

Daily Life in Street

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Abstract | Place experiences of users happen through their daily life experience in space, cognition of space characteristics and their evaluations about space. Through those interactions people experience the spaces and they perceive a place desirable or undesirable. If the spaces support their daily needs they find it desirable and if not they find it undesirable. In order to investigate those experiences in streets and explore common characteristics among desirable and attractive streets, some cases have been chosen. Firstly, Azadi Street (From Enqelab to Azadi Square in four parts) was chosen because of its physical and situational significance, although it cannot support pedestrians' needs and their activities efficiently. Secondly, Khayyam Street in Qazvin as the most attractive public space in Qazvin was also selected based on interviews with citizens and observations. Finally, Motahhari Street in Rasht with the different functional and physical attractions such as shopping and eating activities was chosen as a successful and desirable public space based on people interviews. The research aim was to find differences and similarities between two successful spaces from one hand and Azadi Street in other hand. The research variables include: variety, equity and democracy based on Fainstein study about "Just cities", and vitality, sense, fit, accessibility, control, justice and efficiency criteria based on Lynch study about "Good City Form". Data was analyzed by descriptive analysis based on the given scores (from 1 to 10 scores) to different variables and their different indicators based on direct observation in those three case studies. The result shows the common characteristics which make Motahhari and Khayyam Street successful were two factors: vitality and efficiency. Also, the results indicate Azadi Street has not been a successful public space in term of one of the most important criteria; "fit", and protecting pedestrians' activities.

Keywords | Azadi Street, Motahhari Street, Khayyam Street, Daily life, justice, Lynch theory.

Introduction | Studies show city form not only impact on citizens' daily life but also on their social distinctions and life styles and there is a significant relationship between streets qualities and social and personal behaviors (Pham et al, 2017). Generally, there are three main paradigms in urbanism field including new urbanism, everyday urbanism and post urbanism. New urbanism defines urban design attempts by different qualities such as walkability, compactness, human scale and space hierarchy encouraging people social interactions. Everyday urbanism paradigm is not idealistic as new urbanism and emphasizes on daily life realities in public spaces (Crawford et al, 2005). In this regards, urbanism tries to revitalize meaning in urban environment and public realm considering daily function and its potential characters (Certeau, 1984). Post urbanism which is known by "Landscape urbanism" or "Structural urbanism" has not been as attractive as other paradigms in academic and professional assemblies while "Everyday urbanism" has been the most attractive and democratic approach because of focusing on the real circumstance rather than the ideal condition. Mitchell based on Lefebvre theory describes urban spaces with daily life experiences by work, game, shopping and public life (Lefebvre, 1996 in Purcell, 2003). Low also explains people shape their environment and its meaning during lived experiment in spaces and meeting their needs (Low, 1996). Lefebvre define these experiments by three different types of spaces: perceived, conceived and representational space which experienced in daily life. "Perceived space" is shaped directly during city life and "Conceived space" is created by architects and urban designers and built by a cognitive process in users' minds while "Representational space" is created by spatial practices and lived experiences of users and carries emotional means (Lefebvre, 1991). Likewise, Dolores Hayden describes the power of the place by daily stories of people who actively trying to create the places (Hayden, 1995). In this regard, the study has tried to answer two following main questions by selecting successful and unsuccessful places and evaluating them based on Lynch theory and direct lived experience in the spaces: firstly, what are the desirable and undesirable feature of the selected spaces and secondly, what are the common (positive and negative) features of the spaces during daily life experiences.

Desirable characters of public spaces in daily life Lefebvre (1991) and Crawford (2005) both emphasized on importance of public realm as the place of daily life activities. People need public spaces in their daily life due to their different roles in the democratic societies providing opportunities for social participation and interactions among friends and strangers by shaping social networks, sense of belonging and social security. The streets are the most important urban spaces among different kind of public spaces and urban edges are sociable public spaces. Hussmann

Boulevard idea not only led the sunlight between buildings but also introduced sidewalks and streets as a public space to the world (Zachary & Orum, 2010).

