

## **Social Impact of Amusement Parks**

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**ABSTRACT** – Manufacturing and productive service industries such as urban recreation and leisure industry have contributed to capital generation during past several decades. Modernism era (19th to middle of 20th centuries) had many conceptual and symbolic differences compared to present atmosphere known as postmodern era. Metropolitan areas were historically recognized by the “brands” of their manufacturing industries up to the middle of 20th century. Former city functions have been replaced by new ones and urban spaces are now organized based on social and economic changes that occurred during postmodern era. Among spaces that extensively increase public consumption, create employment, and promote urban living are spaces created to provide recreational, leisure, training, and tourism services. Present amusement parks are multifunctional and provide cultural, economic, and social functions. These parks provide pre and post relations various industries that supply product and services to Metropolitan areas including large industrial producers of amusement park equipment’s, consulting and construction companies, transport industry, and other productive service industries providing design, consulting, insurance, banking, travel, and other similar services. Amusement parks produce extensive social and cultural impacts. Large theme parks have turned into “global villages” that act as a crossroad for different social strata, civilizations, and nations. Iran 1404 Outlook Document has put priority on improvement of social justice in all economic, social, and cultural programs. This document has highlighted infrastructure development for macro programming. In compliance with the directives of this document, Tehran Municipality has undertaken to construct one of the largest social and cultural projects with the participation of private sector. This huge project is named “Hezar-o-Yek Shahr” recreational complex. This complex is planned over 150,000 hectares and incorporates Islamic and Iranian cultural and architectural characteristics in its construction. “Hezar O Yek Shahr” is intended to become the focal point and serve as a model for optimization of economic, social, and cultural functions for residents of Tehran metropolitan area. Present study is a practical research based on its objectives. Research methodology is analytic-descriptive. The findings of this research confirmed the effectiveness of social oriented projects in improving living quality and enrichment of leisure time subject to effective management and monitoring.

**KEYWORDS:** Urban Tourism, Tehran, Tehran District 22, Hezar O Yek Shahr Amusement Park

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### **Introduction**

The most important function of recreation is to provide for safe and risk free regeneration. When social groups or individuals are deprived of recreation or leisure time, the short and long term consequences may be harmful or ill behaviors in one way or the other. Social ills may include wide range of simple or minor nervous disorders to major psychological or psycho-somatic illnesses. Personal problems of members may extend to social levels through vicious cycles and show up in forms of major social tensions, excitements, and harms. Present day recreational and leisure industry have turned into a branch of urban tourism making the industry one of the most lucrative economic sectors in the world. However, Iranian economy has not benefited from this trend for various reasons including lack of unified urban management, sector oriented view instead of space-position view, population growth during past decades (especially youth population growth), rapid urbanization, and industry inability to attract new inflow of migrating workforce. When we add other economic factors that influence Iranian economy such as inability to compete in global markets and dominant role of petroleum income, we witness an economy that gives a free hand to nonproductive sectors who act in the detriment of economic prosperity and influence the creation of urban spaces to their liking through speculative transactions and risky investments on urban development. Such an economic atmosphere is not responsive to modern space requirements and, consequently, fails to fulfill production and service requirements of postmodern era. These shortcomings will finally exacerbate inequality and undermine citizens’ rights. The scope of urban living quality and life satisfaction has expanded extensively in postmodern era. Multidimensional aspects of metropolitan area residents together with varied perceptions of different urbanized social groups about how to spend time for leisure and recreation have created new requirements for recreational and tourism centers. These requirements forces metropolitan areas to adopt and include functions within a planned space that meet diverse cultural and recreational needs. That is why wise space allocation and management

based on social needs has gained high priority in urban planning. Recreational and leisure spaces contribute to economic improvement of metropolitan areas. The outcome is higher living quality for residents through proper and effective management and place marketing.

The following issues are to be considered for space planning in Hezar O Yek Shahr Project.

- Environmental utilization without harmful effects on natural resources or creation of social, cultural, and economic problems for community;
- Maintaining a balance between development in and expansion of the area;
- Creating employment opportunities and income improvement through urban construction, infrastructural development, and public service provisions;
- Protection of natural resources and cultural heritage along with prevention of irregular utilization of urban lands; and
- Organization of western Tehran entrances to provide access to the foremost symbolic recreational-commercial space during its construction and operation.

