

# Chapter 5

## In a State of Flux: Urban Planning Programmes in Asia and Africa



Geetika Anand and Nandini Dutta

**Abstract** The appropriateness of planning programmes in the Global South, heavily influenced by their colonial pasts and the content developed and taught in universities of the Global North, has been widely questioned. In recent years, contemporary urban challenges, as also highlighted National Institute of Urban Affairs by the New Urban Agenda, demand that planning education step up and be a core lever of urban transformation. Grappling with legacies from the colonial past on one hand, and looking towards achieving sustainable change in future, where does planning education in post-colonial contexts currently stand? Taking seriously the intent of the programmes, this paper asks two interrelated questions of ten Master's level planning programmes across Africa and Asia: Who is the programme intended for, and to what end? What are the various forms of knowledge the programme intends to impart, and how? This comparative, qualitative review of planning programmes from across the two regions highlights the similarities and variations in how planning and its education are viewed and approached by different institutions. With the planning discipline currently in a state of flux in post-colonial contexts, this discussion presents an opportunity for learning and innovation through South-South exchanges and partnerships—a critical, yet under-explored area for collaboration when compared with existing North–South knowledge exchange partnerships.

**Keywords** Planning education · Curriculum review · Post-colonial contexts

### 5.1 Introduction

Since its origins in the early twentieth century, planning education has been under constant review aiming to establish itself as a distinct academic discipline and stay relevant with its objectives and scope. Much of the scholarship is rooted in Europe and

---

G. Anand (✉) · N. Dutta  
Indian Institute for Human Settlements, Bengaluru, India  
e-mail: [ganand@ihs.ac.in](mailto:ganand@ihs.ac.in)

N. Dutta  
e-mail: [ndutta@ihs.ac.in](mailto:ndutta@ihs.ac.in)

North America where the discipline has evolved for over a century. While planning remains a relatively “young” profession (Hou 2018) in Asia and Africa, the geography of urbanisation has been shifting to these regions (UNDESA 2018) and their need for effective, trained urban planners is considered urgent and critical. Furthermore, with the adoption of the New Urban Agenda, there is a renewed interest in “territorial planning” and its potential to realise sustainable urban development (United Nations 2017). However, there remains an acute shortage of built environment professionals (planners, architects, engineers, land surveyors) in many Asian and African countries, as reported by a recent survey of Commonwealth nations (Oborn and Walters 2020).

Consequently, as these countries begin the task of reinventing and upscaling their planning education curricula, it is worthwhile to examine the prevailing situation. Sufficient evidence points to the failure of planning education in addressing situations in several Asian and African cities (UN-Habitat 2009; Watson 2011; Mahadevia and Bhatia 2018; Taşan-Kok and Oranje 2018; Denoon-Stevens et al. 2020). However, a detailed assessment of existing planning programmes across all countries is not available. Given this situation, this paper focuses on the intent of planning programmes situated in these regions. The paper asks and attempts to answer two interrelated questions by juxtaposing select planning programmes across Asia and Africa: (i) who is the programme intended for, and to what end; and (ii) what forms of knowledge does the programme intend to impart, and how?

The paper begins with an overview of the existing literature on planning education in Asia and Africa. Recognising the gap in terms of a comparative and qualitative review of planning programmes, Sect. 5.3 lays out the review framework and selection of the programmes. Findings from the selected ten programmes are presented in Sect. 5.4, followed by a discussion on emerging trends. The paper concludes with a set of observations that highlight constraints and innovations across the programmes, which we hope would encourage South-South learning and exchange as well as lay the foundation for further research and action towards rethinking and reinventing planning education in these post-colonial contexts.

## **5.2 The Context of Urban Planning Education in Asia and Africa**

With the locus of urbanisation shifting to Asia and Africa, there is a growing scholarship on the need for and the state of planning education in these contexts. While much of the literature points towards the colonial inheritance and outdated curricula which have rendered planning education irrelevant in dealing with prevailing realities and complexities, as outlined later in this section, there are also examples of innovation and collaboration.

### ***5.2.1 Origins in Colonial History and Continued Influence***

Planning education in the majority of Asian and African countries is closely tied to their colonial roots, as is the development of planning as a profession. Even within the limited body of literature on planning education from these regions, much has been written on the export of planning ideas from the Global North to their southern colonies, and the power relations that shaped the way these were translated into their new contexts (UN-Habitat 2009; Watson 2011). While such foreign planning systems were originally imposed with a view to modernise, civilise and control colonial development, post-colonial governments themselves were often seen carrying forward or building on such legislation, land rights and management systems, spatial plans, administrative structures, and related frameworks.

Diaw et al. (2002) highlight that planning education in South Africa, Tanzania, and Ghana draws from colonial systems not only in terms of the actual degrees, but also the education philosophy and pedagogy. Similar concerns are voiced in relation to the Nigerian (Oduwaye and Olajide 2012) and Malawian (Blair and Manda 2016) contexts. In India, too, the orientation and content of planning programmes have originally been shaped by British planning ideologies (NIUA<sup>1</sup> 2017) despite a huge mismatch between the technocratic master plans developed and the realities of the largely impoverished populations to which they were applied (Mahadevia and Bhatia 2018). The establishment of the professional bodies such as the Institute of Town Planners in India and Sri Lanka were also modelled on the Royal Town Planning Institute of the UK (NIUA 2017).

In many cases, planning ideals from post-war Europe and the USA also continued to directly influence the aspirations of modern cities and planning education in Asian and African countries for decades following their independence. “Softer” forms of diffusion of planning ideas included written material and discourse, international planning consultants, international education of planners, and various decision-making bodies’ engagement with development agencies (UN-Habitat 2009; Watson 2011). For many countries in these regions, early planners were trained in one or the other European nation, as in the case of Malawi (Blair and Manda 2016), and in fact, this foreign training continues to be prevalent in Asian countries (Kunzmann 2015). A number of planning programmes and their curricula, particularly in African countries, have also been shaped by funded partnerships with northern universities (Diaw et al. 2002; Odendaal 2012).

### ***5.2.2 Unattended Contemporary Realities***

Along with the serious concerns of colonial inheritance of planning curricula, the literature also highlights what is missing in contemporary planning education, which makes it irrelevant for the contexts it is taught in. The widening gap between theory

---

<sup>1</sup> National Institute of Urban Affairs.

and practice has been echoed by a number of Asian and African planning practitioners and educators (Todes et al. 2003; Kunzmann and Koll-Schretzenmayr 2015; Mahadevia and Bhatia 2018). Drawing from the experience of The Association of African Planning Schools (AAPS), Odendaal (2012) reports that informality, among other themes such as access to land and more recently, climate change, remains largely unaddressed in conventional planning curricula.

Speaking from the Nigerian context, Oduwaye and Olajide (2012) argue that along with a paucity of legislation, there is currently inadequate training to guide the integration of the informal sector into the urban systems of Nigeria, which are marked by high levels of informality. Denoon-Stevens et al. (2020) highlight from South Africa how land use management is seen as a key skill that is under-developed in planning education, despite being a large part of professional planning activity on the ground. They further observe that planners are required to work with “aspirations to global status at the same time as tackling the unglamorous work of attempting to mitigate grinding poverty” (Denoon-Stevens et al. 2020: 13), which has possibly led to systematic crises in the field. Meanwhile, Mahadevia and Bhatia (2018) write that planning education in India is unable to address issues of exclusion, leading to the production of even greater “informality” within Indian planning practice because the socioeconomic realities of the population being served continue to be unrecognised, unaddressed, and sometimes even actively marginalised.

Thus, not only are there missing themes and subjects, but also a disjuncture is seen between values taught in planning programmes and those prevailing at the workplace, as noted by Taşan-Kok and Oranje (2018). They highlighted frustration at the lack of guidance on the issue of power in planning curricula, leading the planners to question the utility of planning theory itself in practice. This brings planning values, and by extension, the very foundation of planning education, up for discussion. The lack of understanding of institutional and political structures and their power dynamics is a point of concern in Indian planning education as well (Chatterji and Soni 2016). As Denoon-Stevens et al. note, planning educators “expect ... students to fight for abstract ideals of social justice, yet the day-to-day reality requires them to be technocrats who have to achieve this within a market-driven political system” (2020: 3).

While planning education in India has diversified over the years to reflect changing sociocultural and political realities, it is still largely focused on spatial and physical analysis; training in participatory mechanisms, for instance, is almost entirely missing from its planning curricula (NIUA 2017). Meshram and Meshram (2016) highlight that some Indian planning schools even fail to introduce students to national and state level urban development programmes, as well as the latest technological advancements in plan preparation and implementation. Traditional planning schools in India continue to propagate older physical plan-based approaches, merely adding courses involving urban development projects; instead, it is argued, today’s pressing need is for greater diversification of planning education beyond the focus on producing spatial and sectoral planners (Mahadevia and Bhatia 2018).

