



Impact of Severance Due to Road Dualization on Users Satisfaction with Commercial Properties in Port Harcourt

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Abstract This research work ascertained the effect of severance on users' satisfaction with commercial properties along Ada-George road in Port Harcourt. A population of 325 commercial buildings were severed for road expansion and sample size of 180 commercial properties was randomly selected for questionnaire administration. The primary data were collected from the field using questionnaires which was administered to 180 commercial property users of the severed properties and 155 questionnaires were retrieved and duly completed. Frequency distribution table, percentages and pictures were used to present and analyse the data collected. The study found that slightly over half (56.78%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the commercial properties after severance. It was thus concluded that severance reduced users' satisfaction of commercial properties in Port Harcourt. The study therefore recommended that Users opinions should be taken into consideration before the acquisition of such properties and whenever part of any building is to be acquired, the whole area of the commercial building should be acquired and paid for in order to reduce some of the litigation that may arise in the process.

Keywords Users, satisfaction, severance, commercial properties, Port Harcourt

Introduction

User's or Customer's satisfaction is an overall attitude regarding a good or service after its acquisition and use [1]. The factor important to satisfaction is the level of performance of the product. If the level of satisfaction with the product is high customers tend to be satisfied, even if they expected such level of performance [2].

Commercial buildings are those designed, built and operated for any use other than residential, manufacturing etc [1]. When a property for instance, a commercial property situated along a road and is affected by severance for compulsory acquisition purpose, the satisfaction that will be derived by the user may not be the same with the level of satisfaction that was derived before the severance. When a property has been severed for compulsory acquisition purpose, owners or users of such properties face impoverishment when their properties are lost to bigger interest or for the public good forcibly. The challenges that such displaced people go through in their efforts to reorganize their lives have become a phenomenon which is acknowledged worldwide. Johnson et al [3] stated that the extent of loss from severance will naturally vary greatly according to the nature of the undertaking and other circumstances.

In Nigeria today, the principle of determining compensation value of a property compulsorily acquired is set out in the land use Decree of 1978, imposing application of contractors test to determine the value of unexhausted improvement on land; with necessary reflection of age of such improvements (depreciation) being added to the ground rent paid in that year and reflecting interest at bank rate for the period when compensation sum is likely to be paid [4]. This case is applicable to where the properties are fully acquired. What about when the property



is severed? What happens to the value of the retained property when a property has been severed? Does it lead to other defects in the building?

Along Ada George road in Rivers State, compulsory acquisition was embarked upon for the dualization of the road. The project affected many properties, crops, graves, structures/buildings and other unexhausted improvements. After the severance, the spaces left behind are not up to the space that was needed for such use, therefore bringing about change in the satisfaction of derived from the property. Much work has been carried out on compulsory acquisition and compensation and how it has affected commercial properties value, but they failed to consider the effects of severance of such properties on user’s satisfaction. It is against this background that this study examined the effect of severance due to road dualization on users satisfaction of commercial properties.

