

Evaluation of the social and cultural effects of building a cafe-restaurant in district 4 of Tehran

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ABSTRACT

In recent decades, the quality of the living environment has emerged as a critical concern in contemporary society. Rapid urban expansion and physical development have precipitated numerous environmental challenges and a concomitant decline in overall quality of life. Among the determinants of urban functionality, the spatial location of commercial establishments such as cafe-restaurants significantly influences qualitative outcomes. This study aims to identify and assess the potential social and cultural impacts associated with the establishment of the Resalat Cafe-Restaurant in District 1, Region 4 of Tehran Municipality. Furthermore, it seeks to propose strategic interventions to mitigate adverse effects while enhancing positive outcomes. Employing an analytical-descriptive framework grounded in qualitative and phenomenological methodologies, data were collected via semi-structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews. Thematic analysis was utilized to systematically interpret the qualitative data. Findings indicate that the proposed cafe-restaurant holds substantial potential to improve accessibility and enhance security within the park area. Conversely, the project may engender environmental challenges and unintended cultural repercussions, including diminished social capital and resident dissatisfaction. Effective project implementation necessitates comprehensive traffic management, mitigation of nightlife-related disturbances, preservation of the park's ecological integrity, and addressing socio-cultural tensions through integrated physical, traffic, and cultural interventions. The study advocates for the reinforcement of social and environmental monitoring mechanisms involving local citizens and non-governmental organizations, leveraging their capacities to alleviate social issues, including the management of influential individuals within the community.

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1. Introduction

In recent decades, the quality of the urban living environment has emerged as a critical concern for urban managers. The rapid expansion and physical development of cities have precipitated numerous environmental challenges, resulting in a deterioration of the overall quality of urban life. Among the issues facing urban management are wasted and underutilized spaces, which include abandoned areas, highway edges, poorly lit locations, and sites disconnected from social activity flows and their surrounding urban fabric. Such spaces,

characterized by their lack of integration with neighboring elements, are widely recognized in the urban management literature as inappropriate or dysfunctional urban areas (Trancik, 1986; Jonek-Kowalska and Wolniak, 2024). The recreation and adaptive reuse of such underutilized urban spaces can enhance social security and physical quality, while improving key indicators such as per capita urban services and environmental efficiency (Fanni and Mousavi, 2021). However, the Tehran Metropolitan Master Plan neither



explicitly addresses the prevention of the expansion of wasted and lost spaces surrounding development projects nor tackles these issues in a detailed or targeted manner. This oversight is significant, given that these spaces possess considerable potential to increase urban presence and facilitate the efficient and maximized use of urban areas by citizens. When appropriately planned, these spaces can substantially contribute to the dynamism and vitality of cities; therefore, they warrant strategic and intelligent urban planning interventions (Mohammadi, 2018).

Current development plans and proposals predominantly emphasize the physical revitalization and paving of main urban streets, endeavors which demand considerable time, financial resources, and extensive infrastructural investments (Hahighi Boroojeni et al., 2015; Gregg and Kickert, 2025). Moreover, research indicates that the preferences and patterns of public space use—particularly among younger populations—differ markedly from traditional urban design perspectives, which tend to regard public spaces primarily as mere conduits for movement (Carmona, 2022).

In contemporary urban contexts, emerging forms of public spaces, such as cafes, restaurants, and street food venues, are increasingly recognized as vital platforms for leisure and social interaction.

Over the past two decades, cafes, restaurants, and street food have garnered growing attention from urban designers and planners (Nepa, 2011; Elshater and Abusaada, 2024). These venues represent a new typology of public space grounded in Oldenburg's (1989) "third place" theory, which conceptualizes such locations as more than mere sites for food preparation and consumption. Instead, they function as social environments that foster interpersonal interaction, particularly among women, and contribute to the strengthening of community ties (Soja, 2008).

A review of the literature reveals that, depending on their design and location, cafes and restaurants serve multiple functions within their surrounding environments and communities. These third places contribute to fostering a sense of belonging, enhancing social connections, and facilitating the experience of meaningful social relationships, thereby enabling individuals to establish a sense of place identity (Hanks et al., 2020).

