

EVALUATING URBAN SERVICE ACCESSIBILITY IN THE MEDIUM SIZED CITIES OF IRAN

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Abstract

It is a long tradition in urban planning that objective factors are used for study of urban life. However, this approach could be useful in first place to illustrate the level of resident's satisfaction and their environmental quality of life. But the reality is that concentrating only on the objective characteristics regardless to the subjective characters could be misleading because researches show that an objective quality necessarily does not mirror the subjective one. The present paper focuses on both objective and subjective criteria to measure quality of life in the city of Maragheh. Thus, regarding to the scarcity of research on smaller cities of Iran the research tries to examine urban accessibility to public space. The methodology of the research is based on descriptive-analytical methods which applied TOPSIS and FUZZY logic in GIS extension 9.3. The results revealed that the new parts of the city showed considerable differences by objective and subjective accessibility. Also, the findings of the study accentuated the importance of integrated objective-subjective dimensions of accessibility to proper understanding of urban quality of life to distribute main urban facilities by urban planners and designers.

Keywords: quality of access, objective- subjective aspect, public space, urban planning

1. INTRODUCTION

Study of quality of life has captivated widespread attention in recent years among the various fields including sociology, economics, psychology, urban planning, geography, political science, marketing and management. But these researches have been conducted in different scales and various methods were used to measure the quality of life. However, no comprehensive framework has been presented for studying quality of life on an integrated physical, social and spatial measure (Kamp et al, 2003). There is no an inclusive definition for it due to diverse perception by different classes or persons (Bond & Corner, 2004). Also, quality of life often is measured using objective or subjective approaches separately without combining two these approaches (Lee, 2008). Subjective approaches are measured by gauging people's perception, satisfaction and attitudes towards urban life (Campbell, 1976).

Subjective indexes are defined on the basis of ambitions and expectations (Das, 2005) which is characterized by individuals and groups as mental wellbeing. These indexes are reported by peoples on the base of their understanding about different aspects of life and their satisfaction to meet their needs. Such indexes may range from socio-economic to physical indicators displayed in their living areas.

Urbanization is growing, as the most recent census shows . 68 percent of country's total population live in urban areas in 2006 while this figure was only 10 percent in the beginning of 20th century. The main consequences of such growth have been the formation of three different physical structures. Firstly, the old texture or historical part which dominantly comprises the central core of the cities. This area, developed after Islamic era grown organically and is known as Iranian-Islamic texture (Soltanzade, 1986). Secondly, a new texture surrounded the old parts and has developed inconsistently around the cities. This type of urban growth owed its form to modernism which penetrated in the country from 1976 onwards gradually (Aaednia, 2000) also land reform, mechanization of agriculture, growth of assembly industries and increased use of automobiles transformed the traditional urban areas and paved the way for creation of iron web form in the new expanded areas. Third, a rural texture in the adjacent parts which will merge into cities, however due to their particular socio-economic characters they still managed to stay independent physically from the city.

Today, in one hand, the main aim of planners is the integrated and qualitative development of cities and in the other hand, new urbanism concentrate on the development of small communities like neighborhood units. It worthy to mention that there are a long history of sovereignty of the Iranian urban neighborhoods as many old neighborhoods have preserved their social entity. The aims of the research are as follow:

- a) Importance of accessibility to public spaces and their usage
- b) Measuring objective and subjective accessibility to neighborhood facilities
- c) Comparing the results of both approaches in the neighborhood level
- d) Comparing the results of accessibility quality in the three different parts of the city

To measure the objective accessibility to the neighborhood facilities ArcGIS was applied and the subjective accessibility for neighborhood facilities and their quality was measured via conducting a field work by completing questionnaires and TOPSIS model for the final analysis.

1.1. Defining public space

Public space is an environment which all people regardless to their socio-economic status can enter and be present without any restrictions, and in the vision of many scientists the space element is an integral part of each society which could not be perceived in the form of isolated social relations (Afrogh, 1998). In fact urban space is a physical and material setting with social and psychological dimensions (Madanipour, 2003). Urban space is a scene where collective life can form and there is an opportunity for breaking social boundaries which facilitate communication among the people (Lynch, 1976). The main role of urban space is the provision of amenities to facilitate human relations with each others. Urban space by accelerating the citizenship relationships through sense of place (physical aspects of the built environment) and the society (facilitating acts through human interaction together) will inject the civil life to the fabric of cities (Habibi, 1999). Urban spaces include a wide range of public and private spaces which every activity or behavior has its own territory and privacy; reciprocally each space has also its own dignity and privacy. Spaces in the city can be divided in terms of how to use them into three categories (Pakzad, (2006)):

- a) Private spaces: Parts of urban spaces which are under possession of individuals such as homes, private courtyards and gardens.
- b) Semi-private or semi-public spaces: those spaces which are used by certain groups due to limitations in use and goal such as residential areas, sport stadiums and exhibitions.
- c) public spaces: A public space is a social space such as a town square that is open and accessible to all, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic level such as streets, parks, squares, markets, mosques. These spaces due to their broad functions have wide range of contacts and highest share in the collective life of society.

1.2. Public spaces and its impact on the urban quality of life

Public space consists a vital part of our daily life in cities; streets where we cross to reach our work place, school or university. Parks are the places where children play and enjoy from nature and wild life. In other words anywhere which free us even for few moments from crowded areas may be found in such public spaces. Lipton (2003) describes public space as “outdoor living room” and “recreation center and outdoor leisure”. Public spaces are spaces that we get to share with strangers, who are not our relatives or friends and colleagues. These spaces are as places for our political activities, religious practices, business, etc. Public space sets territory for peaceful coexistence, non-personal encounter and our public life (Walzer, 1986). Public space is the scene that social life is performed under the

prospect of all citizens (Rafiayan, & Sifiyae, 2005). However the role of public spaces are evident in the city's integrity and homogeneity but the high quality and urban positive life in streets and open spaces, is a precondition for the community, so that enables people to enjoy social interactions. Losing public space in cities leads to social consequences which Atkinson and Blandy call as decline of urban social relations (Atkinson & Blandy, 2005). This may have some impacts on citizens as existence of public space could be relevant to performance of public activities (Smith & Low, 2006). Public spaces in the city provide the public participation and make them linked together; Mumford emphasized on social cohesion and face to face interactions, mobility of ideas and aesthetic significance of urban spaces and rejected unilateral communication and self-centered fostering. On this basis, he opposes with private spaces because in that case social values are ignored, and ultimately more urban people isolate and collective life loses its importance (Pakzad, (2006). So the basic requirement for a public space of urban space is social interaction and conflict, on the same principle. Regardless of some uncertainties in defining, the public space can be beyond the area controlled by small groups and individual between private spaces, and is space for a range of functions, often used for common and symbolic goals (Madanipour, 2003). On the base of Ardalan's definition, in the Iranian old culture, public space includes public gardens, passages or crossings, streets, business complexes (Ardalan, 1980). However, this definition neglected squares in Islamic cities as the element and node socio-economic and political activities (Alizadeh, 2007). Kostof believed believes that public spaces are well defined in Islamic cities, for him such spaces include streets, squares, mosques and cemeteries (Kostof, 1992). It would be interpreted that public space concentrates on access to places without restrictions and diverse activities which results to social interaction. But today public spaces are disappearing and losing their key role in the process of infill planning in Iran, so that many of Iranian urban neighborhoods have less open spaces compared to the last two or three decades.

1.3. Public space accessibility and the quality of life

Communication networks account a large percentage of cities which are very important join to blocks and locations to each others, as Lynch believes that one of the advantages of city relates to the provision of good access. Appropriate traffic channels, communication paths, streets, alleys, subway route, bike path and walking with good quality invite citizens. Accessibility, public space and physical structures are among the issues under pressure of rapid urban growth. Public spaces such as neighborhood parks or public gardens are important and unique elements of the cities (Pasaogullari & Doratli, 2004). The link between public spaces, walking and the face to face communication does not happen, unless a proper system of communication, walking, leisure and shopping which result to social

dealings in urban life. So the quality of communication networks has a determinant role in citizen satisfaction and efficiency of the city. Road networks with different scales link all parts of a city, if this connection take place easily it leads to qualitative promotion of the city. Tibbalds on being accessible urban environment and its use by all people writes: We need more than ever trying to create urban environment with less obstacles (Tibbalds,1992). One of the spatial dimensions of considering to accessibility in public level is the easy access from one location to another. There are different measurements which exactly relate to social and physical variables. The link between accessibility and land use has been acknowledged by many researchers in rural and urban environments (Castella et al, 2005; Etter et al, 2006; Hanson, 1986; Laurance et al, 2002; Nagendra et al, 2003; Verburg et al, 2004). Analyzing accessibility is important for spatial equity consideration (Talen & Anselin, 1998). As Gould pointed out accessibility has a broad meaning and is flexible and slippery (Gould, 1969). Simple definition of accessibility is that how fast we can reach from one location to another? This question shows the spatial relation of an origin to destination, or shows the degree of relation between one place to other in a region. But often it is defined as relative proximity or proximity of one location to others (Tsou et al, 2005). During the few past decades the concept of accessibility was used in several contexts such as; public amenities, health services, public facilities, shopping centers etc (Nicholls, 2001; Talen, 2002; Cho, 2003; Luo & Wang 2003; Talen, 2003). In fact there is a positive and direct relationship between public space, accessibility and quality of life in urban neighborhoods, whatever the size of public space increase and access becomes easier, results a positive impact on quality of life in urban neighborhoods.

2 METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

2.1. Case Study

Maragheh is one of the oldest cities of Iran. The city was chosen as capital of the country during the Mongol domination by Mongol Holago khan. The city is located in 37° 22' 54" N / 46° 15' 15" E along the river bank of Sofi Chay and the southern slopes of Sahand mount in an area of 2647 hectares, with 1390 meter height from sea level. The city had 149929 population according the latest national census of Iran in 2006. At present, the city is divided into 7 districts and 26 neighborhoods which consisted from tree different urban textures namely old, new and rural structures. In this research three districts with 11 neighborhoods have been selected for measuring the quality of accessibility to urban facilities. These areas have a population of 67958 peoples which cover about 45.56% of the city residents. The main specifications and facilities of the selected districts and neighborhoods are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1.

