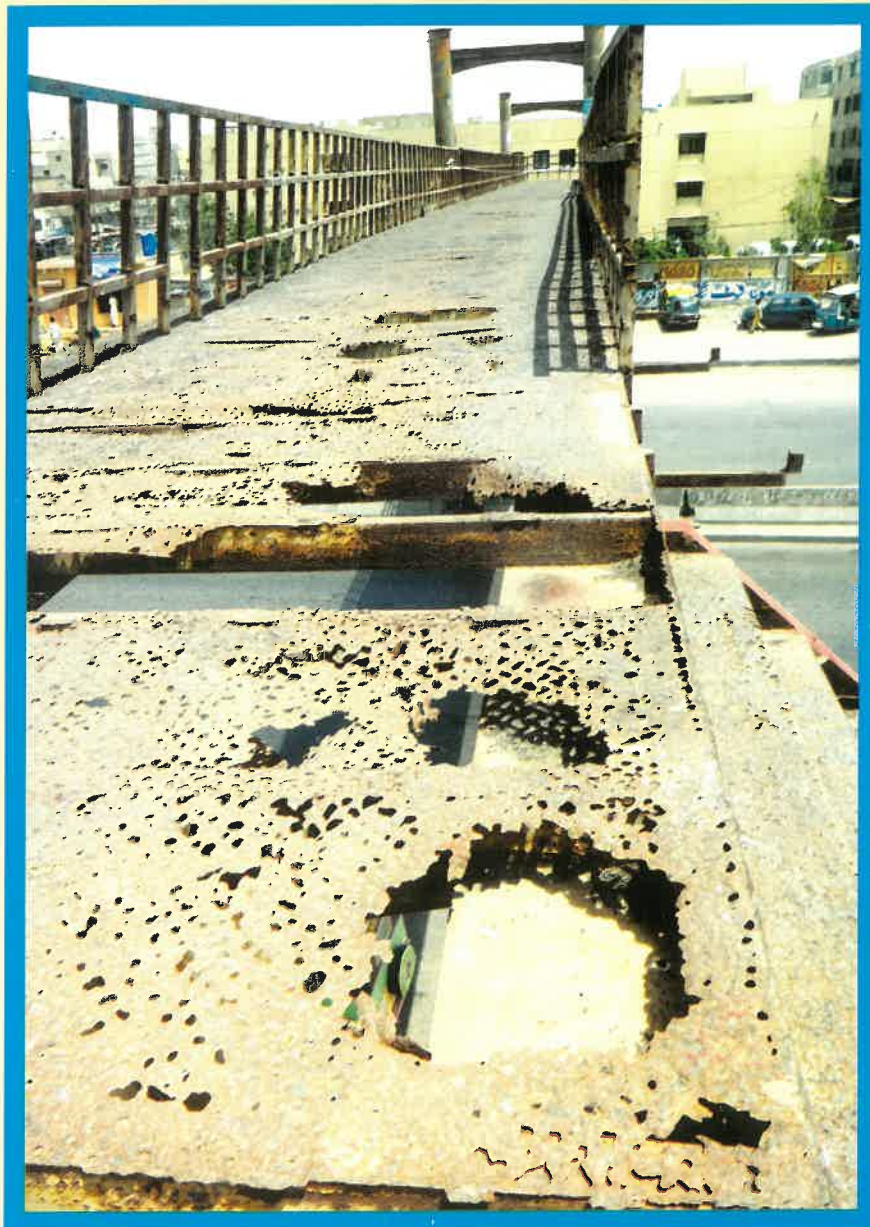


THE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES OF KARACHI

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ABSTRACT

Pedestrian bridges are primarily meant to facilitate the walking population. Their placement and design needs to be sensitive to the requirements of the local population. The paper tries to ascertain the utility and the challenges of the installed pedestrian bridges in Karachi. The findings are based on a quick sample survey and a search for journalistic pieces on the subject.