Additionally, such venues provide neutral and accessible platforms for conversation (Modiri and Davoodi, 2017), influence lifestyle changes (Sudarman, 2023), promote socialization and interaction—particularly among young people—and contribute to the creation of vibrant, interconnected urban spaces (Maspul and Almalki, 2023). Furthermore, cafes and restaurants have been associated with increased perceptions of security and greater public presence of women (Farash Khiabani and Partovi, 2021).

Conversely, the literature also identifies several negative and unintended consequences related to these spaces. These include conflicts between traditional and contemporary values (Maspul and Almalki, 2023), the problematic use of coffee as a substitute for illicit substances (Mohammadi and Farahbakhsh Daghigh, 2023), escalation in land and housing prices, and the resultant displacement of low-income residents. Numerous studies, both in Iran and internationally, have explored the impacts of public and third spaces, such as cafes and cafe-restaurants, on local communities and user groups. However, the majority of these investigations have focused on social and cultural impacts after project implementation. In contrast, the present study aims to examine the potential impacts associated with the construction of a cafe-restaurant before project execution.

Farash Khiabani and Partovi (2021) conducted a study to investigate the characteristics and functions of various spatial typologies, or heterospaces, within the central area of Tehran. The primary objective was to identify the nature of these heterospaces and examine their social and spatial roles. The findings indicated that hydrospace within the study area have progressively evolved into meaningful places, with users demonstrating a pronounced sense of belonging and attachment to these environments.

The findings of Mohammadi and Farahbakhsh Daghigh (2023) focus on the prevailing atmosphere in the cafés along University Street in Zahedan. Their analysis identified two distinct patterns of café-related behavior: the habitual consumption of coffee and espresso, predominantly among local residents, and the practice of café-hopping, mainly observed among students and the younger population. Interestingly, café owners employ contrasting strategies to attract these two customer bases,

transforming the café into a quasi-public space that fosters public congregation and interaction. Similarly, [Sudarman \(2023\)](#), in his examination of the evolving role of coffee shops among the Millennial generation, highlighted the dual influence of globalization and public gathering spaces on lifestyle and behavior. His study suggests that beyond global cultural shifts, coffee shops serve as important platforms for facilitating social interaction among Millennials.

[Maspul and Almalki \(2023\)](#) investigated the influence of modern cafés on social behavior and cultural dynamics in Saudi Arabia. Their research revealed that these establishments have contributed to the emergence of new forms of social gathering, particularly among youth. However, they also noted a tension between modern values and traditional cultural norms, particularly regarding the preservation of societal heritage. Nevertheless, their study emphasized the adaptability of Saudi society to the socio-cultural changes brought about by the proliferation of cafés.

From a technical and developmental standpoint, [Sasongko and Azzizi \(2024\)](#) argue that the establishment of café-restaurants represents a multifaceted urban development initiative with the potential to generate diverse—and at times conflicting—socio-cultural impacts. Consequently, a thorough assessment of these impacts is imperative before project implementation.

In light of these insights, the present study adopts analytical frameworks for social impact assessment to examine the socio-cultural implications of the Resalat Café-Restaurant project located in District 1, Region 4, Tehran. The primary objectives of this study are as follows:

- To identify potential social and cultural impacts associated with the Resalat Café-Restaurant project in District 1, Region 4, Tehran.
- To propose strategies for mitigating adverse impacts while enhancing the project's positive socio-cultural outcomes.

2. Material and methods

2.1. Description of the intervention action

Nazanin Park, situated in District 1, Region 4 of the Tehran Municipality, formerly functioned as a waste separation facility. This

activity generated several adverse outcomes, including the emission of environmental pollutants and a marked decline in local air and environmental quality. Additionally, the area became a gathering point for socially marginalized and unruly individuals, contributing to heightened social challenges such as a pervasive sense of insecurity. These compounding issues ultimately led to the cessation of waste separation operations at the site. Following the termination of these activities, modest environmental improvements were observed—most notably, enhanced air quality due to afforestation efforts. Nonetheless, persistent challenges remained. The Park continued to experience limited accessibility, physical remoteness, inadequate lighting, and competition from numerous other parks located in the southern part of the Mehran neighborhood, also within District 1, Region 4. Mehran is one of the northern areas of Tehran, bordering Shahid Zein al-Din Highway from the north, Resalat Highway from the south, Sayyad Shirazi Highway from the east, and Shariati Street from the west. These factors contributed to the continued congregation of unruly individuals and a sustained sense of social insecurity. Given the predominantly residential character and high population density of the Mehran neighborhood, these conditions have emerged as significant barriers to social well-being and the effective utilization of public space. In response, and to activate the space during evening hours and enhance both safety and vibrancy, the Municipality of Region 4 proposed the development of a café-restaurant within Nazanin Park in 2023 ([Fig. 1](#)).

