

Persian translation of this paper entitled:
تبیین نقش خرده‌فروشی‌های موقت در کیفیت
محیطی پیاده‌راه‌های شهری
is also published in this issue of journal.

Original Research Article

Explaining the Role of Temporary Retail Shops in the Environmental Quality of Urban Walkways*

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Received: 23/06/2020 ;

accepted: 19/01/2021;

availableonline:23/08/2021

Abstract

Problem statement: Malls, megamalls and large shopping centers are continuously expanding and a lot of people visit these spaces everyday but despite the huge costs the construction of such spaces imposes on the city, they cannot fulfill attracting the people and do not have much prosperity due to many reasons such as social and cultural conditions. Environmental studying of temporary retail shops in urban spaces, especially walkways, is nowadays discussed and studied extensively from the socioeconomic viewpoint.

Research objective: The study aims to analyze and assess the role of establishing temporary retail shops and informal markets from the viewpoint of the beneficiary and influential groups in the changes of environmental quality in urban walkways.

Research method: This research was conducted with a qualitative approach, relying on the grounded theory methodology. The initial data were collected through continuous observation and 47 in-depth and semi-structured interviews with pedestrians, permanently-stationed shopkeepers, retailers, urban experts and managers. The interviewees commuted or did business in one of the famous walkways in the historical city of Isfahan in Iran. Then, a number of categories were extracted from the data by coding and recollecting.

Conclusion: The results highlighted seven axial codes and seven core categories for assessing retail shops within the framework of the grounded theory. The seven core categories in the assessment of the quality of urban spaces and walkways as the thematic network are social interactions, activity conformity, microscale economic mobility, multilayered perceptions, balanced visual composition, environmental suitability and targeted control.

Keywords: *Environmental Quality, Urban Walkways, Urban Spaces, Temporary Retail Shops.*

*This article is extracted from "Mina Kashani Hamedani"s Ph.D. dissertation entitled "Explaining the Temporary Retail led Place-Making Process in Public Domain" which is in progress under supervision of Dr.

"Hassan Sajadzadeh" and Dr. "Mohammad Said Izadi" the Faculty of Art and Architecture, Bu-Ali Sina University, Hamedan University in "2019".
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Introduction

Improvement of public spaces is one of the most important goals of urban design, which depends on different aspects, including structural, functional, perceptual, etc. Since different social groups use public spaces, these spaces have become places for exchanging thoughts and information and thus, they facilitate the formation of social networks. In fact, these spaces provide social interaction experiences through which social participations can occur and social skills can improve (Daneshpour & Charkhchyan, 2007, 20). Pedestrian spaces, especially walkways, are among important public spaces that provide the users with the required place to perform social activities. Walkways vary with regard to their environmental qualities and different factors affect their success as public spaces. Informal retail shops and markets are among the activities that can affect the environmental quality of public spaces. The impact of temporary retail shops on the changes of environmental quality of pedestrian roads vary based on the existing conditions and these retail shops try to increasingly adapt to their surrounding space through innovative strategies. Location is always a central concern for any retail real estate-related project (Brown, 2019).

Malls, megamalls and large shopping centers are continuously expanding and a lot of people visit these spaces everyday. These buildings have a large share in today's urban consumer-based spaces. They have recently been criticized for various reasons by scholars and experts of planning and sociology. Regarding the expansion of malls in cities, especially in Tehran, one of the consequences is the gradual replacement of public spaces by these shopping centers, attracting people to malls. More critically, the issues such as the weakening of urban open spaces and the deprivation of marginalized people can be mentioned (Izadpanah & Habibi, 2019, 38-39). Other criticisms laid against these spaces include introversion, fencing, filtering and social exclusion –phenomena mostly involving private interests rather than public benefits (ibid.). “The commoditized space created by department

stores fundamentally changed the individual's relationships with the city and society” (Kazemi & Rezaei, 2008, 11). On the other hand, despite the huge costs the construction of such spaces imposes on the city, they cannot fulfill attracting the people and do not have much prosperity due to many reasons such as social and cultural conditions. In contrast to this large scale in the production of urban consumer space and in the form of large shopping centers, the retails especially temporary retails (as the phenomenon studied in the present paper), are considered to be a way to restore vitality and improve environmental quality in public spaces, which needs a preliminary study of the environmental qualities resulting from the formation of this phenomenon during the social life of cities.

