



**The Phenomenology of Elite Awareness and Understanding  
of Urban Management Challenges (Case Study: Ahvaz)<sup>1</sup>**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the knowledge and lived experience of the elites and managers of Ahvaz city about the definition, concept and dimensions of urban management. To achieve this goal, 14 elites and managers of the province were studied by phenomenological method and in-depth interview technique. According to the results, the social phenomenon of urban management in Ahvaz is organized in the central themes of the meaning of urban management, accountability and interaction with people, professional ethics, knowledge sharing, committed behavior and tasks of urban management. According to the participants, in some cases, the measures taken in the field of urban management in Ahvaz are not based on the principles of management science and do not have sufficient depth, and also cumbersome laws sometimes cause unnecessary slowness of activities. On the other hand, sometimes lack of seriousness and lack of Emphasis on the law creates various challenges. The empty space of symbols related to subcultures is felt in the city, and the interaction of city management with citizens is not at a suitable level.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The present study seeks to investigate the awareness and understanding of the elites of Ahvaz city in Khuzestan province about the issue of urban

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management; What ideas do they have about urban management and how do they assess it when faced with this issue? Since the best method for investigating awareness and lived experience is the phenomenological method, the present research was conducted with this method. Simultaneous phenomenology is a philosophy and a method that examines the nature or essence (fundamental units in the understanding of any phenomenon) of phenomena. The present research was conducted using the Mustax method and includes the following steps. In the first step, the statement of the problem and the research question is formulated; Then philosophical and phenomenological assumptions are collected. The main question of the research is: What is the common mentality of the participants of the current research about urban management?

Sampling is the second step of phenomenological research. At this step, the researcher has examined the number of 14 executive elites of the province who have sufficient familiarity with the state and quality of management in Ahvaz city and at different levels. Sampling was done in a purposeful and accessible way, and an effort has been made to select people for sampling who have the ability to talk and have enough opportunity to talk. The purpose of qualitative research is not to present a representative sample. Therefore, the samples are selected according to the research objectives. The sample size, like most qualitative methods, is subject to the rule of saturation. In this research, the researcher reached saturation by interviewing 14 elite people. That is, more information could not be obtained from more interviews.

### 3. FINDINGD

As mentioned, in this research, 14 elite people living in Ahvaz city were interviewed in depth with the aim of gaining their experience and understanding of the state of urban management in Ahvaz. All of these people have been management experience at different levels and have been lived in Ahvaz for 1 to 10 years. Moreover, in terms of knowledge and information, they have been experts in the field of management in Ahvaz or, they have been considered among the elites of the province and have been busy in academic positions and jobs or things like this. Among these 14 people, 5 people studied in humanities and social sciences and 9 people studied in technical and engineering and basic sciences. Before conducting the research, the career and professional records of these elites were evaluated.

### 4. CONCLUSION

By reviewing the history of the establishment of the city's administrative institutions and comparing it with the current state of urban management, the participants of the research believe that city managers still do not have enough knowledge of city management, and cumbersome administrative regulations



double these problems. Actions and programs that are carried out through them, often do not have the necessary depth. Most of them work in a tasteful manner and despite the problems of the administrative structure which plays an important role in the proper implementation of the programs. Depending on the the opinion of participants, although the governments have the role of supporting, guiding the municipalities, but their programs cast a shadow on the city's progress, regardless of the benefits or harms it has for the city. This case goes back to the structural issues and existing formations of the municipalities. According to them, the urban management aware of the tasks in the shadow of managerial stability and also in interaction with the scientific collections of the province, can take into account the creativity and opening of urban horizons and not see the structural limitations in the direction of solving the problems.

On the basis of the opinion of participants, despite the numerous and sometimes cumbersome laws in some areas, there are still gaps in the laws, and unnecessary appeasement causes some omissions or neglects to form, which can have inappropriate consequences for Dasheh society, while The purpose of urban management there is to help people and facilitate the administrative process of their activity or business. According to them, every action that is taken for the city must coordinate its plan with the city's plan. In the meantime, what is not in the interest of the city should not be implemented.

The strategies and solutions proposed by the participants to overcome the current situation and improve the quality of urban governance in Ahvaz are to follow up on the demands of the citizens and report the progress in this area. Hence, the urban management group in the province should be pay attention to the challenges and problems faced by the citizens in a tangible way, and if they focus on solving them, they should be clearly inform the citizens of the progress report of the projects.

**Keywords:** Urban Management, Phenomenological Method, Ahvaz city

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