

Defining Factors Affecting the Unsustainability of Rural Habitations in Iran

Ma'soomeh Soleimani¹ - Khadijeh Boozarjomehri-^{2*} Ja'far Javan³ - Aliakbar Anabestani⁴

1. PhD Candidate, in Geography & Rural planning, Ferdowsi university of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran.

2. Associate prof, in Geography & Rural Planning, Ferdowsi university of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran.

3. Full prof, in Rural Geography, Ferdowsi university of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran.

4. Associate prof, in Geography & Rural Planning, Ferdowsi university of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran.

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Extended Abstract

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's world is facing various problems and unsustainability in different ecological, economical, and social domains. Decrease in natural sources, increase of pollution, fertile soil becoming salty, desertification, eradication of genetic variety, extreme poverty, and expansion of social-habitational inequality are among the above mentioned problems. Solving these unsustainability's requires the proper and effective solution of their bases and warding off the effective factors. Besides, by defining unsustainability, it is possible to take more appropriate measures to deal with it.

In Iran, rural habitations are facing a lot of unsustainability's which is manifested in villagers' mass migration to cities. Thus, in order to establish a suitable situation in rural habitations, it is necessary to diagnose factors effecting on unsustainability and find solutions for it.

The present paper is trying to answer the following question:

How is it that, in spite of half a century of planning for rural development in Iran, rural habitations are still unsustainable and what are the factors effecting on unsustainability's?

2. METHODOLOGY

The current study is a "theoretical-basic" research in which using previous studies, effective factors on rural unsustainability are identified and their various aspects and outcomes are dealt with. If these factors have negative effects or lead to unsustainability, they are regarded as effective factors in rural sustainability through logical reasoning.

The arrangement of the material in the present paper is based on the scientific background of its writers, but wherever required appropriate cross reference(s) is (are) mentioned. Finally, through surveying

previous effects and conclusions, the writers' outlook and the last result are stated.

3. DISCUSSION

Based on the available knowledge, factors effective on rural unsustainability are divided into two groups, natural factors and supranational ones.

A. National factors:

1. Unlocalized theoretical bases of development in Iran; These schools of thought, attitudes, and strategies are effective on rural unsustainability in Iran due to their emphasis on industrial development so that agriculture development would pay the price.

2. Shortcomings and problems of the planning system; Overemphasis on "Rational Planning Theory" and centralism in the process of planning have had an impact on the occurrence of unsustainability in Iran. Centralism has played its roles in the emergence of rural unsustainability through disregard for local and regional aspects in rural planning and misunderstanding of different economic, social, and ecological domains of rural areas and lack of success in seeking others' cooperation.

3. Rentier of governments;

A rentier government, through weakening the bases of social participation by lack of development of its civilized community, by seeking people's dependence on itself, and due to its lack of regard for agriculture sector-because of its financial independence- has led the affairs to rural unsustainability in Iran.

4. Educational deficiency and scanty knowledge;

This causes unavailability of effective human sources and, as a result, leads to rural unsustainability.

5. Problems and deficiencies of rural management

Past centralized management, some shortcomings of a few urban councils, and detachment of rural management from a good (reasonable) government have so far been decisive in rural unsustainability.

6. Shortcomings of facilities and services;

*. Corresponding Author: azar1334@gmail.com

Tel: +989155199112

Organizational pattern of providing villages with different services, definition of “village” in the law of civil divisions passed in 1985, ignoring villages having less than 20 households in the process of development, and centering of various services on large villages, accounting for the same population to offer services all over the country, and not considering regional/local differences are among these shortcomings.

B. Supranational factors:

1. Rational approach;

This approach has led to an unrealistic view of ecological problems and unsustainability.

2. Industrial revolution;

Manufacturing activities have caused exploiting of natural sources followed by ecological problems.

3. Population growth;

This has increased demands, waste products, decrease in per capita access to natural sources; and, as a result, occurrence of unsustainability.

4. Nature of development;

Growth in the well-being of people has been associated with injustice and destruction of the environment.

4. CONCLUSION

In Iran, unsustainability is mainly due to social constructs which weaken mass participation of villagers. It also seems that among various factors strangeness of developmental patterns, which are based on theoretical planning and management of development, etc. are mainly decisive in this respect.

Thus, applying a local pattern of development and ridding of different obstacles preventing from villagers` participation are effective measures to face rural unsustainability.

Key words: Unsustainability, Rural unsustainability, Sustainability, Sustainable development.

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