CHAPTER - 1

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Housing in general and urban housing in particular is fast becoming a global concern. The population of the world has crossed six billion. The world with 47.04 per cent urban population is heading towards urban majority (U.N, 2001). The transition of humankind from rural to city dwellings represents a major and permanent demographic shift. Interestingly, it is getting concentrated in urban centers. By 2010, the total rural population in the world will reach its peak at 3.1 billion and thereafter begin to decline. By 2030, global urban population will be twice the size of rural population. Provision of housing for large urban population on limited urban space is a great challenge. No doubt the seriousness of the problem is not uniform everywhere. It varies within and among countries. It differs among cities and intra city as well. Housing tends to be the largest single use of urban land and is a necessity for everyone. Socially a homeless person has a status below that of even a prison inmate (Hombs and Snyder, 1982).

The term ‘Housing’ is at the same time simple as well as complex. Simple because in its everyday sense we all know, or at least think we know, what the term refers to (Bourne 1981), however, it is complex because it is simultaneously a physical entity, a social artifact, an economic good, a capital stock and a status symbol. This complex expression provides rich and varied matter for research for social scientists.

Literally ‘to house’ means to put in a safe place or provide with shelter in the form of a house or dwelling. Housing is a process that gives birth to such shelters or residences. Thus, all the dwelling units used by a household comprises housing. In everyday usage, housing is the sum total of houses, apartments, and other shelters that provide dwellings or residences to persons, families, and households. Housing is also the process that converts the quest for houses into homes.

The term also has many hidden meanings through which it relates to status, position, power, and personal identity. It satisfies the simple physical need for shelter, and shelter is a crucial element in material welfare and personal security. A house is the
largest single investment most people ever make. In other words, housing is of direct relevance to almost every one.

Housing choice and its use are ways in which renters and owners communicate to society about where they feel they desire to fit in the social hierarchy. It helps delineate the social and cultural categories and makes them apparent. The development of housing in a region is the outcome of prevalent economic and policy processes. It is, thus, a social, economic and cultural expression on landscape that provides enough content of space as material for geographic investigation.

Conceptual Framework

The study of urban housing in Iran finds significance in the fact that Iran has undergone rapid urbanization in the last four decades (1956-1996) of systematic and complete census counts. The history of officially recording population statistics in Iran dates back to 1939 (1318) when the first population census was conducted in Tehran (capital of Iran). In the other 33 cities the census was conducted during 1940-41. The first national census of population and housing was conducted in 1956 (1335).  

At the country level, every six out of ten persons was recorded as living in urban areas during the 1996 census against only three recorded in the 1956 census (31.4 per cent in 1956 census and in comparison 61.3 per cent in 1996 census). This suggests that proportion of urban population has almost doubled in the last 40 years. Iran joined the list of urban majority countries in 1986. The urban majority population here is noted for being a young majority. Half of its population was recorded to be below 20 years of age (Iran Statistical Yearbook 2000 - 2001). Thus providing housing for this large chunk of young, urban population posed a challenge.

1-City: The term refers to all municipalities in census before 1986, all Sahrestan centers (irrespective of their population size) and places with a population of 5000 persons and more which were considered as a city, (changed to 10000 persons in the 1991 census).

2-Hijri calendar is based on solar months. To get a Hijri year from the Gregorian (International) year one has to subtract 621/622 Years. Thus the years mentioned in the parentheses are based on the Hijri Calendar.
At the province level in 1996, the percentage of urban population to total population varied from a maximum of 91.16 per cent in Qom in central Iran to 39.33 per cent in Kohgiluye & Boyerahmad in the western part of Iran. Of the total 26 provinces existing in 1996, seventeen recorded a majority of their total population as living in urban areas.

The peculiar pattern of urban housing in Iran is associated with a period of intense socio-economic or political change. It includes (i) White Revolution, (Enqelab-e-Sefeed) (ii) industrialization, and (iii) a sudden spurt in oil prices. White Revolution refers to the bloodless land reforms (1963) in which the large landholdings of feudal lords were re-distributed to landless people. This positive decision, however, had a negative consequence. In the absence of capable managers there was disorder in the land. The new landowners were materialistic. This material greed was further fed by the advent of industrialization. Industries located in urban centers were labor intensive resulting in an exodus from rural areas to the urban. Further the rise in oil prices widened the gap in income from agricultural land and oil wells. The resultant rural exodus brought about an adverse effect on urban housing.

