URBAN PUBLIC SPACE: A CASE FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRY

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Urban Public Space:
A Case from Developing Country

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Abstract

Cities in developing world are inadequately equipped with public spaces. The increasing urbanizations trend is attracting more people to come to the cities without having proper sustainable plan for public spaces. However, this social public place holds the important function for urban well-being and collective recognition. This is the place where human can participate as fully fledged social subjects in complex civic life. Unfortunately, in most cases the provision of public space in these cities is always neglected or poorly integrated in planning legislations. So, in many cases community people make their own ways of social interaction that gives public space a new definition. Khulna, one of the divisional cities of Bangladesh, is going through the similar developing country situation. Lack of fund and space restricts development agencies to make new public spaces in this city. On the other hand management and coordination challenges between multilevel planning authorities also making existing public spaces malfunctioned. Sustainably planned, created and managed public spaces are hence urged for the cities of developing world to get livable and healthy urban environment.

Key Words: Public space, Developing Countries, Sustainability
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Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Research has revealed that public spaces are important for cities to grow sustainably but developing countries facing the ongoing struggles of urbanization always find this difficult to create this functional social space for its residents (Daniel, 2016; Cohen, 2006). Here, the quantity, quality and distributions of public spaces are challenged by proper planning initiatives in fast-growing and resource poor urban situations. So, the aim of public spaces to be considered as symbol of collective well-being that nurtures the growth of public life has become questionable in developing world (Amin, 2008). Cities are in need of open social gathering space for its residents regardless of social class, race, ethnicity, gender. So, public spaces hold an important position for the multicultural highly dense cities within the domain of planning for urban sustainability.

Cities all over the world are experiencing a faster urbanization growth. Now, about 400 cities have more than a million people or more where almost seventy percent of them are located in the developing world. More surprisingly, it is estimated that by this year the developing world is going to become more urban in character than rural (Cowley, 2015). The increasing rate of urbanization is good for economy; however, it poses challenges to ensure more sustainable use of space (Torres, 2008). It brings the risk to the cities while having the aim of making these cities sustainable where the social, economic and political foundation is quite weak.

While this space-human ratio poses challenges to offer required public spaces people frequently finds their own ways of making balance. Although the role of public space is universal, the functions and characteristics may vary according to the particularities of the territory and dweller (UN-Habitat, 2016). In “informal hypergrowth cities” large proportions of urban population build their cities without proper referencing from planning apparatus and control (Cowley, 2015, p. 6). They characterize their surroundings based on their demands which may give public space a new definition. A space may get a new role based on the usage of the users which frequently differs from the actual role defined in planning documents. At the same time it makes the planning task difficult to create and manage a useful, attractive, socially equitable, economically feasible and environmentally sustainable public space.
Bangladesh, a small South-Asian country, is also experiencing the general challenges faced by other developing countries. It has followed a faster urbanization rate in current days. The recent statistical report states that about 23.30% of total country population is now living in dense urban areas (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2014). The alarming fact is that almost a quarter of these people fall under poverty line where about 62% lives in slums (Ellis and Roberts, 2016). In the broad context of this urbanization and its circumstances, the continuous decline of public space and also lack of attention on this topic by urban planners is particularly alarming. The shortage of public space and social implications are the matter of serious concern in this growing urban sprawl context (Nowshin, 2017).

1.2 Research Problem

Public space is one of the fundamental components in sustainable urban society. People living in urban areas find this place as their main point of social interaction. So, in urban planning it is expected to have sufficient provision to offer and maintain public spaces for the city dwellers. Unfortunately, this doesn’t always happen in developing countries. Increasing urbanization trend risks the space human ratio where public space usage of land gets the less priority. The situation becomes difficult when the creation and management of public spaces are challenged by complex urban planning structure. Lack of coordination and cooperation between planning agencies leads to nonfunctional and poorly maintained public spaces. As a result, in most cases people make their own arrangement of social meeting point. So, uncontrolled spontaneous growth of informal settlements prevails. This is an important problem in sustainable urban planning when planning agencies fails to provide proper direction to ensure functional public spaces for its citizens. This results in poorly maintained public spaces where informal social activities take over planned functions of any space.

1.3 Research Gap

Though urban public spaces have always been an important component in city planning it never gets the research focus in Bangladesh as how it is actually functioned and managed practically. The practical management challenges thus in most cases turn the public space into an unserviceable situation. Definitions of public spaces are also very vague in the planning documents that results in an ambiguous characterization of this social space. In this work, an in depth analysis of the urban public spaces will be performed to classify these public space based on the practical functions. Attempts were also taken to explore the interplay between different actors who are involved in creating and managing this service. This is crucially
important to make this space sustainable in terms of social, economic and environmental perspective.

1.4 Justification of the Study

For the developing countries where government always struggles to balance between high concentration of urban population and scarcity of land, offering public space is truly a challenge. Bangladesh with all of this economic and urbanization challenges follows the same tragedies of providing livable space to its citizens. Cities of Bangladesh are growing at a tremendous rate where high population flow toward dense cities making city life unsustainable in true sense. Planners are working hard to ensure basic civic services where public space in most cases remains hidden though it is considered as one of the core elements of urban planning. The social breathing place becomes shattered without proper planning guidelines. Authorities responsible for creating and managing this space consider this as lost space that result in unauthorized invasion. So, Bangladesh is in a long way behind to think on this crucial element which is important for sustainable city life. This study hence aims to analyze the nature, context and characteristics of public space as how it functions in real life. The interplay of different actors is also important in this case to critically oversee the management functions to understand existing challenges and move for future planning. Here, sustainable planning and management of public space may range from social, economic and environmental based on the characteristics found from the analysis. Time and fund limitation makes this study to confine only in one city in Bangladesh. As most of the cities follow similar planning and management structures this study can act as a guideline for planning bodies while dealing with urban public space issues.

1.5 Research Questions

It is assumed from the introductory discussion that the public space domain requires extensive analysis as it holds the breathing place for society. At the same time, the development challenges of developing countries are questioning on the sustainable management of this important place. So, the research questions (RQ) are defined as:

RQ 1. How the public spaces are created and managed?

There are different actors who are involved in the creation and management of public spaces in Khulna city. This research question will analyze that how the interplay between these actors affects in public space management.
RQ 2. How do the users in developing country define and characterize urban public space?

People needs space to take breathe and have social chatting where access is not controlled. In the case city there is an assumption that city people may have taken the opportunity of making their own space irrespective of planning provision. So, this research question will try to find answer that how versatile the public spaces can be based on the actual use of the city people. Based on the functions the research will also try make some category for further investigation.

1.6 Description of Study Area

Similar to many other cities of Bangladesh Khulna also fall under this hypergrowth criterion where unplanned urbanization growth is prevalent. There are two different authorities named Khulna City Corporation (KCC) and Khulna Development Authority (KDA) who are legally responsible to ensure the planned development and maintenance of this city. They are designated to develop and execution of master plan to ensure a livable city. However, the extent of success is a matter of question. This is undeniable that sustainable use of space largely depends on the balance between planning control and community acceptance. So, this study will also keep a critical eye on the interplay between different actors aspect of the existing public spaces to propose sustainable management of this important civic amenity.

Khulna is one of the divisional cities of Bangladesh located in the South-West part of the country. From British period this region was well known for it rich agricultural hinterland and good accessibility to surrounding big cities. The city has received municipal status in 1884. Since 1950’s and 60’s Khulna has become a focal point for Jute based trading and industries. From early 90’s the economy of this city has been boomed by shrimp farming and processing activities. The establishment of Khulna University in 1991 also introduced Khulna as an important city to the country.

World famous mangrove forest Sundarban is also located in this division (Khulna Development Authority, 2002 and Khulna City Corporation, 2017a).
There are eight divisions in Bangladesh. Khulna division is comprised of ten districts named Khulna, Bagerhat, Chuadanga, Jessore, Jhenaidah, Kushtia, Magura, Meherpur, Narail and Sthkhira (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2013). Khulna City Corporation falls under Khulna district. It has been promoted to Municipal Corporation in 1984 and later declared as City Corporation in 1990 (Khulna City Corporation, 2017b). The previous city corporation area was 45.65 sq km which has been extended to 64.78 sq km in 2011. Total population of KCC area is about 751.23 thousands (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2013; p.18).

The city has grown following a liner pattern along two natural rivers named Rupsha and Bhairab. So, the land use pattern of the city is mainly influenced by the flow of these two levees. The city is only above 8ft. above the mean sea level that makes the land flat and poorly drained. There is no recent land use data has been found. The only available information found in KDA master plan that can give an idea of the land use pattern of the city.

**Table 1.1: Land Use of Khulna City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>51.74</td>
<td>Municipal and Community Facility</td>
<td>0.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>5.28</td>
<td>Transport and Terminal</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial (including Town Centre)</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>Defence / Security</td>
<td>0.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>7.22</td>
<td>Graveyard/Cemetery/Cremaion Ground</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space (Park, stadium, Urban Green, etc,)</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>Brick Field</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warehouse/Storage/Depot</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>Fish Farm</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>Waterbody</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education and Related Use</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>16.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare Facilities</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>Central Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Division</td>
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<td>District</td>
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<td>Upazilla</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>City Corporation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Khulna Development Authority, 2002
Fig 1.3: Land Use Map of Khulna City Corporation
(Source: GIS Data Collected from KCC, 2016 and Map created by author, 2017)
1.7 Development Control in Khulna City Corporation Area

There are two major authorities who are responsible for city planning and development in Khulna city. Khulna City Corporation is the local government body under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Co-operatives. City mayor and ward commissioners are the members of this local government body. There are 1 mayor and 31 ward commissioners who are elected by public voting. The key responsibilities of this authority include town planning and improvement; health, family planning and sanitation; drainage; education; management of trees, parks and open spaces; waste management etc. (Ahmed, 2000; Khulna City Corporation, 2017c). Another development body named Khulna Development Authority has been established in 1961 under Khulna Development Authority Ordinance, 1961. Currently it is working under Ministry of Housing and Public works of the Government. The jurisdiction area of KDA is much larger than KCC. It overlaps with KCC boundary. KDA is a public autonomous body financed by both revenue and development budget from government (Ahmed, 2000; Khulna Development Authority, 2002). The main objective behind the formulation of KDA was to ensure a controlled and planned development for the KDA jurisdiction area by developing master plan, detailed area plan and structure plan. Unfortunately, these two organization works under the supervision of two different ministries and none of them are accountable to each other while implementing any city development activities. There is even no monitoring authority or regulatory control to ensure effective coordination between these two important actors. Therefore, a communication gap is always prevalent. As both authorities not only share same jurisdiction boundary, also play important roles for the planned development of the city the interplay between these organizations hence very important to analyze for this study.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

Public space has always been considered as an important part of civic life from ancient time. It has been the stage of public life where social people interact to each other. In urban planning public space thus holds very important position those are reflected in several literatures.

