OPEN SPACE IN DELHI: TRENDS AND CORRELATES

Abstract

Availability of public open space, distribution and accessibility are a major concern for cities. It is necessary to retain urban quality. Open space is associated with pleasure, recreation, human interactions and communal celebrations. The relevance of open space increases with increasing size of the city. As urban population increases, the demand of land for various urban activities also increases. The changes of land use/land cover pattern over a time period control the pressure on land. It indicates that the quantity and arrangement of open space is not fixed.

The present study focuses on analyzing the spatial arrangement of open space in Delhi and factors affecting it and to seek relationship between built environment and open space. The user profile has been analysed by primary data collection. Several planning challenges like accessibility, protecting from overuse of open space, conversion to other uses, and encroachment by other developments have come up. For analysing the land use change in Delhi, core, intermediary and peripheral zones have been identified and ward level analysis has been done to review the open space percent in Delhi. Analysis of the spatial arrangement of open space in Delhi reveals that there is general reduction in open space. With population increase in the urban areas of Delhi, the city is expanding towards the peripheral region with the conversion of rural areas to urban expansions. The built up area has increased that mainly came from agriculture land, waste land, scrub-land, sandy areas, open space and water bodies. The user survey shows that the nature and characteristics of park user varies with the size and type of parks. The need for open space is less for high income residents who live in low density areas and the low income residents have more requirement of open spaces as they live in high density areas. So we can say that the user characteristics vary with income. On comparing the education, occupation and household income, it can be said that education levels are related to occupation that is defining the income levels of residents. Be it any occupation, people can come more to public places on weekends as a result the parks are bubbling more with life on weekends and in the morning and evening hours. A periodic monitoring of the issue relating the availability of open space and pattern of user characteristics will be of importance in efficient and appropriate planning and management.