CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Since independence, the Nigeria government has desperately continued to make concerted effort in the area of quantitative (but not qualitative) supply of mass housing through huge budgetary and policy provisions but, surprisingly, the rate at which existing ones are collapsing calls for an urgent attention. The site of building collapse scattered across the length and breadth of Nigeria is quite alarming that it is unimaginable what effects it will have on the building industry and Nigeria economy as a whole. One could imagine what edifices these buildings would have been if only they were constructed accordingly. It has been reported that Nigeria, especially Lagos State has become the "world's junk-yard" of collapsed buildings worth billions of naira (Famoroti, 2005). It is quite unimaginable that a county blessed with so great potentials in its construction industry can experience such magnitude of building collapse Fadamiro in 2002 defined building as "an enclosure for spaces designed for specific use, meant to control local climate, distribute services and evacuate waste". Buildings can be defined as structural entities capable of securing self by transmitting weights to the ground. More so, buildings are defined "as structures for human activities, which must be safe for the occupants" (Odulami, 2002). However, these same buildings have been posing treats and dangers to people either during or after construction as a result of its collapse. Collapse as a whole occurs when part or whole body of a structure fails and suddenly gives way, the structure, as a result of this failure, could not meet the purpose for which it was meant for. Building collapse is an extreme case of building failure. It means the super-structure crashes down totally or partially (Arilesere, 2002). Building failure occurs when there is a defect in one or more elements of the building caused by inability of the material making up the components of such building elements to perform its original function effectively, which may finally lead to building collapse. Buildings are meant to provide conveniences and shelter to the people, but the same building has been a danger trap to the same people. Building is expected to meet certain basic requirements such as buildability, design performance, cost effectiveness, quality, safety and timely completion (Olusola, Atta & Ayangade, 2002). Generally, buildings are expected to be elegant and functional but many projects are constructed that do not meet any of these basic requirements. The recurring incidence of building collapse, some of which claimed innocent lives is a consequence of this. Many studies has been carried out and various workshops organized in major cities of the country by various bodies, government agencies and institution in order to look into causes of the incidence of building collapse in Nigeria, but none has been able to come out with how each of the determined factors directly lead to building collapse in the country. There are many factors that cause building collapse in Nigeria and they are structural design and quality management according to Olusola (2002). The quality management entails material variability, testing variability, judgment factor, contractors' variability, poorly skilled workmen and unprofessional conduct. The study aimed at examining the cases of residential building collapse in Nigeria with a view of identifying the causes, effect and solution.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Building collapse is a defect or imperfection, deficiency or fault in a building element or component. It may also be as a result of omission of performance. The degree of building collapse can therefore be related to the extent or degree of deviation of a building from the "as – built" state which is in most cases represent the

acceptable standard within the neighborhood, locality, state or country. (Ikpo, 1998). However, building collapse can simply be defined as a total or partial/progressive failure of one or more components of a building leading to the inability of the building to perform its principal function of comfort, satisfaction, safety and stability. The incessant buildings collapse in Nigeria has become a great concern to all the stakeholders – the professionals in building industry, government, private developers, clients and users, as well as the neighborhood residents. Fall out of the researcher's concern about the increasing incidents of collapse building nation-wide form the basis for this study to find out the major causes, effects and probable remedial measures to collapse of buildings in Nigeria.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the objectives of this study:

To examine the causes of building collapse in Nigeria.

To identify the effects of building collapse in Nigeria.

To identify the remedial measures or approaches to building collapse in Nigeria

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What are the causes of building collapse in Nigeria?

What are the effects of building collapse in Nigeria?

What are the remedial measures or approaches to building collapse in Nigeria?

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The following are the significance of this study:

The outcome of this study will educate the general public and the government of the day on the causes, effect and solutions to the cases of building collapse in Nigeria.

This research will also serve as a resource base to other scholars and researchers interested in carrying out further research in this field subsequently, if applied will go to an extent to provide new explanation to the topic

1.7 SCOPE/LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study on residential building collapse in Nigeria with careful examination of the causes and the effects with a view of finding a lasting solution to the issue of incessant building collapse in Nigeria.

LIMITATION OF STUDY

Financial constraint- Insufficient fund tends to impede the efficiency of the researcher in sourcing for the relevant materials, literature or information and in the process of data collection (internet, questionnaire and interview).

Time constraint- The researcher will simultaneously engage in this study with other academic work. This consequently will cut down on the time devoted for the research work.

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Building collapse in Nigeria, causes, effect and solutions