

Human Spatial Behavior in a Public Housing Project at Amman, Jordan

Samer Abu-Ghazalah

*Department of Architecture, University of Jordan, P.O. Box 926966, Amman 11190, Jordan
Fax: 962 6 5676213; E-mail: sabugh@yahoo.com*

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ABSTRACT This study is an example of a neighborhood scheme that much has been altered in appearance after its initial construction due to the lack of building regulations. The residents changed, added and altered its architectural characteristics without paying much attention to other social and behavioral factors. Our case study presents an empirical study of human spatial behavior in Prince Rashed Housing scheme located in Amman, the capital of Jordan, where the concept of neighborhood in its original design, is not followed at all. It is similar to many other modern housing schemes in Amman and throughout Jordan, where the concept of neighborhood is neglected and changes in its architectural appearance after building it took place. This is reflected directly in wayfinding and human behavior in neighborhoods. This research is going to assess the quality of the housing scheme through studying human behavior and how people orient themselves inside large-scale schemes. This study covers a range of development concerns such as people's cognitive mapping of the built environment used in wayfinding and the people's behavior and social interaction. The spatial layout and perception of the housing scheme is also studied. Research methods incorporate a variety of interactive methodologies, such as visual analysis of the spatial ability of the area within the housing scheme, and utilize a survey to both the residents and non-residents of the housing. Observational categories include information on users' different age groups and environment. Finally a study to the signage system and landmarks inside Prince Rashed housing is examined side-by-side to the studies of navigation system and the experience of maneuvering. The results emphasize the importance of the spatial organization of the setting, the circulation system or paths, the architecture, and the signage system in wayfinding. The complex interaction of physical environment and social behavior is also stressed. A number of recommendations are suggested at the end to improve the spatial environment and to help people find their way inside this housing scheme.