

**THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE URBAN FRONTS, THE CASE OF URBAN EXPERIENCE  
AND PRESSURE ON THE INFRASTRUCTURE -- Bons N. Obiadi, Nzewi, N.U.**

**The Architecture of the Urban Fronts, the Case of Urban Experience and Pressure on the  
Infrastructure.**

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**Abstract:**

A generalized perception of Architecture locates the discipline within the narrow boundaries of design and erection of buildings. While this may be acceptable in certain quarters, the fact remains that the spatial emergence and generic function guiding the relationship between human beings and space have, for centuries, guided the architecture of cities. Architecture, according to definitions, is practiced by licensed professionals in the industry however; literature has proven that almost everyone practices architecture in different ways and not, exclusively limiting to the design and erection of buildings. The dumping of communities solid wastes redefine the configuration of the area's environment and it is architectural, and deals with human beings and spaces. The design, construction and erection of roads, bridges and community street security gates are architectural and negatively impacting on the environment and particularly, architecture of the area. Objectively, the aim of this study is to create awareness and point to the fact, that the Nigerian players (policy makers) have in the past, designed models to direct positive growth and development in the country, but failed to properly implement the programmes and that is detrimental to the country's built environment and especially, architecture and infrastructure. Importation of inferior goods (cars, furniture and others) into the country and abandoning them on the streets, communities ugly street security gates that are in most cases, abandoned and in disrepair negatively affect the architecture of the communities. The study adopted qualitative and correlational research methods that embraced survey, archival and observational methods. It conducted studies in three Nigerian cities, Lagos, Enugu and Onitsha in 1996/1997 and in 2012 and 2013; it included Owerri in the study. While the government is doing the best it could, she needs to pay attention to the urban and suburbia fronts' environmental issues involving the country's built environments, the security of the communities and most importantly, joblessness and unemployment issues that pushed people into importation of other country's waste and thrown away items in the name of "Tokumbo" just to create jobs for themselves and survive. The government needs to start awarding communities architectural designs, buildings and road construction contracts to qualified professionals in the industry, use the services of the architectural, engineering and other professional bodies in managing and maintaining the country's built environments and at the same time, upgrade the integrit.

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**Key Words:** Architecture, waste, death, infrastructure, growth, development

## **Introduction**

It is a truism to say that architecture evolves over time. The term ‘evolve’ is however usually used quite loosely to mean that architecture changes over time and that it is possible to trace the sources of these changes to work produced by a previous generation of architects (Brown, 2006). Each period offered something new and different because they were not all similar, but some/most of architecture was influenced from other periods/civilizations. Architecture captures the birth of new ideas to the scares of tragic events. Architecture has evolved from Greek to Roman to Modern Day. As time progresses, architecture advances, yet there are things that have retained conservative. This is done so that contemporary people may share the same experiences as the people in the prior time periods. According to the Webster’s dictionary: Architecture is the art of building in which human requirements and construction materials are related so as to furnish practical use as well as an aesthetic solution, thus differing from the pure utility of engineering construction (Bo, et al, 2010).

While it is not the intent of this research to get deep, into the evolution of architecture, it is rather important to understand architecture, how it evolved and the influence it will have on this paper. The focus of this paper is the architecture of the communities, be it buildings, refuse dumps, buildings in disrepair and bad business signs. According to Hiller (1996), the relationship between human beings and space was, at a deep level, governed by two laws: laws of spatial emergence, by which the larger-scale configurational properties of space followed as a necessary consequence from different kinds of local physical intervention; and laws of generic function by which constraints were placed on space by the most generic aspects of human activity, such as the simply facts of occupying space and moving between spaces. Hiller (1996) further states that, to a significant extent, the spatial forms of cities are expressions of these laws, and that if we wish to understand them we must learn to see them as “things made of space,” governed by spatial law whose effects, but not whose nature can be guided by human agency. One implication of this argument will be that twenty-century design has often used spatial concepts for urban and housing areas which fall outside the scope of these laws, creating space which lacks elementary patterning which these laws have normally imposed, in some shape or form, in the past. If as is argued here, such laws exist, then it will be necessary to revise current concepts of the well-ordered city back in the direction implied by the laws. Architecture has equally been defined as the “design and construction of buildings, the style in which a building is designed and constructed, and the complex structure of something (Soanes, 2001).

