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Matters Arising in Urban Governance: Structural Adversities and the Vulnerability of Cities in Africa

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Abstract:

As the search for sustainable cities lingers the rhetoric of the vulnerability of cities in Africa elicits reconsideration. This paper contends that the vulnerability of cities in Africa extends beyond environmental adversities to include spatial distortions and disconnects in the form and function of urban regions that are referred to as structural adversities. The paper argues that the policy instruments of modern urban governance oversights these adversities. Thus the adversities remain as a continuous process that impacts city development, forcing cities in Africa to adopt informal strategies to manage productivity. Amongst other implications, the adversities have the potentials to upset the city-centered paradigm of new regionalism in Africa. This paper adopts the annals approach to rework the adversities and in the process rethink the function of the city in Africa.

1. Introduction

The African civilisation was led by traditions of culture, which translated into cities through the instrumentality of liberal arts. By 1800 African civilisation already had a long fascinating heritage in city development. The various stories of Arab merchants contained tales of flourishing African cities. These cities grew up in the medieval European period at a time when international trade between the Mediterranean, Europe and the Far East was expanding rapidly [14]. Intellectual explorers rediscovered this rich heritage of African ancestry and according to Davison et al. [12] reserved it in a cultural movement called *negritude* in other to rescue a main section of humanity from unhappy misunderstanding.

In the fifteenth century during the mercantilist period, contact with European merchants initiated external interest, which influenced trade relations. This manifested changes in the development of African spatial systems at the levels of the city, urban regions and nation-states. At the city level hybrid cities, which do not necessarily resonate with indigenous values, attitudes and institutions emerged. In the current dispensation, this category of cities are loosely referred to as 'African cities'. Ideally, these hybrid-cities are 'African cities' in the Diaspora in their homeland [13]. These cities better referred to as 'imperial cities' are programmed/conditioned to respond to external economic policies of extraction. The presence of these cities compels the preference of the expression 'cities in Africa' rather than 'African cities'. These imperial cities contributed to the alteration of the space economy that are found within the boundaries of nation-states bequeathed by colonialism. Imperial cities signalled the first phase of imperial space economy in Africa.

By the mid-nineteenth century the planning culture altered. Rather than spirituality, economic growth determined with western values leveraged planning. These values were measured with the institutional order of late capitalist modernity. The measure is 'based on individualism as the basis of social reproduction; on citizenship in a representative democracy' [21]. The values serve as the bases for political and economic relations. Hence it provides utilitarian rationality in 'a system of generational commodity production and market exchange (mediated by state redistribution)' [21].

Under the influence of external interest urban Africa evolved in tandem with the restructuring of its cities to contend regionalism in the mid-twentieth century. As Stephan Kipfer and Kanishka Goonewarda [24] reasoned calling for urban anti-imperialism might appear to be counter-intuitive. Nevertheless, 'the need to conquer, control and segregate urban space assumes an unprecedented significance for contemporary U.S.-led imperialism, as the new empire embarks on a direct re-colonisation of exploited peripheries' [24]. As Mike Davis cited in [24] reported recently: 'The battle of Fallujah, together with the conflict unfolding in Shia cities and Baghdad slums, are high-stakes tests, not just of U.S. policy in Iraq, but of Washington's ability to dominate what Pentagon planners consider the "key battlespace of the future" – the Third World city.'

The peculiar nature of city restructuring under the influence of external interest, which preoccupied Peter Marcuse, guided most of the contributions in urban scholarship. These contributions, which are very well represented in the 2009 Special Issue of CITY, titled 'Cities for People, Not for Profit', spans from:

> Reflections on the nature of critical urban theory and the concept of the right to the city (Marcuse,Brenner, Goonewardena), through analyses of historical alternatives to the commodification of urban space (Flierl and Marcuse, Steinert), discussions of how best to interpret the contemporary moment of worldwide urban restructuring (Keil), critical engagements with established bodies of knowledge on urban questions (Rankin, Slater, Berntand Holm), concrete investigations of various contemporary patterns of urban socio-spatial restructuring and exclusion (Steinert,Keil, Yiftachel, Uitermark), and critical accounts of contemporary mobilizations that contest currently, dominant patterns of urbanism (Scharenberg and Bader, Boudreau, Mayer) [8].

As Brenner et al. [8] indicate, 'all of the contributions to this special issue insist on the centrality of commodification as an intellectual and political reference point for any critical account of the contemporary urban condition'.

It seems the restructuring of cities under the impact of the policy instruments of modern urban governance is taken for a given like the laws of nature. This attitude is worrisome because the resilience of cities is found to be vulnerable to adversities arising from the instrumentality of modern urban governance. At least this is the case with imperial cities found in Africa. The governance of this category of cities shows that their economic and planning policies tend to sustain the distortions found in the space economy, which are responsible for urban productivity decline [17]. Redressing this vulnerability is a major challenge today [29]. But current efforts to construct a universal resilience lens for cities as well as the prospects of operationalising the city-centred new regionalism initiative indicate some points of departure.

This paper argues that cities are vulnerable to powerful interests in urban governance that alter the structure and function of cities. Also the assessment of urban governance seldom considers the way the city function, especially in Africa where cities are presumed to be dysfunctional. This paper contends with these oversights and identifies the management of structural adversities as the core research problem. The critical question is: to what extent do structural adversities exist and how do their consideration influence resilient cities studies?

