The Achimota Transport Terminal in Accra: A Model Urban Regeneration Project in Ghana?

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Abstract

Over the years, government has spent millions of taxpayer's monies to undertake urban regeneration projects (URPs) with the aim of combating the challenges of urban decay in Ghana. Several studies have argued that a number of these URPs have been left to deteriorate because there was no proper plan to maintain them. Amidst these challenges, the Achimota Transport Terminal (ATT) has been tagged as a 'model URP in Ghana'. This paper finds out the reasons for the tag put on ATT. We adopted purposive, convenience and stratified sampling techniques to select the respondents for this study. We found two reasons for the tag on ATT – one being that the managers of ATT strictly adhere to routine and preventive maintenance practices. However, corrective maintenance was deferred. The other reason is that the terminal meets the physical (adequate parking space, availability of waiting sheds), social (creation of employment, reduction in theft cases and available cars to all destinations in Accra and beyond) and environmental (improved sanitation) dimensions of urban regeneration. Nevertheless, same cannot be said about the economic dimension (low daily sales, high maintenance cost). About 90 percent of the drivers complained vehemently of low daily sales at the terminal. We believe that delaying corrective maintenance when needed may not only mean additional cost when repairs are finally done but has the likelihood of plunging the terminal into a poor state within a short period. Additionally, since the terminal in question is serving as a model for future terminals, planning and designing of such future terminals should aim at meeting all the dimensions of urban regeneration to enhance its usage and sustainability.

Keywords: Achimota Transport Terminal, maintenance, urban regeneration project

1. Introduction

Recent statistics have indicated that the world is increasingly becoming urbanized. More than half of all people in the world live in urban areas (World Health Organisation, 2013). Developing countries account over 95 per cent of global urban population growth (UN-Habitat, 2012). Similarly, about fifty-one per cent of Ghanaians are urban dwellers (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). It has been argued that such rapid urbanization in Ghana, coupled with the weak institutional capacity in implementing physical planning policies, has led to the destruction of the urban fabric (Ghana News Agency, 2012). Indeed, many African governments have acknowledged the fact that their urban built environment is decaying and as such must step in to save the situation (Dimuna and Omatsone, 2010) and to prevent the creation of new social, economic and environmental problems (Ribeiro, 2008). Their approach to revitalize the urban area has been to embark on a radical process of urban regeneration. This is underpinned by the belief that the regeneration of vital urban space has been one of the means by which cities have increased their competitiveness to attract foreign direct investment and technology transfer, boost private sector confidence, create a sustainable property market and to restructure and diversify the local economy (Afenah, 2009; Engelbrecht, n.d). As a matter of fact, urban regeneration has become inevitable today because it has become the 'only' means by which countries reposition their cities in the league of fast-growing cities.

Successive governments in Ghana have bought into the idea that the solution to the canker in urban Ghana can be found in urban regeneration. Therefore, over the years, government has undertaken regeneration projects in Accra and Kumasi, the two major cities in Ghana, such as the Tetteh-Quarshie Interchange, the Asafo Interchange, the George Bush Motorway, the Achimota Transport Terminal, the Kejetia Transport Terminal, the

Affordable Housing Project and the ongoing Kwame Nkrumah Interchange and Sofoline Interchange with the aim of reinvigorating and reasserting Ghanaian cities as the gateway to the country and Africa at large (Keeling, 2013; Government of Ghana, 2013). For the purpose of this study, such projects that seek to address the menace in urban areas shall be referred to as Urban Regeneration Projects (URPs). This paper is based on an assumption that every URP goes through three (3) phases constituting the phase of dialogue, land acquisition and payment of compensation to project affected persons (PAPs), the phase of financing the construction and the phase of maintenance of the completed project. This paper focuses on the latter.

