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## Architectural Features for Cultural Sustainability in the Redevelopment of Gombe Urban Market, Nigeria

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### ABSTRACT

Marketplaces are attributed to constituents such as the people, spaces, and unique products. It is a cultural place where the glimpse of local lifestyle evolves daily and also grounds where buyers interact with sellers and bargaining services. This is in contrast to the shopping centres and supermarkets where the prices of goods and services are fixed. This paper examines the architectural features of an urban marketplace (spatial layouts) through its spaces and cultural heritage of Gombe urban market. This was done through purposive selection of three cases; Gombe, Yola (*Jimeta*) and Bauchi Central Markets all in the North-East geo-political zone of Nigeria. A survey of the structured interview was conducted in the study area from well-informed vendors, stakeholders, and checklists across the three cases. The findings reveal the partial reflection of contemporary urban market features that can sustain a culture in the design of the selected markets. A significant finding is that more than half of Gombe urban marketplace was not formally built and hence, no emphasis on spatial plans. Therefore, the design and planning can be said to have been deserted, and the study concludes that the spaces for cultural participation and the selling of traditional products should be integrated into the redevelopment of Gombe urban market such that the market remains unique and sustains its culture.

**Keywords:** Cultural Sustainability, Features of Architecture, Gombe Urban Market

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### INTRODUCTION

Built environment is a representation of the value of the society and aspirations. Architecture, which is part of the built environment, is created for many reasons which include: communication of information, the establishment of identity, and the encoding of a value system (Rapoprt, 2005). It was necessitated by concern that cultural heritage and natural heritage were increasingly threatened with destruction not only

by the traditional causes of decay but also by changing social and economic conditions or destruction (Grazuleviciute, 2006). Colonization and globalization have led to the destruction of indigenous architecture resulting in smaller cultures being gradually dissolved and indigenous architecture moving towards disappearance (Adeyemi, 2008; Odinye & Odinye, 2012). However, the culture of the locals evolves daily in the marketplace as it brings different communities

together by creating a venue that will appeal to different user groups, through its activities, trading and as a vital place for the community to interact (Khalilah & Nur, 2016). The market serves as a historical site and business centre while the gatherings of vendors who sell a variety of specialized and generic products contribute to the quaint qualities of the markets and their culture (Khalilah, Zumahira, & Nur, 2016). The scholars added that it is also a place where buyer interacts with the seller to bargain prices of goods. This is in contrast to the shopping centres where prices of goods and services are fixed without any bargain. The influence of cultural heritage of the people of northern part of Nigeria regarding days of the week is often marked than a date without printed calendars or diaries. It is the weekday that is important everywhere; indeed the days of the week are named after the market held on that day (Willerslev, 2004). In the same vein, the event usually held within a market square in the settlements and eagerly anticipated by participants and audience including the national and international audience in the name of *sharo* (*Shadi*). The main attraction is the raw display of endurance. It is commonly held in an open place like a market square, and commencing with several forms of entertainment as well as the maidens dance (Leadership, 2015).

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

The current design approaches with their standards, rules, and guidelines fall short with respect to issues relating to the cultural context (Design Education Forum of South Africa, 2007). The market becomes too modernized and looks like a shopping mall or a super-market diminishing the heritage values of the place. Gombe urban market experiences redevelopment due to the day by day business expansion that results into modernization using architectural features of market design that has not been formally investigated giving less regard to spaces for intangible products and a place for social events of its populace. This calls for preservation using architectural design principles to achieve cultural sustainability and also serves as a guide to other markets in Nigeria.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the paper is to examine the architectural features for cultural sustainability in the design of selected urban market in Nigeria, through the following objectives:

1. To review the context strategies that revives and preserves the cultural heritage of people, region or place concerning Gombe urban market.
2. To identify the tangible and intangible qualities of culture in the design of selected urban markets

with regards to sustaining cultural qualities in the future.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The rich qualities of the traditional marketplace are attributed to its components, such as the products, people and spaces. There is essential need to examine the characteristics of the marketplace and how they contribute to the setting of the market operation, as these shape people's experiences and to ensure that the development of traditional urban marketplace can continue to flourish in the future, alongside their cultural and heritage values (Zulaikha, 2014)

