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Impact of Road Construction on Land Values in Ebenebe, Awka North L.G.A., Anambra State (2014-2024)

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Abstract: *This study was conducted against the backdrop of rapid infrastructural development in Nigeria, particularly the construction of the Amansea-Ebenebe-Awba-Ofemili road in Awka North Local Government Area, Anambra State, and its potential influence on land values. Infrastructural projects such as road construction have long been identified as catalysts for changes in land value, urban expansion, and real estate investments, yet little empirical research exists on their localized impacts in semi-urban settings like Ebenebe. The aim of this study is to investigate the impact of road construction on land values in Ebenebe between 2014 and 2024. Specifically, the study pursued four objectives: to examine the trend of land value changes before and after road construction, to assess its influence on real estate development, to analyze its impact on different land use types, and to explore the socioeconomic implications for local residents. Data were gathered through questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and field observations, involving practicing estate surveyors and valuers. The population for the study consisted of 63 registered real estate professionals in Awka, with a total of 60 valid responses received. For data analysis, a combination of descriptive statistics, paired sample t-tests, ANOVA, and thematic analysis was used. The results revealed a significant increase in land values post-road construction, with average land prices rising from ₦650,000 before construction to ₦2.25 million after, and as high as ₦5.5 million in 2024. The study recommends that policymakers implement inclusive urban planning policies—such as affordable housing schemes and land use zoning—to prevent displacement and ensure equitable benefits for local communities.*

Keywords: road construction, land values, Ebenebe, Awka North, infrastructure

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INTRODUCTION

In developing countries, road construction is typically associated with a rise in land values due to improved accessibility and the resultant increase in demand for residential and commercial properties. In Moncongloe District, Indonesia, the construction of concrete roads led to a marked increase in land values, demonstrating the strong correlation between infrastructure development and property appreciation (Jinca, 2014). Similarly, in Hamburg, Germany, large-scale residential construction projects linked to road development significantly impacted land values, with changes ranging from -4% to +22% depending on the perceived changes in local amenities (Lukowski, 2019).

Infrastructure development, particularly road construction, plays a pivotal role in shaping the economic and social landscapes of communities. In Nigeria, the expansion of transportation networks has been closely linked to urban growth and increased property values. This phenomenon is evident in various regions, including Anambra State, where recent investments in road infrastructure have significantly influenced land values and usage patterns.In Nigeria, the impact of road construction on land values has been observed in urban centers like Jalingo in Taraba State. The transformation of agricultural lands into residential and commercial zones along newly constructed roads resulted in a corresponding increase in land values (Oruonye, 2014). Additionally, in Owerri, Imo State, road rehabilitation projects enhanced real estate values by improving accessibility and increasing the potential for property development (Ogbonna and Onyejiaka, 2023).The influence of road construction on land values is not uniform and can vary depending on several factors such as proximity to the road, land use type, and changes in local amenities(Shulgan et al., 2021).

Ebenebe, located in Awka North Local Government Area of Anambra State, has experienced notable transformations between 2014 and 2024 due to road construction projects. Historically, the area was characterized by limited accessibility, which impeded economic activities and development. The introduction of new road networks aimed to enhance connectivity, stimulate economic growth, and improve the overall quality of life for residents.Studies have demonstrated that road infrastructure development leads to increased accessibility, which in turn elevates land and property values. For instance, research conducted in Ibadan, Oyo State, revealed that road construction in peri-urban areas resulted in significant urban expansion and a rise in property values (Adegbite and Hassan, 2023). Similarly, in Lagos State, the rehabilitation of the Lasu-Isheri Road corridor was found to positively impact property values, as improved transportation infrastructure made areas more desirable for residential and commercial purposes (Oni, 2009).

