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Integration of Rural Elements into Urban Areas - A Tangible Nostalgia and Sustainability Aid in Developing Countries

M.A. Femi Emmanuel Arenibafo

Girne American University, Faculty of Architecture, Design and fine Art, TRNC, via Mersin 10, Turkey

E-mail: awebfemi@gmail.com, webfemi@yahoo.com

Abstract

In developing countries, people are inevitably moving in a large scale from rural settlements into urban areas for a supposed better opportunity and improved financial situation. This internal migration unarguably mounts pressure and imposes threats on the urban centers, forcing an uncontrolled expansion. Consequently, there's a severe impact on natural surfaces, ecosystems, the climate and a below standard quality of life for urban dwellers. Withal, projection shows that by 2050, 70% of the world's population will be living in urban centers. This seems unstoppable but can be manageable. Hence, this paper seeks to qualitatively emphasize the problems and threats of urban sprawl, to create bases for discussion and polemics, as well as advocate the need and long term benefits of integrating rural elements into urban regions as regards spatial planning, landscape/land use, architecture, and aesthetics. In turn, gives tangible aid to the nostalgia and sense of place feeling of green souls who inevitably move from rural into the urban concrete jungle, equally creating a paradigm for the achievable UN sustainable development goals 3 and 11 in particular and other relatable goals 1,2,12 and 15 in developing countries.

Keywords: Integration; Rural elements; Urban areas; Nostalgia; Sustainability.

1. Introduction

The rural, the suburban and the urban are the three major classifications use to describe the geographical location of a place. These three geographical areas are characterized by different unique artificial and natural elements that have both negative and positive impact on its inhabitants and the world in general. According to Billy and Shepherd (2001), rural areas in a broader sense refer to a settlement outside the urban and suburban areas, namely villages, hamlets and isolated dwellings. Rural areas are characterized by natural surfaces, biodiversity, a small, sparsely and relatively homogeneous population that engages primarily in agriculture, livestock management, art and craft, traditional and cultural practices. The rural community tended to be a folk society (Robert Redfield 1941). These peculiar characteristics of the rural areas are in fact what are needed to be integrated into the urban and suburban areas for a better quality of life and sustainability.

The suburban in itself is a relatively new research territory because it is generally refer to as part of the urban areas. Meanwhile, the suburbs have to be considered separately from the city or as a formless mass within a chaotic peripheral-urban landscape at the city edges (Vaughan et al. 2010a). The suburban areas in developing countries are aggravated by individual who could not afford the high standard of living in the urban settlement, hereby creates places – slums in the sub of the urban centers. These people are those living in the economic range of the city but not absorbed in the economy of the city. They are hardworking individuals trying to make better education and living condition for their children and also for themselves in the urban center/economy hub.

In addition, urban centers are the economy engine of a country because; the prosperity of a nation is often measured by the prosperity of their cities. Urban centers are characterized by high population density and regular inflow of people, high rise buildings, the concentration of administrative bodies, infrastructures and a diverse income livelihood. Presently, more than 50% of the world's population lives in urban areas, and this number will increase to 67.2% in 2050 (United Nations, 2012). Thus, due to the general population increase in the third world countries and heavier population density in the urban areas, there is a rapid expansion in the quest to match up the rapid inflow of rural migrants into the urban area. Reflectively, this expansion has a negative socio-economic impact (Lambin et al. 2001), deteriorating natural environment, global warming, ecosystem alteration and depletion of cultivated lands (Firman, 1997). Thus, this study seeks to propose tangible aids that mitigate the negative effect of uncontrolled expansion into natural surfaces and the bad effect on humans and climate.

Moreover, speaking of the mental state and nostalgia feeling of the individual who for a better financial status and economic value have to move from rural to urban areas, from personal experience and correspondence, urban dwellers with rural roots crave for the peculiar characteristics of the rural which is a part of their upbringing but are not in any way present in the urban areas. This craving is in fact called nostalgia. Defining Nostalgia, Webster dictionary (Merriam Webster dictionary -2014) defines it as "pleasure and sadness that is caused by remembering something from the past and wishing that you could experience it again". Random House Dictionary (2014) defines nostalgia as "a sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time". Thus, urban dwellers that yearn for rural elements such as the green vegetation, traditional ornamentations/decoration, landscape and architecture can have the feeling of a sense of place and experience pleasure of their past in the present urban areas they inevitably move to. This can be easily achieved through the interfacing the elements of the rural and urban area, then incorporating the rural features into the urban areas. In the same vein, sustainability is aided through the presence of these tangible elements in the urbanscape and its artifacts. Furthermore, on the effect this integration will have on sustainable development in vulnerable developing countries, a paradigm for the United Nation Sustainable Development goal 3 – "Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages" and goal 11 – "make cities and human settlements inclusive safe resilient and sustainable" (UN 2015), and other relatable goals 1,2,12 and 15 can be achieved through the integration proposed by this study.

2. Rural settlement

Rural areas can be referred to as the countryside, sparsely populated settlement and characterised by natural surfaces, greenery, biodiversity and vegetation. Primary occupations of rural dwellers are: agricultural practices and livestock management, art and crafts, fishing and other traditional engagement.

Characteristics of Rural Settlement in Developing Countries

In this article, the major characteristic of the rural settlement is holistically described with three main features peculiar to this area. These are: rural architecture, rural aesthetics and rural landscape.

