Stages of Participation in the Dwelling Process-An Analytical Model of Iran

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Abstract: Considering most people and experts' standpoints, the quality of dwelling in Iran, specifically in mass construction housing, is far from ideal condition. Therefore, the paper aims at indicating and defining the viewpoints and opinions to suggest a solution to promote the quality of residence in Iran benefitting from tools such as participation. By studying previous experience of researchers and by considering the cultural and realistic situations of Iran, we will try to define the proper participation stages in our study. We will define the main role player of participation in Iran and try to demonstrate the main interaction among them in order to improve proper participation for dwelling process. The results are shown in three separable stages of participation based on the two ranges of citizens and architectures and finally the interactive participation range is provided. The most critical stage among all is the Interactive participation. *Without* this interactive participation, which is based on same power in designing, no real participation could be defined. Considering Current situation of Iran, it has been shown that participation could improve the dwelling process to overcome the current unsatisfactory problem. Participation within interactive stage could improve elements of users' identification which amend satisfaction of citizens. On the other hand, participation could introduce the real needs of citizens to the architectures to guide their imagination and creativity to the realistic situation. We have also demonstrated that government's responsibility should be redefined and changed from the developer to the trainer in order for a real interactive participation to be achieved.

Key words: Public participation · Experts' participation · Interactive participation · Habitation · Residence · Housing

INTRODUCTION

No one denies the universal need for a house, as one of the fundamental needs of human. This critical place of a house makes housing process an important procedure in engineering. In the past century, lots of different improvements happened to dwelling process. At the beginning, the owners were the makers. Lots of places were created which were bounded to imagination, creativity and knowledge of the owners as architects and users simultaneously. By the development and improvement of education, this process became a combination of architects' knowledge and users' needs. However, after the Second World War, owing to the immeasurable destructions of war, the government was encouraged to improve mass housing construction to satisfy and meet the public demand of the houses. At the beginning, users would be satisfied by meeting their needs for a shelter. However, by passing time the request of houses as the only shelter has not been convincing any more. People want something more than a shelter. They need homes, something that defines their identity and is a mirror of their true soul. The mass housing construction by government to build similar houses for everyone with different backgrounds and needs would not meet these new requirements. Many researchers have already mentioned this universal problem, while each one had their own solutions. Some believe in Victorian idealization of self-help, relieving government of their responsibilities. However, in reality, resources are in the control of government or properties elites. Consequently, government's withdrawal from dwelling process would be impossible [1-3].

Just like rest of the world, In Iran after war, the same needs and problems convinced government on the requirement of mass housing construction. However, two

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decades after war, the definition of house as a shelter is not credible anymore. This unreliability is as a result of the current situation of mass housing construction. In current status the cloning of mass housing make governments, the architecture and developer in dwelling process for imaginary, alike people, which result in similar, unsatisfying houses for users with different knowledge and even cultures. In order to solve this dissatisfaction, removing government from dwelling process would not be realistic in current status of Iran, just like the rest of the world. However, redefining the role of government, architects and users in dwelling process would be practical and promising. The key factor toward users' satisfaction in a practical situation would be in participation. In the oxford dictionary "Participation" as a word is interpreted as "The act of taking part in an activity or event" [1]. "Participation means applying personal resources to play a part in a collective action "[2]. Citizens' participation in planning is a professional act that occurs within a political community and context, which is a link to many stakeholders' interests [3]. Many western experts such as Cohen [4], Turner [5], Midgley [6], Arnstein [7], Davidson [8], Drisklle [9], Sanoff [10], Potter [11] and others attempted to bring back the definition of social participation to the process of constructing dwellings. It is right that "Intrinsically, the design has been linked to the innovation and also is seen as the core of innovation" [12] and architects are tempting to take over the designing by considering such reasoning. Now, "It's time for a reassessment of the relationships between architects and other stakeholders whether they are few users or comprise the wider society" [13]. In this paper, we would be attempting to define the proper participation situation among government, architects and users to improve the needs of shelter while satisfying users by improving identification to change houses to homes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research is based on interpretive and qualitative research and documented on library research. On this basis, initially, the definition of participation in dwelling will be discussed and it will be surveyed through the experts' insights. Formerly, we will classify these definitions in the process of constructing, introduce the research model persuading the current condition in Iran and present a general viewpoint revolving on the subject and suggesting missions to authorities and those in charge of the constructing dwellings process.