It is now no news to argue that poor maintenance culture has become the bane of Ghana's development. Very often, millions of taxpayers' monies are spent on construction and rehabilitation of huge edifices, only for them to go waste within some few years because there was no proper plan to maintain them or authorities hide behind the excuse of no money (Peacefm Online, 2009). A good example is the Kejetia Transport Terminal (KTT) in Kumasi. Upon completion of the terminal in 2002, it was handed over to a private company to ensure an optimized use of the facility and maintain it in a good state of repairs at all times (Anane, 2013). Today, the state of the terminal justifies users' concerns as the terminal has been engulfed with heaps of filth with a possible outbreak of cholera as well as poor lighting, plunging the facility into total darkness at night, a situation pick pockets and robbers have taken advantage of to rob travelers at night and dawn (Anane, 2013). Amidst the challenges at KTT, it so happen that an example of an arguably well managed URP is not far-fetched. This is the Achimota Transport Terminal (ATT) in Accra. In December, 2009, the 800-capacity terminal, constructed at a cost of GH¢16.5million, was completed with the aim of easing congestion on the Accra-Nsawam road. Though not as old as the KTT, the ATT, also managed by a private company, has already been tagged as 'a model lorry station in Ghana' (Nyabor, 2013). This is because, unlike other transport terminals in Ghana, there are no polythene bags and water sachet lying around, no stench and no authorized structures competing for space with vehicles and humans. Indeed, compared with the likes of Kejetia Transport Terminal in Kumasi, the ATT could pass as the 'neatest terminal in any Ghana city'.

In the recent past, there have been a number of studies on urban regeneration. Urban scholars have explored the role of neoliberalism in the ongoing process of urban regeneration. They believe that cities have become strategic targets for an increasingly broad range of neoliberal policy experiments, institutional innovations and politico-ideological projects (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Smith, 2002). This is what Booth (2005) calls market-led urban regeneration, implying a wholesale involvement of the private sector. Other group of scholars believes private-private partnership is critical to urban regeneration (Carley et al., 2002; Poggesi, 2009). More so, urban regeneration as a concept has been accepted by most countries. No wonder a number of URP studies have been country-based such as South Africa (Didier et al., 2012; Thwala, 2009), Botswana (Keiner and Cavric, n.d; Cavric, 2011), Hong Kong (Mee, 2005; Ho, 2012), France (Nappi-Choulet, 2006), Nigeria (Dimuna and Omatsone, 2010; Ibem et al, 2013), Britain (Booth, 2005) amongst others. These studies notwithstanding, very little is known about urban regeneration in Ghana. It is against this background that this study takes the opportunity to provide empirical data on urban regeneration in Ghana. This paper finds out the reasons ATT has been tagged as a model URP in Ghana. This paper argues ATT could pass a tag placed on it due to the strict adherence to routine and preventive maintenance practiced by its managers coupled with the fact that the terminal meets the key dimensions of urban regeneration. The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section two reviews the literature on the rapid urbanization in Ghana and its associated challenges as well as the concept, history and dimensions of urban regeneration. Section three describes the research methodology. Section four presents and discusses the data. Section 5 gives the conclusion and recommendations.

2. The Rapid Urbanization and Urban Challenge in Ghana

The 2010 Population and Housing Census estimated Ghana's population to be 24.7 million with an urban population of 50.9 per cent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). This implies that more than half of all people in Ghana currently live and work in urban areas. Projections indicate that by 2025, 63 per cent of Ghana's population will live in urban areas (National Population Council, 2011). This echoes Songsore (n.d.) assertion that Ghana is becoming increasingly urbanized. It is not in doubt that Accra and Kumasi accommodates majority of urban residents because they are the most populous cities in Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2012). It has been argued that these cities are rapidly urbanizing because they have increasingly become the commercial, economic, industrial, social and technological hub of modern Ghana, compelling young people to migrate from rural areas to seek greener pastures and other lucrative opportunities (National Population Council, 2011). More to the point, Songsore (n.d.) believes that the rapid urbanization in Ghana today cannot be attributed to only rural-urban migration but also natural increase in towns and cities.

Going by the above population estimates and projections and its concomitant rapid urbanization in Accra and

Kumasi, it does not come as surprise that there is enormous pressure on basic amenities and infrastructure in these cities. Obeng-Odoom (2009) succinctly captures the main urban challenges in Ghana, constituting urban waste management, urban housing, urban unemployment, urban transport and urban crime. Afenah (2009: 11) gives a better description of Ghana's urban challenge:

> *Accra [and Kumasi] face serious social, infrastructure, environmental and housing related deficiencies, including high poverty levels, a lack of adequate solid waste management, obsolete infrastructure in low income areas, loss of green space and natural water bodies, frequent flooding caused by inadequate drainage systems and unsanitary and overcrowded bus and truck depots and markets.*

In urban Ghana, these problems are an eyesore in slums, 'zongos' and indigenous communities such as Nima, Old Fadama, Aboabo, Sawaba, Mossi Zongo, Sukura and Chorkor amongst others; the situation is even worse in the Central Business Districts (CBDs), where markets and bus terminals are situated. Until successive governments are committed to a coordinated plan of action that will outlive whoever is in power, the burgeoning urbanization in Ghana may continue to offset the huge investments and gains made in sanitation, transportation, housing and health amongst others (Ghana Business News, 2012). The implication of this is that massive construction of new infrastructural facilities and rehabilitation of existing ones through urban regeneration are needed to curb the current state of decay in the physical environment and the proliferation of slums in Ghanaian cities (Ibem et al, 2013).

