

Architecture, Urbanization and Urban Development in Nigeria: The Key Missing Link in Abuja Urban Housing Built Environment.

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Abstract

Various current movements in urban design seek to create sustainable urban environments with long-lasting structures and a great livability for its inhabitants. Where the cities were designed and developed without urban design principles like in Abuja, Nigeria, urbanization occurs. While the roots of urban development problems in Nigeria are traceable to approaches to social and economic development of the country dating back to events before the pre-colonial era, national socio-economic crisis has fundamentally shaped the country's approach to development since Independence in 1960. In Abuja, urban development laws were prepared such that land use, infrastructure, housing, transportation, recreation, economic and social services were to be coordinated and inter-related. These principles were in most cases neglected resulting in series of distortions to the concept of the city and gave rise to urbanization and spatial dialectics especially, in spatial distribution of objects. The cities are characterized by dual urban spaces: the formal and informal spaces. Overtime, both the formal and informal spaces have also developed interdependent relationship. While the formal spaces are inhabited by the rich or those who could afford them, the urban poor are crowded in the informal spaces. With that, this paper seeks to explore the missing link between the urbanization processes in Nigeria and particularly, Abuja and the level of urban development attention given to Abuja city's urban housing built environment. It will equally investigate and proffer substantial solutions on how to ameliorate Abuja's spatial dialectics (dual urban spaces).

Key words: urban development, architecture, population, housing, urbanization, Abuja

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I. Introduction

The lifestyles, neighborhoods and the behavior patterns of the communities have always determined the type of cities that exist in different parts of the world. More than 5,000 years have passed since the Urban Revolution and about 180 generations separate us from the origins of the first cities. But neither the purpose nor the structure of cities has changed basically in the five millennia. What have undergone transformation are the complexity of city life and the size of urban communities. When men first cut out a little space from the surrounding land, enclosed it with a wall, and formed a place where they could live without tilling the soil themselves, they gave up their intimate solidarity with nature. A new type of human being was born and with it, from the very beginning, began the antagonism between the country people and the town people. The first cities were small enclosures with small numbers of inhabitants. They were limited in conception and size and reflected on earth man's vision of a limited universe that, like his city, sheltered him (Okonkwo, 2006).

The first root of urbanization could be located at the point when man's conception of the universe changed from the limited geocentric one to the still limited heliocentric ideas of Copernicus, so over the centuries, the urban scale has widened and the limitations have disappeared. Now that the universe is conceived of as unbounded yet not infinite, something similar has happened to our cities: their scale and their size have grown beyond all expectations into the open country. The old scale has lost its meaning. The first cities arose where and when agriculture was sufficiently advanced to supply food, not alone for the actual producers, but also for those who were not engaged in agriculture. This was the basic prerequisite, for artisans, craftsmen, soldiers, and traders who congregated in the cities. And even if they owned fields outside the city or gardens without it, they produced hardly more than a welcome portion of the food they needed in addition to the supply from full-time farmers (Gutkind, 1964).

In all, the roots of urbanization go deep into human history. The conventional theory was well stated by Lewis Mumford (1961). He identified the first germ of the city in the ceremonial meeting place that serves as a goal for pilgrimage, a site to which early man with his family or clan group is drawn back from his wanderings at seasonable intervals because it concentrates, in addition to any natural advantage it may have, certain spiritual or super natural powers. From periodic meetings a few steps lead to settlement and agriculture, to villages and finally, to a differentiation of villages in terms of concentration of technical and religious power, the seats of power becoming towns' vis-à-vis the villages. In a counter thesis, Jane Jacobs (1969) advanced the claims of the city above those of the village. She argues that historically it was the development of cities that made possible and necessary the development of satellite agricultural villages; that agriculture was indeed "farmed out" from the city to the countryside.

Whatever its origins and individual peculiarities, an urban center is distinguished most fundamentally by its functions. It is essentially a central place, a center for the mobilization and organization of services for an area. The "basic" urban functions, which generally have to do with administration, commerce, industry, transportation, are facilitated by aggregation. This is in marked contrast to primary production-agriculture, forestry, fishing, mining, extraction and the like – which, spread over favorable sites tied to available sources, is necessarily dispersed (Ukwu, 1980).

Walter Christaller (1966), the pioneer urban theorist whose formulation of the problem remained the most elegant, in modern times, in its logic and simplicity, has likened the process of town formation to "the crystallization" of mass about a nucleus". The number, scale and variety of facilities and services concentrated about a given nucleus determine its status as a town and reflect the size and character of its hinterland. For a given region, the historical process of urban development does not depend on a steady uni-directional pattern of concentration and coalescence of urban facilities and services about a number of given centers. Rather it hinges on a series of critical events in the socio-economic organization of the communities, events which create new nuclei or enlarge, change the character, diminish or destroy pre-existing ones, hence, the development of towns or systems of towns tends to be episodic and it is often possible to identify the key events and the phases of urban development associated with them.

Each key event imposes a new set of area relationships and a new functional ordering of centers thereby setting the scene for a new phase in urban development. This phenomenon has underscored urban development processes in Nigeria, more than ever since the colonial period (Okonkwo, 1993). The first new towns were created in Nigeria during the colonial period; and they were not created to absorb population over-spill from oversized urban centers, but rather to satisfy the economic and administrative interests of the colonial masters. It was in this way that Enugu and Jos were founded essentially for the exploitation of coal and tin resources, respectively, and Kaduna for administrative convenience (Mabogunje, 1968). Consequently, in its post-colonial period, many urban centers have come into existence while others have received more growth impetus under the political instrument of state and local government area creation, as well as the reallocation and redistribution of resources under the process of socio-economic restructuring in the country.

