

Hierarchy of Cultural Identity in Traditional Markets, Iran

Sara Bahmani Kazerooni ¹, Mohammadreza Pourjafar ²

¹ School of Architecture, Art, Kamalolmolk Noushahr University, Noushahr, Iran

² Professor, Department of Art & Architecture, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

-----ABSTRACT-----

The culture contains components including deeds, beliefs, arts, faiths and other social findings that are inherited through the society and form life context. These social activities are generally being formed within public and urban areas. One of these public areas is bazaar that expands cultural identity within society by users. Hierarchy also helps this study through investigation for ways of areas arrangement near each other. The main research question is how and where cultural areas of bazaars have been formed. In this study we practiced to investigate cultural identity hierarchy within Iranian bazaars to realize this question. This research aims at studying Iranian bazaars hierarchy and to extend and promote their culture. The research method applied in this study is explanatory – analytical and is a kind of field studies. Data collection method is of library and field type through observation and using schemes and figure. The study first introduced literature subject and then practiced to investigate cultural, physical and social activities within Iranian prominent bazaars including Tabriz, Shiraz, and Isfahan. In this research, cultural activities position within bazaars and their effects on social stability regarding components like cultural identity, function and framework have been investigated. Results of this paper practiced to provide effective strategies for cultural activities stability and to promote cultural identity.

KEYWORDS: Iranian bazaars, cultural identity, social interactions, bazaar

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1. INTRODUCTION

Bazaars in past were served as a place to perform trade transactions and cultural activities that are one of the basic principles applied for traditional arts fit to hierarchy. These arts not only within their structural formation are based on hierarchy principles, but also Mach and coordinate with flowing and revaluating harmony within world and existence hierarchy which is higher than the material world related to that contract (Nasar, 2001). Trading areas are one of the major public locations. It triggers people interactions, economic, and cultural promotion within society. Social and cultural capitals, which emanated from a very ancient background compared to economic one may be transferred to latter in certain conditions or make indirectly a reliable basis to heighten wealth. Having trade and social/ economic activities as a basic application, Iranian bazaars are considered as perfect samples of urban areas whose economical states are highly affected by cultural/ social capitals. (Pourjafar et al., 2011) Various aspects and hierarchy including religious, functional, spatial and visual are clearly identifiable within traditional structures particularly religious ones through most parts of the world. Although, scholars and commentators have suggested valuable points in this case, there also is an immense and unknown level of hierarchy within religious areas architecture which is believed to emanate from Iranian religious trends and architectural culture. The goal of this study is to investigate spatial hierarchy within trading areas; cultural areas relations ways within these areas are considered here.

Research questions

- [1] To what extent bazaars participate to promote cultural identity within society?
- [2] Do cultural activities affect within bazaars affect social stability?

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This paper tried to analyze indices and criteria of cultural hierarchy within bazaars that are affected by users' activities and other spatial elements have been formed around them. Thus, the research is in the range of fundamental ones investigating cultural activities hierarchy within bazaars and in practice applied following methods:

First, field and logical methods regarding map and figure were used to investigate components like cultural and functional identity. This was performed to find definitions for subjects of hierarchy, social stability, cultural identity, and paper theory approaches. Second, case samples obtained from comparative and logical methods for analyzing indices and criteria were investigated to match theory subjects with architectural field. This analysis was also applied to determine cultural hierarchy within social stability of bazaars.

