

Agriculture and Policy Making;

The Necessity and Prospects of Modern Agriculture in the Century of Globalization Dilemma

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Abstract

The search for coordination and coherence of policies should take into account the fact that ideas about agricultural policy and its role in development have changed over time, indicating the difficulty to find clarity on the approaches to social investment, poverty alleviation and equity. This paper aims to study the meaning of policy, agricultural policy and the Iranian policy making system in agriculture as well.

Keywords: Policy, Agricultural policy, Iranian policy making system.

Introduction

The nature of agricultural policy issue is relevant not only to scientists and scholars of agriculture, politics, sociology and public administration but also for scholars and practitioners in institutions and organizations of different governments, businesses and NGOs and civil society in general. While Agricultural policy and its impact on society have been subject to much debate, often of a critical nature, the evidence continues to mount that a better formulation, design and implementation of an adequate agricultural policy has a positive impact on social development, mainly because the agricultural sector has important impact on country development.

More specifically, it also considers detailed issues in

- policy and administration of agricultural services, including policies for health, , income maintenance, agricultural education and social work because of agricultural income;
- needs and issues affecting the users of services, including poverty, old age, health, disability, and family policy for farm workers; and
- The delivery of welfare for rural residents (Spicker, 2007:Irani & Noruzi, 2011).

Agricultural policy is part of public policy but public policy is more than that, it is economic policy, industrial policy, and also social policy, etc. Definitive answers to the supply, poverty and inequality are likely to remain elusive, and as such, it is important to sustain the opportunities for discussion, experimentation, innovation and learning in social development approaches considered. Finding ways to preserve these conditions and to encourage deeper appreciation for the contextual factors that shape development outcomes can be significant contributions, despite themselves be counterintuitive new forms of coherence and cooperation international in the agricultural sector.

Agricultural policy is the study of agricultural services and the welfare. In general terms, it looks at the idea of agricultural welfare, and its relationship to politics and society.

Thus, Agricultural policy is that part of public policy that has to do with social issues. The Malcolm Wiener Center for Agricultural policy at Harvard University describes it as "public policy and practice in the areas of health care, human services, criminal justice, inequality, education, and labor." (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Agricultural policy often deals with issues which Rittle & Webber (1973) called wicked problems.

Agricultural policy is also distinct as an academic field which focuses on the systematic evaluation of societies' responses to social need. For example in Iran some pioneer universities have a specific university courses and studies on policy and policy making universities like Tarbiat Modarres University is as an example of this pioneer university who has a good background on this studying (Rittel & Webber, 1973).

Therefore, with the noble purpose of discussing the progress of research on agricultural policy is an important step to stimulate the debate on an issue as controversial. With this in mind, research embodies an important contribution to the generation of scientific knowledge, the creation of theoretical and methodological models for analysis and communication and dissemination of key findings in the context of the state and civil society today. What does agricultural policy do?

Agricultural policy will help the community much more improvement in different aspects for example some come in the following:

- Quality of life
- Education

- Citizenship
- Culture
- Income
- Economic
- Resident in the rural areas

Agricultural Policy formulation Agenda

Policies are operating rules that can be referred to as a way to maintain order, security, consistency, or otherwise force a goal or mission. For example, a town council might have a policy against hiring the relatives of council members for civic positions. Each time that situation arises; council members can refer to the policy, rather than having to make decisions on a case-by-case basis (policy-based management, 2011:Rahimi & Noruzi, 2011).

In political science the policy cycle is a tool used for the analyzing of the development of a policy item. It can also be referred to as a "stagiast approach". One standardized version that can be used in agricultural sector as well includes the following stages:

1. Agricultural Agenda setting (Agricultural Problem identification)
2. Agricultural Policy Formulation
3. Adoption
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation of Agricultural policy

An eight step agricultural policy cycle is developed in detail in *The Australian Policy Handbook* by Peter Bridgman and Glyn Davis:

1. Issue identification in the agricultural sector
2. Agricultural Policy analysis
3. Agricultural Policy instrument development
4. Consultation (which permeates the entire process)
5. Coordination
6. Decision
7. Implementation

8. Evaluation (Wikipedia, 2011)

Agricultural policy and Administration

Agricultural policy and Administration is an academic subject concerned with the study of agricultural services and the welfare state. It developed in the early part of the 20th century as a complement to agricultural work studies, aimed at people who would be professionally involved in the administration of welfare and agricultural sector. In the course of the last forty years, the range and breadth of the subject has developed. The principal areas relate to

- policy and administrative practice in social services and agriculture, including health administration, social security, education, employment services, community care and agricultural management;
- social problems, including crime, disability, unemployment, mental health, learning disability, and old age for farm workers;
- issues relating to social disadvantage, including race, gender and poverty in agricultural contexts; and
- The range of collective social responses to these conditions.

