

Chapter 6

Ethnography as a sustainable approach to cultural landscape studies: A case of Nupe community in central Nigeria

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Abstract: Cultural landscapes are referred to as the way people relate to their environment and the meaning as well as the values they derive from such transactions. Understanding cultural landscape transactions through the perspective of the native people requires a social science research method that captures people's cultural values about their landscape. One of such methodological approach is ethnography. Ethnography is associated with the immersion of the researcher in the field, and it draws on a family of methods which includes participant observations, listening, and interviews. These multiple methods of data collection that are subsumed in ethnography are complex, most especially when it is used in cultural landscape research. As such this study gives a detailed outline of how ethnography was employed in the study of a cultural landscape of Nupe ethnic group in central Nigeria. The chapter gives a written account of the experiences of the researcher which also had to take cognisance of the role of theory and philosophical paradigm in social science research. Furthermore, the chapter gives an account of the procedure followed in establishing the philosophical paradigm as well as how the reliability and validity of data elicited were ensured. Most importantly is the applicability of the ethnographic process in the study of other cultural landscapes.

Key words: Cultural landscape, Ethnography, Heritage, Cultural values, Sustainability

Introduction

The preservation of cultural landscape resources is necessary because its study is relevant in a lot of sectors such as rural development, nature conservation, and forestry. Cultural landscape study is also an essential element in the interpretation of sustainable development (Agnoletti, 2006). More recently, the United Nations General Assembly report also established and recognised the preservation of cultural and natural heritage, including biodiversity and landscapes

(United-Nations, 2016). The dynamics of the cultural landscape have been seen to trigger socio-economic development where the relationship between man and the environment has over a long period of time created cultural values (Tengberg et al., 2012; Türkyılmaz, 2016). However, the herculean task is the choice of an appropriate method in the study as well as an understanding of these values within the frame of the people who inhabit such landscapes. This is even more profound when cultural landscape values are to be interpreted to include both tangible and intangible values (del Barrio, Devesa, & Herrero, 2012; WHC, 1994). This arises from the confusion faced by a researcher who chooses ethnography as a technique for social enquiry (Mannay & Morgan, 2014). In response, this chapter focuses on creating a step by step process followed in the use of ethnography for the study of a cultural landscape.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the philosophical paradigm and the theoretical framework applied to the elicitation of information on cultural landscape values. As such the two main philosophical paradigms, Positivism and constructivism were discussed and how each of the paradigms is situated in the study. Furthermore, the grounded theory is also discussed as a frame that guided the explorative research as well as its appropriateness towards analysis of the data elicited through participant observation. In the researcher's eight-month data collection process, the study focused on the everyday lives of the indigenous people residing within the studied Nupe community.

Also, in this chapter I offer a reflection on the research, the documented immersion in the field towards the understanding of the meaning of landscape and values people associate with their landscape. As such, the analytical process towards the formulation of grounded theory as well as the processes through which the cultural landscape values' variables were determined is discussed. The chapter concludes with the steps taken towards ensuring reliability and validity of the methods used for data collection and analysis.

Situating Philosophical Paradigm for Cultural Landscape Studies

A philosophical paradigm is a theoretical framework and system employed to view events (Fellows & Liu, 2008). It elaborates and shows views and perspectives that are adopted in the determination of a phenomenon. Cultural landscape transactions are based on peoples' cultural activities (Berker, 2011) and one of the most suitable means of gathering the total experience and perception of people, is through an unstructured exploration (Blommaert & Jie, 2010). It is also to be noted that for a sociological phenomenon, a qualitative form of data also helps in the understanding of people's world view (Glaser & Strauss, 2009). More also is that human, unlike other objects of study are complex; they hold certain values and live in the world which has meaning and have actions that are intelligible and therefore only understood through empirical evidence

(Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2013). In the elicitation of empirical evidence about people-place relationship, there exists a clear distinction in the philosophical school of thought between positivism and constructivism. Each of the paradigms has its weaknesses and strengths. The strength of each method depends on the type of study and data that is to be elicited. As a result of this, the next section explains what guided the choice of philosophical paradigm for the study of cultural landscape of the Nupe community.

Positivism and Cultural Landscape Study

The positivists are inclined towards Cartesian duality of the existence of reality which stipulates that there are observable facts out there in the field that can be measured by an observer (Creswell, 2012). This thus showcases the positivists to be inclined towards quantitative data which makes the researcher completely detached from the investigation (Biklen, 2010). The positivists believe that social observations should be treated like the way physical scientist treat physical phenomena (Goldkuhl & Cronholm, 2010). However, to understand the cultural landscape values of a community, it is nearly impossible to affirm an absolute true situation, because culture differs and so do the landscapes (Gullino & Larcher, 2012). Suggesting that, there exists a little chance for the existence of the universal reality in cultural landscape transactions (Rapoport, 1969). Consequent upon this, the philosophical paradigm of positivism is unsuitable for the study of cultural landscape values. This is because the cultural landscape is inclined toward people's perception and cultural values which are not all tangibly represented. Suggesting that for a cultural landscape study, absolute reality does not exist in what people perceive and value.

Constructivism and Cultural Landscape Study

The constructivist paradigm posits that construct realities are bound and that, time and context are free from generalisation (Miles et al., 2013). It also advocates that truth and reality are attained through the perspectives of the participants. Similarly, cultural landscape transaction is associated with observations of phenomena which involve the understanding of where, when and how, transactions are conducted (Stephenson, 2010). It also requires the understanding of the sense in which such transactions are perceived by the people (Bergeron, Paquette, & Poullaouec-Gonidec, 2014). It is to be noted that the type of landscape and the culture of people affect how transactions of people are carried out. Thus, the uniqueness of each landscape and its culture means that there exists no absolute reality as far as the human relationship with the environment is concerned. It, therefore, becomes more plausible to be inclined to the constructivist philosophical paradigm in the study of cultural landscape values of communities.

However, the complexity associated with cultural landscapes' research has to contend with culture and human behaviour. Furthermore, the perception of people about their landscape requires a long stay with careful observations (Stephenson, 2010). As such, for phenomenological research on the cultural landscape values, ethnography becomes a suitable means for elicitation of information (O'Reilly, 2009).