These definitions when pulled together, addressed all aspects of designing an environment and the structures by a single class, the architect. The urban environmental fronts littered with garbage dump sites with default architecture graced most cities corners and forming

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part of the cities architecture. It further looked at architecture from a broader perspective comprising all aspects of designs from the urban design to the construction and finishing aspects. Architecture is both the process and product of planning, designing and constructing form, space and ambience that reflect functional, technical, social, and aesthetic considerations (Architecture, 2011). In general terms, it is a collaborative process where materials, technology, labour and mind come together to create a physical structure or form.

Considering all these definitions, it would be agreed that the dumping and concentration of urban refuse dumps in major areas of the communities is the work of architecture although, it could be argued that they are negative architecture. However, in a broader perspective, the rapid increase in municipal solid waste is a significant global problem. Municipal solid waste is what everyone else calls garbage. It's about bottles, cans, disposables, diapers, uneaten food, scraps of wood and metal, worn-out tires, and used-up batteries, papers and plastic packages, boxes, broken furniture and appliances, clippings from our lawns and shrubs-the varied human refuse of our modern industrial society according to Porter (1989). As the

Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1976) states, Population growth and increasing per capital output have led to an increasing generation of goods, and hence of waste. Also increasing per capita income and changing patterns of consumption have resulted in materials previously regarded as useful now being discarded. In short, per capita waste generated has been rising sharply, leading to increased disposal cost; there is no indication that this trend would significantly be reversed in near future unless appropriate measures are taken. Additionally, locational changes such as the continuing migration of people to urban Areas, and the concentration of livestock into intensive production units, exacerbate local problems of waste disposal.

Ukpong and Udofia (2011) noted that in Nigeria, a major feature of the urban environment, particularly from the beginning of the oil boom in the 1970's was the rapid takeover of the cities by all kinds of waste. Most states capitals and other large cities are littered with solid waste (plates 1 to 8) despite the presence of state and local government-owned waste management agencies including private waste collectors (Ukpong and Udofia, 2011). Asante-Duah et al. (1995, 232) noted that in Nigeria, heaps of refuse and garbage are a common sight in most state capitals and other urban areas.

**1996/1997 Architecture of the Urban Waste**



Plate 1. Lagos dump site  
Source: Author's field work



Plate 2. Lagos dump site  
Source: Author's field work

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Plate 3. Enugu dump site  
Source: Author's field work



Plate 4. Fegge, Onitsha dump site  
Source: Author's field work

**2012/2013 Architecture of the Urban Waste**



Plate 5. Broad Street, Lagos dump site  
Source: Author's field work



Plate 6. Randle Street, Surulere, Lagos site  
Source: Author's field work



Plate 7. Lagos canal filled with plastic materials  
Source: Author's field work



Plate 8. Owerri dump site  
Source: Don Emeka Anetoh

Defacing of city sidewalks, non-maintenance of the urban/suburban highways and bridges negatively impact the architecture and infrastructure of the areas.

**Statement of the Problem**

The destruction of architecture, infrastructure and the environmental situations in Nigerian cities are very reproachable. The streets are blocked with ugly security gates, roads and bridges collapsing, urban and suburban streets are littered with garbage, tree trunks, tires, bottles, abandoned cars, buses, and rusted city sanitary trucks.

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As Curi (1982) summarized it, one of the ever present facts of human existence is the generation of wastes. People produce wastes in their homes, work places and leisure area. Collection and disposal of these wastes have always been major concerns of societies, for both health and economic reasons. As global population increases at tremendous rate, waste generation throughout the world has also drastically increased; however, this problem is most acutely felt in the least developed countries (LDCs). Environmental problems in Nigeria have gained national and international attention. In 1988, Nigeria issued a National Policy on Environment and established the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (FEPA). Following an extensive study of the country's environmental problems and the cost, benefits, and priorities in addressing them, the World Bank and the Government published, *Nigeria: Toward the Development of an Action Plan* (World Bank, 1988) and incorporated a number of its recommendations into a \$25million Environmental Management Project. This project proposed to establish a national capacity for formulating environmental policy and legislation, developing institutions, data-gathering and analysis, and to raise public awareness levels about environmental issues. It also seeks to ensure that Nigeria has the ability to take environmental considerations into account in investment and development planning. Yet FEPA's mission and role remain unclear, and responsibilities among state and central government overlap. FEPA's weakness is also reflected in the country's lack of capacity to gather, interpret, and disseminate environmental information. The negative environmental impacts of the society's waste dumping and littering, also affects the infrastructure of the communities leading to architectural decays.

