

The Renewal of *Ile Akogun* in Ile-ife, Nigeria: A Paradigm for the Conservation of Yoruba Iconic Architecture

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ABSTRACT

Ile-Ife has many socio-culturally iconic buildings. Unfortunately, most of these presently range from being poorly maintained to derelict. Though the town records a sizeable annual influx of tourists (as participants in the Olojo and other traditional festivals, as well as routine visitors to the museum and other historic sites), its tourism potentials have not been fully tapped – particularly those centered on its architectural monuments. *Ile Akogun*, is the official residence of Ife's traditional chief-of-army-staff. Nearly 100 years old, it is one of the town's heritage buildings. It is characteristically an impluvium-courtyard typology. Apart from being imbued with mythological nuances, special spatial considerations have been made in its articulation. Faculty of the Obafemi Awolowo University and some concerned indigenes of the town, are engaged in a drive to sensitize the public to the implications for Yoruba posterity of the neglect of traditional architectural monuments. One way of doing this, is by renewing dilapidating heritage buildings. The article discusses the proposal to renew Ile Akogun. It narrates its socio-political significance, linking it with Oranmiyan (the pre-cursor of Akogun), the descendant of both Ogun (the god of iron) and Oduduwa, the progenitor of the Yoruba race. It concludes that in conserving heritage buildings, Ile-Ife has the material to compare favourably with other nations that thrive on architecture-based tourism. The submission is supported by a design proposal to restore both the utility and heritage value of Ile Akogun.

Keywords: architectural renewal, architecture-based tourism, dilapidating heritage buildings, heritage architecture upgrading, iconic architecture, Ile Akogun, Ile-Ife's tourism potential, impluvium-courtyard, traditional architectural monuments, Yoruba vernacular architecture.

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Application of Queuing Theory in Spatial Planning: The Case of Athi River Way-Bridge

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ABSTRACT

In physical development planning, the question of the size of space to be allocated for a particular use often poses a great challenge to the planner. The main challenge lies in the process of arriving at an objective decision, on the issue of the optimal size of the space. This paper looks at the problem of allocation of physical space, by examining the queuing problem, where customers who deserve service, queue-up at the facility that offers the service. To address the issue, a highway transportation weigh-bridge, where vehicles queue-up for axle weighing on a busy highway was chosen. Data relating to queue formation, vehicle identification, physical dimensions of the individual vehicles, times of arrival and times of departure after service is rendered, were recorded. Through the use of standard queuing models, the arrival rate, service rate and the other relevant system parameters of performance were derived. The study found that, the efficiency of the system can be enhanced through the optimization of the allocated space-size, the number of service delivery facilities, on-site queue management and the use of superior technology. Additionally, by analyzing the utilization factor, queuing models can be used to identify uneconomical operational queuing systems. The optimal size of space needed for a facility can be determined reliably through the adoption of a mix of any selected parameters of performance at a site and the decision on how and when to optimize the system can be arrived at through the use of queuing models.

Key Words: Queuing, Arrival Rate, Service Rate, Physical Planning, Space, Decision-Making, Performance.

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Financing Craftsmen Training in an Informal Dominated Kenyan Construction Sector

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Abstract

The Kenyan construction sector is currently dominated by informal procurement practises. These practises are challenging the viability of the existing training system which was formulated to suit formal modes of procurement. One such challenge is to the sustainability of funding of craftsmen training which was hitherto financed via a training levy deducted as a percentage of the building contract sums. The informal sector, which is characterised by minimal contract documentation and undetermined contract sums, does not pay training levy because of the logistical problems involved in collection of the levy. This paper explores various alternatives to financing craftsmen training and their applicability in Kenya. It concludes that employers are the best suited to finance craftsmen training and that to ensure that all employers contribute to the training fund, the latter should be levied on the cost of building materials which are commonly used on both the formal and the informal sector projects. This will ensure sustainability and viability of the training fund.

Key words: training, financing, craftsmen, informal sector Kenya.

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Adopting a new Eco-Ethical Philosophy of Living: The Diminishing Options for Nairobi and Humanity

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Abstract

The issue under study in this paper is the problem of sustainability and development that has dominated the current debate. Burning refuse, especially plastics and other hazardous waste that affect air quality has been a common practice. Authorities point to a well balanced environmental past. During those good old days, people used to be able to throw garbage away. And garbage actually went "away." As they pose, Where is "away" now? "Away" is here. "Away" is someone's back yard. There is no place to go from here. We now see that we inhabit a smaller and smaller planet. "Away" has become very close indeed. Based on preliminary findings of a continuing research, and having used case study approaches to isolate pertinent issues, secondary data obtained through stratified random sampling points to unsustainable livelihoods. This papers objective was to highlight this problem from an eco-ethical perspective. The effect of lack of eco-ethics is numerous. From the very cradle of evolution, nature has been propagating to man in subtle ways the message 'use but don't abuse'. The ancient Bible has a message: After God created the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve, He took the two of them around and told them 'See the world I created, it is all for you, don't spoil it because no one will be there to restore it', (Genesis 2:15). This is probably the first and strongest statement, based upon which Humankind later developed ideas of nature and ecological ethics. Data reveals that humanity and designers, the case of this study, has ignored their responsibility to nurture their environment. This paper concludes that mankind has got a responsibility to future generations in the process of their current development endeavours.

Key words; development, eco-ethics, sustainability, environment, ecology

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Motivation and its Effect on Productivity of Workers in the Kenyan Construction Industry

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Abstract

Human resource today has a strategic role for productivity increase of any organization. Effective and optimum use of human resource could result to enhanced productivity. Therefore, this study examined motivation as one of the major factors that is responsible for construction productivity in Kenya. Questionnaires were used to obtain information from contractors registered by Ministry of Works in categories A to D. There was a response rate of 88%. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics. The null hypothesis was also tested. The study established that motivation impacts productivity although most of the respondents did not have motivation policy. The objectives of the study found out that motivation incentives existed with wage, fringe benefits and job security topped the list. Ninety seven (97%) of respondents stated that they did not have motivation policy in place. The hypothesis showed that there is a direct relationship between motivation and productivity. The study concluded that there was need for stakeholders to educate their management through seminars on the importance of motivating staff since it has a direct relationship on productivity. These seminars would discuss issues related to motivation theories and their application to the work force. It was recommended that physical measurements on construction sites should be undertaken to ascertain productivity levels.

Key words: motivation, productivity, workers, construction industry.

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