Criteria and Indicators of Presence Quality Improvement in Urban Spaces (Case Study: Historical Texture of Kashan city)

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ABSTRACT:

Urban space has been formed in historical texture of cities under the influence of meaning and shape on the one hand and qualities related to human behaviors on the other hand. Among these points, neighborhood centers as the most important areas of social life in urban open space play a critical role in attracting people and improving quality and vitality of environment. This study presents the related literature in an analytical approach and expresses the relationship between neighborhood centers and human presence by structure analysis; it focuses on rules governing presence quality and formed behaviors in this places. In this survey, human and his presence in neighborhood centers are evaluated and urban spaces concept is formed by composing space location characteristics and human behavior. At least, it is sated that people`spresence in urban space of neighborhood centers expresses their thoughts and cultural interactions whose form shows its function and meaning. Therefore, humans would appear in urban space in a way that neighborhood centers quality depends on activity kind and their user's behavioral patterns.

Keywords: *Presence,UrbanSpace, Neighborhood Centers, Historical Texture, Behavior*

INTRODUCTION

Generally, a city is a physical and spiritual system which responds to its residents` needs, activities and behaviors. Spatially, human presence in city is based on social needs and their special behavioral patterns. Therefore, they shape or even modify urban spaces. A city or its different spaces are a ground or container for such happenings. On the one hand, they are a mirror reflecting the whole society activities and behavioral patterns; on the other hand, they affect their resident's activities and behaviors. Although interpretations related to urban space are different, they resemble fundamentally.

By urban space, we mean all the urban open spaces which are

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simultaneously a ground for activities, events and social life and culture which affect these processes and human products, too. Of course, it shouldbeconsidered that urban areas are an image of human and they are aggregation centers for persons and things. (Madanipour, 1992, 88)

According to Kevin lynch, no factor of city is experienced automatically, unless it is known in relation with its environment and hierarchy of events which cause its occurrence and existence and they are experiences of memories. (Lynch, 1960,1).Therefore, after defining the meaning and concept of presence in this article, we review it in parts of urban spaces of Kashan historical texture. Finally, applying the results of field studies, criteria and indicators of people's presence in urban space of neighborhood centers are expressed.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In this study, the descriptive research method and documents technique have been used in order to prepare theoretical principle. First, the importance of presence to public space (especially in observation of human) will be studied by reviewing the literature and its role in the promotion of quality of life. Then, a method on the base of criteria and indicator will be applied for objective measuring of presence quality in the neighborhood scale. In this study, human and his presence in urban spaces are considered as parts of urban spaces. Result from comparison of theories and case study indicates that Kashan city has a historical texture and it could be argued that there is a relation between human behavior and public places in each neighborhood center. At the end, analytical methods have been applied to achieve the relationships between variables and cues resulted from the theoretical principles.

Human, Urban Spaces and Behavior

The relationship between human and its city affects his fundamental matters of life like a strong link. Looking more closely to city, a neighborhood center and its facilities specify the thought of its residents to improve their environment or even motivate people to move and do something. As I discussed in this paper, the concept of urban space is a composition of local characteristics and human presence which is a part of features related to his cognitive and behavioral aspects. By behaviors and experiences, urban space is developing and evolving at moment and its vitality and dynamic space are consequences of life in urban space.

Therefore, there is a strong relationship between urban spaces foundation (human and physical aspects) qualitatively (Fig.1). Human presence in urban space is the first necessity for beginning human's interaction. Urban space, by defining concepts, provides a suitable context for urban activities and it defines a system for functions. Taking the physical aspect into consideration is in order to develop functional and semantic relations and it embodies these concepts.

Human Presence in Urban Spaces

In recent years , discussions related to environmental designers has not been possible without paying attention to human. This level of effect had fluctuations in history, so sometimes people are subdued to environment and sometimes vice versa. Nevertheless , environment can supply a potential facility for human to express his behavior and experience. In view of

environmental-urban design researchers, urban space can be considered the best place to evaluate social, cultural, artistic and cognitive aspects along time. If one is to identify some of the characteristics,which have helped implementation in survival of pedestrian precincts(Tiwari,2013).

