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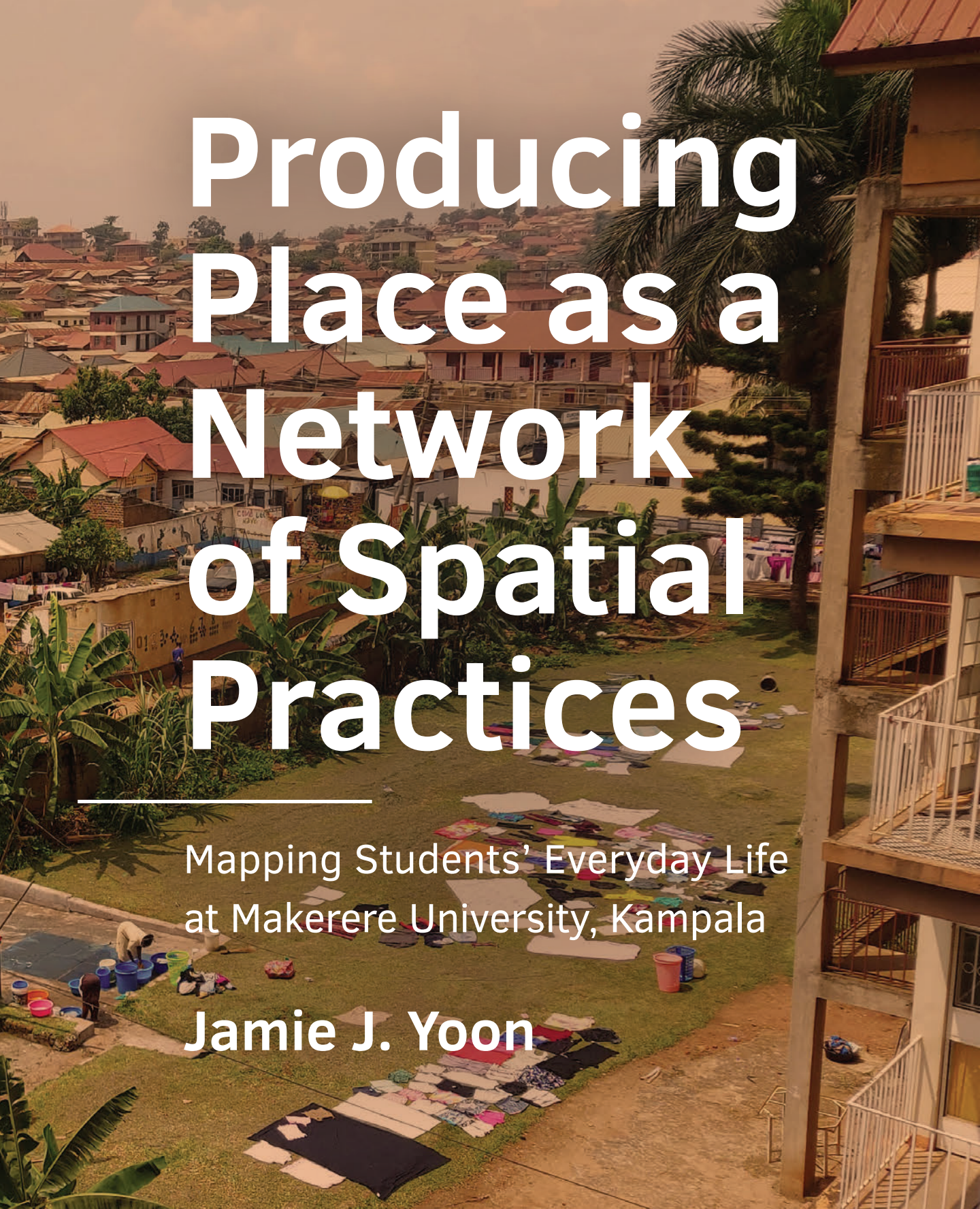
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Producing Place as a Network of Spatial Practices

Mapping Students' Everyday Life at Makerere University, Kampala

Jamie J. Yoon

Producing Place as a Network of Spatial Practices

Mapping Students' Everyday Life at Makerere University, Kampala

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Producing Place as a Network of Spatial Practices

Mapping Students' Everyday Life at Makerere University, Kampala

Dissertation

for the purpose of obtaining the degree of doctor
at Delft University of Technology
by the authority of the Rector Magnificus,
Prof.dr.ir. H. Bijl,
chair of the Board for Doctorates
to be defended publicly on
Monday, 22 June 2026 at 17:30

by

Jungmin YOON

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Summary

This dissertation examines how places are produced through students' everyday spatial practices at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. Makerere University represents a unique empirical context that requires novel approaches beyond Western-centric or structuralist frameworks that overlook the complexities arising from colonial-postcolonial history and the coexistence of formal and informal urban development. Accordingly, this research shifts the focus from institutional space to the relational production of place through students' everyday practices. This study aims for theoretical rather than empirical generalization. The research develops portable conceptual tools, such as a space ontology and practice-based research methodologies, which other researchers can adapt to examine spatial practices in diverse contexts.

Adopting a theoretically driven case study approach, 1) empirically, this study generates in-depth knowledge intended to inform more inclusive and context-sensitive design in rapidly urbanizing African cities and 2) theoretically, it seeks to strengthen the methodological foundations for design research. Rather than imposing external theoretical frameworks onto the findings, this study utilized "campushood"—a conceptual lens encompassing both students and the campus environment—as its primary analytical tool. This approach facilitated a holistic thick description of the phenomena under study. This descriptive approach provides designers with a rich and contextually grounded understanding of the site.

This study proposes a space ontology that understands place as a network of spatial practices. Drawing on Theodore Schatzki's (2016) flat ontology and Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) theory of spatial practices, the study proposes a new epistemic foundation for understanding place production. Methodologically, the study integrates the people–place–practice framework with design thinking and worldview approaches to foster contextual understanding and constructive dialogue across disciplinary and cultural perspectives. The study further adopts Harold Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodology to examine the tacit knowledge through which students navigate and make sense of their environments.

The empirical findings reveal three key dimensions of student-led place production. First, students are active agents who produce place through everyday practices, not mere consumers of urban space. Second, their spatial practices are rooted in communal values, displaying fluid boundaries between private and public space across diverse housing types (halls of residence, hostels, rentals), distinguishing them from Western individualistic approaches. Third, the study identifies the emergence of campushood—a unique urban ecosystem that connects students and their lifeworlds across temporal and spatial dimensions—challenging existing discourses on "studentification." Ultimately, the study seeks to contribute to spatial justice by foregrounding students' voices and spatial practices.

Theoretical Key Concepts

Campushood. Campushood is proposed as an alternative concept to capture the studentification phenomenon. This captures both the spatial (neighborhood) and temporal (studenthood) dimensions of urban life, avoiding the characterization of students as problems or gentrifiers and instead promoting a more inclusive approach.

Urban (Ab)normalist Framework. The urban (ab)normalist framework is introduced to advance practice-based methodology. Within this framework, urban normalists identify deviations from expected patterns as problems requiring solutions, whereas urban abnormalists regard the lifeworld as inherently resistant to normalization. The urban abnormalist perspective rejects the notion of a single 'normal' baseline for urban life. Consequently, research focuses on understanding everyday situated practices rather than framing urban life primarily through problem–solution logics. This approach establishes a philosophical foundation for design research and practice-oriented research that necessitates contextual understanding.

Space Ontology. A space ontology is proposed that conceptualizes places as networks of spatial practices, drawing on Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) spatial practices framework and Schatzki's (2016) flat ontology. De Certeau demonstrates how urban spaces arise from the interplay between planners' intentions (strategies) and inhabitants' everyday appropriations (tactics). Schatzki (2016) offers a non-hierarchical perspective for understanding how practices and material arrangements mutually constitute each other within a single relational plane. Together, these perspectives establish a new epistemic foundation for understanding places as both constitutive of and constituted by networks of spatial practices.

Spatial Capital. Spatial capital is introduced as a concept for architectural intervention aimed at mitigating social inequality. It is argued that architects and urban designers should understand students' dwelling practices as situated modes of living and design in ways that recognize and support students' spatial capital accordingly to contribute to social and spatial justice.

Methodological Key Concept

Dispositionality. Dispositionality is conceptualized as a form of reflexivity that arises from inhabiting in-between positions across multiple worlds. Whereas positionality refers to a static location, dispositionality emphasizes movement between standpoints and orients the researcher toward theory-building through this movement, enacting reflexivity as a dynamic process. Resonating with Bhabha's (1994) concept of hybridity, dispositionality similarly foregrounds the productive tensions inherent in navigating multiple, often contradictory, epistemic positions, and renders this navigation itself a methodological practice.

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Samenvatting

Dit proefschrift onderzoekt hoe plaatsen worden geproduceerd door de alledaagse ruimtelijke praktijken van studenten aan de Makerere Universiteit in Kampala, Oeganda. De Makerere Universiteit vormt een unieke empirische context die nieuwe benaderingen vereist die verder gaan dan westerse of structuralistische kaders, welke de complexiteiten van de koloniale en postkoloniale geschiedenis en het naast elkaar bestaan van formele en informele stedelijke ontwikkeling over het hoofd zien. Dienovereenkomstig verschuift dit onderzoek de focus van institutionele ruimte naar de relationele productie van plaatsen door de alledaagse praktijken van studenten. Deze studie streeft naar theoretische in plaats van empirische generalisatie. Het onderzoek ontwikkelt overdraagbare conceptuele instrumenten, zoals een ruimte-ontologie en praktijkgerichte onderzoeksmethodologieën, die andere onderzoekers kunnen aanpassen om ruimtelijke praktijken in uiteenlopende contexten te onderzoeken.

Door een theoretisch gedreven gevalsstudieaanpak te hanteren, 1) genereert deze studie empirisch diepgaande kennis die bedoeld is om een meer inclusief en contextueel gevoelig ontwerp in snel verstedelijkende Afrikaanse steden te informeren, en 2) versterkt zij theoretisch de methodologische grondslagen voor ontwerponderzoek. In plaats van externe theoretische kaders op de bevindingen op te leggen, maakte deze studie gebruik van "campushood"—een conceptuele lens die zowel studenten als de campusomgeving omvat—als primair analytisch instrument. Deze aanpak faciliteerde een holistische, rijke beschrijving van de bestudeerde verschijnselen. Deze beschrijvende benadering biedt ontwerpers een rijk en contextueel gefundeerd begrip van de locatie.

Deze studie een ruimte-ontologie voor die plaats begrijpt als een netwerk van ruimtelijke praktijken. Gebaseerd op Theodore Schatzki's (2016) vlakke ontologie en Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) theorie van ruimtelijke praktijken, stelt de studie een nieuwe epistemische basis voor voor het begrijpen van plaatsproductie. Methodologisch integreert de studie het mensen-plaats-praktijk-kader met design thinking en wereldbeeldbenaderingen om contextueel begrip en constructieve dialoog over disciplinaire en culturele perspectieven te bevorderen. De studie past verder Harold Garfinkel's (1967) etnomethodologie toe om de impliciete kennis te onderzoeken waarmee studenten hun omgeving navigeren en begrijpen.

De empirische bevindingen onthullen drie sleuteldimensies van studentgeleide plaatsproductie. Ten eerste zijn studenten actieve actoren die plaatsen produceren door alledaagse praktijken, en niet louter consumenten van stedelijke ruimte. Ten tweede zijn hun ruimtelijke praktijken geworteld in de communale waarden, waarbij vloeiende grenzen zichtbaar zijn tussen privé- en openbare ruimte in diverse woonvormen (studentenwoningen, hostels, huurwoningen), wat hen onderscheidt van westerse individualistische benaderingen. Ten derde identificeert de studie het ontstaan van campushood—een uniek stedelijk ecosysteem dat studenten en hun leefwerelden verbindt over temporele en ruimtelijke dimensies heen—waarmee bestaande discoursen over "studentificatie" worden uitgedaagd. Uiteindelijk beoogt de studie bij te dragen aan ruimtelijke rechtvaardigheid door de stemmen en ruimtelijke praktijken van studenten op de voorgrond te plaatsen.

Theoretische Sleutelconcepten

Campushood. Campushood wordt voorgesteld als een alternatief concept om het studentificatiefenomeen te vatten. Dit omvat zowel de ruimtelijke (buurt) als de temporele (studentschap) dimensies van het stedelijk leven, waarbij de karakterisering van studenten als problemen of gentrifiers wordt vermeden en in plaats daarvan een meer inclusieve benadering wordt bevorderd.

Stedelijk (Ab)normalisme-kader. Het stedelijk (ab)normalisme-kader wordt geïntroduceerd om de praktijkgerichte methodologie te versterken. Binnen dit kader identificeren stedelijke normalisten afwijkingen van verwachte patronen als problemen die oplossingen vereisen, terwijl stedelijke abnormalisten de leefwereld beschouwen als inherent weerbarstig tegen normalisering. Het stedelijk abnormalistisch perspectief verwerpt het idee van één enkele 'normale' basis voor het stedelijk leven. Bijgevolg richt het onderzoek zich op het begrijpen van alledaagse gesitueerde praktijken in plaats van het stedelijk leven primair te kaderen door middel van probleem-oplossingslogica's. Deze benadering legt een filosofische basis voor ontwerponderzoek en praktijkgericht onderzoek dat contextueel begrip vereist.

Ruimte-ontologie. Er wordt een ruimte-ontologie voorgesteld die plaatsen conceptualiseert als netwerken van ruimtelijke praktijken, gebaseerd op Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) kader van ruimtelijke praktijken en Schatzki's (2016) vlakke ontologie. De Certeau toont aan hoe stedelijke ruimten ontstaan uit het samenspel tussen de intenties van planners (strategieën) en de alledaagse toe-eigeningen van bewoners (tactieken). Schatzki (2016) biedt een niet-hiërarchisch perspectief voor het begrijpen van hoe praktijken en materiële arrangementen elkaar wederzijds constitueren binnen één enkel relationeel vlak. Samen leggen deze perspectieven een nieuwe epistemische basis voor het begrijpen van plaatsen als zowel constitutief voor als geconstitueerd door netwerken van ruimtelijke praktijken.

Ruimtelijk Kapitaal. Ruimtelijk kapitaal wordt geïntroduceerd als een concept voor architectonische interventie gericht op het verminderen van sociale ongelijkheid. Er wordt betoogd dat architecten en stedenbouwkundigen de woningpraktijken van studenten moeten begrijpen als gesitueerde woonwijzen en moeten ontwerpen op manieren die het ruimtelijk kapitaal van studenten erkennen en ondersteunen, om zo bij te dragen aan sociale en ruimtelijke rechtvaardigheid.

Methodologisch sleutelconcept

Dispositionaliteit. Dispositionaliteit wordt geconceptualiseerd als een vorm van reflexiviteit die ontstaat uit het bewonen van tussenposities over meerdere werelden. Terwijl positionaliteit verwijst naar een statische locatie, benadrukt dispositionaliteit de beweging tussen standpunten en oriënteert het de onderzoeker op theorievorming door middel van deze beweging, waarbij reflexiviteit als een dynamisch proces wordt uitgevoerd. In resonantie met Bhabha's (1994) concept van hybriditeit, belicht dispositionaliteit evenzo de productieve spanningen die inherent zijn aan het navigeren van meerdere, vaak tegenstrijdige, epistemische posities, en maakt deze navigatie zelf een methodologische praktijk.

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1 Introduction

Research Background

The most well-known African philosophy might be *Ubuntu*. Bantu cultures, which cover the broad range of sub-Saharan Africa, including Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, are grounded in the Ubuntu, "I am because we are." It shows the traditional value system of the sense of belonging, that individuals are collective in African philosophy. Ubuntu is also translated into "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu," meaning "a person is a person through persons." It reveals its relational and interdependent belief system and the spirit of community. The philosophy of Ubuntu represents the nature of the everyday lives of Bantu people as a collective being (Higgs, 2012).

A similar approach to viewing people as a collective being emerged in the United States in the early 20th century. Louis Wirth, a leading scholar of the Chicago School, defined urbanism as "a way of life" (Wirth, 1938). The Chicago School focused on the urban dwellers as immigrants and put systematic efforts into theorizing the study of community and urbanism. In their view, urbanism was a cyclical ecological pattern through migration. This worldview of the Chicago School pioneered urban studies, accelerated the concept of universal urban theory to control the social order, and became a foundation of urbanism as a discipline.

The concept of focusing on residents' ways of everyday lives was first introduced by sociology and anthropology and has been a long tradition in architecture and urbanism studies. Scholars with diverse backgrounds also contributed to the discourses in academia, which used to be dominated by Western scholars. Abdoumaliq Simone (2004) introduced a way of viewing "people as infrastructure," and Gautam Bhan (2019) tried to theorize a southern practice using an Indian case and developed a contextual framework. The concept of "ordinary cities" by Jennifer Robinson (2013) also advocates diverse practices in urban studies. Those frameworks urge the importance of exploring the contextual nature of urbanism while countering universal urban theory models, which imply Eurocentricism, modernism, and developmentalism.

Ananya Roy (2016) is one of the scholars who critiqued the Western-centric academia. In her piece, "Who's Afraid of Postcolonial Theory?" she shared the challenges in her Ph.D., that there was no urban theory applicable to Calcutta, and she critically discussed the culture of urban theory. She also called for a southern theory, not as a different variety, but "a relationality of theory." While critical approaches bring diverse viewpoints to academia, Roy's challenge in her Ph.D. still seems to remain the same. Can a younger Roy apply Bhan's framework to her Ph.D. research?

While problems in universalism have been identified and the danger of theorization has been addressed continuously, there seem to be few ongoing discussions about what an alternative way could be to move forward in academia. Roy (2016) suggested concern about the relationship between place, knowledge, and power as an alternative way of theorization, and many LA school scholars embraced postmodern critical theory from a constructivist approach. Like Edward Soja's spatial justice, they actively address politics, economy, and power relations in cities. Unlike Chicago School scholars, who viewed researchers as objective analysts, LA School scholars posited researchers as interpreters (Gieryn, 2006). Yet Spivak's (1988) question remains central to these debates on knowledge and power: Who can speak, and how can we speak about what?

The question motivated this research. This study began with a question about the existing traditions in urban studies. These traditions follow either ontological universalism with epistemological structuralism or ontological pluralism with epistemological interpretivism. As an alternative way of approaching urbanism beyond these dualistic worldviews, this research develops a conceptual framework: a space ontology adapted from Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) spatial practices and Theodore Schatzki's (2016) concept of practice theory as flat ontology. This framework aims to bridge theoretical discourses and actionable interventions through design research that enriches contextual understanding. In this view, place is defined not merely by geographical/cultural context or power dynamics, but as a network of spatial practices.

To investigate these spatial practices, this research develops a people-place-practice framework (analytical framework), a design-thinking-oriented approach (iterative refinement), and a worldview approach (inclusive interpretation). Also, it introduces a range of interview instruments to facilitate a holistic understanding of everyday practices, adapted from Harold Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodological approach and his documentary method. To apply these, this research adopts a theoretically-driven case study approach.

Makerere University as a Strategic Case

To demonstrate the space ontology and apply the practice research methodology through empirical research, this study selected students of Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, as a strategic case, positioning students' everyday practices as place-producing agency. Crucially, this agency does not operate in a vacuum; rather, it interacts with a historically planned place. In this sense, place is not a natural, untamed, and static entity but one that evolves in forms and meanings as students interact in this space. This dissertation therefore examines how places are produced through students' everyday spatial practices at Makerere University.

Makerere University is not simply a site to investigate, but an important empirical site that requires a novel approach, where conventional theories and methodologies have limitations in capturing its complexity. As Nawangwe (2011) called, Makerere University experienced "re-informalization: moving from informal to some kind of formalization and yet returning to an informality situation" (p. 50). Makerere University was selected because its spatial practices exceed and challenge Western urban theoretical frameworks; the site embodies layered complexities arising from colonial-postcolonial history, political upheavals, and the coexistence of formal-informal economies and urban development; and the author's personal experiences in Uganda that provided contextual access and understanding. Makerere University thus serves as a methodology-advancing research site through empirical grounding.

This research pursues theoretical generalization rather than empirical generalization. The goal is not to claim that findings from Makerere University are directly transferable to other contexts. Instead, this research develops portable conceptual tools—a space ontology and practice research methodologies—that can be adapted by other researchers to study spatial practices in their own contexts. This approach enables cross-contextual comparison while respecting local specificities.

This research aims to contribute at three interconnected layers: 1) theoretical contributions by developing a space ontology as a network of spatial practices and several innovative frameworks and concepts; 2) methodological contributions through the people-place-practice framework, design thinking process-oriented approach, and worldview approach grounded in interdisciplinary integrated research methods; 3) empirical contributions through "thick descriptions" of Makerere University spatial practices and contributing to university-related urban discourses. Thick description (see Geertz, 1973) encompasses diverse perspectives on past spatial strategic practices and richer encounters of students' present spatial tactical responses, grounded in methodological rigor ranging from ethnomethodology and ethnography to field archival research. Crucially, this research is not merely

'about' Makerere University, but rather uses Makerere University as a generative site 'through' which to test a space ontology and applicable research methodology. By examining the spatial practices at Makerere University, this dissertation seeks not only to understand the campus's history and present but also to contribute to the broader debates on spatial justice.

1.1 Establishing State of the Art: Theoretical Background and Conceptual Lens

Discussions on the relationship between students and cities are diverse, but as Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) observed, "wherever university life has developed, it has marked out the landscape with its dwelling places, its customary haunts, and necessary routes between them" (p.32). To situate this research within existing scholarship,this section first examines the historical context of the relationship between university and urban design, before tracing how studentification has emerged as the primary lens through which university-related urban dynamics are analyzed, and proceeds to a quantitative review of studentification scholarship. It then addresses the limitations of the studentification approach and concludes by introducing *campushood* as an alternative conceptual lens for design research.

1.1.1 Literature Review on University and Urbanism

Historical Context about University and Urban Design

People today use 'college' and 'campus' interchangeably, but those terms historically imply different ways of student life in a city. The 'college' tradition has European roots, and the 'campus' tradition has American origins (van Gameren, 2018). The college tradition is associated with Oxbridge in the UK. Oxford and Cambridge Universities have not always existed in their current form. Early Oxbridge began as monastery-like collective living communities of scholars within colleges and gradually evolved over time. Unlike Oxbridge's organic evolution, the American academic village was designed in the 18th century. The campus concept was introduced by Thomas

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Jefferson, former US president and architect, when he designed the University of Virginia. Etymologically, *campus* means lawn in Latin, and the main design of the University of Virginia consisted of a series of buildings surrounding a rectangular lawn. Following Thomas Jefferson's ideal, Princeton University was the first to be constructed using the name campus in the late 18th century. This distinction between the two traditions is important to understand because it reveals original spatial concepts of universities and their host towns in relation to urban design.

These two different forms of universities also serve different functions in their host towns. The Oxbridge colleges with courtyards in the center make residential communities within the colleges more intimate and inward-focused through their architectural design, promoting a sense of community. These colleges form a type of gated community, while the buildings connect with host towns through gateways. Unlike these colleges, the grid-based campus demonstrates how American campuses are connected and open to their surrounding towns. American urban and rural layouts with grid fields and streets allow campuses to easily expand, connect, and blend with existing fields in the grid. While Oxbridge colleges grew inward around courtyards, American residential buildings were built on these fields facing the streets, exposing students to a broader world than a courtyard in college would (van Gameren, 2018).

While the college and campus models offer foundational insights into the spatial design logic for university urbanism, contemporary discussions have expanded to encompass the everyday agency of students, as the term *studentification* shows. The following sections trace the evolution of studentification research and explore thematic findings along with the phenomena.

Studentification

Ontological Inquiries

Studentification is a term that branched out from gentrification. The academic and linguistic origin of studentification is rooted in the study of gentrification. Darren Smith, a British geographer, coined the term in 2002 and attempted to differentiate studentification from the discourse of gentrification by identifying the capital-led process of studentification and the characteristics of students as studentifiers, students' temporal residential status, the absence of production-based activities, and the weak relationship between student housing supply and studentification. By understanding how this field has evolved, we can better interpret and analyze urban phenomena.

As the pioneer of the field, Darren Smith conceptualized the effect of the studentification phenomenon through four lenses: social, cultural, economic, and physical changes. While Smith et al. (2014) highlighted the ambiguity in determining indicators to define the studentification area later, they pointed out that the commodification of student housing is the main push factor of studentification. In the UK context, as he studied, to meet the demand for student housing, domestic-scale rental businesses initially began by converting their private houses into Houses in Multiple Occupation (Smith, 2004). Later, the development of Purpose-Built Student Accommodation (PBSA) became popular, and scholars identified PBSAs as gentrifiers. In his argument, the off-campus student housing supply was the key. These observations laid the foundation for subsequent international research on studentification.

Since then, there have been many attempts to theorize and conceptualize the urban phenomenon caused by the influx of student populations. Many studies followed and confirmed this urban transformation phenomenon, but initially, they were mostly limited to Anglo-Saxon countries. Later, case studies from the global South began to voice their own perspectives and suggested different angles to understand the phenomenon. More than a decade after Darren Smith's initial theorization, Nakazawa (2017) framed studentification research in two perspectives based on his in-depth literature review of this field: spatial and temporal perspectives. The spatial perspective focuses on urban change by HMO-ization (Houses in Multiple Occupation) and the development of PBSAs (Purpose-Built Student Accommodation), sharing the similarity with gentrification, while the temporal perspective focuses on the lived experiences of students as suspected gentrifiers. He criticized the dependence on the concept of existing gentrification and emphasized embracing the diverse lived experiences of students.

Despite attempts to generalize and theorize the studentification phenomenon, many scholars acknowledged that studentification should be understood and interpreted on a case-by-case basis (Hubbard, 2008; Smith, Sage, & Balsdon, 2014). Other voices have raised epistemological concerns about understanding studentification from geographical and location-scale perspectives. The following section examines these epistemological debates.

Epistemological Inquiries

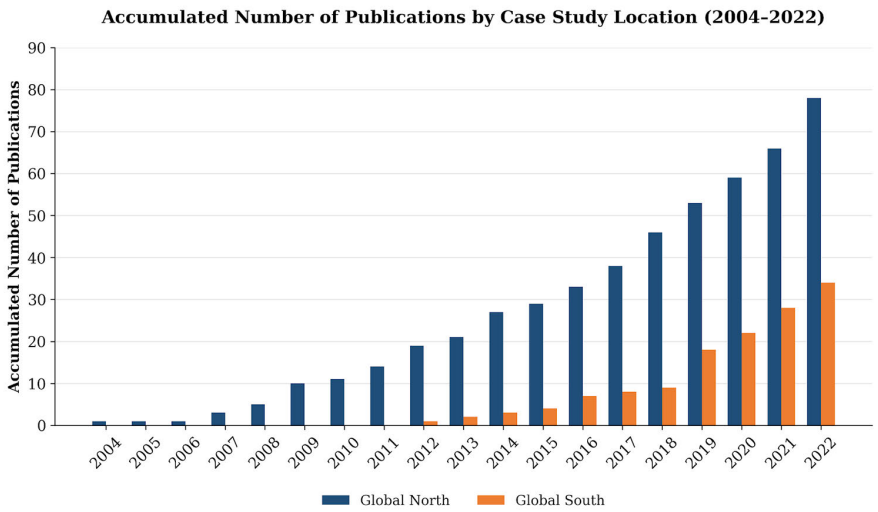


FIG. 1.1 Accumulated number of publications on studentifications by case study location, comparing research output between Global North and Global South regions (2004–2022).

Scholars have examined studentification across diverse global contexts with geographical imbalances. Fig 1.1 shows the geographical trend of academic publications on studentification. Almost a decade later, the first paper from the global South was published. Many studies from the global South only began to expand the discourse ten years later. While some research confirmed the same phenomenon, others opposed the academic dominance of the global North and called for awareness. Many cases were studied to fill the gap on the scarcity of research in the global South (Visser & Kisting, 2019; Gregory & Rogerson, 2019), in Latin America (Prada, 2019), and in China (Gu & Smith, 2020). Research in the global South context often emphasizes the research needs in the global South against the danger of universalism.

There is a clear need to consider geographical contexts due to different premises. For example, in the global North, students are often described as people from middle-class backgrounds (Allinson, 2006; Chatterton, 1999; Sage, Smith, & Hubbard, 2012), with expressive culture and consumption-based lifestyles (Hubbard, 2008). However, Nawangwe's research (2011) and the slummification observed in South Africa (Ndimande, 2018) question the assumptions about how previous research defines students. Without considering such hidden attributes, research can go wrong. Therefore, the careful epistemological concerns about the different contexts nourish academic discussions.

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Some research can contribute to enriching discourses by applying a cross-cultural framework. In the case of Gu and Smith (2020), they borrowed the framework from UK cases and examined the case in China. Differences such as the role of shared rental housing, the significant student population in China, limited commodification of student housing, differences in Chinese student lifestyles and identities, and complex migration patterns related to studentification were identified through a cross-cultural framework.

At the same time, some cases revealed that the phenomenon itself shows different characteristics depending on the context. For example, Ciudad Real, a Spanish city, is a unique case, which was termed "vertical studentification," a morphologically different pattern. Student influx caused demographic changes in apartment ownership, so studentification became vertical in high-rise buildings, in this case, with potential conflicts of lack of communal spaces and noise transmission (Garmendia, Coronado, and Ureña, 2012). Studentification in Polish cities shows the influence of the post-socialist context, a historical connection (Murzyn-Kupisz & Szmytkowska, 2015). Unlike Anglo-Saxons, students "colonize" entire cities instead of clustering, as Polish students prefer former socialist housing estates with good locations and transportation links. Also, the availability of housing with post-socialist characteristics leads students to rent small apartments in groups of 2-3 people. These cases reveal diverse patterns.

Epistemological concerns also appear across different geographical scales and urban fabrics. Sage et al. (2012) focused on outer-city deprived communities and tried to capture diverse aspects of the phenomenon. Cases in South Africa were studied in various contexts from the capital city (Gregory & Rogerson, 2019a, 2019b; Ijasan & Ahmed, 2016), large city (Ackermann & Visser, 2016; Donaldson et al., 2014), university town (Donaldson et al., 2014; Visser & Kisting, 2019), to rural area (Ndimande, 2018). These studies were conducted focusing on either actors and their motivations (Donaldson et al., 2014; Gregory & Rogerson, 2019a; Ndimande, 2018) or the impacts and processes of studentification (Ackermann & Visser, 2016; Donaldson et al., 2014; Gregory & Rogerson, 2019b; Visser & Kisting, 2019). While studies in the South African context are predominant, Fedha (2017) explored the relationship between student activities in neighborhoods and the well-being of local communities in social, economic, and environmental aspects in an urbanizing town in Kenya. These cases highlight that studentification manifests not as a uniform process but as diverse, context-dependent urban transformations.

Summary with Quantitative Approach

Research on studentification has evolved alongside ontological and epistemological inquiries due to the phenomenon's multifaceted nature. To address this complexity, this study employs a mixed-methods approach that combines qualitative and quantitative analysis. Mixed methods compensate for the respective limitations of qualitative and quantitative approaches: while qualitative analysis provides depth and flexibility for exploration, it may lack definitiveness and objectivity. Following a pragmatic worldview, this approach allows researchers to focus on solutions to research problems rather than being constrained by a single philosophical system (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The visualization analyzes 164 papers published between 2004 and July 2025 using VOSviewer, examining their titles, abstracts, and keywords.

The visualization results effectively illustrate the thematic evolution in this field (see Fig. 1.2). While narrative literature reviews reveal contextual diversity in research approaches, quantitative literature analysis demonstrates that these studies can be categorized into four distinct clusters:

1. Housing supply and market considerations (green cluster)
2. Gentrification processes and university-induced urban transformations (red cluster)
3. Interconnections between resident experiences and perspectives, university, and housing (blue cluster)
4. Interconnections with urbanization and planning (yellow cluster)

Fig. 1.3 depicts the chronological shift in research themes, represented by a color transition from dark navy to bright yellow (year bar indicates average publication years). The research focus has undergone a significant transformation: beginning with theoretical frameworks centered on gentrification and geography within the UK context, progressing to expanded theorization that addresses epistemological concerns, and finally evolving toward student- and housing-focused approaches that emphasize empirical evidence. This progression reflects the changing ontological perspectives on studentification within the academic discourse.

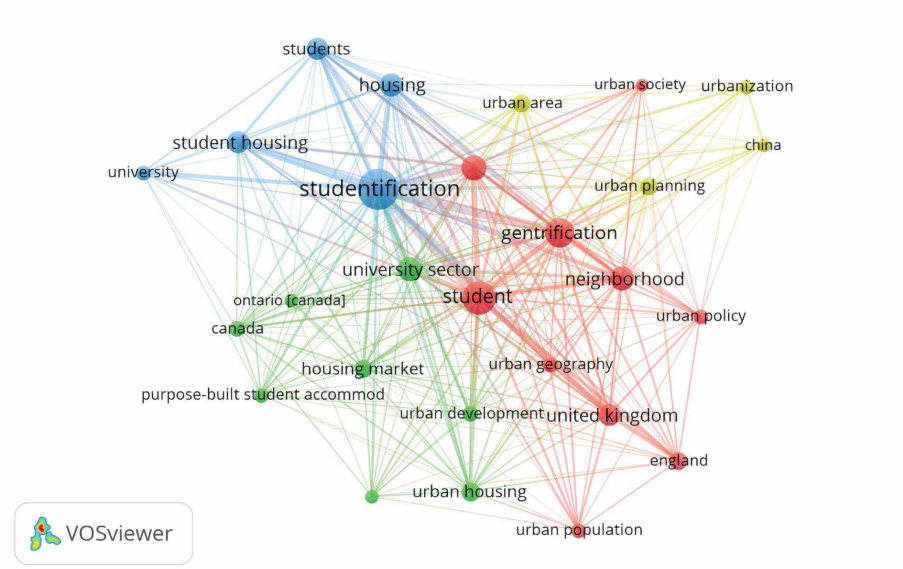


FIG. 1.2 VOS network visualization of keyword co-occurrence analysis based on 164 studentification research articles (fractional counting, minimum keyword occurrences: 6).

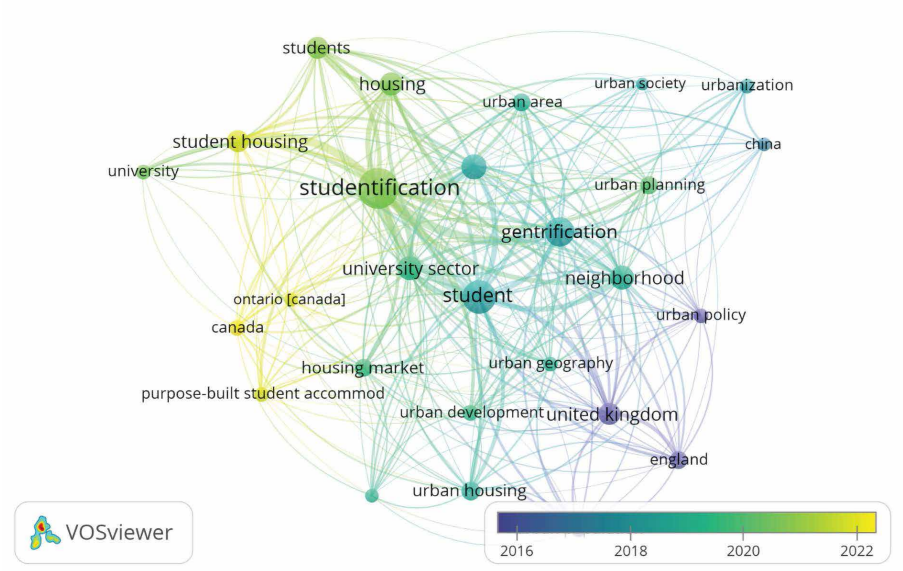


FIG. 1.3 VOS overlay visualization of keyword co-occurrence analysis based on 164 studentification research articles (fractional counting, minimum keyword occurrences: 6).

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This section conducted an extensive literature review to trace the evolution of studentification studies—one of the most actively discussed topics in contemporary university-related urban discourse. Analyzing various empirical studies on the multifaceted impacts of student influx demonstrated the diversity and complexity of studentification research.

Studentification has diversified through numerous ontological and epistemological approaches, a trend likely to intensify. While this plurality enriches scholarly understanding, it presents a critical gap in design research: how can urban designers translate diverse theoretical perspectives into actionable design interventions when confronting studentification's impacts? This gap highlights the need for design research that bridges studentification discourses and design practices and that enriches contextual understanding.

1.1.2 Conceptual Lens: Campushood

Building on the need for design research to bridge theory and design interventions in studentified space, this research proposes "campushood" as an alternative conceptual framework to studentification. The choice of "campushood" rather than the more intuitive "studenthood" is deliberate: it foregrounds the spatial dimension that is central to understanding student-related urban transformation.

Etymologically, "-hood" carries instructive ambivalence: phenomena like "childhood" (temporal) and "neighborhood" (spatial) certainly exist yet lack clear boundaries. “Campushood” integrates both dimensions, reflecting three key characteristics of student-related urban transformation. Spatially, its boundaries are ambiguous, extending beyond campus into rental markets and CBD-adjacent areas, yet remain organized around the campus as an anchor point. Temporally, it encompasses current students, recent graduates who maintain established networks and employment access, and former students who continue to reside near campus drawn by its affordable lifestyle. Demographically, it recognizes gradual transitions between student and graduate resident status, reflecting lived experience rather than administrative categories.

Understanding this phenomenon as “campushood” rather than studentification offers critical conceptual advantages. It captures both the spatial manifestation of temporal student experiences and the temporal continuity of spatial campus relationships. It encourages viewing students as integrated community members rather than temporary outsiders. Finally, it helps prevent the over-problematization, which often frames student presence as inherently disruptive rather than as a natural outcome of urban university proximity.

The campushood approach is inevitably descriptive in its nature, rather than purely critical, distinguishing it from traditional studentification frameworks. This descriptive orientation necessitates 'thick description' to capture its full nuances.

Before moving on, the following section articulates the epistemological position that underpins this research and problem statement for the study.

1.2 Epistemological Position and Problem Statement for Design Research

This section consists of two parts. The first subsection clarifies my epistemological and ontological position as a researcher in architecture and urban studies by engaging with two frameworks: Stephen Marshall's (2012) concept of integrated urban design theory and Abraham Kuyper's (1898/2000) philosophical distinction between normalist and abnormalist worldviews. Marshall helps identify what an integrated theory should contain, while Kuyper allows me to articulate the philosophical commitments I bring to developing such a theory. The second subsection articulates the problem statement that this research seeks to address.

1.2.1 Urban (Ab)normalist Framework and Integrated Urban Design Theory

Stephen Marshall's Integrated Urban Design Theory

Stephen Marshall, a British urbanist, addressed criticisms of "the incoherent state of urban design theory" and "the lack of robust, consistent scientific grounding" in his article "Science, Pseudo-science, and Urban Design" (2012, p.257).

He argued for an integrated urban design theory that combines: (i) insight into how the world works; (ii) a stance on how the world ought to be; and (iii) a view on how to get from here to there.

Marshall's framework is valuable in identifying what integrated theory should contain: empirical understanding ('is'), normative vision ('ought'), and practical methodology ('how to'). However, his analysis does not fully address a prior question: what philosophical assumptions do researchers bring when attempting to integrate these three dimensions? Specifically, do researchers assume there exists a 'normal' state of urban functioning from which deviations constitute problems? Or do they view urban life as inherently resistant to normalization?

This question matters because it shapes how researchers approach the 'is-ought-how to' integration. To articulate my own position on this foundational question, I turn to Abraham Kuyper's philosophical framework, distinguishing between normalist and abnormalist worldviews.

Abraham Kuyper's (Ab)normalist

As a researcher, I draw on the philosophical framework articulated by Abraham Kuyper, a Dutch philosopher, theologian, and founder of Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Kuyper proposed a fundamental dichotomy in scientific worldviews between what he termed "normalists" and "abnormalists" (1898/2000).

According to Kuyper, normalists perceive the world as functioning according to natural laws and regular processes. They understand reality primarily through observable patterns and materialistic explanations. Abnormalists, in contrast, view the current state of the world as divergent from an original condition. They recognize both natural and transcendent dimensions, acknowledging aspects of reality that resist purely materialistic explanation. Kuyper argued that scientific disagreements often stem not from religious differences per se, but from these deeper divergences in how researchers see the world (Kuyper, 1898/2000).

Urban Normalists and Urban Abnormalists

I adapt Kuyper's framework to articulate two contrasting approaches to understanding the lifeworld—the lived, experienced world—and to clarify my own position as an urban researcher. I acknowledge that all ontological and epistemological positions rest on foundational commitments that cannot be fully proven but must be made explicit for transparent scholarship.

Different philosophical starting points fundamentally shape how researchers approach urban phenomena. I propose the terms *Urban Normalism* and *Urban Abnormalism* to describe two such positions, which differ in their basic assumptions about urban life.

Urban Normalists approach the lifeworld as potentially functioning according to identifiable norms or regular patterns. They identify deviations from expected patterns as problems requiring solutions. Research agendas focus on diagnosing dysfunction and developing interventions to restore normal operation.

Urban Abnormalists, in contrast, view the lifeworld as inherently resistant to normalization. From this perspective, there is no single 'normal' baseline against which to measure urban life—only diverse, situated practices that always exceed planners' intentions. Research, therefore, focuses on understanding everyday practices in their specificity rather than measuring deviation from norms. The goal becomes iterative refinement rather than corrective intervention.

Positioning This Research

This distinction between Urban Normalism and Urban Abnormalism addresses a dimension not fully captured by Marshall's (2012) integrated urban design theory. While Marshall identifies three components—understanding how the world works, articulating how it ought to be, and determining how to bridge the gap—he does not address the prior question of whether researchers assume a 'normal' state exists at all.

From my Urban Abnormalist position, I argue that the lifeworld always exceeds the intentions of designers, planners, and policymakers. There is no 'normal' to restore or achieve. Therefore, integrated urban design theory cannot take the form of a blueprint for moving from 'is' to 'ought.' Instead, it must be methodological—an iterative process of understanding situated practices to inform ongoing design refinement.

Stepping on an urban abnormalist standpoint for design research, the next section articulates a problem statement that highlights the necessity of design research for emerging African campushoods.

1.2.2 Problem Statement: Necessity of Design Research for Emerging African Campushoods

The higher education system in Sub-Saharan Africa is undergoing a transition from an elite model to a mass university system. The number of public universities in Sub-Saharan African countries grew from 100 in 1990 to 500 in 2014, while the number of private universities increased from 30 to 1,000 over the same period (The Economist, 2019). However, this expansion of higher education has not been accompanied by improvements in facilities and infrastructure capable of accommodating the growing student population. The World Bank (2010) noted that Africa was the only region to experience a decline in public spending per student between 1995 and 2010. This funding gap triggered the marketization of universities. The ratio of tuition fees to total revenue at Makerere University in Uganda exceeded 50% in the late 1990s (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003), while that of Kenyan private universities had already surpassed 70% in the early 2000s (Otieno, 2004).

As student enrollments continued to rise against limited on-campus capacity, student populations spilled over into the neighborhoods surrounding campuses. The private hostel market in Sub-Saharan Africa has attracted considerable attention from international investors, particularly following JLL's 2016 projection of demand for 500,000 beds across the region over the subsequent five years (JLL, 2016). More recent assessments indicate that South Africa alone faces a shortfall of 500,000 beds for university students (Majola, 2026). This transformation of the university system is reshaping African campushoods, diversifying housing supply across a spectrum ranging from upscale hostel developments to informal rental arrangements.

The surge in student populations has profoundly reshaped urban landscapes, yet the spatial dimensions of this transformation remain poorly understood. In particular, the lived experiences of students within the urban fabric are largely absent from urban design discourse. This study seeks to address this gap through the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, where the shift from elite to mass higher education has been especially pronounced. By closely examining the historical formation of campuses as place, as well as students' housing conditions and student dwellings, and by capturing these nuanced everyday realities, this research aims to generate in-depth knowledge that can inform more inclusive and context-sensitive design decisions for university environments in rapidly urbanizing African cities.

The next section presents research design this research builds on.

1.3 Research Design

1.3.1 Empirical Level: Theoretically-Driven Case Study Approach

Case Study Selection

Makerere University was selected as a strategic case study due to its unique spatial practices and layered complexities, set against the backdrop of Kampala's rapid urbanization (annual urban population growth rate: 4.9%, compared to the Sub-Saharan average of 3.6%; World Bank, 2024), high youth population where 73% of total population is under the age of 30 (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2025), and increasing demand for tertiary education. Tertiary enrollment surged from 65,000 in 2002 to 200,000 in 2012, while the number of institutions more than tripled during the same period (Kasozi, 2017), placing immense pressure on educational infrastructure.

Since the 1990s, Makerere transitioned from an elite institution of 2,000 students to a massive university enrolling over 20,000 students, a shift triggered by financial reforms and the introduction of private tuition fee-paying enrollment schemes. Because the university failed to expand its on-campus housing to match this growth, students flooded the surrounding neighborhoods, leading to what Vice-Chancellor Barnabas Nawangwe (2011) terms "re-informalization"—a cycle where urban spaces shift between formal and informal states. Consequently, Makerere offers a compelling lens through which to examine how rapid enrollment growth reshapes the urban fabric of campus and its surrounding neighborhoods.

As such, Makerere provides the empirical grounding for this study's broader inquiry into student spatial practices and their implications for urban design.

Research Gap and Relevance

Post-colonial theorists have increasingly foregrounded everyday practices in the Global South—with particular emphasis on urban informality—to theorize urban patterns that remain underexamined in the Global North scholarship (Alsayyad, 2004; Birch, 2019). Drawing on Simone's (2010) concept of "cityness"—rooted in the daily lives and localities—and his notion of "people as infrastructure," this

study holds that urban environments must be understood through the lens of lived experiences. Yet lived experience cannot be disentangled from the built environments that structure it—as Churchill famously observed, “we shape our buildings; and afterward our buildings shape us” (as cited in UK Parliament, n.d.). This interaction between the built environment and everyday practices becomes particularly significant when examining highly mobile populations, such as university students. Yet to date, "student dwelling" as a research topic has received limited attention, and its role in the urbanization process has been largely overlooked.

This case study makes several contributions to understanding university student dwelling within the African urban context. Building upon Nawangwe’s (2011) research, "The Architectural Transformation of Makerere University Neighbourhoods during the Period 1990–2010," this study provides detailed observations of the changes occurring since 2010. It investigates the spatial practices of contemporary students through ethnomethodological, ethnographic, and multi-scalar approaches. Despite Nawangwe’s call for further research, no substantial studies have been undertaken for over a decade.

Consequently, this research establishes its relevance by bridging this temporal and methodological divide. Moving beyond the 1990–2010 timeframe, this study integrates the past and present of Makerere University and its surroundings, shifting the analytical focus from structural transformations to spatial practices.

Research Scope and Limitations

The unit of analysis in this study is spatial practices at Makerere University, encompassing both institutional strategies and students’ tactical responses (de Certeau, 1980/1984). While the primary focus is on Makerere University, the scope extends beyond the campus boundaries to include students’ lifeworlds—their lived experiences in surrounding neighborhoods and the wider urban context. Nevertheless, the empirical focus remains largely on the campus and its immediate surroundings.

Temporally, the research spans from the establishment of Makerere University in 1922 to the present. Empirical fieldwork was conducted between late August and November 2023, primarily capturing observations during the academic term, and therefore excluding holiday and exam-period dynamics. In examining students’ spatial practices, particular attention is given to daily and weekly rhythms.

Makerere University offers a range of educational levels, from diploma to doctoral programs, as well as multiple modes of study, including day, evening/afternoon, and external programs. This research focuses specifically on undergraduate (bachelor's level) students enrolled in day programs.

The findings are based on a limited sample of students and may not fully represent the diversity of student experiences. In addition, the research is shaped by the positionality of the researcher as an outsider, which is further discussed in Section 2.1.3. Readers are encouraged to bear these limitations in mind when interpreting the findings.

Having established the research design and background at the empirical level, the following section transitions to the methodological level to delineate the framework for theory-building.

1.3.2 Methodological Level: Methodological-Theory-Building Approach by Integrating Researcher's Dispositionality

This research adopts a theoretically-driven case study approach, entailing a theory-building orientation at the methodological level—one grounded in abductive reasoning, as elaborated in Section 2.1.2. This was a necessary choice to negotiate the researcher's positionality and integrate *dispositionality* throughout the research process, moving between theory and case study. This movement differs from strictly deductive approaches that apply predefined analytical frameworks, as well as from purely inductive approaches oriented toward emergent pattern identification. Drawing on, yet moving beyond, Haraway's (1988) situated knowledge and existing notions of positionality, I conceptualize dispositionality as a form of reflexivity that emerges from inhabiting in-between positions across two or more worlds. This approach resonates with Homi Bhabha's postcolonial concept of hybridity (Bhabha, 1994), which similarly foregrounds the productive tensions arising from navigating multiple, often contradictory, subject positions. For Bhabha, hybridity is not a mere mixture of differences, but a resistance to fixity, forming a new, performative identity. He rejects the idea of static or fixed culture/identity; instead, he locates culture in an in-between and performative space, where cultural differences encounter, clash, and mutually transform. Likewise, it is the in-betweenness that dispositionality seeks to operationalize as a methodological stance for navigating multiple epistemic positions.

The frameworks, concepts, and methodology proposed in this study emerge from the theorization practice of a Korean woman Ph.D. candidate in the architecture department at a Dutch university—one without formal architectural training—who

conducted research in Uganda. The researcher's specific positionality in relation to the Uganda case study drew critical questions from fellow researchers, requiring deeper engagement and enabling the negotiation of positionality. While positionality refers to where one stands, dispositionality refers to how one moves between standpoints—enacting reflexivity as a dynamic process rather than a fixed location. In this research, that in-betweenness is enacted through the productive tension between the researcher's simultaneously insider and outsider positions across multiple dimensions: nationality, disciplinary background, and geographical context. The integration of dispositionality throughout the research process shaped the study's abductive and theory-building methodological orientation.

This theory-building approach also relates to the aim of this research. While relevant scholarship on studentification has heavily relied on problem-solving approaches, this research pursues a design research orientation grounded in understanding students' dwelling practices. The aim of the case study is to inform designers by providing contextual grounding for iterative design improvement, rather than suggesting corrective interventions. A more overtly critical theoretical stance risks fragmenting a holistic account of place and fails to provide designers with the contextual grounding they need—hence the deliberate choice of a descriptive, understanding-oriented approach.

As a result of this negotiation, this research seeks to contribute to architecture and urban studies through its interdisciplinary integration and contextual application of established methods, drawing on the researcher's situated sense-making. To advance interdisciplinary understanding of place production and lifeworlds, the research draws on the urban (ab)normalist framework introduced in Section 1.2, develops a space ontology, and integrates three complementary frameworks: the People–Place–Practice framework (analytical structure), design thinking process (pragmatic iteration), and worldview approach (epistemological reflexivity and inclusion), all of which are articulated in the following chapter. The methodological theory-building approach emerged not only from the integration of dispositionality, but also from the practical constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic; this process was necessarily more exploratory, given significant uncertainty surrounding data availability.

The study combines ethnomethodology, ethnography, and archival research to examine student dwelling at Makerere University. While these methods are individually well-established, their coordinated application across multiple geographical scales and evidence types—spanning colonial archives, student-authored documents, ethnographic fieldwork, and digital sources—offers a methodologically integrated approach to understanding everyday spatial practices.

The reflexivity of each research methodology is partly discussed in Chapter 9. However, a fuller account of the research design process would require additional autoethnographic research, and thus falls outside the scope of this study.

Transitioning from these methodological considerations, the next section introduces the research's normative goal: spatial justice.

1.3.3 Normative Goal: Design Research Toward Spatial Justice

The normative goal of this research is spatial justice. More specifically, it aims to contribute to laying the foundations for design research oriented toward spatial justice. Spatial justice in this research is twofold: 1) by recognizing students as a marginalized group in urban discourse, the research seeks to foreground their voices and dwelling practices; and 2) it explores the implications of spatial design research for social justice.

This dissertation is motivated by a normative concern with spatial and social justice—particularly how design research contributes to mitigating social inequalities and amplifying marginalized voices in urban contexts. Spatial justice serves as the ultimate normative orientation of this research. Drawing on the framework developed by the Centre for the Just City at TU Delft, this research focuses specifically on recognition justice: "the acknowledgment, validation, and respect of individual and collective identities, experiences, and cultural expressions that address historical and ongoing marginalization, discrimination, and misrepresentation of certain groups in society" (Rocco, 2025, p.8).

Students represent a particularly significant yet understudied group in urban studies. Within this gap, students' everyday practices and their role as place producers remain understudied. This research examines students' everyday dwelling practices and their role as place producers. Rather than proposing design solutions for spatial justice, it investigates how students—as ordinary people—shape urban environments through their everyday practices, with the aim of generating insights for designers. The concept of spatial justice thus functions as a normative orientation rather than a design outcome.

Chapter 8 introduces Bourdieu's concept of habitus in education—particularly in relation to worldviews on social class and the reproduction of unequal class structures. Building on this, the chapter develops the concept of *spatial capital*, examining the role of architects, designers, and design researchers and their broader

responsibilities for spatial justice. This research argues that indifference to social inequality among students may lead to far-reaching consequences. This doctoral research thus seeks to illuminate the relationship between social inequality, student dwelling, and the campushood, and to articulate the contribution of design research and architectural interventions toward spatial justice.

