

Original Article

Received: 2025/10/06
Revised: 2025/10/16
Accepted: 2025/10/20



COPYRIGHTS

©2025 The author(s). This is an open access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, as long as the original authors and source are cited. No permission is required from the authors or the publishers.



HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

Tahsiri M. Sadeghi A. R. Elucidating the factors affecting the social participation of guilds in iranian-islamic bazaars (case study: wakil bazaar of shiraz). *Urban Economics and Planning* 7(2):4-23.

DOI: [10.22034/uep.2025.551719.1732](https://doi.org/10.22034/uep.2025.551719.1732)

Elucidating the factors affecting the social participation of guilds in iranian-islamic bazaars (case study: wakil bazaar of shiraz)

Maryam Tahsiri¹, Ali Reza Sadeghi^{2*}

1. Ph.D. Candidate of Urban Planning, Department of Urban Planning and Design, Faculty of Art and Architecture, Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran
2. Associate Professor, Department of Urban Planning and Design, Faculty of Arts and Architecture, Shiraz University, Shiraz, Iran

Abstract

Iranian-Islamic bazaars have long symbolized the cultural and social identity of Iranian cities. A defining characteristic is their spatial proximity to mosques, which distinguishes them from Western bazaars and fosters interaction and synergy among guilds and tradesmen. This study elucidates the factors influencing the social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars, focusing on the Wakil Bazaar of Shiraz. Thirteen experienced and long-standing tradesmen were purposefully selected through the snowball sampling method, and data were gathered via in-depth interviews. Using the Grounded Theory method, the analysis revealed three main categories of factors affecting guilds' social participation: Individual Ethics (religion and personal values), Civic Ethics (trust and economic relations), and Political Society (government and institutional structures). The proposed theoretical model explains the interaction among these categories in shaping and sustaining guild participation. Individual Ethics function as prerequisite factors, laying the foundation for social participation of guilds. Mediating elements play significantly in emerging and sustaining civic ethics, connecting personal values with institutional frameworks. Finally, supporting factors, including the theoretical code of political society, ensure the stability and continuity of this process. The findings highlighted how ethical, social, and political dimensions intertwine in maintaining the traditional cohesion of Iranian-Islamic bazaars. These insights can guide policy-makers and practitioners in enhancing guild participation and revitalizing the functional and cultural vitality of these bazaars.

Keywords

Guilds
Grounded Theory
Iranian-Islamic Bazaars
Social Participation
Wakil Bazaar of Shiraz

* Corresponding Author: arsadeghi@shirazu.ac.ir

1. Introduction

The bazaar is the most significant factor in the formation of Islamic cities. Bazaars serve as the primary axes of communication, economic activity, and social interaction, functioning as the backbone of the historical and central urban fabric (Zia Tawana, 2001: 20; Gharipour, 2017: 22; Kazemi et al., 2018: 85; Ranani, 2019: 6). In Iranian cities, traditional bazaars, beyond their economic significance, are the key cultural and social spaces of the city (Sultanzadeh, 1983: 95; Sadeghi et al., 2019: 89). Iranian-Islamic traditional bazaars were located near city gates and gradually expanded toward the city center along main roads. Within these bazaars, each *rasteh* (row or section) was assigned to the supply and production of specific goods, with *caravanserais* built in their vicinity (Sultanzadeh, 1983: 102).

The congregational mosque (*Jāme' Mosque*) of the city constitutes another key element of Islamic urbanism, spatially situated in proximity to the governmental citadel within the historic urban fabric and directly linked to the city's traditional and historic bazaar. Bazaars functioned as the urban backbone, with streets and alleys branching off as secondary pathways. In addition to *caravanserais*, public baths (*hammams*), traditional schools, granaries, water reservoirs (*āb-anbārs*), mansions, and other urban facilities were also located in the vicinity of this central line (Lewis, 1937: 20; Kazemi et al., 2018: 88). Indeed, the Islamic city takes shape around the mosque, expands through the bazaar, and further extends as streets and alleys radiate outward from the bazaar. From an Islamic perspective, the essence of the city, understood as a human community founded upon wisdom, cooperation, and justice, mirrors the existential truth of humanity (Kazemi et al., 2018: 88). The spatial adjacency of bazaar stalls is a tangible manifestation and testament to this principle (Zia Tawana, 2001: 25).

The concept of the guild is one of the intrinsic elements of the bazaar. A guild refers to a group of city inhabitants engaged in a specific trade or profession (Ogilvie, 2024: 2). This group elects its own leader and is subject to guild-specific taxation by the government (Floor, 2009: 111). The guild system represents one of the oldest social structures in human history, existing in various societies and reaching its zenith during the Middle Ages (Taylor, 1919: 30). During this period, guilds functioned not only as economic institutions but also as social entities, taking on responsibilities for managing certain societal affairs. They also served as a

platform for the convergence of beliefs, values, and cultural and social norms (Floor, 1975: 103). Medieval guilds fostered "social capital," which is also essential for the democratic and efficient political and economic institutions of modern societies (Van Zanden, 2009: 32).

Guilds are recognized as social networks in which a group of merchants or artisans regularly interact with one another, establishing multifaceted relationships. A set of shared norms, collective information, and the willingness and ability to enforce these norms, ultimately benefiting the broader community (civil society), contribute to the creation of social capital derived from the social participation of guild members (Ogilvie, 2004: 3; Stroops, 2012: 291).

Guilds play a significant role in regulating bazaars, maintaining product quality, delivering social services, and supporting their members (Hickson & Thompson, 1991: 136). Examining the regulations and activities of guilds from the late medieval period through their transition into the Enlightenment enables scholars not only to explore religious devotion and loyalty but also to investigate the relationships between voluntary associations and political as well as familial structures (De Munck, 2017: 87). The seventh century CE is widely regarded as the golden age of Islam and marks the emergence of guilds in Islamic societies. From their inception, Islamic teachings have placed a strong emphasis on commerce, positioning it as a key driver for economic growth and development. This emphasis on trade stood in contrast to the prevailing cultural norms of the time, which often held ambivalent or negative views toward mercantile activity. Consequently, the Islamic perspective on commerce was grounded from the outset in a profound understanding of the socio-economic conditions necessary for the flourishing of trade and enterprise (Ali & Al-Owaihān, 2008: 8).

Figure 1 illustrates the evolution of the concept of guilds across various historical periods and civilizations that have governed Iran. The timeline begins with the emergence of Islam in the seventh century CE, highlighting pivotal moments such as the "Golden Age of Islamic Civilization" in the 11th and 12th centuries and the flourishing of the bazaar system during the Seljuk and Safavid eras, periods marked by the emergence of sophisticated commercial systems and early concepts of Islamic capitalism. Concurrently, the diagram traces parallel developments in the Western world, from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, to elucidate the simultaneous emergence of guild and

bazaar concepts in Iran and the West. This comparison underscores the significance of studying and reevaluating the economic and urban development of Iran from the pre-industrial period to the onset of the modern era. Moreover, given the role of guilds as the oldest social and economic structures in Iranian-Islamic cities, traditional bazaars provide a suitable framework for examining the concept of social participation. Investigating this topic can offer valuable insights into the factors contributing to the

development and revitalization of economic, social, and urban planning thought in contemporary Iran and its active guilds.

This study explores the concept of social participation from the perspective of intra-guild interactions, to identify and analyze the factors influencing the social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars using grounded theory methodology, thereby contributing an innovative approach to the subject

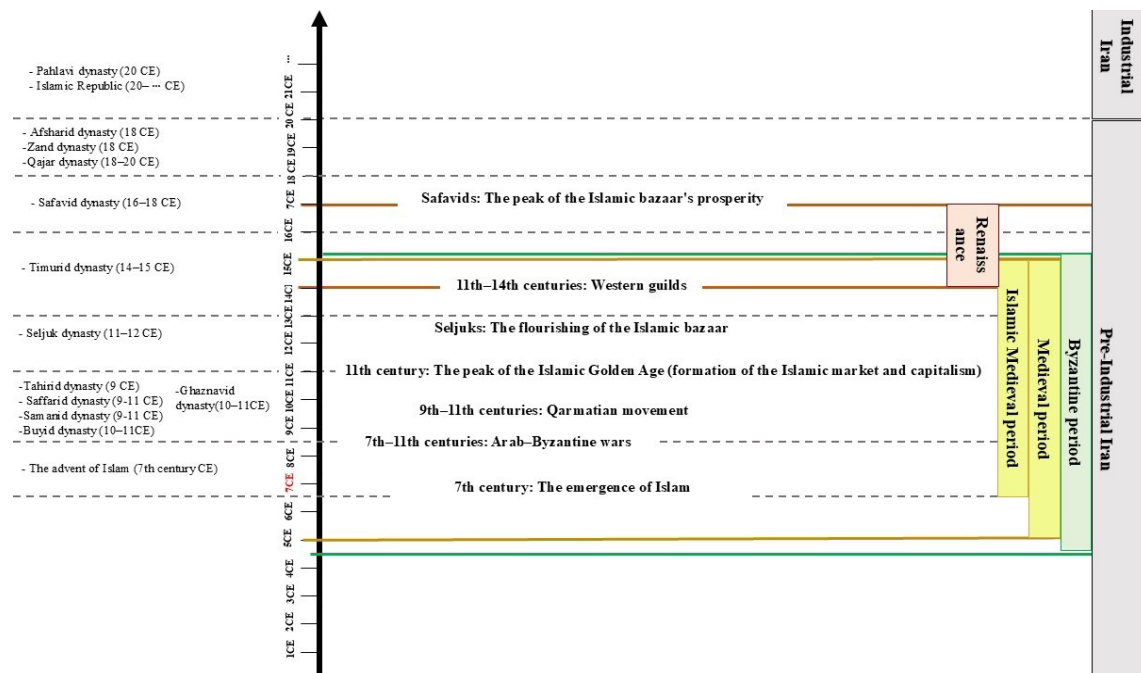


Figure 1. The historical evolution of the concept of guilds across different periods in Iranian history

2. Literature Review

To review the research background of the study over the past 25 years, 189 articles were selected through

the illustrated stages (Figure 2), and their keyword co-occurrence network was visualized using the VOSviewer software (Figure 3).

