



## Popular beliefs in sustainable rural development

Sahar Ghaffari<sup>1</sup>; Mehrdad Navabakhsh<sup>2\*</sup>, Faizullah Nowrozi<sup>3</sup>

1. Ph.D. student of sociology of rural social development, North Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

2. Member of the Faculty of Science and Research Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran.

3. Member of the Faculty of North Tehran Branch, Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran

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### Abstract:

The process of modernization enables the development of rural communities as the basis of popular beliefs when these communities are exposed to external forces. It is important to pay attention to beliefs as folk or superstitions. In this way, with a critical approach to classical modernization researches, the effect of popular beliefs in sustainable rural development is explained. In the ideas of the thinkers of the modernization school, a kind of consensus can be seen in the division of developed and underdeveloped societies, which originates from the viewpoints of "evolutionism" and "functionalism". In the theoretical framework of the current research, we benefit from Durkheim's theory of social division of labor - with a different view in contrast to the general principles of the modernization school in expressing the obstacles to development. The approach of this qualitative research, the method of gathering information in it, is documentary, as well as the technique used, content analysis. The studies conducted in the villages of South Khorasan province are about the meaningful relationship between popular beliefs and sustainable rural development. In general, it can be concluded that the division of societies in Durkheim's theory into mechanical and organic correlation shows the course of movement of societies and not necessarily the backwardness of primitive societies in the sense of an obstacle in the direction of reaching any type of development; As the approaches of the modernization version propose from the social point of view.

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**Keywords:** *Development, sustainable development, village, Durkheim's division of social labor, approaches to modernization.*

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### 1. Introduction

Popular beliefs, as a deep layer of culture, can speed up the process of sustainable development on the one hand, and can prevent the development process on the other hand.

Due to their intuitive nature, this group of opinions has always been disputed and has brought some positive and negative directions. Some of the beliefs have a local and ethnic aspect and are known in a certain geographical area, and some other such beliefs have an international aspect, for example, the number 13 being unlucky, which is common in most cultures and nations and in It has spread among people.

As David Hume believes; The tendency to superstitions can never be eliminated, because the paradoxical point here is that superstitions are an inseparable part of those human mechanisms without which a person cannot continue life.

It seems that these superstitious beliefs are rooted in our ancient literature;

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<sup>1</sup> Email: ghaffari.sahar@ymail.com

<sup>2</sup> Email: navabakhsh@srbiau.ac.ir (Corresponding Author)

<sup>3</sup> Email: f\_noroozi@iau-tnb.ac.ir

Sadegh Hedayat was the first Iranian who wrote a series of articles on folklore or folk culture based on precise scientific principles and in 1312 he published "Nirangistan" which was a collection of customs and folk beliefs of Iranians. "Happiness and Sadness hours" also mentioned.

In the book "Iranian Customs and Beliefs", Henry Mase cites examples that can reflect superstitious beliefs;

- ✓ *"... to ward off accidental consequences, if someone talks about an inauspicious subject (death, disease, noxious animals) to ward off evil, immediately add the phrase: it is an evil hour or an inauspicious time. (Mase: 101; 1357)*

With these descriptions, functionalists such as Radcliffe Brown and Malinowski believe that; Ethnic beliefs and customs are not remnants of the distant past, but are an integral part of contemporary living and flourishing cultures. (Hamilton: 56; 1387)

Apart from the superstition of beliefs in popular culture, we also see a kind of primitive perception of agricultural tools in rural culture, as an obstacle to the sustainable development of this culture.

Owner and farmer Lamton's book is one of the few books of Iranian agricultural history. He is the one who believes that agricultural methods in Iran are only elementary. Lamton's criterion in this book is more of a work tool than anything else. Of course, he sometimes speaks of Iranian agriculture with a tone of praise, but he rejects the general view of the book.

- ✓ *"Iran's agricultural methods are only elementary." (Lamton, 1345: 623)*
- ✓ *"The amount of land that a farmer can cultivate is limited by the use of primitive agricultural methods." (Ibid: 637)*
- ✓ *"In many places, the act of plowing is done by means of wooden stakes that are tied to the ox, the stake only scratches the ground and does not turn the furrow." (Ibid: 663)*
- ✓ *"Undoubtedly, Iranian owners and peasants did not need to change their plows, which, contrary to imagination, are very diverse, otherwise it would have been possible to plow deeply, both in terms of plowing tools and in terms of cow-farming power." (Ibid.)*

It seems that this difference of opinion is not only specific to our country; Farhadi defines the industrial agriculture of western societies as follows:

- "The all-round transformation of Western societies, which was accompanied by the industrial revolution and economic changes, first pushed the traditional European agriculture towards a type of modern or industrial agriculture, the most important technological aspect of which is the use of machine work and fossil energy instead of human and animal energy. And it is water and wind." (Farhadi: 252; 1380)*

Meanwhile, in 2009, the Lisbon Council published a statement that ushered the world into a new era. In this statement, it was announced that new economic value is not obtained by combining land, labor and capital, but skill and genius and combining it with traditional production factors can create new products and services with higher value (Herman, 2012). Based on the Lisbon Declaration, the Council of Europe was developing society with the aim of building a European Union based on a knowledge-based, competitive and dynamic economy in which human capital is at the center (Tudor, 2012)

In this way, the certainty of the existence of superstitions in the popular beliefs of the village people, which is an obstacle to the development of those areas, can be considered as the only way of sustainable development there by changing the attitude and hypothesis;

Due to their geographical location, villagers are closely connected with nature in rural areas, they are constantly forced to submit to natural elements, such as rain, heat, frost, snow and drought. The above factors are considered vital elements for agriculture. Therefore, it is possible that the residents of the

villages may find ideas, beliefs and thought patterns and philosophy of life about nature that are different from the residents of the cities who are far away from nature. (Chitambar, 1373: 106)

It can be said that in the rural society, phenomena such as: weather irregularities, drought, etc. are seen a lot, which are effective in the intellectual and social context of the rural people.

With these words, it seems that this question must be answered;

*Do popular beliefs help sustainable rural development or on the contrary can be considered as an obstacle?*

## **2. Research background**

The importance of popular beliefs in rural culture cannot be denied, but a debatable issue arises when this importance is placed next to sustainable rural development.

