

Culture and Land-Use Dynamics in Obafemi Awolowo University's Staff Quarters

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ABSTRACT Yorubas in Southwestern Nigeria, have a culture of having provisions for multiple uses - like commercial, crafts, light industrial and so on - in their residential areas. Contrary to the provisions of the master plan on which the design of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, is based, this cultural trait is noticed to be manifesting in the evolving land use pattern in the University's staff quarters. This study examines these manifestations. The approach of the study is identifying buildings that are currently being used for both residential and other uses on the base map of the staff quarters. The map is then subdivided into quadrants of equal sizes and Poisson distribution is applied to investigate the pattern of distribution of these multiple-use buildings in the study area. Investigations revealed that commercial and service activities in the staff quarters are at present arranged such that most families travel less than half a kilometer to purchase basic daily needs like bread, candles and soft drinks. Poisson distribution test reveals that these multiple-use buildings (housing the various commercial/service activities in the staff quarters) tend towards clustering. This is similar to what operates in traditional Yoruba residential quarters ('adugbos'). This research has thus been able to show that the study area is gradually being transformed to conform to Yoruba traditional communities. Recommendations are offered to integrate these findings into land use planning in the study area and in other similar places.