

Spaces' Livability in Modern Commercial Centers

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Abstract | Support spaces in shopping centers (playgrounds, food court and the like) were first created to serve the booming of the business in such centers. But, they gradually were turned to direct destinations for human activities meaning that the visitors, having no intention to buy, spend some of their leisure time in these shopping centers for such purposes as amusement and social interaction and so on and, in fact, a sort of novel public space is formed in the business centers. It seems that the main reason why these places have been transformed is their livability. Thus, the present study's primary hypothesis is that "the newly-formed public support spaces are lively and this livability causes functional shifting of these spaces from dependency on active spaces to semi-public urban spaces". The present study aims to identify, within the format of a conceptual model, the factors contributing to livability in the support spaces of the business centers. The present study is a qualitative survey and, in line with this, after performing documentary research and reviewing the relevant experiences, the related concepts were, in the first step, extracted in the form of livability aspects and variables; then, in a second step, in the survey study stage, five commercial blocks, as examples of more successful complexes in terms of livability and attraction of the visitors, not business clients, to spend their leisure time in their support spaces were selected according to the geographical scattering diversity in Tehran. Next, observations and deep interviews were carried out for each of the case samples to extract the aforementioned variables giving rise to support spaces' livability. The results of the study indicated that there are two major branches for the livability of the support urban spaces in the modern commercial buildings: convenience and semi-public nature of them. Thus, the collection of the effective indicators was offered within the format of a conceptual model to assess livability of the modern commercial blocks' support spaces. The study hypothesis was approved according to a qualitative analysis undertaken in the survey research based on the functional independence of such spaces in modern commercial buildings. Finally, the questions raised herein were answered and suggestions were made regarding the methods of enhancing livability of the support spaces in such public spaces.

Keywords | Livability, Support spaces, Modern commercial centers, Conceptual model.

Introduction | Nowadays, the people's social relations have taken various forms manifested through different tools and they are in a constant change. One area of the public relations is the commercial spaces that date back to a hundred years ago in Iran; these commercial spaces have always been providing the most powerful grounding for the social, economic, and cultural activities (Ziaeiyun, 2012). Of course, the social relations have also been existent in the old and traditional markets but now we are bearing witness to their modern type in the large commercial buildings. In more precise terms, a new typology is being formed within the heart of the commercial spaces. The commercial spaces were first developed with the aim of boosting the businesses and the motivation for people's gathering and promotion of shopping and business was inducted through founding of Food Courts, amphitheaters or playgrounds in them. Independent secondary activities were formed in the commercial buildings in the course of time and this turned them into an independent behavioral base for the citizens. It had become a new type of space wherein the people got involved as they wished in the recreational and social activities. In this regard, these spaces were not anymore business support elements rather they had become something more of an active nature featuring an independent identity and their livability was indeed the factor propelling the people's acceptance of them. The main objective of the present study is to discover the special reasons contributing to the livability of the commercial buildings' support spaces. The study is largely a qualitative research in which the documentary studies and conceptual model extraction (through conceptualization) have been conducted via field studies, observation and interview following which the information was qualitatively analyzed to find answers to the study questions and prove the primary hypothesis. Livability of the commercial buildings' support spaces was regarded as the dependent variable in the present study and factors having an influence thereon, like security and access to infrastructure and the existence of use case diversity and others of the like were considered as the independent variables. The case samples were chosen from the commercial blocks featuring the most frequent visits based on their geographical scattering. The study was conducted in a one-year time period from 2016 to 2017. In a study of the independent variables pertaining to the case samples, their relationship with the dependent variable, i.e. livability of the support spaces, was determined.

The main questions raised herein are:

- What are the factors influencing the livability of support spaces in modern commercial buildings? (study conceptual model)
- Can the livability of support spaces in commercial

buildings make them independent as semi-public urban spaces?

Study Hypothesis

According to the abovementioned questions, the primary hypothesis is "the support spaces formed in the modern commercial buildings are lively and such livability has paved the way for a functional shift of these spaces from dependent spaces to active spaces used as independent semi-public urban spaces".

