

## ARCHITECTURAL ANALYSIS OF POOR NEIGHBORHOODS IN ABUJA, NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT:** *The concept of Abuja, Nigeria, as a befitting Federal Capital Territory was spawned in 1975 and in the process, a Master Plan was developed. It was elaborated to put in place, a sustainable urban spatial environment for all groups and activities however, the Master Plan was abused, resulted in volumetric and unvolumetric living. This research aimed to ascertain the extent of distortion in the Master Plan with regards to housing provisions for the urban poor. Instruments of two research strategies; quantitative and qualitative research methods and their tactics were used. The Sample size (n) was determined using the Taro-yamane formula and stratified single-stage cluster sampling technique used to select subjects for the study. Collected data was coded, entered and analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive statistics that included frequency and percentages were used to summarize the categorical variables while means and standard deviations were obtained for continuous variables. The Master Plan provided for low-income settlements, 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 and led to dismal miscommunication problems and economic divide. The city lacked integrity, inclusion of all and not sustainable. The Abuja housing developments should embrace all and not divided by income, social status and political line.*

**KEY WORDS:** urban poor, urbanization, population, architecture, housing, Abuja

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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of Abuja, Nigeria, 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 that, 845 villages were displaced (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). 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, Okonkwo, 2006, Mabogunje, 1968, Ayileka and

Kalgo, 2001), in the process, a 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. 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).

This resulted in the dislocation of the proposed Abuja Master Plan in terms of organized implementation. The consequence was distortion in the planned housing development and lack of adequate urban infrastructure, necessary support facilities and amenities for the surging relocated population. This phenomenon engendered unplanned rapid urbanization which resulted in spontaneous growth of slums, shanty towns and ghetto settlements in the city centre and surrounding territory. This resulted in informal settlement that consisted partly of the original indigenes and partly of the new settlers, who were cut up by the urbanization process.

#### **Failed Abuja government's efforts in providing adequate housing for all classes of people.**

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 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, Abba, 2003), but that was not the case during the implementations. 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 (Olu-Sule, 1988) and 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. The housing failed because of the government rush to move government workers from Lagos to Abuja when the government has not provided adequate housing for the workers. Not only that, the Capital City was planned to be built by the Federal Government in its greater part. The Master Plan 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.

#### **Aim of this Research**

The aim of this research was to ascertain the extent of distortion in the Abuja Master Plan with regards to housing provisions for the urban poor housing with a view to evolving modalities for sustainable spatial housing design for the urban poor in Abuja, Nigeria.

#### **Methodology**

##### **Theories around space/spatial and human use of space: emerging concept in space.**

This research looked at a new approach in identifying a new phenomenon in urban poor housing, being the squatter issues with separate and demarcated territories. 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. The present research examined urban design role(s) overtime and with historical focus. The primary focus of this work was to conduct research on the theory and architecture of the urban poor in Abuja, Nigeria, as a result, it required the review of the theories of architecture and urban planning as they impact human activities and the use of space (overtime) in both rural and urban areas.

According to Onofrei (2005), the theory of architecture considers the whole sphere of architecture as a study matter and has application in-fields belonging both to practice and to the knowledge. These are: architectural experience and architectural output (designing), to which we must add the architectural research, the history of architecture and architectural criticism. The theory enables us to understand the architectural experience, our perceptions in the “lived” architecture.

It also defines the factors which determine the creation of an architectural work and makes possible the critical estimate of the quality of a certain solution in a concrete case. The theory gives a conceptual base to the architectural research, pointing out its result to the effect that without a coherent theoretical basis, both architectural research and history of architecture lead only to knowledge without profoundness. Each of these application fields goes through its own dynamic process, and, in its turn, the theory of architecture; having multiple interconnections with them, is a complex subject in a continuous evolution (Onofrei, 2005).

It is a truism to say that architectures evolve over time. The term ‘evolve’ is however usually used quite loosely to mean that architecture changes over time and that it is possible to trace the sources of these changes to work produced by a previous generation of architects (Brown, 2015). Each period offered something new and different because they were not all similar, but some/most of architecture was influenced from other periods. Architecture captures the birth of new ideas to the scares of tragic events. Architecture has evolved from Greek to Roman to Modern Day. As time progresses, architecture advances, yet there are things that have retained conservative. This is done so that contemporary people may share the same experiences as the people in the prior time periods (Brown, 2015). While it is not the intent of this research to get deep, into the evolution of architecture, it is rather important to understand architecture, how it evolved and the influence it will have on this research.

### **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, 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 research 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, Gutkind, 1974).

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, 2). All this tend to reduce the quality of the human environment especially in the urban areas (Okonkwo, 1998).



Plate 1. Abuja urban poor community in disrepair  
Source: Obidi (April 7, 2021)



Plate 2. Abuja urban poor community showing decayed compound and building additions  
Source: Obidi (April 7, 2021)

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 1, 2). This is an important issue in housing and residential quantity and quality (Okonkwo, 1998).

Historically, 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). 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 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). 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. 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 and Adetoye, 1995) and all these are urbanization problems.

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. At colonization, cities grew 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).

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 complexity of the human need 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. According to Uji and Okonkwo (2007), citing Turner (1974), '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. According to Uji and Okonkwo (2007)], 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 a building for human



beings to live in; the building or part of the building occupied by one family or tenants; dwelling place (Neufeldt and Guralnik, 1994).

The process of urbanization of Abuja has been seen to rather produce what the present research 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 (plates 1, 2). Thus the public spaces in these informal settlements have become or have assumed the function of “housing/shelter” for the Abuja urban poor (plates 3, 5).



Plate 3. Abuja security men, making outside the gate their home.

