufficient or ineffective. The highest levels of dissatisfaction were observed in Beere and Oja-Oba, where respondents largely disagreed with the notion that sufficient government policies were in place. These findings indicate that while there is widespread awareness of environmental degradation, there is also a strong sentiment that more effective policies and actions are needed to address the issue.

Table 7: Educational Opportunities

S/N	Question	Response	Beere	Oja-Oba	Mokola	Oke-Ado	Total
1	There are sufficient educational institutions (e.g., schools) in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	18	20	22	19	79
		Disagreed	42	41	36	45	164
		Agreed	28	25	32	27	112
		Strongly Agreed	12	14	10	9	45
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
2	The quality of education provided in my community is satisfactory.	Strongly Disagreed	24	20	18	22	84
		Disagreed	37	42	39	40	158
		Agreed	29	28	32	30	119
		Strongly Agreed	10	10	11	8	39
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
3	There are enough qualified teachers in the schools in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	15	12	18	21	66
		Disagreed	34	32	31	36	133
		Agreed	38	40	33	32	143
		Strongly Agreed	13	16	18	11	58
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
4	I feel that education is a key factor in reducing poverty in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	20	18	21	22	81
		Disagreed	32	35	37	34	138
		Agreed	30	28	28	31	117
		Strongly Agreed	18	19	14	13	64
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
5	There are programs that support the education of marginalized groups (e.g., girls, disabled).	Strongly Disagreed	22	20	19	21	82
		Disagreed	38	40	41	39	158
		Agreed	30	27	30	32	119
		Strongly Agreed	10	13	10	8	41
		Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the result presented in table 7, the respondents from the four communities of Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado generally expressed concerns about the availability and quality of education in their areas. Many disagreed with the statement that there were sufficient educational institutions in their communities, with Beere and Oja-Oba showing the highest levels of dissatisfaction. A significant proportion also disagreed that the quality of education

was satisfactory, indicating that while schools are present, the resources and quality of education may not meet expectations. Similarly, when it came to the availability of qualified teachers, many respondents were not satisfied, particularly in Oja-Oba and Mokola. Despite some respondents agreeing that education could play a key role in reducing poverty, there was also a recognition that educational support programs for marginalized groups, such as girls and the disabled, were insufficient.

The data also showed that the respondents were divided on the effectiveness of programs supporting marginalized groups, with a large portion disagreeing that such programs were sufficient in their communities. The responses indicated that although education was viewed as a crucial factor in poverty reduction, there were widespread concerns about the adequacy of education infrastructure, teacher qualifications, and specialized programs for vulnerable populations. The findings suggest a need for more investment in educational facilities, teacher training, and inclusive education programs to address the challenges faced by the communities.

Table 8: Employment Opportunities

S/N	Question	Response	Beere	Oja-Oba	Mokola	Oke-Ado	Total
1	There are enough job opportunities available for young people in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	21	19	23	28	91
		Disagreed	35	36	32	33	136
		Agreed	27	30	29	26	112
		Strongly Agreed	17	15	16	13	61
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
2	I have access to employment opportunities that match my skills and qualifications.	Strongly Disagreed	28	25	24	26	103
		Disagreed	40	38	35	41	154
		Agreed	22	26	27	20	95
		Strongly Agreed	10	11	14	13	48
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
3	The government has programs that create jobs in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	18	22	21	20	81
		Disagreed	33	34	36	38	141
		Agreed	35	32	30	31	128
		Strongly Agreed	14	12	13	11	50
		Total	100	100	100	100	400
4	Unemployment is a significant issue in my community.	Strongly Disagreed	14	10	13	15	52
		Disagreed	21	28	25	24	98
		Agreed	44	42	38	39	163
		Strongly Agreed	21	20	24	22	87

5	Vocational and skill development programs are available to help people find employment.	Total	100	100	100	100	400
		Strongly Disagreed	17	15	19	20	71
		Disagreed	36	38	40	42	156
		Agreed	31	30	28	29	118
		Strongly Agreed	16	17	13	9	55
		Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2025

In the result, the responses from the communities of Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado indicate significant challenges related to unemployment and job opportunities, which are major contributors to the socio-economic struggles within these slums in Ibadan. A considerable number of respondents across these areas expressed dissatisfaction with the availability of job opportunities for young people, with Oke-Ado, in particular, showing high levels of dissatisfaction. Many also reported a disconnect between their qualifications and the employment opportunities available to them, highlighting a mismatch between the workforce and job market needs. This lack of alignment in job availability and skills is a critical issue in these communities, exacerbating the poverty and marginalization already prevalent in the region.

