

The Effects of Semi-Public Spaces with Distinctive Functions on the Urban Space Quality

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Abstract : Along with impetuous physical change, configuration and increase in the density of cities, urban public spaces have started to become a transition area rather than spaces to inhabit. The insufficiency of public spaces, one of the most significant components of a city, where communal life is maintained and the decrease in the quality of urban spaces have led to an increase in the use of semi-public spaces as urban space. Semi-public spaces are those that ensure transition between private and public spaces and can be seen, observed, reached and used by urban-dwellers. Humans are in a constant relation to their surroundings and care for integration as part of their surroundings. Semi-public spaces providing balance for the individual between private spaces (structures) and urban-public spaces make this integration easier. Spaces with a semi-public characteristic serve for a particular neighboring unit and the user (i.e. common use areas in residential spaces and dwellings, common outdoor areas situated between office buildings, and etc.) These spaces, whose density of usage is increased with distinctive functions and activities, gain different attributions according to the characteristics of the urban space they are located in (commercial, residential, touristic, and etc.) and to the functions of the structures with which they are in relation. At the same time, they begin to serve other neighboring units along with an increase in public usage. As a result, the interaction between environment-space-structure-humans changes, which directly affects the urban space quality. The aim of this study is to determine how and depending on what characteristics the public usage density of semi-public spaces change and to put forth the effects of this change on the urban environment it is located in and to designate its role in terms of 'urban space quality'. In conclusion, within the scope of this study, semi-public spaces located in urban spaces with distinctive functions will be explored through examples, and the effects of these spaces with altered public usage and density on urban space and quality of life will be put forward. Accordingly, applicable criteria will be determined by means of semi-public spaces oriented at increasing and sustaining the quality of urban space.

Keywords : semi-public spaces, urban public spaces, urban space quality, public usage

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