

ASSESSMENT OF FIRE HAZARD PREPAREDNESS OF MAJOR MARKETS IN PORT HARCOURT METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This work seeks to assess fire disaster preparedness of major markets in Port Harcourt metropolis of Rivers State. To assess fire disaster preparedness in the markets, access fire risk and reduction strategies in the markets, analyse the perceptions and awareness level of stakeholders about fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategies. In doing this, we carried surveys as it were the most common form of research method for collection of primary data as a methodology from which we identified that various programmes which are meant to keep the traders abreast on fire disaster management are not functional, government and non-governmental organisation did not establish or provide emergency trust fund, market fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy were not effective, most installation in the markets were not done properly. Finally, the traders should be sensitised with the new method of protection. Consequently, we recommended that those officials of government agencies involved in emergency operations should ensure that emergency facilities placed in the market are functional, both government and non-governmental agencies should sensitize the traders in the market, the traders and officials of the market develop preparedness strategy that should involve adequate readiness of fire fighting personnel and also fire drills should be done once in a month to make the people prepared, government should be able to establish fire station in each of the market with stand by fire personnel.

Keywords: Traders, Hazards, Preparedness, Perception, Fire.

1.0 Introduction

The revelation of flame furnished man with his first method for progression. It expanded his nourishment decision empowering him to cook, it broadened his living extent by furnishing him with an outer wellspring of warmth, it enhanced his

devices by allowing him a wellspring of light, fire was so essential to primitive man that he made it one of the four components, i.e earth, fire, air and water which made his reality. However primitive man's disclosure of flame additionally uncovered to him his marvelous damaging force, which we are

encountering today. He loved fire and utilized it yet he likewise went in trepidation and fear of its ruinous nature. One recognized peril in the group that can bring about fiasco is flame episode, which has obliterated both lives and properties in high size. Fire constitutes an extraordinary danger both in the businesses and at the local areas (Briggs, 2011).

Fire peril is any circumstance in which there is a more prominent than ordinary danger of mischief to individuals or property because of flame. Nigeria regularly confronts a scope of fiasco occasion including surge, disintegration, fires and other synthetic dangers (Siyanbade, 2006). All catastrophe including fire, causes physical harms additionally in the social and financial connection where they happen particularly advertise fire occurrence. The physical defenselessness of the nation's populace and framework is aggravated by financial powerlessness.

Market fires in Nigeria are basic rate. The harm to property and loss of human lives is escalated by distinctive components (reasons for flame episode), it is obvious that the monetary misfortune because of flame occurrences is expanding progressively, people and families can't manage the cost of the gigantic measure of

misfortune brought about by flame mischance consistently, particularly in the greater part of the situations where casualties put the lost assets in such exchange. Besides, fire episodes in shops modern and business structures cause overwhelming toll on life and property (New Age, 2007).

Lately, there have been huge and immense loses of properties because of some huge flame occurrences in business sectors in Port Harcourt. Whether a calamity is major or minor, of national or neighborhood extent, it is the general population at the group or town level who endures its unfavorable impacts, under these circumstances, the impact of flame disasters on the general population of a group will be noteworthy and complete. It influences the general population from numerous points of view.

1.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to assess fire hazard preparedness in major markets in Port Harcourt metropolis.

To achieve this aim, the following objectives were pursued:

1. To assess fire hazard preparedness in major market in Port Harcourt metropolis.

2. Examine fire risk and reduction strategies in the markets.

The Study Area



Fig 1 . Map of Rivers State showing Port Harcourt metropolis

Source: GIS Laboratory, Geography Department, UNN= University of Nigeria, Nsukka

This study is carried out in Port Harcourt; Port Harcourt is one of the most populated areas in Rivers State. Rivers State is one of the 36 states of Nigeria. Its capital is Port Harcourt. It is bounded on the South by the Atlantic Ocean, to the North by the Anambra, Imo and Abia States, to the East by Akwa Ibom State and to the West by the Bayelsa and Delta State.

The inland part of Rivers State consists of tropical rainforest; towards the coast the typical river delta environment features many mangrove swamps. Rivers State was part of the Oil Rivers Protectorate from 1885 till 1893, when it became part of the Niger Coast Protectorate. In 1900 the region was merged with the chartered territories of the Royal Niger Company to form the colony of Southern Nigeria.

The state formed in 1967 with the split of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. It gained Ughelli in Delta State and Bendel State, and Opobo in Rivers State from the Cross-River State in 1976. Until 1996 the state contained the area which is now in the Bayelsa State (Tide Newspaper 2009).

2.0 Materials and Methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey design. The study population consisted too

of male and female traders (i.e, shop owners) in the size major markets in Port Harcourt metropolis which includes mile 3 market, mile 1 market, Rukpoku market, Okoro-Odo market, Oil mill market and creek road market, this was purposively chosen by the researcher. The choice of male and female traders is based on the fact that the variables under investigation were particular to them and no other party could provide this information.