### 5.2.3 *Networks and Partnerships*

Reflecting upon formerly colonised nations, Frank (2018) highlights that while adapting planning curricula in these contexts is necessary, it may not be straight forward; inertia and lack of resources play a large role in retaining curricula despite the obvious mismatch between planning education and urban development conditions. Since the turn of the century, however, parallel to the critiques of outdated and irrelevant planning education, there have been attempts to decolonise planning education to better reflect local circumstances and traditions, and thereby enhance the potential and relevance for the contexts in which planning is taught. Amongst the efforts, three types of networks or partnerships stand out as emerging pathways for the growth of urban planning education and its practice in Africa and Asia.

Firstly, regional and global associations have been key actors in driving forward the agenda of planning education and facilitating critical debates on its relevance, decolonisation, provision, and development (Frank and Silver 2018). One such regional network is the AAPS<sup>2</sup>. The birth of the AAPS as a voluntary peer network in 1999 was motivated in part by the need to re-connect African planning schools in the post-apartheid and post-colonial context, and to build capacity to meet shared challenges in the region through efforts like the collaborative development of pedagogies and curricula, including a model curricular framework (Odendaal 2012; Wesely and Allen 2019). Similarly, the Commonwealth Association of Planners, a professional association, has worked to strengthen transnational connections to share and acquire knowledge, thereby, creating a more dynamic learning network throughout the North–South and the South–South (Hague 2001).

Secondly, university–university collaborations between countries, often around a joint planning programme or exchange semester, are emerging as pathways to a more multidirectional planning dialogue. Examples include partnerships between the University of Moratuwa (Sri Lanka) and LaTrobe University (Australia), and between the National University of Singapore, University of Tokyo (Japan), Tsinghua University, and Tongji University (China). These collaborative programmes have exposure and credit-sharing components, and also aid graduate entry into international job markets. Thus, alongside the efforts of decolonisation, we also see globalisation and internationalisation of the planning education and profession driving a “convergence” in planning curricula (Frank 2018: 132; Kwok 1983), possibly aided by regional differentials in funding and the position of English as a lingua franca of global planning scholarship (Stiftel and Mukhopadhyay 2007). Despite the diversity of working languages within Asia and across Africa, which remains a challenge to reciprocal knowledge-sharing and practice (Kunzmann 2015), these planning programmes provide a source of reflection and growing literature on the dynamics of new formats of international dialogue and “cross-cultural encounter” (Ratnayake and Butt 2017: 11; Wesely and Allen 2019).

---

<sup>2</sup> The AAPS has 57 member schools across 18 countries. Similarly, there is also the Asian Planning Schools Association (APSA) with 52 member schools across 14 countries (Wesley and Allen 2019).

Thirdly, multi-stakeholder and community partnerships with planning schools are highly instrumental in the deconstruction of parochial planning perspectives. These offer, among other things, opportunities to ground planning education in the contextual realities of communities and local conditions in the Global South (Watson 2009; Siame 2016). Such collaborations have lent themselves to a reframing of pedagogic instruments and practice through collaborative curriculum development, community-based planning studios, participatory research, advocacy, etc. For example, the partnership between SDI<sup>3</sup> and AAPS (and through it, University of Cape Town [UCT] and University of Zambia [UNZA]) is premised on the idea that in pursuit of a more inclusive urban education, “one of the most effective ways to change the mind-sets of student planners is to offer them direct experiential exposure to, and interaction with, the conditions and residents of informal settlements and slums” (Watson 2011: 23). Furthermore, the partnership approach involving multi-stakeholder engagement has been experimented with in Malawi to inculcate a system of curriculum review to embed employability within planning education (Blair and Manda 2016). It is evident that planning and its education is a growing and dynamic field in the urbanising regions of Asia and Africa, which merits attention both in terms of the breadth and the depth. As outlined in the next section, this paper adopts a qualitative framework to review and analyse planning curricula in Asia and Africa at the meta level.

### 5.3 Methodology and Review Framework

Using a comparative lens, the paper takes a qualitative approach to the review of planning programmes. The comparative approach to knowledge-building has been put forth in literature coming from the field of urban planning (McFarlane 2010; Robinson 2011, 2015) as well as education (Bray et al. 2014; Frank and Silver 2018). The findings of a study by Nordtveit (2016) on submissions to the Comparative Education Review indicate how the field is dominated by single case studies over comparative ones, predominantly by authors based in the area studied, and increasingly featuring quantitative studies. Within the planning education literature, few studies exist that bring together multiple planning programmes and their curricula (Friedmann 1996; van Horen et al. 2004; Ali and Doan 2006; Edwards and Bates 2011; Chatterji and Soni 2016; Prakash 2016; Sen et al. 2016; NIUA 2017; Mahadevia and Bhatia 2018; Peña 2019 and others). However, these too are either country-specific or examine planning education across countries more broadly without going into the details of specific programmes.

In this study, ten Master’s level planning programmes from ten different countries in Asia and Africa are selected for review (Fig. 5.1). Many of these universities and programmes hold a significant position in advancing the agenda of planning education in their geographic contexts. Functional websites and the availability of programme documents were other practical ways of programme selection and narrowing down

---

<sup>3</sup> Slum Dwellers International.



**Fig. 5.1** Ten postgraduate planning programmes selected for review (*Source* Authors)

the scope. The authors acknowledge that this paper does not present a complete picture of planning education in Asia and Africa; there are significant gaps in the analysis of planning education in places like mainland China, Indonesia, or Franco-phone Africa. However, it does provide more than a glimpse into planning education in diverse English-speaking areas of Asia and Africa, which could lead to new connections and directions in planning education research relevant to urban practice in the Global South.

Making a case for the use of different approaches in social science research, Flyvbjerg (2006) writes, large samples are useful to capture breadth while a single case study offers depth. In this paper, we position ourselves somewhere in between these two approaches, where the analysis is not based on a single case study, and the sample size has been kept small to do justice to the qualitative, in-depth nature of the review. However, we do recognise the limitation of this approach in articulating details of each and every aspect of the programmes under review and the contexts in which they are situated.

The qualitative review presented here draws its inspiration from Adamson and Morris (2014) and focuses on the “ideology” and “planned/intended” aspects of the curriculum, as articulated through publicly available information on the programmes. Thus, the paper is limited to the intent of the planning programmes; discussion on their delivery, perceptions and impacts is beyond the scope of this paper. It is hoped that this comparative analysis will lay the foundation for examining “enacted” and “experienced” aspects of curriculum (Adamson and Morris 2014) in future research. Accounting for the specificity of the planning discipline, a framework to carry out the comparative review was developed based on Davoudi’s conceptualisation of planning as “practice of knowing”. Davoudi (2015: 317–318) argues:

To conceive of planning as practice of knowing requires an understanding of the complex interrelationship between knowing what (cognitive/theoretical knowledge), knowing how (skills/technical knowledge), knowing to what end (moral choices) and doing (action/practice). Together, these multiple forms of knowing provide the foundation for the art of practical judgement (wisdom). (Davoudi 2015: 317–318)

Extending this notion to higher education in planning, for planning programmes to prepare practitioners, it is important to understand to what extent these multiple, interrelated forms of knowing and knowledge are articulated and accounted for in the higher education programmes. This paper, thus, asks two interrelated, multi-faceted questions of the ten planning programmes across Asia and Africa.

- *Who is the programme intended for, and to what end?* This question looks at both programme entry and exit to examine eligibility for programme admissions as well as intended programme objectives and outcomes.
- *What are the various forms of knowledge (concepts, theories, skills, values) the programme intends to impart, and how (lectures, studio, research, training)?* Using Davoudi's conceptualisation, this line of inquiry tries to ascertain what forms of knowing (what/how/to what end/doing) find a place in these programmes, and where does the focus lie.

These framing questions are useful to not only juxtapose different programmes but also help to reveal the coherence (or lack thereof) of a programme itself. Aiming to answer these questions, the paper focuses on various aspects of programme design—vision, objectives, eligibility, core modules, electives, pedagogy, and so on, as presented in university websites, programme handbooks and brochures, and other curriculum documents. As we move into the section on findings, it is important to reiterate that this is not an exercise in comprehensive curriculum review of the education literature (Short 1991). Instead, it is an attempt to bring different planning programmes into one conversation, by examining specific questions vis-à-vis their intent, identifying key characteristics, and promoting further dialogue and research on planning education in post-colonial contexts.

