Housing Inadequacy in Nigeria: The Case of Failed Government Housing Policies

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Abstract
In Nigeria, there is gross inadequate housing units that will accommodate its teaming population. The available housing units lack adequate facilities and Nigeria's housing problems show-up in the form of overcrowding of buildings and inaccessibility within residential areas. In 1991, the Federal Government of Nigeria came up with a national housing policy, but the question is, did the Nigeria Housing Policies address the issues or rather, theories around space/spatial and human use of spaces in executing the existing housing policies (housing delivery and urban development)? Answering that, this present work emerged with a concept of space as applied to formal and informal settlements. The failure of the government housing policies in Nigeria, coupled with urban development failures and urban poverty created the problems of housing inadequacy. To develop a good housing policy and programmes, it is necessary to ascertain the housing needs of Nigerians. Presently the data for establishing housing needs in Nigeria do not actually exist, as a result, it is the recommendation of this paper for the government to establish a substantiated ways of gathering and keeping records of who needs housing and what qualify's the person. Adopt urban design principles, dealing with the density of the urban poor settlements, the aesthetics, urban amenities, well defined means of circulation, functional parks, how the urban poor settlement areas function and decongestion of the urban areas by building high rise (4 to 6 story apartments) and row housing, with provisions for urban community farming to enable the settlers maintain their lifestyle. 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.

Key words: development, housing, architecture, government and commerce

Introduction

Housing is generally viewed as the most basic human need playing a very important role in the welfare and productivity of the individual. It has a profound impact on the health, welfare and productivity of the individual. Housing contributes to the physical and moral health of a nation and stimulates the social stability, the network efficiency and the development of the individual (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

Okonkwo et al (2012), further indicated that, there is no country in the world devoid of housing problems. However, housing problems is pronounced in the developing countries of the world than in the developed nations. In Nigeria, there are gross inadequate housing units that will accommodate its teaming population. The available housing units lack adequate facilities. Housing problems in Nigeria show-up in the form of overcrowding of buildings, inaccessibility within residential areas (plates 1 to 6) and in the scarcity and high cost of building materials. Besides, the urban area are slum infested with the general state of the urban environment becoming unbearably porous and lacks aesthetics in every true sense of it.

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Meanwhile, it is becoming increasingly difficult for average Nigerians to own houses. This is contingent upon the high cost of housing in the federation. This high cost of building materials which has resulted in shortage of housing has also resulted not only in overcrowding, but has also led many to taking shelter under bridges, shades and make shifts.

House could be defined as a building to live in, especially by one person or family, a house-hold; a family or dynasty including relatives, ancestors and descendants; the audience in a theater, a business firm; a legislative assembly; house music, to provide accommodation or storage for; to cover, encase (Geddess and Grosset, 2005). According to Uji and Okonkwo (2007, p17), 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). Housing need is the minimum shelter or accommodation required to meet the basic minimum demand of a nation. In actual effect, housing need relates to the standard of accommodation acceptable by the society (Okonkwo et al (2012) citing Onibokim, 1982).

The entire world is faced with increasing population numbers and the increase 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).

Land in sub Saharan Africa, is a significant factor and an indispensable asset that determines the quality of life of not only the rural communities but also that of the urban dwellers too.
From the land needed for cultivation by the rural farmers, the site required for urban housing, the workshop needed by roadside auto mechanics and spaces required by various government
and developmental agencies, land has proved not only to be central to man's need and activities but also as the most crucial factor of production. Consequently, access to land has continued to be a tool for obtaining social prestige, economic security and political power. The growth of the economy generates physical development in our cities which most often results in increase in values of land. Naturally, in a market economy, access to the use and enjoyment of this land depends on the purchasing power of individuals concerned. Where the affluent individuals are able to purchase and occupy a choice location, the urban poor are left to grope with the marginal areas. In addition, the centripetal nature of the cities which brings about an increasing spate of economic activities also

creates intense pressure on municipal services and facilities like hospitals, educational institutions, housing, transport, telecommunication systems and energy supply. With the limited funds available to the government, provision of these services is always tilted against the area occupied by the urban poor. This is more so where they encroach upon government lands or other areas where development permits cannot be given. With the influx of more squatters driven by their inability to acquire a better developable site within the city, the resulting squatter settlement will grow into a full blown slum (Bello, 2009).

