

Comparative Study of Sustainability Iranian Bazaar in Traditional Cities; Case Study: Zanjan and Tabriz

Hooman Sobouti¹, and Pari Alavi^{2*}

¹Department of Architecture, Zanjan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran

²Young Researchers and Elite Club, Zanjan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran

*Corresponding author's Email: Parialavi_ir@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: Bazaar is a traditional public space in the Iranian cities, and always a great section of commercial activities in urban life. Bazaar is not only the commercial center of traditional cities in Iran but also the center of social, cultural, political and religious activities. Sustainability of bazaar in Iranian traditional cities seeks to find solutions concerning the effects of city development on cultural heritage and urban element of the city. The main aim of this study is to explain the differences of the social and economic and environmental role of the bazaar in the historical Iranian cities. The case studies are the city of Zanjan and Tabriz in the North West of Iran. The genre of the study is fundamental-theoretical, which has been conducted through basic applied method; the materials required for this research has been gathered through library studies, historical documents, field survey on the historical bazaars of Iran, as well as the historical Bazaar of Tabriz. The main approach of this study is based on qualitative and quantitative data as well as qualitative observations of bodies in charge of urban elements of the Iranian traditional cities in four categories of 1- Mosque (Friday and daily), 2- Citadel, 3-Residential Quarters, 4- Bazaar, and quantitative value for compare bazaar sustainability in Zanjan and Tabriz which including sociology-economic-environment aspect within the framework of the Iranian traditional cities. Surveys show Bazaar can be used as a center for enhancing social interactions and creating a sense of association that leads to sustainable social space. These can act as a model which leads us to sustainable cities in terms of social and economic factors.

Key words: Iranian Bazaar, Morphology, Sustainability, Traditional Cities, Tabriz Bazaar, Zanjan Bazaar

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INTRODUCTION

Although, traditional cities, in most of the countries around the world have been formed and developed organically, paying attention to the urban space and creating spaces in accordance with the citizen's needs of that area can be seen in all cities. Looking at these cities, it can be found out those issues such as social interactions, ease of transportation routes, the role of a square as a place for gatherings and celebrations (even as a landmark) and the role of bazaar and small shopping center around it have always been considered by city constructors of those periods.

Today, because of the changing needs of the society, performing the traditional patterns cannot be a proper response to the needs. However, those patterns that have not undergone so much change in the course of history and time and can be adjusted and updated with the today's needs, could be found and inserted in the modern city structures. Historical urban centers in Iran are significant because of their population density and location, but also because of the major functions of the central buildings that are very often historical monuments and valuable urban ensembles. Historical urban quarters are special places not only because of the cultural heritage they house, but also because of their urban pattern. As a result, a convenient pattern could be proposed for constructing a sustainable city. Firstly, we should define the meaning of sustainability and then the type of the traditional city structures that have an acceptable function in the sustainability of today's city

could be discussed. In order to develop a sustainable residence, one should consider sustainability, not only in its western literature concept including energy, environment, ecology, regional technology, reduction of pollution, waste, recycling, and people's participation issues, but the one that contains progressing the quality of life and providing justice, through attention to the body interaction with human behaviors, developing social sustainability. In a sustainable city, in addition to considering ecology, environment, energy, and the other above mentioned items, feeling of belonging to the place, should be created and increased by maintaining the density, healthy relations and forecasts, adequate size for residence, desirable social relationships, should be developed and a new concept of urban life would be created.

Public space is regarded as "the common ground where people carry out the functional and ritual activities that bind a community, whether in the normal routines of daily life or in periodic festivities" (Oktay, 2002) basically; the urban experiences are the collective experience of places and spaces. Bazaar is one of the key elements of spatial organization in Iranian cities; the main body of city cannot be defined without existence of bazaar. In many historical cities, the main routes are established in adaptation to the main "Rasteh Bazaar" therefore, historical bazaars play an essential role in the body of cities. Every society has its own space of activities (Elden, 2004). In most of the historic cities of

