

Analysis the Process and Priorities of Urbanization in the Mashhad city After Islamic Revolution of Iran

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Abstract

Urbanization can be seen as a process that its requirements consist of making schedule changes and hastily refrain from in the urban systems. The aim of this paper is the analysis of the process and priorities of urbanization in the Mashhad city with special emphasis on the period post-Islamic Revolution of Iran (1979 onward). The applied methodology is based on analytical-descriptive approach. We have used documental, field survey methods to collect information. Results showed that Mashhad city as the greatest city in the southeast of Iran is facing accelerated urbanization. The formation of marginal sectors in the surroundings of the main city center is an important parameter for this rapid growth. Finally, we can present some solutions to encourage private sector to play more role in the investment of housing activity.

Keywords: Mashhad city, Urbanization, Housing activity, Marginal Sectors.

1. Introduction & Background

Almost two and a half billion people representing 45 percent of the world's population live in urban areas. In 1990, 37 percent of the developing world's population lived in urban areas and about one third of the urban population in the developing countries lived in urban slums and shanty towns. In 1990, more than 75 percent of all South Americans were living in urban areas, the highest degree of urbanization in the world. Europe ranked second with a little more than 73 percent of the population in urban areas. The highest urban growth rate between 1960 and 1990 was in Africa at 4.9 percent, compared with a global annual rate of 2.8 percent (UNCHS, 1992 & Watson, 1993). The United Nations report revealed that the world's urban population will rise by 4 billion by 2030, with the birth of 90% of this population in developing or undeveloped countries. From an overview of the contemporary literature on urbanization in developing countries, it appears that despite generally different approaches, various government structures, widely implemented policies and several viewpoints of the policy makers and researchers, the dominant perspective is that the developing countries have experienced rapid urbanization and migration (United Nations Population Division, 2010; Tilaki & et al, 2013). Rapid urban growth is responsible for many socio-economic and environmental changes. Its effects are strongly related to the global issues. Urbanization process has intensified sharply in the early of twenty century. In 1950 less than 30% of the world's population lived in cities. This number grew to 47% in 2000 (2.8 billion people), and is expected to grow to 60% by the year 2015. According to the national census report in 2011, Iran has 1,648,000 square kilometers area with 75.2 million population and 71.2 % percent of them live in cities (Asgharpour & et al, 2013).

