

## Identifying the factors that affect the promotion of a sense of vitality in cultural places from the perspective of architects

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### ABSTRACT

#### Research Problem:

Today, with changing lifestyles and the increasing use of electronic devices, people's presence in public spaces has declined, gradually leading to a reduction in the dynamism and vibrancy of urban areas. The persistence of this trend diminishes social interactions among individuals, even though modern humans, despite technological advancements, still need to connect with their peers. Therefore, creating dynamic and vibrant urban spaces has always been a fundamental goal of urban planners and designers. Undoubtedly, a successful and lively urban environment is one that nurtures talents, attracts people, and can expand the economic, cultural, and social dimensions of a city. Thus, understanding the concept of urban vibrancy is essential for monitoring urban health, development, creative growth, and promoting human-centered urbanization. Urban vibrancy is the result of the interaction between the city and its citizens. If humans as users of urban spaces and human-centered goals are not considered in designs, cities, which play a crucial role in ensuring healthy human relationships, may deviate from their role or even lose it entirely. The primary function of a public space in a city is to provide a suitable platform for collective activities and interactions among people. Cultural centers, as part of public spaces, are no exception. Buildings such as cultural centers play a significant role in enhancing social interactions and serve as effective tools for the cultural development of cities. As urban public spaces, cultural centers bring together diverse members of society and provide an ideal setting for cultural activities. By facilitating social interactions, these spaces play a crucial role in strengthening social connections and collective actions among individuals. This study specifically focuses on the concept of vibrancy, the factors influencing it, and the prioritization of these factors. The research aims to examine and prioritize the components affecting the vibrancy of urban spaces. In essence, the study seeks to answer the question: *Which factors and components have the greatest impact on the vibrancy of urban spaces?* The research process involves identifying the problem, reviewing theoretical foundations, and analyzing the components influencing vibrancy.

#### Research Question:

1. What are the key components influencing the vibrancy of urban spaces, particularly cultural venues?
2. Which factors and components have the greatest impact on the vibrancy of urban spaces?

#### Research Method:

This study is descriptive-analytical in nature and employs both qualitative and quantitative approaches for data collection and analysis. In the first phase, data were gathered through library research, and qualitative methods were used to extract the components influencing vibrancy. After reviewing concepts and factors that enhance vibrancy in previous studies, key components and indicators were identified. These components and indicators were cross-referenced, and commonalities were selected as the study's variables, including: Dependent variables: Functional-activity, socio-cultural, physical-spatial, and environmental components

and Independent variable: Enhancing vibrancy in cultural spaces. In the next phase, field research was conducted to validate and prioritize these components in cultural venues. The factors influencing vibrancy were categorized and measured through questionnaires. The validity of the questionnaire was assessed using the KMO index and Bartlett's test, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The study's statistical population consisted of architecture professors and students at Hakim Sabzevari University. Participants included randomly selected professors and undergraduate/graduate architecture students. After collecting 50 completed questionnaires, the data were quantitatively analyzed using the Friedman test in SPSS.

**The Most Important Results and Conclusion:**

Based on the data, a detailed analysis of the prioritization and relationships between components and sub-components influencing vibrancy was conducted. The Friedman test revealed several key factors in the vibrancy of cultural spaces: Socio-cultural (presence, participation, and social interactions), Physical-spatial (flexibility, accessibility), Functional-activity (design for collective activities, pedestrian-friendly spaces), Environmental (harmony with nature and sustainability). Overall, the components influencing the vibrancy of cultural spaces fall into four categories: functional-activity, socio-cultural, physical-spatial, and environmental. The results indicate that the socio-cultural component has the greatest impact on the vibrancy of cultural spaces, encompassing factors such as social interactions, a sense of belonging, citizen participation, and cultural richness. The physical-spatial component (flexibility, accessibility, and inviting design) ranked second, followed by functional-activity and environmental components. These findings underscore the importance of prioritizing social and cultural dimensions in urban space design and management.

Proposed Design Strategies for Vibrant Cultural Spaces  
Based on these findings, the following design strategies are recommended:

1. Enhancing Presence, Social Interaction, and Participation (Socio-cultural Dimension):
  - *Creating gathering spaces*: Designing plazas, urban seating areas, open-air amphitheaters, and cultural cafés to foster social interactions.
  - *Hosting cultural events*: Art exhibitions, workshops, and festivals to attract people and enhance dynamism.
  - *Developing shared spaces*: Co-working areas, public libraries, and dialogue centers to encourage active participation.
  - *Designing inviting entrances*: Ensuring spaces are easily navigable and welcoming.
2. Flexible and Accessible Design (Physical-Spatial Dimension)
  - *Adaptive architecture*: Using movable walls, modular furniture, and convertible open/closed spaces.
  - *Multi-functional spaces*: Enabling venues to adapt to diverse needs (e.g., a hall for both conferences and art exhibitions).
  - *Interactive elements*: Digital display walls for immersive cultural experiences.
  - *Improved public transport access*: Enhancing connectivity to cultural centers.
  - *Universal design standards*: Ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities and the elderly.
3. Design for Collective Activities (Functional-Activity Dimension)
  - *Pedestrian and cycling paths*: Linking cultural centers to promote easy access and recreational activities.
  - *Multi-purpose spaces*: Venues adaptable for concerts, exhibitions, and workshops.
  - *Family-friendly zones*: Play areas to encourage diverse social groups.
4. Environmental Harmony (Environmental Dimension)
  - *Green spaces*: Incorporating rooftop gardens, vertical greenery, and natural landscapes.
  - *Natural lighting and ventilation*: Reducing energy use and enhancing comfort.
  - *Sustainable materials*: Using local, eco-friendly materials to strengthen ties with the environment.

**KEY WORDS**

Vitality, Cultural places, Cultural center, Urban spaces