Urban Landscape Spaces and Migrants' Everyday Experiences in Bahrain

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Abstract

This paper presents the findings of a research that focused on understanding the everyday activities, preferences and motivations for using urban public outdoor spaces in Bahrain, with emphasis on the experiences of migrants. Bahrain has a super-diverse population with a distinguishing pattern of temporary migration. Linking to theories on social values of public open spaces (POS), the research used a qualitative methodology integrating ethnographic tools of observation and interviews. Participants included Bahraini and migrant groups to examine diverse personal interpretations and socio-spatial associations. Employing a case study approach, the research looked at eight case studies including formal and informal urban POS in Bahrain. The findings highlighted the importance of POS in Bahrain for different leisure practices and patterns of outdoor sociability and demonstrated how these reflect different cultural values. It concluded that the affordances of POS in facilitating the cultural practice of being-outdoors in cities help migrants pursue their cultural leisure practices and connect with home and other migrant groups. These promote wellbeing and sense of belonging. It also revealed how spatial qualities of everyday outdoor spaces can support both the processes of adaptation and integration. The research concludes that design and management of informal spaces can support migrants' positive experiences.

Keywords: superdiversity, urban landscape, socio-spatial, informal spaces, sense of belonging

Contemporary patterns of migrations in Bahrain:

Bahrain, a small island in the Gulf region, is the smallest country and the only island in the Arab world. It shares with the neighbouring countries of the Gulf Collaboration Council (GCC), the same religion, language, history, geographical context, customs, and traditions, as well as the economic resource: oil. Bahrain has benefitted from the rise in global oil prices, and this has been predominantly responsible for a national economic boom. It has also led to a massive population increase, mostly comprised of non-Bahraini transnational migrant residents. They now represent over 50% of the entire population as illustrated in Fig. 1. "Bahrainis are [themselves also] a fluid population of multi-ethnic origin with naturally diverse identities" (Al-Khalifa, 2012:58).
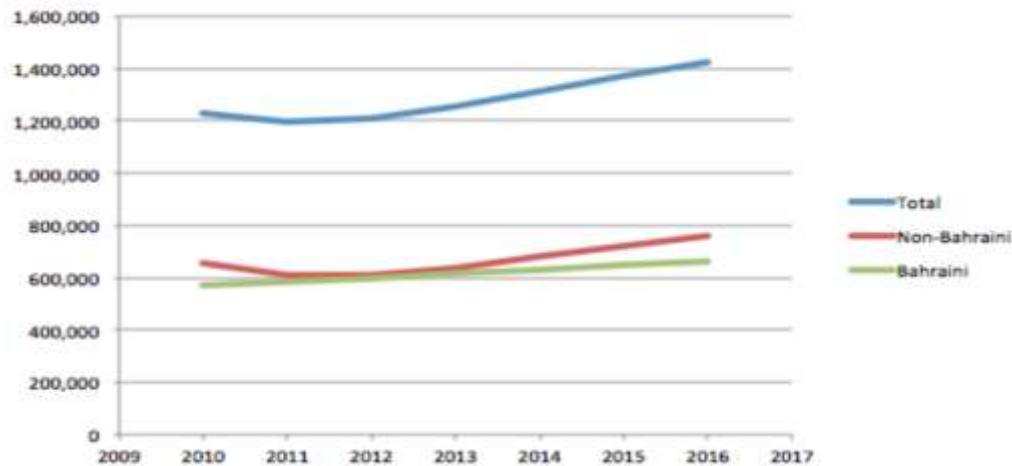
Fig. 1: Population in Bahrain
Source: Information eGoverment Authority, 2017.

Throughout its history, Bahrain has developed a fluid population and a multi-ethnic society from ancient trading and pearling. The maritime systems supported the flow of maritime traffic between the Middle East, India, and Africa, which largely influenced the demography of the island. The permeable nature of Bahrain's borders, as it is the only island in the region, has encouraged diverse ethnic and religious factions to interact harmoniously. Fuccaro (2005), and Onley (2005 & 2014) have investigated the Persian and Indian transnational communities in the region, who are deeply entrenched in the Bahraini society. Several studies have depicted Manama as a cosmopolitan city over the past 150 years (Palgrave, 1883; Fuccaro, 2005; Dayaratne, 2008; Alraouf, 2010; Jarach & Speece, 2013). Fuccaro (2005) identifies cosmopolitanism in Manama as a vital element for transnationalism and for the flow of people and ideas across boundaries.

Currently, the migrant population is fluid as it is affected by re-migration and temporary patterns of migration. The expression 'migrants' in Bahrain does not hold policy connotations. Instead, it refers to 'guest workers', 'contract labourers' or 'non- Bahrainis' (Bel-Air, 2015). Bahrain is considered a significant destination for migrant workers who look for a better quality life. The table 1 elucidates the current migrant numbers and their origins. However, the pattern of migrants' movements is changing which continuously shapes these figures. Non-Bahraini residents in Bahrain are mostly those with a two-year contract work visa or with a visitors' visa for a certain period of time. Both types of visas are renewable. Some migrant workers are allowed to bring their families according to the types of their visa. This majority and minority of different transnational identities, socio-economic levels and religions have increased diversity in the society. The majority of the population is Muslim, but other religions are present. Even though Bahrain is essentially an egalitarian society with a strong constitution that protects human rights for all people, akin to many other societies in the globalised world, there are clusters of wealth, and clusters of poverty across both citizens and migrants. Indeed, having a population with diverse origins, cultures and socio-economic levels creates what could be called a 'superdiverse' society; a phenomenon also observed in other GCC countries. Karolak argues "We have to consider then a very small area where population has been in constant blending over centuries" (2009:2). Bahrain, with its distinguished Arab-Islamic culture, arid climate, and dynamic pattern of migration, could be a significant contributor to studies on migrants' lived experiences, and this research is looking at the spatial dimension in relation to migrants lived experiences.