Having established the overall research design, ranging from the empirical to the methodological levels and the normative goal, the following section addresses the core research question and the sub-research questions this research seeks to answer.

1.3.4 Research Questions

Main Research Question:

— **How are places produced through students' everyday social and spatial practices, and how can these practices be understood through a practice-based space ontology in the context of an urban university campus?**

Four sub-research questions are formulated to address the main research question:

— SQ 1 **(Strategy: The Structural Foundation):** How has the historical and institutional production of Makerere University's landscape established the "strategic" spatial order that shapes its current physical and social ecosystem? (Chapter 4)

— SQ 2 **(Perception: The Cognitive Transition):** How do students perceive and develop emotional attachments to this established landscape, and how do these perceptions mediate their transition from being mere "traveler" to "dweller"? (Chapter 5)

— SQ 3 **(Tactic I: Action):** In what ways do students employ "tactical" practices—such as placemaking, homemaking, and pathmaking—to negotiate and transform these strategic spaces within their daily constraints? (Chapter 6)

— SQ 4 **(Tactic II: Dwelling):** How do students' tactical practices coalesce across multiple geographical scales to produce a collective "place of dwelling"? (Chapter 7)

Each chapter contributes distinct aspects of spatial practices at Makerere University. Taken together, they collectively demonstrate how Makerere University is produced as a place through spatial practices.

While Chapters 4 through 7 examine how place is produced, Chapter 8 turns to the normative implications for spatial justice, addressing the following question:

— **How can a better understanding of everyday dwelling practices of students and the role of students in placemaking help us to achieve spatial justice?**

Building upon the research questions established above, the following section outlines the research roadmap and layout of the dissertation, inviting the reader to navigate the subsequent stages of this research journey.

1.4 Research Roadmap and Layout of the Dissertation

Research Roadmap

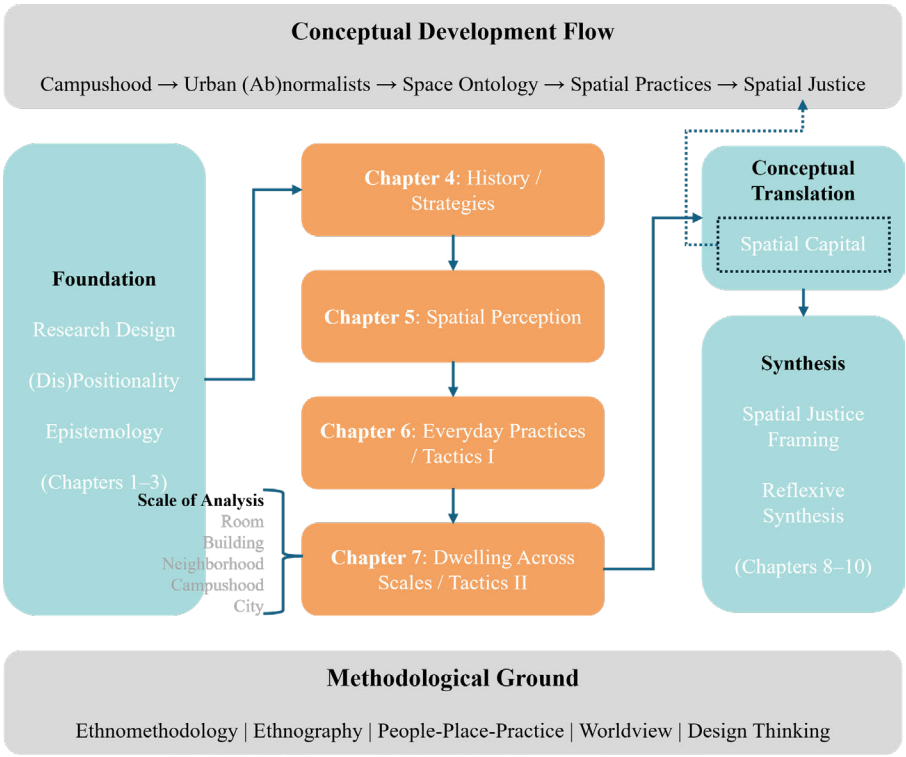


FIG. 1.4 Research Design and Analytical Trajectory.

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Fig. 1.4 illustrates the overall research trajectory, showing how the study moves from theoretical foundations through empirical investigation to conceptual synthesis. The empirical core progresses from historical context to perception, everyday practices, and dwelling, while contributing to the development of key conceptual lenses toward spatial justice. Specifically, it demonstrates how empirical findings can be translated into conceptual abstraction through spatial capital, serving as a conceptual bridge between empirical findings and the normative implications for spatial justice.

Having visualized the research design and analytical trajectory, the following section describes the dissertation's layout.

Layout of the Dissertation

This dissertation unfolds across ten chapters, each representing a distinct phase of the research process. The overall structure reflects the space ontology developed from Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) framework and Schatzki's (2016) practice theory, while orienting toward the normative goal of spatial justice.

Chapter 2 articulates the conceptual framework and research strategies. It integrates a space ontology—rooted in networks of spatial practices—with the 'People-Place-Practice' framework. This chapter also introduces a design thinking process-oriented approach and a worldview approach, through which the logic of theory-building and researcher's positionality are articulated.

Chapter 3 details the fieldwork methodology and research procedures. It describes the research methods used for data collection and analysis, detailing the ethnomethodological and ethnographic approaches through which students' lived experiences are captured. It further explains how their integration produces a holistic body of evidence addressing the core research questions.

Chapter 4 provides the historical production of Makerere University's landscape, laying essential foundations for the following chapters. This chapter investigates the historical spatial practices—strategies in de Certeau's sense—before exploring students' tactics. It traces institutional histories, urban development and expansion, socio-cultural practices that shape place identity, while also analyzing the urban ecosystems of neighboring areas.

Chapter 5 examines Makerere University students' place attachments and spatial perceptions across different geographical scales. It explores the lifeworld across emotional and cognitive dimensions, focusing on the lived experiences of students as dwellers. This analysis lays the groundwork for the examination of students' tactical responses in Chapters 6 and 7.

Chapter 6 investigates the first dimension of student tactics: placemaking through everyday practices. It examines how students transform their environment via time and budget management and activities like eating, shopping, and laundry. It further delves into 'homemaking,' 'path-making,' and spatio-temporal dimensions of daily life.

Chapter 7 extends the analysis from individual tactics to the collective and spatial dimensions of student dwelling. It situates everyday practices across geographical scales and explores the collective nature of student life. It broadens the discussion to the wider African contexts, introducing the philosophical concept of Ubuntu to illuminate the collective ownership of space and the fluid boundaries that characterize student dwelling at Makerere.

Chapter 8 initiates the first part of the discussion, focusing on design research for spatial justice. It employs 'spatial capital' as a conceptual lens to interpret the research findings, examining how the everyday practices of students may both reflect and contest spatial (in)justice.

Chapter 9 provides a second layer of discussion through a reflexive reassessment of the methodology. It reflects on the challenges and insights gained during the fieldwork, ensuring methodological accountability and reflexivity.

Chapter 10 serves as the conclusion, synthesizing the main findings and reflections. It brings the research full circle by revisiting the notions of 'campushood' and 'space ontology,' consolidating the study's conceptual contributions and their significance for interdisciplinary understandings of place production and spatial justice.

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2 Conceptual Framework and Research Strategies

This chapter establishes the methodological foundation of this research. The first section introduces the central theoretical concept: a space ontology. The second section presents three interconnected research strategies: (1) the People-Place-Practice framework as the primary analytical lens; (2) a design-thinking-oriented approach grounded in abductive reasoning as the guiding research logic; and (3) a situated knowledge approach that foregrounds worldview as a critical dimension of inquiry for inclusive interpretation.

2.1 A Space Ontology: Networks of Spatial Practices

This research is rooted in a space ontology that views spaces as constitutive of and constituted by networks of spatial practices. This concept is informed by two key frameworks: Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) distinction between strategies and tactics, and Theodore Schatzki's (2016) practice theory as flat ontology. De Certeau reveals how urban spaces emerge through the interplay between planners' intentions and inhabitants' everyday appropriations. Schatzki provides a non-hierarchical framework for understanding how practices and material arrangements mutually constitute each other on a single relational plane. Together, these perspectives ground my approach to understanding spaces as constitutive of and constituted by networks of spatial practices.

De Certeau's Spatial Practices: Strategies and Tactics

Practice theory became popular through the work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s. While practice theory is primarily studied in sociology and anthropology, Michel de Certeau established the foundation for spatial practices, which has become influential in the fields of architecture and urban design in his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* (1980/1984).

Michel de Certeau articulated spatial practices by distinguishing between strategies and tactics. In his framework, the practices of architects and urban planners constitute strategies that attempt to control and optimize urban functionality through a bird's-eye view from tall buildings. In contrast, the practices of ordinary urban dwellers represent tactics—ways of living daily life by appropriation, occasionally bypassing, and detouring from planned routes, experienced from the street-level perspective of walking. Urban places are produced through this dual interplay of strategies and tactics. Understanding these two types of practices helps us comprehend the complexity of urban lifeworlds (de Certeau, 1980/1984).

Schatzki's Practice Theory as Flat Ontology

The concept of *networks of spatial practices* is inspired by Schatzki (2016), who proposed practice theory as a flat ontology. As a social theorist, he argued that all social phenomena exist on a single level composed of bundles of practices (human entities) and material arrangements (non-human entities, including systems). He claimed that practices and material arrangements are interrelated: practices affect, alter, and use material arrangements, while material arrangements enable, constrain, and shape practices.

His approach differs from other social theories, which view social phenomena as interactions between different layers, such as structure and individuals or micro and macro levels. In these views, micro individual activities construct macro structures (bottom-up), or macro structures constrain micro activities (top-down). Unlike such approaches, Schatzki claimed that "practice theory as social ontology holds that the realm of the social is entirely laid out on a single level (p.8)." Therefore, its character is flat in his conception (Schatzki, 2016).

In the field of urbanism, this concept can be applied to bridge two different worldviews: everyday practices, which focus on individuals' social usage, and structuralism, which focuses on planning and policy. The benefit of adopting Schatzki's approach is that it attends to and balances both people (practices) and place (material arrangements). Schatzki's (2016) concept of "bundle" is adapted here as a *network* to better capture the interrelated and interwoven nature between people and place.

With the foundational space ontology now defined, the next section details the specific research strategies used to apply this concept.

2.2 Research Strategies

2.2.1 Framework Construction: People-Place-Practice Framework

While lifeworlds and practices cannot be simply reduced, understanding urban phenomena requires a systematic analytical approach. This section presents the people-place-practice framework to better inform architects and urban practitioners about the complexity of urban spatial practices.

People, place, and practice serve as the fundamental units of analysis. I constructed this framework based on the following rationale: while practices are inherently diverse and context-dependent, understanding the agents (people) and environment (place) is crucial for defining this context. This framework thus emphasizes the situatedness of each case study while opening possibilities for broader generalization. This specifically does not mean pursuing universalism, rather this approach aims to enable cross-contextual comparison while respecting local specificities.

Building upon the practice theory and space ontology explained in Section 2.1, the following subsections develop each component of people and place in turn. First, I define the target population—university students—using the life course approach in sociology. Second, by examining Kampala, Uganda, I establish a case that represents contexts characterized by rapid urbanization, high youth populations, and significant demand for higher education.

People - Life Course Approach

Cities are places where diverse people gather to form various household types and lifestyles. Despite the diverse lifestyles in cities, patterns of daily life can be organized according to household types or individual life stages such as childhood, adulthood, retirement, and old age. In particular, the constructionist life cycle theory shows that people generally follow certain patterns according to life stages. Gubrium and Holstein (2000) argued that the life cycle is constructed through social interactions and cultural norms and that institutions such as family, school, and workplace can play important roles in shaping the life cycle and guiding individuals. Universities are one of the important institutions that shape individuals in the process of transitioning from dependent adolescence to independent adulthood. Universities influence the daily lives of college students.

The areas surrounding universities develop over time. Affordable restaurants, small shops, and street vendors occupy the areas around campuses, meeting the daily needs of students. Students' lifestyles shape the local landscape and lead to urban changes. Scholars worldwide have been discussing these urban changes since Darren Smith coined and theorized the term *studentification* in 2002. The discourse on studentification confirms the idea that a stage of life can be reflected in a spatial dimension.

This study approaches the university student stage from a social constructionist perspective (Holstein & Gubrium, 2007). This approach views social interactions and cultural contexts as shaping life processes and considers the process by which individuals and groups create meaning as important. In this respect, this approach is dynamic and deeply considers context.

Student Characteristics

University is a unique period for individuals as a life transition period from dependent youth to independent adults. Also, as Bourdieu and Passeron (1979, p.29) point out, "students certainly live and mean to live in a special time and space. Their studenthood momentarily frees them from family life and working life." Students leave a remarkable footprint on the city that is different from other groups. These facts bring students into a unique position from a city perspective.

When university students relocate to cities for education, they represent a particular demographic: young migrant urban dwellers anchored in a university. Socially, they are highly educated citizens of the future who can influence the community by knowledge spillover. Culturally, they are expressive youth who are alert to fashion

and pop culture. Economically, they are consumers with daily expenditures and academic expenses. Politically, they are an invisible population that has no voice in policymaking. Real-estate-wise, they are tenants in formal and informal housing rental markets. Those students transform the urban landscape.

Cities in the global South are also experiencing this phenomenon as student populations grow. Young migrants from rural areas move into cities dreaming of a bright future, but cities are yet to welcome people. In the context of this unique transformation, students become a driving force of urban development. However, the voices of students are often isolated and marginalized in urban discourse, mainly due to the temporary nature of their residential status and their inexperience in political participation.

Place – Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda

Higher Education in Urban Africa

African populations are becoming increasingly urbanized and young. Urban populations in Africa are expected to double by 2050 (World Economic Forum, 2018), and the youth population is predicted to more than double by 2055 (UNDP, 2017). However, the infrastructure of the urban area does not yet meet the housing demands of those immigrants. It is predicted that more than 80% of population growth will be located in an urban area, mostly in slums, for the next 30 years (World Economic Forum, 2016).

At the same time, obtaining a university degree is getting more popular in Sub-Saharan Africa. The total number of students has more than tripled, from 2.7 million in 1991 to 9.3 million in 2006 (World Bank, 2010). Yet, the gross enrolment ratio is only one-fourth compared to the world average (UNESCO, 2020), pushing for an intercontinental movement to increase the enrolment ratio up to the global level by 2063 (ICEF Monitor, 2015). After successfully achieving universal primary education as one of the Millennium Development Goals, with enrolment rates in sub-Saharan Africa increasing from 58 to 76 percent between 1990 and 2010 (United Nations, 2012), more young people have aspired to pursue higher education. The number of universities has rapidly increased to meet the demands accordingly.

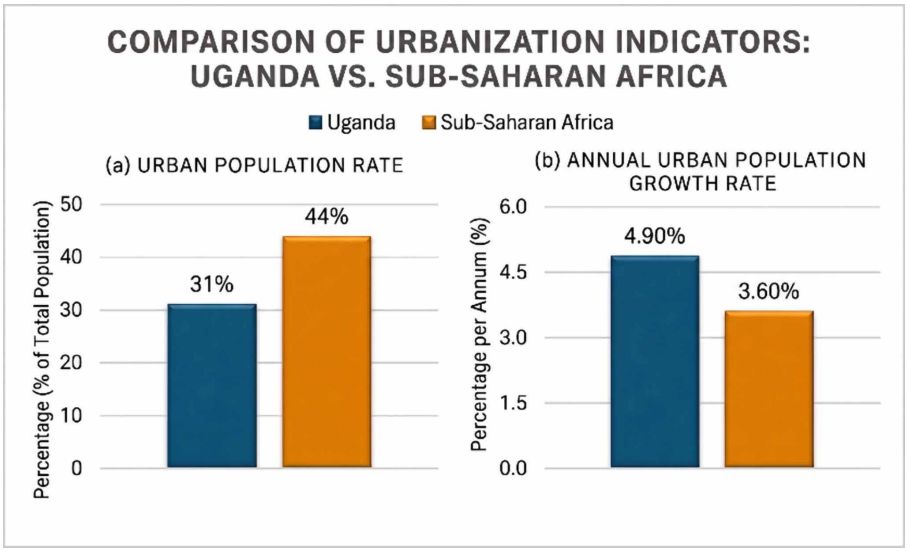


FIG. 2.1 Urban Statistics Uganda vs. Sub-Saharan Africa (World Bank, 2018).

Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda

As mentioned in the introduction section, Makerere University was selected as a strategic case because of its unique spatial practices, its embodied layered complexities, and the author's personal experiences. Beyond those case selection criteria, Kampala, the capital city of Uganda, where Makerere University is located, shows special characteristics: (1) rapid urbanization, (2) a high youth population, and (3) high demand for tertiary education. These characteristics are important to highlight to understand potentially transferable contexts.

Uganda has shown one of the fastest growth rates of urban populations, with over 73% of the youth population under 30 in Sub-Saharan Africa (Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2025). Uganda is one of the least urbanized countries in Africa, with 31% of the population living in cities, but with the highest rate of urban population growth, at 4.9 % per annum, while the average urban population rate and annual urban population growth rate in Sub-Saharan Africa is 44% and 3.6%, respectively (World Bank, 2024; see Fig. 2.1). Most urban population growth comes from rural-urban migrants. Moreover, Uganda is one of the countries that has shown a high demand for university degrees since the 1990s in Sub-Saharan Africa (Barifaijo & Ssentamu, 2017). The number of students in tertiary education increased from 65,000 in 2002 to 200,000 in 2012, while the number of institutions more than

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tripled during the same period (Kasozi, 2017). The demand for higher education is also steadily increasing. Considering the growth of universities and student populations in Africa, in general, and in Uganda, in particular, the understanding of spatial practices is crucial.

Makerere University represents a significant case of higher education in urban African contexts as one of the oldest universities in sub-Saharan Africa. Makerere University was founded in 1922, and many East African national heroes, including the presidents of Uganda, Kenya, and Rwanda, studied there. As the leading university in East Africa, the school used to offer full scholarships with accommodation to about 2,000 elite students, but in 1992, it introduced a new system due to financial difficulties. By accepting students who paid tuition, the school grew rapidly in terms of student numbers. However, the school did not build new facilities to accommodate the students, and the students had to find shelter off campus.

Barnabas Nawangwe (2011), the current Vice-Chancellor of Makerere University, studied the transformation of the area around Makerere University as the student population grew between 1990 and 2010, calling this urban transformation "re-informalization: moving from informal to some kind of formalization and yet returning to an informality situation" (p. 50). From around 2,000 students per year in the early 1990s, Makerere University has grown to over 20,000 students per year since 2010. The growth of student populations has transformed neighborhoods around the campus accordingly. He argued that further research is needed, but it has not yet received attention. Understanding the spatial practices in the Makerere area is important for envisioning a better future, not only for Kampala but for other African cities or other global South cities, showing rapid urban population growth rates and high youth populations.

Building upon the analytical framework of the proposed space ontology, the following section explains the research logic and reasoning—specifically abductive reasoning—that underpins this study.

2.2.2 Research Logic and Reasoning: Design Thinking Process-Oriented Approach

Abductive reasoning provides the methodological foundation for this research because it enables theory formation while accommodating limitations. The abductive approach identifies the most plausible explanations for situations and phenomena while facilitating theory formation through empirical observations (Ijasan & Ahmed, 2016). Abduction distinguishes itself from the two conventional reasoning paradigms: induction and deduction. While induction generates theory and deduction justifies observations, abduction examines specific cases to discern broader patterns within the conceptual framework to which these cases belong (Groat & Wang, 2013). This interpretive capacity proves particularly valuable for design research, as Shearer (2016, p.129) emphasizes: abductive insights "are not just descriptions that qualify past observations, but are also conceptualizations that frame future investigation." The abductive approach effectively generates best-available explanations from limited data while accommodating research constraints.

In social science, therefore, abduction serves as a mode of reasoning for explaining phenomena; in design, however, abduction shifts toward creating phenomena or value. Abductive reasoning also aligns with the design thinking process as it creates value within constraints and limitations. In *Architectural Research Methods*, Groat and Wang (2013) present abduction as integral to design thinking processes, following Dorst (2011)'s approach. They formulate an abductive reasoning structure as "What (object) + How (working principle) → Value (aspired)." They describe basic abduction as "[?] + How → Value," reflecting typical design practice where known principles generate value through unknown solutions. They further introduce advanced abduction: "[?] + [?] → Value," representing the complex scenario where designers pursue predetermined values without knowing either the solution or methodology (adapted from Dorst, 2011, as cited in Groat & Wang, 2013, p.39). This challenging yet prevalent design condition demonstrates abductive reasoning's inherent alignment with design thinking processes.

This study embodies these design thinking principles by adopting an iterative, process-oriented methodology. By adopting abductive reasoning, this study embodies antifragile research principles. Antifragility is "a property of some systems to improve when exposed to volatility" (Shearer et al., 2021, p.75). Rather than pursuing robust research that requires many conditions to generalize its arguments, or risking fragile research that lacks academic rigor, this dissertation pursues antifragile research: one that gains strength through iterative engagement with constraints and continuously evolving insights.

Having defined the research logic, the following section articulates the worldview approach and the researcher's positionality.

2.2.3 Situated Knowledge: Worldview Approach and Researcher's Positionality

Worldview Approach

This research is grounded in a feminist epistemology that critically considers the researcher's positionality, including but not limited to gender, discipline, socio-economic background, and education level. It is rooted in the concept of situated knowledge, as articulated by Donna Haraway (1988). There can be many ways to interpret and understand Donna Haraway's article. How I read and understood her work was to understand the positionalities of authors and participants in all possible ways, rather than evaluating others' arguments through a singular lens. This approach—understanding the premises and positionalities of diverse opinions—enriches discourse and enables a holistic approach to constructing dialogues among people from diverse backgrounds with different positionalities. This understanding of feminist epistemology helped me to specifically focus on people's ways of viewing the world—worldview—a specific type of positionality.

Worldview is crucial when assessing a study's academic positioning. As Groat and Wang (2013) argued in *Architectural Research Methods*, "every piece of research is inevitably framed by a system of inquiry (sometimes labeled a paradigm or worldview), whether explicitly stated or not. Everyone who conducts research makes assumptions about the nature of the world and how knowledge is generated" (p. 10). Because worldview is often implicit, it frequently functions as an underlying premise. Throughout the entire dissertation, the worldview approach serves as the main implicit research methodology.

This research also carefully considers situated perspectives in writing architectural narratives as feminist practices of knowledge creation. Lee and Siddiqi (2021) challenged presumptions of fixity in architectural historiography by investigating migration-related architectural narratives. They categorized four means of investigating and knowing migration: representation, materiality, space, and memory. Treating students as young migrants, this study engages with these four means in an exploratory manner, allowing them to emerge contextually across different chapters rather than applying them as a systematic framework.

Researcher's Positionality

Following Haraway's (1988) emphasis on positionality as crucial for responsible research, this section articulates my position as a researcher in both the field site and academia.

The research was initially shaped by informal conversations within student contexts such as student parties, campus talks, student cafeterias, and student events that the author experienced over two years in university student/staff housing in Uganda since 2011. I worked for Kumi University in Uganda in 2011, and during my stay in Kumi, I spent 4 months in on-campus accommodation and 8 months in an off-campus rental house in Kumi town. I worked for the Korean embassy in Kampala in 2012. During my time in Kampala, I spent 2 months in a hostel near Makerere University and 3 months in a rented room in Kololo. I spent 2 months in Akamwesi Hostel near MUBS during my explorative trip in 2021, and I spent 3 months in a rented room in the Bethesda Medical Center guest rooms in front of the main gate of Makerere University in 2023. I could engage in many informal talks with students during my stay in Uganda. Thus, the fieldwork developed as a cumulative process with a thick underlying foundation over a decade.

Considering the positionality of the outsider researcher as a non-Ugandan but a Korean from a Dutch university and the marginalized status of university students in the decision-making process of student housing-related issues, this research takes an advocacy view. The advocacy worldview emerged from the awareness of the misfit between post-positivist assumptions for society and marginalized groups in the 1980s. The advocacy view allows researchers to negotiate their positionality and understand their limitations (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

When it comes to cross-cultural research, positionality always matters for a foreign researcher. However, the critique towards foreign researchers often overlooks the nature of cross-cultural perspectives. The benefit of being a foreign researcher is to have a naive and rich view of subjects by being in multiple worlds at the same time. Being in a foreign country offers a keen sense of the here and now. Cultural differences are challenging, but they are translatable. Site surveys and micro-ethnographic studies can work as tools to decode and translate foreign cultural landscapes (Mota, 2020). With the help of a rigorous research methodology, iterative and systematic attempts lead researchers from 'having an experience' to 'becoming experienced' (see Sennett, 2018) and then producing general knowledge.

Regardless of methodological reasoning for the sake of a nearly objective approach, this research inevitably involves the embodied experience of myself as a single Korean woman researcher in Uganda, economically richer, vulnerable in terms of gender, with shared historically colonized national backgrounds, and politically insecure and marginalized as a solo traveler. One's embodied experiences can't avoid subjectivity, but as Donna Haraway defined, I suggest this research and methodology as a way to verbalize the knowledge of interviewees' practices as "the situated knowledge," as I am who I am.

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3 Fieldwork Methodology and Research Procedures

The discourse of everyday practices is well-established in architecture and urban design research. However, defining precise architectural research methods for studying lived experiences remains challenging. Drawing from the foundational work *Architectural Research Methods*, which builds upon earlier scholarship to define architectural research as "systematic inquiry directed toward the creation of knowledge" (Groat & Wang, 2013, p.8), we can identify key methodological principles. The authors argue that the essence of research lies in its reduction strategy—specifically, "how it is categorized, analyzed, and presented." They emphasize that "research necessarily involves reducing lived experience or observed phenomena to chunks of information that are noted and categorized in some way" (Groat & Wang, 2013, p.8). Building on this framework, this chapter presents research methods—reduction strategies designed and used to capture lived experiences during field trips through the adaptation and development of cross-disciplinary research methods and techniques.

This chapter consists of four sections. The first section introduces an ethnomethodological approach with various interview techniques. The second section explains the ethnographic approach this research employed. The third section focuses on field archival research. It concludes with analytical strategy, data integration, and limitations.

3.1 Ethnomethodology Approach

This research adopts an ethnomethodology approach, adapted from Harold Garfinkel (1967), an American sociologist, specifically the worldview he calls the "documentary method," as a concept and methodological style for conducting spatial practice research. Departing from Garfinkel's original focus on social interactions, this study extends its application into the spatial dimension, specifically to capture the place-producing agency of students. Furthermore, it integrates this approach with various interview tools to minimize researcher-imposed 'othering' issues.

The ethnomethodology of Harold Garfinkel is a powerful tool to unravel tacit knowledge—the everyday practices of ordinary people. Garfinkel introduced ethnomethodology to sociology in the 1960s. His theory incorporates a unique sociological perspective, suggesting that all people try to interpret their daily lives within a larger system he calls a "document." He attempted to explain this in the third chapter of *Studies in Ethnomethodology* based on an experiment he conducted (1967).

He designed the experiment pretending to be a psychotherapy counseling session and had ten students engage in conversations with fake counselors. The students asked questions and received answers consisting only of "yes" or "no." In this experiment, students interpreted random responses as consistent advice, rationalized contradictory answers, and actively sought meaning in the responses. Based on this experiment, Garfinkel (1967) argued that ordinary people, similar to how sociologists analyze social phenomena based on broader concepts or theories, attempt to analyze others' reactions, the social structure, and the world based on a "document" in their mind with underlying patterns. This perspective views ordinary people as sociologists of everyday life. This view of ordinary people as scholars of everyday life can provide lessons and insights for architects, urban planners, and designers in understanding the practices of place users.

The documentary method of interpretation guides this research's approach to understanding social and spatial practices. Garfinkel (1967) drew a conclusion from his experiment that ordinary people, like sociologists, infer "document" or meaning from unstructured conversations. In other words, like scholars who study cases and conceptualize theories, Garfinkel argued that ordinary people conceptualize the world and others in their ordinary lives in the same way sociologists do. The ethnomethodological approach can help urban scholars to reveal how the real world functions in ordinary people's lives. This research method explores the tacit knowledge of spatial practices by interviewing people with several tools.

This method requires researchers to be equipped with "unique adequacy," a deep level of understanding of the knowledge of research target groups, which, ideally, becomes the phenomenon (Trace, 2016). The major difference from other ethnographies in this approach is that the ethnomethodological approach takes interviewees' tacit knowledge, while ethnographers create knowledge from observations. This study developed several tools to help with in-depth interviews, including place-based interviews, mental mapping, questionnaires, and flashcards, which can help to gain knowledge from the "document" of interviewees reasonably.

3.1.1 Place-Based Interviews

Place-based interviews enabled the capture of vivid lived experiences of participants. Place-based interviews were carried out in and around participants' dwelling sites from August 2023 to November 2023. This includes walking interviews, campus interviews, and home interviews. The walking interview technique was carried out inside and outside of Makerere University campus, including Kikoni, Kikumi-Kikumi, Wandegeya, and Kagugube neighborhoods. Interviewees were recruited randomly on campus, and interviews were conducted while the researcher walked along with participants to their original destinations. This research method reduces disturbance to participants' use of time. Also, walking interviews allow students to reflect on their surroundings in the present moment and to give a deeper understanding of everyday life (Holton & Riley, 2014).

Unlike conventional interviews, this approach provides access to insights into vivid ordinary stories from the place of everyday life. Anderson and Johns (2009) studied the everyday lived experiences of young people and argued the importance of methodological placeness when it comes to everyday practice research. By applying an emplaced technique in their interviews, they concluded that interview results varied depending on where the work was carried out because places are deeply connected to people's experiences. For example, classrooms affected the openness of interviewees because of peer pressure and authority figures, while interviews in situ allowed interviewees to share detailed emotions and experiences with related languages.

Place-based interviews promote intimacy. Holton and Riley (2014) argued that walking interviews vitalize the studentification debate by taking and identifying students' perspectives in their neighborhoods. As they demonstrated, the nature of young people's spatial experiences is non-linear but multi-layered, and walking interviews at the place of daily lives lead to a re-layering of their everyday lives.

This approach encompasses social and cultural discussions of how places promote students' narratives in a deeper and more reflexive way.

Place-based interviews create togetherness between interviewers and interviewees in a special way. Michel de Certeau (1980/1984) compares looking down the landscape from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center, Manhattan, New York, to experiencing the city by walking in the street by using the analogy of reading and writing. While both ways offer ways to understand the city, the understanding is inevitably partial. Walking interviews allow both the interviewers and the interviewees to read and write a city together.

Practically, interviews in open spaces allow both participants and researchers to be in a safe environment and ask for help from the public in unpredictable situations as well. Participants were informed about the nature and purpose of the study, their right to refuse to answer questions, and their right to terminate their participation at any time during the study period. Informed consent was then obtained.

3.1.2 Questionnaires for Interviews

Before starting the interviews, students were asked to complete a questionnaire. Questionnaire surveys are a commonly used research method in quantitative research. However, in this study, the questionnaire serves as foundational material for the interviewer to understand the characteristics of the interviewees as students. Additionally, it provides time and space for students to reflect on their sense of living environment before the interview.

Part I collected demographic and housing information to establish each student's contextual background. Recognizing and understanding both universality and diversity are essential. Individuals are active agents in constructing their own lives while also being socially embedded beings, depending on context. Part I of the questionnaire includes questions about faculty affiliation and year of study, as well as room types such as self-contained, shared bathroom/toilet inside the building, shared bathroom/toilet outside the building, and others. It also covers accommodation categories like halls of residence, hostels, rentals, and daily commutes. Furthermore, it includes questions to identify student types as categorized by Bernstein (2003; see Table 3.1). This is because understanding individual differences is as crucial as understanding general patterns.

TABLE 3.1 Questionnaire (Part I) used to identify student types.

Description	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I actively engage and involve in my study duty such as assignments, exams, and group discussions.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I actively develop and expand my intellectual curiosity.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I actively engage and involve in maintaining my intimate friendships in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I actively develop and expand my social network in school.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

The questionnaire underwent significant revisions to accurately capture local housing typologies and terminology. The questionnaire format was revised twice during the fieldwork through trial and error (see Appendices C.1, C.2, and C.3). Understanding where participants are affiliated provides information not only about which field students study in, but also about where students are located during their campus life. Student affiliation was initially labeled as "faculty" in the initial questionnaire (see Appendix C.1) and was changed to "college" in the revised questionnaire following local practice (see Appendix C.2).

The questions to identify building typology constituted the major changes and reasons for modifications. Initially, following local practice, housing type was loosely suggested to be chosen from halls of residence, hostels, rentals, and daily commute (home). However, after site visits and several interviews, muzigo hostels and high-end rentals were discovered, which overturned assumptions that hostels were purpose-built multi-story student accommodations and rentals were informal dwelling units. Therefore, a "building type" question was added to directly ask whether it was a muzigo or an apartment (see Appendix C.2). Nevertheless, identifying building typology remained ambiguous due to the broad range of variations, and some participants noted that muzigo residents are often reluctant to identify their building type as muzigo due to associated stigma. Consequently, in the final questionnaire, Building type (Muzigo, Apartment) was replaced with Building type (Single Bedroom House, Apartment). (see Appendix C.3) Additionally, Room Type (Self-contained, Shared Bathroom/toilet inside the Building, Shared Bathroom/toilet outside the Building, Other) was replaced with Room Type (Self-contained, Standalone Shared Bathroom/Toilet, Shared Bathroom/Toilet in the Corridor). Simultaneously, the number of floors in the building and the amenities that student housing possesses (Shuttle, Fence, Parking lot, Security Guard, Canteen, and WiFi) were added to the final questionnaire (see Appendix C.3).

Living Perception

Part II assessed students' overall perception of their living environment through phenomenological approaches. This represents the most basic phenomenological approach to place, aimed at understanding people's spatial experiences. First, as shown in Fig. 3.1, students were asked to indicate whether they felt their student housing and surrounding areas were peaceful, lively, crowded, or quiet, based on comfort and congestion levels. They were asked to mark their responses on the graph in answer to the question: "What word best describes your student housing/ neighborhood?" Additionally, they had the option to provide their own descriptions.

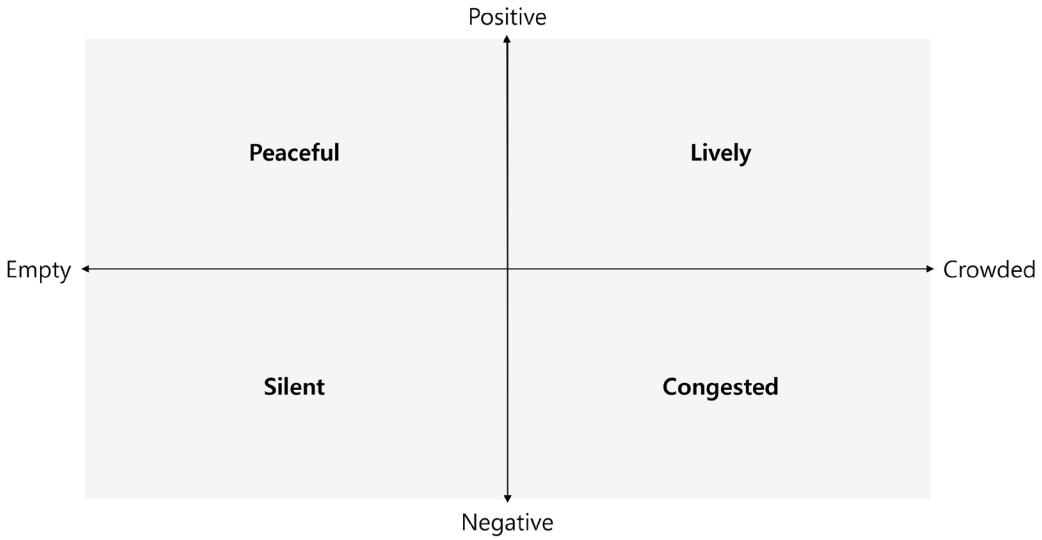


FIG. 3.1 Field survey questionnaire (Part 2) designed to assess students' living environment perceptions (Cross-reference: Section 5.2.2).

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TABLE 3.2 Questionnaire (Part 2) designed to analyze place attachments and the sense of belonging (Cross-reference: Section 5.2.1).

Description	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel attached/belonged to Makerere University.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel attached/belonged to my room.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel attached/belonged to my building (hall/hostel/rental house).	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel attached/belonged to my neighborhood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel attached/belonged to my campushood.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel attached/belonged to Kampala.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Place Attachments and Sense of Belonging

Research on place attachment helps us understand how people interact with and assign meaning to their physical environment (Seamon, 2013). As shown in Table 3.2, place attachment and sense of belonging were investigated using a 5-point Likert scale across various geographical scales. The multi-geographical scale survey was designed to consider various contextual aspects and aim to understand how students relate to their living environment in different hierarchies. In Holton's (2015) case, he studied university students' place attachment to a British university city and concluded that first-year students mainly operate in spaces around their dormitories, while their understanding and attachment to the city broaden as they move to rental housing in their second and third years. While Holton's research focused on changes in the range of sense of place according to the duration of residence, this study focuses on how Makerere University students with various housing types perceive and experience spaces of different scales.

In order to differentiate campus as a physical place and university as one's affiliation, the question about the sense of belonging and attachment to Makerere University was included. While it's difficult to quantify absolute satisfaction with the living environment, the multi-scale survey can allow for comparison of one's relative satisfaction levels across different geographical scales, such as room, residential building, surrounding area, campus, and Kampala. In this way, the survey becomes instrumental in identifying the sources of differences in satisfaction across geographical scales during interviews and in understanding how people relate to different geographical spaces on various dimensions.

3.1.3 Introducing the Flash Card Technique for Interviews

A flash card method was developed to help participants easily trace their use of time on an ordinary day. This helps participants recall memories easily with ready-made cards of daily activities. Several scholars have attempted to synthesize everyday practices of urban environments for various purposes. Meesters (2009) identified Dutch dwelling activities through a survey and tried to interpret the value and meaning of dwelling activities and places. Szalai (1972) attempted to analyze the impact of social status on time budgeting and developed 96 codes of daily activities. Chatterton (1998) borrowed Szalai's code to develop a daily activities coding framework for British university students and finalized 46 codes used to translate participants' diaries into time budget analysis data. Their research confirms that daily life can be patterned.

The codes of daily activities were adapted for Ugandan students from Chattorn's original framework designed for British students. The validity of these activities was cross-checked through individual and focus group interviews, and space codes were developed during focus group discussions with 15 architecture students. Although human error cannot be perfectly controlled, cross-validation through multiple groups minimizes human error to some extent. The flash card technique was applied in two dimensions: a people-focused time-budget survey and a place-focused dwelling practice.

People-Focused Time-Budget Survey

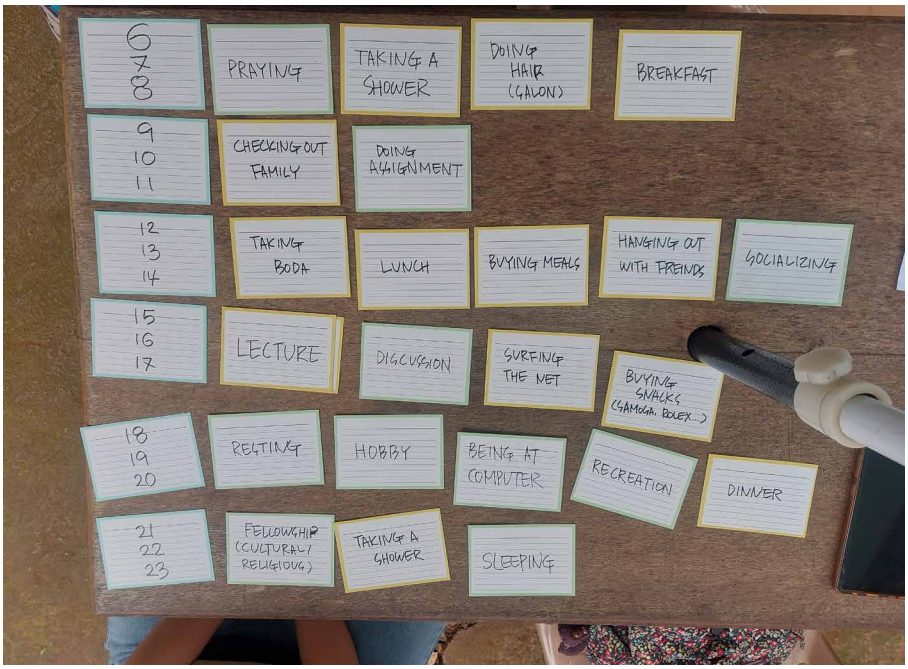


FIG. 3.2 A Result of Flashcards Method for People-Focused Time-Budget Survey.

Time-budget surveys provided a framework for analyzing students' patterns of everyday practices, as daily activities are always spatially located (Andorka, 1987). The use of time provides a framework for analyzing patterns of inhabitation in a city because daily activities are always located somewhere.

Participants were given flashcards with daily activities written on them and were asked to distinguish whether they did or did not do the daily activities written on the card the previous day. Then, participants were asked to arrange the daily activity cards they had classified for the previous day in chronological order (see Fig. 3.2). After that, an interview about the previous day was conducted. The flash card method complements the limitations of interview, questionnaire, and diary-writing methods that have been widely used in existing time-budget surveys. Conventional time-budget surveys ask participants to record 24 hours of their activities and examine their use of time. Interviews and questionnaires are typical research methods for time-budget research, but as Niemi (1993) identified, there are measurement errors in these research methods. People tend to forget daily activities because it is difficult for them to

recall accurate memories during the interview. Additionally, the diary method requires considerable time, cost, and willingness from participants to provide accurate daily logs.

The biggest advantage of the flash card technique is that it saves time in recalling daily activities and prevents forgetfulness of routine work. The flash card method provides a framework for participants to remind and classify daily activities that they tend to overlook because they perform them too routinely.

Place-Focused Dwelling Practices



FIG. 3.3 A Result of Flashcards Method for Place-Focused Dwelling Practices.

The flash card technique also enabled the synthesis of place-focused dwelling practices by linking activities to their spatial contexts. First, participants were asked to sort their daily places among place cards; then they were asked to put daily activity cards on top of the place card where they carry out the activities most frequently (see Fig.3.3). After this, an in-depth interview about the places and activities distinguished using flash cards followed, allowing exploration of individuals' diverse spatial experiences and uses in urban areas and their connections to social activities.

3.1.4 Mental Mapping for Interviews

In this study, two different mental mapping methods were used. Mental mapping is a well-known method for making sense of people's perceptions of their living environment. Kevin Lynch played a pioneering role in connecting psychology and the urban environment in the field of perception. His motivation lay in exploring evaluative tools for designing cities, and his focus was on the actual lived experiences of residents (1984). His book *The Image of the City* (1960) presents his efforts to synthesize the cognitive image of the city. Specifically, he distinguished five elements of city image: Paths, Edges, Districts, Nodes, and Landmarks. Not all people have identical city images. As he acknowledged, environmental images are "the result of a two-way process between the observer and the environment" (1960, p.6). We know that people experience the environment personally through their own filtered perceptions, but like Lynch, we believe that "the coherence of the image may arise" (1960, p.6).

The first method involved asking participants to draw a neighborhood map based on their term-time residence on a blank piece of paper (see Fig. 3.4). The concept of "my neighborhood" is not universally shared. While one's physical neighborhood address is defined by administrative boundaries, not everyone living in the same administrative area defines the same conceptual boundaries as their neighbors. The way people perceive and remember places inevitably reflects how they relate to these places in the past and present.

The second method involved distributing a map of the campus and surrounding areas and asking participants to draw the boundaries of their concept of campushood or their (bi)weekly activity space (see Fig. 3.5). People have cognitive neighborhood/campushood boundaries that differ from physical addresses, and the weekly activity space refers to areas visited at least once weekly or biweekly. For the second map, participants were first asked to name the neighborhoods they had marked and then rank these neighborhoods based on student population distribution and social, economic, aesthetic, and formality levels as recognized by students. They were also asked about the reasons why they and their friends typically visit and use these neighborhoods.

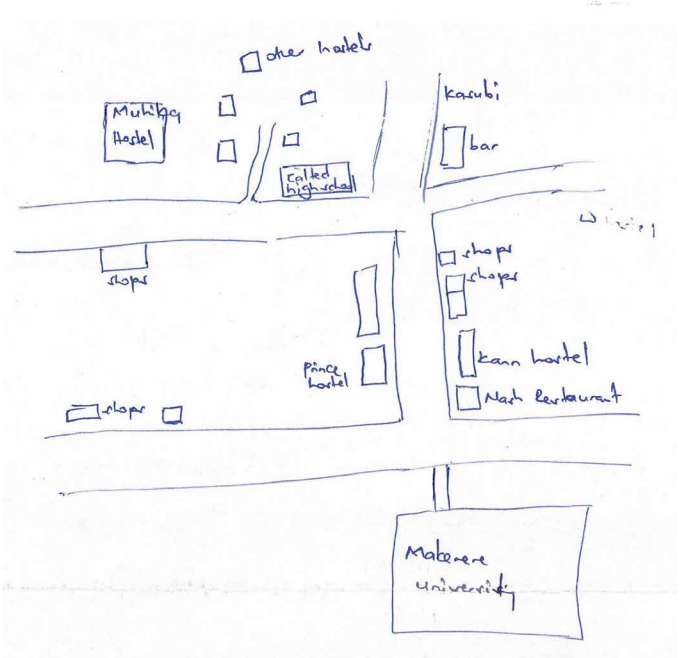


FIG. 3.4 A Result of the Mental Mapping Method.

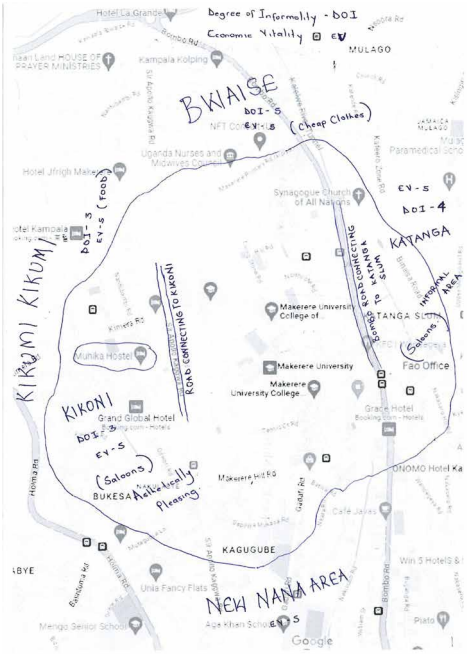


FIG. 3.5 A Result of Cognitive Boundary Mapping Method.

3.1.5 Photovoice for Interviews



FIG. 3.6 A Sample Photo by a Student, Photovoice Method.

The photovoice method was chosen to seek a comprehensive understanding of university students' everyday practices and to visually analyze their daily spaces together from the students' perspective. This method asked participants to take photos of their favorite places (see Fig. 3.6) and conducted thematic analysis through follow-up interviews.

The photovoice technique is useful as "a participatory action research methodology based on the understanding that people are experts on their own lives" (Wang et al., 2004, p.911) and is "the best way to understand a group's experience" (Houle et al., 2018, p.708). This method engages participants as co-researchers by having them document their daily realities themselves, reflect on their lives, and open critical dialogue on specific issues through discussion of the photos. (Wang & Burris, 1997). In this context, photography serves as a form of active meditation and an instrument for exploration (see Spirn, 2011). Photography becomes a channel for messages and exploration in this method.

3.2 Ethnography Approach

3.2.1 On-Site Observations

On-site observations captured embodied experiences across multiple geographic scales through architectural ethnography. Unlike traditional ethnographic research derived from cultural anthropology that requires “thick descriptions” of individuals (Geertz, 1973), the depth of this research lies not in the thick descriptions of a group but in covering multiple geographic scales, based on architectural and urban ethnography. This allows for a better collective understanding of individual students’ everyday practices.

The research was initially inspired by the author's experiences within student contexts in Uganda in 2011 and 2012. The author engaged in participant ethnography before designing the research. Thus, the fieldwork developed as a cumulative process with a thick underlying foundation built over a decade.

3.2.2 Online Site Observations

Field research was conducted both online and offline. While site observation focuses on the here-and-now, online site observation becomes archive-based research accumulated over a period of time.

There are two ways to understand online ethnography: digital as an archive and digital as a process (Akemu & Abdelnour, 2020). While the latter explores the ecology of the virtual field, the former analyzes online data as research material. In this study, both research approaches were conducted: investigating online materials related to student housing posted on major Ugandan daily newspapers such as Monitor and New Vision, and online media like Campus Bee (the former), as well as exploring Google Maps reviews, YouTube, and geocoded social media posts (the latter).

Online media has become a public archive of personal lives. Ethnography in social media has the advantage of overcoming the limitations of direct observation, which can influence people’s typical behavioral patterns and distort results, but it also has clear limitations. As Paay et al. (2015) pointed out, unlike traditional ethnographers

who analyze real-world settings with situational details, ethnographers using social media end up detaching themselves from the actual situation. In addition, the characteristics of social media as research data, which capture an advertising nature rather than a pure nature, should also be considered.

Social media is particularly a space where young people express themselves and a window through which to see students' daily lives. Many university students are heavy users of social media these days. They document their lives to communicate with others online. The advent of smartphones in daily life allows people to easily upload their daily lives publicly. People post their lives with visual images online, and various social media platforms have emerged. Image and video-based platforms such as Instagram and YouTube allow people to share vivid moments with others, enabling us to glimpse others' daily lives.

Considering the above, dual field research conducted both online and offline gives a richer understanding of the daily lives of university students.

3.3 Field Archival Research

On-site Archival Research

Field archival research was conducted at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, in October and November 2023.

The field archival research comprised two major components: visits to the University Archives at the Main Library, and a review of undergraduate and graduate student theses held at Makerere University. Research materials were first identified through the Makerere University Library's online catalogue—covering both archival holdings and student theses—and their accessibility was confirmed prior to and during the library visits.

University-owned archival materials—including correspondence, reports, historical documents, and photographs—primarily related to the halls of residence, were examined during the archive visits. In addition to hall-related reports, student theses addressing local contexts served as important primary sources for the study.

The initial thesis selection was conducted through the library's online catalogue using keywords including, but not limited to, halls of residence, hostels, Kikoni, Kikumi-kikumi, Wandegeya, and Kagugube. A total of 61 student theses were shortlisted for review, comprising 14 master's theses and 47 bachelor's theses, spanning the years 1988 to 2015. However, as the School of Women and Gender Studies building was under construction at the time of the visit, 13 theses (2 master's and 11 bachelor's) were inaccessible. Consequently, 48 student theses were reviewed in total.

Online Archival Research

Data accessibility posed the most significant challenge throughout this research, particularly during the global pandemic, during which the study relied heavily on online archival resources. For the online archival research, materials were drawn from major media outlets such as the Daily Monitor and New Vision, as well as from the Makerere University Endowment Fund website.

To develop a comprehensive understanding of how these sources narrate and portray Makerere University and its students, the following review process was employed. Relevant articles were first collected through keyword searches using

terms including Makerere University, Makerere halls of residence, Makerere hostels, and Makerere rentals. The collected articles were then coded thematically under categories such as halls, hostels, food, business, and COVID. Codes were refined through the identification of recurring patterns, with careful attention to both typical and atypical cases, before the final narratives were constructed.

3.4 Analytical Strategy, Data Integration, and Limitations

Analytical Strategy

To address the research questions comprehensively, this study adopts a mixed-methods approach. The rationale for this design lies in the need to capture the depth of students' lived experiences and to accommodate diverse perspectives.

The research methods are connected to the research questions as follows. First, archival research addresses SQ 1 by providing diverse local perspectives and generating documentary evidence that addresses existing research gaps and deepens understanding. Second, surveys and mental mapping address SQ 2 by capturing the emotional and cognitive dimensions of lived experiences and producing visual data that offer intuitive contextual insights. Third, both the ethnomethodological and ethnographic approaches address SQ 3, which focuses on placemaking, and SQ 4, which focuses on dwelling, by uncovering tacit knowledge of students' daily lives. The ethnomethodological approach overcomes the limitations of the ethnographic approach—particularly its tendency toward 'othering'—by treating participants as 'theorists' who possess tacit knowledge, thereby enabling the researcher to negotiate the positional limitations traditionally associated with the outsider researcher role. This enables thick description through qualitative narrative data and visual outcomes, thereby constructing rich and vivid narratives of everyday practices.

Evidence gathered from these diverse methods is integrated through the iterative process of abductive reasoning and the embracing of diversity inherent in the worldview approach, both of which were elaborated in the preceding chapter on research strategy. Findings from fieldwork methodologies are used to complement the

desk-based and archival research conducted in the UK, which has been predominantly produced by Western scholars. In particular, data collected from students' theses and interviews serve to foreground students' voices—long marginalized in student housing scholarship and urban discourses—and legitimize them as valid sources of knowledge.

As this chapter focuses on fieldwork data collection, certain data presentation methods are further elaborated in Chapters 5 and 6. Quantitative data from surveys are used to complement the findings of qualitative narrative data, ensuring that the analysis in Chapter 5—which addresses SQ 2—remains balanced and comprehensive, providing a fuller understanding of students' lived experiences. Qualitative narrative data from interviews and flashcards are employed in Chapter 6—which addresses SQ 3—to visualize urban paths and daily life, offering visual insights and a spatiotemporal understanding of everyday life.

