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Original Research Article

Changing the Sustainable Perspective from Outcome to Process; the Experience of Designing Urban Spaces based on Social Participation in Shiraz

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Abstract

Problem statement: Following the rapid increase in urban population, numerous social issues have arisen in large cities, leading to a focus on sustainable development concepts. The key to success in revitalizing social sustainability in urban spaces lies in supporting projects that integrate local conditions, and mobilize local skills, and knowledge. Additionally, the heterogeneity and density of cities have reduced cohesion, interaction, and individuals' attention to each other. Nowadays, there is a shift in perspective from prescriptive approaches to participatory ones, and from architect-centric solutions to problem-solving methods emphasizing community initiatives. Therefore, it is imperative to move from the prescriptive role of architects as constructors and directors of all social affairs towards a role as one of the important social partners.

Research objective: This study aims to address the creation of urban spaces using the Participatory Design Method (PDM) to facilitate social interactions and move towards social sustainability.

Research method: This study, with its applied nature, adopted a combined approach based on a qualitative strategy relying on field research, using the "Design Workshop" or "Charette" model.

Conclusion: This research focused on presenting the process model of the "Charette Design Workshop" by designing an urban space located in the northern part of Mottahari Street, Shiraz. This process involved a pre-workshop, four main workshops, and an informal interim session, resulting in the design of the aforementioned space. The research findings recommend the necessity of having a pre-workshop to organize the main workshops and establish guidelines to prevent session deviation and straying from the main objectives. The presence of professional designers as leaders in the workshop, with their ability to design and articulate, formed the most important elements of workshop sessions, among other achievements of this research. Providing additional solutions for improving and enhancing participatory design processes is among the outcomes of this research.

Keywords: *Urban Space Design, Social Participation, Social Sustainability, Social Interaction, Charette Design Workshop Process.*

Introduction

Urbanization, as a social and spatial framework, significantly influences social interactions and cohesion in modern societies (Smith, 2007). However, with the advent of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the nature and extent of these interactions have

changed drastically, with a growing inclination towards virtual communications seemingly diminishing social interactions in local public spheres (Jones et al., 2016). These changes pose new challenges for urban designers and planners, particularly in the arrangement and design of public spaces focusing on enhancing public participation and social communications (Taylor, 2016).

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Moreover, public participation is recognized as a crucial factor in sustainable development (Lee, 2023), yet in practice, this aspect of urban design and planning is often overlooked (Clark, 2012). In this regard, some researchers have proposed that architecture and urban design should be conducted in a manner that facilitates public participation and responds to the needs and experiences of community members (Johnson, 2008). These issues underscore the importance of discovering and evaluating new approaches to public participation and its impacts on urban design and planning (Darabi, 2010). With the continuous evolution of urban design, the integration of public participation is increasingly vital for creating flexible and inclusive spaces. Recent published research such as “Designing public consensus: The civic theater of community participation for architects, landscape architects, planners, and urban designers” (Hou, 2007) and “Participation: From tyranny to transformation? Exploring new approaches to participation in development” (Hickey & Mohan, 2004) emphasize the need to move beyond tokenistic participation and empower communities to actively shape their living environments. Technological advancements provide new tools for understanding societal needs, as evidenced by research of Al-Kodmany on social media data in urban design studies (Yang & Liu, 2022). Meanwhile, frameworks like (Van der Vaart et al, 2014) provide practical guidance for participatory design and adaptation, aiding in the creation of landscapes resilient to future challenges. At the local level, initiatives like the “European Landscape Convention” (2023) demonstrate landscape architects’ commitment to shaping a fair and sustainable future. By utilizing these diverse resources and embracing the principles of public participation, landscape architects and urban designers can cultivate a future where communities not only have a say but also actively co-create vibrant and inclusive urban environments.

Lawrence Halprin emphasized the importance of participatory processes that unite architects, stakeholders, citizens, governmental institutions, and urban planners in integrated urban design and planning (Halprin, 1963, 1972, 2011). He advocated for methods such as workshops, seminars, and forums to create collaborative decision-making frameworks allowing different individuals to participate in shaping urban spaces.

The focus of this approach was on the active participation of local communities, enabling them to shape development projects directly affecting their lives. Additionally, Halprin highlighted the essential role of governmental institutions in facilitating community-centered planning processes and ensuring alignment with public policy objectives and broad regulatory frameworks.

Rudolf Hostetler critically underscores the importance of participatory methods in achieving social and ecological sustainability. He advocates for designs that reflect diverse perspectives and values by engaging stakeholders and local residents (Hostetler & Noiseux, 2010). However, he also delves into the inherent complexities of participatory frameworks, emphasizing the need for fairness and justice in decision-making processes (Hostetler, 2021). Furthermore, Hostetler stresses the role of participatory approaches in enhancing ecological literacy and conserving natural resources (Hostetler et al., 2008).

Despite the theoretical studies and global experiences in the field, there have been few applied researches in the country toward implementing participatory processes in architectural and urban landscape design. Therefore, this current research focuses on studying and analyzing participatory designs aimed at creating social sustainability at the local level. The main question addressed in this regard is to examine and identify the appropriate participatory approach for fostering social sustainability. This research, through addressing two sub-questions, aims to achieve its objective: 1) Determining the role of participation in the process of achieving social sustainability; and 2) Identifying and examining social participation models in architectural design. Emphasizing the importance of social interactions as a key component of social sustainability, this study introduces social participation as the primary approach for creating a socially inclusive space and enhancing social interactions. Subsequently, by introducing and analyzing various participatory models in the architectural design process, it delves into the practical examination of the “Group Design or Charette” model in field research and presents experiences and findings from this approach.

Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

Public spaces, as platforms for social interactions, hold significant importance in urban communities

and serve the community through the management of public organizations (Honarkhah et al., 2022; Garcia-Ramon et al., 2004; Arnstein, 1969). Proper design of these spaces can enhance social interaction and participation motivation, strengthening collective identity (Yazdanfar et al., 2013; Tawfiq, 1996). Social participation is recognized as a key factor in social sustainability and contributes to improving urban life quality and increasing trust among citizens and urban institutions (Wallace & Pichler, 2009; Aldegheishem, 2023). However, challenges such as lack of participation inclination and communication problems with urban authorities exist. Multiple efforts have been made to strengthen social participation through various methods and technologies, such as using smartwatch applications (Wilson et al., 2019) or group interaction methods (Daneshpour & Qafari-azar, 2020). Nevertheless, there are shortcomings and neglects in the field of social participation that require review and renewed attention to social sustainability concepts and related indicators to achieve urban planning and design goals.

Social sustainability is a concept aimed at addressing and eliminating environmental and spatial inequalities through capacity building and skills development. This concept is linked to principles such as justice and social health and

topics such as social interaction, needs, and social capital (Colantonio & Dixon, 2010). To achieve sustainability, human needs must be met, and social interaction and social justice must be facilitated (Litting & Griehl, 2005). Some argue that achieving social sustainability depends on equality, provision of social services, gender equality, and political responsiveness (Harris, 2000). General criteria for social sustainability include social interaction, sense of place, community stability, security, and happiness (Ezzatian & Aminzade, 2023). Based on the definitions provided in Table 1 and the indicators proposed by each theorist, it is evident that different principles and criteria for social sustainability have been presented so far.

For this reason, to achieve comprehensive and widespread principles, it is necessary to examine these criteria and extract principles that have the highest consensus (Table 2). Attention to the criteria mentioned in Table 2 and reflection on them indicate that most theorists have emphasized social interaction and sociability as one of the key criteria for social sustainability. Therefore, social interaction, as one of the fundamental elements of social sustainability, has gained significant consensus among theorists.

According to Jan Gehl’s theory, urban spaces encompass three categories of activities: 1) Essential activities; 2)

Table 1. Perspectives of stakeholders on social sustainability. Source: Authors.

Author	Principles Related to Social Sustainable Development	Perspectives
Perry	Emphasis on forming a cohesive whole, social dynamics, increasing social interactions, and sensitivity to social cohesion (Perry, 1929).	Social Interactions, Identity, Sense of Belonging
Maslow	Maslow’s hierarchy of human needs theory: the necessity of progressing to higher levels of the hierarchy, satisfying the needs of lower levels of the hierarchy, social needs after biological and security needs, the background for the flourishing of talents, and the growth of social interactions (Maslow, 2011)	Social Interactions, Security, Sense of Belonging, Identity
Jacobs	Emphasis on social interactions, security, happiness, social justice, and attention to human scale (Jacobs, 2007).	Social Interactions, Security
Ghul	Emphasis on social interactions, dynamism of space, happiness, and human scale (Gehl, 2008).	Social Interactions
Rapoport	Emphasis on social interactions, attention to tradition and culture, legibility of space, security, desirable density, social homogeneity of individuals, spatial memory, and meaning of space (Rapoport, 2005).	Social Interactions
Altman	Emphasis on security, the dynamism of space, social interactions, solitude, personal space, territory, and congestion (Altman, 2003).	Social Interactions, Security
Alexander & Schultz	Emphasis on social interactions, identity, human scale, access, dynamism, and social justice (Alexander, 2008; Norberg-Shulz, 2002).	Social Interactions, Security, Identity
Newman Oxford	Theory of defensible spaces. (Newman, 2008)	Security
Institute for Sustainable Development (OISD)	Emphasis on four principles of social sustainability: equality, inclusivity, flexibility, and security (Colantonio & Dixon, 2010).	Security
Choguill	Emphasis on social interactions, sense of belonging, interpersonal relationships between residents and neighbors, collective action, mutual support, safety, and access to facilities (Choguill, 2008).	Social Interactions, Security
Dempsey	Emphasis on social interactions, collective resilience, sense of place, social equality, and security (Dempsey et al., 2011).	Social Interactions, Security

Table 2. The perspectives of theorists on social sustainability and its principles and indicators. Source: Authors.

Standards / Criteria		Theorists								
Criteria	Sub-components	Koning (2001)	Breenley et al. (2004)	Antonio and Dixon (2010)	Baines and Morga (2004)	Cinner & Dogan-Saglamturk (2019)	Dempsey(2011)	Barton (2021)		
Non-physical criteria	Social justice	Equal access to transportation routes	*	*	*		*	*		
		Equal access to services and facilities		*			*			
	Social interaction	Social interaction	*	*		*	*	*	*	
		Social acceptance		*	*		*	*	*	
		Housing stability			*			*	*	
		Quality of life (comfort)	*	*	*					
		Sense of belonging and sense of place	Security		*	*				*
			Social capital	*	*					*
		Physical criteria	Mixing and diversity of uses	Social cohesion			*			
				Social inclusivity				*		*
			Adequate green space	*					*	*
			Variety in building types						*	
Presence of public spaces	*		*				*			
Social networks	*		*		*			*		

Optional activities; and 3) Social activities. A good city can offer a wide range of optional and social activities (Gehl, 2013). Social interaction refers to establishing communication between two or more individuals and can be created through physical events, visual contact, or conversation (Charkhchian & Daneshpour, 2010). Social interactions in public spaces are divided into two categories: random and organized interactions, where random social interaction includes opportunities for conversation in streets and alleys and is divided into two types: everyday interaction and sudden interaction (Dines et al., 2006, 15). Social cohesion, social participation, and social trust are the three main components of social interactions that reinforce each other (Fig. 1) (Akbari, 2004, 64).

