

Recognizing the effect of food centre spatial dispersal on pilgrim's behavior patterns in food finding activities

Case study: Mashhad City



1- **Sanaz Saeidi Mofrad** , *PhD candidate, Department of urban planning and design, Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.*
([sanaz.saeedi@hotmail.com](mailto:sanz.saeedi@hotmail.com))

2- **Tara jamali shahni**- *Master of urban design , Dept. of Art and Architecture , Science and Research Branch ,Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran,(*
TARA.J2009@YAHOO.COM)

Paper Reference Number: 07-08-0807

Name of the Presenter:sanz saeidi mofrad

Abstract

Mashhad city as second large city in counter have more than fifteen million pilgrims tourist per year that will be increase to twenty-five million in 2030, and it six times more than inhabitant of city is. This rate of pilgrims creates opportunity for city, but it could also make threats for city if the activities patterns will be out of planning. According to location of Holly Shrine in central part of city, it has been become major destination of trips by pilgrims and it creates problems now for city. To consider this problem, methodology of research includes content analysis to study rate of trips and destinations, in depth interview with pilgrims and experts; graphical analysis particularly GIS tools with overlay technique. The aim of this paper is to recognize and analyze activities of pilgrims in Mashhad city for food finding as normal daily activities regarding behavior patterns and place attributes. Findings of research identified those patterns of placement the food centres in city follow the closest streets to Holly Shrine particularly those streets and avenue are direct to Holly Shrine with good view as visual corridors as legible base to way findings. Additionally there are second layouts of streets as other option for pilgrims and finally numbers of food brands with high quality are other option for special. Results of research identified that pattern of pilgrims in food finding follow two major principles including social activities pattern, and forms of places to present food. These two parts in a logical matrix map addressed to reason of variety in food findings patterns of pilgrims in city and surrounding area. Results of this research could use by those countries that they are involved with centres of tourism with the same condition.

Key words: spatial dispersal, behavior activities, pilgrims, food finding

1. Introduction

Travel sometimes is associated with adventure and sometimes for religious purpose by visiting pilgrimages or by taking holy trip. All these are to quench the thirst of mind. Thus, travel has a very important position in human life and ultimately tourism that is movement of people within their own country or across the national border became one of the largest and gainful industries in the economic domain of human life (Dasgupta and et al. 2007).

Tourism is a rapidly growing phenomenon and has become one of the largest industries in the world. The impact of tourism is extremely varied. It plays an important and certainly positive role in the socio-economic and political development in destination countries by offering new employment opportunities. Also, in certain instances, it may contribute to a broader cultural understanding by creating awareness, respecting the diversity of cultures and ways of life. On the other hand, as a tool to create jobs, it has not fulfilled its expectations.

Pilgrimages are not a destination only for our religious faith but they also strengthen our national unity and promote brother goodness also. Now the time has to come that these should be used to earn foreign exchange also keeping guarded our cultural heritage. On domestic front Pilgrim Tourism can be very helpful for regional development, employment generation, and can enroot again the cultural values. Many modern social evils, which are caused by materialism, can be cured with the help of religious tourism. Religious tourism generates revenue in a way as no other kind of tourism does. It has a distinct edge over other kinds of tourism due to the pull of huge crowds in the form of tourists (Chattopadhyay 2006).

Pilgrim tourism is an ancient and continuing religious tradition of the Culture of places. Here religion, as a cultural dimension, assumes the vital role and central focus of tourism in which tourists (pilgrims) from all strata of the participate. In pilgrim tourism, the dimension of religion forms the basis of tourism of pilgrimage by offering the reward of purification the soul and attainment of objectives related to the problems of mundane existence.

The present article of the sacred place Mashhad highlight about the behavioral patterns of pilgrim tourism with all its multi-dimensional approach as a place of pilgrimage, which attracts the people from distant places, and disseminate through the generation its cultural tenets which in valuable, being one of the repository of the great Iranian cultural heritage.(Karar, 2010)

2. Theoretical framework

A. Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people "traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". (UNWTO -1995) Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. In 2010, there were over 940 million international tourist arrivals worldwide, representing a growth of 6.6% when compared to 2009. (UNWTO -2011)

Tourism is important and in some cases vital for many countries. It brings in large amounts of income in payment for goods and services available, contributing an estimated 5% to the worldwide gross domestic product (GDP), and it creates opportunities for employment in the service industries associated with tourism. (UNWTO -2011) These service industries include transportation services, such as airlines, cruise ships and taxicabs; hospitality services, such as accommodations, including hotels and resorts; and entertainment venues, such as amusement parks, casinos, shopping malls, music venues and theatres. Generally, according to the tourist

motivation, there are different types of tourism such as Agritourism, Cultural tourism, Space tourism, Religious tourism, and etc.

