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Social and Psychological Consequences of Gentrification Plans in Time-Worn Neighborhoods: Displacement of Residents and Threats for their Place Attachment

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Abstract:

Today, the old and time-worn neighbourhoods in our cities are faced with many physical, social and economic problems. Local governments and municipalities try to solve these problems through preparation of different types of development plans. Gentrification plan is one of these plans which have become a common strategy for revitalizing a deprived neighbourhood and changing the quality of its physical, economic, cultural and social characteristics. Despite all positive effects resulting from gentrification plans, it can socially and psychologically influenced the residents. According to these consequences, it is necessary to analyse and estimate the social and psychological costs in a gentrified neighborhood. The aim of this research is to investigate the interaction of these two dimensions in the process of gentrifying a neighborhood. It tries to explore the effects of displacement and vanishing the residents' place attachment, place identity and sense of community in a gentrified society.

The "Abkouh" Neighborhood in Mashhad, Iran, is selected as study area for this research. This neighborhood is one of the old and time-worn neighborhoods in Mashhad which is planned by Mashhad's municipality for gentrification plan. Methodology of the study is based on questionnaire in order to ask residents about their attitudes to the gentrification of their neighborhood. Findings demonstrates that despite having a prolonged residence in this area and deep social and psychological connections to it, dwelling conditions of residents would be affected by direct economic pressures resulting from the gentrification plan. This would impose heavy costs on the residents such as displacement, moving to other neighborhoods, alienage to the new neighbourhoods, lack of place attachment, place identity and sense of community in the new neighbourhoods. However, the positive effects of psychological dimension must be taken into consideration and residents' place attachment can be exploited in order to encourage them to contribute to the gentrification plan. On the other hand, municipality and local government can prevent negative effects of gentrification plans and the original residents' displacement by adopting certain practical policies and increasing financial support. Identifying such policies requires extensive research and can open new windows for the future studies on gentrification plans.

Keywords: Gentrification, Time-Worn Neighbourhoods, Displacement, Place Attachment

1. Introduction

There are many movements in contemporary urban developments which attract significant concerns in various communities. Gentrification is one of the mentioned movements that have become a common strategy for revitalizing a deprived neighborhood or district and changing the quality of its physical, economic, cultural and social characteristics. In spite of a great concern to the process of gentrification, yet its different dimensions and their interactions are not studied completely. According to the negligence of related literatures, this paper aims to explore the different dimensions of gentrification as well as studying their mutual interactions which may affect a gentrified society.

The term 'gentrification' was first used by Ruth Glass as an urban geographer in the 1964. It was initially defined as the rehabilitation of a deprived inner-city area and applied to explain the process of displacing working class people (Glass, 1964). Since 1960s, the process of 'gentrification' has been theorized by many theorists who try to conceptualize and operationalize it as well as focusing on its different dimensions such as social, economic, spatial and physical ones (Hamnett and Randolph, 1984; London and Palen, 1984; Smith and Williams, 1986; van Weesep and Musterd, 1991; Sassen, 1991; Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Atkinson, 2003)

According to related theories, "gentrification" is defined as a process which consists of improving the physical and social qualities of low quality inner-city neighborhoods, changing the essential character of deprived neighborhoods, converting derelict housing areas into middle-class neighborhoods, and displacement of neighborhood's original lower income, working-class and unskilled residents with higher income and highly skilled households (Smith and Williams, 1986; Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Van Crieckingen and Decroly, 2003; Atkinson, 2003; Bostic and Martin, 2003).

Some of the related theories have property-focused visions about the gentrification process. They define it as a kind of urban revitalization, a process which includes disinvestment and re-investment in deprived neighborhoods, commercial or residential improvements with a focus on the economic actions of newcomers and renovation and upgrading of the housing stock. However, other theories emphasize the socio-economic and cultural effects of gentrification (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Bostic and Martin, 2003; Atkinson, 2003).