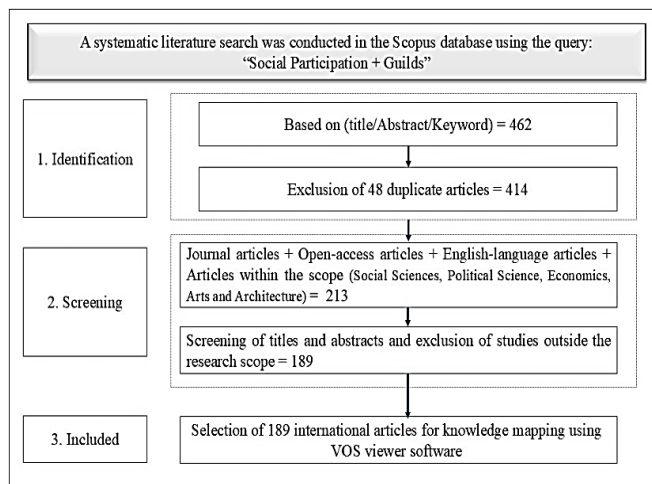


Figure 2. The process of selecting articles for literature review

Through extracting and processing of key terms from relevant scientific texts, this analysis has identified three main conceptual clusters, visualized as a network relationship map (Figure 3, left) and a density map of research focus (Figure 3, right). The studies can be categorized into three broad clusters. The green cluster primarily encompasses concepts such as guilds, trade unions, social capital, skills, commercial relationships, cohesion, and other themes related to organizational and economic structures. The second cluster, depicted in red, includes concepts such as history, education, gender, social class, and local networks, addressing the

social and cultural dimensions of the topic. The third cluster, shown in blue, comprises concepts, such as humanity, ethics, politics, religion, and social interaction, focusing on philosophical and theoretical aspects. The guide in the figure lists supplementary terms associated with each cluster. Although the topics within the blue cluster are more closely aligned with the research focus, as evident from the topic density map (right), these topics have been less studied in relation to guilds compared to the other clusters and require further investigation and research.

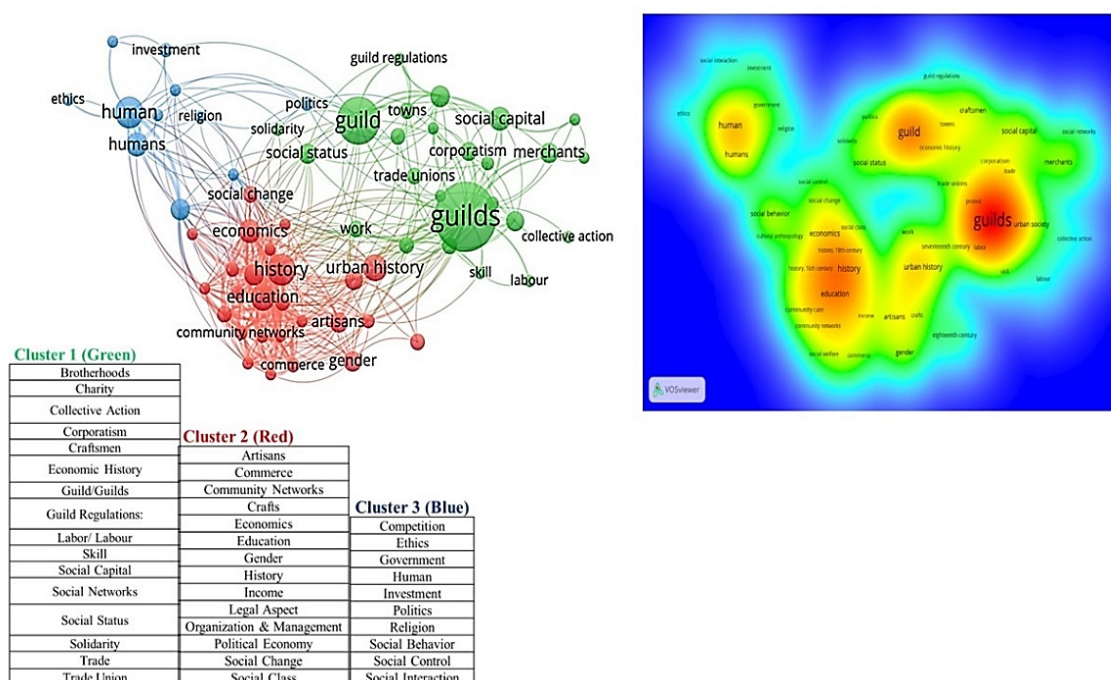


Figure 3. Co-occurrence map of keywords related to the studied research domain

Some of the most relevant domestic and international studies are briefly reviewed below:

Baer (1970), in the article “Administrative, Economic, and Social Functions of Turkish Guilds,” examined the role of Turkish guilds throughout history. The primary objective of this study was to investigate the administrative, economic, and social functions of guilds and their relationships with the government and society, through analyzing the historical documents and records related to Turkish guilds. The criteria for analyzing guild performance included their role as administrative intermediaries between the government and the public, their functions in tax collection, quality control of goods, price and wage determination, labor and services provision, distribution of goods, dispute resolution, mutual aid

provision, and their social roles. The findings indicated that Turkish guilds played a significant role in the country’s history, acting as administrative intermediaries, contributing to the quality control of goods and services, resolving disputes among members, and providing various social services. The degree of autonomy and power of guilds varied across different periods and regions, necessitating a comprehensive historical perspective across all Islamic countries.

Pourjafar et al. (2011) examined the impact of social capital on economic status of traditional Iranian bazaars. The findings revealed that these bazaars, due to the presence of trusted merchants and their proximity to historic mosques and religious sites, have consistently functioned as strong social hubs, attracting

significant economic and social capital throughout history. Furthermore, the organization of religious ceremonies in these traditional spaces has substantially impacted the economic prosperity of the bazaars and surrounding neighborhoods, beyond their spiritual significance. This study considers social participation a tool for realizing social capital, with greater emphasis on the Iranian character of traditional bazaars rather than their Iranian-Islamic identity. Therefore, examining the concept of social participation and its alignment with Islamic principles from the perspective of merchants involves additional indicators and supporting factors that require further investigation.

Javadi Yeganeh and Allameh (2018) investigated the relationship between guild organizations and futuwwa (chivalric brotherhoods) in Iran during the late medieval period. Contrary to the common belief that guild organizations were inactive in Iranian cities, this study demonstrated that artisans, in collaboration with futuwwa organizations, formed a type of guild structure distinct from the medieval guild systems in the West. Employing a sociological framework based on Durkheim's theories, the study concluded that guilds in Iran, through their connection with Sufi futuwwa, established a form of religious guild organization. Sufi futuwwa, as a religious ethos, significantly played in fostering cohesion and structure of guild organizations, prioritizing the professional interests of their members. Although the study, as an innovation, relied on Durkheim's theoretical ideas, a systematic comparison of them with those of other theorists in this field was also evident.

Sadeghi et al. (2019) investigated the role of the bazaar in the formation of Iranian-Islamic cities, focusing on the city of Shiraz. They emphasized that traditional bazaars in Iran, beyond their commercial and productive functions, served as public spaces for community gatherings, information exchange, and fostering social interactions. The research methodology combined historical analysis (examining the evolution of bazaars across different periods), descriptive methods (studying documents, written sources, and visual materials), and comparative approaches (comparing changes in the bazaar across various historical periods). The study primarily focused on the formal and physical aspects of the Shiraz bazaar across different eras, with no attention to intra-guild participation or interactions among artisans and merchants.

In the study "Reexamining the Components of the Bazaar in the Iranian-Islamic City," Tabasi and

Khademzadeh (2020) explored the physical and functional components of the bazaar, concluding that individual ethics and their social impact, as a subcomponent, significantly acts in fostering a healthy and sustainable commercial environment. Adherence to ethical principles benefits not only the individual but also the entire community of merchants and the economy. The uniform appearance of shops and the clustering of similar economic activities highlight the substantial influence of a merchant's individual ethics on attracting customers. Although the study meticulously identified the components affecting the bazaar, it overlooked the relationship and interaction between spatial-physical components and functional-activational ones. Additionally, it lacked a clear method for analyzing interviews, relying predominantly on logical and subjective reasoning.

Molaei (2020) investigated social capital in Iran's historical bazaars, concluding through surveys of merchants and visitors that these bazaars, as a cornerstone of Iranian-Islamic culture, provide a rich foundation for achieving social capital across various dimensions, including cultural-religious, social, economic, historical, semantic, and spatial aspects, thereby enhancing the social vitality of the bazaar. However, the study examined a limited number of classical theorists of social capital.

Vahdatpour et al. (2023) conducted a descriptive-analytical study examining the functional and physical systems of historical Islamic bazaars from the perspective of Islamic religious principles and concepts. Relying on library and field data, they concluded that Islamic commercial regulations (such as the jurisprudence of transactions, professional ethics, organization of commercial spaces, and security) have not only influenced the formation of physical structure of bazaars but also contributed to their sustainability and semantic authenticity. The study was robust in examining Islamic sources and global cultural heritage frameworks. However, it lacked sufficient case studies to support its findings and required the development of appropriate strategies to revitalize and strengthen the social role of bazaar merchants in the contemporary era.

