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Gender Spaces in Modern Muslim Cities: Women's Public Sphere in an Evolving Cityscape

Abstract

In the last four decades, the Arabian Gulf countries experienced exponential growth in population and city sizes. As part of the Omani constitution to cope with the housing needs of its inhabitants, the city of Muscat distributed free Public land in a random lottery system to its citizens. More recently, the rights of women within the territory has evolved to include unrestricted access to education, work, voting and, since 2008, same property rights are secured. The prevailing typology of the Single-Family Detached Villa surrounded by a boundary wall triggered the disproportional growth due to its characteristically inefficient land consumption. It allows for a preconditioned level of privacy inwards, but through tall boundary walls that separate one family from another prevent Public life and social interaction outside. Women in Oman are currently deprived of Public life, as isolated outdoor areas don't provide the required sense of shelter and safety. Through the current economic shift in the country, and the city's limits narrowing the amount of available free space, comprehensive debate on alternatives to the status quo housing preference and layout of urban spaces has ensued. Aligned with the movement to empower women citizens in Oman and the tendencies of them taking over their own Private living sphere, this paper foremost explores the perception of Female Omani subjects to Public spaces and discusses strategies for gender-sensitive urban development in Muscat. Additionally, it attempts to document the current perceptive cultural barriers and the adaptability of these norms to newer living conditions.

INTRODUCTION

Located on the cusp of the Arabian Peninsula, the Sultanate of Oman has experienced an economic boom starting in the 1970s, with the introduction of a new ruler and entering the oil and gas export market. Mass migrations to the new Capital city of Muscat occurred, and urban movements from traditional building typologies to modern concrete and planned structures changed the living styles of the local people. Yet with these changes, the regulated built environment and social norms enticed gender segregation, mobility and leisure limitations on women in Muscat, the Sultanate of Oman. The term “gendered spaces” is used here to refer to the spatial segregation or priority towards one gender, in an architectural and urban scale.¹ Several attempts to engage the female public has been developing throughout the Arab world, with women being in the forefront of a Women’s Empowerment program created in 2016 by the Arab Women organisation, and a specific guide centred around Oman released in 2016 by the National Centre for Information and Statistics.²

Arabian-Muslim cities and their social context.

Cities, in which Islamic Sharia Law pertaining to neighbourhood building-guidelines is applied to combined with Islamic ideologies, are known as Muslim cities. These principles/guidelines are cross-referenced with specific Quranic verses or influential historical Muslim figures that prescribed them. In order to understand the practice of these laws, a division in categories of Arab and Non-Arab Muslim communities is necessary. This is since cultural roots are the basis of the difference between Islamic theory and reality practice.³ In turn, cultural backgrounds cause the formation of different behaviours and needs with Muslim people in Arab and non-Arab countries.

The concept of Public and Private space within Arab society is different from that of non-Arab societies. The “Umma”, an Arabic term for Public space, has a male connotation to it and is defined by the absence of women.⁴ In this sense, Female spaces are reserved as Private spaces⁵. Therefore, spaces in Arab-Muslim cities tend to be distinguishable as ‘Private’ or ‘Public’ based on their interacting users.⁶

The Villa

One major Sharia guideline that has influenced the Sultanate of Oman, and its neighbouring GCC countries, is that of Privacy (حق الخصوصية). It refers to a person's clothing as well as the Private domain.⁷ This enhanced the notion of closed and non-transparent views into people’s homes, corridors, gardens and dwelling spaces. As this value was taken into law, Omani

cities regulatory guidelines⁸ introduced a mandatory building of high walls around residential buildings and the approval designs in which low visibility into a Private space thrives. Oman's economic wonder in the 70s and the beginning of the modernization plans for Muscat took place while the planning discourse was still dominated by suburbanization models. The single-family detached typology matched perfectly both the desire toward comfort and modernity, while able to fulfil the needs for privacy (most commonly referred to as Villas). Since the original regulatory conceptions in 1984, the private "Villa" with its boundary wall has remained as a dominating typology.



Figure 1. Street view of single-detached houses (Villas) in the neighbourhood of Al Hail, in the capital city Muscat, Oman

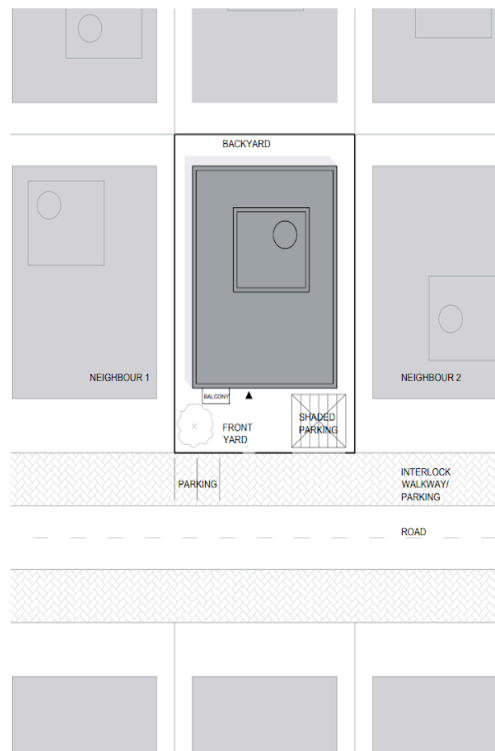


Figure 2. Scheme of a typical Omani neighbourhood with detached single-family houses.

