Developing a Framework for the Regeneration of Historic Districts with an Emphasis on Tourist Attraction: A Case Study of Mashhad Noghan Neighborhood

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Abstract

The historical district with its hidden physical and cultural values has a high urban identity and has the potential of tourism due to its unique historical elements. Despite their potentials and strengths, these districts have undergone many changes over time and have gradually been disrupted. Urban redevelopment, however, is a comprehensive process in terms of social, economic, functional, and physical dimensions which enhances the quality of life in the targeted areas and neighborhoods in relation to the whole city, which can be a good tactic to address the challenges of historical districts. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to achieve an urban regeneration framework for Noghan neighborhood of Mashhad in order to attract maximum tourists. In this regard, the research method used in this study is practical in terms of purpose and in terms of research method; it is a descriptive-analytical method and data gathering method was based on library-documentary studies and content analysis as well as field survey methods such as observation and questionnaires. Prioritization of criteria was done in the data analysis section using ANP method. Thus, in order to reach Noghan historical district, the semantic component has the highest coefficient and it has the first priority over other components. The results of this study indicate that there are potentials for tourist attraction in this neighborhood, which have been neglected due to lack of attention to the identity-creating elements as well as the indiscriminate construction, resulting in the loss of the identity of this neighborhood.

Keyword: *historical district, urban regeneration, tourism, Noghan neighborhood*

1.Introduction

Old and historic districts are the center and the early core of the cities. In fact, at first, the historical urban spaces must preserve the history and the objective and subjective identities of the city and then bring them to the live. Due to their historical antiquity and valuable historical elements, appropriate communication position, the location of the main market of the city and their economic beating heart, etc., the old and ancient textures of the cities have a unique and valuable place in the spatial and functional structure of the city. Whereas these types of textures are potential with strong points, they have experienced different changes over the time and gradually have been disrupted in different functional, economic, social, physical and communication dimensions and could not adopt themselves to new urban needs and criteria. For this purpose, the intervention in historical textures must be done with special patterns, otherwise the valuable and historical identities of the cities will be removed. Hence, to decrease this texture's problems in different times,

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different methods have been considered, including the regeneration method which was first proposed in 1990. Urban regeneration as a new method leads to the creation of new urban spaces by preserving the main space features. In this regard, a new urban space is created that is similar to the old city space but represents semantic and significant differences from old spaces. Regeneration (contemporizing) means creating a new spatial organization that adopts to the new condition and new features that are effective in creating new urban relationships or redefining the ancient or existing urban relationships. In this method, paying attention to cultural values and preserving the indigenous and historical wealth, criticizing the structures with a single application rather than multiple applications, paying attention to the qualitative actions along with quantitative ones and the participation of social groups is completely obvious. The historic textures can attract the tourists due to their unique features. In fact, tourism development leads to economic prosperity and poverty reduction and is effective in income growth and lower unemployment, so the quality of people's life and social

welfare will increase. What criteria and sub-criteria are effective in historical neighborhood regeneration?

In this paper, the framework for policy-making in historical neighborhood regeneration of Noghan in Mashhad is discussed and the solutions and suggestions are provided to increase tourist attraction.

2. Research Method

The data gathering method is documentary and field-based. Due to the nature of the study, the research method is descriptive-analytical and is practical in terms of purpose. Data were analyzed in both quantitative and qualitative ways. In the analysis section, research indexes are analyzed using trained observer technique and the preparation of analytical checklists. After analyzing the qualitative indexes for prioritizing and evaluating the questionnaire, ANP method was used. In the quantitative method, the data collected from the questionnaires which were completed by 41 officials and experts were analyzed. In addition, Super Decision software and ANP method have been used. To reach an appropriate statistical population, a simple random method was used given that the target population are the authorities, urban professionals and academics. In this research, the data gathering tool is based on the research subject, which makes sure the results are valid, so this study has desirable validity. Based on Cronbach's test, the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire is 0.89 which indicates that the questionnaire has good a reliability. In ANP method, after setting the criteria, sub-criteria and options, the structure of the proposed model is outlined (Chart 1). Once the network is formed and the relationship between its elements is determined, the decision elements in each cluster are compared two by two, based on their importance in relation to the control criteria. The clusters themselves are compared two by two based on their role and impact in achieving the goal. Decision makers have to decide about the binary comparison of the elements or the clusters themselves, two by two. In addition, the interdependencies between elements of a cluster must also be compared two by two. The weighting of the criteria and indexes is based on the weighted spectrum of the ANP model whose numbers are considered based on the results of the questionnaire. Finally, a strategy and solution are presented.

