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SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN IN MULTICULTURAL CITIES: BALANCING GLOBAL TRENDS AND LOCAL IDENTITY

At the beginning of the third millennium, more than half of the global population lives in cities. In addition, the United Nations reports that 3 percent of the global population lives outside of their country of birth. That is, 191 million people worldwide are classified as migrants. Patterns of international migration, economic integration, and globalization are said to fuel cultural diversity within urban centers. The ramifications of these processes, which are by no means new phenomena, unfold at the local level, meaning that neighborhoods and urban communities are transformed by the social, cultural, and economic diversity of their new arrivals. This richness also poses dilemmas and challenges. Examining what multicultural cities implicate, then, is central to urban social scientists. The multicultural city as a unit of social scientific study, however, is not without its limitations.

Cultural identity refers to the unique set of values, traditions, languages, and worldviews that define a particular group or society. It plays a pivotal role in shaping both individual and collective identity, linking people to their past and providing a sense of continuity and belonging. Globalization, as a process of increased worldwide integration in terms of economy, politics, culture, and communication, has complicated the ways in which cultural identities are maintained, adapted, or transformed. On one hand, globalization enables the global spread of information and cultural products, which can help smaller or less dominant cultures gain visibility and preserve their cultural identity on the world stage (Mazurkevych et al., 2024). On the other hand, it can contribute to cultural homogenization, where dominant cultures impose their values, media, and consumer practices on smaller or marginalized cultures, risking the loss of local traditions and languages (Assmann, 2010).

Globalization has had an impact, on the creation and preservation of urban identity. The results indicate that globalization has presented challenges to the social and architectural

aspects of cities resulting in a standardization of aesthetics and cultural practices (Grazia, 2012; Sassen, 2002). Nevertheless the findings also suggest that cities are actively resisting these changes by safeguarding practices promoting local arts and culture and designing public spaces that reflect their distinct character (Florida, 2002; Landry, 2000).

1. Cultural Identity:

The research suggests that globalization has caused cultural practices and values to become more similar, across cities as they strive to appeal to an audience. For instance, there has been a presence of European fast food chains, retail stores and entertainment venues in cities around the world.

However, the findings also indicate that cities are actively resisting this trend by preserving their practices and promoting local arts and culture. This resistance aims to maintain the identity of each city and safeguard its cultural heritage for future generations. Examples include supporting cuisine, crafts, and indigenous art forms, as well, as organizing local festivals and cultural events.

2. Social Identity:

Another significant aspect discussed is how globalization impacts the identity of cities. The research findings indicate that globalization has resulted in a standardization of practices and values. Cities, around the world are adopting norms and practices to cater to a global audience.

This can be observed through the rise of networks, international migration and the spread of global cultural norms (Appadurai, 1996; Castells, 2000). However, the results also suggest that cities are actively resisting this process of homogenization. They are promoting practices and values while creating spaces that showcase the unique characteristics of each city (Baumeister & Zeller 2016; Florida, 2002). This resistance is seen as an effort to preserve the identity of each city and safeguard its heritage for future generations (Grazia, 2012; Landry, 2000). Examples include supporting community organizations fostering multiculturalism and developing spaces that encourage social interaction and instil a sense of belonging (Zukin, 1995; Castells, 2000).

3. Architectural Identity;

The literature review also highlighted the impact of globalization on the identity of cities, as a theme. The research findings suggest that the impact of globalization, on styles and

practices has resulted in a tendency for cities to adopt approaches aiming to attract a global audience (Sassen, 2002; King, 2004). This trend is visible through the construction of glass and steel skyscrapers, shopping malls and gated communities across cities worldwide (Olds, 2001). However, the study also reveals that cities are actively resisting this trend by preserving their styles and practices while promoting local architectural traditions (Florida, 2002; Nia, & Suleiman). This resistance aims to maintain each city's identity and safeguard its cultural heritage, for future generations (Landry, 2000). Examples of efforts include conserving and restoring buildings emphasizing vernacular architecture and incorporating local materials and design elements into new constructions (King, 2004; Olds, 2001).