Although we can attribute the rise in the commonality of single-detached houses to governmental housing regulations, that is not to say that traditionally high levels of residential privacy were not present, e.g. mud houses of traditional settlements had thick walls and windowless ground floors to the main streets. The main entrance doors to the traditional Omani home were cramped and short - below head level - so that pedestrians walking through the main streets would not be able to look directly into their neighbour's homes.



Figure 3 & 4. Traditional Omani mud settlement, common street view (left) & common entrance (Right). The Old Capital, Nizwa, Oman

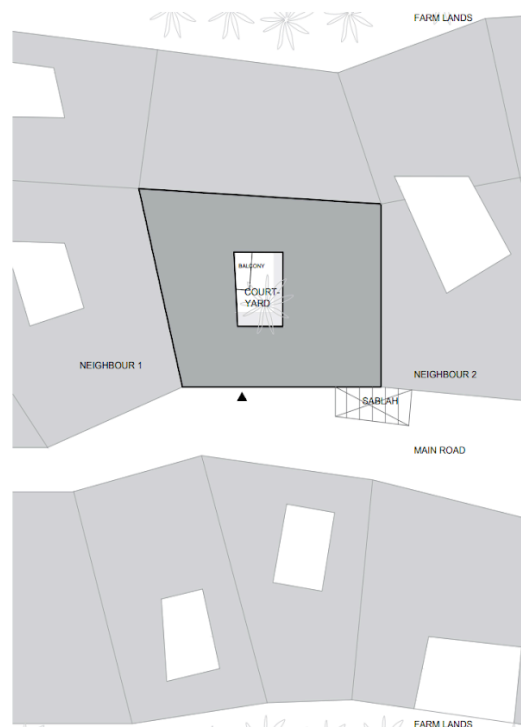


Figure 5. Reconstructed Scheme of Traditional Omani neighbourhood with courtyard homes.

Traditionally, Villages and living structures within Oman housed one or two tribes, growing organically according to their inhabitants' needs. These older settlements had clear spaces in which the community - including women - could gather. One such space was known as a Sabla; a shaded open structure for sitting and discussing formal and informal topics. When such dedicated spaces were missing, however, women were still able to commute from one house to another, due to all members of the Village being of the tribe.

Muscat, a city that was planned by its Municipalities and Ministry of Housing, was not, however, one tribal community, as lands given to the people did not consider family ties. On the one hand, this helped promote a social mixture, yet it breached the transparency that came with tribal communities. This compromised clear spaces in which women could gather and be part of the larger social context.

Lottery Land Allocation and Ownership

In 1984, the Royal Decree No. 81 / 84 (the government lands entitlement regulations) was issued as a constitutional right to male Omani citizens. This dictated that male citizens above the age of 23 would be eligible to apply for a free 600 sq.m. residential or commercial land from the Ministry of Housing.⁹ This decree was a step to provide affordable living spaces, as well as to further de-tribalize Muscat and disallow lower-income-only districts from rising.¹⁰ The lottery mixed residents from different backgrounds throughout the city on available land. Due to the plot area and the regulated low-density building typology of single-detached housing, coupled with the constitutional pressure on the government to provide lands, the city of Muscat developed dramatically along its coast.

As of 2008, an amendment to the Royal Decree extended the land lottery system to include Female Omani applicants, without regard for marital status.

Muscat and Its' Women

As the economic status of the GCC has grown in the past decades, so has the population and city size within the region. In the case of Muscat, the city went from 630,000 inhabitants to 1,480,000 inhabitants in the span of the past 16 years (135% increase), while growing 600% in spatial city development.¹¹

This growth in population and empowerment opportunities by the government, linked with the rising level of women with higher education degrees, higher percentages in the governmental workforce, higher divorce rates and dropping marital rates¹², means many women have become the sole breadwinners of their household, and are conquering their own space. Women above the age of 23 in Oman - unlike other countries in the region - are entitled to

work, travel, vote, drive, and now own lands with similar opportunities to men - all aspects that were restricted in the traditional social context.

Yet the Female demographic had very little input in Muscat's planning and construction, as governing bodies were composed of men and planning approaches were created with the male demographic's needs in the forefront. Ultimately, the women reaped very little Public benefits from these regulations and their new city spaces.

Various conditions socially introverting women from the Public sphere and restricting their ease of movement has resulted in detrimental physical health towards women. The rise of noncommunicable diseases within the Sultanate, such as type 2 diabetes and obesity, has seen record highs - specifically within the Female population. With over half the population in the obesity range, women are also proven to be less physically active.¹³ The disparity is more visible in cases of Vitamin D Deficiency (an outcome of reduced exposure to sunlight). Women in Oman are 61% higher at risk of Vitamin D deficiency¹⁴ stemming from the clothing and coverings that create barriers from natural light, paired with inadequate outdoor scenarios for women to settle freely.