Theoretical and experimental studies have been conducted in the field of superstitions, superstitions and in general popular beliefs and the relationship that can have with development; Some of them are mentioned below due to their content and topic proximity to the current research. Reviewing and reviewing these studies can be useful in finding out about the progress of the problem in question.

Internal Studies:

Masoudi and a book in his research titled "Confrontation of rationality and superstition in the path of development - with emphasis on Qajar period Iran-"; One of the reasons for the underdevelopment of Iran during the Qajar period is the conflict between rationality and superstition in the society. In fact, the superstition was so rooted in the political and social life of Iran that both the collective culture and the political decisions of Iran were affected by it during the era of the Qajar kings, especially Nasir al-Din Shah, Muzaffar al-Din Shah and Muhammad Ali Shah. The application of wisdom, thought and science, to solve problems, they used all kinds of superstitions. This article investigates the effect of superstition as an anti-rational phenomenon on the underdevelopment of Iran in the mentioned period of time and seeks to answer this question by using qualitative methodology and analytical-descriptive method and by collecting library information. How did the superstitious culture cause the underdevelopment of Iran during the Qajar period?".

It was concluded from the mentioned research that; The superstitious culture led to intellectual tyranny and political tyranny as a result of the confrontation with "rationality" in the Qajar period, and the discourse situation resulting from this intellectual and practical confrontation led to the reproduction of a cycle in which superstition culture is on one side. and on the other side of it was political tyranny, in such a way that each produced, reproduced and strengthened the other in this cycle, and thus caused the underdevelopment of Iran during the Qajar era. (Masoodi; 2018)

- ✓ Rabiei in a research titled "Socio-economic development and its effect on people's perception of what superstitions are, a case study: the cities of Isfahan province"; He defined his main goal as studying the effect of socio-economic development on changing people's perceptions of what superstitions are. The statistical population of his study consisted of all the citizens of Isfahan province over 15 years of age and the sample size was 6192 people. The samples were selected by quota sampling method and based on three variables of age, gender and residential area in 25 cities and urban areas of Isfahan province. Questionnaire and open questions were completed through face-to-face interviews.

The results showed that for different levels of development, there are serious differences in people's perception of what superstitions are, and their main difference was in the obtained proportions of religious beliefs. Residents of cities with a higher socio-economic development level than other cities rethink and criticize the religious beliefs and religious rituals of their city of residence. (Rabiei; 2014)

- ✓ Sefidgar in "Cultural Development in the Folk Beliefs of the People of Azerbaijan"; He considers folk beliefs as a double-edged sword that can speed up the development process in all its aspects on the one hand, and on the other hand can act as a brake and stop the development process. In this article, the folk beliefs of the people of Azerbaijan have been investigated in different fields and by giving examples, they have been divided into two groups: generative or developable beliefs and inhibiting or anti-developmental beliefs.

He concluded that; The policies and plans of men of politics, economy and culture in Azerbaijan are made in many cases without knowing the cultural background of the society. With the explanation that; Knowing the beliefs and customs of a society in transition can undoubtedly help us to achieve cultural development, in such a way that if popular culture shows resistance to development, no development will be realized. But when people's culture aligns with development elements, it will gradually reject and destroy those beliefs and traditions that stand against the development process. According to Sefidgar, along with all micro and macro planning and policies at different city, provincial, regional and national levels, the cultural mindset of the general public, especially their popular beliefs, should be identified and analyzed. (Safidgar; 1386)

Foreign studies:

- ✓ Rogers is one of the sociologists in favor of development and modernization in rural communities. By doing some experimental research on fatalism in the peasant society, he believes that the peasants consider fate as the absolute power in determining their misfortunes and successes. Since the peasants believe that it is difficult to fight with nature in order to raise the standard of living, therefore, whenever the peasant achieves success in life for himself and his neighbor, he considers it to be due to the intervention of supernatural forces. He believes that the peasants have views on controlling future events such as apathy, suspicion, submission, tolerance, softness and avoidance, and finally concludes that such beliefs among the villagers cause them to tend to superstitions. (Rogers; quoted by Foroughi and others; 2018)
- ✓ Ronald Inglehart also acknowledges that in agricultural and rural societies, the livelihood of a large part of the people was through agriculture and mainly depended on things of celestial origin, such as the sun and rain. One would pray for good weather, freedom from illness or insect damage. But in industrialized societies, production was increasingly pushed into the human-made environment. One did not expect Baranza clouds and sunrise or change of seasons. He did not pray for a good product, but depended on machines designed by man. With the discovery of microbes and antibiotics, even diseases were no longer considered divine miracles and were under human control. (Inglehart)
- ✓ In his book, Douglas also talks about ritualism and its relationship with social conditions. Ritualism means the tendency to perform rituals with specific and defined forms in such a way that the main importance of a ritual is assumed to be its precise performance. The point here is that according to Douglas, ritualism in religion is related to certain social conditions and situations;

*"When a social group holds its members firmly in social constraints, religion is ritualistic, and when these constraints loosen, ritualism declines." (Douglas 1970:13-14)*

### **The theoretical approaches of the modernization school**

In the ideas of the thinkers of the modernization school, a kind of agreement and harmony can be seen in the division of developed and developing or underdeveloped societies. which originates from the views of "evolutionism" and "functionalism".

Among the evolutionary theorists who have used different interpretations to define the characteristics of ancient and modern societies; including: "Divine, Metaphysical and Positivist Triple Stages -August Kent-", "Military and Industrial Societies -Spencer-" and "Gemainshaft and Gezelshaft -Tunis-";

Durkheim also mentions two types of mechanical and organic correlation in the theory of social division of labor. At the same time, it is possible to have another approach to this theory, in the direction of supporting traditional societies.

Briefly, we will refer to the theoretical views of the renovation school in terms of content proximity to the relationship between the two variables of the current research - popular beliefs and sustainable rural development.