## 5.4 A Comparison of Urban Planning Programmes Across Asia and Africa

### 5.4.1 Institutional Context

Table 5.1 provides details of the ten programmes selected and the universities they are a part of. With their origins in the post-independence development agenda, many of the programmes have evolved over the years in an attempt to keep abreast of changing urban conditions, new national priorities, and increased complexity of planning activity; some of these institutional efforts have been discussed by others in greater detail (Kusiima 2008; Nnkya and Lupala 2008; Oduwaye and Lawanson

Table 5.1 Planning programmes and their institutional context

| S. No | Name of university  | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes   | Programme under review                                     | Institutional affiliation  | Origin of reviewed programme      | Other planning programmes Offered              |   |  | Accreditation/Recognition  |
|-------|---|----------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
|       |   |                |   |  |  |                                   | Undergraduate                                  | Postgraduate  | Doctoral   |  |
| 1.    | School of Planning and Architecture (SPA-D), New Delhi, India | 1941           | Started in 1955, with the establishment of first School of Town and Country Planning by the Government of India   | Master of Planning (with specialisation in Urban Planning) | Department of Urban Planning                                     | 1955 Effective in 2019/2020       | Bachelor of Planning                           | Master of Planning with specialisation in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Planning</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Regional Planning</li> <li>• Transport Planning</li> </ul> | Ph.D. in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban Planning</li> <li>• Environmental Planning</li> <li>• Housing</li> <li>• Regional Planning</li> <li>• Transport Planning</li> </ul> | Yes. Institute of Town Planners, India (ITPI)  |
| 2.    | University of Moratuwa, Colombo, Sri Lanka                    | 1893           | Gained university status in 1972; the Dept. of Town & Country Planning was offering an M.Sc. in Town & Country Planning since 1975, until the new MSc. was introduced in 2012 | Master of Spatial Planning, Management, & Design           | Department of Town and Country Planning; Faculty of Architecture | 2012–2013. Effective in 2018/2020 | Bachelor of Science in Town & Country Planning | Master of Science in Environmental Planning   | –  | Yes. Institute of Town Planners, Sri Lanka + Planning Institute of Australia (part of La Trobe exchange programme) |

(continued)

Table 5.1 (continued)

| S. No | Name of university                     | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes   | Programme under review   | Institutional affiliation                                    | Origin of reviewed programme | Other planning programmes Offered |              |  | Accreditation/Recognition   |
|-------|--|----------------|---|--------------------------|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|--|---|
|       |  |                |   |                          |  |                              | Undergraduate                     | Postgraduate | Doctoral   |   |
| 3.    | National University of Singapore (NUS) | 1958           | Gained university status in 1980; the Faculty of Architecture first ran an MA (Urban Planning) from 1970 until 1976, when it was stopped due to lack of enrolment. Urban planning/design as a programme was not revisited until the 1990s | Master of Urban Planning | Department of Architecture; School of Design and Environment | 2012 Effective in 2019/2020  | -                                 | -            | Doctor of Philosophy available in Department of Architecture | None currently. In future, possibly Singapore Institute of Planners (SIP) |

(continued)

Table 5.1 (continued)

| S. No | Name of university         | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes  | Programme under review              | Institutional affiliation  | Origin of reviewed programme                                    | Other planning programmes Offered |  |   | Accreditation/Recognition  |
|-------|----------------------------|----------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
|       |                            |                |  |                                     |  |   | Undergraduate                     | Postgraduate   | Doctoral                                    |  |
| 4.    | Hong Kong University (HKU) | 1910–1912      | The oldest institution of tertiary education in Hong Kong. In 1980, CUPEM/CUSUP was established for urban planning research and taught programmes (including this M.Sc.), initially as an academic unit outside the faculty structure, but brought under the Faculty of Architecture in 2008 | Master of Science in Urban Planning | Department of Urban Planning and Design; Faculty of Architecture | 1981<br>Effective in 2020,<br>revised periodically (1, 5 years) | Bachelor of Arts in Urban Studies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master of Housing Management</li> <li>• Master of Arts in Transport Planning and Management</li> <li>• M.Phil.</li> </ul> | Ph.D. programme available in the department | Yes. Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP) + Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), UK. With specialisation, HK's Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport |

(continued)

Table 5.1 (continued)

| S. No | Name of university                           | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes  | Programme under review              | Institutional affiliation  | Origin of reviewed programme   | Other planning programmes Offered |              |          | Accreditation/Recognition |
|-------|--|----------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|----------|---------------------------|
|       |  |                |  |                                     |  |                                | Undergraduate                     | Postgraduate | Doctoral |                           |
| 5.    | American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanon | 1866           | Started at the urging of American missionaries in Lebanon and Syria, it gained its current name in 1920. The Faculty of Engineering & Architecture was established in 1951, under which the Dept. of Architecture & Design now offers its urban planning/design programmes | Master of Urban Planning and Policy | Department of Architecture and Design; Maroun Semaan Faculty of Engineering and Architecture | 1998<br>Effective in 2019/2020 | -                                 | -            | -        | Not known                 |

(continued)

**Table 5.1** (continued)

| S. No | Name of university                          | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes   | Programme under review   | Institutional affiliation  | Origin of reviewed programme   | Other planning programmes Offered |              |                   | Accreditation/Recognition  |
|-------|---|----------------|---|--|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--|
|       |   |                |   |  |  |                                | Undergraduate                     | Postgraduate | Doctoral          |  |
| 6.    | University of Cape Town (UCT), South Africa | 1829           | The Dept. of Urban and Regional Planning was founded in 1965, initially offering shorter part-time programmes, and later full-time Masters, with professional recognition from the late 1970s | Master of City and Regional Planning (linked to Honours degree in City Planning) | School of Architecture, Planning and Geomatics; Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment | 1973<br>Effective in 2019/2020 | -                                 | -            | Ph.D. in Planning | Yes (upon completing MCRP). With 2 years supervised experience, South African Council for Planners (SACPLAN); RTPI, UK |

(continued)

Table 5.1 (continued)

| S. No | Name of university                    | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes  | Programme under review                | Institutional affiliation   | Origin of reviewed programme     | Other planning programmes Offered    |  |                                      | Accreditation/Recognition  |
|-------|---------------------------------------|----------------|--|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
|       |                                       |                |  |                                       |   |                                  | Undergraduate                        | Postgraduate   | Doctoral                             |  |
| 7.    | University of Lagos (UNILAG), Nigeria | 1960s          | Established in 1962 to meet a national need for professional workforce; the Dept. of City & Regional Planning was formed in 1980–1981, merged briefly with the Faculty of Architecture in the late 80s, and re-emerged as an independent Dept., in 1997–1998 | Master of Urban and Regional Planning | Department of City and Regional Planning; Faculty of Environmental Sciences | 2003–2004 Effective in 2017–2020 | B.Sc. in Urban and Regional Planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>M.Sc. in Urban and Regional Planning</li> <li>M.Phil. in Urban and Regional Planning</li> </ul> | Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning | Yes/soon (status unclear). Nigerian Institute of Town Planners; Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria (TOPREC) |

(continued)

Table 5.1 (continued)

| S. No | Name of university                   | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes  | Programme under review                         | Institutional affiliation  | Origin of reviewed programme | Other planning programmes Offered       |  |          | Accreditation/Recognition                                |
|-------|--------------------------------------|----------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|---|--|----------|--|
|       |                                      |                |  |  |  |                              | Undergraduate                           | Postgraduate                                       | Doctoral |  |
| 8.    | Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda | 1922           | Oldest institution in Uganda and gained independent national university status in 1970. The Dept. of Geography was established in 1940 but offered Urban planning from 1998 onwards  | Master of Science in Urban Planning and Design | Department of Architecture and Physical Planning; School of Built Environment; College of Engineering, Design, Art, and Technology | 1998 Effective in 2019       | Bachelor of Urban and Regional Planning | Post Graduate Diploma in Urban Planning and Design | -        | Not known  |
| 9.    | University of Zambia (UNZA)          | 1965           | Gained university status in 1965 but it was not until 2013 that a spatial planning programme (this M.Sc.), guided by the AAPS model curriculum, was offered to meet national planning needs following reforms in the country | Master of Science in Spatial Planning          | Department of Geography and Environmental Studies; School of Natural Sciences  | 2013 Effective in 2019       | -                                       | -  | -        | Status not clear; possibly Zambian Institute of Planners |

(continued)