The land problem is mostly expressed in terms of the processes involved in securing title to land, which are very clumsy and expensive. The land problem is however trounced through the compulsory acquisition of land for public use by the government through Land Use Act of 1988. The problem of finance shows in the cost of building a house and the cost of obtaining loan for similar reason. However, this is being resolved through the government intervention by the acquisition of land either directly or indirectly for the mass construction of housing units to accommodate her teeming population, mostly, the low income earners and the mid income earners, (principally, the public and civil servants in the society). Governments also do indulge in the provision of site and services to facilitate development in the housing industry (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

In order to respond to the yawning of the masses for shelter, the Federal Government of Nigeria came up with a national housing policy in 1991 which was meant to address the problem of housing. However, the provision of housing is a product of many factors. Prominent among these factors is land (Okonkwo et al, 2012 citing Clark and Jones, 2001). Although its availability may be necessary, a more important component is the accessibility of the majority of the people to it (Okonkwo et al, 2012 citing Bayer, 1990). The provision of land has historically always been a factor in conflicts; the contemporary speculators take land for a lucrative or unfailing business investment (Okonkwo et al, 2012 citing Calder-wood, 2004). This is why landowners, who are politically influential, may not be prepared to relinquish suitable housing or land because of loss of potential profits. Thus governments see urban development as been only possible if such land is acquired by them and leads to individuals or reserved for public purpose such as housing development (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

Against this background, the Federal Government of Nigeria in 1978 promulgated the Land Use Decree (LUD) which was rechristened Land Use Act (LUA) in 1978. This act which was a major step in land reform aimed at making land readily available for development. Upon the promulgation of the Land Use act No. 6 of 1979, all land comprised in the territory of each state in the federation was vested in the governor of that state (Land Use Act, 1978). By this provision, the state governors replace the family head, as the legal trustee of land. Thus the government is empowered to acquire land for development purpose without the complex and time wasting procedures of the past. Thus, government can acquire land for public housing development in Nigeria; either compulsorily or by agreement with the native owners of the land (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

As seen from the background, the failure of the government housing policies in Nigeria, coupled with urban development failures and urban poverty created the problems in housing inadequacy in Nigeria. Subsequent to this, is the lack of adequate urban infrastructure, facilities and amenities for urban people. These, accompanied by rapid expansion and urbanization resulted in spontaneous growth of slums, shanty towns and ghetto settlements in the city centers and their surrounding territories. These informal settlements are partly the original indigenes and partly settlers, who were cut up by these problems. The situation is heightened by bribery and corruption in

housing delivery offices (development reviews) in most states, bad housing policies in Nigeria and snailling process of land administration and processing that resulted in greater population being without housing and sustainable residential environment.

The spontaneous emergence of the ghettos, slums and squatter settlements created the spatial distortion in city centers' original development plans. As the urban dwellers and poor people were now seen to be housed in areas not meant for them. It was then that the urban city governments started enforcing their development control laws that were in most cases, late in coming. As a result, a lot of the urban dwellers (urban poor), moved to planned, but undeveloped areas within the urban center peripheries. They have done these as they derived their livelihood from jobs offered within the urban central areas; be it public or private jobs. However, because the urban poor are people, according to Uji and Okonkwo (2007), frustrated by the inadequacies and failure of the conventional approaches to provide urban shelter and services to a significantly large enough proportion of the poor in the urban areas of the developing nations, these ever-increasing class of urban populations have to resort to squatting on public or private land, either by invading and forcefully occupying or leasing such land (illegally sub-divided) on which they hurriedly construct (through self-help) their shelter from any available materials using any readily affordable and available technology.