Country of citizenship	Total expatriates		Migration status		Sex ratio (men/100 women)
	Number	%	Worker	Family member	
India	257,663	49.4	76.7	23.3	411
Bangladesh	98,221	18.8	96.5	3.5	3,551
Pakistan	48,991	9.4	81.0	19.0	619
Philippines	29,722	5.7	88.9	11.1	77
Sri Lanka	7,627	1.5	78.1	21.9	136
Egypt	19,580	3.8	43.6	56.4	136
Jordan	7,235	1.4	41.5	58.5	138
Yemen	4,723	0.9	54.3	45.7	249
Syria	2,944	0.6	48.3	51.7	176
U.K.	3,927	0.8	57.9	42.1	143
Other countries	40,917	7.8	77.7	22.3	231
Total	521,550	100	79.4	20.6	385

Table 1: Non-Bahraini populations in Bahrain in 2014
Source: Bel-Air, 2015.

Everyday open spaces in cities, including parks and gardens, are sites where different people's practices and identities could mostly be visible (Al-Madani & Rishbeth, 2020; Rishbeth, 2013). Bahrain has a diverse populace, and this diversity is visible in urban open spaces with large migrant populations. In this respect, it becomes crucial to reflect on the notion of transcultural urbanism (Hue, 2017). This research about everyday migrant' experiences in Bahrain is to understand the role of urban spaces in fitting the cultural dynamics and interactions.

Owing to the prosperity in the region after the discovery of oil and practice of modern city planning, the authority in Bahrain has spared no effort in providing well-designed and maintained green open spaces for public use. The challenge is whether the current provision is 'fit for purpose' in terms of meeting the needs of a contemporary diverse society with their different values and preferences. The research is appropriate in terms of understanding the spatial and temporal uses of everyday outdoor spaces within the context of different transnational identities and social uses and values. This paper provides an insight into how the physical and spatial characteristics of the environment influence transcultural practices, and how new forms of attachments develop. It also explores how this could require a response in the professional practice of urban landscape design.

This paper argues that diverse spatial typologies of public open spaces (POS) can support migrants' everyday experiences and promote wellbeing through the multi-sensory experiences that reflect migrants' identities, past memories and the history of places. Informal spaces should not be ignored from this debate. The prime focus of this paper involves three main aims:

1. To understand how the use of outdoor spaces is reflected spatially and temporally across different typologies of everyday urban spaces
2. To address how the history of migration shapes the values and preferences of using everyday open spaces

3. To inform urban landscape design approaches for planning and managing transcultural urban open spaces within the region

In this respect, a review of previous studies in relation to migration and built environment, both internationally and in Gulf, will contextualized within this research.

Theoretical basis and the review of literature:

Transcultural spaces in Arab countries at Gulf:

The scale of the migrant labourers' population and contemporary transnational movements in the Gulf region stand in stark contrast to the lack of data about the fundamental aspects of migrations (Sassen, 2005; Gardner, 2011; Gardner et al., 2013; Vertovec, 2007a). Discourses on transcultural cities have emerged in line with the increase in the dynamics of transnational movement and migration, which increase the 'superdiversity'. From Vertovec's (2007a: 17) perspective, "most integration policies and programmes, in turn, do not apply to people with temporary status" and more needs to be done to understand the inadequacies and problems for both migrants and service providers in the host nations. Hence, in discourses on transcultural cities, it is critical to consider temporary migrant workers, and in the Gulf region, transnational temporary migrant workers are highly relevant.

The context of the research on migration in the Gulf and spatial qualities under the scope of transcultural cities and superdiversity is still under establishment. Elsheshtawy (2008:10) asserts that the Gulf cities are sites where divisions are made visible and are greatly intensified; however, another way of interpreting the cities would suggest exploring some similarities, ties and repositories of 'memories' where spaces are inscribed with meaning by their users, which makes the spaces liveable and pleasurable. Elsheshtawy (2008) declares: "A central construct underlying these new developments is the notion of transnational urbanism in which urbanizing processes are examined from 'below', looking at the lives of migrants […]. Cities in the Arab world are curiously left behind in this discussion, especially the Gulf" (p.5). Gardner (2010) states that there is critical marginalisation of the Gulf cities in the body of research, particularly on transnational urban spaces. Gardner (2010) argues that there is a need for more research to understand 'the lived experiences' of transnational labourers and different communities in the Gulf cities, including intra-regional Arab migrants. To quote, "to date, there is little ethnographically grounded work to help us understand the experiences of these other communities" (ibid:23). More studies are required in this context to extend this debate from different perspectives.

Gardner (2011), for instance, describes the migrant experiences in GCC as merely being strangers with social complications, while, through focusing on the role of professional planning, design, and management in cities, Al-Madani (2018) explores evidence of outdoor convivial spaces with transcultural practices in which migrants are being welcomed. Al-Madani & Rishbeth (2020) investigate the relationship between urban heritage and migration and find that urban heritage sites, which received investments with regard to tourism and recreation, are inclusive sites and connect migrants to their home. More studies are needed to better understand the patterns of social life in cities, and the implications for urban planning practices (Dayaratne, 2008; Alraouf, 2010; Dayaratne, 2012). Alraouf (2010) argues that when designing POS in Bahrain, cultural diversity should be the main consideration. In another study, Dayaratne (2008 and 2012) investigates both architectural hybridity and the role of landscape architecture in developing fluid identities in Bahrain, and also claims that the social fabric is being transformed. He emphasises the role of migration in these changes.

