



## **Graffiti Usage on Buildings in Ogbomosho North Local Government Area, Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

Understanding graffiti's impact on housing, rent, and resident satisfaction aligns with SDG 11's goal of fostering inclusive, sustainable urbanization and ensuring affordable, safe housing. Hence, this study examined the usage of graffiti on buildings in Ogbomosho North Local Government Area of Oyo State. The study assessed factors that responsible for the choice of graffiti, and the impact of graffiti usage on housing satisfaction in the study area. 120 copies of questionnaire were distributed to residents in selected residential precincts using multistage sampling technique. The data obtained on socioeconomic characteristics of residents were summarized into frequencies, while three indices were developed for the study: the Usage of Graffiti Index (UGI), Factors Influencing Graffiti Choice Index (FIGCI), and Residents' Satisfaction Index (RSI) to rate respondents' opinion. The study found that "word graffiti" is the most common (33.3%) type of graffiti in the study area because it is inexpensive and simple to understand. The majority (80.8%) of homeowners value the existence of graffiti in their area, and it is often employed by youth (40.8%) for dwelling beautification (UGI = 2.44) and business marketing (UGI = 2.40). The study found that religion influences graffiti choice (FIGCI = 2.53), and that religious graffiti has a significant (25.0%) impact on inhabitants in the core area, indirectly affecting housing rent. The survey found that respondents were largely satisfied with word graffiti (RSI = 1.83), while few were satisfied with picture graffiti (RSI = 1.48). The study indicated that the majority of residents enjoy graffiti because of their religious views, and it suggests that informative orientation and awareness programs be implemented to increase residents' comprehension of the detrimental consequences of graffiti on housing satisfaction.

**Keywords:** graffiti, residential precincts, housing satisfaction

## **Introduction**

The global agitation for sustainable cities and communities has intensified in recent years (Onibokun & Faniran, 2018). To advance this goal, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11 aims to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable by ensuring that everyone has access to adequate, safe, and affordable housing. Integral to creating livable and inclusive urban environments are expressions of creativity that enhance the identity of such spaces. Graffiti art, with its communicative and sociocultural values, is one such form (Al-Khawaldeh et al., 2017). This art form allows individuals to express their thoughts and emotions, fostering a more peaceful, tolerant, and inclusive society (United Nations, 2015). Recently, there has been a notable increase in graffiti usage for decorating building walls in urban settings (Albaik, 2023). Beyond beautifying surroundings, graffiti serves as a means of personal and social expression.

Graffiti is an enduring cultural phenomenon, often viewed as a form of artistic expression (Ramirez, 2020). In modern urban environments, despite the availability of digital platforms for expression, graffiti continues to appear on various surfaces, including buildings, schools, parks, and public spaces (Matthews, Speers, & Ball, 2012). The subjective nature of satisfaction derived from graffiti can influence aspects of urban living, such as housing, by shaping residents' perceptions and experiences. For example, Adio et al. (2021) observed that graffiti on building walls could negatively impact the environment and provoke fear of crime, particularly if perceived as antisocial behavior (Idowu et al., 2017). This could potentially affect access to safe and satisfactory housing, thus influencing the realization of SDG 11.

Despite significant research on housing satisfaction (Fatoye & Odusami, 2009; Teck-Hong, 2011; Mohit & Azim, 2012; Ebiaride & Umeh, 2015; Ifaturoti, 2017; Aghimien et al., 2019), there remains a substantial gap in understanding how graffiti usage impacts housing satisfaction, particularly in the context of urban planning in Nigeria. Addressing this gap could offer valuable insights into both the

positive and negative effects of graffiti on housing satisfaction. This study aims to fill this knowledge void by examining graffiti usage in selected residential areas of Ogbomoso North Local Government Area, thereby contributing to a better understanding of graffiti's role in promoting or hindering housing satisfaction and its implications for sustainable urban development.

