

A Survey of Youth Satisfaction with the Life and Living in Rural Areas (Case Study: Anaj County of Khondab Township)

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Abstract

Lack of control over the uncontrolled migration of rural youth to cities leads to many economic, social, cultural and environmental problems and crises at the origin and destination of migration. Recognizing and increasing the satisfaction of young people with living in rural areas has an important role in the survival of young people and the sustainability of rural settlements. The present research method is descriptive-analytical with the aim of determining the level of satisfaction of young people aged 15 to 29 years from living in the villages of Anaj County of Khondab Township. The sample size was 371 people determined by Cochran's formula. The data collection tool was a researcher-made questionnaire. Satisfaction indicators were measured in 4 dimensions: economic, social, physical-infrastructural and environmental in the form of eight indicators of employment, income, cost, health and social security, communication and social ties, physical, infrastructure, and environmental quality. Data analysis was performed using SPSS software and the mean rank of variables and one-sample t-test and stepwise regression were used. The results showed that the average overall satisfaction is moderate. Satisfaction was lower than average in terms of employment, income and cost, but higher than average in terms of indicator of health and social security, communication and social ties, physical, infrastructure, and environmental quality. Also, environmental indicator has the most impact and cost indicator has the least impact on youth satisfaction. To increase satisfaction, it is necessary to implement supportive policies such as entrepreneurship in agriculture and tourism, facilities for purchasing agricultural machinery and upgrading educational and health facilities.

Keywords: Satisfaction, Rural youth, Immigration, Anaj County.

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1. Introduction

Villages are one of the most important bases for the production of vital materials and meeting the basic needs of any society, and the development of any county depends first on the development of its rural sector, where a major share of agricultural production takes place. Given the position of rural areas in the dynamics of the county's economy, such as helping economic growth, controlling inflation, increasing employment and activity, can be a good platform for agricultural, livestock, industrial and service products, environmental protection and security. Every society needs creative and mentally and physically healthy human resources for its growth and development (Piltan & Boroumand, 2014, p. 120), young people as active, cheerful and strong have a high capacity and capability that can be in cultural dimensions. In the meantime, the productive role of rural youth is very important (Astin Feshan et al., 2015, p. 413). They also play a valuable role as a labor force in improving the economic and social situation of rural families. In the year of 2000, the United Nations considered youth as one of the main assets of any county to achieve rural development and pointed out that investing in improving the future of youth is the only way for growth and development of any county (Asadi and Yaghoubi, 2015, p. 3). The success of the county's socio-economic development policy also depends on attracting and retaining rural youth to live in rural areas and work in agriculture (Soltani et al., 2014). If there is no opportunity for the youth in the village, they will leave the village in search of suitable facilities and the ground will be prepared for the emptying of the village and ecological, social and economic crises at the national level (Astin Feshan et al., 2015, p. 413). At the present, the efforts of developing countries are to preserve rural youth in rural areas and to provide them with employment conditions in the agricultural profession in order to provide opportunities for rural youth employment. But the existence of factors such as education and media and facilities in cities or the class distance between city and village has caused the level of ideals of rural youth to increase and even the type of their desire to be different. All these factors cause young people to leave the village and migrate to cities (Poursina et al., 2010, p. 37) and youth migration has become one of the socio-economic inadequacies of rural society. Addressing the issue of youth ruralization for whatever

purpose is inevitably linked to agricultural issues and inevitably to rural development. Young people have a strong motivation to leave the village for various social, cultural and economic reasons. Rural youth exposure exposes the village to population instability, age and gender imbalances, declining rural development indicators - such as literacy - and, most importantly, rural aging, declining active labor and reduced productivity, and deepening development. The underdevelopment of villages has led (Ghadiri Masoom et al., 2012) assessing the level of satisfaction of residents, especially rural youth, with the living environment can help evaluate policies, rank places, and develop urban and rural management and planning strategies.