The problem and the question is, did the Nigeria Housing Policies address the issues or rather, theories around space/spatial and human use of spaces in executing the existing housing policies (housing delivery and urban development)? Answering that, the present work emerged with a concept of space as applied to formal and informal settlements and the invasion of the formal areas of Nigerian urban public spaces by the informal settlers (see theoretical Framework). The urban actors (planners, architects, government, policy makers, politicians, etc.), failed to realize that, the dynamics of the world economy has changed and greatly impacting the socio-economic conditions of every society. Today, the world economy is in a period of rapid and dramatic change, and the question of just how we will connect to this new world is the single most important issue of our life. We are living in a time of contradiction. A time of role reversals, a time in which old expectations are violated so frequently that new expectations cannot form. Many of these contradictions center on connections to the world (Kanter, 1995). The world is now connected and affecting the old operational mechanisms of most establishments. It is a new world and with changes. The changes are affecting the housing delivery and building industry and especially, the production of houses for the urban people. With the arrival of the global economy and the computer age, the days are gone when one economy dominated the world market and policy makers, architects and developers dominated the building industry. As a result of these, different authors are reacting to these changes and differently. The disciplinary area of focus of this paper is housing inadequacy, or better said, scarcity of housing in Nigerian urban areas as a result, the writers evaluated the opinions of the experts in the field and used that in supporting their argument that, there exists, "Housing Inadequacy in Nigeria that resulted from, failed Government Housing Policies".

Government Housing Policies

To accommodate and provide enough housing for the urban immigrants, more lands must be made available. "Our overall demand for land resources finds its roots in the needs and aspirations of the many individuals who make up society. People have different wants and desires. Up to a point, everyone is primarily concerned with the physical need to secure sufficient food and other materials to sustain life. Beyond that, what people want of land is influenced by their knowledge of how land resources can be used, their cultural and educational

background, incomes and spending power, individual tests and personal goals, and by the changing attitudes that come with advancing age. Each of these factors helps to condition the overall demand picture. But the single most important factor that affects demand for land is population numbers. It is imperative, therefore, that we begin this discussion with some considerations of the problems of population pressure and population growth" (Barlowe, 1986). The growth in population and want for land by almost everyone in the world resulted in the government's takeover of land in Nigeria (Land Use Act of 178). The growth in urban population, insufficient economic activities, housing and lack of adequate infrastructure led to urbanization in most of the Nigerian urban centers.

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, 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).

The questions are, who are the people mostly affected by the failed government

housing policies in Nigeria? According to Bamidele (2010), most of the workers who cannot afford to live within the city, find their way to the squatter settlements and uncompleted or abandoned buildings within the city which punctuated all high-brow areas of the city and many. The people, according to Uji and Okonkwo (2007), frustrated by the inadequacies and failure of the conventional approaches to provide urban shelter and services to a significantly large enough proportion of the poor in the urban areas of the developing nations, these ever-increasing class of urban populations have to resort to squatting on public or private land, either by invading and forcefully occupying or leasing such land (illegally sub-divided) on which they hurriedly construct (through self-help) their shelter from any available materials using any readily affordable and available technology.

Keeping and maintaining the government's failed, orthodox housing delivering schemes to the expanding poor Nigerian populations, how can the government, sustainably, provide where the urban poor can live without disturbing the urban equilibrium, knowing that they (the urban poor) have no lands, that they squat anywhere they see and provide services needed to maintain the rich communities? The rich and affluence get their housing rent subsidized, the low income who are underprivileged live in poor dilapidated and deteriorating houses in the midst of modern well serviced shelters for the affluent (Olu-Sule, 1988). A lot of people in the urban areas live in the open (public spaces) and anywhere they can, to continue with their daily existence (economic activities).

Conceptual Theory of Spatial Housing Design

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 paper. 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, p11 - 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 1 to 8). All this tend to reduce the quality of the human environment especially in the urban areas (Okonkwo, 1998, p32).



Plate 1. Better Life Area, Mpape
Source: Babajide Orevba (May 2016)



Plate 2. Berger Quarry Area
Source: Babajide Orevba (May 2016)



Plate 3. An Abuja slum
Source: Babajide Orevba (May 2016)



Plate 4. An Abuja slum
Source: Babajide Orevba (May 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 5 and 6). This is an important issue in housing and residential quantity and quality (Okonkwo, 1998, p33-34).



Plate 5. Alum, Mpape ,Abuja
Source: naij.com (May 2016)



Plate 6. Gateway to Abuja
Source:housingnews.org.ng (May 2016)

In time and space, it was the first Industrial Revolution that brought to the limelight, for the first time, the failure of urban development and the problems of the urban poor. On historical focus of sociology and society, the process of industrialization and population growth compounded urban development failures (Okonkwo, 1998). The problems and challenges posed by the rapid urban growth in Nigeria are immense. More easily observable and perhaps very frightening are the general human and environmental poverty, the declining quality of life and the underutilized as well as the untapped wealth of human resources. Housing and associated facilities (such as water, electricity, waste disposal) are grossly inadequate. Millions live in substandard environments called slums, plagued by squalor and grossly inadequate social amenities, such as, a shortage of schools, poor health facilities and lack of opportunities for recreation among others (plates 1 to 6). Juvenile delinquency and crime have become endemic in urban areas as a result of the gradual decline of traditional social values and the breakdown of family cohesiveness and community (Adepoju Adetoye, 1995). All these are urbanization problems, resulted from failed government programmes and bad government housing policies.



