

IMPOSED MINDSET EFFECTS? COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MASTER PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESSES IN SUB SAHARAN AFRICA —A REVIEW

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Abstract

Community participation in master planning and implementation processes in sub Saharan Africa (SSA) has been given little attention despite the fact that it increases a sense of ownership and the chances of plans implementation. This study firstly, examines community participation practices in master planning and implementation processes in four shifted capital cities of Abuja, Dodoma, Gaborone and Lilongwe and secondly, recommends for policy changes. This study gathered information through literature review whereby a total of one hundred and two (n=102) documents were reviewed. Data was analysed using content analysis by identifying the common themes from empirical and theoretical literatures then comparing and synthesising them based on convergence discourses. The results show that bureaucrats' pay less attention to integration of local knowledge coupled with overlooking the socio-economic and cultural aspects of communities in master planning and implementation processes. Bureaucrats are reported to embrace western planning concepts and practices paired with ineffective communication, lack of transparency, awareness, an inclusive ideas generation, top-down decision making and power imbalance. The sidelining attitude of community needs and

preferences has resulted into polarisation of cities into haves and have-nots. This study recommends active engagement of Civil Societies Organisations (CSOs) in planning and implementation processes to act as watchdogs of planning systems. This study further stresses on conducting routine capacity building to bureaucrats to improve community engagement and constant revisit of available legal tools, monitoring and evaluation frameworks to effect community engagement in planning and implementation stages. These findings are worthwhile to policymakers, urban planners and the private sector to prepare plans which are community centered and enhance inclusive and sustainable development in SSA.

Keywords: Community participation; Master planning; Participation; Implementation and sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Justification

Community participation in spatial planning has been a global agenda for more than three decades now however, it has been less prioritised due to rigidity of planning systems to accommodate community's socio-economic needs, expectations and cultural aspects [1], [2], [11]–[17], [3]–[10]. It has been noted that the governments through bureaucrats' have paid less attention to the local knowledge by thinking that it is useless and can weaken their professional positions and threaten their independent judgment [1], [2], [18], [19]. This is against a global agenda which underpins active community participation as it improves project design through the use of local knowledge, increases sense of ownership, promotes local resource mobilisation and helps to ensure project sustainability [2], [8], [17], [18], [20].

The reluctance of bureaucrats to prepare physical plans that do not reflect needs of sub Saharan Africa (SSA) communities lead to cities polarisation between haves and have-nots, emergency of informal settlements, slums, congestion, crimes and poor housing condition and deficit [19], [21]–[23]. Regrettably, the cities' governments in SSA have continued with centralised planning system for decades, despite the failure of realising the master plan which calls for technocrats' mindset change and get out of ineffective and inefficiency centralised planning system that lack legitimacy on the eye of community [15], [20], [21], [23], [24]. Master plans in many cities of developing countries, particularly the SSA cities, do not conform with the reality on the ground [6], [16], [25], [26]. Lack of conformity of the physical plans is caused by bureaucrats' who still hold their power in the discourse arenas while proposing land uses and zoning regulations which do not reflect needs of the majority community in the SSA cities [6], [18], [22], [27].

The rigidity of bureaucrats' in changing from technocratic to participatory planning can be associated by imposed mindset effects as planning system—many legal frameworks and practices are mimicry of the west tradition; this has made many technocrats to act more conventional than bottom-up approach [1], [6], [21], [23],

[25], [28]–[31]. Planning systems through technocrats have failed to counter the communities' voices and arguments; instead they suppress opinions of community members and implement plans that disregard their interests [11]. As result of imposed legacy bureaucrats' have been prepared and attempted to implement plans that are rigid, unrealistic, non-participatory that prioritise only good order, beauty and aesthetics of cities at the expenses of social, economic and cultural aspects of majority communities who depends on informal livelihoods [1], [2], [17], [22], [30].

Despite a couple of studies reviewed, scanty studies explain the comprehensive status quo of community participation in master planning and implementation and what should be done to address the bottlenecks in order to have an inclusive and sustainable city in the SSA cities. This study contributes to the existing literature by examining how bureaucrats engage communities in master planning and implementation processes, its implications and how the dominance of technocrats could be addressed. Therefore, this study aims to explore how communities participate in master planning and implementation processes in the SSA cities; specifically, (1) To examine the status quo of community participation in master planning and implementation in shifted capital cities—Abuja, Dodoma, Gaborone and Lilongwe and (2) To recommend policy change for addressing the prevailing situation.

