

Original Research Article

Identifying the Available Capacities on the Roof Space to Develop Tourism in Iranian Cities

Ziya Hosseinzadeh^{1*}, Sara Shokouh², Mohammadreza Mehrabani Golzar³

1. Ph.D. Candidate in Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, College of Fine Arts, University of Tehran, Iran.

2. Lecturer, Persian Gulf University, School of Art & Architecture, Bushehr, Iran.

3. Assistant Professor, Faculty Member of Faculty of Architecture and Urban Planning, Imam Khomeini International University, Qazvin, Iran.

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Abstract From ancient times until now, roofs have been an important space in Iranian cities, with many functional and meaningful roles. However, nowadays, in most Iranian cities, these significant capacities have been completely neglected. On the other hand, Iranian cities have always been attractive destinations for tourists due to their unique spatial, social, identity, and cultural characteristics. But with the arrival of modernism and its belongings in Iranian cities and fundamental changes in their texture, these cities have lost many of their attractions to tourists. According to the authors of this article, roofs give quality to urban spaces. Therefore, by examining the roof space of buildings in a special way, this article aims to answer this question: How roof spaces can develop and strengthen tourism in Iranian cities? In this regard, the background of this field and library sources were examined. For this purpose, documents, including travelogues, cinema, and images of urban spaces were scrutinized. The results indicate that due to the increase in the number of high-rise buildings, especially in big cities like Tehran, paying attention to the capacity of the roof space of these buildings gives visitors better views of the city. Due to their spatial integrity and location at a height, they also allow their users to have all kinds of events and create social interactions in direct connection with the nature of the city. This, in turn, creates a lasting image of the destination city in the minds of tourists, tied to natural elements, various activities, and social interactions. Therefore, in general, the main roles of roofs for the development of tourism in Iranian cities can be expressed in the four factors of developing social interactions, strengthening the connection of tourists with the nature of the destination city, creating a suitable mental image of the city, and increasing the quality of the experience of the urban space.

Keywords | Roof, mental image, tourism, city, community.

Introduction | The roof has been one of the most important spaces in Iranian cities and has too many functions and potential, especially in the field of scenery (Hosseinzadeh, Shokouh & Mehrabani Golzar, 2021). By going to the roof, a person expands the scope of their personal and social perceptions, their knowledge finds a stronger tool, and they experience nature more

deeply. If space could influence the perception and relationships of users, give depth to human knowledge, and provide the basis for the formation of society, it would have the best function. Today, roofs have turned into abandoned spaces, places for storing extra things and installing building facilities. The appearance of the roofs is distressing and shows the indifference of humans to them (Mansouri, 2018). With the expansion of urbanization, along with the increase in public

* Corresponding author: z.hosseynzadeh@yahoo.com,+989125571342

incomes and the changes in people's lifestyles, travel and entertainment have become necessary to meet the psychological needs of human beings. This has led to the emergence of a global phenomenon called the tourism industry. On the other hand, urban environments that are the centers of civilization, culture, and politics are sometimes considered the most valuable tourist resources, with parks, natural landscapes, and historical spaces (Khazaei, 2018). Today, the tourism economy is one of the main pillars of the world's commercial economy. In addition, many development planners and policymakers mention the tourism industry as the main pillar of sustainable development (Roknaddin Eftekhari & Mahdavi, 2006). A city, as the best human habitat, has many potential and facilities that can respond to the needs and desires of its citizens and visitors. Therefore, the city has always been considered to be the origin and destination of tourism marketing development (Eskandari, Ezatpanah & Hosseinzadeh Dalir, 2019). Cities receive millions of tourists every year, and urban tourism has become an important activity that has given many countries the flow of jobs, social action, and spatial changes. The role of cities in attracting tourists and the formation of urban tourism as a spatial model has created a new component of an urban economy which leads to the renovation and development of the urban landscape, the transportation system, tourist accommodations, and the improvement and organization of urban infrastructure (Salimi-Sobhan, Yapang Gharavi, Mohamadbeigi Salkhoury & Balichalandar, 2021). Therefore, tourism is essential for cities from various economic, social, and cultural aspects, but now these spaces and their colossal potential are abandoned. Therefore, this research aims to identify the role that roof space can play in tourism development through the review of documents.

