

Developing a Model for the Relation between Heritage and Place Identity

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Abstract : In the situation of great acceleration of changes and the need for new developments in the cities on one hand and conservation and regeneration approaches on the other hand, place identity and its relation with heritage context have taken on new importance. This relation is generally mutual and complex one. The significant point in this relation is that the process of identifying something as heritage rather than just historical phenomena, brings that which may be inherited into the realm of identity. In planning and urban design as well as environmental psychology and phenomenology domain, place identity and its attributes and components were studied and discussed. However, the relation between physical environment (especially heritage) and identity has been neglected in the planning literature. This article aims to review the knowledge on this field and develop a model on the influence and relation of these two major concepts (heritage and identity). To build this conceptual model, we draw on available literature in environmental psychology as well as planning on place identity and heritage environment using a descriptive-analytical methodology to understand how they can inform the planning strategies and governance policies. A cross-disciplinary analysis is essential to understand the nature of place identity and heritage context and develop a more holistic model of their relationship in order to be employed in planning process and decision making. Moreover, this broader and more holistic perspective would enable both social scientists and planners to learn from one another's expertise for a fuller understanding of community dynamics. The result indicates that a combination of these perspectives can provide a richer understanding—not only of how planning impacts our experience of place, but also how place identity can impact community planning and development.

Keywords : heritage, inter-disciplinary study, place identity, planning

Conference Title : ICBAU 2016 : International Conference on Building, Architecture and Urbanism

Conference Location : Prague, Czechia

Conference Dates : March 30-31, 2016