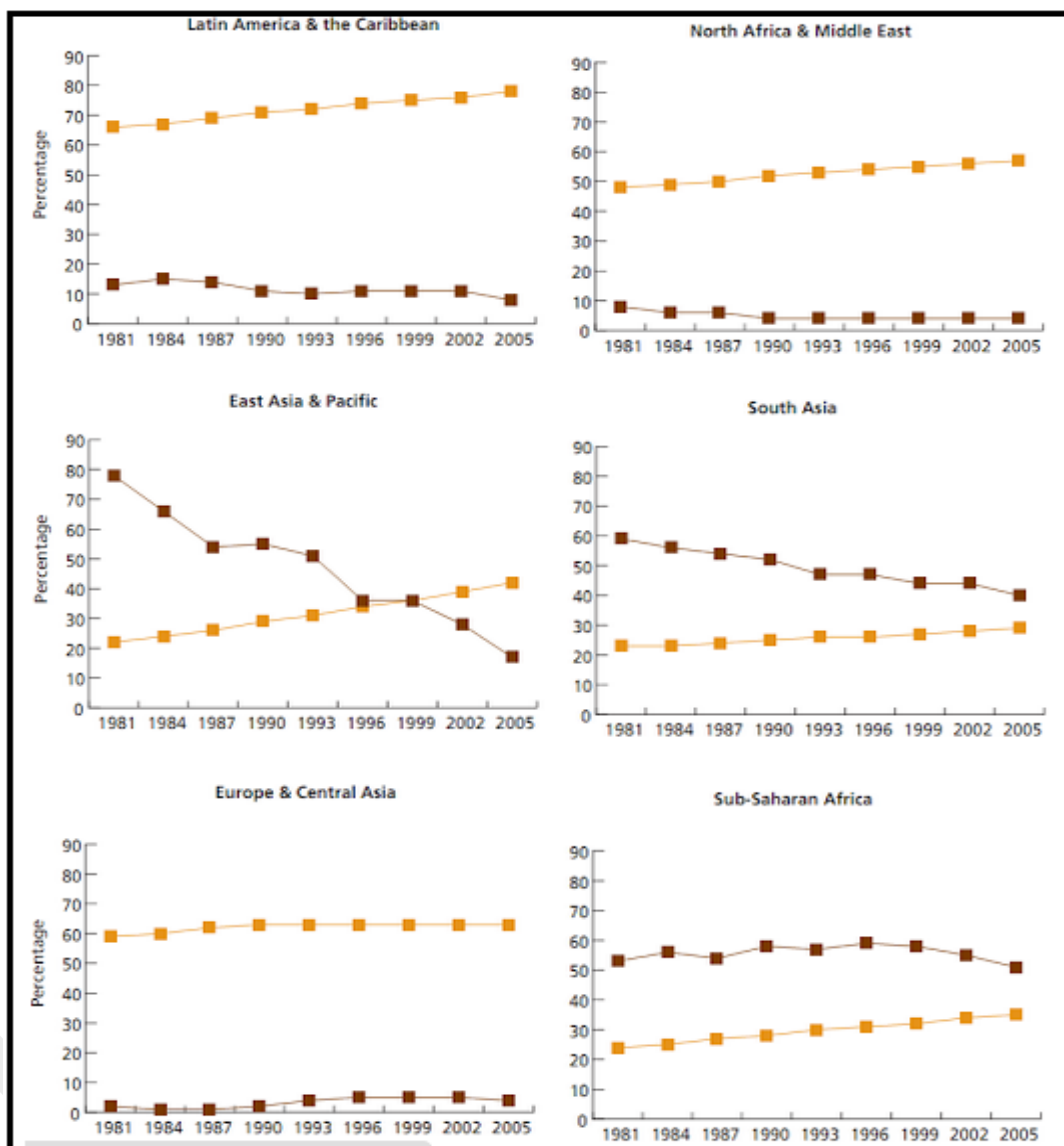


Fig.1. Urbanization and poverty headcount, 1981-2005
Source: World Bank, 2007.

Structure of cities and their regional organization will be changed significantly due to social and economic changes caused by the globalization and changes in the fields of communications and information. Cities will be reconstructing themselves in order to be in line with these changes. By increasing the world domination of cities, the development and management of cities and areas around them are essential as the basis for creating the social and economic actions and interactions which should be better understood. Because the world's sustainability has become the current dominant subject at a global scale, reaching this sustainability without understanding

the cities as the most important spatial physical aspects of human civilization seems impossible (Javaher Ghalam, 2013).

Fanni (2006) in her paper entitled “Cities and urbanization in Iran after the Islamic revolution” says that the nature and the process of urbanization differ from one country to another. In the last two decades, fundamental changes have taken place in ideas about the roles which settlement plays in the developing countries. Specifically, new critical approaches have been introduced as to the assumed function of big cities as the generators of modernization and development (Hardoy, 1988; Fanni, 2006).



Fig.2. A view of Imam Reza holy shrine as a main urban symbol of Mashhad city.

Source: Authors adopted Mashhad Municipality website (Mashhad.ir).

According to different papers and books, urban growth in third world countries such as Iran in general and Mashhad city in special, has two sources: Rural- Urban migration and natural increase of urban population (Fanni & et al, 2014). It must be stated that the acceleration of world urbanization since 1850 partly reflects a corresponding acceleration of world population growth (Lowry, 1990; Peng & et al, 2012). But urbanization in Mashhad isn't merely an increase in the average density of human settlement.

Although, the urbanization and urban growth are global events, its impacts are more considerable in developing countries. High percentages of urbanization have occurred in developing countries compared with other parts of the world. Although the pace of change has varied considerably between countries and regions, virtually every country of the developing world has been urbanizing rapidly. Evidence of a slowdown in the rate of growth of some of the largest cities and of polarization reversal or spatial de-concentration into polycentric metropolitan

forms does not contradict the conclusion that the developing world is becoming increasingly urbanized (Pacione, 2011; Seifolddini & et al, 2014). With the increase of population and development of investment and activities, the structural organization of cities is experiencing fundamental changes (Saeed nia, 1999). So cities will always be bigger physically and more complex structurally as living organisms. Following this physical development of the city, economic, social, cultural and above all ecological and environmental conditions are also gradually changed (Listokin, 2002). This type of urbanization may be seen more in Iran so that one of the important processes of urbanization is rapid physical expansion of cities (Shokuhi & et al, 2013).

