

Social interaction and cultural–environment center design

Abstract

Cultural centers in all groups of people and with any kind of outlook has always been one of the most importance issues for designer. When we use the traditional culture in ordinary daily conversation, we often think of culture as an equivalent to the “higher things of the mind”– art, literature, music and painting and helping a community begin to understand its historic, economic, and social context is an essential foundation for developing and building sense of place. Traditional culture has a particular position among arts and other media due to being multi–dimensional and enjoying facilities regarding to arts. With respect to the shortage of cultural entertaining and particularly cultural center admirable, the art advancement in the country, necessity of matter is obviously clear. So it is necessary to design cultural center in particular place. This paper is aimed at designing a cultural center with the best features of technology in Tehran region 2 by helping the public opinion and studying the effective factors on cultural center design and associating these factors with designing matters. this research applies multiple user experience research methods, which include practical observations and respondents several items in form of questionnaire. 96 questionnaires were distributed among expert respondents. The research findings show that pause spaces in front of the cultural center got the highest rank and Sense of belonging and collective memories got the lowest rank respectively.

Keywords: cultural center, social interaction, cultural design, public opinion, exchange, competition, cooperation, conflict, design, questionnaires

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Introduction

Human needs and ways to meet them are considered in social stability. As Abraham Maslow classified human needs,¹ and one of them in his category are social needs, thinking of the needs and finding a solution.² Social interaction is the process by which we act and react to those around us. Totally, social interaction includes those acts people perform toward each other and the responses they give in return. Having a quick conversation with a friend seems relatively trivial.³ Goffman⁴ argued that these seemingly insignificant forms of social interaction are of major importance in sociology and should not be overlooked.⁴ Social interaction includes a large number of behaviors so many that in sociology interaction is usually divided into five categories: exchange, competition, cooperation, conflict and coercion.⁵ In another side of coin is the Cultural center that can assume as an expression of human needs, dreams, desires, and fears predates written history.⁶ This is reflected in a place like a “Cultural Center” and also manifestation of the belief that the human soul is united, and this spirit is manifest both in the mind of primitive man and meditation of a modern civilized man the same. Here we came to what Louis Strauss Believed: “Man has always been a symbol of his thought.” Mental thoughts and fantasies that reflect the culture and mentality of the people who are representative of a nation.⁷ It has always been a multimedia and a multipurpose activity. Earliest records on cave walls and in ancient sculpture indicate that performance involved a combination of music, dance, and imitation or acting. The goals of the performance were at once spiritual, social, educational, and entertaining.⁸ The conditions of production and reception of theatre today are also more complicated than many other art forms, due to the number of artists, complexity of media, and audience formation customary in the theatre.⁹ Designing the cultural center is to

encourage all aspects of cultural aspect of arts and explore the social importance of art culture¹⁰ and meaning of theater is Performing arts are art forms in which artists use their voices or the movements of their bodies, often in relation to other objects, to convey artistic expression as opposed to, for example, purely visual arts, in which artists use paint or various materials to create physical or static art objects. Performing arts include a variety of disciplines but all are intended to be performed in front of a live audience.¹¹

Need for study

The main and largest cultural center and theater hal in Tehran is Tehran City Theater or Teatr–e Shahr in Farsi (opened ca. 1972) is a performing arts complex and now one of the Tehran Tourist Attraction. Architect Ali Sardar Afkhami designed the main building in the 1960’s, later expanded.¹² The Tehran City Theater complex contains several performance spaces including Chaharsou Hall, Qashqai Hall, Sayeh Hall, and the Main Hall.¹³ Since 1979 the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has overseen its operation.¹⁴ One of needs of Tehran was to increase cultural center and theater halls. To this end, Tehran Municipality put the issue of building theater halls top on its agenda. Iranshahr cultural center and theater was another hall that built by Tehran Municipality. Iranshahr Theater has two halls with a total of 400 seats.¹⁵ Furthermore, presently the largest cultural center and theater is under construction in the south of the city. The Professional Theater Center of Tehran has a span of 27,960 meters with 16,437 square meters of floor area and four halls each with a capacity of 150 seats and a puppet show hall with 120 seats. This hall which has a special architecture could be turned into a center for holding international cultural center and Theater festivals. On the other hand, a center named ‘Center for Ritual Plays’ with a span of 5,987 square meters and 16,118 square meters of floor area has two

halls with a capacity of 600 seats. This center is allocated to ritual and traditional ceremonies and has been built as such that the screen would move with regard to the position of the audience in order to provide the possibility for performance of plays in different scenes^{16,17} (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Some cultural center in Tehran city.

Source Authors.

Hypothesis

The main question in this research is:

- i. What are features cultural center in Tehran with a view to increasing social interactions?
- ii. To design of cultural center, what should be considered?
- iii. What practical solutions in the design of the cultural center can be considered to increasing social interactions?

