Problematic Issues of Citizens’ Participation on Urban Heritage Conservation in the Historic Cities of Iran

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Abstract

The role of citizens’ participation in cultural heritage issues has become a global issue (as the bottom-up approach). This paper aims to examine the effects of strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of heritage programs in one of Iran’s most historic city, Shiraz, using SWOT analysis. This study found multiple issues regarding what the responsibility of citizens’ participation in the UHC are; the lack of a practical and legal system of citizens’ participation and structure of mixed heritage conservation in the decision-making process; power imbalance in the process of urban management; and the lack of appropriate understanding of heritage conservation awareness.

Keywords : Citizens’ Participation; Urban Heritage Conservation; Iran’s historic cities; SWOT analysis method.

1. Introduction

The fact that the ancient and historic areas of cities are a significant amount of historic cities, and that it should be conserved for future generations, is shown in this paper. The historic region of Iran’s cities as identified in this study (to be reviewed) is due to Iran’s oldest civilization. Its history and urban settlements date back to 4000 BC (Zarrinkoob, 2007). Literature in UHC and urban planning indicate

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that, in developing countries like Iran, urban fabrics in most cities are currently faced with similar issues. On one hand, they are experiencing a rapid population growth, intense development pressure, rising area of historic districts and destruction of cultural heritage, while on the other hand, they do not pay attention to the importance of citizen’s participation as the most significant factor to resolve issues that may arise in the decision-making process (Yung et al, 2011). Moreover, (because of the long period of Iran), it can be an appropriate case in between developing countries to investigating the role of the public in the process of urban heritage conservation. Studying of literature review provides (can be hit some) evidences that they admit to increasing the role of community in the policy making process (Taylor, 2007). Therefore, an evaluative research on urban historical fabrics would lead to an empirical finding that emphasize the role and function of individuals and some related issues in the decision-making and policy-making process in the cultural and historic city of in Iran.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Participation Concept and its extent

As a key code, citizen participation has presented a way to obtain success in the decision-making process. Researchers like Arnstein (1996) have appropriately illustrated that programs and projects with impact of a great extent have succeeded in which more people are involved in the planning process. Hierarchy of permeability extent of participation as drawn by Arnstein’s ladder pattern. This pattern showed eight different levels of participation according to the extent of people’s power in the decision-making process. (Many of the current forms of people have effectively affected by governments) while many have externalized to show only physical presence and not actual participation (Painter, 1992). In the later years, researchers have tried to provide a model for real participation in different forms. It is suggested that newer dimensions be added to implementing citizen participation. In this respect, people such as Wilcox (1994) developed Arnstein’s model. He added two new phase to his model. Firstly, he tried to explain ways to actualize citizens’ participation and secondly he showed there is different stakeholder with different interests and they sought participation in different ways. Nowadays, researchers claims that any investigation and modeling in the area of citizen participation should be related both to formal and informal scope of policy-making (Lane, 2005).

2.2. Importance of citizen participation in the U. H. C

At the global level, considering urban heritage as urban sites instead of single monuments has appeared and put forward by different groups such as experts, academician, practitioners and also international organizations in recent years (Sirisrisak, 2009). There is no significant attention to central and historic areas as palpitating heart of cities in the development process before 1970s (Tweed & Sutherland, 2007). After those years, some of the international organization put up efforts for integration of approaches for conservation of urban heritage (Sirisrisak, 2009). In fact, the result of these efforts has appeared in the form of conventions, charters and recommendations with support of international organizations such as United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), The Council of Europe (CE) and others. The Washington Charter obviously stress that prosperity of urban heritage conservation programs is dependent on the presence and intervention of residents in the planning process (ICOMOS, 1987, Article 3). This have also been emphasized by The Burra Charter that sustainability of heritage conservation programs is significantly related to community participation (ICOMOS, 1999, Article 12).
Since the end of the twentieth century, observation of governments and practitioners shifted towards using the public in identifying, preserving, managing and monitoring the urban heritage conservation programs. The researches show that citizen participation is important in order to manage and resolve issues and conflicts in the heritage programs (Sirisrisak, 2009). Citizen participation can also contribute in presenting an appropriate context and definition from heritage in which prevailing community values are commonly different (Kerr, 2000). It is now consider that public comments can be truly reverberated by citizen participation to making heritage better than the expert’s assessment, which is formally selected by specified appointment (Tweed & Sutherland, 2007).