3. The Concept, History and Dimensions of Urban Regeneration

The origin of the term 'regeneration' can be found in biomedicine and ecology, where it connotes the development of plants, animals and organs (Smith, 2002). The term is drawn on to suggest that urban regeneration is a natural process of urban change. The term 'urban regeneration' is mostly used as the mother term to encapsulate terms such as 'urban revitalization', 'urban renewal', 'urban redevelopment' and 'urban renaissance' amongst others (Pugalis and McGuiness, 2013). It is believed that urban regeneration is a contested concept with no generally accepted definition (ibid.). However, one definition seems very popular and this can be found in Roberts (2004: 17). He defined urban regeneration as 'the comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change'. In essence, urban regeneration may be regarded as a coordinated approach to addressing pertinent urban challenges in order to reinvigorate the urban fabric and to improve the wellbeing of urban residents.

Historically, urban regeneration is believed to have evolved in the mid-19th century after the Second World War in Europe and Britain and other parts of the developed world such as the United States, mainly due to post-war decline of industries (McDonald et al., 2009; Njoku and Okoro, 2014). Since then, as depicted in Figure 1, urban regeneration policy has metamorphosed from the phase of 'comprehensive redemption' that assumes that poverty could be eradicated and that changing physical environment would certainly result in economic and social benefits to the phase of 'sustainable place' that proposes that urban regeneration should be founded on the principles of design excellence, economic strength, environmental responsibility, good governance and social well-being (McDonald et al., 2009: 52). No wonder the definitions of urban regeneration provided by Robert (2004) and other urban scholars are strongly influenced by the concept of sustainable development (Colantonio and Dixon, 2009). Following the footsteps of authors who believe in sustainability-led urban regeneration, Tallon (2010) argues that urban regeneration has four interconnected dimensions and these constitute economic, social and cultural, physical and environmental and governance-related in nature. Furthermore, he indicates the concerns of every dimension, as seen in Table 1. However, in this study, we chose to adopt dimensions such as economic, social, physical and environmental and their corresponding concerns.
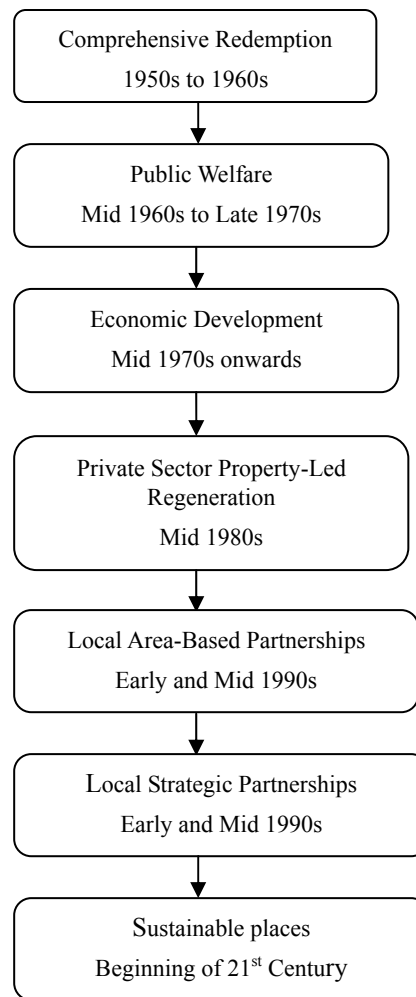
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┌─────────────────────────────┐
│   Comprehensive Redemption  │
│        1950s to 1960s       │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│        Public Welfare       │
│   Mid 1960s to Late 1970s   │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│     Economic Development    │
│       Mid 1970s onwards     │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  Private Sector Property-Led│
│          Regeneration       │
│           Mid 1980s         │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  Local Area-Based Partnerships│
│      Early and Mid 1990s    │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│  Local Strategic Partnerships│
│      Early and Mid 1990s    │
└─────────────────────────────┘
               │
               ▼
┌─────────────────────────────┐
│      Sustainable places     │
│  Beginning of 21st Century  │
└─────────────────────────────┘
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Figure 1. Evolution of Urban Regeneration Policy (1950 to date)

Source: McDonald et al. (2009)

