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Determining the Behavioral Components of Physical Environment and Society in Children and Teenagers Criminology (Study of Symptoms and Norms)

¹Mehri Jafarzadeh and ²Hamid Reza Es'haghi

¹M.Sc of Architectural Engineering, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

²M.Sc Student of Architectural Engineering, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Qazvin, Iran.

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ABSTRACT

Behavioral science of children, environment and society and their relationship is a subject that is a function of logical consideration of the designers in qualifying the space. Children and teenagers are not born criminals but only their only responsibility is to involve in the environment and behavioral science. The behavioral science changes in relation to the environment and sometimes society and environmental condition causes the child to go toward an improper behavioral pattern. Environmental science could not find an effective and therapy solution after many years of studying and research on the role of society and spatial understanding, children and their reaction. The relationship between the spatial, environmental and social concepts by focusing on the theories of sociologists and architectures can be efficient. Finally, the article concludes that as long as there is no proper understanding of the relationship between behavior, environment and society, any attempts in this field can be useless. In addition, appropriateness and replacing the proper behavioral spaces as the therapy instead of the Training Centers for teenagers that is mostly like a protection center is the main result of this article.

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INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that one of the most difficult problems and issues is the children and teenagers crime which is concerned by many experts including the psychologists and sociologist specially the architects.

They are more looking for the question that why children participate in the aggressive crimes and how they can be prevented. There are different views in this field; psychologists consider the emotional dimension (family and feeling), sociologists consider the social dimension (crisis and wrong behavior) and architects consider the environmental dimension (space and internal environment). Considering that there are a lot of researches in the field of psychology and sociology regarding the issue, the experience has shown that these sciences need more development which can be fulfilled by architectural research and studies.

Since the children and teenagers crimes result in different consequences in the society and considering the fact that crime for children in Iran includes the crimes which in case of commitment result in punishment, these types of crime for children and teenagers under the age of maturity lead to losing the education and employment opportunities and their isolation from society. This in turn intensifies the problem for next generation and causes their destruction. This is also costing, time consuming and the power which is used by the governments is also important.

The Center of Training and Correction of Tehran was established in 1959 and studying its history shows that the idea of founding this center was for the child and teenage criminals. The children and teenagers who are aggressive and committed a crime are sent to these centers. Based on article 19 of the jail organization, this center is for keeping, training and correcting the immature children who are under 18 years old.

Unfortunately, in most part of the world the working and training centers are mostly places which are only used for keeping the children and are mostly like jails and not the centers for correcting and training children for a better future. If the cost and time is invested properly, they will have a better future and their life will be more fruitful and society will be healthier.

In this regard, the approaches and theories of the psychologists and sociologists are reviewed and the effective elements are recognized to complement them with the environmental architecture to have better environment to reduce this social problem.

Corresponding Author: Mehri Jafarzadeh, M.Sc of Architectural Engineering, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

The result of the present research can be a mechanism and solution for improving the environment and proper spaces for making the behavior of the child criminals better.

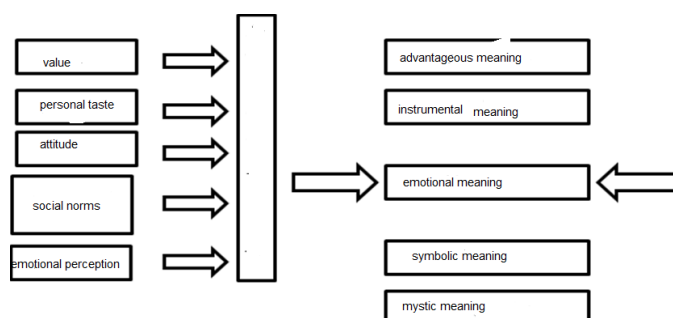
Crime and its definitions:

Teenager's crime is a social phenomenon. However, it changes based on the socio-economic condition. According to Habib Ahmadi, any type of abnormality in the behavior and idea which does not follow the social norms is called social abnormality. The social behavior of the children and teenagers is called teenager's crime [1].

In order to review and use the legal principles, the spatial changes in a collection of knowing the children and teenagers and also knowing the previous environment in which he lived is one of the most important issues in each society.

