Abstract of “The Increasing Demand on High-Rise Buildings and Their History” (200-250 words)

The high-rise building topic is controversial: on one side there is an increase in demand, on the other side we have big issues in terms of sustainability. This paper analyses the relationship between skyscrapers and the environment of past and future cities.

Globalization and the lack of cultural identity have been key to the increase in improper and damaging architectural solutions implemented, especially in developing countries. The good practices of traditional architecture have been neglected and/or forgotten because of this.

Tall buildings have always been a symbol of superiority and power. Religious buildings, for example, have attempted to connect humanity to heaven through spires and bell towers in the Gothic period. Modern towers represent the same aspiration but in a more mundane way.

Recently, researchers have tried to make the most out of natural elements and resources to develop passive cooling environments in tall buildings, using the natural processes of vegetation. These can be further embedded to construct more environmentally friendly buildings that can also be more comfortable for people.

Right now, the condition of our cities is catastrophic: they are so big that they are impossible to live in and they exploit non-renewable resources. High-rise buildings could be a solution but only if they are designed in relation to their natural environment.