



Geographical analysis of indicators and examples of a happy city with emphasis on Ray Oldenburg's third place theory (Case Study: Khorramabad city)¹

Kamran Dolatyarian ¹, Mohammad Hassan Yazdani* ², Ata Ghafari Gilandeh ³, Hossein Nazmfar ⁴

PhD student, Department of Geography and Urban Planning, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran.

Professor of Geography and Urban Planning, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran.

Professor of Geography and Urban Planning, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran.

Professor of Geography and Urban Planning, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mohaghegh Ardabili, Ardabil, Iran.

Abstract

Background and Aim: Third places are active and attractive public spaces that provide the context for interaction, recreation, personal growth, stress reduction, creativity stimulation, and social vitality in cities. The purpose of this study is to geographically analyze the indicators and examples of a happy city with an emphasis on Ray Oldenburg's third place theory in the city of Khorramabad.

Methodology: The research method is descriptive-analytical and survey-type. The statistical sample of the research consists of 400 citizens who were selected by simple random sampling using Sample Power software. Data collection, classification, and analysis were performed using SPSS and AMOS statistical software.

Results and Discussion: The findings of the study showed that Khorramabad city is in a weak position in terms of the dimensions and criteria of a happy city. Also, the results obtained from the structural equation modeling of the study showed that the economic factor with a factor load of 0.082 has the greatest impact on happiness. After that, environmental, physical-spatial, security and socio-cultural factors with factor loads of 0.076, 0.073, 0.071 and 0.063 were determined in the next ranks of impact on social happiness. In addition, it was determined that the third places, which include parks, sports centers, cafes, libraries and mosques, each have an impact of 0.071, 0.044, 0.043, 0.027 and 0.020 on social happiness in the selected area. Finally, based on the integrated path analysis model of the research, the effects of third places on the social vitality of Khorramabad city were determined to be 0.063.

Keywords: Happiness, third place, public spaces, modeling, Khorramabad city.

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*Corresponding Author Email: yazdani@uma.ac.ir

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Extended Abstract

Introduction:

Urban spaces, together with public environments and natural landscapes, can increase feelings of happiness and creativity, while also providing a basis for reducing people's stress. In summary, it should be said that the process of designing public spaces can lead to the creation of environments that are not only aesthetically appealing but also help improve the mental health, quality of life, and social happiness of residents. One of these spaces is the third place, whose main goal is sustainability, improving public well-being, and social happiness of citizens. As public and social spaces, these places provide opportunities for citizens to interact, talk, and meet.

The aim of this study is to geographically analyze the indicators and examples of a happy city with an emphasis on Ray Oldenburg's third place theory in the city of Khorramabad, and an attempt is made to answer the following questions in terms of the social vitality of this city. What is the status of the city of Khorramabad in terms of the key factors of a happy city? What are the most important factors affecting a happy city among citizens living in the city of Khorramabad? Do third places affect the happiness and social vitality of the city of Khorramabad?

Methodology:

The research method is descriptive-analytical and survey-type. The statistical sample of the research consists of 400 citizens who were selected by simple random selection using Sample Power software. Data collection, classification, and analysis were performed using SPSS and AMOS statistical software.

Results and Discussion:

The findings of the study showed that Khorramabad city is in a weak position in terms of the dimensions and criteria of a happy city. Also, the results obtained from the structural equation modeling of the study showed that the economic factor with a factor load of 0.082 has the greatest impact on happiness. After that, environmental, physical-spatial, security and socio-cultural factors with factor loads of 0.076, 0.073, 0.071 and 0.063 were determined in the next ranks of impact on social happiness. In addition, it was determined that the third places, which include parks, sports centers, cafes, libraries and mosques, each have an impact of 0.071, 0.044, 0.043, 0.027 and 0.020 on social happiness in the selected area. Finally, based on the integrated path analysis model of the research, the effects of third places on the social vitality of Khorramabad city were determined to be 0.063.

Conclusion:

The theoretical basis of the present study is the theory of the third place of American sociologist Ray Oldenburg. He believed that in addition to home (first place) and workplace (second place), citizens need a third space and place. Studies conducted in the theoretical background of the study showed that public spaces are the beating heart of a happy city. These spaces make cities pleasant places to live by strengthening social relationships, increasing recreational activities, reducing stress, and improving the quality of life.

Declarations

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