1.2 Participation as concept

Community participation refers to the process of gathering ideas, opinions, concerns from certain groups of individuals with different interests and a stake in a certain project or activity that a final decision is likely to have impact them either positively or negatively on their current life or future prosperity [13], [32]–[35]. Effective community participation includes collaborative idea generation, planning, decision making, realisation and evaluation [34], [36], [37]. However, participation is reported to be affected by the top-down planning tradition, lack of transparency and awareness, ineffective communication and legal provisions [38], [39]. According to Sherry Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation [40], participation is divided into three major rungs namely Manipulation, Tokenism and Citizen power whereby the highest rungs means the high level of participation; the full community participation should reach the level of citizen power which allows partnerships, delegation of power and citizen control [13], [20], [40].

Despite some of the SSA countries have mainstreamed the issue of participation in policies, laws and regulations there are couple of challenges on the way the communities are participating in master planning and implementation processes [15], [20]. These challenges include poor communication, lack of community awareness, planners' chauvinism, power dominance by government systems and technocrats in decision making [20], [31]. According to Sherry's Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Participation (1969) and Communicative and Collaborative Planning Theory by Herbamas (1984) and Healey (1997) emphasis that participation without redistribution of power is an empty and frustrating process of the powerless [36], [38], [40]. Likewise, in a partnership where one partner is ill-informed or lacks the knowledge to negotiate with another partner is likely to contain within it the seeds of its own dissolution [41].

The theory further emphasises that when power holders restrict the views of stakeholders, participation remains as window dressing rituals and rubber stamps [40]. The challenge remains for bureaucrats—professional planners to control their

emotions, reluctance and interests during the process [19], [38], [42]. Based on the debates underscore the importance of community participation and warn the threat of ineffective community participation in realising plans. Unfortunately, participation in the SSA cities is reported to be at a low level in the Sherry's Ladder of Citizen Participation (Manipulation and Tokenism). This scenario poses a pair of questions such as: How does the community participate in master planning and implementation processes in the SSA cities? What should be done to make sure there is genuine community participation in the SSA cities?

Therefore, imposed legacy coupled with conventional planning and planner's chauvinism have resulted in imposed mindsets which have led to ineffective community participation in the SSA cities. Ineffective community participation has resulted to effects such as cities polarization into haves and have-nots, informal settlements, unrealistic land use zoning and sweeping poor communities away from cities which require a mindset change to bureaucrats' in order to attain an effective community participation as it has been summarised in Figure 1. While based on theoretical tenet the conditions for effective community participation, threat and strategies have been summarised in Figure2.