- a) **Rural Architecture:** Rudofsky, Bernard (1964) refers to the architecture in rural areas as “architecture without Architects”. In essence, rural architecture is a communal architecture produced not by specialists but by continuing and spontaneous activity of people with a common thought and heritage, acting within a community of experience. In modern terms, it is recognized as a form of art, a vernacular or traditional architecture that has resulted from human natural intelligence applied uniquely to human modes of life. Rural buildings are much smaller than urban buildings in terms of architectural scale and size. In general, rural buildings are low-rise buildings, namely, one or two floors, Durable and versatile (Changyou Wu et al 2015). The architecture of the rural encompasses different types of shelter, monuments and building components. Examples of these are: the residential houses, barn, religion buildings, cistern, schools, water fountain, and storage places. Lately, rural architecture are not limited to its general characteristic of small scale and size, but pioneers of rural architecture with the aid of modern building technologies and creative ideas, rural architecture now host big scale design such as museums, 4 or more floors of residential and commercial buildings. The products of Rural architecture are usually sustainable and cheap to construct and with low maintenance cost.
- b) **Rural Aesthetics:** Aesthetics in its general sense is a branch of philosophy that deals with the nature of beauty, art, and taste, and with the creation and appreciation of beauty. Holistic definition by scholars in the field defines aesthetics as "critical reflection on art, culture and nature" (Zangwill, Nick. 2003). Rural aesthetics in this context encompasses selected indicators and elements, tangible or abstract that gives pleasure, identity and uniqueness in the rural area. These include: materials, ornaments/decoration, form and functionality.
 - **Materials:** A distinguishing factor of rural settlement in developing countries is the use of natural and recycled materials in construction and in artistic products. The materials use creates a distinctive unification of the structures and product with the environment. Even in modern time, more than half of the population in developing countries resides in rural areas with building materials predominantly earthen which are cost-effective and highlight a healthy, balanced indoor air quality and promote sustainability (Gernot Minke 2006). They include but not limited to: wood/timber, stones, mud/adobe/rammed earth and clay. These materials, when creatively use in different types of shelter and monuments in the rural areas, they give aesthetic experience, a pleasurable one, a sense of place and place attachment.
 - **Ornaments/decoration:** Aesthetic experience (arresting, interesting, pleasurable and beauty) stems from the creative detailed ornamentations and decorations that are symbolic and unique to the demographic area. Rural decorations appear on plane surfaces, furniture, household items, antiquity, monuments and buildings. They are crafted and engraved to tell stories of the past and present for the future generation and they often gives pleasure to the observer.
 - **Form and Functionality:** Form in an Architectural context is of the “first” perceived experience of the physical external outlines that unite the entire image of an architectural piece. The form of rural artifacts (buildings, farm and produce display, fashion) are often well-defined structure, with a display that coordinates with other elements to form either part or the whole of an image in a consistent fashion that makes aesthetic sense (Ching 2007). The original word: “functus” means performance, occupation, role, duty, work; use, purpose, behaviour, operation, activity. Rural house form represents and reflects the traditional lifestyle and culture of its context. The accommodation unit is often multi-habited by immediate family and extended families. Most have an open plan whereby residents live in full view of one another with a courtyard in between for domestic activities and family gathering (Arenibafo 2017).
- c) **Rural Land use/Landscape:** Rural landscape can be defined as mosaic of natural and human managed land on the country side, the landscape interrelating with human economic activities such as agriculture land use and livestock management, untampered and attractive natural topography (Forman and Gordorn, 1986; Wang Yuncai, 2003). Rural land use/landscape is a combination of visual, cultural, and social landscape with ecological functions (Fry et al. 2009). It is an aesthetic place of experience and connection with nature. Rural landscape harbors forest, settlement pattern or living area, low lands and mountains, agricultural land, biodiversity, domestic and forest animals. The settlement pattern largely depends on topography and social cultural factors such as family lineage, religion and property allocation. Rural landscape are the epitome of sustainability with its ecological advantages and scenery.

3. Urban Areas

Urban areas in this context refer to the urban centre/city, metropolitan and sub-urban or adjoining area. There are different criteria used in defining an urban settlement. These factors range from population threshold, administrative criteria and political boundaries, economic functions and infrastructure (Eduardo 2017). Cities as the integral part of the urban area is

defined by Merriam Webster Dictionary as a relatively permanent and highly organized center having a population with varied skills, lacking self-sufficiency in the production of food and lack of ecological element, and usually depending on manufacture and commerce to satisfy the wants of its inhabitants.” (Merriam Webster Dictionary).

Characteristics of Urban Settlement

The urban area or urban settlement is characterised by different physical and abstract features. The physical features are of concern to this study and they are: architecture and urban landscape/land use.

