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Original Research Article

The Challenges and Solutions for Insuring Historical Buildings in Iran: A Good Governance Approach to Economic Protection*

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ABSTRACT

Historical buildings, as the cultural and identity heritage of any nation, play a vital role in transmitting civilizational values to future generations. However, they are constantly threatened by vulnerability to natural disasters and human factors. Despite the ratification of the Law on Supporting the Restoration and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Textures (2019), Article 17 of this law, which mandates the insurance of historical buildings registered in the National Heritage List, has not been fully implemented after five years. Studies show that 14,659 historical buildings fall under this law, of which 74% are privately owned, and 26% are state-owned or endowed (waqf). Nevertheless, insuring these properties faces numerous challenges, including difficulties in financial and spiritual valuation, high vulnerability to earthquakes and floods, lack of regulatory infrastructure, international sanctions, and the financial weakness of domestic insurance companies. Furthermore, the absence of clear standards for calculating insurance premiums and the lack of specialized insurance companies for historical monuments have complicated the implementation of this mandate. To overcome these obstacles, it is proposed to amend Article 17 of the Law on Supporting the Restoration and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Textures (2019). This amendment should oblige the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, in cooperation with the State Organization for Registration of Deeds and Properties, to register the environmental and natural vulnerability levels, as well as the age of historical buildings, in the database subject to Clause (1) of Paragraph (C) of Article 83 of the Seventh Development Plan Law. Additionally, it is proposed that the Central Insurance of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Bimeh Markazi) be legally required to determine the base insurance rate solely based on the estimated costs of restoration and revitalization. Furthermore, earthquake insurance rates should be determined based on the structure type and building materials, the area and footprint of the building, the value of equipment and furnishings within the premises, the reconstruction cost per square meter in case of destruction due to earthquakes, and the building's exposure and hazard risk level.

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Statement of the Problem

Historical-cultural monuments and buildings, as civilizational treasures and cultural heritage, are constantly threatened by destruction due to their age and vulnerability to natural disasters, unexpected incidents, and human factors. Therefore, adopting necessary measures to insure these buildings is one of the most critical steps toward good governance and the economic protection of these assets. Current assessments indicate that no effective measures have been taken in this regard so far. Hence, it is crucial to analyze the current status of insurance coverage for nationally registered historical buildings, investigate the challenges facing its realization, and offer necessary policy recommendations to eliminate these obstacles.

Introduction

Historical monuments and buildings, as the civilizational treasures and cultural heritage of a nation, not only reflect the identity and historical authenticity of a society but also play an essential role in transmitting cultural values to future generations. This precious heritage is constantly under threat of destruction due to its age and vulnerability to natural disasters, unforeseen emergencies, and human activities. Therefore, preserving and safeguarding these monuments is not only a national and global duty but also requires specific governance measures. The most critical of these measures are outlined in the Law on Supporting the Restoration and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Textures, ratified on July 3, 2019.

One of these measures, which remains unimplemented more than five years after the enactment and notification of the law, is Article 17. This article mandates the government to take the necessary measures to insure historical buildings registered in the National Heritage List and related registries. Studies show that this article has not been fully implemented. Insuring historical buildings can provide financial compensation for damages, enabling the government and other private owners to restore and reconstruct these properties. Furthermore, efforts by insurance institutions to establish regulatory and supervisory frameworks to mitigate insurance risks will lead to qualitative and quantitative improvements in the conservation of these monuments. In other words, insurance coverage for historical buildings not only facilitates their revitalization, restoration, and reconstruction but also strengthens their physical preservation. Before exploring the challenges and appropriate solutions, it is necessary to examine the status of ownership (as policyholders) and the quantity of these historical assets.

Good Governance

The concept of "Good Governance" gained widespread attention in the 1990s, particularly within development and public management literature, serving as a framework to improve the quality of policymaking and the administration of public affairs. Governance, in general, refers to the set of processes, institutions, and mechanisms through which power is exercised in society and public resources are managed. Within this framework, public administration is not limited solely to the government; rather, the interaction and cooperation between the government, the private sector, and civil society in decision-making and policy implementation processes are highly emphasized (Rhodes, 1996).

