

**Quality of Space and Its Relation to the Social
Behavior in Academic Open Space**

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KEYWORDS Landmark. Wayfinding. Social Behavior. Cognition. Spatial Environment

ABSTRACT Academic open spaces guide students through their movement and shape our universities' environment by their design and quality of space. They are so important in students' life. In the academic year 1991/1992 the Isra University was established with only 539 students and 5 colleges. The number of students since then increased dramatically and the total number for the academic year 2006/2007 has reached a little over 7300 students. There is, as a result, a large increase of pressure on the University's public utilities, facilities and the open public spaces, where the Main Square is among those utilities that have reached a saturation peak. In this study, the problem of capacity of the most popular space, so called square of the Main Square at the Isra University will be dealt with and an evaluation of the open space will be carried out focusing on social behavior. A questionnaire whose aim is to evaluate the open space of the Isra University through understanding students' behavioral mapping is carried out for two weeks during November 2006. This study will examine the effect of spatial environment upon the behavior of students at the Isra University, with respect to open space, and will concentrate on the design quality of the Main Square, the human behavior inside the Main Square, the landmarks within the Main Square and the wayfinding in it. A number of recommendations are suggested at the end to improve the spatial environment.