This research focuses on migrants' experiences and the spatial typologies of public spaces to highlight the role of everyday informal spaces in supporting migrants' experiences in a superdiverse context. Migrants' experiences in places

have direct relations to the construction of transcultural practices and hybrid identities (Ghosh & Wang, 2003; Al-Madani, 2018). The next section reviews the existing studies on migrants' experiences in a new place at an international level.

Migrants' experiences in new places: transcultural practices and spatial qualities in cities:

The discourse on transcultural city has emerged in the 21st century to express the cultural hybridity and fluid identities with social and cultural dynamics and 'superdiversity' in modern cities (Hou, 2013). Migrant's experiences include not only cultural practices and life expressions that may flow with migrants across borders, but also life actions of post-migration. This is indeed an integral part of evolving cultures tied up with the process of hybridity and adaptation (Al-Madani & Rishbeth, 2020). The flows of migration and the dynamics of transnational movement also increase diversity in modern cities. The term 'superdiversity' has been introduced by Vertovec (2007b), and it emphasises the complexities of diversity rather than merely focusing on ethnicity. In this context, Agyeman & Erickson (2012) prefer the use of the term cultural difference than cultural diversity as the latter is used mostly with issues of race. The term cultural difference shapes the complexity of diversity in the contemporary society. Gender, religion, educational background, socio-economic and family contexts, ideologies, race, length of residence, migrant and non-migrant backgrounds and legal status are also variables of diversity. Migrant identities cannot be excluded from 'intersectionality' of multiple identities. This 'intersectionality', 'superdiversity' and evolving cultures raise issues relevant to justice and make generalisation of people's values very critical (Al-Madani, 2018; Agyeman & Erickson, 2012; Low & Iveson, 2016).

Public open spaces (POS) are sites where different social and cultural leisure practices could become most visible in cities (Gehl, 2011). Leisure and recreational activities in POS are also dimensions of cultural differences. POS offer a range of social benefits to users, including migrants and newcomers, which promote health and social wellbeing (Al-Madani, 2018). Powell & Rishbeth (2012) find that spending time in outdoor public spaces can support processes of adaption and enhances a sense of local belonging for the first generation migrants. Rishbeth (2013) also states that while new migrants are likely to feel unsettled at the outset, spending time outdoors will enable them to identify with their new environment and develop transnational identities. The outdoor environment could provide opportunities for migrants to continue their native outdoor leisure activities in places where they feel welcome (Ghosh & Wang, 2003; Armstrong, 2004; Powell & Rishbeth, 213; Al-Madani & Rishbeth, 2020). Being outdoors in the city would inform migrants with options to fit in and to discover places with practices and cultural groups familiar to their home country. This is important for migrants from across borders to make intangible connections with their past and present homes and support adaptation for migrants (Rishbeth, 2014). Spending time outdoor in cities is also within the agenda of health, wellbeing, and quality of life (Cattell et al., 2008), which raises the significance of social inclusivity and the accessibility of these urban spaces (Al-Madani,2018).

Socio-spatial urbanism addresses how the built environment and society interact and how both of them affect and change each other in an ongoing process (Madanipour, 2014). Under the umbrella of this research, the socio-spatial process can shape and be influenced by different patterns of life in urban spaces. In migration studies, spatial qualities have become significant to support adaptation and to build a sense of belonging amongst migrants and newcomers (Ghosh & Wang, 2003; Rishbeth & Powell, 2013). Many studies have emphasised that lived experiences in places can construct meaningful relations and attachments with places, shape multiple identities and increase familiarity (Gustafson, 2001; Ghosh & Wang, 2003; Manzo, 2003; Manzo, 2005; Rishbeth & Powell, 2013). Hou (2013) and Noussia & Lyons (2009) agree that the choices for engagement can facilitate the process of adaptation and form transcultural practices that support the social and cultural dynamics and diversity in contemporary societies. Hence, they promote a sense of belonging for migrants in a new place.

The approach of transcultural urbanism links to practice with the commitment of social justice to tackle cultural differences in transcultural urban spaces (Hou,2013; Al-Madani,

2018). The key issues are whether the decisions made in operating POS are socially responsive and culturally appropriate for individuals with multiple identities. People who have the greatest need for "access to public parks and the opportunity for sociability in a safe outdoor setting" are perhaps those who have restricted mobility for reasons of 'age, economic status or lack of private transport' (Ward Thompson, 2002:61). With complexity of perceptions, experiences and values in transcultural cities, different types of spaces including liminal and edge types of spaces such as threshold spaces or between-ness, their qualities, forms and functions have different potentials for migrants to become informed about their new places (Noussia & Lyons, 2009; Hou, 2013; Al-Madani, 2018). Hence, it is important to consider social justice and to understand how other typologies and experiences in different public open spaces could have restorative values. It can lead to socio-spatial inequalities and injustice, if differences are not considered. Hence, implications for social justice in the professional practice of the built-environment assumes an ethical disposition when dealing with cultural differences (Low & Iveson, 2016). "Professions such as healthcare, social work, law, and public administration are characterized in part by their ethical obligations". Likewise, the planning profession should be no different (Agyeman & Erickson, 2012:358). Considering the benefits of POS for health and mental wellbeing for diverse users, and providing and regulating POS should be with the ethical responsibility to ensure inclusivity and justice in receiving the benefits.

