
Interaction of Physical Structure and Spatial Orientation in the Reviviscence Process of Social and Functional Solidarity in Urban Neighborhoods

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Abstract

Territorial architecture observations reveal the spatial quality hidden in urban neighborhoods, influenced by traditional tissues and Iranian architectural patterns. This paper was to explain these factors from a new perspective. To this end, at the beginning, "Grounded Theory" was used as an emergent and efficient method in the process of qualitative research. Then, Saat Square in Yazd was selected as the case study to explain the stages of this research step-by-step. The data were analyzed with a focus on three stages of coding, axial coding and selective coding. The document analysis method was employed in the open coding process to categorize the concepts, discover the relations among the components and reveal dimensions in the axial and selective coding stages. Finally, based on Strauss and Corbin's ideas, the paradigmatic pattern was organized as follows: 1) Casual variables, 2) Contextual variables, 3) Mediating variables, 4) Axial phenomenon or category, 5) Strategies, and 6) Outcomes. Findings of this research suggested that the overview of physical structure and proper spatial orientation leads to detection of factors such as introversion, the possibility of behavioral variation in space (flexibility), the appearance of religious symbols, physical contradictions, physical proportions, spatial- mental imagination, sense of attachment, spatial stability, reminiscence and nostalgia of a space.

Keywords: Memory; Spatial Attachment; Saat Square; Grounded Theory; Social Solidarity; Identity

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1. Introduction

In traditional societies and urban organic tissues, the deep and irrefragible bond between space and time can be felt. Hereupon, despite the difficulty of living and social injustice, humans generally have the feel of attachment to, and adoration of, a certain place. The sense of place, generated by human mood and memories, can strengthen or arouse a person's incentive enticement to a particular environment. Pakzad (2014) believes that, at first glance, the sense of place is a necessary provision for memory formation. It is due to the attendance that the place can be perceived and recorded forever because of memory formation (Pakzad and Bozorgh, 2014: 96). Emphasizing on the sense of place concept, Lynch (1972) also insists on the concept of "identity" as one of the main causes of memory formation; therefore, the interaction of human's living dimension and architecture is perused in this way. For Lynch, the events and memories of a place are deeply mixed with spatial attachment and identification so that emotional attachment to a location is valued with memories or the time spent therein (Motalebi, 2006). Memory is rooted in the person's past, and it is fertilized with their long experiences over time. This, born in the space-time span, is reproduced in the space as a result of re-attendance therein by believing in the fact that all these behaviors occur in the same context, and every context is made on the basis of meanings. So, the concept of "meaning" creates identity for a place; in other words, "meaning" is able to evoke and narrate memories by expressing a non-verbal communication of the environment (Shakib and Motalebi, 2014).

Unfortunately, due to the time-place disjunction and the transformation of life; changes to social structure, changes in the relationship between the two, nowadays the relationship between the individuals' living place and their identity has converted places to non-places and thus the relationship between identity and social attachments has undergone unpleasant changes. That is to say, the discontinuance of this relationship is the outcome of the place destruction. Therefore, through the recognition of the social-physical structure features, this research aims at determining spatial domination and finding its potentials and capabilities based on a kind of lived experience. By studying and evaluating the indicators of the collective life quality in urban organic tissue, it is hoped to capture the nature of place and its where as a very suitable place for identification or its continuity and, consequently, the sense of attachment to the place. Through this preface, it seems that thinking about the following questions can be advantageous at this stage of the research:

1) In a physical model, how can one design a memory formation process based on the background information obtained from the audience?

2) In the context of the city's functional space architecture, how do the physical parameters (shapes) impact on a lasting, strong and robust sense of communication with their human audience?

2. Research Background and Theoretical Foundations

Time-place disjunction and the transformation of the relations between the individuals' living places and their identities have attracted a wide variety of theorists. Appadury Phiserson (1992) has noted land destruction and Thompson (1985) has introduced orientation as a major consequence of globalization. Anthony Giddens (1999), in the same vein, applies the term "displacement" (Kumele and Alambaz, 2013). All of these terms mainly refer to the transformation of culture, identity and place attachment relations. Marc Auge (2000), the French anthropologist, speaks of the replacement of places and locations with non-places and emphasizes that in the earlier stages of modernity (Nuffel et al., 2009), there was a close link between the present and the past, the new and the old, and in particular place and identity; however, recently these links have been seriously weakened. In

other words, non-place is the place of silence, loneliness, anonymity, alienation and instability, which, over time, disturbs the organic relationship with a continuous society (O’Beirne, 2006).

