

Evaluation of Socio-Cultural Principles for the Design of Integrated Cultural Center, Adamawa State

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Abstract

This paper explores the evaluation of socio-cultural principles for the design of integrated cultural center, proposed design of the cultural center in Yola, Adamawa State. Culture always seen as a complex issue and socially, politically highly sensitive, it has nowadays become an overused word (clined) in almost all contexts of reality. Culture has also been an area in which we most times find controversial in the political and social arena opened that the word culture is often used abruptly without knowing exactly the meaning. The research aim of this study is to design an integrated cultural center exploring the socio-cultural diversity of Adamawa state with the view to enhancing cultural prosperity. The study adopted a qualitative research approach, involving a case study of the Kaduna State Cultural Centre. The findings will provide valuable insights for architects in creating intuitive and accessible to cultural buildings in Nigeria. The study concludes that the evaluation of socio-cultural principles for the design of integrated cultural center can significantly enhance the usability and navigability of public buildings like the proposed integrated cultural center, Adamawa state.

Keywords: Socio-Cultural Principles, Cultural Center, Cultural Prosperity, Cultural Identity, Social Arena.

Introduction

Culture is one element that makes a community to persist as a distinct entity. According to Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, culture is the arts, customs of a group of people. It is also defined as the way of life of a group of people. In essence culture comprise of all the unique beliefs and attitudes which give shape to life style, identity, arts and intellectual achievements of a group of people or community (Rapoport, 2006). Cultural identity is one's own sense of his culture (Nickeeninetalls, 2011). Cultural diversity refers to a society with separate people of different ethnic roots that have different mode of dressing, arts, languages as well as other traditional or customary practices which are either similar or different in most cases from one another. The people of each ethnic group highly valued and admired their traditional practices and would not compromise their traditions for any reason what so ever, and as such, pay more allegiance to their ethnic authority. Cultural diversity has also been referred to mean multiculturalism by some scholars, and multiculturalism therefore, it literally to a plurality of cultures, which is simply a case in Nigeria (Udebunu, 2011).

Moreover, the research looked at the need to re-discover the cultural heritage of the people of Adamawa and how architecture will help promote and develop the culture of the region in question as a solution to the societal problem of wasted cultural talents of traditional dances, drama, arts and festival, language and other to serve as a third theoretical underpin. The lack of a common space for the performance of these cultural activities within the state is itself a challenge that needs to be addressed. This calls for a propose design for a cultural center that will satisfy the contemporary social needs and also at the same time serve as an expression of cultural identity for attraction within the state.

Statement of the Problem

Cultural diversity is a fundamental aspect of human societies, shaping identities, fostering connections, and enriching lives. In the context of Nigeria, a country known for heterogeneous cultural landscape characterized with many identity-based conflicts, Adamawa states stands as a microcosm of this diversity. The state is home to a multitude of ethnic groups, each with its distinct traditions, language, and heritage. However, while cultural diversity is a source of strength, the lack appropriate space to celebrate, preserve, and educate people about these unique cultures presents a significant challenge.

The establishment of an integrated cultural center has emerged as a solution to address this gap, aiming to provide a physical and intellectual platform that not only showcases the richness of Adamawa cultures but also fosters unity, understanding, and sustainable development. Some researchers have worked on related topics of the studies like: Innocent, (2009) Nairobi Kenya worked on the restoration of cultural centers through the use of contemporary design also Sylvanus, (2014) studied the application of cultural and traditional features in the design of cultural center in Nigeria and Abubakar, (2011) use of cultural element as source of forms in the design of cultural center katsina. Thus, evaluation of socio-cultural principles in the design of integrated cultural center in Adamawa state is the purpose of the study to sustain cultural growth that will serve as a building to foster shared, heritage and social control.

Literature Review

Culture always seen as a complex issue and socially and politically highly sensitive, it has nowadays become an overused word (clinched) in almost all contexts of reality. Culture has also been an area in which researchers most time find controversial in the political and social arena (UNESCO, 2011). Geli (2008) opened that the word culture is often used abruptly without knowing exactly what it is referring to. the word culture is a word which has been recently incorporated into language with its current meaning. There are many readings and different approaches to the notion of culture and the problem is what is included and what is excluded from it. Mondiacult (1982) gave a broad definition of culture as it integrates the cultural expressions, as specific manifestations of cultures. Hence, the definition goes as;

culture is that which offers the context, values, subjectivity, attitudes and skills on which the development process must take place. As seen from the above definition, it is clear that the idea of the complementary nature of the cultures, their dynamism and the generation of culture, culture identities which are not mutually exclusive have been included.

A culture is the way of life of a people through which they humanized and socialized nature. It implies a world-view, a value system, and a network of social relationships (Featherstone, 1996). Culture is not static; it grows out of reverence for selected customs and habits. Culture is changing; People make culture, culture makes people (Tomlinson, 1999). Culture is the total pattern of human behavior and its products embodied in speech, action, and artifacts and dependent upon man's capacity for learning and transmitting knowledge to succeed in generations (Webster's 3rd new international dictionary). The term culture can be defined broadly as being; "the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group..." (UNESCO, 1995). Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary also defined culture as the advanced development of the body, mind and spirit by training and experience. Ayangaor (2003); defined culture as a pattern of life, ways that man has evolved in his attempts to understand, use and control his social and natural environment.

Thus, culture is not a static set of values and practices: it is constantly recreated as people question, adapt and redefine their values and practices when faced with changes and the interchange of ideas. Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievement of human groups, including their embodiment in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e., historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, on the other as conditioning elements of further action (Al-Kroeber and Kluckhohn in , Dana 2012).

Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach, involving a literature review, a case study and interviews conducted to examine the reflection of cultural diversity in the design of integrated cultural center in the case study: sketches of floor plans, views, and photographs as summarized below in Table 1:

Table 1 shows the case studies and the parameters at a glance

ISSUES	CASE STUDY ONE	CASE STUDY TWO	CASE STUDY THREE
Profile Picture:			
Name:	Kaduna state cultural center	Gidan Dan-Hausa, Kano (Hausa Architecture)	Uluru-Kati Cultural Centre, Australia
Location:	Kaduna state	Kano, Nigeria	Uluru, Australia.
Client:	Arts and Culture Department of Information and Culture Ministry	Immigration service,	
Architects:	Kaduna State Ministry of works and housing	Kano State Ministry of works and transport	Unknown
Style	Modern	Traditional (Hausa Architecture).	Modern
Current features	Theatre, offices, outdoor recreational space, car parking, toilets and rehearsal rooms.	Theatre, Offices, Outdoor Recreational Space, Car Parking, Toilet.	Theatre, offices, outdoor recreational space, car parking, toilets and rehearsal rooms.

Source: Researchers' Field Work (2024)

Results

Cultural identity is one's own sense of his culture (Nickeeninetalls, 2011). Culture always seen as a complex issue and socially, politically highly sensitive, it hasnowadays become an overused word (clinched) in almost all contexts of reality. Culture has also been an area in which we most times find controversial in the political and social arena (UNESCO, 2011). Geli (2008) opened that the word culture is often used abruptly without knowing exactly what it is referring to. Prior to the colonialism era in Africa, the geographical area called Nigeria today was inhabited by different peoples, empires, tribes and kingdoms. And, these people have different cultures, traditions and religion (Nwegbu, Eze, and Asogwa, 2011), but, the British government turned a blind eye to the diverse cultural identities and combined culturally and traditionally separate, district ethnic groups and autonomous tribes and peoples into one entity called Nigeria Mashood, (2020).

The Nigeria state consists of more than 400 different ethnic groupings, with the inclusion of the three dominant religions, Islam, Christianity and traditional animist religions" who are to some extent not allies and whose relationships had long been characterized by suspicion and mistrust. In other words, colonialism was the singular most important factor

that brought about identity conflicts in the country. Nigeria presents a complex web of individuals as well as criss crossing divergent ethnic groupings of which the ethnic and sub-ethnic (communal) are the most salient and the main basis of various conflicts in the country. (Udoiem, 1997 and Ikubaje, 2002). It is worthy to note here that, culturally diverse countries or heterogeneous societies have tendencies to face far greater challenges in nation-building process than homogeneous societies, an example of which Nigeria is characterized with many identity-based conflicts Lawrence, (2020), such as; intra (communal) and inter (state) ethnic conflicts, ethno-regional conflicts, ethno-religious conflicts and ethno-cultural conflicts respectively.

The splitting of Nigeria into regional identities (that is, North and South) is a structural creation of the British government during their colonial adventure in Nigeria, an action which started the ethnic majority-minority syndrome and the majoritarian basis of politics which took roots as a result of these structures, hence Nigeria remains divided on socio-political and economic issues as a result of the complex and diverse ethnic groups, religious, and regional divisions in the country (Osaghae and Suberu, 2005). This study was conducted in Adamawa state using the observation, interview and focus group discussion as attributes of cultural domain, and it indicates that people in the study area cannot be disconnected from their culture even in a more formal environment. Based on the interview and focus group discussion conducted indicates that the evaluation of socio-cultural principles for the design of integrated cultural center contributes to the effectiveness of accessing the place in a short period of time. Therefore, a comfortable design and space for the cultural center.

Discussion and Findings

The study revealed significant the classification, protection and valorization of outstanding natural and cultural values have a role to play in the development of national or international cultural tourism. There can also be no doubt, that it contributes to strengthening the local populations' pride, dignity and feeling of belonging, not to mention the job creation and revenue-making opportunities it offers to them. In recent times there has been a noticeable increase in local initiatives aimed at making African cultural values more visible and increasing its appreciation among the general public. These initiatives stem from a growing awareness among local populations that cultural and natural resources constitute assets which can be used to generate harmonious local development and bring economic benefits to people.

Conservation and valorization of heritages, development of tourist circuits and guided visits, publication and diffusion of promotional and educational materials, development of museums cities, etc., constitute significant approaches to generating harmonious local developments. The study demonstrates the effectiveness of evaluation of socio-cultural principles for the design of integrated cultural center in enhancing the functionality and efficiency of the cultural center. The findings support the importance of considering social

needs and behaviors in the design of cultural center in capital cities and interpretation centers in close proximity to heritage sites, holding of permanent, temporary and mobile exhibitions, sensitizing children on cultural values through educational programs, development of cultural centers in important.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates the successful evaluation of socio-cultural principles for the design of integrated cultural center, Adamawa state, Nigeria. The results show significant improvements in cultural center, highlighting the importance of evidence-based design approaches that prioritize cultural center and user needs. The findings contribute to the body of knowledge on cultural center environments, providing insights for designers, architects, and facility managers. By incorporating cultural center can significantly enhance the usability and navigability of these spaces.

Recommendations

Designing an integrated cultural center in a culturally diverse area like Adamawa State requires thoughtful planning to ensure it effectively promotes social cohesion and cultural exchange.

For the successful execution and implementation of the design, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Government should create an enabling environment for local communities and cultural groups in the country to regularly organize festivals.
- ii. Cultural related institutions like the various ministries of Arts and Culture and Tourism should package and market Nigeria's traditional festivals across the country.

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