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Assessment of Correlation between Length of Residence and Good Image: Parand New Town

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Abstract

Many researches related to new towns believe in the healing role of time against a weak person-place relationship in such cities. The aim of this study is to examine the impact of time on a good image in longitudinal and latitudinal views in the new town of Parand. By surveying the image of 151 people including newcomers and old inhabitants, this study found that duration of residency has not affected the public image of the city (latitudinal view), and among the criteria defining the good image, only memorability and imageability of the neighbourhoods have related to the time factor (longitudinal view).

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Keywords: Good image; length of residence; criterion; new town

1. Introduction

Construction of new cities in Iran is one of the most important policies that results in the urban development process (Ziari et al., 2013, 1). New satellite towns built near metropolitan cities to balance and attract the surplus population are included. Unfortunately, the nature of these towns (being new) and the point of view in planning and designing them has caused the laxity of person-place relationship.

Freshness and youth of such cities made time and increased length of residence assumed to be the solution to their problem. It's stated that people who have lived in a place for a long time not only show greater attachment to the place (Daneshpour et al, 2011, 45) but also it is important for them to give meaning to that place

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(Charkhchian&Daneshpour, 2010, 222). Many studies have noted an approving correlation between length of residence and satisfaction (such as Hur&Marrow-jones, 2008, 621; Fleury-Bahi, Félonneau, Marchand, 2008, 675). They declared this factor is contributed to the feeling of comfort and bonding to the place, and can affect the positive image of the place, safety, security and positive connection with other users (Ujang, 2012, 165). However, the place and observer are involved in the image formation (Stern &Krakover, 1993, 131), it's ambiguous to believe that the connection between the person and the place, will grow stronger by lengthening the residence duration regardless of features and qualities influenced people perception of place. Particularly, up to down quantitative approach about new town neglected environmental qualities and their role in the quality of this relationship. Accordingly, the present paper tries to answer this question: *Can lengthening residence duration in town cause positive effect on people-place relationship spontaneously?*

Based on this question, the aim of the paper is to assess the correlation between length of residence and good image. To this end, longitudinal and latitudinal views to the time factor are required for demonstrating the differences and similarities of residents' image and orientation of that through the time (objectives). Therefore, the role of residence duration and environmental qualities in the image formation is determined. Then, those qualities can involve in this process are explored, and used in the operational definition of the good image as its construction or criterion, which can explain the concept. Eventually, the tool is determined to compare the image of residents and appraisalment of the relation between the two main variable of the study.

2. Literature review

Image of the city is formed based on both the observer and the city. Distinctions and relations transmit to the observer by the city to create the image. The Observer selects part of these distinctions and connections based on his needs and goals and organized and gives them a meaning (Neacsu, 2009, 176). Lynch also expressed that perception of the city is a transaction between person and place, which varies with variation in each factor (Lynch, 1996, 251). Therefore, every study related to urban image shall consider both place and person.

2.1. Length of residence and image

The formation of the image is affected by the perception and cognition process that are also affected by factors and cognitive structure of a person (beliefs, ideas, expectations, knowledge, experiences and etc.). Since cognition is developmental, a change of the individual's available cognitive structure influences his perceptual selectivity, thus leading to a reconstruction of the image through selected fields of attention (Stern &Krakover, 1993, 131). In Stern and Krakover's model of image, they present Intangible stimuli and individual background alongside environmental characteristics that affect the perceptual and cognitive processes and the image as well. They express that in the process of image formation from a phenomenon individual's attributes (such as age, sex, etc.) as well as the information and experiences that the person has about that specific phenomenon are involved. These experiences and information will vary between different people based on three features (source, type and amount of information) (Ibid, 131-132). Based on this subject the effect of "period of residency" on perceptual and cognitive processes and the image itself can be explained. As the period of residency extends, people can gain more information about the place because the probability of direct experience of the place is increased. Therefore, familiarity and duration of residency by affecting the type(positive or negative), amount (more or less) and source (direct or indirect) of information, can have an impact on people-place encounters and image formation.

Due to the impact of the residency period in perception and cognition process, it is expected that different people based on this factor have a different image of the city. Therefore, at a particular time phrase, there will be many different mental images between the citizens of the city. This feature can affect the projection of a unique image or as Lynch (1960) believes- the public image of the city. Lack of attention to these differences can make a challenge that is more critical about the new towns. Residency period and familiarity with these towns are not equal to those who live there, because they are not populated at once, and crowd overflow will take both time and different stages. Moreover, this can affect the selected fields of attention, interpretation of the residents from the new town and made some differences between new and old residents' priorities. A latitudinal view to the time factor can consider these differences and their effects.

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