

# Evaluation of Place Attachment Rate in Home, Neighborhood and Urban (Case Study: Shiraz City, Iran)

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**ABSTRACT:** Attachment to a place is a positive emotional relation between a person and a place that leads to the significance of a place for the people staying there. Several studies have been presented about the sense of attachment to one or more locations around the world that each of them has evaluated the subject from a specific view and has achieved different results. This research tries to assess the relationship between intensity of attachment to a place and scale of the place with a new look at this issue. Accordingly, the factors influencing the attachment on the place have been examined in three dimensions of "physical", "socio-demographic" and "emotional". Physical factors have been divided into three scales of house, neighborhood and urban. Social-demographic factors have been generalized to variables such as age, gender, level of education, etc. Emotional factors have been extracted from 21 indices of the literature related to the concepts of place and attachment to a place. In this research, 12 emotional cases were evaluated for each of three interest place scales for people with different demographic characteristics in Shiraz. Studies were conducted through questionnaires at different neighborhoods with randomly selected citizens and the results were presented as a descriptive and analytical report. These results indicate that the feeling of attachment to the city scale is at the highest level, and then is a home, and finally is the attachment to the neighborhood scale.

**Keywords:** Place attachment, Place scale, Home, Neighborhood, City.

## INTRODUCTION

Places have different scales. A place that a person has a more attachment to it might be his/her room, house, apartment, neighborhood, city or country (Gieryn, 2000; Jordan, 1996). Despite the great variety of places with different scales, many studies have been performed on neighborhood scale. Approximately 70% of the research in the field of attachment to a place is related to the neighborhood scale, 20% of them is related to sense of attachment to the house, but much less research has dealt with a sense of city and almost none of them have studied the extra-city scale. Perhaps it is because of easier navigating of attachment to neighborhoods than

other place scales, while the most previous research have been the comparative study of the sense of belonging in one or two places, and rarely three and more places. For example, emotional interests of people to the three places (home, neighborhood, and city) were evaluated simultaneously by Hidalgo & Hernandez (2001) and the relationship between places and the attachment rate to place was indicated as a U-shaped curve (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001). In their study, it was shown that people attachment to the neighborhood is lower in comparison to home and city. In 2010, Maria Le-wicka has approved this report in a survey conducted in four cities in East Europe (Lewicka, 2010). On another study, Shamai & Ilatov (2005) investigates place attachment to a city, a region and a province among the immigrant groups and the inhabitants

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of Israel. However, he has not found a certain pattern of the relationship between place attachment and attachment rate in his study. In another study by Brown, there was not obvious difference between attachment to a home and attachment to a neighborhood (Brown et al., 2003). However, despite being easy to understand why most people have valued their homes more than farther places like the neighborhood, and why cities are more important than neighborhoods for citizens, their reason is still unclear. It should be noted that the cities have many factors caused their charm and these factors can increase a sense of belonging to them. However, the greater size of the place decreases some parameters of attachment to a place such as security and Pease (Lewicka, 2010). However, the current study is aimed to evaluate factors influencing the attachment to a place on three scales of house, neighborhood and city in Shiraz with specific social and cultural characteristics of its inhabitants. Accordingly, two main goals have been considered in this research:

Test of the relationship between scale of place and the intensity of attachment;

Evaluation of the effect of some demographic factors on attachment to a place in various scales of place.

According to the mentioned goals at above levels, considered hypotheses in this research consist of:

There are a meaningful relationship between scale of place (home, neighborhood and city) and the intensity of the attachment to the place that city has highest degree and the neighborhood has lowest degree.

Demographic properties of inhabitant influence on the intensity or weakness of the attachment to the place in various scales of place.

## Litrature Review

### The Attachment to the Place

According to the Jeniffer Cross (2001), attachment to a place is the fourth level of the sense of place. She described the attachment to a place for a person who has a complex emotional relationship with place (Cross, 2001). Stedman believe that place attachment is one of the dimensions of sense of place and positive emotional dependency that will be expanded between a person and a place (Stedman, 1997, 5). This word represents the emotions of a person toward geographical location that the sensory have been tied the person to the place (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, 139).

Generally, attachment to the subject like place, person or other subjects that person encounters with in the daily life, based on the previous experience of life, behavioral, cognitive, sensory and social structure (Proshansky, Fabian & Kaminoff, 1983, 59). Content of a place attachment refers to the emotional impact of place that attracts the person to it culturally and sensory.

