Dynamics in Residential neighbourhood due to Studentification: A case of Pune

Meghana Malve

Assistant Professor, College of Architecture, Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be) University, Pune, Maharashtra, India

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Abstract - *Pune formally known as Poona the 'Oxford of the East' is an educational hub. This has led to the influx of a large number of student populations every year in Pune due to the aspect of location, language, quality education, variety in education streams, climate, connectivity, adaptable in nature and cosmopolitan culture. The urban sprawls in Pune have educational institutes dispersed in all parts of the city. As the city's sprawl extends, so does the educational institute and its growth. This urban expanse captivated the educational institutes within the residential neighborhods. Some of the educational institutes developed within an old residential neighbourhood. Such development within an existing neighbourhood has an influence on the built form as well as on the surrounding of the neighbourhood giving rise to studentified neighborhods. This studentification now has changed the neighbourhood fabric socially, culturally, economically and physically, etc. As every change has two perspectives, the positive and the negative, so is the case with studentification. The implication of this change has a diverse footprint on the surrounding area. The current research paper overviews the facets of studentification along with its impacts on the immediate residential neighbourhood.*

***Key Words*: facets, Pune, residential neighbourhood, studentification**

1.INTRODUCTION

Pune, formerly known as Poona is the second largest city in Maharashtra located in the western Maharashtra region. It is a cosmopolitan city and has been an educational hub for decades. The pioneering university establishment in Pune was in the late 1940'. Pune is honoured as 'Oxford of the East' because it has a large number of quality and premier academic and research institutes offering education in a variety of fields. This educational scenario of Pune attracts a large influx of students every year. Students from all over India as well as around the world come to Pune to gain education in various fields. The student population is so large that its influence is seen at all places in the city i.e. shopping, eating, entertainment, leisure, transportation, etc. Due to this the overall image of Pune as a pensioner's paradise has now become a student's paradise.

With the rise of new educational institutions in the city there is a load on the existing infrastructure and mainly on the areas where these educational institutions are located surrounded by residential neighbourhoods. The influx of students has a lot of influences on the positive and negative development of the neighbourhood around the educational campuses. The paper gives an overview of the current scenario of the immediate surrounding residential studentified neighborhoods around the educational campuses and also about the dynamics in these areas. This research paper also tries to explore how this development is interfering with the residential nature of the neighbourhood.

2. EDUCATION AND RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS:

Pune has many locations, which has educational institutes within the immediate residential neighborhoods. This development helps the city grow dynamically and becomes a hub to attract students from every part of the globe for education. Since the city has cosmopolitan culture and a favourable climate, good adaptive culture and moreover inclusive in all aspects it is the preferable choice for students to chose Pune for education. Due to this the student population in recent times is multifold in Pune and the education institutes have also expanded themselves because of the demand for education.

These educational hubs impart education beginning from primary level to the post graduate level and above, offering a variety of streams and courses within the same campus. This inclusive nature of the campus makes them flooded with student population and inturn impacting the immediate residential neighbourhood. This sizable number of transit student population also makes for the vibrant culture of the locality while helping in boosting the economy of the city. This influx of student population has helped the neighbourhood to grow socially, culturally, economically and physically.

3. STUDENTIFICATION IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOOD

The higher educational institutes are always a source of talent which helps in the progress and development of a society and the nation at large. Pune has always attracted

a large student population from across the globe since decades because of a large number of educational institutes. Some educational institutions are located in residential neighborhoods, due to this in most of the immediate residential neighbourhood the original residents are displaced and it is dominated by student residential occupancy giving rise to studentification. This is because of the shortage of accommodation provided by the educational institutes which drives students to search for accommodation in the private residential accommodation outside the campus.(Donaldson, Benn, Campbell, & Jager, 2014)*No provision has been made for the accommodation of increased student numbers, so the lack has been made up by the private rented sector.* (Smith D., November 2008)The universities and colleges increase the student intake but they do not increase the accommodation with the increased student number due to this students have to accommodate themselves in the existing surrounding neighbourhood. The students always prefer to stay near the educational institutes so that they can save on travelling time and transportation expenses.