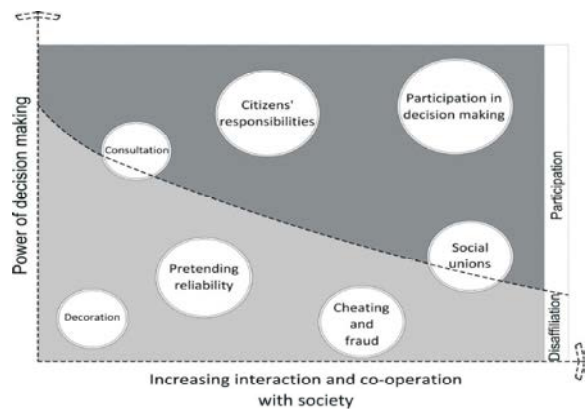
Fig. 1: A ladder of citizen participation [14]

Fig. 2: Drisklle's point of view to participation [9].

Participation, the Concept, History and Opinions: Arnstein [7] mentioned and classified the definition of participation in 1969. She assumed that "participation will fade the anonymity feeling and will draw a higher level of authorities' attention to the user." She also introduced "the ladder of citizen's participation".

Drisklle [9] has also mentioned topics regarding participation and its types with the sub-topic of children and teenagers which cover the social involvement of every citizen regardless of the age. From Drisklle's point of view, involvement transpires in different perspectives; however, it is mainly divided into two general groups of participation and disaffiliation. He introduced a 2D graph which is based on the power of decision making (Figure 2) [9].

Davidson [8], designed a pie chart regarding citizen's participation in 1998. This pie chart consists of three different levels of informing, consulting, partnership and delegating power, without preferring any to the others [8].

John Turner's research on social participation and stressing the role of government indicates that when the central government interferes in the social issues,

two problems arise. First, the real needs of the society stay uncovered to the government and second, by leaving the citizens aside, the power and the equipment will also disappear. He believes that "one of the major weaknesses of governments and authorities' inference for solving or lowering the housing problems is that they contemplate the citizens as the last priority when compared to the process of the land relations and the constructions."[5]

Regarding the participation ideas, Sanoff [10] believes that even though the idea of participation is traceable in the primary societies, however public participation is a new concept that generally revolves around individuals being involved in social growth where participatory planning objectives are creating opportunities for all citizens, subsequently they are practically involved in the development process. In his perception, contributed constructions combine various solutions from top to bottom (experts) and with creativity from bottom to top (citizens) and introduce a collaborative network of urban managements and social organizations. With the citizen's participation for defining goals and expanding the locational strategy, residents believe that they are in charge and hence consider more effort to its success. These common topics, in addition to more applicable results raise friendship and trust between the experts and residents [10].

Hester, based on the theories by Sanoff, believes that participation from the social insight, will lead to providing better care to social needs and better use of human resources. Participation can prepare more relevant information for the experts [15].

In a nutshell, Sanoff offers four substantial and minimal attributes for participation. Primarily, participation is substantially worthy. Moreover, the real resources of local situations are the needs and tendencies and for that reason it will reveal the effect of decision making. Additionally, participation is a pluralistic solution to meet the needs of humankind and reflect the values of the users. In addition, participation is a tool for defending various interests of citizens and it can satisfy and meet their forgotten needs. And finally, "participation experiences indicate that the main source of satisfaction in the users is not only confronting the needs, it is rather the feeling of being influential in decisions [10].