Source: Obidi

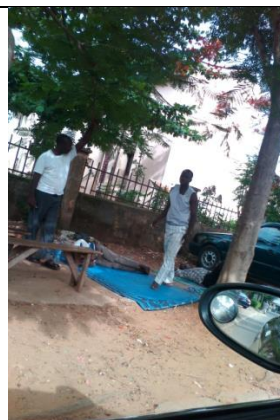


Plate 4. Abuja urban poor, converting public spaces into living areas.

Source: Obidi



Plate 5. Abuja homeless people converted public space into commercial space.

Source: Obidi

The nature, socioeconomic complexity of these informal spaces, which constitutes a strongly identifiable character which is in this research christened *Spatial Housing*. It is so termed because of the assumption of the public/open space into the provision of the basic (spatial) socioeconomic and psychological needs of the urban poor. However, economic growth in urban areas has not kept pace with the increase in the urban population (Mayeni, 2013). To that effect, Abuja urbanization is growing more than the area's urban development when compared with the 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: the three dimensional, continuous expanse extending in all directions and containing all matter: variously thought of as boundless or indeterminately finite (Neufeldt and Guralnik, 1994). 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 Abuja urban poor, caught up in both Abuja's spatial dialectics and dualistic economy. According to Okonkwo and Agbonome (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.

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, Llyod 1997). In urban poor settlements, Okonkwo and Agbonome (2012), citing Osetereichh (1981), indicated that, because of uncontrolled nature and planlessness 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, and provision of basic facilities almost impossibly expensive (plates 1, 2).

The question is, whether urban design can ameliorate the deeper problems of cities and if not, 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, 1988).

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This research investigated the spatial integration of the Abuja urban poor housing and the architectural solutions to improve urban poor housing (formal and informal) delivery systems in Abuja. The authors were careful with the analytical instrument and tools used. The disciplinary area of focus is architecture, as such; the instruments of two research strategies; quantitative and qualitative research methods and their tactics were used. According to Mayoux (Mayoux, 2006), Qualitative research is a type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from these data that help understand social life through the study of targeted populations or places (Crossman, 2006).

### **Population of the Study Area**

The research survey focused on the study area's urban poor communities. The Abuja Master Plan indicated that Abuja will be developed in phases. The urban poor communities in phases 1 to 4 (table 1) have been enumerated by the Abuja government while phase 5 has not because the government has not taken the study and has no imperial data to be used. This research investigated the urban poor communities in phases 1 to 4 and they have a total population of 114,738 (table 1).

In determining the sample size for this research, one community in each of the 4 phases was selected (table 1) and the sample size was 399.

**Table 1.** Workable Household Total

Phase 1:	10830
Phase 2:	21700
Phase 3:	16714
Phase 4:	65494
<b>Total</b>	<b>114738</b>

## 5.2. Sample Size Determination

The Sample Size (n) for the research work was determined using the Taro-yamane formula given by

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

Where: n = Sample Size

N = Total Population

1 = constant

e = error limit

$$n = \frac{114738}{1 + 114738(0.05^2)} = 398.610 \cong 399$$

## Sampling Technique

The stratified single-stage cluster sampling technique was used to select subjects for the study. The phases studied form the strata, afterwards, an area is selected from each phase and sampled randomly. The distribution is as follows (table 2).

**Table 2.** Table of the 4 phases covered in the research

Phases	Population	Sample size allocation
1	10830	38
2	21700	75
3	16714	58
4	65494	228
<b>Total</b>	<b>114738</b>	<b>399</b>



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the 4 communities selected, Garki community in phase 1 received 38 questionnaires and 35 were returned. Jabi Samuel, a community in phase 2 received 75 and 70 were returned. While Kubusa community in phase 3 had 58 and 54 were returned and Lugbe community in phase 4 received 228 and 223 were returned. Out of the 399 questionnaires distributed, 382 (96%) were returned (table 3).

**Table 3.** Sample size for questionnaire distribution

<b>Sample Size 399</b>					
<b>No</b>	<b>Phase</b>	<b>Village</b>	<b>Population distributed</b>	<b>Population Returned</b>	<b>Percentage Returned</b>
1	Phase 1	Garki	38	35	92
2	Phase 2	Jabi Samuel	75	70	93
3	Phase 3	Kabusa	58	54	93
4	Phase 4	Lughe	228	223	97
	<b>Total</b>		<b>399</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>96</b>

### Data Collection

Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources (primary source of data includes, interviews (oral, telephone, television), questionnaires, photographs, etc. Secondary Sources of data includes, literature reviews from journals, previous works, books, etc.).

### Interviews

The interview revealed that the Abuja governments consulted with the urban poor about their poor housing situations, relocation options and at a point relocated them. However, the settlers rejected the relocations. A lot of them collected their keys and rented out their units and stayed back at the settlements. Some sold their units and stayed back while a lot of them rejected the offer. As result of these, the interview revealed that, the government would adopt the use of Biometric Data, to capture and monitor the settlers and by so doing, accurate records of their family history would be recorded and with that, it would be easier to handle their resettlement concerns and who they are.

### Field Observations

Field observation of the study areas were conducted and documented. Photographs of the current conditions of the settlements were taken, January 2015 to June 16, 2017 (plates 1, 2). They helped in identifying the presence or lack of some important features and attributes such as land marks, images and or weaknesses in the area, but most importantly, in the field, the followings were noticed: slums; inhabited by families, businesses and destitute

**Validity of the Instrument**

Questionnaire on the Demographic Characteristics of the Abuja Urban poor study area was designed in consultation with three experts; one came from Department of Statistics, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, the other one from Department of Architecture of the same university and the third one came from Department of Architecture, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Enugu State, Nigeria. The survey questionnaire, covered, the Abuja urban poor living standards, home ownership, place of work in relation to place of adobe, land ownership, socio-economic conditions of the Abuja area territory were conducted between June 6<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> 2017, to aid in understanding the reasons for the inadequate housing within the territory that resulted in urban poor housing in settlement areas.

