Establishment Impacts Assessment of the Industrial Units on Rural Economy
(Case Study: Central District of Firouzabad County, Fars Province)

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1. INTRODUCTION
The global literature on rural industries suggests how the establishment pattern of industrial units can play a significant role in contributing to capital and technology development in rural areas. Nowadays, the analytical indicator-based researches are widely replacing descriptive studies to stress the assessment of rural and regional development. For instance, studies show that there is a significant relationship between establishing rural industries and landscape diversity, and it may couple the environment and economy, which is of great importance to rural sustainable development (Peng et al, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the impacts of establishing industrial units on rural economy in Iran by using analytical indicators. The main aim of the present study was to assess the impacts of establishing industrial units on the rural economy of two rural areas at central district of Firouzabad township, in Fars province.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
In this study, Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA) and Leopold Matrix technique were employed. EIA often involves environmental assessments of all levels of decision-makings, from policy/plan/program formulation to project management and implementation. In recent years, EIA has focused on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), especially sustainable economic assessment encompassing economic aspects of such impacts (Chaker et al., 2006). Leopold matrix is a systematic 2D tool to clarify the complex analyses and comparisons which is innovated by Leopold et al (1971).

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2. METHODOLOGY
To conduct the research we should define some dependent and independent variables to draft in rows and columns, respectively. The implemented variables of this study included twelve economic dependent variables and six independent variables which were related to industrial units. These variables were valued in the matrix to classify the spatial alternatives which were comprised of two rural areas of Ahmadabad and Jaydasht.

4. DISCUSSION
The environmental investigation of the study area revealed that the general characteristics could be summarized into a few mean statistical indicators. The indicator values reflect entire conditions of the rural economy. In this regard, Ahmadabad rural area obtained higher values than Jaydasht. Ahmadabad rural area is the place where agro-industries have been concentrated, while Jaydasht rural area is the host of non-agro-industries which are not dependent on agricultural products. The main purpose of this study was based on the compilation of four Leopold matrixes for current and predictive conditions of establishing industries in two locations. Therefore, four final impact values for both conditions (present and predictive) in two alternatives (Ahmadabad and Jaydasht) were produced.

4. CONCLUSION
In the present conditions of agro and non-agro-industries in Ahmadabad and Jaydasht, the results of Leopold matrix showed the values of the economic impacts were 83 and 67, respectively. Whereas changing the establishment pattern of industrial units in these two locations, the predictive impact values will plunge to 38 and 58 in Ahmadabad and Jaydasht rural areas, respectively. This decreasing trend from 83 to 38 (more than two-times) will be of greater importance in Ahmadabad rural area. Therefore, to strengthen the economic base of the study area, preservation of the present establishment pattern of the industrial units and promotion of the major positive impacts of economic indicators including employment rate and per capita stored capital are recommended. The results of Leopold matrixes confirmed that Ahmadabad rural area has more potential in economic fundamentals.

6. SUGGESTIONS
Based on research findings, it was revealed that Leopold matrix of EIA has more capability to evaluate and assess the economic impacts of establishing industrial units. Using Leopold matrix in establishment impacts assessment of the industrial units enable the rural planners to make more integrated and realistic analysis of
conditions of a rural economy. Moreover, it can calculate the predictable impacts of possible strategies and policies on development of an area in a set of tables and clear statistical data.

**Key words:** Environmental Impacts Assessment (EIA), Rural Economy, Establishment of Industrial Units, Spatial Alternatives, Firouzabad County.

**References (in Persian)**

References (in English)