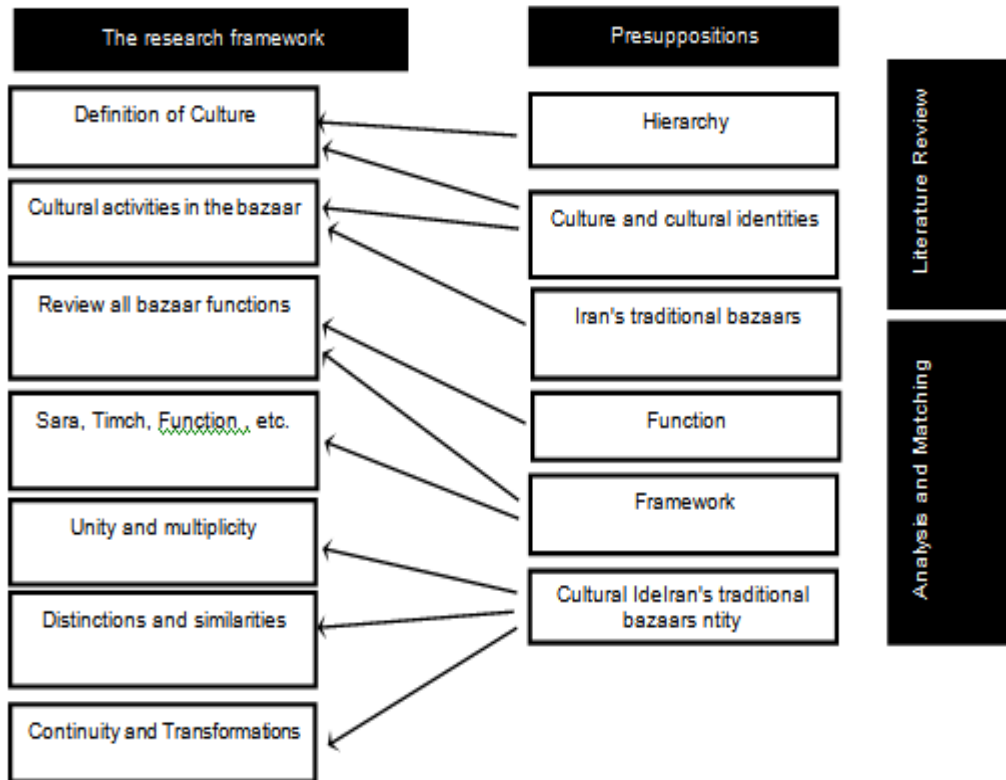


Fig. 1: research method procedure

Cultural Identity and Urban Areas Relation

Any society, with any administration system and any dominant ideology, follows special goals. Indicating these subjective ideas through impression of objective forms is main task of culture. Architecture plays a major role within this permutation process. Structures as a component of architectural culture are supposed to identify a subjective idea through superficial form thereby will turn to an appearance to measure this culture (Groter, 2003). Urban design is considered as very important and sensitive part of citizens' identity. Indeed, urban areas are aspects of life style, kind of vision, and beliefs of that society. Since human activities mainly based on culture, and architecture and also urbanism (dealing with areas containing activities with different frameworks and in fact signify these areas), then it can be concluded that any design methodology wishing to adapt with cultural values of a society within which applied and respect it should be able to organize physical structures design and activities pattern analysis with people's behavioral needs and cultural background. If this is to be realized then city form design and applying it will be real indicator of society culture (Shafie, 2001). Therefore, those city areas would reflect the corresponding cultural identity of a society with two key feature class; physical structures and behavioral - functional pattern conformed to cultural specifications of designing baseline.

Bazaar Function

Bazaars play various roles including political, social, religious, relational, economic and cultural roles which along with their proper combination affect bazaars spirit. Table 1 summarizes bazaar functions.

Table 1. Bazaar function survey

Functions	Framework Fit To Function	Way Of Functioning
Social	Passage and hall Square Bath	Mourning ceremony Connection line and a place for counteractions and transactions
Economic	Chamber hall	Sale and purchase along with other function has been grown.
Political	rows	News and objection announcement
Religious	Mosque School tekyeh	The main row of bazaar follows the mosque gate.
Relational	Passage gate	Bazaar is a passage with stores both side. Near main gate of town

Social Role of Bazaar

Bazaars were considered as a major communication ways within Old Iranian cities. Most of activities and traffic were taken place in bazaar complexes within urban areas. It was the major communication channel between citizens. These were places for good and capital trafficking and also majority of information and news was exchanged here or announced to people by government. One of the strengths of traditional bazaars is to reinforce social encouragement within these areas. Some believe that social behavior styles, traditions and rites, and novel civil thoughts have been resulted in bazaars construction. Bazaar complex and all related areas form the vital center of city and are places within which public and social activities are performed. This part of city along with residential areas complement each other such that studying one as a separated part is nearly impossible though bazaars have primarily been developed as trading centers their areas are applied just for trafficking. Bazaar can be seen as a symbol of collective solidarity, conformity, and sympathy. Formation of guild, politic, and social entities was one of the most important properties within bazaar complex which may be considered as founder of civil entities in society. People of bazaar used to protest government resulting in bazaar suspension in some eras. Thereby bazaar was the most significant element of city political- economic or cultural- social, and or religious- economic areas and its goals and desires were realizing city appearance and framework (Falamaki, 2003).