In Mashhad, one of the most common types of tourism is pilgrims (religious tourism). A **pilgrim** is a traveler who is on a journey to a holy place. Typically, this is a physical journeying to some place of special significance to the adherent of a particular religious belief system. In the spiritual literature of Christianity, the concept of pilgrim and pilgrimage may refer to the experience of life in the world (considered as a period of exile) or to the inner path of the spiritual aspirant from a state of wretchedness to a state of beatitude. (Wikipedia, 2012) One traveling may have different motives and objectives. In Religious tourism, also consider many cultural, economic, and political aspects of tourists. Today, more than any other time, pilgrimage travels have been linked to other types of tourism. Commonly religious tourism is related to cultural tourism.

B. Spatial structure

The concept of space is a collection of relations more than anything. Men have been satisfied their natural needs to make social relations by create urban space, constantly. Some spatial structures in terms of social are more active and provide a stronger interaction.

The public urban space is the best examples of areas with active associated function by creating proximity between groups, ideas and perceptions create suitable background for development in social relationships.

In addition to the physical aspects of urban space, is a social phenomenon that is effective in producing collective behavior and social participation.

C. Behavioral pattern

The relationship between space and behavior Due to its interdisciplinary nature is formed in some pattern; 1.Mechanical pattern or human- machine system; 2.Perception- motivation pattern; 3.Behavioral pattern; 4.Ecological pattern.

Mechanical approach consider human as a phenomenon with mechanical capabilities. In Perception- motivation pattern, know how the men see, understand and survey the environment and its react is important. But behavioral pattern emphasize detect of human behavioral and investigate aspect Instead of inner feelings and reactions. In this approach human mainly manifested in the form of behavioral patterns.

The last approach in relationship between space and behavior is ecological pattern that Know human phenomena on canvas and have some manifest specific:

- Environment and Behavior are inseparable and Behavior is examined in the context of environmental.
- There are Interaction and interactive effects between environment and behavior; behavior is effective and has an effect on environment.
- The quality of relations between human and environment is dynamic and variable.
- Environmental and behavior relations work in the integrated system; multiple levels of behavior (verbal, non-verbal and spatial behavior) simultaneously occur and are inseparable.(Aliakbari, 2006)

D. The relationship between Pedestrian Activities and spatial structure

Jan Gehl, a Danish architect, has written interestingly about the patterns of pedestrian life in a Book, *Life between Buildings*. He simplifies and divides outdoor activities in public spaces in a city into three categories, each of which places very different demands on the physical environment: *necessary activities*, *optional activities*, and *social activities*.

Necessary activities include those that are more or less compulsory, such as going to work, shopping, waiting for a bus or a person, running errands. Among other activities, this group includes the great majority of those related to walking. Because the activities in this group are necessary, their incidence is influenced only slightly by the physical framework. These activities will take place throughout the year, under nearly all conditions, and are more or less independent of the exterior environment. The participants have no choice.

Optional activities – that is, those pursuits that are participated in if there is a wish to do so and if time and place make it possible – are quite another matter. This category includes such activities as taking a walk to get a breath of fresh air, standing around enjoying life, or sitting and sunbathing. These activities take place only when exterior conditions are optimal --when weather and place invite them. This relationship is particularly important in connection with physical planning. In other words, these activities are especially dependent on exterior physical conditions.

Social activities are all activities that depend on presence of others in public spaces. Social Activities include children at play, greetings and conversations, communal activities of various kinds, and finally – as the most widespread social activity – passive contacts, that is, simply seeing and hearing other people. These activities could also be termed as "resultant" activities because social activities occur spontaneously, as a direct consequence of people moving about and being in the same spaces. This implies that social activities are indirectly supported whenever necessary and optional activities are given better conditions in public spaces.

According to Gehl, a social activity takes place every time two people are together in the same space. To see and hear one other, to meet, is in itself a form of contact, a social interaction. The actual meeting, merely being present, is furthermore the seed for more comprehensive forms of social activity. This connection is important in relation to physical planning. Although the physical framework does not have a direct influence on the quality, content, and intensity of social contacts, architects and planners can affect the possibilities for meeting, seeing, and hearing people. (Therakomen, 2001.11)

According to the table 1, when environmental quality or the physical structure of space is good, Optional activities are an increasingly frequent. As the level of optional activities increase the range of social activities become more, too. In other hand, Space is not only context of social and cultural processes and phenomena, and also impact on them.