One way of expressing national goals has been through the establishment of new towns. The two major reasons for these are: one, as capitals for countries which had little urban development or where the colonial capital was poorly placed for national needs, and two, as centers for industry (Pitte, 1977; Bell, 1981). Most great cities around the world enjoy a substantial amount of patronage and reputation by virtue of two major factors, among numerous others, namely: "the visual amenity", defined as the general attractiveness of the environment, and "the cultural content" of the city, which is a property of the city capable of projecting significant aspects of the lifestyle of its inhabitants to the international community (Uloko, 2005).

Abuja, been the newest city in Nigeria will be used in focusing this work as it is typical and a model in illustrating the root of the Nigeria's urban areas housing challenges: inadequacy of housing provisions in the Nigeria's urban areas. The concept of Abuja as a befitting Federal Capital Territory, centrally located and without the defects of Lagos was spawned in 1975. The site for the Federal Capital City was chosen for its location at the center of the nation, its moderate climate, small population and also for political reasons. To accomplish the goal of relocating the Federal Capital to an area, geographically central to Nigeria and with relative equal accessibility to all parts of the nation, about 845 villages were displaced to make way for the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) (Olaitan, 2004). The Government wanted an area, free of all encumbrances, a principle of "equal citizenship" within the territory where no one can "claim any special privilege of "indigeneity" as was the case with Lagos (Jibril, 2006, Okonkwo, 2006). It wanted all the existing population to be moved out of the territory. That was why it authorized not only a census of economic assets of all the inhabitants of the territory but also undertook to pay compensation for all their owners outside of the territory (Jibril, 2006, citing Mabogunje in Ayileka et al, 2001).

In the process, the Master Plan was developed. The Abuja Master Plan was elaborated to put in place, a sustainable urban spatial environment for all groups or classes of activities to be carried out in the Capital Territory. The development plan and process envisaged the seat of power would move from Lagos to Abuja in

1986, but this time of movement was brought forward to 1982/83; hence the commencement of urbanization stampeded. The most vulnerable, the urban poor had to arrange, on their own, where to live in order to stay close to work place and also reduce transportation and rent incidence on their income and that resulted in shanty settlements in both formal and informal housing areas (Obadi, 2017).

The Master Plan was prepared such that land use, infrastructure, housing, transportation, recreation, economic and social services were to be coordinated and inter-related (Olaitan, 2004, citing Abba, 2003). Successive governments (Federal Government and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Ministry) in Abuja neglected these principles (urban development standards). As such, series of distortions to the concept, direction and implementation of the Master Plan are prevalent (Olaitan, 2004).

According to the Abuja Master Plan (1979), "the development of the city was designed to be in four phases with a clearly defined target population of three million inhabitants. The city was designed as an efficient and attractive environment at each stage of its growth – from Phase 1, which was designed to accommodate 230,000 residents through Phases II and III, which were to accommodate 585,000 and 640,000 respectively, to Phase IV aimed at accommodating 1.7 million inhabitants." Its ultimate population is estimated at 3.1 million (Olaitan, 2004).

Without adequate provisions of low income housing, the capital of Nigeria was moved from Lagos to Abuja. The housing provided by the Abuja government failed because of inadequacy of housing and a good access to the central facilities through a corridor of open spaces and lack of economic connectivity (secondary employment). The provided Federal Housing units were developed without adequate economic and municipal service facilities as a result, the housing units are not sustainable and also, inadequate for the Abuja steaming population. Not only that, the Capital City was planned to be built by the Federal Government in its greater part. The Master Plan actually provided for low-income settlements (housing) areas, to be built by the government and to be occupied by the public servants; the private sector servants did not appear to be properly provided for.

The entire world is faced with increasing population numbers and the increases are not without consequences. According to Barlowe (1986), these consequences that are felt mostly and the concern for the resources to sustain the increasing population is making counties and organizations, devise measures that would control the increasing population. The effects of increasing population numbers on the sufficiency of food and supplies and maintenance of the quality of local environment can become matters of critical concern. The occurrence of problems this nature in time past has caused some culture to accept population control measures such as sex taboos, delayed marriages, birth control, infanticide, and senicide. Moral restraints now prevent popular endorsement of population control measures that involve the taking of human life; but strong support exists for the acceptance of practices that will check the rate of population increase. He (Barlowe), further indicated that, regardless of the position one takes on the controversial question of population control, it must be recognized that increasing population pressure has important impacts on the demand for land and its products (Barlowe, 1986).

Generally, as the population and affluence grew, there exist an increase in the demand for land by government, private individuals and corporate bodies. Unfortunately, since the physical overall supply of land within a geographical area is fixed, demand always outstrips supply by a very wide margin, especially in the urban centers. This inevitably brings about the survival of the fittest syndrome. In this struggle, government has the upper hand through the exercise of the power of eminent domain, while individuals and corporate bodies meet their land requirements in the open markets. Within the open market, the corporate bodies and the rich individuals usually with higher bargaining power, dominate the transaction; while the urban poor are left with little or no choice but to make do with the crumbs. Consequently, this group of individuals, in most cases, occupies the less desirable areas such as marshy sites, neighborhood adjacent to refuse dumps and where they can find one, they encroach on government lands. The emergent settlement usually evolved as a spatial concentration of poor people in the poor areas of the cities. As expected, this settlement is usually characterized by infrastructure deficiencies, shanty structures, poor sanitation, urban violence and crime (plate 1). These composition and characteristics have always made squatter settlement a source of worry and concern to the adjacent neighbours and governments (Bello, 2009).



Plate 1. Typical Abuja Slum Architecture
Source: Obiadi (retrieved, April 7, 2021).

Lagos, Ibandan, Enugu, Onitsha, Kano, Abuja and other Nigerian big cities have squatter settlement problems. Alagbe and Adeboye (2005) indicated that, the first dilemma of urban migrant in Lagos was the question of adequate housing. With little resources, financial or otherwise, the drastic option of illegally occupying a vacant piece of land to build a rudimentary shelter is the only one available to them. This is the genesis of the development of squatter settlements and slums which has been seen as a social evil that has to be eradicated. This reaction towards slums has not helped the more basic question of adequate housing for all. Plates 2 to 6, show some of the Lagos slums while 7 to 9 documented some of Enugu's slums and Abuja 10 to 12.