3. Theoretical Foundations

3.1 The Historic District

Historical textures are those which, despite depreciation, there are valuable buildings, collections and urban installations and facilities in their range. The historic districts of cities have elegance and beauty and are the result of the creative spirit of those people who created them according to their tradition, culture and livelihood. The historic texture is one of the most important parts of the identity of each society and its emergence follows obeying the climatic and cultural structures. A coherent set of architecture, culture, economics and social interactions of a historical urban structure creates the historical textures over the time. This emergence is possible when giving importance to the climate and paying attention to the indigenous cultures of the region. The historical and cultural textures of cities show the valuable culture, architecture knowledge and native urbanism and considered as a part of social identity of every nation and country. The historic texture is a space that have been formed before 1300 AH and have been registered or can be registered as a national monument and have a cultural-historical value. Regarding these types of textures, the rules and regulations of Cultural Heritage Organization will be the criteria.

3.2 Urban Regeneration

The term Regeneration, rooted from Regenerate, means the resuscitation, rejuvenation and rebirth. After 1995, this word was used widely as a substitute for urban renewal in the field of urbanism literature. The word urban regeneration has different meanings, and in practice it ranges from large scale activities for promoting economic growth to interventions in districts and neighborhood units to improve the life quality. Regeneration attempts to address the situation, environmental, social, cultural and economic conditions to rebirth the places that are worn out over the time and are not efficient and increase the environmental quality. Urban Regeneration Systematic Operation is a conceptual plan for regenerating urban areas, dealing with improving buildings, infrastructures, public facilities and public spaces. This new method seeks to improve and reform urban texture. Urban Regeneration term (UR) was introduced by many writers as a fixed economic, physical, social and environmental solution in areas that lost their urban forms. Urban Regeneration means improving the life quality and investing in future, which is a very extensive and difficult action but not impossible. Urban Regeneration is an opportunity to solve such problems as the lack of the identity of a residential area, the lack of public spaces and high urban density; however, the roads development, creating green spaces, planting trees in the pavement make these problems impossible. Urban Regeneration term is synonym with urban rehabilitation or urban renewal. Urban Regeneration involves the rehabilitation of the worn-out urban areas through such actions as: 1. Reconstruction of historical areas, 2. Improving the life conditions in residential areas, 3. Improving public places: parks, urban furniture, etc. 4. Renovation of urban infrastructures: water, gas, electricity, transport infrastructure. The experiences regarding the innovations used in the past about the following principles can be used for successful urban regeneration. These principles include: (table1)

3.3 Tourism

Tourism is the collection of activities that tourists and the facility providers are doing. The tourist is a person

who goes on a journey like an athlete or a passenger who is wants to view the landscapes. Finally, tourism has an effective role in empowering the local communities and creating job opportunities and economic growth. Creating the tourism axes can also be considered as one of the ways to regenerate the historical urban spaces and attract tourists. Tourism has different types that are mentioned in the chart below.