Data Processing and Privacy Protection

During the field research, the interviews were conducted in English as a lingua franca between the author and interviewees. The official language and the language of education in Uganda is English, while Uganda has over 56 ethnic groups and local languages. Considering the interviewees' educational levels and the complexities of the language systems in Uganda, English is suitable for describing their daily lives in an integrated way, regardless of cultural background.

Interview transcripts were anonymized by redacting potentially identifiable words or expressions, and all data were used only in a fully de-identified form. To maintain the integrity of the data, minimal data processing was applied to interview transcriptions. Grammatical errors were retained to preserve verbatim accounts. Some corrections were made for clarity. When uncertainty arose regarding what was said, transcripts were verified with AI assistants (ChatGPT-5 and Claude Sonnet 4.5) alongside my own reflections based on the contexts and memories.

Transcript references appear as [T-number] (e.g., [T-1]) and mental map references as [M-number] (e.g., [M-1]). Additionally, flashcard references appear as [F-number] (e.g., [F-1]). These numbering systems are separate and anonymized; any linkages among the three sources are retained solely in an internal, non-public file.

The mental maps were anonymized by removing all direct and indirect identifiers and by separating any linkage keys to other datasets. Although handwritten elements remain, re-identification of individual participants is not reasonably possible. Handwritten elements are shown for illustrative purposes only and are not analyzed as biometric data.

All photographic materials were de-identified by applying blur filters to faces and other potentially identifiable elements, ensuring that individuals are not recognizable in any image. Unless otherwise stated, all photographs were taken by the author.

Limitations

A thorough understanding of the target population is essential for contextualising research findings. This study acknowledges certain limitations stemming from the design constraints of the questionnaires.

First, the research may not have fully captured the diverse demographic spectrum of the student body. While efforts were made to understand participant demographics and mitigate potential bias through questionnaires, certain factors—specifically students' cultural and regional backgrounds—were not explored in depth. Adopting Louis Wirth's perspective on urbanism (1938), this study focused on capturing "ways of life" within an urban context rather than conducting a granular analysis of individual backgrounds. However, data from the Makerere University Factbook (2010) indicate significant regional diversity among the 2008/2009 intake: Central (35%), Western (24%), Eastern (17%), Kampala (14%), and Northern (9%). Furthermore, international students represented a distinct demographic segment; for instance, in 2008/2009, there were 1,135 international student admissions (90% from Kenya, 7.8% from Tanzania). Subsequent data show international student enrollment at approximately 2% (712 out of 35,407 in 2012/2013; 729 out of 38,334 in 2017/2018; and 830 out of 34,596 in 2018/2019)) (Makerere University, 2013, 2019). These regional and national variations were not explicitly controlled for in the analysis. Additionally, while the university operates a "disabled entry scheme" (with 31 students admitted through this scheme in 2009/2010), this study lacked representation from students with disabilities. Furthermore, as the reference factbooks range from 2009 to 2019, there remains a temporal gap between these sources and the fieldwork conducted in 2023. This gap may reflect socio-institutional changes that this study did not explicitly address.

The field archival research faced its own constraints. Unlike traditional, systematic archival practices, this process was necessarily more exploratory. Rather than following predefined research questions, the search was initiated using place-based keywords drawn from student theses. Consequently, the archival narrative was constructed from available fragments rather than following a predetermined systematic protocol. Student theses were utilized in two primary ways: 1) to reconstruct local histories and contexts that are otherwise undocumented and inaccessible to external researchers; and 2) to counter the narratives produced by external scholars.

This approach primarily aims to foreground unheard stories, weaving together the perspectives of "insiders" (students) and "outsiders" (predominantly Western scholars) to construct a more inclusive account of these places' histories.

Building on the methodological foundation explained throughout the chapter, the next chapter explores the evolution of spatial order at Makerere University—strategies in de Certeau's sense.

4 Organic Strategies

The Evolution of Spatial Order at Makerere University

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Theoretical Background: Spatial Planning History

The field of spatial planning emerged as a multidisciplinary field in the backdrop of industrialization and colonization in the late 19th century to solve urban problems, such as congestion, pollution, and hygiene. As colonial power expanded all over the world, planning approaches followed its trajectory. To better understand a place of today and better imagine the place of the future, it is important to understand the background of planned spaces and planning systems, together with their situatedness in the global world. When it comes to understanding planning history, Carola Hein (2018) calls out the danger of focusing on elite white male planners' heroic narratives, and calls for listening to other voices in power dynamics and disciplines and approaches beyond the dominant voice. Particularly, she (2022) reminds us that planning in sub-Saharan Africa differs significantly from the canon of planning history, and that such contextual understanding and critical rethinking that question basic premises can bring transformative change. This thick approach allows a holistic and just view of narratives and overcomes the limitations of the conventional approach. This call resonates with the context of Makerere University, where planning legacies and colonial trajectories require critical reinterpretation.

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This chapter delves into the background of the planned place, Makerere University campus, by exploring and weaving narratives from bachelor's and master's students' theses, media, colonial and post-colonial archives, and various literature, while considering cultural, colonial, gender, and disciplinary biases, as Hein (2022) urged us to acknowledge.

4.1.2 Contextual Background: Makerere University

This chapter provides the historical background of Makerere University and examines the planning strategies—the authoritative spatial practices—in de Certeau's framework. Understanding these planning strategies establishes the necessary foundation for subsequent chapters, which will analyze how students navigate and appropriate these planned spaces through everyday tactics. By tracing the university's institutional transformation and its broader urban impact on the surrounding campus area, this chapter maps the landscape within which contemporary students' spatial practices unfold.

To map these strategic spatial practices, the analysis moves from Kampala's broader urban development to the specific landscape around Makerere University, weaving together social history narratives that reveal both authoritative planning and grassroots spatial appropriation. This historical overview acknowledges the profound colonial influences on urban development while recognizing the inherent limitations in reconstructing precolonial indigenous urbanism from available archival and documentary sources.

Focusing specifically on planning strategies rather than individual tactics, the chapter is organized into seven sections. The second section introduces the geographical scales from Kampala city to the Makerere area and finally to Makerere University Campus itself. The third section traces the institutional legacy of Makerere University and examines how its strategic planning shaped its surroundings. The fourth section examines the landscape of student housing that developed within and around the campus. The fifth section explores the urban ecosystems that emerged in the campus vicinity. The sixth section weaves together the social and cultural memories embedded in Makerere University's spatial history. Finally, the chapter concludes by reflecting on how these strategic spatial frameworks frame our subsequent understanding of students' tactical responses and everyday dwelling practices in Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

4.2 Introduction of Places

4.2.1 Kampala

Kampala is the capital of Uganda, and its name is derived from “the hill of impala.” Today, it’s difficult to observe impala antelope in Kampala, but the name indicates this area was originally their habitat. The name Kampala initially referred to the British colonial settlement now called “Old Kampala,” but gradually expanded to designate the entire city of Kampala (Omolo-Okalebo, 2011).

Prior to European colonization, the region that would become Kampala was governed by the Buganda Kingdom, one of the most powerful kingdoms in central Africa at the time. The kingdom’s capital, known as *Kibuga*, was recognized as one of the most densely populated urban centers in the region (Monteith, 2019). Geographically, Mengo Hill formed the heart of this indigenous capital, housing the *Kabaka*’s (king’s) palace.

British explorers first arrived in Uganda in the 19th century, followed by missionaries. By the late 19th century, modern Kampala was spread across three hills: Mengo, the capital of the Buganda kingdom; Rubaga, the Catholic mission site; and Namirembe, the Protestant mission site. Mengo, as the indigenous capital, had a population of 77,000 Baganda, while Rubaga and Namirembe were for European missionaries (Monteith, 2019). The colonial transformation began in 1890 when Frederick Lugard, a British colonial administrator, established a fort at Kampala Hill and raised the flag of the Imperial British East African Company. This event is widely regarded as marking the founding of modern Kampala City (Makerere University Main Library, 1997). From this point, European settlement gradually expanded, fundamentally altering the existing urban landscape. The landscape of Kampala became known as the “city of seven hills” during the colonial period, referring to Mengo, Rubaga, Namirembe, Makerere, Kololo, Nakasero, and Old Kampala. Today, however, the city is often said to encompass 24 hills (Omolo-Okalebo et al., 2010).

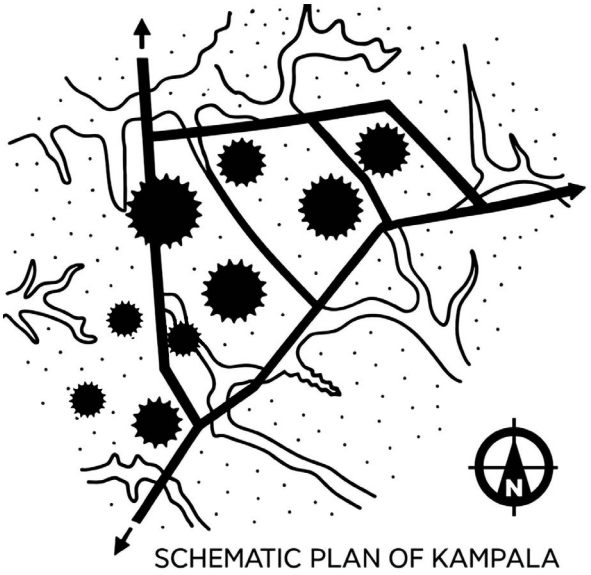


FIG. 4.1 Ernst May's Kampala Planning Diagram, 1948: A Reconstructed Diagram.

Kampala's urban expansion was strongly shaped by colonial planning, which emphasized and adapted to the city's hilly topography. Kampala began as a small 170-acre settlement in 1902, designed exclusively for European settlement. In 1905, the administrative and government offices were transferred to the adjacent Nakasero Hill, which offered more space. In the 1919 planning scheme, based on recommendations from William J. Simpson, a visiting academic from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, an approach that combined racial segregation with hygienic purposes was proposed for Kampala township planning (Omolo-Okalebo, 2011).

A few decades later, Ernst May, a German architect and urban planner hired by the British colonial authorities, applied the concept of urban expansion and decentralization to his Kampala development plan. In his first diagram in 1948, May conceptualized Kampala as nine separate mixed-use settlement groups, each on its own hill (see Fig. 4.1). He argued this arrangement resulted from the natural topography. The place inherently segregated different racial groups; Kololo was designated for European and Asian residents, while Naguru was strictly for Africans. This new plan aimed to double the city's population to approximately 40,000. In 1951, the Nakawa and Naguru areas were designated as African residential areas and incorporated into the Kampala Municipal plan (Omolo-Okalebo et al., 2010). The use of hills as natural topographical features and racial segregation policies were influenced by the colonial era planning, with effects continuing to this day, where racial segregation has been replaced by social segregation (Omolo-Okalebo, 2011).

4.2.2 Makerere

Makerere holds a unique position in the urban development and expansion of Kampala. During the colonial period, it was recognized as one of the city's seven major hills. In 1938, the area was incorporated into colonial Kampala together with the neighboring Wandegeya and Mulago (Omolo-Okalebo, 2011). As the city expanded over time, modern Kampala came to be administered through five divisions: Central, Kawempe, Makindye, Nakawa, and Rubaga. Makerere now falls within Kawempe Division, while sharing borders with the Central and Rubaga divisions.

The original natural topography of the Makerere area made the area both environmentally vulnerable and attractive to later development. The altitude of Makerere is around 1200 meters above sea level. The soil of hilltops is mainly lateritic, which hinders the absorption of rainwater, but allows water to flow to the lowland due to its permeability. The area was mainly used to be wetlands. The area was vulnerable to flooding because rainwater couldn't find the proper drainage due to a lack of infrastructure. Especially, Katanaga-Wandegeya and Kikoni-Makerere II parishes included broad areas of wetlands. However, developers found wetlands to be opportunities because they were cheap (Walusimbi, 2005). As the location's vicinity to Makerere University and the growing student population that exceeded on-campus dormitory capacity, the area was transformed from wetlands into accommodation for students, such as hostels and local businesses for students' daily living.

Etymologically, it is said that the name of this area originated from "kerere," meaning "noise" in Luganda. There were many birds called "Endegeya" in this place, and those birds created a lot of noise. Then, people started to call this area *Makerere* ("Know your hood: Makerere", 2013). People know Makerere as the famous school, Makerere University.

4.2.3 Makerere University Campus

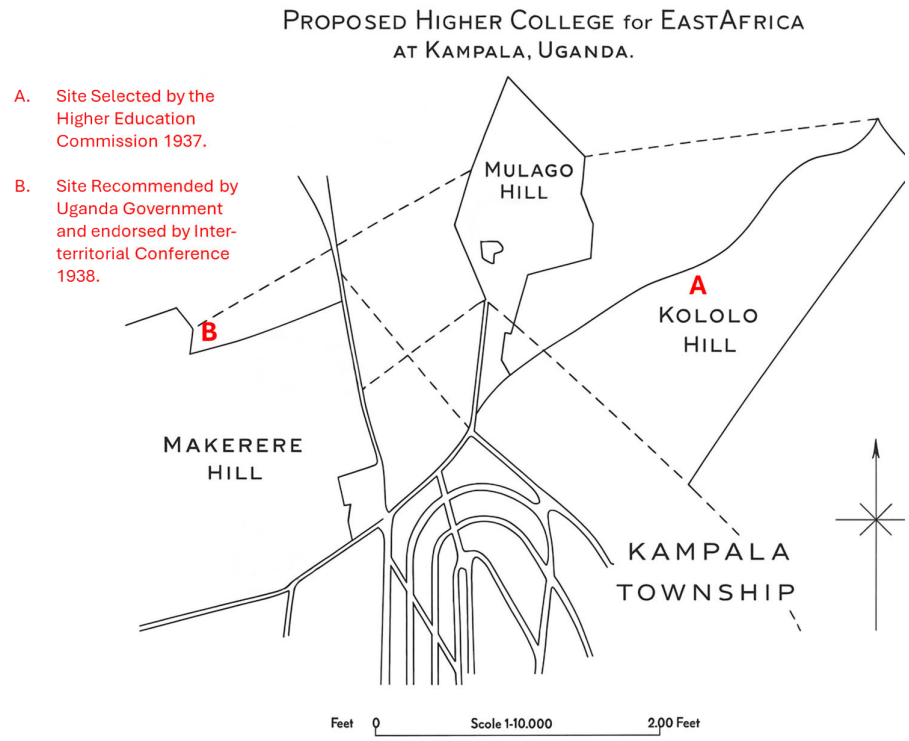


FIG. 4.2 Site Proposal and Selection for Makerere University, 1937–1938: A Reconstructed Map.

The Inter-territorial Conference in 1938 marked a decisive moment in establishing Makerere as the center of higher education in East Africa. Makerere University has been located on Makerere hilltop since its beginnings as a technical school, but this location was reaffirmed when the institution was promoted to a higher education institution. In May 1938, an Inter-territorial Conference was held at Makerere University for the development of a new higher education college in East Africa, which later became Makerere University. The conference was held to discuss practical steps and the implementation of higher education in East Africa. This conference was an important milestone in Makerere's history because it discussed the site selection and site plans of the Makerere campus (see marker B in Fig. 4.2).

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Prior to this conference, a site selection subcommittee reviewed potential sites for the new college. Other candidate sites for Makerere campus were also mentioned, with the Kololo area being the most representative. The Kololo area was recommended by the Higher Education Commission in 1937 (see marker A in Fig. 4.2). However, the site selection sub-committee determined that the local natural features of the Kololo area would increase building costs, and the size of the Kololo site was smaller than Makerere and incapable of useful extension. Also, due to financial issues and the availability of public water and electricity supply, the Makerere site was approved and urged to secure lands and buildings for the development of the new college. Following this site approval, the new college was able to maintain the name Makerere, which already had a reputation (Government of Uganda, 1938, pp.13, 25).

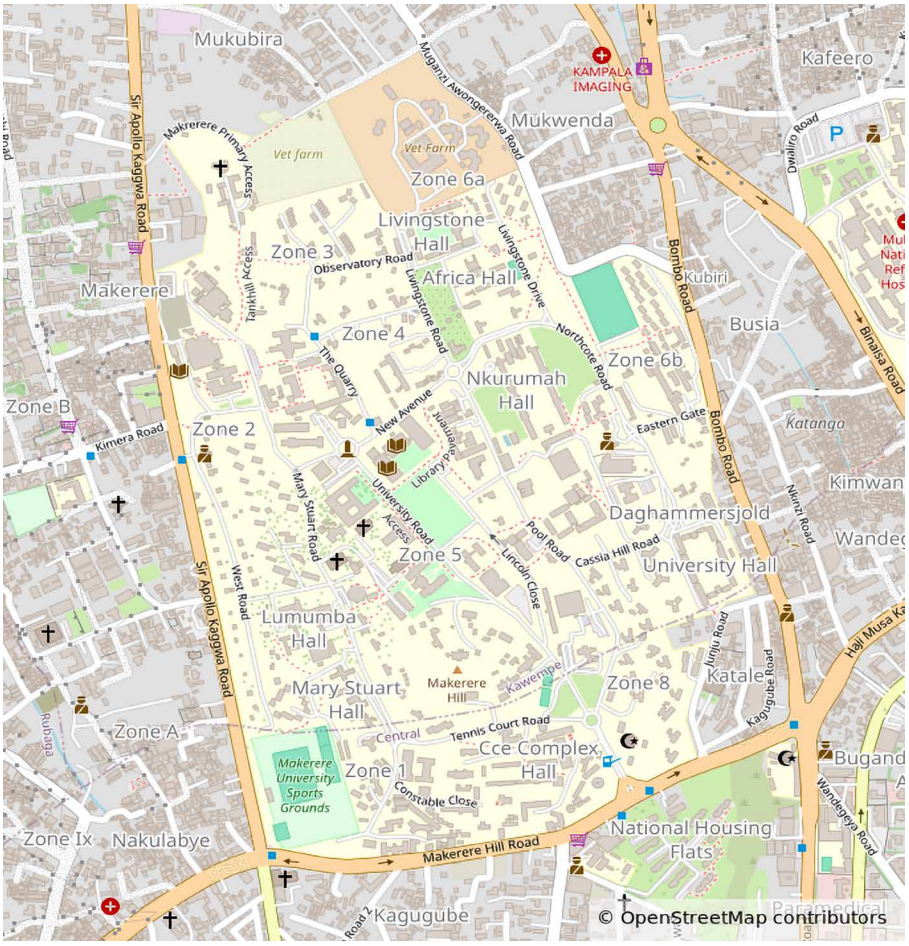


FIG. 4.3 Makerere University Campus map. (Source: © OpenStreetMap contributors)

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Today, Makerere University campus functions as a self-contained academic environment, offering a comprehensive range of educational, residential, religious, and recreational facilities. The landmark of Makerere University campus is the iconic Main Building, also known as the "Ivory Tower." It includes academic buildings organized by 10 colleges: College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, College of Business and Management Sciences, College of Computing and Information Sciences, College of Education and External Studies, College of Engineering, Design, Art, and Technology, College of Health Sciences, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Natural Sciences, College of Veterinary Medicine, Animal Resources & Bio-security, and the School of Law. The campus also has places for religious worship: St. Francis Chapel for Anglicans and Protestants, St. Augustine Chapel for Roman Catholics, and University Mosque for Muslims. The campus offers leisure and sports facilities, such as a swimming pool, tennis court, basketball court, football field, rugby pitch, etc. There are also canteens, small shops, and restaurants, so students can eat and make purchases when necessary. The Main Library was first built between 1955 and 1959 and extended twice in the 1960s and 2000s, and it functions as Uganda's oldest academic library. Also, there are 9 Halls of Residence within the campus to accommodate students (Pottgiesser and Tostões, 2024).

4.3 Legacy of Makerere University and its Surroundings

4.3.1 Early History of Makerere University

The British Colonial education policy in Sub-Saharan Africa commenced in 1882, even before the Berlin Conference, where the initial Partition of Africa occurred (Ajayi, 1996). Colonial universities in Sub-Saharan Africa were designed to foster African elites who would mediate European interests. The need to communicate with their colonies led to the introduction of Western education in Africa (Abrokwaa, 2017). However, before the First World War, colonial officials provided limited support for African educational development, and a significant portion of African education depended on missionaries (Rugiireheh-Runaku, 1995). Educational subsidies were allocated solely to support mission schools with the

purpose of cultivating obedient and submissive attitudes among African students (Abrokwaa, 2017). For colonialists, education was considered a “luxury” rather than an “essential” that should accompany development (Rugiireheh-Runaku, 1995). Within this context, the foundation of higher education in East Africa was established in Kampala, Uganda.

Makerere University, established in 1922 and serving as the sole higher education institution in East Africa until 1956, stands as one of the oldest modern universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. The university played a crucial role in educating national leaders throughout East Africa, including presidents of Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. As the region’s only institution of higher learning, it attracted students from across East Africa. Initially established as a vocational training school called Uganda Technical College on Makerere Hill in Kampala, Uganda, under British rule, the institution responded to urgent local educational needs to replace expensive foreign artisans. In 1922, the college admitted its first fourteen male students to receive training in medicine, transportation, agriculture, surveying, and public works (Macpherson, 1964). In 1925, Makerere College was designated as the University College of East Africa in the Department of Education Report, and from that point forward, Makerere University remained the sole higher education institution in East Africa until 1956 (Rugiireheh-Runaku, 1995).

The university continued expanding, but the outbreak of the Second World War affected Makerere campus construction. Since most construction materials were imported from the United Kingdom, delays in construction completion were inevitable. In the early 1940s, the continuation of the war created persistent uncertainty regarding shipping schedules for building materials. Some buildings, such as the library and mosque, had to await construction materials. Other structures, including the main building and two chapels, required changing their furnishing materials from imported to locally produced alternatives. Only in 1950, after the war ended and the university secured sufficient funding of £1,100,000 from the government, was the university able to establish its first permanent hall of residence (Rugiireheh-Runaku, 1995). These halls of residence established before independence were designed to follow “as closely as local conditions will allow the pattern of an Oxford or Cambridge college quadrangle” (Annual Report for 1955, p.3, as cited in Sicherman, 2008). Under the influence of British architectural styles and global circumstances, the university continued its steady growth.

4.3.2 Brief History of Residential Education System at Makerere University and Its Evolving Urban Ecosystem

Makerere University followed the British model of residential education and hall systems, and many universities in Uganda adopted the Makerere University model (Kasule, 2000). Residential education at Makerere University began in 1925. At that time, it was not yet in the form of halls of residence but small hostels called Sepuya, Nsubuga, Sejango, and Bamugye. Later, it became Mitchell Hall, named after Sir Philip Mitchell, one of the colonial governors. It was not until 1952 that the first hall of residence was established, when Northcote Hall was given its name. This hall was named after Geoffrey Northcote, a former chairman of the University Council (Cyriaco, 1999).

Not all students could follow the residential education system. In 1963, the Mature Age Entrance scheme was introduced, and these mature students were married men and women who already had families. Some of them needed to become non-resident students so they could live with their families and commute from home. However, the school was still understood as the responsible party for student accommodation, not the students themselves. In 1970, the Visitation Committee announced that admission to school would not mean provision of a room in halls of residence (Kasule, 2000). From 1978, the school began to continuously increase non-resident students who were not admitted to halls. In 1991, 1,372 out of 6,240 students (21.4%) were non-resident students, including 467 non-resident postgraduates (Kahangi, 1991).

This doesn't mean an increase in non-resident students only. Halls also accommodated more students. The rooms of halls were designed for 1-2 people, but it was easily observed that 2-3 times the design capacity of students shared one room (Mulangwa, 2005). For example, Cyriaco analyzed the capacity of 13,000 students in twelve halls, including one for postgraduate students in 1999, which compared to Magero's examination of 2,000 students in 1969 and 4,000 students in 1989, respectively (Magero, 1997; Cyriaco, 1999). This shows an example of accommodating students in one room, far exceeding the design capacity. The landscape of Makerere University has transformed significantly since the private scholarship scheme was introduced in 1992.

In this section, taking 1992 as a major milestone for the introduction of the private scholarship scheme, it describes the on/off-campus accommodation challenges and urban transformation surrounding Makerere campus in chronological order by grouping periods.

Student Housing Challenges and Early Urban Transformation surrounding Makerere Campus (1922-1992)

Until the 1970s, students seeking a home away from home in Kampala could easily find affordable and modest accommodation. Whether they stayed near campus or somewhere else in Kampala, students at that time did not face the problems of today, such as security, safety, transportation, and financial pressures caused by being non-resident students. The government allowance was sufficient for students to enjoy a modest student life with dignity. Also, the reputation of Makerere University created a hospitable environment for its students, so conflicts with local residents or landlords were not an issue. Wardens at that time monitored places where students living outside of campus resided because student numbers were manageable until the 70s, but after student populations increased and living conditions of off-campus accommodation became worse, wardens no longer inspected student housing outside of campus (Kahangi, 1991).

It is known that the surroundings of Makerere University were underdeveloped by the 1980s. Also, before the boom of student populations in this area in the early 90s, it was mostly private residential houses and vacant lands (Auma, 2004). The zoning in the 1960s and 70s designated the neighborhoods of Makerere University as low and medium-density residential areas. The initial purpose of zoning to control land use and density could not be achieved due to the specific needs of the area caused by the influx of student populations (Auma, 2004). Even in 1994, the area was still designated for medium-density residential use, but the boom of the student population in this area shaped the region differently from what was planned. Many empty spaces with bushes were cleared, and hostels replaced the empty spaces. Business for students increased rapidly, together with the growth of student populations in the areas (Walusimbi, 2005). The neighborhoods of Makerere University have changed over time. Many facilities have been newly developed for students, while some were facilities that existed for immigrant communities who worked for Makerere University.

With the growth of student populations, some local residents began converting their houses to rent out to students. They began accommodating students in their own houses and running businesses. Some bungalow houses were vacated and welcomed students. People who had permanent structures also sought opportunities to make money from them. Stores and garages were converted to student hostels. Necessary facilities like toilets and bathrooms were added to existing structures to help them function as residences. Landlords and developers built new student hostels, and some built substandard buildings seeking quick money (Kanakulya, 1997; “Know your hood: Kikoni”, 2014). The condition of such a house can be confirmed through the following testimony:

Inside one of the houses converted into hostels, rows of rickety double-decker beds occupy most of the space between the cracked floor and the leaking roof, with hardly any room for the occupants to stretch their legs. What passes for a reading room is a dimly lit cubicle furnished with crudely finished benches. (Kalema, 1998, as cited in Kasule, 2000, p.28)

At that time, such hostels were not places for privacy or study, but shelters for basic needs, namely sleeping (Kasule, 2000). Also, access roads were insufficient (Kamagaiga, 1999). Furthermore, Kahangi (1991) pointed out problems of off-campus housing, such as noise pollution from bars, poor livability, time management due to cooking, and the absence of opportunities for intellectual discussion with peers. Also, poor hostel conditions near Makerere University were frequently reported.

Student Population Boom and Evolution of Urban Ecosystem (1992-present)

Fig. 4.4 demonstrates the rapid increase in student enrollment and the corresponding growth in demand for off-campus accommodation. Since the university's establishment in 1922, the number of admitted students has continued to increase. Enrollment surged particularly after the government enacted a fee-paying program in 1992, and this tremendous increase accelerated the urban transformation of areas surrounding Makerere University.

Since the university began accepting privately sponsored students in 1992, hostel and rental businesses have flourished to meet the needs of student residents in neighborhoods surrounding Makerere University, with challenges. Large hostel buildings replaced small residential structures, and new roads were opened to accommodate increased vehicle traffic. However, this rapid development created significant challenges. Problems with drainage, waste management, and sanitation remained challenging (Nawangwe, 2011). Infrastructure development could not keep pace with the rapid expansion of student residential areas. A journalist's account from the late 1990s provides insight into the daily commuting challenges faced by students living in these hostels as follows:

If you have seen one dreary hostel, you have seen them all. It is dust when the sun gets hot and mud when it rains. The walk from the hostel to class never ceases to be a nightmare. By the time you get to class, your shoes and lungs have collected tons of dust or mud. (Kabagambe, 1998, as cited in Kasule, 2000, p.25)

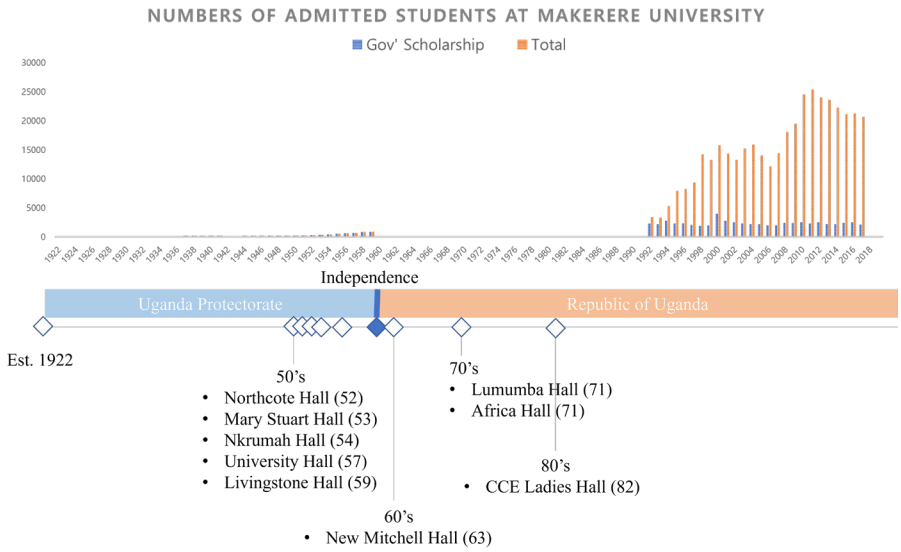


FIG. 4.4 History Map of Numbers of Admitted Students at Makerere University and Halls of Residence Opening, Data for the year 1923-1959 from Goldthorpe (1965), for the year 1992-1998 from Musisi (2003), for the year 1999-2007 from Makerere University (2010), and for the year 2008-2019 from Makerere University (2019).

Most of the campus and surrounding areas have been transformed into residential areas for students, featuring hostels and *muzigos*—single-room houses. According to Walusimbi (2005, p.17), the neighborhoods surrounding Makerere University became "ultimate victims of land use changes and development patterns exerted by the institution." His analysis revealed that the university contributed to land use changes through multiple factors: the influx of students and university workers, fluctuations in land values, and the institution's refusal to lease its land to others. Nevertheless, the surrounding areas became more organized through the university's development planning, and local businesses thrived. Commercial land use in the Makerere area developed primarily along major roads, complementing the dominant residential development pattern.

The two main roads surrounding the campus also contributed to the development of this area. The borderlines between the university and neighborhoods are highways, Bombo and Sir Apollo Kaggwa roads. The easy accessibility of transport attracted vendors, businessmen, investors, and developers. Commercial districts were formed along Bombo Road, Sir Apollo Kaggwa Road, and Nanfumbambi Road. The area has been shaped and significantly developed by local people with the help of Kampala City Council, such as road improvement projects.

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Some areas and roads near Makerere University are still under development. Even now, the areas surrounding Makerere campus continue to change through steady investment, improvements, and the influence of residents and students.

4.4 The Landscape of Student Housing

The previous section explored how the rapid growth of student influx challenged accelerated urban development of neighborhoods at Makerere University. In this section, we zoom in on student housing specifically.

Student housing at Makerere University can be categorized into three types: halls of residence, hostels, and rentals. While halls and hostels are designated student accommodations, rentals refer to any rented spaces, though in local practice at Makerere University, this typically means muzigo—single-room houses. This section introduces the three types of student housing at Makerere University and traces the history of how they have developed.

4.4.1 Halls of Residence

British Influence



FIG. 4.5 Nsibirwa and Nkrumah Hall area: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

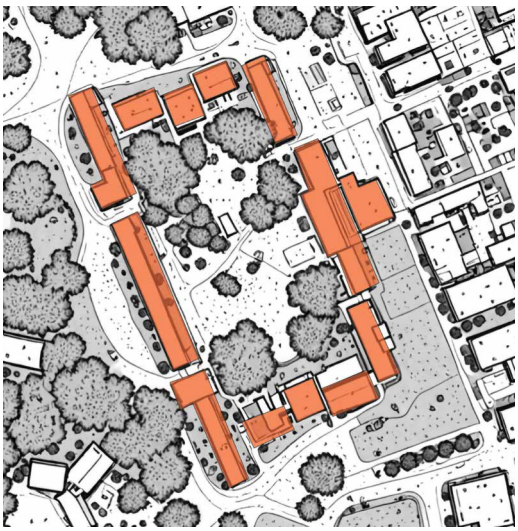


FIG. 4.6 University Hall and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

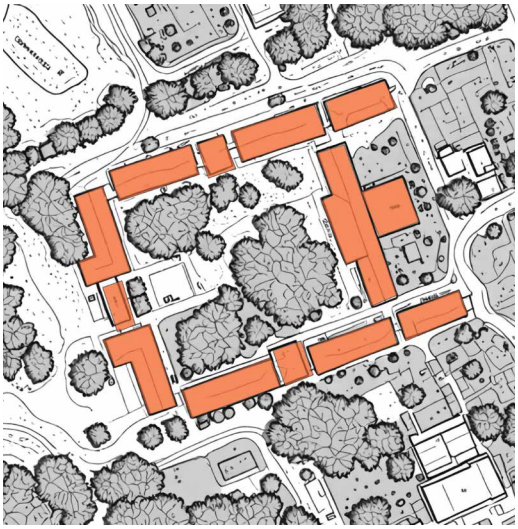


FIG. 4.7 Livingstone Hall and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

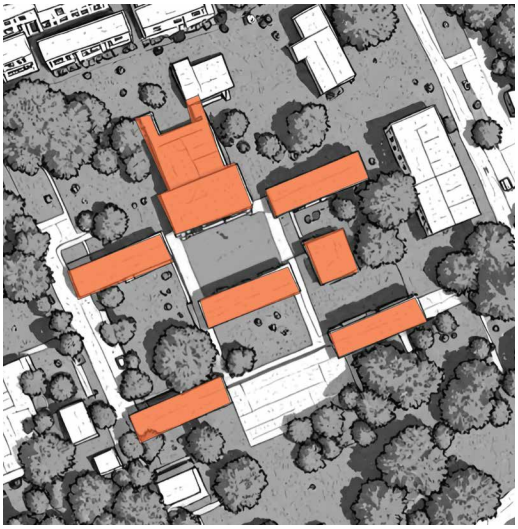


FIG. 4.8 Africa Hall and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

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The on-campus student housing in East Africa is called “a hall of residence,” based on the “Oxbridge” model tradition (Mills, 2006). Most halls of residence at public universities in Uganda reflect British educational philosophy on the residential system for students. In the early 1930s, British educational philosophy emphasized halls of residence that vertically integrated a wide range of university personnel from junior lecturers to undergraduate students (Iersel and Pols, 1959). Commonwealth countries also adopted the same model for their student residential systems in universities.

Halls of residence were structured as residential education, focusing on the social development of students (Sicherman, 2005). The halls were meant to “foster group spirit and teach the social graces of the Westernized elite to which the students would belong” (Sicherman, 2005, p.31). Hall competitions or events, such as sports competitions and cultural galas, enriched each hall’s culture, including unique rituals, and continue to strengthen bonds among students in the same halls.

Beyond the administrative structure, the physical structure of these halls facilitated community bonding. Halls constructed during the colonial period have unique architectural configurations: quadrangles with courtyards. This design resembles the common feature of Oxbridge halls, which are known for their three or four-story buildings and interconnected quadrangular structures (Yanni, 2019). The advantages of a quadrangular design are that it creates central communal spaces, which can serve as social spaces for gathering or gardens where residents can relax and socialize (Macpherson, 1964). The architectural design encourages students to develop a sense of community spirit.

This architectural tradition has deep historical roots. The tradition of quadrangles dates back to monasteries in the Medieval age, and Oxford and Cambridge colleges in the U.K. adapted their forms. Medieval monasteries were ‘places of study, learning, and the production of knowledge,’ and they created community within a physical structure separated from the secular world. The function of monasteries as centers of monastic daily life shares significant similarities with halls of residence, influencing the quadrangular designs of Oxbridge colleges. The quadrangles are perceived as an ideal type of housing for students to socialize and enhance social skills (Yanni, 2019).

Halls built during the British colonial period featured fully enclosed quadrangular designs (see Figs. 4.9 and 4.12), but they evolved into more diverse architectural forms following Uganda’s independence at Makerere University (see Figs. 4.10 and 4.11).

Courtyards and Layout

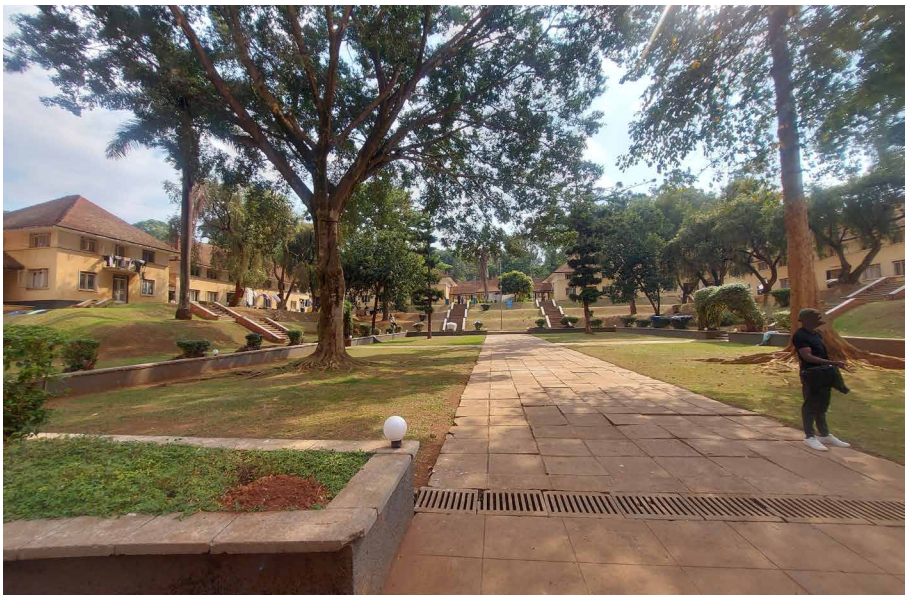


FIG. 4.9 University Hall Courtyard. (All photographs by the author hereafter)



FIG. 4.10 Mitchell Hall Courtyard.

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The quadrangle (rectangular courtyard) influenced by the Oxbridge model shaped not only the architectural form of Makerere's halls but also the social life of students. The report of the special committee on halls policy for quinquennium 1956/60 (Makerere College, 1960, p. 2) stated that "Future halls should be built round a quadrangle, one side of which should be mainly free of buildings, but enclosed with railing […] the ends of the quadrangles should be open to the prevailing breeze." Although the design principle suggested in this report was not implemented following Uganda's independence in 1961, it retained the concept of courtyards.

Beyond architectural form, the quadrangle courtyards serve as a multi-functional communal space that brings people together (see Figs. 4.9 and 4.10). In his bachelor's thesis, Asiimwe (2002) documented courtyard design and usage in Makerere University's halls and analyzed how courtyards served the hall community. For Makerere students, courtyards functioned as a place for relaxation and stress relief; a place to hold academic discussions; a place to read; a place for sports such as badminton and ring tennis; a place for laundry; a place for hosting events such as bazaars; a place for formal gatherings; a place for parties; a place for security; and a place for building community bonds. These activities demonstrate the courtyard's role as a utility space and a social hub. Even today, students meet each other and chat, wash and dry clothes, hold discussions, and read. The quadrangle design thus facilitated community bonds, a sense of belonging, unity, harmony, and safety in student housing.

The committee also recognized that building layout shaped the quality of student housing. The Halls policy committee report in 1960 explained design criteria for the layout and courts as follows: "the superiority of the University/Livingstone layout (staircases around a court, see Figs. 4.9 and 4.12) over the Northcote/New corridor barracks design is evident" (Makerere College, 1960, July, p.23). This critique implied that the first two permanent halls—Northcote (1952) and New Hall (1954)—were flawed in their long corridor plan, while University Hall (1957) and Livingstone Hall (1959) adopted the staircase layout and quadrangle model. By contrasting the two designs, the committee highlighted how architectural form affected student experience and social interaction.

The shift from the corridor plan to the staircase plan reflected not only architectural preference but also deeper social and cultural dynamics. Macpherson (1964, p.110) explained, "the long factory shape of Northcote and New Halls with rooms directly off long corridors on three levels had proved noisy and in many ways inconvenient, and the architects of the new halls had turned to the medieval college plan of building round a quadrangle with rooms in sets off separate staircases. They are attractive buildings—the central quadrangles allow terraced lawns and flowering shrubs of

great charm—and they have proved quieter and cooler than the earlier design." Perhaps in Uganda, which has an embodied community culture, the long double-loaded corridor plan residential environment caused noise problems as it encouraged students to gather in the corridors as a communal space. Thus, architectural debate in the context of Makerere University was not merely about efficiency, practicality, or aesthetics but about community.

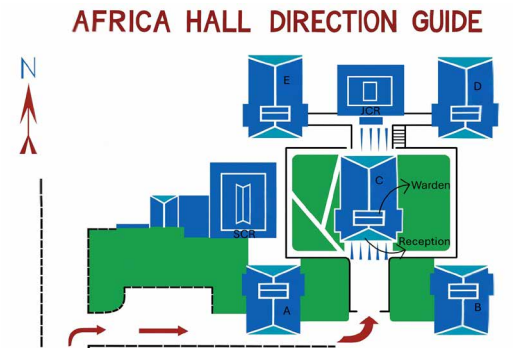


FIG. 4.11 Africa Hall Guide Map: A Reconstructed Map.

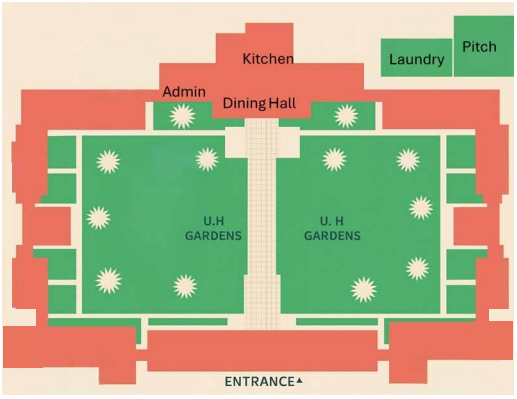


FIG. 4.12 University Hall Guide Map: A Reconstructed Map.

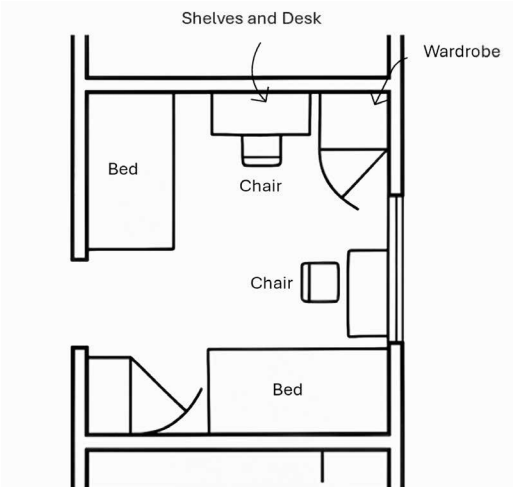


FIG. 4.13 Double Room in Nkrumah Hall: A Reconstructed Plan.

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4.4.2 Hostels

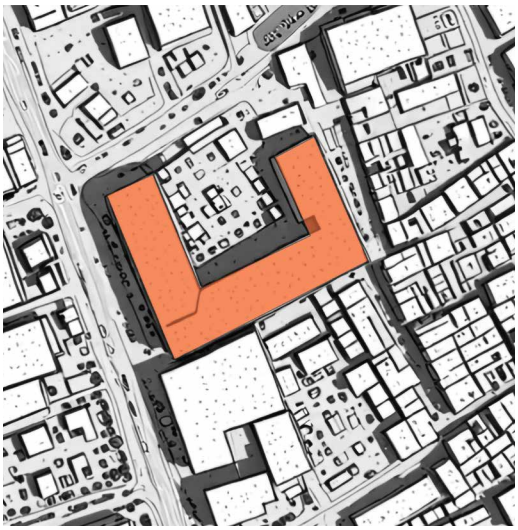


FIG. 4.14 Aryan Hostel and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

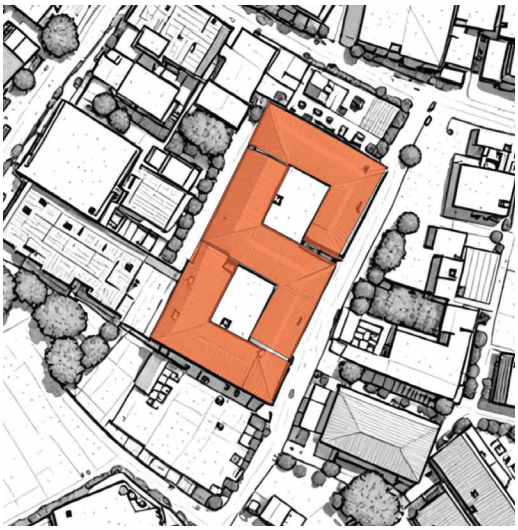


FIG. 4.15 New Nana Hostel and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.



FIG. 4.16 Olympia Hostel and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

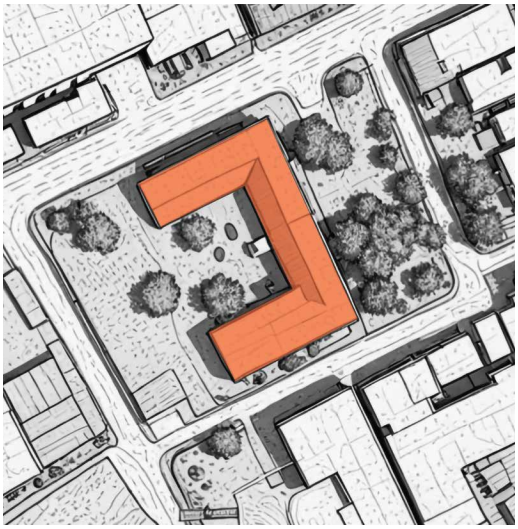


FIG. 4.17 Garden Courts Girls Hostel and Surroundings: A Reconstructed Site Plan.

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Historical Context

The growth of the hostel market around Makerere University has been steadily increasing, with 1978 marking a significant turning point (Musamba, 2000). At that time, student enrollment increased, but there was no corresponding expansion of accommodation facilities, forcing many students to seek off-campus housing. By 1982, the university was already asking 10–15% of students to find private arrangements outside campus (Sicherman, 2005). The halls could not house all enrolled students even after accommodating 1.5 to 2 times more students per room (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003). This capacity shortage catalyzed the marketization of student accommodation as demand exceeded institutional supply and laid the foundation for the hostel sector that expanded in subsequent decades.

To address growing enrollment pressures, Makerere implemented several expansion initiatives to cope with rising enrollment. These programs, combined with alternative entry pathways for female students, significantly reshaped gender dynamics in student housing. This demographic shift had profound implications for the off-campus housing market. Most off-campus hostels catered to female-only or mixed-gender populations, as Musamba (2000) observed. This pattern emerged from a structural imbalance: the university maintained only three female residence halls compared to six male halls, creating disproportionate demand for alternative housing among female students. Musamba's observations documented that these hostels were typically substandard facilities hastily converted from existing residential buildings, presenting significant health and safety issues.

Regulatory Challenges

The shift from regulated residence halls to private hostels fundamentally altered student life dynamics. Unlike university-managed halls with established governance structures, wardens, and behavioral codes, off-campus hostels operated with minimal oversight, offering students considerably greater personal freedom. While many students valued this autonomy, it generated unintended consequences, including disciplinary concerns and security vulnerabilities. In a master's thesis, Mwiine (2010) examined these hostels through the lens of formal and informal regulatory frameworks, social norms, and behavioral expectations. His research demonstrated that hostel residents largely self-regulated based on personal behavioral standards rather than institutional guidelines, highlighting the urgent need for structured governance. This lack of regulation not only created disciplinary and security concerns but also fueled widespread public perceptions that hostel students engaged in immoral or irresponsible behavior. These stigmas disproportionately affected female students,

who faced harsher social judgment and consequently showed strong preferences for single-gender housing arrangements. Mwiine concluded that these hostels functioned as more than mere accommodation—they constituted important social spaces where internal norms and values actively shaped gender identity formation.



FIG. 4.18 Typologies of High-end Student Hostel – Olympia Hostel.



FIG. 4.19 Typologies of High-end Student Hostel – Aryan Hostel.

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Physical Infrastructure and Urban Integration

Physically, Kampala's hostel sector developed with both standard features—such as security infrastructure—and diverse architectural morphologies. These hostels often echoed colonial hall layouts, but with distinct differences in the use of communal spaces. Security measures, including perimeter walls and guard services, emerged as universal expectations, transforming each hostel into a small gated community within Kampala's urban fabric. Architectural diversity characterized the sector, with building types ranging from single-story bungalows to multi-story rectangular, C-shaped, and quadrangle configurations (see Figs. 4.14-4.17, 4.21 and 4.22). A notable morphological characteristic of Kampala's hostels is the tendency for new developments to replicate established patterns from colonial-era residence halls. However, a crucial distinction emerged in spatial utilization: unlike traditional residence halls, where communal areas served as social gathering spaces for leisure and relaxation, hostel common areas were repurposed as utilitarian spaces for laundry drying or remained entirely vacant (see Fig. 4.20).



FIG. 4.20 New Nana Hostel's Courtyard (Unused for Leisure or Relaxation).

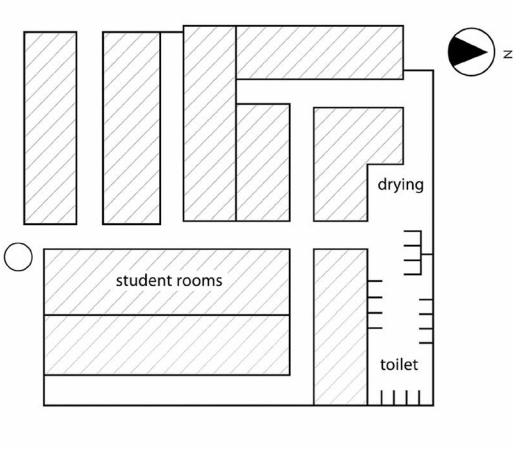


FIG. 4.21 Layout of Casablanca Hostel: A Reconstructed Plan.

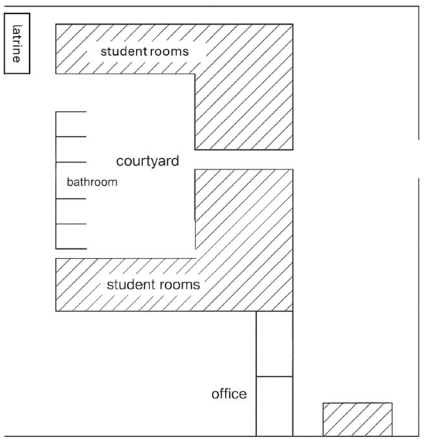


FIG. 4.22 Layout of Zion Student Hostel: A Reconstructed Plan.

4.4.3 Rentals

Rentals - Muzigo as Student Accommodation

For many Makerere students, the most affordable and widespread rental option is the *muzigo*—a single-room communal housing type. With accommodation costs alone, the average living expenses are 1.2 times higher than the average monthly income of urban workers, making higher education itself unaffordable for most people (Musisi & Muwanga, 2003). Additionally, African students are aware of employment instability after graduation (Sundkvist, 2010). Approximately one-third of young people with higher education degrees in Africa work in the informal sector, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2020). Students' social backgrounds and uncertainty about the future compel them to seek more affordable alternatives.

Rentals become settlements for students seeking affordable options (see Figs. 4.23-4.25). While not all rentals are cheaper than hostels, rentals offer a much wider range of price options. Rentals and hostels differ in various aspects, but most notably in their payment systems. Hostels charge rent on a semester basis with all utilities included, but students in rentals usually pay water and electricity bills separately and pay their rent monthly. However, for most Makerere University students, rental housing refers less to the payment system and more to a communal housing type for low-income earners in the city known as "muzigo" (Okello, n.d.).

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Low-income housing in Kampala has colonial origins that continue to shape student accommodation today. German architect Ernst May was commissioned for Kampala city planning in 1945 and, based on the hilly topography, planned Naguru and Nakawa for African settlers. These settlements were peripheral areas for low and middle-income African male laborers. From Ernst May's perspective, locals were perceived as preferring not to settle permanently in the city because they did not invest in their settlements, having only mud huts (Omolo-Okalebo, 2011). This colonial perspective contributed to segregating Africans as temporary residents in rental housing in the colonial city. The first policy for African residents concerning urbanization and housing shortages was introduced in 1954, and the government developed social housing with the muzigo design. Muzigo consists of single-room houses designed around communal spaces (Munanura, 2004). Thus, what began as colonial labor housing evolved into today's common form of student rental accommodation.

Contemporary Muzigo-type Rental Housing

In the contemporary context, muzigo-type rentals have become the most common low-cost housing choice for Makerere students, balancing affordability with significant infrastructural shortcomings. Muzigo is a typical housing option for low-income urban dwellers in Uganda. Every single room functions as a multi-purpose unit for all domestic activities of residents. This housing type meets students' most basic needs.

Most muzigo rental housing for students lacks fencing or security guards around buildings. While raising safety concerns, this factor attracts some students seeking freedom, as some hostels impose curfews. However, poor infrastructure, health, and sanitation are common issues that residents in informal settlements face in their daily lives (Van Leeuwen et al., 2017). Despite all these problems, students occupy muzigos due to affordability, accessibility, and privacy that outweigh their infrastructural deficits for many students.