**Reliability of the Instrument**

A pilot study was conducted in an area similar to the area of study. 30 questionnaires were administered to test for internal consistency of responses using a measure of reliability known as Cronbach's alpha. Ideally, in order to obtain a good estimate of the reliability of a survey, we split the items into two groups and then compare these groups as if they were two separate administrations of the same survey. This is called split-half test. This test is used instead of test – retest technique to avoid bias. The result shows that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the split halves 1 and 2 are 0.860 and 0.894 respectively, and the correlation between forms is 0.880, indicating a very strong reliability. Therefore, the instrument is reliable for the study.

**Methods of Data Analysis**

Data collated was coded, entered and analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 22. Descriptive statistics that included frequency and percentages were used to summarize the categorical variables while means and standard deviations were obtained for continuous variables. The Likert scale used ranges from strongly disagree = 1 (lowest in the scale) to strongly agree = 5 (highest in the scale). However this scale is reversed for negative questions. The average of the scale is 3 (criterion mean). Thus means greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicates a positive response and vice-versa.

**Data Presentation**

In the field, the researchers found formal (well surveyed settlements) and informal housing [urban poor settlements (slums)] characterized by Quick-Fix (make-shift) homes, mostly built with recycled wood, zinc and aluminum products and from construction sites (plates 1, 2). The development was planned in such a way that no settlements or people affected would become separated from their "kith and kin" or be rendered "homeless" in the sense that a whole ethnic group may regard themselves "homeless" if their entire land were taken away from them and they were asked to go to settle in lands belonging to other ethnic groups (Okonkwo, 2006). This however, is not the case. A lot of the displaced people of Abuja land found themselves in areas without their "kith and kin" and in most part, rendered "homeless" and living in urban poor settlement areas. As is inevitable in large-scale government projects, there will be far more segregation of housing by income in Abuja than in most Nigerian cities (ECA, 1980).

Based on these conditions, the authors, state that the Abuja government has not considered all the housing options, in housing the ever increasing Abuja's population as a result, the Abuja urban poor are found in both formal and informal housing settlements of the city. They live in make shift homes and details of their living conditions and family characteristics are detailed in the data tables 4 to 11 below.

**Table 4:** Socio demographic characteristics of the residents

	Frequency	Percent
<b><i>Size of family</i></b>		
1 – 4	75	19.6
5 – 8	296	77.5
9 – 12	11	2.9
<b><i>Number of rooms</i></b>		
1	31	8.1
2	211	55.2
3	139	36.4
4	1	.3
<b><i>Single parent family</i></b>		
Yes	11	2.9
No	371	97.1
<b><i>Family's monthly income</i></b>		
₦0 to ₦10,000	54	14.1
₦10,000 to ₦20,000	206	53.9
₦20,000 to ₦30,000	96	25.1
₦30,000 and above	26	6.8
<b><i>How long have you lived in your current location?</i></b>		
Less than 1 year	13	3.4
1 year to 5 years	42	11.0
6 years to 10 years	113	29.6
Greater than 10 years	140	36.6
All my life	74	19.4
<b><i>Where did you come from?</i></b>		
From another abuja location	85	22.2
From another state	270	70.7
From another country	27	7.1

Table 4, 5 and figures 1 to 4, show that the majority of the Abuja urban poor residents (77.5%) have family sizes of 5 to 8. 19.6% of the respondents have family size 1 to 4 while those with family size 9 to 12 are 2.9%. 211 out of the 382 (55.2%) respondents indicated that they live in 2 bedrooms. 36.4% live in 4 bedrooms, 8.1% are living in 1 bedroom while .3% live in 4 bedrooms. 97.1% (371) of the respondents indicated that they were not single parents while 2.9%

are single parents. The residents' family's monthly income are as follows, ₦0 to ₦10, 000, 14.1%. ₦10, 000 to ₦20, 000, 53.9%. ₦20, 000 to ₦30, 000, 25.1% while ₦30, 000 and above is 6.8%. A look at the respondents' time of residency at their current locations indicated that, 3.4% have lived there less than one year. 11.0% have lived there 1 year to 5 years. 29.6%, 6 years to 10 years. 36.6%, greater than 10 years while 19.4% have lived in their current locations all their lives. Most of the residents have lived in their current location 1 year or more (80.6%) while majority of those who have not lived there all their lives migrated from other States (70.7%). 22.3% migrated from another Abuja location while 7.1% came from another country.

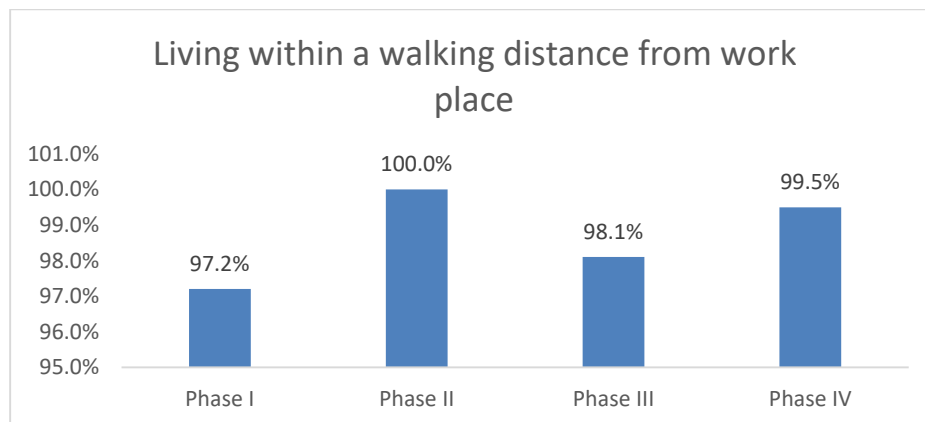
**Table 5:** Socio demographic characteristics of the residents (Contd.)

