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ASSESSMENT OF AMUSEMENT PARKS AND THE PRINCIPLES OF DESIGNING URBAN (CASE STUDY OF TEHRAN AMUSEMENT PARKS)

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ABSTRACT

In the topic of connections among the urban spaces, city amusement parks are considered as a part of urban green space. The only major difference between amusement park and green space is that any amusement park includes green space, but any kind of green space cannot be referred to as amusement park, because amusement park has some additional facilities such as welfare and amusing devices appropriate to the people using them, and their function is different from urban green spaces to a great extent. Public green spaces in city areas act as natural residence and are of high efficient. Trees and vegetation in outdoor public spaces strengthen the social associations which are being weakened every day and play an effective role in reducing aggression, helping achieve spiritual peace and increasing intimacy among citizens. These places can be utilized as the source of economic benefits for city residents. The method of current research is descriptive analytic method. Also a questionnaire has been prepared to collect some parts of information and field data. It has to be noted that

researchers have used SPSS software to analyze and evaluate the significance rate of research.Therefore, one of the requirements maintaining and expanding urban green spaces are applying proper methods and programs. Unfortunately, due to urbanization in recent years, the functions of urban services in general and green space usage in particular has faced numerous problems such as per capita shortage of green space, improper locatingand lack of foresight for these spaces in the city.

Keywords: Amusement Parks, Urban Spaces, Green Space

INTRODUCTION

Due to its diverse environmental, social, cultural and economic functions, green space is a significant and valuable measure in cities. According to Article 50 of Islamic Republic of Iran Constitution, environmental maintenance is mentioned as a public duty. Green space should be appropriate to physical size of the city and society needs, both quantitatively and qualitatively. It also should be designed with special consideration to ecologic conditions of each city and their immediate expansion course to have continuous ecosystem efficiency as a dynamic space. Green spaces have found more importance due to its effects on environment and its undeniable role in citizens' physical, psychological and social health.

The cities are expanding nowadays, with their population increasing day after day. This process will inevitably lead to development of environmental decay and increase of citizens' exposure to environmental pollution. Solving environmental problems and making an urban area a healthy and living environment for residents is one of the major duties of municipality. In fact, observing urban spaces or in other words, considering levels of urban functions with man-made vegetation in order to produce oxygen, adjusting environment heat, absorption of some polluters, inclined plane stabilization, humidity increase and ecologic efficiency will lead to promotion of quality of urban environment, provide a location for social interactions and more than that, satisfy citizens' need for enjoying their leisure. Taking a look at the situation of present urban green spaces confirms the requirement for more attention to this item obviously.

Urban green spaces has an important and undeniable effect on emotional and psychological qualities of human beings, the quality of human's interaction with environment, the way of connection and influence of ecosystem features. Attention to urban green space matter seems to be more

significant when we consider that this urban function is directly related to "city stability" and one of the factors of the latter in current heterogeneous cities and instability is social stability which has a mutual relation with the function of amusement parks in increasing the citizens' participation.

Problem statement

In all of the countries worldwide, the increasing expansion of the cities is considered as the inevitable consequence of science and technology era. Urbanization growth and development has a direct relation with physical expansion of the cities and results in separation from the nature and human's disconnection with natural environment **(Moharamnejad and Bahmanpour, 2009:524)**.

The urbanization and increase of population change the urban green spaces to rough and impenetrable surfaces. This process has a more serious reflection in the developing and third world countries **(Shi [1], 2002:18)**. Amusement parks have social, economic and ecologic roles and are of various benefits such as curing mental illnesses, providing a favorable location for bringing up children, social integration, experiencing comfort and so on. These spaces are counted as measures to promote the quality of life space and society development **(Balram[2], 2005:149)**.

Building amusement parks is worth of wide examination due to its effect on quality of urban life and achieving the stable development, as well as the financial effect without invest return and the profit they have for municipalities **(Manlum [3], 2003,31)**.