Key Concepts and Definitions and Theoretical Framework

Livability

There are numerous and diverse definitions offered for livability. For instance, the scales of a livable and dynamic city, as mentioned in a document published by Chelmsford city council, were the quality of the public spaces, the urban development criterion, economical dynamicity, cultural dynamicity and having a nocturnal economy (Packham, 2013:3-9). In another research that was conducted by John Karras, very interesting scales have been outlined in the book "ten special signs of livable cities", including dynamic economy, mixed use, traffic, compactness, livable streets, dynamic neighborhoods, ambitious people, buildings with cultural value and over a hundred years old, proper connection to the peripheral cities, global attractiveness (Karras, 2015). On the other hand, researchers such as Siadati and Alal-Hesabi specified 15 scales as follows: 1) density; 2) environmental comfortableness; 3) identity enhancement; 4) legibility; 5) creation of walking routes; 6) permeability; 7) visual and aesthetic diversity; 8) transparency; 9) enclosure; 10) emphasis and pause; 11) increase in environmental quality; 12) diversity of land use; 13) green areas and vegetative cover; 14) transportation control; and 15) public space expansion (Siadati & AlalHesabi, 2014). And, the livable space should print a pleasant image in the visitors' minds. Thus both the hardware factors like the urban context and the software factors like social relations between the people influence the corroboration of feeling secure and finally livability and social stability within an urban space (Atrian, Sadjad & Pasha, 2015: 4).

Urban Space

Urban spaces are part of the public and open areas in cities that are somehow a manifestation of the collective life; in other words, they are the places where people reside (Pakzad, 2006). The highest contact occurs in the human interrelationships in public areas of the cities. These areas encompass the entire urban context constituents to which the people have physical and visual access (Tibaldz, 2005). Sergei Chermayeff was *Inter alia* the first theoreticians

who paid a large deal of attention to the public spaces. He classified the collective life and private life areas into six parts: public urban spaces (highways, urban parks), semi-public urban spaces (municipality building, passenger terminals and parking lots), specific public spaces, specific private places, family-specific spaces and individual specific spaces (Alexandre & Chermayeff, 1965). From the perspective of Hanzakian, Mahdavian & Saboonchi, collective spaces are the grounds upon which the social interactions of the society members form and they can be investigated in terms of their own specific concepts' dimensions. Putting aside the importance given to access points, the length, cohesion and the bioenvironmental conditions that cause the creation of auspicious contextual characteristics, land use diversities and the events about to happen provide for the potential socialization of the spaces (Hanzakian, Mahdavi & Saboonchi, 2016: 1).

William Whyte believed that the use of space is one of the most important specifications of success thereof. This is while, the low capabilities of the environments in the today's world are accompanied by lower number of pauses in a daily increasing manner and this per se results in gradual degradation of the spaces (Whyte, 2017). In the present study, the reader is confronted with another form of the collective spaces featuring special livability in Iran. There are numerous social interactions occurring in the open spaces amidst the buildings. Social interaction and establishment of communication can take place either physically, in a look, in a conversation and/or in relationships between the individuals. These interactions need of a definition for the appropriate events and activities and subsequently leading to the people's acceptances of roles in the spaces and their membership in the social communities and networks (Daneshpour & Charkhchyan, 2007). Jin Jacobs, the prominent urban issues journalist and expert, in her book "the extinction and the survival of large American cities, underlines the role of public urban spaces in the creation of social interactions (Kashanijoo, 2010: 99).

Modern Commercial Spaces

The type of the public urban spaces formulating the pivot of the current research paper is the modern commercial spaces consisting of shops and support spaces. Shopping plaza or shopping mall, used interchangeably for shopping center, are the 20th century coinages for markets or bazaars dating long back to the depth of history. Shopping center is a collection of stores and retailing shops, service sections and customer-specific parking lots which are designed, constructed and managed by a single management company acting on behalf of them all (Rahimi, 2012: 10). The recreation and leisure spots of the shopping centers are the subjects dealt with in social sciences in relation

to shopping centers. Their dedication to leisure time and recreational activities cannot be solely attributed to the existence of cases like coffee shops, game nets, fast food stores and so forth, rather shopping is currently playing a recreational and leisure time role. In such spaces, consumption plays an essential part that is not exclusively limited to goods and tools and spaces are also produced and consumed in such places (Jones & Williamson, 2009). Moreover, based on the national building regulations' definition, the large commercial usage incorporates the huge commercial buildings in which over 100 individuals gather to make purchases in levels above and below the street level (the national building rules codification office, 2001: 177).