## **Study Area**

Ogbomoso North Local Government is located in the southwestern part of Nigeria and spans approximately 207 square kilometres with an average temperature of 28 degrees Celsius. It is on the latitude of 10°N and longitude 4 degree 10'E of the globe. The annual precipitation in the area is around 1830 mm, and the average wind speed is recorded at 9 km/h. The local government consists of three residential zones: the core, transition, and suburban zones, each with distinct characteristics and economic activities. (Adeboyejo and Abolade, 2009). The core zone of Ogbomoso North consists of the old town area, including the historic Oja'gbo neighborhood, known for its traditional Yoruba architecture and cultural heritage. This zone has been the center of the town's administration since its early days, with key landmarks such as the Soun's Palace and ancient markets.

The transition zone serves as a bridge between the old town and the expanding suburban areas. This zone, which includes neighborhoods like Owode and Osupa, is characterized by mixed residential and commercial activities. It has experienced significant infrastructural development, with more modern buildings and improved road networks. Small-scale industries, retail businesses, and educational institutions form the backbone of the economy in this zone. The suburban zone is the fastest-growing part of Ogbomoso North, with neighborhoods such as Aje-Igbo, Ayegun, and Under-G offering more spacious and modern residential areas. These areas have become popular for both middle-class residents and businesses looking to expand. Agriculture plays a significant role in Ogbomoso North Local Government economy, with many

engaging in farming activities like cassava, maize, and yam cultivation.