### CULTURAL SUSTAINABILITY

Culture is the most effective sustainable dimension of development and creativity is an enabler for sustainable development; in this light, creativity is an "urban upgrader"(Zhou, 2015). Generative heritage lies between tangible and intangible heritage, tangible as a resource and intangible as energy. Duxbury, Gillette & Pepper (2007), culture contributes to lively cities and cultural places act as physical assets for cultural engagement. Places that offer opportunities for cultural participation are cultural venues such as museums and theatres, and community places such as the library, community parks, marketplaces and festivals (Jackson, Herranz, & Kabwasa-Green, 2006). In years backed, traditional buildings across Nigeria were known to have reflected the climate,

and technological skills of the localities from which they evolved (Agboola & Zango, 2014). However, Adamolekun (2016), before the colonial era, buildings communicated the culture and tradition of the region and people. The loss of indigenous architecture was more worsened with the advent of globalization which dissolved indigenous architecture towards disappearance (Odinye & Odinye, 2012; Adeyemi, 2008). Hence, there is a need for a sense of place own by people, and this trends may lead to creative idleness and cultural failure and leave the future generation without knowledge of their roots (Falola, 2003; Adeyemi, 2008).

### Architectural Features for Cultural Sustainability

Architectural conservation describes the process through which the material, historical, and design integrity of humanity built heritage are prolonged through carefully planned (Moser, 2011). The strategies that when used will preserve essential cultural heritage features are; giant house approach, use of motifs and depictions, placement of traditional roof on modern structure, transforming a jungle into a cultural site, and reinstating new vernacular approaches. However, for the purpose of this study, historical features, culture/tradition, vernacular features and building form will be considered as variables of this research work.

### **Historical features**

There is a very weak link between the historical style (traditional) and contemporary modern architecture of Nigeria. Castlemaine market in Australia was originally designed to sit between two smaller market buildings, Eastern and Western Market buildings. Although some features are derived from other Australian market buildings, the combination of design elements which are unique within Australia (Mount Alexander Shire Council for Tourist Information, 2008). However, it was converted into a tourist information centre and exhibition space. Today, the market

building is widely recognised as being of broad architectural, social, and cultural significance.

### **Cultural / Traditional Features**

To take cognizance of cultural heritage and traditions and also adopt the convention for the safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage, the use of motifs along with depictions as a historical feature in public spaces is another approach to be employed in energising any cultural heritage (Moser, 2011). The use of colours and paintings which are known as decorative arts also professes the essence of any culture in society.



**Plate 1: Recreation of Arab Islamic Urban Heritage, Putrajaya**

**Source: Sarah Moser, summer 2011**

### **Vernacular Features**

Vernacular architecture is an area of architectural theory that studies the structures made by empirical builders without the intervention of professional architects (Arboleda, 2003). It emanates from the traditional though conditioned by external forces that may include socio-political and socio-economic forces.

Traditional architecture is more spontaneous and exposed to other stylistic influences often considered superior (Opoko, Adeokun, & Oluwantayo, 2016). This tends to evolve over time to reflect the environmental, cultural, technological, and historical context in which it exists. It has also often been dismissed as crude and unrefined but also has proponents

who highlight its importance in current design.

### **Building Form**

Rikko & Qwatau (2011) buttressed that different traditional forms paraded at different regions of Nigeria are the resultant effects pursuit to comfortable people structures design forms i.e. curve linear and rectilinear as influenced by culture, religion, climate, urbanization, and current expertise. The religion or philosophical learning of each community and their social order together with culture influenced the forms, grouping of buildings as well as the process of their production. Opoko (2001) enumerates the factors that led to the development of methods as climate, technology, socio-economic and traditional building materials.

### **Spatial Organisation Urban Marketplace**

The marketplace has been recognised as an important economic and cultural place for a city. Iconic marketplaces that are rich with heritage values become significant attractions in urban tourism (AbdGhapar, Zakariya & Haruna, 2014). Its dynamic tangible and intangible qualities make it a vivid and inclusive public space for the local community and tourists alike. However, market redevelopment is a common process for many markets across the globe as change is an inevitable part of urbanization which affects the rise and fall of markets (Fava, Guardia, & Oyon, 2010).

