Cultural Planning Strategies for Urban Parks
(Case Study: Fateh Garden, Karaj, Iran)

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ABSTRACT: Cultural planning, as a place-based approach, has been used in some cases, but it is less frequently used in urban parks. In this study, an experimental investigation was conducted to explore how cultural planning can be used to identify the cultural resources of Fateh Garden, as one of the most popular parks in Karaj, and the officials and users' approach to its cultural resources to provide recommendations to improve Fateh Garden conditions. This study was based on direct observations of components, activities, events, interviews with the park users and officials, and a focus group discussion. The results revealed that Fateh Garden acts as a thriving urban park with popular cultural resources. Based on the cultural resources of Fateh Garden and the use of creative methods, this study has provided suggestions for improving its situation. The results presented here may also facilitate improvements in other urban parks based on their cultural resources.

Keywords: *Cultural Planning, Cultural Resources, Urban Parks, Fateh Garden.*

INTRODUCTION

Recently, Iranian researchers have shown an interest in cultural planning. However, the issue is the lack of proper understanding of the concept of cultural planning by them, who equate this approach with cultural policy. Cultural policy is a discipline-based approach fragmented into smaller sections such as theater, museums. In contrast, cultural planning is a place-based approach (Fitzpatrick, 2009). The body of cultural planning literature is extensive but is mainly focused on urban regeneration. There has been little consideration for the use of cultural planning in public spaces. This research helps fill a gap in the literature because it investigates cultural planning in an Iranian urban park. This study was conducted in the context of Iran and sought answers to the following questions: (1) What are the cultural resources of urban parks? and (2) How can cultural planning be used to identify cultural resources and maintain or change them according to the needs and desires of the users? This paper (1) develops a cultural planning model of urban parks, (2) applies this model to an urban park in Iran, which includes a diversity of cultural resources, (3) identifies the cultural resources in this urban park, (4) shows the park

officials' and users' approach to its cultural resources, and (5) provides recommendations for using this model for other urban parks. In this paper, the components placed by the park officials, the events and activities related to these components, and the meanings and associations that these components evoke for the users are identified. Park officials can maintain or change these components according to the cultural effects of the components in urban parks. For other urban parks, they can select and locate components according to the cultural planning of those urban parks.

Literature Review
Cultural Planning and Cultural Policy
Cultural policy, as Papazoglou says, 'comprises the government activities, laws, and plans that control, protect, inspire, and economically support activities related to the arts and creative sectors, such as painting, sculpture, music, and literature' (Papazoglou, 2019, 2). According to the seminal literature (Mercer, 2010), cultural planning is much more than cultural policy because it links cultural resources to the communities' broad range of economic and social needs (Redaelli, 2013).

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Cultural planning can be a new approach to urban policy and planning (Borrup, 2019). Local authorities can adopt it without enforcing essential changes in the existing policy (Kamrowska-Załuska et al., 2021). Borrup (2021) believes that urban planning and cultural planning can have synergy to address better-complicated challenges facing cities. According to him, urban planners, policymakers, and cultural activists can and must work together to promote places like urban parks where users' desires and needs can be met.

Mercer (2010, 6) defines cultural planning as "the strategic and integrated use of cultural resources in urban and community development." The critical point in this definition is "cultural resources." According to King (2011, 2), "cultural resources are all the aspects of the physical and supra-physical environment that human beings and their societies value for reasons related to culture." As stated by Perley (2011, 218), Harrison (2007) divides cultural resources into two categories: "tangible (artifact, materiality) and intangible (concepts, ideational)." Tangible cultural resources involve not only human-made environments and objects (buildings, sites, neighborhoods, large movable objects such as trains, ships, aircraft, or more minor artifacts such as tools, weapons, and memorabilia) (Morse-Kahn, 2011, 132) but also living and nonliving natural environments such as rocks, soil, water, and especially plants and animals (Willow, 2011).

Intangible resources are things of the mind (Ellis, 2011, 158); in other words, they are things of memory, perception, and belief and expression (Morse-Kahn, 2011, 129). Intangible cultural resources are abstractions compared to physical places and include concepts such as a word and the meaning and value (Ellis, 2011, 157). As Ellis (2011, 158) states, "intangible cultural resources are often associated with tangible cultural resources, but what we are interested in is the meanings and values behind those tangible resources and not the tangible resources themselves." Since the present study considered culture a way of life based on a meaning system, cultural resources in urban parks can be categorized as visible components, activities and events (tangible resources), and meanings and associations (intangible resources).

Cultural Planning of Urban Parks

Urban parks are essential to the health and well-being of urban dwellers worldwide (Moore & Hopkins, 2021). Urban parks can be places for playing and having fun, immersing in nature, and gathering families and friends (Lusk et al., 2020). The increasing population of cities, small apartments, declining household income, and the rising marriage age have made Iranian urban parks the main places for leisure, especially for young people and their friends (Bahriny & Bell, 2021). Urban parks, as popular places in Iran (Hami & Maruthaveeran, 2018), have been used for passive and individual active activities (Hami, 2009) and sports activities (Hami & Maruthaveeran, 2018). A noteworthy point is the significant presence of women in Iranian urban parks. Despite the government's mandatory dress code for women and other limitations restricting women's presence and activities in Iranian urban parks, they constitute half of the users of urban parks in Iran (Khakzand et al., 2015). According to what has been said, urban parks in Iran are receiving more attention than before (Hamzenejad & Gorji, 2018). Arjmand (2017) believes that the construction of urban parks in Iran may be based on the idea of Persian gardens, or it may be formed from the western notion of modernization. He mentions that some scholars consider Persian gardens the Persian version of the modern park. As he asserts, Persian gardens have been an integral part of architecture and urban planning in Iran.