2.3. Participatory approaches in the U. H. C management

Since the second half of the twentieth century, due to two factors, which are “urban heritage conservation”, is extremely needed in participatory approaches (UNESCO, 2001). On one hand, rapid urban development which is formed based on high-speed economic growth and dramatic increase in the urban population growth, and, on the other hand, increasing threats for cultural heritage, which is faced with changing lifestyles and losing of authenticity, and also improper management in the process of urban conservation (Habitat, 1999). However, it cannot be denied that the conditions for using these approaches are different from place to place. There are many factors, which are prominent in determining the extent of participation in the process of UHC. The following are some of the indicators:

- Traditions which consist of cultural rules and norms of social behavior
- Political environment
- Local power structures
- Previous contact and interaction with development agencies

The successful programs of the UHC need powerful and precise tools, which includes a wide range of interpretation methods. These tools have to adapt to local socio-economic, cultural conditions of communities. According to UNESCO recommendations, they may be required as regulatory systems, community engagement tools, technical tools, and financial tools (UNESCO, 2005):

2.4. Types of Interventions for UHC

Cities are always an arena for changes in human civilization. These changes would affects the different aspects of cities such as physical and nonphysical components and the interrelationship between them (ICOMOS, 2002). It has also mentioned that the footprint of time always remains on the face of the city. However, such changes will have an effect on all the municipal subsystems of a city system inevitably (Stovel, 2002).

After making changes, there were some demand for controlling and conducting the changes towards the desired directions for the city and their people. Scholars began to think seriously about how to make an intervention in the existing municipal system particularly in the old urban areas. Indeed, there were four viewpoints for interventions in the urban textures up to which are given as follows (Seyedian, 2008):

2.4.1. Modernism Interventions:

This intervention which has affected urban planning theory from the early times is created for promoting more sanitary than beauty goals and also for increasing efficiency. This viewpoint believes that there are many issues and problems in the urban textures which (drive from) lack the using of new technology. The old methods continue to be faced with problems such as high density, pollutions, lack of green space and gorgeous landscape in the old urban areas. Therefore, it appeared to make a separation
between the past and present. They tried to brighten up light and air for people by some methods like zoning of land usage and creating the regular grid structures and raster model.

2.4.2. Culturally-based Interventions:
This procedure and its effects is as presented by people like John Ruskin, William Morris, and ComilloSitte. They have emphasized on the existence of numerous values in the old urban areas. They believe that old urban formations and their aesthetics should be rebuilt in the future cities. They also believe that the policy of minimal intervention is the most significant approach for preserving old urban areas in the urban development.

2.4.3. Post Modernism Interventions:
The procedure is a combination of the two previous approaches, which was formed from the mid-twenty century onwards. This procedure considers (necessary to modernize on old areas for current living), but it looks after (for) bringing minimal damage within urban textures.

2.4.4. People-oriented Interventions:
This site has affected by participatory theories in the late twenty century, which tried to present the public in the planning process as the main audience. In this intervention, the role of people is the main axis for their involving in the urban textures.

