

Analysis of the underlying factors in the achievement level of implemented rural guide plans in the east of Guilan Province, Iran

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Received: 14/2/2011

Accepted: 15/9/2011

Extended Abstract

Introduction

With about 22 million inhabitants, rural areas of Iran contain 29% of the population in the country in 2011. During the past two decades, rural development policies of the government have aimed to improve the living conditions in rural areas. One of these policies was the preparation and implementation of rural guide plans which mainly have tried to organize the physical development within the villages. Even though a great number of rural guide plans have been prepared over the past years, a small number of them have been put into action, mainly because of the shortage of financial resources. Also the success of implemented plans has not been the same within the villages. The main objective of this research is, therefore, to analyze the influencing factors in the success of executed rural guide plans in the east of Guilan Province, Iran.

Research Methodology

The research method utilized in this study is descriptive and analytic method. Most of the employed data comes from a field survey. Thirteen villages in which rural guide plans had been implemented were selected in the eastern part of Guilan province in the north of Iran to evaluate their achievement level in implementation process.

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These villages included Dehka, Dehshal, Espili, Golsefeed, Lialestan, Moridan, Mousa kelayeh, Peerkooh, Reza mahalle, Roud baneh, Shoveel, South Chof, Tool Lot Nine of the villages were located in the plain area and four in the mountainous area. 25 person in each village and a total of 325 residents were interviewed for this research. The selected villages were evaluated for the level of achievement for plan implementation for which 18 indicators used for the analysis. Pearson correlation analysis was used to find out the causal factors for the achievement level of selected villages for plan implementation.

Results

In the first part of this study, the selected villages were evaluated in terms of their achievements in the implementation of rural guide plans using 18 parameters. Based on this evaluation, the average achievement for 13 villages was 52.77%. Among the villages, three of them including Mousa kelayeh, Peerkooh and Espili with 77.3%, 72.2% and 65.6% respectively had the biggest achievement, three other villages including Shoveel, Roud baneh and Lialestan with 55.6%, 52.4% and 51.1% had around the average achievement while the remaining villages had below the average level. The least achievement was related to South Chof village with 38%.

The second part of study analyzed the underlying factors for the achievement levels of selected villages for plan implementation. One of the main factors regarding the degree of achievement is distance from city centre and access to urban services. Despite our assumption that closer villages to city centers would have higher level of achievement, the Pearson correlation indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between distance and plan achievement level ($R= 0.85$). This means that the more distance between a village and the city centre, the more achievement level in plan implementation. The main reasons for this, perhaps, could be related to the lesser expectation and higher cooperation of the residents of remote villages compared with the closer villages to city centers. Another important factor considered for the plan achievement level was the geographical situation of the selected villages. As stated earlier, four of the villages were located in mountainous region, two in the foothills and the rest in plain area. A significant correlation of ($R= 0.8$) indicates that villages located in mountainous area have higher level of plan achievement. The reason for such relationship could be incorporated to the older physical structure of the buildings and the higher cooperation level of residents in these villages in comparison with the villages located in plain area.

Another underlying factor for achievement level of plans is the time gap between preparation and implementation of the plan. Even though a correlation of ($R= -0.43$) does not indicate important relation between these variables, however, it shows a medium level inverse relationship between preparation and implementation time gap for the guide plan in a way that the less time gap between preparation and implementation of the plan, the more achievement level is for the plan. From social perspectives, the most important factor in the achievement level of plans is public participation in the process of preparation and implementation of the plans. A significant relation of ($R= 0.92$) indicates how public participation matters in the achievement level of rural guide plans. All of the villages with higher achievement

level had higher public participation level. Villagers' knowledge about the guide plan before implementation and the objectives of guide plan with ($R= 0.78$ and $R= 0.72$ respectively) were other important factors in the achievement level of plans. This means that if villagers know more about the plan and its objectives, probably, they might have more cooperation in the implementation process of guide plan. The last factors examined here was the size of the population. It appears that villages with medium or smaller size population have had a better achievement level. This could be related to the smaller amount of physical activities in smaller villages and the possibility of higher cooperation compared in them compared with larger villages.

Conclusion

This article analyzed the influencing factors in the success of the implementation of rural guide plans in the east of Guilan Province, Iran. The main findings of the research are: 1) the geographical location of villages and their distances from cities are found significantly correlated with the degree of the success of rural guide plans. 2) Villages located in the mountainous areas with medium size population and farther from cities seems have been more successful than those located in the plain areas, closer to cities and with bigger population. 3) The knowledge of rural residents from guide plans and their participations in the preparation and implementation of rural guide plans were other important factors in achievement level rural guide plan in the study area.

Key Words: Rural, Rural Guide Plan, Performance Plan, Factors Geography, East-e Guilan.

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