### **The Abused Pedestrian Sidewalks**

In a society where most of their drivers and motorcycle riders operate unprofessionally and without respect for other road users, people, within the government cycle, are not executing or enforcing the laws governing their behaviors and protecting the society's infrastructure. That society's architecture and infrastructure suffer (Uyaka, 2013). Governments spent time and money creating beautiful roads and carefully, separated pedestrian sidewalks from the vehicular traffic ways to avoid accidents, impediments and free flow of traffic, but they are not following through, making sure that the roads are used as intended. Nigerians have laws, governing and protecting lives and properties in different communities, but they shy away from enforcing them. Ignoring and not enforcing the laws expose the sidewalk users to vehicular and motorcycle accidents (Uyaka, 2013). The sidewalks are mostly and constantly occupied by hawkers (plates 10 to 12, 13 to 16), motorcycle riders, merchants, and touts hustling money from bus drivers and motorcycle riders and forcing pedestrians to share the road ways with vehicles, motorcycle rides, trucks, wheel barrows operators, etc. and exposing them to accidents. This, does not tell well of the society rather, confirms the social disorder, disregard for law and order. It also reaffirms the quagmire, false sense of place in the society and that the people have accepted the confused state of the society as a way of life.

Cars are indiscriminately parked along major sidewalks (plate 9) and no one complains. All the government agencies have law enforcement units, but they appear sympathetic to the complaints of the offenders (traders, hawkers, car parkers, etc). It is ironic that in most places, the facilities were provided for the offenders, but people, because of their selfish interests and to beat the system, would not use them. Parking structures and retail facilities (shops) are in most

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cases provided, but people would never pay to make use of them rather, gamble and take advantage of public facilities at the expense of others.

 <p>Plate 9. Opposite Kings College, Lagos Source: the author's field work</p>	 <p>Plate 10. Sidewalk street open market, Yaba, Lagos Source: the author's field work</p>
 <p>Plate 11. Sidewalk street open market, Yaba, Lagos Source: the author's field work</p>	 <p>Plate 12. Lagos sidewalk street market Source: the author's field work</p>

**Awka, Anambra State Capital's Commercial Paradise**

The Architecture and Infrastructure of a Confused Awka major thoroughfare, Zik Avenue, Awka, Anambra State. That people are confused is a common saying in Nigerian communities and saying that most of the Nigerian cities are confused may confuse more people, but it is true (Anetoh, 2014).. During the days of the colonial masters in Nigeria, cities urban environments were more orderly organized and managed although, one may argue that urbanization was not as radical as it is today. Today, the cities are overcrowded, congested and lacked adequate commercial and market facilities for the expanding population. It is also arguable that it resulted in pedestrian walkways in almost all the cities been commercialized. The roads, buildings and business signs are in disarray.

Prior to the Nigerian Civil War, Awka towns people maintained the city on their own. Market traders cleaned around their stalls; streets and pathways and compounds were swept. Blocked storm drains would be cleared by residents. Yet now Awka is often seen as the state capital with the worst infrastructure in Nigeria (a country sharing the same state of infrastructure) with less than 10% of its roads paved, inadequate storm drainage, poor public water supply, garbage dumped on the sides of roads and a nonexistent sewage system. This has been because

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Awka has suffered from decades of neglect and poor urban governance in Anambra State due to corruption and deception from many of state governors (Wikipedia, 2015).

