

Research Paper

Assessing Reverse Migration's Motivations and Consequences in Ijroud County, Zanjan Province

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ABSTRACT

The decision to return to villages is influenced by different factors. The purpose of this paper is to assess the motivations of reverse migration and its consequences in the villages of Ijroud city in Zanjan province. The research is of an applied type conducted via a survey method. The study population consisted of the migrants returning to villages of Ijroud. The sample size was determined using the Cochran formula ($n = 125$). The respondents in this study were selected using the stratified random sampling method. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The face validity and the content validity of the questionnaire were confirmed by a panel of experts. A pre-test and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to measure the reliability (0.79-0.81). Through an exploratory factor analysis, the reverse migration motivations were summarized into four factors including improvement of the welfare and health in rural areas, improvement of the natural attractions of the village and providing a quiet environment, improvement of the prospects for profitability, and improvement of the capacity of agricultural employment in the region. These factors explained 60.80 % of the migration's motivations. Also, using exploratory factor analysis, the consequences of reverse migration to rural area were summarized in three factors including improvement of development and health indexes, increase of rural participation and investment rates, and mental relaxation. These factors explained 33.65 percent of the total variance of the consequences of reverse migration.

Key words:

Reverse migration,
Rural development,
Migration motives,
Agriculture, Ijroud

Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Migration is a common practice in the life time of a nation. It is considered as the movement of people from one geographical region to another, which may be on a temporary or permanent basis. While rural-to-urban migration is mostly temporary,

urban-to-rural migration is often permanent. People migrate based on prevailing conditions, and the reasons for it vary from one person to another depending on the situation in which the decision is made. Migration is a selective process affecting individuals or families with certain economic, social, educational and demographic characteristics. People tend to move away from a place due to a need to escape violence, political instability, drought, congestion in various dimensions and suspected or real persecution.

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Reverse migration is a part of the rural-urban migration in Iran. It has been observed that people that migrate are typically return or reverse migrants. People move to another region in response to prevailing situations, and studies suggest that urban-to-rural movement is an important type of migration. However, recent research has not paid much attention to rural-to-urban migration. The decision to return to rural areas is influenced by different factors; indeed, push and pull factors influence such a decision. This paper examines the causes, or motivations, of return migration and consequences brought about by that migration in the rural areas of Ijroud city.

2. Methodology

This study is an applied piece of research conducted through a survey method. The study population consisted of the migrants returning to the villages of Ijroud. The sample size was determined using the Cochran formula ($n = 125$). The respondents were selected using the stratified random sampling method. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The face validity and the content validity of the questionnaire were confirmed by a panel of experts. A pre-test and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to measure the reliability (0.79-0.81). The collected data were used to provide descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations and to perform factor analyses.

3. Results

The results showed that the most important motivations of people for reverse migration include providing facilities of reinforcing rural houses, increasing rural infrastructures (e.g. electricity, water, roads), enhancing health conditions in rural area, and setting up social security insurance. It was also found that reinforcing rural houses and encouraging people to establish rural houses, improving rural amenities, population growth and government investment in rural areas contribute to the development and prosperity of villages, creation of jobs in rural areas, and increase of health and life expectancy. These are the most important consequences of reverse migration. Using an exploratory factor analysis, reverse migration motivations were summarized into four factors including improvement of welfare and health in rural areas, enhancement of natural attractions of villages to provide a quiet environment, improvement of the prospects of profitability and increasing the capacity of agricultural employment in those regions. These factors explained 60.80 % of the migration motivations. Also, using exploratory factor analysis, the consequences of reverse migration to rural areas were summarized in three factors including

improving the development and health indexes, increasing rural participation and investment rates, and providing for mental relaxation. These factors explained 33.65 percent of the total variance of the consequences of reverse migration.

4. Discussion

As the results of the factor analysis showed that four motivating factors including improving the wellbeing and health in rural areas, enhancing rural natural attractions and creating quit environments, improving agriculture profitability in the future and imitating other migrants are consistent with the findings of the study of [Jalalian and Yavarian \(2015\)](#) and [Adewale \(2005\)](#). Also, as the results of the factor analysis showed, development of construction and health indices, increase of participation rates as well as investment, and psychological comfort are the three consequences of migration to rural areas that are consistent with the study of [Motiee Langroodi et al. \(2012\)](#).

5. Conclusion

Reverse migration has different causes and consequences. Identifying the causes and effects of reverse migration on home communities can be of benefit for planning and decision making of the government. In other words, the government can focus on the identified causes and, through strengthening those causes, increase the reverse migration to rural areas. The results of this study indicated that inadequate health and welfare in rural areas with low income are the main reasons for migration from rural to urban areas. To meet the needs of their villages, migrants are found willing to return. It is recommended to reduce migration from rural to urban areas by encouraging migrants to return to their villages. At the same time, raising health facilities in rural areas and implementing emergency plans to create employment opportunities in rural areas are recommended.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest