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# Investigating the Factors Affecting Social Vitality of City Hall

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**Abstract—** *The city as a living organism needs vitality and joy to survive. Urban space in which social interaction between citizens is formed and cultural promotion takes place plays an essential role in vitality creation. The city can be revived by identifying and strengthening effective factors in the vitality of urban spaces and creating vital spaces. This study examines the factors affecting social vitality of city hall. The results showed that city hall also functions as a cultural and entertainment venue and plaza. It is important for city hall planning to consider social and cultural characteristics of project context.*

**Keywords:** *vitality, planning, city hall, cultural, social.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In today's Industrial and digital world, problems due to decreased social sphere and the invention of individualism requires places to reduce resulting psychological pressures and to develop social relationships. In fact, appropriate land use and urban planning serves as a filter which restores broken social relationships in modern cities. In order to increase social vitality, it is essential to consider appropriate urban planning and physical structure of social environment [1]. Urban planning as a constituent of urban space has the most important effect on social environment structure. Therefore, appropriate urban planning by taking exhilarating and spiritual elements into account can be effective in creating or enhancing social vitality [2]. Landry [3] evaluated the concept of vitality in a different way, defined vitality and viability independently, and adopted four main approaches to thematic issue consideration. He applied nine major criteria to identify a viable and vital city: effective population density, diversity, accessibility, safety and security, identity and distinction, innovation, communication and collaboration, organizational capacity and competition. He expressed a more comprehensive view on thematic evaluation of city's vitality and noted major factors influencing it. The following Table lists Landry statements. Lynch [4] mainly studied vitality at micro scale and mentioned that vitality along with five other factors including relevance, access, control and power, efficiency and equity forms functional issue of an urban planning. He has divided vitality into several parts including survival (adequate water, air, food, and energy, and waste services), safety (lack of environmental toxins and risks), adaptation (coordination between the environment and human needs), genetic diversity and health of required living organisms. Biological and ecological criteria are mainly taken into account in his classification. He deals with the vitality issue using only this approach. Social and cultural and ecological factors that are just as important as ecological ones are ignored. Morris [5] studied Roman squares and concluded that their transfer to Spain led to the discovery of plaza due to different geographical conditions and little cultural differences. Spain medieval squares were often built next to monastery, religious schools, hospitals and/or public gardens, and one side of the main square was assigned to the magnificent church building. These squares essentially function as a place for people gathering and trading (Figure 1).



Fig. 1 The plan of Athenian Agora, 5 BC [5]

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Later, the Romans reconstructed and restored the Agora and added three-story buildings including temples, altars and porches supported by columns and adorned with the statues of Gods and political authorities to gather citizens. This urban space is called the Forum by the Romans as the heir of Greek architecture. According to the power and wealth of the Empire, Roman Forums are larger and more established in the context of the city than the Greek Agora, and serve as a place to gather and trade citizens gathering and to hold political gatherings. They consisted of patterned pavers and were usually surrounded by temples and civil and political luxurious buildings [6]. Given important impact of the proper design of urban spaces and buildings on social vitality, the study examines effective factors in city hall design using social vitality approach.

### II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

An easy way to comply with IJRASET paper formatting requirements is to use this document as a template and simply type your text into it. In order to investigate the factors influencing the design of halls, squares and central courtyard playing an important role in architectural development, criteria were reviewed, and then important city halls designed by famous architects were studied by comparison.

#### A. Public Spaces and Complexes

Although complex architecture is not a new part of urban architecture especially in Iran, it should always be reevaluated.

#### B. General Characteristics of Public Spaces

Over the age of human civilization, public spaces ranging from earliest settlement to villages and towns have been formed to provide common life and communication for man. The boundary between public and private spaces has always been distinguishable during urban life formation. In different forms and names, public spaces are places for various activities, events and festivals, cultural and business activities, etc.