Plate 7. Tale of urban slums in Abuja mega city Source: Fred Itua, Nguamo Aka, Ruth Agada and Amaka Agu (May 2016)



Plate 8. An Abuja slum.
Source: Babajide Orevba (May 2016)

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 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 to Dalley (1989, p.120), the history of urban planning focuses on the people, places, concepts, and practices of planning of urban development over time.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Union of Architects (UIA) Charter (2001), in its preamble stated that: We, the architects, concerned for the future qualitative development of the built environment in a fast changing world, believe that architecture involves everything that influences the way in which the built environment is planned, designed, made, used, furnished, landscaped and maintained.

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.

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 p176-178).

The complexity of this problem 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, p17), 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 Abuja has been seen to rather produce what the present work could term "spatial dialectics" especially in spatial distribution of objects. The city is 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 Abuja (see plate 9 to 11). Thus the public spaces in these informal settlements have become or have assumed the function of "housing/shelter" for the Abuja urban poor (plates 9 to 11).



Plate 9. Abuja's public space (housing/shelter)
Source: Obiadi (May 2016)

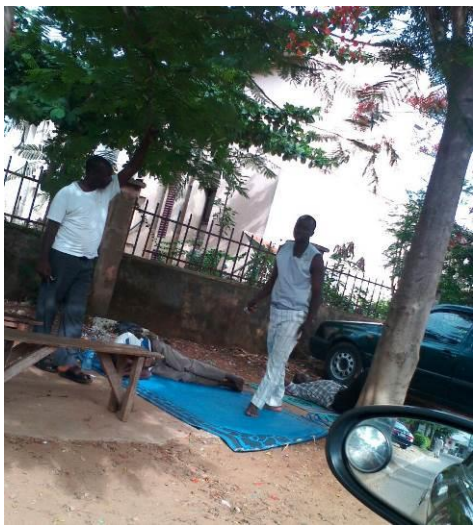


Plate 10. Abuja's public space (housing/shelter)
Source: Obiadi (May 2016)



Plate 11. 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. 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 paper, constitute a strongly identifiable character which is in this paper 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. However, economic growth in urban areas has not kept pace with the increase in the urban population (BBC, 2013). To that effect, Nigeria urbanization is growing more than the urban areas 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'.

As indicated earlier, urban objects includes buildings, parks, trees, roads, highways, sewer lines, and utility plants used by urban planners and architects in defining spaces. Space: is the boundless three-dimensional extent in which objects and events have relative position and direction (Space, 2013). Within the space is the spatial housing characterized by informal volumetric and unvolumetric combination now called the 'spatial house', 'open house' or 'house without limit.

In a larger scale, the spatial housing would serve the interest of the Nigeria's urban poor, caught up in both Nigeria urban centers' spatial dialectics and dualistic economy. The urban poor are equally known to live in the open, in shanty structures, marshy sites, and poor sanitary environments in want of where to live to stay close to work, both formal and informal. The urban poor inhabitants of "spatial housing" live within the formal areas while caving out their informal spaces within the same. According to Okonkwo and Agbonome (2012) citing Llyod (1979), the urban poor are considered to be inhabitants of shantytowns, slums and squatter settlements, who ordinarily, cannot afford, or have no access to means of meaningful existence. In order words, they generally are supposed to have no (or limited) access resources, employment and opportunities for self-improvement, education and advancement in the sense of modern technological developments.

