

Dimensions of Public Spaces in Indian Market Places Feelings through Human Senses

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Abstract : Public spaces in Indian market places are vibrant, colorful and carry latent dimensions that make them attractive and popular gathering spaces. These markets satisfy the household needs of the people and also their social, cultural and traditional aspirations. Going to a market place for shopping in India is a great source of entertainment for the people. They would love to spend as much time as possible and stay for longer durations than otherwise required. It is this desire of the people that generates public spaces. Much of these public spaces emerge as squares, plazas, corners of varied shapes and sizes at different locations, and yet provide a conducive environment. Such public spaces grow organically and are discovered by the people themselves. Indian markets serve people of different culture, religion, caste, age, gender which keeps them alive all the year round. Indian is a diverse country and this diversity is reflected clearly in the market places. They hold the people together and promote harmony across cultures. Free access to these market places makes them magnets for social interaction. Public spaces are spread across a city and more or less have established their existence and prominence in a social set up. While few of them are created, others are discovered by the people themselves in their constant search for desirable interactive public spaces. These are the most sought after gathering spaces that have the quality of promoting social interaction, providing free accessibility, provide desirable scale etc. The paper aims at identifying these freely accessible public spaces and the dimensions within it that make these public spaces hold the people for significant duration of time. The dimensions present shall be judged through collective response of human senses in form of safety, comfort and so on through the expressions of the participants. The aim therefore would be to trace the freely accessible public spaces emerged in Indian markets and evaluate them for human response and behavior. The hierarchy of market places in the city of Bhopal is well established as, city center level, sub city-center level, community level, local and convenient level market places. While many city-centers are still referred to as the old or traditional or the core area of the city, the others are part of the planned city. These different levels of market places are studied for emerged public spaces. These emerged public spaces are then documented in detail for unveiling the dimensions they offer through, photographs, visual observations, questionnaires and response of the participants of these public spaces.

Keywords : human comfort, enclosure, safety, social interaction

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