Prior to anything, the action measures for designing green spaces should be determined properly and presented correctly with consideration to feature of urban life quality and environment psychology.Jekob **[4]**, contemporary critic of urban planning believes amusement park should locate where culture exists and commercial activities are taking place. Some of city regions contain such valuable spots which seem appropriate for building local amusement parks or public squares **(Khemer *et al*. 2013)**.

On the matter of association among urban spaces, city amusement parks are considered a part of urban spaces and the only difference between amusement park and urban space is that any amusement park should necessarily have urban spaces, but any urban spaces cannot be named amusement park, because amusement parks have some additional facilities such as welfare and amusing devices appropriate to the people using them, and their function is different from urban green

spaces to a great extent **(Majnounian, 1995:18)**.

One of the features of amusement parks is providing his users with a set of activities; it means that it is an area that is easy to access and interact with. It can be said its most important quality is being a place for different groups of citizens to meet and make social interaction with one another.

The main elements of a proper and effective amusement park can be mentioned as follows:

- Mental comfort
- Activities and functional features
- The social capability
- Accessibility and connection with environment

In Athens Charter one of the considered functions for cities is spending leisure and the amusement park is one of the major elements of this functionality. In locating process, these elements which are categorized on their capacity, vastness, space attraction and accessibility radius, considering the following factors is of importance:

1. Security in access: amusement parks should be established in a way the all groups of society would be able to use it regardless of their age and sex.
2. Availability: amusement parks should be built in a place which is available for all society groups.
3. Centrality: this function should be located in urban centers including neighborhood and district centers and urban area as much as possible **(Mohammadi *et al*, 2010)**.

Urban green spaces act as a link among environmental factors. Therefore, if these spaces are being planned and executed appropriately, the strength and ecologic diversity of urban spaces will enhance undoubtedly **(SalehiFard, 2002:14)**.

Urban green spaces in urban area act as natural residenceand are very efficient.Tress and vegetation in outdoor urban spaces strengthen the social associations which are being weakened every day and play an effective role in reducing aggression, helping achieve spiritual peace and increasing intimacy among citizens.These places can be utilized as the source of economic benefits for city residents. **(Chiesura, 2003:2)**.

Khemer *et al* (2012) in their article titled "criteria for locating amusement parks in order to improve the social environment" ("with Ya'ghoub Leys amusement park in Zabol city as the case study) discussed green space as a component of city physical system, with which people are in constant connection.

They indicated the attention to humanistic and cultural needs of society, as well as providing necessary elements in building it are the major purpose of designing proper urban spaces. The results indicate that Ya'ghoubLeyds amusement park enjoys 66.7% compatibility on the compatibility matrix, 75% desirability, 40% appropriateness on capacity matrix and 43% properness on dependence matrix. In their assessment and analysis of urban amusement parks situation which was performed by SWOT device and proper pattern (with 8 Shahrivar amusement park of Semnan City as the case study) **Lahijanian and Shiite Beigi (2011)** discussed that urban green space is one of the structural urban elements which is considered as an urban open spaces and has vegetation. These spaces can be identified as layers of city respiration system which has several functions such as beautification of city, adjusting environmental factors and a place to spend leisure. **Mohammadi *et al* (1391)** studied on local prioritizing of development of green spaces and amusement parks and indicated that the importance of urban green spaces is to the extent that is considered as one of the development indices of society, and is a measure for promoting the quality of life space. Thus, it has the least local priority for developing urban green spaces.

Rahnama and Akbari (2013) in their study on elements in amusement park aspects with a look at Mashhad green spaces pinpointed that planting vegetation is one of the present key elements which indicates the significant role of green spaces in current societies. In fact, the urban vegetation is defined as green spaces, structures and structure which lead to ecosystem stability and optimization of people's lives and their work environment. **Tian *et al* [1] (2014)** on their study of landscapes and quality of ecosystem of urban green spaces in dense areas of the city, indicated that urban spaces are natural and cultural city organizations. They play a vital role in the development of the cities and their ecosystems, and provide significant social and economic benefits for these cities. **Brinkyte [2] (2014)** in the case study of urban green space systemsin Siauliai city has mentioned the above points. In giving a definition of urban space design, we can indicate that this harmony will reflect the structure and general view of a city. Here, structure is identified as city space, building architecture and also urban green spaces and the main goal is improving the environment near the citizen's residence.