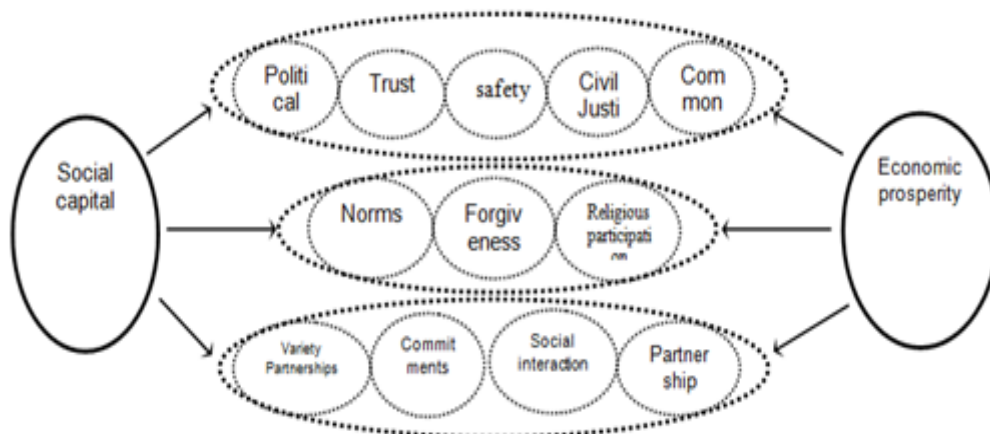


Fig. 2: cultural function in bazaar

Economic role of bazaar

Some commentators believe that bazaar plays a major role as an economic factor determinant of social ecology that can be interpreted within traditional bazaars area. It means they are vital veins of the city. City political, social, cultural and economic aspects are realized in a consolidated complex named bazaar and ecological structure of the society finally is signified at this complex. Bazaar in an Islamic society symbolizes values and thoughts that construct economy of the society. The major difference between Islamic states bazaar and others is that its economic role has been grown along with other roles and there is no controversy and conflict among their consolidation. Modern bazaars don't contain such a consolidation.