Cultural planning strategies for urban parks include using components, activities, events, meanings, and associations as cultural resources to enhance urban parks. The components of urban parks that individuals find meaningful consist of artificial components (e.g., bench), natural components (e.g., water), sensory components (e.g., smell), humans, animals, and plants. According to Alexander (1979), each of these components has a specific pattern of events and activities associated with it. In urban parks, there are two kinds of events and activities: human and nonhuman activities. Human events relate to what users do in parks, and nonhuman events relate to weather conditions, animal movements, and plant growth stages.

The components of urban parks evoke meanings and associations for the users. These meanings and associations can lead the users to form human events and activities. For example, one may see a shady tree in an urban park on a sunny day and find it comfortable lying down or sleeping under. Another example can be when some people see a beautiful flower bed in a park. It may evoke beauty for them and persuade them to take a photo of it.

Furthermore, nonhuman events can evoke meanings and associations for human users and make them engage in human affairs and activities. For example, a couple may go for a stroll in an urban park on a rainy day. The rainfall may remind them of romantic moments in the past and make them stroll along the park.

There is a body of literature that is concerned with components, activities, and events as tangible cultural resources of urban parks (Burgess et al., 1988; Loukaitou-Sideris, 1995; Chiesura, 2004; Manzo, 2005; Krenichyn, 2006; Wynveen et al., 2010; McCormack et al., 2010; Özgüner, 2011; Main, 2013; Lee & Kim, 2015; Campbell et al., 2016; Yazdani, 2018; Vaughan et al., 2018) and meanings and associations as intangible cultural resources of urban parks (Burgess et al., 1988; Loukaitou-Sideris, 1995; Taplin et al., 2002; Muderrisoglu & Demir, 2004; Manzo, 2005; Krenichyn, 2006; Stewart, 2006; Gunderson & Watson, 2007; Wynveen et al., 2010; Peters, 2010; Peters & De Haan, 2011; McCormack et al., 2010; Özgüner, 2011; Mahdavinejad & Abedi, 2012; Main, 2013; Ekinci & Sağlam, 2016; Campbell et al., 2016; Yazdani, 2015, 2018; Vaughan

et al., 2018). Each of these studies has extracted only a part of the cultural resources of the parks. Thus none of them has shown an overview of all the cultural resources (both tangible and intangible) in the garden under study. Some studies that have dealt with the cultural resources of urban parks are listed in Table 1.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

Fateh Garden is an urban park in Karaj, Iran. Karaj is among the most populous cities in Iran (Abdi et al., 2018), with around 1.6 million, as documented in the 2016 census (Statistical Center of Iran, 2018). According to the Head of Landscape and Green Space Organization of Karaj Municipality (2020), there are 243 parks in Karaj. Fateh Garden is the second-largest park in Karaj, with an area of 15 hectares. It was used as a private garden full of many fruit trees sold commercially until about ten years ago. Due to the convenient location of this garden in the city, its numerous and valuable trees, and the demand of the citizens of Karaj, the Municipality of Karaj took over this garden, and within a few years, with the addition of the necessary facilities, turned this garden into an urban park. Fateh Garden is also one of the registered national heritages of Iran as one of the gardens of Jahanshahr (The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism and Handicrafts, 2006).

Fateh Garden was selected as the case study for the present research for the following reasons. This urban park is the most famous urban park in Karaj on some online tools such as Google Maps and social media such as Instagram. Moreover, a large number of entrances to the park from the streets and alleys and the possibility of parking cars on the side of the roads have made it easy for visitors to access this park. However, the most important reason for choosing Fateh Garden is the large number and variety of cultural resources in this park. The great variety of natural, sensory, and artificial components and animals, plants, and humans have led to various activities and events in this park. This diversity of cultural resources has eventually led to the use of this park by different age and gender groups. It has made it the most popular urban park in Karaj.

As Landry (2008) states, cultural resources reflect where a place is, why it is like it is and where its potential might lead it. As a park full of diverse popular cultural resources,

Table 1. Some studies dealing with the cultural resources of urban parks

Researchers	Cultural Resources	Case Study
Burgess et al., 1988	Humans, plants, animals, recreational facilities, human activities, and meanings	Royal Borough of Greenwich, UK
Loukaitou-Sideris, 1995	Humans, plants, artificial components, human activities, and meanings	Los Angeles, USA
Chiesura, 2004	Meanings and human activities	Vondelpark, The Netherlands
Manzo, 2005	Human activities, meanings, and associations	New York, USA
Krenichyn, 2006	Human activities, manmade components, natural components, nonhuman events, meanings, and associations	New York, USA
Wynveen et al., 2010	Plants, animals, humans, natural components, human activities, and meanings	Great Barrier Reef, Australia
McCormack et al., 2010	Humans, plants, animals, park amenities, sensory components, human activities, human events, and meaningS	-
Özgüner, 2011	Plants, animals, humans, manmade components, natural components, human activities, and meanings	Turkey ,Isparta
Mahdavinejad & Abedi, 2012	Meanings	Amirieh and Shahr, Iran
Main, 2013	Humans, plants, animals, human activities, manmade components, natural components, sensory components, meanings, and associations	MacArthur Park, USA
Lee & Kim, 2015	Human activities	Gyeongsan City, Republic of Korea
Campbell et al., 2016	Human activities, indicators of activities (manmade components), and meanings	Jamaica Bay, USA
Ekinci & Sağlam, 2016	Meanings	Ankara, Turkey
Vaughan et al., 2018	Human activities and features that generate activity (e.g., courts and (sports fields	Pittsburgh, USA
Yazdani, 2018	Human events and activities, natural components, plants, humans, manmade components, meanings, and associations	Iran and Australia

Fig.1: Users walking in Fateh Garden

Fateh Garden is a good case study that shows how a park is suitable for cultural planning concerning its location and potential. Moreover, urban parks can be loved or hated depending on cultural resources (Landry, 2008). Due to the rich cultural resources in this park, including appropriate sensory components such as the color and smell of plants and the sounds of animals and humans, suitable natural components such as soil, water, wood and stone, numerous trees, especially sycamore trees, various animals, especially dogs, cats and crows, and different age and sex groups of users, along with daily, weekly, monthly and special events and various activities such as sports activities, playing or listening to music, walking and socializing with friends and family, this park has become the most popular city park in Karaj. Many users come to walk in this park on different days and hours. Fig. 1 shows a picture of users walking in Fateh Garden.