***Functionalism theory of Talcott Parsons:***

Parsons, in the area of modernization and transformation of societies, raises the issue of model variables and categorizes societies based on it, and believes that societies become more complex and differentiated over time along with their development, in which Relationships are more formal and impersonal. (Nawabakhsh; 1400: 64)

According to him, human society is similar to a biological organ. And it can be studied in the same way The first reason is that different parts of biological organs can be compared with different institutions that make up a society; As the constituent parts of a living organ are mutually related and dependent on each other, the institutions of a society are also closely related to each other. Parsons used the concept of "system" to denote the balanced correspondence between institutions.

The second reason is that, in the same way that every biological organ performs a special task to benefit the whole organ, in the same way, every institution also has a special task for the stability and growth of society. Proposing the concept of "functional necessity", Parsons believes that any society, if it wants to survive, must perform four important special tasks:

*A. Matching with the environment, B. Achieving the goal, C. integrity, d. Preserving value patterns from one generation to another.*

Thirdly, the analogy of society with the body of a living organism led Parsons to propose the concept of "self-centered balance". A living organ is always in a balanced and uniform state. If there is a change in one of the components, the other components will also change in harmony with that component in order to maintain balance and reduce tension.

Finally, Parsons proposes the concept of "model variables" for traditional and modern societies. Model variables are important social relations that are located in the context of the cultural system - that is, the most sublime and important system in Parsons' theoretical framework - and have the characteristic of durability and repeatability. According to Parsons, there are five categories of model variables as follows:

1. Personal relationships are contrasted with impersonal relationships. In traditional societies, social relations have an ego part - individual, emotional and face-to-face.
2. Particularism relations against generalism relations. In traditional societies, people tend to associate with members of their own social circle.
3. Collectivist orientation against selfishness or pursuit of personal interests. In traditional societies, the direction of loyalty is often toward the collective. This emphasis on collectivism is a means to prevent social instability caused by innovation, initiative and individual creativity.
4. Attribution versus acquisition.
5. Dedicated roles versus a mix of roles. In traditional societies, roles are often mixed. (Y. Su; 2014: 28-30)

***Neil Smelser's structural differentiation theory:***

Among the sociological approaches to modernization, Smelser's theory (1964) can also be mentioned. Smelser has emphasized on the expansion of structural separation and division of social work based on specialization in institutions and activities of individuals and democracy, that reliance on knowledge

instead of tradition and tendency to use more technology and development of cities and commercialism are cultural requirements. is. (Nawabakhsh; 1400: 61)

According to Smelser, modernization generally includes structural differentiation; Because in this process, a complex structure that performs multiple functions is divided into several specialized structures, each of which is responsible for performing a specific task. This new set consisting of specialized structures performs the same tasks as the original structure, with the difference that the functions are performed in a much more efficient way than in the past.

### **3.Theoretical Framework**

In the theoretical framework of the current research, we benefit from Durkheim's theory of social division of labor - with a different view and in opposition to the general principles of the modernization school in expressing the obstacles to development.

Durkheim distinguishes two forms of correlation: spontaneous or mechanical correlation, and organ or organic correlation. (Aron: 361; 1387)

Mechanical correlation, according to Durkheim himself, is correlation by similarity. When this form of solidarity dominates the society, the members of the society are not much different from each other. Those who are members of a single community have the same feelings and similarities; Because they depend on the same values and have a common concept of sanctity. In primitive societies, everyone is what everyone else is; Common feelings, or collective feelings, are the dominant emotional factor in the conscience of each member of the society in terms of number and degree of intensity. (Ibid: 362)

While in the so-called organ or organic solidarity, people are no longer the same, but different, and the need to establish social consensus is partly the result of this distinction. (ibid.)

- ✓ In this way, Durkheim believes; Basically, we can have two types of society: } Traditional society: composed of a set of units such as: tribes, villages, clans, etc., these units are very similar to each other; In terms of the way of thinking, living and ideas. Also, in each of them, there is a similar division of labor and a kind of morality that comes from the collective conscience.
- ✓ Modern society: Durkheim believed that the reason for the movement of societies towards organic solidarity was the increase in population. In this case, society, like a natural organism, must either adapt or perish.

Finally, we will witness a change in social cohesion, in which the division of labor will be out of the normal state and become specialized. In other words, the separation of each part means that the work in other parts will be shaken.

In terms of the type of emphasis on the obstacles to the development of the modernization school, there are three categories: It is divided into economic, sociological and psychological-social. With these descriptions, all theorists of this school, influenced by the ideas of Durkheim and other classical evolutionists, considered the obstacles to development as internal and considered three major cultural characteristics for developing societies:

1. Dominance of traditionalism: tradition in itself has a dominant value, people worship them and constantly look to the past and are unable to change and evolve.
2. Dominance of kinship relations: that kinship relations dominate all levels of society. The bases are all assigned.
3. People in traditional society; They are appreciative, sentimental and superstitious.

*“With all these descriptions, in Durkheim's opinion, it is possible that in some societies with very advanced forms of economic division of labor, a kind of sectoral or tribal construction will also remain to some extent.*

*"It is quite possible for some form of division of labor, especially economic division of labor, to exist in a highly advanced society, while sectoral organization is still strongly expressed. This seems to be the case in England. Great industry and commerce in They have developed on a large scale in England as much as in continental Europe, however, due to the existence of local autonomies and the authority of tradition, the beehive-like sectorial system still stands out in England.*

*The reason is that, in fact, the division of labor, which is a derivative and secondary manifestation, as we have seen, flows at the level of social life (and not in its depth); And this is especially true of the division of economic labor. This division of labor is superficial. Yes, anything superficial, in whatever organ it is, is more sensitive to the influence of external causes because of its superficial position, while the internal causes to which it depends have not yet changed."* (On the Division of Social Labor, 7th ed., pp. 266-276; quoted by Aron: 1387; 363 and 364)

Furthermore; In the division of social work, Durkheim also talks about the reduction of the individual to the level of a machine, which can be a threat to morality.

