

Quality of Life

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Abstract

The paper is an effort to research into the aspect of achieving quality of life in urban scenario through the concept of joy. It's often understood that quality of life is achieved through a materialistic, rigid and scientific measures and is a by-product of the materials we use in our architecture but a large gap is often realized much after the spaces are in use between the original space analysis and when the user actually uses these spaces which renders dissatisfaction and discomfort.

They are unable to associate with the spaces and cannot connect to them emotionally and regularly demands major structural changes which lead to misbalance and poor life pattern. We as designers take the perspective of intangible feelings into our design process. We shall achieve a better and more sustainable built form for our users. Evoking various emotions through our spatial configurations, sensing a better quality of interaction, visual treat, connectivity's within the fabric, indulgence of art forms, skyline etc.

Human mind is vulnerable to many thoughts and ideas, but the one idea which is majorly overlooked by today's planners is the comfort level in our built form. If the mind is in pleasure mood loving and associates with the public spaces and the basic elements which constitute a place which structures over a period of time..

The idea of joy in built form to achieve a good quality of life would be deliberated through the physical attributes and their relationship to the context they nurture through and create an intangible bond with human daily routine. This is so synonymous to achieving an emotional sustainable structure making it a better liveable place for human performance in all occasions, seasons, and all human emotions.

Keywords — joy happiness, emotion, built form, spaces, bond, qualitative, nature, lifestyle.

I. WHAT IS JOY?

Joy, A feeling of great pleasure and happiness, Synonymous to delight, elation, exhilaration, and bliss is an attitude of the heart or spirit.

I don't think we can talk about designing for joy without first acknowledging what joy means and why joy is so absent from our designs?

The concept of design is rooted in the concept of wholeness. For a qualitative design means it has to be whole.

This is where the consideration of design intersects with joy if qualitative design is whole. Then the goal of design should be to enable us to have the fullest experience of the Architecture, irrespective of the constraints. Design is just not about accommodating functions/ activities but inspiring and motivating people to experience, "The intangible". Architecture/built form making sense of identity, sense of association through physical manifestation through form, shapes, volumes, light, air, color, textures, patterns, landscape. Joy but is the emotion that tells us where we are moving in the direction of exhalation.

"Architecture is a way to touch our world more beautiful, interesting and balances" (as said by Ar. Mauro Mono [1]).

Built form / architecture its enclosures should have the strength to arouse our inert feelings/ emotions and sustain it for a life time. The perception of sustainability with the passage of time. Like A small balcony with a flowering tree is enough to romanticize and instigate our emotions and to achieve an interesting balance.

"Our cultured is obsessed with the pursuit of happiness, but in the process, we kind of over look joy we pursue the things we think will make us happy, but in the process we often find ourselves too busy or exhausted to experience or appreciate joy. Yet joy is a lot more immediate and accessible than happiness and ironically, it may actually be one of the most powerful routes to happiness. So rather than chasing after happiness, maybe what we should be looking is focusing on joy instead" (by Ar.Ingrid fetell lee [2])

If we want to make our architecture reflect this wholistic concept of design then it makes sense to incorporate the aesthetic of joy, which are tangible signs of an environment that can help us thrive.

II. "THE INTANGIBLES"

Joy might seem small; it can be a spark that starts a much bigger chain reaction towards a happy qualitative life.

Joy is a state of being influenced by a range of different factors:

- Joy is inclusive and embracing.
- Joy is warm and solace.
- Joy is energetic and abundant.

- Joy is non hierarchical, irrespective of rank and prestige.

What brings in joy?

When is the last we saw a built form and loved it?

When was the last time we saw a space and wanted to spend some more time?

When was the last time we loved to see that little bird chirp sitting on the branch of the tree?

When was that last when we saw a butterfly jumping from flower to flower and we got excited, thrilled and wow!

When was the last night we spent under the blanket of twinkling stars and yet felt strong and confident?

Which was the colourful colour we chose and despite criticism we stood by our decision and had the last smile?

When we sat in front of our French windows and saw the rain pouring and pouring and pouring!

