



Policies and Planning Approach: Challenges and Opportunities for Local Stakeholders' Empowerment and Sustainable Development (Case Study: South and South-East Villages of Tehran)

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Abstract

Purpose- The present study aims to examine the challenges and opportunities for local stakeholders' empowerment related to rural planning in Iran. In general, the current approach of planning process from making decision to implementation and monitoring is based on instrumental rationalism approach, irrespective of the villagers' viewpoints. Urban – Rural divided planning has created some challenges for sustainable rural development and opportunities for improving environmental-ecological and socio-economic indicators, which have been ignored.

Design/Methodology/Approach- Less attention has been paid to local stakeholders' empowerment in planning methods and procedures, which is regarded as an obstacle for the promotion of the indicators related to sustainable rural development. The present study was based on a descriptive – analytical method. Correlation test and multivariate regression were used to provide a meaningful framework. Library and field studies were used for data collection. Library method was used to understand the impact of policy implementation and planning approach on the socio-economic empowerment of local stakeholders for their socio-economic participation in sustainable rural development and the study of previous research experiences and other countries on appropriate planning. The statistical population of the study is 124 villages in south and southeast of Tehran. Random sample size for completing the questionnaire of local authorities at village level, using Cochran formula and its adjustment formula for small statistical population, with 95% confidence level and probability of 0.05 and prediction of variance $S^2 0.25 =$ sample size of 54 villages was achieved. In these 54 villages, 450 questionnaires were completed according to size by specifying sample size in each village. The validity of the research questionnaire was conducted by experts in organizations. The reliability of the questionnaire through Cronbach's alpha was 0.801.

Findings- The results indicated that local stakeholder's generative empowerment is important although unproductive empowerment is increasingly overcoming. In addition, the possible effects of this process have been identified. Thus, problem-oriented planning is necessary for formulating a community-based approach optimally and strengthening social capital, which is not based on current instrumental rationalism approach. Thus, for the best planning with a community-based approach and the reinforcement of social capital, the group to convene is needed in the process and problem-oriented planning is important. This is inconsistent with the techno centrism rationalism approach.

Key Words- Rural planning, Empowerment, Sustainable development, Rural, Tehran, Iran.

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1. Introduction

Based on the literature in the early 1980s, instrumental rationalism approach had dominated the planning process in most countries (Healey, 2007). The planning process based on this approach, which is common in many countries such as Iran, poses many challenges in the planning process of rural and urban centers of such countries. Because, in this approach, all the planning stages are expert-oriented, people are considered as the only source of the necessary information. In addition, local stakeholders' empowerment and participation were often underestimated in the planning process (Amdam, 2005). In addition, despite the fact that at the regional levels and within homogeneous geographical areas, the rural-urban centers have a "reciprocal interaction" (Douglass, 1998), some countries like Iran have focused on industrialization and a disintegrated planning which have created some challenges in development process although there are some reciprocal interactions between rural and urban centers. According to many development experts, the positive and converging role of rural-urban planning is emphasized for the socio-economic development and sustainability of rural settlements and urban centers throughout the region. (Shafiei Sabet & Azharianfar, 2017).

Today, interactive policies and integrated rural-urban planning have been regarded as a development planning among the developed countries (Njoh, 2011). Thus, in addition to the simultaneous attention to rural-urban development planning, the participation of rural and urban residents in the planning process is also considered (Martens, 2001; Dede, 2016)

Further, paying attention to local stakeholders' empowerment and participation in planning process is considered as one of the most important issues (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015; Spath & Scolobig, 2017). Furthermore, the participation of governmental and nongovernmental organizations in planning provides horizontal and vertical integration while some countries ignored the importance of the components of planning process and socio-economic and national policies and programs (Shen & Yai, 2011). Lack of attention to such planning and neglecting the participation of popular organizations and vertical and horizontal

integration in planning also affect development in different dimensions in rural and urban settlements (Draft Louth County Development Plan, 2015). On the other hand, due to the time consumed and often costly communication approaches, they neglect to integrate rural-urban linkages into policies and planning practices (Tacoli, 2004, 2010). They also neglect to consider the process of education and awareness (McCall, 2003) and to promote rooting the knowledge and skills of the villagers in the decision making and planning processes. Also, lack of attention to the integrated approach neglects issues such as institutionalization, transparency, trust and confidence, empathy, accountability, capacity building, empowerment and involvement of rural and urban groups in development programs (Amdam, 2005; Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015). Analyzing the relationship between policies, approaches and rural planning methods such an efficiency, civil participation, and local cooperation network development can set the ground for sustainable rural development (Snelgrove, Pikhart & Stafford 2009). According to Shen, Jiang & Yuan (2012), enough investment is not available in infrastructure and economic activity among the villages of less developed countries. In addition, they face serious challenges in promoting sustainable rural development such as environmental, ecological and socio-economic challenges.

The area under study has long faced with deprivation and low levels of development. The importance of development is required to find a more scientific and accurate understanding and to promote sustainable rural development indicators and the approach or method for rural planning. It is important that adopting policies and methods for rural planning in the event of linkage between planners and rural settlements can increase the sustainable rural development.

By considering the above-mentioned, the present study seeks to answer the following questions:

Q1: What challenges have been created in the process of empowering and participating rural residents in the south and southeast of Tehran in the process of sustainable development based on instrumental rationalism approach?

Q2: What consequences does the process of empowering and participating rural residents have for sustainable development of rural areas in the south and southeast of Tehran?

Q3: What is the appropriate pattern of development planning for suburban villages such as Tehran?

2. Research Theoretical Literature

2.1. Challenges and opportunities for rural development planning approaches

The history and experience of planning in Iran is equal to the life of the theory of development literature, the effects of patterns, theories, approaches, as well as the related strategies to the development plans and rural development programs. The realization of rural development goals requires appropriate approaches for economic, social, and physical development in planning. In this regard, instrumental rationalism and collaborative approaches have been proposed in development planning process so far. Among the developing countries like Iran, the use of rationalist approach into the planning process is more prevalent and the collaborative approach has

been considered in planning literature since the late 20th century (Rezapour, Bahrainy & Tabibian 2018).

Following the economic, social, and environmental disruptions of instrumental rationalism approach, the collaborative approach entered into development planning literature and was criticized by Jürgen Habermas (1985) (Hummel Brunner, 2000), who sought to communicate effectively and provide an ideal model by focusing on participation among individuals (Machler & Milz, 2015; Duckett, Mckee, Sutherland, Kyle, Boden, Auty, Bessell & Mckendrick, 2017).

The collaborative planning approach is based on exchanging thoughts and approaches among different groups of a society. A mutual relationship between people and planners results in proposing a common solution for the existing problems. Albrecht (2004) is one of the founders of this model (LaFever, 2011).