FIG. 4.23 Typologies of Student Rental Housing in Kikumi-Kikumi.



FIG. 4.24 Typologies of Student Rental Housing in Kikumi-Kikumi.

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FIG. 4.25 Typologies of Student Rental Housing in Kikumi-Kikumi.

Having established the student housing typology within and surrounding Makerere University, the following section explores the broader neighborhoods surrounding the campus.

4.5 Urban Ecosystems surrounding Makerere Campus

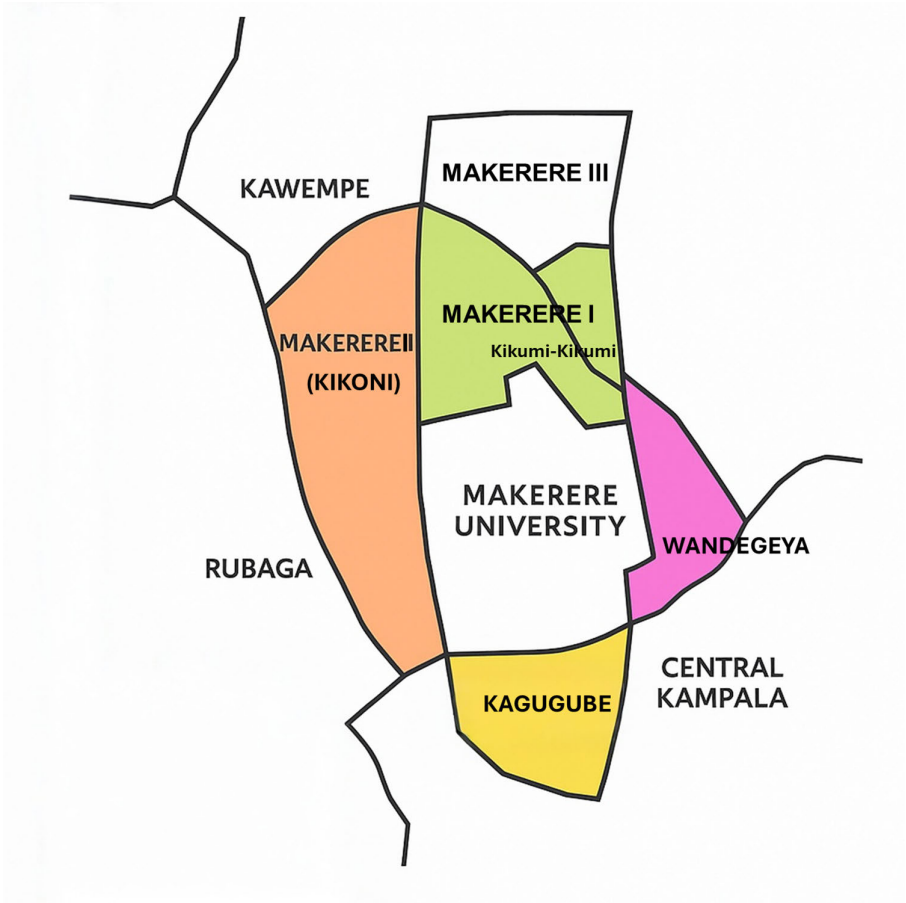


FIG. 4.26 Makerere University Campus and Surrounding Areas: A Reconstructed Map.

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In Uganda, the saying that “land belongs to people” reflects the core philosophy embedded in the Land Act of 1998. This legal framework creates unique opportunities for urban transformation by ordinary people who settle in informal areas. Once established, these informal dwellers gain legal protection and can secure land rights for their future development. This framework has significantly shaped the informal urban ecosystems surrounding Makerere University, where administrative divisions coexist with local nicknames and diverse resident communities.

Administratively, Makerere University’s neighborhoods comprise Makerere I and II parishes and Wandegeya parish under Kawempe Division, as well as Kagugube parish in Central Division, all within Kampala District (see Fig. 4.26). Kampala is divided into five divisions, with parishes serving as the smallest administrative planning units. Each parish implements urban planning according to its priorities and annual budget. However, in daily life, residents prefer to use local nicknames rather than official administrative names. For students, the main neighborhood areas around Makerere University are commonly known as Kikoni, Kikumi-Kikumi, and Wandegeya. The local population is ethnically diverse, including Baganda, Bakiga, Banyankole, Batooro, and other groups (Basingo, 2006; Asiimwe, 2001; Chille, 1996).

This section examines the historical evolution and transformation of Makerere University’s surrounding neighborhoods in the following order: Makerere I, II, Wandegeya parishes in Kawempe Division, and Kagugube in Central Division.

4.5.1 Makerere I (Kikumi-Kikumi)



FIG. 4.27 Restaurants in Kikumi-Kikumi.

Kikumi-Kikumi has evolved as a symbolic hub of affordable student life, rooted in its food culture and closely tied to the socio-economic history of Makerere I parish (see Fig. 4.27). To Makerere University students, Kikumi-Kikumi is not only a place name but also refers to a buffet-type food service and the name of a restaurant. According to Campus Bee, a major campus news media outlet in Uganda, a Congolese man called Ngozi-Ngozi first introduced the Kikumi-Kikumi service and opened a restaurant of the same name. He began selling cooked food to students in the early 1990s, offering a buffet-like service with a variety of choices. Each type of food was priced at only 100 Ugandan Shillings, a strategy that not only made dining affordable for students but also gave rise to the area's name—*Kikumi-Kikumi*, which means "one hundred, one hundred" in Luganda. This service satisfied both resident students, whose meals were limited to dining halls, and non-resident students who needed affordable meals. Today, many restaurants in Kikumi-Kikumi offer similar services (Katumba, n.d.).

Kikumi-Kikumi is a place within Mukwenda village in Makerere I parish, on the northeastern periphery of Makerere University. The origins of Mukwenda's name are linked to a historical figure—the Kabaka's chief Mukwenda from Mityana—who was the

landlord of the village. The place presents a narrative of the socio-economic dynamics that have shaped student life and food culture in the area. The community history is rich and multifaceted, reflecting its evolution closely intertwined with university student life. Since the early 1990s, Kikumi-Kikumi has been renowned for its remarkably affordable eateries, which have played a pivotal role in the dining experiences of Makerere students. Despite its makeshift canteens and salons, the village became a hub for students from diverse financial backgrounds, offering meals at prices that significantly undercut those of modern eateries in the vicinity (Katumba, n.d.).

The account of Richard Byajuta, a former student interviewed by Balungi (2023), illuminates the economic landscape of the early 2000s. He recalls how, with just 500 Shillings, a student could purchase a variety of foods, each priced at 100 Shillings. This pricing system became so ingrained in the local culture that the village's name, *Kikumi-Kikumi*, became synonymous with affordable food. The food vendors, operating from roadside stalls, offered rotating menus based on seasonal availability, contributing to the village's dynamic culinary scene (Balungi, 2023). Leonard Twinomugisha, a Makerere student in 2016, highlighted the conducive living environment in Kikumi-Kikumi, noting its affordability, proximity to the university, and the upright nature of its residents compared to other areas. However, Kikumi-Kikumi faced challenges such as dusty roads, poor hygiene, and theft issues. There were calls for the university authorities to address these problems and enhance the quality of life for both residents and students (Katumba, n.d.).

Significant changes have occurred over the years. Economic shifts, particularly the rising dollar exchange rate, led to increased food prices. The COVID-19 pandemic, among other factors, caused a steep rise in food costs, fundamentally altering Kikumi-Kikumi's economic landscape. Students' ability to dine economically in the area has been challenged by these changes.

Moreover, the construction of a perimeter wall around Makerere University has physically and symbolically distanced Kikumi-Kikumi from the student population, restricting the once seamless access to its affordable eateries. This development, coupled with regulatory changes imposed by the Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA), has further complicated the situation. Enforcement of trading licenses, service fees, and spatial regulations has increased operational costs for vendors, leading to higher food prices and fewer operating eateries. At the same time, significant improvements have occurred in the area. Muganzi Awongererwa Road, the main road crossing Kikumi Kikumi, was reconstructed under KCCA as a key infrastructure development project in 2018 (Kaujju, 2019).

Despite these changes, Kikumi-Kikumi continues to be a popular and relatively affordable area for students, offering a range of services from food to hostels and boutiques. Its affordability stands in contrast to other student residential areas like Kikoni and Wandegeya. It remains a testament to the evolving economic and social fabric of the student community, reflecting broader themes of urban development, regulatory impact, and cultural adaptation.

In summary, Kikumi-Kikumi's history is deeply rooted in its role as a hub for affordable student living. From its beginning as a single restaurant offering budget-friendly meals to its current status as a well-known area within the Makerere community, it has adapted to economic changes while maintaining its core identity as a center for economical student living.

4.5.2 Makerere II (Kikoni)

Makerere II—also known as Kikoni—has transformed into a dense student settlement marked by rapid, largely unplanned urbanization over time. The Batoro and Bakiga people migrated to Makerere II Parish, and the name *Kikoni* derives from "enkoni" in Rukiga (the Bakiga tribal language), meaning "walking stick." While the area once belonged to Baganda landlords, the Batoro and Bakiga migrants reportedly purchased the land after accumulating wealth (Wekikye, 2005). Currently, most of the area consists of mailo land, with a few exceptions of Kabaka's or Crown land ("Know your hood: Kikoni," 2014). Historically, this area was perceived as a residential zone for low-income earners, characterized by mud and wattle houses and social gathering spots where people enjoyed "malwa," a local millet beer served in communal pots with long straws for sipping ("Know your hood: Kikoni," 2014, Feb 11). Due to affordable rental prices and proximity to Makerere University, the area became a haven for students seeking accommodations near campus in the 1990s (see Fig. 4.28).

With increasing student populations following the introduction of fee-paying programs at Makerere University, landlords and investors recognized opportunities to develop rental businesses. Many houses were vacated, and hostels were densely constructed over the past few decades (Kanakulya, 1997). The area attracted not only students but also entrepreneurs seeking small business opportunities to provide daily necessities, such as retail shops and salons. In his bachelor's thesis, Chille (1996) observed that local residents primarily engaged in informal activities and belonged mostly to middle-low class households, with a few upper-class individuals working in the formal sector. Women in poverty particularly supported themselves

by working in bars, selling food/charcoal/or second-hand clothes, or through prostitution (Chille, 1996). Additional bars and restaurants were established, and food delivery services became available.

The area previously suffered from poor dwelling infrastructure—lacking windows, ventilators, pit latrines, and bathing facilities. Inadequate waste management resulted in dumping grounds throughout the area, and there was a noticeable lack of power and water supply (Chille, 1996). Basingo's (2006) bachelor's study on environmental sanitation in Makerere II Parish revealed that residents used buckets and polythene bags for waste disposal due to the absence of a management system. Permanent buildings made of brick and cement were still scarce among local residents. Most inhabitants were tenants living in densely populated squatter houses constructed of mud and wattle, rather than homeowners. Rental costs depended on room size. The area developed organically through local resident initiatives rather than through top-down planning with design guidelines (Chille, 1996; Basingo, 2006). This observation was confirmed by Wekikye's (2005) bachelor's thesis, which found that more than half of the developers in Makerere II Parish were unaware of building plan requirements before construction, resulting in unplanned housing developments.



FIG. 4.28 Kikoni Landscape.

Infrastructure improvements accompanied landscape changes. Until around 2000, taxis—a major form of public transport in Kampala—were inaccessible in the area, forcing local residents to walk to neighboring areas such as Wandegeya or Nakulabye to reach town. Roads were uneven and unpaved. Over time, the main road in Kikoni was tarmacked, contributing to further development ("Know your hood: Kikoni," 2014, Feb 11). During the early 2010s, street lights were installed, and kiosks were regulated by the KCCA. The presence of two police posts helped limit crime rates (Kamalinda, 2016). However, Kanakulya's (1997) bachelor's study focusing on general housing facilities, including hostels in this area, presented a different perspective. It reported that 70% of houses in Kikoni were permanent structures built with burnt bricks. The contrasting observations between Basingo (2006) and Kanakulya (1997) highlight the coexistence of slum conditions and purpose-built student accommodations, as well as the rapid transformation of the area.

The landmarks of Kikoni have changed over time, predominantly featuring names of upscale hostels. Garden Courts and Grand Hostel were pioneering accommodations in the area, with Baskon and Khan also gaining popularity. Today, Olympia Hostel stands as a high-end option. Beyond these hostels, another notable landmark in Kikoni is the University Church Fellowship, which provides multi-purpose cultural facilities ("Know your hood: Kikoni," 2014, Feb 11).

4.5.3 Wandegeya

Wandegeya, the most developed commercial district near Makerere University, has flourished since the 1960s. Wandegeya's commercial vibrancy has shaped the daily lives of Makerere students. It was originally designed as a central commercial hub serving both the Mulago and Makerere areas. Although a small number of student hostels exist in this district, Wandegeya primarily functions as a vibrant commercial center offering diverse food options and shopping opportunities that cater to both Makerere University students and local residents. The name *Wandegeya* originated from the name of a bird called "Endegeya" in Luganda, which used to inhabit there.

4.5.4 Kagugube

Directly across from Makerere's main gate, Kagugube has long been characterized by slum conditions shaped by ambiguous land tenure and gendered socio-economic vulnerabilities. New Nana Hostel is the landmark of this area for Makerere University students. Unlike other neighborhoods surrounding Makerere University, which fall within the Kawempe division, this area belongs to the Central division. Kokunda (2007) identified this area as a slum where 85% of local residents struggled with poor housing conditions, lacked community participation, experienced population growth, and needed formal development in his bachelor's thesis. The settlements in this area consisted primarily of temporary or semi-permanent structures housing for low-income earners. Local residents are mainly engaged in small businesses within the informal sector, such as retail shops and food vending.

Kampala's development plan in the 1960s contributed to creating leftover space in the area called Kivulu, while adjusting the division boundaries of the Aga Khan and Bat Valley areas. Informal settlements formed particularly during the period between 1971 and 1981. The area represents a mixture of mailo land (a form of land tenure in Uganda) and government-owned land, creating challenges for implementing an integrated master plan. However, this ambiguous status simultaneously created opportunities for individuals who occupied the area. These settlers constructed informal structures in the absence of landlords and without government oversight. The nature of the social structure limited the development prospects for individual settlers as they lacked proper land titles and security. They gathered and settled there primarily seeking employment opportunities as laborers, such as cleaners at Makerere University (Asiimwe, 2001).

The gender dynamics in Kagugube Parish significantly contributed to the dwelling environment. Amrah (2005) analyzed how the miserable housing conditions in Kagugube Parish stemmed from the lack of credibility afforded to women working in the informal sector. In this area, women were predominantly heads of households, yet they lacked the resources to mobilize funds for improving their poor housing conditions. Formal lenders typically rejected loan applications from those with self-employment status in the informal sector, and the income generated from small informal businesses was very low. Inevitably, these women in the parish had no choice but to leave their houses in miserable conditions. These circumstances resulted in overcrowded and congested neighborhoods with poor sanitation, characterized by a conspicuous lack of physical planning and development. These dynamics underscore how structural inequalities shape the physical and social environment of Makerere's immediate urban surroundings.

The spatial histories are inseparable from the stories and memories lived within them. The following section explores how social and cultural memories have shaped the place identity of Makerere University.

4.6 Weaving Social and Cultural Memories of Makerere University

The collective memories at Makerere University provide crucial insights into the spatial planning and transformation of the area. Naming practices and gender dynamics in colonial and post-colonial contexts are particularly significant in shaping the campus's contemporary identity. Understanding the social and cultural aspects of planning is essential for comprehending the transformation and evolution of places. Globally and historically, not all attempts to create better places have succeeded, but examining these practices offers valuable lessons for developing new approaches. In post-colonial contexts, Hein (2018) argues that "a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of colonial planning practice, ranging from legal practices to aesthetic and symbolic interactions" can inform and enhance contemporary planning approaches and future practices (p.5). This section explores the collective memories of Makerere University through the lenses of naming, gender, and colonial/post-colonial dynamics, examining how this colonial-era planned space has developed distinct social and cultural identities through periods of independence and political upheaval.

4.6.1 Naming and Renaming of Halls

Hall (re)naming practices at Makerere University represent the changing dynamic of power and identity. The university's nine halls—six male and three female halls—each carry distinct names reflecting different historical periods and ideological shifts. The male halls include Livingstone, Mitchell, Nkrumah, Nsibirwa, University, and Lumumba Hall, while the three female halls comprise Africa Hall, Complex (C.C.E), and Mary Stuart.

Halls established during the colonial period typically bore British names. Livingstone Hall (1959) honored Scottish explorer David Livingstone, while Mitchell Hall, the first residence built in the 1920s, was named after Sir Philip Mitchell, governor of the Uganda Protectorate. The original Mitchell Hall later became the Centre for Continuing Education (C.C.E), which now shares an inter-hall connection with Complex Hall. Northcote Hall, opened in 1952, commemorated Geoffrey Northcote, Chairman of the University Council. Similarly, Mary Stuart Hall (1945) was named after the wife of Dr. Stuart, a missionary at Mengo Hospital. University Hall, established in 1957, maintained a neutral designation ("The stories behind," 2014).

The naming and renaming of halls reveal the political context of Makerere University through time. After Uganda's independence in 1962, new halls no longer bore names with British influence but instead celebrated African leaders and pan-African ideals. Lumumba Hall (1971) honored Congolese freedom fighter Patrice Lumumba, while Africa Hall (1971), initially called New Women's Hall, symbolized continental identity. Most significantly, student-led initiatives drove ideological renaming: New Hall became Nkrumah Hall in 1970, honoring Ghanaian pan-Africanist Kwame Nkrumah, whose values continue to shape the hall's identity ("The stories behind," 2014; Namisango, 2024).

What proves particularly significant for understanding Makerere University's identity is the second wave of renaming. In 1999, Northcote Hall was renamed Nsibirwa Hall after Katikkiro Nsibirwa, who donated the land on which Makerere University stands (Balungi & Bazira, 2023). The title "Katikkiro," equivalent to prime minister in the Buganda Kingdom, anchors the university's identity in local governance structures and traditional authority. This shift from British colonial administrator to Buganda leader represents a reclamation of indigenous heritage and a reconnection with the land's original custodians.

These naming practices demonstrate how collective memory is actively reconstructed through symbolic gestures. The evolution from colonial commemorations to pan-African ideals, and finally to local traditional authority, illustrates multiple layers of identity formation. Hall names have thus become more than administrative designations—they serve as pedagogical tools that reinforce African representation and strengthen student identification with both pan-African solidarity and local cultural roots. Through these practices, Makerere University has reshaped its place identity, building upon a pan-African spirit while honoring indigenous traditions.

4.6.2 Gender Dynamics



FIG. 4.29 Hall symbols and signs.

Gender Harmony

Hall cultures at Makerere University contribute to gender harmony and student cultures. Over time, the nine halls at Makerere University have developed unique cultures. Each hall has formed its own identity and symbols (see Fig. 4.29), and built solidarities—a local term for affiliation—with halls of the opposite gender. Relationships between halls are more commonly known between opposite genders. There are six male halls and three female halls, causing some male halls to form solidarities with off-campus hostels as well. Lumumba Hall and Mary Stuart Hall form the "Lumbox" solidarity. Lumumba students are known as "Elephants" with their mascot "Gongom," while Mary Stuart students are called "Boxers" due to their structure and have "Gongomesi," who is Gongom's wife. Complex Hall and Mitchell Hall form "Mitchelex," and Livingstone and Africa Hall form "Afrostone." Livingstone residents are called "Gentlemen," and Africa Hall residents are called "Ladies." The Afrostone solidarity has existed since 1976, and University Hall and Garden Court Hostel formed the "Unicourt" solidarity in 2004. Nkrumah Hall also formed a solidarity with Mulago View Hostel called "Nkrumview." These inter-hall solidarities form an important aspect of campus culture and social identity at Makerere University ("The stories behind," 2014).

Inter-hall solidarities create harmony in campus culture. They celebrate their solidarity through events such as Afrostone Night. Afrostone Porridge Night is a popular inter-hall event between Africa Hall and Livingstone Hall. In an open square courtyard, they play music and dance for residents of both halls only. They socialize

with each other while preparing porridge. The host hall provides drinking cups to guests from the other hall, forming bonds ("Makerere students fight," n.d.). There is an absence of same-gender solidarities between halls, and those who historically missed male-female bonds eventually found partners off-campus, like Unicourt and Nkrumview. In the late 90s, Tusiime (1999) concluded in his master's thesis that two-thirds of students thought female halls played a moderating role for adjacent male halls, and that Northcote's hall culture included potential conflicts with inter-hall solidarities and other independent male halls. The harmony of opposite genders played a role in mitigating student relationships at Makerere University.

Female students were first admitted to the previously all-male Makerere University in 1945. Margaret Graham laid the foundation for women's education at Makerere University with the support of George Turner (a former Vice Chancellor of Makerere University) and Mary Stuart (the wife of the bishop of Uganda). From the beginning of the hall system, the role of wardens was important for students' well-being and campus life (Burnet, 1982). Hanna Stanton, a former warden of Mary Stuart Hall, determined that "the Halls of Residence were the most important part of Makerere" (Stanton, 1978, Ch. 1, p.20). The first six female students stayed in the "Box," a small square building later renovated as a guest house. Then, Mary Stuart Hall began accommodating female students in 1953. *Box* became the nickname of Mary Stuart Hall later. There are two other stories behind why Mary Stuart Hall is called *Box*. The first one is because of its strict rules for female students. People might not have wanted women students to get out of the box (Pottgiesser and Tostões, 2024). The last one is that it came from "Assanand's Box" record shop because students enjoyed playing gramophone records in the hall. It is said that before the nickname *Box*, it was nicknamed "meat safe" because of its physical appearance with mosquito nets on all windows and doors (Stanton, 1978, Ch.5, pp. 10-11). While it's difficult to determine which of these various stories behind the *Box* nickname is true, they offer glimpses into the early architectural form of female students' accommodation, the particularly strict hall rules for female students, and the university life of early female students who enjoyed music.

The admission of female students fundamentally transformed Makerere University's campus culture, introducing new dynamics in inter-hall relations and social interactions as documented by witnesses like Mrs. Macpherson, who observed a "noticeable increase in good manners" among male students (Stanton, 1978, Ch. 5, p.5). Female students carved out their own path in campus life. The observations during the transition to independence in the halls are also interesting. According to observations by Hanna Stanton, who was the warden of Mary Stuart Hall at the time, they celebrated independence by hosting Independence Dinners at each hall of residence with honored guests. At Mary Stuart Hall, Mrs. Mary Stuart was invited as

the guest of honor. However, not everything went smoothly. Amid the tensions and confusion of the transition to independence, female students cooked for themselves and organized domestic life smoothly, but in the men's halls, this transition created tension and uncertainty as students had to deal with unfamiliar household chores (1978, Ch. 2, p.13).

Gender Conflicts

Despite the longing for gender harmony and acknowledgment of differences, gender conflicts emerged throughout Makerere University's history, revealing the tensions that existed alongside efforts at inter-hall solidarity. The renaming to Nsibirwa Hall is closely related to military hall culture and gender conflicts. Nsibirwa Hall was originally called Northcote Hall. They gained their name with their militaristic subculture along with the Northcote State Supreme Revolutionary Committee (NSSRC). They had military ranks within the hall and followed four core pillars: Supremacy, Superiority, Speed, and Determination. Their motto was "we either win, or they lose." Alumnus John Noronha described his experience at Northcote in the late 60s: "I quickly realized the power of my voice and the attention it commanded. This worked out perfectly for Northcote Hall, where the spirit was "supreme." Before long, the seat at the front of the Northcote Tractor was mine!" (Noronha, 2025). This shows the spirit of Northcote at that time. Additionally, a former resident from the early 90s shared a similar story: "We used to dress in army fatigue, sing, support games with much spirit, and drum – our social life basically was envied by other halls, they would get scared of us. Northcote was a command council. The culture minister was a field marshal, the speaker was a Brigadier, et cetera" (Balungi & Bazira, 2023). Their brotherhood code "Weewe" and confidentiality code may have shaped them in a certain way, and strong bonds within the hall may have allowed them to go their own way without inter-hall solidarities like other male halls. Instead, Northcote students put pepper and glass in the food of two female halls, which led to them being called Hall X for about a year before being renamed Nsibirwa and the hall being dismissed in 1999 (Balungi & Bazira, 2023).

The Nsibirwa Hall incident formed the basis of what David Mills tried to capture in the social history of Makerere students. David Mills begins his article "Life on the Hill: Students and the Social History of Makerere" with his personal experience at Makerere University in 1995, developing the university's historical narrative through observations after witnessing paramilitary hall culture and gender tensions. He concluded that the masculine military hall culture he observed in 1995 was the aftermath of a sad period, citing a student's letter in 1969 mentioning that "everyone needed military training to defend the legitimate government" (Mills, 2006, p.264)

However, given that David Mills explicitly mentioned his positionality as a "presentist" with an anthropological background, and considering his position as an outside researcher, it is not sufficient to accept only his interpretations and observations as historical truth. In that regard, students' observations and analysis give a richer understanding of the same context.

Several students studied interhall relations at Makerere University in the 1990s. Tusiime's (1999) master's thesis also supported the particularity of Northcote Hall culture. As a master's student in Education Administration at Makerere University, he explored the same topic of hall culture and gender tensions in his thesis titled "Correlates of Inter-Hall Student Relationships at Makerere University," and found that, particularly Northcote Hall's relationships with others, displayed potential conflicts due to hall culture. A master's thesis from 1996 also reveals a different voice, while partly supporting Mills' interpretation of political influences. Nakayiza (1996) studied aberrant behaviors, so-called "morale boosting," during inter-hall sports games at Makerere University for his master's thesis in education. He observed and analyzed undergraduate students in 1995/96 with an ethnographic survey approach and found different behavioral patterns depending on hall cultures. In his findings, certain halls like Northcote and Lumumba were more associated with disruptive behaviors than others like Livingstone and Africa Hall, which call themselves "gentlemen" and "ladies." Hall culture significantly influenced campus life for Makerere students both microscopically in inter-hall sports competitions and macroscopically through national political upheavals.

4.6.3 Colonial and Post-colonial Dynamics

Cross-Cultural Perspective: Makerere University and the High Table Tradition

Makerere University emerged from the intersection of the established Buganda Kingdom and British colonial administration. Before the British invaded and settled in Kampala, there had been a governing system of the Buganda kingdom. This helped the British to introduce their "Indirect Rule" system into the Buganda kingdom, which they had already experienced with India and Malaya. This was not the case for the whole Uganda area because eastern Uganda didn't have chiefs or kings, as the British had assumed. In the end, they invented chiefs for areas where traditions were against chiefly authority (Nwauwa, 2013).

The upper class of the Buganda kingdom was open to foreign thinking and Christianity. Unlike West Africa, most educated elite classes under the British system were the ruling group in the Buganda kingdom. This fact could mitigate possible tensions between the newly educated elite group in the colony and the traditional hierarchical system. This might have been a major influencing factor for Makerere University in maintaining its norms even after independence, rather than shifting to extreme nationalistic and anti-colonial movements.

In the end, this might have caused social and cultural segregation between the ruling group and the rest of independent Uganda. Nwauwa concluded, "True to the foreign social and academic culture they had imbibed, the behaviour, taste, and thought of the African 'Oxbridges' isolated them from their peoples. Flaunting British ideals, the new elite continued to wear English suits for business even when the African sun threatened to melt rock!" (Nwauwa, 2013, p.218).

The Oxbridge tradition known as "High Table" was also a school tradition at Makerere University. Each hall in public universities in Uganda had separate dining halls, and they had a high table like Oxbridge and other British universities. The High Table was a set of fine tables and chairs for faculty, senior staff, or their guests in the dining hall, located literally higher than students' tables, while the students occupied the main area of the hall (Sicherman, 2005). When the first hall of residence of Makerere University, Northcote Hall, was presented after its completion in 1952, the custom of High Table was also introduced. After its first introduction at Northcote Hall, it became the norm in the dining hall. High Table played a role in enhancing a sense of community and bonding with senior staff in individual halls (Macpherson, 1964).

There was a function of High Table culture between the two cultures. Hanna Stanton, a former British warden at Makerere University, reflected on her High Table experiences in her campus life in London and her warden life at Makerere University. As a British student, she didn't enjoy the high table, but she remembered that it was a pleasant experience in Kampala, as people could invite friends from outside and introduce local culture and local food to others at Makerere. While High Table culture allowed people, not only staff but also students, to enjoy fellowship and opportunities to socialize with each other, she observed that some students never came. She concluded that "perhaps it all would have been better if it had not been called the High Table; inevitably one thought or one imagined that the students thought of their tables as the low tables, and this, in the context of students, particularly African students, feeling that they want to prove they are certainly as good if not better than any white man, was bound in the end to lead to resentment." This might have drawn High Table to an end, and she observed that even informal dinner parties had disappeared in the early 70s (Stanton, 1978, ch.9, p.22).

Scholarly Perspectives on Makerere University: Colonial and Post-Colonial Interpretations

British sociologist and former faculty member J. E. Goldthorpe documented Makerere University students from 1922 to 1960 (1965). His work offers insight into how British scholars interpreted Makerere students. As his book title, *An African Elite*, suggests, Makerere University followed an elite model during the colonial period. Students became a special group in society, standing at the intersection of traditional African society and modern Western influence. Students commonly experienced feelings of being "men of two worlds," belonging neither to traditional society nor European society. Unlike Western society, students' family backgrounds were mixed – they had some educated relatives alongside many illiterate ones. Students faced significant adjustment challenges moving between traditional environments and the Western educational setting at Makerere University. These challenges continued after graduation due to different value systems. Additionally, male graduates faced challenges in marrying educated women. As an educator at Makerere University, Goldthorpe observed and shared many adjustment challenges of Makerere students.

American scholar and former faculty member during the post-colonial period, James Mittelman, would likely have interpreted students' adjustment challenges differently. He traced Uganda's higher education history to decolonize it (2018). In his historical framework, Western education replaced indigenous knowledge systems during the colonial period, and universities symbolized national independence while maintaining the Western elitist model in the early post-independence period. From his perspective, the adjustment challenges Goldthorpe mentioned would have been dissonance between two knowledge and value systems rather than transition between lower and higher educated classes. He specifically pointed to hall culture as a symbol.

> With decolonization, it soon became abundantly clear that a university under a national flag was not tantamount to a system that conveys local norms and beliefs. Symbolized, for example, by the Oxford-Cambridge customs of dining at high table in residence halls (dormitories) and dining gowns (robes) at evening meals, colonial-style hierarchies remained in play. (Mittelman, 2018, p. 7)

In his view, Oxbridge influences affected the school's culture, structure, and knowledge systems beyond political independence.

While Goldthorpe maintained a Western-centric view and Mittelman focused on decolonization, British scholar David Mills' (2006) approach is more nuanced and multifaceted.

> Academics and students alike were between two, if not three, worlds – the racialized legacy of 'native' education in colonial Africa, the imagined potential of the Oxbridge ideal for new campus universities, and the rapidly changing politics of African societies and states heading towards independence. In the 1950s, students as much as staff wanted a 'gold standard' – why, they felt, should Africa have second-best? Mimesis was a political principle, not evidence of social inferiority. (Mills, 2006, p. 251)

Beyond the dichotomy between colonial and post-colonial, Mills posited and examined Makerere University's legacy in relation to native traditions, ideals, and political realities. Throughout independence, political upheaval, civil wars, and globalization, students actively participated in shaping campus culture through magazines, debates, and social organizations, while simultaneously questioning colonial hierarchies. This tradition continued even under Idi Amin's notorious regime in the 1970s as a place for freedom of expression.

The perspectives of Goldthorpe, Mittelman, and Mills reveal that Makerere's memory extends beyond the simple colonial/post-colonial dichotomy, exposing it as a site where institutions, knowledge systems, and identities interact.

4.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter has mapped the planning strategies that produced Makerere University's landscape, revealing how institutional decisions, colonial legacies, and hybrid urban development have shaped both the campus and its surrounding neighborhoods. Moving across geographical scales from Kampala to the Makerere area and finally to the campus itself, the analysis traced institutional legacies, student housing landscapes, neighboring urban ecosystems, and the social-cultural memories that have shaped this place. Beginning with a brief history of Kampala, it explores how the Makerere area has been shaped over time, examining the interplay between institution, students, and urban environment, and showing how these elements have co-evolved to produce a distinctive urban ecosystem. Makerere University's place identity has been shaped both temporally—from colonialism through independence to political upheavals—and topographically through its hilltop location and surrounding wetlands. Social and cultural collective memories have further articulated this identity.

Institutionally, two decisive moments brought about landscape changes in the Makerere area. The first was the selection of the school site in 1938, and the second was the introduction of the private sponsorship scheme in 1992, which triggered a rapid influx of students and transformed the surrounding neighborhoods. Within the campus, sociocultural collective memories connected to the (re)naming of halls, gender dynamics, and (post)colonial encounters shaped the identity of Makerere University and its students. Beyond the campus, the landscape of student housing resonated with rapid urban development and expansion, while its architectural forms reflected the legacies of colonial design. Neighboring urban ecosystems intersect with the coexistence of formal and informal dimensions of students' everyday lives.

This historical analysis of institutional strategies provides an essential foundation for understanding contemporary student tactics. Following de Certeau's framework (1980/1984), this chapter sought to map "strategy"—the planned and authorized spatial order—but revealed that an organic spatial order emerged in a manner distinct from top-down strategies represented by planning, authorization, and management. The coexistence of institutional change and Kampala's hybrid forms of expansion—both formal and informal—shaped the urban landscape from housing to neighborhoods. This reflects Kampala's land philosophy that "land belongs to the people," which recognizes informal settlers. It also resonates with Simone's notion of people as infrastructure. The development of Kikumi-Kikumi was particularly significant: beginning with a single restaurant owner's food service, it gradually became a local identity marker. Subsequently, the engagement of local authorities such as KCCA through infrastructure investment and road improvements further illustrates the hybrid spatial practice strategies unique to this place, where formal and informal are intertwined.

The landscape of student life also involved ambivalent encounters across multiple domains. The loose disciplinary nature of hostels and private rentals granted students freedom while simultaneously exposing them to social vulnerability under public scrutiny. The (re)naming of halls presented another ambivalence: while some adopted African names to reinforce postcolonial identities, others retained British names, revealing cultural hybridity. Most emblematically, the High Table culture embodied this tension, functioning simultaneously as a site of elite networking and a reproduction of colonial hierarchies.

Thus, the historical trajectory of Makerere University's landscape transformation contributes to understanding the complex ecosystems of student housing, urban development, and sociocultural encounters in a postcolonial university context. Weaving together narratives from former and current students, outside scholars, and press and media accounts, this analysis reconstructs and questions the power

dynamics embedded in place-making. Following Hein's (2022) call to question dominant planning narratives, this chapter has examined not only institutional strategies but also colonial legacies, gender dynamics, and hybrid formal-informal practices that challenge conventional planning historiography. This approach reveals that Makerere's spatial history extends beyond elite planners' visions to encompass diverse voices. By integrating macro-level institutional perspectives with micro-level individual experiences, it provides a holistic account of Makerere University's spatial history—revealing how planned places are entangled with sociocultural practices. These findings contribute to broader discussions on the role of higher education institutions in shaping urban spaces and social dynamics in African cities.

While this chapter has examined the historical production of Makerere's landscape, the following chapters explore students' tactical responses—how students currently inhabit and interpret these spaces through their everyday practices and cognitive maps.

5 Mapping the Mind

Place Attachments and Collective Cognitive Lifeworlds

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Theoretical Background: Cognitive Landscapes and Place Perceptions

Some would argue that everyday landscapes in cities have become mediocre. For example, Marc Augé (1995) conceptualized the notion of "non-place" to describe the anonymous spaces generated by globalization and urbanization, while Edward Relph's (1976) concept of "placelessness" similarly addresses the homogenization of places and the loss of distinctive character. Indeed, globalization and urbanization with economic development have created similar landscapes across most of the world. Calvino's novel *Invisible Cities* shows his perspective on modern cities as spaces of lost individuality and identity (1970/1974).

> But you will arrive at another Trude, absolutely the same, detail by detail. The world is covered by a sole Trude which does not begin and does not end. Only the name of the airport changes. (p. 128) [...] Traveling, you will realize that differences are lost: each city takes to resembling all cities, places exchange their form, order, distances, a shapeless dust cloud invades the continents. (Calvino, 1970/1974, p. 137)

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This homogenization of urban landscapes that Calvino describes reflects a broader critique of globalization's impact on urban identity. However, this perspective primarily captures the external, visual similarities while overlooking the internal, lived experiences that create unique place identities. What Calvino missed here is that he took only the traveler's perspective. For outsiders and sojourners, the landscapes might feel boring, but for insiders and dwellers, there are deeper senses developed through events, memories, interactions with others, and ordinary days. Even if traveling geographers can't find any "genius loci" in a place (see Norberg-Schulz, 1980), the residents of the place develop place attachments and special perceptions of the environment over time. Place perceptions are inscribed in those deeper senses of residents.

Understanding residents' place perceptions is crucial for contextual urban design, as it reveals how lived experiences shape place identity over time. As history shows, city form is not static, even though it is designed in a certain way, but it changes through the everyday lives of ordinary people and the placemaking of citizens. People's lived experiences and perceptions of places provide a better understanding and insights for better urban design that fits the context. Attachments matter in this way.

People form attachments to everyday landscapes over time. The place attachment goes beyond cognition, preference, and judgment about people's living zone. It is relational, emotional, or even spiritual with their daily environment. Not only physical, functional, or aesthetic aspects of landscape, but also social, cultural, imaginative, and hopeful aspects of daily lives connect to people's attachments because the landscapes provide not only contexts for memories to individuals but also contexts for hope and imagination in the future. People develop attachments to ordinary landscapes, and even those can develop into a part of one's identity.

Everyday landscapes are a difficult concept to define because people's dwelling activities are scattered in their daily living zone, from their beds at a furniture level to a scenery of the city through a window as a background while commuting. However, place attachments across geographical scales can provide somewhat of an overview of people's spatial interactions at different scales. Understanding these multi-scalar attachments can lead to more nuanced approaches to urban planning and design that respond to residents' lived experiences. This research specifically focuses on multi-scalar place attachments and living perceptions of Makerere University students. The study on environmental perceptions provides insights into people's understanding of their surroundings that can lead to behavioral patterns in their daily lives.

5.1.2 Contextual Background: Student Housing and Place Attachments

When examining student housing in Uganda, two aspects need to be considered: the influence of the British education system and the traditional dwelling culture in housing typology. While the former intended to enhance community spirit, the latter demonstrates embodied traditions and culture derived from community spirit. When it comes to student housing research related to emotional and psychological aspects in general, there have been several residential satisfaction studies in Africa concerning perceived quality of life in student accommodation (Amole, 2009; Sawyerr and Yusof, 2013; Oke, Aigbavboa, & Raphiri, 2017). While these allow analysis of how buildings function for students, they miss the concept of student housing as a residential community.

The compound dwelling culture is common in African traditions and has been translated into urban forms observable in many African cities. In her case study of Ghana, Deborah Pellow (1992) studied attachments to African compounds and discovered their significance among urban dwellers. The magic of this communal space lies in allowing residents to appropriately utilize and modify the space between private, semi-public, and public areas. She also found that compound dwellers develop deeper attachments to yard spaces than to their private indoor spaces. In her observations, the compound plays a crucial role in building community spirit and social meaning. She considered the yard as the central living space due to its functions and activity-based nature. While it has clear limitations to directly apply Ghanaian contexts to Ugandan students' contexts, Pellow's study gives basic insights about place attachments based on communality and collective dwelling culture that are shared between Ghana and Uganda.

This communal dwelling culture also shares significant similarities with the monastic form of student housing that the British residential education system aimed for. Considering the quadrangle form with a central courtyard traditionally seen in British university systems, the quadrangle form shown in Makerere University's halls of residence, built under British colonial rule, ought to be interpreted as British influence rather than following African traditional culture. Large hostels also appear to have attempted to translate these Makerere University halls. Whether they originated in African compound-dwelling culture or in the European monastic form of student housing, the point is that they were designed for communal living and community.

With that in mind, this chapter addresses students' sense of belonging and place attachments as emotional ties to places according to geographical scale. While existing literature on student housing has primarily focused on residential satisfaction, this research places greater emphasis on attachment aspects over satisfaction. This stems from viewing student housing as a community beyond merely a building to accommodate students, aiming to help understand the direction that housing design, neighborhood design, and urban design should take by focusing on emotional bonds and connectedness to different geographical scales to capture subtleties rather than individual satisfaction based on universal design criteria, ultimately pursuing a better quality of life realistically.

The chapter is organized into five sections. Following the introduction section, the second section discusses the overall survey results on place attachment and students' perceptions of their living environments. The third section examines place attachment across different geographical scales by gender and housing type. The fourth section maps individual mental maps in order to construct collective cognitive lifeworlds. Finally, the chapter concludes by reflecting on the emotional and psychological dimensions of the lived places of Makerere University students.

5.2 Place Attachments and Living Perceptions

5.2.1 Sense of Belonging and Place Attachments of Makerere University students

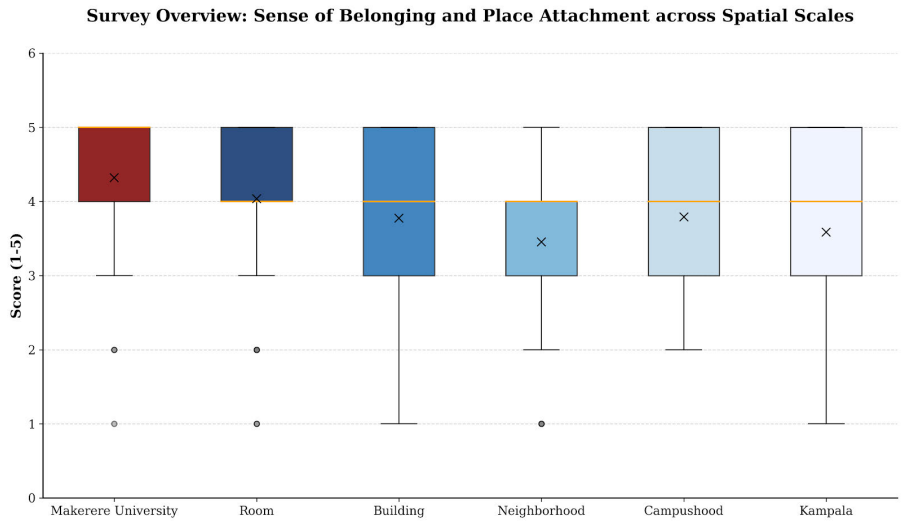


FIG. 5.1 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Makerere University Students across Spatial Scales.

The figure above shows the survey results from 53 Makerere University students. One non-spatial entity (Makerere University) and five spatial entities (room, building, neighborhood, campushood, and Kampala) were presented to students to respond to the statement: “I feel attached/belong to [entity].”

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Sense of belonging and place attachments at different geographical scales were measured using 5-point Likert scales (see Table 3.2 in Section 3.1), and the response data were visualized using box plots (see Figs. 4.1, 4.3–4.8).[1] Among spatial entities, neighborhood and campushood were explained to students as self-defined concepts, rather than administrative boundaries. Students were asked to answer based on their own defined neighborhood, and the term campushood was explained as the neighborhood of the campus.

Sense of belonging and attachment to Makerere University were established as a control variable. This served as a symbolic reference point to help participants compare their feelings about their living spaces to their emotions toward the university. Many students revealed that Makerere University had been their dream school since childhood. For them, their present moment represents both a trophy of their past hard work and academic achievements and a reason to be hopeful for the future. Being Makerere University students was a source of pride for them, and the survey results also confirmed that. However, place attachments and community sentiments did not follow to the same extent.

An interesting finding in the figure above is the lowest level of attachment to the neighborhood. Students did not associate with the physical neighborhoods or local residents. Despite the existence of administrative structures like local councils, students were not engaged in the local community. Also, while the local population was small, the area was highly populated with fellow students. The extent of their neighborhood attachment was similar to their attachment to Kampala, which can be understood more as an abstract scale rather than being based on firsthand lived experiences.

1 Box plots are beneficial as they offer a quick impression and a summary of data distribution by eliminating unnecessary details and making it easier to focus on prominent features of data. In the box plotting method, a rectangular box demonstrates the upper and lower quartiles of the data, and the mean is indicated by a thicker line. The mean values are indicated with the expression 'x' in the above figures. Small dots portray the outliers. Such a graphical display is a powerful tool to offer an understanding of patterns, relationships, and distributions among data beyond numerical values. Through the box plotting above, the data quantitatively demonstrate how students' attachments and sense of belonging change depending on each spatial scale.

5.2.2 General Perceptions of Living Environments

Yi Fu Tuan (1977), in his book *Space and Place*, articulated the experiential perspective of space and place. He acknowledged there had been few studies on how people feel about space and places. As the field of environmental psychology emerges, more scholars deal with feelings about space and place more often, but still, in the field of urban design, studies on feelings receive less attention. Perceptions also involve feelings. His example of different spatial experiences among a longtime resident, a taxi driver, and a geographer offers an easy way to understand his framework. In his framework, sensory experiences involve a lot of feeling and a bit of thought, and knowledge or conceptual experiences involve a lot of thought and a bit of feeling. Perceptions are placed in the middle. Sill, perceptions reveal the work of individuals' minds that extrapolate throughout intimate and direct data from lived experiences.

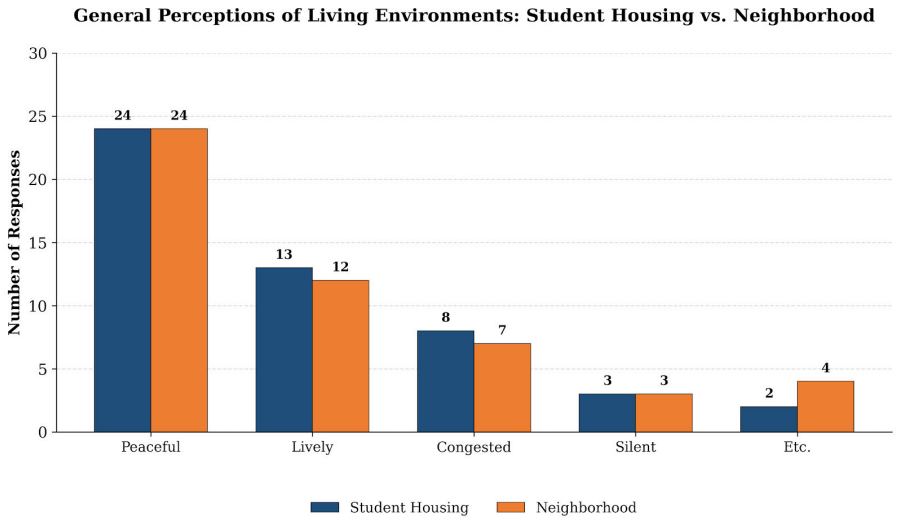


FIG. 5.2 Student Perceptions of Living Environments: Makerere University Survey Overview.

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Survey results reveal mostly positive perceptions of student housing and neighborhoods. A questionnaire survey was conducted for 50 students. Students were asked about their perceptions of student housing and neighborhood in general (See Fig. 3.1 in Section 3.1), and the above figure shows the result. Most students perceive their built environments as peaceful and lively. Students could have stated "congested" over "lively" about crowded living environments, and they could have said "silent" over "peaceful" about their empty living environments, but more students perceived their environments positively. Students clarified that their living environments have their moments of atmosphere changes that can cause discomfort, but the result shows that they accepted and adapted to their living environments in a positive way. Besides the given choices of answers, a female student indicated her hostel "convenient" and her neighborhood "unsafe." Additionally, there were three answers of "crowded" for their neighborhoods and one for the student housing. All the answers to "congested" and "crowded" came from off-campus residents.

Student perceptions of housing and neighborhoods often overlapped, showing similar overall evaluations. There were 18 matched answers of perceptions; the case that a student answered "peaceful" for student housing also chose the same answer "peaceful" for the neighborhood. The 32 pairs of answers were mixed. Nevertheless, Fig. 5.2 shows that students perceive student housing and neighborhood in a similar way.

5.3 Place Attachments of Different Geographical Scales

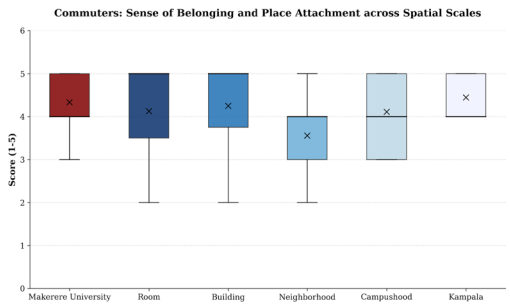


FIG. 5.3 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Commuters.

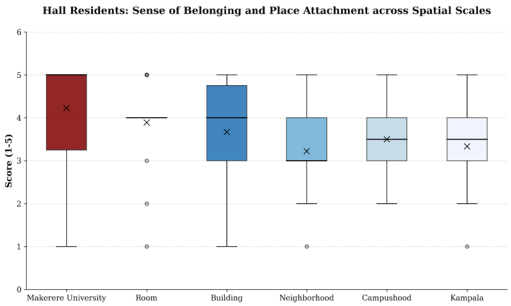


FIG. 5.4 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Hall Residents.

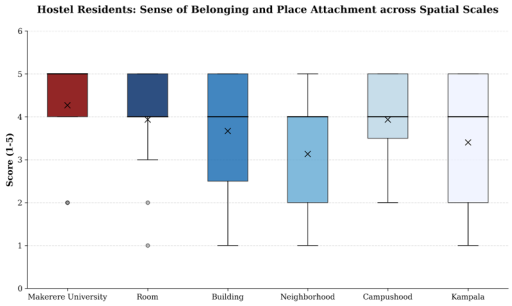


FIG. 5.5 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Hostel Residents.

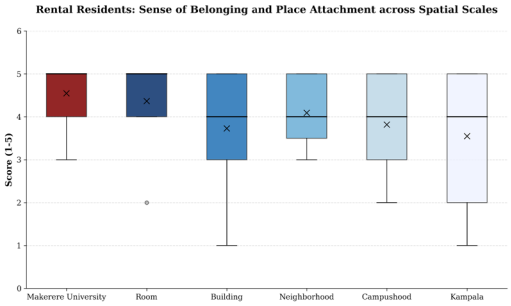


FIG. 5.6 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Rental Residents.

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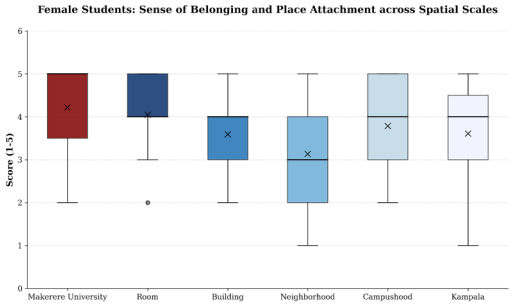


FIG. 5.7 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Female Students.

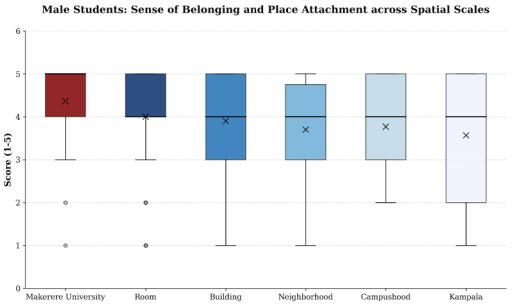


FIG. 5.8 Box Plot: Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment among Male Students.

Figs. 5.3-5.8 show box plotting results by housing types and gender.[2] No significant quantitative differences were found in the survey results by housing type or gender. For example, the close range of building mean values in Figures 5.4–5.6 initially appears to challenge one of the main discussions in this research regarding differences among student housing typologies. While a larger and more diversified sample might have revealed more distinct statistical variances, follow-up interviews revealed subtle variations and rich qualitative insights that quantitative data alone could not fully capture, which will be explored in detail in the following sections.

5.3.1 Room Scale

Contrary to common belief in urban African dwellings, the survey results revealed the strongest sense of belonging to their rooms—their private spaces. Previous studies on African communal housing have confirmed that attachment typically occurs in shared spaces in African contexts. Particularly in Pellow's study of an urban Ghanaian community case, it states, "it carries interest because if we think of attachment in terms of usage, of spatial orientation, it is to this space (compound yard), rather than the indoor private quarters, that the Adabraka people are attached" (1992, p.197). However, in both survey results and interviews, Makerere University students felt the strongest attachment to their private spaces. Students frequently mentioned freedom and privacy in interviews, as they are transitioning from dependent to independent status. The special temporal situation of university students amplified their longing for private space.

2 Box plots are particularly useful for comparing multiple distributions, as they simplify complex information and allow for clear visual comparisions. By emphasizing the essential characteristics of the data, they effectively communicate patterns and trends without overwhelming the viewer.

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Students' desire for privacy was also shaped by previous institutional living experiences and roommate dynamics. Previous residential experiences intensified the desire for freedom and privacy. The crowded and restricted institutional living experienced in primary and secondary schools made students yearn even more for freedom and privacy. Despite their desire, most interviewees share their room with one to three roommates. In this way, the room remains a communal space with roommates, and perfect privacy and freedom cannot be guaranteed. Furthermore, a male commuter answered Nsibirwa hall as his favorite place in his daily life because that's where he spends most of his time with his friends who stay in the hall [T-24].[3]

It reveals a way of communal life beyond hall residents. Nevertheless, because students are accustomed to semi-public life through their previous residential experiences, they cherish the privacy and freedom they can obtain in these shared rooms during campus life.