The specific aim of the paper is to advocate planning that retools the city that is to say to rework the function of the city in Africa. Retooling the city in Africa means to change the functioning of the city as an imperial instrument [37]. The primary objective is to examine epistemic changes in the functioning of cities in Africa due to major changes in development policy and planning interventions and to establish how resilient cities studies consider these changes. Therefore, the purpose of the research is to expound the prospect of cities in Africa to leverage positive operationalization of the city-centred new regionalism. Thus, this paper sets out with the hypothetical statement that Africa will benefit from the city-centred new regionalism initiative. The research methodology adopts desktop reviews using timeframe as line of argument.

This paper continues from this point with a resume on trends in planning intuition and paradigm shifts in new regionalism. Next is the representation of the restructuring of cities and space economy within historical systems in the civilisation of African societies. After that, an enquiry into the existence of structural adversities and planning challenges in Africa follows and then the review of resilient cities studies. Finally, the way forward is indicated, which leads to the concluding remarks.

2. Preliminary Literature: Trends in Planning Intuition and New Regionalism

Modern urban governance is not all about actors, procedures and events. A lot depends on the link between the instruments of urban governance and the outcome of their application in determining the structure of cities. This paper focuses attention on the resilience of adversities in the space economy due to planning practice in modern urban governance.

Current trend in planning tuition that is dominated by institutionalist content drivers seeks the economic bases of integration. This mode of integration favours the use of

infrastructure to tackle climatic adversities. Singh and Steinberg [48] expounded the infrastructure hypothesis. The UN-Habitat is positively disposed to the use of this hypothesis, especially for developing countries. However, African scholars do not seem to respond favourably to the hypothesis because of its tendency to create market-space for Euro-American mercantilism. Comfort Chukuezi [9] thinks the thesis fosters a new form of dependency arising from technology and raw materials. This tuition links with neo-imperialist plot in the twenty-first century, which is already regarded as a hidden agenda in most partnerships with African countries. Kimenyi [22] relied on the thesis to explain the current scramble for market-space in Africa. Against this backdrop, the spatial bases of integration stagnated. Consequently epistemological foundations and ideologies that are responsible for distortions and disconnects in the space economy are relegated in planning scholarship. Instead exclusion and informality are adopted as measures of the vulnerability of cities in Africa.

The current planning perception underpins neoliberal planning philosophy, which subjugates concerns for urban (structure) theories and spatial modelling in space. This planning perception encouraged sociologists, economists and indeed geographers to dominate urban studies. As a result, urban studies conceptually withdrew attention from the city. Renewed interest on the city, driven by factors of growth and environmental determinism, sparked off at the turn of the twenty-first century. By 2009, the concern for spatial justice was the vogue. The resilient city concept emerged followed by the idea of charter cities. The latest notion is the city-centred paradigm of new regionalism.

The idea of new regionalism had its heyday in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Mario Telò [52] indicates that new regionalism is not only economic, but also a multidimensional and political process. Telo further indicates that at the regional level, new regionalism is an attempt by states to strengthen regional control when traditional centralised national sovereignty no longer functions. They also tried to bargain collectively with extra-regional partners. It is presumably a response to uneven globalisation where small states seek to insulate themselves from the shock-waves of liberalisation. Successive, innovative forms of regionalisms have appeared as collective responses in different parts of the South [46].

The thrust of new regionalism is increasingly seen as a protectionist measure that is associated with openness (open regionalism) [50]. Söderbaum and Shaw [49] submits that its theoretical framework is at the developmental stage. Therefore, the concept of new regionalism comes on strong as anti-globalization drive although Yrynen [59] maintains that classic regionalism is resilient. Meanwhile, Acharya and Johnston [1] assert that literature in new regionalism challenged the rationalist bias of neo-liberal institutionalism and shifted its focus from formal institutions to informal sectors, parallel economies and non-state coalitions. However, this did not reflect in Elie Ngongang's [31] work, which portrays nation-states as the focal spatial system for new regionalism.

Later in the 2010s, the Regional Studies Association attempted to refocus new regionalism. This effort redirected the attention of new regionalism to relationships between cities and urban regions rather than between nation-states. However, it is quite difficult to pin the new face of new regionalism down further than that especially at the global level. Nevertheless at the global level there is need to fully exonerate new regionalism from the neo-imperialist plot, and ensure that its

philosophy and operational mechanisms do not uphold the values of the world system, which Wallerstein [56] defined in dependency theory. Shaw et al. [45] provided a comprehensive review of scholarly contributions on new regionalism. The contributions marginally examined deviated from the analysis of national and regional cooperation in the context of globalisation and internationalisation. However, on account of reference to Export Processing Zones (EPZs) found mainly in parts of Asia such as the Chinese triangle (involving nation-states including China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong), their work dared to deviate from treating traditional issues in classic regionalism. But for reference to EPZs common literature leaves the impression that there is nothing new about new regionalism.

As attention shifts to city-centred new regionalism the history of city development in Africa is given more elaborate attention in the next subsection.

3. The Restructuring of Cities in Africa – a Historical Perspective

The history of African cities seems to be relegated to the background too soon in urban scholarship. This history has caused a widespread misunderstanding of urban crisis in African countries, which is responsible for the current misdirection of urban planning in Africa. For purposes of engaging the city-centred new regionalism, this history is recalled with intent to diagnose the evolution of cities in Africa.

There are six taxonomies of historical systems in African civilisation that are marked with major socio-political transformations. They are; the period before the tenth century when traditional African Kingdoms flourished; between the tenth century and fifteenth century. Also, the mercantilist period marked by the Trans-Sahara Trade; between the fifteenth century and mid-nineteenth century. Finally, the inception of imperial control period; between the mid-nineteenth century and 1950, the capitalist colonial period; between the 1950s and 1980s, the independence decade and partial Keynesian period; and from 1980s until now, the neo-liberal period. Each period is associated with meta-theories, which influence the distribution of cities and the reworking of city structures in Africa.