Problems of housing in Iran vary at different scales. Rapid growth of population resulted in shortage of housing at the national level.

**Table 1**

**Iran: Classification of Urban Centers, 1956 - 1996**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classes</th>
<th>No. of urban Centers</th>
<th>Population ('000 persons)</th>
<th>Per cent to Total Urban Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 5000 persons (with municipality)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000 - 9999 persons</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10000 – 24999 persons</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25000 – 49999 persons</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50000 – 99999 persons</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>633</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100000 – 249999 persons</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250000 – 499999 persons</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500000 – 999999 persons</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000000 persons and more</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>612</td>
<td>5999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Iran Statistical Yearbook, 2000-2001
Large scale migration is responsible for the varied patterns of occupation of rural and urban spaces. The migration from the former aggravated the problem of housing in the latter.

The displacement of about 1.5 million people (US Congress library 1987) from the war affected six provinces of Khuzestan, Ilam, Kermanshah, Kurdestan, Lorestan, and West Azarbajjan, located on the western part bordering Iraq, into the big interior cites like Tehran and Shiraz in the central provinces of Tehran and Fars respectively and Mashhad city in Khorason province in North western Iran, led to congestion in the latter and sparseness in density of the former.

The influx of 2.6 million refugees from disturbed neighbouring areas like Iraq (1969) in the West and Afghanistan (1979) in the East led to further deterioration of the housing situation in Iran in general and cities like Tehran and Mashhad in particular. It is evident, thus, that the problem of housing in Iran is multifaceted.

The national policy on population framed immediately after the Islamic Revolution in 1979 had a strong impact on housing. These policies were: (a) for promoting the population increase, (b) incentives for having large families, and (c) reduction in age of marriage from 21 for males and 18 for females to 15 and 13 years respectively. This led to a growth rate of 3.9 percent during the period 1976 to 1986 (Table 2). The consequences of these policies surfaced in shortage of housing.

Another aspect of this phenomenon is that the joint family system is being replaced by the single unitary family system. This factor showed that the size of the household is decreasing whereas the need for housing is on the rise.

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3 The government of Iraq forced the Irani nationals to leave their territory following tension in 1969. (In March, 1969, Iraqi troops began firing on Iranian fishermen in the Arvand River, which, in its lower stretches, constitutes the Irano-Iraqi boundary. Iraq claims on the basis of a 1937 agreement that the correct boundary is the river's thalweg (deepest stretch of the river), which runs very close to the Iranian side as it nears the Persian Gulf. This Iran rejects because the thalweg continually shifts over time. On April 19, Tehran abrogated the 1937 agreement because of alleged Iraqi violations, alerted its troops, and moved military units to the Iraqi border. Then on April 22, Iranian freighters began navigating the Arvand River (Shatt al 'Arab) up to the port of Khorramshahr under naval escort. Because of this display of military power and Iran’s unyielding position, the Iraqis backed off from further harassment of Iranian shipping. The Iraqi government, however, forced a number of Iranians living in Iraq to flee across the border. Elaborate stories of Iraqi mistreatment of these Iranians spread across Iran and fanned anti-Iraqi sentiment). Encarta yearbook; 2004

4 The erstwhile USSR’s intervention on the request of Afghanistan government in 1979 to control the widespread rebellion that followed the military coup in 1973. The situation, however, worsened and a large number of refugees fled to Iran.
Review of the Literature

While the body of literature on housing is enormous, geographic literature is limited. There were hardly four articles on housing during 1970-2001 in the Annals of AAG. Adams (1970), in his article on ‘Residential Structure of Midwestern Cities’, examines residential land use in Midwestern cities as a function of construction history. He concludes that the age and density composition of urban residential areas helps in understanding urban spatial structures.