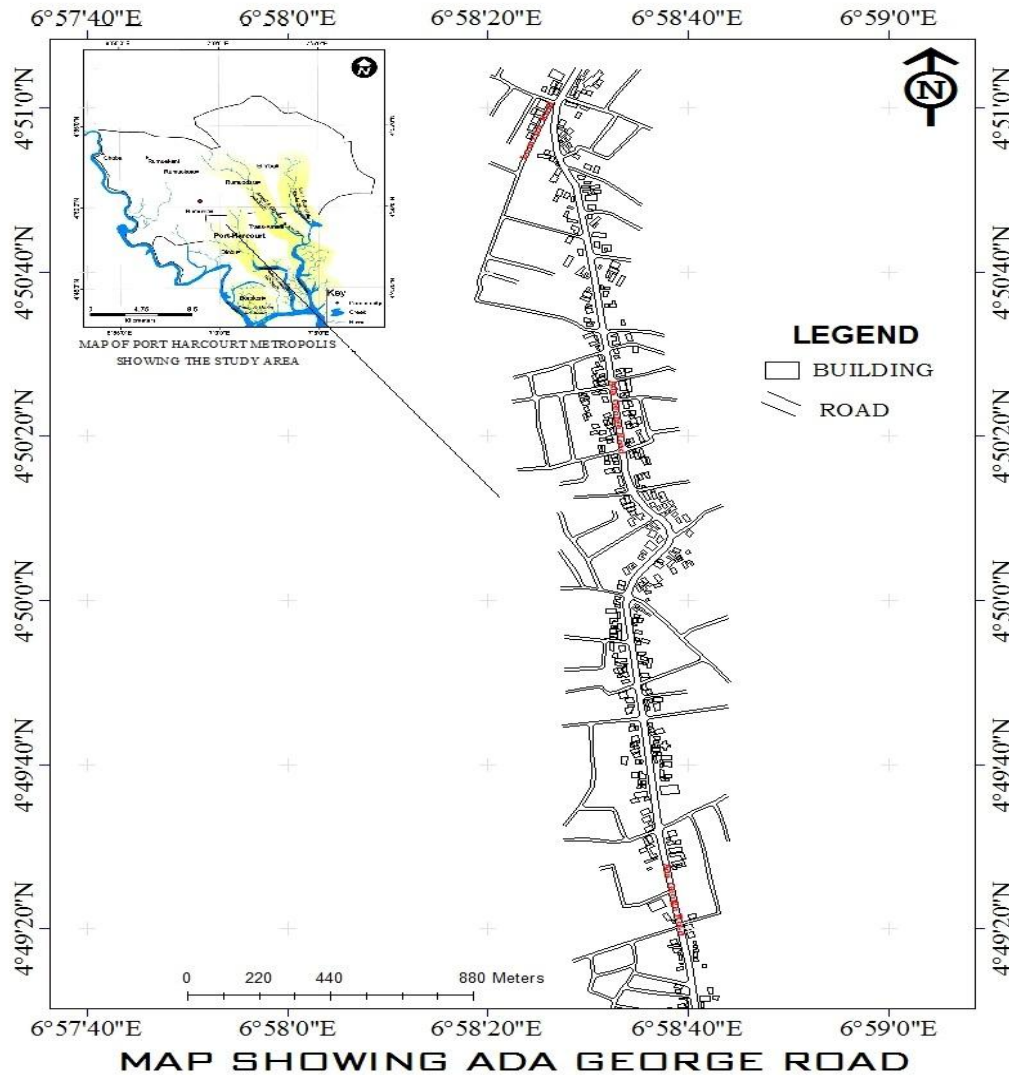


Figure 1.1 Map of Port Harcourt Metropolis Showing Ada George Road, Port Harcourt
 (Source: Department of Urban and Regional Planning Rivers State University Geographical Information System, Rivers State)

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the effects of Severance due to road dualization on Users Satisfaction of Commercial Properties acquired along Ada-George road, Port Harcourt. The objectives are to;

- (1) Ascertain Users satisfaction with commercial properties before severance of the properties.
- (2) Ascertain Users satisfaction of commercial properties after severance of the properties.

Scope of the Study

This study covered severed commercial properties due to compulsory acquisition and the effect of severance on user's satisfaction along Ada George road in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. However, this work is limited to severance for compulsory acquisition purpose.

Description of the Study Area

Port Harcourt is the capital of the Rivers State in Nigeria. It is a port town lying along the Bonny River, hence the "Port" in the name Port Harcourt with "Harcourt" being the former colonial secretary, Lewis Harcourt's surname. It is located in southern Nigeria.

Port Harcourt lies right in the Niger Delta region and thus its economy is primarily based on oil and the petroleum industry. The current state of urbanization and modernization in Port Harcourt are due to the associations it shares with the petroleum industry. Port Harcourt was the chief industrial city of the former eastern region. It also serves as the center of social and economic life in the Rivers State. It is a major industrial center with many multinational firms as well as other businesses from the petroleum industry operating from there. Port Harcourt is also the chief oil-refining city in Nigeria. The main export in the Rivers State is crude oil. Port Harcourt has a tropical monsoon climate. It is victim to lengthy and heavy rain seasons. It has very short dry seasons. The Temperatures in Port Harcourt stay relatively constant though and average about 25°C - 28°C. The Ada George road is predominated with commercial buildings like shops, offices restaurants, eatery, car wash, petrol stations. In addition to these, exists several residential, worship, hospitability, schools, hotels, churches, town halls etc. The buildings and other structures are densely occupied and command good rental and capital values given that the road is one of the commercial hubs of Port Harcourt suburbs. The neighbourhood is well serviced with functional road networks which as at the time of inspection, it was in a good state of repair.

