

Sustainability in Real Property Design: Visual Arts Approach

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Abstract: *Sustainability in architectural design may be considered a huge centre of interest and or activities around which effective architectural designs revolve. The study tries to situate architecture as a profession and academic discipline, considerably concerned with designing of structures, buildings, and environment with utmost consideration for health and aesthetic implications. Again, the study, sees sustainable architectural design as architecture that seeks to reduce the negative environmental impacts of structures or buildings through improved efficiency and minimal use of materials, space, energy and ecosystem to achieve effective results. Visual arts is also discussed to highlight it's importance to architecture and sustainable development. Primary, secondary and participant observation method of data collation were used to achieve the objectives of the study. Some of the findings include: values, standard, discipline are vital nutrients lacking in the growth and development agenda of Nigeria. Nigeria today, seems to favour tribe, idiocy over citizenship hence monumental retrogression in development and sustainable architecture. Insecurity, hostility and brutality underscore environmental threat and dearth in sustainable architecture. These were followed by conclusion and recommendations.*

Keywords:

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1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainability in any endeavour, particularly, human, implies longevity, continuity, prolong, maintain, lengthen in space or duration as it may relate to policy, culture, design, principles, law, and others. Therefore, one may suggest, that any policy, culture, principles, ideology, design in Architecture, Art and Design or other human endeavours that are not in tandem with sustainability may not stand the true test of time. In support of this. Azubine (2022) shares the view that sustainability in architectural design is a huge body of knowledge, a colossal centre of interest and or activities around which effective architectural designs revolve. One may also suggest that sustainability in architectural design is a significant focal point around which events or designs are based.

Architecture is in situ a significant aspect of visual arts globally. It contributes immensely to the growth and development of humanity. The study however, sees architecture and visual arts as predominantly inseparable phenomena that incubate and galvanize creative and

innovative technology with fertile and friendly environment as a suitable playground for effective sustainability. It may also be looked at from different perspectives. On one hand, it is a discipline that deals with various elements and principles of design in construction and ornamentation of buildings and environment with considerations for their health and aesthetic effects. On the other hand, it is a profession and academic discipline, considerably concerned with designing of structures, buildings and environment with utmost considerations for their health and aesthetic implications.

One may look at sustainable architecture as, that architectural design that seeks to reduce the negative environmental impact of structures or buildings through improved efficiency and minimal use of materials space, energy and ecosystem, yet, achieve significant results in the end. However, Aniakor (2012), Ejimofor and Osita (2021) Azubine and Eneogwe (2022) are all of the view that sustainable design is also known as ecological

design which is principally concerned with creating structures and buildings with concentration on health, social and ecological sustainability. They align themselves with the view that the sole aim or goal of sustainability in architectural design is to promote and preserve the health of the buildings' occupants and again, reduce the buildings negative impacts on the environment. In their views, these could be achieved by minimizing waste, employing environmentally friendly materials and reducing the consumption of non-renewable resources and others.

Again, sustainable design in architecture may be seen as a kind of design that reduces the environmentally destructive impact for the huge growth and development of humanity. In view of the above, therefore, the study may be safe to suggest that ecodesign could be an approach to designing structures that give significant consideration to the environmental impacts of space, structures or products with more energy-efficient facilities over its entire life circle.

With the above assertions and definitions therein, one may discover with dismay, that in recent times, ecodesign or architecture in Nigeria could not develop beyond brick houses, "cut and nail" or computer generated designs with little or no supervision, most times, without due considerations for environmental impacts of space on the structure including health and ecological sustainability for examples, one observes constant collapse of buildings, bridges and other products in Nigeria today, unlike in the developed countries where sustainability in every project designs are taken as a serious business, where human and animal lives are better valued. However, sustainable architecture has developed beyond the imagination of black man (Africans). Unlike in developed economies, where architecture has grown to the level of glass, woods, installations, rocks, stones, and structures beneath the soil or earth as epitome of sustainability in architectural design, creativity and technology.

The study is of the view that these innovations in modern architecture attracts and promote tourism, thereby, developing the economics. One may observe that in the present Africa situation, Nigeria for example, there may not be effective sustainability in architectural design because of idiocy, greed, myopism, unawareness, with Nigeria, a certificate ridden society, saddled with religions (gods) and primitive politics. These unfortunate, but sad situations have impacted negatively on the sustainability of architectural design in Nigeria and beyond.