#### **Research Significance**

Spatial evaluation of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project involves many factors and indexes. The following is the list of factors and indexes that require special attention.

- Effective factors in project management;
- Effective factors in project design;
- Effective factors in project implementation;
- Citizen needs and their attitude toward life;
- Private sector's capacity for investment in tourism development; and
- Legal facilities to be provided by government and municipality.

The quality and type of performance provided by these factors and indexes lead to creation of a social atmosphere with positive and negative attributes including:

- Quality and quantity of urban infrastructures;
- Urban and regional traffics and traveling;
- Land and housing prices;
- Land usages in District 22 and neighboring areas;
- Population in the area;
- Degree of life satisfaction;
- Quality of city services;
- Municipality income.

This study examines the changes in these attributes from social points of view.

#### **Research Hypothesis**

Construction of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project will have positive effects on improving living quality of Tehran citizens, especially present and future residents of District 22.

#### **Research Methodology**

Present study is a practical research based on its objectives. Research methodology is analytic-descriptive and is performed in two steps:

1. Data collection and indexing. Data collection was through library research and field study (questionnaire, observation, and interview).
2. Comparative and analytical studies. Data analysis was performed through comparing economical, social, and traffic indexes using SPSS20 software.

This study used three sets of questions related to subjective and objective attributes of living quality. Subjective attributes include happiness, monotony, and security. Objective attributes include urban infrastructures, traffic conditions, sound pollution, business improvement, employment opportunities, and family leisure expenditures.

#### **Leisure and Recreation**

Leisure refers to that part of human activities that are undertaken voluntarily, freely, and willfully to address personal and social needs. The ultimate objective of these activities is to achieve comfort, satisfaction, wellbeing, and actualization. Leisure is an activity intended to seek relief and meaning in life.

Leisure, in another definition, is a collection of activities that a person engages on personal or social level at own will with the intention to take rest, have fun, gain knowledge, get training, or be creative free from occupational, family, or social commitments.

Leisure has turned into a common approach and an essential solution for addressing important parts of material, spiritual, and social needs of community members. Leisure programs are planned in consideration of present urban life problems such as environmental pollution, traffic problems, inflation, overwork, instability, insecurity, tension, and the like. Leisure is no longer considered merely a secondary activity. It is rather the outcome of economic and cultural advancements that are directed by objectives set forth for achieving living quality improvement, self-actualization, and life enrichment.

Many contemporary socialists believe that leisure has gained such level of importance in current human activities to make it "the fourth development stage of human civilization" after agriculture, industry, and services. Current society has turned into "leisure

civilization” or “leisure society”. Bertrand Russell, famous contemporary philosopher, made an informative and explanatory declaration by stating: “the latest outcome of civilization is thoughtful human ability to fill own leisure time” (O’Leavitt, 2000: 54). Enrichment of leisure time is a citizens’ rights and is closely associated with social identity, creativity, physical and psychological reinvigoration, and living quality improvement. Utilization and allocation of recreational and leisure spaces are issues to be studied involving human daily life in metropolitan areas. Recreational spaces are not equally experienced by everyone as urban life perception is influenced by diverse variables including age, gender, social strata, ethnic background and race (Slovin, 2001:20).

Leisure space applications have been subject of many studies by various disciplines in recent years including humanity, sociology, geography, and architecture. Every discipline provides its own definition of urban leisure spaces. These various definitions complement each other. Leisure spaces from social-cultural viewpoint are spaces formed for the purpose of development and support of external relationships including social communications, interactions, exchanges and encounters. They are places where different groups with various needs and desires gather to socialize, interact, and exchanges views.

Recreational spaces are also defined as “spaces for open thinking” as they are designed and planned for various impromptu and spontaneous activities which facilitate fulfillment of diverse citizens’ needs and desires (Khameneh, 1997:103). Recreational spaces turn into social identities when they serve as public spaces available to many individuals to carry out various and diverse activities. Recreational spaces which turn into participatory landscapes become part of main urban life to reflect community culture, beliefs, and values.

### **Commercial Domain as Public Identity**

Hollands and Chatterton (2003) reported that recreation and leisure play a significant role in modern urban economy and are identified by “leisure and recreation patterns”. Leisure and recreation are being promoted by multinational brands. Therefore, it is impossible to ignore the wide regeneration of these brands within urban culture.