*"... he performs the same certain movements every day with monotonous regularity without having any interest in them or understanding their meaning. This is no longer a living cell of a body that moves in contact with adjacent cells... If the goal is the morality of society, then again, such a thing cannot be allowed because the deterioration of the individual is not only a threat to economic roles, but also to all It threatens social roles at any time."* (Durkheim: 328)

**Research hypotheses**

The main hypothesis:

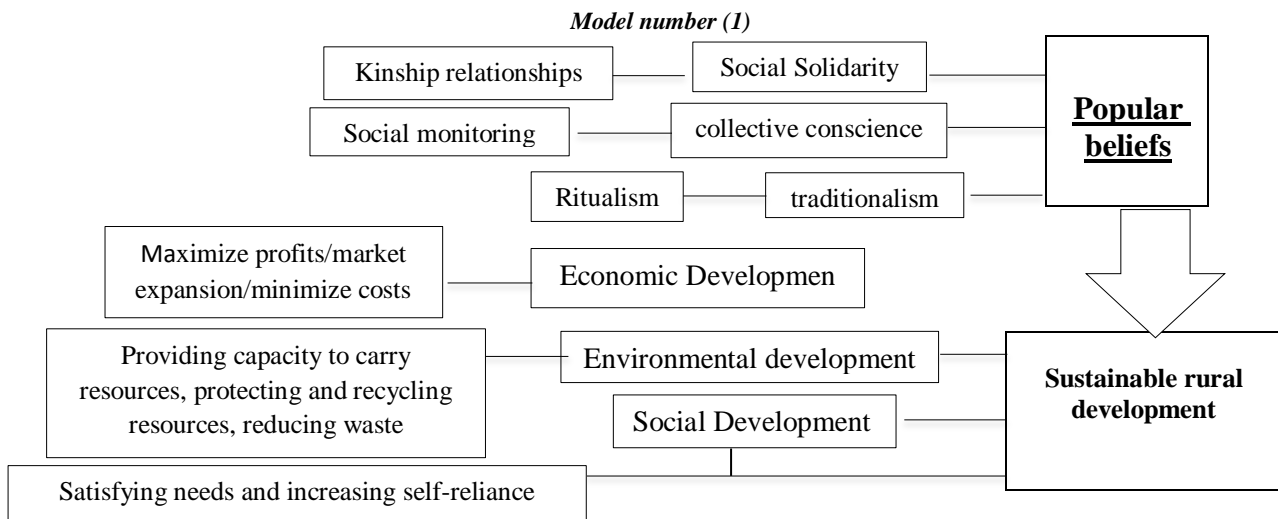
There is a significant relationship between popular beliefs and sustainable rural development.

Sub-hypotheses:

1. There is a significant relationship between kinship relations and sustainable rural development.
2. There is a significant relationship between the level of social supervision and sustainable rural development.
3. There is a significant relationship between ritualism and sustainable rural development.
4. There is a significant relationship between popular beliefs and economic development.
5. There is a significant relationship between popular beliefs and social development.
6. There is a significant relationship between popular beliefs and environmental development.

**Theoretical model**

According to Durkheim's theory of social division of labor, in this part, the theoretical model of the study is drawn.



In this research, we use Durkheim's theory of social division of labor, in order to explain the impact of popular beliefs on sustainable rural development; Whether popular beliefs in rural societies - mechanical societies based on Durkheim's theory - have a positive effect on rural development and contribute to its sustainability, or according to what the modernization school and theorists such as; Lerner, Rogers, Walt Whitman, Rostow, Smelser and other thinkers in this field believe that there is an obstacle on its way and deny the possibility of sustainable development.

According to Durkheim's theory; In mechanical societies, we see high social solidarity, and in rural societies, this solidarity can be examined in the form of kinship relations. In Durkheim's theory, collective conscience or the so-called punitive rights express a high level of social control. In the sense that a crime is nothing but an act that is forbidden by the collective conscience. According to Durkheim, the collective conscience and ritualism - customs and traditions - which the modernization school refers to as an obstacle to development, are considered to be the cause of greater social solidarity.

*"People become closer to each other in the turmoil caused by holidays and social celebrations, they find a kind of empathy with each other." (Fundamental images of religious life, pp. 296-295; quoted by Aron: 1387: 401)*

In this way, according to Durkheim's theory, sustainable development indicators; is checked;

According to Durkheim, we can also witness economic development in primitive societies.

*"Thus, it is enough that a certain situation arouses the need for material well-being in the eyes of a nation, so that the division of economic labor develops in that nation without the social structure changing significantly. (About the division of social work, 7th edition, pp. 266-276; quoted from the same: 363)"*

And also regarding social development and the feeling of satisfaction of the members of society, Durkheim also believes that there is a requirement that the feeling of social satisfaction in primitive and mechanical societies is less than organic or advanced societies.

*"It can be said that turning to more specialization is not to obtain new pleasures... In short, it cannot be accepted that progress is only the result of boredom". (Durkheim: 225-223)*

Durkheim rejects the explanation that Auguste Comte also considered and rejected, the explanation that considers boredom, or the search for happiness, as the basic factor of social development. Because Durkheim says there is no evidence that human beings They are happier in new societies than people in ancient societies.

*"The division of labor cannot be explained on the basis of boredom, nor on the basis of the search for happiness, nor on the basis of the increase of pleasures, nor on the basis of the desire (of individuals) to add to the productivity of collective work. "(Aron: 1387: 371)*

Meanwhile, the school of modernization considers exactly each of the indicators of popular beliefs such as: tradition, fatalism and kinship relations, which are given here based on Durkheim's theory, as an obstacle to achieving sustainable development.

#### **4. Methodology**

In the current research under the title "Popular beliefs in sustainable rural development"; A qualitative approach has been used. The method of gathering information, in this research, documents as well as a technique that has been used according to the objectives and nature of the data of this survey; It is a content analysis technique.



The unit of analysis in this research is the documentary films of the villages of South Khorasan province. The recording unit was also considered as the theme and the counting unit in the initial and experimental plan reviews, as the smallest semantic component in the language of the film; But due to the repetition of some themes in the plans and in order to avoid sarcasm and errors in the research, the plan was changed to a sequence - a collection of several scenes that have thematic or thematic unity.

In this way, in the approach of directional content analysis, based on Durkheim's theory of social division of labor, concepts have been categorized.

### **Statistical Society**

This research seeks to investigate the sustainable development in rural communities of Iran, but considering that the study of villages in all the provinces of the country is time-consuming and more importantly, it may reduce the accuracy of the survey, the villages of South Khorasan province The title of the statistical population of this research has been chosen.