Studentification can be defined as the process of social, cultural, economic and physical changes that occur resulting from the influx of students, usually within privately rented accommodation in neighbourhoods close to higher education institutions (Smith, 2002; 2005)(GREGORY & ROGERSON, 2019) *Studentification is defined as a form of urbanism that results from the concentration of residential areas by higher education students (Sabri&Ludin, 2009)*(Donaldson, Benn, Campbell, & Jager, 2014) This studentification development has impacted the residential neighborhood in a great way. Due to the establishment of educational institutes in residential neighbourhoods the surrounding region undergoes various forms of transformation. (Susanti, Soetomo, & Buchori, MARCH 2020)

Students stay away from home and they lead a different lifestyle altogether which has no defined pattern in eating, sleeping, recreation or anything else for that matter. The very feeling of being away from home and dependency on outsourcing their basic necessities leads to a different lifestyle when compared to a family life is also seen. This disparity in the lifestyle between student life and family life does not fall in line within the same residential neighborhood. Due to studentification the entire demographics of the area changes as the neighbourhood tries to adapt itself to the needs of the students (Sanmugarajah, Kankanamge, Ratnayake, & Kariyawasam, December 2020)

4. FACETS IMPACTING THE RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBOURHOODS DUE TO STUDENTIFICATION

A decade ago the educational campuses were limited to a handful of institutes. As the city grew and Pune being the preferable choice the students influx began for education purposes but this flow had certain implications on the city at large. The educational institutes thought only about their growth and prospects giving no attention to the implications it will have socially, culturally, economically and physically on the surroundings. Studentification has diverse impacts on the neighbourhood residential areas and further these impacts have some implications which affect the functioning of the residential neighbourhood. *New residents bring new habits, behaviours and social changes. Higher population densities, as a result of over-concentration (illegally) of students in houses, brings about an imbalance in population diversity (Hubbard, 2006: 333) and in the process studentification contributes to destabilising the homogeneity of an area.*(Donaldson, Benn, Campbell, & Jager, 2014) Students though are the temporary residents of the area are the key players in shaping the residential neighbourhoods that influence the regional economic structure, such as the level of investment for both student occupancy and trade and services, types of economic activity along with the cultural and environmental aspect also. (Dewi & Ristianti, May 2019)

Immense impact is evident on the residential fabric of the neighborhood due to studentification. *A tangible and intangible relationship occur between students and the society, which results into the domination of the students in the neighbourhood.*(Sanmugarajah, Kankanamge, Ratnayake, & Kariyawasam, December 2020)*The concentration of students in neighbourhoods through processes of studentification has often precipitated conflicts with other residents centred on behavioural issues and perceived neighbourhood decline.* (Revington, 2022)

4.1. Social

Students' lifestyle is often at odds in terms of late working hours and sometimes the rude behavioural aspects hamper the cohesiveness of the residential neighbourhood. New forms of spatial segregation arise increasing tension and conflict between the permanent residents and short term residents. The relationship between the long term residents and short term residents gives rise to a new dimension of relationship which might have a negative impact on the overall scenario of the area.

4.1.1. Indecency in the precincts

Students sometimes behave indecently in public causing a nuisance to the general public by smoking, drinking and indecent dressing. Smoking is a trend nowadays for the youth although it has a lot of health implications. Students smoking on the streets and wearing immodest clothes in the area abutting the residential building is a problem to the people residing in them, since residential neighborhoods include the elderly, sometimes the sick, toddlers and school going children, pregnant women etc.

4.1.2. Unethical behavior

The residential neighborhood becomes a hotspot for illegal and antisocial behavioural activities like late night fuss, rising levels of crime, theft, vandalism, hampering of street furniture, security problems, as well as social tensions caused by cultural difference, etc.(Smith, 2008) (Situmorang, Sudikno, Surjono, & Wicaksono, MARCH 2020) Students being awake late at night and roaming on streets invite crime. Speedy and rash driving by students can cause accidents where the permanent residents can be a victim of them.

4.2. Cultural

As students are not staying with their family they have no restrictions on their behavior and way of living. The lifestyle pattern is different for the students when they live away from their family. They do not follow the standard family culture so there is an increase in the noisy leisure activities and late night culture along with the undisciplined nature which causes nuisance to the permanent residents. Due to the large number of students in a specific area, the area becomes dominated by the youth oriented lifestyle patterns and cultural differences also. The youth population will be more in the age group of 18 to 25 years. Due to the presence of a large number of young population in the area, it pulls youth from other areas to enjoy the youthful character of the studentified area which disturbs the cohesiveness of the existing environment and neighbourhood character which the local community enjoys.