2. Dimensions of Gentrification

According to review of related definitions, the process of gentrification has a wide range of effects and consequences on our contemporary urban developments. These positive and negative consequences can be classified into different dimensions. This paper classifies the main dimensions of gentrification as follows:

2.1. Spatial and physical dimension

Many theories define the process of gentrification as a kind of revitalization in built environments, rehabilitation of the physical fabric of neighborhoods, upgrading the quality of housing and improvement of residential areas (Smith and Williams, 1986; Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Van Crieking and Decroly, 2003; Atkinson, 2003; Bostic and Martin, 2003). In this regard, one of the main dimensions of gentrification refers to spatial and physical aspects.

2.2. Economic Dimension

Through economic dimension gentrification can be defined as an uneven investment of capital in an inner-city area, devaluation, disinvestment and reinvestment through capital flows (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Atkinson, 2002). Different theories emphasize economic effects in the process of gentrification. Upgrading of housing stock, creating new commercial activity, unsustainable property price, loss of affordable housing which may cause by changes of housing prices in the neighborhood, increasing the fact of lobbying, growth of rents and prices in surrounding neighborhoods and increasing the tax and cost of local services are some of the mentioned effects in the related theories (Gale, 1984; Marcuse, 1986; Robinson, 1995; Wyly and Hammel, 1999; Shaw, 2000; Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Atkinson, 2002).

2.3. Political Dimension

Gentrification is a politically powerful concept that can be manipulated to drive resources, jobs and housing into lower income communities that need them. The process of gentrification can be also set in the context of the politically charged urban development process. Sometimes the private, public or non-profit sector actions combine and result in the process of gentrification, producing some positive or negative outcomes (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001).

In the process of gentrification local governments would seek revitalization of high poverty neighborhoods both to enhance their tax revenues and to enhance the overall quality of their neighborhoods. Moreover, professionals and developers would attempt to identify new profitable market opportunities, and find unrealized value in gentrifying neighborhoods (Kennedy and Leonard, 2001).

2.4. Social and cultural dimension

Social costs and benefits can be resulted from the process of gentrification. Changes in social fabric and character of a gentrified neighborhood are some of its social consequences which lead to changing the voice of the community (Chernoff, 1980). Population loss is another social consequence of gentrification, which occur through under-occupation of residents' properties (Wagner, 1995; Bailey and Robertson, 1997). This can be caused by conversion of sub-divided units into larger units and preparation of suitable housing conditions for more affluent households. Homelessness can be noted as another effect of gentrification. Many theorists mentioned loss of social and affordable housing, eviction from private rented accommodation and dwelling in the form of single room occupant as the main reasons for homelessness (Power, 1973; Badcock and Cloher, 1980; Kasinitz, 1984; Hopper, Susser and Conover, 1985; Marcuse, 1986). Moreover, there are some other social consequences such as increase of crime rate, conflict between old and new residents, loss of social diversity and displacement (McDonald, 1986; Taylor and Covington, 1988; Covington and Taylor, 1989; Kennedy and Leonard, 2001; Atkinson, 2002).

Displacement is one of the main social consequences of gentrification projects which affects the urban life of many low income residents. As gentrification is not a "back to the city" movement, it results in shifting of low income residents around the city. Displacement happens in circumstances where residents are forced to move from their residence by conditions which affect the dwelling or its immediate surroundings and because they cannot afford to live in the gentrifying neighborhood. Thus, it is one of the social costs in the process of gentrification. It is studied by many theories (for example, Sumka, 1979; Hartman, 1979; Le Gates and Hartman, 1986; Marcuse, 1986; Lyons, 1996; Freeman, 2005), that displacement of lower income residents from their neighborhoods occurs because of increases in property tax, rapidly rising rents, destruction of a social community or price shadowing of nearby rents and property prices. However, some theories (for example, Hall and Ogden, 1992) argue that gentrification may not necessarily displace anyone at all.

In trying to develop profound understanding of displacement we can note two kinds of displacement, including direct and indirect ones (Twigge-Molecey, 2013). In this regard, it is necessary to consider the neighborhood as social space because if it has no particular importance for residents, then displacement either in direct or indirect forms is of no consequence.