Based on the existing literature, good governance encompasses a set of principles and characteristics that lead to enhanced efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the public administration system. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines good governance based on principles such as participation, the rule of law, transparency, responsiveness, consensus orientation, equity and inclusiveness, effectiveness and efficiency, and accountability (United Nations Development Programme, 1997, 1997). Among these, participation refers to the active involvement of citizens and stakeholders in the decision-making process, which can enhance the legitimacy and effectiveness of policies.

Transparency is another fundamental component of good governance, referring to free and easy access for citizens to information regarding the decisions and performance of public institutions. The presence of transparency in governance processes can prevent corruption and strengthen public trust. Parallel to this, accountability means that institutions and officials are responsible to citizens and stakeholders; decision-makers must be able to explain and justify the performance and outcomes of their actions for evaluation (World Bank, 1992).

On the other hand, the rule of law, as one of the main pillars of good governance, refers to the existence of fair legal frameworks and the impartial enforcement of laws. This principle fosters legal security, reduces institutional instability, and increases social trust. In sum, good governance is an approach that emphasizes the efficient management of resources, the broad participation of stakeholders, and the strengthening of accountable institutions, providing a suitable ground for sustainable development across various sectors (Kaufmann et al., 2010).

Good Governance in the Economic Protection of Historical-Cultural Buildings

Historical-cultural buildings, as part of the identity and cultural capital of societies, possess economic, social, and tourism functions in addition to their historical and artistic value. Conserving and maintaining these structures requires securing sustainable financial resources and adopting efficient policies in cultural heritage management. In this context, the "Good Governance" approach can play a significant role in designing and implementing support mechanisms for historical buildings by regulating relations between the government, the private sector, and civil society.

Good governance emphasizes principles such as transparency, accountability, participation, efficiency, the rule of law, and coordination among various institutions. Applying these principles to cultural heritage preservation can pave the way for innovative financing and risk management mechanisms for historical buildings. From this perspective, economic support for historical buildings is not limited to state funding allocations but requires utilizing diverse financial and institutional instruments that enable the active participation of various actors.

One of the notable instruments in this field is insurance mechanisms. Due to their age, unique architectural features, and vulnerability to hazards such as natural disasters, fire, structural decay, and human intervention, historical buildings face multiple risks. Insurance can act as a tool to manage these risks and, by compensating for potential damages, increase the economic security of owners, custodians, and investors associated with these buildings. Consequently, developing appropriate insurance systems for historical buildings can be considered a key pillar of economic support for this valuable heritage. Accordingly, addressing insurance mechanisms within the framework of good governance, alongside other support instruments, can serve as a complementary approach to strengthen the conservation and maintenance system of historical-cultural buildings.

Quantitative Analysis of Historical Buildings and Monuments

According to statistics from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, the number of valuable historical-cultural assets in the country is estimated to be nearly 1 million, of which 34,320 have been registered in the National Heritage List. The nationally registered assets include 14,659 historical buildings, 19,546 archaeological sites, and 87 historical urban fabrics (Fig. 1).

Since Article 17 of the Law on Supporting the Restoration and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Textures (2019) explicitly emphasizes insuring historical buildings registered in the National Heritage List, exactly 14,659 properties are subject to Article 17 of the aforementioned law regarding the insurance of historical-cultural buildings.

Since the owners of the aforementioned structures are the primary policyholders of these monuments, it is necessary to clarify the ownership status of these sites categorized into buildings, sites, and historical fabrics in addition to detailing the number of nationally registered historical-cultural monuments. As illustrated in Table 2, approximately 10,891 buildings are privately owned, while 3,768 buildings are under non-private ownership. Among the latter, government ownership (1,718 buildings) and endowment (Waqf) ownership (1,225 buildings) constitute the largest shares. Furthermore, approximately 172 buildings have unknown ownership (Majoohl-al-Malek), with their status remaining unresolved.

