

## Components of the City's Physical Identity: A Review of in Iranian Cities

SARA DONBOLI<sup>1</sup>, AREF AGHA SAFARI<sup>2\*</sup> and HOSSEIN KALANTARI KHALIL ABAD<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ph.D. Student in Urban Planning at Institute of Culture, Art and Architecture, (ACECR), Iran.

<sup>2</sup>Assistant Professor of Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research, (ACECR), Iran.

<sup>3</sup>Associate Professor, Department of Architecture and Landscape Research at Institute of Culture, Art and Architecture Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research, (ACECR), Iran.

### Abstract

Nowadays in countries with long history and civilization most of factors that distinguish the historical city is available in the form of physical identity. It always absorbs significant attention of urban planners, residents and visitors and quality of life. It has played an important role in quality of next generation. The objective of this research is to investigate and analysis the components of the city's physical identity in Iranian cities such as Isfahan, Shiraz and Yazd and capabilities of that historical urban identity in field of natural artifact and human factors. Research method is descriptive-analytical with qualitative and quantities approach to recognize and prioritize the factor using AHP analytical hierarchical process that provides a comprehensive and rational framework for structuring a decision problem, for representing and quantifying the Iranian cities, for relating those elements to physical identities, and for evaluating them. This applied study has a descriptive-analytical basis with a population of 30 experts in urban planning and citizens and local people completed 120 questionnaires. Cultural matters and academic staff used as participants. First, the quality physical identity was determined based on the 3 main criteria and 15 sub-criteria in a hierarchical tree. Then experts were asked to score the major and minor criteria and specify their priorities based on paired comparisons. Applying the Expert Choice, which implements the AHP, the weights of each criterion and sub-criterion were estimated respectively. Finally, according to the Iranian urban identity were described. The results obtained showed that the artifact factor, weighting 0.614, got the first priority and it was followed by natural (0.268), and human (0.117) criteria, which got the second to the third rank.



### Article History


Received: 11 May 2017  
Accepted: 18 July 2017

### Keywords:

physical identity,  
historical city,  
Iranian city,  
hierarchy analysis,  
AHP.

**CONTACT** Aref Agha Safari  [arefaghasafari@gmail.com](mailto:arefaghasafari@gmail.com)  Assistant Professor of Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research, Iran (ACECR)

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To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12944/CWE.12.2.07>

## Introduction

In most of period, human settlements are going through progress and revolution. Universal Changes, that appear in all of the world, have most significant impact on the development and formation of cities<sup>1</sup>. These progress and revolution have affected several urban problem in political, cultural and economical, and managed to arise of environmental problem. Today urban identity in all aspect of city characteristics<sup>2</sup> depend on the entire history and social characteristics of a city. Changes in the shape of the city must be balanced in the lives of the inhabitants in order to protect the environment<sup>3</sup>. Urban identity in most of eastern countries, consists of a series of cultural events in different period with the aim of preserving the past. This identity can be defined as the characteristic difference between these cities from other one<sup>4</sup>. An also it has a lively and endlessly changing structure. In all historical stages, each social identity, create in a city has may reflected physical identity of that city<sup>5</sup>. Urban identity is such a expressive truth took by a procedure from past to present that effects city shape; it has distinctive scale and stylistic properties in each city; is shaped by physical, cultural, socioeconomic, historical and formational factors; is formed by urban people and their life style; develops continuously and maintains the concept of sustainability<sup>6</sup>. Urban identity has been accepted as "the sum of the components in the diagnostic quality which defines a city and distinguishes it from the others"<sup>7</sup> Urban identity is defined with the natural and artificial elements and socio-cultural characteristics of a city and the environment. The urban form in the Iranian cities is defined according to the meaning got by its identity format from the content that is affected by the theoretical foundations of the Iranian architecture, art<sup>8</sup>, and urbanism, emphasizing that the form-content relationship like the body-spirit relationship is obvious in the worldview foundations<sup>9</sup>. This study is an attempt associated with two steps to provide a theoretical framework for reviewing Iranian cities<sup>10</sup>, as well as measures to promote urban identity. The main objective of this study is to evaluate the identity of three historical cities in Iran to achieve a theoretical framework for reviewing city's physical identity of urban spaces in Isfahan Shiraz and Yazd<sup>11</sup>.

