

Settlement Distribution & Type

Qⁱⁿatar

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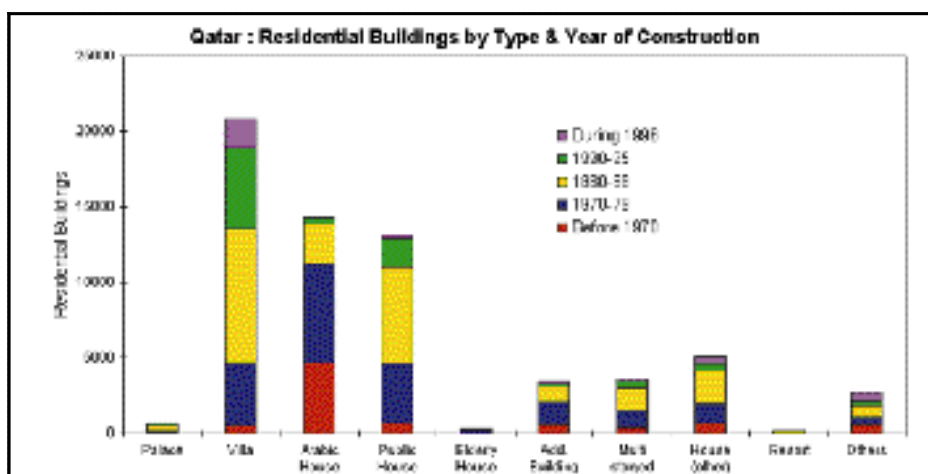
Vestiges of the early settlement in the peninsula of Qatar can be traced back to the 4th century BC (Qatar department of Publication & External Information). The old settlement believed to have started in the northern most coastal areas of the country which later moved to Doha. The spurt in settlement growth can be seen after the discovery of petroleum and natural gas during the seventies. The increase in construction activity along with the development of other sectors of economy has been tremendous after the seventies. The type of buildings constructed and the settlement pattern has also experienced notable changes during the past twenty five years.

The early settlement developed in Doha (inner part of the present Doha city) has rapidly grown towards outside areas in a circular manner, primarily following the major transport arteries. In the process significant number of settlements have been constructed in outer Doha, Rayyan , Umm Slal and Al Wakra areas of the country. Al Khor, Dukhan, Mesaieed and Madinat Al Shamal are the other important settlements clustered along the coastal areas. Vast areas in the countryside, however, are mainly uninhabited with very few settlements scattered here and there. The distribution of settlements is mainly guided by the infrastructure made available. Being more or less a flat terrain throughout, geographic factors do not play a decisive role in settlement distribution except for the areas being developed in the vicinity of the coast.

The Housing and Population Census conducted in March 1997 reveals some of

the interesting features and characteristics of settlement distribution, type and pattern in the country. According to the census, there were 74511 census buildings* in the country. Of these 64400 (86.43 %) are categorized as residential and the remaining 10111 (13.57 %) as establishment buildings. Distribution of settlements is quite concentrated in nature and varies greatly from one place to another. A little more than half (52.07%) of the residential buildings are concentrated in Doha

19361 (30.06%) residential buildings that are constructed during 1970-79 while another 23763 (36.90%) are added during 1980-89. Thus more than two thirds of residential buildings in Qatar are constructed during the eighties and nineties. At the present average, three to four thousand residential buildings are being constructed every year. In the year 1996 alone there were 3496 residential buildings constructed.