Building Environment:

Meaning of an environment is the result of interaction among the potentials of the environment and the personal and social needs of the users [17]. As the human needs are at different spatial and time levels, the environmental meaning of the environment should also be investigated at different levels. Different levels are defined for an environment. A simple categorization is introduced by James Gibson [12]. A construct or building has some semantic levels: 1. Hardness and strength, 2. Profitability for the constructs which have an additional function, 3. Instrumental meaning which is defined by the usage of the building. For example a parking lot is a space for parking the cars. In fact, this level of a building can communicate with the internal emotion of the users. So, many people may not pay attention to the instrumental meaning of a building and only react based on their personal values and tastes or social norms to the building. 5. Symbolic meaning such as Azadi tower in Tehran of Eiffel tower in France, 6. Mystic meaning, for example a building is the symbol of freedom and independence with mystic symbols. Since the present article is related to the emotional meaning (the 4th dimension) of a building which deals with the social norms and emotional reactions of the children is considered here. The emotional-normative level is a multidimensional entity and is the most important issue which is involved with the social norms (figure 1).



Wilson *et al* in the broken window theory believe that environment has strong effects on the health and life of human being. One of the dimensions of natural environment which can affect the health of human being is the building environment. Building environment includes all the environments in which people live, work and play [11] and includes the concept of designing and architecture and affect the emotion and performance of people. The quality and environmental design can cause the harms or prevents them. The studies in psychology have shown that there is a relationship between the quality of the habitants and social harms such as suicide, mental problems, divorce and addiction [7]. A study in America has shown that most of the office workers who work in high rise buildings have a type of mental disease called building syndrome which was accompanied by vomiting, mental tiredness and anxiety.

The studies have also shown that teenagers in high rising building commit more crimes and have more educational and behavioral problems [16].

Environment Psychology:

Today, the psychologists and designers pay a special attention to the psychological understanding of the teenagers behaviors since these types of behavior are closely related to the environment.

The environmental psychologists study the human behavior in the daily environment to be able to understand the direct and indirect effects of the environment on human behavior.

The environmental psychology deals with the behaviors related to the environment and consider the aesthetic factors in different levels of human behavior. The immediate behaviors are the functions of the condition in which they happen.

The psychology defines the criminal as a patient who is affected by the internal and environmental incentives.

So, the attention of designers to the psychological study of the designed spaces has created a close relationship between the environmental psychologists and society.

Psychological Views:

Psychological approaches look for the roots of criminal behavior in unsolved emotional conflicts of people. The unhealthy relationship between children and parents and lack of emotional support prevents solving the mental and social tasks in teenage period which include trust, intimacy, and self-respect, controlling the shocks and internalizing the values.

As it was mentioned before, the social and mental aspects have special effects on understanding. The mental aspects are affected by environment. In evaluating a building not only the building but also the environment is important. Terence R. Lee experimentally showed that the type of understanding is completely personal and different in case of every person. An international society in a study in 9174 concluded that generally environment is defined as 400 meters and 5 minutes walking to affect the understandings and perceptions.

The approach of Douglas about the environment says that: beliefs, attitudes, priorities and personal aspects are special for each person but at the same time these features affect the experiment of a person as a member of a family, society and social class and cultural and national classes.

Criteria and indexes of civil environment satisfaction in teenagers:

In this view, it is believed that the childhood is a general phenomenon and the child has a social identity. So, in this view the child is regarded as the analysis unit which is unique and as a result child is compared with other units of the social system.

Children and teenagers are quite different citizens who need development in an urban area based on their characteristic. In order to obtain the goal, the civil engineers and architects and all who are connected with children should first understand children and their needs to be able to solve their problems. On the other hand, in order to gain this perception and understanding, they should know the space and architecture for the children and adults and this is nothing except understanding the child perception of space, form and environment. So, planning and design should be done by measuring the children values and criteria about the environment [2].

Sociological views:

Behavioral sociology studies the relationship between the behavioral consequences and environmental reactions and behavioral nature of a person.

Social and behavioral dimension is affected by the elements such as religious, cultural, support and economic, psychological and social conflicts which can be the factors of crime development in the society.