Najari Nabi et al. (2024) explored the perspectives of Tabriz bazaar merchants on achieving social sustainability, highlighting that social participation is a key in realizing social sustainability in Iranian-Islamic bazaars. The study emphasized the involvement of bazaar visitors and users in achieving social participation, without addressing intra-guild

regulations and relationships, particularly from an Islamic perspective.

As evident from the literature review, the concept of social participation, as a dynamic and interactive dimension, has been underexplored. Social participation extends beyond mere continuity and sustainability, emphasizing active interactions, voluntary collaborations, and the role of guilds in social and institutional networks. Given the existing research background, we should clarify the distinction between social sustainability and social participation. Social sustainability primarily has a sociological dimension, focusing on cohesion, continuity of values, and social solidarity. In contrast, social participation, in addition to its social dimension, encompasses economic and managerial aspects, as it pertains to the active involvement of individuals in decision-making, institutional collaborations, and the collective management of activities.

Given the lack of studies in this field, the present research is innovative in focusing on social participation within the guild community, examining the guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars. Furthermore, by employing the grounded theory research method, it introduces novel factors in explaining social participation within the guilds of Iranian-Islamic bazaars.

3. Theoretical Foundation

Social participation, referring to an organized process, consists of two components: "participation," meaning cooperation and partnership, and "social," meaning public and community-related. In this process, members of a society (institutions, organizations, or companies, etc.) participate voluntarily collectively with full awareness, for specific objectives, to share in power. Social participation is the conscious and voluntary presence of individuals in collective activities with shared goals, enabling them to be stakeholders in decision-making and power sources (Gheisari, 2019: 37). The concept of social institutions is traceable in various aspects of social life, including family and kinship, education, economics, politics, and culture (Akhavi, 1998: 695).

Traditional bazaars, particularly the Iranian-Islamic bazaars, can be understood as institutions that, with their inherent structures and processes, organize human activities within society, to address fundamental and permanent issues of social life through defined organizational patterns (Akhavi, 1998: 693).

According to Ibn Khaldun, the expansion of solidarity and participation, derived from the concept of

asabiyyah (group cohesion), at both interpersonal and intergroup levels, leads to participation in broader social and political domains (Azadarmaki, 2007: 327). Given this definition, social participation within the bazaar guilds (Asnāf) can also be understood as the active and effective presence of merchants in collective activities that contribute to improving business conditions, safeguarding guild interests, and enhancing the bazaar's position in societal and political affairs (Kirkbesoglu & Sargut, 2016: 4).

During the Middle Ages, guilds were considered a form of autonomous social institutions that, in addition to their economic activities, played roles in social and even charitable domains (Taylor, 1919: 57). The primary and existential purpose of guilds held significant religious importance, as it was rooted in the desire to sanctify their work and gain honor derived from futuwwa within society. Consequently, guild members oversaw the governing structure of bazaar to protect consumers and prevent the decline of standards (Sparks, 2016: 3). During the Middle Ages, the central government played a limited role in regulating urban affairs, and many decisions were made through local councils and guild associations. This enabled the guilds, as an important social force, to assume responsibilities such as establishing labor regulations, monitoring the quality of production, supporting their members, and even contributing to public welfare (Taylor, 1919: 91). A key aspect in examining the social role of guilds was their interaction with government. In many instances, governments granted guilds charters that conferred certain self-governance powers. These charters allowed guilds to establish regulations for their profession, control the entry of new members into the trade, and set production standards (Taylor, 1919: 66).

In general, in any society, the relationship between social participation and social changes is inverse. The increase in social participation contributes to stability of that society (Tabatabaee & Aghjani, 2023: 20). Civil society is a sphere independent of the public domain of politics and the private realm of family (De Munck, 2017: 87). The origin of civil society can be traced to the ideas of John Locke, the Scottish philosopher, and Hegel (Kaviraj & Khilnani, 2001: 35). Locke makes no distinction between civil society and political society. He considers civil society to be solely based on a political order in which individual freedoms, such as property rights and religious liberty, exist (Javidi, 2020: 41). According to Locke, civil society emerges when individuals free themselves from all forms of despotic,

patriarchal, and institutional constraints that lead to their economic and political suppression. Other Scottish thinkers, including Adam Ferguson and Adam Smith, view strong interpersonal relationships, friendship, and morality as essential components of civilization within the context of free Bazaar and under a fair judicial and political system (Fine, 2014: 11; Ghaemi Nik, 2025: 206). In Hegel's thought, the individuals establish a bond with society through ethical principles, and their individual reason leads to the recognition and emergence of collective reason through cultural, historical, and social interactions with others in that society (Fine, 2014: 12). Civil society can be regarded as a specific type of collective formation in which public opinion flows within frameworks independent of individuals' unique backgrounds, ultimately resulting in communicative action (Habermas, 1982: 59). The Holy Quran considers certain ethical and social virtues, such as security, honesty, trustworthiness, benevolence, and commitment during social crises, as factors that foster varying levels of trust (both intra-group and inter-group) and strengthen the bond of brotherhood among Muslims (Pirouzfard, 2025: 219). Mutual trust among members of guilds and professional associations is vital. Guilds and futuwwa associations have established a framework of collective values and norms that encourage participation in economic and political activities, enabling merchants to adopt a democratic approach in the interplay among politics, society, and economy (Putnam, 1993). Catherine Lynch, in her definition of civil society, add the factor of religion to the three forces proposed by Putnam (Lynch, 2003: 213). Guilds generate social capital by reinforcing shared norms, enhancing the flow of information regarding these norms, punishing violations against them, and organizing collective actions to defend them (Ogilvie, 2004: 3). At times, kinship and familial ties among artisans strengthen the power and stability of guilds, consequently enhancing social capital. This social capital not only reflects the collective consciousness of an urban group of craftsmen and merchants but also demonstrate the practical aspects of their interests in organizing

industrial production (Saelens, 2019: 7). Rosser, a British historian, argues that guilds are religious associations that combine ethical and religious objectives with economic and political goals. Through the creation of symbolic and cultural identities, they contribute to strengthening social cohesion and distinguishing between insiders and outsiders (Rosser, 2015). From this perspective, guild life is a form of "modern" society in which, although individuals are somewhat detached from the oppressive structures of the state, they require networking with it for survival (De Munck, 2017: 90). Acting as intermediaries between members and the government, guild leaders possess the power to negotiate for justice. This strengthen their sense of belonging and recognition, creating opportunities for expanding social relationships and economic benefits (De Gobineau, 1907: 379). Consequently, through their intermediary role, guilds exert influence as mediators between the people, religious scholars, and the government, which is particularly prominent in Iran during the Safavid era (Floor, 1975: 165).

Developing a theoretical framework in research is a methodological necessity beyond a mere literature review, serving two vital roles in qualitative data-driven studies. First, the perspectives of classical and contemporary theorists provide the conceptual groundwork and sensitivity that guide the researcher's interpretive lens during the initial coding phase. Theoretical awareness and sensitivity prevent reductionism in studying multifaceted phenomena. In examining a phenomenon such as the Bazaar, factors are identified and explored not merely from an economic perspective, but also through deeper social dimensions. In the second stage, after extracting indigenous categories from the research data and case study, these theories serve as a comparative framework for explaining relationships among the identified categories. Thus, the validity and theoretical acceptability of research findings are reinforced within the context of broader social theories. Accordingly, Table 1 briefly presents the perspectives of several prominent theorists on the study area.

Table 1. Perspectives of prominent theorists on the study area

Theorist	Key theoretical foundations	Theory
Michel Foucault (Flyvbjerg, 1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resistance against central authority (radical democracy) - Emphasis on informal institutions - Continuation of truth based on dominant discourses - Situational and contextual ethics 	Practical rationality (praxis)
Jürgen Habermas (Flyvbjerg, 1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The continuation of truth through free discourse and consensus among individuals (Participatory Democracy) - The organization of any community through consensus and shared norms (Ethical Action) - Discourse ethics based on generalizability and fairness - The imperative of democratic institutions for establishing social harmony (consensus) and cohesion 	Communicative rationality
Talcott Parsons (Kraib, 1945)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professions as key instruments of social cohesion, reflecting societal and cultural values - Distinction between business and profession; business as a profit-centered economic activity; profession as a relationship extending beyond material values and a key to achieving social cohesion - Legitimacy of power through cultural values and social acceptance, not merely through domination - Social action as a combination of individual goals and societal values, regulated through social institutions 	Social action
Anthony Giddens (Giddens, 2004)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emphasis on the importance of public discourse in resolving social issues - Creation of public spaces where individuals can freely express their views - Establishing relationships based on mutual trust and respect for the realization of social participation 	Structuration theory (the interplay between social structures and individual agency)
Herbert Spencer (Offer, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The spontaneous cooperation of individuals in society leading to the emergence of social order and structures - Social self-awareness and individuals' enhanced understanding of their role in society - The role of specialization and professions in facilitating social participation - The role of the state in preserving individual liberties to enable social participation - Cultural development and social solidarity (cohesion) 	Social Evolution
Émile Durkheim (Durkheim, 1957)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional and guild organizations as intermediaries between the familial sphere (individual morality) and the state sphere (civic morality) - Society as an organic whole that requires social cohesion for its survival - Division of labor and social solidarity - Social norms and collective values - The crucial role of institutions such as the family, education, religion, and professions in fostering social participation and maintaining societal cohesion 	Moral System
Georg Simmel (Kraib, 1945; Quist-Adade, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional Division of Labor - Individual behaviors and social norms - Interactions and social identity - Religious beliefs - The encouragement of smaller social groups to advance the objectives of larger social groups (Organismic Analogy) - Loyalty among members of an organization or society 	Social Interaction
Max Weber (Kraib, 1945; Quist-Adade, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social status - Ethical politics (state intervention in the bazaar) - Shared cultural and historical context - Legitimation of the state 	State Legitimate Authority

Based on the theoretical foundations reviewed, the conceptual model of the study is illustrated in Figure 4.