Indirect displacement can be defined as not being able to gain access or belonging in a neighborhood and as a kind of social displacement, which refers to cultural, social or political displacement experienced by residents. It may occur when residents are not able to move into a given dwelling due to the increasing costs of housing within neighborhood (Marcuse, 1986; Chernoff, 1980; Martin, 2007; Twigge-Molecey, 2013). In deed some of the related theories argue that the process of gentrification privilege more affluent households and prevent original residents from staying in the neighborhood (Millard-Ball, 2002; Teixeira, 2007). However, other theories state that indirect effects of gentrification may not be experienced negatively by all residents as their investigations show that a group of residents may be appreciative of improvements in local service (Doucet, 2009; Freeman, 2006).

According to some theories four constituent types can be offered for displacement (Twigge-Molecey, 2013). Its first type can be defined as exclusionary displacement, which happens through mechanisms of gentrification and affects the economic status of the original residents. In this type of displacement areas that were once affordable for all the residents become inaccessible to low and modest income residents as competition from higher income groups pushes prices beyond their means (Marcuse, 1986; Millard-Ball, 2002; Twigge-Molecey, 2013). The second type is social displacement which relates to effects of gentrification on residents' social networks. As a result of this, fracture of local social networks may be experienced by the individuals (Fried, 1966). The third type is cultural displacement and it refers to the interaction between culture of original residents and gentrifiers in a neighborhoods who try to change the character and identity of neighborhood. The last type of displacement is defined as political displacement, which relates to the shifting power dynamics within neighborhood-based community institutions and the creation of new organizations by newcomers (Martin 2007). It can be concluded that social and cultural displacements have strong direct influence on residents' place attachment and sense of place (Blomley, 2004; Jess & Massey, 1995; Lehman Frisch, 2002, 2008; G. P. Martin, 2005; G. Rose, 1995).

On the other hand, direct displacement can be defined as losing the meaning home (Twigge-Molecey, 2013). Exploring the experience of direct displacement is also highly relates to research on environmental psychology and the meaning of home for residents. In such cases, the experience of displacement can result in negative psycho-social reactions, such as alienation or loss of attachment to the neighborhood (Carr, 1994; Després, 1991; Fried, 1966; Key, 1967; Kleinhans, 2003; Vandemark, 2007).

According to both forms of displacement (direct and indirect) the significant role of psychological consequences in the process of gentrification can be understood. However, the psychological dimension of gentrification has been neglected in most of the related literatures. This study aims to investigate the interrelation between the social and psychological dimensions. In deed when the costs of gentrification are estimating, it is necessary to also analyze its psychological influences on the original residents.

2.5. *Psychological Dimension*

Review of literatures which focus on the process of gentrification suggests that the neighborhood is of particular importance for low-income groups and the elderly because their social networks are more neighborhood-based (Authier, 2005; Fortin, 1988; Guest & Wierzbicki, 1999; Henning & Lieberg, 1996). Therefore, it can be concluded that the original residents of gentrified neighborhoods, who are mainly classified in a low-income group, have strong neighborhood-based social networks. These neighborhood-based social networks affect the manner through which residents create a psychological relation with their neighborhood. Place attachment, sense of community and place identity are some of these psychological relations between the residents and their place.

Place attachment is often defined as a multifaceted concept that characterizes the bonding between individuals and their important places (Low & Altman, 1992; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Giuliani, 2003). It includes different actors, social relationships, and places of varying scale which has affective bonds to the residence or neighborhood (Feldman 1996; Bonaiuto et al. 1999; Manzo 2003, 2005). According to some related theories such as Riger and Lavrakas' (1981), two dimensions of attachment can be found, including a sense of bondedness (feelings of being a part of one's neighborhood), and a sense of rootedness to the community.

