



# Why Do They Want to Migrate from Rural Areas? A Psychological Perspective from Iran

Masoud Yazdanpanah <sup>1\*</sup> and Tahereh Zobeidi <sup>2</sup>

Received: 26 July 2016,

Accepted: 01 January 2017

## Abstract

While migration is a basic element of population dynamics in most societies, in Iran, rural-urban migration is a particular concern of both social scientists and policy makers. Rural-urban migration accounts for over half of the growth of most Iranian cities. On the other hand, this movement is often cited as having negative effects on rural area, including a shortage of supply of agricultural labor. It is becoming common to blame rural-urban migration among young people on factors such as education and employment opportunities. This research examines the psychological factors influencing the intentions and decisions of rural young people aiming to migrate to Khuzestan Province. This study used the extend theory of planned behaviour. A questionnaire was developed using the latent variables of attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, behavioural intention, community satisfaction, and youth personal characteristics. The face and content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by a panel of experts. The questionnaire's internal reliability was investigated using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. All scales indicated a good-to-excellent reliability index (0.75–0.85). Samples of young people were identified through a multi-stage, stratified random sampling strategy from two groups (young people who are 'well educated' and those who were not). A total of 163 valid questionnaires were analyzed. Our results showed that adding community satisfaction as additional construct to the original theory of planned behavior could significantly increase the explanatory power of the basic model. Hierarchical regression analysis showed that attitude, perceived behaviour control, as well as community satisfaction can predict 51.3% of variances in migration intentions.

### Keywords:

Iran, intention to migration, Theory of Planned Behaviour, youth migration

<sup>1</sup> Department of Agriculture Extension and Education, Ramin Agriculture and Natural Resources University of Khuzestan, Mollasani, Ahvaz, Iran

<sup>2</sup> Department of Agricultural Extension, Communication and Rural Development, Zanjan University, Zanjan, Iran

\* Corresponding author's email: [masoudyazdan@gmail.com](mailto:masoudyazdan@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

Youth out migration is a common feature of most rural areas in both developed and developing countries (Bednarikova et al., 2016). Rural areas in Iran have also experienced a mass outmigration, especially of young, well-educated and skilled individuals (Karbasi & Fahimi-Fard, 2011). Out-migration from the rural areas and small towns to regional urban centers in Iran reflects the desire of rural inhabitants to improve their situation (Dinkelman & Schulhofer-Wohl, 2015) as in other countries (Kirstein & Bandranaike, 2004).

Young people migrate from rural areas because they see migration as a way to take advantage of new opportunities, to increase their social status, or sometimes simply as a means of survival (Trell et al., 2012). Migration can be an important part of the transition to adulthood (Billari, 2001). The loss of young people from rural areas and small towns has been referred to as the 'rural youth drain' (Kirstein & Bandranaike, 2004). Although migration is a normal element of population dynamics in most societies, the scale of movement experienced in some developing countries can produce undesirable consequences for whole society. For example, migration of motivated and skilled individuals can reduce the quality of life for those remaining in rural areas (Garasky, 2002). Moreover, migration reduces the amount of labour and human capital available to the agricultural sector and allied rural industries (Karbasi & Fahimi-Fard, 2011; Li & Zahniser, 2002), which impacts negatively on the sustainability of rural areas and services (Eacott & Sonn, 2006). Migration from rural areas also puts pressure on urban populations which can have undesirable consequences in terms of urban poverty and development, and social costs such as congestion, pollution and crime. The increased demand for housing and overloading of urban facilities means that migrants and other poor people congregate in urban slums, often lacking access to clean water and sewerage systems (Dinkelman & Schulhofer-Wohl, 2015). Policymakers in Iran are concerned about the outmigration of young people, framing it essentially as a threat to the economic development of the country.

Indeed decrease in rural population in Iran was starting around 60 years ago. This means that for the first time in the Iran history the ratio of population between rural and urban area changed. Based on the statistics from the whole of Iranian population (75 million), 53 million people live in cities and 22 million people live in rural areas. This means that rural people intensively migrated toward cities (see Table 1).

