

## Evaluation of Spatial Layout and Accessibility Performance of Selected High Court Buildings in Southwest Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

Courthouse design plays an important role in supporting efficient judicial processes, safe movement, and equitable access to justice. However, spatial and accessibility deficiencies remain evident in many Nigerian court facilities. This study evaluates the spatial layout and accessibility of selected High Court facilities in Southwest Nigeria, focusing on zoning, circulation, functional relationships, and accessibility provisions. A descriptive research design with a mixed-method approach was adopted across six High Court facilities in Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo States. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires, field observations, interviews, and spatial assessments, while 237 valid questionnaire responses were analysed using descriptive statistics and mean weighted values (MWV). Findings indicate a generally moderate-to-low performance in spatial layout, with an overall MWV of 2.43. Accessibility performance was similarly low, with an overall MWV of 2.39. Ramps (MWV = 2.55), accessible service counters (2.54), and toilets (2.52) recorded the highest accessibility ratings, while court entrances (2.21), adequate door widths (2.24), and emergency alarms for users with sensory impairments (2.19) recorded the lowest. The findings demonstrate that accessibility is largely provided through isolated features rather than being integrated into the overall spatial and circulation system. The study concludes that improved court design should integrate functional zoning, efficient circulation, barrier-free access, wayfinding, and inclusive safety provisions to enhance the functionality, safety, dignity, and equitable use of judicial facilities in Southwest Nigeria.

**Received:** 09 Sep. 2026

**Accepted:** 17 Sep. 2026

**Published:** 25 Sep. 2026

### Keywords:

Courthouse Design; Spatial Layout; Accessibility; Universal Design; High Courts; Judicial Facilities

### INTRODUCTION

Courthouses are important civic institutions whose physical environments influence the experience of justice, safety, dignity, and public confidence. Beyond accommodating legal proceedings, they serve diverse users, including judges, court staff, lawyers, litigants, witnesses, and visitors. The spatial organization of court facilities, particularly zoning, circulation patterns, functional relationships, and accessibility, is therefore essential to efficient judicial processes and equitable access to justice (Resnik et al., 2013; Branco, 2023). Poorly organized layouts, however, can result in congestion, circulation conflicts, confusion, and inefficient service delivery (Makinde, 2013).

In Nigeria, existing court facilities have been associated with challenges such as poor space organization, inadequate circulation systems, weak separation between public and restricted areas, insufficient parking, and inefficient movement patterns (Makinde, 2020). These conditions can affect both operational efficiency and users' experience of court environments. The complexity of courthouse functions further requires appropriate relationships between public, administrative, judicial, and secure spaces to ensure effective movement and interaction among different user groups. Accessibility is equally important in ensuring that public judicial facilities can be used by people with diverse abilities. The Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act of 2018 provides for improved access to public facilities for persons with disabilities (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018). Nevertheless, deficiencies in ramps, lifts, accessible toilets, parking, signage, and

circulation remain evident in many Nigerian public buildings (Babalola, *et.al.* 2020; Ugah *et al.*, 2024, Makinde and Hassan, 2025). Such limitations can particularly affect persons with disabilities, elderly users, and individuals unfamiliar with court environments. Universal Design therefore provides an important basis for evaluating whether court facilities support equitable and independent use (Mosca & Capolongo, 2018).

In courthouse research, socio-legal scholars have developed methodologies that integrate plan analysis, observation, interviews, and photographic documentation to show how spatial layouts shape both legal processes and user experiences (Branco, 2023). These studies emphasize that courts function as complex environments with multiple user groups such as the public, legal professionals, judicial officers, detainees, and support staff each requiring distinct yet coordinated circulation routes. Where these flows are poorly designed or insufficiently separated, significant challenges emerge, including heightened security risks, diminished dignity (for instance, when detainees and the public share circulation), and disorienting wayfinding that particularly affects first-time users, the elderly, and persons with mobility impairments (Branco, 2016).

This study seeks to address that need by systematically evaluating the spatial layout of selected court buildings in Southwest Nigeria, focusing on zoning, circulation, and functional adjacencies; auditing their accessibility against Nigeria's accessibility regulations; identifying design and operational barriers that hinder inclusive access and efficient case flow; and proposing an evidence-based design for an

inclusive court facility in Akure, Ondo State. By combining plan analysis, accessibility checklists, time motion observation of pedestrian flows, and targeted interviews with court users including persons with disabilities, elderly users, legal professionals, and facility managers the research aims to generate both a rigorous diagnosis and an implementable design brief that judicial facility managers, the NCPWD, and architects can use to strengthen compliance and inclusion. Ultimately, courthouse design must reconcile competing priorities of security, dignity, efficiency, and symbolic authority without compromising equitable access.

Southwest Nigeria, comprising Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo States, contains major urban centers and established judicial institutions serving diverse populations. Despite previous research on spatial, operational, and security challenges in Nigerian courts, limited attention has been given to the combined assessment of spatial layout and accessibility within High Court buildings. Understanding these dimensions is important for determining how effectively existing court environments respond to functional and accessibility requirements. This study evaluates the spatial layout and accessibility of selected High Court buildings in Southwest Nigeria. The study answered the following research questions that comprised: how are the spatial layouts of selected courts in southwest Nigeria organised in terms of zoning, circulation patterns, and functional relationships? To what extent are court facilities accessible and compliant with universal design principles and national building regulations? What design and functional

barriers hinder accessibility, inclusivity, and operational efficiency within existing court layouts? What design strategies can be proposed to create an inclusive court facility in future court building development in Nigeria, that addresses identified barriers and promotes universal accessibility? The findings are expected to provide useful evidence for improving the planning and design of functional and inclusive court environments in Nigeria.

### Study Area: Southwest Nigeria

Southwest Nigeria is one of the six geo-political zones of the country and comprises six states: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo. The region is significant because it hosts some of Nigeria's oldest judicial institutions, including the Lagos High Court and the Oyo State Judiciary Complex in Ibadan. It is also the country's most urbanised region, with high population density, complex mobility patterns, and growing demand for judicial services. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBC) (2022), Southwest Nigeria accounts for more than 20% of the nation's population, with Lagos alone hosting over 15 million residents. Courts in the region therefore face unique pressures of overcrowding, infrastructural strain, and increased demand for inclusivity, especially for persons with disabilities, elderly citizens, and other vulnerable groups. Studying courts in this area provides insights that are both regionally significant and broadly relevant to other Nigerian urban contexts where similar challenges of accessibility and infrastructure exist. Figure 1 shows the Map of South West, Nigeria.

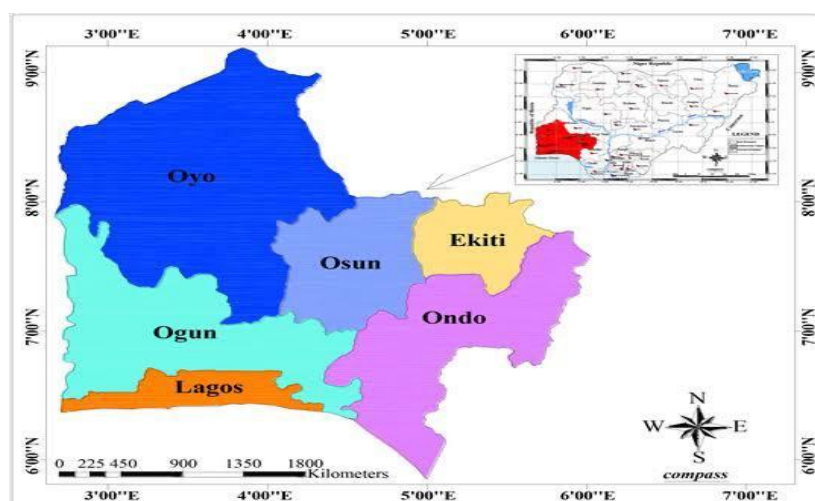


Figure 1: Map of South West, Nigeria  
Source: United Nations cartographic section (2022)

