

Position of Rural Development in Development Plans

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Abstract: In Iran, new centralization characteristic, especially during Pahlavi dynasty, has been convergence and its vast use in bureaucracy. Historical sociological studies have consensus on the issues of centralization, power centralization, and political sovereignty in Iran; however, these issues have some divisional interruptions and different levels of strength in some parts of the history. This essay was aimed to critically investigate rural development plans before and after the Iranian Revolution. To do so, based on a library study, construction programs before the Revolution since 1941 and after the Revolution were examined in development plans. The results indicated that, before the Revolution, rural construction plans were centralized and top-down, lacked indigenous studies and sociological attitude, and had technical attitude toward rural issues. After the Revolution, first, a kind of increasing participation was experienced in the form of social mobilization, influenced by the transformations occurring at the macro level of society. There was no sign of bureaucracy in this period; but, gradually, following the transformations, the participation model again took the guided-from-the-outside form. In general, in the five-year post-revolution development planning, deviation from the execution of approved plan, limitation to some executive measures, and executing previous projects despite content changes have been evident. Rural development plans do not have sufficient budgetary allocations, are not written according to the pathology of previous plans, and no organization or institution accounts for their lack of execution. In other words, lack of access to the goals does not bind the approvers. More details are discussed below.

Keywords: Rural development, centralized planning, public participation, development plans

Introduction

Considering the theoretical and methodology expansion, topics relating to development and sustainable rural development are turning to a large-scale interdisciplinary paradigm. Years of research in this field of development have led to the formation and fostering of considerable theoretical and applied analyses and models, which places rural development at the same level as or superior to the conventional modernization paradigm within the **Error! Bookmark not defined.** globalization trend. Sustainable rural development is originated from macro theoretical changes and transformations in the field of social sciences during recent decades, especially after the 1970s (Vander Ploge, 2002). But, it seems that, since the 1970s, along with theoretical and methodical challenges and criticism against the conventional modernization school by contradiction and dependency schools, post-modernism, and finally feminism and social structuralism, the necessary ground has been paved for introducing rural scope within rural development field. Moreover, one of the causes of the vast introduction of sustainable rural development and getting released from the conventional rural development discussion has been its historical alignment with general environmental activism and sustainable development. These two theoretical fields have been immediately combined due to their numerous conceptual commonalities and formed a paradigm called sustainable rural development with an emphasis on internal, domestic, and people-centered mechanisms. Considering the dynamic spirit and the required necessities in the new sustainable rural development paradigm, development in general and rural development in particular should be formed from the inside of societies and thus utilize the accessible sources and institutions. Accordingly, at the dawn of the third millennium, the adoptive type of rural development was neglected and the internal, domestic, and people-centered mechanisms were emphasized.

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The recent rural development definitions have scarcely mentioned the issue of sustainability; they have been mostly influenced by the governing views during different periods and are mainly centered on economic and social pivots. For a relatively long period, rural development has been defined within the modernization approach with a main emphasis on the economical dimension which considers the growth and increase of production, irrespective of other development dimensions. For some other time, there has been an emphasis on social aspects such as improvement of socio-economic life of certain groups. Later, the distribution of development profits has been considered along with growth and, in the next steps, participation and similar dimensions are attended to. Although integrative development has been emphasized, integrative rural development has been scarcely realized in practice. Consequently, the development occurring in villages has been inharmonious and somehow uncoordinated. In general terms, rural development is a multi-dimensional process, the object of which is to improve and enhance lifestyle of the poor and vulnerable classes of rural society; a process which employs mechanisms such as planning, organizing, enhancing individual and collective self-reliance, and providing appropriate transformation in social and intellectual structures of peasants to reinforce their power, capability, and authority in terms of using available features and resources so that they could change their present situation to a more favorable one. Realization of such a development needs alteration in institutional, technical, personality, and value structures, which would lead to fundamental variations in social structure and personality characteristics of villagers. The consequence should ensure that villagers' essential needs are met, their lifestyle is improved, and self-reliance, freedom of choice, and authority are granted on them. In the recent period, rural development has been also proposed in the form of partnership development which includes dimensions of integrative rural development and participation (Azkia, 2005: 37).

