Title: An Empirical Ascertainment of the Causes of Building Failure and Collapse in Nigeria.
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Outlet: Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, January, 3(1) 313 – 322.
Date: 2012
Abstract: The incessant of building and collapse in the recent past has become a source of national concern and embarrassment in Nigeria. News reports of such incidents are frequently reported in the country by both the print and electronic media. In 2006 alone, no fewer than thirteen of such cases were recorded in Lagos State alone while statistics of the previous and subsequent years were not better off either. This study was set out to empirically ascertain the causes of such building failure and collapse from the perspectives of the stakeholders (comprising of the professional in the building industry, contractors and house owners/developers) with a view to proffering appropriate recommendations to guide against future occurrence. Lagos state was chosen as the case study based on the frequency of occurrence building collapse in the state. To achieve the objective of the study, questionnaires were randomly administered on the professional Estate surveyors and valuers, Architects, Town planners, Quantity Surveyors, Engineers (structural and civil) building contractors and landlords/developers in the study area to seek their opinion on their perceived causes of building collapse. The study identified the use of sub-standard building materials, poor workmanship by contractors, use of incompetent contractors, faulty construction methodology, heavy downpour, non-compliance with specifications/standards by developers/contractors, inadequate/lack of supervision/inspection/monitoring, structural defects, defective design/structure, illegal conversion/alternations/additions to existing structures and dilapidating structures as the major causes of building collapse in Lagos State nay Nigeria. The study recommends education of all the stakeholders including the professional in the building industry and landlords/developers on the inherent dangers of building collapse and the need to be safety conscious while building houses.