Thus, the purpose of the current study is to assess the situation of city amusement parks

based on principles of urban green space design.

In order to achieve the mentioned purpose in the current study, the following questions are necessary to be asked:

The main question:

- Is there a significant relationship between the situation of city amusement parks and the principles of urban green space design?

The secondary questions:

- Is there a significant relationship between the social capability of urban green spaces and improvement of their situation quality?
- Is there a significant relationship between the defined functions of urban spaces and the quality of these spaces?
- Is there a significant relationship between the urban space accessibility and its connection with other spaces, and the improvement of their situation quality?

Following hypotheses and objectives have been tested regarding the aforementioned questions:

Main hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between the situation of city amusement parks and the principles of urban green space design.

Secondary hypothesis

There is a significant relationship between the social capability of urban open spaces and the improvement of their quality of situation.

There is a significant relationship between the defined functions of urban spaces and the quality of these spaces.

There is a significant relationship between urban space accessibility and its connection with other spaces, and improvement of their situation quality.

The methodology of research and data analysis

The method of current research is descriptive-analytic method. Library method has been used in order to collect data and theoretic base of research, history and identification of variables. In this regard, library sources such as books, journals, publications of research and survey centers, dissertations, articles, internet sources and so on. Also, a questionnaire has been used to collect some of the information and field data from statistical sample. To analyze the data and test the research hypotheses, the statistical inference method is used. It should be noted that SPSS

software is used to analyze data and evaluate the significance rate of research hypotheses.

The theoretical framework of research

It is less than half of a century that "green space" has obtained a special place in urban design terminology worldwide. "Green space" includes several meanings and concepts. It contains the region parts which include plants or any kind of vegetation such as trees, shrubs and grass. When located in the urban physical context, the green space makes a tendency to be a part of urban hierarchy and is divided to different measures in the city areas. In this way, the hierarchy differences produce different aspects of norms and standards among various lands and cultures **(Rostamkhani and Leghaee, 2004)**.

Characteristic of urban green spaces

The visual characteristics of tress in the urban structure of landscape: the fame and specialty of many cities is dependent to their vegetation, because it forms a major part of urban landscape. Planting trees in urban spaces may not have a determining role in human's life, but many people describe spending time beside the trees as enjoyable.

Observing a tree is associated with an indescribable joy, and bunches of trees with their natural twigs and leafs gives variety to the landscape of buildings and presenting a beautiful set. Trees create diverse colors, textures and shapes in residential areas and produces natural shapes and colors in geometrical patterns of the roads. The color change in different seasons leads to great diversity and pleasure in the environment. In 3-dimensional structures of the cities, trees find more importance as the complementary elements because they give meaning to the gaps between buildings. In addition to their aesthetical aspect, trees hold other characteristics which can be helpful:

- Showing the border between two types of functions
- Focus on the attitude to some particular elements
- Removing unpleasant view (Brian, 2006).

The environmental characteristics of trees in urban system: in cities, plants and green spaces not only create a unique local structure and are reminiscent of natural environment, but also adjust and reform some of the environmental factors. These environmental factors include:

- Reducing air pollution
- Reducing noise pollution
- Controlling the regional conditions (including: wind, humidity, sunshine and heat controlling)
- Controlling the light reflection

- Controlling the soil erosion and fixing it (Journal 230, 2010).