“While, pop-up stores are a marketing strategy tool and it may be implemented to strengthen brand loyalty” (Zogaj, Olk & Tscheulin, 2019, 111). Generally, “Retail space has cropped up just about everywhere in the urban landscape, at libraries, workplaces, churches and museums. In short, retail is becoming a more and more manifest part of the public domain. The traditional spaces of retail such as city centers and outlying shopping malls are either increasing in size or disappearing, producing new urban types and whole environments totally dedicated to retail. The proliferation of new retail space brings about a re- and de-territorialisation of urban public space that also includes the transformation of materialities and urban design, and even of the logic and ways through which these design amenities meet the needs of retailers and/or consumers” (Karrholm, 2012, 1). “Retail has also been used as a means of urban regeneration; this is usually associated with town centre interventions aimed at increasing their vitality and viability following the changes that affected retail and those areas” (Guimarães, 2017, 352). As retail district resilience is essential to build sustainable cities, understanding a retail system's evolution after threats or shocks may help city authorities and other stakeholders maintain and improve their shopping districts (Barata-Salgueiro & Erkip, 2014, 108). “In

countries within Asia alone, over the last two decades, there has been a substantial rise in the number of street vendors across urban cities in countries like India, Cambodia, Malaysia, Thailand, China, etc.” (Sekhani, Mohan & Medipally, 2019, 121-122). Developing large-scale urban retail systems involves multiple issues related to the public and private sectors, regulation policies, local communities and quality of space (Lee & Hwang, 2018).

One of the measures taken in Iran in this regard, which confirms the importance of this issue, is the resolution approved in January 2018 by the Islamic Tehran City Council as “organizing the mobile and uncategorized occupations in Tehran” (Tehran City Council, 2018). It reflects the beginning of a process of recognizing this part of activities in the urban public space, which has been launched by the decision-making and governing body. Therefore, temporary retail in public space is one of the most challenging issues since there is no related research in the theoretical field of urban planning and design.

This study attempted to find the answer to the following questions:

- Can informal markets and retail shops, as temporary or permanent establishments, improve the environmental quality of walkways?
- In what aspects do temporary retail shops and informal markets affect walkways and urban roads?
- How can we help improve the quality of urban walkways with regard to the environmental effects of temporary retail shops?

Research background

Retail studies have so far focused on the economic aspect of the subject and there is not much literature about the assessment of retail in urban environments from the social aspect of the place. The existence of retail shops can be an influential factor for attracting people to space and boost the liveliness of the environment, leading to spatial regeneration. The following cases are some studies investigating temporary retail, among others: In “Markets as Sites for Social Interaction: Spaces of Diversity”, Studdert

(cited in Aram, Gharaei & Habibi, 2018) explores the significance of markets as social spaces in Britain’s cities and towns. Studdert’s study goal was to assess the role of markets as special social spaces, the significance of markets for different groups of society, and the different forms of interactions between approved policies in the holding places. In another study titled “Consumption, Exclusion, and Emotion: The Social Geographies of Shopping”, William, Hubbard, Clark & Berkeley (2001, 204) view retail space as involving a complex social interaction between people, places and commodities. In his study titled “Location and Agglomeration: The Distribution of Retail and Food Businesses in Dense Urban Environments”, Sevtsuk (2014) analyzes the location patterns of retail and food establishments in walkable neighborhoods and their impact on the livability of these neighborhoods. In a study titled “Retail Planning and Urban Resilience – An Introduction to the Special Issue” carried out as a contribution to REPLACIS (Retail Planning for Cities Sustainability) research project conducted by a number of scholars from Portugal, France, Sweden and Turkey in 2009-2011, Salguerio and Erkip (2014) emphasize the resilience of retail systems in urban areas and highlight the ways temporary retail shops and informal markets can help the sustainability and resilience of cities. “Retailising Space, Architecture, Retail and the Territorialisation of Public Space” by Karrholm (2012) is regarded as one of the best studies in this field in which the author attempts to find out how retail shops in the public domain affect people’s daily social life. In another study titled “Spatial Resilience and Urban Planning: Addressing the Interdependence of Urban Retail Areas”, Karrholm, Nylund and de la Fuente (2014) explore three predominant kinds of Swedish retail places: the pedestrianized city center, the neighborhood center and the regional shopping mall, all of which play important roles in contemporary retail development. Their research is based on an empirical study of the Malmö region and their findings highlight the role of retail shops in spatial resilience in urban and

regional planning. Some other studies that focused on temporary retail (under the title of street vendors) in detail and mainly in association with public spaces are as follows:

- A handbook entitled “Working in public space: A manual for street vendors” prepared by WIEGO (Benitez, Grice & Harvey, 2017).
- A doctoral dissertation titled “Reuse of Public Spaces in Nanchang, China: A Study of Informal Street Artists” conducted in 2017 by Winter. The results showed that despite daily attempts by the local state to remove Nanchang’s street vendors, they continue to actively engage in alternative forms of urban space-making via reappropriating the public space. This ultimately challenges the deglobalizing urban space to neighborhood-level via such reappropriation (Winter, 2017).
- A study published under the title “Critical success factors of temporary retail activations: A multi-actor perspective” in 2018; “Through a series of in-depth interviews with multiple-actors (agency executives, brand managers, and consumers), this study identifies divergences and commonalities in defining the concept of temporary retail activation success” (Lowe, Maggioni & Sands, 2018, 74).
- A study entitled “Quality of Life among Street Vendors in Tiruchirappalli City, Tamil Nadu, India” published in 2013 that street vendors’ socioeconomic conditions and quality of life are mentioned (Karthikeyan & Mangaleswaran, 2013,18).
- The 2008 Ph.D. dissertation entitled “Street Vendors, Marketers, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Puebla, Mexico” (Mendiola García, 2008) also examines the challenges these vendors face.