2.2. Conceptual approach of the research

Livability in cities and regions—characterized by complex interconnections between social structures, behavioral patterns, and economic dynamics—cannot be fully understood through quality-of-life indicators or living standards alone. As [Khastoo \(2021\)](#) argues, livability is a critical dimension in enhancing residents' quality of life, serving as a bridge between the urban environment and individuals' social and cultural experiences. A livable city is not only one that ensures high living standards but also one that fosters a sense of satisfaction and well-being among its inhabitants. Within the context of the present research—focused on the development of a café-restaurant in Nazanin

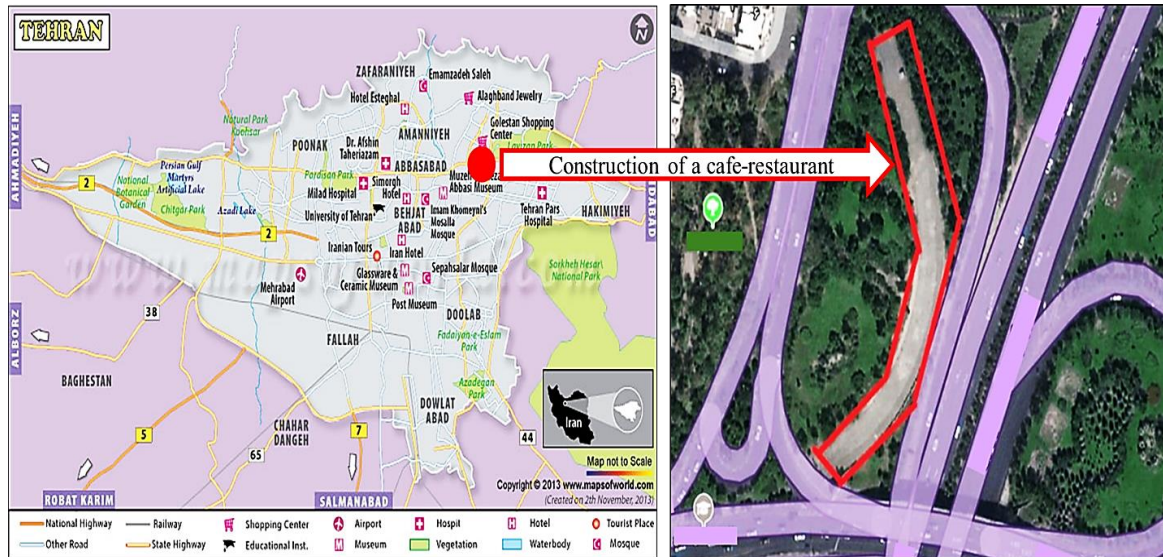


Fig. 1. Plan for the construction of a cafe-restaurant in Nazanin Park, Region 4, Tehran Municipality.

Park, located in a mixed-use area comprising residential zones and educational institutions—this intervention may influence key indicators such as resident satisfaction, transportation patterns, environmental quality, and noise pollution. It is important to emphasize that the conceptual orientation of this study has been designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of

local conditions, with the recognition that no singular framework can fully encapsulate social reality. The research adopts a phenomenological approach, aiming to uncover the direct and indirect consequences of urban interventions on social life. The conceptual model guiding this study, which emerged from preliminary investigations and stakeholder interviews, is presented in Fig. 2.

