Slum Gentrification in the Global South:

A theory test of gentrification and its applicability to processes of slum transformation in Lagos state, Nigeria

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Abstract

The term gentrification carries a significant amount of weight when used to describe processes of urban transformation and, despite its origins in 1960's London, it has become a globally used and accepted term. An in-depth discussion is had on the issues surrounding contextuality and the mutation of the theory of gentrification over time. This research has then analysed the term gentrification through a process of theory testing, using Lagos state, Nigeria, as an illustrative case study. Davidson and Lees (2005) four defining characteristics of gentrification have been used as the basis of the theory. Data on urban transformations relating to slums was collected by undertaking a literature review and coded to highlight whether these processes could be referred to as slum gentrification, as had been done in the literature. The findings show that the only some aspects of the theory of gentrification are applicable to slum transformations in Lagos state, with two out of the four of Davidson and Lees' (2005) characteristics being shown to apply in the data collected.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

As cities in the global south continue to grow and expand, so too do the number of people living in slums within them (Lees, et al., 2016). Many countries and cities experience the duel pressures of competing within the global arena as a modern and desirable, while struggling with systems ill designed for such rapid growth. Nigeria is one such country. In 2012 the Nigerian National Bureau of Statistics stated the population of Nigeria as being 166.2 million (World Population Review, 2019). In 2016 the UN predicted the population to have grown to 186 million and predicts it will reach 398 million by the end of 2050 (World Population Review, 2019), based on its current growth rate of 3.2% a year (Obiezu, 2019). Lagos state is the most populous state within Nigeria, with the number of residents lying anywhere between 17.5 and 21 million (World Population Review, 2019). With the hope of prosperity to be found within Lagos city attracting vast numbers of migrants, the slum population across the state continues to grow as the city swells. This is taking place simultaneously as Lagos state positions the city of Lagos as a global city and the financial hub of Africa. It is this dichotomy which has spurred a vast amount of slum gentrification across Lagos state. The process of Lagos state becoming a globally attractive seems to be incongruous with having slums, particularly ones that are taking up prime real estate within the city of Lagos. It is unclear, however, whether removing slums to be replaced with new buildings truly constitutes gentrification, as it has been referred to in the media and academic literature. This research will therefore shed light on whether the theory of gentrification is applicable to urban transformations concerning slums in Lagos state, Nigeria.

The call for contextual consideration when using and theorising about gentrification has become more overt in recent years (Harris, 2008) (Maloutas, 2018), however, so too has the need to show that gentrification can indeed transcend global north/south boundaries and contextual differences (Shin & López-Morales, 2018). The background of the term will be put forward, paying close attention to its evolution and mutation over time. Data gathered through a literature review will provide the illustrative case study of Lagos state, Nigeria. This data will allow the testing of the theory of gentrification's applicability using Davidson and Lees' (2005) four defining characteristics of gentrification as a rubric.

Following this, a discussion will be had concerning the applicability of the theory. The subsequent conclusion will allow for recommendations for future research to be made.

1.1 What is gentrification?

The concept of gentrification is used to describe processes of urban transformation seen all over the world. However, it is rooted in 1960's London. Ruth Glass's coining of the term "gentrification" was based very specifically on observed class changes in inner-city areas of London (Glass, 1964). The unique British class structure formed an integral aspect of the concept such that the language used to form the word is actively reminding us of such structures. In Britain, the gentry have historically been the upper class, second only to the nobility. In this sense then, the using of this word as the base of this concept shows the deeply integrated nature of British class dynamics in the concept. A vital consideration here is that gentrification, as the original concept denotes it, was taking place before Glass coined the term. Smith (1996, p. 34-40) highlights the Hausmannization of Paris as a precursor to gentrification, similarly as were areas in New York City, New Orleans, Charleston, and Washington DC in the 1930s (Gale, 1984). She did not therefore invent gentrification per se, but rather acknowledge and highlight it, bringing it into the academic sphere as an urban transformation worth considering.

As the use and subsequent study of this concept grew, academia found ways to classify different patterns seen. Jason Hackworth and Neil Smith wrote perhaps the cornerstone of classifying different waves of gentrification in their article titled 'The Changing State of Gentrification', published in Tijdschrift voor Economische en Sociale Geografie (2001). In this paper, three distinct waves of gentrification are distinguished and exemplified through examples from New York City. The first wave, taking place from the late 1960s to the early 1970s, is described as being sporadic and predominantly state-led. This is in contrast with Ruth Glass' description of gentrification in 1964 London (Glass, 1964). Already then, the issues of context and transferability can be seen. The second wave sees a transition period in the post-1973 recession period where gentrifies (developers and investors) bought large amounts of land in devalued neighbourhoods. This paved the way for gentrification to take place in previously disinvested neighbourhoods in city centre