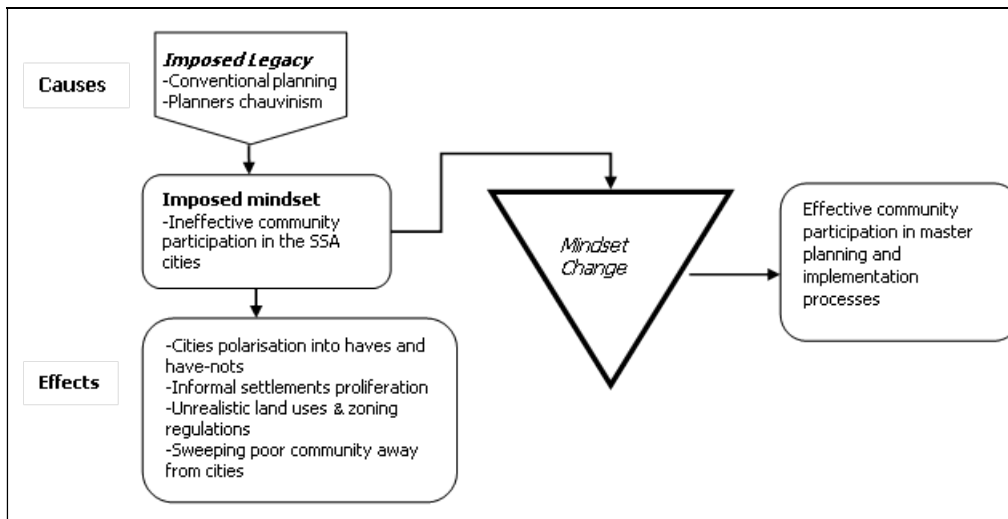


Figure 1: Conceptual diagram of community participation in SSA

Source: Author's construct, 2023

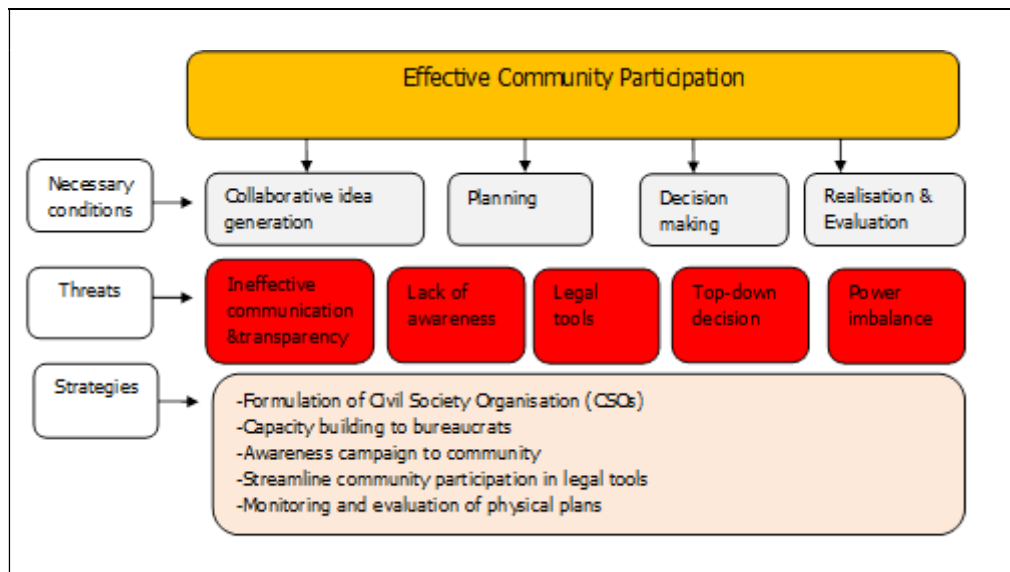


Figure2: Conditions for effective community participation

Source: Author's construct, 2023

1.3 Master planning as concept

Master planning is the process which involves earmarking of different land uses which adhere to compatibility of one another for the sake of guiding and managing urban growth and development up to twenty years [24], [27], [43], [44]. The advantage of using master planning as a planning tool is based on providing long term vision of the city, efficient use of resources, promoting economic development, fostering growth and development and enhancing sustainable development [45]. The top-down approach was common during the modernist era till post-modernist era when the stakeholder's participation started to be a global agenda [28]. In the 1990s, the global movement noticed that top-down approach was no longer the best way of planning as it overlooked social, economic and cultural aspects of stakeholders who are the end users of the master plans [9], [30], [43], [46]. Unfortunately, despite the failure of master plans, the technocrats in cities of SSA have continued to prepare master plans which do not prioritise community needs and without a critical assessment (monitoring and evaluation) of why the previous plans failed and what should be done in order to improve [47], [48]. Therefore, issues emanating from the theoretical tenet include ineffective communication, limited transparency in decision making, lack of an inclusive idea generation, lack of awareness, top-down approach and power imbalance. These are aspects that constitute the analytical framework of this study. Therefore, this paper is divided into five sections namely: Introduction, Methodology, Results, Discussion and Conclusion.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study deployed a literature review to explore how community participation is being practised in the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) cities. Generically, literature review focuses on published materials which provide an examination of recent or current

literature by assessing a wide range of a subject matter [49] According to [1], [2], [50], [51] pointed out that applying literature review as chief method should take precaution of limiting scope of the study inquiry in order the study to be manageable. Therefore, the search of information was based on reviewers' discretions and available literature [49], [52]. The peer reviewed papers were searched by using two key words—*Master planning AND Community participation* using Boolean operator (AND) to limit the search scope. Different search engines such as Google scholar, Research4Life, Government and institutional websites and journal data bases were deployed. The journal databases considered were such as; Cities, Habitat international, Taylor and Francis Group, Springer, Journal of Urban and Landscape Planning and Land use policy. The institution websites visited were World Bank, UN-Habitat and government websites. The focus was mainly to retrieve published journal articles, text books, technical reports and policies describing community participation and master planning at global and sub Saharan Africa written in English language only. A total of one hundred and two (n=102) relevant published documents including peer review articles (94), books (3) and reports (5) were reviewed. This is in line with studies done by [51], [2], [46] who reviewed 60, 70 and 35 published and grey documents respectively.