Research Background

In their research, Mohammadi and Changalvayi investigate pedestrian tourist routes and try to identify the qualitative components that favor this type of urban space in the Esfahan city case, and based on these components, they prioritize the routes of the selected sample in the city of Isfahan (Mohammadi & Changalvayi, 2012). Pajouhan and Pourmoghadam consider cultural tourism and cultural re-creation in historical contexts to be two sides of the same coin and they consider the regeneration of cultural tourism dependent on people's participation and the mobilization of social and cultural forces in the context (Pajouhan & Pourmoghadam, 2016). Bastehnegar paid attention to dance as one of the seven ancient arts and he believes that by using the high capacities of this art, it is possible to make a great contribution to the development

of tourism in the country (Bastehnegar, 2021). Adeli has investigated the attitude of the host community in the Fahdan neighborhood of Yazd and he has concluded that the improvement of the conditions of the neighborhood, especially in the fields of security and environment, the level of awareness and sensitivity of people towards cultural and identity issues are among the factors influencing the evaluation of people towards tourism (Adeli, 2013). Faridi Fashtami and colleagues, by examining the factors affecting tourists' attachment and loyalty to the tourist destination of Rasht city, have concluded that the quality of the experience, the perceived value, and the image of the destination have had a positive and significant effect on the satisfaction of tourists. Also, the satisfaction index has been effective on tourists' attachment and, as a result, their loyalty to the tourist destination of Rasht city, and they had a positive and significant relationship (Faridi Fashtami, Salaripour, & Hessam, 2019). Zendieh and Gudarzian consider the use of the landscape approach and attention to the urban landscape as the driving factors of urban tourism (Zendieh & Gudarzian, 2014). By examining the effect of urban tourism places on attracting cultural tourists, Hosseininia comes to the conclusion that cultural tourists are looking for reliable, diverse, and creative experiences, and the cultural landmarks of the city, including public arenas (historical, natural, contemporary, cultural, native, non-conventional urban, recreational, and commercial)—which have fixed or temporary physical characteristics and social interactions take place within them—help to create the cultural meaning of space for tourists (Hosseininia, 2016). Azadefar believes that to strengthen the tourism industry in Iran, music events in cities should be managed and music spaces should become tourist attractions (Azadefar, 2015). Abbaszadeh and colleagues consider the attention and depiction of values as the basis for decisions related to tourism and cultural heritage (Abbaszadeh, Mohammad Moradi & Sultan Ahmadi, 2014). Pourzakaria and colleagues believe that despite the opposition and unexpected consequences, solutions such as a cultural economy boom, increasing facilities, and promotion of creative tourism will lead to the social vitality of public spaces and the participation of creative class citizens in their own empowerment (Pourzakaria, Fadaei-nejad & Bahramjerdi, 2018). Meanwhile, so far there has been no research focused on the role and effect of using existing capacities on the roof space of buildings in the development of tourism in Iranian cities (Table 1). Therefore, this research investigates this issue by examining and analyzing the documents.

Theoretical Foundations

In this section, the opinions of experts in the fields

Table 1. Suggestions of previous research carried out to promote tourism. Source: Authors.

Theorist	Proposal for the development of tourism
Abbaszadeh et al. (2014)	Depicting the values
Azadefar (2015)	Strengthening and managing music events in urban spaces
Pourzakaria et al. (2018)	The prosperity of the cultural economy, the increase of facilities, and the promotion of creative tourism
Hosseininia (2016)	Creating a possibility for social interactions in the experience of the tourists and the formation of the cultural meaning of the space in a symbolic and continuous combination.
Zandieh & Gudarzian (2013)	Using the landscape approach and paying attention to the urban landscape
Faridi Fashtami et al. (2019)	Improving the quality of the experience, the perceived value, and the image of the destination. Increasing tourists' attachment and as a result their loyalty to the destination
Adeli (2013)	Improving the conditions of the neighborhood, especially in the fields of security and environment, increases the level of awareness and sensitivity of people towards cultural and identity issues.
Bastehnegar (2021)	Attention to dance as one of the seven arts in urban spaces
Pajouhan & Pourmoghadam (2016)	People's participation and mobilization of social and cultural forces
Mohammadi & Changalvayi (2011)	Improving the quality of behavioral camps, security, safety, microclimate quality and...

