

## **Development Level of Rural Areas in the Counties of Kermanshah Province, Iran**

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### **Extended abstract**

#### **Introduction**

Inequality between urban and rural areas and also among different settlements across the country in terms of distribution of facilities and services, currently has been turned into an obstacle for integrated and sustainable development, almost in all developing countries. Most of the services and facilities are gathered in certain places, particularly rural areas, and lack of services has caused more migration to the counties, evacuation of villages from population, unemployment and enormous problems for rural and urban areas as well as many problems in the planning for sustainable development for planners and policy makers in development process. In this regard, to solve the problems of regional imbalances, the first step is to identify and make ranking of villages in terms of enjoyment of development indicators. to the purpose of this research is to examine the process of rural depopulation in Kermanshah province from 44 percent in 1986 to 30 percent in 2013 and to analyze the impacts of the depopulation and migration of residents to cities that consequently lead to urban overpopulation and evacuation of the villages. In this regard, the questions which this study seeks to answer are as follows:

1. Is there any difference between rural areas of Kermanshah province in terms of development?
2. Which areas are most deprived and most developed rural areas in Kermanshah province in development?

#### **Methodology**

In the process of planning and development of rural areas, it is essential to identify and analyze the current status in the villages and to study facilities and their limitations in different fields. The results can help planners determine goals for development and specify policies and strategies for their achievement. In this process, to determine development levels and to study strengths and weaknesses of every area in the fields of education, culture, health, infrastructure and services can be useful to provide optimal allocation of resources and facilities for a

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coordinated, integrated and balanced rural development. Thus, this study is prepared with the purpose to determine the levels of development in rural areas of Kermanshah counties. This study was based on descriptive-analytic method and the statistical population is rural areas of the counties in Kermanshah province according to statistical yearbook of 2013. We have selected 14 counties as sample. Analysis of data accomplished using multi-criteria decision-making models of TOPSIS, KOPRAS, SAW, and Numerical Taxonomy.

### Results and discussion

The multi-criteria decision-making models of TOPSIS, KOPRAS, and SAW have specified development level and final ranking of the areas. The mean values obtained from the three models represented that Kermanshah is ranked 1<sup>st</sup> and known as the most developed and rural areas of Salas-e Babajani is ranked 14<sup>th</sup>, as the most deprived in this study. The results of Numerical Taxonomy method examining the spatial distance on the areas of study have indicated a lack of homogeneity in the studied counties. According to the results, upper limit spatial distance is 3.54 and lower limit is equal to 2.08. Thus, some counties are placed from 2.08 to 3.54; these counties are Sahne, Paveh, Dalahu, Sarpol-e Zahab, Kangavar, and Sonqor, and they are homogeneous together in a group. Some other counties are lower than 2.08; these are Eslamabad-e Gharb, Gilan-e Gharb, Harsin, Qasr-e Shirin, Javanrud, Ravansar, and Salas-e Babajani as a homogeneous group.

### Conclusion

The consequences of many development strategies emphasized only on the improvement of social and economic aspects and supplying facilities and services showed inequality in the surface of different spaces. In all theories of spatial development, based on the pattern of economic growth, rural areas are considered marginal with no significant growth process. In these patterns, based on top-down planning approach, strong focus in the planning and implementation of development projects is considered as a principle. In different countries, the beginning of rural planning goes back to 1940s and 1950s. In Iran, according to formulation of 6 development programs before Islamic evolution and 5 development programs after revolution, we are still seeing inequality in the distribution of services and facilities in the country. This may be the most important reason in the dispersal of villages in the country. The focus of planning is on top to down programs, lack of public participation in plans and projects, lack of coordination between different organizations in providing services and less attention to local management in the areas. The aim of this study isto understand the way of distribution of services and facilities in order to help the planning from bottom and local management with respect to sustainable rural development. In this research we have analyzed 54 variables in 5 educational and cultural, hygienic, institutional and infrastructural, services and communications and population indicators. The results have indicated that there is imbalance in the distribution of services and facilities in the counties of Kermanshah province and that 30 percent of the rural population in Kermanshah are in the well-developed level, 36 percent of the population in the half-developed level, and 34 percent in the deprived level. The overall results of the analysis have indicated regional inequalities in the province of Kermanshah.

**Keywords:** development, rural services, justice, Kermanshah.