

Impact of ‘Socio Cultural Built Environment’ in Creating Sustainable High Rise Housings-

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Abstract

Challenges of urban congestion in growing cities of developing countries have steered the evolution of high rise complexes which are significantly distinct in character with the traditional planning and vernacular architecture of old residential settlements particularly in historical cities like Jaipur.

During the past decade the shift in the urban population from old city of Jaipur to newly constructed mid or high rise residential complexes has been merely apparent but might be huge in future times .People shifted to high rise residential units have been experiencing an altogether different lifestyle to what they used to have while living in the old city.

Apart from the above, city's growing economy too had, if not active but passive, impact on the cultural and social values of traditional city. However on the other hand it is evident that trend of shifting to high rise in such cities is still not been highly accepted.

The study aims to investigate following aspects-

- *The ingredients of architecture in those low or midrise housing complexes in old city of Jaipur which catalyzed development of this enriched cultural heritage.*
- *Impacts of urban sprawl over decongestion of city.*

- *The trends of modern day lifestyles which are not catered in traditional housing complexes of old city.*
- *In the high rise housings-how does built environment caters to the socio - cultural needs of inhabitants in contrast to living in old ‘havelis’ of city (supplemented with suitable examples).*
- *The aspects which still impede living in high rise complexes.*

Key Words: Sustainable, tourism, development

1.0 Introduction

Popularity of high rise residential complexes have been increased throughout the world in past couple of decades ; with the intent of providing world class lifestyles to the inhabitants builders and developers have been putting best of efforts to produce 'state of art' complexes in their own way. On the other hand rapidly increased land values too have urged the existence of such housings; and now with government’s participation too the public’s search of affordable dwellings excessively ends up in these skyscraper housings.

While in the top metros this has been a commonly acceptable trend but in tier II cities or growing cities like Jaipur this still has to be welcomed as a general trend. Though as mentioned above the city has witnessed larger numbers of housing projects in recent times out of which few have gained exceptional popularity while other are still struggling to get their all end users. Now this

could be on account of various reasons which may be geographical, financial, commercial, safety or security related but in context of historical city like Jaipur the socio cultural aspects might also play the critical role in generic non acceptance of such housings.

3.0 The housings in old Jaipur (Within the Walled city)-The famous walled city of Jaipur does not need an introduction particularly for its built heritage in form of architecture and town planning. The low rise residences named havelis have been studied and documented worldwide as case studies of prime architecture examples of houses.

These ‘Havelis’ are built like low rise apartment blocks only & a cluster of these havelis forms a neighborhood which was further bounded with socialites of families, castes, occupation etc. In addition to ventilation and privacy the courtyard of ‘haveli’ itself serves huge usable open space which is sometimes more than external land strip in front of an independent villa or bungalow.

safe growth of its inhabitants. Furthermore the road network & hierarchy was such that all the wider roads had larger buildings with commercial activities enabling all daily needs of people easily accessible through a mere walk of less than five minutes.



Fig

02-Master plan Wall city Jaipur

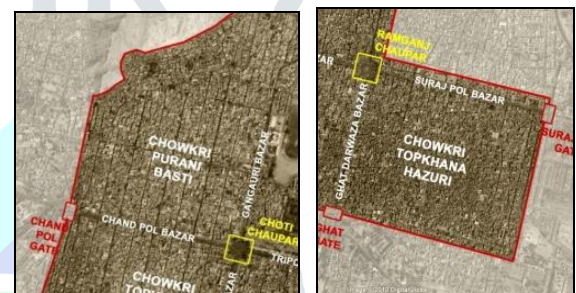
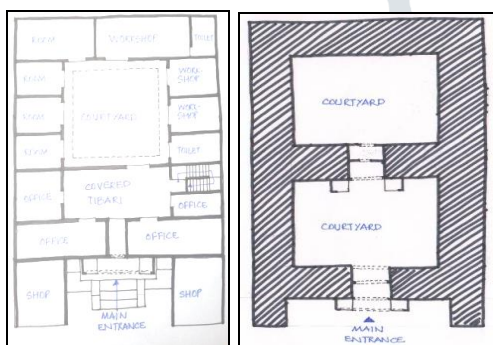


Fig 03-Sectors with Neighborhood

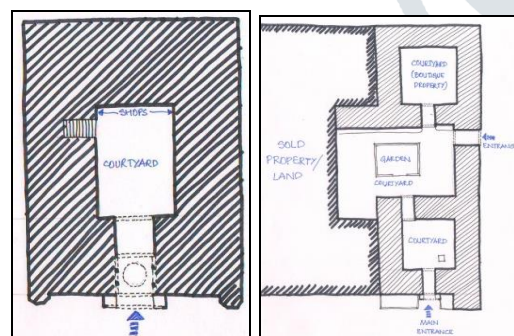


Fig 01-Showing typical forms of Havelis

The tradition of low storey courtyard houses has been continued till 20th Century in the city.

