

Original Research Article

Landscape Capacities in Realizing the Concept of Participation in Urban Projects*

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Abstract | In recent years, many projects have been implemented that, despite their potentials, have not left any noticeable impact on the tangible quality of the city and have not affected the way the citizens assess their habitat due to various reasons. The current disorganized urban landscapes lack the semantic and qualitative aspects despite the authorities' efforts for implementing a large quantity of projects. This has led to people's dissatisfaction since these projects are management-oriented projects that lack public participation. If the urban projects are considered as "landscape" projects, public participation might become more institutionalized. The landscape approach can also guarantee infrastructural participation in urban projects. Therefore, the main research question is, "what specific capacities are there in the landscape approach that makes it appropriate for realizing the concept of participation?" This study aims to investigate the theoretical relationship between the concept of landscape, as a concept related to the audience, and the concept of participation to increase the quality of urban projects and result in people's satisfaction. In this qualitative research, first, the main concepts of the research (participation and landscape) are examined. The next step investigates the relationship between the concept of participation and landscape and the definition of appropriate participation in landscape projects, using analogy and logical reasoning. The results showed that in landscape definitions, the audience's perception is the most significant issue. Therefore, the landscape definition is basically a bottom-up definition and is configured based on the audience's point of view. This view explains the main capacity of landscape in realizing participation because the definition of participation is also derived from a people-oriented view. Other landscape capacities include how the audience affects the landscape or how they are affected by the landscape. The audience's active role in building landscape and the consideration of landscape as a democratic, social, and people-dependent entity are other landscape capacities. They also emphasize the relationship between landscape and the concept of participation. Finally, it can be indicated that if urban projects are built according to the landscape approach, maximum participation will be achievable because they inevitably focus on people's mentality. Overall, participation is a concept embedded in landscape.

Keywords | *Landscape, Landscape approach, Participation, Landscape perception.*

Introduction | Today, many urban projects are implemented, which are considered significant steps toward improving the urban quality of the cities. However, these projects have not left any major impact

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on the tangible quality of the city and the citizens' judgment despite their potentials due to various reasons (Mansouri, 2014). Today, the unhealthy urban landscape of cities lacks meaning and quality despite the authorities' efforts for the quantitative growth of the projects. This has led to people's dissatisfaction because the designers overlook the objective aspect of landscape and ignore how the audience perceives the landscape in recent urban projects. They are regarded as management-oriented projects rather than audience-oriented ones. The absence of public participation in preparing and approving urban plans is the main problem in implementing urban landscape projects. When the designers fail to see the landscape through the eyes of the people, the public will be dissatisfied and refuse to accept the design. Perhaps the leading cause of this problem is the absence of a landscape approach in these projects since landscape has apparently the potentials to realize participation. Today, participation is relatively overlooked in landscape projects (Buchecker, Hunziker & Kienast, 2003). In other words, the existing landscape theory is contrary to landscape practices. In Iran, urban plans and projects are carried out by experts, and public participation is missing in the current situation. Therefore, the design preference of the minority of urban designers is prioritized to the needs of most users. Therefore, it is necessary to study the relationship between the two concepts of participation and landscape in theory, considering their significance in urban projects. In this regard, this study seeks to answer the question of what capacities are there in the landscape approach that makes it appropriate for realizing the concept of participation? In order to answer this question, this research hypothesizes that if the current approach to urban design projects is replaced by a "landscape approach" i.e., if urban projects are seen as "landscape" projects, more participation will be enabled. The landscape approach to urban projects can guarantee maximum and effective participation in urban projects.

Research methodology

The study is qualitative and focuses on the theoretical relationship between the concept of "participation" and the concept of "landscape." In order to conduct the research based on the research question, first, the related literature to "participation," "landscape," and "participation in landscape" have been reviewed through an exploratory review of background documents and library research. Secondly, the views and approaches related to the main research question have been collected through content analysis of the texts. Finally, the relationship between the two concepts of participation and landscape and the definition of

intended participation in the landscape have been investigated, using logical reasoning and comparing the key definitions of these two concepts.