Literature Review

A key element of customer or users' satisfaction is the nature of the relationship between the users and the service provider. The higher the quality of service rendered the higher the level of satisfaction, thus quality of service is an important indicator of customer or users' satisfaction [2]. This underscores the imperative for regular assessment of user satisfaction. Evaluation of customer satisfaction is important for safeguarding customer loyalty [5]. For instance, housing satisfaction is the degree of contentment experienced by an individual with regard to the current housing situation. It should be noted that users/ tenants have vital roles to play in creating service outcomes to ultimately determine the value and level of satisfaction they receive. Assessing users' satisfaction in this regard is important as it plays a critical role in formulating successful housing policies [6]. Users' satisfaction is the result of a user's assessment of a service based on a comparison of service delivery with their prior expectations. In order to ensure that positive users' satisfaction is attained, it is necessary to have a good understanding of the users' expectations and in understanding the users expectation there must be direct link with the users [7]. It is important to assess the satisfaction of users about the management of the property they occupy so as to understand user expectation and perception in order to gain numerous advantages. The concept of customer satisfaction according to Taylor and Baker (1994) cited in Mbachou and Nkado [8] is regarded as *raison d'etre* for the existence and operation of an organization. According to Susilawati [9] a survey of tenant satisfaction should include: willingness to receive suggestions and implement them; appearance and property condition; quality of service management; contract agreement; tenant relationship; renew objectives; property characteristics; and readiness to solve a problem. User or customer satisfaction plays an important role in the success and survival of organization in today's competitive market and the property industry cannot be an exception. A quality workplace can induce productivity gain in the organization. Improved workplace satisfaction can act as a catalyst in attracting and retaining talented members of staff, thereby increasing profits [10]. It would appear that user satisfaction has been relegated to the background by property managers of office buildings. Given the multitude of features and varying quality of office buildings at different locations, an assessment of users' satisfaction remains the only means of meeting the objectives of users (tenants).



Oladapo [6] advocated a systems approach to the concept of user satisfaction. This concept involves four interacting subsystems which include the tenant subsystem, the dwelling subsystem, the environment subsystem and the management subsystem.

Hoq and Amin [2] studied the role of customer satisfaction in enhancing customer loyalty. In particular, the purpose of their work was to examine the role of customer satisfaction in enhancing customer loyalty for Muslim and non-Muslim customers and the effects of customer loyalty on customers behavioural decisions in the Malaysian Islamic banking industry.

Anshori and Langner [11] studied the importance of customer satisfaction and supreme service provision in the hotel industry using Surabaya Plaza Hotel with the aim to gain insight into the concepts regarding customer satisfaction in the hotel industry and to explore the very needs and want of Surabaya Plaza Hotel's guests in order to discover the opportunities a hotel management has in improving the experience of current guests and in becoming more competitive in winning new customers. The research employed the survey method using structured questionnaires. The sourced data was analyzed. It was discovered that the hotel was well acceptable to its customer with few complaints. It was also discovered that the quality of service, based on the wants and needs of the customers, was an important key factor to customer satisfaction and success in the industry.

User satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a subjective phenomenon which cannot be based on objective reality but on client's perception of the objective reality. It should be noted that there will be dissatisfaction if focus is on the objective reality rather than seeing from the users' perspectives [8].

Bevan [12] argued that assessing user satisfaction is necessary to make comparison between products, or to assess whether usability requirements have been achieved. He also emphasized that assessing user satisfaction is important in identifying usability problems, to obtain a better understanding of user needs so as to refine requirements. Measuring user satisfaction with management of properties plays a key role in quality and productivity improvement activities.

Commercial buildings have been defined as those designed, built and operated for any use other than residential, manufacturing etc. These buildings can be dedicated to a single, homogeneous use such as corporate headquarters. Commercial property remains the most capitalized in term of unit value and achieving a meaningful depth [13].