Key words: Pedestrian, accidents, security

Karachi's corridors and arteries are marked, albeit insufficiently, with pedestrian bridges. Those are installed with the aim of facilitating foot travelers to cross roads safely, in less time and with fewer efforts particularly at signal free corridors. After going through whatever news items are available and by conducting a quick survey with forth eight people in the city, it can be safely assumed that all the above-mentioned objectives remain unfulfilled due to lack of robust planning on the part of the city administrators. The survey was conducted at UP Morr, Nursery, Shahrah-e-Faisal, Civic Centre, Board Office, NIPA Chowrangi and other areas. Out of the 48 respondents, 29 were males and 19 were females. The survey comprised of 12 quick questions and those focused on utility and challenges of pedestrian bridges. (Please see Annexure One: The survey questionnaire).

As per secondary sources, there are different meanings regarding pedestrianisation. The simplest meaning of it is the removal of vehicular traffic from city streets. For example in Hong Kong, pedestrianisation is defined by the transport department as “to restrict vehicle access to a street or area for exclusive use of pedestrians”. The objectives of pedestrianisation are:

- ◆ To improve pedestrian safety and mobility
- ◆ To promote walking as a transport mode
- ◆ To discourage access for non-essential vehicles
- ◆ To improve overall pedestrian environment

Various methods, across the globe are deployed to promote, facilitate and consolidate pedestrianisation which includes setting speed limit for vehicles, marking of zebra crossings, hurdle free foot paths, constructing speed breakers, putting up barriers, establishing pedestrian zones and installing pedestrian bridges. The following sections are an attempt to understand the utility of pedestrian bridges from users' perspective, though a quick reference to secondary sources was also made.



An old man trying to cross the road near Baloch Colony

1.0 DEATH TRAP OF SIGNAL FREE CORRIDORS

It was reported in the media that traffic accident related deaths have risen 30 per cent with the advent of the signal-free corridors in the city and fifteen per cent of the increase has been the deaths of pedestrians. The smooth, traffic signal-less roads may be good for zipping, speeding cars but the fact that there were hardly any pedestrian bridges meant that they have become a death trap for people on foot. (Please See Table One, for Details)

Table One: Vehicle Involvement Injury Severity, Year 2008 - Year 2013 (Only Fatal Accidents)			
S. No.	Type of Vehicle	Total Accidents Over 6 Years	Percentage Of Total Accidents in 6 Years
1	Motorbike	3,532	37.47%
2	Mini Van / Coaster	326	3.46%
3	Bus/ Mini Bus / Coach	1,252	13.28%
4	Truck	592	6.28%
5	Taxi	71	0.75%
6	Bicycle	156	1.66%
7	Car	1,011	10.73%
8	Water / Oil Tanker	263	2.79%
9	Rickshaw	241	2.56%
10	Dumper	341	3.62%
11	Trailer	410	4.35%
12	Loading Pickup	402	4.27%
13	Others	648	6.88%
14	Animal Cart	11	0.12%
15	Push Cart	87	0.92%
16	Train	82	0.87%
	Total	9,425	100.00%
<i>Source: Data collected by Urban Resource Centre, percentages' computation by author</i>			

<http://defence.pk/threads/karachis-signal-free-corridors-lead-to-120-increase-in-pedestrian-accidents.64257/>

Before the construction of the Corridor No. 1 (leading from Shahrah-e-Faisal to SITE area), around 200 people were killed in accidents on that road, with 48 of them being pedestrians. Six months after the inauguration of the corridor, the death toll skyrocketed to 438, of which 110 were pedestrians. This means a 120 per cent increase in pedestrian incidents. In 2009, 31,000 cases were reported in which 1,200 people died and 6,500 were seriously injured. The most dangerous roads include Korangi Nadi, M A Jinnah Road, Old Quaidabad, Shahr-e Faisal, Mauripur Road, Korangi Industrial Area, Northern Bypass, National Highway near Bhains Colony and Shershah Soori Road. In 2011, more than 400 pedestrians were killed in Karachi alone most of them on the National Highway, Shara-e-Faisal and the Korangi Industrial Area Road.

It was admitted by a respondent of Karachi Municipal Corporation that, had signal free corridors not been there, the City would not have needed that high number of pedestrian bridges and zebra crossings would have worked or made to work.