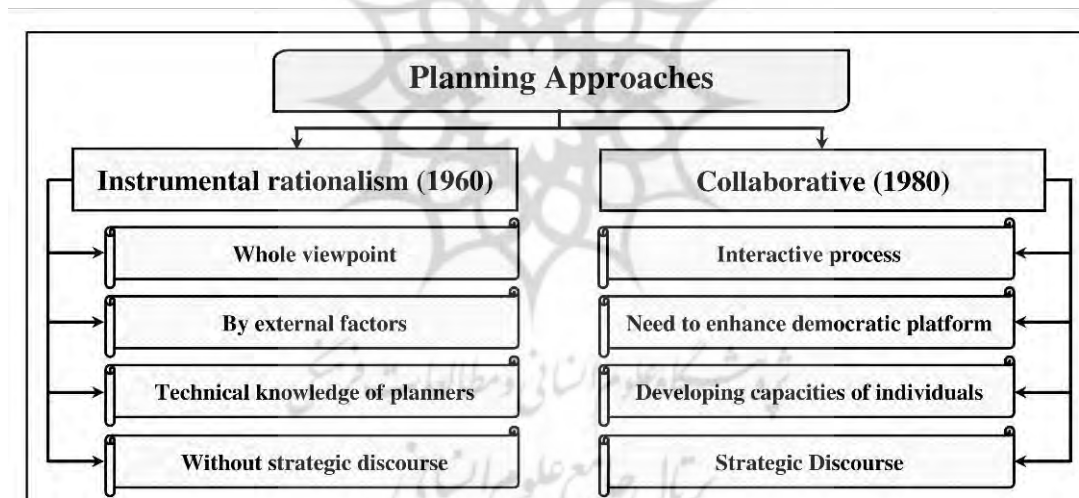


Figure 1. Planning approaches

(Source: Healey 1992, 1997, 2007, Innes, 1995, Hoch, 1996, Mandel, 1996, Alexander, 1997, Habermas, 1985, Umenoto, 2001)

Rural and urban development planning can result in increasing people's choices, empowering people, increasing prosperity, and expanding opportunities and potentials (Soliman, 2004). In this regard, social learning, institutionalization and participation in the planning process should be highlighted. In other words, according to Friedman and Douglass (1978), the local community or empowerment of communities is considered as a key concept for realizing these strategies.

Empowerment based on a participatory strategic approach is considered as the main pillar of rural development planning along with urban development (Chirenje, Giliba & Musamba, 2013). The theory and approach are needed to pass rationalist tendencies based on the instrumental rationalism approach, which had shadowed the planning process in the early 1980s and provide a solid foundation for collaborative and participatory planning (Halla, 2005).

Collaborative planning approach has been incorporated into the geographic literature since the mid-1980s by John Forester (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002).

Collaborative planning requires constructive communication amongst stakeholders. A wider range of arguments include instrumental technical reasoning, moral reasoning, and emotive reasoning.

In addition, four general principles play a role in constructing constructive communication including comprehensiveness, sincerity, legitimacy and truth. It is worth noting that collaborative planning, as the basis of effective participatory planning, is regarded as a communication process. The text of program is based on a communication product and planners need to possess communication knowledge. In addition, accurate statistics data are important in this regard. According to Hosseini (2001), values and feelings are considered as a part of the program.

Healey (2007) emphasized that applying communication skills in the planning is an

important factor in enhancing the quality of the planner's work.

A large number of researchers such as Alexander (1997), Ines (1995), Mandelbaum (1996), emphasized a collaborative planning as a new paradigm of planning theory. Among the proponents of this kind of planning, we can refer to Healey (1997, 2000), who described it as an interactive communication activity, which is regarded as a part of the original theory based on the study of Jorgen Habermas (Martens, 2001). Healey believes that communication rationality is a suitable alternative for planning the current approach, which is essential for empowerment and capacity building.

Accordingly, classical theories have created some challenges in development planning. Based on exogenous and endogenous factors, there are some shortcomings in the planning system. Table 1 presents the main exogenous and endogenous factors.

Table 1. The most important shortcomings of the development planning system among developing countries such as Iran

(Source: Literature and Background of the study, 2018)

| | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Exogenous Factors | Extreme dependency of development planning on single product economy (oil), centralized policies, the role of political economy in development planning, and regional geopolitical impacts on development planning (Regional Security) | |
| Endogenous Factors | Structural | Understanding the concept of development and establishing the related policies and strategies, lack of development strategy and step-by-step process in development planning, lack of knowledge and understanding the needs of any society, planning rural development by urban planners uncooperatively, the lack of a single viewpoint on Iran development planning, lack of coherent development planning process, lack of integration in city and village, lack of regional planning thinking, the centrality of the development planning system, lack of comprehensive and trusted database, lack of recognition of structural - functional factors of rural space developments by planning system, the gap between planning and research and development, failure to evaluate the proposed implications of development planning on the lives of individuals and community groups |
| | Institutional and Administrative | The impossibility of individuals and institutions in the process of development planning, the existence of parallel rules, the existence of organizations with similar tasks and the non-functionality of the country's budgeting system |
| | Collaborative | Non-participation in instrumental rationalism approach, and the absence of political parties and organizations |

Considering the comparison of the weaknesses related to the instrumental rationalism approach and the collaborative approach, adopting a

collaborative approach is essential for the planning process (Table 2).

Table 2. The comparison between instrumental rationalism approach and collaborative planning theory
(Source: Literature and Background of the study, 2018)

| Specifications | Instrumental Rationalism approach (IRA) | Collaborative Planning Theory (CPA) |
|--|---|---|
| Attitude | Positivist | Communicational |
| Approach | Top-down | Bottom-up |
| Reasoning | Technical - instrumental | Emotional, moral (Opinion and Desire, Satisfaction) |
| Authenticity of Power | Specialization | Dialogue and people's participation with planners |
| Centered | Proficiency | Local people |
| Participatory | Planning Specialists | Active participation |
| Kind of look | City and village as separate networks | City and village as non-core networks |
| Empowerment and capacity building | Empowerment and unproductive capacity building | Empowering and building the capacity of stakeholder generators and paying attention to indigenous information and knowledge |
| Knowledge and skills | Passive participation | Advancement skills of stakeholder advancement |
| Transparency | Uncertain targets and planning policies for the people | Transparent plans and programs, clear goals and policies |
| Competency | Lack of attention to merits and self-confidence among individuals | Attention to the ability and capacity and strengthening self-confidence among individuals |
| Meaningful | The person performing the task is not considered meaningful and valuable | The person performing the task is considered meaningful and valuable. |
| Self-determination | Not allowing people to do different things in order to improve the situation | Individuals are required to do different things in order to improve their situation and their village |
| Trust and confidence | Do not deal fairly and equally with all people | Paying attention to the principle of equal, fair and equal opportunities to deal with all people |
| Responding | Lack of planners' response to performance | Planners response to performance |
| Influence | Individuals do not have the ability to influence their consequences | People have the ability to influence on their work outcomes |
| Institutionalization | Strengthening government agencies | Creating and strengthening popular organizations |
| Kind of looking at activities and sections | Focusing on a disintegrated planning, parallel work in programs and activities within and between sectors | Focusing on an integrated planning for linking activities, and sectors and compatibility between them |
| Relations between elements of power | Lack of interaction between people, manager, and planner | Interaction between people, manager, and planner |

2.2. Background Review

Top- down approaches to rural development planning in different parts of the world failed to succeed in promoting living standards among rural and poor areas. There was a consensus in rural planning literature that planning practices failed to understand rural communities and ignore the local people needs (De Meo, Cantiani, Ferretti & Paletto, 2011). During recent years, significant changes have been made in development and rural planning approaches. Instrumental rationalism approach of Top – down attitude has replaced the local and regional approaches with participatory and communicative approaches.

Rationalism in western philosophy from ancient Greece has always been an important element. Expanding and applying rationalism in planning has appeared in the form of a bottom-up and comprehensive planning so that the process is quite

easy and is possible through comprehensive planning (Healey, 2000).

In recent years, the content of planning has been shifting from physical to economic and social issues, as well as from technical to communication approaches (Halla, 2005). Transformation needs residents to participate in planning and implementing the development (Choguill, 1999; Ogu, 2000; Steinberg & Sara, 2000). The change is evident at various types of planning such as planning through discussion (Healey, 1992) and collaborative planning (Innes, 1992), reasoning planning (Fischer & Forester, 1993), advisory planning (Forester, 1999), and revealed planning (Allmendinger & Tewdwr-Jones, 2002).