When we see a climber taking support of a strong tree and the strong tree very gracefully accepting the climber and helped in his growth and we smiled and felt happy and not alone!

We visit our favourite food stall as all these years the smell and taste has reinforced our bond with the food and the place to realize that past so many years we have just unknowingly and subconsciously come to this joint with friend's family and made so many friends there and moved on.

When did we stand on the street and got excited to see this piece of architecture which has now become, a symbol, a landmark, a part of our memory lane (subconscious mental image) and felt sure that such architecture has strengthened the emotional connect between people and the city.

As when did this architecture shape my thoughts ideas and now is such an integral part of my soul and heart ♥ "pause"

The emotions evoked bring us closer and strengthen our physical perception and give us happiness and inert joy (though intangible) but enough to relate as they shape us and we also shape our architecture with the belief that architecture built is meant for human emotions and not only to serve the physical or functional aspects!

These little moments of joy add up over a period of time. There cumulative effects can lead to greater happiness and joy!

III. "PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF THE INTANGIBLE"

The case examples would introduce forces researched by authors through his own designs and his experience's which have helped shape his design ideas. Relating to comfort security, efficiency, emotions, physical, color and texture for a joyous, environment.

- Physical/ functional forces.
- Climatic forces.
- Contextual forces.

- Emotional forces.
- Natural forces.
- Structural / service forces.
- Social forces

The above forces namely [emotional and physical/ function forces] would be examined by Architectural case examples (designed by the author) and design strategies would be worked accordingly.

Architecture needs to have a balanced approach for the tangible and intangible attributes:

- Rooted to community it is structured for.
- Rooted to the land it is built on.
- Rooted to the aesthetics of the site.
- Rooted in the aspirations of the users.

IV. CASE EXAMPLES

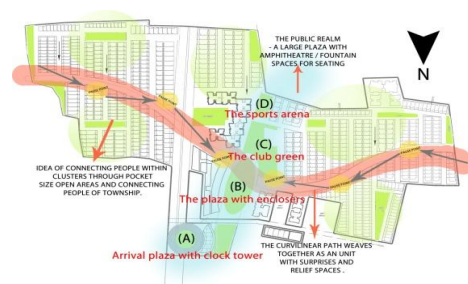
A. Ansal town (integrated housing for an aspiring young generation)

1) The physical / functional programme (by client):

Accommodating 750 houses with club, mall, shopping center, school horizontal / vertical housing. Houses to be on E/W axis and max commercial exploitation of land.

2) The emotional programme (by architect):

Challenge to accommodate the functional requirement in relation to the client expectation and users aspiration. Tying the old shaped land with the help of curvilinear promenade (across the land). The major curvilinear spine carrying all M.E.P. services. The curvilinear promenade reinforces and gives easy mobility to the spaces and itself becomes a space full of surprises with small interactive spaces with elements like trees, fountains, artwork's etc. and relief (pauses) for one to relish the spaces. The community interacts from the cluster neighborhood spaces to the town scale of space. (Designer friendly spaces for all age group). Spaces flow from the arrival plaza (clock tower) symbolic to time and history. The plaza with fountain, amphitheater, gazebo, art work and enclosure. The club/ sports green relate to physical health and general recreations (Celebrations, events, gatherings, and similar place use for private / personal activities. Walking, sitting,. Gossiping, dancing, sports, recreation.



(Sketch plan of ansal town)



(Arrival plaza with clock tower)



(The plaza with enclosures)



(The club green)



(creating enclosures to define space)

Fig 1: ansal town

3) Understanding :

The curvilinear path, creating changing different avenues when one moves along the hierarchical spatial configurations connecting people from cluster neighbourhood in open space to town level and engaging the user from an everyday experience to event based. Connects one emotionally creates solace and happiness where expressions is the qualitative lifestyle.

B. BOB academy , Ahemdabad

1) The physical / functional programme (by client):

To accommodate admin wing, research wing, training wing. A training institute for the young aspirants coming for the training sessions. With sufficient parking, cafeteria, indoor recreational centre.