## Methodology

The issue of city's physical identity in Iranian cities is not a new topic, but, it is an essential tool to create urban identity and physical city planning in Iran.<sup>12</sup> In pursuing this aim, the methodology aims to evaluate the urban physical identity according to public opinion. Therefore, in theoretical part, the paper briefly considers the concept of urban identity, in three historical Iranian cities. Then in practical parts: firstly, a questionnaire containing fifteen questions was designed in three parts. The questionnaire developed for the selected domains and indicators of Natural, Artifact and Human factor and prepare for expert and local people<sup>13</sup>, and secondly based on a library methods and a review of literature from Iranian cities (flowchart 2). Responding to questions on the form and weight of components and indicators designed to determine the effects of city's physical identity. Validated by experts and professors of the validity and reliability of urban planning and field test has been conducted.<sup>14</sup>The study population consisted of all experts and people who have been in contact with these areas. Based on the financial and time constraints of the study, 150 questionnaires were collected. Of these, 30 questionnaires by experts and citizens in the region of 120 questionnaires were completed. To answer questions, choose the common people used simple random sampling and the selection of experts, the first stage cluster sampling, and then each cluster were randomly selected number<sup>15</sup>.

## Case Studies

in this research try to choose cities that played important role in physical identity of Iranian cities such as Isfahan, Yazd and Shiraz city (figure 1)

### Isfahan

Isfahan province with an area of about 107,019 square kilometers, allocating 57.7 percent of the country's total area in the center of Iran's plateau. Based on the results of the general census of population and housing, 1390 the population of the province was 4879312 people.<sup>16</sup>.Esfahan is the third largest city in Iran after Tehran, Mashhad and the third most populous city in Iran after Tehran and Mashhad. Isfahan is also located 435 kilometers

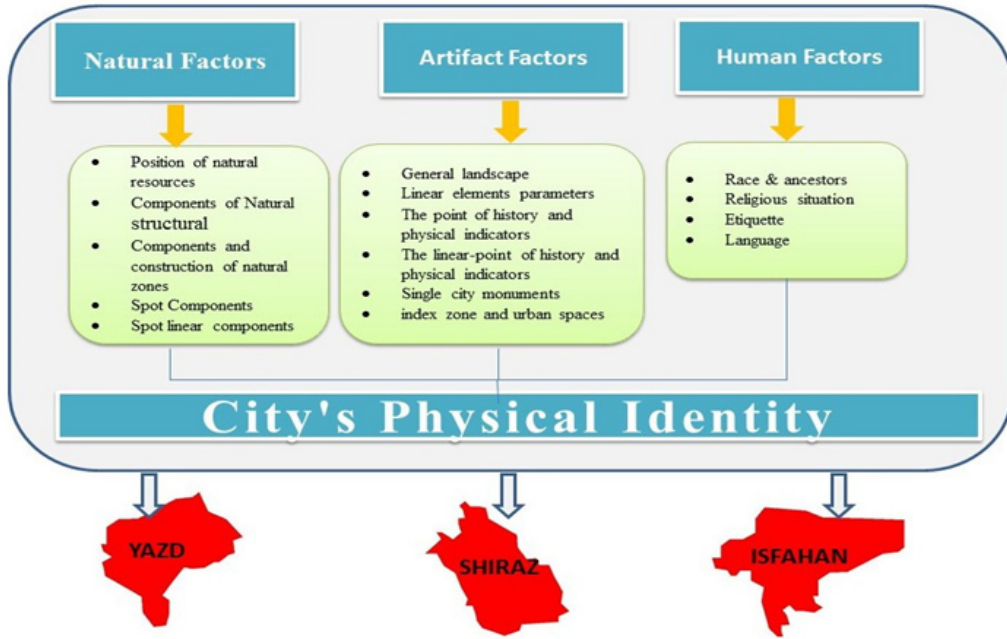


Table 1: Table of Analytical Hierarchy Process



Fig. 1: location of Isfahan, Shiraz and Yazd

from the capital and in the south of the city.<sup>17</sup> the city is one of the few valuable archaeological centers in the world and many of its ancient works are listed on the historical list. This city is famous for

its beautiful Islamic architecture in many beautiful boulevards, covered bridges, beautiful tunnels, palaces, mosques and unique minarets.