### Literature Review

Courthouses are complex institutional environments where spatial organization influences movement, security, efficiency, and users' experience of justice. Their design must accommodate judges, court staff, lawyers, litigants, witnesses, visitors, and other users within clearly defined functional zones. Oyeniyi, *et.al* (2022) emphasized that courthouse environments can influence dignity, fairness, and public confidence, making spatial planning an important component of effective judicial facilities. Spatial layout determines how efficiently activities and users are organized within court buildings. Effective zoning, circulation, and functional relationships help separate public, administrative, judicial, and secure areas while reducing movement conflicts and improving operational efficiency. In Nigerian courts, poor space organization, inadequate circulation, weak zoning,

and inefficient relationships between spaces have been identified as significant challenges (Makinde, 2020). These deficiencies can result in congestion, delays, security concerns, and difficulties in navigating court environments. Accessibility is equally important in ensuring equitable use of judicial facilities. Universal Design promotes environments that can be accessed and used by people with diverse abilities (Aduwo, *et.al*, 2026). In court buildings, accessibility involves entrances, ramps, lifts, toilets, parking, circulation routes, signage, waiting areas, and access to courtrooms. Although the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act of 2018 provides a legal basis for accessible public facilities in Nigeria, deficiencies in accessibility provisions remain evident in many institutional buildings (Sholanke & Adisa, 2025). Court environments present an additional design challenge because accessibility

must be achieved alongside security, privacy, and controlled movement. Clear zoning, appropriate circulation, effective wayfinding, and suitable spatial relationships are therefore essential to balancing operational and user requirements (Adenaike, *et.al*, 2022). This is particularly relevant in Southwest Nigeria, where existing High Court facilities serve rapidly growing urban populations and diverse categories of users. Although previous studies have examined spatial and operational challenges in Nigerian courts, limited research has jointly evaluated spatial layout and accessibility in High Court buildings across Southwest Nigeria. This gap necessitates a closer assessment of how zoning, circulation, functional relationships, and accessibility provisions perform within existing court facilities. The present study therefore evaluates the spatial layout and accessibility of selected High Court buildings in Southwest Nigeria, providing evidence to support more functional and inclusive judicial environments. According to Makinde (2013), most existing court buildings in Nigeria suffer from grossly inadequate functional spaces, poor organization of layouts, and high levels of security porosity, all of which undermine their efficiency and overall functionality. Subsequent empirical audits of Nigerian High Courts confirm these challenges, reporting recurring spatial faults such as unclear entry sequences, poorly defined separation between public and secure zones, long transfer distances between registry and courtroom, and circulation arrangements that mix detainee and public flows conditions that create inefficiencies and significant safety risks (Makinde, 2020). These findings reflect a broader scholarly consensus that the physical organization of courthouses fundamentally shapes access, legitimacy, and procedural fairness (Mulcahy, 2011; Spaulding, 2012). Comparative studies of modern courthouses in other jurisdictions further show that zoning and circulation geometry directly influence operational performance and security planning (Chidiac, *et al.*, 2024). However, Nigerian studies to date have been largely descriptive and have not systematically quantified functional relationships (e.g., adjacency mapping, circulation metrics) or linked them empirically to user outcomes such as wait times, navigation difficulties, or perceptions of dignity. This gap underscores the need for rigorous spatial diagnosis that combines plan analysis, circulation mapping, and observational measures to establish how zoning and circulation patterns in Southwest Nigerian courts shape both accessibility and operational efficiency, and to generate evidence-based priorities for redesign and retrofitting. Nigeria's 2018 discrimination against persons with disabilities (Prohibition) Act and the subsequent Persons with Disabilities (Accessibility) Regulations articulate clear legal requirements for public buildings to provide ramps, lifts, accessible sanitary facilities, and wayfinding supports for person with disability (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018; NCPWD regulations, 2023). Nevertheless, audit studies in Nigeria's public institutions repeatedly show poor compliance with Universal Design (UD) benchmarks for accessibility. Most of the structure studies in Nigeria have deficiencies in ramp gradients, lift availability, accessible toilets, signage and drop-off/parking provision are common (Aruma and Emusa, 2023; Ugah *et al.*, 2024) also in acoustic, functionality of spaces. International UD benchmark emphasises that technical compliance (e.g., door width) is necessary but insufficient; but holistic usability and stakeholder experience must be observed to judge accessibility performance (Mosca and Capolongo, 2018; Watchorn *et al.*, 2022). In the judicial sector, however, there is a notable absence of systematic, standards-based accessibility audits: Makinde's (2020) study assessed space

and security in high court but did not look at Nigeria's accessibility regulations. The result is that compliance of court buildings across the Southwest remains undocumented and enforcement/unawareness issues persist. A targeted, standards-based accessibility audit of selected courts is therefore required to fill this empirical and policy gap.

Physical barriers in accessibility in courts are not limited to missing ramps; they include poor wayfinding, insufficient waiting/queuing space, circulation conflicts (shared paths for detainees and public), inadequate accessible sanitary provision, and lack of assistive technologies (amplification, induction loops). These barriers have been documented anecdotally and in case studies: Makinde (2020) Study Access circulation and parking inadequacies and security porosity in Southwest High Courts, The study fail to reports instances where litigants or practitioners with mobility impairments faced extreme difficulties reaching courtrooms (Equality Reporters narrative). Research in other Nigerian institutional settings (universities, hospitals) consistently shows the same failure modes (steep steps, narrow corridors, inaccessible WCs), indicating systemic problems in professional practice and oversight (Aruma and Emusa, 2023; Ugah *et al.*, 2024).

Although international design guidance and studies propose integrated approaches for inclusive public buildings (Mosca and Capolongo, 2018; Watchorn *et al.*, 2022), and some jurisdictions (e.g., U.S. federal court design guidance) have recently revised courthouse standards to improve circulation and security, Nigeria lacks a context-sensitive, empirically grounded model for an inclusive court. Existing Nigerian research either diagnoses problems (Makinde, 2020) compliance in non-judicial settings (Aruma and Emusa, 2023; Ugah *et al.*, 2024). There are little scholars translating empirical audits into concrete architectural proposals for courts plans, adjacency matrices, accessible courtroom typologies, and phased retrofit roadmaps that reconcile security with inclusive access (Abayomi *et al.*, 2026). The absence of such design-forward work prevents judicial administrators and the NCPWD from implementing practical retrofits and new-build standards tailored to local constraints (budgetary, cultural, and site-specific). This research will synthesize empirical evidence and identified design requirements into a practical, evidence-based design brief and schematic proposal for an inclusive court in Akure, producing a replicable model and implementation roadmap that is currently absent from the literature.

According to United Nation Nigeria, (2023), rather than a single, cohesive document, accessibility benchmarking in Nigeria depends on particular legal and regulatory tools. Several fundamental frameworks provide the baseline benchmarking requirements that are used to assess compliance across infrastructure and services. Accessibility standards used for benchmarking these comprised:

1. The Physical Environment and Built Infrastructure:

The Accessibility Regulations for Persons with Disabilities: released as a necessary statutory addition to fill in the technical details that were absent from earlier frameworks. It offers the useful rules and practical standards that are applied when conducting facility inspections.

The National Building Code (NBC) includes structural requirements for accessible restrooms, elevators, "barrier-free" entrances, and tactile signage. The law establishes the basic conditions that developers must meet in order to obtain an Occupancy Certificate from state building control agencies, while been criticised in the past for having ambiguous dimensions (Sholanke, and Adisa, 2025).

Guidelines for the National Accessibility Compliance Certificate (NACC): This standard, which was created by the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPWD), serves as the gold standard for compliance in both public and private structures. Institutions are directly audited in accordance with these principles after the legal transition window has passed in order to obtain official certification (NCPWD, 2020).

### 2. Accessibility of Digital and Information

NITDA E-Government Guidelines: The National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) use standards that are directly matched to the global Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) for assessing websites and online portals. In order to assess digital inclusion across public services, ongoing compliance audits check for adherence to WCAG Level AA criteria (Sholanke, and Adisa, 2025).

### 3. General Legal Basis

The absolute legal foundation for all benchmarking activities is the Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act. It establishes the penalties and enforcement powers used by the NCPWD and legally requires nondiscrimination and complete access to public transportation, healthcare, work, and education (Sholanke, and Adisa, 2025).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study adopted a descriptive research design with a mixed-method approach to evaluate the spatial layout and accessibility of selected High Court buildings in Southwest Nigeria. The study covered Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo States. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the study sites and respondents. One major High Court facility was purposively selected from each state based on judicial significance, level of activity, and variation in spatial characteristics. The selected courts were the High Court of Justice, Ibadan; Ikeja High Court Complex, Lagos; High Court of Justice, Ogun State; State High Court of Justice, Osogbo; State High Court of Justice, Ado-Ekiti; and High Court of Justice, Akure.