Hitherto, most analyses of the city, which tend to treat the city as an isolated unit within the urban region, are randomly based on either urban structure theory or social networks or economic structures, among others. Contrary to this practice, the analysis contemplated here focuses attention on the dynamics of the space economy of cities. The city as a spatial system is an integral part of the urban region. Therefore for purposes of proper understanding of the restructuring of cities two alternative conceptualisation of the urban region (otherwise the 'urban environment') applies the systems approach and the spatial approach [34]. The systems approach portrays the urban region as a system of relationships between three functional layers (i.e. the systems approach): the system of base which addresses the environmental factors and the culture and value system of the people in the locality. Others include the deep structure, which addresses activity-space relationships; and, the superficial structure, which is the expression of the urban form in physical space. In this case, the urban region is synonymous with the city.

On the other hand, the spatial approach presents the urban region (environment) to comprise of three functional spaces: the core area, the inner ring and the outer ring areas. The three functional layers/spaces in the urban region exist in a system of causal relationship and are therefore mutually dependent. In this case, the core area is synonymous with the city. Theoretically, changes in the functional layers/spaces hold

implications for the restructuring of the city. In the case of Africa, the events that restructure the cities appears in different historical systems.

At the outset prior to tenth century, communities of African renaissance of the middle ages, with diverse systems of behaviour and belief bound with spiritual values, that ousted the backward Bushmen and Pygmies, overcame serious environmental obstacles and founded cities and built states and empires (e.g. Ghana empire in western Sudan in the eighth century) [12]. Then, cities were socially homogeneous urban spaces, which manifested culture-specific pre-industrial and pre-capitalist urban forms. This city structure continued into the mercantile period between the tenth and fifteenth century. The mercantile period spans trans-Saharan trade period with Arab merchants. Trade with Arab merchants during the mercantile period was germane, and its impact was not disruptive. Arab merchants were purely interested in a trade for mutual benefit although their presence enhanced the spread of Islam in Africa. Planning within this period followed the popular design tradition, which emphasis spatio-physical bases of integration. Thus the structure of the space economy was defined with the spatial segregation of homeland territories - comprising resource and production areas - and commercial centres located at the interface of adjourning homeland territories within the inner ring area and linked with regional roads.

Between the fifteenth and mid-nineteenth century, transformational changes occurred following contact with European merchants. Incidentally, the Europeans in their trade relations sought for control and trade monopolies. Then, precisely in the mid-fifteenth century, the notion of imperialism as private commerce was sworn. This imperialism caused the economic geography of the African region to alter, leading to the dawn of modern urban governance. Trade routes seized to be subject to indigenous decision processes or at least to be locally controlled. By the mid-nineteenth century, the city as an activity system started to alter through modern socialisation process. Slowly and steadily the integrated cosmology of traditional Africa was replaced with single-minded utilitarian objectives, which produced utilitarian designs for cities in Africa. The design options bulldozed cultural symbols, behaviour, and beliefs that determined the system of base of traditional African cities. Cities in Africa became hybrids, an inevitable product of intervening culture and policy formulation hegemony from abroad [13]. Cities in Africa were no longer 'African cities' both in character and function because the value system and cultural factors underpinning them altered significantly.

The destabilised urban system ushered expansionism, which marked the capitalist colonial period between the mid-nineteenth century and 1950. Expansionism aims to acquire territory and create new markets [16]. This expansionism initiated the process of installing and managing a capitalist economy in urban Africa. In anticipation of the growth of a capitalist-industrialist urban culture, the modern urban governance sought for spatial integration with planning policy that reworked the functional flow and land use pattern of the urban region [23]. In effect the space economy altered at the level of the urban region. Pseudo-suburbia of imperial orientation with its segregation and homogeneity concept emerged, sometimes from scratch and sometimes on the sites of earlier settlements [33]. Typical examples include Luanda founded by the Portuguese in the sixteenth century; Cape Town founded by the Dutch in the seventeenth century; and several West African ports, including Conakry, Accra, and Calabar, among others

Powerful interest in urban governance informed the locational distribution of these towns on territories with the greatest concentration of natural wealth and convenient

access to ports and railways [43]. Thus colonial health ordinances and sanitation laws, which were not favourably disposed to protect local interests, were applied to resolve environmental obstacles in the location of cities. These ordnances gave rise in the segregation of the European quarters (the forerunner of Government Reserved Area (GRA) syndrome) and the native location. From this point, spatial integration started its gradual descent.

Africa emerged from the colonial period with an extroverted urban economy driven by unequal resource marketing with Europe. The extroversion of the economy marked the second phase in the changing outlook of the space economy in Africa. These features marked the 1950 – 1980 period. In the 1960s, Hawksley [16] diagnosed the resilience of expansionist interests in administration. Rather than physical coercion, expansionist interest in administration wields social management to deliver structured coercion of governance. It demands nothing less than the wholesale transformation of society to reflect the priorities of departed colonial masters [16]. In other words, at independence the emerging ruling class continued to act the script already written by the departing colonisers [26]. Thus urban governance provided planning services for spatial integration that seldom extend beyond the core area of the city. This governance had the effect of limiting the modern economy within the core area of the city and by so doing disconnects the local economy in the hinterland.