Research background

In this research, three types of research are reviewed to answer the main research question. The first category scrutinises the concept of "participation," and the main concepts and definitions of participation are derived from this category for further study. For instance, the studies related to participation typologies (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; White, 1996; Smith, 2003; Lawrence, 2006; IAP2, 2007) are derived from the first category. The second category encompasses the studies related to the field of "landscape," used to understand the concept of the landscape approach and scrutinizes the relationship between participation and landscape. Finally, the third category is related to "participation in the landscape," and focuses on the extensive research in which the concepts of landscape and participation are both used. Research on the concept of participation, especially in the European landscape is quite extensive. This includes the studies that investigate the social barriers to develop participatory landscape in Switzerland (Buchecker, Hunziker & Kienast, 2003); application of design in participatory landscape design in Denmark (Tress & Tress, 2003); challenges of participation in the European Landscape Convention (Jones, 2007, 2011; Jones & Stenseke, 2011); principles and reports of public participation in landscape (Conrad et al., 2011). They also include the assessment of participation in theory and practice in the European Landscape Convention (Butler & Berglund, 2014); the development of the public participation theory in landscape planning (Butler, 2014); and the advantages and limitations of landscape participation processes (Loures, Gómez, Castanho & Loures, 2020). The national research in landscape participation is reflected in some studies, such as "The concept of participatory landscape design," in which the authors have conceptualized participatory landscape design (Mansouri & Foroughi, 2018). Although this research is consistent with previous research, it still aims to find a connection between the two concepts of landscape and participation theoretically. However, none of the studies have outlined why the landscape approach can provide a good basis for the participation process that can perform better than other environmental design disciplines. Fig. 1 shows the research gap and the possible answers to the research questions.

Theoretical foundations of the research

• Meanings and concepts of participation

The term "participation" has impacted the studies

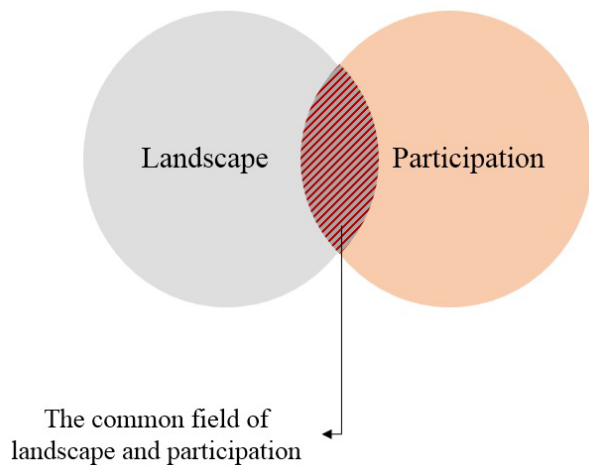


Fig. 1. Research gap and the conception of the relationship between the concept of landscape and participation. Source: Authors.

related to urban development in recent years. The widespread use of this concept in various institutions and organizations, from central non-governmental organizations to local government institutions and the World Bank, has raised many questions about the accurate meaning of this vague and intricate term (Cornwall, 2008). The term “participation” is one of the most complex and controversial scientific issues. This term has various definitions in different scientific contexts. It has been used with multiple ideological, social, political, and methodological meanings and interpretations in various participation fields throughout the history of development (Lawrence, 2006). This flexible term can be used to describe –and to signify– any practice that involves people (Cornwall, 2008). Thus, participation is a people-oriented approach (Loures et al., 2020). “Participation” is often considered an aspect of interaction and interactivity. In other words, “participation” means the performance of an action by several actors; or the mutual and reciprocal participation of individuals to do something. The term participation is derived from the term part (meaning a part of something) and from the Latin root PARTICIPA, meaning “to have with oneself,” “to have something from others,” and “to share something” or “to take part of one thing.” The Oxford dictionary defines this term as “the act of taking part in an activity or event.” Also, the Longman dictionary defines this term as “to take part in an activity or event”; which focuses on the idea of “taking part.” If we scrutinize the composition of this compound verb, we will understand that its original meaning refers to the concept of “being a part of a larger process.” (Mansouri & Foroughi, 2018). This word was first coined about two hundred years ago, in European politics, to encourage people to vote and take part in the decision-making process. Gradually, the use of this word spread to other

