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An Analysis of Factors Influencing the Residential Choices of Ethnic Groups in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria: A Factor Analysis

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the factors that influence the residential choices of different ethnic groups in Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Ethnic diversity plays a significant role in shaping housing preferences, community cohesion, and access to resources in urban areas. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 367 household respondents across four major ethnic enclaves Igbo, Hausa, Kalabari, and Ikwerre through a multi-stage stratified sampling technique. Factor analysis was employed to identify key determinants, which were organized into social, economic, and environmental dimensions. Findings reveal significant variations in preferences among ethnic groups. The findings reveal that social and familial factors, such as support from relatives (mean = 4.35) and family ties (mean = 4.04), are the most influential determinants of residential choices, reflecting the cultural emphasis on communal networks. Economic considerations, including employment opportunities (mean = 3.72) and land availability (mean = 3.58), also play significant roles. In contrast, physical living conditions and safety factors, such as neighborhood welfare (mean = 2.61), ranked lower in importance. These insights highlight the interconnectedness of cultural, social, and economic factors in shaping ethnic residential patterns. The study concludes that urban development strategies should prioritize family-oriented policies, enhance employment opportunities, and promote intercultural understanding. Recommendations include improving housing standards, ensuring public safety, and upgrading transportation infrastructure to foster inclusive and sustainable neighborhoods. This research contributes to our understanding of ethnic residential preferences and offers valuable policy directions for urban planning in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization in Nigeria has led to significant demographic shifts in major cities, including Port Harcourt, the capital of Rivers State. As populations grow and diversify, understanding the factors that influence residential choices among different ethnic groups becomes crucial for urban planning and policy development. The growth of urban areas is significantly influenced by the choices people make regarding residential locations. Different socioeconomic groups living in specific areas have unique infrastructure and service needs that shape the development trajectory of their neighborhoods. In recent decades, there has been considerable attention on the ethnic composition of neighborhoods and how it affects various socioeconomic and urban characteristics across European cities. Research on ethnic segregation shows that the presence of neighbors from the same ethnic background and the existence of ethnic minorities within a community are important factors that influence the residential choices of both immigrants and local residents. Numerous studies have indicated that these two factors play a significant role (Aslund, 2005; Bolt & Van Kempen, 2003; Schaake *et al.*, 2010; van der Land and Van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007; Zavodny, 1999; Zorlu & Mulder, 2008). This suggests a noticeable size effect, where the impact varies based on the level of ethnic concentration

within a particular neighborhood or urban context (van der Land & Van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007).

The understanding of the relationship between determinant variables and residential choice decisions has led to calls for the integration of various components in residential choice models used in metropolitan planning. However, a disaggregate behavioral framework that explains the factors influencing residential location choices in an integrated manner, especially in urban landscapes of developing countries, has yet to be developed. There has been some progress in linking aggregate residential choice decisions with aggregate spatial factors or in utilizing spatial input-output models of these factors (Waddell, 2001). Nonetheless, the framework needed to understand the interdependence and interconnectedness of urban residential location choices and the factors influencing them particularly in Nigeria, and specifically in Port Harcourt has not been sufficiently established. This gap hinders the creation of a solid behavioral foundation for developing models and policies that incorporate current determinants, infrastructure availability, accessibility, and other issues considered during the residential location decision-making process.

Port Harcourt is a multicultural city, home to both indigenous and migrant ethnic groups, each with distinct cultural and economic backgrounds. These differences

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often influence residential preferences and decisions (Adeyemi & Mohammed, 2020). Previous studies have explored urban migration patterns in Nigerian cities (Ogunleye, 2018), but few have focused on the specific factors influencing where ethnic groups choose to reside. This research fills this gap by examining a broad spectrum of variables ranging from socioeconomic status to cultural affinity that guide residential decisions. Ethnic diversity can impact housing preferences, community cohesion, and access to resources. Therefore, this study aims to explore the factors that shape residential choices among various ethnic groups in Port Harcourt, applying a factor analysis model to identify key determinants.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Clarification of Concept of Ethnicity

Ethnicity is a common phenomenon that arises in both affluent and disadvantaged cultures. This occurs because, for various reasons, different cities, communities, and scattered tribes came together to form a nation, while continuing to maintain their own cultural norms and practices within that country (Cohen, 1974). Over time, these entities evolved into ethnic groups that differ in their levels of cultural distinctiveness and uniqueness within a state. For instance, Cohen (1974) defines an ethnic group as a collection of individuals who interact with members of other ethnic groups within a social system and share certain similar behavioral standards. The author indicates that “sharing normative conduct” is a defining characteristic of an ethnic group. According to McLean (1991), “ethnic groups have the strongest sense of belonging.” This statement highlights that individuals, particularly males, may participate in a variety of groups. These include social, political, religious, and professional organizations; however, the emotional connection to one’s ethnic group tends to be the most profound, especially among those who are biologically related. Primordialists, such as Fearon & Laitin (2004), argue that these ethnic groupings arise from biological processes.

