A Systematic Review of Open Space Implementation in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: The rapid increase in population in conjunction with increase in the rate of Urbanization had led to Unplanned and uncontrolled encroachment into our public open spaces in Nigeria. In the light of the above, numerous studies in relation to open space implementation in Nigeria have been studied. In spite of the numerous research efforts, open space implementation has not received a corresponding boost. This study reviewed open space implementation in Nigeria based on a systematic literature review of published works as contained in Scopus, Web of Science and Science Direct Online databases between March 2021 to October 2021. The review was selected from the six-Geopolitical zones of Nigeria and the findings revealed that there is weak monitoring and evaluation mechanism, and lack of inclusive participation by professionals in the built environment this calls for a need of adequate open space implementation model in Nigeria.

KEYWORDS: Open space, Implementation, Urbanization, open space planning, Nigeria.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In recent times, open spaces have become a prominent feature in physical planning and development. This is due to the comfort, aesthetics view; relaxation and recreation that open spaces provide (Alabi, 2020). Public Spaces are integral components of human settlements from time immemorial; these include street space, park system, and the entire larger space in which the city exist. (Hung, 2021). Public spaces are known to enhance urban design, civic identity, community cohesion and quality of life (A, 2012). Therefore, Fabiyi (2017), adduce that during the pre-colonial era, Nigeria had different open spaces quarters that were guarded and administered by warlords or chiefs. The quarter's chiefs report to the central warlords who are the ultimate ruler of the territory to see that guidelines are not violated.

Open spaces implementation necessitate statutory control to ensure orderly development and mutual existence of various land uses. Adebayo (2018). Within the context of this paper, implementation means the process of putting a decision or plan into effect, execution. In developing countries like Nigeria, Public Spaces are subjected to encroachment and depletion. These result from rapid urbanization, population increase and space demand for human activities. (Momoh & Ayeni, 2020). Development control regulation seem ineffective in Nigeria, illegal development into public spaces is alarming. The consequences is the loss of open space associated with complexities (Bako & O.T.B Aduloju and O.F Enisan and Y, 2018) .The UN (2007) estimated that by 2050 over 70% of the people will live in cities especially in Asia and Africa. That report noted that globally, urban population has quadrupled 1950s with the cities of the developing world accounting for over 90% of the world population. African urban centres for instances are growing in leaps and bounds, thus resulting in exploding cities (Oyesiku, 2009). This growth, which is but at 5.50% is far above the general 3% rate for developing countries.

Nevertheless, many studies affirming that in spite of the importance of Open space, its shortage still lingers globally. Against this backdrop, the studies of (Hurley, 2006), (Hepcan, Kaplan, Ozkan, & Vrcdi, 2006), Moroke (2019), (Alserayhi, 2020), (Alabi & Raheem, 2018), have noted across the globe that open space implementation is a problem. Furthermore; existing studies have equally noted that this problem of implementation is more dominant in developing nations like Nigeria. Reporting in the affirmative, UN (2007), Dorcas (2020), Moruf (2018), Officha (2017), Bako (2018), Michael (2009), Azra (2010), Maran (2021), (Ifeoma, 2014), Michael (2020), (Agboola & said, 2016), Olufemi (2018), (Ismail, 2017)Salih have confirmed that Nigeria is within this category. Giving the foregoing, there are obviously questions with respect to open space implementation in Nigeria that need research answers. One of such question could be why open space implementation in Nigeria has not improved over the year's inspite of research effort.

However, this study is aimed at providing answers to the above questions through the objective of the systematic review of the challenged faced by Residents with respect to open space implementation. Going forward, this study shall be structured as follows: Introduction, Methodology, and Review of Open Space Implementation in Nigeria, Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation.

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2.0 METHODOLOGY

The authors consider the systematic review of published works as best appropriate since evidenced based results are envisaged. Additionally, the works of Green (2005), Wittemore, Knafl, and Gray(2005) have affirmed that a systematic review presents itself as one of the most appropriate scientific research strategies that can be used to elicit findings and results on a subject matter involving large research articles and publications. Similarly, the systematic review process of this study involved a holistic search as well as the review of periodicals, publications, peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings. This was carried out between March 2021 to October 2021. The systematic review adopted the five step data gathering procedure involving research questions framing, identification of relevant and related studies, assessment of the quality of the studies, summarization and appropriation of the evidences and finally interpretation of the review findings as recommended by (Green, 2005; Khnan, Kunz, Kleijnen, & Antes, 2003).