Iran, the bazaar play the important role in the city fabric, and all the other complexes are in social and physical relation to this route. In the Iranian cities the bazaar losing its traditional character of multi activities such as market religious and socio-cultural fabric and various urban development. Usually in Iranian city, the bazaar started from one of the city gates, and continues in one of the other gates in another side of the city. Different public buildings such as mosques, inner-city caravanserai, Schools and bath houses as well as the residential neighbourhoods form along the bazaar. In fact, the complex of bazaar route and its adjoining elements is the main design structure of the historic Iranian cities in many cases (Sarraf, 2010). It spreads inside the city, extends its branches, each of which forms a separate neighbourhood, and usually leads to the main mosque of the city, Masjed Jame' (Great Mosque). Most of the social communications and public activities of the city take place along the bazaar and its branches. It is the main communication route while all the economic transactions as well as other social activities could take place there, too (Gaubé, 1978).

The bazaar traditionally begins at the palace area, which symbolize the spiritual head of the body and when the bazaar grows, body structure of the city evolves. So, the history of bazaar and urbanization are interrelated to each other and in fact, no city can be imagined without bazaar (Ardalan et al., 1973).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

According to purposes of this research, it is a basic applied, which uses the descriptive-analytical method. The main approach of this study is based on qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were collected by library method, using different documents and indexing, and also observations of bodies in charge of urban elements of Iranian traditional city in four categories of 1-Mosque (Friday and daily), 2-Citadel, 3- Residential Quarters and 4-Bazaar, Some data were collected by field methods, interview and observation tools like quantitative data by giving value for compare bazaar sustainability in Zanjan and Tabriz which including socio-economic-environment aspect within the framework of economic environment and social environment.

Review of literature

Morphology of Iranian Traditional Cities:

Traditional Iranian cities have an orthogonal network of streets which does not conform to the maze of irregular, twisting lanes postulated for the ideal Islamic city. The grid system did not develop from an outgrowth of streets around rectangular religious buildings or from the orientation of Iranian houses to maximize seasonal usage, but rather it is due to irrigation systems. The orthogonal network of water channels corresponds to the slope of the land. Passageways follow these channels to reach various plots of cultivated land. Cities have expanded along the existing streets and water channels. The basic morphology of traditional Iranian cities was created by houses filling in adjacent rectangular fields and orchards. Structure of Iranian traditional cities reveals general rules in all those towns, bazaar, usually

taking a linear shape, acted as the spinal column of city and continued towards the main gates of town. According to the concept of center point define it moves in time and creates the line (Ardalan et al., 1973). And also passage ways were in fact branches of the linear bazaar which connected the city center to neighbourhood center (Karimi, 1997).

Bazaar of Iranian ancient city is comparable to plaza in cities of pre-industrial Europe. It has played a significant role as the main element of traditional cities in Islamic era alongside other elements such as Citadel, Great Mosques, and residential regions. Even today, the authorities and city planners take bazaar in to attention as an important element in their developmental plans of the city.

A. Great Mosque: The long lasting participation of the pious people at mosques and their movement towards mosques was important to merchants; always they were trying to have a religious and economic look towards these pathways (Soltanzadeh, 2006). The passage path of Muslims was worth valued for the merchants, because this route helped them selling their goods to one who tended to purchase fulfilling his needs. "Establishment of (Jame') mosque is usually studied in direct relation with thoroughfare and bazaar. The first major movements to change the structure and spatial organization of city are launched based on its political, economic, socio-cultural situation" (Habibi, 1999). It is in the heart of the city and was usually surrounded by the bazaar as the case of central mosque (Masjed Jame') in Zanjan. This was where the weekly Friday prayer were held and attached to it was the Madrasah providing religious and scientific teaching.

B. Citadel: Also known as trades people, representing the palace of the governor, the citadel was surrounded by its own walls and constituted a district on its own with its own mosque, guards, offices, and residence. It was usually in the high part of the town near the wall (Bosworth, 2007).

C. Residential Quarters: Surrounding these public structures were the residential areas, with high density and each quarter had its own mosque used only for daily prayers (Ehlers et al. 1993). Quranic School "Madrasah", bakery, shops and other first were usually closed at night after last prayers and opened early morning. They were also ethnically organized, Muslims grouped in quarters and Jews in others so that each group could practice and celebrate its own cultural beliefs.