fields of social and environmental issues in Europe. This term influenced the overall developmental processes by the end of the 1970s. Some experts, like Habraken, believe that the term participation has two definitions with two different meanings. First, participation means assigning central roles to the users who are responsible in the decision-making process together with the experts. The second type of participation does not shift responsibilities between the users and the experts; however, it takes the user’s opinion into account in the decision-making process (Habraken, 1986). Others, such as Biro, consider two meanings for participation from a sociological perspective. In the first sense, participation is an active practice within a group that focuses on “social activity.” In the second sense, participation is considered a process that focuses on a specific group whose members have a share in the existence of a thing or a practice. Other experts consider participation as a process in which individuals, groups, and organizations decide to play an active role in making the decisions that can affect the group (Rowe & Frewer, 2004; Reed, 2008). In other words, the effective involvement of the group or community members or their representatives in all activities and decisions that can affect the whole group and community is considered as participation. Some have defined participation as the “act of being involved in something” (Wates, 2014). The International Association for Public Participation defines participation as involving the public to ensure their concerns are considered throughout the decision process; and collaborating with the public to develop decisions (IAP2, 2007). Participation encompasses the processes and procedures used to consult, participate, and inform the general public and allows those affected to generate the input data for decision making (Smith, 2003).

From Sanoff’s point of view in environmental design, participation is the involvement of people in creating and managing their own environments. According to this view, people should have an active role in creating and arranging their settings instead of having a passive role in participatory actions. Participation is aimed at reaching an agreement and involving people in adapting and making significant and positive changes in their environment (Sanoff, 2010). An in-depth reading of participation studies shows the definition of different participation typologies and levels that distinguish between participation types and levels. Some typologies focus on the degree of the stakeholder’s participation (Arnstein, 1969; Pretty, 1995; White, 1996; Smith, 2003; Lawrence, 2006; IAP2, 2007). For instance, Arnstein’s ladder of participation identifies three general levels of non-participation, tokenism, and citizen power in

public participation. We can mention Pretty's typology, which starts at 'manipulative/passive participation' and ends at self-mobilization.

According to White's classification, which is relatively similar to Pretty's typologies, four participation levels are distinguished, varying from nominal to transformative participation levels. Other experts have focused on the nature of participation rather than the level of involvement and identified different types of public conflict to connect different groups. According to this view, providing information to a passive recipient of "communication," obtaining information from participants, "consulting," and mutual communication between the participants and the actors that exchange information through dialogue is called "participation" (Rowe & Frewer, 2004). Other typologies of participation emphasize the theoretical basis, especially the distinction between normative and/or pragmatic participation. Normative participation focuses on the process of participation and suggests that people have a democratic right to participate in environmental decision-making. Pragmatic issues in participation value the means that can lead to higher quality decisions. Efforts have also been made to develop typologies based on the objectives of applying participation. For instance, some have compared "design-oriented" participation that focuses on output with "people-oriented" participation that gives the stakeholders the power and capacity to define and meet their own needs (Reed, 2008). These typologies show that realizing participation is intricate, and this concept is a manipulative concept of guidance and control. This means that any communication or information, or expression is not considered participation. It must meet certain conditions to be considered a participation process. In summary, it can be indicated that "participation" is a general concept and something more than a simple communication process. It is a people-oriented and audience-oriented concept. The main essence of participation is formed by the mutual, interactive, active, and reciprocal participation of individuals and their affectability and effectiveness. According to people, participation is a bottom-up approach ignored by officials and managers. This term refers to a concept that is hard to realize. Participation must exist in the essence of a process from the beginning and cannot be incorporated into a project or process afterward. Finally, it can be indicated that participation is understood as the constant, active, and effective presence of the audience in a process. Table 1 summarizes the results obtained from this section.

• **Landscape and landscape approach**

The landscape is a phenomenon that has an objective and a real entity and a perceptual nature; a complex

phenomenon that can be analyzed through scientific approaches, subjective experiences, and the theoretical terms; it is both the product and the production (Egoz, Makhzoumi & Pungetti, 2011). Landscape theorizes the mechanism of the human perception of place and considers place as a single component with two inseparable externals (material) and internal (mental) parts (Mansouri, 2005). This means that landscape is neither merely objective nor merely subjective. It is variant and dependent on the perception of the audience. It is a phenomenon raised by human interaction with the environment and has, therefore, an objective-subjective entity. The physical environment is the objective aspect, and the observers' perception is the subjective aspect of the landscape, which are inseparable. Landscape is a new concept for describing the relationship between the material space and the human beings who perceive it (Berque, 2013); it is achieved from the association of the two independent elements of the environment (matter) and the observer's mind (meaning).

