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Analysis of Successive Land Use Changes in the Old Residential Area of "Festival of Art and Culture (FESTAC) Town" in Lagos, Nigeria

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Abstract

In recent times, land use for commercial, residential, and transportation purposes among others is dislodging former units and bare sites as a result of structural alteration, mostly in the urban centers of Nigeria. The changes are due to various guises and structural shift, outright demolition and redevelopment and their impact is consequential. This paper assesses the current pattern which residential zones have assumed within the old Festival of Art and Culture (FESTAC) Town in Lagos, Nigeria. The methods used in the study included the delineation of the study area into six avenues which the researcher(s) adopted for the purpose of even coverage, as well as the use of structural questionnaires, base map and GPS in sourcing for necessary data on the field. Additionally, the data collected were assembled, coded and analyzed using simple descriptive statistics and conventional mapping techniques. The findings revealed the factors responsible for the alteration of land use to enhance financial gains, such as changing neighborhood characteristics and the evasion of permission from the town planning authorities. The findings also provided evidence that many structures still remain vulnerable to conversion, alteration, and/or demolition. The paper recommends that adequate permission should be granted by the legal authority before the conversion and rebuilding of any structure into a new land use.

Keywords: commercial, conversion, *FESTAC*, Lagos, land use, residential

Introduction

Among African countries, Nigeria is growing at the fastest rate. Western commentators, notably McKinsey Global Institute (2016) in its report "Lions on the Move II," saw rapid urbanization in Africa as the source of increasing the continent's productivity. Urbanization is inevitable due to technological advances and a drastic increase in population. Nigeria is becoming urban at an unprecedented rate. Over the last three decades, the city of Lagos which is the

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commercial and industrial nerve center of Nigeria has grown demographically, spatially and particularly in the extent of its area. The population of the city keeps rising as a result of rural-urban migration and due to natural increase (Oyeleye, 2001).

The growth rate of Lagos is about 6% per annum (FHA, 1985). The city covers a land mass of about 3,600km^2 of which about 1,700km^2 is water. Lagos had an average population density of 1,712/km^2 in 1991(NPC, 1991). However, the bulk of the population of Lagos is concentrated in its metropolitan area, an area which is less than 800km^2 – where industrial and commercial activities are concentrated. Metropolitan Lagos has 15 of the 20 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Lagos State and it is a fact that some of these LGAs had a population density as high as 48,000ppkm^2 in 1991 and it increased to 65,000ppkm^2 by the year 2000 (Fasona & Omojola, 2004).

The urban growth rate of metropolitan Lagos exceeds that of any other urban center in Nigeria. This has, in turn, led to high population pressure on facilities and widespread environmental deterioration and pollution. Many formerly planned residential areas in Nigeria are no longer livable (Ahmed, 2005). Liveability means not only the creation and maintenance of a decent environment but also the ease with which people and goods move within the urban setup. The problem of environmental deterioration arises from the inadequacy of existing urban facilities and hence their overutilization, or the inability of the city to cope with the needs of its growing population at the current rate of urbanization. Other problems include inadequate provision of basic infrastructure and amenities leading to housing shortages, slum living and traffic congestion (Ahmed, 2013).

In Lagos, the evidence of development beyond the limits of acceptable changes is manifested in slums and in the breakdown of urban infrastructure and facilities in formerly planned estates. The population index of Nigeria is problematic as there is no corresponding economic structure to support it. Apparently, this situation is not just a national burden of immense proportions but also a global challenge. Unless these demographic trends are reversed, the benchmarks for sustainability across all spheres of life will remain in doldrums (Adeze, 2018). Infrastructural decay, corruption, economic vulnerabilities and social crises across various sectors are all traceable to this unnecessary birth multiplication amidst dwindling economic resources (Adeze, 2018).

Taking the level of environmental degradation of Lagos as a whole and Festival of Art and Culture (FESTAC) Town in particular, the change in residential land use can be attributed to the high incidence of population concentration within FESTAC

Town. This has resulted in the movement of institutions such as banks, eateries, and hotels into the area. These institutions compete for land use at the expense of residential and other land-use types which the original design incorporated. This has invariably promoted the sale of residential buildings to financial, recreational and commercial institutions, while the conversion of areas meant to be residential areas for other uses by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) is clearly evident.