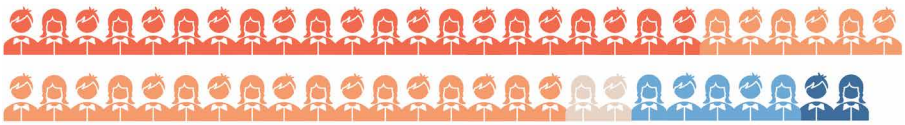


FIG. 5.9 Visualization of the Five-point Likert-scale Responses for Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment at the Room Scale. Color coding follows a warm-to-cool sequence (coral orange, warm peach, neutral beige, cool blue, deep blue) to indicate decreasing levels of belonging and attachment.

5.3.2 Building Scale

While halls have a legacy of strong community spirit, current students show more varied and weaker attachments. Historically, many incidents were reported at Makerere University due to strong community bonds and solidarity within halls (see Section 4.6.2). Also, halls' architectural styles contribute to such attachments, particularly forming floor-level community bonds (see Section 7.2.2). While this hall spirit is maintained by some students, it doesn't apply to all students. This situation is reflected in the survey results, where attachments to halls were not significantly different from attachments to hostels (see Figs. 5.4 and 5.5). Although inter-hall sports competitions and cultural gala shows continue, these were not areas of

3 Transcript references are indicated as [T-number] (e.g., [T-24]) and mental map references as [M-number] (e.g., [M-1]). These numbering systems are separate and anonymized; any linkage between the two sources is maintained only in an internal, non-public file.

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interest for most residents. While some students shared pride in belonging to their halls (for example, see the quote below, many were not interested in the community spirit that halls offer. Although students acknowledged these events helped build community spirit, their daily lives were more individualistic than historically recorded.

For some students, hall identity still carries deep meaning, as expressed by the account in [T-22].

Yeah, everything feels okay with Nkrumah, and I think it is better than every hall. Why? Because of the vibes there when interacting with students; **we have that in Nkrumah: solidarity. OK, so whoever comes from Nkrumah is always respected**. […] Nkrumah is just a name that was given to the former president of Ghana that led Ghana to independence, and they gave that name to our hall as something to make a memory of his name—that he contributed to decolonization of Africa. **So, as Nkrumah residents, we are means to protect that, and the, and we go as what Nkrumah was doing.** Yeah, so **we stand in that solidarity**. We have many things, projects, contests, chairman, we have very many things we do as Nkrumah Hall. ([T-22], emphasis added)

While the account in [T-22] reflects a strong sense of hall culture and identity, the statement in [T-59]—from a female resident in Complex Hall—offers a more qualified view of the continuing legacy of community spirit. She noted that "it used to be more serious back in that day—maybe it was more solidarity; I don't know what it meant to them—but then now it's still there." Then, she continued acknowledging the efforts of student associations and cabinets, "Maybe the cabinets work together, events are organized together between the halls and the halls. So it's sort of still there." Her repeated use of "maybe" and "sort of still there" indicates a noticeably weaker sense of belonging and hall attachment compared to the stronger identification expressed in [T-22].

Hall cabinets organize various events to establish community bonding within halls. While students appreciate this, not many interviewees showed interest in actively participating in community building if it wasn't their natural area of interest. The account in [T-25] exemplifies this alignment: "That's the most common activity. Football. […] we normally celebrate these halls (which) were named after famous people. […] and we may organize some sports and play soccer, and the winner wins a cow or a trophy. […] there are blocks we may play the upper block, lower block, and blocks; we play among ourselves as a hall." (brackets added for clarity) This emphasis on sports activities has deep historical roots at Makerere. According to the Halls Policy Committee Report from 1960, the committee assessed the opinion of the game tutors about concerns on inter-hall games and athletics with larger halls. From the

game tutor's perspective, the size of the hall should have been between 180 and 200, but the committee concluded "the standard and variety of hall games would benefit from a growth in the size of halls" (Makerere College, 1960, p.10). Through such hall events, students enhance their sense of belonging and strengthen their bonds.

While halls have traditionally performed a series of roles to enhance belonging, some hostels have taken on this emerging role. Some hostels seem to provide students with a capitalistic sense of belonging and place attachment. This is particularly observed in high-end hostels. Residents of high-end hostels took pride in staying in such hostels, likely because it reflected their upper socioeconomic background. The brands of these hostels create "distinction" beyond their functions and amenities. In this way, students also form a sense of belonging and attachment to these hostels.

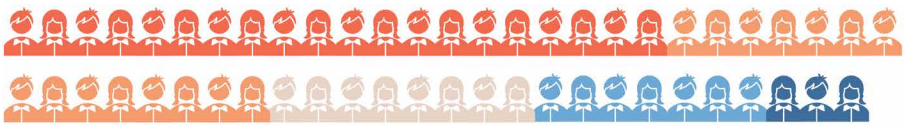


FIG. 5.10 Visualization of the Five-point Likert-scale Responses for Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment at the Building Scale.

5.3.3 Neighborhood Scale

Rental dwellers showed stronger neighborhood attachment than students in other housing types. Since halls and hostels provide most amenities within the building complex, students theoretically don't need to move around unless seeking better deals or special items. Additionally, the shuttle service provided by hostels alienates hostel residents from their neighborhood. This was confirmed through mental mapping as well (see Figs. 5.31 and 5.34). Halls and hostels, represented as gated communities, create an environment where they don't feel the need to understand their neighborhood. However, rental dwellers have relatively frequent opportunities to communicate more directly with their neighborhood for mutual support. A rental dweller in Kikoni [T-53] maintains good relationships with his neighbors and values mutual support. "Sometimes you get a problem like with electricity power, so you get the chance of going to their places to charge something of that nature. When you get a shortage of water in your housing, you can get some water from your neighbors." Unlike halls and hostels, rental dwellers need to take care of their electricity and water supply, not only paying separately but also in case of emergencies. For rental dwellers, neighbors serve as a social safety net.

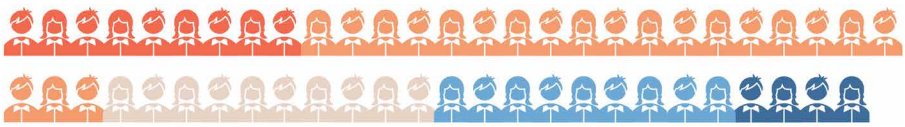


FIG. 5.11 Visualization of the Five-point Likert-scale Responses for Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment at the Neighborhood Scale.

5.3.4 Campus Scale

At the campus level, students expressed both pride and stress in their attachments to Makerere University. A student shared her ambivalent feelings about Makerere University and the campus as a place. While she was very proud of being at the best university and felt strongly attached to it, she feels Makerere campus is a stressful place because of the academic burden she bears [T-11]. In contrast to this student, another student developed a strong attachment to campus and shared his feelings when the iconic main building, the Ivory Tower, was burned in 2020.

> Attachment has grown over time. Over time, I become more strongly attached, and I feel I'm part of this community—that, **whatever happens here, it affects me.** For example, you see the main building? So, **when that main building got burned, felt bad—so felt bad.** And when it took almost four years without reconstruction beginning, we're like: **it was betrayal**. Another one is that one. ([T-30], emphasis added)

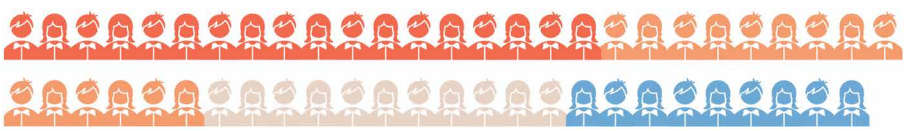


FIG. 5.12 Visualization of the Five-point Likert-scale Responses for Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment at the Campus Scale.

5.3.5 City Scale

At the city level, commuters reported stronger attachments to Kampala than resident students, though experiences were often constrained by financial limits and discrimination. Commuters have a relatively higher attachment to Kampala. This might be understood by the fact that commuters are either originally from Kampala or their daily living zone itself extends beyond campus scale and approaches a city scale like Kampala. Students in student housing facilities had less need to move around Kampala, and their experiences were limited unless they actively explored. However, due to financial dependence on parents, students couldn't afford to explore Kampala. One student shared his first-year experience of exploring Kampala after coming from the countryside out of curiosity, but had to walk dozens of kilometers to save on transportation costs [T-20].

The opportunity to become familiar with the city is not the only factor affecting attachment to the city. Some students reported experiencing discrimination in Kampala due to their different regional or ethnic backgrounds [T-11]. Kampala is a Baganda area where Luganda is spoken. People can recognize each other's ethnicity or regional backgrounds through language, names, and appearances, which can be sources of discrimination and accordingly affect individuals' level of place attachment at the city level [T-14]. This makes some students remember their Kampala experience as unpleasant, as expressed in [T-38].

> That's why I don't feel so attached to belonging to Kampala. Also, again, being from [a region name] means I'm a different tribe from the people staying in the central. […] the people from the west are now the leaders of the government, but I am not in the government. I don't know anyone in the government, but people make assumption that 'you're from there, you know the leaders.' So, they have this feeling that you are maybe more of the common—because people around here don't like the government. They look at you as: 'are you the people in government?' or '(are you) the people doing this or the people doing that?'. So, sometimes I feel like it makes you uncomfortable even saying where you come from, because people judge you for it and make these other comments. ([T-38], region name redacted for anonymity, brackets added for clarity)

Gender also influenced place attachments. Overall, female students scored lower on both the building and neighborhood scales than male students (see Figs. 5.7 and 5.8). Female students' sense of belonging to Makerere University itself—the control variable—was slightly lower than that of male students. Considering safety and security, which are often mentioned in interviews with female students, this could be understood as cautiousness arising from gender differences.

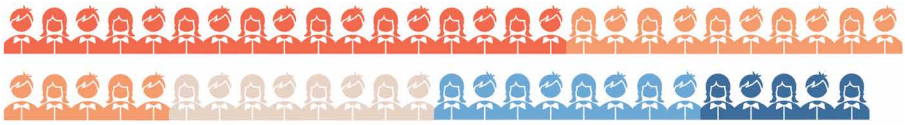


FIG. 5.13 Visualization of the Five-point Likert-scale Responses for Sense of Belonging and Place Attachment at the City Scale.

5.4 Mapping Collective Cognitive Lifeworlds

This section constructs collective cognitive lifeworlds by analyzing Makerere University students' mental maps, building on the previous discussion of place attachment across multiple geographical scales. A new resident's neighborhood is "a confusion of images," as Yi Fu Tuan depicts (1977, p.17). Throughout time, residents develop a sense of neighborhood boundaries as they learn about their nearby living zone better. Residents' neighborhood perceptions are the outcomes of intimate and direct lived experiences.

Individuals define their neighborhood in diverse ways. The vague concept of neighborhood becomes clear when they are asked to define the boundaries of neighborhoods. Mental mapping is an effective way to help people visualize their cognitive boundaries of neighborhoods. Figs. 5.14 to 5.16 and 5.27 to 5.34 show students' mental mapping based on the question "Please draw the map of your neighborhood." Some people start mapping their cognitive neighborhoods from a node, such as where they stay, and some people start visualizing based on the path they use most daily.

Mental mapping is a well-established method for understanding people's perceptions of their living environment. Kevin Lynch tried to synthesize cognitive elements of city image and pioneered bridging between psychology and the urban environment in the field of perception (1960). However, mental maps are also known to be insufficient to capture an individual's lifeworld. Yi Fu Tuan (1975, p.213) argued that "the study of people's mental world in the course of daily living requires that we do not impose on it the specialized categories of the academic and artistic professions. Geographers run the risk of seeing maps in people's heads, just as art historians are perhaps inclined to put undue emphasis on picture-images." However, mental maps can serve as guide maps that initiate communication about one's lifeworld and be complementary to other methods.

In this study, Makerere University students created maps of their neighborhoods and were asked to compare how they perceive the campus and different neighborhoods around campus using printed Google maps. The results confirmed that mental mapping could serve as an instrument to bridge the cognitive lifeworld and urban environment.

To analyze these maps, this study draws on Kevin Lynch's five elements of the city image—paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks—as a systematic framework for identifying convergent and divergent patterns across individual perceptions. This comparative analysis invites readers to consider how personal cognitive geographies might reveal the contours of students' collective lifeworlds. While the method captures individual mental maps rather than group interactions, the aggregated patterns suggest both shared spatial logics and divergent experiences—exposing the plural and contested nature of collective dwelling. This analytical approach lays a foundation for the observed and narrated lifeworlds explored in subsequent chapters.

5.4.1 by Paths

Kevin Lynch argued that paths are the predominant elements in most people's city image, serving as the main connectors of places. For Makerere students, however, major roads act more as edges or barriers than as lived paths. Makerere University campus is surrounded by two highways and one main boulevard in front of the main gate. For students who need to move between surrounding neighborhoods and the campus, these roads serve not as channels but as edges that hinder accessibility rather than facilitate movement. Students were asked about their understanding and perceptions of the neighborhood(s) of Makerere campus and the main road(s) on the map. The three major roads that most students mentioned were marked not as centers of their living radius, but as roads for taking taxis to their hometowns or for traveling to the city center to hang out on weekends or holidays. Apart from the two major highways, no student mentioned any names of roads in their neighborhood or within the campus in the interviews.

Nevertheless, students were well aware of orientation, directions, and the shape of paths they use daily. They use several paths to get to school and move around for daily activities. Many roads in the neighborhoods of Makerere University campus are unpaved and muddy, yet students create paths and systematize their daily routines as they live in these areas.

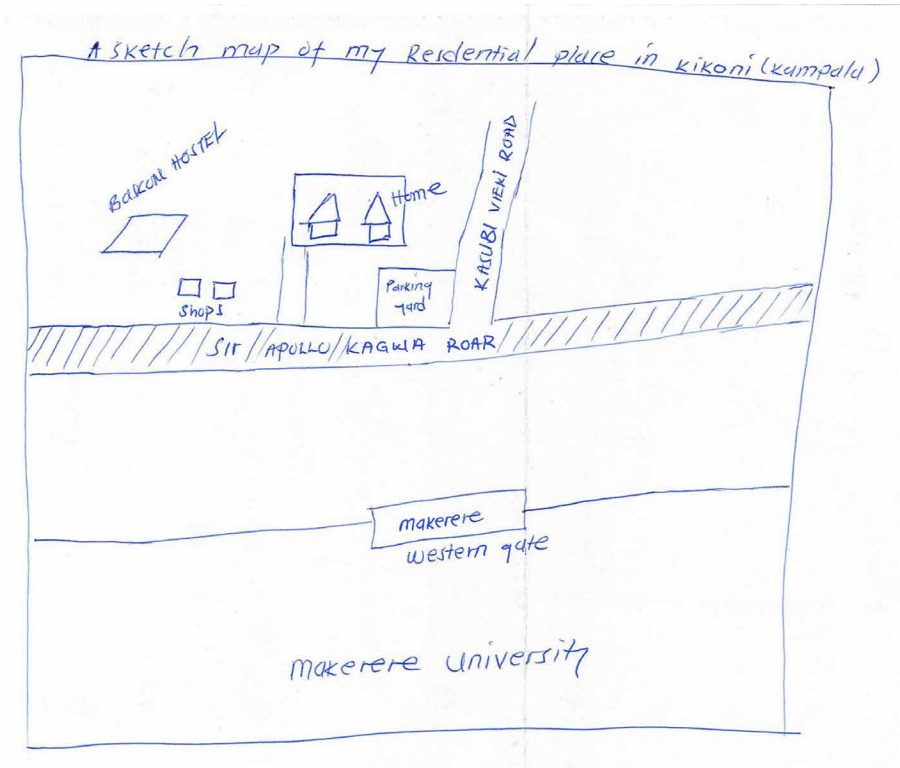


FIG. 5.14 [M-11], Mental Map, Male Rental Resident, Kikoni. Key feature: Sir Apollo Kagwa Road between Kikoni and Makerere University's western gate. Cross-reference: Section 5.4.5, landmark analysis for Bascon hostel.

Yeah, so this is my home of residence; this is where I stay. Oftentimes, I use this route, Sir Apollo Kagwa. So, when you cross here, you'll enter to the western gate of Makerere. On a daily basis, I use this route to start Sir Apollo Kagwa and to campus. Then again, I use the same route going back, then other times I use this road going to town, in case I'm going to shop for some of my plastic materials; and these are the shops I normally buy like my daily materials I want to use.
This is where there is a market here called the Kasubi market. I always use this road to Kasubi market, and here you'll find Bwaise market, which is mainly for fish, so whenever I need fish always this road to Bwaise. So, this is mostly my daily routine movements. Yeah, so these are the main roads I always use. ([T-55], associated map [M-11]; anonymized linkage, see Fig. 5.14).

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As seen in [T-55], he defined his neighborhood almost entirely through roads, illustrating how paths structure daily routines. His living zone was defined through roads. He goes to school via Sir Apollo Kagwa, and destinations like Kasubi market and Bwaise market are within his frequently used living zone. While his neighborhood doesn't extend to Kasubi and Bwaise, the roads connecting to those places are important roads for him. There are many shops along Sir Apollo Kagwa Road. As students in Kikoni cross the road to go to school daily, those shops offer good accessibility to them on the way to and from school. [T-55] also notes that he enjoyed using roadside shops on his commute.

Some students gain knowledge of places over time and customize their daily routines. Their understanding of places extends beyond mere considerations of convenience and accessibility. The participant in [T-34], who also resides in Kikoni like the one in [T-55], illustrates this contrast. While the [T-55] participant understands his neighborhood through a wider activity space, the [T-34] participant demonstrates a more detailed, path-oriented understanding within a smaller activity area.

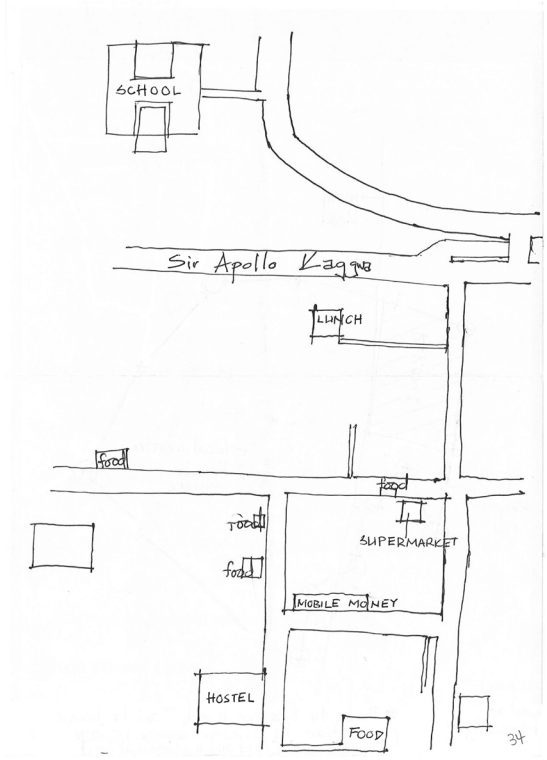


FIG. 5.15 [M-24], Mental Map, Male Hostel Resident, Kikoni. Characteristics: high neighborhood detail, extensive pathway mapping.

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On days when I don't want to cook or when I don't feel like eating what it's there, I just get out of the hostel, walk up a bit, and buy rolex, (chapatti with egg roll) from here. It's just exactly above ya. But if I don't have the cash, I will go to the mobile money first and then go to the food with the mobile money. There's drinks;.They are selling drinks. So after that, I always try to get the shuttle; try to time the times when the shuttle is moving from the hostel, because hostel is deep here is. So when I use the shuttle, it's going to take this route because this road leads to Kasubi. So it goes directly to the west gate. If I don't use the shuttle, I'll walk this, but this is very narrow. So I walk to school, and school is just near the gate. And then I leave (school) at lunchtime. I always get out of the gate—such as today—I just slope down; just outside the gate, there's a lunch spot, kiosk. (metal structure) Then I go back up, then in the evening, I slope back down again. I always use this street because it has food vendors all the way up to this side. So, I get what I feel I want to eat for the night, and then I slope down to the hostel. ([T-34], brackets added for clarity; associated map [M-24]; anonymized linkage; see Fig. 5.15)

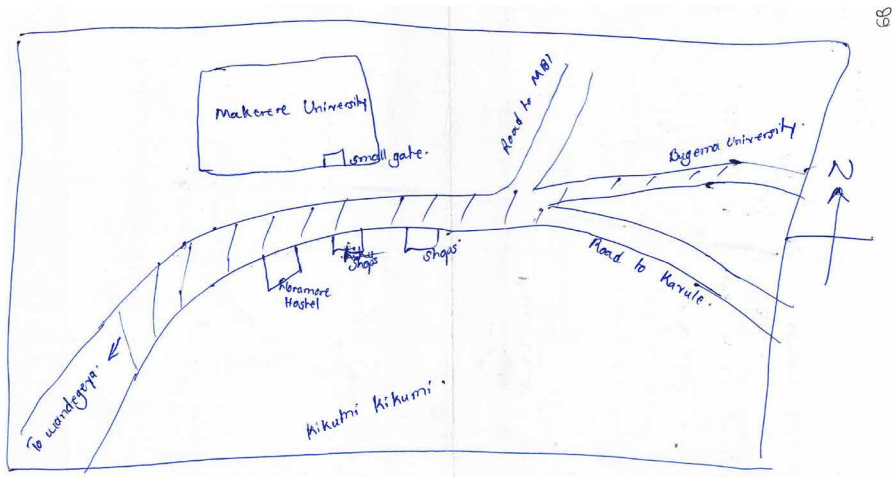


FIG. 5.16 [M-3], Mental Map, Male Muzigo Hostel Resident, Kikumi-Kikumi. Key features: unnamed road between Makerere University (small gate) and Kikumi-Kikumi, with directional indicators toward Wandegeya and others.

Many students described that Kikumi-Kikumi has better accessibility from school than Kikoni. Even though settlements deep inside Kikumi-Kikumi are muddier with narrow unpaved roads, the main road between campus and Kikumi-Kikumi is well paved and more organized compared to the one between campus and Kikoni. This road welcomes students who seek affordable food and housing. Small shops and restaurants are mainly located along this road (see Figs. 5.16-17).

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FIG. 5.17 Kikumi-Kikumi Road Streetscape: University Boundary (left) and Student Retail zone (right).

5.4.2 by Edges

In Lynch's work, edges as an element of city image imply physical attributes of discontinuity, boundary, and division, such as streets, canals, and railroads. While students were given existing Google map photos, many students did not consider physical boundaries for their cognitive neighborhoods or campushood boundaries. Students rarely traced roads given in the existing map; rather, they marked their own understanding of areas as volumes, which did not necessarily indicate clear boundaries (see Figs 5.18-25).

Students' weekly activity zones largely overlapped with their cognitive neighborhoods. In the fieldwork, there were two group mental mapping sessions. The first group was asked to draw 'campushood maps' after being given an explanation of the term campushood in relation to neighbor and neighborhood [M-17; M-18; M-19; M-20; M-21; M-22; M-23; M-24; M-25; M-26; M-27; M-28; M-29; M-36]. The second group was given a task to define cognitive boundaries of their weekly or biweekly living zones [M-1; M-2; M-3; M-4; M-5; M-6; M-9; M-10; M-31; M-33; M-34; M-35]. Some students were asked to draw weekly living zone cognitive maps, while others were asked to draw neighborhood

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cognitive maps. The important finding was that there was no significant difference between students' (bi)weekly living zone ranges and neighborhood cognitive maps.

While the results of cognitive mapping varied depending on where students live and where their faculty is located, there was a clear pattern in naming and labeling the neighborhoods around campus. Generally, they seem to define their living zone area as their neighborhood area.

A higher tendency to stay on campus and define campushood within the campus was observed among students residing in halls. Hostel and rental residents drew much larger boundaries compared to hall residents. For commuters, 6 out of 7 students included Kikumi-Kikumi within the edge of their boundaries. This reflected Kikumi-Kikumi's easy accessibility and popularity for lunch among students, as many students indicated. There were no distinctive differences in cognitive neighborhood boundaries between male and female students.

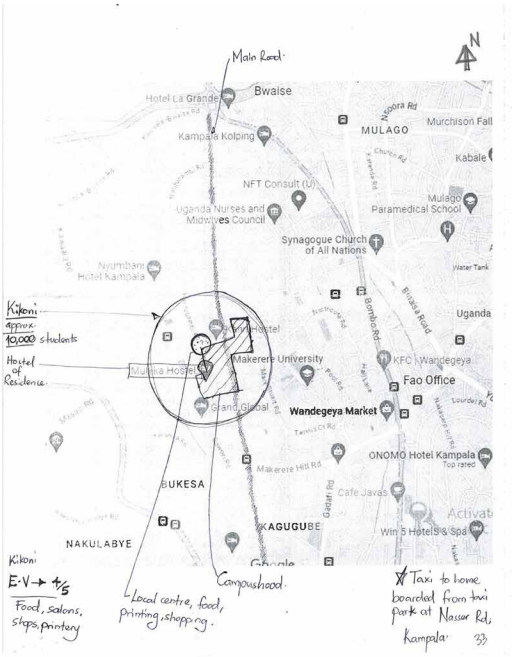


FIG. 5.18 [M-25], Cognitive Campushood Map, Male Hostel Resident, Kikoni. Key feature: campushood boundary delineation encompassing Kikoni area and his college (bottom-center).
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

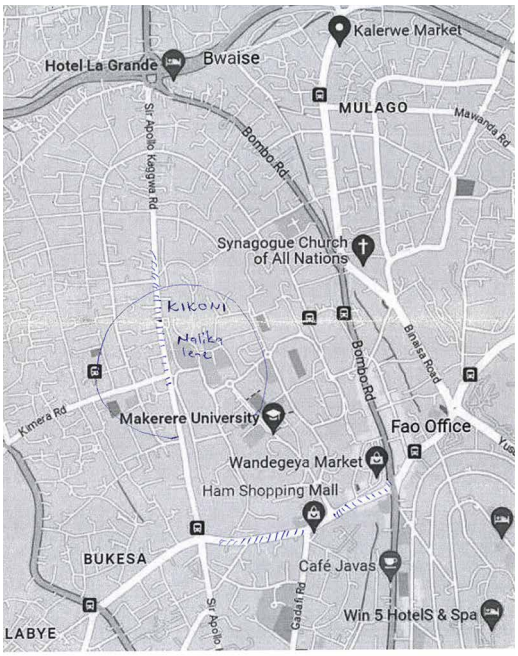


FIG. 5.19 [M-5], Weekly/biweekly Activity Space, Female Hostel Resident, Kikoni. Primary zone: Kikoni area and her college.
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

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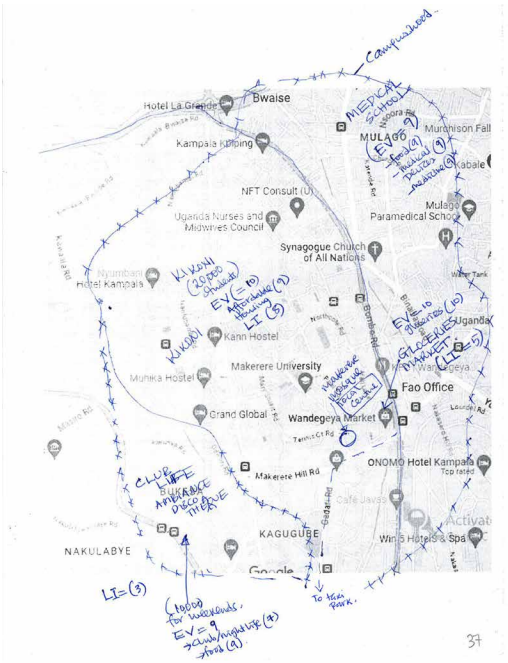


FIG. 5.20 [M-21], Cognitive Campushood Map, Male Hall Resident, University Hall. Key feature: extensive campushood boundary encompassing all surrounding neighborhoods (top-right delineation).
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

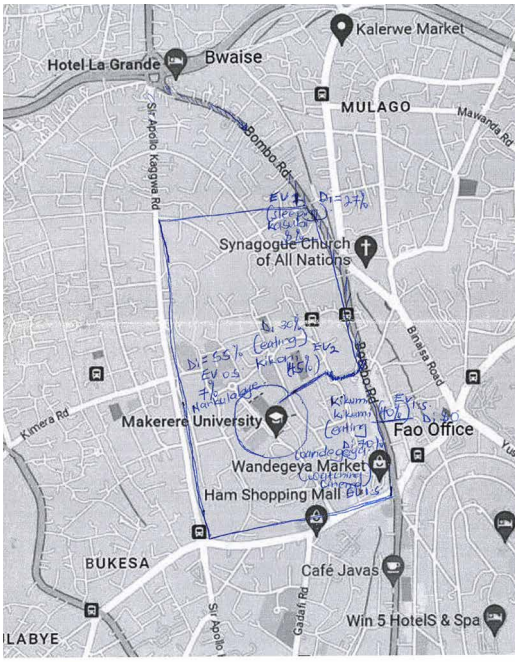


FIG. 5.21 [M-2], Weekly/biweekly Activity Space, Male Muzigo Hostel Resident. Key feature: extensive multi-neighborhood coverage, including Kikoni, Kikumi-Kikumi, Wandegeya, Kasubi, and Nakulabye.
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

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5.4.3 by Districts

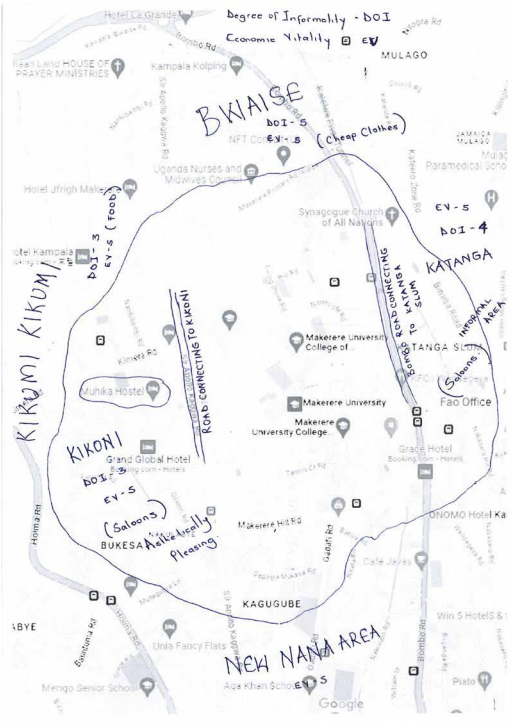


FIG. 5.22 [M-48], Mental Map with Participant-assigned Scores for Neighborhood Characteristics, Female Hostel Resident, Kikoni (self-determined scales, not standardized across participants).
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

Data Summary

- ***Identified area*** *– Kikoni, Kikumi-Kikumi, Bwaise, Katanga, New Nana*
- ***Kikumi-Kikumi*** *- Degree of Informality 3, Economic Vitality 5 (food)*
- ***Kikoni*** *– Degree of Informality 3, Economic Vitality 5 (Saloons) Aesthetically Pleasing*
- ***Katanga*** *– Degree of Informality 4, Economic Vitality 5, Informal Area*
- ***Bwaise*** *– Degree of Informality 5, Economic Vitality 5*
- ***New Nana Area*** *– Economic Vitality 5*

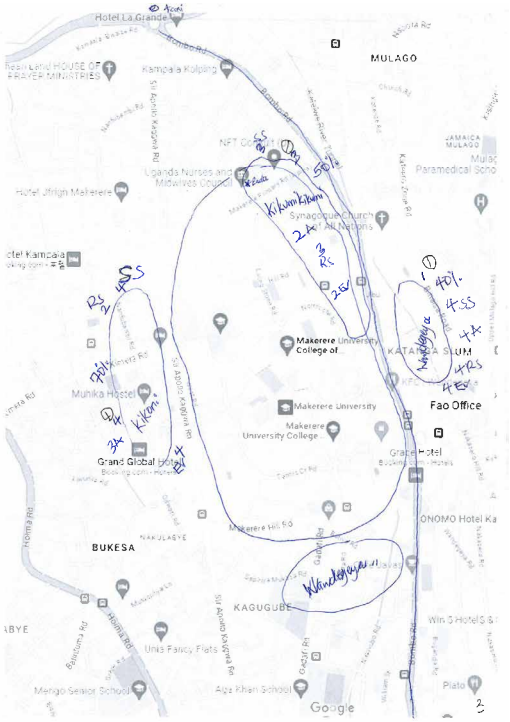


FIG. 5.23 [M-46], Mental Map with Participant-assigned Scores, Male Hostel Resident, Kikumi-Kikumi.
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

Data Summary

- ***Identified Area*** *– Kikoni, Wandegeya, Kikumi-Kikumi*
- ***Kikoni*** *– Student Population 70%, Economic Vitality 4, Aesthetic 3, Lower-Middle Income Neighborhood (Resident Status 2)*
- ***Wandegeya*** *– Student Population 40%, Aesthetic 4, Economic Vitality 4, Upper-Middle Income Neigborhood (Resident Status 4)*
- ***Kikumi-Kikumi*** *– Student Population 50%, Economic Vitality 2, Aesthetic 2, Middle Income Neighborhood (Resident Status 3)*

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According to Lynch, districts are “recognizable as having some common, identifying character” (1960, p.47). Most students identify Kikoni, Kikumi-Kikumi, and Wandegeya as their neighborhoods or campushood regardless of where they live. Students recognize and are aware of the different characteristics of the neighborhoods surrounding the campus. Mulago and Katanga were sometimes mentioned, but the administrative name, Kagugube, was rarely mentioned, despite the area having high numbers of student populations. Even residents of that area used more descriptive expressions like “the opposite of Kikoni” or “New Nana area”—New Nana being the landmark hostel in the area—rather than the administrative name.

All students perceived and sensed social, economic, and cultural segregation among neighborhoods around campus. Participants assigned unstandardized scores reflecting their individual interpretive frameworks rather than uniform criteria (see Figs. 5.22-25). Students also distinguished different levels of informality and aesthetic aspects depending on the district/area. While the ways students score or rank degrees of differences are varied and subjective, they all shared the commonality of recognizing certain levels of social and cultural differences, segregation, or characteristics in the Makerere area.

Kikoni is often described as a student-dense area. As shown in [T-2], the participant perceived 99% of residents in this area as students, with many hostels and a vibrant, busy commercial area, especially for nightlife, though generally poor and slum-like as a residential area. The account in [T-1] explained Kikoni as follows: “Despite the fact that they are going to hostels, most of the people living there live in their small houses. Mostly informal. Maybe at night it would get really crowded, and then sometimes there’s also theft, a little theft. So we have curfews.” Kikoni has many gated community-type high-end hostels represented by Olympia Hostel, and therefore, there is high demand from students with wealthy backgrounds. At the same time, since informal settlements coexist in this area, especially female students maintained high vigilance when perceiving the neighborhood, preparing for potential incidents (see Fig. 5.26).

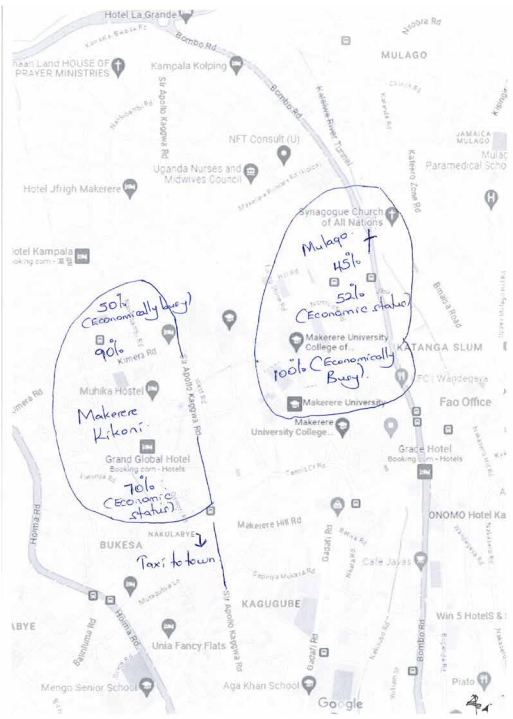


FIG. 5.24 [M-45], Mental Map with Participant-assigned Scores, Female Hostel Resident, Kikoni.
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

Data Summary

- ***Identified area*** *– Mulago and Kikoni*
- ***Kikoni*** *– Economically Vitality 50%, High income neighborhood 70%, Student Population 90%*
- ***Mulago*** *– Economically Vitality 100%, Middle-income neighborhood 50%, Student Population 45%*

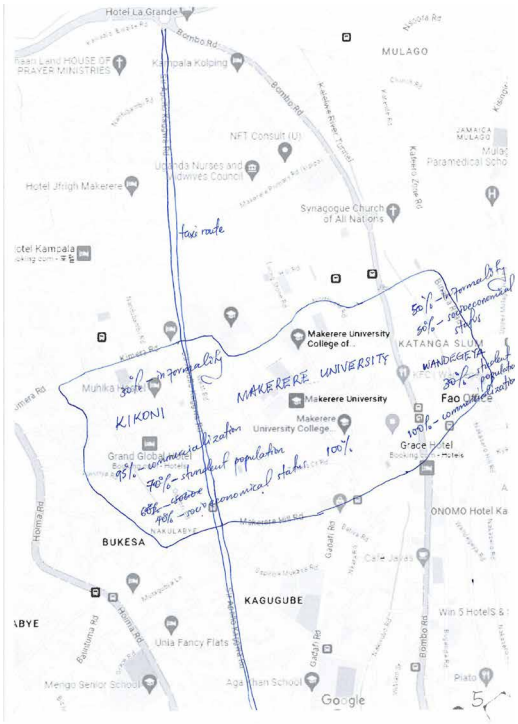


FIG. 5.25 [M-44], Mental Map with Participant-assigned Scores, Female Hostel Resident, Kikoni.
Note. *Base map adapted from Google Maps (© Google).*

Data Summary

- ***Identified Area*** *- Kikoni and Wandegeya*
- ***Kikoni*** *– informality 30%, commercialization 95%, student population 70%, Lower-middle income neighborhood (40%)*
- ***Wandegeya*** *– 50% informality, Middle-income neighborhood (50%), commercialization 100%, student population 30%*

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FIG. 5.26 Kikoni Residential Landscape with Rentals and Hostels.

Kikumi-Kikumi is known for its affordable food, rentals, and inexpensive businesses, making it popular among students. The economic activity in these areas is closely tied to student presence, with businesses such as food vendors, clothing sellers, and stationery shops. Due to the high student population, the area is considered more congested. People think everything is cheap in Kikumi-Kikumi, so hungry students love Kikumi-Kikumi. “All the business there is cheap. It’s the cheapest place,” as expressed in [T-1]. The statement in [T- 30] also agreed: “Kikumi-Kikumi is very busy both day and night. Kikumi-Kikumi is to a large extent busy both day and night. But Kikoni is densely populated at night.” However, affordability is not the only reason why Kikumi-Kikumi is popular among students. [T-1] continued: “Kikumi-Kikumi is very organized. I think it’s because there is a road, a well-made road. It looks much better in a way. Because of the way they constructed the buildings, I think it was much more organized, so you will find that. Compared to Katanga, it looks much better and more organized.”

An interviewee also shared honest opinions about neighborhood connotations related to economic status when it comes to neighborhood choice. While he said he chose Kikumi-Kikumi because of its peaceful environment, unlike congested Kikoni, he also shared complaints about connotations regarding Kikumi-Kikumi as follows:

And then also, of course, sometimes the mindset. **When you hear the name Kikumi-Kikumi, people be like: 'How can I say I'm coming from a place like this?'** So, people want to go to a place where maybe they can say: 'this person is in Kikoni,' even the names of the hostels. Some people go to hostels because they say: 'this hostel is for rich kids, this hostel is for this.' Yeah, so it causes people to choose different places. ([T-3], emphasis added)

In his opinion, the name Kikumi-Kikumi devalues the place image and even stigmatizes residents of the area. Social, cultural, and economic segregations are observable, and naming reinforces or at least influences the place image that can cause negative consequences.

Wandegeya is perceived as a more affluent area due to its commercial activities. With a longer history of development, it is considered more developed. Students frequently visit Wandegeya for stationery, groceries, and other supplies. Katanga is described as the most informal area with small houses. Mulago is described as more of a slum area with cheaper goods.

However, for some students in halls, neighborhoods around campus are not their places. They seldom visit neighborhoods, perhaps only once or twice per semester when they visit their friends. Their living zone is limited to within campus only, so while they are aware of the presence of neighborhoods, they don't know much about the areas, or perceive them negatively as congested, dirty, and slum-like [T-9].

5.4.4 by Nodes

While there was no clear node pattern for off-campus residents, many roundabouts were observed in hall residents' mental maps (see Figs. 5.27-30). At Makerere University campus, there are many roundabouts. Students were well aware of roundabouts and often used them to indicate routes.

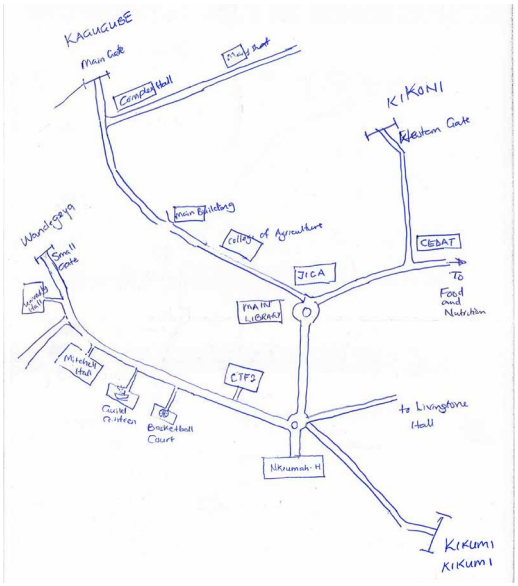


FIG. 5.27 [M-36], Mental Map, Male Hall Resident, University Hall. Key feature: two central roundabouts.

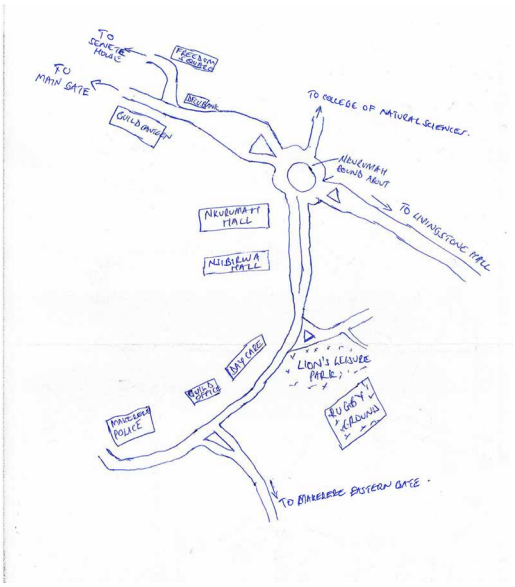


FIG. 5.28 [M-32], Mental Map, Male Hall Resident, Nsibirwa Hall. Key feature: roundabout (top-right).

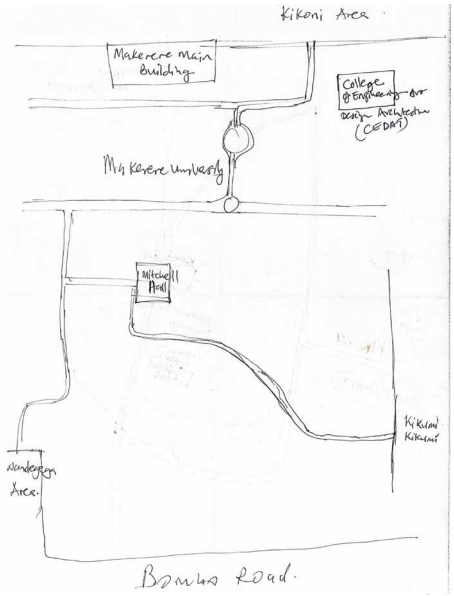


FIG. 5.29 [M-28], Mental Map, Male Hall Resident, Mitchell Hall. Key feature: two roundabouts (top-center).

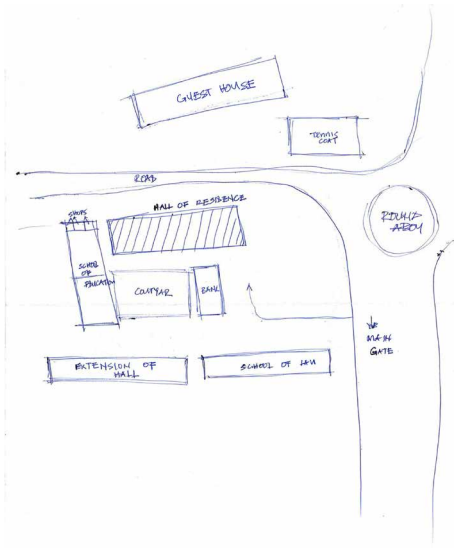


FIG. 5.30 [M-27], Mental Map, Female Hall Resident, Complex Hall. Key feature: roundabout (right).

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5.4.5 by Landmarks

While Lynch defined landmarks as visible reference points such as towers or storefronts, Makerere students most often identified hostels—such as Olympia and New Nana—as their key landmarks. Almost all Makerere students are aware of high-end hostels like Olympia hostel, and residents of such high-end hostels are referred to as "rich kids" with upper-class backgrounds. These were mentioned quite frequently in interviews. The high social class backgrounds of these hostel residents are also confirmed through the press and media when they describe hostel residents in articles at Campus Bee and NewVision. In the major press and media, some students are introduced as residents of specific hostels, which subtly reveals their economic background. However, these high-end hostels that serve as social and economic landmarks do not function as landmark elements of place image in mental mapping, except for one map (see Fig. 5.31).

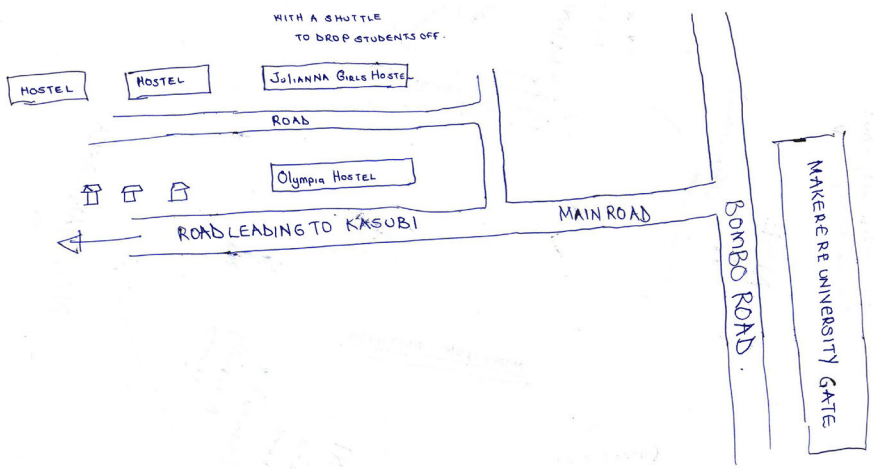


FIG. 5.31 [M-48], Mental Map, Female Hostel Resident, Kikoni. Key features: Olympia Hostel as central landmark; participant's hostel (top-center).

For rental dwellers, nearby hostels serve as landmarks. Since the residential address system is not yet fully implemented in Uganda, people use P.O. boxes. For online delivery, they use pickup point systems. However, when people need to direct visitors to their places, they must borrow nearby named hostels, shops, or any distinctive places as their landmarks and reference points. One rental dweller [T-55] clearly addresses this point:

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So this is just for location to direct you to my place, this Bascon hostel, these are my neighbors for easy location. So if I'm to locate you to my place, I can direct you from Bascon, look on your right, when you see this parking, take it through, place here. This is a description of my place of residence. So definitely this is what I can say. ([T-55], see Fig. 5.14)

Hall residents often indicated religious places, such as chapels and mosques, on their maps (see Figs. 5.32–33). Religious buildings are always distinguishable by their architectural styles. At the same time, religious facilities are places that many students frequently visit for prayer and worship. Both architectural styles and frequency of visits likely influenced mental map drawing.

Another finding was that there were no landmarks in many mental maps (see Fig. 5.34). Considering students are focused on their academic and social lives, the physical and spatial attributes of their daily lives might not have stood out to them. Also, as many hostels operate as gated community systems, students might not have an interest in exploring their neighborhoods.

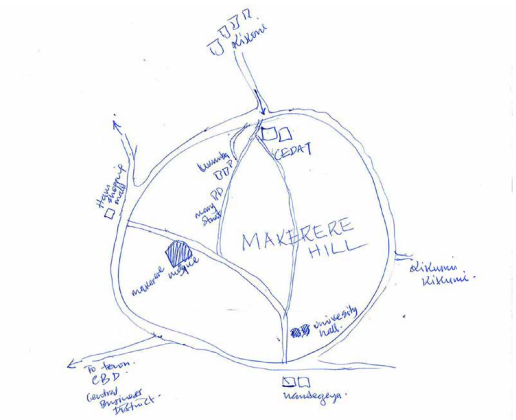


FIG. 5.32 [M-21], Mental Map, Male Hall Resident, University Hall. Key feature: mosque landmark (left, blue-filled box).

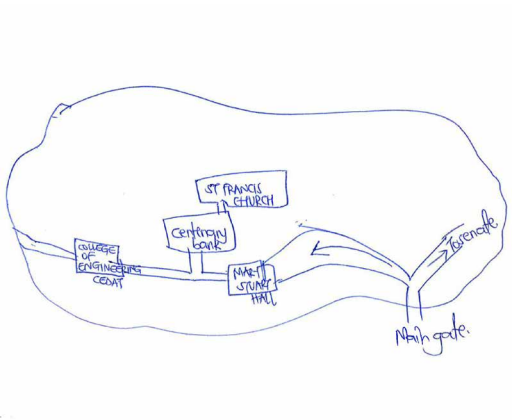


FIG. 5.33 [M-41], Mental Map, Female Hall Resident, Mary Stuart Hall. Key feature: St. Francis Chapel as central landmark.

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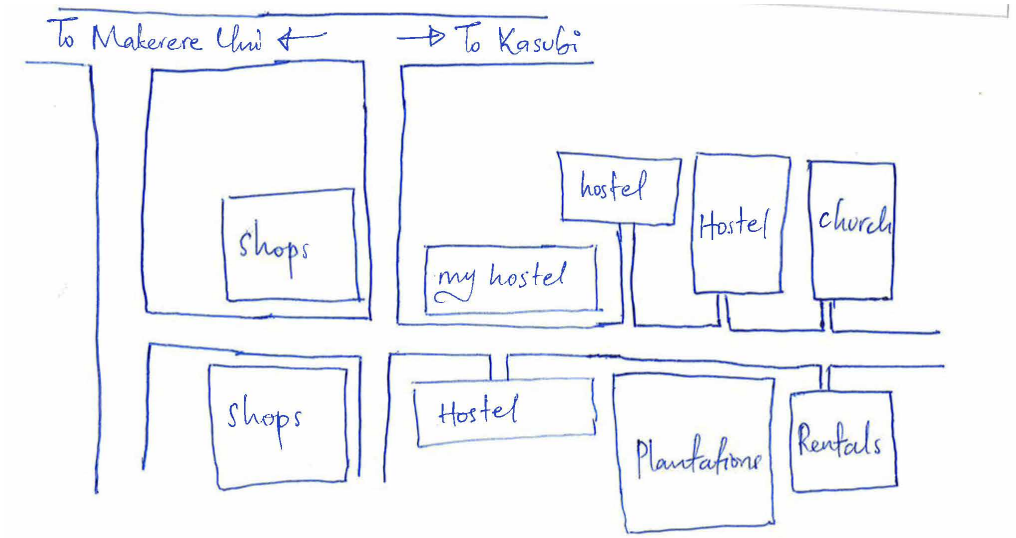


FIG. 5.34 [M-44], Mental Map, Female Hostel Resident, Kikoni. Key feature: absence of specific landmarks; general categories (hostels, rentals, shops).



FIG. 5.35 Symbolic Landmark: Olympia Hostel (high-end facility with pool), Kikoni.



FIG. 5.36 Symbolic Landmark: New Nana Hostel (high-end facility with clinic and restaurant), Kagugube.

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5.5 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter examined Makerere University students' place attachments and spatial perceptions—revealing that even in seemingly uniform urban landscapes, residents construct deeply meaningful and differentiated lived places. Several key findings were derived, which reveal the collective cognitive lifeworlds formed within the contemporary residential settings surrounding Makerere University.

The patterns of place attachment and cognitive mapping varied across the three housing types identified in the previous chapter. Hall residents demonstrated the strongest campus-oriented patterns, with roundabouts and religious facilities serving as prominent cognitive landmarks within university boundaries. Their activity zones remained largely campus-centric. Hostel residents exhibited more commercially mediated relationships with place, characterized by 'capitalistic belonging' at the building scale and more dispersed activity patterns beyond campus. Rental dwellers showed the most neighborhood-embedded patterns, developing stronger local ties and more integrated cognitive maps of the surrounding urban fabric. These distinctions validate the student housing typology established in the previous chapter while revealing how physical housing arrangements shape students' multiscalar place attachments and spatial cognition.