Table 5.1 (continued)

| S. No | Name of university                              | Year of origin | Timeline of planning programmes  | Programme under review                             | Institutional affiliation  | Origin of reviewed programme | Other planning programmes Offered  |  |   | Accreditation/Recognition |
|-------|---|----------------|--|--|--|------------------------------|--|--|---|---------------------------|
|       |   |                |  |  |  |                              | Undergraduate  | Postgraduate   | Doctoral  |                           |
| 10.   | Ardhi University (ARU), Dar es Salaam, Tanzania | 1956           | Started as a Surveying Training School, under the Ministry of Land, Govt. of Tanzania. It trained town planners from the 1970s and underwent multiple changes over the next three decades, until it gained independent university status in 2007. Throughout, it maintained its focus on land, housing, and similar development-related concerns | Master of Science in Urban Planning and Management | Department of Urban and Regional Planning; School of Spatial Planning and Social Science | 2003<br>Effective in 2018/19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B.Sc. in Urban and Regional Planning</li> <li>B.Sc. in Housing and Infrastructure Planning</li> <li>B.Sc. in Regional Development Planning</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>P.G. Diploma in Urban Planning and Management</li> <li>M.Sc. in Urban and Regional Development Planning and Management (jointly conducted with Technical University of Dortmund)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Management by Thesis</li> <li>Ph.D. in Urban Planning and Management by Coursework and Dissertation</li> </ul> | Not known                 |

Source Compiled by authors from university websites and Programme documents, 2020

2008; Watson 2008; Butt et al. 2013; Siame 2016; Kumar et al. 2016; NIUA 2017). A few of the programmes have been (re)launched, while others have undergone some form of curriculum revision in the early years of this decade.

The starting year of the programmes (including their predecessors) is evidence that planning as a discipline is relatively young in Asia and Africa. Within the sample, the School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi (SPA-D), established in 1959, has the oldest postgraduate planning programme, created in 1955 when the School of Town and Country Planning was affiliated with the Delhi University. A department of Urban and Regional Planning was founded at the University of Cape Town (UCT) a decade later, in 1965 (Watson 2008). Nearly half of the programmes under review, i.e. Ardh University (ARU), the University of Lagos (UNILAG), Hong Kong University (HKU), and the University of Moratuwa, had their origins in the 1970s and early 80 s. The urban planning programme in Makerere University was created at the turn of the century, in 1998, the same year as the programme at the American University of Beirut (AUB). The sample also includes a few recently established programmes, such as the one offered at the University of Zambia (UNZA) since 2013, and another offered at the National University of Singapore (NUS) since 2012. NUS had a part-time Master's programme in 1970, but it was discontinued in 1976 due to low enrolment. The University of Moratuwa's current planning programme was also introduced only in 2012–2013, as a joint offering between the University of Moratuwa and LaTrobe University, Australia. Three trends can be observed in terms of how these planning programmes are institutionally organised.

- Schools like SPA-D and ARU have always been set up as separate autonomous entities focused on the issues of land, surveying, architecture, and planning. Over the years, they gained the status of a university with different departments for architecture, urban planning, etc.
- Within the large universities and spanning multiple faculties and disciplines, the majority of planning programmes have close ties with architectural studies. Planning is integrated with architecture departments, as in the case of UCT, Makerere, NUS, and AUB; when there is a separate department for planning, it exists within the faculty of architecture, such as at HKU and Moratuwa.
- UNZA is the only exception where the planning programme is within the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at the School of Natural Sciences. However, this could be a function of the current absence of architectural education at UNZA.

While several of the institutions noted in Table 5.1 offer undergraduate and multiple postgraduate planning programmes, the scope of this paper is limited to one postgraduate programme per university. It is, however, interesting to note that several universities in Africa began with undergraduate programmes before moving on to establishing graduate programmes. On the other hand, in Asian universities like SPA-D and Moratuwa, postgraduate programmes were established first, and undergraduate programmes came in about three decades later. NUS, HKU, and AUB do not have undergraduate planning degrees.

### 5.4.2 *Programme Intent and Objectives*

Planning is seen everywhere as an interdisciplinary professional degree; however, within this broader perspective, multiple similarities and differences can be observed across the programmes, in terms of how they envision planning and planners' role, who they allow into the programmes, where they see these planners going after the programme, and more.

Starting with degree titles, we see that no two programmes are named the same. Thus, to an extent, the titles themselves are suggestive of the focus of the programme. Firstly, this gives us an indication of the range in the operational scale of the planner, i.e. city, urban, regional, and more recently, spatial. Many programmes describe the planner's need to operate at or move between these multiple geographic scales. For example, NUS' Master of Urban Planning highlights the spatial planning skills that "will equip graduates with the ability to 'zoom' between scales, using the design and planning tools that are appropriate to the different scales but without losing sight of the overall picture" (NUS 2020). The idea of what constitutes the "urban scale" is understood to be a spectrum across which urban processes play out. Secondly, in some cases, these intersect, even within the titles to highlight areas of professional expertise beyond just "planning", such as policy in AUB, design in Makerere, and management in Moratuwa, ARU. This perhaps indicates the specific thrust and positioning of the programmes. For example, AUB's Master of Urban Planning and Policy positions policymaking as central to contemporary urban practice, while Moratuwa's Master of Spatial Planning, Management, and Design aims to develop planning skills but with "specific attention to urban management and design skills" (University of Moratuwa 2020), based on what they describe as a national need for such competencies.

All the programmes require applicants to hold a bachelor's degree. In terms of the discipline, HKU is the most inclusive, accepting graduates from any discipline to join their planning programme. AUB also appears to be more open, accepting students with professional or social science degrees. Most other programmes, however, require the first degree to be either in one of the spatial design or built environment professions (planning, architecture, urban design, civil engineering, surveying), or in related fields of study (geography, urban studies, development studies, etc.). SPA-D requires either a Bachelor of Planning/Architecture/Civil Engineering, or a Master of—specifically—Geography, Sociology, or Economics. Moratuwa's programme requires one to three years of work experience in the previous field of study prior to admission, as well as the first level or membership in a recognised professional institute. Makerere's programme is only open to built environment professionals, and applicants can only join after gaining two years of work experience. Overall, we see a range of disciplines across the board, but a distinct commonality skewing towards accepting those with architectural and similar spatial or built environment backgrounds.

In addition to degree titles and eligibility criteria, the programme's own stated vision and objectives, and the emphasis they are given, provide insight into how

planning/planners are viewed. Two examples highlight the differences in how planning may be fundamentally understood: as a techno-managerial enterprise, in the case of SPA-D, and as a political activity, as exemplified in UCT.

The idea of problem analysis and solving is central to the programme offered at the SPA-D, which aims to create “professionals who are sensitized about the various facets of planning for human settlements and who have the required analytical skills needed for performing the assigned task related to planning and implementation” (SPA-D 2020). Emphasis within the programme is placed on various forms of “plan preparation” and implementation, as well as “new techniques such as project planning and GIS” (SPA-D 2020). In later semesters, the management aspect of cities is the core focus. This is also an imperative in Moratuwa and Makerere’s programmes which aim to train their students to “conceptualize, define, and analyse design problems and opportunities at the urban scale”, to “synthesize and manage strategies for implementation”, and to “analyse and evaluate the performance of design projects and policies”.<sup>4</sup> Their programmes also highlight the ability for creative “resolution of urban problems through design” (UCT 2020). However, there is also some acknowledgement that the planner must “work successfully with the public” (UCT 2020), and that there is a need for the “urban designer’s public role” (UCT 2020).

The idea that planning involves social negotiation and co-creation, in addition to it comprising technical activities, is given great weight in UCT’s programme statement. Here we see planning described as a “political activity” (UCT 2020) along with the idea of place-making, in reference to UN-Habitat (2009). This idea of planning as a “collective societal effort” (HKU 2020) is reflected in a few other programmes as well. For instance, strongly guided by the AAPS model curriculum, Zambia’s programme also takes on this idea and promotes skills in participatory planning, the importance of ethical judgement, and engagement with issues of competing interests and differential access to power. Place-making is also a shared theme with HKU’s programme, which emphasises, “Cultivating interdisciplinary, visionary and critical thinking for better place-making” and “Nurturing integrative efforts and partnership for sustainable development” (HKU 2020).

In addition to the broader role of the planner and planning, we see levels of distinct geographic focus, along with varied articulation of planning aims or challenges specific to their context, within the scope of the given programme. For example, Makerere’s programme does not indicate any particular geography of practice but speaks of planning in universal terms. UNILAG’s programme is proposed as a step towards developing capacity to contextually understand and gain “deeper insight” into Nigeria’s planning needs (UNILAG 2017: 27). A national scope is seen in SPA-D’s and Moratuwa’s programmes without going into the nature of issues that arise from their contexts beyond the need for greater implementation and urban management capacities. Similarly, in AUB’s programme there is a focus on “Lebanon and the region” (AUB 2018) without further context-specific details. In contrast, there are

---

<sup>4</sup> The College of Engineering, Design, Art and Technology, 2020. *Master of Science in Urban Planning and Design: Objectives of the Program*. Available from <https://cedat.mak.ac.ug/graduate-programmes/master-of-science-in-urban-planning/> (Accessed 8 October 2020).