Literature review

• Retail concept

In categorizing place aspects (form, activity and meaning) as the Canter’s Place Model, retail falls in the activity category. Overall, activities must be understood in a way that can help improve social activities and the dynamism of space. In his proposed categorization, Gehl (2011, 9-12) divides activities

into three groups: necessary, optional and social¹. Shopping is an activity that has a direct relation with the concepts of retail and market. As Karrholm (2012, 7) says, “Shopping can enrich city life”. Therefore, temporary and informal markets are suitable means for improving social life in cities as they add a constructive dimension to the concept of shopping. Cowan (2007, 328) defines (generally) retail as “the sale of goods directly to consumers”. Cowan’s dictionary of urbanism also mentions the concepts of “retail-led regeneration” and “retail-led urban quarter” which signifies the importance of retail in the generation and regeneration of urban places, especially the regeneration of such spaces as brownfields, waterfronts and city centers (Barata-Salgueiro & Erkip, 2014, 107).

According to this definition, retail agglomerations are important elements of “place product” and retailers influence how attractive place users perceive an urban place to be (Teller & Elms, 2011, 2). Retailers can affect the temporal aspect of public spaces. Local and periodical markets are important examples of retail, formed at the two ends of or along a road or even in squares but lack architecturally built spaces. In some cases, awnings made of light and cheap materials are used to protect goods from direct sunlight and rain (Aram et al., 2018). “The markets serve as a social, economic and spiritual public and collective places” (Chukwuemeka, Scheerlinck & Schoonjans, 2017, 59).

“Karrholm (2009) identifies two groups of processes through which retail activities shape the urban time-space – synchronisation and territorialisation: they can be called strategic in de Certeau’s approach” (Muliček & Osman, 2018, 4). “Retail Streets support neighborhood retail by providing low-speed access to commercial and mixed-use buildings. A Street with good retail is pedestrian-friendly, with wide sidewalks, pedestrian amenities such as seating, parallel or angled on-street parking, and a limited number of travel lanes. A narrow street width creates spatial enclosure, and sidewalk bulb-outs allow short pedestrian crossing distances. Planting

strips are replaced with planting wells” (Al Bashir, 2008, 44). “Street vending, however, by many is seen as an underground activity that undermines the healthy function of the formal economy because it is unaccounted and unrecognized in national economic statistics, as also argued by some of the scholars that support Dualistic view” (Sekhania et al., 2019, 122). Therefore, retails (especially in the form of temporary and informal shops) can have both positive and negative effects on different aspects of life and urban planning.

“Within these markets lies myriads of collective spaces that act as catalysts for extensive urban complexes of productivities to emerge such as Complexes of mobility, material flows, spatial appropriation, and social expressions, of course these complexes generally vanish after each use (Chukwuemeka et al., 2017, 58).

• Retail and environmental quality in urban space

Considering that improvement of the quality of public spaces is one of the primary goals of urban design, having a clear definition of this concept is necessary and essential. Comfort, human scale, variety, complexity, urbanity, inclusiveness, meaningfulness, understandability, linkage and coherence, congeniality, playfulness, safety and security, transparency, mystery and awe, etc. are among the diverse defining features of environmental qualities (Khan, Moulaert, Schreus & Miciukiewicz, 2014, 393-394).

The systematic and academic study of the qualities of urban environments has a rather short history, which started in the second half of the 20th century. This history is majorly consisted of the reviews and assessments of the structural, social, economic, etc. standards (Rafieian, Moloudi & Pour Taheri, 2011; Rezaei, Moazzen & Nafar, 2014). Environmental quality is a subcategory of quality of life and is related to qualitative and quantitative urban elements and their constituting components (Taghvaei, Maroufi & Phlavan, 2013). Proposed theories about urban environmental qualities have two

dimensions: objective and subjective (Radjahanbani & Partovi, 2011). Porteous (1971, 105) believes that environmental quality is a complex subject that includes subjective perceptions, viewpoints, attitudes and values of different groups and individuals.

A review of the related literature shows that there are different approaches to spatial qualities, which rarely provide a clear definition of the subject. “Place quality” discussed by Healey (2004), “Quality planning” explored by Creedy, Zuidema, Porter and de Roo (2007), “effective planning process” examined by Conroy and Berke (2004) and “experimental quality of urban environments” discussed by Southworth (2003) is among the concepts in this field (cited in Moulaert, Schreurs & Van Dyck, 2011). Lansing and Marans (1969) have also proposed their own definitions, which focus on the sense of welfare and satisfaction, while Porteous (1971) believes that this concept includes the attitudes and subjective perceptions of people (cited in Van Kamp, Leidelmeijer, Marsman & de Hollander, 2003, 7).

