

Measurement of critical land use in terms of passive defense in the metropolis of Ahvaz

Mostafa Mohamadi Dehcheshmeh*

Assistant professor of geography and urban planning, Shahid Chamran University, Ahwaz, Iran

Mohammad Ali Firouzi

Assistant professor of geography and urban planning, Shahid Chamran University, Ahwaz, Iran

Saeed Heydarinia

MA in geography and urban planning, Shahid Chamran University, Ahwaz, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Ahvaz metropolis as the center of the oil and gas industry is located in the southern part of Iran. The metropolis has the potential to be attacked since century ago. The passive defense has been neglected for the city because it sensitive in some aspects including policy (center of Khuzestan province, north-south highway, transit function, and etc.), Security (near the western border of the country, separatist groups, history of aggression, and etc.), economy (factories, several strategic industries such as steel, gas, oil, sugar, etc.), and socio-cultural issues (diversity in ideas and sensitivity to ethnic and linguistic diversity, and etc.). The purposes of the research are to make a zonation of the risks of critical applications in Ahvaz, to assess the compatibility of neighboring landuses in terms of passive defense, and to clarify the risks in the metropolitan area.

Methodology

This is an applied research based on the objective of development with a descriptive - analytic approach. We have used quantitative and qualitative applications by ArcGIS and Excel. In this study, the entire metropolis of Ahwaz is considered through critical applications. After identifying the critical applications, they can be divided in five categories (five applications) and then GIS layers have been prepared by ArcGIS. The research is focused on the following objectives:

- A) Assessment of location - proximity to critical applications
- B) Evaluation of the spatial distribution (consistency and density) of critical applications

The research have been conducted in four steps including (1) preparing necessary land use layers, (2) correlation of the layers and maps, (3) integration of the maps by proximity functions, (4) critical assessment of the land use adjustment by passive defense.

Results and discussion

The land use and use of urban spaces are classified on the basis of a defense perspective; it

* Corresponding Author, Email: m.mohammadi@scu.ac.ir

should be robust measure of proximity. In this regard, it can be in the form of passive defense compatibility matrix to evaluate the logic of urban land intensive use. From the perspective of two or more adjacent passive defense options, the alternatives must also create vulnerabilities. It should also trigger the vicinity of the incident and the increasing risk of damage but should complement each other and prevent the spread of risk and vulnerability.

Conclusion

The results of this research have indicated that the landuses are in an incorrect location for critical applications with neighboring uses. Thus, in case of an attack, the vulnerability of life and property will be more. For compatibility with the existing range of vulnerabilities, residential and other uses will be transferred, and the amount of human and financial can be increased. With the distribution of critical applications, position of each land use relative to other members of the special life was studied. This means that the number of critical applications and residential area in the space is designated for each critical use. A total of 14 members to the special account within the desired density is totally inappropriate and a distance of 400 meters from the sanctuary for the desired application does not comply with other options. Each of these critical applications or other sensitive uses located in the neighborhood is entirely inappropriate. The improper distribution of critical applications leads to a special account of the risks to the land use picks from the passive defense

Keywords: passive defense, metropolitan Ahvaz, special land use, spatial distribution

Traffic Calming for Neighborhood Revitalization Using SWOT Models (Case Study: Yurdshahy Neighborhood, Urmia)

Mohamad Reza Ahadi*

Assistant Professor Road Safety, Transportation Research Institute (TRI)

Elnaz Ghanizadeh Hesar

MA in Urban Planning, Islamic Azad University, Qazvin, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Nowadays, transportation is a subject that all people are in direct contact with it and Parallel to the development of cities. The need for public services and facilities is increased and this, in turn, will add a new dimension to metropolises public issues, particularly transport as traffic. Traffic calming is considered as one of the engineering proceedings that can cause a significant reduction in speed of vehicles. Thus, it has significant effects on reduction of accidents rate and fatalities. Since the implementation of the traffic calming projects can change street traffic process especially on local streets, it should be considered as requisite accuracy to choose the traffic calming tools and determination of suitable sections to perform. Followed by the problems of old areas of city especially the central urban areas affecting various aspects of urban life. government have paid special attention to the old urban areas. This need leads to designing an approach for urban revitalization that reflects long term and dynamic nature.

There may be three reasons for the occurrence of the revitalization of urban life and, so, three types of revitalization are discussed:

- a) Imposing revitalization.
- b) Opportunistic revitalization.
- c) Protective or futurist revitalization.

Methodology

Traffic calming means network design and engineering proceedings that are coming together in a way that improve road safety and other aspects of people's living environment. We can mention the followings as the issues that affect traffic calming:

- a) Speed of passage.
- b) Black spots and the risk of accidents.
- c) The type and pattern of traffic thoroughfares.
- d) Attractive Land travel position.
- e) Physical and geometrical features of streets.
- f) Pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

* Corresponding Author, Email: m.ahadi@bhrc.ac.ir

- g) Location of pedestrian crossings.
- h) Existence of special bus line.
- i) Access patterns in the range
- j) Location of bike paths in the area

Since the issue has been examined in this study is neighborhood traffic calming with an approach to revitalization, we address the components of urban revitalization. These include four main dimensions of economic, social-culture, physical and environmental aspects. However, we plan to analyze the data in Table SWOT matrix. The matrix has a conceptual framework for the identification and analysis of threats and opportunities in the external environment and internal assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a system.

Results and discussion

In order to identify the opportunities and threats that the YurdShahy neighborhood is faced with, we explained and analyzed SWOT Table for the research. External and internal factors include general economic forces, social, cultural, political, institutional and legal and environmental conditions.

At this stage, for evaluation of the obtained component of guidelines we can improve the neighborhood and use the SWOT plot strategy development. This is to prioritize the strategies of acceptable results. That is the strategy of the SO (aggressive strategy) to strengthen the power of the neighborhood YurdShahy to achieve the opportunities in this area.

Conclusion

Appropriate solution for intervention and resolving issues and problem of traffic calming is different depending on the type of issue, the extent and severity of that. In this research, neighborhood traffic calming with an approach to revitalization was investigated. Yurd Shahy neighborhood is one of the old and central neighborhoods of Urmia that is formed organically in the vicinity of commercial part of the city. Due to old age of YurdShahy neighborhood, it kept local and social cohesion for many years. For objective evaluation of the obtained prior factors of analysis in the first stage and the obtained results of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the second stage, SWOT fourfold diagram were used. We identified the results of this offensive guideline diagram as the most prior one. The offensive factors show that Yourdshahy neighborhood of Urmia has the requisite potential for traffic calming and organization of programs. We should not forget the role of people as the elements that the programs are conducted not only for them but also with them.

Keywords: calming, traffic, neighborhood, revitalization, SWOT

Inequality in development of tourism industry with emphasis on Iran

Abolfazl Meshkini*

Assistant Professor of geography and urban planning, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran

Elham Amirhajlou

PhD candidate in geography and urban planning, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Abolfazl Zanganeh

PhD candidate in geography and urban planning, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

This paper has a philosophical and epistemological view to examine inequality in tourism development and studies. This research emphasizes on the debates underlying perspectives and paradigms for exploration of weaknesses of tourism knowledge and studies in methodological change. The purpose of this paper is to study inequalities in development of tourism industry and to understand the effects of tourism in Iran, in combination with agency and structure in the tourism industry in Iran.

The growing synergy of tourism and culture has been one of the major themes in tourism development and marketing in recent years. The tourism industry, one of the fastest growing industry at the global scale, generates jobs and income especially in those layers of the job market that are most severely disadvantaged by economic conjuncture of variables including non-specialised work, reputedly low-skills part-time jobs and female works. By investing in cultural attractions and infrastructure, the cities seek to secure a good position in the international tourism map, developing an industry that is sustainable and plentiful in synergies with other strategic sectors of the urban economy. Tourism also represents an indispensable source of financial resources for the preservation and restoration of the heritage that otherwise faces shrinking budgets and state transfers.