Multi-scalar place attachments from the room level to the city level revealed a complex interplay of personal identity, housing type, and gendered experiences. At the room scale, Makerere students, regardless of which kind of housing type they live in, felt the strongest attachment to their rooms, which contrasts with the common assumption of communal living in traditional African dwelling arrangements (Pellow, 1992). At the building scale, the historical legacy of hall identity has weakened, while a sense of capitalistic belonging has emerged in high-end hostels. At the neighborhood scale, rental dwellers demonstrated stronger local ties than students in other housing types. At the campus scale, an ambivalent mix of pride and stress was observed. At the city scale, commuters reported stronger attachments, while others were constrained by financial limitations and experiences of discrimination. Overall, female students expressed relatively lower levels of attachment at the building and neighborhood scales, largely linked to concerns over safety and security.

Mental maps show that students defined their neighborhoods flexibly, rather than being bound by administrative boundaries. Lynch's framework was applied to identify convergent and divergent patterns across individual perceptions and

to invite readers to consider the contours of students' lifeworlds. By paths, the main roads around Makerere University functioned more as barriers than as connectors. By edges, students' weekly activity zones largely overlapped with their perceived neighborhoods, whatever their housing type. By districts, all the students recognized the social, economic, and cultural segregation surrounding the campus. By nodes, roundabouts within the campus stood out in the maps of hall residents. By landmarks, religious facilities emerged as prominent landmarks for hall residents. Some students did not indicate any landmarks or notable places at all, suggesting that their everyday lives were more inward-focused than outwardly exploratory. Cognitive maps reveal how students selectively and differentially attend to their surroundings.

Students' lifeworlds are constructed through social life rather than being shaped only by functional daily needs. Students maintain sufficient mobility around campus by visiting friends' rooms for socializing and leisure, across all housing types. Place attachments vary across geographical scales and are influenced by housing type, personal experience, and gender. Everyday practices transform abstract spaces into lived places.

The collective cognitive lifeworlds of Makerere University students demonstrate that insiders develop profound place meanings that outsiders cannot perceive—validating the study's emphasis on residents' lived experiences over travelers' observations. Understanding these multi-scalar attachments and perceptions can inform more nuanced, contextually responsive approaches to urban planning and design, ultimately pursuing a better quality of life for student communities. This analysis provides insights into placemaking processes, which will be further elaborated in the following chapter.

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6 Students' Tactics I

Placemaking by Everyday Practices

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Theoretical Background: Placemaking-view

Placemaking is a well-known tradition in urban design in the 21st century. Matthew Carmona, a British architect and urbanist, categorized urban design traditions of thought into four: the visual-artistic tradition, the social usage tradition, the placemaking tradition, and sustainable urbanism as an emerging tradition in his book *Public Places - Urban Spaces* (Carmona, 2021). Having an established conceptual framework called academic traditions helps situate and position research within the broader body of knowledge as well as determine hidden premises the field takes for granted.

Each urban design tradition reveals how scholars view urban forms. The visual-artistic tradition follows an aesthetic approach, and the social usage tradition is on the social side, as the term itself reveals. The emerging sustainable urbanism puts emphasis on environmental matters. He also argued that the placemaking tradition is founded on both conventional urban design thoughts of visual-artistic and social usage (Carmona, 2021).

Carmona (2021) later rephrased "placemaking tradition" to "making-places tradition" to further elaborate the concept in his book. This wordplay reflects his view of urban designers as the agents of placemaking. He then continues by introducing "desirable qualities of successful urban places and/or 'good' urban form" with

six examples by theorists (p.8). In his making-places view, urban designers are at the very center. Similarly, the discourse in placemaking often limits itself to the imagination and vision of planners and scholars. However, what happened when and where urban designers didn't exist?

Considering the long history of human civilization and today's majority world without urban designers, this research focuses on dwellers of place as the agents of placemaking. Crucially, while the main concept of this research, 'producing place as a network of spatial practices' focuses on 'being'—existence, placemaking in this chapter deals with 'doing'—actions of agents. In other words, if the space ontology is about what place is, this chapter turns to what people do to bring place into being through everyday acts of placemaking. Thus, placemaking is the lens to narrate the daily life choices of Makerere University students in this chapter, zooming in on the spatial aspect of daily lives. Here, the researcher engages with students to infer and find links between the daily lives of today's Makerere University students, student housing, and campushood.

This everyday practice-based approach particularly aligns with critical geographies that examine underrepresented populations—children's geography, feminist geography, queer geography, migrant geography, and disability geography—which share a commitment to foregrounding marginalized groups' spatial agency and everyday practices. However, students occupy an ambiguous position within this analytical framework. Unlike children navigating adult-controlled spaces, or queer individuals negotiating heteronormative environments, students often constitute the demographic majority in campushood, exercising considerable spatial presence and economic influence. Their marginalization is thus not experiential but representational in urban discourses and frameworks.

6.1.2 Contextual Background: Placemaking of Students

Students leave urban footprints by living their daily lives. What students learn from their first independent life is to make personal decisions and to manage their budget. Through these life experiences, students develop responsibility and independence.

Students' financial management strategies vary depending on their sponsorship background. Government-sponsored students receive allowances, and for many, these are the basic source of survival (Mugaya, 2024). Privately-sponsored students receive support from their parents, but they also need to learn how to manage their money. A freshman encountered during the field trip shared the challenges he faced after staying in a rental for 1.5 months, as follows:

In the rental, you need to take care of the security around because when you don't take about it, no one will care. You leave the door open, someone can enter in. People are least like less concerned. You have to look for yourself. You have to wash for yourself, but at home, mom can help; the sister can help. So **all the responsibilities in you here**. You have to shape you and know what you're supposed to do—as you, not as anyone else does for you. Home is better than rentals; a lot happens in rentals. You have to buy your gas electricity for yourself. In dormitory, (high school) there are caretakers. There are people who would organize the rooms, and they would wake you up—you wouldn't just wake up from nowhere. Someone come to wake you up, to prepare you, then you go for, watch this, but in rental, you have to know at all time: you are supposed to wake up at time, you are supposed to be back, at all time, you are supposed to eat. No one is there to direct you what to do, but in (high) school, you have people who tell you, 'it's time for break,' 'time to go,' 'time to sleep.' So that's hard in rental. ([T-10], emphasis and brackets added for clarity)

For some students, independent life is an overwhelming experience with many duties, as expressed in [T-10]. Students eventually learn how to manage it, but the adjustment period always takes time. However, many students also come to cherish learning these things. As one student mentioned, "you have a chance to face decision-making; it's all on your own, and also some responsibilities because there are things that come up when you have to deal with them on your own. [...] Of course, now at hostel you have to figure out feeding yourself. You have to figure out what to do. Sometimes you have to cook for yourself, but at home you will sit and they bring your food" [T-3]. The account of [T-3] might include a gender dimension as well.

Students also need to learn how to manage their time, as well as their space and money, for a better future. As university time is the transitional period towards socially responsible adulthood, with given free time, they learn to plan and budget their time in their daily lives. These various budget and time management strategies by individual students certainly create different urban paths —urban footprints— and places.

This chapter describes how students' placemaking practices occur through their time and budget management, analyzed through an activities-spatial lens that examines food places, shopping places, business places, and laundry-scapes, and later zooms into specific forms of placemaking: homemaking and pathmaking. It concludes with the temporal-spatial dimensions of students' everyday life.

6.2 Placemaking

6.2.1 Food Places



FIG. 6.1 Street Food Vendors on Kikoni's Main Road: Popular Protein-based Offerings (chicken, sausages, meat) Targeting Students.

Food habits of students reflect both economic constraints and the local food culture. A Daily Monitor article describes the early semester scene near Ugandan universities: "as the semester begins, everyone prides in a 'fat' wallet, and fast food joints are the order of the day. But a good stay in a hostel will also teach one that cooking from the hostel is cheaper in the long run" ("The good, the bad," 2013).

Many Ugandan university students love food joints (see Fig. 6.1). What Makerere students find exciting about Kikoni is its vibrant street business at night. During the day, it serves as a thoroughfare to and from school (see Fig. 6.3), but especially at night, it becomes a lively district along the roads (see Fig. 6.4). Nightlife in Kikoni is active along the streets with informal vendors of various goods, but especially food. The statement in [T-1] explained the main street in Kikoni (see Fig. 6.2 for location) as 'very active' and continued: "There are many businesses, probably because of students. At night, they sell clothes. People **who make chips** come on the road at night because **that's what most students eat at night**. Because of students, local business is good. A lot of people **cook food,** and there are many loans as well." (emphasis added) The account in [T-30] also supported this: "Kikoni is usually busy at night. During the day, it's not so busy except for a few shops, but at night it becomes busy because people come to sell stuff along the road." As students gather, street vendors come along, and they create place identity and place image. When street vendors set up their stalls and entice students with various food offerings, roads no longer exist merely as pathways.

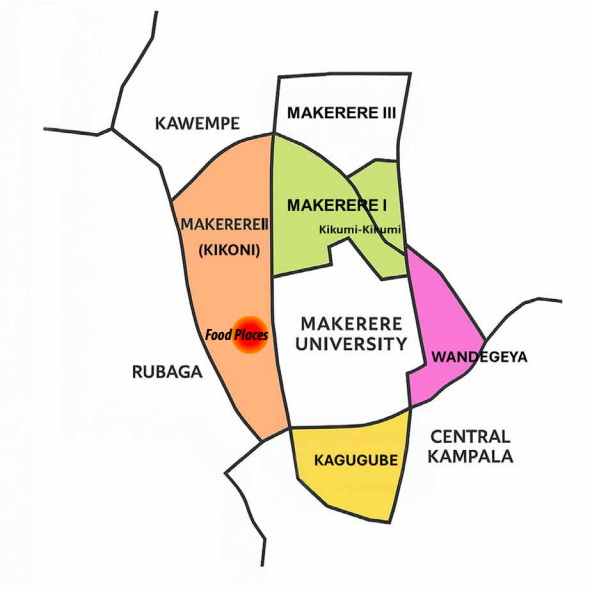


FIG. 6.2 Kikoni Hot Spot for Food Places (Modified map: Reconstructed map with added food place location).

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FIG. 6.3 Street Food Landscape, Kikoni.



FIG. 6.4 Kikoni Food Street at Night.

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Regardless of where they live, students showed a tendency to have lunch near their college. This could be at the college cafeteria, guild canteen, campus dining halls, or outside of campus. Students often visit Kikoni or Kikumi-Kikumi for lunch, depending on their college location. For example, one student [T-6] mentioned that Kikoni "is always good when you're in class for lunch. Every time I have a lecture, I'll go to Kikoni" because her college is located just next to Kikoni and the western gate. These students' eating outside patterns could vitalize the local economy in these areas. If students are not in a hurry, many particularly prefer having lunch in Kikumi-Kikumi due to its affordability and accessibility, as one participant explained, "Mostly Kikumi-Kikumi, maybe on a daily basis. Kikumi is cheaper and more accessible. Many more shops and restaurants. Kikoni once in a while" [T-11]. While Kiknoi charges 3,000 UGX to 9,000 UGX per meal, the price range at Kikumi-Kikumi is 3,000 UGX to 6,000 UGX, depending on the menu. Usually, all the menus are served with staple foods like matooke (cooked banana), rice, or posho (a mixture of maize flour, ugali in Kenya), and beans are the cheapest option. For the meat menu, Kikoni charges more than Kikumi-Kikumi. Halls charges similarly with Kikumi-Kikumi.

While halls provide dining halls that serve meals at specific times, students can find alternative food options. The account in [T-7] explained: "There is restricted time for getting meals, but to buy from the supermarket or from the (external) eatery I mentioned, they are open until midnight. Yeah, so even if you want supper at three or four, you can buy it, but you can't buy it at four from the dining hall." (brackets added for clarity) Students can order food or visit nearby areas like Kikoni for additional options (see Fig. 6.2). They also patronize nearby vendors for snacks such as pork joints, chicken, and samosas. Hungry students create paths by seeking food at any time, and they can certainly get it.

While some students maintain flexible lifestyles regarding where to eat lunch, other students are dedicated to one option. These daily routines are another form of urban footprints that students create. Some students use meal coupons. The meal coupon system run by restaurants or hostels is a way to build eating routines and be free from decision-making stress. As captured in [T-27], some students resolve almost all daily struggles in their hostels:

> When you first get out, you've got the canteen, then you buy equipment from them. So from there I should also buy breakfast, I get out, and then go to the canteen. Still buy breakfast when I go back. So personally, I buy most of the things in the hostel because daily things we need are just food. So in most cases, that food I just buy it in the hostel. [T-27]

The meal coupon system is how students can save money and how restaurants maintain stable cash flow and retain regular customers. Some restaurants near major hostels and hostel canteens offer a meal coupon system. An informant reported that students can buy a meal coupon for a 3,000 UGX meal per day for a semester for 300,000 UGX, with a reduced amount of 60,000 UGX. They sell multiple meal coupons at lower prices. [T-27] notes that he is also a coupon enthusiast: "If I see, every day I buy using a coupon for breakfast, also lunch, also supper. So everything is in the hostel, not from outside the hostel. Just in a few cases, we go outside the hostel. In most cases, you're just getting it from the hostel." The meal coupon systems maintain students in the relatively limited living radius with daily routines, capturing and concentrating students into hostel proximity.

However, those who use restaurants on a regular basis are male students. There are gender differences when it comes to where to eat. Male students use restaurants and grab food outside more often than female students. Female students mostly prefer to cook if they are allowed to cook, considering hygiene and costs. Some students strictly avoid food outside, especially from street vendors. They often don't trust the hygiene of outside food. These students prefer to do their own grocery shopping and cook for themselves. Female students' cooking practices transform space, whether it's a balcony, room, or common area, into food places. The gender differences—male students' outside food preferences vs. female students' cooking practices—create differences in the appropriation of spaces, ultimately producing distinct food places within and around student housing.

In this way, food placemaking also happens domestically at a micro level. Some halls and hostels have communal kitchen areas, so students can cook in designated areas (see Figs. 6.5-6). While some strictly ban students from cooking, others allow students to cook in their rooms or at least on their balconies. For most cases, boiling water is possible at the room scale, so many students have breakfast in their rooms with hot tea. Most students have electric kettles, and they find ways to store their food and drinks without fridges.

Also, as students highly demand snacks like samosas and mandazis, some traveling vendors visit hostels and rentals door-to-door for students' hungry stomachs (see Fig. 6.8). Paths and places for food are made for students and by students.



FIG. 6.5 Communal Kitchen Facility, Student Hostel.



FIG. 6.6 Student's Personalized Cooking Space: Balcony Kitchen Setup, Olympia Hostel.



FIG. 6.7 Adaptive Food Storage: Desk Space Converted for Storage, Student Hostel.

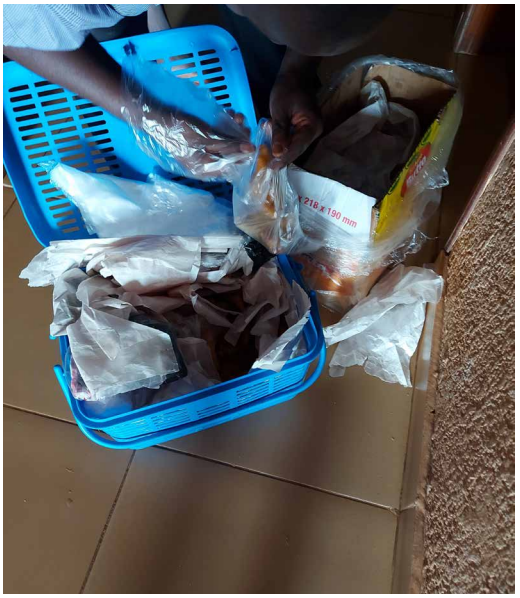


FIG. 6.8 Itinerant Food Vendor: Mandazi Sales in Student Hostel.

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6.2.2 Shopping Places

The local economy for daily goods develops through students' monetary and time constraints. Students explore neighboring areas to find better prices for daily essentials. Some reported shopping in areas like Kasubi, Mulago, or local markets like Kalerwe and Wandegeya (see Fig. 6.9 for location). One student said that she preferred Kasubi for its wholesale prices: "You can shop here (near campus), but Kasubi prices are cheaper because they are wholesale prices, then here they are retail prices" [T-6]. Students living east of campus use nearby local markets in Kalerwe and Wandegeya for daily goods, as they offer lower prices compared to other supermarkets. A student observed that Kikoni has higher prices because vendors assume students have money, while Mulago offers cheaper goods as it caters to local residents rather than students, as illustrated in [T-5].

> You know, since it (Mulago) 's somehow **a slum area,** it's full of (activity)—like, there's also a market. People sell a lot of things here, and cheap things. So sometimes we put together with my friends to, say that, to buy those **cheap things. I'm talking about food like this: Irish potatoes. They could sell like many, many of them at a cheaper price than this.** Because here in Kikoni, things are somehow expensive things. **In Kikoni,** students and maybe students, **they (sellers) think students have money, so that things are somehow expensive.** And here (Mulago), since they know that, this is somehow slum area, so things are lower. It's cheaper. ([T-5], brackets and emphasis added for clarity)

Students learn where they can get affordable food and create urban paths. As shown in [T-5], she does most grocery shopping in Wandegeya market, bulk food like potatoes shopping in Mulago, and daily goods near her hostel in Kikoni. Students' price-driven mobility creates a layered geography of consumption in campushood—Kikoni as a convenience zone, Mulago and Kasubi as budget destinations—spatially differentiating the urban areas surrounding campus by their student-perceived economic function.

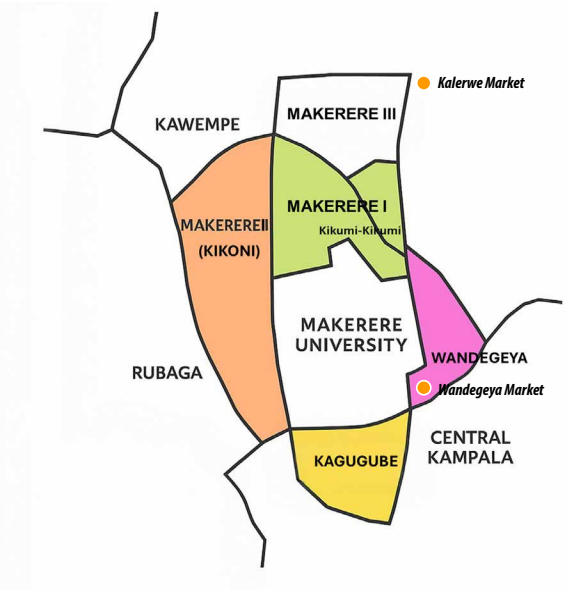


FIG. 6.9 Various Student Shopping Places (Modified map: Reconstructed map with added shopping place locations).

Many students utilize nearby vendors and retail shops. Even those who typically shop at cheaper locations use these nearby commercial establishments in emergencies. While affordability motivates students to actively travel to certain neighborhoods, they rely on nearby vendors for urgent needs. Most necessities are available within or near student housing, including supermarkets, dining halls, restaurants, eateries, mobile money services, and places for snacks and basic supplies (see Fig. 6.10).

Some students contribute to creating paths rather than places by bringing all supplies from their parents' homes. In that way, they can save money with the help of their parents [T-9].



FIG. 6.10 Commercial Streetscape, Kikoni.

6.2.3 Business Places

While most students depend on their parents financially, there are students who seek opportunities to earn a living. Some students find jobs in companies. Since some courses run during specific time slots, they manage to balance work and study together with night shifts. Other students run their own businesses.

Snack business and second-hand clothing business are popular among students (see Figs. 6.11-12), so some students operate these businesses for a living. One interviewee mentioned that fellow students become their immediate market. He added that students even advertise inside the classroom, so they can connect with each other when they need items like clothes and shoes. Some students cook snacks like mandazi (mandazi: traditional East African doughnut) in their rooms and sell them to other students. Students even rent spaces near streets from landlords and run kiosk businesses selling chapati, rolled eggs, and French fries. Students advertise their second-hand goods by posting flyers throughout the campus and on the streets of neighborhoods (Mbabazi, n.d.; [T-9]; see Figs. 6.13-14). Students also create spaces for their businesses and even establish business spaces on the streets, as expressed in [T-20].

Where do they sell? They sell, first of all, the immediate market they have is their fellow students. Yeah, they get the stock, then they even advertise during **classroom,** 'please if you need the shoes, if you need the clothes of this kind, please, I have everything. And in case I don't have it, I can easily communicate supplier and get.' So the first immediate market is there for the students. Then, after meeting their classmates, **they go to hostels and they find their other students.** Then, or else, they find other people **on the roads** because in Kampala here, so as you're in the jam, you find some people bringing some items, most of them are students playing union. ([T-20], emphasis added)

In doing so, students appropriate everyday spaces—classrooms, hostel corridors, and streets—as informal commercial spaces, blurring the boundaries between academic, residential, and business places.



FIG. 6.11 Chapati Vendor Stall Operated by Student Entrepreneur.



FIG. 6.12 Itinerant Clothing Vendor in Student Hostel.



FIG. 6.13 Notice Board, Student Hall.



FIG. 6.14 Tree-posted Advertisements near Student Hall.

6.2.4 Laundry-scape

Kampala's sunny weather easily helps wet clothes get dried, so students hang their clothes in the natural breeze and sunlight. Students either do their own laundry or pay helpers who reside in hostels or halls to do their washing for a fee. Some students also outsource their laundry to workers within the compound and pay per item. These outsourcing services are commonly found in halls and hostels. The completed laundry is then hung in well-lit and well-ventilated locations throughout student housing.

The communal compounds of hostels and rental buildings often display their residents' clothes. Laundry-scapes can easily be found in student housing. Courtyards or any open spaces often serve as ideal drying areas. Most student housing has dedicated clothing drying/hanging areas. In such areas, drying lines are often provided by management (see Figs. 6.15-16), but students also don't mind drying their clothes on the grass (see Fig. 6.17). Also, balconies of individual rooms are good places to dry clothes (see Fig. 6.18). Some students' laundry hung in courtyards and balconies creates a laundry-scape across the entire building (see Figs. 6.15-18).

The laundry-scape is not merely a presentation of functional practices but a visible inscription of domestic life onto shared and semi-public spaces, making the private rhythms of students' daily lives readable in the urban landscape.

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FIG. 6.15 Laundry-scape: Clothesline Drying at Rental Housing, Kikoni.



FIG. 6.16 Laundry-scape: Communal Drying Line, Hostel Compound, Kikoni.



FIG. 6.17 Laundry-scape: Ground Drying in Hostel Courtyard, Kikoni.



FIG. 6.18 Laundry-scape: Balcony Drying at Student Hostel, Kikoni.

6.2.5 Students as Place Producers: Everyday Practice

This section examined how placemaking practices unfold in the daily lives of Makerere University students. Students' lifestyles generate a range of food places, from street-scale eateries to domestic food spaces. Economic urban segregation, students' financial constraints, and occasional urgency shaped urban paths around student housing. In response to this student demand, diverse forms of local businesses emerged in neighborhoods with concentrations of hostels and rentals, ranging from informal structures such as stalls and kiosks to more formal building-based enterprises. Self-reliant students also sought opportunities for a living by creating business places through marketing and advertising practices. Physically, laundry-scapes were observed across all types of student housing. Together, these constitute the spatial footprints students inscribe through their ordinary lives.

These placemaking practices demonstrate that students are not merely users of space but rather producers of place. The following section elaborates on this argument by focusing on specific forms of placemaking: homemaking and pathmaking.

6.3 Homemaking

The common understanding of homemaking in Western contexts is represented by Heidegger's notion of dwelling (Heidegger, 1971). In the Heideggerian sense, people actively construct personal boundaries or bring objects to recreate a sense of home when they move. This notion is closely linked to the concept of rootedness. By contrast, in Luganda, the local language in Kampala, waka refers to home, but it can also mean a homestead where someone comes from, especially in a village context. It can also mean clan. Drawing on these approaches to understanding the meaning of home, this section examines Makerere University students' homemaking practices through the lenses of sense of home, housing choice, and materiality. It concludes with students' adaptive homemaking.

6.3.1 Sense of Home

Students consider their student housing as home when they feel comfortable and familiar with their places and other students living nearby. Most students call their current living place home, but the reasons vary among students. Female students, regardless of housing type, primarily defined "home" as a place of unity, family, shared experiences, and mutual understanding. They focused more on the social aspects of home. In [T-1], the participant felt at home in her room because of her roommate: "I share with someone. At the end of the day, we can be together and talk about how the day was. So it's like home for me." This tendency to emphasize social aspects more was mainly found in hostels and halls where students share rooms with roommates and have many communal spaces (see Figs. 6.19-20).

Compared to female students, male students' responses emphasized freedom more. They called their rooms home because of the peace, freedom, and personal space they provided [T-3]. Many male students perceive their living space as home based on what the place provides, such as sleeping space or rest areas. Particularly for male students,

they call their current student housing home because of its functionality. High adaptability, flexibility, and acceptance can be found in their word choices to describe their living spaces. Additionally, in the case of halls, inter-hall competitions and student representative elections create a sense of belonging mainly for male students.

Beyond gender differences, past residential experiences shaped students' sense of home. Most interviewees attended boarding schools before coming to Makerere University. Students feel comfortable with institutional living because of their previous experiences in boarding schools. The boarding school system is common in Uganda, especially among the elite classes. Students reported various aspects of dormitory life during their secondary and even primary school years. While dormitory living conditions were described as not the best, many students still remember their boarding school lives fondly and build strong bonds with their boarding school friends, known as OBs (Old Boys) and OGs (Old Girls). The friendships formed in boarding schools continue to remain strong throughout campus life.

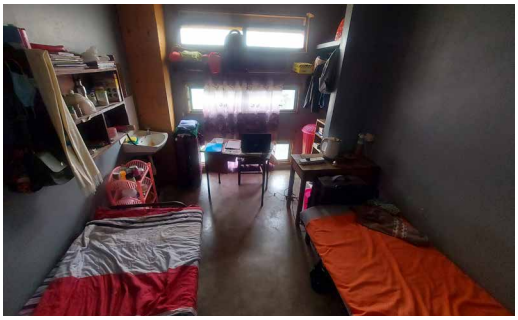


FIG. 6.19 Shared Room, Female Student Hall.



FIG. 6.20 Single Room, Female Student Hall.

Students who did not consider their housing as home mainly pointed to the lack of facilities, family presence, and daily expenses. A male hostel resident brought up facilities and functionality, saying "of course there are things that are at home and they are not at all there, such as medical facilities and care," then he continued "medical care, security, and the rest, also yes, your family members to interact with" [T-19]. Regardless of gender, daily expenses such as wifi and food make them feel less at home. Also, the need to vacate their place during holidays makes residents of halls and hostels feel less at home.

Campus life can provide a stronger sense of home than village life for students who feel disconnected from traditional norms and language. Language and cultural differences in villages make village homes feel less comfortable than the campus for

students who live away from their villages. Because of the boarding school system, some students have lived far from their villages since primary and secondary school, so they feel less connected to their traditional roots [T-9].

On the other hand, there was a student residing in a hostel run by an NGO to promote community spirit and integrity. They offer slightly cheaper accommodation and scholarships, together with several community rules and programs. It maintains a philosophy of residential education with a strong emphasis on integrity and communal living. He confessed he feels more at home in the community hostel than in his village home. They run a fellowship every Sunday for community gatherings and leadership programs regularly for personal development. Also, students in the hostel take turns cleaning. By helping each other and doing house chores together, they form a family away from their homes within the hostel [T-21].

6.3.2 Housing Choice

When it comes to housing choice as the first step of the homemaking process, privacy and freedom were the main factors. Students consider halls of residence and hostels to have less privacy and freedom than rentals. Both halls and hostels have rules and regulations for students to follow, and they have curfew times.

Gender-specific perspectives were also visible. For female students, hygiene issues and security are often their major concerns. This is also reflected in female students' preference for girls-only hostels over mixed accommodations [T-1, T-9]. Students perceive mixed-gender hostels as lacking privacy. Also, safety and security matter for female students. Female students feel more comfortable with rules and regulations in halls and hostels, as they believe these can control safety and security.

Parental concerns and transitional adjustment periods often lead new students to stay with relatives rather than in student housing. Parents' concerns about their children starting a new life in a new city might be universal. Regardless of context, university time is a transitional period for youth to grow into independent adults. In this way, many students choose to live with their relatives in Kampala, following their parents' suggestions, to adjust to the new environment in their first year, and they can have an adjustment period with their relatives' help. After spending more time in the new city, they find independent living spaces without family or guardians in their senior years and focus on their studies [T-16]. There are also the economic concerns of higher living costs in student housing. Even though students need to spend money on transportation to campus, they can save on housing and food costs by living with relatives.

The semester-based payment system of halls and hostels versus the monthly costs of rentals makes economic conditions the decisive factor in many students' housing choices. Both halls and hostels charge per semester. According to the Hostel Inspection Committee at Makerere University (2023), hostel rates range from 330,000 UGX (triple room) to 1,500,000 UGX (single room) per semester. In contrast, Campus Bee (n.d.) noted that average rentals cost around 150,000 UGX per month. Some students inevitably choose to live with family or relatives or in rental housing because of the payment system in hostels. In the long term, halls or hostels can be cheaper than rentals or relatives' houses, with transport costs. Unlike rentals, students can keep their rooms and belongings during holidays. For rentals, the contract is monthly-based, so they must pay monthly even during holidays if they want to keep their room. Additionally, unlike halls and hostels, in rental housing, students must pay additional electricity and water bills separately. While rentals can end up being more expensive than hostels and halls, students who can't gather large sums of money end up choosing rentals due to their day-to-day living situation. Also, one interviewee mentioned commuting from their parents' home despite wanting to find cheaper accommodation near campus due to expensive daily transport costs, because of financial constraints and tuition fee struggles. Hand-to-mouth living ultimately forces students from lower-income backgrounds into more expensive lifestyles.

Students generally show low mobility in their housing choices, often remaining in the same accommodation throughout their academic years [T-5; T-10]. The willingness to move was generally low for most students, and they accepted their given living environment. However, some students plan to move to rentals in their senior year. Staying in rentals comes with great responsibilities, so students are reluctant to stay there. However, high-end rentals are the most spacious option, as explained in [T-27] (see Figs. 6.21-22).

> But once I finish, I don't think I can stay there because of the conditions. I will prefer to get a rental, which is more **spacious**. It is more special even though the problem is security. But still, you can find a way of how to handle that. Yeah, so the major reason is **just looking for more space**, trying to live. ([T-27], emphasis added)

Also, unlike hostels and halls, students can stay in rentals after graduation. Makerere University is close to the CBD, so there are more job opportunities compared to the rest of Uganda. Students from villages know that the chances of getting a proper job would be much lower when they go back to their villages. Therefore, many want to continue to stay near campus, where they have already built social and cultural capital.

I would shift to rentals for my last year. After your course is done, you have to evacuate your room at the hall, but when you're in a rental and you're paying rent, **you already have your property there. It's convenient. You don't easily shift at the end.** Okay, when the course is done, you understand, I mean, you know, my course is [several] years. So after my [second last] year, I would consider shifting for my [final] year so that when I complete university. **I don't again go into panic of shifting my things from hall to another place.** So if I shift, I'll go there and be there. Even after the course, I still have that allowance of staying in the place because I'm paying the rent. ([T-25], emphasis added, year level redacted for anonymity)



FIG. 6.21 High-end Rental Housing: Exterior and Parking Facilities, Kikoni.



FIG. 6.22 High-end Rental Interior, Kikoni.

Additionally, cooking restrictions in halls lead some students to choose hostels over halls for economic reasons related to basic living costs. This is because cooking for oneself is much more affordable than using dining halls or restaurants. Also, the same phenomenon was observed for hostel choices because not all hostels allow cooking. A student specifically mentioned that she preferred to stay in Olympia Hostel because it allowed students to cook on their balconies [T-15].

Proximity to campus was one of the main reasons for people to stay on or near campus. Especially, most students in halls chose to remain in halls because of convenience and proximity to campus. Many hostels offer shuttle services between the campus and the hostels, but if students miss the schedule, they have to walk a long distance. Students in hostels choose hostels over rentals due to the provided amenities like shuttle services and security with guards and fences.

Some students in halls complained about how deteriorated the facilities have become over time, compared to newly built off-campus student accommodations. Most students are aware of a wide range of hostels and rental options, ranging from high-

end to low-end in terms of their facilities and maintenance. In this way, students could share their opinions about halls more easily than expressing their views about hostels and rental accommodations.

Commuting is often shaped by both parental concerns about safety and finances, as well as students' own difficulties with independent living near campus. However, some students find living alone near campus challenging, so they choose to commute. One student's testimony illustrates this dilemma vividly:

> So if you're in a hostel, remember you don't work, your parents give you allowance, they can give you like maybe 300,000 to take you through two months like that. So **if you don't plan like me, you'll spend the money before two months** and you can't call before 2 months. […] **I also don't like doing housework–cooking, washing and all that.** So if I stay home I have someone to help me out. OK, I just study like I have a lot of homework, I have coursework, I have lectures. But I don't have any here. I'm lazy. ([T-57], emphasis added)

Ultimately, regardless of what type of housing students choose, economic factors encompassing rent, food costs, living expenses, and transportation costs were major considerations.

6.3.3 Materiality

Materiality is one way to observe homemaking. Materiality in the home reveals the dweller's social and cultural capital in the Bourdieu sense (see Bourdieu, 1977). This section distinguishes performative materiality—one that shows economic background—and personal materiality—a more common way of understanding personalized homemaking.

Performative Materiality

Materiality as a homemaking element was not relevant for everyone in interviews, but it was a well-observed factor on social media. This might reflect the nature of social media: people want to advertise their lifestyle. When observing geo-coded social media posts for halls and hostels, the most visible figures are students' selfies with gadgets, such as high-quality loudspeakers, good computer equipment, and laptops. These devices provide options for students to utilize their leisure time, such as watching movies (see Figs. 6.23-24).

Students enjoy music and partying, and the sound of music played through quality amplification systems provides acoustic privacy from intimate activities between residents. Both halls and hostels are filled with loud music every night. While noise pollution from high-quality amps themselves is severe, people complain about noise from intimate activities even beyond loud music ("MAK Halls," n.d.). A student interview with *Daily Monitor* also revealed the relationship between loud music and girlfriends: "That egocentric twerp who plays loud music or worse when his girlfriend is also around, there are always loud, irritable sounds going through the corridor" ("The good, the bad," 2013).



FIG. 6.23 Male Students' Hostel Room with Electronic Equipment, Kikoni.



FIG. 6.24 Female Students' Hostel Room: Personal Belongings and Electronics, Kikoni.

Personal Materiality

Some students personalize their rooms with furniture and home decorations. A female student in a hostel mentioned that she specifically personalized space for herself to make it home by choosing a single room and painting her room [T-15]. This was also observed in a male student's room in a rental property, who decorated his room uniquely with tape and paint (see Fig. 6.25). Some mentioned they bought furniture to make their home [T-34]. With small hanging decorations, carpets, and furniture, there are students who create their special space (see Fig. 6.26).

Definitely my room. **I personalized my place.** I put my painting. I put my own furniture. Little by little, I did. TV and fridge. I like it, and for most of the time, I prefer a private space. I will definitely prefer my room over anything else. It's big. ([T-15], emphasis added)



FIG. 6.25 Male Student's Rental Room: Personalized Wall Decoration.



FIG. 6.26 Female Students' Hostel Room: Woolen Carpets and Audio Equipment.

This materiality in student housing both prepares students for adult life and serves as a tool for social display. On one side, the material settings in hostel life, such as utensils, woolen carpets, computers, home appliances, TV sets, and home theatre systems, can prepare students for their adult life, but at the same time, as the account in a *Monitor* article shows, particularly for male students, those materials eventually become means to attract girls for sexual enjoyment and house duties like cooking and laundry. The materiality in their rooms is essential to be "cool," and male students even borrow luxurious gadgets from neighbors to impress their female guests. As rentals offer privacy and freedom, some students choose to cohabit like a traditional husband and wife. ("The good, the bad," 2013). While the article primarily discusses male students' materiality practices, it is unclear whether female students engage in similar material displays to attract partners.

6.3.4 Students' Adaptive Homemaking

This section examined how students create a sense of home in their student housing. Students regarded their housing as home when they felt comfortable and socially secure. Some even experienced a stronger sense of home in student housing than in their villages, as they had long been detached from traditional norms and local languages. Privacy, freedom, and parental concerns were key factors in their accommodation choices. An emphasis on materiality, especially in terms of decoration and personalization, was most evident on social media.

Apart from the advertising nature of material displays observed on social media, active forms of homemaking were rarely found among Makerere University students. Instead, students were largely passive and adaptive in their homemaking,

accepting the given conditions. Their previous experiences with institutional living, financial constraints, and the transitional nature of university life may have shaped these practices.

This stands in contrast to the common understanding of homemaking in Western contexts, represented by Heidegger's notion of dwelling (Heidegger, 1971). Neither the active construction of personal boundaries nor the practice of bringing objects from parental homes to recreate a sense of home was observed. Furthermore, students' interpretations of feeling at home in student housing differ from the common Western understanding. Students interpreted student housing as home because of their previous experiences in boarding schools. Also, many students tended to see student housing as home when it fostered social connections. In this sense, the concept of *waka* in Luganda—which encompasses not just the household but the extended clan—may help explain why students interpreted social connection as central to feeling at home, though not all students speak Luganda.

Given the specific temporality of university life as a transitional phase, students tended to accept their environments rather than actively shape them. Furthermore, the collective African context may also have contributed to the adaptive homemaking practices of Makerere University students. The following section explores how this pattern extends into pathmaking.

6.4 Path-making

Beyond homemaking, students also shape the urban fabric through their urban path—daily movement patterns. Students' urban paths reveal how differently they appropriate routes in the urban areas based on where they reside, time, and budget management. While some hall residents only travel within campus on weekdays, others move in and out of campus during their ordinary campus days. Hall residents' path-making practices are mainly concentrated on the campus. Hostel residents create urban paths via shuttles that the hostel offers. However, sometimes they also need to walk or take a boda-boda motorcycle taxi since shuttles run on fixed timetables [T-15]. Accordingly, hostel students' path-making practices can be considered as negotiating between structure and freedom. Most rental residents walk between their accommodation and the campus every day. Some students commute from their parents' or relatives' residences instead of staying in student housing near or within campus. Those students contribute to creating long urban paths every day.

Students commonly use taxis and boda-bodas. Unlike the common understanding of 'taxi' in other parts of the world, a taxi in Uganda is not private transportation. Taxi refers to a minibus or passenger van, *matatu* in Kiswahili. Boda-boda is the most popular public transportation in Kampala. It is a motorcycle taxi in the informal sector. Some male students engage in boda-boda driving (Nagitta, 2024; [T-20]). These students create diverse paths within the city while simultaneously creating mobile business places.

Then another thing, maybe they do. Another thing they do–that is basically some of the boys, but this is a very small percentage, boda-boda. For example, boda-boda people, they may ride until 6 PM. Then, if you're a student and this person is your friend, they can give you their motorcycle, and then you use it until late in the night, and then you take it back. ([T-20])

In most cases, when students go back to their village, they use a taxi or bus, depending on where they are from. When they are in a rush, they use boda-boda, as they bypass traffic jams, but as private transportation, it is more expensive than a taxi. In their daily lives, students use taxis because they are affordable.

Taxi, I use when I'm going to town because when you're **not in a hurry** or something like that. But I use a **boda** when I'm coming to **school late**. So sometimes, (it has to do) with time, and when you use a taxi, there can be a lot of traffic jams, and yet you have to get to school early. So a **boda is more efficient** because it can at least pass through the jam when you arrive at school. ([T-11], emphasis added)

Depending on where they come from, some students visit their parents every weekend [T-5]. They can save money by bringing food and daily supplies from their parents. Usually, they use a taxi to go back to their village.

6.5 Mapping Daily Journey

This section traces and maps students' daily footprints—literally visualizing their spatial practices to make visible the otherwise invisible patterns of urban dwelling. The conventional way of using mapping in urban studies has limitations in showing students' mobility patterns over time since it focuses only on spatial characteristics. However, understanding both temporal and spatial dimensions provides a deeper understanding of lifeworld experiences. Chatterton (1999) used temporal and spatial dimensions to illustrate the comparison of urban pathways between a traditional student and a non-traditional student. Chatterton's approach provides an additional axis of time, thereby capturing the temporal trait of behavioral patterns, which enhances understanding of students in places.

The everyday journeys of students were mapped in temporal and spatial dimensions, as shown in Figs. 6.27-6.32. The everyday journeys of students were mapped in temporal and spatial dimensions. Their daily lives are illustrated in the following figures, based on the results of the flashcard method. Students were asked to arrange flashcards to represent the day prior to their interview. The outcomes, combined with interview insights, were reconstructed to visualize students' urban footprints across time and space.

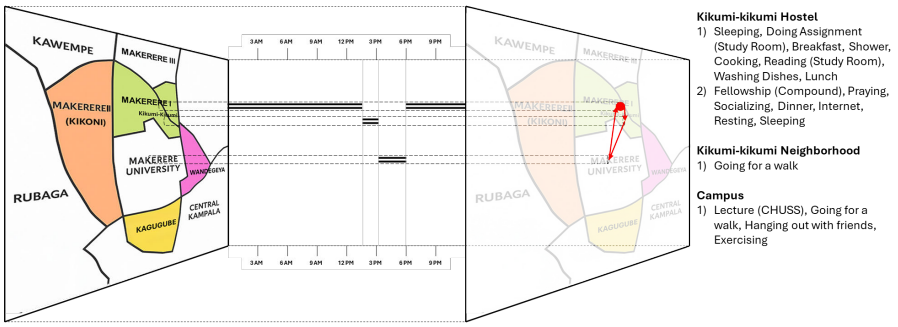


FIG. 6.27 Mapping a Student's Day: A Space-Time Visualization (Weekday, [F-1]: Hostel Resident, Kikumi-Kikumi).

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Meta Case (Reading Guide): An Ordinary Day of a Kikumi-Kikumi Hostel Resident
The diagram(see Fig. 6.27) can be read through a representative daily routine of a Kikumi-Kikumi hostel resident. In the morning, activities such as sleeping, doing assignments, eating breakfast, showering, cooking, reading, washing dishes, and eating lunch are done in the hostel and clustered into a long time block. During the day, around 1 pm, movement toward the university campus for classes and walking is represented through both spatial displacement on the map and a shift in the temporal diagram. Lectures, hanging out, and exercising were carried out on campus. In the evening, around 6 pm onwards, religious activities, socializing, and dining take place within the hostel. This meta case demonstrates how the figure links time, space, and activities to describe everyday mobility across student housing, campus, and the neighborhood environment.

Students, like every individual, make diverse urban pathways. Figs. 6.27, 6.28, 6,29, and 6.31 illustrate the weekdays of hostel residents, hall residents, rental residents, and commuters, respectively. Figs. 6.28-6.29 highlight home-oriented urban footprints, while Figs. 6.27 and 6.31 emphasize activity-oriented ones. In other words, some students, like those in Figs. 6.28-6.29, made frequent back-and-forth trips centered around their rooms, whereas others, as in Figs. 6.27 and 6.31, organized their movements around activity needs. The thickness of the red lines in the figures indicates the frequency of these back-and-forth trips.

Students spend a significant amount of time in their rooms preparing for academic life, recharging, and engaging in various activities. Student housing is not merely a place to sleep but also a space for fellowship and friendship (see Figs. 6.27-6.28). Thus, it is not surprising that students devote much of their time to social engagements within student housing. However, this alone does not explain the home-oriented footprint of the student in Fig. 6.29. Beyond the social environment, student housing fulfills residents' fundamental needs, namely the functional necessity of feeling secure in a shelter.

In terms of activity patterns, the distinctive difference between student housing residents and commuters is mobility. The social life in halls and hostels is similar to family social life in a parental home (see Figs. 6.27, 6.28, 6.29, and 6.32). By contrast, rental residents tend to have fewer social activities within their compounds (see Figs. 6.29 and 6.30). What makes it different is the mobility that commuters need to have. Commuters devote considerable time to traveling on the road using vehicles such as boda-bodas (motorcycle taxis) and regular taxis, while student housing residents usually move on foot, producing a different kind of urban footprint and landscape.

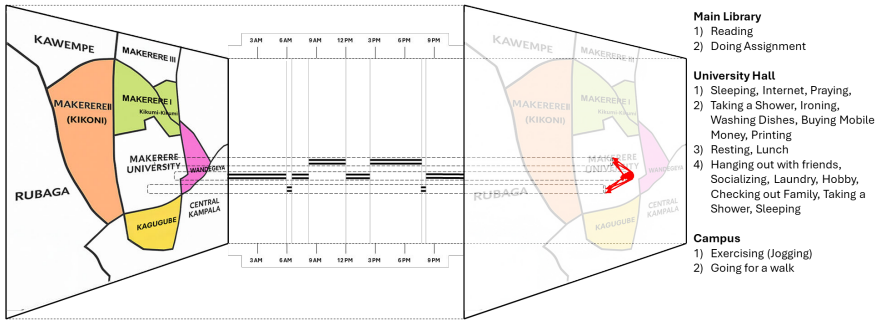


FIG. 6.28 Mapping a Student's Day: A Space-Time Visualization (Weekday, [F-2]: Hall Resident, University Hall).

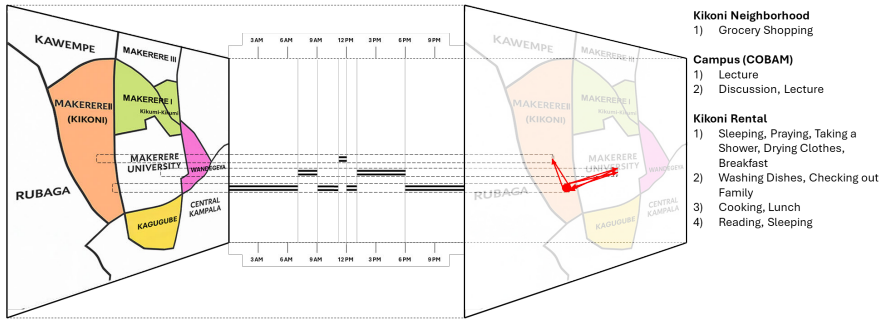


FIG. 6.29 Mapping a Student's Day: A Space-Time Visualization (Weekday, [F-3]: Rental Resident, Kikoni).

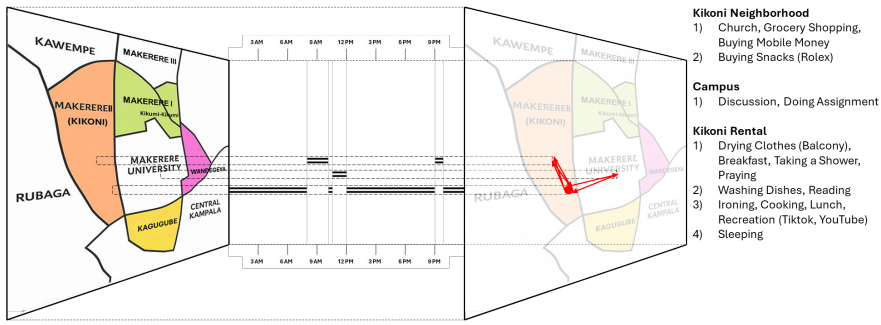


FIG. 6.30 Mapping a Student's Day: A Space-Time Visualization (Weekend, [F-3]: Rental Resident, Kikoni).

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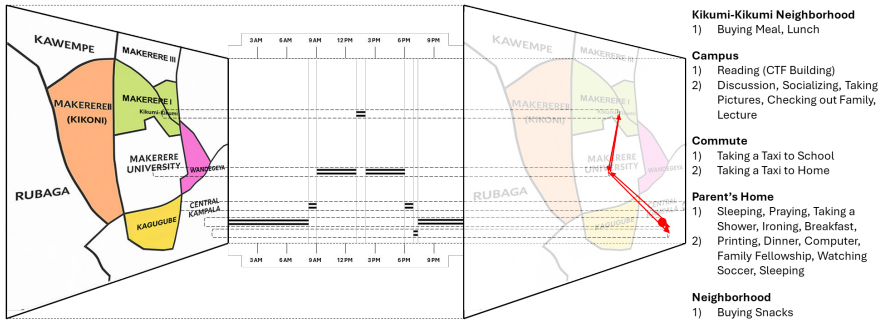


FIG. 6.31 Mapping a Student's Day: A Space-Time Visualization (Weekday, [F-4]: Commuter, Kampala).

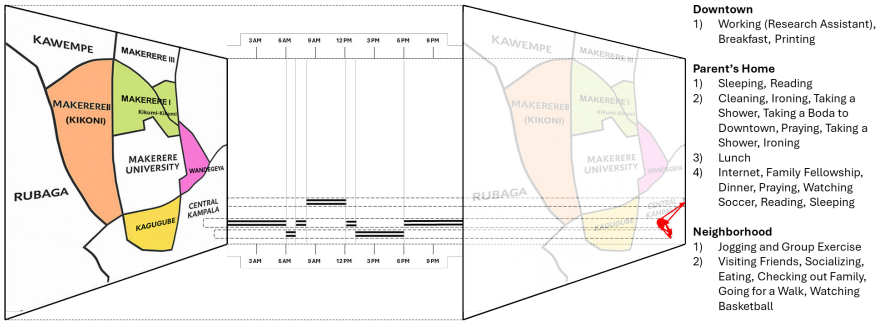


FIG. 6.32 Mapping a Student's Day: A Space-Time Visualization (Weekend, [F-4]: Commuter, Kampala).

Beyond housing differences, the time of week also shaped students' urban patterns. Differences between weekdays and weekends also emerged in the interviews and are illustrated in Figs. 6.29-6.31. Many students attend church on weekends and take care of household chores they could not manage during the week. Laundry and drying clothes are among the major chores typically done on weekends (see Figs. 6.30 and 6.32). Students also go into town to enjoy leisure activities (see Fig. 6.32).

Students occupy student housing due to its proximity to campus, but they also spend much time within these spaces, supporting and growing alongside their peers. At the same time, they actively appropriate the campus and surrounding neighborhoods in their everyday lives. Students' occupation of space plays a crucial role not only in their own social and academic development but also in shaping the campus and its urban landscape. Mapping students' everyday lives in temporal and spatial dimensions thus provides a visual account of how they appropriate and inhabit places.

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6.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter explored how Makerere University students engaged in placemaking through their everyday practices—ranging from food, shopping, business, and laundry to homemaking and pathmaking. Also, it mapped daily urban footprints across spatial and temporal dimensions, demonstrating how cartographic methods can illuminate social realities. Through ethnomethodological and ethnographic analysis of student residential practices, the study revealed that students play a crucial role in placemaking through daily activities, which is different from Carmona's placemaking tradition centered on urban designers.

The findings demonstrated that Makerere University students created paths and places by managing their time and budgets, and that they remained adaptive to their living environments despite various constraints. For example, regardless of where they live, students tended to have lunch near their colleges, such as in the cafeteria, guild canteen, dining halls, or outside campus. This reflects their time management; additionally, Kikumi-Kikumi is a popular lunch location for many due to its affordability. Some hostel students tried to save costs by using a meal coupon system in their hostel or at restaurants near the hostel. For hall residents, they could take a short break by having lunch at the hall and resting in their rooms.

Students' practices can be characterized as constrained, adaptive, and informal. Their daily decisions are limited by time and budget, and these very constraints generate local businesses, places, housing choices, and urban paths. Whether residing in halls, hostels, or rentals, students navigate the city in adaptive ways to secure better conditions for managing their time and resources. While halls and hostel facilities tried to fully accommodate students' needs, students still sought better deals to manage their time and budget. Moreover, the transitional nature of student life, along with past experiences of institutional living, shaped their adaptability to living environments. Informal vendors also played a critical role by shaping streetscapes with their stalls or by visiting students door-to-door, thereby contributing significantly to the everyday landscapes of student life.

As shown in this chapter, students become agents who, through their distinctive lifestyles, actively shape the informal economy and leave spatial footprints. The informal commercial landscape surrounding Makerere University reaffirms the relevance of Simone's (2009) approach of "people as infrastructure" in African urban studies. By demonstrating how students act as producers of place, this chapter contributes to broader debates on placemaking and urban informality, while emphasizing the importance of recognizing dwelling practices as active forms of placemaking.

In the following chapter, the focus shifts from students' placemaking to dwelling from a spatial perspective, further situating students' everyday practices across multiple geographical scales to inform architects, urban designers, planners, and policymakers.

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7 Students' Tactics II

Dwelling Across Spatial Scales

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Theoretical Background: Student Dwellings

Dwelling is a fundamental condition of human existence. Even in situations where we lose our homes, we still dwell somewhere. The relationship between people and space/place is a long-standing philosophical topic. Heidegger explained Dasein, his main existential terminology, to explain being with dwelling (Heidegger, 1927/1962; 1971; see also Sennett, 2018). He interpreted people as 'thrown into the world' and seeking roots to resolve the insecurity and uncertainty of their existence. Traditionally, it was believed that people want to generate emotional bonds with a dwelling place, a place called home, for a sense of rootedness, security, and safety.

Cities were and still are meant for people who moved from their historical roots. The Industrial Revolution started accelerating the growth of the urban population in the 18th century. Since then, land has been urbanized rapidly all over the world. People with diverse backgrounds stay together on a limited-sized land. Now, we live in the age of mobility. This mobility challenges traditional ideas of dwelling. Critics suggest taking relational and contextual aspects of places into consideration. Doreen Massey (1991; 1993) is one of the scholars who focuses on the relational concepts of places. She introduced the concept of 'power geometry' to explain how different social groups and individuals are placed in very distinct ways in relation to global flows and interconnections. She pointed out that different temporal and spatial dynamics depend on each individual and group and are influenced by contexts and

backgrounds. In her place view, identity reproduces through relational dynamics and connections. People move from area to area for various purposes. Among them, one typical reason why young people move from rural areas to urban areas is to pursue higher education.

