

Research Paper: Identifying Factors Affecting the Strengthening of Socio-Cultural Participation in Peri-Urban Villages with an Emphasis on Urban Spaces (Case Study: Bojnurd)

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Urban spaces can serve as a critical platform for socio-cultural interaction between residents of peri-urban villages and cities. Accordingly, this research aims to identify the key factors that strengthen socio-cultural participation in peri-urban villages, with a focus on urban spaces in Bojnurd.

Methods: The present study is applied in orientation and adopts a mixed-methods (qualitative-quantitative) approach. In terms of strategy, it is survey-based, and its implementation is descriptive-analytical. Data was collected through documentary (library-based) sources as well as field methods, including interviews and questionnaires. The statistical population consisted of managers and specialists in Bojnurd. Using purposive sampling, 25 participants were selected until theoretical saturation was achieved. Data analysis was performed using the Grounded Theory method alongside hybrid models (F-ARAS + F-COPRAS).

Results: The findings revealed that human-centered and multi-functional infrastructure design, with a score of 72.65, plays a pivotal role as the most effective causal factor. Among the contextual factors, identification and mitigation barriers such as ethnic dispersion and the lack of quality public spaces, with a score of 72.50, were found to be most significant. Regarding the intervening factors, governance transparency and trust-building, with a score of 72.69, and sustainable financing of participation, with a score of 72.54, were identified as the most critical elements for the success of the strategies.

Conclusion: The study demonstrates that strengthening socio-cultural participation requires a simultaneous approach combining the improvement of the physical quality of public spaces, the reform of governance structures, and the removal of institutional barriers.

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1. Introduction

Today, the goal of sustainable development is to enhance the quality of life by creating optimal and favorable conditions in areas such as poverty alleviation, nutrition, health, employment, education, and leisure (Momeni et al., 2023: 3). Achieving sustainable development, which aims to improve the social, economic, and cultural status of individuals in a society, requires the formation and strengthening of social capital. Social capital, as a fundamental prerequisite for urban and rural development, comprises elements such as social trust, social participation, social cohesion, and social awareness, the levels of which differ across societies (Adel, 2022: 1).

Attention to the phenomenon of participation and the emphasis on its role as one of the most important factors of development largely stems from the experience of failed development programs in the 1950s and 1960s (Azizkhani, 2018: 223). Evaluation of these programs revealed that the neglect of public participation was the primary reason for their lack of success (Shuib et al., 2015: 314). The trajectory of development planning in past decades indicates that these programs were predominantly based on centralized, top-down approaches. The shortcoming of these approaches was that most people were rarely included in development planning and typically did not play an active role in development initiatives (Jome pour, 2003: 1052). In response to these limitations, from the 1980s onward, the attention of many social planning theorists shifted toward bottom-up and participatory planning models (Noormohammadi et al., 2022: 1770; Azizkhani, 2018: 223).

within this context, the spaces in peri-urban rural areas play a significant role as hubs for community gatherings. The characteristics inherent in these spaces attract individuals, encourage their prolonged stay, and foster participation among them (Dabiri & Zare, 2020: 25). These spaces are settings for life and activity that must consider the similarities and differences among individuals and various age, social, and gender groups and provide a safe, healthy, sustainable, and attractive environment for all users. Accordingly, they should respond not only to diverse social needs but also to basic functional and psychological requirements (Maroofi et al., 2018: 20).

Given these considerations, it appears that the level of participation and presence of residents in peri-urban rural areas is directly related to their satisfaction with

the environment, facilities, and characteristics of these spaces. The accessible amenities and services for residents in these areas—such as transportation, roads and streets, green spaces, a sense of security, aesthetically pleasing visuals, etc.—can facilitate greater participation, presence, and social interactions. The necessity of this is acutely felt in the peri-urban villages of Bojnourd, the capital of North Khorasan province. As the primary development hub of North Khorasan province, Bojnourd has profoundly impacted its surrounding villages. One of the most significant changes in patterns of cultural and social participation in these villages. Modern urban spaces, such as shopping centers, parks, etc., have gradually replaced traditional rural communal spaces. This phenomenon is particularly visible among the younger generation, who prefer to spend their leisure time in the city. This shift has contributed to declining engagement in local socio-cultural activities and the gradual weakening of traditional rural institutions.

Furthermore, the physical expansion of the city and the integration of peripheral villages into the urban fabric have not only transformed the spatial and physical landscape but also affected their social and cultural structures. The migration of young people to the city for better jobs and educational opportunities has led to the erosion of active human capital within villages. Consequently, traditional forms of social cohesion have weakened, giving way to more fragmented, superficial, and individualistic social interactions.