In general, rural development is considered among the important issues in any country's development and has high priority in socio-economic development plans. Thus, ignoring or paying insufficient attention to this issue will result in the destruction of villages and expansion of urban problems. In other words, growth and development require planning and one of the very important factors in the success of development planning is the availability of a comprehensive and efficient planning system. According to Tofigh (2006), in modern approaches, the relationship between goals and results has not been very important. Nowadays, interactive planning has been considered. Strategic planning is aimed to form decision-makers' mentality and help planners understand circumstances. Planning is the most fundamental tool in achieving development; it is a conscious action for achieving certain goals and performing the related actions in future. It must be mentioned that multi-dimensional growth of all human societies is the general goal of development. Thus, in the planning process for achieving development and being placed on the right track, it is necessary to understand conditions and necessities of human societies as well as their spiritual and material needs. Undoubtedly, such a necessity is not considered the same everywhere and facilities and resources are not the same in all places as well (Saeidi, 1998: 150). Considering the dynamic spirit and the required necessities in the new sustainable rural development paradigm, development in general and rural development in particular should be formed from the inside of societies and thus utilize the accessible sources and institutions (Azkia, 2009:18). According to the above points, it is concluded that the best plans for development, especially rural development, occur in the bottom-up state with a better understanding of the villagers' socio-cultural characteristics.

The Government Role in Planning

Centralization refers to the monopoly of decision-making power to the governing political structure, which resists any kind of distribution and dispersion of decision-making power and implementation of affairs via different centers and structures. This concept leads to the geographical power distribution at local and regional levels, i.e. beyond national level. According to Robertson, centralization denotes the concentration of governance and political authority in the capital at a national level, which is opposed to the distribution of power and responsibilities among national, regional, and local centers (Modir Shanechi, 2000, 361). Bureaucracy refers to the organizational adjustment in order to work effectively and impersonally. But, in practice, especially in countries such as Iran, bureaucracy does not have such a positive performance and has turned to the governance of bureaucrats consisting of a kind of patriarchal treatment with local people. According to Glosman, "The points that have been theoretically mentioned about bureaucracy, especially in Weber's approach, have been practically applied in a different way. Although bureaucracy is rationale in terms of organizational position and category, it acts extremely irrationally in political terms, constrains participation, lives secretly, limits authority, exempts leaders from supervision and increases power hierarchy, and ruins individualism and equality" (Modir Shanechi, 2000, 31). Thus, bureaucratic system has turned to the application system of bureaucrats. In Iran, especially in Pahlavi dynasty, the new centralization characteristic was convergence and vast utilization of bureaucracy. Historical sociological studies have consensus on the issues of centralization, power centralization, and political sovereignty in Iran; however, these issues have experienced some divisional interruptions and different levels of

strength in some parts of the history. According to Katouzian (1993), in traditional Iranian society, the government has been separated from society and has been located not only on its top, but also above it. As a result, in the final analysis, the government has not have a permanent reliance position within society and did not represent its benefits. Accordingly, the government has exclusively owned all the social rights and the rights of every person, group, and social class, even the entire society, have been basically governed by authorities as a privilege that could be instantly cancelled by the government. In other words, the government has not subject to any tradition, convention, contract, or permanent law; this is the real meaning of autocracy: dictatorship and conceit. Any kind of freedom forms a responsibility and any right causes an obligation; in a society in which there are no rights and freedom, no obligations and responsibilities would be accepted. In such a society, the nation, i.e. the whole society, is basically in conflict with the government. In other words, even if there is no chance of rebellion and uprising, people would obey the government because of necessity and farseeing, not satisfaction and acceptance. In other words, the king has been the only competent authority for dealing with all civilian and martial affairs, commander in chief of the armed forces, and benefactor of every single person whose orders are binding, reign has a divine grace, and existence is the source of blessing for all the nation. Any power has been emanating from and returning to the king. All the people, even the prime minister, ministers, and high-ranking officials have been considered the king's servants (Shamim, 1989, 223).

