

Quality Assessment of Pedestrian Streets in Iran: Case Study of Saf, Tehran

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Abstract : Pedestrian streets as one type of urban public spaces have an important role in improving the quality of urban life. In Iran, planning and designing of pedestrian streets is in its primary steps. In spite of starting this approach in Iran, and designing several pedestrian streets, there are still not organized studies about quality assessment of pedestrian streets. As a result, the strength and weakness points of the initial experiences have not been utilized. This inattention to quality assessment have caused designing pedestrian streets to be limited to just vehicles traffic control and preliminary actions like paving; so that, special potentials of pedestrian streets for creating social, livable and dynamic public spaces have not been used. This article, as an organized study about quality assessment of pedestrian streets in Iran, tries to reach two main goals: first, introducing a framework for quality assessment of pedestrian streets in Iran, and second, creating a context for improving the quality of pedestrian streets especially for further experiences. The main research methods are description and context analyzing. With respect to comparative analysis of ideas about quality, considering international and local case studies and analyzing existing condition of Saf Pedestrian Street, a particular model for quality assessment has been introduced. In this model, main components and assessment criteria have been presented. On the basis of this model, questionnaire and checklist for assessment have been prepared. The questionnaire and interview have been used to assess qualities which are in direct contact with people and the checklist has been used for analyzing visual qualities by authors through observation. Some results of questionnaire and checklist show that 7 of 11 primary components, diversity, flexibility, cleanness, legibility and imaginability, identity, livability, form and physical setting are rated low and very low in quality degree. Three components, efficiency, comfort and distinctiveness, have medium and low quality degree and one component, access, linkage and permeability has high quality degree. Therefore, based on implemented analyzing process, Saf Pedestrian Street needs to be improved and these quality improvement priorities are determined based on presented criteria. Adaption of final results with existing condition illustrates the shortage of services for satisfying user's needs, inflexibility and impossibility of using spaces in various times, lack of facilities for different climatic conditions, lack of facilities such as drinking fountain, inappropriate designing of existing urban furniture like garbage cans, and creating pollution and unsuitable view, lack of visual attractions, neglecting disabled persons in designing entrances, shortage of benches and their undesirable designing, lack of vegetation, absence of special characters making it different from other streets, preventing people taking part in the space causing lack of affiliation, lack of appropriate elements for leisure time and lack of exhilaration in the space. On the other hand, these results present high access and permeability, high safety, less sound pollution and more relief, comfortable movement along the way due to suitable pavement and economic efficiency, as the strength points of Saf pedestrian street.

Keywords : pedestrian streets, quality assessment, quality criteria, Saf Pedestrian Street

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