The selection of this province as a statistical community is important and noteworthy due to the problems that were defined for it; Among them: drought, the insecurity of the eastern borders of the country, the low population density of the province, etc., which have been mentioned as the factors of the deprivation of this province. (Deputy of Employment and Entrepreneurship Development: 2016)

With this description, the investigation and analysis of the villages of South Khorasan province, according to the positive approach of Durkheim's theory of division of labor, can be challenging and should be considered.

Sampling volume:

34 parts of the documentary collection of the villages of South Khorasan province, which examines the economic situation, employment and agricultural products of that province, in 30 villages.

It should be noted that out of these 34 episodes, episodes 16, 17 and 24 repeat the villages of "Daddran", "Gol" and "Zirkoh". is. In addition, in two parts 33 and 34, the village of "Korund" is also discussed in the form of supplementary explanations.

The selection of this series is important because the production and direction of 34 episodes of the mentioned documentary was done by Mohammad Abdullahi, who was born in Birjand and is a native of this province.

Validity and reliability:

Face validity: In the present study, we tried to reach a kind of consensus regarding the validity of the classification by referring to the supervisors and advisors and consulting with them. Also, reliability in describing various aspects of reliability is evaluated according to Durkheim's theory of social division of labor as a theoretical framework.

### **Theoretical definitions**

Development:

Development in the word means gradual growth in the direction of becoming advanced and powerful. Development is also a qualitative concept that is opposed to growth and can be considered equivalent to increasing the quality of life. (Khakpur; 1387)

Development is not a one-dimensional flow, but a multi-dimensional flow in which the set of cultural, social, economic and political system is coordinated and upgraded according to the basic human needs, and hence, new capacities are created in the society, so that the whole It puts the society in a better and more favorable situation than its past. (Nawabakhsh; 1400: 22)

There are types of development that will be explained below:

- ✓ Social development: It is a different form of interaction that occurs in a particular society along with the development of civilization. Social development seeks to improve the social status of people in a society.
- ✓ Cultural development: Another precondition for socio-economic development can be a suitable cultural background and conditions. Basically, development is doomed to failure regardless of its cultural context.
- ✓ Economic development: the most important concern of economic development; It is related to the proportion between the population and the resources available for it.
- ✓ Political development: It is a process that provides the necessary ground for institutionalizing political organization and participation, which results in increasing the capability of a political system.
- ✓ Human development: Human development means expanding the selection process of people. In fact, the concept of human development means that humans can take advantage of the available facilities and capabilities in order to improve human and social goals and meet their physiological needs.
- ✓ Exogenous development: It is a type of development model that has foreign origin and orientation and emphasizes on imitating western developed countries.
- ✓ Endogenous development: It is a development that takes place using internal resources and is realized when the level of people's awareness, knowledge, facilities, capabilities and interest in the society has reached such a level that it can develop from within itself according to Culture, customs, social traditions and values and beliefs governing the society and by using all the available forces, try to achieve the desirable material and spiritual goals.
- ✓ Sustainable development: Since the early 1980s, the concepts and strategies of development changed and thinkers considered development as a process that was considered both the goal and the means of development in humans. (endogenous development or self-reliance). (ibid: 23-40)

#### Sustainable Development:

The concept of sustainable development was first officially introduced in 1987 in the Brantland report titled "Our Common Future" of the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. This commission defines sustainable development as: "providing the needs of the present generation without jeopardizing the capacities of the future generation to meet their needs" (Wackernagel & Yount, 2000:23).

Therefore, in evaluating the dimensions of sustainable development, the following points can be mentioned: In economic development, the ultimate goal is to ensure sustainable economic growth, maximize benefits, expand the market, and minimize costs. In environmental development, provision of carrying capacity of resources, protection and recycling of resources, reduction of waste and in social development, satisfaction of needs and increase of self-reliance have been defined (Rodrigue, 2009:2).

Before the introduction of the paradigm of sustainable rural development, rural development was mainly focused on the goals of social and economic development of rural areas (Ward & Brown, 2009). But changes in global production networks and increasing urbanization changed the character of rural areas (Chigbu, 2012: 212).

After the process of modernization in the decades after the Second World War, consumerist policies in relation to the field of agriculture intensified, and with the introduction of the paradigm of "development" versus "growth", at the beginning of the 1980s, these policies were Development experts and activists were challenged. This issue, especially in developing countries, caused the deterioration of social, political and environmental conditions. The failure of modernization, especially in the agricultural sector, caused a potential tendency to a new paradigm in development under the title of sustainable rural development (Borec & Turk, 2009:40-41).

On the other hand, sustainable rural development is significantly dependent on institutional dimensions. Rural communities may not be able to determine their own destiny, but governments can significantly help in empowering them in this field. (Herrmann, et. al., 1999; Matthews et. al. 1999)

The difference between belief and superstition:

A belief is an opinion that is true or false. Beliefs were the beliefs of the ancestors in all aspects of life from birth to death. Beliefs are sometimes superstitious and sometimes not. The truth and falsity and whether or not it is superstition depends on the type of vision and thinking of the believer and their personal beliefs. Equating belief with superstition is a kind of direction and intervention of personal attitude to beliefs. This is where the difference between belief and superstition becomes clear. Superstition is an Arabic word and its plural is superstitions. Its root is "kharf" which means "old age and stupidity". "Superstition" is the infinitive of this verb and in the idiom it refers to "false and laughable story" or "corrupt opinion and false opinion, idle talk and nonsense". (Quoted by Zulfiqari: 10; 2014)

Popular beliefs are a subset of folklore and in the field of anthropology. (Zulfiqari: 8; 1394)

C. S. Burn has placed folklore subjects in three main categories:

1. Beliefs and customs and habits related to the earth and the sky, the world of plants and events, the world of animals, the human world, human-created and man-made objects, the soul and the other world, superhuman beings, occultism, miracles and virtues, dawn Sorcery and medicine.
2. Customs related to political, economic and social institutions, rites and rituals of human life, jobs and professions, chronology and calendar and celebrations, games and leisure entertainment.
3. Stories (real and entertaining), songs and ballads, parables and fables. (Bayhaqi: 21; quoted from the same: 9) We can also see the definitions mentioned to describe popular beliefs in Durkheim's discussion of totems and totemism.

