

Rethinking Market as Public Spaces through Placemaking Strategies: Case of Chh. Sambhajinagar, Maharashtra

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Abstract:- Markets have always been vital to urban landscapes, acting as centers for various commercial, social, and cultural interactions. Over the years, their role and structure have evolved, yet the markets remain traditional in nature. This paper examines how this market can be transformed into a dynamic public space using placemaking principles and strategies. By redesigning and reimagining the market, it aims to create a space that not only meets modern needs but also fosters community engagement and cultural exchange. This transformation addresses today's urban challenges, offering a model for how markets can evolve to better serve society while preserving their historical significance. Through this process, the market can be revitalized as a key public space, enhancing its role in daily life and promoting sustainable urban development.

Keywords:- Marketplace, Placemaking, Socio-Economic Impact, Public Realm.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Urban Market as Public Space starts to shift not only the function of markets but also the forms of markets from transport and commercial passages to the vibrant public spaces. This paper explores the interaction between urban design, community, and the markets that run through cities to show how they can act as inclusive, accessible public spaces with cultural value. With the growth of cities at an alarming rate, use and form of public spaces in relation to the population is being transformed. The following trends are some of the key drivers in the changing urban scenario of marketplaces. One of these is the transition in the retailing strategy that focuses more on the shopping experience than a sale, whereas marketplaces are integrating factors that are associated with entertainment, dining, and interactive spaces. In response, marketplaces must embrace green architecture, sustainable products' supply and management of wastes and focused developments that govern the future morphology of the marketplace which can be transformed to social places of the community.

The process of market development in the Indian context is usually not well directed and therefore the 'market' creates numerous issues and concerns. However, the objectives of rising the urban vitality, enhancing the circulation and sustainability of the Indian cities, many of the fundamental market zones of the Indian cities remain untouched for the growth of new market zones. This implies that older markets are left unexplored and underdeveloped and are faced with critical issues such as poor infrastructure, high population density, poor hygiene, and traffic jams. Also, uncontrolled street selling, and other informal trading activities exacerbate the confusion and complicate the process of proper urban planning and development. Therefore, new developing market areas are gradually expanding while the core traditional markets are gradually stagnating, which also demonstrates that when formulating and implementing comprehensive and precise urban development policies, the needs of all markets within a city should be taken into consideration.

In the past, urban markets were seen as places that provided interactive space, brought together different cultures, and provided an opportunity to experience being a citizen and improve the quality of life. The urban markets of Chh. SambhajiNagar were purely commercial, but also provided social space, cultural value and historical significance. Today, however, they are known for being noticeably crowded and cluttered, and for diminishing architectural character.

New market scenario will prove beneficial for the development of urban areas as it will enhance the vibrancy of the urban areas, connectivity and accessibility of the urban areas and will also encourage sustainability. The community will be enhanced, as the marketplace will transform into a social place for cultural and leisure activities. There will be better and more efficient ways to access facilities through pedestrian and public transportation thus minimizing the use of cars and motorcycles. The proposal to integrate cultural and/or historical features will enhance the architectural look of the city and enhance people's interest in the culture as well as history of the place.

Therefore, there is an opportunity to improve the urban experience of urban markets in Chh. SambhajiNagar. This is because such spaces are public spaces that have enduring significance, provide space for social interaction and create meaning, cultural significance and a sense of place for all stakeholders. Revitalizing these spaces restores their place in the city's economy, social life and culture and therefore becomes an asset for the future.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Role of Markets in Urban Areas

Markets have always been located at the heart of urban environments and only served as social, economic and cultural hubs of cities. Thus, markets are not only places for business activities but also active socio-spatial constructions that build the vital part of the public sphere and create communities. Markets are important for the economic development of cities and contribute to the diversification of the economy since they offer opportunities for independent producers and traders. Therefore, markets foster local producer and retailer business, promote community development and boost economy within the region surrounding the market. In the social context, markets act as social places that bring together people hence enhancing social interaction and cohesion as residents meet in these markets and engage in conversations. The flexibility in markets relates to people's social circles, and this can bring about unity of different people in the society. Socially, the market is culturally diverse, which provides a true representation of the ethnically diverse population of the urban city through the food, the crafts, music, and dance. They create something special, which helps to promote various cultures and enliven the atmosphere of cities. Markets also play a major role in influencing the urban morphology and placemaking due to their ability to foster human friendly and active streets that increase the appeal of the neighbourhoods. However, the market has some problems, for instance, gentrifications, competition with large retailers, and appropriate infrastructures and management requirements. Solving these issues calls for effective planning and development of good policies that promote the physical environment as well as creating economic, social, and environmental development in cities.

B. Placemaking Strategies

Place making is a diversified concept of urban design which provides various aspects constructed in various urban environments that are adjusted for specific community development. The traditional way for placemaking strategies is by inclusiveness and community involvement whereas another aspect is public inclusion to foster cultural activity in the shared urban spaces. Placemaking is a practice that employs short-term, low-cost interventions to improve public space. Meanwhile, digital placemaking employs high-tech tools that make the users task easier. Social placemaking breaks the ice between members of the community, and economic placemaking paves way for the growth of local economy. Beside cultural placemaking which is about the promotion of cultural heritage, healthy placemaking aims to

encourage the citizens to maintain good health physically and mentally, and the inclusive placemaking which is about the overall situation of the city whether it is a question of accessibility and equality. Every of these kinds is contributing to the creation of live, functional, and sustainable public spaces which are crucial for urban areas to remain quality places for people to live.