Moreover, search strategy was based on criteria such as; firstly, the time frame of the publication whereby the published articles from 1990s to 2023 were highly considered because from the 1990s community participation was a regional agenda and the majority of the SSA countries adopted it as a new planning system (paradigm shift). However, there were no restrictions of year of publication for reviewing theories, dissertations and government reports because the model (Sherry's Arnstein Ladder of Citizen Participation) Communicative Planning (Herbamas) theories were promulgated in 1969 and 1984 respectively. While reports and dissertations comprise grey literature which helped to give authors much insights about the topic. Secondly, the validity of information was considered through assessing the convergence of arguments among different authors discussing the same issue in the same line which was then summarised using a matrix to detect the patterns. The authors used abstracts and conclusions to decide whether the documents were valid or not through a skimming process. When the document was seen to be valid then in-depth reading of all paper's sections followed by critically considering analytical issues such as weak communication, lack of transparency, awareness, lack of an inclusive idea generation, top-down planning and power imbalance. Thirdly, the results were limited in the SSA countries specifically to countries which shifted capital cities—Nigeria (Abuja), Tanzania (Dodoma), Botswana (Gaborone) and Malawi (Lilongwe). The choice of these cities was purposely to examine whether or not the post-colonial governments used the weaknesses in previous colonial government capital cities to improve the new shifted cities.

Furthermore, the policy recommendation gathered experience from both the developed and developing countries such as Europe, Latin America, Asia and Africa where successful stories about community participation in spatial planning have been reported. Taking their experiences does not mean that they are perfect, but consideration was done based on hustles and struggles by communities over rigid planning systems and achievements which have been recorded. After the data were collected from different search engines were then analysed using content analysis whereby the themes from different authors were summarised and synthesised based on analytical issues (themes) mentioned prior. The data were

analysed using Microsoft Office and presented in text, table and figures so as to enable easy communication with readers. The next section discusses the results based on the themes identified.

3.0 RESULTS

This study identifies a pair of themes such as: ineffective communication and lack of transparency, lack of awareness, lack of an inclusive idea generation, top-down decision making and power imbalance as prominent analytical issues contributing to ineffectiveness of community participation in master planning and implementation processes in the SSA cities as follows.

3.1. Ineffective communication and lack of transparency

One of the contributing factors for weakness in community participation process in Abuja-Nigeria is weak communication between community and bureaucrats about master planning and implementation processes whereby a normal citizen in Abuja does not know even the meaning, content and implication of master planning [26]. Weak communication among stakeholders in Abuja has resulted in a master plan developed in the form of poor and rich, success and failure, the city lacks integrity, social and economic inclusion [53]. This scenario in Abuja is contributed by the planning system not embracing participatory planning approach whereby bureaucrats earmark land uses without participating communities [53], [54]. Leaders in the planning system are not informed about the problems confronting communities which has made them to propose policies which are ineffective to solve the prevailing problems such as informal settlement, environmental pollution and urban sprawl [43].

Equally, there is poor communication with the community coupled with ineffective coordination between planning authority, private sector and parastatals in Dodoma [55]. It has been revealed that there is poor information dissemination between citizens and the planning authority in development projects in Dodoma [56]. The low level of transparency in planning, surveying and land allocation led to informal settlement propagations in Dodoma city [57]. Likewise, there is weak communication between bureaucrats and communities in Gaborone whereby planners tend to overrule the community preferences and needs [58]. The preparation of Gaborone master plan paid less attention to community participation including civil society, private sector and chiefs [1], [59]–[61]. It has been reported that communities in Gaborone complain that they were not engaged in planning and execution of projects [62]. Similarly, it has been reported that the planning and implementation of Lilongwe master plan did not participate community and civil societies; instead zoning of land uses was done by technocrats [1], [63]. Failure to effectively participate communities especially landowners has led into informal settlements proliferation, poor infrastructure and social polarisation and community seldom accept plans prepared by the government due to lack of effective communication and transparency during planning process [63], [64].

3.2. Lack of awareness

About 90 percent of Abuja residents do not know about the master plan [2]. There is low awareness of community about land use planning and regulations in Abuja [65], [66]. For instance, the community lacks awareness of the proposed green

spaces which has resulted in abuse of parks by converting them to buildings, dumpsites and commercial trade spaces [67]. Correspondingly, there is low knowledge to the community in the development programme in Dodoma; the community lacks education as there is a low awareness campaign done by the planning authority [56], [68]. Equally, there is low community awareness about Gaborone master plans as only experts prepared them; communities are not aware and consulted by the government about development plans being implemented [1]. There is low awareness among communities on legal frameworks which are reported to be prepared as one size fits all concepts [62]. Likewise, there is low community awareness on the master plan in Lilongwe which makes people invade land designated for public uses; there is no plan ownership as communities view the plan as troublesome to them and are opposing their daily lifestyle [1], [64]. Lack of community awareness in the planning process has resulted into informal settlements proliferation [63], [64]. It has been reported that plans are rarely accepted due to lack of awareness of landlords; failure to effectively educate landlords has resulted into land use conflicts and rejection of master plan proposals in Lilongwe [64].