There are many different qualities mentioned by researchers such as Carr, Lynch and Gehl which make democratic public spaces. In this regard, Francis introduces different qualities including variety, comfort, access, meaning, discovery, participation, control, ecological quality and place management (Francis, 1988). Public spaces should be design considering way of users' activity and providing different activities opportunities (Walzer, 1986: 470). Creating meaningful, democratic and protective places and emphasizing on public property and place meaning are the key elements to achieve the just places (Carr et al, 1992: 24). Generally, demand for a just city was considered during 19th century crisis and social depression era of western countries (Fainstein, 2010:166). Each citizen deserves to have a portion of a livable place, identity, control and opportunity regardless his or her poorness or richness (Jacobs & Appleyard, 1987). Lefebvre in relation to citizen rights emphasizes on social variety and inclusiveness of the public spaces (Lefebvre, 1996; Mitchell, 2003). To achieve a just city, there is a necessary value list should be taken into consideration such as: democracy, equality, diversity, development and sustainability (Fainstein, 2010:183-184). In this regard, there are many studies emphasize on equality and inclusive cities considering disable groups (mentally or physically) and even refugees from the other countries (Hamer, 2017).

Reviewing literature shows there are two intangible triangles including: democracy, equality and diversity from one hand and perceived, conceived and representational spaces from the other hand which have different indicators such as sense, access, fit, vitality and efficiency which all can create the just spaces in cities. (See Diagram 1)

Diagram 1 demonstrates citizens' perception of a just city and its different dimensions which can be acquired through daily life experiences and social interactions in the places. This perception is directly influenced by the space potential like sense, access, fit, vitality and efficiency as the main research indicators of the study.

Methodology

Firs person research method based on the researcher experiences and observations in the place is one of the most common methods to study of a place as a phenomenon. These studies are performed by descriptive notes (about behaviors, interactions, situations and activities) and analytical and rational interpretations based on systematic and nonsystematic observations considering research indicators and their different parameters (Low, 2005). In this study, Violic (1985 and 1998) and Toombs (1992 and 1995) methodology was applied. This method performance by the educated observers is also recommended by other researchers