Data Collection and Analysis

This study is based on ethnographic research. As Koster (2019) claims, ethnographic research contributes to understanding city planning in three ways. First, ethnography focuses on people's time instead of project time. Second, ethnographic research can capture the diversity of livelihoods, people's situations, needs, and aspirations. Third, adopting an ethnographic approach to city planning can structure people's lives through urban interventions. The data for this ethnographic study were collected throughout the spring, summer, and autumn of 2020. Given the method used by some previous research studies on urban parks (Campbell et al., 2016; Loukaitou- Sideris, 1995; Rall & Haase, 2011), the research data was drawn from three primary sources: direct observations of human activities (32 observations on weekdays and weekends at different times of the day and night), observation of the signs of human use, and interviews with park users (57 interviews) to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected (Beebe, 1995).

Ethnographic interviews are often conversational or semistructured (Van Hulst et al., 2015). In this study, semistructured interviews were used to understand better the meanings and associations that accompany parts of the park and users' everyday events and activities. Among those interviewed were three children (under 15 years of age), 14 adolescents (15 to 20 years old), 28 youths (20 to 40 years old), nine middle-aged people (40 to 60 years old), and three older adults (over 60 years old), and they were composed of 27 males (47.4%) and 30 females (52.6%) overall. Each interview lasted between 20 and 60 minutes and was held in Persian. We asked such questions as: How often do you come to Fateh Garden? What do you usually do when you are in Fateh Garden? What does Fateh Garden evoke for you? What is the reason for your interest in Fateh Garden? Which parts of Fateh Garden are more attractive to you? How do you feel when you take a walk in Fateh Garden?

Moreover, we interviewed the designers, planners, and manager of Fateh Garden as well as the Head of Landscape and Green Space Organization of Karaj Municipality to discuss their approach to the components of the park, their location in the park, and their relationship with the events, activities, meanings, and associations they have for the users. The open-ended interview data were carefully analyzed to determine the purposes and associations.

Finally, a focus group was formed to provide suggestions for Fateh Garden using creative methods. The focus group members included seven of the most creative interviewees, who discussed the proposed solutions to improve the park conditions for two consecutive days. They were asked to answer the questions, express their opinions, and share their feelings about Fateh Garden. The examples of the questions are: How did you feel about Fateh Garden? What do you like most about Fateh Garden? What do you want least about Fateh Garden? Suppose that you were in charge of Fateh Garden and could make one change to improve the park. What would you do? What is the main problem with Fateh Garden? What needs improvement?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The cultural resources of Fateh Garden include components, activities, and events as tangible resources and meanings and associations as intangible resources.

Park Component Parts

The components of Fateh Garden include natural components, sensory components, plants, animals, human users, and manufactured components.

Natural Components

Due to its nature, there is soil in most parts of Fateh Garden, and trees have been planted and grown in this soil. Another natural element of Fateh Garden is water, which is mainly used to irrigate the trees. There is also water in the fountains, drinking fountains, and toilets for drinking or washing. Wood is another component that can be seen in Fateh Garden. Various stones have been used in the walking paths, sitting walls, facades of the Garden House, Book Cafe, and fountains. Metal bars and railings are also used in fitness equipment, swing benches, trash bins, and fencing around the garden. Some materials combined with natural components, such as bricks, plastic, and polyethylene, have also been used in different parts of Fateh Garden.

Sensory Components

In Fateh Garden, different colors can be seen. Since most of the area of Fateh Garden is covered by trees and soil, the primary colors in this park are green and brown. In fall, due to the colorful leaves of the trees, Fateh Garden looks colorful. Green, brown, gray, and white are the most frequent colors in Fateh Garden, and the secondary colors include yellow, black, blue, orange, and red. Moreover, Fateh Garden has different smells, including trees and plants, wet soil, and cigarettes. Various sounds include crows, birds, dogs, cats, insects (e.g., scarab beetles and crickets), human laughter, human speech, water, music and songs, wind, and cars.

Plants

Fateh Garden was initially used as a garden full of trees built more than 50 years ago. Among the fruit trees in Fateh Garden, mulberry, plum, Coe's golden drop, pomegranate, walnut, pear, and apple can be seen, and among the non-fruit trees, sycamore, maple, poplar, ash, weeping willow, and acacia can be mentioned. Furthermore, at the eastern entrance of Fateh Garden, the Municipality has planted flowers and grass. For people who go to Fateh Garden, it is delightful to see these plants and trees. The soaring and old sycamore trees along the walking paths of Fateh Garden, which are characterized by their height and shading, are one of the most popular cultural resources of Fateh Garden.

Animals

The animals in Fateh Garden, commonly mentioned in the interviews, including crows, birds, cats, dogs, and insects. In general, the users of Fateh Garden can be classified into three groups based on what they stated in the interviews: The first group is people who love animals, consider them part of nature, feed them if possible, and enjoy their presence in Fateh Garden. The second group is people who do not have a good relationship with animals and are usually afraid. The third group is people who are indifferent to animals and do not pay attention to them. It is important to note that a person may be interested in a particular animal and be indifferent to other animals. This classification may be different in the case of different animals. Due to the safe and welcoming space for dogs and cats in Fateh Garden, they walk or even sleep without fear on the walking paths.