Providing the conditions for people to have a presence in urban spaces is a duty of urban designers and planners and according to Canter’s “purposive” model of place, a person assumes a specific role in any environment based on a specific purpose (Adhya, 2008, 179). Therefore, paying due attention to walkways and sidewalks is very important as walkable communities tend to be more sociable, accessible, livable, attractive, diverse, healthy, safe, environmentally friendly and of mixed-use (Haykal & Abdullah, 2018, 44). Walkable spaces have an important role in establishing social relationships between people and they can provide transportation and recreation (ibid.). Also, pedestrianization can enhance the attractiveness of commercial areas and increase their vitality (Guimarães, 2017, 353).

Walkability is an experiential phenomenon aiming at the achievement of a specific purpose, which has been explored in other disciplines such as social sciences as well (Dörrzapf et al., 2019, 852). Some interpret walkability in terms of creating “better urban

places” (Galston, 2017, 30-31). Walkable spaces can be categorized into different groups based on their purpose, characteristics etc., among which four types of categorization are more prominent in the literature: 1. purpose such as transportation, exercise, etc., 2. socio-demographic characteristics such as gender, age, etc., 3. spatial or structural context such as neighborhood, district, city and the last one 4. spatial features that are important for residential location choice (Dörrzapf et al., 2019, 852-853).

Overall, different factors determine the quality of walkable space. Mohamed Al Bashir (2008, 29) states that “an essential ingredient for a street to be walkable in the more urban area of a town is for the street to be lined with a rich collection of healthy, diverse, local retail establishments.” Among these factors, retail is more essential because it “provides goods and services to urban residents and visitors. It also employs a substantial share of the workforce, generating income for the local economy and taxes for local governments. In addition, retail promotes local development, supports local property values and generates a sense of urban life vitality closely related to the flow of people in retail areas (Mazza & Rydin, 1997).

The number of studies about retail and informal markets has risen during the past few decades and the subject has gained more importance in urban and regional planning (Karrholm, 2012). In fact, the impact of urban retail on the quality of urban environments has been so notable that it is often referred to as retail revolution. Buying is no longer the main activity for fulfilling one’s needs in walkways; rather, it is now a leisure experience (Barata-Salgueiro & Erkip, 2014). The development of large-scale urban retail systems now includes a myriad of issues in both the public and private sectors. It also involves many components such as regulation policies, local communities and spatial qualities (Lee & Hwang, 2018). On the other hand, expansion of the consumer society has resulted in diversification of the forms and place models of retail shops (Barata-Salgueiro & Erkip, 2014).

“The retail sector is essential because it: provides

goods and services to urban residents and visitors; employs a substantial share of the workforce, generating income for the local economy and taxes for local governments; promotes local development and supports local property values; supports a sense of urban life vitality closely related to the flow of people in retail areas” (Mazza & Rydin, 1997). “The projects of retail-led urban regeneration are, most often, focused on a limited geographical territory, sometimes even a single street or a city quarter” (Guimarães, 2017, 353).

Research methodology

Considering the fact that the precise understanding of the role of temporary retail in the daily lives of citizens and in social spaces, especially urban spaces that are formed on a human scale and more effectively and recognizing its qualitative effects on the quality of life and environmental quality is largely dependent on understanding its perceptual aspect in the audiences’ minds and the interpretation of their mental constructs of temporary retail as an independent phenomenon in the spaces of everyday life, this study tried to examine the subjective interpretation of the audience in understanding the qualitative aspect of the phenomenon, relying on the interpretative paradigm and through descriptive analysis of data.

The concept of walkability supports urban planning processes through considering important quantitative and qualitative aspects of walking in cities (Dörrzapf et al., 2019, 851). However, assessment of subjective walking quality has been examined mainly by qualitative methods such as surveys, observations, etc. Therefore, this study attempted to assess the role of temporary retail shops and their impact on the different aspects of the quality of urban walkable spaces and streets by adopting a qualitative and contextual approach and by using observation and semi-structured interviews. The collected data were analyzed by the grounded theory methodology and thematic analysis. The thematic analysis method was selected to contribute to the holistic viewpoint of this research and because of the rather different approach

of this study compared to other studies conducted on the qualitative relationship between walkways and temporary retail shops.

Similar to other related qualitative studies, the sampling method of this research was nonprobability. In this type of sampling, the participants are selected for the maximal obtainment of information about the concerning phenomenon. Such sampling is based on targeted and criterion-led selection and is performed theoretically. Compared to questionnaires, using interview as a research tool inevitably limits the number of participants. But selection of the participants becomes more prominent when the researcher decides to conduct interviews rather than distribute questionnaires. As Guimarães (2017, 353) says, "The projects of retail-led urban regeneration are, most often, focused on a limited geographical territory, sometimes even a single street or a city quarter." Such a focus allows the study to be more accurate.

On the other hand, due to the limitations of the present study in the field of temporary retail in the urban public spaces, this study can be considered a new research in this field, which aimed to improve the quality of the environment. Therefore, identifying what is formed in the perceptual dimension of space users and audiences' minds as well as extracting it in the form of a network of core themes will help the researcher present a more accurate interpretation of the phenomenon.