Primary data were collected through field observations, questionnaires, interviews, and spatial assessments of zoning, circulation, functional relationships, and accessibility features. Secondary data were obtained from relevant literature, court records, architectural documents, government

publications, and accessibility regulations. The sample frame comprised 492 administrative members across the six selected High Courts. The study chose 50% of a sampling frame (246 out of 492 respondents), which is a significant and reliable decision. This is far greater than the minimums for descriptive research. This high percentage guarantees that the sample fairly represents the traits, diversity, and variances of the entire population. According to statistics, the sampling error gets closer to zero as the sample size gets closer to the population size. The reliability and generalisability of these results are increased by a 50% sample, which significantly lowers the margin of error and narrows the confidence intervals. Financial limitations, rigorous academic or organisational deadlines, or administrative restrictions make it difficult to collect data from all 492 people. A sample size of  $n = 246$  offers a very manageable dataset that permits careful analysis, follow-ups to reduce non-response bias, and extensive data cleaning without overpowering this study. Formulaic sample sizes are aligned with the sample size. Running 492 through conventional sample size calculations (such Cochran's Formula or Yamane's Formula  $n = N / 1 + N(e)^2$  at a standard of 95% confident level and 5% margin of error, the required sample size often hovers around 221 respondents. The study actually surpassed the minimal standard statistical requirements by purposefully selecting 50% ( $n = 246$ ), which acts as a buffer against incomplete surveys or dropouts. Therefore, A 50% sampling proportion with a total of 246 questionnaires were administered, of which 237 valid responses were used for analysis, comprising 40 from Ibadan, 48 from Lagos, 39 from Ogun, 35 from Osogbo, 37 from Ado-Ekiti, and 38 from Akure.

Random sampling was used to select questionnaire respondents, while purposive sampling was adopted for key informants. A total of 246 questionnaires were administered across the selected High Courts, out of which 237 were successfully retrieved and found suitable for analysis, representing a high response rate of 96.3% as seen in Table 1. Data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and charts were used to summarize questionnaire responses, while spatial observations were comparatively assessed based on zoning, circulation, functional relationships, and accessibility provisions. Accessibility conditions were benchmarked against relevant Nigerian accessibility requirements and Universal Design principles.

**Table 1: Questionnaire Administration and Retrieval Rate by Selected High Courts (n = 237)**

| S/N   | Selected High Court                        | Questionnaires Administered | Questionnaires Retrieved | Retrieval Rate (%) |
|-------|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1     | The High Court of Justice, Ibadan          | 42                          | 40                       | 95.2               |
| 2     | Ikeja High Court Complex, Lagos State      | 49                          | 48                       | 98.0               |
| 3     | The State High Court of Justice, Osogbo    | 36                          | 35                       | 97.2               |
| 4     | The High Court of Justice, Ogun State      | 41                          | 39                       | 95.1               |
| 5     | The State High Court of Justice, Ado Ekiti | 38                          | 37                       | 97.4               |
| 6     | The High Court of Justice, Akure           | 40                          | 38                       | 95.0               |
| Total | —                                          | 246                         | 237                      | 96.3               |

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in the Selected High Courts

This section presents a comprehensive analysis of the spatial layout of court facilities in selected High Courts in Southwest Nigeria. The objective is to examine the extent to which zoning, circulation, functional relationships, and internal spatial organization support effective court operations and ease of movement for users. The analysis is particularly important because the quality of spatial layout within judicial

buildings has direct implications for functionality, accessibility, user comfort, safety, and administrative efficiency. The overall pattern of respondents' perceptions was analysed to provide a comprehensive assessment of the spatial layout of court facilities across the selected High Courts in Southwest Nigeria.

The assessment of the spatial layout of court facilities was carried out using descriptive statistics based on responses obtained from the questionnaire. Respondents rated each statement on a five-point Likert scale, where 1 = Very

Inadequate, 2 = Inadequate, 3 = Fair, 4 = Adequate, and 5 = Very Adequate. The responses were analysed using the Total Weighted Value (TWV), Mean Weighted Value (MWV), and Average Weighted Value (AWV) to determine the perceived adequacy of each spatial layout variable.

The Total Weighted Value (TWV) for each variable was obtained by multiplying the number of responses in each rating category by its corresponding weight and summing the products.

$$TWV = \sum(f_i \times w_i)$$

Where:

$f_i$  = Frequency of responses for each rating

$w_i$  = Weight assigned to each rating (1–5)

The Mean Weighted Value (MWV) was calculated by dividing the Total Weighted Value by the total number of respondents.

$$MWV = \frac{TWV}{N}$$

Where:

TWV = Total Weighted Value

N = Total number of respondents (40)

The Average Weighted Value (AWV) was computed by multiplying the Mean Weighted Value by the number of response categories (five-point scale), thereby expressing the mean score on a scale of 100 for ease of comparison.

$$AWV = MWV \times 8$$

#### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in the State High Court of Justice, Ibadan

Table 2 presents respondents' assessment of the spatial layout of the High Court of Justice, Ibadan. The findings show that

the highest-ranked variable was "Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted," which recorded a Mean Weighted Value (MWV) of 2.68. Although this variable ranked first, the value remains below the benchmark of 3.00, indicating that respondents generally disagreed that movement within the court building was smooth and efficient. This suggests that circulation routes exist but do not adequately support convenient movement between major functional spaces. The variable "Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas" ranked second with an MWV of 2.60, while "Building layout allows easy supervision and control" also recorded a relatively high MWV of 2.63. These findings suggest that some degree of functional relationship exists between key spaces within the court complex. However, the values remain below the acceptable benchmark, indicating that respondents were generally not satisfied with these aspects of the spatial arrangement. Variables relating to the separation of public and restricted areas, vertical circulation, emergency exits, and the location of offices recorded MWV values ranging between 2.45 and 2.50. Although these variables performed better than several others, respondents still expressed overall dissatisfaction with their effectiveness in supporting efficient court operations.

Overall, the Average Weighted Value of 2.48 indicates that respondents generally perceived the spatial layout of the High Court of Justice, Ibadan as unsatisfactory. The findings suggest the need for improvements in circulation planning, functional zoning, security integration, and the organization of internal spaces to enhance operational efficiency and user experience.

**Table 2: Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in high court Ibadan (n = 40)**

| S/N           | Variables                                                               | 1  | 2  | 3 | 4 | 5 | n  | TWV  | MWV  | AWV   | Rank      |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|---|---|----|------|------|-------|-----------|
| 1             | Building layout allows easy supervision and control.                    | 8  | 13 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 40 | 105  | 2.63 | 21.0  | 1st       |
| 2             | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas.      | 9  | 12 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 40 | 104  | 2.6  | 20.8  | 2nd       |
| 3             | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances.                | 8  | 13 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 40 | 103  | 2.58 | 20.6  | 3rd       |
| 4             | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps, elevators) is adequately provided. | 9  | 13 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 100  | 2.5  | 20.0  | 4th(tie)  |
| 5             | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible.                 | 9  | 13 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 100  | 2.5  | 20.0  | 4th(tie)  |
| 6             | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated.            | 9  | 14 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 99   | 2.48 | 19.8  | 6th       |
| 7             | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located.                    | 10 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 98   | 2.45 | 19.6  | 7th(tie)  |
| 8             | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed.                            | 9  | 15 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 98   | 2.45 | 19.6  | 7th(tie)  |
| 9             | Service areas are properly positioned.                                  | 10 | 13 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 40 | 98   | 2.45 | 19.6  | 7th (tie) |
| 10            | Court functions (courtrooms, offices, waiting areas) are clearly zoned. | 10 | 13 | 9 | 6 | 2 | 40 | 97   | 2.43 | 19.4  | 10th      |
| 11            | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas.                   | 10 | 14 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 40 | 96   | 2.4  | 19.2  | 11th      |
| 12            | Corridors and walkways are wide enough.                                 | 11 | 13 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 40 | 95   | 2.38 | 19.0  | 12th(tie) |
| 13            | Overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations.        | 11 | 13 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 40 | 95   | 2.38 | 19.0  | 12th(tie) |
| 14            | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes.   | 11 | 14 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 40 | 93   | 2.33 | 18.6  | 14th      |
| 15            | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted.              | 16 | 9  | 6 | 5 | 4 | 40 | 92   | 2.3  | 18.4  | 15th      |
| Total Average |                                                                         |    |    |   |   |   |    | 1473 | 2.46 | 19.68 |           |

#### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in the State High Court of Justice, Osogbo

Table 3 presents respondents' assessment of the spatial layout of the State High Court of Justice, Osogbo. The findings indicate that "Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted" recorded the highest Mean Weighted Value (MWV) of 2.60, ranking first among the assessed variables. Although this variable performed better than the others, the value remains below the benchmark of 3.00, indicating that respondents generally disagreed that movement within the court complex was sufficiently smooth and efficient. The variable relating to the location of courtrooms in relation to waiting areas ranked second with an MWV of 2.54, while

both minimization of unnecessary walking distances and easy supervision and control of spaces recorded MWVs of 2.51, jointly ranking third. These findings suggest that some aspects of the functional arrangement of spaces were considered relatively better organized. However, the ratings remain below the acceptable threshold, indicating that respondents still perceived noticeable shortcomings in the court's spatial planning.