Table 1. Dimensions of urban regeneration

Dimensions	Concerns
Economic	Job creation, income, employment, skills, employability, development
Social/Cultural	Quality of life, health, education, crime, quality of public services
Physical/Environmental	Infrastructure, built and natural environment, transport and communications
Governance	Nature of local decision-making, engagement of local community, involvement of other groups, style of leadership

Source: Tallon (2010)

Urban regeneration is a very popular subject in the developed world (Europe and North America) and some parts of the developing world (South Africa and Nigeria). However, in Ghana, urban regeneration is a neglected subject area and as such the many URPs have not caught the eye of the urban scholarship. Therefore, like Ibem

et al (2013) did in Nigeria, this paper appraises the Achimota Transport Terminal as a URP. More so, one aspect of the urban regeneration discourse that has not been explored, both in academic and policy circles, is the maintenance of URPs. It is this lacuna that this study sought to fill and to set the tone for future research. We understand that maintenance of URPs may not be a 'burning issue' in the developed countries due to their strict adherence to maintenance practices. In developing countries, nevertheless, maintenance is a big deal as city authorities have looked unconcerned for most URPs to deteriorate because there was no plan to maintain them.

4. Research Methodology

This paper adopted the case study research design. We believe this research design is appropriate for this study because it gives an in-depth and first-hand understanding of the situation as well as help make direct observations and collect data in natural settings (Yin, 2004). Data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through individual interviews and field observation whilst the secondary data was gathered by reviewing existing literature such as published materials in libraries, journal articles, research papers, unpublished thesis as well as internet information that hinge upon the theme of this study. We collected the data in three (3) phases and in three (3) months interval to enable us find out the level of adherence to maintenance practices. The first phase of data collection was in mid-June whiles the second and third were in mid-September and mid-December respectively. Respondents for the study constitute the manager of the ATT, welfare secretary of the drivers' union, drivers, passengers and canteen operators. Stratified and convenience sampling was used to select a total of 125 respondents, constituting thirty (50) drivers and thirty (75) passengers, from the five (5) waiting sheds at the terminal. Purposive sampling was used to select the key informants such as the manager of the terminal, canteen operators as well as the welfare secretary of the drivers' union. Two (2) basic primary data collection tools were used. Having considered a number of factors, we adopted an interview guide to collect data from all the respondents. Drivers and passengers, particularly, had very limited time to respond to our questions and as such using questionnaire would have made it difficult to collect the needed data. All key informants opted to be interviewed to due to their busy schedule. Field observation (non-participant observation) was also adopted to gather some further information. Where respondents were found to be illiterate, questions were asked in Ghanaian language (twi or ga).

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1 below shows the characteristics of the drivers and passengers interviewed for the study. In the sections that follow, we draw on individual interviews and observation to illustrate the maintenance practices and challenges at the ATT as well as how the terminal meets the key dimensions of urban regeneration focusing on social, physical, economic and environmental needs of users. The findings are organized around the objectives and themes of this study.

5.1 Maintenance Practices at the Achimota Transport Terminal

ATT is managed by a private company known as Koajay Company Limited (KCL). The company is in charge of the overall management and maintenance of the terminal. Findings revealed that three (3) types of maintenance are practiced at the terminal and these constitute routine, preventive and corrective maintenance. Data on corrective maintenance are presented and discussed in the next sub-heading. With respect to the *routine maintenance*, KCL has employed a permanent cleaning workforce to ensure the terminal is always tidy. The cleaning workforce runs three (3) shifts every day. Throughout each shift, the cleaners go round the terminal, every 30 minutes to 1 hour, to pick any waste material found and dispose of dust bins. Figure 2 below shows cleaners picking waste at the time of our visit to the terminal. Most drivers and passengers were impressed about the modus operandi of the cleaning workforce. Apart from the activities of the cleaners, management has given a directive that all drivers and conductors must dispose of waste swept from cars into the dust bins that have been placed at vantage points in the terminal.