3.4 The Historical Tourism
The historical tourism is one of the most important types of tourism in the world, which includes viewing the cultural, historical and ancient areas and the old attractions such as the Seven Wonders of the word. The historical attractions include historical and cultural sites that are important in the view of cultural heritage and that's why there are very attractive for tourists. This type of tourism which is known as "Heritage Tourism" covers the visiting of museums, places and historical buildings, and today it is a major part of tourism. Tourism based on the historical heritage includes visiting the museums, historical and ancient buildings, palaces, historical monuments, religious buildings, traditional architecture and so on.

3.5 Theoretical Framework
This section is one of the most important parts of the research and it is effective in achieving research objectives by identifying the criteria and the indexes' group. According to the studies on historical texture, tourism and urban regeneration, the important indexes of this field are determined and discussed in table below.

Introducing the Research Field
Strategic area: The strategic area is the Samen region. The total area of Samen lands is 360 hectares which is located in the central area and is the neighbor of the 2nd and 3rd areas from the north, the 4th and 6th areas from the west, the 7th and 8th areas from the south and the 1st area from the east. Local area: In this project, Noghan neighborhood is considered as the local area. The current Noghan is the survivor of the main and old Noghan district which is located in the northern part of Mashhad in Samen area, and today Noghan area includes the streets of Shirazi, Azadi, Ayatollah Kashani and Tabarsi. The functional, physical and socioeconomic ad semantic features of this neighborhood are reviewed in the following table.

4. Discussion and Findings
in the present research, in order to study the indexes extracted out of the theoretical framework in Noghan district, first they are reviewed based on the trained observer technique, and then a questionnaire was prepared the sample populationos which includes relevant experts and authorities. This questionnaire has been completed by 41 experts and authorities. Finally, the priority of the criteria and indexes are discussed based on the questionnaire results.

4.1 Data Analysis Based on the Trained Observer Technique
In this part, the indexes of the area under study are reviewed in the table below. Noghan neighborhood has always attracted many pilgrims and tourists because of its closeness to the holy shrine of Razavi as well as various accommodation and service centers such as hotels, guesthouses, restaurants and so on. This neighborhood has many historical buildings besides services and accommodation for tourists, which can attract many tourists. These buildings include mosques, residential buildings and so on. Although these buildings have undergone many changes over time, there are still many works left in this ancient neighborhood and one can well see the remnants of Noghan's customs, accents, clothes and old food, and there are still old remnants of narrow and dark warehouses and corridors, and houses with yards below the alley level which have colored glass. The old name of the alleys is relatively unchanged (Mirnejad & Zebarjadian, 2013: 93). In the margin of Noghan district, there was in fact the main market of this neighborhood which is in the north southern direction and its northern end leads to the Noghan Gate and its southern end to Chahar Sowgh (intersection of Siahan alley and Noghan) (Shahghadami, 2013: 92). Noghan has many old mosques, some of which have interesting names and an ancient history, including Foni Mosque, Haft-Darre Mosque, Keshmiriha Mosque (Mirnejad & Zebarjadian, 2013: 94). In this neighborhood, many residential houses have been registered in the cultural heritage and are part of the monuments, including Taghavi's House, Talaei's House, Mousavi's House, Zaraei's House and so on, which are still attractive to tourists.

4.2 Questionnaire Analysis in the Form of ANP Matrix
In this section, the results of the questionnaire are prioritized, using ANP method by Super Decision software. According to the table below (table 4`), the semantic component has the highest coefficient. This emphasizes the importance of semantic component among others. Below are some examples of matrixes extracted by the software which indicate these findings.

