

A Comparative Study of Housing Planning in the Economic, Social, and Cultural Development Plans of Iran and Measuring their Efficiency Using the TOPSIS Model

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ABSTRACT

Housing is one of the essential needs of human beings; therefore, efficient planning and policy-making to provide it for all of society are very necessary. The housing policy-making after the Iran's revolution has had major differences, and various orientations. According to housing experts, these efforts have been sometimes successful and generally failed and have had a significant effect on the supply and demand of housing in the country. Therefore, the main issue is the ineffectiveness of some of these policies in providing housing during the revolution until now. The purpose of the essay was to do a comparative study of the land and housing policies in the Iran's development plans and to determine their effectiveness according to the statistical data on housing in certain periods¹ after the revolution. A comparative study with a mixed (quantitative and qualitative) approach has been considered to achieve this purpose. In order to collect data, non-reactive measures and documentary methods have been used. For analysis, the concepts extracted from these texts, have been coded, classified, and organized under categories and subcategories. Then, they have been qualitatively compared over five-year periods. In the next step, a comparative study between quantitative housing data was done in the same periods. Finally, using the TOPSIS model, these plans have been ranked based on efficiency. The results show that the fifth economic, social and cultural development plan has the most efficient policies. On the contrary, the sixth plan is considered the most ineffective development plan since the Iran's revolution.

Keywords: *Comparative Study, Housing Planning, Land and Housing Policies, Topsis model*

Introduction

The fact that Abraham Maslow, the father of humanistic psychology, placed the need for housing (shelter) on the same level as other physiological and basic human needs, such as water, air, food, and clothing, shows the importance and necessity of proper and efficient planning and policies in this regard, taking into

account all sections of society. In Iran, the five-year economic, social and cultural development plans, as the upstream authority of the country's planning, pay special attention to the land and housing plans and, in fact, define the macro policy of housing planning. After the Islamic revolution, the first development plan was approved in 1989

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Under the so-called construction government, and its horizon was until 1994. After that, the second and third plans of the country's development in the reform government between 1995 and 2004 were the action criteria. The fourth development plan was also prepared and implemented during the first kindness government between 2005 and 2009. The fifth development plan was prepared and approved with a delay of two years. This caused the uncertainty of the plan and created a gap between policy making and its implementation because the policy-making and approval of the plan had been done in the second kindness (Mehrvarz) government. However, its implementation should have been done with the first prudence and hope government. In any case, between 2011 and 2015, this plan was the criteria of action. The sixth development plan was prepared, approved, and implemented by the second prudence and hope government between 2017 and 2021. But the important issue is that the policies adopted in each period had major differences and various orientations and underwent many changes. All these changes can signify the government's efforts of the time to improve access to housing in the country and control and guide the housing market. According to the experts in this sector, the efforts were sometimes successful and generally failed and significantly affected the supply and demand and construction of housing in the country. Therefore, the main issue is the ineffectiveness of some of these policies in providing housing during the revolution until now. The purpose of the study was to compare the land and housing policies in the country's five-year development plans and determine their efficiency according to the statistical data on housing in the mentioned periods.

1. literature review

1.1. The variables for measuring the quantitative condition of housing

Indicators for measuring the quantitative condition of housing include the following variables.

1.1.1. Housing inventory (number of residential units): each residential unit is built for the residence of one household; therefore, the comparison of the number of households with the number of residential units shows the lack of housing (Ziari et al., 2010, 88) and (Ronald, 2011,429).

1.1.2. Housing ownership (the way of occupying residential units): the indicator of the way of occupying residential units, in terms of ownership or rental, is one of the basic indicators in recognizing the housing sector from economic and social dimensions (Ziari et al., 2010, 104).

1.1.3. The rate (volume) of new housing construction: it is possible to measure the efficiency of housing planning by comparing the volume of new construction with the inventory and housing shortage (Gros, 2007, 8).