3. The need for Urban Heritage Conservation (UHC) in historic cities of Iran

In Iran, UHC management has faced two paradoxical yet mixed challenges like many developing countries. On one hand, they are experiencing a rapid population growth, high development pressure, rising area of historic districts and destruction of cultural heritage while on the other hand, they do not pay attention to the importance of citizen’s participation as the most significant factor to solve their issues in the decision-making process (Steinberg, 1996; Kong & Yeon, 1994). The historical study on UHC management shows that it has undergone so many changes. In fact, it had started for the first time when Iran signed an agreement with France for archaeological excavations in 1985. However, it cannot be denied that the Constitutional Revolution (1906) was a turning point in both UHC area and issue of citizen participation. Moreover, it was the first time that people are allowed to participate in their own destiny. It had some advantages in the municipal heritage conservation such as posited by (Madanipour, 1998):

- Increasing importance of UHC among the educated classes,
- Increasing public awareness, which led to establishing Antique Administration by The Ministry of Culture in 1910.
- The increasing involvement of Iranian experts in conservation era, which is only limited to preserve the antiques.
- Cultural heritage took on some importance in the minds of the general public and journalists.
- Legalizing urban development planning by permission of Baladieh Act in 1907.

A Multiple comparison adjustment carried out for showing concept of urban conservation, development and the role and extent of citizen participation during experiences of Iran’s contemporary history. This study illustrates that although pressure of modern urban development caused extensive damages in the old relics of historic areas, but they can be avoided by increasing the functional integration of conservation knowledge through attracting citizen participation (Hanachi & Moradi Masihi, 2001).
### Table 1. Multiple comparison adjustment on the evolution and scope of conservation, development and citizen participation in the experiences of urban planning management; Source: Hanachi et al (2001) and Author’s survey (2010)

| Period | Year (A.D) | Important Events | Concept of Development | Concept of Conservation | Extent of Citizen Participation |
|--------|------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1st Period  | 1785-1906 | From, the beginning of Qajar dynasty rule To: the Constitutional Revolution | 1-Demolition of single monuments 2-Slow-growing development in the physical boundaries of cities. | 1-Limited protection on antiquities. 2-Demolition and reconstruction in monuments | No citizen participation on urban administration, and just the executive head of the town (appointed by princes) was the actual regent of the town. |
| 2nd Period  | 1906-1922 | From: the Constitutional Revolution To: Establishment of National Assembly of Monuments | 1-Continuing in the process of demolition and reconstruction. 2- Development of the physical range of cities. | 1-Developing in the protection of antiquities. 2-Continuity in the demolition and reconstruction in monuments | Establishment of Town and City Assemblies in 1907, formation of Parliament, and approval of the Constitution (the first Baladieh Act) are new pattern for the beginning of citizen participation in the decision-making process for town and city administration. 1-The beginning of the throne of Reza Shah and a wide change with severe political centralization. 2-Approval of the second Baladieh Act. 3-The first effort to establishing an autonomous urban management. 4-Decreasing citizen participation with decreasing independence of Assemblies. |
| 3rd Period  | 1922-1944 | From Establishment of National Assembly of Monuments. To: Amendment to Act of National Monuments preservation. | 1-Extensive demolition of precious buildings, monuments and historic fabrics, and 2-construction of a wide street in the fabrics. | 1-Very limited protection from single buildings, and 2-Lack of consideration to historic fabrics. | 1-The beginning of the throne of Reza Shah and a wide change with severe political centralization. 2-Approval of the second Baladieh Act. 3-The first effort to establishing an autonomous urban management. 4-Decreasing citizen participation with decreasing independence of Assemblies. |
| 4th Period  | 1944-1965 | From: Amendment to Act of National Monuments preservation. To: Establishment of National Center for Protection of Iranian Antiquities. | 1-Decreasing in the monuments demolition and increasing in the demolition of fabrics. 2- Continuing in the hurried development of cities | 1-Limited protection from single buildings, and 2-Lack of consideration to historic fabrics. | 1-Decreasing citizen participation due to the failure of Assemblies. 2- Factories of their failure were: -Lack of people awareness to elect competent members for Assemblies. -Intervention of local government officials in the elections. -Lack of citizen participation on urban affairs 1-Lack of citizen participation on urban affairs 2-Increasing citizen participation in religious activities and 3-attending in military applications against enemies. |
| 5th Period  | 1965-1978 | From Establishment of National Center for Protection of Iranian Antiquities. To: The victory of Islamic Revolution | 1-Containing in fabrics demolition. 2-Construction of historic buildings. 3- Continuing in the hurried development of cities. | 1-Increasing in the scope of preservation from monuments. 2-The beginning of considering to urban fabrics. | 1-Decreasing citizen participation due to the failure of Assemblies. 2- Factories of their failure were: -Lack of people awareness to elect competent members for Assemblies. -Intervention of local government officials in the elections. -Lack of citizen participation on urban affairs 1-Lack of citizen participation on urban affairs 2-Increasing citizen participation in religious activities and 3-attending in military applications against enemies. |
| 6th Period  | 1978-1985 | From, The victory of Islamic Revolution To: Establishment of Iran’s Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization | 1- The hurried development of cities. 2-Development of settlement and land | interrupting urban conservation of monuments and valuable urban fabrics | 1-Decreasing citizen participation due to the failure of Assemblies. 2- Factories of their failure were: -Lack of people awareness to elect competent members for Assemblies. -Intervention of local government officials in the elections. -Lack of citizen participation on urban affairs 1-Lack of citizen participation on urban affairs 2-Increasing citizen participation in religious activities and 3-attending in military applications against enemies. |
| 7th Period  | 1985-2011 | From Establishment of Iran’s Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization. To: Now | 1- Increasing urban collections 2-Raising issue of sustainable development. | A variety of programs for conserving historic areas | 1-Establishing Islamic rural & city councils 2-increasing local power for monitoring urban affairs. |
4. Historic and Cultural City of Shiraz as a case study