locations. Differently from the first wave, during the second wave of gentrification the process can be seen in smaller, non-global cities. During this period, strong anti-gentrification sentiments are expressed through social movements and organisations. This process slows in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as the recession limits the amount of capital moving in to the previously gentrifying neighbourhoods. Around 1993 the third wave of gentrification is observed as neighbourhoods further away from the city centre begin to undergo gentrification processes. It is emphasised that in the third wave, gentrification is taking place funded more so by large-scale capital than during the previous waves, with developers gentrifying entire neighbourhoods usually with the support of the state (Hackworth & Smith, 2001). Loretta Lees and her colleagues coined the fourth wave of gentrification in their 2008 book *Gentrification*, in which she states that the fourth wave of gentrification is a combination of 'an intensified financialization of housing … with the consolidation of pro-gentrification politics and polarized urban policies' (Lees, et al., 2008, p. 179). It is overtly stated that this wave is thus far only applicable to the United States of America as it has not been identified outside of the USA (Lees, et al., 2008, p. 184).

These different waves highlight the traditional time span of a "wave" and the general intensity and level of state involvement. Of course, this literally is exclusively based on North America. It is however still valuable when considering processes of so-called gentrification outside of North America as it provides a blueprint from which to assess different examples and cases. Hackworth and Smith (2001) did not state that this was the only experience of gentrification, and indeed highlighted that the time frames may differ in different countries and depending on their level of involvement in the global economic system. When considering cases from the global south, this timeline is almost completely incompatible with processes of gentrification observed there, and herein lies the interest of this theory.

As these distinct time related waves have shown, gentrification has mutated over time. In their book, *Gentrification* (2008), Lees et al. highlight the numerous non-time related mutations that gentrification has undergone. The terms rural gentrification, new-build gentrification, super-gentrification (financification), studetification, commercial gentrification, tourism gentrification and coastal gentrification (Lees, et al., 2008, pp. 129-

132) are all mutations of gentrification used within the field. At this point, it may not seem surprising that the term slum gentrification has come into use, considering the slurry of adapted gentrification terms that have come before it. However, slums, and their role within cities of the global south, do not transcend the fabricated boarders that lie between the global north and global south. This therefore makes the stretch the concept of gentrification to include slums unique when compared to others stretching it to include other phenomena. In the following section the numerous challenges that come with applying the concept of gentrification to the global south will be explored in detail.

Due to this debate within the field, a cohesive definition of gentrification is hard to find. While Glass's definition of gentrification stated 'the process by which working class residential neighbourhoods are rehabilitated by middle class homebuyers, land-lords and professional developers' (Glass, 1964), Davidson and Lees (2005) have more recently stated the defining characteristics as being: (1) reinvestment of capital; (2) social upgrading of locale by incoming high-income groups; (3) landscape change; and (4) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups (Davidson & Lees, 2005). This current definition is the one that will be used in this research and what is referred to when the term gentrification is used. This definition includes a change of land use, which differs significantly from Glass's definition, and highlights the move away from only considering residential change as gentrification. Lees and Davidson's (2005) definition further includes a class dynamic which is in keeping with Glass's original definition; the removal of lower class users and owners of land or property and their replacement by wealthier users and owners. This research will consider these four aspects of gentrification and use the case study of Lagos state, Nigeria to highlight whether gentrification can be applied to slums in the global south.

1.2 Gentrification in the global south

In recent years, there has been a concerted effort to include countries of the global south within gentrification literature. In spite of the potential limitations of this, as discussed above, the inclusions of a wider range of examples when considering gentrification has been seen as important to the expansion and legitimation of the concept (Lees, 2014, pp.

506-507). The term gentrification has been applied to countries such as Malaysia (Khalil, et al., 2015), India (Harris, 2008), China (Huang & Yang, 2017), South Africa (Lemanski, 2014) (Winkler, 2009), the Philippines (Ortega, 2016), and Chile (Janoschka & Sequera, 2016), showing its vast scope. Ley and Teo (2014) draw our attention to the fact that even though the same language of gentrification or exact wording may not exist in an observed area, city, or country, that does not equate to gentrification not existing there. In this way then, the ontological presence of gentrification is not reliant on the linguistic expression of it within the language of the place in question (Ley & Teo, 2014). It is therefore valuable to consider that gentrification may already be acknowledged and potentially studied in countries within the global south, but they may use different language to do so. In this case, there is a tendency for academia to bring it under the umbrella of gentrification. Lees, Shin and López-Morales (2016) state the usefulness of this by highlighting the benefits of a globally understood word in order to unite social movements in different countries. This will be considered in more detail below.

This research will be only considering examples already referred to as slum gentrification in Lagos State, Nigeria. The urban structure referred to as a slum is generally not observed in the global north. A slum will be understood in this research as 'the physical and spatial manifestation of urban poverty and intra-city inequality' (UN-Habitat, 2010). Slums are, however, a serious reality for those living in cities in the global south. The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015) states that sub-Saharan Africa maintains the highest prevalence of slum conditions in the world and they predict that the additional population moving in to cities will live in slum conditions (UN-DESA, 2015). There are many phrases naming different (and sometimes the same) processes of slum transformation in the global south, such as slum development, slum removal, slum clearance (Olu Sule, 1990). While similar to the focus of this research, these processes do not include a dynamic of social class change. Highlighted examples of slum gentrification include a social class change similar, or at least comparable, to that which was initially observed by Glass (1964). Slum gentrification is therefore a unique process amongst the myriad of urban transformation processes related to slums that have been named and studied.