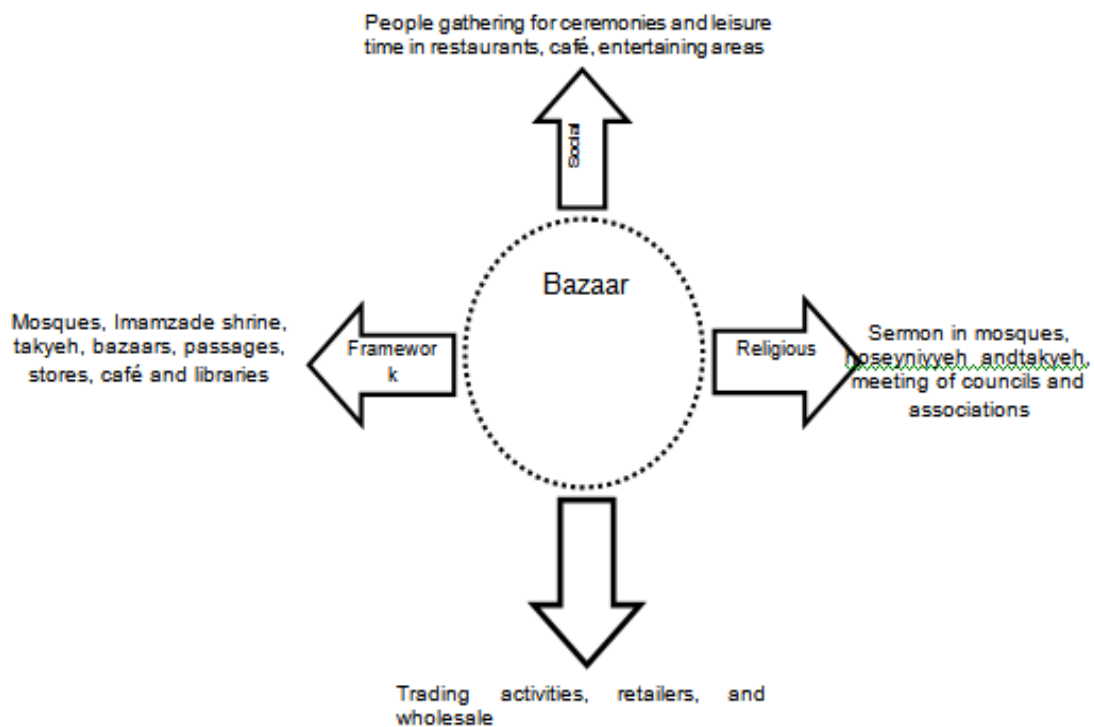


Fig. 3: cultural functions of bazaar(Source: Pourjafar et al., 2011)

Bazaar Areas Framework

Framework elements of Iranian bazaars can be introduced as following:

- [1] **Chamber** : The Timcheheh is a part of Iranian bazaar designed as a room to sell product directly. It opens to row of passage from one side or more that called store or shop, too. They are different regarding their form and size appropriate to good type, buyer's traits, and environmental and geographical features like climate, slope. Their structures have been designed based on needs and conformable to conditions though simple (Rajabi, 2006; Raymond, 1992).
- [2] **Tim**: It means a circle and broad location in Persian glossary and is indeed like a caravansary (KARVANSARA) including a yard with open area at middle and surrounded by with a lot of chambers. The yard is served as a warehouse and all area is dedicated to supply certain goods. It's sometimes called center of some similar firms meaning compact, circle and vast place that is served for office works and whole trading (Rajabi, 2000). It is a place for dealer's activities (Pirniya, 1993).
- [3] **Timcheh** : Alike team, it's a center for major trading activities which is in the form of short, broad and roofed row. It's deadended from both sides. Unlike to team, it's served for single trade. Regarding size, they have been built in two forms: arched and non-arched (Rajabi, 2006).
- [4] **KHAN**: They are caravansary that are stretched along bazaar and used to be served as a place for goods (Kiyani, 1996). It's an equivalent for current enterprise containing trading offices and a warehouse for certain goods which is built as a one or three storeys building around an open central area. Location of houses or halls is following a rule toward rows (Rajabi, 2000).
- [5] **RASTEH** :It means guild and row of main street containing guilds. Each bazaar has several main and secondary rows which are connected to other elements of bazaar. They are assigned to sell a product (Encyclopedia of the Islamic World, 1998).

- [6] **Chahar sogh** :It's a point where two rows cross each other and make a very good trading center. Main branches of bazaar start from here (Hog, 1999).
- [7] **Gheissarieh**: Gheissar means roman Caesar in Persian glossary. Gheissarieh or Sezariyeh was served to sell precious gods like gold, expensive cloths. Its name was adopted from eastern Rome bazaars.
- [8] **Khanbaz** : It refers to a warehouse area within Iranian traditional bazaars.
- [9] **Caravansary** :It's a place served as residence, loading, wharf for traders and international passengers. Since 2500 years ago, caravansaries had been built inside cities, bazaars, and outside cities on way of traders and passengers. They served as hotels and residents as well as a place to keep chattels and burden (Pirniya, 1991).

III. DISCUSSION

In this section analytical components were derived regarding theory basics including framework, cultural identity, and bazaar functions. Framework was classified as social, economic, and environmental categories proportionate to functions. Components hierarchy is shown in table 4 proportionate to their analysis. First, we reviewed Tabriz, Shiraz, and Isfahan bazaar and then practiced their analysis.

