Abstract

The interaction between people has now been more restricted and confined due to institutionalization, by classifying people according to their ages. With the rise in the number of nuclear families and a corresponding decrease in extended families, together with more elderly living alone or with their spouses, intergenerational contact, which once used to be a norm in most family, has now been eroded.

A relatively new prototype, a community learning centre, is proposed as a vehicle to introduce a new intergenerational contact between people of different age groups during the day, by using learning as a linking mechanism. This forms a new family structure, one that is independent from any blood relationship.

This thesis purposes to explore the design of environments of institutions that are more human-oriented and "normalized"; an environment where people feel at ease and are more likely to interact with one another spontaneously. This is done through the investigation of the activity patterns, the site constraints and the behaviour of the users.

With the use of varying degree of privacy vs. public spaces, such spaces are explored not only to meet the varied needs of the different user groups, but also to create a home-like environment in the midst of an institution. By establishing the basic relationship between the users in the different zones and identifying the main interaction spaces, the spatial layout sought to create a more interactive environment while not ignoring certain private spaces where one can withdraw from high-energy spaces when needed.