

# “Socio- Economic effect of Pedestrianisation of Commercial Street into Ambit” – Case study of Pedestrian Path from Car Parking up to Golden Temple Amritsar, Punjab.

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Received: July 04, 2018

Accepted: August 16, 2018

## ABSTRACT

*Amritsar is the Well-known city of Punjab, which is especially popular by the name of Trade city and Heritage city because of hamlets and a trading centre of the spices and green tea of the Punjab and also the administration head quarter as well as the metropolitan area of Punjab, which is situated in the North-western part of India. Amritsar is also divine centre for Sikh religion because of the Golden Temple (Harmandir Sahib) along the wall city of Punjab. There are many Cultural as well as institutional places are present in the Amritsar, which includes Jallianwala Bagh, Wagha Border, Durgiana Mandir, Guru Nanak Dev University and Gurudwara Baba Deep Singh Ji Shaheed. Amritsar (Specially Golden Temple) is one of the most visiting places from India as well as in world for attracting the tourists and devotees. The traffic- transportation and economic scenario of Amritsar is affected by tourism of the city. Peoples are travelled by their own private vehicles or by using public mass transit system. Planning of Pedestrianized path played a fundamental role in shaping the physical, social, and economic landscape in Pedestrianisation of Commercial Street from car parking up to Golden temple. This pedestrian planning is fully depends on future policies, safe and efficient socio-economic goals and designs as according to the future needs in order to move people and goods towards heritage and religious destination. It enhances the quality of life of that pedestrian path by providing efficient mobility of pedestrians, social equity, good public health (No pollution from MV), safety and ecological sustainability (by promoting the walkability as part of NMT). Mainly there are nearly 1,00,000 number or of admirers or tourists visit the place of Golden Temple as well as Jallianwala Bagh daily which can be diversified on festivals and Gurpurabs. Before 2015 the path/street near Golden temple area was disturbed due to traffic chaos and vehicular pollutions. But after 2015 the administration of Amritsar has imposed some restrictions on the commercial street towards Golden temple by pedestrianized it with the strong motive to free this area from traffic chaos and vehicular pollutions. This pedestrianisation also affects the Socio-economic scenario into the realm. This study contemplates the present effect of pedestrians along with their activities as urban renewal on the commercial pedestrianized street on the socio economic scenario in the realm or its surrounding areas.*

**Keywords:** Pedestrianisation on one commercial street; Surrounding street network; de-congest.

## 1. Introduction: -

Mainly the religion plays a crucial role for the smooth running of any society. Amritsar is basically famous for trade of green tea, as heritage city and religious city. Fourth Guru (Guru Ram das Ji) of the Sikhs was the founder of Amritsar and the world famous Golden Temple. Basically the local residents or peoples not only serving the Golden temple as the divine or holly strength but outer area is being used by these peoples as open space especially in the evening time after its new landscaping design. This spiritual place is also the place of social interactions for the tourists and daily commuters to clear away their tensions of their mind rapidly. These things affect the traffic and transportation of this area especially at urban neighbourhood level. For the solution of these concerned problems and issues of traffic congestion, the Punjab government started the construction and designing multilevel four wheeler parking as well as two wheeler parking into ambit zone in between 100 m before the Jallianwala bagh entry gate and 200 meter to 220 meter from the entry gate of Golden temple. This is being a major commercial street evolved as a great public space on pedestrianisation.

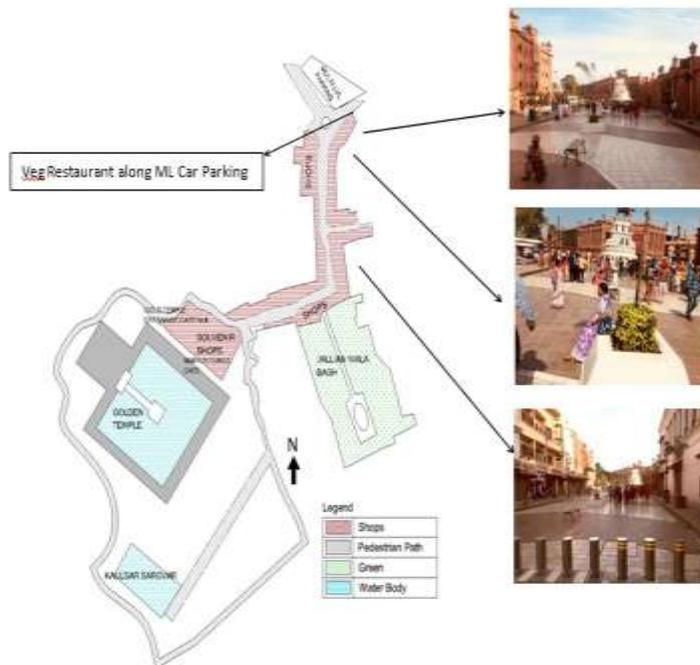


Fig No. 1:- Pedestrian path from Multilevel Parking up to Golden Temple.  
Source: Drawing is prepared by author.