The separation of public, semi-public, and restricted areas together with the provision of vertical circulation facilities each recorded MWVs of 2.46, while emergency exits and the distribution of waiting areas recorded MWVs of 2.43. These results indicate moderate performance but also reflect

respondents' dissatisfaction with the effectiveness of these spatial elements in supporting convenient movement and efficient court operations. Overall, the Average Weighted Value of 2.41 indicates that respondents generally perceived the spatial layout of the State High Court of Justice, Osogbo

as unsatisfactory. The findings suggest that improvements are required in circulation planning, wayfinding systems, security integration, and the organization of functional spaces to enhance accessibility, operational efficiency, and user satisfaction within the court environment.

**Table 3: Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in the State High Court of Justice, Osogbo (n = 35)**

| S/N           | Variables                                                               | 1  | 2  | 3 | 4 | 5 | n  | TWV  | MWV  | AWV   | Rank      |
|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|---|---|----|------|------|-------|-----------|
| 1             | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted.              | 8  | 10 | 7 | 8 | 2 | 35 | 91   | 2.6  | 18.2  | 1st       |
| 2             | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas.      | 8  | 11 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 35 | 89   | 2.54 | 17.8  | 2nd       |
| 3             | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances.                | 8  | 11 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 35 | 88   | 2.51 | 17.6  | 3rd(tie)  |
| 4             | Building layout allows easy supervision and control.                    | 8  | 11 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 35 | 88   | 2.51 | 17.6  | 3rd(tie)  |
| 5             | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated.            | 9  | 11 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 35 | 86   | 2.46 | 17.2  | 5th(tie)  |
| 6             | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps, elevators) is adequately provided. | 9  | 11 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 35 | 86   | 2.46 | 17.2  | 5th(tie)  |
| 7             | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible.                 | 9  | 11 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 35 | 85   | 2.43 | 17.0  | 7th(tie)  |
| 8             | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed.                            | 9  | 12 | 6 | 6 | 2 | 35 | 85   | 2.43 | 17.0  | 7th(tie)  |
| 9             | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located.                    | 9  | 12 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 35 | 84   | 2.4  | 16.8  | 9th(tie)  |
| 10            | Service areas are properly positioned.                                  | 9  | 12 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 35 | 84   | 2.4  | 16.8  | 9th(tie)  |
| 11            | Court functions (courtrooms, offices, waiting areas) are clearly zoned. | 10 | 11 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 35 | 83   | 2.37 | 16.6  | 11th      |
| 12            | Corridors and walkways are wide enough.                                 | 10 | 11 | 8 | 5 | 1 | 35 | 81   | 2.31 | 16.2  | 12th      |
| 13            | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas.                   | 10 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 35 | 80   | 2.29 | 16.0  | 13th(tie) |
| 14            | Overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations.        | 10 | 12 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 35 | 80   | 2.29 | 16.0  | 13th(tie) |
| 15            | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes.   | 11 | 12 | 7 | 4 | 1 | 35 | 77   | 2.2  | 15.4  | 15th      |
| Total Average |                                                                         |    |    |   |   |   |    | 1267 | 2.41 | 16.89 |           |

#### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Ikeja High Court Complex, Lagos State

Table 4 presents respondents' assessment of the spatial layout of the Ikeja High Court Complex, Lagos State. The highest ranked variable was "Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted," with a mean weighted value of 2.77. Although this ranked first among the assessed variables, the value remains below the benchmark of 3.00, indicating that respondents generally did not perceive circulation within the court complex to be fully efficient.

The variable "Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas" ranked second with a mean weighted value of 2.71, suggesting that while some relationship exists between waiting spaces and courtrooms, respondents considered the arrangement only moderately satisfactory. Similarly, easy supervision and control of the

building layout ranked third with a mean weighted value of 2.67, indicating that the spatial organization provides only limited support for monitoring activities within the facility. The lowest ranked variable was "Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes," with a mean weighted value of 2.21. This finding suggests that security checkpoints interrupt circulation patterns and may contribute to congestion, delays, and inconvenience for court users. Overall, the Average Weighted Value of 2.50 indicates that respondents generally perceived the spatial layout of the Ikeja High Court Complex as below the acceptable level. Although some aspects of circulation performed relatively better than others, deficiencies in zoning, wayfinding, security integration, and functional relationships continue to reduce the overall effectiveness of the building's spatial organization.

**Table 4: Assessment of Spatial Layout of Ikeja High Court Complex, Lagos State**

| S/N           | Variables                                                              | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5 | n  | TWV  | MWV  | AWV   | Rank |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|---|----|------|------|-------|------|
| 1             | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted              | 10 |    | 11 | 9  | 6 | 48 | 133  | 2.77 | 26.6  | 1st  |
| 2             | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas      | 11 | 12 | 10 | 10 | 5 | 48 | 130  | 2.71 | 26.0  | 2nd  |
| 3             | The building layout allows easy supervision and control                | 11 | 13 | 10 | 9  | 5 | 48 | 128  | 2.67 | 25.6  | 3rd  |
| 4             | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances                | 12 | 12 | 10 | 9  | 5 | 48 | 127  | 2.65 | 25.4  | 4th  |
| 5             | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps, elevators) is adequately provided | 11 | 14 | 10 | 8  | 5 | 48 | 126  | 2.63 | 25.2  | 5th  |
| 6             | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible                 | 12 | 13 | 11 | 8  | 4 | 48 | 123  | 2.56 | 24.6  | 6th  |
| 7             | Service areas are properly positioned                                  | 12 | 14 | 10 | 8  | 4 | 48 | 122  | 2.54 | 24.4  | 7th  |
| 8             | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated            | 13 | 14 | 10 | 7  | 4 | 48 | 119  | 2.48 | 23.8  | 8th  |
| 9             | Court functions are clearly zoned                                      | 13 | 15 | 10 | 7  | 3 | 48 | 116  | 2.42 | 23.2  | 9th  |
| 10            | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas                   | 13 | 15 | 11 | 6  | 3 | 48 | 115  | 2.4  | 23.0  | 10th |
| 11            | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed                            | 14 | 14 | 11 | 6  | 3 | 48 | 114  | 2.38 | 22.8  | 11th |
| 12            | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located                    | 14 | 15 | 10 | 6  | 3 | 48 | 113  | 2.35 | 22.6  | 12th |
| 13            | Overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations        | 15 | 14 | 10 | 6  | 3 | 48 | 112  | 2.33 | 22.4  | 13th |
| 14            | Corridors and walkways are wide enough                                 | 15 | 15 | 10 | 5  | 3 | 48 | 110  | 2.29 | 22.0  | 14th |
| 15            | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes   | 16 | 15 | 10 | 5  | 2 | 48 | 106  | 2.21 | 21.2  | 15th |
| Total Average |                                                                        |    |    |    |    |   |    | 1794 | 2.49 | 23.92 |      |

### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in Ogun State High Court

Table 5 presents the assessment of the spatial layout of court facilities in the Ogun State High Court. The analysis indicates that movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted ranked 1st, recording the highest Mean Weighted Value (MWV) of 2.55. Although this variable obtained the highest score among all the indicators, it still falls below the benchmark value of 3.00. This implies that respondents generally disagreed that circulation within the court building is smooth and uninterrupted, suggesting that users continue to experience challenges when moving between functional spaces. The variable the internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances ranked 2nd with an MWV of 2.52. This indicates that while respondents acknowledged some level of compactness in the building arrangement, they generally considered the layout insufficient in reducing travel distances between related court functions. Excessive walking distances may reduce operational efficiency and increase user fatigue, particularly for litigants, lawyers, and court personnel who frequently move between different departments.

The lowest ranked variable was security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes, recording an MWV of 2.33. This indicates that respondents considered the arrangement of security screening facilities to be the weakest aspect of the court's spatial organization. Poor integration of security checkpoints into circulation systems may contribute to congestion at building entrances, delays in movement, and inconvenience during peak operational periods. Overall, the Average Weighted Value (AWV) of approximately 2.44 indicates that respondents generally expressed dissatisfaction with the spatial layout of the Ogun State High Court. Although certain circulation-related variables performed relatively better than others, none attained the acceptable benchmark of 3.00. The findings therefore suggest that improvements are required in zoning, circulation planning, wayfinding systems, accessibility provisions, waiting area distribution, security integration, and the overall functional organization of the building. These improvements would enhance operational efficiency, user convenience, safety, and the overall effectiveness of judicial service delivery.