**Table 2: Components of Isfahan city identity**

Components of city identity		Isfahan
Natural factors	position of natural resources	Located in a semi-desert area along the river in central Iran, the climate mild and dry
	Components of Natural structural Components and construction of natural zones spot Components	Zayandeh-roud river Hezar Jerib garden  Sofeh and Baba Said Mountain (south of Isfahan), Ghaleh Bozi Mountain (West of Isfahan), Kolahghazy Mountain (Southeast Shahreza), Yaran Kooh Mountains (Southern Shahreza), Nazhvan Forest (zayandehrood)
Artifact factors	Spot linear components	Zayandeh-roud river
	General landscape	Wide streets and large squares, wide gates, mosques and royal palaces, chahar-bagh (four garden)
	Linear elements parameters	Chahar Bagh Axis , the river, the market
	The point of history and physical indicators	Kohneh Square, Naghsh-e-Jahan Square
	The linear-point of history and physical indicators	Naghsh-e-Jahan Square, Zayandeh-Roud river
	Single city monuments	Imam Mosque, Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque, Ali Qapu, the Palace of Eight Paradises of the market, Allahverdi, Khan Bridge, bridge Khajoo gheysarie Bazaar, Karvansaras
	index zone and urban spaces	Jolfa and Farah Abad and Abas Abad (Housing Armenians), Lonbon and Qenyan and the Sar peleh (economy), Khajoo and Bagh karan, Karan and Seyyed Ahmadian, Chelman and Sonbolan and scope of Darb-e Imam, Dardasht (economic, political and military), Judea.
Human factors	Race & ancestors	Ayaran and Armenians
	Religious situation	Shias thought mastered the city, Islamic values, especially the values and principles derived from the Safavid that represent themselves more.
	Etiquette	Social and cultural life of people with common intersection of Safavid art era, art and business activities, sounds and smells of the city market activity (voice woodcarving, copper casting and ... and sweet smell in the bazaar)
	Language	persian, Isfahan dialect

### Shiraz

One of the major cities in Iran and the capital of Fars province. Based on the latest census of the Iranian Center for Statistics in 2006, the city has a population of 1, 214, 808, which has increased to 1,455, 073 in 2009. The original site of this city was at the castle of Abu Nasr. The city of Shiraz was a fortress before Islam, dating back to the Sassanid

era. The city is being transferred to the current site during the Bani-omayeh period, and it thrives at the expense of the collapse of the old capital of the Fars province. Shiraz was the capital of Iran during the Safaryan, Boeyan and Zandieh periods. Due to its many historical, cultural, religious and natural attractions, it has always attracted many tourists<sup>18</sup>.