The main hypothesis from this research is:

- a. Designing public spaces in the cultural center attracts people of Iran in that space and improves the social interactions in this space.¹⁷
- b. Designing of the cultural center with a view to increasing social interactions provide opportunities for interaction and social reaction and caused the place attachments.
- c. Dialogue and relations place between people and artists face-to-face input lead to increased social interaction in the community.
- d. Cultural center make to increasing social interaction of the citizens and artists' attitudes, opinions, beliefs.

Methodology

The present research is descriptive and explanatory and that is conducted in order to make the plan for designing the home theatre, and also practical because it is useful and can be used for several performing Arts like home theatre.¹⁸ Documentation study by which the conceptual and theoretical investigation were done on this subject, such that the researcher could present conceptual and theoretical definitions of each variable¹⁹ and use previous methods and studies results in the research. Survey method is considered as the most common research method in architecture studies and its prominent property is use of questionnaire tool in data collection.²⁰ The main issues discussed in this research are find the relationship between social interaction and cultural building. Therefore, to reveal aspects in relation to both architectural designing and to the social interaction, this research applies multiple user experience research methods,

which include practical observations and respondents several items in form of questionnaire, so all of them answered to similar questions. A special questionnaire regarding the form of qualitative Likert–scale questions was distributed.²¹ These items measure research variables and final analysis is done based on the results obtained from variables relationships. Statistical population of this research includes about 47 percent of citizens and 52% of the artists have formed in the district 2. According to formula, 96 questionnaires were distributed among respondents that the information obtained from all questionnaires was analyzable. The Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient was used assessment tool.²² Alpha obtained from 96 questionnaire with 11 questions, the result was 0.769 that is higher than 0.7 therefore validity of questionnaire were obtained. Of the respondents, about 53.1% of women and 46.9 percent of the gentleman who was selected at random from the pilot study. 43.9% of people aged between 20 and 30 years and about 75 percent of those with a diploma and bachelor's degree.²³

Location of case study

Region 2 in Tehran has Alborz Mountain range dominates the natural at north view. As Alborz spreads its fields and wings towards south, it embraces the two rural communities with its natural beauty through the valleys of “Darakeh” and “Farahzad”. In general, “Darakeh” and “Farahzad”, green fields of “Nasr Hills”, “Pardisaun Park” and “Trasht Gardens” constitute the natural elements of this region.²⁴ Historical land scape has highly been affected by the rapid commercial and residential growth during the past two decades. The older sections the region is surrounded by “Azadi” Avenue. Its history stretches to early 1960s.²⁵ Geographically covers 64 Sq. Kilometers of land or 10% areas in the greater Tehran. It consists of 31 subsections with an average family size of 3.3 people. It is divided into nine divisions, 30 electoral sections and 14 census areas.²⁶ Residential, major roads and highways, and green zones form the landscape of this region. The case study is located between Chamran high way and the southern part of the Modiriat Bridge (Figure 2).



Figure 2 Location of study.

Source Authors.

Theatrical frame work

Considering that the aim of this research is to design cultural center Iran with a view to increasing social interaction between people and artists, so the questions are based on the effective space in the cultural center to promote social interaction and the factors that increase social interactions have been written (Figure 1). In this regard, effective areas have been identified and these spaces are the areas showing the services and the factors influencing the increase in

social interaction have been studied. Questions Based on these criteria is designed for people and artists. The questionnaire has been fully joined (Figure 3). The boundaries affected by the some factors that are shown on the map in Figure 2 the guidelines and standards of the cultural center Design Guide apply to commercially designated Parcels on the portion of Broadway generally bounded by Modirait bridge to the north and green area to the south²⁷ (Figure 4).

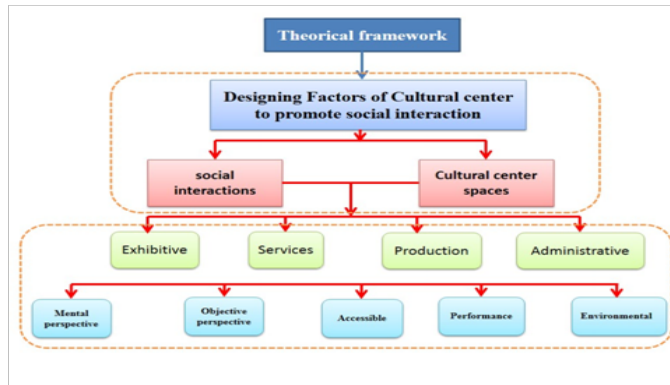


Figure 3 theatrical frame work of the study.

Source Authors.

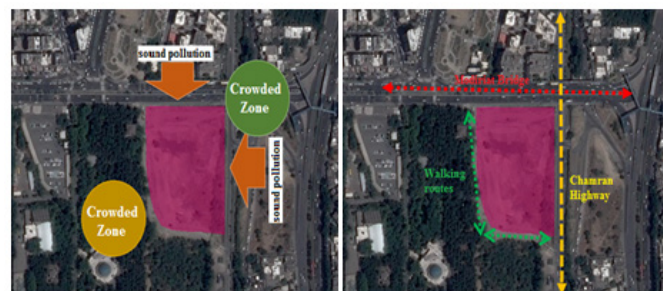


Figure 4 Boundaries affect.