3.3. Lack of an inclusive idea generation

The Abuja master plan is typically technocratic with little regard to community needs and means of surviving; much attention is given to high-quality infrastructure which is reported to expelled majority urban dwellers from the city [1], [2], [43]. Despite the government initiatives like integration policy, hybrid resettlement and integration policy and demolitions none of these initiatives were effective as the government couldn't provide a community to air their feelings and views [43]. Communities are reported not to participate which lead to suspension of their ideas and opinions [16]. It has been revealed that participation in Abuja is not genuine, inclusive and negotiated rather it is pseudo; this scenario has led to social stratifications of urban dwellers, crimes, environmental pollutions, evictions and demolition [69], [70].

Similarly, there was a lack of stakeholders' ideas inclusion in Dodoma master planning and implementation processes which is reported to be one of the prominent causes of the Capital Development Authority (CDA) not to effectively fulfill its targets [71]. It has been pointed out that communities were not involved in preparation of the 1976, master plan which gave less consideration of community needs such as the informal sector and urban farming which were the main sources of livelihood for majority residents in Dodoma [2], [72]. Ignoring community needs resulted in the abuse of the master plan through proliferation of informal settlements to a couple of areas including Chang'ombe area which was originally planned for landscape (forest) purposes [2]. Despite of community being perceived to participate especially the 2010 master plan; there are violations reported on the ground including presence of informal settlements, violation of land use zoning regulations, blockage of infrastructure, conversion of green areas into settlements and urban sprawl [1], [2], [55], [72]. Correspondingly, it has been revealed that, the first Gaborone master plan polarised the capital city in terms of low, middle and high income; the low income are found in slums and informal settlements while majority high income are found in well planned and serviced neighbourhoods [1], [60], [62]. However, since 1990s the zoning regulations are reported to be flexible and allow the mixed uses; this was possible only after president Sir Seretse Khama intervened and ordered planners to change planning

approach and enhance social cohesion, inclusivity and avoid sidelining community ideas and needs [62]. Similarly, it has been revealed that Malawians have been respecting chiefs more than the government simply because chiefs have been respecting their customs and culture such as allocating plots that accommodate livelihood needs like urban agriculture and social affairs which is not the case from bureaucrats in the planning system [64].

3.4. Top-down decision making

The planning system in Abuja is reported not to embrace participatory planning approach whereby bureaucrats earmark land uses without engaging communities [53], [54]. It has been reported that the modernist planning concept (Garden City Concept) was applied which emphasises more on scientific knowledge at the expense of local knowledge [2], [69]. Likewise, there has been poor participation of non-state organisations such as the private sector, civil society, community based organisations and agencies in planning and implementation processes [73]–[76]. Equally, it has been stated that the 1976 Dodoma master plan proposals could not take into account the livelihood activities of poor residents [72]. Stakeholders were not engaged during the planning process of green areas in Dodoma which resulted in clashes between government and residents' priorities [72]. There was a low level of stakeholders' participation as decisions were done by local government staff [68]. The Capital Development Authority (CDA) gave less priority to community participation whereby citizens were not part of planning and implementation processes as results lead to informal settlement development in different wards such as Chang'ombe, Ntyuka, Zuzu, Michese and Mkonze to mention few [57].

Furthermore, [57] pointed out that there has been a low level of participation of stakeholders for the 1976, 1988 and 2010 Dodoma master plans; the CDA experts and foreign consultancy firms used a western planning concept (Garden City Concept) which prioritised the rigid land use zoning, beauty and aesthetic at the expense of social, economic and cultural aspects of community [1], [2], [72]. Alike, the Gaborone master plan used modernist planning approach (Garden City Concept) whereby the plan is dominated by strictly land use zoning regulations [1], [60]. Moreover, Lilongwe master plan was prepared based on the modernist planning approach (Garden City Concept) as it was applied in Abuja, Dodoma and Gaborone; parks, low density and strictly land use zoning was predominantly emphasised [1], [63], [64]. The planning and implementation of Lilongwe master plan did not involve community and civil societies; instead zoning of land uses was done by technocrats [1], [63]. Community in Lilongwe are regarding the master planning as '*apartheid planning*' due to the fact that a plan has been used as a catalyst to intensifying the gap between haves and have nots; the Garden City Concept used has been reported to favour politicians and elites while leaving majority urban dwellers living in miserable life socially and economically [1], [2]. According to [1], one of the residents in Lilongwe said '*a contemporary Lilongwe is a rather boring city laid in a western way and lived in an African one*'.