**Table 3: Components of Shiraz city identity**

Components of city identity		Shiraz
Natural	position of natural resources	Located in the Zagros Mountains, with a mild climate, warm and dry
Factors	Components of Natural structural	Khosk river(dry river)
	Components and construction of natural zones spot Components	Ghasroldasht gardens in the North and North West of Shiraz, Orangery garde Bamou Highlands (north of Shiraz), Mountain Drake (West Shiraz), mountains of Ghebleh (Mecca) and Sabzpushan (southwest and south of Shiraz), mountain Maharloo (East Shiraz)
Artifact Factors	Spot linear components	Aqueduct azodi ,Khosk river(dry river)
	General landscape	Streets with grid iron pattern (organic), visiting Shiraz between the mountains in the middle of the colorful domes. the fence and the fort of the city and the beautiful cypress trees in their gardens around town to show off the Quran Gate
	Linear elements parameters	Khosk river(dry river)Shiraz, Bamou, Drack, Sabzpushan and Maharloo heights
	The point of history and physical indicators	Toopkhaneh Square,Mashgh Square, Hosseinieh Haft tanan, Hosseinieh chehel tanan, school Khan, Atiq Mosque, the New Mosque Atabak, Vakil Mosque
	The linear-point of history and physical indicators	Toopkhaneh Square, ,Mashgh Square, Karimkhani buildings, Ali ibn Hamzah, Shahcheragh, Seyed Alaeddin Hussein domes
	Single city monuments	Monuments: the tomb of Hafez, Khajoo, Saadi, Sheikh Kabir, Sheikh Roozbahan, Shah Shuja, Siboozeh, Quran Gate Church of Simeon, the monastery Ahmadi, Adrian (Zoroastrian temple) Shahcheragh monument, the threshold Seyed Alaeddin Hussein, the tomb of King motive to Allah , Shah Mir Hamzeh shrine, the tomb of Sheikh Mohammed Lahiji, New Mosque, the Old Mosque, the Pars Museum, Khan school, Eram garden, garden beds, garden delights, ...
	index zone and urban spaces	Heidari home neighborhoods: the neighborhood Ishagh Beyg, the poultry market neighborhood, the neighborhood Bala Kaf, neighborhood doors prince, King Square neighborhood B: gift neighborhoods, neighborhoods of the garden, Head Quarters (Dezzak Castel), Black Rock neighborhood, neighborhood water's edge, a new door of the mosque neighborhood, neighborhood Jewish
Human Factors	Race & ancestors	Persian people
	Religious situation	Almost Muslim
	Etiquette	Social and cultural life, art activities and business people, the smell of orange blossom in the city
	Language	Persian ,dialect Shirazi

**Yazd**

Yazd province with a total area of 74493 square kilometers is the fourth largest province of the country, located in the central part of the Iranian

plateau in the margin of the plains of the Lut River. The waves are 29 degrees and 52 minutes to 33 degrees and 27 minutes north and 52 degrees 55 minutes to 56 degrees 37 minutes. East is located.

Yazd province has 10 cities (Yazd, Abarkouh, Ardakan, Bafgh, Taft, Khatam, Sadouq, Mehriz and Meybod), 23 cities, 20 districts and 51 villages with Semnan provinces northwest, Isfahan from west, Fars from southwest, Khorasan South of east, Khorasan Razavi from north east and Kremans from

east and south east of neighboring. Water reservoirs, wind farms, refiners and mills are the characteristics of this province.<sup>19</sup> Historic city of Yazd, as the first historic city of Iran and the twenty-first historical monument of the country, was registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

**Table 4: Components of Yazd city identity**

Components of city identity		Yazd
Natural factors	position of natural resources	Located in central Iran Shirkooh between mountain ranges, has a warm and dry desert climate
	Components of Natural structural	Yazd is located in the valley between the mountains Yazd is located in the valley between the mountains Shirkooh
Artifact factors	Components and construction of natural zones	desert
	spot Components	Desert and Shirkooh height
	Spot linear components	Aqueducts, refrigerator, water storages
	General landscape	Dowlat Abad Garden, cypress trees emerged from the central courtyard houses, narrow streets with relatively high walls and along a line break, two perpendicular axes (Imam streets and resurrection) to comply with the organic tissue City
	Linear elements parameters	Lack of edge because of interruption in the continuity of texture density and texture structures of residential and nonexistence of large gaps or spaces inside Hosseinieh, mosque, community centers and squares
	The point of history and physical indicators	
	The linear-point of history and physical indicators	Amir Chakhmaq squares, Maidan Shah Tahmasp, mosque, Amir flint and comprehensive Hosseinieh, Mosque, mosque, Amir Chakhmaq, City Market, cisterns, wind towers, gardens
Human factors	Single city monuments	Neighborhood: Amir Chakhmaq, new Kooshk, four minarets, Abshahy, Abualmaly and
	index zone and urban spaces	People of Iran
	Race & ancestors	Almost Muslim and Zoroastrian
	Religious situation	Artistic and commercial activities people (goldsmith industry, carpet industry, textile industry), the sounds and smells of the city market activity (coppersmith sound and smell of sweets in bazaar)
	Etiquette	
	Language	Persian ,dialect Yazdi

**Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP)**

The Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) is one of the most popular multi-purpose decision-making techniques, first developed by Thomas L. An Iraqi

hour was devised in the 1970s. The hierarchical analysis process reflects the natural behavior and human thinking. This technique examines complex issues based on their interactions, and turns them

into a simple way to solve them. A hierarchical analysis process can be used when decision-making practice is faced with multiple competing choices and decision criteria<sup>20</sup>. The proposed criteria can be quantitative and qualitative. The basis of this method lies in the decision of the paired comparison. The decision maker starts with the process of bringing the hierarchical tree to the decision. The tree of the decision hierarchy, the compared factors, and the competing choices being evaluated in the decision. Then a series of pairwise comparisons is performed. These comparisons show the weight of each of the factors in line with the competing choices being evaluated in the decision. Finally, the logic of the hierarchical analysis process combines the matrices derived from the paired comparisons to arrive at an optimal decision (Table 5). The Principles of Analytic Hierarchy Process Thomas A. Saaty (the founder of this method) expresses the following four principles as the principles of the hierarchical analysis process and has based all the calculations, laws and regulations on these principles. The hierarchical

analysis process model involves the following four main steps:

1. Modeling :In this step, the problem and the purpose of the decision are hierarchically related to the elements of decision that are in contact.
2. Preferred Judgment (Paired Comparisons): Perform comparisons between different decision options, based on each indicator (table 5)
3. Relative weights calculations: Determine the weight of "decision elements" relative to each other through a set of numerical calculations
4. Integration of relative weights in order to rank decision choices: At this stage, we must multiply the relative weights of each element in the weight of the higher elements in order to obtain the final weight. By doing this for each option, the amount of final weight is obtained.

**Table 5. Preference values for paired comparisons**

Numerical value	Preferences (Oral Judgment)
1	Preference, the same importance or utility
3	A little reference, more or less desirable
5	Prefer or strong
7	Preference or very strong significance
9	Quite a reference, quite desirable
2,4,6,8	Preferences between the above intervals

Sources:(David, 1963)<sup>21</sup>

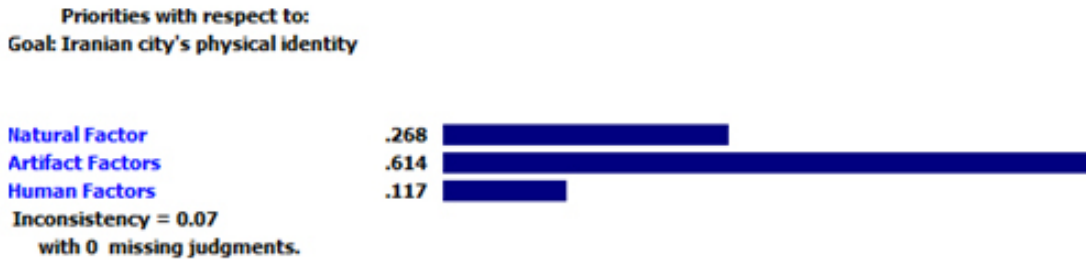
### Results and Discussion

Components related to physical identity<sup>22</sup> has been shown in table (1, 2, and 3). In the first level, the research objectives should be addressed. (prioritizing the Iranian physical identity in order to Components of case studies), in the second level Comparisons the elements of these cases by experts and performed using paired comparison and the third level, the prepare the diagram for compare the physical identity which is shown on the basis of the

main criteria of the research. (Figure 2)

The weights obtained for each of the three main components are shown in Table 6. Based on this information, artifact factors with a weight of 0.614, natural factors with a weight of 0.268, human factors with the highest of 0.117 have gained. In this calculation, the Inconsistency rate is 0.07, which is less than 0.1, indicating the parallelism between the pairwise comparisons.

**Table 6. Weights of Main Criteria**



The weight of the natural components is shown in Table 7. Based on the information obtained, the location of natural resources, the components of the natural structure of the region are highest in the order

of magnitude. In addition, the level of inconsistency is 0.0224, which is less than 0.10, indicating that compatibility between pair comparisons is very high.