2. Case Study Region

Mashhad city is the second largest city of Iran. It is the center of Khorasan Razavi province. Current Iran's population is over 75 million. Most Iranian reside in densely populated urban areas. Iran's capital city is Tehran. The population of the Tehran Metropolitan Area including the city, some of its suburbs and the surrounding area is approximately 12 million. Major cities of Iran and their approximate populations are shown in the Table (1).

Table (1)
 Major cities of Iran and their population

City	Population
Tehran	12,059,000
Mashhad	2,926,000
Isfahan	1,598,000
Shiraz	1,271,000
Tabriz	1,222,000
Ahvaz	830,000
Karaj	1,090,000
Bandare Abbas	508,000

Source: U.S census Bureau, 2007.

The city has witnessed rapid growth in the last two decades, mostly because of its economic, social and religious attractions. It has an area of 148 km² and its current population is 2.9 million. Since 1987, its population has grown 3.6 times while its extent at the same time period has doubled (Rafiee, 2007). Mashhad as other shrine cities in the world has different potential's in the field of attraction urban tourism. Advertising as a powerful tool has a key role in exacerbating this process (Tavakoli & Heydari, 2012). The aim of current research is the evaluation of the process and the priorities of urbanization in the Mashhad city after Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979 with a general review of its past process. Also, we will analyze the different aspects of research subject and we will present some solutions at the end of the paper.

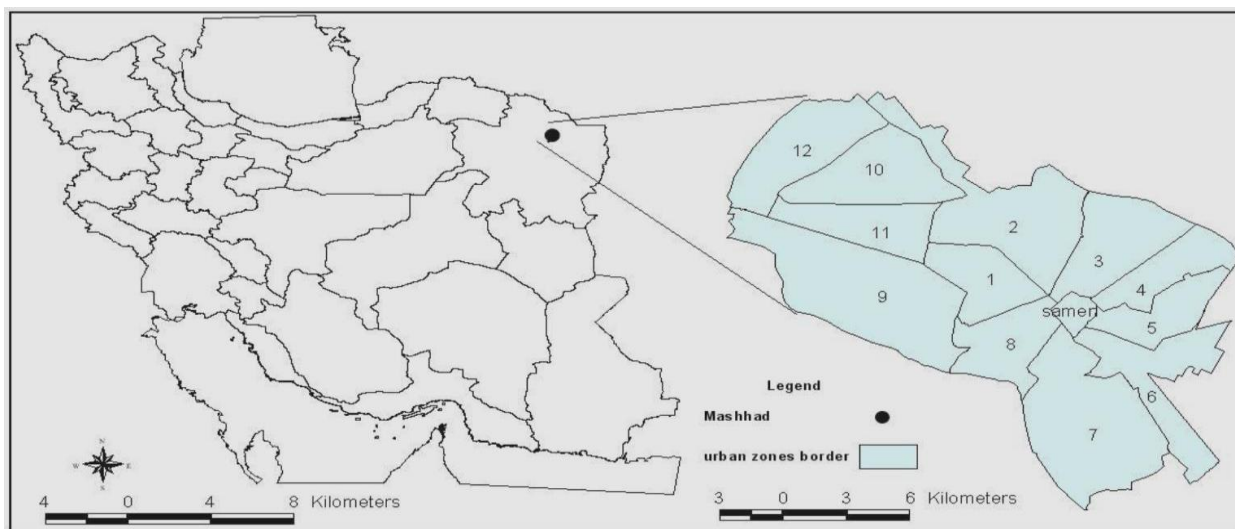


Fig.3. A view of case study region.

Source: Authors adopted of Zanganeh & et al, 2013; Mahiny & et al, 2012.

