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# LOST IN TRANSLATION:

DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY FAILURES IN MAJARA  
RESIDENCE, IRAN (A CASE STUDY)

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## ABSTRACT

The pressing need to address the profound consequences of climate change and the socio-economic repercussions of global inaction on environmental concerns has prompted an imperative for immediate and transformative measures. Design, a driving force for innovation across sectors, intermittently intersects with sustainability discourse. However, achieving sustainability objectives remains challenging, as specific endeavors encounter obstacles despite rigorous adherence to frameworks and certifications. This disjunction between intent and outcome underscores the inherent complexity within sustainability pursuits, thereby necessitating avenues for learning and refinement.

Acknowledging the intricate and multifaceted nature of sustainability, this study delves into its elusive dimensions and underscores the need for context-specific indicators that dynamically evolve over time and space. Deviating from traditional paradigms, this research prioritizes the examination of failures over the emphasis on factors fostering project sustainability. This shift is propelled by the recognition that a definitive formula for achieving sustainability remains elusive, and insights drawn from understanding failures can inform the design of solutions with comparatively reduced unsustainability. Thus, this thesis aims to elucidate failures in design for sustainability, utilizing the "Majara Residence," a tourist accommodation in Iran, as a case study and departure point.

The research deliberately selects the "Majara Residence" project as a focal point, a project lauded for its sustainability achievements. This selection aims to uncover latent inadequacies often overlooked in superficial examinations, facilitating a comprehensive investigation of sustainability failures. The research objectives steer away from definitive solutions. It is essential to acknowledge that outcomes may not yield universally applicable answers or prescriptive formulas. Nevertheless, they provide intriguing directions for further exploration within the research domain.

Systematic data collection and meticulous analysis reveal prominent themes. These themes center around three principal areas: Sustainable Tourism Development, Design and Designer, and Beneficiaries and Stakeholders. Each theme is intricately elaborated, accompanied by an in-depth exploration of associated concepts that provide a foundational framework for scrutinizing nuances within the case study. The discourse within the Sustainable Tourism Development section revolves around the concepts of "Ecotourism" and "Land Suitability and Tourist Carrying Capacity." Transitioning to the Design and Designer theme, examining "Situated Design" and "Design and Democracy" ensues. Finally, the Beneficiaries and Stakeholders section delves into the complexities of "Gentrification" and "Inter-subaltern Colonialism," contemplating their implications within the context of the Majara residence scenario.

This thesis aims to uncover design failures in the sustainability context of the Majara residence from diverse angles. While this approach offers a specific viewpoint, future research initiatives might employ different methodologies to probe sustainability failures in projects. This research underscores sustainability's elusive nature, defying definitive assurances and rigid rules. Understanding sustainability failures provides insights for developing less unsustainable designs, thereby promoting the persistence of sustainable lifestyles.

**Keywords:** Design for sustainability, Sustainability failures, Situated design