

Urban management of Iran after city council establishment (local governments)Shohre Bagherzadeh Kasiri^{1*}(Corresponding author), Ali Zeinali Azim²

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Abstract: Present study examines the urban management of Iran after city council establishment (local government). Due to lack of necessary coordination at different levels of performance, monitoring and implementation, affairs management of cities in the world, especially in third world countries have been faced with many problems. In Iran, that is not an exception to this rule, city council has been formed to manage cities in order to solve urban problems. Forming local governments, urban management has entered new stage. Although urban problems have solved partly by establishing these institutions, there are new problems in this context. The main goal of research in urban management after establishing city council (local governments) in term of effectiveness of councils is planning, implementation, monitoring in urban management as well as making appropriate context to operate councils in coordination with urban institutions in order to achieve integrated management. The results showed that the performance of urban management in Iran after establishing councils (public institutions), was appropriate.

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1- Introduction

In current societies, some factors such as increasing poverty and social and economic injustice, population growth, increasing urbanization, have been made citizens and city manager facing many problems for city management. (Hadili, Zeynali Azim, 2010, p. 33-55) Cities are shaped and developed by affecting forces and factors. Therefore, the city is a social and economic phenomenon that by getting cities larger physically, the problems of managing it get more (Ghaderi and Amiri, 2007). The main challenge for the public sector in urban management begins when the need for services to meet the needs of a growing population of cities arises. Public sector usually provides two types of services: 1- infrastructure and equipment services 2 - Supervisory Service. (Caraley, 1977) Urban management was mentioned as a concept has roots in the 1970 local government reform and geographical concepts as "urban management". However, urban management primarily as an institutional concept since mid-1980 has flourished when a number of key international donor organizations for the defense and support of the developing world applied (Jenkins, 2000). Urban management makes local government enable to optimal performance in order to improve economic and social conditions (Baclija, 2011). Local governments, by providing municipal services, are the main actors in urban management. Urban management is essential element of good urban governance (Anchor Institute Kolkata, 2003, 6-27).

To date, urban management approach has emphasized the following factors:

- 1- Strengthening local governments by supporting decentralize in order to decision making in the allocation of resources to beneficiaries, and the emphasis on their participation;
- 2- Changing community-based attitudes to the economic-based attitudes - stimulating economic development, improving efficiency and productivity, combining the formal and informal sector, etc;
- 3- emphasis on the role of market, accepting government's role as regulator, and promote cooperation;
- 4- Coordination with the main groups of strategic management (Post, 1997).

On urban management in Iran, it can be said that the city has existed since ancient era, but the turning point in the management of cities in Iran is constitutional era that was done by approval municipality law in 1286. This law was defeated and there was a strong centralization in the Pahlavi dynasty. In this era, government authorities were in charge of cities management. After the Islamic revolution in 1357, a new law was approved on managing council department based on the constitution at the country, state, urban and rural levels. At city level, city council was replaced to city association and became in charge of the tasks rather than city council. The first Islamic city council election was held in 1377 and the first Councils representatives were started to work since then and for the first time government power in urban management

reduced and local and public institutions power increased (Saeidnia, 2004).

2- The concept of urban management

The city is like a system that has several components which interact together and disturbance in one of these components makes whole system confuse. Several definitions of urban management has been proposed that some of them are mentioned below: urban management is to organize factors and resources to respond to different needs of citizens (Sarafi et. al. 2009). Urban management is as an effort to coordinate and integrate public and private actions in order to overcome to problems that urban citizens face to, and create more competitive, fairer and more stable conditions among the cities (Moemni Mostafa , 2011). Urban management is a large organization, composed of the effective and relevant formal and informal elements and components on various social, economic and physical aspects of urban management in order to control and conduct comprehensive and sustainable development of that city (Rezvani Saeedi Navid, 2004, 40). Stern defines urban management as: to play an active role in developing, managing and coordinating resources to achieve the objectives of urban development (Zarabi Asghar, Jamali Nezhad Mahdi, 2010, 225-240). All these definitions imply urban management flexibility because the urban management system consists of interconnected components and elements that must be considered in interaction with each other and what is the significance to lead this system is its ability to flexibility (Resni and Bishoon, 2001, 62).