#### C. City Hall: Concept

In a general sense, city hall is a place belonging to people and apart from administrative organization of municipality. The independence of city hall is stemmed from citizens' independent function in administering their city. As the city belongs to all the people, city hall is also their iconic house. It is a complex consisting of administrative, ceremonial and cultural activities that evokes a physical concept of civilization and citizenry. This complex is an enduring symbol for the city and a palace for the people, and creates memory and identity. City hall is a building which does not get old but ancient, and its architecture is a tool to rehabilitating the city. Historical review of how to planning urban centres of industrial developed world indicates that these centres have gradually become a good and popular tradition. Although participation meaning has long linked with human life, its new meaning has invented in politics sphere after World War II. In some countries (especially those who were defeated in the war), it began in economic and industrial to involve people in the ownership and to enforce the sustainability of industry and economy. In practical, this participation cannot be observed yet since there is not any philosophy to understand it and to make the commitment to it. Participation is a subjective phenomenon which may not work and be a part of the culture without an effective philosophy. Citizens' participation in administrative affairs of city is the most recent its type. It is one of the urban life requirements. When city dwellers change from a person who just lives in a place to a citizen, this participation is realized. Iranian urban management is facing many problems including the expansion of urban fabric and the complexity and diversity of social, economic, political and cultural relationships. Citizenship culture is certainly created when citizens are given the responsibility of participating in social affairs. Participation is not a new phenomenon in our country; and our people have conducted their affair passion. Urbanization growth and hence its patterns change requires to review the concept of participation and to provide the models based on citizen's current needs. Government attempt to increase people's participation and aware and create civil society confirms this claim; and the establishment of Islamic Councils around the country has made it very important [7].

#### D. City Hall: Function

Due to some close and direct relationships with municipalities, city hall is traditionally built in the vicinity of them and is considered their constituent although it is a unique complex and has its own iconic character by itself. Of course, this proximity would negate the inherent independence and architectural existence of city hall. Emphasizing on non-interference between city hall and municipal building functions and valuing to the characteristics of each component of the city council building, will be effective in contrast to

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the grandeur of municipal building.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In order to determine key factors affecting social vitality in city hall design, we examine few important examples designed by known architects. Evaluation and recognition of physical characteristics and the architecture of these projects can result in design ideas and strategies.

#### A. Chicago City Hall

It is one of the most beautiful buildings in Chicago in which city council has continued its activities since 1967 (Figure 2). Chicago Department of Environment, under the supervision of the mayor, began the pilot project of aggressive green roof design and implementation on the roof of Chicago city hall by recruiting a team of landscape architects, architects and structural and environmental engineers. The primary purpose of this project was to provide a practical example for facilitating research and developing education under Midwestern climate conditions. Although the roof was not available to the public, these points were well observed from 33 taller buildings in the region. To coordination and match with historical relevance of city hall, plants were grown in a solar radial pattern.



Fig. 2 Chicago city hall [7]

#### B. London City Hall

London city hall was designed and completed by Norman Foster in 2000. It exhibits egg-like structure (Figure 3). In addition to Municipality building, it also includes London city council. It also functions as a cultural services complex. Foster agreed with the employer over two primary goals for new council city hall. The goals are 1) reduction of energy consumption to about a quarter of the usual amount for an official administrative building, and 2) the establishment of transparent government and communication facilitation between clients and government officials. Meanwhile, structure inclination towards the south while displaced stories has been effective reduced level of sunlight.



Fig. 3 London City Hall [7]

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### C. Manchester City Hall

Manchester city hall was designed by English architect. It is a building constructed in Gothic style in 1877 (Figure 4). Inside the hall, British painter Ford Madox Brown expresses the images of Manchester's history by wall paintings.



Fig. 4 Manchester City Hall [8]

### D. Paris City Hall

The hall was designed by inspiring the Renaissance architecture in 1928; and currently is the administrative seating of the municipality and associations in Paris. It functions as a place for big celebration as well (Figure5). Wall paintings inside the building reveal the events that have been observed in Paris's history.



Fig. 5 Paris City Hall [7]

### E. Dallas City Hall

Dallas city hall was designed in the form of an upside down pyramid by Chinese-American architect (Figure 6). It is famous for different use of geometric shapes. The hall is surrounded by a square to hold festivals and other events [8].



Fig. 6 Dallas City Hall [9]

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### F. Tehran City Hall

In the years 1975 to 1977, Kenzo Tange as the winner of Tehran city hall project overtook the other international competitors. Due to social changes in later years, it remains unfinished at early stages. Tehran city hall was designed as a place for different administrative activities, a series of official places for ceremonies and receptions, a center to host a variety of activities and active public pimpls, and a unique landscape of Tehran [10].

### IV. CONCLUSIONS

In this study, the examination of above-mentioned city halls building can be concluded:

- A. City hall is not just an administrative organization but a place belonging to the people and for the people. Almost all projects have this feature.
- B. Cultural and social features consideration was one of the specific points of this project. It can be seen a strong relationship between one project and social and cultural characteristics of its environment. This relationship is made by creating a special spatial quality, evocative detail and elements or certain outside view.
- C. These projects are very special. As mentioned before, a city hall building must have a specific identity.
- D. In terms of function, it can be outlined common points for these projects.

Almost an important part of the project is devoted to spaces for city council. In other words, it can be said that city council along with parts offering administrative services is one of the important parts of a city hall.

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