• **Social participation**

Social participation has various definitions and dimensions. According to Cunningham, it is a process where individuals exercise decision-making power regarding societal issues (Ghaffari & Niazi, 2007). Social participation arises from group relations and activities such as voluntary associations and unions (Kesayi, 2000). Different definitions exist, but a general definition that distinguishes between participation and exclusion from participation considers it as a process of community members engaging in planning and

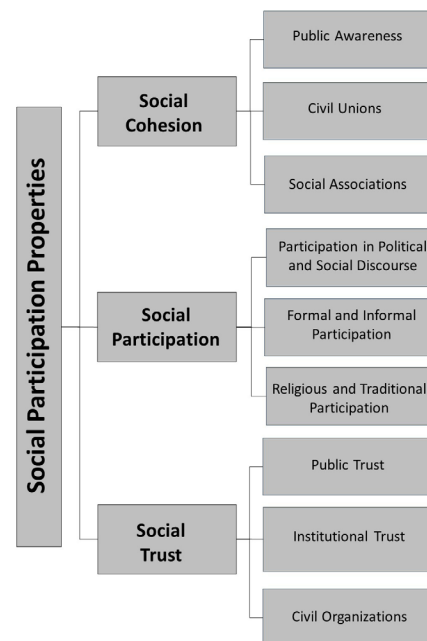


Fig. 1. Components of social interaction. Source: Authors, adapted from Akbari, 2004.

policymaking activities (Mohseni Tabrizi, 1998). People may be involved in these processes at various levels, and fundamental differences exist between these states (Majidi et al., 2021). Three concepts of public engagement, consultation with people, and social participation have been proposed to illustrate the differences in these interventions. In social participation, information exchange between people and officials occurs through

dialogue (Abdi Daneshpour, 2008; Cullingworth & Caves, 2013; Samuel, 1987; Foroughi et al., 2023; Francis et al., 2012; Chambers, 1994; Rowe & Frewer, 2005). As for theoretical perspectives on social participation, three general perspectives including psychological, sociological, and humanities sciences exist as outlined in Table 3.

• The role of participation in achieving social sustainability

Social participation is a process in which individuals exercise decision-making power regarding societal issues (Cullingworth & Caves, 2013). This participation stems from the expansion of interpersonal relationships in the form of voluntary associations, firms, and unions (White, 1996). Various objectives exist for employing participation, including generating new ideas, identifying attitudes and trends, disseminating information, resolving conflicts, and evaluating ideas and opinions (Sanoff, 2000). In genuine participation, all individuals should provide the necessary information and resources to influence the

decision-making process. Planning and decision-making must be structured to enhance participation across the entire community.

The achievements of public participation, which are closely related to social sustainability, include: 1) increasing people’s trust in the planning system and accepting decisions; 2) educating citizens and transferring information about the living environment; 3) legitimizing the planning process; 4) empowering communities in various fields; 5) establishing multidirectional communication between society and decision-making bodies, including public officials and other individuals and entities involved; 6) increasing society’s awareness of events affecting the living environment; and 7) involving people in environmental decision-making that can align political priorities with citizen needs (Daneshpour & Qafari-azar, 2020).

This process can play a significant role in shaping collective life and increasing social awareness (Wilson et al., 2019). With these explanations, social

Table 3. The perspectives of stakeholders in the field of social participation. Source: Authors.

Perspective	Authors	Perspectives on social sustainability.
Psychology	Mc Clelland & Winter (1969)	- An examination of personality constructs with an emphasis on the trait of the need for progress and creativity in the course of history elucidating its relationship with socio-economic development. - Presenting motivational aspects for innovation. - Identifying factors influencing levels of motivation for progress.
	Hogan & O’Flaherty (2021)	- Explaining the transformations of various traditional and modern societies based on the personality structure of the individuals in that society, presenting the theory of social change, presenting the effective conditions for the emergence of creativity.
Sociology	Fries (2009)	- Necessitating a specific impetus or initiative for initiating socio-economic development, recognizing methodological and attitudinal differences between underdeveloped, developing, and developed countries in their accepted behavioral norms and patterns, and the necessity of inherent and intrinsic impetus among the general populace for development.
	Engels (2017)	- Explaining the transformations of various traditional and modern societies based on individuals’ personality structures, presenting a theory of social change, and outlining the conditions conducive to fostering creativity.
	Lerner (2006)	- Examining the prevailing conditions in the processes of transitioning from traditional to modern worlds, initiating the process of innovation with new public relations, which are the main means of societal acceptance and the primary driver of social change, presenting a model that must be consistently followed to achieve socio-economic participation.
Humanities	Weber (2013)	- Elucidating aspects of the prominent characteristics of modern humans, both internal and external, one related to their environment and the other to their beliefs, values, and sentiments, describing the components of the new (renewable) human.
	Huntington (1996)	- Factors such as prudent authority, discernible constructs, and the expansion of political participation are dynamic elements of innovation and development, presenting fundamental aspects of participation (Huntington, 1996).
	Lipstadt (2005)	- Exploring factors directly or indirectly involved in the emergence of the concept of capitalism, attention to the influence of religious beliefs and values on the behavior of social actors, the concomitance of the concept of participation with the concept of chance or probability, attention to ideas, opinions, and values that shape individuals’ socio-economic behavior.
	Dahl (1985)	- The belief that philosophers, psychologists, and social sociologists have often attributed human political activities and social participation in various ways to internal needs, psychological motivations, instincts, and personality traits (citing reasons for some individuals’ reluctance to engage in social participation, citing factors that increase the likelihood of intervention and participation).

participation is highlighted as a fundamental principle for achieving social sustainability. Since the participation of individuals and groups in social processes plays a vital role, attention to the various aspects and conditions of participation and the fundamental differences between related concepts is of paramount importance.

