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# Women, Urban Designing and Planning with Emphasis on Iran

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**ABSTRACT:** It is necessary to clarify the status of women at the cities. Because women as a half of the city population are one of the most effective group of city. Therefore in their view, a desired place happiness in the environment of the city. Environment designing and planning can be considered as a kind of goal- oriented approach for the promotion of women status at city environment. The purpose of the current study is to strong and weak point opportunity and threats in the feminine city planning and designing. The current research method is a combination of library and field method. In the library method, some of information about the status of women in the environment of city have been collected and by the use of surveying method and field studies have been done to clarify the existent points for development and improvement of planning. Then by the use of SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) modeling, it has addressed analyzing data. In order to define the weight of factors of SWOT, based on interview and filling out question nares some groups of women helped to do it, and in the following appropriate strategies were defined in four groups of SO, ST, WO, WT finally in order to choose of the best approach, the four point matrix (IE) was used. The results of the study showed that the diversity strategy (ST) is the most appropriate approach for development and promotion of city designing and planning that are good for women in the society.

Keywords: Planning, City Designing, Women, SWOT

#### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of problem

The need for development and progress is an inner requirement for both man and woman. Motivation for self- flourishing and individual evolution and progress will be possible in a good environment of meritocracy. With such an approach, attention to the gender dimension has been urban considered in urban design and planning. Because most of experts who critically view today cities believe that cities are made by men and that requirements of civil life is ignored for woman. One of challenging issues of theories and development programs is the status of woman in designs and politics of the country. Nowadays with such a view the need for revision in urban approaches and politics has been considered with the goal of fundamental reform in gender inequality.

That is, based on UN agenda, gender development programs are based on gender realities (Longe, 1993: 26). Environmental design and programming can be considered as a targeted approach to reduce crimes in in artificial environments of city which effectively has a great impact in increasing social investment, quality improvement of social welfare. Improvement and increase in citizen satisfaction and consequently improvement of social welfare. Without doubt, realization of a justice city that is a significant outlook of a good city rule in a new urban society which requires expert planning and careful pathology. With such a literature in this article focuses on the status of woman in management and planning of city and in addition to surveying theoretical and practical dimensions of this matter, we pay attention to city condition and departments in social life. The important question that comes out here is that how far do the decision's and politics in designing and urban planning pay attention to the benefits and demands of woman?

#### Literature review

Ramon et al. (2004) in a research has been surveyed the role of urban planning in making contact between gender and local urban places in Barcelona of Spain. In this research it has been basically tried to extract the important parameters in the Field of gender planning of urban places and finally using the above parameters, optimal planning will be done. The result of research has shown that woman because of being more vulnerable than men, should be considered in urban planning Because

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wrong planning can avoid women who involve a great number of people in a city, from appropriate use of public places of that city.

Dadvar and Afzali (2007) in an article titled as "role women in planning and city design in Kerman " with the use of didactic statistical analysis like Cramer coefficient and Alpha coefficient, concluded that there is a direct relation between once education and highlighting the role of women in urban planning and there is an inverse relation between education and level of presence of women in defending sessions of architecture and urban development, between age of women and with their participation in urban designing projects, as well as between age of women with their participation in development projects.

Sarayi and Ali Rezanjad (2007) in their research with a sociological approach and considering women as a significant part of society that can have important role in social movements, have surveyed limiting factors of women's presence in public arenas the results have shown that because of in appropriate design of public places and domination of masculinity in Iran society, also low level of security urban environment, the presence of women in these places is so weak.

Soltani et al. (2011) in a research titled as "urban planning in order to enhancing the Iranian – Islamic identity of women with the emphasis on the role of city quarters" with the method of content analysis. Concluded that, promoting current status is necessary in city structure by paying attention to native patterns of this country. Also, creation of collaborative centers of women for activating physical environment of city, creation and reinforcement of neighborhood center system in providing city services and revival of public places, will be greatly effective.

Shokouhi et al. (2013) in an article titled as "women participation in safety of public places city of Saghez by urban participation model" through library studies and PUA Sessions by women and providing appropriate strategies, using SWOT model, showed that required strategies has been offered for communication and urban mobility (like taxi and bus station).