2) The emotional programme (by architect):

Gardens within the built forms arranged as stepped terrace to achieve multiple layer of horizontal and vertical gardens. The users need not use mechanical equipment and can walk the institute through series of levelled corridors acting as balconies / terrace which become strong visual connect and enjoy the impact of vertical gardens within the built form.



To design an ambience suitable to work in an unstress and healthy environment where one can enjoy the forest, flowering trees , rains, the sky -in different seasons.

(Multiple layered base plan)

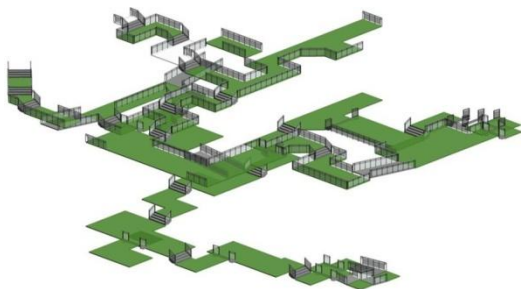


(View of vertical levelled garden)





(Indicating vertical levelled garden and movement)



(Section showing rising vertical garden with built form)



(The vertical colourful forest)

Fig 2: The BOB academy

3) Understanding :

Saving on electrical energy through these walkable levelled terrace become spaces for socializing, interaction, casual sessions and meeting points. Reinforced by cafes and general recreational activity. Spaces for outdoor informal sessions add to

the work quality of space and shape the overall behaviour of the users for a better qualitative environment.

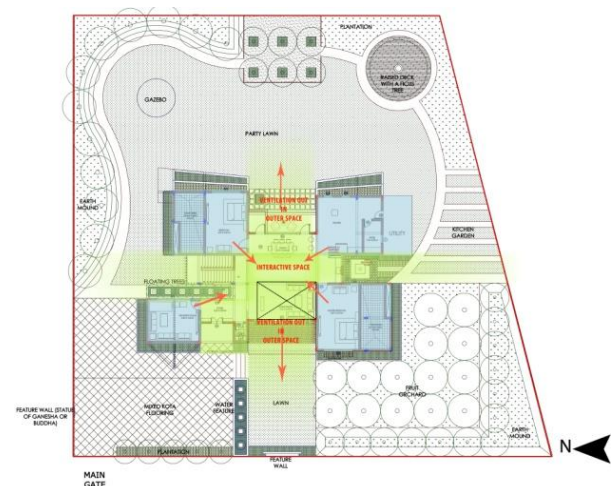
C. Private residence at khargone (MP, INDIA)

1) The physical / functional programme (by client):

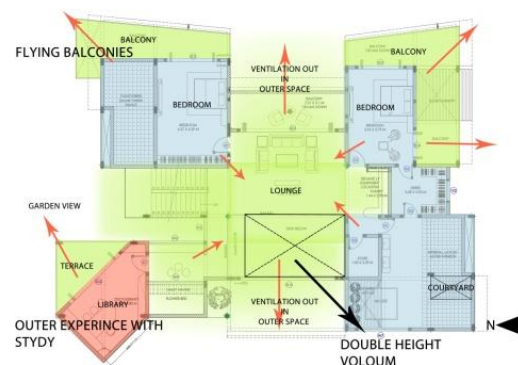
To accommodate four master rooms with big family space, formal living space, spa/library, loft, store room, kitchen etc. with a garden, porch, entrance foyer , garage.

2) The emotional programme (by architect):

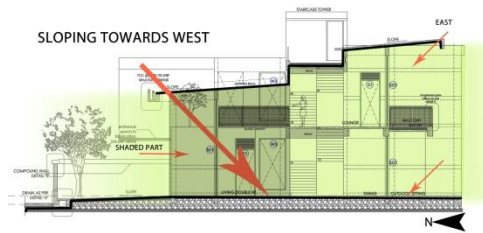
Balconies facing towards the east, have been styled, they visually appear to extend in space / the roof scapes. The internal volumes, cross ventilation, roof sloping in direction to allow diffused light and cut the harsh sun, and allow landscape / nature to be an integral part of the house / the family space with its volumes, sloping roof towards west becomes the place of association to reinforce family bond with rooms, library (study room) over looking into. A nature and visually integrated home with subtle terraces for flowering plant. The library placed skewed to an angle, to create a terrace, and surprise visual element during the day and seasons.