Study Area

The motivation behind convening FESTAC '77' in Nigeria can be traced to the development of ideas on Negritude and Pan-Africanism (Enahoro, 1977), with the purpose of bringing Africans together through a display of talent, black unity, cultural affinity and festivals. However, at the end, the intention generated new town development and structural changes in Lagos (Apter, 2005).

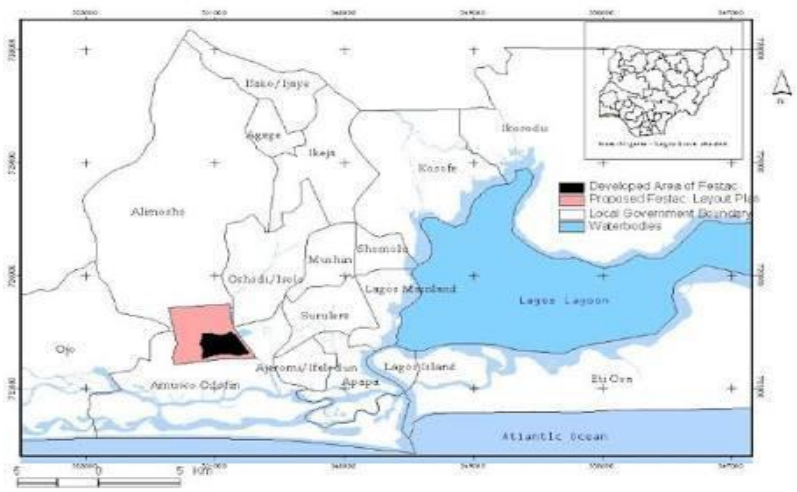
Festival town, also known as FESTAC Town, is a federal housing estate located along the Lagos-Badagry expressway in Lagos State, Nigeria. It is the largest and most monumental estate development so far undertaken by the Federal Housing Authority (FHA). The project was designed with the short-term objective of accommodating participants to FESTAC by African people in 1977 and it later became the long-term plan to relieve the city of Lagos of its acute housing problems (FHA, 1985). FESTAC Town is a public residential estate originally designed to house the participants of the second World Festival of Black Arts and Culture held in Lagos State from January 15th to February 12th, 1977.

The study area (FESTAC Town, Lagos, Nigeria) was defined using UTM-31 coordinates 533409E, 713989N, 531727E, 718231N; 527512E, 718017N and 528295E, 713512N in order to obtain the extent of coverage and limit. It is located some 10km southwest of central Lagos in Amuwo-Odofin local government area of metropolitan Lagos and covers approximately an area of 1770 ha (4424 acres). It is situated at a distance of about 10km west of Lagos along Badagry expressway which forms its southern boundary. Amuwo-Odofin housing estate of the Lagos State Development and Property Corporation (LSDPC) and Sha-sha Rriver forms the eastern boundary of FESTAC town, while the International Trade Fair Complex developed by the Federal Ministry of Trade and Commerce forms part of its western boundary. The northern limit of the area has not been finalized yet. The boundary runs parallel to Badagry expressway at a distance of approximately 4700 meters from it. All of the above information assisted the author to delimit the study area. According to the master plan, the town provides 8 persons per h.a. and its ultimate development will allow it to occupy an area of 2025 h.a., comprising 24,000 dwelling units or about 140,000 people (FHA, 1985). The proposed area layout

design of FESTAC Town has six major land use classes: residential, industrial, commercial, recreational, circulation and central function. Like any modern residential layout, canals and drainage channels are well laid out to take care of flood and sewerage problems (Fasona & Omojola, 2004). The information acquired from land and aerial surveys of the designated area before and after the festival is mapped in order to develop an in-depth understanding (see Figures 1-3).