2.0 PLACEMENT OF PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES

Setting aside the debate of number of pedestrian bridges in the city, it was highlighted in the media that most new overhead pedestrian bridges being built in the city are at places from where people usually don't want to cross the road. For instance, people cross the road from the Johar Morr intersection, which is half a kilometre away and serves as a bus stop as well where as the pedestrian bridge is near the Millennium Mall on Rashid Minhas Road. Same could be observed at other places as well. Nevertheless, in the conducted survey, 40 out of 48 respondents confirmed that pedestrian bridges under their use are installed at right spot.



Woman not using the pedestrian bridge

It was observed by the author and opined by the respondents of the survey that it is important to have pedestrian bridges near hospitals, colleges, bus stops and flyovers. In Karachi, there are a lot of flyovers (almost 43) but not enough pedestrian bridges. Karachi, a city of 20 million (approx), has

<http://defence.pk/threads/karachis-signal-free-corridors-lead-to-120-increase-in-pedestrian-accidents.64257/>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/454876/pedestrian-bridges-to-nowhere-dot-karachi-a-city-where-cars-are-king/>

only 93 pedestrian bridges. (Please see Annexure Two for the complete for the spatial distribution of pedestrian bridges across Karachi). An official of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, on the condition of anonymity told Urban Resource Centre, that lack of funds is the major hindrance in installing more bridges.

It was reported in the press that, the officials involved in road safety management suggest that the authorities have not bothered to carry out any survey of the roads or the points where the bridges have been proposed. Cities around the world carry out comprehensive surveys before spending money on infrastructure. KMC's transport and communications department does not even have the figures of how many pedestrians use a particular road in a day, officials say.



Its business as usual on the Liaqatabad pedestrian bridge

It was mentioned by a KMC official that for the selection of location of placement two criteria are kept in mind. Preference is given to markets where as the other consideration is the frequency of accidents at a particular point.

3.0 LIMITED USE CONUNDRUM

It was mentioned in the media that it costs 20 million rupees to build a pedestrian overhead bridge, but because of some design flaws among other problems, only about a quarter of people on foot use them. An official of Karachi Metropolitan Corporation however suggested that around 30 percent of the money on each installation is pocketed by the corrupt official of the Corporation.

Nearly half of the people interviewed, do not use the pedestrian bridges in the night it's not safe because of snatching and mugging. If they are compelled to use those after dusk they prefer to do it in groups. Respondents complained about the absence of proper light on those bridges, making difficult to figure out who is passing next to them.

The Pedestrian Bridges of Karachi

CEO of traffic solutions firm Pak-German Engineers Zafar Naveed believes people avoid pedestrian bridges because of untidiness and mugging threats. "If you have beggars sitting and naked mad men sleeping [at the bridges], I don't think anyone will use them."

Interviewed people mentioned that the bridges are not very well maintained and the conditions of the iron sheets are not very satisfactory. Most of the pedestrian bridges are in dilapidated

conditions, posing a great danger for the pedestrians, forcing people to pass under these bridges. Almost all the pedestrian bridges are in shambles, but bridges located in Saddar, Korangi, Jama Cloth Market and Nazimabad need more attention for proper repair... The works and services department of city government, responsible for construction and repairing of these bridges, has held finance and planning department responsible for not allocating the funds for bridge repair. In March 2012, a portion of pedestrian bridge located in Maripur locality was has collapsed after a speeding container hit it, resulting in traffic jam here in Karachi. The bridge had come down once before as well.

Old agers cannot use those pedestrian bridges. Respondents complained about the large number of stairs and stressed that it causes fatigue. Alternatively, they risk lives and cross the roads in groups with the help of some youngsters. Same holds true for knee joint patients and patients of rheumatic arthritis; they prefer not to use those pedestrian bridges. Only one pedestrian bridge in the City, at Aga Khan University Hospital, has the provision of lift with it.