4.2.1. Fast food culture

Fast food culture is a trend among youngsters. The neighborhood in the vicinity of the educational campuses is flooded with such fast food outlets to meet the demand of the students. These eateries are open till late in the night due to the student's requirements. This is disturbing the peaceful atmosphere of the residents. *The consumption behaviours of students create a different type of retail and administrative framework.*(Sanmugarajah, Kankanamge, Ratnayake, & Kariyawasam, December 2020) *There are different consumption practices of students and so new or transformed spaces of consumption arises* (FABULA, BOROS, KOVÁCS, HORVÁTH, & PÁL, July 2017)

Fig-1 : Setting up of a variety of fast food outlets.

Source: Author

4.2.2. Late night culture

Students roaming on streets late in the night, celebrating birthdays, late night parties with loud noise on streets or coming home late, is a trend to them but it is a nuisance to the families staying in the vicinity. The loitering on streets late in the night howling and honking disturbs the peaceful and calm atmosphere within the residential neighbourhoods.

4.2.3. Undisciplined

Students lead an unorganized and undisciplined lifestyle but sometimes it affects the family routine for the families staying in the vicinity. Playing loud music and failing to cooperate with the residential society's norms is objectionable and this type of undisciplined behaviour by students creates a tense situation between students and residents in the locality. *The concentration of students and their associated lifestyle causes conflict within communities and lead to the disruption, exclusion and displacement of 'well balanced' communities (Smith, 2009; Smith et al., 2014)*(GREGORY & ROGERSON, 2019)

4.3. Economical

As students prefer residing close to the educational institute there is an increased demand for student housing so a change in the real estate scenario along with various student related services popping up to fulfill their needs as the area is more student centric is seen. The occupancy characteristics are changed by the increases in the non-owner occupied residences and decrease in the owner occupied residences. *The economic changes of a neighborhood start with the abnormally increasing property values due to rising students' accommodation demand.*(Sanmugarajah, Kankanamge, Ratnayake, & Kariyawasam, December 2020) *Studentification*

encourages the emergence of aspects such as new urban facilities that did not exist previously in a particular place. (Susanti, Soetomo, & Buchori, MARCH 2020)

4.3.1. Changing scenario in real estate

The residential apartments are converted into hostel facilities in greed of making more money so as to meet the demands of the students but the same is not affordable by the families. The rent prices are higher in these neighborhoods because as the students stay on a sharing basis they are able to pay for it. The profit gained from student tenants is more than that gained from the family tenant on a rental basis as on an average 3-5 people in a family live in a 3bhk flat but 8-10 students live in the same space giving more income to the owners, so the owners prefer students over families. (Ordor, Cattell, Michell, & Bowen, 2010)

4.3.2. Retail chains

The retail chain development boosts the local economy. The existence and survival of some retail businesses is only due to the presence of students in large numbers in terms of consumption patterns, lifestyle patterns, leisure aspects, etc. The studentified neighborhood gives rise to a lot of retail chains to meet the increasing demands of students like parlours, hairdressers, stationery shops, mobile repair shops, laundry, vehicle repair shops, gift shops, eatery, clothing, travel agencies, real estate offices, etc. This boom in retail chains has created business and job opportunities and has become a source of income to the people living nearby. *These business opportunities target students and the associated business chains as the primary market.*(Susanti, Soetomo, & Buchori, MARCH 2020)

Fig – 2: Establishment of various services to cater the needs of students. Source: Author

4.3.3. Cutting down expenses

Students prefer accommodation near to the educational campus where they study for cutting down on their travel time and expenses which could be an added liability on the ongoing expenses. *Students that cannot find accommodation on campus generally prefer to be located as close to the institution as possible. (Curtis, 2005)*(Donaldson, Benn, Campbell, & Jager, 2014) Students share the total rent so per head the rent is less for each student so the total rent the owner gets is more. A single family paying capacity is sometimes less when compared to students paying capacity.