TABLE1. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED NEIGHBORHOODS

Districts	Neighborhoods	Population	Density	% of city as whole
District 6 (new texture)	22	6466	252	3.82
	19	6481	165	3.061
	23	5010	130	6.04
	24	1294	194	0.84
District as whole	-	19251	-	12.90
District 2 (old texture)	12	4566	54	3.35
	18	5700	78	4.34
	14	9022	66	4.33
District as whole	-	19288	-	12.933
District 4 (rural texture)	1	7375	188	4.94
	2	7908	149	5.30
	25	8706	84	5.83
	3	5429	168	3.64
District as whole	-	30455	-	20.42

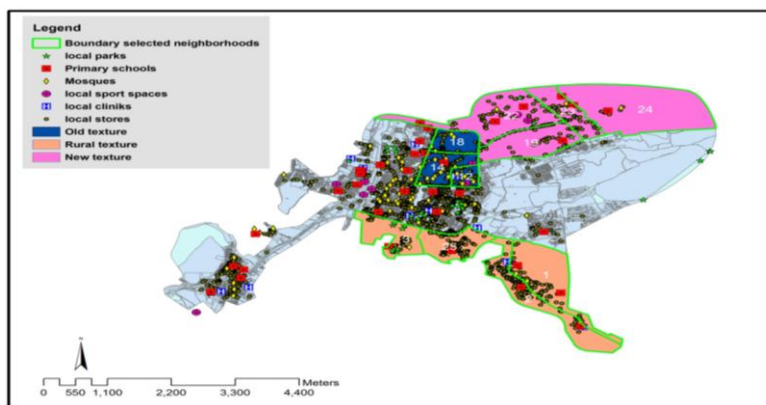


FIGURE 1 - STUDY AREA AND DISTRIBUTION OF URBAN FACILITIES

To achieve the research objectives two approaches of objective and subjective criteria were used to measure the quality of facility accessibility.

2.2. Objective approach

In this approach, firstly the data of neighborhood facilities (parks, elementary school, daily shopping, mosques, clinics and neighborhood centers, sports) were obtained from municipality as points of destination. Then census blocks of each neighborhood were regarded as points of origins. In the next stage the distance between origins and destinations was calculated using Extension network analysis and ARCGIS 9.3 which our criteria in this method was the amount of proximity of statistical blocks to neighborhood facilities. Fuzzy Logic was used to obtain scores of neighborhoods from minimum accessibility distance to urban facilities which 800 meter was considered as most appropriate distance;

in fact the distance was between 800m and 1200m (full fuzzy). The points more than 1200 meter were calculated inappropriate (fuzzyless).

2.3. Subjective approach

Subjective quality of life shows the perception of people about their living status and is measured by subjective indicators. Subjective indicators are based on the people describe and perceive their life (Campbell, 1976). These indicators investigate the expressed level of satisfaction by individuals and groups which called mental well-being (Costanza et al, 2007). Such indicators which are complementary to socio-economic and environmental variables illustrate personal reports of individuals' perceptions and evaluations about their objective life. Subjective quality is often measured by questionnaire survey and interviewing. In this research, the questions were classified in four categories include: accessibility to urban facilities, satisfaction about neighborhood service quality, social and environmental security and the overall feeling towards their neighborhoods. Then the questionnaires were distributed equally in eleven neighborhoods of study. The answers were sorted in five options of very well, good, moderate, low and very low; for easier and clearer comparison these five options were ranked from 5 to 1 respectively. The scores of each neighborhood were calculated by multiplying the share of each option to its weight and the sum of all weights for each neighborhood. Then for better analysis TOPSIS was applied as follow:

- a) Normalizing the values

Converting existing raw data matrix into a non-scale matrix using the following equation:

$$R_{ij} = \frac{X_{ij}}{\sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^m X_{ij}^2}}$$

$$J = \{1, \dots, n\} \quad I = \{1, \dots, m\}$$

- b) Criteria weighting

Using entropy technique for weighting, firstly the amount of E was computed by equation 2:

(Equ. 2):

$$E \approx s\{P_1, P_2, \dots, P_n\} = -k \sum_{i=1}^n [P_i \cdot \ln p_i]$$

K is a positive constant and the amount of p for each i and j is obtained from equation 3.

(Eqe3):

$$p_{ij} = \frac{r_{ij}}{\sum_{i=1}^m r_{ij}}; \forall i, j$$

And for the E_j of P_{ij} set the equation 4 shows:

(Equ. 4):

$$E_j = -k \sum_{i=1}^m [P_{ij} \cdot \ln p_{ij}]; \forall j$$

As equation 5 shows:

(Equ. 5):

$$k = \frac{1}{\ln m}$$

Then the degree of information variance is calculated by D_j for each j index according to equation 6:

(Equ. 6):

$$d_j = 1 - E_j; \forall j$$

The equation 7 is used to calculate the weights of W_j from existing indexes (for all j).

(Equ. 7):

$$W_i = \frac{d_i}{\sum_{j=1}^n d_i}; \forall j$$

Then the scale-less of weighted matrix is created by multiplying each similar weight to another similar weight of obtained indices from entropy method.

$$V_{mn} = W_n R_{mn} \quad W = \{W_1, W_2, \dots, W_n\}$$

2.4 Identifying the ideal positive and negative responses

$$A^+ = \{(Max V_{ij} | j \in J), (Min V_{ij} | j \in J) | i = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, m\}\}, J = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$$

$$A = \{(Min V_{ij} | j \in J), (Max V_{ij} | j \in J) | i = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, m\}\}, J = \{1, 2, 3, \dots, n\}$$

2.5 Calculating the distance of each option from ideal and negative ideal

$$d_i^+ = \left\{ \sum_{j=1}^n (V_{ij} - V_j^+)^2 \right\}^{0.5} \qquad d_i^- = \left\{ \sum_{j=1}^n (V_{ij} - V_j^-)^2 \right\}^{0.5}$$