As previously mentioned, guild members occupy an intermediary role and position.

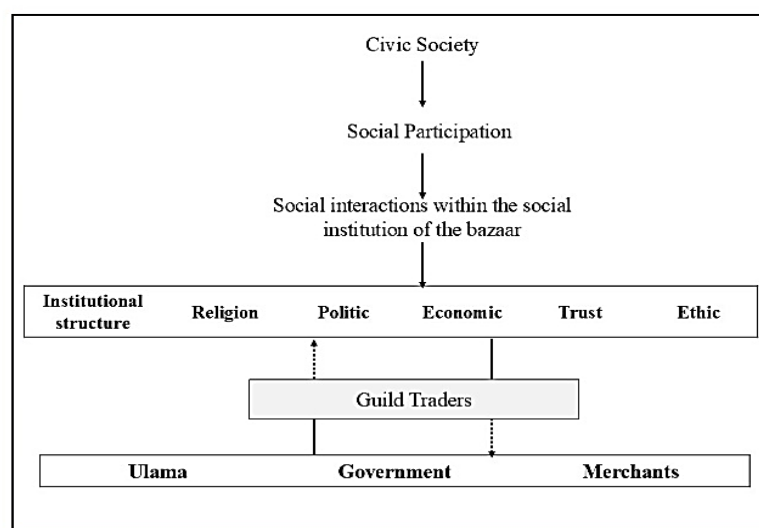


Figure 4. Conceptual model of the study

4. Methodology

The present research is conducted within the framework of the social constructivism paradigm, adopting an inductive reasoning approach. The epistemological foundations of this approach are rooted in the traditions of the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of science, aiming to achieve a deep and comprehensive understanding of scientific phenomena within their social contexts (Chaparak, 2019: 125). This study is qualitative in nature and fundamental-applied in purpose. The statistical population of the research comprises the merchants and guild members active in the Vakil Bazaar of Shiraz. Theoretical sampling in qualitative methods enables the researcher to collect data purposefully and dynamically, based on concepts and categories emerging during the analysis of initial data, to develop a robust, data-driven theory. In this method, the processes of data collection and analysis are conducted simultaneously by the researcher. Theoretical sampling, unlike random sampling, guides data collection based on ongoing analyses; it ensures that the final theory closely aligns with the realities present in the data, preventing the imposition of the researcher's preconceptions. Consequently, it leads to the development of a valid and rich theory, employing the logic of theoretical saturation (Ligita et al., 2020: 120).

The potential participants of this study were purposefully selected based on the significance of

their lived experiences, using the snowball sampling method, which consisted of 13 experienced merchants from the Vakil Bazaar in Shiraz. The required data were collected through in-depth, semi-structured interviews with these participants. The interviews were conducted at their business place and recorded with their prior consent. Data analysis was performed using the Grounded Theory methodology and through manual coding by the authors. Theoretical saturation in the data analysis process was achieved after Interview 9, when no new code, concept, or theoretical dimension was added to the existing set of concepts, and the main themes reached stability and consistency. Nevertheless, to enhance the credibility and dependability of the analysis and ensure full coverage of the phenomenon's dimensions, the interview process continued up to 13 cases. Interviews 10 through 13 were conducted for confirmation, consolidation, and assurance regarding the complete achievement of theoretical saturation.

The Grounded Theory methodology was selected due to the limitations of positivist and quantitative methods in studies based on the social constructivist paradigm. This method is first introduced in 1967 by two American sociologists (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Focusing on the extraction of theory from data, the Grounded Theory emphasizes an inductive research approach (Mills et al., 2006:32). The method can be implemented based on three main approaches: the emergent, the structural, and the systematic. The

main difference among these approaches lies in the degree of researcher's involvement in data collection process and the necessity for their awareness and utilization of prior knowledge (Creswell & Miller, 2000: 127). The structured grounded theory approach developed by Kathy Charmaz challenge the objectivist assumptions of the earlier grounded theory model (Charmaz, 2006). Drawing on the epistemological perspective of constructivism and symbolic interactionism, she assert that theory is not discovered or extracted but rather constructed. Within this approach, theoretical awareness is essential for the researcher, who is no longer a neutral observer but an active co-constructor. The researcher must explicitly acknowledge the influence of their own perspectives and background on the data, analysis, and ultimately, the generated theory (Mohajan & Mohajan, 2022: 13). To enhance the credibility and reliability of the findings, the present study employed data triangulation. Data triangulation, as a primary strategy in qualitative research, enhances the credibility of findings by collecting information about a phenomenon from diverse sources, such as interviews, observations, and

documents. Its objective is not merely data collection but rather the comparison and cross-verification of results to achieve convergence of perspectives. This approach strengthens the theoretical justification of the research, enables the identification of differences and contrasting viewpoints, and leads to a more comprehensive analysis of social phenomena (Meydan & Akkas, 2024).

Table 2 presents the descriptive information of the participants. Given the significant importance of lived experience and the long-term presence of merchants in the bazaar, interviewees were selected without any bias. The absence of women in the interviews was due to their lack of historical presence as guild members in the Vakil Bazaar of Shiraz. Informed consent and the confidentiality of participants' information were fundamental ethical principles of this research. To this end, before each interview, the respected merchants were fully informed about the research objectives and manner in which data would be used. Additionally, they were assured that their personal identities and details would remain completely anonymous, with only a reference number used to cite their statements.

Table 2. Descriptive information of interview participants

No.	Age	Education	Gender	Type of guild	Interview Length (Minutes)	Interview Date
1	60	Below the high school diploma	Male	Apothecary	45	09/02/2025
2	48	Bachelor's degree	Male	Carpet	45	09/02/2025
3	56	High school diploma	Male	Termeh & handicrafts	37	09/02/2025
4	78	Below the high school diploma	Male	Textile & Fabric	45	11/02/2025
5	62	Below the high school diploma	Male	Silver and copper craftsmanship	40	11/02/2025
6	74	Below the high school diploma	Male	Textile & Fabric	45	11/02/2025
7	70	High school diploma	Male	Textile & Fabric	50	15/02/2025
8	57	High school diploma	Male	Textile & Fabric	50	15/02/2025
9	40	Bachelor's degree	Male	Apothecary	40	15/02/2025
10	76	Below the high school diploma	Male	Carpet	35	21/04/2025
11	64	High school diploma	Male	Silver and copper craftsmanship	43	21/04/2025
12	59	High school diploma	Male	Apothecary	35	21/04/2025
13	67	High school diploma	Male	Apothecary	40	21/04/2025

Figure 5 briefly illustrates the stages of conducting this research.

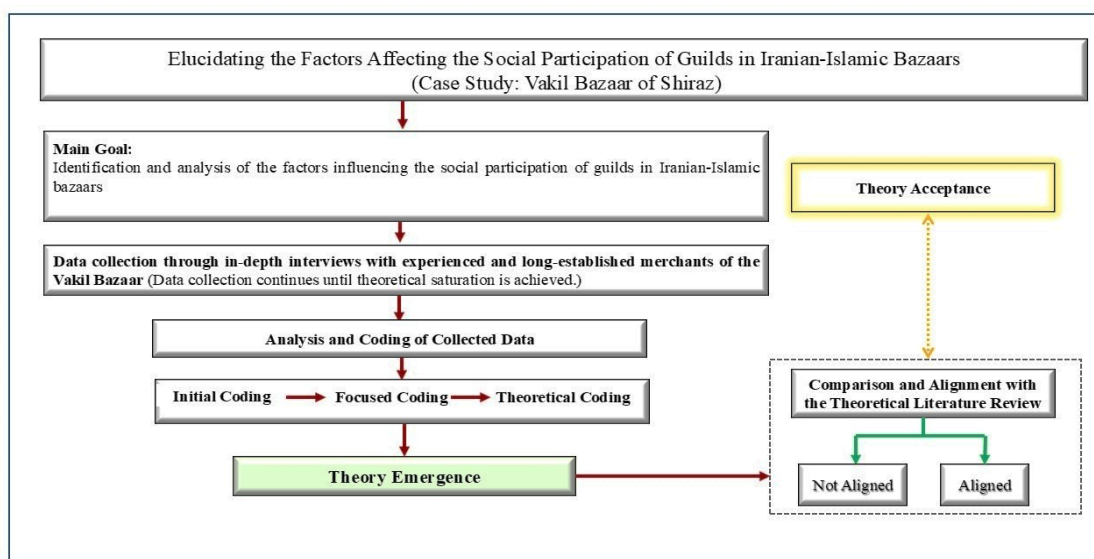


Figure 5. Research design

4. Findings

4.1. Case Study

Shiraz, due to its distinctive geographical location, characterized by high mountains and a significant distance from the country's northern regions, has historically been less affected by foreign invasions. Thus, the people of Shiraz, in comparison with other cities, have experienced fewer cultural and behavioral disruptions, maintaining greater stability in their individual values and social norms (Norden, 1928: 77). Vakil Bazaar is a vaulted passageway constructed with yellow bricks and covered by an arched roof. It is intersected by a shorter corridor, and at the junction of these two sections lies a space featuring a fountain and an upper-story balcony. Throughout various historical periods, this area has consistently served as a gathering place for merchants and traders to meet and exchange ideas (Curzon, 1966: 122). As represented in Figure 6, the Vakil Bazaar was originally composed of two intersecting parts. Today, with the construction of Zand street and underpass, the main section of the Bazaar is divided into northern and southern parts. The shorter section, which runs perpendicular to the main axis in the southern part of Vakil Bazaar, consists of two wings, eastern and western. The western wing, formerly known as the Bazaar of leather crafts (Tarkesh-Duzha), is now entirely transformed into carpet shops, with no remaining trace of the saddlery, leather crafts, and harness workshops that once operated there. This transformation has occurred due to the diminished need for such goods in contemporary times. The

eastern section of this bazaar, historically known as the Bazaar of braided silk (Alaqe-bandha), is now transformed into shops selling carpets, textiles, and other goods. Adjacent to the Vakil Mosque, a bazaar runs parallel to the Tarkesh-Duzha Bazaar, formerly known as the Swordsmiths' Bazaar (Shamshirgarha). In the past, this section housed workshops for crafting weapons, such as swords, knives, daggers, and other military equipment. However, this trade is now obsolete, and the shops in this area have also shifted to carpet retail.