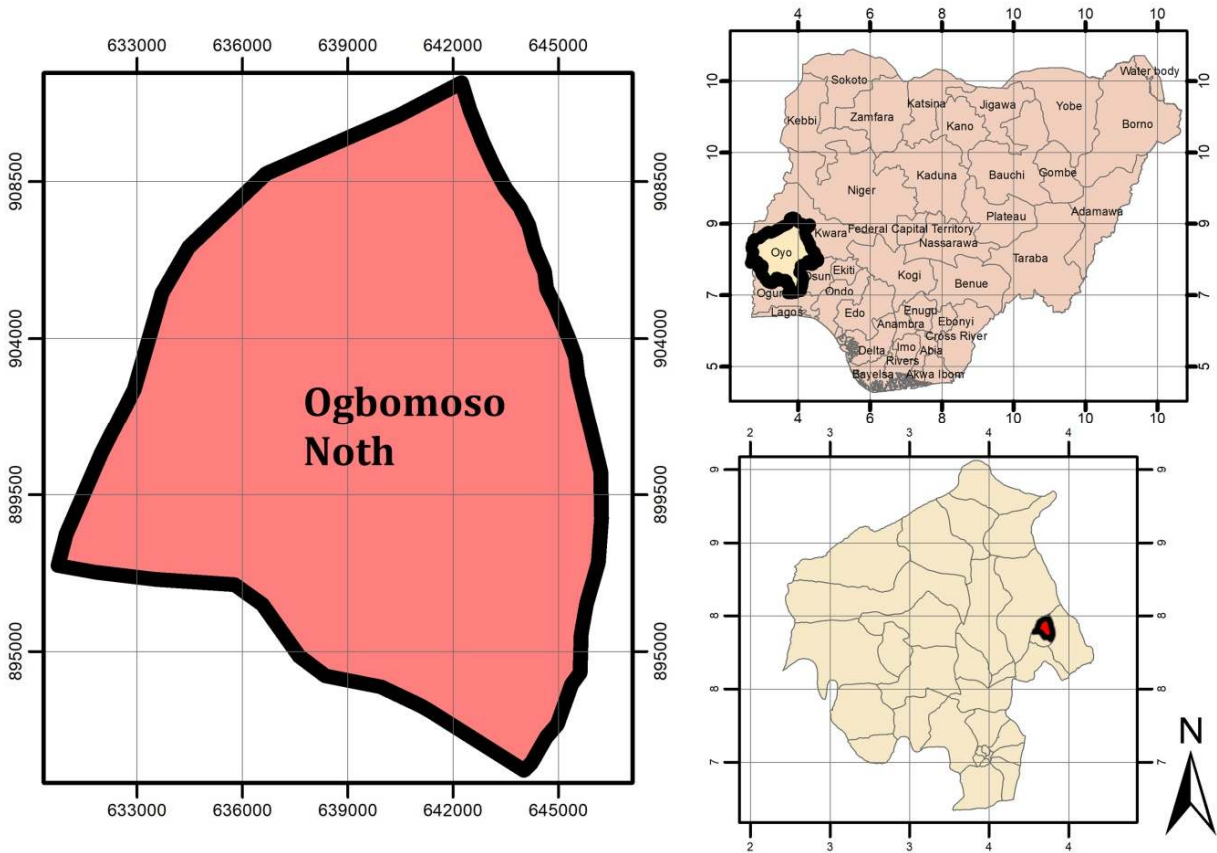


Figure 1: Ogbomosho North Local Government Area, Within the Context of Oyo State, Oyo State within the Context of Nigeria

### Materials and Methods

The study employed primary data obtained through direct observation, personal interviews, and questionnaires administered to residents in the three residential zones of Ogbomosho North Local Government Area. The primary data obtained include the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, the forms of graffiti and its usage on houses, factors that are responsible for the choice of graffiti on houses, and the impact of graffiti usage on housing satisfaction in the study area. Using a multi-stage sampling technique, the sample size of this research was derived from 22 percent of the total number of residential precincts selected purposefully and 10 per cent of the total number

of buildings in the selected residential precincts were sampled for questionnaire administration (Table 1 and 2). The percentages ensure a manageable and statistically significant sample size, reflecting the broader populations' socio economic characteristic and attitudes towards graffiti usage, without overwhelming the research resources. The percentages also allow balancing precision and practicability, ensuring that the study captures enough variability in Graffiti usage while maintaining feasible data collection and analysis. This approach ensures that the sampling focuses on locations that provide the most valuable data related to the research objectives, such as diversity in graffiti forms and their socioeconomics influence.

The socioeconomic characteristics of residents were summarized using frequencies and percentages, which were then displayed in tables. Three primary indices were created for the study: the Usage of Graffiti Index (UGI), Factors Influencing Graffiti Choice Index (FIGCI), and Residents Satisfaction Index (RSI). The UGI assesses respondents' usage of graffiti on houses, while the FIGCI evaluates the factors influencing the choice of graffiti. The RSI measures residents' satisfaction with various forms of graffiti.

The UGI was measured using a Likert scale with the following rankings: "Very Often" (3), "Often" (2), and "Seldom" (1). Similarly, both the FIGCI and RSI were measured using a Likert scale, with responses categorized as "Strongly Agreed" (3), "Agreed" (2), and "Disagreed" (1). To calculate each index, the summation of the

weighted value (SWV) for all variables was divided by the total number of respondents. The SWV for each variable is derived from the sum of the products of the proportions of responses. It is mathematically expressed as:  $SWV = (ax3) + (bx2) + (cx1)$

$$CII = \left[ \frac{SWV}{No\ of\ respondents} \right]$$

$$\bar{X} = \sum \left[ \frac{SWV / NR(f)}{No\ of\ variables} \right]$$

$$D = \frac{SWV}{NR(f)} - \bar{X}$$

$$D^2 = \left[ \frac{SWV}{NR(f)} - \bar{X} \right]^2$$

$\bar{X}$  = mean    D = Deviation

$D^2$  = Standard deviation

SWV = Sum of weight value

NR (f) = No of respondents

**Table 1: Precincts within Residential Zones**

Residential Zone	Ogbomoso North Residential Precinct	Total
Core area	Masifa, Isale-Afon, Aaje, Oja-igbo, Isale-ora, Oja-jagun, Baaki,Okeelerin,	8
Transition Zone	Taki, Apake, Papa-Alajike, Starlight, Oke-Aanu, Sabo, GeneralOlomi, Randa, Osupa, BMC, Paku, Agbowo, Ileewe, Attenda, Stadium, Oke Ado, Orita Naira	18
Sub –Urban Zone	Hamama, Federal, Iwagba, Girls High School, Babi, Are-Ago, Adeniran, Under-G, Adenike, Yoaco, Ayedaade, Kuye, Low Cost, Aroje, Abaa.	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>41</b>

Source: Adapted from Jelili, Gbadegesin and Alabi (2020).