The importance of addressing this issue stems from the fact that the continuation of this trend may result in the progressive disintegration of social networks, the weakening of local cultural capital, and a reduced sense of place attachment in future generations. In regions where villages surrounding expanding cities—such as Bojnourd—play a vital role in preserving cultural identity, neglecting patterns of social and cultural participation threatens not only the quality of rural life but also affects the social cohesion of the entire province.

Therefore, while access to urban amenities can enhance the quality of life, this process, in the absence of proper planning, poses a serious threat to the social cohesion and cultural vitality of villages. Preserving and strengthening socio-cultural participation in these areas requires strategies that intelligently integrate the benefits of urban development with the protection and revitalization of local social and cultural capital.

2. Literature Review

Today, public participation is widely recognized as the most effective mechanisms for addressing socio-spatial challenges and enhancing the functionality and quality of public spaces (Syukron, 2022: 3192; Shuib et al., 2015: 314; Terán et al., 2012: 121; Bianchi, 2019: 2). Over the past decades, participation in planning has been acknowledged as a consensus-based decision-making system, and participatory planning has consistently been regarded as part of community development (Li et al., 2020: 2).

From a macro-level perspective, social participation can be considered a set of moral virtues and social harmonies that align with developmental transformations. It is influenced by economic performance and political performance, along with the corresponding power structure and governance, while simultaneously influencing these two aspects (Dini Torkamani, 2007: 174). Development therefore, extends beyond quantitative growth and necessitates qualitative, structural, and institutional transformations distinct from past trajectories (Sarafi, 2013: 194).

The significance of social participation in achieving rural development has become a central focus of numerous studies in recent years. A necessary condition for the progress of any society, particularly rural communities, is comprehensive development, the establishment of warm relationships, the expansion of social cohesion, the enhancement of social capacity, and, most importantly, mutual trust (individual, community, and government)—all of which are components of social participation. Although the scientific study of villages has long been a field of research, it has only gained particular interest in recent decades (Saeedi, 2004: 1).

Drawing on the sociology of space, Fritz and Binder propose conceptualizing participation as a relational spatial process, emphasizing that space is a “relational arrangement of social goods and individuals in places.” They also stress the link between power relations and participation, and the importance of considering the construction of participatory spaces, access possibilities, and how relationships between participants are shaped, and consequently, participation itself (Fritz & Binder, 2018: 5). Following this concept, the environment (both social and physical) plays a vital role in creating the context for participation (Breuer, 2003: 12).

Numerous domestic and international studies have addressed aspects of social participation. In Iran, several studies have examined factors influencing rural participation. Sojasi Qeidari et al. (2025) in a study titled

“Analysis of the Willingness of Rural People to Participate in Village Management” found that the willingness of local people to participate in rural management is high, with factors such as sense of place attachment and collective identity. Shafiei Sabet and Karimi Marzi (2023) in research titled “The Role of Social Participation of Villagers in the Livability of the Rural Environment” found that despite the positive impact of social participation on livability, the level of villager participation in improving indicators is still assessed as low. Asadi et al. (2016) also emphasized the key role of people’s participation in rural development and showed that the desire for intellectual, consultative, and labor participation among villagers is at a desirable level, and increasing economic capacity enhances participation. Shafiei Sabet and Khaksar (2019) showed that social capital (including awareness, trust, and social networks) has a positive and direct impact on villagers’ participation in development programs. Taleb and Najafi Asl (2010), with a broader perspective in their article “Lessons from the Process of Rural Participation in Iran,” suggest that revitalizing participation, requires integrating traditional participatory patterns with modern development programs and moderating power relations to expand opportunities for local engagement.

At the international level, Jiménez-Calderón et al. (2024), in their study on Montería, Colombia, showed that proper planning of public space areas and meetings plays a fundamental role in enhancing quality of life, especially in developing countries where socio-economic inequalities impact social and territorial cohesion. Termansen et al. (2023), in research titled “Spaces for Participation: Exploring Characteristics of Environments That Enable Citizen Participation in a Community-Based Health Promotion Initiative in a Disadvantaged Neighborhood” in Copenhagen, Denmark, demonstrated how organizational, social, and physical environments played important roles in participation. Yang et al. (2023) investigated the mobilization of solidarity and the effectiveness of citizen participation in the Kyiv city region. Results showed that increased exposure to face-to-face guidance, multi-sectoral monitoring participation, information dissemination, and the involvement of social activists significantly enhanced the effectiveness of participation among citizens. Bruegel (2006), in her work “Social Capital, Diversity, and Education Policy in London,” showed that politicians should have programs for educating students to meet needs and navigate life, enabling them to live in a global, multi-racial/ethnic world. Fukuyama (1999), in “Social Capital and Civil Society,” focuses on the concept of social participation through expansion of the “radius of trust.” Grootaert

(1998), in an article titled “Social Capital, Household Welfare, and Poverty in Indonesia,” found that household social participation has a positive impact on welfare.