The architectural characteristics of plants in green spaces

In designing the green spaces, plants are used as the design and spacing components which can be participants as an effective architecture form in creating the space, regarding their individual or mass shape and size. Plants can be utilized in the forms of wall, ceiling and floor. If planted linear and crowded, they can act as a parapet. The shade of tress can replace the ceiling and the floor can be composed of covering plants **(Pishbin, 2005)**. Plants can act as a visual or physical separator of spaces, and define them. Their roles are as follows:

Creating fences

The first principle for designing urban spaces is surrounding the space, since the space cannot be a pleasant place if not surrounded properly. If the surrounding objects follow the quadrangle or circular pattern, will form a static mass and gives the mental perception of calmness. If they imply a lengthy mass, they will find a motion identity. In case of spiral form of surroundings and free fence, the motion will be implied, with the freedom to move in any direction **(Rostamkhani, 2003)**.

Sight control

One of the characteristics of the plants is to restrict the space, thus preventing the undesirable sight. Plants can cover the undesirable sights and guide the eyesight to the pleasant views. In addition to plants, other elements such as ground slope, height and density of plants or building elements can be useful. To control the sight, plants should restrict the outside view, but the inside view to outside should be free to enjoy the pleasant landscapes. The viewer's intent is of importance in sight control.

Prevention of movement

The path in a green space can be beautifully restricted by plants. Plants can have a great role in controlling the traffic. The plants show the road with the assistance of edges, preventing people to use other parts. This function is obviously visible in fences. Also, thorny plants can be used to restrict the road. In some cases, prevention of movement leads to physical separation in the space. This physical separation can be associated with visual separation, in a way that one can observe the adjacent area, but is not able to enter it. To create space separation, plants, natural landscapes such as valleys, rivers, mountains or difference of surfaces can be used **(Journal 230, 2010)**.

Introducing the case study

Jamshidieh amusement park is located in Tehran north extreme in Alborz mountain slope, or in better words, is in the western corner of Jamshidieh flood channel and is built over the wrecks of an Iranian old garden. It has been attempted to maintain the structure of the garden in accordance with Earth topography and the stone surface around, as well as keeping the components and spirit of Iranian garden and making it compatible for current usage of being pattern of design. The design has been done with respect to ancient Iranian architecture to some extent **(Mo'meni *et al*, 2013)**.

The main northern and southern axes of the road which is now the main road of the amusement park and begins from south of the park, has been the major landscape of the old garden. The lakes under the treesand little gardens have been rebuilt but their structureis exactly the same as ones in the linear plots of the old garden.The other axis which has undergone more design and is a composition of stairs, slope and fountain is parallel to the mentioned axis. Three east-to-west axes complete the garden structure. Due to ground steepness, the secondary axes have a distinctive state but are in harmony with other axes. Different spaces have been considered on these axes to rest and observe the garden and the lake. Resting places have been designed in the two forms of benches and old seats. In some places, the stones have been utilized to build a location to rest. Some spaces have been prepared for public eating. A little amphi-theatre is constructed between two little lakes, one of them having a fountain in the center. Amphitheatre has a capacity of 300 people and is located in the mountain slope, in the eastern part of the amusement park, overlooking the wide landscape of Tehran. Three other buildings have been built in the amusement park. One of them, gallery building is considered as a meeting place for mountaineers. The second one is administration building, located in the north of the first one and is designed in the form of mountain huts of north provinces of Iran. The third building is the glass greenhouse which is adjacent to the mountain and is prepared to grow and exhibit mountain plants **(Mo'meni *et al*, 2013)**.

Statistical analysis

Categorizing the research by method, this descriptive research is conducted by survey method research. The library and field method of research have been used to collect data and library method has been used to collect data on history of domestic and foreign studies. The required specialized and relevant journals have been collected through studying of other researchers' works. Also, a questionnaire has

been circulated among 190 experts of reduction of behavioral complications in different age ranges. Considering the topic, objective and method of current research,the most important tools to collect data for the test are the questionnaire hypotheses. It is noteworthy that SPSS software has been utilized to analyze the data and evaluate the rate of significance of hypotheses. It should be explained that research results are prepared in two descriptive and analytic categories. First,one-dimensional tables have been shown in descriptive results sectionand the analytic results are depicted afterwards.