3.5. Power imbalance

There is dominance of bureaucrats in the planning and implementation process in Abuja which provides less consideration of community needs [26]. There is a weak legal framework to guide the planning and implementation of master plan in Abuja such as lack of coordination among government departments [26]. Likewise, in

Dodoma, council plans are prioritized at the expenses of Mitaa plans which leaves the socio-economic problems unsolved [77]. Correspondingly, there is less consideration of Tswana cultural aspects; the Gaborone master plan prioritises the western ideologies with little negotiation and integrated development [58], [62]. Communities in Gaborone are treated as audience rather than interactive stakeholders which has led to decisions made to be a one sided championed by bureaucrats [58], [61]. Similarly, the first Lilongwe master plan of 1967 considered experts views' while overlooking the community needs [1], [63]. There is no reconciliation between spatial planners' vision and experience of community in Lilongwe [64]. The experience of community participation in four capital cities has been summarised below (See the summary in **Table 1**) while the results and its implications have been discussed in the next section.

Table 1: Summary of community participation in four shifted capital cities

Analytical Issue (Theme)	Cities				Remarks
	Abuja	Dodoma	Gaborone	Lilongwe	
Ineffective communication and lack of transparency	-Community members are marginally informed and there is lack of transparency as experts do not disclose the plans to community	-Community lack information about master plan, coupled with limited transparency from bureaucrats	-There is poor communication and lack of transparency between community and bureaucrats	-There is poor communication and lack of transparency between community and bureaucrats	Bureaucrats pay less attention on making sure community is well informed about master planning. There is also lack of transparency in planning and implementation in master planning processes which has resulted into plans realisation failure
Lack of awareness	There is lack of awareness to community as majority of the citizen are not informed about the meaning and content of the master plan	Majority of community members are not aware of master planning due to low level of education	Community is not aware of land use proposals in the master plan	-Community lack awareness as bureaucrats do not conduct education campaigns	Bureaucrats pay less attention on making sure community are aware and knowledgeable about master planning
Lack of an inclusive idea generation	-Inputs and views are born from bureaucrats at the expenses of community needs and preferences -There is poor consideration of socio-economic & cultural aspects in the planning process	-There is less consideration of socio-economic & cultural aspects such as community livelihood vis-a-vis land use proposals	-Despite, the government initiative to make the master plan inclusive; it has been reported that technocrats dominate the process -There is less consideration of socio-economic & cultural aspects	-The master plan is not a product of community ideas rather than the influence of bureaucrats	-The proposed land uses in the master plans do not reflect the socio-economic and cultural aspects of global south cities. Beauty, good order and aesthetic have been prioritised at the expenses of socio-economic and cultural aspects in all four capital cities
Top-down decision making	-Preparation of master plan considered scientific knowledge at the expense of local knowledge. Garden City Concept was deployed; Land use zoning regulations do not reflect the local context	-Preparation of master plan considered scientific knowledge at the expense of local knowledge -Garden City Concept was deployed; Land use zoning regulations do not reflect the local context	- The president intervened to bridge the gap between haves and have-nots however, Garden City concept was deployed too	-Preparation of master plan considered scientific knowledge at the expense of local knowledge -Garden City Concept was deployed -Land use zoning regulations do not reflect the local context	-Planning approach used largely doesn't reflect the SSA cities contexts. The concept polarised cities into haves and have nots, slums and informal settlements. Bureaucrats regard community as ignorant and they have nothing to influence during planning processes and they can plan on behalf which is regarded as professional power misconception
Power imbalance	-Legal frameworks are reported to exacerbate power imbalance as they do not clearly state how community should be participated -There is lack of coordination among stakeholders in planning process	-Legal frameworks are reported to exacerbate power imbalance as they do not clearly state how community should be participated -Experts disregarded community livelihood means in proposing land uses	-Legal frameworks are reported to exacerbate power imbalance as they do not clearly state how community should be participated -Tswana culture was less considered while western ideologies were highly prioritized	-Legal frameworks are reported to exacerbate power imbalance as they do not clearly state how community should be participated -The government overlooked community needs at the expenses of beauty and aesthetics	Bureaucrats are reported to dominate the planning process. There is no genuine inclusive idea generation, planning, decision making, monitoring and evaluation. -Experts participate community as formality (Pseudo)