Research methods:

The research emphasises on the socio-spatial association to support migrant outdoor cultural practices. This also shaped the selected methods. Thus, it adopted an ethnographic approach and used multiple qualitative data collection methods, which is not common in the research context (Gardner, 2010; Al-Madani, 2018). The selected methods appeared to be significant contributors to the study of the socio-spatial association within the theory and practice of landscape architecture. People would have different perceptions and constructed values about different spaces and also places have different affordances for different leisure activities that need to be investigated.

The research was conducted on eight case study areas involving observation and a total of 98 onsite in-depth walking and short semi-structured interviews. The fieldwork was conducted during six months between July 2014 and January 2015 with a total of 70 observation sessions covering different times, days and seasons. Observationa of the activities, the provided landscape elements and the settings of where these activities happens were supported with onsite short interviews. Observation and interviews were used to reveal different patterns of use in public open spaces (Gehl & Svarre, 2013).Thirteen go-along participant-led interviews were conducted to gather more in-depth data relevant to the affiliations between people and places. Go-along interviews can stimulate the memories and tell stories through participants' own expressions about their connections to certain places (Kusenbach, 2003; Al-Madani, 2018).

The research employed an on-going sampling process to select the respondents. This way of sampling reflected broadly the users of the POS. Sampling was based mainly on people's willingness to be interviewed and their age and language ability. The participants for both short and in-depth interviews included diverse users of Bahraini and non-Bahraini origins. The intention was to understand diverse personal interpretations and socio-spatial associations and analyse these alongside different patterns of use in urban public spaces.

Expert interviews were also conducted to inform the design approaches and policies for planning and managing of open spaces. This method also provided the researcher with an overview of the current policies. It was also an opportunity to support the analysis and to confirm the key findings that emerged from the data.

Spatial and temporal patterns of use in public outdoor spaces:

The findings illustrate that leisure experiences are context-dependent and are shaped by typologies of public open spaces. Different typologies of POS can support different migrant

outdoor leisure practices. Forms of social and cultural outdoor leisure practices also follow forms of the space.

This section describes the patterns of use in each typology in the selected case studies. For the case studies, the research is based on eight urban sampling areas with varieties in geographical and urban landscape character. The map of Bahrain shows that the urban areas are concentrated on the northern side while the rest is desert and vacant land; this has influenced the selection of the case studies (Fig. 2). Four selected cases are located in congested urban areas (Bab Al-Bahrain, Andalus Garden, Block 338 and the Pearling Path), two in waterfront locations (Amwaj and Arad Bay Park), and the last two in low-density areas, in which one is located next to the desert. Each sampling area focuses on a designated formal public open space and takes into account the immediate surrounding context to investigate any other informal and incidental POS in streets, fronts of shops, mosques, residences, or even in parking areas.
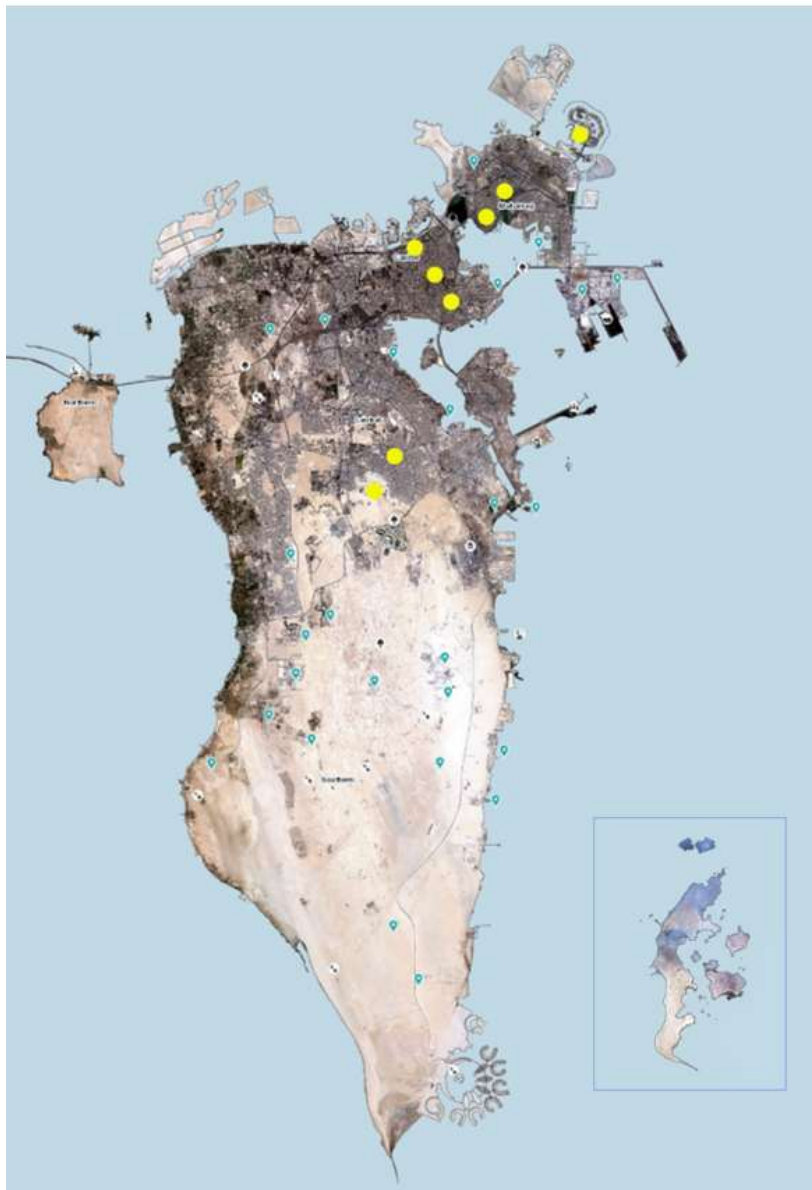