1.1.4. The house rent and price: residential rent indicator, like house price, has a direct relationship with household income. But what should the housing price be? In fact, the real payable income of the household should be compared with the real price in any period (Gros, 2007, 3). Of course, the amount of supply effective in determining prices (Fraser & Others, 2008,3).

1.1.5. The rate of housing price growth in a long-term perspective: knowing the housing price at a specific point in time may not be able to show the success rate of housing planning policies. Therefore, comparing prices over a long period, calculating their growth rate can be very useful (Gros, 2007,15).

1.1.6. The average infrastructure of residential units: the purchasing power of consumers and, of course, the policies of the government are very effective on the average residential infrastructure, and in fact, the housing market is the most important factor in the small construction of residential units (Taheri & Safari, 2016,17).

1.1.7. The power of housing purchase facilities: The retail sector and housing purchase facilities, which affect the purchasing power of applicants, are the main determinants of housing

prices (Gok & Keceli, 2015, 113; Zhao & Michael, 2016,19).

1.2. The housing policies in the first to sixth development plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran

In this part, the policies of the land and housing sector in first to sixth development plans have been examined.

1.2.1. The first economic, social, and cultural development plan of Iran (1989-1994)

Following the recession prevailing in the housing sector and carrying out reconstruction after the war, this plan adopted a set of policies related to strengthening the supply side of housing (Pourmohammadi et al., 2012, 39). Policies aimed at increasing the total surface of residential infrastructure, decentralization and preventing the growth of large cities, improving the quality of urban development and optimal use of building materials and energy, handing over prepared government land, reducing the available housing per capita, and the average infrastructure less proportionate with local per capita (law of the first development plan of the country, 1989, 4-5). Also, the creation of new cities to attract the overflow of the population of big cities, increasing the price of land, housing, and rent at a rate lower than the rate of inflation, reducing land ownership, and gradually reducing direct intervention in the land market, granting special facilities for builders of rental housing and cooperatives, supporting the mass builders of housing, the maximum use of land in the form of urban and construction densities, the use of unproductive and suitable land for residential use, the creation of housing complexes for workers, employees, etc. were among their goals (Pourmohammadi et al., 2012, 40).

1.2.2. The second economic, social, and cultural development plan of Iran (1995-1999)

In the second development plan, policies such as providing cheap and prepared land for the construction of low-income housing and relying on the support of mass builders were put on the agenda, which was compiled with its own goals

such as renovating worn-out textures and gathering parts in urban areas of the country and helping vulnerable groups and those affected by natural disasters, etc. (Azizi, 2004, 39). This plan aims to create a suitable model of economical housing in cities, to build organizational houses in worn-out textures by the private sector, guide and support the private sector and consumers to invest in the existing urban texture, and clean up the surroundings of historical works and to revitalize these textures. The principle emphasized by this plan was based on the clean slogan, namely savings, mass construction, and small construction. The provision of housing by the private sector also followed the three modes of free housing, supported housing, and social housing in this plan (law of the second development plan of the country, 1995, 91-101). Free housing was built beyond the standards of the consumption pattern and for social groups with medium and high income without government support, in which case the price was determined based on supply and demand and market balance. Supported housing, however, was built according to the standards of the consumption pattern and supported by the government in the form of subsidized payments for water, electricity, gas, infrastructure fees, and cheap loans. This is while the social housing is built, with the intervention and participation of the government, lower than the standards of the consumption pattern and minimally and for young couples, low-income groups, and homeless households. Its production capital was provided with the participation of the government, banks (especially Bank Maskan), the social security organization, and the sale of shares to the beneficiaries (Pourmohammadi et al., 2012,40).

1.2.3. The third economic, social, and cultural development plan of Iran (2000-2004)

The third development plan supports small residential unit manufacturers with an emphasis on complex and mass construction, gradual payment of bank facilities for phased construction of housing for low-income groups, creation of a secondary market, and the

possibility of buying and selling housing sector shares in the stock market and the amendment of the rental housing law to gradually reduce government intervention and increase the presence of the private sector and local institutions were intended (Law of the third development plan of the country, 2000, 101-105). The targeting of this plan included reducing the density of households in residential units, reducing the average surface of the infrastructure of residential units, and reducing the depreciation of residential units (increasing the life of the building) (Pourmohammadi et al., 2012,41).