2.6 Calculating the relative proximity to ideal solution

$$0 \leq c_i^+ \leq 1 \qquad c_i^+ = \frac{d_i^-}{(d_i^+ + d_i^-)}$$

TABLE 2 - STATISTICAL BLOCKS AND ACCESSIBILITY IN NEW TEXTURE

Neighborhood's access	Neighborhood 1				Neighborhood 2				Neighborhood 25				Neighborhood 3							
	population	Block	F(x)		population	Block	F(x)		population	Block	F(x)		population	Block	F(x)					
Clinics	6466(100)	75	100	0.69	6481	100	97	100	0.85	5010	100	49	100	0.39	1294	100	35	100	0.31	
	High	65(1)	66		88	130	2	79		81.4	0	0	33		67.3	0	0	33		94.3
	Moderate	905(14)	9		12	194	3	4		4.1	0	0	16		32.7	0	0	1		2.9
	Low	5496(85)	0		0	6157	95	14		14.4	5010	100	0		0.0	1294	100	1		2.9
Shopping centers	6466(100)	75	100	1	6481	100	97	100	1	5010	100	49	100	1	1294	100	35	100	1	
	High	6466(100)	0		0	6481	100	0		0.0	3457	69	0		0.0	0	0	4		11.4
	Moderate	0(0)	0		0	0	0	0		0.0	651	13	0		0.0	0	0	3		8.6
	Low	0(0)	75		100	0	0	97		100	902	18	49		100	1294	100	28		80.0
Mosque	6466(100)	75	100	0.98	6481	100	97	100	0.84	5010	100	49	100	0.83	1294	100	35	100	0.96	
	High	323(5)	74		99	5250	81	94		96.9	651	13	31		63.3	375	29	32		91.4
	Moderate	1099(17)	1		1	843	13	3		3.1	2705	54	15		30.6	116	9	2		5.7
	Low	5043(78)	0		0	389	6	0		0.0	1653	33	3		6.1	802	62	1		2.9
Sports	6466(100)	75	100	0	6481	100	97	100	0	5010	100	49	100	0	1294	100	35	100	0.13	
	High	1293(20)	42		56	4472	69	75		77.3	3357	67	19		38.8	91	7	4		11.4
	Moderate	2004(31)	20		27	1231	19	17		17.5	150	3	1		2.0	0	0	15		42.9
	Low	3168(49)	13		17	778	12	5		5.2	150	3	29		59.2	1203	93	16		45.7
Schools	6466(100)	75	100	0.99	6481	100	97	100	0.99	5010	100	49	100	0.72	1294	100	35	100	0.97	
	High	3362(52)	75		100	6092	94	97		100	5010	100	49		100	595	46	35		100
	Moderate	3039(47)	0		0	389	6	0		0.0	0	0	0		0.0	375	29	0		0.0
	Low	65(1)	0		0	0	0	0		0.0	0	0	0		0.0	324	25	0		0.0
Parks	6466(100)	75	100	0	6481	100	97	100	0	5010	100	49	100	0.4	1294	100	35	100	0.95	
	High	4397(68)	75		100	4990	77	97		100	4860	97	7		14.3	272	21	33		94.3
	Moderate	1487(23)	0		0	1102	17	0		0.0	150	3	21		42.9	505	39	1		2.9
	Low	582(9)	0		0	389	6	0		0.0	0	0	21		42.9	518	40	1		2.9

3 FINDINGS

3.1. Accessibility quality by objective dimension

As tables 2, 3 and 4 show each three textures are analyzed separately for better understanding. First neighborhoods are analyzed with respect to their inner features.

3.1.1. Rural texture

Access to shopping center has been highest in all four neighborhoods with score of 1 (Table 2). Access to school placed in second which neighborhood 25 had lesser access compared to other neighborhoods with score of 0.72. Access to mosques was ranked after schools.

Regarding accessibility to health clinics shows variation among the different neighborhoods of the rural texture. As neighborhood 3 with 0.3 score stood behind the neighborhood 2 with 0.85 score.

Accessibility to parks shows a better condition for neighborhood 3 while others have lesser access to parks. The last criterion is physical access of residents to sport centers which all neighborhoods have no good access.

3.1.2. New texture

Accessibility to neighborhood facilities of new texture of Maragheh is reflected in Table 3. Access to shopping centers (stores) is high in three neighborhoods of the area which reaches to maximum level i.e. 1, and only one of them (Neighborhood 24) has the minimum access to such uses. Totally the area favors a good condition of accessibility to urban facilities however shows some oscillation.

3.1.3. Old texture

As table 4 shows there is less variation to urban facilities in the neighborhoods of old section of the city. Access to shopping centers reaches to the highest level with full score of 1 in three neighborhoods. Mosques and schools are the central elements in the Islamic cities and so in the city of Maragheh access to such centers is high (Table 4).

Access to parks shows a lower level compared to the average level of the area. A neighborhood has the maximum accessibility to the urban facilities as this section is located right to the heart of the old texture and such facilities were provided in the course of times.