Khalil Abad et al. (2013) in an article names as "planning safe places of city based on gender segregation using CPTED approach, case study: district of Farhangian in Bonab city" relying on descriptive- analytic method and using documentary data and according to CPTED approach in the form of SWOT table, concluded that Creation of active business ridge and raising night economy, removing.

Silent places should be provided on order to promote the planning pattern of the city. In this article by taking advantage of some results of previous research, it has been surveyed the status of women in urban planning and given right strategies for promoting city environments for women.

#### Woman and urban planning and design

City is a set of culture and a framework that has been formed due to its requirements, activities and behavior of its resident. Human beings behave according to their individual and group requirements and define their certain behavioral pattern (Pakzad, 2005:1). The concept of citizen is an abstract concept for our urban planning. And programmers have little tangible imagination of a citizen and a citizen in its best from is a young healthy man without any problem to communicate in the street. So all the city services are for providing his individual needs and gender differences of citizens have never been in the center of attention of programmers.

Attention to the fine differences between men and women is apparent in any of the city designs. According to this, since 1960, growth of women movement and matter of relation between city and gender was proposed. Women increasingly find out that how city politics in different fields of economical, social, cultural and free time, housing, transportation, open places, environment, safety and etc... can cause them to comfort. Hence, in city planning, attention to dispersion, distribution, location of activities and services such as training, health, cultural, economic and official centers are of great importance considering intervals, special connections, natural features and environmental potentials (Masavorhawer et al., 1994: 96). It seems that reaching more beautiful, healthier, more appropriate, kinder and safer cities require a revision in foundations of national politics of city with emphasis on the role of gender factors and feminine values in housing, transportation, economic, social and cultural activity centers, leisure spaces and tourism.

## Grounds for Iranian urban woman from a historical viewpoint

A review on itineraries show that the main position for Iranian urban woman, in the period of Ghajar, was a special part, called inside, almost all the itinerary writes and observers, remember Iranian woman as someone who is looking furtively behind the tall walls without any window to the outside. All of them agree that their house was divided into two part of inside and outside and that women's name were never mentioned outside the house.

It seems that tall colorful earthen walls that usually were remembered in introducing Iranian house, are the main symbol of separation for whatever that is called in private and household arena with whatever that is outside the house. Even, Because of Women not involving in social activities, Hasan Beigi refers to the lack of information about women's clothing in in old Tehran (Hasan Beigi, 1987: 26-29). The presence of women outside home was so limited and identifying such atmosphere helps recognizing potential feminine arena outside home. Foreign observers suggest the image of secluded a creature from an Iranian woman, Their reasons for this isolation is based on two point: her clothing 2) her absence in public assemblies.

In reports of Karla Serna (1983), Lady Shal (1989), Brogesh (1988) and etc. it has referred to holy places and tombs out of city or visiting relatives graves on Thursday evenings. Markets, public bathrooms and relative's house. Public bathroom was a place for exchanging the latest news about the city and it has been called a place for "picnic" and a kind of "circle". These places were for the continuation of home arena (for playing the traditional role of Feminine) and were completely feminine and practically most of women's time was spent in such places. However Karla sevena refers to more low- class women of society washing clothes in the Allais.

So, it seems that probably low-class women in order to do their daily duties and every day riles, were seen more out behind the tall walls of houses. But in this case should be taken into account that they were seen near their living places and with other women. Poolak (1989) also reports that whenever a family wished to, they sent their daughters to schools. In those days schools they were separated from boys at the. Age of 9 and were completely separated from them thereafter.

#### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method of this research is, materials and documents, descriptive and library studies. In order to clarify the explanation and description of the research it has been tried to collect the related information in line with subject of the research by exploring in scientific texts, articles, websites, magazines and etc. Then it identifies the positive point, weaknesses in planning related to women and chances and threats. In a brainstorming session and an interview with urban planning reporters (experts), following the research based on their viewpoint it has been weighed to every factor in SWOT strategy and finally the big strategies appropriate with planning has been defined for this group.