**Table 5: Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in Ogun State High Court (n = 39)**

| S/N           | Variables                                                                | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4 | 5 | n  | TWV  | MWV  | AWV   | Rank      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|---|---|----|------|------|-------|-----------|
| 1             | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances.                 | 8  | 13 | 7  | 8 | 3 | 39 | 102  | 2.62 | 20.40 | 1st       |
| 2             | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas.       | 9  | 12 | 8  | 7 | 3 | 39 | 100  | 2.56 | 20.00 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 3             | The building layout allows easy supervision and control.                 | 9  | 11 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 39 | 100  | 2.56 | 20.00 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 4             | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted.               | 8  | 12 | 8  | 8 | 3 | 39 | 99   | 2.54 | 19.80 | 4th       |
| 5             | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps, elevators) is adequately provided.  | 9  | 13 | 8  | 6 | 3 | 39 | 98   | 2.51 | 19.60 | 5th(tie)  |
| 6             | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible.                  | 9  | 12 | 9  | 7 | 2 | 39 | 98   | 2.51 | 19.60 | 5th(tie)  |
| 7             | Service areas (records, registry and storage) are properly positioned.   | 9  | 13 | 8  | 6 | 3 | 39 | 98   | 2.51 | 19.60 | 5th(tie)  |
| 8             | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed within the building.         | 8  | 16 | 6  | 7 | 2 | 39 | 96   | 2.46 | 19.20 | 8th       |
| 9             | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated.             | 10 | 13 | 7  | 7 | 2 | 39 | 95   | 2.44 | 19.00 | 9th       |
| 10            | Court functions (courtrooms, offices, waiting areas) are clearly zoned.  | 10 | 13 | 8  | 6 | 2 | 39 | 94   | 2.41 | 18.80 | 10th(tie) |
| 11            | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located.                     | 10 | 13 | 8  | 6 | 2 | 39 | 94   | 2.41 | 18.80 | 10th(tie) |
| 12            | Corridors and walkways are wide enough to accommodate users comfortably. | 10 | 13 | 9  | 5 | 2 | 39 | 93   | 2.38 | 18.60 | 12th      |
| 13            | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas.                    | 10 | 14 | 8  | 5 | 2 | 39 | 92   | 2.36 | 18.40 | 13th(tie) |
| 14            | The overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations.     | 11 | 13 | 7  | 6 | 2 | 39 | 92   | 2.36 | 18.40 | 13th(tie) |
| 15            | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes.    | 9  | 15 | 9  | 4 | 2 | 39 | 92   | 2.36 | 18.40 | 13th(tie) |
| Total Average |                                                                          |    |    |    |   |   |    | 1445 | 2.47 | 19.27 |           |

### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in Ado-Ekiti High Court

Table 6 presents respondents' assessment of the spatial layout of court facilities in the Ado-Ekiti High Court. The results indicate that movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted and courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas jointly ranked 1st, each recording an MWV of 2.62. Although these variables recorded the highest scores in the assessment, they remain below the benchmark value of 3.00, indicating that respondents generally disagreed that circulation within the court building was entirely smooth or that the relationship between waiting areas and courtrooms was fully satisfactory.

The variable the internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances ranked 3rd with an MWV of 2.65. This suggests that the court building demonstrates some degree of compact planning, thereby reducing unnecessary movement between functional spaces. However, the score remains below

the acceptable benchmark, indicating that respondents still experienced avoidable travel distances within the facility. The building layout allows easy supervision and control ranked 4th, recording an MWV of 2.62. This finding suggests that although some level of visual control exists within the building, respondents generally believed that the overall arrangement does not adequately facilitate supervision of users and court activities. Overall, the Average Weighted Value (AWV) of 2.50 indicates that respondents generally expressed dissatisfaction with the spatial layout of the Ado-Ekiti High Court. Although several circulation-related variables performed relatively better than others, none achieved the benchmark value of 3.00. The findings therefore suggest that improvements are required in functional zoning, circulation planning, accessibility, security integration, waiting area provision, and the overall spatial organization of the court building to enhance user satisfaction and operational efficiency.

**Table 6: Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in Ado-Ekiti High Court (n = 37)**

| S/N           | Variables                                                                | 1  | 2  | 3 | 4 | 5 | n  | TWV  | MWV  | AWV   | Rank      |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|---|---|----|------|------|-------|-----------|
| 1             | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances.                 | 7  | 12 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 37 | 98   | 2.65 | 19.60 | 1st       |
| 2             | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted.               | 8  | 11 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 37 | 97   | 2.62 | 19.40 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 3             | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas.       | 8  | 11 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 37 | 97   | 2.62 | 19.40 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 4             | The building layout allows easy supervision and control.                 | 8  | 11 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 37 | 97   | 2.62 | 19.40 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 5             | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps, elevators) is adequately provided.  | 8  | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 37 | 95   | 2.57 | 19.00 | 5th(tie)  |
| 6             | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible.                  | 8  | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 37 | 95   | 2.57 | 19.00 | 5th(tie)  |
| 7             | Service areas (records, registry and storage) are properly positioned.   | 8  | 12 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 37 | 95   | 2.57 | 19.00 | 5th(tie)  |
| 8             | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed within the building.         | 7  | 15 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 37 | 93   | 2.51 | 18.60 | 8th       |
| 9             | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated.             | 9  | 12 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 37 | 91   | 2.46 | 18.20 | 9th       |
| 10            | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located.                     | 9  | 12 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 37 | 90   | 2.43 | 18.00 | 10th      |
| 11            | Court functions (courtrooms, offices, waiting areas) are clearly zoned.  | 9  | 13 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 37 | 89   | 2.41 | 17.80 | 11th(tie) |
| 12            | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas.                    | 9  | 13 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 37 | 89   | 2.41 | 17.80 | 11th(tie) |
| 13            | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes.    | 8  | 14 | 9 | 4 | 2 | 37 | 89   | 2.41 | 17.80 | 11th(tie) |
| 14            | Corridors and walkways are wide enough to accommodate users comfortably. | 10 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 37 | 88   | 2.38 | 17.60 | 14th      |
| 15            | The overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations.     | 10 | 12 | 8 | 5 | 2 | 37 | 87   | 2.35 | 17.40 | 15th      |
| Total Average |                                                                          |    |    |   |   |   |    | 1390 | 2.50 | 18.53 |           |

### Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in Akure High Court

Table 7 illustrated the results on assessment of spatial layout of court facilities in Akure High Court. The analysis reveals that movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted and courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas jointly ranked 1st, each recording a Mean Weighted Value (MWV) of 2.66. Although these variables recorded the highest ratings in the assessment, both values remain below the benchmark of 3.00, indicating that respondents generally disagreed that movement within the court building is entirely efficient or that the relationship between courtrooms and waiting areas is fully satisfactory. The variable the internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances ranked 3rd with an MWV of 2.68, making it one of the relatively better-performing aspects of the court's spatial organization. This suggests that respondents acknowledged some level of compact planning within the building. Nevertheless, the score remains below the acceptable threshold, indicating that unnecessary movement between related functions continues to affect operational efficiency.

The building layout allows easy supervision and control ranked 4th, recording an MWV of 2.63. This finding indicates that while some degree of visual oversight is achievable,

respondents generally considered the layout inadequate for effective supervision of users and court activities. Improved spatial visibility and better integration of circulation routes would enhance security and administrative control. The lowest-ranked variables were corridors and walkways are wide enough to accommodate users comfortably and the overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations, both recording an MWV of 2.39. These findings indicate that respondents perceived the circulation spaces as inadequate and believed that the overall building layout does not sufficiently support efficient judicial activities. Narrow circulation routes and weak functional relationships between spaces may contribute to congestion, inconvenience, and reduced operational effectiveness.

Overall, the Average Weighted Value (AWV) of 2.51 indicates that respondents generally expressed dissatisfaction with the spatial layout of the Akure High Court. Although several circulation-related variables recorded comparatively higher ratings than those observed in the other High Courts, none attained the benchmark value of 3.00. The findings therefore suggest that improvements are required in circulation planning, functional zoning, accessibility, waiting area provision, security integration, and the overall spatial organization of the court building to improve efficiency, user satisfaction, and the quality of judicial service delivery.