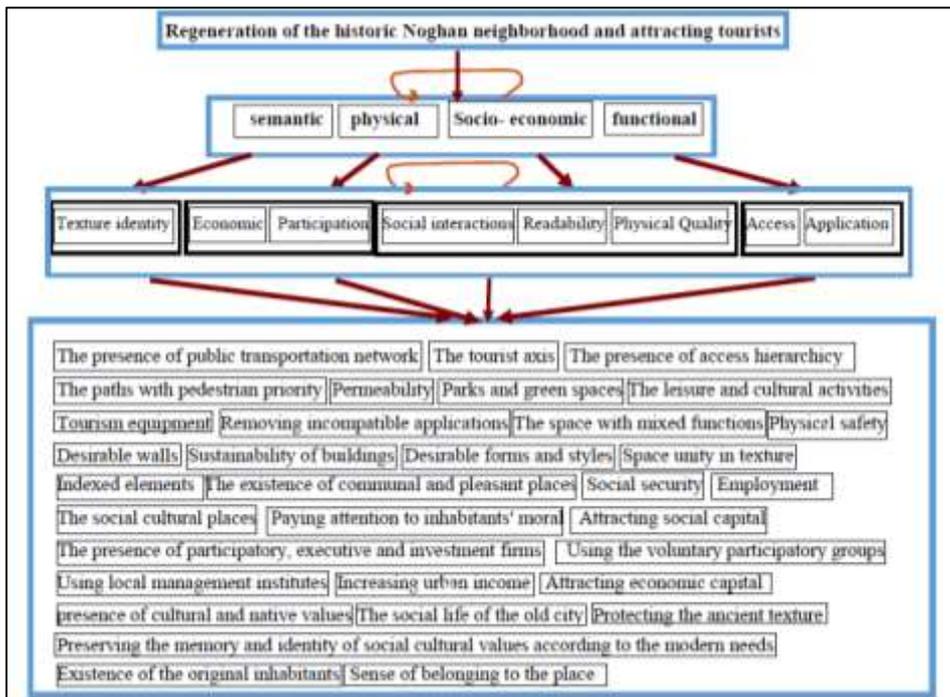Chart 1. Relationships between the Criteria in ANP Network Analysis
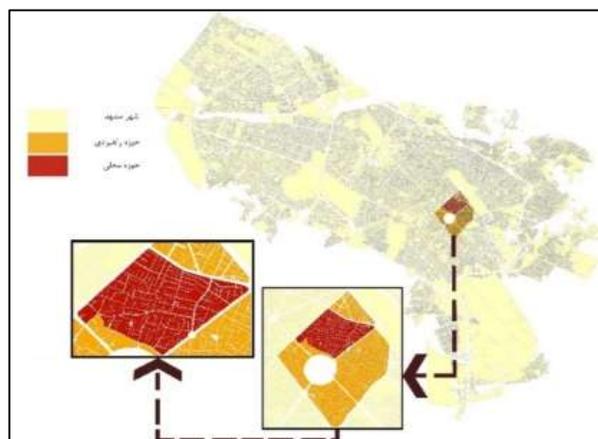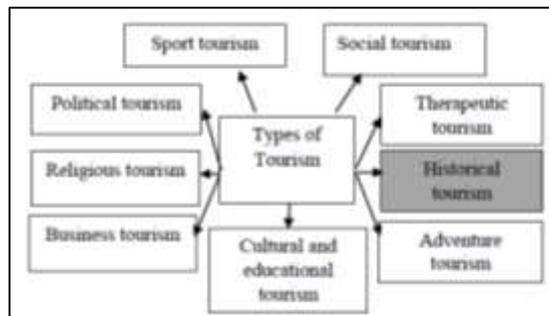

