

District 10 in Tehran: Urban Transformation and the Survey Evidence of Loss in Place Attachment in High Rises

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Abstract : The identity of a neighborhood is inevitably shaped by the architecture and the people of that place. Conventionally the streets within each neighborhood served as a semi-public-private extension of the private living spaces. The street as a design element formed a hybrid condition that was neither totally public nor private, and it encouraged social interactions. Thus through creating a sense of community, one of the most basic human needs of belonging was achieved. Similar to major global cities, Tehran has undergone serious urbanization. Developing into a capital city of high rises has resulted in an increase in urban density. Although allocating more residential units in each neighborhood was a critical response to the population boom and the limited land area of the city, it also created a crisis in terms of social communication and place attachment. District 10 in Tehran is a neighborhood that has undergone the most urban transformation among the other 22 districts in the capital and currently has the highest population density. This paper will explore how the active streets in district 10 have changed into their current condition of high rises with a lack of meaningful social interactions amongst its inhabitants. A residential building can be thought of as a large group of people. One would think that as the number of people increases, the opportunities for social communications would increase as well. However, according to the survey, there is an indirect relationship between the two. As the number of people of a residential building increases, the quality of each acquaintance reduces, and the depth of relationships between people tends to decrease. This comes from the anonymity of being part of a crowd and the lack of social spaces characterized by most high-rise apartment buildings. Without a sense of community, the attachment to a neighborhood is decreased. This paper further explores how the neighborhood participates to fulfill ones need for social interaction and focuses on the qualitative aspects of alternative spaces that can redevelop the sense of place attachment within the community.

Keywords : high density, place attachment, social communication, street life, urban transformation

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