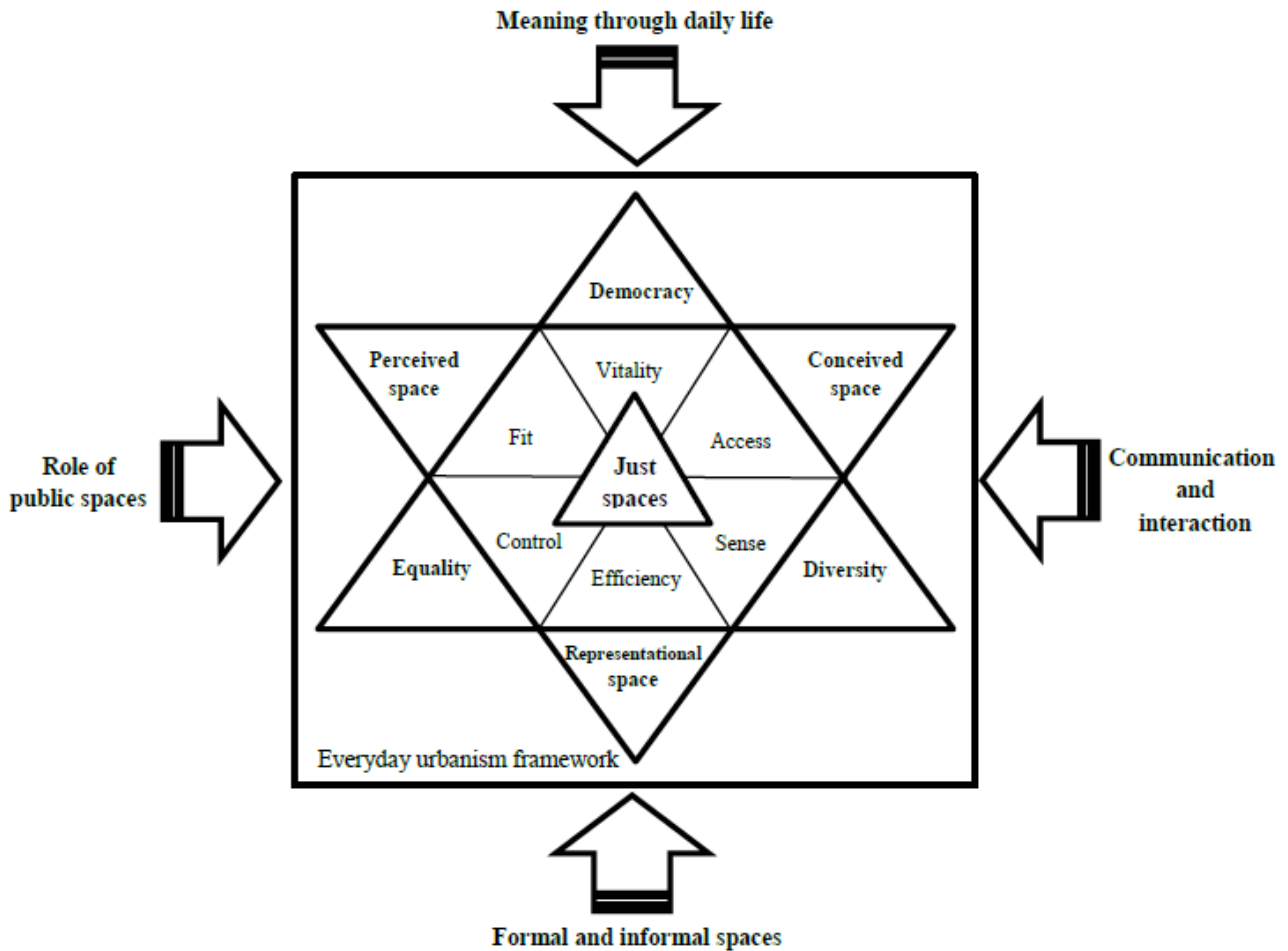


Diagram 1: Different Aspect of Daily life, space production and Lynch Theories, Source: Author.

as a best way to study and record physical and social features of the spaces (Pliakas et al, 2017).

In order to conduct the study firstly three case studies: Azadi Street (in Tehran), Khayyam Street (in Qazvin) and Motahhari Street (in Rasht) were selected. In spite of undesirability of Azadi Street, Khayyam and Motahhari Streets were reported as successful and desirable space by interviewing citizens (Baharestani, 2014 and Charkhchian, 2008). Case studies were evaluated based on Fainstein Study about just cities and theoretical framework (shown in Diagramure1) considering the following indicators and their differer scores in the range of 1 to 10:

1. Vitality: sustainability, safety and congruency;
2. Sense: legibility, structure, transparency and inevitability of the space;
3. Fit: adaptation of the space with its current activities and its flexibility;
4. Access: place accessibility for different groups;
5. Control: clarity of responsibilities and active role of urban manager to place maintenance and people freedom in their

activities and territories;

6. Efficiency and Justice: balance between different mentioned indicators and equity of facilities distribution in the space for different groups.

Case studies

Azadi Street (Enghelab to Ekbatan)

Azadi Street is one of the main streets in Tehran due to its different meaning, physical, activity and social aspects. Azadi monument located in the street is one the most important monuments in the city as Iran capital and different dominant official, educational and commercial activities inviting different groups exist in the street. In addition, social, religious and political events in the street are key elements giving meaning to the place. West terminal also introduces this place as one of the city entrances (Pic 1-3).

Khayyam Street

Adjacency to historical center of Qazvin city, commercial role and different physical and activity attractions of Khayyam



Pic 1: Location of Azadi Street in city. Source: www.googleearth.com.



Pics 2 & 3: Photos from Azadi Street, Tehran, Iran. Photo: Maryam Charkhchian, 2016.

Street make the place attractive for different social groups. Variety of activities including official, educational, medical and recreational centers and more importantly walking are the most desirable activities in the street (Pics 4-7).

Motahhari Street

Motahhari Street is one of the most important urban spaces of Rasht with appropriate access and location based on citizens' viewpoint. Diversity in activities such as shopping, recreational centers and restaurants invite people from different areas and constant stream of people presence can be seen in the place during days and months (pics 8-11).

Data analysis:

Descriptive results based on investigations and scores of different indicators in the three selected cases has been shown as the following.

In Azadi Street the highest score belongs to sense due to the distinctive elements like Azadi monument and the lowest score belongs to efficiency due to the challenge among drivers and pedestrians (Diagram 2).

In north section of Khayyam Street better access, public transportation, wide sidewalks and green spaces are features that make this section more desirable. This street is a vital space due to its desirable spaces and its appropriate pavements. Traffic and its sound pollution is one of the undesirable features of the place for users' comfort. In addition inappropriate urban furniture and its location can be considered as an obstacle for pedestrians' movement. Human scale of this street with desirable visual qualities and its comfort has increased the scores of its fit and its clarity, its distinctive physical, functional and social identi-