Common beliefs:

According to Durkheim, primitive society needs binding laws to maintain unity and solidarity among its members. But this binding must be institutionalized and lose its external binding status so that each member willingly submits to the will of the given group and passes his individual wishes. This is not possible only through the formulation of regulations. There should be a collective spirit and everyone should consider himself a part of it. This collective spirit and group conscience is possible through adopting a totem as a symbol of the group and then raising it to the status of divinity. Although this work is done consciously at the beginning, gradually the main issue is forgotten and the belief is formed that there is a being beyond the society that must follow the moral rules established by him. As a result of divinity, it is on the coin of the social group, not an entity distinct from it. (Durkheim: 292; 1383)

In this way, the problem of beliefs, which is one of the main pillars of every religion, is solved. But in addition to beliefs, in every religion we see many rituals and acts of worship. Durkheim solves this problem in such a way that society, after creating that initial belief, in order to always keep the individual towards the group and to tell him that he should consider himself an inseparable part of the group, creates rituals whose function is ultimately, Strengthening the spirit of solidarity among group members. (Ibid.: 309)

Robertson Smith raised the issue of totemism before Durkheim. He distanced himself from the individualistic and intellectual-rational tendencies of the previous theorists, and his comparative study of the Semitic tribes before the Bani Israel, led him to the conclusion that primitive religion was fundamentally a matter of social institutions and rituals. It is rituals. Not personal and metaphysical opinions.

Smith emphasized on the social character of religion and the importance of totemism and considered this primitive tribe's way of worship as the most basic form of religious life (Khorramshahi: 139; 1372).

As seen in the theories of Durkheim and Smith, what can be seen in primitive tribes, primitive groups, and primitive communities in general, is an effort to maintain the collective spirit and solidarity between members. Totemism and in general the formation of beliefs related to it also result from this effort to maintain unity between people; Because of the significant role that beliefs have in

### **Operational definitions**

Popular beliefs:

According to Durkheim's definition of primitive societies and mechanical solidarity in the theory of social division of labor, as well as what is given in the theoretical definition of popular beliefs; Rural communities in Iran can be considered as a platform where these beliefs are produced and reproduced.

Durkheim's first main thought in spontaneous solidarity is related to the concept of collective conscience; In societies with mechanical or spontaneous solidarity, the most important part of existence (person) is subject to social commands and prohibitions. (Aron; 2017: 365)

*"Collective conscience, by definition, is scattered throughout society, ... individuals pass away, but the collective conscience remains. ... The collective conscience is the spiritual type of society, the type that, just like the individual types, each In a different way, it has its own properties, conditions of existence, and its own way of development." (On the division of social work, p. 46; quoted by Aron; 2017: 385)*

Durkheim's definition of collective conscience can also be seen in the rural communities of Iran;

*"In the rural society of Iran, custom is considered an important and decisive factor in explaining issues and determining the boundaries of the system and solving problems, and rural people, without the need of written regulations, solve their problems in this way in many matters." (Wathoqi; 1387: 16)*

According to the above mentioned levels, we can consider rural communities as a platform to examine the (variable) level of sustainable rural development.

Sustainable rural development:

As mentioned in the theoretical definition of the concept of sustainable development; The dimensions of this concept can be considered in three economic, social and environmental categories. With this definition, the relationship between these three categories is also important.

According to Durkheim's theory of social division of labor, each aspect of economic, social and environmental development is addressed separately, and then their relationship in the formation of the concept of sustainable rural development is explained.

Economic Development:

In the theoretical definition, the ultimate goal of economic development is to ensure sustainable economic growth, maximize benefits, expand the market and minimize costs. While Durkheim believes; The appearance of the division of social work from a sociologist's point of view is different from its explanation from an economist's point of view.

In fact, the division of labor that Durkheim is trying to understand and define is different from the division of labor considered by economists. According to Durkheim's theory, profit maximization as a

result of industrial activities, which is considered by economists as a criterion for economic development in societies, cannot be decisive in a society with mechanical correlation. Since any type of division of labor in societies indicates the change of mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity of those societies; This formation of different jobs with the aim of more efficiency, informs about the distinction that people have divided the work with the knowledge of this distinction, and that knowledge cannot have formed spontaneously before the break of solidarity.

*"..., the multiplicity of industrial activities is a manifestation of social differentiation that Durkheim prioritizes. The origin of this type of social differentiation is the disintegration of fake solidarity and the foundation of a sector or tribe like society." (Aron; 2017: 364)*

Economists who see the social division of labor as a result of the benefit that individuals had to divide tasks among themselves in order to increase the efficiency of the society, are wrong. ... to say that people have divided the work among themselves in order to increase the social efficiency and have given each of them a specific job means that before the distinctions of people appear on the social scale, people are distinguished from each other and according to their social distinctions. Let's assume conscious. The truth is that the consciousness of individuality could not practically exist before the emergence of bodily solidarity and division of labor. The rational search for more efficiency is not able to explain social differentiation because the demand for more efficiency itself requires the existence of social distinctions." (Durkheim; 2017: 367)

However, according to Durkheim's theory of division of labor, "maximizing benefits" which was stated in the theoretical definition as the ultimate goal of economic development cannot be used as a criterion for examining economic development in rural communities.

Of course, we may also witness economic progress in some societies with mechanical correlation, which according to Durkheim's beliefs and statements, this economic progress is merely imitative and superficial, and because it does not have a deep root, it disappears very soon and the same correlation remains by itself.

*"It is quite possible that some kind of division of labor, especially the economic division of labor, is very advanced in a society, and yet the sectoral organization is still strongly expressed. ... The reason is that, in fact, the division of labor, which is a derivative and It is secondary, ... it flows on the surface of social life (and not in its depth), and this is especially true of the division of economic labor. This division of labor is superficial. ... The spirit of imitation, or contact with a more perfect civilization, For example, it can lead to such a result... There are intelligences in humans that are sufficient to achieve progress, but they do not have deep roots. Such intelligences (based on understanding and education) are therefore not transferable through inheritance". (About the division of social work, 7th edition, pp. 267-266; quoted by Aron; 1387: 364)*

In this way, in the operational definition of economic development, not necessarily the material benefit and increasing the social efficiency, but the multiplicity of jobs and the expansion of the market in the sense of communication with each other, the theoretical definition is also included, it is consistent with Durkheim's social division approach. The meaning of market expansion and communication with the outside world here; Establishing commercial relations between rural communities and urban communities.