Urban space is the best context to accrue behavioral human's interactions. These spaces include all public areas where people have physical and visual access (Madanipour, 1992). In this regard ,researchers have carried out studies about pedestrian activities and human's behavior in public spaces in order to enhance their quality. There has been a great emphasis on the role and importance of public spaces in different aspects of socio-cultural and health issues in the literature of design and planning (Alexander, 2012; Hall, 1990; Long,2002; Thiel,1961; Barker,1968; Whyte, 1980; Karier, 2005;Tibbalds, 1992; Madanipour ,2000; Calthrop,1993;Katz, 1994). As Long has depicted in Fig.2, environmental data are achieved from perceptional process which formed in mind not only perceptional processes, but also behavioral reaction in shape of schematics.

On the other hand, as it can be perceived from the process of environment- human relationship (Fig.3) ,the reasons of human presence in urban space are classified into three parts, according to Gehl: A) Necessary activities(e.g. going to school or work, shopping, waiting for a bus) that participants have no choice. B) Optional activities take place, if time and place allow, and weather and setting invite them(e.g. taking a walkning to get a fersh air, stopping for a coffee in a street, people watching) C) Social activities depend on the presence of others in public space(e.g.communal activities, passive contacts such as simply seeing and hearing other people)(Gehl,1987,9-11)

Presence in urban spaces, applications and activities seem more important than physical dimension. According to Tibbalds, cities and urban environments are beyond a collection of buildings which are separated by streets or parks. Undoubtedly, cities belong to and are about people. They embody people's activities. Therefore, a better efficiency , variety, and quality of citizenship would be more possible. (Tibbalds, 1992,15) Cullen discusses that townscape is "the art of relationship". There are three factors affording city's sensational experience: optics, place and content. Among these factors, optics is the most important one and declares us a dynamic experience of walking city. Cullen's (1975) work shows how movement can be read as a pictorial sequence. Our perception is a function of the visual and experiential qualities of the environment
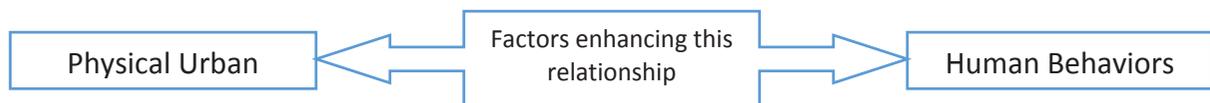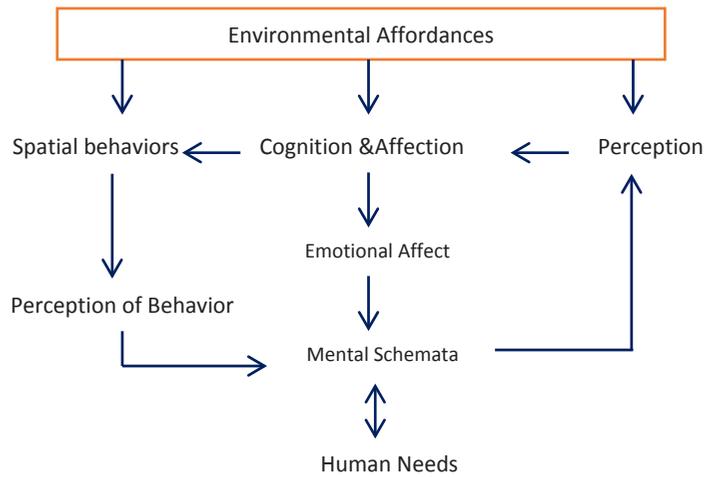

Fig.1: conceptual framework

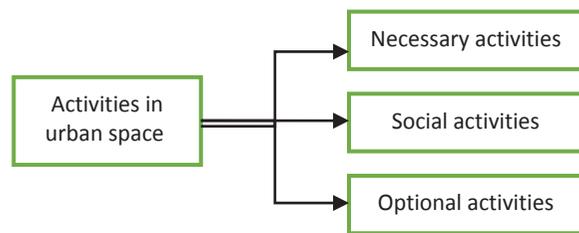Fig. 2: Intergation of Human and Behavior Process (source: Gibson, 1979)

Fig. 3 :Activities in Urban Space (source:Gehl, 1987,9-11)

we are moving through and it is a dynamic activity involving movement and time(Carmona et al.,2005,134). Appelyard indicated that how a systematic approach to urban designing based on human behavior can be turned into a designing instrument baesd on traffice systems. Appelyard's framwork is much more prespective. His criteria suggests the vibrant, lively and well-integrated urban form of cities. (Ibid)

In 1981, Kevin Lynch suggested five performance dimensions for cities` spatial shape in his book "A Theory of Good City Form" . He called one of them fit which means the degree to which the form and cpacity of spaces match the pattern of behaviours that people engage in or want to engage in. (Carmona et al., 2005, 9).According to Lynch, fit cinsiders matching between act and shape in behavioral ground and behavioral zone, too. Therefore it can be concluded that fit has close relationship with culture. He suggests two main ways to study fit and consequently, behaviors interpretation: first, observing people and their behaviors while doing activiites and recording them by audiotape and photo and second, interview with usres(Lynch,1981;quoted from Bahrainy,2008, 241).Appleyard (1979) extended Lynch's work by identifing four ways in which buildings and other elements in the urban environment were known: By their imageability or distinctivness of form;By their visibility as people move around the city;By their role as a setting for activiites;By the significance of a building's role in society. (Ibid)

Another scientiest studying human and environment is Rapoport who considered and discussed mutual relationship between human and environment in his works. In his book "Human Aspects of Urban Form"(1977), Rapoport discussed different aspects such as culture, perception, cognition, behavieral issues and made environmet(Rapoport,1982,223). According to him, direct relation between people and spaces or buildings isn't of great concern, but the relation between people is more critical. Barker discussed psychology in a point of view called ecology(Barker,1968). He suggested that if there is adjustment between human acts and physical and social environment, places will come to conformity. In behavioral setting disccusion, great forces are effective so that possibly their most important one is local community and privacy. (Lawson, 2012,11)

Generally, presenting a comprenhensive classification of theories expressed in appreance studies in urban space can help us to identify its qualitative dimensions.

Conceptual Model and Criteria

Reviweing the above mentioned studies emphasizes on a conceptual model existence. In this model ,a comperhensive

approach should be taken into consideration between different dimensions of urban space. Each of studies carried out by Lynch(1960),Whyte(1980), Long(2002), Gehl(1987), Cullen(1975), Rapoport(2012), and Appleyard(1979), emphasizes on one of physical, social or cultural dimensions. Assessment of culture is seldom undertaken and often dismissed as purely anecdotal in comparision with the hard evidence offered by established economic and phusical compact evaluations(Garcia,2005). These three dimensions should be taken into consideration at time of persons`presence and they are in multilateral interaction with each other. (Fig.4)
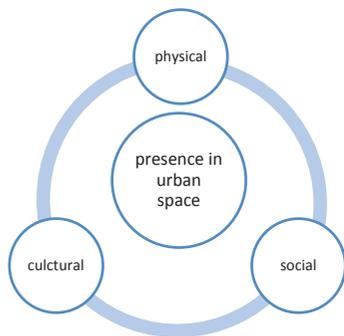
Fig.4: Conceptual model of spaces dimensions

Considering results achieved from these researches, it can be concluded that in examination of presence quality in urban

space, regarding the three parts of physical (space designed elements), social (not-designed elements such as people presence in urban space) and cultural (norms forming and controlling behaviors) dimensions plays a more effective role. Taking physical aspect of urban space and activities whitin it into consideration can be used to improve quality of urban space. Behaviral setting (Barker,1968) and space occupancy by people(Rapoport,1982) are considered subdivided parts of urban space. Consequently, each kind of setting reflects the activity carried out within it.These activities take a different form cinsidering socio-cultural aspect, Rapoport suggests. People propend their surronding environment based on their experience of space and its structure and information. Behaviores strongly depend on spatial pattern and activities. As spatial pattern can form processes of person's perception and feeling development, a part of this spatial pattern is related to physical dimension of urban spaces.