There is the direct relationship between a person and a place and his attention to it. This means that increasing the attachment of a person to the place increases the rate of his attention and tendency to it (Mesch & Manor, 1998, 139).

Shumaker believes that the presence of person with similar properties such as social class, nation and religion, the economic situation, lifestyle, financial income and education play a critical role in the attendance of a person in the place (Shumaker & Taylor, 1983, 119). The attachment to the place has been increased with the prolongation of residence time and visit from one place. Also, it is related to the interaction of a person with the place (Relph, 1976, 33). One of the main properties of the attachment to the place is making a close emotional relationship with the places. In this way, the attachment to the place leads to the effective and persistent link to the place that people who can use it and it makes more relaxation and welfare in that place (Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001, 127). The attachment to the place has been constructed by emotional interest to a place according to the cognitive, emotional and behavioral interactions between people, groups and a place during the time (Brown & Perkins, 1992). Bonainto defined the attachment to the place as emotional attachment to the specific place and the conversion of person as part of place identity. He claimed that this issue has emerged within the framework of social and psychological process between a person and a place and leads to the interest and emotion tie to the place (Bonainto et al., 1999, 332). He has pointed to the personal properties and its role in the style of interaction with a place and various factors such as age, gender, income, material status, education, social class and occupation (Cohen & Shine, 1985; Bonainto et al., 1999). The idea, perception, imagery and personal purposes of person in relation with place (Gifford, 2002, 27), backgrounds, belief and personal values are other factors that play a role in this field (Browe, 1988). In other words, each person has a special sensory quality of life experiences that create the type of the sense of belonging to the place that occurred in the person's past experience (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992). The attachment to the place has generally been occurred after a person has the long term or strong experience to the place. The sense of place occurred in this process (Prentice & Miller, 1992; Tuan, 1974; Korpela & Harting, 1996; Gifford, 2002; Kaplan & Kaplan 1982). The person remembers places that have experienced the favorable events; therefore, a place is the part of individual experience that it can be symbol of its experience (Riley, 1992, 19). These experience and occurred events lead to the "memories" and "nostalgia" for repeating these experiences that have tied to the one's feelings (Bonainto et al, 1999; Sanoff, 1970; Rohe & Stedman, 1994). Although the attachment to the place is the dynamic process but a partial of that is related to the "memories" and "the important events in the life" and the style of its expression that required to the protection of self-sense of continuity during the time (Rubinstein & Parmelee, 1992, 134). In the study of attachment, the recognition of a place is not sufficient and this issue is the emotional state arising the important events in the life of a person (Chawla, 1992, 64). Amongst these events, it can be referred to the "temporary or continual leave of place". As far as the elder is concerned, the

attachment to the place is the tool for “preserving the past” and “the identity of person” against the changing (Milligan, 1998, 33).

Such a feeling can be interpreted into the preserving the past among people and “proud” of the past”. The theory of the attachment to the place represents that people develop their attachment to the specific place based on their previous expectations from the similar places and their cognitive process that depends on a place cognition (Marcus, 1992). The presence of people in the process of place creation leads to the better feeling to its place. The attachment to the place leads to the development of social relationships, maintaining the historical roots, the safety and calm feeling (Riley, 1992). The people when encountering its sense to the place express “I belong to that” and it will be meaningful (Jacobs, 1995, 109). This type of place attraction is the motivation of attendance and spending time in this place (Scherl, 1989). Some researchers have defined the attachment to the place based on the public participation at place (Marcus, 1992). Some activities lead to the promotion of a place attachment and reciprocally this sense leads to the “participation of people and be effective, in the social activities and continuity of their attendance in their place (Altman & Low, 1992, 12).

## Investigation of Place Scales

### Home

In western culture, the concept of a house has introduced in the form of a home and is defined in two states. In the first state, a home is an independent place in which people live in. The second state has been known as an apartment, which means that living together in a building place. The first meaning is more common between the middle families of North American and West Europe, while the second meaning is more common among families with lower economic situations, immigrants or people have a temporary life and have more generality (Lewicka, 2010). Home especially in the east (because of the preference private of family living) has considered the main unit of urban living and focused as a symbol of world that forms the urban texture (Ardalan & Bakhtiar, 1973, 32). Also, in Iran, there are two patterns of apartment and an independent house with a yard for urban housing (Hashemnezhad et al., 2014).