Obviously, consequents and outcomes of centralization and bureaucracy include authority disclaimer and complicating partnership process. Primary transformations of Land Reforms Program encouraged the peasants who had experienced years of forced labor and masters' injustice to be optimistic about themselves and having a share in determining their destiny. However, new governmental organizations immediately disappointed these peasants. Many farmers realized that transformations could be useful for them if they could obtain a base for ensuring and determining their destiny and get directly involved in decision-makings (Fiouzat, 1996, 110). Thus, Land Reforms Program did not help the realization of democracy, but reinforced governmental domination. If the peasants had no choice, but electing landlords for the National Council before the Land Reforms Programs, later, they had to elect the ones already selected by the government, about whom they were completely uninformed. Banks and cooperatives which had acquired the credit and financial systems of villages turned to the mechanisms for controlling and monitoring villages and served only a specific group who formed the elite— mostly those who were the masters' and landlords' agents and familiar with the language of bureaucracy, the result of which was reforming social stratification, intensifying and reinforcing a new form of social inequality, and reinforcing relationship-orientation and government-dependence as well as destruction of individuality and interest in teamwork. It is mentioned that "In their interaction with each other, Iranians think about the following quotations:

Where does the other person belong? Where does s/he depend on? What are his/her connections? What is his/her clique? Based on their accumulated culture, Iranians cannot see people's individuality and then guess their group connections; individuality is not a point for them. The person does not have any meaning and existence without collective identity; but, s/he gains identity through connections. This kind of pessimism has some historical roots, which could hinder teamwork, common rational work, successful party work, and rational consensus" (Sariolghalam, 1999, 67). Consequently, centralization and bureaucracy, which are manifested as a bureaucratic, authoritarian government, have been the obstacle for the formation of original collaborative processes. A part of this situation has still remained after the Islamic Revolution. Although the Revolution ended the dictatorship dominance of Pahlavi dynasty in Iran, substituted Islamic Republic based on people's votes, and considered gaining political and economic independence as well as expansion of social justice and participation of all people in the destiny of themselves and their countries, due to some domestic and international issues such as internal crises in the early post-Revolution years and the advent of the Imposed War, people did not witness the realization of these principles in practice. As an example, the plan for the foundation of councils which was set forth from the early days after the Revolution and mentioned in the Constitutional Law was approved in Islamic Parliament of Iran in 1982.

Then, in 1996, it was re-enacted after some modifications, and ultimately in 1998 i.e. 20 years after the Revolution, following the social and political transformations in the society, the government enforced it and, at the national level, people elected members of City and Village Councils for the first time. Although bureaucratic feature underwent some institutional and organizational changes after the Revolution, it still continued; also, because of the centralization of the planning system in Iran, especially the divisional nature of planning, bureaucracy was expanded and became inefficient so that the the rural part of the country found different authorities. If only Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Construction was responsible for the rural part in the past, after the Revolution, the following institutions and organizations got involved: Jihad of Construction, Ministry of Interior, State Welfare Organization of Iran, Central Organization for Rural Cooperatives of Iran, Islamic Revolution Mostazafan Foundation, Imam Khomeini Relief Foundation, Foundation of Martyrs and Veterans Affairs, and Mobilization

Base in Rural Affairs. These organizations not only lacked coordination in their duties and activities, but also had different approaches and owned different socio-political positions at the rural level. More importantly, similar to the past, instead of taking conductive, training, and promoting roles, they still emphasized their interventionist, assisting, and agency, not supervision role, the result of which was people's dependence on the government and reduction of their self-reliance and partnership spirit (Azkia, 2013: 109). It must be mentioned that, in today's developmental literature, people's participatory role in the formulation steps of government has been highlighted, which has occurred because of the failure of autocratic policies of development plan and orientation toward people's participatory policies (Azkia, 2014, Chapter 9: 1).

Rural Development and Criticizing Planning System in Iran before the Revolution

Rural development is a multi-dimensional process, the object of which is to improve and enhance the life quality of the poor and vulnerable classes of rural society. Improving the quality of social life of Iranian peasants has been in the center of attention from long ago; in the first constitutional assembly, three major measures were undertaken: revocation of feudalism, adjusting peasants' tax, and extinction of extortion, which had their own effects on the quality of social life. It has been mentioned that the first step in the modification of social affairs and construction of villages as well as improving villagers' circumstances was taken in 1937 when Construction Act was approved and Ministry of Interior established Office of Construction and Reforms responsible for the execution of constructions plans according to the mentioned act. This act, which was in force until 1941 (Ramezani, 1971:12) and suffered from financial challenges, limited the presence of the government in rural areas and lacked planning and practical solutions.