Pic 4: Location of Khayyam Street in city. Source: www.googleearth.com



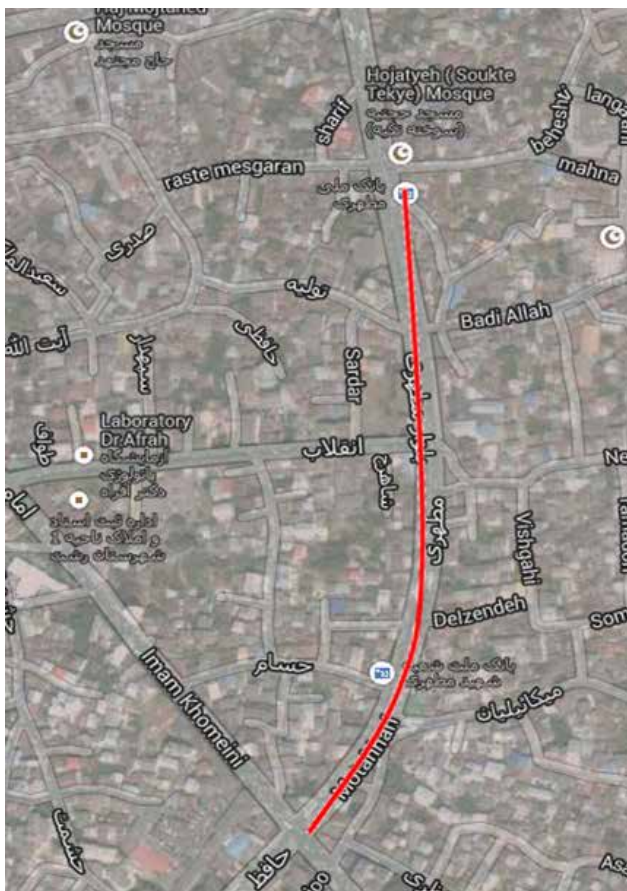
Pic 7: The presence of sculptures creates a sense of place and adapts to cultural and social identity, Qazvin, Iran. Photo: Maryam Charkhchian, 2016.



Pic 6 & 5: The clarity and clear structure of space has contributed to the desirability of space, Qazvin, Iran. Photo: Maryam Charkhchian, 2016.

ty, existence of sculptures, old trees, signs, and legibility also increased its sense. Responsibility of urban managers and volunteer attempts to place maintenance shows the managers' attention to the place and residents' sense of belonging. In spite of the lack of parking lots, traffic and ignoring handicaps and elders groups can be seen in the street it still is an attractive place for different groups. Additionally, equally distribution of different activities and facilities along the street is a key element which causes the street to be a just place (Diagram 3).

Motahhari Street is a safe and secure place because of its cleanness, variety and low speed of cars. Despite of the recent constructions, human scale of the street still has remained and existence of two old mosques and Bazaar has enhanced its legibility and finally, religious events make it distinctive place in the city. Attractive daily life and livability of place can be observed because of the variety of recreational and educational activities. Lack of public transportation, seating and parking, presence of vendors and inappropriate pavement can be considered as the weakness points of the place (Diagram 4).



Pic 8: Location of Motahhari Street in city., Source: www.googleearth.com.

Pics 9, 10, 11: Commercial spaces in Motahhari Street edge, Rasht, Iran.

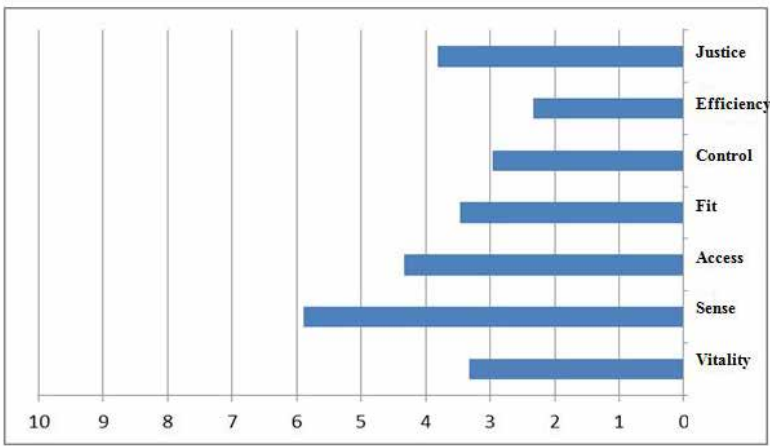


Diagram 2: Comparison between given scores in different indicators to Azadi Street. Source: Author.