	Quality of the physical environment	
	Poor	Good
Necessary activities	●	●
Optional activities	●	●

"Resultant activities" (Social activities)_	●	●
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Table 1: When the quality of outdoor environment is good, optional activities occur with increasing frequency. Furthermore, as level of optional activity rise, the number of social activities usually increases substantially (Gehl, 1996)

3. Importance of Mashhad

3.1. Ethno-historical Background of Mashhad

Generally for a long time, Mashhad due to establishment of historical Silk Road and adjacent to nomadic lands and has been faced with an influx of different ethnic groups that these factors caused communication and competition between different cultures in this land. Review the history of Mashhad show that these conditions caused severe handling and mixing of indigenous and non indigenous population. There is less in the world such a diversity of ethnic groups with different cultural and historical roots in a small range.

Mashhad city complex in addition to religious center and strong historical and cultural background of geographical origin has a unique position. The position of flat Mashhad between two Major Mountain "Hezarmasjed" and "Binaloud" has created many natural resources; these as a natural heritage near the cultural heritage have played an effective role in shaping valuable settlements and diversity of lifestyle and culture in this area.

From the perspective of spatial planning, the available resources in Mashhad complex city can be divided in to three main groups that are complementary are involved in the development process of city:

- Religious and cultural complex of holly shrine
- Cultural and historical monuments
- Natural resources and attractions

3.2. Potentiality of Mashhad being a Tourist Spot

Mashhad, the second metropolitan and the largest religious pilgrimage city of Iran, attract the highest level of tourists and pilgrims every year. This situation is due to numerous attractions including the attractions of pilgrimage, tourism, historical, natural and etc. According to studies, the number of entering pilgrims and tourist inflow to metropolis of Mashhad in 2010 is estimated about nineteen million. Entering this number of pilgrims to this city, regardless of scale or to travel abroad, is cause that this metropolis considered as the second religious metropolis in the world. In addition to, Mashhad has been the international domain of influence and because of adjoining Muslim countries has become the largest center of religious tourists and pilgrims in the Middle East and north-eastern of Iran. This situation cause that the economic performance of Mashhad, develop to provide the pilgrims services required. The presence of large numbers of pilgrims and tourists has changed pilgrimage and tourism economy in the city of Mashhad. in this area, the concentration of tourism activities has formed. Despite the relative changes of pilgrims in the different seasons and months, the

continuous presence of pilgrims and tourists in Mashhad has created a special relative stability economically. And also has expanded some social and economic activities such as residential units, reception and tourism, particularly in some parts of the city. As the number of suburban and enter-urban public transport and shops are also added.

However, pilgrims and tourists who travel to Mashhad almost residence in all parts of city, but because the primary purpose of their trip is pilgrimage holly shrine, they usually selected some places for residence that has minimum distance to holly shrine. On the other interpretation, the interest of pilgrims to nearer the holly shrine cause that many tourist and residential facilities are concentrated around the shrine.

Generally, considering the different travelers characteristics in the different months of the year, the behavior patterns of pilgrims and tourists in the different times of the year will be different.