The Study Community

Rural landscapes are largely historic products that need to be protected from rapid urbanisation (Agnoletti, 2014). More also is that opportunities are bound in Africa towards its contribution to humankind in the world of science, technology and culture. This is because Africa is considered as the cradle of humanity (United-Nations, 2002). This cradle of humanity, (Africa) is made up of several ethnic groups each with its uniqueness and cultural landscape transactions which have limited documentation especially the minority ethnic groups. For example, Nigeria has over 250 ethnic groups and one of such ethnic group is the Nupe which has been affirmed to have a rich cultural heritage (Nadel, 1937, 1942). As such this methodology (ethnography) was used to measure people and space interaction in a rural Nupe community of Doko, Nigeria. The choice of Doko community is based on its historical connection as one of the communities that constituted the nucleus of Nupe kingdom (Muhammad & Said, 2015). It is located 12 kilometres south-west of Bida in Niger State, Nigeria. The landscape of the community is surrounded by a hill that runs from the south down to the west as indicated in Figure 6.1.

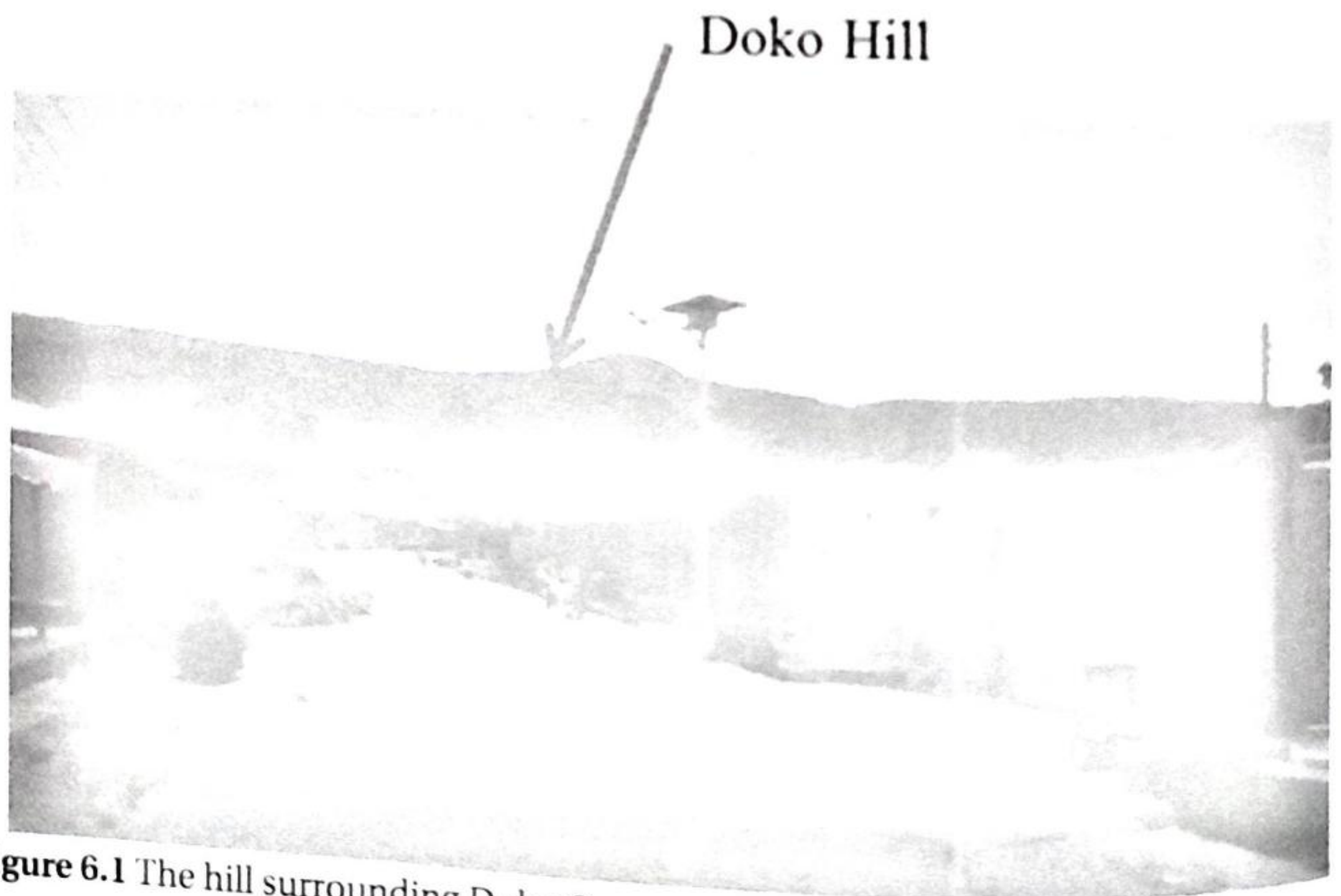


Figure 6.1 The hill surrounding Doko Community landscape

Soliciting Information through Ethnography

Ethnography is engendered in an in-depth study, which involves the interpretation of meaning in the local context of the participants. As such it is rooted in the first-hand exploration of research settings (Mannay & Morgan, 2014). Ethnography when used for the collection of data, requires the researcher to be immersed in the field to collect information about the study phenomena (Murchison, 2010). The ethnographer, therefore, collects data by interacting with respondents which usually take different forms such as conversations, interviews, and performance of ritual within the community. Ethnography allows emphasis to be placed more on understanding the meaning and the cultural practice of the people within the settings where they inhabit.