**Table 2: Questionnaire Schedule**

Primary SamplingUnit (Residential Zone)	Secondary SamplingUnit (Selected Precinct)	Number of buildings	Sample Size
Core area	Isale Ora	153	15
	Oja Igbo	149	15
	Isale Afon	183	18
	Okeelerin	117	12

	<b>Total</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>60</b>
Transition Zone	Apake	153	15
	Randa	125	13
	Osupa	122	12
	<b>Total</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>40</b>
Sub urban zone	Iwagba	113	11
	Low Cost	92	9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>20</b>
	<b>Grand Total:</b>	<b>1,219</b>	<b>120</b>

**Source: Authors' Compilation, 2023.**

### Results and Discussion

The findings of the study were discussed under these headings: socioeconomic characteristics of respondents, forms of graffiti and its usage on houses, factors that are responsible for the choice of graffiti on houses, and the impact of graffiti usage on housing satisfaction in the study area.

#### *Socioeconomic Characteristics of Residents*

The socioeconomic characteristics of respondents in the study area were categorized into six headings: age, gender, marital status, occupation, and educational qualification. There was a notable difference in age distribution across the three residential zones, with the majority (85.0%) of respondents belonging to the independent age group. This was further broken down as follows: 30.8% were aged 46–60 years, 26.7% were between 36–45 years, and 25.0% fell between 21–35 years. A smaller group (15.0%) were aged 60 and above, and only 2.5% were within the 18–20 years age range. These findings suggest that residents' perceptions of graffiti usage may vary widely, as different age groups typically have distinct perspectives and attitudes toward forms of expression.

More than half (54.2%) of the respondents were male, while 45.8% were female, indicating

greater male participation in the study. This gender difference in perception is significant, as research suggests that men and women may process visual information differently (News, 2009; The Guardian, 2009). In terms of marital status, 51.7% of respondents were married, 20.0% were single, and 13.3% and 15.0% were divorced and widowed, respectively. This suggests that most respondents were mature, with potential preferences for housing aesthetics or construction.

Graffiti use also appears to be tied to occupation, with artisans more likely to use graffiti as a form of business advertisement. Findings show that 10.8% of respondents in the core zone and 10.0% in the transition zone were artisans, while the sub-urban zone had the lowest percentage (1.7%) of artisans. Traders were most common in the core zone (22.5%), artisans in the transition zone (10.0%), and civil servants in the sub-urban zone (7.5%).

Education levels varied among respondents, potentially influencing their views on graffiti. Nearly half of the respondents had tertiary education (32.5%), while 30.8% had no formal education, 19.2% had primary education, and 17.5% had secondary education. Those with no formal education were mostly found in the core zone (21.7%), while tertiary-educated individuals dominated the transition (15.0%) and sub-urban

(10.8%) areas. This variation in education levels likely affects respondents' knowledge and perception of graffiti, with educated individuals potentially viewing it as vandalism, while others may see it as simple art.

#### *Building Characteristics*

The study observed that 26.7% of respondents in the core and transition zones had inherited their homes, while tenancy was noted for 14.2% in the transition zone and 10.8% in the core area. Housing types in the study area were predominantly traditional compound houses (50.8%), followed by Brazilian-style houses (26.7%), flats (17.5%), and a small proportion of duplexes (5.0%). The type of house tends to influence the use of graffiti, as traditional compound and Brazilian-style homes often house larger families who might use graffiti as a form of self-expression or for recognition, whereas those in flats or duplexes might view graffiti as a sign of disorder.

Building usage also affects the type of graffiti expected. Commercial buildings might use graffiti for advertising, while residential and mixed-use buildings may use it for decoration or direction. The findings show that most homes in the core area were used for mixed purposes (30.0%), while 18.3% were for residential use and 1.7% for commercial use. Mixed-use buildings were also common in the transition zone (16.7%), with 14.2% being residential and 0.8% for industrial use. In the sub-urban zones, residential use accounted for 11.17%, with only 5.0% being mixed-use. Across all zones, mixed-use buildings made up 51.7% of total building use, with residential, commercial, and industrial uses at 44.2%, 3.3%, and 0.8%, respectively.