The Vakil Bazaar of Shiraz, distinguished by its exceptional historical, physical, and social characteristics, stands as a prominent example of Iranian-Islamic bazaars. As a legacy of the Zand dynasty and the primary hub of Shiraz's economic and civic life, this bazaar provides a suitable historical context for elucidating the role of traditional civic institutions, such as guilds, and for analyzing the structural and motivational factors influencing the social participation of this group. Furthermore, its accessibility to researchers creates favorable conditions for participatory observation, semi-structured interviews with guild members, and the collection of field data objectively and qualitatively. This, supported by theoretical sampling, enables the targeted data collection and analysis, allowing the researcher to flexibly select individuals and guilds to enrich the data. Ultimately, this approach ensures the validity and depth of the research findings, contributing to the theoretical richness of the study.

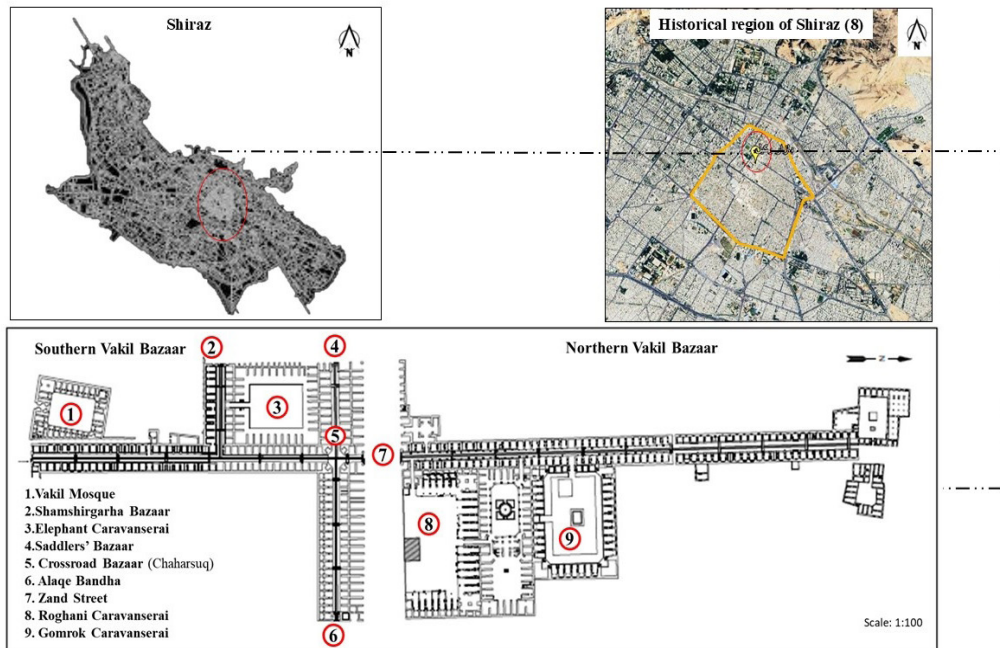


Figure 6. Case study

4.2. Analysis

After collecting the data through in-depth interviews, manual coding was conducted sentence by sentence at three levels: initial coding, focused coding, and theoretical coding. Following the structured approach of grounded theory for qualitative data analysis, the initial codes derived from the interviews were organized into broader categories through focused and then theoretical coding. To enable a more precise analysis of the interview data, the initial codes were classified based on semantic and conceptual similarities into six selected categories: ethics, religion, economy, trust, government, and institutional structure. This classification, encompassing 26 initial codes, allowed the researchers to more clearly identify and interpret patterns and relationships within the data, prevent data fragmentation, and achieve a deeper level of analysis.

As shown in Table 3, the codes referring to moral values and related behavioral patterns were grouped under the category of "Ethics," while those reflecting the influence of religious beliefs and values were classified under "Religion." The third column of the table includes representative quotations from the initial codes corresponding to each focused code, organized by interviewee number. Based on the initial codes and nature of focused codes in traditional Bazaars, it became evident that the relationship between merchants and customers extends beyond a

merely economic interaction; it is rather grounded in trust, respect, and friendship. These intimate relationships are reinforced through behaviors such as offering credit purchases, providing discounts to loyal customers, and observing fairness, which in turn foster customer loyalty. These actions are rooted in a set of shared moral values and ethical beliefs that are essential for maintaining social order of the Bazaar. The greater the merchants' adherence to these norms, the stronger the cohesion within the Bazaar community.

A form of cooperation and mutual assistance grounded in ethical principles among the merchants also exists, in addition to competition. Through exchanging experiences, helping to solve problems, and avoiding opportunistic behavior, they reinforce a sense of collective spirit and serve as balancing and supportive agents against external pressures. At a deeper level, religious and spiritual beliefs influence the merchants' economic behavior, guiding them toward fairness, honesty, and the pursuit of lawful livelihood; so that economic activity is driven not merely by material profit but also by moral and spiritual satisfaction. The continuity of businesses in the family and intergenerational transmission of norms contribute to the preservation of social roles and persistence of Bazaar ethics, ultimately leading to the formation of a socio-cultural sustainability that is reflected in the merchants' individual morality.

Table 3. Prerequisite factors of social participation in Iranian-Islamic bazaars

Initial coding	Focused coding	Representative quotation	Theoretical coding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collective conscience (honesty, fairness, trustworthiness, etc.) - Moral cohesion - Customer-oriented - People-oriented 	Ethic	<p>10: "...We basically had an unwritten rule in the bazaar; no cops, no cameras, but nobody would act shady. That trust we had was like the glue that held everything together."</p> <p>3: "... If someone got sick or their business was struggling, everyone else would just step up. It was all about this brotherhood and loyalty among the shop owners that everyone stuck to."</p> <p>7: "... Everyone was careful to protect each other's reputation, 'cause they'd say if one person messes up, it reflects badly on the rest of us too." 5: "...A small profit with a happy customer is way better than a huge profit and an upset one. A lot of people come back for years because they feel like we genuinely respect them."</p> <p>2: "...Treating customers right pays off"</p> <p>6: "...Someone's been walking through this door for twenty years. They don't even have to say what they want, I already know their taste. And if they're short on cash that day, I just tell them to take it and pay later."</p> <p>3: "...Sometimes a colleague would leave their shop with us, and we'd help their customers out, totally putting the competition stuff aside."</p> <p>7: "...If someone ran out of stock, we'd send them stuff from the shop next door. Because the important thing was that the customer left the bazaar satisfied."</p> <p>10: "... If someone got sick, others would help out. If someone was new to the business, others would show them the ropes. That's what kept the bazaar united."</p>	Individual ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Belief in the afterlife - Social culture - Continuity of social identity 	Religion	<p>1: "...When Muharram came around, all the shop owners would wear black. It was kind of a spiritual competition, and everyone was united. Things like that made us feel like a real family." 9: "...A deal needs to have blessings, not just profit. My dad always used to say God is a witness to every transaction."</p> <p>4: "...Every morning before work, we'd go over the religious principles of trade (Islamic business ethics) at the Vakil Mosque."</p> <p>8: "...We'd tell the customer a price that we felt good about, something that kept our conscience clear. That's how God sends customers our way."</p> <p>5: "...My dad took over this very shop from my grandpa, and I learned everything from him. Now my son is slowly starting to join the business too."</p> <p>6: "...It's kind of an honor to still have your family name above the shop door. It shows how long you've been a fixture in the bazaar."</p> <p>8: "...We have loyal customers who've been with us since my dad's time. We know our customers and they know us."</p>	

In Table 4, the initial codes related to the factors influencing the establishment and strengthening of trust within the Bazaar are grouped under the focused code "Trust," while those associated with various aspects of economic activities in the Bazaar are categorized under the focused code "Economy." The representative quotations corresponding to the initial codes are presented in the third column.