Chart 2. Types of Tourism

Figure 1. The Location of the Area under Study

Table 1. Regeneration Principles

Regeneration Principles	Explanation
Economic transformation	Increasing the employment opportunity, improving wealth distribution, developing the talents, raising taxes and local real estate, linking between local construction and improvement, urban and regional improvement, attracting domestic investment.
Social transformation	Improving the life quality and social relationships, reducing crime, overcoming defamation and social exclusion
Governing	Reorganizing the decision-making mechanisms through democratic understanding, increasing the cooperation and participation spaces, considering different expectations, emphasizing various regional partnership
Physical transformation	Solving the problems associated with physical burnout along with new lands and proportional requirements
The environment quality and the sustainable development	The urban regeneration must promote the balanced development and the management of society's economics and environment. Achieving such an integrated procedure requires the regeneration of the society creativities and its application in regeneration.
Improving the application diversity	The mixture of different applications (administrative, residential, entertainment, commercial and restaurants) to create a vibrant and diverse entertainment and commercial environment. These applications must be connected to each other through public infrastructures and pedestrian movement patterns.
Encouraging the compression	This relation is an essential and important action for filling the physical distances in urban texture. Even small spaces between the buildings, which show the problems of the continuity norm, can dramatically reduce the pedestrians' flow.
Creating the development density	While density is very important in creating vital masses of the city, it should be noted that new large-scale projects should not have negative effects on the desirable features. Such constructions may have negative effects on economic values of buildings and on street level activities.
Ensuring the activities' balance	The space should have an activity balance throughout the day and evening. The inappropriate administrative space vacant the space after the work hours. Hence, it must be attempted to preserve vitality at these time by shops, applications attractive to the visitors and residential spaces. Major applications should not be focused only in one place.
Enhancing the ease of access	It's important that along easy and efficient access to the cars and reaching to a parking, the priority and the right to go first should be given to the pedestrians in order to encourage them to walk and give life to the streets. The pavements with enough width and also the needed facilities must be provided to improve the pedestrian experience.
Creating the functional links	The people should be able to walk on foot between the activity-based centers through direct, attractive and convenient communication paths. The pedestrian communications must create a unified network which is defined through the unique design in the view of street, open spaces and active applications of street level.
Creating a positive identity system	The urban spaces need a positive identity system to create an attractive and pleasant space for people's social interactions. Sales, cultural, entertainment and sport activities and programs for special events, housing and improvement of urban life, marketing and sales of goods, all these have an important role in creating an urban system based on positive identity attributes.

Table 2. The Criteria and Sub-criteria Effective on Regenerating the Historical District

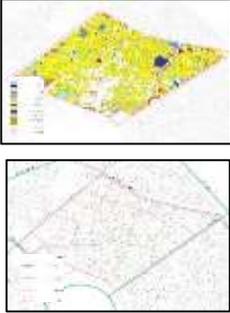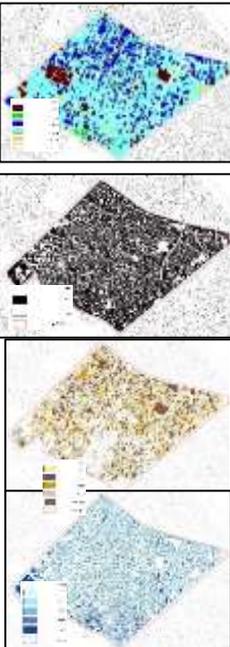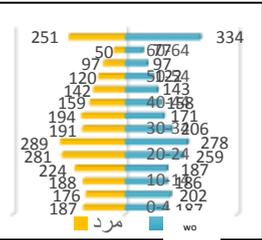| Component	Criterion	Sub-criteria (index)
functional	Access	Desirable permeability (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) The presence of tourism axes (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) The presence of access hierarchicy (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010), (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) The presence of public transportation network (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) The presence of paths with pedestrian priority (Hanachi and others, 2007) The presence of the parking (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012; Hanachi and others, 2007) The presence of separate paths for the vehicles and pedestrians (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012)
	Application	The presence of urban installations (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Parks and green spaces (Hanachi and others, 2007) Cultural and leisure activities (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz,2010), (Hanachi and others,2007) Tourism equipment (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Removing inconsistent applications (Poor Ahmad,Habibi and Keshavarz,2010),(Hanachi and others,2007) The presence of new collections in conjunction with the old urban architecture (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012), (Hanachi and others, 2007) A space with mixed functions (Hanachi and others, 2007)
Physical	Physical quality	Desirable walls (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Sustainability of buildings' quality (Hanachi and others, 2007) Physical immunity (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) (Hanachi and others, 2007) Quality facades (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Desirable landscape (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Well-liked forms and styles (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Space unity in texture (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012)
	Readability	Desirable permeability (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) Indexed elements (Hanachi and others, 2007)
Socio-economic	Social interactions	Communal and pleasant spaces (Hanachi and others, 2007) Social security (Hanachi and others, 2007) Suitable openings for people's accumulation (Hanachi and others, 2007) Social – cultural places (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Suitable facilities for social movements of all citizens (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Paying attention to the inhabitants' spirits (Hanachi, 2010) Public places (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010), (Hanachi and others, 2007)
	Partnership	The investment, executive and participatory firms. (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Attracting the social capital (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) Using the local management institutions (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) non-governmental neighborhood services (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) Taking benefits of the participation of voluntary group (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010)
	Economic	Growth of urban income (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Job creation (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010) Attracting the economic capitals (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010)
Meaning	Texture identity	The cultural and indigenous values (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010), (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) Preserving the memory and social- cultural values according to modern needs (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010), (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012) The social life of the old city (Hanachi and others, 2007) The presence of the original inhabitants in the historic texture (Hanachi and others, 2007) Sense of belonging to the place (Poor Ahmad, Habibi and Keshavarz, 2010), (Hanachi and Poursarajian, 2012)