Whether we call them unauthorized housing, informal housing, spontaneous or shelter settlements, they are settlements (usually in urban areas) also referred to as 'shantytowns' by Llyod (1979) who considered them as settlements found on land that may, usually, be illegally subdivided, with perpetual disregard for any form of urban settlement laws (Okonkwo and Agbonome (2012) citing Llyod (1979). In urban poor settlement locations, Okonkwo and Agbonome (2012) citing Osetereichh (1981), indicated that, because of uncontrolled nature and planleness of the development, buildings may either come too close to one another or obstruct and conflict with one another constituting serious potential fire hazard and making accesses to them also difficult (plates 1 to 8), and provision of basic facilities almost impossibly expensive. Their own alternative facilities like deep wells and latrines also come into conflict with each other, posing serious fire hazards. They are usually characterized by physical forms that have acquired or become grime-and rat-infested, peeling paints and with surroundings littered garbage cans and refuse dumps, a generally depleted and unsanitary environment usually attributed to poverty of the occupant (plates 1 to 8, 12 and 13).



Plate 12. Utako, Abuja Settlement area
Source: Obiadi (November 2014)



Plate 13. Utako Village, Okonjo Iwulal Way
Source: Obiadi (November 2014)

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), Housing Inadequacy in Nigeria: A case of failed Government Housing Policies is thus a documentation/identification of a prevailing urban phenomenon with interest to make remediation recommendations.

Major Problems with Housing Delivery in Nigeria Cities

The failed government housing policies in Nigeria are exacerbated, according to Okonkwo et al (2012), by the fact that a good percentage of the existing residential buildings are not suitable to the modern needs and lack conveniences such as open space, electricity, water closet, tap water, waste disposal, and communication network system. Solving the housing problem in Nigeria would involve the need to ensure an adequate supply both quantitatively and qualitatively. Such housing should an ever growing demand so as to produce rents which are seasonal to meet the resources of various incomes groups within the community and which are equitably in terms of returns to investors in housing. These housing problems aforementioned are a function of many factors in combination, such as: social, economic, and demographic. The blending of these factors show up in the following: land problem, financial problem and problem of the cost of building materials (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

Almost all the major urban areas in the world are witnessing rural to urban migration resulting in urbanization. In his "Economic Implications of Rapid Urban Growth in the Third World Countries," Sijuwade (2010) indicated that, we have seen that rural-urban migration brings workers to cities that are already burdened with surplus labor. With the daily influx of people into the urban areas in Nigeria, unavailability of this data is one of the major problems challenging the provision of housing in Nigeria. With is, how can the Nigerian government accurately maintain the data of the housing heeds of the people?

Moreover, the rate of urbanization in Nigeria has witnessed tremendous increase in the last two decades. Census in the early fifties showed that there were about 10.6% of the total populations of Nigerians living in cities. This figure however, rose drastically to the tune of 19.1% in 1963, and 24.5% in 1985, 38.7% in 2000 and 38.3% in 2008 (Okonkwo et al (2012) citing Grimmes, 2008). Thus, given the present growth rate in urban population, one is left appalled that the magnitude of housing problems in Nigeria (in terms of the demand and supply of qualitative housing units) will be heightened in the next two decades (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

In February 2009, the Nigerian Federal Housing Authority investors' toolkit, indicated and carefully stressed the needs for more housing in all the states of the federation to accommodate the nation's urgent housing needs. It states that, to fulfill its obligation and bridge the Nigerian housing gap, the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) must explore more than its conventional housing delivery models. The housing deficit is ever increasing and urgent

measures are necessary to make more homes available to the people (Jamide, 2009). The Federal Housing Authority fully aligns itself with this patriotic objective, particularly given the need to aggressively combat the nation's housing deficit now put at 12-16 million (FHA, 2009).

Housing needs in Nigeria is quite difficult to measure because the range and degree of need varies considerably. Housing need require the provision of a minimum standard housing quality necessary for a given household to meet its physiological and psychological needs. It is only the ability to make a good estimation of housing need of a given society that can lead to lasting solution of providing accommodation to the countless destitute and homeless, particularly in the urban areas of Nigeria. Lastly, housing need embraces the total requirement of shelter, without considering whether the family can pay for it or not. One of the problems facing the supply of housing in Nigeria has to do with determining the housing need (Okonkwo et al, 2012).

Findings

There is no hard empirical evident to support government's yearly housing needs (numbers) in Nigeria especially, when there is no data pointing toward the number of people trooping into the major urban centers of Nigeria every month in search of greener pastures. According to Okonkwo, et al (2012), to develop a good housing policy and program, it is necessary to ascertain the housing need of Nigerians. Presently the data for establishing housing need in Nigeria do not actually exist (Okonkwo et al (2012) citing Sule, 1995).