MUSCAT, THE METHODOLOGY

This paper revolves around analysis tools that lead to community workshops in order to understand women's outdoor spaces and explores methods on analysing women's spatial involvement in the city and its current boundaries. It works directly with gaining qualitative surveyable data on the perspective women in certain neighbourhoods have to their outdoor space.

Where Oman Walks (WOW) Research

A study of two neighbourhoods' outdoor adequacy in Muscat was conducted. The neighbourhoods of Al Hail and Al Athaiba were chosen for their similarities: of which both neighbourhoods developed post-1984 and were part of the lottery land handouts; their equal proximity to the airport; and being beachside communities. They also have a distinct feature of being built up, with sparse - yet visible - empty plots within their confinements and therefore room for new interventions.

With previous data showing that inhabitants of the city were largely inactive¹⁵, the study intended to question the walkability state within the neighbourhoods and any perceptual and physical barriers experienced when moving through the area. The research developed with 3 main methods of deduction – Surveyable data, Observations/Mapping and City gaming community workshops.

The Mosque

The study area started with the central node of the neighbourhood Mosque - a communal gathering location and a frequently visited site by male residents for the five Muslim prayers of the day, and a daily Quran school for the women of the neighbourhood - and further encompassed the houses surrounding the said Mosque. According to preliminary surveys in various locations within Muscat, the team was able to identify the Mosque as the most walked-to area of neighbourhoods in Muscat. According to Islamic scholars, such as Sunan Al Tirmidhi, there are religiously reaped benefits for a Muslim man who decides to walk to the Mosque. In the majority of cases, with the absence of the old communal Sabla, the local Mosques of the neighbourhoods of Muscat have become the social gathering space and areas in which local policies are explained and distributed. The distinct users of Mosques are men, with women quarters regularly being much smaller, more hidden, and in some cases even non-existent. This is further due to the religious impression that a woman blesses her home with prayers and is not required to pray at the Mosque.

IPEN Localised Survey

The analysis of 6 Attributes of Density, Land-use Mix, Street Connectivity, Pedestrian Infrastructure, Aesthetics, and Safety that affect the walkability of a space according to the IPEN Project survey study ¹⁶ ¹⁷ was deployed. The research team included the paper authors, a research assistant and a group of nine second-year bachelors' in urban planning and architecture students. A reconstructed IPEN survey was created on the website SurveyMonkey. The original IPEN Survey was adapted to the local scenario (to include functions such as the Mosque, etc.).

Mapping Attributes

The 6 attributes of the IPEN localised survey was translated into mapping elements. The mapping of various elements included on-site manual inputs, videoing and photographs of the scenarios, and using aerial footage.

These results of both the survey and maps were then used to establish the parameters of 3 challenges the group intended to acknowledge discuss and ultimately respond to through workshops from various stakeholders.

Contacting the community

Approaching the residents and inviting male participants was much more fruitful than getting in contact with the women in both neighbourhoods. The team was able to set up an information table at the Mosques and have a direct contact for invitees to the workshop. As

for the Female residents, there was minimal to no interactions with them before the workshop, as there was no clear space to reach them in the neighbourhood. The team then applied a door-to-door invitation method, in which official invitation cards were given to the residents in the hope of attracting the Female community. As women did not open their house doors at most houses due to cultural norms, the attendance outcome for the workshop in Al Hail was 37 attendees for the male workshops, and 8 attendees for the Female workshops.

City-Gaming Model

City gaming is a method used to allow open conversations and negotiations on space through stakeholders of a space.^{18 19} Four communal workshops in which residents were able to discuss, suggest and design the Public space within their neighbourhood took place in March and April of 2019. For each location, gender-segregated workshops occurred at the Mosque, as both neighbourhood Mosques happened to have women prayer halls or a Majlis (a gathering place for weddings, Islamic lectures and Quran-reading school). A replica model of their neighbourhood in scale 1:200 was presented and city gaming exercises were held, where residents were able to negotiate the spaces in front of their house with one another (using tools (e.g. Cardboard cut-outs of pedestrian walkways and trees) pertaining to the three outlined main barriers). Residents were invited to voice their thoughts on the outdoor space as well as partake in the gaming experience by placing written out comments and physical elements that corresponded to the original challenges/barriers the team came up with through the initial surveys and maps. The model included existing urban elements such as trees, pavings, speed bumps, entrances to properties, light poles, alleyways, facades, ditches and more, to allow for a realistic feel of the area.



Figure 6. Female residents add comments to their final design of the neighbourhood changes 13/03/19, Muscat, Al Hail.

Workshop activities

The workshops lasted an average of 1.5 hours each and began with a presentation from the team in which the survey results and mapping elements were presented and the aim of the workshop was introduced.

