ARCHITECT'S ROLE IN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Short Title:

As designers of society, architects have great opportunities to impact human lives positively. With deeper understanding of the current and changing situation they help to achieve a country's social goals.

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Abstract:

Architecture is a blend of art, science, psychology, sociology, economics, politics, and more—advancement in technology impacts architectural designs, which influences society. An architect is a conventional thinker who designs an Urban, Semi-urban, or rural fabric favorable to community spaces that suit the user and goes with the environment. Architects bring optimism and better quality of life by designing spaces ,and by educating the citizens of their society. They add value in defining strategic goals in making simple, public-oriented, and effective policies, which is the need of the hour.

Keywords:

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INTRODUCTION:

As Frank Gehry said, "*Architecture should speak of its time and place but yearn for timelessness*"

Throughout history, architecture has stood as a representation of society, reflecting the values, successes, of civilizations over time. From the monumental structures to the residences and buildings that make up the city's fabric, we can learn a lot about who the people were and who inhabited these cities long before our time. When kings were in prominence, architecture was mainly concerned with palaces and stately buildings. During the period of wars, architecture

was essentially focused on building forts and castles. Belief in religion resulted in the construction of temples, mosques, and cathedrals, etc. The Industrial Revolution resulted in architects reflecting their ideas through industrial buildings, factories, etc., and consequently creating residential buildings for laborers.

Architecture after Independence and Its role in Social Development -

After Independence, due to industrialization, there was urbanization and as a result, urban societies were created. No. of towns and cities grew in India. As the country adopted mixed economy, private sector was developed. Small villages evolved into urban and industrial regions. This resulted in large-scale rural urban migration causing overcrowding in big cities. As development set in and globalization started connecting remote places, the exchange of thoughts and philosophies channeled into a new social responsibility for architects and urban planners. Several modern architects like Le Corbusier, Achyut Kanvinde, Habib Rahman, Charles Correa, Raj Rewal, B.V. Doshi, Kuldeep Singh, were inspired by American, German, and French ideas, contributing to building post-independent cities of India. India was a testing ground for the exploration of architectural and social development. Due to availability of roads, electricity, education, health and medical facilities, employment opportunities and migration from rural to urban increased. Per capita Income in urban location became three times that of the rural location. Urbanization led to severe shortfalls in housing, water supply, waste management, and sewerage, creating congestion, pollution, environmental degradation, and inadequate public transport, and lack of good urban governance.

During the 1990s, Architects started observing people living in urban areas were surrounded by artificial environments and were isolated from nature. High population density, more usage of vehicles and industries resulted in pollution. This rapid development and widespread urban sprawl have drastically depleted green cover leading to habitat loss, pollution and significantly impacting the quality of life of urban dwellers. Rapidly declining green spaces and rampant urbanization has also made cities more vulnerable to climate change.

Consequently, unlike the urban development, the rural part of our country, despite contributing to 65.53 percent of Indian's population (according to the 2019 census), hasn't changed neither architecturally nor socially. Even though the government has taken a lot of initiatives to improve this condition, the improvement in the livelihood of rural India is minimal due to the lack of implementation of these plans.

Ways in Which Architects Contributing Towards Society:

Today, an architect's role in a community is to look after its society's needs without disregarding any social, cultural, or environmental issues. Nowadays, architects are designing user-centric design, climate responsive design, sustainable design, eco-friendly design and design that adheres to the current social fabric to attempt corrections in what has gone wrong becomes crucial.

By combining civic engagement and public service into the practice of architecture, architects apply their professional skills to society's benefit. Architects provide basic ideas and proposals for regulations that make it possible for us to have sustainable communities in the future. The Architect's social responsibility is not restricted to designing a built environment, but their ability to think differently can help define strategic goals of societal improvement & its environment. Structured social policies and their execution by India's Government in adherence with the Constitution bring growth in social sustainability attributes, predominantly in education, employment, and gender empowerment and equality. Hence, architects are joining in social movements and demanding public dialogues to reduce all kinds of injustice. As a result, architects are making efforts to create platforms that can give solutions to better architecture.

1. To preserve the socio-cultural identity of the Indian cities, architects like AnupamaKundoo, Laurie baker, ChitraVishwanath, Krishnarao Jaisim, NeelamManjunath, SathyaPrakashVaranashi, YatinPandya, Dean D'Cruz, and Samira Rathod are using materials such as brick, clay, bamboo, timber, stone, etc. in their projects.

2. Architects like Nimish Patel, ParulZaveri, Bijoy Jain, and GirishDariyavKarnawat have also used the immense resource of' craftspeople' designs to conserve the treasures of our country.

3. Architects such as BrindaSomaya, Pratima Joshi, PK Das, and AbhaNarainLambah are working on community architecture and restoring/ conserving heritage structures like castles, museums, forts, temples, mosques, churches, etc.

4. To create awareness towards sustainability, our culture and create architecture that cultivates an 'Indian identity, architects like Charles Correa, BV Doshi, Raj Rewal, CN Raghavendran, Shiv Datt Sharma, Sanjay Puri, Mathew & Ghosh, and many others have gained lots of credence.