By considering some neighbourhood centers in Kashan historical texture, the effect of space structure on human movement and his social behavior is reviewed. In this study ,the bilateral relationship between space structure and human perasence is considered simultaneously. A behaviral environment can enhance different behaviral indicating what describes cultural and social values. Moreover, what happens in a space is an identity forming element and it shapes the behaviral patterns of that space.(Fig. 5)

Urban space is the main location for events and happenings which play a creative role in human presence scale. Urban space is a commuting place between past, present and future.
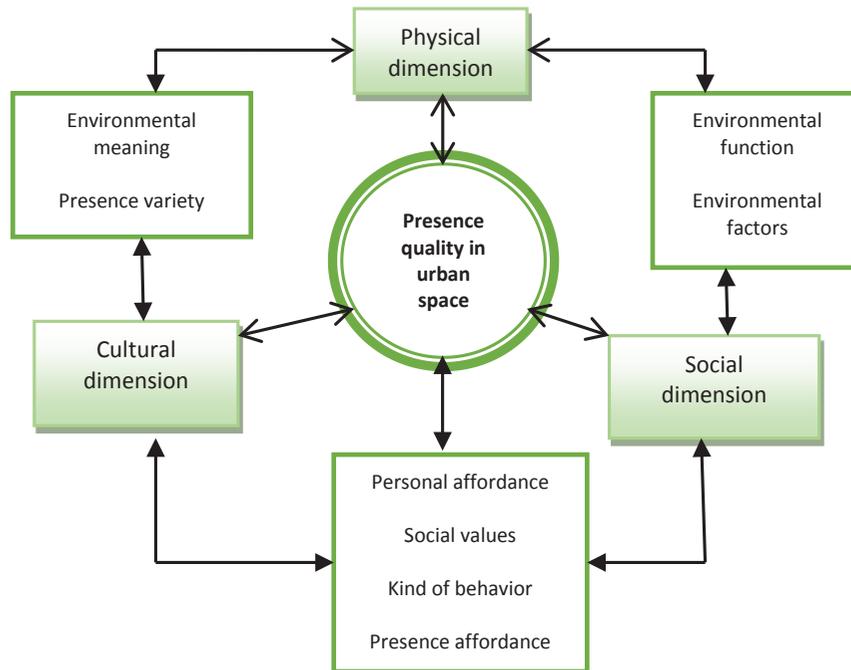
Fig. 5: Conceptual model of presence quality criteria in urban space

This space encompasses the four fundamental elements which consist in residents or passengers, human made elements (physical), relations (between people and elements) and time (Habibi & Maghsoudi, 2002, 10). Human as an effective force of shaping urban design space and as a physical environment developer plays a significant role. Also, he can help to improve urban space quality by his presence. Nowadays there are amorphous spaces or anti-spaces in cities in which unprofitable, abandoned and neglected space can be observed which Roger Trancik calls   "lost spaces"(Trancik,1986,3). Peresence promotion depends on two general aspects of social and physical structure of neighbourhood centers (Gehl, & Lars, 2004,25). In social dimension, sense of belonging (personalization) to neighbourhood, social interactions can be identified. In environmental psychology, sociofugal space invite people. Relations and continual contact of people have led to stronger relationships and increasing unity between them. Customs and traditions of each city and each group have also played an important role in the spatial form of each neibourhood center. Some of the cities have given more value to religious ceremonies and have built the nesseary spaces in their nieghbourhood center such as Hoseinieh6(Ferdowsian,2002,71). In order to experess the method of persent study in neighbourhood center

in respect of suggested conceptual model,in Table 1 there are peresented peresence quality indicators and ceriteria.

