

# **A Study on Informal Eating Places & Community Interaction**

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**ABSTRACT:** The research paper named Informal Eating Places – Centers For Community Interaction is the study of informal eating places. It deals with the interaction within the community. Importance of community interaction and various issues related to it have been discussed here.

Interaction, which forms an intrinsic part of every culture, seems to be abating or diminishing in today's speeding world. In today's man made world, there is an urgent need of places for interaction. One aspect of humankind's social nature is a strong desire to communicate. It has been realized that a person cannot exist in a state of mental health without interaction with other people. The concept of interaction may be set to define the process, which constitutes the core of the social life and of the human behavior. The social actions of individuals are always oriented towards other human beings.

The psychic health of each individual depends upon a beneficial interaction with other humans. In spite of the growing sophistication of electronic communication systems, no technique now available can match the precision and accuracy of a face-to-face conversation.

**KEYWORDS:** Eating places, Informal and formal spaces, Community interactions, You and me.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

*"If we look at the city, as a place in which private life and community life find a meeting place, then the mark of the city, is the balance between 'you and me' relationship that needs to be built again today. No machines can replace physical nearness, neither telephone nor radio, home worries or television."*<sup>1</sup>

In order to develop this 'you and me' relationship in a public place i.e. in order to facilitate a dialogue between the user and the space there is need for the presence of certain factors which would help in generating this dialogue. Thus these spaces could be assumed as a set up where the users are the protagonists, the public place-the mode and the factors which would help in generating a dialogue-the props.

When all these factors would work together, the climax would be reached and it would determine the end i.e. whether the public space succeeds to become a place or whether it works or not.

Our structural environment influences, directly or indirectly, the shaping of our personality and the choice as well as the attainment of goals. Each individual is engaged in a constant interaction with the architectural conditioning of the mental health.

There can be many places which foster effective personal communication by providing appropriate ambient conditions. They can be open spaces, spaces within a build setup or just an informal eating place.

Eating places may be a result or part of the following factors:

- A variety of other activities to attract people
- A place to bring in masses
- A place for small public gathering
- A large open space to socialize

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Eating places can be the centers of activities. As people come from various activities and various cultural backgrounds, the element of these places become very important. Generally people like to discuss things while having good food by taking their own time. In that case, eating places become an important medium for interaction.

*“The success of any public space depends on the intensity of usage of the space by the people. The place, is made for the people, people are its main interest and it’s the people’s movement and activity that brings alive the place over and over again.”<sup>2</sup>*

Vision, sound, touch, taste and smell all affect human psyche. Taste and smell can directly be linked to the food available. Vision and touch are linked to the materials and finishes. Sound is something, which depends on the events taking place in and around that area. The events in turn depends on the space designed by the architect. The environment needs to be designed to accommodate a wide range of behavior-the architect’s idea and the user’s perception.

An eating place can be compared to any complex system that depends on all of its parts to function correctly.

*“An eating place is comparable to an old-fashioned pocket watch. What people see is the face and hands. What makes the watch work are the hidden gears, which have been intricately designed to keep the hands revolving in time.”<sup>3</sup>*

Eating places are of two types – organized and the ones which are the result of the need. The attempt of the study will be to trace the importance of organized eating places for the development and growth of community and individual, the element of these spaces and the human response to these elements so that it provides us knowledge to be more sensitive and be better designers.

## II. WHY DO WE INTERACT?

The concept of interaction may be set to define the process, which constitutes the very core of social life and of human behavior. One aspect of humankind’s social nature is a strong desire to communicate. People communicate in order to find out what is happening around them, to exchange information, to determine the attitudes of others, and to express thoughts and feelings. The social actions of individuals are always oriented towards other human beings. It is the interplay between the action of self and the expected or actual reaction of one or many others, which occupies the center of the human stage.

The city today represents a complete environment of its inhabitants and provides not only functional requirements but also a qualitative setting, fostering interaction between people and their environment.

The psychic health of each individual depends upon the beneficial interaction with not just other humans but with their environment and the structured spaces also. Interaction need not necessarily be only on the human level. Today’s society in the metropolis is large with vast cultures and its outlook towards the city seems to be changing. Interaction, in this scenario is important to reinforce from getting mechanized and introverted otherwise the society will become dust heap of individuals without links to one another.

One of the fundamental prerequisites for health is that there should in fact be a social milieu. A person cannot exist in a state of mental health without interaction with other people. The necessity to unite with other living beings, to be related to them, is an imperative need on the fulfillment of which man’s sanity depends, Martin bloom’s theory of the ‘formation of the self’ states that while people may inherit a biological basis for mental illness, they actually become mentally ill because of their “social experiences”.

