Analysis of the causes of rural-urban migration
(Case study: Khav and Myrabad District, Marivan County)

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1. INTRODUCTION

Migration is one of the most important population phenomena to economic planners, especially in the Third World countries. Migration is most affected by rural-urban relations. High density of population in major cities and rapid decline of rural populations have created huge social and economic issues in Iran, and this has changed the settlement patterns. Continuing uncontrolled migration of villagers could be regarded as an indicator of the lack of a regional approach in economic and social activities in Iran's development planning. Centralist policies in positioning of these activities, on the one hand lead to concentration of services and different welfare and economic facilities in cities, and on the other hand, end in poverty and deprivation in rural areas. Persistence of this unequal trend has led to duality and a gap between urban and rural areas, and they have turned into hubs of attractive and repulsive populations. In "Khav and Myrabad" district which is one of Iran's borders districts, rural-urban migration is common to a greater or lesser degree. In order to reduce migration and achieve sustainable development in this region, it is essential to investigate the causes of these migrations and provide a solution for it. The aim of this study was to investigate these causes. Thus, the main research question is: What are the main causes of rural migration from "Khav and Myrabad" district to "Marivan"? For this question, a hypothesis was proposed and this paper is trying to test this hypothesis. It seems that the main causes of rural-urban migration in “Khav and Myrabad” district are unemployment and low income.

2. METHODOLOGY

This is an applied research which was conducted in a causal-descriptive method, and its required data were collected by library research and field studies. The main instruments used in data collection were questionnaire and interview. The statistical population is the rural population of "Khav and Myrabad" district with a population of 11,849. Considering research facilities, as well as trying to have homogeneous villages, rural migrants in six villages (about 20% of the rural areas) whose residents had migrated to

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“Marivan County” were randomly selected from the villages of this district. In this research, various software packages such as ARC GIS, Excel, and etc., were used in data analysis. Based on Sharp-Cochrane formula 372 subjects were selected as the sample of the study.

3. DISCUSSION

The research findings show that 41.6 percent of the total migrants were farmers, 14.7 percent stock raiser, 31.4 percent were unemployed, and 12.3 percent worked in other occupations (including shopkeepers, drivers, laborers, etc.). Exploring the financial status of migrants before migration, showed that 76.4% of migrants were in poor financial status, 15.8 percent were in relatively good conditions and the remaining 7.8 percent were in financially good conditions. Furthermore, the largest majority of the respondents (60%) due to lack of education centers in their rural areas were illiterate or had just attended primary schools, which is one of the main reasons of their migration. As we said, 76.4% of migrants were financially poor, 15.8 percent were in relatively good conditions and the remaining 7.8 percent were in economically good conditions. This is indicative of unfavorable financial conditions of majority of respondents (76%) before migration and this is one of the main reasons why migrants leave their rural areas, they leave their village to escape this situation, and get a better financial status. Of employed respondents, 65 percent worked in service activities, 14.6% worked in industrial activities and 17% were engaged in agricultural activities and this indicates that most respondents were engaged in service activities in urban areas. It means, they abandoned their mainly productive activities in the villages and got engaged in service activities in cities. This should be noted as one of the consequences of rural-urban migration. Employment rate of villagers in towns is about 84 percent, which confirms the realization of one of the most important factors in rural-urban migration (finding a job). In addition, the financial status of 86% of migrants has improved. And this level of satisfaction and financial improvement could be regarded as another encouragement for migration. Besides, 56.6% of respondents are those who left their villages to find a job, 29.4% left their villages because of low income, 3.4% because of access to urban sanitation facilities and lack of such facilities in their own villages, 6.5% left to achieve better educational facilities in the city, 2.4% left to access sports and recreational facilities and for 1.7% marriage was the major cause that brought them into the cities. This indicates that employment and access to jobs in the cities has the highest priority and is one of the important causes of migration from villages of "Khav and Myrabad" district to Marivan County.

4. CONCLUSION

Now, one of the major concerns of the government is to control unrestrained rural-urban migration, and consequently resolve urban issues, and reduce the adverse effects of rural-urban migration. "Khav and Myrabad" district is one of the border districts of Iran that
has many villages some of which have been evacuated at different periods of time and their populations have migrated to Marivan County. The main hypothesis test showed that 41.6% of migrants were farmers, 14.7 percent were stock raisers, 31.4 percent were unemployed, and 12.3 percent worked in other occupations (including shopkeepers, drivers, laborers, etc.). High unemployment rate (about 31% of all respondents) before migration is one of the major causes of migration to urban areas. Exploring financial status of migrants before migration showed that 76.4% of migrants were in poor financial status, 15.8 percent were in relatively good conditions and the remaining 7.8 percent were in financially good conditions. It reveals poor financial status of respondents (76%) before migration. Therefore, economic incentive to achieve a better financial status is one of the main reasons for rural-urban migration. Employment rate of rural migrant in the city after migration was about 84 percent. This shows the realization of one of the most important factors of rural-urban migration (to access jobs and escape unemployment). Thus, the main hypothesis of the research is confirmed which states "unemployment and low income of rural migrants is the main causes of rural-urban migration".

5– SUGGESTIONS

1- Appropriate and practical planning for development of tourism in this region with regard to high tourism potentials.
2- Planning for the establishment of small and medium industries in the region, with regard to presence of many young people in the villages that are not yet evacuated.
3- Creating employment opportunities in the rural areas of this district through diversification of activities.
4- Development of health centers and necessary educational, recreational services in the centers of rural district and its expansion into the villages.
5- Providing necessary economic and social infrastructures for development of sustainable rural employment opportunities.

Key Words: Rural-urban migration, Rural economy, rural evacuation, "Khav and Myrabad" district.

References (in Persian)


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