Fig. 2: Location of the case study areas on the aerial map of Bahrain
Source: Central Informatics Organization, 2013

A. *Formal green spaces: public parks and gardens:*

Name of the formal park/ Garden	Description
Andalus Garden	Located in a high-density area in Manama with 78% of residents as migrants, the users are mainly Filipinos and Indians. However, there are also users from Arab North Africa and the Mediterranean countries as well as Bahrainis as revealed from the observations on-site. A pedestrian bridge links Andalus Garden to the surrounding. It is juxtapositioned with the Salmaniya Garden. The two gardens are considered to be the first examples of public gardens in Bahrain with applications of urban planning practice. (Fig. 3)
Arad Bay Park	This is located in Muharraq in a generally low-density area next to the airport. Migrant residents in this area comprise 44% of the population. The Park is a protected Natural Bay, which the government has transformed into a park. It was opened formally in 2010. The area is a habitat for migrant birds, shrimps, and rare marine life. The visitors can see flocks of flamingos, which make the island their winter home. The area is linked to the surrounding areas by two elevated pedestrian bridges crossing two highways. The Park is provided with restaurants, cafés, a water fountain, a playground, picnic areas, a mosque, toilets, shaded and un-shaded benches, parking areas and the longest walking track in Bahrain (three-kilometre along the parameter of the bay). Arad Park offers a family destination for users from different parts of Bahrain for recreation and focuses on particular forms of leisure and attractions including sea view, a park, a walkway, and marine life. (Fig. 4)
Khalifa Garden	A well-designed garden located in Riffa, a low-density city, within a residential neighborhood where a middle class and mostly Bahraini people live. The non-Bahraini residents in this district form 44% of the population. The interviews in Khalifa Garden revealed that the users are mostly Syrians, Yemenis, Egyptians and Jordanians along with non-Arab users such as Filipinos, Indians, Nepalese, and Pakistanis. Khalifa Garden is the main formal public open space in this area. The functions provided in the Garden include football, volleyball and basketball courts, an outdoor fitness area, walking tracks with distances marked, an interactive fountain, playgrounds for under and above six years of a rubber ground finishing material, sitting areas, picnic areas, administration, toilets and two parking areas. Opening a well-designed and maintained garden in this context is something unique, which also attracts users from different cities. (Fig. 5)
Hunainiyah Park	This is located in Riffa City where migrant residents are 44%. The Park is located in a distinguished desert valley, an important natural indigenous topographical feature in the landscape of Bahrain, and close to an old form of neighborhood and a historical fort overlooking the park. The Park and the surrounding area are provided with a number of functions, a sitting area, a playground for football or cricket, a field, a walkway, a plaza and stands for hawkers. The users in the park are mostly Yemenis, Pakistanis and Balochis of low socio-economic status from the surrounding poor neighborhoods. Affluent people from various areas visit the Hunainiyah Park as a local tourist attraction for the fort and the luxury coffee shop in the fort. (Fig. 6)

Table 2: Formal Parks and Gardens
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

The data demonstrate that the parks and the gardens in the selected case studies are well-designed spaces. The physical and spatial characteristics were observed with understanding the locations and qualities of landscape design elements. These observations were also supported by interviews. Table 2 describes the selected parks and gardens. The diversity of users and everyday patterns of use are visible in all the Parks and Gardens at different times of the day and in different seasons. Most users in the parks and gardens are migrant families, and during the fieldwork, I encountered users who originated from a wide range of countries. This social mix is reflected by the demographics of the surrounding residential context. However, some of these users travel longer distances from different cities and villages to certain Gardens where they feel more integrated as the observation was supported by broad on-site interviews.

Fig. 3: Andalus Garden
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

Fig. 4: Arad Bay Park
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

From the data, it appears that the concept of health and social wellbeing influences the patterns of use in these parks and gardens. Walkers and joggers in the different POS in Bahrain allocate time in their daily routines for healthy activities regardless of their busy schedules.

Socialising and restorative activities also influence the regularity of people's use of outdoor spaces. In the findings, it was also a familiar sight to see visitors in small and large groups socialising, setting out picnic mats, food baskets bringing along radios, board games, playing cards, baby cots and changes of clothing for children and other items that allow them to spend five to eight hours away from their homes.

Fig. 5: A photo by the Author from Khalifa Garden
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

Fig. 6: A photo by the Author from Hunainiyah Park
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

The spatial qualities and affordances of the designed landscape elements in the parks and gardens support the spatial and temporal patterns of use. During the field observation, It was frequently noticed that migrant workers have their lunch-break in the parks and gardens rather than on the roads or sidewalks. The affordances of design and management of the greenspace with their trees and grassy areas and the provided shaded seating areas offer a cool space for workers to seek respite from the summer sun and afternoon temperature, and for

women, the choice of enjoying privacy or being visible. For example, one of the interviewers preferred having a picnic in the area among foliage as it affords a partition for privacy, "The trees are covering us, and we remove our hijab (hair scarf). We feel free and private". The people also use the affordances of design to meet the temporal pattern of use. During an interview in Khalifa Garden in August, a young migrant mother from Yemen explained that in summer, they prefer to gather on the open lawn, and every time they sit at the same spot in a large group of more than ten women and their children. In fact, this was verified during the site visits. She added that in winter, they do not sit on the grass but use the provided seating areas between the trees and shrubs. In December, during the interview with the Syrian sisters in the Khalifa Garden, they explained,

> "When it is hot, they go up the hill (pointing to the designed and maintained natural sloped topography in the garden). When it is cold, many people avoid going up the hill".