Since mind and matter or meaning and substance are essentially inseparable, the landscape is not perceived as an image observed by eyes, nor as a shapeless entity waiting to be imposed by human preferences. We live in the landscape; the landscape is a part of us, just as we are a part of it (Ingold, 1993). As a part of the entire landscape, the landscape of the city is an "objective-subjective" phenomenon, created by our perceptions of the city and revealed through human experiences and human interactions with the environment. Therefore, the people and their perceptions of the city have a decisive role in understanding the urban landscape; their meanings are interdependent to each other, so that one may be considered incomplete without the other. As a result, the landscape concept of the city is a common phenomenon in the physiques, events, and mentality of residents. Regarding landscape entity, landscape approach is a holistic approach in which objectivity and subjectivity are inseparable. According to the definitions, the landscape approach has diverse aspects, the most important of which are: landscape as a visual phenomenon, experience and perception of the landscape, landscape as a political phenomenon, and the physicality of the landscape. The two related aspects are: 1. Landscape perception as a political entity, and 2. Landscape perception. They are discussed in the following.

• **Landscape as a political entity**

This aspect implies the social meaning of landscape. The studies of landscape architecture have changed socially since the late 1990s, raising new issues such as justice and democracy in landscape. This new landscape concept focuses on landscape conservation,

organization, and maintenance by formulating effective guidelines for landscape managers through a collaboration of politicians, professionals, and society. Thus, the meaning of “public participation” will emerge in the future of people’s daily landscapes. In this view, the conceptualization of landscape in policy is increasingly recognized as being reliant on the perceptions of the people who experience it. Indeed, landscape reflects broad social influences (Butler, 2014). In this definition, landscape is changed from a single perspective or scene to a concept manifested in political society (Olwig, 2007). The conceptualization of landscape in politics also relies more on the people’s perception of landscape (Butler, 2014). The difference between rhetoric and practice exposes two dominant conceptualizations of landscape; one a democratic entity perceived by those who experience it (Olwig, 2005; Roe, 2013). The other is an objective, physical, viewed, and measurable entity. While landscape is increasingly theorized as a democratic entity, providing space for multiple values to be addressed (Butler, 2014), it continues to be operationalized in practice as a visual, physical surface experienced by objective outsiders (Conrad et al., 2011). This subsequently affects how public involvement in landscape issues is conceptualized and operationalized. The argument outlined in this section shifts the focus from landscape as viewed or reliant on how it is experienced by individuals to also be recognized as a social entity reliant on polity and place. Landscape, in this light, results from people’s perception and landscape creators and depends on the laws and customs of the landscape creators. The political entity of the landscape is one of the aspects of the landscape that can be related to the concept of participation.

• Landscape perception

Landscape perception is the contrary of landscape material entity. It is also a subjective experience based on existential engagement with the landscape (Butler, 2014). Focusing on the individual can reveal wider societal implications which are embedded in acts of engagement. Thus, alternative theoretical interventions have raised the possibility of different ways of understanding the subject, allowing landscape as an entity to be addressed through other conceptual lenses, e.g., phenomenology (Wylie, 2013). This view focuses on the undeniable role of the people, their mindsets, and the perception of landscape concept and addresses landscape as a milieu of engagement and involvement. Landscape perception is considered as a function of human-landscape interaction. There is always a perceptual interaction between landscape and human beings, and this perceptual interaction can have consequences such as people’s satisfaction

or dissatisfaction. Therefore, any landscape approach requires addressing the audience’s mindset (Backhaus, Fryd & Dam, 2017). In this regard, the cultural, social, and historical differences of perception, or the human mind must be recognized (Mansouri, 2005). This process promotes the landscape from a practical image to a set of actions that lead to landscape perception due to practicing or participating in the landscape process. The activities that take place in the landscape and the individual mindsets, meanings, and cognitions are more centralized where landscape perception relies more on objective aspects rather than the physical elements. The landscape is formed by the active interaction between the observer and the observed element. The definition of the European Landscape Convention is based on the concept that: “Landscape” is an area perceived by the people; the landscape character is the product of the action and interaction of human and/or natural factors. People play a productive role in landscape perception by using, and changing the landscape, both physically and mentally. We can only understand this space by becoming an active part of the whole space surrounding us and understanding the current environment evolution process. Thus, the physical features of landscape are not the only aspects that should be measured and analyzed; the observer and the audience should also be considered in landscape perception (Schultz & Von Etteger, 2017). Landscape perception enables diverse individual perceptions that are affected by landscape. The relationship between participation and landscape perception can be understood by perceiving the subjective aspects because the audience’s minds should be taken into consideration. Wherever the audience is involved, participation is realizable.