Attendees were given cue cards to fill out on good and bad things about their neighbourhood, as well as things they would wish as an interesting addition to their neighbourhood. The residents were then placed around the replica model, in which they began discussing the 3 challenges outlined by the team. Responding to the issues present, the residents were handed tools relating to each challenge; such as scaled 2-metre-wide white walkways to place in front of their homes, Trees for shade, and zebra crossings.

The WOW-team acted as mediators and designers and gave expert opinions on the placements while guiding the conversations. Furthermore, a representative from the Muscat Municipality was present to input the regulatory comments and possible governmental responses to such issues.

The workshops' intention was to identify walking patterns of the residents and ways in which to improve it. This followed the distinct approach of surveying, mapping, discussing and ultimately designing. The segregation of the workshop was necessary through cultural norms and allowed attendees to speak freely.

RESULTS – AL HAIL

In the case of the neighbourhood of Al Hail, the surveys and maps identified perceptive and physical negatives: in the Pedestrian Infrastructure (e.g. survey responses to shading and interesting things); Safety (e.g. crosswalks/zebra Crossings); and Land-use mix (e.g. Functions to walk to). These were turned into challenge elements to deliberate within the workshop.

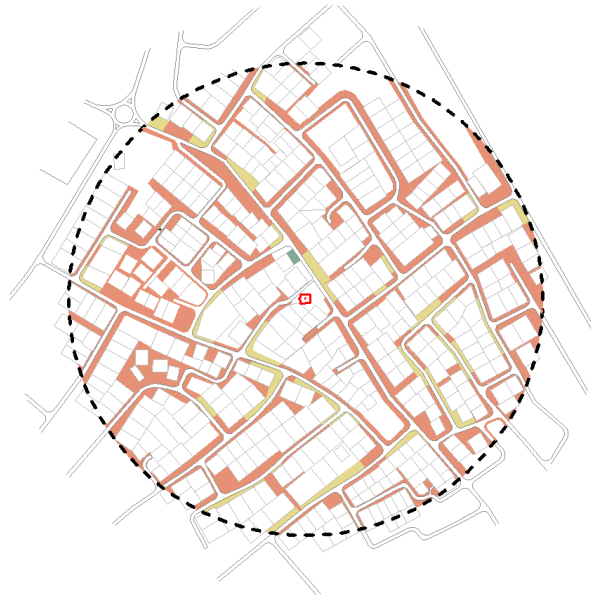


Figure 7. Example of Al Hail Pedestrian infrastructure map: Red = No paving, Yellow = Damaged paving, Green = Good existing paving. The mosque is identified in the centre of the map, with a 500-metre radius of study area.

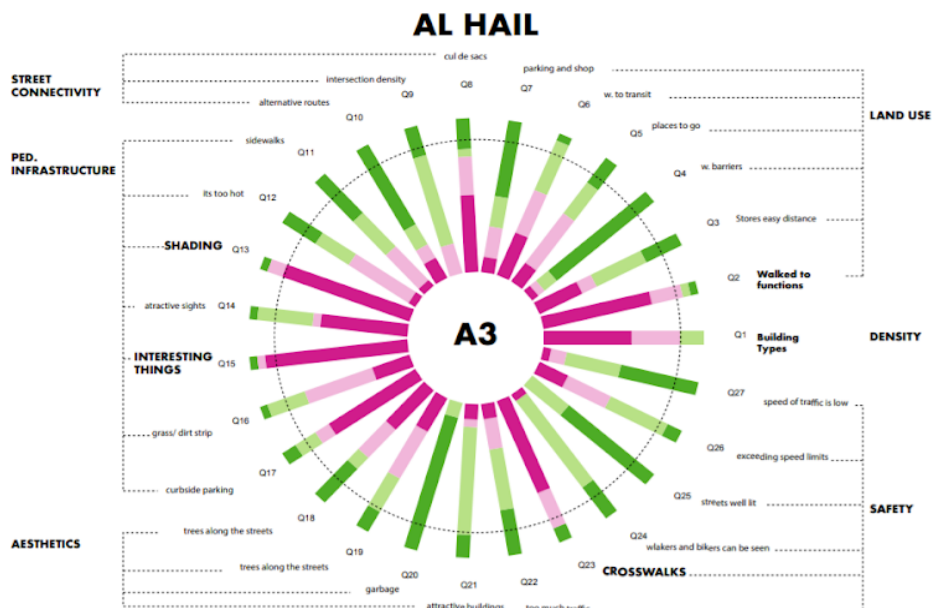


Figure 8. Al Hail Survey Results diagram: Based on questions pertaining to the different IPEN attributes, we can see resident's perception of spatial elements within the study area.

Although the attributes during the Workshops were distinctly chosen to solve walkability problems, the cue cards allowed for the inclusion of other important elements that personally affect the participants not foreseen by the questionnaires, and through these cue cards we were able to see patterns that emerged within the Female community.

