



Sociological study of the effect of informal settlements on social harms (Case Study: Kermanshah city)

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Background and Aim: The phenomenon of informal settlements can bring with it many social harms. The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of informal settlements on the amount of social harms such as theft, divorce, suicide, and drugs in the city of Kermanshah. **Methods:** The current research is an applied research in terms of its purpose. In terms of method, it is a descriptive research and it will be done as a survey; Because the required information is obtained from the current state of the statistical sample using a questionnaire. It is a researcher-made questionnaire of informal settlements and a standard questionnaire of social harms, which is set in 66 items. The statistical population of the present study includes 270,979 male and female residents of informal settlements in Kermanshah city in the year 2021. In this research, 384 were selected as sample members by random-cluster method. **Results:** The descriptive findings of the current research show that the reason for migration and choosing the neighborhood of most of the 160 respondents (42.7%) was their economic situation. Also, in the studied sample, 169 people (44.5%) agree to leave the place and 211 people (55.5%) oppose leaving the place, 241 people (63.6%) agree and 138 people (36.4%) oppose. To leave the place, they were on the condition of handing over land or housing, which was the reason for not wanting to leave the place of most of the respondents (151 (42.8%) being close to the workplace). Finally, regarding participation in activities to improve the status of their community during the past 5 years, 177 people (46.1%) participated in the activities and 202 people (53.3%) did not participate. **Conclusion:** Based on the statistics and findings of the research, it can be concluded that the main problems of informal settlements are the lack of minimum facilities, which indicates poverty, lack of economic security and forced to migrate to this neighborhood. Addiction to cigarettes and drugs, history of theft, crime and prison or violence, suicide and divorce, all of these factors have come together and caused insecurities and caused social damage among the residents of this neighborhood. Considering that most of these people have migrated from the city to these marginal areas, this confirms that they did not have suitable living conditions and were forced to migrate to the outskirts of the cities with limited facilities and many problems.



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Introduction

During the last few decades, urbanization in Iran has enjoyed rapid growth. One of the consequences of this expansion of urbanization and rapid growth has been the formation of fringes and informal settlements with irregular structure and abnormal housing around the cities. Its residents are usually rural migrants and low-income urban strata who have settled in certain neighborhoods (Gharakhlo, 2009). The ever-increasing growth of cities in all countries, especially developing countries, has caused a very rapid increase in the urban population in these countries, without foreseeing the infrastructure required for the sudden jump of this population (Gharakhloo, 2009). Today, the term informal settlements is used for these unplanned, car-ridden and illegal neighborhoods. These disorderly settlements lead to the physical separation of some residential areas from the whole city and the reduction of the amount of urban-social services (Javaheripour, 2013). Informal settlement is a geographical phenomenon in which the settlement pattern is the result of spatial inequalities in different scales and weak planning at the regional and national levels, which has been manifested in the city (Daviran, 2013).

Informal settlement is created not only in the form of a living space on the outskirts of the city, but even in the main body and within the legal boundaries of cities (Ali Akbari, 2013). Changing policies in informal settlements requires correct and principled planning in such contexts; However, informal settlements are a reflection of the lack of proper planning at the city level. This is despite the fact that the plans in the city are not designed to meet the needs of all the residents of the city, and it can be said that the urban poor have been neglected in the plans (Shia, 2012). Based on this, the first step for rational planning in informal settlements is the correct and comprehensive knowledge of such contexts, so that appropriate solutions can be provided to improve the conditions of its residents. The current study was conducted with the aim of sociologically investigating the effect of informal settlements on sociopathology in Kermanshah. Considering that informal settlements reproduce social pathology within themselves, the type of social pathology produced in these areas is directly related to the quality of housing. The houses built in these

settlements are mainly accompanied by aggressive occupation or unauthorized construction and lack the necessary safety. Adaptation and compatibility in the outskirts of cities is very low and people who have different cultures and different attitudes are forced to live in the outskirts of big cities, they often live with each other not with understanding, but with hostility. It's natural that they don't feel safe, and young people and teenagers, and in general, families and children, see the most damage in the outskirts of cities. By conducting the current research in the informal settlements of Kermanshah, the social and individual destructive factors caused by the informal settlement will be identified, and solutions will be provided to reduce informal settlements and reduce the effects of social damage (Daviran, 2013).