The ethnographic mode of eliciting information from the Nupe Community was saddled with the challenges of conducting it in either covert or overt form. This challenge of overt observation was based on the influence of the observer on what is being studied (Patton, 2005). Because there exists the possibility of the behaviour of those being studied to be staged with the resultant effect of affecting the data elicited (Oliver and Eales, 2008). On the other hand, covert observations would have resulted in ethical questions. This is because, it is also argued that, it is the right of those being studied to know that they are being studied (O'Reilly, 2009). This conflict cuts across all the facet of ethnographic field work right from the type of observation, evaluator's role to participants, and the portrayal of the purpose of the evaluation to the people being studied (Risjord, 2007). Consequently, the strategy employed in the field was to adopt a process that was most suitable, reliable and ethically viable. As such for the study of the cultural landscape of the studied community, the emphasis was laid on the fulfilment of ethical issues as well as ensuring that the data gathered were valid (Miles et al., 2013). Patton (1987), gave five dimensions through which empirical field work varies. They are the role of the evaluator, the portrayal of the evaluator role to others, the portrayal of the purpose of the evaluation to others, duration of the evaluation and the focus of the evaluation. In a similar manner, the dimension that was taken for the study of cultural landscape of the Nupe community is given in Figure 6.2.

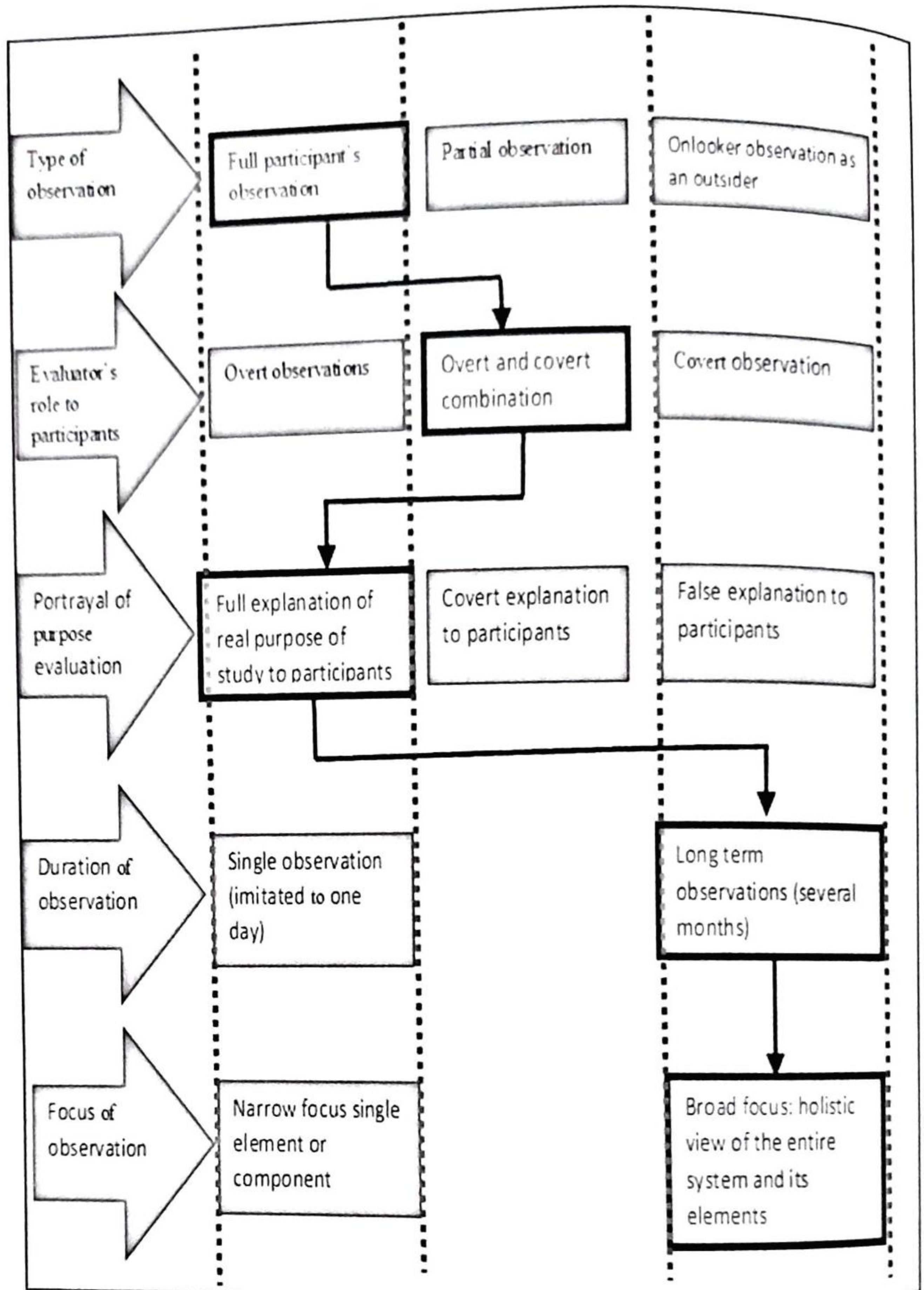


Figure 6.2 Dimension for the conduct of the fieldwork on the Nupe cultural landscape, adopted from (Patton, 1987)

The elicitation of data from the community required a choice between three types of observations which are either full participant's observation, partial observation or an onlooker observation. Markedly, rural communities are

characterised by the settings in which everyone is known due to their small population. As such the conduct of research which is ethnographic and which also involves a long time of stay makes it nearly impossible not to be noticed. It thus necessitated that the choice of type of observation needed to be a full observation. Therefore, the Village Head was informed of the study as well as its purpose. The approval of the Community Head allowed for some level of trust and rapport to be developed between the researcher and the community. Trust, especially in ethnographic research, is key for the gathering of information from participants (Charmaz, 2014).

Period of Stay for Holistic Understanding of Cultural Landscape

In anthropological tradition, participant observation requires a minimum of six months to be spent in the culture of those being observed (Patton, 2005). This is because the holistic view of people's culture takes a great deal of time and the social scientific objective is to generate theoretical propositions of how a culture functions. As such the duration for the elicitation of data on the cultural landscape took 8 months. This is to allow for most of the transaction of the community to be captured. This included farming activities such as the planting and harvest periods in the community. More also is that the long stay allowed for transactions of the community to be observed over the period of wet and dry seasons. The reason for this is that climatic condition most times have an influence on how people interact with their spaces. Additionally, in rural communities, especially in Nigeria, the activities of the wet seasons mostly do take place at the farm while that of the dry season are off the farm (Muhammad, 2017). Furthermore, in order to have a full understanding of the community transactions, aside from participant observation, interviews were conducted as part of the ethnographic process.