People's attachments to their neighborhoods are often intertwined with their sense of community (Pretty, Chipuer, and Bramson 2003). In fact, Place attachment to the neighborhood served as a precondition for the development of a sense of community among residents (Rivlin, 1987). A psychological "sense of community" is a multidimensional concept and relates to interpersonal relationships within blocks and neighborhoods. It express the feelings of membership or belongingness to a group based on historical, cultural or social connections (McMillan and Chavis 1986; Chavis and Wandersman 1990; Hughey and Speer 2002; Perkins and Long 2002). This fact is again an emphasis on the interrelation between the social and psychological dimensions in gentrification's studies.

Furthermore, place identity has been described as the individual's incorporation of place into the larger concept of self; conceptions, interpretations, ideas, and related feelings about specific physical settings. In this regard, definition of place identity emphasizes the importance of the physical environment in constructing the identity (Proshansky, 1978, 1983).

Based on the above-mentioned concepts in relation with the psychological dimension of gentrification, it can be expressed that sense of community, place attachment and place identity manifest themselves behaviorally in participation and can motivate community members to participate in neighborhood improvement and planning efforts (Saegert, 1989).

In gentrifying neighborhoods, explorations of place attachment have found there are often competing representations of place held by longstanding residents compared to newcomers (Blomley, 2004; G. P. Martin, 2005) since place attachment specifically can be linked to length of residence (Kasarda and Janowitz 1974; Ahlbrandt 1984; Taylor 1996). Place attachment provides

psychological strengths that could help fuel long-term urban projects and revitalization programs. Residents with high levels of place attachment may be willing to participate in the improvement of their neighborhood (Brown et al. 2004).

This study reviewed the effective dimensions of gentrification and some of its significant consequences. However, the focus of this research is the last two dimensions, including social and psychological dimensions. The aim of this research is to investigate the interaction of these two dimensions in the process of gentrifying a neighborhood. It tries to explore the effects of displacement and vanishing the residents' place attachment, place identity and sense of community in a gentrified society.

3. Methodology of Research

3.1. Study Area

The restricted area selected for this study located in the "Abkouh" Neighborhood in Mashhad, Iran. This neighborhood is one of the oldest areas in Mashhad which has been located outside of the city limits until 1960s. Urban development towards the west of Mashhad caused the area to locate inside the city limits and it has been gradually turned into a neighborhood of Mashhad. Due to such development towards the west, residential neighborhoods and commercial centers of the city have been surrounded by this area. These renovated and new-built urban fabrics are considered a place to attract major investment of the city and also enjoy appropriate conditions structurally, socially and economically. However, urban fabric of Abkouh Neighborhood has maintained its basic features and fallen behind urban development. Although significant structural and functional changes have been made in blocks around the neighborhood, residential blocks inside the area face the lack of development, old and time-worn fabric and lack of public services such as educational, athletic uses, green spaces etc. The continued existence of such social problems, low-income people settlement in this neighborhood, and also their economic problems are other difficulties that the residents are facing with these days.



Figure1: The Organic Urban Fabric of Abkouh Neighborhood

The physical fabric of this area is organic and Abkouh Neighborhood was classified into two parts i.e. northern and southern as one of the main streets of Mashhad passes through the area. About 65% of residential properties have an area of less than 100 square meters. Buildings have mostly one or two floors and some turned into warehouses due to their old and time-worn structure and also some are empty. Peripheral blocks of this area are mostly commercial or administrative centers and work in line with city scale. In addition to residential properties, there are some stores inside the area in which functional scales are in proportion to this neighborhood and the owners are the very residents.

The price of the peripheral properties has been economically increased but residential ones have been not increased in value due to their old physical fabrics and inappropriate social conditions. Some residential properties belong to those who are not living in this neighborhood but they didn't sell their homes in the hope of increasing the price and sometimes paid by tenants for commercial activities. In addition to physical and economic issues, the social conditions of Abkouh Neighborhood's residents are very poor. The majority of residents are families with poor occupational and economic conditions who migrated from rural areas or small towns to Mashhad.



