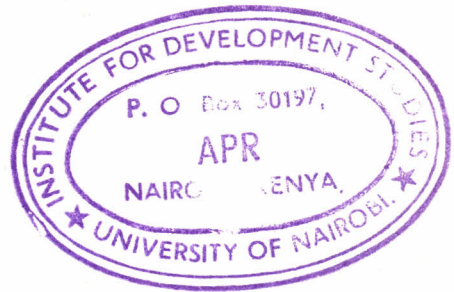


EXTERNAL DEPENDENCE AND NATIONAL URBAN DEVELOPMENT POLICY:  
A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF GRADUATE UNEMPLOYMENT  
IN NAIROBI, KENYA

by  
FANTU CHERU



A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY  
in  
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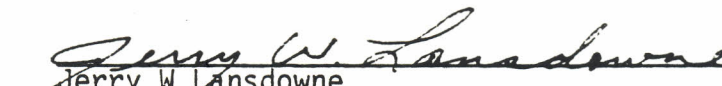
AN ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION OF Fantu Cheru for the Doctor of  
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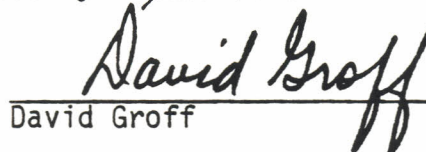
Title: External Dependence and National Urban Development Policy:  
A Structural Analysis of Graduate Unemployment in Nairobi,  
Kenya.

APPROVED BY MEMBERS OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE:

  
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This study examines the attempts by the government of Kenya to develop and implement policies directed toward the problem of urban unemployment. Specifically, it focuses upon two policy areas directly related to urban unemployment: education and economic growth. An additional element of this study is to examine the possible consequences

of Kenya's external dependency upon the linkages among education, economic growth, and employment opportunities.

Throughout the 1960's, the main problem in the educational sector of developing societies as perceived by planners, politicians, and theorists, related primarily to the challenge of producing numbers of educated people to promote a rapid localization of jobs and to sustain the high rate of economic growth which were believed necessary for development. The policy prescriptions involved a dramatic quantitative expansion of school enrollments. This was understandable and inevitable in view of the dramatic manpower shortages which existed at the time of independence.

In recent years, however, these efforts at expanding educational opportunities for the people of Kenya have resulted in widespread unemployment of school graduates. The dynamic rate of economic growth and a forceful campaign of Kenyanization have not been successful in creating sufficient employment to meet the growing numbers of Kenyan students who believe themselves qualified for gainful employment. The problem is particularly significant in the city of Nairobi, where the African population is increasing through births and migration by over 10% per year. In contrast, the tiny increase in employment is scarcely noticed.

In an attempt to resolve the problem of unemployment among graduates, governmental policies in Kenya were directed toward improving various components of the school system, such as examination content and procedures, curriculum, and vocational and technical education. Policymakers believed that the mismatch between education and employment

was the cause of graduates lacking marketable skills to secure the needed employment. However, the impact of these educational strategies in solving the unemployment problem has been extremely limited.

Thus, any attempt to trace the causes of graduate unemployment in Kenya rapidly leads to an analysis of the entire socio-economic structure and touches on almost every element of development strategies. A major factor is Kenya's dependency on external economic forces, which influence and constrain its actions by controlling the amount of resources available to it and the distribution of political power. The evidence presented in this study points to the continued vulnerability and limitations of the Kenyan economy imposed by its periphery role within the world economic system.

While changes in curriculum and in the examination system may be expected to bring educational benefits, it is unrealistic to suppose that such changes alone will improve the employment prospects of graduates in the labor market. The results of this study suggest that the roots of the unemployment problem are in the structure of society, and particularly in the failure of the Kenyan economy to industrialize and modernize at a rate that absorbs the labor force. These economic problems are traced to Kenya's continued dependency on external economic assistance, which reduces its ability to determine the course of national development independently. This economic problem is of such a magnitude that it can only be solved by structural adjustments, both internally and externally.