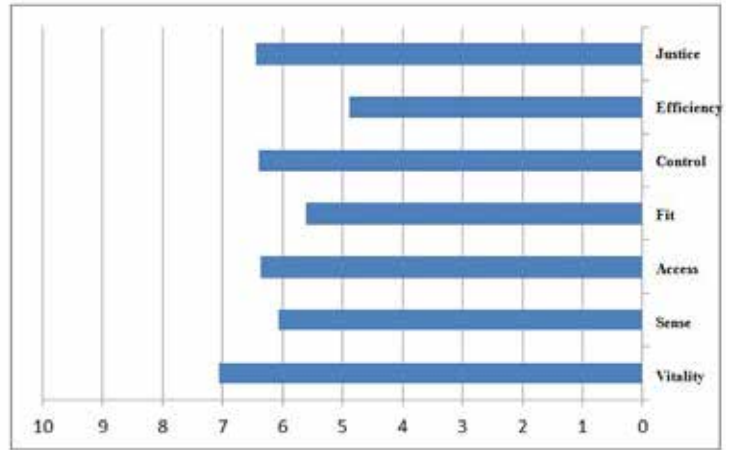


Diagram 3: Comparison between given scores in different indicators to Khayyam Street. Source: Author.

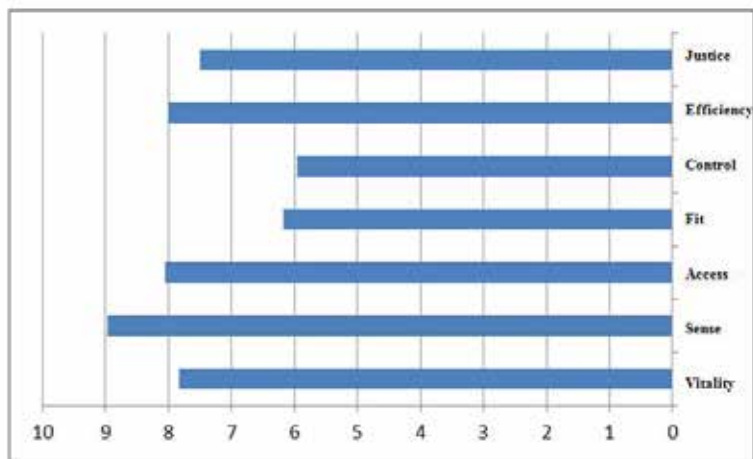


Diagram 4: Comparison between given scores in different indicators to Motahhari Street. Source: Author.

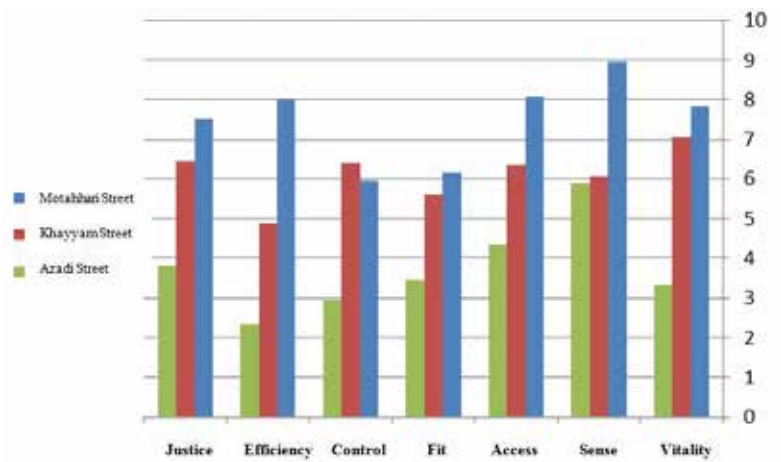


Diagram 2: Comparison between given scores of three case studies. Source: Author.

Conclusion | Considering “Everyday urbanism” theory based on the lived experiments it can be claimed although there are different physical, functional and social elements, in Azadi Street, its efficiency has been very low due to the lack of “Fit” score. However, study on Khayyam Street shows there was a balance between different research indicators and consequently “Vitality” and “Justice” had the highest level. In Motahhari Street, sense, access, efficiency and vitality had the highest degree in order. Comparison of the obtained results

in three case studies indicates the weakness points of Azadi Street are: efficiency, vitality, control, justice and fit which showing the lack of place responsibility to human needs in their daily life and to protection of users’ activities. Actually, potentials of the places in relation to daily life can create meaning by protecting people presence in places.

Finally, observations in selected spaces also show human scale of space is one of the most important features in place desirability which needs to be studied in future studies.

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