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## **STUDYING THE VITALITY RATE IN GATED COMMUNITIES (THE CASE STUDY OF TABRIZ)**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Urban vitality is among the terms which have been used in many areas of urban planning in the past decade. Charles Landry investigated the vitality of urban areas in different aspects: Economical vitality, cultural vitality and livability. Specific gated communities are complexes isolated from other areas through physical factors, such as walls. Gated communities are divided to three sections, including lifestyle, social status and secure neighborhoods. This study is an applied and developmental research and its' method is descriptive- analytical one. It is based on field study using the present documents. The aim of this study is to demonstrate the rate and status of vitality among the especial gated communities. Based on the results, the overall vitality indicators in the gated communities, is about 3.25 and the medium 3, which represents a relatively good rate of vitality in these residential complexes. The four vitality variables in residential complexes, was obtained 0.000 ( $p < 0.005$ ) that was significant. Therefore, establishing the gated residential complexes can increase the vitality and social stability among the residents.

**Keywords:** *Gated Communities, Vitality, Stability, Security, Social Stability*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Due to the changes in situations and factors affecting the urban development in recent years, residential complexes have achieved a special place in the formation of cities. Gated communities, as urban physical spaces, are small communities which have been enclosed by physical elements such as walls, fences and doors and isolated from other neighborhoods (Blakey & Snyder, 1997).

In fact, the development of Gated communities and fixing the gates to the streets (especially in large cities in Western countries) suggests that these areas are symbol of some social actions in specific families (Kirby, 2008). Blakey and Snyder (1997) divided the Gated communities to three forms:

A: communities with special lifestyle

B: communities with high status

C: communities with lower security

Given that gated communities are spatially a type of enclave, Low (2003), among other anthropologists, has argued that they have a negative effect on the net social capital of the broader community outside the gated community. The social sciences literature about gated communities has been highly publicized, and three types of arguments are now part of a general theoretical discourse, which especially focuses on the relationship between gated communities and social segregation. First, gated Enclaves are described both as a physical and obvious expression of the post-industrial Societal changes (fragmentation, individualism, rise of communities), as part of a Commoditization trend of urban public space (Sorkin, 1992; Dear and Flusty, 1998), and as a Penetration of ideologies of fear and security supported by economic and political actors (Renaud, 2003).

There has not already been a clear assessment of the vitality and sustainability of gated communities in different cities of Iran, except evaluation of the life quality in both the country and city by international agencies (City Studies and Planning Center in Tehran, 2009).

Tabriz, in terms of physically connected development, encounters with serious obstacles (faults and steep slopes have prevented Tabriz from physically connected and continuous development). On the other hand, by increasing population of Tabriz city, providing the residential space seems essential for citizens. Tabriz population growth rate in the five-year period, 1385 – 1390, was 1.92%, while it was 1.61% in

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1375-1385. That is an indicator of the growing population of this metropolis in future years. To prepare the adequate space for the increasing population, it is necessary to conduct a comparative study and evaluate the vitality level of citizens in Gated communities by which we can increase the quality of these complexes. This study tries to test this hypothesis: it seems that specialization of the complexes may increase the vitality rate.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

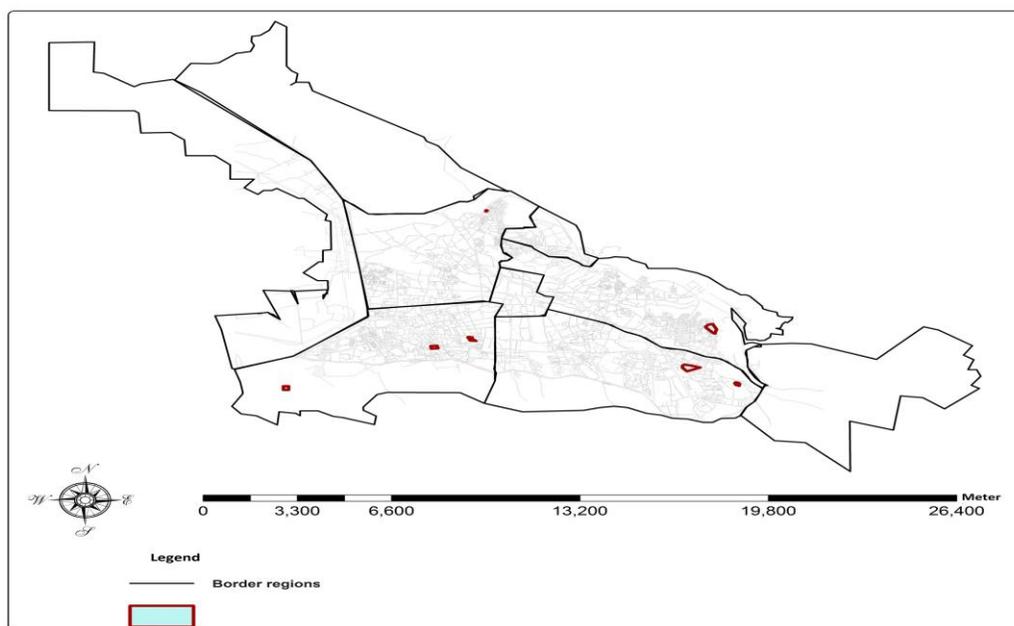
This is an applied and developmental study and based on field work (direct observation, interview and questionnaire) and the documents. Cochran method was used to determine the sample size, which included the following formula (Hafez, 1999):

$$n = \frac{\frac{t^2 PQ}{d^2}}{1 + \frac{1}{N} \left( \frac{t^2 PQ}{d^2} - 1 \right)}$$

The study area includes Tabriz metropolis with 2 million populations as the capital of East Azerbaijan province in North West Iran. According to the study population (N) which includes 3261 housing units, sample size (n) is 343. To choose the sample size, stratified random sampling method is used.