Post-independence large numbers of residential settlements have spread across the city mostly promoted by government bodies like Housing board, Jaipur development authority etc. Colonies such as ‘Gandhi Nagar, C Scheme, Bapu Nagar, Mansarovar, Malviya nagar’ etc. have flourished in this course of time but were contained substantially with large scale bungalows.



Fig

02-The Havelis:Low rise residential settlements

Typical dwellings of Jaipur were commonly in square form with courtyard at center built to serve the needs of family and their customs, symmetrical plans outcome of strong ‘Vastu’ beliefs of the inhabitants. The architecture classically reflects the fusion of traditional ‘rajputana architecture’ with colonial features.

The concept of residential neighborhood called as ‘Mohalla’ was the prime feature of this town which was acting as a secured environment for

4.0 Urban development affecting the city of Jaipur- The city is the first planned development of the country; founded in the year 1727 by Maharaja ‘Sawai Jai Singh’; the city started expanding outside the walled territory right from the mid of 19th century with the introduction of

railway lines and the commencement of Rajasthan University; Post independence the state government bought numerous residential schemes which further pushed the development outside the walled city. After the decade of 1970's city started spreading linearly alongside all major roads altering land uses; agriculture land converting onto residential construction. Availability of cheaper land caused flourishing of numerous residential colonies in all the directions. However the new settlement's clusters evolved in 20th century whereas the notable high rise housings have only started to appear in the past decade only. The city indeed is witnessing the vast real estate development alongside major roads.

5.0 Changing lifestyles -The life in the City has undergone drastic changes; the lifestyle which was full of 'Rajputana flamboyance' in 18th century has swiftly adopted the modernity in its behavior.



Fig

04:- Badi Chaupar Today

Today people are living fast paced life; transportation ,dress styles has changed, gender ration visible on streets is different from what it is used to be earlier. The spectrum of thought and transformation is quite considerable that it has affected the urban fabric of city too. As the society has developed with transition in lifestyles, food, fashion & clothing, modern structures are now more visible and being appreciated which put confirmation on statement that 'Architecture is nothing but expression of lifestyles'. The desire to prove equal or superior to the western culture can be noticed among the public; adoption of technology in each and every aspects has been quite evident too. Now air conditioning is one of the most common need & preferred status symbol; while energy saving is a prime requirement.

Importantly like the other growing cities Real Estate business has exponential grown here as well proving the fact that available land in or close to urban zones is very less; thus no option is left but to go for vertical developments.

6.0 High rise housing complexes in the city-

Several high rise complexes in the city have come up. People have moved and are moving into such apartments;

Recent revisions in building bye laws too encourages the high rise construction now as till few years back the maximum permissible height allowed was only 30.0m but now constructions can be done in reality to a height up to 90.0-100.0m depending upon the front road width and sizes of plot.

However success of any high rise housings depends on several factors be it geographical influence, architecture style, commercial and financial viabilities etc. & this study aims to understand the causes of acceptance or rejection of these housings by the users primarily in context of 'socio culture offerings'.

7.0 Case Studies: Enlisted below is the case studies of some of popular housing projects (came up in after decade of 2000) of Jaipur.

<i>Case Study 1</i>	
Project Name:- Rangoli Gardens	
a	Developer: - Private Sector.
b	Locational aspects:- Near Vaishali Nagar, close to the current business hub of the city.
c	No's of floors: - G+13.
d	Occupancy level: - 95%, almost fully occupied.
e	Offerings for Social life:- The housing carries apartments for users of all income groups, security system club house with swimming pool & banquet hall is provided, large landscape parks offer safe gathering and interacting space for the inhabitants of all age groups.
f	Remark:- Project is currently being considered as one of the most popular society in the city for various reasons like vicinity with the city's business center ;moreover unique concept of one of the first operational clubhouse in such type of complexes attracted the public largely.

Case Study 2	
Project Name: - Royal Ensign.	
a	Developer:-Private Sector.
b	Locational aspect:-Statue Circle, In Centre of the city.
c	No's of floors: - G+11.
d	Occupancy level:-100%.
e	Offerings for Social life:-Premium apartments for high income group; huge scale sky terrace gardens provided with every individual flat, security system, wide internal roads with jogging tracks and internal retail store for catering immediate daily needs of the inhabitants.
f	Remark: - Unique architecture concept of the duplex villa type apartments with open spaces on all sides along with the huge double height terrace has attracted the users. The housing was primarily built with the intent of providing bungalow feel in the apartments to the users. The prime location of the project was inevitable factor in the project's success

considering the urban growth of Jaipur city, secondly buyers have bought the apartments solely with intention of investment and they might resale the apartment once property rates in that area gets increased.