Since the end of the 1950s when development plans started to be considered, rural development topics and the plans also came into consideration in the form of six plans. The sixth plan was practically not dealt with due to the concurrence with the Revolution and special conditions at that time. After several decades from the execution of development plans before the Revolution, as mentioned by the scattered investigations, major failures and deficiencies of these plans, especially in terms of rural development and construction, were as follows; top-down and centralized planning: The executed construction plans before the Revolution were mainly the plans that were designed and executed by the organizations or groups considering themselves the authority for planning. Even in some cases, these designers and planners had a foreign origin (Taleb, 1994: 10); Lack of local and domestic studies which should be the basis of the planning system. Our reformers and planners were completely unfamiliar with the case as it existed in the outside world and were unaware of the knowledge and insight of those for whom they were planning. According to Clock, "High-ranking planners do not believe in the fact that poor villagers have a kind of knowledge and insight, without considering of which no project can be planned and executed" (Clock, 1986: 115). Planners see villages as the raw material which could be rapidly changed by their plans. Chambers believes, "While dealing with rural crises, development reformers of urban sites are usually captivated by the center-periphery thought and look down upon remote and weak rural areas. So, their imagination about rural society is incorrect and vague" (Chambers, 1997:178); Superficialism about modern issues and ignoring the diversity of rural units so that new issues were introduced to villages in many cases due to the lack of precise investigation; but, since there were no appropriate socio-cultural structures, they were left useless or were misused.

However, harmonious evaluation of motivation in rural societies along with analyzing cultural determinants in the acceptance or rejection of plans can provide a useful insight for precise planning and execution of development plans (Dube, 1959, 30); Lack of personal responsibility system at design and execution levels caused such inefficiencies. It seems that those involved in planning system had more focus on the mechanical and technical aspects of rural development, rather than social aspects. Also, they did not consider technical progress as an important factor for increasing production, which would only realize within a proper and certain social base (Johnson, 1981: 127); Construction plans for rural development had a uni-level characteristic; in other words, although plans were executed at three national, regional, and urban levels, they were only planned at the national level and did not have conformity with ecological, cultural, social, and economic structures and physical context of all villages (Rokneddin Eftekhari, 1993: 62). Moreover, the inclusion of rural development and construction issues within the agricultural sector, especially in the first, second, and third construction plans, led rural development and growth in the country's construction plans to be assumed equal to the agriculture growth. Budget allocation of agriculture which was less than those for other sectors on the one side and its expenditure which was mainly consumed for urban society on the other side hindered the progress and growth of rural society (Taleb, 1994: 97).

By accepting industrial strategy, share of agricultural sector from the first to fifth plans was reduced from 30 to 7.5%, respectively. In an investigation on the role of rural organizations in rural development, Ahmad Ashraf

mentioned that merely the wishes of national leaders and allocation of a certain amount of financial and human forces from high authorities would not suffice for rural development; fundamental changes in political and economic fields via mobilization, politicization, and partnership of peasant for moving toward self-reliance and integrative rural development should be considered as the necessary preconditions in Iran's rural development process (Ashraf, 1997: 78).

Rural development planning is essentially done to eliminate or decrease social inequalities; but, this issue has not been realized in practice. Rural development plans in the 1970s led to the fulfillment of a new structure in the rural society which was very important in terms of rural development, because Land Reforms Program was aimed to modify the previous structure which was considered to be a barrier for rural development; but, in practice, following Land Reform Program and governmental entry, a new structure was imposed on rural societies which prevented decentralized planning and people's participation.

Rural Development and Criticizing Planning System in Iran after the Islamic Revolution

The first construction plan (1983-1987)

In Iran after the Revolution was entitled Islamic Republic of Iran's social, economic, and cultural development plan, which was approved by the government and proposed to Islamic Parliament of Iran. But, because of the Imposed War and the country's special situation, this plan was not approved by the parliament. Finally, after some modifications, it was presented to the parliament by the government as the first five-year plan for economic, social, and cultural development for 1989-1993 and was approved for execution. In this plan, rural construction did not have an independent chapter, like the three previous plans before the Revolution, and rural development plans were considered within national goals, regional construction, agriculture, and land preparation (Rokneddin Eftekhari, 1993: 62). In this plan, the government allocated credit for rural regions within sectional executional plans and legal notes and emphasized two fundamental models for rural development: One was the emphasis on the strategies causing favorable changes in the production structure of social societies and another was the increase in agricultural production and improvement in the life standards of farmers and their families. The comparison of the set of construction activities during the 14 years after the Revolution with those before the Revolution showed that rural areas were in a better situation because of the construction activities and services (Azkia, 1999:18). Indeed, it must be mentioned that, during this period, the increased number of vacant villages and increased rate of migration from villages to cities, despite the high cost of servicing and meeting fundamental needs of villages for the society, revealed that the socio-economic development model and the applied strategies for supplying basic needs after the Revolution could not lead to appropriate rural development, because, first, this model was focused on the physical and material dimensions of development and on the redistribution of economic growth effects, rather than development opportunities, and second no attention was paid to the increased income of rural households" (Azkia, 2013:125). Also, considering the subsidies allocated for urban and rural areas as well as the amounts paid by the government for construction from the fixed investment source, it could be observed that there was no considerable change in the gap between cities and villages before and after the Revolution. The first development plan was inadequate in terms of content, since it lacked an independent chapter on the rural construction and scattered organization of the goals and policies of rural constructions policies in different planning parts. However, the plan was relatively successful in terms of achieving goals and sectional policies (Shakouri, 2012: 179).