Figure 2. Staff of KCL (Cleaners) picking waste at the terminal

Source: Field Survey (2014)

During the data collection, we observed that most drivers and conductors complied with this directive. According to the Welfare Secretary of ARTTWA, any driver or conductor who flouts this directive shall be brought before the Disciplinary Committee of ARTTWA and if found guilty of the act, he shall be made to pay a fine of between GH¢20 to GH¢30. We found that from time to time, management announces through a PA system that drivers and passengers must drop waste materials only in the dust bins provided in the terminal. The study also found that *preventive maintenance* is practiced in the terminal. KCL undertakes regular inspection in the terminal to identify minor faults before it escalates into a major problem. Indeed, drivers and passengers confirmed that on a number of occasions, the officials of KCL are seen going round for inspection. According to the project manager, inspections are not limited to checking roof leakages or broken louver blades but also the water pumps, generator, street lights and closed circuit television. Due to the specialized nature of these items, KCL has outsourced its maintenance to some companies. From the findings on maintenance practices in the terminal, it can be deduced that KCL pay so much attention to routine and preventive maintenance. It is not surprising that the terminal is still in relatively good condition after 4 years in operation. This is the reason Chan et al (2003) argued that routine and preventive maintenance, if properly carried out, would effectively reduce system breakdown. More so, Kyle (2005: 168) has noted that regular and everyday inspection of property will disclose structural and mechanical problems before major repairs becomes necessary and hopefully eliminating or reducing corrective maintenance costs.

5.2 The Maintenance Challenge at the Achimota Transport Terminal

The challenge we found at the terminal was the postponement of *corrective maintenance*. Upon our first visit to the terminal, we found two major defects in the terminal, constituting a roof defect and a broken concrete bench. The officials of KCL did say that they are aware of the defects and that there are plans to repair them. Most of the drivers also confirmed that the officials have been to the waiting shed to check the defects. Due to the nature of corrective maintenance, we decided to arrange two further visits to the terminal but at three months interval. As indicated in Table 4, we found on our second visit in mid-September that the defect to the roof had been repaired whiles the broken concrete bench remained unrepaired. According to a driver, the roof defect was repaired about a week to our visit, implying it took almost three (3) months for the managers to repair the defect. In mid-December, we decided to visit the terminal a third time to find out if the broken concrete bench had been

repaired and to our surprise, the concrete bench remained unrepaired. Though the manager of KCL said that plans are underway to get the concrete bench repaired, the challenge here is the delay in executing corrective maintenance. We believe KCL might have deferred some corrective maintenance tasks due to the scarce resources with which it has to use to maintain the terminal. However, KCL must note that delaying corrective maintenance can be very costly, especially with the current economic conditions where prices of building materials are increasing by the day. In fact, carrying out corrective maintenance immediately the defect occurs cannot be underestimated because it is needed to restore an item to a state in which it can perform its required function (Chanter and Swallow, 1996). This means that while such an item cannot perform its function, the organization loses.

Table 2. Characteristics of study samples, by group

Characteristics	*Drivers*					*Total(n=50)*	*Percentage*
	Terminals						
	1	2	3	4	5		
Driving Experience	(n=10)	(n=10)	(n=10)	(n=10)	(n=10)		
1 – 5 years	2	3	2	4	4	15	30%
5 – 10 years	3	3	2	1	-	9	18%
Above 10 years	5	4	6	5	6	26	52%
Years of Operation at the Terminal							
Less than 1 year	-	-	2	-	3	5	10%
1 – 2 years	-	2	1	-	-	3	6%
2 – 3 years	3	3	1	4	5	16	32%
3 – 4 years	7	5	6	6	2	26	52%
	Passengers						
	Terminals						
	1	2	3	4	5		
	(n=15)	(n=15)	(n=15)	(n=15)	(n=15)		
Years of Using Terminal							
Less than 1 year	2	-	5	-	-	7	9.33%
1 – 2 years	3	8	-	-	1	12	16%
2 – 3 years	2	-	5	5	6	18	24%
3 – 4 years	8	7	5	10	8	38	50.67%
Frequency of Usage of Terminal							
Everyday	7	7	6	9	8	37	49.34%
Once a Week	5	1	-	1	3	10	13.33
Twice a Week	-	-	1	-	3	4	5.33%
No specific pattern	3	7	8	5	1	24	32%

Source: Authors' Construct (2015)

Table 4. The level of adherence to corrective maintenance

	Time of Visit to Terminal		
	Mid-June	Mid-September	Mid-December
Findings	A defect in the roof of one of the waiting sheds (See Figure 3)	Roof defects had been repaired (See Figure 4)	No further maintenance required for roof
	A broken concrete bench in one of the waiting sheds (See Figure 3)	Concrete Bench remained in the same state (See Figure 4)	Concrete Bench remained in the same state as Figure 3 & 4

Source: Authors' Construct (2015)

Figure 3. Showing the defect to the roof and concrete bench

Source: Field Survey (June, 2014)

Figure 4. Showing repaired roof and unrepaired concrete bench

Source: Field Survey (September, 2014)

