



Creative economy assessment: a case study Kish Island

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to evaluate the case of Kish, which is a small island off the coast of Iran, using the creative indicators of a creative economy.

Design/methodology/approach – Based on the extant literature, a set of performance measures and factors are identified for the creative economy. This set is mainly based on Florida's theory on the creative class. The case of Kish Island is evaluated based on these indicators, and after analysis, conclusions are drawn.

Findings – Kish Island, with its numerous tourist attractions, shows remarkable creative industries that highlight the presence of the creative class and the development of a creative economy in this area.

Originality/value – The paper illustrates the model of creative economy assessment for the small Kish Island and finally provides a good understanding of the concept of the creative economy as a key element of the creative city.

Keywords: creative industry, creative economy, Kish Island, creative city

Paper type: Case study

Introduction

The world is currently struggling with a serious financial and economic crisis that started in 2007-2008. Until recently, it was the support of a knowledge-based economy that was viewed as the most efficient tool in the fight against the crisis. However, there is an increasing belief that the crisis cannot be overcome without the support of the so-called creative economy (Vesela and Klimova, 2014).

The creative economy encompasses a wide range of activities across thirteen sectors: advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software, and television and radio. These activities all trade their creative assets in the form of intellectual property (Andres and Round, 2015). The main policy motivation driving this classification is to account for and encourage economic growth, employment, and social cohesion in advanced countries, and to recognize sources of value creation where cities, regions, and nations face the decline of traditional manufacturing industries (Mangematin *et al.*, 2014). In a creative economy, production requires creativity and innovation, and draws its inspiration from others. Production in this economy also requires a compulsory involvement in cultural life for personal cultural consumption (Lloyd, 2002). The cultural economy has always acknowledged the fact that the production of innovative goods involves the use of specific skills (Greffé, 2016).

The structure of the international economy is changing rapidly with economic growth, from a natural-resource-based economy to a human-resource-based economy. The best and brightest creative talents have the power to drive the new economy; they create unique and highly profitable products and services. When they have access to the right conditions, environments, and opportunities, they will thrive, generate new products and services, and boost innovation (Prawata, 2015). Thus, many countries strategically try to support their economy's move forward to a creative economy where the creative industries play an important role (Bae and Yoo, 2015).

There are several elements that must be considered in discussing and analyzing issues of creative industries: first, the industry itself, which is associated with the rotation of the economy and market transactions; second, the organization, communication, and/or cooperation between various stakeholders and the policies that govern the interaction; third, the data and statistics

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3 needed as way of measuring progress and also as a reference to create a basis for policy and
4 further programs. A foundation based on human resources as the main asset is a characteristic of
5 almost all sub-sectors of creative industries (Rustiadi, 2015).
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7 In this paper, we first present a discussion of a theoretical framework on the creative
8 economy and on the case of Kish Island. This is followed by a section in which the framework is
9 applied to evaluate the potential of Kish Island. Then the case of Kish Island is analyzed. The
10 paper concludes with general recommendations and overall remarks.
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12 13 **Literature Review**

