

**ORIGINAL ARTICLE****Urban Agriculture As An Emergence Key For Asian Developing Countries Such As Iran****<sup>1</sup>Mostafa Basiri, <sup>2</sup>Habib Ghaderiardakani**<sup>1</sup>*Department of Architecture, Ilkhchi Branch, Islamic Azad University, Ilkhchi Iran,*<sup>2</sup>*Ardakan Payame Noor University, Ardakan, Yazd, Iran*

Mostafa Basiri, Habib Ghaderiardakani: Urban agriculture as an emergence key for Asian Developing countries such as Iran

**ABSTRACT**

Although many studies are addressed to the role of urban agriculture to food security and poverty alleviation, but still we see an increasingly gap between place of food produce and where it is consumed which is because of rapid and uncontrolled urbanization and subsequently increasingly using of fossil fuels i.e. not regarding to sustainable development. So in this paper we examine the role of agriculture in some of Asian countries GDP such as Iran for last decades which we have found that unfortunately, agriculture loses its role in GDP's growth though, it has had increasingly growth rate for the same era. Attention to that, "agriculture sector" is always fundamental base of sustainable development and it is include the greatest portion of labors in many of developing countries and the same time losing its role, may be as a alarm for time to reform and replan for their urbanization. And urban agriculture is a great key to this target.

**Key words:****Introduction***Mean of poverty:*

There is variety of ways to understand poverty. It can be imagined strictly in economic classify i.e. as lack of income. Or it can be imagined as social deprivation and take into account a broad range of personal, social, economic, cultural and political factors. Some definitions focus on "absolute poverty", which is interpreted as a lack of resources to meet the physical needs for survival. Others focus on "relative poverty", which is interpreted as a lack of resources to achieve a standard of living that allows people to play roles, participate in relationships, and live a life that is deemed normative of the society to which they belong (Loewen, 2009).

*Defining Poverty*

There are several ways to conceptualize poverty such as the following table which we chose it because it will influence the goal we are interest to them.

**Table 1:** Loewen, 2009

Condition of poverty	Definition	Poverty reduction goal
Absolute poverty	Lack of resources to meet the physical need for survival	Meet basic needs
Relative poverty	Lack of resources to achieve a standard of living that allows people to play roles. Participate in relationships, and live a life that is deemed normative by the society to which they belong.	Equity / parity with others.
Poverty as dependence	Lack of critical mass of assets needed to meet one's needs on a sustainable basis	Self – sufficiently
Poverty as exclusion	Processes of deprivation and marginalization that isolate people from the social and economic activities of society	Inclusion
Poverty as capabilities deprivation	Lack of resources, capabilities, choices, scarcity and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, economic political, social rights.	Human development

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*Types of poverty:*

A different way to understand poverty is to focus on stability and term of poverty which it divided to "Chronic and Transient poverty"

Distinguishing short from long term poverty is also important for policy because different instruments are needed to deal with each (Baulch and Hoddinott, 2000).

As. (Pevez and Flavia, 2007) cited, the standard definition of chronic poverty specifies it as an individual experience of deprivation that lasts for a long period of time (Hulme and Shepherd, 2003). According to Barrientos *et al.* (2005), there are three main definition of chronic poverty in the literature. The first approach emphasizes the duration of poverty. It identifies the chronic poor as those with per capital income (or consumption) levels persistently below the poverty line during a long period of time. Transient poverty is associated with a fluctuation of income around the poverty line (Gaiha and Deolalikar, 1993). The second definition, called the component approach. Distinguishes between the constant component of income or consumption (the determination of chronic poverty) and the fluctuating component (the determinant of transient poverty) (Jalan and Ravallion, 1998 and 2000). The third approach considers current income and its variability approach considers current income and its variability among groups or households in order to estimate the probability of future shortfalls in income (prieckett *et al.*, 2000; Baurguignon *et al.*, 2004).

We need to know this classified of poverty whereas, there are some different ways to tackle then such as short term or transient poverty is better alleviated by policies that assist with consumption smoothing better access to credit markets. Whereas long term or chronic poverty may call for transfers or programs that increase the poor's earning capacity (Lipton and Ravallion, 1995). For these reason the use of longitudinal studies of poverty and mobility have increased rapidly (Salchi and Majbouri, 2010).

*Urban agriculture:*

Urban agriculture can be defined shortly as, the growing of plants and the raising of animals within and around cities (Ruaf, 2011).

The most significance feature of urban agriculture against rural agriculture is that it is integrated into the urban economic and ecological system. Urban agriculture is identified on urban areas and interacting with the urban ecosystem. We can account a lot of it's advantages such as; the use of urban residents as labourers, use of typical urban resources, like organic waste as compost, easy and direct access to the urban market and urban consumers and direct impacts on urban ecology.

*Why is urban agriculture important?:*

As RUAF, (RUAF, 2011) has mentioned, the rapid urbanization that is taken place goes together with a rapid increase in urban poverty and urban food insecurity and by 2020 the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America will be home to some 75% of all urban dwellers. Also it is expected that by 2020, 80% of the poor in Latin America, and about 40-45% of the poor in Africa and Asia will be concentrated in towns and cities. In the other ways, most cities in developing countries have great difficulties to cope with this development and are unable to create sufficient formal employment opportunities for the poor. They also have increasing problems with the disposal of urban wastes and waste water and maintaining air and river water quality.

Urban agriculture could provide a complementary strategy to reduce urban poverty and food insecurity and enhance urban environmental management.