An ethnic group can be identified by various characteristic behaviours such as its unique family life patterns, language, hobbies, and religious traditions. Because its characteristics are passed down from one generation to the next, ethnicity is a continuum. Sanda, (1976) considered an ethnic group to be made up of individuals who interact and identify as being a part of a social group that is known or identified and has common interests. In addition to being a member of a wider civilization, this group demonstrates features of a separate culture. Recent events in Nigeria have demonstrated that ethnicity is now a viable tool and basis for competing for political and economic supremacy. Anugwom, (2000) viewed ethnicity as phenomena which arose whenever a group of people, regardless of their number, uses cultural and linguistic distinctions as the basis for intergroup cooperation and communication. According to Azeez, (2004), ethnicity is a sense of belonging based on shared past experiences and aspirations for the future. An individual’s ancestry

determines their ethnicity. Since ethnicity cannot exist independently of the unit or group in which it is embodied, the group’s existence is what permits ethnicity. Therefore, a person’s interaction with their environment determines their ethnicity rather than always being the product of a “biological tie” (Brubaker, *et al.*, 2004).

Ethnic Groups and Residential Preferences

Ethnic diversity in urban environments can lead to distinct housing choices. Research indicates that factors such as financial status, cultural identity, and social networks significantly influence housing decisions (Lupton, 2017). Different ethnic groups may prioritize various criteria based on their historical connections to specific locales or due to economic limitations (Tunde & Akinwale, 2019). Previous studies on immigrants’ housing choices suggest that households tend to prefer living in areas with a higher concentration of co-ethnics and other foreign groups (Alsund, 2005; Zorlu & Mulder, 2008; Zavodny, 1999; Zorlu & Latten, 2009). Additionally, the literature suggests that other factors may play a role in these two ethnic characteristics concerning housing choices. The formation of ethnic networks is believed to assist new immigrants in learning about and accessing employment and housing markets, particularly in the early stages of settlement (Van der Land & Van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007). Over time, preferences for remaining close to one’s community of origin are expected to be reinforced by factors such as the preservation of local language and culture, as well as the availability of certain ethnic goods (Zhou & Logan, 1991). Moreover, the “voluntary choice for segregation” may stem from negative factors such as discrimination from other ethnic groups (Van der Land & Van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007). Consequently, whether these preferences are based on positive or negative factors, it is thought that the observed patterns of concentration among co-ethnics arise from immigrants’ desires to live near their compatriots.

In contrast, significant concentrations of immigrants in certain neighborhoods are often linked to conditions that result in involuntary segregation. It is widely believed that the residential preferences of immigrants are influenced by their lower socioeconomic status, limited accessibility, and discrimination in the housing market (Darden, 1986; Van der Land & Van der Laan Bouma-Doff, 2007). Likewise, the voluntary choices of more dominant ethnic groups can impact the involuntary segregation patterns of disadvantaged ethnic minorities (Zorlu & Latten, 2009). Therefore, while immigrants tend to remain in or move to neighborhoods with large immigrant populations, this may be more a result of restrictions than of personal preference.

Studies have shown that ethnic traits significantly influence residential location choices. Tatjana (2013), in a study of Lugano, Switzerland, found that families consider ethnic neighborhood characteristics important and weigh them against other factors when choosing where to live. The study highlights how ethnic preferences contribute to

self-segregation tendencies among different communities. Similarly, William (2000) investigated racial preferences in housing decisions and concluded that factors like social class, family structure, and in-group preferences do not fully explain these choices. Households of all races tend to avoid certain racial compositions in neighborhoods, indicating broader, complex influences on residential preferences.

