

## Abstract

This study focuses on public spaces of residential neighbourhoods in the City of Nairobi. It establishes various spatial characteristics, hence patterns, that have a bearing on the distribution of pedestrians therein. A higher encounter rate of pedestrians is a desirable public space quality given that the higher degree of surveillance accorded to space has the attendant benefit of deterring crime. Whereas the public spaces are intended to be a physical setting for people to socialize, move from one place to another, engage in business or recreational activities, some spaces are devoid of or have sub-optimal encounter rates of pedestrians due to weaknesses in spatial planning of the settlements. Such spaces have consequently failed to fulfill the roles ascribed to them and instead have become neglected and unsafe to operate in. Space syntax and structured observation have been used to collect data. Multiple regression analysis establishes that nine public space variables significantly predict the distribution of pedestrians in public space. The significant public space variables are grouped into the following four public space planning patterns that thus explain human distribution in public space: integration, constitutedness, land use planning and connectivity. The patterns inform generation of spatial planning policies whose utilization in layout of residential neighbourhoods results in desirable distribution of pedestrians in public space environments.