Source Authors.

Results and discussion

Evaluation of the factors that increase social interaction between people and artists in the design of the cultural center was calculated through the Friedman test.²⁸ The Friedman test is a nonparametric test that compares three or more matched or paired groups. The Friedman test first ranks the values in each matched set (each row) from low to high.²⁹ Each row is ranked separately. It then sums the ranks in each group (column). If the sums are very different, the P value will be small. Prism reports the value of the Friedman statistic, which is calculated from the sums of ranks and the sample sizes.³⁰ The whole point of using a matched test is to control for experimental variability between social interactions, thus increasing the power of the test.³¹ Some factors don't any control in the experiment will increase (or decrease) such as the process of construction, provision of budget and the questionnaire respondents. The results in the table1 shows the average grade calculated from “pause spaces designed to increase social interaction in the area of cultural center artists and the” has the most effective rank and least effective rank was “increase social interaction between artists and people increase citizens’ sense of belonging and increase collective memories”. The significant level is

less than 0.05. Factors are ranked from Q1 to Q11 in Table 1.

Table 1 Rating Questionnaire

Ranked	Question	Ranking
Q2	What is the role of public space in the cultural center (such as lobbies) affected to increase social interaction between artists and the people?	5.34
Q10	How much open space in front of the cultural center is effective to increase social interaction?	6.61
Q11	What is the role of pause spaces in front of the cultural center to making interaction between artists and people to increase social?	6.77
Q6	How is the safety and security of cultural center increased social interactions between artists and the people?	5.99
Q9	What is the role treatment station in cultural center to increase social interaction between artists and the people?	6.64
Q1	What is the role of social interactions between artists and people to increase the sense of belonging and collective memories?	5.05
Q5	How designing attractive and diverse spaces in the cultural center make effective in increasing social interaction between artists and people?	5.96
Q8	What is the role of common pathways in cultural center design for increased social interaction between the artists and the people?	6.44
Q3	What is the role of cafes and restaurants to increase social interaction between artists and people in the cultural center work?	5.46
Q4	In your opinion, what is the role of meeting place for interaction between people and artists?	5.61
Q7	What are the role of ventilation and the use of natural elements in the cultural center (performance spaces and cafes) to more staying people and artists?	6.13

Suggestion and guidelines

Therefore, to increase social interaction in the design of the theatre building following strategies are recommended:

- i. Create security in space with happiness
- ii. Use of art and culture tools with leisure activities in design
- iii. Highlight the participation of social groups in the process of design
- iv. Emphasis on multi–functional design³²
- v. Increase permeability by increasing and facilitating access to various spaces

- vi. Create a variety of different environments and through a variety of different applications and variations in the design of the individual components
- vii. Furniture design appropriate and in harmony with the cultural characteristics of users
- viii. Flexibility of spaces in a way that meets the needs of all members of society
- ix. Create a sense of space through the design to achieve place attachment of the whole characteristics³³
- x. Create readability in space by using the built and non–built elements transparent for citizens
- xi. Due to new technologies, coordinated with the spatial and temporal patterns of social and cultural
- xii. Use of modern technology in combination with local elements for form or function and form
- xiii. Understanding the concepts of the modern world and its alignment with the values of Islamic–Iranian architecture³⁴
- xiv. Use of vernacular architecture and utilizes a liquid form and full and empty spaces
- xv. Use of green open spaces in some quarters as the volume of packaging that can be used to hold cultural events.
- xvi. Diversify interior using internal courtyard
- xvii. Composition and volume levels so that the open and semi–open and closed with a beautifully created landscape
- xviii. Designed so that the purity and simplicity of the cause and people can easily connect with it

Conclusion

To reach favorable conditions in any society, the first step is to know the existing situation that states problems of any society. This is particularly important in Social Interaction between People and Artists because increasing the proportion of cinema, cultural, and artistic products have been underlined in the urban spirit to the city like Tehran.³⁵ So, the society and families need a space that can separate them from their daily life and attract them to a social and cultural environment. Increasing the proportion of theatre, cultural, and performing arts in the hobbies of families and different classes of the society particularly youth, women, and workers, make them happiness and awareness to educate the future generation. As per as the result of the study create the space in front of the entry in the area of cultural center help the people and artists to increase social interaction, and Public space such as lobbies, cafes and restaurants, meeting place, attractive and diverse spaces, safety and security ,use of natural elements, common pathways, treatment station, open space and Pause spaces in front of the cultural center has got the lowest rank respectively These elements that rising from public opinion is increasing many events for Social Interaction.³⁶ The designer that control use of space for creating proper land uses can easily progress in the brilliant planning and use the logic of character in their spaces. In general, the cultural center site must be designed in a way that embraces both climate and physical conditions of the region and a

prominent building with good conditions must be designed so that it emerges in the city as a symbol (Figure 5).



Figure 5 Highways around the sites.

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Conflict of interest

The author decline there is no conflict of interest.

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