The issue of informal settlements is nearly half a century old, but studies show that research studies related to this social issue have only slightly increased in the last two decades. According to the results of previous researches and studies, it can be seen that during different decades in the big cities of Iran, there have been studies about different informal settlements. These studies have been carried out mainly by government organizations, especially the Program and Budget Organization. In addition, in many cases, universities have been at the forefront of studies regarding informal settlements in Iran and have investigated the situation of residents of informal settlements. In our country, informal settlement is facing a faster growth than the growth of urbanization in an official sense, and it is estimated that one fifth of the urban population is settled in such settlements. While the prevailing attitude of urban management in some countries, including in Iran, is to remove the informal part from the public arena of the city and to organize (in the sense of removing) the informal part due to problems such as roadblocks. In fact, the informal sector is a panacea for the employment problem in developing cities and a decisive element in urban development. There is a consensus that the informal sector has great potential in planning and organizing informal settlements, and its organization can bring many benefits to the actors of the urban arena, especially the low-income ones, as well as the city management. Informal settlements have been investigated and studied many times;

However, there has not been any scientific and documented research on the topic of explaining the sociological role and new paradigms of social pathology, and examining these variables, even without having an experimental background, will make it more difficult for the researcher; The lack of theoretical and experimental research (in Iran) in this field prompted the researcher to investigate this issue. Moreover, the need to examine and influence the above-mentioned variables was not found in any study. Therefore, this issue can be done as a documented and regular scientific work, and the necessary benefits for the stakeholders can be obtained from its achievements. New paradigms in the formation of social pathology and its measurement with sociological issues have not been evaluated. Therefore, measuring the mentioned factors and investigating their impact on each other can lead to the creation of a new conceptual model.

A review of the theories presented about the characteristics of informal settlements and social pathology shows that their social, economic and physical characteristics are different from conventional urban life. It has caused the lowering of living standards and social and economic anomalies in these settlements. The theoretical point of view of the upcoming research is based on the opinions of the experts of informal settlements and in terms of the point of view of social damages, it is in accordance with the theory of Anderson (1998). The reason for choosing this approach is that Anderson has provided a comprehensive list of studies conducted in the field of theories related to social pathology. This list considers the theories of behavior problem, reasonable action, social learning, social control, self-deprecation, integrated delinquency pattern, social development and triple influence of individual, group and society among the most important dominant theories in explaining social pathology. This list of theories of social anomie, labeling and selected theories that were introduced in the study of Dan Ji and his colleagues (1998) shows a broad effort to theorize about social pathology. Within the structural and functional tradition, there will be a lack of consensus resulting from the constructive and positive interaction between the components, a disorganized and anomic system, and as a result prone to the occurrence

of various social deviations. According to this theory, the higher the level of social cohesion and solidarity, the lower the probability of people tending to all kinds of social deviations (Akers & Sells, 2014). This view covers the hypotheses corresponding to the title of the research. To evaluate and present the theoretical model of the current research, a content analysis framework was created.

Finally, it can be said that the main problem of the current research in the general explanation is that this socio-economic phenomenon is caused by structural causes such as inequality in opportunities, distribution of resources, wealth and income of the society. These factors have emerged in the process of growth and development in the form of urban and rural regional imbalance. Therefore, the aim of the current research is to use the results of the analyzes of social pathology, informal shelters in terms of the approach of social pathology in accordance with Anderson's (1998) point of view and apply it to the studied sample.

Method

This research was designed using the field survey method and using the indicators of informal settlements in Kermanshah city (legal features, socio-cultural features, physical features and economic features) in the form of a questionnaire. A comparative study of social damage indicators (theft, violence, drugs, suicide and divorce) has been done. Since the data and results of the research are in the form of numbers and figures, this research is based on the type of data collected and analyzed of the type of quantitative research. In terms of its purpose, the current research is an applied research because the results of its findings are used to solve the specific problems of the society (informal settlement areas of Kermanshah). The statistical population of the present study included 270,979 male and female residents of informal settlements in Kermanshah city in 2021. The minimum required sample size through Cochran's formula was 384 members of 4 informal settlement districts of Kermanshah city. Therefore, in this research, according to the random-cluster sampling method, 4 neighborhoods of Daulat Abad, Shatar Abad, Koli Abad and Jafar Abad were selected and the status of their human groups was evaluated.