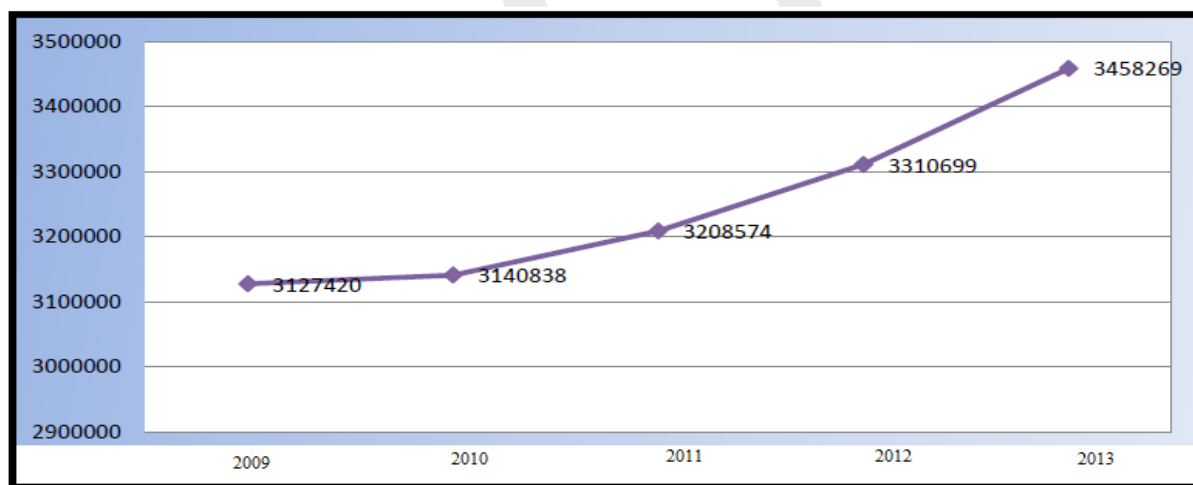


Fig.4. Comparison of the processes of Mashhad city population during 2009 to 2013.

Source: Mashhad university of Medical science & Mashhad Municipality, 2015.

3. Material and Methodology

The methodology used is based on analytical- descriptive approach. We have used documental, field work and survey methods to collect information. Given the importance of the indices and our limitations in having access to them, we have chosen some of these variables to measure the process and priorities of urbanization in Mashhad city of Iran (Health facilities, access to appropriate food, improving of urban and municipality laws, number of cities in case

study region, the proportion of urban and rural population and etc.). In the continuum, we have used statistical software analyze the data.

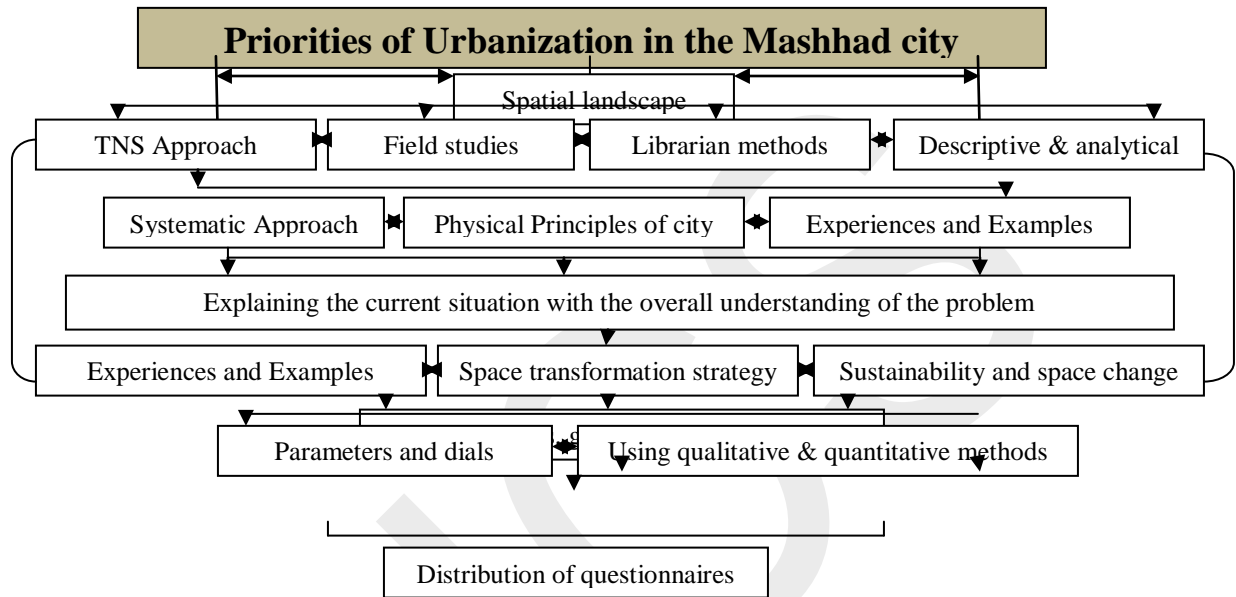


Fig.5. Conceptual diagram of the research

4. Findings and Results

Urbanization and its priorities in the Mashhad city have special framework and this framework led to, the process of urban planning, architecture and etc., to be more distinguished from Iranian urbanization system.