It has to be reminded that the historical roots of purchase sociology date back to nearly 1950s. Unlike the theories that equal "purchasing" to "going shopping", Edward Taber, in 1972, made a distinction between the motivation for going shopping and making a purchase and this caused purchase to be seen as a form of leisure time activity. In the classic sociological studies, purchase was firstly regarded as an intellectual topic; later on, the addition of such a concept as leisure time and recreation activity helped sociologists advance one step forward to also take the cultural aspects of purchase into account (Ahvar & Jajarmi, 2013).

Livable Urban Spaces (Especially Modern Commercial Centers)

Charles Landery has defined urban livability and viability in a separate manner. He enumerates nine effective scales for the identification of a livable and viable city: useful population of the individuals, diversity, access, safety and security, identity and distinction, creativity, relationship and joint venturing, organizational capacity and competition. Adopting a more comprehensive approach to the urban livability, he investigated the issue more topically (Landery, 2000: 13). Traditional urban spaces, including the markets, as meeting and crowding places, have always enjoyed the highest capacity of accountability to human beings' social needs in the urban communities. In the course of time and with the entry of such modern urban elements, the role and the structure of marketplace, as a valuable element, underwent changes and alterations within cities. The lowering of the marketplaces' spatial role within the city structure led to the lessening of their social effects as the spots where human's presence and social interactions occurred and they were soon found being served as economy centers which became their most important function (Khorsandi, 2013). The more the marketplaces are preserved and expanded, the more social interactions can take place in them (Latifi, Sheykhi & Shiee, 2010). Malls or the modern urban centers are

realized as the economic development propellers, society's soul and political capital of the cities. Nowadays, the malls, as a new urban form, have gained new significance and they are surely a constituent of the planning (Lowe, 2000). In regard to the public and private revolutionizing effect of the urban spaces, Madanipour thinks of the shopping center as the new additions to the urban regions. He believes that a great many of these centers compete with the city downtowns for taking possession of social and economic livability (Madanipour, 2013). Malls can create a new urban experience for the space users. Urban experience means getting involved in three constituent elements of a city: activity, form (context or shape) and a combination of the two, i.e. space (Habibi & Maghsoodi, 2007). Therefore, the quality of the urban life can be simulated in malls.

In the today's world, watching the galleries and then making a purchase in large chain stores have become the most substantial leisure time activities of the urban life. Therefore, the other aspect of the marketplace is its transformation into a place for the presence of the people to socially interact and spend their leisure time and enjoy (Aghajani, 2016: 25).

Summary of Theoretical Framework for Livability in Support Spaces of the Commercial Centers:

In this section, the key concepts pertaining to the theories related to livability of the support spaces in commercial centers have been summarized in the table 1.

Literature Review

Studies have been conducted regarding the concept "livability" in commercial spaces, especially the modern commercial spaces like passages and commercial buildings amongst which the following can be pointed out:

In the study that was conducted under the title of "Investigating the Effect of Environment Psychology Principles in Designing Recreational Commercial Blocks on the Enhancement of Livability and Social Interactions (case study: commercial and recreational building in Tabriz's Vali-e-Asr junction", reference is made to appropriate positioning in consideration of the users' psychological structure based on a survey of the relevant documents and similar samples' past records; it is eventually concluded that the observation of the environmental psychological principles have actualized the project's objectives both in locating the floors and also in shaping the intended form. Inter alia the factors influencing the internal decoration, the foresaid study enumerates the followings: light and low-volume design, window designing, appropriate ventilation, selection of the furniture, light and color. Moreover, the scales of enhancing livability in such commercial blocks are:

association, collective memory, spatial visualization, the importance of the children games and symbolism (Faramarzi & Aghajani, 2015). Another example bearing the title of "Livable Spatial Creation in Business Centers (Case Study: Triangle Shopping Center)" performed based on a qualitative method, a successful experience in using a commercial building with livability approach was evaluated. The study sample volume included Triangle Shopping Center in England. The center is a successful case that has made use of a special solution in the field of purchase activity and livability relationship in the process of improving and livening itself. The results of the improvement and livening analysis of England's Triangle Commercial Center indicated that diversity, attractiveness, view and favorable landscape as well as identity are the most important factors influencing the design of the center (Dideban, Momeni & Niknam, 2016). And, finally, the study called "Evaluating the Quality of Livability and Dynamicity in Urban Spaces with an Emphasis on Modern Commercial Spaces (Case Study: Alton Shopping Center in Mashhad)" presents the successful experience of Mashhad's Alton Shopping center based on the indicators proposed by Golkar in 2003. The study evaluated the customer satisfaction based on a researcher-made questionnaire that was scored based on Likert's five-point scale and through making use of face-to-face interviews. The results of the study indicated that the highest satisfaction rate goes to experiential-aesthetic indicators and the lowest satisfaction rates were found for functional and bioenvironmental indicators. The findings can be suggestive of the idea that the experiential-aesthetic factors are amongst the primary priorities and concerns of the designers and employers to the extent that they are most frequently taken into account. Visual personality, sensual richness, color and attachment were pointed out as the most important experiential-aesthetic indicators in the investigation of the factors influencing the customer satisfaction of the modern shopping centers. The findings showed that such scales as "the customers' ability to touch the goods", "order, simplicity and eligibility" and "the observation of the spatial hierarchy" can be pinpointed as the dominant functional indicators having an effect on the customers' satisfaction. Furthermore, security was found of a great importance and special stance for the individuals and various age groups, especially for the families. It is worth mentioning that the results also suggested that the customers' satisfaction correlates with the bioenvironmental indicators as components of shopping centers' function (Zamani AliAbadi & Pishbin, 2013).

As it can be seen in the review of the literature on the livability of the commercial support spaces, the functional independence of these spaces has not been taken into

Table 1. Collection of key concepts pertaining to theories on livability of support spaces in commercial centers.
Source: authors.

	Theoretician's name	Year	Key concepts
Livability	John Karras	2015	Dynamic economy, mixed use, traffic, compactness, lively streets, dynamic neighborhoods, ambitious people, buildings with high cultural value and over a hundred-year-old, proper relationships with peripheral cities, global attractiveness
	Mehran Al-Al-Hesabi	2014	Density, environmental comfort, identity increase, legibility, trails, permeability, visual and aesthetical diversity, transparency, closure, highlighting and pause, environment quality increase, use diversity, green space and vegetative cover, transportation control and public space expansion
	Jin Jacobs	1961	Use diversity, contextual diversity, compact density and diversity of activities
	Kouros Golkar	2007	Eligibility, visual personality, permeability and movement, climatic comfort, safety and security and cleanliness
Urban space	Pakzad	2005	They are the manifestation of the collective life
	Tibaldez	2004	The entire urban context sections to which the people have physical and visual access
	William White		Making use of these spaces is one of the most important success specifications
	Chermayov	2007	Collective life areas and private life spaces are divided to six categories: public urban spaces, semi-public urban spaces, specific public spaces, specific private spaces, family specific spaces, individual specific spaces
Livable urban spaces	Charles Laundry	2000	Useful density of the individuals, diversity, access, safety and security, distinction and identity, creativity, relations and joint venture, organizational capacity and competition
	Levu	2000	Malls or modern urban centers, economical development propellers, society's spirit and political capital of the city
	Edward Taber	1972	There is a difference between the motivation to go shopping and making a purchase
	Ali Madanipour	2013	They are places for gathering and many of these centers compete with the city downtowns for taking possession of social life and economy
	Sayyed Mohsen Habibi	2007	Mall can provide the space users with an urban experience. Urban experience means getting involved in three constituent elements of a city: activity, form (context or shape) and a combination of the two

consideration. Therefore, after extracting the conceptual model and through running survey research, the present study deals with this same factor.

Conceptualization and Extraction of the Indicators Influencing the Livability of the Public Commercial Spaces:

Concepts should possess experimental indices so as to be rendered usable because the concepts are only tools that are applied to facilitate understanding of the issues and the abstract summaries are composed of a general collection of behaviors, attitudes and properties having something in common. The first step in conceptualization is the determination of the aspects constituting a certain concept. The second step is the determination of indices

by the aid of which one can measure the aspects of the intended concept (Khaki, 2008: 75). The third step is the formulation of the variables (Taleb, 1991:76).

