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Towards Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11): An Analysis of the Factors contributing to Urban Sprawling in Major Cities of Ghana

Prof. Dr. Joseph Buertery, Atsrim Felix, Samuel Nartey

Pentecost University

Abstract

Urban development in Ghana has been characterized by economic expansion, rapid population growth and rural-urban migration. However, these changes have often outpaced effective urban planning, leading to significant challenges in the management of urban areas. This paper examines the key factors that contribute to urban sprawling in Ghana for the purpose of formulating sustainable urban planning strategies for the future. Using quantitative methods, structured questionnaires were distributed, retrieved and analysed using descriptive statistics. Analysis showed that factors with the highest mean and most negative skew such as increasing population growth, the desire for single-family accommodation, high cost of accommodation at urban centres and affordable land values in sub-urban areas are perceived as the most critical issues related to urban sprawl. There was a strong consensus due to negative skewness that lower-ranked challenges like safety and security, anticipated developmental services and job decentralization are still concerns although perceived as less urgent. The research provides actionable insights into how urban sprawl undermines sustainable development and offers strategies to mitigate its negative impacts. The practical implications of the research on the challenges posed by urban sprawl are crucial for city planners, policymakers, and local governments, particularly in a rapidly urbanizing country like Ghana.

Keywords: Cities, land use, sprawling, planning, urbanization