2.1. Spatial Attachment

According to phenomenological viewers of human geography, the sense of attachment means a strong link and an influential factor between people and place with its constituent parts. Relf (2008), by expressing the link between perception and place experience, believes that in the sense of place, human beings perceive a concept beyond the physical characteristics and elements of the place, which reach a kind of continuity and long relationship with the spirit of the place (Lewika, 2008). Considering the spatial differentiation as a characteristic of spatial identity, Twigger Ross and Uzzell emphasized and developed the theory of Rolf in the formation of individual identity. This concept is mainly known as the realm and is related to physical dimensions and psychological logic of the place recognition (Carmona et al., 2006). Altman and Low (1992) regards the sense of attachment to the environment beyond the cognitive experience and argues that this sense also incorporates the cultural beliefs that connect individuals to the environment. He describes the properties of this environment in terms of three dimensions: "scale", "specificity" and "availability" (Altman and Low, 1992). Rappaport (2011), emphasizing the role of socio-cultural components in shaping the physical environment and by providing the non-verbal communication theory, divides the environment into a set of "fixed", "semi-fixed" and "non-fixed" physical elements so as a person, based on his own codes and cultural notions, deduces the specific meaning and concept from the environment and its elements (Rappaport, 2011:87). Based on his view, place turns into a symbol, in which each element symbolically represents a part of the social culture of its environment. Therefore, according to Rappaport’s attitude, "sense of attachment" and "spatial association" appears as physical and social-cultural symbols in the environment, and the individual discovers these symbols and shapes his relationship with the environment based on his codes and cultural notions. From Mazlow's point of view, "sense of attachment" is one of the basic needs and comes from a kind of social need of a person who seeks to find the firm foothold to make an association and intimate connection with the environment. In the book “The Space Language” Lawson (2007) explains this sense and refers to unwritten laws in human societies, definitively declaring its existence. Jane Jacobs (1961) in the book "The Death and Life of Great American Cities" recognizes the sense of belonging to place due to perception and sense of place. Kevin Lynch also considers the meaningfulness and ability to perceive a place as an essential component of emotional satisfaction and attachment (Lynch, 1972: 184). He believes that an environment which is capable of stimulating all of the senses provides a better understanding of its audience. Without a doubt, this strong understanding will seriously affect the formation of a stronger mood, increasing memories and increased value. Referring to the theory of "the shape of a good city" in 1981, and emphasizing the dependence of the "environmental meaning" on the "cognitive process," and using "cognitive maps", Lynch explored the meanings intended by those who use the place. By indicating the term "sense of attachment" as a "design code" and by presenting the mental concept of place, Lynch introduces the physical elements (path, edge, districts, nodes, landmarks) as factors influencing the formation of the readability and memorization concepts based on users’ perspectives.

2.2. Collective Memories

Paul Ricoeur thinks that the major foundation of the memory- human being's knowledge of past events, or the passage of past events- is the understanding of the past that gives rise to memory, whether immediate or mediate understanding. Ricoeur believes in two kinds of memories: "Personal memories and collective memories." According to him, history entails the both. However, referring to Maurice Halbwach's discussions who considers reciting as "a hook linking the individual and collective memories", Ricoeur tries to link the individual memory to a collective one. He also considers a function for collective memories by objectifying the Husserl's discussion on subjects and inter-subjectivity processes. In his opinion, even personal memories coming from social institutions with concepts such as the country and the homeland, which are somehow common in all of us- especially those brought to us by our ancestors- are constituents of concepts that emerge out of them (Rappaport, 2011). From Halbwach's point of view, collective memory is the constant memory of a group and a selective and agreed reminder among the members; in this sense, it resembles a myth (Eyerman, 2007: 7). The Italian architect Aldo Rossi, is the first one who introduced Halbwach's concept of collective memories into the literature of architecture and urban development. In a part of his well-known book, "City Architecture", Rossi shapes his approach to form the deepest structure of the city's artifacts (city form) (Rossi, 1982: 128). So, it can be said that the city itself is the collective memory of its people, and it is like memory in connection with objects and places. When certain artifacts turn into a part of memory, a new image emerges in the mind. In explaining the relationship between memory and space, Halbwach (1980) mentions the term memory in two scopes of space and time, and imagines it on the basis of a lived experience; the thing that is developed from the past and capture the person in a conscious, directly and simple way.

With every attendance in the space this lived experience is reproduced and consequently collective memories are developed. Ron Eyerman in the book "Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African-American Identity," quotes from Giessen and states that collective memory, while identifying past and future time parameters, is formed for the individual and society as a timetable and thus it makes connection within the society through time or space. From Yi-Fu Tuan's point of view, our confrontation with objects and places of the past has the power to create a specific and nostalgic sense of our past. This has a close relationship with "individual identity" and "spatial identity"; formation of spatial identity in turn will enhance the sense of place. With the presentation of the "model of location," Canter introduces three components the body, activity, and meaning (concept) are the main dimensions of any research to improve the quality of this relationship with the approach of identity and collective memories in development plans (Soltani et al., 2017: 92). For the first time by introducing the term mental image, Kevin Lynch (1972) realized the environmental identity and "image of time", like the existence of an "image of place", for the mental health of individuals in the environment (Golkar, 2001: 39, quoted from Lynch, 1972). The owner of the theory of the "subjective-evaluative image" of the environment, Jack Nasar, in the book with the same title, created the term 'urban likeability' and considered the two factors of imageability and making a strong emotional and sensory influence to be effective in likeability of the place. According to him, historical importance is one of the five factors effective in emotional and sensory preferences of the individuals and through it, in likeability of a place (Naser, 1997). Hence and in other words, it is possible to deem that the connection to time (memories, hopes, etc.) is one of the factors of forming the sense of attachment to the location (Pakzad, 2014:76). Therefore, by establishing a link amongst the individuals in the society, social solidarity is created,

the sense of belonging is strengthened, the collective spirit is improved, and the sense of participation is raised among the members of society.