Figure 2: The Old and Time-Worn Fabric of Abkouh Neighborhood

Figure 3: The Commencial Peripheral Blocks of Abkouh Neighborhood

The existence of such conditions has turned Abkouh Neighborhood into a separate area from its surroundings; an area which has a poorer environmental character and physical quality compared to the area around it and more importantly it requires a comprehensive planning for revitalization, renovation and rehabilitation.

In the current year, the local government and Mashhad’s municipality tried to provide a gentrification plan in this area to solve the existent problems and resolve the contradiction between this neighborhood and other neighboring regions. Therefore, formulating this plan will have significant effects on physical, social and economic conditions of Abkouh Neighborhood. This plan can reduce the mentioned contradictions and it can ultimately promote the quality of life in this area.

Despite all positive effects resulting from gentrification plan in Abkouh Neighborhood, some negative results faced by the residents. One of the negative results is displacement of the residents. So, considering the theoretical framework of this study, the examination of such displacement’s consequences on place attachments of the first residents regarded as very important issue. In fact, on the one hand, the purpose of this study is to examine displacement effects on place attachment of the first residents but on the other hand to identify solutions to remove negative aspects of gentrification and especially displacement results faced by the residents, through using and focusing on their place attachment.

3.2. Data Collection

The research was carried out on a sample of 60 participants living in Abkouh neighborhood. All 60 participants were adults and were sampled from both male (50%) and female (50%) residents. The average age was 44 years (age range: 23–65) and about the education, the majority had under high school diploma (74%) but there were also people with a higher level of education (26%). Most of the participants (64%) were the owner of their houses and 57% of them worked outside the neighborhood.

Groups of Participants	n	%
Gender	30	50
Male	30	50
Female		
Age	10	17
23-35	35	58
35-50	15	25
50-65		
Education		
Under High School Diploma	44	74
High School Diploma	16	26
Housing Status of Residents	22	36
Tenant	38	64
Owner		
Occupation Status of Residents	26	43
Inside the neighborhood	34	57
outside the neighborhood		
N= 60		

Table1: Demographic Descriptors of Selected Participants

3.3. Questionnaire

In order to collect the necessary data, the technique of questionnaire was used. Data were gathered by a self-reported questionnaire which took about 15 min to be filled in by each resident. The first part of the questionnaire was related to demographic information. Participants were asked to fill in some personal details related to their sex, age, education, and housing and occupation status.

Then the second part of the questionnaire was related to questions which analyzed the attitudes of residents about the gentrification of their neighborhood. Based on the theoretical framework of this study, the methodology of research should investigate the consequences of different dimensions of gentrification and analyze the interaction between social and psychological dimensions in the process of gentrifying the Abkough neighborhood.

Thus, questionnaire structured in a format that could analyze different dimensions of gentrification. Questions were divided in to 4 categories and each of these categories were referred to one of the mentioned dimensions of gentrification, including spatial and physical; economic; political; social and psychological dimensions. A number of items were included in each of the mentioned categories in order to ask participants about their attitudes to the gentrification of their neighborhood. Table 2 indicates the related items in the questionnaire.

Dimensions of Gentrification	Item Label	Item Description
Spatial and Physical Dimension	Features of the Neighborhood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explaining obvious spatial–physical features and reasons to mention them Evaluating public services exist in the area Residents' expectations of the results obtained from gentrification planning
Economic Dimension	Residents' Financial and Economic Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial and economic affordability in order to participate in gentrification plan Residents' trend towards buying securities and shares
Political Dimension	Chief Administrators and Managers of the Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifying chief administrators who manage the plan (local government and the municipality or the residents)
Social and Cultural Dimension	Social Ties and Housing Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining tribal and racial integration Examining social integration with other residents How to incline to take part in gentrification plan Previous measures made by the residents relevant to renovating and revitalizing the area and residential units Future measures and decisions made by the residents about housing (decisions about living in Abkough Neighborhood or in other areas. Residents' comments about the effects on the implemented plan on their living conditions
Psychological Dimension	Place Attachment, Place Identity and Sense of Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duration of living in the area Reasons for reaming in dwelling houses Satisfaction rate expressed by the residents from living in the area and their trend towards staying there Satisfaction rate expressed by the residents with individual and social security at the area Intimacy rate among the residents Peace, safety and convenience rate in the neighborhood The importance of changes resulting from the implemented plan for the residents

Note. Items which are described in the third column refer to the questions of the questionnaire.