Fig 05:-Case Study 1-Rangoli Gardens



Fig 06:-Case Study 2-Royal Ensign

a	Developer:- Private Sector
b	Locational aspects:-Project located on the outskirts of the city in a separate township called as 'Vatika Infotech City'. Distances from important city centers are high; developer has targeted to cater the working population of nearby SEZ area but yet to receive the considerable occupant's inflow
c	No's of floors:- G+13
d	Occupancy Level:- Less than 20%
e	Offerings for Social life:-The housing have apartments for middle and high income group with top class infrastructure services; security system, club house with swimming pool; large landscape parks, kids play area ,banquet space etc.
f	Remark: - Though the project possess a decent contemporary architecture style with potential of addressing all the needs of users but despite of being ready for possession from almost two years now the occupants have not shown keen interest in shifting into this complex primarily for two reasons; firstly the distance of the township is too much from city's key central nodes



Fig 07:-Case Study 3-Jaipur 21

Above case studies clearly shows that living in high rise has its own advantages ;Firstly exclusivity; most of the apartment complexes are being built with some unique concepts be it the architecture style or level of amenities or space layouts etc. which usually attracts the inhabitants predominantly. Every modern day complex is being equipped with facilities like Gymnasium & swimming pool. Security factor is also very crucial in such housings provides you with automated and manual security systems operating every seconds which in havelis or bungalows within or outside the walled city might be quite difficult to attain.

8.0 Lesser craze of living in high rise housings among public- Yes the developing cities like Jaipur have adopted the modern urban lifestyles quite openly but there are some aspects which clearly reflects that people's preference of opting high rise is still not a priority. Apart from the geographical location of the project primarily these aspects relates to physical-psychological

health issues & fondness of having an independent villa.

As discussed in the third case study; immediate success of the housing complex does depends over its strategic location; the project should not be difficult to access from the city's central fragment as particularly in such tier II cities public still prefers not to drive too long in their daily routine. The vicinity with the business, education and transport hubs plays a vital role in public's general acceptance for the project.

Moreover, the Construction sector has undergone huge advancement in recent times, introduction of modern technologies, construction materials, methods and designs have undoubtedly improved the built quality in all aspects but yet there are inherent threats inhabitants carry while living in high rise complexes.

Many studies & researches have been conducted in distinct parts of world which commonly concludes that following health issues are found more in 'higher floor occupants':-

- Traits of social isolation and depression are more among people living in housings.
- Results of surviving in cardiac arrests are better on lower floors as compared to upper floors.

Additionally in tier II cities the need of high rise complexes is more of an imposed trend rather than a necessity as the land is still available and easily procurable as compared to metro cities, this in turn facilitates that general public can easily afford a 'piece of land' over which independent villas can be built. Amid Jaipur citizens the fondness of living in own independent bungalow is much more than owning an apartment on 10th floor.

9.0 Conclusions-The impacts of evolution of high rise housings within the city has impacted quite significantly on the urban life & feel of the city; few observed impacts are as follows:-

Urban Fabric & Skyline has undergone changes; However city is still famous for typical traditional courtyard type low rise 'havelis' but Now skyscrapers spread throughout the city can be well observed which imparts an impression that people are looking forward to adapt the culture of modernism or high rise in the city.

Challenges of modern day lifestyles such as de congestion, traffic parking, safety & securities are

well catered in such high rise housings which are prime reasons why people prefers to shift into such complexes.

Apart from living in the dwelling it is the endowed amenities which create social life in high rise complexes. Amenities such as club house, landscaped courts, play fields, & swimming pool are the common gathering spaces for inhabitants and promote the neighborhood culture and social life of the inhabitants.

For 'nuclear families' such complexes are always on liking.

These vertical neighborhoods are being planned to address the current socio challenges in the lifestyles to some extents but their approach towards the cultural aspects which are routed in the traditions and famous arts, craft and architecture of the city is still contentious. This is where an unending debate always exists among the practicing architects and urban planners whether to opt for heritage or contemporary. As Architects and planners it's becomes important for us that we ensures that traditional values shall not get compromised with the modernism. The culture in modern buildings can be well imparted with the appropriate blending of vernacular design elements and construction materials which at least may provide a physical feel to inhabitants that they are still rooted with city's original context.

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