### Position and formation of feminine social relations in Iran

Surveying the places were urban woman was allowed to be at and also by study the way of her communication with the outside world, it can be said that, Iranian women of Naseri period had a special zone that men were not allowed to enter at it. In addition that women themselves had no reach to places that were dedicated for men. Reports also suggest that in home parties and other circles. Gender separation was seriously observed, in a way that the relation of strange women was also accelerated. Karla Serena (1983), in this case says that: "There nothing called as home party in Iran" (Serena, 1983: 117). Gander separation was up to a point that the circles were formally masculine. Although mother of shah had hold special celebrities called "feminine Islam", these celebrations were also ridiculed and never been considered as serious.

Historical surveys show that Iranian urban woman was allowed to be present at special arenas that generally had feminine tissue. Observations of foreign of men and women, observed certain rules. Laydy Shal states: "Before we went off the ship, I covered myself in a thick chador (hijab) and I tried to imitate the local women. As I didn't want to annoy Muslim people's emotion so I agreed on doing such a thing (Shal, 1989: 19).

Whenever in the streets, hijab of a woman goes away because of accident, men near her have to keep their eyes off from her until she orders herself again. Even the old beggar woman is never seen without mark in the streets. this triggers public curiosity and even people sympathize with them. Just the face of a chador- wearing woman is apparent that they also cover it in front of strangers (Poolak, 1989: 157). With respect to the condition of society among this period and had the assumption that Iranian women were secluded ones.

The ambassador of Japan, in the period of Nasser-Addin Shah states in his itinerary: "women were wearing chador that had covered them from top to bottom and only the eyes had a view to outside from behind a lace mask (Masaharo, 1998: 176). Apparently this isolation was even extreme when communicating with men.

#### Urban planning for women in the abroad

City programmers, have combined city designing and gender mainstreaming for more that two decades. So, before any research is done, data are collected to estimate how different groups of people use public places. In 1999, formal authorities of Vienna, Austria asked the residents of a city how and how often do they use public transportation. Orsoal Baer one of authorities in this research states that: "most of the filled out the questionnaire less than 5 minutes but women were continuing writing them".

Men reported that two times a day, in the mornings for going to the work and at night for coming back home. They used car or public transportation. However women for hundreds of reasons, use sidewalks, buses, metro lines and tramway they had written things like this: some mornings I take children I help my mother in shopping and get back children to home by metro.

Women used more of public transportation than men and most of them used to walk. They also dedicated their time between work and household commitments such as taking care of children their old parents. Urban planning experts planned to promote sidewalk conditions and facilitate public transportation availability (Figure 1).

27



Figure 1.





In order to making walking safer at nights for women, more lights were added and on the other hand sidewalks were made wider so that people could walk easily on tight allies. A big staircase with a slop inside it was installed near the big intersections of streets, so that crossing facilitated for those a carriage or others that used will chairs. Vien has applied gender mainstreaming in parts of city management including health and education politics. However nowhere was much effective than urban planning. More than 60 hundreds experimental project have been done so far. In increasing size of these projects, gender mainstreaming has been turned into a constraint, therefore to reform the city to its real meaning, then, the organization of " green city" soon started a set of experimental projects for mainstreaming in urban planning. One of the first projects that were designed for women and by them in 21 region of the city.

The idea was to create a home that would facilitate life for women (Figure 2). According to this idea there are buildings that yard surrounds them. There are circle and green parts in the yard that allows parents and children spend time outside home without going to some faraway places. These set of apartments consist of kindergarten, drugstore and doctors Clinic. It is also near to public transportation and so makes traveling to school and work place easy for women. The conference of "building safer places and women's safety in city" was hold in November 2005 in London. In this conference was also done on Vietnamese women that were in the form of 3 workshop: 1) city designing workshop 2) methods of estimation and evaluation workshop 3) priority practice and practical designs was focused on matters like availability, movement and active view and other things that reduce the chance of criminal acts and introduced places that were successful and were well- designed in appearance and had various motions.

The workshop of method of evaluation showed that some matters should be taken into account: empty stores, unnecessary staffs, lack of liable such as police and guard and weak light have the most priority in weakening the safety (report of conference of London 2005: 25).

In recent years in Australia a new movement of urbanism has been spread, the movement of "night economy" has had a great impact on different parts especially city centers and has certain meanings for women. At first it seems that women are fewer users, unless the availability of transportation and station of transportation develop more. Design of garages considers security matters and design of big shopping centers and at night and this way, light and public transportation and its related services will develop. In addition it revivifies cultural and amusement programs such as events and street activities. Here more combination for the use to such places should take place. Renting places that are currently empty. If are temporarily used, many locations will be provided for cultural activities. The light is designed in a way that it attracts more people with its light spectrum so that more people come around city center. Decorative lamps for streets and building and the light coming out of stores and other else help improved the safety (Hamedi & Naeemi, 2010: 16).