Figure 1

Map of Metropolitan Lagos Showing the Study Area



Source: Hartshorne (1992)

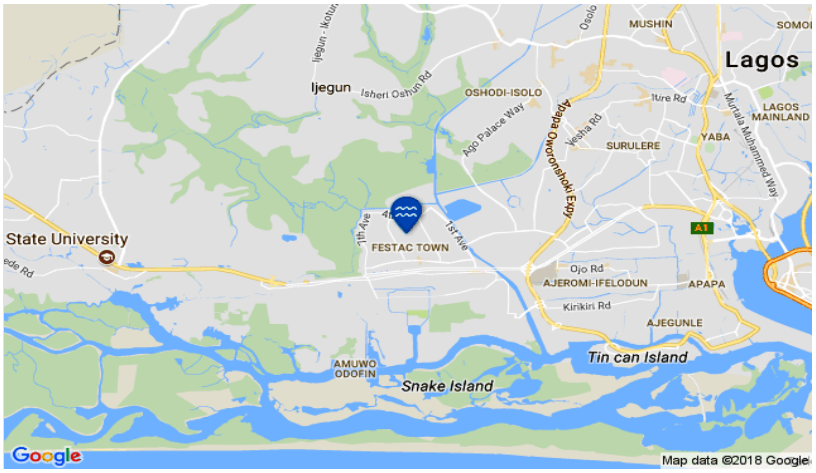
Figure 2

FESTAC Town in Lagos State, Nigeria

Source: Wikipedia

Figure 3

Map of Metropolitan Lagos Showing the Study Area



Source: Map Delta @ Google 2018

Method of the Study

This study integrates the use of remote sensing data with a complementary use of Geographic Information System (GIS). In order to evaluate the condition and state of residential zones in the already developed parts of FESTAC Town (Phase 1), the revised 1:2,500 master plan produced in 1982 for this developed phase was used to generate the baseline data about the status of residential buildings and structures, while field investigation was carried out in 2016 to see the existing situation on the ground (see Tables 1-2).

Table 1

Data and Data Sources for the Current Work

S/No.	Data Type	Year	Scale	Sources
1	Revised Master Plan Map	1982	1:2,500	Federal Housing Authority (FHA)
2	Satellite Imagery (Ikonos)	2004		GEDAS
3	UTM Coordinates	2016		Field Survey

Source: Authors' Compilation

To generate data about the status of residential buildings and other structures in the study area, the revised master plan was scanned and imported into *conventional mapping techniques.* The new maps generated were used as the basis for field work to compare how these residential buildings and newly available structures looked like in the past and in 2016, when the bulk of this work began (see Figures 1-3).

Successive Land Use Changes / Conversion in FESTAC Town

The characteristics of converted residential buildings and other land use types (structures) were determined using the avenues as sample to represent the entire study area. A breakdown of their distribution manifested how the old FESTAC Town developed into the new bubbling town that absorbs population from Lagos (see Figures 3, 4 & 5).

Table 2

Distribution of Residential Building Conversions in Avenues

Location	Number of Conversion
1st Avenue	8
2nd Avenue	11
3r Avenue	10
4th Avenue	6
5th Avenue	17
7th Avenue	3

Source: Authors' Field Survey

Figure 4

Map Showing Changes in Old Land Use of FESTAC Town
Authors' Compilation

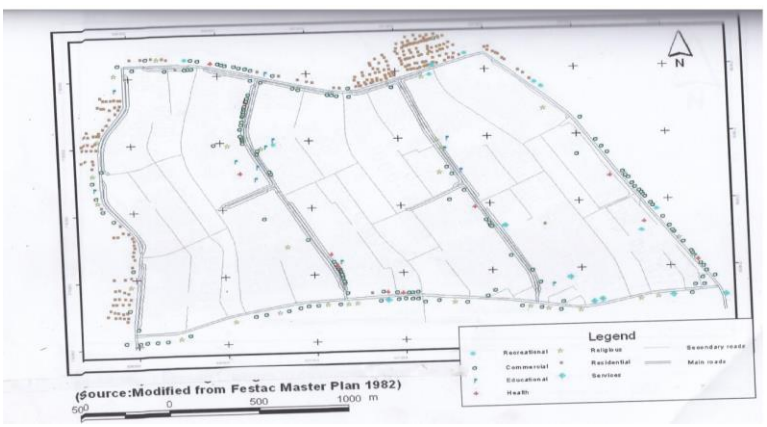


Figure 5

Land Use Map of FESTAC Town

Source: Modified by Authors (2017)