### Neighborhood

As previously mentioned, most studies have been performed in the place scale and focused on neighborhood scale. Although in the literature, the concept of neighborhood has been used, this concept is still ambiguous. According to the theory of Satel a neighborhood contained four areas that apply from the smallest block scale (area that children can be played without any attention) to the complete part of urban. Sometimes, there is the image from the neighborhood in the mind of its inhabitants or something based on the presented statistical units that are very different (Coulton, et al., 2010). Despite neighborhood units, there are issues that various studies have been performed in this

area in order to evaluate the sense of belonging and attachment; however, this concept cannot be simply generalized for each language or culture. For example, in Slovakia culture, there is not any concept equal to the word of neighborhood (vicinity) (Lewicka, 2010).

### Urban

In Geography, psychology of the environment and urban sociology, urban space refers to a physical place in which different social, cultural and economic strata exist (Lapinitie, 2007). The urban space is the sense concept that the public activities of urban living have occurred into it. Streets, squares, and parks of a city have formed the human activities (Bahreini, 1998). The city can be investigated from the viewpoint of scientific and philosophic. The scientific viewpoint has raised from the visual and body view in social, economic, body, spatial, and functional, fields by the ponderable criteria, scales, and evaluated this phenomenon from the intellectual view through the identity finder approach (Habibi, 2004).

### Theoretical Framework

Based on the environmental psychology experts’ ideas, the attachment to the place has created based on body, social, demographic, cultural, emotional elements and the experience of a person to the place. Therefore, the influencing factors on place attachment can be divided to three fields of “body”, “socio-demographic” and “emotional-experiential” (Altman & Low, 1992). The perception of place attachment was used to assess and evaluate the pathway of emotions, kind feeling, and personal experiences to achieve the research goal.

To valid the obtained theoretical framework, the Delphi technique was used. The result from many investigations revealed that the keywords were critical and important amongst 12 items (Fig. 1) and has been mostly applicable. That have been considered as a theoretical base in the present research to evaluate the emotional and experience rate of people in the life stream (the process of life) is in the place. These items consist of “nostalgia”, “calm”, “anguish”, “proud”, “having root”, “satisfaction”, “leisure time”, “familiarity”, “leaving the place”, “influencing”, “belonging” and “changing the place”. Body factor has also been generalized to three place scales of home, neighborhood and city. In the part of socio-demographic factors, a group of indices such as age, gender, education, occupation and the period of living have been evaluated for measuring the influencing factors on attachment.

### MATERIAL AND METHODS

Basically, each research follows the specific methodology rules. Two basic issues play a role in determining the type of research process. One is the nature of the studied topic and another one is the view of research. In this study, both criteria confirm the utilization of descriptive- analytical research process relying on library resource and design of questionnaire. In codification of the questionnaire, the Likert template was used.