Human Users

Sports practitioners, teenagers, young families, couples, middle-aged and older adults, children, artists, poets, writers, photographers, musicians, singers, students, and unemployed people are among the human users of Fateh Garden. Moreover, sweepers, gardeners, security guards, workers, and managers try to maintain the garden. However, there are also wrongdoers such as drug users or dealers and people who verbally harass others in this park.

Manmade Components

Managers and policymakers of Fateh Garden have placed components in this park to respond to the demands and needs of users. Urban parks are used for physical and sedentary activities (Floyd et al., 2008a). According to Kaczynski et al. (2012), Floyd et al. (2008b), and Cohen et al. (2010), more than half of observed urban park users were involved in sedentary activities.

For sedentary activities, it is necessary to think of options for users to sit. In Fateh Garden, there are several components for the users to sit on, including fixed benches, swing benches, gazebos, four-seater chess tables, and concrete sitting walls along the main walking path. People can experience swaying while sitting on swing benches, and it makes the users feel relaxed. Due to their roofs, the gazebos are good options for sitting on rainy, snowy, windy, or sunny days, and due to their location next to the trees and away from the walking path, they preserve personal privacy. Some users choose to sit on fixed benches because they are located on some walking trails. Four-seater chess tables are options that people use to sit and do different sedentary activities. Since the benches, gazebos, and four-seater chess tables are not enough for all users, and many people use sitting walls to sit and relax. The distinctive feature of these sitting walls is that people can observe other people walking along the main walking path, and sometimes people pass by them at a very close distance. Fig. 2 shows a picture of benches, gazebos, four-seater chess tables, and sitting walls as seating options in Fateh Garden.

For children's physical activities, there is a set of playground equipment. Moreover, various sports fields are provided for adult sports activities. Parks managers and policymakers need to encourage users to do more physical activities (McCormack,

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Fig. 2: Seating options in Fateh Garden

2014). The goal of the managers and policymakers of Fateh Garden, from the beginning, was to encourage users to do physical and sports activities in this park. There are fifty-one fitness machines in Fateh Garden, which are placed along four walking paths (out of seven). There is also a fenced sports enclosure in the east of Fateh Garden for ball games. Moreover, there are seven tennis courts in the east of the park, in front of the fenced sports enclosure, for tennis enthusiasts, separated from the walking paths by a fence. In addition, one of the walking paths is dedicated to five badminton courts in the West of Fateh Garden.

Urban parks should be easily accessible (Güngör, 2016). Park (2017) believes that park accessibility is a comprehensive concept to assess the potential of park use. There are twelve entrances to Fateh Garden on Jomhouri St. (east), Mahan St. (north), Bijan St. (south), 14th East Alley (northwest), and west Bijan St. (southwest). Walls and fences mostly surround the western part of Fateh Garden. The primary and remarkable entrance of Fateh Garden is in the form of an entrance gate on the south, and the name of "Fateh Garden" is written on it. In the east, the entrances are in the form of metal arches, and the north, northwest, and southwest, in the form of open space (in some entrances, metal bars are placed to prevent the entry of motorcycles and cars). Figure 3 shows the location of the entrances to Fateh Garden.

Fountains can be placed in an urban park to ensure an obstacle-free walking path and meet accessibility standards (ACT Government, 2019). There are six fountains at the intersection of the walking trails, which vary in shape, material, height, and color. Figure 4 shows the location of the fountains in the Fateh Garden. Fountain No. 3 is repeated immediately at the lower intersection. Moreover, fountains No.1 and No.5 are identical in shape but different in color.

In addition to these, there are other components as listed in table 2 One of the most important of these components is the paths that users have taken to walk. There are thirteen east-west, one western, and one main north-south walking path in Fateh Garden. People usually walk along these walking paths, but some people also do some sports like running, cycling, skating, volleyball, football, parkour, slacklining, chess, badminton, and games such as Frisbee along the walking paths. There is a marginal walking path in the West of the garden that is extended from north to southwest and is more similar to the original state of the park due to the lack of artificial components, the dominance of plants and trees, and the narrow width of the walking path. Many people prefer this walking path to walk and run. Fig. 5 shows the placement of walking routes in Fateh Garden.

There are some places in Fateh Garden where different events and activities take place. These places include Shamdooni Café, Book Café, garden house, food kiosks, restrooms, prayer room, playground, fenced sports enclosure, tennis courts, volleyball
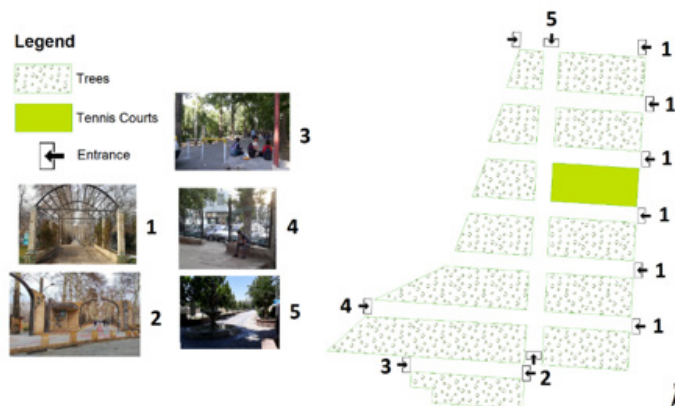