14 The term “creative economics” is derived from the term “creative industries”, also
15 referred to as “cultural industries.” The concept of the creative economy extends creativity to the
16 whole of the economy, including socio-economic processes and the organization of labor or
17 creative means (Moore, 2014). Creative industries are grounded in personal ideas, talent,
18 experience, and work (Hartley, 2005, p. 107). Creative industries are strategically significant
19 engines of economic growth, job creation, and social cohesion (Pratt and Jeffcutt, 2009). The
20 idea of creative industries has emerged as a universal research and policy concept exploited for
21 the advocacy of economic development of cities, regions, and countries (Roventale and Lavanga,
22 2014). Creative industries, with their specific requirements for production space, have become a
23 niche market for innovative real estate development (Vivant, 2013). Developing creative
24 activities is related to the economic dynamics that allowed the appearance of emergence
25 processes in the economic activity (Pintilii *et al.*, 2015). Some studies have even proved creative
26 industries to be more innovative than other manufacturing or service sectors (Chapain *et al.*,
27 2010). Many cities turned to creative economies to compensate for the loss of their economic
28 bases in manufacturing and standardized services that moved to low-cost countries, and not out
29 of altruistic motives such as art promotion (Trip and Romein, 2010).
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33 In the modern economy, the prerequisite for personal and family prosperity is to hold a
34 creativity-intensive skill or job, preferably one in a trade industry (Martin *et al.*, 2015). Creative
35 clusters are a result of economic and structural innovations, and are related to the realization of
36 innovation projects achieved with the help of local development strategies based on the economy
37 of excellence, culture, and local quality. At least two main types of clusters exist within the
38 creative city. The first is the cultural cluster, created around activities such as fine arts, music,
39 cinema, architecture, and design, and whose start-up is encouraged and planned by local
40 administration. The second is the cluster of events, whose development originates in the
41 organization of great events or different kinds of recreational and cultural manifestations (Carta,
42 2007; Maitland, 2009; Mommaas, 2004). Howkins (2002) views the establishment of a creative
43 economy as an entrepreneurial activity and, thus, concentrates on five critical success factors:
44 vision, focus, financial insight, pride, and urgency. Sung (2015) indicates that corporate strategy
45 is essential in delivering high corporate performance in both creative and manufacturing
46 industries. Firms in creative industries should seriously consider IT traits of efficiency and threat,
47 while firms in manufacturing industries should take IT traits of efficiency and integration into
48 account (Davis, 2011). Creative industry firms fail if their employees do not develop ideas that
49 can be turned into commercial, sellable commodities (Scase, 2002).
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53 Researchers have turned their attention to studying the impact of creative activities on the
54 economic development of different types of territorial systems (Harvey *et al.*, 2012), and to
55 identifying the impact of location on creativity (Pintilii *et al.*, 2014). A survey on Japan shows
56 that various cultural elements such as the legal system, management, and commercial transaction
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3 rules based on mutual trust, in addition to a well-trained workforce, are all related to the cultural
4 creativity of the society (Kakiuchi, 2015). Sepe and Trapani (2010) refer to place identity,
5 cultural sustainability, and involvement of the population as important key elements in creating a
6 creative city. A study on the film industry in Turkey shows that both technical and art education
7 are important and must be developed by education policy and strategic management (Incekara *et*
8 *al.*, 2013). Musterd (2004) claims the creative economy has a positive effect on tourism and
9 global trade in creative cities. Music, visual art, media, crafts, fashion, publishing, and
10 advertising are the essential creative industries that profoundly affect creative cities (Haug *et*
11 *al.*, 2009; O'Connor, 2014). Gu (2014) stresses the fact that creative clusters could potentially
12 play a role in creating jobs for the local community. The cultural and/or creative sector is a
13 significant part of the innovation system because of the possibility of producing social realities
14 and therefore influencing politics, companies, and public perception (Carayannis and Campbell,
15 2009). Maryunani and Mirzanti (2015), in their survey on creative industries in Bandung, state
16 that various factors including technology, information, science, and management have a
17 remarkable effect on the development of entrepreneurship that results in creative industries.
18 Aritenang (2015) has focused on several sectors such as fashion, screen, and digital technology,
19 and some training and exchange programs, as the main factors for the development of a creative
20 economy. Matheson (2006) emphasizes innovation, creative networks, communication and
21 teamwork, and self-determination as basic elements of a creative economy. In another study on
22 Brazilian cities, culture is defined as an effective factor in the development of a creative
23 economy (Fachinelli *et al.*, 2014).

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25 Creativity contributes significantly to contemporary urban economies, whose
26 restructuring has also spelled a rise in the need for service work. But service workers do not just
27 provide for the needs and desires of creative workers (Ocejo, 2010). Felton (2013) highlights this
28 point that one of the key factors influencing the choice of location for many creative workers
29 initially was affordability, which participants invariably expressed as affordability of space, both
30 domestic and workspace. Douglass (2015) indicates that creative communities that arise in a
31 cultural environment of place-based social relationships are being targeted for cultural economy
32 strategies to revitalize cities in Asia. White *et al.* (2014) indicate that the eight factors of
33 education, leadership, infrastructure, culture, government policies, technological innovation,
34 network, and diversity can be used as measures for managing performance in a creative
35 economy.

36 37 38 39 40 41 42 **Methodology**

43 The first step in developing a framework is to identify which factors influence the
44 successful establishment of a creative economy. Goede (2009) emphasizes talent, tolerance,
45 technology, and education, the development of real estate, an institutional framework,
46 distribution of income, and meritocracy as main elements that can raise the creative class in
47 different sectors. He also refers to arts, tourism, international financial services, science,
48 education, information and communication technology, and sports as basic sectors of the creative
49 economy.

50 The goal of this paper is to evaluate the case of Kish Island by applying this framework based on
51 Florida's indicators for a creative city (2002). We gather needed information about the case
52 study and then analyze the data according to the SWOT-framework and the Boston Consultancy
53 Portfolio Matrix (BCG Matrix).
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Kish Island

Kish Island is a touristic island located 50 km southwest of Lengeh Port in Hormozgan Province. The island has an elliptical shape, being 15 km long in the east-west direction and 5 km wide in the north-south direction. The area of the island is a bit more than 90 km², and its highest point is at +45 m above sea level (Figure 1). It has an estimated population of 26,000 residents, and about 1 million people visit the island annually. Kish Island was ranked among the world's 10 most beautiful islands of the world, and is the fourth most visited vacation destination in Southwest Asia after Dubai (Iran Statistics Center, 2014).

Kish Island has been the pearl of the Persian Gulf since ancient times. Diverse plants and native trees, as well as a pleasant climate, are characteristic of the island. The development of Kish Island's cultural infrastructure has been followed by a marked growth in urban amenity, and Kish Island's inner-city cafes, bars, and restaurants are the hubs or meeting places where interpersonal networking occurs. Regarded as central to the development of creative industries, networking enables the exchange of information and transmission of tacit knowledge (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).