TABLE 3 - STATISTICAL BLOCKS AND ACCESSIBILITY IN NEW TEXTURE

Accessibility	Neighborhood 19				Neighborhood 22				Neighborhood 23				Neighborhood 24			
	Population	Block	F(x)		population	Block	F(x)		population	Block	F(x)		population	Block	F(x)	
Clinics	7375	100	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	8706	100	16	100.0	4500	100	2	100
high	3245	44	3	5.2	4428	56	80	76.2	2812	30	80	49.7	675	15	0	0
Moderate	2286	31	10	17.2	2214	28	25	23.8	1828	21	54	33.5	810	18	1	50
Low	1844	25	45	77.6	1265	16	10	9.5	4266	49	27	16.8	3015	67	1	50
Shopping centers	7375	100	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	8706	100	16	100.0	4500	100	2	100
high	7375	100	18	31.0	7908	100	62	59.0	8706	100	32	19.9	4500	100	0	0
Moderate	0	0	12	20.7	0	0	33	31.4	0	0	84	52.2	0	0	0	0
Low	0	0	28	48.3	0	0	10	9.5	0	0	45	28.0	0	0	2	100
Mosques	7375	100	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	8706	100	16	100.0	4500	100	2	100
high	4573	62	30	51.7	5694	72	96	91.4	5311	61	12	75.2	2340	52	0	0
Moderate	1918	26	27	46.6	1028	13	9	8.6	3308	38	28	17.4	135	3	0	0
Low	885	12	1	1.7	1186	15	0	0.0	87	1	11	6.8	2025	45	2	100
Sports	7375	100	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	8706	100	16	100.0	4500	100	2	100
high	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	90	2	0	0
Moderate	0	0	52	89.7	0	0	3	2.9	0	0	0	0.0	135	3	0	0
Low	7375	100	6	10.3	7908	100	102	97.1	8706	100	16	100.0	4275	95	2	100
Schools	7375	100	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	8706	100	16	100.0	4500	100	2	100
high	7154	97	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	5137	59	16	100.0	3915	87	1	50
Moderate	221	3	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	3134	36	0	0.0	225	5	0	0
Low	0	0	0	0.0	0	0	0	0.0	435	5	0	0.0	360	8	1	50
Parks	7375	100	58	100.0	7908	100	105	100.0	8706	100	16	100.0	4500	100	2	100
high	0	0	41	70.7	79	1	72	68.6	1132	13	15	97.5	3555	79	2	100
Moderate	0	0	9	15.5	0	0	22	21.0	3569	41	4	2.5	360	8	0	0
Low	7375	100	8	13.8	7829	99	11	10.5	4005	46	0	0.0	585	13	0	0

3.2. Comparing quality of accessibility by objective dimension in three urban textures

Analyzing of three textures the qualities are illustrated in figures 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Among the six urban facilities, access to shopping centers and stores was in maximum level with score of 1 except neighborhood 24 with score of 0 had the least access to such uses. This neighborhood is a new expanded part of the texture area which needs to wait for the provision of new stores. Old areas of the city had highest (very good) access to primary schools with 66.6 percent and good access of 33.3 percent. The old part of the city had the highest accessibility score to mosques. As it was outlined in the Islamic cities mosque is an important element which has been one of the crucial points in socio-cultural issues which has lost its significance in the face of modernism. Rural texture also present a good accessibility to mosques compared to the new areas. Such reason is depended to the cultural character of rural people who are still attached to Islamic values and practices and so establishing a mosque is their first priority.

As figure 4 shows old neighborhoods had better success health clinics compared to two other textures. It could be discussed that despite the critiques who believe that old areas of Islamic cities suffer from lack of urban public amenities, but the case of Maragheh showed a different scenario. This matter is also obvious in the high accessibility of old neighborhoods to sport facilities. It seems that older areas of the city absorbed traditional sport centers namely zoorkhaneh, where youth and middle aged people practice professional actions.