Agricultural policy is a subject area, not a discipline; it borrows from other social science disciplines in order to develop study in the area. The contributory disciplines include sociology, social work, psychology, economics, political science, management, history, philosophy and agriculture (Spicker, 2007; Rahimi & Noruzi, 2011).

Iran, Islam and History of Agricultural policy

Policy plays an important role within the agricultural sector. It provides the principles which dictate how the members of the agricultural sector will act.

Those principles are derived from and shaped by: the law and regulations that govern the farm; national standards and community expectations, and the values and mission the farm articulates in its strategic plan (Rahimi & Noruzi, 2011).

It is the role of Policy to:

- translate values into operations;
- ensure compliance with legal and statutory responsibilities;
- guide the agricultural sector towards the achievement of its strategic plan;
- set standards; and
- Improve the management of risk (policy library, 2011).

Islamic republic of Iran is an Islamic country which has a good and comprehensive policy making system with its base and foundation on holy Quran and Islamic roles.

Evidence suggesting that policy and policy making is one of the fundamental parts of any government. And there are different types of policy making process in different countries, for example some countries having democratic and some have dictatorship policy making process (Danaee Fard & Noruzi, 2011; Rahimi, & Noruzi, 2011).

Islam is one of the most important proponents of social policy Muslims were always pioneer in helping and giving money for the poor to have good life as the other and the earliest example goes back to Umar ibn al-Khattāb's rule as the second caliph of Islam. He used zakah collections although it is now be used and a lot of Muslim countries use it and also other governmental resources to establish pensions, income support, child benefits, various stipends for people of the non-Muslim community. In the West, proponents of scientific social planning, such as the sociologist Auguste Comte, and social researchers, such as Charles Booth, contributed to the emergence of Agricultural policy in the first industrialized countries. Other significant examples in the development Agricultural policy are the Bismarckian welfare state in 19th century Germany; social security policies introduced by the New Deal in the United States between 1933 and 1935, and health reforms in the UK following the Beveridge Report of 1942 (Agricultural policy, 2006).

Modern government is based on a social contract between citizens and the state in which rights and duties are agreed to by all to further the common interest. Citizens lend their support to a government through taxes and efforts to a country's good; in return, governments acquire legitimacy by protecting the people's rights and through public policies that benefit all. However, policy making is often captured by powerful groups and elites, making government policies biased and unaccountable to the majority of citizens. With half the world's population living below the two-dollar –aday poverty line, ineffective social policies can be the spark for state breakdown (Ortiz, 2007, p. 7).

Policy making in Iran

In Iran because it is an Islamic country so its laws and policies are in Islamic base. In different countries there are different levels of policy making but in Iran there are just three level of management in Iran includes:

- Political management,
- Public management and
- Private management

And policy has been formulated in the two above ones. Political management and political manager called "Rahbar" refers to the leader and its professional consulting group that make Meta policies and the can be considered as vision in strategic management and other sub-policy systems obey and look for it and it is as the tip of the mountain that policy makers want to get it. According to the different conducted researches about policy making in Iran

and the related text about policy making system in Iran, supreme leader is responsible for making Meta policies of I. R. Iran and this is formulated after consultation with the Expediency Council. Expediency Council is the specialized consulting group for supreme leader (Danaee Fard & Noruzi, 2011). In the second level public policies are made by triple forces including:

- Legislative,
- Executive
- Judicial

And in the third level public and private organizations create strategies instead of policies. Therefore, the process of policy making process in Iran is a systematic and comprehensive, clear, easy to understand and specialized also (Danaee fard, and et al, 2010, p. 185).