Determinants of Residential Location Choice

The decision of where to live is made by households based on a variety of these variables. When choosing a location, a household takes into account all of the available variables, including the environment, location, neighbourhood, and economy, and selects the option that offers the greatest utility. Kelly & Lamb (2003) asserted that residential location includes a variety of factors. According to them, this could include the distance to a job, school, or store, the neighborhood's physical conditions, such as its density and pollution, the quality and accessibility of community facilities, the neighborhood's financial values, and social factors like its social, economic, or ethnic characteristics. An important factor is location and accessibility preference. The selection of a household's work location has been overlooked and under-researched, especially in developing countries. The existing literature shows that more developed countries frequently produce the majority of empirical studies that demonstrate a strong positive relationship between job location and the choice of home site. Cho, *et al.*, (2008) conducted a case study in Mecklenberg County, North Carolina, a polycentric metropolitan area with ten employment subcenters, to examine how these subcenters influence residential placement choices. They developed heteroscedastic logit and conditional logit models for residential decisions, using both the full option set and a sample of options. Their findings indicated that families' choices about where to live are significantly affected by proximity to specific job subcenters, as determined by average cost. Waddell, (2001) conducted a study on the relationship between a person's career choice and their place of residence. The author developed a layered logit model specifically for the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, which considered worker preferences regarding job location, housing, and length of tenancy. The study's results indicated that a joint choice definition more accurately reflects household spatial decision-making behavior. Zondag & Pieters (2005) conducted a study in the Netherlands, employing a multinomial logit model to analyze various household types. They found that accessibility significantly influences the residential site preferences of major family types; however, its effect is relatively moderate when compared to demographic factors, neighborhood amenities, and property characteristics. In Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, Eun & Rodriguez (2008) talked about choosing a place to live. The aim of this study was to examine the impact of sub-center accessibility on residential site choice in the study area. The decision of where to locate

a family's house was shown to be significantly influenced by access to particular job sub centers, which were cost-effectively assessed. However, depending on the family's income, different distances exist from a given job sub-center. Wu (2010) says, "People choose where to live based on how safe they feel, how close they are to the city, how close they are to public transportation, how close they are to their place of work, how safe they think it is, and how many medical and educational resources are available." Numerous families with varying incomes reside in varying proximity to specific employment subcenters. Shammi & Jannatul, (2014) investigated the elements garment workers in Dhaka city considered when selecting a residence. The study identified "house rent, utility service accessibility, monthly household income, being located close to a workplace, social security, dependence on family decision-making, dwelling unit size, communal living, and access to community facilities" as significant determinants of where garment workers in Mirpur choose to reside.

Studies examining the importance of local factors in deciding where to live present varied findings. Many experts argue that the quality of a neighborhood is a key determinant in home-buying decisions. However, some contend that individuals' feelings of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with an area do not significantly influence their choices about where to reside. In their 2006 research, Clarke *et al.* found that neighborhoods play an important role in the residential decision-making process and highlighted that these factors have a strong and independent impact. A review of the literature shows that residents are often drawn to specific neighborhoods for various reasons, such as the presence or absence of good schools, the friendliness of the community, noise levels, crime rates, social interaction, and the sense of community (Parkes, *et al.*, 2002; Galster & Santiago, 2006). For example, in China, homeowners are willing to pay a premium for neighborhoods that are well-regarded and offer high levels of security, appealing image, accessibility, and convenience (Wang & Li, 2006). In Port Harcourt, Nigeria, there is a notable trend among individuals with medium to high incomes to prefer certain areas based on their perceived social status. Additionally, Ibraimovic *et al.* (2010) analyzed neighborhood preferences among the ten main demographic groups residing in Switzerland, revealing the extent of this phenomenon. Masiero & Scagnolari (2010). They show, among other things, that two significant factors causing residential segregation greatly impact the housing decisions of immigrant and native households. The first is a preference for the concentration of individuals from the same nation in a particular area, and the second is the presence of ethnic minorities at the local level.

The combination of neighborhood characteristics and the socioeconomic status of a household significantly influences residential decisions. Numerous studies in housing research have shown that social stratification and homogeneity greatly affect where individuals

