

Viewpoint

## Neighborhood as a Possibility to Attract Tourists (Social Solidarity in Traditional Neighborhood is a Factor in the Neighborhood's Vitality)

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**Abstract** | The fundamental changes in lifestyle all over the world have also affected the tourism industry. Tourism has moved away from museums and historical places and has stepped into new realms that free people from their daily life (and maybe their boredom). Human diversity and perfectionism can perhaps be considered as his most important tool that has led to his progress. Man always criticizes his situation and looks for a different experience that will improve his current situation. This principle is also seen in tourism. New generation tourists travel to different countries and cities with cultural-biological diversity to experience a different life in a different cultural context. Stay in eco-hotels, participate in cooking with the locals, participate in their rituals and celebrations, and generally experience different cultural-biological experiences up close. Now, our new cities and lifestyle have become like other peoples of the world, which attracts less tourists. Current life in traditional neighborhoods and The villages of Iran, derived from the culture and environmental conditions, are attractive and diverse, which can tempt the tourist to experience. What is this factor that has given life to the neighborhood and brought tourists from around the world to touch it?

**Keywords** | *Social solidarity, Neighborhood, Tourism.*

**Introduction and Problem Statement** | Why the city and the neighborhood as a foundation for social events and relations, in the present time, are not responsive and promoting relationships and “social solidarity” with the power of traditional Iranian cities? What effect will social cohesion have on attracting tourists? Talking about the group life of humans seems to be an obvious issue nowadays. In the present time, it is almost impossible for a human being to live without a relationship with another (both in terms of meeting material and vital needs and psychological and spiritual relationships). The platform where humans can communicate with others is the “city” as the best product of human civilization. In traditional cities, we witness this social solidarity among the people of the neighborhoods, while in modern cities, despite more comfort and facilities, we witness the separation of mankind from each other. While the solidarity of people in the formation of a neighborhood or city will be one of

the tourist attractions for tourists, and this is a possibility that is easily ignored in the tourism industry.

### Structure of Criticism

Centuries ago, mankind strengthened the foundations of the social life of its race by turning to group life. The gathering of people in the form of small groups led to their ability to complement each other's power and energy in dealing with external threats and striving for their own survival. In order to gather this number of people together, there is a need for an agent who will guide them in reaching their goal, resolve their conflicts, and strengthen the unity between them, and this cannot be achieved except by mutual acceptance of the common principles between them, and its observance by all members of the group who called this “social agreement”. The agreement made mankind consider himself a member of a group in which he will achieve his goals under the protection of achieving the goals of the group. This issue led to the creation of a strong emotional feeling

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among the members towards other members and the group itself, which results in the sense of responsibility, duty, obligation and belonging of the members towards others and the group. This is the hidden force within the social alliance that leads to the “social solidarity” of the members. Despite the social solidarity according to Spencer, the mentioned human group has become closer to socialization and we can witness the human “community” (Mousavi, 2012, 120-121-125), (Fig. 1).

Talcott Parsons (American sociologist) believes: “The factor that strengthens social solidarity [...] is in the balance and harmony between shared ideas, beliefs, and values with the environment [...and common beliefs by themselves] cannot create solidarity between members of society. Provide [...]” (Baghi Nasrabadi, 2004). In general, a city can be considered an environment as a platform for the formation of social relations (because cities are created in line with human social life). Among the building components of the city, “neighborhood” as a very important type of small wholes of the city can also be considered as a smaller-scale platform than the city for creating social relations, and this note also deals with this valuable concept in the historical cities of Iran. The localities of Iranian cities (after Islam) are small landscape wholes and spatial-social urban divisions that place man with his fellow man and to the extent of his perceptive ability in creating social relations with others. The border of these neighborhoods is the common wall of houses that use different routes, spaces, and functions for daily life.

From Mackenzie’s point of view, the neighborhood is a telling concept of “close physical unit and place of social communication” if the neighborhoods of our modern cities have divergence and sense of alienation of the neighborhood people from each other (Mousavi 2, 2002, 71-72). Sociologists believe that “the traditional identifiers of the neighborhood are related to the unit of collective life and socialization” (Masoumi, 2010, 42). This is what makes the neighborhood valuable. “The common feature of all neighborhoods in Iranian cities is having a social, functional, and meaningful centrality that provides services at the neighborhood level [in the form of independent units]” (Abarghouei Fard et al., 2020, 26).

Now the question is, what effect does social solidarity have on improving the quality of the neighborhood?

And what attraction will this added quality, have for tourists? Regarding the first question, it can be said that the solidarity of the people of a group (here residents of a neighborhood) is the first word in the survival of that group. It is solidarity that supports its people in hardships and joys and solves their problems. A clear example of the solidarity of neighbors in solving the problem of hospitality Regarding the first question, it can be said that the solidarity of the people of a group (here residents of a neighborhood) is the first word in the survival of that group. It is solidarity that supports its people in hardships and joys and solves their problems. A clear example of that is the solidarity of neighbors in solving the problem of hospitality in the movie “Mother’s Guest” (2002) by Dariush Mehrjoui. The people of the neighborhood (which can also be the families that make up the neighborhood) consider themselves to be part of that neighborhood and the neighborhood to be theirs (I am a member of my neighborhood and the neighborhood is mine), so they defend it.