Table 2: Items Used to Analyze the Attitudes of Residents about Gentrification of Their Neighborhood

According to the questionnaire, the first part aimed at collecting information from the residents and their viewpoints about spatial – physical results from the gentrification plan. In this part, the residents were asked to give their comments on the obvious spatial – physical characters relating to Abkough Neighborhood and then to express their ideas about public services such as educational, cultural, athletic services and green spaces.

Additionally, they were asked to state their desirable results obtained from the gentrification plan. In this case, the questions were about the local conditions prevailed in the current position as well as the shortage of standards of living required changes after implementing gentrification plan.

The second part included some questions about economic features and financial affordability of the residents. In this section, the residents were asked about their financial conditions in order to participate in the mentioned plan and also their tendency towards participation in case they can afford to invest on revitalization of their dwellings.

The third part was related to the political dimension of mentioned plan. In this part, residents were asked to give their ideas about their favorite organization for managing the project (local government and the municipality or the residents?)

In the fourth part, social and tribal integration was taken into consideration. In this part, the residents expressed their measures they've taken to renovate and revitalize their area as well as their contributions in proportion to their financial positions. Also, they were asked to anticipate the effects of the plan on their own quality of lives and their satisfaction with the future changes (such as costs, price of properties and housing).

In the fifth part of the questionnaire, the place identity, place attachment and sense of community were taken into consideration. In this part, the residents were asked about the length of time they lived in the area and their reasons to stay. Also, in this part, they were asked to express their attachment to their residential places and neighbors. Residents were finally asked to explain whether they care about the future results obtaining from gentrification plan and structural changes in the area or not and how do they estimate these positive or negative changes.

4. Results and Discussions

According to the results obtained from the questionnaire, the residents' comments on Abkouh Neighborhood and its current and future conditions were analyzed. Statistical analyses on the residents' comments showed that the oldness of physical fabric of the area, the existence of paths with narrow width, blind alleys and residential units with small areas were the obvious features of the neighborhood while most of the residents (75%) regarded the old physical fabric of the area and its worn-out buildings as the most serious problem. Also, 57% of the respondents regarded the shortage of green space as the most critical shortage of public services while 20% of them pointed out the shortage of medical services, 18% of the residents cited athletic spaces and 5% complained about the shortage of appropriate spaces for cultural activities. Based on the mentioned problems, 65% of the residents expected to renovate and restore old buildings as well as increase green spaces in the area. Most of the residents who demanded for the mentioned supplies were the owners of their own homes and 35% of the respondents requested for economic development and income growth. These people were those who lived and worked inside the neighbourhood.

The analysis of economic and financial conditions of the residents and their tendency to participate in the gentrification plan showed that 55% of them didn't intend to take part for renovation and revitalization of the area and the main reason for their reluctance was the lack of financial and economic affordability. Also, 37% of the residents were interested in participating while 8% of them were qualified to take part and cooperate with the plan implementers.

According to the political aspect of the questionnaire relevant to the gentrification plan, residents were asked to give their ideas about the chief administrators to manage the plan. 63% of them argued that the municipality had to undertake the implementation of the project and bear all costs and capitals. 32% of them believed that the residents could improve the physical, social and economic conditions of the area in cooperation with the municipality while only 5% of them argued that the residents could be the main participants for the mentioned plan. More accurate consideration shows that those who considered the cooperation between the municipality and local government the main factor in the investment were the persons with inappropriate financial conditions to contribute; therefore, they expected the local government to bear costs and capitals. Those who agreed to cooperate with the municipality were mostly the residents that were eager to take part and regarded the results as positive points although they did not have financial affordability. Therefore, they believed that they could promote their quality of lives in the area with the help of the local government while the residents enjoying higher income levels intended to change the structure of the neighborhood in accordance with their own decisions.