In the AAG presidential address (1984), entitled ‘The Meaning of Housing in America’, Adams unfolds the various meanings of housing. He addresses housing as an interactive process with meanings tied to social position, wealth, power, aspirations and personal identity. Housing decisions reflect social drives for congregation and segregation. It thus helps in making social and cultural categories of urban society visible, intelligible and stable. Cybriwsky (1978) explains the way an inner city (Fairmount in Philadelphia) transforms from a working class neighborhood to a fashionable area in his paper on ‘Social Aspects of Neighborhood Change’. The change relates to the influx of newcomers and how it altered the traditional social patterns. Basset and Short (1980) enlist four approaches to housing and residential structure. Burgess (1925) is considered a follower of the ecological approach while the neo-classical approach was followed by Alonso (1964). Form (1954) and Pahl (1975) used the institutional approach while Harvey and Castells presented the Marxist approach.

Larry S. Bourne (1981) had undertaken to provide a modest introduction to the geography of housing which is also a synthesis of the diverse perspectives on what housing is in a contemporary context, it emphasizes the processes through which housing is produced and then distributed (allocated) among people and places; how patterns in the use of housing have changed overtime and within cities; who benefits through these changes; and their implications for public policy. Clark et al. (1984), in their article ‘Housing Consumption and Residential Mobility’, use large sets of longitudinal data on housing and mobility information for the city of Tilburg, The Netherlands, to examine the relationships among households and the housing stock. They conclude that housing consumption varies by life cycle and by tenure. In
general, larger and older households consume much less space than younger households.

The quarterly journal on ‘Housing Economics’ was started in 1992 by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Iran. A part of each volume focused on housing in the capitals of provinces. The articles mostly relate to a comparative study of housing in different countries. In addition, articles on the housing of any 50 selected countries of the world generally find space in the journal.

Some geographical journals published in Persian in Iran also reveal the concern of geographers for housing. One such journal, Faslnameh-e Tahghighat-e Gogharfiaei (published from Markaz-e Tahghighat-e Gogharfiaei Mashhad, by Professor Mohammad Hossein Papoliyazdi) Iran, showed that as many as twenty articles on housing were published during 1986 to 2002. The following review deals with some of the related works.

Alijani (1995) in ‘The Role of Climate in Building Designing’ focused on climate as an important factor in building designing. In this study a climatic model is designed for buildings and settlements in Tabriz City. He recommended that geographers trained in climatology would be effective designers.

Papoliyazdi and Vossoghi (1996) have analysed the earthquake data for Khorason province for a period of a hundred years. Thus, they have tried to assess the differential impact of earthquakes on housing in different cities.

Zarrabi (1996) examined the extent of regional disparities in housing. Rahnema (1977) discusses the process of housing and improvement of residential neighborhood units in city centers. Rezvani (1997) examines the spatial organization of the settlement in Shahrrood sub-province in the context of its setting, situation, density, dispersal and distribution, size of population, functions, linkages and related functions, as also the hierarchy of rural settlements. Papoliyazdi and Vossoghi (1997) believe that transitions from conventional to modern housing have appeared in rural housing in Iran. Important reasons for this include: improvement in villager’s economic conditions, improvement in transportation network, and better access to government services.
Kundu (1993) assessed urban poverty using indicators of housing. He described the role of various construction agencies in India and compared the level of housing and amenities among Indian states.

Verhage (2002) compared the local policy for housing in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Germany, and France in the Appendix of his book besides discussing housing development processes.

Housing and planning issues have always been discussed in Iran since 1947 but they have always been overshadowed by other issues in the country to the extent that the people and the government have come to consider them as problems of secondary importance. This attitude of unconcern and indifference of the past has become a major concern of the present. The present work takes up the task of expressing that concern.

Khorasan province, one of seventeen, in which Mashhad is located, is ranked tenth. Khorasan recorded 56.5 per cent of its total population as living in urban areas in 1996 against only 21.48 per cent in 1956. About one tenth of the total population of Iran lives in this largest province of Iran.

Mashhad accounted for 11.9 per cent of the total population of Khorasan in 1956 but in 1996, the city alone recorded 31.22 per cent of the total population of the province. This large concentration of population posed a serious housing problem for the planners. The present study is, therefore, an attempt to understand the various dimensions of this problem in a spatial context.