By considering presented quality indicators, presence in urban spaces can be improved. Environmental qualities in this survey are selected in respect of behaviral needs of space users. Collective urban spaces development and social interactions improvement in urban spaces. Each   of these indicators is achived based on related literature in behavior- environment scientists` view point. Considering these criteria and their resulted indicators can help to study peresence in urban spaces.

Case Study

Kashan historical urban fabric is represented as a case study which is known as vital texture but consists of peresence criteria of their own time as well. (Naghshe Jahan Pars Consultant Engineers, 2010). Kashan city is located in a hot and dry zone. This analysis will result in the development of a suitable framework for planning and design of new development as persent and future neighbourhood. Originally ,the aim of this study is to prove that a liveable city is formed by peresence of people. Historical texture of Kashan is a coherent texture with a strong spacial organization. This city is located with its organic development and its design criteria which are the
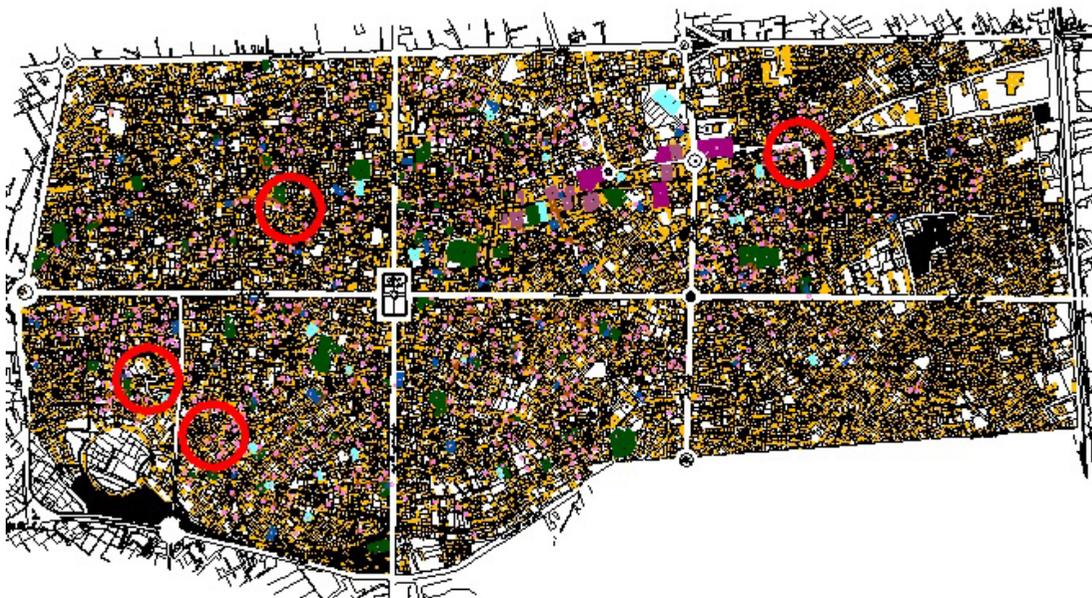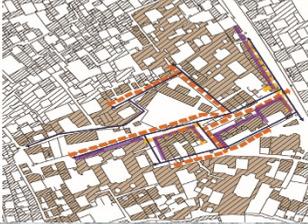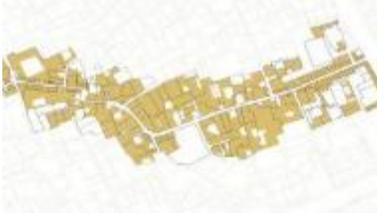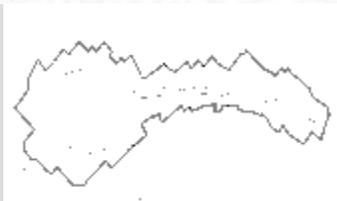

Fig.6:. Historical texture of Kashan and chosen neighbourhood(source: Kashan Municipality,2009)