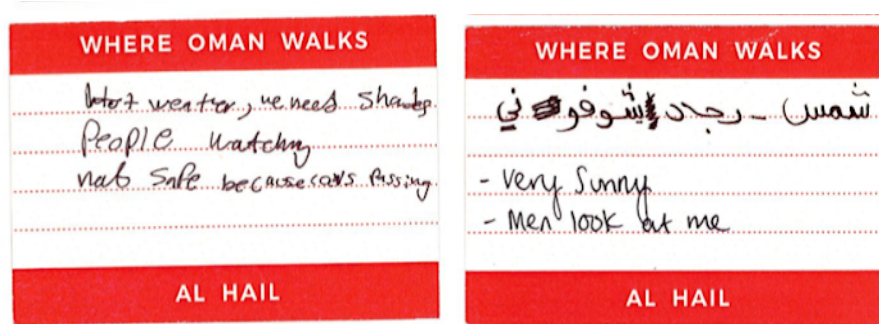


Figure 9 & 10. Red cards for comments on ‘Bad’ aspects of the neighbourhood of Al Hail during the Women’s workshop. Participants were given the cards at the beginning of the workshop and would write their responses in their preferred language. Once collected they were translated by the first author.
 13/03/19, Al Hail, Muscat.

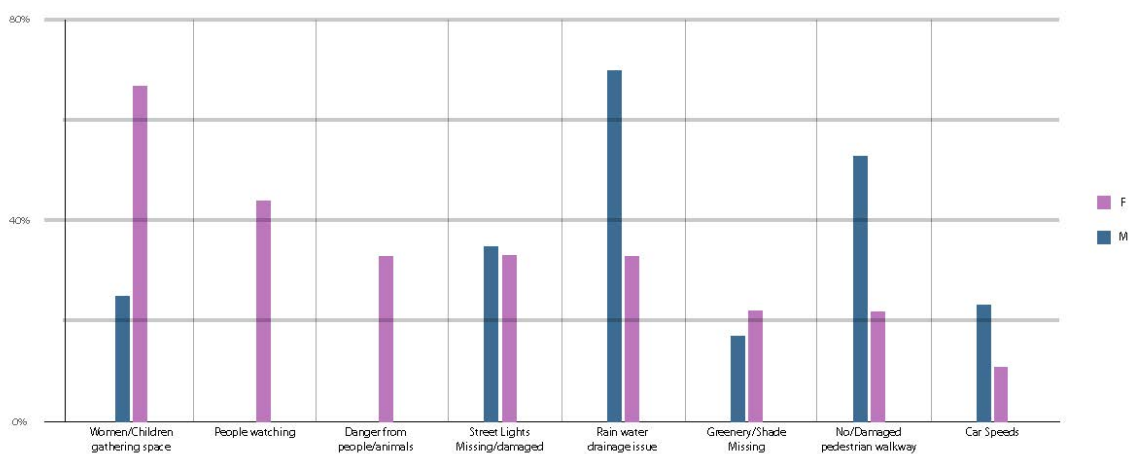


Figure 11. Shows the number of repetitive comments made by the women attending the workshop, in comparison to the percentage of men with the same comments. This graph is only based on the comments made by the women (while the men’s responses also included other issues with their outdoor space such as garbage accumulating, haphazard parking spots, and parking spaces for the disabled not being provided). The top 3 reported bad qualities of the space for the women were that of ‘No space for women and children’, ‘People watch’ and ‘danger from people and animals’.

The results show that in general, most women identified areas in the neighbourhood where men were able to gather (such as the Mosque) while not having a clear space for themselves. Due to cultural norms, Public space is only public for women when given a sense of privacy and clear indicators. In comparison, the male participants showed interest in the need for a park; yet the idea of people watching them or feeling uncomfortable by the opposite gender did not come up once in the cards of the 37 participants.

A repetitive ‘Bad’ element was the idea that people were looking or watching the Female subjects, an aspect that was never discussed or commented on during the Male workshops. In figure 10, one subject specified, “Men look at me”. The transparency and lack of coverage that allows an area to feel inviting to women were lacking in their perceptive terms. It is therefore understandable why some of the attendees included “Area for women”

or "Park only for women" (As shown in figure 12) as one of their wishes as a possible interesting thing for their neighbourhood.

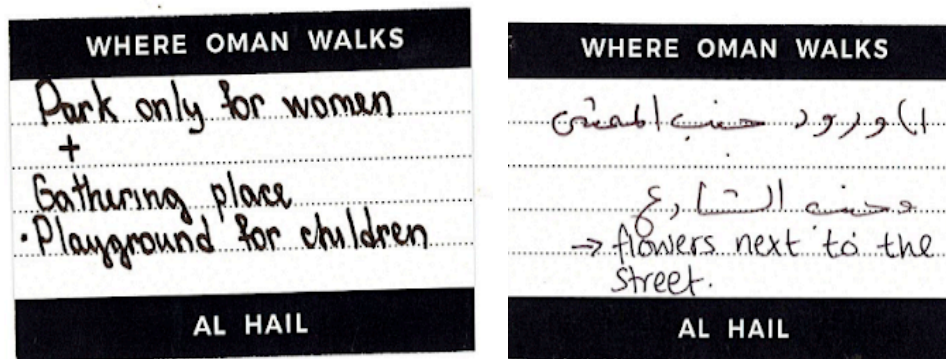


Figure 12 & 13. Black cards for comments on possible wishes for the neighbourhood of Al Hail during the Women's workshop. Participants were given the cards at the beginning of the workshop and could write their responses in their preferred language. Once collected, they were translated by the first author.
13/03/19, Al Hail, Muscat.