Furthermore, while some respondents acknowledged the existence of government programs aimed at job creation and skill development, many felt that these programs were inadequate or ineffective in addressing the unemployment crisis. The responses suggest that while vocational training and skill development initiatives were available, they were not sufficient to combat the widespread unemployment in the slums. Many individuals in these communities strongly agreed that unemployment was a significant issue, reflecting the need for more comprehensive and accessible employment programs that can provide the necessary support to reduce the high levels of joblessness and improve the living conditions in Ibadan's slums.

4.2 Discussion of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendation

The findings of this study reveal important insights into the socio-economic and environmental conditions shaping urban sustainability in selected slum communities of Ibadan. The demographic profile of respondents indicates a slightly higher representation of females than males, suggesting that women constitute a significant proportion of residents in informal settlements. This pattern reflects broader urban poverty dynamics in Nigeria, where women are often disproportionately exposed to housing insecurity, informal livelihoods, and limited access to urban services (Citaristi, 2022; Nchor, 2023). The dominance of respondents within the economically active age bracket further suggests that slum communities are not merely spaces of dependency but are largely inhabited by potentially productive individuals constrained by structural and institutional barriers within the urban system (Abdulkareem et al., 2023).

Despite the relatively high proportion of respondents with secondary and tertiary education, the study reveals persistently low-income levels and high unemployment rates across the communities. This finding aligns with recent studies which argue that educational attainment alone does not guarantee improved economic outcomes in poorly serviced urban environments (Ezeudu & Tukur, 2024; Edwards-Fapohunda & Adediji, 2024). However, this study extends

existing knowledge by demonstrating a pronounced disconnect between education and livelihood opportunities within slum contexts in Ibadan, indicating a structural mismatch between skills acquisition and the urban labor market. This challenges the assumption that human capital development alone can resolve urban poverty without complementary economic and infrastructural reforms (Canton, 2021).

Access to clean and reliable water emerged as a major concern across all four communities, with Beere and Oja-Oba exhibiting the most severe challenges. Although Oke-Ado showed relatively better conditions, no community could be considered adequately serviced. These findings are consistent with recent research identifying water insecurity as a defining characteristic of slum environments in Nigerian cities (Ogunbode et al., 2024; Ogaro et al. 2024). What distinguishes this study is its comparative

Healthcare accessibility and affordability were also found to be inadequate across all communities. Respondents consistently expressed dissatisfaction with the cost, quality, and emergency preparedness of healthcare facilities, reinforcing recent findings that slum residents face both physical and financial barriers to healthcare access (Friesen et al., 2025)). While Oke-Ado showed relatively better access, affordability remained a universal challenge. This study contributes new insight by highlighting that emergency healthcare capacity is perceived as weak across all communities, suggesting a systemic failure in urban health planning that goes beyond facility distribution to include service quality and responsiveness.

Poverty was widely acknowledged as a pervasive condition in all four communities, driven by unemployment, insufficient government support, and limited access to basic services. These findings align with contemporary literature that frames slum poverty as multidimensional and structurally induced rather than the result of individual shortcomings (Khan et al., 2023). However, this study reveals notable intra-city perspective, which reveals variations in service provision even among slum communities within the same metropolis. This suggests that slums should not be treated as homogenous entities in urban policy design, as localized spatial and governance factors significantly shape access to basic services (Khan et al., 2023). Variations in the depth of poverty experiences, with Beere and Oja-Oba exhibiting more acute deprivation than Mokola and Oke-Ado. This nuanced understanding adds to current knowledge by demonstrating that poverty intensity varies within slum settlements, underscoring the need for differentiated policy interventions rather than uniform poverty alleviation strategies.