#### Analysis of data by SWOT modeling

SWOT modeling is one of strategic tools for matching inner strengths and weaknesses of system with weakness and threats of system or chances and threats of outer system. SWOT modeling gives a strategic analysis for recognizing these factors and selection of the strategy that creates the best matching among them. From this viewpoint, this model is an appropriate strategy that maximizes strengths and chances and minimizes weaknesses and threats. In fact, the key point of this model is the analysis of a range of all positional features of system and there for providing a useful framework for the selection of strategies (Hekmatnia and Mousavi, 2006: 294). Based on this in order to suggest good strategies, planning stable and desired places of city is considered as inevitable in a way that gender differences are observed in it and help recognize ingredients and elements to remove weaknesses and threats and promote strengths and chances. So in order to improve such places, first it takes

into account the classifying of the most important inner strengths and weaknesses and outer threats and chances.

As it is shown in table 1, in city planning's and designs, based on women's position, number of 11 strengths versus 11 outer chances versus 9 outer threats has been recognized and surveyed. In sum number of 22 strengths point and chances as advantage and number of 20 weaknesses and threats as limitation, confronting planning of desired places for women has been recognized. In addition through questionnaire, general advantages and limitations for prioritizing the options, has been evaluated and completed by groups of urban women. In the table below it is shown prioritizing and significance coefficient is given and the rank and final marks of each weaknesses, chances and threats strengths, are shown.rank1: critical weakness, rank 2: usual weakness, rank 3: usual strength, rank 4: perfect strength, As it is shown in table 1: factors such as light facilities and light at night in public places, public transportation, space for safe crossing and walking, women active role in city

architecture and urban development, higher education chances for girls and Existence of security measures such as locational positions of stations., are the most important points that are mentioned for desired planning and based on women needs.

Zoning rules that have caused separation of users and accommodation in surroundings and women and getting far away from city center, extreme separation of residential and commercial areas, in a way that women's need in balancing home and economical duties, have been ignored. Unsafe places for women for example low class areas of the city, margins of half- built buildings and silent allies, using some features like garage, public toilets, Telephones and automatic cars that are considered as vulnerable factors, open spaces (parks and sides of city) and places (allies and under passes) and narrow sidewalks and mentioned as the most weakness points in planning and women points in points in planning and women axis designing.

	Table 1. The matrix of inner factors evaluation (IFE) designing and planning desired places for women				
	Row		Significance factor	Rank (1-4)	Mark (grade)
	S1	Existence of light at night in public places.	0.05	4	0.02
	S2	Existence of special agency for women.	0.04	4	0.16
	S3	Involvement & leadership of women in local politics	0.04	4	0.16
$(\mathbf{s})$	S4	Safety of public parks that women experience fear in them.	0.04	3	0.12
Strengths (S)	S5	Public transportation and places for safe and effective walking.	0.06	4	0.24
eng	S6	Women's active role in city architecture urban development.	0.05	4	0.2
Str	S7	Increasing higher education chances for girls.	0.05	4	0.2
	S8	Separated public places women, such as women's park	0.04	3	0.12
	S9	Existence of security measures such as location position of stations	0.05	3	0.15
	S10	Security of women by some evaluations like special guards in required places like when women work late at night	0.04	4	0.16
	S11	Cultural amusement programs in city areas	0.04	3	0.12
		Sum	0.5	-	1.63
	W1	Regional rules cause the separation of user and accommodation of surroundings women getting far away from city center	0.06	1	0.06
	W2	Absence of expertise in traveling to city areas	0.03	2	0.06
	W3	Extreme separation of residential and commercial areas in a way that women's need are ignored in balancing household and economical duties	0.05	2	0.1
	W4	The possibility of hard entrance to special work of men, market and technical and specialized exchanges, are some of these places	0.03	2	0.06
N N	W5	Fear of using garages of city and crossing sidewalks at nights	0.04	1	0.04
sses	W6	Disability of viewing public places and public ways	0.04	1	0.04
Weaknesses (W)	W7	Unsafe places for women like low- class regions of the city, margins of half- built building and silent allies	0.06	1	0.06
	W8	Using features such as garage, public toilets, telephones and automatic machines that are considered as vulnerable factors	0.05	2	0.1
	W9	Open areas (parks and surrounding of the city) and sidewalks(allies and under passes)	0.05	2	0.1
	W10	Narrow sidewalks and entrance to places that are banned by beggars.	0.06	1	0.04
	W11	Positions without any owner and custodian.	0.03	2	0.06
		Sum	0.5	-	0.72
		Sum of weaknesses & strengths	1	-	2.35

