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FULL LENGTH ARTICLE

# The role of fishing cooperatives on social – Economic and cultural development of rural areas of Bord Khun city of Bushehr, Iran

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**Abstract** The main purpose of this study was to determine the role of fishing cooperatives on the socio – economic development of and rural areas in the Bord Khun of Bushehr, Iran. This research, in terms of objective, was exploratory and in terms of data collection was descriptive (causal-comparative). The under study population were active fishing cooperatives of Bord Khun. To determine the validity of the questionnaire the content validity was used which was obtained through the views of teachers and specialists after several steps of revision. To identify the reliability of the questionnaire a pretest (30 questionnaires) was administered in Abkesh Village, of Bushehr, Iran. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was obtained (0.864–0.610) showing the validity of the questionnaire. The results showed that mean total economic for the registered villages was 1.57 (SD = 0.367) and for the non-registered villages was 1.51 (SD = 1.82). These figures indicated a very poor economic situation of registered villagers compared to non-registered members before implementing the plan. The total socio-cultural mean for the registered villagers was 2.122 (SD = 0.609) and for the non-registered members was 2.578 (SD = 0.673). The figures indicated better socio-cultural situation of non-registered villagers compared to registered members before implementing the plan. It can be claimed that the fishing cooperatives had significant impact on rural areas.

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## 1. Introduction

The current consensus of fisheries professionals' is that the fisheries industry and aquatic resources are under of various threats and risks because of overfishing and the destruction of aquatic habitat. However, other professionals believe that in addition to resources crisis, the fishing industry has faced

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a management crisis, which has resulted in organizational and institutional problems. In most developing countries fisheries resources are managed through the means of state management. This top-down, centralized approach to fisheries management, which emphasized the role of government in fisheries management, failed to protect fish stocks from over-exploitation (Hollup, 2000). In addition, this centralized approach has led to a lack of legitimacy (Nielsen and Vedsmand, 1997). Failures of top-down approaches to fisheries management have come under scrutiny and the concept of co-management has gained increasing purchase (Beem, 2007).

There has been a growing recognition that user-groups have to become more actively involved in fisheries management. Indeed, one of the most important differences in the area of agriculture in general and fisheries in particular, is that the users (i.e., the fishers) play vastly different roles. Consequently, in fisheries management, one cannot ignore the role of the fishermen or the users themselves play (Ghasemi, 1998). According to World Bank (2006), co-management refers to an arrangement through which government and resource users share the responsibility for managing fisheries. Co-management can be defined as a dynamic partnership using the capacity and interest of user-groups complemented by the ability of the fisheries administration to provide enabling legislation (Nielsen and Vedsmand, 1997). In addition, Hollup (2000) believed that this approach emphasizes that recourse has to be involved in the management process and participation in regulatory decision-making, implementation and enforcement. This approach has great advantages, too. Its advantage is that the fishers can influence the decisions made, while governments can ensure that long-term management objectives are met. Participation in decision-making gains the support of the fishers, confers legitimacy on the regulations and fosters compliance, which may also reduce the costs of monitoring and surveillance (Schumann, 2007; Kuperan et al., 2008; World Bank, 2006; Hollup, 2000). However, co-management is a means of building trust and empowering stakeholders to participate in the shared governance of fisheries (Beem, 2007; Jentoft, 2005; World Bank, 2006). Pomeroy et al. (2001) examined the conditions affecting the success of fisheries co-management in Asia.

Nowadays, sociologists shifted more attention on co-operations as a way to help to reduce poverty, to increase employment, and to empower marginalized groups in developing countries (Kofi Annan, 2005). The World Summit for Social Development, held in 1995, and a united nations general assembly (UNGA) resolution adopted in 1996, recognized the importance of cooperatives in the people-centered approach to social development (Hansen et al., 2011).

The concept of partnership is based on participation including the process that increases people's awareness and members of the technical and general knowledge. The guidelines take effect on reducing poverty, hunger and unemployment in the form of participation in the unions. The cooperatives not only could influence on the institutional structure but also affect economic institution that can create profound connections and influence human relations. Cooperatives from their inception in the mid-nineteenth century when presented with a positive performance could spread throughout the world. Every 6 people in the world and in every 4 people have some form of cooperative membership (Ansari, 2006). Nowadays, with

economic developments, social and cultural circumstances in the global community to create cooperatives have been able to experience new approaches. The new challenges of today's cooperatives on the one hand and the adherence to sustainability principles in the other hand were approved by the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA), and accept the terms of the global economy. Regarding the old and new formats, the increasing power of multinationals and communities faces crisis point (Darwish Nia and Sedighi, 2003). In another study it was shown that cooperative leads to one of the most civilized communities and activities, needs, health, housing and financial services (Dogarawa, 2005). Cooperatives were determined by details in terms of quality and quantity of education and the rights of employees to support. Article 44 of the constitution of the country's economic activities is divided into three major public and private unions (Dogarawa, 2005). After the Islamic Revolution in the participation of political activities, found a significant increase in the economic success was in a large portion of society, while today's economic participation has become a historical necessity. International levels of participation are the special attention of many international organizations (UN Food and Agriculture, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, UNESCO, etc.). With the participation of cooperatives in the division of the scientific and practical work to find. In one of the oldest cooperatives, cooperative farmers are Caspian Sea. Cooperative Caspian Sea fisheries company since 1893, the year of the contract to the government fisheries north of the Russian citizens to leave. The government agreed in 1921 with joint investment and the company was formed. In 1940 to coincide with the fishing cooperatives during World War II first-person assembly 80–60 as the main centers in the gorge was formed passing way for the food needs of the Russian army during the war (Eslah Arabani, 2001). In 1330 the government of Iran Fisheries Organization was took over by the Russians. With regard to the political – and economic problems in the operation, control, storage, reproduction, and income was created Hunters. Hunters was formed in 1343 the first modern cooperative. Today Cooperatives unite Cooperative blades as a beneficiary to the fish bone caught in a fishing period of 132 days to pay. Style hunting blade that is a group activity with the division of labor among its members has been replaced by the seiner.

The livelihood of fishermen in the area and improving their living conditions is an essential condition for the development of this region (Bord Khun city of Bushehr, Iran). To achieve this, formation of fishing cooperatives causes the fishermen to have more participation in their political, economic and social destiny in their own development in their own areas. Therefore considering the necessity of this issue and the lack of a comprehensive research on statistical situation of Bushehr Cooperatives in Dayer city, it is necessary to analyze this cooperative and their role. According to what was said, the main purpose of this study was to clarify the role of fishing cooperatives in the socio – economic development of the Bord Khun rural areas and consequently, the main research question would be: Do fishing cooperatives in Bord Khun and the covered areas have a positive economic and social effects of or not?

In this regard, the following partial goals are consider:

- What are the economic consequences of fishing cooperatives projects (such as job opportunities and income) in Bord Khun?

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