1.3 Contextuality

It is vital to understanding the concept and processes of gentrification to remain cognisant of contextuality. In terms of gentrification, there are two opposing groups that discuss contextuality when considering the application of the term. On the one hand, there many (Lees, et al., 2008) who state the need to move away from the origins of the term and allow it to adapt over time to new urban changes taking place. On the other hand, there are those call for a consistent consideration of the contextual origins of the concept (Maloutas, 2018) and an awareness that the concept may not be applicable to societies with different property and planning systems (Ghertner, 2014).

As mentioned previously, the term gentrification is born out of 1960s London and the British class system exhibited there. For Shin and López-Morales (2018) however, the focus on the linguistic aspect of the term gentrification is unnecessary and unhelpful. They argue that 'generality and particularity are not mutually exclusive and can co-exist in theoretical and political realms' (Shin & López-Morales, 2018, p. 16). In this sense then, they highlight the need for academia to move away from Glass' particularistic choice of language, with its origin deeply rooted in its context, and instead focus on a more theoretically useful 'generic gentrification' (Shin & López-Morales, 2018, p. 16). Shin and López-Morales (2018, p. 16) purport that a more generic understanding of gentrification will allow for it to be used more extensively as an analytical tool and also to unite political movements and discussions taking place globally.

On the other hand, the language is vital to others who state it is an integral part of understanding the concept and processes that the term was brought about to describe (Maloutas, 2018). It signifies the connection to the class structure and change that Glass (1964) was highlighting through her coining of the term. The general question of contextuality in gentrification literature, not only when considering the linguistic aspect of the concept, is an important and strongly contested issue within the field. Maloutas (2012; 2018) is an enthusiastic proponent of the need to consider the contextuality of the concept of gentrification. He highlights that due to the context-bound nature of the concept of gentrification, issues arise when the concept is applied to vastly differing urban settings.

An overly simplistic and intentionally universalised explanation of complex patterns, processes, and impacts removes the potential intricacies applying to a specific example of urban transformation from the forefront of the discussion (Maloutas, 2018). He continues that in simplifying the definition of gentrification, in order to allow it to be universal, global economic forces are given a more prominent role. In doing so, less space is given to other region, country, and city specific factors that may influence the impacts of global economic forces upon the example in question (Maloutas, 2018). Maloutas concisely reminds academia of its tendencies to exasperate the global power dynamics of the academic sphere through the consistent use of Anglo-centric concepts within the developing world, stating:

> 'The metamorphoses of gentrification through its different waves in the Anglophone world are not a script that should be imposed in order to understand other cities' urban histories and to make sense (in class terms) of their urban restructuring processes.' (Maloutas, 2018)

However, others such as Lees, Slater and Wyly (2008), have stated the importance of the term maintaining a high degree of elasticity to allow it to be applied to a multitude of examples. They express a desire for new and differing processes of gentrification to be brought under one umbrella. Rather than it being an exasperation of existing power dynamics, Lees et al. (2008) pertain to the benefits that come with one uniting word. When the geographic and time-specific context is moved away from, the concept of gentrification is able to include a much wider scope. Lees, Shin, and López-Morales (Lees, et al., 2016) argue that it is this that allows for the inclusion of the global south and encourages the experiences of countries within the global south to influence how gentrification is defined.

1.4 Research aims and question

This research will test whether the theory of gentrification is applicable when considering urban transformations of informal settlements in Lagos state, Nigeria. Considering the contextual beginnings of the concept, and the movement within the field to move away from the contextuality of the concepts origins, the question remains as to whether transformative urban processes concerning slums in Lagos state can be referred to as gentrification. Rather than encouraging a discourse surrounding the unique processes and

complexities seen within and amongst countries of the global south, the majority of gentrification literature is highlighting the need to expand the concept and the variety of countries used as examples that fall within the umbrella of gentrification. The need to include more rich and varied experiences of countries from the global south in academia is absolutely undeniable. However, it is pertinent to consider how much of the original context can truly be moved away from when using the concept of gentrification. Is the rubric of global north urban transformation and development merely being applied to and, where necessary, tweaked to include countries of the global south?

With its evolution through different waves, as stated previously, gentrification has been applied to and expanded to include countries of the global south. With this in mind however, it is vital to acknowledge that urban transformations and class dynamics exist within the global south that are not seen within the global north. It has been argued that the role of slums and informal settlements within the cities of the global south is vastly different to cities of the global north, with slums being both the product of and vehicles for modernising activities (Nwanna, 2015, p. 311). The same can be said of class dynamics. Many cities of the global south where destructively colonised by powers of the global north, impacting their unique class dynamics that existed prior to colonisation and continuing to impact societal structures after official colonisation ended.

The aim of this research is to assess whether urban transformations concerning slums taking place in Lagos state, Nigeria, do fall within the scope of gentrification according to Davidson and Lees' (2005) four defining characteristics of gentrification. Through the use of a single case study, these four defining characteristics will be individually analysed to consider whether they are taking place in examples of so-called slum gentrification in Lagos state. With its multiple mutations and adaptations, there has been a concerted effort to ensure gentrification can be applied universally. This research will shed light on if this is successful in Lagos state – a vibrant and rapidly expanding area of the global south.

My research question is therefore as follows: *To what extent does gentrification accurately describe processes of slum transformation in Lagos state, Nigeria?*

2. Theoretical framework

The following section will bring together a theoretical framework that will form the basis of analysis for this research. Two theories will form the foundation of the theoretical framework, namely post-colonial theory and world-systems theory. Post-colonial theory will be used to set a background framework that will act as a starting point from which to understand the circumstances seen in Lagos. World-systems theory will provide a framework with which to understand current global political and economic relationships

2.1 Post-colonial theory

Post-colonial theory is predominantly concerned with studying the cultural legacy of colonialism and imperialism. Its main focus is on those who were subjected to colonial rule, bringing to the forefront the human consequences of colonial power and exploitation (Loomba, 2015). It brings into question the social and political power relations that permeated the colonial and imperial world, emphasising the experience and view of the colonised and taking the coloniser's narrative as inherently unreliable. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) put great emphasis on the Western attitude of viewing Eastern societies as inferior to their own. According to Said (1978), orientalism is when the occident maintains a view of the orient as being backward, underdeveloped, and primitive compared to the occidental world. The orient itself is indeed a construct of the occident perpetuating the view of otherness. Despite criticism that orientalism does not include African or Latin American experiences of colonialism (Tekdemir, 2017), Said purports that European colonisers considered themselves solely as the West and viewed any group outside of this as the Other (1978). The Other therefore is referring to all regions, countries, and cultures outside of the West as one homogenous group, different and inferior to their own.

In relation to gentrification then, post-colonial theory allows for an understanding of why a term coined in the global north is being used to describe urban transformations taking place in the global south, in particular concerning urban structures that are not seen in the global north. Post-colonial theory calls for an awareness of using global north theories

rather than theories born out of the global south itself. Experiences and consequences of urban transformations are varied and vastly differing throughout the global south. It is vital to remain cognisant of this fact while considering slum transformations in Lagos State. While post-colonial theory provides a valuable basis from which this research will consider the current urban transformations taking place in Lagos State in relation to its internal processes and unique history, it does not provide a framework to understand how Nigeria is interacting with the current global political and economic climate.

2.2 World-systems theory

World-systems theory is useful in understanding the significance of geographical context within the global arena. When considering the urban transformations taking place within a city, one must include the level of globalisation experienced by the country, city, and particular neighbourhood that is experiencing change. External pressures and constraints exerted upon the area in question form a fundamental part of understanding why certain urban transformations take place. Countries within the global south are subjected to vastly different conditions within the global economy, compared to countries in the global north. The seminal thinker of world-systems theory, Immanuel Wallerstein, describes these differing experiences as the core/periphery relationship. According to Wallerstein (2004), core countries are economically dominant countries that exploit periphery countries. They have contributed to a world order whereby they benefit from the exploitation of other countries. In contrast, periphery countries are those which are exploited by core countries within the global economic system. Lying between the two are semi-periphery countries, that, as the name may suggest, are not fully exploited by core countries but do not also fully benefit from the global economic system currently seen. They may contribute to exploitation of periphery countries but are not in the same position of power as core countries.

Periphery countries are purported to experience pressure to conform to core country standards and ideals in order to succeed within the global arena. As the global arena is organised in favour of core countries, periphery countries are exploited to support core

country economies and are prevented in many ways from being competitive within the global arena.

2.3 In combination

World-systems theory is useful in acknowledging the global pressure and circumstances that Lagos state is existing within. It encourages a macro-level understanding of the external circumstances Lagos state is working within and against. World-systems theory does not however provide an in depth understanding of Lagos state, and indeed Nigeria as a whole's, internal circumstances. Nigerian history and cultural norms will undoubtedly impact how decisions are made within the country in relation to the global dynamics. Post-colonial theory therefore provides a basis from which to maintain an understanding of internal Nigerian culture and experience. Pertaining to the study of gentrification, an acute understanding of both the external and internal factors contributing to processes of urban transformation is necessary to ensure a robust analysis of the observed transformations taking place.

3. Methodology

This research will be conducted as an instrumental single case study. The instrumental case of Lagos state, Nigeria facilitates an understanding of something else which, in this case, is the applicability of the gentrification to urban transformative processes concerning slums in the global south. While the case study will not provide a definitive and expandable answer to be applied to the global south as whole, it will allow for a deeper understanding of one area of the global south and highlight weaknesses and strengths of using the theory of gentrification for similar examples.

