Factors Affecting Staying of Rural Youth in Rural Areas
Case Study: Ahar County

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Extended Abstract

Introduction
Census data of Iran show that about 68.5% (1956) to 29% (2011) of rural population has decreased over the past half-century. Rural population has rapidly declined over the last half century and is influenced by several factors, one of which is rural-urban migration.

Although the percentage of rural to urban migration (20%) and urban to rural one (17%) from 1996 to 2006 show less difference, but it should be noted that the individuals involved in these two types of migration are different in demographic, social and economic characteristics. The most important difference is the fact that over 50% of immigrants in the past decade were younger (29-15 years).

Therefore, one of the important problems facing the rural area today is that the young and active population leaves the rural areas. Departure of migrants from the rural areas decreases rural labor and rural production. The migration makes empty

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rural areas from labor workforce and cause uneven pattern of the workforce. The migration has caused a severe depletion of the villages especially villages that have population less than 50 people. Rural migration caused a severe imbalance between rural and urban areas where space urbanization and expansion of unlimited cities in the area is typical of this process. Thus abandoned villages formed by migration and migration out of the main outcomes include: decreasing population, demographic structure change, rapid urban population and decrease in rural population growth. The process of migration of the young and active rural population out of rural areas threatens the sustainability of rural communities.

Therefore, this study is mainly focused on rural youth particularly in demographic and social characteristics. How are impressions of rural life, Demographic characteristics, socio-economic and geographical features? And which factors could keep young people in rural areas? And what is the best and the most effective model for explaining the field of youth staying in rural areas? What is characteristics of the individual and village?.

Methodology
The research has been carried out by using multi-stage cluster sampling surveys of young people living in the villages of Ahar District. Geographic location, distance and proximity to the city, determine the staying of educated young age in the village. Because of this, 27 villages were selected in eight vills (Dehestan). Selected sample of 570 young people between 15-30 years old was done by simple random sampling. To gather information from the people, the questionnaire and interview techniques were used. It should be noted that some of the questionnaires were excluded due to incomplete data and the final analysis was performed on 535 cases.

Results
Results show that many variables are playing a vital role on the staying of young people in rural including the employment status, education, occupation, family income level, household economic class respondents and their families in terms of employment of the respondents. The major trends of migration of young people
from rural communities and migration into urban areas in order of preference are: lack of facilities, lack of sanitation, lack of educational and cultural facilities, lack of good jobs and work problems, shortage of transport and lack of fertile agricultural land. The imagination about rural and urban areas reveals that negative portrayal of the village and positive self image of the city undermine the sense of belonging in the rural youth. This facilitates and expedites the process of leaving the village by the youths.

Finally, youth in rural areas of Ahar are prioritized based on the elements of its facilities including educational-cultural facilities, the rich natural resources, health care facilities, occupational opportunity, transportation and recreation facilities and a unique feature of rural. They are staying in rural areas and these can prevent them from being flooded in the urban areas.

Conclusions

Ability of developing countries to keep young people in rural areas is so difficult and requires a lot of development programs this is because of limited employment opportunities for young people in these areas. However, many factors such as education, the media and the promotion of rural tourism have increased rural youth aspirations and wishes. These lead to an increase in distance between employment opportunities in the villages with their desires and aspirations. This gap makes it faster for the youth to leave the villages and they are encouraged to migrate to big cities. Desires and aspirations of young people are including occupation, income, dignity and position, social status. The key to attract young people in rural communities is that they must be able to achieve the goals. Thus, the results show that the variables of employment status, education, occupation, family income level, family economic class are playing a vital role in the village and the staying of their young respondents. Also, there is big difference between rural communities and urban areas in having many facilities, and this can be exacerbated by the emigration of young people.

To keep young people in rural areas to suit the needs of rural and urban communities is equal opportunities. We plan to develop a comprehensive rural
development including social, economic and cultural and this can be effective in keeping youth in rural communities.

**Keywords:** Rural image, Rural sustainability, Rural- urban migration, Rural youth, Rural youth staying.

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