Talent

Growth in the abilities and capacities of creative talents brings growth in their businesses, and when all creative businesses in one field grow collectively, it brings development to the industry (Chuluunbaatar *et al.*, 2014). Creative people are not necessarily motivated by market demands. Such competences can only be developed in conditions of multidiscipline and freedom from economic pressure. In this way, the education of creative professionals needs a sustainable foresight and a wise touch, and it should not be driven only by short-term market trends (Kampratha and Mietzner, 2015). In fact, creative workers become catalysts of change and innovation, inventing titles, products, and even new markets (Lingo and Tepper, 2013). The creative industries may be defined as a set of knowledge-based activities focused on the production of meaning, content, and aesthetic attributes by means of creativity, skill, and talent (Cercloux and Merciu, 2016).

The people of Kish Island are multi-cultural, multi-lingual, and musical, as well as mentally and physically intelligent. The local creative class is often off island, but on the other hand, the island is visited by other members of the global creative class (Chart 1).

As Chart 1 shows, most of the citizens work in trade, banking, insurance, construction, and manufacturing areas respectively, while agriculture, fishing, and mining have the fewest employees (less than 1%). This means that most activities on the island are related to business and urban services.

Fishing, farming, maritime trade, and pearl fishing are the traditional occupations of aboriginals on Kish Island. Moreover, fishing and hunting are common among the natives. Different kinds of products such as mats, Gabbeh, passementerie fabrics, needlework fabrics, and the different products of the marine industries, made of shell, fish bone, scallop, and coral are the most important crafts in this reign. The largest figurative statue in Iran called "Fisherman," is located in Beach Park of Kish Island. Thirty-eight sculptures have been installed in urban spaces during last decade; the Kish Sculpture Symposium is attended annually by artists from Iran and other foreign countries. The Kish Conservatory, managed by famous maestro and one of the celebrated cultural figures of Iran, Loris Tjeknavorian, collects national and international musicians together annually. The Iranian-Islamic Fashion Festival is also held each year by participating costume designers, clothes producers, as well as investors and businessmen,

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3 university students, and academicians from Iran and other Islamic countries (Kish Free Zone
4 Organization, 2016).
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7 **The technological infrastructure**

8 According to the Kish Free Zone Organization's report, Kish Water and Electricity
9 Company generates over 90 MV of electricity and 12,000 cubic meters of drinking water daily..
10 Over 20 domestic and overseas flights transfer passengers from and to Kish Island daily. The
11 Kish port enjoys an annual warehousing and product unloading capacity of 3.5 million tons, an
12 admission capacity of 730,000 passengers entering and exiting each year, as well as the ability to
13 host vessels with maximum tonnage of 12,000 tons.
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15 The city network of roads and avenues in Kish is 370 km long. There are no traffic jams
16 in this area. Regular public taxi and mini-bus services, plus rent-a-car and private call-cab
17 agencies, are also operating. The Rin Project (Persian Gulf Highway) will have a width of 75m
18 and a length of 27 km and has been named as one of the most important plans for developing
19 Kish's intercity transportation infrastructures. It will go around the island, and a large part of the
20 project has already been put into operation. Kish Island has a telephone center furnished with
21 5,800 telephone ports. The Kish Telecommunications Center (KTC) was established in 2001.
22 Eighty percent of the population has access to personal computers, and 38.6% has access to the
23 internet. A total of 68% of the businesses use computers and 92% have access to the internet.
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26 The transfer of electricity from mainland Iran through submarine systems, and the
27 construction of ports, sewage management systems, and warehouse facilities for the storage of
28 goods are some examples of projects that highlight the powerful infrastructure of Kish Island
29 (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).
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32 **Tolerance**

33 Herliana (2015) indicates that the progress of the construction of a creative economy is
34 strongly influenced by tolerance and a creative mindset (synonymous with democracy). Kish has
35 a population of 26,000 comprising 5,654 households. The increase in population is the result of
36 the migration of Iranians from all parts of the country who come to work or invest in Kish. The
37 inhabitants of the island are mostly Muslims and Christians (Iran Statistics Center, 2014). Both
38 the urban and the rural Arabs of the Persian Gulf Coast are intermingled with the Persians,
39 Turks, and Lurs who also live on the island. The native people are a mixture of Aryan,
40 Dravidian, Nordic, Sami, and the black race (Rashidvash, 2013).
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43 The increase in population has created considerable job opportunities and encouraged
44 more migration to the island. Currently, only 20% of the companies in Kish's free trade zone
45 involve foreign partners. Visiting foreigners are mainly migrant workers from the United Arab
46 Emirates (UAE). The official language is Persian, but English and Arabic are also spoken by
47 some shopkeepers, residents, and students who live on the island (Kish Free Zone Organization,
48 2016).
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50 There is a significant level of homophobia and systematic and institutionalized
51 discrimination against LGBT populations in Iran (Khoshnood *et al.*, 2008). The tolerance of Kish
52 is illustrated by the island's diverse population; on the other hand, the intolerance is illustrated by
53 censorship and the fact that the LGBT lifestyle is illegal.
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Education

Education is seen all over the world as the key to enabling individuals and nations to meet rapid economic and social changes (Rustiadi, 2015). Education exposure to the arts, design, and the creative process foster success in creative enterprises. Government supported formalized education is an investment in the future economic health of a region (White *et al.*, 2014).

