

# Responding Human Needs in Iranian Traditional Houses in Psychological Approach (Case study: Haghighi House, Isfahan, Iran)

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Human being is an egocentric creation, which select and behave based on his/her ego's benefits. The most important motivation for human is satisfying the needs. Psychological Researches have shown that these needs are the same in all people. Houses as physical base of forming family, participate in satisfaction of needs in some aspects. Iranian traditional houses, have been preparing good quality of life for their residents in their life period, and therefore it seems that it is somehow because of facilitating the basis of need satisfaction. In this research, literature of human needs has been collected and categorized, and after that this needs has been surveyed in Haghighi house as a case study in descriptive and Logical analysis method. Haghighi house is a traditional house in Isfahan, Iran, from Qajar Period (early 19<sup>th</sup> century). Although the examples are from this house, but it has been tried to identify some general aspects of Iranian traditional houses. At the end some strategies for designing contemporary houses toward more satisfaction of human needs has been derived.

**Keywords:** Human needs, Iranian traditional houses, Haghighi House, Isfahan, Iran.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

It seems that there is a strong connection between the pleasurable experience of fulfillment of needs and well-being (Korhonen, 2013). "The idea of common human needs provides a superior theoretical framework with which to conceive of human welfare, which overcomes each of the critiques leveled against preference satisfaction" (Gough, 2014). The most of works, behaviors, and reactions of human can be interpreted in term of "human needs" and his preferences. They are powerful sources of explanation of behavior and social interaction of human being (Coate & Rasati, 1988). Needs are innate rather than learned (Deci & Ryan, 2000), and therefore they are common between all people, and Satisfying needs is essential for healthy development and effective functioning (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Also needs are the link between performance and demand of the social world (Deci & Ryan, 2000), and therefore to have healthy individuals and society, needs satisfaction is essential. Many psychologists have researched about human motivations and need;

Maslow divides human needs to four types that must be satisfied before a person can act

unselfishly. These needs are in a hierarchical order, and for upward climbs one set of needs should be satisfied at a time. These needs are physiological needs, need for safety, the desire for love, and the quest for esteem. Maslow name these needs as "deficiency needs" besides "being needs" or "self-actualization" (Griffin, Andrew, & Glenn, 1991) (Thielke, et al., 2012).

He defined the need for self-actualization as "the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming". People gravitate to maximize their potential in a gentle but persistent way, only after satisfaction of their basic deficiency cravings (Maslow, 1943).

Max-Neef classifies the fundamental human needs as existential needs and axiological (value) needs.

- |                 |            |
|-----------------|------------|
| - subsistence   | - leisure  |
| - protection    | - creation |
| - affection     | - identity |
| - understanding | - freedom  |
| - participation |            |

Each need occurs at four different levels of activity: Being, Having, Doing and Interacting (Table.1). These needs are the same everywhere, while the means of satisfying a need may be highly variable in terms of time, culture and environment (Max-neef M. A., 1991) (Max-neef, Elizalde, & Hopenhayn, 1992).

In addition needs can be satisfied in different intensities and levels. For example needs are satisfied within three context:

- With regards to self (Eigenwelt)
- With regards to the social group (Mitwelt)
- With regards to the environment (Umwelt) (Max-neef M. A., 1991).

Table 1: The Matrix of human needs by Max-neef (Max-neef M. A., 1991)

<b>Fundamental Human Needs</b>	<b>Being (qualities)</b>	<b>Having (things)</b>	<b>Doing (actions)</b>	<b>Interacting (settings)</b>
<b>subsistence</b>	physical and mental health	food, shelter work	feed, clothe, rest, work	living environment, social setting
<b>protection</b>	care, adaptability autonomy	social security, health systems, work	co-operate, plan, take care of, help	social environment, dwelling
<b>affection</b>	respect, sense of humor, generosity, sensuality	friendships, family, relationships with nature	share, take care of, make love, express emotions	privacy, intimate spaces of togetherness
<b>understanding</b>	critical capacity, curiosity, intuition	literature, teachers, policies educational	analyses, study, meditate, investigate	schools, families universities, communities,
<b>participation</b>	receptiveness, dedication, sense of humor	responsibilities, duties, work, rights	cooperate, dissent, express opinions	associations, parties, churches, neighborhoods
<b>leisure</b>	imagination, tranquility spontaneity	games, parties, peace of mind	day-dream, remember, relax, have fun	landscapes, intimate spaces, places to be alone
<b>creation</b>	imagination, boldness, inventiveness, curiosity	abilities, skills, work, techniques	invent, build, design, work, compose, interpret	spaces for expression, workshops, audiences
<b>identity</b>	sense of belonging, self-esteem, consistency	language, religions, work, customs, values, norms	get to know oneself, grow, commit oneself	places one belongs to, everyday settings
<b>freedom</b>	autonomy, passion, self-esteem, open-mindedness	equal rights	dissent, choose, run risks, develop awareness	anywhere

Alderfer (1969), Speaks about needs in term of needs for existence, relatedness, and growth instead of Maslow’s theory (Alderfer, 1969).