Markets need to be resilient to thrive alongside the modern development; the essential cultural qualities of the markets have the tendency to fade as the markets become modernized than their previous state (Vural, 2015): Dursun (2009, 2012), space design begins by gaining an understanding of the living culture, constraints and variables of the space, needs of users, their preferences, requirements and movement patterns.

### **METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE**

Three cases were studied; the study area Gombe urban market, Yola (*Jimeta*) modern market and Bauchi central market all in the North-East of Nigeria. The cases were selected based on purposive sampling method with the aim to examine the architectural features of the urban market that can sustain its cultural strength in line with the research problem. Each case was studied in view of the variables through visual survey and observation, followed by an interview in the study area (Gombe urban market) from well-informed personnel. This study uses a case study and interview approach to enable an in-depth investigation towards a specific phenomenon, setting, process and relationships for data collection (Creswell, 2009). However, the author added that this method could be applied to the built environment research because it enables the combination of multiple factors that include social, physical, environmental and economic

aspects. The interview was based on peoples' volunteer to respond. Thus, twenty-four respondents out of which twelve are vendors, four market officials/vendors and eight

businessmen. The table-1 shows the distribution of interviewed.

**Table 1. Distribution of the Interview Respondents**

Years of Business	Number of Vendors	Products
23-26 years	5 vendors	Traditional Wears ( <i>Dankale</i> ) & Artefact
9-38 years	1 vendor	Herbs
32-46 years	3 vendors	Leather work of Hats & Horse Seats ( <i>Bagariye</i> )
30-44 years	4 vendors	Calabash
22-31 years	11 vendors	Other businessmen & Market Officials

Source: Author, 2016.

### Case Studies

Gombe Urban Market is located along *Hirwa-Gana* road, commercial area Gombe. The market was made up of a total of about 5,823 numbers of stalls. It was established in mid- 1980's by the State

Government and opened daily between the hours; 08am-06:00pm. The market is known for its rich traditional and cultural products hence, plate 2 to 5 shows some of its iconic products;



*Plate 2. Market Buildings*  
Source: Author 2016



*Plate 3. Traditional products Calabash*  
Source: Author 2016



*Plate 4. (Matukare) Traditional Cloth*  
Source: Author 2016



*Plate 5. Traditional local Plates*  
Source: Author 2016

Gombe urban market is rich in intangible traditional/local products such as crafts, farming tools, traditional cloths, calabash and decorated leatherwork from open stalls and offers a wide range of different products that are specifically unique to the market such as craft and antique.

### Case II

Yola (Jimeta) modern market is located adjacent Yola Airport, along with Muhammad Mustapha

road in Nasarawa area of Jimeta. The market was built in 2009 by the state government Ministry of Commerce with operation hours from 08:45 am to 06:00 pm daily. It is spatially organised with architectural features of urban market and houses 3600 stalls double sided shops. It is also known for its iconic cultural products as shown in plates 6-9

**Architectural Features for Cultural Sustainability in the Redevelopment of Gombe Urban Market, Nigeria**



**Plate 6.** Main Entrance Gate and ritual objects.  
**Source:** Arthor 2016



**Plate 7.** Folk, hunting tools  
**Source:** Arthor 2016



**Plate 8.** Cloths (Matukare), Bow & Arrow. Wrist ware  
**Source:** Author: 2016



**Plate 9.** Ornamental Beats and local  
**Source:** Author 2016

The cultural features are assortments from large collections of folklore instruments, beats, calabash and other artefacts that are dated backed on sales. All of these depicted the cultural heritage of the populace that linked past to present in expectation to future as it is desired.

**Case III**

Bauchi Central market is located adjacent Ahmadu Bello round-about by Shekai and Ali Ajiya



**Plate 10.** Bauchi Central Market  
**Source:**

drive. It was built in the mid-1990s by the state government and operates from 08:00 am to 06:00 pm daily. The market was spatially organised with architectural features of vernacular elements of central courtyards integrated with design to enhance light and fresh air circulation. Hence, no single traditional cultural products found that defined the heritage of the populace.