Analytic results of research

Main hypothesis:

There is a significant relationship between the situation of city amusement parks and the principles of urban green space design.

H0: the situation of city amusement park has no effect on principles of urban green space design.

H1: the situation of city amusement park affects principles of urban green space design.

In the **Table 1**, the relationship between situation of urban amusement parks and principles of urban green space design have been evaluated based on opinions of 190 people. As it is shown, considering spearman statistical value (0.689) and the occurred error level which is less than 0.01 (P-Value < 0.01) we can confirm the relationship between above variables is significant with confidence level of 0.99. In other words, H0 is rejected and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between situation of city amusement parks and principles of urban green space design. Also Spearman correlation coefficient between two variables indicates a strong relationship between the aforementioned variables, and the relationship is direct and positive.

Test of secondary hypotheses:

1- First hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between social capability of urban green spaces and the quality of their situation.

H0: social capability of urban green spaces has no effect on their quality.

H1: social capability of urban green spaces affects their quality.

In the **Table 2**, the relationship between social capability of urban green spaces and their quality has been assessed based on opinions of 190 people. As it is seen,considering Spearman statistical value (0.480) and the occurred error level which is less than 0.01 (P-Value < 0.01) we can confirm the relationship between above variables is significant with confidence level of 0.99. In other words, H0 is rejected and the

main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between social capability of urban green spaces and their quality. Also, Spearman correlation coefficient indicates the relationship between two variables is strong, and the relationship is direct and positive.

2- Second hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between defined functions of urban spaces and their quality.

H0: activity in defined functions of urban spaces has no effect on their quality.

H1: activity in defined functions of urban spaces affects their quality.

In the **Table 3**, the relationship between activity in defined functions of urban spaces and the quality of these spaces has been assessed based on opinions of 190 people of sample population. As it is seen, considering Spearman statistical value (0.560) and the occurred error level which is less than 0.01 (P-Value < 0.01) we can confirm the relationship between above variables is significant with confidence level of 0.99. In other words, H0 is rejected and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between activity in defined functions of urban spaces and their quality. Also, Spearman correlation coefficient indicates the relationship between two variables is strong, and the relationship is direct and positive.

Third hypothesis: there is a significant relationship between urban spaces accessibility and connection with other spaces, and quality improvement.

H0: the accessibility and connection with other spaces has no effect on quality improvement.

H1: the accessibility and connection with other spaces affects quality improvement.

In the **Table 4**, the relationship between accessibility and connection with other spaces and its effect on quality improvement has been assessed based on opinions of 190 people of sample population. As it is seen, considering Spearman statistical value (0.659) and the occurred error level which is less than 0.01 (P-Value < 0.01) we can confirm the relationship between above variables is significant with confidence level of 0.99. In other words, H0 is rejected and the main hypothesis is confirmed. Therefore, there is a significant relationship between accessibility and connection with other spaces and its effect on quality improvement. Also, Spearman correlation coefficient indicates the relationship between two variables is strong, and the relationship is direct and positive.

Table 1: Spearman correlation coefficient, main hypothesis:

Row	Variable	Spearman statistical value	P-Value	Total
1	**The effect of city amusement parks situation on principles of urban green space design**	**0.689**	**0.000**	**190**

Table 2: secondary Spearman correlation coefficient, first hypothesis

Row	Variable	Spearman statistical value	P-Value	Total
1	**Effect of Social capability of urban green spaces on quality of these spaces**	**0.480**	**0.000**	**190**

Table 3: Spearman correlation coefficient, second hypothesis

Row	Variable	Spearman Statistical Value	P-Value	Total
1	**Effect of activity in defined functions of urban spaces on their quality**	**0.560**	**0.000**	**190**