Materials

1. Researcher-made Questionnaire: This questionnaire is organized in 66 items, which included the descriptive-cognitive information of the respondents from items 1 to 14. Items 15 to 31 are prepared and arranged in the form of 5 options from very high to very low, related to informal settlements. The indicators considered in the design of questions in this questionnaire included (legal characteristics, socio-cultural characteristics, physical characteristics and economic characteristics). The second part of the questionnaire related to the assessment of sociopathology, from items 32 to 66, has been prepared and arranged in the form of 5-choice questions from completely agree to completely disagree. The sociopathology that were targeted in this questionnaire included (theft, violence, drugs, suicide and divorce). The scoring of this questionnaire is graded based on the Likert scale (from 5 to 1 respectively). The validity of the questionnaire was checked and confirmed by the professors and its reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficient.

Implementation

After collecting the completed questionnaires, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics were used to analyze the collected data using SPSS-26 software. In order to describe the mentioned data, statistical indicators such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used, and at the inferential level, Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistical tests, Friedman's ranking test and regression test were used.

Results

The descriptive findings of the current research show that most of the participants were men (315 people or 82.03 percent); had a diploma education (136 people or 35.8 percent); They

had average income (184 people or 90.48 percent). The minimum and maximum age of the respondents was 19 and 75 years, respectively, and the average age of the respondents was 46.15 years. On the other hand, the housing ownership type of most of the respondents was rented (46.8 percent). Among the 384 respondents, the minimum and maximum age of the building of the respondents was 1 and 70 years, respectively. The average life of the building was 19.13 years. The minimum and maximum size of the residential property was 35 and 300 meters, respectively, and the average size of the residential property was 98.81 meters. The minimum and maximum length of stay in the neighborhood was 1 and 50 years, respectively, and the average length of stay in the neighborhood was 14.58. The reason for migration and choosing the neighborhood of most of the respondents (160 people) (42.7%) was their economic situation. 169 people (44.5%) were in favor of leaving the place, 211 people (55.5%) were against leaving the place, and 241 people (63.6%) were in favor. 138 people (36.4%) were against leaving the neighborhood on the condition of handing over land or housing, which was the reason for not wanting to leave the neighborhood of most of the respondents (151 (42.8%) being close to the workplace). Regarding participation in activities to improve the status of their area during the past 5 years, 177 people (46.1%) participated in the activities and 202 people (53.3%) did not participate.

The minimum, maximum, average and standard deviation for the descriptive indices of theft, violence, drug use, suicide and divorce variables were 1.3, 0.3, 2.4, 3.4, 3.3 and 2.3, respectively.

Table 1. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results

Variable	K-S	Sig.	Result
Informal settlements	0/940	0/341	Normality Approved
Theft	0/802	0/302	Normality Approved
Violence	1/246	0/090	Normality Approved
Drug abuse	0/601	0/119	Normality Approved
Suicide	0/546	0/168	Normality Approved
Divorce	1/395	0/208	Normality Approved

Based on the above table, considering that the significance level of the test (Sig) in all research variables is more than 0.05, the claim of normality of the data is confirmed and all the

variables of this research have a normal distribution. Therefore, parametric tests were used.

Table 2. Regression tests

Predictor	Model	β		t	R ²	F	Durbin-Watson	Sig.
		Non-standard	Standard					
Informal settlements	Constant	2/061		12/647	0/475	2/776	1/911	0/035*
	Theft	0/269	0/289	2/333				
Informal settlements	Constant	2/880		22/557	0/770	13/527	1/993	0/000*
	Violence	0/749	0/788	3/678				
Informal settlements	Constant	2/810		20/535	0/632	11/592	1/819	0/000*
	Drug abuse	/6550	/6650	3/262				
Informal settlements	Constant	2/908		19/398	0/556	5/676	1/869	0/018*
	Suicide	0/434	0/454	2/383				
Informal settlements	Constant	4/073		24/483	0/444	2/273	1/963	0/045*
	Divorce	0/128	0/132	2/523				
Informal settlements	Constant	2/937		37/433	0/595	11/308	1/932	0/001*
	Sociopathology	0/484	0/493	3/363				