6. Appraisal of the Achimota Transport Terminal as an Urban Regeneration Project

According to Robert and Sykes (2004), at the heart of every URP is the need to resolve urban problems through improvement in economic, physical, social and environment condition of the area where such project is situated. This study adopts the four dimensions and concerns in Tallon (2010) as yardstick to appraise ATT. As indicated in Figure 5, responses from the users (drivers and passengers) of the terminal revealed that the construction of the terminal has brought about some improvement in the physical, social and environmental dimensions. However, same cannot be said about economic dimensions.
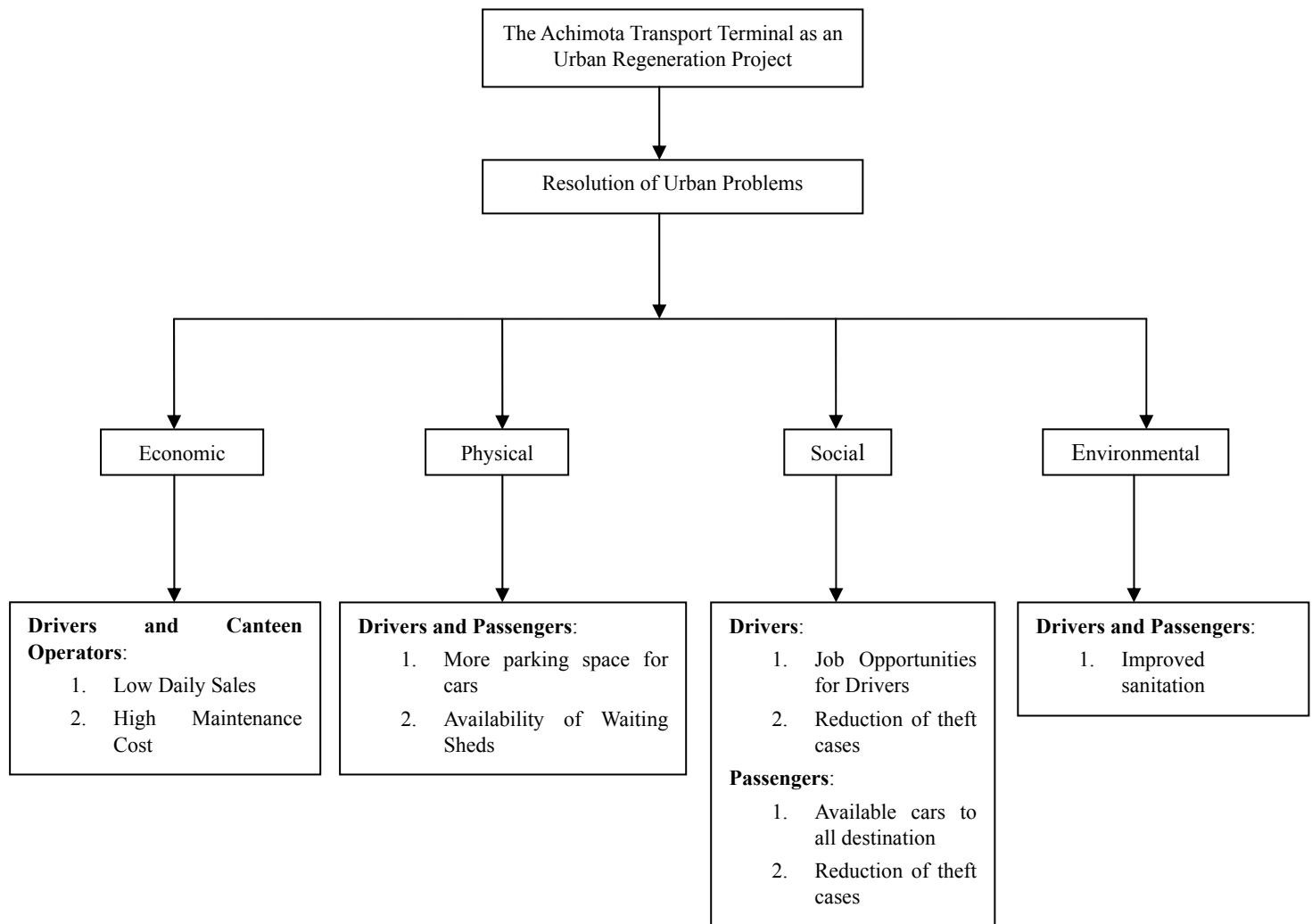
Figure 5. The dimensions and concerns of the achimota transport terminal as a URP

