An Investigation into Unequal Housing Indices in Rural Areas of West Azarbaijan

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Extended Abstract

1. INTRODUCTION

The most fundamental, original, and at the same time complex type of housing for people is rural housing given that, they not only have a recreational role, but they are responsible for the productive, livelihood, warehouse, and workshop roles also. Investigating the inequalities of rural areas in terms of housing indices can identify enjoyed and deprived areas and help planners to impartially improve housing planning. From a different perspective, this notion can be considered as a key criteria for allocation of resources and subsides to rural housing.

Based on the above descriptions, the present study is aimed at answering the following questions:

How is the situation of the rural areas of West Azarbayjan in the terms of housing indices?

Is there a significant relationship between enjoyment level of rural areas of West Azarbayjan and their housing and population indices?

Is there a significant relationship between enjoyment level of rural areas of West Azarbayjan and their distance from the center of the province (Urmia)?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One of the most essential and sensitive sectors in the planning of economic and social development is the housing sector. In the final Brundtland commission, housing was identified as one of the key needs of the developing world. In the second meeting of human detribalization which was held in Istanbul, proper housing has been defined this way: a suitable shelter is not only an umbrella for an individual, but also is a suitable comfort place with physical access, suitable security, ownership security, sustainability of housing structure, lightening, suitable air conditioner, proper initial infrastructure such as water supply and canalization, sanitation and education, garbage disposal, and suitable environmental quality. These are provided according to the financial ability of people.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study is a descriptive-analytic and a causal one. The required data were gathered from the result of the general population and housing consensus along with the documents from the Statistical Center of Iran in 2011. To analyze the inequality indices of housing in rural areas of West Azarbayjan Province, 38 housing indices, were categorized under 4 groups of infrastructure and welfare, structural strength, facilities and sanitation. To weight the indices Shannon Entropy and to rank and classify rural areas, TOPSIS technique and Cluster Analysis were used. To illustrate the situation of counties according to main indices, the results of ranking and classifying of mentioned techniques were displayed on the map using ArcGIS software.

3. DISCUSSION

The findings showed that, there is a significant difference between the rural areas of West Azarbayjan province in terms of infrastructure and welfare, structural strength, facilities and sanitation. The finding also showed that, the highest inequality value belongs to rural housing sanitation indices and the least inequality value belongs to structural strength. The result of combined indices showed that, more than half of
the towns of West Azarbayjan province are in good conditions enjoying rural housing indices and the rest of the towns are located in average and below average condition

4. CONCLUSION

The combined results of the indices suggest the closeness of the scores of the towns and their homogeneity in the enjoyment of rural housing indices. Based on the results of the Cluster Analysis, more than half of the towns of West Azarbayjan were located in a relatively suitable condition and the rest in the average and below average conditions. So, in order to make regional equalities and move forwards to sustainable development, it is necessary that the housing development policies focus on the less populated and isolated rural areas. Otherwise, the rural housing problems can lead to enhanced inequalities and rural exodus.

Key words: Enjoyment levels, West Azarbayjan province, index, rural housing, TOPSIS model, cluster analysis model.

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