

Architectural trends in Kenyan universities

University Of Nairobi

College of Architecture and Engineering

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BAR 613: Research Thesis (2015/2016)

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B02/0293/2009

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Declaration.

This thesis to the best of my knowledge, has not been previously been presented for the award of a degree in any university or institution. It is hereby presented as part of the examinations requirements for the award of the degree of Bachelor of Architecture by the University of Nairobi in the 2015/2016 academic year.

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Acknowledgements.

I am greatly indebted and express my deepest gratitude to all those who have contributed so towards the completion of this work.

I would like to begin by thanking God almighty without whom I am not.

Prof. Anyamba, my tutor; for your tireless efforts in guiding me through my academic endeavours your insights have been pivotal on the foundation of this research. I gratefully express my appreciation for your constant and invaluable input through my academic endeavours.

To all lecturers, Department of Architecture and building science whose insightful contributions and guidance have enabled me carry out this research successfully I say thank you. Your advice in matters architecture and beyond during my six years in ADD is utterly gratifying.

I would also like to recognize all my classmates for all the love and friendship. You have been a great source of inspiration and your encouragement. I will forever cherish the memories we shared, the best and tough times spend together in ADD. May God bless you always.

To arch Fredrick Mae of lexicon +ion architects for the kindness offered when I visited your offices, Mr. Anthony Kiuna the Research Administrator at Strathmore University for your patience and understanding and Mr. Tracisio M. Thuita the Estates Manager at Kenyatta University, I am entirely great full to you. Without your aid, this research would not be possible.

And finally my family for all the sacrifices you made to ensure my comfort while at school and your constant words of encouragement that have infused me with confidence to be who I am today, thank you.

Dedication.

This thesis is dedicated to Mr. Peter Ouma Obwogo my high school principal at St Joseph's High School, Kitale. Your early inspiration, coaching and enthusiasm moulded me to the man I am today.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

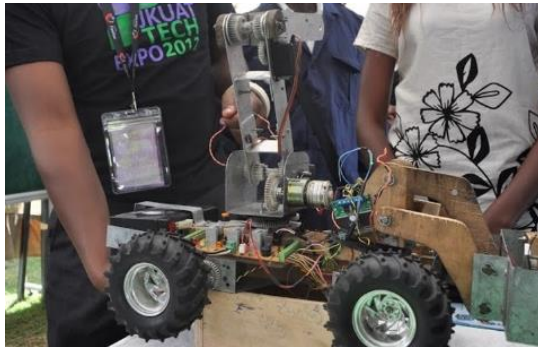


Figure 1-1 image showing a model by JKUAT Engineering students.

Source: Retrieved on 15/9/2015 from <http://www.jkuat.ac.ke/departments/engineering>.



Figure 1-2 image showing taifa laptop by JKUAT

Source: Retrieved on 15/9/2015 from <http://www.jkuat.ac.ke/departments/it/taifa-a3-laptop/>

1.1 Introduction

The university has a deep-rooted prestige as a place of teaching, learning, and nurturing and yet it is also a place of cutting-edge science, of youth, vibrancy, and energy. 'It is this dual nature, this concurrent adherence to tradition and innovation, which renders the physical environment of the university such a redolent, enduring, and dynamic realm' (Coulson et.al 2015). However, it also means that the contemporary university is a highly challenging and exacting landscape to design and manage successfully. As city in miniature, it must continually respond to external political and fiscal pressures, whilst simultaneously adapting to changing pedagogies and technology (Roberts, 2014). Higher education institutions the world over are facing this and new challenges which have necessitated reforms in their management and governance styles. The rise of new stakeholders, internal factors, together with globalization and the rapid pace at which new knowledge is created and utilized are among the recent developments which challenge higher education institutions. While in the past they have responded rather slowly to changing circumstances, there is now an urgent need for them to adjust rapidly in order to fulfil their missions and the needs of other stakeholders (Jowi, 2003).

Kenyan universities are not immune to these changes and being accountable to the public they need to guarantee that they offer quality teaching research and community service to its students. They have therefore evolved to reflect the needs of communities. Many of these changes are encouraged, supported or enforced through funding and measurement systems established by the government.