Author

/2016



### Data Collection

The data collection involved conducting a visual survey via checklist in three cases and a structured interview among the targeted respondents on criteria set for getting information from well-informed individuals/ officials of Gombe urban market. These criteria were based on vendors' age, position, experienced and those that sells an assortment of local products unique to Gombe urban market using probability sampling strategy. Meanwhile, the checklist was used to determine the architectural features of an urban market that can sustain cultural heritage. The data collected were analysed to establish the links between traditional products and marketplace in view to reflect cultural features in market design to serve as a heritage.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The interview conducted shows the majority of the respondents aged between 20-30 (33%), 30-40 (22%), 40-50 (28%) and gender distribution between male (82%) and female (18%) of market vendors' and officials. The interview conducted reveals that twelve (12) inherited the businesses from their father/ families, three vendors of traditional wears and artefacts have been into the business for more than 26years and a herbs vendor started the business by himself for more than 36years. Also, three calabash vendors inherited the business for 30-44years while others started by them-selves and some inherited the

business for 22-31years. Vendors' Cultural Experience to Gombe Urban Market aspects comprise of both tangible and intangible forms of culture that took place before and present at the market. Based on the results the market's appearance is shaped by its identity as a place where glimpsed of social events take place before in the old market days but nowadays it is not due to low participation of traditions. Sharo event and maidens dance were encroached due to its settings except in rear cases. However, local products businesses that are unique to the urban market represent a distinctive local lifestyle of Gombe people. The leather vendor and calabash vendors expressed their concern that in the oldest day's market settings, there is space for social events. Two vendors of traditional wears and market officials note that the market is becoming too modernised and looks like supermarket nowadays. This diminishes the heritage values of a populace in which prices are fixed with no bargain. Hence, for them, this kind of interaction cannot be found at the supermarkets. Therefore, market needs to be resilient to thrive along modern development without compromising its distinctive qualities (regionalisms). These findings relate products, social interactions and the atmosphere found in the market as the qualities that shape peoples' perception of the market and their experience. Hence, both tangible and

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intangible qualities of the market can be regarded for sustaining cultural heritage.

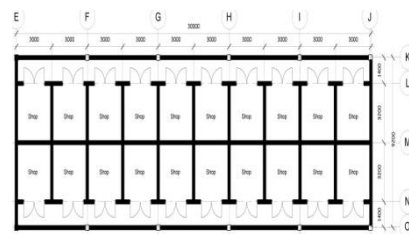
**Architectural Features from Three Cases**

From the three visited cases of studies, case study II (Jimeta modern market) explored the best general application of architectural features of layout building form and hierarchy of spaces based on spatial

organisation and urban market features that can sustain cultural vitality from the survey findings. However, this is not true of all the individual variables assessed, cultural features, vernacular features, building form and urban market features as shown in plate II-14 below show the existing architectural features in *Jimeta Yola* market.



**Plate II.** Google image of Jimeta modern market sided stalls  
*Source: Google earth (2016) modified by Author*



**Plate II.** Floor plan of Double sided stalls  
*Source: Author 2016*



**Plate 12.** Vehicular Movements & Spy Tower  
*Source: Author 2016*



**Plate 13.** Market Building and Parking Space  
*Source: Author 2016*

Facilities found in *Jimeta* modern market as seen in plate 13-16 include the following;

- a) Administrative block
- b) Magistrate Court
- c) Public Convenience
- d) Warehouse
- e) Spy Tower
- f) Parking Space
- g) Delivery Bay
- h) Security Stations
- i) Retails and Wholesalers' Stalls
- j) Fire Service Station
- k) Clinics and
- l) Restaurants

The groupings of sales outlets influence the flows and the arrival point of customers. However, there is no emphasis on butcher's units. Hence, the market is relatively weak in cultural expression.

**Case Studies Checklist Findings**

The checklist analysis from the three cases shows the appearance level of variables uses for the research in a view to exploring

architectural features that can sustain cultural heritage in the market. The results were analysed using bar charts derived from the frequency scores of the three cases as shown in table 2, figure 1. However,

the frequency scores indicated by each variable from the three cases highlighted areas to place emphasis on in the proposed redevelopment.