According to cultural statue of Iran, the country has to pay attention to tourism policy-making in national and regional levels. The main goal of this paper is to study the role of tourism policies in inequities in tourism industry. The central issue is: urban management using the tools of development planning, by expansion of social justice for all populations to increase economy growth rate.

Methodology

Critical realism presents a methodological perspective which takes a critical stance towards positivism and hermeneutics in one hand and tries to integrate strong points from both theories of science on the other hand. Contemporary critical realism is formulated by Roy Bhaskar and his like-minded circle of British colleagues. If we take explanation to be the core purpose of science critical realism, it seems to emphasise on thinking instead of experiencing, and especially the process of

* Corresponding Author, Email: abolfazl.meshkini@gmail.com

abstraction from the domains of the actual and the empirical world to the transfactual mechanisms of the real world. This kind of thinking made Bhaskar talking about 'transcendental realism' in his early writings, emphasising the crossing of the division between the empirical and the speculative activities of scientific works. The experienced world of events is not explainable in terms of the empirical facts, but they can be incorporated in non-experienced mechanisms incorporated in objects which may be within or outside our domain of investigation.

In this study, relationships between the agents that are producer of development are classified based on critical realism into two categories and three levels: mechanisms or policies for tourism (the real) provides guidelines for the tourism industry as well as the agents and stakeholders (the actual). The instructions in different ways to produce different results have already been experienced in the cities (the empirical).

Results and discussion

This shows that Positivism Approches in the study of tourism inequities in Iran ignore participation of stakeholders in urban policy and considers governmental power as a referee for several stakeholder groups and ignore great sociospatial forces. In this respect, these approaches ignore economic-political processes and structures and slures formal and informal relations between governmental and non-governmental actors to prepare urban tourism planning. Since such agents reflect dominant forms of economic and social inequalities and reproduce inequality in nature of tourism spaces.

To borrow useful ideas from three explanatory paradigms, it is clear that a comprehensive explanatory theory can be created that can simultaneously meet experimental, interpretational and structural requirements. With the proper combination of these three approaches, critical realism can achieve their merits based on the integration.

The relation between the actors who produce results of development categories on the basis of critical realism: 1) mechanisms and policies of tourism in national level in tourism industry; 2) stakeholders in local level (Actual) who suggest agendas in defferent ways to produce various results. Cities play an intermediate role between wider national policies and their results in local level.

There is close relations between tourism activities and geographical places in their historical background. Since 1977, tourism in Iran was changed to reflect decisions of authorities in cities on framework of government's policies.

Conclusion

The plans and policies for national development (the real) has played considerable role in development procedure after and before Islamic Revolution in Iran. On the other hand, it needs to pay more serious attention to importance of participation (the actual) in nature of developmental plans that can be effective on life people. In this paper, development plans and policies are as an example of social mechanisms in realistic approach. We can discuss about the values of sustainable tourism with philosophical and epistemological assistance of tourism. This study is based on the idea that opportunity from policies of tourism development has the ability to maximize products and other needed elements to promote sustainable tourism. This can be concluded that the cities aspiring international destinations for cultural tourism should not neglect the quality of human capital and training, not only in the lower grades of the job market but also for tourist entrepreneurs and public and private managers. The desired pattern of inequality in the tourism industry for Iran's society is sustainable for critical tourism model and policy-making in this Framework.

Keywords: tourism, inequality, critical realism, sustainable tourism, Iran.

The Influence of Nomads Habitation on the Participation of Nomads Women in Family Income (Case Study: Sistani Nomad Women)

Faramarz Barimani*

Professor of Rural Geography, University of Mazandaran, Mazandaran, Iran

Gharib Fazelniya

Associate Professor of Geography, University of Zabol, Zabol, Iran

Zahra Saiyadi

MA in Geography and Rural Planning, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

It is believed that nomadic life is developed because of adaptation to ecological conditions, but after the industrial revolution (1750) and the advances in technology also affected nomadic life. Changes in Iranian nomadic population were a result of Reza shah's plan to settle nomads (Takhteh Ghapoo) according to his Modernization policy. After Islamic revolution, comprehensive development of Iran's nomadic regions was proposed with the aims of improving the nation; but these projects did not succeed, because the expansion of inner capitalist and pseudo-capitalist systems marginalized nomadic population, and this itself changed nomadic life. Unlike the past conditions, now the tribes were forced to settle despite their tendency to have accommodation. In some cases, without government's policy the tribes settled by their own will. This caused confusion in the political and socio-economic structure of nomadic tribes. This feedback corresponds more to our case study (Sistani nomads). Addition to these above mentioned factors, recent droughts (1998 to 2007) ruined pasturelands during summer (South Khorasan) and winter season (Sistan Plain) in this region. As a result, Sistani nomadic life has been greatly in danger of destroying the environmental. Before these changes, the situation of nomads, especially nomad women, was worsened and their role in family income was decreased. This paper studies the role of Sistani nomad women before and after habitation based on the following hypotheses.

- The role of Sistani nomad women was underestimated after habitation.
- There is a significant relationship between the weakness of Sistani nomad women role and family income.
- There is a significant relationship between these womens participation in family income before and after habitation.

Methodology

The statistical population of this study is 5 settled groups with 250 families in Zabol. Using Cochran equation, we have randomly selected 141 households with sampling. We have asked

* Corresponding Author, Email: f.barimani@umz.ac.ir

124 women for distance of groups and availability problems. We have used a questionnaire in order to collect data. The 2 questionnaires were designed, one of which for nomad women and we have used 0.8 (goat & kid (yeanning)), 5 (cow & calf) and 8 (camel & camel's kid) coefficients regarding the kinds of livestock. This is to equalize changing rank units. With regard to animal products, we have also calculated a 100 days of milking period. To compare women's status before and after habitation, the price of livestock animal products and handy crafts have been measured according to the current prices (2010). The Second questionnaire has been distributed among the elders of the nomad society. In the experience, we have also utilized bigeminal comparison and Pierson cohesion.

Results and Discussion

The study has indicated that 31.2 % of husbands are unemployed and 17.6 % of them have just begun to work. If we add the 18.4 % of those who have non-productive jobs, about 67.2 % do conestraction work. In other words, they are out of the production cycle; and only 32.8 % are in the production cycle (agriculture & ranching). On the other hand, 97.6 % of the nomad women are house holders and practically they have no role in economy compared with before habitation. Only 2.4 % do dressmaking and broidery. However, before habitation, these activities are parallel to their main activities (animal products, handy crafts, etc.). Given the ecological peculiarities and its changing situation Sistan, these facts show that nomad's habitation in Sistan was not a good plan.

Comparing the sistani before and after habitation shows that, before being settled all nomads had livestock; but after settelment 25.6 % did not have any livestock. If 100 livestock with other activities can complete family income, before habitation only 33.6 % have 100 livestock, but after habitation, about 25.6 % have lost their livestock. Secondly, 54.4 % have lesser than 100 livestock. In other words, about 80 % have been deprived of livestock as a source of income; although we see 33.6 % before habitation.

Before habitation, 57.7 % of ranchers had 100-499 livestock, but this number decreased to 8.8 % after habitation. The share of ranchers with more than 500 livestock decreased from 8 to 1.6 %. These numbers show tendency from a middle point to a lower point from livestock point of view and subsequently this affects economic situation and life quality in the studied nomads. We compared their activity before and after habitation using t-test, and the results confirmed our hypothesis.

Conclusion

Sistan region is located in a arid zone of north hemisphere. The region has confronted with two important phenomena of periodic flood and drought. The drought sometimes dries Hirmand River and the hamoons lake becomes waterless and canebrakes are destroyed. In such conditions Sistani nomads are in danger. There are three solutions for the problem: Quitting this life style and beginning another one, continuing nomadic life and doing other parallel jobs, spontaneous habitation. These three solutions have been practiced in some tribes. However, one of Government's policies is guided habitation to improve nomad's life. Family peculiarities of the statistical sample shows that, this policy was not successful; especially after habitation, the participation of Sistani nomad women has decreased and subsequently the family income is reduced. This approach, not only created problems for nomads families, but also adaptation with the environment in other studies also showed the same results. The goals of government are to build low cost houses for the people, provide financial aids for them, and create new employment opportunities for them.

