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Domes and minarets: a study on the effect of Musjid-Ur-Rahma on surrounding property

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Abstract

The Mosque has a symbolic and spatial significance that transcends its immediate locality. Muslims are required to pray five times a day in congregation at intervals throughout the day, which alludes to the importance of the Mosque. Many Muslims centre their daily life around the prayer, indicating the symbolic significances of the Mosque. These symbolic significances have a spatial manifestation, as the Mosque is the focal point of the community.

In post-Apartheid South Africa, affluent Muslims are migrating to previously white-only suburbs to take advantage of the services and amenities these neighbourhoods offer. The growth of the Muslim population in these areas increases considerably with the construction of a Mosque, with new families settling in the immediate vicinity. A similar effect is seen within the Jewish community, with Jewish families settling around the Synagogue. Studies conducted in these areas found that Synagogues add value to surrounding properties.

This study examines the effect of the Greenside Mosque on surrounding properties by investigating if the Mosque increases the price of the surrounding properties. One objective is to shed light on new spatial trends that have emerged in post-Apartheid Johannesburg. Besides the physical characteristics, the price of property is determined by its location in relation to external factors. Certain external factors can have a positive effect on the price of properties. For example: a scenic view, close proximity to transport, services or other amenities while other characteristics can be detrimental to the property price, such as if the property is within close proximity to a cemetery or dump yard.

Hedonic value assigns value to individual characteristics of the property. To ascertain the value of the Mosque on surrounding properties, the study employs a hedonic analysis. Property prices in Emmarentia and Greenside have been analysed in a Geographical Information system as well as a statistical program to examine the relationship between the Mosque and the surrounding residential property. The analysis covers a seventeen-year period. The study has a low R-squared value and, therefore, does not conclusively establish a link with the Mosque having an effect on value.