A. Pedestrianized spaces:

The second typology in the selected case studies is the pedestrianised spaces, which are not common POS in Bahrain (Table 3). These pedestrianized sites received investment for recreation and tourism, and the research shows that those spaces are liveable and are also attractive spaces. The patterns of use show how the design and management supported migrants' experience. The use of landscape design elements (benches, plants, shading, water, lights, and pavement) with design principles supported everyday patterns of use. The users in these sites were from different migrant backgrounds and different socio-economic levels who resided in the sites or in other cities. The resident users were pleased with the recent changes in the appearance of the space as many of them use the space every day as they go about their routine life or walk through the space to their respective destinations. From observations and interviews, the activities during the day and night were diverse—walking, gathering, or lingering outside. There were also tourist activities. Bab al-Bahrain shows how the renovation supported the experience of migrants. The square is fully occupied by migrant workers and labourers. The flow of migrants is dominant in the pedestrianized *souq* alleys. The atrium also provides alternative choices for being in the site. The different spatial territories at Block-338 provide affordances for different residents and tourists' needs in the area. Lagoon-side, with diverse activities, cater to the needs of different age-gender intersections. The users come to enjoy being outdoors in a facilitated space.

Name of the Area	Description
Bab Al-Bahrain square and Souq	Located in Manama, it has a city centre character with 78% migrants using the spaces. It is a heritage site. The Square was the first public open space in Bahrain. The historical *souq*, an Arabic cultural urban space is partially pedestrianized, and has a mix of historical and religious buildings and also a mix of historical, traditional and international restaurants and shops. The site is under renovation. (Fig. 7)
Block-338	Located in Manama, this is an area where 78% of the population are non-Bahraini residents. The site is a significant modern pedestrian quarter in Bahrain with walkability quality. It is an up-market street with cosmopolitan characteristics. It consists of a series of street restaurants and cafes. The new luxury restaurants are targeted by middle and high-income users, while the residents in the area are migrant workers. The site is a good example of public participation for art works, with airy art galleries and mural works. (Fig. 8)
Amwaj Lagoon	This is an area located on a private artificial island within a gated community and with low density. Affluent migrant residents are the majority of the population in Amwaj islands. The lagoon is publicly accessible to residents as well as non-residents who come from different areas and from different socio-economic

	backgrounds. Amwaj-lagoon is a one-kilometre-long water's edge of an outdoors pedestrian pathway in a traffic free zone encircling an elongated, curving lagoon interspersed with restaurants, cafes and outdoors. (Fig. 9)
The Pearling Trail	Located in old Muharraq, this area is also listed under UNESCO World Heritage sites. This site is a historical neighborhood undergoing a renovation process. A large part of the site is now pedestrianized. The project is provided with a walking path through a series of heritage and historical sites and buildings in the area and provided with 19 micro-POS or *Sahat*. At the time of the fieldwork, two of them had been accomplished. Non-Bahraini residents in this area comprise 44% of the population. (Fig. 10)

Table 3: Pedestrianized spaces
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

Fig. 7: A photo by the Author from Bab Al-Bahrain Square and Souq
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

Fig. 8: A photo by the Author from Block 338
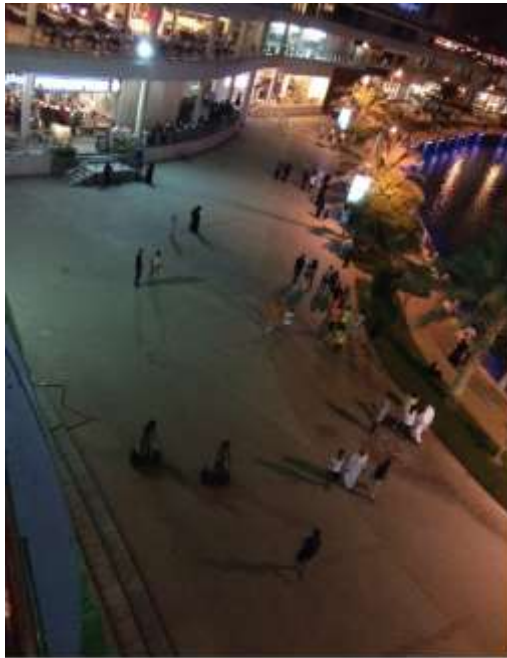Source: Al-Madani, 2018

Fig. 9: A photo by the Author from Amwaj lagoon
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

Fig. 10: A photo by the Author from The Pearling Trail
Source: Al-Madani, 2018

A. Informal Public Open Spaces:

The ethnographic findings also provided evidence of outdoor leisure practices in informal POS and urban streetscapes. Everyday informal mundane spaces could be important for some migrant users where cultural differences can shape their experience. While these informal spaces could be an important addition to POS in the planning of cities, the social functioning were not supported in these spaces and the level of design and management are not at the same level of the first and second types.