The social theories are based on the hypothesis that the criminal behavior can be like the normal behaviors in the normal social process of learning such as strengthening, imitating and empathy. Based on this theory, each person has the potential of ignoring the law but the social controls prevent him. The social norms determine the limits of the proper behavior [15]. Some findings have shown that the criminal responses can be learned from the environment so the training can play a significant role in strengthening the positive patterns for the teenagers.

Educational and training spaces have flexibility and variety and spatial flexibility that is the spatial potential and development. Spatial flexibility is created due to variety of decoration. Training spaces include library, training halls, sport club and praying house.

Psychological factors of crimes and its effect on environment:

Environment and mind are two inseparable components. Children and teenagers are affected by the environment (including the advantageous and disadvantageous incentives) and modify their behavior and sometimes the immediate behavior of the family or small society can challenge the environment.

Environmental information are obtained through perception process which are invoked by the mental schemas and lead by the human needs. Schemas are not only the perception process but also lead the emotional reactions and actions and in contrast, these processes and reactions affect the mental schemas as the results of perceived behavior (figure 2).

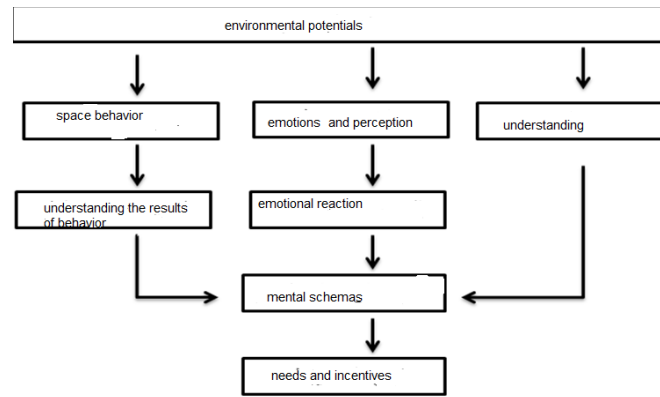


Fig. 2: basic processes of human behavior [12].

Teenager is a process of life that a person looks for the identity. If at this stage parents do not have serious presence. Teenagers model the environment by facing the divergent models. Positive and negative mental schemas are received together. Children and teenagers who have the potentials, their mental schemas are determined such as aggression and street crimes.

So, selecting the place and social position which is proper with the behavior of children and teenagers is very important.

The strategies for solving the crime facing the mental and environmental problems:

After many decades feeling the need and cooperation of psychologists and sociologists and designers in different fields such as architecture, many schools put them in their curriculums. The subject of this approach is to pay attention to the environment and space in which the criminal lives.

Here two cases of therapy strategies of the criminals and environment are studied:

A: applying the common habitants and their effects:

As it was mentioned before, criminal children and teenagers need an environment which is accompanied by their aims. The behavioral habitants are places for supporting some of the activities. Here the building environment is an organized place with different levels of quality and the behavioral habitant is a combination of activity and place including following elements:

- Repeatable and returning activity with common patterns
- The compatible relationship between these two
- Special time period

It means that if the common patterns emerge in a behavioral habitant in different times, a place can be a part of some habitants or behavioral place [4].

A common behavioral pattern can include the behaviors which happen symmetrically.

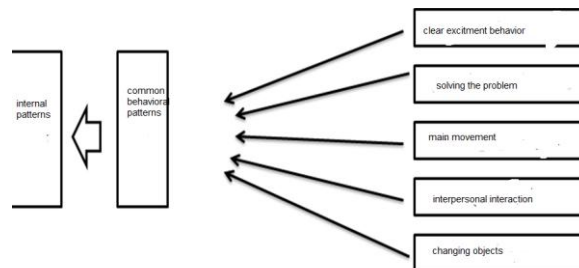


Fig. 3: The behavioral habitant or place, the role of behavioral science in environmental design [4].

A combination of these behaviors makes the common pattern in special field which is the internal environment.

Home is a physical structure in which the relationship and values forms systematically.

Helping and association of architecture or internal help is creating changes in architectural elements which can change the human behavior at social level. Here, it is not surprising that architects, designers and even modifiers have special role in determining the behavior of people and even their beliefs and values.

