

CPUD '17

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MAINTAINING UNIQUENESS IN GLOBALISATION: EXPLORING PROGRESSIVE APPROACH TOWARDS URBAN CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES IN SMART CITIES MOVEMENT: CASES OF CITIES IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The quest for smart cities and global environments is at enormous scale, especially in developing countries. Such opportunities are perceived as economic growth catalysts. The inevitable change that globalisation brings, is transforming cities across the world affecting its local identity. India is among the leading countries to have huge number of such rapidly urbanising cities undergoing transformation leading to monotonous modernisation.

The concern for the potential loss of unique local environments while emerging into smart global cities provided an impetus for this research. However, one has to accept this change and intermixing as it brings economic growth and depicts modernity. Therefore, emerges a need to realise ways in which the unique character of the city could be maintained and enhanced while we embrace modern values and the global – local conflict.

Historic core areas of Indian cities are integral part Indian urban landscape. They own a diverse built and cultural heritage that give them a strong sense of identity. The smart city missions raised a need to revisit old cities from a developmental perspective. The research intends to figure out ways to reinforce the original image of the city with smart city aspirations that is coherent to its historic core. The study assesses urban components that can continue to maintain the unique image of the city giving it a sense of belonging in this changing context. The research explores alternative ways in which the local identities can be strengthened that do not restrict growth and is devoid of conventional conservation practices.

For the purpose, three cases of cities in India namely Nasik, Pune and Srinagar have been investigated. Research methodology involved comparison of on-site data collection and archival records along with public interviews and mental mapping to derive components of uniqueness. Parallel case studies across the world have been analysed to re-affirm the results of the research. The study found out that natural morphological components prove significant and critical care is required while planning to avoid fragmented development. This is where natural features can be fused to link into a coherent development. In addition, historic urban structure – a result of natural morphology is a factor responsible for identity needs attention, while it can allow the desired flexibility.

Keywords: Local Identity, Urban Conservation, Sense of Place, Smart city, Globalisation, historic core areas

Introduction

Urban Design and Uniqueness of a Place

The various and most influential literature on urban design and its qualities have exemplified the importance of uniqueness or distinctiveness of an urban environment. The variety of urban design principles advocated by most of the authors in the field support the concept of uniqueness.

Kevin Lynch 1981	sense
Bentley et al 1984	Visual appropriateness
Holyoak 1985	Retain the Best
Buchanan 1988	Dialogue with context and history
Tibbalds 1998	Respect history
HRH the prince of Wales 1989	Harmony and context
Aldous 1992	Sense of place and historical continuity/harmony/distinctive
character and identity	