2.1 Public Space and Civic Life

Carmona, Magalhães and Hammond (2008) have provided a broad definition of public space where it relates to all those parts of the built and natural environment which has free access to public. This also covers the private spaces where public access is unrestricted. Public space belongs to all people in the society both literally and theoretically. It forms a sense of ownership in local residents.

This is the place that delivers a range of benefits across economic, social and environmental spheres. Luther and Gruehin (2001) argued that presence of public space increases land value and sometimes helps to boost regional economic performance. In the compact urban society when people find this difficult to take a fresh breath public space might be the best option. It provides a space for formal and informal sports, games and exercise that can influence a longer life by reducing physical and mental stress (Woolley and Johns 2001). The cities come alive by its culture and social life through this interactive place. Public space is the venue for social interchange that nurtures social and cognitive skill and promotes neighborliness (Mean and Tims, 2005). It delivers learning benefits to children through creative play and reduces anti-social behavior (Fjortoft, 2001). The environmental functions of public space should also not be overlooked. This acts as an important contributor to the livability of city life. The green urban spaces certainly improve air quality and reduce heat island effects. Pervious grass lands filter rain water to replenish for ground water (Littlefair et al., 2000). Sometimes, parks and zoos as public space create opportunities for urban wildlife to flourish (Shoard, 2003).

Cities are the concentration of different ethnic, cultural and professional groups in the same space favors the confrontation of different cultural traditions (Bourdieu 1977). This diversity and density of people gives urban social life a distinctive character. This is about encounters and interactions among diverse group of people who are different. The interactions thus discover and realize the diverse needs and this is the public space that many of these contacts occur (Stevens, 2007).
However, the functions of public space are not only limited to act as an interactive and social space. There are few other sites of public gathering justifying their connection with politics through inculcations of community, civic responsibility and political judgment or participation sparked by meeting and mingling in public space (Amin, 2008). The recent protest movements from the Arab world to the western capitals have reopened the role of public space into the realm of democracy. This is the site for staging and practicing democracy through the everyday practices of ordinary citizens (Göle, 2013).

2.2 Public Space in Developing Countries

Developing countries are usually characterized by poor economic condition with low human development index where poverty is visible almost every aspect of life. The small size of economies translates into very low levels of per capita income, savings and investment. With this very low domestic financial situation it becomes difficult for the developing countries to keep pace with increasing population growth. In this circumstances they fall trapped in the vicious circle of underdevelopment where domestic resources fall short to meet development needs (SESRTCIC, 2006). The situation is jeopardized by corruption, nepotism and bribery which hardly allow the effective utilization of resources (World Bank, 2013). Nearly half of the world’s population is now living in cities which will be increasing in upcoming days. It is estimated that over the next thirty years most of the two-billion-plus person increase in global population will occur in urban areas in the developing world (Cohen, 2006). The speedy growth of urban transformation has appeared as a new challenge to the developing countries. It outstrips the capacity of the cities to provide the basic services to the residents (Cohen, 2006). So, it becomes a vital question to the world leaders that how to ensure sustainable development.

In January 2016 world leaders from more than 150 countries adopted the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in UN summit to fight against poverty, inequality and climate change. One of the targets of these SDGs is to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Beside many other important components public space is considered as a key character in achieving safe, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable cities. Public space has been identified as a specific target under SDG 11.1 as “By 2030, provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities” (Daniel, 2016). Resource poor developing countries consider this target exclusively important to make an inclusive society.
As urbanization is leading us to denser cities and also creating higher demand for available land, there is an increasing pressure on making and maintaining public spaces. This is truly a challenge for the resource poor developing world where a high percentages of their population living in slums and in underprivileged circumstances (UN-Habitat, 2016). The constant facing social classes are represented here in an aggressive way that activates a chain of reactions which would be mostly demonstrated within the public space (Huta and Mico, 2012). Aside by the social setting there are many intermediary factors such as lack of investment, proper management, designing and implementing an appropriate planning and public policy, and political instability, economic instability make the public space design a hard job (Haq, 2011).

### 2.2.1 Formal-Informal Public Space

In formal definition public space in developing countries takes many spatial forms, including parks, sidewalks, streets and footpaths that connect, playgrounds of recreation and marketplaces (UN-Habitat, 2015, p.2). Most importantly, it doesn’t mean that public space needs to be an open space (Carmona, 2010). It varies in nature based on the functions it performs. Public space forms the setting for the exhibition of ceremonial festivities of the multi-cultural city, provision for infrastructure, setting for community life, trade of the commercial city (UN-Habitat, 2015). However, in practice the typology of public space can be sometimes different in developing countries. They are in most cases multidimensional and informal in contrast to clearly defined land use zoning (Cantada, 2015). Because, in most of the developing countries the master-plans that have little prospect for being enacted or enforced become outdated before they were ever implemented (Martine, 2008). People here organize their space without the assistance from any professional body i.e. planners, architects, engineers and government planning bodies. It is very frequent that citizen of developing metropolis becomes the true builders and managers of their own place by neglecting existing planning documents (WCED, 1985). That’s how the character of public space ranges from pathways for public transport, edge space between buildings or roadsides, venues for informal trade and commerce such as hawking and street vending, recreational, centers of religious and cultural exchange and even places for various household chores as washing, cooking etc. (UN-Habitat, 2012). Substantial planning and investment effort are thus very important to improve infrastructure and making services and opportunities available for inclusive public spaces.
2.2.2 Public Space Planning and Management

Cities in developing countries are the illustration of complexities in terms of service delivery, public investment, development policies, political representation and accountability (Borja, 2001). Inadequate planning framework and legislation is considered here as one of the key hindrance to good urban planning (UN-Habitat, 2012). Weak planning framework, legislation and enforcement have resulted in grabbing of public land by illegal users and usage. The role of regulation and planning guideline that recognizes the capacity to enforce laws and regulations is the key instrument to secure the provision, vitality and utility of public space (UN-Habitat-2015). Unfortunately, the need of specific roles and responsibilities for the state of these public spaces as who should be building and managing are usually neglected (Carmona and Magalhaes, 2006). Ideally, the sustainable urban planning systems should have the provision of adequate public space as part of local and municipal plans. Nevertheless, many of countries legal documents also fails to provide any specific guideline about the creation and management functions of public space (Blanco and Kobayashi, 2009). There are some basic constraints that imperil success in the creation, management and enjoyment of public space initiatives in the metropolis of developing countries (UN-Habitat-2015, p.31):

- Complex encounter by different local authorities in exercising their role
- Frequent lack of communication between various planning departments
- Encroachment of public spaces by informal activities
- Tough to extract public space from private landowners when legal frameworks and the enforcement of plans are weak
- Increasing urban growth with vast pockets of informal settlements and the strain on scarce financial resources
- Competition for space by different uses and users, resulting in the privatization of public space
- Weak regulatory and legislative frameworks for public-space creation and preservation

Generally, local governments like municipalities are responsible to take care of the public spaces. In many cities there are even different kinds of stakeholders who are directly linked to public space management i.e. other government bodies, private sectors etc. Problems arise when their roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined in creating, managing and maintaining public spaces. Sharing of management fund is also very crucial as everyone has
their designated development fund and no one else would like to take the burden (Prédal, 2014). Therefore, it is extremely important to clarify every stakeholder’s responsibilities for an effective long term coordinated public space management system through a clear decision making process.

It’s the common practice in urban planning project to consider management aspect as less important and simply added at the end. This always create non-functional urban public spaces those are difficult in manage due to technical difficulties or lack of practical management issues (Prédal, 2014). After care do matter for proper management of public spaces. Just placing public space by overlooking the sign of decays through after management might bring a rapid spiral of decline. Poor management can turn any public space to an abandoned and deteriorated lost space (Carmona and Magalhaes, 2006). The current state of public spaces has become a matter of concern because of its malfunctions. Everyday public spaces are too often littered, polluted, unsafe, taken by homeless people, poorly maintained services, covered by informal businesses, places for street beggars those makes this space far away from its primary aim of providing social breathing space to the city people. The management of this public space is always considered as someone else’s problem to clean up while numerous organizations are in the stage to create and manage this place (Tibbalds, 2001).

2.3 Public Space Situation in Bangladesh

The situation doesn’t really vary in Bangladesh to other developing countries. With poor economic background and space scarcity, offering sustainable public spaces has appeared as a great challenge to the planning organizations.

2.3.1 Public Space in Planning Legislations

The definition of “public space” in planning documents of Bangladesh is quite ambiguous. It is mostly defined as recreational areas, parks and open land which are accessible by public (Mishu et al., 2014). Unfortunately, there is no specific guideline that deals with public space. The lowest tier of urban structure in Bangladesh is municipality where land use planning is controlled by Local Government (Paurshava) Act, 2009. This act defines “Public Places” are any building, space or place where common people have access (Government of Bangladesh, 2009, p.6693). The same definition is also found in the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009. This act imposes development control in the city corporations of Bangladesh. Except this definition there is no other direction found for the functions and management of public spaces in these two important planning legislations.
There are four development authorities who are responsible for planning and development of four divisional cities of Bangladesh. These are: Rajdhani Unnayan Kartipakha (RAJUK), Chittagong Development Authority (CDA), Rajshahi Development Authority (RDA) and Khulna Development Authority (KDA). All of them are controlled by their respective ordinances.

“Public Space” also came in their land use plan in terms of open space, parks and recreation. For example, the CDA detailed area plan published in 2009 says that the city has a shortage of required public spaces. It didn’t work in practice as planned in 1961 master plan. So, in recent development plan they have given the provision of making more public spaces in the city in a kind of park, open space and recreational site (Chittagong Development Authority, 2009). The public space has also appeared as open space, park and play field in Khulna development plan.

In the 2001 master plan the proposal made as to preserve two acres of land as open and green space for 1000 population (Khulna Development Authority, 2002).

Mega city, Divisional Town and District Town’s municipal areas including country’s all the municipal areas’ playground, open space, park and natural water reservoir Conservation Act, 2000 also deals with some specific parts of public space as mentioned in the title. This act enforces the maximum publicity and use of master plan to implement it in field to control unplanned development of the city that can save the public spaces not be encroached by other purposes (Government of Bangladesh, 2000).

So, the planning frameworks of Bangladesh don’t have any specific guidelines for public space that results in dense urban areas without having proper social breathing space for its citizen.

