



Evidence-Based Design of University Zoological Gardens: A Perception Study in South-west Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Evidence-based design (EBD) has become an acceptable paradigm in environment-behaviour endeavours in recent years with documented benefits especially in healthcare facilities. However, little is known of its application to University Campus Open Spaces (UCOS) like University Zoological Gardens (UZGs) which accounts for the repetition of design mistakes. This study aims to assess the UZGs as a major component of UCOS in South-west Nigeria with a view to formulating EBD frameworks. It adopts a comparative post-occupancy evaluation (POE) approach through a Stratified Random Sampling protocol of users (n=3,016) of the gardens in Federal Universities in South-west Nigeria. Results of the quantitative data analyses suggest that while walk-ability is a primary satisfaction factor among thirty design considerations in the formulated model, legibility is the most primary cognitive factor for designing perceptible high quality UZGs. The study argues in favour of the developed framework as design tool-kit and recommends its application as a feedback input into the design process of UZGs.

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1. Introduction

The university campus is the total physical environment, including all buildings, open spaces and landscape elements (Aydin and Ter, 2008). It is this combination of buildings and landscaped open spaces between buildings that functions as an organized whole with a distinctive identity (Gehl, 1987). Rapoport (2004) states that these environments are structured and composed of fixed (infrastructure and buildings), half-fixed (open spaces and their components) and non-fixed (users, user actions and vehicles) elements. Half-fixed open spaces and components are the important determinants of the environment's influence on

user attitudes (Aydin and Ter, 2008; Lefebvre, 1991; Abu-Ghazze, 1999; Dober, 2000).

The design qualities of these open spaces are related to their spatial, social, cognitive and affective characteristics (Adedeji, Bello and Fadamiro, 2011; Adedeji and Fadamiro, 2012). The spatial characteristics are the design considerations and include accessibility in terms

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