Table 1: neighbourhood centers in historical texture

Neighbourhood center	Map	Physical Elements of NhC.	Identity Significance
Soltan Mir Ahmad		Reservior,Bath, Mosque, Historical Houses,	Entrance Landmark, Mixed Uses, Visual Corridor,Mixed Activities
Kushk-e-Safi		Weave of Shaare Workshop, Reservior,Bath, Mosque,	Entrance Landmark, Visual Corridor, Mixed of Activities, Serial Vision, Residential Texture
Darb-e-Bagh		Reservior, Mosque, Bath, Hossienieh	Conection to Bazaar Interaction of People, Religious Activities, Residential Texture
Darb-e-Fin		Ghazi Asad-o-Allah Squar, Cheheltan Hossienieh, Reservior , Zoorkhaneh	Entrance Landmark, Mixed Uses, Visual Corridor, Interaction of People, Residential Texture
Amirieh Cross		Reservior, BiBi Sar Khatoon Emamzadeh, Weaving Carpet Workshop	Mixed Uses,Conection to Bazaar, A Lively Environment, Entrance Landmark, Residential Texture

result of the cultural, social situation of the people, and also the climatic and ecological situation of the region. The historical texture of Kashan city is a solid and continuouse entity. In these neighbourhoods centers of social interactions are observable in individual or collective forms.(Fig.6) The case study area involves these neighbourhood centers: Soltan Mir Ahmad, Kushk-e-Safi, Darb-e-Bagh, Darb-e-Fin and Amirieh Cross. (Table2)

Nieghbourhood centers served all the daily needs of people. Old buildings of traditional texture have a strong effect on the mentality of their inhabitants. These texture are still active and give services to people. Peresence quality is evalueated via visual observation, attending each neighbourhood , observing and recording people`s behavior. Therefor, survey is carried out by summing up using suggested criteria and indicators. Some of these refer to religious rites which give an attractive quality

to the neighbourhood. Peresence qualities in urban spaces such as neighbourhood centes are persented in the following:

Considering gaind ceriteria and indicators, field studies of intended neighbourhood centers are started. Also, identified was what Seamon(2007) labeled a time-space routine—a set of more or less habitual bodily actions that extend through a considerable portion of time—for example, a getting-up routine or weekday going to- lunch routine. One ingredient of placeballet is familiarity arising from routine, since regular actions of individuals meet together in space, which becomes a place of familiarity and perhaps attachment (Ibid). The regularity of place ballet is unintentional and only comes about through time and many repeated "accidental" meetings. At its base is the habitual force of body-subject, which supports a timespace continuity grounded on bodily patterns of the past (ibid).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study shows that there is a strong place ballet in neighbourhood center. So, it is a majer factor of selecting these neighbourhood centers. In this survey, people observation recording is done by putting codes related to indicators and criteria in map(Fig.7). For example, one of the behavieral maps is as follows:

For each index and ceriterion, it is essential to consider peresence recognizable dimensions. To reach this aim, living in the study neighbourhood with a close relationship to residents was the first and basic step to be taken. Then, it was necessery to investigate every criterion. Based on experience of various experts involved in the programme, in dealing with historic

projects, knowledge of people's life and existing problems in these neighbourhood centers,are nessasory. It is carried out through recording observations and classifying them into more compehensive concepts. Therefore, the criteria dimensions are specified.

Human scale: Because people playa major role in peresence quality improvement, considering the human scale in urban environment designing assumes great importance. Human activities make an attractive spaces along with mystrey and functions intrgration, activities and accessibilities catching all the people's attention . Urban spaces are formed for human and his activities. Neighbourhood centers are people'daily meeting place and they should provide a scene for theater,playing,rites ,cerenomies and a place to set up Bazaar, so they are designed according to these activiteis and considering human and his psychological and physical scale(Keniresh,2009,2) .But because of hasty interferences, social life in urban spaces of modern cities is faded and such spaces are ugly and unpleasant, since they lack human scale which means crucial characteristrics for successful urban environments.(Tibbalds,1992,64)

