



Population Instability of Tehran Metropolis vs 12 Regions in Tehran Province: a Brief Case Study

Yasmin Shabazzadegan¹ and Zahra Arzjani^{2*}

¹Geography and Urban Planning, Islamic Azad University, Central Tehran Branch, Tehran, Iran

²Department of Geography, Central Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

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Correspondence to

*E-mail: zarzjani@yahoo.com

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Abstract

Distribution of cities and consequently the concentration of urban population in Iran are not uniform and homogeneous. This is not only due to natural factors but is caused by the trend of civilization, evolution and changes in cities, of which the effect of the later is much more than the former. Due to structural inefficiencies in the planning system of the country and in the absence of land preparation plans, urbanism in Iran has caused a discordant urban system which has ended into unbalanced focus and concentration of population and activities in urban hierarchy. Tehran as one of the 20 large cities in the World and the largest Iranian metropolis is the most sensible instance of this phenomenon. Since the beginning of the current century, especially in recent decades, skeletal-spatial structure of this city has been the subject of vast heterogeneous and dispersed changes. On the other hand, 12 regions of Tehran province has witnessed continuous population drains, the departure of local residents and traditional families. Iranian Government needs to address such issues for balanced population growth and distribution implementing suitable policies.

1. Introduction

In November 1956, Iran conducted a national census for the first time (Mehdizadeh, 2002). Over the years after World War II until recently, Iran has witnessed a rapid population growth. During the year 1956-2006, growth rates of urban areas have consistently been higher than rural areas. Even in 1986-96, differences in population growth rates between these two regions were more than ten times. In due course of time, Tehran's population changes for the periods considered have been consistently upward, while they have been downward in the case of Tehran's historical center, in particular related to district 12. Population pressure and source of jobs are unparallel in flushing the population growth and improper distribution of the population. Government needs to play a major role for equal distribution as well as integration of the different factors for better livelihood of the local people to restrict migration. The strengthening or provision of infrastructures and the improvement of the living standards should be taken as priority in policy measures followed by providing the various housing, activity, and leisure needs of the residents. Adequate measures and facilities to the burgeoning population may provide sustainable development of the country.

2. Materials and Methods

The city of Tehran is geographically situated from 51°4' E to 51°33' E and from 35° 35' to 35° 50' N latitude that lies on the southern foot of Alborz in a vast area between desert and mountains (Figure 1 and 2).

Continuative and sectional methods were used in this research work and also changes in phenomena were studied and compared during 1956-2006. The type of causal relationship between them was investigated; field observations and Statistical Center were used. Data were processed using the geographic information system (GIS).

3. Results and Discussion

Due to structural deficiencies in the national planning system and the absence of physical development plans, the phenomenon of urbanization has brought about an incoherent urban system that has resulted in an unbalanced concentration and densification of population and activity within the urban hierarchy (Statistical Report of the Urban Research Center, 1995). The scale of these undesirable transformations has been broad to the extent that on the one hand it has curtailed the effectiveness of the considerable activities and efforts of city managers, and



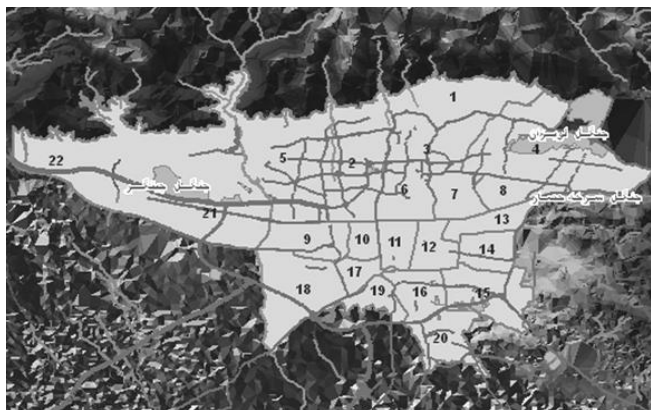


Figure 1: Location of Tehran territory in Iran



Figure 2: Location of the region in Tehran

on the other has reduced urban environmental standards (more pollution, etc.) and disruption in the system within which this metropolis functions (Zanjani, 1988).

This lack of coordination within the legal framework and over a large area of the city's dependent areas within a complicated network of interconnected social, economic, and physical problems has exasperated the difficulties of city management (Habibi, 2003). The background developments and expansion of Tehran have been summarized in five groups as follows (Table 1):

Period one (from the beginning up to 1921): From a village to early Tehran.

Period two (from 1922 up to 1942): Renovation and the development of modern Tehran.

Period three (from 1942 up to 1966): Accelerated growth and the appearance of a metropolis.

Period four (from 1967 up to 1978): Accelerated growth of the Tehran urban conglomeration.

Period five (from 1979 up to 1996): Accelerated growth of suburban settlements and towns.

The map below (Figure 3 & 4) show the expansion of Tehran from 1891 until now (The Report of the Spatial Organization

of Tehran's District 12, 2003).