Authors' Construct (2015)

6.1 Economic Dimension

In finding out how ATT meets the economic dimension of urban regeneration, two (2) main issues came up and these constitute low daily sales and high maintenance cost. Respondents who depend on activities in the terminal for their daily income were not happy with the level of patronage and consequently their daily sales. About 90% of the drivers and two (2) canteen operators interviewed for the study complained vehemently about low daily sales at the terminal. According to one of the drivers

> *"Over three (3) years that I have operated from this terminal, I only get enough to pay my daily sales and virtually nothing to take home. It has been difficult taking care of my family."*
> (Interview, 7 July, 2014)

A canteen operator at the terminal also said

> *"Business is indeed bad here. We cook the food and due to the low patronage we throw away food every day, especially those that cannot be preserved."* (Interview, 7 July, 2014)

The low daily sale is mainly attributed to the reluctance of the inter-city buses to use the terminal as transit point. Others believe that the bus stops at the New Achimota Overpass and the Old Station is the main reason for the low patronage. According to the Welfare Secretary of ARTTWA, all efforts at getting the AMA to make the inter-city buses use the terminal and to stop cars from picking passengers at the Overpass and Old Station have proved futile and hence the low patronage of the terminal. The low patronage and its resultant low daily sales is a confirmation of the assertion by Lartey (2011) that the ATT is not serving its purpose because majority of commuters prefer to board cars at the shoulders of the road at the Old Station and the new Achimota Overpass.

Apart from the low daily sales, most drivers also complained about the high cost of maintenance. According to them, there are no mechanic shops or spare parts shops close to ATT. Therefore, the cost of transporting a mechanic to the terminal and service charge is having an impact on their already low daily sales.

6.2 Physical Dimension

With a vehicular capacity of 800, it is not surprising that ATT is that spacious and has enough space for cars to exit and enter, a complete departure from the overcrowding at the Old Station. Respondents are happy to have such an edifice in Ghana. A passenger commented that

> *"I have travelled several times to a number of West African countries but I have never seen any transport terminal as big as this. I think this terminal meets international standard. This terminal gives me some pride as a Ghanaian"* (Interview, 14 September, 2014)

Additionally, ATT has a five (5) waiting sheds, each spanning about 100 meters. These waiting sheds serve as waiting or resting area for drivers and passengers as well as protection against elements of the weather. According to one driver

> *"This is where I sit every time whilst I wait for my car to get full. Sometimes, I do work overnight. When I am tired and sleepy, I park my car at the terminal and get a place at the waiting shed to sleep. When I wake up, work continues again. We were not this comfortable at the Old Station."* (Interview, 16 December, 2014)

One passenger also said

> *"This is the only transport terminal I know in Ghana that has this type of long waiting sheds. Right now, I am seated here waiting for my mother so we could go somewhere together. I think it will be a good idea if we can have this kind of waiting shed in all terminals in Ghana."* (Interview, 7 July, 2014).

Figure 6 shows some passengers and drivers alike seated at the waiting sheds whiles others are seen moving from the shed to the vehicles either to board or drive. Though majority of the respondents were impressed about the availability of waiting sheds, some had reservations about the ability of the shed to protect persons against the elements of the weather, especially rainfall. In an interview with one passenger, he commented that

> *"One day I was seated here waiting for my friend when it started raining. At a point, it was as if I was standing in the rain. The wind could easily blow the water on me."* (Interview, 14 September, 2014).

Majority of the respondents suggested that management must check the waiting shed again to ensure that it can well serve its purpose.

Figure 6. Passengers and drivers at the waiting shed

Source: Field Survey (2014)

6.3 Social Dimension

To a large extent, our findings revealed that the social aspect of urban regeneration has been met. Job opportunities have been created, theft cases been reduced to its barest minimum and there is available car to all destinations in Accra and beyond. Thirteen (13) of the drivers interviewed for the study were able to secure a car to work because of ATT. According to one driver

> *"The owner of my car is very particular about where his car operates from. He gave me the car because he wanted me to operate from only the Achimota Transport Terminal".* (Interview, 7 July, 2014)

Many will agree that once a driver gets a car, a conductor also gets a job. Others who got jobs as a result of ATT include the cleaners and security personnel in the terminal. Moreover, unlike the Old Station where theft cases were rife, we found that there is a drastic reduction in theft at ATT. Majority of the respondents interviewed attested to this finding. Nevertheless, some drivers held the view that a number of theft cases have been recorded at the terminal. One of the drivers interviewed for the study was a victim and he averred that