Some Lagos Slums (villages)



Plate 2 White Sand Village, Oyimbo, Lagos.
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 3. Lagos Lagoon Timber Sawmill Slum (village)
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)

Ilaje, Lagos Villages



Plate 4. Ilaje, Lagos Village
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 5. Ilaje, Lagos Village
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 6. Ilaje, Lagos slums (villages), from Ijora to Costain [Ilaje Apapa, Ilaje Costain, Brickfield area village, Aloba Street area settlement, etc.]

Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)

In their “Critical Evaluation of the Ogui Slum in Enugu”, Nigeria, Nwachi et.al (2012) state that, the high rental value of core city areas has always influenced the formation of slums at the peripheries or outskirts of towns and cities of the developing world. However, a peculiar inner-city slum that has persisted over the years is the Ogui slum in Enugu, Nigeria. Nwachi et.al (2012) further indicated that, the unprecedented influx of people into Enugu in the early 1970’s overstretched the existing facilities in the city and turned the indigenous land of Ogui into a slum.

The governments in Enugu have in the past, tried solving the Upper Chime, Ugbo-Owa and Ugbo-Odogwu, Enugu Slum problems by one of two measures: retention of slum dwellers within their resettlement, by way of legalization of occupancy and offer of title of ownership to area so occupied. Plates 10 to 12 are some Enugu urban poor settlements pictures.

Some Enugu Slums



Plate 7. Iva Valley, Enugu, view from the Enugu-Onitsha Expressway
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 8. Ogui Slums
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 9. Upper Chima Avenue, New Haven, Enugu slum
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)

SOME ABUJA SLUM



Plate 10. Utako settlement area
Source: Obiadi (June 2017)



Plate 11. Utako settlement area
Source: Obiadi (June, 2017)



Plate 12. Jabi Village - I. T. Igbani Street
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)

Almost all the major urban areas in the world are witnessing rural to urban migration resulting in urbanization and it is important to focus this paper to the problems of urbanization, homelessness, population and their consequences especially, as they affect human settlements, growth, development and the resources to sustain them. As shown in plates 2 to 12, all these cities have housing and unplanned settlement problems. Nigeria Federal Housing Authority indicated the urgent need to provide 12 to 16 million homes in the country (Federal Housing Authority, 2009), to accommodate the housing needs of the people and avert urbanization that has its consequences.

Urbanization is not a recent phenomenon in the history of Nigeria. Also, city growths date back into the country's pre-colonial era. Both urbanization and city growth have in the course of time been in relation to the level of the country's socio-economic development. Pre-colonial Nigerian cities recorded gradual growths in general terms. Where and whenever they existed their growths were associated with one basic feature: they controlled the spatial economic order; and provided spaces for cultural interaction. At colonization, the British introduced another socio-economic pattern of development characterized principally by a new hierarchy of administrative centers and a colonial export-oriented cash-crop economy. This resulted in the dislocation of the pre-colonial traditional urban economies and their system in Nigeria, thus affecting city development patterns. Cities then grew quite in relation to the impact of colonialism on the socio-economic life of the country. And most of Nigeria's major cities today emerged out of this colonial impact (Okonkwo, 2013). However, in whichever form the making process of an urban center, town or city is examined one must contend with the complex nature of the subject because its political, social and economic implications are characterized by 'urban development' and 'urbanization,' which underscore, in a permanent way, the making of urban centers at any time, in any place and at any scale.

If urbanization could be summed up as the process of concentration of people and their socioeconomic activities within a place over a period of time, urban development does not depend on steady concentration and coalescence of urban facilities and services about a given center; it is fundamentally guided by man's reaction to his environment which passes through successive stages of transformation. However, while concentration process of people in a place (urban center) could be continuous and seemingly unstoppable, as is the case in Abuja the Federal Capital of Nigeria, the environmental transformation that accompanies it has important implications for proper understanding of the political, social and economic structure of the built environment of the place. As the form and meaning of the built environment are transformed and changed overtime, they both express the spiritual and intellectual conception of the universe which men have made for themselves, in response to human, organizational and institutional need (Okonkwo, 1998).

The emergence of Urban Design as both intellectual, professional and administrative instrument to address urban development failures can never be over emphasized. Architecture, urban planning and settlements cannot be reasonably discussed without fundamentally understanding the history of urban design, which ties them together. According Dalley (1989:120), the history of urban planning focuses on the people, places, concepts, and practices of planning of urban development over time.

According to Catanese and Snyder (1979), physical planning must now be defined to include all these diverse examples without excluding the more traditional focus upon the design of the “built environment.” One such definition is that physical planning is the determination of the spatial distribution of human actions and conditions to achieve predetermined goals. This concept is the key to understanding the expanded role of physical planning.

THEORETICAL VIEWS

Theories around space/spatial and human use of space: Emerging Concept in Space. This work looked at a new (approach) at identifying a new phenomenon in the Nigeria’s urban areas architecture and housing inadequacy: 1. being the squatter issues with separate and demarcated territories. 2. Being the invasion of the urban formal areas by the urban poor. Thus, they live in the formal areas with their informal ways of life and this could be called the invasion of the formal by the informal (Obiadi, 2017)? The present work examined urban design role(s) overtime and with historical focus as seen above. It substantiated and documented the importance of time and space in relationship with socio-economic issues of different countries, cities and towns.