Keywords: Nomads, Habitation, Sistani Nomad Women, Family income.

Assessment of Regional Competitiveness in Functional Urban Regions by Cluster Analysis, Mazandaran, Iran

Seyed Masoud Poursafavi*

Assistant professor of architecture and urban planning, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran

Shahin Jafari

MA in regional planning, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran

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Extended abstract

Introduction

In the recent two decades with acceleration of globalization process and increase in the extent of information economics, concept of competitiveness and its measurement in cities have attracted the attention of many experts, planners, and decision makers in regional and urban fields of study. However, there are many ambiguities for definition and measurement of the concept. Increase in competition changed the city as the main core of a region. The changes in function of the urban areas are also dependent upon the structure of global development. Creativity and staffing of resources are critical for economic performance and competition. Mazandaran Province is one of the few provinces with high productivity in using spaces. The province has the least dependency on oil incomes. There are some conceptual models for competitiveness studies. The study attempts to measure the competitiveness criteria and incorporate them in a mathematical and statistical model. The statistics of the counties of the province have been compared with the theoretical fundamentals. Porter (2002) model for regional foundations of competitiveness is based on interaction of infrastructure and institute strategy, demand condition, input condition, and competition of dependent companies. The model of Gardiner (2003), in a pyramid shape, determined the source of regional competitiveness in economy, structure, innovation, business development, and skills of workforce. The purpose of this present research is to present a clear and comprehensive definition of the concept to analyze functional urban regions of Mazandaran Province using cluster analysis.

Methodology

This present study is a descriptive and analytical research. We have used library and document methods to gather data and cluster analysis method for ranking of the functional urban regions. To determine the functional urban regions, we have used the results of Mazandaran Landuse Planning Act of 2009. To gather data, addition to the data, we have used Mazandaran Investment and Employment Development Act and statistical Annuals of the province.

The indicators of the analysis have been initially extracted from the literature, then the criteria have been compared with the conceptual design of the research, and finally the data of

* Corresponding Author, Email: Mas.Poursafavi@iauctb.ac.ir

the province have been compared with the theoretical indices. The main elements of competitiveness indicator are the results of annuals of the province about innovation, skillful workers, and employability of workforce, entrepreneur environment, establishment life, business size, industrial specialism, and industrial composition.

Results and discussion

The results of the research have indicated that the functional urban regions have been assessed in three levels. The results of cluster analysis have also indicated that three high populated urban regions of Sari, Amol, and Babol are in the first cluster. The economic structure and heritage of the cities are the most important characteristics for the position. For example, Amol has an industrial function, Babol a commercial function, and Sari has an administrative function. The three urban regions have supplementary roles that encourage their functions. This supplementary situation can be observed in workforce market and innovation.

The second cluster is urban regions in the second population group. The cluster includes the cities of Ghaemshahr, Tonekabon, Babolsar, Behshahr, and Chalus. Therefore, the geographical distribution of the cities cannot be considered in their position, but the economic and social heritage of the regions are effective in their position.

The cities in the third cluster have lower production capacity. This is mainly resulted from institutional capacity that impedes their cooperation to use synergy for better performance. Some of the cities were not able to develop useful tourism activities.

The cities of Amol, Babol, and Sari have the highest rank in industrial specialism because they have suitable concentration of population. The three urban regions have also the highest quantity of institutes and employment rate. This is typical of dynamics of workforce and investment in the regions. In terms of company size, Amol City is in the first cluster. Entrepreneur environment of the cities of Amol, Babol, and Sari are in the first cluster and the Ghaemshahr and Tonekabon are in the second cluster. The cities of Savadkuh, Babolsar, Noshahr, Neka, Noor, Chalus, Jooybar, Mahmudabad, Behshahr, and Ramsar are in the final cluster in terms of entrepreneurship properties. The two cities of Amol and Sari have the highest ranks among the functional urban regions of the province in terms of employability of workforce. The skillful workforce is the best in the cities of Sari and Chalus as the first cluster. Sari has the highest rank of innovation potential among the urban regions of Mazandaran.

Conclusion

The ranking of the regional competitiveness of the urban regions as an interesting issue for both academic literature and policy making projects has been considered in this research based on present resources and the outcomes of competitiveness process. There is no consensus in the ranking of competitiveness. We have initially defined the concept and then analyzed the present state with the theoretical situation.

The results of this research have indicated dispersion and preference of three functional urban regions of Sari, Amol, and Babol. The cluster with spatial and urban advantages was able to attract investment. Thus, this prosperous environment is dependent upon geographical location and economic structure. Natural characteristics of the functional urban region formed a special structure that concentrated many settlements in the region. Spatial vicinity reinforced the spatial ties in the region and made it as an inter-related spatial cluster. The second group of urban regions including Ghaemshahr, Tonekabon, Babolsar, Behshahr, and Chalus are located in the second cluster. Access to skillful workforce, employability of the workforce, and innovation capacity are considered as the opportunities giving the potential to this cluster to compete the first cluster. The urban regions of this cluster cannot support entrepreneur

environment and attract investment. The third cluster includes the urban regions of Noshahr, Savadkuh, Neka, Mahmudabad, Noor, Ramsar, and Juybar. The cluster also contains all the seven fields of competitiveness. The power points of the cities in the cluster are innovation capacity and skillful workforce.

The most important subject that should be considered in the priority of policy making in the province is to promote spatial competency to support economic development. Therefore, specialism in the functional urban regions and reinforcement of transportation system can improve spatial and functional integrity in entire province.

Keywords: competitiveness, functional urban region, Mazandaran, workforce.

**Ethical Convergence Modeling Based on Political Managers Need
Assessment and Recognition of the Races Demands
(Case Study: Kurdistan Province)**

Afshin Motaghi*

Associate professor of international relations, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Jahangir Heydari

PhD candidate in political geography, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Iraj Nikjoo

Assistant professor of History, Islamic Azad University, Ilam, Iran

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Extended abstract

Introduction

Philosophers use meta-ethics to criticize and compare ethical judgments to criticize, compare, and justify ethical systems and to discuss and classify the ideas within meta-ethics. We are going to perform meta-ethical theories in analysis of these theories of convergence in AI goal systems as convergences of ethical systems. We will try to classify this approach to show where it fits within meta-ethics more generally. In essence, we all tell stories and tell them truthfully as the best we can. This is our purpose, our mission, our profession. So much of what we hold as ethical precept is actually convention –socially agreed upon norms, not commandments come down from the mountain. However, all photojournalists believe that the purpose of what they do is to provide truthful information to the reader or viewer. This is the ethical rule, this is the guiding principle. How we accomplish this in many ways is subject to evolution, interpretation of symbolism, and arbitrary regulations.

It is impossible to remain far from cultural and ethnical differences, in the modern communities of the world. Cultural and ethnical diversity is among characteristics of the Iranian societies. Such diversity has been appeared in various periods among the micro and macro identities and followed by some difficulties. Such difficulties and convergent and divergent challenges have made modeling, surveys and recognition of the effective factors inevitable. Therefore, both forces play a crucial role in the Iranian nation integrity and their study is of great importance. Given the importance of the problem, we have studied ethnical divergence model based on the need assessment of the political managers and racial demands among the Kurd people in Kurdistan province. The suggested model for analysis of the above mentioned factors is in the forms of convergent, divergent and neutral.

Methodology

The present research is an applied study by descriptive-analytical method. The researcher has

* Corresponding Author, Email: sfshin-mottaghi@yahoo.com

Tel: +989125984416

attempted to provide a model for demonstration of the mutual influence of the effective factors in convergence and divergence. For this purpose, to implement the model, two questionnaires were prepared. The sample population is consisted of Kurd citizens and political managers at decision making. Sampling methods were clustering for citizens and purposeful for managers.