	Frequency	Percent
<b><i>Type of work</i></b>		
Sales	161	42.1
Farming	59	15.4
Government	17	4.5
Contract work	87	22.8
Self employed	58	15.2
<b><i>Ever applied for land in Abuja?</i></b>		
Yes	27	7.1
No	355	92.9
<b><i>Do you own your home?</i></b>		
Yes	70	18.3
No	312	81.7
<b><i>Where do you live?</i></b>		
Public housing	6	1.6
Someone's ancillary support house	75	19.6
Rental unit	301	78.8
<b><i>Would you like to live within a walking distance from your work place?</i></b>		
Yes	379	99.2
No	3	.8
<b><i>What type of building or community would you prefer to live in</i></b>		
More organized village	4	1.0
In apartment with open lands	58	15.2
High-rise in the city	296	77.5
Single detached building in the suburb	24	6.3
<b><i>Would you be interested in living in a government subsidized housing estate with industries where you can work?</i></b>		
Yes	371	97.1
No	11	2.9
<b><i>Is the government doing a good job handling the urban poor housing problems?</i></b>		
Yes	40	10.5
No	342	89.5

According to table 4, 5 and figures 1 to 4, the socio demographic characteristics of the residents indicated that, the residents are predominantly sales personnel (42.1%). A few of them get involved in farming, 15.4%. Contract works, 22.8%. 15.2% are self employed, 4.5% are involved in one government work or another. Most of the residents have not applied for Abuja land, 92.9%. 81.7% of the residents do not own the buildings they live in while 18.3 indicated they own their buildings. Inquiring where the residents lived, the researchers noted that 78.8% of the respondents live in rented units. 19.6% live in someone's ancillary support house (boy's quarter, farm house, etc.), 1.6% in public housing. The residents would like to live within a walking distance from their work places, 99.2% while .8% would prefer to live far away from their work places. The researchers inquired, the preference of the respondents as to, the type of building or community they would prefer to live in. 77.5% of them indicated that they prefer to live in a high-rise type of building in the city. 15.2% indicated apartment with open lands, 6.3% preferred single detached building in the suburb while 1.0% preferred more organized village. They are also, interested in living in a government subsidized housing estate with industries where they can work, 97.1%. However, the urban poor do not believe that the government is doing a good job handling their housing problems, 89.5%. Only 10.5% of the respondents indicated that the government is doing a good job in handling their housing problems (table 5)

### Model Considerations

**Figure 1.** Living within walking distance from work places



The researchers reviewed the characteristics of the 4 phases. When asked if they liked living within walking distance from their living places, 79.2% responded yes. In phase 2, 100% said yes, in phase 3, 98.1% while in phase 4, 99.5% (figure 1).