- a) **Urban architecture:** In the Dictionary of Urbanism, Cowan defines urban architecture as “buildings in an urban setting” or “the overall design of an urban area.” (Robert Cowan 2005). “The main elements contributing to the visual-aesthetic character of urban space. “Architecture that responds and contributes positively to its context and to the definition of the public realm (Matthew Carmona 2003). Every architectural project as a component that constitutes the city, as an urban artifact, regardless of its scale. As regards scale, architecture of the urban encompasses the small and big scale residential apartment, high rise commercial buildings and infrastructures.
- b) **Urban Aesthetics:** Urban aesthetics is said to be an aesthetic of diversity and resulting experience perceived by the dweller through aesthetic elements in the urban area. Urban aesthetic is an art achieved only with the conscious fusion of structures, site, and surroundings into a unified whole of proper scale with a value associated with fulfilled human life. (Drew 1964). Scholarly written works such as *The Image of the City*,” by Kevin Lynch and Gyorgy Kepes and Gordon Cullen’s “*townscape*,” states five elements of the urban area that gives aesthetic experience which are:
 - Paths: The major routes in which the urban dwellers customarily move or navigate. Paths provide important viewing points, connection and circulation for other elements of the city which arranged along this ways.
 - Districts. The city section with a common form and activity. Examples of these sections are the in-town residential areas, midtown, uptown, industrial areas, train and metro yards, suburbs, commercial and educational district. Buildings and infrastructure plays a big part in producing these components of the urban area.
 - Edge: This is where a district terminates and another district begins. They are boundaries or breakage of linear continuity. A wall, stream, rail road cut, or path may function as an edge that joins two districts. The unique architecture designs, material finishes, form and function can clearly articulate an edge.
 - Landmarks: Landmarks are point references of urban area that gives satisfaction to urban dweller and beautify the area. They are prominent visual objects. A landmark helps to easily navigate one's self within the city. To easily orientate around the urban area through land marks is a positive aesthetic experience. Landmarks are monuments, a city center of activity, tall and tallest towers or natural elements such as trees and mountains. They are seen from distance and different angles over the smaller elements.
 - Nodes: The foci or centers of activity. A node is where a traveller can start or end a journey. They can be regarded as landmarks too because they provide orientation. Open spaces of activity such as motor parks or market square enclosed by groups of buildings are examples of nodes.

The above mention elements and their components are the main visuals of the urban area that exert the strongest emotion for observers. Drew (1964) grouped the emotional or psychological experience of an observer or an urban dweller into 3 categories which are appreciation of form, materials (surface qualities) and expression. They triggers the strongest emotions in the urban areas when consciously and neatly done.

- c) **Urban land use/ landscape:** It means the utilization of available natural surfaces by humans or built environment practitioners for suitable functions. The urban land use and the resulting urban landscape are a combination of commercial, residential, transportation, recreational and industrial land use. There are considerable number of theories and argument about the evolution of urban land use over time. These theories include the concentric ring model by Klaff and Schnore (1972), the sector theory by Hoyt (2000), multiple nuclei model by Harris and Ullman (1945) and the central place theory by Alonzo (1960). Some of the theories argued that the city expand outward from the central business district to the transition zone, then into the different classes of residential area, further into the industrial zone and the suburb. While others state in their theories that the pattern of expansion of urban area do not emanate from a single central point in the city but from multiple points or nuclei. Nonetheless, as regards this study, it is noteworthy to know that most urban land use/landscape does not include a very paramount land function, which is the agriculture and natural habitat for sustainability and well-being in the urban area. Recently, due to the obvious climate change effect, sustainable urban design is now of interest, advocating the preservation of natural surfaces and incorporating nature into the urban land use.

4. Urban Sprawl and it Effect in Developing Countries

According to Wilson et al. (2003) and Galster et al. (2001) urban sprawl is better describe rather than having a direct definition because it is a broad concept which is unique to different urban region. Nonetheless, F. Xi et al (2012), defines Urban sprawl as the expansive spread process of urban structures on rural areas, it is an uncontrolled and unplanned hinterland between the urban and the rural (F. Xi 2012). Urban sprawl in a way behaves like flood water; it simply needs an outlet through which to escape, the escape is the slums around the city in third world countries. The term “sprawl” is often used as a derogatory term because of negative externalities associated with it – “slums”. Sprawl is different from urban growth as sprawl is a form of urbanization that is unsustainable (Sinha, 2017). Urban centers are the hub of financial prosperity that plays a critical role in poverty alleviation and sustaining economic growth, and urban centers are often considered the future of prosperity in the

developing world, thus many troops in for a supposed better life and financial status. The United Nations Population Fund 2007 report on the current state of the world population state that "For the first time in history, more than half its human population, 3.3 billion people, will be living in urban areas. By 2030, this is expected to swell to almost 5 billion (UNFPA, 2007). Most urban growth now occurs in developing countries. For example, according to the report of the center for strategic and international studies by Saghir and Santoro (2018), Sub-Saharan Africa is often regarded as the world's fastest urbanizing region. The population of the urban areas is currently 472 million people, and in the next 25 years, the figure will become double. The global share of African urban residents is projected to grow from 11.3 percent in 2010 to 20.2 percent by 2050. In addition, in many developing countries, there are two main contrasting types of urban sprawl development: one is characterized by large peri-urban areas with informal and illegal patterns of land use (Fulton, W. (1996). This is combined with a lack of infrastructure, public facilities and basic services, and often is accompanied by little or no public transport and by inadequate access roads. However, from the look of things, developing countries are not well equipped or ready to mitigate the impending effect of rapid urban population growth aggravating "sprawl" and "slums". Corresponding development to accommodate the rapid growth is lacking as regards infrastructures, affordable and enough housing, land use and planning regulation. Thus, urban sprawl becomes hard to manage and as a result, the inevitable bad effects of urban sprawl continue to plague urban area in developing countries.