Collaborative planning should involve some characteristics like planning as an interactive and interpretative process among the societies with independence and discourse. In addition, it focuses on the area where problems, strategies, and values

are recognized and evaluates the developing people's capacities and their evaluating during the planning stages (Gibbens, 2012).

Paul reported that the World Bank experiences in collaborative partnership projects show that planning done with expert originality is regarded as non-participatory (Paul, 1987). Ondrik (1999) believes that the participatory approach to the development planning process will lead to wider participation and engagement of key stakeholders, public transparency, and accountability in different organizations and institutions. In addition, participatory approaches are undertaken by the government and development planners and sustainability requires the empowerment, capacity building and participation (Ondrik, 1999).

Therefore, in the process of planning, the approach should be adopted in such a way that it can enable individuals to take control of development. The optimal planning pattern should be accompanied by capacity building to meet future needs, recognize the needs of the community, and empower people in the process of development (Kennedy, 1996).

Further, the United Nations in a report in 2005 entitled *Decentralized, reducing poverty, empowerment and participation* emphasized that empowering, capacity building, transparency, responding to the needs of local communities in development planning will encourage local governments to engage in a constructive dialogue with civil society and are regarded as the best way to measure the needs related to local communities. Based on the evidence from the Philippines, Nepal, Indonesia, India and Fiji, decentralized forms of conflict resolution, participation and empowerment of civil society have been considered as national priorities (United Nations, 2005).

In this context, according to Amdam (2006), a different form of planning is needed with regard to each state and political system. Collaborative planning is a prerequisite in the existing structure based on the partnership between the private sector government and volunteering at the local, regional, national, and international levels. Therefore, shifting instrumental rationalism approach to collaborative approach in planning is considered as an important factor for enhancing participation, empowerment and other new ideas in the development process (Amdam, 2006).

Further, in another in Africa, Matovu (2006) reported that the local level focuses on the bottom-up and participatory planning approach. In the process of planning, the creation of capacity building at all levels and sectors related to society empowerment and capacity building are the product of planning process and its implementation is possible just through a satisfactory investment. However, many central governments, especially in developing countries, have not made any attempt to build capacity and empower people at low level although investment in capacity building is considered as a top priority (Matovu, 2006). In another study, the role of public participation was highlighted as a key component in planning for development over 30 years (Twitchen & Adams, 2011). The positive and converging role of rural-urban planning is emphasized for the socio-economic development and sustainability of rural settlements and urban centers throughout the region (Shafiei Sabet & Azharianfar, 2017).

Today, interactive policies and integrated rural-urban planning have been regarded as a development planning among the developed countries (Njoh, 2011). Paying attention to local stakeholders' empowerment and participation in planning process is considered as one of the most important issues (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015; Spath & Scolobig, 2017). There has not been much research in Iran on planning and focusing on empowering local stakeholders. The results show that the rationalist approach has many weaknesses because of its specialty driven and non-participatory character. In the current situation, adopting a communication approach is one of the important requirements of the country's rural development planning process (Eftekhari & Behzadnasab, 2004). There is no common understanding of this type of development in rural development planning in Iran and such planning does not have the necessary intellectual and epistemological coherence. It seems that this theory has not yet found good support for sustainable rural development (Zahedi & Ghafari, 2012).

Table 3 presents the indicators emphasized by different researchers in the planning process based on theoretical foundations, literature, and background.

Table 3. Indicators underlined by different researchers in the process of rural development planning based on sustainable development approach and dimensions and indices of sustainable rural development

(Source: Literature and Background of the study, 2018)

| | Index | Researchers |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Planning Approach | Training and Informing | (Matovu, 2006); (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015); (Behzad nasab, 2005) (Eftekhari & Behzadnasab, 2004) (Spath & Scolobig, 2017) |
| | Knowledge and skills | (Amdam, 2005); (Matovu, 2006) (Behzad nasab, 2005) (Eftekhari & Behzad nasab, 2004) |
| | Clarification | (Healey, 1992) |
| | Competency | (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990); (Spreitzer, 1995); (Gyamfi-Kumanini, 1996); (O'Bannon, 2003); (Rist et al, 2007); (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015) |
| | Meaningful | (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990); (Spreitzer, 1995); (Gyamfi-Kumanini, 1996); (Matovu, 2006); (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015) |
| | Self determination | (Gyamfi-Kumanini, 1996); (Dab, 2013); (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015) |
| | Trust and Confidence | (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015) |
| | Effect and Effectiveness | (Wellbrock, 2013); (Dab, 2013); (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015) |
| | Institutionalism | (Honadle & Hannah, 1982); (Healy, 1992); (Isaac & Harilal, 1997); (Rossberger & Krause, 2015) |
| | Participatin | (Paul, 1987); (Kennedy, 1997); (Matovu, 2006); (Twitchen & Adams, 2011); (Ristić, 2013); (Wellbrock, 2013) |
| | Integration and compatibility between activities | (Douglass, 1998); (Tacoli, 1998) |
| Sustainable Development | Environmental – Ecological, Socio-cultural, Economic, Physical – Infrastructure | UN, 2006, 2009 UNECA, 2006 OECD, 2001 |

3.2. Theoretical model of the study

Based on the literature review, the theoretical approach of the present study is based on the conceptual model proposed in Figure 2. Thus, the main hypothesis raised is whether the facilitators of the method and process of empowerment of local stakeholders and government policies as an effective factor with all its dimensions and indicators influence the promotion of sustainable rural development indicators and whether there is any interaction among them or not (Fig. 2).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Geographical Scope of the Research

The rural settlements of the study area are located in the South and Southeast territory of Tehran (Figure 3). The area is 2874 square kilometers, which comprises 11.94% of the total area of the province of Tehran (Statistical Center of Iran, 2012). The area is mathematically located at 51 degrees, 40 minutes and latitude is 35 degrees and 28 minutes. According to the 2011 census results, there are 5 districts, 7 cities and 124 villages in the area.

3.2. Methodology

The present study was based on a descriptive – analytical method. Correlation test and multivariate regression were used to provide a meaningful framework. Library and field studies were used for data collection. Library method was used to understand the impact of policy implementation and planning approach on the socio-economic empowerment of local stakeholders for their socioeconomic participation in sustainable rural development and the study of previous research experiences and other countries on appropriate planning. Field survey was utilized for collecting the field data. The field survey method was used for collecting the field data in relation to indicators, items and measures of effective factors including facilitators of the method and process of empowering local stakeholders and governmental policy-making and impressionable factors including dimensions and indicators of sustainable rural development. Then, a village questionnaire was developed.

The statistical population of the study is 124 villages in south and southeast of Tehran. Random sample size for completing the questionnaire of local authorities at village level, using Cochran formula and its adjustment formula for small statistical population, with 95% confidence level and probability of 0.05 and prediction of variance $S^2 0.25$ = sample size of 54 villages was achieved. The villages were selected on the basis of size. In these 54 villages, 450 questionnaires were completed according to size by specifying sample size in each village. In some villages, the number of households to generalize to the entire statistical population was less than four, so we increased the number of sample households to five.

Initially, the focus group interview technique was used at the level of managers and experts of the related organizations and institutions. In addition, the idea of scholars and university professors about

the research questions was asked using 30 + 1 questionnaires in different dimensions of the theme and with qualitative and open questions and then the quantitative questionnaires were reviewed. Indeed, after a precise examination of the ideas of local authorities, the experts of the relevant organizations, researchers and university professors, the quantitative questionnaire was developed for household and village analysis based on their ideas. Data analysis was performed using SPSS 24. The formal validity of the questionnaire was conducted based on the idea of experts and specialists. The reliability of the questionnaire in relation to the qualitative questions with five options, ranging from a very low value of 1 to a very high value of 5, was adapted from sustainability guideline of UNEP and WTO (2005). The reliability of the questionnaire through Cronbach's alpha was 0.801 (Table 4).