Discussion: The specific characters of landscape in realizing the concept of participation

This research consists of two main sections. The first section, which is based on the extensive literature on participation, revealed that participation should be “people-oriented.” Participation is used for anything that involves people. Besides, the study of landscape literature showed that “audience-oriented” participation is a prerequisite for realizing the landscape approach. Landscape should not be defined through the eyes of experts and elites but from the audience’s point of view. The audience actively plays an effective and unavoidable role in the process of understanding and producing space. Landscape will have the power to develop participation and establish a “real participation” when the audience’s reactions and opinions are prioritized in the evaluation of the landscape. Therefore, the participation process will not be formal. Participation

is debated in other fields of environmental design, such as architecture and urban planning. It seems that it would be better if “voluntary participation” is realized to increase the environment quality. Nevertheless, involuntary participation will not impair the outcome. In the concept of landscape approach, the implied meaning of participation is a kind of “mandatory participation.” The definitions mention that the landscape approach should be audience-oriented because landscape evaluation is based on people’s opinions. Therefore, the relationship between participation and landscape is not insignificant, but an efficient, effective, and extensive relationship. Because one of the main characteristics of both concepts is to be “audience-oriented.” Furthermore, the review of landscape literature reveals that landscape is an “objective-subjective phenomenon” and “the result of people’s interaction with the environment.” In this definition, the subjectivity and the mentalities of the people and the society who create the landscape are taken into consideration. In landscape, the observer’s mentality “participates” in landscape evaluation, and therefore the observer’s mentality should be considered as the design basis. Thus, the landscape entity is not purely materialistic. This issue is also reflected in the perceptual aspect of the landscape. Since landscape is dependent on the audience due to its objective-subjective aspects, the urban projects may fail or deviate from their goals if they overlook the bilateral characteristics of landscape. When the management process, the preferences, and the functions are in line with the audience’s mentality, they can be defended and recognized in landscape. Likewise, when mentality is ignored, the project fails like the “17 Shahrivar sidewalk” project and “Imam Hossein (AS) Square” project¹ (Fig. 2). Disregarding the factors that are related to the mind can result in dissatisfaction and

ignorance of the project (Majidi, 2020). These projects are manager-centered and possessive projects that are operated regardless of the audience, their mentality, and the context. Neglecting the landscape aspects in urban projects is commonplace. Similar problems also happened in the “Shahriyar sidewalk”² project (Fig. 3) because the designers considered the space disregarding the people’s opinion. They only changed the project title and function from “ritual” to “cultural.”

Although this project was built as a participatory project, it seems that this concept was impaired by repetition, triviality, and insignificance. Transforming some of the existing houses into spaces such as coffee shops seems more like economic rent to attract people. These spaces (which are necessary but not sufficient for the prosperity of the space) can certainly serve as the primary attraction. It is believed that the spatial capacities of landscape are chosen correctly in this project only if people are still attracted to this space after the elimination of these functions. These measures should not encourage people to prioritize space functions over the landscape. In addition, people’s involvement from the initial stages of the project, i.e., since the project definition, could help them further recognize this space because the audience’s perception of this space is influential in recognizing the space, which is only possible by studying the audience’s minds.

A further review of the existing literature on participation showed that being a part of something, having a share in something, and having an active role rather than a passive presence in something is another characteristic of participation. The audience and the observer should have an integral and inseparable role in creating the landscape. Therefore, participation is realized with full capacities when the audience is taken into account. The



Fig. 2. The 17 Shahrivar sidewalk, with little people’s presence in normal days, Tehran. Photo: Maryam Majidi, 2019.



Fig. 3. A view of Shahriyar sidewalk, Tehran. Photo: Maryam Majidi, 2020.

essence of participation in landscape approach has an audience-oriented entity. The consideration of audience mentality can lead to the definition of space based on the audience's perception of space. Thus, audience and participation are two integral parts of the landscape approach.