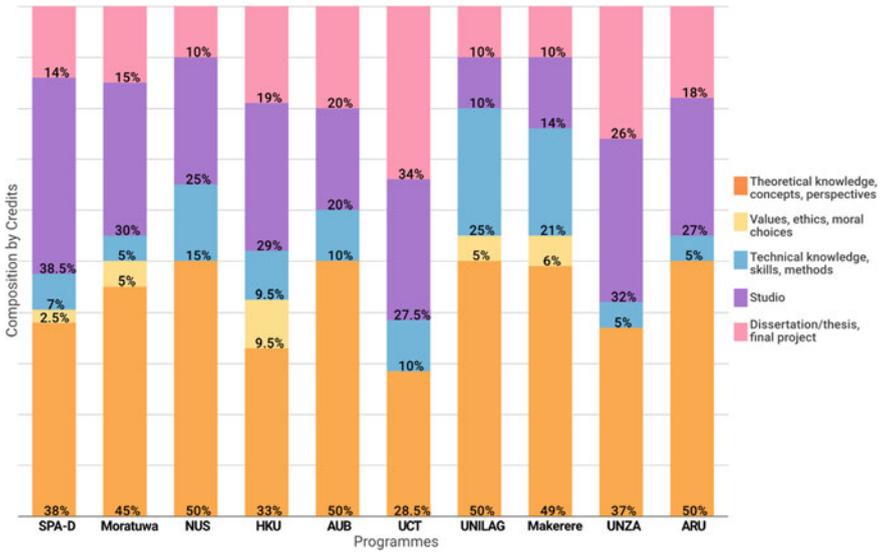
programmes with a strongly articulated thematic and geographic focus, such as those in NUS, HKU, UCT, and UNZA. In HKU's, we see them speak of "high-density environments of Hong Kong, China and Asia" and "high-rise and high-density cities" of these places (HKU 2020). They also make mention of the Asia-Pacific and the Belt and Road Regions. They aim to reshape urban planning and policy, ground professional practice, promote research, and critically review and theorise from these local contexts. Similarly, NUS' programme writes of a "rapidly urbanising world" with reference to "the experience of Singapore and cities in Asia as laboratories of planning ideas and methods, experimenting with high density living, ecological sensitivity, data science and social policies to ensure equity through development" (NUS 2020).

Half of the Asian programmes highlight the challenges of high-density settlements, in contrast to what is articulated in the African programmes. In UNZA, planning education is stated to promote "ethical, sustainable, pro-poor, gender-sensitive, and participatory planning practice", and to "ensure that the programme reflects the needs of planning in Southern Africa" (UNZA 2018). They go on to identify themes critical to African urbanisation which define this curriculum: "planning and informality; planning and climate change; planning and infrastructure; actor collaboration; and urban land markets" (UNZA 2018). UCT's programme is similarly focused on the "particular demands of cities and regions in Africa and in the Global South, in the twenty-first century. This requires us to engage with issues of poverty, inequality, informality, rapid urbanisation and environmental change" (UCT 2020). Through these four examples, we see strong local, national, and regional linkages.

All the programmes highlight multiple avenues to opportunities and placements after finishing the programme. For example, HKU's programme writes that it equips its graduates to enter "various fields of the profession, such as: urban planner and manager in the public and private sectors; professional staff in land development and management, transport, utilities companies; social and community planner in NGOs; educator and researcher in urban planning and development issues; and policy analyst and solution provider in sustainable urban development" (UNILAG 2017: 27). These are all similar to domains mentioned in other programmes, and some, like UCT, also state that graduates can "put their skills to good use in almost any part of the world" (HKU 2020). This shows the wide range of positions a planner may occupy. Interestingly, these include cases where they may find themselves in conflicting positions or contentious roles with respect to one another in practice—all under the shared umbrella of a "planner".

### ***5.4.3 Programmes Content and Modules***

All the planning programmes in the sample consist of three types of modules: classroom-based modules (including core courses and electives), field-based modules (studios/planning projects), and individual dissertation/final project. These modules are offered over two years (four semesters), except in ARU,

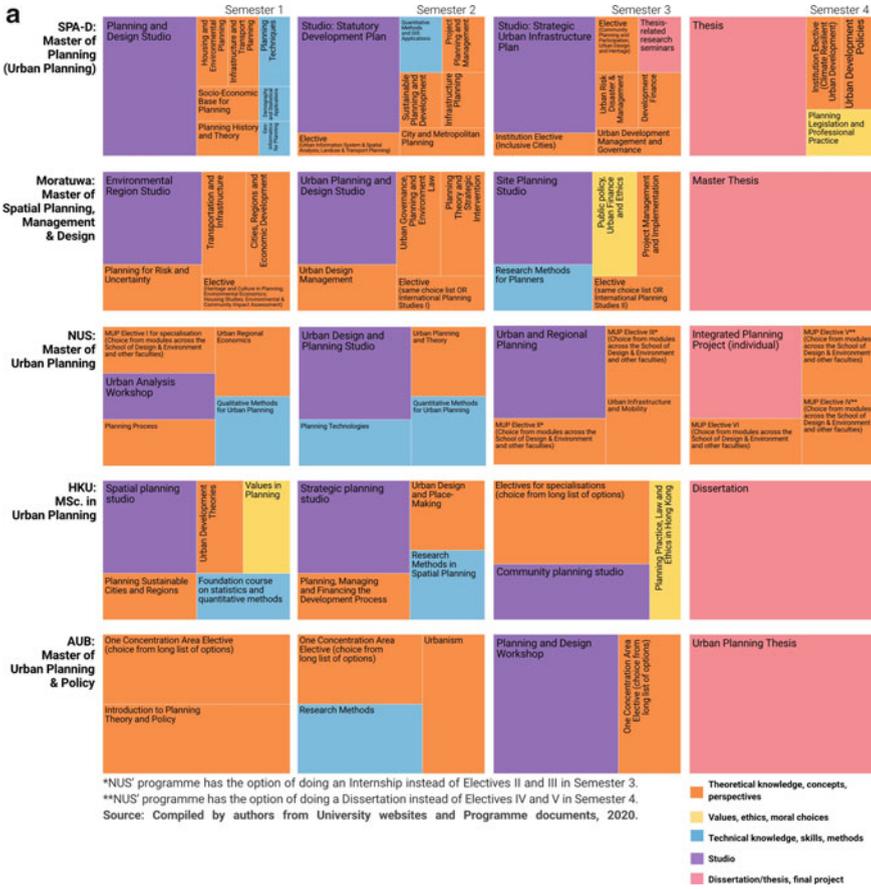


**Fig. 5.2** Overall programmes’ composition by types of modules based on their predominant ways of knowing (*Source* Authors 2020)

which has an 18-month-long (three semester) programme. This paper focuses on the classroom-based modules and studios. Following Davoudi (2015), and in line with the review framework set out above, in-class courses are further classified into concepts/perspectives/theoretical knowledge (knowing what); skills/methods/technical knowledge (knowing how); and values/ethics/moral choices (knowing to what end). Guided by the principle of “learning by doing”, studios and projects closely relate to the action (doing) in this framework. We recognise that these are not entirely distinct categories, and often modules speak to multiple ways of knowing, but it is useful to add this layer of analysis to understand where the focus lies and what some of the blind spots could be. Figure 5.2 presents the composition of the planning programmes, based on the overall credit weight of different types of modules. A breakdown by semester, with titles of modules, is presented in Fig. 5.3. It must be noted here that this classification is based on our interpretation and is, therefore, limited; students and faculty in these programmes, and planning educators’ and practitioners’ communities at large, may have a different view. Our objective here is to initiate the conversation along these lines.