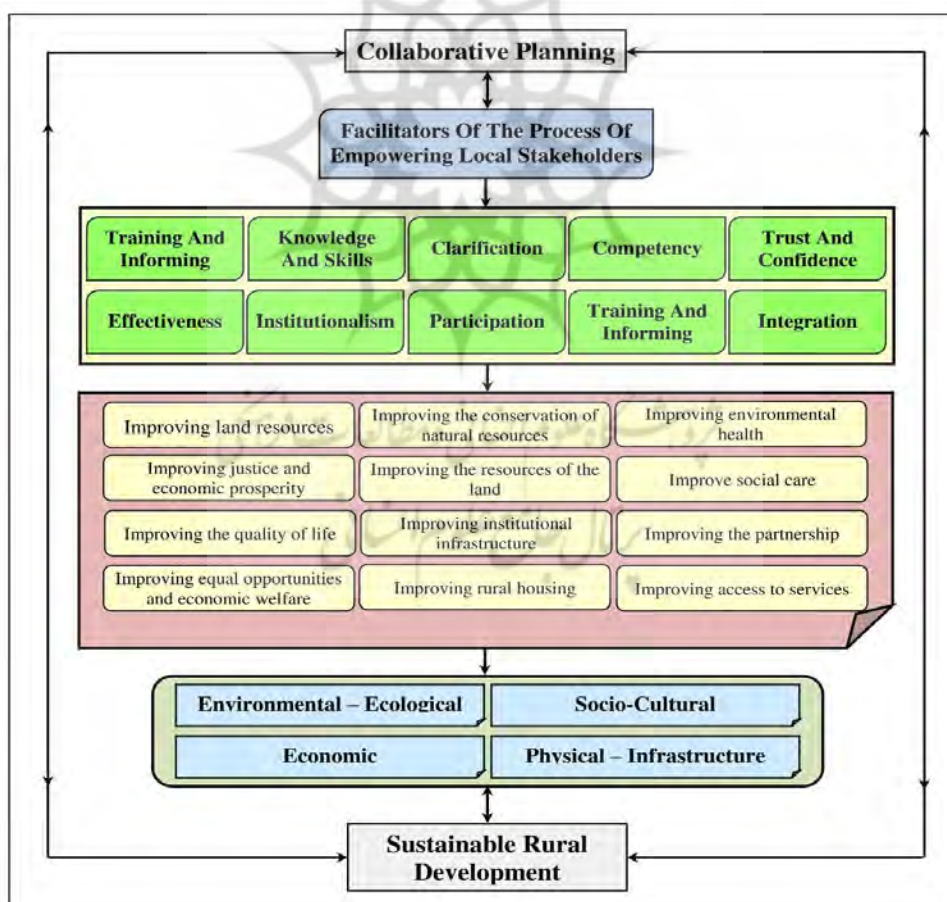


Figure 2. The conceptual model based on the literature review of the study (Source: Research findings, 2018)

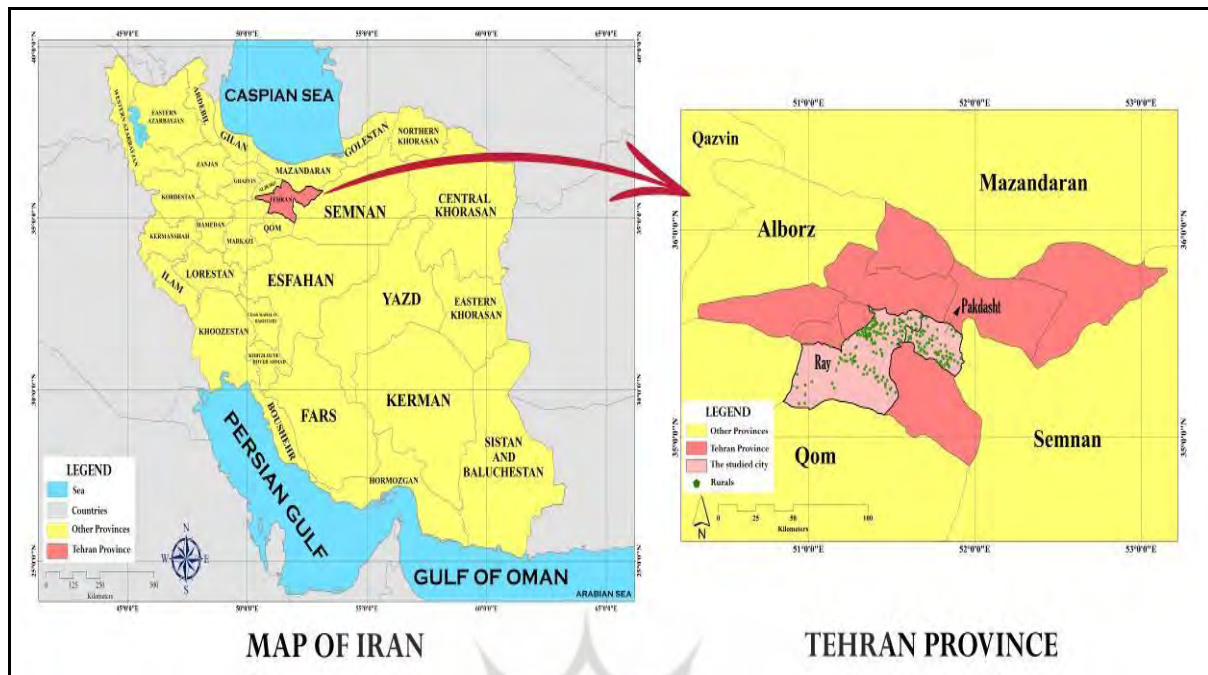


Figure 3. The location of villages in the Tehran province and in Iran
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

Table 4. The reliability of the questionnaire
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Mean | Variance | Standard Deviation | Cronbach's alpha |
|--------|----------|--------------------|------------------|
| 281.81 | 1809.298 | 42.536 | 0.801 |

Table 5. Names of villages with sample size per village
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| County | Sample village name | Number of households | Number of samples per village |
|------------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Pakdasht | Nik | 52 | 5 |
| | Mandakan | 75 | 5 |
| | Kahrizak | 78 | 5 |
| | Abbas abad | 59 | 5 |
| | Hesar abad | 55 | 5 |
| | Heydar abad | 67 | 5 |
| | Kabood gonbad | 283 | 5 |
| | Abdol abad | 134 | 5 |
| | Gheshlagh feron abad | 178 | 5 |
| | Erambooye | 481 | 7 |
| | Gheshlagh karim abad | 225 | 5 |
| | Ghermez tape | 342 | 5 |
| | Jamal abad | 554 | 8 |
| | Jito | 684 | 10 |
| | Ghale no | 801 | 12 |
| | Ebrahim abad | 594 | 9 |
| Karim abad | 618 | 9 | |
| Filestan | 1258 | 16 | |
| Rey | Vijin paen | 66 | 5 |
| | Najm abad | 92 | 5 |
| | Esmaeel abad | 68 | 5 |
| | Esmaeel abad moein | 87 | 5 |
| | Azim abad | 95 | 5 |

