

## Factors Influencing Rural-Urban Migration from Mountainous Areas in Iran: A Case Study in West Esfahan

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Received for publication: 10 May 2014.

Accepted for publication: 25 August 2014.

### Abstract

Migration of young people from rural areas reduces the rural development goals and increase social and economic problems in cities. This is an analysis of the causes of rural-urban migration from Esfahan Mountainous areas and guidelines for reducing migration from villages. Data were obtained using mixed methods approach comprising questionnaire surveys and key informant interviews. Study population are residents of 28 villages from Fereidan and Fereidunshahr counties. The population are 6300 people, who have migrated from these two counties. 362 persons were selected Using Cochran formula, as the sample size. Then, analysis was performed using SPSS v. 20 software. The study revealed that poverty, lack of jobs, insufficient educational facilities, education in the city, lack of public transportation systems, unsuitable mountain Road, cold weather , shortage of doctors, hospitals and health facilities are main factors of rural-urban migration from iran Mountainous areas. So It is recommended to eliminate the problems mentioned to reduce the rate of rural-urban migration for the rural residents.

**Keywords:** Iran, mountainous areas, rural-urban migration

### Introduction

Rural-urban migration in developing countries, including Iran, is considered one of the most important social and economic problems. while the cities are increasing in population, the rural areas are decreasing. Rural-urban migration has negative consequences. It leads to overpopulation of the urban areas thus encouraging crime in the society. this phenomena in the study area is one of its main problems. Rural migration highly developed after unfairly Land Reform(1964)in Iran. Construction of factories in big cities, increasing need for labor, rural poverty and attractiveness of urban areas provided rural - urban migration. As in the year 1964 Been a million rural to urban migration (Almmalk Mostofi, 2003, 95). After the Islamic Revolution in 1979, plans to reduce rural to urban migration was considered, but the migration process again returned to the past (Ghaffari, G., A. Hagh parast). Many studies have found diverse causes of population change ranging among geographical, social, economic, and political factors (Albrecht 2010; Duncan 1999; Nord and Cromartie 2000; Rural Sociological Society Taskforce on Persistent Rural Poverty 1993). Literature broadly suggests that availability of jobs and better education opportunities in urban areas are the major driving factors of rural out-migration, especially among the younger generation (Brown 2002). The decision to migrate involves 'push factors' which force migrant out of the rural areas as well as 'pull factors' which attracts migrants to urban areas. The earlier model developed by Harris and Todaro (1976) explains rural-urban migration as a response to the expected rather than current

income differential between rural and urban areas. In other words, workers will continue to migrate from rural to urban areas until wages they expect to earn in urban areas are equal to the wages they expect to earn in the rural areas. Numerous empirical research have built on this foundation to examine individuals' motivation to migrate from rural to urban areas and majority reveal that the primary motivation is indeed economic considerations (Connell et al, 1977, Baril et al, 1986). According to (Taghi Ramin. 2006) conscription of rural people in cities causes rural urban migration. Some researches argue that Rural Poverty causes migration (Zahedi Mazandarani, 2005, Dasgupta, 1993, Anderson, 2002 ). According to Gary (1993), disequilibrium between rural and urban areas causes migration. Some researchers argue that economic and psychological factors causes rural urban migration ( Fawcett and Jameset,1982). The UN (1980) estimates a significant positive relationship between rural-urban out migration rates and the standard of living of citizens. Oucho in his research in Africa reported that rural – urban migration is as a last resort. The situation where a family loses all their hopes for survival and sees no choice but to emigrate (Gary,1993). In this article we have tried to analyze the causes of migration from villagers In Esfahan mountainous area, and recommendations are provided to solving these problems.