choose to live (Sirgy *et al.*, 2005). Research indicates that social connections also play a crucial role in the home-buying decisions made within budget constraints. Key predictors of household residential location include social connectedness and status. For instance, Lee, *et al.*, (2007) found that households valuing social interaction and prestige tend to prefer downtown locations for their ideal apartments, whereas those prioritizing spacious living conditions and mental and physical well-being often choose non-suburban settings. A study conducted by Tatu (2010) explored factors influencing housing decisions among urban dwellers in Tanzania. The research suggested that when incomes are unstable, housing options are limited, and informality prevails, social factors like networks and informal channels dominate the decision-making process. In another study by Taraknath (2010) in the city of Nagpur, the impact of various geographic, social, and economic factors on residential neighborhood selection was examined. The study revealed that for low-medium income group (LMIG) households, the key criteria for choosing residential locations included the age of the household, the number of usable rooms, and the number of bedrooms. Conversely, high modern income group (HMIG) households often chose their locations based on proximity to parks and local amenities. William (2000) discussed how race affects housing decisions. He examined whether factors such as family size, in-group racial preferences, and socioeconomic status could adequately explain households' sensitivity to racial diversity in their neighborhoods. His research indicated that families of all races exhibit racial avoidance behavior. Moreover, social class differences, changes in family structure, and in-group racial preferences do not fully account for residential racial preference. For instance, Asian families tend to avoid their Hispanic, Asian, and Black neighbors, while their Asian neighbors often distance themselves from White neighbors. William also noted that urban geographers, planners, and transportation engineers typically apply residential site choice research to understand, explain, and predict household residential placement behavior. Similar findings were observed in Nyantira, Tanzania, an informal village that continues to attract immigrants from the same ethnic group, who support each other socially and financially (Lupala, 2007). Additionally, a study by Colwell *et al.* (2002) investigated the relationship between preferences for leisure activities and the tendency of individuals to choose residential locations near recreational facilities. They found that the greater the desire for leisure, the more likely a person is to live close to recreational areas.

Research conducted in Africa highlights the importance of socio-cultural factors in the residential location preferences of families, which contrasts with findings from studies in continents like America and Europe. This emphasis on cultural connections may stem from the strong cultural ties found in African societies. Empirical investigations show that different geographic areas and household types significantly influence families' choices

about where to live. According to Oladapo *et al.* (2019), African scholars have explored the underlying concepts of residential location selection. Specifically, a study by Acheampong & Anokye (2013) in Ghana identified key factors influencing residential location choices in two peri-urban areas of Kumasi. These factors include family connections, proximity to employment, affordable land prices, and reasonable house rentals. The study found that housing issues related to the neighborhood are less critical compared to socio-cultural factors, housing conditions, and accessibility. Similarly, Nkeki & Erimona (2018), as reported by Oladapo *et al.* (2019), indicated that socio-cultural cohesion and accessibility significantly impact where households choose to reside in Benin City, Nigeria. In another study by Ubani *et al.*, (2017), also referenced by Oladapo *et al.* (2019), the housing decisions of families in Port Harcourt Metropolis, Nigeria, were evaluated using various push and pull factors. The study found that moving to a new residence, high crime rates, and insecurity are major push factors, while safety in the new environment, changes in household income, and ownership status of real estate serve as pull variables. However, this research did not attempt to statistically analyze the primary factors influencing families' decisions on where to live in the studied region.

It is widely recognized that various factors, categorized as "income and environmental" features, influence individuals' choices regarding house locations. These factors relate to people's monthly incomes, the aesthetics of their surroundings, and their feelings of safety and security. Research conducted by Shammi *et al.* in 2014 focused on the variables affecting the housing choices of textile workers in Dhaka city. They carried out a questionnaire survey among residents of Mirpur and identified several key predictors for where textile workers chose to live, including home rent, access to amenities, monthly household income, proximity to employment, social security, reliance on family opinions, size of the dwelling unit, communal living, and accessibility to community facilities. Lekan & Felicia (2009) investigated the factors influencing household choices of residential districts in Ibadan, categorizing the area into high, medium, and low-density zones. They found that in high-density areas like Mapo, household preferences were mainly shaped by ethnicity and socioeconomic factors, especially regarding neighborhood safety. In contrast, environmental quality (86%) and land security (35%) were the major influences in medium and low-density areas such as Mokola & Bodija. The study highlights that residential density types have distinct factors shaping household location preferences. Shammi & Jannatul (2014) studied the factors influencing housing choices among garment workers in Dhaka using a questionnaire survey in Mirpur. They identified key determinants such as house rent, access to facilities, household income, proximity to work, social security, family influence, dwelling size, communal living, and availability of community amenities.

Studies have shown that social contacts and status

significantly influence where households choose to live. Social networks and interactions are generally viewed as indicators of social capital, which plays a crucial role for urban residents navigating life in cities. Within the urban livelihoods' framework, social capital refers to the networks of mutual assistance that exist among households, extended families, and communities. These networks can be leveraged to help individuals secure housing, employment, and other opportunities (Meikle, 2002). Shammi & Jannatul (2014) studied the factors influencing housing choices among garment workers in Dhaka using a questionnaire survey in Mirpur. They identified key determinants such as house rent, access to facilities, household income, proximity to work, social security, family influence, dwelling size, communal living, and availability of community amenities.