| County | Sample village name | Number of households | Number of samples per village |
|--------|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Andarman | 97 | 5 |
| | Hosein abad gardane | 50 | 5 |
| | Kabir abad | 84 | 5 |
| | Hamze abad | 100 | 5 |
| | Ghale no fashapooyeh | 99 | 5 |
| | Kenar gerd paeen | 58 | 5 |
| | Lape zanak | 100 | 5 |
| | Kolin | 158 | 5 |
| | Khanlagh | 145 | 5 |
| | Chale tarkhan | 195 | 5 |
| | Eshgh abad | 333 | 5 |
| | Gol kabir tape | 286 | 5 |
| | Deh kheir | 670 | 10 |
| | Zivan | 222 | 5 |
| | Sadegh abad | 243 | 5 |
| | Emad avar | 188 | 5 |
| | Tabaeen | 358 | 5 |
| | Ghani abad | 418 | 6 |
| | Darsoon abad | 271 | 5 |
| | Ebrahim abad | 783 | 12 |
| | Zaman abad | 863 | 13 |
| | Eslam abad | 2804 | 30 |
| | Torghooz abad | 780 | 12 |
| | Taleb abad | 710 | 11 |
| | Ghale no khalese | 1476 | 23 |
| | Ghooch hesar | 1154 | 18 |
| | Solombor | 796 | 12 |
| | Anis abad | 884 | 13 |
| | Shoor abad | 628 | 9 |
| | Firooz abad | 2416 | 30 |
| | Sham abad | 959 | 15 |
| | Total | 25274 | 450 |

3.3. Indicators of the study

Based on instrumental rationalism approach the empowerment and participation of people and villagers is underestimated based on the method of rural development planning in Iran and Tehran region. Thus, in the present study, the challenges related to this scant attention to the dimensions and indicators of the method and process of empowering villagers to participate in the planning process were examined. A total of 13 indicators and 87 items were determined based on the

literature review, the background of the research, and the opinions of experts at the regional and national levels (Table 6).

Then, the effective components of the study based on the dimensions of sustainable rural development such as environmental, ecological, socio-cultural, economic, and physical-infrastructure and the experts' opinions were determined according to the conditions of Iran and the study area. Thus, four dimensions were measured by nine indicators in 34 positions (Table 7).

Table 6. Components and indicators of the effective study

(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Empowerment indicators | Number of items |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Training and awareness | 11 |
| Skills and human resource development | 7 |
| Transparency | 6 |
| Empathy and accountability | 5 |
| Institutionalization | 5 |

| Empowerment indicators | Number of items |
|--|-----------------|
| Participation | 12 |
| Empowerment process indicators | |
| Competency | 4 |
| Meaningfulness | 4 |
| Self-determination | 4 |
| Trust | 7 |
| Efficiency and Effectiveness | 3 |
| Policies | |
| Integrity of activities and their compatibility | 15 |
| Adjusting the relationships among power elements | 2 |

Table 7. Dimensions, indicators and stages of sustainable development (effective research component)
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Dimensions | Index | Number of items |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------|
| Environmental-ecological | Improving the resources of the land | 6 |
| | Improving environmental health | 3 |
| Socio-cultural | Improve social care | 2 |
| | Improving the quality of life | 4 |
| | Improving institutional infrastructure | 3 |
| | Improving the partnership | 1 |
| Economic | Improving equal opportunities and economic welfare | 5 |
| Physical - Infrastructure | Improving rural housing | 5 |
| | Improving access to services | 5 |

4. Research Findings

4.1. Characteristics of subjects

Among the questionnaires completed by rural settlements in the study area, about 57.5% of the respondents were male and 42.3% were female. Respondents were classified into five groups based on age. In general, the average age of respondents is 39 years old and the highest frequency is in the

age group of 35-44 years old, which equals to 34.25% of respondents in this category. The youngest respondents were 22 years old and the oldest were 64 years old. Further, the results indicated that about 25.7% of respondents had high school education, 12.6% had a bachelor's degree, and 9.1% had master's degree and higher (Table 8).

Table 8. Descriptive statistics for the participants
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Variable | | Villagers | | Experts | |
|-----------|-------------------------------|-----------|------|---------|------|
| | | N | % | N | % |
| Gender | Male | 260 | 57.7 | 14 | 45.1 |
| | Women | 190 | 42.3 | 17 | 54.8 |
| Education | Elementary | 157 | 34.9 | 0 | 0 |
| | Guidance | 79 | 17.7 | 0 | 0 |
| | High school and diploma | 116 | 25.7 | 0 | 0 |
| | Associate degree and Bachelor | 57 | 12.6 | 0 | 0 |
| | Master and higher | 41 | 9.1 | 31 | 100 |
| Job | Employee | 70 | 1.5 | 31 | 100 |
| | self-employment | 140 | 31.1 | 0 | 0 |
| | Farmer | 175 | 38.8 | 0 | 0 |
| | Other cases | 65 | 14.4 | 0 | 0 |

4.2. Measuring the impacts of policies and planning approaches on empowering local stakeholders and promoting sustainable rural development indicators

The policies and approaches governing the development planning system in Iran have created some challenges in the process of empowerment,

which prevent from promoting sustainable development indicators. Thus, as shown in Table 9, the average environmental, ecological, socio-cultural and economic dimensions are undesirable and lower than average condition and it is in a moderate level only in the physical-infrastructure dimension.

Table 9. Mean, variance and standard deviation of sustainable rural development dimensions
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Dimensions of sustainable rural development | M | Variance | SD |
|---|------|----------|-------|
| Environmental - Ecological | 2.28 | 0.393 | 0.627 |
| Sociocultural | 2.35 | 0.383 | 0.619 |
| Economic | 2.15 | 0.317 | 0.563 |
| Physical - Infrastructure | 2.96 | 0.527 | 0.726 |

4.3. Relationship between the method and process of empowering local stakeholders and promoting sustainable rural development indicators

Pearson correlation test was used to analyze the relationship between each of the components of the method and the process of empowerment and policies with sustainable rural development. The results indicated that there is a significant relationship between the three components with stable development at 1% confidence level (Table 10).

In other words, the mean of the effective component was lower than the mean and the mean values of the indicators of sustainable development were lower than the mean. Therefore, there is a direct linear correlation between the indicators related to the method and the process of empowerment, local government policy making and sustainable development. Regarding the study area, the approach and policies focused on rural development planning failed to promote the development of sustainable development indicators.

Table 10. The relationship between local stakeholder empowerment process, government policy and promotion of sustainable rural development indicators
(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Component | Effective component | Pearson Test | | Correlation |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------------|
| | | Sig | r | |
| Empowerment method | Sustainable rural development | 0.000 | 0.436 | + |
| Empowerment process | | 0.000 | 0.374 | + |
| Local government policy | | 0.000 | 0.402 | + |

4.4. Evaluating the indicators related to methodology and process of empowerment of local stakeholders, local government policy and rural sustainable development

The results of Pearson correlation test indicated a significant relationship ($P > 0.05$) between education and awareness components (10 items), knowledge and skills and human resource development (7 items), transparency (6 items), trust and confidence (7 items), participation (12 items) and the integration of activities and

compatibility (12 items), and planning with developing components (Table 11).

In fact, there is a relationship between education and awareness indicators, knowledge and skills, and the development of human resources, the transparency, integration of activities and their compatibility with the indicators of sustainable rural development in the area under study.

Thus, promoting these indicators in the planning process will promote the indicators related to sustainable rural development in rural settlements.