1.2.4. The fourth economic, social, and cultural development plan of Iran (2005-2009).

This plan is more about organizing worn-out textures, securing and strengthening buildings and cities to reduce human and economic losses caused by unforeseen events, and of course, providing housing for low-income groups in the form of Mehr housing (policy of housing construction with direct intervention government). The policies adopted in this plan include supporting the creation and benefiting from the participation of organizations, associations, and charitable groups that build housing for vulnerable groups, encouraging and persuading foreign investment in the housing sector, granting housing facility fee subsidies to builders of low-cost and rental residential units, upgrading the rural housing improvement indicator to double the performance of this indicator in the third plan, stepped repayment of bank loan installments in the housing sector, removing the price of land from the cost of housing (free land policy) (Fourth development plan of the country, 2004, 51-52). The comprehensive housing plan was also prepared and approved during this period, considered the most important measure regarding housing in Iran. This plan aims to provide safe and healthy housing within the financial capacity of the family, without discrimination and, improve the quality of life for everyone, improve the living conditions of all communities, preserve Islamic and national culture and identity, improve the

management of the housing sector, and create coordination between housing plans and the urban and rural development plans and the reduction of regional disparities in having suitable housing (law of the fourth development plan of the country, 2004, 51-52).

1.2.5. The fifth economic, social, and cultural development plan of Iran (2011-2015)

The non-completion of a significant part of the fourth development plan in the housing sector (especially Mehr housing) and its transfer to the next development plan affected the policies of the fifth plan, which include supporting investment in the production of housing, ease of access to a suitable house for the homeless, especially low-income groups, providing suitable land and reducing or eliminating the cost of land from the cost of housing, providing low-cost banking facilities, applying for tax exemptions, emphasizing and promoting the model of Islamic-Iranian architecture and urban planning, improving the quality and quantity of manufactured housing in the country, improving and modernizing the worn-out urban textures and informal settlements, retrofitting of existing houses, and compiling of national construction rules and regulations (fifth development plan of the country, 2010, 238-244).

1.2.6. The sixth economic, social, and cultural development plan of Iran (2017-2021)

Among the new goals that have been emphasized in this plan are the control of horizontal development and the creation and support of endogenous development in cities and even villages, as well as neighborhood-based development, special attention to the environment, control of the immigrant population, and proper organization of population overflow of Metropolises. The most important goals of this plan are regional balance, rural development and empowerment of vulnerable groups, revitalization, improvement, renovation, retrofitting, and regeneration of neighborhoods including inefficient and historical textures, informal and marginal urban settlements, improving access to services and improving infrastructure with a neighborhood-oriented approach, improvement and renovation

and provision of housing for low-income urban strata, provision of financial resources and cheap facilities and required land, finishing of incomplete Mehr housing projects and provision of the remaining obligations of Bank Maskan. In general, the following table is considered the theoretical framework of the research

Table 1: The theoretical framework (Quantitative Approach)

Approach	Component	Indicator
Quantitative	House price	Average housing price growth in each period (5-year average growth) The housing price growth rate between the beginning and the end of the period (to multiply)
	Rental price	Average annual rent growth in each period
	Housing purchase facility	The power of the housing purchase facility in terms of covering the cost of buying an apartment
	Residential construction status	The total volume of residential construction in each period The number of building permits issued Number of residential units The average infrastructure of residential units
	Ownership	How to occupy the land

Table 2: The theoretical framework (Qualitative Approach)

Approach	Category	Concept
Qualitative	Types of housing policies	Support for the supply, support for the demand
	How to provide financial resources	Government budget, private sector, people's empowerment
	Built housing pattern	Rental, cooperative, organizational, supportive, social, small construction