The data search was carried out on multiple online databases to include Google Scholar, Science direct as well as Scopus, which served as the principal database source for the study because of its wide range of coverage, citation analysis and abstract indexing (Falagas, Pitsouni, Malietzis, & Pappas, (2008). The search process for the review involved a combination of words like 'Open Space Implementation in Nigeria'. The initial search from the multiple databases retrieved 300 abstracts/manuscripts. Out of these, 100 duplicates were discovered and subsequently removed leaving a total of 200 abstracts/manuscripts left. Further review by the authors following the *priori exclusion criteria*: abstracts not in English language as well as articles without complete manuscripts (i.e. only abstracts with short communications and letters) led to the further removal of 90 abstracts/manuscripts leaving 110 abstracts/manuscripts left. The remaining 90 abstracts/manuscripts were further screened following a *priori exclusion criteria*: This lead to the removal of 45 abstracts/manuscripts leaving 65 abstracts/manuscripts. Similarly, the 65 abstracts/manuscripts were then rated using the scale of 1-3 where 1 represents low relevance, 2 represents averagely relevance and 3 represents highly relevance. Only abstracts/manuscripts with rating 3 (high relevance) were eventually selected and considered fit for the review of Open Space implementation in Nigeria. While abstract/manuscripts that contains only open space models were considered low relevance (1), those with only open space implementation were considered averagely relevance (2). The systematic review flowchart is presented in figure 1 below.
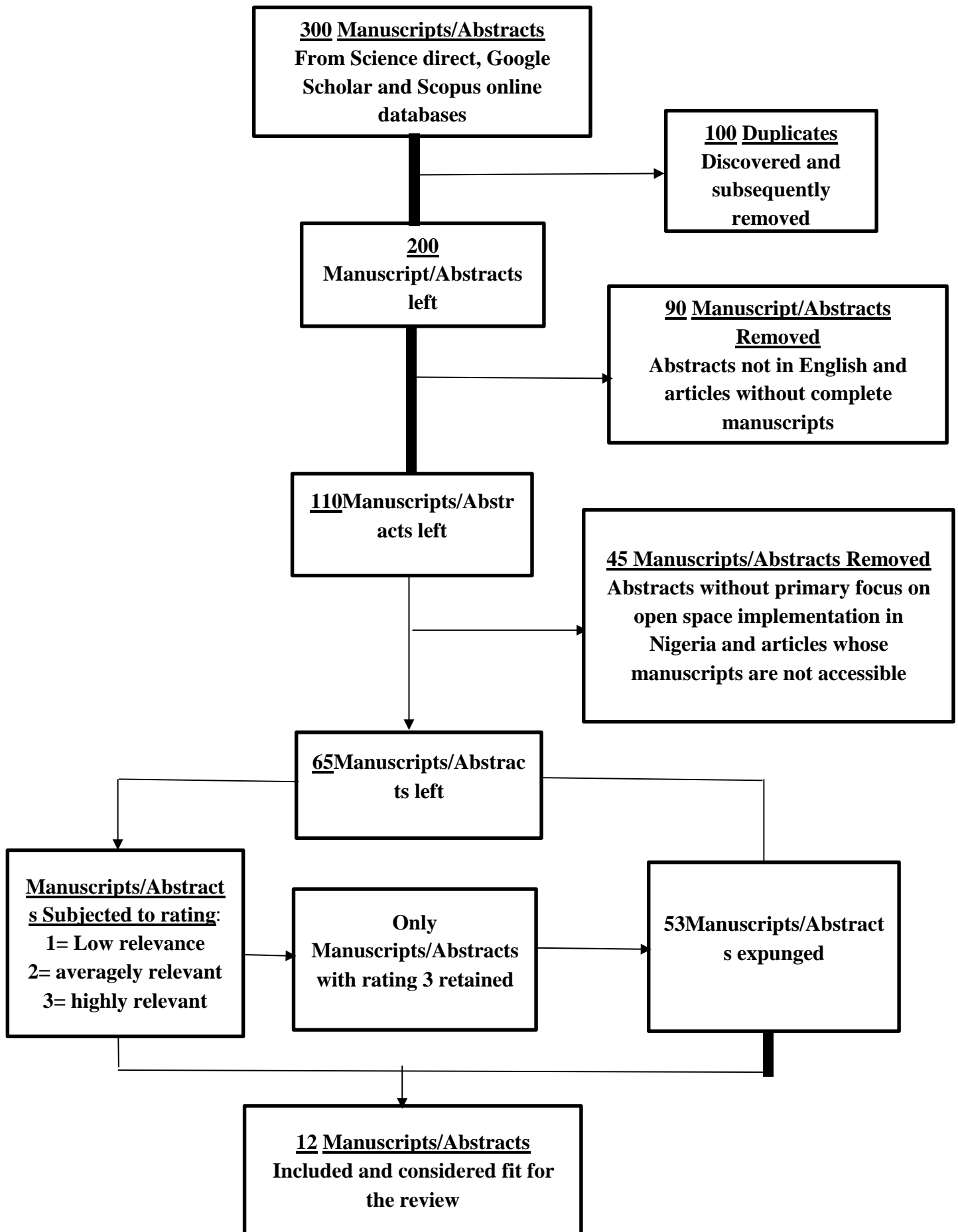
Figure 1: Systematic review flowchart for the study