Effective Policy making advantages in agricultural sector

According to the Strategic Policy Making Team Cabinet Office (1999), an effective agricultural policy making has lots of competencies for organizations connected with agriculture below are some of them:

- Finding and evaluating different forces, public, private and political forces in agricultural sector.
- Minimizing the policy failure in agricultural sector.
- Using evidence – uses best available evidence from a wide range of sources and involves key stakeholders at an early stage
- Inclusive – takes account of the impact on the needs of all those directly or indirectly affected by the policy
- Coalition and Joined up – looks beyond institutional boundaries to the Government’s strategic objectives; establishes the ethical and legal base for policy
- Evaluating feedback of implemented agricultural implemented policy – keeps established policy under review to ensure it continues to deal with the problems it was designed to tackle, taking account of associated effects elsewhere
- Learning lessons from other countries agricultural sector – learns from experience of what works and what doesn’t (Noruzi & Hernandez 2010)

Practical Steps in an Effective policy making in agricultural sector

According to Effective Policy Making (2003), for making an effective policy or identifying problems of agricultural policy it should be considered some steps as come below.

- ✓ Creating a map of agricultural policy
- ✓ How does the issue relate to the firms strategic vision and mission? Will addressing the issue contribute to the realization of strategic agricultural objectives?
- ✓ What agricultural policy instruments could be utilized to address the issue? Can the resource requirements be estimated?
- ✓ Is there a case for government intervention in agricultural sector?
- ✓ What impact assessments may be required?
- ✓ What are the outcomes of doing this process?

The above steps should be considered for an every country wants to make an effective agricultural policy

Iranian government as other countries should take some steps to strength the agricultural policy making process i.e. these steps will strength the policy making process in organizations. Although Iran in its' fifth development program has prepared a brief and comprehensive program to be cleared and easy to understand to everyone who is engaged in organizational programs and this is a good action but other important factors in the agricultural sector are listed below:

- ✓ Providing complete information
- ✓ Providing objective information
- ✓ Providing clear information
- ✓ Providing reliable information
- ✓ Providing easy to understand information
- ✓ Bringing specialized consultants
- ✓ Using and engaging citizens in policy making process
- ✓ Holding some programs to learn the policy making process for citizens and others who are interested in the process of agricultural sector policy making because farmers and rural area residents sometimes can offer good tips (OECD, 2005:Danaee Fard & Noruzi, 2011).

Results and discussions

Individuals and groups often attempt to shape agricultural policy through education, advocacy, or mobilization of interest groups. Shaping agricultural policy is obviously different in Western-style democracies than in other forms of government. But it is

reasonable to assume that the process always involves efforts by competing interest groups to influence policy makers in their favor (Kilpatrick, 2000).

First, if the agricultural policy makers are encouraged to reflect agricultural policies in a critical fashion, trying to make it easy to imagine and understand the contents of the various issues that focus on agricultural policy, there have been many opportunities for agricultural policy analysts to be closely involved in framing policies. Especially in the past 30 years, during which presumably has been responsible for a range of reforms to infinity in both progressive legislation to operational the model of economic development.

Virtually everyone in the academic world of agricultural policy has to be critical of government policies. Therefore it can be argued that there is no distinctly agricultural policy despite criticism that it would be an exaggeration to suggest that agricultural policy criticism is in danger of evaporating into the dry heat of the cynicism of post-classical analysis.

Citizens cannot become a great idea for agricultural policy without acknowledging the changes in the locality in which they have occurred.

The Agricultural policy analysts have moved beyond the concept of poverty to the concept of social exclusion since the early nineties is not a coincidence that corresponds to the worsening economic climate, with higher social and demographic profiles of needs and increased fiscal pressures on welfare provision. If the new agricultural policy approach has been to promote the values and personal responsibility, social institutions outside of government must be mobilized.

Some cases emphasize the thought of Agricultural policy at this time, such as a commitment to full employment in agricultural sector, relations between central governments and local welfare provision, the contributions of philanthropic and charitable agricultural organizations, the participation of citizens and civil society organizations, etc. The way in which inequality affects the lives of many people is through the consolidation of agricultural policy areas which are not conventionally thought of as agricultural policy (Hernandez et al, 2011).

The processes of agricultural economic globalization adjustments bring political and social system and agricultural science, setting up new institutional arrangements and governance systems, the formation of a culture of peace, the pursuit of a global ethic, the cohesion of social relations by rules the promotion of sustainable agricultural development, etc.

Finally, aiming to approach the processes of agricultural policy change in the construction of social development, the responsibility lies with the agents capable of promoting these changes, such as academics, researchers and analysts, civil society, technology information and communication technologies (ICTs) used by the media, individual subjects of rights from holders, etc. (Hernandez et al, 2011).

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