Determination of Geographic Boundaries in Cultural Landscapes

The scale of data to be elicited in cultural landscape study is an important factor that needs to be established right from the beginning. As such, the scale of observations for the studied community was established to be the domestic space as well as the geographic extent required by the natives towards the fulfilment of their daily needs (Appleton, 1975). The socio-cultural transaction of each community is established based on the family system and as such the determination of the family basic transactions gives the cue to the spatial transactions of the community. Thus, the ethnography study began with the understanding of the homestead, which is the domestic space.

Observation of the Domestic Space Transactions

Domestic spatial relationships are central to cultural landscape transaction more also is that it constitutes a great proportion of an individual's daily life (Ausserhofer et al., 2016). As such it became imperative to understand the socio-physical settings of the Nupe domestic space (Alitajer & Molavi Nojomi, 2016). Therefore, the determination of domestic space transactions of the community, a detailed sketch of some selected compounds was made. It involved the identification of tangible features that constitute each compound. This was necessary so as to determine the conceptualization of the traditional architecture of the Nupe people. More also is that it is expected just like many cultures, that the Nupes will have a unique characterisation of their vernacular architecture (Donovan & Gkartzios, 2014). Undoubtedly, the community's compound layout showcased a common character after 15 compounds were documented. The features found common in all the compounds visited are the *kata* (bedrooms), the *katagi* (kitchen), *nanche* (open kitchen) *katamba* (entrance hut), *zhempa* (courtyard), *yekun* (the local oven structure), *edo* (granary), *Kara* (fence), *shikpata* (toilets and bathrooms) and *ega* (animal pen). Some of these features observed are shown in Figure 6.3, 6.4 and 6.5 respectively.

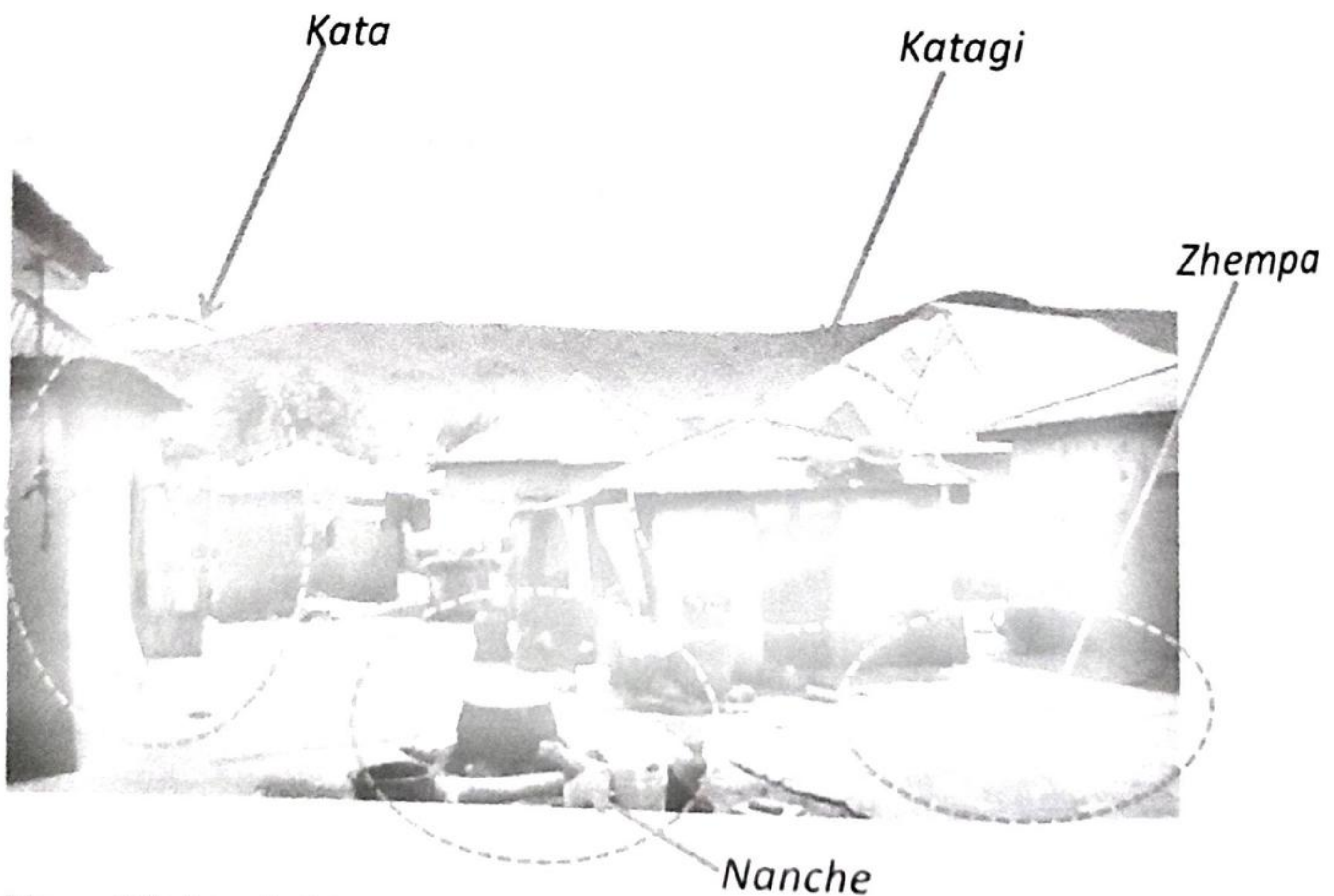


Figure 6.3 A typical Nupe compound showing the *kata* (bedroom), *katagi* (kitchen) *Nanche* (open kitchen) and *zhempa* (courtyard)