**Table 7: Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in Akure High Court (n = 38)**

| S/N | Variables                                                                | 1  | 2  | 3 | 4 | 5 | n  | TWV | MWV  | AWV   | Rank      |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|---|---|---|----|-----|------|-------|-----------|
| 1   | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances.                 | 7  | 12 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 38 | 102 | 2.68 | 20.40 | 1st       |
| 2   | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted.               | 8  | 11 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 38 | 101 | 2.66 | 20.20 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 3   | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas.       | 8  | 11 | 8 | 8 | 3 | 38 | 101 | 2.66 | 20.20 | 2nd(tie)  |
| 4   | The building layout allows easy supervision and control.                 | 8  | 11 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 38 | 100 | 2.63 | 20.00 | 4th       |
| 5   | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps, elevators) is adequately provided.  | 8  | 12 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 38 | 98  | 2.58 | 19.60 | 5th(tie)  |
| 6   | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible.                  | 8  | 12 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 38 | 98  | 2.58 | 19.60 | 5th(tie)  |
| 7   | Service areas (records, registry and storage) are properly positioned.   | 8  | 12 | 8 | 7 | 3 | 38 | 98  | 2.58 | 19.60 | 5th(tie)  |
| 8   | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed within the building.         | 7  | 15 | 6 | 8 | 2 | 38 | 97  | 2.55 | 19.40 | 8th       |
| 9   | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located.                     | 9  | 12 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 38 | 95  | 2.50 | 19.00 | 9th       |
| 10  | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated.             | 9  | 13 | 7 | 7 | 2 | 38 | 94  | 2.47 | 18.80 | 10th      |
| 11  | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas.                    | 9  | 13 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 38 | 93  | 2.45 | 18.60 | 11th(tie) |
| 12  | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes.    | 8  | 14 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 38 | 93  | 2.45 | 18.60 | 11th(tie) |
| 13  | Court functions (courtrooms, offices, waiting areas) are clearly zoned.  | 10 | 12 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 38 | 92  | 2.42 | 18.40 | 13th      |
| 14  | Corridors and walkways are wide enough to accommodate users comfortably. | 10 | 12 | 9 | 5 | 2 | 38 | 91  | 2.39 | 18.20 | 14th(tie) |
| 15  | The overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations.     | 10 | 13 | 7 | 6 | 2 | 38 | 91  | 2.39 | 18.20 | 14th(tie) |

| S/N           | Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | n | TWV  | MWV  | AWV   | Rank |
|---------------|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|------|-------|------|
| Total Average |           |   |   |   |   |   |   | 1444 | 2.53 | 19.25 |      |

Table 8 presents the aggregate assessment by combining responses on the major spatial layout indicators. The results reveal that respondents generally rated the spatial organization of the court buildings below the acceptable benchmark, as all fifteen assessment variables recorded Mean Weighted Values (MWVs) below 3.00. This indicates that users were generally dissatisfied with the spatial layout of the surveyed court facilities.

The highest-ranked variable, "Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted," recorded a Mean Weighted Value of 2.50. Although this variable ranked first, its value remains below the benchmark, indicating that respondents generally disagreed that movement within the court buildings is efficient and uninterrupted. The finding suggests that circulation systems are functional only to a limited extent and still require considerable improvement to support convenient movement between major court spaces. The variable "Courtrooms are appropriately located in

relation to waiting areas" ranked second with an MWV of 2.49. This suggests that although respondents perceived the relationship between waiting spaces and courtrooms to be relatively better than other spatial elements, the arrangement remains generally unsatisfactory. Poor adjacency between these spaces may contribute to congestion, unnecessary movement, and inconvenience for litigants, lawyers, witnesses, and visitors. The variables "Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances" and "The building layout allows easy supervision and control" ranked third and fourth respectively, each recording Mean Weighted Values of 2.48. These findings indicate that respondents acknowledged some degree of compact planning and opportunities for supervision within the buildings. Nevertheless, the values remain below the neutral benchmark, suggesting that the existing layouts do not sufficiently support efficient movement or effective oversight of activities within the court environment.

**Table 8: The Aggregate Assessment of Spatial Layout of Court Facilities in all the Selected High Courts (n = 237)**

| S/N           | Variables                                                                  | SD(1) | D(2) | N(3) | A(4) | SA(5) | TWV  | MWV  | AWV     | Rank |
|---------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|------|------|-------|------|------|---------|------|
| 1             | Court functions (courtrooms, offices, waiting areas) are clearly zoned.    | 63    | 74   | 52   | 35   | 13    | 572  | 2.41 | 114.40  | 10th |
| 2             | Public, semi-public and restricted areas are well separated.               | 59    | 81   | 45   | 41   | 11    | 575  | 2.43 | 115.00  | 8th  |
| 3             | Signage clearly indicates different functional areas.                      | 56    | 84   | 52   | 33   | 12    | 572  | 2.41 | 114.40  | 10th |
| 4             | Movement between court spaces is smooth and uninterrupted.                 | 58    | 72   | 49   | 46   | 12    | 593  | 2.50 | 118.60  | 1st  |
| 5             | Corridors and walkways are wide enough to accommodate users comfortably.   | 63    | 80   | 52   | 30   | 12    | 559  | 2.36 | 111.80  | 13th |
| 6             | Vertical circulation (stairs, ramps and elevators) is adequately provided. | 54    | 83   | 53   | 32   | 15    | 582  | 2.46 | 116.40  | 5th  |
| 7             | Courtrooms are appropriately located in relation to waiting areas.         | 56    | 77   | 50   | 40   | 14    | 590  | 2.49 | 118.00  | 2nd  |
| 8             | Offices and support spaces are conveniently located.                       | 56    | 84   | 54   | 28   | 15    | 573  | 2.42 | 114.60  | 9th  |
| 9             | The overall spatial arrangement supports efficient court operations.       | 66    | 79   | 47   | 31   | 14    | 559  | 2.36 | 111.80  | 13th |
| 10            | Emergency exits are well located and easily accessible.                    | 58    | 76   | 52   | 40   | 11    | 581  | 2.45 | 116.20  | 6th  |
| 11            | Security screening areas are well integrated into circulation routes.      | 53    | 90   | 59   | 27   | 8     | 558  | 2.35 | 111.60  | 15th |
| 12            | Waiting areas are appropriately distributed within the building.           | 47    | 98   | 43   | 38   | 11    | 579  | 2.44 | 115.80  | 7th  |
| 13            | Service areas (records, registry and storage) are properly positioned.     | 58    | 81   | 49   | 35   | 14    | 577  | 2.43 | 115.40  | 8th  |
| 14            | Internal layout minimizes unnecessary walking distances.                   | 52    | 82   | 56   | 32   | 15    | 587  | 2.48 | 117.40  | 3rd  |
| 15            | The building layout allows easy supervision and control.                   | 58    | 71   | 60   | 32   | 16    | 588  | 2.48 | 117.60  | 4th  |
| Total Average |                                                                            | •     | •    | •    | •    | •     | 8645 | 2.43 | 1729.00 |      |

### Assessing the Level of Accessibility of High Court Facilities in all the Selected High Courts

The assessment of accessibility provisions in the selected High Courts is presented in Table 9. The overall mean weighted value (MWV) of 2.39 indicates a low perceived level of accessibility across the facilities. Ramps for persons with mobility challenges recorded the highest MWV (2.55),

followed by accessible counters and service desks (2.54), accessible toilets and restrooms (2.52), and provisions for visually impaired users, including tactile guides and signage (2.51). Although these were the highest-rated indicators, their scores remain within the low category, suggesting that accessibility provisions are present but not sufficiently developed across the selected courts.

**Table 9: Accessibility Performance of Selected High Court Facilities in Southwest Nigeria**

| Rank | Accessibility Indicator                                         | MWV  |
|------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 1    | Ramps for persons with mobility challenges                      | 2.55 |
| 2    | Accessible counters and service desks                           | 2.54 |
| 3    | Accessible toilets and restrooms                                | 2.52 |
| 4    | Provisions for visually impaired users (tactile guides/signage) | 2.51 |
| 5    | Accessible parking facilities                                   | 2.44 |
| 6    | Courtroom access for wheelchair users                           | 2.43 |
| 7    | Provisions for hearing-impaired users                           | 2.43 |
| 8    | Seating provisions for persons with disabilities                | 2.42 |
| 9    | External pathways and landscaping for easy access               | 2.35 |

| Rank    | Accessibility Indicator                                             | MWV  |
|---------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| 10      | Non-slip and user-friendly floor surfaces                           | 2.35 |
| 11      | Handrails along stairs and ramps                                    | 2.30 |
| 12      | Adequate door widths for wheelchair movement                        | 2.24 |
| 13      | Accessible court entrances                                          | 2.21 |
| 14      | Emergency alarms accessible to hearing- and visually-impaired users | 2.19 |
| Overall | Accessibility performance                                           | 2.39 |

Accessible parking (MWV = 2.44), courtroom access for wheelchair users (2.43), provisions for hearing-impaired users (2.43), and seating for persons with disabilities (2.42) also recorded relatively low ratings. Similarly, external pathways and landscaping and non-slip floor surfaces recorded MWVs of 2.35, while handrails along stairs and ramps recorded 2.30. The pattern indicates that accessibility features have received some attention, but their provision and integration remain inconsistent across the court facilities. The lowest-rated indicators were adequate door widths for wheelchair movement (MWV = 2.24), accessible court entrances (2.21), and emergency alarms accessible to hearing- and visually-impaired users (2.19). These results point to important gaps in barrier-free access, particularly at building entrances and in emergency systems. The low rating for Court entrances is particularly significant because the entrance provides the primary point of access to the judicial environment and influences the ability of users to enter and navigate the facility independently.