**Mashhad: A case study**

The history of evolution of Mashhad goes back to 7915 AD (193 Hijri) when Harun-Al-Rashid the Abbasid Caliph, proceeded from Rey eastward to Sanabad near Tūs (now Mashhad) to suppress a revolt at Marv7 in Khorasan province. When he reached Tūs, he fell ill and suddenly passed away.

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5. Asia institute- Shiraz, Iran (1976)  
6. Rey was a province of Iran  
7. Now Marv city is in Turkmenistan
His son and successor, Mamun built a beautiful mausoleum for him in Tus. A few years later, when Mamun was in Marv (Mary), he announced Imam Ali Ebn-e-Musa-ar-Reza as his successor. He was officially announced as the successor. After about one year, Imam Reza and Mamun left Marv for Baghdad. They stopped near Sanabad and it was during this short stay that the Imam Reza was poisoned and killed and buried at the same place (203 Hijri). Soon after, this mausoleum of Imam Reza became a sacred place for the Shiites and it was because of his martyrdom that this area of suburb villages came to be recognized as "Mashhad-or-Reza" Mashhad in Persian and Arabic means martyrdom and Mashhad-or-Reza denotes the place where Reza received martyrdom. From that time onwards Mashhad-or-Reza became popular. Gradually people fell to calling it Mashhad. Mashhad remained the capital of Iran during the 1936 to 1947 period.

Mashhad is divided into 10 divisions (Mantagheh) (Table 3). Mantagheh is the smallest official administrative unit. Every division, on an average, occupies 22.5 sq. km. Such large units have further units comprising Mohallas or streets.

Mashhad (Map 1) is the second largest city in Iran after Tehran; it is the capital (Center) of Khorasan province. The city is located between the two mountain ranges of Binalood in the South and Hezarmasjed in the North. It has an average elevation of 970m. It is an evolved city although some parts have been recently planned. It is located in the eastern province of Khorasan, which is politically a very sensitive zone. A large number of refugees are added to the population every time instability persists in the neighboring Afghanistan and Turkmenistan.

According to the latest formal Census in 1996, Mashhad city covers an area of 225 sq. km, and its population was 1.9 million with 408 thousand households, living in 345 thousand houses. It has a density of 8388 persons per sq. km. Household per house is 1.18, persons per room, per house and household are 1.36, 5.43 and 4.63 respectively (Table 3).

The population growth of Mashhad is extraordinarily high when compared with the national growth rate or with the capital city (Table 2). The population growth of Mashhad was more than double the national average during 1976-86. This additional population also requires housing since most of them are of marriageable age now.
The housing is of two broad categories: public and private. Both kinds have spatial manifestation. Government houses are (i) Social and (ii) institutional. Private houses have different types.

Table 2
Population: Iran, Khorasan, Tehran and Mashhad, 1956-1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mashhad City</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>668</td>
<td>1463</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehran City</td>
<td>1561</td>
<td>2720</td>
<td>4530</td>
<td>6043</td>
<td>6759</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khorasan Province</td>
<td>2043</td>
<td>2521</td>
<td>3256</td>
<td>5281</td>
<td>6043</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iran</td>
<td>18955</td>
<td>25789</td>
<td>33709</td>
<td>49445</td>
<td>60055</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Statistical Center of Iran, (Djavan, J: Population Geography of Iran, 2002)

Ethnicity is reflected in the housing in clusters like the Ghaleh-e abkoh Mohalla, Barbar Mohalla, and Afghani Mohalla. One can easily identify the directions from which the inhabitants of these Mohallas have come seeing their locations in the city. Mashhad is an important religious center. A large number of functions associated with the holy center are on the rise. People come to get employment in these emerging functions and add to the growing demand for housing.

Slums are another recurrent problem. At the time of the Revolution (1979), it was estimated that as much as one-third of the population of Tehran and a quarter of the population of other large cities was comprised of persons living on the margins of urban society. Their life was typified by squalid living conditions in the slum riddled with poverty, malnutrition, lack of health and educational facilities, as well as rampant crime. In 1987 there was no evidence of measures undertaken by the new government to alleviate conditions in the urban slums (US Congress library). However, official records do not mention the existence of slums in Iran.