In sum, the review of domestic and international research indicates substantial attention has been paid to the role of social and cultural participation in rural development and quality of life enhancement. Previous studies have predominantly focused on individual, social, and cultural-social capital factors affecting participation, with some research also pointing to the connection between public spaces and participation. However, most of these studies have either addressed purely rural environments or examined urban spaces separately. Few studies have systematically explored the interactive and reciprocal relationship between urban spaces and socio-cultural participation in peri-urban villages.

The innovation of the present research lies in its integrated qualitative-quantitative approach and the use of hybrid models (F ARAS + F COPRAS). It not only identifies the causal, contextual, and intervening factors strengthening socio-cultural participation but also highlights the position and importance of designing human-centered and multi-functional urban spaces as a sustainable bridge between village and city in the case study of Bojnourd. This approach fills the gap in previous studies and provides a practical tool for policymaking and planning integrated urban-rural development.

3. Methodology

The present study is applied in orientation and in terms of its nature, adopts an integrative integrative mixed-methods approach (qualitative–quantitative). From a methodological standpoint, the research is survey-based, and in terms of implementation, it follows a descriptive–analytical design. Data was collected through a combination of documentary and library-based sources as well as field methods, including semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. The statistical population consisted of urban managers and subject-matter specialists in Bojnourd city. Using purposive sampling, 25 participants were selected, with sampling continuing until theoretical saturation was achieved.

Data analysis was performed using the Grounded Theory method and hybrid models (F-ARAS + F-COPRAS). Grounded Theory is a research strategy for the social sciences formulated by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. This method involves the following steps:

Stage 1: Interview transcription: at this stage, open coding was performed, meaning that for each question posed, responses were transcribed, and codes semantically related to the topic of conflict were extracted.

Stage 2: Categorization of Open Codes: To categorize open codes, the researchers performed semantic categorization of the codes, grouping those conceptually close to each other.

Stage 3: axial coding and paradigmatic modeling. During this stage, the categories developed in Stage 2 were positioned within the Grounded Theory paradigmatic model. Through repeated reference to interview data, categories were carefully examined and classified as causal, contextual, or intervening conditions. This process involved refining and integrating categories at a higher conceptual level, ultimately leading to the identification of core categories. Following this qualitative structuring, the relative importance and prioritization of the identified factors were assessed using the hybrid F-ARAS and F-COPRAS models.

The spatial scope of the study focuses on Bojnourd, the capital of North Khorasan Province, which covers an area of 32.5 square kilometers. It is located in north-eastern Iran at longitude 57° 20' E and latitude 37° 28' N, south of the Kopet Dag mountain range, east of the Aladagh Mountains, and north of the Alborz mountain range. The elevation of Bojnourd is 1070 meters above sea level. The city itself has an area of 36 square kilometers and is 821 kilometers from Tehran. Bojnourd shares a border with Turkmenistan to the north and with Esfarayen and Jajarm to the south. It also connects to Shirvan, Ashkhaneh, and Jajarm from the east and west. This study examined four peri-urban villages around Bojnourd: Malekesh, Halgheh Sang, Ghaleh Aziz, and Ahmadabad.

4. Findings

To identify the factors affecting the strengthening of socio-cultural participation in the villages around Bojnourd city, with an emphasis on urban spaces, the Grounded Theory method was used. Accordingly, the causal, contextual, and intervening factors in strengthening socio-cultural participation were first examined, followed by the resulting strategies and consequences. For this purpose, a total of 25 in-depth interviews were conducted. Each interview, lasting between 60 and 90 minutes, was recorded, noted, and transcribed immediately, allowing more precise analysis and review of the experts' perspectives through repeated examination of the conversations.

