Evaluating the effects of Malekan weekly Market on the economic sustainability in rural areas
(Case study: Northern Marhamat-abad Dehestan, Miyandoab County)

Farahani, Hossein
Assistant professor, Geography and rural planning, Zanjan University, zanjan, Iran

Valaei, Mohammad
M.A Student in Geography and rural planning, Zanjan University, zanjan, Iran

Rasolini, Zakie
M.A Student in Geography and rural planning, Zanjan University, zanjan, Iran

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1. INTRODUCTION

In Iran, markets have played an important role in the urban development, as the first cities were built near mosques and markets (Habibi, 2009:11). Since any market infrastructure development and marketing of food and agricultural products would raise the income of low-income classes of communities. Furthermore, it has important impacts on food supply of country's urban and rural populations (Azeri Hamidian, 2004:6). Generally, weekly markets in Iran were places to meet the needs of rural and urban residents and communities, places for transaction of rural surplus products, goods and services that might be provided (Mahdavi and Hndkhalh, 2011:38). In northern Marhamat-abad Dehestan, thanks to plains and fertile land more percentages of people earn their living through agriculture and horticulture, and customarily to supply and sale their crops and livestock, they go to weekly markets. Among these markets, Saturday market or Malekan weekly market is one of the oldest traditional markets in this region and is the most thriving market of East and West Azerbaijan and Kurdistan provinces. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the effects of Malekan weekly Market on economic sustainability and rural development and answer the question of "what is the relationship between the Malekan weekly market and economic sustainability of rural areas?"

2. METHODOLOGY

This is an applied research conducted in a descriptive-analytical method. Library research and field works (questionnaires, interviews and observations) were used to collect data about the study area. Statistical society of the research included farmers in northern Marhamat-abad Dehestan of Miandoab County. This district (the study area) has 8 villages that all of them (due to their small number) were seen as the sample statistical society. According to the general census of agriculture in 2003, the beneficiary farmers of this

1- Corresponding Author: valaei1365@gmail.com
Dehestan this year were equal to 1,503 farmers, from which 266 farmers were selected through Cochran formula as the sample size. Households in each village were selected in simple random method based on the principle of equal opportunity. Accordingly, in order to achieve the tangible results, a questionnaire was designed to assess the effects of Malekan Saturday market on rural households’ economy. It included 6 components and 33 indicators related to agricultural economy of the rural areas. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics, factor analysis by principal items analysis method were used.

3. DISCUSSION
At this stage of the research, to analyze the effects of Malekan Saturday market on economic sustainability of rural settlements, 33 indicators were used through factor analysis. Thus, the loading indicator at each factor that was over 0.5 formed a factor and the other factors that could not be integrated with these variables, formed another factor. As a result, 33 indicators were reduced into 9 factors and 66.58% of the variance was explained. Meanwhile, among the nine factors, "economic incentives and pricing" is the first factor with eigenvalue of 5.373 that had the greatest impact on the sustainability of the rural economy in the study area and explained 16.28% of the variance.
Weekly markets are very appropriate places for exchange of surplus rural products, so the surplus agricultural and non-agricultural products suitable for the weekly markets are very effective on market's conditions and development, and play a key role in the orientation of agriculture and non-agriculture production.

4. CONCLUSION
Studies show that Saturday Market of Malekan has different effects on sustainability of the rural economy in the study area, they include: increased incentive of people for buying and going to the Market every week, increased production of horticultural crops because of competitive environment, face-to-face exchanges, easy access to local markets, easier travel and familiarity with the culture and values of the local people. Another effect of this market is the elimination of speculators and middlemen in the study area. As for many years ago, due to lack of transportation and the farmers' lack of awareness of Malekan market, they were forced to sell their products at much lower price to middlemen. But with the expansion of such a market and development of transportation, products are priced in the market to farmers' benefit, and people do not sell agricultural products to brokers or middlemen and pre-sale of agricultural products by farmers has sharply declined.

Key words: rural economy; factor analysis; marketing; Malekan Saturday Market.

\[ N = \frac{\frac{t^2}{2q}}{1 - \frac{t^2}{2q}} \quad (N = 1503 \quad q = \frac{20}{100} \quad q = \frac{10}{100} \quad t = 1.96 \quad d = 0.05) \]
References (in Persian)


References (in English)