Proshansky et al. (1983) considers the "individual identity" as the result of "spatial identity," and this identity is the result of "perception," "recognition," and ultimately, "feelings about the place." He emphasizes "place identity" as the base and as the factor influencing in human communication and thus emphasizes on the role of physical factors in the environment as a part of social elements. Accordingly, he refers to the prominent factor of interaction and the individual's close relationship with his environment as the physical element of the environment, that is, a part of the mental and individual identity (Proshansky et al., 1983). Strengthening the national identity is possible with the renewal of collective memories; the memories with which the story of the place is written. Benjamin (1980) believes that symbolic collective meanings are deliberately transmitted by narrating traditions (Tajbakhsh, 2004: 11, quoted from Benjamin, 1980). In his view, as long as storytelling was alive, experience still relied on tradition and was associated with historical memories (Gehl, 1987), because storytelling transmits well the meaningful experiences and provides conditions for the audience to speak of a memory that is linked to and incorporated with the community, past and its collective traditions (Habibi, 1999). According to Alexander (2006), identity will be manifested in the environment if there is a natural and logical connection between the individual and the environment. In his opinion, without deep knowledge and recognition by the audience, this connection and the sense of attachment will not be created (Mohajeri and Qomi, 2008). Walter Bor (1997) sees the identity as same as the small and big differences that result in the recognition and legibility of a place, the sense of attachment to the environment, being specific and reminiscent (Latifi et al., 2015). With this thought, Woolf (1929) sees identity in the environment as the result of the interconnection of three components within a set (Berger and Luckman, 1996): 1) Apparent and physical combination of the symbols in the place, 2) Observable functions and activities in the place, and 3) Concepts and symbols in the place (Kumele and Alambaz, 2013). Latifi et al. (2015) argue that identity in a spatial context will be meaningful if it is objectively crystallized in the physics and body of the location. Accordingly, the various aspects of location identity are grouped as following:

1. Physical-spatial identity, 2. Visual identity, 3. Nuffel's cognitive identity (2009).

The physical and structural tissue of the place is one of the most important aspects of its identity because the formation of the physical tissue is influenced by thoughts, beliefs, activities and the level of the users' culture. Therefore, recognizing this part of the context can lead to a better understanding of other social, economic and cultural dimensions. From Nuffel's point of view (2009), the physical tissue provides the possibility of visual recognition of spatial identity and thus is more significant than other aspects of identity. So, recognizing the deep relationship along with the understanding of logic, which can be easily recognized through the use of socio-cultural, semiotic and perceptual characteristics leads to the convergence of social-spatial identity in the place (Ibid. 2015). Identity involves aesthetic values in the place, spatial quality, perception, position and navigation (Latifi et al., 2015). For example, when one arrives at the place and can describe it well after vesting its different parts, it means that the location diagram has remained in his mind; therefore, it reflects a place with visual identity. Identity, qualitative and quantitative characteristics of the place as well as its symbols and signs also includes historical and cultural values (Mohajeri and Qomi, 2008). Hence, the readability and clarity of identifying elements during the various hours of the day is effective in conceptualizing, immortalizing, timelessness of the place and maintaining the identity at all times (Figures 1 & 2).