The review has shown that selection of residential neighborhoods significantly shapes urban growth patterns. Research indicates that household location choices are influenced by a wide range of factors beyond local service availability. Key determinants include housing options, income, natural and community features, neighborhood conditions, housing tenure, employment type, transport systems, telecommuting, infrastructure, socio-economic status, security, dwelling quality, and demographic characteristics. Additional factors include educational access, land use, neighborhood attractiveness, environmental conditions, accessibility, financial value, proximity to key locations, daily activity patterns, and affordability. Only a select number of these factors will be relevant to the present study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employs a quantitative research design, using a survey instrument to collect data on the residential choices of ethnic groups in Port Harcourt. A factor analysis model is applied to identify the key factors influencing these choices. Factor analysis is a statistical method commonly used to identify underlying relationships among variables. In urban studies, it has been employed to analyze various factors influencing residential choices, including environmental, economic, and social characteristics (Garba & Fashola, 2020). This method provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how different factors interact to shape housing preferences. A multi staged stratified sampling technique was used to select respondents from various ethnic groups living in Port Harcourt. A stratified sampling technique was used to select respondents from various ethnic groups living in Port Harcourt. The multi-stage stratified cluster probability sampling approach diagrammed in figure 3.1 was adopted to select a combine sample of 367 household on selected residential location

or enclaves. A multi-stage sampling procedure is used to select home respondents for the survey. This method is typically employed to address challenges associated with populations that are geographically dispersed, especially in situations where face-to-face interaction is necessary, or where creating a sampling frame across a large area would be costly and time-consuming (Saunders, *et al.*,

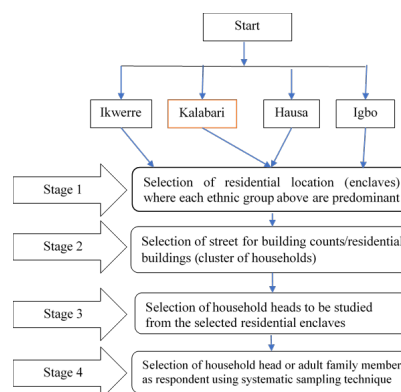


Figure 1: The multi-stage sampling process

Source: *Researchers Concept, 2022.*

2009). The approach involves selecting several cluster samples, each utilizing a form of random sampling. The stages of the sampling process are illustrated in Figure 1 below:

The sampling technique adopted within each cluster to select respondent was the simple random sampling technique. By the study design, there will be two rounds of visits in each house. The first was the distribution visit, and second repeated visits for collection of completed questionnaires. This study investigated four residential location or enclaves in Metropolitan Port Harcourt where the Igbo, Hausa, Kalabari, and Ikwerre ethnic groups are predominant. Thus, the population for this study consist of residential properties and occupiers who are household heads or adult members of the respective families. A total of 367 respondents were surveyed, representing ethnicities such as the Igbo, Hausa, Kalabari, and Ikwerre. The Krejcie and Morgan formula (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) was used to determine the sample size from the population of homes to be examined. This method generated a sample size of 367 respondents. The formula is presented as follows:

$$N = X^2 N p(1-p) / e^2 (N-1) + X^2 p(1-p)$$

Where, n = the sample size;

N = population size;

e = acceptable error of sample size

X^2 = Chi-square df = 1 and reliability level 95% (X^2 = 3.841);

P = the population proportions (Assumed to be 0.5).

Table 1: Sampling Information on Studied Households

Name of street	No. of Households Listed	Sample Size	No of Questionnaire Returned
Igbo (Ihediohomma, Diobu)	79	65	36
Hausa/Fulani (Garki, Elemenwo)	112	87	44
Kalabari/Okirika (Borikiri- old Port Harcourt)	127	96	48
Ikwerre (Rumuola)	162	119	64
Total	480	367	192

Using the Krejcie & Morgan formula @ 5% acceptable error of sample size

As indicated in Table 1, a total of 367 questionnaires were distributed to the heads of households or adult family members in each of the four research locations, out of which 192 questionnaires were validly answered and returned. This approach, as stated by the researcher, fulfills the study objectives by providing a broad range of solutions to the issues examined and ensuring maximum diversity. Data were analyzed using factor analysis in SPSS, which identified clusters of factors that significantly influence the residential choices of the respondents. These factors were categorized into economic, social, and environmental dimensions, offering insights into the distinct preferences of different ethnic groups.