A better understanding of the motivations behind rural to urban migration decisions in Iran could help both re-frame the policy debate and contribute to the development of better policy instruments with which to respond to this phenomenon and its socioeconomic consequences. Two key questions are: (1) What are young people's intentions about leaving rural areas? and (2) What factor(s) determine their intention to migration? While these questions have important implications for policy, there are no simple answers. Many researchers argue that the decision to migrate is a consequence of limited opportunities for education and employment in rural areas (e.g. Eversole, 2001). This idea stems from rational choice theory, where individuals are seen as resourceful actors who select from sets of alternatives, while constraints and opportunity structures impose restrictions on their choice. A cost-benefit approach underlies the decision-making process (Haug, 2008).

However, Eacott and Sonn (2006) argued that while education and employment are important factors, there are others; and Kirstein & Bandranaike (2004) argued that not all rural youth are attracted to the opportunities found in urban areas. Furthermore, the rational choice approach does not study the internal processes underlying behavior outcomes: indeed, there is surprisingly little attention in the migration literature to the psychological dimension (Groenewold et al., 2006). Related critiques of the rational choice approach to migration come from van Dalen and Henkens (2008) who argued that that stated migration plans are not solely based on wage differences and expectations of improving one's living standard, but they must also be in line with prevailing social norms. Furthermore, Thissen et al. (2010)

Table 1  
Changing Population in 2006 and 2011

Census year	population	The absolute increase of period	The relative increase of period (%)	The average annual growth (%)
<b>All</b>				
2006	70495782	10440294	17.4	1.62
2011	75149669	4653887	6.6	1.29
<b>City areas</b>				
2006	48259964	11442175	31.1	2.74
2011	53646661	5386697	2.14	2.14
<b>Rural areas</b>				
2006	22131101	-895192	-2.9	-0.40
2011	21446783	-684318	-3.1	-0.63

argued that the migration intentions of young rural people must be understood in the social and cultural context of the family, the community, the region and the nation-state, just as the intentions of adolescents toward migration that may affect the attitudes and behaviour of younger and older residents alike (Bjarnason & Thorlindsson, 2006). These are kinds of social norms or forces. In other words, the knowledge and ideas about the destination may then be communicated to other friends and neighbors gradually spreading throughout the population, and as a result other family members such as younger brothers and/or sisters, and friends may eventually move to that destination (Kirstein & Bandranaike, 2004). De Jong (2000) revealed that norms have a strong positive relationship with both temporary and more permanent migration behaviour for both males and females. In this regard, Van Dalen et al. (2005) believed that social forces are important in forming migration intentions in both developed and developing countries. Furthermore De Jong (2000) believed that behavioural constraints and facilitating factors directly affect the intention to migrate. The main goal of this paper is to provide much-needed empirical data about the intentions of rural young people in relation to migration and the factors associated with these intentions. We use a well-established social-psychological model, rooted in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991), to identify the factors

that influence young people’s intention to leave their rural area. Migration is conceived of as a process that starts with the realization that important personal goals might be better met elsewhere than at the actual place of residence. This realization informs the intention to move (De Jong & Gardner, 2013). First we derive a psychosocial model of the intention to migrate based on the TPB. We then test it empirically by examining the extent to which TPB inspired psychosocial determinants of migration intentions help to explain the intentions of potential migrants. It is expected that ‘planned behaviour’ migration intentions will be less important determinants of temporary compared to more permanent migration decision-making (De Jong, 2000), and for this study our focus is thus on more permanent migration.

### Conceptual Framework

The TPB is an important and widely used social cognitive model that aims to explain variance in volitional behavior (Ajzen, 1991; Liao et al., 2007). TPB focuses on psycho-social factors that influence behavior, such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, intentions and personality traits (Yazdanpanah et al., 2014). The idea is that a person’s actual behavior in performing a particular action is directly guided by his or her behavioral intention. Thus, according to the TPB, individuals who have positive attitudes toward migration, believe that there is normative