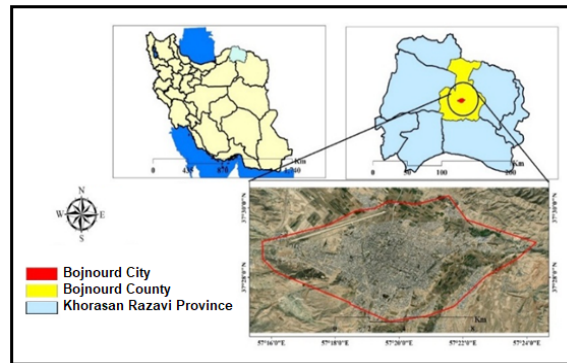


Figure 1. Geographical location of the study area. Reference: Authors, 2024



Causal Factors

Causal factors refer to the conditions that directly contribute to the emergence and formation of the core phenomenon. These factors are a set of categories and their characteristics that influence the main category. Table 1 shows the causal factors contributing to the strengthening of socio-cultural participation in the villages around Bojnourd city, with an emphasis on urban spaces, organized by semantic units and corresponding analytical categories.

According to the interview results in Table 1, the categories of Spatial (Infrastructural) Design, Communication-Education, Planning for Capacity Building and Training, Formulating a Participatory Vision Statement for Bojnourd, and Creating Diversity and Employment were identified as effective causal factors in strengthening the socio-cultural participation of citizens in Bojnourd. Therefore, to determine the relative importance and priority of these factors, the hybrid model technique (F-ARAS + F-COPRAS) was used. The results are shown in Table 2:

Table 1. Effective Causal Factors

Categories (Classes)	Semantic Units	Interviewee Codes
	Human-centered design	
	Creating multifunctional and flexible spaces	
	Increasing public green spaces	X11, X14, X19, X21
	Improving street furniture and lighting	
	Attention to architecture and local identity	
	Education and cultural development	
Communication-Education	Creating specific apps or social media pages for each public space for information dissemination, and even public consultation on programs	X22, X23, X22, X25
	Encouraging the formation of groups for maintaining green spaces, cleanliness, or organizing small events	
Planning for Capacity Building and Training	Holding training courses for local facilitators	X1, X2, X5, X9, X11, X14, X19
	Creating support packages for the people	
	Holding futuristic workshops on implementation methods	
	Creating a shared and inspiring understanding	
Formulating a Participatory Vision Statement for Bojnourd	Forming a board of trustees or project steering committee	X1, X2, X5, X9, X11, X14, X19
	Holding informal dialogue-centered meetings	
	Launching idea stations in public spaces	
	Forming separate focus groups	
	Preparing neighborhood mental maps	
	Direct job creation through cultural spaces	
Creating Economic Diversity and Employment	Boosting the local economy	X6, X8, X9, 19, X16
	Economic participation in events	
	Private sector investment	

Reference: Research Findings, 2024.



Table 2. Ranking Results (Degree of Influence of Each Causal Factor)

Causal Factors	Score Obtained (QL)	Max Score (QMAX)	Min Score (QMIN)	Range between QMIN and QMAX	Score out of 100
Spatial (Infrastructural) Design	14.190	15.567	13.100	2.467	72.65
Communication-Education	14.133	15.330	13.230	2.100	72.35
Planning for Capacity Building and Training	14.090	15.140	13.400	1.740	72.10
Formulating Participatory Vision for Bojnourd	14.065	15.110	13.300	1.810	72.16
Creating Diversity and Employment	14.080	15.118	13.387	1.731	72.21

Reference: Research Findings, 2024.



As shown in Table 2, Spatial (Infrastructural) Design achieved the highest importance score (72.65), indicating that human-centered, multifunctional, and identity-oriented spatial design plays a decisive role in stimulating socio-cultural participation. This factor is followed by Communication–Education (72.35) and Creating Economic Diversity and Employment (72.21), underscoring the importance of information flow, cultural awareness, and economic incentives in participatory processes. Formulating a Participatory Vision for Bojnourd (72.16) and Planning for Capacity Building and Training (72.10) ranked slightly lower, yet still demonstrate substantial influence, highlighting the necessity of long-term visioning and skill development in sustaining participation.

Contextual Factors (Governing Context)

Contextual factors refer to the specific structural, institutional, and socio-cultural conditions that shape and influence the implementation of strategies. Although distinguishing contextual factors from causal factors can be challenging, contextual factors typically define the environment within which causal mechanisms operate, whereas causal factors function as active drivers. Table 3 outlines the contextual factors affecting socio-cultural participation in peri-urban villages around Bojnourd, categorized according to their underlying concepts and thematic classes.