In traditional Bazaars, the economic and social behavior of merchants is not solely driven by individual interests; it is rather guided by a framework of collective responsibility, professional order, and civic values. Cooperation, coexistence, and synergy among various occupations reflect a culture of social harmony that contributes to the dynamism, continuity, and balance of the Bazaar's economic life. Tradespeople reflect a form of civic conscience and economic ethics in their daily interactions by avoiding greed, hoarding, and monopolistic practices and prioritizing healthy circulation of capital. This collective conscience is

rooted in the principles of public interest and economic justice. The hereditary continuity of occupations and sustained presence of successive family generations in the bazaar foster a form of institutional and cultural stability that is reinforced through trust, mutual respect, and internal guild oversight. In this context, guilds and trade associations play a significant role in sustaining ethical order of the bazaar by overseeing members' conduct, preventing violations, and upholding professional discipline. Furthermore, bazaar merchants, grounded in their ethical values and beliefs, consistently play a pivotal role in the political, social, and cultural transformations of society, a role that reflects their civic awareness and sense of social responsibility. Accordingly, the theoretical concept of "civic ethics" encapsulates a form of moral and social order within the framework of Iranian-Islamic bazaars, elevating economic behavior beyond individual interests and organizing it within the framework of collective commitment and civic values.

Table 4. Mediating factors of social participation in Iranian-Islamic bazaars

Initial coding	Focused coding	Representative quotation	Theoretical coding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contentment - Synergy - Hereditary expertise - Financial flow - Professional competition 	Economic	<p>2: "...The bazaar only stays alive through buying, selling, and customers." 13: "... A shop owner has to put their profits back into the business." 5: "... My dad learned this trade from my grandpa, and I learned it from him. The bazaar, in a way, is our family inheritance, not just the property, but the trade and the reputation too." 7: "...Here, everyone tries to do better than the person next door, but it's not out of spite, it's out of professional pride. If I bring in good quality stuff and the customer leaves happy, they'll have to up their game too." 8: "...We learn from each other. Someone might have a better display set-up; someone else is nicer to the customers. You automatically want to better yourself" 1: "... "We find peace just knowing that our income covers our expenses." 9: "... You shouldn't be greedy. Everyone's livelihood is already set out. " 11: "... I've had this same shop from the beginning, and I'm not looking to swap it for a place in one of those new malls." 5: "... A customer who comes to buy fabric also stops by the coppersmith and the spice seller. We are connected to each other like a chain." 6: "... When the bazaar gets busy, there's work for everyone, no matter what you're selling"</p>	Civic ethics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good reputation - Internal supervision - Dignity - Shared ideals 	Trust	<p>3: "... Among the bazaar merchants, a trustworthy shop owner's signature was worth more than a cheque." 7: "... When people said 'He's a bazaar guy,' it was a reference to his reputation and trustworthiness." 9: "...In some cases, the government would actually consult with well-respected and reputable bazaar merchants." 1: "... The veteran guys (elders) would gather and talk to anyone who stepped out of line. The respect for those old-timers and their word did the trick; everyone knew where they stood." 3: "... Every guild had an elder one who made sure no one broke the rules." 1: "... When a collective decision was made, e.g., to help those in need or to close the bazaar for an occasion, everyone stepped up without question, because they believed it was the right thing to do." 3: "... We competed with each other, but there was no animosity, because we all wanted the bazaar to thrive." 5: "... "Even a simple greeting had meaning. If someone returned your hello warmly, it meant they still trusted you."</p>	

The initial codes that address the interactions of tradespeople with external and governmental factors are categorized under "Government," while codes related to the bazaar as an institution are grouped under the focused code of "Institutional structure." In Iranian-Islamic bazaars, the social structure of guilds and bazaar merchants extends beyond their economic role, functioning as a semi-independent political society. This community, on the one hand, operates under governmental supervision, and on the other hand, possesses internal self-governing mechanisms for managing affairs, resolving disputes, and safeguarding guild interests, an aspect manifested in the election of the board of trustees and internal guild supervision. Bazaar merchants, relying on their values and collective ethical conscience, actively participate in social, cultural, and political transformations, consistently serving as an influential civic force and intermediary between the government and people.

The bazaar is not merely an economic institution but also a dynamic space for exchanging ideas, news, and socio-political information, serving communicative and cultural functions as well. The master-apprentice educational system further contributes to reproduction of knowledge, order, and legitimacy within this community. Governments have consistently sought to maintain public order and harness the social and economic potential of the bazaar through supervision and control. This complex, reciprocal relationship between political authority and the bazaar's order has at times led to cooperation and at others to tension. The theoretical code of "political society" reflects the reality that the traditional bazaar in Iran is not solely an economic entity but a socio-political institution with an internal structure, behavioral norms, and a supervisory system. Endowed with political awareness and social responsibility, this community acts as an intermediary between the government and people,

playing a significant role in societal transformations. It sustains its internal political life through participation, representation, and dialogue, an order that emerges

from guild relationships and collective ethical conscience.

Table 5. Supporting factors of social participation in Iranian-Islamic bazaars

Initial Coding	Focused coding	Representative quotation	Theoretical coding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External supervision - Social activism - Ethical policy - Political transformation 	Government	<p>3: "... The revolution actually kicked off from the bazaar and the bazaar people."</p> <p>9: "...The bazaar has always been a place for public protests when people wanted their voice to reach the government."</p> <p>7: "... The board of trustees always tried to make decisions that wouldn't oppress anyone. They would even sacrifice their own profit if necessary, just so that fairness was upheld."</p> <p>3: "... Governments have changed over the years, but the bazaar has always stayed right where it is."</p> <p>7: "... The bazaar might have different colors on its doors and walls, but its spirit is exactly the same."</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social discipline - News and information exchange - Labor division - Professional hierarchy - Mediation - Skills training 	Institutional structure	<p>2: "... When we opened the shop in the morning, the first thing was always a greeting and catching up, and then we'd talk about how things were going."</p> <p>4: "... There was a time when if you wanted to know what was going on in the city, you just had to spend half an hour in the bazaar. Everything from the economy to politics and culture was being discussed right here."</p> <p>8: "... To deal with the bazaar's issues, the merchants elect a board of trustees, who then act as a bridge between the shop owners and the government."</p> <p>5: "... Learning the trade meant you had to go and apprentice under a master craftsman. I came to the bazaar myself as an apprentice when I was thirteen."</p> <p>6: "... We always used to say the bazaar is the mirror of the people. If people are unhappy, the bazaar is dull. That's why we felt it was our duty to voice their concerns."</p> <p>12: "... If they announced the bazaar was closed on a certain day, everyone would comply. Even the religious minorities."</p> <p>6: "... In the bazaar, everyone knew their place. The apprentice respected the master, and the master looked out for the apprentice. That hierarchy is what kept things running smoothly."</p>	Political society

5. Conclusion

Traditional bazaars with an Iranian-Islamic pattern are among the structures that have continued to exist in Iranian cities over the years, retaining their dynamism. These bazaars are not exclusive to a specific social class, and a diversity and heterogeneity of social groups can consistently be observed among their visitors. The noteworthy is the bond, participation, and interaction among merchants and business owners in preserving and perpetuating the spirit that governs these bazaars. Figure 7 illustrates the theoretical model derived from the analysis of in-depth interviews with research participants.

Factors related to individual ethics, particularly those encompassing religion, have been identified as prerequisite and foundational elements for achieving social participation within guilds. Among prominent theorists, Durkheim considers the role of religion vital for establishing social order, while Weber regards value systems, including religion, as fundamental to any economic and social activity. Therefore, this

section of the model is in accordance with Durkheim's theory of ethical systems and Max Weber's theory (as outlined in Table 1).

The Vakil Bazaar in Shiraz, throughout its existence, has provided a conducive environment for the education of Islamic commerce due to its proximity to the Vakil Mosque. Merchants and tradespeople would traditionally review the principles of Islamic business practices at the mosque before opening their stalls each day. Although this practice has been undermined in modern times, the mosque continues to serve as a venue for merchants to consult on matters pertaining to the bazaar.

Civic ethics is a prerequisite for peaceful coexistence in any society. Based on the studies, trust and economy within the bazaar institution have been identified as mediating factors for achieving peaceful participation among merchants. This category is considered mediating because it serves as an intermediary between individual values and the state. Attributing a mediating role to trust and economy (civic ethics)

aligns with the theories of Parsons, Habermas, and Giddens (Table 1). A key strength in the Vakil Bazaar of Shiraz is the sustained presence of trust and loyalty among merchants. This factor is evident in division of labor and selection of the bazaar's board of trustees' president by the merchants. The elected president serves as an intermediary between the political society, encompassing the state and institutional structure, and the individual ethics, including religion. Thus, the labor division among guilds also aligns with the theories of Simmel and Durkheim.

Determining the political structure, including the state and institutional framework, has been identified as a supporting institution for achieving social participation within guilds. If the state grants appropriate individual freedoms to business owners, while maintaining its legitimacy, a reciprocal relationship is established between the state and the guilds. Consequently, the state can regard the capital of traders, merchants, and tradespeople as an economic support. Therefore, the proposed mode aligns with Weber's theories of state legitimacy and Spencer's theory of social evolution.

Similar to the research by Tabasi and Khademzadeh (2020), this study places religion within the realm of individual qualities and ethics. Therefore, it aligns with the reviewed literature, considering religion effective in fostering a healthy and ethical economic environment. Javadi Yeganeh and Allameh (2018) and Vahdatpour et al. (2023) have also referred to religious factors and futuwva associations in their research, considering Iranian guild organizations as religious entities. The study findings identify religion as a prerequisite factor and trust as a mediating factor in achieving social participation among guilds. In this regard, the study confirms the findings of previous

research. In addition to trust, the economy is also categorized as a mediating factor. According to the findings of Pourjafar (2011), who considers trust essential for realization of social capital within guilds, this aspect is also confirmed.

The findings from interviews with merchants and the identified open codes in this study correspond to the findings of Sadeghi et al. (2019), which state that the Vakil Bazaar in Shiraz, like other traditional bazaars, serves not only as an economic hub but also as a venue for social gatherings, religious activities, and even political protests.