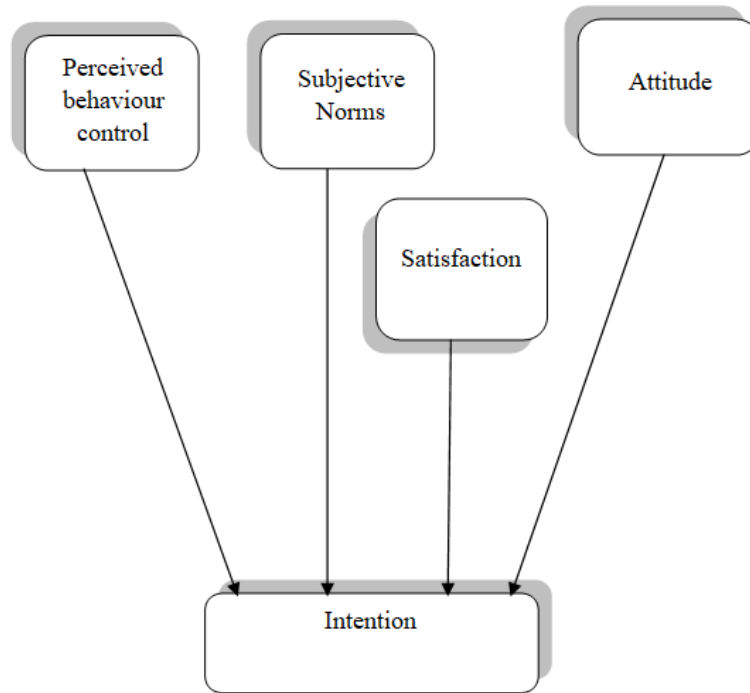


Figure 1: Theoretical framework of the research variables

support for migration, and feel that it is easy for them to engage in it, should also have strong intentions to migrate. In line with the theory, [Wiborg \(2004\)](#) and [Kirstein and Bandranaik \(2004\)](#) revealed that attitude toward rural areas is an important factor in migration decisions. [De Jong \(2000\)](#) labeled attitude as valued goal that helps define motivations for migration.

Although the success of the TPB in terms of predicting behavior has been amply demonstrated ([Kaiser, 2006](#); [Liao et al., 2007](#); [Yazdanpanah et al., 2016](#)), the theory continues to evolve, and other researchers in various fields have expressed the belief that for some behaviors and contexts, the inclusion of other variables might increase the model's utility ([Burton, 2004](#); [Whitmarsh & O'Neill, 2010](#)). In this regard, [Ajzen \(1991\)](#) argued that the model was "in principle, open to the inclusion of additional predictors if it can be shown that they capture a significant proportion of the variation in intention or behavior." In relation to migration, a construct that seems to be very important in intention to migrate is community satisfaction ([De Jong, 2000](#); [Eacott & Sonn, 2006](#); [Grgić et al., 2010](#); [Lu, 1998](#); [Vogt et al., 2003](#)). The empirical findings indicate that people have a higher intention to migrate when they are not satisfied with their community.

[Van Dalen and Henkens \(2008\)](#) argued that the dissatisfaction with the public domain is important in triggering not only migration intentions but also actual migration. However, [De Jong \(2000\)](#) found that satisfaction measures are not directly related to either more permanent or temporary migration. We propose a model with respect to young people's migration in which intention is determined by four variables: community satisfaction, attitudes, perceived behavior control and subjective norm (Figure 1).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

### Sample

The study was designed as a cross-sectional survey. The target population consisted of two groups of rural young people: (a) 83 randomly selected students studying at Ramin University in Khuzestan Province of Iran, and (b) 80 young people, one identified by each of the student respondents, who were from his/her rural area and was not well educated. The researchers selected these two groups to find whether there are any differences between educated and not well-educated rural young people regarding migration from rural areas. The study sample thus consisted of 163 young people all of whom were living in rural areas. The questionnaire



took 25 to 30 minutes to complete. All respondents were given the right to refuse to participate and to refuse to answer any question they deemed to be too sensitive or the one that would make them feel uncomfortable. The participants would not receive remuneration: Those declining to participate were replaced by another young person.

### Instrument and variables measured

Data were collected through a questionnaire based on the model shown in Figure 1. In designing the questionnaire, a 5-point Likert-type scaling was used, ranging from 1 (completely disagree) to 5 (completely agree). Negatively worded items were reverse-scored. The 5-point scale helped to reduce the statistical problem of extreme skewness (Fornell, 1992). Based on Ajzen's (1985) recommendations, scales containing multiple items were developed to measure each of the following psychosocial variables: attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, behavioral intention, and community satisfaction. The face validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by a panel of experts. The survey was also field-tested in a pilot study that included 30 young people in rural students in Chamran University, Iran. Additionally, Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients were calculated for the pilot study and used to refine the questions for the final questionnaire. All scales indicated good-to-excellent reliability, generally 0.75–0.85. The following are examples of survey items contained in the migration questionnaire. We were used SPSS software to produce descriptive statistics, and to perform t-tests. These were, also used to determine whether there was any significant variation between different groups' responses. We also used the Pearson correlation tests to investigate the relationship between all variables; finally a regression was applied to determine which variables are capable for predicting intention.