Based on the study and analysis of social development indicators, in 2016, the most deprived Township in each province was identified by the Ministry of Interior, which was recognized as the most deprived and underdeveloped Township in the central province of Khondab Township, which according to field studies in rural areas, despite of the high capabilities of the agricultural sector, the uncontrolled migration of villagers, especially young people from the villages of this city is high. Therefore, considering the current situation of the villages and the rate of migration of the villagers, especially the young generation, measures should be considered in order to preserve these capitals in rural areas. Therefore, it seems necessary to identify indicators and factors affecting youth satisfaction in order to provide their satisfaction and prevent destructive migration. In the present study, the level of satisfaction and the degree of importance of each factor in the satisfaction of young people with housing and facilities in the villages of Anaj County, one of the counties of Khondab Township, has been investigated.

2. Review of the Literature

Individuals assess their current situation according to a set of desires and needs (Shayan et al., 2010, p. 160). The first theoretical model of home satisfaction was proposed by Marna and Rogers (1975). They have considered the satisfaction of the living environment as dependent on the individual's understanding and evaluation of the characteristics of the living environment (Rafieian et al., 2009, p. 54). Therefore, the level of human satisfaction with

their environment indicates the extent to which goals and programs have been developed to improve living conditions (Barimani et al., 2014: 113).

The economic psychological approach defines satisfaction as customer experience of production and service providers. It can be said that all models of satisfaction have grown mainly in the economic and social fields, especially in the fields of market, education, health and leisure. But the geographical environment consists of different dimensions and these dimensions in relation to each other define the identity of the environment and control human activity and behavior. In some studies, satisfaction has been proposed as one of the main criteria for measuring environmental quality (Shayan et al., 2010: 160). High quality environment conveys a sense of well-being and satisfaction to the population through characteristics that may be physical, social and economic. Thus, satisfaction was introduced as a general criterion for measuring the quality of the environment (Rafieian et al., 2009: 55).

Assessment and perception of rural communities and people about the quality of life, as well as the reality of life, is greatly influenced by tangible and intangible factors. Quality of life in rural areas depends on many factors, including employment, adequate income, access to services such as education and health, health, the natural environment, security, and strong associations.

The purely physical-structural approach to the rural environment, regardless of socio-cultural values and economic indicators, has faced the growth and development of the village with many problems. Man, as a creature who inherently tends to improve the well-being and comfort of life, always seeks to achieve this goal in his plans (Badri et al., 2013: 53) To be satisfied with his life by meeting human needs, and the concept that is used to examine how human needs are met and a criterion for understanding the satisfaction or dissatisfaction of individuals and groups from different aspects of life, is quality of life (Boustani and et al., 2012: 168). Quality of life has physical, social, psychological, environmental and economic dimensions (Fattahi and Khorasani, 2012: 47; Azizpour et al., 2014: 108) Which reflects the level of fulfillment of human needs (Zielinska et al., 2010: 1) and reflects the general social, economic and environmental characteristics of the regions.

Quality of life means the feeling that a person has towards his social, emotional, and physical well-being, and this feeling is affected by the extent to which a person has achieved personal satisfaction in different life situations (Rezvani et al., 2013: 303). Due to the deprivation of rural society, it is necessary to study and analyze the quality of life of this group of society as a criterion in meeting the material and immaterial needs of rural families and their mental understanding and satisfaction of these needs (Barimani et al., 2014: 1; Mirzaeian et al., 2016: 2). Decreasing the quality of rural life compared to urban society and widening the gap between rural and urban settlements, the outflow of active population from the rural sector and its migration to the outskirts of cities and abandoning the county's limited water and soil resources and finally reducing productivity in agriculture It is one of the challenges facing rural environments (Ghadiri Masoom and Najafi Kani, 2003: 120). Quality of life is a criterion for measuring the extent to which the spiritual, psychological and material needs of society are met and the quality of rural life also means how the living conditions of rural families (Barani Pesyan et al., 2014: 74) which reduces life satisfaction Among individuals, society will lose its productive and capable manpower over time (Danesh et al., 2014: 4).

Due to the irregular migration of villagers to cities, however, some factors, such as a sense of belonging to the place of life and satisfaction with rural life, can motivate villagers, especially rural youth, to live in villages and work To provide agricultural products and prevent their migration to cities (Rostamalizadeh et al., 2018: 30). The decisions of those living in rural areas for relocation planning are based on a sense of overall satisfaction with the local community and the level of belonging to the local community (Long et al., 2012: 5).