A lack of communication resulting from inadequate social development makes individuals especially vulnerable to delusional development.

Thus interaction plays a very important part in our lives and it should be encouraged in every possible way.

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## III. HOW ARCHITECTURE INFLUENCE INTERACTION

Spaces affects us and can control our spirit; and a large part of the pleasure we obtain from architecture-pleasure, which seems unaccountable, or for which we do not trouble to account, springs in reality from space.

There is a continuous reaction on the part of each individual to the enclosed spaces in which he finds himself (to such phenomena as size, scale, proportion, openness, closure, light, colour, etc.)

The creation of successful architecture is the creation of an environment in which the preconditions may exist or take place naturally, instead of being thwarted, as is the case most often in today's scenario. Architecture can better be conceived of as an agent, a catalyst, which is able to make possible a reduction of frustrations and tensions, and improved social interaction. A well designed architectural environment designed to interact with individual human beings and to assist them in fulfilling their emotional as well as their physical needs can best awaken their self esteem and sense of possibility, and foster their growth.

An understanding of the relationship between structured space and the essential psychological and social needs of man can help in planning a working environment that is conducive to mental health. The architectural environment, if it is planned with psychological sensitivity, can enable modern man to attain a delicate equilibrium between isolation from other persons and alienation from the self, an insufficient sense of individuality, and an increasing sense of mechanization or of being one of the herd. This alienation from the self is the result of the complex conditions, among them, a lack of positive values and goals, and a rapport with other people.

### I.1 SPATIAL ORGANIZATION IN TERMS OF SEATING ARRANGEMENT

In an eating place, there are usually requirements for space that:

- Are flexible in use
- Require exterior exposure for light, ventilation, outlook, or access to outdoor spaces
- Must be segregated for privacy
- Must be easily accessible

Seating arrangements can be organized in the following ways:

- Centralized organization
- Linear organization
- Radial organization
- Cluster organization
- Grid organization

### I.2 MOVEMENT & CIRCULATION PATTERN

Movement patterns can do more than mechanically follow the planning principles, for they are among the principal elements giving shape to the open spaces and visual directors to the searching eye.

All paths have a starting point, from which a person is taken through a sequence of spaces to the destinations. These sequences of spaces can be artfully arranged.

The approach

The nature of the circulation

Relationship between circulation and space

### I.3 COLOUR

It is the hue, the intensity and tonal value of a form's surface. Colour should always be chosen in concern with lighting because the two are closely associated. Together they communicate a variety of psychological messages on both obvious and subliminal levels. In other words, the same colour appears to be a different colour when seen under different light sources or when viewed in direct or indirect light.

### I.4 TEXTURE

It is the surface characteristic of form. Texture affects both the tactile and light reflective qualities of a form's surface. Colour texture together with light affect the scale and visual weight of form. Very rough textures may make a person

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feel uncomfortable to sit and too smooth textures may produce slippery effect. So, textures should be in accordance with the function of the surface.

Various types of material used for creating these textures are:

- Concrete
- Masonry
- Wood
- Metals
- Glass
- Plastics
- Fabrics

## I.5 ARCHITECTURAL FURNISHINGS

It is an important aspect of place making. As they helps in lending an identity to a place. The drama that can be released in a space and the articulation of space can be achieved through furnishings like ground finishes, paving pattern, street furniture etc. exceptional effects can be obtained when the elements are closely related.

Articulation of space can also be achieved through landscape, like paving pattern more than floor detailing, representing movement within the space and also helping to differentiate use.

A contrasting spatial organization of the built form with respect to the surroundings gives definition and sanctity to the space, highlighting the approach to the place.

## I.6 LANDSCAPING

People are animals too. We still retain, and are largely motivated, by our natural animal instincts. If we are to plan integrally, we must acknowledge and accommodate these instincts. A perceptive analysis of our most successful ventures in planning would reveal that we have affected the greatest improvements not by ignoring the natural conditions but rather by consciously seeking a harmonious integration. This can be achieved by modulating ground and structural forms with those of nature.

Some of the features that can be incorporated with the design are:

- Earth forms
- Water
- Plants

## IV. CONCLUSION

An eating place is such a space where people will go irrespective of the fact whether it is designed properly or not. The reason obviously being the need of the user, but at the same time we cannot ignore the importance of the right way of designing. The architect is aware of the fact that every space a man is in has an effect on his psyche. This effect might not be immediate but nonetheless cannot be ignored. It is true that a person would go to an eating place to have a cup of tea without bothering about its location, access, the quality of light in it or the way the seating is. What we cannot overlook is whether this is what we, as architects; have to give to our society. The aim of the architect is to always make spaces more accessible, livable and lovable, to design spaces where people hang around because they want to and not because they have to.

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