### **Main research questions**

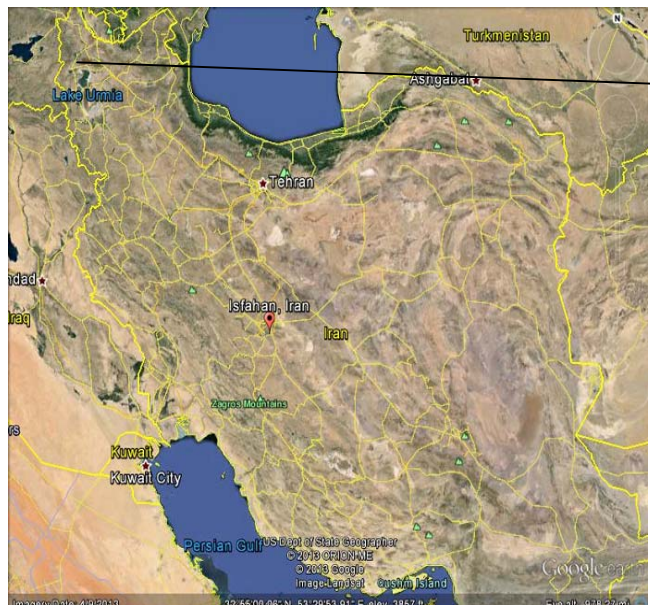
- 1 )What are the causes of rural-urban migration in the West ESFAHAN?
- 2)Does the factor of unemployment (seasonal and permanent) have been effective on rural – urban migration?
- 3)Does the type of employment in mountainous areas has been effective on rural–urban migration?
- 4)Do poor of services, deficiency facilities, lack of public transportation systems and unsuitable mountain Road have been effective on rural –urban migration ?
- 5)Does the cold weather have caused the migration of villagers to cities?
- 6) Has the lack of sufficient educational facilities (schools and high schools) been effective on rural –urban migration?
- 7) What is the effect of rural households population on rural–urban migration?
- 8) Do factors such as military service for boys, married with boys and girls in the city and urban educated have any impact on rural–urban migration?
- 9) Has the shortage of doctors and hospitals and health facilities been effective on rural – urban migration?

### **Hypotheses**

1. Socio-economic and cultural factors are the main causes of rural migration.
2. There is a significant correlation between the unemployment factor (seasonal and permanent) and rural-urban migration.
3. There is a meaningful relationship between kind of job and rural-urban migration.
4. There is a meaningful relationship between the deficiency of Welfare facilities, poor of services, deficiency facilities, lack of public transportation systems and unsuitable mountain Road and rural-urban.
5. Lack of entertainment is effective to rural-urban migration.
6. There is a relation between the cold weather and rural-urban migration.
8. There is a relation between the lack of sufficient educational facilities (schools and high schools) on rural–urban migration.
9. There is a relation between shortage of doctors and hospitals and health facilities has been effective rural–urban migration.

10. There is a significant relationship between the factors such as military service for boys, married with boys and girls in the city and urban educated and rural-urban migration.

Data were obtained using mixed methods approach comprising questionnaire surveys and key informant interviews. The target population for the study consisted all the people who have migrated from villages of this two mountainous counties of Esfahan province, namely Fereydan, and Fereydunshahr (fig1). This region is mountainous, cold, with the height of 2550 meters above sea level and located in the central of Zagros Mountains. Rates of immigration in the past 10 years were 6300 people in the study area (Zaker-esfahani,). The sample included 362 person were determined using Cochran formula (Cochran, W. G. (1977). Stratified random sampling method was used in the selection of the respondents. The instrument of the study was a 20 questions questionnaire which was validated by a panel of experts (Dr Ramin ghafari from Esfahan PNU university). Initially, a pilot study was conducted in two villages with collaboration of 30 people and the alpha value was 0.87. Data analyzed using SPSS v. 20. Questionnaires distributed during the religious events due to the fact that immigrants should stay in the village.



**Figure 1. Map of study zone**

## **Results and Discussion**

### ***Descriptive statistics***

The demographic characteristics of respondents showed that their mean age ranged from 17 to 76 years (mean = 40.3). 67.7% of the respondents in our survey were male and 32.3% were female. 24% of the sample had a high school degree or equivalent, 18% had some college or trade school experience, 38% of the respondents had only elementary and middle schools degree, and 20% had high graduate. There are different kinds of jobs between respondents and it is clear that rural-urban migration has occurred for all types of people in West Esfahan. most of the respondents were farmer(37.8%), then housewives and labors were respectively 29% and 18.8%.(table1). Land fragmentation, traditional farming, information poverty and lack of suitable agricultural extension causes farmers to leave their farm and migrate to cities.