4.1. Summary of Shiraz’s History

Shiraz is one of the six prominent ancient cities in Iran, which is located on a green plain. Its location is in 895 km south of Tehran and 100 km north of the Persian Gulf. It also is the capital of Fars Province. There are prominent features by which Shiraz is believed to be one of the most prestigious destinations for interior and foreign tourists. Some of these features are: a moderate climate with mild summers and winters, known (due to) city of poetry and roses, cultural and artistic life, and a long and fascinating history. UNESCO has also chosen Shiraz as the first Iranian city to be part of the list of UNESCO’s city of literature (Cultural Heritage News Agency, 2006).

Historical study on the city of Shiraz shows that it has experienced a long of ups and downs in her history as it was the capital of Iran in different period such as; Achaemenid era (2500 years ago), Deylamian era (978 AD), Atabaki era (1148-1287 AD), Al-e- Enjoo and Al-e- Mozafari era (1335-1356 AD), Zandieh era (1164-1193 AD) (Wiesehofer, 1999). In front of these glories, this city had faced terrible events during its historic eras, which led to destruction of the total or part of the city. Some of these horrible events are; destruction of the city by Timur (1387 and 1393), disastrous floods in 1630 and 1668, the Afghans invasion in 1724, destructive earthquakes in 1789, 1814, 1824 and 1853 (Lockhart, 1939; Clarke, 1963; Wilber, 1975). Although Shiraz’s tragic historical conditions such as natural disasters, unstable social situations, and political calamities led to extensive damages but conditions of peace and stability have brought up urban growth and development.

4.2. Shiraz’s physical transformation

Despite some serious crisis, urban sprawl of Shiraz happened around the historic core for a long period between 9th century (the early Islamic era) and the late 19th (the beginning of modernization) (Ardeshiri, 2010). Figure 1 shows these changes as well as.

Fig 1: Evolution of Shiraz physical structure; Source: Tavasoli&Bonyadi, (1992)
In terms of physical structure, a great wall surrounds Shiraz. Azud- Al- Doleh constructed the first wall in the 10th century (1750-94. Although Agha Mohammad Khan, the founder of the Qajar dynasty, removed this wall but replaced it later by a mud wall with six main gates (Clark, 1963). In the Zand dynasty, urban development was carried out with respect of traditional structure. As Figure 1 shows, Shiraz had primarily enjoyed a circular shape, while the regular urban pattern was changed to an organic structure like in the other Iranian cities. Organic urban development change durban morphology of Shiraz up to the early 20th century gradually (Karimi, 1998).