The age of a building is often indicated by the presence and type of graffiti. Older buildings in the core area are likely to have more instances of graffiti, as well as older styles and materials, compared to newer buildings in sub-urban areas. The study found that 9.2% of buildings in the core zone were between 20-30 years old, with 21.7% and 19.2% being 40-60 years old and 60 years or older, respectively. In contrast, 5.8% of the buildings in the transition zone were under 10

years old, indicating a higher incidence of new or renovated buildings there. Similarly, 7.5% of buildings in the sub-urban area were less than 10 years old. Overall, buildings aged 40-60 years were most common (36.7%), while 28.3% were 20-30 years old, and 21.7% were over 60 years old, with only 13.3% being under 10 years old.

In terms of building materials, mud construction was most prevalent in the core area (33.3%), with 15.0% made from mud blocks, and only 1.7% using concrete blocks. The transition zone showed 10.0% use of both mud and mud block materials, with a higher percentage of concrete blocks (13.3%) compared to the core. In the sub-urban zone, no buildings used mud or mud blocks, and 16.7% were made from concrete blocks. Across the entire study area, mud materials were dominant (43.3%), followed by concrete blocks (31.7%) and mud blocks (25.0%), reflecting a shift towards modern construction techniques.

Regarding length of residence, 25.0% of respondents in the core area had lived there for over 20 years, compared to 18.3% in the transition zone and 6.7% in the sub-urban area. This indicates that half of the respondents (50.0%) had been long-term residents, which likely contributes to a deeper understanding of housing conditions and satisfaction with their living environment.

#### *Graffiti: Forms, Features, Usage and Users*

In the core area, word-based graffiti is the most common, making up 45.0% of the total, followed by pictures (23.3%) and drawings (18.3%), with symbols being the least common at 13.3%. In the transition zone, symbols lead with 32.5%, while drawings, pictures, and word-based graffiti each account for 22.5%. In the sub-urban areas, symbols dominate at 80.0%, while word-based graffiti makes up the remaining 20.0%. In terms of graffiti placement, walls are the most common surface in both the core and transition zones, with 83.3% and 77.5% of graffiti positioned there, respectively. However, in the sub-urban zone, although wall graffiti makes up 10.0%, the majority of graffiti is found on gates (55.0%).

This is likely because many sub-urban buildings have gates, and welders often incorporate graffiti designs into them. Graffiti in the study area communicates cohesion, harmony, and beauty, particularly when it is bold and easily visible from a distance. The study classifies graffiti as bold when it stands out and can be seen clearly. Overall, 49.2% of the graffiti in the area is categorized as very bold, 28.3% as bold, 16.7% as moderately bold, and 5.8% as not bold at all. This suggests that most graffiti in the area is

highly visible from a distance. Regarding the materials used, more than half (59.2%) of the graffiti is made from painted materials, while 25.8% is engraved. A smaller proportion is made from paper or flex materials (9.2%) and markers (5.8%). The most common method for applying graffiti is painting (38.3%), followed by engraving (35.8%) and pasting stickers (15.0%). A small portion (10.8%) of the graffiti was inherited, indicating that most graffiti in the area is intentionally created.



**Plate 1:** Word and Picture Forms of Graffiti on Building Wall.  
**Source:** Authors' Fieldwork, 2023.



**Plate 2:** Incidence of Graffiti on Wall  
**Source:** Authors' Fieldwork, 2023.

Graffiti can influence housing satisfaction either positively or negatively, serving as a symbol of attractiveness or chaos, and sometimes being perceived as a form of vandalism within a community. However, in recent years, graffiti and street art have increasingly been used to enhance and rejuvenate urban spaces. To assess graffiti use in the study area, a Usage of Graffiti Index (UGI) was developed, with a maximum possible score of 3.0. The average UGI in this study was 2.02, indicating that respondents generally acknowledged the use of graffiti for all identified purposes.

