



COMMUNITY SPACES: UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY SPACES IN URBAN AREAS

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ABSTRACT

Community spaces play a very important role in the social life of communities. Community spaces in urban areas are present in variety of functions, spaces, activities, etc. Increasing migration of people from rural to urban areas has led to the scarcity of open spaces. Urban living also limits the access to open spaces and further restricts the community life of people. It is important for the architects and urban planners to first understand how the community interacts and behaviour of community to design these spaces. Also, the successful protection and development of community spaces in urban areas is required.

Keywords: Migration, scarcity.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

2.1.1 Significance of Community Spaces

Community spaces play a very significant role in the social life of all communities. They act as a shared resource that serves the public in organising themselves and where the values and experiences are created. These spaces have many benefits – people display their culture, identities, spread awareness and learn the diversities and differences of various cultures, it gives opportunities for the people, including elders, children and adults to meet and interact with each other. All these various activities ultimately help in creating local attachments which is the most important aspect in the public lives.

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2.1.2 Aim

To explore the significance of community spaces based on human behaviour and from the studies of other research based programs.

2.1.3 Methodology

- Desktop Study - Study research based works, articles and its impact.
- Behaviour of the people with such spaces.
- Explore some ideas that will help encourage in maintaining such public spaces.
- Explore the different standards for community spaces.

2.1.4 Evolution of Community Spaces

The earliest city emerged around 6000 years ago and the public squares were established at the crossroads of trade routes. Gradually, these public spaces started getting importance and further improvements were made and became common grounds which were intended to support all political, social and economic activities and provided a platform which was accessible to all the people.

Some of the examples of the earliest public spaces in history are: The Greek Agora, The Roman Forum, The Medieval Market Square and The Renaissance Plaza.

In the modern era, public spaces witnessed a very drastic evolution. The planning of the city developed a close relationship between open spaces and surrounding area. Also, there were new public spaces for entertainment and leisure. Further, spaces like, shopping arcade, bazaar, and departmental stores also emerged.

In the contemporary era, the community spaces needs to be designed in such which has to anticipate the changed and changing lifestyle of the urban population and living.

2.1.5 Standards of Community Spaces

Community spaces should be in coordination with the type and scale of development which will enhance and support the public values. There are variety of community spaces depending on many factors which includes active spaces like courtyards, picnic areas, plazas and passive spaces. Each of these spaces should have inviting character and designed in such a way which will help people navigate easily. Also, these spaces should be multi – functional and able to accommodate variety of programs and activities.



Another important aspect of community spaces is the integration of the location, scale of neighbouring buildings and its uses. The location of community spaces should be preferably at ground level and should be accessible and visible from Public Street. While orienting the internal spaces, there should also be balance between sun and shade. The scale of all the spaces needs to be appropriate as it should not feel empty or barren when not in use. Also, wherever possible, outdoor areas should be provided for the opportunity of connecting with nature. This also means that the preservation of adjacent nature should be considered. Elements like water bodies, sculptures, landscapes (hardscape and soft scape), artwork, and lighting should be provided which will make the navigation more interesting and also appeal the senses.

2.1.6 Understanding Community Spaces

Community spaces exist in a variety of types within rural or urban fabric. Protecting, maintaining and developing these spaces is the key element for sustainable community spaces in urban or rural fabric. To do this, it is important for all to first understand how the community spaces work and its intersections with the living beings.

Community spaces represent public values – social and economical and have a significant role in the well – being of individuals. These spaces are appreciated and accepted on how much appropriately the accessibility, characteristics, amenities and provisions have been given in these areas. Other than only accessibility, provisions and characteristics, the green areas in community spaces are also one of the important aspects in terms of the designing of community spaces.

3.1 CONCLUSION

Community spaces embrace a wide range of variety of spaces. Their uses, structure and the overall design varies from neighbourhood planning to the metropolitan scale. In today's era, these spaces are viewed as resources for urban establishments and also improvements. Also, with increasing urban population, the importance and the quality of community spaces is also decreasing. It is lacking in liveliness, amenities, ambience and maintenance, because of which these spaces are not much inviting and losing its importance. These spaces are the fundamental part of any urban area that unifies all the urban informal and formal activities and should be designed taking all these aspects into consideration.



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