CENTER-DIRECTED DEVELOPMENT AND SOCISL CONSENSUS OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN IRAN

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ABSTRACT
The present paper has attempted to investigate issues related to center-Directed development and its relationship with social Consensus among ethnic minorities of Iran. The researcher used documentary and library research methods for data gathering; finally, the analysis of the data has been conducted based on a hybrid-analytical method. It was indicated that in the Iranian society there is a direct relationship between the increase in Human Development Indices (HDI) including gross domestic product per capita, life expectancy, literacy level and social Consensus. Also it was shown that the less developed provinces also face less social Consensus and this problem has caused some divergences and ethnical movements in some of these areas.

KEYWORDS: Centripetalism, Development, Ethnic minorities, Social Consensus.

INTRODUCTION

One of the challenges and priorities of the political system of each country is homogenizing social and ethnic groups. Social Consensus can be referred to as one of the significant issues in this regard, having a close relationship with economic and social development indices. One of the most significant affecting factors on the existing inequalities in the status of country development is social Consensus (Abdollahi, 2011). Iranian society is composed of different ethnics. Ethnic minorities in Iran are different from each other in language, religious and custom points of view and considering geographical location, they are settled in borders of the country and are in neighborhood with people speaking the same language and of the same ethnicity on the other side of the border. Among these ethnics, Turk, Kurd, Lor, Baluch, Arab and Turkmen can be referred to. Relying on the studies in relation with this issue, the researcher found out that there are few studies, both in books and papers, on social Consensus in the Iranian society. Also, the previous researchers have scarcely discussed and challenged the effect of center-Directed development on the social Consensus of the Iranian society. In this regard, the subject of the present paper can be viewed as a new one.

As the investigation of the development status in Iran requires ranking the provinces of the country, the previous studies on ranking of Iranian provinces has been gathered which is included in the following table.

Table 1. Previous studies of Iranian provinces

No.	Title	Year	Executive
1	Classification of Provinces of the Country, A Model to Identify Priorities in Decreasing Regional Differences	1977	Planning and Budget Organization
2	Regional Inequalities in Iran	1981	Regional Planning Center
3	Primary Ranking of the Provinces of the Country	1982	Iran Statistics Center
4	Primary Plan for Detection of Deprived Regions	1982	Planning and Budget Organization
5	A Framework for the Analysis and Collation of Regional Indices	1994	Regional Planning Office
6	Ranking of the Provinces of the Country Based on Enjoying Economic-Social Indices	2000	Hosseini, Eskandari

The following questions can be considered as the main concerns of the present study:
Are development status, significance of development and developmental policies in Iran center-Directed?
What are the effects of development status on social Consensus in Iran?

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The researcher hypothesizes that based on the obvious superficial symbols of development in different provinces of Iran developmental status of this country is centripetalism and results in a decrease in homogeneity and social Consensus level among Iranian ethnic minorities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS
To probe the hypotheses of the study, the researcher used documentary and library studies to gather data and finally analyzed the findings based on a hybrid-analytical model. This model has been designed using a theoretical framework based on stable development and decentralization theories.

DEFINITIONS
1. Social Consensus

Social Consensus means general agreement between individuals and groups in mind and sense. (Masoodi *et al.*, 2003), (Taghvaii *et al.*, 2006), (Hosseini *et al.*, 2000). Social Consensus in a society happens when the majority of the members of a society along with sub-groups of the society, especially a significant number of the decision-makers, are in general agreement regarding necessary decisions and important discussions. (Alinaghi, 1999)

"Social Consensus includes collective agreement on a set of rules and principles in a social interactional circle which causes (emotional power) and at the same time is the effect and cause (cause and effect) of social Consensus (Chalabi, 1993). Social Consensus is in agreement with concepts such as social Consensus, social homogeneity, collective identity and even social order and team conformity. Nevertheless, at times, Consensus is taken as the equivalent for the concept of culture and is at times taken in its order-focused and equivalence-making meaning. (Hosseini, 2012)

2. Being developed

In the 1900s, "development" ruled as a kind of philosophical cognition for human advances. But practically, political elites considered development as the social structure of national societies. It should be considered that development is not merely an economic concept, and includes other aspects as well.

At times, the concepts of development and growth are mistakenly interchanged; however, growth is a merely quantitative and one-dimensional concept while development is a multidimensional concept, including both qualitative and quantitative aspects. Development is in close relationship with "improvement and advance" and it has added to its conceptual value.