TABLE 4 - STATISTICAL BLOCKS AND ACCESSIBILITY IN OLD TEXTURE

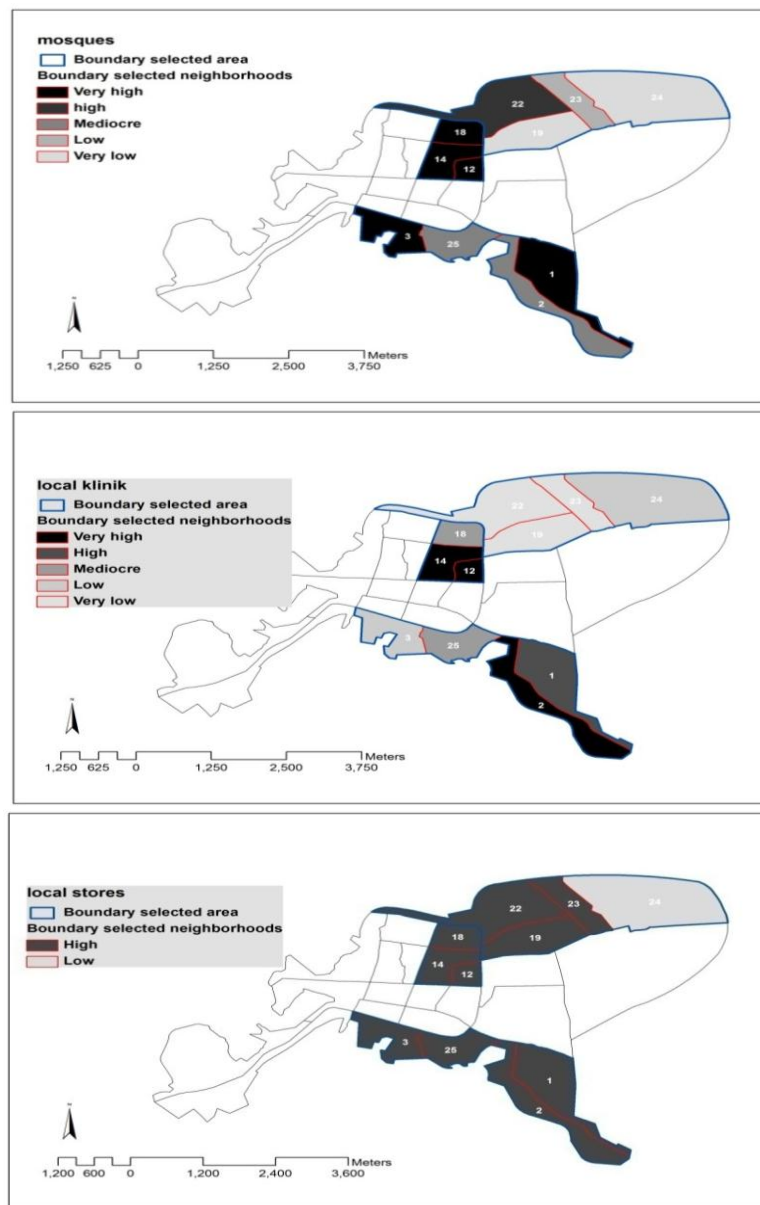
	Neighborhood 18				F(x)	Neighborhood 14				F(x)	Neighborhood 12				F(x)
	population	Block				population	Block				population	Block			
Clinics	5700	100	38	100	0.47	9022	100	29	100	0.96	4566	100	18	100	1
High	2109	37	36	94.7		7759	86	29	100		4566	100	18	100	
Moderate	2964	52	2	5.3		1263	14	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0	
Low	627	11	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0	
Shopping centers	5700	100	38	100	1	9022	100	29	100	1	4566	100	18	100	1
High	5700	100	12	31.6		9022	100	15	51.7		4566	100	18	100	
Moderate	0	0	17	44.7		0	0	11	37.9		0	0	0	0.0	
Low	0	0	9	23.7		0	0	3	10.3		0	0	0	0.0	
Mosques	5700	100	38	100	0.99	9022	100	29	100	1	4566	100	18	100	0.98
High	5187	91	21	55.3		9022	100	27	93.1		4566	100	17	94.4	
Moderate	513	9	17	44.7		0	0	2	6.9		0	0	1	5.6	
Low	0	0	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0	
Sports	5700	100	3	7.9	0.57	9022	100	29	100	0.72	4566	100	18	100	1
High	1767	31	8	21.1		4150	46	25	86.2		4566	100	18	100	
Moderate	2451	43	4	10.5		4331	48	4	13.8		0	0	0	0.0	
Low	1482	26	14	36.8		541	6	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0	
Schools	5700	100	38	100	0.89	9022	100	29	100	0.98	4566	100	18	100	1
High	3819	67	38	100		8390	93	29	100		4064	89	18	100	
Moderate	1881	33	0	0.0		632	7	0	0.0		502	11	0	0.0	
Low	0	0	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0		0	0	0	0.0	
Parks	5700	100	38	100	0.17	9022	100	29	100	0.3	4566	100	18	100	0.92
High	342	6	1	2.6		632	7	1	3.4		2146	47	13	72.2	
Moderate	2109	37	12	31.6		5774	64	17	58.6		2374	52	5	27.8	
Low	3249	57	25	65.8		2616	29	11	37.9		46	1	0	0.0	

Parks in their new form are the outcome of new urbanism as important use in the city. It should be recalled that Iranian cities once enjoyed many attractive traditional gardens which were open to all people. But by the surge of new urbanism hectares orchards and lands converted into constructed urban buildings which now most of the cities in the country have a small per capita of green space and parks. Today importance of parks is highly voiced by urban planners in the urban development plans. A

glance on the figure 7 shows that old areas of the city have less access to parks while in the new areas the condition is better.

Analyzing objective dimension of quality of life

As it was depicted in research method to analysis the quality of accessibility to neighborhood facilities and the quality of these facilities a field survey was undertaken by completing questionnaires among the household's heads in a random way. Then, the score of each question was obtained which ranged from minimum of 30 to maximum of 150 (table 5). TOPSIS was applied to analysis all answers.



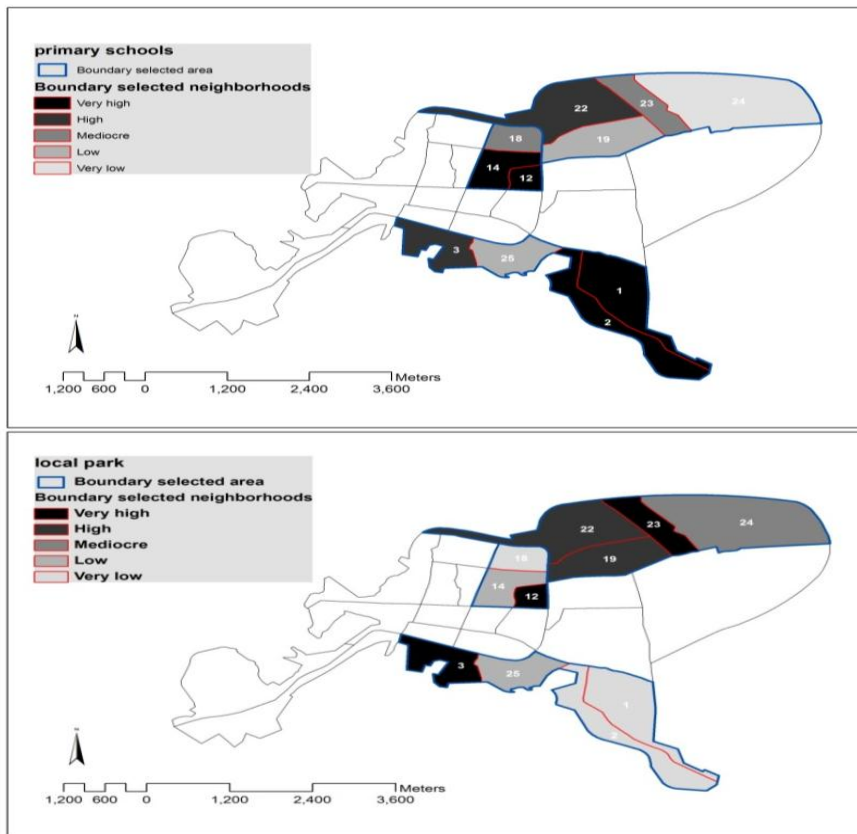


Figure 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 - The level of accessibility to urban facilities in different part of the city