Reasons that Contributed to Changes in Land Use Structures in FESTAC Town

The unwholesome loss of housing units and bare sites in the designated residential neighborhoods of Lagos had led to the development of similar structures. The losses are in various guises and designs and have been caused by mere changes in use, structural alteration, outright demolition and redevelopment.

However, all residential buildings, regardless of their originally approved usage, are equally vulnerable to invasion by more profit yielding uses. Over a given period of time, the invasion and succession is dictated by factors such as growing population, the propensity for tenants desirous of accessible locations, and growing commercial neighborhood characteristics among others. These factors constitute the main reasons for different changes in residential land use in FESTAC Town, Lagos, Nigeria.

Notable Implication of Residential Land Use Changes in FESTAC Town

Land use is allocated in such a way as to promote a livable and workable environment. However, changes which include recreational, commercial, educational, health, services and religious encroachment on residential spaces continuously defeat the above goal. These changes become economically significant but inappropriate within any residential setting. Indeed, they pose

considerable challenges to strict adherence to land use in a planned residential estate. The effects of such trends include drastic reduction in the stock of residential housing units and incidence of environmental degradation which are pronounced problems usually associated with residential housing on the standing stock of urban areas. Major environmental implications of these trends are congestion, poor waste management, noise pollution, and insecurity among others.

Findings and Discussion

The effort made in this research was centered on the investigation of some new developments that emanated from the old settlement of FESTAC Town. It provided a lot of information gathered through base map and field survey about new developments dating mostly from the years 2016/2017. It was found that most conversions of residential buildings to commercial uses such as shops occurred in areas with low (that is, the T1, T2 and T3) and middle income (that is, T5, T6 and T9) households in the 2nd, 3rd and 5th avenues. Also, most of the new developments or structures in these avenues were intended for commercial and religious uses. However, in high income areas, most conversions of residential buildings were intended for recreational, health and educational uses. Typical areas that reflect these patterns are T8, T9 and T10 on 1st avenue, 4th avenue and some parts of 3rd avenue which is a middle income area. Apart from the conversions found in 4th avenue, newly developed residential areas were also taken over. These included developments on 403 road, 404 road and 40/41 roads. These are newly developed parts of 4th avenue which have been developed in the years 2017 and 2018, respectively. It was found that 7th avenue has the lowest number of residential conversions. The conversion here was mainly intended for commercial purposes only. A lot of new residential buildings as well as educational and religious centers have been developed on the vacant plots of this avenue.

Our findings also revealed that the expansion of Phase 1 of FESTAC Town through new buildings and other structures badly affected the nearby canal, which serves as a boundary to Phase 1 of FESTAC Town. The canal has been narrowed due to the huge amount of sand filling resulting from the ongoing construction work. There have been many changes in the structural pattern of the residential land use of FESTAC Town (Phase 1) as discussed in Table 4 since 1982. Detailed information about newly developed roads, religious houses, and residential quarters is portrayed in the new base maps (see Maps 3-5).

Table 3

Types and Frequency of Land Use (Master Plan 1982)

Land Use	Count	Sum-Area	Sum-Perimeter	Sum-Acres	Sum-Hectare
Commercial	15	11207.436	1940.444	2.768	1.12
Educational	24	335465.184	11683.796	82.895	33.549
Recreational	30	40785.025	4885.311	10.078	4.077
Religious	6	3373.655	569.684	0.834	0.337
Residential	806	174327.689	13753.888	430.048	174.033
Service	14	230505.605	8574.827	56.96	23.05

Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 4

Types and Frequency of Land Use (Master Plan 1992)