Table 3. Noghan Neighborhood Features

Component	Feature	Picture
Functional	In Noghan neighborhood, after residential application, the commercial application has assigned the largest share of area to itself. tThe residential centers are also very important. Tabarsi and Ayatollah Shirazi roads are as the 2nd grades arterial routes and Kashani and Azadi streets are considered as the collective and distributive passages.	
Physical	The system of textural massing, due to its historical nature, is not subject to certain laws and an uncontrolled and relatively undisciplined system is visible in this system. Most of the buildings in this area are more than 30 years old and worn out. The quality of the used materials is not high and they have very little physical stability. Most of the buildings of this neighborhood have 2 floors and the density of the buildings with more than 2 floors increases as one gets close to the Holy Shrine of Imam Reza.	
Socio-economic	According to the population and housing census in 2011, the population in Noghan was 5821 of which 2882 were male and 2939 were female. In agriculture, industry and services areas which constitute the main economic parts, there were 20, 284 and 987 employed individuals, respectively.	
Semantic	This district has many historical monuments as Taghavi's House, Talaei's House, Mousavi's House, Ahmadian's House, Akbar Zadeh's House, Zarai's House, Sabzeveriha's House, Mousavi Nejad' House, Nematollahi's Monastery and Mir Fakhrian's House, some of which are registered as legacies, but as for some of them no action has been done for their registration, protection and systematic restoration and privacy.	

Table 4. Reviewing the Indexes
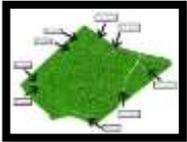
The paths with pedestrian priority	The closer we get to the center of the district, because the streets' width decreases, the vehicles' movement decreases and people mostly commune on foot. The pattern of people's movement is linear.	
Tourist equipment	The main needs of tourists must be met and the required services in the neighborhood must be prepared. This neighborhood has many hotels and guest houses that provide the needs of tourists. Moreover, the presence of commercial complexes in the margin of the main passages of this district and the Noghan axis has supplied the needs of tourists.	
Permeability	In some parts of this texture in which the streets are formed organically and the widths of streets is low, the permeability is undesirable. In the parts that the streets have geometric ordering, access to the texture is more desirable; therefore, the permeability is favorable.	
The indexed elements	The presence of the historical and indexed elements in this texture results in readability, and the paths are well identified. The constructed and constructing high structures that are visible from the main street of the area are among the physical signs of this neighborhood. Komeil hotel, Negin Hotel and Emad hotel are among those physical signs because of their proper location. The presence of mosques is an indicator of functional signs. In the case of semantic signs, very old mosques are remembered by inhabitants and sellers of that area. Thus, these signs help the neighborhood readability.	
Social security	In this neighborhood, the lighting and security is different, so in the places where the lighting is suitable, the people are more than the other places, but in side streets and dead-end alleys that the lighting is not suitable, something threats the people's safety. In addition, the successive destructions by the municipality has created many empty and vacant spaces that causes fear in people due to lack of lighting, and the lack of security is completely felt.	
Preserving the memory and identity of the original cultural and social values based on the modern needs	The different historical monuments of this district are kept in the people's minds. Using the historical monuments contributes to the memories' revival and the supply of modern needs in valuable buildings and helps the neighborhood dynamics. In this district, the historical monuments are residential and sometimes privately owned. For that matter, the historical monuments are being destroyed day by day and the authorities must pay more attention to this issue.	