It is the "satisfaction" that encourages residents to go towards both sides of participation and make them more committed, hardworking and more responsible to guard it. Hence, one of the most important goals of participation is developing the sense of satisfaction in participants.

Defining the Participation Model in the Current Conditions in Iran: Regarding the above-mentioned points, it can be seen that participation is a two-sided definition. The most important term for its attainment is active, disposed and equal presence with high interest of the participants. No participant must be replaced by another and they must all have equal rights towards announcing and applying their opinions. Excesses and extremes of the role of participants may be a threat to the success. Hence, as seen formerly, eliminating citizens from participation is faulty and history and experience has proved it already. Eliminating the role of experts will also lead to failure.

In the course of this article, the procedure of expanding the endogenous developments, self-reliance and satisfaction, as a result of participation in construction progression, is the issue that leads to success. To extent such a concept, all participants must have equal or at least reachable power of applying compared to each other. In the current conditions in Iran, there are three main role players in the procedure of producing and using dwellings. The first is the government and organizations which are well-matched with the government. The second is the architects and experts of house buildings and the third is the citizens as the users of the dwellings.

In the place where the government assumes itself as the guardian and the executive performer of the involvement procedures, it conducts its way to ignore citizens' roles and attempt to consider the experts only [5]. This is called fraud participation where the term involvement is only a slogan. Regarding this, government will fade from direct interference and becomes the provider of involvement and plays the essential role of preparing and training. Experts and architects become aware of the importance of the effects of citizens' participations and their rights for involvement in the procedure of constructing their accommodations. Hence, when negotiating about participation, people are more interested and therefore fearless of losing their involvement control. They attempt to learn more and with the governments and the architects' preparations, actively attend negotiations with the experts with more knowledge. After the appropriate locating, there is one "thing" that may bring the government, the experts and the citizens closer and that is bending domains towards each other. This will assist them to interact closely (Figure 3).

Based on the way participants engage, as this procedure continues, three stages of involvement forms are separable. The stages are as the following:
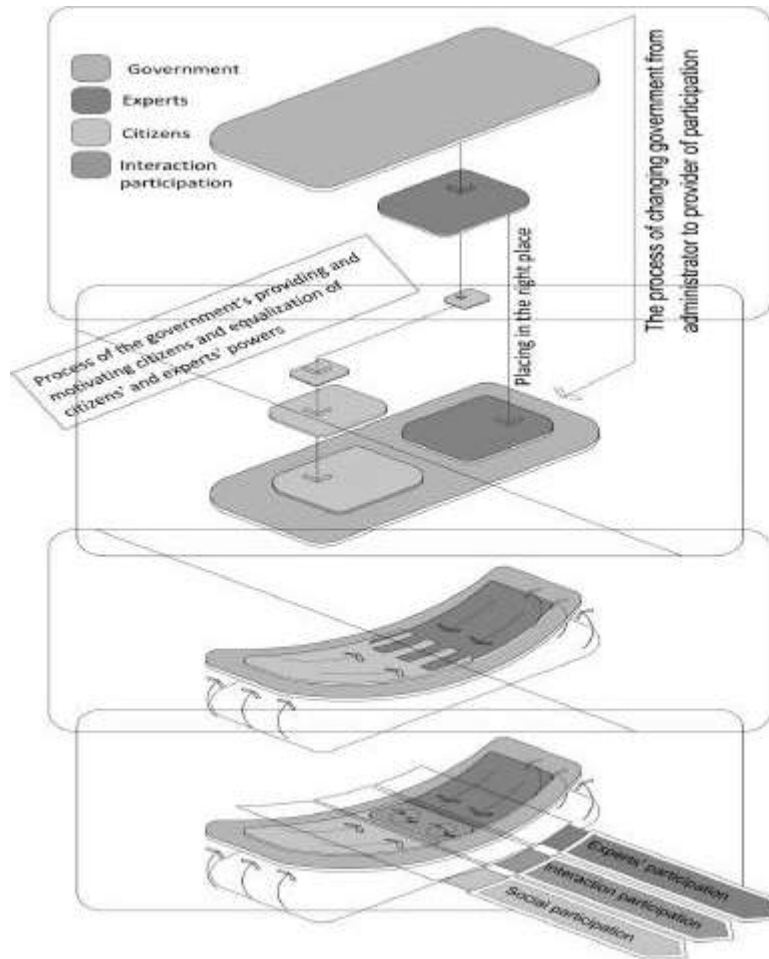
Fig. 3: Defining the environment and the participation stages based on locating the participants.