Table 2: components of social stability and bazaar function

Components	Title	Descriptions
Function	political	Mourning ceremony A place for communications and interactions
	social	Sale and purchase have been grown up along with other functions.
	economic	News and objection announcement
	religious	Main row of bazaar follows mosque entrance.
	communications	Bazaar is a passage with stores both side. Near main gate of town
Framework	social	Timcheh, crossroad, Tim
	economic	Chamber, row, hall
	environmental	Caravansary, mosque, bath, Khanbaz
Cultural Identity	Distinctions and similarities	Always contains similarity with familiars and discrimination with unfamiliar.
	Unity and multiplicity	It's continuous and evolute time passing and is dynamic.
	Continuity and Transformations	Similar cultural base may contain different cultural identities, while multiple and various have fundamental consolidation.

Shiraz Bazaar (Vakil)

It's the major bazaar of Shiraz which was built at time of Karim khan of Zandiye dynasty between 1758-1778 in Darb Shahzadeh neighbourhood located next to the Vakil mosque and eastern part of current Shohada square. Its area is 21830 m² with 22960 m² foundation (containing caravansary). The architecture is inspired from Qeysariye bazaar in Lar and Isfahan bazaar which was built by the order of Abbas the great. It contains three spaces including traffic, stores sanctum (almost 2 steps lower than ground) and stores area. The bazaar has five gates located at four sides. It also has two north- south and east- west gates that cut each other like a cross. There is a crossroad at the junction of these two chains located on a porch. This crossroad has a big stable arch and at the base of each arch has several brickwork Toranjs. The porch has square stores in two stars. North – south gate starts from Isfahan gate and stretches to Saraye Moshir alley. There are 82 stores both sides in all. There is a platform in front of each store made from stone slabs having Toranj embossed on. The stores are built 1 m higher than ground to avoid humidity. Stores often contain a closet designed in two storeys. There are several caravansarys at north eastern part of the row named Roghani and etc (Pirniya, 2010).

Qeysariye Bazaar of Isfahan

It was built late 16th century. Whole area of this square includes Ali Qapu as well as Imam Mosque, Sheykh Lotfollah mosque and bazaar enterance gateway named Qeysariyeh that located in the rectangular context of stores and chambers around the square. The square connects to Khneh Saljuqy bazaar. Kampfner a

European tourist who visited Isfahan between 1683-1685 reported that various economic and trading activities were being performed at the ground floor of bazaar. He also said that the upper floors were used as residents. They were rented to strangers and even prostitutes (Kaempfer, 1989).

Tabriz Bazaar

This bazaar was ruined to earth as a result of an earthquake in 1779 but restructured very soon by people. It's the longest roofed structure all over the world with the length of 1 km. it was recorded as national heritage in 1975. There are a lot of corniced tall arches and domes, integrated brickworks, arranged stores, multiple Timchehs, several occupation and schools and mosques located near trading halls. Thereby, this bazaar has been made a very proper place for trading, Islamic and eastern style life. Since Tabriz has located on silky way, it has made a very good center between Far East and Europe and a lot of traders and tourists have pictured its bazaars in their memories. Ibn Batoutah morrocean explorer and Taverniyeh have visited this bazaar in 1330 and 1636, respectively. They had praised the bazaar in their reports. Sharden a French tourist has reported that Tabriz has the best bazaar in Asia. Popular rows of this bazaar are Amir, shoemakers, harem, bazaar, Yamani Douz, combers, Qiz Basti, saddler, old row, cappers, maden dealers, Sadeghiyeh, coppersmith, Haj Mohammadhossein, Moshir, Shotorian, Safi, Mir Abolhassan, glaziers, Rangli (colored), and Street bazaars. The biggest dome here is Mozaffariyeh Timcheh's dome. There are Timchehs, halls and crossroads all over these bazaars whose chambers and stores are served as wholesale centers for domestic and foreign goods. Most of halls and Timchehs are three storeys; the first floor is served as a warehouse, second is enterprise, and third is a place for rest and stay. Although most of third floor chambers are used as offices for traders, in past that there were no vehicles like today traders were inevitable to put a representative for trade they used to stay at the upper floor. That is these Timchehs and halls were served as work and rest place. We analyze surveyed bazaars based on above investigations and derived tables.