We live in an era when large multinational corporations are inclined to expand their influence on leisure and recreation. They use their brands to dominate their market, improve their market share, and expand their commercial standing. This is a phenomena associated with globalization and determines the focus of economic activities. It is reflected by the round-the-clock branding of large commercial centers intended to dominate the recreation and leisure time of their audience. Monbiot (2000) recited Hollands and Chatterton by stating that we have reached a position where “the facilities we have created for large corporations to provide us with more services are working toward our extinction”.

Market focus by new global players has produced specialized market segmentations that have effectively worked toward replacing the historic and traditional ways of recreation with new ways of round-the-clock pleasure and fun (Maciocco, 2009:52). The end result has been the branding of leisure and recreation that are commonly accepted as the natural feature of public spaces and has become a part of contemporary living. This development represents a gross change compared to the past when recreational spaces were kept separate from public places. An example is the huge Disneyland Complex.

Various rehabilitation works are underway in metropolitan areas. For example, old industrial areas are being converted into new night recreational areas to facilitate modern infrastructures for leisure and recreation of the wealthy who are seeking pleasure and fun. Multinational corporations, media centers, leisure and recreational enterprises participate in the redesign of urban landscape into “brand space”.

Creation of spaces for arts, leisure and recreation in urban renewal era is serving as a vehicle for intercity rehabilitation works by thinking new application for old areas. Contrary to hearsay about postmodernism’s stress on supply of variety of goods, the supply side view has really worked toward offering standard and common goods.

Commercialization is not a new concept. Simmel stressed that a form of city commercialization existed in eighteenth century and contributed to development of culture, social identity, and belongingness concept. Names such as Hollywood, Guinness World, and Silicon Valley are examples of commercialization. This form of commercialization was associated to certain cities for several decades (Maciocco, 2009:81).

Commercialization project plays important roles in urban transformation. It may also present serious risks in social control if it is used as a means for collective social development - control over readily access to leisure, arts, and cultural activities. This problem was exacerbated by generally lowered humanism in postmodern societies represented by relationship difficulties and overall life dissatisfaction.

Commercialization of urban development through applications of arts and culture has certain advantages and disadvantages. It is believed that branding changes the order and organization concepts into a multidimensional reality which enables us to understand and explain spaces and products within a simple framework. Similarly, commercialization support common identity and culture (Latour, 1987:59).

There are other examples of spaces and movements which invite resistance against commercialization and provide a ground for citizens to voice objections against dominance of large corporation over public sector and common spaces. Hollands and Chatterton explained this reaction as a balancing power against dominating tendencies and controls excreted by large corporations. Certain places with entrepreneurial culture have been created with the intention to resist and oppose commercialization tendencies. We would face many problems if we were to resort only to regulations in defense of consumers’ rights vis-a-vis producers because it involves human rights (Morisi, 2007:118).

Consumers and citizens should increase the frequency of their interactions with businesses in order to gain a better understanding of business, marketing, and strategies, and learn how they are grouped. This may be the first step toward creating more democratic, creative, diverse, and real nightly recreation.

### **Economics of Urban Tourism**

Productization of urban spaces is one important part of economic activities related to tourism. Tourism transforms cities from merely economic industrial spaces to leisure and recreation spaces. The transformation process offers urban spaces as marketable goods or leisure times. This is a key aspect in local economy in many cities that have transformed into tourist attractions. This process requires changes in urban planning which is traditionally influenced by tensions and conflicts present within layers of city management. Problems arise when cities are nominated to become tourism destinations in addition to being places for work and living. The tensions affect the relations of tourism versus work policies, work policies versus preservation of nature, savings of values versus opening up to new experiences. Transformation of urban spaces will, inevitably, get cut in a power struggle. Tourism in any form involves redefinition of values. Meethan (1997) paid attention to the conflicting forces fighting to gain dominance and control over urban space. He believed that approaches adapted for creation of quality spaces should conform to the historical background of the elements that make those spaces. These approaches should also incorporate the existing social and economic structures with the new ideas and representations. Local values, ideals, and symbols are inherent to urban spaces and should be considered in reevaluation of the urban spaces nominated for improvement. With focus on quality and value of aesthetic, cities are being transformed into usable recreational and amusement spaces based on their existing cultural and architectural characteristics. Reevaluation of cities is a response to the changes in macro economy at global level. The reevaluation at local level should reflect the set objectives at city level and experimental micro policies at district level. Social changes could be observed in New York City when it was transformed from a postindustrial state to a tourist attraction one. New York City officials would not invest on tourism as an important source of income before 1980s. They argued that tourism was a secondary and seasonal sector that was not fully developed. Tourism became subject of conflict between economic benefits of local organizations and establishments from one side and macro views of city managers from another side.