• **Models of social participation in architectural design**

Determining appropriate mechanisms and selecting the correct participation method in planning and decision-making requires a deep understanding of the various models and methods available. In this regard, many models can be categorized as presented in Table 4. In addition to common models in advancing participatory projects, he categorized them into 5 main groups and presented other proposed methods, which can be observed in Table 5.

In summary, based on design models and previous

research, the positions of collaboration between architects and people in the design process have been examined. Initially, conceptual diagrams of the collaboration ratio are drawn, followed by a matrix between the collaboration ratio and design models. In most stages of design, there is a need for joint activities between architects and people, and design ideas should be formed through people’s activities (Dobson, 1999). Different parts of the design require various participatory models, with design workshops (charrettes) being one effective method for achieving collaboration in the design process (Baquerzadeh Khosroshahi, 2015). These workshops assist in achieving the final quality and enhancing the intermediary role and link between architects in the design process. Fig. 2 and Table 6 provide a more detailed description of the process and participatory models presented.

Table 4. Models of social participation in architectural design. Source: Authors based on Sanoff, 2000.

Classification	Models	Applicable Examples
Two-tier classification	Models of awareness-raising	- Exhibitions and public presentations of plans, lengthy reports, media packages, press conferences, newsletters, newspaper supplements, and the like.
	Participatory model	- Consultancy groups, interviews, meetings, public hearings, surveys, polls, workshops, and similar activities.
Three-tier classification	Information exchange model	- Information repositories, briefings, bill stuffers, central information contacts, feature stories, information kiosks, hotline, field office, email newspaper inserts, press release print, advertisements print public, information material, technical information contacts, technical report
	Feedback reception model	- Comment form, computer-based polling, community facilitators Delphi Process, in-person surveys, Interviews mailed surveys & questionnaires Telephone Surveys/Poll
	Community gathering model	- Coffee klatches- kitchen table meeting open houses, public hearing symposia, fair & events public meeting, web-based meeting
		town meeting, task forces- expert committee workshop, open space meeting ongoing advisory group, revolving conversations, world cafes fish bowl processes
Five-tier classification	Awareness model	- Organizing exhibitions, news media coverage, and pedestrian visits.
	Indirect model	- Questionnaires and surveys.
	Group interaction model	- Workshop and public meeting organization.
	Open-Ended Methods	- Participatory television and survey sheet design.
	Brainstorming model	- Gallery, note pages.

Table 5. Models for Advancing Participatory Projects. Source: Sanoff, 2000.

Models	Examples
Awareness Model	- Participating in exhibitions, news media, and walking tours.
Indirect Participation	- Conducting questionnaire surveys and analysis.
Group Design Models	- Engaging in face-to-face interactions in workshops and group methods, such as charrettes and intra-group design sessions. - Involving in television programs and planning through planning ballots.
	- Collaborating in team-based problem-solving activities, art exhibitions, using pin-up card, nominal group technique, employing the Crawford Slip Writing, the Ringi process, and the Delphi model.
Open Models	- Utilizing motivational ideas and panel formats.
Brainstorming Models	- Employing collaborative group processes to facilitate idea sharing among team members.
Various Brainstorming Methods	-Availing tele-communication services like video conferencing, etc.

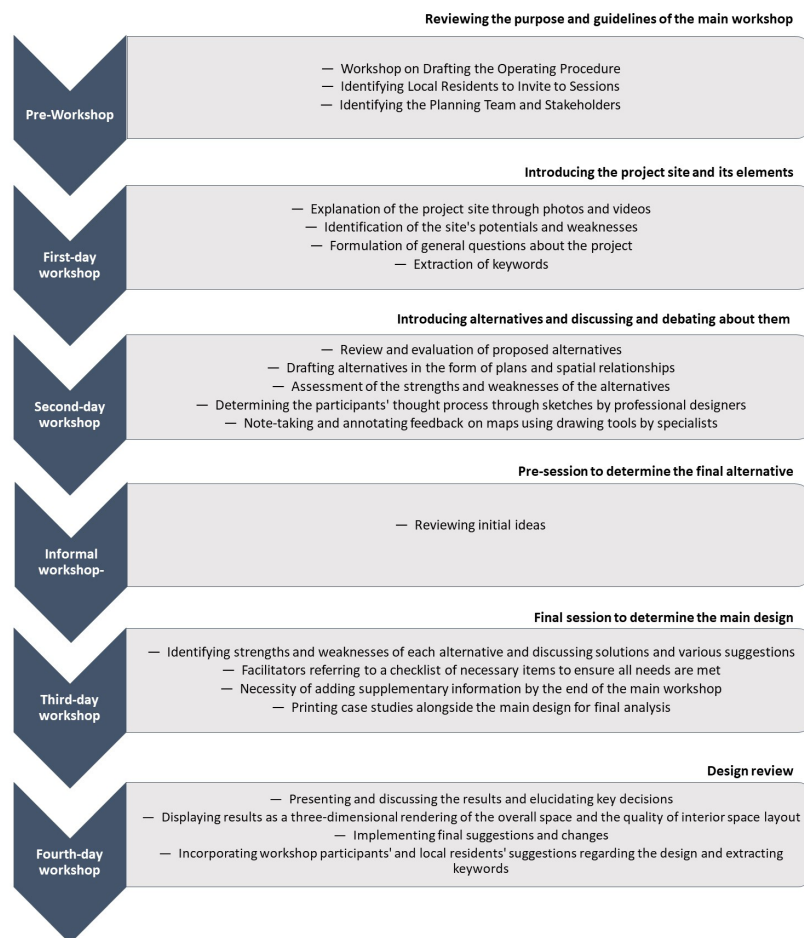


Fig. 2. The process model of the design workshop "Charrette".Source: Authors.