For years, Awka stood out as a metaphor for all that could possibly go wrong with Anambra. After 23 years of playing host to the government of the most illustrious people in black Africa, Awka was reluctant to shed its overcast outlook of a semi urban town with a mishmash of mostly residential buildings jutting out of green areas and no hint of a distinct skyline. Awka had no promise of ever transmuting to urbanity, no obvious aspirations to greatness. This is in stark contrast to the well-known industrious nature of Awka indigenes whose ancestors are famous in all of Igboland for their prowess in metallurgical productions and blacksmithry. Meanwhile, right across the Niger in neighboring Delta State, Asaba, a town that became an administrative seat at the same time as Awka is in full bloom. As successive administrations came and went without any landmarks, inhabitants of the town lost all hopes of any real modern changes in the landscape. So many conspiracy theories were woven to explain the seemingly endless neglect of Awka by different administrations. Some people blamed Awka's increasingly sorry state on the reluctance of the indigenes to work in harmony with any government. Others argue that they are reluctant to cede their lands for developmental purposes. But the opposing views argue that it was the government that failed to demonstrate good faith by assuring the indigenes of a compensation package that is commensurate to the land they were willing to cede. Whatever was the true account, the outcome was a damning verdict on Awka. It remained trapped in its utter lack of ambition – an avoidable stillbirth. The irony here is that while Awka stagnated, the rest of Anambra bloomed - especially the smaller towns (Chyjosky, 2014). Awka has steadily grown, but in a negative direction.

Awka like most Nigerian cities is defined by large rudimentary open-air markets where everything from basic food produce to clothes, cosmetics and household items are sold. The largest market in the town is Eke Awka, named after one of the four market days (see Igbo Calendar). Located on a former community burial ground in the center of the city, Eke Awka has grown from a small market serving the needs of residents of the Agulu, Ezi-Oka and Amikwo sections of Awka to functioning as the main retail outlet for the city and neighbouring towns. It houses an estimated 5,000 lock-up shops and stalls all tightly packed into less than 35,000 square meters of space and has become infamous for causing tremendous traffic chaos with a medley of shoppers, buses, wheel barrows all jostling for the limited amount of space available. The second largest market in Awka is Nkwo Amaenyi located further down on the busy Zik Avenue business district artery. It is far smaller than Eke Awka with less than 100 market stalls in an area estimated at around 3,000 square meters (Wikipedia, 2015).

The famous Awka's Zik Avenue still grows negatively, congested and out of character for a city looking to identify and to match Dubia both in architecture and tourism (plates 13 to 16). The architecture and infrastructure of Awka's Zik Avenue are deplorable and mostly in disrepair. There is absolutely zero pedestrian right-of-way on that thoroughfare. The sidewalks have been converted into commercial alleys. The worst of the area's commercial alleys resulted from fraudulent city employees and touts parading the avenue with utmost impunity, arrogance and indiscriminately extorting money from poor sidewalk traders and allowing them to stay at the detriment of the area's upright growth and development, detrimental to the area's architecture and infrastructure.

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Plate 13. Zik Avenue’s commercial area showing a building and electric pole atop the pedestrian sidewalk.  
Source: the author’s field work

The electric pole has nothing, but cut and none functional wires dangling over people’s head. The building sitting atop the pedestrian sidewalk is in total disrepair and the little part of the sidewalk left for the pedestrians was covered with empty cartons, shielding off and prevention the designated users’ access.



Plate 14. Zik Avenue’s commercial area showing pedestrians and cars, jostling for access.  
Source: the author’s field work.

The merchants, without regards for the sidewalk users, covered the sidewalk with their merchandise, forcing the users out and on the road.



Plate 15. Eke Awka-Zik Avenue’s roundabout.  
Source: the author’s field work.

This is Eke Awka roundabout, showing state municipal solid waste collection point at the middle of the road and been used as buffer for hawkers displaying their products for sale



Plate 16. Eke Awka-Zik Avenue’s roundabout.  
Source: the author’s field work.

This Eke Awka roundabout area with no visibility of the pedestrian sidewalk. Merchants covered the sidewalk with their products and part of the road, also, used as sales area.