Table 11. The relationship between indicators of the component of empowerment of local stakeholders, local government policy making with rural sustainable development

(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Empowerment and Participation Indicators | Dependent variable | Kendall's tau_b test Villagers' viewpoints | | Correlation | Kendall's tau_b test Experts' viewpoints | | Correlation |
|--|-------------------------------|--|-------|-------------|--|-------|-------------|
| | | P | r | | P | r | |
| Training and awareness | Sustainable rural development | 0.020 | 0.276 | + | 0.050 | 0.255 | + |
| Knowledge and skills | | 0.045 | 0.274 | + | 0.006 | 0.245 | + |
| Transparency | | 0.038 | 0.283 | + | 0.042 | 0.265 | + |
| Empathy and accountability | | 0.181 | 0.185 | - | 0.171 | 0.175 | - |
| Institutionalization and formation | | 0.231 | 0.166 | - | 0.228 | 0.145 | - |
| Participation | | 0.014 | 0.199 | - | 0.017 | 0.191 | + |
| Competence | | 0.677 | 0.058 | - | 0.679 | 0.053 | - |
| Meaningfulness | | 0.499 | 0.094 | - | 0.506 | 0.086 | - |
| Self-determination | | 0.217 | 0.171 | - | 0.213 | 0.157 | - |
| Trust and confidence | | 0.016 | 0.190 | + | 0.015 | 0.186 | + |
| Efficiency and Effectiveness | | 0.080 | 0.241 | - | 0.084 | 0.220 | - |
| Integrity of activities and compatibility between them | | 0.007 | 0.364 | + | 0.008 | 0.353 | + |
| Adjusting the relationship between power elements | | 0.158 | 0.187 | - | 0.172 | 0.173 | - |

** Significance level at 99%

4.5. Final evaluation of policy implications and planning approach in the methodology and process of empowerment among local stakeholders for sustainable rural development

After analyzing and predicting the impacts of the indicators related to the method and process of empowerment with the indicators of sustainable rural development, a significant positive correlation was observed among six indicators related to the empowerment method and process including training and awareness, knowledge and skills, transparency, trust and confidence, participation, integration of activities and their compatibility with respect to sustainable development component among rural areas in the study area (Table 12).

However, as shown in Table 12, no significant correlation was observed among the indicators of competence, self-determination, empathy and accountability, impact and effectiveness, institutionalization and formation, participation and regulation of relationships between elements of power. In addition, six indicators were analyzed through multivariate regression. Based on the results in Table 13, there is a correlation between the components of the empowerment method in the planning process and the rate of promotion in sustainable rural development indicators ($r=0.486$).

Further, the adjusted coefficient of determination indicates that 13.9% of the changes in the level of improvement related to sustainable rural development indicators are explained through the linear combination of the six components related to the empowerment.

Table 12. Regression results of main variables and the promotion of sustainable rural development

(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Model | Multiple Correlation Coefficient (r) | Coefficient of Determination R ² | Adjusted moderated coefficient | Standard error of measurement |
|-------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 | 0.486 | 0.236 | 0.139 | 0.590 |

Furthermore, as shown in Table 14, based on the calculated value for F and the significance level of

0.040, the linear correlation of the effective components can explain and predict the changes in

the effective component (the promotion of sustainable development indicators).

Table 13. Results of ANOVA for determining the regression effect related to main variables in improving sustainable rural development

(Source: Research findings, 2018)

| Model | | Sum of squares | df | Mean squares | F | Sig. |
|-------|----------------------|----------------|----|--------------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Effect of regression | 5.060 | 6 | 0.843 | 2.422 | 0.040 |
| | Residue | 16.336 | 47 | 0.348 | | |
| | Total | 21.426 | 53 | | | |

a: Dependent Variable: Sustainable rural development
 b: Predictors participation, transparency, integrity of activities and compatibility between them, knowledge and skills, trust and confidence, education and awareness

Finally, based on the standardized coefficient, the results indicated except for the integration of activities and their compatibility, other indicators in this model were not significant. In fact, due to the policy and approach to the Iranian planning system, the promotion of sustainable rural development indicators in pre-urban settlements have not been affected by any of the indicators related to local stakeholder empowerment, which

have been less emphasized in explaining sustainable rural development. The only significant indicator is related to the integration of activities and their compatibility (Table 14). Therefore, rural development planning is fully focused and non-participatory in Iran and was not effective in any of the indicators related to local stakeholder's empowerment which promotes these indicators in the process of sustainable rural development.

Table 14. Coefficients of the effect of independent variables on dependent variables based on rural residents' viewpoints

(Source: Research findings 2018)

| Model | Description | Non- standard coefficient | | Standard coefficient | t | sig |
|-------|--|---------------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|-------|
| | | B | Std | β | | |
| 1 | Integrity of activities and compatibility between them | 397 | 0.196 | 0.280 | 2.025 | 0.049 |

Therefore, due to the lack of significance of local stakeholders' empowerment indicators in the regression model, and considering that the indicators of the methodology and process of empowerment of local stakeholders failed to predict the future status of promoting sustainable rural development indicators in the area under study, some changes should be emphasized in the rural development planning approach in order to reduce the challenges of the sustainable rural development process and achieve community-based collaborative planning opportunities. However, the villagers have no role in the planning process in the present situation in the vicinity of the metropolis in Tehran.

The lack of attention to empowerment facilitators of villagers in the rural planning process from decision making to implementation and monitoring has led to reduction of rural sustainable development indicators in the studied area. The

results of the present study are inconsistent with the findings of the Issac and Harilal (1997), Blayer (2000), Kan NG (2008) and Risit (2013). In other words, in these studies, policies are being used to strengthen the facilitators of the method and process of empowering local stakeholders by informing collaborative planning and paying attention to social justice through the participation of local stakeholders. Community-based development and implementation of empowerment and capacity-building programs, and the participation of all stakeholders in the planning process, have led to greater synergy between the government and the local community and, consequently, sustainable development in rural areas. The results are consistent with the findings of Forster (1980), Almendinger (2002), Ondrik (1999), Eftekhari and Behzad Nasab (2004) in terms of shifting the planning approach toward the collaborative approach. Also it is consistent with

the findings of Kennedy (1997) and Amand (2007) in terms of paying attention to empowerment and promoting its indicators in the development planning process. The lack of promotion of local community empowerment indicators and the low level of sustainable development indicators have been highlighted. In Iran and the countries with similar conditions, planning system cannot influence the improvement of the life quality of local stakeholders hence the "bottom-up" and "collaborative" planning approach and attention to issues such as improving the management system of organizations and rural development institutions through the implementation of participatory methods, empowerment, participation, knowledge,

training, transparency, trust, Effectiveness, self-determination, meaningfulness, etc. are emphasized.

4.6. Appropriate planning method and practice for rural development (opportunities)

As it was already mentioned, the approach taken by the rural planning system in the present situation is devoid of the necessary structure for empowerment and participation of rural inhabitants in the process of sustainable rural development. In addition, establishing and expanding a stakeholder's group have been less emphasized in Iran.