The highest UGI score was for aesthetics, at 2.44, reflecting that graffiti is often used to beautify the surroundings. This is closely followed by graffiti's use for advertisement (UGI = 2.40),

meaning that many residents in the three residential zones utilize graffiti as a way to promote their businesses. Additionally, graffiti was used for directional or locational purposes, with a UGI of 2.22, while self-expression and communication both had UGI values of 2.10. Artistic expression was slightly lower, with a UGI of 2.04, and the use of graffiti as landmarks had a UGI of 2.02.

Graffiti was less frequently used for purposes like political affiliation (UGI = 1.70), security (UGI = 1.83), and self-recognition, which had the lowest UGI score of 1.41. Overall, the study found that 80.8% of residents appreciated the presence of graffiti art in their neighborhoods, while 19.2% expressed dislike for it.

**Table 3: Usage of Graffiti**

S/N	Uses of Graffiti	Rating			SUM	NR	UGI	D	D <sup>2</sup>
		3	2	1					
1	Political Affiliation	96	40	68	204	120	1.70	-0.32	0.1024
2	Beautification	204	74	15	293	120	2.44	0.42	0.1764



3	Advertisement	189	80	17	286	120	2.40	0.38	0.1444
4	Cultural Heritage preservation	105	86	42	233	120	1.94	-0.08	0.0064
5	Artistic expression	123	86	36	245	120	2.04	0.02	0.004
6	Direction	171	64	31	266	120	2.22	0.20	0.04
7	Landmark	123	84	37	242	120	2.02	0.00	0.00
8	Security	105	60	55	220	120	1.83	-0.19	0.0361
9	Self-expression	120	100	30	250	120	2.10	0.08	0.0064
10	Communication	120	102	29	251	120	2.10	0.08	0.0064
11	Self-recognition	57	36	85	178	120	1.41	-0.61	0.3721
							22.20/11=2.02		

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2023.

Graffiti users in the study area are identified as individuals who engage with various forms of graffiti. The data indicates that the predominant users are youths, with 83.3% in the core area and 65.0% in the sub-urban zone. This suggests that young people are more inclined towards self-expression and enhancing the aesthetic appeal of their surroundings compared to adults, possibly influenced by their occupations. Additionally, over half of the respondents (59.2%) reported having graffiti in their neighborhoods, while 40.8% did not. These findings indicate that graffiti is generally accepted within the community.

*Rating of Factors that Influence Choice of Graffiti on Housing*

This section discusses the various factors that influence the choice of graffiti. To capture residents' ratings of these variables, a 'Factors Influencing Choice of Graffiti' (FIGC) index was developed, with a maximum possible score of 3.0. The calculated average index value was 1.90, indicating that all listed variables were seen as having a moderate impact on graffiti choices in the study area. The findings revealed that religion (FIGC= 2.53), was the most significant factor influencing graffiti choice. This suggests that individuals often select graffiti based on their religious beliefs. Aesthetics ranked second (FIGC=2.23), followed by financial status (FIGC=2.00), culture (FIGC=2.31), and social values (FIGC=2.10). The only factor with a lower influence on graffiti choice was 'status,' which had a FIGC score of 1.71.

**Table 4: Factors Influencing Graffiti Choice in the Study Area.**

S/N	Factors	Ranking			SUM	NR120	FIGC	D	D <sup>2</sup>
		3	2	1					
1	Religion	242	52	13	307		2.53	0.63	0.3969
2	Aesthetic	126	126	15	267		2.23	0.33	0.1089
3	Financial	90	112	37	239		2.00	0.10	0.0100
4	Cultural	180	74	23	277		2.31	0.07	0.0490
5	Social	123	96	31	250		2.10	0.20	0.0400
6	Status	45	96	62	203		1.71	-0.19	0.0361
							11.17/6=1.90		

Source: Authors’ Fieldwork, 2023.