Andersen and her colleagues (1997) Mention human needs/motivations as:

- return.” They believe that this specially reflected as attachment. This need is profoundly influential and may even practically dwarf the others.
- Autonomy Needs; it is opposing need to connection, as detachment from others in the form of individual autonomy and

- Human connection; “the need to feel connected with other people, the longing to be close, and the desire to experience tenderness, caring, and warmth from others and to be able to provide it in personal freedom or the need for self-determination. The need to experience a locus that is distinguishable from an external locus, and also from internal loci that reflect the mere adaptation of external forces.

- Mastery needs; in the word of sense of personal mastery, competence and control.
- Meaning needs; that reflects the motivation to comprehend life, to have a discernment on the basis of this understanding. Operating across culture, provides a framework for action and identity<sup>1</sup>.
- Security need; the need to feel safe and secure (Anderson, Inga , & Serena, 1997) (Andersen, Chen, & Carter, 2000)

<sup>1)</sup> *This is to comprehend and make sense of their experience, specially, difficulties and tragedies of life* (Andersen, Chen, & Carter, 2000).

According to Glasser theory there are two basic human needs to be satisfied;

- 1) Physical needs are the needs to survive, to prepare food, shelter and safety.

2) Psychological needs are spoken in term of;

- Belonging: to be with people who know, care about, and to be accepted and appreciated.
- Gaining power: knowledge and skills and therefore self-esteem.
- Having fun.
- Being free: to rehabilitate self (Glasser, 1999).

Whether we are aware of it or not, we are all the time behaving to meet these needs (Glasser, 1999). Deci and Ryan speak about three innate of fundamental psychological needs; Competence, autonomy, and relatedness, which defeated satisfaction of them causes negative functional consequences for mental health and often sequels in persistence and performance (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Frey and Wilhite categorize needs in five basic ones: The need for survival, belonging, power/self-worth, freedom and fun (Frey & Wilhite, 2005).

Table 2: Human needs categorization

Needs		Maslow 1943	Max-neef 1991-1992	Alderfer 1969	Anderson 1997	Glasser 1999	Deci & Ryan 2000	Frey & Wilhite 2005	
<b>Physiological</b>	Physiological	Physiological	Subsistence	Existence		Physical		Survival	
		Safety			Security				
<b>Connection</b>	Love	Love	Protection	Relatedness	Connection	Belonging	Relatedness	Belonging	
			Affection						
<b>Autonomy</b>	Participation		Participation				Autonomy		
	Understanding	Esteem	Understanding	Growth	Autonomy				
	Fun		Leisure					Fun	Fun
	Identity		Identity						
	Freedom	Self-actualization	Freedom			Freedom	Freedom		
<b>Competence</b>	Competence		Creation		Mastery	power Gaining	Competence	Power/self-worth	
<b>Meaning</b>	Meaning				Meaning				

**2. RESEARCH METHOD**

According to above mentioned categorization of needs, we can divide needs in two major categories named physiological (subsistence, physical, survival, existence) and psychological (axiological) needs. The psychological needs could be categorized to Connection, autonomy,

competence and meaning need (Table 2). We can speak about connection in term of love (belonging, or protection/affection), and participation. The autonomy need include understanding, fun (leisure), identity, and freedom needs (Diagram 1).

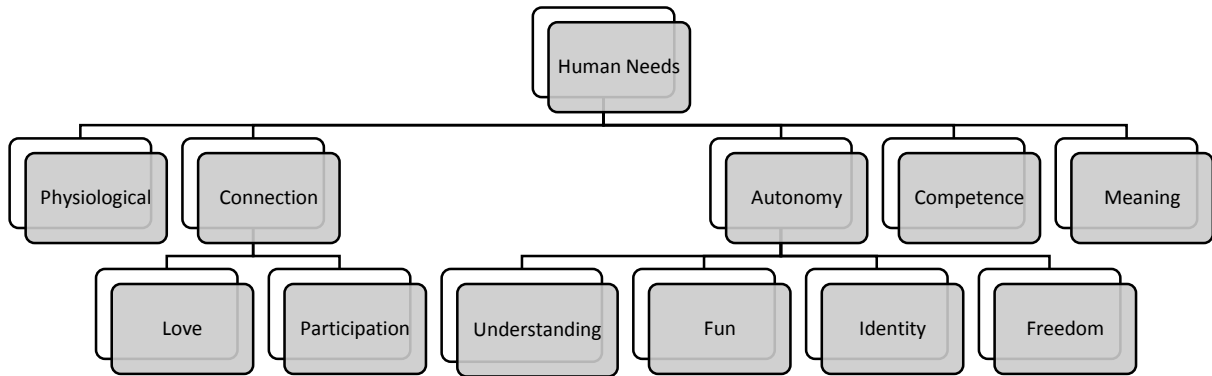


Diagram 1: Human needs

The traditional houses along history were more satisfying than today ones. In this survey, Haghghi house as a case study has been taken and the most common factor and elements - which are the same in most of traditional houses- in relation to needs satisfactions has been studied.