Realizing the significance and increasing problems of housing, the present study takes up the challenge and attempts a spatial analysis of housing in Mashhad.
### Table 3
Mashhad City: Basic Statistics on Housing, 1996

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector (Mantagheh)</th>
<th>Area (km²)</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Density</th>
<th>No. of households</th>
<th>No. of Houses</th>
<th>No. of Rooms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15.58</td>
<td>161492</td>
<td>10365</td>
<td>40658</td>
<td>37422</td>
<td>165473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>23.94</td>
<td>274533</td>
<td>11468</td>
<td>59528</td>
<td>48887</td>
<td>194908</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.79</td>
<td>263943</td>
<td>22387</td>
<td>56714</td>
<td>47199</td>
<td>183424</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.95</td>
<td>203201</td>
<td>29238</td>
<td>41550</td>
<td>34525</td>
<td>129734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>148558</td>
<td>15787</td>
<td>30011</td>
<td>24324</td>
<td>85493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.43</td>
<td>185816</td>
<td>16257</td>
<td>38447</td>
<td>32274</td>
<td>112315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>33.88</td>
<td>156454</td>
<td>4618</td>
<td>34384</td>
<td>28741</td>
<td>114776</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.86</td>
<td>105273</td>
<td>7595</td>
<td>24825</td>
<td>19287</td>
<td>84338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>35.47</td>
<td>140302</td>
<td>3956</td>
<td>29342</td>
<td>26069</td>
<td>114213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>36.52</td>
<td>247833</td>
<td>6786</td>
<td>52315</td>
<td>46585</td>
<td>201402</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>225.0</td>
<td>1887405</td>
<td>8388</td>
<td>407774</td>
<td>345313</td>
<td>1386076</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Studies and Planning of Urban Housing of Khorasan (2002), Housing and Urban Development Organization, Mashhad.

### Major Objectives:

The major objectives set for the present study are to:

- identify the national, regional, and local housing processes responsible for bringing about the varied expression of housing on urban space.
- trace the locational policies and programs initiated for urban housing during different plan periods.
- examine the spatial patterns of housing types and the changes therein over time.
- delineate the social and cultural regions based on housing.

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Research Questions:

- What are the national, regional and local housing processes that find expression on urban space?
- What are the locational policies and programs that have been initiated for urban housing during the plan periods?
- Has the situation of a holy place (Holy shrine of Imam Reza) in Mashhad influenced the concentration and rental values of housing around it?
- What are the different patterns of housing emerging within the city and what changes have occurred over time?
- What are the location and housing type specific problems emerging in the city?
- Is housing within the city presenting a visible expression of the social and cultural categories spatially?

Hypotheses:

- Housing in newly developed areas reflects a marked social and economic segregation as compared to the older evolved and unplanned parts.
- The concept that different ethnic groups have a tendency to concentrate in specific ethnic housing has evolved over the years in different parts of Mashhad.
- Housing around the holy place is specifically developed for particular social groups and housing heterogeneity increases as we travel away from it.
- Housing near the holy place is older, more crowded and has higher rental value than the peripheral areas.

Methodology and Data Sources:

Given the nature of the present study, data was acquired from different published and unpublished sources. A detailed questionnaire was also prepared to collect data from sampled Mohallas of different localities.
The annual publication of the Statistical Center of Iran (Statistical Year book of Iran published annually since 1966) and Central Bank of Iran was consulted for national, provincial and city level spatial pattern of housing. The Central Bank of Iran has been publishing information about private construction in urban areas since 1965. In addition Reports of Management & Planning Organization (Plan and Budget Organization, Tehran), and census related to the work were consulted for secondary data.

Central Housing Banks of Tehran and Mashhad and their budget departments were visited for collecting Information related to housing loans and bylaws.

The offices of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development, Iran, and the Housing Foundation of Islamic Revolution, Mashhad, were also visited for collecting the information on plans and programs related to urban housing. Concerned publications of these institutions were gleaned for relevant information.

The study relates to the post Revolution plan period i.e. 1979. The Five Year Plans began in 1989. However comparison with the pre-Revolution period was considered depending upon the availability of data.