Overall, the findings indicate that the selected High Courts have not fully achieved an inclusive level of accessibility. Accessibility appears to be provided through selected individual features rather than being comprehensively integrated into spatial planning, circulation, wayfinding, and building services. This finding supports the principles of Universal Design, which emphasize equitable, safe, and independent use of the built environment by people with diverse abilities (Paul, *et.al.* 2021). It also agrees with previous studies reporting accessibility deficiencies in Nigerian public buildings, particularly in circulation, sanitary facilities, signage, and barrier-free access (Aruma & Emusa, 2023; Ugah *et al.*, 2024). Improving these aspects is essential to creating court environments that support dignity, independence, and equitable access to justice.

## Case Studies

### Case Study One

#### Description

The Osun State High Court of Justice, Osogbo, is situated within the administrative and judicial district of Osun State, positioned in a predominantly urban environment characterized by government institutions, legal chambers, commercial activities, and civic infrastructure. The court complex occupies a strategic location within the city, ensuring accessibility to legal practitioners, litigants, public officials, and members of the public. The facility is connected to major road networks within Osogbo, allowing for convenient access and effective judicial operations. The courthouse environment is typically characterized by moderate vehicular and pedestrian activity due to daily court proceedings, legal consultations, and administrative functions. The main entrance is visibly defined and controlled to regulate movement into the judicial premises while maintaining security and order.

**General Lay-Out:** The layout of the Osun State High Court complex is organized around courtroom functions and administrative support spaces within a secured institutional environment. The primary entrance leads into reception and

circulation areas that provide access to courtrooms, registries, and administrative offices. Courtrooms are generally positioned as central functional spaces, with judges' chambers and registry units located adjacent to them for operational convenience. Administrative offices and staff workspaces are distributed along corridor systems that connect various departments within the complex. Public waiting areas are positioned near courtrooms and filing sections to accommodate visitors and litigants. Circulation within the facility is largely linear and corridor-based, allowing movement between judicial, administrative, and public spaces. However, the zoning between public circulation areas and restricted judicial spaces is not always clearly articulated, resulting in occasional overlaps between staff, litigants, and public users. While the layout supports the basic judicial functions of the facility, workflow efficiency and privacy in sensitive areas are not fully optimized.

#### Merits

- The location of the court complex within Osogbo provides accessibility to major transportation routes and government institutions.
- The facility accommodates multiple judicial and administrative functions within a centralized complex.
- The presence of dedicated courtrooms and registry units supports effective judicial operations.
- Adequate external spaces are available for parking and controlled movement within the premises.
- The institutional setting reinforces the civic and administrative importance of the judiciary within the state.

#### Demerits

- The spatial organization does not fully separate public, judicial, and administrative zones, resulting in circulation overlaps.
- Corridor-based circulation creates congestion during peak court sessions and high visitor periods.
- Some functional relationships between courtrooms, registry units, and administrative offices are not optimally organized for workflow efficiency.
- Building finishes and interior elements show signs of wear due to aging and insufficient maintenance.
- Environmental comfort is inadequately addressed in some areas, particularly with respect to ventilation, thermal comfort, and waiting spaces for the public.

Figure 2 show the site layout plan of the Osun State High Courts of Justice, Figure 3 illustrated floor plan of the Osun State High Courts of Justice, while Figure 4 show first floor plan of the Osun State High Courts of Justice. Plate 1 shows the approach view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice, while Plate 2 demonstrates the parking lot of the Osun State High Courts of Justice. Plate 3 show the interior view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice and Plate 4 shows the interior view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice and Plate 5 shows the exterior view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice.

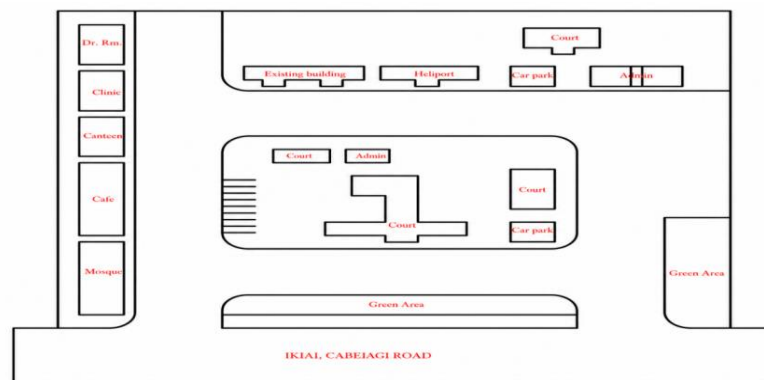


Figure 2: Site layout Plan of the Osun State High Courts of Justice



Figure 3: Floor Plan of the Osun State High Courts of Justice

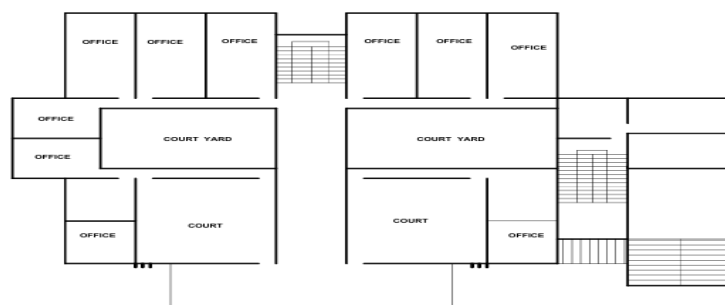


Figure 4: First floor Plan of the Osun State High Courts of Justice



Plate 1: Approach view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice



Plate 2: Parking lot of the Osun State High Courts of Justice



Plate 3: Interior view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice



Plate 4: Interior view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice



Plate 5: Exterior view of the Osun State High Courts of Justice

### Case Study Two

#### Name: Ondo State High Court of Justice

#### Description

The Ondo State High Court of Justice, Akure, is located within the administrative and governmental district of Akure, the capital city of Ondo State. The court complex is situated in a predominantly urban setting characterized by government institutions, legal chambers, commercial developments, and civic facilities. Its strategic location within the city enhances accessibility for judicial officers, legal practitioners, litigants, and members of the public. The courthouse is connected to major road networks within Akure, enabling efficient movement to and from the facility. The surrounding environment experiences moderate to high daily human and vehicular traffic due to the concentration of administrative and legal activities within the area. The main entrance to the complex is clearly defined and secured to regulate public access and maintain order within the judicial environment.

**General Lay-Out:** The layout of the court complex is organized around the functional requirements of judicial proceedings and administrative operations. The main entrance opens into circulation and reception areas that provide access to courtrooms, registry units, and office spaces. Courtrooms are positioned as the primary functional spaces within the complex, while judges' chambers and registry offices are located in close proximity for operational efficiency. Administrative offices and staff workspaces are arranged along circulation corridors connecting different sections of the building. Public waiting spaces are positioned

adjacent to courtrooms and filing areas to accommodate litigants and visitors. Circulation within the facility is predominantly horizontal, with movement occurring through corridor systems linking courtrooms, offices, and service areas. While the general arrangement supports judicial functions, there is limited separation between public circulation routes and restricted judicial or administrative spaces, leading to overlaps in movement patterns during peak operational periods.

#### Merits

- i. The court complex is strategically located within Akure, ensuring accessibility and connectivity to major road networks and government institutions.
- ii. The facility accommodates judicial, administrative, and support functions within a centralized environment.
- iii. The arrangement of courtrooms and registry units supports effective judicial operations and case management.
- iv. Adequate external space is available for parking and circulation within the premises.
- v. The institutional character of the facility reinforces the authority and civic importance of the judiciary.

#### Demerits

- i. The spatial arrangement does not fully separate public, judicial, and administrative circulation zones, resulting in overlaps during court sessions.

- ii. Circulation systems within the building are not optimally organized, leading to congestion in corridors and waiting areas.
- iii. The relationship between some functional spaces does not fully support efficient workflow and privacy requirements.
- iv. Building finishes and interior elements show signs of deterioration due to aging and maintenance limitations.
- v. Environmental comfort within certain spaces is inadequate, particularly regarding ventilation, thermal control, and public waiting conditions.