4. DISCUSSION

The findings in section three show that there is ineffective community participation in master planning and implementation processes in all four shifted capital cities. The ineffective participation is caused by ineffective communication and lack of transparency, lack of awareness, lack of an inclusive idea generation, top-down decision making and power imbalance. Community participation is given less attention by the post-colonial governments which prioritise scientific knowledge at the expense of local knowledge. Disregarding community participation in physical planning is contrary to the global agenda which underscores planning with people and not planning for people [20], [78]. Embracing community participation addresses the challenge of policy failure as it acts as social capital by exactly identifying the needs of society and making well-informed decisions [37], [78]. The bureaucrats are reported to overlook socio-economic and cultural aspects in the planning processes by concentrating much on the modernist planning approach (Garden City Concept) which has less to do with community participation and inclusive planning. The governments in four capital cities are reported to adopt decentralization in their policies and laws nevertheless; the reality in practice is doubtful. Concentrating on what is really happening in global south cities is of greater paramount importance than focusing on normative frameworks which are global north oriented [3], [17], [23]. It has been noted that communities participate in a pseudo way which can be regarded as technocrats deceiving themselves.

According to [3], participation is not simply discursive and collaborative decision making towards shared vision rather it is built on power laden compromise, contests from community, government agencies, civil society, local and international private sector. Unfortunately, it has been revealed that countries in SSA do not have regulations and laws which measure the quality or quantity of public participation needed, thus the participation process is not monitored or measured by the available legal frameworks [32]. Based on this situation it has been badly used by bureaucrats by being not pro-community and discourages self-governance and organisation [79]. Similarly, there is poor communication, transparency, awareness and education among the community members which result into plans lacking eligibility and poorly realised on the ground. Master plans proposals are not well communicated to communities and people have less understanding even of the meaning and importance of master planning. Since communities are not aware and knowledgeable it has contributed not to make informed decisions instead technocrats have been deciding for them which can be regarded as planners' chauvinism. This is in line with [33], who said participation does not just happen, it needs strategy, commitments, time, resources and planned approach; planning systems in SSA do not value learning as vital especially to the controversial and complex issues during participation process as results makes communities to participate in the limited way (blindly) and without well understanding the issue on board.

Collaborative governance requires effective access to information and data; this is precondition for community to participate with the government [80]. The roles of technocrats are to make sure that stakeholders especially community is well informed and engaged in planning process, reconcile public and private interests, coordinate, promote formulation of policies and engagement in securing political and economic support [34], [81]. Moreover, [82] emphasises that a city that excludes its citizen's needs and wishes will have a hard time to create quality life.

The SSA cities planning system is associated with command and control rather than ensuring negotiation among actors including communities in order to get solutions of societal problems which are context based [63], [79], [80]. There is a lack of inclusive idea generation so as to have realistic plans rather than copying modernist planning approaches which has proved to be ineffective to solve Global south challenges. The post-colonial governments have found themselves in a trap of creating the same problems created by the colonial governments such as informal settlements, slums, crimes, polarisation of cities into haves and have-nots, housing deficits, poor consideration of informal sector, traffic congestions and rigid and unrealistic land use zoning regulations which [30] regards as planned city sweeps poor away.

The approach opted by bureaucrats of not coming up with new planning approach which address the SSA cities challenges such as informality as main livelihood means of majority urban dwellers can be associated with imposed mindset effects in African spatial planning systems. Community participation is reported to be done in a pro-forma manner which results to fantasy physical plans [22] which have ineffective impact on the ground; this situation calls for a need of changing bureaucrats mentality (mindset change) by cracking minds into other epistemological world for the effective master planning process that will yield a better results that reflect general society in the SSA countries [1], [2], [4], [19], [22], [30], [37], [80], [83]. The imposed mindset effects require policy change as it has been recommended in the conclusions session below.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Community participation has been given less attention by governments in sub Saharan Africa (SSA) countries, specifically in the shifted capital cities—Abuja, Dodoma, Gaborone, and Lilongwe. There is ineffective communication, lack of transparency, lack of community awareness, lack of an inclusive idea generation, dominance of top down planning and power imbalance in master planning and implementation processes. There are mismatches between community demands, needs and preferences vis-a-vis the master plans proposals. Government officials are vested with power by institutional frameworks to influence decisions on behalf of the community members, but community members have their own concerns which are normally sidelined by bureaucrats. Legal tools do not measure the quality and quantity of participation which is used by bureaucrats as a loophole to dominate over the community needs and preferences. Paying less attention to local knowledge by planning systems in the SSA cities has led to informal settlements proliferation, social crimes, traffic congestion, housing deficit, evictions and demolitions. The planning systems in sub Saharan Africa are still practicing a top-down planning coupled with application of western concepts (Garden City Concept) in the name of participatory planning as the results plans prepared are largely not realised on the ground cause are not community centred. Therefore, based on global experience this study recommends the policy change as way of addressing the status quo in SSA cities;