Conservative New York City officials maintained a “hands off” approach to city management and did not engage in development of tourist attractions. Tourism trips to the inner city remained limited due to this strategy. This passive and “indirect” position did not support policies that would help New York City and its neighboring communities to benefit from opportunities that would turn them into tourist attractions. The outcome of the urban planning approach which is directed in providing technical solutions to urban problems is creation of spaces that do not conform to what people actually experience. In case of New York City, it was development of urban tourism as a solution to economic problems of the city. This different understanding or view may provide a ground for conflict of interest between the needs perceived by city residents and needs perceived by potential tourists. One important factor to be considered is the fact that urban spaces face continual transformation in a tourist attraction city. Space control not only is made of economic and organizational elements but also works as means to develop and maintain city identity and culture (Morisi, 2007:39). Transformation of a city into tourism and leisure attraction should have the objective to influence its potential visitors. It also affects its own residents through working policies that provide a wider outlook of city perspectives. In such conditions, space control gains strategic role and serves as a means to improve citizens’ understanding of the approaches adapted for transforming city into a tourist attraction. Any undertaking to develop a city into tourist attraction should involve a search into understanding the culture and perception of its residents at various social strata. Such study will help in gaining an understanding of what is meaningful for city residents in terms of spatial images. Paola Pittaluga proposed a matrix made up of psychological, sociological, and geographical dimensions. This matrix quantifies the environmental and spatial values of residents to arrive at spaces that provide for living of the residents who value the interrelations between community members - the relationships that highlight the symbolic parameters, ideals, and concerns of the local community. Paying attention to ways residents portray space based on their cultural and psychological states is important for creating a clear perspective. These states are derived from daily encounters and life experiences of residents. They are important to reveal the gap between what is obtained from the analysis and the real traditions that are maintained in urban areas and their suburbs. The interpretation of space varies based on community perceptions which are influenced by their expectations and ideals. Variations in interpretation act as minor external factors related to objects and diverse perceptions of that object. They may also be minor internal factors created as the consequence of significant changes in perception (Scheyvens, 2002:70).

### **Social Impacts of Recreational Development**

Large scale tourism developments may provide huge benefits and, yet, create serious problems for local residents. Measurement of social and cultural impacts may be much more difficult than economic and environmental effects. As developing countries normally have their own traditional culture, failure to effectively evaluate the socio-cultural consequences of tourism development may present serious problems. The negative effects of these problems have helped formation of radical schools of thought who objected the formation of large scale tourism projects during past decades especially 1960s (Latour, 1987:75). The radical groups argued that such developments will destroy the socio-cultural values and traditional beliefs in the local communities. They maintained that the only outcome of such developments is social crisis and consumerism. Rapid development of tourism industry plus formation of different international, national, private, and non for profit organizations together with contributions made by academic research and formation of academic disciplines related to tourism helped to defuse the opposition provided by anti-tourism groups. The residents of most tourism destinations realized that if tourism is very well planned, they will face very few problems and tourism will serve to provide opportunities for cultural interactions and improvement. That is the reason that comprehensive planning for tourism industry, evaluation and measurement of socio-cultural effects of tourism on hosting communities are acceptable and required procedures (Scheyvens, 2002:29).

Social impacts of tourism represent the changes that may occur in living standards of hosting communities. The effect comes from the interaction between members of local communities and visiting tourists. Cultural effects may show up in the form of changes that may occur in arts, customs, and architecture of hosting communities. Socio-cultural effects are the changes in daily experiences, values, life style, artistic and intellectual products of hosting communities. They are long term changes resulting from the development of tourism industry over a period of time. Tourism development may introduce certain social problems to local communities including addictions, alcoholism, and crimes. It may also create social disorder and alter local culture to affect dressing, dialect, customs, and values in the immediate areas (Latour, 1987:64). Tourism also has diverse positive socio-cultural effects on local communities. It provides opportunities for socio-cultural exchanges and interactions between tourists and local residents. These exchanges add to cultural dynamism of both visitors and visiting communities. New cultural experiences shall lead to improved living quality for both groups (Morisi, 2007:66).

