Dialectics of Urban Planning in Nigeria

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Conceptualizing and Theorizing Dialectics of Urban Planning
- Evolution of Urban Planning
- Prevailing Dialectics in Urban Planning
- Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities
- Way Forward
The planner has become the victim of planning, his own creation has overwhelmed him. Planning has become so large that the planner cannot encompass its dimensions. Planning has become so complex planners cannot keep up with it. Planning protrudes in so many directions, the planner can no longer discern the shape. He may be economist, political scientist, sociologist, architect or scientist. Yet the essence of his calling-planning- escapes him. He finds it everywhere in general and nowhere in particular. Why is planning so elusive?” (Wildavsky, 1973).
Introduction

The significance of this discourse can be gleaned from...

**Goal 11:** Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Domesticating this agenda requires consensus on various dialectics among the stakeholders in urban planning.
Conceptualizing and Theorizing Dialectics

- Definitions
- Characteristics
- Dialectics and Urban Planning
Definitions

a method of philosophical argument that involves some sort of contradictory process between opposing sides.

Reasoning or argument that juxtaposes opposed ideas and usually seeks to resolve their conflicts.
Dialectics – Definitions

an art of investigating or discussing the truth of opinions

a method of intellectual investigation and specifically the Socratic techniques of exposing false beliefs and eliciting truth
Characteristics of Dialectics

- Discussion and reasoning by dialogue
- Intellectual investigation
- Juxtaposing opposing or contradicting ideas
- Seeking truth to resolve conflicts
Dialectics and Urban Planning

Started with Hippodamus of Miletus’, father of urban planning, zoning principle which was criticised by Plato as discriminatory.
Dialectics is occupying a centre stage in urban planning issues, thereby encouraging planners to:

- emotionally take sides.
- locked into dialectical reasoning and conflicts of rationality, objectivity and subjectivity.
- unable to collectively think out of the box.
Dialectics and Urban Planning

My Choice of Dialectics Approach

is not necessarily to:

take sides as to what is true or false or right or wrong approaches in planning practice

but to:

reflect on my professional experience and foster critical thinking in urban planning.
Dialectics and Urban Planning

My Choice of Dialectics Approach

is to show that planning, as a profession, has become so wide in scope such that the practitioners struggle:

- to justify its relevance to the beneficiaries;
- as to what its core areas of competence are;
- to create enough opportunities for the practitioners.
Conceptualizing Urban Planning

- Definitions
- Evolution of Planning
- Urban and Regional Planning Profession in Nigeria: An Historic Perspective
- Purpose of Planning
“Planning is an extremely ambiguous and difficult word to define. Planners of all kinds think that they know what it means; it refers to the work they do. The difficulty is that they do all sorts of different things, and so they mean different things by the word; planning seems to be all things to all people” (Hall and Tewdwr-Jones, 2011).
Urban Planning - Definitions

Planning as:

❖ a product (a physical representation of something – a drawing or map);

❖ a process (a method for doing something)

❖ an outcome of a process (an orderly arrangement)

❖ a profession (what planners do)
Urban Planning - Definitions

A profession dealing with the growth and functioning of cities and towns, including environmental concerns, zoning, and infrastructure.

The art and science of ordering the use of land and siting of buildings and communication routes so as to secure maximum practicable degree of economy, convenience and beauty (Keeble 1969).
Evolution of Planning

- Town Planning is as old as humanity

- Evolved into a profession in the late 19th and early 20th centuries as a result of the negative consequences of industrial revolution.
Evolution of Planning in Nigeria

- Relatively young as a profession.
- The first set of statutes on planning came as a result of concern for health in the colony.
- 1946 Town and Country Planning Act aimed at re-planning Nigeria.
Evolution of Planning in Nigeria

- NITP – about fifty years ago to advance planning education, training and research.


- With only 3002 registered members as at 2016
Why Planning?

Planning is about:

- Managing resources efficiently to meet people's needs and aspirations
- Create a decent living environment through development projects and policies.
Why Planning?

