

Evaluation of Physical Components of Public Spaces and their Impact on Social Security of Babolsar Citizens

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Introduction

Security has been one of the most fundamental needs of human society and the incidence of crime is one of the most important problems in cities. Security feeling in urban spaces is one of the crucial indicators of a good space quality which is dependent upon different aspects of socio-economic and cultural status of each society. Today social scientists try to identify the factors which impact and influence the incidence of crime in public spaces. Urban planners analyze the role of physical and environmental variables in the level of public security in urban communities. The present research attempted to study the connection between public space security and spatial and environmental factors to formulate the main planning guidelines for maintaining security and prevent crime occurrence in the city of Babolsar.

Materials and Methods

The city of Babolsar is located in the southern part of the Caspian Sea and is one of the important tourist destinations in Mazandaran province. The methodology of the research is based on descriptive and analytical approaches and the required data and information were collected by conducting a field work to complete the research questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire was justified by Cronbach Alfa coefficient (0.792) and the validity of the questions were confirmed by the help of several experts. The statistical society of the present research includes 14422 households of Babolsar city and the sample was selected via Cochran formula (350 household heads). In general, nine main components and 35 indicators were used to measure the physical components of public spaces. Also three components and 22 indicators were applied for investigating the social security in this research. The data was processed via SPSS and different statistical tests such as Pearson regression and T test were used to determine the possible relationships among the variables.

Discussion of Results and Conclusion

The findings of the research are classified in two main sections as space size and physical form of space. Each of these two criteria is divided into different indexes. Overcrowding in public space is referred to the mental pressure experience from space density. The finding from one tailed T test for this index showed a general

satisfaction with mean difference of 0.135, which is placed in the status of upper middle level and is reflected in the overall contentment of residents. Scale index in Public space revealed that the expected mean in not meaningful and so it showed a moderate satisfaction.

Visual and environmental comforts are two important and essential components in secure urban environments. This index is further subdivided into symbolic, visual, light, and sound discomforts. The mean difference of symbolic discomfort shows the figure of 0.392, reflecting the lower medium satisfaction of urban residents in public space of the city. In general regarding to the visual and environmental comforts, there is a lower medium level of contentment which highlights the proper planning and management of public spaces in the city. As it was illustrated the city of Babolsar is one of the key destinations of tourism in the North of Iran and also the main state university of the province is located there. So provision of security for public spaces is a main duty of the urban authorities as the city has intraregional functions.

Keywords: Environmental Factors, Public Spaces, Social Security, Babolsar

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