### 2.3.2 Ownership and Coordination for Public Space Management

There are different levels of authorities involved in urban planning and management services. Their roles and responsibilities are designated in their respective legislation. Conflicts arise when several authorities share same jurisdiction with overlapping responsibilities (Rahman, 2015). City Corporations and Municipalities get the responsibility to develop master plan, structure plan and detailed area plan to control urban development. The Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 defines the roles and responsibilities of city corporations. Section 50 of this act states that urban planning and development of city corporation areas should be done by this authority. According to this act city corporation can also make markets, park, open space, street and public space to ensure a sustainable city life. They are also responsible for the better management of these places by plantation, up gradation and regular maintenance (Government of Bangladesh, 2009). Beside city corporations there are 320 municipalities in Bangladesh who are controlled by Local Government (Paurshava) Act, 2009.
This act also gives them the responsibility of doing master plan for the municipalities. Under this act they are entitled to take development initiatives, decide land use, protect environment and other city planning activities (Government of Bangladesh, 2009). There are also four different planning authorities in Bangladesh who are in practice to develop master plans and land use zoning at different levels. These planning authorities fix standard for different land uses within their own jurisdictions (Nazem, 2016).

So, it has been observed that several organizations are doing the same work. Sometimes, they work in the same jurisdiction areas. Development authorities have many municipalities and city corporation that own same geographic boundary. Organizational cooperation and coordination hence is one of the pressing issues of Bangladesh. Sharing responsibility particularly overlapping functions and ownership of work boundary makes the planning task difficult. Even, these organizations work under separate ministry which certainly affects development plans having the absence of role casting principle (Rahman, 2015, p.331). Rahman (2016) in his research stated that apart from financial and political bureaucracy there is a lack of coordination among the different development bodies that makes the plan obscure. So, similar to other civic services public space creation and management have challenged by this poor coordination practices of planning agencies.

### 2.3.3 Informal Forms of Public Space

The use of any space reflects the way people have used it (Madanipour, 2010) which can add a different definition to public space situation in Bangladesh. Place is a product of practice, relations and connections that allows for a multiplicity of parallel functions. The use of space in everyday life hence outlines the dynamic functions which are many cases spontaneous in character (Hackenbroch, 2013). The cities of Bangladesh are in lack of public space. Planning authorities have also failed to provide required spaces where public gathering can happen (Mishu et al. 2014). So, an informal growth of public space is observed in the dense urban areas. The accessibility and use of these spontaneous forms are becoming subjects to informal activities like street vendors and shops that go beyond the actual use of any space (Hackenbroch, et al., 2009). The socialization process also influences people to accept or trespass spatial boundaries in any place. Specific social perception, style or routine of interaction in space define the nature of that place. This is the users who actually use public space characterize that space based on their interests and freedom of actions (Etzold, 2011). Informal community public spaces can be an example of this that evolves from this socialization process which are very common in Bangladesh. The management and operating
rules also vary according to the ownership structure and functions of these public spaces. For the formal public spaces municipalities or other city authorities legally define the management functions. In contrary, besides the formal rules the informal unwritten practices govern the maintenance of the spontaneously evolved public spaces (Frey, 2004). This complex formal and informal function of public space receives much importance in sustainable management of this civic place.

2.3.4 Socio-Cultural Perspective of Public Space

Social practices can also define public spaces according to its functions, logic and value (Frey, 2004). The access and use of urban public spaces can become a matter of contestation as per divergent interest and group of actors. This is not always the city authorities or state who poses access control (Etzold, 2011). Social norms, values and interest sometimes implicate the exclusion or displacement of certain activities, uses and users (Hackenbroch, et al., 2009). Societies may have different social groups with divergent views, values and beliefs. These differences within society may give rise to various tensions over the use of space for individual or social purposes (Sharp et al. 2000). In Bangladesh women have showed much progression in their economic and social position that altered the nature of urban public space by the visible presence of women. However, these changes don’t affect all women equally. The access to urban public spaces is still dominant by man. So, a gendered spatial segregation of urban public space is observed in Bangladesh (Redclift, 2013). Access to public spaces by gender roles are in many cases restricted by social practices in Bangladesh. There is a high level of sexual violence and harassments are reported in urban public spaces. This is because women’s social status has not improved much alongside their economic independence which is deeply rooted in patriarchal society (ActionAid, 2014). Islam, Mahmud and Islam (2015) also argued that most of the existing open spaces face safety and security, environmental, managerial and institutional, quality of facility due to lack of proper management system. So, women don’t feel safe to access to these urban public spaces.

2.4 Conclusion

Urban public spaces in developing countries are challenged by complex planning structures. Lack of coordination and cooperation between planning authorities always results in non-functional and poorly maintained public spaces. Ambiguous or even non-existence of clear direction to create and manage public spaces has also made the situation worst. Improper practices of land use planning also create informal activities over planned functions of any
space. Beside these common challenges the urban public spaces in Bangladesh is also confronted by its socio-cultural structures. Access to these public areas are sometimes controlled or not considered safe for women. So, gender norms also define the use and access to public spaces.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Methods

The outcome of any research mostly depends on which research method has been selected and that was executed in field. For this work a method should be chosen than can perform an empirical enquiry of the public space problems for a developing countries metropolis where case study method found best suitable. Using this method the investigation was performed for a contemporary real life situation from multiple sources of evidences.

3.1.1 Case Study Method

Beyond the criticism of being an introductory explanatory process “Case Study” method has established itself as a strong research method. Robert K. Yin (1984, p. 23) defines the case study research method as:

“.. *an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used.***

Case studies as a research method explore the real life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis within a given boundary, time and relationships (Flyvbjerg, 2006). In some case studies an in-depth examination of single event is used over a certain period of time. The process allows a researcher to investigate a case in far more detail than dealing with a large number of interest groups to draw conclusion based averaging (Zainal, 2007).

Cities are the complex networks of social, economic and political activity. Hence, urban planning research has relied heavily on case studies over the last fifty years. Case study approaches allow planners to provide the evidence, depth, and detail about any urban context that other methods may not capture (Birch, 2012). The phenomenon that separates urban planning from other discipline is its relation to space. Challenges arise when planners have to deal with the complex relation of space with other variables as environment, social class, politics and even human psychology. Case study method is a far more flexible method that can tolerate this complex and dynamic elements of urbanism. It can represent the varied and
conflicting voices of the city more flexibly than a traditional statistical summary (Campbell, 2003).

This research aims to deal with the public space situation of a developing country context. Here, case study found the best option to be chosen as the research method. Under this study an in depth analysis of public space has been performed for a city in Bangladesh. Considering the time limitation the case analysis for Khulna might be the best option because it has uncovered the real situation of Bangladesh by representing one typical urban situation. Khulna is one of the big cities of Bangladesh where different levels of planning organizations are in practice. So, the diversity in planning rules and regulations and the coordination effort in terms of public space management can also be found by analyzing the city.

One of the limitations of this study might be looking at one city context that may not have external validity for other cases. It’s true that generalization can’t be done for different developing countries metropolis; however, this study rests on some certain assumptions and has performed deeper ontological analysis which can draw similar challenges for the others.

3.2 Data Collection

This research depends on both secondary and primary sources. The data collection process can be illustrated below:

a) Questionnaire Survey: A simple questionnaire was developed for the residents of Khulna city to identify the public spaces accessed by them. They were asked on the type and functions of these areas. Besides, information on ownership and overall maintenance quality was also been collected from this survey. The target audiences were versatile in nature by age, sex, social class and education who were selected on random sampling basis. The idea is that to capture the differences in the use of public space by diverse group which may define public space in different ways. There were sixty eight responses received from the survey. Among them 37.31% are female and 62.69% are male. The respondents were also classified under five age category from 18 to more than 70. People participated in this survey also represent different occupation group which define their socio-economic situation and their respective access to public spaces.

b) Review Legal Documents: Master plan prepared by KDA is the key development guideline followed in Khulna to control development growth. This document has been thoroughly reviewed to identify that how the public spaces are defined here in the
document. Khulna Development Authority Ordinance, 1961 and Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 which describe the roles and responsibilities of KDA and KCC were also been reviewed. This was important to understand specific roles and responsibilities of these authorities to create and manage the public spaces.

c) **In-depth Discussion:** It was important for the study to understand the practical public space management situation of Khulna city. That’s why two in-depth interviews with the urban planners of KDA and KCC were conducted.

d) **In-depth Information Collection for Public Spaces:** Public spaces of Khulna are versatile in functions and ownership. To better explore the situation three public spaces from different ownership and management context were surveyed.

### 3.3 Indicator Selection

Indicators are important for research to guide collecting empirical evidences. The surveys and interviews were performed in different stages as discussed in the previous sections. Indicators set here for individual research questions ensured that all required data sources have been contacted and information collected. Later, the analysis of the study findings also followed the indicators set up here to ensure that research goal has been achieved. The table given below is the summary of those indicators:

**Table 3.1: Indicators for Research Questions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>How the public spaces are created and managed?</strong></td>
<td>Complexity in ownership and management responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development and maintenance of public space</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Coordination and cooperation between authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management of informal use and forms of public space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do the users in developing country define and characterize urban public space?</strong></td>
<td>Functions of place and it’s connection to people</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Formal and informal ownership</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planned and spontaneous use of space</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>User category</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>User satisfaction to access public space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency and level of use</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social acceptability</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gender role</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Author, 2017
3.4 Overall Methodology

There were two in-depth discussions held with urban planners from the two development authorities in Khulna. This discussion helped analyzing the actual practices to create and manage public spaces in this city. The management, coordination and ownership challenges between these two authorities were also been reflected in this discussion. These arguments were supplemented by reviewing the planning legislations practiced by these authorities for urban public space management in Khulna city. Interview scripts were developed, coded and summarized for analysis. Chapter four basically is the findings for this analysis that answers the research question one.

There was also one online survey conducted to understand as how the public spaces are used by the residents of Khulna city. The main goal behind this survey was to understand users’ perception to define public spaces in Khulna city that answers research question two. All the collected data were organized in a database and analyzed for the findings. The survey response helped finding the formal and spontaneous public use of this civic space. Answers from different social and gender groups also helped to realize the socio-cultural and gender perspectives that might define public spaces differently. Overall situation analysis of three public spaces was also performed that represents the usual public space quality of Khulna city.

Finally, based on the findings of research question one and two some sustainable management solutions were proposed that might help offering sustainable public spaces for the citizen of Khulna.
Chapter Four: Creation and Management of Public Space

Khulna City Corporation and Khulna Development Authority are the two large actors who hold the major ground to ensure successful creation and management of public spaces in Khulna city. They are guided by separate acts and ordinances which defines their specific roles. These responsibilities sometimes become ambiguous because of overlapping accountabilities. So, the interrelationship and coordination mechanism is very important to understand the public space management for Khulna city.

4.1 Public Space in Master Plan

KDA plays the leading role to provide the development guideline for Khulna city. According to the KDA Ordinance 1961 KDA gets sole responsibility for the preparation and execution of master plan.