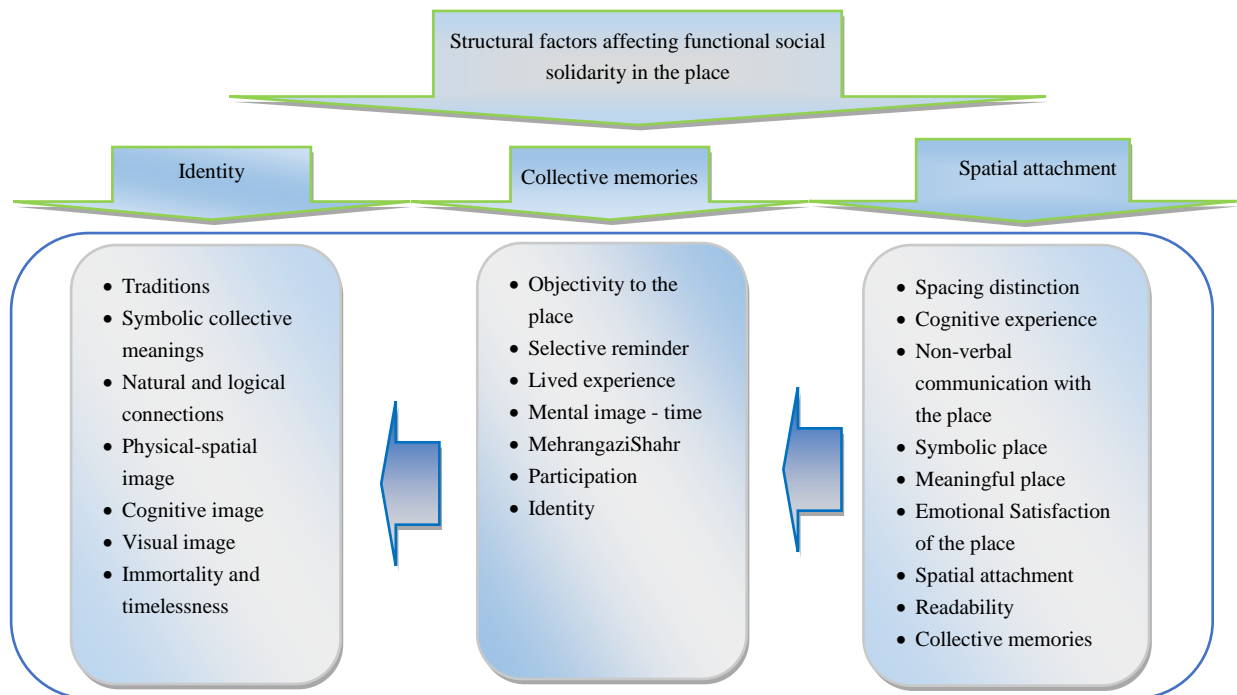


Fig 1 Features effective in the collective structure role in functional collective solidification of a place, derived from researchers' perspectives. (Source: Authors')

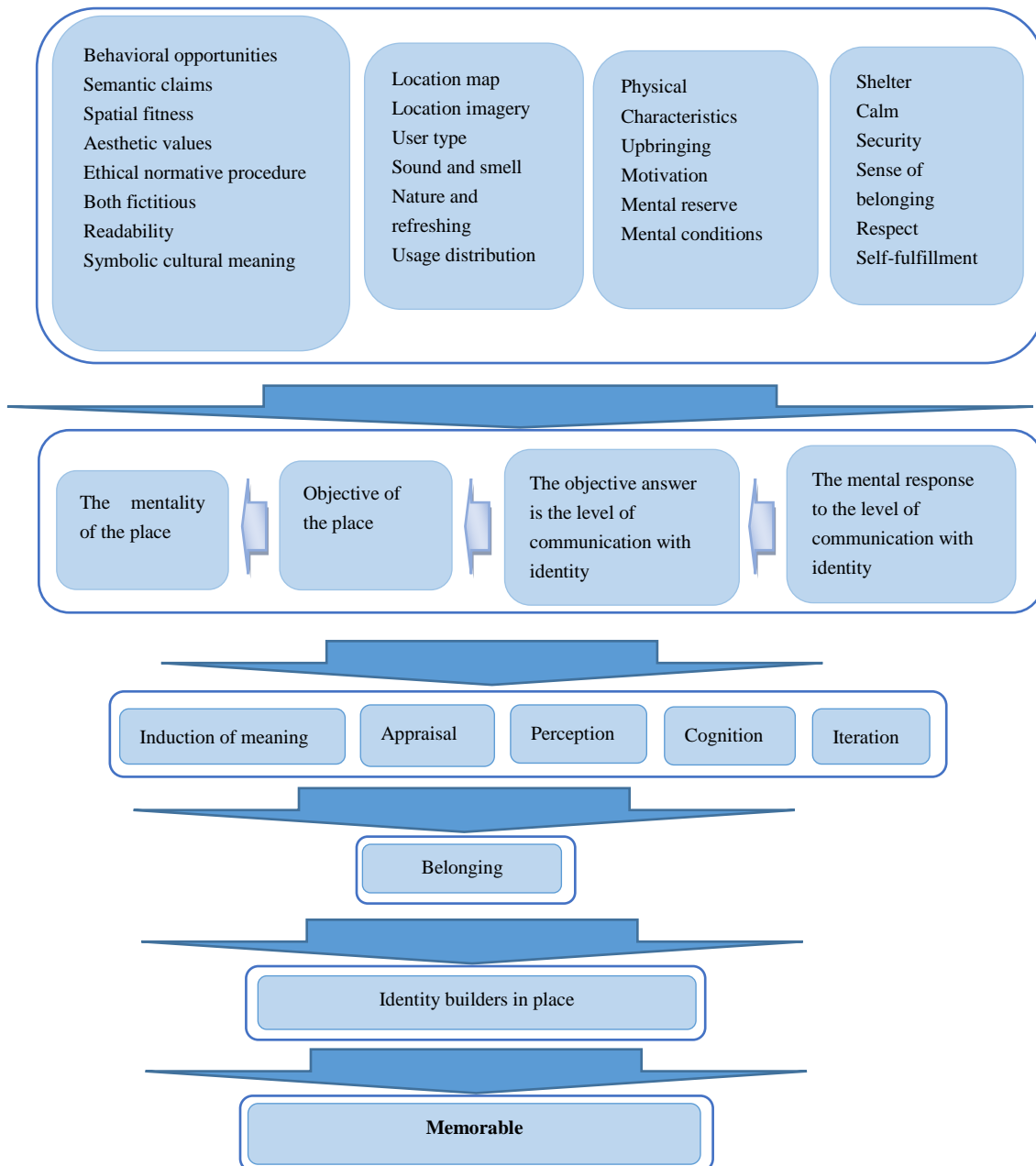


Fig 2 Features effective in creating persistent and diverse memories based on identity components in spatial context. Source: Authors, based on Latifi et al. (2015) diagram in presenting the graph of cultural and symbolic components of collective places.