5. Causes of Urban Sprawl in Developing Countries

Granted, the historical cause of urban sprawl is the demographic transition from rural to urban, but the urban populations of a country can change as a result of births and mortality rate, migration and reclassification of areas resulting from changes of the boundaries that defines urban territories. According to Siedentop (2005) cites demand for urban land, urban planning and natural economic factors as major causes of sprawl. In summary, the major cause of urban sprawl in developing world are but not limited to: rapid urbanization and population growth, uneven development, affordable land and housing in the suburb, income/employment opportunities or lack of it in the rural area, inadequate infrastructure to balance the inflow, uncontrolled or poorly planned urban development, high standard living in the urban center and ill implementation of developmental plans (Sinha 2018).

6. Effects of Urban Sprawl in Developing Countries

Urban sprawl has long been associated with a negative effect on the natural environment, residence wellbeing, biodiversity and the climate. Nonetheless, looking at urban sprawl from just centrifugal perspective, there are some perceived benefits of urban sprawl. As noted earlier, urban sprawl is an expansion of cities beyond it regulated boundaries into the peri-urban, thus the result of expansion into the suburb do not always result into negative impact. Here are some silver linings of urban sprawl in some developing countries:

- Due to the affordability of land and housing in the peri-urban, middle class or even lower class individual can own a reasonable house, which gives a level of satisfaction and fulfillment to the owners (Kahn 2001).
- In most developing countries, the readily available plots of land in the suburban area own by "soil of the land" are purchased for the construction of residential units at a competitive price, which strengthens the financial positions of the farmers. Thus, the lives of this individual who are usually low class improve (Kassa 2018).
- Some suburban areas are relatively quiet with few or no restrictions. Thus, people escape into these areas for serenity.
- Residence has a community spirit and connection/social relation due to the fact that most of the residences are of rural root with the unique characteristics of rural settlement.
- The suburban, still have a ready access to open space, provide dwellers with a chance to enjoy nature and an easy escape from the city problems. Proximity to rural area and first access to the fresh agricultural produce (Brueckner, 2000).

On the contrary, urban sprawl has obviously done more damages than good to the environment and individual in developing countries. Here are some negative effects of urban sprawl in developing countries:

- Agricultural land: Land is difficult to access and afford in the city. Hence, excessive urban expansion have claimed farmlands and open spaces, bringing about conversion of agricultural lands in these sub-urban areas to non-agricultural use or deforestation so to speak, especially for residential development. As a result, there is need for importation of consumable agricultural produce from far away rural area, in turn, the level of agricultural produce drops, fresh and healthy products is lacking and affects the prices inflates.
- Climate: There are two main causes of climate change: natural and anthropogenic (main cause). The natural cause is the volcanic activity and solar output while the detrimental anthropogenic cause is as a result of urban sprawl and human activities overtime (Feng and Gauthier 2018). Carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the most detrimental contributor to global climate change (Edwing, et al 2008). This done by the frequent automobile-oriented transportation of people from the edge of the city into urban center for work related reason to earn a living. Social factor and beliefs in Developing countries such as Nigeria, contributes to the CO₂ emission, because it is of the opinion that the more auto mobile you own, the higher your social status and most individual strive to own and put a car on the road, without giving consideration to environmental impact of the carbon dioxide emission. More also, Domestic greenhouse gas emissions from burning of fossil fuel such as; coal and oil releases Carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄) and nitrous oxide (N₂O) in the air and gives greenhouse effect on the planet. Developing countries such as part of Asia and Africa with high level of poverty, residents depend on coal and wood burning to carry out domestic activities such as cooking, heating and source of light. These practices obviously have a negative impact on the

climate as felt from unprecedented rise in temperature, sea water level and extreme weather condition. Unfortunately, most Developing countries have a weak regulatory framework as regards sprawl which is a major factor in climate change.

- Quality of life: World Health Organization (WHO) defines Quality of life as “an individual’s perception of his/her position in life in the context of the culture and value systems(environment) in which he/she lives, and in relation to his/her goals, expectations, standards(living) and concerns” (The WHOQOL Group, 1997). People inevitably move to the city for a better financial status, granted some are better off in the urban area financially but have a below standard quality of life. There are many environmental factors that hinder the quality of life and wellbeing of urban area dwellers. Consequences of urban Sprawling expose people to poor health and constrained economic opportunity. More auto mobile on the road result into traffic congestion, making commuters to be stuck and spend more time in traffic to reach their jobs, homes, schools and shopping areas. Due to the over reliance of most developing countries on automobile and traveling long distance in it, they inhale Poor air quality from carbon dioxide emission which is associated with severe respiratory problems, experience car accidents and pedestrian injuries and fatalities (Frumkin 2002). Wellbeing and quality of life is often associated with access to nature, green parks and sustainable environment, but in reality, the sprawl expansion encroached on nature. And for the fact that urban sprawl is a leapfrog development or unplanned settlement none of these quality of life aid are present. In retrospect, all of the above mention urban sprawl effect in developing countries result into below standard quality of life, reduced life expectancy, less prosperous life, obesity and ill health.
- Slums: The resulting effect of urban sprawl and the story of urban sprawl will be incomplete without the mention of slums. In most developing countries, Slums are aggravated by urban poor who could not afford and keep up with the high standard of living inside the city. Slums are the degraded settlements in the edge of the urban area. According UN-HABITAT (2006), a slum household is a group of individuals living under the same roof in an urban area lacking the following: permanent shelter durable to withstand extreme weather, adequate room/indoor space, easy access to clean water, Access to adequate sanitation in the form of a private or public toilet. UN-HABITAT analyses show that over 80 per cent of the Sub-Saharan Africa’s region households have one or two slum shelter. Nnaemeka-Okeke (2016) found out that the slums in Nigeria lacks essential social and welfare infrastructure like water, electricity, health care and educational facilities and generally unsafe.
- Environmental effect: urban sprawl is a major contributor to environmental degradation and pollution namely; bad air quality due to mobile source emission from cars, trucks and traffic congestion in the long commuting hours of sub urban dwellers working in the city, the energy emission and consumption due to high population density of consumer in the same place at the same time which in turn increases the surface temperature (shim et al 2006). Sprawl makes the natural environment degraded and more fragmented, habitat becomes smaller, making it difficult for some certain wildlife species to survive as they try to reach breeding ponds, hibernation sites, feeding locations, or to establish viable nesting areas (Bruegmann, Robert 2005). Flooding and water pollution is another environmental hazard caused by urban sprawl. Negligence, no or unimplemented policy to checkmate the erection of buildings and waste disposal on rain water path and lack of adequate drainage system is visible in sprawl area in most developing countries.

