

Abstract

The phenomenon of informal housing has become one of the most important issues that affects the composition of communities in the countries of the world as a whole, whether urban or rural communities. It is considered one of the most important topics being discussed, because of the resulting negative effects on the economical, social and environmental aspects of life.

This study aims to clarify the concept of informal housing in the Palestinian Territories, to review its patterns and characteristics, and to shed some light on the most important causes that led to their creation, to study the resulting impacts, and to propose solutions to be followed to limit their spread and prevent their appearance in other places. The importance of the study is to provide a clear definition of “Informality” in the Palestinian Territories. By reviewing previous researches, it was found that the concept of the informal housing in the Palestinian Territories was only applied to the Palestinian camps, but this study will show that additional features of random housing which are appearing in major cities in the West Bank.

To achieve the objectives of the study, a specific methodology has been built, through reviewing the patterns of “Informality” throughout the world, and then reviewing the historical upbringing of the Palestinian cities and its urbanization patterns. Additionally, the definition of the concept of the informal housing in the Palestinian territories and its pattern classifications has been reviewed. This information was obtained by conducting interviews with key decision makers in governmental institutions and local bodies. The methodology applied was adopted from the Yen approach (Yin, 2003) in the analysis of case studies. However, the writing style of the Multiple Case Version of the Classic Single Case was obtained in reviewing the case studies.

The final results of this research showed that there are more than one class of informal housing in the Palestinian Territories: it is that Palestinian camps are classified as a first category of informal pattern in Palestine, while in the second category, it is that informal housing which has appeared in the rural communities, either as random in building inside the border of the villages or these which are located away. The third

category of the random housing pattern was found in the urban areas, either within the boundaries of the master plan of the cities or outside. Moreover, the final results of this research uncovered the causes and the impacts of these three informal types of housing, and thus proposed a number of recommendations were proposed in order to stop or reduce the spread of this phenomenon.