D. Bazaar: Bazaar means a marketplace or assemblage of shops where miscellaneous goods and services are displayed to buy and sell (Pirnia, 1990). The word "bazaar" refers to "Waazaar", which is an ancient Persian word (Porushani, 1995) In Iranian traditional city located outside the main mosque provided the economic activity in the town. Goods sold were usually spatially distributed corresponding to their nature. Sacred items such as candles, incense and perfumes were sold close to the mosque as well as items that would be sold by booksellers and binders (Soltanzade, 2001) while the rest of the goods were found at a further distance. The central area was also the gathering of other public activities such as social services, administration, trade, arts and crafts and baths. There have been three types of bazaar in the cities of ancient Iran: periodic bazaar, urban bazaar and

local bazaar urban bazaar was a popular urban space which could accommodate commercial activities as well as social and cultural activities of people. Architecturally speaking, urban bazaar is a covered public passageway which is surrounded by shops and stores in two sides. It was, therefore, a place for shopping, walking, social dialog, and cultural interaction of people. It has acted as the most important and influential public space in ancient cities and towns of Iran (Pirnia, 1990).

Bazaar in Traditional Cities of Iran: Bazaar as a traditional public space in Iranian cities has always accommodated a great section of commercial activities in urban life. As time passed, it became the inseparable part of each city and the place for exchange of commercial goods from near and far off places. The history of bazaar and urbanization are interrelated to each other and in fact, no city can be imagined without bazaar. The word “bazaar” is an Old Persian word which has become an integrated part of Iranian culture. It has a very long and old history. Historical documents indicate that bazaar has existed in Iranian cities and towns since 3000 B.C. (Soltanzadeh, 2001).

In traditional city of Iran, Bazaar was also a place for social, political, cultural and civic activities of people. In this regard, it was similar to “Forum” and “Agora” in ancient Roman and Greek cities. In other words, Bazaar was the heart of the city and most of the important and prestigious buildings as well as governmental ones were always constructed adjacent to it. In addition, Bazaar has always defined the major street of urban fabric, connecting two major entrances of the city in Islamic ages fundamentally; the government had a mercantilist approach to cities. In these ages, all the internal walls destroyed and center of cities shift to out of walls. These occurrences in cities give an opportunity to bazaar to achieve significant roles in city. Also bazaar founded conventional role for jointing main gates of cities to the main square in city. With investment of government in streets and performance shopping and storing in the streets declined role of bazaar to attract people for attendance and leisure in the space, so spatial form of bazaar changed. Spatial from same as “Chaharsough” bazaar squares lost their function and changed to abandoned or lost spaces. Parts of bazaar commenced to move from old fabric to new places and new sitting of people same as literature’s markets and books shoppers. Although Bazaar lost its leisure role in the old cities but it was became strongest by mono-siding of functional accretion and commerce. Functions and activities continue in Bazaar. Development of trade and commerce in integration with world trade resulted to distribution of new trade and commerce zones in the cities. These functions implemented and assisted the traditional roles of Bazaar.

The bazaars of Islamic cities are among the greatest products of the Islamic civilization which were without any counterpart in the ancient east, as well as in Greece, ancient Rome or the Europe of middle ages. At the time, Islam gained control over a large part of the world, and bazaar became a common feature of the cities under its government. It is clear that the uniqueness and originality of an Islamic city was in the commercial constructions which are gathered in a compressed space

in a uniform and continuous form in the center of the city. Even today, despite the apparent changes in social and urban structure of cities, bazaar still brings to mind the uniqueness of an Islamic city. In this regard, economy and religion may be considered the two basic elements which, from the beginning of the establishment of Islamic bazaars, have intervened together in the expansion of the bazaar. They still remain the basic element of difference between the operation of this kind of bazaar and other bazaars (luxury and modern markets in the Islamic countries and the markets of non-Islamic nations) (Mehdipour et al, 2013).