Behavioral intention: three items, for example: "I intend to migrate from rural to urban" (on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = extremely unlikely; 5 = extremely likely). Attitudes: five items, for example: "living in rural area is not rational; living in a

city is attractive". Subjective norms: three items, for example: "People I value think I should migrant from rural" My close friends, whose opinions are important to me, think that I should migrant from rural (on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = extremely unlikely; 5 = extremely likely). Attitudes: five items, for example: "living in rural area is not rational; living in a city is attractive". Perceived behavioral control: Nine items, for example: "How much control do you have over whether you stay in rural?"; "For me to living in rural is (1, very difficult; 5, very easy)"; "If I wanted to, I could easily can migrant to city" (1, strongly disagree; 5, strongly agree); "It is mostly up to me whether or not I migration to city" (1, strongly disagree; 5, strongly agree); "How difficult would it be for you to stay in you rural?" (1, very difficult; 5, very easy). Community satisfaction: respondent's expressed satisfaction with their job, their income, use of knowledge and skills in the rural community, their security, rural infrastructure, and their neighborhood" (1, low satisfied; 5, very satisfied).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Descriptive statistics

Respondents were 45.4% female and 54.6% male, and ranged in age from 18 to 31 years. The mean age was 24 years (Sd = 3.2). Based on the variance, the researcher divided age into three groups (see Table 2). Mean scores for the model variables are shown in Table 2 below.

Differences across levels of age, education, and sex were investigated using the t-test and ANOVA. There was no significant difference between female and male groups or across the three levels of age for any of the variables. Regarding educated, the test revealed that just PBC was significant between two groups. The less educated group felt significantly more control on their migration than the privileged educated group (see Table 3). Differences observed in the other variables were not significant.

A Pearson correlation test was used to investigate the relationships between the variables (see Table 4). The results revealed a significant degree of correlation between all combinations of the variables. The relation between community

Table 2  
Descriptive Statistic

Factor	Level	Subjective norm	Perceived control	Satisfaction	Attitude	Intention
Sex	Male	2.50	2.8	3.21	1.97	2.31
	Female	2.65	2.9	3.16	2.13	2.47
Age	18 – 21	2.38	2.83	3.28	1.68	2.43
	22 – 25	2.70	2.98	3.19	2.21	2.48
	26 – 31	2.50	2.62	3.12	2.07	2.20
Education	Well-educated	2.40	2.6	3.01	1.93	2.37
	Not well educated	2.73	3.1	3.27	2.16	2.38
Overall mean		2.56	2.83	3.2	2.05	2.39

Table 3  
Comparison Variables in Well-educated and Not Well-educated

Variables	Well-educated		Less educated		t-value	p-value
	Mean	Sd.	Mean	Sd		
Perceived behaviour control	2.6	1.22	3.1	0.96	-2.74	0.007

satisfaction and other variables is negative.

### Intention regarding migration

In order to test the hypothesis that an intention regarding migration is a function of the four variables (i.e. attitude, subjective norm, perceived behaviour control and community satisfaction), a hierarchical multiple regression analysis (HRA) was performed. The order and content of the blocks of variables for the regression were based on the theoretical tenets of the TPB, previous research findings, and new constructs (community

satisfaction). In the first HRA, intention regarding migration (the dependent variable) was regressed on attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behaviour control (Block 1) and satisfaction (Block 2). Variables in block 1 explained 43.2% of the variance in intention regarding migration ( $F=39.609$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ). Attitude ( $\beta=0.340$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) and PBC ( $\beta=0.421$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) were significant predictors of intention, with PBC being the stronger predictor. Subjective norm ( $\beta=0.041$ ,  $p>0.05$ ) was not a significant predictor of intention.