Following the modernism’s increasing tendency, extensive physical transformation was carried out at the beginning of Pahlavi dynasty (1925-1979). The new political power targeted organic growth for dealing with the manifestations of the old power such as monuments. This movement seriously hurt the traditional urban pattern by creating modern road networks into historic core. The significance of the historic core decreased by the expansion of the other urban areas and subsequently increased the population in the late 1960s and the 1970s rapidly. Following these changes, historic area became an extremely small part of urban sprawl, which has suffered deterioration and lack of an appropriate conservation programs (Hanachi&MoradiMasihi, 2001). After the Islamic Revolution, it has theoretically provided a context for dealing in unbridled modernism and participatory planning, while direct government intervention was a serious obstacle to its realization.

5. SWOT Technic as a method for assessment

At the first stage, a documentary study carried out on the improvement and renovation program at historic core of Shiraz (Sarvarzadeh et al, 2010). By this study, the internal and external environment of this district is evaluated by using assessment matrix for internal and external factors. The primary strategies of urban conservation have developed through matrix of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. In order to determine appropriate strategies, the current position of historic area specified with using internal and external matrix. Moreover, the ranking and prioritizing matrix of strategies applied at the next stage. In this process, the various sources applied for identifying and analyzing the four fold factors of SWOT method are presented, such as the library sources and documents related to the powers and limits of city, regional and national macro plans, and improvement and renovation plans of the historic core under consideration and the urban experts and authorities' views.

5.1. The four fold factors of SWOT method for Historic Center in Shiraz

Extreme tendencies towards modernism have taken out many particularities in the vitality and vibrancy in the historic core of cities. These issues are often complex and worse at the historic cities than the other once. However, it cannot be denied that the physical, socio-economic, cultural conditions of a historic city against current modern life led to both negative and positive outcomes. It can be noted that identifying strengths and weaknesses points will be able to reduce negative consequences. On the other hand, creating new opportunities and confronting with serious threats will improve urban heritage conservation approaches. Table 2 states the internal conditions including some of significant strength and weaknesses, and also external conditions, which consists of threads and opportunities in the historic core of Shiraz city.
Fig. 2: Historic core of Shiraz

