

## **The performance of village head assistants (Dehyars) in rural development and management (Case study: central district of Birjand County)**

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### **1. INTRODUCTION**

One of the initiatives of the Council of law was to define an enforcement official in each village called Dehyar who was set responsible for enforcement and implementation of the decisions made by the Islamic of Councils in villages. Dehyaris<sup>2</sup> and evaluation of their performance are examined in three categories: social, economic and environmental-physical. Dehyars and evaluation of their performance in rural development have been among the most important issues in the field of rural management. A decade after Dehyars' activity, evaluation and analysis of their performance in rural development is of great importance. The main objective of this research were to study and evaluate the performance of Dehyars in different economic, social and physical aspects of rural development and management in the villages of the central district of Birjand County from people's perspective, and provide appropriate solutions to improve such conditions and also identify the most effective indices in evaluation of their performance. Furthermore, we try to evaluate the amount of improvement in social, economic and physical aspects resulted from Dehyars.

### **2. METHODOLOGY**

The current research is a field study. To collect data, 30 households and accordingly 30 Dehyaris were chosen with random sampling method. Then using Cochrun formula, 305 households were identified as the sample volume. Questionnaires were also distributed relative to the population and the total number of the households in each village. Data analysis was managed by application of a t-test in SPSS software.

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2- Plural form of Dehyary: Office of village head assistants

### 3. DISCUSSION

The establishment of Dehyaris led to health promotion and environmental health in the villages of the study area. 33.3% of Dehyaris have evaluated high the health status of the villages after the establishment of Dehyaris, while this figure before the formation of Dehyaris was near to zero. Dehyaris have facilitated the co-operation process with Housing Foundation and jihad of Agriculture and the Office of rural district. 40%, 33.3% and 43.3 % of Dehyaris have respectively evaluated high the co-operation process with Housing Foundation, jihad of Agriculture and the Office of rural district after the establishment of Dehyaris, while these figures before the establishment of Dehyaris were respectively 0.0%, 3.3% and 13.3. The same was true for the improvements in economic situation and environmental-physical conditions.

Evaluation of social indices suggest that Dehyaris with average rating of 3.8 gained the highest rank in fulfilling their duties in preserving healthy and hygienic conditions, and cooperation with the office of rural districts and Islamic councils, and with the average rating of 2.4 they were least successful in fulfilling their duties in providing help in crisis and emergency situations. Given the economic indices, Dehyaris had the highest success rate in fulfilling their duties in cost management with the average rate of 4.4, and they were least successful in conducting budget procedures and programming with the average rating of 1.4.

Evaluation of Dehyaris' performance in environmental-physical dimensions of rural development showed that Dehyaris had the highest success rate in fulfilling their duties in observing the rules of construction and issuing construction license in rural areas with the average rating of 4.0, and they were the least successful in fulfilling their duties in maintenance of public facilities and properties in the villages with the average rating of 2.4.

The study results suggest that from Dehyaris' perspective, there have been significant changes in social, economic and environmental-physical factors related to rural development after establishment of Dehyaris. Based on the data analysis, specific indices gained the highest average rate and indices of rural services and better rural traffic had the highest score and highest importance, Indices of rural services and rural traffic had the highest score and highest level of performance improvement. In general indices which gained the lowest scores, the indices related to office works, had the lowest score which reveals their small role in improving the performance of Dehyaris and achieving the goal of rural development.

Besides, the study results showed there is a significant relationship between the indices effective in evaluating the performance of Dehyaris and advancing the development in the villages of Birjand County. Note that indices effective in rural development after establishment of Dehyaris are considered as specific ones.

To investigate the construction activities before and after establishment of Dehyaris including surface water disposal channels, green spaces, issuing construction license, etc., we have used t-test separately for each of the above activities. Their significance shows Dehyaris' success. In construction activities except for public conveniences, public baths and mortuaries, given the value of t-test which was lower than 0.05%, i.e., between the average value of construction activities before and after establishment of Dehyaris, there was a significant differences

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The research findings show there is a significant relationship between the performance of Dehyaris and rural development in central districts of Birjand County, which is a positive and direct relationship. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between the indices effective in evaluation of Dehyaris' performance and progress of rural development in the villages of rural district of Birjand County. Based on the study results, general and specific indices effective in Dehyaris' performance can only explain 73% of total changes in development process in the study area. Up to now, the most effective indices in evaluating the performance of Dehyaris were the specific ones which mainly evaluated construction activates of Dehyaris. In sum, the role of Dehyaris in rural development was wholly satisfactory. However, there are some weaknesses in social, economic and environmental-physical dimensions. One of the reasons for such faults lies in the lack of co-operation between people, authorities and Dehyaris and also the lack of funds and credit.

#### 5. SUGGESTIONS

- To train Dehyaris of the study area for their more familiarity with economic, social and environmental-physical dimensions of rural development.
- To adopt a local and regional participatory model.
- To accredit Dehyaris in the villages of the study area to build up trust among people,
- To emphasize on public participation in all stages of decision making, planning, implementation and utilizations.

**Keywords:** Evaluation and performance, social development, economic and environmental dimensions, management by village head assistants, rural development.

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