

State and Rural Class Formation in Ghana: A Comparative Analysis

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Impact Of The Land Market On Spatial Development: A Study Of EJISU Township, Ghana

Wilfred Ebo Sam-Awortwi, John Kwadwo Boateng Kwatia, Augustine Yaw Asuah

Abstract— A proficient land market stimulates orderly spatial development and improves quality of life in an environment. This is because activities involved in the disposition and acquisition of land spatially impact the growth and development of towns and cities. Consequently, a well-organized land market is required to promote satisfactory human settlement development. The overall objective of the study was to determine how circumstances in the land market affect the physical development of Ejisu Township, the capital of Ejisu-Juaben Municipality in the Ashanti Region of Ghana. The case study approach was adopted, as well as purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The study indicates that the acquisition of land from the stool positively enhances spatial development, since the allocation is based on the layout of the town. This ensures that spatial development conforms to the physical planning theme. Conversely, it was observed that a little more than a quarter (29.8%) of developers did not acquire their lands from the stool. The study recommends that the city authority are to pay particular attention to the 're-market' situation created as a result of lands being acquired for speculative reasons; to enhance security of tenure by promoting proper documentation and ensuring conformity to physical plans.

Index Terms— Land; Ownership; Market; Spatial Development; Ejisu.

I. INTRODUCTION

Land use planning is widely offered as an appropriate tool to drive sustainable development of towns and cities (Godschalk, 2004; UN-Habitat, 2009). Campbell and Feinstein (2003) argue that a robust and appropriate underpinning theory is fundamental to planning since it always provides a basis for reference. In Ghana, however, ownership and access to land poses several challenges which inhibit planning efficiency: inflexible land tenure systems; weak human resource capacity; weak legislative framework; inadequate funding; and undue political interference in the planning process (Obeng-Odoom, 2010). These issues are interlinked and dealing with them will enhance access to land for physical development. Land markets exist to regulate trade or ensure exchange of interest and rights in land among concerned parties such as individuals, families and organizations (UN-HABITAT, 2010). In doing so, land value in relation to size, location and availability of facilities and services are taken into account (Kundu, 1997). Also taken into consideration, is the value of any structure (building,

machinery, etc.) on a piece of land and the environment as well; since land use distribution has an effect on the land market (Cheshire and Vermeulen, 2008). For example, the value of a piece of land which is serviced by roads will differ and be higher than the same-sized piece of land without access. Land markets are generally regulated through land tenure and land administration systems (Mooney et al., 2007). Securing the confidence of tenure is enhanced by the existing land administration system. In Ghana, all legal dealings and transfer of ownership of land are registered with the Land Title Registry and thus, serves as a built-in mechanism to guarantee the security of tenure. Ensuring a well-ordered spatial development through operative and efficient implementation of strategies developed by the planning authority promotes environmental sustainability (European Communities, 1999). It is however to be noticed that the trade of land has a direct influence on determining whether development follows the spatial plans developed by the planning authority in their bid to promote sustainability. This is because it is normally speculated that a rational developer will make sure there is a high sense of security so far as ownership of land is concerned before commencing development. It is not far from right to establish that there is a direct link between the disposition and acquisition of land and spatial development. Therefore, taking cognisance and integrating the activities in the land market in spatial development plans, as well as ensuring compliance to plans will go a long way to enhance the quality of life in an environment.

The Spatial Perspective

The management of land resources to support a well-ordered spatial development and economic growth has remained the basis of problems in African urban communities (Getis et al., 2006). Koroso (2011) identified unlawful land transfers, corruption, bribery, and disorganized land administration structures as the major challenges faced. This condition is undoubtedly due to the fact that land in Africa are largely possessed by traditional bodies (chiefs, clan heads, families etc.) even though its management is in most cases the responsibility of the government. This condition creates conflict since those owning the land are not those directly administering its management. Forkuor (2010) additionally identified that the management of land, precisely, stool/family lands had remained the most devastating problem to town planners and thus has had effects on the conformity of spatial development to human settlements layouts. This is because the most reliable and sustainable source of revenue for the stool (traditional authority) for financing their administrative expenditure is the land rent or 'sale'. The inefficient land management and administrative measures which for instance give rise to multiple sales of land lead to land disputes and haphazard development (Kasanga and

Wilfred Ebo Sam-Awortwi, Department of Spatial Planning and Environment, Faculty of Spatial Sciences, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
John Kwadwo Boateng Kwatia, Institute for Transport Studies, University of Leeds, United Kingdom
Augustine Yaw Asuah, Faculty of Spatial Planning, Technical University of Dortmund, Germany

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