Apart from these commercial relations of rural communities, the participation of the people of a rural community with each other, which Farhadi refers to as cooperation, is also a confirmation of economic development.

*"Sector or tribe, in Durkheim's dictionary, is a social group whose people have very close ties with each other. But sector or tribe is also a specific local group, relatively separate from other groups and having its own life." (Aron; 2017: 362)*

Despite the neglect of material benefit in the study of economic development of the village, material well-being has been considered as a sub-category of this dimension of development in the classification. Because it emphasizes the concept of life satisfaction - as a sub-category of social development which will be explained later - and not necessarily increasing social efficiency or utilitarianism to achieve profit and economic capital. And these dimensions - economic, social and environmental - are complementary in the formation of the category of sustainable rural development.

#### Social Development:

In the theoretical definition, social development means "satisfaction of needs and increasing self-reliance". This meaning of social development can also be seen in Durkheim's theory.

In this way, the satisfaction of needs, as a sub-category of social development in the classification, can be considered in harmony with the concept of feeling happy or satisfied with the conditions of life that Durkheim deals with.

*"He says, it is true that in new societies pleasures are more numerous and subtle, but this differentiation of pleasures is the result of social differentiation, not its cause." (Aron; 2007: 371)*

*"The division of labor cannot be explained on the basis of boredom, nor on the basis of the pursuit of happiness, nor on the basis of the increase of pleasures" (Ibid.: 372)*

Therefore, we can code the fulfillment of needs as well as the feeling of happiness in the confirmation of social development. Since the basis of this research is rural communities with mechanical correlation, therefore social development is also coded based on self-sufficiency or self-sufficiency of rural communities.

*"The concept of creating a sector or tribe should not be equated with the concept of solidarity through similarity. The meaning of this concept is relative individuality, or self-sufficiency of various elements. One can imagine a kind of general society that is spread over a wide area and nothing but The connection of similar parts or beams is not self-sufficient." (Durkheim; 1387: 364)*

#### Environmental development:

In environmental development, according to the theoretical definition of "providing the carrying capacity of resources, protecting and recycling resources, reducing waste," in providing the carrying capacity of resources as a sub-category; We refer to preserving and even expanding the existing resources in the investigated location.

In this way, the protection and recycling of resources means trying to use and maintain resources optimally, as well as reviving resources at risk of extinction.

Apart from that, the reduction of waste in order to prevent environmental pollution and harmful effects on natural resources is also important and is being investigated and analyzed. According to Dali, the production of waste materials should be within the capacity of the environment. If it is more than that, there is no place left for absorption for the next waste material that is produced, and as a result, the capacity is destroyed.

*Table number (1). Classification of sustainable rural development*

|   |   |   |                         |
|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| Sustainable rural development           |   |   | theme (unit of meaning) |
| Environmental development               | Social Development  | Economic Development                      | category                |
| Provision of resource carrying capacity | Feeling satisfied   | material well-being                       | subcategory             |
| Conservation of resources               | Self-sufficiency of various elements or relative individuals (self-sufficiency) | Multiplicity of jobs                      | Code1                   |
| resource recycling                      | Supplying needs   | Business relations with the outside world | Code2                   |
| waste reduction                         | A feeling of happiness and joy  | Participation and cooperation in work     | Code3                   |

| Sustainable rural development | Environmental development | Social Development | Economic Development | Village names | Row |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|-----|
| 86                            | 28                        | 42                 | 16                   | Anik          | 1   |
| 63                            | 19                        | 28                 | 16                   | Ark           | 2   |
| 73                            | 13                        | 41                 | 19                   | Bidesk        | 3   |
| 63                            | 14                        | 39                 | 10                   | Chahdashi     | 4   |
| 91                            | 16                        | 56                 | 19                   | Afin          | 5   |
| 80                            | 20                        | 35                 | 25                   | Behdan        | 6   |
| 71                            | 14                        | 33                 | 24                   | Baraz         | 7   |
| 95                            | 37                        | 30                 | 28                   | Akbariya      | 8   |
| 38                            | 11                        | 21                 | 6                    | Awaz          | 9   |
| 23                            | 3                         | 19                 | 9                    | Dadran        | 10  |
| 38                            | 9                         | 18                 | 11                   | Khansharaf    | 11  |
| 50                            | 20                        | 27                 | 3                    | Karimo        | 12  |
| 41                            | 14                        | 17                 | 10                   | Khoro         | 13  |
| 52                            | 18                        | 30                 | 4                    | Shawakand     | 14  |
| 49                            | 17                        | 25                 | 7                    | Gol           | 15  |
| 65                            | 14                        | 44                 | 7                    | Khor          | 16  |
| 40                            | 12                        | 25                 | 3                    | Chenesht      | 17  |
| 62                            | 8                         | 30                 | 24                   | Zol           | 18  |
| 74                            | 21                        | 35                 | 18                   | Nofirst       | 19  |
| 60                            | 13                        | 30                 | 17                   | Azmighan      | 20  |
| 29                            | 8                         | 19                 | 2                    | Darmian       | 21  |
| 37                            | 5                         | 24                 | 8                    | Esfad         | 22  |
| 83                            | 17                        | 39                 | 27                   | Esfahk        | 23  |
| 19                            | 13                        | 4                  | 2                    | Estend        | 24  |
| 33                            | 13                        | 14                 | 6                    | Forg          | 25  |
| 47                            | 5                         | 26                 | 16                   | Ghaniabad     | 26  |
| 59                            | 10                        | 37                 | 12                   | Khan          | 27  |
| 39                            | 12                        | 18                 | 9                    | Mohammadabad  | 28  |
| 31                            | 12                        | 13                 | 6                    | Koreh         | 29  |
| 100                           | 21                        | 48                 | 31                   | Korond        | 30  |

**4. Findings:**

Table number (2). Sustainable rural development and its dimensions in the villages of South Khorasan province

Social Development:

Studying and researching in villages, as the basis of popular beliefs, informs about the meaningful relationship between these beliefs and social development.