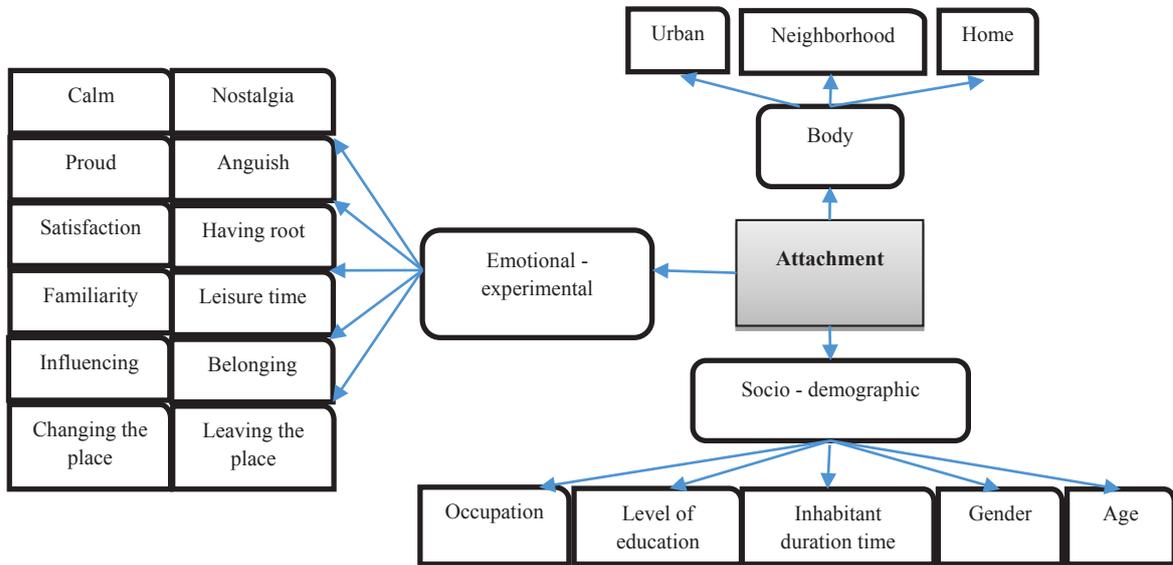


Fig.1: Diagram of evaluation of attachment variables

The questionnaire consists of three sections: The first section follows the extraction of information about the introduction of people based on the demographic information consisting of: age, gender, education etc. The second section consists of evaluation of different emotions of people toward three place scales and this section consists of three sets of question; 12 indexes for evaluation, and the sense of people (considered in the theoretical framework of research) have been evaluated in three scales of home, neighborhood and city separately. The third section consists of the open questions that the various reasons and motivation of people about various emotions have been evaluated and investigated in the various place scales.

The volume of samples according to the Cochran formula consists of 385 numbers that have randomly been selected from 10 neighborhoods of Shiraz city and from various demographic, gender and job spectrum. The analysis of data has been accomplished using the replicate size test and also mean of response of people was in relationship with each of 12 indexes for extracted home, neighborhood and city and in order to interpretation of the collected data, the analysis of content of method used for evaluation of interviews in the form of open questions mentioned in the questionnaire.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, after data collection through the questionnaire and analyzing them, the various tests were used.

### Research Hypothesis 1

After evaluation and comprehensive analysis of data result from the statistical questionnaires, the result have been presented in

the form of plots for 12 emotional-experiential items and the sum is as follows:

In the response to this question that when you are not in your own city, how much do you miss there? The result shows that the urban scale is at the highest mean score 4.17, and then is home with the mean score of 3.27, and finally is neighborhood with mean score of 2.62. The result of this test is shown in the Fig. 2.

Fig. 3 represents the result from the question that to what extent are you dependent (attachment) on your own city? While, there is the sense of belonging to the city for most of people, but the belonging to the home and neighborhood with the mean of 3.01 and 2.88 respectively, don't have much difference with each other. It seems that the low level belonging to the home is due to the tenant of some participants that can both have the sense of belonging to the home. Also, the old textures of home and small area of home are other mentioned reasons for this issue. The results reveal that two parameters consisting of proud and nostalgia to the place have gained partly similar scores (Figs. 4 and 5). According to two items in the urban scale, the means above 4.14 and in the home scale have gained scores of 3.44 and 3.37, respectively. The sizable difference in this section with the score difference of 0.3 is in the neighborhood scale. Likely, it can be found that these similar scores are due to the close concept of two senses, because each of them explains the past of people's life. Therefore, the citizens observe their past life were interested in comparison with other places according to the place scale.