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3.0 OPEN SPACE IMPLEMENTATION IN NIGERIA: THE REVIEW

Following the successful retrieved and screening of articles manuscripts from the multiple online databases as mentioned in the methodology, the reviewed articles are presented as:

Moruf Bako and Raheem (2018) Researched On National Policies, Programmed And Initiatives On Sustainable Urban Development In Ilorin Nigeria. The Study Which Sourced Its Mainly From Reviewed Literatures, Attributed Open Space Implementation To Weak Monitoring Evaluation Mechanism, Lack Of Transparent, Lack Of Inclusive Participation By Professionals In The Built Environment.

Officha, Onwuemesi and Akanwa (2017) researched on Problems of Open Recreational Space Delivery and Management in Onitsha Nigeria. The study employed the use of survey strategies to source its data. The study findings revealed that urbanization, poor spatial planning and land development control mechanism, lack of coherent approach to management, poor site planning and buildings designs contribute to problem of open space implementation in Nigeria.

Olalekan and Enisan (2018) researched on Adequacy, Use and management of Open Space in Lagos, Nigeria. The study, which adopt the use of survey method to source its data. The study findings revealed that the management of open space is inadequate based on planning, management, infrastructure and shortage of land.

Olufemi, Ojo and Ambrose (2018) researched into Development Control Regulations Compliance: Paradigm change to Reinvent Disrupted, Nigeria. The study adopted review of literature and survey. The study findings revealed that encroachment into public open space by commercial activities, lack of effective government control, ignorance of good quality environment and people's desire for economic benefits are among factors responsible for lack of open space implementation.

Emenike (2014) research focus on Public Open Space: An Urban Development Strategy for Enugu Metropolis, Nigeria. The study employed the quantitative strategy to source for its data. Findings from the study revealed that funding, urbanization pressure, poor management styles resulted to lack of implementation.

Goomsu (2004) researched focus on the city as public space: Abuja, Nigeria. The study adopted the qualitative strategy to source for its data. The findings revealed that the Abuja Master plan has not be followed because of political interventions, which has resulted, to noncompliance of public open space laws.

Michael (2020) researched into sustainable urban form and challenges of open space utilization, Akure, Nigeria. The study adopted quantitative method for its data collection. Findings revealed that the ministry's involved in open space management is partial because they have problem of overlapping functions, low priority placed on open space provision by the government, when compared to other uses is also a major factor.

Agboola (2016) Resident's Contribution towards improving physical Quality of Neighborhood Open Spaces in multi-cultural community of Nigeria. The study employed the quantitative method and interview for its data collection. The study findings revealed that resident's opinion, views, and suggestions in decision-making process at various stages of open space planning will go a long way at resolving implementation problem.

Ayeni (2012) towards an Effective and Sustainable Use of Open Spaces in Nigeria. The study adopted literature review as for its data collection. Findings revealed that unguided development, urbanization, lack of appropriate planning approval from the appropriate authorities all contributed to implementation in Nigeria open spaces.

Adedeji and Joseph (2015) researched on urban open space transition and management in Lagos, Nigeria. The study adopted survey method as a means of data collection. The study findings revealed that there is no sustainable management framework.

Michael (2009) researched on Revitalizing Urban Public Open Spaces, through vegetative enclaves in Lokoja, Nigeria. The study adopted the uses of quantitative approach in data collections. The finding revealed that urban service boundary laws are not adhered to, incentive zoning is lacking which result to implementation problem in the study area. **Victor (2020)** research into Human response to greeneries in public spaces in Nigeria. The study revealed that trees and shrubs were been removed from public open space areas which could have provide thermal conducive environment for relaxation.