**Figure 2.** Types or community preferred by the urban poor



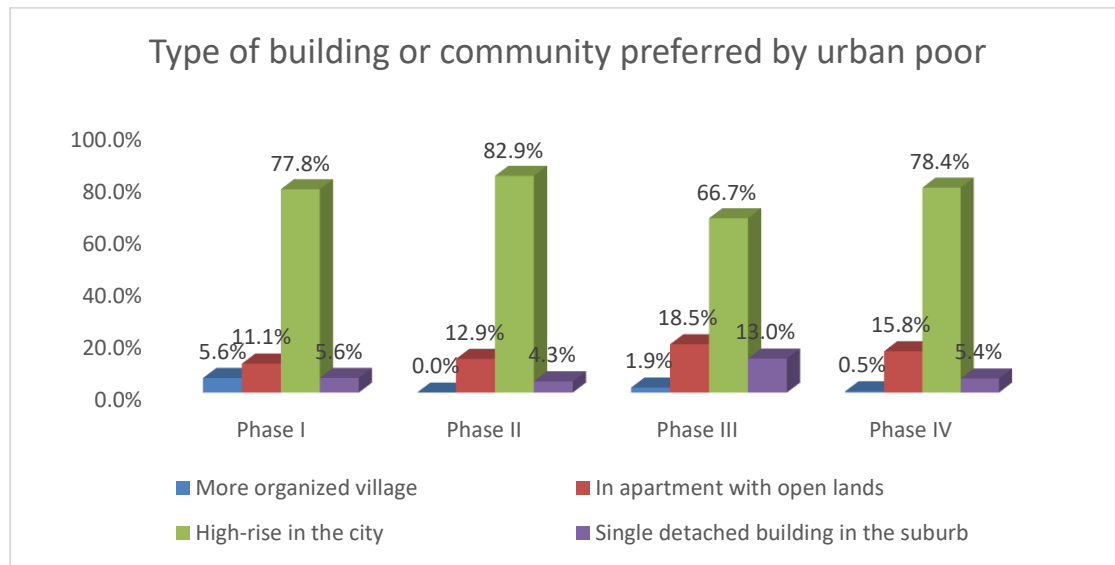
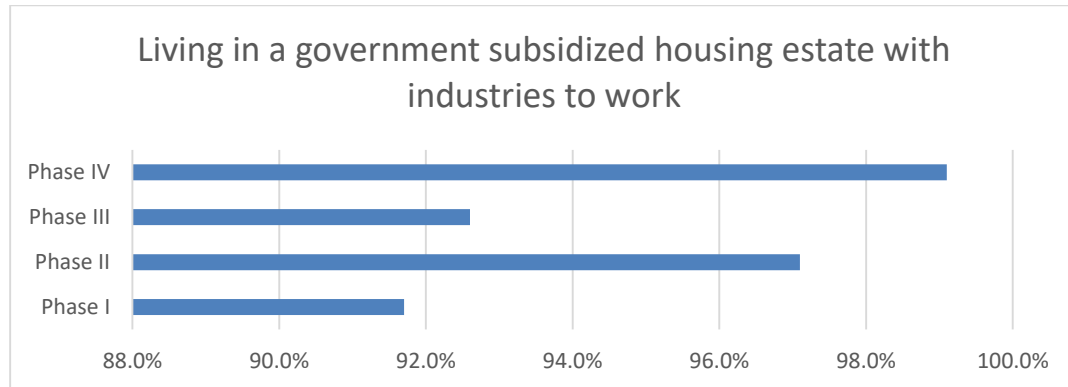
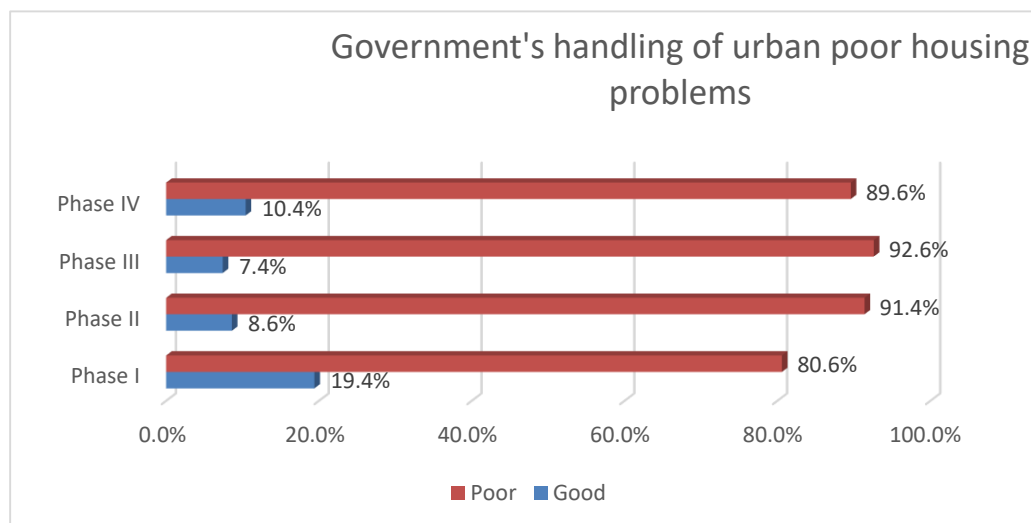


Figure 2, reviewed the response of the respondents from the 4 phases, when asked their preference of the community type. Phase 1 had 77.8%, phase 2 had 82.9%, phase 3 recorded 66.7% and phase 4 had 78.4%. Phases 1, 2 and 4 were statistically equal which attracted the researchers' attention. Upon further investigation, the respondents in the Kabusa village although indicated High-rise building, would prefer one with open spaces that would enable them develop and manage their own businesses because of availability of land. Some equally indicated that it would afford them the opportunity to live close to their homes as indicated in figure 2. Figure 2 equally revealed that among the 4 phases investigated for their preference for living in single detached buildings in the suburbs, 13.0% of them came from phase 3. At Garki that was sampled for phase 1, 5.6% of them would equally prefer living in single detached buildings in the suburb. Jabi Samule was sampled for phase 2 and 4.3% of the respondents shared the same view while at Lugbe that represented phase 4, 5.4% of the respondents preferred single detached buildings in the suburb. Upon the researcher's further investigations, it was clear that most of the people were into farming and would prefer staying close to their farms as indicated in table 5, 15.4% of the respondents are into farming.

**Figure 3.** Living in a government subsidized housing estate with industries to work

97.1% of the respondents to the survey questionnaire (table 5) indicated that they would prefer living in government subsidized estate with industries where they can work (figure 3). The researchers looked at the components of the respondents and their areas. Figure 3 revealed that statistically, all the phases are interested in government subsidized estates although, the respondents from phase 4 are more eager to live in a government subsidized estate. The researchers investigation indicated that the attraction came from high cost of commuting to and from work, the opportunity to own and manage their own businesses and living in a subsidized house in a more organized scheme where they can live and work (table 5).

**Figure 4.** Government handling of urban poor housing problems

When asked in table 5, if the government is doing a good job handling the urban poor housing problems (figure 4), 89.5% of the respondents indicated that the government is not doing a good job. 10.5% of them said that the government is doing well in handling their housing needs. The researchers' review of the composition of the respondents who indicated that the government is not doing good job in their communities, statistically, the respondents from the 4 phases surveyed were even in agreeing to that. 19.4% of the 10.5% who indicated that the government is doing a good job handling their housing needs came from phase 1 (Garki), 10.4% from phase 4 (Lugbe), 8.6% from phase 2 (Jabi Samuel) while 7.4% are from phase 3 (Kabusa).