7. Nostalgia in Human

What is nostalgia? The term eludes easy definition and categorization. Nonetheless, there are numerous definition of nostalgia which alludes to yearning, bitter sweetness, and positivity. Nostalgia can be define as “pleasure and sadness that is caused by remembering something from the past and wishing that you could experience it again” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2014), and “a sentimental yearning for the happiness of a former place or time” (Random House Dictionary, 2014) The term “nostalgia” typically conjures up images of a previous time when life was “good or unpleasant. Nostalgia comes from the Greek word *nostos*, meaning “return home,” and *algia*, meaning pain or longing. Hence, nostalgia literally means “homesickness (Wilson 2014). Interestingly, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, nostalgia was considered medically as a neurological diseases / psychological illness. Even by the end of the 20th century nostalgia was still considered as a medical condition, but mercifully restricted to four groups of people: soldiers serving abroad, seamen, immigrants, and first-year boarding or university students (Batcho, 2013a; Sedikides, Wildschut, & Baden, 2004). Nostalgia is “between the head and the heart”; it is both cerebral and visceral. The head knows that what is being fondly recalled wasn’t really that way, but the heart finds comfort in the feeling (Wilson 2014). Nostalgia solely relies on the supply of a type of autobiography memory, “the bittersweet recall of emotional past events (Mills and Coleman 1994).



Figure 1: Nostalgia solely depends on the supply of memory of past places with a place attachment and symbolic – physical or abstract.

Reflectively, with the above definitions, synonyms and descriptions of nostalgia, it is obvious that the feeling of nostalgia helps people find meaning in their lives, it buttress the accomplishment of ones goals by inducing meaning to life and self-continuity. It increases mind energy, reduces stress, and regulates meaning-seeking in boredom. Rural settlements are characterized by elements that trigger nostalgia when an individual is removed from a place of identity into a place that only encourages placelessness (urban area) as against sense of place by it artificial creations, land use, lack of natural elements and aesthetics.

8. Nostalgia for Rural Elements in the Urban

As noted earlier, urban areas are the engines for industrial and economic development which in turn attracts people from surrounding places and predominantly from rural areas for a better financial and economic gains (Burchfield et al, 2006). Speaking about the characteristics of the rural to urban migrant, socially speaking, they are mostly young people with rural upbringing and with tendency towards having a strong bond with their hometown. Culturally speaking, they are sincere and hardworking and trying to make better education and living condition for themselves and their children. The nostalgia feeling is peculiar to this set of individual who inevitably migrate from rural to urban and the nostalgic moment is perfectly natural. Nostalgia in this context is the “longing for what is lacking in a changed present, a yearning for what is now unattainable, simply because time is irreversible” (Pickering and Keightley 2006). Thus, a changed present for rural to urban immigrant is their current urban residence, lacking all sort of rural abstract and physical characteristics this individual are familiar with, and as a result, a strong nostalgia kicks in. More also, because, material and immaterial mediate people’s relationship to their past and, often, they trigger powerful mnemonic responses (Parkin 1999). Using Boym Svetlana (2002) “future of nostalgia” write up about nostalgia feeling felt by student abroad, soldiers, and workers serving abroad during the world wars to explain the similar nostalgia experience of rural to urban immigrant. She explains that this yearning had an amazing ability to remember sensations, tastes, sounds, smells, the “minutiae and trivia” of the past or lost moments. More also, quoting Dr. Albert von Haller, she wrote “One of the earliest symptoms is the sensation of hearing the voice of a person that one loves in the voice of another with whom one is conversing, or to see one’s family again in dreams”. From personal experience, these are in fact one of many nostalgic moment felt my rural to urban immigrant; the yearning to see loved ones, to engage in cultural/ traditional activities the individual is use to use to in the rural social settings. Furthermore, she mentioned some details that triggers nostalgia for the homeland or social cultural background, these are: thick rusty mother soup, artworks, ornamentation with deep meaning, fresh out of farm meat and produce, the music from home, the moonlight storytelling and the rural fabrics or wraps. All of these are lacking in the urban area. More also, nostalgia for the natural in the urban is another natural feeling for migrant with a core rural root. Rural area is characterized by natural features such as the aged trees that serve as habitat for animals, relaxation and meeting point for residence, greenery, biodiversity, breath taking natural topography, water and water bodies, the refreshing feeling of walking through plantation and forest. Additionally, cultural orientation and practices peculiar to the rural settlement that encourages community connection and unity is done away with in the urban area where people lead a very busy life to earn a living.