Major and affordable housing proposals into major Nigerian urban centers end-up and die, on the desks of the development control staff of most Nigerian Development Review offices. Hard evidence exist that no major project in most of the offices goes through without the developer, paying (bribing) his way through the project. In most cases, the reviewing officers demand share in the proposed developments and where that fails, major monetary or land contributions must be made without which, the proposal dies naturally.

The majority of the development review offices in Nigeria are poorly staffed and in most cases, the reviewing staff are not professionals in the built environment industry and have no idea what to be looking for or, better put, what to review, a discredit to the government. It shows government's inability to properly staff her offices, resulting in make-shift staffing and mediocre developments in the urban centers.

The government lacked in security, protection of life and properties of her people. Most times, developers with good intent to carry out good and sustainable housing developments projects are discouraged because the government and politicians' "hired" touts extort money from them (developers). In most cases, the extortions are endless. Most state governments have established Material Testing Laboratories to maintain the integrity of the building and construction works in the state. In general, what they have succeeded in doing was creating government official avenues for their staff to extort money from developers. Material Testing Laboratories for the most part, is a christened way of bribery and corruption for government staff. Governments of different urban centers have thousands of inspection vehicles on the roads with government staff driving from one project site to another. The governments have not bothered to look into what those challenged with their inspections do outside the offices. The government is promoting quackery, bribery and corruption and those are affecting government's housing delivery programmes and policies in Nigeria.

Recommendations

The focal point of this paper was to examine, Housing Inadequacy in Nigeria as associated with failed Government Housing Policies. This paper has established that the failed government housing policies led to the growth and development of urban poor settlements (shanty, squatter, ghettos, etc.) at both formal and informal areas of the urban areas in Nigeria. As a result, it recommends, linking the urban poor settlements areas with the city urban

economy and improving on their physical or built environment.

According to Okonkwo, et al (2012), to develop a good housing policy and program, it is necessary to ascertain the housing need of Nigerians. Presently the data for establishing housing need in Nigeria do not actually exist (Okonkwo et al (2012) citing Sule, 1995) and it is the recommendation of this paper for the government to establish a substantiated ways of gathering and keeping records of who needs housing in Nigeria and what qualify's the person. By so doing, the provision of housing to the people will be better managed. The process could be accomplished through the following recommendations:

- Granting and giving lands to the residents of the urban poor settlements in Nigeria, to enable them build and economically develop their settlements. The government's approaches to solving the problems of housing in Nigeria have not worked and to start solving Nigeria's housing problems, this paper recommends retention and sustainable spatial integration of the urban poor settlement areas, that would architecturally bridge the gap (spatial solution) between the urban poor settlements (place of abode) and place of work.

- It recommends adopting urban design principles, dealing with the density of the urban poor settlements, the aesthetics, urban amenities, well defined means of circulation, functional parks, how the urban poor settlement areas function and decongestion of the areas by building high rise (4 to 6 story apartments) and row housing, with provisions for urban community farming to enable the settlers maintain their lifestyle. 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 (plates 14 and 15).

- Industries and markets allocate resources more efficiently than government and reduce the dependency on government for survival and daily living as a result, this paper recommends that, efforts must be made by the government to incorporate commerce and industries in the retained urban poor settlements 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 poor settlements that would foster growth, technological excellence and entrepreneurship. These will lead the urban poor settlements to unprecedented housing developments and ownership and especially in the major urban centers of Nigeria.

- It recommends for the government to invest in the urban poor settlements in Nigeria to invigorate hope, encourage and restore confidence in them. The settlements have for years, suffered and in poor conditions and lacked housing and socioeconomic needs. The present state of the rich community's comfort and competition are, as a result of the free access they have to lands and resources. Denied access to lands and resources are persistent problems to the urban poor and have continually derailed their growth and development and those are to be changed.

Proposed Model. This model adopted the high-rise building approach with factories and municipal activities on lower floors while the upper floors serve as residential units. Community gatherings and business activities are located at the middle of the subdivision to spatially and economically tie the model (14 to 15).



Plate 14. Proposed Model-Site Plan.
Source: Obiadi



Plate 15. Proposed Model's perspective.
Source: Obiadi

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