of landscape and tourism are examined and effective indicators in the promotion of tourism are extracted. A number of articles in this field are mentioned, and at the end, these indicators are summarized with the indicators presented in the background section of the research in Table 2. Tourists' mental image of the destination is one of the most important concepts effective in understanding their perception and behavior. The tourist's mental image of the destination plays an important role in the process of choosing the destination, satisfaction, and the possibility of revisiting that destination. Urban spaces are an example of these tourist destinations (Tayebi & Zakavot, 2016). A pleasant environment can be created only by understanding the images that different groups and people have of the city's appearance in their minds and their relationships (Haji Ahmadi Hamedani et al., 2016). It is necessary to pay attention to collective spaces from the physical aspect, in terms of creating the necessary opportunities for gaining collective experiences and also responding to human social needs. Urban landscapes are places that play a significant role as public spaces in the continuity of a city's identity. Humans have long been interested in understanding phenomena beyond normal limits. And therefore, the complete understanding of a phenomenon has always been a pleasure and a special attraction for them.

This issue is also objectified by landscapes in the complete understanding of a city. A person can better understand the connection between the streets and important elements of the city in their landscape. In Tehran, the lack of opportunities for public understanding of the city's landscape is evident to revive visual capacity and create

coherence in people's mental images of the city, which should be considered more in urban landscape projects (Yarahmadi, Lotfollahi Yaghin & Tashakori, 2015). Tourism in nature is one of the most important types of tourism that is most compatible with development (Rakhshaninasab & Zarrabi, 2008).

Discussion

In the theoretical section of this paper, several indicators to strengthen tourism were obtained from previous research. Which and how many of the tourism indicators can be improved by using the available capacities on the roofs of buildings is a question that this discussion aims to answer. Visual values as an essential part of environmental qualities are very important to strategic urban landscapes, identifying spatial identity, the arena of urban competition, and determining the international position of a city or country (Zandieh & Zandieh, 2009). An observatory is defined as a place to look and think, and an urban observatory is defined as a place from which to view a part of the city or the whole of it. Since urban observatories give us a clear general picture of the environment, they are very important. The general image is the mental image of many city residents of its appearance (Tayebifar, 2009). Before the arrival of modern architecture and its accessories to Iran and changing the texture of Iranian cities with numerous high-rise buildings, travelers and tourists were able to observe and understand the whole image of that city as a unified whole, even from the surroundings of the city. As Mousavi Garmaroudi describes the image of one of the traditional Iranian cities before entering it: "... two

Table 2. Indicators extracted from previous research to strengthen tourism. Source: Authors.

Effective indicators in the tourism prosperity											
Positive understanding of the image of the destination city and its identity	Connection with nature	Safety, Security, Microclimate	Show values	Urban music	Economy, Culture, Facilities	Landscape approach	Social interaction, the meaning of space	Experience quality, Destination image, Place attachment	Safety, Cultural-identity awareness	Dance in the urban space	Participation

meters away, a city begins with long oleander flowers on the side of the streets and with towering palm trees and orange, tangerine, and sour orange trees... with houses all with thatched vaults and domes... And what a wonderful farewell to have this thatched dome of houses among the palm trees, as if many camels were kneeling to eat in an eternal grove... (Mousavi Garmarodi, 1998). The citizens' perception of the visual qualities of the city depends on the introduction of visual values and the image of the city, which are considered desirable by the citizens. The citizens' perception of the visual qualities of the city depends on the introduction of visual values and the image of the city, which are considered desirable by the citizens. In this regard, issues such as readability, sense of direction, and gate quality have a special place. The most important dimension of the image and the urban landscape is place recognition. Citizens are attached to the visual quality, and these qualities lead to the prosperity and improvement of the place. The key and influential role of this phenomenon in the identity and desirability of a place and society improves the economy of the place and attracts tourists and the creative class from different parts of the world (Zandieh & Zandieh, 2009). However, today, with the rapid and excessive growth of the population in big cities and the consequent need for more space, preventing the horizontal growth of cities, the construction of tall buildings has become common. For this reason, the growth and expansion of high-rise buildings can be seen in metropolises, especially in Tehran (Farhoudi & Mohamadi, 2001). Therefore, by changing the scale of the cities, it is not possible to understand the overall image of the city as it was in the past (Fig. 1). And people, only from certain points of view, can see coherent images of cities, which in big cities like Tehran, these specific points are also very few and it is not easy to access them. On the other hand, the roof spaces in Iranian cities and houses have had various functions in addition to providing pure viewpoints of the city and its landmarks, and they have formed the location of houses and the identity of cities. The main roles of the roofs in Iranian cities can be categorized into three: social roles; connection with nature; and identity roles (Hosseinzadeh, et al. 2021). It