Some scholars have suggested that the basis of urban life in Africa is so very recent in an historical sense, that we are still able to detect some of the early characteristics in many of the towns of contemporary Africa (Okonkwo, 1998 citing Gutkind, 1974). Both subsistence economy and nomadism still prevail over most of the continent today. Whether or not the prevalence of these early characteristics is widespread is a matter of less important in this work. Rather, of interest, is the presentation of an insight into the socioeconomic and sometimes political phenomena of urban development.

As man’s attitude, towards the group, the community and society of which he is a member, has been changing throughout known history, so his reaction to his environment has passed through successive stages of transformation. Cities have played an important role in this process, which consists of a never-ending dialogue between challenge and response and which derives to strength and continuity from elementary thoughts of mankind-religion, exchange of ideas and goods and need for protection and gregarious living. For millennia human efforts have been directed, as far as cities are concerned, toward the same goal. Always and everywhere the basic elements of cities have been the same-dwelling houses, public buildings, and spaces between them. But the form and its meaning have changed, for both express the spiritual and intellectual conception of the universe that men have made for themselves (Okonkwo, 1998 citing Gutkind, 1974:11 - 12).

Today, the major threat to human environment is more complex, more closely connected with the very way in which cities are built. For example, the largest cities have grown nearly tenfold in a century. Yet, there consumption of land is greater still. An immense transport system is required. In the wealthier countries this bears strongly on the fact that masses of automobiles raise the level of air pollution and noise, and create serious problems of congestions and accidents. In poor countries where poor housing structures dominate the urban landscape, spaces are littered with settlements lacking the most basic urban infrastructures (plates 13 to 17). All this tend to reduce the quality of the human environment especially in the urban areas (Okonkwo, 1998: 32).



Plate 13. Better Life Area, Mpape
Source: Babajide Orevba (retrieved May 14, 2016)



Plate 14. Berger Quarry Area
Source: Babajide Orevba (retrieved May 14, 2016)



Plate 15. An Abuja slum
Source: Babajide Orevba (retrieved May 14, 2016)



Plate 16. An Abuja slum
Source: Babajide Orevba (retrieved May 14, 2016)

It is important to realize how these pressures resulting from development, on the urban geography mutually reinforce rather than correct one another. Although cities transform resources in ways that contribute strongly to economic development and social welfare, they also generate waste that pollute the urban-human environment and degrade renewable natural resources. A simple fact in this respect is that, though man's interaction with nature has brought about the formation of urban spaces and centers and their extension, the same process of interaction has also led to the degeneration of the spaces it created (plates 13 to 17). This is an important issue in housing and residential quantity and quality (Okonkwo, 1998: 33-34).



Plate 17. Alum, Mpape, Abuja
naij.com(retrieved May 14, 2016)

Whether or not it is clear, urban design can ameliorate the deeper problems of cities. But short of liquidation, what then is the future for urban design? It is arguable that it is ultimately the tasks of managing and improving the spatial dialectics. Expanding the concept of an inclusive, democratic, and civil domain will remain the critical challenge for urban design; the process may begin with solutions that are incremental and marginal in scope, but it must progress with larger vision of what needs to be accomplished (Loukaitou – Sideris and Banerjee, 1998, 308), sustainable cities and housing adequacy in Nigeria.

All human actions and conditions are distributed in space: groups, cultural beliefs, buildings, vehicles, environmental pollutants, political power, energy consumption, skills, and technology. Any of these variables can be defined, observed, located, and translated into a map to show how they are distributed in space. Almost all urban planning activities sooner or later refer to a map showing the spatial distribution of critical variables that typically include population figures, economic and social conditions, and characteristics of the physical environment. Interest in the spatial distribution of activities and condition is not limited to urban planning. Many disciplines, including geography, architecture, engineering, economics, agriculture, sociology, anthropology, business, and public health use the concept of spatial distribution for solving problems.

Simply including spatial distributions in the analysis of an urban problem does not imply that physical planning is taking place. Only when a spatial distribution is part of an action recommended to achieve some purpose can we say that a physical plan is being proposed. For example, if a planner analyzes the socioeconomic conditions in areas of the city and recommends a social program which does not differentiate between areas, then there is no physical plan, only a social plan. However, if social programs vary among areas, there is a physical plan. What kinds of actions and conditions do planners spatially distribute, and for what purpose? There are essentially four types of variables whose spatial distribution is manipulated in physical plans: objects, functions, activities, and goals.

Within the context of physical planning, the spatial distribution of objects refers to items such as buildings, parks, trees, roads, highways, sewer lines, and utility plants. Spatially distributed objects may be as small as traffic signs and as large as airports. This aspect of physical plans comes closest to the traditional image of the urban planner. For example, the layout of pathways, residences, and marketplaces was a function of the planners in ancient Greece. Today planners are still actively engaged in planning the layout of suburban subdivisions, the design of new towns, and the location and distribution of parks, recreational facilities, hospital, schools, museums, libraries, and art centers.

There are other less obvious situations in which planners are concerned with the spatial distribution of objects. The location of a series of firehouses or ambulance stations is a form of physical planning in which objects are placed to achieve an effective distribution of critical public services. Large objects, such as industrial parks, highways, and shopping centers, also must be planned and located in space. Although the explicit functions of these objects are of paramount importance to the physical planner, they have many other attributes with which the planner must be concerned. For example, while an urban highway fulfills the function of transportation, because of its properties as a physical object it has a significant impact upon the quality of life within the neighborhoods through which it passes. Determining what impacts will occur and who will be affected is critical in the spatial distribution of such objects. Similarly, in the design of a downtown center the aesthetic qualities of the objects are as significant as the functions of the building. Thus the spatial distribution of objects is often an extremely complex problem that relates not only to the proper location of an object from the standpoint of its explicit purpose, but also to its form and visual quality, symbolic importance, and its interaction with other objects and human activities (Catanese and Snyder, 1979: 176-178).