4. Globalization and Urban Planning:

Additionally highlighted in the literature review is the role of planning in shaping how cities respond to globalization—an important theme identified. The research indicates that urban planning has a role, in determining whether globalization leads to cities becoming more similar or if it allows for the preservation of their uniqueness and diversity (Fainstein, 2005). On one hand urban planning strategies that prioritize competitiveness by constructing business districts, convention centres and tourism infrastructure often contribute to making urban spaces more uniform (Sassen, 2002; Friedmann, 1986).

In the context of sustainable environmental design in multicultural cities, future development in this field is defined by the need for a careful and thoughtful balance between global trends and local identity. Modern cities are becoming increasingly diverse in their cultural composition, and this directly influences design approaches. Sustainable design can no longer be seen solely as a set of universal ecological solutions—it is evolving into a complex system in which environmental, social, and cultural factors are closely interconnected.

On the one hand, global trends form the foundation of sustainable environmental design. These include energy efficiency, reduction of carbon footprint, the use of renewable energy sources, the implementation of circular economy principles, and the integration of digital technologies such as intelligent building management systems. These approaches are universal because they address global environmental challenges relevant to all cities, regardless of their cultural context. Moreover, international standards and certification systems contribute to the

unification of sustainability requirements, establishing a certain level of quality and responsibility in design.

On the other hand, in multicultural cities, relying solely on global solutions may lead to the loss of environmental uniqueness and cultural identity. This is why the role of the local context is becoming increasingly important as an integral part of sustainable design. Local identity is expressed through architectural traditions, the use of local materials, climatic conditions, and the values and lifestyles of different cultural groups. In a culturally diverse environment, design must respond to the needs of various communities, ensuring inclusivity and social sustainability.

For example, public spaces should be adaptable to different usage scenarios that reflect diverse cultural practices and patterns of social interaction.

Particular importance is given to adapting global principles to local conditions. This is reflected in hybrid approaches, where modern technologies are combined with traditional construction methods and local practices. Such a synthesis not only enhances environmental efficiency but also preserves the authenticity of the urban environment. For instance, the use of local natural materials reduces transportation costs and carbon emissions while supporting regional economies and craftsmanship. Similarly, bioclimatic strategies based on traditional knowledge can be integrated with modern engineering systems.

In addition, an essential element of sustainable design in multicultural cities is the involvement of local communities in the design process. A participatory approach makes it possible to take into account a wide range of perspectives and cultural characteristics, resulting in more harmonious and *востребованные пространства*. This strengthens social sustainability, as residents begin to perceive spaces as their own, which encourages their care and long-term development.

In the future, sustainable environmental design will evolve as a multi-layered system in which global innovations and local characteristics do not oppose each other but complement one another. Global trends will provide the technological and ecological foundation, while local identity will ensure cultural depth and uniqueness. In multicultural cities, this balance will become a key factor in successful design, enabling the creation of spaces that meet environmental standards while reflecting the diversity of human cultures.

The future of emerging areas presents both challenges and opportunities in the preservation and promotion of local identity. As urban developments and foreign investments increase, so does the pressure on local traditions and customs. It is essential for communities to organize to defend their cultural heritage against the homogenization that progress may bring. Neglecting these aspects can lead to the loss of the uniqueness that makes each place attractive, which, ironically, may decrease its long-term value. Therefore, it is crucial to create a balance between economic growth and the conservation of local identity.

Opportunities are equally significant. By integrating cultural elements into development projects, spaces can be created that not only attract investors but also foster a sense of belonging among residents. Initiatives such as local markets, cultural festivals, and educational programs can be effective tools to strengthen the bond between the community and its identity. Furthermore, by valuing and promoting these unique local characteristics, interest from tourists and new residents seeking authentic experiences is enhanced. Thus, by facing challenges with creativity and innovation, emerging areas can become sustainable models where local identity not only is preserved but also flourishes alongside its economic value.

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