**Table 7. Weight of Natural Factors**

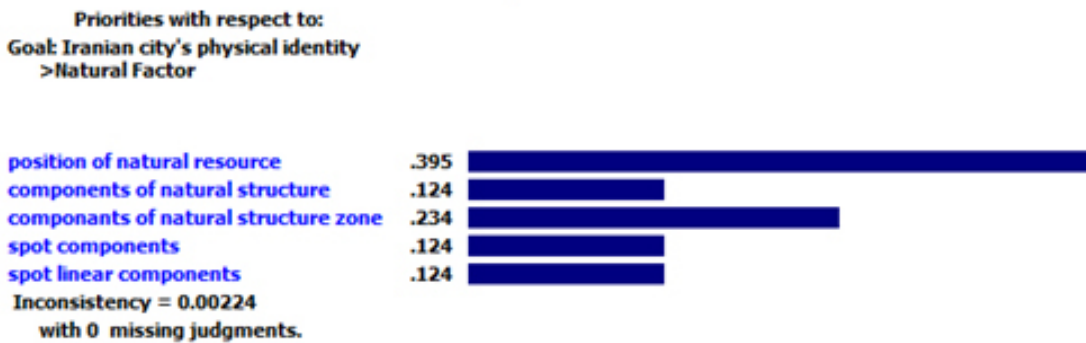
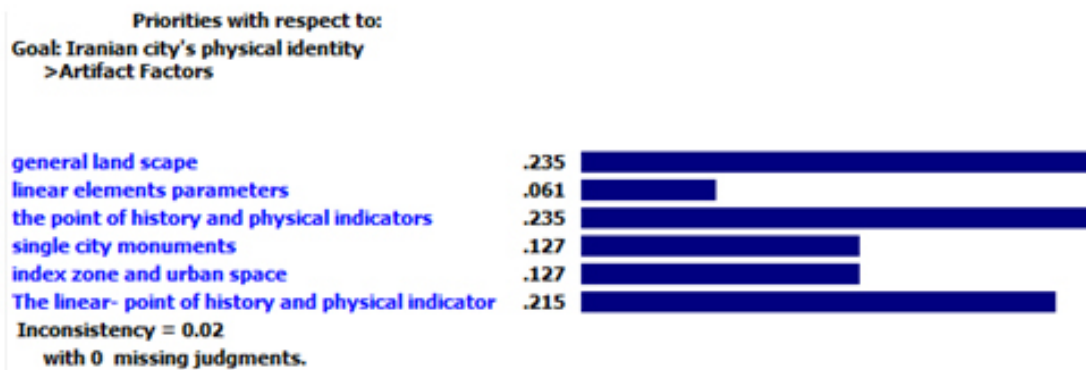


Table 8 shows the weights obtained for the economic factor. According to the information obtained, General land scape , the point of history and physical indicators and single city monuments rate have the

highest weights, respectively. The Inconsistency is 0.02, which reflects the compatibility between the pair comparisons<sup>23</sup>.

**Table 8. Weights of subsidiary artifact factors**





The weight for each subset is shown in Table 9. According to information obtained, etiquette, language, race, and ancestors have the highest

rates. The Inconsistency rate is 0.01, which is less than 0.1 and represents a correlation between pairwise comparisons

**Table 9. Weight of Human factor**

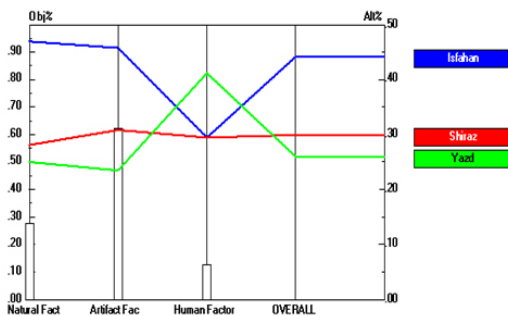
Priorities with respect to:  
Goal: Iranian city's physical identity  
>Human Factors