Each part of city, where marketing is practiced could be a potential for being Bazaar; "a definite part, at the hands of a group of people, who are involved in marketing (personally or in group in proportion to their job), and supply - demand" (Encyclopedia of the Islamic Foundation, under Bazaar entry). The main goal of bazaar is economic issues, however over the time, other applications were added, so that the persistence of the mentioned capabilities besides the economic issues helped bazaars to gain more values and features, and possessed a position higher than an ordinary economy; "Since bazaars in the cities of Iran, in the past eras, were considered as a basis, within which all the urban public activities could be concentrated, they used to be considered as the center of city, and by lapse of time and increasing role of bazaars in determining the fate of cities, the centrality of bazaar developed to the extent of its universality in determining the main lifelines" (Falamaki, 2005).

Each Bazaar has had different functions in different cities of Iran so that they vary based on their size, location and importance. Some of the cities which were located along trading routes (like Silk Way) had a greater bazaar, and the others which were distant from these routes had a weaker bazaar. Bazaars in Iran generally categorized into three types;

- Periodic Bazaar: without any architectural space and totally scattered throughout the city intended to be a place for exchanging goods
- Urban Bazaar: as a popular urban space which accommodated commercial activities along with social and cultural activities of people
- Local Bazaar: was a smaller type of urban bazaar with less importance which was allocated to a particular area or district of the city or town (Moosavi, 2006).

"Although bazaar, as a commercial center and the live heart of social life in city, has a uniform performance in the cities of Iran, it is witnessed that in terms of structure, there are differences between bazaars in various continents" (Ghobadian, 1994).

After Comparison morphology of Iranian bazaars founded three types of bazaars:

- 1) Bazaar with connecting the gates
- 2) Bazaar as the major street of the city
- 3) Bazaar as the linear element in urban fabric

Case Studies

A-Tabriz: Tabriz city (Figure 1), the capital of East Azarbaijan Province, lies 46° 17' E and 38° 5' N with an altitude of about 1340 meters above sea level. According to the last census of Iranian Statistics Center

in 2006, Tabriz city has a population of more than 1,398,060 and the largest Turkish speaking city in Iran (Geographical Culture of Iranian Counties: Tabriz County). Tabriz historical bazaar, based on its urban and architectural significance, has been recorded in world heritage list in 2010 A.D. by UNESCO; thus it could be a good case for study; furthermore existence of two parallel routes contrary to other Iranian historical bazaars, is a unique feature of this bazaar. Tabriz historical bazaar is the most prominent complex of the Tabriz historic context, and with regard to the excavations in the vicinity of the Jame' Mosque and "Chahar Menar" tomb, it dated back to the early Islam period; The excavations show that the main floor of bazaar is 430 cm lower than the contemporary one; the reason was the repeated earthquakes in that region. The last earthquake in Tabriz occurred in 1783 A.D, and the general structure of Tabriz city and its bazaar is the outcome of rebuilding works after quakes by "Najafgholi Khan Donboli", the ruler of Tabriz at the time of quake; this caused to have no precise documents regarding the shape and spatial quality of bazaar before the "Qajar Dynasty", there are only descriptive and historic papers

remained. For more understanding on the situation and quality of Tabriz bazaar before quake, a comparative analysis is made between the current and historic situations (Pourjafar et al., 2013).

B-Zanjan: Zanjan city (Figure 2), the capital of Zanjan Province, lies 47° 10' - 90° 26' E and 35° 33' - 37° 15' N with an altitude of about 1340 meters above sea level. According to the last census of Iranian Statistics Center in 2006, Zanjan city has a population of more than 1,015,734 (Geographical Culture of Iranian Counties: Zanjan County). Zanjan bazaar is one of the most important historical complexes in Iran, and is a great attraction for tourists. It's one of the oldest bazaars of the Middle East and the largest covered bazaar in the world. Dating back to the Qajar period (1779-1925), the bazaar is located in the heart of the old fabric of the city. It consists of two sections: the upper bazaar and the lower bazaar. Having an area of 150000 square meters, the bazaar comprises 940 shops and two baths called Bolori and Mo'ini. There are 56 entrances to the bazaar. In the past it could, and even now it can, meet all the needs of the people (Sobouti, 1987).