When a property is severed, the property owner and/or the property suffer:

- a) **Disturbance:** Is used to mean a person's monetary loss caused by disruption to the person's property arising from severance and partial acquisition. However the compulsory acquisition (*i.e.* partial acquisition) of a property could involve expenses such as; removal expenses, loss of goodwill and loss of profit. Apart from these listed, the health inconveniences is important. The health problem may include noise, dust and heart related problems faced during the acquisition exercise.
- b) **Injurious affection:** This applies when part of the property is taken and the value of the rest of the property is reduced by whatever it is the acquiring authority intends to do on the property taken. In many cases acquiring authorities intend to construct some facility which will have effects which often influence property values and the closer the property is to the facility, the greater the negative effect on the value of the property.
- (c) **Defects on building:** Defects are abnormalities or deficiencies on properties. According to Oladapo (2004), defects in building are characterized by number of factors such as unsuitable materials, incorrect assessment of loads, inadequate appreciation of condition of use and assess out of exposure to rainfall, direction of prevailing wind, microclimate, atmospheric pollution, aspect and height of buildings. The defects can be patent or latent. Patent defects are those which can be discovered by reasonable inspection. Latent defects are those which cannot be discovered by reasonable inspection, for example problems with foundations which may not become apparent for several years. characterize

Defects on buildings as a result of severance can be grouped under the following areas. They are;

architectural defects, structural defect, mechanical (plumbing) defect, electrical defects and economic defect

Previous studies from the perspective of building users distinguished between the emphasis on occupants' well-being and health. Collectively these two factors constitute user satisfaction and are a measure of building performance [14]. In summary, occupants either feel good, healthy and comfortable or not when they are in the



sustainable building [14-15]. Meir et al. [16] argued that building users may be either satisfied or dissatisfied with a sustainable building. Since designers of sustainable buildings incorporate three main components namely economic, environmental and social sustainability, it is important to determine an acceptable balance between designer creativity and utility

Abbaszadeh et al. [17] and Edwards [15] proposed that to identify the building user satisfaction gaps, the task is to evaluate user satisfaction on aspects such as Internal Environmental Quality (IEQ); in this example the focus is placed on office layout, office furnishings, thermal comfort, air quality, lighting, acoustic qualities, cleaning and maintenance in the workplace. The relationship between user satisfaction and building's IEQ categories is where high levels of satisfaction towards the building's IEQ categories can be positively correlated with better building performance

The basic factors that influence user satisfaction have been identified to:

personal needs, previous experience, inter personal communication explicit service communication, implicit service communication and personal beliefs. According to Szymanski & Henard [18] there are four main factors that influence user or customers' satisfaction for a product or service and they include: perceptions of service and product quality, perceived performance of products and services, customer complaints behavior and perceived or real interaction between customers and service providers.

Abolade, Omirin and Dugeri [1] conducted a study on An Evaluation of Users' Satisfaction with Property Management Services in Commercial Properties in Lagos. The paper examines tenants' (users) satisfaction with management of commercial properties by Estate Surveyors in Lagos. Users of commercial properties in Lagos were sampled using the simple random sampling technique. A structured questionnaire was administered to tenants of the commercial properties in Lagos. 240 questionnaires were administered and 170 were returned and found usable and analyzed. The data were analyzed using frequency distribution, mean rank score and relative important index. It was found that personal need is the most important factor that influence users' satisfaction with management of commercial properties. It was also discovered that users' of commercial properties are averagely satisfied with the management of the properties they occupy. It was recommended that both practitioners and academia should give more attention and value to the performance measurement of users' satisfaction so as to enhance cordial relationship among users and property

Ibem, Opoko, Adeboye and Omole [19] conducted a study on Performance Evaluation of Residential Building in Public Housing Estate in Ogun State, Nigeria; Users satisfaction Perspective. A cross sectional survey of 452 household heads in nine public housing estates was conducted in the study area. Data were obtained using structured questionnaire and observation schedule; and were subjected to descriptive statistics and factor analysis. A mean satisfaction score of 3.21 was observed; indicating that the respondents were generally satisfied with the performance of the different components of the buildings. Satisfaction levels were generally higher with privacy and sizes of living and sleeping areas than the availability of water and electricity in the buildings. The type, location and aesthetic appearance as well as size of main activity areas were the most predominant factors that determined satisfaction and indeed the performance of the buildings in meeting users' needs and expectations. The paper highlights critical areas where attention is needed in order to improve the performance of residential buildings and users' satisfaction with public housing projects in Nigeria.

