Edwin K'oyoo

Dr Edwin Oluoch K'oyoo*, Former PhD student in Landscape Architecture, Department of Architecture, University of Pretoria, South Africa, Phone: +254-727-477-746. Email: <edwinkoyoo@gmail.com>, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7049-1034

Christina Breed

Dr. Christina A. Breed, Department of Architecture, University of Pretoria, South Africa, Phone: +27 (0)12 420 4536. Email: <ida.breed@up.ac.za>, ORCID: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2185-8367

URBAN MEMORY AND IDENTITY WEIGHED AGAINST ECONOMIC INVESTMENT IN URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS: A CASE OF KISUMU CITY, KENYA

RESEARCH ARTICLE[1]

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ABSTRACT

In urban contexts, memory and place are inseparable and important for identity formation. The individual and collective memories of city residents link their identity with place identity. Special features in the landscape and urban fabric help residents differentiate between, and connect with the city's identity. The use of collective memory to identify and retain urban identity during urban renewal projects, however, receives less attention than functional and economic investment considerations. This article investigates the importance of urban landscape identity during urban renewal. It postulates that a city's individual and collective memory is important in maintaining its uniqueness in terms of urban landscape identity, but requires economic investment to maintain basic physical comfort and access. A qualitative research approach with photo-elicitation interviews (PEI) was used to investigate the features that activated the memory of the participants and that were important in contributing to the image of Kisumu City, Kenya. There were ongoing and completed urban renewal projects within Kisumu

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City at the time of the study, which made it a good case study for postcolonial Africa. Twelve residents (as PEI participants), four officials from the County Government, and four professionals were interviewed as key informants. A field investigation was carried out through mapping and photography in addition to an archival review. The study reveals that the old railway station, the port, and the market featured strongly in collective memory as part of historical trade development. Despite the important role of civic and administrative buildings from the colonial era in the formation of memory, place, and identity, there was also a positive response from residents to the 'new look' of the city. The physical upgrade, decongestion and cleaning of the city, its streets and parks as public spaces resulted in greater safety and public use, which was well appreciated from an investment point of view. The study emphasizes the importance of identifying, considering, and retaining the elements that support memory and identity during urban renewal projects as equal in importance to economic development and functionality when considering long-term sustainability.

ABSTRAK

In stedelike kontekste is geheue en plek onafskeidbaar en is dit belangrik vir identiteitsvorming. Individuele en kollektiewe herinneringe van die stad se inwoners koppel hul identiteit met plekidentiteit. Spesiale kenmerke in die landskap en stedelike struktuur help inwoners om te onderskei tussen en met die stad se identiteit te skakel. Die gebruik van kollektiewe geheue om stedelike identiteit te identifiseer en te behou tydens stedelike hernuwingsprojekte kry egter minder aandag as funksionele en ekonomiese beleggingsoorwegings. Hierdie artikel ondersoek die belangrikheid van stedelike landskapidentiteit tydens stedelike vernuwing. Dit postuleer dat 'n stad se individuele en kollektiewe geheue belangrik is om sy uniekheid in terme van stedelike landskapidentiteit te handhaaf, maar dit vereis ekonomiese belegging om basiese fisiese gemak en toegang te handhaaf. 'n Kwalitatiewe navorsingsbenadering met foto-ontlok onderhoude (PEI) is gebruik om die kenmerke te ondersoek wat die geheue van die deelnemers geaktiveer het en belangrik was om by te dra tot die beeld van Kisumu City, Kenia. Daar was deurlopende en voltooide stedelike hernuwingsprojekte binne Kisumu City ten tyde van die studie, wat dit 'n goeie gevallestudie vir post-koloniale Afrika gemaak het. Twaalf inwoners (as PEI-deelnemers), vier amptenare van die County Government en vier professionele persone is as sleutelinformante ondervra. 'n Veldondersoek is uitgevoer deur middel van kartering en fotografie bykomend tot 'n argiefbron-oorsig. Die studie het aan die lig gebring dat die ou spoorwegstasie, die hawe, en mark sterk in die kollektiewe geheue verskyn het as deel van historiese handelsontwikkeling. Ten spyte van die belangrike rol van burgerlike en administratiewe geboue uit die koloniale era in die vorming van geheue, plek, en identiteit, was daar ook 'n positiewe reaksie van inwoners op die 'nuwe voorkoms' van die stad. Die fisiese opgradering, ontstuwing en skoonmaak van die stad, sy strate en parke as openbare ruimtes, het gelei tot groter veiligheid en openbare gebruik, wat vanuit 'n beleggingsoogpunt goed waardeer is. Die studie beklemtoon die belangrikheid daarvan om die elemente wat geheue en identiteit ondersteun tydens stedelike hernuwingsprojekte te identifiseer, in ag te neem, en te behou as ewe belangrik aan ekonomiese ontwikkeling en funksionaliteit wanneer langtermyn volhoubaarheid oorweeg word.

1. INTRODUCTION

Urban landscapes are both expressions of identity and a means of shaping the relationships between people who inhabit them (Hall, 2006). These landscapes offer the environments in which buildings, street layouts, and monumental structures are interpreted and reinterpreted as changing

expressions (Hall, 2006). However, cities also undergo physical deterioration and decay that necessitate urban transformation through renewal, in order to improve the quality of urban life (Bosselmann, 2008). This renewal process results in the homogenisation of cities, by affecting the local urban landscape identity through global forms and aesthetics (Xuesong & Hui, 2008). In addition, urban renewal, which involves changes to urban form elements, often does not pay attention to the role of urban elements in shaping the urban landscape identity and memory. Several studies confirm that urban form elements such as streets, squares, buildings, public spaces, urban furniture, and monuments all play a vital role in expressing the notion of urban landscape identity and memory (Enache & Craciun, 2013; Oktay & Bala, 2015; Ziyaee, 2018; Yaldiz, Aydin & Siramkaya, 2014). Molavi, Rafizadeh and Rafizadeh (2017) posit that rapid changes in our cities destroy these familiar urban elements and transform accustomed environments into unfamiliar ones. They argue that urban elements are symbols of urban identity, and their recognition leads to collective memory constantly and in the memorability of the urban landscape.

African countries with spatial built forms that have existed since the colonial era are now experiencing physical deterioration, requiring urban renewal in a postcolonial era. Studies reviewed on urban renewal in postcolonial Africa by Amado and Rodrigues (2019); Njoku and Okoro (2014), as well as Dimuna and Omatsone (2010) are all concerned with creating viable communities, by upgrading decayed neighbourhoods and urban spaces. Their concern is mainly for the social and physical aspects of cities, without specifically paying attention to how this impacts on memory and the urban landscape identity. According to Phillia and Sihombing (2023), the priority of the vast majority of governments is urban economic development, because of its contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP). They argue that physical development and improvement are valued, due to economic returns, with hardly any focus on preservation efforts in urban developments. Shaheen and Wijesundara (2014) as well as Lak and Hakimian (2019) opine that limited efforts have been made in using collective memory for facilitating urban renewal projects or representing collective memory in architectural or public places in the Global South. The authors concur with Lak and Hakimian (2019) that it is important to maintain the distinctiveness and uniqueness of various urban realms.

This article seeks to elucidate the various aspects of individual and collective memory from the city residents' perspective and their importance in shaping the urban landscape identity amid ongoing and completed urban renewal projects. The authors postulate that memory and identity of city residents within urban landscapes that are undergoing urban renewal can mediate the challenges of homogenisation and globalisation. This study

adopts the use of the phrase 'urban memory' to refer to both individual and collective memories of the city residents. Kisumu City in Kenya was adopted as a case study for several reasons. Like many other cities in Africa, Kisumu boasts about rich architectural history within the old town from the colonial era. Kisumu City underwent various urban renewal projects, with some already completed. Kisumu thus offered a case study that could investigate urban memory and the extent to which it is attached to various urban realms and features by the residents, taking into account the changes brought about by urban renewal.

The study offers a valuable case study within the discourse that relates to urban renewal projects. It weighs up the importance of economic viability that provides much-needed comfort and access to residents, to the importance of urban identity and memory in the wake of global homogenisation. The article aims to propose recommendations that could be applied to Kisumu City and cities in the Global South in using urban memory to reinforce the urban landscape identity. The findings are important to policymakers within local authorities, who manage new developments, reconstructions, and urban renewal.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Urban memory within urban landscape

Alishah, Ebrahimi and Ghaffari (2016) posit that the urban landscape is the citizens' understanding of the city due to their perception of its various symbols (the physical dimensions of the city) and the ideas associated with them (the mental and memory aspects). Halbwachs (1992) defines individual/personal memory as the knowledge and experiences that are autobiographical, unique, and thus highly personal. Shared/collective memories refers to shared past expressions by inhabitants when remembering buildings, spaces, and places of the past (Halbwachs, 1992). According to Goheri, Behbahani and Salehi (2016), collective memories are directly related to a number of factors including identity and culture, memory and time, social memories, as well as the urban landscape and its constituting elements.

Mansouri (2010) considers the urban landscape to be the citizens' perception, which is obtained through its signs and symbols that represent the events and memories of the citizens in the space. This indicates history and important reference points in the city for its residents (Mansouri, 2010). According to Baker (2012), landscape can operate as a 'storehouse' for collective or social memory, as it frames the lives of an exponential number of people with its features, especially in urban landscapes that outlast many

generations (Baker, 2012). According to Baker (2012), both memory and place are woven into the fabric of everyday life, in that while personal/individual memory makes place out of space, collective/social memory contributes to people's material and symbolic understanding of place through shared knowledge. The shared knowledge is in terms of buildings, streets, historical events, and other aspects that are particular to the place, and brings about a sense of belonging to the place (Baker, 2012).

2.2 Relationship between urban memory and urban landscape identity

Urban and landscape identity is formed by physical aspects, social-cultural functions, and meaning attributes of the given place that ultimately shape memory associated with a given place (Shao *et al*., 2020; Ziyaee, 2018; Ramos *et al*., 2016; Okesli & Gurcinar, 2012; Stobellar & Hendriks, 2004). For this study, urban landscape identity is defined as the residents' opinion and perception of the special features that help them differentiate and develop attachment to a place. It encompasses the forms/physical aspects, functions and activities/social-cultural aspects, and meaning aspects. All three aspects combine to create memories for the residents (K'oyoo & Breed, 2023, modified from Shao *et al*., 2020). Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for urban landscape identity and its link to urban memory within the urban landscape.
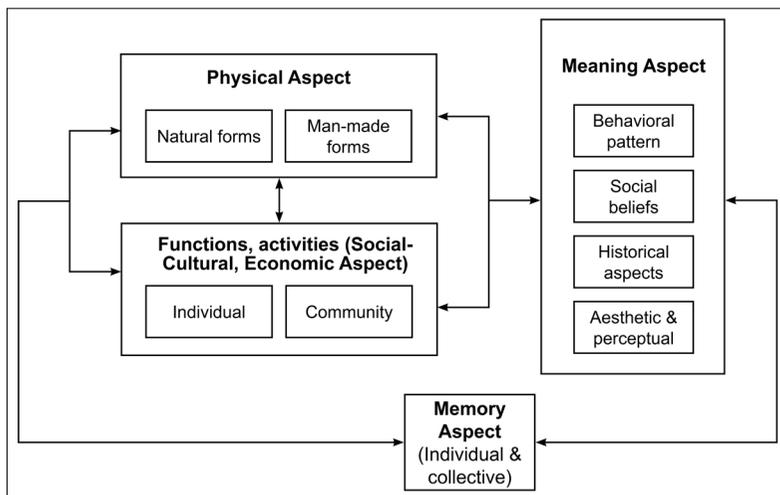

Figure 1: Conceptual framework for urban landscape identity

Source: Author 2021 (modified from Shao *et al*. [2020]; Ziyaee [2018])

Several studies have shown the link and interaction between urban memory and urban landscape identity within urban landscapes, which consist of various physical elements such as natural geographical features, streets, parks, and buildings. These studies include Lynch (1972); Proshansky, Fabian and Kaminoff (1983); Montgomery (1998); Crang and Travlou (2001); Hall (2006); Baker (2012); Mitriou (2014); Shaheen and Wijesundara (2014); Hoteit (2015); Goheri *et al.* (2016); Molavi *et al.* (2017); Lak and Hakimian (2019); Yanmaz and Cengiz (2019), and Shao *et al.* (2020). The various studies stress the importance of urban memory as key in the formation of urban identity.

2.2 The importance of urban memory and urban landscape identity

Rossi (1982:130) explains how collective memories associated with a given place shape the identity of a city.

> The city itself is the collective memory of its people and, like memory it is associated with objects and places. In this sense, great ideas flow through history of the city and give shape to it. The city is the locus of the collective memory. This relationship between the locus and the citizenry then becomes the city's predominant image.

Rossi (1982) asserts that both architecture and the landscape become part of the memory of a city even when new aspects emerge. Shaheen and Wijesundara (2014) posit that collective memory of any society is vital in preserving identities and in bridging the past and the present. Ardakani and Oloonabadi (2011, citing Hague [2005]) posit that, when collective memory is valued, the identity of the place is also valued, and this enhances the people's attachment to it.

Ramos *et al.* (2016) draw attention to the fact that the 'past', in general, is of outstanding relevance to landscape identity in a given place. How people and landscapes interact should be considered in several dimensions. They refer to 'memories' as a symbolic aspect of landscape identity associated with a given place. This is formed by the interaction of all the aspects that constitute landscape identity and depends on people's perceptions of the specific landscape (Ramos *et al.*, 2016).

2.3 Urban memory and urban landscape identity in urban renewal transformations

Lak and Hakimian (2019) point out how urban decay and dilution of social belonging happened due to urban transformations that were eroding the collective memory of both meaning and the physical environment. In their case study of Baharestan Square in Tehran, Iran, they argue that the transition from a traditional city to a modern city has caused a decline in the cultural and social functions of this urban space. They conclude that transformations of the urban physical environment affects activities and place experiences, ultimately transforming meanings and the collective memory of the residents. Akin (2020) avers that the city of Akcaabat, Turkey, had historically important urban gathering spaces that lost their ability to reflect the function and city identity over time. New areas reflecting the city identity have been formed, due to the effects of urban changes (Akin, 2020). Eren (2006), supported by Hoteit (2015), argues that constant change in the built environment in terms of rebuilding of buildings, monuments, reshaping the squares and streets, and changing the names of streets so often causes breaks in urban memory.

Amado and Rodrigues (2019) opine that regeneration of urban areas is a key objective that seeks revitalisation. The physical conditions of the built environment and open spaces within cities are improved for human comfort and use. Urban regeneration has to face the challenge of preserving the identity and memory associated with places (Amado & Rodrigues 2019). Based on the foregoing studies, urban renewal in Africa should be concerned with more than the provision of basic infrastructure within the dilapidated, degraded city centres. Enache and Craciun (2013), Oktay and Bala (2015), as well as Yaldiz *et al*., (2014) consider the importance of changes on urban form elements in shaping urban identity and memory. Shao *et al*. (2020) consider the memory aspect in terms of cultural meanings from historical relics, monuments, and intangible heritage. In their studies, they consider urban identity and associated memory to be vital components of cities. They posit that a renewal project should aim to preserve and strengthen these elements as part of the 'upgrade' or 'improved' physical infrastructure and amenities of the city. However, in most of the African cities, historic elements date from colonial periods. Would preserving them not imply a preservation of colonial identity that does not fully represent the current residents' heritage, values, and identity?