In the second plan (1994-1998)

For the first time after the Revolution, rural construction and development found an independent title in documents, in which development of industry in rural spaces, studying and designing optimal spatial structure, and hierarchical equipment of rural centers were considered as the most important rural development policies (Planning and Budget Organization, 1999: 285). The second plan's goals in rural construction and development were as follows: Integrative development of the spaces with the potential capacity for rural growth and development; organizing the population of small and dispersed rural places in the population centers with development facilities; physical structure modification of rural settlements; diversifying production activities; providing necessary conditions for transferring villages' affairs to managerial and public institutions; and enhancing technical skills and increasing villagers' efficiency (Planning and Budget Organization, 1993: 64). In this plan, three executional plans of renovation and improvement of villages, organization of dispersed villages, and creation and development of rural industries can be identified. Generally, there were a relatively large number of prepared projects in terms of village conducting and mitigation plans and the goals of the plan were fulfilled in this regard; but, due to various factors such as managerial and financial problems as well as content inadequacy, the execution of these plans was slow

in progress. Due to the supporting, consulting, and indirect role of Housing Foundation of Islamic Revolution in this regard, the undertaken measures were unclear; however, according to the available pieces of evidence, there was slight progress in this regard (Tofigh, 2006: 69).

The third development plan

It was related to 1998 to 2004. Important things happened during this period: first, State Organization for Administrative and Employment Affairs and Planning and Budget Organization were integrated and State Management and Planning Organization was formed, which enhanced the expertise power of the organization and placed the authorization of formulating and determining the country's administrative structure and organization units beside the formulation of development plans and budgeting and construction projects (Alavi, 2013). The third development plan was formulated while continuing the economic adjustment policy and emphasizing structural modification in macro policies so that the highlighted institutionalism approach can be mentioned in its conduct. The general policies communicated in the third development plan were as follows: Trying to maintain the purchasing power of low-income groups; providing bases for occupation and encouraging investment and entrepreneurship in agriculture; processing industries, and small- and medium-sized workhouses; attempting to develop and construct villages and paying special attention to peasants' livelihood; providing food security and self-sufficiency in essential commodities by increasing domestic production, especially agriculture; deepening spirit of cooperation and public participation; town and country planning based on the principles of economic efficiency; and eliminating limits, especially in rural areas (Shakouri, 2012: 186). In this plan, a number of cases in terms of rural development were considered and the government was obliged to make reorganization in order to eliminate similar activities in the organizations related to rural development. Since similar activities were undertaken in similar organization, this issue should have been re-considered to avoid duplication. Moreover, a part of the activities of governmental units was assigned to Islamic Councils, local units, and non-governmental companies.

The non-governmental institutions providing micro-credits and private and public investments in rural environments were supported in order to develop employment and rural settlements were planned to uniformly develop agricultural, industrial, and service activities and establish nomad volunteers. Also, in urban and rural designing, destruction of buildings was supposed to be avoided and valuable views were maintained. Based on the approved development and construction plans, there were some criteria for presenting infrastructural services in rural environment and equipping rural spaces, which could be tracked by the villagers themselves. Also, sufficient credit were supposed to be allocated for providing proper roads, schools, hygienic potable water, electricity, and telephone in all villages with the capacity of more than 20 households (Planning and Budget Organization, 2000). In summary, it can be said that performance of the third plan was successful because of the emphasis on structural modifications, eliminating duplication, decentralization of planning, and indexes such as growth of gross national production, growth of per capita income, and decreased average inflation rate, the indexes whose improvement could undoubtedly affect lives in rural societies. However, the weaknesses of this plan in terms of rural development cannot be neglected: equalizing rural construction and rural development; lack of a comprehensive vision toward the issues of rural societies; ignoring capabilities, life style, and quality of villagers; socio-cultural damage existing in rural societies; and excessive emphasis on economic view in plans (State Management and Planning Organization, 2005: 1758). Investigating the credit lines of rural construction in the third plan shows that this plan was focused on infrastructural activities and physical plans and did not have great difference from the previous plans, while strategic and execution policies of rural construction in the third plan considered other issues (Rezvani, 2011: 62).