4.4. Physical

As students are staying for short term they have less attachment or bonding to that area due to which the physical environment is hampered on a large scale which gives rise to tension and conflicts in the area. A reduction in the owners occupying the area leads to the deterioration of the premises.(Smith D. , 2005) A number of services come up to cater the needs of the students, the students occupy the walkways, roads become hangout spaces by sitting in/on the vehicles. All this causes noise, haphazard parking, congested pathways and an unhealthy environment in the area. *The physical change due to studentification causes a decline in environmental conditions, depending on the local context.*(Smith, 2005)(Susanti, Soetomo, & Buchori, MARCH 2020)

4.4.1. Eateries

Eateries encroach the pedestrian walkways and replace the assigned usage of the walkway. This encroachment can be in terms of seating area of the eatery outlets in front of the eateries, students smoking area, dumped trash bins, parked vehicles, human traffic, etc. There are no fixed timings for such traffic, rather a nuisance at all times. The eateries remain open late in the night creating noise due to functioning of the eatery and by the gathered students at the eatery. This type of development affects the residential neighborhood because the typology of activities and the users are not the same.

Fig – 3: Trash bins kept on pedestrian walkways

Source: Author

4.4.2. Roads

Road widths are in accordance with the residential neighbourhood layout. Residential precincts have a different type of vehicular traffic requirement. The carriageway has a limitation of the vehicular carrying capacity. Since the educational campus has a limited parking facility, the increased number of student vehicles barge on to the immediate neighbourhoods. This excessive parking gets accumulated on to the surrounding areas and becomes a hindrance on the carriageway of the neighborhood residential areas.

Fig – 4: Width of carriageway reduced due to On street haphazard parking. Source: Author

4.4.3. Pedestrian walkways

Pedestrian walkway edges develop in a pattern that is not the usual acquaintance. These edges are occupied with eatery kiosks, small shopping outlets etc. Due to this changed use these walkways are occupied by students for eating, smoking, shopping, loitering etc. There is a change in the pattern of usage of walkways and street edges due

to wet and dry waste getting collected on the streets. This type of encroachment reduces the carrying capacity of the walkway making it congested and a forced walkway gets created on the carriageway of vehicles. This indirectly becomes a hindrance to vehicular movement of the neighbourhood and invites casualties.

Fig – 5: Walkway width reduced due to student accumulation. Source: Author

Fig – 6 : Pedestrian walkways encroached by eatery.

Source: Author

4.4.4. Parking

The overflowing parking from the educational institutes occupies the neighbouring road parking lots. This leads to congestion occurring because of haphazard parking, traffic jams and increased noise levels due to honking and in turn overloading the street capacity. Parking slots are always occupied by students' vehicles coming to the commercial shops and eateries leading to less parking of the residential vehicles from the neighborhood.

Fig – 7 : Width of carriageway reduced due to unorganized parking. Source: Author

4.4.5. Persistence of noise

Noise pollution has become a very major issue in these areas. Students honking their vehicles unnecessarily at any time of the day and silencer-less vehicles add on to the unbearable noise levels in a calm residential area. This forces the residents to install soundproof windows to curb the external noise. The activities in the educational institutes are unlike the regular routines of home activities namely cultural events, sports events or any other program within the campus which adds on to the noise levels in the vicinity because of use of public address systems. At times it is stressful to the elderly who are not used to such a student culture.

4.4.6. Unhealthy vicinity

Discarded alcohol bottles, cigarette butts and garbage creates unhealthy surroundings. The studentified neighbourhoods do not have clean environments due to their undisciplined lifestyle. *Students do not have a high degree of maintenance culture, which consequently contributes negatively to the quality of the public environment. This lack of maintenance ultimately influences the gradual decline of the environs of the student areas. Lack of maintenance issues creates a tense relationship between the students and the landlords.*(Ordor, Cattell, Michell, & Bowen, 2010) Reduction in the owners occupying the areas leads to deterioration of the surroundings and unhealthy vicinity prevails.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Pune's development in terms of educational institutes is interfering with the residential neighbourhood fabric development. Image of the residential neighborhood has changed greatly from family culture and influenced towards hostel culture. Impacts of studentification have a positive side including the vibrancy in the area created by the large youth population and also the setting up of the retail outlets, food outlets, services gives job opportunities and also its contribution to the local economy catering to

the needs of the residential neighbourhood in the area. (Ordor, Cattell, Michell, & Bowen, 2010) *New upscale services like restaurants, shops, bars and other services that cater to the affluent new generation and their lifestyle benefit the resident families.* (Malhotra, March 2013)This growing population of students has changed the pattern of living in the residential neighbourhood. The studentification is also a highly influential component in the private rental market. This is because of the scarcity of ON campus accommodation provided by the educational institutes which forces students to stay in private rented accommodation nearby the institutes. Students live together in an apartment sharing the total rent even if it is more than the market rent for a family.