*Significant at 0.05 Level

Based on the above table, taking into account that the Durbin-Watson statistic is close to 2, we can accept the independence of the residuals in the fitted model. Also, due to the fact that the F statistic was obtained for all variables as significant ($F > 0.05$), it can be seen that the presented model has good adequacy. The value of the coefficient of determination (0.475) shows that informal settlements can explain 47.5% of the variable changes in the amount of theft. The value of the coefficient of determination (0.770) shows that informal settlements can explain 0.77% of the changes in the variable of violence. The value of the

coefficient of determination (0.770) shows that informal settlements can explain 63.2% of the variable changes in drug consumption. The value of the coefficient of determination (0.556) shows that informal settlements can explain 55.6% of the changes in the suicide rate variable. The value of the coefficient of determination (0.444) shows that informal settlements in total can explain 44.4% of the changes in the divorce rate variable. The value of the coefficient of determination (0.595) shows that informal settlements can explain 59.5% of the changes in the social damage variable.

Table 3. Ranking and prioritization of social pathology based on the average rank

Sociopathology	Mean	Rank
Theft	2/60	4
Violence	4/53	1
Drug abuse	3/24	2
Suicide	3/16	3
Divorce	1/47	5

In the above table, the average rating of each sociopathology is specified, and the component with the highest average rating is assigned the first priority and rank. The amount of violence with an average rank of 4.53 has the first priority, the amount of drug use with an average rank of 3.24 has the second priority, the rate of suicide with an average rank of 3.16 has the third priority, the amount of theft with an average rank of 2.60 has the fourth priority. The

rate of divorce with an average rating of 1.47 takes the last priority. It should be noted that the value of chi statistic was 1292.519 and the significance level of the test was calculated as 0.000, which is less than 0.05. Therefore, it is possible to prioritize between sociopathology.

Conclusion

The present study was conducted with the aim of sociologically investigating the effect of informal settlements on sociopathology. From

the total findings of the current research, it can be seen that informal settlements have a significant impact on the sociopathology of people living in the informal settlement areas of Kermanshah; That is, with the increase of informal settlements, the amount of social damages of people increases. The general findings of this research, confirming the results of other studies, show that informal settlements are in an unfavorable situation with regard to social damage indicators, and in this regard, they have a significant difference with their main city. The transformation in the way of economic attitudes is much faster than the transformation in the way of cultural attitudes, and this is due to the deep-rooted traditions and social beliefs among the residents.

The present research is in line with the results of Heidari and Mohammadi (2020) in terms of the average housing rental price in marginal areas. In addition, it is in line with the results of the Nik-Tab and Pourkhaton (2018) research in terms of the reasons for drug addiction, smoking, history of crime and migration to these settlements. Poverty in the occurrence of social damage in the settlements is in line with the results of Asgari's research (2017) in terms of dealing with the phenomenon of informal settlements in the urban areas of Kermanshah and empowerment. Moreover, it is in line with the results of Firouzi and Madanlu Joibari's research (2017) in terms of the spatial distribution of sociopathology and crimes. Furthermore, it is in line with the results of the research of Raushi et al. (2018) in terms of the distribution of social poverty in marginal areas. It is in line with the findings of Zangiabadi and Mobaraki (2012) from the dimension of economic factors of socio-cultural repulsions in the place of residence. In addition, it is consistent with the results of the research of McCord et al. (2019) in terms of land use and with the results of the research of Smolka et al. (2018) that the inability of urban policies to solve the housing problems of vulnerable sections of society and control migrations is in line. Finally, it is consistent with the results of Beckley's research (2015) from the perspective of studying the behavior of criminal immigrants. It is inconsistent with the results of studies by Durani (2016), Hatami et al. (2016), Satlani (2013), Shafia (2010), Zhang (2017), Douglas (2016), Melani (2014) and Chatrekeh (2010).

Informal settlements in the cities of Iran, including in Kermanshah, have different characteristics that arise from the process of development and evolution of their location. Based on the geographical location, desirability of the place, the characteristics of the resident social groups, the level of services and facilities, upcoming plans and hopes for the future, the residence has a different residential value.