The survey included questions on housing affordability, proximity to employment, social networks, and cultural preferences. Data collection was conducted through face-to-face interviews and online questionnaires. Using questionnaires to gather data has several advantages. Researchers use questionnaires to extrapolate sample information to the overall population (Creswell, 2003). For these reasons, the questionnaire will be considered

one of the primary tools for data collection. The main goal of the questionnaire survey was to understand the perspectives of various ethnic groups regarding the significance and relevance of the study's topic.

To enhance the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the questionnaire was initially reviewed by two research experts. Their feedback was helpful in refining the content and ensuring that the questions aligned with the study's objectives. Additionally, to further enhance reliability, a pilot test was conducted to pre-test the instruments. This allowed us to assess the internal consistency of the responses using a reliability measure known as Cronbach's alpha. The results indicated a reliability value of 0.74 for all composite variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Analysis of Ethnic Characteristics that Influence the Residential Choices.

This theme explores various ethnic characteristics derived from literature. These characteristics include family ties, the maintenance of social relationships, a higher presence of co-ethnic groups, support from relatives, instances of discrimination from other ethnic groups, differences

Table 2: Factors Influencing Ethnic Choices in Port Harcourt

Factors Influencing Ethnic Choices in Port Harcourt	HI	I	SI	RI	NI	Mean	SD	RII	Ranking
Employment opportunities	80	48	24	10	30	3.72	3.49	0.74	3 RD
Maintenance network of social relations	67	54	15	45	11	3.63	3.36	0.73	4 TH
Support from relatives	110	56	12	12	2	4.35	3.93	0.87	1 ST
Family ties	78	66	30	14	4	4.04	3.65	0.81	2 ND
Intra-city mobility	46	68	38	16	24	3.50	3.22	0.70	7 TH
Building opportunities in vacant land	60	58	26	30	18	3.58	3.32	0.72	5 TH
Ethnic affiliation	70	44	30	22	26	3.57	3.35	0.71	6 TH
Neighbourhood welfare and security	30	28	28	50	56	2.61	2.50	0.52	10 TH
Comfort levels of households	42	72	26	18	34	3.36	3.14	0.67	8 TH
Housing conditions	30	40	22	48	52	2.73	2.61	0.55	9 TH

in social class or status among ethnic immigrants, variations in family structure, the welfare and security of neighborhoods, the comfort levels of households, and the preservation of native language and culture. Respondents were asked whether any of these factors influenced their choices regarding ethnic residential locations. They were instructed to select one of the following options: "highly

influenced," "influenced," "sometimes influenced," "rarely affected," or "never influenced." Table 2 displays the responses and accompanying analyses.

Table 2 presents an analysis of factors influencing ethnic choices in Port Harcourt. The data ranks these factors based on their significance, as measured by mean scores, relative importance indices (RII), and standard deviations

(SD). The rankings and discussions of the factors are as follows:

Support from Relatives has a mean score of 4.35 with a standard deviation of 3.93, emerging as the most influential in determining ethnic choices. This highlights the significant role that support from relatives plays in the decision-making process. The high mean and RII values reflect a consensus among respondents, with minimal variability indicated by the standard deviation. Family Ties following closely behind support from relatives, have a mean score of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 3.65. This suggests that ethnic choices are profoundly influenced by family connections, underscoring the cultural and social importance of familial relationships in the region. Employment Opportunities ranks third, with a mean score of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 3.49, emphasizing the economic considerations involved in ethnic settlement choices. Its relatively lower standard deviation indicates a moderate level of agreement among respondents. Maintenance of Social Relations with a mean score of 3.63 and a standard deviation of 3.36, confirms the importance of maintaining social networks, reflecting the value of established relationships in influencing ethnic-based residential preferences. Construction Opportunities on Vacant Land ranked fifth, has a mean score of 3.58 and a standard deviation of 3.32, pointing to the role of urban development and land availability in ethnic choices. Ethnic Affiliation with a mean score of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 4.35, is a moderately significant factor, highlighting the importance of cultural identity and belonging in residential preferences. Ease of Mobility though a lesser consideration, ease of mobility within the city has a mean score of 3.50. This factor emphasizes the significance of accessibility and transportation in choosing residential locations. Comfort Levels despite its important, ranks relatively lower, suggesting that physical living conditions may not be as critical as social and economic factors for

ethnic preferences. Housing Conditions despite being a fundamental aspect, housing conditions appear to have limited influence on ethnic choices, which may reflect an adaptation to the available housing.