Results and discussion

The model represents the fact that if the ethnical policies are predicted in province divisions, social and cultural policies are predicted in the decisions. The participation in political power and economic concentration are realized based on the recognition of the racial demands. A top-down decision making will be formed by the legal and ethnical groups' elites and the results would be convergence and national integrity.

In neutral model, if the ethnical policies assume roles for citizens in some occasions and deny it in other cases, without precise investigations, and if these policies attempt conservatively to keep the current situation and use military powers or power demonstration, then racial issues would appear as fire under the ashes. Whenever power vacuum is felt, it will erupted and caused divergence among the races.

This model represents the fact that if the ethnical policies are practiced in province divisions, social and cultural policy making can be realized, based on political dictation. In such circumstances, the local and ethnical groups will lose their efficacy in policy making.

Using surveys and field studies, this model was applied to assess the situation or amount the Kurd divergence and convergence among people. As a case study, Kurdistan province was selected. The findings of the study revealed that situation is convergent in province divisions (with the average of 31.96), political participation (with the average of 36.46), socio-cultural (with the average of 33.44) and economic (with the average of 35.09) indicators.

Conclusion

Based on the need assessment of the political managers and recognition of the racial demands, the dominant situation in Kurdistan province tends to be convergent. However, the considerable point is that "the political managers and citizens of the province have different priorities. For instance, priority of the political managers is political participation indicator, while the first priority of the citizens' demands is economic indicators.

Keywords: convergence, identification of receivables, needs assessments, ethnicity, divergence.

The impact of geopolitical situation on the National Strategy (Case Study: South East Iran)

Morad Kaviani Rad*

Associate Professor of Political Geography, Kharazmi University, Tehran

Hasan Maldari

PhD candidate in Political Geography, Kharazmi University, Tehran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Much of countries have their national strategy as a function of their geopolitical situation. Geographical location determines that if a country is dried land or maritime; is landlocked or passage; is marginal or has a geopolitical importance. We can say that this is a situation that defines greatly the activity of any country in international affairs and its spatial- location functions. Each situation has its own geopolitical codes that a country follows for policy making and strategy development according to these codes. Paying attention to these codes determines geopolitical weight of a country in spatial geographical configuration of geopolitical arrangements and orders governing the world. United States of America and Soviet Union have chosen maritime and dried land strategies, respectively, due to their geographic location. Former Soviet Union's did not pay attention to geopolitical codes due to its geographical location. This caused that the efforts of this country, during 1957-1979, to influence in marine field was failed, in addition to bearing high costs, and it eventually collapsed. Therefore, in formulating strategies, paying attention to geographical location is essential for proper implementation. Iran is the only single layer country between dried land and maritime powers and is in the focus of geopolitical theorists because of its geographical position on Rimland margin and it has had various roles in different era such as passage, retaining and influencing region. The South East region of Iran is one of the most important geographical positions because of allowing Iran to have relationship with the geopolitical structures of Indian Ocean, South and Southeast Asia and International Sea. The importance of this coastal area can be considered so much that it gives Iran the chance of selecting policy making in two different areas of maritime and dried land strategy. For this reason, the present paper is going to examine Iran's geopolitical position, particularly in the South East region. This study attempts to answer these questions:

- 1 - What impact does have Iran's geopolitical status on Iran's national strategy?
- 2 - What strategies do have South East region geopolitical codes for Iran?

The main hypothesis argues that adopted strategy by Iran in the South East region of the country is not in accordance with geo-political and geo-economical capacities of that region and is not effective in producing national power.

* Corresponding Author, Email: kaviani@khu.ac.ir

Methodology

This article is based on knowledge of political geography and geopolitics. The present article seeks to explain how geographical location and space influence codifying strategy based on geopolitical theories. Since the present study has objective and the subjective nature, the research methodology is based on empiricism and proof and the study method is descriptive-analytical using library, internet resources and Yearbook Statistical data of Sistan and Baloochestan province in 2011.

Results and discussion

In most geopolitical theories, the importance of geographical location has been emphasized as an important factor affecting the countries' strategy. Geographical position with its dual functions can strengthen the country in meeting its national interests and aims, in addition to create its dependency and weakness context.

Iran has considered geographical status and regional conditions in strategic policy making and formulation in higher documents, particularly country's outlook document in 2025 horizon. However, what is felt as a disadvantage is that this view is not made objectively at five-year plans. Geopolitical codes of Iran due to the geographical status of South East region of the country in local, regional and global levels include:

- Acting as a gateway country in the international arena and relating inland countries to maritime and to East Asia geo-strategic fields and geo-political structures of Persian Gulf, Oman Sea and Indian Ocean, Caspian Sea, OPEC and South West Asia.
- Investing Navy power and being in line with the states having power in maritime level
- Adopting maritime strategy and economic policy making based on this strategy
- Attracting foreign and domestic investments to bring out South East region from geopolitical isolation and developing Infrastructures of Chabahar Free Trade-Industrial Zone for promoting its geo-economic status.

The study results show that those in charge of the issue have not understood the importance of geopolitical codes of the country in South-East region. The reasons is weakness of the economic infrastructures in the study area, and it seems that five-year plans have been remained in codifying level at this area and have not been explained and implemented. Iran should pay attention to South East oil reservoir potentials in order to avoid expositing in geopolitical impasses. South-East Iran can be converted into national effective land and regional effective land and be promoted to a developed economic and population region by attracting foreign investments. Development of a transportation network, advanced technology facilities and economic focus can help better use this area. Iran should focus on strengthening North-South, South pathways and developing East axis under the security caused by energy exchange. Accordingly, geopolitical codes of South East region by planning maritime strategy for Iran will cause that this country achieves its actual position as a passage area and connecting geo-strategic and geo-political areas and its result is to move towards specialized integration and sustainable development of the country. Geopolitical opportunities arising from the movement towards a strategy based on above codes are:

1. Empowerment of Iran in the field of maritime trade and strengthening its naval power.
2. Conversion of Chabahar Port into a central and international port to provide broad and different services to international ships in terms of refueling, repairing, furnishing and manufacturing ships. It can also be used to create geopolitical dependency of the neighboring countries to these services.
3. Covering and supplying the ships for marine transportation of other countries,
4. Activities in North- south pathway,

- 5 . Promotion of Iran's role in regional integration,
- 6 . Conversion of Iran into a stable gateway country,
- 7 . Strategic depth and increasing military strength and control on the coast of Persian Gulf and its opening,
- 8 . Creation of a suitable path to transfer intercontinental energy to South East Asia market and decrease in the dependency on the Persian Gulf,
- 9 . Creation of fields for landlocked countries access to open water,
10. Construction of international airports for different countries access,
- 11 . Development of the tourism industry.

Conclusion

Due to the weakness of infrastructure needed for sustainable development in the region under study, the research hypothesis has been confirmed and has been based on the fact that the adopted strategy by Iran in the South East region of the country is not consistent with the geopolitical realities of the country and has not influenced by the geopolitical weight of Iran in the region.

Keywords: National Strategy, Geo- economic, Geo- politic, South-East Iran.

The effects of political factors on intensification of dust storms in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin

Mohammad Reza Hafeznia*

Professor of Political Geography, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

Ahmad Taheri

MA in Political Geography, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

Manuchehr Farajzadeh Asl

Associate professor of Remote Sensing and GIS, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran

Hossein Karaminezhad

MA in International Relations, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Dust storms in the arid regions of the world and in particular in the deserts have been imagined as a usual event, but recently they have taken widespread facets and have become as a significant problem because of the climate changes and environment destructions resulted from human activities.

Dust storms in the Middle East have affected wide areas of the region. Many factors have affected the emergence of natural phenomenon, directly or indirectly. Based on this idea, dust is influenced by different factors such as political agents expanded in different areas, especially in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin.