Crucially, in the process of insuring state-owned historical buildings, the government acts directly as the policyholder. However, for non-governmental properties, the government serves as a facilitator to expedite and streamline the insurance process. Consequently, the measures outlined in Article 17 of the Law for the Protection, Restoration, and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Fabrics (approved on July 3, 2019) are twofold: first, actions taken by the state as a policyholder for monuments under its direct ownership; and second, actions taken by the state as the custodian of national cultural heritage to facilitate the insurance of non-governmental historical properties. This distinction is vital when proposing effective policy interventions.

Another critical point is the distinction between

Fig. 1. Number of nationally registered cultural-historical works, categorized by buildings, sites, and fabrics. Source: Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Table 1. Ownership status of the country's nationally registered historic buildings. Source: Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts.

Ownership Status	Statistical Status (Based on the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts Registration System)
State-owned	1718
Charitable / Non-profit	345
Public	175
National	22
Endowment (Vaghf)	1225
Joint / Common Property	111
Unknown Ownership / Undetermined	172
Private	10891
Total	3768

monuments as "historical-cultural objects," "historical-cultural buildings," and "historical-cultural sites." Investigations indicate that while all nationally registered historical-cultural objects are covered by insurance against fire, flood, explosion, and lightning, none are covered against theft. This is a significant gap, as theft insurance is the most vital requirement for these artifacts. Due to their movable nature, these objects are far more susceptible to theft than to damage from fire or lightning.

Furthermore, among all nationally registered historical-cultural sites and buildings, only 75 historical buildings those under the ownership of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts' Revitalization and Utilization Fund are covered by insurance against lightning, fire, flood, explosion, and theft. Notably, none of these buildings are insured against earthquakes. This is despite the fact that earthquake insurance is the most critical form of coverage for historical-cultural buildings. While other environmental and natural factors may threaten parts of a structure, an earthquake poses an existential threat to the entire monument. Therefore, insuring historical-cultural buildings against seismic events is of double importance compared to other natural disasters. The following section examines the challenges of implementing insurance for historical buildings.

Challenges of Utilizing Insurance Mechanisms for Optimal Economic Support of Historical-Cultural Monuments

• Difficulty in valuation

One of the primary challenges in applying insurance mechanisms for the economic governance of historical-cultural heritage is financial valuation.

Historical buildings possess both “tangible value” (construction costs, materials, and maintenance) and “intangible value” (historical, cultural, artistic, religious, and identity-related significance). Thus, the true value of a historical monument is a synthesis of its material and intangible attributes. Currently, there is no standardized or universally accepted methodology for calculating the intangible value of historical monuments in the country. This is largely due to the inherent complexity of such calculations; unlike material value, the intangible significance of a monument cannot be measured by objective, physical criteria. For instance, how can one quantify the religious value of a Safavid-era minaret and mosque in Isfahan? How can the historical role of Persepolis in shaping national identity be translated into a numerical figure? Or what criteria exist for pricing the intangible value of a Qajar-era historical house in Qazvin?

Furthermore, the intangible value of a historical building is multi-dimensional, spanning historical, cultural, artistic, religious, and social facets. Each dimension requires a specific evaluative methodology, and synthesizing them into a single aggregate value is highly complex. For example, the Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque in Isfahan possesses both immense religious and artistic value, the quantification and combination of which are extremely difficult. Additionally, the uniqueness of each monument precludes simple comparisons. One cannot apply the same spiritual valuation framework used for the Golestan Palace in Tehran to the historical house of Imam Khomeini in Qom. These complexities hinder the development of a standardized framework for the intangible valuation of historical monuments.

In countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom, many historical buildings are privately owned and marketable. Consequently, a secondary market for historical properties has emerged, where monuments are periodically traded through auctions and art markets. In such markets, a “market value” is determined based on supply and demand, which may be influenced by economic factors, trends, or promotion. It is important to note that market value often differs from “intrinsic value,” which is based on historical and artistic significance. In countries with active heritage markets, market value typically serves as the basis for insurance payouts. In Iran, however, no such market exists for historical monuments. Moreover, the public or endowment nature of many sites makes them non-transferable. The inherent nature of certain structures, such as mosques and minarets, also precludes their entry into a commercial market.

Conversely, countries like Italy and France, which have a long history of heritage conservation, have developed methods to measure the “real value” of historical buildings. In Italy, for example, the Central Institute for Restoration (ICR) employs expert methodologies based on age, historical significance, local cultural role, and impact on the tourism industry to determine value. However, such methods have not yet been globally standardized.

In response to inquiries regarding the insurance of historical buildings, the Central Insurance of the Islamic Republic of Iran identified the lack of a “base price” and valuation difficulties as the most significant barriers. The Central Insurance’s proposal focuses specifically on coverage for reconstruction and repair costs following natural disasters. This has been met with opposition from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts. The Ministry argues that excluding intangible value from the valuation process is insufficient, as insuring only reconstruction costs ignores the historical and cultural essence of the monument. Furthermore, the lack of an official authority for heritage valuation remains a major obstacle. This stems from a lack of consensus between the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance (the insurance regulator) and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage (the heritage custodian). Additionally, Article 17 of the 2019 Law mandates the government to insure historical buildings in general terms, without specifying the exact duties and authorities of each executive body. Therefore, the law requires amendment to clearly define the responsibilities of each agency regarding the insurance of historical-cultural monuments.

• Vulnerability of historical-cultural monuments

The high vulnerability of historical monuments is another major challenge in implementing insurance as an economic support mechanism. This vulnerability stems from factors intrinsic to the building such as age and the nature of historical materials as well as environmental and human-induced factors. This fragility significantly affects the insurer’s motivation; the risk associated with insuring highly vulnerable monuments, given their immense value and the exorbitant costs of restoration, is exceptionally high for insurance companies.

Consequently, accurate data is required regarding the level of exposure and existing damage for each monument. Furthermore, the causes of such vulnerabilities must be disclosed to insurers to optimize the insurance process. Currently, there is a lack of transparent data concerning the vulnerability and damage levels of historical monuments in Iran. No comprehensive or integrated study has been conducted even for nationally or globally registered sites. This data vacuum prevents insurance institutions from accurately calculating the risk of coverage. Given the technical expertise of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, this ministry is the only authority qualified to provide such vulnerability assessments. However, no legal mandate has yet been issued to the Ministry to provide this critical information.

- **Geographical location and natural hazards**

One of the main reasons why historical monuments are vulnerable to damage is their geographical location. Many of these monuments are located in sensitive areas such as earthquake-prone, flood-prone, or even landslide-prone areas. Currently, the seismicity of many regions of Iran is the most important reason why historical monuments and monuments in the country are vulnerable to damage, which has caused damage and destruction of many of these monuments so far. For example, the Bam Citadel in Kerman Province, which is one of the largest adobe structures in the world, was severely damaged by a severe earthquake in 2004. This earthquake not only destroyed many parts of the Citadel, but also showed that even fortified historical monuments such as the Bam Citadel are vulnerable to natural disasters. Another example is the historical village of Isfahak, located in the Dihok district of South Khorasan province, Iran, which was seriously damaged in an earthquake in Tabas in 1979 and was no longer habitable. In addition to earthquakes, floods are another natural threat to historical monuments. For example, in recent years, devastating floods in the northern provinces of Iran, such as Golestan and Mazandaran, have destroyed parts of historical monuments in these areas. In addition to causing physical damage to the buildings and damaging their material and historical value, these natural disasters also entail heavy costs for their restoration and reconstruction.