General policies of *the fourth plan (2005-2009)* which was the role model and major pivot of the fourth bill stated the mission of this plan as "sustainable knowledge-based economic growth" (State Management and Planning Organization, 2004: Introduction). In the fourth development plan, although a separate chapter was not considered for rural construction and development, some items could be tracked in terms of rural construction and development in Articles 19, 30, 69, and 133: policy-making, planning and supervising rural development affairs; enhancing rural development indexes by at least 25% more than the third plan; organizing nomads' residence while enhancing economic capabilities for 50% of nomad population; reinforcing constructions and improving life environment in villages, complete coverage of fuel supply for nomads; and organizing ownership system of residential lands in villages by issuing 1.5 million property documents (Rezvani, 2011: 66). In sum, the fourth development plan had fundamental deficiency in content and structure so that the stereotypical physical, construction, and service viewpoint to rural development was dominant in the bill and rural development was considered as urbanizing rural areas. Moreover, some years after the approval of the act requiring the government to appoint a policy-making, planning, and supervising authority for balanced rural development within three

months by Islamic Parliament of Iran and the emphasis for forming a cross-divisional structure for coordinated management of rural and nomadic development, 2010 and 2011 budget acts still had a sectional approach to rural development and management, plans relating to rural construction and services were scattered among various chapters and ministries, and no budgeting was considered for the formation of the mentioned cross-sectional structure. According to the investigations, credits of strategic plans for rural management plans had negative growth in 2010 and 2011 budget bills. While assessing performance outcomes and the reason for failure in some goals of the plan, executive organizations refer to the limited credit sources as the most important factor and admit that the allocated and communicated credits are too far away from the credits required for realizing such goals. Another factor is the existence of numerous decision-making centers for obtaining licenses. The following points are among the reasons for the lack of proper realization of the goals of the fourth development plan in rural water and sewage system sector: lack of progress in the studies related to the execution of sewage collection and disposal, lack of coordination in the proposed and allocated budget, and lack of timely allocation; in most cases, budget is allocated when the proper season for the execution of construction operations has been already over (Vice Presidency for Strategic Planning and Supervision, 2011: 276).

The fifth development plan (2011-2015)

With two years of delay (from 2009 to 2011), was written in the conditions that the planning organization of the country was dissolved and its divisional structure was eliminated. Besides, it seems that the government was not determined to execute the plan. It is customary in the formulation of every plan to first determine the situation in the basic year (last year of the previous plan) and pathology of the previous plan is studied to protect the new plan from deviation; however, the fifth development plan was written while the performance of the previous plan was not specified (Alavi, 2013). Although it was possible to assess the performance of fifth plan after ending its execution period, some evaluations and criticism were made for it. Some of the general and communicated policies of the fifth development plan seemed to be idealistic and motivational, yet challenging (Saeidi Naeini, 2009). In the criticism by Nili (2009), it was mentioned that the fifth plan was a plan without any paradigm; a precise look at this plan shows that, in the first place, this plan had an acute and criticizing view to the previous plans. In the first clause of the bill of this plan, it was mentioned that the government was determined to introduce a new pattern called Iranian-Islamic development plan and the required time for its preparation and composition would be two years; i.e. the fifth development plan was Iranian-Islamic, whose intellectual paradigm was going to be formulated in the following two years. In general policies of the fifth plan, it was emphasized that Iran's economic growth must be at least 8%; but, the economic growth was 0.5% in 2008.