Relationship between activities:Kind of activities and social life occurring in nieghbourhood centers and their abilities to attract different people and group may result in peresence quality improvement. One of the major factors affecting urban spaces dynamics and vitality in different hours and seasons is residents` peresence which highly depends on activities done someplace in urban spaces. These activities take place in public open spaces where the most fascinating parts of historical texture are. In other words, the level of responsiveness to peresence of residents provid necessary opportunities for social

Fig.7: Darb-e-fin- behavioral map

interactions. When people interact with other residents, they feel a stronger relation with their place and groups peresence, social networks formation and living in different hours of day. Environment function: It concerns with movement mode in space and spatial relations along with physical places visibility such as house, bakery, bath, reservior , etc.in nieghbourhood center and space accessibility mode which Tibbalds called "visual and physical access" (Tibaldds,1992,51). In this regardaccessibility, movement continuty and peresence of people such as children and the old people in different parts of nieghbourhood center, easy and effective movement of vechiel(in new life), adequate relation with streets and access of network in city are effective indices.

Environment concept:Environment concept is related to conditions of space body organization and mental relief perception from space, so this character can encourage people to rest, to walk and friendly to experience collective life."Environment "is a complex concept incorporation diverse aspects.Spatial data,social aspects,and cultural, phisical.architectural,symbolic,geographical and biological considerations are among the significant environmental dimensions(Tabaeian&Einifar,2011).In environmental preference framewok suggested by Kaplan (2000), mystery is a major factor in urban space. Similarly,Nasar&Yurdakul(1990,75) observes that while interest increases with the complexity of an environment, our pereference increases only up to a piont, beyond which it decreases(Carmona et al.,2005,132). Also, public activites of people happen in urabn open spaces called daily actions. (Daily activities include movements like going to Bazzar, school and cultural activities which take place on spacial occasions such as religios activities , ceremonies and rites which invite people together in public spaces.

Environmental factors:Since noticing environmental comfort may be related to human's primary needs, in order to respond this, needs play an effective role to perceive other space qualities which help people`s peresence continuation. Taking into consideration a place calm and without unpleasant by bearing in mind climatic factors such as wind, humidity, sunshine and shadow really helps to respond this need .

Social utility results from people interaction based on space sociability which means residents and different social groups` peresence and interaction between them, so it may affect nieghbourhood center quality improvement.

CONCLUSION

To sum up , due to persent research, it could be understood that presence quality improvement in urban space, different dimensions related to peresence in urban space, different dimension related to peresence in urban spaces are recognizale dimensions which are shown in the following table2 (complementory to table 1). Also ,case study is assessed by reviewing historical books and different official documents in addition to a complete assessment which is performed by site survey, socioeconomic survey, physical survey, and demographic analysis.(Table3) If we take into consideration sociability process and collective life improvement in urban spaces such as nieghbourhood centers, the following dimensions will be recognizible. Sociability in public spaces is based on people's need to social belonging feeling and interaction with others, and it would be possible only in a supportive social space along with physiological comfort provision. Perecence in social urban spaces which depends on human peresence and it can be studied and recognized via daily users(carrying out necessory activities) or a special activity users(social activities or recreational activity). Therefore, physical dimensions of public spaces (such as nieghbourhood centers)and its

Table 3: Peresence dimensions in urban space

	Ceriteria	Presence Quality	Peresence dimensions in urban spaces
Peresence (social structure)	Scale of movement	Pedestrian movement	Serial vision in pedestrian view
	Presence affordance	Child, Young, Old	People peresence in different ages and activites
	Kind of behavior	Personal, collective	Space for playing, recreation and cultural relation
	Social values	Ceremonies, rites, rituals	Possibility and continuation of pedestrian movement, sitting, standing up and shopping
Urban Spaces (physical structure)	Relations between activities	Effect on other activities occurrence	Conversation and interaction sapce, colllective activities, space activation in different hours
	Environmental function	Accessability,mixed uses	Physical / visual accessibility
	Environmental meanning	Mystery, complexity	Diversity, switable movement rhytme
	Environmental factors	Climatic comfort	Spirit, voice comfort, shadowing

pereference related to space sociability dimensions such as access situations and bearing relation with surroundings, public space organizing, form, geometry, dimensions and public spaces proportion like Zirgozar .