- 1.2. Landscape Planning:** - It basically includes the designing or planning of new visible structures on ground space area or on the land as according to the compatible existing built up environment.
- 1.3. Redevelopment:** - It is describe as the redevelopment or rebuilding of new structures and designs on any space or part of land, which provides comfort for peoples and also fit for human living.
- 1.4. Major advantages of Pedestrianisation of the Commercial Street near/realms of Golden temple and Jallianwala Bagh:-**
  - 1.4.1. Safety of the peoples:** - It basically increases the safety for shopkeepers and pedestrians, especially for the Children's and small kids.
  - 1.4.2. Safety for tourists:** - It provides safety to tourists from vehicular traffic and MV congestion, when they move from parking area towards Jallianwala Bagh and Golden temple. This landscaping of pedestrianization also attracts the tourists from many different places.
  - 1.4.3. Reduce the Environmental Pollution and affects the carbon footprints:** - It helps to reduce the carbon footprints from motorised fuel based vehicles and environmental pollution in the surrounding of wall city area.

## 2. Meaning of Pedestrianization and Pedestrian:-

Cambridge dictionary defines Pedestrianization as "to make an area into one where vehicles are not allowed to go". Pedestrianized area is basically the specific zone or area, where the entry of motorised vehicles as well as Non-motorised vehicles are not allowed, that specific space is only for walkabout movements.

### 2.1. Impacts of Pedestrianization of Commercial street:-

- **Impact on surrounding environment:** This great initiative by the Punjab government effect the surrounding environment of that particular range. The road width from multilevel car parking up to Jallianwala bagh is 13-15 meters and from Jallianwala Bagh up to Golden temple entry gate is 9-10 meters but before 2015 the vehicular traffic and haphazard growth of hawkers along this path were the main root cause of congestion, which also created noise pollution and air pollution along with congestion. But after the completion of pedestrianized path, government of Punjab strictly prohibited the entry of vehicles after multilevel car parking. This thing reduces the carbon footprints from the motorised vehicles in this realm by which the problem of air pollution and noise pollution is to be controlled. The small kids and children's also enjoy the landscaping of pedestrian walk able path, other than the peoples like the pedestrian street infrastructure of that area mostly, which impact positively on the surrounding environment of that area.

- **Economic impacts:** This pedestrianization of the commercial street effects economically on the shopkeepers of that particular street and also on the shopkeepers from others streets near to this particular commercial street. Mainly due to pedestrianization of that commercial street, it also has a new change on the shops present on that particular street, the outer look of these shops are designed by giving them a heritage and cultural touch due to which these shops attract the more tourists and children's towards them which effect positively on the economic status of the shopkeepers. But on other hand the shops which are present in the nearby streets of this commercial street (Parking to Golden temple) are badly affected in terms of economic impact because there are very less tourists, who use to purchase some items from other streets shops. Due to pedestrianization of the particular commercial street, the local residents and some tourists use to pass their motor vehicles from other nearby streets, by which the congestion and pollution on these other streets also impact negative on the economic status of the shopkeepers in these other streets. Secondly a wonderful Shopping Plaza already constructed in front of Golden Temple by shifting the haphazard old Market to the newly constructed plaza shopping complex opposite to Hindu Temple (Mandir).
  - **Impact on the health of tourists:** - Due to the reduction of air pollution, noise pollution and traffic congestion, this pedestrian path is safe from harmful gases and materials. Availability of proper street furniture and road side structures and infrastructure for the pedestrians, it is good for the health of the tourists. Mainly the aged couples and females along with her small kids are used to sit on the benches present in the centre and roadside of this street for relaxation and prepare their health power for further moving's.
- 3. Parameters for Evaluation:-** There are the some basic parameters on which this project to be evaluated as following:-
- Evaluation based on Cost (Cost of this Project) & physical landscape planning
  - Survey of the tourists and divine public
  - Survey of the shopkeepers for study the economic impact.
  - Evaluation on basis of benefits to the shopkeepers
- **Evaluation based on cost (Cost of this Project) and Physical landscape planning:** - According to the news on 9 October 2014 (when this development work was under the construction) for newly built entrance plaza at Sri Darbar Sahib that mainly the Punjab government spent more than INR 78 crores (10) of cost for the beautification and land scape designing of this open plaza and there had been crores of rupees (a part from 469 crores government of Punjab & GOI invested in Smart City Amritsar from there agenda ) [11]were invested on the pedestrian/walk able path at the entry gate of Shri Darbar Sahib and pedestrian path from the multilevel parking up to Darbar Sahib (Golden Temple). For reducing the congestion on the main street (now pedestrian street) towards Jallian wala Bagh and Golden temple from Multilevel car Parking and especially around that open plaza by prohibiting the vehicles near it for the facilitation of devotees and avoid the inconvenience to devotees. Punjab government give a unique and traditional look to the entire passage with world-class landscaping, fountains and trees (<https://www.sikh24.com/2014/10/09/new-entrance-plaza-of-sri-darbar-sahib-set-to-open-for-bandi-chhod-diwas.W6-pgnszZ0w>). The devotees and other tourists feel relaxed and better than before because of present of benches on the centre and side walk ways of the path for sitting arrangement, lack of vehicular congestion and less air pollution on this pedestrian path as well as the open plaza at Golden temple entry gate. The plan of government to give heritage or traditional look to the shops present on the pedestrian path attracts the attention of the tourists also.
- Evaluation on basis of benefits to the shopkeepers, Survey of the tourists and divine public and Survey of the shopkeepers for study the economic impact is to be shown by primary survey and data collection on the site in Paragraph 4.