**Table 1: Characteristics of the studied samples**

Residential complex	Household	Population	Block	Floor
Negin Milad	48	190	3	4
Abadane Maskan	95	335	10	5
Pezeskan	128	460	3	12
Amirkabir	160	575	4	4
Farhangshahr	496	1700	42	4
Aseman	928	3152	18	18
Eskan	1406	5200	27	4



**Figure 1: Map of Study areas**

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To determine the variables of Gated communities’ vitality, an exploratory factor analysis model is used. In the second output of exploratory factor analysis, Bartlett test results are shown that approximate the chi-square statistic. Bartlett test value is less than 5% (0.000). It is statistically significant and shows that to identify the structure, the factor analysis model is suitable. The opposite hypothesis is confirmed; there is a significant correlation between the variables. The KMO index value is 0.894 (Close to one), which represents the suitability of data for factor analysis (Table 2). To measure the vitality of the samples, one-sample t-test is used.

**Table 2: Bartlett test and KMO index to assess the adequacy of the sample**

<b>KMO Bartlett’s test</b>		
<b>Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy</b>		<b>.894</b>
<b>Bartlett’s test of Sphericity</b>	Approx Chi-square	17651.181
	df	406
	Sig.	.000

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

After determining the vitality indicators (the way of choosing the indicators are previously described), one-sample t- test method is used to confirm or reject the hypothesis. Since we used Likert scale, number 3 is considered as moderate. Accordingly, if the above mentioned mean index is higher than 3, it represents the vitality and if it is less than 3, it show the lack of vitality in Gated communities. Therefore, the statistical hypotheses are defined as follows:

There is lack of vitality:  $H_0 : \mu \leq 3$  There is vitality:  $H_1 : \mu > 3$

Therefore, according to the theoretical literature and using factor analysis technique, the main indicators of vitality (four factors) were identified, and then the mean of the items in each index were calculated through SPSS software (The following table).

**Table 3: Average main indicators of the vitality in Gated communities based on Likert scale**

<b>Residential complex</b>	<b>Variables</b>			
	<b>Environmental</b>	<b>Economical</b>	<b>Social</b>	<b>Physical</b>
Pezeskan	4	3.56	3.1	3.79
Aseman	4	3.56	3.13	4
Amirkabir	3.1	3	3.83	3.37
Farhangshahr	3.2	3.1	3.15	3.66
Abadane				
Maskan	3	3.03	3.1	3.18
Eskan	2.79	2.89	3.01	2.71
Negin Milad	3	2.98	3.09	2.73

According to the results, the overall vitality in the Gated communities of this study is about 3.25, with a median 3 which suggests the fair vitality rate in the Gated communities. Then, according to the one-sample t-test, we assess the mean and significant level of vitality indicators in these complexes.

**Table 4: The descriptive statistic results of One-Sample t-test**

<b>One-Sample Statistics</b>				
<b>Variables</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>	<b>Std. Error Mean</b>
Physical	343	3.53	.58205	.03389
Social	343	3.21	.51088	.02974
Economical	343	3.16	.81973	.04773
Environmental	343	3.30	.50872	.02962

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**Table 5: The descriptive statistic results of One-Sample t-test**

	Test Value = 3		Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	Df			Lower	Upper
Physical	28.609	342	.000	.96949	.9028	1.0362
Social	11.465	342	.000	.34102	.2825	.3996
Economical	21.450	342	.000	1.02373	.9298	1.1177
Environmental	31.531	342	.000	.93390	.8756	.9922

The four aspects of vitality in the Gated communities were significant (Sig <0.005) and since their average is more than 3 (mean average= 3.26), the upper and lower limit in confidence interval is more than zero (positive), the null hypothesis is rejected and the research hypothesis is verified (it seems that specialization of the residential complexes can increase the vitality rate). So with 95% confidence, we can say that specialization of the residential complexes can increase the vitality rate of them.

**Conclusion**

According to this analysis and the field observations, one of the main reasons to create the gated residential complexes is lack of security in some urban areas. In the affluent and desirable areas of the city, due to paying especial attention to the residential environment and prestige, people create walls around their residential complexes. The results show that the mean average of vitality variable Gated communities is 3.26 which is higher than average (3). Among the examined indicators, physical index, with score 3.35, is the first and Economical index, with score 3.16, is the last index. Therefore, preparing the Gated communities with appropriate spaces in the desired positions can absorb much more people and promote the city vitality.

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