Fig. 3: The location of the entrances to Fateh Garden

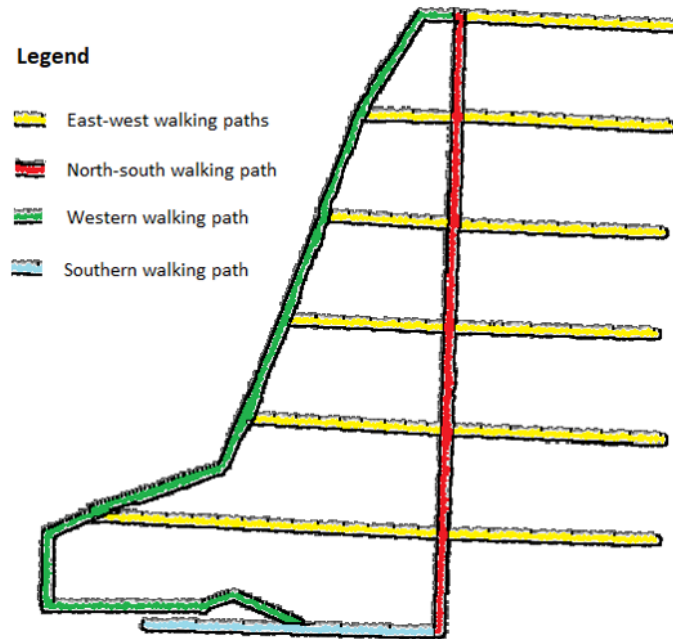Fig. 4: The placement of fountains in Fateh Garden

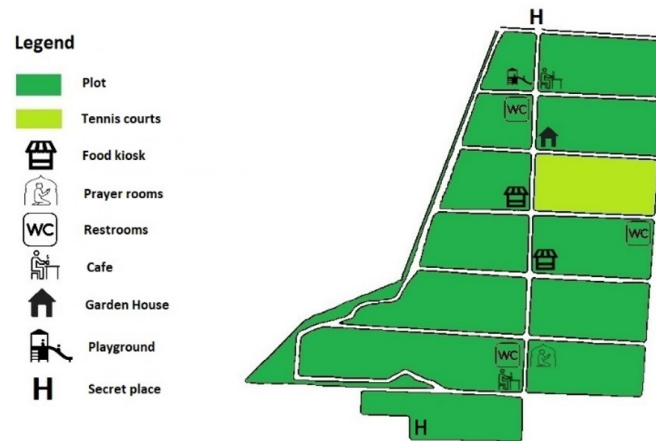Fig.5: The placement of walking paths in Fateh Garden

Fig. 6: The location of places in Fateh Garden

and badminton courts, trees fields, walking paths, and secret places. Fig. 6 shows the location of sites in Fateh Garden.

Since the components in Fateh Garden are influenced by the decisions of the former and current heads of Landscape and Green Space Organization of Karaj Municipality, the designers and planners of this organization, as well as the director of Fateh Garden, it is necessary to investigate their tasks and approaches to these parts. Table 2 shows these in detail.

Park Events and Activities

There are also some events and activities associated with the components in Fateh Garden. Events and activities can be human and nonhuman. The human events and activities are

related to what the users do in Fateh Garden. Essential activities in Fateh Garden are sports activities, including morning group workouts, walking and running, tennis, badminton, volleyball, chess, skating, cycling, parkour, slacklining, and football. Figure 7 shows the location of these sports in Fateh Garden.

Other Fateh Garden activities and events include game and fun activities (board and card games, backgammon, Frisbee, pantomime and Mafia, and music and singing), children's activities, photography and video recording, events related to socializing with friends and family (conversations, laughing, and eating and drinking), making friends, working, holding studying, literary, artistic, and educational sessions, political activities, smoking, drug dealing, irrigating and maintaining the

Table 2: Fateh Garden developers and managers' tasks and approaches

Component parts	Park developers and managers' duties and approaches
Natural components	- Using natural components to build gazebos, sitting walls, and benches following the natural context of the garden
Sensory components	- Using brown and green colors to build many of the components in the park following the natural context of the garden - Preventing lighting fires because of the risk of burning the trees and the resulting smoke - Preventing noisy activities in the park for the convenience of the users
Plants	- Protecting the trees and preventing construction on the plots - Preserving the nature of the garden in a pristine and untouched way - Planting non-fruit trees - Cutting down the dying trees and planting new ones - Planting shrubs and flowers
Animals	- Collecting the stray dogs - Preventing the entry of domestic dogs - Holding birdwatching tours

Continiue of Table 2: Fateh Garden developers and managers' tasks and approaches

Component parts	Park developers and managers' duties and approaches
Humans	- Increasing the number of sports practitioners by equipping the park with suitable sports facilities and holding sports events - Preventing the presence of drug users and drug dealers - Encouraging families to attend the park by equipping it with various seating options - Encouraging more middle-aged and older adults to come to the park to play chess by equipping the park with four-seater chess tables
Tennis court complex	- Encouraging the users to play tennis
Garden house	- Increasing the citizens' participation in the park activities and promoting group activities among individuals
walking paths	- Encouraging people to walk along with the trees - Creating a connected and circular path to encourage people to run and exercise, especially in the morning - Holding national, religious, sports, and special events
Gazebos, swing benches, fixed benches, and sitting walls	- Providing different options for the users to sit on
Four-seater chess tables	- Encouraging the users to play chess - Increasing the presence of middle-aged and older adults in the garden to play chess - Creating vitality and happiness, especially in middle-aged and elderly people
Fitness machines	- Encouraging the users to exercise, especially in the morning
Book Cafe	- Encouraging the users to read books - Empowering the disabled people by handing over this cafe to a disabled couple - Holding literary events in this cafe - Holding events related to the disabled in this cafe
Shamdooni Cafe	- Creating a space for families to sit, eat, and drink - Paying attention to beauty and health in the design and operation of the cafe
Fountains	- Creating an atmosphere similar to that of Iranian gardens - Using appropriate shapes in the design of the fountains
Entrances	- Creating multiple entrances for easy access to the garden
Statue	- Reluctance to install statues due to the theft of previous statues
Playground equipment	- Creating a suitable environment for children to play in - Preventing sports practitioners from entering the playground as they may damage the playground equipment and harass the children
Drinking Fountains	- Putting enough drinking fountains, especially for sport practitioners
Restrooms	- Building enough toilets in different parts of the garden
Prayer rooms	- Providing a place for prayers
Rubbish bins	- Putting enough rubbish bins on the walking paths - Not placing rubbish bins on the main sidewalk for the sake of visual beauty
Signs	- Informing the users of different news, events, and announcements - Helping the users to find places in the garden - Warning the users about the garden prohibitions
Border features	- Using rods and railings so as not to block the view of the garden - Respecting the wishes of the garden neighbors and removing the separating fences
Badminton courts	- Assigning the widest bypass to badminton (as it is a reasonably safe sport and does not cause disturbance to other users) - Encouraging families to play badminton as a group
Food kiosks	- Meeting the users' needs to buy food and beverages - Making money by leasing out the kiosks
Fenced sports enclosure	- Encouraging ball sports in a closed environment makes playing with the ball easier.