"The Authority shall, as soon as feasible, but not more than two years after the provisions of this Ordinance comes into force, prepare and submit to the Provincial Government for approval a Master Plan for the Municipality and the areas in its vicinity indicating the manner in which it proposes that land should be used (whether by carrying out thereon of development or otherwise) and the stages by which any such development should be carried out" (Government of Bangladesh, 1961, p.7).

All the development agencies and private owners are legally liable to follow this planning guideline for any kind of development initiatives. The use of any land within the jurisdiction is fixed according the master plan. So, to dedicate any land for public use it is important to be mentioned as “Public Space” in these planning documents. Unfortunately, there is no official term used for public space in KDA documents except open space, streets and markets. This is somehow restricts the boundary of public spaces that results in informal creation of this civic space. The Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 however defines public space as “public place” which could be any building, yard or place where general people have access. Nevertheless, the definition is very vague and doesn’t provide any specific set of rules as what does it mean by public access and at what levels.
KDA master plan provides some development proposals for streets, markets, town centers, open spaces and parks aside by other key sectors. In these sections public use of these areas came to some extent. For example, it is said that the roads of Khulna don’t provide enough pedestrian facilities although fifty percent of people make their trips to work place by walking (Khulna Development Authority, 2002). The proposal thus made to provide enough walking space for the city dwellers specially in the market places and shopping where large scale mass gathering is observed. Town centers should also be provided sufficient cultural and recreational facilities to increase social interactions. These facilities include varieties of retail shops, eating places, cinemas, auditoriums, games and sport areas. Public open spaces are also proposed in terms of metropolitan and community level park, zoo, botanical garden, playfield etc. So, it is a good sign that the planning documents have some guidelines to create space which is accessible for public use though it doesn’t provide detail functions of these places as public space.

4.2 Development of Public Space

Although KDA prepares planning guidelines for Khulna the development works are done by different public and private authorities including KDA. There are KCC, District commission, Khulna Water Supply and Sewerage Authority (KWASA), Bangladesh Railway etc. who initiate different development project for Khulna. According to KDA ordinance every authority is liable to follow the master plan prepared by KDA. Hence, it is very much important to have a good coordination between these authorities. Among these stakeholders KCC takes the major role to provide and maintain civic services for city dwellers that includes creation and management of streets, open spaces, markets and others. So, at least a good sharing of work update between the two leading development actors of Khulna is highly expected. Unfortunately, it happens very rarely that result in misunderstanding and distrust between these two important organizations. So, plans mostly remains in paper than actual execution in place.

The most common tension arises between these two authorities while implementing any development project. It can be well described from the voice of two personnel from KDA and KCC:

"KCC should obey the development guidelines as mentioned in master plan whenever they are going to implement any development work. They should take permission from KDA while changing the actual plan for maintenance or other purposes"
“KDA never consider us as the key actor for the development of Khulna. They rarely consult us while giving permission for any development work in Khulna city although the final responsibility comes to us to provide the civic services.”

So, these two authorities seems have lack in trust and respect on each other. Public spaces within the maintenance responsibility of respective authorities have hardly been consulted with other. They consider this as their own jurisdictions where no others should have anything to influence.

The lack of coordination between KDA and KCC was also observed during the master plan development phase. According to these authorities no separate meeting between KDA and KCC was held during this stage. KCC was mainly present at general public sharing. So, similar to other development work both authorities have their different perspective for public space as well.

4.3 Maintenance of Public Spaces

The maintenance responsibility of public spaces is a bit complex for Khulna City. There are lists of organizations involved in overtaking this liability. For the sake of analysis two broad sections could be made in this case as KDA developed areas and KCC developed areas. While any development project is taken by KDA it completes all the components that include roads, drains, open space and facilities for other utility services. According to KDA ordinance after the completion of project they are liable to handover the maintenance responsibility of the utility services to respective authorities. For example, roads and pedestrian ways go to KCC, electricity facility to Bangladesh power development board, drain and water supply to KWASA.

Here, the common complains raised by KCC are on road design and quality. According to KCC prior to the handover to these public roads KCC has never been invited or consulted on quality of products or design. They just receive the roads from KDA and said to maintain afterwards. KCC doesn’t even get any maintenance cost from KDA to take care of the roads. So, negligence on these handover roads is much prevalent. They find this more important to spend their budget on KCC developed roads than KDA one. Therefore, as an end users the citizen of Khulna always finds fragile and broken roads due to poor maintenance.

KDA also take the maintenance responsibility for some of their property. Khulna New Market, the famous big market in Khulna, has been created and owned by KDA. Here, KDA take the leading role to manage and provide facilities to the shop owners and users. KDA has fixed some maintenance fees according to shop size. In return they provide maintenance service that covers big repairing work, cleaning, toilet facilities and others. There is also a market
management committee formed with the representative from shop owners. KDA maintain a good relation with this committee to ensure a good environment for the users.

KCC also own several public spaces in Khulna city which they have developed and are responsible to take care of the services. For example, Hadis Park, Sonadanga Solar park, KCC markets etc. For the markets KCC receive maintenance fee from the shop owners. KCC has their annual development budget for the reconstruction and maintenance work of these areas.

The informal development of public space boomed up easily in multi owned and maintained areas. As discussed before lack of coordination and sharing mentality between the authorities keeps many spaces uncared. Local muscle men or street hawker took over areas and create informal public spaces. No formal maintenance is performed in these areas that creates unhealthy environment.

4.4 Fund Management

The creation and maintenance of public spaces largely depends on the availability of fund. Every fiscal year KCC publish their budget that indicates the major sectors where the money will be spent. KCC mainly has three sources of fund as revenue from tax, government donation for special project and donors’ contribution for specific development work. The regular cleaning and maintenance of the public spaces are done from revenue budget. Unless there is any specific development work mentioned in the annual budget the fate to create new public spaces depends on government or donor contribution. So, KCC finds this is the main challenge to arrange sufficient fund to offer new public spaces for the city dwellers.

As discussed before, in KDA developed areas the maintenance responsibility of roads and pedestrian ways goes to KCC. KCC don’t take the liability to take care of the community parks and open spaces. It’s the KDA who have to ensure the functionality of these services. Unfortunately KDA don’t have any maintenance budget for these community parks and open spaces unless there is any special development budget. They develop the area and provide the maintenance responsibility to the community house owners committee. The residents living in the community provide certain amount of monthly maintenance fee. The committee spends money from the budget if any maintenance work is required. Unfortunately, the examination of these public spaces found some of those in very poor quality. The involvement of KCC in developing and maintaining these important community spaces may improve the situation.
4.5 Non-Functional Committee

Khulna Development Authority Ordinance, 1961 states that in the KDA management committee there should be two representatives from Khulna City Corporation (former Khulna Municipality when the ordinance was published) aside by other key stakeholder. This is for better coordination effort while taking any development decisions. Similar to KDA the Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 also states the presence of KDA representative in KCC. This act makes it mandatory to organize at least one monthly meeting with all stakeholders to share work updates and take decision for future initiatives. In this meeting city corporation can invite KDA chairman to get their concern. Unfortunately, none of these initiatives observed active within the organizational body in normal situation. KDA sometimes invites KCC representative only when big development projects are taken. The situation is quite similar in KCC. If KCC consider the presence of KDA is important for any large scale project only then KDA representatives are called for meeting. The issues on public space thus always kept beyond the coordination effort of KDA and KCC unless it falls under the big category development initiatives.

4.6 Lack of Control over Informal Settlements

For the Khulna people the informal settlements function as very popular public space. The popular place is road side cafés, tea stalls and food kiosks which in most cases developed in government properties without proper permission. Private owners also use their land violating land use rules. This is true that these places offer some social space for the city dwellers living in the chaotic city, however, the unplanned growth of this shanty shops create traffic congestion, encroachment of pedestrian ways, polluted surroundings etc. Controlled planned development of these physical spaces might enable these networks to evolve in a more attractive way.

The legal documents give both authorities i.e. KDA and KCC the right to control the unauthorized encroachment of land. According to Local Government (City Corporation) Act, 2009 KCC can provide notice to land owner or the person developing any land or make changes of the land by violating master plan. If the person doesn’t take initiatives as per notice KCC has the power to demolish the construction. Similarly, KDA can impose some penalties if the construction doesn’t properly follow master plan or building approval received from KDA. In practice, KCC consider this as KDA’s responsibility to control land use of Khulna city because the master plans are developed by them. However, some illegal encroachment of
street hawkers is done by KCC. On the other side, KDA consider this is very difficult for them alone to ensure the successful implementation of master plan with very limited work force. None of the authorities are bound to communicate to each other during implementation of their role for development controls. So, a communication gap is always prevalent in their relationship. A better coordination between these two authorities could control the unauthorized encroachment of land and provide some smart public spaces for the citizens.

4.7 Conclusion

In a nutshell, there are multifaceted challenges both in planning documents and practice those make public space creation and management a hard job. Unclear definition of public space in master plan and city corporation legal documents limits the boundary of this civic space to some fixed forms. Many of the functions of public space hence left behind the formal physical space. As a result bunch of them has emerged informally by the city dwellers. The coordination and cooperation between the key stakeholders of Khulna has also identified as major management challenge. This mainly depends on the personal relationship exists between these head of these authorities. Sometimes, politics play here the key role. If the chairman or head and city mayor don’t belong the same political or ideological belief an uncomfortable relation between organizations always prevails. This affects the inter-organizational working environment. Nevertheless, legal bindings provide some good coordination effort, however, non-practice of these regulations make them mostly obsolete.
Chapter Five: Classification of Public Space

The management, coordination and planning challenges leave the formation of public space in the hand of city people. This is the society and users who make their own definition of public space. The people, culture and power relations shape urban public spaces into contested and fragmented forms that reordered this civic space to some new identities. In this chapter the public space of Khulna city will be analyzed based on some assumptions found from field surveys. Urban public space can be classified according to the use assigned to them like, café, playground, open square etc. Whereas, the access to public spaces sometimes define the boundary to use this place. Public spaces can also be characterized by the gender norms, ownership and socio-economic status. Here, the attempt has been made to analyze the urban public space from different perspectives of the users.

5.1 Functions of Place

Functions of place are defined as a set of activities performed to satisfy the particular needs of any society. These functions are generally assigned based on its natural and economic potential (Mints and Preobrazhenskiy, 1972). City authorities develop master plan for the city where the functions of different spaces are scaled. The survey conducted in Khulna city to identify the available public space for city dwellers results in a range of places with varied functions. Below given figure can provide a glimpse of the place where people meet for social gathering:

![Fig 5.1 List of places people meet for social gathering (Source: Field Survey, 2017)]
The streets are the popular place for social interaction. Despite the main functions of being travel network it offers several services like shopping, street food shops, walking etc. which attracts people to spend time here with family and friends. The open spaces can also be characterized as parks, community space and playground. The main idea of planning open space is to provide people some open areas where city people can spend their leisure time. Among the citizen of Khulna market places and shopping malls are also very popular public place where people can do shopping and make free time in the market areas. Public library is quite different than other public spaces. This offers the public access to reading books, spend time with friends and discuss on their thoughts. These public places are characterized based on the activities performed by the users. Sometimes, users improvise the planned endeavors to chase their demand and this is when the places get new dimensions. So, every public space classified above according to their functions can be analyzed based on planned and unplanned or spontaneous forms and activities.