2-1- Urban management tasks

Urban management tasks generally have been divided into two main parts:

- 1- Tasks of local government management and its performance
 - Providing Water
 - Health services and offal disposal
 - Transportation services
 - Health-related services
 - Security and safety services
 - Urban environment protection
- 2- Administrative tasks beyond local government
 - Providing energy
 - Educational services
 - Providing housing
 - Global and regional performance (Mattingly Michael, 1995, 8-15)

2-2- Urban management objectives

The goals evaluate management. There is no problem or opportunity without them. They specify what concerns there are about the activities occur in the city. Explicitly, urban management favorability

would be evaluated against its objectives. Despite the infinite variety of goals that can be considered for urban management, there is a set of core goals related to poverty reduction and improving quality of life, urban productivity and protect the city's physical environment (UNDP, 1991).

Therefore, the objectives of urban management are:

- 1- To improve the working and living conditions of all citizens respect to low-income individuals and groups.
- 2- To encourage stable economic and social development
- 3- To protect the physical environment of the city

That means urban management, is in contact with human body in urban construction and considers its effects on people life and the social environment. In one hand, it considers economic and social development by stable patterns of equality and decides to spread justice and equality (Gholamreza Kazemian - Navid Saeedi Rezvani, 2004). Three mentioned purposes are all related. For example, productive investment and job and income creation leads people life to be upgraded. However, the future economy of cities is threatened by non-performance infrastructure and poor health services or conditions. Current methods of urban management in developing countries that their government is a decentralized system and is based on local government independence and people's vote has root in several hundred years ago (Ziyafati Kaveh, 2006, 30). In the modern countries, the leaders and citizens decide simultaneously about the city managing. But the cities of underdeveloped or developing countries are vulnerable cities in the world. Thus, the consequences of urbanization and urbanity in these cities is much worse than in developed countries and problems of urban management systems in Southern countries is more and more serious. Administrative reforms in the cities of southern states need a new approach to urban management in cities (khazaei, Razavian, 2012, 659-666). Urban management in developing countries has two simple goals but so important achievements: Planning for the provision and maintenance of urban infrastructure and urban services and to ensure the organizational and financial condition of local governments (Abedi Jafari et al, 2012, 67-75).

3- Urban Management and City Council in Iran

Urban management in Iran city has existed since ancient era with the basic characteristics of urbanization in past eras and had major communication and management of cities from ancient era, but the turning point in the management of cities in Iran is constitutional era. Municipality law was approved in 1286 the beginning of new development in Iran and has five parts. First part as a

general rule explains objective of forming municipality, duties and responsibilities of the mayor and municipality against the law and second part explains how to form municipality association and its members with their duties. Third and fourth parts explain how municipality works, division of labor, the powers and duties and responsibilities of board members and subordinate units and the way governor supervises and intervenes in municipality affairs and finally, fifth part explains employment status of municipality employees and related explanations. Municipal Law was considered advanced for the urban management during its era but in practice the law failed. The main reason for this failure was discrepancy of this law with social and cultural characteristics and conditions of the country. Urban management has strong centralism at Pahlavi dynasty (Saeed Nia, 2003, 24). During this era, the mayor was elected by government and council members were considered as government employees. In 1309, municipal law was renamed to municipal (Shieh, 2003, 37-62). By approving new municipal law, interior ministry became in charge of leading and supervising municipalities. Although according to third article of this law the government was required to recognize city association, mostly due to the same factors that led to the failure of municipal law and prevented municipal associations and their stability, city associations started to work in that era (Imani Jahromi, 1994). During the seventeen-year reign of Reza Shah, a total of 136 municipalities were established. In this era, the average municipality established was eight municipalities in every year that this amount represents urbanization growth and government consideration to establishing municipality and managing affairs of these cities. Selective urban management wasn't formed at Pahlavi dynasty and attempts to establish city associations were failed at country cities level. At Pahlavi dynasty, new formal organizations based on the decisions of that time government have been entered to the cycle of urban management of Iran that plan and budget organization, ministry of housing and urbanity, union of municipalities and the technical offices are top of them. After the Islamic revolution in 1978, a new law was approved on managing council department based on the constitution at the country, state, urban and rural levels. At city level, city council was replaced to city association (Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, 1991, 51). Urban system of Iran arising from political, economic and social structure of ancient society of Iran and influenced by external factors, has had many ups and downs. Therefore, the analysis of the urban system is not possible without considering external and internal factors. Until constitutional revolution in Iran, the city was in the hands of those

directly responsible for cities by order of king and they have known as sheriff, reeve and etc. Urbanization also proceeded slowly and the problems were limited. Since constitutional revolution, the new government began in the political, social and economic aspects that affected on urban life. Urban laws in following decades confirm the importance of urban management. However, urban management process in different form influenced by political power governance on the society (Latifi, 2006, 110-111). After two decades of interruption, for the first time in 1377 March, people participated in the city council election. By council elections, major step were taken in the management of the administrative affairs of the country based on the free exchange of knowledge, insight and people votes. The city council is a public institution. The hundredth law of constitution confirms it: to advance social, economic, civil, health, cultural, educational and other welfare affairs through cooperation and public participation due to local requirements of managing village, ward, town, city and province, there are supervisory council of village, ward, town, city and province that Indigenous people elect its members (Yousofi, 2006, 38).