**5.4.3.1 Concepts/Perspectives/Theoretical Knowledge (Knowing What)**

Most number of modules fall into the category of theoretical knowledge, with an aim to expose students to different concepts and perspectives. Upon further assessment of this category, four clusters emerge:



**Fig. 5.3** Classification by semester of modules based on their predominant ways of knowing (Source Authors 2020)

- All programmes have at least one module dealing with planning theory and general planning principles.
- A second set of modules concentrate on specific sectors, with a clear focus on physical infrastructure. Seven programmes have a dedicated core module on infrastructure, four also have a specific focus on transportation either in the joint infrastructure module (Moratuwa, NUS) or as a separate module (SPA-D, UNILAG). Housing also appears in a separate core course in SPA-D and UNILAG and is included as an elective in a few others (Moratuwa, ARU).
- The third cluster includes modules with cross-cutting themes such as sustainability, governance, environment, risk, and economic development, which feature in varying degrees across many programmes. Dedicated core module(s) on planning law and governance find a place in half of the programmes. Some unique modules that merit further investigation include land-focused modules

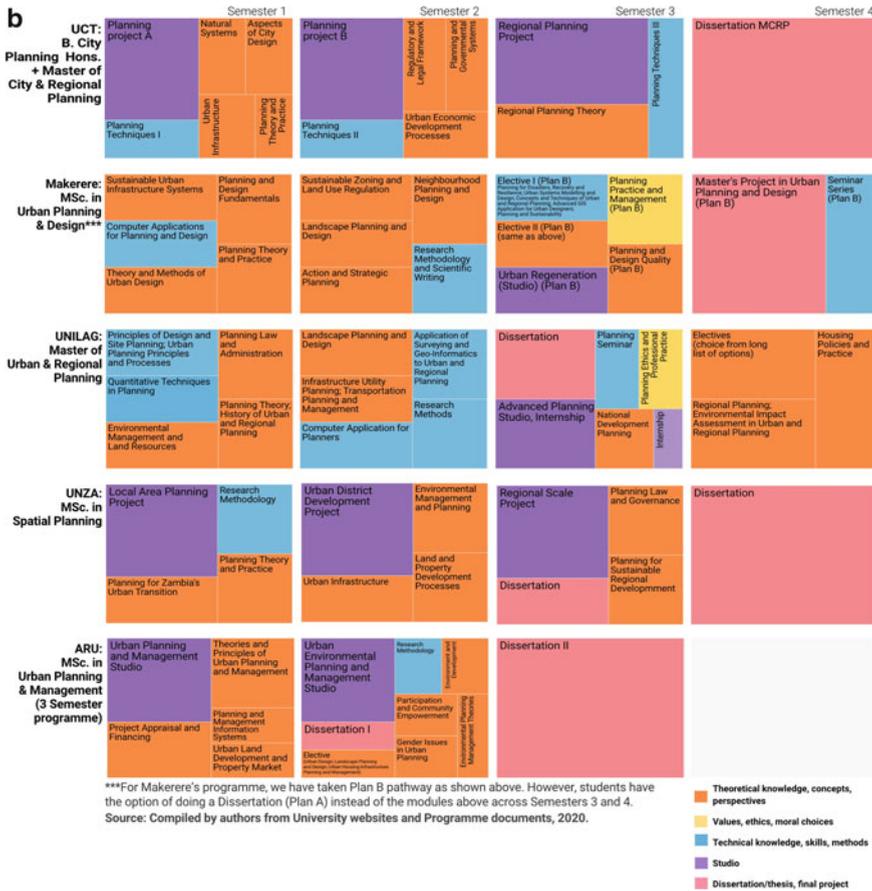


Fig. 5.3 (continued)

(ARU, UNZA); gender issues in urban planning (ARU); and inclusive cities (an elective in SPA-D). This cluster appears to be the most dynamic across the programmes, where many universities are trying to introduce modules that speak to contemporary urban challenges in cities of the Global South.

- Lastly, modules pertaining to planning instruments like project management, budgeting, and zoning, transcend the theoretical knowledge framework and have an overlap with technical knowledge.

### 5.4.3.2 Skills/Methods/Technical Knowledge (*Knowing How*)

There appear to be three technical aspects covered across all programmes, to varying degrees through these module(s): (1) quantitative and qualitative methods for urban planning and research; (2) computer applications and software skills (e.g. ArchGIS)

for planning practice; and (3) technical report writing. A module on methods and/or planning techniques can be found in all programmes under consideration. Moratuwa, ARU, UNZA, and AUB—each have a module on research methods. The other six programmes have more than one module dedicated to building the technical skills of their students.

UCT, for example, has a module on “planning techniques” in three of their four semesters, which together cover a broad range of skills including mapping, report writing, qualitative research methods, and impact assessment. In HKU’s “Research Methods in Spatial Planning” module, they cover “research design methods, data collection, and the use of statistical as well as qualitative techniques in data analysis... analytical models and evaluation and management methods that are commonly used in spatial planning and research”. NUS, on the other hand, has one module on “Qualitative methods for urban planning” and a second one on “Quantitative methods for urban planning”. This idea that planners must have both quantitative and qualitative methodological competency appears to be a shared one, whether for research or applied analyses.

The other aspect, i.e. computer applications and software skills for planning, are explicitly named in all but the NUS and AUB programmes. We see dedicated modules starting from very basic computer applications (MS, Word, Excel) in SPA-D and computer techniques within a foundational course in HKU, to more specialised technology-based skills in working with geo-informatics, remote sensing, etc., in SPA-D, Makerere, ARU, and UNILAG. Technology supported planning techniques are being highlighted in many programmes as a key requirement for planning practice today. In other places like UCT, Moratuwa, HKU, and UNZA, this computer/software training is located within larger mixed modules of planning techniques and methods, or is integrated with studios. While technical writing is emphasised in planning techniques modules, other forms of communication receive less attention. They are mostly subsumed within studio projects or found, if at all, as a small component of other modules.

#### **5.4.3.3 Values/Ethics/Moral Choices (*Knowing to What End*)**

Underlying values of planning programmes are visible in multiple places—vision statements, choice of themes and theoretical modules, and also where and how studios are conducted. In terms of the programme design and modules, however, limited space exists in most of the programmes to deliberate upon values and moral choices that planners are faced with. HKU has the only programme with a dedicated module on values in planning, in addition to one on professional practice, which is also included in SPA-D, Moratuwa, Makerere, and UNILAG, where issues of ethics and code of conduct are covered. In other programmes (UCT, UNZA), planning ethics are included within the larger module on planning theory and practice.

#### 5.4.3.4 Studios and Projects (*Doing*)

Studios form the backbone of all planning programmes. They make up close to a third of overall programme credits in the majority of programmes (SPA-D, HKU, NUS, Moratuwa, UCT, ARU, UNZA), and constitute an even more critical component in each of the first two or three semesters, until the dissertation component in the final semester. AUB, Makerere, and UNILAG each have only one studio module in the entire programme and relatively smaller studio components as a percentage of the total programme credits. UNILAG's focus is on the design of new towns, capital cities, and master plans, whereas Makerere is focused on "urban regeneration" and "practical debates" and solutions. AUB, within a single studio, goes through the process of planning—from documenting, analysing, and problem framing, to conceptualising and designing interventions. In NUS, this planning process is dealt with across scales, from city area to urban design to regional planning.

The scalar progression—from local to regional—appears to be typical of many of the programmes. For seven out of the ten programmes, there is a focus on "local" in the first semester and a focus on the intermediary scale (like urban district, city, metropolitan area, etc.) in the second. UNZA, for example, moves from working at local area planning in the first semester to urban district planning in the second, followed by regional scale in the third. Moratuwa, however, is an outlier in that it has an opposite scalar progression, starting from the environmental region and moving to urban planning and design, then to site planning in the third semester. Overall, the third semester is where we see the most thematic variations in the studio across the programmes.

When comparing studios at SPA-D to those at HKU, different approaches to studio settings come to light. SPA-D is structured more in terms of statutory plans and planning products, rather than explicitly around scale, though there is an aspect of the typical scale progression seen here as well. In the first semester, it is framed around an area appreciation study and City Development Plan, followed by a Tier II City-level statutory development plan in the second semester, and finally an urban infrastructure plan, feasibility study and its Detailed Project Report in the third. HKU, on the other hand, is structured primarily around three types of planning/planners: spatial planning in the first semester, strategic planning in the second, and community planning in the third. While all the studios are set in urban areas within their contexts, some of the programmes (e.g. UNZA, UCT) actively collaborate with partners, for example, Slum Dwellers International (SDI), to make the experience even more grounded.

## 5.5 Discussion and Conclusion

The first thing that can be concluded from this review is the diversity found among urban planning programmes at different institutions. We see planning presented in varied manifestations, and indications that multiple influences over time have shaped each programme's formation and greater understanding of planning/planners.

While the evidence does confirm the rootedness of several of these programmes in their colonial pasts, with relics from that era of planning still present in their design and modules, there are signs to indicate a shift from this origin in all programmes to varying degrees. In some, the need for this shift appears more articulated and has perhaps been given greater impetus through active and critical regional debates and dialogues in recent decades, as observed in the case of UCT or UNZA through AAPS, while in others, such as SPA-D or UNILAG, efforts to reframe planning education appear as yet to be in early stages. While the intention and the energy with which the change has taken place may differ, it is clear there has been some evolution in the planning curricula in Asia and Africa from colonial and even post-colonial era development logics.