3.1 Theory testing

The defining characteristics of gentrification outlined by Davidson and Lees (2005) will form the basic understanding of gentrification for this research. These are: (1) reinvestment of capital; (2) social upgrading of locale by incoming high-income groups; (3) landscape change; and (4) direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups (Davidson & Lees, 2005). It is therefore these characteristics that will be used to structure the testing of the applicability of the theory of gentrification to slums in Lagos, Nigeria. According to Davidson and Lees (Davidson & Lees, 2005), these four characteristics need to be present in an example for it to be considered gentrification. The single case study of so-called slum gentrification Lagos state, Nigeria will be used and assessed to see whether it does indeed fulfil the four characteristics outlined by Davidson and Lees (2005) to be referred to as gentrification.

3.2 Data collection and analysis

Data was collected on slums in Lagos state, Nigeria. Lagos state was chosen as the single case to be used in this study due to data availability and the use of the English language. Data was collected through the use of the LUBsearch search engine, as well as google search. The words slum/informal housing/informal settlement and Lagos and/or Nigeria were used in every search in combination with the words gentrification, removal, development. In the case of searches through LUBsearch, the abstracts or summaries of relevant results were read in order to determine their use within the study. In the case of google searches, relevant results were first analysed by their source and, if reliable, were read to determine their relevance to the study. The data collected was delimited to being published from 2005 until the present day. This is based on the publication date of Davidson and Lees (2005) article which is forming the basis of this analysis. This data was then coded in relation to the four determining characteristics of gentrification stated previously (Bryman, 2012, pp. 576-577). The four characteristics were given an overall area to which they applied, allowing for data within the overall area to be included without necessarily fitting positively into the chosen rubric of gentrification.

4. Case study: Lagos State, Nigeria

This section will introduce Nigeria and the state of Lagos. It will provide a frame of reference with which to understand Lagos state as it is discussed through the rest of the paper. It will then collate the data on slum gentrification in Lagos State, separating it into Davidson and Lees' (2005) four defining characteristics of gentrification mentioned previously.

4.1 Lagos State, Nigeria

Despite the capital city of Nigeria being Abuja, close to the centre of the country, the port city of Lagos maintains much of the importance it had as the previous capital city to this day. Lagos is seen by many as the financial hub of Africa and is actively positioning itself within the global arena to attract foreign businesses to Africa. The city of Lagos is one of only two mega-cities in Africa, the other being Cairo. Nigeria, and Lagos state in particular, experienced pressure during the colonial era to conform to western expectations, with Great Britain implanting its own systems into Nigeria and disrupting the already existing culture and systems in place. Unfortunately, this research does not have the scope to include more detail about this and will therefore only focus on certain outcomes of such an experience. Compared to its African neighbours, Nigeria can be said to have developed relatively early and, as a result, has maintained a status of rapid expansion through its attractiveness as being full of opportunities from all socio-economic groups. Currently it is estimated that 66% of those residing in urban areas in Nigeria reside in slums (Nwanna, 2015, p. 311).

Wallerstein's (2004) world-systems theory allows a certain degree of understanding about how Nigeria, and Lagos State in particular, experience the global arena. It may be seen as a pocket of "core" in a "periphery" area, or may qualify as a "semi-periphery" city within a "periphery" country. While this is helpful in encouraging an understanding of exploitation and global flows of capital, it lacks the acknowledgement of local systems and norms. In the case of Lagos state, post-colonial theory provides a framework with which

to more deeply understand Nigerian development before, during, and after official colonialisation. It is not only then the global patterns of dependency that dictate a country or city's developmental process, but also its political experience and own cultural norms. To more deeply understand processes of urban transformation in relation to slums in Lagos, one must remain cognisant of the external and internal pressures existing within Lagos. The external pressure of appealing to the global (western) expectations of what a desirable mega-city looks like is taking place within a uniquely Nigerian climate, and cultural norms will dictate how these pressures are dealt with.

4.2 The defining characteristics of gentrification in slums in Lagos State, Nigeria

4.2.1 Reinvestment of capital

It is overtly clear that in instances of so called slum gentrification, the state and private sector have worked together to invest capital into the area. This can be seen in Maroko where slums were removed, with the state claiming ownership of the land, and replaced with an expensive development (Nwanna, 2012). The same can be said of Makoko slum. While civil resistance to the removal of the slum has prevented it from taking place thus far, the state has claimed that the area needs to be developed in order to fall in line with the plan for Lagos to become the global megacity desired by its leaders (Olumuyiwa, et al., 2019).

It is challenging to determine whether what is seen in Lagos state constitutes reinvestment, or merely investment. Wegelin (2004) reminds us that slums are invested in by their inhabitants in incremental and labour intensive ways. In this sense then, these areas may never undergo the process of disinvestment, to then be followed by reinvestment. In the cases mentioned, this is the first time the state or private sector are investing capital into the areas. While up until this point the residents of the area have been investing in the area in an overtly different way, the input of capital from the state and/or private sector does not constitute reinvestment.