5.1.1 Streets and the Adjacent Areas

The streets in the case city go beyond the main function of linking road network for travel. This is the place where life unfolds. People routinely come here to encounter people, bump into friends and celebrate festivals. It’s a means of social engagement irrespective of age, sex and social class.

a) Places and Their Planned Functions

In general, the roads in Khulna don’t have much planned forms to act as public space except pedestrian ways, road side cafés and restaurants. The intensity and quality of the activities performed in the streets also vary according to its location and types.

i. Walking Trails: The roads here are characterized by heavy traffic movement with poor facilities by non-motorized vehicles. Hence, traffic congestion is very obvious to be present in the busy streets. So, walking in the roads is sometimes risky as there is hardly any facility for pedestrians. The situation is jeopardized by illegal encroachment of street hawkers. Small shops and haphazard vehicle parking make the walkable parts of roads much narrower. Despite, these practicalities streets appeared as top position to be considered as social centers. The neighborhood street where traffic is less still attracts many people for free walking. This is an important jogging place to the health conscious people. Lack of open space has raised the demand of adding this function to streets. In the
morning when there is less traffic and street shops are still closed walking and exercising along the roadways is a common scenario.

ii. *Road Side Café and Restaurant:* The city where biking or walking is dangerous and parks or open spaces are very scarcely present, café and restaurant becomes very popular among the citizen to spend social time. Here comes the road side cafés those might took the top position to bumping into neighbors, family and friends. These cafés could be both formal and informal in character. This is a profitable business as many people hang out here after their busy work day. So, municipality and also private owners develop these facilities which are formal. In Khulna city anyone can observe plenty of small cafés and restaurants in the shopping streets, main city roads and highways. They offer cheap foods with unlimited time of sitting arrangement that easily attracts many people to relax, meet people and talk. The quality of the cafés and restaurants ranges from very cheap and shanty small shops to high quality expensive big one. User categories also vary according to the aesthetic and business quality. These places are very popular among the women who feel safe and comfortable visiting these places by themselves.

b) *Spontaneous Use*

One of key reasons of considering streets as public space is its accessibility. It’s open for twenty four hours a day in seven days a week. After work on their way back home people consider it’s the best place to relax, eat and socialize as it offers plenty of opportunities to spend time. Usually, the road crossings, dead end and in front of shopping centers are the most popular street space among the city people. The dynamic activities of these areas attract people to come and spend social time.

i) *Civic Functions:* Streets are also the center of civic actions. Political parties in democratic government system always use this pace as their platform to represent their thought. Observing political meetings, human rally or protest against injustice everything happens here.

ii) *Place to Celebrate Life and Culture:* Observing cultural program by blocking the roads are also found here in the city. During festivals it’s common practice to organize functions like cultural program in some parts of the streets. Even, in the local streets inside the neighborhoods playing games like cricket or badminton by children can also be found. So, streets appear with all of its color of being a social space in city life.
iii) Informal Tea Stalls and Food Kiosk: This is quite similar to formal café and restaurant but very informal in functions. This small shanty shops mostly locates over the pedestrian ways or vacant spaces beside road kept for future development. These are controlled by local muscle men who receive donation from the shop owners. This is a good meeting place for different classes of people. Students, professionals, rickshaw pullers etc. people from different social group come here to have tea and/or snacks and spend social time to others.

iv) Informal Parents Gathering in front of Children School: Surprisingly, children’s school is a very popular ground to the housewives or caretakers who bring their children to the school. It’s a common practice here to carry kids to their school by their parents which is mostly done by the housewives who stay at home. They find this place as the key meeting point with other parents. When the kids are at school parents spend the time in the streets outside the school compound. Parents consider this wise to relax here with others than travelling again to get children back home. So, women having social talk with others parents, sharing cooking recipes, discussing about children education, sewing cloths or having foods are very common to see in school streets. As an indirect impact of this regular human crowd create business opportunity to many people. Anyone can see beauty parlor, tailor shop, food stalls located near to these areas that make business from this gathering.

v) Informal Place for Professional Meeting: Illegal encroachment of government properties is very common in Bangladesh. It’s very normal to see political party offices or small owner associations located in the road side vacant areas. In the survey some people have mentioned their professional association office as main social gathering space. This was specifically said by day labor or masons who has their association in the street sides. This is the main meeting place for them where they come after work in the evening. Most of them are very temporary in nature with fragile construction material. Day labors or masons of specific regions i.e. ward boundary make this place as their meeting point. Although, the basic idea of making this space is to take care of their rights and discuss on their problems. However, it has become the main recreational space to them where they do chitchat, watch television and discuss about their works. Although, it didn’t come in the survey professional association could also be mentioned for well-known profession like lawyers association, doctors group, teacher association etc. They
are more formal in nature and have legal establishment setting. The access to these professional associations may be restricted to some specific user group only. Nevertheless, it is no doubt a public space to its large interest group which offers that opportunity of having social encounter.

vi) **Drinking Water Collection Point:** In Bangladesh drinking water usually does not come in supply water. People living in Khulna mostly collect drinking water from the public tube wells provided by KCC which are in most cases located in street corners. This work is mainly done by the house maid. So, while surveying with some of this group of people this place has appeared as their social meeting point. This is a very small place and not aimed at making this a public gathering space. There is no formal service to have a sit or do other things. However, every day water collectors visit the place and take that opportunity to meet others who come here for same purposes. This place is considered as their prime point to encounter others, share their problems or happiness and take news of others.

**5.1.2 Open Space**

The city lacks desired open space for its people. According to KDA there is only 0.1 acre of open space per 1000 persons which is very low compared to any standard city. This indicates that the city is in need of more open public spaces to make it more livable. There are some open spaces within and adjacent to the cities which are accessed by the city people for different purposes.

a) **Places and Their Planned Functions**

Despite fund and space limitations city authorities provide few open spaces in terms of playgrounds, parks and memorials. Sometimes it’s the green space and waterfronts to take a fresh breath and in some cases this is the place to celebrate culture.

i) **Municipal Parks and memorials:** Having parks in an unplanned urbanized area is a real concern. Here, development hardly follows any planning guidelines. Haphazard growth of buildings leads to reduction of green spaces. There are a few municipal parks within the city. Most of them are open in character and have free public access. People come here with family and friends to roam around, enjoy free environment or just seat under the trees. One of the parks has a memorial located with the park. The memorial is for martyrs who sacrificed their lives to establish Bengali as national language which is the popular hangout place among the citizens. Basically, it’s a memorial with some greeneries, waterfronts and sitting
arrangements. This place is dedicated to observe international mother language day on 21 February in each year.

Bangladesh is a country of festivals. They have different occasions to observe throughout the year. These places are the main gathering point when city people altogether celebrate their national or local festivals. This is the home ground to arrange book fair, tree fair, 1st year celebration of Bengali year, international trade fair, science fair and other festivals.

ii) **Community Park:** Beside the municipal park there are also community open spaces located in some neighborhood. This is mainly for the residents who live on that area. KDA has made some planned residential areas within the city. In these areas they took the attempt to provide sufficient green area to the people living here. So, there are also some green parks in these planned zones like Sonadanga and Nirala residential area etc. These areas are very popular not only among the citizens who live in vicinity. People also come from the surrounding areas to enjoy the green open spaces for relax.

iii) **Playground:** There are some open playgrounds within the city where people go to play games. Dwellers don’t need to pay any fee to access the services. Circuit house playfield, widely known as *Boro Math*, is the biggest open space which is open for all. Young kids and youth usually use this area as their practice ground. They play football and cricket in their team. There are some schools near to area. So, kids from these schools come here to play with their classmates. This place is also very familiar among the middle aged person to come here and spend social time with their friends.

iv) **Political Ground:** The open spaces has also played very important role in politics over the history. The largest non-violence human gathering to raise voice against injustice and criticize political decisions happens here. This is the stage for political parties and social activist group to display their ideals.

a) **Spontaneous Use of Open Spaces**

Due to lack of open space city people always tries to make the best use of their surroundings for social encounter. This is how sometimes small communal open space or peripheral university campus becomes the meeting place for them.
i) **Community Open Space:** Traditionally, people from this country love to meet their neighbors in their backyard. Vacant land kept for future development or small open space in front of the house is informal kind of open spaces observed in the residential areas. It was a common feature in 15-20 years back when women and girls used to spend their leisure period in these community spaces. The situation has changed a bit now a day while life becomes more professional. However, it is still very popular to the middle aged and elderly people who mostly stay at home to enjoy this neighborly feeling at this place.

ii) **Open Land in Peripheries:** While the core city lacks in open spaces city people always get in touch with the surrounding peripheries for green nature and fresh breathing. There are two public universities just located at the vicinity of city corporation area. These universities own big campus with plenty of open spaces. Basically, the campus was designed only for the students who study here. However, lots of people from the city come here every day to experience the nature. It becomes one of the important breathing places for the city people. Good communication system with main city makes these areas easily accessible by locals. Families come here with their children to let them play in free open environment which is very rare in the core city. Jogging, cycling and walking are also observed at the morning and afternoon.

Open spaces in waterfront areas in peripheries are also very popular community space although there is no planned facility provided by city authorities. Khulna city is located at the bank of Rupsha and Bhairab rivers. So, aside by shipping and port activities waterfront areas attract many people to roam around the places, boating in the river and enjoy the nature. Rupsha bridge although fall outside the KCC boundary is one of the main attraction point to the publics. In the afternoon people comes here from the city to walk along the width highways. They consider this as blessings to have green and rural environment near to the city. A good number of people visit here every day with friends and family.

Within the city there are also some waterfront sites which are very narrow and congested compared to Rupsha bridge site. Markets and river based business activities makes these areas congested and less attractive as social interaction point to the citizens. However, labors, shop owners or business man who work here count these places as their resting place with coworkers.
5.1.3 Market Place

This is the most common public place where thousands of people walk and move every day. The market places in Khulna vary from vegetable markets, departmental store to large shopping mall. Most of market places are solely used for shopping purposes except some bigger markets located in city centers.

   a) Places and Their Planned Functions

In general people go to the markets for daily needs where they have the social encounters with others. Despite that, there are also some market places which offer walking lane and free spaces for movement. These market places are planned in a way where people can come with family and friends for social interaction irrespective of shopping purposes. For example, in Khulna New Market or Hadis Park Market there are travel corridors dedicated for pedestrians. No vehicles are allowed to get into the space. So, it has that appeal especially among the women, children or family people to visit these areas.

   b) Spontaneous Activities

The market areas are famous as social meeting point since the development of these areas. In the 1960’s or even before that when Khulna was very little city people used to come to these places for daily needs. Here, they got the opportunity to meet their neighbors and friends. With the advancement of time many other places have been develop to spend social time. However, the market places have still that charms especially to young. Groups of youth having friendly chat in the markets are a very common feature in this city. Meeting friends here is the main purpose in spite of doing shopping. It has become more crowded during festival season when lots of people visit the place for enjoying their social time.