Danielle [20] conducted a Research on the Determinants of Satisfaction Amongst Occupiers of uk Commercial Property School of Real Estate and Planning Henley Business School, University of Reading, Reading, United Kingdom. This study used structural equation modelling and regression to analyze 4400 interviews with retailers, office tenants and occupiers of industrial property in the UK, conducted over a 12-year period. Interval-scale ratings of satisfaction with many aspects of occupancy are used as explanatory variables. The dependent variables are satisfaction with property management, value for money, overall occupier satisfaction and landlord reputation. Findings showed all three sectors of commercial property examined, the aspects with most impact on occupiers' satisfaction with property management are found to be communication, understanding business needs and responsiveness to requests. For occupiers' overall satisfaction, the key determinants vary between property sectors, whilst the professionalism of the property manager has an impact on occupiers' willingness to recommend their landlord. Billing and documentation, cleanliness and maintenance



of the property, strongly influence occupiers' perception of receiving value for money for rent and service charge.

Oluwunmi, Akinjare and Izobo [21] conducted a research on user's satisfaction with residential facilities in Nigerian Private Universities: A study of Covenant University, this study aims at ascertaining the satisfaction derived by residents of the staff residential estate of a Nigerian private university from its facilities with a view of ensuring the functionality and optimal performance of facilities in Universities. In achieving the aim of the study, one hundred and ninety six (196) questionnaires were distributed to the residents of Covenant University's staff quarters made up of diverse housing units for various cadre of its faculty using the non-probability sampling technique. A total of one hundred and twenty-four (124) questionnaires were returned representing a response rate of 63.26% and collated data was analysed accordingly using the weighted arithmetic mean coupled with the relative importance index. Findings showed that the inhabitants of the university staff quarters were majorly satisfied with the services of five out of the eight principal university facilities maintained by the Physical Planning and Development (PPD) unit. Three other systems were in need of attention as indicated by the relative importance index. Conclusively, the PPD was admonished to continually pay attention on the services of the University's priced assets which on the long run, would foster an increased satisfaction level for residents of the estate

There appears to be a dearth of literature on the impact of severance on users' satisfaction with commercial properties.

Research Methodology

The researcher adopted a descriptive research design (i.e. survey research design). The population of the study is 325 buildings that were severed. The sample size for this study covers the 180 properties that were severed and compensation has been paid. The researcher applied the simple random sampling techniques in selecting the sample size. Taro Yamane's formula was used to estimate the sample size. See Taro Yamane's Formula below;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + (e)^2}$$

Where, n= sample size sought

N= Population Size (325)

e= Level of significance (0.05)

Table 1: Questionnaire Distributed

Option	Respondent	Percentage (%)
Number of questionnaire retrieved	158	87.78
Number of questionnaire not retrieved	22	12.22
Number of questionnaire administered and Retrieved	180	100

In the study 180 questionnaires were administered and 158 were retrieved representing 87.78% response rate while 22 (12.22%) of the questionnaire were not retrieved. It is pertinent to note that out of the total number of questionnaires that were retrieved (i.e. 158), 155 of the questionnaires were duly completed by the respondents and formed the basis for data analysis.

This research work basically made use of two types of data namely; primary data and secondary data. The data obtained were from two major sources namely: primary source and secondary source. The primary source of data was based on oral interview, through questionnaire as well as reconnaissance survey that was carried out at Ada George road. The secondary source is based on documentation such as books, internet, and journals. The data was analyzed with descriptive statistical tools such as frequency distribution table, percentages and Plate.

Results and Discussion

The results of the research work are presented below.

Property Occupied before the Road was Dualized

Table 2 showed that the respondents were asked whether they were occupying the property before the road was dualized. 119 respondent representing 76.77% said they were occupying the property before the property was



dualized whereas the remaining 36 respondent representing 23.33% of said they were not occupying the property before the road expansion.