It can be stated in an investigation of these definitions and according to the principles and theories posited that livability in public urban spaces can be distinguished in two aspects, i.e. contextual and social. In the present study, we only deal with the contextual aspect thereof. Then, in another stage and based on the documentary research and qualitative analysis, the following variables will be extracted for assessing livability of the modern commercial buildings' support spaces. Of course, these variables will be classified and their relevant indices will be outlined after a series of case studies and survey researches and in an ending part of the present study.

The obtained results will be offered within the format of a conceptual model of livability evaluation in such public urban spaces (Diagram 1).

Field Study Cases

In this section of the study, according to the limitations in time and access to the public commercial spaces case samples, several commercial buildings' support spaces were selected in Tehran.

The case samples were chosen from the commercial buildings featuring the highest number of visits based on their geographical scattering in Tehran and studies during a one-year time span from 2016 to 2017. Table 2 summarizes the similarities and dissimilarities (regarding the homogeneity) of the case samples:

Recognizing the Status Quo of the Studied Commercial Spaces

A) Tirageh 2 Commercial Building (Nezam Abad)

The center, besides being served as a commercial means, functions as a recreational place due to the existence of a cinema, Food Court, Hyperstar and a book city (Pic 1). The population density in the commercial sectors is less than the noncommercial and recreational sectors (Pic 2). The reasons behind the livability of these spaces and people's presence in them are:

- Being hidden from public eyes (as a characteristic of such semi-public spaces)
- Demonstration of light and color
- Environmental convenience and being safe from heat and cold
- Diversity in use and closeness of various uses (movie theater, purchase, food, book city) to one another

Environmental comfort and convenience are inter alia the factors that provide for making use of commercial buildings for spending leisure time (Pics. 3-6).

There are numerous examples in which the cold and the heat and the other environmental factors have caused difficulties to the space users. A sample of this is the elegy in Imam Hussein (peace be upon him)'s square in the cold during the recent years. These problems do not exist for commercial buildings as novel collective spaces.

B) Seven Center of Haft Howz's Shopping center

Seven Center Commercial Building has been constructed on a land with 2100 square meters in an area on the southwestern side of Narmak's Haft Howz Square. The substructure of the building is about 2000 square meters. According to the images, the center enjoys a large number of visits for spending leisure time and social interactions, more than being used for shopping.

As it is observed, there is no sign in the visitors indicating their intentions to buy from the shopping center ; they

do not have shopping bags in their hands and they do not also pause before the store's windows. The shopping center is mostly visited for social gathering, leisure time and hangout. As put by Farda News, mall-wandering has become one of the recreational activities of the third Iranian generation and a great many of the adolescent girls and boys use these places as resorts. Another more interesting phenomenon that was observed in this commercial mall was the "location registration" in virtual space. Since the time that the sim cards were first given, the duty of information and data transferring on the internet grounding and through smart phones, the conditions of the society and the social interactions were also largely influenced. Since then, taking a trip to the shopping centers lost its original, "purchase", concept and was turned to a recreation spot and one's taking of his or her photograph to prove presence in such places has become a necessity. Now in every minute, Instagram hosts tens of images of the adolescents who have put on weird clothes, accepted the difficulty of taking a trip in heavy traffic to record an image of themselves in their commercial block of interest. This way, a commercial compound located in a relatively luxurious region has become the most visited spot on the social networks via this same virtual space locating and this has led to the attraction of a larger number of leisure time user. Anyway, Seven Center is seen as an attractive commercial space by the people and its attractiveness can be attributed to the followings:

- Security
- The possibility to make appointments for social meetings
- Being hidden from public eyes
- The existence of numerous fast food shops
- Easy Access
- Brightness

C) Tirageh 1 Shopping Center

Sadeqiyeh's Tirageh Shopping Center is one of the most modern malls in western side of Tehran. It is also recounted as one of the largest shopping centers citywide. The beautiful architecture of the shopping center is one reason giving rise to its more attractiveness. The shopping center possesses playground and various restaurants that were found in the observations and interviews performed by the author as the most frequently visited places. The majority of the individuals referring to the complex seem to have no intention to buy. In this regard, the commercial center's support uses have currently been turned to active and independent uses.

The factors contributing to the attractiveness of Tirageh Complex can be summarized as below:

- The space's sociability
- Beautiful view and landscape and aesthetical interior architecture that provides for a perfect view of the inside

Table 2: similarities and differences of the case samples.
Source: authors.