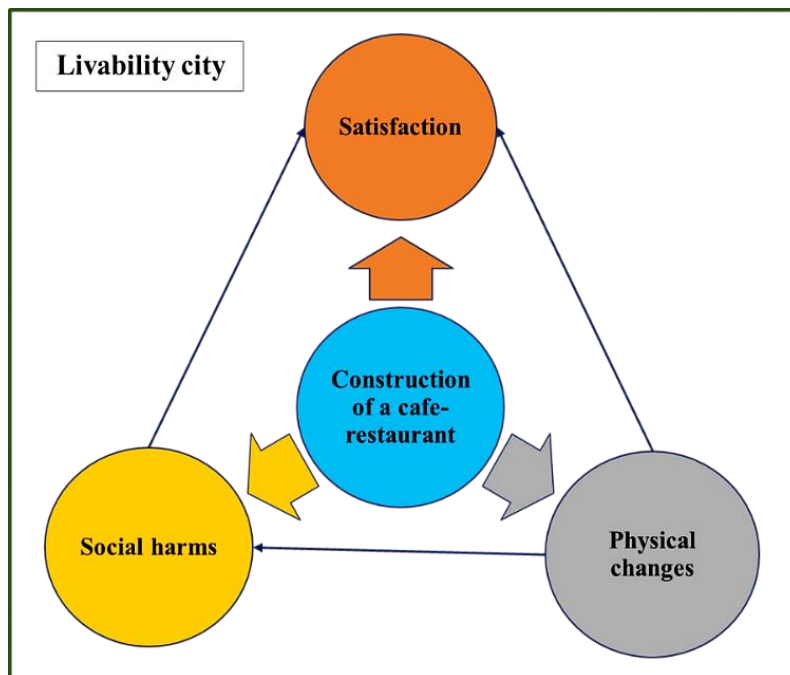


Fig. 2. Conceptual approach of the research.

2.3. Research methodology and method

The present research adopts a descriptive-analytical methodology grounded in a qualitative, phenomenological approach.

Phenomenological studies aim to explore lived experiences and uncover the underlying meanings of phenomena as perceived by individuals. In such studies, data collection typically involves in-depth interviews to

capture the subjective experiences of participants (Khastoo, 2021). Accordingly, this study employed a semi-structured interview technique, guided by a set of open-ended questions designed to elicit comprehensive, reflective responses. The target population consisted of experts affiliated with the Tehran Municipality. A purposive sampling strategy was used, with participant selection based on accessibility and relevance to the research topic. Sample size adequacy was determined using the principle of theoretical saturation—that is, the point at which additional interviews no longer yield new insights or data (Khastoo, 2021). Saturation was achieved after conducting interviews with 12 experts. For data analysis, a thematic (or content) analysis approach was employed. This inductive method involves identifying recurring themes and

patterns within qualitative data to facilitate analytical categorization and interpretation. As outlined by Roustakhiz et al. (2023), the thematic analysis process includes conceptualization, categorization, organization, and the development of thematic models. In this study, meaningful units of data were first extracted from the interview transcripts and then grouped into semantic categories representing variables potentially affected by the project. To further analyze and quantify the project's social and environmental outcomes, each identified variable was evaluated and scored according to five dimensions: type, intensity, nature, duration, and scope. The numerical values assigned to each dimension are detailed in Table 1. All dimensions were weighted equally in the scoring process.

Table 1. How to score the identified outcomes.

Variable	Intensity, Duration, Nature, and Extent	Score
Type	Indirect	2
	Direct	1
	Cumulative	3
Duration	Short-term	1
	Medium-term	2
	Long-term	3
Nature	Unwanted	1
	Wanted	2
Scope	Local	1
	Regional	2
	Transregional	3
Intensity	Low	1
	Moderate	2
	High	3

3. Results and discussion

An analysis of the physical structure of the Mehran neighborhood reveals that, despite its historical background, the area is predominantly residential and lacks significant tourist attractions or a cohesive cultural identity. This characteristic is particularly pronounced in the eastern, western, and southern sections of the neighborhood. The population density stands at 131 persons per hectare, exceeding the average density of Tehran, which is approximately 119.1 persons per hectare. One of the distinguishing features of the Mehran neighborhood is the abundance of parks and green spaces, primarily concentrated in its southern region.

3.1. Consequences of building a cafe-restaurant in Nazanin Park and the mechanism of influence

The proposed establishment of a café-restaurant in Nazanin Park aims not only to generate economic revenue but also to enhance social engagement and transform the park into a more sociable and vibrant public space. At the time of this study, the project remained in the pre-implementation phase. Accordingly, this research evaluates the potential socio-cultural and environmental consequences of the intervention prior to its execution. A summary of the anticipated positive and negative impacts, along with the associated mechanisms, is presented in Table 2. The consequences of building a cafe-restaurant in Nazanin Park are shown in Table 3.