Table 4`

	Socio- economic	functional	physical
Socio- economic	1	0.222222	0.666667
functional	4.500005	1	3.000003
physical	1.499999	0.333333	1

	functional	semantic	physical
functional	1	0.555556	1.659999
semantic	1.799999	1	3.000003
physical	0.60241	0.333333	1

	Socio-economic	semantic	physical
Socio-economic	1	0.222222	0.666667
semantic	4.500005	1	3.000003
physical	1.499999	0.333333	1

	Socio- economic	functional	physical
Socio-economic	1	0.4	0.666667
functional	2.5	1	1.659999
physical	1.499999	0.60241	1

Chart 3: Macro Goals, Micro Goals and Strategies
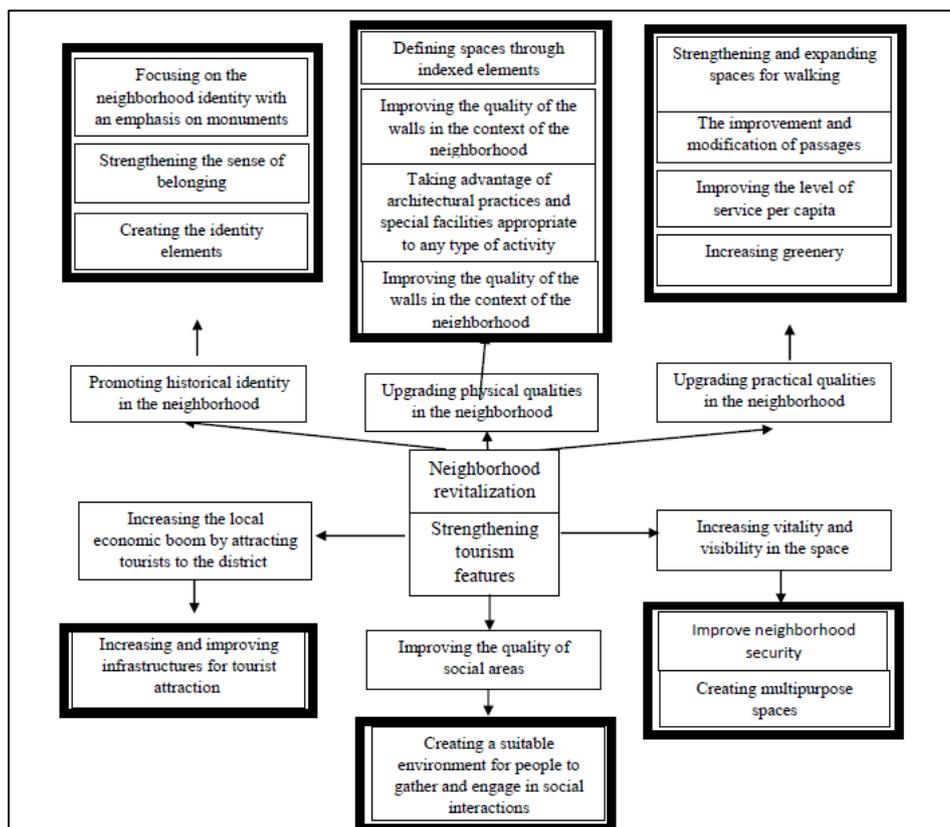
Table 6. The Policy-making Framework