Table 4: Spearman correlation coefficient, third secondary hypothesis

Row	Variable	Spearman Statistical Value	P-Value	Total
1	**Accessibility and connection with other spaces and its effect on quality improvement**	**0.659**	**0.000**	**190**

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Khemer *et al*, (2013) on their article titled "criteria of locating city amusement parks to improve social environment" discussed green space as a component of city physical system, with which people are in constant connection. They indicated the attention to humanistic and cultural needs of society, as well as providing necessary elements in building it are the major purpose of designing proper urban spaces. This definition is in association with the results of our researches. The results indicate that there is a significant relationship between the social capability of urban green spaces and the quality improvement of these spaces.

In their assessment and analysis of urban amusement parks situation which was performed by SWOT device and proper pattern (with 8 Shahrivar amusement park of Semnan City as the case study) **Lahijanian and Shiite Beigi (2011)** discussed that urban

green space is one of the structural urban elements which is considered as an urban open spaces and has vegetation. These spaces can be identified as layers of city respiration system which has several functions such as beautification of city, adjusting environmental factors and a place to spend leisure. The results of this research are in accordance with the aforementioned data. As it was confirmed, there is a significant relationship between situation of city amusement parks and the principles of urban green space design.

Rahnama and Akbari (2013) Rahnama and Akbari (2013) in their study on elements in amusement park aspects with a look at Mashhad green spaces pinpointed that planting vegetation is one of the present key elements which indicates the significant role of green spaces in current societies. In fact, the urban vegetation is defined as green spaces, structures and structure which lead to ecosystem stability and optimization of people's lives and their work environment. The difference between the mentioned research and the current one is in studying the variables.

Brinkyte (2014) in the case study of urban green space systems in Siauliai city has mentioned the above points. In giving a definition of urban space design, we can indicate that this harmony will reflect the structure and general view of a city. Here, structure is identified as city space, building architecture and also urban green spaces and the main goal is improving the environment near the citizen's residence. But in the current research, we discussed the social capabilities, activities in the framework of defined functions, green space accessibility and connection with urban spaces.

Tian *et al* (2014) on their study of landscapes and quality of ecosystem of urban green spaces in dense areas of the city indicated that urban spaces are natural and cultural organizations of the city. They play a vital role in the development of the cities and their ecosystems, and provide significant social and economic benefits for these cities. As it is seen, the results of our research are similar to the aforementioned study.

Final conclusion

Green space as a real phenomenon which covers a part of city view, is one of the basic issues with which human being has been in constant interaction. Its importance in city environment is to the extent that it is considered as a development index, and a measure for improvement of life quality. Therefore, proper design of these spaces in cities is of high importance. One of the most important points that should be considered in designing public green spaces is the social

requirement for building amusement parks. Urban green spaces acts as a link among environmental factors. Therefore, when green spaces is designed and used properly, it will undoubtedly contribute to enhancement of ecological competence and diversity of urban spaces. Also, due to the various environmental, social, cultural and economic functions of urbangreen spaces, it is an important and valuable factor in cities. Thus, it should be enhanced qualitatively and quantitatively appropriate to society needs and with consideration to ecologic conditions and city expansion course. Management strategy for urban green spaces is a delicate and important matter. In order to maintain and expand urban green spaces, appropriate planning and methods should be taken. Due to urbanization in recent years and lack of comprehensive planning in the country, the functions of city services generally and function of green spaces particularly has faced numerous problems such as per capita shortage of green spaces, inappropriate locating and lack of foresight in the city areas.

Research suggestions

- Prioritizing the expansion of green spaces in poor neighborhoods considering amusement parks and green spaces
- Conducting studies about distributing and locating the city functions considering the physical hierarchy of the city and practical functions.
- Conducting studies about the quality of public participation increase in maintaining green spaces and enhancing social control and supervision of this type of function, through necessary public participation.
- Attention to public participation is necessary and mandatory in order to reach the favorable limit for expanding urban green spaces and maintaining them.

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