3. Materials and Methods

Grounded theory is used as a research method. This strategy is a systematic and qualitative method for developing a theory that in a broad extent identifies the process, action or interaction of the subject with a certain identity (Creswell, 2017). Here, theorizing goes through two main steps, each of which can be the main purpose of a study. These steps consist of “description” and “conceptual arrangement”. The second phase relies on the previous one, but theorizing will be efficient by using the both stages. The first stage is to describe what has been, or is in progress, and what the situation looks like, is perceived or judged, or how people are involved in activities and so

on. In this field research, the population under the study undergoes to a general question about the description and perception of the intended environment. These descriptions gradually find a certain orientation, and at the second step, the concepts are categorized and the theoretical path is followed (Table 1).

Table 1 The process of building a grounded theory. Source: Mohammad Saeed Zokaei (2002)

Research stage	Research activity
Research design	Definition of the research problem Definition of previously constructed structures Theoretical sampling versus random sampling
Data collection	Interference of data collection and analysis step
Sorting the data	Sorting the events in a calendar manner
Data analysis	Open coding, axial coding, selective coding
Comparison of literature	Comparison of the theory derived from data obtained from similar and different frameworks

3.1. Statistical Population

The students of the Yazd University of Art and Architecture were selected as participants and the statistical population of the current study. Each of them was openly and in an unstructured way interviewed while attending in the Yazd's Saat Square to answer to the general question "What can you say about this square, how can you express your feelings and perceptions?" The research process was begun by five sophisticated experts focusing on the main issues of the research. During the process of interviews with the samples, the following question was posed: who else does the interviewee consider eligible to take part in the study to achieve an unbiased outcome? In this way, other participants were selected. The number of samples to be interviewed was determined based on the principle of saturation in the sample size (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). According to this principle, when the researcher concludes that more interviews do not provide him with much information and merely iterate the previous data, he will stop collecting information.

3.2. Sample Size and Sampling Method

Since in the studies using the grounded theory the data is considered to be the main element in the research process, sampling from the statistical population of the study was conducted using purposeful or non-probabilistic method. According to the findings of Gall (2006) and Teddie (2009), snowball technique was considered appropriate for this research (Soltani et al., 2017). Based on theoretical sampling, 20 senior MA students of the Yazd University of Art and Architecture were selected as the participants. The collaborators' opinions in the interviews were saturated at the 17th interview, however, the interview process ended with the twentieth person. The text of each interview was carefully checked for several times, and then the terms and sentences that transmitted the conceptual and qualitative load of the research were categorized. Finally, using the steps in the approach of the grounded data theory, the results were coded, written, and theorized.

4. Data Collection and Analysis

The data were gathered at the initial stage through semi-open and unstructured interviews with the participants, and then, according to the principles and rules governing the grounded data theory, the information was summarized, categorized and coded. The main procedures of conceptualization in the grounded data theory are as follows:

Open Coding: Naming concepts that represent definite events and other examples of phenomena

Axial coding: Procedures through which data are compared in a continuous process so as the link to be identified in the categories after the open coding.

Selective coding: This refers to the process of selecting the axial category, its systematic link with other categories, the valuation of their relations, and the inclusion of categories that should be confirmed and further developed

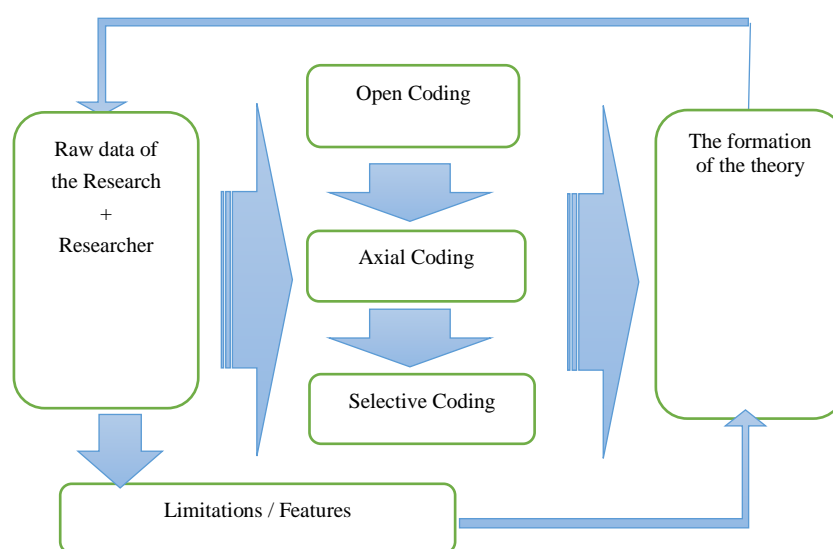


Fig 3 Modeling of the analysis procedure and analyzing the raw data to obtain the grounded theory