### **History and Current Trends**

The origin of recreational parks lies in middle ages when they were constructed around European cities. They were the early forms of current amusement parks offering fireworks, games, riding, dance, and similar activities. The early forms of recreational parks were popular and in use up the end of seventeenth century when they were closed because of political unrest. Bakken Park in Copenhagen opened in 1583 and is known as the oldest recreational park. The next oldest recreational park is Prater Park inaugurated in 1766 in Vienna, Austria. Recreational industry entered United State at the end of eighteenth century. End of Civil War marked the expansion of urban development through additional intra-city railroad services and intercity electric trolleys. Public services received low fees to encourage the use of public transportation. Transport companies were searching for ways to increase use of public transportation during weekends. Recreational parks were the answer. These parks were built around lakes or along riversides at the end of trolley lines. They offered simple recreational opportunities including group activities, dance parlors, restaurants, game rooms, and a few riding facilities. Successful reception of earlier parks by city residents helped their expansion throughout United States. World's Columbian Exhibition of 1893 in Chicago launched the golden era of amusement parks. This exhibition introduced Ferris wheel and amusement midway as part of its attraction. Inclusion of various riding equipments in this exhibition was so successful that help creation of many amusement parks around United States during the following 60 years. Paul Boyton opened Paul Boyton's Water Chute, America's first modern amusement park, at 63rd and Drexel in Chicago, Illinois, on July 4, 1894. Unlike early trolley parks that offered picnic places around a lake, Water Chute was the first amusement park to use riding equipment extensively. Success of this park inspired Paul Boyton and Thomas Polk to build another example in 1895 for Sea Lion Park Coney Island, New York in 1895. Development of amusement parks continued well into twentieth century with Coney Island acting as its center of expansion. The high point of expansion was the construction of highly glamorous amusement parks with myriad of smaller attractions. New amusement parks opened around the world and trolley parks expanded to offer additional attractions by adding various riding equipments. Invention of new park equipments provided lots of fun to the growing population of United States. Amusement parks grow to 1500 around US by 1919. However, the blossoming period was short lived and ended in 1929 because of Depression. Only 400 amusement parks could survive by 1935. The second blow to this industry came during World War II. Many amusement parks were forced to close and others were barred from adding new equipments because of rationing (Broun, 2000:26). Amusement parks benefited from the boom that followed the victorious end of World War II. New recreational parks opened around United States with record new visitors. The idea for creation of Kiddieland Amusement Park came about to benefit from the baby boomers. Parks like Kiddieland provided recreation to people who were living in suburb of cities which were experiencing rapid expansion. This period was also short lived. Wide availability of television starting from 1950s followed by migration of people from inner cities to move to expanding suburbs imposed heavy losses to inner city residents. These changes were harmful to well being of recreational parks as people sought other ways of entertainment. The industry needed new ways for renewal and Disneyland provided that. When Disneyland opened its doors to visitors it offered a totally different concept of entertainment. Many questioned the wisdom of an amusement park without the traditional attractions. Disneyland had five distinctive zones that offered visitors the opportunities to travel into various times and locations using their imaginations.

The popularity and success of amusement parks in United States interested the owners and operators of these parks to expand into new markets including Europe and Asia. Disney Incorporation has been the most active company to expand outside of United States. Presently there are 19 large amusement parks in operation in Europe. The most notable has been the opening of Euro Disneyland in Paris with 13 million visitors per year. This park is expected to make great contribution to the rising trend of amusement parks in Europe.

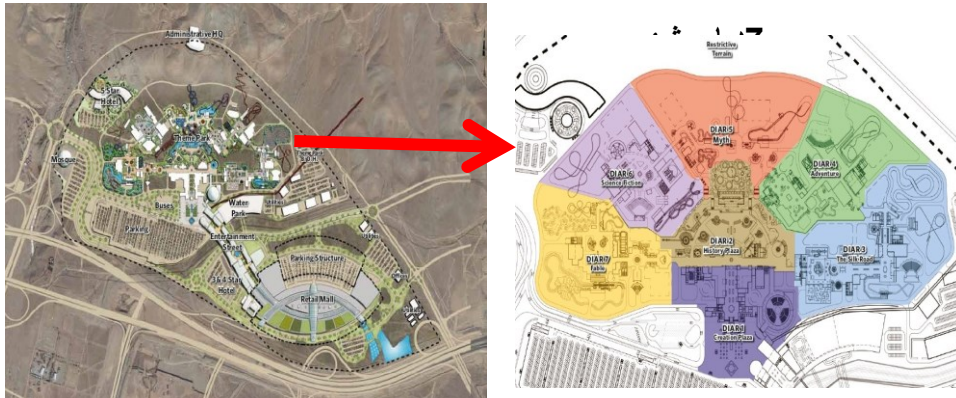
Disneyland provided three contributions to Europe:

- Encouraged further expansion of existing amusement parks around Europe into multifunctional parks.
- Helped improvements in park management over long run.
- Increased employments by offering multitudes of work opportunities.

Amusement parks in Asia also experienced a growing trend. It is estimated that 35 large amusement parks in Asia attend to 71 million visitors per year and earn a total annual income of 1.5 billion Dollars. Medium amusement parks number 49 with total annual income of 350 million Dollars. The total revenue of amusement parks in Asia is estimated at 1.8 billion Dollars (Kyriazi, 1997:48). Japan is experiencing the highest growth of amusement parks in Asia especially in Tokyo, Osaka, and Kobe. Amusement parks in other Asian countries like Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, and Malaysia are also experiencing expanding trends.



Map 4: Positions Amusement Park within Hezar O Yek Shahr Complex



Source: Hezar O Yek Shahr Comprehensive Plan Studies

Amusement Park will have seven zones covering 54,000 square meters. Each zone is named one Diar and will feature a unique attraction. The seven zones are as follows:

- Diar 1: Creation Plaza
- Diar 2: History Plaza
- Diar 3: Modern Plaza
- Diar 4: Adventure Plaza
- Diar 5: Silk Road
- Diar 6: Science Fiction
- Diar 7: Storybook Garden

Hezar O Yek Shahr Impact Study  
Statistical Population

Statistical survey is performed on a sample of statistical population for many reasons including cost-time limitations and accessibility of statistical population. The size of statistical sample for this study was calculated at 296 using Cochran formula with 10% error. This study distributed 306 questionnaires to avoid falling below the required sample size due to possible rejection of some questionnaires. Six questionnaires were dropped in final review because of logical errors or incomplete answers. The rest of 300 questionnaires were used for the analysis. Cochran formula used for this study to calculate the size of the sample with 95% level of significance and  $p=0.1$  is stated below:

$$n = \frac{p \cdot q \cdot N \cdot t^2}{d^2 \cdot (N - 1) + t^2 \cdot P}$$

Where,  $t=1.96$ ,  $p=0.5$ , and  $q=0.5$

1. Questions related to current living quality level in the area:

No.	Question
1	How much desire do you have to reside in District 22?
2	How much happiness and usefulness do you feel in your personal and family life?
3	How dull is your life?
4	How happy and refreshing is city spaces for you?
5	How much gender inequality do you experience in using city facilities?
6	How much sound pollution do you experience in District 22?
7	What is the current traffic level in District 22?





No.	Questions
1	How much increase in transportation and traffic is expected after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project?
2	How much increase in travel time is expected between home and office for residents of District 22 after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project?
3	How much increase is expected in intercity traveling after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project?
4	How much increase is expected in car accidents in District 22 after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project (subject to supervision provided by traffic police)?
5	How much reduction in leisure traveling during official holidays is expected for residents of District 22 after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project?

This study examines the effects of construction of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project on living quality of residents in the immediate neighboring areas. The data for this study was collected from 300 accepted questionnaires received from the families living in the area. The effects were measured by t-statistics using SPSS20 Software.

*Cronbach Alpha Coefficient*

Cronbach Alpha coefficient is a common way of measuring reliability of questionnaire. Reliability of a questionnaire indicates the repeatability of the results if the tool is used in another time under similar circumstances.

Cronbach alpha coefficient is used to measure whether attitudes, beliefs, views, or similar attributes are one-dimensional. This is indicative of how closely respondents perceived the questions proposed in the questionnaire. This coefficient is based on scales. Each scale represents a range of numbers that map the qualities that are attributed to individuals, objects, or behaviors into measurable quantities. The most common scale used in social studies is Likert scale. Likert scale assumes equal weight for questions. Answer to each question is scaled based on the number of possible answers. For example, a question with 5 possible answers is said to be a 5-item Likert scale. The total score obtained from answers indicates the individual's tendency.