For example, there is a recycling of colonial administrators' ideas including design without conscious efforts to improve upon the existing ideas of the colonial masters.

One may agree with the study, that the greatest problems facing Nigeria today are Brutality, values, standards and discipline.

From the views and observation of the study, Nigeria of present times is characterized and plagued with

brutality and impunity at all levels. Therefore, there is no way impunity and brutality can produce sustainable architectural design, no matter how much one pretends. A careful observation as recorded by the study, reveals that one of the greatest problems facing Nigeria today is lack of true value system. Human lives and others are not valued much so that any policy or ideology that is not connected to politics, looting and corruption is dead on arrival. This, significantly affects the entire social process including sustainable architectural design, creativity, Art and design, technology including health and education which is the bedrock of human and industrial development, as well as technological advancement of any nation, particularly, the developing economies. The study shares the view that value driven society inspires creativity, sustainable architecture and innovative technology.

Standard and Discipline in relation to Nigeria situation are salient but crucial factors that could impact on the sustainability of architectural design. From the careful observation of the study, one may discover and accept that standard and discipline are among the greatest challenges facing Nigeria. These account for her pathetic retrogressiveness amounting to underdevelopment in every standard. From findings based on careful and lengthy but huge observations, Nigeria lacks maintenance culture, standard as well as discipline to develop and does not accord Architecture, Art and Design including other environmental design technology based disciplines their rightful places in the development agenda of Nigeria. These affects sustainability in Architecture, indeed, national development. Architecture and environment are relegated to the background in Nigeria against looting and corruption.

The study is of the view that the negligence of salient areas of human endeavors, including capacity building is counterproductive and may be unacceptable in the present day Nigeria socio-economic realities. Nigeria as a matter of necessity could reconstruct, deconstruct and decolonize the whole picture and ideology of the colonial administrators and their educational system and policy which are job seeking and certificate oriented and also theoretically based with its dehumanizing implications. One may suggest that colonization affects the cultural self-definition of ethnic groups on the continent of Africa particularly Nigeria. In support of this view. Ikwuegbu (2017:103) citing cesaire, who argues that "colonization equals dehumanization in a simple but brutal equation". He further asserts that the effects of cultures trampled underfoot, institution undermined, religions destroyed, extra ordinary possibilities wiped out are calamitous

However, in support of ikwuegbu (2017:104), the study asserts that;

Since the advent of colonialism into Nigeria, the values and identity have degenerated, much so that some cultures in Nigeria appear to be lateral invasions of western mirrors. Architecture, visual arts and others seem

to be wearing western lenses, only to see what and how the west wants them to see, thereby, impacting negatively on sustainable development and others.

In view of this, therefore, Nigeria, indeed, architects find themselves entangled in the mimesis of the westerners and should discuss anything antediluvian in character and in action. It is for this reason, some scholars like Wole Soyinka, Chinua Achebe, Ekwensi Cyprian, Ola Oloidi, Uche Okeke, Okpara Anthony U, Ikwuegbu Nnamdi and others wrote extensively on the negative implications of colonialism in Nigeria and dehumanizing effects on the black race and therefore called for synthesis of cultural ideology.

Ejimofo and Osita (2020) citing Fanon (1963:250) asserts that; *The psychiatric essence of colonialism is that it is a systematic negation of the other persons and furious determination to deny the other persons all attributes of humanity. Colonialism forces the people colonized to ask themselves the question constantly in reality, who am I?*

In the opinion of the study, colonialism and its negative impacts aside, one would have expected from the colonized the (victim), a rethink, readjustment, reconstruction and a systematic decolonization of the colonial administrators' mentality and its infiltration into the people's way of life. There should be a conscious effort to disintegrate and decolonize European influences values, culture and carefully, call for diversification and creatively integrating Architecture, Art and Design technology and others into its development agenda, which to a greater degree may massively pave way for sustainable architectural design as well as national development. However, this is against the backdrop of

over dependency on oil, western ideas, education and certificate acquisition against skills, creative designs and human capacity development.

At the moment, it is expected that Nigeria, as a nation, should be applying critical thinking to solving problems of global importance instead of unnecessary extraordinary rendition of western ideology values and policies which is counterproductive in the present day socioeconomic realities, citing African nations as underdeveloped or developing economies globally.

