# Analysis of the Citizen's Enjoyment Level of Urban Services in Kermanshah Province, Iran

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**Extended abstract**

**Introduction**

With increasing urbanization, urban services and its quality is concerned by urban managers, planners and citizens. In principle, the discussion of urban services was accompanied by expanding urbanization and apart from the nature of urban services; they are affected by economic, political, administrative and climatic conditions and structures. The quality of urban services has been one of the obvious indicators of urban management from the beginning. One of the difficulties and problems that developing countries are faced with is unbalanced and unequal development between and within the regions which mainly occurs due to national and centralized planning. Regional planning by keeping an eye on spatial view and optimal utilization of regional and local resources can create a hierarchical relationship among settlements at local, regional and national levels. It ultimately leads to a comprehensive and integrated development of the region.

The main task of municipalities giving general services to citizens is provision of urban services that contain the health, security and reconstruction facilities. But this part of their duty does not always receive the equal and enough amounts of attention and services. As a result, some kinds of injustice and split is always seen in receiving services by different cities. It also causes imbalance spatial distribution in urban system.

**Methodology**

The present study deals with measurement and evaluation of urban services in the municipalities of Kermanshah province. The sample is all 32 municipalities of the province. Based on urban service indicators, all cities are ranked by taxonomy, factor analysis and cluster analysis methods. Thus, all cities are ranked and compared with each other based on their own actual number of services. To show the portion of urban residents who enjoy provided services by municipalities, the percentage of their access to services is calculated by population coefficient method. This method was also applied to classification of cities in Kermanshah province.

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## Results and discussion

Presence or absence of required urban services in the cities of Kermanshah province has a significant relation with their antiquity and population sizes. It means that the ratio of urban services depends on the size of population and provided public services of those municipalities. Preliminary observations indicate that newly-established cities are enjoying higher levels of access to public urban services in comparison with the more populated cities. This is due to the impact of administrative factor which is the main factor for their establishment. As an example, the city of Kermanshah which has the highest number of population and users of public urban services occupies a lower rank in comparison with small and low-populated cities of the province. This indicates the more population suffering from the lower levels of public urban services. The current problem is intensified by dependency on state budgets or administrative factor which is the main causes in establishment of small cities. To verify the problem and achieve reliable and scientific results, appropriate models used in urban planning are applied in this study. Findings of the present study indicate that the ranks of cities in Kermanshah province, despite the consistency of applied data, are not quite similar when taxonomy and factor analysis models were applied. In most cases, each model showed a relatively different result of ranking for the cities. Therefore, to minimize the differences and achieve more realistic results of analyses in the current study, the Hierarchical Cluster Analysis model was also applied.

Using Cluster Analysis model, the cities of Kermanshah province were re-ranked based on their enjoyment of considered indicators. This time cities were ranked in 5 categories ranging from quite enjoyment to very weak. Results of applying the Cluster Analysis method, which was completed by SPSS software, showed that city of Soumar stands at the top of ranking pyramid by itself as having the highest levels of public urban services (relative to its very low population which is just 9 people!). A large number of other cities (27 cities) are located at the Very weak level of ranking categories.

## Conclusion

Growing number of cities in Kermanshah province is an obvious characteristic of urban system since 1990s. The current urban system contains a rather large number of small and low-populated cities. The main causes for establishment of these cities are not the proper expansion of urban infrastructures, services and populations, but it goes back to changing definitions of governmental division roles and neglecting many requirements which are necessary to convert a settlement to a city. Most of the cities (even after many years) are still low populated places with the least conditions of urban life. They look like a kind of semi-cities instead of real cities.

The results of the present study indicate that there is not a strong relation between the ratio of urban population and the enjoyment of urban services. In other words, the cities with higher amounts of population are located at the lower levels of ranking categories of enjoying urban services. Occupying a higher stage of ranking by Soumar with 9 people than Kermanshah with nearly 900000 is a good example.

Results of the present study also emphasizes that urban authorities of Kermanshah province should select more proper attempts and solutions to minimize the weaknesses of municipalities in case of the provision of urban services. They should find a way to make a balance between the size of population and their share of public urban services in all cities of the province. At the final part of the paper, some suggestions and recommendations are introduced aimed at the enhancement of the existing situation.

**Keywords**: Municipality, Taxonomy, Factor Analysis, Cluster Analysis, Kermanshah.

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