Table 1. The matrix of inner factors evaluation (IFE) designing and planning desired places for women

Rank 1= serious threat; Rank 2= usual threat, Rank 3= usual chance, Rank 4= exceptional chance. Source: findings of research

Table 2. Evaluation matrix of outer factors (EFE)	) - designing and planning desired places for women
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Mark (grade)	Rank (1-4)	Significance factor	Outer factors	Row	
0.16	4	0.04	Attempts for civilization and improvement of city places.	01	
0.24	4	0.06	Users politics in sectional range.	O2	
0.2	4	0.05	Good location choice for educational, cultural and amusement facilities	03	â
0.12	3	0.04	New metro stations made of glass so that women can be seen inside and also they can see their surrounding.	04	Opportunists (O)
0.12	3	0.04	Increasing economical movements and night activities.	05	ti
0.2	4	0.05	Promoting night transportation services.	06	IOU
0.09	3	0.03	Improving and promoting the quality of life and household matters of women though participating in group and community places.	07	Op
0.2	4	0.05	Some roles of management with support of women assemblies.	08	
0.24	4	0.06	Dedicating some roles of managements support of women assemblies.	09	
0.16	4	0.04	Reorganization and planning environments in line with women's perception of danger.	O10	
0.12	3	0.04	Acknowledgement and other signs and information's	011	
1.85	-	0.5	Sum	•	
0.07	1	0.07	Feeling extreme insecurity	T1	
0.06	1	0.06	Fear as the factor of absence in public places	T2	
0.1	2	0.05	Women's vulnerability in silent and private places	T3	
0.1	2	0.05	Areas in which the apartments are close shopping centers. These buildings are exposed to many dangers, because they empty during the day & have the least natural care.	T4	( <b>T</b> )
0.1	2	0.05	Big shopping centers and places where have cinema bar and amphitheater have more problems than places that are located around the city	T5	Threats (T)
0.07	1	0.07	Some bothering's for women such as: scaring by cars, ridiculing and sexual abuse	T6	H
0.1	2	0.05	Social crimes in public places	T7	
0.08	2	0.04	Focus on users land that create crime and bothering behavior	T8	
0.06	1	0.06	Designing and planning body factors of city without considering gender observations	T9	
0.74	-	0.5	Sum	•	
2.59	-	1	Sum of chances and threats		

Rank 1= serious threat; Rank 2= usual threat, Rank 3= usual chance, Rank 4= exceptional chance.

According to table 2, applying mixed users policy in sectional range, good location of educational, cultural and amusement facilities, promoting night transportation services, dedicating some management roles with the support of women assemblies, rearrangement of places, basic factors such as pruning the trees and recognizing dark areas of the city. It have been the most important chances in the field of planning for women. Extreme feeling of insecurity, fear as the factor of absence in public places, bothering women such as: scaring them by car, ridiculing and sexual abuse, designing and planning of the body factors of city without considering gender observations are mentioned as the most important threats in this field according to the obtained results based on SWOT analysis, in order to promote the plans and designs of the city with respect to position and conditions of women in cities the following strategies in table 3 are given.