Table 3. Effective Contextual Factors

Categories (Classes)	Semantic Units	Interviewee Codes
Examining Barriers to Strengthening Participation	Departmentalism/Sectionalism	X1, X3, X6, X8
	Ethnic dispersion	
	Lack of quality public spaces	
	A faint role of the private sector and NGOs	
Identifying Positive Contexts and Strengths	Rich intangible heritage	X13, X16, X18, X19, X22
	Relatively traditional social structure	
	Existence of cultural elites	
Facilitative Administrative Laws and Permitting	Developing procedures for fast, low-cost permits for local socio-cultural events	X14, X19, X21, X22, X23, X24, X25
	Defining a transparent bylaw that specifies exactly what documents are needed for each event type and the review timeline	
	Ratifying regulations for the use of public spaces	
	Developing bylaws for supporting socio-cultural projects	
	Creating a legal framework for private sector cooperation with civic groups	
	Laws governing participatory governance and management	
	Laws guaranteeing quality and safety	
Horizontal Coordination	Eliminating sectoral approaches	X1, X3, X5, X7, X9, X10
	Concluding specific agreements between institutions for dividing responsibilities	
	Focusing on common goals instead of individual interests	
	Decentralized and network structure	

Reference: Research Findings, 2024.



According to the interview results in Table 3, the factors of Examining Barriers to Strengthening Participation, Identifying Positive Contexts and Strengths, Facilitative Administrative Laws and Permitting, and Horizontal Coordination were identified as effective contextual factors in strengthening the socio-cultural participation. Therefore, to determine the importance of each factor, the hybrid model technique (F-ARAS + F-COPRAS) was used. The results are shown in Table 4.

Based on the findings in Table 4, Examining Barriers to Strengthening Participation with a weight of 72.50, Identifying Positive Contexts and Strengths with a weight of 72.41, Horizontal Coordination with a weight of 72.31, and Facilitative Administrative Laws and Permitting with a weight of 72.17 have the highest and lowest importance in the socio-cultural participation of citizens, respectively.

Intervening Factors

Intervening factors include those that influence strategies. They constitute a set of mediating and intervening variables that facilitate or limit the intervention of other factors and have a causal and general nature. Table 5 presents the intervening factors influencing socio-cultural participation in peri-urban villages around Bojnourd, organized by conceptual categories and supporting interview evidence.

Based on the interview analysis summarized in Table 5, the categories of Reviewing Inspirational Ideas for Planning, Governance, Financing Participation, Management, Maintenance, and Continuous Evaluation, and Strengthening Core Functions of Participation were identified as effective intervening factors. Therefore, to determine the importance of each factor, the hybrid model technique (F-ARAS + F-COPRAS) was used. The results are shown in Table 6.

As indicated in Table 6, Governance with a weight of 72.69, Financing Participation with a weight of 72.54, Management, Maintenance, and Continuous Evaluation

with a weight of 72.32, Reviewing Inspirational Ideas for Planning with a weight of 72.21, and Strengthening Core Functions of Participation with a weight of 72.11 have the highest and lowest importance in the socio-cultural participation of citizens, respectively.

5. Discussion

This research employed the Grounded Theory method to analyze the factors influencing the strengthening of socio-cultural participation in the villages surrounding Bojnourd. The findings demonstrate that causal, contextual, and intervening factors collectively create a complex context for participation. Among the causal factors, Spatial (Infrastructural) Design, with a score of 72.65, was identified as the most effective factor, emphasizing the importance of human-centered architecture, multifunctional spaces, and local identity in attracting participation. These results show that physical infrastructure acts not only as a physical setting but also as an active socio-cultural catalyst for participation.

From the perspective of contextual factors, Examining Barriers to Strengthening Participation (score of 72.50) plays the most significant role in shaping participatory outcomes. Issues such as ethnic dispersion, lack of quality public spaces, and the weakness of the private sector were identified as key constraints that, if left unaddressed, may undermine the effectiveness of other strategies. Conversely, the recognition and mobilization of existing strengths—such as rich intangible heritage and relatively traditional social structures—can serve as strategic leverage points for enhancing participation.

Regarding intervening factors, Governance (score: 72.69) and Financing Participation (score: 72.54) received the highest rankings, respectively. These results indicate that transparency, trust-building, and two-way dialogue between governance institutions and citizens, along with sustainable and diverse financial models, provide the necessary foundation for the successful implementation of participatory projects.