Figure 6.4 The katamba (entrance hut) found in most of the compounds



Figure 6.5 *Ega* (Animal pen) in different forms in most compounds

The people-place relationship is complex to measure due to the dynamics associated with what people do every day, especially in domestic spaces. The technique found most useful for the everyday behaviour of the built environment is the time budget concept (Muhammad & Said, 2015). Time budget concept entails the collection of what people do during a fixed period of time. Such type of observations is carried out either through diaries or through the conduct of interviews with the participant. However, for the cultural landscape transactions of the studied community, the administration of diaries to the participants was not possible due to the low level of literacy and thus

asking the participants to document their activities was difficult. As a result, the researcher decided to map the activities of family members in a chart. This involved the monitoring of activities base on sessions. Session 1 was held between 6 am and 3 pm, session 2 was held between 3 pm and 9 pm, and finally, the 3rd session lasted from 9 pm to 6 am. These seasons were based on preliminary observations made on the pattern of the community's transactions. A day was then set aside each for the selected families (n=15). Sessions 1 and 2 were logged in through direct observation while the 3rd session, which constituted the private time for night rest were mostly captured the following day through interviews. The interviews were conducted on the *emitso* (family heads) and *inna-emitso* (women's head). These interviews were made to capture the activities that took place during the private time of the Night. As such the inclusion of the interviews together with observations allowed for a 24-hour circle of activities of each of the families observed.

Furthermore, a follow-up random visits were made to the compounds to intersect the bias associated with human subjects, especially when they are aware that they are being observed (Patton, 2005). This strategy was taken to also ensure that each session was covered at least thrice in each of the 15 compounds chosen for the study. This was to validate the participant's observations (Blommaert & Jie, 2010). It was equally important that during the process of data collection photographs were taken. Photographs aside from its presentations of empirical truth, they were referred to later in order to give a clearer understanding of the activity log. Besides, photographs do offer experiences in which linguistic terms cannot completely interpret or explain (Seamon, 2014).

Similarly, during the conduct of observations, in the spatial transaction of families, there existed periods in which the activities were broken. Such periods included long hours of rainfall during the day and night. This natural phenomenon forced activities that usually take place outside to be suspended and refuge sought in covered spaces such as rooms, entrance huts, and kitchens. These periods of activity transactions were excluded because they did not constitute the normal routine of the families. Obviously, it is expected that people-place daily transactions are likely to be broken by occasional external forces (Seamon, 2015). As such in the study of people-place relationship what needs to be understood are the routine transactions that occur without any external interference. Summarily, the observation within the domestic space was directed by a set of ethnographic observation guide as illustrated in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1 Observation guide on the Domestic space transactions

1	How are the buildings and compounds laid out?
2	What are the physical features that constitute a typical compound?
3	What are the distances between major activities within the compound?
4	What are the meeting places?
5	How are the compounds kept clean?
6	What is the source of water?
7	How do they source for their cooking fuel?
8	Where do the female family members spend most of their time?
9	Where do the male family members spend most of their time?
10	Which part of the compound do children spend most of their time?
11	Where do most men receive their guests?
12	Where do most females receive their guests?
13	Where do men eat their food?
14	Where do women eat their food?
15	Where do the family members have their meetings?
16	How are spaces defined for males and females within the family?
17	How is security constituted within the compound?

The outline of domestic space transactions, schedule as shown in Table 6.1 is to ensure that, the data elicited across the various families observed are the same. This was done so that a pattern could be established as the cultural, spatial transactions of Nupe families within their domestic spaces.

Observations of the Community's Transactions

Cultural landscape study deals with various forms of transactions. It, therefore requires that data elicitation is carried out systematically to save time and also to ensure that relevant data about the phenomenon is captured (O'Reilly, 2009). Although the study on the cultural landscape of the Nupe community was explorative, it was important that the research was carried out within a given frame of reference (Forsey, 2010). Correspondingly, the "Habitat Theory" was used as a frame of reference for the study due to its universal applicability in the study of cultural landscapes. The habitat theory asserts that people interact with their environment towards the attainment of their biological needs. It further posits that settlements exist only in a landscape that provides

water, food, security, defence and place for economic activities. Correspondingly the researcher ensured that aside from other findings that emerged, observations were also made to see how defence, security, water, food, and shelter were constituted within the studied community.

Furthermore, the plethora of data collected required categorisation for ease and also accurate elicitation of information (Creswell, 2012). Consequently, Nassauer's (1995) three distinctive classification of cultural landscape was employed. They are "Form", "Practice" and "Relationship". The data elicited under "Form" are the spatial and physical structure of both natural and man-made, while data on "Practice" is the transactions of the people between themselves and the landscape while "Relationship" includes those transactions that are intangible. The sum of these classes of data is represented in Figure 6.6.