Sample case's name	Similarities				
	Tirageh 1	Tirageh 2	Arg-e-Tejari	Seven Center	Kurosh
Tirageh 1		High number of visits, security, density	High number of visits, security	High number of visits, security	High number of visits, security
Tirageh 2	Geographical position		High number of visits, security	High number of visits, security	High number of visits, security
Arg-e-Tejari	Geographical position, environmental quality	Geographical position, environmental quality		High number of visits, security	High number of visits, security
Seven Center	Geographical position	Geographical position	Geographical position, environmental quality		High number of visits, security, permeability and access
Kurosh	Geographical position	Geographical position	Geographical position, environmental quality	Geographical position, environmental quality	



Diagram 1: variables influencing the livability in modern commercial buildings' support spaces.
Source: authors.



Pic 1: furniture is used for co-thinking and conversation while the stores are not so much crowded, Tirageh Shopping mall, Tehran, Iran.
Photo: Elham Nahavandi, 2016.



Pic 2: cold weather decreases the sociability of the urban spaces, Koohsangi, Mashad, Iran.
Source: <http://www.oshagh.com>.

and outside of the shopping center and this is due to its high eligibility

- Security
- Diversity of art-related and recreational activities
- The possibility for serving various individuals from different age groups

D) Kurosh Commercial Block

This commercial building is one of the most attractive complexes in Tehran and the various people from different social classes use it to spend their leisure time. Based on the observations and interviews with the visitors of the place, the reasons behind the selection of this shopping center for spending leisure time are:

- Induction of enclosure
- Security and comfort
- Availability of a great many of recreational and leisure time facilities
- Possibility to be used by the entire age groups

One common feature of all these commercial buildings is security which can be a result of the space's being served as a semi-public area meaning that the space is a cozy place in which the unexpected incidents are deemed rather unlikely. This smallness of the space provides for some sort of comfort and security. Another commonality observed in this newly-emergent space is the coziness of the space stemming from the semi-publicity of the area.



Pic 3: empty commercial space of Seven Center Commercial Complex. Source: www.-7center.com



Pic 4: Seven Center's Food Court, a place for friendly meetings. Photo: Elham Nahavandi, 2016.



Pic 5: nonexistence of a sign indicating purchase intention in the majority of the complex users. Photo: Elham Nahavandi, 2016.

E) Arg-e-Tejari (Tajrish)

This commercial building is situated on the northern side of Tehran and it is comprised of recreation and amusement spots, movie theater campus, restaurant, food court and coffee shop, carwash and parking lot all designed perfectly scientifically and based on the modern expertise according to international standards and located in the most optimum angle of Tajrish Square (Arg-e-Tejari's website, visited in 2017). Many people come to spend their leisure time in this commercial building. For example, the people frequently visit the movie theatre without having any shopping bag in their hands.

Analysis of the Livability Status in the Studied Case Samples and Offering a Conceptual Model:

There are common characteristics recognizable in the study of the extracted variables pertaining to livability of the selected modern commercial buildings' support centers as presented in table 3.

The collection of the livability conceptual model variables in the commercial buildings' support spaces (in contrast to the other urban spaces) can be divided to two sets of indices based on the above-presented table: a) Semi-publicity of the space and b) comfortableness of the space. Diagram 2 illustrates the separated dimensions, indices and variables of the conceptual model considering the foresaid divisions:



Pic 6: Seven Center's being the first choice as a spot for spending leisure time.

Photo: Seyed Amir Zakeri, 2016.

Table 3: Assessment of the livability conceptual model's variables in support spaces of the case samples studied in the present study. Source: authors.

		Kurosh	Seven Center	Arg-e-Tejari	Tirageh 2	Tirageh 1
General livability factors	Security					
	Nocturnal economy					
	Dynamic economy					
	Vegetative cover					
	Use diversity					
	Environment quality enhancemnt					
	Enclosure					
	Aestheticism					
	Permeability and access					
	Eligibility					
	Environmental convenience					
	Density					
Special livability factors	Smallness and coziness					
	Hiddenness from public eye					
	comfortableness					