As diagram 1 and table 6 shows the subjective quality of neighborhoods was compared which revealed a dramatic difference among the neighborhoods. D+ and D- represent the distance from positive ideal and the negative ideal respectively. Neighborhood 24 of new texture has the farthest distance from positive ideal. Four neighborhoods of rural area have maximum distance from positive ideal and least from negative ideal. Such position is depended to the different structure of the formation of neighborhoods in the city and the adjacent rural texture, as city facilities are provided by establishment of neighborhoods while neighborhood facilities in rural texture are located in the center of rural structure which by physical expansion of neighborhoods, access to facilities became inappropriate. The minimum distance from positive ideal belongs to neighborhood 22. Generally the neighborhoods of new texture have minimum distance from positive ideal (Table 6 and diagram 1). Table 6 shows the ranking of all neighborhoods of three different areas of Maragheh city.

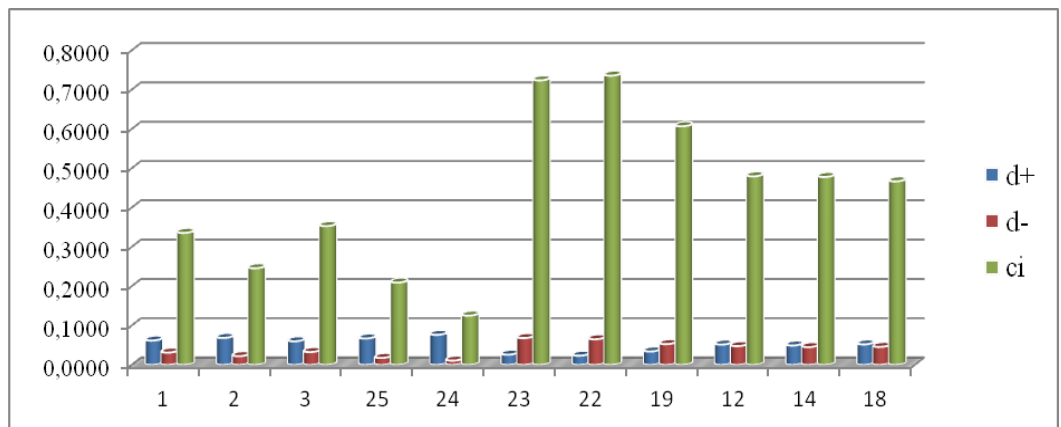
TABLE 5 - RESULTS OBTAINED FROM QUESTIONNAIRES

Textures	Neighborhoods	Questions																				
		1- Do you have easy access to urban parks?	2- Do you have easy access to easy access to schools?	3- Do you have easy access to mosques?	4- Do you have easy access to clinics?	5- Do you have easy access to shopping centers?	6- Do you have easy access to sports?	7- How is the quality of parks?	8- How is the quality of clinics?	9- How is the quality of the mosques?	10- How is the quality of primary schools?	11- How is the quality of shopping centers?	12- How is the quality of sport centers?	13- Are pedestrians safe and efficient?	14- Are thoroughfares socially safe?	15- My neighborhood is safe from thief.	16- Do think have less stress in your neighborhood?	17- Do you think all people have equal access to urban neighborhoods?	18- can you safely walk in your neighborhoods?	19- Do you like your neighborhood for living?	20- Is your neighborhood a part of your identity?	21- Is heart to leave your neighborhood?
Rural	1	38	73	82	89	118	35	51	44	58	102	109	38	44	57	54	80	65	39	80	58	58
	2	39	109	121	28	115	45	31	71	81	31	100	36	67	55	58	94	47	70	53	56	58
	3	84	112	108	38	116	56	38	30	112	86	89	36	56	62	62	84	36	56	36	46	46
	25	44	67	55	43	135	42	44	44	89	71	116	44	62	63	72	86	32	58	46	42	56
	Mean	51	90	92	50	121	45	41	47	85	73	104	39	57	59	62	86	45	56	54	51	55
New	24	32	39	58	30	114	47	36	36	84	51	100	45	32	87	76	97	39	74	56	46	36
	23	11	112	112	64	114	45	100	34	135	110	128	48	88	49	39	118	94	102	122	114	94
	22	98	135	84	57	122	64	87	68	113	115	128	96	107	89	44	88	69	72	106	96	135
	19	89	110	84	86	132	84	78	56	126	113	130	62	98	82	64	98	56	59	67	79	76
	Mean	82	95	85	50	117	52	74	46	111	92	119	63	76	75	53	101	67	83	95	85	88
Old	12	39	98	146	96	150	52	43	73	135	86	144	52	47	56	54	86	64	84	104	112	110
	14	46	107	146	74	135	46	53	64	124	98	128	58	46	82	44	104	47	86	84	124	112
	18	36	112	146	76	128	35	56	66	116	108	132	49	53	78	38	96	53	87	96	116	113
	Mean	40	106	146	82	138	44	51	68	125	97	135	53	49	72	45	95	55	86	95	117	112

