

Achieving Good Urban Governance through Strategic Planning For Sustainable City Growth

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Abstract

Several attempts have been made over the years in making governance work in cities so that plan implementation and aestheticism is sustainably ensured has face several draw backs making the system unaccommodating. This paper explores two popular plans so far in operation in many countries including Nigeria. After careful assessment, two working plans were selected among are comprehensive development plan and strategic plan. The Comprehensive Development Planning is called traditional master planning blue print that is usually prepared and because it is rigid, cumbersome and has complicated procedures as to where to start and end, its implementation is always a problem. The loopholes of the comprehensive development planning are its inability to discover the community's goals agreed upon by all, understanding the character of the decentralized political system, rigidity, cost, incrementally towards relative changes, remedially moving away from ills rather towards goals, continual discovery of new problems, fragmentation, limited in alternatives and disjointed disperse decision points are among many reasons. Strategic planning is a new concept which is more of action planning, is indeed normative, analytical, and futuristic with strategic thinking. A five-point Likert scale was employed for analysis of data collected from the perception of consulting firms on the paradigms using a structured questionnaire. The result shows that Comprehensive Development planning is more popular with no result to show. Hence, the recommendations suggested the use of Strategic Planning for sustainable governance and city Growth.

Keywords: Achieving, Good Urban Governance, Strategic Planning, and Sustainable city Growth.

Background to the Study

The administrative process followed when projects are designed and implemented is critical to its future success and impact because many cities and towns are managed by institutions and organizations that have been inherited from the past. They are old fashioned and do not enable the most effective use of human resources, nor the promotion of civil society or private sector to play a role in development through partnership. This is the reason why the prepared plans are not implemented and as a result, the consequences are often inefficient and ineffective management of the cities and towns.

Strategic planning is an organization's process of defining its strategy or direction and making decisions on allocation of its resources to pursue the strategy. This is simply to consider what to

do, for whom we do and how we do to excel or be successful. It is more of activity in Land use oriented measures which is explicit and is concerned with implementation and decision making factors (Robert 1999). These made it have upper hand on the traditional, comprehensive planning which have been practiced but ending in shelf because of the problems bedeviling and hindering its implementation as have been stressed by Ilesanmi and Ugwu (1998) about rigidity and credibility.

According to Obialo (1999) and Beaker (2007), strategic planning encompasses district plan, action area plan and subject plan which in another way is called local plan. Strategic planning is not only applicable to short term projects alone but also long term projects identified and timed differently. This shows that even without a comprehensive master planning approach the strategic can be used. The most important thing is to be specific on vision; mission and goal to provide the action oriented principles of the strategic planning. It is equally to say here that the method can be utilized for business and land use development. Once the objectives of the plans are clearly defined, the internal and external situations assessed, formation and implementation of the strategy is made, and evaluation progress adjustment therefore becomes necessary.

This method has five major steps in the processes and is because of this, Lawlor (2006) stated the ingredients of successful planning and implementation as creating vision and direction that is simple and clear, preparing a good plan, setting a good execution with communication being vital. Apart from making and keeping commitments, the core values are stewardship, accountability, innovation integrity and sustainability (Iowa University 2011). The core value went in similar way as the goal of governance. Best practices (2011) have utilized it in solving community problems through models formulation. The issues relating to this subject will revolve around strategic and comprehensive development/traditional/blue print planning so that there can be a fruitful decision making in addressing our planning objectives.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is survey and analytical research design. The type of data source utilized is primary and secondary data source specifically for obtaining quantitative and qualitative data on the popularity and working of the concepts. The primary data was obtained from the field and obtaining opinion from professional consultants in the field, while the secondary data is obtained through literature consultation from published and unpublished written materials such as text books, magazines and thesis.

The sampling frame for the study constitutes twelve educational institutions offering planning courses in the North. A university and a polytechnic were selected by random sampling technique. A sample size of 30 consultants in the selected institutions was chosen at random and questionnaire was administered to come out with the result of the opinions. The method adopted for data collection was the administration of questionnaire based on the sample size which was filled and returned.

Aim

The aim of this study is to examine strategic plan for delivering Good Urban Governance through development plans design and implementation with the view to making recommendations for sustainable city management.

Objectives

1. To appraise the components of strategic development plan along side comprehensive development plan in cities governance
2. To examine the opinions of the users on its applicability
3. To make recommendation of the paradigm for cities governance through development plans designs and implementation

Scope of the a Study

This paper is focused only on two concepts such as comprehensive development plan and strategic plan paradigm but not on comparative bases.

The Concept of Strategic Planning and Comprehensive Development Planning Approach (CDP) as Relates to Governance

The understanding of the paradigms is of importance to its practicability as it gives the opportunity to select the most yielding method because governance is all about responsibility sharing to be executed by expert ideas. The term strategic planning is relatively a new generic planning paradigm and according to best practice (2001) the model is more of grass-root, and bottom up Consensus building and is better suited for non-profit organizations and local governments. Strategic planning is defined as a systematic, formally documented process for deciding what is the handful of keys decisions that an organization viewed as a cooperate whole must get right in order to thrive over the next few years (SBI 2005). Again, it is defined as a statement describing the purpose and ethical conduct for an organization together with the specific strategies designed to achieve the target set for each of the stake holders. Lowe (1999) further states that simplified strategic planning provide a frame work for creating direction in a manner that moves away from guess work and towards intelligent selection of criteria which is the end result of a destination of choice and not chance.

Comprehensive development plan is a top-down approach and a package of proposals used for ordering development on space. It has also been defined by Ilesanmi and ugwu (1998). The document is prepared to guide an orderly development of a city or region which is also referred to as a master plan or blue print but have been criticized in many ways because it is too general, comprehensive and is of long range which sometimes could be forgotten or would not cope with the future trends of growth and rigid. It is usually prepared for a long range period of 25 years and to be reviewed after every five years but the review is not always feasible. The inability to review the plan has made implementation more critical. However, the plans are usually made to be in the shelf. The CDP ordered physical development any way, Robert (1999) have observed that land use plan making process have come up in reaction to the comprehensive/traditional planning and one among the plan that can complement implementation is the strategic/structure planning as it may be called because of its objectivity.

Technicalities in Comprehensive Development Planning and Strategic planning paradigm

The technicalities of CDP are the components, contents and limits to which the paradigm operates. It is made up of land uses such as residential, commercial, educational, public and semi-public, recreational/open space, industrial and communication routes. The implementation of these land uses through this process has been difficult since the concept is too broad for objectivity. Since the concept is not always reviewed, it makes things worse off because it does not encourage embarking on the subject plans within the system the required stakeholders which will embrace the support of the communities especially for sustainability. Strategic Planning helps in such a way that section of the plan is first implemented (Oderinde 1998 and Ilesanmi and Ugwu 1998). It encourages the approaches that are sector incorporated while issues are addressed with everyone a participant indeed.

In United State of America, strategic plan which is sometimes considered as structure planning is regarded as a new paradigm of planning (Roberts 1999). The role of this paradigm cannot be over emphasized because it has practically clear steps to addressing issues. Many business organizations have hijack the word but today, Urban and Regional Planners as well as other allied professionals have keyed into the concept because it is more of their advantage than business line sequel to the reasons that it works much further ahead; It consist largely of words with just a few figures to indicate the planners intension and the few figures do contained are tested by risk analysis technique which might be discussed in due course

The paradigm is looked towards several years and is concerned with massive factors. SBI (2005) have observed that Urban and Regional Planning which is a multidisciplinary profession is called strategic planning. Let it be clearly stressed here that it involves sets of statements describing the purpose and ethical conduct for an organization together with the specific strategies designed to achieve the targets. This concept is all about strategic thinking and just as Total Quality Management (TQM) and re-engineering are often extremely beneficial to the progress of Business Company, so it is with simplified strategic planning process to enable a focus on superior performance without straining resource (Lowe 1999).

Components of Strategic Planning in achieving its set objectives

The concept has four main components such as plan development, plan execution and plan reviewing and the involvement of stake holders which is more or less like the Comprehensive Development Planning (CDP). Plan development involve assessment of the past, present and evaluation of the current governance structure-the governance structure which is more of sharing responsibility to stakeholders for effective participation, development of mission and vision statement, determination of operating values, performing needs assessment, determining key result areas and critical issues. The involvement and adoption of SWOT, PEST, STEER, EPISTEL and ATM in analysis of the project in a matter of concern (Renger and Titcomb 2002). Again, the roles of the key players are defining, communicating the prioritize plan in the long range and many more. Plan execution involves programs and procedures and budget. Plan require constant improvement of the plan to ensure execution through periodic meeting to

resolve issues in this case no one right way exist hence skills are needed to balance up opinion and as stake holders are involved, consultants are also involved to allow balancing of the opinions easier, although hiring of consultants might be expensive.