#### 4. Data collection & Analysis:-

In this part, it basically presents the details of the data collection on the site of the study area along with its analysis which is to be shown with the help of pie charts. The main objective behind this data collection is to evaluate the benefits to the shopkeepers of this pedestrian path and study their economic impact.

**On Site Data Collection** - This primary survey was conducted with the help of questionnaires on the base of sampling method mainly in the weekdays or weekends, in which the data regarding the satisfactory level of the devotees, tourists and local residents peoples were collected on the basis of before this main path became pedestrianized & after it became pedestrianized along with proper social and physical

infrastructure. In this survey, the questions were asked to those peoples, who were basically come to visit in the Jallianwala Bagh or Golden Temple and both. Some of the factual data which is taken from the secondary data sources like as comprehensive mobility plan of Amritsar like the **Total trips – more than 100,000 on the weekdays** (Pedestrian path in front of Jallianwala Bagh towards Golden Temple). The survey questionnaire included many other questions for shopkeepers and Merchants, which are to be discussed and shown with the help of pie charts.

<b>Pictures of Pedestrian path</b>	
	
	
	
<b>Source:</b> Pictures are clicked by the author during survey.	

<b>Total Sample Collected</b>	
Merchants and shopkeepers Opinion	50
Tourist Opinion	300
Public Opinion (Local residents)	230

The total samples were collected nearly 580 out of which 300 (52%) samples were taken by tourists opinions, 230 (40%) were taken by the public opinions (mainly local residents) and 50 (8%) samples were

taken from the Merchants and shopkeepers opinions. The data is collected from the visitors coming for different purposes and places in Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) and Jallianwala Bagh.

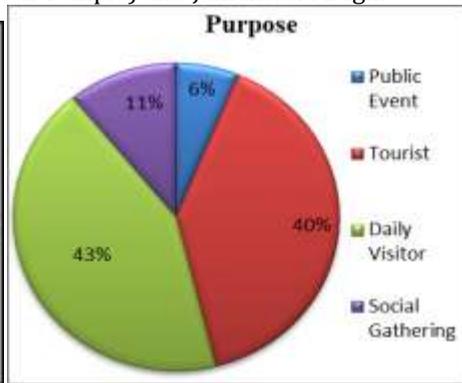
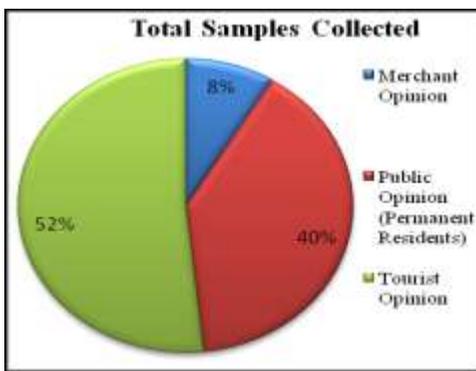


Fig. No. 2: Total No. of Samples/Opinion collected during survey      Fig. No. 3: Purpose for the Visitors.

During the survey with sampling method technique, the opinion regarding the impact of pedestrianized of path on the social life of visitors had been taken from the general public (Visitors) by which 95% of peoples replied positively that the pedestrianization puts positive effect on their social life because now after this pedestrianization they feel good and relax while walking towards the Jallianwala Bagh or Golden temple because of no interference of the vehicular traffic on walk able path due to which their childrens and kids are also enjoy the street scape environment during walking. But 1% peoples replied negative that it hasn't impacted their social life and 4% of peoples didn't give their any opinion regarding this project.