Table 2: Property occupied before the road was dualized

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	119	76.77
No	36	23.33
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Properties affected by Road Dualisation

Table 3 showed that 155 respondents representing 100% said that their properties were affected as a result of the dualization of Ada- George road, Port Harcourt.

Table 3: Properties Affected by Road dualisation

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	155	100
No	-	-
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Length of Time in Occupation of the Property

Table 4 showed that 36 respondents representing 23.23 % have been occupying the property for 1-4years. 56 respondents representing 36.13% have been in occupation of the property for 5-9years.42 respondents representing 27.10% have been occupying the property for 10-14years while the remaining 21 respondents representing 13.54% said that they have been occupying the property for 15 years and above.

Table 4: Length of time in occupation of the Property

Number of Years	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1-4	36	23.23
5-9	56	36.13
10-14	42	27.10
15-Above	21	13.54
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Properties Severed (Partly Severed)

Table 5 showed that 155 respondents representing 100% agreed that their properties were severed. It is pertinent to state that none of the respondents said that their property was not severed. See Plate 1 and 2 showing severed buildings.



Plate 1A: severed building along Ada George road



Plate 2A: severed building along Ada George road

Source: Field Survey, 2017

Table 5: Properties severed (Partly Severed)

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	155	100
No	-	-
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Effects of Severance on the Use of the Property

Table 6 showed that 132 respondents representing 85.16% said that severance has affected the use for which the property was put to. However, the remaining 23 respondents representing 14.84% said that severance has not affected the use for which the property was put to.

Table 6: Effects of severance on the use of the property

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	132	85.16
No	23	14.84
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Satisfaction Derived from the Property before Acquisition

Table 7 showed that 89 respondents representing 57.42% were very satisfied with the property before it was acquired. 42 respondents representing 27.10% were satisfied with the property before it was acquired, 6 respondents representing 3.87% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the property before it was acquired, 10 respondents representing 6.45% were dissatisfied with the property before it was acquired. While the remaining 8 respondents representing 5.16% were very dissatisfied with the property before it was acquired.

Table 7: Satisfaction derived from the property before Acquisition

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Satisfied	89	57.42
Satisfied	42	27.10
Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	6	3.87
Dissatisfied	10	6.45
Very Dissatisfied	8	5.16
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Satisfaction Derived from the Property after Severance

Table 8 showed that 15 respondents representing 9.68% were very satisfied with the property after it was acquired and severed, 24 respondents representing 15.48% were satisfied with the property after it was acquired and severed, 25 respondents representing 16.13% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the property after it was acquired, 63 respondents representing 40.65% were dissatisfied with the property after it was acquired while the remaining 28 respondents representing 18.06% were very dissatisfied with the property after it was acquired. The study revealed that slightly over half of the respondents were dissatisfied after the severance of the property while a quarter of the respondents were still satisfied after the severance.

Table 8: Satisfaction derived from the property after severance

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very Satisfied	15	9.68
Satisfied	24	15.48
Neither Satisfied Nor Dissatisfied	25	16.13
Dissatisfied	63	40.65
Very Dissatisfied	28	18.06
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)



Reduction in Satisfaction Due to Severance

Table 9 indicated that 109 respondents representing 70.32% said that the satisfaction they derived from the commercial properties has reduced due to the severance. However, the remaining 39 respondents representing 29.68% said that the satisfaction they derived from the commercial properties has not reduced due to the severance.

Table 9: Reduction in satisfaction due to severance

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	109	70.32
No	46	29.68
Total	155	100

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2017)

Conclusion

The study revealed that most of the respondents were satisfied with the property before acquisition while most of them were dissatisfied with the property after the acquisition and severance. The study also showcased the reduction in users' satisfaction with the property after the severance of the property. The study has established that severance has impacted negatively on Users satisfaction of commercial properties. The study therefore recommended that Users opinions should be taken into consideration before the acquisition of such properties and whenever part of any building is to be acquired, the whole area of the commercial building should be acquired and paid for in order to reduce some of the litigation that may arise in the process.

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