Table 4  
Pearson Correlation Test Between all Variables

	Attitude	SN	PBC	CS	Intention
Attitude	1				
SN	0.540** (0.0001)	1			
PBC	0.358** (0.012)	0.594** (0.012)	1		
CS	-0.560** (0.0001)	-0.330** (0.0001)	-0.187* (0.017)	1	
Intention	0.565** (0.0001)	0.467** (0.0001)	0.512** (0.0001)	-0.544** (0.0001)	1

\*\*  $p < 0.01$  \*  $p < 0.05$

SN=Social norm; PBC=Perceived behavioural control; CS=community satisfaction.

Table 5  
Regression Analysis for Intention Regarding Migration

Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	F	p-values	Beta	B	R <sup>2</sup> change
<b>Block 1</b>	0.432	39.609	0.006	0.340	0.366	0.432
Constant			0.0001	0.421	0.038	
Attitude			0.0001	0.041	0.350	
PBC			0.627			
Subjective norm						
<b>Block 2</b>	0.513	40.845	0.0001	0.235	0.204	0.081
Constant			0.002	0.357	0.367	
Attitude			0.0001	0.019	0.018	
PBC			0.803	-0.343	-0.373	
Subjective norm			0.0001			
community satisfaction						

It was found that PBC, attitude and community satisfaction in Block 2 are significant predictors of intention regarding migration (F=40.845, p<0.0001). These three variables predicted 51.3% of the variance in intention regarding migration. PBC appears to contribute greatly to the model (beta = 0.357, p <0.0001), followed by community satisfaction (beta = - 0.343, p <0.0001), and attitude (beta = 0.235, p <0.002). The value of beta shows that one standard deviation change in PBC, attitude and community satisfaction causes a 0.357, -0.343, 0.235, standard deviation change, respectively, in intention regarding migration (see Table 5).

### CONCLUSION

The present study drew on a well-established social-psychological model to examine decisions to engage in migration. The aim of this study was three-fold, to: (a) investigate the intentions of rural youth toward migration and the factors that determine this intention (main goal); (b) examine the use and efficacy of TPB in migration studies (sub goal 1); and (c) improve the explanatory power of TPB by adding community satisfaction to the model (sub goal 2).

The study leads to three major findings: First, we revealed that attitude toward urban, perceived behavior control (particularly related to the job opportunity), and satisfaction with living in rural areas are having an impact on migration intention. Second, the TPB framework is an effective tool for this policy question. In a meta-analysis of the TPB, Armitage and Conner (2001) revealed that the TPB accounted for 39%, of

the variance in intention. In our study, the TPB-inspired model explained 43.2% of the variance in intention. The regression showed that attitude (the extent to which a person believes that moving to the city will deliver positive outcomes) and Perceived behavior control (the extent to which a person feels that he/she has control over her/his decision) can predict nearly 43% variance of intention. On the other hand, the variable subjective norm (the extent to which a favorable opinion of significant others was not a significant predictor of intention. In this regard, Trafimow and Finlay (1996) and Petrea (2001) illustrating the possible lack of predictive power of one or more of the TPB constructs, argued that it is common for people to be under either attitudinal or normative control across a large number of behaviors. Third, results lend partial support for the usefulness of incorporating measure that captures community satisfaction in the framework of the TPB. In line with recent extending of the TPB, the model incorporated measures of community satisfaction, and the addition of this construct significantly increased the explanatory power of the basic model. Overall, the revised model successfully accounted for migration intentions, explaining a total of 51% of the variance in intention. This construct seem to be useful in terms of understanding and predicting intentions toward migration. Our findings reinforce existing evidence for the importance of community satisfaction in predicting migration. Furthermore, this study is a leader in including community satisfaction in prediction intention in the TPB. Finally, this study revealed that well

educated young people face with more control and barriers regarding remaining in rural area. It is not a surprise finding, because based on their education and existence of job opportunity in rural area they feel more pressure to migrant from rural area than their less educated young in their village.

From a practical point of view, the present study provides a justification for using attitude, perceived behaviour control and satisfaction dimensions in policies and programs that intend to decrease young people to migrant from rural area. Perceived behavior control was a determinant (main predictor) of their willingness to migration. Perceived behavior control refers to the grade to which an individual feels that the performance of behavior is under his/her volitional control. Perceived behavior control could affect student' intention toward migration. PBC (evaluation of owns ability to accomplish a special action) is a crucial trait of a person (Bandura, 1977). There is an evidence that the perceived difficulty (or ease) of remaining in rural area will have an impact on the possibility of carrying out this behavior. Rural area requires job opportunity and other opportunity for young people, which it needs a change in government policy transition from urban to rural area in issue such as investment, infrastructure, and building manufacture.