Reflectively, Due to urbanization, modernization and quest for world class lifestyle; these features are encroached on and eradicated. Thus, nostalgic rural to urban immigrant looks desperately for spiritual addressee, memorable signs, familiar smell and encounter, but can’t be found and he/she continue to lack sense of place.

9. Integration of Rural Elements into Urban Area as a Sustainable Urban Aid in Developing Countries

The rural area takes particular stance in sustainability. The practicality of sustainable environment is more obvious in the rural settlement because of the natural features in this geographical location. Granted, urbanization trend and it effects is irreversible but can be manageable through sustainable planning and policies. Thus, the aim is to incorporate rural features into some crucial sector of the urban settlements in developing countries. This will in turn create a paradigm for achieving the United Nation Sustainable Development goal 11 – “make cities and human settlements inclusive safe resilient and sustainable” and an automatic positive effect on goal 3 – “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages” (UN 2015), in vulnerable developing countries. However, there is need to first give meaning to what sustainable urban means. A sustainable urban is “a mixed-use densely populated urban form that creates efficiency gains. It combines greater productivity and innovation capacity with lower costs and reduced environmental impact. It provides secure and healthy urban environments where both people and nature can thrive, and offers residents affordable housing, vibrant street life, and safe and high-quality public spaces and infrastructure”(GPSCWB 2018). Moreover the World Bank global platform for Sustainable Cities provides a

universal frame work in which urban area in developing countries can adopt to achieve sustainability in their urban areas. These frame works are: 1. diagnosis – to sincerely understand where the city is in term of sustainability urban development. 2. Defining a vision and identifying priorities. 3. Financing and implementation plan. 4. Monitoring and constant evaluation. There are 3 main faces of an urban form, and when these faces are touched through the integration of rural element into it, the urban area becomes a sustainable one. These faces/sectors are: urban planning/land use, architecture and aesthetics.

a) **Urban planning/ Land use:** The way we design, allocate and use the land available is one of the key aspects that either have a positive or negative effect on our environment and quality of life. The term urban planning is defined as “the political process, technical planning, design and development of land use and the built environment, including buildings, services, routes and the needed infrastructure to navigate in and out of urban areas, such as transportation, communications, and distribution networks (Nigel 1998). Thus, this is an important aspect where the incorporation of rural elements can be effective either in a new urban development or the revitalization of existing urban area. A typical urban plan and land use development in developing countries must incorporate the following rural features into the urban:

- **Urban agriculture:** In many developing countries, urban sprawl have encroached upon nearby agricultural lands, consequently, food and other agricultural produce are transported from a faraway rural area and they are expose to germs and infections, inflated purchase price and some become decay before getting to the destination. Hence, to have a rural agricultural practice in the urban area is a major way to achieve urban sustainability. Reasons are, urban agriculture is a representation of a system that sustains the environment, improves local economy, enhance community spirit/unity, creates a thriving local, save, healthy and seasonal food system, while at the same time protects the ecosystem (Goldstein, 2011). The practice of urban agriculture can take many forms such as: neighborhood allotment gardens, personal house farm in the backyard, a large commercial production area, rooftop gardens and a large urban farm. It can include livestock management and animal husbandry. Urban dwellers with rural root have the skills needed to carry out such practices and they will be gainfully employed in an urban area while enjoying the luxury of the urban settings.
- **Market square:** A typical rural area in most developing countries have a market square that opens once a week or every five days, this market is where local farmers sale their fresh produce, communicate and meet friends. It is proposed above to practice urban agriculture in an urban environment, thus, to sell and exhibit their produce, market squares different from the city centers should be a part of an urban design and land use. This square can also serve as place for traditional and cultural practices like traditional dance, festivals, rituals and meeting points.
- **Urban forest:** Granted, the forest in the rural area is naturally formed, this feature can be artificially incorporated into the urban area for a sustainable environment. An urban forest includes all artificial or natural grown trees and other vegetation within and around the urban area and the soil and water that enhance it. It encompasses vegetation in streets, parks, gardens, plazas, campuses, river and creek, wetlands, railway corridors, community gardens, balconies and roofs. An urban forest is a form of “absolute green strategy and afforestation”. When this rural feature is fully integrated into local urban planning and management, it helps transform cities into more resilient, healthy, pleasant place to live and increase aesthetic value. Urban forest improves air quality by removing air pollutants, it shades roads, buildings, and regulates temperature, hereby reducing energy consumption and has economic value, because, many tree species produce edible products. The implementation of this green strategy has worked in both developed and developing countries such as, Nairobi’s Karura forest, Beijing’s afforestation miracle, Peru’s capital city, Lima, Singapore and in America states. Hence, with a thorough implementation plan, developing countries in Africa, Asia, South America and others can learn and adopt the green and afforestation strategy for sustainable Social, economic, environmental value and better quality of life of urban dwellers.
- **Rural village district:** The common narrative and reality of a country is that the rural area or villages is located outside or surrounds the urban area, but this study proposed to change the planning by using a lake-like concept of villages inside or surrounded by the city. Incorporating a well-planned village into the urban land use with core rural characteristics. Just like there is Industrial Avenue, Bank Street, Commercial Avenue in the city, the city can have a tradition street, Village Avenue and a Spring Street with historical and rural scape features such as: narrow pedestrian path, zigzag, dusty, bushy and muddy lanes, little houses and huts, shrines for traditional worship or practice, the village administration and commercial offices, and storage places. The main transportation means will be as it is in the rural area with the use of bicycle, horses, camel and donkeys. Hence, urban village will be free from the green house emission or carbon dioxide. More also, a compact Medium to high density housing, style houses with thatched high and gentle slope roofs can be built. Just as rural settlement or villages exhibit a unique connection and social inherent, this can permeate into cities too, hereby restoring lost cultural and moral values in urban area.