2. Methodology

A comparative study with a mixed approach was used in the present study. Therefore, the analysis included two qualitative and quantitative parts. The research process was also designed according to the model proposed by Dr. Gharamaleki (Gharamaleki, 2007, 18) for comparative studies and taking into account other references (Ghafari, 2010,3) and, of course, the topic and purposes of this research. In this way, in the first step, the problem and the scope (purpose) of the research were determined, and then in the second step, in a three-step process, the research samples were selected and verified. This process was so that in the first step, primary samples (the first to sixth five-year development plans of the country) were

and provision of required financial resources without the obligation of construction of new units (sixth development plan, 2015, 15).

1.3. The theoretical framework

selected. Then, in the second step, to ensure the homogeneity of the primary samples, the unit of analysis and the comparison scale were determined for all of them based on the research variables. This way, the unit of analysis for qualitative concepts was determined, and for quantitative variables, the five-year average percentage was determined. The comparison scale for all quantitative and qualitative variables was national level. In the third step, in order to ensure the same structure of the primary samples, their adaptability and equivalence were checked. Therefore, considering that the criterion of adaptability is the presence of at least one point of contact in one of the epistemic aspects between the samples (Gharamaleki, 2016,18), all the

samples were written under the epistemic system of Islam; therefore, they have high adaptability. Regarding the issue of equivalence, all samples were prepared in the same context and cultural background (Iran), and the units of analysis were similar for all of them, even in different historical periods (from the beginning of the revolution until now), and had the same meaning. In this way, the primary samples were considered equivalent, and all of them were introduced as final samples. Then, the adaptability approach was determined in the continuation of the research process and in the third step. In this way, the type of adaptability was determined as case-oriented, and the type of analysis was comparative and a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. Then the research design, data collection, and variable analysis methods were determined. Therefore, considering that quantitative and qualitative data are integrated, the convergent research design was chosen. In order to collect data, non-reactive measures and documentary methods were used. For the purpose of analysis,

the concepts extracted from the mentioned texts (housing policies in the country's development plans) were coded, categorized, and organized under categories and subcategories. Then, these categories and subcategories were qualitatively compared over five-year periods. In the next step, a comparative study was made between quantitative housing data by the same periods (five-year periods). Finally, using the TOPSIS model, these plans were ranked based on efficiency.

3. Results

In this section, the content related to land and housing in all six plans was developed, studied, and summarized. Then the concepts extracted from them were coded and categorized under categories and subcategories, respectively. Then, all six plans were qualitatively compared with each other based on these categories and subcategories. The following tables show these comparisons.

Table 3: Comparison of housing policies in Iran's first to sixth development plans based on the extracted categories

sample	Types of housing policies	provide financial resources	Built housing model
First development plan	Support for the supply, government land provision, housing per capita reduction, land price increase lower than swelling, gradual reduction of direct government intervention, and support for mass construction housing	Less construction and bank loans to the housing sector, gradual reduction of direct government intervention in the housing market, loan for rental housing builders, payment of housing subsidies (cheap materials)	Less average infrastructure, denser construction, cooperative housing, rental housing, low-class housing, mass construction housing
Second development plan	Support for the supply, support for the demand, paak policy, support for mass construction (economic housing), land provision by government	loan to personal investors and applicants, promoting savings policy, paying subsidies for utilities expenses and paying low-cost loans for supported housing, and providing financial resources through direct government intervention (participation of the government, banks, social security organization and stock sales).	Small construction, organizational houses, personal housing (proprietary), supported housing (proprietary, rental), social housing (affordable housing, rental or rental subject to ownership)
Third development plan	Phased construction of social housing, gradual reduction of government intervention in rental housing, support for supply (mass construction)	Gradual payment of bank facilities for social housing, creation of a secondary market and buying and selling of housing sector shares in the stock market, support for the personal sector and	Mass construction, small construction (smaller units)