In Anambra State, the government has prioritized road infrastructure as a catalyst for economic development. Governor Chukwuma Soludo's administration, within 32 months in office, awarded 641.121 kilometers of roads, with 316 kilometers already asphalted (Anambra State Government,

2024). These projects are strategically designed to enhance connectivity across the state, including areas like Ebenebe, thereby fostering economic activities and potentially increasing land values. Despite the recognized benefits, the impact of road construction on land values in specific locales like Ebenebe requires detailed examination. Factors such as the quality of the roads, the efficiency of project execution, and the integration of these projects into broader urban planning initiatives play crucial roles in determining the extent of their impact. Additionally, public policy and governance significantly influence infrastructure development outcomes. In Anambra State, policy failures have previously hindered infrastructure projects, underscoring the need for effective governance to realize the full benefits of such investments (Nwosu et al., 2023).

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between road construction and land values is complex and multifaceted, influencing economic growth, urban expansion, and social dynamics. Road infrastructure enhances accessibility, reduces transportation costs, and increases connectivity, which in turn raises land and property values (Adebayo and Iweka, 2014). However, the extent and nature of this impact vary across different locations, influenced by factors such as land use patterns, urban planning, and the quality of the road infrastructure (Omirin, 2018). In Nigeria, rapid urban and infrastructural development have significantly transformed property markets, particularly in peri-urban and rural areas (Eziyi, 2016). Despite the apparent benefits, the impact of road construction on land values is not always straightforward and can lead to socioeconomic disparities, land speculation, and uneven development (Oluwaseyi and Akintola, 2020).

Ebenebe exemplifies an area undergoing rapid transformation due to road construction. Historically, the area suffered from poor accessibility, limiting economic opportunities and leading to underdeveloped land markets. The construction of the Amansea-Ebenebe-Awba-Ofemili road aimed to improve connectivity, stimulate economic activities, and enhance the overall quality of life. However, the extent to which these goals have been achieved remains unclear. While anecdotal evidence suggests increased land values and real estate investments, there is a lack of empirical data to substantiate these claims. Moreover, the implications of rising land values on local communities, particularly regarding affordability and social equity, have not been adequately explored.

Several studies have highlighted the positive impact of road construction on property values in various Nigerian cities. For instance, Adegbite and Hassan (2023) found that road development in peri-urban areas of Ibadan led to urban expansion and increased housing prices. Similarly, Nwosu et al. (2023) emphasized the role of infrastructure development in boosting property values in Awka. However, these studies primarily focused on urban centers, leaving a gap in understanding the effects in semi-urban and rural areas like Ebenebe. Additionally, existing research tends to generalize the positive outcomes of road construction without adequately addressing potential challenges, such as displacement, gentrification, and social inequality (Oni, 2019).

Research Hypothesis

H_0: Road construction has no significant impact on land values in Ebenebe, Awka North L.G.A., Anambra State, between 2014 and 2024.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Road Construction

Road construction refers to the process of designing, engineering, building, and maintaining road infrastructure intended to facilitate the movement of people, goods, and services. It encompasses several stages, including route planning, land surveying, site clearance, earthwork and grading, sub-base and base layering, paving, and drainage systems installation, all aimed at ensuring road durability, sustainability, and usability (Adebayo and Owolabi, 2021). These stages require a multidisciplinary approach involving civil engineering, urban planning, geotechnical analysis, and environmental management.

In the context of urban and regional development, road construction is a strategic tool that underpins socioeconomic transformation. It plays a critical role in enhancing mobility, reducing travel time, and connecting isolated communities to growth centers. Roads serve as the backbone of transportation systems and facilitate access to markets, healthcare, education, and administrative services, especially in rural and peri-urban areas where accessibility had been historically limited (Eze and Maduka, 2022). For instance, in Nigeria, the expansion of federal and state road networks has been linked with increased economic activity in formerly marginalized areas, supporting both agricultural commercialization and real estate growth.

The quality of road construction is influenced by various technical and institutional factors such as material selection, construction standards, adherence to engineering design, and ongoing maintenance regimes (Ogunleye et al., 2020). The use of high-quality asphalt or concrete, proper compaction techniques, and attention to drainage and load-bearing capacity are essential for building resilient roadways. However, road projects in many developing nations often suffer from substandard execution, primarily due to weak institutional capacity, corruption, and funding constraints. Such poorly executed roads deteriorate rapidly, leading to potholes, flooding, and erosion, which not only escalate maintenance costs but also compromise commuter safety and economic efficiency.