3. Ethnicity

Ethnicity includes a certain human population with common legendary ancestors, cultural elements, linkage with a territory or homeland (Bahrami, 2007). Ethnic identity is predicted on a smaller society within a broader one, the members of which are connected by successive, ancestral and/or legendary attachments based on social and political hierarchies. (Saleh, 2009)

Theoretical Framework
Decentralization from central government shapes human capitals and authority assignation in horizontal and vertical levels manifests democratic ruling. The advances of societies and as a result, increases in public awareness and their abilities in understanding the needs and how to meet them, have increased the necessity of their intervention in administrative tasks. This trend is not executable unless they are organized in the form of regional cooperative forms; hence, in order to be inclined toward diversity in governmental structure, decentralization and assignation of authorities to lower levels has been addressed and in future, decentralization studies will be considered as a passage for studying development in developing and developed countries.

Iranian Ethnics
Iranian ethnics can be classified in different aspects, including population, settlement location, neighbors, population formation, religion, economic status, activity factor, political tendency, level of activity. In what continues Iranian ethnics (Turk- Kurd- Arab- Lor- Baluch- Turkmen) will be considered in the mentioned aspects.

Image 1. Map of Ethno-religious Distribution in Iran

Table 2. Status of Different Ethnic Groups in Iran

Ethnic group	Population (in millions)	Settlement location	Neighbors	Population formation	Religion	Economic situation	Main political tendency	Level of activity
Turk	25	Ardabil, West and East Azerbaijan	Turkey, Azerbaijan	Outspread	Shi'a	Relatively good	Autonomy, Independence	Low
Kurd	4-5	Kurdistan, north of Khorasan, Kermanshah, Hamadan, West Azerbaijan	Iraq-Turkey	Semi-centralized	Sunni	Average towards low	Independence	Average
Arab	1	Khuzestan	Iraq	Centralized	Shi'a	Average	Nationalism	Low
Lor	3-4	Lorestan, Kohkilouyeh-Boyerahmad, Ilam, Chaharmahal Bakhtiari	Iraq	Semi-centralized	Shi'a	Low	Tribal autonomy	Very low
Baluch	2	Sistan-Baluchistan	Pakistan and Afghanistan	Centralized	Sunni	Very low	Independence	Average
Turkmen	1	Mazandaran	Turkmenistan	Centralized	Sunni	Average	Independence	Very low

Some of the political experts and thinkers believe that there is a low amount of social Consensus in the society. They use examples of peoples' behaviors such as offences and value deviations to prove their claim. On the other hand, there

are the other group of experts who believe that there is Consensus in our society, stating their reason as peoples' participation in elections and marches.

The main tendency of Iranian ethnics has always been protecting the country's territorial integrity. Nevertheless, some of the powerful individuals among them who claimed the leadership of these ethnics have diverged from the society, affected by some internal factors such as ethnic homogeneity, political parties, geographical location and also some external factors like supports from other countries especially powerful countries from west and east (Bahrami, 2007).
From the beginning, Islamic Republic of Iran has experienced various ethnical insecurities in different parts of the country. Although this movements have been restrained in some regions such as Kurdistan, Sistan-Baluchistan, Tabriz, Khuzestan, Turkmen-Sahra and etc. by thoughtful measurements, power and self-devotion, but the factual powers and threatening forces of ethnic groups in the country shall not be neglected (Karnami, 2009).

Table 3. Ethnic Movements in Iran

No.	Ethnic group	Political and anti-security movements and rise of ethnics	Year
1	Kurdistan	Tribalism and secession movement	1920-1922
		Kurd Democrat Komalah movement	1945- 1946
		Tribalism and secession movement of Democrat and Komalah parties	1979
2	Azerbaijan	Secession movement of Democrat party of Azerbaijan	1945- 1946
		Muslim peoples' republic party movements in Azerbaijan	1979
3	Khuzestan	Secession movement of Sheikh Khaz'al in Khuzestan	1920- 1925
		Arab nationalist secession movement in Khuzestan	1979
4	Baluchistan	Secession movement of Doost Mohammad Khan	1920- 1925
		Political crisis	1979
5	Others	Turkmen-Sahra movements	1979-1980

Geographical Location of Ethnics
Based on researches conducted on national security and religious and ethnic minorities in Islamic Republic of Iran, the geographical location of ethnics in Iran has three main features:
1. Located on the borders: The aspect of distance prohibits military forces of the central government to have fast and cost-effective access to these areas and in return the possibility of ethnic movements increases.
2. Existence of a homogeneous population with the same culture on the other side of the border: Settlement of a similar population in custom, language, culture and race aspects is an appropriate support for the ethnics.
3. Appropriate topographic situation: Existence of mountain ranges, forests, rivers and border lines.