The sample size in this type of sampling, which is exclusively used in qualitative field studies, depends on theoretical saturation of the research questions. In this study, the interviewees were either the residents of the district (such as shopkeepers) or customers and passersby who use the walkway. The authors tried to include both men and women in the sample population in equal numbers. Overall, 47 individuals were interviewed, including the owners of the shops along Chachar Bagh Street with more than ten years of history of doing business in the area, owners of temporary retail shops, passersby and users of the streets, as well as the experts and managers related to

the area of study. The interview questions revolved around the interviewees' personal experiences about the impact of temporary retail shops and their perception of the environmental qualities and consequences of establishment of these shops along the walkway. The questions were asked based on the conversation flow and were followed by more questions for acquisition of more information. Prior to designing questions suitable for the goal of the study and for avoiding irrelevant questions, pilot interviews were conducted with seven shopkeepers before conduction of the 47 main interviews (excluding the pilot interviews) in three parts.

Besides conducting interviews, continuous observations by researchers and recording the related phenomena will significantly contribute to the analysis and extraction of data.

Finally, six main questions were designed for the interviews. Open, axial, and selective coding were used for the analysis of the collected data, followed by extraction of the concepts related to the assessment of the impact of temporary retail shops on the environmental quality of the selected walkway and their categorization into seven groups.

Area of study

Iran is a vast country with many different realms and subcultures, making it impossible to choose the entire country or even a province as the area of study of research. Therefore, the Abbasid Chahar Bagh Street, one of the main historical and cultural roads of Iran in one of its well-known cities, namely Isfahan, was chosen as the area of study. Built during the Safavid Era (around 400 years ago) and with a rich historical background and a prominent role in Isfahan's historical school of urban development, Chahar Bagh Street is one of the major passages in Isfahan City. "Built during the reign of the Safavid Shah Abbas, Chahar Bagh served as a place for stopping, enjoying oneself and spending leisure time rather than just a road for passing through (Haghighi Boroojini, Yazdanfar & Behzadfar, 2015, 32). Recently, the urban managers of Isfahan decided to pedestrianize

Chahar Bagh and make it a permanent walkway (Figs. 1, 2 & 3). As a result, Chahar Bagh Street is currently providing a rather different environment at the heart of Isfahan City. Also, several structural modifications have transformed the environmental quality of this street and the banning of motor vehicle entry into Chahar Bagh has made the social presence of people more tangible, altering the street's dynamism and vitality.

The urban managers of Isfahan City have also decided to take some measures to increase the liveliness and economic growth of Chahar Bagh Street, such as holding occasional events and allowing the establishment of temporary markets (Figs. 4 & 5). The current market comprises 90 booths offering handicrafts and other products and three van cafés².

Findings

As it was mentioned before, the interviews were conducted with three groups of people in Chahar Bagh Street: 1. Fixed shopkeepers, 2. Passersby and users and, 3. Urban experts and managers. The data collected via the interviews were coded and thematically analyzed. The coding was performed at two levels. Then, the codes were conceptualized, followed by the determination of the links between them and their agglomeration in a new manner, which led to the formation of 33 axial codes. In the final stage, seven categories (selective codes) were determined about the relationships between temporary retail shops and their impact on environmental quality by using the opinions of a number of urban experts and professors, including social interactions, activity congruity, microscale economic mobility, multilayered perceptions, balanced visual composition, environmental suitability and targeted control. The mentioned concepts and qualities include both positive and negative effects of the presence of retail shops in walkways, which have been written under one rubric. Table 1 shows the concepts and qualities formed via the coding process.

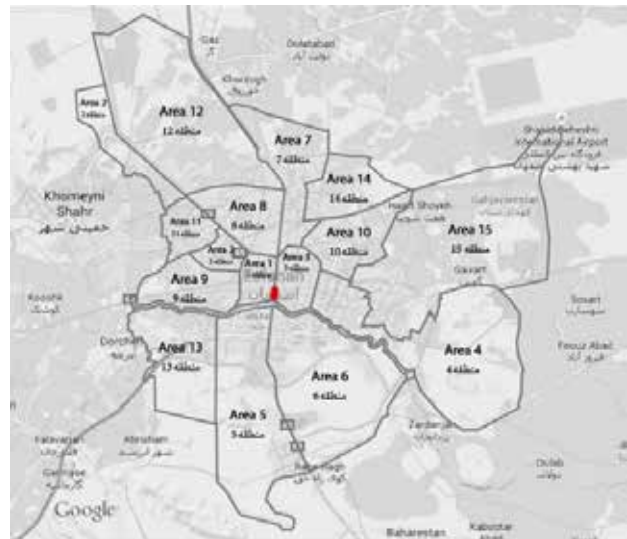


Fig. 1. The location of Chahar Bagh Street in Isfahan City .Source: www. iranrealestateboard.com.

