

Pedestrian accessibility to public space: the implication of the urban form in the city of Granada

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Abstract

This paper is a part of a research project which has been designed for identifying the environmental quality in the pedestrian accessibility to different opportunities and services and understanding the determinant factors on it. The case study is the city of Granada. Different types of factors like urban form, attraction of opportunities or pedestrian comfort are jointly considered with the traditional accessibility measures.

In this context, the present paper aims to show how traditional accessibility measures to public spaces (squares, gardens or parks) in terms of time; need to be complemented with other measures regarding urban form. Frequently, accessibility is assessed only by considering a space-time dimension. The lack of these measures may result in a non appropriate location of public space with the consequent loss in their services for inhabitants.

This new dimension provides useful information about the best location options in the district or city and how this location may affect the accessibility to public spaces. In this context the Space Syntax theory and other techniques developed at the Bartlett School of the UCL present some measures like integration or connectivity that could aid to improve the environmental quality of the pedestrian accessibility to public spaces.

Firstly, an analysis of spatial coverage of public space as a traditional measure of accessibility has been undertaken. In this point, it has to be considered that public spaces provide a different level of services or spatial coverage (at neighbourhood, district or municipal scale) depending on their extension, design and associated facilities, public spaces provide. Nevertheless, in this research only their extension has been considered so far.

Secondly the spatial structure of Granada has been analysed through axial analysis and its relation to different types of public spaces. This analysis is based on the idea that different types of public spaces need different levels of integration and intelligibility to give an optimal accessibility and services.

The main result of this study emphasizes the role of integration and intelligibility as a key factor in the pedestrian movement across the city. Traditional measures of time jointly with these measures of urban form could aid to improve the environmental quality of the pedestrian accessibility to public spaces.

Keywords: pedestrian accessibility, public space, space syntax