4.2.2 Social upgrading of locale by incoming high-income groups

Social upgrading in the broadest sense refers to a combination of changes in employment and real wages (Salido & Bellhouse, 2016, p. 10). This can certainly be seen in the area of Maroko, Lagos state. Prior to urban transformation processes, residents of the Maroko slum were predominantly unskilled and petty traders (Nwanna, 2012). The post-transformation area, now known as the Oniru Private Housing Estate, houses highly educated residents, with the majority holding a post-graduate level education and working within the fields of law, medicine, engineering, and finance (Nwanna, 2012). Another key difference is that the majority of families included women who had continued working in professional and technical fields after having children, resulting in duel career families. The original female residents of Maroko were predominantly traders (Nwanna, 2012). It is clear that in this area of Lagos state, both the type of employment and the real wage earned from employment has changed drastically with the urban transformation.

4.2.3 Landscape change

The Oniru Private Housing Estate, previously Maroko, saw a total removal of the slum structures that originally existed there. These were replaced with very luxurious and planned housing options. The informal structures were entirely demolished in favour of a formally planned residential area (Nwanna, 2012). The same is true for Otodo Gbame, where a luxurious, eco-friendly business city will be built (Reuters, 2017). Ilubirin is another example of this, whereby the informal settlement was demolished to allow for the building of expensive residential buildings (Badmos, et al., 2018).

4.2.4 Direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups

The direct displacement of low-income groups from slums in Lagos state is irrefutable. The slum structures of Maroko were replaced with very high cost housing that, according to Nwanna (2012) was completely unattainable in terms of cost for the original residents of the area. Of the roughly 10,000 home owners originally living in Maroko, about 2,000

were resettled. The remaining 8,000 residents did not receive any form of compensation or support in finding alternative housing (Amnesty Internaitonal, 2006). The waterfront slum of Otodo Gbame where the low-income residents of the slum were not given notice by the state that their homes would be demolished. During the demolition process, fifteen residents were killed. Moreover, the residents were not given an alternative housing option or financial compensation (Kazeem, 2017). Direct displacement has been repeatedly highlighted by journalists, NGOs, and academia as a major force at work when looking at slum gentrification in Lagos state.

5. Discussion

The concept of gentrification has been stretched and applied to the processes of urban transformation concerning slums taking place throughout Lagos state, Nigeria. The following section will discuss the data put forward in the previous section. This will be done using the framework of Davidson and Lees' (2005) four defining characteristics of gentrification. Important features of processes of urban transformation distinctly seen in Lagos state will be discussed in detail, drawing attention to the dichotomy that lies between the traditional literature depicting gentrification and the realities in Lagos state.

The first of Davidson and Lees' (2005) defining characteristics of gentrification to consider is the reinvestment of capital. A vital aspect of the city of Lagos, and indeed Lagos State, to consider is that it is not a de-industrialised post-industrial city, as many of the traditional examples of gentrification are (Lees, 2014, p. 510). It is rather a city experiencing pre-industrialisation, industrialisation, and post-industrialisation simultaneously (Lees, 2014, p. 510). With this in mind then, when considering the flow of capital into the area in question, one must first consider whether the area has been invested in previously and by whom. Wegelin (2004) highlights the residents as the ones investing in the slum, with incremental capital investment when possible. For the areas mentioned, this is the first time the state or private sector are investing money into them.

It is clear from the data above that the state and private sector are indeed investing in urban transformative processes focusing on slums. However, these settlements have not followed the general pattern of initial state investment, then disinvestment, and finally reinvestment. This pattern is predominantly observed in post-industrial cities following the rise and fall of the industrial sector. This is overtly different in Lagos state, where, as mentioned previously, post-industrialisation is taking place simultaneously with pre-industrialisation and industrialisation. This aspect of slum urban transformation is therefore not consistent with the first of the four characteristics outlined by Davidson and Lees (2005). The investment of capital follows a different pattern in Lagos state when compared to traditional examples of gentrification from the global north, such as New York, and indeed examples from the global south as well, such as China. It is therefore imperative to consider who is investing and at which stage of the process are they investing. By not considering it reinvestment in Lagos state, this research is not discounting the investments made by the residents of the slums in question. Rather it is acknowledging that the state and private sector are themselves investing for the first time.

Concerning the second characteristic, social upgrading of the locale by incoming high-income, it is overtly clear that this can be seen in Lagos state. The distinct change in demographics from before the transformative process to after is undeniable. In the data it is clearly shown that there was a distinct intent to change the demographic makeup of the areas. With high-income earners being the only people able to afford to live in these areas after they had been transformed, it appears to have been a concerted effort by the state to change the demographic. The previous residents of the area were prevented from engaging with the area as they could no longer afford to live there. This "class" aspect of gentrification processes is concurrent with traditional gentrification processes; however, the time aspect is certainly different. Referring back to Hackworth and Smith's (2001) chronology of the waves of gentrification, the changes took place in their study of New York in ten to twenty year intervals. The data from Lagos state shows changes taking place in an overtly different time frame. The social upgrading does not take place incrementally and it does not "upgrade", for lack of a better word, the original residents of the area. Instead they are removed and replaced with high-income earners. While this does fit into the rubric outlined by Davidson and Lees (2005), this research is hesitant to say it

absolutely applies to the data gathered. The social upgrading takes place once the newly built residences are ready for occupancy. They are then filled with high-income earners who maintain a vastly different leverage within society and are therefore able to demand high-quality amenities within the area. These amenities are however never accessed by the original group of residents as they no longer live in the area. It is therefore not a clear distinction as to whether social upgrading of the locale by incoming high-income is indeed applicable to slums in Lagos state. In terms of this research, the conclusion drawn from the data is that social upgrading of the locale does take place. It is however taking place at the expense of the original residents who, rather than gaining access to higher quality amenities or networks, are completely excluded from participation.