Table 3: functions survey and cultural viability conditions

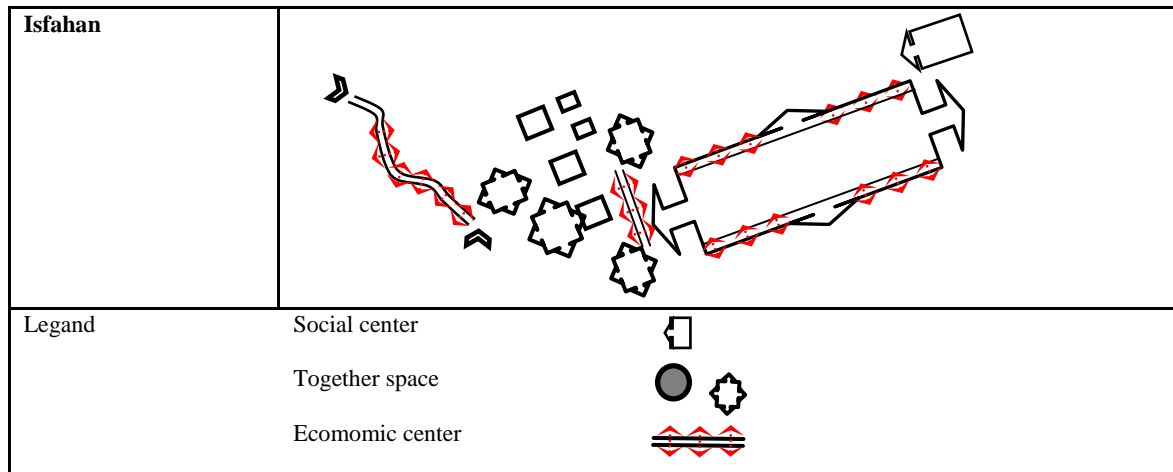
Isfahan	Tabriz	Case study Shiraz	Title	Factor
			Political	Function
			Social	
			Economical	
			Religious	
			Communications	
			Social	Framework
			Economical	
			Envirommetal	

			Environmental
			Distinctions and similarities
As can be seen from figures social areas are concentrated while economic ones are linear.			social economy
			Unity and multiplicity
As clear from figures social areas show continuation and are concentrated. Economic areas contain Transformations and are linear.			Unity multiplicity
			Continuity and Transformations
As clear from figures social areas show continuation and are concentrated. Economic areas contain Transformations and are linear.			Continuity Transformations

Based on analyses performed above, the cultural identity within Iranian bazaars is investigated here. The way of acting cultural activities along with economic ones are investigated based on them.

Table 4: investigation of cultural identity hierarchy

Bazaar	Hierarchy
shiraz	
Tabriz	



IV. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

The main subject of this article is investigation of cultural appearance within Iranian traditional bazaars. This subject, regarding performed analyses among above tables, has been studied based on three elements; Framework, Cultural identity, Function. We conclude with respect to said elements that all cultural activities have been formed within center-oriented areas. Cultural areas have been formed such that is in an axel-oriented path to be able to bring unification though multiplicity. This is one of the aspects of culture within bazaar. These analyses show that social areas are formed beside other applications that also are true for bazaar areas in which social activities accompany economic ones. Cultural identity elements are studied here proportionate to economic and social functions.

- [1] Evolution and continuity. Social activity has appeared in the form of continuity and the economic one like evolution within this element.
- [2] Similarity and difference. Social activities are formed similarly and introverted, but economic ones are formed differently like Timcheh, hall and row within this element.
- [3] Unification and multiplicity. Social activities are formed integrated and introverted, but economic one are scattered in bazaar within this element.

All these discussions are assessed in following table in the form of a diagram and provided several suggestions which help to expand culture to public areas including bazaar. Therefore, one can conclude that culture identity requires the connection between cultural activities beside others. This is also true for bazaar in which cultural activities are formed beside economic ones.