Table 4. Ranking Results (Degree of Influence of Each Contextual Factor)

Contextual Factors	Score Obtained (QL)	Max Score (QMAX)	Min Score (QMIN)	Range between QMIN and QMAX	Score out of 100
Examining Barriers to Strengthening Participation	14.230	15.334	13.130	2.204	72.50
Identifying Positive Contexts and Strengths	14.543	15.443	13.300	2.143	72.41
Facilitative Administrative Laws and Permitting	14.150	15.245	13.100	2.145	72.17
Horizontal Coordination	14.241	15.332	13.200	2.132	72.31

Reference: Research Findings, 2024.

Table 5. Effective Intervening Factors

Categories (Classes)	Semantic Units	Interviewee Codes
Reviewing Inspirational Ideas for Planning	'Passage of Cultures' Project	X12, X18, X19, X21
	Project: Nowruz Rituals Thematic Park	
	Participatory Mural Project	
Governance	Four-Season Neighborhood Clubs Project	X14, X17, X19
	Increasing trust between governance institutions and citizens	
	Two-way dialogue dominating the decision-making space	
	Tracing and understanding the decision-making process regarding budget and planning for public spaces	
	Transparency of officials even in failure	
	Management's flexibility on rigid administrative rules to achieve a creative public idea	
Financing Participation	Possibility of piloting small, low-cost projects with public participation	X10, X2, X4, X5, X19, X21, X22, X25
	Degree of power distribution resulting from financing	
	Type of social links created	
	Temporary, event-based financial support	
Management, Maintenance, and Continuous Evaluation	Sustainability of financial relations	X10, X2, X8, X9
	Diversity of financial resources from relevant organizations	
	Delegating maintenance responsibility to local groups	
Strengthening Core Functions of Participation	Holding periodic review meetings	X10, X12, X18, X20, X21
	Establishing a committee of active user representatives for minor daily decisions and event coordination	
	Developing spaces for gatherings and ceremonies	
	Developing green spaces and parks	
	Developing pedestrian-oriented spaces	
	Developing cultural and memorial spaces	
Developing sports and play spaces		
	Compatibility of functions with the cultural fabric	

Reference: Research Findings, 2024.



Table 6. Ranking Results (Degree of Influence of Each Intervening Factor)

Intervening Factors	Score Obtained (QL)	Max Score (QMAX)	Min Score (QMIN)	Range between QMIN and QMAX	Score out of 100
Reviewing Inspirational Ideas for Planning	14.432	15.231	13.150	2.081	72.21
Governance	14.611	15.321	13.100	2.221	72.69
Financing Participation	14.332	15.456	13.300	2.156	72.54
Management, Maintenance, and Continuous Evaluation	14.378	15.332	13.200	2.132	72.32
Strengthening Core Functions of Participation	14.432	15.453	14.400	1.053	72.11

Reference: Research Findings, 2024.



In summary, this research shows that strengthening participation in Bojnourd requires an integrated approach where spatial design, addressing structural barriers, and improving governance are addressed simultaneously. Focusing on a single dimension, without considering the interaction of these factors, cannot lead to sustainable results.

The findings of this study are consistent with a wide range of domestic and international research. At the national level, [Sojasi Qeidari et al. \(2025\)](#) emphasized the role of sense of place attachment and collective identity, [Asadi et al. \(2016\)](#) highlighted the importance of intellectual and economic participation, and [Shafiei Sabet and Khaksar \(2019\)](#) stressed the impact of social capital

on strengthening participation, which aligns completely with the “causal factors” identified in this study, including planning for capacity building and creating economic diversity. At the international level, [Termansen et al. \(2023\)](#) addressed the role of physical, social, and organizational environments in facilitating participation, which aligns with the findings related to “Spatial (Infrastructural) Design” and “Governance” in this research. Also, the study by [Jiménez-Calderón et al. \(2024\)](#) emphasizes proper planning of public spaces as a context for participation, which corresponds with the findings related to “contextual factors” in the present study. These alignments indicate that the key factors affecting socio-cultural participation in different geographical contexts share significant common aspects.

Finally, based on the research results, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Conduct targeted research and design interventions focused on human-centered, multifunctional infrastructural spaces, emphasizing the preservation and representation of local identity to enhance citizen participation.
- Undertake in-depth studies to identify the root causes of structural barriers such as ethnic dispersion, lack of quality public spaces, and the weak private sector.
- Implement and evaluate participatory governance methods based on transparency, trust-building, and two-way dialogue between governance institutions and the local community.
- Analyze sustainable and diverse financing models for participatory projects to ensure their successful implementation.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest.

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