III. CURRENT SCENARIO OF MARKETS IN CHH. SAMBHAJINAGAR

Chh. SambhajiNagar's markets has a combination of historic vitality and modern hurdles. These markets have for long been the hub of commercial activities in the city with vendors selling different goods including fresh vegetables, fruits, household items as well as traditional crafts. The local economy depends on these markets since they support many small businesses and traders who rely on daily sales for sustenance. However, urbanization and population explosion have greatly strained them. The markets have become overcrowded typical with their narrow alleys which are filled by both pedestrians and street hawkers without any formal arrangement. It has become worse with no proper infrastructure like limited parking lots and inadequate waste management system hence creating unhygienic conditions that endanger the lives of sellers and buyers at large. Further, the market lacks modern facilities and amenities that would make its operations more functional and attractive. Sometimes there is a lack of basic provisions, such as clean restrooms, appropriate lighting, or even seats, which clearly compromises comfortability and convenience during shopping. The market also wholly lacks organized public open spaces, thereby greatly limiting any chances of gathering and socializing, as it should be in a lively public space. Unchecked development and unregulated sprawl of stalls have also cause visual chaos that puts off its aesthetic appeal and degrades the cultural heritage value of the market. Another pressing issue is that of environmental sustainability. Present waste management practices are inadequate, resulting in huge littering and resultant pollution. Lack of organized recycling and composting efforts has seen wastes accumulate around markets. Inadequate water management, lack of rainwater harvesting systems, or even other miscellaneous wastewater reuse has worsened the situation.

IV. ANALYSIS OF PLANNED AND UNPLANNED MARKETS IN CHH. SAMBAJINAGAR





















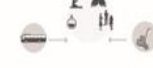







Characteristics Parameters	Unplanned Markets		Planned Markets	
	Site 1 Shahgunj Market (Unplanned Market)	Site 2 Gulmandi Market (Unplanned Market)	Site 3 Connaught Market (Planned Market)	Site 4 Nirala Market (Planned Market)
Location Vicinity, Surrounding & Factors	 Located at the core of the city and has high value heritage structure, cultural and religious values associated. One of the commercial hub of the city with historical significance.	 Located in the core area of the city having high commercial value and historic significance associated.	 Located in the planned neighbourhood of the city have gained commercial potential due to food junctions and showrooms making it the most active public realm.	 Located near to the core area of the city, Nirala is a well planned market place with high branded value stores and restaurants making it highly vibrant market place.
Zoning Building & Land Use	 The street is combination of Commercial, Residential and informal hawking activities. Mixed use street with adaptations during traditional festivals as compared to regular uses.	 The street is combination of Commercial, Residential activities. Ground floor (horizontal spread) are the commercial spaces were as upper floors (vertical spread) are residential spaces.	 A commercial street with least residential covering zone. The street only cater to the eateries and shoppers and businesses on commercial basis.	 It is the commercial zone in the front and residential zone behind. Highly adaptive street with variety of local and branded retails and restaurants on horizontal spread.
Morphology Grain, Form, Density	 Fine-grain urban fabric consisting of several small blocks close together. Within each block are several buildings, most with narrow frontage, frequent storefronts, and minimal setbacks from the street.	 Fine-grain urban fabric consisting of several small blocks close together. Within each block are several buildings, most with narrow frontage, frequent storefronts, and minimal setbacks from the street.	 Bigger building footprints with narrow arcade lanes proving better circulation. Growing market along the main garden in the center with coarse grain fabric.	 Bigger building footprints with narrow arcade lanes proving better circulation. Growing linear market along the main spline with coarse grain fabric.
Layout Shape, Scale, Built form	 The form of the development is non-linear with activities scattered and continuing towards the smaller internal lanes. The built form is horizontal acquiring more street space.	 The form of the development is linear with activities continuing towards the smaller internal lanes. The built form is both horizontal and vertical acquiring more street space.	 The form of the development is non-linear with activities and shop surrounding the garden. The built form is both horizontal and vertical acquiring lesser street space.	 The form of development is linear with activities and shops also in a linear pattern. The built form is both horizontal and vertical acquiring lesser street space.
Types of Commerce Commercial activities	 Formal shops along with numerous informal vendors. Cloths, footwear, street food, pan shops, fruit and vegetable vendors, fish market.	 Formal shops along with lesser number of informal vendors. Cloths, footwear, street food, utensil market, fruit and vegetable vendors, daily need, electronic.	 Formal shops and showrooms in the commercial buildings. Mobile Stores, restaurants, jewellery, as-secceries, eateries.	 Formal shops and showrooms in the commercial buildings. Mobile Stores, restaurants, jewellery, as-secceries, eateries, electronic market.
Co - existence Working of several activities together	 Formal and informal activities struggle to exist in the same walkable area. Vendors of such activities try to overpower each other neglecting the purpose of pedestrian pathways. Both activities are diverse and time based and are preferred by the customers as per their needs.	 The market has more formal shops and lesser informal setups. The major co-existence of informal vending and vehicles operating through the same route is observed causing traffic congestion.	 The market has more formal shops and lesser informal setups. The major co-existence of people and vehicles operating through the same route is observed causing traffic congestion.	 The market has more formal shops and lesser informal setups. The major co-existence of people and vehicles operating through the same route is observed without causing traffic congestion.
Social Factor People, Space, Vehicular Movement	 Notion of social spaces are formed through local market, the heritage value buildings and celebration of festivals and informal hawking. Sense of culture, tradition and associated values.	 Notion of social spaces are formed through local market and celebration of festivals. Sense of belongingness and associated values.	 Social spaces are formed through the celebration of market and street food activities. Sense of belongingness and associated values.	 Social spaces are formed through the celebration of market and street food activities. Sense of belongingness and associated values.
Inferences Need of interventions	High	Moderate	High	Low