Some of these changes echo contemporary national as well as shared bilateral or international development agendas and frameworks, and imaginations of the urban. We also see responses to the demands of programme accreditation, existing and available faculty expertise, local planning cultures, and job markets. While not explicitly articulated, some of the programmes align with globalising landscapes of planning employment, which shape the way these programmes are presented and the professional competencies they choose to highlight, as in the case of Moratuwa's development of urban management expertise, or NUS with its focus on techno-spatial analysis skills. Some programmes are distinctly catering to national demands, as seen in UNILAG, whereas others have a more regional or global objective. We also see, in the articulated imagination of the planner, a continued bias towards physical planning in most programmes, but also—in a few programmes like HKU, UCT, and AUB—a more diverse understanding of the sociopolitical nature, and multiplicity of planner's roles in practice. Some of these observations, written by other authors in individual contexts (Mahadevia and Bhatia 2018), become very distinct when comparing the universities and geographies.

The shift is also more apparent in the vision statement/objective of the programme than in the actual design of the curriculum itself. There appears to be a loss in translation between intent and proposed content; while there is recognition of contemporary and contextualised issues and needs, this is articulated better in the vision and objectives than in the modules design and selection. It may be argued that certain concerns are dealt with during course delivery, but by not spelling out key issues in the curriculum description itself, there runs a danger of critical aspects being left to the discretion of individual faculty members. This concern is again seen in how programmes engage (or not) with the issues of values, ethics, and moral choices as a planner. Some of these value questions and negotiations, as written by Taşan-Kok and Oranje (2018) and others, may be dealt with through dedicated spaces in the

curriculum for reflection and debate, as is expected from the values modules of HKU or the planning seminars of AUB. In other cases, there is a possibility for a more soft-touch and integrated approach through discussion in studios or classroom-based modules. Again, the absence of dedicated spaces for such deliberations carries the risk of oversight of an issue that has been highlighted as crucial by practitioners, educators, and graduates alike. In a handful of cases where values and ethics have been given their own space in the programme, we tend to see more instrumental ways of looking at them through modules in professional practice. While it may appear reductive to look for modules focused on values and ethics—and it can be argued that they should be embedded in everything—the methods and approaches to do so within such programmes is one important line of enquiry for improving the potential of these programmes in preparing their future planners.

Kwok (1983: 93) has discussed how planning education approaches may be seen as “multi-disciplinary (which coordinates different disciplines) or inter-disciplinary (which integrates from the outset)”. In this context, we see that some programmes have a great number of discrete, dedicated modules (e.g. SPA-D, UNILAG) while others are at the other end of the spectrum with far fewer, more integrated modules overall (AUB). The danger of the former type of programme is the possibility of excessive overlap or alternatively a lack of shared direction or cohesiveness across the modules, where there is less time given to negotiating or prioritising the many forms of knowing/doing and various parcels of knowledge delivered separately. Often, systemised integration across modules gives holistic “meaning” to what is learned in the programme (Kwok 1983). In this review, some programmes are clearer in their overall objectives than others; in many, they appear to be a collection of courses and the integration is not explicit. In the studio as well, which bears the potential of bringing together multiple forms of knowing, there appears to be very little change in most of the programmes, and it continues to remain an artefact of the much-criticised expert-driven or rationalist planning model. Though a few places are making an effort to run collaborative studios with communities on the ground, a number of other key stakeholders (like government and private sector actors) are still missing from the picture.

We see sustainability as a recurring term in both intent and content throughout most programmes. We also see an emphasis on physical aspects of planning such as physical infrastructure, especially in the content of modules. However, these continue to remain somewhat limited in their framing—for example, transport rather than the idea of mobility (NUS is a notable exception), or sewerage and waste management rather than service delivery, and the issues of equity and public health. Perhaps responding to prior cycles of critique on the lack of attention to implementation (Kwok 1983), and growing focus on sustainability globally, we see these included in modules dealing with development finance, and environmental management. However, apart from a few exceptions such as UCT and UNZA, other crucial themes of informality and access to land, as highlighted by UN-Habitat (2009), Watson (2011), Mahadevia and Bhatia (2018) and Denoon-Stevens et al. (2020), still appear to remain peripheral in many programmes, especially those in Asia accompanied by

a long-standing lack, or very narrow training in participatory engagement. Necessary soft skills of communication and language, facilitation, and negotiation, also remain conspicuously absent for the most part, despite programmes speaking about “multi-stakeholder” engagement and planners working in “multidisciplinary teams”. Instead, across all programmes, we see much weight given to computer and design software literacy, methods of analysis and research, and technical report writing—what could be referred to as the hard skills of planning. The question this raises for us is why are some concepts more explicitly included than others: for example, environment and sustainability, but land markets, informality, or equity and inclusion less often? Why do “hard” skills overshadow “soft” skills to such an extent? It is worth investigating further exactly how and why such choices are made in curricula.

This review of the ten planning programmes presents us with evidence of rich parallels and variations in the curricula within and across the two continents. It is clear that multiple influences are at play in shaping the planning education in these contexts, which merit further investigation and discussion. The review also highlights the varied attempts that are being made in different places to respond to the contemporary urban challenges within their local and regional contexts. This presents an immense opportunity for learning and innovation through South-South exchanges and partnerships—a critical, yet under-explored area for collaboration when compared with existing North–South knowledge exchange partnerships.

**Acknowledgements** We are very grateful to the anonymous reviewers for valuable comments and suggestions. We wish to thank Rekha Raghunathan at the Indian Institute for Human Settlements for careful reading and editing of the first draft of the paper. A special thanks to Dr. Genet Alem Gebregiorgis at TU Dortmund for constant support throughout the process of paper writing. This article is part of the research programme “Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality” (KNOW), supported by UKRI through the Global Challenges Research Fund GROW Call. Grant Ref: ES/P011225/1.

## References

- Adamson B, Morris P (2014) Comparing curricula. In Bray M, Adamson B, Mason M (ed) *Comparative education research*. Springer International Publishing, pp 309–332. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-05594-7\\_11](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-05594-7_11)
- Ali AK, Doan PL (2006) A survey of undergraduate course syllabi and a hybrid course on global urban topics. *J Plan Educ Res* 26(2):222–236. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X06291500>
- AUB (American University of Beirut) (2018) Graduate Catalog 2018–19, Department of Architecture, pp 328–329. Available from <https://www.aub.edu.lb/Registrar/Documents/catalogue/graduate18-19/architecture-mupp-mud.pdf>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- Blair N, Manda M (2016) A partnership-based model for embedding employability in urban planning education. In: *Urban, planning and transport research* 4. Routledge, pp 46–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21650020.2016.1145070>
- Bray M, Adamson B, Mason M (2014) *Comparative education research: approaches and methods*. Comparative Education Research Centre, University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong

- Butt A, Ratnayake R, Budge T (2013) Planning education and inter-cultural collaboration: awareness, innovation, reflection and preparation for practice. *Bhumi, Plan Res J* 3:1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4038/bhumi.v3i1.10>
- Chatterji T, Soni A (2016) Chapter 5: positioning urban governance in planning pedagogy. In: Kumar A, Meshram DS, Gowda K (ed) *Urban and regional planning education: Learning for India*. Springer Science+Business Media, Singapore, pp 61–77
- Davoudi S (2015) Planning as practice of knowing. *Plan Theory* 14:316–331. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473095215575919>
- Denoon-Stevens SP, Andres L, Jones P, Melgaço L, Massey R, Nel V (2020) Theory versus practice in planning education: the view from South Africa. In: *Planning practice and research*. Routledge, pp 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02697459.2020.1735158>
- Diaw, K, Nnkya T, Watson V (2002) Planning education in sub-Saharan Africa: responding to the demands of a changing context. In: *Planning practice & research* 17. Routledge, pp 337–348. <https://doi.org/10.1080/026974502200005689>
- Edwards MM, Bates LK (2011) Planning's core curriculum: knowledge, practice, and implementation. *J Plan Educ Res* 31(2):172–183. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X11398043>
- Flyvbjerg B (2006) Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qual Inq* 12(2):219–245. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800405284363>
- Frank AI (2018) Chapter 9: adapting, shifting, defining new roles: education for a maturing professional field. In: Frank A, Silver C (ed) *Urban planning education: beginnings, global movement and future prospects*. Springer International Publishing AG, pp 131–145
- Frank A, Silver C (2018) *Urban planning education: beginnings*. The Urban Book Series. Springer International Publishing AG, Global movement and future prospects. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09640566208730631>
- Friedmann, J (1996) The core curriculum in planning revisited. *J Plann Educ and Res* 15(2):89–104.
- Hague, C (2001) The formation of the Commonwealth Association of Planners Network of Planning Schools: a response to the Istanbul+5 development agenda. In: *World planning schools Congress, Shanghai*
- HKU (University of Hong Kong) (2020) Master of science in urban planning. <https://www.arch.hku.hk/programmes/upad/master-of-science-in-urban-planning/>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- Hou L (2018) Chapter 6: six decades of planning education in china: those planned and unplanned. In: Frank A, Silver C (ed) *Urban planning education: beginnings, global movement and future prospects*. Springer International Publishing AG, pp 81–99
- Kumar A, Meshram DS, Gowda K (2016) *Urban and regional planning education: learning for India*. Urban and Regional Planning Education. Springer Science+Business Media, Singapore
- Kunzmann KR (2015) The state of the art of planning and planning education in Asia. *Disp—Plan Rev* 51:42–51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2015.1134961>
- Kunzmann KR, Koll-Schretzenmayr M (2015) Unchartered territory: planning and planning education in Asia 2015. *Disp—plan Rev* 51:20–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02513625.2015.1134925>
- Kusiima A (2008) Makerere University, Uganda: Urban Planning Programme. AAPS Conference 1–24.
- Kwok R-W (1983) Education in urban planning. *Habitat Int* 7:91–101. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0197-3975\(83\)90014-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0197-3975(83)90014-0)
- Mahadevia D, Bhatia N (2018) Urban planning education for inclusive cities: global and Indian perspectives
- McFarlane C (2010) The comparative city: knowledge, learning, urbanism. *Int J Urban Reg Res* 34(4):725–742. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00917.x>
- Meshram DS, Meshram S (2016) Chapter 2: energizing planning education in India. In: Kumar A, Meshram DS, Gowda K (ed) *Urban and regional planning education: learning for India*. Springer Science+Business Media, Singapore, pp 17–32
- NIUA (National Institute of Urban Affairs). 2017. Recommendations for an improved master's level urban planning curriculum. Delhi, India

- Nnkya T, Lupala J (2008) Ardhi University, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania: School of Urban and Regional Planning. AAPS Conference 1–21
- Nordtveit B (2016) Trends in Comparative and international education: perspectives from the comparative education review. *Ann Rev Comp Int Educ* 27–37. <https://doi.org/10.1108/S1479-367920160000030001>
- NUS (National University of Singapore), School of Design and Environment (2020) 4.2.2.9 Master of urban planning. <http://www.nus.edu.sg/nusbuletin/school-of-design-and-environment/graduate-education/coursework-programmes/degree-requirements/master-of-urban-planning/>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- NUS (National University of Singapore), Department of Architecture (2020) Master of urban planning. <http://www.sde.nus.edu.sg/arch/programmes/master-of-urban-planning/>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- Oborn P, Walters J (2020) Planning for climate change and rapid urbanisation: survey of the built environment professions in the Commonwealth
- Odendaal N (2012) Reality check: planning education in the African urban century. *Cities* 29. Elsevier Ltd, pp 174–182. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2011.10.001>
- Oduwaye L, Lawanson TO (2008) University of Lagos, Nigeria: Department of Urban and Regional Planning. AAPS Conference 1–33
- Oduwaye L, Olajide O (2012) Incorporating informality into urban and regional planning education curriculum in Nigeria. *Town Reg Plan* 60:31–37
- Peña S (2019) Urban and regional planning education in Mexico. *J Plan Educ Res*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X19889662>
- Prakash P (2016) Ethics and planning education in India. In: Kumar A, Meshram DS, Gowda K (ed) *Urban and regional planning education: learning for India*, pp 181–192. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-0608-1\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-10-0608-1_13)
- Ratnayake R, Butt A (2017) Encounters with the unfamiliar: international planning education. *Int Plan Stud* 23:51–64. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13563475.2017.1339347>
- Robinson J (2011) Cities in a world of cities: the comparative gesture. *Int J Urban Reg Res* 35(1):1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2427.2010.00982.x>
- Robinson J (2015) Thinking cities through elsewhere. *Prog Hum Geogr* 40(1):3–29. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132515598025>
- Sen S, Umemoto K, Koh A, Zambonelli V (2016) Diversity and social justice in planning education: a synthesis of topics, pedagogical approaches, and educational goals in planning syllabi. *J Plan Educ Res* 37(3):347–358. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X16657393>
- Short EC (1991) *Forms of curriculum inquiry*. State University of New York Press, Albany, NY
- Siame G (2016) The value and dynamics of community-based studio projects in planning education in the Global South. *Berkeley Plan J* 28:40–67. <https://doi.org/10.5070/BP328133858>
- SPA-D (School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi) (2020) About the Department of Urban Planning. Available from [http://spa.ac.in/User\\_Panel/UserView.aspx?TypeID=1429](http://spa.ac.in/User_Panel/UserView.aspx?TypeID=1429). Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- Stiftel B, Mukhopadhyay C (2007) Thoughts on Anglo-American hegemony in planning scholarship: Do we read each other's work? *Town Plan Rev* 78:545–572. <https://doi.org/10.3828/tpv.78.5.2>
- Taşan-Kok T, Oranje, M (2018) Why it is important to give voice to young practitioners. In: Taşan-Kok T, Oranje M (ed) *From student to urban planner: young practitioners' reflections on contemporary ethical challenges*. Routledge, New York, pp 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315726854-1>
- Todes A, Harrison P, Watson V (2003) The changing nature of the job market for planning in South Africa: implications for planning educators. *Town Reg Plan* 46:21–32
- UCT (University of Cape Town) (2020) Bachelor of City Planning Honours degree and Masters of City and Regional Planning degree (linked). <http://www.apg.uct.ac.za/apg/city-and-regional-planning>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020

- United Nations (2017) New urban agenda. <https://habitat3.org/wp-content/uploads/NUA-English.pdf>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- UNDESA (United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs) (2018) World urbanization prospects 2018. United Nations, New York
- UN-Habitat (2009) Global report on human settlements 2009: Planning sustainable cities.
- UNILAG (University of Lagos) (2017) Departmental Handbook 2017–2020: Department of Urban and Regional Planning. Faculty of Environmental Sciences. University of Lagos, Lagos
- University of Moratuwa (2020) Student’s handbook—Master of Spatial Planning, Management & Design—2016/18: Department of Town & Country Planning: 19
- UNZA (University of Zambia) (2018) Postgraduates: overview. <https://www.unza.zm/academics/postgraduate-programmes/master-of-science-spatial-planning>. Accessed 8 Oct 2020
- van Horen B, Leaf M, Pinnawala S (2004) Localizing a global discipline: designing new planning programs in Sri Lanka. *J Plan Educ Res* 23(3):255–268. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0739456X03261282>
- Watson V (2008) University of Cape Town, South Africa: City and Regional Planning Programme. AAPS Conference 1–19
- Watson V (2009) Seeing from the South: refocusing urban planning on the globe’s central urban issues. *Urban Stud* 46:2259–2275. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098009342598>
- Watson V (2011) Inclusive urban planning for the working poor: planning education trends and potential shift. WIEGO Working Paper (Urban Policies). Vol. 21. WIEGO Working Papers
- Wesely J, Allen, A (2019) De-colonising planning education? Exploring the geographies of urban planning education networks. *Urban Plan* 4:139–151. <https://doi.org/10.17645/up.v4i4.2200>

**Geetika Anand** is a doctoral researcher at the University of Cape Town (UCT), focusing on practice biographies of urban development practitioners in South Africa. Working with the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) since 2010, she is currently a researcher on the Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality (KNOW) programme, looking at planning education in Asia and Africa. Trained in urban planning, Geetika has 15 years of experience in the sector spanning the areas of master plans, housing, water and sanitation. She has a special interest in field-based learning and is part of studio teaching teams at SPA, the School of Planning and Architecture in New Delhi, IIHS, and the UCT

**Nandini Dutta** is an architect and planner from Auroville, practising since 2016. She has developed children’s ‘sensory’ gardens for CCAMH-Caritas in Cambodia, and for Chengalpattu Medical College Government Hospital in India. Since May 2019, she has been a research consultant with the Indian Institute of Human Settlements in Bangalore. Her work is part of the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) project, Knowledge in Action for Urban Equality, and focuses on planning education and curricula in the Asian and African regions. She also contributes to research for sustainable planning with the Max Lock Centre in New Delhi under the development research and consultancy unit of the University of Westminster.

**Open Access** This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