2006 census recorded Iran's population as 70495782. Considering the 60055488 population of 1996, during the period 1996-2006, on an average about 1044029 people were added to the population, which is equivalent to an average of 1.74% annual growth compared to growth for the period 1986-2006 which was 1.96% or a fall of about 0.34% (Table 1).

Results of land reforms and an unbalanced distribution of capital as investment in the nation has led to the city's population increase to more than 7 millions till 2006 (Table 2). In 1976, about 13% of the total national population lived in Tehran, while at the same time the suburbs grew rapidly.

With an area of 1600 ha, Tehran's 12 regions is situated within the capital's historical center. In 2006, 12 regions had a population of 248048. The region boasts characteristics such as its historicity and historical values and is the focus of central urban communications and the city's commerce, which is the bazaar. However, its population changes have not been in tune with

Table 1: Population of Iran during 1986-2006

Year	Population
1986	49,445,010
1991	55,837,163
1996	60,055,488
2006	70,495,782

Source: webpage

Table 2: Trend of historical population growth in Tehran

Year	Population	References
1627	20-30	Census Tomas Herbert
1806	30	Gardan and Ouliviye Census
1808	10-60	Keiner Census
1811	40-60	Ouzly Census
1817	60-70	Cerpereter Census
1867	155736	Najmalmolk Census
1883	106482	Census
1891	160000	Shafie Mirfakhraie
1923	210000	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1932	300000	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1933	310139	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1935	360000	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1940	540087	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1943	669000	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1986	6,042,584	Iran's Statistics Bureau
1991	6,475,527	www.citypopulation
1996	6,758,845	www.citypopulation
2006	70,495,78	www.citypopulation

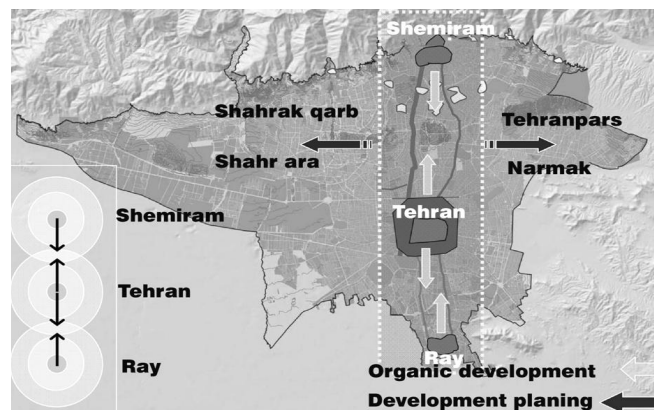


Figure 3: Expansion of Tehran

Tehran's or the changes in population nationally. During the last 20 years this historical region has witnessed continuous population drains, the departure of local residents and traditional families at the same time as influxes of impoverished migrants in search of work to the extent that from 301701 in 1980 until the latest population census of 2006 its population has fallen -2.86% (Table 3) (The Report of the Detailed Plan for Tehran,



Figure 4: Expansion of Tehran from 1902 till 1996

Bavand Consultants, 2006).

The most important factor of population drain in the district has been the inadequacy of service infrastructures, social frictions, and replacement of living by workshop and warehouse uses, inadequate safety in residential areas due to physical and environmental deterioration, the departure of the area's original residents and the lack of a sense of belonging among

Table 3: Population specification of Tehran and 12 regions

Year	Region	Total	Male	Female	Family	Ratio of males and females	Household size
12 Regions	230,068	120,533	109,535	59,152	110	3.9	1996
Tehran city	6,758,845	3,468,946	3,289,899	1,660,219	105	4.1	
12 Regions	248,048	131,645	116,403	72,161	113	3.4	2006
Tehran city	7797520	3,983,080	3,814,440	2,266,984	105	3.4	

new residents. The strengthening or provision of infrastructures and the improvement of the living standards can be followed by providing the various housing, activity, and leisure needs of the residents. When and if the residents sense such amenities, they would be able to live in such neighborhoods with a feeling of assurance and peace of mind.

In order to prevent the present detrimental process, observing the following points could help to augment the environmental qualities of these neighborhoods and absorbing new residents:

- Encouraging the return of the original residents.
- Preventing an influx of unmarried migrants and people with a weak sense of belonging to the area.
- Improving the cultural consciousness of the residents and provide social and educational amenities for elevating the neighborhoods' cultural and social levels.
- Providing urban services and paying due attention to service quotas (health, educational and cultural, sports, green space).

- Improving urban infrastructures.
- Identifying derelict and uninhabitable properties and implementing restoration, reconstruction, and renovation policies.
- Implementing policies aimed at assisting the residents in the physical improvement of their properties.
- Strengthening and developing an interconnected network of public spaces along historical routes and pavements with an emphasis on valuable historical townscapes.
- Providing parking spaces around the city's historical area close to public transport stations.

4. Conclusion

The unbalanced urbanization and growth have brought about an incoherent urban system in Tehran province. Government should come forward with adequate policies to safeguard the adequacy of service sectors and infrastructures not only to restrict the population drain but also for sustainable development of the area.

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