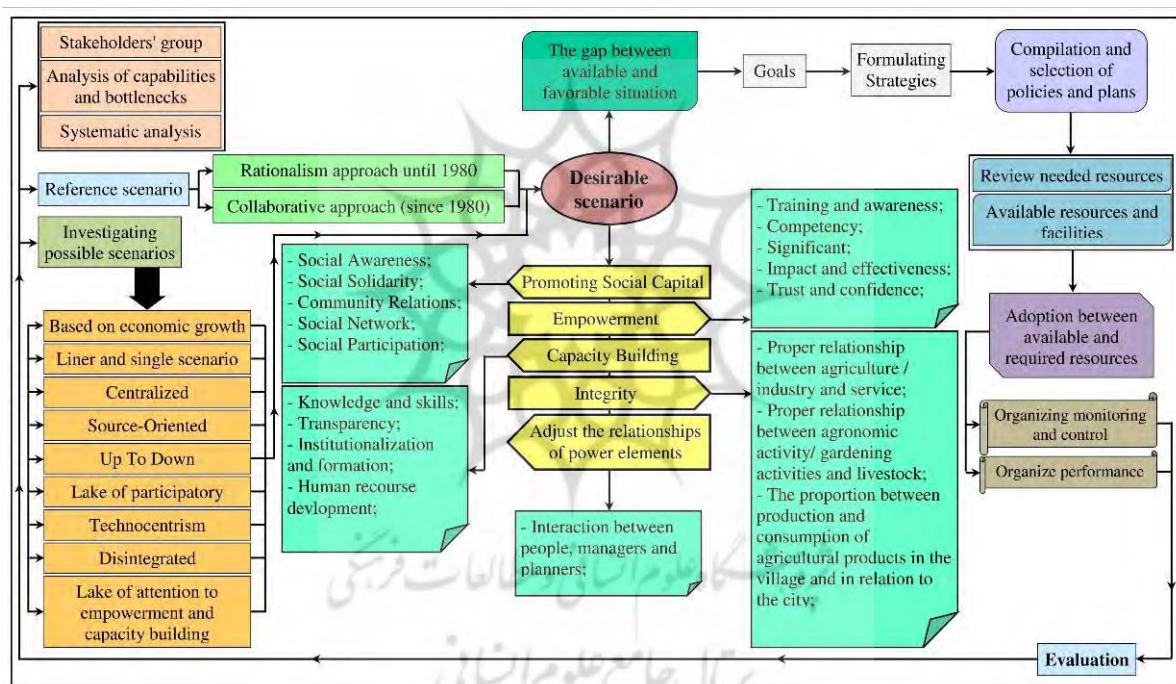


Figure 4. The pattern of planning steps to achieve the desired rural development planning model

(Source: Research findings, 2018)

Therefore, changing the planning pattern with the current approach of governing the planning process, as well as paying attention to the problem-oriented and stakeholder planning process will provide a good opportunity to use the capacities of the local stakeholder. In other words, the stakeholder's group should be established based on the proposed perspectives and challenges. In addition, the efficient use of financial, physical and administrative resources, as well as the most effective use of human and social capital should be highlighted for empowering productive local stakeholders. Planning in this way is regarded as a

new approach for using resources and opportunities. Furthermore, establishing stakeholders' group which can directly and indirectly affect the economic, social and cultural of rural sustainable development in each area can pave the way for growth and development. In this regard, implementing programs and projects, adhering managers and officials to contribute to local villagers and stakeholders, establishing communication between managers and planners with local stakeholders for participation in programs and projects, setting the ground for interaction and participation between experts and

villagers in relation to agricultural and non-agricultural activities, involving people in different decisions, planning and implementing programs, and participating in the interests of development projects are regarded as some factors which have not been emphasized in rural settlements. Thus, these factors should be highlighted by changing the attitudes and approaches toward a community-based approach and involving local stakeholders in the process of rural planning.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

Creating a balance between the development of the city and the countryside plays a significant role in the social and economic life among the inhabitants (Shen et al, 2012). In addition, top-down approaches in rural development planning in different parts of the world were not successful in improving living standards among rural and poor areas. Based on the literature and experience of rural planning, there was a consensus that inappropriate development and planning methods have largely ignored the feelings, needs, and perceptions among the local people. Thus, the present study aimed to evaluate the governing approach for planning rural settlements around Tehran in Iran by implementing the most important indicators affecting the formation and expansion of empowerment. To this aim, the relationship between the indicators related to the methodology and the process of empowering the local stakeholders with those of sustainable rural development was measured. The findings of the present study on the non-participation of planning and utilization of empowerment and capacity building in projects to enhance the level of development are in line with finding research of Powell (1987) and Rokneddin Eftekhari and Behzadnasab (2004). It is also in line with the findings of Kennedy (1996), Twitchen and Adams (2011), Amoundsen and Martinsen (2015) and Spath and Scolobig's (2017) study in terms of capacity building, empowerment and its indicators, including education, knowledge and skills as well as participation in the optimal planning model. But the results of the present study in Iran do not correspond to those of the Philippines, Nepal, Indonesia, India, Fiji and Njoh research in 2011 because these countries do not have expert planning systems and have taken decentralized forms of conflict resolution, participation and community empowerment as national priorities. In

addition, in terms of changing the planning approach from a technical-instrumental to collaborative in case of promoting participation, empowerment, and other new ideas in the development process, it is in line with the findings of the Adam (2006), Matthew (2006), Machler and Milz (2015), Duckett, Mckee, Sutherland, Kyle, Boden, Auty, Bessell & Mckendrick (2017). And in terms of convergence of rural-urban planning for the socio-economic development and sustainability of the settlements it is in line with finding research of Shafiei Sabet and Azharianfar (2017).

The findings confirmed the positive effect of the indicators related to the method and process of empowerment and the participation of villagers in rural planning on the economic, social, environmental and physical environment in the rural sustainable development infrastructure. Increasing the use of villages and their capabilities in the planning process will improve the socio-economic indicators of urban rural settlements, which is regarded as a tool for the local government to balance the socioeconomic conditions of urban rural settlements at the regional levels. Accordingly, based on the development literature, the present research emphasized the collaborative planning approach in regional balanced conditions in developing and empowering local stakeholders in order to promote ecological, social, and cultural, economic and environmental indicators. In this regard, sustainable development of the regions is effective by choosing the appropriate social and economic policies of the government based on development planning. Therefore, the proper understanding of the relationships between rural and urban environments can lead to structural and functional changes in the existing relationships and in planning to establish a favorable relationship between the stakeholders and two-way equilibrium functions with the authorities and encourage sustainable development policy by the government and integrated development in urban rural areas.

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سیاست‌ها و رویکرد برنامه‌ریزی: چالش‌ها و فرصت‌های توانمندسازی ذینفعان محلی و توسعه پایدار روستایی (مطالعه موردی: روستاهای جنوب و جنوب شرق تهران)

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چکیده مبسوط

۱. مقدمه

مورد مطالعه داشته است؟ الگوی متناسب برنامه‌ریزی توسعه برای

روستاهای بیرامون کلانشهری همچون تهران کدام است؟

۲. مبانی نظری تحقیق

از آنجاکه سابقه و تجربه برنامه‌ریزی در ایران با عمر و تجارب نظریه‌پردازی در ادبیات توسعه تقریباً برابر است؛ می‌توان تأثیر این الگوها، نظریه‌ها، رویکردها و راهبردها را در برنامه‌های توسعه این کشور به‌طور عام و برنامه‌های توسعه روستایی آن به‌طور خاص ردیابی کرد. در فرآیند توسعه روستایی دو مقوله به‌وضوح از یکدیگر قابل تفکیک و هم‌زمان نیازمند توجه هستند:

۱- دیدگاه، اهداف و رهیافت‌های حاکم بر فرآیند توسعه روستایی؛
۲- فرآیند حاکم بر روند و چگونگی عمل برنامه‌ریزی توسعه روستایی است؛ تاکنون دو رویکرد «عقلایی گرای» و «ارتباطی» درباره چارچوب و فرآیند برنامه‌ریزی توسعه مطرح بوده‌اند که در کشورهای در حال توسعه [همچون ایران] استفاده از رویکرد عقلایی گرای در فرآیند برنامه‌ریزی غلبه داشته است؛ و رویکرد ارتباطی که از اواخر قرن بیستم در ادبیات برنامه‌ریزی جهان مورد توجه قرار گرفته، هنوز کاربرد چندانی پیدا نکرده است. توانمندسازی با رویکرد راهبردی مشارکتی به‌عنوان ارکان اصلی برنامه‌ریزی توسعه روستایی در کنار توسعه شهری مطرح می‌شود؛ که خوداتکایی مردمی، آزادسازی فرهنگی، دسترسی به حقوق در بعد اقتصادی، اجتماعی و فرهنگی، و وجود یک فضای مشارکتی در همه جنبه‌های تلاش انسانی از پیش شرط‌های این نوع برنامه‌ریزی جدید است.