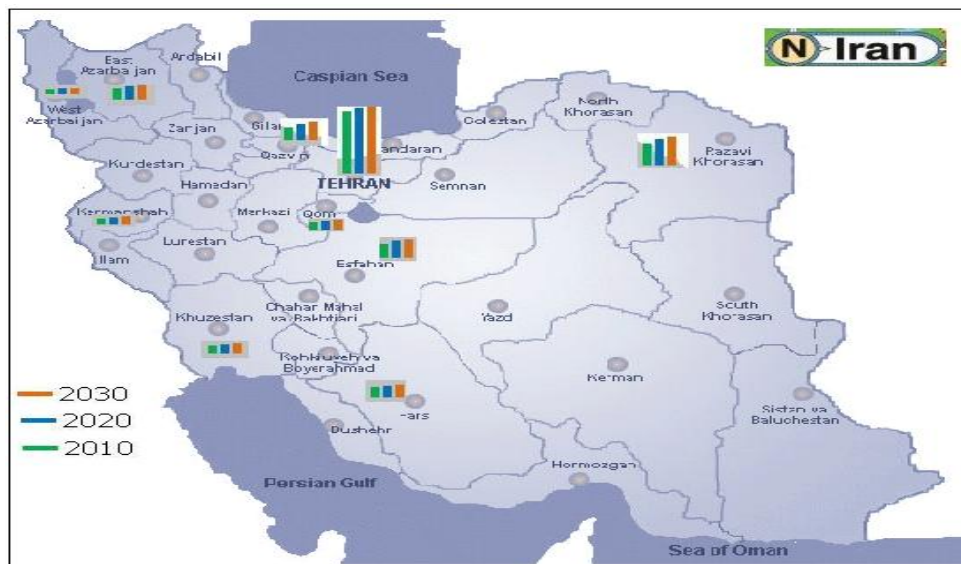


Fig.6. growth of urbanization in the main cities of Iran, during 2010, 2020 & 2030

With attention to fig (6), we can notice that Tehran city is the largest city of Iran as it has a very high proportion in the Iranian Urbanization. After Tehran, Mashhad is the greatest city in the southeast of Iran and the second largest city of Iran. Mashhad is the only city in southeastern of Iran which is growing rapidly. This growth has different reasons:

1. Migration from neighboring provinces, especially from Sistan and Baluchestan;
2. Growth of unplanned urbanization in the most urban areas of southeast Iran;
3. Numerous droughts in the South and North Khorasan province of Iran that in the long time villagers were forced to migrate to Mashhad and Gogran as two important cities;
4. Development of urban transport facilities that allowed villagers facile movement from countryside to the center of city.
5. Earning of more income for rural residents in the city of Mashhad.