Despite the importance given to memory and identity in the above review, the literature reviewed in this study, specifically on urban renewal in many jurisdictions, hardly emphasised viewing urban memory as an important aspect of urban landscape identity that should be factored for the success

of renewal projects. The authors of this article opine that there is a great need to carry out new developments, reconstructions, and urban renewal projects, by observing the vital aspect of conservation within historical areas of the city, in order to avoid the negative impact on urban memory and resultant urban landscape identity as viewed by the residents over time. This is supported by De Bellis and De Mattia (2014) who argue that the city is built like a collective reality where identity and memory act dialectically, in contrast with the processes of transformation that result from most of the contemporary reconstruction and renewal projects. The authors in this study argue that urban renewal projects are faced with challenges posed by the government's pursuit of economic growth benefits, including global city status, but also with the conservation and preservation of historic aspects at times associated with colonialism that could be perceived as contradictory in how they constitute 'local' identity through memory.

3.   STUDY AREA

The study was conducted in Kisumu City, the third largest urban area in Kenya (see Figures 2 and 3). Kisumu City is the main administrative centre and headquarters of Kisumu County and is 265km north-west of Nairobi. It lies on the northeastern shores of Lake Victoria, the continent's largest freshwater lake and source of the Nile. Kisumu is 1,146 metres above sea level and located 0°6' south of the Equator and 34°45' east (French Development Agency [AFD], 2013). According to COK KUP (2019), the city is ranked third in terms of population at the national level in Kenya and is a major urban centre. The City of Kisumu was founded on 20 December 1901 when the railway from Mombasa reached the shores of Lake Victoria (COK KUP, 2019). The first boundaries of Kisumu town were demarcated by the British colonial government in 1903 as the area within 2.5 mile radius of the district commissioner's office. In 1972, the municipality boundary was extended. The first structure plan for Kisumu City was elaborated in 1984 but was never implemented, due to lack of political will and resources (COK KUP, 2019).

In 2022, the city covered an area of 417km^2 (157km^2 water and 260km^2 land), with a population estimated at over 500,000 people (Wamukaya & Mbathi, 2019). According to the National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2019: 20), on Kenya's population and housing census 2019, the study area (Kisumu Town Area and its outskirts) falls within Kisumu Central Sub County that has a total population of 174,145 people, consisting of 84,155 males (48.3%), 89,985 females (51.7%) and 52,331 households. The Kisumu Town Area has a total population of 56,498 people and 17,258 households within a land area of 25.4km^2. Sub-locations within the Kisumu Town Area include Kaloleni, Bandari, Southern, Northern, and Kanyakwar.

According to the City of Kisumu's Urban Project (2019), the City of Kisumu designed and implemented the Kisumu Urban Project (KUP) from 2009 onwards with funding from the French Development Agency (AFD) to improve the residents' living conditions through various development projects. The authors in this article reiterate the fact that urban renewal was funded by foreign money and that often, no local funding is spent in upgrading Africa's cities. Kisumu's Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Plan (ISUD-Plan) was presented in 2012 (COK KUP, 2019), with its key focus to provide a renewed spatial organisation for a conducive business environment and to improve the living conditions for all.

Several urban renewal projects were implemented in Kisumu City from 2019 to 2022, based on the ISUD-Plan. The main aim of the various projects was to improve urban infrastructure, public facilities, and spatial planning as well as to carry out slum upgrading in addition to modernising public policies to improve public service delivery through effective city management (COK KUP, 2019). Other key considerations include to protect and valorise Kisumu heritage, improve public realms, and improve mobility and accessibility to and within the city. These include non-motorised transport (NMT) within the CBD, including the improvement of pedestrian walkways. The first phase of the NMT was implemented in the Kisumu Triangle that consists of the three major streets of Oginga Odinga, Jomo Kenyatta and Ang'awa, as shown on Figure 4a. The largest and centrally placed park in the city, now renamed Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Sports Grounds (formerly Jomo Kenyatta Sports Grounds), is situated in the Kisumu Triangle and has been rehabilitated. Other projects include the construction of new markets, bus parks, rehabilitation of public parks (Figure 4b), beautification of roundabouts, road islands, and proposed new high-rise affordable housing.

Figure 2: Map of Kenya showing the location of Kisumu County
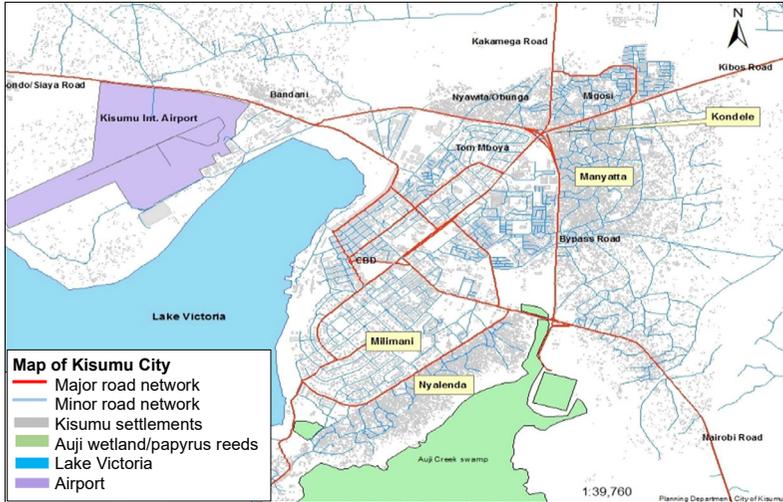
Source: Google Maps, 2019

Figure 3:   Map of Kisumu City showing CBD and the neighbourhoods

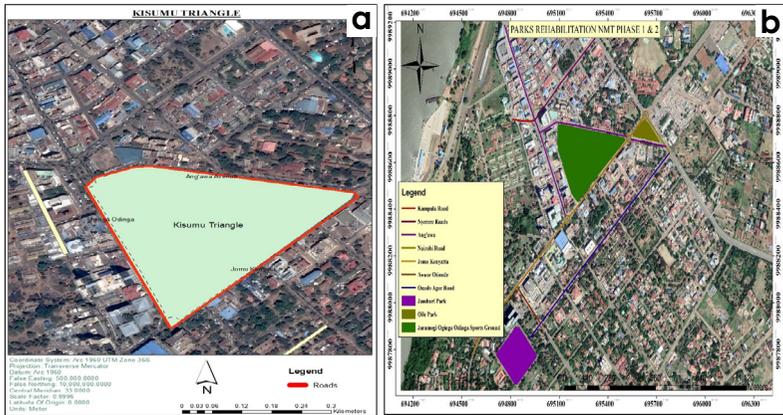Source: City of Kisumu, GIS Department, 2020

Figure 4a: ArcGIS Desktop 10.3 map showing the location of the Kisumu Triangle NMT project.

Figure 4b: ArcGIS Desktop 10.3 map showing the location of the parks under rehabilitation, NMT road and street projects.

Source: Author, 2021

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research design

Using a qualitative research approach, this case study made use of various data-capturing methods to elicit residents' opinions about, and perceptions of ongoing and completed urban renewal projects within Kisumu City, Kenya. The use of different data-collection methods allows for testing validity by combining information from different sources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016: 245). This study used three data-capturing methods, photo-elicitation interviews (PEI), interviews, and field investigation to identify and discuss the features that captured individual and collective memory for the participants and contributed to the image of the city.

According to Bignante (2010), photo-elicitation is a research method that depends on the principle of using images in interviews to prompt and stimulate interviewees and to gather related information. It involves the use of photos, videos, paintings or any other visual representation for informants' comment on them. The researcher or the selected informants may provide the images. Photo-elicitation has been used in research across many disciplines, for example, by Torre and Murphy (2015) in education; Loeffler (2004) in leisure studies, and Bignante (2010) as well as Stewart *et al.* (2004) in landscape research. Recently, Yanmaz and Cengiz (2019) used PEI in studying urban memory among city residents. They used eight purposively selected photos of various spaces and buildings that consisted of streets, avenues, and public gardens.

4.2 PEI sampling

The first author, who is a resident of Kisumu, purposively chose 12 respondents (KSM 1 to KSM 12) (seeTable 1) to take part in the PEI and each respondent was interviewed independently either on- or off-site. The respondents included businesspeople within the CBD, university students on the city campuses, elderly residents in the city who have grown up and resided in Kisumu for a long period of time, and professionals purposively selected by the researcher based on availability and willingness to participate. In her study using PEI on the meaning of outdoor adventures from participants' experiences, Loeffler (2004) used 14 participants to discuss the images with the researcher. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) found that saturation occurred within the first 12 interviews and that there were basic elements for metaphors from the sixth interview. Variability with data followed similar patterns (Guest *et al*., 2006). The first author thus decided to keep to 12 respondents, but made use of 24 selected images of Kisumu City. In addition, the PEI was supplemented with eight key informant interviews, in order to gain greater insight into the historical city development context.

4.3   Interviews sampling

To gain insights into the development and urban renewal of Kisumu City, this study purposively selected eight additional key informants as interviewees and included the City Director of Planning and the Chief Officer of Lands, Housing and Physical Planning of CGK. The CGK key informants were labelled as CGK 1 to CGK 4. Four practising professionals were also purposively selected, based on their years of service, for responses as experts. They were named as KSM-P1 to KSM-P4. Table 2 summarises the profiles of the interviewees. According to Yin (2003), key informants are often important for case study research to succeed, as they provide the researcher with deeper context-specific insights into a matter under investigation.

4.4   Field investigation

The field investigation in this study entailed extensive photography on various urban renewal projects that were already completed and ongoing in Kisumu City. The photographs constituted the qualitative material that was part of data-collection methods. Aerial Google maps and ArcGIS (Figure 4) were used to locate the various renewal projects in the streets and other spaces within the CBD and were accompanied by descriptions of the works involved for the ongoing and completed projects (see Figure 6).

4.5   Data collection

Between June and August 2021, photos used in the PEI were taken by the researcher during field investigation on-site for the ongoing and completed urban renewal projects to constitute the primary data. Other photos of interest to the study were sought from the archives of the County Government of Kisumu Offices and from the internet to constitute secondary data. The 24 photos were selected based on the COK KUP report on Kisumu City sites of interest (see Figures 5 and 6, images 1-28). According to Shao *et al*. (2020), social researchers prefer to produce their own PEI photos for the interviews. These are more effective in gathering feedback from the participants, as such data is more focused on the subject under investigation in the study (Shao *et al*., 2020).

Both the PEI sessions and the key informant interviews were carried out in September 2021. The researcher used semi-structured interview questions geared towards the study objectives but was open to clarifications from the participants who gave further insights into the reason for their choices and opinions. The first part of the PEI checklist obtained the interviewees' demographic information such as age, gender, profession, duration of residence, and area of residence in Kisumu City. In the second part of the

interview, the PEI interviewees were presented with six A3 sheets with four photos each that were discussed one at a time in terms of historical development, individual memory, and collective memory. A total of 24 photos were discussed with respect to the memory aspect, while the last 4 photos were discussed regarding urban renewal changes (see Figure 6 and Appendix A). The interviewer probed for further clarifications where necessary and constant note taking was done, while recording using mobile phone handset with consent. Direct quotes from the key informants were included to illustrate certain points of importance. The interviews lasted approximately 40 to 60 minutes each.

4.6   Data analysis

The researcher reported the audio responses of the PEI and key informant participants *verbatim* and no software was used in the analysis. The author approached the data-analysis process *tabula rasa*, that is, without any predetermined themes or categories (Gibbs, 2014: 284). Using simple reflexive thematic analysis, findings were reported as a reflection of the researcher's interpretive analysis of the data conducted at the intersection of the dataset; the theoretical assumptions of the analysis, and the analytical skills/resources of the researcher (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Based on frequency of occurrence, the first author determined the emergent themes and relative importance of a particular theme which reflects on historical development, the need for conservation, preservation, and the resultant image of the city after renewal.

5.   RESULTS

5.1   Respondents' profile

Results on the demographic characteristics in Table 1 indicate that most of the PEI interviewees were male (58.4%), aged between 20 and 67 years, of whom 66.6% were aged 30 years and over. The period of residence for the respondents was between 4 and 67 years. Nine out of 12 (75%) of the respondents had lived for over 10 years in Kisumu City. This indicates that they had lived long enough in Kisumu City to respond to questions about what contributed to their urban memory within the urban landscape over time and the effects of the urban renewal changes.

Table 1:   Demographic characteristics of participants engaged in PEI

	Gender	Age	Profession/Occupation	Period of residence in Kisumu	Area of residence
KSM 1	Female	40 years	Business lady	Over 15 years	Kisumu Central
KSM 2	Female	Between 35 to 40 years	Business lady	Over 35 years	Kisumu Central

	Gender	Age	Profession/Occupation	Period of residence in Kisumu	Area of residence
KSM 3	Male	Between 50 to 55 years	Accountant	Over 50 years	Kisumu Central
KSM 4	Male	Between 25 to 30 years	Building technologist	5-10 years	Kisumu Central
KSM 5	Female	Between 25 to 30 years	Business administrator in CBD	Over 15 years	Kisumu Central
KSM 6	Female	Between 30 to 35 years	Office receptionist/ secretary in CBD	Between 6 to 10 years	Kisumu West
KSM 7	Male	67 years	Retired primary school teacher	Over 65 years	Kisumu West
KSM 8	Male	Between 30 to 35 years	Planner	Over 15 years	Kisumu Central
KSM 9	Male	Between 35 to 40 years	ICT university lecturer	Over 35 years	Kisumu West
KSM 10	Male	Between 40 to 45 years	Sociologist and human rights activist	Over 40 years	Kisumu East
KSM 11	Male	Between 20 to 25 years	GIS university student	Between 15 to 20 years	Kisumu Central
KSM 12	Female	Between 20 to 25 years	Urban planning university student	1 to 4 years	Kisumu Central
Totals	Male 58.4% Female 41.6%	Above 30 years (66.6%) Between 20 and 30 years (33.4%)		Over 10 years (75%) Less than 10 years (25%)	

Source: Author, September 2021

Table 2 shows eight interviewees including four county officials as key informants and four professionals/experts who engaged in the study.

Table 2: Profile of interview respondents (key informants and experts)

Interviewee ID	Profession/Place of work	Type of respondent	Gender
CGK 1	Kisumu County Government	Key informant	Anonymised
CGK 2	Kisumu County Government	Key informant	Anonymised
CGK 3	Kisumu County Government	Key informant	Anonymised
CGK 4	Kisumu County Government	Key informant	Anonymised
KSM P1	Physical planner	Private professional	Female
KSM P2	GIS specialist	Private professional	Male
KSM P3	Landscape architect	Private professional	Female
KSM P4	Urban designer	Private professional	Male

Source: Author, September 2021

5.2   Field investigation

According to the City of Kisumu's situational report under Kisumu Urban Project (2019), there are several sites of interest, including parks such as Jomo Kenyatta Sports Ground (currently renamed as Jaramogi Oginga