Dust as seen at the steps of Essa Nagri Pedestrian Bridge



Advertisement at Gujjar Chowk Pedestrian Bridge, Express Way

<http://www.dawn.com/news/132307/karachi-pedestrian-bridges-in-a-shambles>
<http://www.city21.tv/tag/pedestrian-bridge/>

It was reported in the media that a random survey on the roads in Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Korangi and DHA shows that people prefer to cross the road even if they have to jump over the grilles at the median. However the conducted interviews suggested that a lot many people fell prey to laziness as well as they cited the reason for not using the bridges “to save time” and “it is a long process to go up, walk and then come down”.

It was mentioned by the respondents that pedestrian bridges are insensitive to the requirements of physically challenged person as well. There is no way one can take the wheel chair up to the bridge. There is also no guidance of visually impaired person as well. The interviewed official of the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation mentioned that when ramps were made, alongside pedestrian bridge, to facilitate disabled near Natha Khan Flyover, people started motorbikes on it. Hence those were blocked by the concerned authorities.

4.0 MONEY MATTERS

According to a press report the city district government of Karachi had identified 320 spots as potentially dangerous ... and Rs. 4 billion would be needed for all 320 sites. As



Advertisement at Awami Markaz Pedestrian Bridge
Shahrah-e-Faisal

**Table Two: The impossible gulf of pedestrian bridges
(Selected points only)**

S. No.	Spot	Distance b/w two points
SHAHRAH-E-FAISAL		
1	Nursery to Lal kothi	1 km
2	Lal kothi to Fortune Centre	1 km
3	Fortune Centre to Tip Sultan	700 m
4	Day Inn to Tipu Sultan	1.2 km
5	Awami Markaz to Day Inn	600 m
6	Awami Markaz to Karsaz	800 m
EXPRESS WAY		
1	Qayumabad to Iqra University	1 km
2	Iqra University to Eidgah	1 km
3	Eidgah to Gujjar Chowk	1 km
4	Gujjar Chowk to Shaheed-e-Millat	3 km
Source: Survey By Urban Resource Centre, May 2015		

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/454876/pedestrian-bridges-to-nowhere-dot-karachi-a-city-where-cars-are-king/>
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/196328/out-of-reach-only-25-of-people-use-overhead-bridges/>

mentioned above media reports suggest that a pedestrian bridge costs Rs. 20 million.

According to a senior civil engineer, as reported in press, who did not wish to be named said that two of the 13 proposed pedestrian bridges in the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation's 2014-15 budget were cancelled due to technical issues, seven were completed while there weren't enough funds left for the rest to be finished. It was mentioned that a KMC is constructing a number of footbridges – at times even spending up to Rs20 million on a single steel structure.



An old man resting on isle at Essa Nagri Pedestrian Bridge

According to press reports, the new pedestrian bridge, which was inaugurated on Karsaz Road, earlier this year will give exclusive rights to place billboards on the infrastructure to the private company that financed it. A private company that had been contracted to construct the pedestrian bridge had invested the entire capital. In return, they had been given permission to put up huge billboards on both sides of the bridge. The firm will be able to get returns on its investment and make good profit by renting out the billboards to advertisers, he explained. It is important to mention that as per, no billboard on the pedestrian bridges could be installed on a height of less than 8 ft. It comes to 24 ft from the ground zero as 6 meters is the conventional height of a pedestrian bridge from ground zero.

5.0 OTHER FINDINGS

Most of the respondents use mentioned the frequency of the usage as twice a day. The purpose of usage varies from going to shops for grocery to drop and collect students. The Nursery and Civic Centre pedestrian bridge is mostly used by the office goers. The North Nazimabad, Block B Pedestrian Bridge is considered to be relatively safe as on the one side of it there is a newly constructed Rangers' check post. It was mentioned that youth usually don't use it as they consider going up and down as a sheer wastage of time. Before the placement of those bridges people had run and cross which was risky and now they consider it safer but only in day time. Respondents did

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/779645/bridging-the-gap-karachi-needs-more-pedestrian-bridges/his-year>.

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/454876/pedestrian-bridges-to-nowhere-dot-karachi-a-city-where-cars-are-king/>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/857891/exclusive-rights-karsazs-new-bridge-gives-billboard-rights-to-private-builder/>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/857891/exclusive-rights-karsazs-new-bridge-gives-billboard-rights-to-private-builder/>

complain about beggars on the pedestrian bridges.