Table 2: Skeleton, Socio-Economic and Managerial SWOT of Shiraz’s historic core

| Threats | Opportunities | Threats | Opportunities |
|---------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| T1: Increasing widespread deterioration in the other areas. | O1: The existence of indicator elements with the regional and national importance like Shah eCheragh in the H.A | W1: Extreme physical deterioration and lack of stability in most of building particular in the monuments against incidents and earthquake | S1: Existence of historic, religious, and cultural value elements, and their momentous role in the regional, national, and even global level |
| T2: Intense expansion of commercial activities toward H.A | O2: Importance of Shiraz as cultural capital in Iran | W2: Shortage of green & public open spaces to spending leisure times | S2: Existence of collective memories from monuments |
| T3: Lack of public passages and transportation | O3: Establishing Vakil bazaar (Shiraz’s traditional bazaar) and the most liner shopping center in the H.A | W3: Shortage of social, cultural, educational, and sport centers in the H.A | S3: Taking place historic elements like Zandieh collections, Bazaar, Shah eCheragh, Jam-eAtigh mosque, and etc as the main structure of Shiraz |
| T4: Unwillingness for establishing institutes and organizations in H.A | O4: The existence of global heritage elements like Hafez iye in the H.A | W4: Shortage of public services health center in the H.A | S4: Performance values of historic texture as an important part of CBD |
| T5: Loss of open and green spaces | O5: To benefit for establishing in the CBD and access to urban central services | W5: The existence of many dilapidated and abandoned buildings in the H.A, and physical and insecure problems | S5: Using abandoned buildings for making up shortage of services |
| T6: Environment pollution (Air, Sound, visual, …) in the H.A | O6: Importance of Shiraz as the third significant religious center in Iran | W6: Reluctance to renovate buildings in the depth of neighborhoods due to occupation and residential pattern (to be leased) | S6: Existence of open spaces from destruction of Bein Al Haramin street for regeneration |
| T7: Lack of safety standards, strengthening, and urban services and infrastructures | O7: The existence of the main administrative and academic centers in the H.A | W7: fine-grain residential fabric and inappropriate composition are an obstacle for their aggregation and integration in the regeneration and renovation process | S7: There is a perfect basis for creating job opportunities in the tourism industry |
| T8: The drug issue and its extent in the H.A | O8: Establishing a bureau in the Governor-general for encouraging foreign investors | W8: Facing with environmental | S8: The existence of reference |
| T9: Developing | O9: The tendency for supporting and counseling civil | | |
| T10= | Continuing the trend of low-income housing with the incentive of access to cheap housing |
| T11= | Financial downturn in the investment sector of historic areas due to calculate return on investment period certainly |
| T12= | Lack of required infrastructures for attracting foreign investors and the existence of the obstacles |
| T13= | Lack of incentive tools for innovating H.A |
| T14= | Lack of appropriate laws for land ownership |
| T15= | Lack of local authorities for managing over the local issues |
| T16= | Involvement of different institutes and agencies in the decision making process |
| T17= | Lack of enough authorities and rules for local bureau |
| T18= | Lack of coordination between local plans and regional plans |
| T19= | Threats of widespread destruction due to occurring natural disasters |
| T20= | A continuous increase in criminal gangs and strengthening criminal behavior with respect to economic and social problems in the district |
| T21= | The weakness of incentives for Macro investments by the private sector due to lack of clear urban policies, programs, and management |
| T22= | Lack of coordination between renovation programs and economic facilities in the city |
| T23= | Lack of infrastructures for tourist welcoming and lack of accountability to current needs and finally, loss of interior and foreign tourists |
| T24= | Power imbalance in the process of urban management and declining local power |

Organizations and NGOs

- O10= The tendency of interior and foreign people for visiting pilgrimage and tourist places
- O11= The tendency of urban management to urban revitalization and renovation
- O12= The people’s tendency and motivation to urban revitalization and renovation
- O13= Collectivimemoriness of people to cultural and the historic areas of Shiraz will help to create an incentive for restoration of H.A
- O14= The existence of the administrative and academic experts & there is capacity Their absorption in various categories of urban
- O15= Crossing the path of subway from Zand street within H.A as one of the important traffic network of the city
- O16= Possibility for expanding surface and classes parking in the arid lands and dilapidated building
- O17= The existence of the tendency for removing passing traffic from the area and in contrast, attracting local traffic flows
- O18= Possibility of using internal and external loans
- O19= The existence of cultural commons in particular religious ones among the residents
- O20= The existence of regulations related to broadening the passages and interference in road networks
- O21= The existence of regulations related to monuments renovations

Pollution throughout H.A due to high level of groundwater and lack of disposing sewage and surface water properly
- W9= Shortage and extreme deterioration on the urban equipment and installations infrastructures.
- W10= Weakness in collecting and removing garbage in the H.A
- W11= The existence of corners result from meanders lanes and passages and consequently, creation of insecure places in the H.A
- W12= Inappropriate distribution of services and their focuses on the edges of texture
- W13= High population density relative to the other regions of Shiraz city
- W14= High number of people in per residential units density relative to the other regions of Shiraz city
- W15= Lack of belonging a sense for living in the H.A and escape of native people and in contrast high tendency of commercial activities
- W16= Negative population growth in the H.A as the population decreased about 35% during periods of 1956 to 2006
- W17= Most low-income people and lack of power saving
- W18= Poor dispersed and small economic businesses
- W19= Instability in the neighborhood relations with ethnic diversity without cohesion
- W20= Addiction and behavioral abnormalities
- W21= Loss of life quality and lack of the minimums of life facilities
- W22= Condominium ownership problems for rebuilding and renovating buildings
- W23= Lack of area of passages network and low width of lanes in the H.A
- W24= Lack of access hierarchy and network performances in the H.A
- W25= Weakness at the traffic management
- W26= A severe shortage of space for public parking in the H.A
- W27= Lack of continuity on the proper pedestrian access from the bazaar and historic and cultural places to the other main places
- W28= Lack of a certain position for Bein-Al-Haramian street
- W29= Lack of appropriate infrastructure for public transportation
- W30= The lack of a practical and legal mechanism of citizens’ participation for UHC
- W31= Bureaucratic administrations groups and the old middle classes in the some quarters