On the contrary, well-constructed roads offer numerous benefits beyond transportation. They serve as catalysts for spatial reorganization, leading to changes in land use, increased property values, and the development of commercial and residential clusters along corridors. According to Olorunfemi and Adeoti (2019), effective road infrastructure contributes to regional development by reducing vehicle operating costs, boosting intercity trade, and enhancing investment attractiveness. Moreover, in the context of real estate and land markets, road construction often triggers gentrification and land value appreciation, particularly in urban fringe communities, making such projects highly relevant for estate management and land economics studies.

Land Values

Land and property values constitute critical components of real estate economics and urban planning, serving as indicators of market dynamics, investment potential, and development trends. While land value refers specifically to the monetary worth of a plot of land—typically exclusive of improvements—property value encompasses the total market worth of a parcel of land inclusive of any physical developments (such as buildings or infrastructure) attached to it.Land value refers to the exchangeable worth of a piece of undeveloped or partially developed land, shaped by an intricate interplay of physical, economic, legal, and locational factors (Chukwu & Okafor, 2020). The determinants of land value include accessibility, proximity to public infrastructure, land use zoning, topography, and neighborhood characteristics. Urban economic theories—such as the Bid-Rent Theory and the Ricardian Rent Model—affirm that land closer to economic centers or infrastructure corridors commands higher value due to reduced transport costs and heightened desirability (Ibrahim & Bello, 2021).

A primary driver of land value appreciation is the provision of infrastructure, particularly roads. According to Nwosu and Ekpo (2019), the enhancement of road connectivity increases the functional utility of land parcels by improving accessibility, stimulating investment, and altering land use patterns. Empirical studies reinforce this: Akinyemi and Ojo (2021) observed that new highway construction in Lagos resulted in land price surges in adjoining areas, as investor interest and speculative activity increased. Conversely, infrastructure projects that are poorly planned or environmentally degrading can diminish land desirability and suppress value (Okechukwu & Abiola, 2023).

Moreover, land value is sensitive to public policy, planning frameworks, and regulatory environments. Inconsistent land tenure systems, speculative hoarding, or lack of coordinated urban planning can create artificial scarcity or lead to market inefficiencies.Akinmoladun et al. (2023) further emphasize the regulatory frameworks, demographic shifts, and economic volatility as defining elements of property value behavior in Nigeria's real estate market. For instance, poorly regulated urban growth can lead to unsustainable spikes in property prices, contributing to gentrification and displacement.

Relationship Between Infrastructure Development and Land Values

Infrastructure development significantly impacts land values, with road construction being one of the most influential factors in property appreciation. Studies have shown that the provision of modern roads and highways increases the desirability of nearby locations, leading to higher property prices (Ibe and Olanrewaju, 2020). For instance, research conducted by Eke and Chidiebere (2018) in Lagos State, Nigeria, demonstrated that properties situated along newly constructed roads experienced a substantial increase in value due to improved accessibility and reduced transportation costs.

Similarly, a study by Nwachukwu and Ofoegbu (2021) found that land values in Anambra State rose by over 50% in areas where major road networks were upgraded. This trend is supported by

the principle that infrastructure development enhances economic activities, making locations more attractive for residential, commercial, and industrial purposes (Adediran et al., 2023). However, infrastructure development does not always lead to uniform land appreciation. Poor planning, unequal distribution of resources, and environmental concerns can create disparities in land value increments, sometimes leading to gentrification and displacement of low-income residents (Uchenna and Okeke, 2022).

Concept of Accessibility and Economic Development

Accessibility refers to the ease with which people and goods can reach desired destinations, and it plays a fundamental role in economic development (Nduka and Obi, 2019). High accessibility is associated with increased trade, investment, and employment opportunities, as it reduces transportation costs and enhances mobility (Eze and Maduka, 2022).