This study, similar to Baer (1970), considers the relationship between guilds and the state interactive and reciprocal, evaluating the role of the state and political Society as a supportive factor in fostering economic and social stability among guilds. Given the consistency between the prominent theorists' perspectives and previous studies' findings and the theoretical saturation observed from the ninth interview onward, the model presented in Figure 7 possesses a reliable degree of validity.

Among the limitations of this study is the limited access to participants for data collection. Some bazaar merchants, due to their advanced age, have leased their shops, and the younger tenants, often lacked sufficient knowledge of the bazaar's historical context. We recommend that future studies explore social participation through a comparative analysis of Iranian-Islamic bazaars and modern markets. Another suggestion is to focus on newly arrived merchants in Iranian-Islamic bazaars and examine social participation from the perspective of this group of tradespeople.

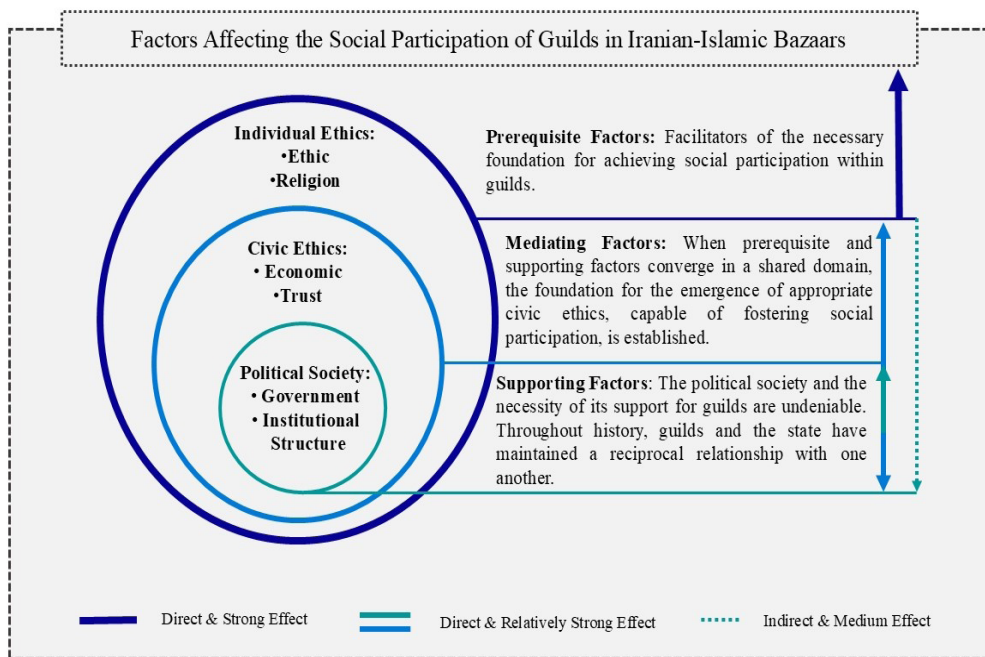


Figure 7. Factors affecting social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars

Proposed Strategies and Actions

Examining the factors affecting social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars reveals that various dimensions of civic ethics, personal ethics, and political society play a significant role in enhancing such participation. Promoting moral values, formulating supportive policies, and adopting appropriate

strategies can enhance social interactions, foster a sense of responsibility, and strengthen social cohesion among guild members. Table 6 presents a set of objectives, strategies, and proposed policies aimed at enhancing the three prerequisite, mediating, and supporting factors of this research model.

Table 6. Proposed strategies and policies for enhancing social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars

Goal	Strategies	Actions
Individual ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate guild members on the principles of professional ethics Strengthen the role of successful role models in professional ethics Establish mechanisms for public supervision of guild performance Promote religious and cultural teachings related to professional ethics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mandate professional ethics codes by trade guilds and unions, requiring minimum passing scores in ethics training courses Introduce annual tax incentives for businesses based on ethical criteria, as defined by the Tax Administration in consultation with unions Hold an annual trade ethics festival and award an Ethics Seal by the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade, in collaboration with the Chamber of Guilds Develop an online platform for reporting ethical violations, enabling unions and the Government Enforcement Organization to track and address complaints
Civic ethics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen a culture of cooperation and mutual trust Develop intermediary institutions for dispute resolution Establish inter-guild communication networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold at least two annual civil interaction training workshops for each active trade unit, organized by trade unions in collaboration with cultural institutions Establish Trade Peace and Mediation Advisory Centers in major bazaars by the Chamber of Guilds and the Bar Association Develop online platforms for sharing professional experiences and knowledge among trades, managed by unions' specialized commissions

Goal	Strategies	Actions
Political society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance the social participation of trade guilds in decision-making processes - Establish legal frameworks to strengthen the role of guilds in policymaking - Increase transparency and accountability of government institutions toward trade guilds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish and hold monthly Trade Advisory Council meetings by municipalities, with participation from union board members and bazaar trustees - Allocate government budgets and facilities to unions conditional on performance, for implementing development programs, managed by the Plan and Budget Organization under the supervision of the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade - Create and launch a unified government-guild communication portal, introduced by the Presidential Office and the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade, to facilitate direct access to officials

The proposed strategies for enhancing the social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars specifically address the existing needs and challenges in this context. These strategies can simultaneously contribute to achieving the objectives of social participation while fostering cooperation and interaction among guild members. Educating individuals on the principles of professional ethics and reinforcing successful role models guides merchants toward ethical behavior and responsibility within the bazaar. This approach not only improves the quality of goods and services but also enhances the trust among customers and colleagues. Moreover, strengthening civic ethics through promoting a culture of cooperation and mutual trust contributes to the formation of effective communication networks among guild owners. Organizing training workshops and establishing counseling centers can significantly play in facilitating conflict resolution and fostering greater social cohesion. Additionally, the political society through providing legal and consultative frameworks to enhance the participation of guilds in decision-making processes, particularly in policymaking, can improve the transparency and accountability of governmental institutions. This mutual interaction contributes to strengthening social capital and fostering a stable economic environment. To operationalize these strategies, policymakers must design and implement measures in collaboration with trade unions. Furthermore, the periodic evaluation of these policies' effectiveness can help optimize processes and refine the proposed strategies. Ultimately, these strategies are comprehensively interconnected and can effectively contribute to enhancing the social participation of guilds in Iranian-Islamic bazaars. Given the inherent complexities of these bazaars, careful consideration and implementation of these strategies can significantly improve the guilds' social participation within Iranian-Islamic bazaars.

Authors' contributions

All authors contributed equally. The first author (50%) was responsible for drafting the manuscript, data collection, and initial data analysis, while the second author (50%) supervised the research, designed and oversaw the methodology, and reviewed the data analysis.

Acknowledgments

The present article has no financial or non-financial support.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

References

- Akhavi, S. (1998). Social Institutions. *Iranian Studies*, 31(3), 691–701. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4311198>
- Ali, A. J., & Al-Owaidan, A. (2008). Islamic work ethic: a critical review. *Cross-cultural management: An International Journal*, 15(1), 5-19. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13527600810848791>
- Alikhan R., & Moradi H. (2013). *Introduction to Social Capitals*. Tehran: Azarakhsh Publishing. [In Persian]
- Azadarmaki T. (2007). *History of Social Thought in Islam from the Beginning to the Contemporary Period*. Tehran: Science Publishing. [In Persian]
- Baer, G. (1970). The administrative, economic and social functions of Turkish guilds. *International journal of Middle East studies*, 1(1), 28-50. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0020743800023898>
- Chaparak A. (2009). Social Constructionism. *Methodology of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 14(57), 125-146. https://method.rihu.ac.ir/article_424.html [In Persian]
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Sage Publishing.
- Creswell, J.W., & Miller, D. L. (2000). Determining validity in qualitative inquiry. *Theory into practice*, 9(3), 124-130. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip3903_2
- Curzon G.N. (1966). *Iran and Iranian Issue* (Gh. Vahid Mazandarani, Trans.). Tehran: Scientific & Cultural Publishing. [In Persian]
- De Gobineau, A. (1907). *Les religions et philosophies de l'Asie Centrale*. Paris: G. Crés et Cie. <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001922719/Home>