Table 2. Components affected by the cafe-restaurant construction project.

Components	Mechanism
Neighborhood prosperity and vibrancy	The project is expected to increase the prosperity and vitality of the surrounding area.
Social interactions	As the survey also mentioned, social activities such as socializing and talking, people interact with each other when they are in a cafe-restaurant.
Social participation	Building a cafe-restaurant can turn a park into a place to increase people's presence in public places.
Increase social security	With increased public presence, increased traffic and vitality in the neighborhood, and a decrease in the number of homeless and unruly people, the potential for crime is reduced and, as a result, social participation and security are enhanced.
Social deviations	With the increase in visits from other neighborhoods and cultural mixing, there is a possibility of some behaviors that are inconsistent with social values, such as dog walking and improper hijab. On the other hand, it is expected that with the increase in visits, some social deviations, such as theft and pickpocketing around the project area, will decrease.
Increased nightlife	It seems that with the construction of the project, nightlife in the area will increase, and the phenomenon of dead night in the construction site and the area around the park will become less pronounced.
Social harms and student's injuries	It seems that schools around the parks are socially affected by the project, as there is a possibility of drug use and drug dealing around the schools, and social deviance among students. Also, assuming other conditions are constant, it is expected that the risk of physical injuries when crossing ramps (in the absence of bridges and entrances from streets and highways, especially the Shahid Soleimani Highway) will increase.
Destruction of green space and the ecological function of the park	With the construction of the cafe-restaurant, changes will be made to the green space and lawns, and the ecological function of the park will be more limited.
Highways and thoroughfares	Given that the park where the cafe-restaurant is being built is closed and enclosed, it is necessary to make changes to the structure of the ramps and to consider measures to reduce vehicle speed to reduce risks and ease travel and access. Therefore, it seems that changes will be made as a result of the highways and thoroughfares project.
Municipal income	Given that ownership of the cafe-restaurant is not definitively transferred, it is expected that a sustainable source of income will be created for the municipality.
Values and attitudes	In the opinion of some citizens, the construction of a cafe-restaurant can create a place for girls and boys to gather, and behaviors outside the norms prevailing in the neighborhood. On the other hand, some citizens considered the increase in the prosperity and security of the neighborhood to be among the effects of the action. Therefore, it is expected that the project will change people's attitudes towards urban management and satisfaction with it, under the values and attitudes of citizens and neighborhood residents.
Spending leisure time	The construction of a cafe-restaurant can be an environment for citizens and residents to spend their free time. Since not many families and individuals use the park, it is expected that with the construction of a cafe-restaurant, more people will visit this place to spend their free time. The results of the survey showed that in addition to eating, residents are willing to do activities such as leisure, mental peace, exercise, study, socializing, playing games, etc. in cafes and restaurants; therefore, in general, it can be said that a change in the leisure pattern of residents is not far off.
Changing consumption patterns and lifestyles	Social security and vitality are priorities for residents of the neighborhood, and if the environment is appropriate, they use the outdoor cafe-restaurant environment as a place to sit and talk with friends and family, exercise, etc. Therefore, it is expected that the construction of a cafe-restaurant will affect the social habits of residents, such as being in public spaces, socializing, and interacting.
Landscape and cityscape	It seems that the construction of a cafe-restaurant, depending on the design, can affect the urban landscape and cityscape.
Accessibility	The presence of ramps and poor lighting in the streets has reduced access to the park. By changing the structure of the ramps and improving the lighting, it can be expected that accessibility to the project area and the movement of people will increase.
Traffic customers	Given the park's location, which is adjacent to two highways and adjacent to the fruit and vegetable market, the increase in traffic will cause more traffic pressure on the streets and highways adjacent to or leading to the park. This is expected to be even more severe, especially during the late hours of the day.
Increased traffic	
Noise pollution	It is expected that the construction of the cafe-restaurant will increase the production of waste, specific environmental pollution, unpleasant odors, and noise pollution in the area of the park where the construction is taking place. It is expected that air pollution will not be directly affected by the cafe-restaurant construction project significantly. However, given the location of the park and its proximity to two highways and the Shahid Iraqi Vegetable Square, it is expected that the pollution caused by them will increase with the increase in vehicle traffic. In other words, the direct effect of the project on air pollution is low, and the indirect effect is significant.
Environmental pollution	
Air pollution	

Table 3. Consequences of building a café-restaurant in Nazanin Park.