A sample size of 600 respondents was drawn from 6 major markets using a stratified random sampling technique. The instrument used was a questionnaire developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was validated and the reliability was tested test-retest method, calculated with Pearson's product-moment correlation. This yielded a reliability index of 0.81 mean scores.

The data generated were analyzed using SPSS. The research questions were answered using both mean and standard deviation and simple percentages. The results of the data analysis are presented below.

3.0 Result and Discussion

Table 1: Fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy been effective

S/NO	MARKETS	NUMBER OF TARGETED RESPONDENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1	MILE 3 MARKET	80	-	-	7	63
2	MILE ONE MARKET	80	-	-	5	65
3	RUKPOKU MARKET	80	-	-	-	70
4	OKORO/ODO MARKET	80	-	-	-	70
5	OIL MILL MARKET	80	-	-	5	65
6	CREEK ROAD MARKET	80	-	-	11	59
	TOTAL	480	0	0	30	392

Source: Researchers Fieldwork, 2015

Findings presented in table 1 shows respondent opinion on whether fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective in the respective markets. Traders reveal that Majority of the traders (63) respondent at mile 3 market strongly disagree that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective, while the remaining seven (7) respondent disagree that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective in the market.

Also at the New Mile one market, traders reveal that Majority of the traders (65) respondent strongly disaster that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has not been effective, while the remaining seven (5) respondent disagree that its fire

disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective in the market.

Also at the Rukupoku market, traders reveal that all the traders (70) respondent strongly disagree that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective, also at the New Oil mill market, entries reveals that Majority of the traders (65) respondent strongly disagree that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has not been effective, while the remaining seven (7) respondent disaster that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective in the market.

Also at Creek road market, traders reveal that Majority of the traders (59) respondent strongly disagree that its fire

disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has not been effective, while the remaining seven (11) respondent disagree that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective in the market.

Thus with the analyzed result it implies that majority of the respondent (392) respondent from the various markets strongly disagree that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective.

3.1 Causes of Fire Incident in the Markets

Table 2: Showing respondent opinion on causes of fire incident in the market

S/NO	MARKETS	NUMBER OF TARGETED RESPONDENTS	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE
1	MILE 3 MARKET	80	49	10	11
2	MILE ONE MARKET	80	49	10	11
3	RUKPOKU MARKET	80	35	10	25
4	OKORO/ODO MARKET	80	-	-	70
5	OIL MILL MARKET	80	10	10	50
6	CREEK ROAD MARKET	80	20	20	30
	TOTAL	480	163	60	197

Source: Researchers Fieldwork, 2015

Findings presented in table 2 shows respondent opinion on causes of fire in the respective markets. traders reveal that Majority of the traders (49) respondent at mile 3 market had the opinion that the causes of fire is as a result of electric faults, while ten (10) respondent had their opinion that arson might be the cause of frequent fires in the market while eleven (11) had their opinion that other factors like sabotage and carelessness might be the cause of fire in the market.

Also at the New Mile one market, traders reveal that Majority of the traders (35) respondent had the opinion that the causes of fire is as a result of electric faults, while ten (10) respondent had their opinion that arson might be the cause of frequent fires in the market while eleven (11) had their opinion that other factors like sabotage and carelessness might be the cause of fire in the market.

Also at the Rukpoku market, traders reveal that Majority of the traders (35) respondent at Creek road market had the

opinion that the causes of fire is as a result of electric faults, while ten (10) respondent had their opinion that arson might be the cause of frequent fires in the market while twenty five (25) had their opinion that other factors like sabotage and carelessness might be the cause of fire in the markets.

Also at the Okoro-odo market, traders reveal that all the traders (70) respondents had the opinion the cause of fire incident is as a result of other factor such as sabotage. Also at the New Oil mill, entries reveal majority of the traders (50) respondent had the opinion that the cause of fire is as a result of other factor such as sabotage, while ten (20) respondent had their opinion that arson and arson respectively.

Also at Creek road market, traders reveal that Majority of the traders (30) respondents had the opinion that the causes of fire is as a result of other factor such as sabotage, while ten (20) respondent had their opinion that arson and arson respectively.

Thus with the analyzed result it implies that majority of the respondent (197) respondent from the various markets had their opinion that other factor like sabotage could be the likely cause of fire disaster.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, majority of respondent strongly disaster that its fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy has been effective. And also majority of stakeholders have an average perception about the effectiveness of the fire disaster preparedness and reduction strategy. Majority of the fire emergency program such as drills. Weekly sensitization, disaster prevention club and others are not totally effective in the major markets.

1. Based on data collected and analyzed the researcher recommends that officials of government agencies involved in emergency operation should endeavor that emergency facility placed in the market are functional by test running all the fire preparedness gadget in the market after installation and commissioning of the facility.
2. Secondly both government and non-governmental agencies should sensitize the traders in the market to see the benefit of insurance cover for their goods.
3. Thirdly the traders and officials of the market should develop preparedness strategy that should involve adequate readiness of

firefighting personnel and also fire drill should be done once in a month to make the people prepared. Financially government should be able to establish one fire station in each market with stand by fire personnel.

5.0 References

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