Sharif University of Technology International Campus [1] in bilateral cooperation with the National Polytechnic Institute of Toulouse (INPT), École des mines d'Albi-Carmaux (EMAC), University of Paul Sabatier (UPS), Civil Aviation University (ENAC), Kharkiv National University of Radio Electronics and Tehran University of International Campus [2] in international collaboration with The University of Santiago de Compostela, The University of Zagreb, and Yerevan State University are the reputed universities of Kish Island.

The total physical area of educational space on the island was over 6623 square meters in 2014, which was a 62% rise as compared to the beginning of 2001. Activities are carried out in the educational section for general education, basic education, and higher education. Chart2 shows the level of literacy of Kish's habitants:

As illustrated by Chart2, 99% of the island's inhabitants are literate, and most of them have university degrees (approximately 80%). Florida (2002) argues that recruiting well-educated workers in creative industries through cultural and aesthetic investments is a necessity for urban growth. Creative workers strongly prefer the mixed-use type of urban setting, both for living and working. They are drawn to stimulating and experiential creative environments (Lawton *et al.*, 2013).

Therefore, the level of education of the people is a strength of Kish Island. The number of people with higher education degrees is remarkable.

Real estate

Kish Island is an interesting real estate market. The executive projects in different areas, particularly in the construction sector, make local real estate very affordable for neighbor cities and countries, especially the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Some old buildings that need reconstruction are on the market. The new project of "Green Town" pertains to construction of residential apartments for Kish organization employees. A total number of 1,312 housing units has been considered for the plan. Approximately 1,334 units will be allocated to active employees, workers, and staff members of different organizations and offices (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).

The institutional framework

The institutional framework, consisting specifically of the tiers of government (institutions), planning legislations, and administrations, was not significantly affected by cultural, physical, political, institutional, financial, knowledge based, analytical, or legal constraints, while the planning authorities were significantly constrained (Wapwera *et al.*, 2015). The legal system of the island is part of the governmental system. This provides citizens and corporations extra security. There is political stability on the island. The Kish Free Zone Organization offers some special benefits to the agencies representing reputable domestic or international brands: a 10% discount off zone duties for such agencies who provide after-sales services along with the submission of relevant documents, and in cases of short transit time for products passing through the country. Furthermore, for the purpose of developing e-commerce and seeking tradesmen and investors, the Kish Free Zone Organization has established a product

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3 registration system with the help of the Iranian Ministry of Commerce and Trade Development
4 Center. Due to its ease of order registration for tradesmen and investors, this system has been
5 widely welcomed by tradesmen (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).
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8 **Distribution of income**

9 Freund and Bolaky (2008) point out that increased trade is positively correlated with
10 income in economies that facilitate firm entry, but not in more rigid economies. Some of
11 problems relating to the staff salary and bonus have their root in complicated methods and
12 procedures which can impact the society's goals (Orkami, et al., 2015). The expected low-
13 income Iranian working populations, who come from the mainland, as well as the expatriates,
14 need a lot of houses that must be built. At the moment, there is a shortage in low-income housing
15 in Mir Mohanna, i.e. the town is targeted for this reason because it is close to the industrial areas,
16 harbor, workshops, and quarrying areas (Afshar *et al.*, 2012).
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19 The income distribution in Kish Island is poor (Chart3), despite the powerful
20 technological infrastructures and business activities in this area.

21 Chart3 shows that most of Kish's inhabitants earn between \$300–600 (up 35%), while the
22 average monthly expenses per person according to Iran statistic center (2014) is about \$500. So it
23 is concluded that the income distribution is not fair enough in Kish Island.
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26 **Meritocracy**

27 Egalitarianism and meritocracy are two competing principles to distributing the joint
28 benefits of cooperation (Barbera *et al.*, 2015). The meritocracy in Kish is only dominant in
29 global operating organizations: This is explained by the cultural and historical development, and
30 the small scale of society (Goede, 2009).
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32 In oil-producing countries like Iran, the government plays a significant role in
33 establishing and developing the private sector. Direct distribution of oil revenue among the
34 people of the society, or indirect distribution of it through subsidized goods and services or free-
35 of-charge grants to supporters of government, such as the policy run in Iran, result in promotion
36 of anomalous consumption and dependency of the people on governmental alms. This
37 exacerbates oil-oriented and rent-seeking problems and destroys work motivation, wealth
38 production, competition, and economic efficacy (Mohammadi *et al.*, 2014). Iran, in the two
39 previous decades, has shown that a decrease in petroleum income can be threatening, an example
40 of which is Dutch disease (Alilou and Ahakchi, 2012). Meritocracy is a dynamic and flexible
41 concept, and it changes based on conditions, values, environment, views, and visions.
42 Meritocracy has a weak position in Kish Island.
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46 **Arts**