Familiarity with the place compared with other indices has a



Fig. 2: The plot for the evaluation of anguish to place anguish to place

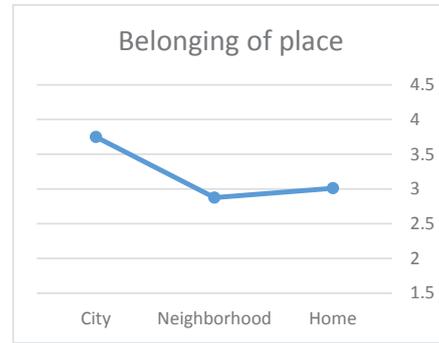


Fig. 3: The plot for the evaluation of belonging to place belonging to place



Fig. 4: The plot for the evaluation of proud to place proud to place

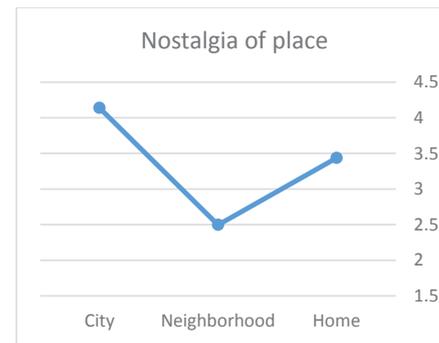


Fig. 5: The plot for the evaluation of nostalgia to place nostalgia to place



Fig. 6: The plot for the evaluation of familiarity to place familiarity to place

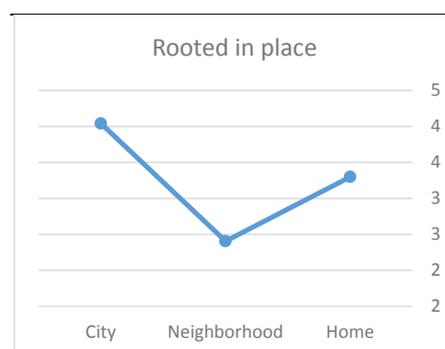


Fig. 7: The plot for the evaluation of having root at place having root at place

different result. The only index has a score mean above 3 in three place scales and also close score in two parts of a city and a home, is this scale. The reason for this issue can be found the common sense from the word of familiarity with people and also bias of native citizens for indicating the knowing about their city (Fig. 6). In contrast with the familiar item, the sense of having root in the neighborhood is in the lowest level (Fig.

7).

The most important reason for this research can be understood in relocation of lessee citizens in various neighborhoods and destruction of obvious boundaries and comprehensible neighborhood for citizens (Fig. 7). The biggest difference between score levels in considered scales about attachment in relation with the concept of leisure time have been achieved



Fig. 8. The plot for the evaluation of leisure at place leisure at place



Fig. 9. The plot for the evaluation of calm at place calm at place



Fig. 10. The plot for the evaluation of satisfaction from place satisfaction from place



Fig. 11. The plot for the evaluation of influencing on place influencing on place

between two scales of neighborhood and city. This obvious difference can be searched in the not suitability of neighborhood facilities for passing leisure time and historical places etc. that lead to more people's attention to their places in the urban scale (Fig. 8).

The biggest numeral in the home scale has been recorded for calm item of 3.97 that this score among full of investigated items have lowest difference with the urban scale. It is obvious that the reason for this issue can be attributed to the view of citizens and function of home in recent age as a place for calm and avoid the turbulence raised out of home (Fig. 9).

In relation with the satisfaction item, like other previous items considered by citizens, there are three scales of a city, home and neighborhood, respectively. According to citizens' and experts' view, satisfaction in the urban scale was achieved by concepts such as the dominant culture of people, infrastructure facilities, recreation, etc. and in the home scale, by items such as home and calm into it and relationships with neighborhood (Fig. 10). The influencing on place is the most different result in this research. Dominance on home scale by the paucity of

area and continual presence of woman and their housekeeping role are the main reasons for achieved response (Fig. 11).

The changing place is another item that citizens with negative question asked that express how much do you like to change your place permanently? The result shows that citizens are willing to the change of home or neighborhood but constantly have great attachment to the city (Fig. 12).

Also, citizens believe that there is most tendency to short-term leaving in home scale. Herein, housewives have high tendency for spending their time out of home because of the continual presence at home. Also, there is the lowest order for the tendency to leave the city (Fig. 13).

As a whole, the sum of obtained score from 12 emotional items for assessment of the intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city are presented in Table 1. The intensity of attachment of people shows according to the place scale in the 0.05 area is Significant ( $p$ -value  $< 0.5$ ). So, the hypothesis 1 has confirmed based on the attachment to the Shiraz city with average of 3.7816 in the highest level and neighborhood with average of 2.6394 in the lowest level.



Fig. 12: The plot for the evaluation of changing the place and attachment changing the place and attachment



Fig. 13: The plot for the evaluation of leaving the place and attachment leaving the place and attachment

Table 1: The analysis of variance for the intensity of attachment and place scale

Attachment	Mean	Standard deviation	F	P-Value sig.
Home	3.2994	0.70868	229.842	0.000
Neighborhood	2.6394	0.7828		
City	3.7816	0.73363		
Sum	3.2401	0.87703		

