



Explanation of Factors Affecting the Realization of Social Innovation in Urban Regeneration¹

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Abstract

The importance of social innovation to successfully face various challenges has brought it to the forefront of urban development. Social innovation offers solutions to improve the existing situation and increase the quality of life for individuals and society, and seeks to develop innovative solutions to solve the social challenges of cities. Given the need for change in line with the needs of the times, social innovation can take an effective step in urban regeneration by overcoming the inefficiency of old policies and solutions. Accordingly, the most important goal of the current research is to explain the factors affecting the realization of social innovation in urban regeneration. This research is in the field of applied research in terms of purpose and descriptive-analytical in terms of research method. Also, library-documentary studies and qualitative content analysis and logical reasoning methods have been used in order to formulate the conceptual framework of the research. The results of the research show that five main actors, including the government, citizens, civil organizations, universities, and private companies, play a role in the regeneration based on social innovation. Citizens also acquire different roles in this type of recreation, which include sensor, sharing, collaborative, and entrepreneurial. Also, the four components of "Empowerment and capacity building", "participation and cooperation", "creative solution and idea", and "change and transformation" are highlighted as the most important components of social innovation in urban regeneration. Finally, four factors: the quality of urban governance, the quality of the local economy, the quality of urban research, and the quality of social relations and power were identified as the most important factors for the realization of social innovation in urban regeneration.

Keywords: Realization, Social Innovation, Urban Regeneration.

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Introduction

Social innovation has become a popular concept in both science and policy in recent years (Tschumi & Mayer, 2024, 30). The potential of social innovation to resolve social and environmental problems has been widely celebrated (Hagedoorn et al, 2023, 174). Social innovation is a new structural solution to a social problem, a solution that produces a social change in the sense of an improvement in the existing situation and an increase in the quality of life for groups of individuals, communities and society as a whole (Anechitei, 2018, 245). Social innovation refers to those changes in agendas, agency and institutions that lead to a better inclusion of vulnerable groups and individuals into various spheres of society (Mehmood & Imran, 2021, 1870). Social innovation has been identified as a potential solution to global issues such as pandemics, social inequalities, health crises, and education failure. Increasingly, it is thought that social innovation can tackle many socio-economic problems. These solutions include enhancing collective well-being and promoting sustainable development (Kasumaningrum et al, 2024, 114). In recent years, various approaches have been proposed and used in urban regeneration to improve the condition of worn-out and problematic urban contexts. These approaches have all been planning responses of their time to the problems of worn-out contexts, but the relevance and desirability of these approaches to the needs and problems of these contexts today are subject to doubts. Accordingly, it is necessary to form a research that can present a new approach to the regeneration of urban contexts with a new perspective. Social innovation, as the approach proposed by this research, can play an effective and useful role in the urban regeneration of problematic contexts. Given the need for change in line with the needs of the times, the application of social innovation in urban regeneration can take an effective step towards solving the problems of these contexts by overcoming the inefficiency of old policies and solutions. Accordingly, the most important goal of the present study is to present a new approach to urban regeneration based on social innovation. This research also seeks to answer the question: What are the most important factors and components influencing the realization of social innovation in urban regeneration?

Methodology

This research is in the field of applied research in terms of its purpose and is of a descriptive-analytical type in terms of its research method. The method of collecting data in the present research is based on library-documentary studies, in such a way that data is collected by using books, articles and projects related to the research topic. The research process is also as follows: in the first step, by studying and exploring reliable scientific sources and by creating a precise and complete perspective resulting from the summary of the studies conducted, concepts related to social innovation and urban regeneration are regulated. In the second step of the research, by considering the theoretical approach of the research and using two methods of qualitative content analysis and logical reasoning, the components and factors of the realization of social innovation in urban regeneration are explained.

Findings

According to the studies conducted in the present study, the goals, actors, roles of citizens, and components of social innovation in urban regeneration were identified and specified. Accordingly, the nine goals of social justice, social welfare, improvement of quality of life, social entrepreneurship, economic growth, social interaction, social cohesion, social transformation, and social inclusion are the most important goals of social innovation in urban regeneration. In this type of urban regeneration, five main and important actors, namely the government, citizens, civil society organizations, universities, and private companies,



play a role and seek desirable changes in problematic urban contexts. Citizens can also achieve several distinct and combined roles in social innovation for urban regeneration, including the roles of "The Sensor Citizen", "The Sharing Citizen", "The Collaborative Citizen", and "The Entrepreneurial Citizen", which indicate the different dynamics of social innovation. In this approach, citizens can have dual or multiple roles simultaneously or change roles depending on the situation. Also, the four components of "Empowerment and Capacity Building", "Participation and Collaboration", "Creative Solutions and Ideas", and "Change and Transformation" are highlighted as the most important components of social innovation in urban regeneration.

Conclusion

Social innovation is a concept that has been given a wide range of interpretations and definitions. Social innovation can play an important and effective role in problematic urban contexts by finding the best ways to solve the challenges and problems of these contexts. The goal of urban regeneration based on social innovation is to improve the quality of life and achieve satisfaction through optimal response to the unmet needs of residents of problematic urban contexts. To realize this approach in urban regeneration, the factors affecting it must be identified in a way that can respond to the effects resulting from the components. Accordingly, four factors, "quality of urban governance", "quality of local economy", "quality of urban research", and "quality of social relations and power", were identified as the most important factors for the realization of social innovation in urban regeneration. Given that the nature of social innovation is dependent on the environment and influenced by the values and norms of the target society, it is necessary to formulate a regeneration based on social innovation based on the characteristics of that society in order to get the most out of this approach in urban regeneration of problematic urban contexts in the country. The success of initiatives and actions of this type of regeneration requires changing approaches and methods of urban planning and governance in order to obtain the most benefit from it by providing the necessary conditions. Finally, it can be said that socially innovative solutions to solve the problems of worn-out urban contexts require the joint efforts of all actors in such a way that these efforts and cooperation lead to better benefits for all parties involved in urban regeneration based on social innovation.

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