

Compiling a District-Centered Strategic Planning Pattern with Focus on the Healthy City Approach (Case Study: Sareban District, Bojnourd)

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Nowadays, cities across the world are witnessing the global phenomenon of urbanization. According to estimations, 60% of people in the world will be living in cities by 2045 (World Bank, 2018). As a consequence, cities are faced with numerous challenges such as increasing immigration to cities, exhaustion of urban infrastructure, and environmental problems such as pollutions, influencing the health of both cities and their citizens. Subsequently, urban spaces have been filled with traffic, tension and stress, putting the lives of citizens at risk to the extent to which the medical field can no longer guarantee the health of citizens. Therefore, healthy cities are required so as to restore the citizens' health. Urban planning can play a role in designing and implementing consistent actions in line with sustainability, while simultaneously contributing to the reduction of diseases, overcoming biological inequalities, and preventing the aggravation of such problems (Whittingham, 2013). Here, the significance of urban planners as well as decision-making and planning for various policies such as land use, congestion, green space per capita, housing, and other things, are highlighted. Given such extensively, it is necessary to employ a holistic, strategic view through a novel approach such as the healthy city. Attention to health and

providing proper structures and processes to achieve such an end should be considered a necessity (Corburn, 2009). Not only the idea of a healthy city is not merely an idealistic, fictional one, but it is also a practical and implementable notion with relatively realistic dimensions (Papoli Yazdi, & Rajabi Sanajerdi, 2011). According the latest report published by the World Health Organization's commission on social factors for health in 2008, healthy societies were defined as districts which are of social solidarity and designed in a way as to guarantee the mental and physical health of their citizens while advocating natural environment protection so that justice in health is served. In these societies, governments can employ social health factors at local levels (Frisch, 2015).

2. Methodology

The present inquiry is an applied study conducted through the descriptive-analytical approach. The factors explaining health in districts were identified through studying the literature on the healthy city approach and its indices. The evaluation of obtained components on health in Sareban district was conducted according to the following model, in the form of questionnaires filled by people and authorities. The population of the study included the residents of Sareban district, Bojnourd, out of which 368 individuals were selected according to

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Cochran's formula. Strength and weaknesses, as well as opportunities and threats, were identified by analyzing the responses to questionnaires. Subsequently, the comments of 10 experts and 10 urban authorities were taken into account. The SWOT analysis method and QSPM matrix were used to identify strategic problems and compile strategies.

3. Results

The characteristics of Sareban district in Bojnourd city include an unhealthy urban texture such as the reduction of residential values, decline of environmental qualitative values, lack of public green and open spaces, restricted access to proper services, presence of social issues within the texture, and ultimately, the alienation of district residents compared to adjacent districts. The present study seeks to mitigate the issues existing in Sareban district using the health approach which is more comprehensive compared to other new approaches. Employing the indices of a healthy city, particularly across districts, along with strategic planning in this scale is possible in short-time, which is the major advantage of this study.

To meet the purposes of the study, a separate questionnaire was designed to evaluate the indices of the district's health. Initially, a matrix of internal and external factors was drawn through analyzing the responses and identifying the weak and strong points as well as opportunities and threats.

According to the final score obtained from the assessment matrix of internal (IFE=3.06) and external factors (EFE=2.45), the strategic position of Sareban district falls within the contingency strategies (competitive) quarter inside SWOT (IE) quarterly analysis chart. The extent of the attractiveness of strategies were indicated using the QSPM matrix. The results of assessing the strategies show that "the

enhancement of environmental qualities with focus on the area of health and sanitation" is the most important diversity strategy (ST) on laying out strategic planning for Sareban district. The second, most important contingency strategy is "improving the awareness of citizens on subjects such as health, sanitation, healthy city/district and sustainable development". The third strategy is "the development of green spaces, parks and children's playground" which is rational, given the status quo and threats ahead. Finally, a set of plans were drawn to implement the recommended strategies.

4. Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the purpose of compiling a strategic planning pattern according to the components of a healthy city. The study was carried out so as to evaluate the extent of health in districts as well as planning for healthy districts. Given the findings, the following recommendations are presented to improve the health-related conditions of Sareban district, Bojnourd:

- Increasing the functional role of public platforms in Sareban district
- Enhancing the physical-visual qualities of public platforms in Sareban district
- Achieving the highest indices of mental and physical health
- Achieving local, sustainable development
- Developing green spaces, parks and children's playground
- Conserving the topography of Northern Sareban district
- Renovating ruined, worn-out buildings of Sareban district
- Improving the quality of houses in Sareban district

Keywords: Strategic planning, Components of healthy city, Healthy district, Sareban district

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