Afin village with a social development of 56, in terms of the spirit of unity and intimacy, self-sufficiency and meeting the needs of themselves and the residents, compared to other villages in South Khorasan province; It is placed in the highest order. It should be noted that this village is not the only area that has this development; Rather, we witness it in all 29 other villages of this province.

Investigations of the high level of social development in comparison with economic and environmental development - as considered categories of sustainable rural development - in 27 villages of "Anik, Ark, Bidsk, Chahdashi, Afin, Behdan" , Baraz, Awaz, Dadran, Khansharf, Karimo, Khor, Shwakand, Gol, Khor, Chenshet, Zol, Nofirst, Azmeighan, Madhim, Esfad, Esfahak, Forg, Ghaniabad, Khan, Mohammadabad, Koreh and Korond.

In this way, considering the theoretical and practical definitions of social development based on satisfaction of needs, increasing self-reliance and satisfaction with existing conditions; -According to Durkheim's theory,- in contrast to the theories of modernization, the people of these areas can be considered as having a sense of satisfaction despite living in villages and border areas despite existing problems.

#### Environmental development:

The persistence of people in the rural areas of South Khorasan province in maintaining and restoring the natural environment shows the significant relationship between popular beliefs and environmental development.

The efforts of the two villages of Akbariyeh and Stand, for the optimal use and maintenance of resources, as well as the restoration of resources at risk of extinction and the reduction of waste in order to prevent environmental pollution and destructive effects on natural resources, are also considered in relation to social and economic development.

While the village of Akbariyeh has achieved a higher level with its environmental development of 37 compared to other areas of this province, but this was not the reason for the indifference of the residents of other villages to this issue. Each of these communities, according to the conditions and facilities available in their region, make the most effort to maintain natural resources.

#### Economic Development:

The spirit of participation, trying to communicate with urban areas and other villages, as well as helping to create different and suitable jobs for the native area of rural communities, confirms the existence of a meaningful relationship between popular beliefs and economic development.

Finally, the village of Karand with its economic development of 31, in commercial relations with other rural communities and urban communities, as well as the number of jobs and the cooperation of residents with each other, ranks high compared to the rural areas of this province.

#### Sustainable rural development:

In general, in social, economic and environmental development as dimensions of sustainable rural development, among the 30 villages investigated in this province, no region has been seen that has been indifferent to each of the dimensions of this development. In other words; In the study and research carried out on a village with sustainable development; Zero, or even in any of its dimensions, which shows the absence of material well-being, feeling of satisfaction, and provision of resource carrying capacity, has not been seen.

In this way, the hypothesis of the meaningfulness of the relationship between popular beliefs - as the beliefs of the villagers - and sustainable rural development can be confirmed. And as a result, kinship relations, social supervision and ritualism - according to Durkheim's theory of social division of labor -



in the form of rural life and mechanical solidarity in connection with sustainable rural development; It refers to the significance of each of the following assumptions.

1. There is a significant relationship between kinship relations and sustainable rural development.
2. There is a significant relationship between the level of social supervision and sustainable rural development.
3. There is a significant relationship between ritualism and sustainable rural development.

Comparison of sustainable rural development of 30 rural communities in South Khorasan province shows that Karand region with sustainable rural development; 100, is placed at a higher level.

## 5. Conclusion

*Wallerstein*, in response to the question of how countries such as England, the United States, and Germany, which were once semi-peripheral, were able to reach the level of central countries; He considers the basic element of the progress and promotion of a semi-peripheral country to be in possession of a large market that can justify the use of advanced technology and that country can also produce goods for that market at lower costs than other existing producers.

With this description; The important point here is the possibility of development. Therefore, the primitiveness of communities such as rural communities, not only does not disturb this possibility, but it may create an opportunity to provide it.

Also, the investigation of the rural communities of South Khorasan Province as a base of popular beliefs indicates the efforts of each member of the community in order to meet the needs of each and every person in the village; And this importance may not even be seen in many urban communities.

*McClelland* is one of the thinkers who believes in the " *motive of progress*" in the field of classical modernization studies; He considers the desire and motivation for activity as the necessity of development, and this motivation for progress refers to the same self-sufficiency in rural communities. He believes; Each of us has some free time. If a person spends his free time on things such as resting, etc., this person has very little motivation to progress. If a person spends his free time thinking about social groups, friends, etc., this person also has a little motivation to progress. Only in such a case can it be said that a person has a strong motivation to progress, that he continuously thinks about how to improve the current situation.

In the current research, we have witnessed the self-reliance of each of the regions of the investigated villages. Also, while the traditional view of modernization in relation to the causes of problems in the third world, points to the existence of characteristics such as traditional culture, lack of motivation for progress and lack of productive investments in third world countries; *Baran* considers India in the 18th century to be one of the most developed countries in the world.

In general, it can be said that; The division of societies in Durkheim's theory into mechanical and organic correlation shows the progress of societies and not necessarily the backwardness of primitive societies in the sense of an obstacle in the direction of reaching any type of development; As the approaches of the modernization version from the social point of view, such as; *Huziltz*, put forward. According to *Hauslitz*, the obstacle to development is the traditional culture patterns in underdeveloped societies. The solution is to eliminate traditional patterns and replace them with modern cultural patterns.

In other words; Even developed societies according to the criteria proposed by the theorists of the modernization school - which is rooted in the opinions of evolutionists and classical functionalists - were not advanced from the very beginning, and they have gone through stages to reach development.

In this way, the formation of developed societies is necessary for these primitive societies with their own beliefs and traditions; Perhaps, with the destruction of these societies, we will witness the formation of various crises, such as environmental and epistemological crises, etc.

It should be kept in mind that even the distance between rural and urban communities cannot be considered as a proof of the existence or non-existence of sustainable rural development; As in the surveys, Stand village with a distance of 35 km from Zir Kouh city with 19 sustainable development, compared to Karand village with a distance of 36 km from Beshroi city, with the same distance, has the highest and lowest sustainable development. have dedicated themselves.

In this way, from Durkheim's theory of division of labor, we can reach the positive performance of primitive societies and here villages and their popular beliefs in sustainable rural development.

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