**The Nigerian Caged Communities**

Not too long ago, probably in the mid 1970s and 80s, during the oil boom in this country, Nigeria, the communities enjoyed freedom and structural growth. Freedom in the sense that young school leaver found jobs in the areas of interest. Inflation was within control and Naira (Nigerian) money attracted good values. Nigerians did not flood Nigeria with other countries waste in the name of imported “Tokumbo” (used items). The Tokumbos would, for this paper, be expanded to include cars, refrigerators, motorcycles, generators, kitchen utensils, furniture and all condemned items worthy of other countries landfills. Before the Federal Government of Nigeria imposed conditions on their importation, some of them arrived dead and remained inoperable. They were abandoned by the road sides (plates 17 to 22), impeding free traffic flows and defacing the area’s architecture and built environment.

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It is understandable that the country is growing, but regrettable that the country does not have sufficient work (jobs) to occupy the people and especially, young school leavers. In want of what to do to earn decent living, some of them joined trading that resulted in import and export businesses. While trading may have been lucrative to some of them, it was not their first option. While in importation business, a lot of them concentrated more in cars and condemned items from other countries for quick gains. The cars and other items were so affordable that almost everyone in the society can afford them. Not only that unemployment forced a great majority of them into careers not before thought of or considered, a lot of the unfortunate ones who do not have the capacity to join trading took other options and indulgences including, stealing.

Stealing to survive, forced a lot of communities to form community watch dog groups, generally known as “community policing.” Communities are coming together and campaigning against robbery and in the process, installing security gates (plates 17 to 22) in many of the city streets and rural community roads. The intent of the security gates are clear and loud (for security), but are not the correct measures to apply? With the ugly gates defacing the area’s architecture, the society is trapped and living in bondage in the name of providing security. Locking the gates prevented free flow of movements (cars and pedestrians) within and out of the arterial streets and roads and defacing the architecture of the beautiful streets.

Another negative part of the community policing and gate locking scenario is that most of the gates are rusted and in total disrepair and at the same time, gracing the views. On some of the streets, behind the gates, are those imported dead and abandoned cars and other items. In most cases, the abandoned imported items add to the poor, ugly and bad landscape and architecture of the Nigerian streets. The items are defacing the architecture of the streets and communities.



Plate 17. Surulere, Lagos photograph  
Source: the author’s field work  
Photograph shows a neighborhood street, with a gate locked at the middle of the day. Abandoned buses packed at both sides of the street.



Plate 18. Surulere, Lagos photograph  
Source: the author’s field work  
Part of the street blocked with a concrete wall, creating imported vehicle’s parking area on the street



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<p>Plate 19. Surulere, Lagos photograph Source: the author's field work Surulere security gate house in disrepair and abandoned for a long time.</p>	<p>Plate 20. Surulere, Lagos photograph Source: the author's field work Street security gate house, built at the middle of the road and with a gate. The building has formed a buffer for street dumps (waste collection point).</p>
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Because of the width of some of the streets, concrete blocks were used in blocking off half of the streets (in some cases) before installing the security gates and security guard's sheds. Unfortunately, those concrete blocks once build, are not maintained and within a short period, would start cracking and falling apart.

In majority of the gates visited by the author, half of them remained bolted and locked to the ground while the other side opened at all times. Most of the built security guard's houses are no longer in use and are still there. Behind some of the security guard's sheds and concrete blocks, are hips of municipal solid waste and in some places, packed cooking wood.

 <p>Plate 21. Surulere, Lagos photograph Source: the author's field work Abandoned street gate in disrepair and serves as a stand for a community vulcanizer and motor mechanic.</p>	 <p>Plate 22. Surulere, Lagos photograph Source: the author's field work A better photograph of the street, showing the abandoned security gate, gate in disrepair, abandoned tires, concrete slabs, and empty concrete bays at the middle of the road. A van parked at the middle of the road behind the concrete slabs.</p>
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**Death traps on Nigeria Roads**

As indicated by Obiadi (2013), most times, the governing people of Nigeria have good ideas and as always, would come up with programmes they thought would advance their causes in good directions, but at the end, they would fail and because of poor and bad implementations, misplaced priorities, disrespect by the affluence and privileged circumstances. Geographically, Nigeria covers a wide expanse of land requiring that they should have adequate to enough road networks to serve the exploding population. However, Nigerians are still contending with most of the major roads put in place by their colonial masters, narrow and squeezing. The supposedly, ultra modern roads, built from the 1970's are not particularly wonderful and some of them are death traps. People are been killed on them in thousands every year and Nigerians are not bothered. To manage these roads and the road users, Nigerian policy makers came up with different programmes and agencies including, but not limited to, the Federal Road Safety

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Commission (FRSC), the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA), all kinds of both state and local government traffic control programmes and personnel yet, lives are lost on the roads in thousands because of carelessness and lackadaisical behaviors of the users, consequent upon the fact that the roads are in most cases, bad conditions.