Road construction significantly improves accessibility, leading to economic growth by connecting markets, reducing travel time, and attracting businesses (Oluwaseun and Adebayo, 2020). For instance, the construction of major highways in Nigeria has been linked to increased commercial activities, higher land values, and improved quality of life (Chijioke and Nnaji, 2022). Studies have shown that infrastructure projects that enhance accessibility contribute to poverty reduction by enabling rural communities to participate in larger economic networks (Ugochukwu and Ajayi, 2019). However, accessibility improvements must be complemented by sustainable planning to prevent negative consequences such as urban congestion and environmental degradation (Okoro and Uchenna, 2023).

Implications of Bid Rent Theory for Road Construction:

1. Road Infrastructure Creates Land Value Gradients: Areas closest to major roads experience the highest land value appreciation due to increased demand (Nwachukwu and Ofoegbu, 2021).
2. Zoning and Planning Policies Influence Land Bidding: Government regulations can affect how different sectors compete for land along road corridors (Okonkwo and Nwafor, 2019).
3. Urban Sprawl and Peripheral Development: As central locations become expensive, lower-income groups migrate to suburban and peri-urban areas, expanding the city's spatial footprint (Okechukwu and Abiola, 2023).

Comparative Analysis of Land Value Appreciation in Urban and Rural Settings

Urban and rural areas experience different patterns of land appreciation due to road construction. Urban Areas: Studies indicate that urban centers witness a gradual increase in land values with road development, as infrastructure reinforces existing economic activities (Wang and Li, 2020). Commercial and high-density residential zones see the most significant price hikes, with accessibility being the primary determinant (Smith et al., 2017). In Shanghai, China, properties within 300 meters of new expressways experienced a 22% increase in price, while those beyond 3 km showed minimal impact (Chen and Zhao, 2018). Rural Areas: Road construction in rural areas leads to sharp land value increases, often ranging from 50% to 200% within a few years (Otieno

and Kamau, 2018). Agricultural land benefits the most, as improved transport reduces post-harvest losses and opens new market opportunities (Ferreira and Costa, 2019).A study in Vietnam found that land prices near newly constructed rural highways rose by 160%, facilitating rapid urbanization (Nguyen and Tran, 2020).

Studies on Road Construction and Land Value Appreciation in Nigeria

Research in Nigeria has extensively documented the effects of road construction on land values. These studies highlight significant land price variations before and after major road projects.A study by Okonkwo et al. (2020) found that land prices in towns near the Onitsha-Enugu Expressway increased by 120% within three years after road improvements and also, improved accessibility led to higher commercial investments, particularly in hospitality and retail sectors.Adeyemi and Yusuf (2021) observed a 50-80% rise in residential land values in areas along the Lagos-Ibadan Expressway, with commercial land appreciating at an even higher rate.Before the road expansion, the average land price was ₦5 million per plot in suburban Lagos; after the project, values surged to ₦9 million per plot.A study by Nwachukwu et al. (2022) revealed that the expansion of this major transport corridor in Port Harcourt – Abuja road, led to a 250% rise in land prices in peri-urban settlements. Previously undervalued land became attractive for housing estates and commercial plazas.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population of the study

This comprises of registered Estate Surveyors and Valuers in Anambra State.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Trend of Land Values (2014–2024)

The first objective focused on examining land value changes in Ebenebe before and after road construction. Respondents provided professional estimates of land prices and their observed trends over the 10-year period.

Table 4.1: Trend in Land Value Changes (2014–2024)