(Ground floor plan)



(First floor plan)



(Section)



(Interior view from family lounge through double height)



(Views)

Fig 3: The private residence at khargone, mp (INDIA)

3) *Understanding :*

The roof scapes, the internal volumes, the terraces and balconies, scaled windows; the massing , slits for cross ventilation, the visual connectivity (internally / externally)the integrated gardens all add up to the emotional experience of the user creating his sense of identity by shaping his/her life style for better quality of life.

D. High secondary school (maihar school)

1) *The physical / functional programme (by client):*

A contoured site, gentle sloping towards the river and offering the Mountain View. To accommodate nursery, primary, secondary classes with labs, library, curricular room , mess/dinning, indoor sports activities, auditorium, outdoor sports activities and staff quarters.

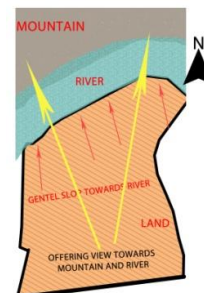
2) *The emotional programme (by architect):*

The student who is the principal user, experiences spaces of proportionate scale and shape. Through the morphological arrangement of built

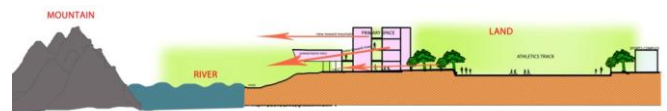
form enclosures in the nursery / primary to secondary block to the mass congregating spaces. The built form lays emphasizes on place making, creating spaces as per age groups and the pattern of events from daily routine activities /to periodic activities. Morning assembly, sports activities, mass gathering, dramas, acts, dance. The built form orientations allow for the rain water to flow and connect with the river. River, slopes and the mountain become an integral part of the everyday experience.



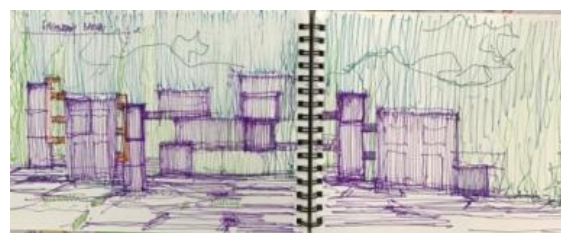
(Layout plan)



(Topographical understanding)



(section)



(The visual linkages through bridges, volumes, terraces etc. [conceptualization as perceived by architect])



(The built form arranged to allow easy flow of rain water into the river and streams offering to the mountains.[a visual connect])

Fig 4: higher secondary school



(Bridge and terraces)

3) *Understanding:*

The topography, the mountain, the nature integrated for an design experience and built form so arranged reinforces it. Space varying in scale, sizes and proportion is sync. With the users and adds to the security and safety of the students .Shaping the character of education arousing feeling, sensitivity towards nature and it's elements for a qualitative academics environment generating a sense of identity and an long term association.

E. Bank of Baroda, Indore

1) *The physical / functional programme (by client) :*

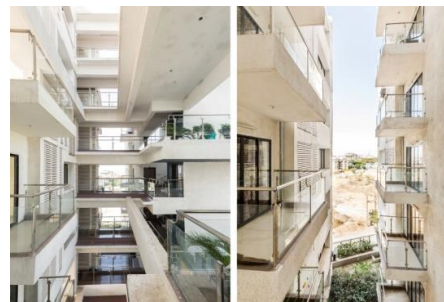
To accommodate 27 apartment of 2BHK with space for regional, branch office and parking at low level with a chest room facility.