The Experts' Participations: It refers to those actions that experts take to understand the public and facilitate their opinions by considering their differences. This is to be called virtual participation between citizens and experts.

Public (Social) Participation: It refers to those actions that citizens take to be aware of the decisions, presenting their needs and solutions. This is to be called participation of residents and experts.

Interactive (Real) Participation: It refers to the type of involvement where experts and citizens – citizens and experts are both interacting. They have equal powers and both sides mutually understand the needs and the abilities and trust and may survey different topics of participation.

Based on the interactions between the fore stated ranges, the three forming and defining feedbacks above are reviewed as follow:

- The outsource feedbacks of government in two domains of experts and citizens.
- The in-range feedbacks of each range of citizens and experts separately.
- The interactive feedbacks of citizens-experts and experts-citizens range.

Outsource feedbacks are feedbacks that citizens and experts, separately in their own range, gain from attempts of government for training and providing needs. In-range means that architects attempt to define rules of participation in the experts' range and try to creatively affect the various identities of people in their designs. Citizens also, with a critical view, try to motivate each other in the society and criticize the active conditions and become aware of their real needs which are based on their identities. The interactive feedbacks are interactions in which residents present their thoughts and attempt to suggest a creative solution for their own dwelling
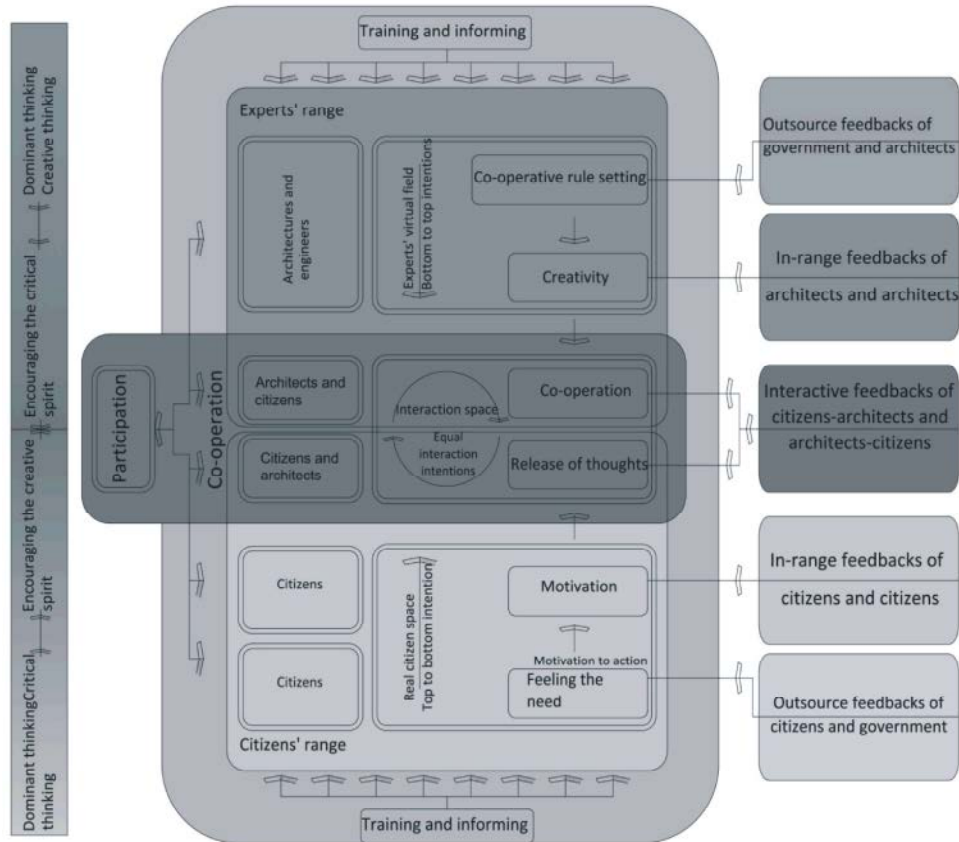
Fig. 4: Stages of participation based on the interaction definitions.