4.1. Data Analysis

In general, three steps can be listed for conducting the research: 1. Analyzing and coding; 2. Hypothesizing and issuance of a statement; 3. Theorizing. In order to increase the precision and accuracy of the findings. The researcher carried out the coding process through two separate paths, though in parallel with each other: manual encoding and software coding. And finally the results of the two steps to illustrate the graphical model of the theorization in the "grounded data theory" was combined and explained. Finally, the process of data analysis and coding continued along with sampling, followed by collecting interview data, observations, referring to written sources and previous theories. In this process, in accordance with the principles of grounded data theory, comparison was regarded as the basis in order to design and explain the three main stages of coding once more. To this end, Atlas. Ti software was used, which is currently one of the three renowned software in the field of qualitative data analysis.

4.2. Case Study: Yazd Saat Square

In order to study the rules of grounded data theory and to apply it in architecture, the "Saat Square of Yazd" was determined as the location of the study case. This complex is located at the heart of old tissue of Yazd city along with the valuable monuments like Yazd mosque, Imam Khomeini School, Sayed Rokn al-Din complex etc. which are on the historical-cultural axis of the city. This complex, located at the northern margin of the Jame mosque, is attributed to the eighth century AH. In addition, in the immediate vicinity of this complex, other uses such as residential, textile workshops (ikat), Hussainiya and the exhibition of antique and ancient works of Cultural Heritage have also been formed that can provide more attractions to be visited by domestic and international tourists (Figures 4 & 5). It's worth noting that the Saat Square is also called Saat Hussainiya by the people of Yazd because during the decade of Muharram, a magnificent mourning is held at this place, which itself, has made the physical changes in the texture of this square.



Fig 4 & 5 Yazd Saat square (Source: Authors)

5. Results

In the sources that has introduced the grounded data theory, this step is taken as the natural achievement of the selective coding stage, and optimistically it is argued that the final analysis is done in order to extend the theory at this stage. With regard to the components emerged from the heart of the data, a rich image of concepts and components is provided about the concepts and components. Indeed, in selective coding, the previous findings are refined and a theoretical framework emerges ultimately (Charmaz, 2008: 374). But, the nature of this phase is different from the previous one. Modeling is a stage that requires thinking, initiation, creativity, and expertise; a very difficult stage that needs more precision and energy than the data collection step. Eventually, the conceptual model appeared after a relatively long and challenging duration, following the consultation and running the "multi-judgment" technique among the experts. In this case study, 11 dimensions from the previous step are presented in the form of 5 categories, each dimension with a specific role and position. The dimensions were categorized as follows: 1) casual reasons, 2) the underlying factors, 3) mediating factors, 4) strategies, and 5) the main issue. Figure 6 displays the modeling derived from the grounded data theory methodology:

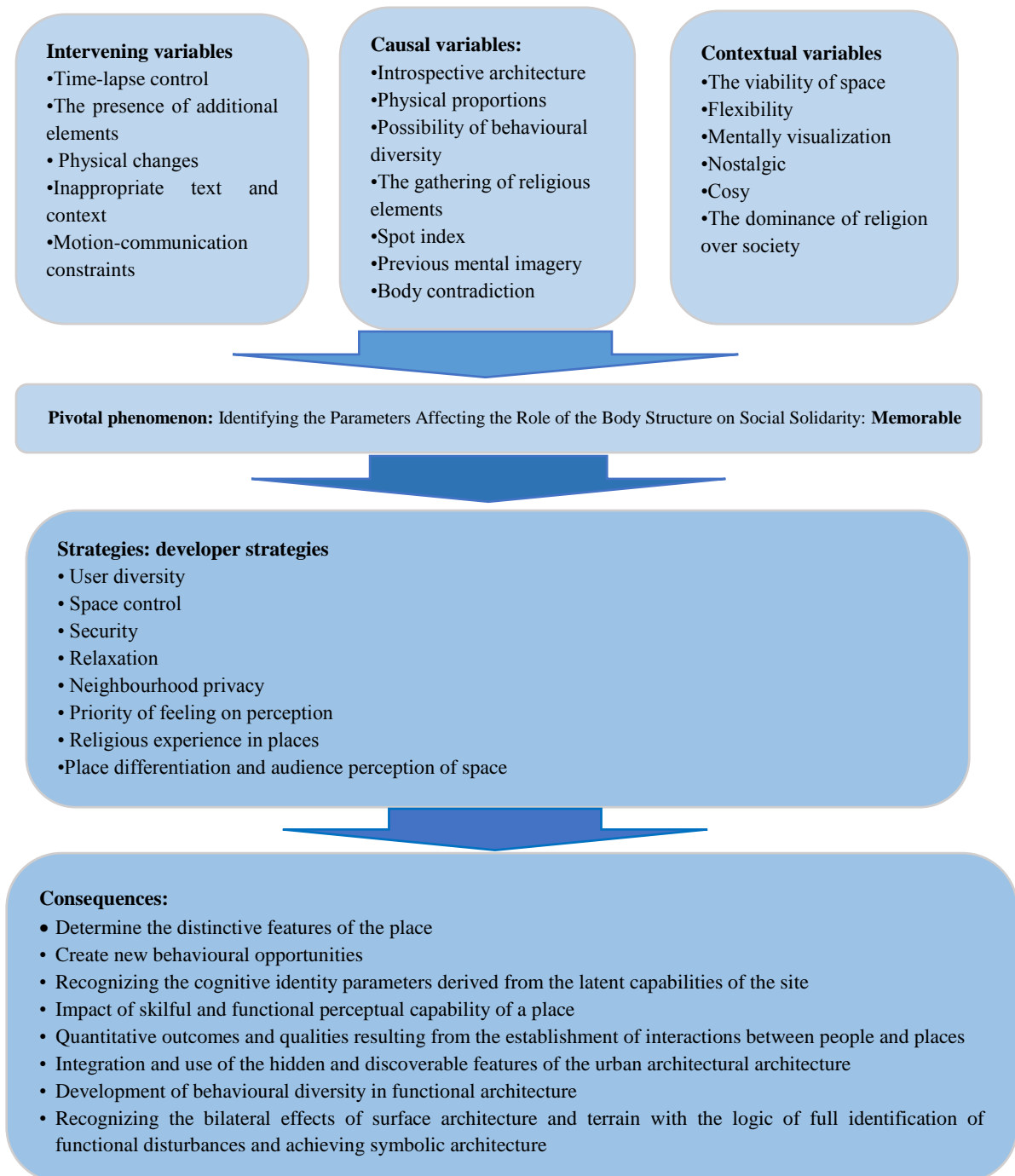


Fig 6 A Comprehensive model for the role of the physical structure patterns in social solidarity of Saat Square based on the grounded data theory.

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Grounded data theory is one of the methods that can play a basic role as a bridge between the two past and future paradigms, which generates theory by the use of induction and on the basis of real and qualitative data. Theorization is done by disconnecting the past restricted molds that were often confined to test theories of analogy. This feature has led to the more congruity of the grounded data theory with qualitative architectural issues because the imposition of the scholars' preconceptions on the qualitative architectural issues as well as the interpretation of their ideas has been strongly criticized by the quantitative theory scholars, in order to adapt to the actual conditions of the human society and to measure the satisfaction level of the user of the architectural space. On the other hand, the stages of running the grounded data theory- from data collection method to classification, final analysis and theorization- is somehow like the human behavioral process in the architectural space. Based on the results of the previous studies and theoretical foundations about the memorabilia, presented in the relevant section, the findings of the current case study are explained as the following:

1. Security: Physical and psychological security are ensured under conditions such as the elimination of unwanted gazes, a cozy and self-made space, indirect access to the square privacy, the emphasis on the square delineation, and the configurability of the space enclosure. This important physical parameter is the foundation of individual freedom, individual autonomy, the establishment of healthy social interactions, and ultimately the adaptation of the level of the square's confidentiality to the specific needs of the audience simultaneous with the collective use. This issue can be observed in the opinions of Kevin Lynch's (1972), Maurice Halbwach (1980), Jack Nasar (1997), etc. which is involved in the interaction among timeless architecture in the minds of the audience, the spatial security, and identity constituents in relation to the human audience and as a result in the sense of belonging to space. Obviously, this space capability can easily bestow peacefulness to the audience.

2. Mental imagination: The possibility of mental imagination of the square which is realized with an emphasis on memorabilia, familiar mind factors, manifestation of living elements, and attention to the square's flexibility has led to the emotional attachment, readability, sense of alignment with the space and, ultimately, the square stability in the audience's mind. Following the entry of the term "mental imagination" into the architecture and urban development for the first time by Kevin Lynch (1972), theoreticians like Juhauni Pallasmaa (2010), Halbwach (1980), Randolph Hester (2007) and others have expanded it (Rahimi et al., 2013). Pallasmaa (2010) refers to the mind as a broad city of remembrance and recall that has been formed through all the places visited during an individual's lifetime. He recognized the poverty of these places in terms of environmental perception as one of the reasons for why people feel alienated in the today's architectural and urban spaces as compared to environments full of natural and historical feelings.

3. Nostalgia: In traditional Iranian architecture, by using strategies such as the creation of a hierarchy in various spatial domains, flexibility in controlling collective and individual confidentiality, use, behavioral and emotional diversity, physical fitness based on function, the logical contradiction between the body and time passage, social- religious elements, introversion and, most importantly, the existence of socialism pretexts, it is allowed to invoke collective memory in the minds of the audience and, consequently, to achieve specificity and uniqueness. Merleau Ponty (1996), Heidegger (1998), Paul Ricoeur (1999), Pallasmaa (2010), etc. have posed their theoretical foundations for this connection (Piravi vanak, 2010). Regarding the representation and the organization of activity and power, social and cultural systems, interaction and separation, and identity and memory, architecture is involved with fundamental existential questions.

