

STUDY THE FACTORS AFFECTING RURAL DEVELOPMENT (CASE STUDY: VILLAGE ILAMP ROVINCE IN IRAN)

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ABSTRACT

In rural areas, women often have low access to job opportunities, lower social support, inadequate care of children due to cooperating with the spouse or family in production processes, difficulties in getting services and transportation, etc. and these issues will cause privation, inequality, insecurity, and thus psychical distress. Regarding this, social, economic, and ecological stability will be held if in addition to improve social and economic conditions of rural accommodations by supplying facilities, services and infrastructures and providing people with their basic needs, they reach health and psychical tranquility. In this research, has been discussed relationship between rural women's stress and social-economic and ecological instability in the rural of Village Ilam province– Township Sirvan. The methodology used in this study by geographical approach is descriptive–analytic methodology. Also in this study, the sampling of 240 women survey was selected among the 6 rural communities in – Township Sirvan- Village Ilam Province. The results indicate that the sampled women in the studied rural suffer from higher levels of social stress. Also after classification of rural into categories of stability, it was inferred that despite the reverse correlation between women's stress and rural instability, there is not reasonable relationship statistically. Nowadays urban influences, has changed rural life in a way that feeling inequality and low self-confidence has led to suffer from the feeling of lack of urban facilities and welfare services and consequently in order to get welfare and more development, get exposed to more stress and find their only way out and seek peace in urbanization.

Keywords: *Psychical Stress, Women, Economic-Social and Ecological Stability, Health Province, Village Ilam Province, Township Sirvan*

INTRODUCTION

The new paradigm of development and specifically rural development focuses on the indicator whose purpose is to reach welfare and peace and also a quiet life with no stress. Considering the nature of rural community which observes traditional communities' customs and attitudes and their tendency to hide problems, the results of this issue will be apparent over time, the most noticeable of which is the outbreak of depression and social injury especially among the rural young and women.

Murry and his colleagues, (2008) published the article "Long-term effects of stressors relationship well-being and parenting among rural African American women". It is concluded that financial distress negatively impacts individuals physical functioning (Murry *et al.*, 2008). It is also suggested that women with high stress tend to transfer negative emotionality into their families which cause less support for the sexual spouse, feeling unsatisfied with life conditions, little stability, and contradiction and conflict among household (Murry *et al.*, 2008). Studies conducted in 2009 by Brannen and his colleagues cover different parts including the initial effects of stress and health on changes to rural communities, studying negligence on stress and rural health and to some extent discovering stress levels in rural areas. Thus, the research findings suggested that stressors affecting rural people include personal characteristics (e.g., loneliness, hygiene), variety of relationships (e.g., abuse and care giving), hygienic services, factors of unemployment (e.g., restructuring the government, lack of fixed incomes), transportation, dwelling and social concerns (e.g., social capital or infrastructure) (Brannen *et al.*, 2009). Therefore we decided to conduct a research on rural women considered as the vulnerable part of rural community, then to define

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the stressors and consider the way its level affects the instability of rural families and rural or in other words whether there is a meaningful connection between rural women's stress and the rural instability or not? Considering the above mentioned aims, some questions are presented:

What is the major factor of women's stress in rural communities in– Township Sirvan-Village Ilam province?

How does women's stress spatial distribution take place in– Township Sirvan-Village Ilam province?

Does women's stress affect on instability of rural communities in– Township Sirvan-Village Ilam province?

In the first part of the article, the theoretical bases of defining women's psychical stress and its significance on rural instability has been proposed, the second and third parts as well consider the methodology applied in the research and research findings respectively, and finally in the fourth part according to the findings, the results are presented. In general our tendency as a rural geographer makes us consider rural health as the ultimate goal of sustainable rural development.

The theoretical bases of defining women's psychical stress and its Influence on rural instability.

It is evident that the term “rural stress” (Brannen *et al.*, 2009) has been embedded globally in health discussions as a dimension, not only spatially but also academically. For example recent editions of geographical textbooks and treatises earmarked a section for rural health (Boyd and Parr, 2008) indicating the fact that “for many people rural life can be a stressful experience” (Price and Evans, 2009).