4. Analysis and implication results

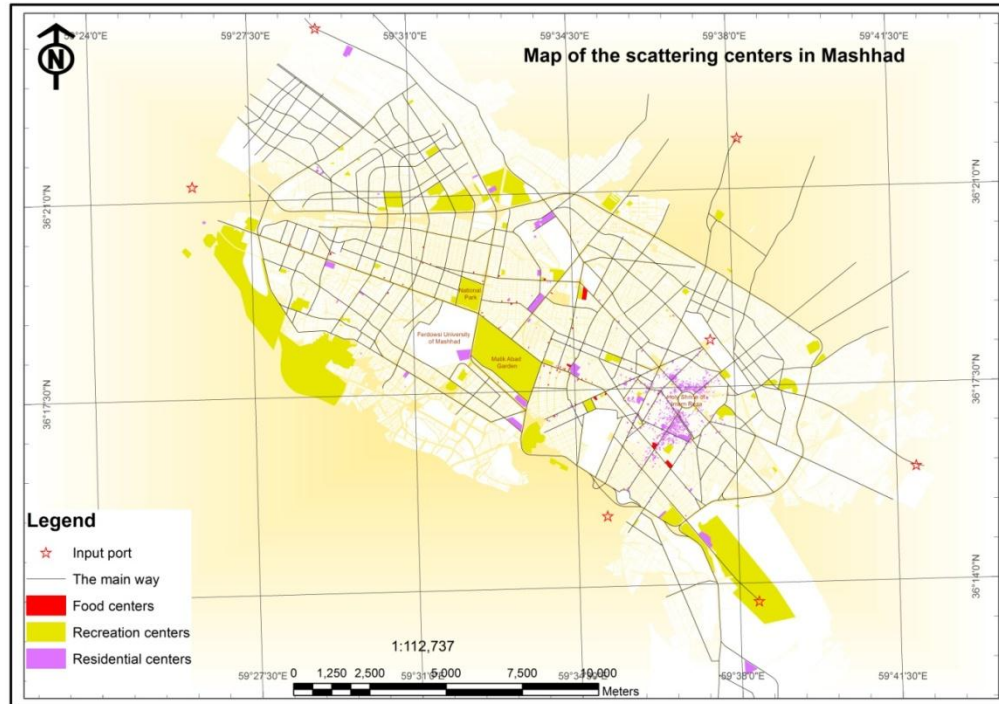
Generally, settlement pattern of tourism services is one of the most important objects in tourism economic and planning. In this way, the entertainment services as a part of tourism services has been function of these changes.

Entertainment sector in tourism has a central role. Tourism trends directly are affect the volume of this sector, the manner of it's with demand and the reception quality.

One of the variable affecting in entertainment services sector is the settlement pattern of it in tourism that is based on pilgrim's behavioral analysis. So, to know more we can be pointed to the status of entertainment services in the city of Mashhad.

In Mashhad the situation is more different. Many entertainment services do not meet the minimum expectations of passengers. In fact, this due to settlement patterns of entertainment services that based on target market of habitants of Mashhad and considering to pilgrims and tourism market is less than expected. According to figure 1, entertainment services (food centers) follow a liner pattern that is surrounding the main streets of city. While around the main attraction of city, holly shrine, the density of these centers become less.

Figure 1: the scattering pilgrimage centers in Mashhad

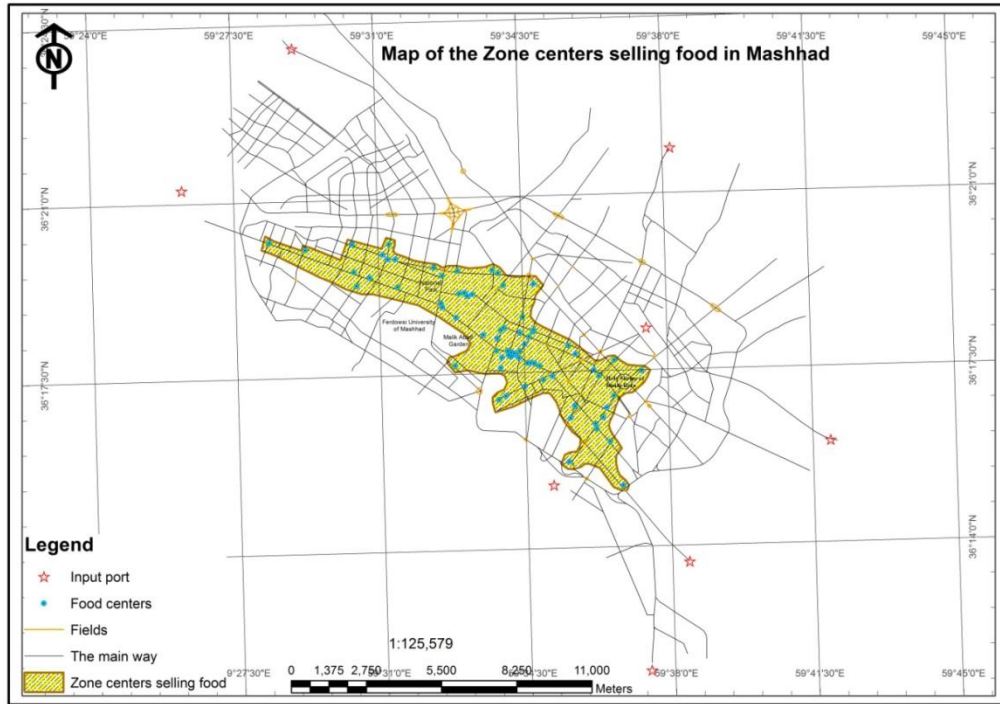


5. Conclusions

According to the study the dispersal of food, entertainment and residential centres in Mashhad characterize some results:

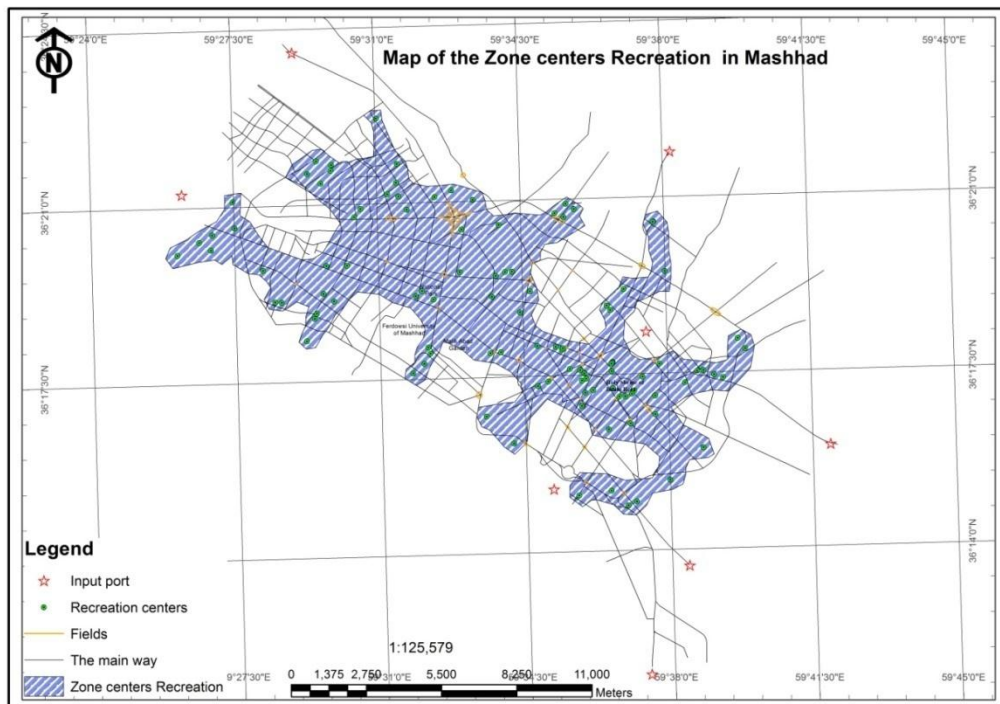
1. Spatial distribution of food centres and restaurant in Mashhad is liner and centrality of urban spaces around the holly shrine and continue to be linear along the main streets.(look at figure 2)

Figure 2: the linear pattern of food centers and restaurants



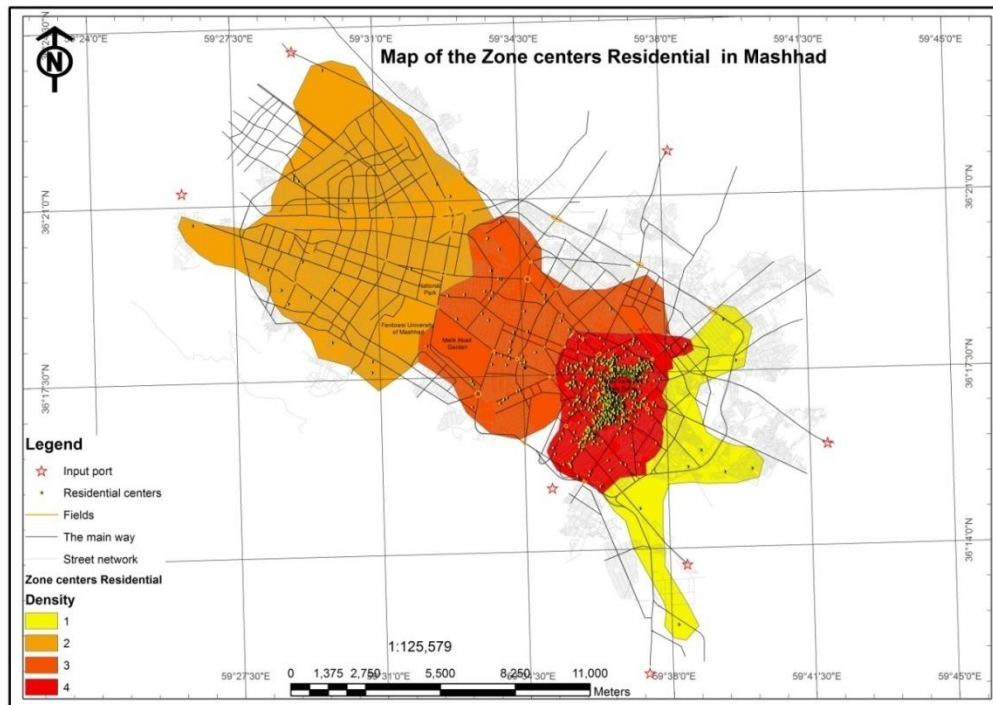
2. Spatial distribution of entertainment centres in Mashhad is dispersal. These services are scattered throughout the city.(look at figure 3)