Landscape change is the third of Davidson and Lees' (2005) defining characteristics and it too is evidently taking place in Lagos state. The Lagos state governor stated in October 2016 that he intended to order the 'demolition of all the shanties around the creeks in Lagos State and also around our waterways' (Kazeem, 2017). Various reasons have been given as to why the informal settlements need to go, with Lagos State officials stating the residents have no legal claim to the land, they are creating a serious health hazard, they are harbouring criminals, and that the settlements are not in keeping with the state plan of Lagos city becoming a modern mega-city (Kazeem, 2017). In this sense then, the state is intentionally removing slum dwellings from the city and replacing them with aesthetically very different structures. Osuide (2004, p. 15) purports that the state is making a concerted effort to change the urban environment through large-scale adjustments of existing city areas. Landscape change is therefore taking place in an extreme way. Rather than adapting, improving, or changing in some physical way the structures that make up the slums of Lagos state, the state is removing the structures all together. This provides a distinct difference with slum development, whereby informal structures are rebuilt or adapted with stronger and more sturdy materials, however still maintaining many characteristics of the original dwelling. In this sense then, from the data analysed, the examples of slum urban transformations certainly fulfil the landscape change aspect of Davidson and Lees' (2005) definition of gentrification. Lagos state fulfils the most extreme example of landscape change within the scope of the characteristic. The intention of the state to remove any and

all trace of the existence of slums is unequivocally landscape change in its most extreme sense.

Again, however it is necessary to exercise caution when considering the data. While landscape change in undeniable, one must consider the time frame in which these changes are taking place. In Lagos state, the data shows slum removal taking place in a matter of days. In the case of Makoko, the state informed the citizens 72 hours prior to the beginning of the demolition process (Nwanna, 2012). This was not an incremental change spanning years and encroaching steadily through an area. The urban transformations of slums analysed in this research take place, or are planned to take place, on a certain date. It is a formal and, to a certain extent, legally supported process of urban transformation whereby the state and private actors are dictating the time span of the process. In this case, the argument discussed above for having a term to unite global movements against a process is challenging to employ as this form of landscape change is drastically different to those seen in other countries. Citizens are not slowly dispersed from the city-centre and forced into the shadows of the city over time. It can therefore be stated that while the data does fall within the stated rubric of gentrification, it must be understood with the caveat of contextual differences.

The final defining characteristic of gentrification is direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups. The data clearly shows direct displacement of low-income groups. Lagos state has repeatedly used force to remove informal settlements from desirable land and, in doing so, has removed the low-income residents living there from desirable city locations. However, the difference in time span as well as the method used which results in displacement must be discussed. Similarly to the prior discussion on landscape change, the time span of displacement described in Hackworth and Smith's (2001) waves of gentrification is significantly different to that experienced in Lagos state. Displacement took place in the same instance as landscape change, with the act of removing the slum structures displacing the residents. While still undoubtedly falling within the criteria of displacement, it is starkly different to displacement due to rising rent and land costs. The predominant driver of the highlighted urban transformations taking place in Lagos state is coercion. The state is exerting coercive methods to remove the citizens living in the slums

in order to repurpose the land. Working within the Nigerian legal framework is unlike working within the legal framework of any other country, be that in the global north or the global south. It is integral to consider that while capital may be used to continue the exclusion and displacement of low-income groups, coercion is consistently used first in order to remove the residents from the area. The deaths that have occurred during slum demolition processes are a very real reality of low-income groups living in slums in Lagos state, with the majority of residents being left homeless after such instances. It is a far more extreme form of displacement than that which is experience in traditional examples of gentrification, such as New York and London.

When gentrification does take place within a robust framework of explicit citizen rights, particularly pertaining to their property rights, actions to combat gentrification can follow an organised and clear process. This does not guarantee success by any means, but it allows for a specific plan of actions when citizens are looking to prevent the process from taking place. This is different when transformative urban processes are taking place within a less rigid legal framework. The actions needed in order to combat these processes are not as clear or formally recognised in Lagos state, with a more challenging process to hold the state to account.