1.2 Background of the Study

Education in Kenya has significantly grown since pre-colonial times. Before the coming of the Europeans, societies in Kenya had traditional systems of education whose objective was to train individuals to fit into their societies as useful members. It provided skills and knowledge, and was a socializing agent that transmitted cultural values from one generation to another. In the 19th century, Christian missionaries introduced formal education when the first mission school was established in 1846 at Rabai, near Mombasa. Little progress was made to establish formal schools in-land until the colonial administration took over control of African education and established several education institutions. And years after independence the Government has invested heavily in all sectors of education (Eshiwani, 1993)

The government has since exponentially expanded education and consolidated past achievements in primary, secondary and university education. University education has significantly grown from 1952 when the colonial government established the Royal Technical College as an affiliate of Makerere College (Nwaura, 1996). The Royal Technical College was gradually upgraded over the years to the current University of Nairobi. This growth in university education 23 public and 18 private universities. Student admission has also risen steadily over the years from to 18,883 students in 1987 to 443,783 in 2014 (KNBS 2015).

University education in Kenya has experienced several changes over the years; as a result of financial stringency, combined with demands for expansion of enrolments and improved efficiency, Kenyan universities have been forced to reduce expenditure, seek new sources of funding and improve the utilization of existing resources (Nick Clark 2015). This has necessitated changes in the mechanisms, techniques and styles of institutional management. At the same time, higher education has had to cope with increased diversification and new types of students, including adult learners, so as to meet the changing needs of the labour market and foster closer links with industry as well as widen participation through the introduction of distance learning.

1.3 Problem Statement

The rise of new stakeholders, internal factors, together with globalization and the rapid pace at which new knowledge is created and utilized are among the recent developments which challenge universities. While they have responded rather slowly in the past, to changing circumstances, there is now an urgent need for them to adjust rapidly in order to fulfil their missions and the needs of other stakeholders. There is therefore need to understand this changes that are taking place in and what impact they are having on the design and planning of Kenyan universities.

1.4 Research Objectives

1. To understand the historical development of universities in Kenya.
2. To determine the factors of change in Kenyan universities.
3. To investigate what impact this changes have had on the architectural environment of Kenyan universities.
4. To determine the best way for universities to implement the changes they are undergoing.

1.5 Research Questions

1. What is the historical development of universities in Kenya?
2. What are the factors of change in Kenyan universities?
3. What impact have this changes had on the physical environment in universities?
4. What is the best way for universities to implement the changes they are undergoing?

1.6 Research Justification

Previous research investigates contemporary learning environments as educational policies, management or organizational structures. (Richard Feildein-2013). Through this research the author hopes to establish the character of contemporary learning and the transformation that have taken place in university education and analyse how this impacts on their built environment.

1.7 Scope and Limitations

The research will focus on analysis university development projects and determine what impact contemporary learning and issues affecting the universities has had on their built environment. Physical investigation will involve all facilities in the selected universities to understand what transformation they have undergone over time.

1.8 Significance of Study

The purpose of this research is to offer a descriptive view of the places, characteristics and built forms that make up contemporary learning environments to further guide university administrations and architects in designing dynamic optimum contemporary learning environments.

1.9 Chapter Breakdown

Chapter 1: Introduction.

It highlights the preamble, problem statement, research questions, objectives of the study, justification and relevance of the study, the scope and limitations and also the methodology that were used to undertake the investigation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review.

This chapter focuses on the historical development of universities globally and in Kenya, factors affecting Kenyan universities over time and how this factors have influenced their planning and design.

Chapter 3: Research Methods.

This chapter highlights the methodology that was used; the research purpose, research design, sampling design, the tools that were used, data collection methods and analysis.

Chapter 4: Case study analysis.

This chapter includes the fieldwork of the study where two cases are examined. These include; Kenyatta and Strathmore Universities.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.

This chapter highlights the relevant conclusions and recommendations of the findings that were carried out during the study.