

## Understanding Walkability in the Libyan Urban Space: Policies, Perceptions and Smart Design for Sustainable Tripoli

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**Abstract :** Walkability in civic and public spaces in Libyan cities is challenging due to the lack of accessibility design, informal merging into car traffic, and the general absence of adequate urban and space planning. The lack of accessible and pedestrian-friendly public spaces in Libyan cities has emerged as a major concern for the government if it is to develop smart and sustainable spaces for the 21st century. A walkable urban space has become a driver for urban development and redistribution of land use to ensure pedestrian and walkable routes between sites of living and workplaces. The characteristics of urban open space in the city centre play a main role in attracting people to walk when attending their daily needs, recreation and daily sports. There is significant gap in the understanding of perceptions, feasibility and capabilities of Libyan urban space to accommodate enhance or support the smart design of a walkable pedestrian-friendly environment that is safe and accessible to everyone. The paper aims to undertake observations of walkability and walkable space in the city of Tripoli as a benchmark for Libyan cities; assess the validity and consistency of the seven principal aspects of smart design, safety, accessibility and 51 factors that affect the walkability in open urban space in Tripoli, through the analysis of 10 local urban spaces experts (town planner, architect, transport engineer and urban designer); and explore user groups' perceptions of accessibility in walkable spaces in Libyan cities through questionnaires. The study sampled 200 respondents in 2015-16. The results of this study are useful for urban planning, to classify the walkable urban space elements which affect to improve the level of walkability in the Libyan cities and create sustainable and liveable urban spaces.

**Keywords :** walkability, sustainability, liveability, accessibility

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