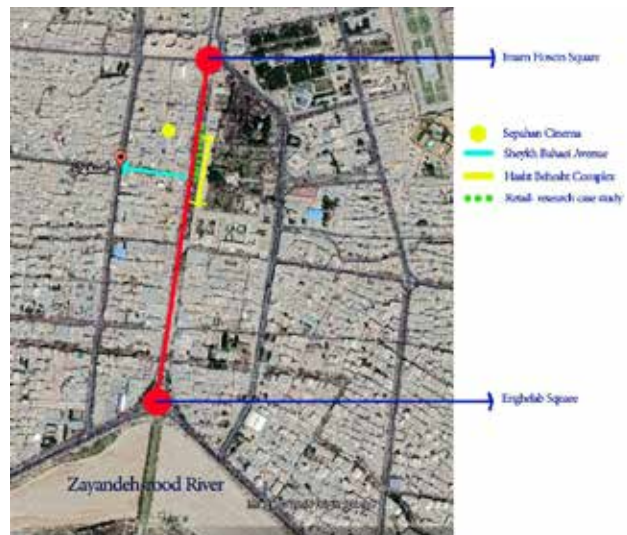


Fig. 2. Chahar Bagh Street and the market under study. Source: www. goolemaps.com



Fig. 3. A photo of the temporary retail shops (booths) in Chahar Bagh Street. The buildings in the background belong to Hasht Behesht Complex which is currently inactive. Photo: Mina Kashani Hamedani, 2019.



Fig. 4. A photo of Chahar Bagh Street during the business hours of the temporary retail shops. Photo: Mina Kashani Hamedani, 2019.



Fig. 5. A photo of Chahar Bagh Street when the temporary retail shops are absent. Photo: Mina Kashani Hamedani, 2019.

Discussion

Considering the seven main categories that were formed in the analysis stage, it seems that temporary retail shops can stimulate economic mobility in urban and public spaces at a small scale. Although, in this case, the temporary retail shops can boost the economic dynamism of the site through generating competition, such improvement is very small and fragile because of the lack of energetic and positive competition and the small scale of the economy.

Increasing the stability of this trend requires certain measures such as branding of said retail activities. Also, since the temporary retail shops are open until midnight, they can help the evening economy of the fixed businesses of the area³.

As mentioned in the literature review, temporary retails are suitable means for improving the social life of cities. This effect can be defined through the “social interactions” category specified in this study and via qualities such as security, inclusiveness, vitality, informal and public participation, social acceptance, dynamic human landscape, sociability, invitingness and social mixing mentioned herein. These qualities contribute to improvement of the quality of walkways. Temporary retail shops provide a space for people to stop by and to participate in interactions in a public space, leading to more social interactions and a more dynamic social composition, which can be further enhanced based on the existing contextual conditions at the selected site. Since walkable spaces allow for more pedestrian presence in public spaces, they facilitate the exploitation of temporary retail shops, and if these shops are attractive enough, they can directly improve the pedestrian invitingness and even sociability of public spaces.

It was also mentioned that the agglomeration and presence of retail shops could increase the attractiveness that users perceive (Teller & Elms, 2011). In this study, the concept was defined through the multilayered perception category which includes aspects such as sensory richness, sense of belonging, coziness, authenticity of space, and structural connectivity. These aspects have increased the quality of the walkway studied in this research. Paying attention to the historical context and the authenticity of the space that encompasses the temporary retail shops can play an important role in improving the quality of the selected space. For example, many permanently-stationed shopkeepers of the selected site believe that if these temporary shops acquire a fixed footing in the area, the value and authenticity of the space might decline. The reason for such belief lies in the historical context of Chahar Bagh Street

Table 1. The concepts and qualities related to the impact of the presence of retail shops in Chahar Bagh Street via coding of all 47 interviews. Source: Authors.

Open Coding (Level 2)	Axial Coding	Selective Coding (Category)
Small and microscale entrepreneurship		
Creative crafts	Economic dynamism	
Microscale economy		
Uniqueness of some products	Creating identity and branding	Microscale economic mobility
Microscale economic competition	Competitive power	
Nightlife	Evening economy	
Economic transactions	Large-scale economic instability	
Establishing hangouts and behavior settings		
Defining special aura, sphere and territory	Perceptual invitingness/sociability	
Defining stop-by and sociable places		
Increasing social interactions	Social acceptance	
Dynamic sociocultural interactions	Dynamic human landscape	Social interactions
Improving the performance of the immediate platform	Vitality	
Indirect supervision/observing eye	Security	
Paying attention to specific groups	Inclusiveness	
Using human capital in the informal aspect of activities	Informal and public participation	
Daily life	Social mixing	
Activity diversity, Visual diversity, Social diversity, Activity innovation and variety, Defining experience-led spaces	Diversity and variety	
Noise pollution	Incompatibility with some applications	
High mobility, Multipurpose and multifold activities	Flexibility	
Motion interference/interruption of motion flow		
Reduction of the mobility and movement of passersby	Safety	Activity congruity
Maintaining the traffic flow of electric cars, bicycles and pedestrians of Chahar Bagh Street		
Easy visiting, Defining events at different levels	Functional scale	
Event scheduling, Nightlife	Emphasis on temporal landscape	
Adjacency of complementary land uses	Compatibility of proposed activities and applications	
Functional diversity		
Convenience and comfort		
Paying attention to the environmental aspect	Climatic Comfort	Environmental suitability
Environment Cleanliness	Cleanliness	
Control and supervision	Good urban management	
Defining management frameworks and rules	Control and management	Targeted control
Stimulation of non-visual senses and improving street soundscape		
Enhancing soundscape	Sensory richness	
Space readability and marking		
Incompatibility with the dignity of space	Disregard for the authenticity of space	Multilayered perception
Paying attention to the immediate area	Structural connectivity	
Preventing chaos	Coziness and peacefulness of street	
Paying attention to native identity	Sense of belonging	
Harmony		
Visual disorder	Visual properties	
Preventing visual disorder		
Consistency with the historical landscape and identity of Chahar Bagh Street	Contextualism in the visual design of booths	Balanced visual composition
Emphasis on traffic and social nodes	Physical permeability	