Finally, Neighborhood Welfare and Security ranks the lowest in influence, indicating that safety and welfare considerations do not heavily impact ethnic residential decisions. This might be due to existing strategies for managing security concerns in Port Harcourt. Overall, the analysis underscores the interplay of social, economic, and cultural factors in shaping ethnic choices among residents in the region. The analysis reveals that social and familial factors, such as support from relatives and strong family connections, are the most significant influences on ethnic choices in Port Harcourt. Economic factors and development-related issues, including employment opportunities and the potential for building on vacant land, also play an important role, although to a lesser extent. Housing conditions and neighborhood welfare have the least impact, indicating their limited influence on decisions regarding ethnic settlement in the area. This ranking provides valuable insights for policymakers and underscores the necessity of considering social dynamics and economic opportunities when addressing ethnic residential patterns. Subsequently, the variables in Table 4.1 were submitted to factor analysis.

Factor analysis

As discussed above, three steps of factor analysis were conducted.

Suitability of the Data for Factor Analysis

Before deciding to employ factor analysis, researchers should have a number of significant correlations, according to Tabachnick & Fidell (2012). If there are no correlations that are more than 0.30, the use of factor analysis should be questioned. KMO and Bartlett's test were used to determine how strongly the factors

Table 4: shows the communalities between variables.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.632
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	344.794
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

Table 4: KMO and Bartlett's Test

	Initial	Extraction
Ethnic Affiliation	1.000	.654
Family ties relations	1.000	.429
Support from relatives	1.000	.515
Maintenance network of social	1.000	.676
Intra-city mobility	1.000	.610
Employment opportunities	1.000	.646
Building opportunities in vacant land	1.000	.354
Neighbourhood welfare and security,	1.000	.509

Comfort levels of households	1.000	.673
Housing conditions	1.000	.557

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Source: Researcher's Field Data, 2024

influencing home purchases were related. Table 3 displays the findings. The correlation matrix was regarded as possibly suitable for factor analysis since the dataset's output showed several bivariate correlations between variables that were greater than 0.30. By each of these two criteria, it was also determined that it was suitable to apply factor analysis to this dataset. The Kaiser-Meyer-

Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO = 0.632) was more than 0.6, and Bartlett's test of sphericity (χ^2 (DF = 45, n = 192) = 344.79, p 0.05), was significant.

Factor Extraction

It is expected that a satisfactory solution will be found because several of the communalities in this study were

Table 5: Eigenvalues and total variance explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total
1	2.288	22.882	22.882	2.288
2	2.027	20.273	43.155	2.027
3	1.308	13.081	56.235	1.308
4	.946	9.460	65.696	
5	.806	8.056	73.752	
6	.656	6.556	80.307	
7	.619	6.187	86.495	
8	.588	5.881	92.376	
9	.427	4.274	96.650	
10	.335	3.350	100.000	

relatively big and none were below 0.3. As a consequence, they have a strong ability to explain the variation of the researched variable (Mark & Don, 2007). The factors with eigenvalues larger than 1 and the variables with factor loadings greater than 0.3 in the rotated component matrix were kept by the study (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Three components had eigenvalues larger than 1.0, as shown in Table 4.4. As a result, out of 10 variables, the PCA retrieved three components to support the ethnic choice of residential

An analysis of the rotation sums of squared loadings shows that component 1 explains 22.89% of the variance, component 2 explains 20.27%, and component 3 accounts for 13.08% of the variance in the initial set of ethnic residential choices factors. Together, these three factors

represent 56.24% of the variance in the criteria used to indicate ethnic residential site preference. Given that the sample size for this study was over 190, the researcher considered factor scores of 0.30 to be significant. Table 4.15 presents key criteria that justify residential location choices based on ethnicity, where factor loadings exceed 0.30.

Factor Rotation and Interpretation

A total of three components were extracted from an analysis of ten variables. The first component, labeled "Ethnic Affiliation," shows the strongest correlations with factors such as the maintenance network of social connections, comfort levels within the household, and support from relatives. The second component,

Table 6: Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
Ethnic Affiliation	-.058	.775	-.222
Family ties relations	.117	.131	.631
Support from relatives	.668	.092	.247
Maintenance network of social	.813	.107	.059
Intra-city mobility	-.489	.422	.440
Employment opportunities	.056	.760	.256
Building opportunities in vacant land	.122	.579	.061

Neighbourhood welfare and security,	-.400	.006	.591
Comfort levels of households	.754	.225	.231
Housing conditions	.021	-.053	.744

“Family Ties Relations,” is strongly correlated with ethnic affiliation, employment opportunities, and the potential for development on vacant land. The third component, “Support from Relatives,” has significant correlations with housing conditions, family ties, and neighborhood welfare and security. Notably, all three components display a weak correlation with intra-city mobility. Collectively, these components encompass the ten factors justifying the ethnic choice of residential locations as indicated in the questionnaire.