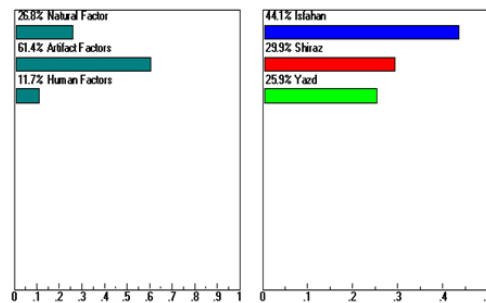
Performance sensitivity and dynamic sensitivity of Iranian city's physical identity with main criteria (Isfahan, Shiraz and Yazd) have been presented in table 10 . based on the obtained results, Isfahan with 44.1% got the highest rate, shiraz with 29.9 and Yazd with 25.9 stand in the next levels. The

results obtained from the expert opinions regarding the indicators of urban physical identity tested under sensitivity analysis using Expert Choice software have been shown in Table 10.as per as the result artifact factor with 61.4% has the highest sensitivity.

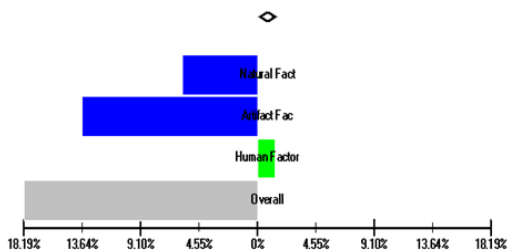
Performance Sensitivity for nodes below: Goal: Iranian city's physical identity



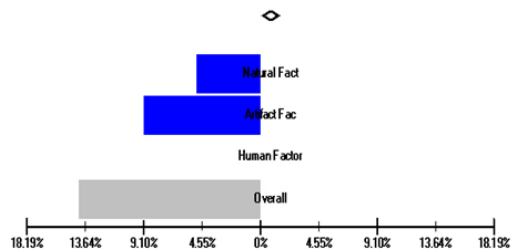
Dynamic Sensitivity for nodes below: Goal: Iranian city's physical identity



Weighted head to head between Isfahan and Yazd



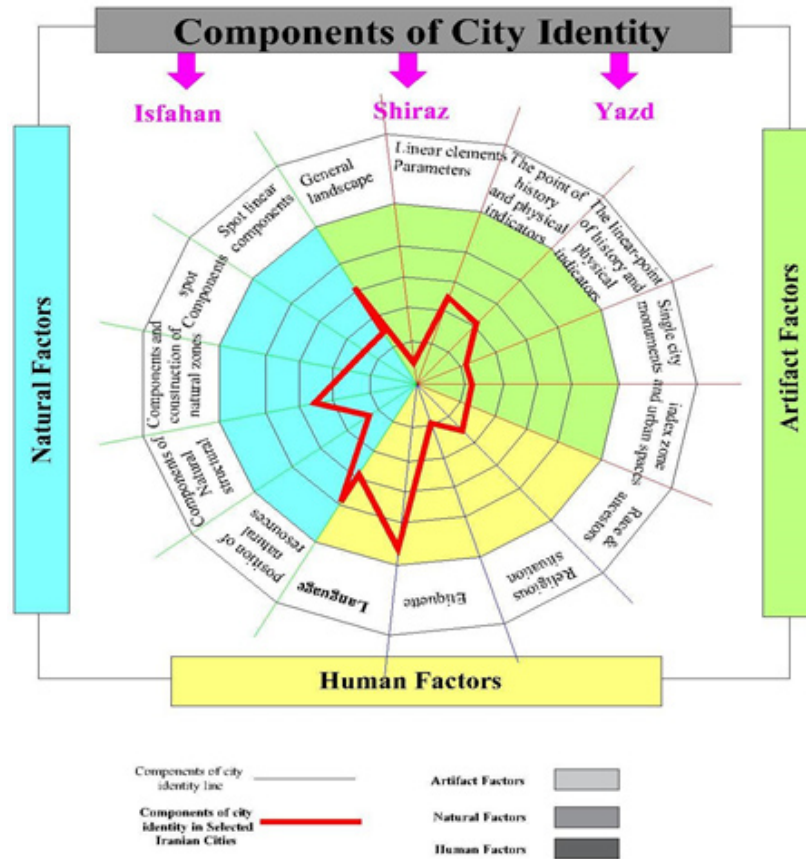
Weighted head to head between Isfahan and Shiraz