Methodology

Using library findings, the paper is to investigate the role of political factors creating dust in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin. The research question based on “descriptive-analytic” method is “which political factors has intensified dust phenomenon in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin?” The results show that war, the status of political management of the space and political-security conditions have been effective to intensify dust phenomenon in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin.

Results and discussion

War and armed conflicts: Library findings show that political factors have been effective on intensifying dust phenomenon in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin:

Iraq and Iran war (1980-1988), Iraq’s invasion to Kuwait on August 1990, the US and its coalition forces’ invasion to Kuwait in order to drive out Iraq’s forces and the US and coalition forces’ invasion to Iraq in 2003 has made the space of Iraq more critical. Iraq’s deserts have

* Corresponding Author, Email: mhafeznia2006@yahoo.com

been faced with martial conflicts and consequently widespread destruction due to transportation of army vehicles. In 1991, the movement of the US tanks toward desert damaged the protective layers of soil. In Persian Gulf War in 1990, 375000 shelters, trench, ammunition caches and the holes made by arsenals were made in Kuwait and in Iraq. Totally, 35000 tanks, 2500 armored personal carriers caused a considerable disorder in dust and sand and soil layers of deserts.

To facilitate army forces mobilization and increase in the maneuver power, Saddam regime started drying the marshlands to control their residents. Then, the army performed a big attack on wetlands residents using mortars, and land attacks. Wetlands were deprived of their input water and today less than 10 percent of wetlands have been remained.

Weakness in political management of the space: Weakness in management of water sources is one of the most important reasons of dust problem. This variable which includes change in the passage of rivers, dam establishment and over-use of water sources, is among the factors that causes plains to get dry. Management of the water sources in Iran, Iraq, Turkey and Syria has provided the conditions for dust creation in wetlands. Dam establishment is an obvious example having hydro-political dimensions. With decrease in inputted water to downstream, the soil loses its moisture, vegetation is degraded and dust is formed with wind blowing.

Security and political conditions: Iraq and Syria are not desirable and the number of citizens and civilian death due to fights, bombing, domestic upraise, religious-sectarian conflicts show the political insecurity and instability. These conditions intensify dust phenomenon and make it a priority in the policy and management of these countries. Basically, the weakened government cannot manage the geographical space of the country, properly.

Conclusion

Dust phenomenon is one of dangers made by human and nature interaction that has expanded and became a serious problem due to the issues such as wrong managerial policies and incorrect water resource control, climate changes, drought and wide destruction of the environment and water-soil sources. The dust phenomenon affected by many issues like political factors have been expanded in Southwestern Asia, especially in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin. The present study has investigated dust phenomenon in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin. It was shown that there are many factors which intensify dust phenomenon in the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin. Political factors include armed conflicts and war, inability and weakness in political management of the space and instable political- security situations. Martial forces have paved the way for dust through changing in river paths. Inability and weakness in political space management in general and water management in particular are among the factors intensifying dust. Dam establishment on the Euphrates–Tigris River Basin is an example of incorrect water management. In recent years, security conditions of the area have caused death of hundreds of civilians, especially in Syria and Iraq. These conditions affect authorities' ability to manage and control dust phenomenon and this issue do not get priority over Syria and Iraq's policies.

Keywords: Dust, Political Factors, Euphrates–Tigris River Basin.

Patterns for Providing Low Income Groups with Housing (Case Study: Karaj City)

Somayeh Ziari*

PhD in Geography and Town planning, Alborz International Complex, University of Tehran,
Karaj, Iran

Rahmatollah Farhodi

Assistant Professor of Regional Planning, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran,
Iran

Ahmad Pourahmad

Professor of Urban Geography, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Hossien Hataminejad

Assistant Professor of Urban Geography, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran,
Iran

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Extended abstract

Introduction

The policy of inexpensive housing is new in Iran though some kinds of houses including free houses, supported housing, social housing, renting providing ownership, and Mehr housing are developed in the recent years. Karaj Metropolis as a host for immigrants and a center for industry and workforce in Tehran is in need for housing for low income groups. The main problem of the research is the pattern of providing houses for low income groups in this city. Therefore, the purpose of the present research is to examine the patterns to provide housing for the low income groups.

Methodology

This is a fundamental-developmental research by a descriptive-analytical method. The study area of this research is Karaj City as center of Alborz Province in the vicinity of Tehran, capital of Iran. The variables included in the research are deciles, foundation surface, family dimension, percentage of ownership, percentage of tenants and occupants, cost of house, and bank accommodations. The data have been obtained from Iran Statistical Center. The methods used include statistical techniques of population tenths. In order to estimate financial states of the groups, the indirect function method has been used. In order to define the opportunities, threats, power points and weak points of the low-income groups, quantitative analyses have been performed through indirect method functions and Stone-Garry Function. To estimate and calculate the absolute line of poverty and for the relative line of poverty, SPSS and Excel software have been employed in this study.

* Corresponding Author, Email: Szyari@gmail.com

Results and discussion

Based on the last census, 2011, there were 485565 residential units in Karaj. According to this census data, density of residential houses was 27.8 per hectare, number of family were 487043, ratio of family in house was 1.003, people per house was 3.32, density in house was 1.78, and people per room was 1.82. As the difference between the number of the houses and the families is called shortage of the residential unit, the shortage ratio is 0.3. However, house ownership is low and the percentage of lessees is high. This has indicated the need to increase housing for low income groups. In 2011, the houses in the city were mainly made of metal (39.8%), concrete (42.7%), and other kinds of materials (17.5%). Now most of the houses are small in area, i.e., the houses are mainly 51-75 square meter (30%) and less than 50 square meter (5.5%). Half the houses are less than 100 square meters often for the poor and low income groups. The results have indicated that the housing cost of the vulnerable and poor people is 26.2% and 26%, respectively. The costs for 3rd, 6th, 5th, and 4th deciles of the community are 24.9%, 25.8%, 25.8%, and 26.08%, respectively. The housing cost of rich families in Karaj is higher than those of the poor. The cost was 29.3% in average in 2011. Thus, the low income families pay 26% of their income for renting a house or other housing costs. The lands in old textures and marginal suburbs can be used for developing houses for the low income groups.

Conclusion

The Karaj metropolis has experienced rapid physical and population growth due to migration of the low income groups into the city. Thus, housing development must be highly considered in planning. About 44.2% of the residents rented the houses. The tenure of the houses is as 50% of ownership. Half the houses are less than 100 square meters in area, 23% of the rental houses are occupied by poor families and 43.4% for low income groups. According to the results of the research, the city needs 65647, 47878, and 33637 new houses until 2012, 2016, and 2020. The groups of citizens are in need for government aids from low interest rate loans or housing subsidies. However, the poor financial condition of the government for these payments makes it essential to focus on urban lands for these aids. Therefore, the pattern of supplying the houses for the low income groups is presented. This pattern is that the lands in urban old textures and marginal urban lots must be prepared by municipality for housing and the investments should be received by the loans with low interest rate and also by the investment by the groups. The municipal services must also be supplied by the Supreme Council of Architecture.

Keywords: patterns of supplying housing, low income groups, housing indices, banking facilities, Karaj City.

Assessment of Social Sustainability in Sprawl Urban Neighborhoods (Case Study: Shadabad, Tehran)

Mostafa Tavana*

MA in urban planning, Fine Arts Campus, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Farshad Nourian

Associate professor of urban planning, Faculty of Urban Planning, University of Tehran,
Tehran, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

There is an emphasis on human dimension and the community as the main axis of sustainable development. The goal of sustainable development, as considered in this paper, is to explore comprehensive development which is made possible through social development. Objectives such as cultural identity, social cohesive, establishment of public organizations, citizen participation, and empowerment of people are central to this discussion.

This paper attempts to contribute to the definition of social sustainability in a comprehensive and coherent manner and develop a theoretical framework within which this concept can be analyzed. There is a shortcoming of this framework in the available literature today since it requires a rearrangement of multidimensional elements. This can combine social, economic and environmental issues into a single independent body.