Regarding the definition of psychical distress, Bachrach is one of the experts that considers different aspects of the village in relation to rural mental health services and categorizes them in five broad categories: 1) non-social, 2) demographic, 3) social-economic, 4) interpersonal and 5) ideological. Her provinces that these categories are interconnected. She also suggests that natural forces and related factors, whether expected or not affects rural behavior. This process indeed causes multiple stresses among rural people and impacts their psychical pressure (Philo *et al.*, 2003; Bachrach, 1983; Bachrach, 1985). Studies also indicate that the prevalence of depressive symptoms and more stress is observed especially among women with less social supports, hazardous working conditions, job insecurity and higher levels of environmental pressures (Lipscomb *et al.*, 2007).

Thus it is concluded that both “stress” and “distress” are entirely interdependent and due to their continuance, the individual suffers from distress and depression (Howton *et al.*, 1998; Price and Evans, 2009; Woston and pennebaker, 1989). Meanwhile rural areas in terms of ecological structure (natural and human) are exposed to lack of environmental sanitation, unsafe access to safe drinking water, insufficient nutrition, unhealthy diet, inadequate dwelling and shelter and overdoes of chemicals in farming, unemployment, poor education, sedentary, addiction and smoking in some areas, and finally some unsafe lifestyles of the people underlies stress and physical distress (Lorenz *et al.*, 1993; Turner, 2007).

Gregoire and Thornicroft present “population density, physical and social environment and land use” as substantive dimensions which encompass rural life. Namely in other branches of rural inquiry, it is essential to consider rural psychical health as well and in order to deplete the risk of prevalence of stress among individuals, it is alerted that careful attention should be paid to different dimensions and aspects in each rural part around the earth (Philo *et al.*, 2003; Gregoire and Thornicroft, 1998). Research findings indicate that rural women suffer from a disproportionate level of stress (Brannen *et al.*, 2009).

Jacob believes that rural areas are considered economically poor; women and babies in these areas are specifically subject to suffer from stress and experience more stressful circumstances (Jacob *et al.*, 1997). This could impact the instability of rural accommodations. Clearly, the realm of sustainable rural development does not deal only with maintenance of environment or wildlife, but also consists of concepts such as city, village, energy, social justice, fair distribution of wealth, involvement of people in the processes of decision-making and planning. Otherwise in the literature of sustainability and sustainable development “community” and “society” are widely considered as the basic elements. In fact economic, social and environmental considerations make up the three main elements of sustainability

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(Scott *et al.*, 2000). The main pivots of this dimension in sustainable development consists of depleting social stress, the style of compatibility with social environment, equality in treating the poor, women, and racial, ethnic-religious groups, human rights, satisfaction of available services, education and environmental information, hygiene, treatment and adequate shelter available for everyone, propagation of community and family role, political rights and participation and also propagation of social values. Based on what was mentioned, if development is believed as an economic-social and ecological process, then in addition to economic variables such as economic growth, it is also essential to consider social aspects, such as health, inequality, and the relationship between these components. Discussions regarding sustainability and sustainable development focus on the significance of emotional psychical health of community, specifically the vulnerable such as babies, women and the elderly. Therefore there is a meaningful relation between “sustainable development” and “health”.

(Price, 1997), namely the less health levels in a society, the more psychical stress there will be, thus there is a reverse meaningful relation between those (Scott, 2009), and accordingly rural health advocates often emphasize that rural residents compared to urban ones experience worse health conditions, which implies the fact that residing in rural areas is considered a potential risk for its residents (Rohrer *et al.*, 2005). The issue of health is discussed considering women’s psychical stress in rural communities, individuals’ health condition as one of the most important social categories is exposed to direct and indirect effects of both economic development and unequal range of incomes. According to definition presented by World Health Organization (WHO), health consists in not only lack of illness and paralysis but also individual’s perfect physical, psychical and social ease.

