

Abstract

This study dealt with the impact of the spatial constraints of the Israeli occupation on land use and built up area of some Palestinian communities in the West Bank.

The main aim of the study is to diagnose the existing situation of land use and to study the distribution of the Palestinian built-up areas during three different periods of time: 1997, 2006, and 2013 in a comparative way, using quantitative spatial analysis and Geographic Information Systems (GIS). The aim is also to reveal different effects of some spatial obstacle of the Israeli occupation (e.g, colonies and geopolitical divisions of Oslo agreement).

The study focused on some Palestinian communities that have been chosen in accordance to the intended sample procedures; where this procedure resulted in the selection of nine communities , four of them are urban (Hebron , Tuqu', Al bireh, and Ya'bad) and the other five are rural (Beit Ummar , 'Anata , Ni'lin , Marda , and Deir Sharaf).

Among the most important results is the presence of an increase in the built-up area of both the Palestinian and Israeli colonies accompanied with a decrease in the agricultural and grazing as well as the forested area . The increase in both built-up areas was equal and on the expenses of the agricultural land as compared to grazing land, while the increase in rural areas in the Palestinian built-up area was mostly on the expenses of agricultural lands, whereas those for Israeli colonies was on the expense of agricultural grazing land. The study also showed that the total

increase of Palestinian built-up urban areas was more than the increase in Israeli colonies built-up areas. The current Palestinian built-up expansion in most of the Palestinian communities was against the direction of the Israeli colonies' expansion. In addition, the Palestinian urban expansion is mainly located into Area (A), whereas the expansion in rural areas is mainly in Area (B). The distance between centers of most of the Palestinian built-up areas and the Israeli colonies is increasing; indicating that the Israeli colonies are repulsion factor for Palestinian built-up areas, the study also showed that Israeli occupier is trying to create geographic continuity between adjacent colonial built-up areas , which is obvious in the direction of growth of such colonial entities.