Leisure activities in the informal POS raise questions about the accessibility, affordability, sufficiency, and conveniences of the formal provided POS in Bahrain for different people with varied working hours and mobility or specific cultural needs (ethnic, age or gender) (Al-Madani, 2018). For example, families were having picnics on the crowded roadside in the

Arad Bay Area at the park; this could be because women and families negotiate spatially for privacy. This could also mean that greater capacities of parks and gardens, both in their sizes and numbers are required to accommodate large numbers of people. A further example is the migrant male workers who were seen relaxing and gathering on the ground of some sidewalks and roundabouts. This could be because there are no outdoor leisure spaces where the single migrant male workers feel welcome to gather and socialise. Hence, migrants may need facilitated spaces where their outdoor leisure practices are legitimised. Children were also seen playing on the busy roads because these roads are the only places where affordances for play available closer to where they live. Accessible outdoor spaces need to be provided for the children to play safely. Data shows that poorer migrants appear to be less familiar with the alternative parks and gardens and have significant constraints in accessing a range of places due to a lack of private transport and long working hours. Informed by social justice and wellbeing, these informal spaces need to be thoughtfully considered in practice to support inclusivity in transcultural Bahrain with different spatial leisure specificities and different barriers to being outdoors.

Cultural practice of being outdoor: restorative values and sense of belonging in a new place

The research findings resonate transcultural sense of belonging in which memories of home countries appeared to migrant users in different spaces and connected migrants to their homes. For example, during the go-along journey with an Indian migrant single mother in Bab Al-Bahrain, she described herself as the 'insider' who was leading me (a Bahraini) 'the outsider'. She guided me through the alleys of the *Souq* with confidence, pride and familiarity about the space and the people. She wanted to show me everything about the place and said, "You have to come many times to know the area. I know the area very well". She has never lived in Bab Al-Bahrain area; yet transnational bonding allowed her to feel that she belongs more to Bahrain than to her home country, as explicitly mentioned by her. She used expressions 'Like my India,' 'I feel here it is our country' and 'I feel it is my place' when describing the space. Regarding the roundabout in Bab Al-Bahrain Square, she added, "We have in India exactly the same place: a round area with water [fountain], where people are sitting, drinking tea and eating samosa. So, it is exactly like India". In another go-along interview, a migrant contract worker made a reference to a bonding with his homeland when he visits Bab Al-Bahrain, "There is one place in India same like this. It is also a 'bazaar'. What happens here is similar to the 'bazaar' in India, same activities".

Even in different places, the findings show that several migrants can trace their Bedouin practices in parks and gardens where lawns recall winter desert leisure practices and patterns of outdoor sociability. Syrian sisters in the Khalifa Garden, clarified, "The Syrians only relax when it is winter and all the winter means desert for them, where they can have their comfort and freedom". A Jordanian grandfather said, "Before we were going to the desert, but with the urban development, we are going to the gardens more as the country is providing them"; desert leisure activities in parks could sustain throughout the year. In Hunainiyah, it was revealed that a large section of the users are Yemeni and in the words of an old Yemeni grandmother, the area reminds them of Sana'a: The fort on the top of the ridge. A day out in the parks and gardens also allowed migrant (Arab and non-Arab) users to be away from their homes for longer and served as a reminder of the leisure activities popular in their countries. These formal public parks and gardens across borders connect the migrants to their homes.

For many migrants, parks also produce a family atmosphere by bringing them together. Besides being a place for gatherings, these parks and gardens have the value of affinity to a second home for some migrant users. They can invite friends and relatives to them. In the interviews, the Arab migrants in parks used the term 'Majles' to describe their picnicking and gathering in the public parks and gardens. In the Arab culture, the Majles is a gathering room in the house where people invite others, meet and socialize. From the field notes, the Filipinos and Indian families in Andalus Garden also hold large family and friends' gatherings, picnics, or celebrations of specific occasions such as birthday parties. It could be interpreted that

socialising in the garden enhances migrants' self-esteem, as it represents the size of their social network. Such practice is also restorative as it helps them to retain their migrant identity in the host country.

To escape is also a restorative value for migrant users in these formal green spaces. However, escape is not necessarily 'being alone' in a quiet destination. A busy *souq* alley with a visibility of cultural groups has a restorative value for many users, who choose to 'escape' and connect to their home country here. The single Indian mother said, "If my mood is not nice, I take my children and come here". The aromas of the Indian food in the alleys allow those users to relive their childhood memories. The fragrance of incense from the temple is also present in some parts of the *souq* alley allowing a visitor to experience the feeling of having travelled to an Asian country. For many migrants, the fact that they can simulate experiences similar to those in their native country inspires them to frequent these busy spaces. A Syrian mother in Arad Park said, "When I'm in bad mood, I come here, and I feel better. It is nice, especially when I come in a group with family and bring our Syrian tea". She claims that sometimes during her visits to the park, she notices groups of Egyptian families sharing a meal sitting close to each other and then she too longs to be part of such a family gathering.

The concept of being in a visible diverse group of people in these public open spaces, with opportunities of socialising with others and among diverse others also promoted a sense of belonging and integration. In the Pearling pedesterianised Trail site, a Jordanian resident mentioned that he feels a sense of belonging as others often greet him while he goes about his routine of everyday activities. Patterns of sociability can be strengthened through facilitating lingering and spending longer periods of time outdoors.

From this variety of important (formal and informal) POS, the data demonstrated that each type has significant values and uses for migrants with cultural differences. Investigating migrants' experiences in POS highlighted that diversity reflected intersectionality in gender, socio-economic status, generation and migrants' identities and ways of cultural differences. This diversity affects their everyday activities, preferences and motivations for using POS. These differences and affordances could also be barriers for using POS (Al-Madani, 2018). Physical and social barriers could also be struggles for adaptation and transcultural practices. Given the wide range of benefits of POS for human wellbeing, the complexity in patterns of use in practice should be considered to serve the diverse uses and support migrants' leisure experiences in these public spaces.