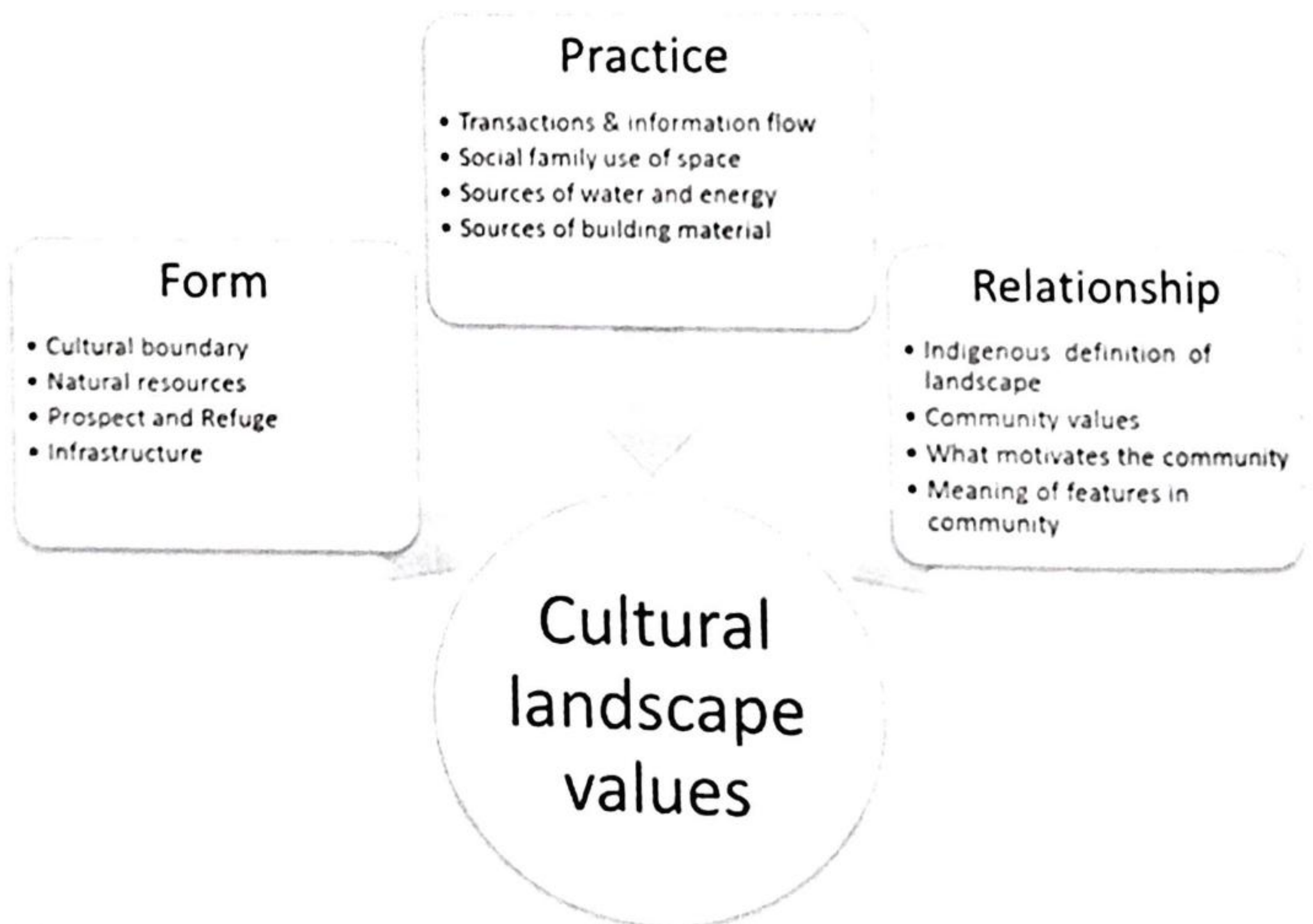


Figure 6.6 The three Key variables of cultural landscape values

It is to be noted that the constituents of the "relationship" category are mainly made up of meanings and values of the community. As such this category is difficult to measure through observations. It thus became necessary to use interviews as a suitable tool for understanding the intangible values of the Nupe community.

The Interview Approach for determination of Intangible Values

One of the important sources of information on participant observation is the interview (Forsey, 2010). The interview serves as a means for learning about things that cannot directly be observed such as feeling, thoughts and what goes on in the natural world of those being studied. However, three types of interview approaches are available for the elicitation of information. They are the general interview guide approach, the conversational interview, the standardised open-ended interview. The general interview guide approach consists of questions carefully worded which mean that each respondent is taken through the same sequence of questions (Creswell, 2012). Its limitation lies in its confinement to an outline of predetermined questions which will result in information being gathered under limited subjects. Moreover, phenomenological studies require information to be gathered naturally from the participants (Seamon, 2015). As such the use of conversational interview became more suitable especially during the early part of the field work when the rapport between the researcher and the community was being established. More also is that the choice of conversational interview allowed for flexibility on questions asked by the researcher towards the understanding of the community's culture and values. Similarly, conversations with participants afforded the researcher an in-depth understanding as well as the subjective meaning the participants ascribe to their landscape (Mannay & Morgan, 2014).

In addition, the adoption of conversational interview suited all categories of respondents, which included children, and the adults (Forsey, 2010). The advantage of this is that the researcher was able to interview the indigenous people through their own terminologies, perceptions, and experiences. Furthermore, the data elicited was such that it was gathered in the natural state of the people and as such, it reduced the complexities in the understanding of people's socio-cultural transactions. Buttressing this is Shopes (2011) in which she stated that good information from the field means the ability for the respondent to give freely the necessary information without the feeling of holding back some information. It is important that in the conduct of interviews in cultural landscapes, key informants need to be identified in order to get adequate information about their community. In the case of Nupe community, the compound heads are the custodians of the cultural heritage of the community. Therefore, the compound heads became the key informants in each of the compounds visited. The interviews were all in the evenings after their day's work at the farm. It is important that appropriate time is strategically used so as to get adequate information from the respondents.

It is worth mentioning that aside from the compound heads, interviews were also conducted on the women, children, and people whose transactions were

seen to be different from the general practice of the community which is mainly farming. The examples of these categories are the *gozan* (traditional barber), and the *egba* (the local builder). This was to ensure that most of the transactions of the community were adequately captured. In addition, an audio recorder was used to record interview responses. The choice of an audio recorder over a video recorder was because it was less intrusive and allows the respondents to adjust quickly as the interview progressed (Mehl, Gosling, & Pennebaker, 2006).

Ethnographic Data Analysis

Ethnographic experience in the cultural landscape of community is the culmination of diverse sources of data which included participant's observations, taking of photographs, interviews and field notes. Field notes were taken in the form of sketches and jottings of the researcher on what was observed (O'Reilly, 2009). However, the first aspect of the data analysis for all the various forms of qualitative information was to employ open coding, then followed by sorting (Miles et al., 2013). Employing this sequence of analysis of open coding and sorting was carried out towards answering of questions such as when, where, why, who and how transactions are made (Charmaz, 2014).

As such for this study, the whole data collected were defragmented into a pool. Even though, as earlier mentioned information about the cultural landscape transactions of the Nupe community was collected under three categories of "Form", "Practice" and "Relationship". However, these categories were used as a framework for the elicitation of data and thus the grouping did not emerge from analysis of cultural landscape data. Therefore, there was the need for the generation of an indigenous typology based on the settings under study (Miles *et al.*, 2013). As such, to generate an indigenous typology, all information gathered under the three categories was merged as illustrated in Figure 6.7 for content analysis. Thereafter, computer software QSR Nvivo 10 was used because of its capabilities in content analysis and organisation of documents, such as audio, video, pictures, and memos.