47 Night programs, live pop and traditional music, film screenings, happy carnivals, and
48 awards are a part of the Kish summer festival that is held annually. The island, compared to a
49 hidden pearl, has an underground water channel known as Kariz, which has a 2,500-year history.
50 There are seashells, coral, and fossils covering the ceiling of this Kariz that experts believe are as
51 old as 270 to 570 million years.
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53 The Kariz has been converted into an underground town at a depth of 16 meters below
54 the surface. The ancient canal was expanded below the surface of Kish Island, with museums, art
55 galleries, handicraft workshops, and traditional and modern tea and coffee shops. The present
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length of the underground complex is about 10,000 meters, and visitors have the choice either to walk inside it or to sail in power/pedal boats and see its beauties from the water (Figure2).

Tourism

Since Kish is a tourist island and annually hosts 1.5 million guests, heavy investments have been made there by the government and the private sector to establish hotels and motels. Kish currently has 11 hotels, 12 apartment hotels, 18 motels, and four guesthouses, with 6,500 beds in all.

There is one international airport on Kish Island. All flights are to and from Iranian provinces, except for one flight that goes to and from Dubai twice a day. However, visitors can also travel to Kish Island by boat and cruise ships because foreign can come and stay at Kish for up to 14 days without a visa. This can be attractive and can motivate many more tourists. The official Iranian currency is the rial. Money can be exchanged at the airport on arrival, at banks, or at any of the private exchange offices available on Kish Island (Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism, 2015).

According to the Tourism Organization's report (2015), Kish hotels have a wide range of facilities that provide an easy choice for tourists and travelers according to their budget and taste. In addition to the restaurants serving travelers in hotels, there are tens of small and large restaurants with Iranian and foreign cuisines, and travelers can choose their favorite spot according to their taste with full assurance about the quality of services. There are dozens of tourist agencies throughout Kish that facilitate traveling for both Iranian and foreign tourists. These agencies work under the supervision of the Kish Tourism Development Institute and provide tourists with excellent services.

International Financial Services

Iran's economy is a mixture of central planning, private ownership, village agriculture, and small-scale private trading and service ventures. Prior to 1979, financial reporting in Iran was influenced heavily by Anglo-American practices. There were no national accounting standards, and disclosure requirements were based on tax law, corporate law, and stock exchange regulations, but since 1997, there have been some changes in the economic environment (Mirshekar and Saudagaran, 2005). Free zones are exempted from certain national laws, and the various free zone authorities may establish their own commercial and legal codes in some matters. The Kish Island Free Zone exempts manufacturers from taxes, customs, and other duties, and offers natural gas to manufacturers at a fraction of international prices. In addition, foreign subjects investing in the free zones can have up to 100% ownership in any company. They can import and export foreign currency unrestrictedly and utilize the application of free market rate on all financial transactions (Iranian National Tax Administration, 2015). Over 100 production companies are currently active in Kish, and 120 units are being constructed. By the end of 2002, industrial investment was estimated at \$500 million. The activities of the country's first private insurance companies in Kish, the presence of foreign exchange facilities and transfers by all the banks in Kish, the receipt of proposals from foreign and Iranian banks, and the receipt of the final approval for Iran-Europe Bank branches to work in Kish are some of the successes of the organization in developing monetary units and banks (Iran Statistics Center, 2014).

Science

The Kish International Campus (KIC) was established in order for the University of Tehran to facilitate the enrollment of foreign students. Graduates of the KIC have the linguistic and professional abilities to function effectively in an international environment, the technical skills to operate in an increasingly complex technical world, the intellectual capacity and flexibility to adapt to constant changes, and the leadership potential to make remarkable contributions to the development of the community. In line with these goals, the KIC will select Iranian and international students who can succeed in harnessing diverse and modern academic and research capabilities. Through the development of strong scientific links with local and foreign educational and research institutions, the KIC continues to uphold the highest quality in both research and education. Advanced studies conducted on “The Effect of Combination Exercise Training on Metabolic Syndrome Parameters in Postmenopausal Women with Breast Cancer” that were conducted at the UT's Kish International Campus have been registered with the United States Library of Medicine, National Institute of Health. Efforts have been made to remain at the cutting edge of the different fields of science and to adjust the KIC's strategies to meet market demands (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).

Higher education

Higher education in Iran is part of the national education and training system and now is managed by the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology and the Ministry of Health and Medical Education (for medical sciences). Higher education in Iran includes all training and teaching that leads to associate, bachelor, master, and PhD degrees. There are about 400 universities and higher education institutes in Iran (Orkami *et al.*, 2015).