In addition, the concept of “social sustainability” can be observed through a qualitative lens since it deals mainly with qualitative concepts such as human life and well-being. Thus, “social sustainability” preserves and promotes social capital, i.e. realization of a unified and comprehensive society with mutual benefits for all residents, greater interaction between groups of citizens. This is accompanied by greater sense of compassion, patience, flexibility, and affection. Social capital, in this manner, is the values of “human rights” and “cultures”.

In developing a comprehensive definition of the concept of “social sustainability”, we have considered people within their living environment and the physical potential as well as their ability to reproduce the structure. As shown by previous studies, understanding the concept of social sustainability is better achieved by understanding and accepting the importance of other concepts such as “quality of life” and “social welfare”. These are evaluated by the criteria such as accessibility to services, decent housing, security, appropriate income, and lower levels of deprivation.

Another concept which is discussed in this paper is “urban sprawl”. This takes prominence here since it has been one of the major topics of discussion within the literature on sustainable development in recent years. Planning based on the theories of sustainable development has been critical to urban sprawl from different economic, social and environmental perspectives. The main criticism is related to the low levels of social sustainability in the neighborhoods

* Corresponding Author, Email: mostafa.tavana@ut.ac.ir

which have been created due to urban sprawl. Advocates of sustainable development believe that urban sprawl leads to the problems such as diminution of social justice, negative consequence for public health, weakening of sense of community in inner cities, greater social segregation, polarization, and inability to cope with distinctions and variations in life styles. Thus, this study attempts to assess the factors which affect the level of social sustainability in one of the sprawl neighborhoods of Tehran (Shadabad).

Methodology

A questionnaire has been used to gather data from 300 residents of the Shadabad neighborhoods. Factor analysis and Pearson correlation coefficient have been used to analyze the data obtained through questionnaire and field survey.

As the first step of analysis, the indices of social sustainability are discussed. The indices are classified into objective and subjective. It should be noted that the subjective indices are more focused in this paper than the objective ones.

In the next step, factor analysis is used. KMO test is 0.719. This made it possible to continue the use of factor analysis. Five factors which affect "social sustainability" are developed here using the factor analysis: "social action", "neighborhood satisfaction", "individual satisfaction", "social capital" and "neighborhood attachment"

The last step of the analysis is related to identification of the underlying factors which affect the extent of social sustainability. These factors are evaluated through the use of other criteria such as the expanse of migration to the neighborhood and level of economic hardship. For this purpose, Pearson correlation was used.

Results and discussion

The analysis of findings suggests that the most important factor for the low level of social sustainability in the Shadabad neighborhood is low rate of social interaction among neighbors. The next major factors are dissatisfaction with residential environment and housing, lack of jobs, and low incomes. Some other significant variables are lack of social capital and poor sense of belonging to the community among citizens. Statistical analysis shows that all the mentioned variables are primary elements in the discussion of "social sustainability".

It can be concluded that the coefficient tables of the correlation between the two factors of migration to the neighborhood and economic hardship have a significant effect on the social sustainability. In fact, migration to the neighborhood shows significant correlations with the three factors including social action, social capital and sense of belonging, and economic hardship. These are meaningful in the discussion about individual satisfaction.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the factors such as migration to the neighborhood and economic hardship in the context of urban sprawl are contextual and indispensable factors which affect the social sustainability levels. These lead to lower social action and less inclination and disposition to participate in public activities at the community level. In general, the results show that the concepts such as "migration to the neighborhood" and "economic hardship" play a greater role in social sustainability. Five other factors, i.e. social capital, individual satisfaction, neighborhood satisfaction, social interaction, and neighborhood attachment are also significant in sustainability of neighborhood.

Keywords: social sustainability, sustainable development, sprawl, social capital, Shadabad.

Components influencing promotion of social interactions in urban parks (Case Study: Zabol City)

Safar Ghaedrahmati

Assistant professor of geography and urban planning, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

Mansour Rezaali*

PhD student in geography and urban planning, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

Sodabe Hashemi Zehi

PhD student in geography and urban planning, Islamic Azad University, Zahedan, Iran

Farhad Javan

PhD student in geography and urban planning, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

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Extended abstract

Introduction

Urban parks play social, economic, and ecologic role in cities. They have some advantages including treatments of spirit problems, favorable environment for children training, social integrity, and welfare. The environment is also a factor to enhance quality of life space and development of society. Establishment of the urban parks can improve quality of urban life and achieve sustainable development. It can also have a cost for municipalities without return of investment and profit. Hence, use of the urban public spaces should be considered in the studies of daily life of citizens. It is believed that public spaces such as parks are defined as available open places. The citizens have the high traffic in the parks. The public spaces are considered as important elements in forming social interactions among the residents. In Zabol City, located in the border area with Afghanistan as the center of drug dealing, the parks are the best place for leisure time. The parks in the city can be useful in promoting social interactions among the adolescents and adults. In this study, we have investigated the components affecting promotion of social interactions in the parks of Zabol City. Therefore, we have addressed some issues; which components have the highest impacts on the social interaction among all the effective components; which park has the highest rank in promotion of social interaction among all the parks of Zabol City.

Methodology

This research is conducted in a descriptive analytical method. In analytical stage, the components influencing promotion of social interactions in the parks of Zabol City have been analyzed. The data have been gathered by two methods of library and field studies. In descriptive stage, document information has been gathered from books, journal articles, annuals, maps, and internet. We have used Cochran, as the most effective method to get sample volume,

* Corresponding Author, Email: m.rezaali@modares.ac.ir

method to determine the volume of sample for selection of samples. Population of this study is residents of Zabol City. According to Cochran, we have selected 384 people as sample. The analysis of the data has been conducted in SPSS. We have also applied VIKOVER decision making model to determine the components affecting the promotion of social interactions in the parks of Zabol City and to make a ranking of the parks. The results of the information have been compared and integrated with those of library analyses.

Results and discussion

The parks are usually defined as open available spaces for citizens. Urban parks are the places in which people have the highest traffic and interactions. The public spaces are important components to shape social interactions among the residents. To explore the factors affecting the promotion of social interactions in the parks of Zabol City, some indicators have been extracted from the literature and incorporated in questionnaire to ask from the 384 respondents residing the Zabol City. For the analyses of the information SPSS application have been employed to test the hypotheses. To examine the components affecting social interactions, we have used some indices including distance and the access of residents to the parks, creation of social events for sense of belonging to the place, social potentials, promotion of participation opportunities in social life, social trust, social-environmental security, and sports and physical activities. The results have indicated that the index of distance and the access condition of residents to parks has the average of 3.94, creation of social events for sense of belonging to the place has average of 3.59, social potentials has average of 3.46, promotion of participation opportunities in social life has average of 3.09, social trust has the average of 3.08, social-environmental security has average of 3.00, and sports and physical activities has the average of 2.99. In all the indices, the average obtained is higher than median level (3), except for sport and physical activities with average of 2.99. The results have also indicated that all the components are effective on promotion of social interactions in the parks of Zabol City. The results have also indicated that the highest value of Q is belonging to Yaghubleis Park with rank of 0.509. Mellat Park with Q value of 0.502, Moalem Park with Q value of 0.454, and Alghadir Park with Q value of 0.450 are ranged from the highest rank to the lowest rank in the city.

Conclusion

The results of average values obtained from the respondents have indicated that among the indices of this study, the indices of distance and the access of residents to the parks, creation of social events for sense of belonging to the place, social potentials, promotion of participation opportunities in social life, social trust, social-environmental security, and sports and physical activities have influenced the social interactions in the parks of the Zabol. The results have also demonstrated that all the indices have effects on the social interactions in the parks of the city. The results of this study have also presented a ranking of the parks of the Zabol City based on VIKOVER decision making model using indices affecting promotion of social interactions. The parks of Yaghubleis and Alghadir have the highest and lowest rank among the parks of the city, respectively.

Keywords: urban parks, VIKOVER model, social interactions, participation, Zabol City.

Evaluation of the factors affecting the entrepreneurship adoption among rural communities (Case study: Kan-Souleghan)

Fazileh Khani*

Associate professor of geography, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Somayyeh Sadat Mousavi

MA in geography and rural planning, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

The study is to examine the entrepreneurship as a factor affecting rural development in Iran. Generally, rural development is seen as a process by which community is able to maximize its control and use of the material resources to change quality of their life. Changes in people standard of living, particularly upwardly, is often considered as an indication of a government success in reaching rural development, particularly in traditionally rigid structures.

Many rural families need to diversify their sources of income and employment in increasingly smaller parcels of land, low agricultural productivity, volatile weather conditions and soil erosion. Entrepreneurship promoting strategies to diversify rural economic activities, including the development of non-farm economic activities and facilitating the transition of informal activities into the formal growth sector is a very important tool for development of the rural communities in Iran. Local communities often show different reactions to the extent and speed of adoption of an innovation. These reactions depend on the characteristics of innovation and the people who accept these innovations. Basically, these factors affect the rate of diffusion and acceptance of entrepreneurship between target populations.

Recognition of the facilitating factors and constraints for adopting the innovation has an important role in accelerating the process of development in the society. Thus, this study intends to use this aspect to study the diffusion of entrepreneurship in rural communities.

Methodology

The aim of the empirical research is to evaluate the main factors affecting extension of innovation and finally to apply a certain entrepreneurship in a rural areas. The research has been conducted in Kan-Souleghan rural district located in North –West Tehran. This is a descriptive and analytic research.

The research is mainly concentrated on the villages such as Ksharolya, Ksharsofla, Souleghan, and Kan with considerable amount of entrepreneurs. The data for the study have been collected by questionnaire with Likert model, the documentary method, and interviews with sample respondents to complete the questionnaire. All entrepreneurs in the research have been examined by random selection.

* Corresponding Author, Email: Fkhani@ut.ac.ir

The research statistical population is 2,713 people, which include 667 households in the study area. All people with entrepreneurship and innovation, about 102 households, that living in the 4 villages of Kan- souleghan are included in the sample population of the research. The data have been analyzed by SPSS using multiple stepwise regressions and combined model.

Results and discussion

Innovation is the basis of entrepreneurship that can lead to changes in the society. But the innovation must have some features that make it attractive for people to accept the new activity. However, people also need to have some characteristics to accept a new phenomenon.

Entrepreneurship in the rural area is mainly based on local knowledge and living conditions of the villagers and their livelihood. The gardening in the area was started about 50 years ago, and it developed over time. In this study, two categories of factors along with admission's elements have been investigated: characteristics of entrepreneurship and characteristics of entrepreneurs. To determine the contribution of each factor in accepting entrepreneurship by rural people, regression analysis was used to analyze the characteristics of entrepreneurship using stepwise regression method. Among all the characteristics of entrepreneurship, attractiveness and simplicity have the greatest impact on the adoption. Other characteristics of entrepreneurship such as compatibility with the experience and needs of entrepreneurs, start-up costs for market sales and profitability and availability have secondary importance.

In relation to the characteristics of an entrepreneur, entrepreneur's motivation is more effective on the adoption of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial characteristics that affect the amount and rate of its acceptance by local people are easiness and attractiveness of innovation, its compatibility with local people's experience and the level of skills required for entrepreneurs, cost of application, profitability (economy) and well selling in market. The entrepreneurial characteristics influencing the rate of innovation's acceptance by entrepreneur are Achievement Motivation, Confidence and self-esteem and the spirit of modernism. In general, there is a systematic relation between the characteristics of local people so each character has led to the emergence of the next character and finally it caused the acceptance of an innovation.

Conclusion

It is suggested that seminar sessions and participatory approach method should be used to explore the problems and potentials of the local community for discovering and creation of an entrepreneurship and innovations in the rural community. The entrepreneurship should be adjusted with natural and human nature of the countryside, rural activities, facilities and local knowledge. Under such conditions the speed and entrepreneurial acceptance will be increased.

Keywords: Innovation, Entrepreneurship, Acceptance, Rural development, Iran.

External Factors Affecting the Failure of Iran-Georgia Relations

Elaheh Kolaee*

Professor of Central Eurasian issues, Faculty of Law and political Sciences, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

Masoud Rezaee

Assistant professor of Central Eurasian Researches, Faculty of Law and political Sciences, University of Tehran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

The article examines the limits of Iranian foreign policy in Georgia and outlines the threats from the US and other regional players such as Russia, Turkey and Israeli. This study also attempts to identify the main causes and motivations for Tehran's affiliation with Tbilisi. Since regaining its independence two decades ago, Georgia, a small weak state, has developed close relations with Iran in order to compensate for its weaknesses. In contrast, Iran is a mighty regional power playing important role in the Middle East, although its influence over South Caucasus is smaller and unsteady. The South Caucasus, as a source of both opportunity and threat occupies a major place in Iran's multiregional foreign policy agenda. After disregarding the Caucasus for decades and being excluded from its geopolitical chess game, Iran decided to cultivate a new relationship with the South Caucasus, including Georgia to regain its omnipotent role as a regional power. Addition to US factor, this is partly due to the main regional powers in South Caucasus, Russia, Turkey and Israel that create problems for Iran in bolstering its position in relations with Georgia. However, Georgia is the only South Caucasian country, which has no border with Iran; and this geographical factor has affected relations between the two countries over more than last two decades. Thus, after historic nuclear deal, "the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action" in Vienna on July 14, 2015 between Iran and the P5+1, now is growing optimism in Iran and the West. This is an excellent time to review the Georgian-Iranian relations to assess its likely future direction.

Methodology

This paper has been performed as a field and analytical-descriptive study and has also been analyzed by "Realism theory" in Persian and English resources. The authors of the analysis have addressed, in detail, the opportunities for economic and other forms of partnership with Iran. This will help diversify Georgia's neighborhood policy and make balancing in the interests of regional players in the South Caucasus. Finally, the possible opportunity for Iran and Georgia that might accompany such a political strategy are discussed as well. The final goal of this

* Corresponding Author, Email: ekolaee@ut.ac.ir

document is maximum detection of the potential for improving Georgia-Iran relations and its in-depth analysis, as well as opening a space for discussion and debate on Georgia-Iran relations.

Results and discussion

Georgia has had longstanding ties with Iran, regardless of both countries constantly changing political dynamics. The strained relations of Iran with the US and several other factors have prevented close cooperation between Iran and Georgia.

One of the most important reasons that hampered the relations of these countries was initially Georgia's obvious course toward the West and its impact on Georgia's decision making. From Iran's point of view, having close ties with the country that has more contacts with its enemies, appeared to be a factor that hindered the relations. Iran had constantly a fear that the US might have used its power to use Georgia as a bridge-head against Iran. The Iranian side was concerned about its relations with the little South Caucasian country. Therefore, Georgian integration with the West, and more specifically its intention to join NATO, has made Iran very nervous. Worsening relations between Iran and the West, and the maintenance of sanctions have had a negative impact on Iranian-Georgian relations. As a result, Georgia cancelled a free visa regime with Iran in 2013 due to some pressure from the West. Iran is very prudent when it comes to its relations with Georgia, as far as the Iranian political establishment is not willing to be affected by United States' increased influence. This fear is expected to be diminished when Iran's relations with Western countries gradually becomes less harsh.

On the other hand, from a Russian perspective, improved Iran-Georgian relations will harm the Kremlin's strategic interests in south Caucasus, given that the Russian Federation is seeking the absolute hegemonic position in the region and perceives the third party's increased influence in a negative light. Iran is able to become an alternative energy source for Georgia. Therefore, it takes credit in decreased energy dependence on Russia. Diversifying energy import sources is a matter of pivotal importance for Tbilisi in its current volatile geopolitical landscape. According to some information in 2013, Russian lobbyists played an essential role in exaggerating Georgia-Iran economic relations in the West.