				local institutions, applying for tax exemptions		
Fourth development plan	Support for the supply (the benefactors of housing builders, land provision by government (free land policy), direct intervention of the government in the construction of Mehr housing, support for mass construction, preparation of a comprehensive housing plan			Paying loans for applicants of Mehr housing, supporting charitable housing construction groups, paying subsidies and facilities to builders of affordable and rental housing, providing financial resources through direct government intervention in the construction of Mehr housing, and encouraging foreign investment.		mass construction (Mehr housing), affordable housing, rental housing
Fifth development plan	Support for the supply, land provision by government			Providing low-cost banking facilities, applying for tax exemptions, increasing investment capacity in the manufacturing		Economical housing (affordable), mass construction, Mehr housing
Sixth development plan	land provision by government emphasis to provid housing for low-income groups in small cities			Financial resources and cheap facilities for individuals, housing financing by the stock exchange organization, empowering vulnerable groups		Completing Mehr housing, dealing with suburbia

Table 4: Comparison of housing policies in Iran's first to sixth development plans based on the subcategories

Sample	Govt. Focus	Govt. Intervention	Land by Govt.	Loan to	Govt. fiscal stimulus	supported housing pattern	Provide Low-income housing
First Dev. plan	Supply	Indirect	Yes	To rental housing	Housing subsidy	Cooperative, rental, mass construction	Cooperative and rental housing
Second Dev. plan	Supply and demand	Indirect	Yes	To personals, To applicants, And to the manufacturers	housing subsidy, Loan, Selling stocks	Organizational, supportive, social, mass construction and rental	Organizational house, supportive and social housing
Third Dev. plan	Supply	Indirect	No	To social housing, To rental housing	Bonds, Stock , Tax exemption	Social housing, mass construction, rental housing	Provision of gradual facilities and the gradual construction of housing
Fourth Dev. plan	Supply	Direct	Yes	To the Mehr housing, To affordable and to rental housing	Housing subsidy, Direct supply, foreign investment	Social housing, mass construction housing, rental housing	Benefactors in the field of housing construction, free land, and direct construction of Mehr housing
Fifth Dev. Plan	Supply	Direct	Yes	To economic housing	Tax exemption	Economic housing, mass construction	Mehr housing

Sixth Dev. plan	Supply and demand	Indirect	Yes	To the applicants	Stock org., investment	Economic housing, Renovation of urban decay	Mehr housing By government financial stimulus
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Considering that the final purpose of the comparative studies is to find similarities and differences between samples, therefore, this is shown in the table below.

Table 5: similarities and differences between samples

Similarities	Differences
1. Supporting supply (production) in all six plans	1. Support for the demand only in the second and sixth plans
2. Generally indirect intervention of the government in the provision of housing (not the fourth plan)	2. Direct intervention of the government in the fourth and fifth plans
3. Pay special attention to housing mass construction in all six plans	3. Lack of providing land by the government only in third plan
4. Pay attention to providing housing for low-income groups in all plans	4. Special attention to the private sector only in the second plan
5. emphasis to the housing downsizing in all plans (especially from the second plan onwards)	5. Lack of special attention to social housing only in the first plan
6. emphasis to the land provision by government in most plans (except the third plan)	6. Granting housing subsidies only in the first, second, and fourth plans
	7. Lack of serious attention to rental housing in the fifth and sixth plans
	8. Entering the stock market in the housing sector only in the third and sixth plans
	9. The government's use of tax exemptions only in third and fifth plans
	10. Pay attention to organizational and cooperative constructions only in the first and second plans
	11. Trying to attract foreign investors only in the fourth plan
	12. emphasis to gradual construction of social housing in the third plan

Looking carefully at the table 5, it is clear that the Differences were more than the Similarities. The existence of all these differences between the six development plans shows frequent changes in housing policies by different governments. however, the existence of some similarities is also due to the fixed policies and Paradigm of the

government regarding housing provision. Considering that the main purpose of the research was to measure the effect of these variable policies on the efficiency of each plan. Therefore, to achieve this purpose, a comparative study was made between quantitative housing indicators separately for each five-year period.