Participation cannot be seen as an additive or a concrete approach but must be present in the essence of the space design and planning. The project itself and the project entity should be realized based on participation, which is achievable by landscape approach. If we accept that different perceptions play a major role in the production and creation of landscapes, and people have different perceptions of landscapes at the same time, the connection between participation and landscape will become stronger. In other words, participation cannot be considered an authoritative and acquisitive measure. Therefore, five landscape capacities that play a significant role in realizing participation were derived based on the content analysis of the two concepts of landscape and participation and extracting their key concepts. Table 1 summarizes the specific landscape capacities in enabling participation in urban projects by the comparison and logical reasoning of these two concepts.

Finally, it can be inferred that any intervention in landscape (like the interventions made in the Imam Hossein Square project) is not considered participation, meaning that the urban landscape projects will succeed when landscape is prioritized in the projects. Recognition of landscape increases the presence of the

audience, and the increased presence of the audience means that people are in a space that they understand, perceive, and remember. Therefore, people will be satisfied since the criteria related to the audience's mentality are taken into account. How can a perceived being be evaluated and assessed, disregarding the people who perceive it? Therefore, asking for participation from appropriate people and with the appropriate subject is a prerequisite to realize real participation, which is enabled in landscape approach. The audience and their mentalities define the landscape and landscape approach, and there would be no landscape when these concepts are ignored. On the other hand, the audience and their undeniable role in defining the landscape, emphasizes the importance of their participation in landscape. It seems that participation in landscape is the constant presence of the audience and their perception of the environment in defining landscape. Therefore, if the audience and the audience's perception are ignored, the meaning of landscape will not be fully understood, and there will be no concept as landscape.

Conclusion

The landscape approach can enable maximum participation because the landscape definition begins with the audience's perception of landscape in this approach and recognizes the audience's mentality and perception as an integral part of the landscape. Taking the audience and their mindsets into consideration will help realize their views and opinions, which will

Table 1. Specific landscape capacities in enabling participation concept in urban projects. Source: Authors.

Concept	Main features	Commonalities and the specific capacities
participation	1 -Involve people -People-oriented	
	2 - To be a part of something - To have something from others - To have a share in something - To have a role in something - To share something	
	3 - Active, mutual, and reciprocal participation of individuals - Mutual communication	1- Audience-oriented –taking the observer into consideration
	4 -Affectability and effectiveness -Effective intervention	2- The audience's mind plays a major role in landscape perception
	5 - As a democratic right	3- The audience's perception is actively involved in landscape construction 4- The audience affects the landscape and is affected by it
Landscape approach	-Audience-oriented, taking the observer and the audience into consideration - Objective-subjective phenomenon - Based on the audience's perception -The result of people's interaction with the environment - Based on the observer's experience - A social concept - A democratic entity	5- Landscape as a democratic entity

eventually lead to satisfaction with the environment. The landscape definition is a bottom-up definition because it originates from the audience's perception. This view determines the relationship between landscape and participation since landscape should be defined based on the audience's perception. The existing literature on participation disagrees with making decisions individually and does not specify who has the right to decide; however, the landscape approach can provide a solution to this problem. This approach, defining the audience's role, considers the space and environment as a product of the audience's mind. The landscape approach recognizes all stakeholders, who are very difficult to be recognized in other approaches. Therefore, in answering the main research question that queried the capacities of landscape in the realization of participation, we can indicate that the landscape approach is an appropriate solution. The landscape approach to space and environment inherently embraces the concept of participation since it perceives the space from the audience's point of view. If the audience is ignored, the definition of the landscape and the landscape approach will be disrupted. As a result, the landscape concept is meaningless without considering the audience's active participation and their minds. It can be declared that the landscape is nothing rather than people's participation. Therefore, the most important and the main capacity of landscape is the audience's mentality and perception.