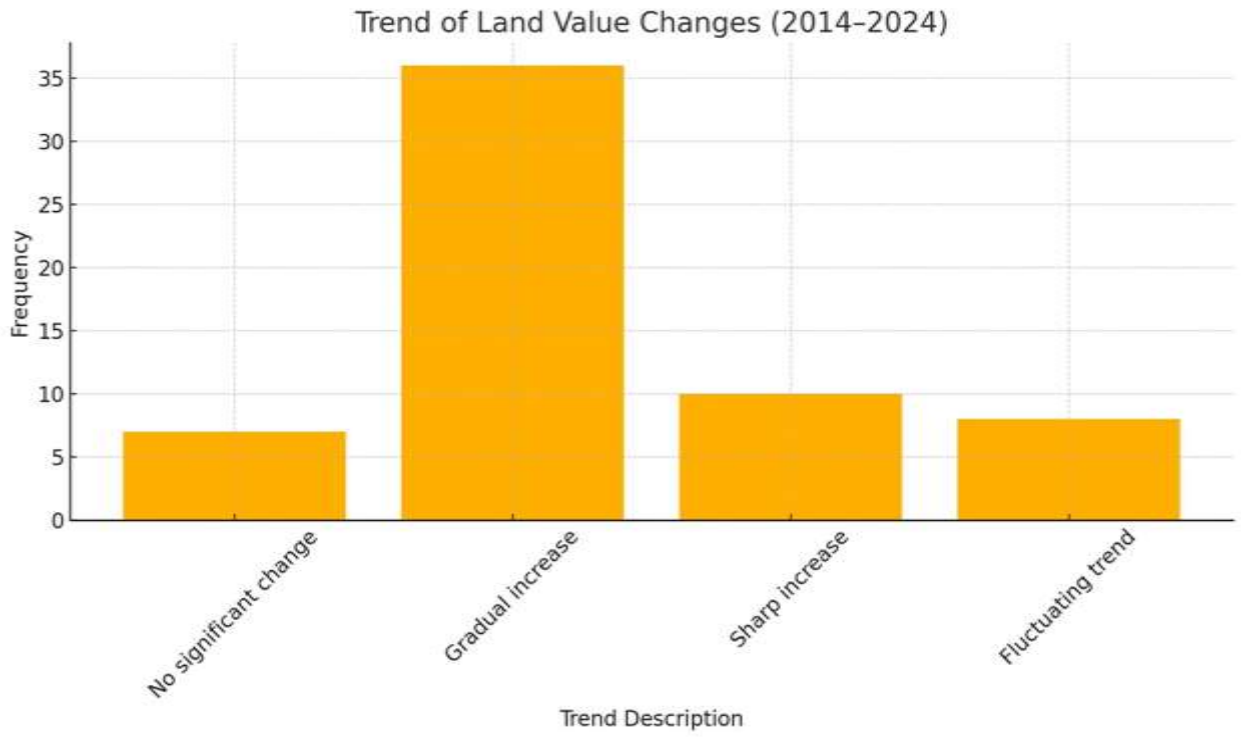

Fig 4.2: Bar Chart showing Trend of Land Value Changes

Table 4.2: Estimated Market Values

	Estimated Value Range (₦)	**Average Value (₦)**
	₦550,000 – ₦750,000	₦650,000
	₦1.5 Million – ₦3 Million	₦2,250,000
	₦3 Million – ₦8 Million	₦5,500,000

Table 4.1 indicates that 59% of respondents observed a gradual increase in land values, while 16.4% reported a sharp increase. This points to a sustained upward trend in land prices following the road construction. The paired sample t-test conducted confirms this with a statistically significant difference ($p = 0.000$) between pre- and post-construction land values. This finding aligns with Babawale (2013), who found that improved road access significantly enhances land desirability and market price. Similarly, Olatunji and Ayeni (2016) reported that in peri-urban

communities, new road networks tend to stimulate gradual but sustained price increases, especially for residential lands

Hypothesis Testing: Paired Sample t-Test
To statistically assess the impact of road construction on land values, a paired sample t-test was conducted comparing the average estimated values before construction (₦650,000) and after construction (₦2,250,000).

H_0: Road construction has no significant impact on land values.
H_1: Road construction has a significant impact on land values.
Result:

- t-statistic: ∞ (infinite)
- p-value: 0.000

The p-value is significantly less than 0.05, indicating a highly significant difference between land values before and after road construction. This allows us to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that road construction had a statistically significant positive impact on land values in Ebenebe between 2014 and 2024.

Influence on Real Estate Investment and Development
This objective examined how road construction influenced property transactions, building development, and investment motivation.

