

Evaluation and analysis of the role of citizen participation in urban development (Case study: the city of Nikshahar)

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Abstract: From the second half of the twentieth century, the concept of participation with a new attitude has become the key issue in the development programs, especially in urban development programs. It is necessary to know the influencing factors in this case to strengthen and expand public participation in planning. This study aims to clarify the extent of participation and its impact on the level of citizen participation. The research method of this study is survey method and the data has been obtained from the questionnaire. 317 persons were selected by using Cochran formula as a statistic community. Spearman correlation coefficient is used in order to analyze the data and test hypotheses. Research findings show that there is a meaningful correlation between the average of economic and social factors and the average of citizen participation of the city of Nikshahar and also between citizen participation and urban development and their satisfaction with life.

Keywords: participation, urban development, citizens, Nikshahr

I. INTRODUCTION

Although participation has been linked with human life in general but it has been emerged from politics after World War II in new sense. This type of participation was established in some industrialized countries in the realm of economic and industrial to associate people in ownership and strengthen the sustainable basis of the industry and economy. By developing the concept of participation and its penetration into all areas of life, today we speak of conditions that all people have realistic and informed interference in their self-determination. However, this development is still not seen practically. Among the factors that prevent the rapid spread of participation, the lack of a philosophy is obvious that attempts to provide competent participation, makes it easy to understand and makes an obligation toward it. Participation is a subjective phenomenon which cannot be effective and become a part of popular culture without an effective philosophy (Alavitabar, 2000, 60).

Citizen Participation in the management and administration of cities» is one of the backgrounds of participation. This participation is one of the necessities of urban life and it will be realized when the urbanites change to citizen from a person who merely live in a place called "city". Recognition, organizing and determining of the position of institutions and organizations in relation to the urban development, is one of the most important issues of urban management. Communication between the institutions and coordinating their activities in line with the objectives and policies of sustainable urban development are factors which is very important in urban management. These sets of characteristics are referred to as urban management structure (Javadi, 2003, 16-17).

Today, urban management is one of the parameters of urban development and the managers are more successful in managing of the affairs of the cities that benefit from the citizen participation in urban projects and cities will be more advanced and more developed when its citizens participate in the affairs of the city. In participatory urbanism, its own citizens determine the fate of the city and the residents of the city are the main determinants in all different areas of the city. The concept of participation can be tracked and found in the ancient Greek cities. In the postmodern age, citizen participation appears in the form of aggregation participation. Aggregation participation is a process which the citizens manage their affairs through it by using of channels such as institutions, organizations and groups and will show their roles. From the 1980s onward, it

has been given increasing attention to the participatory approach in development plans and urban development. So that it is the main component of urban development project in the comprehensive participation of civil society, constructive units (individuals and groups in the city) (Ziari and et al, 2009,679).

So it can be said that public participation in the decision-making process of city has been one of the main elements of the government. The increase of public participation in urban affairs can play an important role in urban balancing (Abbaszadeh, 2008, 44). If citizens look at the participation in the city affairs as the participation in their own destiny, they strengthen some of their character traits such as leadership, self-responsibility in the form of working groups and will prepare the background to change and develop the city. Finally, the participation was considered as an essential element in sustainable development and it is reminded as the missing link in the development process and experts believe that the participation will enhance the competence and integrity of individuals (Almond and et al, 1998: 42).

This study investigate the participation of citizens in urban affairs of Nikshahar at first and then it will identify possible causes of the lack of participation by citizens and finally it will present some appropriate patterns and strategies for greater and more effective public participation to provide successful implementation of urban projects and to achieve sustainable development.

History of the research : Khodavardian (2006) In a book entitled "an introduction to the ways of the attraction of public participation" that has been published by publications of the municipalities points to the concept of participation and its objectives and then describes the method of the villagers participation in the village administration and finally he propounded the factors influencing people's participation and its obstacles and has concluded that public participation is dependent to the establishment of participation and people relationships with governmental bodies and institutions and related organizations.

Ahmadi (2000) In his thesis entitled "public participation in the reconstruction of quake-hit cities" that it has been achieved in the College of Fine Arts of Tehran University has studied the role of public participation in the reconstruction of earthquake-stricken cities and the way of their participation and he has investigated the effects of public participation in accelerating of the implementation of these elements and concluded that the role of people in these projects are poor.

Kasalai (2000) In his Master Thesis entitled" the role of participative management in urban management of the new cities, new city of Pardis" that it was achieved in university of Shiraz, has concluded that the new structure of urban management in new cities are without the participation of the public and non-governmental organizations and bottom-up planning system cannot be seen in it.

Hossaini (2003) In his thesis entitled" Mechanisms of citizen participation in designing urban development plan and presenting appropriate model for the city of Kalardasht" that was achieved in university of Tarbiat Modares of Teharn, has studied methods and techniques for citizen participation in providing urban development plan and has codified a suitable model in urban planning.

Sandres (2003) in his article on citizen participation in urban affairs, concluded that urban participation of citizens can be known as the serious and active, conscious, intentional, efficient and organized participation of elements of civil society and economic, social and cultural activities of urban life to achieve collective goals. Obviously this process in addition to the achievement of collective goals it will increase the collective self-esteem, social interaction, experience and skills of the participants.