Plate 6 show the parking lot of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice, Plate 7 shows the position of the Toilet of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice and Plate 8 show the entrance of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice, while Plate 9: Entrance Gate of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice.



Plate 6: Parking lot of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice



Plate 7: Toilet of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice



Plate 8: Entrance of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice



Plate 9: Entrance Gate of the Ondo State High Courts of Justice

### Case Study Three

#### Name: Ekiti State High Court of Justice

#### Description

The Ekiti State High Court of Justice is located within the administrative and governmental district of Ado-Ekiti, the capital city of Ekiti State. The court complex is situated in an urban civic environment characterized by government establishments, legal institutions, commercial activities, and

public service facilities. Its location within the city enhances accessibility for judicial officers, legal practitioners, litigants, law enforcement personnel, and members of the public. The facility is connected to major road networks within Ado-Ekiti, allowing for efficient access and circulation. The surrounding environment experiences moderate daily vehicular and pedestrian traffic due to the concentration of governmental and legal activities in the area. The court premises are clearly

defined with controlled entry points that support security and orderly movement within the complex.

**General Lay-Out:** The layout of the Ekiti State High Court complex is organized around courtroom activities and administrative support functions within a secured institutional setting. The main entrance opens into reception and circulation areas that provide access to courtrooms, registry departments, and administrative offices. Courtrooms are positioned as the major functional components of the complex, while judges' chambers are located adjacent to them to support operational convenience and privacy. Registry units and records offices are situated within accessible locations for case filing and administrative processes. Administrative offices and staff workspaces are arranged along corridor systems connecting different functional sections of the building. Public waiting areas are positioned near courtrooms and registry spaces to accommodate litigants and visitors during court proceedings. Circulation within the facility is primarily horizontal, with corridor-based movement linking the various departments and spaces. However, the separation between public zones and restricted judicial areas is not fully optimized, resulting in overlaps in circulation and occasional congestion during peak operational periods.

#### Merits

- i. The court complex is strategically located within Ado-Ekiti, providing accessibility to major road networks and government institutions.

- ii. The facility accommodates judicial, administrative, and support functions within a centralized complex.
- iii. The proximity between courtrooms and judges' chambers supports effective judicial operations.
- iv. Adequate external spaces are available for parking, circulation, and operational activities.
- v. The institutional setting reinforces the civic identity and authority of the judiciary within the state.

#### Demerits

- i. The spatial arrangement does not fully separate public, administrative, and restricted judicial zones, resulting in overlaps in circulation.
- ii. Corridor-based circulation contributes to congestion during peak court sessions and high visitor periods.
- iii. The relationship between certain functional spaces is not optimally organized for workflow efficiency and privacy.
- iv. Building finishes and interior elements show signs of deterioration due to aging and maintenance limitations.
- v. Environmental comfort within the facility is inadequate in some areas, particularly regarding ventilation, thermal performance, and public waiting conditions.

Plate 10 shows the approach view of the Ekiti State High Courts of Justice, while plate 11 shows the interior view of the Court at the Ekiti State High Courts of Justice



Plate 10: Approach View of the Ekiti State High Courts of Justice



Plate 11: Interior View of the Court at the Ekiti State High Courts of Justice

#### Case Study Four

##### Name: Lagos State High Court Complex

##### Description

The Lagos State High Court Complex, Ikeja, is located within the administrative and judicial district of Ikeja, Lagos State. The complex is situated in a highly urbanized environment characterized by government institutions, commercial developments, legal chambers, and civic infrastructure. As one of the major judicial facilities in Lagos State, the court complex occupies a strategic location that supports accessibility for judicial officers, legal practitioners, litigants, law enforcement personnel, and the general public. The facility is connected to major transportation routes within Ikeja, including primary arterial roads that facilitate efficient movement across different parts of Lagos State. Due to its

metropolitan location and high judicial activity, the complex experiences significant vehicular and pedestrian traffic on a daily basis. The entrances to the complex are clearly defined and controlled to regulate access, maintain order, and support security within the judicial environment.

##### General Lay-Out

The layout of the Ikeja High Court Complex is organized around courtroom functions and administrative support systems within a secured institutional setting. The main entrance provides access to reception and circulation areas that connect the various functional spaces within the complex. Courtrooms are arranged in clusters across different sections of the facility, with judges' chambers strategically positioned adjacent to or behind the courtrooms to ensure privacy and

operational convenience. Registry departments, administrative offices, and records units are distributed along corridor systems that connect the judicial spaces. Waiting areas and public lobbies are positioned near courtrooms and filing sections to accommodate litigants and visitors. The circulation pattern within the complex is primarily corridor-based and multi-directional due to the size and complexity of the facility. Separate circulation routes exist to some extent for judges, staff, and the public; however, overlaps still occur during peak operational periods. The layout supports the complex nature of judicial activities, though certain areas experience congestion due to the high volume of daily users.

#### Merits

- i. The strategic location of the complex within Ikeja provides excellent accessibility and connectivity to major transportation routes within Lagos State.
- ii. The facility accommodates a wide range of judicial and administrative functions within a centralized judicial environment.
- iii. The provision of multiple courtrooms supports the handling of large volumes of legal proceedings.
- iv. The presence of dedicated registry, archive, and mediation spaces enhances judicial administration and case management.

- v. The institutional scale and organization of the complex reinforce the authority and civic significance of the judiciary within Lagos State.

#### Demerits

- i. The high volume of daily users contributes to congestion within circulation areas and waiting spaces.
- ii. Circulation routes between public, administrative, and restricted judicial zones are not fully segregated, resulting in overlaps during peak operational periods.
- iii. Some functional spaces experience overcrowding due to increased demand and limited expansion capacity.
- iv. Building finishes and interior elements show signs of deterioration resulting from heavy usage and maintenance challenges.
- v. Environmental comfort and ventilation within certain areas are inadequate, particularly during periods of high occupancy.

Figure 5 below shows the floor area of the court at the Lagos State High Courts of Justice, while Plate 12 shows the approach view of the Court at the Lagos State High Courts of Justice.



Figure 5: Floor of the Court at the Lagos State High Courts of Justice



Plate 12: Approach View of the Court at the Lagos State High Courts of Justice

#### CONCLUSION

The study assessed the spatial layout and accessibility of selected High Court buildings in Southwest Nigeria. This study concludes that many High Courts in Southwest Nigeria have inadequate spatial organization and accessibility, limiting their ability to provide efficient, inclusive, and user-friendly judicial environments. Although the courts perform their statutory functions, deficiencies in zoning, circulation, waiting areas, wayfinding, and accessibility reduce operational efficiency and user satisfaction. The findings further reveal that inadequate provision for persons with disabilities, poor environmental quality, and weak facility management hinder equal access, comfort, safety, and effective service delivery. These challenges demonstrate the need for judicial facilities that prioritize functional planning, universal accessibility, environmental quality, and user-centred design. The study therefore concludes that future

court buildings should adopt integrated design approaches that promote accessibility, efficient circulation, operational effectiveness, and inclusiveness. The proposed High Court Complex in Akure provides a practical design model for achieving these objectives and advancing judicial architecture in Nigeria.

Findings revealed that the selected High Courts recorded moderate-to-low performance in spatial layout (MWV = 2.43) and generally inadequate accessibility (MWV = 2.39). The results indicate deficiencies in functional organisation and accessibility provisions, particularly in areas such as circulation, accessible entrances, door widths, and inclusive emergency systems. It is therefore recommended that High Court facilities adopt Universal Design principles and improved spatial planning, with attention to functional zoning, circulation, accessible entrances, ramps, toilets, parking, wayfinding, and inclusive emergency provisions.

Integrating these requirements into the overall planning and design process will promote more functional, accessible, safe, and equitable court environments.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Spatial Planning and Circulation: Court buildings should adopt clear functional zoning and efficient circulation systems that separate public, semi-public, and restricted areas while providing adequate waiting spaces and integrated security checkpoints.
- ii. Accessibility and Inclusive Design: Court facilities should fully implement universal design principles by providing ramps, elevators, accessible toilets, handrails, tactile signage, wheelchair-friendly circulation, and other assistive features to ensure equal access for all users.
- iii. Environmental Quality and User Comfort: Court buildings should improve lighting, ventilation, acoustics, wayfinding systems, and regular maintenance to enhance user comfort, safety, and operational efficiency.
- iv. Facility Management and Maintenance: Regular maintenance, periodic facility upgrades, and staff training should be implemented to ensure safe, functional, and accessible court environments.
- v. Future Court Development: Future court projects and renovations should integrate accessibility, functional efficiency, environmental sustainability, and user-centred design to improve judicial service delivery.

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