With the inception of the neo-liberal economic system in the 1980s, radical changes occurred. These changes impacted planning and development policies of urban governance. Since the 1980s, the general ethical precepts of neo-liberalism encouraged plunder with the sole aim of acquiring territory to exploit the riches it possesses. Also, it encouraged international administration in which international aid activities evolve from support to control. These features, which Hawksley [16] diagnosed, occurred under the guise of globalisation - the buzzword in global political economy. In the words of Majekodunmi & Adejuwon [26] 'the new drive for the globalization of the economies of the states of the world is ideologically sponsored by the leading capitalist state of the world, to integrate the world under its imperialist hegemony'. They opined that 'globalisation is capitalist expansion by imperialist means'.

Modern urban governance had to attend to these epistemologies and functions to retain the extroverted nature of the urban economy in Africa. For this purpose, the neo-liberal participatory planning approach informed urban governance. This planning approach, which Mohammadzadeh [28] identified as 'planning without a plan', thrives in informality. Thus according to Bibangambah [5] the informalization of cities is the vogue and urban governance is compelled by virtue of neo-liberal orthodoxy to propel major aspects such as informal housing [21], the growth of informal land administration and land occupation [18], the proliferation of informal settlements [32], among others. Deceptively, the environmental stress arising from these activities tend to dominate the attention of planning in modern urban governance.

Neo-liberalism is the latest influence that consolidates the progressive alienation of cities in Africa from functioning as a vernacular entity. Apparently, the entire experience of the restructuring of cities in Africa relates to the influence of development ideologies especially the installation of capitalism in the mid-nineteenth century. The difficulty of addressing the restructuring of cities in Africa lies with the disregard of the influence of development ideologies as the meta-theory of planning.

This disregard is the reason why participatory neo-liberal planning is not all about citizens' participation in planning. Also in contention is neo-liberal urbanism, which goes further to restructure the city in Africa.

The restructuring of cities in Africa holds very drastic implications. The first stage of restructuring, which occurred in the mid-fifteenth century following the transition from mercantilism to unfettered capitalism as a global development ideology, introduced changes in the system of base of the city. Cities became places for the 'integration of households into new networks of capitalist production; the invention of new webs of concepts and practices of land and land laws; new patterns of foodstuff consumption; new regulations governing social and political life' [11]. The second stage of restructuring in the mid-nineteenth century redefined the city as a spatial system. In effect, the modern urban economy disconnects with the local economy in the hinterland. Thus the city encouraged individualistic growth that demands the 'reworking of actors, policies, institutions and regulatory frameworks in order to facilitate market-driven land-use changes' [2]. By implication, the city as right pales into insignificance as the city as leeway and chance assume prominence. The third stage of restructuring in late twentieth century initiated the current informalization of cities (exacerbated with informal planning) that is in favour of the exploitative mode of integrating Africa into the global neo-liberal economic system.

The fact remains that urban productivity in Africa continues to decline against the backdrop of the informalization of cities. In other words, the functional flow within the urban regions are informal and economic activities are dependent on backward linkages. This trend grew especially in the final decades of the twentieth century when much of urban Africa was de-industrialising [41]. The rating of African cities in the global economy slumped. As at late 1990s Africa was not even part of the semi-periphery and the functional city-systems linked across national borders that have begun to emerge in Asia. This outcome is not evident in Africa except insofar as cities in the interior must use ports in other countries for trade [42]. Considering the ratings by Taylor at GaWC (Globalization and World Cities Study Group and Network) in 2004, which correlate strongly with earlier works by Simon [46, 47], none of the 'world cities' is located in the continent, although Cairo, Nairobi, and increasingly Johannesburg have regional roles. After a painstaking quantitative analysis of the connectivity of African cities in 2011, Victor Onyebueke arrived at the inevitable conclusion that African cities occupy a very low place and function in the global economy. This situation has not significantly changed.

4. Structural Adversities of Cities in Africa – Evidence from Nigeria and South Africa

Structural adversities refer to distortions and disconnects in the development of the urban economic region of cities. It occurred in the different historical systems of African civilisation. The distortions often take the form of core-periphery divide (otherwise duality in economy) and disconnects manifest as dichotomy in functional linkages between the modern and local economy. These adversities indicate extroverted space economy. This category of space economy is sustained with compliance to modern urban governance in which neoliberal participatory planning approach plays a determinant role.
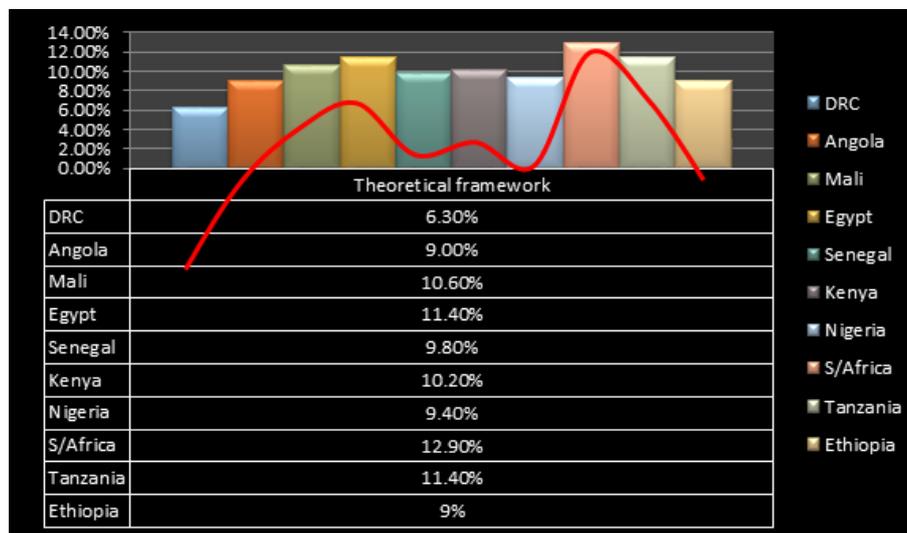
Compliance to neo-liberal planning varies amongst African nations. An independent review of secondary data on select African countries conducted in 2015

indicates that South Africa is the most compliant nation while the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the least compliant (see Figure 1 below). Meanwhile, compliance with this typology of planning is found to underpin the informalization of cities [35]. The informalization of cities, which indicates the deepening of structural adversities, exacerbates urban productivity decline in Africa (see Table 1 below) [17].