Fig 1: Comparative Analysis
Source: Author

Observing the characteristics of the unplanned and planned markets in the given images indicates the differences between both types of markets and the required intervention. Traditional markets like Shahgunj Market and Gulmandi Market are unplanned which are congested, less accessible, and have issues in managing and maintaining cleanliness and safety which shows a high degree of market needing some sort of interference. These markets are situated in dense spaces with an intimate interaction of people and fine-grained urban fabric characterized by small blocks and narrow fronts; the atmosphere within these markets is active yet congested toward rush hours and festive occasions. The cultural and historical significance help maintain the social functions as a place of informal meetings and traditional trade activities leading to its dynamism. Intervention in unplanned markets should be targeted at maintaining the cultural character of the place while facilitating traffic and pedestrian control, segregation, and safety measures.

However, planned markets like Connaught Place and Nilala Market are not as chaotic as the unplanned ones and hence, would require minor interventions. Well defined zones or circulation paths, bigger building plans, and systematic block arrangement enhance the flow, approach and utility. These markets possess a different and more organized commercial area for formal stores and showrooms eliminating hitches that characterize most markets and making the shopping experience all the more enjoyable. Planned markets call for social interactions and are involved in the community and are more hygienically and safely located and more easily accessible than the unplanned markets. Subsequent engagements to planned markets can address the stability of the markets as well as put into practice the modernization of infrastructure, environmental conservation, and development of communal facilities.

Such an environment of an unplanned market is developed naturally and people know each other, giving it a social fabric. The planned markets are the mix of the commercial and residential zones as well as contribute towards the organized and active city structure. Proposing policies for mixed use development in such markets will guarantee that they are active and sustainable and will meet the needs of different population categories. Concisely, it is necessary to pinpoint that the given unplanned markets make it possible to get numerous cultural and commercial values for visitors, as well as to receive various experiences that call for specific adjustments to minimize congestion and improve safety levels. On the other hand, planned markets can be characterized by promising factors that may contribute to sustainable growth and, at the same time, modernization of these markets, so that it is possible to balance the modern needs. Each of them plays an important role in the context of the city, and the development strategies should be aimed at overcoming the existing deficiencies and providing the further growth of these markets.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The case of the market under analysis, currently an economic epicentre, presents several issues which hinder its potential as an effective public space: such as an improper access of a pedestrian, improper interconnectivity with the nearby streets, and the lack of proper utilisation of Studying these conditions, it is possible to identify key areas for improvement. The physical and visual links and integration with pedestrian and bicycle facilities and public transport can improve the accessibility and attractiveness of the market. To enhance the utilization and appeal of public spaces, the design elements incorporating the installation of seating facilities, art works, green areas, and versatile areas can positively influence people's perception. There is a clear suggestion that the formation of measures for development of mixed-use complex is required since most of the facilities are commercial and there are not enough residential and cultural ones. Thus, the market will be able to foster the growth of residential, cultural and recreational infrastructure hence become vibrant with diverse population. Moreover, transformation needs the active involvement of the community. Currently, very few citizens are actively involved in the planning and running of markets. This will assist in turning residents as well as other businesses into stakeholders through active involvement. This is to make the market relevant towards community of the people. It will also help in enhancing connectivity, activation of public space, mixed-use development, and citizen participation can transform any market into a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable public space, improving quality of life for the users and visitors.

Some of the critical issues that can be expounded on in subsequent studies on the use of placemaking techniques in development of markets into lively public places include requirement to establish the long-term effects of the strategies that are being implemented regarding the market and neighbouring communities in relation to economical activities, social interaction, cultural enhancement, and ecological balance. Furthermore, while thinking through the lens of the technological aspects of placemaking, as well as the use of digital technologies for the management of the public realm and for communication with the public, new possibilities for the improvement of the public environments could be discovered. Scholars should also pay attention to issues of social justice so that the strategies being implemented in placemaking do not exclude any section of people or compromise the rights of such groups.

Investing in the creation of policy instruments that would help to implement placemaking strategies can be useful to fill the existing void in the regulation of urban development.

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