Abstract
The process of building involves many stages beginning from the conception to the completion of the space and continues on to the post occupancy stage. As architecture is an art form experienced by the user, each step in the process of designing a building requires his involvement. The user group are those who are most affected by an architectural piece. Their participation in its development is thus of great value to both the designer as well as the users themselves.
User-Designer collaboration usually upholds the idea of community ties and works to create partnerships not only between the individual user and designer but the community as a whole. This process usually comes forth as a bold gesture with the potential to influence the urban landscape. The dialogue between the participants thus becomes an important and structured event. The successful working of this participant body becomes as important as the final product. There are however many obstacles in the course of this process, which in circumstances render it to be unfeasible. The strategy must then be to determine the extent of collaboration between the user and designer so that the benefits out weigh the detriments and result in generating an effective design solution. The tool of designer collaboration ensures that the users become more involved in impacting their surroundings. This involvement creates a synergy amongst the community empowering them and breeds a sense of responsibility. User participation helps in creating awareness and brings about a sense of ownership within the user. It also promotes territorialism, which links back to the basic human instinct of protecting ones spaces and creating a greater sense of belonging.