Legend
- ▦ Trees
- ■ Tennis Courts
- □ Fenced Sports Enclosure
- ▥ Volleyball & Badminton Courts
- Chess Tables
- Skateboarding Area
- Roller Skate Path
- Cycle Path
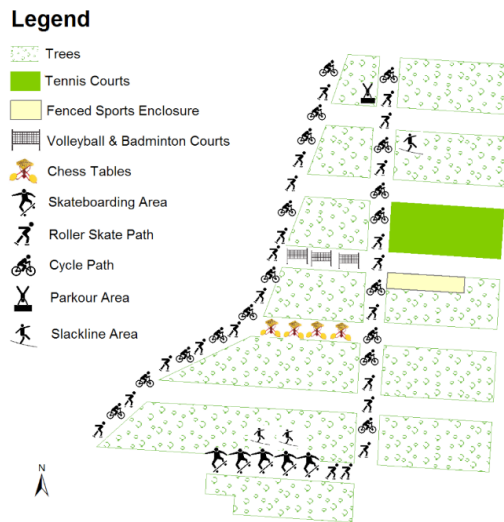- Parkour Area
- Slackline Area

Fig. 7: The location of sports done at Fateh Garden

trees, patrolling, fruit picking, buying and selling goods, dog walking, feeding animals, and occasional events. Nonhuman events relate to animal-related events, plant-related events, and weather and seasonal conditions.

There are different animals in Fateh Garden. Birds fly around or survey the area from the tops of trees, constantly searching for food. Some people also feed them. Insects also make noises at different times, especially at night and early morning. Cats and dogs are also usually provided by animal lovers. They also sometimes seek attention and caress from humans and go to them to be loved. The plants and trees of Fateh Garden experience different stages in the four seasons of the year: in spring, with blooming flowers, in summer with green leaves, ripe fruits, in fall with shedding leaves, and in winter with no leaves and flowers. Since Karaj is a city of four seasons, Fateh Garden experiences different weather conditions in different seasons. Table 3 shows events and activities associated with the components in Fateh Garden.

Park Meanings and Associations

According to the data collected through the interviews, the components of Fateh Garden evoke meanings and associations

Table 3: Events and activities associated with the components in Fateh Garden

Cultural resources	
Component parts	**Related events and activities**
Tennis court complex	playing tennis
Garden house	activities and events of charitable and environmental organizations such as training sessions, group consultation, holding art exhibitions, selling products including handicrafts, flowers, and plants, and occasional events
Walking paths	walking, running, exercising, skating, cycling, throwing Frisbees, family, friendly, artistic, political, and sports gatherings, special events, and cleaning and sweeping
Fixed benches, swing benches, sitting walls, gazebos	sitting, talking to each other, smoking, eating and drinking, listening to music, playing musical instruments and singing, and playing games and having fun
Four-seater chess tables	sitting, talking to each other, smoking, eating and drinking, listening to music, playing musical instruments and singing, playing chess, playing board games, playing cards, and playing backgammon
Fitness machines	exercising
Book Cafe	sitting, talking to each other, playing games and having fun, smoking, eating and drinking, listening to music, playing musical instruments and singing, and literary events such as poetry readings
Shamdooni Cafe	sitting, talking to each other, playing games and having fun, smoking, eating and drinking, listening to music, playing musical instruments and singing, and listening to the sound of water

Continiue of Table 3: Events and activities associated with the components in Fateh Garden

Cultural resources	
Component parts	**Related events and activities**
Fountain	listening to the sound of water, taking photos, playing with water, and daily cleaning and maintenance
Entrances	taking photos and walking
Statues	taking photos
Playground equipment	doing parkour, practicing martial arts, and using the playground equipment
Drinking Fountains	washing hands and face and drinking water
Restrooms	washing hands and face and using the toilets
Prayer rooms	praying
Rubbish bins	dumping garbage
Lights	lighting up the garden
Signs	creating alerts, announcing news and events, showing different locations in the garden
Border features	preventing motorcycles and cars from entering the garden
Badminton courts	playing badminton
Food kiosks	buying and selling food and beverages
Fenced sports enclosure	playing volleyball and football and exercising
Secret places	buying, selling, and using drugs and sitting
Plants	slacklining using the tree trunks, activities performed by the park workers such as irrigating, fertilizing, sanding, and leveling the soil, planting new trees and cutting down the dying ones, planting flowers and shrubs, lawn mowing and weed control, and pruning trees
Animals	singing (birds), flying over trees (birds), making sounds (insects, crows, cats, dogs), building nests on trees (birds), droppings on the clothes (birds), attacking humans, searching for food, feeding animals by users, taking photos of animals by users, running after cats (dogs), climbing trees or run away (cats), dog walking, playing with animals by users

for its users. Table 4 shows the Meanings and associations of the components in Fateh Garden.