Suggestions

- [1] Cultural activities should preferably be performed in line with other social activities.
- [2] in order to areas attract people, cultural activities should be performed within focused and center-oriented areas.
- [3] Trading centers should be nearby or contained cultural areas to cause cultural identity expansion and economic growth.

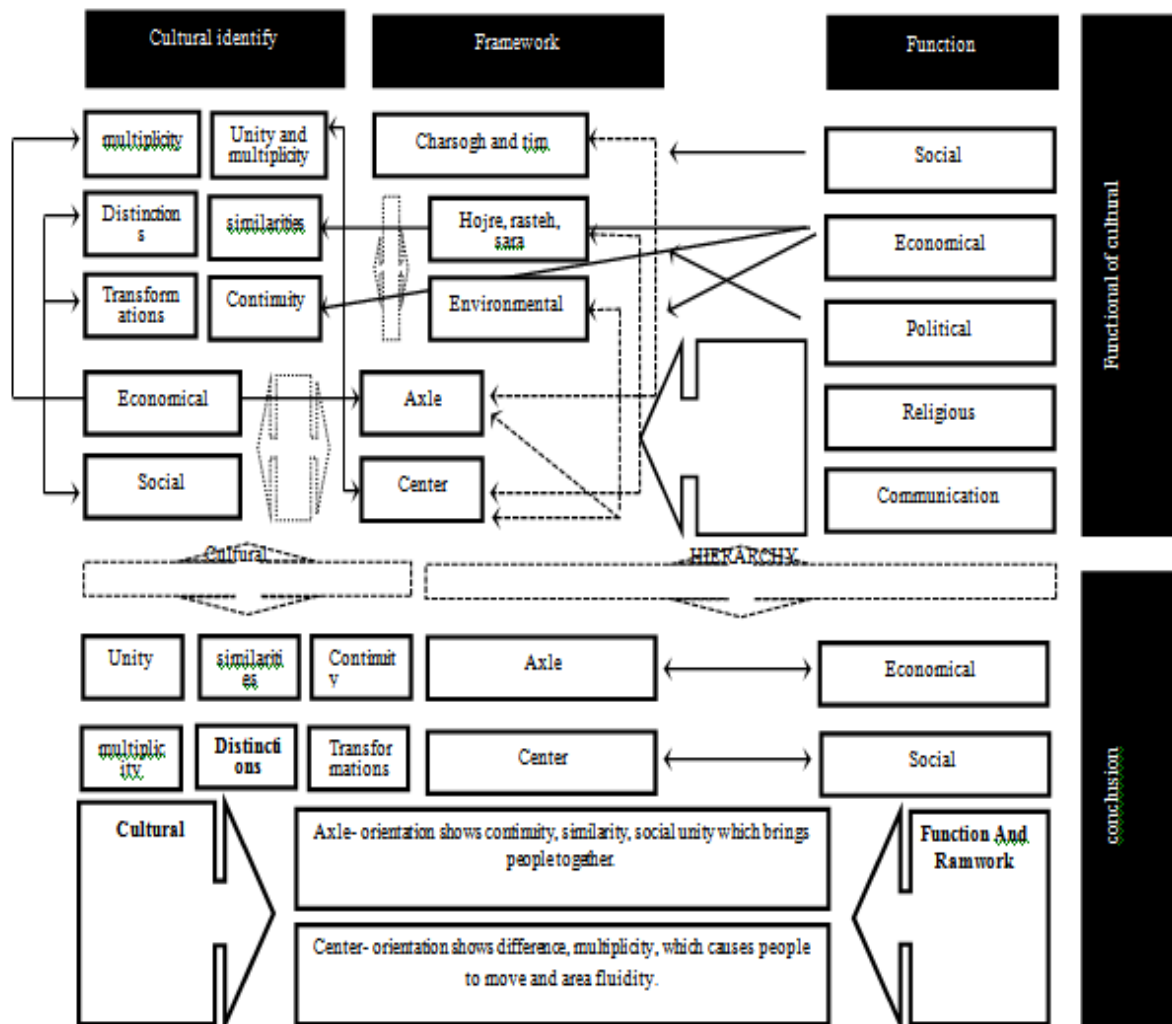


Table 5: survey and conclusion

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