In fact those pedestrian bridges have created new sets of hazards for the population, those were meant to serve. It is important to note that despite all misgivings of pedestrian bridges, respondents were unanimous in recommending more of those for the City. Hence more pedestrian bridges are recommended and at locations of high density: factories, hospitals, shopping malls, interchanges and schools.



State of Cleanliness at Essa Nagri Pedestrian Bridge

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

To walk with safety is a basic human right. First right on the road and the right to way is of pedestrians. Vehicles and cars should do in favour of pedestrians. The infrastructural development, allocation of urban spaces and the implementation of laws, such as that of speed limit, should reflect the respect of that basic human right. It is important from social, ecological, health and economic reasons.

Annexure One

Use of Pedestrian Bridges in Karachi

Date: _____ Place: _____

Male/Female (respondent): _____

Age of the respondent: _____

The Pedestrian Bridges of Karachi

1. How many times in a day you use it?
2. For what purpose.?
3. Before this pedestrian bridge, how you used to cross the road.?
4. Do you think that it is placed in the right placed.?
5. Who use it most.?
6. Are there any people who don't sue it?
7. If yes why people don't use it.?
8. How do they cross the road then?
9. What difficulties do you face while using this pedestrian bridge?
10. Do you use it in the night as well?
11. If not why not?
12. Any other comments?

Annexure Two: List of Pedestrian Bridges

S.NO.	LOCATION
1	Near Aisha Bawani Academy ,Sharha-e-Faisal
2	Near FTC Building, Sharha-e-Faisal
3	Near Faran Hotel, Sharha-e-Faisal
4	Near Jason Trade Center, Sharha-e-Faisal
5	Near Shaheed-e-Millat Flyover, Shahra-e-Faisal
6	Near Awamee Markaz Shahra-e-Faisal
7	Near Karsaz, Shahra-e-Faisal
8	Near PNS Karsaz, Shahra-e-Faisal
9	Near Drigh Road Station , Shahra-e-Faisal
10	Near Base Montessori, PAF Faisal, Shahra-e-Faisal
11	Near Drigh Colony Flyover, Shahra-e-Faisal
12	KCR Bridge near Drigh Road Flyover, Shahra-e-Faisal
13	Near Chota Gate Shahra-e-Faisal
14	Near Kala Board Malir Shahra-e-Faisal
15	Near Murghi Khana Laeqabad, Shahra-e-Faisal
16	Near Dar-ul-Uloom, Road 8000 Korangi
17	Near Jail Chowrangi Flyover University Road
18	Near New Town Police Station, University Road
19	Near Faizan-e-Madina University Road
20	Near Edhi Home, University Road
21	Near Civic Centre University Road

The Pedestrian Bridges of Karachi

S.NO.	LOCATION
22	Near EXPO Centre University Road
23	Near Mumtaz Manzil, University Road
24	Near Bait-ul-Mukarram Mosque, University Road
25	Near Urdu College University Road
26	Near Nipa Flyover University Road
27	Near Sindh Technical Board, University Road
28	Near Ibe-e-Sina Hospital University Road
29	Near Safari Park University Road
30	Near NED University, University Road
31	Near Karachi University University Road
32	Near Magna Mall Rashid Minhas Road
33	Near Aladin Park Rashid Minhas Road
34	Near Raza Square Rashid Minhas Road
35	Near Dhaka Sweets, Rashid Minhas Road
36	Near Oxford School Rashid Minhas Road
37	Near Kareem Plaza, Sir Shah Sulemman Road
38	Near Essa Nagri , Sir Shah Sulemman Road
39	Near Jamia Mosque Quba , Sir Shah Sulemman Road
40	Over Ghareebabad Underpass, Sir Shah Sulemman Road
41	At Liaquatabad Stop No .10, Sir Shah Sulemman Road
42	At Liaquatabad Stop No .4, Sir Shah Sulemman Road
43	Near Liaquatabad Town, Hakeem Ibn-e-Sina Road
44	At Nazimabad Stop No. 2, Hakeem Ibn-e-Sina Road
45	Near New Golimaar, Sir Syed Govt. Girls College

