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## Analysis of the Overview of the Causes of Fire Outbreaks in Nigerian Markets

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### ABSTRACT

Markets employ traders and several auxiliary workers such as porters, truck pushers, revenue collectors, security, among others. To reduced fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, the causes of fire were critically considered in this study, in order to check the high frequency of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. There is a need to take steps to curb these raging fire outbreaks through preventive measures to avoid further loss of lives, goods and properties. The causes of fire outbreaks in Nigeria were recapped with the aim of being informed of the inappropriate activities of people that causes fire outbreaks in markets and thereby reduces fire outbreaks and the consequences. To investigate the causes fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria and to analyse the damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria as well as evaluating ways to reduce fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria are the objectives. The methodology for this study is the review of relevant literature on the past fire outbreaks in markets and other commercial buildings in and outside Nigeria, in order to know their possible causes and other related issues. The findings showed that, there is no study on the assessment of damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria; subsequently, there is need for the analysis of the damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. It is expected that, this study shall educate people about the danger of fire outbreaks, by informing them about their various inappropriate activities that cause fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. It is also expected that, this study shall lay a foundation for further studying of causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. Thus, it is recommended that, people should be well educated with regards to how to stop their inappropriate activities that cause fires in Nigeria markets, in order to reduce the incidences of fire outbreaks and their consequences.

**Keywords:** Causes, Damages, Fire Outbreaks, Markets, Nigeria.

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### INTRODUCTION

Marketplaces are economic, social, political and cultural institutions (Overa, 2006). Apart from traders; markets employ several auxiliary workers such as porters, truck pushers, revenue collectors, security men, among others. Market

places provide avenues for various forms of interactions that lead to the development of relationships among traders and even between traders and their customers. Some of these social relationships may extend beyond the market and can have long lasting effects. Lastly, Nigerian markets

serve as places for various forms of cultural exchanges because traders are usually of heterogeneous ethnic backgrounds.

In Africa, underemployment or unemployment leads to a majority of the urban population to look at markets for an honest living and this leads to uncontrolled market development where the traders build markets at any empty space (Ngugi, 2015) and this in turn, disregards planning authority of the urban areas. In addition, the markets transform to adapt to the changes to accommodate needs of people and the increasing population. According to Ngugi (2015), this change eventually brings about increased market needs that require more space and support infrastructure, hence, expansion is inevitable. Sometimes, this translates to a market spillover to other designated areas like commercial buildings or residential buildings at the periphery of market edges. With the transforming markets, come many problems in which some areas that were previously designated as commercial buildings degenerate into unplanned retail outlets and infrastructural support services become overstretched while vehicular and pedestrian conflicts occur.

Fire disasters in markets are not mere events striking each particular time but the result of various processes [Department for International Development (DFID),

2005]. Many factors are responsible for fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. In some places, one of the factors is keeping of petrol in markets, and other factors are adulterated fuel, wrong connection of electricity, power surge, sparks, lighted match, stoves, gas cylinders and throwing away of remains of cigarette at offices and markets (Mann, 2010). Thus, to reduce fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, the above mentioned causes of were critically considered in this study, in order to check the high frequency of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. Having reached a verge of recording higher economic growth, there is a need to take steps to curb these raging fire outbreaks through preventive measures to avoid further loss of lives, goods and properties (Alhaji, 2014). Therefore, a recap of the causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria is of paramount important, in order to find a way to reduce fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, so that, further loss of lives, goods and properties can also be reduced in markets in Nigeria.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Fire outbreak in markets is a problem in Nigeria and it has led to loss of lives and destruction of properties (Nigerian Fire Service, 2016). Table 1.1 shows that, fire outbreak in markets is frequently occurring across the length and breadth of Nigeria. Giving a consideration to these fire outbreaks in

markets in Nigeria, it is therefore important to carry out a study that can reduce fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.

**Table I.I: Reports of the Fire Outbreaks in Some Markets in Nigeria**

S/N	MARKET	LOCATION	DATE OF INCIDENT	YEAR OF REPORT	NUMBER OF CASUALTIES	NUMBER OF BURNT SHOP/ ESTIMATED LOST PROPERTIES
1	Wuse New Market	Wuse, F.C.T, Abuja	last week of Dec, 2002	2002	Not given	Not given
2	Part of Wuse Old Market	Wuse, F.C.T, Abuja	17th Jan, 2003	2003	No life was lost	Not given
3	Muhammadu Abubakar Rimi market	Sabon Gari area of Kano, Kano State	2nd November, 2008	2008	Not given	400 Shops burnt
4	Ose Okwuodu Food Stuff Market	Onitsha, Anambra State	13th April, 2014	2014	Not given	200 Shops and goods worth over one million naira destroyed
5	Alaba International Market	Ojo, Lagos, Lagos State	30th June, 2014	2014	Not given	Five phone accessories Shops were affected
6	Atakumosa Market	Ilesa area of Osun State	9th August, 2015	2015	No Casualty Reported	Properties worth millions of naira were razed
7	Area I Market	Garki, F.C.T, Abuja	30th Dec, 2015	2016	Not given	Loss of properties worth millions of naira
8	Yola South Main Market	Yola, Adamawa State	4th January, 2016	2016	Not given	Goods worth millions of naira destroyed