### Evaluation of Hypothesis 1

Overall, the study can be realized that urban scale, when reviewing shortage of city, expressed without any defect and wane and have great bias and highest level of attachment. The main reason for obtained result from the view of citizens consists of the existence of commercial and municipal facilities, the history of Shiraz city, the existence of cultural, artistic, and natural symbols. The result reveals that the home after the city has second level of sense of attachment according to the view of Shiraz citizens. This issue among persons who live in ledged, home and apartments and old homes, will be decreased. In this scale, familiarity and calm items that have the specified relationship with the area of place are in the highest level. It should be noted that in this research, the result of Hidalgo & Hernandez (2001) about u shape relationship between in the intensity of attachment and scale of place in the case study of metropolis Shiraz with specific social can be confirmed or why neighborhood are in the lowest level of attachment can be confirmed in the field of body, social and psychological view. The main reason for this view can be explained with the destruction of the comprehensible boundary of neighborhoods for citizens in the present municipalize, destruction of the social functions of neighborhoods and continual inner urban immigrant. (Fig.14)

### Evaluation of Hypothesis 2

Hypothesis 2 is the research on evaluation of the influencing rate of social demographic variables such as gender, age, the level of education, the number of family member, the duration of residence of people on intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city.

Data from Fig. 15 reject the existence of significant relationship among the intensity of attachment to the place and the gender

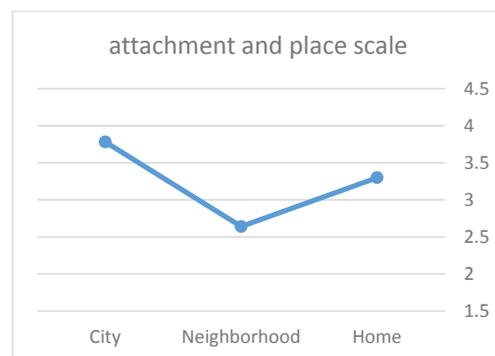


Fig. 14. The relationship between the attachment rate and place scale



Fig. 15: The relationship between the gender and their intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city.

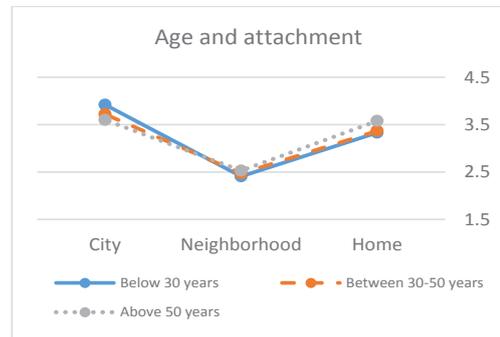


Fig. 16: The relationship between the age and their intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city.

(0.204=p-value>0.05). According to this result, it can be observed that in various place scale, the gender does not have a significant effect on the attachment place and place.

Data from Fig. 16 confirm the existence of significant relationship between the intensity of attachment to the place and the age. The data obtained from the Student's t-test and relation (0.2=p-value<0.05) confirm this hypothesis. Therefore, people in various range of age have toward various scales of place, have various levels of attachment.

Data from Fig. 17 reject the existence of significant relationship between the intensity of attachment to the level of education (0.204=p-value>0.05). According to this result, it can be observed that in various place scales, the level of education does not have a significant effect on the attachment to the place. Data from Fig. 18 confirm the existence of a significant relationship between the intensity of attachment to the place and the inhabitant duration time. The data obtained from the Student's t-test and relation (0.008=p-value<0.05) confirm this hypothesis. Therefore, greater inhabitant duration time in home, neighborhood and city leads to the increase the attachment of the place attachment.

Data from Fig. 19 reject the existence of a significant relationship between the intensity of attachment to the number of family members (0.151=p-value>0.05). The hypothesis of effectiveness of this item rejects the attachment for three scales of place.

The result of Student's t-test about assessing the effect of variables such as age, gender, the level of education, the duration of residence in the place and finally the number of family members was shown that except for two factors of age and duration of residence, other proposed variables have not critical effect on the difference of their attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city. It is obvious that various people in the term of their age, according to the

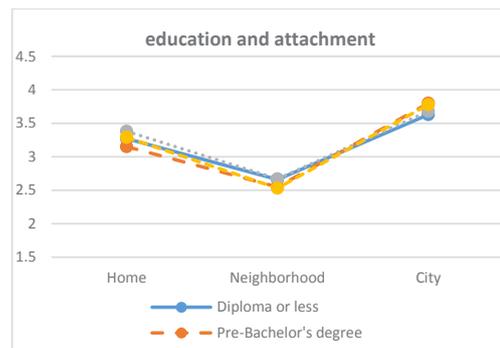


Fig. 17. The relationship between the level of education and their intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city.