Planning Processes of the Strategic Approach

There are several strategic planning processes ranging from five steps to ten steps but wish to consider here that Olsen (2012) considered who strata the processes into situation target proposal and Draw see think plan.

A. Situation target proposal

- II. Situation is evaluated in the current happening and concluding how it came about
- III. Targeted means defining goals and or objective which is sometimes called ideal state
- IV. Path proposal means mapping out a possible route to the goal and objectives.

B. Draw see think plan

- V. Draw the ideal image or desired end state
- VI. See today's situation and the gap from ideal and why.
- VII. Thinking about the specific action that must be taken to close the gap between today's situation and ideal state
- VIII. Plan the resources that are required to execute them.

Analytical Tools in Strategic Planning Among the useful tools for strategic planning analysis are the following:

1. Strength, weakness, opportunity and threat (SWOT)
2. Balance score card which creates a systematic frame work for strategic planning
3. Scenario writing analyzing future by past scenario
4. Rapid appraisal method (RAM) for seeking speedy information from people
5. Political, Economic and Social Technological (PEST) analysis
6. Socio-cultural, Technological, Economic, Ecological and Regulatory factors (STEER) analysis
7. Environmental, political, informatics, social, Technological, Economic and legal (EPISTEL) analysis.
8. Antecedent conditions, Target strategies, Measure progress and impact(ATM) analysis
9. Route Cause Analysis (RCA) is utilized by ATM and whichever is suitable to be used based on programme schedule is desired (Lorenzo 2006)

Pitfall to be avoided in Strategic Planning

According to best practices (2001), there are pitfalls that will be avoided in strategic planning especially in the long range planning process.

- i. Becoming so engrossed in current problems where by spending in sufficient time on long range planning and becomes discredited.
- ii. Failure to assume the necessary involvement of stake holders in the planning process especially the community associations
- iii. Failing to use plans and standards for measuring performance.

- iv. Consistently rejecting the formal planning mechanism by making conflicting decisions.
- v. Failing to develop association goals which are suitable as a base for formulating long range plans.

According to Harrington (2012), the utilization of strategic planning in city planning needs a great foresight, qualitative reasoning, innovative thinking and planning. This is an operational planning that is involved which is seen as a subset of strategic work planning (Wikipedia the free encyclopedia 2012).

Importance of Strategic Planning

The importance of strategic planning cannot be over emphasized because failing to plan is planning to fail. The strategic plan is the master of other plans hence failing to think ahead will mean no prediction for the future; it gives overall direction; it involves planning for the organization as a whole as well as confirming the strategic planners. Bara (2006) however supported by stressing that strategic planning promotes effective management, improves communications, helps in alignment and linking, improves flow of internal information and processes, helps efficiently and effectively in allocating resources and reduce time and expense as well as security of infrastructures.

There was this conception by Jordan (2012) that the strategic planning is link to Agenda 21m, a United Nations sustainable development initiative. However Ahoy (2010) observed that the three major keys to successful strategic planning and implementation are commitment, credibility and communication but should not be forgotten that it looks into three to five years ahead. The core values associated with strategic planning are stewardship responsible for maintaining the process, accountability for justifying the use of resources, innovation by striving to create better future, integrity for honesty, ethical and professionalism and finally sustainability for meeting the needs of today without compromising the future.

Relating Governance to Strategic Planning Paradigm

When compared with the above, urban management is concerned with how decisions are made and put into action or implemented while focusing on the institutional, financial and planning system to achieve development objectives as well as managing development in cities or towns. This is the reason why Falade (2002) outlined the components of good governance as participation, sustainability, legitimacy and acceptance to the people, transparency, equity and equality, ability to develop the resources and methods of governance, tolerance and accepting diverse perspectives, and ability to mobilize resources for social purpose. Other components are strengthening of indigenous mechanisms, rule of law, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of resources, respect and trust, accountability, ownership of national (local) solutions, enablement and facilitation, regulatory rather than controlling, ability to deal with temporal issues and service oriented measures. This can be effective through the use of stakeholders such as the Federal, State and the Local Government, the civil society and the private sector.