**Table 10. Result of Iranian cities physical identity**

Table 11: Result base on study

	<b>Political influence on the identity of the city</b>	<b>Cultural influences on the city's identity</b>	<b>Economic impact on the city's identity</b>	<b>The effect of climate on the identity of the city</b>	<b>Final result</b>
Isfahan	King was built Naqsh-e Jahan Square, stand on the porch o ali-ghapoo, and shows his power to people. The political aspect is reinforced.	The formation of linear elements such as Chahar, and Naqsh-e Jahan Square all indicators foca I point of political influence.It passed with his buggy in chaharbagh street and go to the gardens and people on both sides to stand and watch her power.	Isfahan bazaar that is connecting Mydan-kohneh and Naqsh-e-jahan	Large area buildings, indoor and outdoor, clay brick and original materials.	Politics has the effects on identities
Shiraz	Construction of mashgh squares and toopkhaneh and other buildings around it and dominate the organ	The most massive and the most eternal of history and civilization of Iran is in the fars province. Celebrities, literature philosophy and science was in the shiraz city .Cultural and historical monuments in Fars and Shiraz, was not just put a period to the modern century in all periods of history of the Achaemenid the most important parts of Iran and the entire region.	the city has long due to its relative centrality in South Zagros region and located in a relatively fertile area,it was the natural local products to loca exchanges between farmers and nomads	Clay brick and stone is the main construction materials that are derived from regional climate	Culture affects identity
Yazd	Daralkhalafeh has been created in different periods and in the Daralhokumeh is the seat of the governor.	Religious city, Hosseinieh, Takaya, honesty and integrity	Yazd bazaar	Organic architecture, influenced by the City of climate (bricks and mud), interconnected buildings, arched and domed arches, thick walls, compact urban texture ,residential introverted types, wind towers, cistern, streets with awnings, awning.	Climate. affects identity



Source: authors

The statistical graphs and diagrams that shows in figure 10 represent the evaluation and comparison of the two components and sub-components and the alternatives relative to each other. The vertical axis represents the final weight of the criterion, and the horizontal axis represents the main criteria. The human, artificial and natural factors of all three dimensions were measured. In the final figure shows the paired comparison between the Iranian cities.

**Conclusion**

Urban identity is not known only as physical, Artifact and Human factors , but it is a mental ,Political, and Cultural element that its formation in people’s mind has direct relevance with the interventions of climate, Economic and historical beliefs. In Isfahan city, the King was built Naqsh-e Jahan Square, stand on the porch o ali-ghapoo, and shows his power to people. The political aspect is reinforced. and we consequences that Political influence has more effect on the identity of Isfahan city .

shiraz city has The most massive and the most eternal of history and civilization of Iran. .Celebrities, literature, philosophy and science was in the shiraz city .Cultural and historical monuments in Fars and Shiraz, was not just put a period to the modern century in all periods of history of the Achaemenid the most important parts of Iran and the entire region. And we consequences that Culture affects identity has more effect on the identity of shiraz city. yazd with Organic architecture, influenced by the City of climate (bricks and mud), interconnected buildings, arched and domed arches, thick walls, compact urban texture , residential introverted types, wind towers, cistern, streets with awnings, awning stand on first climate and vernacular architecture level. and we consequences that Climate affects identity has more effect on the identity of yazd city Consequently, urban physical identity is one of the main aspect of the city development. The historical value of the city is the backbone of this identity and, they mostly from the first civilizations in the city,

their character is emphasized in compromise the urban physical identity. The urban identity of Iran is an image that reflects human relationships with its environment from past to present time. It has a physical, Artifact and Human factors. This also depends on the popular culture, history and images of the human being, Heritage area , relationships, And the strains combined with this combination make the urban disasters understandable in the city and

may be full of events, tangible and intangible urban identity.

### Acknowledgements

The authors of this paper would like to show appreciation of Acecr-Academic Center for Education, Culture and Research for their assistance to access their record regarding to physical identity for Iranian cities. We also thank the anonymous reviewers for their precious comments and recommendations.

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