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9	Jakande market	Ikosi-Ketu, Lagos, Lagos State	28th of January, 2016	No injury and no life was lost	Goods worth millions of naira were destroyed
10	Muhammadu Abubakar Rimi market	Sabon Gari area of Kano, Kano State	26th of March, 2016	No life was lost	3800 Shops burnt and led to the loss of goods and properties worth 2 trillion naira

**Source:** Federal Fire Service of Nigeria, 2002 - 2016.

**AIM OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study is to recap the causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, in order to be informed of the inappropriate activities of people that causes fire outbreaks in markets and thereby reduces fire outbreaks and the consequences.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To investigate the causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.
- ii. To analyse the damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.
- iii. To evaluate ways to reduce fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.

**SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Markets have been classified by different researchers based on different factors such as location, time, competition, function, legality,

transactions, regulation, volume of business, nature of commodity, demand and supply (Gaurav, 2010; Manoj, 2015). Based on location, markets have been classified in to three forms, which are, openair markets, closed or built-up markets and street markets[Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 1995;Bromley, 1998; Amiteye, 2015].

Also, based on location, Ngugi (2015), classified markets into street markets and regional markets, of which regional markets are the open air markets and the built-up markets. Considering and putting together, the above classifications of markets based on location, markets can be classified into regional open air markets, regional built-up markets, and street markets. In this scenario, regional built-up market is a market in a particular defined location or region, which is made up of different commercial buildings that contain lock-up shops, open stalls, restaurants,

and other features of a market (Amiteye, 2015; Ngugi, 2015). Thus, the scope of this study is the regional built-up markets in Nigeria.

### JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Some of the causes of fire outbreaks in Nigerian markets have been identified by some researchers. Fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria are mostly traceable to electrical faults (Olaiya, 2013) and Mann (2010) also identified some causes of fire outbreaks in Nigerian markets to be out of careless disposal of cigarette stubs, adulterated fuel, illegal connection of electricity, power surge, sparks, lighted match, stoves, cookers and gas cylinders. Gbenga (2014) argued that, about 70 percent of fire incidents in markets in Nigeria is traceable to electrical faults; that is why safety measures should be part of the design and construction stages and not when a market has been built before makeshift arrangements are put in place for safety.

Giving a general consideration of fire outbreaks in public buildings in Nigeria of which markets are included, Abdulwahab *et al.* (2012), discovered that, causes of fire in public buildings could include chemical spills and also, internal risks of fire are ever-present with widespread reliance on the use of electrical appliances, such as desk lamps, heaters, computers, power boards and other equipment. The research carried out by

Makanjuola *et al.* (2016) showed that, the causes of fire in public buildings are attributed to carelessness, accident and willful act or arson.

In all these studies on fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, different causes of fire outbreaks were pointed out and different issues associated with them have been discussed but there is a gap in knowledge, which is an assessment of damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. Therefore, it is important that, this gap in knowledge is filled, in order to be informed of the implications of inappropriate activities of people that cause fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.

### METHODOLOGY

Literature review is a basis for research in nearly every academic field (Lamb, 2014). Therefore, the information was obtained from the relevant literature on the past fire outbreaks in markets and other commercial buildings in and outside Nigeria. They are data obtained from textbooks, journals, theses, reports, papers, archive and data base of institutions and the internet was also used to download information from various websites on the past fire outbreaks in markets and other commercial buildings in and outside Nigeria, in order to know their possible causes and other related issues.

## FINDINGS

There is no study on the assessment of damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. Subsequently, there is need for the analysis of the damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Mann (2010), Ogeah and Omofonmwan (2013) identified some causes of fire outbreaks in Nigerian markets and some other researchers in the time past have also established some causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. One of the causes of fire disasters is ignorance (Amoako, 2014). Poor awareness of what fire is and how it can be prevented has led to a lot of fire outbreaks. Thus, it is expected that, this study shall educate people about the danger of fire outbreaks, by informing them about their various inappropriate activities that cause fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. It is also expected that, this study shall lay a foundation for further studying of causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Marketplaces are economic, social, political and cultural institutions. Apart from traders, markets employ several auxiliary workers such as porters, truck pushers, revenue collectors, security men, among others. Market places provide

avenues for various forms of interactions that lead to the development of relationships among traders and even between traders and their customers. Some of these social relationships may extend beyond the market and can have long lasting effects. To reduced fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, the causes of fire were critically considered in this study, in order to check the high frequency of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria. Having reached a verge of recording higher economic growth, there is a need to take steps to curb these raging fire outbreaks through preventive measures to avoid further loss of lives, goods and properties.

The aim of this study is to recap the causes of fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria, in order to be informed of the inappropriate activities of people that causes fire outbreaks in markets and thereby reduces fire outbreaks and the consequences. To investigate the causes fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria and to analyse the damages caused by fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria as well as evaluating ways to reduce fire outbreaks in markets in Nigeria are the objectives. The methodology for this study is the review of relevant literature on the past fire outbreaks in markets and other commercial buildings in and outside Nigeria, in order to know their possible causes and other related issues. The findings showed that,

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