and the activity framework of temporary retail shops throughout the history of Isfahan. However, they might be willing to reconsider if other criteria that are influential in the formation of temporary retail shops and markets such as their visual appearance, establishment location and activity framework, are properly observed. Based on the findings of a research titled “Location and Agglomeration: The Distribution of Retail and Food Businesses in Dense Urban Environments” by Sevtsuk (2014), location and adjacency have an important impact on retail shops and their activities. The category of activity congruity in this study can be highlighted in this regard, which includes qualities such as movement safety, flexibility, functional scale, diversity and temporal landscape. Qualitative improvement of an environment that becomes the activity space of temporary retail shops can be achieved only if the activity type and use of the temporary retail shops are congruent to the activities and land uses existing within that space, preferably complementing them. Otherwise, because of being rejected by the main body of the existing activities in the space and a competitive outlook, they might find themselves in a very difficult situation. Also, having multipurpose activities and offering services that temporally complement the existing land uses within the area can help improve the environmental quality of the space that provides the foundation for the activity of temporary retail shops. Three other categories, namely balanced visual composition, targeted control, and environmental suitability, are also influential in the quality of public spaces and walkways in which temporary retail shops do business. The environmental qualities of each category are as follows:

The qualities of the balanced visual composition category are visual properties, contextualism and physical permeability. Establishment of temporary retail shops in walkways should not create visual disorder or obscure the aesthetic elements of the space such as landmarks, decorations and valuable building facades. Other criteria of visual harmony such as color congruity, not facing away from the main body

of walkways and using simple, light and proportionate structures are also important. In addition, given the historical background of the selected walkway, space designers must aim to create consonance between the overall landscape of the temporary retail shops in Chahar Bagh and the historical body of the street. Regarding the location of temporary retail shops in walkways, the main permeation channels must be paid due attention. Certain locations and spaces must be allocated to them to enhance the social nodes based on effective movement nodes along the path. These physical permeation channels would allow for easier physical and visual access to retail activities.

The qualities of the environmental suitability category are climatic comfort and cleanliness. Considering that many temporary retail shops may lack proper heating/cooling facilities and solid structures and are usually established with light and portable parts, climatic comfort is one of the main issues for both the shopkeepers and customers. These temporary shops should be established preferably in spaces that provide proper shading by trees and vegetation (based on the changes of climatic conditions in different seasons). The qualities of the targeted control category are good urban management and control and management. Considering that the identity of many retail shops in the selected site has been formed based on the decision of Isfahan’s urban managers, many retailers welcomed the general idea of establishment of their shops in specific urban spaces as per a governmental decision to avoid social harms. Because, at least, these areas can be monitored, and retailers especially women can do business with more safety and security. Also, paying due attention to the regulations set for the presence of temporary retail shops and their activities in public spaces can facilitate their acceptance by other shopkeepers and better adaptation with the space that has provided the basis of their formation.

Conclusion

This study indicated that the establishment of temporary retail shops in historical walkways could increase or

decrease the environmental quality of the walkways. The nature of this impact depends on multiple factors and different aspects, which according to the interviewees' opinions, can be grouped into seven categories: social interactions, activity congruity, microscale economic mobility, multilayered perception, balanced visual composition, environmental suitability, and targeted control. Proper observation of the principles and frameworks related to each of these categories can notably contribute to the improvement of the environmental quality of walkways; otherwise, their establishment in walkways can result in the discontent of the residents and users. Regarding the research question, it can be stated that the appropriate establishment and placement of temporary retail shops in walkways can improve the environmental qualities of the walkways and facilitate the formation of community spaces. As it was mentioned in the literature review, it can even act

as a catalyst or development stimulus in public spaces. However, this requires the realization and presence of the qualities mentioned in the seven categories. In short, temporary retail shops must be formed in a manner that can encourage the pedestrians to “stay awhile and not metely pass by” as stated by one the the interviewees. This shows the significance of the different aspects of temporary retail shops in urban public spaces from the general viewpoint of the involved people. Therefore, the relationship of place, space, and daily life to temporary retail shops has the capacity to be explored in the different areas of urban planning and design. The analysis of the role of retail shops in different open public, open semi-public and enclosed public spaces can provide a framework for further studies. Figure 6 shows the model of the qualitative aspects of the impact of the establishment of temporary retail shops in urban public spaces formed via this study.