- **Old age and deterioration of building materials**

The old age of historical monuments is one of the most important factors that expose these monuments to vulnerability. Many of these buildings were built hundreds or even thousands of years ago, and the materials used in their construction, such as brick, wood, stone, and other natural materials, deteriorate and deteriorate over time. This deterioration, which is caused by the passage of time, is exacerbated by environmental and human factors. Materials such as brick, brick, wood, and stone used in the construction of historical buildings and monuments lose their resistance over time. These materials crack, erode, and even collapse over time. This deterioration is especially visible in parts of the building that are exposed to rain, snow, and direct sunlight, as climate change is one of the most important factors exacerbating the deterioration of historical buildings. Increased temperature, decreased humidity, heavy rainfall, and frequent storms can quickly damage old materials. For example, in desert areas of Iran such as Yazd, brick buildings crack and erode due to extreme temperature changes between day and night. On the other hand, in humid areas of northern Iran, historical buildings deteriorate due to high humidity and the growth of fungi and moss. Environmental pollution, especially in large and industrial cities, is another important factor damaging historical buildings. Air pollutants can react with building materials and cause them to deteriorate. For example, in cities such as Tehran and Isfahan, some historical buildings have changed color, eroded, and even been destroyed due to air pollution. This pollution has a particularly destructive effect on old stones and bricks, causing these materials to become brittle and worn out over time.

- **Unnecessary construction within or near the boundaries of buildings**

With the growth of the population and the expansion of cities, the need for new construction has increased. This urban development is often carried out without regard to historical monuments and their boundaries. For example, in the city of Isfahan, which is known as one of the most important historical cities in Iran, unauthorized construction and irregular urban development have put many historical monuments at risk. One of the most important problems in preserving historical monuments is the failure to respect the boundaries of these buildings during new construction. The boundaries of historical monuments are determined in order to maintain the necessary space to prevent damage from surrounding construction. However, in many cases, this boundary is not respected and new construction is carried out very close to historical monuments. This not only reduces the space required to preserve the buildings, but can also damage the structure of the buildings. For example, in the city of Yazd, known as one of the oldest brick cities in the world, unprincipled construction around historical monuments has put these monuments at risk of destruction. Of course, the above issue should be sought in the lack of necessary provisions regarding private rights in contrast to public rights. In the current situation, the current economy in historical structures and monuments is based on "their land of seeing" instead of "their value of seeing"; therefore, destruction is defined by entering the territory of the aforementioned structures and monuments in line with the economic interests of the general society.

• Lack of regulatory and monitoring infrastructure to mitigate vulnerability risks

One of the most critical requirements for utilizing insurance mechanisms in the optimal governance of historical-cultural heritage is the ability to monitor these sites both in real-time and periodically. Due to their age and immense tangible and intangible value, historical monuments are constantly exposed to risks. If these structures are insured without effective oversight and maintenance, the risk for insurers increases significantly, as they are contractually obligated to cover restoration costs once damage occurs.

To mitigate this risk, periodic and real-time technical inspections are essential. Such monitoring allows insurers to accurately identify the causes of damage or, ideally, prevent it altogether. It should be noted that technical supervision requires specific prerequisites, including the installation of high-quality CCTV systems and the employment of specialized heritage conservation experts.

Modern technologies play a pivotal role in optimizing this process. For instance, Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs utilizes seismic sensors and smart monitoring systems to assess the structural integrity of historical buildings. This data enables insurance companies to conduct precise risk assessments. In Iran, the lack of such equipment in most historical sites makes the monitoring process exceptionally difficult. Consequently, domestic insurance companies show little inclination to cover these monuments due to their "unmonitorable" status. Therefore, with the support of the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, necessary measures must be taken to equip these sites. Enhancing the monitorability of historical buildings not only incentivizes insurers who aim to protect their financial interests by preventing damage but ultimately ensures the long-term preservation of the country's cultural heritage.