The role of urban landscape design of everyday spaces to support positive migrants' experiences

Border crossing is no longer about travelling from one nation to another, but a part of everyday experiences in modern cities. The importance of everyday open spaces to support social activities and promote a sense of belonging across differences appeared significant in the ethnographic findings. However, the expert interviews revealed that in practice; public open spaces are limited to parks and gardens, while the ethnographic findings provided evidence of outdoor leisure practices and recreations in informal POS and urban streetscapes. The findings show the important value of these spaces in Bahrain, especially for people of different mobility abilities (i.e., without a car) or with busy lives and routines and long working hours. Many migrants spoke about their experiences of strolling, lingering, and enjoying social life in these spaces. Residents in the selected sites talked about accessibility during different times of the day: for a woman in a wheelchair to enjoy the morning sun or for migrant workers at night after their long working hours. Some of the informal urban open spaces were in poor condition although people are seen outdoors, strolling, socialising in front of the mosque, their shops, and houses, on vacant land and on street corners while children were seen playing in these spaces. Nazir, a worker from Pakistan, and Faiza, an Indian mother, mentioned that they use parks and gardens as alternatives because the roads in front of their houses are only for vehicular traffic, which shows the importance of the sidewalks. Besides the diversity of users in these formal open spaces was visible. The expert interviews highlighted that cultural diversity and integration are not considered in design and management of POS. However, the findings

highlighted how the formal green spaces have a significant role in supporting integration, migrants' wellbeing, adaptation, and meaningful encounters and also promote a sense of belonging. Hence, the experts in the field should not underestimate their role in supporting adaptation and integration.

The professional practices used in the formal POS can be applied to everyday spaces by understudying the characteristics of urban contexts to support diversity and migrants' experiences across border. It is not always possible to provide parks or gardens in some congested areas, but it might be possible to facilitate the sidewalks or pedestrianize streets for use, which is also a creative design solution to deal with inequalities. Designers need to understand the value of the mundane spaces as accessible and inclusive outdoor spaces. These spaces could be in front of cold-stores (mini-supermarkets), vegetable shops and traditional bakeries or in front of houses or mosques in the *souq* or neighbourhood spaces which people use for necessary activities. Supporting these essential activities with optional diversions such as sitting or waiting (Gehl, 2011) means providing choices for being outdoors and lingering (Powell & Rishbeth, 2012). By supporting local mundane leisure practices with materials such as lighting poles, planting materials, benches, shade, or pavement, it would be possible to make these settings safer and more pleasant as well as legitimised. Assigning a budget for the management and maintenance of these informal spaces would also enact spatial justice in areas with locational disadvantages. In Bab Al-Bahrain, no seating areas are provided, so the migrant men occupy the ground around the roundabout and pavement sides despite the inconvenience.

The role of design and management of the everyday spaces should not mean displacing the local users or segregating them. Instead, it should involve facilitating the space for socio-spatial experiences without practising any exclusion strategies. For example, in Block-338 and in Sahat, the residents (mostly migrants) are not excluded from using the new pedestrianised cultural and tourism streetscapes. The coffee shops, traditional cafes and food outlets appeared as important spaces in these case studies and encouraged people to use outdoor spaces and come together. While shops, restaurants and cafes are not always affordable, the idea of sharing the use of the public benches and the landscape elements enact the egalitarian nature in these spaces even though not all people use the space for leisure. There might not be direct social interaction between different classes but sharing the space with joy and acceptance provided positive social engagements and encounters and also presented the chance for unemployed workers to find jobs.

Legitimising and facilitating the cultural practices for using outdoor spaces and supporting the wide patterns of sociability need to be fundamentally considered in design and management of both formal and informal POS. Everyday POS should not be considered as alternatives to parks and gardens as both have distinctive values for wellbeing across differences. Diverse and creative types of POS are required to facilitate temporal and spatial patterns of use. Though streets, and in particular pedestrian streets do have recreational values, they should not be quantified as contributing to the greenspace provision in the city.

Conclusion

Linking migrant studies to the practice of urban landscape design should be significantly considered in modern cities. This paper adds a new context, with distinguished culture, geography, and climate and with different patterns of migration, to the literature on migrant experiences in a new place. Continuing outdoor social and leisure practices across borders is important for promoting migrants' wellbeing, including temporary migrants and short-stay migrants. The migrants' leisure practices are very visible in the POS, which shows the importance of these spaces for migrants' experiences. Spatial design qualities of the built environment can promote emotional attachment and a sense of belonging for migrants and support both the processes of adaptation and integration.

Different forms and typologies of spaces can enable different leisure practices, which affect the patterns of use, sociability, and recreational practices for users from different social and cultural groups. The informal spaces have significant values and should not be under-estimated, particularly with complexity of cultural differences. Migrants' leisure practices in

transcultural cities are shaped by cultural differences and 'intersectionality' of gender, age, economic and education opportunities, mobility, life pattern, working hours and family responsibility. Patterns of use would also reflect preferences, motivation, history, or climate. Neglecting these everyday spaces in professional practice would have implications on unintended locational disadvantages and socio-spatial injustice in the distribution of resources.

The finding of the research would also have implications on urban landscape design practices on POS post covid-19. The fieldwork was conducted prior to the pandemic and the findings highlight the social uses and values of being outdoors for promoting health and wellbeing. Increasing the capacity and typologies of POS to include the everyday mundane spaces will reduce pressure and crowding of POS to maintain social distancing. With locking down of the parks and gardens, the everyday open spaces would be used by people as an alternative. The practice of regulating and managing the everyday spaces to facilitate being outdoors with precautionary measurements would support inclusivity in sustaining the social uses and values of being outdoors in promoting wellbeing.

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