However,

Planners are often entangled in the dialectics of rationalities as they struggle to justify their relevance to the public, the beneficiaries of development projects, and the policy makers who probably have an idea of what they want the society to look like.
Dialectics of Urban Planning: Experience from Practice.
Land right vs planning control

Land a core component and subject-matter of planning

“includes any building and any other thing attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything so attached, but does not include minerals” (NURP Act, 1992).
Land right vs planning control

- Common law and the Constitution recognise property rights.
- Right to property, movable or immovable, is recognised as fundamental human right.
- Planning control remains a major activity abrogating this right.
Land right vs planning control

To address the challenges of land acquisitions under Land Use Act, Lagos State formulated the following policies:

- Ratification
- Village Excision
- Regularisation of title
- Ogun Homeowners' Charter

more problems for urban planning with many developments without development permits.
Lagos adopted a system of development control which subsumed building control in 1976.

The 2010 Lagos State Urban and Regional Planning Law distinguishes development control from building control, without subsidiary legislations for effective implementation.
Development control vs. building control

**building control** aims to secure safety and quality in construction.

The development control – compliance with land use, the height, density, setbacks/air spaces and environmental impacts of developments are usually perceived negatively and misunderstood and Urban planners are much vilified and needlessly blamed.
Development control vs. building control

- Laden with delay and corrupt practices and planners are tagged corrupt.

- World Bank Statistics on Ease of Doing Business better depicts this delay.
Out of 189 nations, Nigeria ranked:

- 175th on ease of construction permit.
- 181st on ease of registering property.

Out of 36 states, Lagos ranked 36th and 31st on the two indicators respectively.
Development control vs. building control

- Planners tagged X-men’, ‘wole-wole’ (demolition squads) instead of ‘Atun ilu to’ (Town Planner).

- Buildings marked X with LABSCA label are on the increase.
Development control vs. building control

Planners are needlessly blamed.

- Are there no town planners again?
- Who approved this building?

- Definitely buildings will not collapse on paper
- Planners rely on the judgment of Architects and Structural Engineers
Decentralisation vs. Centralisation of planning

Three levels of planning authorities:

- Urban and Regional Planning Commission (Federal)
- State Urban and Regional Planning Board
- Local Planning Authority (Local Government)

Planning activities are concentrated at the State level against global best practice.
Dialectics of strategic development planning

Different types of development plans

- national physical development plan;
- regional plan;
- sub-regional plan;
- an urban plan;
- town plan;
- local plan and
- subject plan
Challenges of strategic development planning

- No clear interpretation of the content of the plans
- Lack of synergy between National Physical Plan and States Plans
- No Spatial Planning Policy Framework for guidelines and standards for urban and regional planning.
- Low level of public participation in plan preparation and implementation
- The technical complexity and obscurity of the plan documents
Poor planning services: who is to blame?

- Inefficient political economy
- Poor Governance system
- Disconnect between the technical experts (professionals urban planners) and political decision makers (executive urban planners)
- Poor public participation in planning process
- Dialectics of formal and informal developments.
Poor planning services: who is to blame?

- Dialectics of legal and illegal developments.
- Utopian (idealistic and Neo-liberalist) school of thought vs dystopian (realist) school of thought.
- Application of uniform planning standards to developments.
Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities

- Climate change
- Sustainable Development
- Smart city
21st century Planning is faced with various challenges:

- Climate change and associated challenges:
  - Flooding
  - Ocean surge

- Sustainability issues
Sustainable Development

“...meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” WCED

need to balance environmental concern, social equity and economic prosperity
Concerns for urban sustainability is driving the development of various ecological-derived design concepts and philosophies. Such as Sustainable Development. They are drivers of new dialectics in urban planning.
Smart city

“an urban development vision to integrate multiple Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and Internet of Things (IoT) solutions in a secure fashion to manage a city’s assets.”
**SMART CITY DEFINITION (EU)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>ENVIRONMENT</strong></th>
<th>Reduction of CO2 emissions; Use of renewable energy sources, monitoring on energy consumptions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LIVING</strong></td>
<td>Co-working, Cultural initiatives, Living-Lab, crowdsourcing co-design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MOBILITY</strong></td>
<td>Development of technologies to improve urban mobility, low environmental impact</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GOVERNANCE</strong></td>
<td>Starting of processes for the involvement of citizens about topics of public relevance</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ECONOMY</strong></td>
<td>Cooperation among public and private actors, development of social incubators and of small and medium enterprises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PEOPLE</strong></td>
<td>Sharing of data, security and protection of sources, networking and communication</td>
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</tbody>
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- **SMART ECONOMY**
  - Entrepreneurship & innovation
  - Productivity
  - Local & global interconnectedness