Haghghi house has built in early Qajar period in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The house is belonged to a private owner and in the early 1975 winter house was bought by Iran government, and transferred to Ministry of Art and Culture. From 1980 till now Art University of Isfahan is the owner of that (Abdul Rahim, 2013).

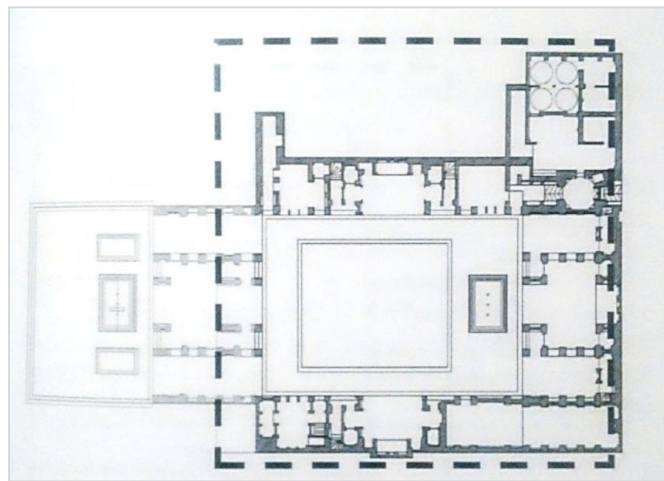


Figure 1: Plan of Haghghi House (Abdul Rahim, 2013)

### 3. DISCUSSIONS

As before said, houses as a context of everyday life, participate in satisfaction of human needs;

The most important role of every house is to be a shelter, to response physical needs; to save people from danger, rain, sunlight, and also a place to make family, to become together, etc. (Figure 2). Also a base to develop protectiveness in relation to protection need. As Heidegger mentions; “Things of this sort are housings, though not necessarily dwelling-houses in the narrower sense” (Heidegger, 1971). Therefore all houses prepare a minimum of physiological needs, but they are different in psychological ones;

- **The need for Love**

Because of life style at traditional families in Iran, affection and belonging need is responded at

traditional houses in a reasonable way; the hierarchy to reach the house, the arrangement of rooms around a yard like sitting around a table (Figure 3), the colorful places which increase sympathy (Figure 4). All of these items bring people together to live and act in a united group and it increases their belonging. Different places in houses with their own character facilitate forming memories and it is effective in shaping sense of attachment to place and other people.

- **The need for participation**

Living in a large home with a broad family increase human participation in each works. In other hand the main place for day life is central yard and many works are done in common. In traditional houses there are large rooms for family to come together and benefit each other presence (Figure 5).



Figure 2: Haghghi house as a shelter

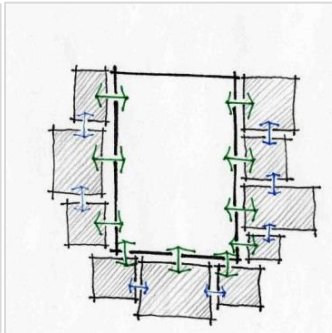


Figure 3: Arrangement of rooms around central yards



Figure 7: Mysterious places in traditional houses



Figure 4: Colorful places of houses



Figure 5: Large rooms to facilitate family participation

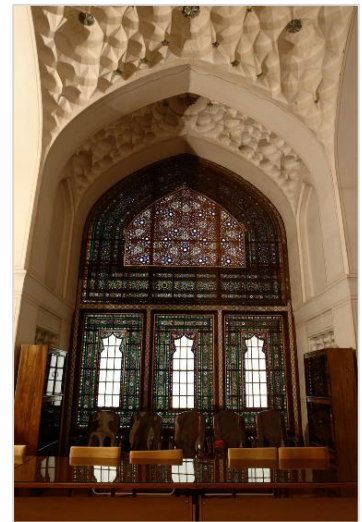


Figure 6: Platforms at door entrance is for social participation



- **Understanding need**

The mystery hidden in these houses is a way to satisfy understanding need (Figure 7&8). Mysterious places in which you should think to understand their order, harmony, details and the wisdom behind them, are designed in these houses in different ways.