Discussion

The analysis of the data reveals several key insights into the ethnic characteristics influencing residential choices in Port Harcourt. These findings, supported by factor analysis, highlight the role of social, economic, and cultural factors in shaping ethnic residential preferences as follows:

Dominant Influence of Social and Familial Factors

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that support from relatives (mean = 4.35, RII = 0.87) and family ties (mean = 4.04, RII = 0.81) are the most significant factors influencing residential choices. These findings underscore the cultural emphasis on family and social relationships in Port Harcourt, where individuals depend on familial networks for assistance in housing decisions. Additionally, the factor rotation results (Table 6) demonstrate that support from relatives is strongly correlated with housing conditions and neighborhood welfare and security. This emphasizes the interconnectedness between family support and tangible living conditions. Similarly, family ties are also strongly associated with ethnic affiliation and employment opportunities, suggesting that family structures play a crucial role in promoting economic stability and cultural identity.

Economic Considerations

Employment opportunities (mean = 3.72, RII = 0.74) ranked third in significance, pointing to the importance of economic prospects in shaping residential choices. Additionally, building opportunities in vacant land (mean = 3.58, RII = 0.72) ranked fifth, suggesting that land availability and development potential also influence these decisions. Employment opportunities and building opportunities in vacant land align with family ties relations in factor rotation (Table 6), emphasizing the dual role of economic stability and familial connections in ethnic residential choices.

Cultural Identity and Social Networks

Ethnic affiliation (mean = 3.57, RII = 0.71) and maintenance of social networks (mean = 3.63, RII = 0.73) are moderately significant factors. These findings

highlight the role of cultural identity and the preservation of co-ethnic ties in shaping residential preferences. Ethnic affiliation is strongly correlated with maintenance networks of social relations and comfort levels of households, as shown in the rotated component matrix (Table 6). This reflects the intertwined nature of cultural and social factors in ensuring comfort and a sense of belonging in residential choices.

Lesser Influence of Physical and Safety Factors

Factors such as neighborhood welfare and security (mean = 2.61, RII = 0.52), housing conditions (mean = 2.73, RII = 0.55), and comfort levels of households (mean = 3.36, RII = 0.67) rank lower in significance. This suggests that while important, these factors are secondary to social and economic considerations. Housing conditions and neighborhood welfare correlate weakly with most components except for support from relatives, indicating that such factors are indirectly influenced by familial and social dynamics rather than being primary determinants. The findings highlight the multi-dimensional nature of ethnic residential choices in Port Harcourt, with a dominant influence of social and familial factors, supported by economic opportunities and moderated by physical and safety considerations. These insights are crucial for guiding policy and urban planning initiatives in similar socio-cultural contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the ethnic characteristics influencing residential choices in Port Harcourt. The findings demonstrate that social and familial factors, such as support from relatives and strong family ties, are the most influential determinants of residential preferences. Economic considerations, including employment opportunities and land availability, also play significant roles, though they are secondary to social factors. In contrast, physical living conditions and the welfare and security of neighborhoods have less impact, indicating that residents can adapt to varying conditions when strong cultural and social ties are present. Factor analysis revealed three main components influencing residential choices: cultural and social dynamics, economic and developmental opportunities, and physical and security factors. These components collectively explain 56.24% of the variance in ethnic residential site preferences, highlighting the interplay of social, economic, and physical factors in shaping ethnic settlement patterns. The findings provide valuable insights into the priorities of different ethnic groups when selecting residential locations and highlight areas for intervention to promote inclusive urban development. To create inclusive neighborhoods, policies should promote intercultural understanding,

increase employment opportunities, enhance housing conditions, improve public safety, invest in transportation infrastructure, and focus on urban design. These measures aim to attract diverse ethnic groups, enhance living conditions, and ensure equitable access to essential services. By addressing these recommendations, stakeholders can ensure that residential development aligns with the cultural, social, and economic needs of Port Harcourt's diverse ethnic population, fostering sustainable and inclusive urban growth.

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