

The Investigation of Cultural Factors Affecting the Sustainable Development in Yazd, Iran

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Abstract

Culture is the main factor and is regarded as the engine of sustainable development that without considering it, development programs would not be successful. Cultural factors play a vital role in sustainable development and sustainable development planning should be based on different cultures. Yazd in many years had considerable share in the field of cultural and religious in the country. But a glance at the current situation of the city that perhaps the cultural climate of the city has been neglected, the continuation of historical role and identity of the city, as well as improvement the lives of residents of the city without understanding the cultural factors affecting sustainable development does not seem possible. In the cultural issues, there are various indices that affect on development. In this paper, combining some of the models include the development of culture and the experiences of other countries and division of the Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution, four basic indicators with the sub- indicators for each indicator have been specified. Given the descriptive nature of the investigation, in order to collect required data and test questions the questionnaire has been used. The first part of questionnaire consisted of demographic questions. Other questions have been considered to measure the components and based on assumptions of the study.

Questionnaires were distributed on the basis of statistical sampling in Yazd city. The research method is descriptive survey. The study population in our research included Yazd citizens over 18 years old with a history of more than two years residency in the city of Yazd. Based on the results of the questionnaires, the hypothesis of effectiveness of two indicators of identity and social order was accepted and effectiveness of the two indicators of involvement and cultural engagement and social capital was not approved. In the end, some strategies of urban management approach to effectiveness of affective cultural factors on sustainable development have been provided.

Keywords: sustainable development, urban management, cultural development, culture, sustainable urban development

Introduction

One of the main concerns of instability of development process, particularly in Iran, is the rapid growth of urbanization and lifestyle emerged from that. With uneven development in the cities in different aspects, several problems have represented, especially in economic, social and cultural aspects that we have witnessed increasing income gap and wealth among the social strata, increasing poverty, economic growth without commensurate growth in employment opportunities, social disintegration and weakening of the family structure, differences between different generations and cultures, which have transpired the sustainability of development in the current routine, and which in turn has caused instability in the ecological dimensions and it also makes economic and social

instability mutually. Therefore, a negative cycle in escalation of instability arises (Zahedani, 2005: 83).

Urbanization in Iran over the last decade has been accompanied by substantial growth, but not away from problems and negative consequences. Part of these problems is the result of lack of attention to the cultural aspects of urban life. Matching development, culture and the city is one of complex subjects and in the meantime notable. The role of culture and its evolution in the development of our country, particularly after the Islamic Revolution, has been very prominent (Duayee, 25: 2006).

Paying attention to cultural dimension of development began from Mexico City conference during which it was advised that a global decade for cultural development under the joint auspices of United Nations and UNESCO to be announced. According to the declaration of the conference, since culture constitute a fundamental part of the life of every person and society, therefore, sustainable development as its ultimate goal is focus on the man, should have a cultural dimension.

Accordingly, although culture is an element of development but not only one factor among other factors, but is a fundamental factor of development, the driving force and ultimate horizon of it. Cultural factors include all elements of psycho-social elements which like scientific, technical and economic factors has led to improvement of the society material and intellectual life in general and urban communities in particular without causing sudden changes in life style or thinking states and yet plays a vital role in technical success of plans or programs of urban, regional and national development. In fact, the goal of cultural attitudes to development is meet the real needs of the people and in most cases depends on the creative capacity of people, values, abilities and different forms of cultural representation and causes in one hand people play an important role in the developmental programs and in the other hand, ensures the integration of development and socio-cultural structures.

Because, created changes in the structure are a part of inner and natural process or at least with regard to the relevant cultural requirements. Historical experience also clearly shows that development can only in areas where it has taken root, grow in the culture and traditions of the region. Because development is an all-round process and related to values of any society and calling for the participation of all individuals and groups who have built it and benefit from it, otherwise sustainable development cannot be achieved (Huntington, 2003, 45).