- **Need of leisure**

There are extensive places to spend leisure times for children and also places like hozkhane at some traditional houses for adults. Having different places with different criteria help people spend their leisure time in different ways

- **Identity need**

As mentioned before, hierarchy of places in neighborhood let people shape their identity of place (Figure 9), also places with good criteria with unique character help to increase dependence and identity (Figure 10).

- **Need for freedom**

Places with different criteria and also large open spaces let residents to have different option to select the place and therefore reply the need of freedom (Figure 11).

- **Competence need**

The rooms in traditional houses are made for different level of competency; the child room, the guest room, the room for married sons, the parents room, which are in a hierarchy level of quality, and this in some extent satisfy competence need. At the other hand, aesthetic elements at home increase creativity of people, also free places which let to think in an open mind space help it, and this bring freedom and competence (Figure 12).

- **Meaning**

Meaningful places in traditional houses is a base to develop meaning. Myths, stories, similes- especially in ornaments- are too important to bringing meaning to life (Figure 13).



Figure 8: Mysterious ceiling

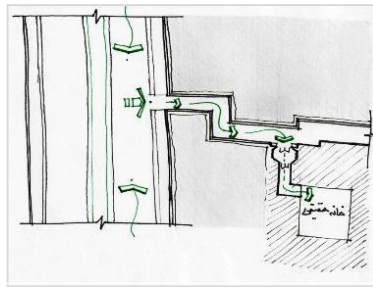


Figure 9: Hierarchy of access to house



Figure 10.a: Good definition of different places



Figure 10.b: Good definition of different places

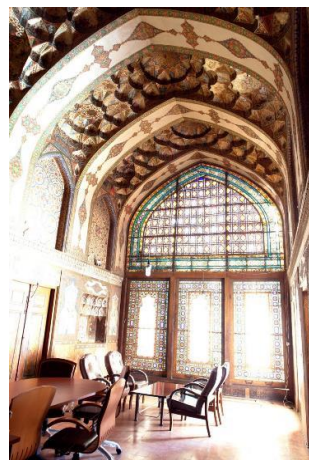


Figure 11: Some places satisfy the freedom need

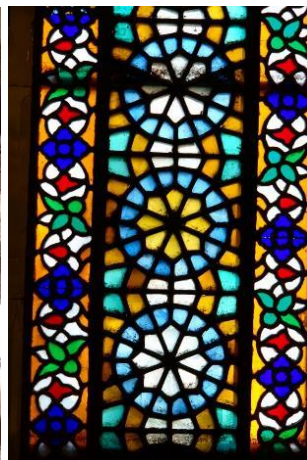


Figure 12: Aesthetic designs at Haghghi house windows

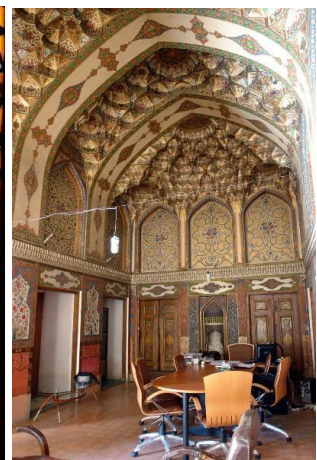


Figure 13: Wall painting full of visualization of

#### 4. CONCLUSION

A house contributes in satisfying human needs as base of everyday life. Traditional houses - in comparison to today ones - were more engaged with these needs. In this survey Haghghi house as a case study has been studied. It seems that traditional houses were built in a more humanistic way, and the human being, as user of these houses

were considered. Both physical and psychological aspects of human has specific place in designing a house. These factors were considered as a whole and architects tried to have a balance between them. The logic of responding to needs can be used for contemporary life's places. Therefore the results could be concluded in this way;

Table 3: Strategies for contemporary houses to satisfy more needs

Need		Elements	The house elements to satisfy it	Strategies for today houses	
Physiological needs		Food, Shelter, rest, work, sex	House as a shelter	This need is responded	
Psychological needs	Connectio n	Love	Family, friendship	Good places for a family home	
		Participation	Duty, rights, cooperation	Central yards, rooms with internal interaction, consecutive views, a complicated family with different works	
	Autonomy	Understanding	Education, Thinking	Ornaments, different criteria of places	Make places with good criteria, attention to details
		Leisure	Games, Parties, relief	Large open spaces, places with different criteria, Ornaments, Large gathering places	Avoiding repetition of places, attending to yards, designing gathering places
		Identity	Being Unique, Detection	Hierarchy of access, identity of spaces	Hierarchical access, Make places with good criteria
		Freedom	Having options and selection	Large open spaces, places with different criteria	Avoiding repetition of places, attending to yards
	Competence		Ability, Skill	Various degrees of using spaces (depend on age, marriage, etc)	Designing places with different levels (age, education, abilities)
	Meaning		Discernment, Life comprehension	Remembering myths in ornaments, Metaphors	Bringing metaphors, and simile in designs

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