

City and Information Technology: Theoretical Challenge

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ABSTRACT

Since the mid-1970s, new information technologies have increasingly become the means of interactive communication among people scattered throughout the world. The fundamental changes that have occurred created new realities of how socioeconomic activities, and essentially cities, behave. The commonly established planning theories have since challenged.

This paper is an attempt to analyze these theories which could be looked at in three perspectives: the Physicalist; the Urban Economist ; and The Social Meaning perspectives.

The physicalist perspective tends to minimize the significance of social relations, and concentrate on the physical elements of the city such as schools, hospitals public spaces and street patterns. It is the process of manifesting social structures into symbolic expressions. (Hyper space and virtual spatial patterns are immanent challenges.)

The economist perspective perceives the city as a practical machine. It emphasizes efficiency. Activities are located according to their relative cost of reaching labor, materials, markets, and services. These competitions result in the arrangement of land uses and cityscape (low cost telecommunication challenges the bases of accessibility.)

The social meaning perspective is concerned on the reflection of the society's dominant culture. To understand the city, analysis of the population, institutions, and political structure, is necessary. (grass root movements, new sense of spatial arrangements are true challenges.)

This paper will explain these perspectives and suggest the most likely changes in their assumptions and the emergence of new propositions. The, this study will attempt to establish a theoretical framework to construct a conceptual model to deal with these challenges.

Biography:

Tarik A. Fathy, Ph.D., is a planner and architect. He holds a doctorate in planning from the University of Southern California (USC), Los Angeles, California in 1988. His research work emphasizes on the transformation of cities into a new era. He is considered one of the first researchers on this subject. He has published few papers and he authored: "TELECITY: Information Technology and its impact on City Form." Praeger, New York, 1991. He is a member of many academic and professional organizations. He is a founder member of T.H.E. Architects, Planners, and Civil Engineers in both Los Angeles and Cairo, Egypt. He was born 1955.