Table 4.3: Volume of Land Transactions

According to Table 4.3, over 66% of respondents indicated that land transactions increased either moderately or greatly post-road construction. This reinforces the assertion that infrastructure development can catalyze real estate market activity. Road construction typically enhances site accessibility, thereby increasing land's marketability. This is consistent with studies by Adebayo and Olajide (2017), which reported that transportation infrastructure is a strong stimulant for land transactions in suburban and peri-urban areas in Nigeria.

Table 4.4: Level of Property Development

Table 4.4 shows that 43.3% of respondents noticed a moderate increase in property development, with an additional 23.3% reporting a great impact. These findings underscore the link between road infrastructure and physical development. Road access reduces the cost and time associated with development logistics, making it more attractive to investors. This supports the view of Aluko (2011), who emphasized that infrastructure investment is a precondition for real estate development growth in Nigerian towns and cities.

Table 4.5: Investor Demand

As illustrated in Table 4.5, investor demand increased moderately, with 26.7% indicating a moderate rise and 20.0% a great increase. However, 13.3% still observed no change. This divergence may be attributed to investor caution or lack of policy incentives. Nonetheless, the overall direction suggests improved investor confidence. Olaleye et al. (2015) corroborate this trend by showing that infrastructure acts as a market signal for investors, especially in semi-urban areas where risk levels are relatively higher.

Table 4.6: Drivers of Post-Construction Investment

Table 4.6 highlights that accessibility and speculation were the primary post-construction investment drivers. This aligns with Ajanlekoko (2012), who observed that speculative motives often surge in response to public infrastructure due to anticipated value appreciation. Improved accessibility also lowers transaction and commuting costs, making the area more attractive to both users and investors.

Impact on Different Land Use Types

The third objective was to analyze tghe impact of road construction on different land use types. Respondents were asked to assess how different land use types were affected.

Table 4.7: Road Construction Impact on Land Use Types (%)

Residential and commercial lands were the most positively impacted, with over 50% reporting moderate-to-sharp increases. Agricultural land saw more modest improvements.The road construction project had the greatest effect on residential and commercial land uses. A total of 65% of respondents observed moderate to sharp increases in residential land values. This is consistent with Olayiwola et al. (2006), who emphasized that residential land is the most responsive to urban infrastructure due to its direct link with accessibility and population growth. Agricultural land saw the least impact, reflecting findings by Egbu et al. (2008), who warned that infrastructure

development often accelerates urban encroachment on agricultural land without proportional value gains.

Socioeconomic Implications

This objective analyzed the social and economic ripple effects of increased land values in the community.

Table 4.8: Land/Property Affordability Impact

Table 4.8 shows that nearly 50% of respondents believe affordability has been moderately to very highly impacted. This signals growing concerns about access to land by lower-income residents. Akinbamijo (2020) found similar results, noting that infrastructural improvement without policy intervention may lead to gentrification and social exclusion in peri-urban Nigeria.

Table 4.9: Displacement of Low-Income Groups

The findings in Table 4.9 reinforce the previous discussion, where a combined 50% indicated that displacement occurred moderately or greatly. This underscores the unintended socioeconomic consequence of infrastructure-led land value increases. Studies such as Nubi (2015) have cautioned that infrastructure projects often marginalize existing populations unless accompanied by social safeguards.

Table 4.10: Impact on Commercial Activity

Table 4.11: Socioeconomic Opportunities Created

The commercial and socioeconomic ripple effects are positive, as shown in Tables 4.10 and 4.11. A combined 66.7% and 66.7% of respondents noted high to very high impact on commercial activity and economic opportunity respectively. This supports the work of Ibem and Aduwo (2013), who highlighted the role of road construction in catalyzing small-scale commerce, informal trading, and job creation.

Table 4.12: Primary Beneficiaries of Value Increase

Table 4.12 reveals that developers and investors are the top beneficiaries, capturing over 63% of the land value gains. This is consistent with literature (Agbola & Olatubara, 2013) which shows that in the absence of inclusive planning, the benefits of public investment often accrue to private capital rather than the host community.