Among these mobile populations, students represent a particularly significant yet understudied group. Students' dwelling, as a research topic, has received limited attention, and its role in the urbanization process has been overlooked. The focus of existing studies mainly lies in student housing-related research on residential satisfaction or studentification. Students remain largely absent from urban discourses and frameworks, despite their significant impact on neighborhood transformation. This study, therefore, conceptualizes student marginality as epistemic rather than spatial—a gap in how student dwelling is understood and governed rather than in students' capacity to occupy and shape urban space. Thus, this study examines students' dwelling practices to better inform architects, urban designers, and policymakers.

7.1.2 Contextual Background: Species of Students' Spaces

Five spatial scales are identified in this research from the students' daily life perspective: the room, student housing, neighborhoods, campus, and the city. These scales—from the intimate space of the room to the broader urban environment—reflect the layered nature of students' spatial experiences.

To map student dwellings, the spatial scale is adapted from Georges Perec's *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* (1974/1997). Perec listed various "species of spaces" and described his philosophy of each: the page, the bed, the bedroom, the apartment, the building, the street, the neighborhood, the town, the countryside, the country, the world, and the cosmos/universe. His approach to space carries a distinctive characteristic. The spatial scale unfolds from the sensation of paper to the perception of the urban landscape, and further to the conceptual dimension of the universe. As the scale expands, so too does the social dimension: moving from the personal level of writing, to the communal level of society, and finally to the self-effacing dimension of the cosmos.

This way of approaching space reflects the relationship between humans and their dwelling environments. Perec's treatment of space is neither a hierarchical taxonomy nor one that adheres to the principle of being mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive (MECE) for scientific justification. Nevertheless, his approach is realistic

in dealing with the complex nature of human–space relationships in everyday life. Adapted from Perec's approach, the species of students' spaces were selected based on the scope of this research: student dwelling, which encompasses individual and collective living.

This chapter maps Makerere University students' dwelling practices across the given spatial scales.

7.2 Living Across Scales: Students' Everyday Practices of Dwelling

7.2.1 The Room

At the most intimate scale of dwelling, the room constitutes the center of students' daily lives. It's a space that fulfills basic daily needs such as eating, resting, and sleeping. It's also a place where they prepare to become mature members of society by taking breaks from social pressure and managing themselves. Simultaneously, it's a space where students dream of a better future by studying, doing assignments, and discussing with fellow students. It's also a place where they enjoy hobbies like painting or playing harmonica, spend free time listening to music and watching TV, and build close friendships with roommates by inviting and visiting friends. Sometimes, it's also a place where they host a party.

Fundamental Unit in the Room: the Bed

The bed in the room, by its nature, serves as both the most private space and simultaneously functions as a semi-public space for them. Beds and desks are common furniture found in students' rooms. The bed, in particular, is where many daily activities take place. Multiple students gather on the bed to cook together and share meals (see Fig. 7.1). They play games and have discussions together (see Fig. 7.2). The bed is an important socializing space for the students.



FIG. 7.1 Communal Activities in Hostel Room: Students Cooking and Socializing on Beds.

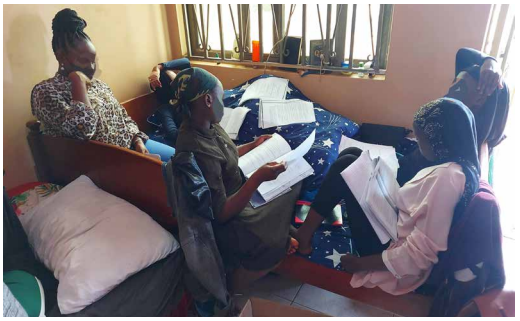


FIG. 7.2 Communal Activities in Hostel Room: Students Reading and Discussing on Beds.

The Room as Home Office

Some students run businesses from their rooms. Some make and sell snacks. Online businesses are often conducted from their rooms. Students use social media to advertise products like second-hand clothes and cakes. Some students also operate mobile money (mobile financial services) businesses. Based on their majors, some students assist with research projects, some do digital marketing, and some work on architecture projects in their rooms for extra income. Even a shisha rental business was observed during site visits. Students find their own creative ways to make money in the home office: the room.

The Room as Religious and Rebellious Place

The room is also a space for both religious activities and rebellious activities. Many students start and end their day with prayers in their rooms. However, not all students keep their rooms sacred. A student interview with *Daily Monitor* revealed his observations about hostel residents engaging in drugs and cigarettes: “At the balcony, they will stand, jabbering about something mushy like soccer, glasses of gin nestled in their hands, and cigarettes sticking between their lips. Then the whole alley will reek of smoke” (“The good, the bad,” 2013).

The Room as Places for Privacy and Intimacy

At the same time, rooms are of course also places for intimate activities for young ladies and gentlemen. Whether they are in halls, hostels, or rentals, rooms are the most private spatial unit for young couples ("MAK Halls," n.d.; "Shocking facts," n.d.).

At the room level, rental accommodations provide students with maximum freedom and privacy, while halls and hostels focus on maintaining discipline and fostering community. Rules and regulations in halls and hostels create boundaries that shape students' daily lives. Unlike halls and hostels, cohabiting couples are observed in rental rooms ("The good, the bad," 2013).

7.2.2 The Student Housing

Common Rooms

Student housing organizes social life through shared facilities—most visibly, TV lounges that concentrate entertainment, visibility, and informal rules. One of the most distinctive features of Ugandan student housing is the enthusiasm for watching soccer. Many hostels are equipped with TVs in lounges or common areas, allowing male students to gather and watch soccer together. In halls of residence, TVs are traditionally located in what were designed as common rooms. Rather than the traditional term "common room," students call these spaces "TV watching areas" or "entertainment halls." Students enjoy watching soccer, especially on weekends. While watching soccer in common rooms at halls is mainly known for male students, a *Monitor* article in 2022 reveals that demands also exist in female halls. The article points out safety concerns for female students when visiting male halls and gender equality concerns due to the lack of working TVs in Africa, Complex, and Mary Stuart Halls (Akullu, 2022).

Beyond watching soccer, students use this area as a multi-purpose hall for various activities, such as reading, group discussions, and social gatherings, as discussed in a focus group discussion below.

Participant 2: And then if there are some groups that are using that space, the TV becomes specific, and maybe for evangelism, it will be committed to those **specific religious communities.** But it becomes exclusive to the people that are not attached to that society that is using that space. The varieties in religious activities, **the cultural activities.** (ethnic group gatherings)

Participant 3: Yeah, so sometimes on the weekends or Saturday from around 3 PM to midnight for football, and the same on Sunday. Then, actually, **Sunday morning,** there's some groups that go there for **prayer**, and then in the **afternoon,** there's **soccer.** (Focus Group Discussion – Male Hall [FG-T-2], emphasis and brackets added for clarity)

Apart from these rooms, there are other areas like corridors for sociability.

Floor-level Common Area

Corridors are semi-open areas where students form floor-level communities. Among students on the same floor, friendships and bonds develop over time. A female student in a hostel chose the corridor as her socializing place, and a male student in a hall selected the corridor as his favorite place in his campus life:

It's a corridor, but not a corridor between rooms. On this side, there are rooms; on this side, there's a mesh. So each of these are individual rooms like 6 rooms on that level. So that's a building where I sleep. Each level there's that community per level. People know themselves at that level. So during daytime, some people could come out here; **some are washing (laundry), some are doing. So you normally stand there and have the conversations**. [...] So we normally gather here just to talk. People from different courses, they have different experiences, interesting experiences, and **you get there, we talk**. It normally takes a long time, and you could even be there for three hours. The unity is mainly because of where you stand, so the people on the lower floor, there is a way they cooperate as people on the lower floor, and the people above have their own **community**. So you come from different areas, you come from different courses, but when you're there, there's always something that **bonds** you with the **proximity**. There is some, but somehow **you get bonded and you start to talk**. Some good thing, yeah. ([T-14], emphasis and brackets added for clarity)

Many male students appear to have developed a certain level of bonds in their halls. Students come to recognize each other through daily interactions over time. They value community bonding and unity, though the sense of community can weaken when groups become too large. While not all students feel a sense of community spirit toward their affiliated hall, most hall residents develop a certain level of friendship with their neighbors. Each floor forms its own small community. Students form friendships along corridors or by blocks as neighbor groups, and these become manageable units for developing brotherhood as they frequently encounter each other in their daily lives. A similar response was given by a female student in a

hostel who identified her corridor as a socializing space. Through these interactions, students make shared stories over time, and such student housing becomes 'a home away from home.' Sustained encounters accumulate into a sense of brotherhood and sisterhood—yet this varies with architectural layout.

Residents read design as causal for community spirit. A female resident in Complex Hall shared her observation that each architectural design of the halls formed different levels of friendship among residents on the same floor:

(for Africa Hall) like long corridors open long open corridors, like many doors, you just keep seeing each other. But then for Mary Stuart, it has like very many dissected, dissected places, and the floors have few people. **It's design that you see few people.** If you don't know all the other floors, then for us (Complex hall), we all share the same stairs in a way that we all see each other. ([T-59], emphasis and brackets added for clarity)

The female interviewee [T-59] believes that apart from her hall, the Complex hall, other halls and hostels are mostly individualistic. She believes building design plays a big role in creating community spirit.

Courtyards

Halls act as social hubs. Community spirit did not only develop within hall residents. Halls often welcome visitors and friends of hall residents. The courtyards in halls of residence are places that host many special events, such as cultural festivals and parties, as well as daily activities, such as student gatherings and discussions. Open green spaces with benches also allow students to relax from their daily busy lives. A commuter shared that he spends most of his time in Nkrumah hall, where his best friends are: "I normally spend my time in Nkrumah hall, because my friends are here. Within campus, my best place in campus where I normally spend most of my time when I'm there. Yeah, that's where I spend most of my time in Nkrumah Hall" [T-24]. Similarly, another commuter [T-62] also shared that she was used to studying in Nsibirwa hall together with her classmate, because there are many top-performing classmates who reside in Nsibirwa hall. Halls are not only for residents, but also for their friends.

Common Areas at High-end Hostels

High-end hostels raise students' place dependency through on-site leisure, study, and food. Most high-end hostels offer TV watching areas, so residents can watch soccer during their free time (see Fig. 7.3): "We go to the TV room to watch sports with football. I support, so we always go to the TV room to watch games, football games mainly on the weekend" [T-22]. They also offer places to study (see Fig. 7.4) and even a swimming pool (see Fig.7.5). Some run canteens and cafeterias, so students can buy meals and snacks in the hostels (see Fig.7.6).



FIG. 7.3 Shared Facility Use: Students Watching TV in Hostel Common Area.



FIG. 7.4 Shared Facility Use: Students Studying in Hostel's Reading Room.

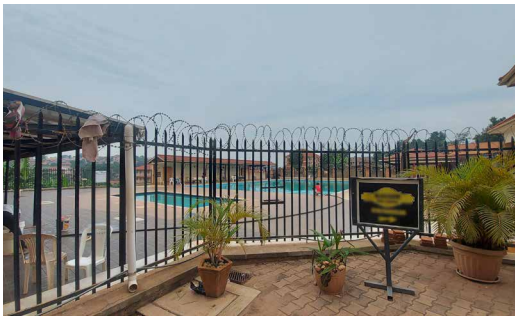


FIG. 7.5 Swimming Pool at Olympia Hostel.

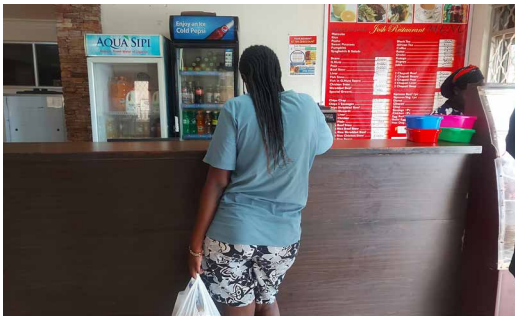


FIG. 7.6 Shared Facility Use: Student Purchasing Snacks at Hostel Canteen.

Sometimes, students host or participate in large parties and events in halls and hostels. Some high-end hostels' common areas become places for hosting parties. The advertisement article about "Selfie party: class attracts class" at Olympia Hostel pool in 2015 shows the high level of the party as shown in the title, together with what it offers, such as bikini dancers, red carpet, BBQ, and media coverage. The good

brand of the hostel and its luxurious pool facility are well-marketed, and the place functions not only as a hostel for rich kids but as a luxurious and classy party venue ("Selfie party," n.d.).

From outside, such scenes can be read as "worldly"—a normative framing that contrasts hall discipline with hostel autonomy: "I think they are just there bringing boyfriends. And I think people in halls don't have that liberty compared to those in hostels because those in hostels they can cook, they can do whatever they want [...] So with my daily life, I think their life is a bit somewhere worldly lives with parties." ([T-17], brackets added for clarity)

Communal Facilities and Rentals

At the student housing level, facilities and architectural design shape students' daily lives. Students recognized that the halls' architectural design, including courtyards, influenced their academic and social lives. Some hostels' high-end facilities increase students' place dependency and attachment. At the same time, it was observed that rentals without communal facilities tend to isolate students relatively.

7.2.3 The Neighborhoods

The Neighborhoods as Places for Daily Needs

Students visit the neighborhoods of the campus or of their student housing for various reasons. A student mentioned Kikoni is a place for better quality furniture and computer equipment. When students get their rooms, they are offered very basic furniture. Since halls and hostels provide only basic amenities, students often buy their own furniture. They need to furnish their spaces. Even though it is a one-time purchase, the consistency of different students' essential needs creates flow. Even though the businesses they offer might be similar, there are price differences among neighborhoods. Students enjoy food, snacks, shopping, and salons there. Students' everyday life in the neighborhoods is better explained when compared to COVID times, when there was no business-as-usual. Reflecting on the COVID-19 time, students shared the devastating situations of that period: most shops were closed; students returned to their places of origin (NewVision Reporter, 2021).

The Neighborhoods as Places for Leisure and Social Life

Beyond daily necessities, neighborhoods also function as spaces of leisure and sociability, where students walk, meet friends, and engage in exercise. As illustrated in [T-9]: “Maybe I’m going to see one of my friends, if not, maybe just walk around.” Or as recorded in [T-11]: “Around Kikoni, we also have some friends that stay in hostels outside. So sometimes after lectures during the evening, we can be safe to walk around small playgrounds.” Other students go for exercise: “In the neighborhoods, sometimes we do exercising together. When on the other side, then it’s group sports. I have friends that I always play football with them and basketball” [T-56].

The Neighborhoods as Places for Secret Industry

Neighborhoods are also sites of controversial and sometimes problematic activities. According to Campus Bee, an online media dealing with campus life in Uganda, there are many tabloid-style reports about the prostitution business around campus. According to Campus Bee, the prostitution business is running in the neighborhoods of Makerere University. While there are also commercial prostitutes around the campus, like Kikoni (“Shocking: Campus,” n.d.) and Wandegeya (“Prostitute runs,” n.d.), sometimes students get involved in this business (“Corporate prostitution,” n.d.). While these articles are not verified yet, Monitor also shared a story about someone who worked as a prostitute in Wandegeya (Ngwomoya, 2013). The article itself starts with “It has been said that university students, especially females from Makerere University, use their bodies to acquire and maintain posh lifestyles,” although the story was about a female student who failed to enter Makerere University. One of the interviewees also shared students’ involvement in the prostitution industry in a subtle and nuanced manner:

Interviewee: Some people go to hostel **because they say. 'This hostel is for rich kids,' '**This hostel is for this.'
Interviewer: Have you ever seen any students chose Olympia Hostel beyond her or his budget because they want to somehow show off?
Interviewee: That’s why I say some chose because of the name of the hostel. […] to some few, of course, **maybe the girls, some of them have their own ways of getting money.** ([T-3], emphasis added)

Also, Mwiine’s (2010) master’s thesis pointed out that female hostel residents at Makerere University were perceived and labeled as prostitutes.

At the neighborhood level, hall residents tend to live within campus, but students in general enjoy walking, eating, shopping for snacks, visiting salons, and exploring the neighborhoods (see Figs. 7.7-8). Additionally, some students might participate in commercial sex work within the neighborhoods.



FIG. 7.7 Kikumi-Kikumi Social Hub: Student Dining and Conversation.



FIG. 7.8 Neighborhood Transport Hub: Boda-boda Operators Awaiting Passengers at Kikoni Junction.

7.2.4 The Campus

The campus is a place where Uganda's cultural and religious diversity is expressed in daily student life. Uganda has more than 50 ethnic groups, and these ethnicities form cultures. Students often refer to these diverse ethnicities as "culture." A student shared that there are approximately 40 cultural associations in Makerere University, and half of them are active. In his observations, about 10 cultural groups regularly meet at Freedom Square, which is the main square in front of the Ivory Tower. Even though rural-urban migration and mixed marriage are common, people maintain identity and value rootedness. Especially, students from minority groups feel at ease and comfortable with students from the same background. While students preserve history through various cultural activities, students as a community move toward broader unity. A student who was born and raised in Kampala confessed that he strongly identifies with his father's ethnic culture and emphasized that cultural origin is considered stronger than place of upbringing [T-14].

Religious Places on the Campus

Uganda is a religious country, and many interviewees use campus religious facilities often. They often visit campus churches and mosques or find an empty, quiet lecture room to have time to pray. Some students show a strong tendency to prioritize spiritual life over social activities. Especially, students who introduce themselves as "born-again" often link their daily lives to their religious activities. Their needs are confirmed by some private hostels offering prayer rooms as hostel facilities, and halls of residence are also being equipped with prayer rooms for students. Also, the campus offers main religious facilities, including a mosque, a Catholic church, and an Anglican church. Some religious groups use temporary spaces to gather, like TV rooms in halls or the rugby pitch, for their fellowship.

The Campus as a Daily Place

Religion and ethnicity/culture highlight students' diversity, but daily life on campus is not greatly different. Students spend long hours in the library, attend classes, and participate in assignments and discussions. Besides academic life, eating might be one of the most important daily activities on campus. Usually, students have lunch on campus, such as in department cafeterias, guild canteens, and dining halls. Some students buy snacks or bread for breakfast, and some enjoy ice cream. Several students mentioned that they like the food in Africa Hall because it's good and affordable.

Leisure Places on the Campus

The campus is also a place for sports and leisure activities. Many sports facilities help students enjoy sports activities during their free time (see Fig. 7.9). Both playing and watching soccer are hobbies for many male students. They play soccer for fun and exercise. Some students also enjoy riding bikes through a digital bike rental system. Some male students chose the rugby pitch as their favorite place. An interviewee said he likes to play chess at University Hall. Students also enjoy swimming: "In my free time I watch football, play—I know how to play netball and some little bit of football. Yeah, even swimming. Okay, yeah, we have the swimming pool here" [T-22].



FIG. 7.9 Campus Sports Facility Use: Basketball Play and Spectatorship.

Places for Physical and Mental Health on the Campus

Students use the campus area to maintain healthy habits, including jogging and walking on weekends. Some students care for their health, while others find opportunities for learning and building friendships:

I go for outdoor sporting that also adds to my daily life. So in my daily life, I participate in different activities. Sometimes I watch football. Yeah, that is my space I live in—maybe specifically for these current three years, my daily life has been on things of that matter, adding knowledge to me. So every day in my daily life I'm learning and then outside learning, it's sports [...] (yesterday) in the morning I woke up, went for my sports, jogging around as morning exercise." ([T-52], brackets added for clarity)

Some students go for walks not only for health but also for contemplation, as shown in [T-14]: "But when I'm walking, as I told you, I do a lot of walking. When I'm walking, especially going through silent areas like in Makerere, there is that area. If you go from where Lumumba Hall is to San Francis chapel, about that area."

The campus offers a peaceful environment in the midst of busy Kampala. Many students acknowledge the need for quiet places for peaceful moments. Students walk around campus when they need to organize their thoughts (see Fig. 7.10). While vibrant student life in student housing energizes students who need it, some students seek a time of solitude in silence. Escaping from densely populated places, students find places to enjoy silence until they get bored. Through their walks in peaceful and green spaces, students seek to generate creative ideas. Open spaces and small paths under big trees on campus are often these spots.



FIG. 7.10 Campus Walkways: Students Walking near Trees and the Main Library.

Open Green Spaces on the Campus

Open green spaces on campus function as multi-purpose spaces to serve students. Students can chat, socialize, and discuss in such places. Because of the shade trees, students can enjoy breezing under the shade. If the space is large enough, students play sports so people can watch them. Also, such open green spaces can be places for contemplation.

Academic Places on the Campus

Dedicated students maintain a disciplined schedule while balancing academic and personal time. They engage in both structured academic work and spontaneous creative thinking. Students find empty lecture rooms to read and self-study (see Fig. 7.11). Also, studying goes with group discussions in lecture rooms (see Fig. 7.12). Students consult each other about what they learn and share ideas and opinions. Lecture rooms are filled with the passion for learning.



FIG. 7.11 Campus Facility Use: Students Studying in a Vacant Lecture Hall.



FIG. 7.12 Campus Facility Use: Students Discussing in a Vacant Lecture Hall.

Social Places on the Campus

The campus is also a good meeting point for students living in different places (see Fig. 7.13). In [T-5], the participant shared that she often uses the guild canteen to meet friends from her secondary school: “Most of the things I’m telling you, we used to meet from here, from campus, so whenever we met, we could sit like how we are sitting here, so we could talk about our lives outside campus. Yes, most of the time we meet from here since we all live in different hostels.”



FIG. 7.13 Guild Canteen: Campus Social Convergence Point.



FIG. 7.14 Campus Residential Convenience: Retail Accessibility at Nsibirwa Hall Entrance.

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The Campus as Living Places

For some residents in halls, the campus itself is their living zone (see Fig. 7.14). They are content with what the campus offers. They simplify their daily activities and focus on their academic life. In that case, the campus itself forms a self-sufficient living zone: students jog inside the campus, buy daily necessities, including groceries, in halls, pray in the chapel or mosque on campus, attend lectures, and just focus on their studies in the library or halls [T-9].

At the campus level, the campus serves as the foundation of all students' academic and social lives, but particularly as a home for hall residents.

7.2.5 The City

The City as Pathways of Mobility

Traveling is the most common daily activity done at the city level for those who commute. Students who commute from their original homes or relatives' houses experience mobility through the combination of minivan public transportation, called a taxi, and motorcycle transportation service, called boda-boda. While boda-boda has the benefit of carrying passengers door-to-door, it is more expensive than taxis. A taxi is the most affordable public transportation.

Students living in student housing also travel during their free time. Students also choose several malls in the city as their favorite places for hanging out and special occasions like holidays and birthdays, and some go beyond the Kampala boundary, like to Entebbe. There are well-organized malls in Kampala, such as Acacia Mall, Village Mall, Lugogo Mall, and Arena Mall, and students prefer to spend some time there to enjoy their free time. Many students also attend churches across the city. They travel on Sundays.

The City as Places for Excursions

As one participant [T-20] shared, some students explore Kampala as newcomers to the capital city, full of curiosity: "Most of the students are from upcountry villages. So when they come to compare, they want to understand the city. They just move to different places. They may go to the city square, they may go to the Kabaka's palace, they may

go to Miracle Center church and go and see this church, and then you go to Mandela stadium and see things like that. And you find people have planned for the weekend just to move to understand the places where some of them come from far away."

The City as a Place for Hangout

Students also often visit Kololo (see Figs. 7.15–16 for the location). Kololo is a well-organized area functioning as an upper-class residential area as well as a vibrant commercial area. The area is also popular for foreign embassies. There are fancy bars and restaurants, so male students like to hang out in Kololo [T-14; T-22; T-62]. Regardless of where students live—in halls, hostels, rentals, or commuting from home—city life is also part of their ordinary lives through free time and mobility.

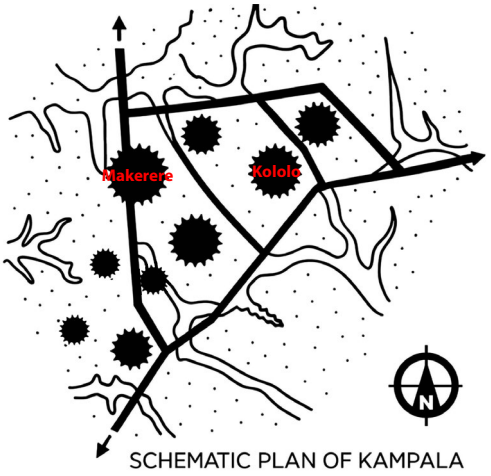


FIG. 7.15 Makerere-Kololo Location (Modified map: Reconstructed map with added Kololo and Makerere Location).

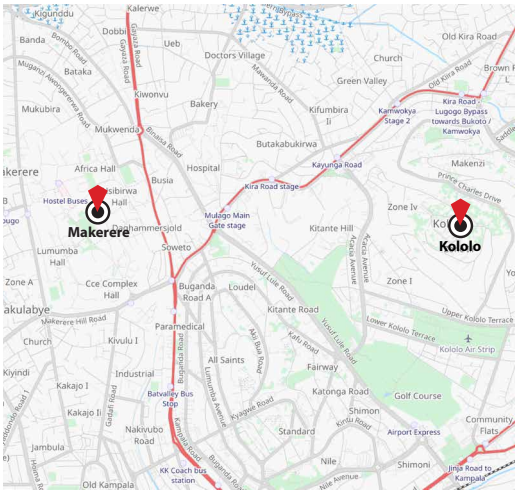


FIG. 7.16 Makerere-Kololo Location (Source: © OpenStreetMap contributors, with added Kololo and Makerere Location).

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7.3 Student Dwelling as a Communal Living

"Home" is not an easy word to define, but the meaning of home extends beyond the physical space where a family lives. Both globally and historically, communal living is well-known as a form of home for community members. For example, there is increasing demand for nursing homes for the elderly and patients with specific diseases, and there are people who choose communal living for environmentally friendly lifestyles, technology-free lifestyles, or religious reasons. People live together beyond their families for shared needs and values. Certainly, home is not necessarily about family or familiarity only. For university students, this broader understanding of home becomes particularly relevant.

When we try to design housing, the focus typically goes to physical and aesthetic aspects. When we try to design a home, however, the focus must go beyond materiality. How can we make a home truly home? Korean architect Seung Hyo-sang (1996) articulates this distinction in his book *The Beauty of Poverty*: "Our lives are inseparable from the deep contradictions of society and the truths of history. Therefore, insofar as architecture as a culture hopes to secure a better quality of life for human civilization, it must be in positive accord with the goals that life strives to fulfill. When it cannot, that architecture is most likely a fraudulent stage set that deceives life." He further argues: "When a house is like a house, a school like a school, a church like a church, the life that the architecture contains will be more ethical, and consequently, society will be the healthier for it." This raises a crucial question in the context of student housing: what does it mean for student housing to be authentically student housing? What does it mean to make student housing genuinely home-like in the context of Makerere University?

7.3.1 Fluid Boundaries: African Spatial Understanding

Students' perceptions of communal and private space reflected a distinctively African understanding of fluid boundaries between the two. This was evident in a focus group discussion, as expressed as follows:

Participant 2: Yeah, furniture like bed, desk, and chair that are within our rooms–it's basically that the nature of **whether it's communal or private depends on whether you've hosted people.** Like, there are some instances where we discuss classwork within our rooms. So in that case, it will be communal for the time being. Of course,

as we discussed together in the first place, it **becomes communal** in a case where you **invite** people. But again, there's a level of semi-privacy whereby the people that you host will definitely acknowledge the privacy level.
Participant 3: That's exclusively for those people inside. So when there's like people that have come to visit, it takes on that **semi-private** character.
(Focus Group Discussion – Male Hall Residents [FG-T-2], emphasis added)

The focus group discussion was part of discussions conducted to structure and cross-check the validity of the research method design. Fourth-year architecture students at Makerere University, who have a rich understanding of space and context, were provided with preset communal spaces (see Fig. 7.17) and discussion topics about what happens in these spaces. In the discussion, students were asked to identify and define communal space. Interestingly, students' recognition of spatial use regarding the loose or vague boundary between communal space and private spaces echoes what Pellow (1992) described in her Ghana-based study as flexible spatial boundaries between communal and private spaces.

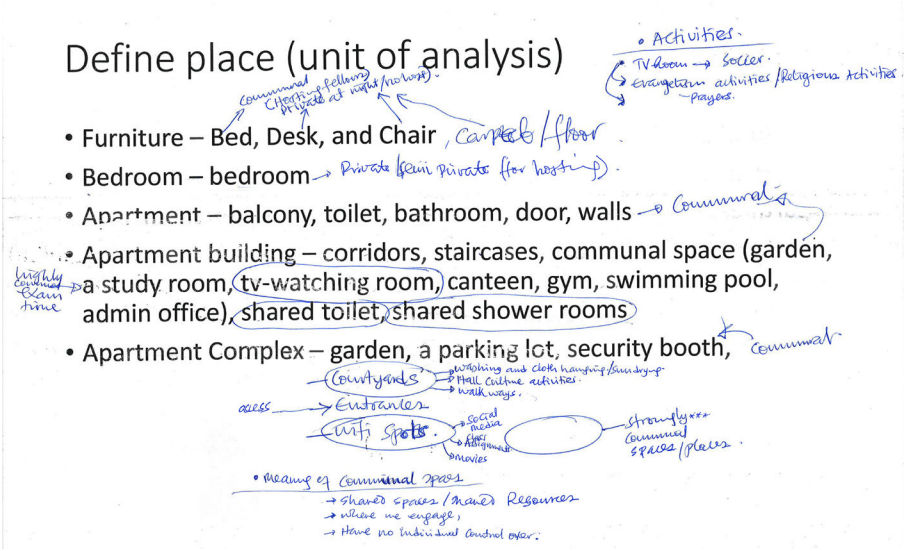


FIG. 7.17 Focus Group Discussion Handout: Students' Written Responses - CEDAT Lecture Room, Makerere University (September 25, 2023).

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7.3.2 Ubuntu in Practice: Collective Ownership of Space

Students' tolerance and acceptance towards others in communal space reflect the spatial practice of *Ubuntu*—I am because we are, and/or a person is a person through persons—as expressed in a focus group discussion.

Participant 2: For the meaning of the communal spaces, we understand them as spaces that are shared by everyone.
Participant 3: As shared resources as well
Participant 2: Where we engage in group activities and then have interactions. We **don't have individual control** over them, like in our individual rooms.
(Focus Group Discussion – Male Hall Residents [FG-T-2])

A student shared the important point about communal space: the absence of individual control. This concept can be understood as tolerance towards others, rather than respecting individual boundaries as emphasized in the West. Students at Makerere University are mingled at a deeper level, where no one claims "me" or "myself," but considers "us" and "ourselves." This is a moment where the Ubuntu spirit is confirmed.

The Ubuntu mindset was also observed in a participant's answer when he was asked about his favorite place. In his case, "my" favorite place was because it was "our" place, as explained in [T-38].

My favorite place is behind my hall of residence. […] But then, in the middle of it, there is a bare ground where people play football from. So it is a place where **you can go and watch people play football. You can socialize with people** there, **sit and watch the football together**, sometimes **play together.** But then, if you don't want to be right at the center of that football, you **can extend in the sides,** sit under a tree, and then **just relax on your own.** ([T-38], emphasis added)

In this quote, there is no "me". He liked that place not because he liked to play or watch football, nor did he like to socialize or be on his own. He likes the place because it is "their" place.

7.4 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter examined how students dwell across multiple spatial scales, from the room to the city, through detailed ethnomethodological and ethnographic analysis. By applying Perec's framework, the chapter highlighted the process through which students' dwelling practices transform spaces into lived places. The final section situated Makerere University students' dwellings within both African geographical contexts and wider urban studies debates.

Each spatial scale became meaningful through students' everyday lives. The room served as a multifunctional hub for private yet semi-public activities. Student housing and neighborhoods formed social and consumption networks. The campus became a self-sufficient and complete space for some students while serving as the center of academic life for all students, and the city extended leisure and mobility. These spatial scales do not operate in isolation but form an interconnected system through students' daily movements and practices.

Across these scales, everyday life mediates the transformation of each space into a networked and multi-layered place, where boundaries between functions and scales become fluid. This multifunctionality penetrates all spatial scales, and students' mobility is closely interwoven with this multifunctionality.

Student dwelling, therefore, is not primarily a matter of rootedness but should be understood as relational, mobile, and multi-layered, as students seek academic and social opportunities. Perec's notion of species of spaces offered a valuable lens to unpack how students' dwelling practices produce species of student places. These micro-level tactics, as de Certeau (1980/1984) conceptualized, revealed how students creatively operated within structures, transforming spaces into meaningful dwelling places.

This study offers preliminary insights into how students negotiate communal living in ways that may reflect broader African Bantu cultural contexts in ways distinct from Western models of urban individualism. The students' fluid boundaries between private and communal spaces and their emphasis on tolerance and accommodation suggest potential resonances with communal living traditions and values such as Ubuntu. While this study does not engage in detailed comparative analysis with Western models or systematic exploration of Ubuntu philosophy, these findings point to the value of further research examining how local cultural contexts shape students' dwelling practices. A fuller treatment of these themes would require deeper engagement with African scholarship on communal living and more explicit cross-cultural comparison.

Having unpacked the complexities of student dwelling at Makerere University, the next chapter bridges these empirical findings with the normative goal of this research: spatial justice.

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8 Towards Spatial Justice

Synthesis and Conceptual Implications through Spatial Capital

The normative-conceptual research question of this research was “How can a better understanding of everyday dwelling practices of students and the role of students in placemaking help us to achieve spatial justice?” By grounding normative concerns about social justice in empirically rich accounts of everyday practices, this dissertation bridges between speculative theory and the needs for design research.

8.1 Spatial Capital as Conceptual Lens for Design Research

This research is motivated by normative concerns with social justice. This section proceeds in three parts: first, I introduce Bourdieu’s concept of habitus and its significance for understanding class reproduction; second, I trace its philosophical lineage from Plato’s class-based worldview through Kant’s aesthetics to Bourdieu’s critique of distinction; finally, I apply these concepts to student dwelling practices, proposing *spatial capital* as a concept for architectural intervention.

Practice and Habitus

When people are socialized in a society, they are taught and trained to assimilate the specific behaviors, values, and thought systems of the society they belong to. Bourdieu called this *habitus*. According to Bourdieu (1977), habitus refers to "systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations" (p. 72). Habitus can also be understood as lifestyle or way of life; achievement motivation, preferences, tastes, emotions; embodied behaviors; worldview; skills and practical social capabilities; and aspirations and expectations for life opportunities and occupational success (Smith, 2001/2008, p.233). In this way, an individual's habitus is closely related to their practices and lifeworld—the lived, everyday world—as directly experienced by individuals before any theoretical reflection.

Habitus is one of Bourdieu's core sociological concepts: field, capital, class, habitus, and practice. An individual's practice reveals their habitus, which shows the class they belong to, which is determined by the capital they possess, manifested in the field where they are positioned. Habitus is significant in that one can understand the class an individual belongs to through their practice, and when the class is known, practice can be predicted.

The reason habitus receives attention lies in its insight that identifies cultural and social elements underlying class conflict as causes of conflict, beyond simple economic inequality. In Bourdieu's perspective, society operates through habitus, which is mobilized for invisible symbolic violence and contributes to justifying class segregation and reproducing inequality.

Habitus and Worldview

The problems of class separation and inequality reproduction are also deep-rooted philosophical issues that cannot be simply reduced and explained. Although the emergence of hierarchy is practically inevitable, few people in modern democratic societies think that a caste system with existing hierarchies is ideal. However, this was not the case historically, with Plato being a representative example.

Modern Western philosophy and mainstream academic philosophy are rooted in Plato's philosophical framework. Among his works, *the Republic* became the foundation of political philosophy with its various principles (Plato, 375 B.C.E./1992). In *the Republic*, Plato used the city-soul analogy to

describe an ideal world. Plato believed in the existence of the soul and approached it in three dimensions: the rational, spirited, and appetitive parts. Just as these three parts integrate in one body, Plato believed that an ideal world could be realized when rational, spirited, and appetitive classes of people—rulers, guardians, and producers—integrate well in a city. In his political view, rational rulers govern appetitive producers through spirited guardians. His framework of viewing the world, humans, and their souls through rational, spirited, and appetitive lenses as a political system has influenced many fields and scholars. Immanuel Kant is one of them.

Immanuel Kant followed Plato's worldview, seeing the world through rational, practical, and judgmental aspects. However, what makes Kant different from Plato is that Kant considered aesthetics as important as rational and moral aspects by dedicating three different books, unlike Plato, who created a hierarchy by positioning them as rulers, guardians, and ruled classes. Kant elevated the status of taste/aesthetics to the same level as rational thought. His famous three masterpieces: *Critique of Pure Reason* (Kant, 1781/1998), *Critique of Practical Reason* (Kant, 1788/1996), and *Critique of Judgment* (Kant, 1790/2000), address the rational, moral, and appetitive parts of the world. While the first two books dealt with long-established fields of thought, *Critique of Judgment* pioneered aesthetics and became its foundation. He attempted to integrate subjective desires, which Plato had assigned to the character of the ruled class, into the realm of objective reason within the framework of judgment. In particular, the first part of the book is dedicated to "Judgment of Taste," including judgments of beauty and the sublime. He articulated reflective judgment for aesthetics, distinguishing it from determinant judgment. He argued that judgments of beauty and the sublime possess "subjective universality" because, while they don't belong to the objects themselves, they are based on a certain belief that others also agree that these objects are beautiful or sublime. His notion of judgments of taste was revisited by Pierre Bourdieu in 1979. Pierre Bourdieu approached aesthetics from a different angle as an instrument to establish hierarchy.

In 1979, Pierre Bourdieu published *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, which is highly interconnected with Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. While Kant sees beauty as a universal value, Bourdieu views aesthetics as a tool for class separation and approaches it through a sociological lens. What Bourdieu discusses about habitus deals with the nature of creating judgments of taste through which the upper class creates distinction from the lower classes. The philosophical tradition of class separation and distinction-making revealed in habitus is deeply connected to Kant's aesthetics and Plato's worldview.

Student Habitus and Understanding Students' Dwelling Practices

Students have their own unique habitus. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) researched French university students and their culture, presenting findings and drawing several conclusions that can be applied to other contexts with elite higher education models in the book *The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relation to Culture*. In this book, they pointed out that "students certainly live and mean to live in a special time and space. Their studenthood momentarily frees them from family life and working life" (1979, p.29). Students can freely manage their social life, so this leaves remarkable traces in the city. There are no fixed boundaries between weekdays and weekends or day and night. Unlike others who live within a limited temporal framework, they can go to restaurants, cafes, or cinemas anytime (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1979). The temporary state of liberation from traditional social structures gives freedom to students in their use of time and space, which certainly leads to special urban footprints.

However, the main argument in this book is not about this kind of collective student habitus, but about individual students' inherited habitus. Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) concluded that the school system justifies inequality through subtle symbolic violence exercised through inherited cultural capital, contrary to the common belief that education mitigates social inequality. Thus, from Bourdieu and Passeron's perspective, education fails to provide a blueprint for solving social structural problems.

At the same time, they leave open the possibility of integration that can mitigate inequality among students of individual and diverse backgrounds in the use of time and space. They speak of "a regulated, temporally structured use of space that gives a group a framework for integration" and that "a common space and time are integrative factors only when their use is regulated by an institution or a tradition" (1979, p.32). Bourdieu and Passeron saw the possibility of mitigating segregation among students who inherited different cultural and social capital according to their class through rules and regulations of space and time use. Their argument seems to support traditional educational models represented by strong discipline.

However, if we focus more on the original point of "the use of time and space," we can propose design as an alternative to control through discipline. This also connects with Immanuel Kant's worldview, who believed that the world of 'is' and the world of 'ought' could be connected through beauty. Therefore, I argue that it is the role of architects and urban designers to understand students' dwelling practices—a situated mode of living—and design the utilization of students' *spatial capital* accordingly. Design with students' spatial capital in mind can play a crucial role

in mitigating inequality without requiring radical transformation. Crucially, spatial capital is proposed as a descriptive and actionable concept aligned with social justice concerns, not as a variable to be measured and controlled. The operationalization of spatial capital for managerial purposes remains beyond the scope of this research.

8.2 Everyday Life of Students and Spatial Capital

The Spatial Design Needs for Social Justice

Bourdieu and Passeron (1979) argued that the education system justifies inequality by approving individual students' habitus of upper-class background (inherited from their family's capital) and by disapproving that of lower-class background students. On the surface, the education system is officially fair and equal, but in reality, it reproduces and reinforces hierarchical class order and inequality. At the same time, they left some space for the use of time and space to mitigate this problem. While time is given equally to everyone, space is distributed differently according to accessibility and mobility, and its utilization varies according to place knowledge. Designing the redistribution of this spatial capital can play a pivotal role.

Spatial Capital in Everyday Practices

Through the previous three chapters, we have examined in various ways how students utilize spatial capital. For example, spatial capital can be redistributed by housing type. Students residing in halls tended to solve everything within the campus. Since there were constraints on dining hall operating hours, students expanded their living radius to find food solutions. Students living off-campus expanded their living radius to do cheaper shopping in places like Kasubi, Mulago, Kawale, and Wandegeya. Some hostel students lived a completely gated community life by utilizing shuttles, meal vouchers, and other amenities. Kikumi-Kikumi was a beloved, affordable dining place for all students regardless of their residence.

While housing types provide a structural framework for spatial capital, individual agency further diversifies its practice. Some students play rugby, and others watch them at the rugby pitch. On other days, people gather at the same place for religious events. This aligns with one student's sharing about the TV room in the hall. Students adaptively utilize spaces as long as the spatial attributes align with their immediate needs. This flexibility and adaptability can be observed at various scales, as illustrated by a resident in one of the focus group discussions:

But it's not strictly just a TV room. Today or tomorrow, it will be used **for a class, party, or study–it's multi-purpose**. It's a space whose use keeps changing because it's not a standardized space; or this is just a flexible area. Yeah. In other words, most of the spaces are communal. (Focus Group Discussion – Female Hall Residents [FG-T-3], emphasis added)

Students' Shared Dreams with Different Resources

Understanding spatial capital becomes particularly crucial when we recognize that all students share similar aspirations despite their differential spatial resources. The following narratives reveal how students articulate their dreams and the spatial practices they employ to pursue them—demonstrating that while goals converge, the spatial pathways to achieve them diverge significantly.

"We build for the future" is the main motto of Makerere University. They are building for the future. Students use different places for different reasons. Students enter university pursuing higher degrees. However, it's not about mere degrees, but about hope and dreams. The following are students' responses to questions about their goals, visions, or dreams:

To become (what I want to be), I want to study so much that I get that PhD because it's like I want to break something - a generational curse at home of not going so far. [...] (To achieve) those goals, I usually read hard. Any work without prayer is nothing. So I usually go to church. ([T-17], commuter, brackets added for clarity)

Family. Make my parents happy. You know we are from a kind of awkward background. Make them happy because they gave me money, made me through campus. When you're after school, you get a nice-paying job, so use that money to make them proud, or they feel proud. Like as an educated child. [...] Like the most important place that helps me achieve my dreams. Like as in campus, of course, I have to make sure that I go. ([T-53], rental resident)

My dreams are I want to be a professor. Like our (Nkrumah hall) motto, they say activists forward we move. So the role is to have that thing that pushes us to work hard in classes that we have. We make sure that we are the best in class, not that we push our dreams away. You know, even blessings can't come from just life like blessings; they come when you have worked for them. [...] Everything? Discussions. We're always engaging in discussion groups. We read books. We have the Main Library, East African School of Library and Information Sciences. So you go there and read your books, every type of book that people like, so that you achieve your dreams. ([T-22], hall resident, brackets added for clarity)

They want to be proud children of their parents and heroic figures like their idols. Academic excellence is a means to their dreams and visions. Of course, some are more realistic than others.

I want to be a rich woman. I wanted to excel in nice education. Initially, my parents wanted me to do law, and convincing them to do [a major] was not the easiest thing, so I need to make sure that I actually excel at it and find a job. [...] I study. ([T-15], hostel resident, major redacted for anonymity)

Financial stability and wealth are also life goals for many students [T-56]. They want to find good jobs. Students' dreams vary from field workers to different disciplines, but their academic life is the foundation for the next step in their careers [T-5, T-16, T-23]. Some students focus more on the social aspects of their lives as well as their careers. For them, school becomes a place for training and networking for the future [T-19; T-21]. The dreams and goals they pursue do not differ significantly based on where students live. However, their daily lives differ according to the spatial capital given to them, including their mobility.

Regardless of whether their goals are feasible, students have dreams and try to make the best use of their time during university. While most people think about how to optimize their time, how to utilize spatial capital is often overlooked. Understanding individual spatial capital is hidden in this way.

Toward Spatial Justice

Through exploring people's lifeworlds via interviews and observations, we can recognize the spatial needs, interests, and aspirations of people, and architects and urban designers can design spaces based on a fair distribution of burdens and benefits. Policymakers and planners can derive ideas based on fairness in decision-making.

Student dwelling should be about routes, not roots. If we approach student housing merely as a means of discipline and control, or as a place for establishing roots in the Heideggerian sense, we risk missing the most pivotal space at the most critical moment for nurturing future leaders and fellow citizens. And by considering how to design and manage spatial capital related to student dwellings that become these routes, we can create the foundation for moving toward spatial justice.

8.3 Design Research for Spatial Justice

Returning to Marshall (2012) in Section 1.2.1, he defined integrated urban design theory as a combination of three elements: "(i) insight into how the world works. (ii) a stance on how the world ought to be. (iii) a view on how to get from here to there." I answer: (i) the world will always deviate from the ideals of designers and planners—there is no "normal" against which to measure urban life, only the lived realities of diverse inhabitants. (ii) While perfect ideals are impossible, regarding just cities, those who can participate in discourse can advocate for marginalized groups. University students from low-income families are one of the most marginalized groups in urban life. We can always strive to do the next right thing, which is understanding their lifeworlds as an iterative process for the world of ought. (iii) An iterative spatial design that considers the fair distribution of spatial capital can mitigate inequality. From my positionality, statement (ii) represents the role of researchers in architecture and urban studies, while statement (iii) represents the role of architects and urban designers. This understanding of researchers' and designers' roles (statements ii and iii) points to a specific positionality: that of advocate.

I propose the role of urban researchers and designers as advocates who address a gap in Jürgen Habermas's communication theory (1987). While Habermas's communication theory advances the status of democracy, it still isolates and marginalizes people who lack the means to participate in political dialogues due to their skills, abilities, experiences, time, and energy. There are inevitably unheard realities in Habermas's ideal democracy. As established earlier, university students represent one such marginalized group whose spatial realities remain unheard.

For researchers, advocacy means identifying unheard realities and developing methods to understand and articulate those realities. In this dissertation, I do so by documenting students' dwelling practices and proposing research methods adapted from ethnomethodology. For designers and planners, advocacy means taking up this research to orient spatial intervention toward more just outcomes. This advocacy-oriented approach differs from conventional participatory planning and design by acknowledging that marginalized groups often cannot participate effectively in dialogues. It requires researchers to surface unheard realities and designers to act upon this knowledge toward more just cities.

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9 Researching as Praxis

Reflections and Accountability

This chapter will reflect on the methodological and methodical layers of the entire dissertation: research strategies and fieldwork methodology.

9.1 Reflections on Research Strategies

This section reflects on the research methodologies, which were introduced in Chapter 2. The first section reflects on the main analytical framework: the people-place-practice framework. Second, the design thinking process-oriented approach will follow. Finally, the worldview approach as a feminist approach will be discussed.

9.1.1 People-Place-Practice Framework

The main analytical framework rests on the three dimensions of People, Place, and Practice. This gave a new insight into a better understanding of the communal and collective nature of students dwelling in the urban African context.

The people-place-practice framework comprises three interrelated units of analysis for understanding urban spatial practices. By grounding research in practice theory (strategies and tactics), specifying the population (university students as life-stage agents), and situating the place (Makerere University in Kampala), this framework enabled both context-sensitive analysis and potential generalization to similar urban contexts.

Grouping People—Life Course Approach

The life course approach enabled the grouping of university students to synthesize their dwelling patterns. The lived experiences of residents are particularly crucial when it comes to human-centered spatial design and planning. However, how to integrate the diverse lived experiences of people remained a challenge. Despite this challenge, the employed life course approach provided a foundational framework for grouping a particular population—in this case, university students—thus enabling the patterning of daily lives to some extent.

While the life course approach provides this methodological foundation, the grouping of university students used in this study is also grounded in a social constructionist worldview. This worldview holds that institutions influence and shape people's lives. Adopting this perspective extends the analytical power of the life course approach and enables researchers to advocate for certain groups whose ways of life are influenced and constructed by social and cultural institutional entities.

Ordinary People as Theorists—Ethnomethodology Approach

Building upon the rich tradition of ethnographic methods in architectural and urban studies, this research adopted Harold Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodological approach and his documentary method to enhance the study of spatial practices in everyday life. While ethnographic methods play a crucial role as communication tools for capturing everyday life, this study integrated Garfinkel's ethnomethodological worldview to further strengthen everyday practice research. This perspective recognizes ordinary people as individual theorists and knowledge producers in their own right, fundamentally shifting the researcher-participant relationship.

This methodological synthesis—combining ethnography's strengths in observing people and place with ethnomethodology's emphasis on members' own sense-making practices—enabled a more collaborative and reflective research process. Rather than positioning the researcher solely as an external interpreter, this approach foregrounds participants' own analytical capacities and creates space for their theoretical insights to emerge alongside ethnographic observation. As demonstrated in Chapters 5 to 7, this enriched methodological framework successfully captured the multifaceted nature of lifeworlds while honoring participants' roles as co-producers of knowledge.

Place with Institutional Entity—Higher Education in Urban Africa

The university is a special entity in the urban African context. African populations are becoming increasingly urbanized and young, and the high demand for university degrees has contributed significantly to the growth of urban youth populations in African cities. Given this situation, there is an urgent need to understand students' daily lives and living conditions to inform architectural and urban planning practice.

The case of Makerere and its surrounding neighborhoods reveals how rapidly growing student populations transform urban landscapes in cities characterized by high youth demographics and expanding higher education systems. Understanding these spatial practices is crucial not only for Kampala but for other cities in the global South experiencing similar demographic and educational transitions.

This research offered insights into two major dimensions. First, geographically, the study revealed the spatial dynamics between universities and cities in the African context, demonstrating how campus and city mutually shape each other. Second, in terms of urban informality, the study illuminated how students actively engage with the surrounding informal economy—including street vendors, informal housing, and entrepreneurial activities—through their daily spatial practices.

9.1.2 Design Thinking Process-Oriented Approach

This research pursued a pragmatic and experimental approach grounded in design thinking processes to advance research for urban design and planning while establishing philosophical foundations in rationality through methodological reasoning. To present its outcomes, this study adopted a case study examining everyday urban practices.

This research aligns with the pragmatic worldview in its application of research methodology. Pragmatism allows researchers to transcend singular philosophical systems and focus on solving research problems (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). While multiple philosophical systems appear throughout this dissertation, I contend that no contradictions exist among them. Where surface-level contradictions may seem apparent, they actually address different analytical layers. In applying this pragmatic worldview, Dutch pragmatism and TU Delft's academic tradition shaped the research's pragmatic orientation. If pragmatism characterizes the Dutch and TU Delft tradition, experimentality is rooted in the faculty tradition and design pedagogy at TU Delft's Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment.

Architectural pedagogy fosters creativity, and architecture's unique disciplinary position—spanning from arts and humanities to building technology and engineering—enables considerable flexibility. Design thinking processes in architecture can bridge disciplines and accelerate innovation. The academic culture at TU Delft's Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment enabled me to adopt design thinking processes in research design and bridge the gap between academic reasoning and urban design theory through multifaceted interdisciplinary approaches.

As explained in Section 2.1.2, abductive reasoning in design pursues creation beyond mere explanation. In this research, abduction extends beyond explaining phenomena to constructing theory by mapping and weaving together multidisciplinary approaches, including life-course approaches, ethnomethodology, de Certeau's spatial practices, and Schatzki's practice theory. This iterative process of theoretical construction through abductive reasoning exemplifies the experimental and iterative design thinking process.

9.1.3 Worldview Approach for Feminist Epistemology

A worldview approach grounded in Haraway's situated knowledge served as the primary implicit research methodology for this study. The worldview approach encompasses and embraces multi-dimensional realities because one's worldview is shaped by cultural, colonial, gender, disciplinary, social, economic, and many other backgrounds. Throughout this dissertation, I sought to incorporate these complex realities of human experience. By doing so, this research included diverse voices and perspectives.

The worldview approach enabled me to conceptualize spatial capital, as explained in Section 8.1, and construct the space ontology—defined as a network of spatial practices drawing on de Certeau's concept (1980/1984) and Schatzki's concept (2016)—through the empirical case of Makerere University by weaving together different narratives. For example, students' voices in bachelor's and master's theses could balance the possible biases of outsiders' perspectives found in official documents. By understanding and weaving together different narratives with specific positionalities, Chapter 4 successfully provides an overview of the evolution of the planned place—Makerere campus—through the worldview approach. Furthermore, in the dwelling practice research conducted through interviews and site observations in Chapters 5 through 7, articles published in media and press, along with insights from netnography into the nature of social media, helped mitigate the potential risk of authorial misinterpretation.

