The Evaluation of Quality of life index in rural areas (Case study: Miandeh Dehrstan of Fasa County)

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Introduction

Enjoying a high quality of life has always been one of the wishes of the human. At first, this was reflected in some improvements such as income, education, health and housing but now it has expanded to a broad spectrum that includes qualitative and mental variables. Being concerned about the quality of life is enumerated as one of the characteristics of the contemporary societies. This is because, over the last 30 years, this concept as the main purpose of a society, has influenced policy makings of many countries. Actually, the theory of the QOL is the promotion of the concepts of the quality of living environment of the human to provide the best life styles for them. Therefore, the ultimate goal of QOL researches and its implication is to acquire higher standards of living so that one can lead a meaningful and happy life.

The QOL is highly influenced by time and place, so its constituent elements and components will differ with regard to their time period and geographical space. The QOL of people and rural areas depends on many indices such as employment, sufficient income, access to basic services like education, health, natural environment, security, strong associations and so on. Although the QOL of the people and urban settlements is also related to the mentioned factors, the challenges related to measuring the QOL and better living conditions in urban areas are different from those in rural areas. Some of these challenges are related to major economic conditions while some others are related to organizational and institutional frameworks in rural areas. Parameters like small scale or low density of rural settlements, reduction of employment opportunities and income in agricultural sector, far distance, geographical isolation, poor roads and lack of appropriate transportation systems have made it more complicated to implement necessary policies to improve the QOL in rural areas. But considering the undeniable role of rural areas in national production and development, to gain the satisfaction of residents in such areas and improve their quality of life is quite necessity. Therefore, this study aims to evaluate the level of QOL in rural-ship of Miandeh in Fasa County in various dimensions using

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the method of subjective social welfare and data collected by questionnaires. Accordingly, the current research will respond to the question of: How is the QOL of the residents in the study area? And what factors do influence the satisfaction level of villagers of their QOL?

**Methodology**

The current study is an applied one and regarding the nature of the article and research variables, the dominant approach is a collection of descriptive-analytic and correlational ones. Data were collected using both documentary and field studies. To design questionnaire and construct indices of this study, we used WHOQO-BREF circulated by World health organization. It was slightly modified to suit the rural people in Iran. The WHOQO-BREF questionnaire is one of tools devised by WHO to determine the QOL of people and is used all around the world. The summarized form of the questionnaire includes 26 questions and 4 dimensions namely, physical health, mental health, environmental health and social relationship (24 questions). Two more questions assess the overall condition of quality of life. In this research in addition to these 4 dimensions, the variables representing the components of economic well-being were also evaluated by referring to conceptual framework and the literature of the study.

The statistical population of the research included all the residents of the rural areas in Miandeh rural-ship. Considering the size of the population, a sampling method was used to collect the data. Based on Cochran formula, with 5 % measuring error and confidence level of 95%, and also taking the maximum heterogeneity hypothesis into account, the sample size was estimated to be 385. The sampling was carried out in a random sampling method, and in proportion to population size in every village of the statistical population. Using various descriptive and inferential statistics methods, SPSS software was used to analyze the collected data.

**Discussion and conclusion**

In this study, the QOL index in Miandeh rural-ship was evaluated by 5 dimensions including environmental, social, physical, economic and mental health. To measure the satisfaction level of the people in this area, in the context of each dimension, the independent T test was used. This test can indicate the difference level of collected data from a specific amount and therefore, it can also show the significance or insignificance of the observed variances. In most cases, this test is used to determine the significant difference between sample mean and average population. To explore the quality of relationships between the five dimensions with each other and also the effect of these dimensions in getting satisfaction from the overall index of QOL, the Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis were used. The Pearson correlation coefficient indicates both the level and type of the relationship between two variables. Regression analysis is one of the common methods in socio-economic studies and it has
close relation with correlation coefficient. In the regression, we aim to estimate and analyze the mathematical function, so that it can help to quantify an unknown variable by using certain variables. Ultimately, considering the analyses made in this research, the following results were obtained:

- The satisfaction level of the residents of their QOL is lower than average and the difference between villagers' satisfaction level and the average level of satisfaction is quite significant. Therefore, there is a relative dissatisfaction in the rural areas.
- With regard to social health, the satisfaction level of people in the study area from the satisfaction variables of personal, sexual and friendly relations were higher than average, but in terms of satisfaction with sport, cultural and educational facilities and the overall average of the variables, the satisfaction level was lower than average and there was a considerable dissatisfaction.
- In terms of physical health among the residents of the study area, of seven criteria, they were dissatisfied with physical pains and operating capabilities. On the other hands, the observed satisfaction level with the rest of the variables of physical health and also the average of all the seven items was higher than the average and considerable satisfaction was observed.
- In terms of economic health, analysis of the collected data showed that the satisfaction level with 4 items of economic health was lower than average and the observed difference between observed satisfaction and the average satisfaction is quite significant.
- In terms of mental health, of six variables, villagers' satisfaction level with meaningfulness of life in the rural area, self-confidence and enjoying life in rural areas were lower than average. In contrast, the satisfaction level with variables of concentration on daily works, satisfaction with one's gender, appearance and not being affected with mental illnesses such as depression, etc., is higher than average.
- There is a direct and significant correlation between the various dimensions of the QOL in this rural district, and the satisfaction in each dimension of QOL is in line with other dimensions of this index. In addition, any of the studied dimensions have a significant relationship with the overall index of QOL and any of these dimensions are able to explain and predict a part of variance of satisfaction with the QOL in rural areas. Among these dimensions, the economic health is the strongest of all and can exert direct influence. These five variables can explain about 38% of the variance of the satisfaction with the QOL index in rural areas, and the remaining 62% is explained by individual, social and other anonymous elements.

**Keywords:** evaluating the satisfaction level, Quality of life, Rural settlements, Miandeh rural-ship.

**References (in Persian)**


References (in English)