S.NO.	LOCATION
46	Nazimabad No.1 Near Urdu Bazaar
47	Nazimabad No.1 Near Inquiry Office
48	Near Baqai Institute Of Nephrourology Urology At Nazimabad No. 3
49	Near Board Office Stop, Qaser-e-Sheeren At North Nazimabad
50	At Hydri Stop, North Nazimabad
51	Near Jamia Mosque Farooq-e-Azam at North Nazimabad
52	At Shadman Stop No.1
53	At Shadman Stop No.2
54	Near Nagan Flyover Road 5000
55	Near Al-Haaj Akhatr Restaurant Road 5000
56	At U.P Mour Road 5000
57	Near Saleem Centre Road 5000
58	Near Bara Market, Road 5000
59	Near Sultan Plaza Road 5000
60	At Liaquatabad Super Market Shaharh-e-Pakistan
61	Near Agha Khan Apartments Shaharh-e-Pakistan
62	Near Aisha Manzil, Shaharh-e-Pakistan
63	At Naseerabad Stop, Shaharh-e-Pakistan
64	At Ancholi Stop Shaharh-e-Pakistan
65	In Between Shahrah-e-Noor Jehan and Qasbah
66	Near Shahrah-e-Quaideen Flyover, Shahrah-e-Quaideen Road
67	Preedy Street near Mosque (Imam Bargh), Lines Area.
68	Near Nizami Road, Lines Area
69	Preedy Street near Allah Wali Mosque, Lines Area.

The Pedestrian Bridges of Karachi

S.NO.	LOCATION
70	At Pardah Park near Jail Chowrangi Flyover, M.A. Jinnah Extension Road
71	Near Numaish Chowrangi, M.A. Jinnah Road
72	At I.B.A, Kiyani Shaheed Road
73	Near Zoo, Nishter Road
74	Near Bismillah Hotel, Mangopir Road
75	Al-Asif Square, near Sohrab Goth
76	At Shaheed-e-Millat Road near Shaheed-e-Millat Flyover
77	At Shah Waliullah Road near Al-Noor Society
78	AT Shah Waliullah Road near Edhi Home
79	Near Qayyumabad
80	Rashid Minhas Road near Moti Mahal
81	Near Mashriq Centre, Sir Shah Suleman Road
82	At M.A. Jinnah Road near Capri Cinema
83	At Stadium Road near Khatoon-e-Pakistan College
84	Near Govt College for Women Korangi No. 4
85	At Shaheed-e-Millat Expressway (Azam Basti)
86	At Shaheed-e-Millat Expressway near Iqra University
87	Near Farooq-e-Azam Masjid North Nazimanbad
88	At KDA Flats, Rashid Minhas Road
89	At Gulistan-e-Johar near Darul Sehat Hospital
90	At Shah Waliullah Road near Café Today
91	At Shaheed-e-Millat Expressway (Manzoor Colony)
92	At Gulistan-e-Johar near Perfume Chowk
93	Near Star Gate Shahrah-e-Faisal

URC
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The Urban Resource Centre is a Karachi-based NGO founded by teachers, professionals, students, activists and community organizations from low-income settlements. It was set up in response to the recognition that the planning process for Karachi did not serve the interests of low- and lower-middle-income groups, small businesses and informal sector operators and was also creating adverse environmental and socioeconomic impacts. The Urban Resource Centre has sought to change this through creating an information base about Karachi's development on which everyone can draw; also through research and analysis of government plans (and their implications for Karachi's citizens), advocacy, mobilization of communities, and drawing key government staff into discussions. This has created a network of professionals and activists from civil society and government agencies who understand planning issues from the perspective of these communities and other less powerful interest groups. This network has successfully challenged many government plans that are ineffective, over-expensive and anti-poor and has promoted alternatives. It shows how the questioning of government plans in an informed manner by a large number of interest groups, community organizations, NGOs, academics, political parties and the media can force the government to listen and to make modifications to its plans, projects and investments. Comparable urban resource centres have also been set up in other cities in Pakistan and also in other nations.

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