component	solution	component	solution
Semantic	1.Introducing the existing monuments to the public 2.Preservation of and repairing the monuments (monuments and other valuable buildings) 3.Using old and identity-making names 4.Designing elements that show the past memories and neighborhood identity 5.holding religious ceremonies in the historical-cultural spaces existing in the district 6.Using historical spaces to create a museum	Socio-economic	1. Strengthening the social monitoring in the neighborhood 2. Construction of the handicraft exhibitions in the vicinity of tourist spaces (Noghan Market). 3. Considering tourism tours 4. Carrying out projects in the field of tourism, using private sector capital 5. Participation of the public sector in the production of handicrafts 6. doing activities related to advertising and marketing relavant to tourism
Functional	1. Building sidewalks and using physical agents to prevent vehicles from entering the sidewalks 2. Paying attention to the continuity of sidewalks at the intersections of streets 3. Establishing a connection between the historical elements of the city 4. Providing appropriate access to local services 5. Proper use of deserted and ruinous lands to create locally proper applications 6. Using diverse and suitable vegetation 7. Paying attention to the provision of the necessary facilities (restaurants, cafes, residential centers, etc.), as the dominant application of the spaces 8. Creating attraction of pilgrims and tourists on the historical axis (recreational, cultural, etc.) 9. Provide pausing space for attending and pausing 10.Using boarding activities to provide services such as pharmacy, clinic and ... 11.Define and strengthen the human scale in the urban space of the neighborhood	physical	1. Creating proper physical and functional signs to extend the readability and identity 2. The relative coordination of the form with function 3. Using the renovation plan to create a connection between new and worn out buildings 4. Using high quality materials for strengthening the residential units in the event of natural disasters 5. Creating diversity and improving the quality of the streets' artifact wall 6. Removing extensions and arranging billboards 7. Using a determined rhythm in the facade 8. Using an outstanding physical form at the entrance to the neighborhood 9. Using native geometric forms 10.Using indigenous materials and avoiding the excessive use of the modern materials in making the façade (use of the tiles) 11. Using past architecture patterns of houses when redesigning them (central courtyard pattern, summer and winter yards) 12. Equipping urban spaces with suitable furniture and lighting

5. Conclusion

Given that the urban regeneration tries to improve the quality of spaces and focus on neighborhood identity and creating a new identity in accordance with the modern needs, the process and the way to achieve it is very important. Furthermore, the historical elements are necessary for attracting tourists that contributes to the neighborhood's economics. Nevertheless, the life restoration of the neighborhood and strengthening its tourism features are the macro-scale goals of this project, and in order to execute and apply these goals, some micro goals and strategies for achieving the macro goals are described in the following diagram. In this section, the project solutions are identified. The solutions are developed using strategies, trying to create and promote the neighborhood identity and tourist attraction. The developed policies are applicable, and show the details and how to implement the goals, in more clear way. The related solutions are expressed in the table below. According to the obtained theoretical foundations, it can be said that urban regeneration is seeking to increase the quality of urban textures, especially the historic textures. Urban regeneration can organize the functional, physical, socioeconomic and semantic components of the neighborhood and bring the texture to favorable conditions. Noghlan neighborhood of Mashhad has been selected as a case study in this project. This is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Mashhad, which is very important due to its adjacency to Imam Reza's holy shrine. Noghan neighborhood is also very well-kept and has a lot of cultural values. On the one hand, the findings of this research suggest that the various historical elements made at different time periods can revitalize the neighborhood and lead to the economic prosperity of the neighborhood. On the other hand, the provision of modern services to people in the old spaces and the reuse of historic monuments by changing their applications while protecting and safeguarding them will lead to the emergence of

memories and the preservation of the identity of this neighborhood.

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