**Table 6:** Attitude of the urban poor as regards their development

Items	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Indifferent n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
Urban poor will never grow out of poverty.	210 (55.0)	27 (7.1)	1 (0.3)	104 (27.2)	40 (10.5)	2.31 $\pm$ 1.58
If given the opportunity, I can change my life.	309 (80.9)	70 (18.3)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.5)	1 (0.3)	4.79 $\pm$ 0.48
I can work hard to build my own house if the opportunity is there.	122 (31.9)	42 (11.0)	2 (0.5)	33 (8.6)	183 (47.9)	2.70 $\pm$ 1.82
The urban poor are lazy and cannot contribute to urban development	9 (2.4)	23 (6.0)	2 (0.5)	139 (36.4)	209 (54.7)	4.35 $\pm$ 0.94
The urban poor cannot manage resources and cannot manage their communities	5 (1.3)	3 (0.8)	1 (0.3)	307 (80.4)	66 (17.3)	4.12 $\pm$ 0.56
Grand mean						3.65 $\pm$ 0.62

When asked, if given the opportunity, if they can change their lives, 80.9% strongly agreed. 31.9% agreed that, they can work hard to build their own houses if the opportunity is there while 47.9% strongly disagreed. When the researchers investigated why 47.9% strongly disagreed that they would not be able to build their own houses, the response was that, they have no economic base to support themselves. 54.7% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the urban poor are lazy and cannot contribute to urban development while 6% agreed. When asked their opinion about popular believe that, the urban poor cannot manage resources and cannot manage their communities. 80.4% of the respondents disagreed with that while 0.8% agreed.

Table 6 shows a high grand mean response value of 3.65 greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicating that the urban poor have a significant positive attitude towards their development. They believe they can change their lives if given the opportunity ( $4.79 \pm 0.48$ ); and can also manage their resources and communities ( $4.12 \pm 0.56$ ). In as much as they are not lazy ( $4.35 \pm 0.94$ ), the urban poor believe that they cannot own a house based on their income ( $2.70 \pm 1.82$ )

**Table 7:** Belief of the urban poor with respect to their contribution to development in Nigeria

	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Indifferent n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
It is a common belief that the urban poor cannot live in organized housing estates because they are used to living in villages	3 (0.8)	6 (1.6)	1 (0.3)	145 (38.0)	227 (59.4)	$4.54 \pm 0.67$
It is common belief that the urban poor cannot live in buildings with lifts (elevators) and other security devices	4 (1.0)	3 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	148 (38.7)	227 (59.4)	$4.55 \pm 0.65$
It is a common belief that the urban poor are satisfied with their shelter life style and will not like to live in structured estates with high-rise buildings	8 (2.1)	163 (42.7)	1 (0.3)	104 (27.2)	106 (27.7)	$3.36 \pm 1.33$
It is a common belief that the urban poor cannot do without their petty businesses/trading	2 (0.5)	3 (0.8)	0 (0.0)	271 (70.9)	106 (27.7)	$4.25 \pm 0.54$
It is common belief that the urban poor prefer to live in their communities whether or not it is well structured	4 (1.0)	2 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	318 (83.2)	58 (15.2)	$4.11 \pm 0.51$
Grand mean						$4.16 \pm 0.40$

The survey indicated that, 42.7% of the respondents agreed that, the urban poor are satisfied with their shelter life style and will not like to live in structured estates with high-rise buildings. 27.2% of them disagreed while 27.7% strongly disagreed. Upon further investigation into the 42.7% that agreed, the researchers discovered that because most of the residents have lived in the settlements too long if not all their lives, that they are afraid to change to a new life style. Table 4, indicated that, 19.4% have lived in their communities all their lives. 36.6% have lived in their communities greater than 10 years, 29.6% have lived there 6 to 10 years, 11% have lived in their areas 1 to 5 years while only 3.4% have lived in their communities less than 1 year.

When asked whether it is true that, the urban poor cannot do without their petty businesses/trading, 70.9% disagreed while 27.7% strongly disagreed to that. Upon further investigation, the researchers were told that, the residents were limited in their resource capacities. They do not have the capacity to mobilize and raise reasonable resources to expand their businesses. One of the respondents questioned the researchers, if they have investigated the educational level and background of the residents of the urban poor communities? That the researchers would be surprised to note that well educated people equally live in the communities. According to table 4, 6.8% of the respondents have family monthly income of ₦30, 000 and above and table 5 indicated that, 4.5% are involved in government work. With that, 83.2% of the respondents disagreed with the belief that the urban poor prefer to live in their communities whether or not it is well structured. Table 5 indicated that, 77.5% of the respondents would prefer living in high-rise buildings in the city while 15.2% preferred living in apartments with open lands.

Table 7, shows a high grand mean response value of 4.54 greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicating that the urban poor have a significant positive belief with respect to their contribution to development in Nigeria. They believe that the urban poor cannot live in organized housing estates ( $4.54 \pm 0.67$ ), buildings with lifts (elevators) and other security devices ( $4.55 \pm 0.65$ ). They believe that the urban poor prefer to live in structured estates with high-rise buildings ( $4.25 \pm 0.54$ ).

**Table 8:** Opportunity to live in a different environment

	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Indifferent n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
My outlook in life will change if I live in a more organized community	95 (24.9)	275 (72.0)	2 (0.5)	8 (2.1)	2 (0.5)	$4.19 \pm 0.59$
If the government provides a building with lifts/elevators, without electricity, walking up six floors will pose a problem for my family and I	1 (0.3)	3 (0.8)	2 (0.5)	276 (72.03)	100 (26.2)	$4.23 \pm 0.52$
If the government provides a building and there is power outage, providing my own generator will be a major problem	0 (0.0)	2 (0.5)	1 (0.3)	116 (30.4)	263 (68.8)	$4.68 \pm 0.51$
If the government provides a building with lifts/elevators, contributing to pay my rent or ownership mortgage will pose a major problem for my family and I	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	112 (29.3)	270 (70.7)	$4.71 \pm 0.46$



If the government provides a building with lifts/elevators, contributing for the up keep of the building will pose a problem for my family and I	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	97 (25.4)	285 (74.6)	4.75 ± 0.44
Grand mean						4.51 ± 0.27

Table 8 questioned the Abuja urban poor opportunity to live in a different environment as it is a common believe that they are resistant to changes. 72.6% of the respondents agreed with the notion that, their outlook in life will change if they live in a more organized community. 72.03% disagreed that, if the government provides a building with lifts/elevators, without electricity, walking up six floors will pose a problem for their families. 68.8% strongly disagree that, if the government provides a building and there is power outage, providing their own generators will be a major problem. 70.7% strongly disagree that, if the government provides a building with lifts/elevators, contributing to pay their rent or ownership mortgage will pose a major problem for their families. 74.6% equally strongly disagreed that, if the government provides a building with lifts/elevators, contributing for the up keep of the building will pose a problem for their families. Table 8 shows a high grand mean response value of 4.51 greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicating that the urban poor welcome the opportunity to live in a different environment.