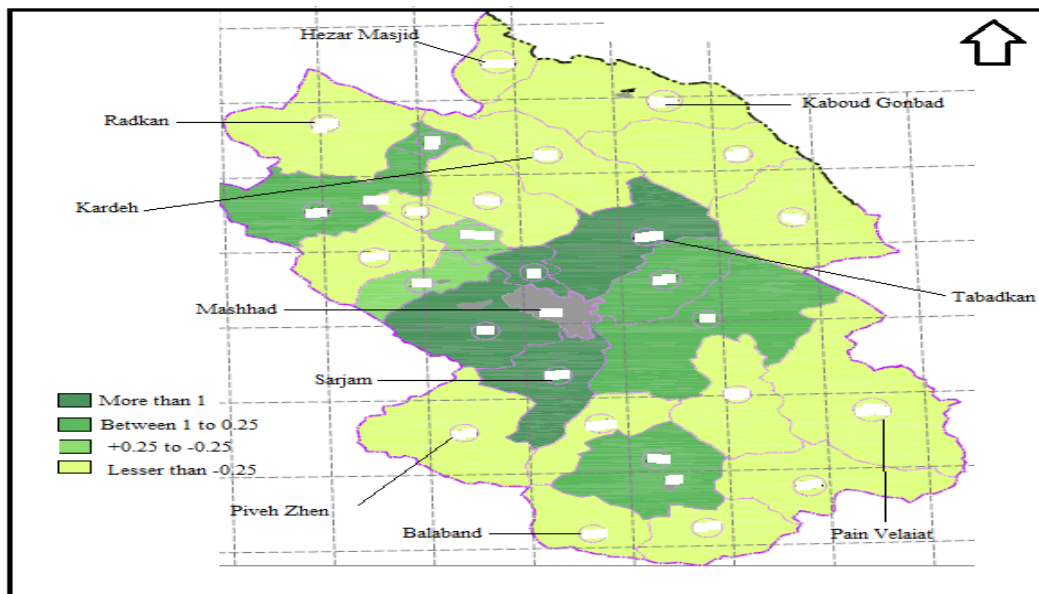


Fig.7. Mashhad travel size from villages to urban area of Mashhad.

Discontinuity of spatial and social structure of Mashhad city in the wake of unbridled accelerated urbanization in the recent decades is clear. This imposes serious consequences to the Mashhad city body. These factors led to the accumulation of the asymmetrical urban population in the case study region. The formation of informal settlements, with abnormal tissue and non-standard text leads to inefficient of urban projects and as a result urban health system is facing with serious challenges. Massive volume of 1.2 million marginalized peoples in the study area makes it necessary to political and municipal authorities to pay more attention to the crisis and the demands of citizens. Therefore, they have to make purposeful decisions to empower urban residents and secure equilibrium that are important issues.

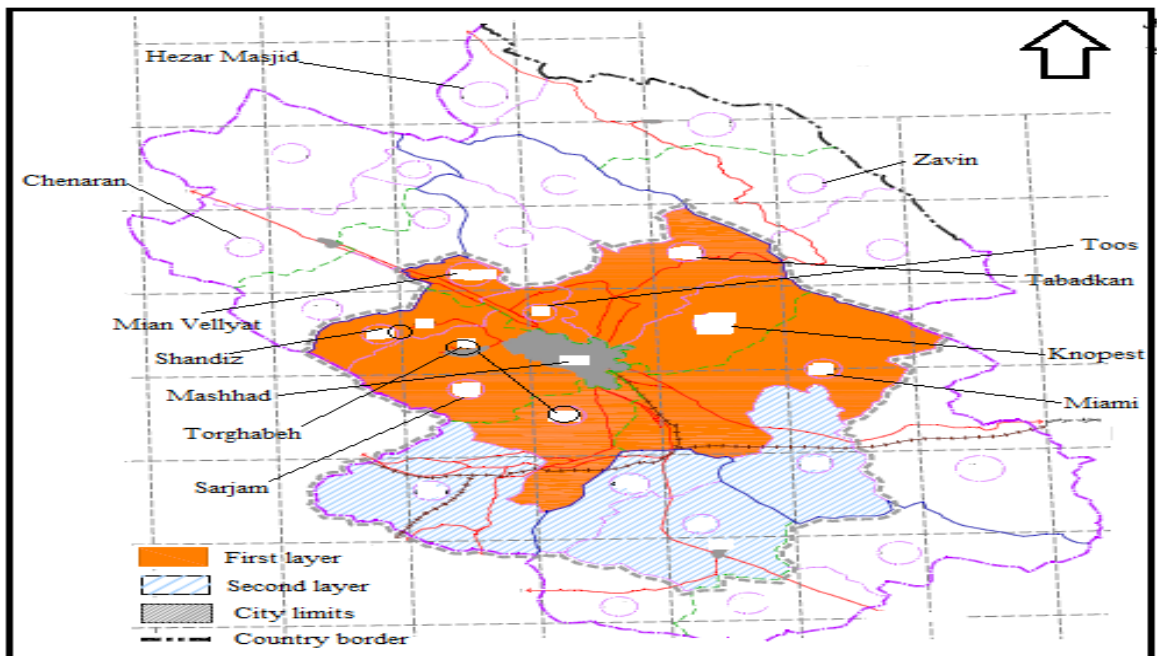


Fig.8. Transportation as a main element in determine of Mashhad city limit.