Showing more interest in the region stems in the fact that Turkey, one of the opponents of Iran, increased its influence and potential in the region and Georgia. But Iran's ability to serve as an important balancing force of Russia and Turkey in Georgia is prevented by geography. In contrast with the other two countries, there is no direct border between Georgia and Iran. Consequently, in parallel with intensification of relations of Georgia with Iran, it is possible for Russia and Turkey to enhance their impact in terms of Soft power, intensifying special services and their impacts on certain political processes. The Georgian authorities must be prepared to meet these challenges.

The issue of Israel should be considered in the same context. Israel has a long-standing partnership with Georgia mainly in the sphere of defense. Officials in Tel Aviv openly criticize the nuclear agreement and believe that Tehran is the biggest threat to its statehood. Therefore, it should be taken into account that Georgia's interests towards the Jewish state may be sacrificed to Tbilisi's close ties with Tehran.

Georgian-Iranian relations to some extent have been improved since the P5+1 countries and Iran signed a nuclear agreement in July 2015. Therefore, the Georgian government decided to broaden the spectrum of its foreign policy by coming up to Iran. For Iran, gaining an influence on the South Caucasus is one of the top foreign priorities so as to settle in the region as the powerful actor. The main obstacle of achieving its intentions is the West's politics towards Iran, sanctioning its economic activities, and halting its growing potential. Intensifying relations with Georgia seemed prolific for Iran in such circumstances. Thus, the main interest of Iran in the

Georgia could be defined as follows: to reduce the influence of outside powers, the US and Turkey, and Israel, as a security threat. This would reduce Iran's perceived security concerns and give Tehran more space to increase its own influence.

Conclusion

Iran's foreign policy towards Georgia is essentially a pragmatic one, shaped by realpolitik, historical experiences and balance-of-power calculations. Thus, Tehran may be eager to assert itself as a regional power, it is able to acknowledge the limitations of its own capacity and the constraint of external challenges by regional players (Russia, Turkey and Israel) and trans-regional powers such as United States. Therefore, its regional policy is relatively cautious and balanced. Regional stability and security is of particular importance and have often taken precedence over the ideological preoccupations in Iran's policy choices in the South Caucasus, inherent to a revolutionary and religious behavior. It means that, Tehran's policy is not aimed at Westernization in the region, but rather to keep the South Caucasus from becoming a base for U.S. and Israel military power. Iran pursues a stability-based foreign policy, albeit one that promotes its own economic and strategic objectives and expands its own regional influence. The JCPOA gives a new chance for establishment of good relations between the two countries. The Georgian side has already started to talk about the imports of natural gas from Iran. On May 2015 Iran and Georgia signed a memorandum of understanding after a meeting of the Bilateral Cooperation Commission, the first of its kind in the last ten years. Both sides are interested in common projects related to education, tourism, transport and, most importantly, the energy sector. Iran views Georgia as a transit country, which could bring its goods to Europe. There is no doubt that even after JCPOA, US-Iranian hostility and Russia, Turkey and Israel factors still will poison bilateral relations between Tehran and Tbilisi.

Keywords: Iran, Georgia, US, South Caucasus, Russia, energy, Turkey, Israel, JCPOA.

Development of a Context-Aware Sensor Network Algorithm to Optimize Sensor Coverage in a Smart City

Meysam Argany*

Assistant Professor of RS and GIS, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

A sensor network usually consists of numerous wireless devices deployed in a region of interest in a city. Despite the advances in sensor network technology, the efficiency and performance of a sensor network for collection and communication of the information in the cities may be constrained by the limitations of sensors deployed in the network nodes in urban areas.

These restrictions may include sensing range, battery power, connection ability, memory, and limited computation capabilities. These limitations create challenging problems for the users of the sensor networks and decision makers, which has pushed researchers from different disciplines in recent years to study various problems related to the design and deployments of efficient sensor networks regarding characteristics and requirements of the smart cities.

However, sensor networks deployment has some limitations when it comes to the modeling, monitoring, and detecting environmental processes. Urban environmental elements are also important to be considered in a realistic sensor networks deployment. Other examples of such elements include contextual information of the sensors environment and urban physical phenomena in distributed area of the network. Using such information in context of urban applications is necessary to perform an appropriate and efficient sensor network deployment. For this purpose, one needs to introduce relevant models of the type of urban phenomena, the accessibility or inaccessibility of the observation area in the city, urban environmental conditions, spatial relations between the objects as well as sensors, and different level of information availability. The complexity of the urban area as the sensing environment of sensor networks may result in several uncovered areas. Consequently, performing an optimized sensor placement affects how well an urban region is covered as well as the cost for constructing the network and connecting the networks elements. Hence, a fundamental issue in a sensor network in an urban area is the optimization of its spatial coverage. Based on previous studies, several optimization algorithms were developed and applied in recent years to meet this criterion. Most of these algorithms often rely on oversimplified sensors, their characteristics, and network models as well as simulation of the efficient urban model and its relevant elements.

Methodology

Based on mentioned issues, this paper presents an approach to improve sensor deployment

* Corresponding Author, Email: argany@ut.ac.ir

processes by integrating urban contextual information with optimization algorithms. To achieve this objective, the following approach containing three specific parts is defined.

First, a conceptual framework is proposed to integrate contextual information (CI) in sensor network deployment processes. CI defines the spatial dependencies between spatially adjacent nodes, nodes and obstacles, and obstacles themselves as well as the temporal dependencies between historical movements of nodes in the deployment process. The so-called CI is used in the proposed framework to find good alternative positions of sensor nodes to fill uncovered areas, and decide about the sensor's adequate actions in order to guide sensor network deployment.

Then, a local context-aware optimization algorithm is developed based on the proposed framework. The proposed method is a generic local algorithm, which accepts spatial, temporal, and thematic urban contextual information in different situations. In the proposed algorithm, sensors are ordered in a priority queue, in order to be sorted based on their coverage gain obtained by considering different CI, and following related moves in the network. Then, the sensor with the maximum gain is selected, and stands at the top of the queue. The movement types of sensors are related to the local CI as well as sensor network mission. By changing the position of the topmost sensor of the queue, the network configuration is updated. Then, the coverage gains of the adjacent sensors of moved sensor is recalculated and their ordering in the priority queue is updated. This optimization process is conducted iteratively until one of the predefined stopping criteria is reached.

Next, the accuracy assessment and error propagation analysis is conducted to determine the impact of the accuracy of contextual information on the proposed sensor network optimization method.

Results and discussion

The first category of CI is the terrain model and information on the network. The information can provide the elevation of the objects in study area and as a result the obstacles can also restrict the sensing field of the sensors. Thematic information is the next category of CI used in sensor network optimization. For example, several locations may be legally forbidden for the deployment of sensors. Given the restricted areas in context-aware optimization, sensor action is changed and new moves are defined. Desirability of coverage is another type of thematic information that can be considered in the optimization process. Suppose that there are some places in the study area, where sensors cannot be set up, but there is a high interest on those regions to be covered. Sensor placement in an environment with a critical asset is the next thematic CI side of the context-aware algorithm. Let assume a critical asset to be monitored for preventing any undesired access with a slight activity in its environment, which is located beside a street with high level of activities. Thus, there is an interest to monitor any intrusions within the fenced area, but not having the sensor always activated due to the traffic or other activity on the street.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper is to prevent to overcomplicate the optimization process, but rather to find a flexible methodology that can locally accommodate all relevant information that would have an impact on sensor placement. To do so, a local optimization framework was introduced. The extended optimization algorithm can come up with different sensor placement configuration according to the various circumstances, environmental information, and/or sensor parameters encountered.

Consequently, if there are any changes in sensor parameters or environment, the context-

aware algorithm can simply take new contextual inputs and regenerate a new sensor placement design adapted to the new situation. The outstanding advantage of the proposed context-aware algorithm was that it was designed independent of any specific CI. Thus, it is able to take into consideration different types of information based on specific network applications at hand.

Keywords: Sensor Deployment, Urban Area, Contextual Information, Optimization, Context-Aware Algorithm.