Different methods were used to measure the various dimensions of the urbanization processes such as percentage distribution, average size of urban centers, urban densities, average spacing of urban centers, Gini coefficient ratio etc. Similarly, urban housing was measured using indices like percentage of urban household to total households, household per house, person per room, persons per household, owners and tenants as per cent to total household etc. To measure the quality of houses based on facilities, average ranks were calculated. Various cartographic techniques such as choropleth, isopleth, and graduated circles were used to represent the statistical data. Maps were drawn using state-of-the-art computer techniques and software. All maps for Iran were prepared using 28 administrative divisions (Provinces) existing in 2001. However the administrative maps of Mashhad were used for mapping the urban housing related to 1996. The presentation of data collected from the field was done on the 16 spatial units generated by the author based on homogeneity. Aerial and focussed, close-up photographs were used as visible supplements.
Major Concepts and definitions:

**Urban:** In Iran, before the 1986 census, an urban center was defined as a place of settlement with a municipality and 5000 or more population (Statistical Year Book of Iran, 2000-2001). In 1986 and 1991 censuses, settlements with a municipality, irrespective of their population size, were considered as urban centers (Statistical Year Book of Iran, 1993). From 1996 till the present, urban centers have been defined as places with a municipality and 5000 or more population (Statistical Year Book of Iran, 1993).

**Urbanization:** has been defined as a process of population transformation. It is measured by dividing the total urban population in a unit space with the total population of the unit.

**Urban Majority Provinces:** The provinces in which more than 50 per cent of the total population lives in urban centers.

**Urban Growth Rate:** The absolute change in urban population during two reference years is divided by the total urban population in the former year and multiplied by 100.

**Sex Ratio:** The number of males against every 100 females is regarded sex ratio.

**Housing Indices**

**Room:** A separate space in residential unit with a minimum floor area of 4 sqm and a minimum height of 2 m. Kitchen, bathroom, animal sheds, and barns should not be counted as rooms.

**Housing Unit:** The Iran Management and Planning Organization defines “a conventional housing unit” consisting of at least one room, usually with a kitchen and a toilet, forming all or a part of a building intended for habitation by one or more households where they take their meals, sit together, and sleep. In the national census of population and housing (1996), all the housing units made of hard materials (steel,
bricks, cement, stone, wood, etc.) and falling under the above definition have been considered as conventional housing units. In simple words, is upper limit of the number of rooms in a housing unit has been defined.

**Rooms per House:** The average number of rooms in a house.

**Person per Room:** Average number of persons in a room.

**Household:** Persons living together in one residence, sharing their living expenses and eating together constitute a household. A person living alone also forms a household.

**Household per House:** Average number of households living in one house.

**Shortage of Houses:** Not enough houses for households (One house per household).

**Housing Ownership:** Own purchased house.

**Rental house:** A house for which a person is paying rent and does not have any legal ownership of that property.

**Aging of Houses:** Classification of houses on the bases of their year of construction.

**Levels of Housing:** The national average was considered as reference point. Values above and below the national average denoted high or low level of housing respectively.

**Urban Housing Gaps:** Difference between number of houses and households.

**Housing cooperatives:** The cooperatives engaged in preparation of land and construction of residential units and / or purchase of completed or incomplete housing units for completion and ceding to cooperative members, whether employees or workers or others.
Organization of the Study:

The contents of the study have been organized into six chapters excluding introduction and summary of conclusions.

Introduction

I. Conceptual Framework: This chapter covers the nature of the problem, literature review, definition of concepts, objectives, research questions, hypotheses, data base and methodology.

II. Study Area: This chapter introduces the physical, social and demographic aspects of Iran with a detailed focus on Mashhad city.

III. Urban Housing in Iran: An Overview. This chapter provides national and sub-national level variations in housing over time and space.

IV. Policies and Programs: In this chapter area specific housing policies, programs and the related changes over time are investigated for Iran as a whole and Mashhad in particular.

V. Housing Types: Pattern and Trends: This chapter is devoted to the identification of intra city variations in housing types and attempts to find varying changes over time.

VI. Housing Problems: Patterns and Trends: This chapter takes into account the problems of different kinds of housing within the city. The patterns of and trends in problems have been described.