Odinga Sports Grounds), monuments such as the Clock Tower, religious buildings such as St Theresa's Catholic Church, Sikh Building. Government civic buildings including the old provincial commissioner's headquarters, Railway Station, Kisumu Port, Fire station. Educational buildings include the University of Nairobi building. Kisumu proposed that the historic and heritage core area consisting of old Asian architecture in the Old Town is also of interest. Public buildings include Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Teaching and Referral Hospital, Kisumu Social Hall, and Kenya National Library Services building, among others. Figure 5 shows the map of the various sites.
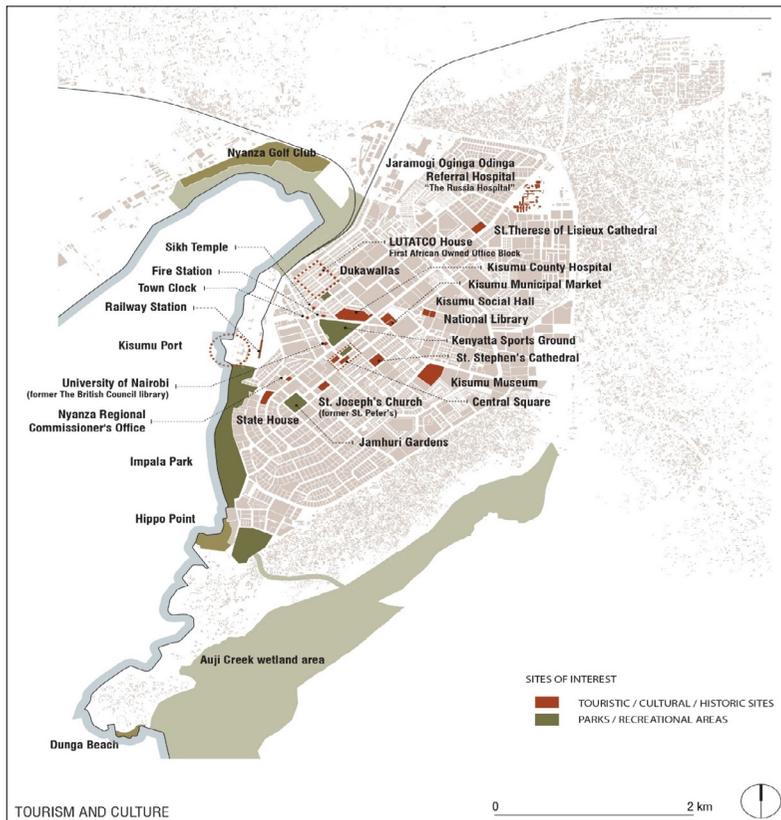

Figure 5: Kisumu sites of interest

Source: City of Kisumu, Kisumu Urban Project, 2019

Figure 6 shows the photos of some of these sites of interest in addition to some purposively selected by the interviewer.
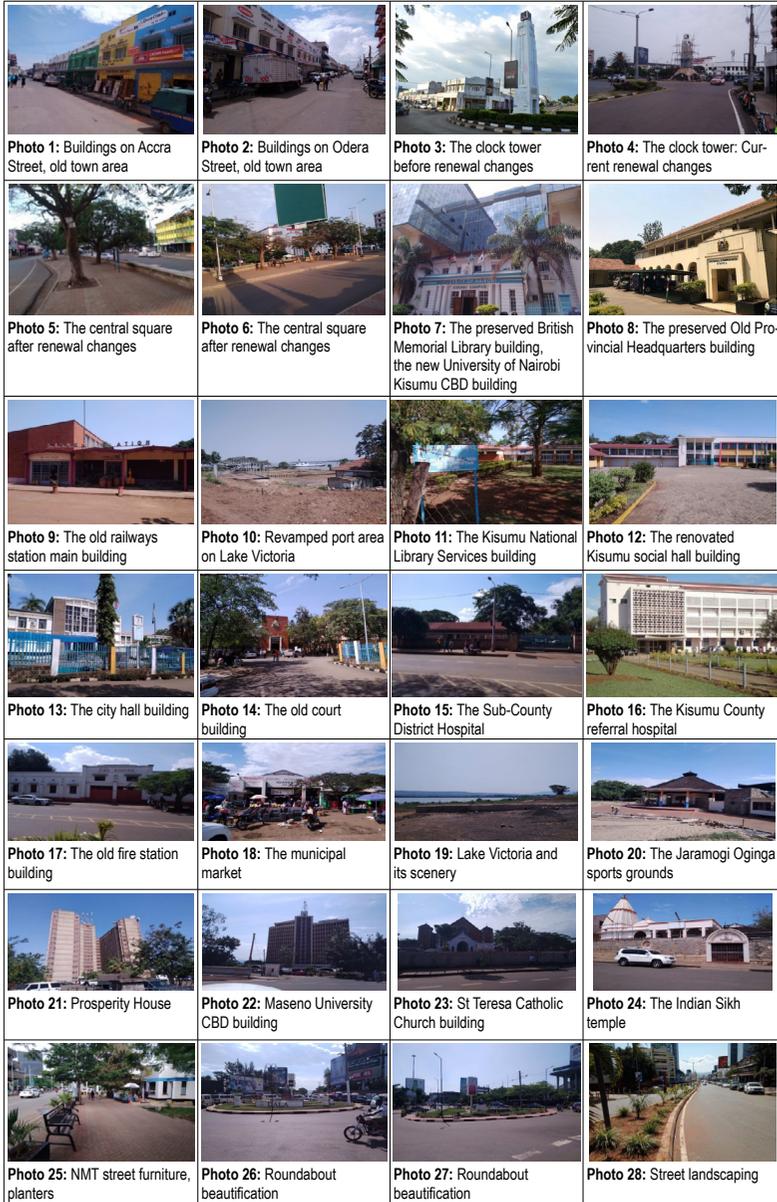
Photo 1: Buildings on Accra Street, old town area	**Photo 2:** Buildings on Odera Street, old town area	**Photo 3:** The clock tower before renewal changes	**Photo 4:** The clock tower: Current renewal changes
Photo 5: The central square after renewal changes	**Photo 6:** The central square after renewal changes	**Photo 7:** The preserved British Memorial Library building, the new University of Nairobi Kisumu CBD building	**Photo 8:** The preserved Old Provincial Headquarters building
Photo 9: The old railways station main building	**Photo 10:** Revamped port area on Lake Victoria	**Photo 11:** The Kisumu National Library Services building	**Photo 12:** The renovated Kisumu social hall building
Photo 13: The city hall building	**Photo 14:** The old court building	**Photo 15:** The Sub-County District Hospital	**Photo 16:** The Kisumu County referral hospital
Photo 17: The old fire station building	**Photo 18:** The municipal market	**Photo 19:** Lake Victoria and its scenery	**Photo 20:** The Jaramogi Oginga sports grounds
Photo 21: Prosperity House	**Photo 22:** Maseno University CBD building	**Photo 23:** St Teresa Catholic Church building	**Photo 24:** The Indian Sikh temple
Photo 25: NMT street furniture, planters	**Photo 26:** Roundabout beautification	**Photo 27:** Roundabout beautification	**Photo 28:** Street landscaping

Figure 6: Photos of various features selected for PEI

Source: Author, June 2021

5.3 Archival literature review

There was a need to undertake an archival literature review of the various features and sites of interest in Kisumu City. This is important for understanding the reasons why various respondents attributed importance to these in the historical development of the city and why individual or collective memory is attached to them. According to Kisumu Urban Project (2019) carried out by the City of Kisumu, there is important history of the Central Square, Clock Tower, Old Provincial Commissioner's building, Kisumu Municipal Market, and the Old Town, among other sites of interest. The following is a brief summary of some of the sites and features of interest.

- Clock Tower: It was built by the colonial government to honour the memory of Kassim Lakha, a great Indian trader who contributed to the development of Kisumu Town in the colonial days from 1902 to 1910. The tower was unveiled on 19 August 1938 to remember his charitable act of serving the residents of Kisumu with medical facilities at his expense without discrimination of cast and creed (COK KUP, 2019).

- Old Town: Kisumu boasts about the great Asian (Indian) architectural influence in its urban form. This is still present within the area earmarked for heritage protection. This area has old shops (Dukawalas) that were built by Indian nationals who settled in the town upon completion of the Mombasa-Kisumu railway line in 1901. The Indian people were brought by the British colonial government to construct the railway line (COK KUP, 2019).

- Old Provincial Commissioner's office: Its construction was completed in 1909 and it operated as the base for colonial administration in Nyanza Province. It remained a provincial headquarter even into post-independence after 1963. It was declared a national monument in March 2001 and is currently under National Museums of Kenya (COK KUP, 2019).

- Kisumu Municipal Market: This was constructed in 1935 and was key to the economic development of Kisumu. It continues to be a dominant commercial space where agricultural products such as cereals are traded (COK KUP, 2019). Figure 7 shows the transformation of the Municipal Market from the colonial era to the postcolonial era.

Figure 7: Kisumu Municipal Market in 1909, 1968 and 2015

Source: Kisumu Museums, COK KUP, 2019

- Central Square: This was constructed in 1957 as a focal point of the municipality. It still has great political significance for the City of Kisumu (COK KUP, 2019).