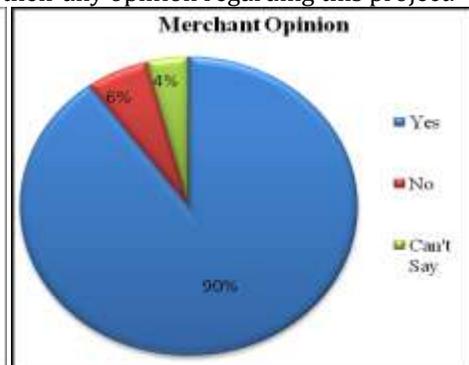
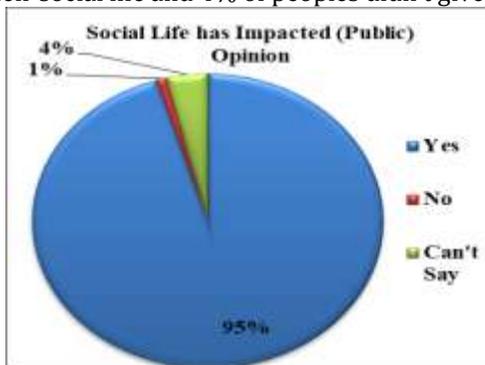


Fig. No. 4: Impact on the social life by pedestrianized path (Public Opinion)      Fig. No. 5: Opinions of the Merchants and Shopkeepers.

When the Opinions taken from the Merchants and shopkeepers about the impact of pedestrianized street or path on their economic business then 90% of the Merchants and Shopkeepers replied positively that it has impacted the economic status of their business very positively by increasing their income and sale after increase in the pedestrian movement on this path and vehicular movement is strictly prohibited. Whereas 6% of the people say it hasn't impacted their economic growth and 4% people responses that they can't say anything regarding impact on economic growth.

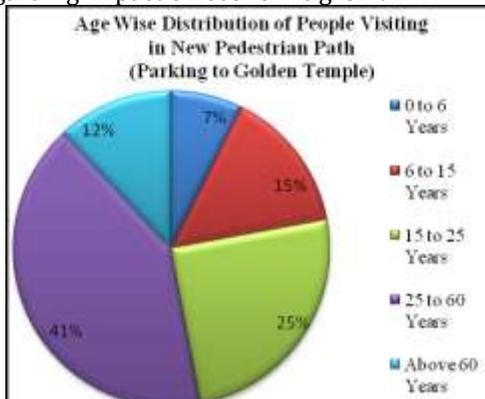


Fig. No. 6: Age wise distribution of Visitors.      Fig. No. 7: Satisfactory Level.

As from the survey it was analysed that children from the age of 0-6 year are found least that is only 7% whereas the people from age group 6 - 15( years) are 15 % & 15 - 25 (years) are 25% and 25 -60 years are the 41% found and almost the above 60 years of age are the 12% respectively. In Satisfactory level, It was a survey in that regarding this area before it became pedestrianize and after the responses are as 9% people were not satisfied before its pedestrianized 453 are not satisfied and after it become pedestrianized 521 people were satisfied. Response of visitors regarding the aesthetic essence of the area is as 97% says it has improved due to pedestrianisation where as 1% visitors says can't say anything about aesthetic essence. And pedestrian really benefitted pie chart, the pedestrians stay benefitted due to pedestrianisation response from are as 97 % say yes, where as 1 % say no and in the same way 2 % can't say anything.

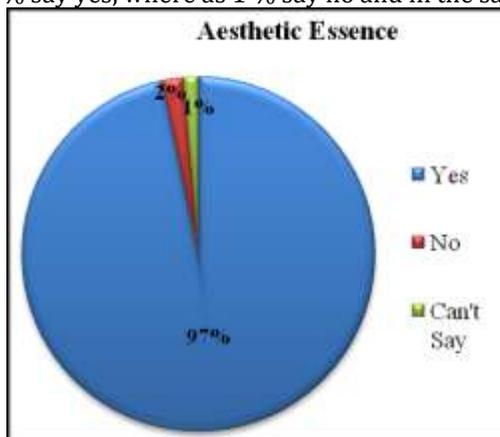


Fig. No. 8: Shows Aesthetic Essence.

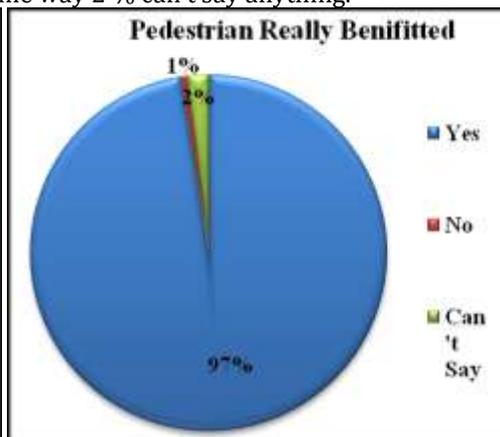


Fig. No. 9: Analysis of Benefits of Pedestrianized path

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