Establishing Relationship between Strategic Planning and Comprehensive Development Planning

A strategic planning defers from a comprehensive development planning as is display in table 1. The relationship is established through emphasizing the processes and the multiple elements of the plans as well as the ways at which it is carried out. The strategic planning helps and organization get on determining what is important, what is needed and where a comprehensive planning fits in. A successful comprehensive plan is usually a primary product of strategic planning, through emphasizing the land use component of the plan (Goche' 2009)

Table 1: Relationship of the Paradigms and Principles

S/No	Strategic planning	Comprehensive Development planning	Observation
1	Agreeing on a strategic planning in a board and staff meeting	Broad assessment of the context	Retain both
2	Carry out an environmental scan through an agreed techniques e.g. SWOT	Decision on framework for organizing and controlling the planning process	Introduce strategic planning
3	Identify key issues and choices to address part of the strategic planning effort such as prioritization in the organization	Specification of broad goals	Retain both
4	Define and review the organization's values, community vision and mission	Formulation of feasible objectives	Retain both
5	Develop a shared vision for the organization	Data assembly	Introduce CDP
6	Develop series of goals and organizational status statement describing specific number of years	Data analysis	Introduce strategic planning
7	Agree upon the key strategies to reach the goals and addressing them through environmental scan	The refinement of goals	Introduce strategic planning
8	Develop an action plan that addresses goals, objectives and work plan on annual basis	Development of objective measures	Retain both
9	Finalized written strategic plan that summarizes the results and decision of the process	Evaluation	Introduce strategic planning
10	Built in procedures for monitoring strategies base on changes	Decision	Retain both

Source: Author Derived 2012

The principles adopted by Town planners and consultants in carrying out Strategic Planning and Comprehensive Development planning were laid side by side the other and observation was drawn out on the suitability of the use of each item, though one is more popular than the other. The observations are as shown in table 1 comparing the paradigm's planning processes. The adopted planning processes in the two concepts is shown in the last column and the observations can be applicable to both strategic and comprehensive Development plan as well as any other local plan in urban planning system. The observation column also observed that among the principles utilized by each concept, the strategic planning paradigm was mostly picked or both were picked while the Comprehensive Development Planning was only picked on rare occasion. Therefore, it could be advised that strategic planning be utilized in packaging and implementation of development proposals. This is very imperative as to give regards to strict implementation of development proposals/packages in this democratic dispensation.

Some Live Development Plans Projects

The following projects are live projects executed with faulty implementation. This is to help in appreciating the fact that the comprehensive development planning is mostly used and result is not always achieved:

1. SHESTCO Final land use plan, Vol. 1 prepared by Niger Consultants Architects and planners in January, 1989.
2. KAFE District Phase III land use plan prepared by EMMARY Konsult in association with TURNKEE Development Consultants, Kaduna 2001.
3. SHEDA Research Town land use and Development plan prepared by EMMary Konsult, Kaduna in October, 1998.
4. The Federal Polytechnic Kaura Namoda master plan 1995 prepared by Department of Urban and Regional planning, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.
5. Gombi master plan 2010 prepared by Department of Urban and Regional planning, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria for Ministry of Works and Transport, lands and Survey Department, Gongola State, Yola, Nigeria.
6. Kaura District Phase II, Abuja. Land use Development Plan 1997.
7. The Abuja master plan
8. Zaria Master plan 1976 prepared by Department of Urban and Regional planning, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria.
9. Birnin Kebbi Master Plan: 2005-2015, Prepared by CES-Development Consortium, Waziri Umaru Polytechnic Birnin Kebbi and many others have not achieved the purposed to which the plans were made. These plans are kept in the shelves or use for record purpose. This seem to be waste of resources