**Table 9:** Urban poor communities' retention

	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Indifferent n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)	Mean ± SD
Retaining the existing urban poor settlements in their current locations will help in promoting growth and development within the area	246 (64.4)	134 (35.1)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	1.36 ± 0.50
Retaining the settlements in their current locations and improving the housing standards will help the life style of the community	244 (63.9)	136 (35.6)	2 (0.5)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.63 ± 0.49
Retaining the communities and tying them with the central city infrastructure will promote growth and development in the community	147 (38.5)	228 (59.7)	7 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	4.37 ± 0.52
Grand mean						3.45 ± 0.24

The urban poor insistent on retaining their communities was tested by the researchers as noted on table 9 (urban poor communities' retention). In the survey, 64.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that, retaining the existing urban poor settlements in their current locations will help in promoting growth and development within the areas. 35.1% agreed. It indicates that, 63.9% strongly agreed that, retaining the settlements in their current locations and improving the housing standards will help the life style of the communities while 35.6% agreed. Meanwhile, 38.5% strongly agreed that, retaining the communities and tying them with the central city infrastructure will promote growth and development in the communities while 59.7% agreed.

In all the 4 phases surveyed, only 0.3% disagreed that, retaining the existing urban poor settlements in their current locations will help in promoting growth and development within the areas. Equally, no one disagreed that, retaining the settlements in their current locations and improving the housing standards will help the life style of the community. No one disagreed that, retaining the communities and tying them with the central city infrastructure will promote growth and development in the communities.

Table 9 shows that a high grand mean response value of 3.54 greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicates that the urban poor prefer to retain the communities in their current locations and tie them with the central city infrastructure to promote growth and development.

**Table 10: Work and proximity of housing**

	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Indifferent n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
It is believed that the urban poor prefer to live far away from their work places	24 (6.3)	100 (26.2)	0 (0.0)	241 (63.1)	17 (4.5)	3.33 $\pm$ 1.10
It is believed that the urban poor prefer to live and work in the same community	233 (61.0)	140 (36.6)	0 (0.0)	8 (2.1)	1 (0.3)	4.56 $\pm$ 0.64
It is believed that the urban poor prefer to travel a short distance from the place of abode	322 (84.3)	59 (15.4)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	4.84 $\pm$ 0.39
It is believed that the urban poor prefer to live and work in the same complex if opportunity presents itself	326 (85.3)	55 (14.4)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.3)	0 (0.0)	4.85 $\pm$ 0.38
Grand mean						4.39 $\pm$ 0.44

The belief that the urban poor preferred to live within close proximity from their places of work was tested and the result presented in table 10 (work and proximity of housing). In the survey,

63.1% of the respondents disagreed that, the urban poor prefer to live far away from their work places. 61.0% strongly agreed that the urban poor prefer to live and work in the same community while 36.1% agreed. 84.3% strongly agreed that, the urban poor prefer to travel a short distance from their places of abode to work while, 85.3% strongly agreed that, the urban poor prefer to live and work in the same complex if opportunity presents itself.

Table 10 shows that a high grand mean response value of 4.39 greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicates that the urban poor prefer to live close to their work places in the same community, if possible live and work in the same complex.

**Table 11:** Government implementations / urban poor participation in planning and development in their communities

	Strongly agree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Indifferent n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Strongly disagree n (%)	Mean $\pm$ SD
Government relocation program was in accordance with the Abuja master plan?	4 (1.0)	3 (0.8)	1 (0.3)	353 (92.4)	21 (5.5)	1.99 $\pm$ 0.43
Government sort our community's participation in Abuja planning	8 (2.1)	7 (1.8)	0 (0.0)	177 (46.3)	190 (49.7)	1.60 $\pm$ 0.78
Government consults our community in all planning efforts affecting us	249 (65.2)	88 (23.0)	2 (0.5)	34 (8.9)	9 (2.4)	4.40 $\pm$ 1.03
My personal information if given to the government will help in my community's development	110 (28.8)	266 (69.6)	4 (1.0)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	4.26 $\pm$ 0.51
Grand mean						3.06 $\pm$ 0.41

Table 11 looked into the government implementations / urban poor participation in planning and development of their communities. Out of all the people surveyed, 92.4% disagreed that, government relocation programmes were in accordance with the Abuja Master Plan and 5.5% strongly disagreed. 46.3% disagreed that, government sort the community's participation in Abuja planning while 49.7% strongly disagreed. 65.2% strongly agreed that, government consulted their communities in all planning efforts affecting them while 23% agreed. 28.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that, their personal information if given to the government would help in their community's development while 69.6% agreed. Upon further investigation on the 65.2% of the respondents who strongly agreed that, government consulted their communities in all planning efforts affecting them, the researchers noted that, the government representatives have always notified the heads of the communities of the government's intents regarding the programmes in the communities. As indicated above, 46.3% disagreed that, the government sort their community's participation in Abuja planning while 49.7% strongly disagreed. This is because it is

the same government that said that they want to resettle us that are saying they want to reintegrate us (inconsistency in administration and policy making by Abuja government). If the communities were involved and participating in planning and executing government's programmes affecting their lives, the head of Idu community and his people would have known their fate.