Furthermore, a positive attitude towards rural living is a good starting point to stimulate young adults' willingness to remain in rural area. This relationship has received substantial empirical support (see Yazdanpanah et al., 2015). To increase young adults' intention toward rural area, it is imperative to have an understanding of the young adult attitudes towards this area. We believed that in Iran, the success of many policy instruments will be limited unless we succeed in offering a more positive attitude towards rural area to young adult minds. Furthermore, enhancing attitude towards rural area among young people will indirectly contribute to improving the public norm. Our study also suggests that in the case of rural migration, it may be useful to consider individual satisfaction order to encourage young adults to remaining in rural area.

Moreover, policy that aims to decrease migration among young people could emphasize on the factors whom increase young people satisfaction. Targeting young people satisfaction may offer opportunities to change their behavior. In sum, the results of this study demonstrates that the TPB can be used as a proper conceptual framework for intervention programs aimed at decreasing the intention to migration from rural area.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We express appreciation to the respondents who kindly gave their time to make this research possible.

#### REFERENCES

- Ajzen, I. (1985). From intentions to actions: A theory of planned behavior. In *Action control* (pp. 11-39). Springer Berlin Heidelberg.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 50(2), 179-211.
- Armitage, C. J., & Conner, M. (2001). Efficacy of the theory of planned behaviour: A meta-analytic review. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 40(4), 471-499.
- Bednařiková, Z., Bavorová, M., & Ponkina, E. V. (2016). Migration motivation of agriculturally educated rural youth: The case of Russian Siberia. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 45, 99-111.
- Billari, F.C. (2001). The analysis of early life courses: Complex descriptions of the transition to adulthood. *Journal of Population Research*, 18(2), 119-142.
- Bjarnason, T., & Thorlindsson, T. (2006). Should I stay or should I go? Migration expectations among youth in Icelandic fishing and farming communities. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 22(3), 290-300.
- Burton, R.J. (2004). Reconceptualising the 'behavioural approach' in agricultural studies: A socio-psychological perspective. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 20(3), 359-371.
- De Jong, G. F., & Gardner, R. W. (Eds.). (2013). *Migration decision making: multidisciplinary approaches to microlevel studies in developed and developing countries*. Elsevier. United States of America. Pergamon Policy Studies