Table 4. Current Status of Iranian Ethnics

Current status	Provinces	Explanation
Provinces with no ethnic population	Tehran, Qom, Isfahan, Yazd, Semnan, Markazi	These provinces are mainly located in the center of the country and except for a limited number of ethnic groups who are mainly immigrants, the majority of the population are Fars and Shi'a.
Provinces with a considerable number of population and ethnic or religious issues	Khorasan, Qazvin, Kerman, Gilan, Mazandaran, Lorestan, Hormozgan, Ilam, Bushehr	They have deep connection with Fars people in ethnical, language and cultural aspects.
Provinces in which the majority of the population includes Iranian ethnics and can	A: Ardabil, East Azerbaijan, Khuzestan, Kermanshah, Zanjan, Hamedan	There is ethnic and language gap but majority of the people has religious linkage with the majority of Shi'a and in this aspect, they are not regarded as threatening ethnics.

be classified into two categories	B: Sistan-Baluchistan, West Azerbaijan, Kurdistan	Ethnic and language gap is accompanied by religious gap; the two factors continuously reinforce each other and add to the ethnic's activities; Such problems have also existed in the past.

Status of Development Indices in Provinces of Iran

One of the main indices for assessing the development status is the index of human development (HDI). This index was introduced by the United Nations in 1990 to assess the development status of countries which is comprised of many sub-indices such as education, life expectancy at birth and Gross National Product per capita.

A survey of the status of the Provinces of Iran, in which ethnic minorities reside, can be a representative picture of the status of development in these provinces. Then by comparing these indices attributed to ethnic provinces with the indices collected from central provinces, we can observe the degree of centralization of development in Iran.

The development and growth of urban centers was of high priority in the agenda of administrations before the Islamic Revolution. This was the dominant trend during the 30 years before the Islamic Revolution and in this period the population of cities increased significantly, and as a consequence of a number of developmental programs of the administration in villages, villagers migrated to large and small urban centers. Apart from the countryside and the districts and minor urban centers- which were not listed on the top of the agenda of the administration as a result of their "efficacy-oriented" nature- other regions attracted the administrations attention with regard to criteria such as their historical, natural attractions and climate specifications, their population capacity, centrality of the district, infrastructures, and mineral resources as well as water resources, each with a view to the communicational situation of the city, it`s industrial, agricultural and touristic capacities.

This agenda was mainly as a result of inequality while we cannot say that inequality was particularly directed toward one ethnic group. Comparison of investment figures in different cities reveal many differences, for example a great part of the investments of the government were allocated to Khuzestan, Azerbaijan and cities of Tabriz, Ahvaz, Abadan in addition to Tehran, Isfahan and Yazd the structure of which are mainly populations with diverse ethnic patterns. At the same time Kurdistan provinces and Sistan and Baluchestan province (two Sunni provinces) remain the most undeveloped provinces of the country even after construction programs the government (1976).

The first index in this survey is the life expectancy at the time of birth which is represented in the following table.

Table 5. Life Expectancy at the Time of Birth in Provinces of Iran

Life expectancy at the time of birth	Province
Very low	Sistan and Baluchestan
Low	Kurdistan-Kohgilouyah and Boyer Ahmad
Average	Western Azerbaijan-Ilam-Khorasan-Kerman-Kermanshah-Lorestan-Hamedan
High	East Azerbaijan-Ardebil-Bushehr-Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari-Khuzestan-Zanjan-Mazandaran-central-Hormozgan-Yazd
Very high	Tehran-Gilan-Isfahan-Semnan-Qom-Fars

As it is clear from the above table we can observe that life expectancy rate in border provinces and ethnicity areas is lower than the same index in central regions of the country.

The rate of deprivation and or educational welfare of girls and boys in the level higher education would be as follows.

As we can see in the next table, border provinces and ethnicity areas are deprived of higher education development while central provinces of Iran enjoy a relatively appropriate situation in this regard.