Additionally, I clarified my own positionality and worldview as a researcher while specifying the positionalities and worldviews of the authors I analyzed. In doing so, I intended to invite continued academic discourse.

9.1.4 Research Strategies—Responsible and Accountable Interaction with Fellow Scholars and Practitioners

This research establishes a comprehensive methodological approach that bridges theoretical understanding with practical application in urban design research. By integrating the people-place-practice framework, design thinking process-oriented approach, and worldview approach, this research advances a methodology centered on a deep understanding of others and contexts, and fostering constructive dialogue. These three approaches complement each other: the people-place-practice framework provides the analytical structure, the design thinking process enables iterative refinement, and the worldview approach ensures inclusive interpretation of multiple perspectives. Together, they pursue research for contextually grounded and human-centered design while fostering responsible and accountable interaction with fellow scholars and practitioners.

9.2 Reflections on Fieldwork Methodology

This section reflects on and discusses the research methods employed during the fieldwork conducted at Makerere University from August to November 2023, which were introduced in Chapter 3.

9.2.1 Ethnomethodology Approach

Place-based interviews

Place-based interviews were effective in creating a natural environment for discussing lifeworlds. During the COVID-19 period in 2020 and 2021, three interviews were conducted via Zoom, during which the researcher experienced difficulties engaging emotionally in the conversations. I felt detached from the places in Uganda because my experience in Uganda was nearly a decade ago. The placeness of interviews was crucial not only for interviewees in reviving vivid sensations but also for the interviewer in fostering a sense of connection to the places under analysis and directly experiencing those places together.

Among place-based interviews, walking interviews in particular were effective in reducing the threshold of burden for the researcher approaching students. When researchers recruit random interviewees, they inevitably struggle with the fear of rejection. However, the understanding that walking alongside participants to their original destinations would not require additional time usage from participants helped me approach potential interviewees more easily and naturally. However, walking interviews had limitations and constraints. Due to mobility requirements, activities requiring writing and drawing could not be performed. Therefore, except for a few students who agreed to meet again for other research tools such as questionnaire surveys, mental mapping, and flashcard methods, it was impossible to obtain the complete data set designed for this research from the walking interview participants.

Different interview locations each offered unique advantages for data collection. Home-based interviews allowed me to engage in the very environments of students' daily lives through site observation. This sometimes helped to discover unexpected connections. For example, as mentioned in Section 7.2.1, there was a shisha in one interviewee's room. If the interview had not been conducted in the participant's room, the shisha rental business might not have been understood as a facet of the student's entrepreneurial life.

Additionally, lecture room interviews enabled me to understand how students appropriate empty lecture rooms for their individual reading and studying, as well as their group discussions. However, the small size of tablet armchairs was insufficient for conducting flashcard methods. Therefore, only questionnaires and mental mapping were feasible in the lecture room setting.

For campus interviews, the most suitable location was the guild canteen, which was an open space with outdoor tables equipped with umbrellas, providing surfaces large enough to place flashcards. Moreover, the guild canteen was the very place of students' daily lives, where students converged for snacks and refreshments, small gatherings, printing, and shopping.

Reflections on Questionnaires

Questionnaires administered before starting interviews served as a good starting point for conducting interviews. Understanding others' basic backgrounds establishes directions and foundations for conversations. The study year in the General Information section served as an indicator or basis for assumptions about their residential years near and within the campus. However, room type (self-contained, shared bathroom/toilet inside the building, shared bathroom/toilet outside the building, other) in the General Information section did not play an important role in interviews. While self-contained rooms are obviously more convenient than rooms with separate bathrooms and toilets, room type did not significantly contribute to the landscape of individual students' daily lives.

As articulated in Section 3.1, the questionnaire underwent two revisions during the field study—particularly regarding housing and room types—due to the socio-economic sensitivity of certain terminology and associated stigmas. These lessons and feedback from participants provided valuable insights for both research ethics and research credibility. On the one hand, this demonstrates how important and sensitive word choices are. On the other hand, it prevents possible errors due to careless research design.

Practically, for 5-point Likert scale questions, they were initially indicated as arrows with five blanks: Disagree ← → Agree (see Appendix C.1 and C.2), and because some students were confused about marking their level, this was changed to 5 rows: Strongly Disagree; Somewhat Disagree; Neither Disagree nor Agree; Somewhat Agree; and Strongly Agree (see C.3). The clarity of written communication was a lesson from this research practice regarding questionnaire usage.

Multi-geoscalar Approach

The multi-geoscalar approach enabled the exploration of layered and interrelated spatial dimensions. Place attachment and sense of belonging were examined across five different spatial scales—room, building, neighborhood, campushood, and Kampala—with Makerere University as a control variable representing an institutional entity. By examining these scales relationally within the same population, this approach revealed how individuals' attachments varied across geographical contexts, thereby illuminating the relative significance of each scale in shaping students' lived experiences.

This approach offered two key advantages. First, it enabled comparison of individuals' relative satisfaction levels across different geographical scales, overcoming the challenge of measuring absolute satisfaction. Second, it facilitated deeper interview discussions by helping identify the sources of satisfaction differences and revealing how people relate to various geographical spaces. These insights can inform architects and urban practitioners in developing contextually grounded design strategies.

Box-plotting Method

Particularly in Chapter 5, the box-plotting method was used to present survey results. Through box plotting, the data quantitatively demonstrated how students' attachments and sense of belonging change according to each spatial scale. Box plots were visually compelling, and the graphical display served as a powerful tool for offering an understanding of patterns, relationships, and distributions among data beyond numerical values. This approach suits architects and urbanists well for understanding contextual overviews at different geoscalar levels. Box plots were particularly useful because they compared multiple distributions, simplified complex information, and enabled clear visual comparisons. By emphasizing essential characteristics of the data, they effectively communicated patterns and trends without overwhelming viewers.

The box plot method can be beneficial, particularly for architects and urbanists, as they are familiar with visual communication. Its graphics provide quick impressions and summaries of data distribution, making it easier to focus on prominent features of data. This research presentation method will help architects and urbanists understand the direction that housing design, neighborhood design, and urban design should take in a novel way.

Reflections on the Flashcard Method

Conducting the Flashcard Method

The proposed tools enabled interviewees to elaborate on their everyday practices and helped build rapport with the researcher. Participants who used the flashcard technique provided much more detailed information about their daily lives compared to those who only participated in walking interviews and were asked the same questions. In many cases, walking interview participants without flashcards gave very simple answers like “nothing special” when asked about their previous day. This is likely how most people remember ordinary daily lives. However, participants who had undergone classification using flashcards described the previous day more specifically and vividly.

The research method was designed to evolve through participant input. After participants placed the cards, they were always asked whether there were any missing activities or places. Most participants answered that everything was covered, except for two participants: one mentioned the pantry [T-14], and another mentioned a friend's room [T-21]. Nevertheless, the pantry is considered to belong to the common room category, and a friend's room is considered to belong to the room category.

Several blank cards were prepared alongside pre-made flashcards for unexpected activities or places. During interviews, additional blank cards were often needed for lectures and showers, as some participants showered twice daily and attended more than one lecture per day. Considering the frequency of daily activities could help future researchers using this method.

As mentioned in Chapters 6 and 7, netnography through media and press revealed active sexual lives among Makerere University students, but no one, including walking interviewees without flashcards, mentioned this, while there was no “sex” card. Participants might consider the “dating” card to indicate sexual activities, but as Chatterton (1998) pointed out, participants may be reluctant to share aspects of their lives that are private or not generally accepted.

The flashcard method aligned well with the People-Place-Practice framework, the main research methodology of this study, as it was applied across two dimensions: people-focused time-budget surveys and place-focused dwelling taxonomy. This technique enabled linking the activity dimension to both spatial and temporal dimensions.

Presenting Flashcard Method—Mapping Daily Journey

The cartographic method of mapping daily journeys enhanced understanding of everyday practices. The results of some participants' flashcard methods were visualized through cartographic methods in Section 6.5.

This method had two advantages. First, it provided a richer understanding of everyday practices by visualizing the temporal dimension. Second, it captured participants' mobility behavioral patterns, such as home-centered back-and-forth trips or circular trips.

Mapping students' everyday lives in temporal and spatial dimensions provides a visual account of how they appropriate and inhabit places, which can offer urban practitioners insights for better strategies.

Reflections on Mental Mapping

Chapter 5 briefly introduced two perspectives on mental mapping. Yi-Fu Tuan was concerned about researchers imposing too much judgment, while Kevin Lynch attempted to link the mental world with the visible world. Through mental mapping and using Kevin Lynch's analytical framework of the five elements of city image, this research attempted to extract meanings and patterns by grouping mental maps rather than investigating individuals' lifeworlds through their mental maps. Acknowledging the limitations of fully decoding and understanding individual lifeworlds through mental maps, an alternative approach was adopted: comparing groups' mental mapping and attempting thematic analysis.

In this way, the analytical framework borrowed from Lynch's work provided a synthesis similar to recognizing patterns in photography. As American landscape architect Spirn (2011, p.46) mentioned, "to group photographs by theme is to recognize patterns. To connect them in series is to study patterns and plot a line of reasoning. To link through metaphor is to synthesize a 'repatterning' to realize a new whole." The mental mapping technique, combined with Lynch's framework as an analytical framework, provided new insights about the context and living environments of Makerere University students. This approach also aligns with the well-known pattern language approach by Christopher Alexander (1977) in architecture and urban studies, and allows us to glimpse collective lifeworlds.

Reflections on the Photovoice Technique

While the photovoice technique provided some conversational benefits, its utility was limited in this study due to the place-based nature of all interviews. Some participants were asked to take photographs of their favorite places and bring them to the interviews. Having a foundation and reference point for conversation was beneficial, but there was no remarkable usefulness in this technique because all interviews were place-based interviews and the researcher was conducting site observations in parallel. This method would be better suited for remote interviews conducted far from the case area.

9.2.2 Ethnography Approach

This study introduced a multi-sited ethnographic research method to understand everyday practices of urban environments for a university student group from people and place perspectives across virtual and physical dimensions. The traditional approach to researching everyday practices in urban studies is based on the ethnographic research method through close interaction within a single site, but as society becomes complex and advanced technology influences people's daily lives, there are limitations in the conventional ethnographic approach to capturing the real world.

Multi-sited online and offline research complemented each other. Particularly in online site observations through social media, preferences were observed, such as what students wanted to advertise about their lives (e.g., materiality) or challenges and complaints (e.g., WiFi). Offline site observations provided a better understanding of what an ordinary day means. Additionally, through online media and press, sensitive aspects of life, such as sexual activities, including prostitution, could be identified, which was difficult to detect due to the researcher's positionality as a female outsider.

9.2.3 Field Archival Research

This study utilized students' theses as pivotal primary sources to understand local histories and counter perspectives against the viewpoints of outside scholars. This approach contributes to partly overcoming the limitations encountered when narrating micro-level local histories as an outsider researcher.

The initial design of this field archival research was exploratory in nature. This was because the themes it sought to address were, on the one hand, very broad, and on the other, highly specific. The study aimed to understand students' lives differentiated by housing type (dormitories, hostels, and private rentals) and the local histories of university surroundings.

When it comes to the local histories of university surroundings, students' theses carry a degree of academic rigor and legitimacy as reliable sources, given that they are written under faculty supervision and require formal approval. In particular, for the themes this study addresses, students' theses served as pivotal primary sources that vividly capture "students' perspectives" on that matter.

Particularly, regarding students' lives and perspectives in the past, while oral history may be considered as an alternative means of uncovering undocumented stories, it carries the risk of memory loss or bias arising from the temporal gap between past and present—and, in particular, the tendency to romanticize recollections of student life. In contrast, student theses, as contemporaneous records, offer a comparatively more objective viewpoint.

While student theses are essential when resources are limited, they necessitate a cautious approach to interpretation and application. This is because they may contain unintended errors and biases arising from a lack of experience in conducting rigorous research. In this research, they were treated as complementary rather than definitive.

In conclusion, the physical and psychological constraints that outside researchers face when accessing local histories of university surroundings and students' perspectives in the past could be mitigated through students' theses, while local media and press served as a partial supplementary resource.

9.2.4 Research Tactics—Respectful Interaction with People and Places

Various ethnographic and ethnomethodological techniques—including place-based interviews, questionnaires with multi-geoscalar approaches, flashcard methods, mental mapping, and multi-sited observations—enabled the identification of tacit knowledge in university students' daily lives. Daily life is inevitably spatial as it is always situated somewhere. How a place is used and experienced is inseparable from how people live in that place. The proposed tools allowed approaching the daily practices of urban dwellers from both individual and collective perspectives.

These methodological proposals aim for a deeper and more comprehensive understanding by studying spatial practices as complex phenomena beyond simple measurement or evaluation. This laid the groundwork for a nuanced exploration of how university students interact with and shape urban spaces. Ultimately, this approach assists architects, urban planners, and policymakers in designing and planning spaces with residents as co-designers and co-planners.

Nevertheless, context-dependent sensitivity will always be required in the research design and application of these research methods. For instance, the trial and error in questionnaire development for Muzigo demonstrated how terminology and categorization must be carefully adapted to local contexts and participants' perspectives. Beyond terminology, ethical requirements for specific groups can vary depending on the researcher's position, participants, and contexts. Despite these contextual variations, the research methods proposed in this study can be adapted and applied to other groups from individual experiential perspectives, provided researchers remain attentive to context-specific sensitivities.

Additionally, by integrating institutional archives with student theses and memoirs, it foregrounds students as active historical agents and legitimate knowledge producers. This shifts authority away from elite, planner-centric narratives and reframes place historiography as a contested and politically situated practice. It underscores the importance of positionality in interpreting place histories and demonstrates how localized perspectives can destabilize dominant Western-centric narratives of modernization and development.

These methodological innovations position urban and architectural researchers as facilitators and translators of collective knowledge—seekers of the hidden "documents" in people's minds. Through the developed research methods focusing on respectful interaction with people and places, this study argues that the role of urban and architectural researchers is to seek and understand unheard and unobservable realities in everyday environments in order to envision spatial justice.

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10 Conclusion

This dissertation set out to examine how places are produced through students' everyday spatial practices at Makerere University. Drawing on Michel de Certeau's (1980/1984) framework of strategies and tactics, it develops a space ontology—understood as a network of spatial practices—as its primary conceptual lens. This concluding chapter summarises the research findings, revisits this conceptual framework, examines the research's innovations and significance, and concludes with limitations and future research agendas.

10.1 Main Research Findings and Discussion

Historical Spatial Practices of Makerere University, the Planned Place

Chapter 4 provided an overview and evolution of the planned place, Makerere campus, and historical spatial practices—strategies and tactics in de Certeau's sense. Many official documents about Makerere University were predominantly written by white male scholars. Simultaneously, bachelor's and master's students' theses across a broad range of departments or disciplines, from education to architecture, recorded the social and spatial history of Makerere University in a distinctive way. The voices of students thus served as an effective archive that could balance possible and potential biases of white scholars' outsider perspectives. It demonstrates that understanding and weaving different narratives with specific positionalities is important.

Student housing at Makerere University embodies layered colonial and postcolonial influences across three distinct forms: university halls, commercial hostels, and Muzigo rentals. The history of naming and renaming halls represents both colonial and postcolonial influences in a linguistic way, which also affects spatial practices. British hall cultures and gender-related policies also brought different spatial

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practices in the history of Makerere University. The private students scheme, since 1992, attracted hostel business surrounding the campus, and the rapidly increasing hostels reflect the contemporary trend of marketization and privatization of education. Muzigo rentals, as an urban housing form for low-income workers that has continued since the colonial period, meet students' needs.

Colonial planning contexts demand methodological approaches distinct from those developed in non-colonial settings. I argue that the intertwined cultural, colonial, gender, and disciplinary dynamics of colonial planning require a holistic approach that can address this complexity, rather than simply adapting analytical frameworks from elsewhere. The holistic approach applied in Chapter 4—which attends to the cultural, colonial, gender, and disciplinary positionalities and worldviews—enabled the weaving of diverse voices beyond merely architects' or planners' visions, recognizing the complex coexistence of traditional and contemporary landscape experiences rather than viewing them as mutually exclusive. This methodological stance is particularly crucial in colonial planned places, where layered histories and power relations cannot be understood through singular analytical lenses.

Tactical Spatial Practices with Students as Place Producers

In this dissertation, everyday life is understood as being constituted through dwelling practices. This analysis was conducted across geographical scales, and this approach is grounded in the universal premise that all life activities are spatial, seeking to analyze students' dwellings by utilizing spatial scale as an analytical lens. However, for this section's analytical clarity to address how dwelling practices connect to everyday life and place productions, dwelling practices are treated as spatially situated modes of living, while everyday life refers to the temporal, social, and experiential patterns that emerge through these practices.

The empirical chapters collectively demonstrate that student dwelling operates as a socio-spatial process of place production, with each chapter revealing distinct dimensions of this phenomenon. Chapter 5 demonstrated that students as dwellers developed profound place meanings that outsiders cannot perceive and validated the research's emphasis on residents' lived experiences over travelers' observation. Chapter 6 revealed that students created paths and places by managing their time and budgets. Their constraints and opportunities of time and budget generated local businesses, places, housing choices, and urban paths. These dwelling practices demonstrated that students are producers of place. Chapter 7 examined how students' dwelling practices transform spaces into lived places across scales. It drew a conclusion that students' dwelling should be understood as relational, mobile, and multi-layered, rather than a

matter of rootedness, as students sought academic and social opportunities. Chapters 5 to 7 demonstrated both homogeneity and heterogeneity of Makerere students' social and spatial practices. While they shared common patterns like attending lectures, students as diverse individuals fulfilled distinct spatial needs through leisure time, revealing varied tactical responses to spatial opportunities and constraints.

Taken together, the empirical chapters demonstrate that student dwelling operates as a socio-spatial process through which everyday life and places are co-produced. The different landscapes of student dwelling do not simply reflect housing diversity, but are actively shaped by how students manage time and budget, organize their daily routines, and participate in urban social life. This study demonstrates that students play a crucial role in producing places through their daily lives, rather than living as place consumers. These findings can carry significant implications for spatial design.

To translate these findings into design practice, an integrated understanding connecting individual and social contexts is essential. Students' spatial practices revealed a pattern of communality and multifunctionality across all scales. This ranges from cognitive and psychological levels based on living perceptions and mental mapping to behavioral, social, and cultural levels observed through ethnomethodological and ethnographic approaches. The lifeworld of Makerere University students demonstrated that while individual dwelling experiences vary, the concepts of communality and fluid boundaries are consistently observed in students' daily lives when viewed through the lens of place. The analytical spatial scales did not operate in isolation, but rather formed an interconnected system through students' daily movements and practices. This reflects Ubuntu practices and residential education traditions.

Evaluating the Initial Analytical Framework: Building Typology Model

The three categories of student housing show clear distinctions of housing types and urban fabric in urban Africa: formal and informal, gated community, colonial, and postcolonial influence. The footprints that university students make in cities are significant. However, I concluded that the lens of building typology alone does not fully capture the complexity of students' daily lives residing in each housing type.

The initial goal of this analytical framework was to derive housing design implications by studying their architectural and urban qualities and the dwelling practices of students living in them. In simple terms, the initial research design hypothesis was "building types and urban morphology of residences influence students' daily lives," and sought to synthesize patterns of inhabitation according to building types.

Indeed, building typology provided insights into identifying differences in interaction with local communities. Hall residents often showed limited activity boundaries, as the campus is self-sufficient. Some hostel residents also maintained their lives within their hostels, similar to gated communities. In contrast, rental dwellers developed a need for mutual support with their neighbors, as they had to handle emergencies such as water or electricity shortages, as one student mentioned.

While building typology provided valuable insights into the spatial framework of student housing, the research revealed an additional dimension that operates across typological boundaries: communal dwelling practices and multifunctionality. Students from various housing types consistently gathered in friends' rooms—more specifically, on particular single beds—transcending the spatial distinctions established by building types. The scene of 5-6 students cooking or studying on beds was repeatedly observed, and multiple interviews revealed spatial practices of "Ubuntu" characterized by fluid boundaries between private and public spaces. Additionally, students' mobility blurred boundaries between function and scale. This communal living culture and mobility operate as parallel organizing principles alongside building typology, suggesting that patterns of inhabitation emerge from the interaction between architectural form and cultural practices of communality, rather than from building type alone.

Reflections on Problem Statement: Necessity of Design Research for African Campushoods

This research is grounded in the recognition that design research for emerging African campushoods is both necessary and urgently needed. The case study of Makerere University revealed that students' dwelling practices cannot be fully captured through the Western dwelling framework, as represented by Heidegger's notion of dwelling. Two dimensions proved particularly salient in examining the Makerere University case: first, the collective culture embodied in Ubuntu philosophy, encompassing collective ownership of spaces and fluid understandings of spatial boundaries; and second, the adaptive homemaking practices that characterize the transitional phase university students occupy between dependent childhood and independent adulthood—a phase further shaped by their prior experience of institutional living in boarding schools. Together, these findings affirm both the necessity of design research into African campushoods and the need for a research design appropriately attuned to their distinctive cultural and spatial conditions.

10.2 Integrating Space Ontology

This research presented a space ontology adapted from de Certeau's conceptual framework of spatial practices (1980/1984) and Schatzki's practice theory as flat ontology (2016). At the ontological level, this section reflects on space ontology, examining how this research's space ontology positions the study and distinguishes it from other approaches.

This research developed a space ontology for understanding place production. By adapting concepts from de Certeau (1980/1984) and Schatzki (2016), it opened a pathway to integrate time, space, and people in place production. While de Certeau's approach encompasses spatial practices of both authorities/planners and ordinary people, Schatzki's concept explicitly suggests its aggregated and flat concept of both human entities and material entities (place in this research). Together, these laid the foundation for this space ontology.

One's way of seeing space determines how we approach spatial research and design—shaping what we observe, how we interpret findings, and what interventions we propose. For example, Rocco (2025) articulates his space ontology as follows:

> It rests on an ontology that sees space as both constituted by and constitutive of social relations. In other words, spatial arrangements and territorial configurations shape and are simultaneously shaped by economic, political, and cultural processes. The spatial organisation of cities, regions, and territories thus plays an active role in producing or mitigating inequality. (Rocco, 2025, p.5)

Similarly, this research's space ontology—viewing space as a network of practices—determines what it observes, how it interprets, and its analytical direction. While Rocco (2025) sees space as both a product and producer of social relations, this research views space as produced through the historical and ongoing interaction of spatial practices.

This space ontology directly influences how this research is positioned. Dwelling research has traditionally been closely linked to geographical contexts. Within this traditional framework, this research on student dwelling at Makerere University would have been positioned within African dwelling scholarship. However, this research deliberately introduced the people-place-practice framework and "network of spatial practices" to position the study. In other words, this research's findings concern student dwelling and university-related urban change rather than being

specifically African. This is analogous to how my own spatial practices as a PhD student at TU Delft would be understood not as Dutch urbanism or European urbanism, but as practices organized by the institutional context of the university and the life-course stage of doctoral study. Therefore, the focus is not on a specific geographical contextual sphere, but rather on (1) the agency of students' spatial practices and (2) the university campus as an institutional entity.

This research aligns with existing studentification research in its focus on people (students) and place (university surroundings). However, there is a fundamental difference at the ontological level. Most existing studentification research frames student concentration as a "problem" and takes a positivist approach that seeks to predict and manage the future by identifying relationships between causes (e.g., housing markets, gentrification) and effects (e.g., community conflicts, housing inequality).

In contrast, this research follows the hermeneutic tradition and focuses on students' everyday spatial practices. Rather than identifying problems and proposing solutions, it seeks to envision better future spaces by understanding past and present contexts—colonial planning, housing typology, students' tactical spatial appropriations. This is grounded in a core principle of architecture and urban studies: the belief that understanding the contexts of the past and present enables us to better envision future spaces. This approach connects hermeneutic understanding with spatial envisioning, integrating temporal and spatial dimensions.

This research's space ontology operated across three interrelated dimensions: (1) Analytically, viewing space as a network of strategies and tactics enabled examination of how planners' intentions and residents' everyday appropriations interact to co-produce place. (2) Methodologically, this ontology justified the hermeneutic approach, enabling a research design that integrates understanding of both past (colonial planning) and present (students' everyday lives). (3) In design practice, viewing space not as a fixed physical form but as continuously produced through practices enables recognizing residents as co-designers rather than passive occupants.

Whether positivist or hermeneutic, research ultimately gains legitimacy and meaning when it contributes to the future. This research's space ontology goes beyond stating a philosophical position to provide a foundation for more human-centered and context-sensitive urban design.

10.3 Research Innovation and Significance

This section summarizes the research innovations and their broader significance across theoretical, methodological, and empirical dimensions.

Theoretically, this research advances interdisciplinary understanding of place production and lifeworlds through several innovative frameworks. The application of urban (ab)normalism worldview—drawn from theology and applied to lifeworlds, as articulated in Section 1.2.1—seeks to strengthen the theoretical rationale for practice-based research methodology. The proposed People–Place–Practice framework may enhance the relevance of future empirical studies and facilitate constructive dialogue across contextual boundaries. Finally, this research develops and presents a space ontology that views space as a network of practices produced through the ongoing interaction of strategies (formal planning) and tactics (everyday appropriations), building on de Certeau (1980/1984) and Schatzki (2016). This ontology enables a repositioning of student dwelling research from geographical-cultural contexts (e.g., African dwelling) toward a focus on agency (people) and institutional entities (place), thereby opening pathways toward more human-centred and context-sensitive urban design.

Methodologically, the study contributes to the three layers. First, the proposed methodological-theoretical rationale for design research may strengthen the field of architecture and urban design as a discipline. The theory-building approach, design thinking, design research, and design practices are distinct yet deeply interconnected, operating in a continuous cycle. Although the suggested frameworks and concepts are a tool for design research, not a recipe for design practices, they create scientific foundations that design practices also rely on. Second, this research applied bibliometric methods to trace the evolution of studentification studies and map the profile of the field. This approach enabled an understanding of the research ecosystem, connecting research across disciplinary and geographical boundaries and integrating diverse scholarly perspectives into a more cohesive research community—ultimately leading to the conceptualization of 'campushood.' Finally, the introduction of Harold Garfinkel's (1967) ethnomethodological approach to overcome the 'othering' problem inherent in observation-based research seeks to contribute to advancing spatial practice research methodology in the fields of architecture and urbanism. While architecture and urbanism are inherently multidisciplinary disciplines, this methodological contribution opens further dialogue between spatial research and the social sciences.

The empirical contribution is grounded in thick description—encompassing diverse perspectives on past strategic spatial practices and richer accounts of students' present tactical responses. The study's synthesis of diverse sources—including colonial and post-colonial archives, students' undergraduate and graduate theses, and contemporary digital sources such as social media—offers a methodologically distinctive approach to understanding the spatial history and present of Makerere University. Building on Nawangwe's (2011) research on "The Architectural Transformation of Makerere University Neighbourhoods during the Period 1990-2010," this study provides detailed observations of changes since 2010 and examines contemporary students' spatial practices through ethnographic and multi-scalar approaches.

Taken together, these contributions serve the research's overarching normative orientation: advancing spatial justice by foregrounding the voices and practices of students as an understudied group in urban discourses.

10.4 Limitations and Future Research Agenda

Originally conceived as an exploratory investigation into dwelling, this research evolved through an organic and continuous negotiation of my (dis)positionality. Rather than imposing external theoretical frameworks onto the findings, this study utilized "campushood"—a conceptual lens encompassing both students and the campus environment—as its primary analytical tool. This approach facilitated a holistic thick description of the phenomena under study. The primary purpose of this descriptive approach was to furnish designers with a rich, contextually grounded understanding of the site.

The descriptive nature of this research was a deliberate choice, intended to capture a fuller range of diverse perspectives and experiences to better inform designers. While this emphasis on breadth resulted in a less overtly critical mode of narration, it establishes a robust evidential foundation. These limitations, however, also point toward productive directions for future research. Future research may build upon these findings through more critical interpretations, with implications for policy-making, urban planning, or site-specific design strategies.

Furthermore, while "spatial capital" was conceptualized in Chapter 8, the time-intensive nature of this exploratory study precluded its fuller application as a primary analytical lens for examining spatial practices at Makerere University. Future research should expand upon this conceptual framework to investigate the dynamics of spatial capital more deeply, and to explore how design interventions might mitigate social inequalities and contribute to the pursuit of spatial justice.

Acknowledgment of AI Usage

Language Assistance

Anthropic Claude and Grammarly were used to assist with English language editing for grammar, clarity, and academic style throughout this dissertation. Additionally, Claude was utilized to translate the English summary into the Dutch *samenvatting*.

Visual Content Generation

Google Gemini, OpenAI ChatGPT and PromeAI were used to reconstruct photographs into hand-drawn style illustrations or to digitally enhance original drawings for Figs. 1.1, 2.1, 4.1, 4.2, 4.5-8, 4.11-4.17, 4.21-4.22, 4.26, and 5.1-5.8 (see Appendix F: Image Credits for details). All reconstructed images were verified against the original images to ensure visual quality. Some images were further edited and refined by the author.

Scope and Limitations

AI was not used to generate research ideas, develop methodological or theoretical frameworks, conduct data analysis, or formulate any narrative arguments. All research design, analytical interpretations, and academic judgments are solely the author's own work. All AI-generated or AI-assisted content was critically reviewed and verified by the author to ensure accuracy and academic integrity.

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APPENDIX A

Research Materials

Data accessibility was the most challenging part of this research, especially during the worldwide pandemic situation. Throughout the pandemic, research relied heavily on online archival resources.

In-person archival research was conducted at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda (October-November 2023); various institutions in London, Oxford, and Cambridge, UK (June-July 2024); and archives in Glasgow and Edinburgh, UK (June 2025).

Archival Visit - Primary Sources

Uganda

- Makerere University Library – University Archives: 8HP9+43F, P. O. Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda
- Makerere University Library – Africana Section: 8HP9+43F, P. O. Box 7062, Kampala, Uganda

United Kingdom

- Cambridge University Library - Royal Commonwealth Society Library: West Rd, Cambridge CB3 9DR, United Kingdom
- Oxford Unviersity Archives – Bodleian Special Collections: Broad Street, Oxford, OX1 3BG, United Kingdom
- SOAS University of London - SOAS Library Special Collections: Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG, United Kingdom
- University of London, School of Advanced Study - Institute of Historical Research (IHR): Senate House, Malet St, London WC1E 7HU, United Kingdom
- Wellcome Collection: 183 Euston Rd., London NW1 2BE, United Kingdom
- Lambeth Palace Library: 15 Lambeth Palace Rd, London SE1 7JT, United Kingdom
- The National Archives: Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 4DU, United Kingdom
- Glasgow University Archives and Special Collections: 13 Thurso St, Glasgow G11 6PE, United Kingdom
- Edinburgh University Heritage Collections: Main Library George Square. Edinburgh. EH8 9LJ, United Kingdom

Online Archival Visit - Primary Sources

- Daily Montior: https://www.monitor.co.ug/
- New Vision: https://www.newvision.co.ug/
- Campus Bee: https://campusbee.ug/
- Makerere University Endowment Fund: https://endowment.mak.ac.ug/
- YouTube
- Google Map Reviews

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent

Thank you for participating research. You are being invited to participate in a research study titled "Spatial Experiences of University Students and Studentification in Uganda". This study is being conducted by Jungmin Yoon (Jamie) from the TU Delft. The purpose of this research is to understand the everyday practices and spatial experiences of university students and their urban impacts. You will be asked several questions about your daily lives and spatial experiences. You can be asked to draw a mental map of your neighborhood and a timetable of your daily life, and you can be asked to be photo-taken. The data will be used for academic purpose only.

General	**Yes**	**No**
1. I have read and understood the study information.	☐	☐
2. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can refuse to answer questions and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.	☐	☐
3. I understand the recording of the interview will not be shared beyond the study team and will be destroyed after anonymization.	☐	☐
4. I understand that anonymized data I participate, such as anonymized interview transcript, mental map, and timetable, will be used for academic purposes only, including publication, and will be archived in 4TU.ResearchData repository.	☐	☐
	☐	☐
Photo-taking (Optional)		
1. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study and understand that I can ask to delete my photos and I can withdraw from the study at any time, without having to give a reason.	☐	☐
2. I understand my photos will not be shared beyond the study team and will be destroyed after anonymization.	☐	☐
3. I understand my face in the photos will be blurred for anonymization.	☐	☐
4. I understand that anonymized photos will be used for academic purposes only, including publication, and will be archived in 4TU.ResearchData repository	☐	☐

Signatures

_____	_____	_____
Name of participant	Signature	Date

I, as researcher, have accurately read out the information sheet to the potential participant and, to the best of my ability, ensured that the participant understands to what they are freely consenting.

_____	_____	_____
Researcher name	Signature	Date

Study contact details for further information: Jungmin Yoon (j.yoon-1@tudelft.nl)

APPENDIX C

Questionnaire Form

C.1 Initial Questionnaire Form (as of August, 2023)

Part 1. General Information

Gender □ Male □ Female
Faculty :_____
Study Year :_____
Housing Type :
□ Halls of Residence □ Hostel □ Rental □ Daily commute(home)
What is your room type?
□ Self-contained □ Shared bathroom/toilet inside the building
□ Shared bathroom/toilet outside of the building □ Other

Please check your degree of agreement with the statements.

(The level of agreement degree is from left to right: Strongly Disagree; Somewhat Disagree; Neither Disagree nor Agree; Somewhat Agree, and Strongly Agree.)

Description	Disagree ← → Agree
I actively engage and involve in my study duty such as assignments, exams, and group discussions (academic maintenance)	□ □ □ □ □
I actively develop and expand my intellectual curiosity (academic development)	□ □ □ □ □
I actively engage and involve in maintaining my intimate friendship in school (social/networking maintenance)	□ □ □ □ □
I actively develop and expand my social network in school (social/networking development)	□ □ □ □ □

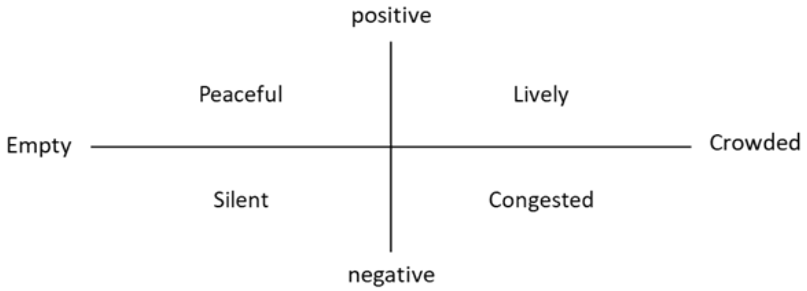
If you are interested in participating further research, please provide your email address:

_____

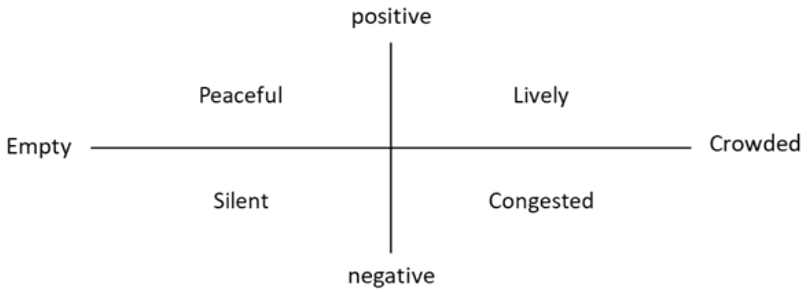
TOC

Part 2.

What word best describes about your student housing? (feel free to add your description)



What word best describes about your neighborhood? (feel free to add your description)



Please check your degree of agreement with the statements. (The level of agreement degree is from left to right: Strongly Disagree; Somewhat Disagree; Neither Disagree nor Agree; Somewhat Agree, and Strongly Agree.)

Description	Disagree ← → Agree				
I feel attached/belonged to Makerere University.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my room.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my building(hall/hostel/rental house).	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my neighborhood.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my campushood.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to Kampala.	□	□	□	□	□

TOC

C.2 Revised Questionnarie Form (as of September, 2023)

Part 1. General Information

Gender □ Male □ Female
College :_____
Study Year :_____
Housing Type :
□ Halls of Residence □ Hostel □ Rental □ Daily commute
Building Type :
□ Muzigo □ Apartment
Room Type :
□ Self-contained □ Shared bathroom/toilet □ Other

Please check your degree of agreement with the statements.

(The level of agreement degree is from left to right: Strongly Disagree; Somewhat Disagree; Neither Disagree nor Agree; Somewhat Agree, and Strongly Agree.)

Description	Disagree ← → Agree				
I actively engage and involve in my study duty such as assignments, exams, and group discussions	□	□	□	□	□
I actively develop and expand my intellectual curiosity	□	□	□	□	□
I actively engage and involve in maintaining my intimate friendships in school	□	□	□	□	□
I actively develop and expand my social network in school	□	□	□	□	□

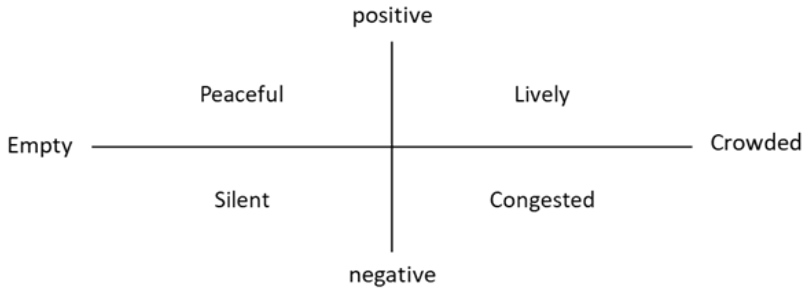
If you are interested in participating further research, please provide your email address:

_____

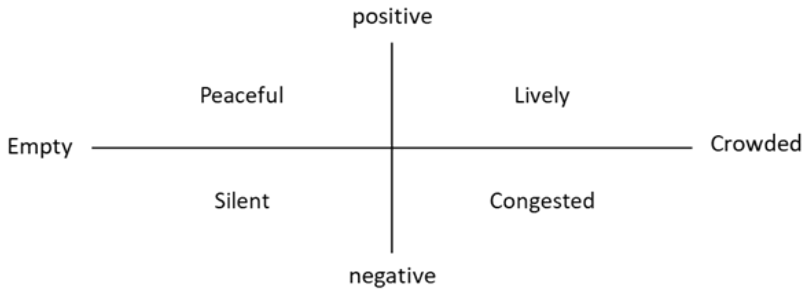
TOC

Part 2.

What word best describes about your student housing building? (feel free to add your description)



What word best describes about your neighborhood? (feel free to add your description)



Please check your degree of agreement with the statements. (The level of agreement degree is from left to right: Strongly Disagree; Somewhat Disagree; Neither Disagree nor Agree; Somewhat Agree, and Strongly Agree.)

Description	Disagree ← → Agree
I feel attached/belonged to Makerere University.	□ □ □ □ □
I feel attached/belonged to my room.	□ □ □ □ □
I feel attached/belonged to my building(hall/hostel/rental house).	□ □ □ □ □
I feel attached/belonged to my neighborhood.	□ □ □ □ □
I feel attached/belonged to my campushood.	□ □ □ □ □
I feel attached/belonged to Kampala.	□ □ □ □ □

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C.3 Final Questionnarie Form (as of October, 2023)

Part 1. General Information

Gender □ Male □ Female
College :_____
Study Year :_____
Housing Type :
□ Halls of Residence □ Hostel □ Rental □ Daily commute
Building Type :
□ Single Bedroom House □ Apartment
No. of Floors in the Building :_____
Amenities the Student Housing Have :
□ Shuttle □ Fence □ Parking lot □ Security Guard □ Canteen
Room Type :
□ Self-contained □ Standalone Shared Bathroom/Toilet
□ Shared Bathroom/Toilet in the Corridor □ Other

Please check your degree of agreement with the statements.

(The level of agreement degree is from left to right: Strongly Disagree; Somewhat Disagree; Neither Disagree nor Agree; Somewhat Agree, and Strongly Agree.)

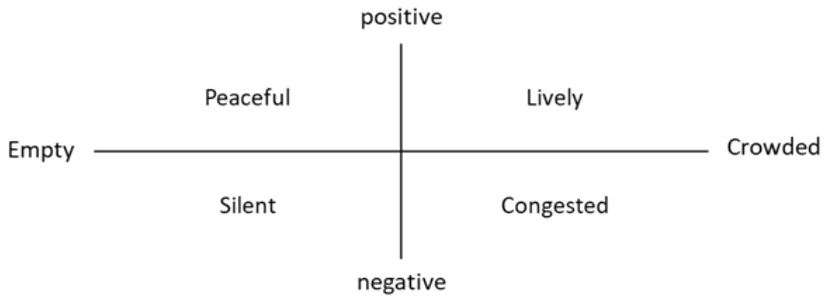
Description	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I actively engage and involve in my study duty such as assignments, exams, and group discussions	□	□	□	□	□
I actively develop and expand my intellectual curiosity	□	□	□	□	□
I actively engage and involve in maintaining my intimate friendships in school	□	□	□	□	□
I actively develop and expand my social network in school	□	□	□	□	□

If you are interested in participating in further research, please provide your phone number:
_____

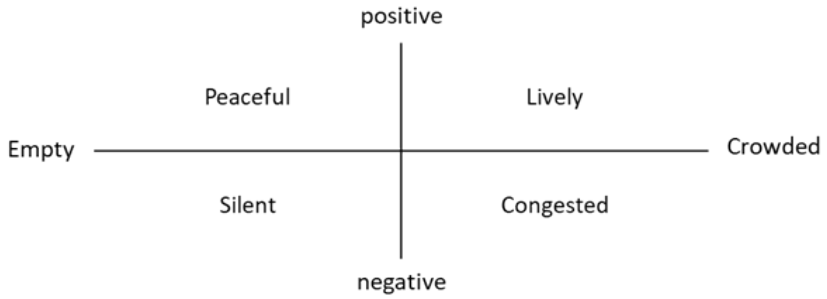
TOC

Part 2.

What word best describes about your student housing building? (feel free to add your description)



What word best describes about your neighborhood? (feel free to add your description)



Please check your degree of agreement with the statements.

Description	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel attached/belonged to Makerere University.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my room.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my building(hall/hostel/rental house).	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my neighborhood.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to my campushood.	□	□	□	□	□
I feel attached/belonged to Kampala.	□	□	□	□	□

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APPENDIX D

Instructions for Mental Map

Part 1. Segregation

1. Map the main connecting streets between districts. Draw them as (red) continuous lines on your map.
2. Identify inner urban borders (campushood). Draw them as (black) dotted lines in your map. (Look for dividing walls, rivers, canals, transport infrastructure, or other forms of physical separation.)
3. Identify local centres, the concentrations of commercial and public amenities. These concentrations can be arranged linearly along streets, around squares or crossings (point centralities), or scattered in the neighbourhood. Draw these (main) local centres by outlining them with (red) dotted lines on your map.
4. Delineate areas with similar morphological features that differ from neighbouring areas. Draw the outline of homogeneous areas in (grey) dashed lines on your map.
    a. Lingual
    b. Legal (Formal/Informal)
    c. Social Status (Social background of Residential/non-residential)
    d. Economic (Comercial Streets/Points)
    e. Aesthetic
5. (discussion) Discuss the causes and consequences of segregation in the area, and provide suggestions on how to reduce inequality and segregation in the area.

Part 2. Daily lives

1. Draw a mental map of your neighborhood, in other words, draw your neighborhood by mind. Do not look at maps while doing so. It may be very sketchy.
2. Make a basic drawing of your neighborhood, including the network of public spaces.
3. Analyze your neighborhood by defining ‘enclaves’
4. Analyze your neighborhood by drawing ‘routes and routines’. draw your movement patterns in the neighborhood.
5. Analyze the ‘sense of place’.
6. You can add words and diagrams, if you see relationships between the physical and the social layers of the neighborhood and its surrounding
7. (Optional) Compare the three neighborhood analyses: can you draw routes and places that you share, or do not share, with other groups of people?

APPENDIX E

Semi-structured Interview Questions

General

1. How do you perceive your dwelling places?
    a. Compared to home
    b. Compared to boarding school
    c. Compared to other types of student housing
1. Do you think student housing home? Why or why not?
2. What makes home a home?
3. What do you do in your holiday? Do you go back home?
4. Where do you/students go out usually?
5. What did you learn from the lived experiences of studenthood?
6. What is your life goal?
7. Did your student experience help you to get closer to your goal? How?
8. How can student housing help you to achieve your goal?

Campushood Scale

Mental mapping follow-up questions

1. Segregation (Campushood)
    a. What do you think the difference/segregation of each area came from?
    b. What do you wish for those places?
    c. What do you think you or students can do to make student housing and neighborhood more better?
2. Daily activity (Neighborhood)
    a. Where do you buy Rolex/Pork Joint/Chicken/Sausage?
    b. Where do you do your hair?
    c. Where do you usually buy your clothes, stationary, mobile money, printing service?
    d. Where do you take taxi/boda to where?
3. Could you explain me your yesterday as detail as possible?

Housing Scale

Dwelling taxonomy (focus group)

- daily activities -> ranking (by spending time)
- ranking comparison among focus group by gender and student housing type

Timetable (interview)

- Daily activities using flash card method
- Why do you do that? What does it mean to you? For what?

Use Visual language to communicate with others/communities
(Reconstructed photos)

Housing Choice

1. Why did you choose this student housing?
2. Did you ever move from a student housing to another since you started university? (for example moving from halls of residence to hostel after 1st year) If yes, why?
3. Would you prefer to move and live in different housing?

APPENDIX F

Image Credits

Fig. 1.1: Digitally enhanced from MS Excel graphs created by the author with the assistance of Google Gemini.

Fig. 1.2: Digitally enhanced from MS Excel graphs created by the author with the assistance of Google Gemini.

Fig. 4.1: Reconstructed from Ernst May's original diagram (May 1948: Report on the Kampala Extension Scheme, Kololo – Naguru, Nairobi Government Printer, as cited in Omolo-Okalebo 2011). Symbols represent hills that formed the basis of Kampala's extension planning. Digital reconstruction created with AI assistance OpenAI ChatGPT.

Fig. 4.2: Reconstructed map based on original drawings held in the SOAS Archive (Government of Uganda, 1938) and the British National Archives, digitally enhanced and reimagined with AI assistance (ChatGPT-5) to visualize the historical planning process.

Figs. 4.5–4.8: Digital site plans derived from Google Earth satellite imagery (©Airbus, 2023) and reconstructed with PromeAI.

Fig. 4.11: Reconstructed maps based on the guide signposts at Africa Hall and University Hall, respectively; digitally enhanced with the assistance of ChatGPT.

Fig. 4.12: Reconstructed maps based on the guide signposts at Africa Hall and University Hall, respectively; digitally enhanced with the assistance of ChatGPT.

Fig. 4.13: Reconstructed plans based on original drawings by Musamba (2000), digitally enhanced with ChatGPT.

Figs. 4.14–4.17: Digital site plans derived from Google Earth satellite imagery (©Airbus, 2023) and reconstructed with PromeAI.

Figs. 4.21–4.22: Reconstructed plan based on original drawing by Musamba (2000) and digitally enhanced with AI assistance (ChatGPT-5).

Fig. 4.26: Digital reconstruction of the Makerere University campus and adjacent areas, adapted from Amua (2004); AI-assisted visualization via ChatGPT to illustrate the broader urban context.

Fig. 5.1–5.8: Digitally enhanced from MS Excel graphs created by the author with the assistance of Google Gemini.

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Curriculum vitae

Jamie J. Yoon (Jungmin)

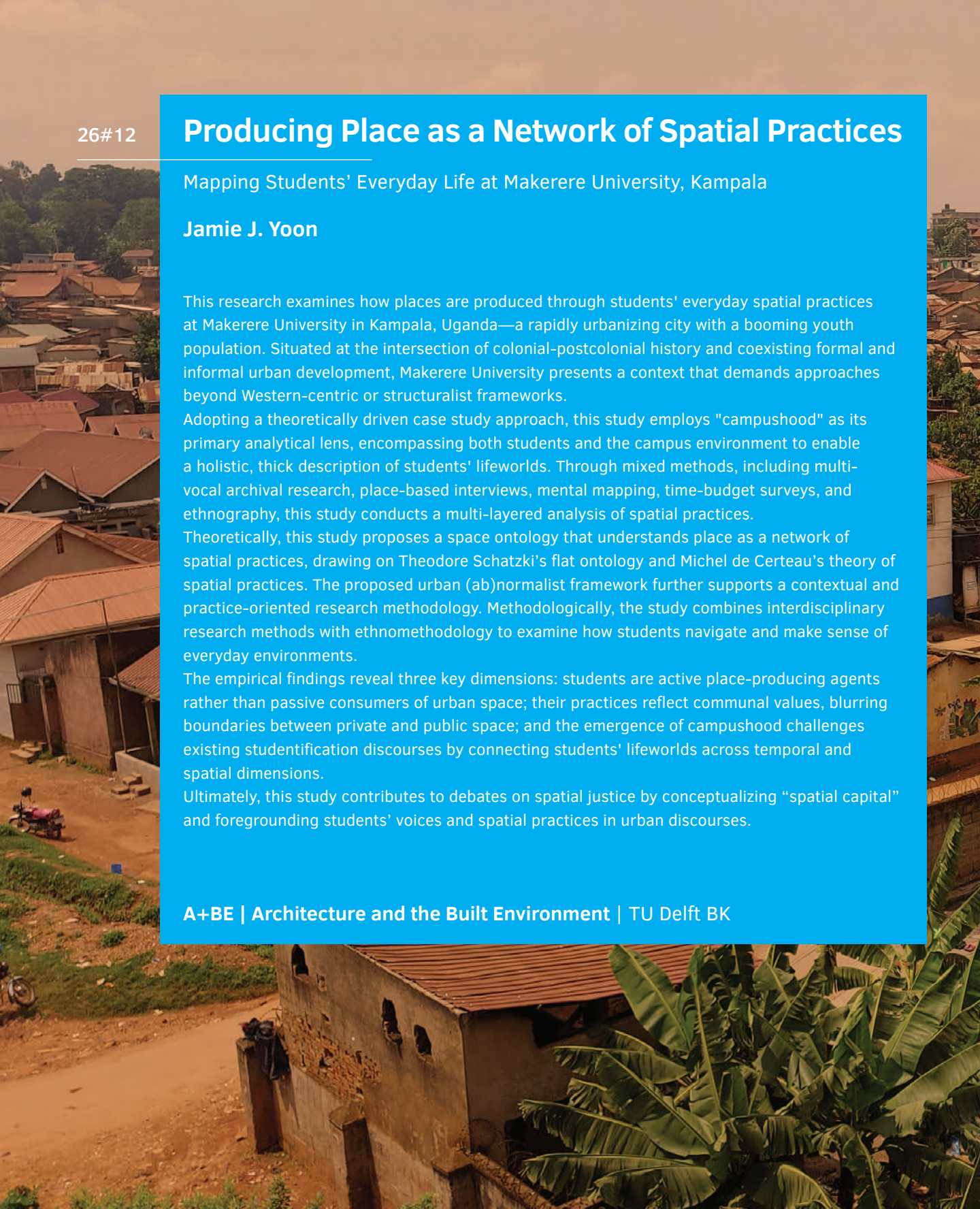
Education

Dec 2019 - June 2026	PhD Candidate in Architecture, Delft University of Technology (TU Delft), Delft, the Netherlands.
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Sep 2012 - Aug 2014	MSc in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), Daejeon, Korea.
Mar 2005 - Aug 2010	BSc in Urban Planning and Engineering, BSc in Human Environment and Design (Double Major), Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea.

Professional Work

Aug 2014 - Aug 2017	Project Engineer, Samsung C&T, Seoul, Korea & Singapore (30-month Expatriate Assignment).
Mar 2012 - Jul 2012	Public Relations, Korean Embassy in Uganda, Kampala, Uganda.
Mar 2011 - Mar 2012	Teaching Assistant, Kumi University, Uganda, Kumi, Uganda.

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26#12

Producing Place as a Network of Spatial Practices

Mapping Students' Everyday Life at Makerere University, Kampala

Jamie J. Yoon

This research examines how places are produced through students' everyday spatial practices at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda—a rapidly urbanizing city with a booming youth population. Situated at the intersection of colonial-postcolonial history and coexisting formal and informal urban development, Makerere University presents a context that demands approaches beyond Western-centric or structuralist frameworks.

Adopting a theoretically driven case study approach, this study employs "campushood" as its primary analytical lens, encompassing both students and the campus environment to enable a holistic, thick description of students' lifeworlds. Through mixed methods, including multi-vocal archival research, place-based interviews, mental mapping, time-budget surveys, and ethnography, this study conducts a multi-layered analysis of spatial practices.

Theoretically, this study proposes a space ontology that understands place as a network of spatial practices, drawing on Theodore Schatzki's flat ontology and Michel de Certeau's theory of spatial practices. The proposed urban (ab)normalist framework further supports a contextual and practice-oriented research methodology. Methodologically, the study combines interdisciplinary research methods with ethnomethodology to examine how students navigate and make sense of everyday environments.

The empirical findings reveal three key dimensions: students are active place-producing agents rather than passive consumers of urban space; their practices reflect communal values, blurring boundaries between private and public space; and the emergence of campushood challenges existing studentification discourses by connecting students' lifeworlds across temporal and spatial dimensions.

Ultimately, this study contributes to debates on spatial justice by conceptualizing "spatial capital" and foregrounding students' voices and spatial practices in urban discourses.

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