- Jaramogi Oginga Sports Grounds, previously Jomo Kenyatta Sports Ground. It is the large green space within the city. It is within the heart of the city within the Kisumu Triangle. It is famous for both passive and active recreation and a major site for large religious and political gatherings (COK KUP, 2019).

- Kisumu Triangle: This consists of three major streets of Oginga Odinga, Jomo Kenyatta, and Ang'awa. They enclose the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Sports Grounds. These streets are important to the city as they account for most of the city's pedestrian and bicycle traffic (COK KUP, 2019). Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Referral Hospital: Famously known to the locals as Russia Hospital. Its construction was funded by the Russian Government. It opened in 1969 in postcolonial government. Its opening ceremony, which was meant to be a landmark day for the region, was marred by controversy, tension, and bloodshed. An altercation between the then president Jomo Kenyatta and his vice president Jaramogi Oginga Odinga led to police officers opening fire on the crowd in what is remembered as "Kisumu massacre" (COK KUP, 2019).

5.4   Interviews

5.4.1 Contribution of historical development to urban memory

Respondents emphasised the historical buildings and their functions in the city. Some emphasised economic progress and political development. According to several respondents (KSM 8, KSM 6, KSM 2, KSM 12), the railways and train station are important defining features and infrastructure in Kisumu's historical development. The railway is cited as important in the genesis of Kisumu City as it opened up the region for trade through port and railway transportation.

Kisumu sprung and grew from the development of the railway line in 1901; you can't talk about Kisumu town without the mention of the railway line and the station within the CBD and the Port which used to be managed by Kenya Railways in earlier years. The railway led to the growth and development of Kisumu City" (PEI interviewee KSM 7).

Several respondents (KSM 7, KSM 10, KSM 11, KSM 12) also opined that the Central Square is an important contributor to the historical development of Kisumu. KSM 10 felt that it should be improved further by introducing shades for the users. The Old Court building is supported as an important landmark building in the historical development, being the first court building that has served for many years to date (KSM 6, KSM 8). Others mentioned the importance of the Kisumu Port and the St Theresa Catholic Church building (KSM 2, KSM 12).

In addition, the Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Referral Hospital's main building (Photo 16, Figure 6) and the Municipal Market are important (KSM 3). The current referral hospital has an important history for the city and the country. During its opening ceremony in 1969, violence and commotion arose in the presence of the then president Jomo Kenyatta and many lives were lost. The Municipal Market has operated from the pre-independence colonial era and is still important for trade within the city (KSM3, KSM 8). The City Hall building was mentioned as it was used by the colonial administration and is still used to host the governor and the city manager (KSM 8).

Three respondents opined that the Old Provincial Commissioners Headquarters building in addition to the Central Square, the University of Nairobi (UoN) building, the Old Railways and the Port, the Municipal Market, the Prosperity building, the Fire Station building, and the old court building are important in the historical development of Kisumu and give it meaning, thereby contributing to its identity (KSM 4, KSM 11, KSM 12). The current UoN building that hosted the former British Council Library is an important reminder of the British colonisers who built it. It is considered to be among the oldest buildings, with a rich history of Kisumu City. The Fire Station is also important as it is the first and only building that served as a fire station from the earlier years of Kisumu. The Provincial Headquarters building is a good reminder of the past regime when the provincial administration was very powerful in the country. The interviewees stated that its proposed preservation is a very good idea. The Port is a good reminder of the previous years during active operation when it connected the three East African countries through trade and transportation. The interviewees stated that its current revamping has potential to reignite its full economic benefits for Kisumu City.

Interviewees also mentioned that the Old Town area is crucial in the historical development of Kisumu City, because of developments that still exist, dating back to pre-independence, and a unique Asian architecture (KSM 8, KSM 9, KSM 10). KSM 9 and KSM 10 supported the Old Town area for its importance due to the many Asian residents who owned various forms of trade there and who resided on the upper floors of the buildings in its streets. KSM 9 mentioned the Kisumu Social Hall as important in the historical development of Kisumu:

> "You cannot talk of any education and schooling in Kisumu without mention of the Social Hall that was also important for hosting school music and drama events. The hall was important for tallying of votes during election periods and is still used for that purpose to date."

5.4.2 The need for conservation and preservation in maintaining urban memory

Some respondents opined that there is a need for more conservation efforts in the city. According to KSM-P4, an urban designer, Kisumu City considers the preservation of components of the city, including street walkways, as the City of Kisumu (CoK) had preserved them and only improved them through paving and reclaiming their encroached reserves. Landmarks in parks under rehabilitation are also considered for preservation. Urban green spaces such as Oile Park, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Sports Ground as urban parks are preserved for recreational purposes and improved through wall fences among other amenities. Above all, COK maintained the previous street names despite the developments within the CBD and beyond (KSM-P4).

According to the city planner, the Clock Tower has been maintained over the years by simply being repainted. Major changes to it are occasioned by the present upgrading that has changed its structure. Some respondents agreed with the changes made to the old Clock Tower (Figure 7a). "I prefer the new look of the Clock Tower as it is visually appealing" (PEI interviewee KSM 1). Respondents KSM 7 and KSM P3 explained how people used the Clock Tower for many years to give directions and for meetings in the nearby Central Square. KSM 8 also supported the Clock Tower as an important physical feature and, despite the improvements to it, it was still recognisable and important.

> "The Clock Tower is an important physical feature and there was need to preserve its original form and colour. The Central Square is an important socialization place, and the current upgrade has made it even better. The UoN building consisting of the preserved former British Council Library building is very important for the image of Kisumu and the university CBD building. It is important in offering employment to many people" (PEI interviewee KSM 3).

Respondents KSM 3 and KSM 11 also opined that the Old Railway Station is an important aspect of Kisumu City's identity as it gave rise to Kisumu, and there was a need to preserve it. By contrast, KSM 10 averred that it did not make sense at the time of the study to preserve it since it stopped active operations, but it was important in the historical development of Kisumu. KSM 10 supported the preservation of the Old Town area by stating that it has an important heritage history of Kisumu City and there is the need to retain its unique architectural design, despite any new improvements within it.

The Kisumu Provincial Commissioner's Headquarters building was also important in the historical development for the many functions it served in the past governments (PEI interviewees KSM 9, KSM 10). KSM 10 stated that, with the proposed preservation of the building, it was better to furnish it with resources that could inform the public.

> "The former Provincial Headquarters building for former Nyanza Province is also a very important building in Kisumu that should be preserved to be remembered as one of the oldest buildings that served government roles in the provincial administration and was said to be one of the railway's first buildings" (PEI interviewee KSM 7).

Commenting on the Central Square, KSM 11 supported the preservation and conservation of all the old trees that were in it prior to the renewal changes. Respondents KSM 9, KSM 11, and KSM 12 also supported the former Provincial Commissioners Headquarters building as an important part of Kisumu's image, as it hosted administrators of the provincial administration in past governments and was a symbol of power and authority. The old provincial headquarters building, according to the National Museums Kisumu office, was earmarked for preservation under National Museums of Kenya and was closed for renovations. The respondents supported the then proposed need to preserve the building under the National Museums of Kenya.

Interviewees KSM 9, KSM 11, and KSM 12 also supported the need to preserve some of the old buildings and the existing architectural character within the Old Town area so as to preserve Kisumu's history about its earlier days of development. KSM 10 felt that there was a need to ignite life into the Old Town area while preserving some aspects for heritage purposes. The respondent averred that there was a need to change the functions of the area, in order to make it an active place, as it lacked vibrancy of late. The respondent also applauded the idea of preserving the British Council Library building that was acquired by the present University of Nairobi Kisumu CBD campus, as this is a reminder of the building, built by the British, that served as a library for many years.

5.4.3 Outcome of the Kisumu urban renewal projects on urban memory

Based on the 12 PEI interviews conducted, all the respondents were satisfied with the current image of the city in terms of its appearance and character based on the current renewal project outcome. Comments regarding various aspects of the renewal within the CBD include the following:

> "The streets are well upgraded and have a spectacular new look, Kisumu has a new look and image" (PEI interviewee KSM 1, a business lady, aged about 40 years, who has lived in Kisumu City for over 15 years).

This was supported by KSM 11 and KSM 12 who stated that the wide and well-paved roads and streets gave Kisumu City a new good appearance (Figure 7b). Interviewee KSM 2, a business lady, aged about 40 years, who was born and has lived in Kisumu City all her life, compared the new look with the previous look more so within the CBD street spaces and had this to say:

> "The new look of the CBD streets is smart, the streets are clean and the new look/image is better than the image before" (PEI interviewee KSM 2).

Respondent KSM 1 mentioned that the aesthetically appealing feature of Kisumu was the Central Square, due to its new look with cabro paving and seats provided. A respondent supported the good work achieved so far, despite the mandatory relocation, in order to pave the way for the upgrading works:

> "The overall work carried out within the city is exemplary. All in all, good work has been done and has changed the face of Kisumu City, despite the cries from local residents who had to be relocated to give way to the new upgrade works. The improvements have given Kisumu orderly spaces especially within the streets that are now good looking and safe from vehicular transport. There is need for good management plan to be in place and implemented to ensure that the good work done is not run down and becomes deteriorated" (PEI interviewee KSM 7, a retired teacher, aged over 65 years, born and bred in Kisumu all his life).

The field investigation revealed to the researcher that the streets, where the NMT had been implemented, were free from roadside vendors and that previously existing temporary commercial structures had been demolished and had to be relocated to other places.

"Upgrading has given Kisumu a new good look. Mobility is now controlled with implementation of NMT especially within Oginga Odinga Street, Ang'awa Street and Jomo Kenyatta Street. There is good organization by eliminating the street vendors that has achieved decongestion of the streets. The streets are now safer, clean with a good look that can appeal to investors" (PEI interviewee KSM 3, a male accountant, aged above 50 years, who has lived in Kisumu all his life).

From field investigation and analysis, the County Government of Kisumu (CGK) organised market areas within which to relocate the street vendors who were evacuated to pave the way for the implementation of the NMT in the CBD's major streets.

"CGK has created better spaces for the relocated street vendors within Chichwa Market next to the Jaramogi Oginga Sports Grounds. The town now is looking more aesthetically appealing with paving, improved streets and roads. The new palm trees are adding interest within the streets. The town now has more spaces for games within revamped Jomo Kenyatta Grounds. The town is a better place than it used to be" (PEI interviewee KSM 5, a male business administrator, aged about 30 years, who has lived in Kisumu for over 15 years).

Regarding the new image of Kisumu City, based on the new structures and developments done, a respondent had this to say:

"Kisumu has changed for the better, not comparable to any other town in Kenya. Street walking has been made easier due to relocation of street vendors. The CBD has changed due to better structures and improvements done within the streets and roundabouts. The streets are more appealing due to more vegetation, elimination of roadside structures that existed within them before and that Kisumu is better economically. Again, street lighting has improved the general security within the CBD as people feel much safer" (PEI interviewee KSM-9, an ICT lecturer, aged above 35 years, who has lived in Kisumu City for over 30 years).

According to county officials CGK 1, CGK 2 and CGK 3, adequate measures to relocate the evicted roadside traders were put in place to pave the way for the implementation of the NMT, for example, within the Kisumu Triangle, where the renewal works began. Being a donor-funded project, an appropriate Relocation Action Plan was mandatory and led to the building of Chichwa 1 and Chichwa 2 markets to house the evicted roadside traders.

Figure 8a: The new look of the completed Clock Tower on Oginga Odinga Street after changes.

Figure 8b: Part of the Kisumu Triangle implemented NMT, as seen from the junction of Oginga Odinga Street and Ang'awa Avenue.

Source: Author, December 2023.

5.4.4 Summary

This summary is based on the results of the field investigation, the archival literature review, and the interviews. The responses by various respondents point to the importance of the diverse features and sites of interest in contributing to the historical development of Kisumu City over the years. The urban memory attached to some of the features points to their continued importance from colonial days (1901 to 1963) through postcolonial years (from 1964 to date). The authors provide insight by using PEI, which is suited to this study, on how residents perceive urban renewals. Interviewees emphasised the "new look" infrastructural improvements that have an economic impact through investment potential, but also aesthetic appeal, order, comfort, and safety improvements. These are contrasted with aspects related to memory and identity in urban spaces, such as symbols of power and authority during colonial rule and historic development of trade and administration that brought economic growth and employment, versus unique cultural-historical architectural design. It is interesting to note that many positive memories and symbolisms are associated with buildings and features built during colonialism (1901 to 1963) and less so with the post-independence era structures. The PEI respondents did not frequently mention street landscaping, the beautification of the roundabouts, and the rehabilitation of parks. They mainly emphasised built structures, historic development, and urban functionality. The respondents' preferences highlight the importance of urban renewal for progress and economic benefits versus the historic importance of elements that add to memory and urban identity. This is relevant beyond the context of the case study,

as all urban renewal projects need to consider urban identity and memory in relation to economic viability and return on investment. Based on the responses, the findings support the need for preservation and conservation of features complementing the need for maintenance, renewal, and economic upliftment, in order to retain urban memory and identity.

6.   DISCUSSION

6.1   Aspects of historical development that contribute to urban memory

It is clear from the findings that respondents emphasised socio-economic development and political administrative aspects. Further emphasis was placed on the importance of mainly buildings with civic functions, and the development of trade in the city, such as the railway and the port. These functions coincidentally align with the meaning of the name Kisumu, which refers to a place where people came to trade. Gusevkaya and Plotnikova (2020) posit that historical memory and identity are inseparable and that identity is constructed in the process of understanding a people's history. Halbwachs (1976) supports these authors, by positing that memories of important events, heroes, and celebrations play an important role. This is supported by Othman, Nishimura & Kubota (2013) who conclude that one's memory and perception of the environment are shaped by three components: the role of events, history, and the monuments found in a place. This enables the residents to perceive a place through memory association as they interact within the different urban spaces (Othman *et al*., 2013). For this study, this means, for example, that, regardless of the colonial architectural style and time period of the buildings (which may have been perceived as foreign to local residents), a building can accumulate positive memories from social events, activities, and interactions. Administrative functions, as well as economic trade and development are associated with power and status that support employment and progress. This progress also manifests as structures for shade, cleaner streets, order, and safety that make for more activities and greater public use.

According to Shao *et al*. (2020), the memory aspect of the local identity is highly dependent on the knowledge of the participants within the local study area. The findings from this study concur that individual and collective memories, which the respondents associated with the various features and urban form elements, depended greatly on their familiarity and knowledge of the local history. Lacking the knowledge and history of a given place greatly affects the residents' memory, but does not necessarily lead to a loss of identity. Places transform due to changes over time. People enhance the physical environment to suit their needs better. However,

Shao *et al*. (2020) confirm that the rapid transformation of Chinese cities has occasioned the loss of landscape identity, with the changes resulting in people being less attached to their environment. This, in turn, has resulted in an identity crisis within local places (Shao *et al*., 2020). This study also emphasises the civic and socio-economic functions that bring people to specific places in the city. This points to the importance of social aspects and activities, as highlighted earlier, for those who might not have a historic knowledge of the city.

It is interesting to note that the open spaces and the natural and geographic features of the environment (for example, Lake Victoria) were not emphasised as much as civic, administrative, and trade-oriented buildings. This is in contrast with a former study that used surveys to determine elements of importance for landscape identity in Kisumu (Koyoo & Breed, 2023).