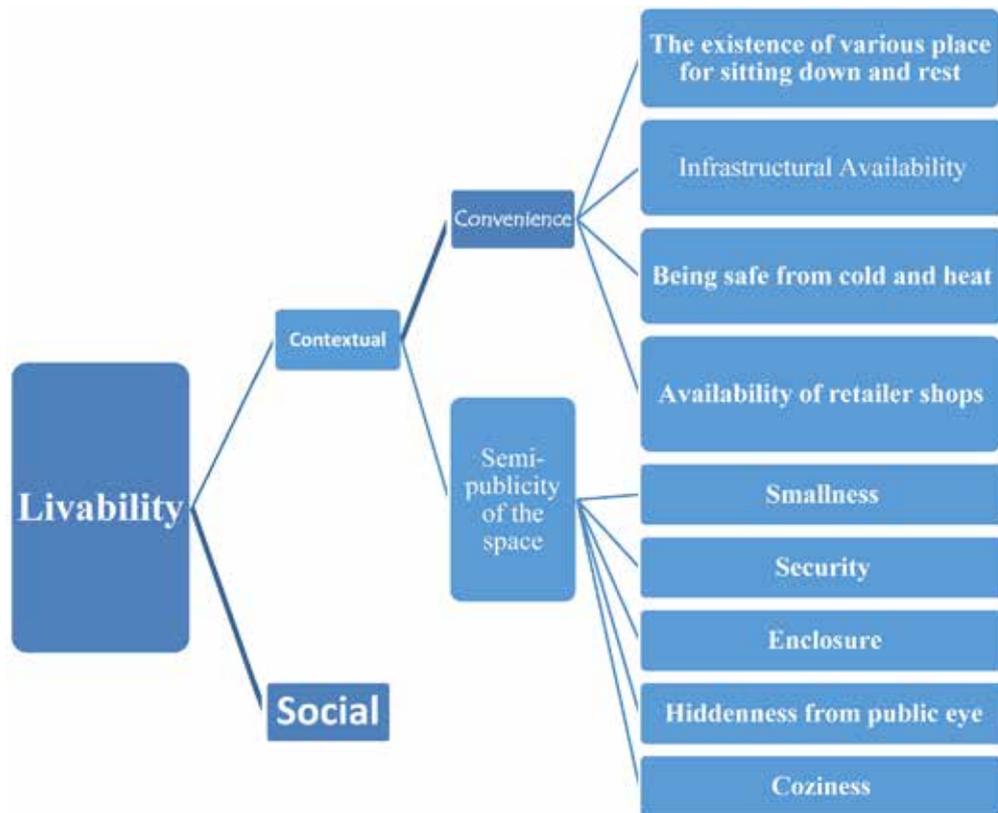


Diagram 2: conceptual model of the indicators influencing the livability of the support spaces in modern commercial buildings (including the dimensions, indices and variables).
Source: authors.

Conclusion and Suggestions | According to the discussions put forth above and based on the survey research carried out, the major reason behind the livability of the commercial support spaces distinguishing them from the other collective spaces in a city can be summarized in two indices of semi-publicity of the space and its convenience. Generally, the collective support spaces in commercial buildings, although legally are considered as public areas, induce the visitors with a privacy perception due to being sensed comfortable and enclosed. They make the people more inclined to attend them and spend some of their time there. Thus, it can be stated that this type of the spaces have managed to gain themselves some sort of relative independence in the modern commercial blocks in terms of identity because the citizens are found feeling strongly lively and such livability of these support spaces has been gradually turned to the people's reason and purpose for attending there; thus, the study hypothesis is approved based on this reasoning. Moreover, in responding to the main question of the present study as to "what are the indicators influencing the livability of the modern commercial buildings' support spaces", the

conceptual model extracted herein (with its indices and assessed variables) can be pointed out.

As mentioned, the livable spaces possess other characteristics the corroboration of which can bring about livability in the commercial centers. For instance, the presence of water and plants, round-the-clock liveliness and international tourism that are missing from the case samples studied in the present study can also be taken into consideration. However, even so, the spaces are found enormously livable, happy and encouraging pause. In order to enhance such vital characteristics in these spaces, it is hereby suggested to consider the other livability factors in them, as specified below:

- Designing fountains and use of vegetative cover
- Upgrading the furniture to more efficient and more diverse ones
- Corroboration of identity and sense of space in association with Iranian culture
- Augmentation of light manifestations
- Creation of attraction to the foreign tourists and transformation of the place to tourist destination

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