Environmental degradation emerged as another critical challenge, with respondents across all communities reporting frequent pollution and inadequate waste management practices. Industrial activities were perceived as significant contributors, particularly in Beere and Oja-Oba. These findings corroborate recent studies linking environmental degradation in slums to weak regulatory enforcement, poor waste governance, and rapid urban expansion (Eneh, 2021). A notable contribution of this study is the strong perception among residents that existing government policies are ineffective. This reflects a growing gap between public awareness of environmental risks and confidence in state-led solutions, suggesting that sustainability policies may be failing at the implementation level rather than in formulation.

Education was widely regarded as a key pathway out of poverty, yet respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of education, availability of qualified teachers, and support for marginalized groups such as girls and persons with disabilities. This finding supports recent research questioning the capacity of slum-based educational infrastructure to facilitate social mobility (Vundi, 2023). The study further contributes by highlighting perceived inadequacies in inclusive education programs, indicating that educational inequality persists even within marginalized urban populations and requires targeted, equity-driven interventions.

Unemployment and limited job opportunities were identified as major contributors to socio-economic vulnerability in the communities studied. Respondents frequently reported a mismatch between their qualifications and available employment opportunities, reinforcing arguments in recent literature regarding urban labor market exclusion and informalization (Baravelli, 2025; Chen et al., 2023). Although some government employment and skill-development programs were acknowledged, they were largely perceived as insufficient or ineffective. This finding adds new empirical evidence that existing employment interventions may lack alignment with local economic realities, thereby limiting their impact on reducing unemployment and poverty in slum areas.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that urban sustainability challenges in Ibadan's slum communities are deeply interconnected, with deficits in water, healthcare, education, employment, and environmental governance reinforcing one another. While previous studies have often examined these issues separately, this study advances current knowledge by empirically illustrating their combined and mutually reinforcing effects within a single urban context. The evidence emphasizes on the need for integrated, context-specific approaches to urban sustainability that move beyond fragmented sectoral interventions (Morandell et al., 2025; Webb et al., 2023).

5.0 Conclusion

This research reveals that healthcare access, poverty, environmental degradation, educational opportunities, and employment remain significant challenges in the communities of Beere, Oja-Oba, Mokola, and Oke-Ado. Poor healthcare services, high poverty levels, inadequate waste management, and environmental pollution contribute to the overall socio-economic difficulties. The education system is underdeveloped, with limited opportunities for marginalized groups, while employment prospects, especially for the youth, are also scarce. Addressing these issues requires a multi-faceted approach, including improved healthcare infrastructure, poverty alleviation programs, stronger environmental policies, better educational resources, and enhanced employment opportunities. Collaborative efforts from both the government and private sector are crucial in fostering sustainable development in these communities.

5.1 Recommendations

1. The government should prioritize the improvement of healthcare facilities and increase access to medical services in the communities.
2. Poverty alleviation programs should be implemented, focusing on empowering marginalized groups through skills training and microfinance.
3. Environmental policies need to be enforced to address pollution and waste management issues, ensuring a cleaner and healthier environment.
4. Investment in education infrastructure and programs should be a priority, with a focus on increasing access to quality education for all, especially the underprivileged.
5. Creating job opportunities, particularly for the youth, through entrepreneurship programs and vocational training would help reduce unemployment rates.
6. There should be increased collaboration between the government, private sector, and non-governmental organizations to provide sustainable solutions.

7. Public awareness campaigns about health, sanitation, and environmental conservation should be launched to educate the community.
8. A comprehensive social safety net program should be developed to support vulnerable populations, including the elderly and people with disabilities.
9. Policy reforms should focus on improving governance and ensuring accountability in the implementation of development projects.

5.2 Implications for Policy, Practice, and the Field

Overall, the findings demonstrate that urban sustainability challenges in Ibadan's slums are interconnected and mutually reinforcing, rather than isolated issues. While past studies have examined these problems individually, this study contributes new knowledge by empirically demonstrating how deficits in water, healthcare, education, employment, and environmental governance collectively shape urban vulnerability.

For policy, the findings suggest the need for integrated, community-specific urban interventions rather than uniform citywide policies. For practice, they highlight the importance of participatory planning that incorporates residents' lived experiences. For the academic field, this study advances the discourse by providing comparative intra-city evidence that challenges the homogenization of slum conditions in urban sustainability research.

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