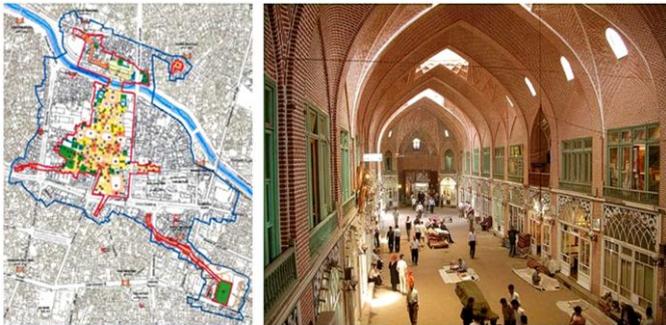


Figure 1. Tabriz; Source: Assari et al. (2011)



Figure 2. Zanjan Bazaar; Source: Authors

Table 1. Morphology of Zanjan Bazaar and Tabriz Bazaar

| Bazaar Name | Formation era | Urban landmarks | Morphology |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| Zanjan Bazaar | Safavid era, Qajar era | Divided in to 2 part (Ashaghi bash and Yukhari bash) | Bazaar as the linear element in urban fabric |
| Tabriz Bazaar | Seljuk, Ilkhanid, safavid and Qajar era | Hasan padeshah (king) square Saheb ol Amr square | Bazaar with connecting the gates |

Source: Authors

Table 2. Urban element of Zanjan and Tabriz;

| Urban elements of Iranian city (Zanjan and Tabriz) | | Location | | | Ownership | | | Degree of privacy | | | User | | | Control | | | Planned | |
|---|--------------|-------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|---------|-------------|-------------------|-----|------|------------|--------|-----------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
| | | City Center | Inner Circle | Periphery | Public | Private | Institution | High | Low | None | Individual | Groups | Community | Public | Private | Institution | Public | Private |
| Zaar | Main | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mosque | Friday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Daily | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Citadels | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Residential Quarters | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Authors

Table 3. Urban element of Zanjan and Tabriz

| Urban elements of Iranian city (Zanjan and Tabriz) | | Main tendency | | | Builder | | | Function | | | | Services | | | | | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|--------------|----------|----------|-------------|------------|----------|-----------------|----------------|---------|------------|----------|---------|
| | | Public | Private | Institution | Public | Private | Artisan | Governmental | Commerce | Military | Residential | Swage | | Fire Protection | Storm Drainage | Garbage | Water | | Police |
| | | | | | | | | | | | | Individual | Communal | | | | Individual | Communal | Private |
| Bazaar | Main | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | neighborhood | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mosque | Friday | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | daily | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Citadels | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Residential Quarters | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Authors

One of the main arguments that have drawn the attention of organizations such as municipalities to the issue of tourism is the income generation of tourism. In fact, municipalities thereby cause economic value creation, i.e. creating economic flow in the city, as well as helping tourism is helping national economy, either through direct payments that are the interest of the municipality or through the benefit that is the interest of other organizations and is actually the circulation of the national economy. Therefore, acting in the tourism development in a city means increasing income, savings and investments rate (Municipalities, 2000).

Different activities and land uses are in its structured architectural and urban context of both Zanjan and Tabriz bazaar. In Tabriz mass and open space are properly mixed together and bazaar central courtyards help to the regulation of air in interior space. The existence of green space and water open space, help to the sustainability of the complex and Hojreh 4 and shops are shaped around these spaces. Zanjan bazaar complex has 56 entrance and alleys connected to whole city along with other route networks. It has 900 shops and nearly 51 businesses including producing and importing occupations run by 3200 people and many others engaging with service activities. Zanjan bazaar is a complicated unit from economic point of view in which there are many retail and whole safe trade and because of continual process of increasing capital it is going to become a whole safe center. Continued development of the complex ;s economic status caused the residential units of the region to be turned to be commercial ones as a result its physical and fabric value with be damaged incurably unless it is planned logically and according to historical values. The bazaar was built on a 15 hectare land out of which 5 hectare located for economic section, 7 hectare for housing section, 1 hectare for public utilities and 2 hectare for communication network. All in all it has 945 estate properties and was registered as historical traces under the number 1/44 because of its age and cultural value and special protecting rules resulted from it. The complex was a proper place to social contacts nearby commercial centers from old days and played an important role in preserving national and religious customs. In addition to mentioned cultural elements there are several factors that put an emphasis on the complex in the city including climatic and

geographical conditions (Yarmohammadi Bigdeli, 2011).