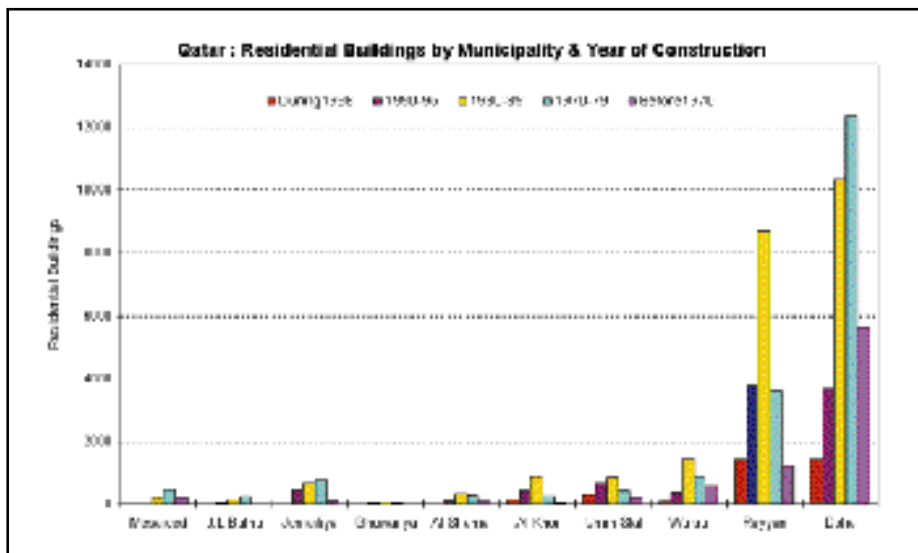
alone, followed by 29.11 percent in Rayyan, 5.35 percent in Wakra and 3.21 percent in Al Jemiliya. There are some pockets in inner Doha where on an average more than 4000 residential buildings exist in just one square kilometer of geographic area. On the other hand vast majority of area has average less than 10 building per square kilometer. The building density as shown on the map reveals that majority of areas in Doha and Rayyan however fall in the density range of 100 to 1000 buildings per square kilometer area.

Settlements have grown rapidly in the past 25 years. This is revealed from the fact that of the total residential buildings (64400) in 1997 only 12.69 per cent (8173) belong to the buildings constructed prior to 1970. There are

The buildings are a mix of different architecture and style. Accordingly they have been grouped into different types as Palace, Villa, Arabic House etc. As per 1997 census, Villas constitute the majority (32.45%) of residential buildings followed by Arabic (22.22%) and Public (20.39%) houses. The proportion of Multi-story buildings is just 5.65 per cent while remaining fall in other type of houses. About one percent of the residential buildings are Palaces.

There has been notable changes in the type of buildings being constructed over the time in the country. Of the total residential buildings constructed prior to nineteen seventy, 57.75 per cent are the Arabic Houses. Their share fell down to 33.57 per cent during 1970-79 and further down to 11.25 per cent during 1980-89.





This downward trend has further continued and it is observed in the total residential buildings constructed during 1990-95 and 1996 there are only 3.63 and 1.86 percent Arabic Houses respectively.

On the contrary there has been a tremendous increase in the construction of Villas and Public houses. Of the total residential buildings constructed prior to 1970, Villas constituted just 6.15 per cent. This proportion rose to 21.77 percent during 1970-79 and further to 37.07 percent during 1980-89. Further, more than half (55.95 %) of the residential buildings constructed during 1990-95 are Villas. In 1996 this proportion has further risen to 56.88 percent.

The increase in the proportion of Public houses has also been quite remarkable until the nineties. The proportion of Public houses which was just 7.97 percent in the residential buildings constructed prior to 1970 rose to 20.74 percent during eighties and further to 26.68 percent during 1980-89. However, the ratio fell down to 20.45 percent during 1990-95. In 1996 out of the total residential buildings constructed in the country just 4.66 percent belonged to this category. There has not been much change in the ratio of Multi-storied buildings constructed in the country which has varied between 4 to 7 percent during this period.

All the municipalities of Qatar have shown significant increase in the construction of residential buildings during the eighties and nineties. The constant increase in the later period can be noticed for Doha, Rayyan, Umm Slal, Jemaliya and Al Khor whereas in the remaining municipalities the process has slowed down significantly. The overall scenario of settlement distribution in Qatar reflects a speedy growth in the settlements primarily in the areas where there have been an infrastructure development. For this purpose, the areas of major concentration were the outer Doha, Rayyan and areas towards Umm Slal and Wakrah.

* Census Building is a part or whole of an architectural building determined by the entrance/s of the building. An architectural building with the entrance/s leading to the same components is considered as one census building whereas entrances leading to different components of the same architectural building will determine the number of census buildings in that architectural building.

Settlement Distribution