b) **Architecture:** Architecture is a tangible face of urban area, and a sustainable urban can be achieved by adopting a rural type of architecture in the aspect of design, materials, construction technique and connection to nature. There are two similar architecture concepts this study propose for urban sustainability in developing countries. These

concepts are: “vernacular architecture” and “Biophilic architecture”. Vernacular architecture is a concept of architecture that responds to site; draws on peculiar local or indigenous traditions, materials, and crafts; and strives to create a sense of community. It’s the type of architecture that represents what has been, what is and what we want it to always be (Brian et al. 2015). They are tailored to sociological need, climate and aesthetic functions.



Figure 2: A form of local or vernacular architecture peculiar to the rural settlement should be in a district inside the city as part of the urban scape as a whole.

Unlike the urban architecture of most developing countries, in which due to rapid and uncontrolled urbanization and social aspiration or quest for world view, the urban architecture products are not climate responsive and do not in most cases fit into the context. Thus, having streets, avenues or districts with mainly vernacular/ rural type or hand-made type of architecture is a sure path to attaining sustainable urban area and combat climate change effect.

More also, humans possess an inbuilt longing to connect with nature because of we are a type specie that is historically meant to evolve in a natural world not in the artificial world or “concrete jungle”. Thus our senses and emotion and intellect feel connected to nature. This natural need is called “Biophilia”. Therefore, an architecture design that satisfies this need is called “Biophilic design. Kellert(2008) defines Biophilic design as “the deliberate attempt to translate an understanding of the inherent human affinity to affiliate with natural systems and processes—known as biophilia—into the design of the built environment” (Fig 3).



Figure 3: A pictorial representation of Biophilia architecture – nature is incorporated in and outside of a building for sustainability and aesthetic.

These natural features and system are related to sensory features such as light, sound, odor, wind, weather, water, vegetation, animals, and landscapes. Biophilic design is a form of green architecture that can reduce stress, enhance our creativity and cognitive function, improves our quality of life and speed up healing. Therefore, the high rise condominium, the enormous office and commercial buildings characterized by most urban area can still be in existence for a sign of modernization, but biophilic features must be incorporated for greater benefit for humans and the earth.

- c) **Aesthetics:** Aesthetics simply put as beauty, pleasure, satisfaction or otherwise. The aesthetic values of the city thus include more than urban beauty; they also encompass the perceptual experience of meanings and traditions, of familiarity and difference. These can be reflected in the urban fabrics/materials, ornamentation/decoration and landscape. Aesthetic experience and judgment in an urban area can either be positive or negative depending on the environmental features and value system. Negative aesthetic values obstruct positive perceptual experience through the presence of factors such as noise, air pollution, strident signage, utility lines, littered streets, and boring, conventional or oppressive buildings. While a positive aesthetic experience in an urban settlements stems from logicity and functionality; ‘natural forms and materials’; ‘local aesthetic and cultural identity’; ‘individuality and diversity’; ‘simplicity and minimalism’ (Zafarmand 2003). Sustainable and good urban aesthetic is linked to satisfaction and welfare of residence which is possible through intricate planning, development, rural ornamentation and material usage of the three-dimensional features that makes up the urban area. Speaking about rural material

usage for aesthetic experience and sustainability, materials such as wood/timber gives people a warmth, soft feeling; rough stone gives people a rough, bold and uninhibited feeling; earth (mud, clay, adobe), gives people a plain and natural feeling. In addition, for beauty, pleasure, self and cultural identity in an urban area, incorporating traditional ornamentation, art and decoration (Fig 4) into urban artifacts in developing countries is a tangible way to achieve sustainability and pleasurable aesthetic experience.

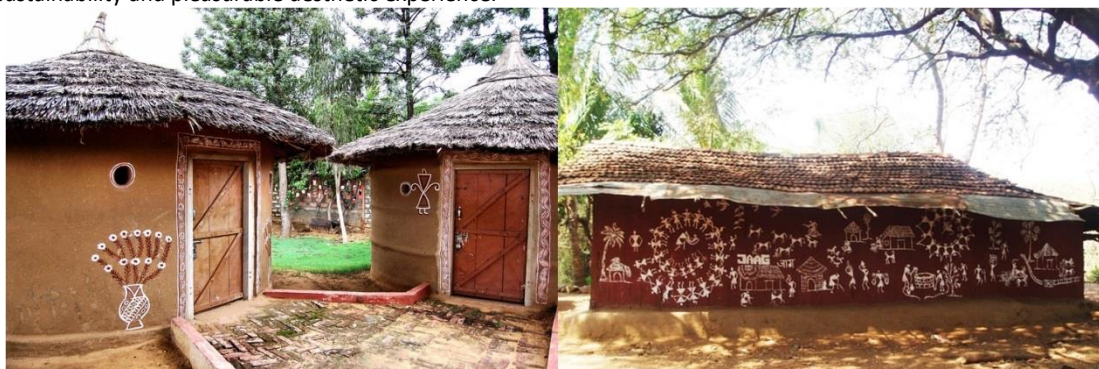


Figure 4: Decoration on rural walls and building which is symbolic and gives an aesthetic experience to be incorporate into urban artefacts.