• Absence of Participation by International Insurance Institutions

Certain international insurance firms specialize exclusively in the coverage of historical and cultural heritage. These companies often accumulate significant capital through philanthropic donations or specialized activities, such as auctions of privately-owned artworks, providing them with the financial capacity to insure high-value monuments. A prominent example is Ecclesiastical Insurance, which specializes in historical churches. Established in 1887 by the Church of England initially to cover fire damage, the company expanded its services by 1894 to include personal accident and theft insurance. Today, it insures not only churches worldwide but also numerous historical buildings and religious artifacts in the UK. For example, archaeological objects can be insured for up to €375,000, and artworks for up to €750,000 globally. Iconic structures such as Gloucester Cathedral and St. Paul's Cathedral in London are among its policyholders. The company operates under the Church of England, and its shares were valued at over £100 million on the London Stock Exchange in 2023.

Another example is AXA Art, founded in London in 1934 with the support of art enthusiasts. It now operates in over 20 countries, including the UK, UAE, Singapore, France, Germany, and Italy. AXA Art specializes in insuring artworks and historical objects for national and international exhibitions, serving museums, galleries, and private collectors.

Despite the vast capacity of these international institutions, they are currently unable to operate in Iran due to unilateral and unjust international sanctions. However, since sites registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List are considered "global heritage," the activities of international insurers regarding these sites should technically fall outside the scope of sanctions. By pursuing proactive diplomacy and legal measures, it may be possible to secure their participation in insuring Iran's World Heritage sites. It is worth noting that while World Heritage sites receive limited financial aid from UNESCO in the event of damage, this is insufficient compared to comprehensive insurance coverage.

• Financial Incapacity of Domestic Insurance Institutions to Cover Damages

A primary reason for the reluctance of domestic insurance companies to enter the heritage sector is their financial inability to cover potential losses. As previously discussed, because the intangible value of these monuments is factored into the valuation in Iran, the required payouts for damages would be extraordinary exceeding the financial thresholds of domestic firms.

To compensate for this high risk, insurers tend to set premium rates significantly higher than those for other sectors. This creates a deadlock, as neither the Ministry of Cultural Heritage (as the primary custodian) nor private owners have the financial means to pay such exorbitant premiums. Consequently, finding a "balanced premium rate" one that covers the insurer's risk while remaining affordable for policyholders remains a major challenge. Currently, no specialized insurance company for historical heritage exists in Iran. There is an urgent need to establish a specialized insurer, funded through a public-private partnership involving government resources and contributions from heritage owners and custodians.

• Unreliability of prospections and estimates regarding historical sites

A significant challenge in applying insurance mechanisms to historical-cultural sites is the uncertainty and unreliability of archaeological prospections and estimates. Due to the complex nature of exploration and research, the exact boundaries of these sites are often based on non-definitive estimates by experts from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage.

In many cases, reliable and precise data regarding the geographic limits of historical sites, as well as the artifacts contained within them, is unavailable. This lack of certainty creates ambiguity regarding the scope of the "insured object." In any insurance system, defining the exact nature, components, and boundaries of the insured item is an indispensable requirement. Without comprehensive and accurate data, drafting an insurance contract becomes nearly impossible, as it hinders accurate risk assessment and appropriate valuation of these cultural assets.

Conclusion

Considering the foregoing discussion, effective governance for the economic protection of historical-cultural buildings through insurance mechanisms faces several major challenges, including the difficulty of valuing historical monuments and buildings, the vulnerability of these structures, the lack of necessary monitoring infrastructure to reduce risk exposure, the non-participation of international insurance institutions due to economic sanctions, and the financial incapacity of domestic insurance companies to compensate for the costs of restoration and reconstruction of the aforementioned monuments and structures. Therefore, in addition to removing the ambiguity surrounding Article 17 of the Law on the Protection, Restoration, and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Fabrics of 12/04/2019 with regard to the measures and arrangements required for insuring buildings registered on the National Heritage List, the necessary legislative, executive, and policy measures must be placed on the agenda to address the aforementioned challenges.