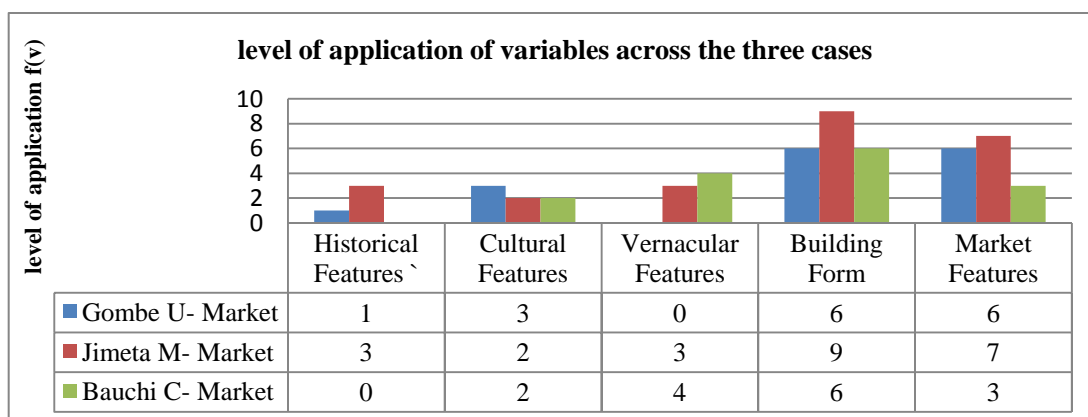
**Table 2. Frequency analysis of variables in three cases**

		Historical Features	Cultural Features	Vernacular Features	Building Form	Market Features
Gombe Market	U-	1	3	0	6	6
Jimeta Market	M-	3	2	3	9	7
Bauchi Market	C-	0	2	4	6	3

Source: Researcher (2016).

The variable uses for the research were highlighted in figure 1, and a bar chart was used in

computing the results, comparing the features from each three cases studied.



**Figure 1. level of Variables application across the three Cases**

Sources: Author 2016

The analysis from the research shows that cultural value of tangible and intangible heritage can be found in the marketplace. However, the expression of those values was not strongly considered to shape the market's appearance

when compared to its local products. That is, it is essential to understand that the built environment influences the market's settings and the sophisticated physical qualities contribute to it environ. Although to position market as a cultural attraction, it needs a multi-scale

method in planning and designing the market spaces. However, Dursun (2009) emphasized the role of decodable physical form such as scale, geometry in communicating the context of indigenous architecture. The sustainability of the market's operation involves a

wide range of infrastructure that goes beyond the market site (Zakariya, 2015). Hence, cultural vitality of the market can be sustained through multi-scale approaches that are in line with the contemporary trends.

### CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that there are architectural features of culture; tangible and intangible values that can be integrated to expressed cultural heritage of populace in market design that has not been fully incorporated into market designs in North-Eastern Nigeria. These features are nevertheless limited, and the markets structures in the cases studied if not that of *Jimeta*, were not built to the standards of modern trend. Therefore, the indigenous characters were more evident in cultural products.

facilities and expression of cultural heritage of populace as a basis for the design. The use of space as an architectural feature in markets varies substantially with the type of function it contains as standards. However, the new modern trend should be integrated with an extension of milk (*fura da nono*) joints in women vendor's site, provision of space that will enhance cultural participation of sharo and maiden dance, and stalls that will promote and enable the production of local products to flourish. Therefore, there is need to achieve optimum relevance to the locals/users and to distinctively serve in protecting and preserving the indigenous (regionalism) of the populace in market design.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

From these findings, the study recommends integration marketplace spaces along with the new trend of modern market

### Appendices-I

S/ N	Variables	Checklist	Application					Remarks
			5	4	3	2	1	
1	Historical Features	Demonstration of the community's cultural legacy						
		Establishment based on past implication						
		Connection between the past and present						
		Depiction of community's cultural heritage						

2	Cultural Feature	Availability and display of artefacts artwork								
		Provision for persistent production of artwork								
		Expression of motif and depictions								
		Significance of colours and building painting								
3	Vernacular Features	Architectural expression of vernacular features								
		Display of traditional decorative design patterns								
		Availability of vernacular elements								
		Morphology of the entire building structures								
		Application of indigenous building materials								
4	Building Form	Form and complexity of building design								
		Building concept and architectural expression								
		Square								
		Rectangular								
		Circular								
		Composition of form in relation to site								
5	Urban Market Features	Accessibility and vehicular circulation								
		Security Units								
		Parking Space								
		Zoning and spatial organization of functions								
		Fire Outbreak Mitigation Facilities								
		Waste Disposal Facilities								
		Health Care Facilities								

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