Table 6. The summary of the design workshop (charrette). Source: Authors based on Lindsey et al., 2003.

The type of session	Description	Duration	Goals
Workshop	Lecture and large group discussions	Half a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing the charrette design process to participants. - Providing training to participants within a limited timeframe. - Introducing the charrette design process to participants. - Training participants on all high-quality design strategies. - Actively involving participants in charrette design exercises. - Holding high-quality, low-cost sessions.
Mini design workshop (charrette)	Workshops and interactive exercises	From one to half a day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing fundamental training in high-quality design topics (in workshops). - Conducting charrette design activities in subgroups for specific projects. - Identifying appropriate high-quality design strategies considering specific projects.
Full-scale charrette	Workshops accompanied by intensive discussions in subgroups	2 days or more	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussing high-quality design strategies that have been reviewed for a specific design (within the framework of the workshop) and selecting specific project strategies.

Research Methodology

The nature of this research is such that it can be applied to improve and enhance social interactions in public spaces. Therefore, it is applied research, and since it is participation-oriented, field research has been conducted based on the "design workshop or charrette" model. Qualitative research methods, such as in-depth interviews, have been used to collect information, and interviews have been conducted with experts, city managers, and local individuals. Additionally, this research has been presented through the

examination of a case study to elucidate the study subject. Base and foundational data, especially technical information related to the project, have been gathered through reviewing statistical data (census information), studying upper-level documents (detailed regional plans), and reports from urban renewal offices (identification reports, development documents, and monthly office reports).

Research Site

The selected site is located on Motahari Street North, in

Zone 1 of the Shiraz Municipality, adjacent to Motehari Square. It connects to Zargari Bridge and Sattarkhan Street on one side and Ghodusi West Street and Ghodusi East Street on the other side. The choice of land in this area, based on the land use zoning map defined in the zoning of orchards, indicates that this space is considered an urban green space. Furthermore, according to studies conducted in the Planning Deputy Office of Shiraz Municipality, this area in Zone 1 of Shiraz Municipality suffers from a shortage of urban green space (Fig. 3). According to studies conducted by the Urban Planning Deputy of Shiraz Municipality, based on the Statistical Yearbook of Shiraz (Planning and Budget Organization of Province, 2009), Zone 1 of Shiraz Municipality lacks cultural spaces such as libraries and reading rooms within its boundaries. Therefore, for the promotion and dissemination of culture, as well as for healthy recreational activities to spend leisure time and showcase the value and position of Iranian knowledge and literature, it will be beneficial, even for tourists (Fig. 4). Additionally, primary and first-rate access to the site is from Shahid Motahari Street, which is among the main arteries (Fig. 5).

Practical Workshop (Charrette) Stages

• Pre-workshop

A pre-workshop was held to review the guidelines and objectives of the main workshop.

The core of the Charrette Process: The heart of the charrette process is a specialized and comprehensive team. This team consists of two key sections: the “Planning and Design Team,” composed of experienced professionals in urban planning, architecture, environmental studies, transportation, etc., as well as representatives from relevant organizations and municipal managers. The other section is the “Stakeholders,” who are somehow impacted by the implementation of the charrette project.

To lead this team, an experienced individual with sufficient knowledge of the available expertise is selected to ensure maximum utilization of collective capacities. The presence of municipal employees in this team not only supervises the formation of the plan but also provides an opportunity to familiarize themselves with various specialties and better understand urban problems and opportunities (Fig. 6). The aim of forming this team is to address challenges and achieve comprehensive and desirable results in planning

and formulating strategies. The combination of diverse expertise, the presence of stakeholders, and the participation of municipal employees promises a fruitful and successful process for the charrette. Detailed and systematic planning was a prominent feature of this pre-workshop. The planning process was carried out in four distinct stages with full details:

- Day 1 Planning: Introduction of the project site and presentation of general information about it.
- Day 2 Planning: Introduction and discussion of various alternatives for project planning.
- Day 3 Planning: Selection of the optimal alternative based on discussions held on the second day.
- Day 4 Planning: Reviewing the final project plan and incorporating comments and suggestions.

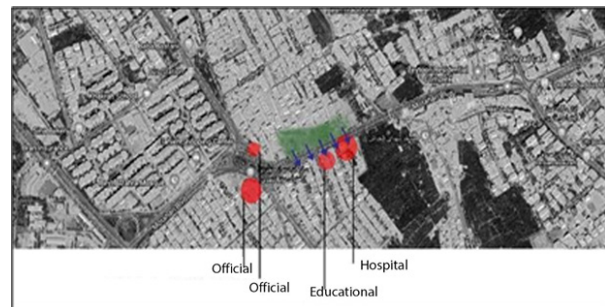


Fig. 3. Right: Depicts the site location (highlighted in green) and its surroundings and perspectives. Source: Google Earth.

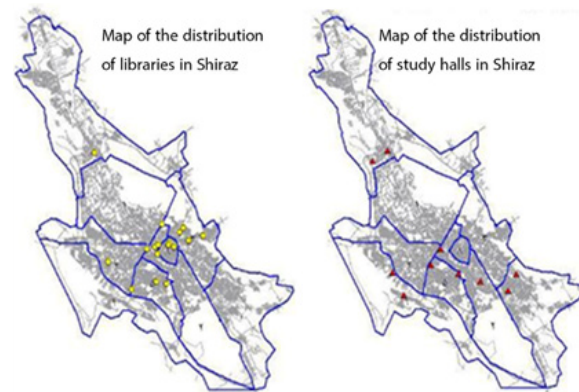


Fig. 4. Right: The distribution of reading rooms. Left: public libraries in Shiraz. Source: Planning and Budget Organization of Province, 2009.



