

Seniors and Parks

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Abstract— Problem, research strategy, and findings. Parks provide important physiological and psychological benefits to seniors, improving their quality of life; they are particularly important for low-income, inner-city seniors who lack access to open and green space. However, seniors do not often use parks partly because park design and programming are not responsive to their diverse needs and values.

Index Terms— Sociological, psychological, Life style, Fatigue

I. INTRODUCTION

Indian society so long basically traditional, where aged people were respected, looked after and their advice or opinions were given importance. This attitude is changing with the growth of industries to considerable extent. Aging comes with many challenges. Old age is categorized into:

Early old age (60-69yrs) • Old age (70-79) yrs. • Older old age

- The elderly people are the exact replica of young ones, they need the same care & attention as the kids.
- Elderly people suffer from various types of problems:
 1. Psychological
 2. Physical
 3. Economic
 4. Social.

Parks provide an opportunity to spend time in a natural setting and undertake activities including exercising, gardening, walking or simply meditating in nature. Programming activities for seniors in parks, rather than designing the parks with the seniors in mind, is the norm. A garden is a planned space, usually outdoors, set aside for the display, cultivation, or enjoyment of plants and other forms of nature. The garden can incorporate both natural and man-made materials. The most common form today is known as a residential garden, but the term garden has traditionally been a more general one.

II. OBJECTIVES

1. To study the architectural problems faced by seniors in parks.
2. To study the behavior of seniors in parks.
3. To suggest solutions for the problems faced by seniors in parks.
4. To provide them quality life.

III. METHODOLOGY

Parks are not only important in terms of independence, but also in terms of affecting everyday experience for older people. Outdoor offers physical, sociological & psychological benefits for older people. Supportive outdoor spaces, i.e. parks contribute to a more active lifestyle & are related to their life satisfaction & health. Contact with nature, which reduce mental fatigue & reduced fear of crime.

1) Relation between senior & parks

Parks serve as one of most important areas of public space for relaxation & recreation. People specially elders like to spend their time sitting & social gatherings with others in public spaces. Park users usually do various activities including exercises & static activities.

2) Indian Scenario

In India, most of the people do not understand the importance of parks & do not maintain it properly. Seating are not comfortable, not according to anthropometry. Park users usually do various activities including exercises & static activities, & areas for performing this activities is not sufficient. Pavements, jogging tracks are slippery. People don't find it safe, No separate play area for children, Fear of crime, Entry of stray animals, & seniors get scared of them. Parks represent valuable assets for cities as they provide recreational opportunities, serve as places for social interaction & offer a natural respite to urban dwellers. Parks serve as one of most important areas of public space for relaxation & recreation. Parks can be particularly beneficial to older adults who may be at risk for social isolation. Senior citizens remain a highly underserved group in regards to parks. Despite the fact that studies find a positive relation between physical and emotional well-being and spending time in a natural setting (park, garden, the woods) or undertaking activities such as gardening, walking or meditating in nature. Despite the strong link between physical activity and health, older adults represent the most inactive portion of the population. Parks not only give people space to relax and play but also provide chances to communicate with a group of people. One of the factors for the success of park design is the seating. Good seating areas can create attachment for users and improve the sustainability of the parks. Therefore, user preferences on seating patterns can create significant value in improving the design of the available seating furniture. People get emotional attachment to places other than their home, sometimes referred to as "third spaces."

Older adults are more likely than younger adults to have lived in a singular place for a long period of time and consequently feel more attached. If parks and other open spaces are part of the third spaces for community elders, they can help them develop a positive connection to their surrounding environment and feel part of their community. They develop a positive connection to their surrounding environment and feel part of their community. Since older adults are the most at risk for such ailments, it is important to have spaces like parks and greenery that allow for relaxation and stress reduction. Parks can be particularly beneficial to older adults who may be at risk for social isolation. The connection between people and nature is a deep bond that reaches back thousands of years and has also been associated with healing processes.

3) *Problems faced by seniors in parks*

1. Accessibility
2. Comfort
3. Privacy
4. Location of the park
5. Seating
6. Security

4) *Solutions to the problems (Architecturally)*

The location & orientation of the park should be significant, garden should be near the main entrance and visible from main indoor area. Parks should have elements that can encourage the elderly access to nature. Importance of health benefits, helps elderly to reduce stress. Comfort is very important for every age group, but for elderly people it is one of the most important factor. Benches should be comfortable.