The complexity of this objects is made manifest in various noticeable attempts (formal and informal) by urban dwellers (both poor and rich) to provide housing for themselves in the city. Housing, according to Uji and Okonkwo, 2007:17), Turner (1974), sees 'housing' as human dwelling, a roof over one's head meant to serve as shelter for human living, interaction and carrying out of activities away from in clemencies of weather. Uji and Okonkwo (2007) further indicated that, Turner (1974) associates housing with the process of responding to the needs for shelter and the associated demands of social services, health and public facilities which go with the physical shelter in order to ensure congruent living with the environment. Housing generally refers to the social problem of insuring that members of society have a home to live in, whether this is a house, or some other kind of dwelling, lodging, or shelter (Housing, 2013).

The process of urbanization of the Nigeria cities have been seen to rather produce what the present work could term "spatial dialectics" especially in spatial distribution of objects. The cities are characterized by dual urban spaces: the formal (where all is organized) and informal (undeveloped squatter settlement). Overtime, both the formal and informal spaces have also developed an interdependent relationship. While the formal spaces are inhabited by the rich or those who could afford them, the urban poor are crowded in the informal urban spaces which dot mostly the central city areas of the Nigeria cities (plates 1 to 17). Thus the public spaces in these informal settlements have become or have assumed the function of "housing/shelter" for the Nigeria's urban poor (plates 18 to 20).



Plate 18. Abuja's public space (housing/shelter)
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 19 Abuja's public space (housing/shelter)
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)



Plate 20 .Abuja's public space (housing/shelter)
Source: Obiadi (May, 2016)

A typical space becomes the shelter/house and the house becomes the space (for most of these people who are security guards, their relations and friends):- the case of urban poor and urban poor housing in Nigeria. They spend most of their time outside and outside becomes their home. Most times, they sleep on mats with mosquito nets over them. In most cases, these spaces are without spatially distributed objects yet, they are side by side with formal settlements without proper links and visually acceptable urban objects, elements and qualities. The nature, socioeconomic complexity of these informal spaces, which analysis is shown in this work, constitute a strongly identifiable character which is in this work christened *Spatial Housing*. It is so termed because of the assumption of the public/open space into the provision of the basic (spatial) socioeconomic, psychological, shelter, etc needs of the urban poor. This phenomenon is different from those of the destitutes/homeless people in the city. The informal inhabitants are more or less fixed in location (even though improper location) and actively dependent on the socioeconomic activities of the urban economy. The Nigeria's urbanization is growing more than the area's urban development vis-à-vis housing and economic resources. In the formal sense, spaces can be defined and differentiated, however same cannot be said in the informal, hence 'spatial dialectics'.

Urbanization which occurs without adequate industrialization, sufficient formal employment or secure wages, has condemned burgeoning urban populations in the Third World to poor-quality housing. The problem has been compounded by a lack of government funds for housing subsidies, by inflated land prices boosted by housing needs and speculation, and by real-estate profiteering on the part of the upper and middle classes. The operation of the class structure of Third World cities nowhere more geographical explicit than in the composition and working of the housing market. Only the small upper and middle classes in Third World cities have income, job security and credit worthiness to purchase or rent houses in properly surveyed, serviced and legally conveyed developments (Dickenson et al, 1983).

The same small upper and middle classes in Third World cities have benefited from government sponsored housing programmes in the past. In his *Housing and Environmental Planning*, Olu-Sule (1988) indicated that, prior to 1973 government activities in public housing had been quite sectional and favored only the working class elites in the society. The poor and low-income were relegated to the background. For example, during the first Development Plan period, 1962 – 68, no attention was accorded housing generally. It was under the town and country planning. Government's policy to house the low-income and the underprivileged did not crystallize even during the Second National Development Plan of 1970 – 74. In spite of the N49 million allocated Town and Country Planning, housing was overshadowed by other priorities of the planning department.

Housing as major government social service venture did not receive any priority attention it deserved until the Third National Development Plan of 1975 – 80 when the Federal Government of Nigeria allocated the sum of N2.5 billion to housing for the creation of 202, 000 units mostly for low-income families. The defective and ineffective methods of allocating these houses to the low-income, the medium-income and under which the underprivileged masses received their shares is the bone of contention in the Nigeria public housing policy (Olu-Sule, 1988).

The 1980 – 85 Development Plan when N1.6 million was allocated to housing sector did not achieve any better success than its predecessor. The plan included the construction of 200, 000 housing units; provision of staff quarters and staff housing loans; site and services programme and urban development in collaboration with the World Bank. In addition to Federal Government budgeting efforts, the state governments committed the sum of N1.1 million to the housing sector during 1980 – 85 Development Plan. The core of the problem in all

these Development Plans -1962 – 68 to 1980 – 85 was not the financial allocation or the units completed, but who got the houses. Hard evidence exists that those who benefited from the general government financial capital investment in housing sector has been the upper-income families (Olu-Sule, 1988).

In solving urban population problems, Tower Blocks and or, Skyscraper have a very long history. In Shibam, Yemen, the tower blocks were the tallest mudbrick buildings in the 16th century. Shibam has more mud brick high-rise buildings and the tallest mud buildings than anywhere in the world. Some of the buildings are 30 meters (100 feet) high and regarded as oldest and best examples of urban planning based on the principles of “vertical construction or Manhattan of the desert,” and they accommodate more families when compared with low density developments (Tower Block, 2013).

In the Roman Empire, the High-rise apartment buildings were in their antiquity, the insulae in the ancient Rome and many other cities. Some of the insulae had ten or more storeys. In Fustat, the original capital of Arab Egypt, many High-rise residential buildings including seven storey buildings were in existence and accommodated hundreds of families. Cairo, the capital of Egypt by the 16th century had many High-rise apartment buildings which most of the upper floors were for residential while the lower floors served mostly commercial interests.