- S9= The existence of commercial cores with the ability to become asignificant center of business
- S10= The existence of high potential for expanding activities related to cultural and religious places
- S11= Consideration of H.A as first clothes distribution center in the Shiraz city
- S12= The existence of cultural and religious capabilities as the mainstay of identity in Shiraz
- S13= The existence of educated women in the local residents
- S14= A growing trend of literacy
- S15= The existence of strong pedestrian access with the possibility for passing throughout texture
- S16= The existence of pedestrian access in the Bazaar and Arg-e-Karimkhani and the possibility for encouraging hiking in the texture
- S17= The existence of bus terminals in texture and the possibility for development of public transportation
- S18= The existence of arterial streets in the eastern and the southern border of H.A
- S19= The existence of wide pedestrian along Zand street
- S20= Low level the rate of car ownership among inhabitants
- S21= Carrying out some improvement in the roads performances
- S22= The existence of proper communication among the municipality, city council, neighborhood councils for developing citizen participation
- S23= Increasing consideration to historic and cultural aspects in the municipal programs
- S24= Possible to creating neighborhood associations for developing citizen participation in the making-decision process
6. Strategies for Urban Heritage Conservation in the Historic core of Shiraz City

In the case of the historic center of Shiraz, prioritizing SWOT factors in separate groups could not state their relative importance. Therefore, the following process considered for analyzing the most influential factors that play role in the urban heritage conservation of this historic core:

- To determine the relative priorities of factors in separate groups of SWOT method.
- To ask from the experts for comparing the four factors together in pair comparison.
- To determine their importance by Likert scale.
- To calculate their weight and ranking them.
- Finally, ranking and prioritizing the most significant factors respectively.

| Conservation of Historic & Cultural area of Shiraz | S24 | W30 | O2 | T24 | Relative importance of factors |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|----|-----|-------------------------------|
| S24                                                | 1   | 7   | 4  | 3   | 0.6231                        |
| W30                                                | 4   | 1   | 6  | 2   | 0.3103                        |
| O2                                                 | 37  | 31  | 1  | 2   | 0.2101                        |
| T24                                                | 29  | 30  | 3  | 1   | 0.0941                        |

Graph 1: Graphic of the result interpretation for pair comparison of SWOT groups and factors

7. Conclusion

Since the mid-1990s, the increased focus on the conservation of historic cities, using participatory planning has become a prominent topic in national and international meeting, conferences, and congresses throughout the world. In this way, many principle and guidelines have provided and broadcast participatory approaches. They could improve practice of urban heritage conservation and support professionals and decision makers in addressing the points of weaknesses and strength and identifying opportunities and threats. This paper study the key challenges in conserving historic and cultural city of Shiraz as a case study in between historic cities of Iran via SWOT method. The paper’s findings demonstrate that some serious issues which affected Shiraz’s UHC are more complex than the other ones.
Partly, it implies that the most significant point is in the weakness of UHC management, which is the lack of a practical and legal mechanism of citizens’ participation for UHC. Also the greatest threat, which is the power imbalance in the process of urban management and declining local power were discussed. On the other hand, there are many opportunities to be derived from improving UHC program but the most importance of all is Shiraz, the cultural capital of Iran.

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