The information from pictures, field notes, sketches, and interviews was aggregated together to create codes. These codes were then thematically analysed and label given to describe each category of the theme (Figueroa, 2008). The thematic analysis output emerged with five categories of themes which are "Profession", "Architecture", "Family structure", "Landscape" and "Values" as illustrated in Figure 6.8.

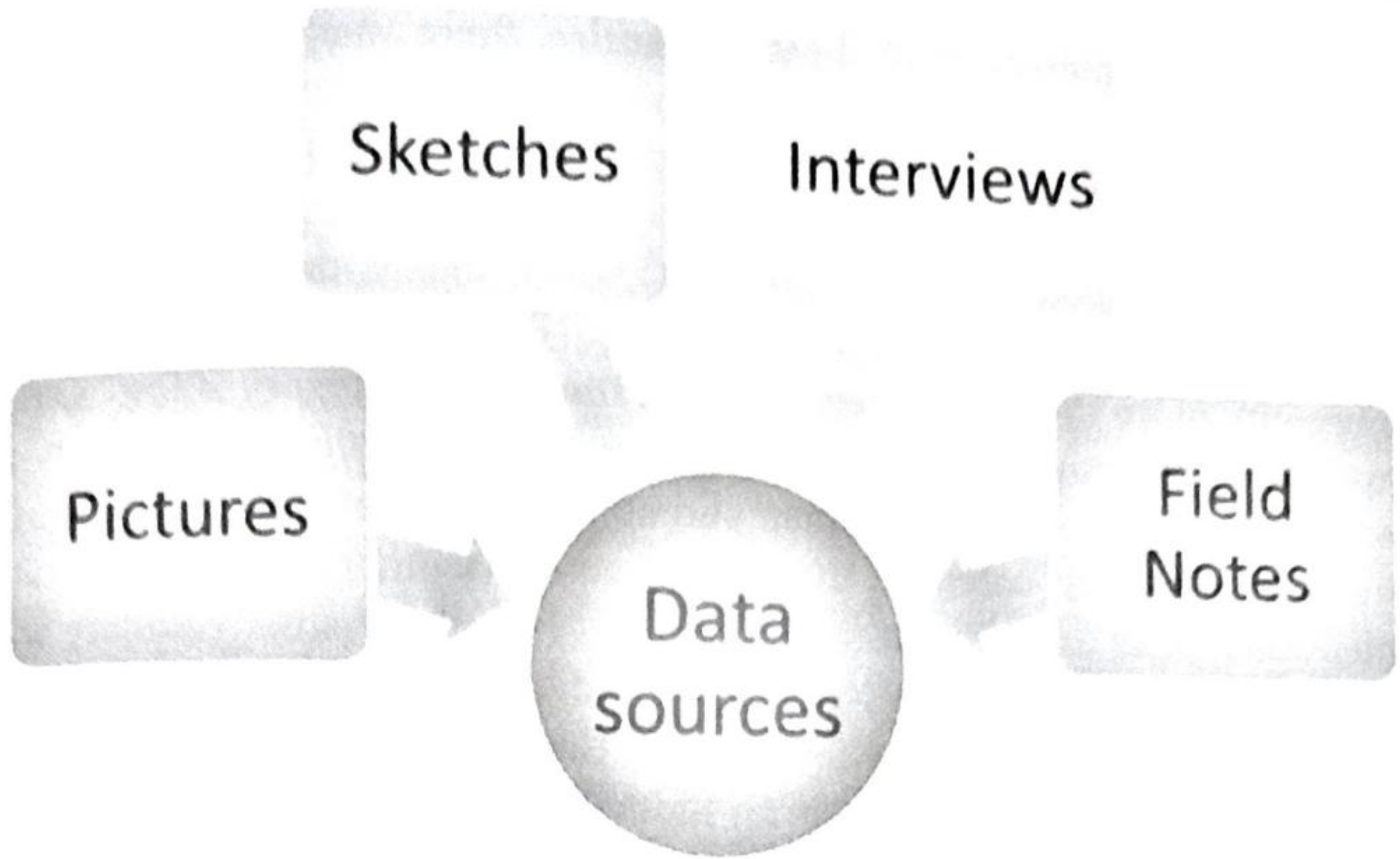


Figure 6.7 Multiple sources of ethnographic data (Muhammad 2015)