Since cultural factors have an important role in sustainable development, sustainable development planning should be done on the basis of different cultures. Culture is the main factor and in the other words the engine of sustainable development that without considering it, sustainable development programs would not be much successful (Nazari, 2009, 34). Urban development and promotion before everything required different areas are identified and are programmed according to the current situation (Ghanizadeh, 2005, 12). Knowing cultural factors affecting income and sustainable development and the status of these factors can help managers and particularly city managers, to consider these factors in their decision-making and planning to sustainable urban development in true meaning with the use of resources, meet the needs and aspirations of citizens in present and future (Shabirchima, 2003,25).

In cultural issues, various indicators are expressed, but this study intended combining some development models involving the culture and experiences of other countries and division of the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution and also appropriate to the context of this province, the objectives of the research are selected.

According to various sources, Yazd in many years had considerable share in the field of cultural and religious in the country, but a glance at the current situation of the city that perhaps the cultural climate of the city has been neglected, the continuation of historical role and identity of the

city, as well as improvement the lives of residents of the city without understanding the cultural factors affecting sustainable development does not seem possible. In this paper, we assess the impact of cultural factors affecting the management of sustainable urban development focusing on the city of Yazd. This article has been divided in 7 parts. In the second part, a brief review of preceding studies done in the field of study. Part III contains variables in a conceptual model and fourth part of study is research methodology. Study model and the relationship between cultural components with designed questionnaire are expressed in the fifth part. Part VI deals with the findings and conclusion is noticed in Part VII.

Background of Research

Sajjad Muhammdyarzadeh and Behnoosh Shamsollahi (2006) conducted a study entitled the need to revive the cultural and social capitals in sustainable urban development of Non-Aligned Movement countries and stated that urban communities in developing countries are in transition from a social and cultural crisis. The main cause of this crisis can be the dominance of the world market and the dominant values of capitalist society which during this process, the role of cultural and social capitals in the management and development of many cities has been faded. Providing good grounds for the presence of citizens in the management and planning of cities and respect for citizens' rights would be a step in order to start building trust and starting civic participation through the creation of social and urban institutions with the aim of preserving cultural heritage and improving the quality of urban textures.

Beig Mohammadi (2001) has delved into the role of culture in sustainable urban development. He states that between a traditional person living in city and a citizen with urban culture there is much difference. In a traditional urban society, no one feels responsible and does not interfere in solving problems and not responsible for and wants everything from government. He believes that today the problem of Iran cities is urban culture weakness of citizens and failure in urban planning and management and as long as these two are not matched together, sustainable development would not be formed.

Rahimi's (2000) research entitled "cultural barriers to sustainable development in the city of Kashmar using field operations" has been completed which with a sample size of 3000 questionnaires analyzed the cultural barriers of development. Of the major obstacles of researcher on the study include belief in fate, the lack achievement motivation, emulations, preserving traditions and low respect for knowledge and scientism.

Because cultural factor in terms of culture and its detailed has an important role in sustainable development and environmental protection, it is necessary to achieve a comprehensive and ecological development, the positive and negative factors of culture clearly separated, the negative factors (cultural barriers) be removed and positive factors be supported. Toys and Satzland (2007) in a study entitled "the combination of cultural heritage and sustainable urban development" examined the relationship between development and culture in the city.

They believe new discussions about urban sustainability tended to focus on technical issues such as carbon dioxide emissions, energy consumption and waste management, or on the economic aspects of development and urban regeneration. This research with a brief discussion about the deficiencies of existing approaches in urban regeneration, suggests how this problem can be addressed by an understanding of how people interact with the urban environment and cultural heritage, be resolved.