Table 3. Strategies of feminine	programs and	designs improvement

Threats (T)	Opportunists (O)	SWOT
<ul> <li>ST</li> <li>Diversity strategies</li> <li>Reinforcement of alignment of city development programs with feminine users.</li> <li>Promotion of urban villages as an option for old centers and based on sidewalk centers and transportation stations.</li> <li>Movement to growing night economy.</li> <li>Designing shopping centers using findings of crime- recognition (e.g. Number of benches to sit on or decrease in the ways that are dedicate for traveling) that creates less chance to get together in such places.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>SO</li> <li>Offensive and competitive strategies</li> <li>Reinforcement of investment for creation of places that facilitates services to the women such as women markets.</li> <li>Give attention to the role of women to work on places related to architectural units and city development.</li> <li>Reinforcement of the role of government in stabilizing social security.</li> <li>Designing safe transportation for women.</li> </ul>	Strengths (S)
<ul> <li>WT</li> <li>Defensive strategies</li> <li>Using media and new information technology and attracting support of projects and programs that gender observation is considered in them.</li> <li>Generation of cooperative assemble, of women in designing and planning and introducing relative subjects with gender.</li> <li>Promotion of cultural level and reinforcement of Islamic culture.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>WO Reviewing strategies</li> <li>Following the cooperative programs in the environment</li> <li>Rebuilding and reforming city areas and proceedings for investigation of these areas.</li> <li>Existence of a good security system for fast recognition of social crimes.</li> <li>Temporary use of empty places.</li> </ul>	Weaknesses (W)

Source: findings of research

#### Four point inner and outer Matrix (IF)

For analyzing the inner and outer factors at the same time it is used of tool called inner and outer Matrix. In order to from this Matrix, grades obtained from evaluative matrixes of inner and outer factors should be placed in vertical and horizontal dimensions of this matrix, so that place of industry becomes clear and good strategies can be taken (Kurdaich and Azar Niakan, 2009: 105). The matrix under the study here is of checkered kind in checkered matrix, these grades are defined in a spectrum of two parts including weak (1-2.5) and strong (2.5-4). According to inner and outer matrix, planning and feminine city development is placed in home III. Therefor diversity strategy should be used for promotion and reformation program and city designs.



**Figure 3.** Final grade of inner & outer factor evaluation matrix. Source: findings of the research, 2015

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Study the way of women's presence during historical period in cities and by breaking down the traditional rules in modern world, in city programing, attention to traditional values on one hand and considering new needs of this group on the other hand, are very important. In general very city development and programming that consider women, will cause less crimes.

Some places, some times for certain gender create feeling of fear and more commonly feeling of noncompliance. In this study that is in line with the analysis of urban women condition is done by marking grounds for fulfilling the development strategies of feminine programs, the inner factors (Strength and weakness points) and outer factors (threats and chances) were recognized. Among strength points factors such as light facilities at night in public places, public transportation and place for safe and effective walking, women's active role in architecture and city development, increasing chances of higher education for girls and existence of security measures, like the position of stations, are considered as the most important advantages in the field of designing and programming that is appropriate for women.

Also according to the results, the regional rules that caused the separation of user and accommodation around the city and women getting away from city center, extreme separation of residential and commercial areas, that is, ignoring women needs in marking balance between household and economical activities, unsafe places for women like low-class areas of the city, margins of half- built building and empty and silent allies, using features such as garages, public toilets, telephones and automatic machines that are considered as vulnerable factors. Open areas (parks and the country) and pass ways (allies and under passes) and narrow sidewalks and entrance to places that are banned by beggars, are the most important weak points in feminine planning and designing.

application of mixed user The policy in neighborhood range good accommodation of educational, cultural and amusement facilities, promotion of night transportation services, dedicating part of management roles with the support of women assemblies, rearranging the spaces, basic factors such as pruning trees and recognizing the dark comers of the city... are the most important outer chances for women in planning field. Among outer threats, feeling extreme un security, fear as a factor of the absence in public places, bothering women such as: scaring them by car, ridiculing, sexual abuse, designing and planning the body factors of city without considering, using the inner and outer evaluation matrix, the strong and weak points and confronting threats in planning and designing cities for women, were classified, then using the inner and outer factor analysis matrix at the same time (IE), necessarily diversity strategy (ST) for development and promotion of feminine programs of city development programs with feminine user programs, promotion of city villages as an option for old centers and based on sidewalk location, centers and transportation stations, movement for growing night economy, designing shopping center with the findings of crime- recognition (e.g. reducing number of benches to crossing through that cause less opportunity of getting together in these centers.

#### DECLARATIONS

#### **Authors' Contributions**

All authors contributed equally to this work.

#### **Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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31

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