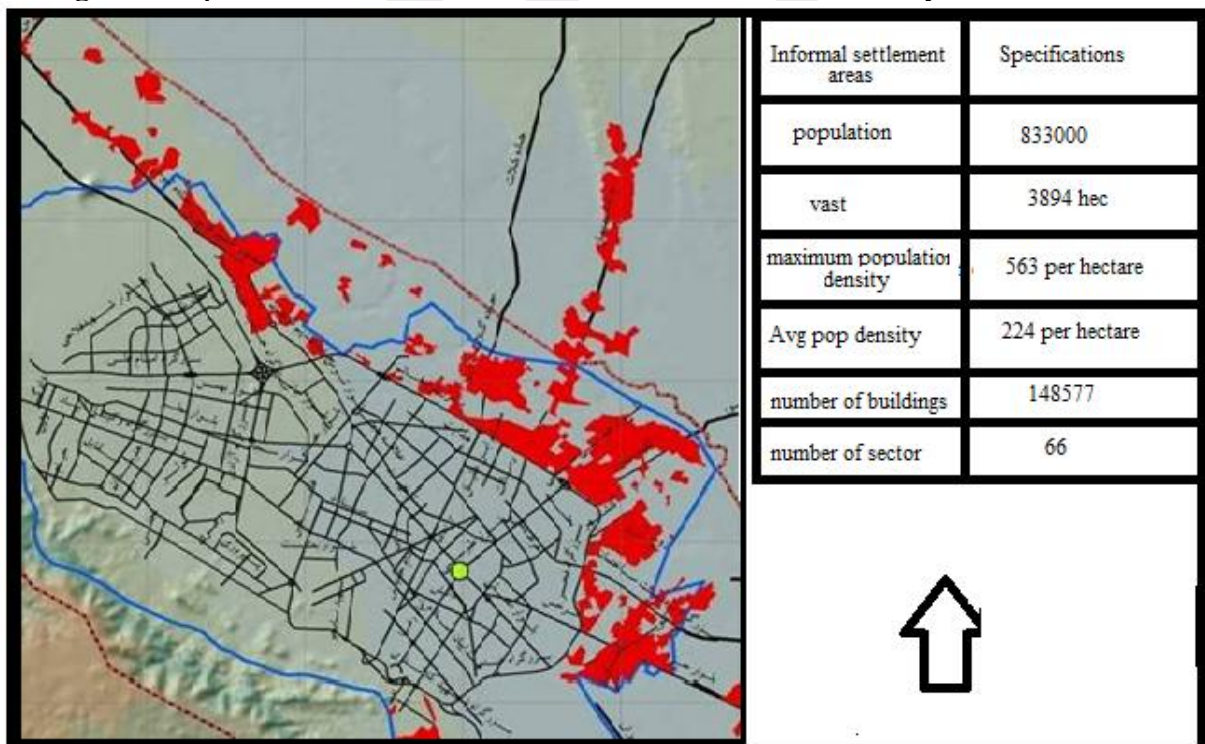


Fig.9. Informal settlement's in the Mashhad city as a main part of Mashhad urbanization.
 Source: Planning deputy of Mashhad municipality, 2015.

According to past plans in Mashhad city, the proposed Khazeni plan of vast agriculture areas were in legal boundary. So, the city has grown horizontally. But in other issues such as residential density and complex functional areas, it was better. Indeed, comprehensive Khazeni plan has led to horizontal growth. Thus, the mentioned plan hasn't succeeded to create a compact city concept. It must be stated that the development pattern of Middle West plan has attempted to achieve compact city concept items. The proposed population was 800.000 people for studied area, while there are 650.000 people now. So the plan was not a success. But in other elements such as: residential density in hectare and complex land-uses,¹ it is better than other plans.