The shift from the narrow colonial roads to ultra modern roads of the 1970's and all the traffic control programmes and personnel associated with them are nothing but false paradigm (Uyaka, 2013). This is not to criticize the programmes because it is not good and appreciated when criticized, but criticism is healthy when it attracts changes and developments. If Nigerians want growth and make changes in their road programmes, they must all get involved, speak with one voice and move towards one goal and would not allow any distraction or divides in the programmes. The programmes are good, but poorly implemented and heavily influenced by the privileged.

The questions are, and according to (Anetoh, 2014), what are the jobs of the Federal Road Safety Commission (FRSC), the Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA), all the state and local government traffic control programmes and personnel while we have?

- Pot holes on almost all our roads except, maybe, inside the Abuja Capital City.
- Our major roads' bridges are collapsing and without protective handrails (plate 23) and vehicles are falling inside them.
- The hauling trailers plying our roads on daily basis go through hundreds of FRSC and police control posts with incomplete tires and tilted consignments and most times, overloaded.
- Vehicles ply our roads with worn-out tires and in most cases, blown tires.
- Commercial buses, fuel tankers and trailer drivers excessively speed on our roads as if they are on race tracks and in most cases, some of them have inadequate and functional brakes.
- Touts block both federal and local roads extorting money from road users, collecting money for some of us and in most cases, radio fees.
- Commercial vehicles and motorcycles block our roads with impunity.
- Crashed vehicles are left on accident scenes for hours, if not days and in most cases, causing more accidents.
- Corpses litter our roads and no one bothers to remove them and or, look for their family members.
- Sick and mad people roam our roads; sleep on bridges and sidewalks without humanitarian assistance. We must remember that these people belong in shelters and not on our roads and highways.
- Panhandlers, sick and especially people with leprosy form colonies along our roads and major highways.
- Hawkers turn our roads and major highways into commercial heaven, roasting and selling from yam to plantains in very poor sanitary conditions. Most times, some of their products are infected and inducing diarrhea in our road users who patronize them. We are not afraid of hepatitis and other infectious diseases that could easily be transmitted through those merchants and their products.

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Plate 23. A bridge with collapsed protective handrails along Benin – Lagos Express Way

Source: author's field work

This bridge is a death trap, highly dangerous with routine accidents and especially for night users and vehicles without proper and adequate head lights as it is common in the area.

The truth is that, some of these programmes were created to alleviate pains and sufferings in the people however, they have themselves, turned into nuisance and causing the people more headaches. The FRSC, the VIO and a few others, take undue advantage of the provisions of the law. They block the roads and impede traffic flow especially, during heavy rush hour traffic.

It has been commonly observed that when these agencies, especially, the FRSC personnel appear on accident scenes, that they are pre-occupied with damages to the cars and vehicles instead of the state (safety) of the occupants of the vehicles which should be their initial and primary responsibility. Safety of the occupants of the accident vehicles and around the scene must come first before property damages to expensive vehicles. Although, one may not completely blame them because Nigerians are living in a society consumed by influence and material powers. They are living in a society where people drive recklessly undermining the legal rights of other road users and when accidents occur, the unprivileged suffers because they do not have the voice to protect them. The city bus drivers are in the world of their own and without control. They excessively speed, run the road shoulders where they destroy the architecture and infrastructure of the roads and most times, overloaded. Yet, these overloaded vehicles go through the road monitoring agencies unperturbed.

Equally, it has been commonly observed that most of the vehicles falling on the Nigerian highways and major roads are orchestrated by over-loading and potholes (Uyaka, 2013). The author knows about the unnecessary speeding and drunkenness by the drivers, but limiting his emphases on overloading the vehicles, their falling and negative impacts on the built environment. This overloading would include, both long and short distance hauling commercial vehicles, private and commercial passengers' vehicles. The majority of our highways and major roads have pot holes, deep enough that overloaded vehicles tip-over trying to manipulate their ways through them. Knowing and seeing these, one wonders what and why we have these agencies (Anetoh, 2014)?