First, engagement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), in planning process is likely to be a game changer in planning systems as it helps community to seek for their infringed rights; so far communities' rights in the SSA cities are being suppressed by bureaucrats who prioritise scientific knowledge at the expenses of local knowledge [6], [18], [84], [20]–[23], [63], [65], [73], [76]. Lack of awareness and absence of an inclusive idea generation has led to the bureaucrats

proposing land uses and zoning regulations which do not reflect socio-economic and cultural aspects. Well organised, committed and informed civil society which is courageous to confront those running state could abandon autocratic practices and power imbalance; confrontation can be a stepping stone for institutionalisation of democracy as it is anticipated to acts as watchdogs of the planning system [10]–[12], [30], [45], [56], [79], [85]–[87]. Experiences from South Korea, Brazil, Norway and Netherlands show that civil societies have acted as catalysts to transform ideology of the governments from top-down to bottom-up approach [82], [88]–[96]. Despite the challenges of civil society organisations as pointed out by [31], there are many advantages of having them rather than its absence as it helps to raise awareness to community members which is reported to be very low in SSA cities. Increased community awareness will make the bureaucrats' to think big and come up with solutions that will address the challenges happening in Global south cities rather than preparing plans in a business as usual manner.

Secondly, conducting routine capacity building to bureaucrats about community participation through refresher courses in order to upgrade knowledge and to change the way of engaging communities as the needs of the cities are dynamic [20], [28], [33], [97]. Currently, it is not well researched how often bureaucrats get refresher courses on how to participate the community in spatial planning and implementation processes so as to enhance their performance in dealing with complex issues associated with urbanisation in the SSA cities. Thirdly, to enhance awareness creation, transparency and an inclusive idea generation in decision making in which each group and stakeholder has adequate representation [17], [21], [24], [58], [61], [65], [79], [98]. Plans being demand driven increase the chance of implementation [37]. Negotiation is the key to understanding the possibilities and limitations of change in sub-Saharan cities planning system [3]. Bureaucrats' should embrace community's self organisations in the urban planning system rather than treating them as failures or exceptions [42], [79]. Lack of awareness, transparency and an idea generation being born from experts lead to poor realisation of master plans; the plans should be two way traffic rather than bureaucrats' oriented.

A fourth, legal framework which sets terms and fosters community participation process is of great importance. Despite decolonization which happened in 1950s to 1990s to many SSA countries, the majority of recent planning regulations still embrace western centralised planning systems which disregard the needs and local knowledge [3], [20]. Notwithstanding community participation being articulated in institutional frameworks—laws, regulations and guidelines of sub Saharan African cities, the basic principles of participation in implementing institutional frameworks are not adopted as community members are unaware of master planning proposals which they are deemed to be engaged or affected them [15], [20], [22], [99]. Experience from Brazil reveals that community participation is part of provision in the right based constitution with slogan a called '*right to the city*' which is uncommon in SSA countries [90], [100]. Similarly, experience from Curitiba, shows that presence of independent agency backed with constitution will increases the chance of making informed decisions by the local community through participatory mapping and critical discourses arena [101]. Without strong legal framework such as regulations and guidelines to foster the process from planning, implementation and evaluation of master plans in the SSA cities, power imbalance, lack of transparency and awareness will remain unchanged in the SSA planning systems. Fifth, monitoring and evaluation should be stressed in the SSA cities in

order to assess whether the plan is successful or not [9], [43], [102]. It has been a tendency of the governments in SSA not to prioritise monitoring and evaluation as important; plans are prepared without critical assessment of the success and failure of previous plans.

This study is useful to policymakers, urban planners and the private sector as it recommends policy change for future enhancement in order to address the power imbalance among bureaucrats over community needs and preferences in SSA cities. This study is in line with how to achieve a sustainable development goal (SDG) number 11 which emphasises *sustainable cities and communities that are inclusive, safe and resilient*. However, the major limitation of this study is that it considered only secondary data as a source of information using literature review as main review typology. Therefore, this study further suggests case studies on how community participates in master planning and implementation processes, how Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) can be strengthened to raise awareness to majority urban dwellers and how legal frameworks could be streamlined to make a wide range of community participation in the sub Saharan Africa cities.

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