At this point it is useful to refer back to the argument made in favour of gentrification being a global term as it would allow for the uniting of actors working to prevent these processes and support those being affected by them. While these are valid points, it is difficult to unite a movement working against very different challenges and within vastly varying circumstances. The actions needed to resist the processes of slum removal in Lagos state, as well the possible actions citizens can take within their legal framework, are overtly different in each country. One must remain cognisant of the impacts that uniting these differing processes may have upon the citizens residing in the global south. Just as the global north and global south cannot be seen as part of the same, homogenous group, the same must be said of the global south itself. Lagos state does not exemplify the experience of the global south as a whole – far from it in fact. It does however provide an interesting case to test whether the theory of gentrification is truly applicable to processes of slum transformation. As these experiences have been highlighted for Lagos state, it is possible

that other countries within the global south may have similar experiences or, more likely, different experiences from both Lagos state and the traditional examples of the global north. This research has therefore highlighted the need to further explore the differences in processes of urban transformation taking place globally that have been stated as being gentrification.

6. Concluding remarks

This thesis has addressed whether the term slum gentrification can be used to describe processes of urban transformation concerning slums in Lagos state, Nigeria. The expansion of the theory and wide ranging application of gentrification has been considered from two standpoints. Those that call for a need to ensure the term is used within the contextual limitations of when it was coined, and those that encourage the elasticity of the term and a move away from its contextual limitations. This point of tension within the literature allowed for a discussion concerning how vital the contextual beginnings of the term are and whether they are necessary to maintain as the term adapts and mutates over time. This contested area within the literature provided a fundamental understanding of how to approach testing the theory of gentrification on a case from the global south.

Data on slum urban transformations was collected on Lagos state, Nigeria. The data was coded into the four defining characteristics of gentrification outlined by Davidson and Lees (2005, p. 1170). This process allowed examples of so-called slum gentrification to be tested against a rubric of gentrification, highlighting whether the theory was truly applicable to slums in Lagos state. While the data does show that two out of the four defining characteristics of gentrification are indeed fulfilled in Lagos state when considering slum urban transformation, it is vital to acknowledge the large scope that these characteristics have. Davidson and Lees (2005, p. 1170) state that this large scope is intentionally allowing for a wide range of urban transformative processes to be defined as gentrification. The first of the four characteristics, reinvestment, was not shown to be true in the data gathered. The residents of slums certainly invested in them themselves, incrementally adding to the structures as resources and opportunity allowed. However, this

particular transformation is the first involvement of the state and private sector in the area. It is therefore not reinvestment from the state and private sector, but rather the first round of investment. Social upgrading of the locale by high-income earners was also not a clearly fulfilled characteristic. It is evident from the data that social upgrading of the locale took place, however when analysing the data is became clear that the original residents of the areas in question were removed and replaced with high-income earners. In this sense then, the social upgrading did not have any benefit upon the low-income residents, potentially benefiting from improved amenities or state funding in the area. They were rather excluded from the area upon its improvement. It is due to these two characteristics that gentrification is not completely applicable to Lagos state.

The following two characteristics, landscape change and direct or indirect displacement of low-income groups, are evident in Lagos state. Landscape change, being an explicit goal of Lagos state, is certainly undeniable. Slums have been intentionally completely removed in order to allow for aesthetically different buildings to replace them. The same is true of displacement of low-income groups. While not being an explicit goal of the state, by demolition slums with no plan for financial or housing support for the displaced residents, the state is actively allowing their displacement.

It is vital to remain cognisant of the fact that, while slums in Lagos state fall within these two parameters outlined as defining gentrification (Davidson & Lees, 2005), they certainly do not look the same as other examples of gentrification also falling within these parameters. The intentionally wide scope of the four characteristics does ensures that cases such as Lagos state subscribe the majority of characteristics. Through the testing of this theory, it is evident that it is not applicable in slums in Lagos state, Nigeria. The term slum gentrification is thus not an appropriate term to use when considering processes of urban transformation concerning the slums of Lagos state.

6.1 Future research

Moving forward from this research, an interesting question to consider would be to question why there has not been a theory of urban transformation, focusing on class

change, formed out of the global south. It would undoubtedly be more enlightening to consider the multiple regions that lie within the global south and allow for their unique intricacies to be considered separately, rather than homogenizing the entire area referred to by global north institutions as the global south. By answering whether the concept of gentrification is applicable to Lagos state, Nigeria, multiple gaps in the field of gentrifications studies have been highlighted. As gentrification is not applicable, are there existing concepts that are? And if not, why not? There is an undeniable need to remove the Anglo-centric concepts from countries within the global south. Acknowledging why these countries do not have concepts specific to their own context is a step in encouraging that process to take place. Moreover, as mentioned previously, there is a need from some within the field to state that gentrification is indeed taking place even if that language does not exist in the country in question. An interesting question may be to consider whether the purported benefits of this are proven, rather than merely hypothesised about. As experienced in Lagos state, the residents of slums have experienced tremendous hardship throughout processes referred to as gentrification. Do they benefit from falling within this umbrella term concerning the support they may receive form the global community? More research certainly needs to be done to understand the processes that lie on the very ends of the scope of Davidson and Lees' (2005) very wide reaching defining characteristics.

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