Table 6: Comparison of housing quantitative indicators for five-year periods (the central bank of Iran, 2016)

Devt. plan	Average growth of housing prices (%)	The rate of rising housing prices from the beginning to the end of the period	The average growth of the annual rental price per period (%)	Power of loan to buy an apartments (m2)
First	9	1/9	27	29
Second	25/2	1/5	20	26
Third	26/5	3/2	24	16
Fourth	34	3	27	18
Fifth	24/1	6/2	13/3	20
Sixth	35/7	7/5	19/9	33

Table 7: Comparison of housing quantitative indicators for five-year periods (the statistical center of Iran, 2016)

Devt. plan	Construction permissions	Total residential units	Total gross floor area (m2)	Average infrastructure (m2)	average of households owns a house (%)	average of households rent a house (%)
First	578235	785674	129568424	145	76	13/6
Second	680447	984051	158457906	129/4	74/2	16/3

Third	696283	1532515	218494305	120/6	71/3	19/1
Fourth	1003767	2799951	410974109	123/2	66/2	24/6
Fifth	883674	2972591	496452717	135	63/4	26/4
Sixth	707966	1922689	362240275	156/8	64/5	26

According to the above data and using the TOPSIS model, the country's first to sixth five-year development plans were ranked in terms of efficiency in housing planning. First, a 6*10 decision matrix (6 samples and ten indicators) was formed. Then this matrix was normalized (unscaled). In the next step, the entropy method weighted the normalized matrix. After that, the

positive and negative ideal solutions were determined, and the size of the distance of each sample from the positive and negative ideal was determined. Finally, the proximity of each sample to the positive and negative ideal solution was calculated, and the samples were ranked accordingly, which the table below shows.

Table 8: Calculation of proximity to the positive and negative ideal solution and ranking of samples

Rank	Result	Proximity coefficient
1	Fifth Development Plan	0/79
2	Fourth Development Plan	0/66
3	Third Development Plan	0/48
4	Second Development Plan	0/47
5	First Development Plan	0/45
6	Sixth Development Plan	0/38

4. Discussion

So far, many studies have examined and measured housing planning in the country. However, it is difficult to find research that has analyzed housing planning from within the country's five-year development plans. The most important and serious research, which is similar to this article in terms of subject, is the research of Dr.Pourmohammadi. During that, researchers examined the housing sector of the country's first to fifth development plans and stated the strengths and weaknesses of each. Also, to some extent, they have analyzed the success rate of adopted policies (Pourmohammadi et al., 2012). Another similar research was conducted by seyed abolhassan Riyazi. during which the housing policies in the first to third development plans were examined (Riyazi, 2002). But the important issue is that, firstly, according to the age of publication of these researches, there is no sixth development plan in any of them, and secondly, the housing policies in these articles have been

examined and analyzed separately, and no comprehensive analysis of the whole policies in development plans has been made. An analysis that, like this article, considers the efficiency of housing planning based on the outcome of policies and in a specific period. Considering that each of these plans has been prepared by different governments and according to relatively different views and philosophies, therefore, having a holistic view of all policies in each plan as a package of housing planning in a specific period can help to better understand the pattern of housing planning in the country and also predict the future housing situation.

5. Conclusion

According to the quantitative analysis of the statistical data of housing in specific periods (five years) and the ranking, two very important points could be obtained. First, the fifth development plan of the country has been the most efficient, and the sixth development plan has been the most ineffective concerning housing since the

revolution until now. Second, by looking closely at the ranking of development plans, it is clear that the more we have moved forward from 1989 to 2016, we have seen growth and an increase in the efficiency of housing planning. But the serious question is why the sixth development plan paid so little attention to the land and housing sector. The seriousness of this issue is determined when the sixth development plan is even lower than the first development plan that was prepared in the post-war and reconstruction conditions of the country.

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