Kish is home to Kish University, a university founded in 1996; it now has 360 students. The importance of public education from the lowest to the highest levels as a main element in the steady development of Kish is now being paid special attention. The University of Tehran's International Campus – Kish Island, one of the best examples of Iran's universities, is located on Kish Island. The official language of the Kish International Campus is English, and all courses are offered in English (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).

Sports

Kish Island also holds Iran's Traditional and Heroic Games Contests, which annually attract over 17 countries worldwide. This city is home to a multi-purpose Olympic stadium that seats 1, 200 spectators; it caters for 11 sports, including volleyball, basketball, handball, gymnastics, wrestling, taekwondo, judo, karate, and chess. All of these are supervised by professional and international coaches. In 2016, Kish was host to an officially sanctioned FIVB beach volleyball event.

Kish attracts top national football teams and clubs, who often use the island as a summer training camp with high quality facilities –one of the first of its kind in Iran. A great array of water sports is also on offer in Kish, such as snorkeling and scuba diving courses, jet skiing, diving cruises, water skiing, sea skiffs, cruises to other islands around Kish, parasailing, jet boat rides, cruise fishing boats, pedal boating, banana boat rides, and wind surfing. The fourth round of the Asian Billiard and Snooker Championships were held in Kish in 2015. There are more than 200 athletes in different fields like gymnastics, archery, swimming, squash, and wushu. Amir Fazli (wushu gold medalist), Bahram Moradi (martial arts gold medalist), Amir Zarei

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3 (kickboxing gold medalist), and Zahra Nemati (Olympic archery medalist) are some of the
4 examples of the international medalists in Kish Island (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).
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7 **Information and Communication Technology**

8 Telephones are used 100% in Kish, and since the rate is 19% for the rest of the country,
9 this is a high percentage. There are also over 5000 mobile numbers issued. Kish has been active
10 in this field by transferring mobiles to the private sector and preparing this zone to become an
11 internet city.
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13 The presence of large international oil and gas companies to support South Pars activities,
14 and the transfer of the offices of the Oil Ministry from abroad, have created the background for
15 establishing an oil exchange market in Kish. Furthermore, the decorative and gemstone stock
16 exchange and software and hardware are also being processed by the organization.
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18 Suitable hardware and software facilities and the expansion of trade and financial
19 facilities in the region have created good opportunities for the development of commercial
20 activities in the region. Easy access to production and consumer markets that provide legal and
21 potential facilities to create and expand monetary and financial institutions, and the good and
22 services exchange markets, have all in all created a remarkable capacity for trade in the region
23 (Kish Free Zone Organization, 2016).
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26 **Analysis of Kish Island**

27 According to data given in the previous sections, many factors that could support a
28 creative economy are present in Kish Island. Table1 shows the results of the SWOT-analysis. It
29 can be seen that the factors do not have the same impact on all sectors. Factors like talent,
30 technology, real estate and education have a strong positive effect on creative industry sectors;
31 however, elements like distribution and meritocracy have negative impact on these sectors,
32 which can be an obstacle for this city to be creative.
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34 Also, tolerance and institutional framework are the weaknesses of this city. However, the
35 prominent position of the island regarding easy access to waters of the Persian Gulf that
36 facilitates trade activities provides the opportunity for Kish Island develop the creative
37 industries, especially the tourism sector, which makes this city remarkable among the other cities
38 of Iran.
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40 Kish Island is a spectacular island with a large number of educated people in different
41 scientific and artistic areas, which can reinforce the tourism sector as well.
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43 It is concluded that the arts and education have potential. These sectors are both in high
44 growth markets and make up a sizeable portion of that market. They are “star” positions and
45 should be invested in more. The other sectors like tourism, science, sport, information and
46 communication technology, and international financial services are “question mark” sectors that
47 are in high growth rate markets, but ones in which the city doesn’t maintain a large market share.
48 These sectors need to be further analyzed.
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50 The situation of Kish Island according to creative economy sectors is promising, although
51 there is a necessity for resolving its present weak points.
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Conclusion

Kish Island has some strengths to bring the creative city into focus. We also recognize that the island must first support and enhance the lives of the creative individuals who are the heart of Kish's cultural experience. Creative industries rely on creative individuals who are often considered to have unique talent and creative processes that are mysterious if not inexplicable to outsiders (Lampel and Germain, 2015).

Fortunately, the presence of well-educated people and the rich culture of the region on the one hand, and the enormous tourist attractions and access to world free waters on the other, provide a high level of social security and peace and tranquility that can attract more people to this city. But here is the question: Why is Kish Island not yet a creative city, and why have its creative industries not been developed significantly?

The answer is somehow problematic. However, according to results, the lack of tolerance and insufficient development of the tourism industry, combined with the lack of distribution of income and meritocracy in the various creative economy sectors, which are the main elements to attracting the creative class, are the main obstacles for developing the creative industries in this city. A leadership role may be required for the national government to educate and build the capacity of the community to enhance its economy through tourism (Ghanian, *et al.*, 2014). Communities that consciously invest in human and financial resources are at the very forefront in preparing their citizens to meet the challenges of a rapidly evolving, and now global, knowledge- and/or creativity-based economy and society (Eger, 2006, p. 18).