5.1.4 Public Library

This is the formal reading place which is open to all. The book lovers of all ages and classes can come here to read books, articles and newspapers. A wide variety of books are available in the library that attracts many people. Despite the main purpose of reading literatures individuals also got the chance to have social interaction. City authority and book publishers also arrange book fairs which is a mass gathering for book lovers.
5.1.5 Summary for the Functions

So, the public spaces classified according to their functions can be summarized in the figure given below:

![Diagram of public space classification based on functions]

Fig 5.2: Public space classification based on functions (Source: Author, 2017)

A bunch of activities are observed in individual public spaces. Sometimes it overlaps with other. For example, walking path can be found in the street, open spaces and also within the market where people can move freely. Cultural festivals are also observed both in parks, open spaces and streets.

These activities in many cases go beyond the planned functions defined by city authorities. The chart given below can describe as how these spaces are used by the citizens...
Fig 5.3: Activities observed in Public Spaces (Source: Field Survey, 2017)
The planned areas get new activities added by the users. For example, university campuses supposed to use for academic purposes becomes a popular social meeting place to the people. Streets are more popular as social hang out point by means of tea stalls, informal shops, professional association and other. The inabilities of planning authorities to provide well maintained public spaces influence people to make their own space for social meetings. So, master plans don’t only define the role of public spaces. This is the users who are playing the predominant actors to characterize any space.

5.2 Ownership Category

The public spaces of Khulna city can also be categorized based on the owners’ characteristics. It can be privately owned if located in any private property. KCC, KDA or divisional authority also own many public spaces. These can be termed as formal in terms of ownership. Most importantly, illegal encroachment and use of any place is also widely observed in the city. These are informal in ownership.

5.2.1 Formal Public Spaces

There might be questions about the quality and availability of public spaces in Khulna city. However, city authorities as well as government work to provide public spaces for its citizen. There are lists of spaces which are formally placed by these agencies. Streets, open space parks and markets are the major spaces fall under this category. In Khulna the big markets are owned by either KDA or KCC. They have made the markets and finally sold or gave lease to the shop owners. There are market committees who are mainly responsible for the maintenance services. The authorities also take some responsibilities as agreed in the lease contracts. Except that, there are also some private shops located in the commercial private land which is accessible to the public.

For the streets within city corporation area KCC takes the main charge. They are responsible to make necessary roads and ensure the regular maintenance by respective department within KCC. Some development projects are also taken by the development body named KDA. Within their development sites the roads are first developed by KDA. Then, the further maintenance task goes to KCC. The same thing happens for community open spaces. If there is any park or open spaces in the project site it is developed by KDA but later maintained by KCC. KCC also provide some open spaces, memorial and playground for the public where access is free to all people. However, to arrange public functions or gathering may require permission from KCC.
The university campuses as arrived one of the important public spaces are owned by university authority. They have their own development budget or direct government fund to develop and maintain their spaces.

5.2.2 Informal Use of Public Spaces

People make their own space when adequate facilities are not available that makes this city a heaven of informal public space. This study defines informal use of space where ownership is ambiguous or public access has taken over the actual use of space as stated in planning guidelines. The roadside informal small shops/kiosks are the best example of this kind of space. Most of the shops are located in government or private land without formal permission. People demand has created this business opportunity which is also a social interaction point. Local muscle man here plays the key role to take care of the services. They have some mutual understanding with shop owners understanding to run the business. The private land owner also found this business as profitable. They rent their places out to shop owners whether the place has the permission to run this business or not.

The informal human gathering in front of the children school, community courtyard, road cross section and even in the streets may also fall in this category. Social interactions in terms of relaxation, gossiping, eating, political meeting, festivals etc. with friends, relatives, neighbors, colleagues and even with unknown has added an additional dimension in use of these places.

5.3 Gender Role and Public Space

The classification of public space can also be done based on sex. Social, religious and cultural norms sometimes define the accessibility to any space for men and women differently. The absence of basic facilities required for women also act as a barrier to use any space. In this section this issues will discusses as how men and women access the available public spaces in Khulna city.

5.3.1 Public Space for Women

There is no legal restriction for women to access any place in Bangladesh. Nevertheless, because of social norms, customs and values they sometimes don’t feel comfortable to go to some places. For example, according to the survey market and café/restaurants are the main public place where women spend their social time. They consider this as safe and comfortable to hang out with friends. Better sitting arrangement, free movement in market ground and
access to toilet attracts them mostly to come to this place. Many women also go to the nearby parks with their children, friends, neighbors to walk, exercise or have social chat. They hardly travel long distance for social gathering unless something special happens. This can be seen from the given figure 5.4 where the average distance travelled by women to use public space is 3.43 km which is about 18.94 km for men.

Time spent in these areas also vary according to their sex. Girls are generally observed during daytime and evening whereas boys are found till midnight. The number of women sitting beside road side tea stalls or having social chat with others in public street is also not very common although the situation has changed in recent days. Women are now going out frequently for work and enjoying their freedom. So, movement of women has markedly increased in all over the cities.

5.3.2 Public Space for Men

There is hardly any space where men don’t have access. From local public street to city peripheries, markets to professional association men move with all of their freedom. Political meeting, social functions, cultural programs, friendly gossiping, sharing national international new etc. men have their dominant feet everywhere. Women accompany men but not with the similar frequency as they do. The given fig 5.5 shows that everyday going men are more in percentage to access public space than women. Most of the women said they visit public spaces once in a month which is insignificant for men.
5.4 Conclusion

The above given analysis provides the impression that the public spaces of Khulna city can be analyzed from different angles based on functions, ownership and access based on gender roles. The planned use of any space may change its nature by the user to follow their demand. Ownership and maintenance responsibility can also play role to characterize any space. Gender norms are also imposed to these places to define accessibility. So, a matrix can be developed to define urban public space of Khulna city based on these classification criteria.

Table 5.1: Urban Public Spaces in Khulna City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Space Category</th>
<th>Public Space Sub-Category</th>
<th>Forms of Use</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Gender Role and Access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street</td>
<td>Walking trail</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Road side café and restaurant</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Place for civic engagement</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage to celebrate life</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small tea shops and food kiosks</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Men dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>In front of children school</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Women dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional association</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Men dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drinking water collection point</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Women dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Place</td>
<td>Walking lane</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Free space for social interaction</td>
<td>Planned &amp; Spontaneous</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space</td>
<td>Municipal parks and memorial</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community park</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Place for politicians and social activists</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open playing field</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Men dominant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community open space</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Open land in peripheries</td>
<td>Spontaneous</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Library</td>
<td>Public reading place</td>
<td>Planned</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Equal access by men and women</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2017
The above mentioned matrix reveals that the planned forms of public spaces have formal ownership which are created and managed by certain city authorities or private owners. However, spontaneous forms and use of public spaces are observed both in formally or informally managed or owned places. It emerges naturally over time by neglecting the ownership context. Ownership doesn’t also hamper to access any areas according to the gender role. This is the functions and social norms that define gender access.

Beside many other financial, political and geographical issues the three major factors as functions, ownership and gender role keep significant impact in the creation and management of public spaces. This is the activities which define the characteristics and consequent maintenance of any area. Master plan also offers varied provision for different kinds of public spaces. So, the creation of public spaces depends on what kind of functions the space is going to be played. Ownership here is very important for the proper management of public spaces. Places having formal ownership showed better maintenance than informal places. The owners are entitled to provide the management service. On the contrary, gender roles come here from a different perspective. Safety, equity and social environment in many cases define the access of women to any public space. So, to ensure sustainable management of any area it is very important to make public spaces gender friendly in all aspects.
Chapter Six: Towards a Sustainable Public Space

Lack of proper planning and coordination between development agencies is making many of the public spaces of Khulna unusable. Sustainable management of this important civic space can provide a better city to the people living here. This section will mainly focus on proposing some simple management practices based on the challenges found in this study.

6.1 Existing Situation Analysis

The general overview of the public spaces has already been elaborated in previous chapters that explored public space categories, maintenance practice and management challenges. In addition to that, a simple situation analysis of three popular public spaces identified in the survey has been conducted. These are KDA New Market, Hadis Park and Nirala More.