Table 1. *Analysis of frequency distribution of preferred perception of informalization in Enugu.*

PERCEPTIONS		FREQUENCY	
		No.	%
Overall	Negative (-1)	24	34.3
	Moderate (0)	4	5.7
	Positive (+1)	42	60.0
	TOTAL	**70**	**100**

Source: [36]

| Theoretical framework	
DRC	6.30%
Angola	9.00%
Mali	10.60%
Egypt	11.40%
Senegal	9.80%
Kenya	10.20%
Nigeria	9.40%
S/Africa	12.90%
Tanzania	11.40%
Ethiopia	9%

Figure 1. *Column diagram indicating the level of compliance to the theoretical framework of neo-liberal planning for select African countries.*

Source: [34]

Do these structural adversities exist and are they sustained with current planning practice? The answer is probably an emphatic 'yes' given the perception of respondents in three strategic urban studies. These studies include: first, the study of Enugu urban economic region in Enugu State, Nigeria. This study was initiated in 2014 following the commissioning of planning consultancy services by Enugu State government for the preparation of a physical master plan for 9th Mile Settlement and its environs. Second, the study of the South African Integrated Development Planning (IDP) initiative to gauge its performance in the delivery of integration. This study was part of an independent research that was conducted within 2010 - 2015 periods. The four categories of respondents in the planning studies are consistent in their views that IDP at the moment indicates negative in securing integration (see Figure 2 below). And third, the study of the informalization of cities and the decline of urban productivity in Enugu and Owerri, the capital cities of Enugu and Imo States' in Nigeria. This study was conducted within 2015 - 2016 periods with a research grant from CODESRIA to national working groups in Africa (Table 3 and Table 4 below).
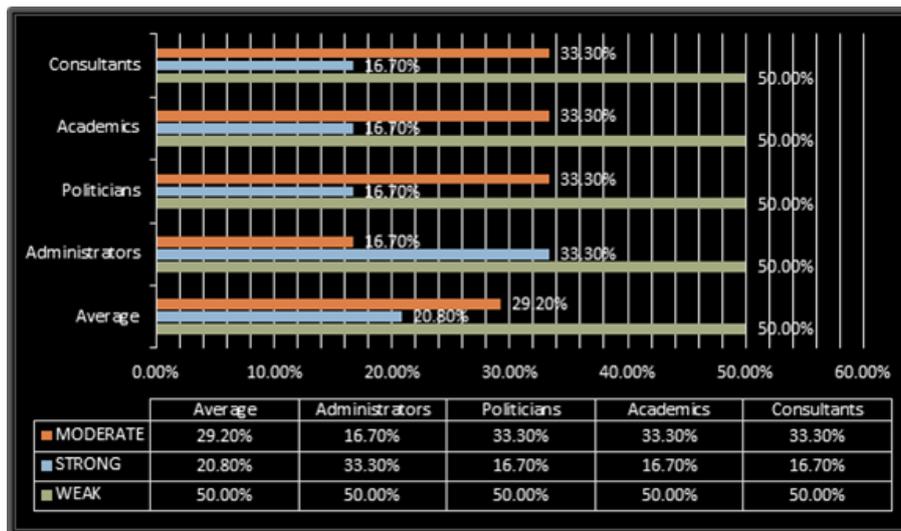
Figure 2. *Bar chart of performance of different categories of respondents interviewed on the capacity of IDP to deliver integration.*

Source: [34]

Table 3. *Matrix of frequency distribution of preferred perception of select variable in Enugu.*

MATRIX		PERCEPTIONS	
		Frequency	**%**
Planning initiative	Negative (-1)	6	66.7
	Moderate (0)	0	0
	Positive (+1)	3	33.4
	TOTAL	**9**	**100**
Planning in neo-liberal dispensation Planning in neo-liberal dispensation	Negative (-1)	9	60
	Moderate (0)	0	0
	Positive (+1)	6	40
	TOTAL	**15**	**100**
Planning and informalization of African cities	Negative (-1)	3	27.2
	Moderate (0)	0	0
	Positive (+1)	8	72.7
	TOTAL	**11**	**100**
Resilience of master planning	Negative (-1)	1	12.5
	Moderate (0)	1	12.5
	Positive (+1)	6	75.0
	TOTAL	**8**	**100**
Space Economy	Negative (-1)	2	16.7
	Moderate (0)	1	8.3
	Positive (+1)	9	75.0
	TOTAL	**12**	**100**
Urban form	Negative (-1)	3	20.0
	Moderate (0)	2	13.3
	Positive (+1)	10	66.7
	TOTAL	**15**	**100**

Table 4. *Matrix of frequency distribution of preferred perception of select variable in Owerri.*

MATRIX		PERCEPTIONS	
		Frequency	%
Planning initiative	Negative (-1)	5	55.6
	Moderate (0)	0	0