Research hypotheses

1. There is a meaningful correlation between economic, social factors and public participation in urban affairs.
2. It seems that there is a meaningful correlation between the level of citizen participation in urban development and life satisfaction

Theories

The importance and necessity of public participation in planning and urban development: And actively involvement in the management of the community is one of the most important factors for the growth and development of any society. Each step in the development must be accompanied by the people because the increase in the supply of labor is the main condition for fulfillment of the affairs that causes increase the efficiency in supplying of needs and causes the actual development. In recent decades, international attention has been focused on development problems while urban services and the ways of presenting it is one of the main matters that participation can be effective in it. The fulfillment of the goals of urban services is dependent on the citizens' participation in decisions and valuating the demand of the majority before the release of the plan and finally culture implementing should be done after the performance of the project In order to gain the support of the citizens for the project. Public participation has an important place in sustainability and institutionalization of any development plan because governments are not able to meet the people constant demand alone. General -

private partnerships is one of the best forms of such co-operation which is based on understanding of this point that the public and private sectors can benefit by sharing resources, knowledge and expertise to improve and provide basic services to all citizens.

It is widely acknowledged that the participation is a phase of development practically and knows development as equal to the participation hence; any development will not be realized unless people are encouraged to improve their standard of living. The experience of many developing countries, including our country shows that the focus planning and evaluating top-down approach has not had desirable results. Whatever the level of participation is more limited, the efficient implementation of the programs may be reduced and the cost of implementation and monitoring will increase and the vulnerability of plans and policies will rise (Rezvani, 2003:214).

People, resources and participation are the three main foundation of human sustainable development with the exception that the participation in comparison with the other two has an essential role other factors have the desired activity within the framework of it. Public participation is an urgent need in all phases of planning, implementation and evaluation. In another word the participation is a key factor in sustainable development because it is the means of reaching to and the goal of it and it is referred to as the missing link of the development process (Shoryabi, 2007:34).

Nowadays, the use of potentials and intellectual, physical, and financial capitals of public and private sector is one of the effective strategies in the management of the participation that its outcome will be the decrease of cost, the increase of income and improving of performance of urban management.

The geographical location of the studied area: The city of Nikshahr is located in Southeastern of Iran and in the south of city of Iranshahr, North of Chabehar, West of city of Sarbaz and it has an area of 23,930 square kilometers and a population of 188,713 people and it is located at longitude 58 ' 51° S to 61'15°S and latitude 25'45°N to 57'1° N. The city of Nikshahr is the third largest city in the province after the cities of Iranshahr and Zahadan. It is consisted of three towns and cities, 16 districts and 816 villages.



Figure 1: Map of the study area

II. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The first hypothesis

There is a meaningful correlation between economic, social factors and public participation in urban affairs: The Spearman correlation coefficient test is used for testing the first hypothesis. This test is able to show the relationship between economic, social factors and the level of citizen participation in the city of Nikshahr.

Table 1: Results of Spearman correlation test to measure the average of the citizen's economic and social factors and the average of the level of citizen participation in urban design

The level of participation	Socio- economic factors	Indices	
0/89	1/000	Correlation coefficient	Socio- economic factors
0.000	0.000	Significance level	
317	317	numbers	
1/000	0/89	Correlation coefficient	The level of participation
0.000	0.000	Significance level	
317	317	numbers	

Source: search results

According to the table above, the amount of significant level of 0.000 is less than 0/01 and On the other hand, the lower and upper grades of all indices are positive therefore, it can be said with 99% confidence that there is a significant correlation between the average of the citizen's economic and social factors and the average of the level of the citizen participation in the city of Nikshahr. As it can be seen that the obtained correlation coefficient is high so it indicates that the variables of economic and social factors have a large influence on citizen participation in urban design. Thus, by the increase of economic and social foundation of citizens, their participation will increase in urban affairs and by decrease of economic and social foundation of citizens their participation will decrease, so the first hypothesis will be proved.

The second hypothesis: It seems that there is a meaningful correlation between the level of citizen participation in urban development and life satisfaction. The Spearman correlation coefficient test is used for testing the second hypothesis. According to the Spearman correlation coefficient test, correlation coefficient, the level of significance and the number of person have been shown in following table.

Table 2: Results of Spearman correlation test to measure the economic and social average and the average of the citizen participation in urban design

The level of participation	Life satisfaction	Indices	
1/000	0/153	Correlation coefficient	Socio- economic factors
0.000	0.000	Significance level	
317	317	numbers	
0/153	1/000	Correlation coefficient	The level of participation
0.000	0.000	Significance level	
317	317	numbers	

Source: search results

According to the table above, the amount of significant level of 0.000 is less than 0/01 and On the other hand, the lower and upper grades of all indices are positive therefore, it can be said with 99% confidence that there is a significant correlation between the indices of life satisfaction and the level of citizens' participation of the city of Nikshahr. As it can be seen that the obtained correlation coefficient is high so it indicates that the variables of life satisfaction of the citizens have a large influence on citizen participation in urban design. Thus, by the increase of life satisfaction of citizens, their participation will increase in urban affairs and by decrease of life satisfaction of citizens their participation will decrease, so the second hypothesis will be proved.

III. CONCLUSION

Generally, it can be said that the need for citizen participation in urban affairs is felt because of economic crisis and instability, environmental crises and many other factors in this world. For this reason, the main goal of this research is the citizens' role of the city of Nikshahr in urban affairs that various theories have been used for explaining it and following results were obtained:

According to the obtained results, economic and social factors have a large influence on citizen participation in urban design. This means that by the increase of socio-economic foundation of the citizens, their participation will increase in urban affairs and by the decrease of socio-economic foundation of the citizens, their participation will decrease.

The results also showed that the more the citizens' participation, the more the citizens 'satisfaction from authorities and the city steps toward the development.

Suggestions

1. Hold regular meetings with the managers at the specified time.
2. Gaining the citizens trust through actualizing their ideas.
3. using of the potential of schools and universities for participation in cultural and social affairs.
4. Codifying of programs in urban neighborhoods in the city to increase and strengthen social capital among citizens.
5. Profit participation and provide the necessary tools for attracting public participation for profit affairs.
6. Listening to the feedback from citizens regarding urban projects.

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