seems that with the growth of urbanization, the ever-increasing population of cities, and the requirements of today's life, it is not possible to use a system similar to the cities of the past. Also, preparing and increasing the number of strategic observation points in the city will have many implementation restrictions, and assuming that it is possible, these points will not be available to tourists easily and at any time, despite the very positive effect they will have. On the other hand, with the increase in the number of high-rise buildings in different parts of the city, the roofs of these buildings provide many suitable viewpoints in different parts of the city. This huge capacity has been neglected until now, except in limited cases such as the food courts of some new malls. The roof space of these buildings provides suitable vantage points for visitors to better understand the image of the city (Figs. 2 & 3), and due to its spatial integrity and location at a height, it also allows its users to have various events and create social interactions in direct connection with the nature of the city, which leaves a lasting image in the minds of visitors. Fig. 4 shows the most important capacities of the roof to strengthen tourism.

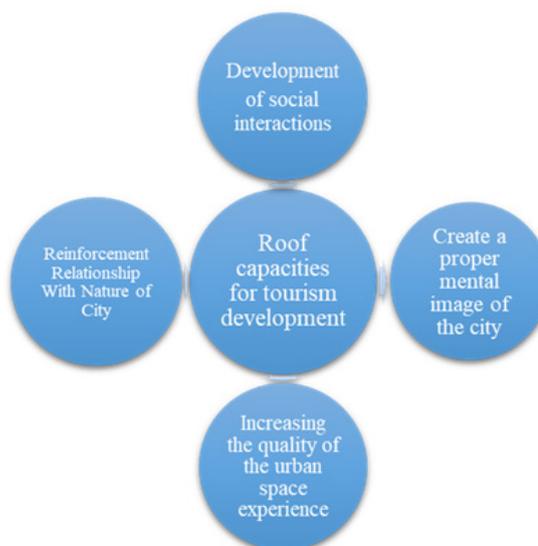


Fig. 1. Available capacities on the roof space for the development of tourism. Source: Authors.



Fig. 2. Lack of proper understanding of urban spaces and the natural landscape of the mountain, due to a large number of high-rise buildings. Source: Authors' Archive.



Fig. 3. The ability to appreciate the proper image of the city from the roof of one of the buildings in the Sa'adat Abad district of Tehran. Source: Authors' Archive.



Fig. 4. A proper view of the urban space and the establishment of social interaction between the users on the roof, Gharibeh movie, directed by Shapour Gharib, 1972. Source: Screenshot of the movie.

Conclusion

In the past, Iranian cities have welcomed many tourists due to their prominent spatial, social, identity, and cultural characteristics. But in the last few decades, due to the lack of awareness of officials and managers who

had a role in the process of change and development of Iranian cities, the fabric of Iranian cities has suffered a lot of damage and many of their unique features have been lost. Considering the great importance of roof space in Iranian cities in the past, the increasing number of high-rise buildings in metropolises, and the importance of the tourism industry, this paper sought to identify the capacities and roles of roof space in buildings to strengthen and develop tourism in Iranian cities. And the result showed that the capacities of the roofs of buildings in Iranian cities for the development of tourism can be summarized into four main roles: developing social interactions; strengthening the connection of tourists with the nature of the city; creating a suitable mental image of the city; and increasing the quality of the experience of the urban space.

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