

A Need and Approach to Gender Inclusive Planning for Crime Prevention in Urban Spaces: A Case of Delhi (India)

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Abstract—Delhi being the capital of the country acts as an attractive magnet to the people of India for the better lives. Migration and Urbanization processes are basically defined by gender roles and relations. Rapid urbanization leading to urban sprawl results in developments in National Capital Regions (NCR) which further results in long travelling distance to work places, absence of recreational and other facilities. Due to negligence in mixed use planning of areas, provision of proper public services, unsafe streets or pedestrian walkways give fuels to the rising levels of insecurity and sexual violence to women in cities. And these places become the hot spots of criminal activities. According to the crime records of India, Delhi tops the list among the total crime rate in Indian cities. Almost as many as 100 areas have been mapped as unsafe in the capitol by the Delhi Police Headquarters. The issue of women's safety at public spaces in Delhi has come in sharp focus over the past five years, with increasing media coverage and public outrage at violence faced by women of all social classes and age groups. There are two main objectives of this paper. Firstly, identify the various threats to the women in the designated urban spaces and investigate the causes of these criminal activities with respect to urban planning. Secondly, this paper will suggest design inferences for the designated areas of study and guidelines for their defense through planning techniques. This paper also encourages ekisticians, policy makers, planners and urban designers to incorporate gender perspective planning strategies as a pre-requisite factor in the policies, programmes and decision making process so as to create a safer, sustainable and inclusive urban development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Delhi, the national capital of India is famous for its tradition ,culture and exuberant history. It is the third largest city in India and now the most preferred city in terms of investments, industrialization, information technology, healthcare, real estate, etc. The city is comprised of two contrasting yet harmonious parts, the Old Delhi and New Delhi, New Delhi is famous for its planned landscape and spacious streets with shades of greenery whereas Old Delhi still has the influence of Mughals with monuments, mosques and forts all through the complicated streets. It is bounded by Haryana on three sides and by Uttar Pradesh to the east. It acts as an attractive magnet to the people of India for the better lives and hence the population of the city is increasing rapidly. Resultant is

migration and urbanization processes configured by gender roles and relations.

Rapid urbanization has lead to urban sprawl which leads to the developments in National Capital Regions (NCR) which further results in long travelling distance to work places, recreational and other facilities. Due to negligence in mixed use planning of areas, provision of proper public services, unsafe streets or pedestrian walkways give fuels to the rising levels of insecurity and sexual violence to women in cities. And these places become the hot spots of criminal activities. Delhi accounted for the maximum number of rape cases among 19 major cities, at 40%.According to the crime records of India, Delhi tops the list among the total crime rate in Indian cities. The city ranked no. 1 in terms of crime rate that accounts for 33.1% share among metropolitan cities when it comes to women's safety .Almost as many as 100 areas have been mapped as unsafe in the capitol by the Delhi Police Headquarters. The issue of women's safety at public spaces in Delhi has come in sharp focus over the past five years, with increasing media coverage and public outrage at violence faced by women of all social classes and age groups.Delhi reports 24 rapes and molestation cases everyday. Crime against women has risen in Delhi at an alarming rate of 20% in last on year based on data from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).

2. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

There are two main objectives of this paper. Firstly, identify the various threats to the women in the designated urban spaces and investigate the causes of these criminal activities with respect to urban planning. Secondly, this paper will suggest design inferences for the designated areas of study and guidelines for their defense through planning techniques. This paper also encourages ekisticians, policy makers, planners and urban designers to incorporate gender perspective planning strategies as a pre-requisite factor in the policies, programmes and decision making process so as to create a safer, sustainable and inclusive urban development.

3. WHY GENDER INCLUSIVE PLANNING IN URBAN SPACES?

Gender inclusive planning has become a 'must' for the urban cities as the data of crimes against women has reached to its peak. Public safety has emerged as an important function for governments across the world. It refers to the duty and function of the state to ensure the safety of its citizens, organisations and institutions against threats to their well-being as well as the traditional functions of law and order.[5] A safe city is one that promotes the elimination of gender-based violence, while at the same time promoting equal opportunities for men and women in all the spheres of social, economic, cultural and political life (access to employment, education, political participation, resources and leisure, etc.).[1] Gender inclusive cities offer safety and security for all occupants, irrespective of age and gender.