> *"One time, my car developed a fault at the terminal and I had to remove one of my car seats. By the next day, I could not find the car seat. I also know of other drivers whose car tapes and batteries have been stolen in this terminal."* (Interview, 7 July, 2014)

Though there is a reduction in theft cases, there is still more room for improvement in order to reduce theft to its barest minimum. Another social issue that ATT has addressed is the availability of a car to almost everywhere in Accra and beyond. One passenger commented that

> *"Whenever I think of going to somewhere in Accra, all I need do is to go to the Achimota Transport Terminal and I will get a car to my destination."* (Interview, 16 June, 2014)

It is not in doubt that ATT offers the convenience that passengers have always craved for.

6.4 Environmental Dimension

This study confirms the fact that there is improved sanitation at ATT compared to the old station. One passenger commented that

> *"I am happy with the clean environment and the general discipline at this terminal. Dust bins are provided at vantage points and cleaners are seen going round to pick waste."* (Interview, 16 June, 2014)

Majority of drivers and passengers interviewed for this study shared this view. The respondents were impressed about the neat environment at the terminal. The manager of KCL was quick to attribute this feat mainly to their ability to keep away hawkers and food vendors coupled with the routine and preventive maintenance undertaken in the terminal. However, management expressed worry at the wooden structures that have sprung up at the gate leading to the Achimota Shell Service Station. Management said the land on which these structures have been built is outside their jurisdiction and that it is the responsibility of AMA to ensure such structures are not built in the first place.

7. Concluding Remarks

Many would have thought the statement made by the Accra Mayor that the 'Assembly will ensure the best professional practice in the terminal' will be another political promise that will not be fulfilled (Danso, 2009). However, after 4 years since its inauguration and under the management of KCL, the terminal is still in relatively good condition owing to the strict adherence to routine and preventive maintenance practices. The continuous delay in undertaking corrective maintenance, however, might offset the gains made from the routine and preventive maintenance. This might also mean additional cost when such corrective maintenance is finally done.

ATT as a URP has indeed addressed a number of urban problems in Accra and hence qualifies to be tagged a model urban regeneration project in Ghana for the following reasons. The terminal has provided employment for a number of drivers, conductors and some staffs of KCL. There is a drastic reduction, if non-existent, in cases of pick-pocketing and bags snatching. The terminal has given passengers lots of options and convenience to passengers, as there is a vehicle to almost everywhere in Accra and beyond. With the opening of the terminal, the AMA has been able to clear the filth at the Old Station. The terminal itself is a complete departure from the rowdy and dirty environment at the Old Station. There is also a relatively bigger space at the terminal to accommodate more cars. One distinguishing feature of the terminal is the availability of waiting sheds, which doubles as a waiting area and protection against the elements of the weather. However, the location of the terminal has introduced some other economic problems such as low daily sales and high maintenance cost. This paper concludes that ATT passes as a model URP in Ghana because its managers strictly adhere to the routine and preventive maintenance practices coupled with the fact that the terminal meets most of the dimensions of urban regeneration.

The consequence of deferring or postponing corrective maintenance has been established in the earlier sections. It is recommended that corrective maintenance should be undertaken as soon as possible to avoid incurring additional cost or plunging the terminal into a poor state like the Kejetia transport terminal and other terminals across the country. More so, executing corrective maintenance at the earliest possible time is key because the defect can cause some inconvenience to users, put users at risk of getting hurt or cause some consequential

damage to other elements of the structure. We also recommend that KCL should consider having an estate manager in the management team of the terminal who can help in developing a maintenance strategy that fits into the general purpose of the transport terminal.

The study gives a short and long term recommendation to resolve the issue of low daily sales for drivers at the terminal. In the short term, it is recommended that AMA together with the management of the terminal must have a meeting with the owners and executives of the drivers' unions (PROTOA, GPRTU and so on) of commercial vehicles, especially the inter-city buses, to encourage them to use the terminal as transit point. In the long-term, the Department of Urban Roads must be brought on board to advice on a traffic flow mechanism that compels commercial drivers to drive through the terminal for passengers to alight instead of doing same at the shoulders of the road at the Achimota Overpass and Old Station. This we believe would increase patronage of the terminal and by so doing enhance its economic benefits to its prospective operators and users. More so, since the terminal is serving as a model for future terminals, planning and designing of such terminals should aim at meeting the economic dimension of urban regeneration to enhance its usage and sustainability.

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