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# Community Development Strategic Planning with a Focus on Social Variables, Case study: Tollab Community of Mashhad

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## Extended abstract

### 1- Introduction

The world has encountered an urban revolution in the past 200 years. In 1800, the cities were a small island in rural ocean, now in 2000; half of world populations were living in cities. It has been stated that it reaches to 65 percent in 2025, While they occupied just 2 percent of the earth, and upon UN forecast, 80 percent of next decade population growth take place in cities, 90 percent from this rate will occur in cities of developing countries. Urbanization is growing fast in our countries and upon 1385 year census results, over 68 percent are civic, while just 10 percent of country population were living in cities in last century. However, the opportunities, sources and facilities do not distributed appropriate to improve human requirements in cities.

Consequent to these changes in urban planning domain could be cited transition from comprehensive rational planning and related to it, detailed planning to strategic urban planning and transition from comprehensive plan to detailed plan, transition from modern urban and modern planning to post modern once. Therefore, this article tries to use new form of planning by stakeholder participation and exerting strategic planning in neighborhood scale. So, the aims are:

- Recognizing Tollab strategic position
- Recognizing pros and cons, opportunities and threats related to this neighborhood development
- Reaching appropriate strategies to neighborhood development in Tollab community

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## 2-Theoretical bases

### 2-1-Strategic Planning

Growing urbanism and new scales of urban growth have caused current city and urbanism encounter new challenges in

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recent decades. For the wideness of dimensions and changes in urban problems essence, considering various aspects and dimensions of problem to stable solving is inevitable. In the late 1960s after change in management concept and spread of systemic theory, theoretical basics of traditional planning (executive planning) have changed generally and strategic planning and systemic planning displaced. Strategy means having central long term aims and thinking about their access methods. Strategic planning is a systematic planning method in making continuity among priority action by considering pros and cons (abilities and resources of organization) and opportunities and threats (outer factors and affective cases on organization) with essential procedure to reach organization mission. This study tries to reply three following questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to go?
- How do we reach that?

Various models are introduced for strategic planning procedure, but their communal property is their cycling and planning process, at this manner that they begin from inner and outer periphery recognition and after underpinning the strategies lead to executive phase and all phases evaluate and feedback affects are checked. SWOT model in terms of date consequence is last model in underpinning strategic planning that is one of the most efficient among qualitative models. From this model's point of view, an appropriate strategy makes strengths and opportunities extreme and weaknesses and threats at least. In executive phase of SWOT avoiding of weaknesses and threats is necessary and must consider the weaknesses as potential to making strength and threats as a power to making opportunity.

## 2-2- Community Development

One of the negative effects of traditional comprehensive plans is gravitating toward totalism and incorporating the methods and solutions and for reaction to compensate this basic deficient, the strategic planning trends to planning and designing in small scales and human tangible subjects in community domain. Thus, nowadays urban planning and management attention assigned to lower and more objective levels of urban life, community is most appropriate base to access to urban sustainable development, cause ecologic relationships to general experiences and under community covenant and stakeholder moral commitment would be signified and subsistence way and improving life will be elected according to environment potentials and kindness to the others and next generations. The importance of the subject is so that, Anthony Giddens says "community subject is not just a fantastic motto in civic society and endeavor to revitalizing community correlation but it is considered as a facility to advance social and physical community, cities and important central districts renovation" but at the first it is better to know what is community definition, what changes have occurred in long time and then consider community development and planning.

In urban division hierarchies, community is one of the minor urban sectors and includes adjacent houses and a special geographical space, before contemporary period, urban life was based on community identity. Communities were social correlation factor. Identity of these communities based on religion and employment kind. Upon Mumford's opinion where the human are gathered, the communities became a social reality. In other words it can be stated that: urban community is a place whose properties

provide spaces and conditions for intimate relationships. Community provides various functions such as making and retaining social identity, reinforcing social correlation, safety and local services for its residents. Communities were axis of social life in traditional urban life. Also community could be introduced by its adjustment along time from human approach (place introduced by its residents identity) to tool approach (as a good scale to construct city) and then to phenomenological approach (community is a spatial pattern that its mean originates deep and permanent relationships between place and people) (Saremi, 2009, pp.46-48), so that the community always is a dynamic and growing concept. The communities must be coincided professional and theoretical basics. Despite long term history of local society and local society development at scientific and executive literature, it is considered in community sustainable development discussion format in late 1980s. With a short halt in this decade and in attention to city functional cells, it raised as a newer concept. Community planning as a process begins by community associations or local organizations apply and considering residents, employers and other stakeholders decide about the advancements and proceedings they want to take place in their community. Community development presents an approach upon that increases the wealth that the social can use possibly by exerting those improve community life. It must be cited this process in community planning is as important as the program. Total purpose of community development is replying community residents' routine requirements mostly relying on resources, values and community inner participation. Community planning in Canada and Australia metropolises and middle cities is upon strategic planning procedures and in Canada is done as "local development