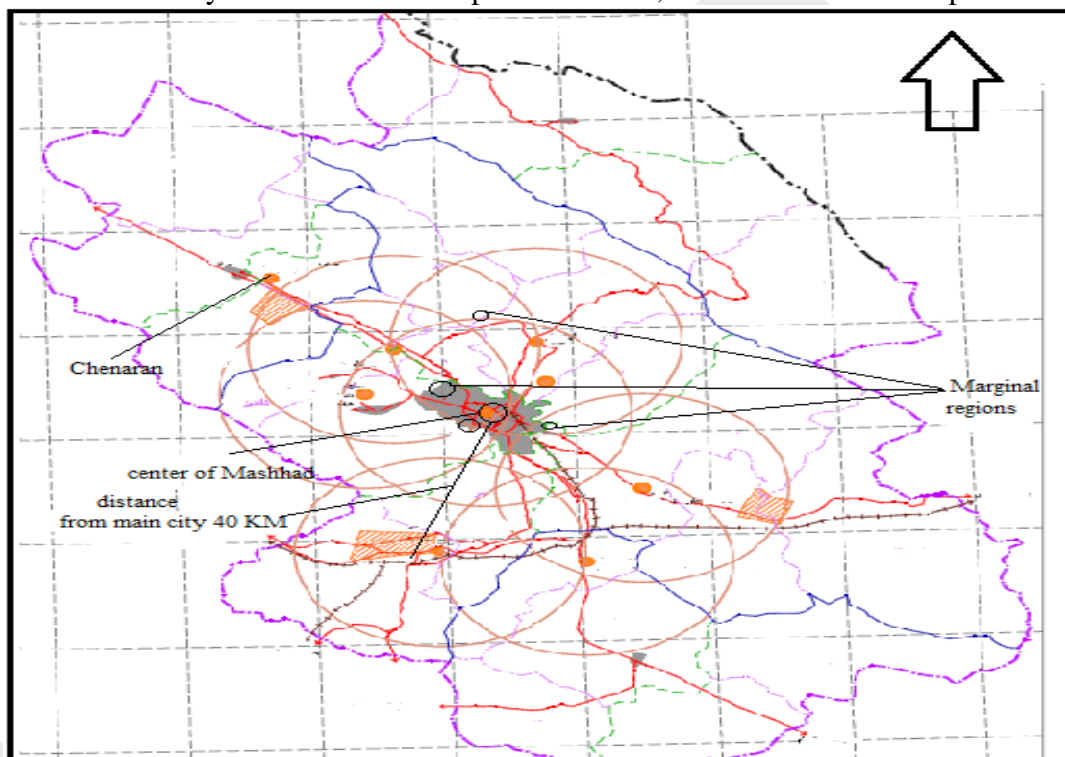


Fig.10. Areas of housing, employment and distribution of small businesses in the Mashhad city

¹ Rahnama & et al, 2013, AJER.

5. Problems and Solutions

In this section, while addressing some of the problems, solutions will be appropriate:

Table (2): Problems and Solutions in the urbanization of Mashhad city process:

	Challenge	Solve way
Physical	Confusion and irregular texture of accommodations;	Giving better shape to the settlements according to cultural and natural conditions;
	Formation and rapid growth of the construction even before fixing;	Construction with schedule and attention to urban laws;
	Improper positioning near a stream and high voltage pylons;	More precise positioning of municipal equipment;
Security, social and cultural	inappropriate composition of the population;	Zoning due to their ethnic placement
	Low social status and human development;	Improvement of social identity of citizens;
	Fertility and high residential density;	Providing high quality housing;
Economic	Not wanting to improve housing conditions due to poverty and lack of legal ownership;	Improve housing and healthy conditions;
	The lack of private sector investment in these settlements;	Encourage private sector to play more active role in housing, economic aspects and investment in the city;
	Widespread informal economy;	Attempts to regulate the informal economy and the compliance of citizens with the law;
Environmental	Low quality, volatility and lack of health environment;	Improve the quality of live environment;
	Vulnerability to diseases and natural disasters;	Resistant homes and buildings against natural disasters;
	Immodestly passages and maintenance of animals in homes;	Attention to the passages coverage and improving the social identities of citizens;
Functional and operational	The inappropriate establishment of settlements and neighborhood;	Reasonable Establish of settlements;

	Absence or severe shortage of public spaces and services;	Giving more attention to public and services space in the urbanization process;
	Inefficient and inadequate access networks with narrow and low permeability;	Reasonable and fair access to distribution networks, maintaining illicit networks;
Infrastructure and public Land uses	Lack of infrastructure networks (especially gas), especially in the context of the emerging;	Improvement of infrastructure sources as water, gas etc.
	Illegal use of certain infrastructures and the vulnerabilities and risks from it;	Efforts of legalizing peoples and enforcement of urban laws;
	Lack of the passages lighting was implemented and appropriate ways;	Equip the passages and improving the culture the use of these equipment's.

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