There is also a great potential for innovation and technological development that should be adapted to the local conditions. So there is a huge demand for reform and to update the current urban principles according to other creative cities and world changes.

Regard to special geographic environment of Kish Island and talented sportsmen, there is a necessity for development of sport tourism in this region. Whereas the economic costs were the main concern of hosting large-scale sport tourism events (Kim *et al.*, 2015), more investments should be made on this sector. Comunian (2011) points out that for a city to be truly creative, investments need to be made not only in regeneration projects but also in cultural development. New firms are also crucial to promoting aggregate economic growth, to creating an economic middle class, and to maintaining a relatively equitable income distribution (Berkowitz and Jackson, 2006). In addition; they make an important contribution to productivity growth, especially in developing countries and advanced sectors (Bartelsman *et al.*, 2004). **Consequently, Kish Island should rely on its domestic art and real estate trades to reinforce the creative industries which lead to urban advancement and economic growth.**

Historical culture seems to have the biggest and the most overlooked potential, not only as an element of a creative city, but also as a mean for restructuring the wider entrepreneurial activities, but we should consider that a particular challenge at present is to move beyond the tourism, heritage, and consumption focus of many initiatives and to embrace the full cycle of culture making that includes cultural production (Pratt, 2011).

In general, the creative industries in Kish Island need to be encouraged by means of special policies and development strategies. Urban management in conjunction with the Economic Ministry should review the feasibility of establishing cultural industries' Development Service to provide startup assistance and industry networking opportunities. Additionally, they should set up an annual cultural industries career forum for youth in partnership with universities, colleges, and training institutions and facilitate creative youth internships in local and international cultural enterprises.

Notes

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Figure1. The location of Kish Island in the Persian Gulf

Figure1

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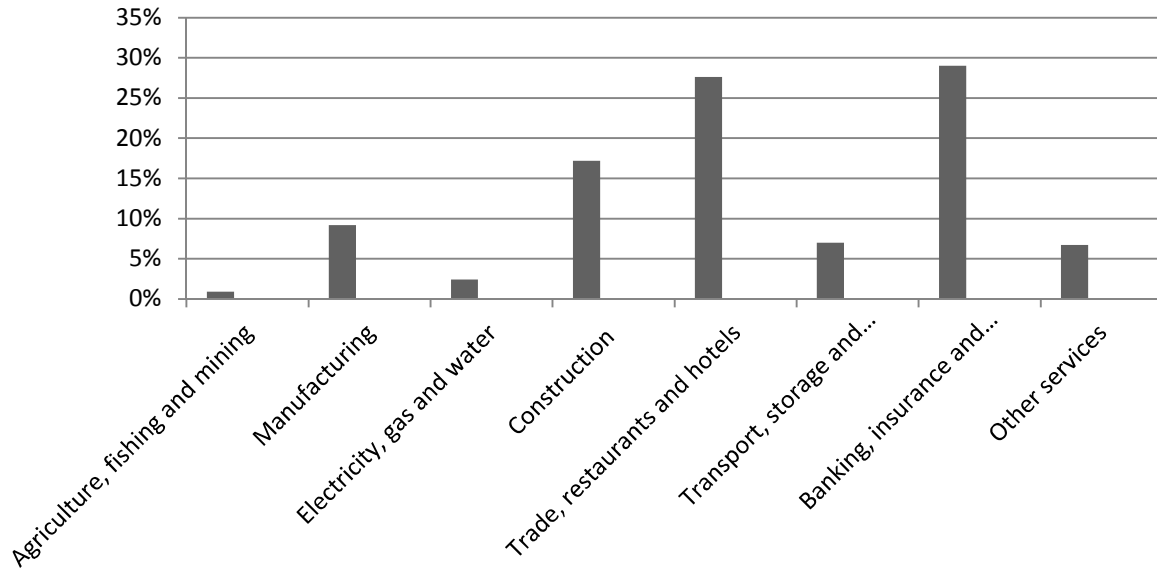
Of Social Economics