The outcome of workshop exercises

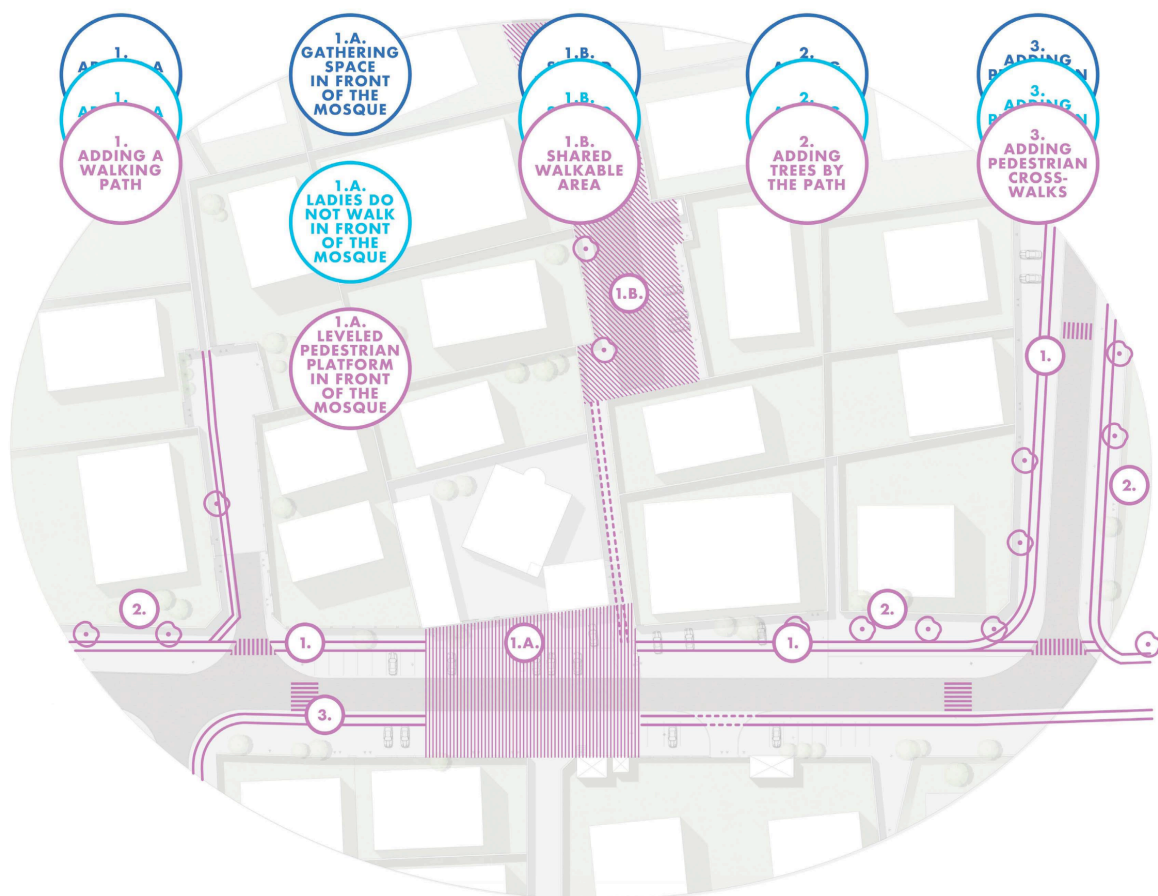


Figure 14. The joint solution by residents of Al Hail. Dark blue – Men, Light blue – Women, Pink –

Joint Solution. We see a commonality in elemental distribution for both workshops, with the main point of differentiation related to the space in front of the local mosque.

Gaming challenges and Elements placement

Sidewalks: Throughout the events, both groups voiced concerns of privacy when dealing with the sidewalks. The agreed solution amongst present male and female participants was the placement of the sidewalk element as far as possible from the house owner's boundary walls. During discussions, terms such as "Safety" and "Privacy" were used as arguments against having pedestrians walking close to the high boundary walls of homes.

As for the connectivity of these paths, the men's workshop finalised a walkway that connected the Mosque to the houses on the street in one linear motion, while the women's workshop vehemently disagreed with walkways in front of the Mosque. As the Mosque is in use 5 times a day by male residents for prayers, the area has distinct spatial ownership. Instead, the women opted for a walkway that purposefully turned away and avoided the area in front of the Mosque.



Figure 15. Comments by a Female participant on the reality of the area in front of the Mosque.

13/03/19, Al Hail, Muscat, Women's Workshop.