Conclusion and Discussion

Planning is the most fundamental device in achieving development. It is a conscious action for getting to specific goals and performing related actions and activities in future. In this regard, rural development is one of the most important issues in any country's development plan. Great development thinkers consider rural development beyond urban development and believe that paying attention and giving priority to rural issues guarantee national development and are the final solution for urban unemployment, population density, and other urban issues. In Iran, most experts believe in a special position for rural development and find it necessary for achieving sustainable national development. However, in development plans, the proportionate position and share of village in the process of national development are not sufficiently considered. Many decades have passed since 1937 when the first step in the reformation of social affairs and rural construction was taken and many acts have been approved in more than 10 development plans; however, we still deal with many issues and deficiencies in villages. Comparison of development plans before and after the Revolution shows that these plans could not properly overcome the challenges in Iranian rural society; challenges such as lack of employment opportunities, proper participation mechanisms, ambiguity in duties of related organizations, and inequality between city and village are still dominant. Similar to the plans before the Revolution plans, the post-revolution plans were economic plans with political, rather than developmental, orientation. Besides, in today's development literature, role of people's participation has been highlighted in formulating governmental plans, while in Iran, people's participation in the design and implementation of plans is still trivial. Governments' attitude toward the process of participation is determined within developmental policies and strategies and their view about the masses. The attitude of different countries in different periods toward people is not unique; thus, based on the response type and governmental reaction to participation, various types of participation have been distinguished.

Generally speaking, multilateral development can be achieved when the government and society cooperate with each other, rather than living in two different worlds. Considering the dependent development model in the Iranian society, in a macro scale, historical data prove the existence of some participation patterns. Before Land Reforms

Program in the 1960s, the rural society which was less involved with development outcomes and was governed within the lasting master-peasant system had a kind of relatively pervasive spontaneous, participation pattern at the level of household and collective production units. After Land Reforms Program when the structure of rural society was transformed and the presence of the government in the rural society was expanded, the spontaneous partnership pattern lost its importance and villages confronted a kind of anti-participation pattern, because the traditional participation pattern not only was ignored during this period, but also was in contradiction with the new participation plans. The collapse of traditional cooperatives (Boneh) as collective production units could demonstrate the downfall of traditional partnership units. During this period, participation pattern was conducted and included, from top to down, as constitutions such as rural cooperatives, Justice House, Culture House, and Army of Knowledge, Hygiene, and Promotion, which was continued in the rural society until the victory of the Islamic Revolution. After the Islamic Revolution, a kind of incremental partnership was formed as social mobilization in the rural society, which was influenced by the occurred transformations at the macro level of the society. Spontaneous collective participations were almost revived among villagers and attempts were made to apply traditional collective methods for defining new participation methods. In this period, there was no sign of bureaucracy; but, following the transformations, the participation pattern gradually gained its guided-from-the-outside form.

Each of the institutions entering villages intended to provide their own plans to villages. At the macro level, the required ground for the achievement of effective organized participation that needed empowerment of villagers, their freedom from dependence on the government, their fostered self-reliance, increased participation at different levels, necessary changes in personalities, enriching interpersonal relations, and decentralization were not considered. Due to structural characteristics such as centralization and bureaucracy which are originated in the Iranian society, political structure has not been able to successfully and effectively accomplish organized social participation among villagers. So, the history proves that, in order to provide the ground and reinforce social participation at the macro level, it is necessary to have an attitude and policy different from those of the previous governments; a policy adopted considering a real participation pattern which is aimed to empower villagers, liberate them from dependence on the government, and let them participate at different participation levels.

In sum, development plans of the country should be parallel to and complement each other. However, development plans are not written based on the results of previous plans and their problems. Moreover, performance and pathology of previous plans are investigated by the designer and executor team. In other words, design, execution, and supervision are done by one team. Therefore, the non-executed approvals and acts are not perfectly pursuable, which could lead to the current situation for Iran's development plan; i.e. every five years, a series of new regulations with nice concepts are approved and added to these plans without considering sufficient budget and without considering the pathology of the previous plans. The reason can be that there is no need for accountability. Thus, in each period, a series of comprehensive, complete, and idealistic regulations with the worldly accepted concepts are approved without any worries about their execution, as if the approval of these regulations imposes no responsibilities on statesmen. As mentioned earlier, planning is the intention to achieve a goal; thus, the necessary actions are orderly arranged one after the other and it is necessary to write a long-term plan with specific and operational goals and then divide it into five-year parts. Then, it must be clarified that each case should be covered to what percent until the end of each five-year period. Also, the required budget should be provided and planning must be done accordingly. Most importantly, officials should be accountable about delay in plans. Moreover, supervision should be undertaken by another team of designers and executors and the media should be able to criticize and challenge weak points of the plans.

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