Urban planning is part of the larger context of urban growth, management and governance. The examining of urban governance with gender and socio-economic dynamics of the city is a critical starting point in assurance of equalities, inclusion, and urban sustainability. [2] Gender mainstreaming across local governments offers an opportunity to create inclusive cities respecting the human rights of both women and men of all ages and diverse backgrounds. Only when the diverse experiences and needs of women and men are integrated into urban planning and design, it will be possible to form an inclusive, sustainable and intact urban environment. [2]

4. CRIMES IN DELHI AND ITS IMPACTS

According to the crime records of India, Delhi tops the list among the total crime rate in Indian cities. Almost as many as 100 areas have been mapped as unsafe in the capitol by the Delhi Police Headquarters. The issue of women's safety at public spaces in Delhi has come in sharp focus over the past five years, with increasing media coverage and public outrage at violence faced by women of all social classes and age groups.

5. CAUSES OF CRIME IN URBAN AREAS: DELHI

There is no single cause to any disorder, including crime. While clearly we all are ultimately responsible for our own actions, it is wrong to hold an individual wholly in our societies, cultures (family values), system (educational, political, law-enforcement...), economy, and so on that endorse the potential of criminal activities of an individual.

In Delhi, **almost 65% of the total population lives in unplanned colonies**. 11.7% live in rural/urban villages, thus leaving only 23.7% people living in planned colonies. This is an important causative factor for crime in Delhi. The large expansion of new colonies like Dwarka, Rohini etc. and thousands of unplanned colonies is an important crime factor

particularly in respect of street crimes like robberies and snatching.

- Socio-economic imbalances, Proximity in location of colonies of the affluent and the under-privileged,
- Structures and family control
- Adverse sex ratio (866 females/1000 males),
- Easy accessibility/means of escape to criminal elements from across the borders.
- Extended hinterland in the NCR region.

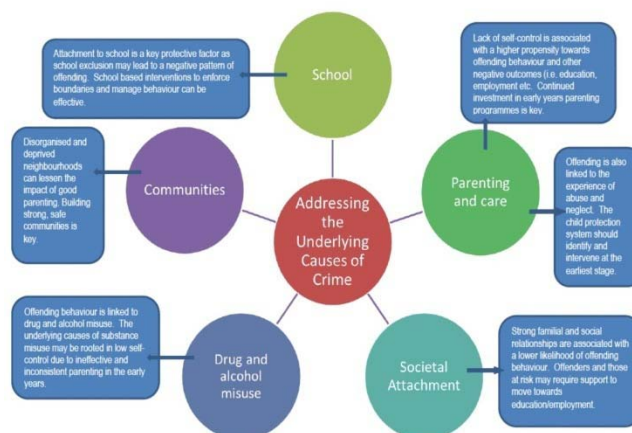


Table 1 Cause of Crime

<https://www.google.co.in/search?q=cause+of+crime&espv=2&biw=1366&bih=623&source=lmms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0CAcQ>

6. THE ROLE OF PLANNERS AND DESIGNERS

Planners and community designers theoretically should play a central role in crime prevention given the importance of —women safety as a part of sustainability. Sustainability entails planning for future generations and has environmental, economic and ethical components (Wheeler and Beatley, 2009; Roseland, 2005) Crime has a negative effect on all three components of sustainability. Planners, Ekisticians, Designers or Decision Makers should include gender as an important element while planning or designing cities which should cater the needs or requirements of both the genders - men and women. The way of perception of a city or areas of it are different for both men and women. Women not only perceive and experience cities in a way different than men, but also use public spaces in different ways. [3] People who have come to Delhi for work usually reside in Delhi and commute to their workplaces that are mainly in National capital regions ,which further results in long travelling distance to work places, absence of recreational and other facilities.