Cronbach Alpha coefficient is calculated from one of the two formulas:

$$\alpha = \frac{k}{k-1} \left( 1 - \frac{\sum_{i=1}^k S_i^2}{\sigma^2} \right) \quad \text{or} \quad \alpha = \frac{k\bar{C}}{\bar{V} + (k-1)\bar{C}}$$

Where  $k$  is the number of questions,  $S_i^2$  is the variance of  $i^{th}$  question,  $\sigma^2$  is the total variance of questions,  $\bar{C}$  is mean covariance between questions, and  $\bar{V}$  is mean variance of questions (adapted from Allen and Yen, 2002).

*Reliability Measurement*

Reliability measurement of the questions related to quality of life before construction of Hezar O Yek Shahr (first set of questions) produced the following results by SPSS Software:

Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
12	0.862

Calculated Cronbach alpha is higher than 0.7 indicating that the questionnaire had desirable reliability for measuring quality of life before project construction.

Reliability measurement of the questions about the quality of life after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project (second set of questions) produced the following results by SPSS Software:

Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
14	0.803

Calculated Cronbach alpha is higher than 0.7 indicating that the questionnaire had desirable reliability for measuring quality of life after the project completion.



Paired Sample Test

	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair m3 - x7	-0.63574	1.00138	0.05801	-0.74990	-0.52158	-10.959	297	0.000

The results show different traffic conditions before and after project construction. Therefore, null hypothesis assuming no difference between traffic conditions before and after project construction is rejected. The difference between average score of traffic conditions before and after project completion was -0.64. This indicates that traffic condition will increase after project completion. As objective of this study was to measure living quality, therefore, questions related to traffic condition received negative scores. A low traffic score represents higher traffic and lower living quality.

*Socio-economic Comparison*

This study compared the family expenditure for leisure and recreation before and after project construction, as an indicator of the socio-economic impact. The results are presented in the following table.

Paired Sample Test

	Paired Differences					t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair x12 - x13	-1.7915	1.11777	0.06440	-1.91869	-1.66520	-27.824	297	0.000

The results show that economic condition of residents is different before and after project construction. Therefore, null hypothesis assuming no difference between economic condition of residents before and after project construction is rejected. The difference between average score of economic conditions before and after project completion was -1.71. This indicates that family economic condition will improve after project completion.

Conclusion

Recreational spaces make a clear contribution to making cities homogenous and unified. High quality recreational spaces are required for comfort of a society. They will enable people to enjoy their social interactions. Hezar O Yek Shahr Project is planned to serve this objective and provide additional facilities for sports and recreation. Preventive measures are more effective than remedial actions in addressing social problems such as addiction, street harassment, crimes, etc. Hezar O Yek Shahr Project can decrease the number of social problems in Tehran, especially in District 22 by providing opportunities for enrichment of leisure time.

Hezar O Yek Shahr Project will act as a ground for regular interactions of people who use its services. Attendance of people in recreational activities provided by this park will serve to unify members of society. Human interactions have been greatly influenced by rapid advancements of technology and communication. These advancements have reduced the opportunity for face to face contact. A project like Hezar O Yek Shahr shall serve to provide the missing opportunities.

Population concentration creates complex issues causing inequalities and difficulties in service provision to different social strata. Increased work hours and taking up multiple jobs create new requirements for further planning to fulfill vital needs for recreation and leisure time suitable in different age groups. One way to meet this requirement is increased use of public spaces.

Human activities require certain public spaces. This requirement helps the formation of various applications of public service. Planning and allocation of spaces for certain activities especially the ones that take place outside home demands advance planning (Javan, 2003:31).

The spaces to be provided after completion of Hezar O Yek Shahr Project are expected to contribute toward higher living quality. This project share a feature with other city projects in offering “spaces free of prejudice and personal ownership”. Large complexes that provide public spaces offer a wider perspective for personal and group activities. Exceptionally well planned spaces can balance different aspects of life. They can also fulfill diverse needs of citizens and gain satisfaction through access to places that are suitable for achieving a reasonably acceptable living standards and relative comfort.

Hezar O Yek Shahr Project is expected to provide improved economic condition and higher living standards in spite of the expected higher traffic conditions based on the responses received from study sample.

