

COMMUNITY SPACES IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS

A STUDY OF DESIGN STRATEGIES



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A 'SENSE OF COMMUNITY'

IN HIGH-RISE AND HIGH-DENSITY LIVING

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A STUDY OF DESIGN STRATEGIES
TO ESTABLISH
A 'SENSE OF COMMUNITY'
IN HIGH-RISE AND HIGH-DENSITY LIVING

A dissertation presented to the
Faculty of Architecture

University of Moratuwa



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Final Examination in M.Sc. Architecture

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Hashen Martino
Faculty of Architecture
University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Community space in a residential neighbourhood is the most vital ingredient contributing to strengthen the 'sense of community'. The communal life in modern society is very complicated and often unpredictable. Hence, for an individual, life is an ongoing process between public and private spheres, which is always shaped by alienating forces in providing meaning and identity for human existence. In this context, where the people and the places are unknown and instances where information is unreliable it is a challenge to achieve a community cohesion. Community experts have understood the value of residential community space as a subject rather than an object in achieving the above aspect by promoting architecture which generates healthy interactions. Within this context, high-density residential areas have been identified as the most crucial situations, contributing to unhealthy social problems that could be avoided substantially in a more socially stable environments. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to explore the strategies which deter the generation of healthy social interactions and to identify the existing contribution from the built-environment in formulating a constructive model focussed towards promoting a stable social structure.

Part one of this study, traces the value of healthy communal quality. An extensive theoretical survey provides a strong set of guidelines which could be applied, despite the changing needs of the society. It identifies, how the mechanisms of enhancing visual contacts and attraction and generating a sense of community, together could promote an architecture which could uplift the neighbourly attitudes of people. The absence of the above mechanisms had resulted a number of implications in high-density areas. The research on contemporary examples would further validate the above mechanisms and underlines the importance of them in establishing a framework, directing further evolution giving identity and meaning to the neighbourhood.

It is evident from the total study the importance of the built-environment as a generator of public acquaintanceship which gives a community a clear knowledge of its accepted mores, predictable guidelines for behaviour and an essential framework for social stability. Therefore, architects should understand the importance of the built-environment as an essential tool in the deployment of materials in space, the organization of spaces as a vehicle of behaviour for sense of control and self expression and to achieve a collective coherent among the people in creating a neighbourhood. Accordingly, this study has opened new vistas into the realms of creating meaningful and habitable environments in high-density housing schemes.

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