construction process. Architects also attempt to suggest solutions that are both creative and critical and are based on the citizens' creative thoughts and define them based on the project's conditions and conduct the procedure to result in an approachable way. According to the fore mentioned interactions, for each of the stages, two goals are set as the following. (Figure 4)

The Experts 'Participation Intention:

* The experts' participation solution with the goal of setting rules:

In this solution, citizens are "virtually" considered as a whole. In general, the insight needs of residents are fully considered. It must be emphasized repeatedly that government and authorities must support the providing process for the rules that were set by architects' who believed in the participations.

* The experts' participation with the goal of creativity and invention:

This solution takes place in the architects' and experts' range. In this intention, citizens and their various needs are considered "virtually". In this solution, the intention is based on the architects' creativity.

The Public (Social) Participation Intention:

* The social participation with the aim of sense of need:

This intention takes place in the citizens' range. By government training, Citizens become aware of the necessary information and with a better comprehension of their actual desires and towards the preferable dwellings they begin to request and become critics of their primary houses. From the residents' point of view, architects are only constructors of the architectures. This path leads to more trust amongst society and architects.

* The social participation intention with the aim of citizen motivation:

This objective takes place in the citizens' range. In this solution, residents become aware of their actual requests and attempt to be more active in the process of constructing their houses.

The Interaction Participation Intentions:

- The interaction participation intention with the aim of allowing citizens a chance to express their thoughts:

In this objective, consultants of the projects are collaborative and they are present all thorough the procedure of dwelling production. They design and infer their opinions and thoughts. Architects play the role of the facilitators. They gather facilities towards simulating citizens' creativities (such as presenting 3D models and etc.) and conduct them through the right path for reaching the preferable architecture. In this category, citizens' intentions are creative and architects' intentions are critical and guiding.

- The interaction participation intentions with the aim of co-operation between the citizens and architects:

In this objective, citizens visually attempt to present their opinions and they participate creatively in the process of designing and constructing. In this objective, from strict critics, citizens become active and creative participants. Architects (with a creative and critical insight) are decision makers and citizens are trustworthy convincers.

According to the fore mentioned classifications and conditions of Iran, in order to reach the preferable success point of actual citizen's participation in the procedure of dwelling production, there are few preconditions such as social participation with training and motivating intentions. Experts' participations with a contributed rule defining intention and creativity and innovation, are the key elements. By the previous preparations, the preferable creative and critical co-operative interactions of citizens and architects become reachable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This article attempted to introduce a model to redefine the contribution of the citizens and architects based on the theorists' prospective and current participants of dwelling production process and present Iran conditions. Generally, the thinking model represents and restates that public participation is an efficient way for reaching the favorable housings where both citizens

and architects are being involved throughout the process of producing housings and therefore result in higher quality architecture and finally cause satisfaction of the residents. This participation consists of social, general and visual (actual) involvements.