In the United Kingdom, residential tower blocks came after the Second World War and the first one was, the Lawn, built in Harlow. In Glasgow, Scotland’s largest city may have the highest concentration of tower blocks in UK. The 20-storey blocks in Sighthill, Hutchesontown C blocks in the Gorbals and the 31 – storey Red Road (Flats), northeast of the city. According to Tower Block (2013), London has the largest number of high-rise residential buildings in UK. Post war Britain (1950’s to late 1970’s) saw the explosion of tower block buildings in Britain. Most of the buildings were constructed to impress voters and signify post war progress, adopting Le Corbusier’s building features addressing residential interaction (street in the sky). After the post war Britain’s tower block boom, a school of thought including, Coleman in his 1985 work, argued against the construction of the tower blocks. Lynsey Hanley believed that tower blocks were Slum in the sky. Contrary to the views that the tower blocks have problems, they are becoming popular with young professionals who appreciate their views, desirable locations, architectural pedigrees and their commanding values (high cost). In solving her housing problems and clearing her slums, Belfast Corporation built the Belfast flats. In Dublin, the same pattern followed. The Ballymun Flats with seven 15 storey towers, ten 4-storey blocks and nineteen 8-storey blocks were constructed between 1966 and 1969. In recent years, some of UK’s largest cities, Cork, Dublin, Galway and Limerick are experiencing growth in large apartment building constructions as their population continues to grow(Tower Block, 2013).

In the United States of America, buildings are generally categorized according to their height although, depending on the area (east or west coast). Tower blocks are usually referred to as “highrise apartment buildings” while lower ones are known as lowrise apartment buildings. New York City, Castle Village recorded the first residential towers, completed in 1939. In 1960s and 1970s, the governments, in the United States, built a lot of high-rise apartment buildings to accommodate and solve their urban housing problems. At that time, they worked, but as time progressed, the buildings were turned into slums and were discontinued. Contrary to that opinion, commercially developed high-rise apartments continued to grow in New York, California, Chicago and a list of other big cities of the United States because of High land prices and the housing boom of the 2000s (Tower Block, 2013).

In Asia, especially, East Asia countries; Japan, China, Singapore and Korea with high land prices, almost their entire population live in High-rise buildings. The residential buildings are generally known as “vertical cities in the sky or vertical communities.” After the Korean War, the South Korean government built many residential towers to accommodate her increasing population and the practice continued, and has been transformed into tower blocks accommodating shopping malls, convenient facilities, housing and parking systems (Tower Block, 2013).

Adopting to changes and innovative architectural approaches, Shane (2011), recognized elements and transformed models to fit local circumstances and time. This ability to reflect, adapt, discuss and change is very important to the continual creation of new urban forms and the adaptive reuse of old ones. The last 60 years has been a period of enormous changes and Nigeria needs to adopt the changes in accommodating and providing adequate housing for her people in the urban areas. Rather, the cities in Nigeria are littered with slums and a lot of people in the urban areas are homeless.

CONCEPTUAL VIEW: The Problems with Abuja Architecture and the Remedies for Proper Growth and Development

In solving most of the urban areas housing and poor development problems, most cities of the world are resorting to urban planning and urban renewal programmes, the missing link in Abuja, Nigeria urban housing built environment. Historically, the principles of urban planning were neglected and the history of urban planning not properly considered and adapted in implemented the Abuja Master Plan.

In the Neolithic period, agriculture and other techniques facilitated larger populations than the very small communities of the Paleolithic, which probably led to the stronger, more coercive governments emerging at that time. The pre-Classical and Classical periods saw a number of cities laid out according to fixed plans, though many tended to develop organically. Designed cities were characteristic of the Minoan, Mesopotamian, Indus Saraswati or Harappa, and Egyptian civilizations of the third millennium BC. The first recorded description of urban planning appears in the Epic of Gilgamesh: "Go up on to the wall of Uruk and walk around. Inspect the foundation platform and scrutinise the brickwork. Testify that its bricks are baked bricks, and that the Seven Counsellors must have laid its foundations. One square mile is city, one square mile is orchards, one square mile is clay pits, as well as the open ground of Ishtar's temple. Three square miles and the open ground comprise Uruk. Look for the copper tablet-box, Undo its bronze lock, Open the door to its secret, Lift out the lapis lazuli tablet and read (Dalley 1989:120).

Distinct characteristics of urban planning from remains of the cities of Harappa, Lothal, Dholavira and Mohenjo-daro in the Indus Valley Civilisation (in modern-day northwestern India and Pakistan) lead archeologists to interpret them as the earliest known examples of deliberately planned and managed cities (Davreu, (1978) and Kipfer, (2000)). The streets of many of these early cities were paved and laid out at right angles in a grid pattern, with a hierarchy of streets from major boulevards to residential alleys. Archaeological evidence suggests that many Harrapan houses were laid out to protect them from noise and to enhance residential privacy; many also had their own water wells, probably both for sanitary and for ritual purposes. These ancient cities were unique in that they had developed drainage systems much ahead of their time, seemingly tied to a well-developed ideal of urban sanitation (Davreu, 1978).

MODERN URBAN PLANNING

Planning and architecture went through a paradigm shift at the turn of the 20th century. The industrialized cities of the 19th century had grown at a tremendous rate, with the pace and style of building largely dictated by private business concerns. The evils of urban life for the working poor were becoming increasingly evident as a matter for public concern. The laissez-faire style of government management of the economy, in fashion for most of the Victorian era, was starting to give way to a New Liberalism that championed intervention on the part of the poor and disadvantaged. Around 1900, theorists began developing urban planning models to mitigate the consequences of the industrial age, by providing citizens, especially factory workers, with healthier environments (Hall and Tewdwr-Jones, 2010).