The physical and spatial order of cities is particularly linked to women's and men's work patterns.[4] Poor women living in insecure neighbourhoods are more likely to need to commute

in the late or early hours to and from work or to and from educational opportunities, and they are more likely to work in informal sectors. These routines may result in their being exposed to the risks of sexual assault, particularly if water collection is involved. [3]

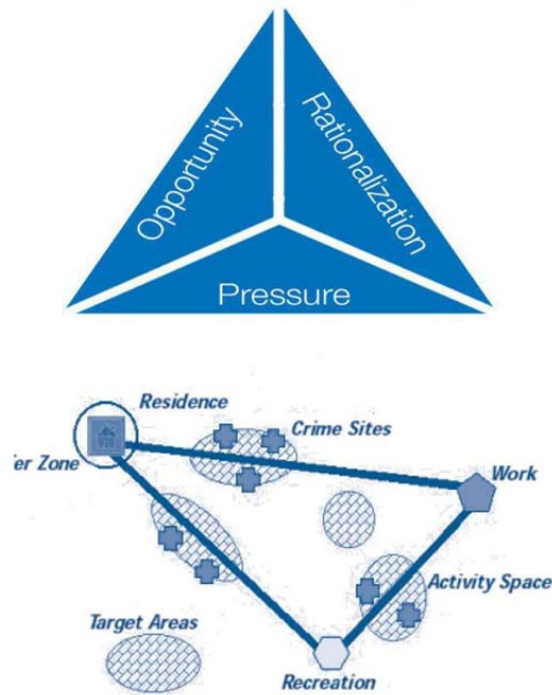


Figure 1 Criminal triangle theory

http://www.popcenter.org/learning/60steps/graphics/step_16.gif

Due to negligence in mixed use planning of areas, provision of proper public services, unsafe streets or pedestrian walkways give fuels to the rising levels of insecurity and sexual violence to women in cities. And these places become the hot spots of criminal activities.

Unhealthy and inequitable economic and environmental conditions trigger in turn more degradation to natural and built environments as well worse socioeconomic conditions. Crime prevention is an important goal for planners given that crime can deteriorate the very efforts and goals that planners hope to achieve through their actions. For instance, economic development is severely hindered by crime ridden environments.

Crime can create inequities in the way land growth and infrastructure is developed and distributed, thereby, creating inequities planning should theoretically be seeking to eliminate. Crime also disrupts synergies within and across local community boundaries by reducing social networks and social capital that could be used to mitigate conflicts. The inequities created by crime can also lead to environmental degradation and economic deterioration. Finally, since

planning generally deals directly with built and social environments, which are also central components of modern crime theories, there is considerable overlap.

However, some modern crime prevention approaches may also conflict with common practices of planning such as regulation building codes and zoning bylaws, as will be demonstrated in the literature review.

7. CRIME PATTERN AND OPPORTUNITIES W.R.T. SPACE IN DELHI

A space/ badly designed space can lead to crime in that area. Cause could be lack of visibility, improper manage that can provide opportunity to crime. The main principles which are to be considered while designing safe environments for the people at large are given below.

These are useful to identify patterns of criminal activity.

- i. **Opportunities play a role in causing all crime** – design and management play an important role in generating crime and preventing it.
- ii. **Crime opportunities are highly specific** – theft of cars for joy-riding has an entirely different pattern of opportunity than theft of cars for their parts.
- iii. **Crime opportunities are concentrated in time and space** – dramatic differences are found from one address to another within a high crime area. Crime shifts greatly by hour of day and day of week, reflecting the opportunities to carry it out.
- iv. **Crime opportunities depend upon everyday movements of activity.** --Offenders and their targets shift according to the trips to work, school, leisure activity, etc. Burglaries frequently occur in the afternoons when residents are at work or school.
- v. **One crime produces opportunity for another** – a successful break-in may encourage the offender to return at a later date.
- vi. **Some areas offer tempting crime opportunities** – these opportunities reflect particularly the value, inertia, visibility of, and access to potential crime targets.
- vii. **Social and technological changes produce new crime opportunities** – products that are highly marketable, e.g., laptops, are prime targets.
- viii. **Crime prevention can be done by reducing opportunities** – the opportunity reducing methods of situational crime prevention fit systematic patterns and rules which cut across every walk of life. Prevention methods must be tailored to each situation.