Table 6. Status of Development of Higher Education

At the level of higher education			
Hamedan-Bushehr-Isfahan-Ilam-Tehran-Semnan-Yazd	Qom-Gilan	Prosperous	The Criteria for Choosing Boys
Kerman-Western Azerbaijan	Sistan and Baluchestan-East Azerbaijan-Kurdistan-Khuzestan-Hormozgan-Lorestan-Kermanshah-Ardebil-Khorasan-Kohgilouyah and Boyer Ahmad-Fars-Markazi-Zanjan-Mazandaran-Chaharmahal Bakhtiari	Deprived	
Prosperous	Deprived		
Index for Selection of Girls			

Table 7. Province Share of the Country`s Gross Domestic Product in 2010 (Iran Statistics Center)

Province	Percentage
Ardebil-Ilam-Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari-southern Khorasan-Northern Khorasan-Zanjan-Semnan-Sistan and Baluchestan-Qazvin-Qom-Kurdistan-Golestan-Lorestan-Hamedan-Yazd	1% each
Western Azerbaijan-Kermanshah Kohgilouyah and Boyer Ahmad-Gilan-central-Hormozgan	2% each
East Azerbaijan-Bushehr-Kerman	3% each
Fars-Mazandaran	4% each
Razavi Khorasan	5%
Isfahan	6%
Khuzestan	13%
Tehran	28%

Table 8. Overall Assessment of Development in Iran Provinces

Class	Condition	Province	Number	Percentage
1	Highly Deprived	Ilam, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari, Zanjan, Semnan, Qazvin, Kohgilouyah and Boyer Ahmad, Golestan, Hormozgan, Sistan and Baluchestan province, Bushehr	10	35/8
2	Deprived	Western Azerbaijan, Ardebil, Qom, Kurdistan, Lorestan, Hamedan Yazd	7	25
3	Middle Class	East Azerbaijan, Kerman Kermanshah, Mazandaran, Markazi	5	17/8
4	Developed	Isfahan, Khorasan, Khuzestan, Fars, Gilan	5	17/8
5	Highly Developed	Tehran	1	3/6

Tehran province allocating the most percentage of GDP share to itself (28%), is first rank holder in this regard, which can be a reasonable indication of centralization and unbalanced development in administration policies. On the other hand provinces of Sistan and Baluchistan, Kurdistan, Western Azerbaijan, East Azerbaijan, Khorasan Razavi, northern

Khorasan, southern Khorasan, collectively enjoy a total share of the country's GDP amounting to 14% which is almost half of this indicator for Tehran Province. In addition, one can hypothesize about the average amount of unemployed people in the provinces with a view to the gross domestic product indicter. It would be logical to say that higher production can be an indicator of higher employment rate in the province. On the contrary, the lower share of gross domestic product indicates higher unemployment. Moreover, province with less share of production being located in border zones can cause an increase in smuggling goods along with security threats in these regions.

By combining indices related to human development, evaluating, and comparing provinces of Iran with each other, we can classify them all in five categories of very deprived, deprived, middle class, developed and very developed. In the last the class (very developed) only one province is included: Tehran province which is the Capital of Iran. Ethnic provinces usually consist of a middle class population and below. One of the fundamental slogans of Islamic revolution, is eradication of poverty and deprivation from the whole country. Based on the scattered surveys conducted in this research, eight ethnic provinces of the country are far behind other provinces in terms of welfare status.

CONCLUSION

By taking into account our definition of social Consensus as well as political movements of ethnic minorities who usually reside in border regions it can be claimed that although the general tendency of these groups have been convergence but in some periods they have raised troubles and threats to national security. Unfortunately in ethnic minorities of Iran who reside particularly in Kurdistan province, Sistan and Baluchistan, Western Azerbaijan and Khuzestan, are in the vicinity of their counterparts in in Iraq and Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan, etc. These countries are often dealing with conflicts among sects and ethnic groups and unfortunately in some phases, these clashes overshadow borderlines of Iran and threaten the security and stability of parts of the local regions of the country. Although fear of insecurity and instability cannot be a good excuse for low rate of industrial investment and development projects, we cannot exclude it entirely as a cause. Today security and stability of a region directly correlate with investment rate in that region, therefore intensified military and security atmosphere in ethnic regions was not able to encourage higher government investment in these regions.

Analysis of the indices related with human development in Iran provinces-the degree of general literacy and the condition of higher education, life expectancy at the time of birth, the rate of the gross domestic product- shows that border provinces and ethnic groups of the country, enjoy lower degree of development, compared to the center provinces. Moreover, the policies of the government before the Islamic Revolution, which have created industrial and urban poles in the center of the country, have not yet been balanced and this gap between the center and periphery is still in effect. As we can observe a direct link between low level of development and the relatively low rate of social Consensus in border provinces, the hypothesis of the researcher (i.e. decrease in social Consensus in border provinces due to unbalanced development and emphasis on centralization) is validated.

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