6.2 Aspects of conservation and preservation in maintaining urban memory

The findings revealed that aspects of green infrastructure, in terms of trees in the rehabilitated parks, streets and Central Square, were preserved despite the ongoing or completed changes. The respondents believed that conservation was not observed when changes were made to important landmarks such as the Clock Tower in the CBD. Most of the respondents thought that this structure was important in the historical development of the city over the years (since colonial days) and as such to their individual and collective memories. To them, this affected urban landscape identity of the city they had known for years. These notable changes, according to the director of Environment at CGK, raised debate, due to their importance in the memory formation of the residents in the city. The changes to this structure had to be stopped from time to time before the final look was implemented. Yanmaz and Cengiz (2019) posit that it is important to preserve the buildings and spaces that make up the urban memory of people. They further argue that it is important to conserve a city's buildings that contribute to the original identity of that city, and that carry noteworthy architectural and vital features. These buildings play a significant role in providing the cultural continuity of the period to which they belong and they are important in forming urban identity and, hence, carrying it to the future (Yanmaz & Cengiz, 2019). Hoteit (2015) and Eren (2006) concur that some places and landmarks should be preserved as far as possible, as they form important spatial reference points of memory, due to their symbolic value.

In addition, the authors argue that one should not continuously change the names of courtyards, streets, and places based on their renovations or changes. For example, in the authors' opinion, the renaming of Kisumu

Sports Grounds (Aguch Kisumo) to Jaramogi Oginga Odinga Sports Grounds (previously Jomo Kenyatta Sports Grounds) could confuse the residents and erode the connection to this important centrally located public park. This is supported by Zeybek (2020) regarding frequent changes that weaken collective memory and resultant urban identity.

We concur with Phillia and Sihombing (2023), by arguing that urban renewal projects in this study seemed more focused on creating 'new look' urban environments without specifically acknowledging urban memory and identity that is important to the city's residents. We argue that preserving urban identity and maintaining urban memory in the case of Kisumu City require a greater vision for long-term sustainability, where residents are attached to their city and find meaning in their urban surroundings. Lak and Hakimian (2019) as well as Akin (2020) report how meaning can be lost when urban renewal erodes important aspects of a city's historical identity and memory. Ardakani and Oloonabadi (2011) opine that, when the inhabitants' collective memory is ignored, one of the most important repercussions is the people's failure to be involved in the conservation of historical areas. This ultimately leads to the unsustainable immaterial and material structures of the city concerned.

6.3 Outcome of urban renewal projects on urban memory

According to Batkova and Chizzoniti (2021), architecture and urban form are decisive in affecting and, hypothetically, producing the social/collective memory. They argue that collective memory is the core of urban identity basis. The above findings revealed that the vast majority of the respondents opined that a new image was created/established for Kisumu City as a result of the renewal project. These findings indicate that people understandably value physical upgrade and investment in their city. According to Oktay and Bala (2015), as well as Stobbelaar and Hendriks (2004), a city is not static; it changes. Landscape identity changes when people change. The authors posit that it changes and then re-establishes itself as a result of the action and interaction between people and their environment. However, these changes need to retain the essence of the physical and social aspects that capture the identity of the city, despite being new.

According to Eren (2006), memory is re-established dynamically. What he refers to as "new urban memory" is not a memory formed by new images but new references where memory links images that are detached from their places and no longer considered 'new'. Kisumu City has a new look, but the changes of materials retained the urban spaces and landmarks that held memory among the residents and formed the urban landscape identity. The study findings show that the residents believe that this is a

'better' new look. This does not necessarily signify that a new identity has been formed, but rather that the memories and sense of belonging they experienced previously are still there. The response that the city had a new better look and image implies that people like the fact that the streets and other public spaces are no longer in a state of disrepair. The streets, for example, have sidewalks and paving that work better and allow for greater and better movement and enjoyment by the residents. The authors argue that the residents also articulate their appreciation of public funds that are spent on the renewal of urban public spaces, since this is not often prioritised nationall, if international funding is not available. The improved economic opportunities resulting from urban renewal are also naturally valued within a developing world context. The appreciation for civic and socio-economic functions in the historic value of the city points to a historic tendency for people to favour economic growth and daily functionalities such as order, safety, cleanliness, as the legacies of modern western cities and forming part of global homogenisation processes (Cocks *et al*., 2021). The findings imply that the residents who responded in the PEI were more concerned with the use of the spaces in terms of comfort and convenience and less concerned or perhaps satisfied with the identity and memory aspects. However, the findings also underscored the value of memory and the unique identity of the city. How to balance these aspects is the challenge for urban renewal.

The findings of the study are limited by the fact that only 20 interviewees were consulted and a greater socio-economic spectrum of residents might have revealed more nuances in terms of the renewal project and its impact on, for example, informal vendors.

7.   CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study reiterated the importance of maintaining the perceived uniqueness associated with various cities in terms of landscape identity and associated memory within urban realms, despite unavoidable new developments, reconstructions, and renewals. The study revealed that respondents mainly mentioned buildings with administrative and civic functions, or important places of trade such as the market, the railway, and the port, as important to the historical development and memory aspects of the city, despite their colonial connotations. The authors conclude that the responses received show that the respondents mainly focused on the built structures to inform their views of the historical developments and associated urban memory aspects. Hardly any emphasis was placed on the open spaces and the natural elements of the environment (for example, Lake Victoria or street landscaping and parks). In addition, upgrading and economic investment, which result in increased urban functionality, were

emphasised over aspects of memory and identity that create a sense of belonging for residents. It shows that urban residents are not only concerned with memory and identity; but also support physical functions and socio-economic benefits in the city – a phenomenon of developing countries also based on globalisation.

This study reiterated and further added to the existing theory in landscape studies regarding urban landscape identity and the associated memory aspect. Only a few studies, as cited earlier, on urban identity relate to urban renewal within the East African context and the Global South, in general. The studies covered issues of urban renewal with no emphasis on landscape identity and memory aspects.This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge on urban landscape identity and urban memory to help understand how they manifest in different parts of the world. The use of PEI and the specific case study make a contribution to how urban renewal projects can be addressed more broadly in developing countries. The challenges of weighing economic benefits against more intangible factors such as urban memory and identity are relevant to consider, in order to reach a balanced and sustainable outcome.

This article proposes the following recommendations that could be applied to Kisumu City and cities in other jurisdictions:

1. Preservation of human-made structures: Artificial features in the city such as the Old Court building, the Kisumu Municipal Market building, St Theresa's Catholic Church, the Clock Tower, the Old Town area, and the City Hall building, which were mentioned as symbolic for the unique design, importance in historical development of Kisumu City over the years, should be preserved in the wake of any redevelopments or urban renewal projects.

2. Visual perception studies: There is a need to undertake landscape visual assessment prior to major developments and urban renewal projects to investigate the residents' perception of the various existing spaces and landscape elements within the urban landscape. These studies should consider the views of the public that are important. The views should be integrated into planning and implementation, in order to enhance preservation and ensure that the memory aspect is maintained, and that the urban image and landscape identity are strengthened.

3. Analysis of the urban landscape: CGK should undertake a comprehensive appraisal of its natural and man-made features within its urban landscape to assess the character, influence, and contribution to the city's image and landscape identity formation and develop adequate management plans and policies for protecting the urban landscape identity and the associated memory aspect.

4. CGK and other global cities should focus on urban memory as an approach in urban design to present meaning, character, and identity and involve local residents in renewal processes as stakeholders, to ensure meaningful and sustainable cities in the wake of new developments, reconstructions, and urban renewal projects that impact on old order in spatial built forms.

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APPENDIX A: PHOTO-ELICITATION INTERVIEW (PEI) CHECKLIST

Participant information

Participant no……………….

1. Gender   Male   Female

2. Profession ………………………………………..

3. Period of residence in Kisumu City
    0-5 years   6-10 years   11-15 years   Above 15 years

Questions:

1. Which photos among these do you feel have *unique features* that contribute to the **historical development** of Kisumu City and are important to its image/character and as such contribute to its identity?

2. Which photos among these do you feel have features that hold ***collective memory*** (e.g. memory of a group, families, and city residents as a whole) and is important in the image/character of Kisumu City and contribute to its identity?

3. Which photos among these do you feel have features that hold ***individual memory*** for you and is important for you in the city?