2) *The emotional programme (by architect):*

The podium floor with garden space for clubbing activities, meditation, allows for social interaction and celebration of festive events and general get together, partying . The built form with random play of solid/voids to allow light and accommodate interactive and playful balconies, terraces, bridges reinforcing the idea of visual interaction and community meeting through vertical garden. The layering of terrace/ bridges randomly allow shade and cover to the space below. The sky, the nature, the humans, the birds sing in harmony with each other. The user with their inert emotion, a joyous feeling into a sense of being there and part of the built form.



(Vertical forest)



(The axis open for light, cross ventilation, views)

Fig 5: Bank of Baroda, Indore

3) *Understanding:*

Space of expression, Space of freedom, Private spaces, Community space, a feeling of overwhelm with nature all these attribute to the quality of user life and with pride one feels solace and happy for a qualitative life.

F. Elements of architecture

1) *Facades and skylines-as a way of evoking emotions:*

- Facades with changing profile / shapes.
- Allow for quality visual interaction among the users
- Varying volumes and skylines give relief to the bulky straight line facades.
- Reinforce our emotions for free expressions.



(View)

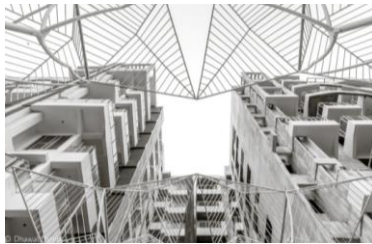
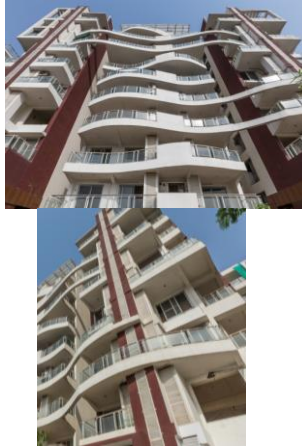
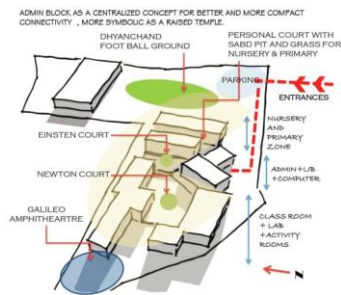


Fig 6: curvilinear facades and changing skylines

2) Knowledge sharing courtyards:

Hierarchy of courtyard displaying work/creativities of eminent scientist, painters, poets. Reinforces the plural uses of these courtyards; for the students, teachers, with the outdoor academics sessions), For a stress free, enjoyable academics environment, for quality and fullest education.



(Knowledge sharing open spaces)



(The built form creates comfortable space)

Fig 7: knowledge sharing courtyards

3) Form based architecture, night architecture, and colour architecture.

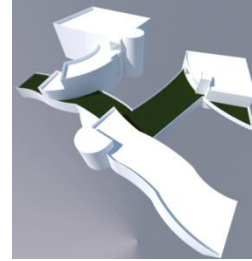


Fig 8: form based architecture



Fig 9: colour in architecture



Fig 10: night architecture

V. MOVING AHEAD WITH ARCHITECTURE

- Rightful and meaningful understanding of these two factors adds to the qualitative ambience to our architecture built form concerned. Too much harsh sun to have shaded elements and openings. Like Morning sun is always welcome with big window, but heat impact to be controlled with natural and architectural tools. To develop an understanding of the local climate and flora and fauna Building bye laws to allow flexibility and relations in volumes, terrace, random voids, to enrich our building profile and create facades and built form which do not look gloomy, need to create an

impressive mental image. To work with the heart and soul of the user's aspirations, his intangible expectation has to be understood sensitively.

- Emotion of joy generates identity to the Architecture, space and time. It builds on the back ground of the context and purpose we design upon. Emotions of joy create a successful sense of place in our built form rooted in context generating a new image for them evoking cultural values in line with the nature of expressions.
- Architectural elements identified here are possibility for beings happy and joyous into any design project. One can put to use this knowledge and designs that give high priority. To integrate in a meaningful ways.
- Approach there design and shaping their work with an eye towards making people happy.

Design for joy and happiness, for qualitative life.

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- [7] All sketches, art work and 3D rendering of buildings are of author himself.