Shading: A discussion ensued in terms of the type of shading to be provided. Attendees of both workshops did not agree that trees should be the only form of shading to be provided for the sidewalks. This was more due to previous bad experiences in which non-native trees were planted in front of their homes and caused damage to their walls, sidewalks and water pipes due to straying tree roots. The attendees brought up a suggestion of artificial shading elements. This also meant that both gendered workshops placed the trees at equal intervals on the side of their newly created walkways, as shading did not feel like a very important challenge to their area.

Crosswalks: Throughout the male workshops, the attendees placed walkways that allowed easier passage and crossing from common routes towards the local Mosque, while the women tended to locate crosswalks at areas that helped them avoid walking too close to the male-dominated spaces. An outcome of the women's workshops also included their concerns on a popular unofficial school bus drop off spot, and the placement of more crosswalks and a bus stop sign for this location and ease of access for their children.

DISCUSSION

Setup and Approaching Omani Women

Although the team was able to have detailed discussions about individual locations, the low turnout of attendees was a clear indicator that the approach to engage the women of Al Hail was ineffective. The study sample included almost all-male residents pertaining to the houses in the replica model, while the input from the limited Female attendees required neighbours speaking for their neighbours and fewer negotiations on space between different women.

As a possible alternative, the women do not have space that they can claim within the neighbourhood, while the living room of their home is the space for gathering and meeting one another. Once the team had connected with a social woman in the community a snowball process was triggered and she invited the 7 other women that attended our workshop in the neighbourhood of Al Hail, while other attempts to engage the women failed. Both the male and female workshops in Al Hail took place at the local Mosque's Majlis. Through the event, the team identified the Mosque as an inhospitable space for women to approach freely.

Therefore, in the future new preliminary meetings should be held to get to know the Female community of spaces and allow for easier interaction with the Omani women. This requires the identifying of local socialites, that can be done via door to door informational forms with contact details to the team, that would allow active female members of the community to reach out to the team, and a cooperative invitation method can be held with the help of the local socialites.

WOW-WOman Method

With the research findings we were able to see what a necessity for the women was in a typical Omani neighbourhoods, yet some methodologies used did not allow for a full comparison. The attributes to focus on for future reference are in response to the results displayed previously in this paper. (1a) A mixture of elements of the NEWS survey as an adequate analysis of outdoor spaces, (1b) A development on the Social cue cards expressed by Female residents of Al Hail and Al Athaiba, (1c) scenarios from the current urban typology of Muscat and relating directly to single detached family houses with boundary walls.

This leaves us with the new and connected topics of:

1a

Land-Use Mix

Safety from Crime, Safety from Cars

1b

Privacy & Visibility

1c

Adequacy of the Boundary Wall

Current use of outdoor spaces and the typological "Front Yard".

These finalised attributes are the basis of the study's question and are future explorable tools to explain the social-spatial norms of the Female residents. The translations of these new Woman Methodological Attributes into analysis tools can be done as follows.

Quantitative Attributable Surveyable data

"Perceived Security/Safety" or "Fear of Crimes" is the concept of a risk-generated emotion towards security or safety.²⁰ The measures of crime or threats do not impact the emotional sense, as this relates to the perception of an individual.²¹ The emotional state of anxiety that comes with low perceived security is often as large of an issue as the crimes themselves, as it pushes people to avoid certain areas for fear of wrongdoings. The factors influencing perceived security are the physical, personal and social attributes.

The NEWS survey questions safety according to vehicular fears, yet in the cue cards from our Al Hail workshop Female session, we see that car speed was the least likely "Bad Element" to be discussed. In the research of 2018 by the Ministry of Health Oman²² women were questioned on their freedom of movement, as to where they would be willing to go easily and alone. Various groups aged 15 to 50 showed that accordingly, the older

participants were more likely to have the freedom and therefore be unopposed; while younger women felt “not comfortable” or “unable to”. Specifically, the example of whether they would have freedom of movement to “go on a walk”, 50% of women aged between 40-49 were inclined to do so, while only around 25% of 15 to 19-year-olds could say the same. With this in mind, previous studies on perceived safety worldwide have shown trends of decline (Increased fear) as a person gets older²³, yet in Oman older women feel more likely to go out on their own. Therefore, a new idea towards perceived safety, not one against cars or external sources, but instead, towards societal and male guardian backlashes should be included.

Cue cards relating to degrees of fear from certain spaces

The workshop of Al Hail focused on one location and its social norms. Yet to get a more inclusive response, a more systematic approach through the use of images of areas, such as three types of neighbourhood parks found in Muscat, or three different neighbourhood Mosques’ women’s halls could be displayed, and specific cue cards for those scenarios would allow for an understanding of the women’s responses to certain topics. These topics would be related in more detail to the new and revised survey.

Observations of the Front Yard

Observing the outdoor space, specifically the women’s use of the front yard, in order to collect data that can then be compared to survey findings, as well as the women’s descriptions of their spaces, can lead to an understanding of the social norms set for the Female residents in their specific house to boundary wall relationship.