The first major urban planning theorist was Sir Ebenezer Howard, who initiated the garden city movement in 1898. This was inspired by earlier planned communities built by industrial philanthropists in the countryside, such as Cadburys' Bournville, Lever's Port Sunlight and George Pullman's eponymous Pullman in Chicago. All these settlements decentralized the working environment from the center of the cities, and provided a healthy living space for the factory workers. Howard generalized this achievement into a planned movement for the country as a whole. He was also influenced by the work of economist Alfred Marshall who argued in 1884 that industry needed a supply of labour that could in theory be supplied anywhere, and that companies have an incentive to improve workers living standards as the company bears much of the cost inflicted by the unhealthy urban conditions in the big cities (Hall and Tewdwr-Jones, 2010).

Howard's ideas, although utopian, were also highly practical and were adopted around the world in the ensuing decades. His garden cities were intended to be planned, self-contained communities surrounded by parks, containing proportionate and separate areas of residences, industry, and agriculture. Inspired by the Utopian novel *Looking Backward* and Henry George's work *Progress and Poverty*, Howard published his book *Garden Cities of To-morrow* in 1898, commonly regarded as the most important book in the history of urban planning (Howard, 1898). His idealized garden city would house 32,000 people on a site of 6,000 acres (2,428 ha), planned on a concentric pattern with open spaces, public parks and six radial boulevards, 120 ft (37 m) wide, extending from the center. The garden city would be self-sufficient and when it reached full population, another garden city would be developed nearby. Howard envisaged a cluster of several garden cities as satellites of a central city of 50,000 people, linked by road and rail (Goodall, 1987).

In North America, the Garden City movement was also popular, and evolved into the "Neighbourhood Unit" form of development. In the early 1900s, as cars were introduced to city streets for the first time, residents became increasingly concerned with the number of pedestrians being injured by car traffic. The response, seen first in Radburn, New Jersey, was the Neighbourhood Unit-style development, which oriented houses toward a common public path instead of the street. The neighbourhood is distinctively organized around a school, with the intention of providing children a safe way to walk to school (Christensen, 1986 and Schaffer, 1982).

MODERNISM: Contemporary Period

In the 1920s, the ideas of modernism began to surface in urban planning. The influential modernist architect Le Corbusier presented his scheme for a "Contemporary City" for three million inhabitants (*Ville Contemporaine*) in 1922. The centerpiece of this plan was the group of sixty-story cruciform skyscrapers, steel-framed office buildings encased in huge curtain walls of glass (plate 21).



Plate 21. Partizánske in Slovakia – an example of a typical planned industrial city founded in 1938 together with a shoemaking factory in which practically all adult inhabitants of the city were employed.

Source: Internet (retrieved, September 2015)

These skyscrapers were set within large, rectangular, park-like green spaces. At the centre was a huge transportation hub that on different levels included depots for buses and trains, as well as highway intersections, and at the top, an airport. Le Corbusier had the fanciful notion that commercial airliners would land between the huge skyscrapers. He segregated pedestrian circulation paths from the roadways and glorified the automobile as a means of transportation. As one moved out from the central skyscrapers, smaller low-story, zig-zag apartment blocks (set far back from the street amid green space) housed the inhabitants. Le Corbusier hoped that politically minded industrialists in France would lead the way with their efficient Taylorist and Fordist strategies adopted from American industrial models to re-organize society (Norma, 1969:7).

In 1925, he exhibited his "Plan Voisin", in which he proposed to bulldoze most of central Paris north of the Seine and replace it with his sixty-story cruciform towers from the Contemporary City, placed within an orthogonal street grid and park-like green space. In the 1930s, Le Corbusier expanded and reformulated his ideas on urbanism, eventually publishing them in *La Ville radieuse* (*The Radiant City*) in 1935. Perhaps the most significant difference between the Contemporary City and the Radiant City is that the latter abandoned the class-based stratification of the former; housing was now assigned according to family size, not economic position (Fishman, 1982: 231).

The Architecture of Objects and Decline of the Public Domain

Modernism also came with the decline in the quality of the architecture of public spaces as was the case in the eras past. As indicated by Curran (1983:5), directly related to the reduction of architectural structures to the status of objects, the most dominant characteristic of the modern tradition has been the deterioration and virtual disappearance of the public domain. No longer sustaining a range of activities traditionally associated with urban life, the public domain has been reduced to the exclusively use of the automobile, and the city, as a collection and system of spaces having multiple social as well as functional roles, was lost. This has paralleled the decline of public participation in government, industry, community affairs, etc., which represent the other vital dimension of the public domain. Accordingly, the city-making process has been fragmented into separate and specialized professions, including city and regional land-use planning, road and highway engineering, landscape architecture, architecture, etc. As in factory-line production, each is concerned with a single aspect of the process, while the effects of their input within the community has been lost to abstraction (Curran, 1983:5).

URBAN CRISIS

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, many planners felt that modernism's clean lines and lack of human scale sapped vitality from the community, blaming them for high crime rates and social problems. Modernist planning fell into decline in the 1970s when the construction of cheap, uniform tower blocks ended in most countries, such as Britain and France. Since then many have been demolished and replaced by other housing

types. Rather than attempting to eliminate all disorder, planning now concentrates on individualism and diversity in society and the economy; this is the post-modernist era (Morris et al. 1997).

NEW URBANISM

Various current movements in urban design seek to create sustainable urban environments with long-lasting structures, buildings and a great livability for its inhabitants. The most clearly defined form of walkable urbanism is known as the Charter of New Urbanism. It is an approach for successfully reducing environmental impacts by altering the built environment to create and preserve smart cities that support sustainable transport. Residents in compact urban neighborhoods drive fewer miles and have significantly lower environmental impacts across a range of measures compared with those living in sprawling suburbs (Ewing, 2009) yet, the concept of Abuja, but was not fully implemented.

STATEMENT OF FACTS ON HOUSING PROVISIONS IN NIGERIA ESPACIALLY, ABUJA

Almost all the Nigeri's cities have one thing in common, elaborate urban development laws however, with weak implementations.