These three places are quite different in terms of functions, ownership and user category. KDA New Market is the biggest market place in Khulna where people mainly go for shopping. However, this place is also popular among the citizen for social hangout. As the name implies this market and surrounding areas is owned and managed by KDA. On the other hand, Hadis Park is basically a park with the memorial ground for the martyrs who sacrificed their life to establish Bengali as national language. People come here for recreation and spend their leisure time. This place is located at the center of Khulna city. Important business centers are located surrounding this area. So, a lot of informal activities are observed here. KCC is mainly responsible for the maintenance of park, memorial and adjacent streets. Nirala is quite different in nature and ownership. This is mainly a planned neighborhood developed by KDA. They have developed the land and sold to the people. So, now these lands are now owned by private owners. KDA don’t perform any maintenance responsibility. The streets within this neighborhood is owned and maintained by KCC. The part of this neighborhood adjacent to the main road is known as Nirala more. There are several shops which are owned by private owners. This is a place of mass gathering. So, large scale informal activities are observed here in street sides. A lot of people come here every day for different purposes like shopping, meeting friends, spend time in professional associations etc. These informal activities are mainly maintained by local muscle men. The detail findings of these three locations can be found from table 6.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>KDA New Market</th>
<th>Hadis Park</th>
<th>Nirala More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owned by</td>
<td>KDA</td>
<td>KCC</td>
<td>Private Owners and KCC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed by</td>
<td>KDA</td>
<td>KCC</td>
<td>KDA, KCC and Private Owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintained by</td>
<td>KDA and Shop owners association</td>
<td>KCC</td>
<td>KCC, Private Owners and Muscle Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Purpose</td>
<td>Market place</td>
<td>Parks and Memorials</td>
<td>Streets, Commercial shops, Car Parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Public Space</td>
<td>Social gathering, street shops</td>
<td>Social gathering in road side shops adjacent to the park</td>
<td>Street Shops, Political Office, Social Interaction, Walking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Functions</td>
<td>All kinds of people come here for shopping and social meeting</td>
<td>All kinds of people. However, women and kids generally come at day time.</td>
<td>A variety of people are observed as it offers a large scale of activities. Political offices are for people who like politics, walking is observed by everyone, and road side shops and tea stalls are almost accessed by everyone includes students, service holders, rickshaw pullers, day labors etc. However, in these tea shops the presence of women is less than women.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety Situation</td>
<td>Quite good, There are gatemen to ensure security for the public</td>
<td>- Safety situation is not quite good. Hijacking and stealing of goods happens sometimes. Women alone don’t feel safe to come in the evening. No safety guard or gateman observed. - Many homeless people also stay at</td>
<td>- The place is safe as it is located near to police station.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>KDA New Market</td>
<td>Hadis Park</td>
<td>Nirala More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>night within the park. People don’t feel it safe to walk there at night.</td>
<td>The park has recently got some renovation work. There is a waterfront and memorial which is very good in quality.</td>
<td>The place mainly grows without any formal planning. Pedestrian ways are encroached by informal activities. So, aesthetically the place doesn’t look good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetic quality</td>
<td>- The market was developed in 1960s. After that not much renovation work has done except some small maintenance job. So, the aesthetic quality observed moderate.</td>
<td>- There are trees and open space for roaming around.</td>
<td>- The place mainly grows without any formal planning. Pedestrian ways are encroached by informal activities. So, aesthetically the place doesn’t look good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There is a small tree nursery at the center. Except that there is no greeneries in the market ground</td>
<td>- There is a waterfront and memorial which is very good in quality.</td>
<td>- The place mainly grows without any formal planning. Pedestrian ways are encroached by informal activities. So, aesthetically the place doesn’t look good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>- KDA ensure the cleanliness of the area. Cleaners clean the road and public toilets every day. Shop owners also clean their surrounding for the sake of their business.</td>
<td>- City corporation cleaner clean the park areas every day. So, the cleanliness is not bad. However, the surrounding encroached by street shops and illegal parking seems quite dirty.</td>
<td>- City corporation cleaner cleans the pedestrian ways and roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There are separate public toilets for men and women which is very good.</td>
<td>- There are separate public toilets for men and women which is very good.</td>
<td>- No on formally responsible for the informally owned areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- There is no public sitting arrangement in the market ground. So, elderly and sick people find this difficult to enjoy their time here.</td>
<td>- Public sitting arrangement attracts many people to come, seat and enjoy the nature.</td>
<td>- Because of many informal shops these areas looks dirty in most cases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children has no dedicated place to play</td>
<td>- Park lighting system is quite good.</td>
<td>- There are no formal utility service for the users. Many men observed urinating in the open street or drains.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utility Facility</td>
<td>- There are separate public toilets for men and women which is very good.</td>
<td>- There are separate public toilets for men and women which is very good.</td>
<td>- No parking facilities are found. Haphazard parking in roads create congestion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criteria</td>
<td>KDA New Market</td>
<td>Hadis Park</td>
<td>Nirala More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The parking facility outside the market is well enough.</td>
<td>- There is no formal vehicle parking place for the users. People keep their car or cycle outside the park in the streets. So, traffic congestion is very common in the surroundings.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Enough lighting facility for the users.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- There is no special arrangement for physically challenged people.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey, 2017

So, these public spaces have some differences in nature and also in management context. Here, two places are owned and managed mainly by individual authority as KDA and KCC. Whereas, Nirala more which is basically a street has been developed by KDA, KCC and private owners. The maintenance responsibility of street goes to KCC. However, no one take the liability for the informal activities which performs the major role as public gathering. These ownership and management context somehow influence in maintenance services. For example, both KDA new market and Hadis park remarked better maintenance services than Nirala More. KDA has developed the area and sold to private owners. As per legal bindings KCC receives the responsibility to take care of the roads and pedestrian ways. KCC only perform its responsibility within its jurisdiction. Maintenance of informally encroached areas is found as no one’s liability. Despite the ownership and maintenance factors there are some common challenges identified by for these areas. Those are:

- Lack of proper planning encourage informal creation of public space forms i.e. street shops
- Most of the spaces lack green factors except park areas.
- Basic services are sometimes not offered in these spaces. For example, better sitting and walking arrangements for all could increase the appeal of these spaces.
- The places are also not women friendly. They don’t feel safe to go alone when it is dark. Basic utility services are also not offered in some areas i.e. public toilets are hardly accessible by women.
- Cleanliness is also a challenge for these areas. Authorities provide regular cleaning services but dirty streets and parks are always prevalent. This is because the illegal
use of these spaces. For example, street people who spent night at parks make the surrounding dirty. This is also true for the street shop areas.

- There is hardly any place which has special facility for physically challenged people. So, the public spaces exclude a larger portion of the community to access the services.

6.2 Proposal for Sustainable Management of Public Spaces in Khulna City

The sustainability concept contains a series of social, economic and environmental issues with the commitment to provide an improved quality of life. Public spaces are considered as the most important ingredient for a lively city. The sustainable use of this public place leads to an urban environment which is healthy, safe and attractive to live and work. Hence, in response to the findings of public space situation of Khulna city some recommendation was generated to ensure planning and managing of this place at different levels.

6.2.1 Socially Inclusive

The public spaces should not make any boundary for gender, social class or physically challenged people. This should contribute in developing the sense of cohesion and citizenship by fostering social and cultural interaction. Unfortunately, for Khulna the social environments limit users to access many public spaces. City authorities should be careful on making these places inclusive for all. Specific planning provisions need to be provided in development guidelines. Authorities responsible for maintenance services should be sensitive on these aspects. The recommendations to make public spaces socially inclusive are listed below:

i. The public space should be safe and accessible by children. City authorities i.e. KDA and KCC can take initiatives to provide enough playing opportunity for children to spend social time with other kids. It is important for young to increase physical activity and also to develop social capacity by playing with others. The existing public spaces especially the community parks could be targeted in this case. KDA can provide enough provision for children activity in their plan having consultation with KCC and other key actors.

ii. Public spaces should be managed in a way where women can feel safe and move freely without the fear of any kind of harassments. In addition to proper safety guards i.e. enough lighting, well maintained space to ask for help in parks, open space and markets public awareness among the citizens should also be developed. Police, social and print medias can play here a major roles. Proper implementation of laws can also
ensure gender security in accessing the public spaces. Here needs a better coordination between all the stakeholders.

iii. Control the unethical use of public spaces is also very important. The public spaces are sometimes observed occupied by drug users or prostitutes. So, people avoid those space whatever good the service quality is. With support from police city authorities can identify the locations and stop unethical use of public spaces.

iv. It is crucial that women feel comfortable in public spaces. Having public toilets is one of the major challenges that the city are now facing. The public toilets mostly are not in quality or don’t provide facilities for women to use. The existing toilets could be improved that will certainly increase women ratio accessing outdoor activities. As developing and managing public toilets requires fund, the development agencies can jointly make plan to create new toilets and ensure proper maintenance from joint funding.

v. The elderly and physically challenged people keep the equal right to enjoy open environment in parks, open spaces or freely moving in the streets. Unfortunately, the city hardly provides any facility that supports them enjoying the freedom. The streets should have safe pass for them. Open spaces, parks and community spaces should have facilities like ramp and sitting facilities for this specific group.

vi. Many people don’t feel comfortable to bring families and children in public spaces as it is sometimes filled with beggar and floating people. This problem should be managed in planned way by relocating them to some safe places to make public space free.

6.2.2 Economically Viable

Public spaces in Khulna are the home ground for many informal activities. This provides many people the opportunity to earn livelihood although most of their activities have no legal permission. Formalization of these activities can add economic value to manage public spaces. The suggestions hereby made are:

i. The public streets are occupied by informal street shops that hardly keep enough space for pedestrian movement. One of the reasons of growing these shops is low establishment price. Shop owners don’t have the capacity to buy or rent big space. They used to give some small amount of donation to local muscle man for running their business. City authorities can use this opportunity by providing low cost space
and relocating them in a more planned way. This will not destroy the popular road side public space activities and also provide earning opportunity to city authorities that could be used to develop more public spaces.

ii. Haphazard parking in public streets and outside the parks and open spaces create traffic congestions. This system can also be improved by introducing some planned arrangement. Some places in busy traffic zone can be identified those will be used for parking. No other places should have the permission except these demarcated places. City authorities can impose parking fees for vehicle parking.

iii. Market places are also very important public spaces in Khulna city. In addition to KDA or KCC owned markets there are also some places which are owned by private owners. These formal markets provide city tax to KCC to run their business. KCC can influence them to provide enough facilities for the public i.e. public toilet, safe and secure environment, public sitting arrangement etc. by introducing tax redemption provision. This will certainly keep positive impact to improve public space situation in Khulna city.

6.2.3 Environment Friendly Clean Public Space

Lack of coordination between authorities has turned many public spaces to a spare place. Cleanliness is the major challenge faced by these areas. Public spaces with multiple ownerships become no one’s responsibility. As a result unhealthy environment prevails. Some proposals can be made in this regard:

i. Streets consume the major parts of public space in Khulna. Proper planning to encourage bicycle movement can contribute to less carbon emissions. Unfortunately, the roads of Khulna are not cycle friendly. City authorities can give emphasis to create and maintain separate lane for cycle. This can also reduce car movement and improve traffic situation. Proper planning should be done from beginning of work. For example, KDA scan consult with KCC and traffic authority before initiating road development. The same thing should happen in KCC developed roads. This will ensure the after management of the roads.

ii. For the maintenance of multi-owner public spaces specific rules and regulations should be in place. Overlapping responsibilities should be identified and distributed among the authorities. Agencies with specific responsibilities will be liable to complete their designated task. It is a common complains for public spaces as these are not clean. Wastes are seen everywhere. Street side drains and narrow space of
parks are always used as urinating place by men. Trees are dying because of poor maintenance. Drain, public toilet, green space management etc. every work should be properly identified and planned for a green and clean public space. However, this is the city dwellers who have to change their habits. Mass scale awareness is thus expected.

iii. Development organizations making new public spaces should be careful of aftercare budget. If the final responsibility goes to KCC they should be informed from the beginning so that fund allocation is ensured. For community managed spaces the community association should also be aware about the maintenance responsibility very well.

iv. Road side plantation is the best option to increase green spaces. Foot-travelers can enjoy the shadowed paths in sunny summer days while crossing the roads. There are trees in the street of Khulna city. However, still there are many streets left behind this scheme. City authorities claim that not having funded to provide and maintenance tree is the main challenge although they wish to make the city green. Privatization of green space in street side can solve this problem. Companies can advertise their product by planning trees as streets are the lucrative place for publicity.