Pallasmaa (2010) believes that human beings realize their own identity with this space, with this moment and with the dimensions which become their being constituents. Architecture is the art of reconciliation between man and the world around him, and this mediation takes place through sensory perceptions. As Merleau Ponty (1996) argues, the emotional experience that the human being instantaneously captures with his physical body- along with whatever is open to a world of mutual feelings- is unstable and aligns in terms of natural perception (MerleauPonty, 1996). What is missed in our lives today is the potential exchange between the body, imagination and the environment.

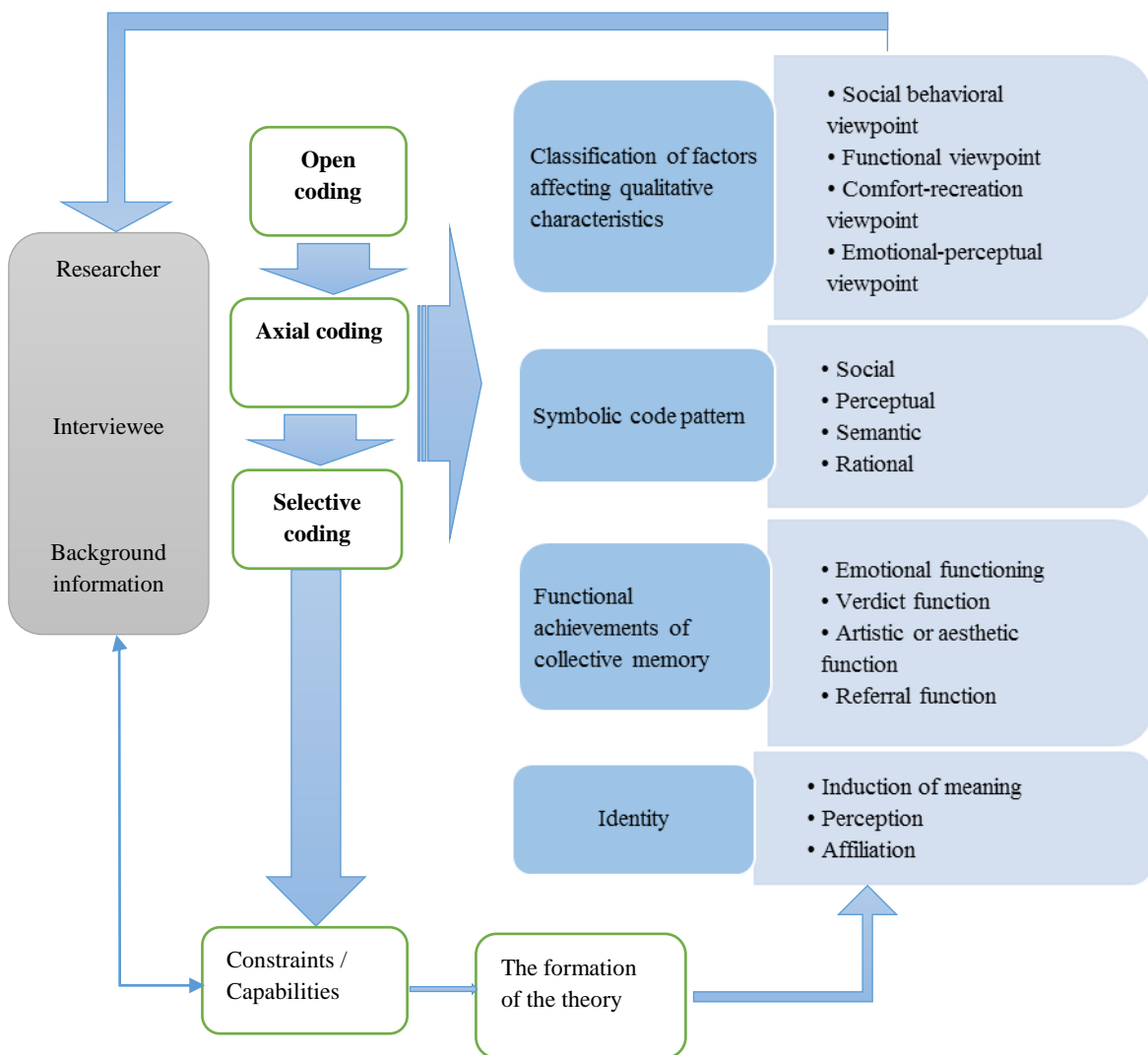


Fig 7 Theoretical coordination model in evaluating the process and results of checking qualitative factors for Saat Square (Source: Authors)

7. Suggestions

At the end, the following items are suggested:

1. To attract the users' participation in the textures and their satisfaction
2. To avoid building new structures with heterogeneous materials in organic tissues and not destroying urban landscape.
3. To pay attention to the users' sense of attachment
4. To pay attention to the opinions on the vicinity with the city's religious pole and ritual ceremonies
5. To pay attention to the role of religion and its influence in creating citizens' social interactions and the sense of reminiscence
6. To forecast new activities and functions appropriate with the complex in order to rehabilitate urban life in the texture.
7. To preserve and strengthen the asset and potential of the place
8. To pay attention to the technology in today's life and make the necessary arrangements to facilitate traffic towards the tissue without destroying its nostalgic sense

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