The analysis of Abkouh Neighborhood's social and cultural aspect shows that 75% of the residents migrated from neighboring towns and villages to Mashhad and settled in the area. Also, 41% of them were immigrants who came from smaller towns and 36% of them migrated from neighboring villages. This group of the residents has migrated to Mashhad very long time ago and they've gradually settled in this neighborhood. In addition to the low price of the properties in the area, the main reason for their migration was family and tribal relationships. The study showed that a considerable number of families settled in this area had family relationships while 25% of the residents migrated from other parts of the city to this neighborhood. This group had no tribal relationship with other neighbors and the main reason for choosing this area was the lower price of properties. It is necessary to say that despite spatial position of the area, the price of properties has not significantly increased due to inappropriate physical and social conditions of this area. Apart from racial and tribal relationships among the residents, social connections considered one of the obvious characters of this area. 83% of the residents argued that they had strong relationships with their neighbors.

According to the results obtained from the questionnaire, 8% of the residents intended to invest in the area and buy neighboring properties near their lands in order to build new houses. This percentage of residents had financial affordability and required economic conditions to contribute towards investment and regarded the residents as the main factor to implement the mentioned plan. 18% of the subjects agreed to sell their properties to the municipality and investors in exchange for taking properties and houses in other neighborhoods of the city. These residents included middle income people; so, they intended to change their neighborhood with the help of the government and settled in other areas with similar economic conditions. The majority of these people had not tribal and racial relationships with other neighbors. While 43% of the residents intended to sell their properties and houses to the municipalities in exchange for receiving the payment to move away. The main reason for such tendency was the tribal relationships of Abkouh Neighborhood's residents and their lack of financial affordability. Thus, they preferred to move away along with their close kinfolks to areas in which the price of properties was at a lower level. In their opinions, the price of lands in central neighborhoods was higher than peripheral areas; therefore, peripheral neighborhoods were more appropriate to live in. On the other hand, 31% of the residents had no tendency to cede their properties to the municipality or the investors. The majority of these residents belonged to a group with inappropriate economic conditions and they considered such gentrification a threat for their dwelling places in this area. So, they were opposed to the plan.

The results obtained from the previous measures showed that 75% of the respondents had not already taken measures to renovate and revitalize their residential units and only 35% of them have made small changes in rebuilding their houses. Also, the residents were asked to give their opinions about the gentrification plan and its effects on their ways of lives as well as express their future measures and decisions about staying in Abkouh Neighborhood. The survey demonstrated that 31% of them considered the effects negative and menacing so that they were opposed to the plan while 61% argued that this plan could make significant changes in the area and increase the price of the properties and housing. Significant percentage of the residents was those who did not their own homes and lived as tenants; so, they argued that they could not afford to pay for the rentals. Totally, both groups (92%) argued that the implementation of the mentioned plan could force them into leaving the area; therefore, they had to move away and live in deprived or peripheral areas. In contrast, 8% of the residents had higher revenue levels and regarded the effects as positive measures which could increase the price of the houses and properties. They were very eager to invest on the area to continue their lives there.

Finally, the last analytical part included place identity, place attachment and sense community among the residents. The research showed that 45% of them have been living for more than 25 years in this area. The length of dwelling time for 32% of them was between 15 and 25 years and 18% of them have lived in the area less than 15 years. Also, 5% of the residents have moved into this area less than 5 years ago. The majority of the native residents (83%) preferred to stay here just to be close to their kinfolks and relatives. They migrated from the neighboring towns and villages to Mashhad and settled in this area and they were ready to stay there in case the economic conditions could be stable as ever. Compared to this group, other residents (17%) were those who settled in Abkouh Neighborhood because of the low price of properties. They argued that if they had better economic conditions, they would move away and live in better neighborhoods of the city.

