



Strategic Planning to Achieve a Creative City (Case Study: Ardabil City)

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Abstract

Background and Aim: Urban creativity is one of the main drivers for achieving sustainable development. This requires having creative industries, creative employees, creative knowledge, and cultural richness. The present study was conducted with the aim of strategic planning to achieve a creative city in Ardabil.

Methodology: The present study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of method. The data collection method is library-survey. Based on the creative city indicators and the collected data, 34 strategies for achieving a creative city were divided into five main criteria (people, economic enterprises, urban spaces, connections and communications, and city vision and reputation), and to determine their importance (opinions of 50 experts), structural equation testing was used in SMART-PLS software.

Results and Discussion: The results showed that the economic enterprises criterion (factor loading 0.937), the people criterion (factor loading 0.936), the urban spaces criterion (factor loading 0.918), the linkages and communications criterion (factor loading 0.896), and the city vision and reputation criterion (factor loading 0.875) are the best strategies for achieving a creative city. Also, among the economic enterprises criterion, specialized support for creative businesses (factor load 0.87), among the people criterion, developing creative capacity at all levels of general education (factor load 0.85), among the urban spaces criterion, creating stable and secure spaces for cultural and artistic activities (factor load 0.76), among the linkage and communications criterion, providing virtual infrastructures and facilitating electronic communications (factor load 0.82), and among the city's vision and reputation criterion, planning to enhance the city's regional and supra-regional position and facilitating the presence of tourists (factor load 0.83) are the most important strategies for achieving a creative city in Ardabil.

Keywords: Creativity, Urban Planning, Urban Development, Creative City, Ardabil.

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EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Introduction:

The creative city is a new theory that, following the extreme and unplanned urbanism of previous centuries, became the preference of urban planners in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The purpose of proposing the idea of the creative city is to try to provide the necessary conditions for creating a suitable platform for vitality, livability, dynamism, competitiveness, sustainability, and development of the urban economy. The realization of the creative city requires the creative use of the human, social, cultural, economic, educational, spatial, spatial, and natural capabilities available in cities. Despite the measures taken in developed countries to use the creative class to develop cities, Iran has not been able to take steps in this direction as it should, and the city's platform is still not suitable for attracting the creative class and ultimately creating a creative city. In the 20-year vision document of Iran (approved in 1382), by 1404, Iran is a developed country with the first economic, scientific and technological position in the region, and also the Iranian society in the horizon of this vision will have features such as having advanced knowledge, being capable of producing science and technology, relying on the superior share of human resources and social capital in national production. Obviously, to acquire such features and position, it is important and necessary to focus on creative and innovative human resources. The city of Ardabil, as one of the middle-sized cities of the country, has a high potential in some fields to become a creative city due to its location. Among the special conditions of this city are its rich history, special communication position, tourism, agriculture, enjoyment of the arts (music and singing, playing instruments) and other things. The important issue is that although Ardabil is a treasure trove of capabilities in the country from the perspective of geographical, architectural, historical, social, cultural, and human indicators, the correct guidance and plan for Ardabil to join the Creative Cities Network is one of the fundamental challenges for urban planners. Therefore, this study examines the strategies for Ardabil to achieve the status of a creative city.

Methodology:

The present study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of method. The data collection method is library-survey. In the process of preparing and producing data (strategies for planning the creative city of Ardabil), the opinions of experts, including professors and experts in universities and research centers, were used. In this regard, due to the uncertainty of the number of the statistical population (experts in the relevant field) and the ambiguity in the experts' understanding of the research subject (creative city), the snowball method was used to complete the questionnaire, which ultimately resulted in 50 questionnaires using theoretical saturation. It should be noted that the questionnaire questions were first approved by experts (confirmation of the content validity of the questionnaire) and then tested in a pilot environment, and the results of the Konnek alpha test for the researcher-made questionnaire were obtained as 0.894, which indicates the high reliability of the research tool (questionnaire). Also, the structural equation test in SMART-PLS software was used to analyze the information.

Results and Discussion:

Based on the results obtained, the economic enterprises criterion with a T value of 13.08 and a factor loading of 0.937, the people criterion with a T value of 12.87 and a factor loading of 0.926, the urban spaces criterion with a T value of 12.64 and a factor loading of 0.918, the linkage and communication criterion with a T value of 11.19 and a factor loading of 0.896, and the city's landscape and reputation criterion with a T value of 10.99 and a factor loading

of 0.875 have a significance level of 0.000 and a positive effect. In other words, these criteria are the best strategies for achieving a creative city from the experts' point of view. Also, based on the factor loadings obtained from the economic enterprises criterion, specialized support for creative businesses (factor loading 0.87), from the people criterion, developing creative capacity at all levels of public education (factor loading 0.85), from the urban spaces criterion, creating stable and secure spaces for cultural and artistic activities (factor loading 0.76), from the linkage and communications criterion, providing virtual and facilitating infrastructure in electronic communications (factor loading 0.82), and from the city's vision and reputation criterion, planning to enhance the city's regional and trans-regional position and facilitating the presence of tourists (factor loading 0.83) are the most important strategies for achieving a creative city in Ardabil.

Conclusion:

The criterion of economic enterprises (factor load 0.937), the criterion of people (factor load 0.926), the criterion of urban spaces (factor load 0.918), the criterion of connection and communication (factor load 0.896), and the criterion of city landscape and reputation (factor load 0.875) are the best strategies for achieving a creative city. In this regard, the results of this study are consistent with the results of the research of Grodach (2017), Habibi and Ahmadi Dehrashid (2010), Naderi Dizaj et al. (1401), and Mousavi and Shams (1402). In the end, it can be said that Ardabil province has high natural, economic and human potential, and with its high-quality agricultural lands, warm underground waters, mines, excellent nature for tourism, shared borders with neighboring countries, young and educated human resources, etc., this city and county could have been ranked high in the country and among the creative cities, but this has not happened. It is hoped that with the great efforts of the provincial authorities, the ground will be prepared for introducing Ardabil as a creative city in the not-too-distant future, so that this province can reach its true position in the national and international arenas.

Declarations

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