MATRIX		PERCEPTIONS	
		Frequency	%
	Positive (+1)	4	44.4
	TOTAL	**9**	**100**
Planning in neo-liberal dispensation	Negative (-1)	7	46.7
	Moderate (0)	1	6.7
	Positive (+1)	7	46.7
	TOTAL	**15**	**100**
Planning and informalization of African cities	Negative (-1)	3	25.0
	Moderate (0)	0	0
	Positive (+1)	9	75.0
	TOTAL	**12**	**100**
Resilience of master planning	Negative (-1)	3	37.5
	Moderate (0)	0	0
	Positive (+1)	5	62.5
	TOTAL	**8**	**100**
Space Economy	Negative (-1)	2	16.7
	Moderate (0)	1	8.3
	Positive (+1)	9	75.0
	TOTAL	**12**	**100**
Urban form	Negative (-1)	4	26.7
	Moderate (0)	1	6.7
	Positive (+1)	10	66.7
	TOTAL	**15**	**100**

Source: [36]

Enugu and Owerri urban economic region are colonial spatial systems. The structural adversities under review indicate the form and function of these urban regions. Thus the respective urban regions are predominantly rural and agrarian, with a substantial proportion of their working population engaged in subsistent farming. In the urban core areas (that is the cities), trading is the dominant occupation followed by services [36]. Enugu urban region was declared a planning area in 1958 and Owerri urban region was declared a municipal council in 1996. Both cities shared a similar history of planning intervention until the late 1970s when the urban master plan was prepared for both cities. After that, their planning experience altered. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Enugu city was exposed to experimentations with participatory planning (vis-à-vis the Sustainable City Program) and explicit neo-liberal planning (in the form of MTIP) in 2010. The governance of Owerri city maintained faith (in principle) with master planning. However, planning practice in Owerri remains pragmatic and painfully under political influence (as it is also the case in Enugu).

The general perception arising from the study of the cities indicates that the existing project planning approach and sectoral development of the cities do not necessarily resonate with the local polity. Even though this pessimism is very popular development consultants tend to be more disposed to rationalise pragmatic project planning, which is often not participatory (although a contrary impression is often given). Sprawl development is manifest and distortions and disconnects were confirmed to be resilient in the space economy. However, the studies found that public awareness of planning activities and its impact on growing the economy is very low. Generally, they relate poor planning to rampant sprawl development and slum formation.

The South African study confirmed that the IDP is unable to deliver integration [34]. The general disapproval of IDP practice to achieve its theoretical role is inherent in the perception of respondents. However, the views of administrators differed from the symmetry of pessimism shared by the other categories of respondents and tended to be relatively optimistic. In both the questionnaire and personal interview studies, pessimism is commonplace. It is not clear how much of this is a reaction to urban governance by unpopular governments found in Africa.

Overall, urban planning under nationalist urban governance has failed to address the structural adversities that are inherent in the development of urban regions in Africa. These adversities impact the productive health of the city, vis-à-vis the resilience of extroverted space economy. Hence, urban productivity decline is not just commonplace in Africa. It indicates a neo-imperialist outlook, which informs the growth of poverty and survivalist informal sector. Somehow informality is treated as a virtue in the 1980s to enhance the downstream sector of the neo-liberal economy in Africa. This prompted pseudo-urbanisation, a situation where informal tertiary sector rather than productive economic activities stimulate growth. The cities of Enugu and Owerri are confirmed to be experiencing pseudo-urbanisation at the moment [36]. Indeed they are found to be undergoing informalization in tandem with declining productivity. Amidst survivalist informal sector activities, the informalization process manifests informal use of space for backward capitalist production. The chaos that obtains explains the dysfunctional state of cities in Africa. In other words dysfunctionality and its attendant declining productivity, which plague cities in Africa, links with structural adversities. Africa cannot continue with this syndrome and hope to participate effectively in the city-centred new regionalism initiative [38].

5. Review of Resilient Cities Studies Vis-À-Vis the Consideration of Imperial Cities in Africa

The term 'resilient cities,' is a terminology of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR). As a UNISDR terminology, a resilient city indicates capacity to withstand or absorb the impact of a hazard through resistance or adaptation, which enables it to maintain certain basic functions and structures during a crisis, and bounce back or recover from an event [55]. Since its launch in 2010, institutional resilient cities studies abound, including Rockefeller Foundation studies, United Nations Centre for Resilient cities studies, International Council for Local Environmental Initiative studies. The World Bank is practically involved, including multinationals such as Siemens, Grosvenor, among others. An outstanding player is the ICLEI (Local Government for Sustainability). Since 2010, this group comprising 'Mayors of the world' has conducted annual global conference on resilient cities, all held in Germany.

Depending on the perception of cities, existing studies are in two categories: those that are practical and commercial (investor's perspective), and those that are theoretically compelling and ideological. Attention focused on the latter category, and this brings the works of Rockefeller Foundation and ICLEI to the fore. The pioneering effort of Rockefeller Foundation's Resilient Cities Program espouses the prospects of determining general resilience principles that will help all cities learn to view their specific problems through the so-called 'resilience lens' [57]. ICLEI conferences attempt to theorize this possibility based on the intellectual platform coordinated by UN subsidiaries. The intellectual platform under reference is firmly built on rapid growth argument, which upholds resilience as natural disaster preparedness (as

measured by UN-Habitat infrastructure hypothesis). Emerging scholarly inputs introduced the elements of vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities as factors of resilience. Resilience is therefore assumed to be a natural process that determines the ability of cities to continue in its set mission aftershock defined by natural calamities (otherwise described as adversities) [38].