Since Zanjan has hot summers and very cold and snowy winters as well as results spring and falls people might not feel this weather conditions so severely when they are inside the complex so they may have opportunity to spend plenty of time to choose their desired products (Sobouti, 1987). Bazaar of Zanjan is including two parts “Yukhari bash” or “upper” section and the “Ashaghi bash “ or “lower” section, which is the main and important difference between Zanjan bazaar and Tabriz.

In each type of bazaars, public and governmental building of the, gates and major square are available. Tabriz bazaar has used natural resources prudently and reduced use of the resources renewable and recyclable resources have been used in bazaar. But both bazaars has created healthy and non-toxic environment. Air, land and water pollution are minimized by using vernacular and environmentally friendly materials and giving the main access to people and not vehicles. In Zanjan bazaar because of low distance of bazaar and air pollution is stand in upper rank to compare with Tabriz bazaar (Moradi et al., 2007).

There is social self determination and cultural diversity in the bazaar and it is compatible with local community. It protects and promotes human health through a healthy and safe working environment. Mixed land uses in the bazaar complex helps to social sustainability also it helps to employment creation as people work and create artifacts along with selling their products. It has Flexible design and spaces are used for different and various purposes. Bazaar has appropriate infrastructures because of its compactness. There are three characteristics for sustainability of the bazaars used, environmental, social and economical and in (Table 4) compare the aspect of sustainably to Zanjan Bazaar and Tabriz bazaar and (Figure 3) show Sustainability of bazaar by urban element of Zanjan and Tabriz.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Table 4 and Figure 3, the results of the analysis can be summarized as follows:

✓ In both Bazaars we have to covered areas due to climate issues, but these areas in Zanjan bazaar are more

than Tabriz bazaar, in fact Zanjan bazaar is the longest indoor bazaar in Iran.

- ✓ Prudent use of natural resources and reduced use of the resources (energy, water, materials, and land) at stages in the life cycle and in both bazaar is Equal.

- ✓ Natural hazard like earthquake risk in Tabriz is much less to compare with Zanjan (Ghafory, 2006).

- ✓ Use of renewable, recyclable resources and environmentally friendly material in Zanjan Bazaar is more than Tabriz bazaar.

- ✓ Zanjan bazaar is in heart of city then cultural diversity and communication and tourism attraction is more than Tabriz bazaar.

- ✓ Mixed land uses in the both bazaars complex are high, this issue helps to social sustainability, but both bazaars should focus on increasing the supply of parking facility.

- ✓ In Zanjan bazaar has been more attention to promotion of employment creation and flexible design and reduced life-cycle cost of the bazaar.

- ✓ In both bazaars we have to avoid use of more infrastructures in the bazaar because of the compactness of the complex.

- ✓ Location of main bazaar in the cities is within walking distance in their particular neighborhoods.

- ✓ Except Friday mosque with public owner ship, all the elements of the Iranian traditional cities have private or institutional owner ship.

- ✓ The social organization of bazaars provided different groupings, individuals, small groups and community