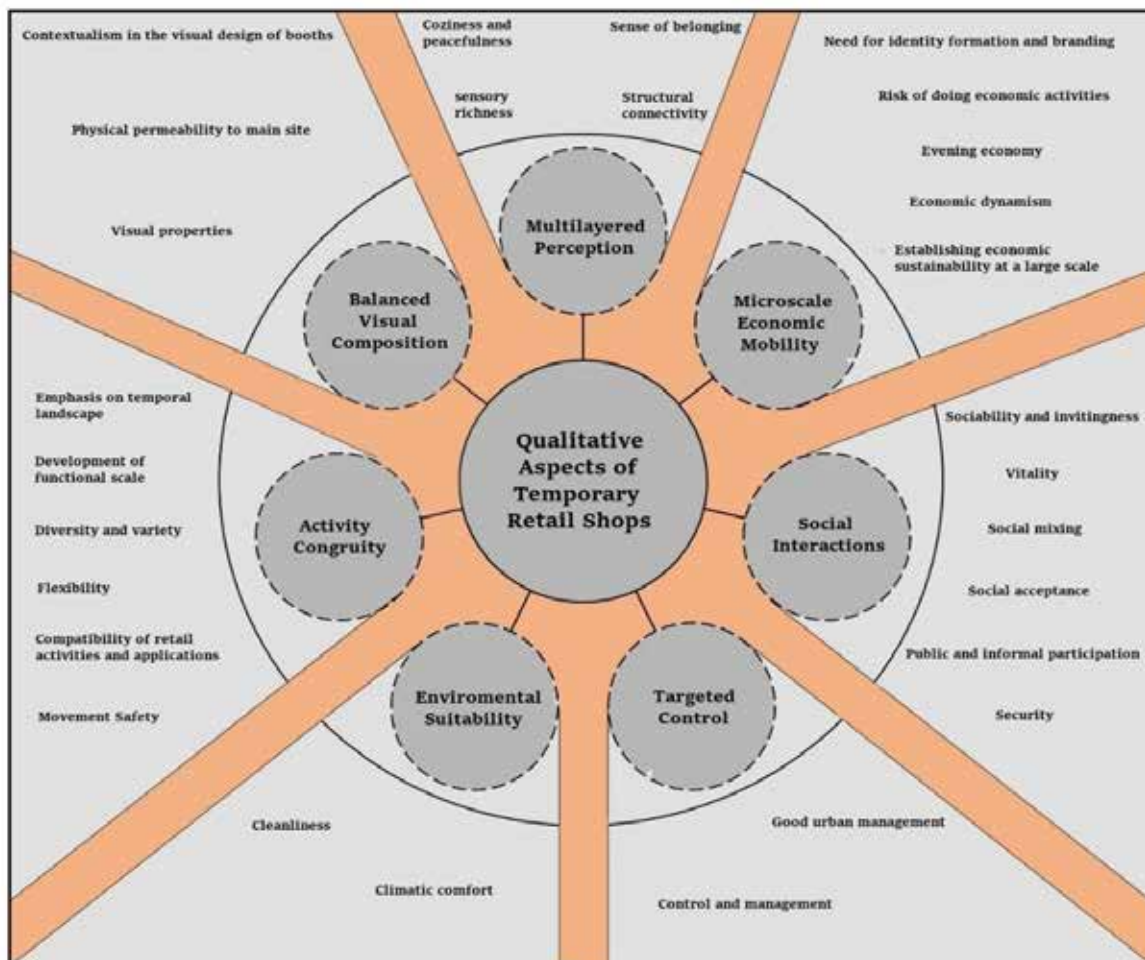


Fig. 6. Thematic network of the impact of the establishment of temporary retail in pedestrian spaces. Source: Authors.

Endnote

1. Necessary activities are rather compulsory such as going to school or work, shopping, waiting for a bus, running errands, distributing mail, etc. In other words, a necessary activity is any activity in which the involved people are required to participate to some extent. Optional activities are the ones that are participated if there is a wish to do so. Social activities are the ones that depend on the presence of others in public spaces including children's play, greetings and conversations, communal activities of various kinds and passive contacts, i.e. simply seeing and hearing other people (Gehl, 2011).
2. A van café is a van vehicle converted into a mobile café through modifying its appearance and adding certain equipments for serving drinks and small meals.
3. Considering that the economic aspect of this phenomenon is not the subject of urban design in the selected framework, it has been mentioned briefly.

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HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Kashani Hamedani, M., Sajadzadeh, H. & Izadi, M. S. (2021). Explaining the Role of Temporary Retail Shops in the Environmental Quality of Urban Walkways. *Bagh-e Nazar*, 18(99), 97-110.

DOI: 10.22034/bagh.2021.236465.4580

URL: http://www.bagh-sj.com/article_129396.html?lang=en