Cultural resources are the raw materials for the process of cultural planning. According to the cultural resources of Fateh Garden and the problems brought up in the interviews, which were presented earlier, creative thinking has been used to provide suggestions for this urban park. As Landry (2006, 389) points out, creative thinking is based on the idea of cultural resources. Creative thinking sees every problem as an opportunity for change, and every weakness can become a strength. According to Ghilardi (2010, 3), making the most of a place's unique cultural resources depends on creativity. As Landry (2008, 7) stated, creativity exploits the cultural resources and helps them grow; therefore, urban planners should recognize, manage, and develop cultural resources through responsibly creative thinking.

Fateh Garden is one of the most popular parks in Karaj, and most of the users and managers of this park have emphasized in their interviews that the current situation should be maintained. There is a general preconception that 'If it ain't broke, don't fix it; however, Ghilardi & Bianchini (2006) point out that even in successful places, improvements can be made by creative

thinking and the use of innovative methods. They refer to some creative approaches, some of which are suggested for use in Fateh Garden.

To this end, a focus group was formed, and these methods were discussed with them. It was concluded from the focus group discussions that the lack of adequate lighting, lack of security at night, the large number of stray dogs, and verbal harassments are among the main problems that must be solved. The issues were discussed, and the members were asked to suggest their solutions to the issues. The implementation of the proposed solutions was also considered and discussed. The final solutions were then presented by collective agreement. Table 5 shows these solutions. The focus group discussions provided additional information on how the cultural resources of Fateh Garden should be considered in the management of the park.

CONCLUSIONS

Cultural planning strategies for Iranian urban parks can meet the needs and desires of different age and gender groups to spend their leisure time in a healthy and stimulating environment. Cultural planning strategies for urban parks help

Table 4: Meanings and associations of the components in Fateh Garden

Component parts	Related meanings	Related associations
Plants	antiquity, originality, deep-rootedness, greatness, strength, stability, calmness, freedom, vitality, positive energy, life, the flow of life, glory, freshness, delight, remembrance, happiness, and love	Individuals: the hardworking gardeners Places: Valiasr St. in Tehran, forest parks such as Chitgar Forest Park, forests, the north of Iran, and the riverside of Babolsar
Crows	dawn, fear, dirt, ugliness, nostalgia, greatness, blackness, and enthusiasm	Event or activity: playing music Places: nature Components: old trees and gardens
Other birds	beauty, mobility, beautiful sounds, calmness, and enthusiasm	Event or activity: playing music Places: nature Components: old trees and gardens
Cats	kindness, mercy, pleasure, love, affection, playing, happiness, hope, fear and dread, dirt, ugliness and beauty, and enthusiasm	Event or activity: feeding
Dogs	kindness, mercy, oppression, kindness, playing, love and affection, hope, fear and dread, danger, dirt, diseases, ugliness and beauty, and enthusiasm	Events or activities: dog walking, feeding, biting, and barking
Insects	annoyance, fear, and fun	Periods: childhood Places: private gardens
Fixed benches, swing benches, gazebos	calm, comfort, solitude, socializing, thinking, imagination, liberation and loneliness, privacy, companionship, entertainment, friendship, beauty, charm, pleasure, mischief, and drowsiness	Periods: spending time with friends, times of unhappiness (solitude and loneliness), high school (gatherings with classmates), nights, meetings and classes (network marketing, English classes.), and the period of being with a spouse, fiancé, or family Events or activities: talking, eating, and drinking in groups, riding on children's swings, group games, and group music performances Individuals: fiancé, girlfriend or boyfriend, family and friends, children, high school classmates, and adolescent girls and boys Places: nature, trees, walking paths, children's playgrounds Components: swings, meals, drinks, and musical instruments
Four-seater chess tables	companionship, playing and entertainment, camaraderie and competition, victory and defeat, joy and sorrow, a sense of life, liveliness, youth, and old ages, and passion and pleasure	Periods: the time of accompanying friends, business meetings Individuals: lively and friendly older men, friends, participants in business meetings Components: food, drinks, cigarettes, chess, backgammon, ludo, snakes and ladders, and cards Events or activities: talking, smoking, eating, drinking, group games (chess, backgammon, cards, snakes and ladders, ludo.)
Sitting walls	mobility, change, stopping, the flow of life, movement, loneliness, discomfort, solitude, and crowds	Periods: times of companionship with friends and family, business meetings, times of solitude and solitude, and times of playing live music Events or activities: talking, smoking, eating, drinking, and group music performances Individuals: passers-by, friends, family, and participants in business meetings Components: food, drinks, cigarettes, musical instruments, insects, and bird droppings
Fitness machines	mobility, vitality, happiness, health, and enthusiasm	Periods: training times in the gym or playing other sports Individuals: bodybuilders, athletes, and sports practitioners Places: sports clubs and gyms
Fountains	a sense of life, coolness, peace, beauty, disproportion, antiquity, warmth, and enthusiasm	Periods: summer Events or activities: swimming and playing Individuals: children and swimmers Places: pools, rivers, and lakes Animals: crows
Entrances	remembrance, charm, loveliness, beauty, splendor and ordinariness, proportion and disproportion, symmetry, and similarity and difference	Periods: spending time in Fateh Garden in the past
Statue	sacrifice, magnanimity, chivalry, courage, forgiveness, effort, and kindness and peace	Periods: the time when Fateh Garden was a private garden, Individuals: gardeners and the late Fateh
Playground equipment	joy, excitement, energy, excitement, and friendship	Events or activities: playtime and making friends with other children Individuals: children and their parents

us to identify the components, events, and activities (tangible cultural resources) and meanings and associations (intangible cultural resources) of the parks and to exploit them in a sustainable way (also through creative methods) to improve the conditions of the parks as well. Cultural planning for Iranian urban parks is different from the similar approaches used in other countries, especially in the West. These differences mainly have to do with the various decision-making bodies for urban parks, such as governmental, military, and religious institutions and organizations, and with prohibited events and activities in Iranian parks, such as drinking alcohol, dancing, and dog walking.