It was imagined that there are commonalities between landscape and participation in this study (See Fig. 1). However, in-depth scrutiny of these concepts revealed that participation is an essential and integral part of landscape. This means that if public participation is ignored in urban design projects, the project will not be essentially a landscape project. Maximum participation of the audience's mentality is realized in the landscape approach. Therefore, Fig. 1 can be improved in Fig. 4. The research hypothesis is also approved, and the landscape approach can guarantee maximum participation in projects because such an approach seeks to preserve the identity and originality of the space and focuses on the audience rather than concentrating only on the physical aspects that seem sufficient for the success of a project. This approach considers the space as a whole, consisted of two objective and subjective aspects. If people and their mentalities are considered in the environment, they will consider themselves as a part of the space and mutually feel affiliated to the space. This will lead to satisfaction. Therefore, in realizing participation in projects and increasing satisfaction, the landscape approach can be a more appropriate solution to the research question rather than environmental design disciplines. This can be enabled by employing more landscape experts in the relevant legislative bodies and using landscape expertise in research and design teams of urban projects.

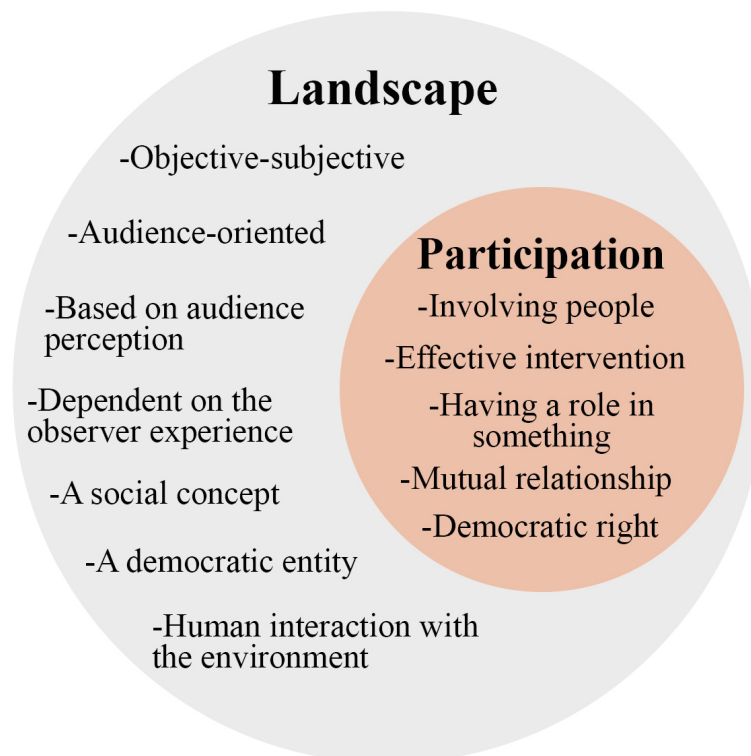


Fig. 4. Participation is an integral part in defining landscape; a concept incorporated into landscape. Source: Authors.

Endnote

*This paper is extracted from part of the thesis of “Maryam Majidi” entitled “The Relationship between Participation and Satisfaction in the Landscape of the Pedestrian Paths in Tehran” which conducted under supervision of Dr. “Seyed Amir Mansouri” and consultation of Dr. “Jaleh Sabernejad” and Dr. “Nasser Barati” in February 2020, at Islamic Azad University, South Tehran Branch-Faculty of Art and Architecture.

1. The “Imam Hossein Square” project and the “17 Shahrivar sidewalk” project were implemented in 2012 by Tehran City Beautification Organization to create a ritual sidewalk. But shortly after the inauguration, people protested because they were dissatisfied with the disruption of their business and the removal of practical access to this place. They were so dissatisfied that it was decided to re-allocate a part of this sidewalk to the traffic movements after a month due to congestion problems and the residents’ disrupted access in this area. Although this problem was interpreted as a temporary coincidence, it was never solved over time. The project failed despite the high expended costs and became one of the most controversial urban projects in Tehran. Today, only a small part of this sidewalk is allocated to the pedestrians. Many researchers attribute this problem to the lack of public participation and ignoring people (Soltani, Farnoosh & Pishro, 2015; Majidi, 2020).

2. The project of “Shahriyar sidewalk” is another project constructed for pedestrians in Tehran, built and inaugurated in July 2016 in cooperation with Tehran City Beautification Organization and Tehran Municipality. This sidewalk, which is a part of Rudaki Cultural and Artistic Area of Tehran, was built to serve as a cultural sidewalk and hangout for the people who practice performing arts and music. The authors believe that this sidewalk, like the 17 Shahrivar sidewalk, will not achieve the desired goals because only insincere measures have been taken into account. There is still no effort to attract the users’ participation in the production process.

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