

Spatial Planning Strategies for Improving Accessibility of Differently abled in Kochi City

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ABSTRACT

Accessibility of urban area can be defined as the ability of people to move around the city, living and interacting with the space. The lack of accessibility faced by people with disabilities, particular in many cities in the world, presents a major challenge. "A city that is well designed is well designed for all. Accessibility, as a collective good that benefits all, should therefore be considered a central component of good policy to achieve inclusive and sustainable urban development." (The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2016). By 2050, it is expected that about 6.25 billion people, 15 per cent of whom are persons with disabilities, will be living in urban centres. (United Nations, 2015). According to census of India 2011, 2.21% of India's population and 2.28% of people in Kerala belongs to differently abled category. (Census of India, 2011).

Urban spaces and specifically the pedestrian environments are frequently inadequate to the needs of elderly people and people with disabilities. Kochi City is one among the two smart cities in Kerala is located in Ernakulam District which has higher percentage of differently abled population. Communities are working to improve urban accessibility for all citizens, independently from age and needs, the urban built environment still represents one of the most actual examples of how people with impairments can be disabled by barriers. This study aims to develop Spatial Planning strategies to improve the accessibility of differently abled in in Kochi City.

Keyword: Differently abled, Accessibility, Kochi, Smart city