• Necessary strategies for addressing governance challenges in the economic protection of historical-cultural buildings through insurance mechanisms

First Strategy: In order to improve effective governance in the economic protection of historical-cultural buildings and monuments, it appears necessary to address the challenges related to determining the base price and insurance premium for these assets, as well as the lack of transparent and up-to-date information regarding their level of vulnerability. Accordingly, it is proposed that Article 17 of the Law on the Protection, Restoration, and Revitalization of Historical-Cultural Fabrics of 12/04/2019 be amended as follows, with the aim of strengthening informational transparency, institutional coordination, and efficiency in the insurance system of this field:

17- The Government shall be obliged, within six months after this law enters into force, and within the framework of the principles of good governance and through cooperation among the relevant institutions, to provide the necessary measures for insuring historical buildings registered on the National Heritage List and other related lists:

1. The Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts shall be obligated, in cooperation with the Organization for Registration of Deeds and Properties, to enter information regarding the natural and environmental vulnerability, protective status, and age of the monuments into the system referred to in subsection (1), paragraph (P), Article 83 of the Seventh Development Plan Law, and to

update this information annually. The creation of such a transparent information database can provide the basis for more accurate decision-making and strengthen trust among the responsible institutions, insurers, and other stakeholders.

2. The Central Insurance of the Islamic Republic of Iran shall be obligated, in cooperation with the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts and by utilizing the expertise of official judicial experts, to formulate a transparent and standardized framework for determining the base price in specialized insurance policies for historical buildings, بحیث[N5.1] that the insured value of such buildings, irrespective of their intangible value, is calculated and announced based on the estimated costs of restoration and revitalization. This can contribute to greater transparency and efficiency in the interaction between the insurance industry and heritage institutions.

3. The insurance premium for risks such as earthquakes shall be determined within the framework of technical regulations and by considering indicators such as the type of structure and materials used, the building's area and dimensions, the value of the fixtures and equipment located within the site, the reconstruction cost per square meter in the event of destruction, and the seismic risk level of the region. The determination of such specific criteria can lead to the establishment of a coherent, predictable, and risk-management-based insurance system for historical buildings.

Second Strategy: Within the framework of good governance and with the aim of reducing the risk associated with insuring historical-cultural monuments and buildings, it is proposed that the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts establish, by utilizing modern monitoring technologies, an infrastructure for continuous monitoring of the condition of historical buildings and sites registered on the National Heritage List. In this regard, equipping these buildings with smart monitoring systems such as seismic sensors, humidity sensors, high-quality surveillance cameras, and other environmental monitoring tools can enable real-time observation of structural and environmental changes. Implementing such a monitoring system, in addition to enhancing prevention and reducing the likelihood of extensive damage, can also increase informational transparency and strengthen insurers' confidence in risk assessment and the provision of appropriate insurance coverage for these buildings. It is also proposed that the implementation of this plan be included among the ministry's priority programs and financed through capital asset acquisition credits, so as to lay the groundwork for an efficient system of risk management and economic protection of historical buildings.

Third Strategy: Given that some of the country's historical-cultural monuments and buildings registered on the UNESCO World Heritage List may benefit from the insurance coverage of specialized international institutions, the expansion of international cooperation in this area can be considered within the framework of good governance and cultural heritage diplomacy. Accordingly, it is proposed that the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts adopt an active approach to facilitating cooperation and engagement with reputable international insurance companies and institutions in the field of insuring historical buildings and sites. Such an approach can, while benefiting from global expertise and specialized standards in the field of heritage insurance, help strengthen the economic protection system of nationally registered assets on the World Heritage List. For example, in the case of World Heritage churches in Iran, the capacities of specialized international institutions active in the insurance of historic religious sites, such as Ecclesiastical Insurance in the United Kingdom, may be utilized. These interactions can contribute to improving the protection, risk management, and economic sustainability of these monuments within a multi-level framework of cultural heritage governance.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there was no conflict for them in conducting this research.

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