- De Munck, B. (2017). Rewinding civil society: Conceptual lessons from the early modern guilds. *Social Science History*, 41(3), 83-102. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/ssh.2016.39>
- Durkheim, E. (1957). *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*. London: Routledge publishing. <https://archive.org/download/professionaethi00durk/professionaethi00durk.pdf>
- Fine, R. (2014). *Civil society theory, enlightenment and critique in Civil Society*. 7-28. London: Routledge publishing. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315036670-2/civil-society-theory-enlightenment-critique-robert-fine>
- Floor, W. M. (1975). The guilds in Iran, an overview from the earliest beginnings till 1972. *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, 125(1), 99-116. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/43372445>
- Floor, W. M. (2009). *Guilds, merchants & ulama in nineteenth-century Iran*. Mega Publishing. <https://ccn.loc.gov/2009006397>
- Flyvbjerg, B. (1998). Habermas and Foucault: thinkers for civil society. *British Journal of Sociology*, 149(2), 210-233. <https://doi.org/10.2307/591310>
- Ghaemi Nik M. R. (2025). A Reflection on the Relationship between Moral Philosophy and Adam Smith's Economics: A Discussion on the Foundations of Islamic Economics. *The Doctrines of Islamic Economics*, 1(2), 179-209. doi: [10.30513/ied.2025.6306.1232](https://doi.org/10.30513/ied.2025.6306.1232) [In Persian]
- Gharipur M. (2017). *Bazaar in an Islamic City: Design, Culture and History* (Kh. Esmailzadeh, Trans.). Esfahan: Naghsh Mana Publishing. [In Persian]
- Gheisari N. (2019). Social Participation: An Analysis of a Strategic Concept. *Naja Strategic Studies Journal*, 4(11), 31-59. <https://sid.ir/paper/270264/fa> [In Persian]
- Giddens, A. (2004). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. In *Practicing history*, 121-142. London: Routledge publishing. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780203335697-9/constitution-society-outline-theory-structuration-anthony-giddens>
- Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L., (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter. http://www.sxf.uevora.pt/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Glaser_1967.pdf
- Habermas, J. (1982). *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit: Untersuchungen zu einer Kategorie der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft*. Germany: Luchterhand. <https://ixtheo.de/Record/042005345>
- Hickson, C. R., & Thompson, E. A. (1991). A new theory of guilds and European economic development. *Explorations in economic history*, 28(2), 127-168. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0014-4983\(91\)90015-B](https://doi.org/10.1016/0014-4983(91)90015-B)
- Javidi M. (2020). A methodological look at John Locke's Social Contract Theory. *Journal of Religious Thought of Shiraz University*, 20(2), 21-44. Doi: [10.22099/jrt.2020.5720](https://doi.org/10.22099/jrt.2020.5720) [In Persian]
- Javadi Yeganeh M.R., & Allameh S., (2018). Social Analysis of the Relationship between Guilds and Futuwat Organization in Iran. *Social Studies and Research in Iran*, 7(2), 279-309. <https://sid.ir/paper/242871/fa> [In Persian]
- Kaviraj, S., & Khilnani, S. (2001). *Civil society: history and possibilities*. Cambridge University Press. <https://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/samples/cam031/00065176.pdf>
- Kazemi E., Darskhan R., & Salehi P. (2018). The Role of Spaces for Religious Ceremonies in the City with an Emphasis on Muharram Ceremonies Case Study: Timcheh Mozafariye, Tabriz. *Naqshejahan-Basic Studies and New Technologies of Architecture and Planning*, 7(4), 84-99. <http://bsnt.modares.ac.ir/article-2-919-en.html> [In Persian]
- Kirkbesoglu, E., & Sargut, A. S. (2016). Transformation of Islamic work ethic and social networks: The role of religious social embeddedness in organizational networks. *Journal of business ethics*, 139(2), 313-331. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44164226>
- Kraib J. (1945). *Classical Social Theory* (Sh. Mossamiparast, Trans.). Tehran: Agah Publishing. [In Persian]
- Kurtz, T. (2022). The end of the profession as a sociological category? Systems-theoretical remarks on the relationship between profession and society. *The American Sociologist*, 53(2), 265-282. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12108-021-09483-3>
- Lewis, B. (1937). The Islamic guilds. *The Economic History Review*, 8(1), 20-37. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2590356>
- Ligita, T., Harvey, N., Wicking, K., Nurjannah, I., & Francis, K. (2020). A practical example of using theoretical sampling throughout a grounded theory study: A methodological paper. *Qualitative Research Journal*, 20(1), 116-126. <https://doi.org/10.1108/QRJ-07-2019-0059>
- Lynch, K. A. (2003). *Individuals, families, and communities in Europe, 1200-1800: the urban foundations of Western society*. Cambridge University Press.
- Mahboubimanesh H. (2016). *Sociology of Values: With an Emphasis on Order and Security*. Tehran: University of Law Enforcement Sciences Publishing. [In Persian]
- Meydan, C. H., & Akkaş, H. (2024). The role of triangulation in qualitative research: Converging perspectives. In *Principles of conducting qualitative research in multicultural settings*, 98-129. IGI Global. DOI: [10.4018/979-8-3693-3306-8.ch006](https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-3306-8.ch006)
- Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5(1), 25-35. <https://doi.org/10.1177/160940690600500103>
- Mohajan, D., & Mohajan, H. K. (2022). Constructivist grounded theory: A new research approach in social science. *Research and Advances in Education*, 1(4), 8-16. DOI: [10.56397/RAE.2022.10.02](https://doi.org/10.56397/RAE.2022.10.02)
- Molaei A. (2020). Social Capital in Iranian Historical Bazaar (Case Study: Tabriz Historic Bazaar). *Sociology of Social Institutions*: 7(15): 61-88. doi: [10.22080/ssi.2020.17475.1680](https://doi.org/10.22080/ssi.2020.17475.1680) [In Persian]
- Mughaddas, A.A., & Ghodrati, H. (2004). Anthony Giddens's Structuralization Theory and Its Methodological Foundation. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 1(4): 1-31. <https://sid.ir/paper/453558/fa> [In Persian]
- Norden H. (1928). *Under the Sky of Iran* (S. Samiee, Trans.). Tehran: Tehran University Publishing. [In Persian]
- Najjari Nabi R, Nezhadfadard A, Mahdinezhad J, Sedghpour B S. (2024). The Evolution of the Concept of Socialization in the Marketplace to Enhance Social Sustainability (Case Study: Tabriz Grand Market). *International Journal of Architectural Engineering & Urban Planning*, 34 (1): 1-18. Doi: [10.22068/ijaup.782](https://doi.org/10.22068/ijaup.782) [In Persian]

- Offer, J. (2019). Herbert spencer, sociological theory, and the professions. *Frontiers in Sociology*, 4, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fsoc.2019.00077>
- Ogilvie, S. (2020). Guilds and the Economy. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Economics and Finance*. DOI: [10.1093/acrefore/9780190625979.013.538](https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190625979.013.538)
- Ogilvie, S. (2004). *The use and abuse of trust: social capital and its deployment by early modern guilds*. CESifo Working Paper. <https://www.econstor.eu/handle/10419/18667>
- Parsons, T. (1939). The professions and social structure. *Social forces*, 17(4), 457-467. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2570695>
- Pirouzfard S. (2025). Quantitative and Qualitative Analysis of Trust Components and the Reinforcement of Social Capital in Surah Al-Ahzab. *Social Studies of the Quran*, 3(2): 200-221. doi: [10.22084/qss.2025.30464.1100](https://doi.org/10.22084/qss.2025.30464.1100) [In Persian]
- Pourjafar M.R., & Pourjafar A. (2011). The Role of Social Capital in the Economic Status of Traditional Markets in Iran. *Urban Management*, 9(Special Issue): 203-221. <https://sid.ir/paper/477243/fa> [In Persian]
- Putnam, R. D., & Work, M. D. (1993). Civic traditions in modern Italy. Princet UP. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt7s8r7>
- Quist-Adade, C. (2019). *Symbolic interactionism: The basics*. Vernon Press.
- Ranani M. (2019). *An Introduction to the Nature, Function, and Decline of Guilds* (A. Ghudjani, M. Goharian & N. Masoudi, Trans.). Tehran: Noor Publishing. [In Persian]
- Rosser, G. (2015). *The art of solidarity in the middle ages: Guilds in England 1250-1550*. OUP Oxford. https://api.pageplace.de/preview/DT0400.9780191017551_A24313683/preview9780191017551_A24313683.pdf
- Sadeghi, A. R., Khakzand, M., & Jangjoo, S. (2019). Historical analysis of the role of bazaar on the formation of iranian islamic urban forms; case study: Shiraz, Iran. *Armanshahr Architecture & Urban Development*, 12(26), 89-101. doi: [10.22034/aaud.2019.89058](https://doi.org/10.22034/aaud.2019.89058)
- Saelens, W. (2019). Guild brotherhood, guild capital? *Social network strategies of master weavers and drapers in fourteenth-century Ghent*, 16(1), 5-30. <https://repository.uantwerpen.be/desktop/irua>
- Sparks, R. (2016). *What we can learn from the guilds*. Distributist Review. https://economy.secondspring.co.uk/uploads/articles_17_2867479356.pdf
- Stroope, S. (2012). Social networks and religion: The role of congregational social embeddedness in religious belief and practice. *Sociology of Religion*, 73(3), 273-298. <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srr052>
- Sultanzadeh H. (1983). *The Process of Shaping Cities and Religious Centers in Iran*, Tehran: Agah Publishing. [In Persian]
- Tabatabaee S. M. and Aghajani N. (2023). Examining the Factors and Contexts of Social Participation in Islamic Sources. *Human Sciences Elite Discourse*, 7(2): 121-143. doi: [10.22081/scs.2024.64627.1171](https://doi.org/10.22081/scs.2024.64627.1171) [In Persian]
- Taylor, G. S. (1919). *The guild state: its principles and possibilities*. London: Allen.
- Tabasi S.M., & Khademzade M. H. (2020). Recognition of Bazar's Components in Iranian-Islamic City. *Journal of Architectural Thought*, 4(7): 155-171. <https://sid.ir/paper/376390/en> [In Persian]
- Vahdatpour S., Mehdizadeh Saradj F., & Mohammad Moradi A. (2023). Analyzing the Functional and Physical Systems of the Islamic Historic Bazaars Based on the Religious Concepts and Rules. *Culture of Islamic Architecture and Urbanism Journal*, 8(1): 121-137. DOI: [10.52547/ciauj.7.1.469](https://doi.org/10.52547/ciauj.7.1.469) [In Persian]
- Van Zanden, J. L. (2009). *The long road to the industrial revolution: The European economy in a global perspective, 1000-1800*. Brill. <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004175174.i-346.5>
- Zia Tawana, M.H. (2001). *Qeysarieh Bazaar of Lar*. Tehran: Ney Publishing. [In Persian]