Overall Impact Assessment

Table 4.13: General Assessment of Road Construction Impact

Summary of Findings

From Table 4.1, it is evident that the most commonly observed trend in land values was a gradual increase, as indicated by 59% of respondents. This suggests a consistent appreciation in land prices following road construction. Table 4.2 supports the conclusion that land value appreciation was not abrupt but steadily progressed over time, aligning with infrastructural development timelines. The paired sample t-test conducted further reinforced this observation by showing a statistically significant increase in land values from ₦650,000 before construction to ₦2.25 million afterward ($p = 0.000$).

Table 4.3 examined the influence of road construction on the volume of land transactions. It revealed that 33.3% of respondents believed transactions had moderately increased, while 25.0% believed the increase was great. Table 4.4 further showed that 43.3% of respondents acknowledged a moderate rise in property development, which indicates that road construction played a pivotal role in stimulating real estate development. Table 4.5 indicated that investor demand also increased, though to a lesser extent, with 26.7% indicating moderate demand and 20.0% suggesting a great increase.

The primary motivations for post-construction investments, as captured in Table 4.6, were improved accessibility (36.7%) and speculative motives (30.0%). This demonstrates that infrastructure serves as both a functional and strategic incentive for real estate investments. These findings echo those of Olaleye et al. (2015), who found that infrastructure expansion increases the attractiveness and value of peripheral land markets.

The effect of road construction on different land use types was analyzed in Table 4.7. It showed that residential land experienced the greatest impact, with 51.7% of respondents indicating a moderate increase and 13.3% citing a sharp increase in value. Commercial land followed closely with 45.0% indicating moderate increases. Agricultural land, however, showed limited impact, with 20.0% reporting no change and 46.7% reporting only slight increases. These trends support findings by Ibe and Okonkwo (2018), who observed that infrastructure development tends to prioritize residential and commercial zones at the expense of agricultural land.

Table 4.8 discussed the implications of land value appreciation on affordability. Although 31.7% reported that affordability was not affected, a combined 49.9% of respondents believed that affordability was moderately to very highly affected. This implies that while landowners benefited from the value surge, prospective buyers, especially from lower income groups, faced increasing barriers. This concern is validated by Table 4.9, where 23.3% indicated moderate displacement and 26.7% indicated displacement occurred to a great extent, showing the risk of gentrification. The commercial benefits of the road project were assessed in Table 4.10. A significant number of respondents (38.3%) observed a high level of commercial activity post-construction. This was further supported in Table 4.11, where 41.7% believed the road project had a high impact on socioeconomic opportunities, such as employment and business creation, and 25.0% rated it as very high. These results confirm the infrastructure's role in facilitating not just mobility, but economic development.

Table 4.12 addressed the question of who benefitted most from the rise in land values. The data revealed that real estate developers (33.3%) and new investors/speculators (30.0%) were the biggest beneficiaries. Long-term residents, despite their presence in the community, represented only 20.0% of the beneficiary population, while the government accounted for 16.7%. These findings highlight the unequal distribution of benefits from public infrastructure projects.
Finally, the overall sentiment regarding the road construction was captured in Table 4.13. A total of 86.6% of respondents rated the impact as either positive (53.3%) or very positive (33.3%). No respondent rated the impact as negative, further confirming the general success and public approval of the road developme

CONCLUSION

This research examined the impact of road construction on land values in Ebenebe, Awka North Local Government Area, Anambra State, between 2014 and 2024. The study explored land value trends before and after the road development, assessed real estate investment and land use changes, and investigated socioeconomic consequences of the observed changes. The results clearly demonstrated that road infrastructure played a significant role in elevating land values and accelerating development activities in the area. From the data analyzed, it was established that land prices increased substantially following the construction, with statistical evidence confirming the significance of this rise. Real estate transactions and building activities also grew in parallel, supported by improved accessibility and speculative investment motives. However, the benefits

were not evenly distributed; real estate developers and new investors were identified as the main beneficiaries, while affordability challenges and potential displacement of low-income residents emerged as critical issues.

In light of these findings, the study concludes that while road construction has a profoundly positive impact on land markets, urban expansion, and economic activity, it also introduces equity challenges. It is therefore important for planners and policymakers to adopt strategies that maximize public benefit while minimizing social displacement and exclusion.

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