ARTS AND DESIGN

Art and design is universally regarded as visual arts. It is also an integral part of architecture and other environmental design related disciplines. It is an essential area of study or discipline that appeals first to the sense of sight as it is further classified into different but salient disciplines like, Architecture, Painting, Graphic, Sculpture, Photography, Ceramics and Textile design technology. Like architecture, visual arts is not accorded its rightful place in development agenda of Nigeria. The study records that in the precolonial days, visual arts were elaborately used in adorning palaces, shrines, and sacred places of worship. In support of this view, Akinwonsola and Osita (2020) assert that; *Visual art was sacred and noble until the emergence of the colonial administrators who came and utterly as well as brutally destroyed these precious and magnificent art pieces on the ground that they are fetish, yet they looted most of the works which are now found all over Europe including Britain.*



Figure 1: Bicycle Rider, Artist – Unknown, Source: Opera news.com/ FB. Year: 2021



Figure 2: Untitled, Artist – Unknown, Source: Opera news.com/FB. Year: 2021

In the views of Ejimofor and Osita (2020), the above position metamorphosed in loss of cultural values and aesthetic awareness for art culture until the emergence of Aina Onabolu (a self-taught artist), Ben Enweonwu and others. From that moment till date, the acceptance of art and design in Nigeria has been discouraging and demoralizing. However, the importance of art and design technology and architecture as crucial drivers of the economy must not be ignored or neglected as it is in Nigeria situation today.

To a greater degree, one may accept that Architecture, Art and Design, like education which must not be for certificate acquisition alone, but to broaden horizon of knowledge and to raise the bar of management and skills that may encourage one to live effectively and contribute significantly to the overall growth and development of man and society. If the society is well managed and properly packaged to the advantage of the country, architecture, and visual arts could help in developing creativity and the building of technology.

Art and Design is an integral part of Architecture and could help in acquisition of innovative skills and ideas that may empower and restore the dignity of man within and outside the communities, however, visual arts (Art and Design) and sustainable Architectural design could transform man and society into job providers, increase aesthetic awareness, encourage tourism and provide suitable playground for creativity and innovative Technology, nationally and internationally as exemplified in figures 3 to 6



Figure 3: Sustainable Architectural Design (Free Hand Drawing/Sketch), Artist – Unknown, Source: Opera news.com/ FB. Year: 2020



Figure 4: Sustainable Architectural Design (Free Hand Drawing/Sketch), Artist – Unknown, Source: Opera news.com/ FB. Year: 2020

In **conclusion** therefore, the study is of the opinion that values, standard, discipline and misplacement of priority seem salient nutrients lacking in the growth and development agenda of Nigeria including sustainability in architectural design as well as other unifying agencies that would have effectively combined in synergy to shoot Nigeria into creative world power. From all indications as noted by the study, Nigeria today, seems to favor tribe, idiocy over citizenship, hence the monumental retrogression in every facet of life, particularly, human capacity building, sustainable architectural design, visual arts, Estate management and others. Architecture and visual arts are products of creativity and the study shares

the view that opportunities for creative expressions are extremely important in the overall development of the society.

Preble and Preble (1994:25) are of the view that creativity helps to develop one's abilities to integrate experiences of the outside world with those of the inner selves. For this reason, one may be safe to suggest that any activity that is consistent with rationality and at the same time, attain a new reality could be considered creative as exemplified by the images below (figures 7 and 8). These are huge and massive examples of creative ingenuity demonstrated through drawings which are products of visual arts and architecture as symbols of

modernity, technology development, including sustainable architectural design

Recommendations

For sustainable architecture to be effectively achieved, the government and its various agencies must apply critical thinking to solving problems of global importance.

Ministry of environment must be holistically reevaluated to encourage ecological research across the country

Environment must in situ be considered a veritable platform through which any sustainable development agenda must be built upon. Present day Nigeria is characterized by high insecurity, hostility and brutality under such environmental threat, there is no way brutality can produce sustainable architecture and or effective growth and development. From the view of the study, there no environment in Nigeria today that could significantly produce sustainable growth and development in the present systematic ecological terrorism. Hence dearth of ecological research and sustainability in development. These must be adequately addressed.

Architects, visual Artists, Environment and town planning authorities must come together to apply critical thinking to solving problems of global and ecological importance including urbanization and environmental degradation and others. These to a larger degree, may pave the way significantly for sustainable growth and development.

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INTERVIEWS

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Eneogwe (2022), International on 10th February 2022, at ABSU. Uturu, Age 60yrs (Architecture). Profession – Architect.