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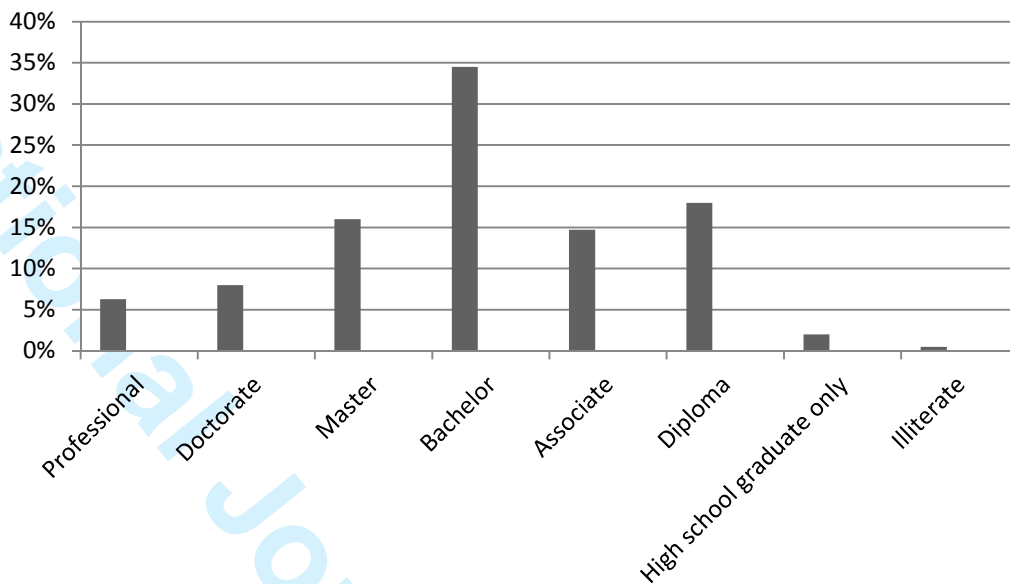
Figure2.Underground town of Kariz
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Social Economics



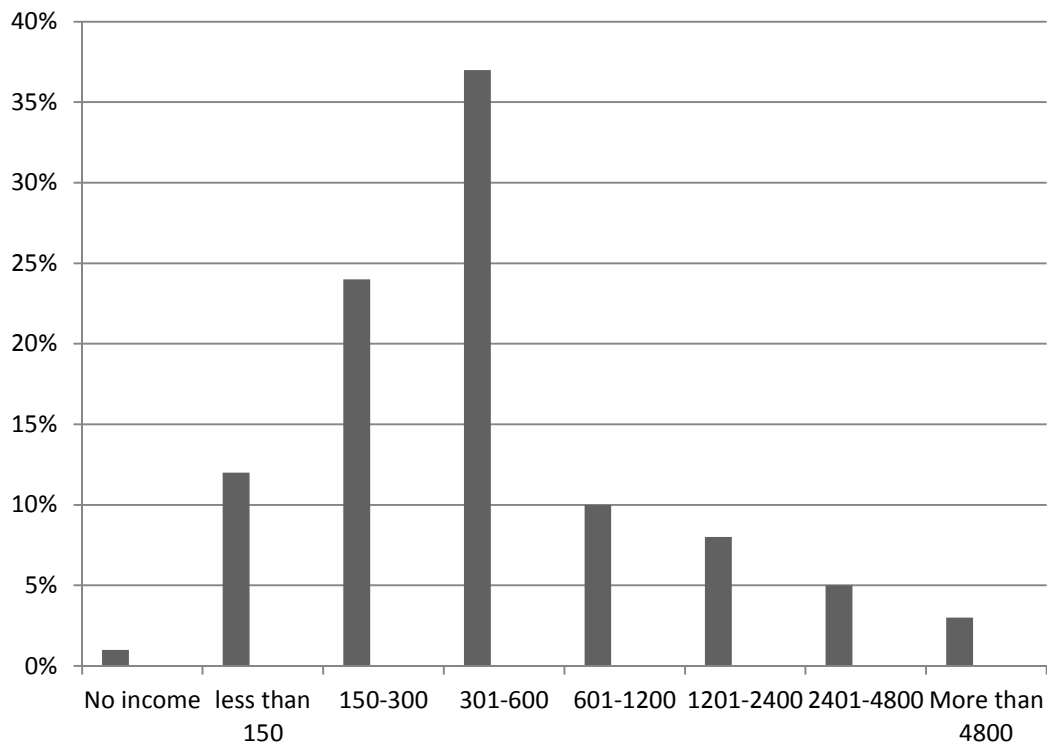
Source: Iran Statistics Center (2014)

Chart1. Employment in Kish Island by sector (five-year average)



Source: Iran Statistics Center (2014)
Chart2. The level of literacy in Kish Island (five-year average)

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Source: Iran Statistics Center (2014)
Chart3. The level of monthly income in Kish Island (Annual report)

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Table1. The analysis of the creative economy of Kish Island based on the weight of the factors attracting and developing the creative class

	Talent	Technology	Tolerance	Education	Real estate	Institutional framework	Distribution	Meritocracy	BCG Matrix
Tourism	+++	+	-	++	+	-	+	-	Q
International Financial Services	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	Q
Arts	++	+	-	++	+	-	+	-	S
Science	+	+	+	++	+	+	-	-	Q
Higher education	++	++	+	+++	+	++	-	+	S
Sport	++	+	-	++	+	+	-	+	Q
Information and Communication Technology	+	+	-	+	+	-	-	+	Q
SWOT-Analysis	S	O	W	S	O	W	W	W	
Notes:	Q, question mark; S, stars; C, cash cow; D, dogs, strength; w, weakness; o, opportunity; t, threat; -, negative; - -, very negative; +, good ++, very good and +++, excellent								