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## Analysis of Vitality of Urban Commercial Streets, Case Study: Nobahar Boulevard in Kermanshah

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### Extended Abstract

**Objective:** Public spaces have been a major concern of urban planners since the time of the Greek Agora until the modern era. modernist planners focused on cars more than the needs and expectations of pedestrians. As a result, cities have lost many of the old qualities found in old cities and vitality has been forgotten in many areas. This issue has caused special attention to be paid to the factor of vitality today compared to other sociological factors. This is due to immediate expectations that are formed in the minds of citizens after the name of urban space is mentioned. In fact, one of the most prominent expectations of people about urban spaces, is the dynamism and vitality of those spaces, which is understood in the form of the concept of urban vitality. Understanding urban vitality is essential for monitoring urban health, intensive urban development, creative urban growth, and populist urbanization. Paying attention to this issue is especially important for metropolises, where the mentality of people towards urban spaces is crowdedness, traffic, pollution and chaos. Although the city of Kermanshah as one of the metropolises of Iran has a high historical and cultural background, but there is no suitable urban spaces. Therefore, it seems that improving the vitality of urban spaces in Kermanshah quantitatively and qualitatively can lead to increased collective interaction, improved sense of security and peace of pedestrians. At present, Kermanshah, as the largest Kurdish city in Iran and the center of the province, has failed to realize vibrant urban spaces. Of course, Nobahar Street is one of the few spaces in this city that is considered somewhat lively due to its conditions. Therefore, the present study tries to clarify and pave the way for promoting the vitality of other urban spaces of Kermanshah by analyzing the situation of this street, while presenting proposed strategies for it.

**Methods:** The present study is analytical-interpretive. Therefore, first, vitality indicators have been extracted from valid researches. Documentation and selection of indicators taking into account items such as "frequency of the index in articles", "minimal overlap with other indicators", "ability of people to evaluate mentally and qualitatively" and "adaptation to the cultural and indigenous conditions of Iran". In the following, the indicators are arranged in the form of questionnaire questions. The validity of the questions has been examined and confirmed by receiving the opinion of experts and the reliability by calculating Cronbach's alpha (0.806). The statistical population includes all citizens of Kermanshah who have come to Nobahar Street for shopping or entertainment. The sample size was based on Cochran's

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formula of 384 items, which is approximately 400. The sampling method is simple random. Data analysis was performed in SPSS software using factor analysis and linear multivariate regression models.

**Results:** Findings show that about 38 indicators represent the vitality of an urban shopping street. These 38 indicators are categorized in 8 factors including "Walkability", "Space to Stay", "Invigorating", "Shopping Convenience", "Accessibility", "Inclusiveness", "Flexibility" and "Memorable". Meanwhile, the two factors of Walkability and Space to Stay have the greatest impact on people's satisfaction with the vitality of a commercial street, which should be considered by urban planners and designers. The fastest and most effective way to enhance the vitality of an urban street is to provide the necessary facilities for the ease of movement and walking of the clients, as well as to create spaces for them to pause and stay. This finding is also consistent with the principle of urban spaces stagnation and dynamism in traditional Iranian urban planning.

**Conclusion:** Although Nobahar Street in Kermanshah is relatively lively, the dissatisfaction of the visitors is evident in two factors: "Accessibility" and "Inclusiveness". Therefore, at the end of the article, strategies for promoting these two factors are presented. Some of the most important strategies are: Installation of multi-storey public parking lots in the immediate vicinity of Nobahar Street, Increasing the network of public transportation routes leading to Nobahar Street, Controlling and regulating the marginal park on Nobahar Street, Building and securing sidewalks and crosswalks for the movement of physically disabled groups, Managing commercial spaces with the aim of increasing diversity and economic efficiency of prices of goods and services.

**Keywords:** Urban Vitality, Urban Space, Vibrant Street, Environmental Quality, Kermanshah.

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