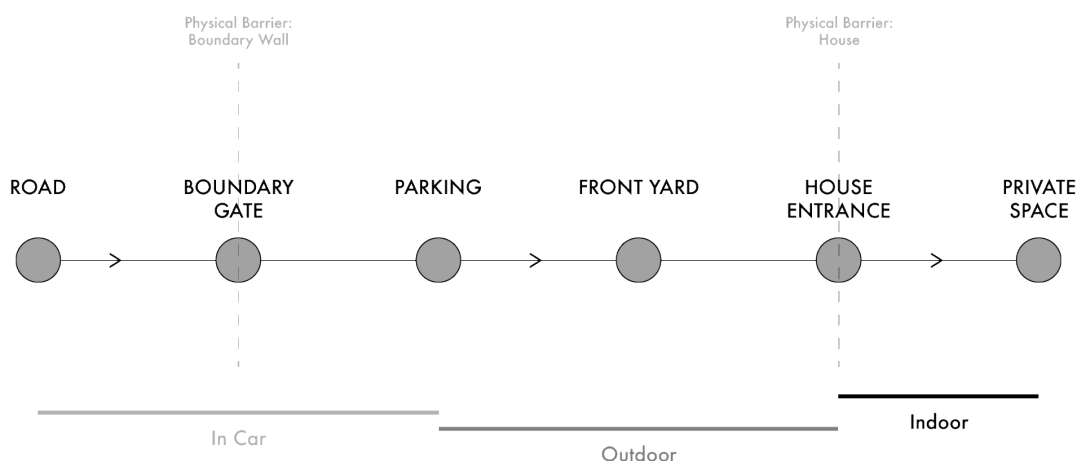


Figure 16. Modelling the space syntax of the approach from ‘Public’ to ‘Semi-Public’ to ‘Private’ created by Authors

As women move through the city, they spend the majority their time inside the car. In the private sphere of their homes, the provided outdoor portion is experienced in the front yard of

the house between two barriers - a 2m high wall and the entrance to their Private abode. The boundary wall's original function was to ensure a sense of privacy, yet the disuse and misuse of these space states otherwise; that the area does not provide enough privacy to be of use. Observations of the movements and uses of these spaces could help identify opportunities in this existing characteristic of current local homes.

Mental Mapping as a perceptive tool

Through the workshops, the women's responses to creating the permeable walkways and their distinct avoidance of the area in front of the Mosque allowed us to understand the social-spatial barriers that were provided. An additional tool to introduce would be that of Mental Mapping, in order to identify personal spatial qualities that affect the users in any given place²⁴. Participants would be asked to map their paths from their house to a nearby function such as the neighbourhood store or a Public park, detailing and drawing their experience from memory. Then symbols pertaining to disliked scenarios and liked scenarios would be introduced for further clarification.²⁵ The women may also leave comments as to why specific areas are problematic. For those unwilling to map, a written response of their movements can be taken into account to produce similar atmospheric understandings.

CONCLUSION

Through the workshops held with the residents of Al Hail, our engagement with the community resolved in the design for a small-scale intervention in the public spaces of their Neighborhoods. We presented it during a final gathering aiming at collecting additional feedback and general approval. This was done through; finalising and interpreting residents' provisions of the model; responses through cue cards; and the transcripts of negotiation that happened during the workshops. Lastly, the research through the different workshops helped us to capture nuances of the relationship toward open spaces and public life in Muscat.

Ultimately, this study succeeded with using gaming as a method to allow women to speak about their expectations towards outdoor spaces. However, one can also argue that the absence of a mix-gender event contradicts its essence as a negotiation tool. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that in a context of segregated cultures the proposal of joint events would lead to an imposed way to interact while the exchange between one-gendered neighbours worked naturally.

We found that women of a typical neighbourhood in Muscat are either unable or unwilling to walk in front of male-dominated spaces feeling exposed and unsafe. The cultural root is, therefore, a deciding factor in the recruitment, organisation and realization of the workshops. While our strategy to invite men approaching them directly after the prayer times succeed, a better way to reach women seems to be inviting them indirectly through active actors of the

neighbourhood. For that, previous knowledge of the social network is required. Future designs should find ways to work with this clear separation and to move to more inclusively discussed spaces.

The Workshops helped to shed light on aspects of gender inequalities prevailing in Muscat, such as levels of activities in outdoor spaces favouring the male demographic, while focusing on a context-sensitive approach in its case study. It should be distinguished that the women of the workshops were able to identify specific places, such as the area in front of the local mosque, in which their presence did not feel welcome or viable, and furthermore commented on the lack of female-safe spaces in their neighbourhoods. In its essence, the topics discussed tended to be towards outdoor walking and leisure activities and attempted to acknowledge the fundamental disproportionate users.

Gender-sensitive design strategies for the city of Muscat is an upcoming topic considering the push for policy changes aiming at women and youth empowerment labeled by the vision of Oman. Therefore tools to enable the inclusion of those demographic groups in the planning praxis are the first step to provide with spatial rights.

Endnotes

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