To date, urban management in Iran depended on government and government has been present in urban management system through interior ministry and other agencies (Ahangaran, 2006, 46). It must be said that by establishing Islamic city councils and electing council members and municipality, we have taken a very important step to democratize urban management, but the government habits to be in charge of urban managing that is not easy to quit. Government may think that by giving full powers to the councils of cities and municipalities, they get major parts of authorities and it makes municipalities as a wayward entity (Mozaiani, 2000, 6-51). City councils and municipalities as the basic element of urban management don't have sufficient and necessary authorities to fulfill obligations whom in charge of them. The main factors that contributed to the failure of the city council are:

- 1- Public institutions such as city councils and municipalities, however, they have been emerged after the revolution of Iran and had not any historical tradition and experience in this country.
- 2- During the hundred years since the establishment of local councils and city councils and municipalities, Iran history was full of unrest and political vicissitudes and during this time, at least two revolutions (Constitution revolution and the Islamic revolution), three coups (Mohammad Ali Shah's coup, coup of February 22 in 1299 and coup of August 19 in 1953), and

two world wars and the Iraq war against Iran have been happened that all of them imply on the unrest and political vicissitudes. To flourish local democracy (City Council), the environment should be appropriate (Jacques, 1994) that in our country councils didn't have such conditions.

Overall, the position of councils in urban management of country is ambiguous and city councils don't have sufficient and necessary authorities for local planning. Because of the fundamental problems that have been mentioned above, the councils do not have sufficient control over the process of providing urban development plans. Therefore, in practice these plans that provided and codified without the participation of local institutions and citizens fail. The city council should plan according to their own local conditions, so that can consider and meet the public and welfare interests of the citizens. Urbanization development and specific problems of urban life caused widespread attention to urban management, however, one of the main obstacles to urban management, especially in metropolitans is fragmentation of urban management in planning, decision making, policy making, leadership and supervision that these five are main tasks of knowledge management. The city is a living and dynamic system that has different functions and components. Each of these components has its own functions that are always changing according to time, place and spatial circumstances. However, the city is an overall system. If we separate the components of the overall system, urban system will be irregular and based on it urban management will be confused. Five main tasks that mentioned above are also applicable in urban management. One of the common ways that managers use to achieve goals is to identify ways and problems are in the path (Koontz, Odonnel, 1976). According to increasingly urbanization growth, to avoid effects of this kind of residency, today new ways of urban management have been provided and answer of urban volatile searches on increasing and improving quality of urban management ways. Good urban management has various parameters such as participating, fairness, transparency and so on. Therefore, to achieve integrated urban management, urban organizations should conduct different urban activities in all areas integrated and coordinated. In fact, the task of urban managers is to transform inputs (money, manpower, etc) into outputs (urban services, resident satisfaction, etc) (Chakrabarty, 1997, a, b, 2001). Although the autonomy of local governments to urban management is pale, has a positive impact on some aspects of performance (Bačlija, 2011). Looking at the state of urbanization and urban management in Iran, to integrate urban management an accurate definition of city should be provided.

4- Discussion

Due to expansion and growth of urbanization, life became complicate in cities, and managing affairs, especially in metropolitans, is in trouble. To overcome these problems, urban management should integrate. To achieve integrated urban management, urban organizations should conduct and supervise urban affairs integrated and coordinated. Urban management in Iran has long history. Urban management in Iran in the modern sense began after approving municipal law in 1286 and was defeated due to centralization. There was also a strong centralization in Pahlavi dynasty, and there was no public participation in urban management. After the revolution, it was observed that the councils didn't have sufficient authority to coordinate between organizations for urban management and the problem was due to higher managers didn't devolve urban management to councils and local governments fully. This has led to confusion in urban management of Iran. To achieve the goal of a unified and integrated urban management in Iran, higher managers should reduce their involvement in urban management and devolve it to councils and public institutions. Also, councils and local institutions in cities of Iran should plan to develop and construct intact and desirable city according to issues related to their city. Finally, the main mission of urban management is to improve the quality of life and welfare of most citizens and it can be achieved just by integration of urban management through relevant and responsible organizations (Councils, local institutions, public participation and municipalities).

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