در کشورهای در حال توسعه، روستاها در مقایسه با مناطق شهری از پیشرفت کمتری برخوردارند؛ و سرمایه‌گذاری کافی در زیرساخت‌ها و فعالیت‌های اقتصادی آن‌ها وجود ندارد، از این رو، با چالش‌های جدی در زمینه ارتقاء شاخص‌های توسعه پایدار روستایی نظیر: محیطی - اکولوژیک و اجتماعی - اقتصادی مواجه هستند. منطقه مورد مطالعه این پژوهش نیز، سکونتگاه‌های روستایی جنوب کلانشهر تهران، به مثابه یکی از گونه‌های روستایی بیرامون کلانشهری در کشورهای در حال توسعه، از دیر باز با محرومیت و پایین بودن سطح توسعه یافتگی رو به رو بوده است. اهمیت موضوع رویکرد و روش برنامه‌ریزی توسعه روستایی در این قلمرو و روستاهای آن نیز اهمیت توسعه یافتگی و بهزیستی جوامع روستایی و این‌که بیشترین افراد آسیب‌پذیر و فقیر در کشورهای در حال توسعه در مناطق روستایی زندگی می‌کنند، ایجاب می‌کند تا شناخت علمی و دقیق‌تری به مسأله ارتقاء شاخص‌های توسعه پایدار روستایی و رویکرد و روش برنامه‌ریزی روستایی پیدا کنیم. براساس این پژوهش به دنبال پاسخ‌گویی به پرسش‌های زیر است:

۱- به‌کارگیری رویکرد برنامه‌ریزی مجزا و متخصص محور در روش و مراحل انجام برنامه‌ریزی توسعه چه چالش‌هایی در روش و فرآیند توانمندسازی و مشارکت ساکنان روستایی بیرامون کلانشهر تهران در منطقه مورد مطالعه در فرآیند توسعه پایدار به همراه داشته است؟

۲- اتخاذ این رویکرد در روش و مراحل برنامه‌ریزی چه پیامدهایی در فرآیند توسعه پایدار روستایی در بیرامون کلانشهر تهران در منطقه

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۳. روش تحقیق

برای بررسی وضع موجود روش برنامه‌ریزی مجزا و متخصص محور در ناحیه مورد مطالعه و برای تبیین دقیق سؤال‌های پژوهش، تحقیق حاضر با استفاده از روش توصیفی - تحلیلی انجام شد. همچنین، برای ارائه چهارچوب معنی‌داری مجموعه‌ای از روش‌ها از جمله آزمون همبستگی و رگرسیون چند متغیره در کلیتی منطقی و در قالب فرآیند علمی پژوهش استفاده شد. جمع‌آوری اطلاعات به دو شیوه کتابخانه‌ای و میدانی صورت گرفته اطلاعات مورد نیاز از روش بررسی منابع کتابخانه‌ای و پیمایش میدانی حاصل شد.

۴. یافته‌های تحقیق

عبور از الگوی برنامه‌ریزی منبع‌گرا با اصالت متخصص (براساس سیاست و رویکرد برنامه‌ریزی حاکم برایان)؛ و توجه به فرآیند برنامه‌ریزی مسئله‌گرا و ذینفع محور، فرصت مناسبی برای استفاده از ظرفیت‌های ذینفعان محلی فراهم می‌سازد. به‌گونه‌ای که با در نظر گرفتن چشم‌اندازها و چالش‌ها به دنبال ایجاد هسته‌های خط دهنده می‌باشد؛ تا بر اساس آن سازمان‌های مردم‌نهاد و تشکل‌های روستایی، اهداف و سیاست‌ها را طراحی و تدوین کنند. اهداف اصلی هسته‌های خط دهنده حل مشکلات اصلی و شکل‌دهی قطب‌های خط دهنده و نه همه مسائل است. علاوه بر این استفاده کارا از منابع مالی، فیزیکی و اجرایی و از همه مهتر استفاده کارا از سرمایه‌های اجتماعی، انسانی و نمادین و توجه به بحث توانمندسازی مولد ذینفعان محلی می‌باشد. هسته‌های کلیدی، منبع اصلی ایجاد نهضت توانمندسازی مولد هستند. تشکل‌ها با برقراری ارتباط سازنده بین دانش بومی و دانش کارشناسان هدف پیام را منتقل کنند. برنامه‌ریزی به این شیوه برنامه‌های جاری را نفی نمی‌کند، بلکه رویکرد نوینی برای استفاده از منابع و فرصت‌ها است. در این راستا، مشورت در اجرای برنامه‌ها و پروژه‌ها، پایبندی مدیران و مسئولین برای مشارکت دادن روستاییان و ذینفعان محلی، برقراری ارتباط بین مدیران و برنامه‌ریزان با ذینفعان محلی برای مشارکت در برنامه‌ها و پروژه‌ها، فراهم کردن زمینه تعامل و مشارکت کارشناسان با روستاییان در ارتباط با فعالیت‌های کشاورزی

و غیر کشاورزی، دخالت مردم در تصمیم‌گیری‌های مختلف، دخالت مردم در تدوین برنامه‌ها و اجرای طرح‌ها، شراکت در منافع حاصل از طرح‌های توسعه و غیره از جمله مسائلی است که در فرآیند برنامه‌ریزی روستایی مورد توجه می‌باشد.

۵. بحث و نتیجه‌گیری

این مقاله با به‌کارگیری مهم‌ترین شاخص‌های اثرگذار در شکل‌پذیری و گسترش توانمندسازی به بررسی رویکرد حاکم بر برنامه‌ریزی سکونتگاه‌های روستایی پیرامون کلان‌شهر تهران در ایران پرداخته است. با افزایش به‌کارگیری روستاییان و توانمندی‌های روستایی در فرآیند برنامه‌ریزی، باعث بهبود شاخص‌های اجتماعی - اقتصادی سکونتگاه‌های روستایی - شهری می‌گردد؛ که این خود وسیله‌ای برای دولت محلی به منظور تعادل بخشیدن اجتماعی - اقتصادی سکونتگاه‌های روستایی - شهری در سطوح ناحیه‌ای و منطقه‌ای است. بدین ترتیب، بر اساس ادبیات توسعه، پژوهش حاضر بر اهمیت رویکرد برنامه‌ریزی ارتباطی در شرایط متوازن ناحیه‌ای در شکل‌پذیری و گسترش توانمندسازی ذینفعان محلی برای ارتقاء شاخص‌های محیطی - اکولوژیکی، اجتماعی و فرهنگی، اقتصادی و محیط زیستی تأکید دارد. در این راستا، توسعه پایدار مناطق از طریق انتخاب سیاست‌های اجتماعی و اقتصادی مناسب دولت بر اساس برنامه‌ریزی‌های توسعه نیز مؤثر است. بنابراین، شناخت صحیح روابط جاری میان محیط‌های روستایی و شهری می‌تواند به کوشش در راستای تغییر ساختاری و کارکردی روابط و مناسبات موجود در برنامه‌ریزی برای برقرار کردن ارتباط مطلوب ذی‌نفعان و عملکردهای متوازن دوسویه با مسئولان و ترغیب به سیاست‌گذاری‌های توسعه پایدار به‌وسیله دولت کمک کند و الهام‌بخش توسعه یکپارچه در بخش‌های روستایی - شهری باشد.

کلمات کلیدی - برنامه‌ریزی روستایی، توانمندسازی، توسعه پایدار، روستا، تهران، ایران.

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