The assessed variables in a conceptual model

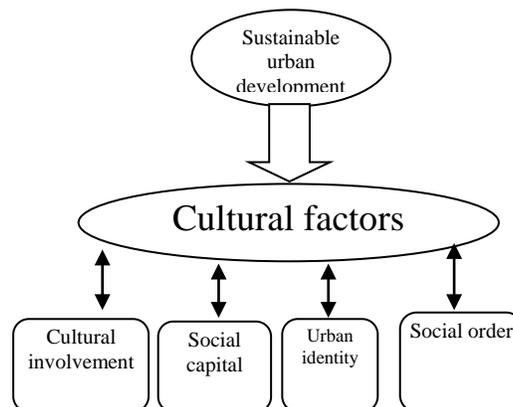


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Methodology

The present study in terms of aim is an applied one and considering the type of data collection and data collection is descriptive survey in which with recognition of cultural factors affecting the sustainable development, the situation of these factors in Yazd is identified. The research method is descriptive survey and given the descriptive nature of the investigation in order to gather needed data and test of questions, questionnaire has been used. The first part of questionnaire consisted of demographic questions. Other questions intended to measure the components and based on research assumptions. The cause of sampling was collect data for the total population is very expensive and time-consuming. On the other hand the sample size should be large enough to obtain good estimates of population parameters. The formula used to measure the sample size in this study are as follows: One common formula for calculating sample size is Cochran formula: $n = (N \times t^2 \times p \times q) \div (N \times d^2 + t^2 \times p \times q)$ (1)

In the above formula, usually, the maximum permissible error (d) is considered 0/05, confidence coefficient 0/95, $t = 1/96$ and p and q are each equal to 0/5 and population size = N. P value is considered equal to 0/5. Because if $P = 0/5$, n finds its maximum possible value and this causes the sample is large enough (Sarmad et al., 2009). Due to the expense and time-consuming maximum allowed mistakes is considered 0/7 that considering the population size of about 400,000 people, the sample size is determined 190 and ultimately these questionnaires are provided for members of intended population. In this study to assess the validity of questionnaire acted so that all questions of test has been developed with study of different study sources and then was assessed using supervisors' comments and advisor and a number of other professors comments the validity of questions were assessed. In this article, to obtain the reliability of questionnaire statistical software of SPSS was used and based on 24 existent questions in questionnaire 0/835 has been achieved, that given that is bigger than minimum acceptable reliability for the questionnaires, so the questionnaire has acceptable reliability.

The research model

Although the main purpose of this study is to investigate the influence of cultural factors on the management of sustainable urban development for the gathering information in a coherent framework, and given that in cultural issues, various indicators are expressed, it is intended to combine some models involving the culture and the experiences of other countries that were addressed in this chapter and the main basis for the division indicators which involved in Supreme Revolutionary Cultural Council and also appropriate to the context of this province, the objectives of

the research are selected. In a definition of culture is a system of basic beliefs and assumptions, values, customs and rooted and long-standing behavioral patterns, symbols and artifacts that shape the perception, behavior and social relations and build its identity (Approved in Persian date of 25/09/1386 of cultural Engineering Council).

According to various theories, it can be said that, in culture, there is this expectation and assumption that, all individuals and groups in all areas have responsibility and contribution. Because culture is the extent of the whole city and society, and in its development, all people have a responsibility and role. Therefore, public participation is one of principles of sustainable development. However, making the infrastructure of it is the responsibility of organizations and institutions that formally follow programs in this regard. Among the active organizations in modern cities, municipalities play a leading role. In this regard, the municipality can adopt programs to provide the material and non- material promote in people and contribute developed culture and sustainable development. This more than anything else is tracked in the main areas of culture.

Thus, the aims of this study, based on four components related to the culture and conditions in this city have been selected to determine to what extent this cultural factors influence the management of sustainable urban development of the city (Kashmar). The four selected components included a sense of identity of city, social capital, social order and cultural employment and involvement. However, sustainable development is not limited solely under the influence of these factors and it has been tried the most important factors emphasized in the studies to be considered.

Based on these four components and according to these assumptions, a questionnaire was prepared and responses were collected. In this section, according to the study objectives, definitions and concepts of culture, development, sustainable development and urban management was suggested and the factors affecting sustainable development with a focus on the role of culture begin to be evaluated and relying on the conditions of Yazd city and municipal cultural responsibilities of Yazd municipal, model of comparative studies and cultural segmentation indicators in the Council of the Cultural Revolution in 2010 and indicators with characteristics of reliability, comprehensiveness, accessibility, etc. were optimized and made native. Ultimately, a table was set as the following table to prepare a questionnaire and some statistical indexes.