Fig. 5. Right: Access to the site, Left: The current layout design of the site. Source: Authors.

Throughout these four days, cohesion and collaboration among various experts and stakeholders were visible. Free exchange of ideas, constructive discussions, and commitment to participatory design created a dynamic and hopeful atmosphere. In addition to the mentioned aspects, the following points were also given special attention in this pre-workshop:

- Formation of Planning Teams: Various teams with diverse expertise were formed to facilitate the planning process and task allocation.
- Identification of Stakeholders: Key project stakeholders were identified and involved in the planning and decision-making process.
- Drafting Guidelines: A detailed and concise set of guidelines was drafted for each charrette to ensure regular and purposeful sessions.

The Charrette Pre-Workshop was a turning point in the path of participatory design for this project. With the synergy and commitment of experts and stakeholders, an important step was taken towards creating a dynamic, beautiful, and people-oriented urban space.

Now, let's briefly describe the achievements of each day of the pre-workshop:

Day 1 Achievements:

- Introduction to the history, features, and location of the project site.
- Presentation of information regarding the population, needs, and desires of the neighborhood residents.
- Familiarization of participants with each other and the project objectives.

Day 2 Achievements:

- Presentation of ideas and various alternatives for project planning.
- Discussion and evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative.
- Exchange of ideas and collaboration among participants.

Day 3 Achievements:

- Selection of the optimal alternative based on the majority's opinion.
- Presentation of details and initial ideas for the final plan.

Day 4 Achievements:

- Reviewing the final project plan with the participation of stakeholders.

- Incorporating comments and suggestions from participants.

- Finalization of the project plan and preparation for the next phase.

With the results and achievements of the Charrette Pre-Workshop, we can confidently move towards the next stages of design and implementation.

The collaboration, commitment, and active participation of experts and stakeholders promise the creation of a dynamic, beautiful, and people-oriented urban space.

• First-Day workshop process

During the conducted pre-workshop, some local residents and experts were present. Initially, the project site was explained to the attendees through photos and videos to provide them with initial insights into the subject. Following that, participants were asked to provide their opinions on the potential and weaknesses of the site. Local individuals shared memories and stories about the place, and the key phrase "Nari Garden" emerged from these discussions, indicating the historical name of the project site. Furthermore, it became apparent from the discussions with local people that there used to be a water reservoir (known as Haj Habib) at this location in the past, which has disappeared due to the construction of streets in past decades. Upon the conclusion of open discussions, questions were raised about the design of the library, and printed materials were distributed to the local residents to engage them in the topic of discussion. Various keywords were extracted from the results of this discussion, including the type of building architecture, attention to indigenous and earth-based architecture, respect for the site's past, quality of spaces for the library, the concept of a garden as the main design theme, and related strategies. This process contributed to a better understanding of the needs and facilities available at the site, as well as the collection of various ideas to advance the project (Fig. 7).



Fig. 6. Conducting the Pre-Workshop. Source: Authors.

• Second-Day workshop process

On the second day of the workshop, five design alternatives for the space were introduced and evaluated based on the discussions from the first day. Professional designers, acting as workshop leaders, translated ideas and designs onto paper. Interaction among local individuals, experts, and city managers was noticeable, with experts noting down opinions using drawing tools to reach a consensus on space design (Figs. 8 & 9).

The stages covered on this day:

- Presentation of five design alternatives: These alternatives were designed and presented considering the discussions and expressed needs from the first day.
- Evaluation and comparison of alternatives: The pros and cons of each alternative were discussed and examined by participants.
- Sketching and recording ideas: Professional designers visually recorded the ideas and opinions of participants.
- Interaction and synergy: Interaction and exchange of ideas among local individuals, experts, and city managers occurred in a dynamic and creative environment.
- Efforts to reach consensus: Using drawing tools and constructive discussions, efforts were made to reach a collective agreement on space design.

• Intermediary and informal session

An intermediary and informal session was conducted between the workshops on the second and third days to review initial ideas. All specialists and facilitators were invited to this session. This session served as a pre-session to determine the final alternative so that all aspects could be examined in a specialized manner.

• Third-Day workshop process

On the third day of the workshop, based on the feedback from the previous session, one alternative was selected as the optimal design, and its architectural details were discussed. Strengths and weaknesses of the alternative were identified, and various solutions and suggestions were presented. Expert facilitators referred to the list of required items to ensure that everything was provided. Additional complementary information needs to be added by the end of the main workshop session. This session constituted the final stage of determining the main design and focused on the details of the interior space and the quality of semi-open spaces in the final design (Fig. 10).

All case studies with similar spatial quality were printed for final analysis and placed alongside the design. Experts elaborated on the final design, discussing policy-making components and assessing strengths and weaknesses. Different spaces in the design were evaluated from the perspectives of city managers, specialists, and local residents.



Fig. 7. First Day of Charrette Workshop. Source: Authors.

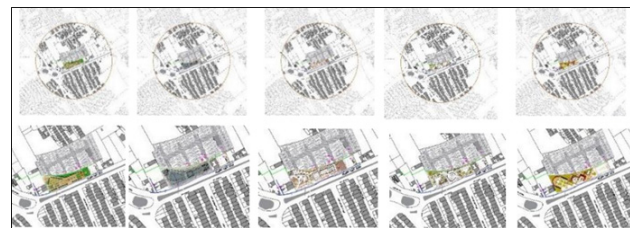


Fig. 8. Presentation of Different Alternatives. Source: Authors.