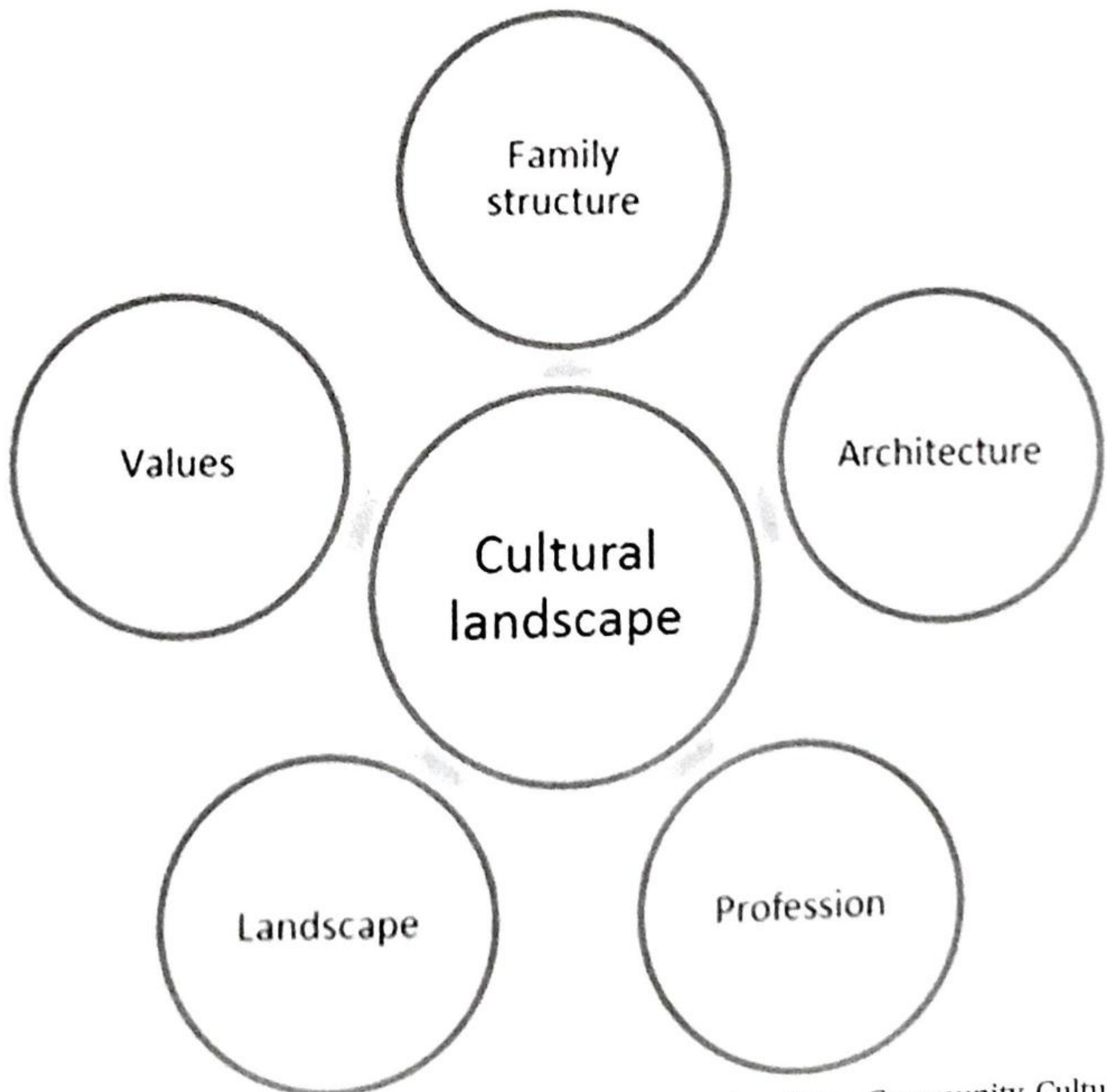


Figure 6.8 The Emergent Five Categories of Themes for Nupe Community Cultural Landscape (Muhammad 2015)

Thereupon the emergence of these categories, there was also the need to determine the most important category amongst the typologies of categories towards the formulation of grounded theory (Miles *et al.*, 2013). To restate, the first category is the "Family structure" which is the basic structure of communities; this was followed by "Architecture" which means the immediate domestic space of both built and unbuilt forms. "People and profession" of the community make the third category, while the fourth category is the "Landscape of the community". The landscape was operationalized to mean both the natural and man-made features and spaces of the common communal transaction. The fifth category, the "Value" category emerged to have multi-dimensional links to all the other categories. Thus, the "Value" category was found suitable for the generation of a grounded theory of the community (Charmaz, Clarke, Friese, & Washburn, 2015; Glaser, Strauss, & Strutzel, 1968). The foregoing analysis showcased an inductive grounding of data and also abstractions from the cultural landscape of the community. More also is that the strength of ethnography lies in allowing the unexpected and also an unpredictable outcome of research. This thus makes it devoid of techniques that insist on control of outcomes (Mannay & Morgan, 2014).

Reliability and Validity of Ethnographic Data

Reliability and Validity of data for ethnographic data (qualitative data) are difficult especially when it has to do with the establishment of a uniform standard of measurement to be applied everywhere (Seamon & Sowers, 2008). However, reliability can be obtained through intersubjective corroboration. As such for this study, the researcher within the limits of knowledge imbibed the principles of reporting the phenomenon with vividness, such that the reader is drawn to the text in the form of reality and honesty (Forsey, 2010). Accuracy was attained through maximisation of believability of the reader and also a comparison with other similar or contrasting scenarios. The ultimate aim was towards drawing the reader from their usual recognition towards a new path of understanding (Seamon, 2009).

Furthermore, the reliability of the data was certified by the use of multiple methods in data gathering on the cultural landscape values of the study community. To rephrase, this included interviews and participants observations. Direct participation provided a meaningful context of what took place and what people actually did empirically and therefore gave the data more credence. More also is that participants observation followed by interviewing reinforced the quality of data gathered (Miles *et al.*, 2013). In addition, reporting on rival explanations lends credibility to the final sets of findings reported by the evaluator. Hence, negative cases were sought within the community and in some instances corroborations or counters, found during the course of

the discussion. Similarly, extrapolations were also made to give a multiple interest and possibilities of the same scenario within the studied community and also on other studies carried out elsewhere. Doing this was to allow the researcher a broad-based view of all phenomena studied. Finally, the sequence of a good phenomenological study as outlined by Seamon and Sowers (2008) was followed. This involved the identifications of phenomena, descriptive account of the phenomena, and the study of the respondent towards understanding the underlying commonalities and pattern.

Additionally, the generation of grounded theory is towards the fulfilment of four criteria which are fit, work, relevance and modifiability (Creswell, 2012). As such, for fitness, it was ensured that there were no contradictions of what were uttered, especially in the interviews and the realities on the ground. While in workability of data, it was ensured that variations found in the field were explained. Such explanations were also made within the context of the cultural landscape values of the studied community. Finally, the theory formulated was made amendable to new information. Consequent upon these all the four criteria of grounded theory were fulfilled.

Conclusion

Sustainable development, advocates for the incorporation of people's values in developments. However, people's values are constituted in both tangible and intangible forms. It thus becomes imperative to have a systematic way of understanding such values. People's values are constituted in their cultural landscapes which serve as an everyday environment. The study showcased the extensive step by step process involved in the elicitation of cultural landscape values of communities. These, amongst others, included the formation of rapport with the study community, the use of multi-method approach in the elicitation of data about the indigenous people upon which the bedrock of the information was ethnographic. The ethnographic process allowed for data to be gathered and understood through the perspective of the indigenous people. Most importantly is that rural landscapes are largely historic products that need to be understood and protected from global acculturation towards documentation and preservation of the uniqueness of each cultural landscape. Consequently, ethnography as a methodological approach needs to be sustained as a sustainable means in the study of cultural landscapes in order to meet up with United Nations advocacy in the preservation of global cultural heritages.

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