The perception of the mission of a city is matter arising in resilient city studies. Available literature indicates that the mission of the city could be perceived in human or business context [4]. The difference contexts elicit the question: what is the purpose of the city and what is a city's responsibility to its citizens? The citizens' wellbeing should be central to the answers to these questions. Wellbeing is not just vulnerable to environmental adversities. It is also and more precariously vulnerable to dependency as adversity. This category of adversity is peculiar with the governance of cities in Africa. Investigating institutions do not seem to border with this category of adversity, which is tucked away in the global political economy. This oversight is worrisome and more so with the emerging theoretical framework of vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities.

In 2010 the ICLEI Resilient cities conference sets out on the UNISDR platform of making cities resilient. Their major focus was on the challenges of climate change. The rapid urban growth argument was deployed as a factor of natural hazard. The same argument was used in the 1980s to destabilise the use of master planning in urban governance. Remarkably, Deborah Potts [41] summarily debunked the rapid urban growth argument in Africa. Earlier, Todaro [54] observed that institutional database on urbanisation in Africa is highly sensitive to error. A decade later Linden [25] indicated that urbanisation in developing countries is not accelerating. Cohen [10] reaffirmed this position and challenged the assumption of rapid urbanisation in developing countries. Regardless, the rapid urban growth argument still applies in determining planning and development policies in urban governance for Africa. It informed the action plans considered in 2011 ICLEI Resilient cities conference and justified the dominance of UN climate negotiations.

With the entrance of UN-Habitat and UNDP as facilitators and external development partners, the conference became more or less a UN affair vis-à-vis international administration. The focus of the conference adopted a wider range of concerns associated with UN-Habitat such as urban poor as measures of resilience and stress assessment. A positive stress assessment requires that a community and its citizens need to understand where, why and how they are vulnerable to what [38]. It is not clear the dimension of vulnerabilities that are put into consideration in the UN-Habitat packaged stress assessment methodology.

More encouraging trends were recorded in the 2012 ICLEI Resilient cities conference. This conference elaborated adaptation planning based on the wisdom that 'guiding urban development towards resilience is always better and cheaper than using engineering infrastructure to withstand possible hazards. This adaptation encouraged the use of risk maps in land use planning and the inclusion of logistics in city planning. Apparently adaptation planning is a pleasant surprise that is not commonplace, although the competitiveness of cities for investment is still a very strong planning consideration. Another conceptual milestone occurred in the 2013 ICLEI Resilient cities conference is the evolution of the concept of 'City region'. Adaptation planning for food security gave rise to this concept. According to Balbo et al. [3], 'taking a city region approach means looking beyond traditional jurisdictional

borders, sectors, and scales. For cities, this requires understanding what the rural counterparts are doing'. This requirement resonates with the spatial approach of conceptualising urban regions elaborated in Okeke [34]. The 2014 ICLEI Resilient cities conference elaborated city-to-city cooperation, integrated and collaborative planning however with strong emphasis on infrastructure development. Attention gravitated to funding in the 2015 conference.

The 2016 ICLEI conference maintained faith with ICLEI 2010 tuition. It focused attention on inclusive resilience strategies, financing the resilient city, measuring and monitoring progress, resilience and adaptation planning, governance and collaboration, resource management, and resilient infrastructure. The hysteria of integrated resilience planning is evident in the mood of the conference, but it is not clear what exactly that model of planning is all about. Nevertheless, the proceedings of the conference continue to take the vulnerability of cities in Africa to structural adversities for granted.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the vulnerability of cities in Africa is remotely linked with climatic adversities. The structure of cities in Africa does not necessarily make cities vulnerable to climatic adversities as it is the case for cities in the global north. The cities in Africa are rather vulnerable to dependence. As remarked in the conference by a guest speaker, there is a need to dig deeper into the root causes of vulnerability - and to add into the dimensions of vulnerability. This concern is certainly not reflected in the report on four African cities including Lilongwe and Balantye in Malawi, Bulawayo in Zimbabwe, and Lusaka in Zambia presented at the conference. The report deplorably showcased effort to secure SDG 11 based on the framework of UN-Habitat perception for city development in Africa. It is known that the same framework resulted in negative partnerships and participatory approaches and procedures that did not deliver the SCP initiative in the 1980s and MDGs since 1990s in Africa.

The activities of ICLEI conferences revolve around two primary elements: funding and infrastructure development. How these elements are applied to manage climatic adversities has dominantly preoccupied the conference since its inception in 2010. The arguments, activities, policies and strategies outlined to pursue this objective have remained constant and used since the 1980s as global orthodoxies. The recipe has not changed. Thus the conference has little to do with redressing the structural adversities that sustain the dependence of the African region. The infrastructure hypothesis does not redress this dependency rather it sustains it by creating market-space for Euro-American and Chinese mercantilism [9]. This scenario leaves the impression that powerful interests indeed exist. Perhaps this interest explains why the outlook of ICLEI Resilient cities conferences resolutely disregards structural adversities. This outlook poses a serious threat to the delivery of SDG 11 in Africa.

6. The Way Forward

Given the extroverted nature of the urban economy and the distortions identified in the development of the space economy in Africa, the resultant urban productivity decline makes it difficult for the continent to benefit from the city-centred new-regionalism. The relegation of these structural adversities in the resilient cities studies works to undermine any prospect of leveraging positive engagement with city-centred new-regionalism. In so far as cities in Africa continues to function in line with expansionist objectives in global political economy there is no reasonable expectation

that things will change. However, a feasible way out is to retool the city in Africa. This will require a scientific approach of redefining the form and function of the city for purposes of delivering the development of the local economy (and enhance African renaissance of the third millennium). Also, this redefinition connects the local economy with the modern economy through forward linkages based on exogenous activities.