Domain	Variable	Time	Type	Intensity	Duration	Nature	Scope	Score	Ranking in each domain	Overall ranking of each variable
Social	Social participation	After the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Local	9	2	7
	Social interactions	After the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Regional	10	1	2
	Social trust	During and after the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Local	9	2	7
	Social security	After the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Local	9	2	7
	Social deviance	During and after the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Medium-term	Unwanted	Regional	9	2	7
	Satisfaction with city managers	During and after the performance	Accumulative	Moderate	Medium-term	Unwanted	Local	9	2	7
	Neighborhood prosperity and vibrancy	During and after the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Long-term	Wanted	Local	10	1	2
Infrastructures	Nightlife	During and after the performance	Indirect	High	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	10	1	17
	Green space	After the performance	Direct	High	Medium-term	Unwanted	Local	8	1	17
	Highways and thoroughfares	After the performance	Indirect	Low	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	8	1	17
Economic	Municipal income	After the performance	Direct	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Local	8	1	22
	Employment	During and after the performance	Direct	Low	Short-term	Wanted	Local	6	2	22
Cultural	Sense of belonging	After the performance	Indirect	Low	Short-term	Unwanted	Local	6	3	22
	Values and attitudes	After the performance	Indirect	High	Medium-term	Unwanted	Regional	10	2	2
	Spending leisure time	After the performance	Indirect	High	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	11	1	1
	Consumption patterns and lifestyle	After the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Long-term	Unwanted	Regional	10	2	2
Physical	Landscape and cityscape	During and after the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	9	1	7
	Accessibility	During and after the performance	Indirect	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Local	9	1	7
	Traffic customers	During and after the performance	Direct	Moderate	Medium-term	Wanted	Local	8	2	17
	Traffic	During and after the performance	Direct	High	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	9	1	7
	Noise pollution	During and after the performance	Direct	High	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	9	1	7
Environmental	Environmental pollution	During and after the performance	Direct	High	Long-term	Unwanted	Local	9	1	7
	Air pollution	After the performance	Direct	Moderate	Medium-term	Unwanted	Regional	8	2	17

As previously noted, the primary objective of constructing a café-restaurant in Nazanin Park is not only to generate economic revenue but also to enhance social presence and transform the park into a vibrant and sociable public space. The findings of this study indicate that key variables—including leisure activities, social interactions, neighborhood prosperity and vitality, and the extension of nighttime activity—are positively associated with increased social engagement and the sociability of the park. The redevelopment of underutilized

space within Nazanin Park into a café-restaurant offers a dedicated setting for socialization, recreation, and the alleviation of nighttime desolation (depending on the operational schedule). While the physical enhancement of the park imposes significant financial costs on the municipality, it concurrently contributes to improved lighting, accessibility, and circulation within the park. Furthermore, the project holds the potential to generate sustainable municipal revenue, aligning with its economic objective. However,

the economic function received a lower prioritization compared to its anticipated social benefits. In a study by [Rahmani and Rafiepour \(2022\)](#), coffee shops were described as peace-oriented spaces, characterized by a semantic relationship between physical setting and meaning, fostering positive social imagery and serving as gathering places, particularly for youth. Similarly, [Ferreira et al. \(2020\)](#) noted that third places such as coffee shops have experienced considerable economic growth in the United Kingdom over the past decade—a trend expected to continue. These venues, beyond their roles as dining and refreshment sites, serve as cultural and social hubs that contribute to enhancing the urban landscape and providing platforms for collective engagement among like-minded individuals, thereby promoting increased social vitality.