5. For architects like Sanjay Mohe and Sandeep Khosla, Architecture is not about the 'aesthetics,' it is about functionality, a 'way of living, and how it can affect us. For them, it is about designing buildings as spaces and not merely 'objects.'

6. The role of Indian media in architecture and design has also remained minimal, and very few people in the country have taken it upon themselves to make a difference through writing. Ar.

Apurva Bose Dutta is an author and award-winning architectural journalist from India who has spent the past 12 years writing about architecture and the growth of this industry.

7. Practitioners such as Karan Grover, Rahul Mehrotra, and NareshNarasimhan have begun to assume the role of activists to create more awareness regarding architecture, social development, technological development, and cultural preservation.

8. In addition to professional bodies like the Council of Architecture, Indian Institute of Architects, and Indian Institute of Interior Designers, many cities also have very active architects' groups who meet, interact, disseminate, and share their views on social issues.

9. Numerous international architecture conventions are also creating opportunities to address burning topics such as the green movement, sustainability, the role of architects in the planning of cities, and integration of urban planning, architecture.

Social Responsibilities of an Architect:

Access to an excellent social system is a fundamental right, and architects are the agents of change to make this right a reality. So, the role of Architects in Social developments can be narrowed down to:

1. <u>Development of a well-designed Infrastructure:</u> Infrastructure is more than roads and bridges. The public buildings are the bedrock of our communities—like schools, hospitals, libraries, police and fire stations, parks, and government buildings. Architecture can bring society together and empower them to develop their lives. It can also empower future generations to live healthier lives.

2. <u>To mitigate the effects of Global Warming:</u> The world is slowly becoming more and more uninhabitable as more years go by. Designing Green buildings that consume fewer natural resources and reduce the carbon footprint is good for the environment and business. According to a 2015 study, from 2011 to 2014, the green construction market generated $167.4 billion in GDP, supported over 2.1 million jobs, and provided $147.7 billion in labor earnings. By advocating for policies that lead to energy-efficient, carbon-neutral buildings, architects are creating a better environment to live in.

3. <u>To reduce the economic gap:</u> Architecture specifically designing for communities belonging to low income-groups helps these people reduce their living price and gives them a chance to improve their lives. Structures designed to promote public activities also allow smaller businesses to thrive and help decrease the gap between the rich and the poor. By designing offices, storefronts, and home offices, design firms create great spaces and well-paying jobs and opportunities.

4. <u>To create more cultural awareness and promote social interaction:</u> As the years have gone by, humans have become more isolated due to lifestyle changes. Various forms of architecture like entertainment centers, religious places, hotels, gardens, and museums are designed to create better social interaction. People also connect based on their socio-cultural beliefs and ideas. Architecture can serve as a center for bringing these people together to celebrate, pray, and relic their faith. By adding visually pleasing elements, like decorations, plants, and different colors, any place can be made more engaging for people.

5. <u>To Promote Innovation and create a comfortable working environment:</u> The role of architecture in human psychology is enormous and essential; it can elevate peoples' mood, promote optimistic thoughts, improve self-esteem, and boost confidence. With the ever-growing population, architecture has to grow to create better solutions and improve its customary practices for the benefit of society.

6.<u>To promote tourism:</u> Any country's economy is affected by the number of tourists who come to enjoy that country's culture. Tourism in any country is influenced mainly by different monuments, places, structures, and design styles unique to that region. Sites like 'The Seven Wonders of the World' essentially draw many tourists and bring wealth to their respective countries.

7. <u>To build natural disaster-resistant buildings:</u> Resilient and adaptable buildings are a community's first line of defense against disasters and changing conditions of life and property. Natural disasters like floods, storms, earthquakes are the forces of nature that can render anyone helpless. Architecture plays an essential role by providing short-term immediate relief structures in the areas struck by these disasters, and more tolerant systems can be built in the future to prevent these effects.

8.<u>To create universal designs:</u> Ensuring health and safety provisions for residents, workers involved in the project and creating barrier-free designs for people with special needs.

9. <u>Encouraging the schools of architecture:</u> to educate future architects about their social responsibilities and providing expert advice and quality education regarding sustainable and social architectural development. Many firms have also taken upon them to hold smaller academic programs and train students themselves.

CONCLUSION:

As designers of society, architects have great opportunities to impact human lives positively. With a deeper understanding of the current and changing situation they can help in achieving our country's social goals. Social development is an amalgamation of cultural, economical,

medical, educational, and technological development. Development of any kind requires basic provision and services like clean drinking water, electricity, education, transportation etc which architects must design to create new communities that are acceptable, relevant, inclusive and sustainable. Architects can gain necessary knowledge from user involvement to ensure that their planning and design will meet the intended objectives in the most effective way. The architect can act as a link between the user and the project. The role of architects can be defined as to preserve, improve and create the required quality of built environment under the particular condition of each community, in an ideal and sustainable world. Integrating these various approaches helps gaining a broader understanding of the interwoven social, economic, and ecological interconnections, dependencies, relationships. Consequently, the role of architects, their responsibilities, and their social engagement needs to be more and more questioned and redefined within the process. Ethical standards that are contextually-sensitive should be developed to enhance a more responsive architectural practice.

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