TABLE 6 - EUCLIDEAN DISTANCE OF NEIGHBORHOODS TO POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE DISTANCE AND THEIR RANK

Texture type	Rural texture				New texture				Old texture			
Neighborhoods	1	2	3	25	24	23	22	19	12	14	18	
d+	0.0620	0.0686	0.0601	0.0672	0.0765	0.0261	0.0235	0.0343	0.0518	0.0494	0.0522	
d-	0.0313	0.0224	0.0328	0.0178	0.0110	0.0684	0.0653	0.0529	0.0477	0.0452	0.0458	
Ci	0.3358	0.2459	0.3531	0.2094	0.1253	0.7239	0.7358	0.6072	0.4797	0.4780	0.4670	
Rank	8	9	7	10	11	2	1	3	4	5	6	

Diagram 1: Euclidean distance of neighborhoods to positive and negative distance and their rank



From subjective point of view all three neighborhoods have good condition but are placed in three different levels of very high, high and moderate by their objective accessibility.

TABLE 7 - RANKING OF OBJECTIVE ACCESSIBILITY IN THREE DIFFERENT URBAN AREAS OF MARAGHEH

Components	Neighborhoods	Old texture	%	New texture	%	Rural texture	%
Very high	12	1	33.3%	0	0%	0	0%
High	14	1	33.3%	0	0%	0	0%
Moderate	18-22-23-3	1	33.3%	2	50%	1	25%
low	1-2-25-19	0	0%	1	25%	3	75%
Very low	24	0	0%	1	25%	0	0%

TABLE 8 - RANKING OF SUBJECTIVE ACCESSIBILITY IN DIFFERENT URBAN AREAS OF MARAGHEH

Components	Neighborhoods	Old texture	%	New texture	%	Rural texture	%
Very high	19-22-23	0	0%	3	75%	0	0%
High	12-18-14	3	100%	0	0%	0	0%
Moderate	1-3	0	0%	0	0%	2	50%
Low	2-25	0	0%	0	0%	2	50%
Very low	24	0	0%	1	25%	0	0%

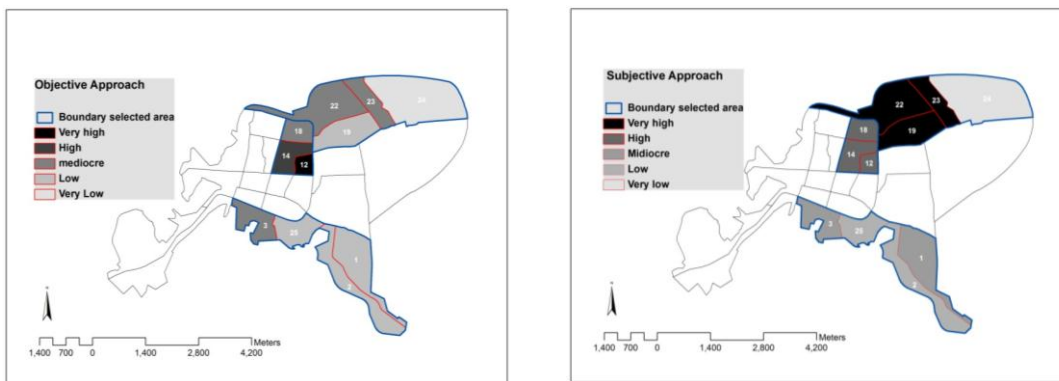


FIGURE 8 AND 9: FINAL MAPS OF OBJECTIVE AND SUBJECTIVE ACCESSIBILITY

4 DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The starting point of development in human society is a precise understanding of people's needs and then monitoring the achievements of development. Measuring quality of life could be a right tool for such purposes as it provides an effective way of interaction between citizens and urban authorities. In fact there would be better solution to urban problems by integrating objective and subjective accessibilities as people can participate and show their real needs. Today, accessibility to public spaces is widely considered by researchers as an important components of quality of life in urban communities. In this research there has been an effort to measure objective-subjective accessibility to neighbourhood facilities in the three different urban areas of Maragheh city in Iran. As it was outlined earlier Iranian cities has different urban structures which are the outcome of historical events. Three different textures of the city were analyzed by using Fuzzy TOPSIS and statistical models. The results showed that the old area of the city influenced from Islamic-Iranian urbanism in a gradual way and had a better condition from both objective and subjective accessibility. While the new area of the city has developed by

influencing from modernism and wide use of automobile. The study showed that people of this texture were satisfied by their accessibility to local facilities and has more choice of selection of their living place and generally were better off than other areas of the city. The rural texture of the city showed a lesser satisfaction regarding to accessibility. Historically Iranian rural areas suffer from lack of public living amenities. The attached rural neighbourhoods of Maragheh city however had a better condition compared to the common rural places of the country but due to the influx of rural migrants these areas bear most of the urban pressures. Also here competition for occupying land is very high which increases the use of urban facilities. So there has been lower quality of life in the rural texture of the city, however the residents were hoped that the condition will change for good. Now it could be concluded that urban authorities should pay more attention towards the marginal areas of the city where play as absorbent of rural migrant to new and older section of the city. There has been different level of quality of life when objective and subjective accessibility were measured in these three areas. So urban authorities and QOL researchers should take care of their type of policies and methods contributed to urban planning. The study revealed that mere satisfaction toward objective accessibility can not guarantee subjective one and for an appropriate understanding of quality of life both objective and subjective approaches should be considered especially in developing countries.

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