The definition implies that the issue contains physical, psychical, social and ecological dimensions affected by social, economic and biological environment (Babakhani, 2009). Therefore, it is concluded that since past, the relation between “development and health” has faced different challenges. In fact “health and hygiene geography” are adopted as a subcategory in the limited boundary of some social and medical sciences. As the last point, it also should be pointed that the issue of women’s health is considered as a requirement out of the domain of mother and child and their hygiene (Draak, 2005). The risk of sexual contagious disease, working conditions and violence led the girls to be under positive discrimination (Dienstbier, 1970) and get better food and training compared to other members of the family (Babae, 2002). According to studies, hygienic services are focused only on reproductive health and do not provide a wider range of requirements for rural women. Therefore organizational deficiencies such as lack of equipment, skillful personnel, and a weak referral system (at the first referral level) may lead to encourage individuals to use available traditional medicine continuously instead of medical care (Berhane *et al.*, 2001).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology

Accordingly, the aim of writing this article is to recognize women’s stress factors, explaining the role of women’s stress in rural instability and also determination of the special distribution style in the discussed rural. The researcher case study is– Township Sirvan-Village Ilam province in Iran. In this study, the methodology is descriptive-analytic and correlation.

The method of collecting data is done through designing questionnaires which deals with measuring rural women’s psychical distress in the discussed area. Sample quantity was determined through calculating some properties such as “population rate in the rural, natural conditions of rural communities and also its distance of the city” which in total 240 women were chosen out of 6 rural. The present research measures two factors named “rural women’s stress” (Bentley *et al.*, 1999; Boyd *et al.*, 2002; Bullock *et al.*, 2001; Oberoi *et al.*, 2006) and rural stability indicator (Farmer *et al.*, 2003; Marsden *et al.*, 2004) to evaluate their relevance and the influence they impose on one another. In order to measures mentioned variables some indicators were designed, which are shown in tables 1.

Table 1: Stress and Stability Variables

Stress & Stability Variables	Dimensions	Stress	Stability
	Economical	Price fluctuations for agricultural and horticultural products, insurance of agricultural and horticultural products, market conditions of agricultural and horticultural products, prior to the sale of agricultural and horticultural products, relationship with mediators of agricultural and horticultural products, relationship with government for products sale, adequate time and money for avocation and free time, farm confine and sanctum, fragmentation of farmlands, no commercial agricultural and horticultural products, economic costs, lack of agricultural and horticultural products preservation, livestock disease	Health quality, social participation, political participation, extroversion and social interaction, hope, prosperity, responsibility, social correlation, social confidence, privation, satisfaction with performance of organizations, satisfaction with availability of services, satisfaction with quality of services
	Social	Problems with parents, problems with spouse, concern of divorce or separation from spouse, overlap of home responsibilities, help reduce in agricultural activities, , concern of children's future, lack of pension in old age, conflicts with neighboring farmers, working long hours in farm, fear of disease at agriculture activity, fear of products steal, refer agricultural services agent, lack of job security	Income, economic costs, job opportunities, economic stability, economic stability
	Environmental & Ecological	Warm and cold inordinate air, sudden and irregular rainfall, agricultural pests and diseases, drought and water wells reduce and water wells salinity, wild animals assaults, erosion and soil fertility reduce, encountered problems with weed, natural disasters such as floods, earthquakes, hailstone, wind and storm, access to services, repairs and purchases, access to health services, access to main roads, district or county center, distance rates and access to agricultural services centers, access to vehicle, ruin farmlands and horticultural s of the pipeline or road crossin	Satisfaction of the housing, rural location of roads, Location of rural areas, Facilities of rural, Distance of rural areas

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The discussed region –Township Sirvan- is located between 32° 18′ longitude and 33° 27′ latitude. According to the last statistics of individuals and housing in 2011, this province consists of 11 rural and a population of 4593 people.

36.6 percent of studied women are in the age range of 15-30, 56.7 percent of those in 30-50 and about 7 percent are over 50 years old. 87 percent of those women married and only 13 percent are single and also 48.7 percent are illiterate. Regarding women's occupation in this district, 94.5 percent namely most of them are housekeepers, 0.4 percent clerk and 5.4 percent are employed in other occupations. In this research, in order to measure the condition different aspects of rural women's stress exactly, three kinds of stress are assessed which includes "economic stress", "social stress" and "environmental stress".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

As inserted in table 2, the research results indicate that according to Friedman test, since the meaningfulness level is under 0.05 Alfa, there is a meaningful difference between the average rate of economic, social and environmental stress. Calculating the ranking average of different kinds of stress, it would be concluded that social, environmental and economic stress, with the average rates of 2.82, 2.12 and 1.05 respectively, are considered the most to the least stress level among sample women.