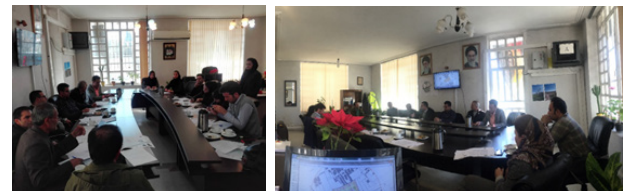


Fig. 9. Second Day of Charrette Workshop. Source: Authors.



Fig. 10. Third Day of Charrette Workshop. Source: Authors.

• Fourth-Day Workshop Process

On the final day of the workshop, which was a half-day event, members, officials, and interveners were present (Fig. 11). The results of this workshop were presented and discussed, and key decisions were outlined. The outcomes were displayed visually as three-dimensional designs of the overall space, interior space quality, and plan, allowing everyone to see the work’s outcome and make final suggestions and changes. Some of the achievements of the final day of the chart workshop included:

- Visual Presentation of Workshop Results: Three-dimensional designs, plans, and explanations regarding the quality of the interior space were presented.
- Discussion and Examination of Results by Participants: Participants provided their opinions and suggestions regarding the presented results.
- Clarification of Decisions Made: Key decisions regarding the final space design were clarified and outlined.
- Implementation of Final Changes: Final suggestions and recommendations from participants were incorporated into the design.

With reliance on the results and achievements of the chart workshop, confident steps can be taken towards the next stages of design and implementation.

Discussion

During the first day of the workshop, discussions revolved around the historical features of the land, particularly the design concept of the pomegranate garden and Haj Habib’s water reservoir. The primary concern of the residents was the revitalization of the garden and the establishment of a unique library. Traditional architecture and people’s feelings towards the space were examined. Keywords extracted from the first-day workshop are listed in Table 7, and suggestions from workshop participants and locals on the final day workshop regarding the design and examples of designs based on them are presented in Table 8.

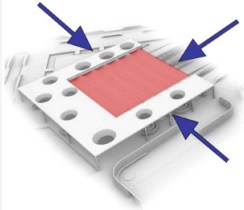
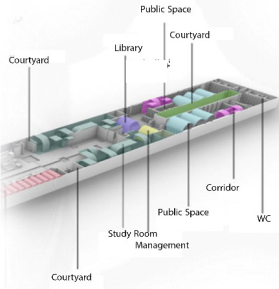
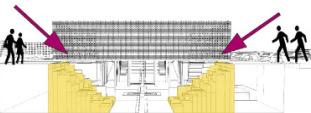
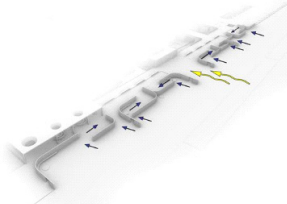
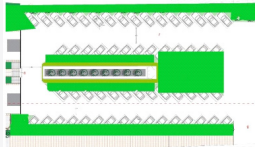

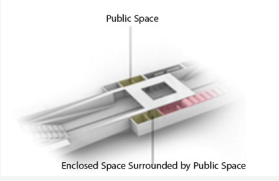


Fig. 11. Fourth Day of Charrette Workshop. Source: Authors.

Table 7. Keywords extracted from the first-day workshop. Source: Authors.

Characteristics and Type of Space	Proposed Strategies and Solutions
The type of architectural design.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis on indigenous architecture, but not in a classical sense. Rather, with a fresh look at the indigenous architecture of our city (contemporary). - Respect for the site’s past to enhance the richness of the environmental sense. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ground-oriented architecture. - Nature-oriented architecture.
The entrance of the complex relative to the street space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To create an inviting atmosphere, the entrance should be flexible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design the entrance interactively with pedestrians. - Presence of main and secondary entrances.
The quality of the study space.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cozy spaces for those in need of concentration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Variety in seating areas. - Views of green spaces and existing water features on the site. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Book café space. - Gallery space.
Proposed spaces alongside the study area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering a space for storytelling in the garden. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space for book sales. - Utilizing various sitting areas in the garden space.
Quality of the spaces for interaction between users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A combination of open and enclosed spaces. - The uses across the entire site should be scattered, with interaction spaces between them in the form of semi-open and open spaces. - Interaction spaces can be interconnected like courtyard architecture. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It should evoke a different atmosphere from a regular park. - It should offer optional activities.
The ideal design from the perspective of local residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The sound of water should prevail over any other noise in the complex. - A tranquil space that helps to distance us from the stresses and excitement of the surroundings. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The garden space should dominate over any other space. - The building should blend into the garden.

Table 8. Keywords extracted from the fourth-day workshop and examples of designs based on them. Source: Authors.

Design Sketch	Design Strategies and Solutions	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering a portable covered space in the outdoor area to facilitate book introduction ceremonies, book signings, and book launches. - Considering a projection screen facing the open amphitheater area for film screenings and book readings in the outdoor space. 	Suggestions for the storytelling and narration space
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diversity in study spaces (private, semi-private, public, and semi-public) should be considered. - A communal study space (for discussion and conversation about the selected book) should be included. - A space for leisurely reading, where individuals can enjoy books recreationally rather than feeling obligated. Creating a high-quality outdoor reading space. - The presence of an open library among the study spaces. 	Suggestions for book reading spaces
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The entrance design should have more interaction. - The entrance walls should have more connection with the pedestrian space. - In the previous design, due to some opposing slopes, there is no possibility of sitting in some walls. 	Suggestions for the entrance area of the complex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating a space for sitting and resting next to the library area, which, in addition to safety and visibility, is considered the second entrance. - Considering a combined space of seating and stairs. - The second entrance space should be between the library area and the central kiosk. 	Suggestions for enhancing security in the lower space and recommendations for improving security and surveillance in the complex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering parking space for individuals visiting the book house. - Integrating parking space with green space. - Separating parking space from the book house complex. 	Suggestions for the parking area of the complex
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increasing the per capita green space in the entire complex. - Increasing the per capita green space in the garden's depression area. 	Suggestions for the green space
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Considering spaces for various artistic societies (architects, calligraphers, writers, etc.). - Including a series of offices for hosting gatherings where experts can engage in discussions and conversations. 	Proposed spaces for the complex