Principal of a design for seating (benches) should emphasize:

1. Comfort
2. Simplicity of form
3. Simplicity of details
4. Ease of maintenance
5. Durability of finish

Trees can be used for privacy, separate area should be made in parks, and playground should be at separate place. Trees can be used for shade. Security is one of the important factor, a revolving door should be provided in the garden to restrict the entry of stray animals. Entrance & exit to parks should be easily accessible & clearly visible from the road.

5) *Barrier free design*

Guidelines and space standard for barrier free built environment for disabled: Barrier Free Environment is one which enables people with disabilities to move about safely and freely and to use the facilities within the built environment. The goal of barrier free design is to provide an environment that supports the independent functioning of individuals so that they can get to, and participate without assistance, in everyday activities.

6) *Mobility devices*

A mobility aid is a device designed to assist walking or otherwise improve the mobility of people with a mobility impairment. Adequate space should be allocated for persons

using mobility devices, e.g. wheelchairs, crutches and walkers, as well as those walking with the assistance of other persons.

The range of reach (forward and side; with or without obstruction) of a person in a wheelchair should be taken into consideration. • Attention should be given to dimensions of wheelchairs used locally. Standard size of wheel chair has been taken as 1050mm x 750mm (as per ISI). Surface materials for access routes and adjoining areas should be carefully selected, designed and detailed to provide safe and robust environments for everyone to use. The logical and creative selection of materials can make it easier to demarcate different zones, for example, to clearly describe between pedestrian and vehicular zones in a typical street profile. The surface of all access routes should be hard and firm with a good grip. Smooth paving surfaces are easier for everyone to navigate and are particularly valued by people pushing prams and pushchairs and by people who use wheelchairs and walking aids. Uneven surfaces such as cobbles and bare earth and surfaces such as loose gravel and sand should be avoided.

These are difficult and uncomfortable for many people to cross and may present a tripping hazard. Surfaces should be slip-resistant when wet and dry, with a dry friction coefficient between 35 and 45. Surface materials should be selected to reduce the potential for glare from bright sunlight or other light sources such as street lights. The ground surface should not have a strong pattern as this can be a source of visual confusion. The use of contrasting lines or bands should be avoided in locations where they may be perceived by some people as highlighting a step edge. A significant factor in the selection of surface materials is the ease of making repairs. An expensive stone from a faraway place, or unusual color of macadam, is less likely to be repaired properly than a local stone or standard color of Macadam that is readily available. This is not to say that special places should not be celebrated by the use of special materials. They will, however, require a high degree of care when repairing any damage. Regular and effective maintenance should prevent or replace cracked and uneven paving slabs and those with loose joints, as they become tripping hazards and are difficult to walk on, cause puddles to form and become slippery.

7) *Psychological Needs*

Choice is an important psychological need for elders. Specifically, leisure service organizations should focus on elders' motivations and negotiation strategies before, during and after implementing health programs. Surviving to an old age requires resilience. One way elders may maintain resilience is to cope with psychological needs by adapting to the environment. With age, the fear of falling likely becomes more pronounced as elders realize the difficulty of maintaining physical stability in open spaces. Elders may, however, differ in their expectations as to whether the environment should accommodate their psychological fears of falling or they should adapt to the potential for environmental risks and be extremely cautious. Choice and a sense of control compose part of elders' desire to be as independent as possible. In relation to open space, elders' priorities vary by subgroups. Among elders living alone, distance to the park was more important than other park

features and facilities. Among elders with a disability, having seating opportunities enroute to the park was the most important feature.



Fig. 1. Psychological need for elders

IV. CONCLUSION

Design recommendations from the reviewed literature can be summarized as follows,

1. Location of the Garden
2. The outdoor garden needs some sense of enclosure and the absence of feeling that users are in a “fishbowl” or being stared at. Thus, the location and orientation of the garden are significant such as the garden should be near the main entrance and also visible from main indoor area.

Access to Nature: Many research had found the importance of health benefits for the elderly such as improved mood and

reduced stress by having contact with nature. Thus, a well-designed garden should provide elements that could encourage the elderly access to nature such as a diverse mix of plants and trees, availability of water features and also amenities for birds and animals. There are various styles of seating patterns. Line style, partial circle style and circle style are the three most common patterns. Selection of seating pattern was related to the number of group members. Line style was selected most often for groups of 2 friends while circle style was selected by the majority for 3 or more friends. The preferences of seating patterns indicated that park users needed seats to be a close distance allowing for easier eye contact and better interactions. A well-designed garden for the elderly plays an important role in providing a sense of belonging and also encourage the elderly to be more physically active. Based on the results, a better understanding and guide to the suitable design elements should be given consideration when creating outdoor spaces for the elderly. Parks serve as one of most important areas of public space for relaxation & recreation.

REFERENCES

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