Neighborhoods are always under the supervision of their secret public guards who will monitor strangers until they leave the border of the neighborhood. So the survival of the neighborhood depends on the survival of this solidarity of its members. Without the solidarity and belonging of the members, there will be no group and neighborhood to defend it or remain in the common memories of the people. Regarding the second question, we can also refer to a statement by Jan Gel that he considers the attractions of the current century to be people, not buildings. Humans are naturally attracted to places that are attractive to their own kind and have attracted others. One of the unwritten and natural ways to choose a good store is “the store that is more crowded”. The interdependence of the people of the neighborhood leads to their actions in the neighborhood, which shows the life of the neighborhood. An old woman returning from a prayer meeting at the neighborhood mosque with her peers, a salesman who greets passers-by by washing and sweeping in front of his shop at the same time, a teenager who consults with his neighbor in the bakery line about solving their classmate’s financial problem, a housewife with a basket in her hand at the door. The grocer of the neighborhood inquires about the condition of the neighbor, all of them are verbs whose condition is “to know and know the neighbors”. Recognizing and



Fig. 1. From group life to community formation. Source: Author.

observing these behaviors shows the current culture in the neighborhood, the condition for its emergence is the solidarity of people with each other, and this is the attraction that Jan Gehl (2012) mentions and will attract tourists, a problem that cannot be seen in the current neighborhoods (if they can be called neighborhoods). In these urban areas, people are alienated from each other, do not have solidarity and do not have a special sense of belonging to their place of residence or their neighborhood (as much as before). A problem that cannot be seen in the current neighborhoods (if they can be called neighborhoods). In these urban areas, people are alienated from each other, do not have solidarity, and do not have a special sense of belonging to their place of residence or their neighborhood (extremely past). Due to the new lifestyle, people usually meet their needs in places far from their place of residence with strangers, which goes back to the way of urban development and placement of service centers, employment, and life of contemporary people.

In the article "Reading the neighborhood as a landscape" (Majidi et al., 2022), the investigation and reading of the neighborhood from its various dimensions in the two historical cities of Semnan and Damghan, representing most of the traditional neighborhoods of Iran, have been discussed. In this article, the centralization of various functions in the center of localities is mentioned and the possible reasons that led to this spatial coexistence were briefly stated in the form of hypotheses. One of the most important reasons is social solidarity. Each user attracts his own audience with different ages, tastes, genders, and needs. Just like the molecules inside a box, the smaller the space of the box, the more likely the molecules will collide with each other, the coexistence and placement of different uses in a centralized point increase the possibility of people bumping into each other. Therefore, the possibility of social interactions between them increases, and a platform is provided to ensure the life of the neighborhood, which is the attraction that will attract tourists. This is one of the most important alarm bells that threaten not only contemporary urbanism but also old structures. The layers have been restored, but only their physics have been kept like a mummy, and the daily life has been removed from it, and only a lifeless body remained. In the new generation of the tourism industry, people have passed the basic levels of the destination country, the interest in the more basic levels of culture, customs and their different way of life has been given a higher priority, which is a clear sign of the prosperity of ecotourism centers that provide tourists getting familiar with the life and culture of the destination country and brings them the direct life experience of that culture.

The areas of our cities lack the life of such tourists, and one of the most important reasons for this, is the lack of solidarity among people. Because the solidarity of the people of the neighborhood guarantees its integrated identity, which is not seen in new areas. The tourist is faced with the life of people who are in front of the whole city and not in front of a neighborhood, so there is not much difference between different parts of the city and even the country that makes it an indicator and worthy of a tourist's visit. The destruction of the neighborhood's solidarity and fellow residents, Accompanied by the destruction of the neighborhood's identity (Fig. 2).

### Conclusion

With the advancement of various technologies, including easy access to complete information on buildings and tourist-attractive spaces by using the web world, as well as augmented reality and virtual reality (AR and VR), the tourism industry has entered a new world with tremendous changes. Tourists are no longer eager to visit buildings and museums as much as in the past because, without any cost, they will get an endless world about them with just a hint from a distance. What draws a 21st-century person to another country, maybe the different life experiences of that destination country? Direct touch of culture and daily life different from your own life. The increase in ecotourism hotels is a confirmation of this claim. Therefore, tourists come to Iran to experience daily life, which is rare due to the new lifestyle and also the absence of what makes people fellow citizens or neighbors and we called it social solidarity earlier. The actions that people express due to getting to know each other and having a common identity in the neighborhood are more common in old contexts. Therefore, social



Fig. 2. The collection of public buildings in the central neighborhood increases the possibility of meeting people. (1) Soltani Mosque-Madrasah (2) Semnan Jame Mosque (3) Pahne Takieh (4) Pahne Hamam (5) Imamzadeh Yahya (6) Semnan Bazar (7) Hosseini. Espusfan neighborhood, Semnan. Source: Majidi et al, 2022.

solidarity not only implies the life and survival of the neighborhood and its identity in the eyes of the audience, but it also implies and forms the basis for events and actions on the part of the residents, which will emerge from them if they have a single identity. Events that will attract tourists. Our neighborhoods need social solidarity for their survival (for their residents) and also for using the possibility and potential of attracting tourists, one

of the solutions of which will be neighborhood-oriented urban development. People get to know each other and get their needs from a centralized center, which is a platform for increasing their social interactions. This approach, which has been favored by many countries in the world to revive social life and improve their quality of life, may be an elixir that will revive the neighborhoods for its residents and attract tourists.

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