Conclusion

This research aimed to investigate the effects of social participation in the process of designing and organizing urban spaces. The ultimate goal of such projects is to

increase cultural and social values, improve public welfare, and benefit society as a whole. With greater success in urban spaces, interactions and communal life among individuals in those areas increase. This necessitates a

shift in design approach from government-centric to community-oriented and participatory, which harnesses social capital and collective wisdom towards the social sustainability of the city. By evaluating the indicators affecting social sustainability, we have shown that the primary components of socially receptive spaces include social interaction and participation. Participatory design creates a potential platform for problem-solving and urban sustainability. The “design workshop” was identified as a suitable method in the architectural design process, and based on it, a specific process was proposed for practical application. In the selected site in Shiraz, considering the need for green space and a cultural library, surveys and discussions led to the presentation of design proposals and ideas. The results showed that people’s participation in the “design workshop” is crucial for achieving project goals and for increasing convergence among different groups, as well as identifying neighborhood potentials and resources. This study emphasizes the importance of social participation in enhancing the quality of urban spaces and achieving social sustainability in the city. The ideas and suggestions obtained can provide a suitable platform for the participatory design of quality urban spaces.

In the conclusion section, this research provides a complementary categorization for the improvement of citizen participation workshops in architectural projects.

- Key Points:

1. Paying attention to neighborhood physical features and their requirements is among the discussed points in implementing “design workshops.”
2. Alignment with upstream plans and being concurrent with them has a significant impact on the technique.
3. Local participation in each neighborhood requires specific considerations based on the area’s conditions and characteristics.
4. The relationship between the facilitation team and the local fabric greatly influences the progress of the work.
5. Power relations in the local fabric and how different groups interact have significant effects on advancing the work.
6. Documents and tools for implementing this technique also play a significant role in encouraging effective participation.

- Strategies for “Design Workshops” are as follows, with actions also predicted for each strategy:

1. Adopting a goal commensurate with the scale of work and selecting operational objectives.
2. Designing “design workshops” based on existing conditions and neighborhood characteristics.
3. Determining the type of “design workshop” (visionary or executive).
4. Identifying steps and executive scenarios of “design workshops.”
5. Defining the dimensions of “design workshops” considering upstream documents, diversity of individuals and participating groups, types of group interactions, their social and economic backgrounds, and neighborhood physical characteristics.

- Before anything else, it is essential to determine that the regulations and the executive system of each “design workshop” are reviewable, presentable, and designable in the same project. However, some general regulations in this regard are anticipated:

1. Citizen participation.
2. Mutual understanding and empathy with people, creating conditions for specialists and officials to understand people’s problems, fits of anger, and hopes, and accept them.
3. Deep understanding of the neighborhood.
4. Readable documents for use in the session and presentation to the people.
5. Powerful start of a workshop at a specific point with a specific goal.
6. Strong and visionary project presentation.
7. Initiating the flow of thoughts and meanings.

- Each “design workshop” can be divided into three stages, and it is necessary to follow the following stages in it:

1. Before the main workshop
Selecting a steering committee to advance the “design workshop” and expand the necessary concepts in the “design workshop,” including important priorities and secondary concepts in the project, including:
 - a. Determining the project’s goal;
 - b. Identifying the precise geographical scope of the project;

- c. Identifying legal and regulatory issues related to the “design workshop”;
- d. Summarizing the agenda for involvement in the main workshop;
- e. Developing the “design workshop” agenda specific to the project.

To attract people’s participation before the workshop, presentations can be held for different groups, encouraging and selecting participants. One of the best ways to involve individuals in workshops is to engage children, which not only involves using their opinions and understanding but also activates their parents. For example, ideas such as choosing an occupational character for children in the workshop session can be used. Moreover, encouraging them to draw images of the neighborhood’s future during the session is beneficial. Additionally, choosing a day at school for children to design and get acquainted with them before holding the “design workshop” is beneficial. Providing necessary and secondary information during the “design workshop” is also essential. In this regard, the following are noteworthy:

- a. Identifying key individuals
 - b. Documenting current conditions (images, maps, previous drawings, studies and reports, statistical information, historical documents, regional laws, related projects, videos, and other available information)
 - c.. It is necessary to document the date, location of the session, the number and characteristics of participants, equipment and materials, and documentation needs.
2. Main workshop
- a. A minimum 2-day process (in some cases 4 days) consisting of three stages (thinking, graphic thinking, presentation, and design).
 - b. Implementation of the main workshop includes documentation, interviews with groups, prioritization of concepts, and expansion of proposals.
 - c. Stabilizing local development projects, priorities, and implementation strategies in this workshop.
 - d. Achieving comprehensive and comprehensible graphic documents for everyone.
 - e. Achieving the main concept in this workshop.
3. After the main workshop
- a. Presenting the final output report and identifying challenges and opportunities.

- b. Presenting written proposals for local development projects.
- c. Achieving actions.
- d. Access to resources and existing potentials.
- e. Presenting an official report and presenting it to neighborhood individuals and, if necessary, to a larger community (region and city).
- f. Promotion and informing.
- g. Presentation of documents and images for publication in the media.

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