Figure 3: the dispersal pattern of entertainment centers



- Spatial distribution of residential centres in Mashhad is a little different. To better understanding the sprawl of residential centres we divided city to four density group (look at the figure 4). Dispersal of residential centres is radial pattern to central shrine. As the Distance of the shrine is much greater, the density of these centres becomes less.

Figure 4: the dispersal pattern of residential centres



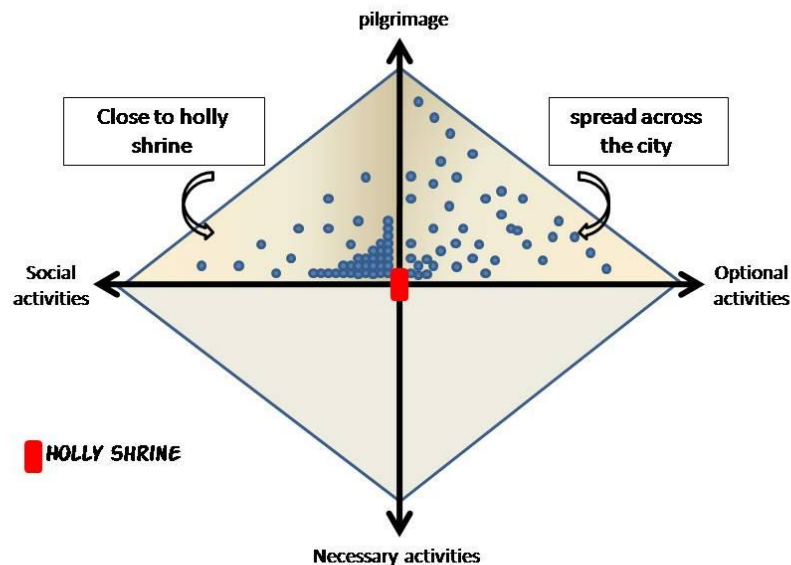
In this research, the most common approach has been based on Gehl classification; behavioral patterns of pilgrims are classified to three groups: Necessary activities, Optional activities and Resultant activities (Social activities).

	Global	pilgrims
Necessary activities	going to work, shopping, waiting for a bus or a person, running errands	Eating, resting, necessity activities
Optional activities	Taking a walk to get a breath of fresh air, standing around enjoying life, or sitting and sunbathing and	Shopping, diversion, pastime, pilgrimage
"Resultant activities" (Social activities)_	greetings and conversations, communal activities of various kinds and ...	Visiting cultural and recreational places

Table 2: behavioral patterns of pilgrims in Mashhad

Comparing patterns of entertainment centers and residential centers in Mashhad represents a major difference in the settlement patterns of these two categories. (Look at figure 5). Results show the important difference between behavioral patterns of pilgrims and their activity patterns. Settlement model of these two groups is based on two different target markets. Because of residential centres can only offering their services to pilgrimage and tourism target markets, contain a height density at a small distance of holly shrine, and conversely entertainment centers built their target markets on inhabitants of Mashhad city and have a little attention to tourism and pilgrimage markets. Thus mainly they were located on the busy main streets in city.

Figure 5: behavioral patterns of pilgrims in Mashhad in relationship between holly shrines



According to results of this research, Models of pilgrim's behavioral patterns in Mashhad are based on their activity patterns. Studies show that pilgrim's Necessary activities are located closed to holly shrine such as restaurants, hotels. On the other hand, their optional activities are somewhat variable, they are spread across the city and most of the times are far away from holly shrine. In this regard, considering the behavioral pattern of pilgrims, planning for improve the quality of entertainment and residential services in Mashhad city is so important.

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