

# Unlocking Potential: Strengthening Education, Technology, and Student Life at Kwame Nkrumah University

Owen Mulima<sup>1</sup>, Pethias Siame<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Religious Studies Education, Kwame Nkrumah University, Zambia

<sup>2</sup>Department of Literature and Languages, Kwame Nkrumah University, Zambia

**Submission:** September 10, 2025; **Published:** September 23, 2025

**\*Corresponding author:** Pethias Siame, Department of Literature and Languages, Kwame Nkrumah University, Zambia.

**Keywords:** Digital Transformation; Practical Learning; Project-Based Learning; STEM Education; Student Life; Wi-Fi Access; Online Learning; Institutional Development; Academic Excellence; Mental Wellness; Peer Mentorship; Digital Skills; Infrastructure; National Development

## Introduction

Kwame Nkrumah University stands as a formidable pillar of academic excellence in Zambia, boasting a distinguished history that spans over five decades since its establishment in 1967 as Kabwe Teachers Training College [1]. Today, as the world undergoes rapid transformation driven by technological innovation and evolving job markets, Kwame Nkrumah University was elevated to a university status in 2008. Uniquely positioned to spearhead revolutionary changes in higher education that align with 21<sup>st</sup> century demands. The foundation is undeniably robust; what is urgently needed now is a bold, transformative leap toward creating a student experience that is fundamentally more practical, thoroughly digitized, and comprehensively supportive.

## The Critical Gap: Theory without Practice

One of the most glaring deficiencies in contemporary higher education lies in the persistent disconnect between theoretical knowledge and practical application. Too many students graduate with solid academic foundations, but sadly with limited exposure to hands-on, real-world problem-solving experiences. This educational gap is particularly pronounced in Zambian institutions, where infrastructure challenges have historically limited practical learning opportunities [2]. Kwame Nkrumah University must urgently integrate project-based learning methodologies, actively encourage comprehensive fieldwork experiences, and establish practical workshops across all academic programs. Such initiatives

would produce graduates who are not merely knowledgeable but genuinely prepared to tackle complex problems and make meaningful contributions to national development objectives. The university's commitment to "training for transformation" and "decolonizing students' mindset to offer transformative service to the nation" [2] provides the perfect philosophical foundation for this practical approach. However, transforming mindsets requires more than ideological frameworks, it demands concrete experiential learning opportunities that bridge the academic-professional divide.

## Digital Infrastructure: Bridging the Divide

The digital transformation challenge facing Kwame Nkrumah University mirrors broader national concerns, yet solutions remain within reach. While Zambia has made significant strides in digital connectivity with approximately 11.4 million active internet subscribers as of 2024 [3], many university students continue to face substantial barriers in accessing computers and reliable internet connectivity. This digital divide represents not merely an inconvenience but a fundamental obstacle to educational equity and economic competitiveness.

The university must aggressively pursue initiatives that expand Wi-Fi coverage across all four campuses, provide comprehensive basic digital skills training, and dramatically increase access to online learning resources. These efforts would serve a dual

purpose: supporting immediate academic success while fostering the digital confidence and technological independence that modern workplaces demand. Given Zambia's National Digital Transformation Strategy for 2023-2027 [4], Kwame Nkrumah University has a strategic opportunity to position itself as a leader in educational digitization.

The stark reality is that supporting STEM programs and digital initiatives requires substantial infrastructure investment, a challenge that most Zambian institutions currently struggle to meet [5]. However, the cost of inaction far exceeds the investment required for digital transformation.

### Student Life: The Foundation of Academic Excellence

Student life represents far more than dormitory accommodations and recreational activities—it constitutes the fundamental ecosystem within which learning occurs. A nurturing environment where students feel secure, supported, and genuinely inspired can determine the difference between mediocre outcomes and transformational educational experiences. Research consistently demonstrates that inadequate sanitation facilities, overcrowded conditions, and limited access to modern technology significantly impair student-learning outcomes [6].

Kwame Nkrumah University must prioritize comprehensive improvements to hostel facilities, establish robust academic guidance systems, and implement innovative peer mentorship programs alongside mental wellness initiatives. These investments would empower students to thrive both personally and academically, creating a positive feedback loop that enhances the institution's overall academic culture and reputation.

### The Path Forward: From Aspiration to Action

Transforming an established institution requires sustained commitment and strategic vision, but incremental progress through focused initiatives can generate substantial momentum. What matters most decisively is the institutional will to pursue continuous improvement and Kwame Nkrumah University has repeatedly demonstrated its capacity and determination to rise to significant challenges throughout its evolutionary journey from teacher-training college to a comprehensive university [7].

The university's current ranking as 10th in Zambia [8] provides a solid foundation, but settling for current achievements would represent a profound disservice to the institution's potential and the nation's developmental needs. With five established schools offering various programs at different levels, the university possesses the structural framework necessary for comprehensive transformation.

### Conclusion: A Vision for Educational Leadership

By embracing practical learning methodologies, pursuing aggressive digital inclusion strategies, and prioritizing comprehensive student well-being initiatives, Kwame Nkrumah University can transcend its current role as merely another place of study. It can emerge as the definitive model for transformative education in Zambia, a launching platform for the next generation of leaders, innovative thinkers, and problem-solving professionals.

The opportunity before Kwame Nkrumah University is extraordinary; to lead Zambia's educational transformation while contributing meaningfully to the nation's ambitious goal of achieving 15% higher education enrollment by 2030 [9]. The question is not whether the university can achieve this transformation, but whether it possesses the courage and commitment to seize this pivotal moment in its institutional evolution.

The time for incremental change has passed. Kwame Nkrumah University must embrace revolutionary transformation, not merely for its institutional advancement, but as a critical contribution to Zambia's broader developmental aspirations and the urgent need for educational institutions that truly serve the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

### References

1. Higher Education Authority of Zambia (2021) Kwame Nkrumah University. Higher Education Authority of Zambia.
2. Musonda A, Chikwanda T, Mulenga R, Daka H (2023) Decolonizing students mind set to offer transformative service to the nation and the society at large: A case study of Kwame Nkrumah University, Zambia. World Journal of Social Science and Humanities 9(2): 3.
3. UNSDG (2024) New frontiers: Zambia embraces digital transformation. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
4. Digital Watch Observatory (2024) The national digital transformation strategy for Zambia (2023-2027). Digital Watch Observatory.
5. Higher Education Authority of Zambia (2023) Higher education in Zambia: Progress and challenges. Higher Education Authority of Zambia.
6. Chilufya LB (2021) Learning infrastructure and delivery of education: A case of Zambia's private teachers' training colleges. Research Gate.
7. Kwame Nkrumah University (2024) About Kwame Nkrumah University.
8. Edu Rank (2024) Kwame Nkrumah University ranking 2024 + acceptance rate. Edu Rank.
9. Tech Africa News (2024) Zambia targets 15% higher education enrolment as government expands access and teacher recruitment. Tech Africa News.



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License  
DOI: [10.19080/OAJELS.2025.03.555614](https://doi.org/10.19080/OAJELS.2025.03.555614)

Your next submission with Juniper Publishers  
will reach you the below assets

- Quality Editorial service
- Swift Peer Review
- Reprints availability
- E-prints Service
- Manuscript Podcast for convenient understanding
- Global attainment for your research
- Manuscript accessibility in different formats  
( Pdf, E-pub, Full Text, Audio)
- Unceasing customer service

**Track the below URL for one-step submission**  
<https://juniperpublishers.com/online-submission.php>