### **Who are the Road Builders in Nigeria?**

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According to ABD Digest (2014), the roads in Nigeria, who are the builders? This is a million dollar question that will question the integrity of both the Ministry of Transport and the Nigerian Society of Engineers. It is a challenge for the Nigerian Society of Engineers. The association should be answerable to their communities and answer questions associated with the nation's poorly constructed roads irrespective of the fact that it is business as usual (everything goes, as long as you watch my back and I watch your back). It is the responsibility of the association to advise, both the federal and state governments on the minimum standards, the construction of the nation's roads must meet. It is equally, the responsibility of the association, to monitor the roads' constructions and make public, inconsistencies and sub-standards in the construction, irrespective of who builds the road.

The nation's rail lines are not functional and most freights and haulage are through the nation's express roads. The roads are poorly built and not strong enough to take the heavy vehicular pressures exacted on them. The question is, who are the builders of those roads? To investigate the quality of the roads, one must first; answer avalanche of questions and the questions are endless. Every Nigerian has absolute and civic right to question the quality of the construction companies building their roads, the quality of the materials used, the experience and qualifications of the personnel involved in the construction and endless list of other scenarios. In that direction, the House of Representative Committee on Environment, in 2014, questioned the quality of work carried out in Anambra State and indicated, according to Anyanwu (2014), that the House of Representative Committee on Environment has questioned the spending of N363 million on an erosion control work at Ifitedunu in Dunukafia Local Government Area of Anambra State. This came just as the committee commended President Goodluck Jonathan for the projects the Federal Government was executing in various communities across the country, which positively affected the lives of the people. At the end of the committees' oversight function on some projects in Anambra State, the committee Chairman, Uche Ekwunife, who visited the project sites with two other members, Dr. Pat Asadu and Tobias Okwuru at the weekend, said: "We feel happy that people are getting results from the efforts of the Federal Government to ensure that dividends of democracy gets to the grass-roots.

We have visited four sites of ongoing projects in Anambra State, some of them are quite good, the contractors have done very great which is quite commendable. Some are not very good but as a committee, when we get back, we will look at all the contractual agreements vis-à-vis what we have seen on ground to know whether some of the contractors have the competence to continue their job. Some of them have some issues they should come back and address." On the Ifitedunu project, the committee stated that the work done was not commensurate with the amount spent by government and after looking at the papers, it would ensure that justice was done.

Members of the committee were conducted round the project by a director who certified the job done by the contractor and told the lawmakers that the job had been completely paid for and handed over. After speaking with the director in the absence of the contractor, Ekwunife said: "If this project has been completed, we have to look at the scope and re-scope it because the ministry has scoped its own, to know whether it is in tandem with the terms of conditions stipulated in the contract paper."

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Except within the Abuja Capital City, throughout Nigeria, roads are bad and dangerous to the users (plates 23 to 27). Almost all the towns in the Federal Capital Territory are suffering the effects of bad roads. Kuje, towards the Forest is a typical example. Benin-Lagos Express way, shortly after Ore, heading towards Lagos and especially along Ogun State (plate 23), the road is horrible. From Onitsha to Enugu, one could hardly go two kilometers without ditches called potholes in Nigeria (plate 24). Awka-Enugu express way is nothing to write home about and especially, along Ugwuoba. Inside Lagos, except in the highbrow areas, the roads are horrible. Driving from Ota, Ifo and towards Oworoshoki, the roads are dangerously in disrepair and traps and most times, breeding grounds for urban criminals who trap their victims at the potholes. In Imo State, from Akokwa to Olu, although the majority of the roads are under construction, they are all bad and questionable and for a long time, under construction.



Plate 24. Onitsha - Awka Express Way around Umunya, Anambra State  
Source: author's field work  
The road is in total disrepair and dangerous to the users.



Plate 25. A big pothole on the road (Onitsha - Awka Express Way), Anambra State  
Source: author's field work  
This pothole records accidents, car and vehicular damages especially, on a high speed as it is always the case.