These decorations/ornamentations depict history, cultural heritage, beauty, symbolic significant, craft and art skills of a country. A well carved rural decoration can be merge into urban household appliances and components such as; furniture and kitchen utensils. They can be equally use in building aesthetics, in walls, floor finishes, column decoration, urban landmarks and icon.

7. Integration of Rural Elements into the Urban as Nostalgia Aid in Developing Countries

Humans have the tendency to constantly search for meaning and understanding, a form of self-awareness, sense of belonging to really come to know ourselves and our place in the social world. Yet nostalgia for rural life is impossible without the subjective experience of urban culture. One must first identify oneself as an alien, who was removed from a place of identity or been exiled to the urban distant land, so as to long for a 'return' to the rural hometown (David Cole 2015). This is the typical life of most rural-urban migrant, due to hard economy, unemployment and rural neglect by the government; many rural dwellers are in a way forcefully removed from their rural life to experience the urban life for supposed better economic and financial prospect. When this individual wants to recount life on the rural side, they use phrases such as: the good old days, back in the days, the good life. It is a wave of nostalgia, moments that feel like they're locked in time, a yearning for a previous place of happiness. Therefore, to aid or find an antidote to individual Nostalgic feeling, the tangible element of the rural such as structures, buildings and land use and fabrics must be present in the urban scape. Hence, the search for meaning and yearning for a past place of happiness can be presently fulfilled through these tangible rural elements in the urban. More also, the intangible things of the rural area automatically incorporated through the tangible things such as: the folks song, traditional entertainment, family and community bond, cultural and traditional Practices. All of these features when present in the urban is an excellent escape to a world of simplicity and peace and natural beauty, because it arouses their nostalgic feelings, a kind of vintage charm. In turn gives "their inner peace, fulfilling their need for self-actualization and improving their subjective well-being. When the rural-urban immigrant looks for a nostalgic connection and finds it, he/she is willing and able to overlook negative aspects of their choice to stay in the urban area, even when there is little economic advantage. (David Cole 2015).

8. Conclusions

In reality, the influx of people from the rural settlement to the urban cannot be stopped, but the resulting effect of urban sprawl on the climate, the environment, the urban dwellers and the world in general can be manageable, and a paradigm can be establish for a long term solution of these bad effects. Therefore, this study is able to qualitatively and with present reality, emphasized the causes and effects of urban sprawl in developing countries. And equally propose a form of rural- urban synthesis as regards, architecture, aesthetics and land use in urban areas for sustainability and nostalgia aid. Predominantly, the green scenery is what characterized the rural settlements, thus a rural-like urban green strategy is proposed by this study to be incorporated into the urban. And as regards the well-being, quality of life and nostalgia feeling of the rural-urban immigrant, this study emphasizes the integration of rural features which is a part of a past life of this individual that gives peace, pleasure and happiness to the urban dwellers. These features include rural decorations, city forest, core rural villages inside the urban area with cultural and traditional practices peculiar to the demographic location. In summary, here are some of the benefits of the integration of rural features into the urban settlement in developing countries:

- a) Sustainability: urban forest, urban agriculture, Biophilia architecture, rural-like urban village/district/street, urban vernacular architecture and natural surfaces preservation are proposed by this paper for sustainability. the highlighted effect are:
 - Create a paradigm to achieve The United Nation Sustainable Development goals 1,2, 3, 11, 12 and 15 in developing countries.
 - Combat climate change and enhance city resilience
 - Preserve the natural habitat and encourage biodiversity

- b) Nostalgia: A longing and yearning for a past place of happiness, which becomes painful when this place of past experience cannot be experienced in the present. Thus, this study proposed to incorporate some if not all of these features that trigger nostalgia into the modern urban scape in developing countries. Features are: symbolic art/decoration/ornamentation, rural aesthetics, rural traditional and cultural practices (classic songs, entertainment, morals, beliefs) and rural land use/landscape. In turn, a fulfilled yearning for a past memory that seems lost brings self- actualization, inner peace, and more creative, boost their immune system to keep on for a life is worth living.
- c) Quality of life/well-being: The green strategy and access to fresh food through urban agriculture proposed by this study is linked to well-being and a better quality of life. Connection to nature can help individuals fight against mental health issues like depression, anxiety and stress, helps overall cognitive well-being. A favourable environment with lively space and activities such as green pavilion, parks, bicycle path, easy navigation and transportation and a reform/redesign slum contribute to the quality of life of urban dwellers.

Conclusively, it is recommended that government, built environment practitioners and pedagogic bodies strive to implement, create awareness and teach how every individual can be a part of the above proposals in achieving a better world for now and future generation.

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