Considering individual and social security, 90% of the residents considered this area a safe place to live because they had tribal and close relationships with their neighbors. However, 10% of them were not satisfied with individual and social security of the neighbourhood, but they had to stay in the area due to their economic problems. The results obtained from the questionnaire showed that 90% of the residents felt convenient and relaxed and also they had a close relationship with their neighbors. In contrast, about the rest (10%) was the contrary.

Ultimately, responses about the future changes in the area showed that almost 90% of the subjects considered the changes very important. This group of people demanded such positive changes in the area and they regarded Abkouh Neighborhood as their home. The majority of these people has been living there with their kinfolks for a long time and expressed a strong attachment to this area, while 10% of them were not so obsessed with the possible changes in the area. They quite liked to move away.

Residents' Social and Cultural Conditions	Percentage of Respondents
Tribal and racial integration	75%
Social integration with other residents	83%
Inclination towards participating in gentrification plan	8%
Previous measures for revitalizing and renovating the area and residential units	35%
Negative evaluations for possible changes in the area and increasing the price of properties and housing	92%
To be forced to leave the area, move away and live in peripheral areas of the city	92%
Note. The percentage column indicates percentages of respondents who mentioned having each particulare social and cultural condition.	

Table 3: Analyzing the Attitudes of Residents about their Social and Cultural conditions in the neighborhood

Residents' Place Attachment, Place Identity and Sense of Community	Percentage of Respondents
Prolonged residence in the area	77%
Satisfaction with residential conditions and closeness to other relatives	83%
Inclination towards staying in the area	83%
Satisfaction with individual and social security in the area	90%
Feeling of being close to other residents	90%
Feeling of safety, peace and convenience	90%
Caring about the future of the area and the possible changes resulting from the implementation of the gentrification plan	90%
Note. The percentage column indicates percentages of respondents who mentioned having each particulare condition in relation to their place attachment, place identity and sense of community.	

Table 4: Analyzing the Attitudes of Residents about their Place Attachment, Place Identity and Sense of Community in the neighborhood

According to the tables above, the cultural and social interactions among the residents and the conditions of place attachment, place identity and sense of community showed that the majority of the residents in Abkouh Neighborhood had a prolonged residence in this area. They also had tribal and racial relationships with other residents and they have a feeling of safety and convenience in this area. So, they quite liked to stay in this area. In fact, they considered Abkouh Neighborhood their home due to the strong attachment to this and regarded it as their individual and social identity. Therefore, they (90%) cared about the future of the neighborhood and possible changes resulting from gentrification plan. But on the other hand, the necessary measures for improving the physical fabric of the area were blocked because of the lack of appropriate economic conditions and income.

From the viewpoint of the residents, such financial and economic problems would have negative effects of the area and their way of lives so that most tenants considered such plan a threat to their dwelling places. Moreover, despite the trend shown by the landlords to contribute in this plan, they would be forced to sell their properties to the municipality and move away due to inappropriate financial and economic affordability. Analytical data obtained from the social and psychological interaction relating to the implementation of gentrification plan shows that despite deep social and psychological connections to the area, dwelling conditions of the residents would be affected by direct economic pressures resulting from such plan. This would impose heavy costs on the residents such as displacement and also their place attachment, place identity and sense of community would eventually fade away.

5. Conclusion

Totally, according to the findings obtained from the study, we can conclude that gentrification plans can have the most negative effects on the low-income people due to considerable economic changes they would make. Displacement of the original residents, their movement to other neighborhoods, their alienage to the new neighbourhood, lack of place attachment, place identity and sense of community are the considerable issues which require significant attention in the future plans. Therefore, about implementing such plans, not only physical effects but also social and psychological results would be the most important to deal with.

Furthermore, the effects of psychological aspect and its positive effects on plan implementation must be taken into consideration. In line with this goal, we can exploit residents' place attachment and encourage them to contribute to the gentrification plan. On the other hand, the municipality, local government and administrators can prevent negative effects of gentrification plans and the original residents' displacement by adopting certain practical policies and increasing financial support. Identifying such policies requires extensive research and can open new windows for the future studies on gentrification plans.

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