- on International Development.
- De Jong, G.F. (2000). Expectations, gender, and norms in migration decision-making. *Population Studies*, 54(3), 307-319.
- Dinkelman, T., & Schulhofer-Wohl, S. (2015). Migration, congestion externalities, and the evaluation of spatial investments. *Journal of Development Economics*, 114, 189-202.
- Eacott, C., & Sonn, C.C. (2006). Beyond education and employment: Exploring youth experiences of their communities, place attachment and reasons for migration. *Rural Society*, 16(2), 199-214.
- Eversole, R. (2001). Keeping youth in communities: Education and out-migration in the South West. *Rural Society*, 11(2), 85-98.
- Fornell, C. (1992). A national customer satisfaction barometer: The Swedish experience. *Journal of Marketing*, 56 (1), 6-21.
- Garasky, S. (2002). Where are they going? A comparison of urban and rural youths' locational choices after leaving the parental home. *Social Science Research*, 31(3), 409-431.
- Grgić, I., Žimbek, T., Tratnik, M., Markovina, J., & Juračak, J. (2010). Quality of life in rural areas of Croatia: To stay or to leave? *African Journal of Agricultural Research*, 5(8), 653-660.
- Groenewold, G., Bruijn, B., & Bilsborrow, R. (2006). *Migration of the health belief model (hbm): Effects of psychosocial and migrant network characteristics on emigration intentions in five countries in west africa and the mediterranean region*. Paper presented at the The Population Association of America 2006 Annual Meeting, March.
- Haug, S. (2008). Migration networks and migration decision-making. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 34(4), 585-605.
- Kaiser, F. G. (2006). A moral extension of the theory of planned behavior: Norms and anticipated feelings of regret in conservationism. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 41(1), 71-81.
- Karbasi, A.R., & Fahimi-Fard, S.M. (2011). Estimation of rural-urban migration in Iran (an autoregressive distributed lag approach). *Iranian Journal of Economic Research*, 16(46), 97-113.
- Kirstein, K., & Bandranaike, S. (2004). *Rural youth drain: Attitudes, behaviours and perceptions*. Paper presented at the 12<sup>th</sup> biennial conference of the Australian Population Association 'Population and Society: Issues, research and policy.
- Li, H., & Zahniser, S. (2002). The determinants of temporary rural-to-urban migration in China. *Urban Studies*, 39(12), 2219-2235.
- Liao, C., Chen, J.-L., & Yen, D.C. (2007). Theory of planning behavior (tpb) and customer satisfaction in the continued use of e-service: An integrated model. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 23(6), 2804-2822.
- Lu, M. (1998). Analyzing migration decision making: relationships between residential satisfaction, mobility intentions, and moving behavior. *Environment and Planning A*, 30(8), 1473-1495.
- Lu, M. (2011). Analyzing migration decisionmaking: Relationships between residential satisfaction, mobility intentions, and moving behavior. *Environment and Planning*, 30(8), 1473-1495.
- Petrea, R. E. (2001). The theory of planned behavior: use and application in targeting agricultural safety and health interventions. *Journal of Agricultural Safety and Health*, 7(1), 7-9.
- Thissen, F., Fortuijn, J. D., Strijker, D., & Haartsen, T. (2010). Migration intentions of rural youth in the Westhoek, Flanders, Belgium and the Veenkoloniën, The Netherlands. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 26(4), 428-436.
- Trafimow, D., & Finlay, K. A. (1996). The importance of subjective norms for a minority of people: Between subjects and within-subjects analyses. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22(8), 820-828.
- Trell, E.-M., van Hoven, B., & Huigen, P. (2012). 'It's good to live in Järva-Jaani but we can't stay here': Youth and belonging in rural Estonia. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 28(2), 139-148.
- Van Dalen, H. P., Groenewold, G., & Fokkema, T. (2005). The effect of remittances on emigration intentions in Egypt, Morocco, and Turkey. *Population Studies*, 59(3), 375-392.
- Van Dalen, H., & Henkens, K. (2008). Emigration intentions: Mere words or true plans? Explaining international migration intentions and behavior.

- Explaining International Migration Intentions and Behavior (June 30, 2008)*. Retrived from: SSRN:<https://ssrn.com/abstract=1153985> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1153985>
- Vogt, R.J., Allen, J.C., & Cordes, S. (2003). Relationship between community satisfaction and migration intentions of rural Nebraskans. *Great Plains Research*, 13 (1), 63-74.
- Whitmarsh, L., & O'Neill, S. (2010). Green identity, green living? The role of pro-environmental self-identity in determining consistency across diverse pro-environmental behaviours. *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 30(3), 305-314.
- Wiborg, A. (2004). Place, nature and migration: Students' attachment to their rural home places. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 44(4), 416-432.
- Yazdanpanah, M., Forouzani, M., Abdeshahi, A., & Jafari, A. (2016). Investigating the effect of moral norm and self-identity on the intention toward water conservation among Iranian young adults. *Water Policy*, 18(1), 73-90.
- Yazdanpanah, M., Hayati, D., Hochrainer-Stigler, S., & Zamani, G. H. (2014). Understanding farmers' intention and behavior regarding water conservation in the Middle-East and North Africa: A case study in Iran. *Journal of Environmental Management*, 135, 63-72.
- Yazdanpanah, M., Komendantova, N., & Ardestani, R. S. (2015). Governance of energy transition in Iran: Investigating public acceptance and willingness to use renewable energy sources through socio-psychological model. *Renewable and Sustainable Energy Reviews*, 45, 565-573.

**How to cite this article:**

Yazdanpanah, M., & Zobeidi, T. (2017). Why do they want to migrate from rural areas? A psychological perspective from Iran. *International Journal of Agricultural Management and Development*, 7(2), 283-292.

URL: [http://ijamad.iaurasht.ac.ir/article\\_527210\\_7d0080902c2f3d017d7e287f5bcb4289.pdf](http://ijamad.iaurasht.ac.ir/article_527210_7d0080902c2f3d017d7e287f5bcb4289.pdf)