- Abuja been the newest city in Nigeria, Abuja's Master Plan was elaborated to put in place, a sustainable urban spatial environment for all groups or classes of activities to be carried out in the Capital Territory.
- The Capital City was planned to be built by the Federal Government in its greater part. The Master Plan actually provided for low-income settlements (housing) areas, to be built by the government and to be occupied by the public servants; the private sector servants did not appear to be properly provided for.
- The development plan and process envisaged the seat of power would move from Lagos to Abuja in 1986, but this time of movement was brought forward to 1982/83; hence the commencement of urbanization stampeded. The most vulnerable, the urban poor had to arrange, on their own, where to live in order to stay close to work place and also reduce rent incidence on their income and that resulted in shanty settlements (in both formal and informal housing areas).

The weak and inappropriate implementation of the urban development laws in Abuja, Nigeria resulted from the use of unprofessional in the review offices. According to Jibril (2006) and Adeoye's (2006), the use of unprofessional workers and manual record keeping delayed the proper growth and development of Abuja and resulted in the growth and establishment of shanty and squatter settlements in the territory. Where unprofessional workers were used in the execution of the Master Plan, the urban planning and development objectives of the Master Plan and especially, as they affected the Abuja formal and informal housing settlements never received the attention deserved. The used of workers (including military rulers) who were not trained in the profession and failed to prioritize the development objectives of the Master Plan including, proper relocation of the original inhabitants of the Abuja land, socio-economic needs of the Abuja urban poor and accessibility of land and resources affected the proper development of Abuja and gave impetus, to the proliferation of the formal housing areas by the informal settlers.

The use of non-professionals in the implementation of the Abuja Master Plan resulted in delays in land application processing, approvals and quackery (Obiadi, 2017) and as explained by Jibril (2006), most developing nation's government departments are known for their slow and inefficient way of doing business. Government officials in charge of land acquisition tend to create serious huddle for development purposes over the years. In a lot of cases, it takes years after obtaining formal governments grant to complete the processes of obtaining title with stringent conditions. It equally takes another couple of years to obtain building plan approval from the relevant approving authority. This has made some serious developers resort to quacks and illegal land markets, leading to the development of unplanned and squatter settlements.

Adeoye (2014) adds that, Manual record-keeping has been in use by Land Department of the Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory (MFCT) and the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) since the inception of the Federal Capital Territory almost 30 years ago. The city and its surrounding have been expanding rapidly beyond projections. With this expansion, manual record-keeping became inefficient, time-consuming and prone to abuses resulting to the establishment of the Abuja Geographic Information Systems (AGIS). According to Adeoye (2014), the mission of the project is to produce a comprehensive, all-inclusive, foolproof and state-of-the-art computerized geospatial data infrastructure for the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, Nigeria.

Adeoye (2014) further indicates that in Abuja, land allocation within the territory is based on the provisions of the Land Use and FCT Acts. This is carried out by the Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory on the recommendation of the Department of Land, Planning and Survey. The Ministry of the Federal Capital Territory initiated the computerization of its cadastral and land registry and established Abuja Geographic Information System (AGIS) to sanitize land administration system in the FCT. The Abuja Geographic

Information Systems Project is in the process of developing a comprehensive land policy for Nigeria in a systematic form to reduce poverty and enhance economic and social growth by improving security of tenure simplifying the process of acquiring land by the public, developing land market and fostering prudent land management by establishing efficient system of land administration (Adeoye, 2014).

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

The governments in Nigeria have in the past, developed housing programmes for the people in the urban areas without urban architecture or urban design attributes, contributions of the inhabitants and consideration of their interests and those are, part of the problems with the Nigerian housing delivery programmes and needed to be changed. For any reasonable housing development in the Nigerian cities, the development must meet engineering and economic feasibilities, physical and biological capabilities, institutional acceptance and endorsement, and political, social, and financial acceptability. They must stand the test of time and have the ability to command resources and compete beyond borders and attract outside influence. In line with that, this work recommends for strict adherence to the goals and objectives of every city's Master Plan, development laws, the use of professionally trained staff in the execution and implementation of their Master Plans and integration of the informal settlements into the formal settlement areas of the cities: New Urbanism.

It recommends adopting urban design principles, dealing with the density of the urban settlements, the aesthetics, urban amenities, well defined means of circulation, functional parks, how the urban settlement areas function and the decongestion of the areas by building high rise (4 to 6 story apartments with facilities for factories and industries within the buildings. The buildings would embrace facilities for factories and industries (commerce) on the lower floors, where the residents would be gainfully engaged in economic activities while they live on the upper floors. Industries and markets allocate resources more efficiently than government and reduce the dependency on government for survival and daily living as a result, this work recommends that, efforts must be made to incorporate commerce and industries in the city buildings where the residents can live and work. It recommends for the government to review the nation's industrial policies to encourage private sector investments in urban settlements that would foster growth, technological excellence and entrepreneurship.

III. Conclusion

The current settlement patterns (formal and informal) in Abuja are not speaking in terms of integration, the missing link in Abuja urban housing built environment. There is, inexistence, adverse economic inequality and injustice in Abuja and the need for the formal, informal settlements and the urban actors to be talking, to link the informal and formal settlements together and tie them into the central city's infrastructure. The poor implementation of the Abuja Master Plan led to dismal miscommunication problems and economic divide within the area. The Abuja city growth lacked integrity, inclusion of all and shared prosperity. Abuja is a model city that lacked inclusive economic growth incentives.

The current socioeconomic situation in Abuja favors the rich and only through balanced economy can a better society be made of the city. Share values make for a stronger society. The Abuja's urban settlers are calling for freedom and dignity by economic integration of the formal and informal settlements. The formal and informal settlements of the city should be talking to each other instead of talking at each other and the city's diversity needs to be turned into treasure for the inhabitants, both in the formal and informal settlements.

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