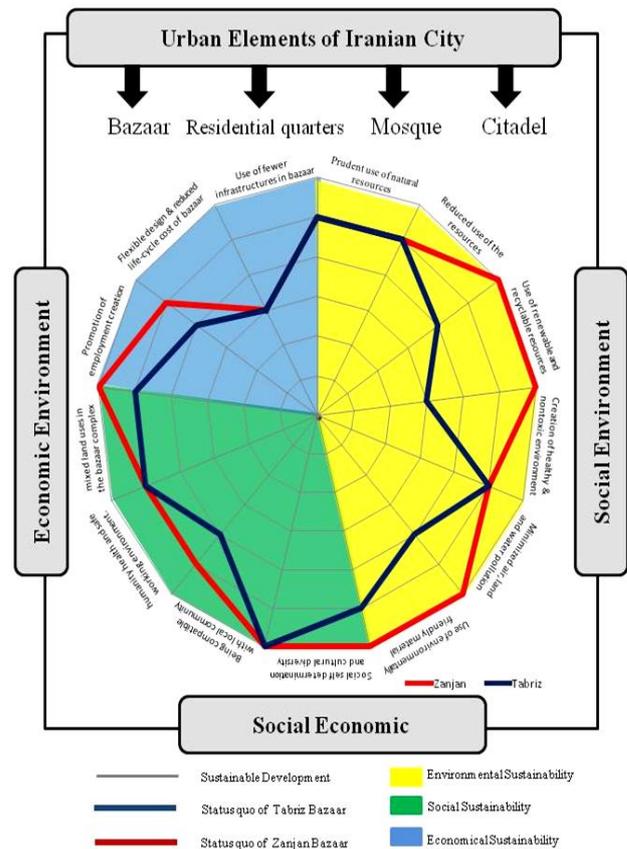


Figure 3. Sustainability of bazaar by urban element of Zanjan and Tabriz (Source: Authors)

Table 4. Comparison bazaar sustainability in Zanjan and Tabriz

| Item | Zanjan | | | | | Tabriz | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|------|--------|-----|----------|-----------|------|--------|-----|----------|
| | Very High | High | Medium | Low | Very Low | Very High | High | Medium | Low | Very Low |
| Environmental Sustainability | Prudent use of natural resources | | | | | | | | | |
| | Reduced use of the resources (energy, water, materials, and land) at stages in the life cycle of bazaar | | | | | | | | | |
| | Use of renewable and recyclable resources | | | | | | | | | |
| | Creation of healthy and nontoxic environment through the elimination of hazardous and toxic products in the indoor and exterior of the bazaar complex | | | | | | | | | |
| | Minimized air, land and water pollution | | | | | | | | | |
| | Use of environmentally friendly material | | | | | | | | | |
| Social Sustainability | Social self determination and cultural diversity | | | | | | | | | |
| | Being compatible with local community | | | | | | | | | |
| | Protection and promote of human health through a healthy and safe working environment. | | | | | | | | | |
| | Existence of mixed land uses in the bazaar complex that helps to social sustainability | | | | | | | | | |
| Economical Sustainability | Promotion of employment creation | | | | | | | | | |
| | Flexible design and reduced life-cycle cost of the bazaar | | | | | | | | | |
| | Use of fewer infrastructures in the bazaar because of the compactness of the complex | | | | | | | | | |

Source: Authors

CONCLUSION

Cities, like any other kind of man made creature undergo transformation and develop during the time.

This phenomenon is much more tangible in some cities with a significant history in spite of the fact that all of these ancient cities or towns nowadays have been too many efforts into maintaining their valuable heritages.

One can generally understand that while developing and expanding the city, some new phenomenon as Bazaar emerged from Iran as a result of economic exchanges. This phenomenon differs physically from one region to the other according other climate and cultural conditions. However the style and framework of these centers are nearly constructed the same and in general they all equipped with social and religious centers so that a cultural and complicated architecture was created along with the combination of residential centers and rows for pedestrian traffic (Sobouti, 1987).

In Iran, bazaar has played a significant role as the main element of traditional cities in Islamic era, and large numbers of these bazaars were formed in cities which were the capitals of Iran such as Zanjan, Isfahan, Tabriz and Shiraz. The second group was in the Silk Road such as Tabas and Kashan. Today town planners and authorities pay attention to the bazaar as an important element in sustainable development planning because every city development planning in the world produces from its own urban elements.

This study with comparative the Zanjan and Tabriz bazaars, concludes that the main elements of the city have direct effect to the sustainability of bazaar, but as the result come bazaar sustainability in Zanjan and Tabriz which including socio-economic-environment aspect within the framework of Iranian traditional city, play the most important role to compare other elements. Because other elements were changed in different period of time but bazaar still has its own characteristics. Consequently, this study suggests that firstly, structure of bazaar in the Iranian cities should keep as well as early periods. Secondly, sustainability of bazaar can be divided into three types: economic, social and environment the commercial that should be in the framework of Iranian traditional cities. By regarding bazaar structure and bazaar sustainability explanation of city development can be more successful.

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