6.2.4 Management and Coordination

Beside the three key sustainability challenges the public spaces of Khulna city also suffers for not having proper coordination effort between different authorities working for the development of the city. Based on the analysis performed to understand the coordination challenges some proposals are made as:

i. As KDA and KCC perform the major development job for Khulna city better coordination among them is hence very important. Sharing of work plan is still done in a much unorganized way. Both organizations send representatives only when they are asked for any meeting. Regular sharing of work plan has never been observed. Besides, legally both organizations have very limited control on each other to influence any decision taken individually. Having a formal committee with only KCC and KDA members may improve the situation. The main objective of this committee will be to regular meet and share their current work progress and also future plan. In this meeting they will discuss on different development projects and their maintenance context. The final development decisions for Khulna either KCC or KDA funded should come from this committee.
ii. Development donors and central government can also play here a very crucial role. They can give emphasis on better coordination between city authorities while providing budget for any development project. In their project provisions can be made to take consent from all the stakeholders relevant to the work. Emphasis can also be given on regular sharing of work update between all the actors. This should be mandatory to get financial support which will make city authorities interested for better coordination.

iii. Challenges also found while handing over the management responsibility. For example, KCC always feels them excluded in KDA projects although the final maintenance responsibility vested to them. So, a kind of hidden negligence in maintenance of these areas is sometimes observed. Active involvement of KCC from the beginning of development work can minimize this problem. This should also happen in KCC or other organization owned activities. All the stakeholders should feel a part of development initiatives to ensure sustainable management.

iv. Better coordination with law enforcement authorities is also very important. Their support is required while illegal encroachment of land needs to be demolished. They also feel excluded as in most cases they are contacted at last moment. Better management of public spaces could be provided if their involvement is ensured at an early stage of the work.

v. City people are the key stakeholders of any kind of developments. Public spaces could be better maintained if their participation is ensured. So, coordination between planning agencies and community people can work better to offer some attractive public space for Khulna people.

6.3 Conclusion

Public space has the boundless opportunity to act as a center of culture and social capital. This place needs to be open, safe and accessible to all by means of socially inclusive, environmentally safe and clean, and economically viable functions. Here comes the management role of planning and development authorities to ensure a sustainable management of this vital ingredient of civic life.
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

Sustainable formation and management of urban public space is important to offer a sustainable healthy civic life. The liveliness of this amenity depends on what scale and how these places are being used by citizens. There are some formal public spaces in Khulna city developed by different city authorities. They are diverse in character and play important role in civic life. However, different management challenges make the task difficult to run the services in a sustainable way. As a result people find their own ways of making social spaces. Therefore, informal public spaces are created and added an extended wing in the already existed services which is good but sometimes the situation goes beyond control. Unplanned growth of informal public spaces has appeared as the main reason of traffic congestion, unhealthy environment, illegal encroachment of public land, violation of planning guidelines etc. The opposite scenario can also be found. Due to these informal public spaces people may have at least some place in their vicinity to take breath and meet people. The situation can be compared with other developing countries with similar socio-economic situations. Cities in poor economic position face challenges with land and fund scarcity. Public space gets here the least priority and is neglected in urban planning and development. They are in most cases poorly integrated in planning legislations which narrow down the provision of providing public spaces for the citizens. So, inadequate public space is one of the prominent problems in most of these cities. In addition to that lack of sustainable maintenance process makes many of the existing public spaces obsolete. These places are turned into waste dumping places or house of floating people rather than functioning as a social course of interaction. Decision makers of the developing world thus should recognize the role of public space it can play to create a sustainable lively city. Therefore, it is very important that developing countries give much attention to this fundamental civic service in policies and practice that it deserves. The case analysis in this study can draw a pathway for further enquiry and implication of public spaces in the cities of developing world.
References


27. Government of Bangladesh. (2000). *Mega city, Divisional Town and District Town’s municipal areas including country’s all the municipal areas’ playground, open space, park and natural water reservoir Conservation Act*, 2000. Dhaka: GoB.


Appendix - Survey Questionnaire

Urban Public Space: A Case from Developing Country

This survey is a part of my Master’s thesis at Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden. The information you provide here will remain strictly confidential and will only be used for study purposes. Your cooperation is much appreciated. If you have questions or comments about the survey please contact me by email at: sheemaup@gmail.com.

* Required

1. Are you a permanent resident of Khulna? আপনি কি খুলনার একজন স্থায়ী বাসিন্দা?

   * Mark only one oval.

   - Yes হ্যাঁ
   - No না

2. How long do you live in this city? (Years)
   আপনি এই শহরে কতদিন ধরে বসবাস করছেন?
   (বছর)

3. In which ward do you live in? (please mention the ward number)
   আপনার বাসা খুলনার কোন নাম্বার ওয়ার্ড এ অবস্থিত?

4. What is your age group? আপনার বয়স নিম্নের কোন দলের অন্তর্ভুক্ত?

   * Mark only one oval.

   - Less than 18
   - 18-29
   - 30-39
   - 40-49
   - 50-59
   - 60-69
   - More than 70

5. Sex

   * Mark only one oval.

   - Male পুরুষ
   - Female মহিলা
   - Prefer not to say বলতে ইচ্ছুক নই
   - Other:

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6. What is your occupation? আপনার পেশা কি?

7. Your monthly family income (BDT) আপনার পরিবারের মাসিক আয় কত?
Mark only one oval.
- Less than 10000
- 10001-20000
- 20001-30000
- 30001-40000
- 40001-50000
- More than 50000

8. Your educational qualification আপনার শিক্ষাগত যোগ্যতা
Mark only one oval.
- No institutional education কোন প্রতিষ্ঠানের শিক্ষা নাই
- Primary প্রাথমিক
- Secondary মাধ্যমিক
- Higher Secondary উচ্চ মাধ্যমিক
- Bachelor/Masters/PhD ব্যাচেলর/ম্যাস্টারস/পি.এইচ.ডি.

9. Where do you mostly visit to meet people? Please mention the name of that place. (This is the public space where you go for social informal gathering) আপনি সবার সাথে সাধারণত কোথায় যেতেন বা সময় কাটান? এটি সামাজিক সাধারণের জন্য উন্মুক্ত একটি স্থান যেখানে সামাজিক সময় কাটান যায়। অনুগ্রহ করে স্থানটির নাম উল্লেখ করুন.

10. What kind of place is that? এটি কি ধরণের স্থান?
Check all that apply.
- Market মার্কেট/বাজার
- Parks পার্ক
- Open Square উন্মুক্ত স্থান
- Memorial মূর্তিস্থাপনকার্য
- Streets রাস্তা
- Religious ধর্মীয়
- Playground খেলার মাঠ
- Community Open Space কমিউনিটির খেলার স্থান
- Waterfronts জলাধার/নদীর পাড়
- Children School বাচ্চাদের বিদ্যালয়
- Cafe/Restaurant কফির হোটেল
- Other: ___________________
11. Please mention some of the major activities observed in that place. এইস্থানে উল্লেখযোগ্য কিছু ধরনের কার্যকলাপ পরিলক্ষিত হয়?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

12. Who is the owner of this space? এই স্থানের মালিক কে?
   Check all that apply.
   □ KDA কেডিএ
   □ KCC কেসিসিএ
   □ Private Owner ব্যক্তি মালিকানাধীন
   □ Other: ____________________________

13. Who is responsible for the maintenance and repair services? এই স্থানের রক্ষণাবেক্ষণের ও সেবাপ্রদানের জন্য কে দায়িত্ব নিয়োজিত আছে?
   Check all that apply.
   □ KDA কেডিএ
   □ KCC কেসিসিএ
   □ Private Owner ব্যক্তি মালিকানাধীন
   □ Other: ____________________________

14. How can you level the maintenance service? এই স্থানের রক্ষণাবেক্ষণ ব্যবস্থাকে আপনি কিভাবে মূল্যায়ন করবেন? (1-5 স্কেলে এ। 1 = সবচেয়ে খারাপ, 5 = সবচেয়ে ভাল)
   Mark only one oval.

   1  2  3  4  5
   Lowest ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ Highest

15. How far is this place from your home? (km)
   এটি আপনার বাসস্থল হতে কত দূরে অবস্থিত?

16. How frequent do you visit the place? আপনি সাধারণত কতবার সেখানে যান?
   Mark only one oval.
   ○ Everyday প্রতিদিন
   ○ Once a week সপ্তাহে একবার
   ○ Several times a week সপ্তাহে বহুবার
   ○ Once in a month মাসে একবার
17. When do you generally visit the place? আপনি সাধারণত দিনের কোন সময়ে সেখানে যান?
Check all that apply.

- [ ] In the morning সকালে
- [ ] Afternoon বিকােল
- [ ] Evening সন্ধ্যায়
- [ ] Other: ____________________________

18. While visiting do you generally take your family with you? আপনি কি এই স্থানে আপনার পরিবার সাথে নিয়ে যান?
Mark only one oval.

- [ ] Yes হাঁ
- [ ] No না

19. Do you feel safe when visit the place? আপনি কি এখানে যেতে নিরাপদ বোধ করেন?
Mark only one oval.

- [ ] Yes হাঁ
- [ ] No না
- [ ] Neutral নিরাপদ নহে

20. Do you provide any service/user fee to access the area? আপনি কি এই স্থানে প্রবেশ/সেবা প্রদানের জন্য কোন সেবা মূল্য পরিশোধ করে থাকেন?
Mark only one oval.

- [ ] Yes হাঁ
- [ ] No না

21. What makes you more interested about that area? এই স্থানের কোন বিষয়টি আপনাকে সবচেয়ে বেশি আকর্ষণ করে?

________________________________________________________________________

22. How satisfied you are with the services offered by this place? এই স্থানের ব্যবহারের কোন জ্বালা আপনি কতটে সন্তুষ্ট?
Mark only one oval.

- [ ] Very satisfied খুবই সন্তুষ্ট
- [ ] Satisfied সন্তুষ্ট
- [ ] Neutral নিরাপদ
t
- [ ] Dissatisfied অসন্তুষ্ট
t
- [ ] Very dissatisfied খুবই অসন্তুষ্ট
t

23. Is there anything which you don’t like about this place? Please mention এই স্থানের এমন কিছু কি আছে যা আপনি পছন্দ করেন না?

________________________________________________________________________
24. What improvement should be made to make it more accessible? সবার কাছে প্রহৃতীযোগ্য/প্রবেশযোগ্য করার জন্য এই স্থানের আর কি উন্নয়ন প্রয়োজন বলে আপনি মনে করেন?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

25. Your overall suggestion for Khulna city to ensure the sustainable use of public space খুলনা শহরের সর্বসাধারণের জন্য উন্মুক্ত স্থানগুলোর সার্বিক উন্নয়নের জন্য আপনার কোন মতামত আছে কি?

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

26. Please provide your cell phone and email no (Optional) অনুগ্রহ করে আপনার মোবাইল নং এবং/অথবা ইমেইল প্রদান করুন (বাংলাতথ্যুক্তি নয়)

_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________