Designers and theorists at the end of 19th and beginning of 20th century have no doubt about the changes in social structures. Designing the urban gardens by Howard [13] was a reformist movement in organizing the social structure and is a good example of social help.

In their theory, it is believed that by changing the environment, people can accompany their behavior. People play an important role in the building environment theory (figure 2) (figure 4 and 5).

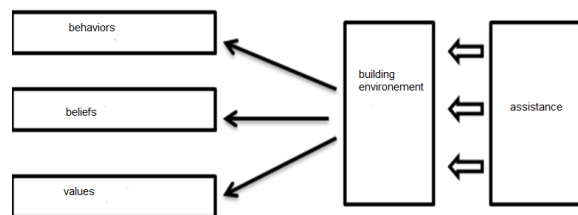


Fig. 4: helping chart.

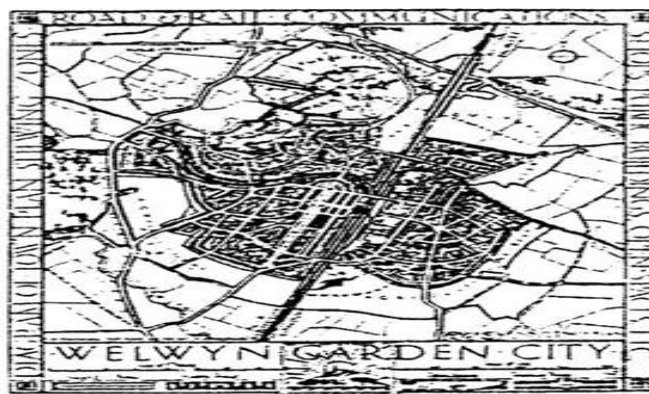


Fig. 5: the garden of Velvin city (1920) based on the design by Howard (left), the attitudes and principles of decentralized design in urban area.

Based on the psychological principles of the environment, a house should not be too complicated and ambiguous to make stress and should not be simple to cause tiredness and finally emotional deprivation [14].

According to what has been said above the criminal children and teenager in changing environments are based on principle and roles. This principle can help the constructing the proper social environment and vice versa.

b) Making the therapy spaces intellectuals:

Now, by knowing the behavioral habitants as a proper environment and improving the teenagers' environment so that people perform their behavior without any challenge and make themselves to accept their tasks and functions, a better natural compatibility is provided. Applying the intellectual spaces inside and beside these inhabitants can be a good strategy. Intellectual spaces are the main goals of psychology and its aim is to manage the environment in a better form and provide a better mental development and study the effective ways to improve the environmental awareness among people.

System of intellectual management which has been emerged in recent years and the safety strategies are provided. It should also be mentioned that the effect of issues such as color, light, size, material and furniture are the main bases which cannot be dealt with in this article.

Intellectual control systems can be easily compatible with different needs in the space such as the need for therapy space in the hospitals. The super modern systems, closed-circle cameras and controlled computers are the other services of these systems (figure 3).

Conclusion:

This is the environment that shapes people. Imagine a room in which everything is disorganized and has no order. The first encounter of a person with space is adding chaos. This is the event that happens unconsciously. In first encounter with bigger spaces the condition is same. The environmental order causes that the behavior is more polite and respectful.

Immediate behaviors are the function of condition in which they happen. The character of children and teenagers are formed by the family and environment.

Human being during the process of socializing learns about some spaces and symbolic incentives of the environment. Human being gives meaning to the spaces, incentives and events and behaves according to them.

Psychological and environmental accommodation can be a strategy to provide the factors for better management of the environment for better life and growth of the teenagers. This mechanism can be efficient in improving and suggesting a proper behavioral environment and better method for designing spaces and buildings considering the needs and behavioral reactions of the teenagers.

Designing the proper behavioral habitats is accommodated with the behavior of children and criminal teenagers which has effect on behavioral patterns and in fact includes the continuous behavior.

Since one of the most important demands of human being is providing the needs of security and welfare of human being. So, creating an environment with maximum potentials of security and welfare is one of the goals of buildings. This is important about children and teenagers who need increasing care and incentives in designing spaces however, the issue is important considering the costs and time.

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