Although the proposed intervention aligns with the intended objectives—such as enhancing social presence and generating economic revenue—it also presents the potential for various unintended and undesirable environmental, social, and cultural consequences. One significant concern is the likelihood of increased social risks accompanying the influx of visitors from other neighborhoods and districts. Such risks may include illicit activities such as drug trafficking and usage, as well as behaviors deemed inconsistent with the community's prevailing social and cultural values. This concern is especially pertinent given the proximity of the project site to Shahid Abbaspour and Salehi Shafa secondary schools, where students may be particularly vulnerable to such social and cultural harms. From an infrastructural perspective, the project site—located on a flat concrete surface at an irregular intersection—poses considerable limitations for the development of adequate parking facilities. The restricted capacity for parking may not only detract from the café-restaurant's attractiveness to potential visitors but also contribute to increased traffic congestion in the surrounding area. Notably, the nearby Shahid Iraqi Fruit and Vegetable Market already faces parking shortages, which are a significant source of vehicular congestion on Shahid Iraqi Street. The addition of a new attraction, such as the café-restaurant is expected to exacerbate these traffic challenges, particularly given the anticipated rise in visitor numbers. Moreover, the café-restaurant's location near two major

highways—each flanked by access ramps—demands attention to transportation planning and access management. In order to facilitate safe and efficient access to the café-restaurant, it is necessary to implement changes to the surrounding road network, including potential redesigns of the ramps and pedestrian pathways. However, the feasibility of such changes is contingent upon cooperation from various municipal bodies, including the police, road authorities, and traffic management agencies. In the absence of such coordination, access to the café-restaurant would remain limited to a single entrance point, potentially impeding its functionality and exacerbating congestion. Environmental concerns are also prominent. Due to the café-restaurant's proximity to major roadways, increased vehicle traffic is likely to contribute to heightened levels of noise and air pollution. Additionally, waste generation associated with food service operations may attract pests, such as rodents, thereby degrading the local environmental quality. The lack of a main municipal gas pipeline in the park further complicates the situation. Should the café-restaurant be unable to secure a connection to the city's gas infrastructure, reliance on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) may become necessary, posing further safety and environmental risks, including increased traffic from supply vehicles and a higher likelihood of hazardous incidents. The findings of [Mahapa \(2016\)](#), in a study of Melville, Johannesburg, underscore the significance of such concerns. That research demonstrated that nightclubs and restaurants situated near residential areas are major sources of noise pollution. To address this, Mahapa emphasized the necessity of implementing comprehensive noise management policies, supported by regular monitoring and enforcement by local authorities. Taken together, these findings underscore the importance of adopting a holistic and multi-sectoral approach in the planning and implementation of urban interventions such as the proposed café-restaurant. Addressing the interconnected challenges of accessibility, infrastructure, public safety, and environmental management is essential for ensuring the sustainability and success of the project.

As a result of anticipated physical alterations associated with the project, modifications to the park's green space—particularly its lawns—are likely. Given the limited feasibility of

replanting lawns in the area, such changes may constrain the park's ecological capacity. At the time of this study, Nazanin Park and several adjacent streets in the Mehran neighborhood were characterized by inadequate lighting and insufficient oversight. These conditions have facilitated the emergence of a "dead of night" phenomenon, marked by the congregation of drug users and homeless individuals, which has in turn undermined the park's perceived and actual security. The construction of a café-restaurant is expected to mitigate this issue by increasing foot traffic and social activity in the area, thereby reducing the presence of marginalized populations such as drug users and the homeless. However, it is important to note that this intervention is unlikely to resolve the root causes of these social issues. Rather, it is probable that such individuals will relocate to nearby parks and neighborhoods. Given that Nazanin Park is situated in the southeastern part of the Mehran neighborhood—and considering that most of the neighborhood's parks are concentrated in its southern section—it is anticipated that these displaced populations will gravitate toward these adjacent green spaces. With the improvement of lighting infrastructure, the nighttime inactivity currently observed is expected to diminish significantly, potentially giving rise to a more vibrant nightlife in and around the park. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the park is embedded within a predominantly residential context. The introduction of nightlife-oriented activities in such areas requires careful consideration of local social and cultural dynamics. While the present study does not directly investigate the implications of nightlife in the Nazanin Park area, it is prudent to exercise caution when implementing measures aimed at activating public spaces during nighttime hours in residential zones. In this regard, [Niazkhani et al. \(2021\)](#) emphasize that any analysis of nightlife must consider the diverse stakeholders and policy audiences involved. The social and cultural impacts of nightlife vary considerably among different groups and may result in challenges such as cultural dissonance, incompatibility with prevailing religious or social norms, disruption of residents' rest and peace, perceptions of insecurity, and the emergence of "backstage spaces"—areas characterized by informal or subcultural activity outside the dominant public realm. Effective nightlife policy-making and