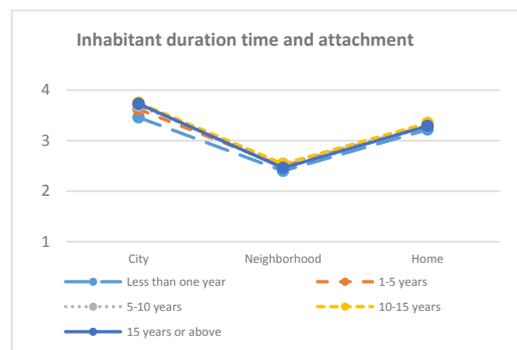


Fig. 18. The relationship between the inhabitant duration time and their intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city.



Fig. 19. The relationship between the number of family member and their intensity of attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city.

situation of work and life, have more emotional and intellectual interactions. The result of such research reveals that adolescents after crossing their childhood, for the first time enter the society and this entering is through the finding the same age friends at the neighborhood level. Therefore, adolescent spend more time with these people. By increasing the age of people and entering to the field of work, the level of their interactions upgrade from the home and neighborhood scales and it can be observed in the city scale. However, in the old aging period, people prefer to spend more time at home so that this relationship would depend on some cases. Thus, the elder cannot stay at other places for the long time nor can they expect home. The obtained result shows that the inhabitant duration time of people have had a different effect on the intensity of their

attachment in three scales of home, neighborhood and city; thus, the greater inhabitant time of people in proposed scales, increase the intensity of attachment in three scales. However, it should be noted that for full of various spectrum such as the inhabitant duration time, the attachment to a city is in the first priority and finally the attachment to the neighborhood is in the third priority. Obviously, by increasing the social interaction of people and also the more recognition to the environmental body properties, that increase with the increasing the inhabitant duration time of people lead to the increasing of their attachment to the home, neighborhood and city.

### CONCLUSION

The present research investigated the relationship among different place scales and the intensity of attachment. Hereof, different emotional aspects of people have been evaluated in three scales of home, neighborhood and city. The response of Shiraz citizens to this research question revealed that the city scale is in the highest level intensity of attachment. According to the view of citizens, the reason for this issue has been raised from the climate, cultural and historical properties of city. They prefer to express the highest level of their emotions to the urban scale. The attachment to the home is at the second level and finally is neighborhood. Factors such as “destruction of neighborhood boundaries”, “diminish of the neighborhood social function”, “the lack of specified physical texture”, and finally “the movement of habitants to different neighborhoods” are the most important reasons of attachment in the scale of neighborhood that identified by people. In the second part of research, the effect of variables such as socio-demographic on the intensity of attachment was evaluated in the three scale of home, neighborhood and city. The result revealed that among the proposed variables, two variables of age and the duration time have had a direct effect on their intensity of attachment,

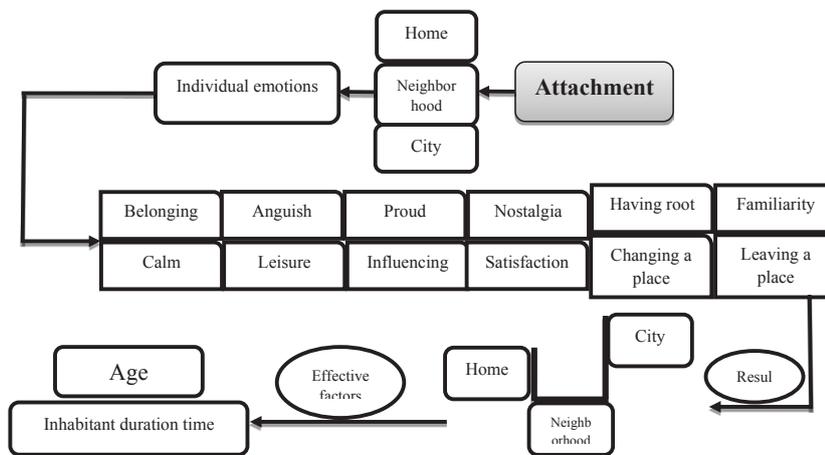


Fig. 20: The pluralization trend of research and result

this meant that the attachment of people toward various scale of place for various age group, and also, by increasing the inhabitant duration time of people, have been approved differently in the their home, neighborhood and city. Fig.20 shows the clear pattern for introduction of the trend of research and the obtained result from the continual one-year works on this research.

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