The next table shows relation between theory and case study. It shows that many factors improve quality of peresence. These criteria are investigated in every nieghbourhood center. Table 3 is simply a review of what we know as traditional nieghbourhood centers. It is result of observation activities of people and physical dimentions. As this study indicates, public open spaces are the most fascinating parts of nighbourhood center where many public activities occur within it. The central space of the nieghbourhood is the most exellent fabric manifestation of urban design in a period of time by the people who use it. This spatial composition is completed with a hierarchy of spaces. Taking everything into consideration, it could be argued that peresence of people is a spatial feature of the spatial structure with physical dimension. According to Table 4, social structure is strong as well as physical structure. This comparison indicates a coherence relationship between activities in a potential urban space.

Ignoring social, cultural and identity values hidden in urban spaces, neglecting environmental qualities improvement in urban spaces and qualities effective on links and new transportation system and mere emphasis on mental perception of town designers and architectures result in forming urban spaces which people just get by them. Social life in urban spaces is a challenge of modern urban designing studies. In physical structure of neighbourhood there are prominent points such as mosque, reservior, shops , etc. which establish strong spatial and physical relationships between spaces, needs and functions with more external expression bearing more collective memories in minds of neighbourhood's residents. Therefore, neighbourhood centers play a critical role in social life of neighbourhood and they function as a communication and evolution center in urban space organization. Considering effective factors on residents` peresence in nieghbourhood centers and consequently effective factors on belongiong feeling to a place in classic nieghbourhood are necessory while studying historical texture of cities.

ENDNOTES

1. In his book "life between buildings", Jan Gehl describes formed behaviors in urban spaces simply and attractively. In this respect, he refers to the relationship between human and environment in forming and kind of behavior.

2. Five performance dimensions: vitality, sense, fit, access and control and two meta-criteria: efficiency, justice (Carmona,2005)

3. In historical texture of Kashan, daily life flow is observable. Bazaar and residential neighborhood are regarded as main parts of spatial organization in this texture. In spite of city's new developments and newly-established business centers, the role of Bazaar is still prominent and life in historical texture neighborhood is still flowing. Regarding population statistics, there is an adequate population density in historical context and maybe residents` presence is a factor of content spirit(Kashan Comprehensive plan report, Naghsh-e-Jahan Pars consultant engineers)(2010)

4. Seamon, David, 2007. A Lived Hermetic of People and Place: Phenomenology and Space Syntax [keynote address]. In Proceedings, Sixth International Space Syntax Conference. Istanbul: Istanbul Technical University.

5. An access is built partly covered and partly opened for communication and climate reasons.

6. it is a place for religious mourning ceremony.

7. QoP (Quality of Presence)

8.NhC (Neighborhood Center)

Table 4:Analysis of Peresence Dimension in Urban Space

QoP[1] / NhC[8]	Peresence (social structure)						Urban Spaces (physical structure)				
	Pedestrian movement	Different ages	Personal activities	collective activities	Ceremonies &…	Effect on other activities	Accessibility	mixed uses	Mystery	complexity	Climatic comfort
Soltan Mir Ahmad	◩	■	◪	■	◪	■	■	◪	■	■	☐
Kushk-e-Safi	■	◪	■	■	◪	◪	◪	■	◪	■	◩
Darb-e-Bagh	■	◪	◩	◪	■	■	■	◪	■	◪	■
Darb-e-Fin	◪	■	◩	■	◩	■	◩	■	◪	■	◪
Amirieh Cross	■	◪	☐	◪	■	◪	◪	◪	☐	◩	■
sum	14 ■	11 ◪	4 ◩	1 ☐			11 ■	9 ◪	3 ◩	2 ☐	

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