4.0 FINDINGS

A total number of twelve (12) publications on open space implementation in Nigeria was systematically reviewed. The review revealed that open spaces are faced with; open space implementation to weak monitoring evaluation mechanism, lack of transparency, lack of coherent approach to management, poor site planning and buildings designs contribute to problem of open space implementation in Nigeria. Management of open space is inadequate based on poor planning management, infrastructure and shortage of land, lack of effective government control, ignorance of good quality environment and people's desire for economic benefits are among factors responsible for lack of open space implementation. Poor funding, urbanization pressure, poor management styles resulted to lack of implementation. Master plan has not be followed because of political interventions that has resulted to non-compliance of public open space laws. Ministry's involved in open space management is partial because they have problem of overlapping functions, low priority placed on open space provision by the government, when compared to other uses is also a major factor. Unguided development, urbanization, lack of appropriate planning approval from the appropriate authorities all contributed to implementation in Nigeria open spaces. This study confirms that these findings are in agreement with findings from

the existing study of Michael (2020), Bako (2018), Officha (2017), Alabi (2018), Ayeni (2020), NM Hung (2021), and Abdullah (2020).

Additionally, findings from the review also revealed that the methodology adopted in the reviewed works were mainly the quantitative strategy as well as the review of literatures and documents. These strategies as well as the findings emanating from their usage remains novel and valuable. However, this study in line with the previous studies of Ebekozien, Abdul-Aziz, and Jaafar (2019), sues for the adoption of a mixed methodology otherwise known as the pragmatic paradigm if better understanding of open spaces implementation in Nigeria are envisage. The pragmatic paradigm as defined by Creswell(2014)has the advantage of validating each other as well as broadening the generalisability of findings.

5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study systematically reviewed open space implementation in Nigeria and revealed that despite concerted efforts form research bodies, open space has not witnessed any remarkable boost as a result of challenges such as weak monitoring evaluation mechanism, lack of transparency, lack of coherent approach to management, poor site planning and buildings designs contribute to problem of open space implementation in Nigeria. Management of open space is inadequate based on poor planning management, infrastructure and shortage of land, lack of effective government control, ignorance of good quality environment and people's desire for economic benefits are among factors responsible for lack of open space implementation. Poor funding, urbanization pressure, poor management styles resulted to lack of implementation.

The study equally recognizes, the non-uniform nature of the factors put forward as findings from the reviewed works. The study also posits that the methodologies adopted in the reviewed works were mainly the quantitative strategy as well as the review of literatures and documents. These studies therefore, note that future studies in the open space implementation should be encourage as seen from the review, such studies should adopt the mixed method in its methodology for robust result as stated by Ebekozien, Abdul-Aziz, and Jaafar (2019).   Going forward, this study recommends future studies on open space implementation in Nigeria.

Summary of the Reviewed Works

S/No	Name of Authors	Title of Research	Methodology
1	Moruf Bako and Raheem (2018)	National Policies, Programmes and Initiatives on Sustainable Urban Development in Ilorin, Nigeria	reviewed literatures
2	Officha, Onwuemesi and Akanwa (2017)	Problems of Open Recreational Space Delivery and Management in Onitsha Nigeria	survey strategies
3	Olalekan and Enisan (2018)	Adequacy, Use and management of Open Space in Lagos, Nigeria	survey method
4	Olufemi, Ojo and Ambrose (2018)	Development Control Regulations Compliance: Paradigm change to Reinvent Disrupted, Nigeria. The study adopted review of literature and survey	literature and survey
5	Emenike (2014)	Public Open Space: An Urban Development Strategy for Enugu Metropolis, Nigeria	quantitative strategy
6	Goomsu (2004)	the city as public space: Abuja, Nigeria	qualitative strategy
7	Michael (2020)	sustainable urban form and challenges of open space utilization, Akure, Nigeria	Quantitative
8	Agboola (2016)	Resident's Contribution towards improving physical Quality of Neighbourhood Open Spaces in multicultural community of Nigeria	Quantitative
9	Ayeni (2012)	Effective and Sustainable Use of Open Spaces in Nigeria	Literature review

10	Adedeji and Joseph (2015)	urban open space transition and management in Lagos, Nigeria	Survey method
11	Michael (2009)	Revitalizing Urban Public Open Spaces, through vegetative enclaves in Lokoja, Nigeria	Quantitative approach
12	Victor (2020)	Human response to greeneries in public spaces in Nigeria	Quantitative

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