Land Use	Count	Sum-Area	Sum-Perimeter	Sum-Acres	Sum- Hectare
Commercial	24	80906.847	1773.784	2.001	0.805
Educational	17	6034.723	1502.294	1.492	0.603
Recreational	4	1777.582	341.866	0.439	0.178
Religious	9	7901.434	1048.772	1.954	0.789
Residential	3544	1265023.785	277712.540	312.615	126.492
Service	3	1447.424	279.759	0.357	0.145
Health	4	1370.966	301.560	0.339	0.137

Source: Authors' Compilation

It can be evaluated from the above tables that the total sum-area occupied by educational, service and recreational land uses on the master plan of 1982 declined overtime, that is, from 33546.184m^2, 230505.605m^2, 40785.025m^2 on the master plan to 6034.723m^2, 1447.424m^2 and 1777,582m^2 on the Ikonos, respectively. This was due to the conversion of these land uses into other uses such as health, religious and commercial land uses. Moreover, the total sum-area for commercial and religious land use also increased, that is, from 11207.437m^2 and 3373.655m^2 on the master plan to 8096.847m^2 and 7901, 434m^2 on the 2004 Ikonos, respectively. This was due to the encroachment of land by these land uses.

Furthermore, it was observed that the residential land use sum-area reduced from 1,740, 327.689m^2 on the master plan of 1982 to 1,265,023.785m^2 on the 2004 Ikonos, despite the increase in residential counts from 807 on the master plan to 3544 on the Ikonos. This is a result of a fundamental error on the master plan, that is, the way the master plan was designed or drawn. According to our study, the new master plan was drawn in such a way that the areas apportioned to residential buildings included parking spaces and lots. The new development was subsequently rectified, which gives rise to the following statistical summaries for residential buildings and other structural developments:

Sum total-area	=	542940.978 m^2
Count	=	2819
Mean	=	192.601
Maximum	=	2382.945
Minimum	=	0.001
Range	=	2382.944
Variance	=	29579.838
Standard Deviation	=	171.988

Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 5

House Types and their Interpretation

House Types	Interpretation
T1	One bedroom flat
T2	Two bedroom flat
T3	Three bedroom flat in a two bedroom block of flat
T4	Three bedroom flat
T5	Two bedroom terraced bungalow without garage
T6	Two bedroom bungalow with garage
T7	Three bedroom terraced house
T8	Three bedroom semi-detached
T9	Three bedroom house
T10	Five bedroom house

Source: A Planning and Research Monograph of Federal Housing Authority

The current research further revealed that no house type was spared of conversion, to whatever extent. For instance, housing units in residential locations of choice such as 1st avenue, 3rd avenue and 4th avenue, which are high-income

residential areas, were equally open to change in use as low-value residences, such as tenement houses located in 2nd avenue, 5th avenue and 7th avenue. Apart from contributing to existing knowledge, this research ensures the revival, resurgence, and propagation of Black and African cultural values and civilization. Economic gains emanated from Africans coming together are imparting a new hope for environmental development and structural changes in Lagos.

Conclusion

The work assessed the conversion of residential buildings to other land uses, particularly commercial land uses. The assessment discovered some significant effects of land use conversion on the broader urban housing situation. FESTAC Town of Lagos State is becoming more of a hub of commercial activities rather than a residential center as a result of rapid land use conversion. This stems from the inability of residential users to retain their units under the forces of demand and supply. It must, however, be stressed that a well-planned environment is the pride of a nation and the present illegal conversion of this residential area will degrade the residential environment into slums, ghettoes and haphazardly developed areas. This will lead to problems that will eventually cost the government much money to rectify them in the near future.

Recommendations

The current research recommends that for proper and adequate planning, permission should be sought and granted by the legal authority before the conversion and rebuilding of any structures which are adapted into new use. Builders must be granted acquiescence before they are allowed provision to the site and service schemes. Also, zoning policies and mass delivery of public commercial properties at pre-designated locations must be adhered to in every area in the state in general. Moreover, the movement of migrants from Lagos metropolitan area to FESTAC Town must be discouraged in order to avoid the development of ghettoes and slums. All legal city developers, planning agents and government's planning authority must only approve the conversion of structural and residential buildings that are legal and where necessary.

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