- **SMART ENVIRONMENT**
  - Green buildings
  - Green energy
  - Green urban planning

- **SMART MOBILITY**
  - 21st century education
  - Inclusive society
  - Embrace creativity

- **SMART GOVERNMENT**
  - Enabling supply & demand side policy
  - Transparency & open data
  - ICT & e-government

- **SMART PEOPLE**
  - Mixed-modal access
  - Prioritized & non-motorized options
  - Integrated ICT

- **SMART LIVING**
  - Healthy
  - Safe
  - Culturally vibrant & happy
Smart City Goals

To improve quality of life and efficiency of services that meet residents' needs.

Improve governance and standard of living of the people through effective service delivery.

Efficient use of physical infrastructure to support a healthy economic, social, cultural development.
Urban planning vs. smart city

“a city can said to be smart when investment in human and social capital and traditional (transport) and modern (ICT) communication infrastructure fuel sustainable physical and economic development and a high quality of life, with efficient management of natural resources, through participatory action and engagement” (Caraglin and Nijkam 2009).

TOP 10 SMART CITIES IN WORLD

- Vienna
- Toronto
- Paris
- New York
- London
- Tokyo
- Berlin
- Copenhagen
- Hong Kong
- Barcelona
Examples of smart cities

Berlin, Germany

Milton Keynes, United Kingdom,

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Examples of smart cities

Emerging smart cities

Songdo, Republic of Korea

Eko Atlantic City, Lagos Nigeria

Lagos-Dubai Smart City
MOU for the development of “Africa’s first smart city” on 1,000 hectares in Lekki sub-region.

- multi-billion dollars investments,
- create several thousands of jobs
- transform the entire landscape of the State.
- a sustainable globally connected and compact knowledge-based community that drive knowledge economy.
Two schools of thought:

The critics

The Promoters
The critics argued that the idea is:

**fantasy, idealistic and utopian planning ideology:**
ignores the overwhelming realities of:

- high incidence of informality and poverty.
- Low level of infrastructure and technological advancement.

to further deepen already established spatial and social inequality

to create an island of smart cities in contrast to existing cities which lack adequate basic services.
Smart city Lagos

The promoters argued that it is:

- factored into contemporary spatial planning process in line with sustainable development.
- applicable for both the old cities (including slums) and the new settlements.
- a practicable approach to tackling complex challenges of the cities, such as flooding, traffic congestion.
National Perspective on Smart city Lagos

Yet to formulate a policy framework on smart city initiative

- Recently set up an inter-ministerial committee;
- Organize smart cities sustainable summit;
- Develop framework for emergence of smart cities;
- Guidelines for the formation of National Consortium on a PPP model for the implementation of smart cities initiatives.
Recommendations

- Planning statutes should be reviewed with sustainable subsidiary legislations;
- National Spatial Planning Policy Framework
- The governments at all levels should embark on preparation of appropriate development plans
- acknowledge the city or community leaders who envision the future of the cities as the leaders and accord them key role as planners.
Recommendations

- The system of local planning should be revisited;
- Climate change, smart development, smart city concept, public participation and inclusive planning approaches should be considered in planning regulations;
- Adopting ICT for transparent processing of planning applications and city development;
- The land use law and land rights should be reformed to ensure positive planning and effective development control.
Conclusion

• I am of the opinion that our job is simple and straightforward.

• I personally do not think it is unattainable, I think being able to create a platform that brings all actors together, where all actors recognise that we have a common responsibility of improving the living condition of human settlements, will be the challenge.

• Large part of this challenge comes from our individuals’ orientation, biases, and understanding of what development connotes.

• I will like to conclude that we need to realise that the best legacy we can leave is to build a sustainable, resilience and inclusive society. It is our collective responsibility to find answer to what this might mean in our society.
Acknowledgment
Thank you all