Table 1: Variables used in the present study

Main component of culture	General indicators
City identity	Understanding the cultural heritage, sense of belonging to the culture of the city, Getting to know the symbols and myths of City, sense of cohesion and solidarity between the people of the city
Cultural involvement and employment	The interest in books and reading, the presence in artistic and cultural activities, access to cultural sites and cultural and artistic events, necessary facilities and information
Social capital	Participation in social institutions, the confidence to urban authorities, social satisfaction
Social order	The knowledge and awareness of common social norms, The rights of citizenship, The commitment to social traditions, the responsibility

Results

To evaluate the hypotheses of the research, path analysis method was used so that firstly we evaluate the considered model with the presence of predetermined variables and the assumption and approval and disapproval and of them and finally present the model with confirmed assumptions and based on the proposed model explain the model based on goodness of fit of indicators.

Table 2: The routes of research model

		Hypothesis	Standard estimate	S.E.	C.R.	Significant probability	Result
Sustainable Development	<---	Identity of the city	.299	.147	2.033	.003	+
Sustainable Development	<---	Employment and cultural identity	.058	.116	.446	.656	-
Sustainable Development	<---	Social capital	-.125	.104	-.854	.393	-
Sustainable Development	<---	Social order	.379	.150	2.442	.015	+
Identity of the city	<--->	Social capital	.398	.048	3.158	.002	+
Identity of the city	<--->	Social order	.451	.052	3.502	***	+
Employment and cultural identity	<--->	Social capital	.417	.051	3.362	***	+
Social order	<--->	Social capital	.664	.045	4.356	***	+

Table 3: Fitness of model

RFI	IFI	CFI	NFI	AGFI	GFI	RMR	RMSEA	Sig.	DF/ Chi-squared(χ^2)
0/760	0/974	0/971	0/952	0/839	0/978	0/029	0/11	0/114	2/168

Although χ^2 index is significant, but this index is very sensitive to the sample size, however, the chi-square to degrees of freedom is less than 3 and this is due to intense being effected of chi-square statistic of sample size. Although in the model of relationship between the variables this is fitness is appropriate, the significant amount more than 0.05 indicating the suitability of the model.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the influence of cultural factors affecting on sustainable development management of Yazd city. In this regard, the mentioned hypotheses were shaped and examined. In this study, it was intended in one side enrich the plan theoretically and on the other side collecting and analyzing the data to be done coherently. As a result, according to a review of the literature and culture and conditions in the city were proposed model. The aforementioned model was formed from four components of urban identity, social order, involvement and cultural employment and social capital. According to conducted structural equation, these four components have a reciprocal relationship with each other mutually interacted and strengthen themselves mutually. According to analysis and evaluation done and using the provided model which was done by confirmatory factor analysis on environmental factors with acceptable loading factor is a good model to evaluate the relationship between the research variables, because the value of model quality indices (indicators) all are almost above 80 percent which is excellent. In relation to the RMSEA index, the values closer to zero indicates the goodness of fit and less than 0/05 to 0/08 indicates a very good fitness of model which in this study is 0/11 that fairly is a well goodness of fit and measuring model is verified. RMSEA index shows that outstanding performance is relatively weak in the model. Although this index (indicator) in the present model seems somewhat weak but other indicators of model is justified appropriate. In addition, according to the table of examining the model routes, assumptions (hypotheses) of research are explored as below and also the amount of effective variables on independent variable was specified.

In this study, the main assumption (hypothesize) was the evaluation of the impact of affecting cultural factors on sustainable development management of Yazd city, which was marked by a model considering the variables in this way is approved. The feeling of "identity of the city" has a positive impact on the management of sustainable development.

Factor of social order" has a positive impact on the management of sustainable urban development. But two other hypotheses weren't approved. "The cultural involvement and employment" does not have a positive impact on the management of sustainable urban development. "Social capital" does not have a positive impact on the management of sustainable urban development.

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