



Type of Article (Research Article)

Explaining The Relationship Between Spatial Structure And Social Action In The Markets Of Tehran Metropolis; Focusing On The Sociological Approach To Urban Spaces

Elmira Saaveh: Department of Architecture, Ta.C., Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.

***Mohammadreza Pakdel Fard:** Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, Ta.C., Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.

Hasan Sattari Sarbangholi: Department of Architecture and Urban Planning, Ta.C., Islamic Azad University, Tabriz, Iran.

Article Einfo

Received: 2024/12/10
Accepted: 2025/04/05
PP: 13-24.

Keywords:

Spatial Structure
Social Action
Tehran Metropolis Markets
Sociological Approach

Abstract

Spatial structure and social action are fundamental factors in analyzing urban spaces and examining their social dynamics. The markets of Tehran metropolis, as one of the most significant arenas for social and economic interactions, possess unique potential for explaining the relationship between spatial structure and social action. This study, utilizing a sociological approach and a descriptive-analytical method, examines this relationship. Data were collected through quantitative and qualitative methods; in the quantitative section, questionnaires were distributed among 450 merchants and visitors in Tehran's markets, based on Cochran's formula. In the qualitative section, semi-structured interviews were conducted with experts in related fields. The collected data were analyzed using "SPSS" and "AMOS," software. The results reveal a significant and reciprocal relationship between the spatial features of the markets and the quality of social actions. Physical elements of the market, including spatial organization, accessibility, and interaction spaces, directly influence behavioral patterns and social interactions. By providing strategies to improve the spatial design of markets, this research emphasizes the importance of sociological approaches in urban space planning and management, contributing to enhancing social interactions and cultural sustainability in Tehran's metropolis markets.

Citation: Saaveh, Elmira. Pakdel Fard, Mohammadreza. Sattari Sarbangholi, Hasan. (2025). Explaining The Relationship Between Spatial Structure And Social Action In The Markets Of Tehran Metropolis; Focusing On The Sociological Approach To Urban Spaces. *Journal Of Socio-Cultural Changes*, 22(2; Ser. 86): 13-24.

DOI:

This Article Is Extracted From The Doctoral Thesis Of '*Elmira Saaveh*', Titled "*Exploring The Interconnection Between Spatial Structure And Behavioral Patterns In Traditional Bazaars And Iran Mall In Tehran*", Under The Supervision Of '*Dr. Mohammadreza Pakdel Fard*', & Advisory '*Dr. Hasan Sattari Sarbangholi*'.

***Corresponding Author:** Mohammadreza Pakdel Fard

E-mail Address: m.pakdelfard@srbiau.ac.ir

Tel: +989143168187

Extended Abstract

Introduction

Urban spaces have always served as the context for social interactions and human activities. In modern societies, spatial structure not only organizes the physical fabric of the city but also influences social relationships and citizens' behaviors. Spatial design and organization can either strengthen or weaken social interactions, a sense of collective identity, and quality of life. Urban markets, as prominent examples of public spaces, play a significant role beyond their economic functions; they contribute to social cohesion, cultural interactions, and the formation of urban identity. Among spatial characteristics, factors such as density, accessibility, land-use diversity, and environmental quality have a direct relationship with social behaviors and communication networks among individuals. Tehran, as a metropolis with a diverse spatial structure and markets ranging from traditional to modern, provides an appropriate case for studying the link between spatial structure and social action. Tehran's markets, in addition to their economic role, reflect the city's socio-cultural identity and transformations resulting from urban growth. This study, employing a sociological approach alongside quantitative and qualitative methods, investigates the impact of the spatial structure of Tehran's markets on patterns of social behavior. The central research question is: How do the structural characteristics of Tehran's urban markets affect social behaviors and human interactions, and what strategies can be proposed to improve spatial quality and enhance social interactions?

Methodology

The present study was conducted with the aim of elucidating the relationship between spatial structure and social action in the markets of metropolitan Tehran, employing a mixed-methods approach and a descriptive-analytical strategy. Initially, through library and documentary research, key concepts and influential elements in the interaction between spatial structure and social action were identified, and a conceptual framework was developed comprising four categories of elements: spatial organization, social actions, cultural and symbolic elements, and accessibility. In the quantitative phase, the statistical population included economic actors and market visitors, from which 450 individuals were randomly selected using the Cochran formula. Data were collected via a specially designed questionnaire. In the qualitative phase, semi-structured interviews with experts were conducted to gain deeper insights into spatial and social factors. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical tests in SPSS and structural equation modeling in AMOS. The results indicated that the spatial structure of markets—including spatial networks, functional density, and communication pathways—has a direct impact on behavioral patterns and the quality of social interactions. The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings led to the development of a conceptual model aimed at improving the design, management, and planning of urban markets.

Results And Discussion

Tehran Grand Bazaar and Iran Mall, as prominent examples of traditional and modern urban spaces in metropolitan Tehran, play a significant role in reflecting social, cultural, and economic relations. The traditional Tehran Bazaar, with its complex and organic spatial structure, provides an appropriate setting for social interactions and the formation of collective identity. In contrast, Iran Mall, with its modern and integrated design, offers a diverse space for cultural, recreational, and commercial activities, representing shifts in urban lifestyle patterns. This study, based on statistical analysis of 450 questionnaires and the application of advanced statistical methods, demonstrated a significant relationship between the spatial structure of these markets and the social actions of their users, grounded in a sociological approach to urban spaces. Results indicate that spatial organization has the greatest impact on social actions, followed by accessibility and functional linkages, cultural and symbolic elements, and finally the social behaviors of users. Furthermore, sub-elements such as cultural events, social identity, and cultural land uses emerged as key factors in strengthening social interactions and fostering a sense of belonging to the space. The statistical indicators of reliability and validity confirm the accuracy and trustworthiness of the model. The findings emphasize the necessity of spatial design in markets focused on enhancing the quality of social interactions, reinforcing collective identity, and improving accessibility. These insights can serve as effective guidance for the planning and management of urban markets in Tehran and other metropolitan areas. The study's conclusion highlights that the spatial structure of Tehran's markets significantly influences users' social actions, creating a reciprocal relationship that reinforces cultural, social, and economic interactions. Both traditional and modern markets act not only as economic centers but also as identity-forming spaces that enhance social belonging. Therefore, purposeful spatial design aligned with the social needs of users is critically important. Accordingly, optimizing market management, providing adequate access, strengthening communication networks, and developing functional linkages are key strategies to improve the quality of interactions and cultural-social sustainability. The study's findings can serve as a strategic framework for policy-making and urban market planning aimed at improving quality of life and strengthening social structures.