strategy" and community developments programs could reduce urban poverty from 33 percent to 13 percent and also have increased social capital from 36 percent to 90 percent in years 1985-2000.

### 2-3- Social Factors

New concepts have been formed in transition of urban planning traditional concept that their essence refers to sociology and even psychology and so has made urban planning an interdisciplinary concept. That could be titled social capital and sense of place and participation.

Capital is a reproductive wealth or a resource a person use to make income but it can present a new concept of capital, capital is a public resource can form as monetary or non monetary and tangible or intangible forms. Social capital at e first at Life and Death of USA Metropolises book entered in urban planning by Jane Jacobs and was extended by Colman, Bart, Putnam and Portz. Jacobs in his book identified social capital as compressed social networks that in old urban realms in relation to subjects impress the quality of life, make decision and react; he presented the social capital concept in relation to urban spatial, physical discussions and urban communities.

### 3-Methodology

Research method is descriptive-analytical; in that we have used descriptive quantitative statistics and SWOT methods. In data gathering, we have used library and documentary and questionnaire (citizens and experts) methods. In order to calculate the reliability of the questionnaire, 36 questionnaires have been completed as pilot in Tollab community. According to standard deviation and resulted information, sample pilot is equal to:

$$n = \frac{9^2 \cdot 2^2}{d^2} = \frac{12.16^2 \cdot 2.58^2}{2^2} = 246.2 \approx 250$$

This research questionnaire is based on content and has been reviewed by several masters and MA students and Cranach's alpha rate has been calculated and it was 0.75 in the pilot study. The study area includes Tollab community of Mashhad and for its extent has divided to Tollab sub community A, B and C and has had 46516 people in 1385 year.

#### **4- Discussion**

Planning process and community development strategy in Tollab community access appropriate strategies include following items.

In the first phase, we must extract inner factors (strengths and weaknesses) and outer factors (opportunities and threats) and calculate their scores, after evaluating inner and outer factors must be produced appropriate strategies; at this phase, 4 various strategies will be made but what strategies have priority? To reply this question inner and outer assessment matrix must be constituted by scores obtained from inner and outer factors assessment tables and community position must be clarified in strategic planning matrix.

It can be perceived from the evaluation of internal factors that: strengths and weaknesses total scores (2.57) are near to mean and it shows the community has reacted appropriately to external environment and has been located in average position; planners and residents must try to use strengths extremely and avoid weaknesses to obtain more appropriate position and stabilize their own position.

Tollab community external factors evaluation final score is 1.99 and has a distance of (2.5) to mean, that shows Tollab community has not reacted appropriately to external factors.

Analyzing and combining strengths and weaknesses and opportunities and threats and making strategies is one of the most difficult phases of strategic plan, cause the appropriate strategies must be extracted in attention to incorporate internal and external environments but which strategies have priority? To reply this question, Tollab community position must be clarified in strategic planning matrix; internal and external matrix has to be located at a competitive position and must improve its internal system by using external environment opportunities. In other words, this community must prioritize competitive strategies. On the other hand, rectangular in matrix shows that Tollab community strategic range includes the most defensive sectors; thus, defensive strategies must be noticed.

#### **5- Conclusion**

Results show that Tollab community encounter strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats to reach community sustainable development and between these factors, internal factors have better position and external factors are below the average. Also, based on TOWS matrix, necessary strategies that must perform a competitive strategy in attention to Tollab community position at IE matrix.

#### **6- Suggestions**

The following strategies must be operative in Tollab for accessing community sustainable development

- engaging residents to participation especially in religious ceremonies,
- Increasing commercial units in participating for municipality stable incomes,

- Making community council and mayor and assigning executive cases to people and their representatives

**Key words:** Strategic planning, community development, social indicators, Tollab community, SWOT

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