Students bring social, cultural, and economic benefits to a university town or city, creating lively, mixed-community neighborhoods with an attractive range of uses, high levels of local services and vibrant cultural activities (Munro et al., 2009).(Wilkinson & Greenhalgh, 2022) The advantage to students who are staying in these hostel facilities is that they have to walk less and save commuting time to reach their destination. The area is subjected to services which cater to the needs and interests of the students. Although this boosts the local economy, the existing neighborhood infrastructure is overloaded in terms of encroachment, noise, security, parking, traffic congestion, poor property upkeep, etc. This transformation from residential neighborhood to studentification is seldom unbearable in terms of waste generation, unhealthy vicinity, night culture and rude behaviour. The decorum of the residential neighbourhood is lost due to studentification. Students come from different backgrounds, social status, and upbringing so naturally they behave differently from the local community where they reside. There is an increase in the residential density of the studentified area with a youth population giving rise to the loss of residential character along with the loss of identity of the place. The student culture is not accepted by some of the permanent residents so it might give rise to tensions between the non-student population and student population. (Ordor, Cattell, Michell, & Bowen, 2010) The ingress of students in the residential neighbourhood impacts on the balance and cohesive nature of the permanent residents which hampers and weakens the local communities at large.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Studentification, along with its impact on the development of an area, must address relevant issues carefully and thoughtfully.(Susanti, Soetomo, & Buchori, MARCH 2020) Patrolling is a recommended technique to curb unauthorized encroachment and also the noise levels. Regular checks should be done by the local authority to avoid encroachment and also on noise levels to be within the permissible limits according to the residential areas.

Impact of educational campuses on immediate residential neighbourhoods is to be checked by the educational authorities to facilitate the outgrowth and expansion of their institutes without causing hindrance to the general public. Transformation of the area to studentification leads to disruption of the social, cultural and economic cohesive living. Enhancing the cohesive living in On campus accommodation should be encouraged so that Off campus accommodation can be limited to a lesser percentage in reference to the student population in the educational campus. Education campuses should plan an On campus accommodation facility in conjunction with the student population of their campus with the future prospects as well. To avoid the overloading and chaos on roads created by the haphazard parking in the residential neighbourhoods the traffic and parking should be given importance and space to available in the campuses itself. A policy should be framed by the authorities to combat urban sprawl and maximize land use in the city.

Educational institutions in residential areas must be established only after study of the future population that will be residing in the area and the impact it will have on the permanent residents and environment as a whole. There should be some limit in the number of only students residing in a particular area who are not the local residents along with the intake of students in the educational institutes. The increase in the number of students in the higher educational institutes and they residing in the residential neighbourhood should now be taken seriously to maintain the residential character of the neighbourhood community and revival of the studentified area. *Militating against the emergence of social conflicts in studentifying areas thus requires the establishment of lines of communication between town and university, cultivating a `student-friendly' ethos among local residents and an empathy for local residents among students.* (Hubbard, 2008)

The process of studentification has a large impact on the urban fabric of the place so considering the future growth and effect it should be considered in the planning and decision making process in the growth and development of the cities. *Joint effort is to be taken by the educational institutes and the local organizations in order to develop an efficient collaborative planning in the city.* (Ruiu, December 2017) As the students are temporary residents the issue of maintenance of both buildings and environment as a whole in addition to the influence on the housing prices should be studied and death with proper planning. Issue of maintenance should be given due consideration as it has a direct impact on the quality of living and also on the safety and security of the people residing in that area. (BARON, & KAPLAN, August 2010) The visual aspect of the studentified area should also be given due attention so that the residential neighbourhood character is not lost and the long term residents do not feel alien in their own areas.

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BIOGRAPHIES

Meghana Malve is an Assistant Professor at College of Architecture, Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be) University, Pune. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Architecture and Masters degree in Environmental Architecture.