In the past few decades, solutions and models of urban planning with an exogenous nature and generally based on western experiences were experienced one after another. Models such as urban development plans at different levels, pay less attention to informal and poor settlements, and most of the proposals, solutions and policies are presented based on the averages of the society, which are sometimes very far from the existing realities. The set of rules and regulations presented in these plans, such as average separation plots and zoning, have often pushed low-income people out of the legal boundaries of cities. If the set of municipal regulations is added to these cases, then the repulsive force will be much stronger. In addition, the set of different plans in the framework of public housing has also been implemented on a very limited scale, which has not been very effective in the whole city; In public housing, like other businesses in the country, there has always been a concern that whether the built housing will be given to the real needy and whether it will not be evacuated from the original residents and handed over to a higher income group sooner than expected.

Despite this background, with the promotion of international organizations such as the World Bank and the Human Settlement Center and with regard to the successful global trade, the official planning system took a new approach to the phenomenon of urban poverty and informal settlements. The result is the formulation and implementation of the plan for the improvement and organization of informal settlements in Kermanshah (and the cities of Sanandaj, Tabriz, Bandar Abbas and Zahedan), which actually started in 2003. In this regard, many efforts have been made by those involved in the matter, which is rare in the country's urban planning. The final judgment about this relationship requires the passage of time; However, the existence of this program and independent organizations in this regard is a blessed event that deserves praise and reinforcement.

Therefore, the plan and program of empowering informal settlements in Kermanshah regarding the prevention of social damage is considered a development in the planning and attitude of the issue from a theoretical and to a practical extent; However, structural and institutional obstacles have made it difficult to achieve the goals. In most of the programs of the past few decades, what has been considered more is the provision of housing and planning from above. In general, local and endogenous participation has been largely ignored, and urban planning and local and national management have never played their facilitative aspects.

The listed features in informal settlements require different inherent capabilities and limitations for the upward course and environmental improvement or the downward course and environmental deterioration after the occurrence of social damages. However, the planning approach and the urban management system have a significant effect in directing the settlement to this or that direction. In this regard, accepting informal housing not only as a problem, but also as a part of the solution to providing housing for destitute citizens is the first step, in the continuation of which it is necessary to adopt policies to empower such local communities. It is clear that in the process of transformation and stabilization of informal settlements and the community living in these neighborhoods, there are more concerns about the group that lives in declining settlements.

The findings of this research indicate that different policies and measures should be put on the agenda of city managers to accommodate different types of informal settlements. Therefore, empty-handed citizens will take steps towards better conditions and integration with the text will be placed instead of separation. Undoubtedly, in organizing and empowering declining neighborhoods like Chaman, a city-oriented approach should be taken into consideration, which simultaneously focuses on social damage, providing basic needs and providing minimum livelihood, especially in the informal sector. Securing the right of residence is the first step in building the trust of the mentioned communities, as well as forming the socio-economic capital necessary for improvement measures. The limitations of this research include the following: problems in collecting information and collecting

questionnaires; The possibility of the answers being unrealistic; Lack of necessary and sufficient internal and external scientific and research resources related to the subject under study; The statistical community is limited to the informal settlements of Kermanshah city; Limiting the research tool to closed-ended questionnaires.

Considering that a questionnaire was used in this research, there is a possibility of the answers being unrealistic more than it should be. Therefore, this problem may affect the research results. Therefore, one should be careful in generalizing the results and even use interviews if possible. Since the survey method has its own problems, it is suggested to use other methods such as interview and observation in future research. The use of multifaceted approaches in research studies, including the use of observation and interviews, etc., can produce better results compared to self-report tools such as questionnaires. The current research method is of the correlational type, which makes it impossible to establish scientific documents, and to confirm these relationships, it is necessary to repeat intervention-based research. Since the studied sample consists of informal settlements in Kermanshah, caution should be exercised in generalizing the results to other regions and communities. Finally, it is suggested to collect information equally from informal settlements for a more comprehensive review of effective indicators.

Conflict of Interest

According to the authors, this article has no financial sponsor or conflict of interest.

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