Table 2 Perception of planning consulting firms on the Concepts

ITEM	WEIGHT					REMARK		
	5	4	3	2	1	TOTAL	MEAN	RANK
Don't know both strategic planning and comprehensive development planning	-	-	-	10	25	35	1.2	9
Know both strategic planning and comprehensive development planning	100	40	-	-	-	140	4.7	1
Know only comprehensive Development planning	50	20	-	10	20	100	3.3	2
Know only strategic planning	25	-	-	20	15	60	2.0	7
I have use both strategic planning and comprehensive development planning	75	-	-	10	10	95	3.2	3
I have only use strategic planning	-	-	-	20	20	40	1.3	8
I have only use comprehensive development planning	50	-	-	20	10	80	2.7	4
Both comprehensive development planning and strategic planning are same	-	-	-	10	25	25	0.8	10
The Comprehensive development planning is better for use	25	-	15	10	15	65	2.2	6
The strategic planning is better for use	25	20	-	20	10	75	2.5	5
I prefer both comprehensive development and strategic planning	25	20	15	10	10	80	2.7	4
I prefer only comprehensive development planning	50	-	15	-	10	75	2.5	5
I prefer only strategic planning	50	-	15	-	15	80	2.7	4

Source: Field study 2014

Discussion

In attempt to know the perception of people about comprehensive development planning and strategic planning, a Likert scale close and open ended structure questionnaire was developed using weight to score the concepts. The mean score is then ranked according to order of highest response. The result is as presented in table 2. Any response that has a mean score of 3.5 and above shows a positive response, between the mean of 2.5 and 3.49 is neutral which might be that respondents are unable to decide on the concepts while the scores with mean 2.49 and below disagree with the statements about the concept. In another way, the ranking was also used to ascribe rank by giving positions to the weights mean scores.

The fact that respondents don't know the strategic planning paradigm was disputed with mean 1.2 taking 9th position while knowing the two concepts score a mean of 4.7 to be 1st in the ranking hence it tends to agree with the aforementioned item. The responses seem agreeing with one another because the mean score of knowing only Comprehensive Development Planning (CDP) carries a mean of 3.3 and Strategic planning has 2.0 to be undecided or to disagree. The fact that there is only item two that gain recognition, the poor response might signified that the concepts are either not popular or the people could not differentiate between them, even though they proved to have known them.

Generally speaking and by ranking, Comprehensive Development Planning is more popular and is mostly utilized than the strategic planning which is an indication that the strategic planning paradigm is not popular. In suitability of utilization and achieving better result, the strategic planning has mean of 2.7 against the CDP with mean 2.5 even though responses showed that the strategic planning has not been used with mean of 1.3 and 8th position. The fact is that the two concepts are not the same as proved by the mean response of 0.8 for 10th position which is the least in the ranking order even though strategic planning is not yet put into practice by many. It can be deduced here that the strategic planning is not as popular as the CDP yet many prefer the application of the paradigm in real situation.

Conclusion

Having explores the working of the strategic planning in relation to Comprehensive Development Planning, found out that the concept could be better applied for solving problems since it is more of action and could yield positive result. The component parts of the paradigm is suitable for sharing responsibilities to stakeholders because it considers accountability, transparency and many more which is similar to the urban governance parameters. It helps in addressing the objectives and spelling out for the community what and how it should be. The weak response about the concept of strategic planning is an opportunity that the concept can religiously be applied so that it can be better appreciated. At least, the CDP concept has been adopted in many cases in land use planning but planning reports and documents usually end up in the shelf because of the inability to implement. The working of the strategic planning has already been reviewed earlier in this work; it is encouraged for application in achieving sustainable city development and growth as a product of Good Urban Governance.

Recommendations

1. Strategic planning paradigm should be applied in physical development plans design and implementation. The concept can be used with modifications or direct for accountability in governance. More so, the advantages is that responsibilities can easily be shared among stakeholders to avoid being rigid as in the comprehensive development plan.
2. Though the master plan concept is more popular, the strategic planning paradigm is better used for the implementation of the prepared packages and proposals when sector of the land uses or subject area plan considered can easily be allocated to stakeholders based on their capability for easy implementation.
 - i. Action area plans is a component of strategic planning to tackle areas based on needs, proved the acceptability of responsibility with guaranteed security as is accepted by implementers.
 - ii. The application of strategic planning helps in justifying who will do what and at what period as a direction and success of Governance.
 - iii. The utilization of concept is an indication that the project is accepted by all stake holders. However it is a way of encouraging their private public participation in governance.

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