Some of more significance importance of urban agriculture as RUAF, (RUAF, 2011) cited are;

1. Food security and nutrition
2. Economic impacts
3. Social impacts
4. Contributions to urban ecology

*Role of urban agriculture to sustainability of cities:*

Conventional wisdom recognize of the need for greater sustainability and its for impacting on many aspects of human activity. Though, the planners, Academic scholars and policy makers are strenuously debating issues of sustainability but still widely varying views exist as to how to best translate sustainability theory into practice.

The potential role of urban agriculture in the improvement of sustainability of cities has been recognized in some areas (UNDP, 1996). Some large-scale examples or urban agriculture have been operating successfully

over many years, even decades or centuries, particularly in china, which indicate the viability and sustainability of this form of land-use in particular contexts (Nelson, 1996).

Urban agriculture has been the norm in urban areas until recently, with agriculture having virtually disappeared from industrialized cities only over the last hundred years and particularly the last several decades as agricultural trade has become increasingly international. The environmental impacts of separating food production from where food is consumed are very significant and lead to depleted agricultural soils (Mollison, 1998), pollution from concentrated organic waste emanating from cities (Nelson, 1996), and high use of fossil fuels that their related polluting emissions (Vale, 1997).

Urban agriculture of one form or another is undertaken on a significant scale in many developing countries, where issues such as lack of food security, chronic urban unemployment, and lack of health – care drive the poor in urban areas to seek greater self – reliance. However, in industrialized countries, urban agriculture is most often viewed as a form of community recreational activity that returns greenery and a sense of nature to sprawling cities (Bodlovich, 2001).

#### *Emphasize of Agriculture in Iran's Economy:*

Actually, Iran's economy has been based on oil export, so, other parts such as industry and service sectors are depended strictly to the oil income. Though we can not say that the agriculture section is not dependent so it.

This situation cased that agriculture sector. As the smallest sector has an effective role in Iran's economy. This sector shared 13.7 percent of Iran's GDP about 25 and 20 percent of occupation and Iran's non-oil export respectively (Gilanpour, 2006).

#### *Changes in structure of Iran's economy 1980-2004 percent:*

**Table 2:** Gilan pour, 2006

	1980	1988	1990	1995	2000	2004
Share in GDP						
Agriculture	11.4	15.9	15.2	15.5	14.3	13.7
Industry	16.3	16.2	17.4	17.6	21	24.5
Services	69.1	52.3	50.9	51.6	52.4	51.4
Share in agriculture output						
Crop & horticulture	62	58.3	58.3	61.1	60.8	61.8
Livestock	29.8	34.5	33.9	31.1	32.4	30.3
Forestry	1.4	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.3
Fishery	2.5	21.1	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.4

With a perusal of above table, obviously, we can find a worthless share of Agriculture in Iran's economy which is the smallest portion versus the others i.e. industry service. Though with compare to some other Asian countries we will not surprised, because agriculture share is the same for some of them.

#### *Share of Agriculture in GDP:*

**Table 3:** Fan, 2005

Country	1980	1985	1995	2000	2003
India	35.19	30.27	28.09	22.60	21.30
China	30.09	28.35	27.05	15.90	13.55
Indonesia	23.95	22.87	20.42	17.03	16.28
Korea, Rep.	14.84	12.59	8.51	4.70	3.96
Malaysia	22.61	19.92	15.22	8.69	7.49
Bangladesh	49.64	41.77	29.42	24.62	22.76
Srilanka	25.78	25.29	23.77	17.40	16.39
Thailand	23.27	15.81	12.50	10.29	9.85

However in the other hand we see agriculture has had growth rates in the last decades.

#### *Agriculture growth rates*

**Table 4:** (Fan, 2005)

Country	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000-04	1961-2004
Iran *	4.39	3.93	3.86	4.41	4.2	4.15
India	2.05	2.18	4.05	2.80	0.17	2.69
China	4.06	3.01	5.26	5.30	1.29	4.39
Indonesia	3.08	3.82	4.68	2.21	0.95	3.53
Malaysia	5.68	4.78	4.72	3.01	1.36	4.58
Bangladesh	2.01	1.16	2.15	3.38	-0.33	2.01

Srilanka	2.91	3.63	-0.49	1.22	-1.66	1.49
Thailand	4.32	4.51	1.74	2.70	-0.44	3.12
Asia Developing	3.15	2.89	4.29	3.92	0.81	3.53

\*(Tehranchian,2007)

As it very clear there though agriculture has had positive growth on the era but it loses its role in GDP growth in the same time.

### Conclusion:

Simply we can find that recently agriculture has given its portion to the others sector such as industry and service. In the other word, though agriculture has had positive growth over the last decades always, but the for the same era it losses it's role in the countries, GDP growth which it can be consequent of oil revolution and urbanization, that it causes of separating food production from where food is consumed which can not be respect to sustainable development obviously. Actually it can be as a serious alarm to many of developing countries such as Iran which they are going to develop with a rapid rate of urbanization without sufficient tent on urban agriculture to restoration of agriculture role in their countries, GDP growth rate that it can be toward sustainable development. Simply, it will be possible if we promote the agriculture not only in rural but also in urban areas. And must not forget that always, the rapid growth in agriculture is a pre condition for the country's economic to take off. Even if the country might entered to a more advanced stage, agriculture is still important in poverty reduction and food security for its own country which agriculture covers a great portion of labors and more over, this section is a fundamental base for sustainable development though, the role of agriculture is always dynamic and it may changes over time but it may not goes to shadow.

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