*Impact of Graffiti Usage*

The impact of graffiti is multifaceted, but in this section, its perceived effect on rental values is the primary focus. Some perspectives view graffiti as a sign of neglect, disorder, or even crime, leading to feelings of insecurity among residents and diminishing overall satisfaction with living conditions. Graffiti can negatively influence property values, making it harder to rent or sell homes in affected areas. Additionally, various forms of graffiti, such as religious, cultural, or gang-related, may contribute to changes in rental values. For example, religious graffiti, like "Jesus is Lord" or "Allah is the true way," may have a significant impact in areas where religious sensitivity or discrimination is high.

It was found that slightly over half (50.8%) of respondents across the three residential zones reported being affected by religious graffiti, while 25.8%, 16.7%, and 6.7% were affected by cultural, gang-related, and other types of graffiti, such as those related to music or sports. Further analysis revealed that in the core areas, 50% of respondents were impacted by religious graffiti, which had a substantial influence on house rents, followed by gangster graffiti at 28.3%. In the transition zones, religious graffiti was the most impactful, affecting 50% of respondents, with cultural graffiti accounting for 25%. Similarly, in the suburban zones, 55% of respondents perceived that religious graffiti had the greatest effect on rental values. This aligns with Goodbye

Graffiti's (2023) claim that properties with graffiti can lose up to 15% of their value, or nearly 25% if the graffiti is profane or hateful. As a result, graffiti can indeed devalue properties.

However, graffiti is not universally viewed negatively. Across the three residential zones, 46.2% of respondents saw graffiti as having a positive impact, 38.7% believed it had no impact, and 15.1% viewed it negatively. This suggests that many people see graffiti as a positive medium for expressing creativity within their communities.

*Residents’ Perceived Satisfaction with Graffiti in the Study Area*

The perceived level of satisfaction of residents on the use of gravity in their residential environment was measured using an index termed the Residents' Satisfaction Index (RSI), with a maximum possible score of 3.0. The average RSI recorded was 1.6, indicating that residents in the study area were moderately satisfied (RSI = 1.63) with graffiti in their neighborhoods or on their buildings. Among the types of graffiti, word-based graffiti was the most commonly preferred, scoring the highest RSI of 1.83, likely due to its simplicity and cost-effectiveness. In contrast, fewer residents expressed satisfaction with symbol-based graffiti, which had an RSI of 1.75, while drawing and picture-based graffiti were less favored, receiving RSI values of 1.43 and 1.48, respectively.

**Table 5: Residents’ Perception on Satisfaction Level of Graffiti on Buildings**

S/N	Factors	Ranking			SUM	RSI	D	D <sup>2</sup>
		3	2	1				
1	Word	114	48	58	220	1.83	0.20	0.04
2	Symbol	69	88	53	210	1.75	0.12	0.0144
3	Drawing	42	46	83	171	1.43	-0.2	0.04
4	Picture	45	56	77	178	1.48	-0.15	0.0225
						6.5/4=1.63		

Source: Authors’ Field Work, 2023.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

The study finds that graffiti is utilized across all three residential zones in Ogbomoso North Local Government Area, indicating a broad acceptance and integration of this form of urban art in the community. Predominantly, graffiti is used for beautification and advertisement purposes, reflecting its dual role in enhancing the aesthetic appeal of buildings and serving as a communication medium. Despite the widespread use of graffiti in Ogbomoso North Local Government Area, the study concludes that residents express only moderate satisfaction with its presence, suggesting room for improvement in how graffiti is applied or regulated. This moderate satisfaction highlights a nuanced relationship between graffiti and housing satisfaction, where residents appreciate its artistic and functional elements but may also have concerns about its impact on property values or neighborhood image. In this regards, the study recommends launching public awareness campaigns, encouraging organized urban art projects that incorporate graffiti thus giving residents a sense of ownership over public spaces and enforcing existing laws that regulate graffiti, ensuring that it is applied responsibly. Future research could explore the contribution of graffiti to place making and development of urban identities. This will address some of the limitation of this studies and as well providing a

comprehensive understanding of Graffiti role in urban housing and aesthetics.

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