**Table1. Occupational positions of respondents**

Job types	Frequency	percent	Cumulative percent
Farmer	137	37.8	37.8
Labor	68	18.8	56.6
Housewife	105	29.0	85.6
Employee	31	8.6	94.2
Self-employment	12	3.3	97.5
Other jobs	9	2.5	100.0
Total	362	100.0	

**Table 2. Percentage of respondent's answers to questionnaire**

	Questions	Answers				
		Very high	High	Medium	low	Very low
1	How much the Migration rate from your village have been in the past 10 years?	25.1	30.1	20.4	10.6	13.8
2	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the rural poverty?	13.5	44.8	27.6	9.4	4.7
3	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the unfair agricultural land ownership?	13.3	15.2	27.3	16.0	28.2
4	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to poor service, lack of services in rural areas?	53.8	17.7	2.3	9.8	16.4
5	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to poor entertainment facilities in rural areas?	45.9	19.1	12.1	12.4	10.5
6	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the phenomenon of unemployment?	71.8	23.2	2.5	1.1	1.4
7	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the lack of education facilities?	22.4	29.6	24.9	8.2	14.9
8	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the rural jobs types?	23.2	38.1	16.0	14.6	8.0
9	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the distance of village from cities?	14.1	24.6	25.7	23.2	12.4
10	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the mountain cold weather?	68.4	26.0	1.4	2.8	1.4
11	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the unsuitable mountainous roads?	30.9	18.5	28.2	21.3	1.1
12	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the rural household population?	21.3	24.6	21.0	13.5	19.6
13	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the Inheritance law in Agricultural land fragmentation ?	25.1	27.1	20.4	16.3	11.1
14	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the hardness of agricultural work and lack of motivation for children to continue fathers job?	41.7	28.7	10.8	14.4	4.4
15	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the Continuing education of rural children in the city?	30.2	29.6	20.5	12.2	7.5
16	how much of rural-urban migration has been due to the advertise of urban comfortable life?	19.1	27.9	20.1	12.2	20.7
17	Has the lack of sufficient educational facilities (schools and high schools) been effective on rural –urban migration?	48.7	27.3	16.3	5.2	2.5
18	Factors (military service for boys, married with boys and girls in the city and urban educated) What impact has been on rural –urban migration?	12.7	37.6	13.8	19.3	16.6
19	How much of rural-urban migration has been due to the Low opportunities in villages?	68.5	26.5	2.5	1.1	1.4
20	Is the shortage of doctors and hospitals and health facilities has been effective on rural –urban migration?	51.9	30.2	13.3	2.8	2.8

### Correlation Analysis

To test the hypothesis, the chi-square test was used because the variables are qualitative study. The respondents were asked to indicate their answers with very high, high, medium, low and very low quality expressions (table2). Chi-square test is used when we want to investigate whether different levels of response are equally important or not? For this purpose, the chi-square statistic, which is calculated by using equation(1) in SPSS software.

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(e-o)^2}{e}$$

equation(1)

E: represents the expected values .

O : indicated the frequency.

All tests was performed at  $\alpha = 0.05$ . to accept the hypothesis the significance level (sig) should be less than  $\alpha = 0.05$ . (Almmalk Mostofi, R).

According to the Table 3, the significance level for all tests of hypotheses examined in this study are lower than 0.05. So it looks the factors mentioned in assumptions have been effective to rural - urban migration.

**Table 3. Results of Hypothesis testing**

hypothesis	Significance level of the test	hypothesis	Significance level of the test
H1	0.000	H6	0.011
H2	0.000	H7	0.001
H3	0.000	H8	0.020
H4	0.005	H9	0.018
H5	0.002	H10	0.006

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of massive rural - urban migration from the mountainous areas of west Esfahan. The results of field investigations and surveys indicate that social, economic and cultural factors, including unemployment ( seasonal and permanent), poor health services, poor education facilities, cold weather, household population , unsuitable public transport system in the region has led to migration from rural areas. Lack of proper planning for youth employment in villages makes them to migrate from villages every year and causes population is getting older and female in villages. this migrations is also causes so many problems in the cities.

Given that the migration is a phenomenon that cannot be eliminated, the following measures is recommended to reduce the rural–urban migration including job creation, creating a variety of business activities in villages, development of entrepreneurship, establishing small industries in villages (Esfandiari, A.), support for rural tourism as a career lasting and high income, supporting small farmers in villages, giving credit to those who live in rural areas (i.e, more subsidies), development of health services , educational services, public transport, suitable rural roads for mountain areas, sending doctors to the villages, developing new technologies (Internet, ATMs and e-banking) in rural area, participating rural residents to decision making, psychological motivation to stay active forces in the villages, setting and planning for easy access of rural to urban areas (public transportation system), and finally increasing job opportunities in urban areas, there is a need

to devise an integrated rural development program whereby the incomes of rural workers could be increased.

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