Table 11 shows that a high grand mean response value of 3.06 greater than the criterion mean of 3 indicates that government did not consult their communities in all planning efforts affecting them. In planning and consulting with the urban poor communities, the researchers interviews revealed that the Abuja governments consulted with the settlers/urban poor about their housing options especially, relocations and the survey proved that (65.2%). However, 96% of the survey respondents indicated that, the Abuja governments never sort their participation in Abuja planning. If that had happened, the government would have realized that a majority of the settlers/urban poor would have preferred to live within walking distance from their work places (99.2%). 97.1% preferred to live in a government subsidized housing estate with industries where they can work. Instead of considering the interests of the settlers/urban poor, the government relocated them to areas without jobs (outside the city center) and in most cases, the settlers/urban poor challenged that.

### **Statement of Facts**

Abuja lacked inclusive economic opportunities, has prevalent inadequacy of housing and infrastructure, lacked economic link with the central city. 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 and 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 and the development plan and process envisaged that the government offices would move from Lagos to Abuja in 1986, but this time of movement was brought forward to 1982 into 1983 hence, urbanization stampeded.

### **Contributions to the body of knowledge**

Conceptually, this research adopted "Spatial Housing" as a term that could be used in putting together the identified nations around the problems surrounding the urban poor housing in Abuja City. These notions have substantially been sustained by some fundamental issues or phenomenon originating in the process and product of or in the building of Abuja City. Taking into considerations the impacts of two important issues or phenomenon taking place or happening at the same time; urbanization and urban development, with their unavoidable spatial consequences, the way both were handled, as explained properly (in process and product) in this research, gave rise to the very evident competition for access to space or spatial access, in the city, by both the rich and the poor.

However, the inadequate implementation of the Abuja Master Plan, in time and space, in process and product, created the emergence of the formal and the informal spaces in the city. The competition for space in the city by the poor and rich gave rise to the phenomenon which this

research regards and calls the "Spatial dialectics." The low level of development in some parts of the city up till date (see plates 1 to 5) constituted an attraction for settlement for those who could not access spaces or settlements (residential or business) in the well developed areas, the formal spaces. These are the urban poor who according to Uji and Okonkwo (2007), are characterized as people, "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."

Now, 1. The urban poor housing problem is created by inadequate implementation of the Abuja Master Plan in development process and product (built environment outcome) of the city. 2. The inadequacy of the built environment outcome in some areas enable the emergency of squatter settlements. 3. The need for the poor to access jobs and other opportunities concentrated in the formal spatial areas produced the link between the poor and the rich in the city. 4. But the high cost of maintaining this link by the poor, especially the transportation and security cost components, forced the poor to seek settlement in the formal spaces, hence the invasion of the formal by the urban poor. 5. The urban poor settlements within the formal spaces now produced the informal enclaves, the invasion of the formal by the informal.

Nevertheless, this research, in an attempt to address this ensuing spatial dialectics between the formal and informal, has evolved the concept of spatial housing as a way or solution to the very unavoidable and unacceptable situation. Spatial housing for the urban poor in Abuja thus constitutes a new and different approach to addressing the problems and issues of urban poor housing in Abuja. It is a new approach because it is different from the approaches, measures and strategies reviewed in Section 4 (Conceptual Theory of Spatial Housing Design); as it thus looks at the urban poor housing problems from the point of view of the emanating spatial competitions between the formal and the informal inhabitants of the city. It upholds the contentious issue of the spatial dialectics in urban development as a fact due to the link and costs or consequences of such link between the urban rich and the urban poor. Equally from the literature available to the authors, spatial housing design approach is a design approach which aim is fundamentally to take into consideration the dialectical consequences of the formal and informal spatial needs in proposing a solution to the existing urban poor housing in Abuja. Having presented its novelty, it might be important to point out that spatial housing design is also an innovative design approach in Nigeria. Hitherto, the authors, on the basis of available literature and survey conducted on the subject, are not aware of housing design in Nigeria that looks at the concomitant effects of a seemingly unavoidable spatial relationship between the urban rich and poor in proposing a suitable solution to the problems of urban poor housing in Nigeria.

## Conclusion

There is inexistence, adverse economic inequality and injustice within the Capital City of Abuja and the need for the formal, informal settlements and the Abuja urban actors to be talking, to link



the informal and formal settlements together and tie them into the Central City infrastructure. The inappropriate implementation of the Abuja Master Plan, led to dismal miscommunication problems and economic divide within the Abuja Capital City. The city lacked integrity, inclusion of all and shared prosperity. It is a model capital city that lacked inclusive economic growth incentives and from the research findings, not sustainable. The current situation favors the rich and only through balanced economy can a better society be made of the Abuja Capital City.

### Recommendations

This research strongly recommends for the Abuja government to review and change the government's typical ways of implementing government policies. The governments in Nigeria have in the past, developed housing programmes for the urban poor 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. It recommends the introduction of sustainability (adequacy) of spatial urban development in the Abuja Federal Capital Territory with special attention to the urban poor housing areas retention, for the Abuja government to link the urban poor settlements areas with the Central City urban economy, improve their physical or built environment as retained in the current locations. For any reasonable development in the retained settlements, the development must meet engineering and economic feasibilities, physical and biological capabilities, institutional acceptance and endorsement, and political, social, and financial acceptability. The Abuja housing development should be inclusive, adopt the concept of New Urbanism devoid of Abuja's urban spatial dialectics, dualistic economy, volumetric and unvolumetric living now, called spatial housing.

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