ix. Reducing crime does not usually displace crime but each effort to reduce crime can accomplish some real gain. Even crime that is displaced can be directed away from the worst targets, times or places.

x. Focused opportunity reduction can produce wider declines in crime.

xi. Prevention measures in one location can lead to a diffusion of benefits to nearby times and places because offenders seem to overestimate the reach of the measures. Reducing crime opportunity can reduce larger crime rates for community and society.

The above reasons and analysis of criminal behaviour and pattern can lead to designing spaces which discourage criminal activity. A place that seems safe is more comfortable for the people to use. These principles broadly state which design strategies will work and which won't and where is the highest risk of crime to take place.

8. PARAMETERS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is concluded that designing for -Crime Prevention is a joint effort of the urban planner, architect and the police..

It must be understood that the design policies do not directly reduce crime but they reduce the opportunity for crime which is one of the main factors to be considered while designing to prevent the occurrence of crime in a place. As the opportunity of crime is reduced, crime rate of that particular area will directly get impacted.

Small measures and interventions prove to be cost effective in future. It is clear that the relationship of a space to the user is important. Only spaces which are perceivable to the user get used by them. People attract more people in an open space. So introduction of activity in the spaces while planning a neighborhood or residential scheme is helpful in crime reduction. Activities lead to more people in an area which resulted into more eyes on street or on a location which creates a sense of safety among the users. It is also important to consider the feel a space provides to its user. People use spaces more if they feel relaxed in them. So merely marking out areas for recreation does not solve the problem. The intent of the space should be clear and the activities in them should be identifiable.

Women's safety, needs and requirements are rarely reflected in urban planning policies. More emphasis should be given on -"Planning city with women" rather than "planning city for women" i.e., encouraging more women participation in policy making and city planning process at the grass root level so as to integrate their state of perception. [4]

- **Typology of street/open space** –Mixed land use reduces the chances of criminal activity and hence women safety will be achieved through planning. Spaces like streetscape, nodes, plaza or squares can be created to encourage social interactions among different age group of people to achieve an objective of gender equality. An eye on the street can save a woman from a criminal eye.
- **Multifunctionality of space:** Same space shall be used for different purposes during day and night
- **Mixed use developments-** Gated colonies can be clubbed with institutional/commercial spaces which will make the space buzz with activities and under surveillance.
- **Flyovers** space can be used to provide night shelters to the homeless making it unisolated even at night times. Flyovers space can also be provided with small kiosks converting it into a lively space and also providing livelihood to the poor. It can be used for community space as well.
- **Designation of the street-** Activity generators discourage crime. Streets having small shops or kiosks serve as eyes on streets. Creating hawking zone on lonely vulnerable roads/streets or near street intersections will reduce crime against women in these places.
- **Definition of the street /open space-** Visible edges provide a feeling of safety.
- **Subways-** A womb of crime against women. It should be well lit and should have shops, so that eyes could be kept over criminals.
- **Public Toilets for women** shall be provided for women in the city as per requirements. Strategic Location for these Toilets is required and they should not be managed by men.
- **Linkages and access points-** A street should have smaller feeder lanes and several points of access.
- **Space hierarchy-** A space should have clear distinct public and private areas.
- **Boundary walls** should be opaque at low height and should be transparent /translucent at higher to have clear sight vision to adjoining streets.
- **Penetrability of open space-** Removal of any kind of visual hindrance discourages crime.
- **Lighting and signage-** Proper lighting makes surroundings clearly visible and hence prevents crime.
- **Transit Oriented Development-** It will reduce the travel distance between workplace and home
- **Proper illumination** to be provided on roads at night.
- **Problematic zones-** Spaces should be designed such that no entrapment areas are formed anywhere in the open space.

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