The major challenges of retooling the city in Africa are in three directions: first, to downsize the current quantum of market metaphor in determining policy provisions, especially as it relates to liberalization vis-à-vis free-trade and anti-protectionism (World Bank, IMF), financialization and fiscal conservatism, deregulation, marketization and privatization policies; second, to rework the space economy; and third to re-define the mission of urban governance in Africa. Each of the proposed intervention is a body of activities, which will cumulatively redress the vulnerability of cities to structural adversities in African urban region.

The first challenge in the twenty-first century is the reconsideration of neo-liberalism as a development ideology for Africa. This challenge moderates the role of neo-liberalism as meta-theory of planning. The resultant neo-liberal planning theory subjugates planning rationality when indeed planning rationality is considered the missing link in current urban governance for the delivery of spatial integration. This rationality has the potentials to redress the distortions and disconnects that are found in African urban region. Okeke [34, 35] espoused as alternative neo-mercantile development ideology that works with planning rationality. The proposed ideological change hold three critical implications. They are: first, the re-awakening of mind-set for nation-building in the context of globalisation, second the redefinition of the mission of cities in Africa to make them congruent again with nation-building, and third the re-working of the economic model for Africa (possibly with reference retrospectively to the African Alternative Framework to SAP (AAF-SAP). The AAF-SAP as designed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in the 1990s debunked the minimal role of the state. As Bade 1995 cited in [51] indicates the framework presented 'a balanced non-ideological vision which neither calls for a strict intervention of the state nor promotes a total reliance on markets').

A resolute optimistic mind-set is considered a fundamental requirement for positive action. The mind-set will in principle follow the path of spiritual and cultural renewal along with the moral rearmament of the African people around the world [13]. In practical terms, it will redefine the value system to make it synchronise with development as growth and not innovative process. In terms of planning, as Mark Oranje [40] opined, possibly the reversion to the ethos of early Town Planning Movement should be given some consideration. However, with changes in the value system the redefinition of the mission of cities is most likely. The changes in the value system cannot ignore the contribution of the African Historian and Anthropologist, Cheikh Anta Diop in a series of Essays beginning in 1946 [30].

Also anticipated are changes in the economic model for Africa. For most African scholars, the NEPAD economic model lost credibility in the process of its evolution. NEPAD evolved in close contact with the G8 (Okinawa 2000, Genoa 2001 cited in [7]), and the Bretton Woods Institutions and international capital (Davos 2001 cited in [7]), under conditions of secrecy. NEPAD lost its original outlook and by 2001 had become another form of structural adjustment in disguise [6]. Bond and Dor [7] view

NEPAD as home-grown African neo-liberalism. The so called Agenda 2063 replacement as economic model for Africa is metaphorically 'NEPAD 2020.'

The resilient fiscal (funding) adversity for plan implementation elicits action to protect creative planning that is not capital intensive. Africa should look inwards and depend more on domestic savings [52]. According to a 2007 UNCTAD report, the ability of African countries to finance a greater share of their development from domestic sources 'would give them much-needed flexibility in the formulation and implementation of policies' [15]. Africa will be more able to address development challenges, direct resources into high-priority areas and 'strengthen state capacity,' [15]. In the early 1990s, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) indicated that over 95 per cent of investments in any developing country derives from domestic savings [19].

Still on funding attention is drawn to the Pan-African Infrastructure Development Fund (PAIDF) set up in 2007. PAIDF seeks to raise money mainly from public and private pension funds and asset management firms in Africa [15]. The PAIDF will invest directly in large-scale infrastructure projects in Africa. It is encouraging to note Efam Dovi's [15] indication that African governments are increasingly turning their attention to the need to mobilize domestic resources better and strengthen the continent's national savings. The capacity building of African financial systems and financial institutions is critical to make them effectively channel domestic savings into productive investments. The financial institutions will consolidate the PAIDF momentum in engineering financial mechanisms locally for plan implementation.

7. Conclusion

There is no gainsaying the need to retool the city in Africa and change it from consumer to production centre. At the outset, in the mid-nineteenth century, these cities lost their focus on nation-building after they underwent colonial restructuring and planning intervention. The restructuring of cities in Africa has remained resilient. Subsequent planning interventions have continued to build on established epistemological foundations of planning. There is no gainsaying the need to redress this situation. The redressing demands changes in the meta-theory of planning. The new meta-theory of planning will regenerate urban governance for spatial development. The new urban governance will rework the structural adversities and enhance the productive health of cities in Africa.

Africa must of necessity rethink the infrastructure hypothesis because it is not affordable. Besides it makes development planning vulnerable to market forces. In the context of the cultural and agricultural revolution (as it is the case with the Chinese model), attention should focus on reworking the space economy. Therefore planning rationality should constitute an element urban governance. Rationality in the context of equitable involvement in planning is required to develop a new spatial framework. In other words rationality in planning relates directly with spatial integration in space.

On the other hand participatory process in planning is known to highlight the practice of integration by stapling as it is found in South Africa [34]. Integration by stapling is built on market-driven urban governance hence it is vulnerable to expansionism in global political economy. It is not clear how this method of integration should be encouraged if productive economy and functional specialisation of spatial systems (that is cities, urban regions, etc.) are in contention in Africa.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

Author Contributions

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