Table 2: The Meaningfulness of Rural Women's Stress Difference Levels According to Friedman's Test

	Samples	Standard Deviation	Numeral Mean	Ranking Mean
Economical	240	0.83	0.91	1.05
Social	240	0.83	2.20	2.82
Environmental	240	0.93	1.77	2.12
Chi- Square	377.655			
Df	2			
Sig	0.000			

The output of Tukey test indicates that the studied community concerning stress kinds is divided into three categories.

Table 3: Categories of Different Kinds of Women's Stress According to Tukey Test

Kind of Stress	Samples	Sig	Social Stress	Categories for 0.05 α Environmental Stress	Economical Stress
Economical	240	1.000	2.19	1.77	0.91
Social	240	1.000			
Environmental	240	1.000			

In this way it could be inferred that according to statistical analysis of studies over stress factors, social factors are of more significance compared to others and consequently H0 hypothesis could not be rejected for the benefit of H1 hypothesis.

Results of sample rural' clusteral categories concerning stress levels show the existence of 1 high stressed, 2 mid stressed and 3 low stressed rural Sarab with the average rate of 170.70 and Choobderaz with the average rate of 63.34 are the most and the least stressed rural, respectively. Surveying studies

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show that out of 6 studied rural, there are 4 mountainous, 2 valleys. 2 valleys located rural, Sarab and Cheshmerashed are among low stress distributed ones.

Table 4: Categorizing Rural According to Stress Levels

	Rural	Stress Mean
Low Stressed Rural	Cheshmepahn	71.12
	Choobderaz	63.34
	Cheshmekazane	64
Mid Stressed Rural	Ghanatabad	149.21
	Cheshmerashed	165.21
High Stressed Rural	Sarab	170.70

Results of sample rural communities' cluster categories concerning stability including high stability, mid stability and less stability shows that Sarab is the only high stability one, two rural such as Cheshmerashed, and Cheshmekazane are the mid stability and Cheshmepahn, Choobderaz, Ghanatabad, Cheshmekazane are the less stability ones.

Conclusion

According to theoretical bases and testing research hypothesis, following points could be indicated: Regarding social stress, some issues such as Problems with parents, problems with spouse, concern of divorce or separation from spouse, overlap of home responsibilities, help reduce in agricultural activities, concern of children's future, lack of pension in old age, conflicts with neighboring farmers, working long hours in farm, fear of disease at agriculture activity, fear of products steal, refer agricultural services agent, lack of job security about 45 percent has had more affect the stress among sample community members. With due attention to the fact that the unit of analysis in the research is women which are mostly involved with social-cultural and psychical issues, so as mentioned in the first hypothesis, it would seem reasonable to consider social factors as the most important one affecting women's stress in the studied area, however economic and environmental ones shouldn't be ignored totally. Since 94 percent of sample are housekeepers who are neither responsible for providing household with their financial needs and nor directly in charge of life expenses, then compared to men are more exposed to social stress. In fact awareness and feeling inequality on one side and involving in more complicated relations due to development, suffering from shortage and modern needs on the other, also lack of good employment, children confronted to unemployment and worrying about their future occupation in these communities, has highlighted the role of stress therein.

As is indicated in the research findings, the lower rural stability level, with decreasing stability of rural areas the amount of rural women's stress will be increased, so the more rural areas get developed in terms of stability indicators, the more individuals feel psychical rest, mental and personality stability.

Also it could be inferred that highly-populated rural with greater economics, more services and facilities, etc. compared to others, are exposed to highest levels of stress and consequently less populated rural with weak economic basis and less services, are exposed to less stress. By analyzing the condition, it could be admitted that stress levels in the studied area is directly connected to individuals' awareness and education on one side and related to rural development level on the other. Thus the more individuals' awareness of their properties and facilities, the more stressful they will be and also the more developed rural, the more rural people are exposed to vation, insecurity and psychical stress. Nowadays urban influences, has changed rural life in a way that feeling inequality and low self-confidence has led to suffer from the feeling of lack of urban facilities and welfare services and consequently in order to get welfare and more development, get exposed to more stress and find their only way out and seek peace in urbanization.

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