Three gaps are apparent in the previous urban park research. First, the cultural resources of urban parks have not been comprehensively addressed. Studies that have referenced the cultural resources of urban parks have focused only on some parts of these resources. Some studies have focused solely on tangible cultural resources, and others have only investigated the intangible cultural resources of urban parks. Yet another group of studies has pointed to a few tangible cultural sources and a few intangible cultural sources. The present study is innovative because it adopts a broader definition of the cultural resources of urban parks. It considers humans, animals, plants, sensory components, natural components, manmade components, human events, activities, and nonhuman events as tangible cultural resources and meanings and associations as intangible cultural resources. This information may provide a fuller understanding of the cultural resources of urban parks for cultural planners, policymakers, managers, individuals, and institutions that are in charge of urban parks. For example, the presence of specific features, which enable a plant or an animal to live in a particular urban park and the type of activities and events concerning the plants and animals can be considered by urban park officials.

Table 5: Suggestions for Fateh Garden using creative methods

Method	Suggestion for Fateh Garden
Evolution	- Previously done: Removal of the giant stone pots from the main walking path due to the risk of cyclists and skaters colliding with them - Recommended: Placing small pots on the sitting walls along the main walking path
Synthesis	Playing music and exercising simultaneously - - Holding field performances with live music - Setting up handicraft and art training booths for teenagers and youths
Reapplication	- Turning Shamdooni Cafe into a board game cafe for the fans of board games
Reconceptualizing the problem	- Encouraging night activities in the park to increase the users' sense of security, such as playing music and singing or holding sports and entertainment competitions
Broadening the concept	- Proper lighting at night by combining green, brown, and red colors to match the dominant colors in the park to increase the users' sense of security and also their sense of belonging to the park
Turning weaknesses into strengths	- Organizing night tours to see the life of animals inside the plots among the trees due to the darkness of the plots at night
Reconciling strategic dilemmas	- Stray dogs: Collecting them by volunteers or environmental groups - Playing sports on the walking paths: drawing lines to indicate the walking route and exercise locations - Children's playground flooring: determining the time to practice martial arts and parkour during the hours when children do not use this place
Sensory surveys	- Colors: green, brown, gray, and white as the most frequent colors Recommended: Using colors that match the natural background of the garden for new components - Scents: The smell of trees and plants, wet soil, and cigarettes Recommended: planting fragrant flowers - Sounds: The sounds of crows, birds, dogs, cats, insects (e.g., scarab beetles and crickets), human laughter, human speech, water, and music and songs Recommended: Playing sports music in the early morning encourages sports practitioners to exercise and play relaxing music when the users need to relax.
Changing negative attitude	- Using youth workers to train the park attendants to change the attitudes towards Fateh Garden as a hangout for thugs and ignorant people
Seeing the problem through the eyes of different groups of users	- School children: Holding game and entertainment events as well as strengthening their participation skills - Teenagers: Creating sports, arts, and social groups to encourage teenagers to engage in group activities instead of seeking out the opposite sex in other ways - The elderly: Establishing friendly relationships among the elderly by holding sports competitions, especially to encourage them to play chess and boost their morale
Reverse thinking and visioning	- Possibility of planting trees and flowers in the name of the users by paying their planting and maintenance costs to encourage them to maintain the plants of Fateh Garden

The second gap concerns the participants in the studies on urban parks. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, previous studies have mostly sought the opinions of urban park users regarding the cultural resources of urban parks without gathering the managers' and policy makers' attitudes and approaches to urban parks. In the present study, in addition to the interviews with different age and gender groups of the park users, the designers, planners, the Head of Landscape and Green Space Organization of Karaj Municipality, and the manager of Fateh Garden were also interviewed, and their attitudes and approaches to the park's cultural resources were investigated.

The third gap is related to how to provide solutions to improve the conditions of urban parks. Previous studies have mainly researched the problems of urban parks and made suggestions derived from each user individually or the opinions of groups of users. Relying on creative methods and using a focus group (including seven of the most creative interviewees), the present study set the ground for discussions and exchange of views on suggestions and solutions among the users to improve the conditions of an essential park in a major city in Iran.

This study has provided suggestions to improve the conditions of Fateh Garden by using a focus group. However, there are severe challenges for implementing some of the focus group's proposals. For example, there is a plot of land not owned by the Municipality and abandoned in the northern part of Fateh Garden. Since the landowner is a governmental institution and there is a disagreement with the Municipality on using it, it is impossible to plan its development. The next challenge is related to animals such as dogs and cats in Fateh Garden. The presence of many stray dogs in this park, especially at night, is frightening for some users.

Moreover, some users consider a large number of cats the reason for their dissatisfaction with this park. On the other hand, many users welcome the cats and dogs in Fateh Garden and even prevent stray dogs from moving out of the park. Resolving this conflict is not easy and requires the broad participation of the users and officials to adopt an appropriate solution. For example, concerning lighting, Karaj Electricity Authority must cooperate with Karaj Municipality to increase the electricity poles and lights, especially in the northern part of the park.

Further research on cultural planning in urban parks should seek to answer other questions. The following list is indicative of possible emerging research questions. What plants need to be planted? What animals are likely to be in the park as a result of choosing certain kinds of plants? Which plants and animals are the users' favorites? What kind of urban furniture do the users prefer in each urban park, and what meanings and associations does this urban furniture have? What colors should be considered for these components? What age and gender groups are more likely to use the park, and what are the main reasons for such uses? How safe and secure do the users feel? What are the requirements for better access of the users to an urban park?.

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