Plate 26. Ngwo-Ninth Mile Express Way (Enugu State). At a major intersection connecting the express way from northern parts of Nigeria to Enugu-Onitsha Express Way.  
Source: author's field work  
The road is so bad that vehicles coming from the northern express way, in other to avoid destroying their cars that would tip and fall, risk turning into a one-way express lane and a big challenge for road masters in the area.



4  
Plate 27. Ngwo-Ninth Mile Express Way (Enugu State). Just before a major intersection connecting the express way from northern parts of Nigeria to Enugu-Onitsha Express Way.  
Source: author's field work  
The road is so bad that vehicles turned pedestrian sidewalk into drive lanes and equally, destroyed the pedestrian side walk.

**Objectives of the Study**

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The primary objective of this study is to create awareness and point to the fact that the Nigerian policy makers have always made policies gearing and propelling the country towards the right directions, but have failed to monitor the implementation of the programmes resulting in collapses in the country's architecture, infrastructure and urban and suburbia environments. Equally, the society has always seen architecture as involving only the design and erection of buildings however, from the cited definitions, heaps of the communities municipal solid waste dumps and their daily expansion and configurations are equally architectural and defines the area's environment. It is equally the objective of this paper to prove that architecture involves more than designing buildings and by the architects. It includes the human environments and their spatial integration of community wastes, security gates, highway bridges and the surrounding environments. The design, construction and erection of roads and bridges are architectural and letting them fall apart drops the architectural values of the country's built environment.

**Research Methodology**

The research adopted qualitative and correlational research methods that embraced the following: Survey, Archival and Observational methods. The source of data involved both primary and secondary sources. Primary Source of data includes, interviews (oral, telephone, television), photographs, etc. and the Secondary Sources of data includes, literature reviews from journals, previous works, books, etc. To understand how the people in Nigeria manage their solid waste, a-three cities survey was conducted in late December 1996 and early January 1997 at Onitsha, Enugu and Lagos. In 2012 / 2013, the same studies were repeated and included Owerri, the capital of Imo State. This paper presents the results of the survey, information from the field observations, and the attitude of Nigerians towards their built environment.

**Solutions / Recommendations**

It is time the government pays attention to the urban fronts environmental concerns, roads, highways and bridges. Unemployment issues that led to importation of unwanted items into the country, criminal activities because a great number of people could not secure gainful employments and that resulted in stealing and introduction of both urban and suburbia security gates that are defacing the area's architecture. Locking those gates no doubt, would only serve as deterrent to none-professional criminals and robbers. Any determined and planned robbery would happen with or without the gates locked. Locking the gates has only succeeded in giving the communities comfort and not protection. God has been protecting the the communities and would continue doing so (Umoru, 2014). Nigeria has professional associations of well trained and qualified architects and engineers and not taking advantage of their skills and professional obligations. The Nigerian government cannot afford to be ignoring the falling standards of the communities architecture and awarding building and road construction contracts to quacks and business men simply because they have influential political connections. It is equally irresponsible for the politicians to secure the building and road construction contracts and award them to unqualified and incompetent construction companies only interested in profit making (Anetoh, 2014).

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The society must be conscious of her dealings. In all, the society shall be responsible and take blames for all the deaths on the Nigerian roads, cars and vehicles falling and tipping over after virtually every ditch (pothole), hundreds of broken down cars resulting from those bad roads and the society should not forget, that "protection of life and property" also, applies to those securing road contracts as well as, those building them (Anetoh, 2014).

While there is no clear definition or solutions to some of the social problems as mentioned above, from urban planning point of view, adequate measures must be made to implement the urban and regional development environmental laws guiding the communities infrastructure and developments (Anetoh, 2014). Standardized policing by the state and federal security agents, police and private security agents could be used in securing the communities and all the gates eliminated. With the elimination of the street gates, the original architecture of the streets would be restored. In all, to de-cage the communities and emancipate the people from their current bondage, the government needs to rethink her stands in some road monitoring and maintenance policies and possibly adopt better implementation procedures for her road management, monitoring and construction agencies. The government needs to be proactive in her implementations instead of reactive.

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