management should, therefore, prioritize alignment with the cultural and religious values of the local community. Moreover, such efforts must respond to the needs of at least three key stakeholder groups simultaneously: (1) individuals seeking opportunities for safe and healthy nighttime leisure; (2) business owners and economic stakeholders interested in benefiting from the night-time economy; and (3) residents who rely on the night hours for rest due to daytime work or other obligations. The success of any nightlife development initiative is contingent upon its ability to maintain an appropriate balance between the interests and well-being of these three groups.

4. Conclusion

This study assessed the cultural and social impacts of constructing a café-restaurant in Nazanin Park, located in District 4 of Tehran Municipality within the Mehran neighborhood, before the project's implementation. The findings indicate that the establishment of a café-restaurant in this park holds substantial potential for achieving the intended economic and social objectives. Beyond these goals, additional positive social outcomes are anticipated, including enhanced accessibility and improved security within the area. However, the project may also give rise to undesirable and largely unintended consequences, such as environmental challenges and cultural tensions, which appear to be insufficiently addressed in the current planning framework. If such adverse impacts materialize, they may negatively affect residents' perceptions of urban management, leading to diminished social satisfaction and erosion of social capital. The efficacy of the proposed intervention, therefore, hinges upon comprehensive management strategies that address pedestrian and vehicular movement, mitigate the negative externalities of nightlife activities, preserve and enhance the park's ecological capacity, and curtail existing and potential social and cultural issues. This necessitates the integration of coordinated physical, traffic, social, and cultural measures. To mitigate the project's adverse effects, it is recommended that environmental and social monitoring be actively supported through citizen participation and the involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Leveraging the capacities of NGOs may also

facilitate interventions aimed at reducing the population of homeless individuals and those experiencing rough sleeping in the area. Furthermore, the design of the café-restaurant should incorporate principles of environmentally sensitive design to minimize ecological disruption. Given the relatively low cultural capital per capita in the Mehran neighborhood and District 4 more broadly, it is advisable to consider alternative or complementary development projects, such as cultural-sports clubs or libraries. These initiatives have the potential not only to enhance cultural capital indicators but also to foster stakeholder engagement and generate positive cultural, social, and economic impacts. The café-restaurant project demonstrates significant promise in advancing social objectives—including increased social interactions, neighborhood vitality, and leisure opportunities—as well as economic goals such as generating municipal revenue. Mechanisms identified through the study suggest that the project can reduce occurrences of nighttime inactivity and improve accessibility. Nonetheless, environmental concerns—specifically increased traffic, noise, and pollution—as well as the reduction of green space and potential cultural shifts related to changes in values and lifestyle, demand vigilant management. Moreover, simply displacing marginalized populations to adjacent parks will not address underlying social issues. Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Environmental management:**
 - Implement traffic reduction strategies, such as designated pedestrian pathways or traffic restrictions during peak hours.
 - Employ low-noise construction materials and adopt effective waste management practices to mitigate noise and environmental pollution.
2. **Green space preservation:**
 - Replace existing lawns with drought- and wear-resistant plant species or develop additional green spaces surrounding the café-restaurant.
3. **Cultural management:**
 - Design the café-restaurant in accordance with local cultural values to minimize social tensions and discordant behaviors.
 - Organize cultural events tailored to neighborhood needs to strengthen community identity and social cohesion.
4. **Management of vulnerable populations:**
 - Collaborate with social service institutions to address the root causes of violence and social disorder, rather than merely relocating affected individuals.
5. **Student safety:**
 - Construct pedestrian bridges or safe access points from nearby highways (e.g., Shahid Soleimani Highway) to reduce physical injury risks.
 - Enhance monitoring around schools to prevent social harms.
6. **Physical and urban design:**
 - Improve lighting and modify ramps to increase accessibility and ensure that the park's urban landscape harmonizes with the surrounding residential context.

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