These statements were redefined to meet the standards of this article and any fraud and faulty participation type is not considered in this model. Hence, all participants of the dwelling production procedure and fine consumption of the housing space must be a part of this model. Being insensitive about any of these may be harm to the results.

In the current conditions in Iran and through the dwelling production process, there are three main members. Defining the role of government as the main provider of the participation objectives by training and informing the public is necessary. Indirect interference is one of the preconditions of this theory model. Citizens and architects are the two other role players. They both have equal rights, not the same title, in the dwelling production process. It is necessary to remind that real interaction participation is the purpose of this theory model.

However, approaching such term is impossible unless citizen-based social participation of an architect-based public participation take place. This means that the architects should work with the residents instead of just considering them, the results are more favorable; also speaking with citizens instead of speaking about them is more considerate. In the interaction process, releasing citizens' and architects' thoughts and their co-operation is the main factor of this theory model. Revising in this range is interaction between creative and critical thinking. A discussion is presented in Table 1.

Based on this paper and according to the connection of government, citizens and architects ranges, three interactions of in-range, outsource and interactions are categorized. On this basis, solutions for approaching the participation purposes in this theory model can be defined by its type and sorts of interactions.

Outsource solutions are solutions that emphasize on providing and training-base fields that must be published by the government and it is traceable in universities, schools and media. In-range solutions are solutions that are influenced by mutual and internal actions of training-base in any of the citizens' or architects' ranges taking place in their own field with their present members. In the architects' range, engineering organizations and in the citizens' range cooperative trade unions can actively

Table 1: defining citizens' and architects' roles in different types of participation

Type of participation	Type of intention	Range of participation	Architects' role	Citizens' role	Purpose of participation
Experts participation	Creative intentions Architects = inventors and of virtual people's need	Architects and experts range creative with comprehension users but virtual	Architects = professionals Citizens = real various	Citizens = virtual and equal users Creativity and innovation, architects' creative thinking	Rule setting participations
Interaction Participation	Architects' and citizens' creative and critical intention	Architects and citizens range	Architects = real co-operation with citizens	Citizens = good and creative consulters	Co-operation and accepting the critical thinking of architects
	Citizens' and architects' creative and critical intention	Citizens and architects range	Architects = simulators and conductors of citizens' creativity	Citizens = visual and creative citizens	Release and start creative thinking in citizens
Social (public) Participation	Critical intentions	Citizens range	Architects = good industrialists	Citizens = active and critic customers	Motivating towards approaching better dwellings and activating citizens to eliminate their criticism and social interactions
			Architects = constructors of the dwellings only	Citizens = critical costumers	Feeling the need of gathering more information about their needs and starting criticizing their primary conditions and becoming aware of what's favorable

emphasize on citizens' and architects' co-operation and participation. The solution of interaction participation is intrinsic, critical and creative which takes place by real participation of citizens and architects. This objective can be established by non-governmental organizations and self-establishing unions. Citizens and architects may form a system of architecture.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this article is to re-define the various stages of participation, taking into consideration the present Iran conditions and represent an interpretive and qualitative solution considering the three stages of participation based on the participants' roles. These three ranges are social participation with the objective of sense of need and motivation, experts' participation with rule defining purposes and innovation and interactive participation with the aim of releasing thoughts and co-operation. Users are classified to three stages based on the interactions with the government, citizens and architects. Outsource solutions are to be published by the government and it is traceable in universities, schools and media. In-range solutions in the architects' range, engineering organizations and in the citizens' range, cooperative trade unions can actively emphasize on citizens' and architects' co-operation and participation.

The solution of interaction participation, which can be established by non-governmental organizations and self-establishing unions and citizens and architects, may form a system of architecture. It must be said that the mentioned solutions are general insights towards the topic and reaching it may be the purposes of future

projects. However, it is clear that national commitment is the essential term and it will not happen on individuals' efforts even though individual's effort is the first step. Nevertheless, approaching the preferable result is based on a social effort in outsource and in-range interactions.

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