Dimensions of place belonging include the social dimension, the emotional and cognitive dimension, and the physical dimension. The social dimension of the sense of belonging to the place considers the sense of belonging as a result of current social relations and interactions in the place and defines it as the main factor in the formation of this sense. The sense of belonging to the environment is the result of factors of social interactions that take place in the environment. According to this approach, the environment contains

information and common social signs that humans interact with their environment by understanding and deciphering them (Rostamalizadeh et al., 2018, p. 39). The emotional dimension of belonging to a place (perception and cognition) emphasizes human emotions and feelings about the place and the environment and considers the sense of belonging as a result of interaction between the person and physical, social and activity stimuli. In physical belonging to a place, the physical environment, by satisfying the material and spiritual needs of human beings, affects a person's dependence on himself (Siavoshpour et al., 2014).

A sense of belonging to a place is an emotional and meaningful relationship between a person and a place; an emotional bond that makes people consider that place a valuable place to return. The personal (individual) dimension that constitutes the sense of belonging, which includes the factor of perception, cognition and feeling, which is considered as an intrapersonal factor, and the dimensions of the physical environment and society are considered as external factors affecting the sense of belonging (Rostamalizadeh et al., 2018, p. 39).

Studies show that more satisfaction is measured in the context of health. Job satisfaction is one-dimensional and mainly in urban spaces and the satisfaction of people, especially young people in rural areas and its measurement has been less considered by researchers. Here are some of the researches that have been done in the field of satisfaction, quality of life and belonging of the villagers. Shayan et al., (2010) in a study entitled *Assessing the Level of Satisfaction of Villagers with the Residential Environment in Komijan Township* stated that the level of satisfaction in % 71 of the settlements is less than expected and with increasing education, satisfaction has decreased and physical dimensions are normal. And economics have had the greatest impact on residents' satisfaction. The quality of health and safety and the physical quality of the sample population are assessed as moderate. Kouchakinejad et al., (2011) have studied and measured the quality of life in rural areas of the Central District of Kermanshah Township. Their findings indicate that the three criteria of quality of infrastructure, quality of employment and income and quality of health and security at a high level of satisfaction. Residents are located in front of the four criteria of quality of leisure, environmental quality, quality of housing and

quality of education. Barimani et al., (2013) in their research entitled "Assessment and Analysis of Quality of Life in Rural Areas of Nikshahr Township have concluded that the quality of life of rural people in the economic and social dimensions is lower than average and economic resources and facilities are most effective basic facilities and services have the least impact on quality of life. Asadi and Yaghoubi (2015) in the article assessed the tendency of rural youth to live in rural areas and the factors affecting it in Qasr Shirin villages and believed that the sense of value in rural areas and the tendency to employment in agriculture play a positive role. Astin Feshan et al., (2015) in the study of the effect of belonging and satisfaction with rural life on the participation of youth in agricultural activities in Kermanshah Township concluded that the belonging of young people to their village and their satisfaction with rural life is moderate.

Youth participation in agricultural activities was assessed as relatively good and it was suggested that planners and policy makers pay maximum attention to the education of villagers in their programs. Findings of Anabestani et al., (2015) entitled Spatial Analysis of Factors Affecting the Quality of Life in Rural Areas showed that physical and environmental dimensions have the greatest impact on quality of life and economic and social variables in the next rank are located. Arghan (2017) in the study and prioritization of factors affecting life satisfaction in rural areas of Sorkheh city showed that economic factors are the most important factor of satisfaction with life in the rural environment from the perspective of officials and social factors are the most important social satisfaction. Also, rural infrastructure had the greatest impact and the quality of education had the least impact on the quality of life of rural households. Rostamalizadeh (2018) in an article examined the determinants of rural youth belonging to their place of residence in the Township's of Osko and Hashtrood and came to the conclusion that the environment and nature of the village, meeting needs, sense of identity and participation in collective rural affairs have decisive roles in the belonging of rural youth. Sojasi Gheidari and Saadati (2019), in their research entitled Factors and Components Affecting the Increase of Spatial Belonging and Sustainability of Youth in Rural Areas of Neishabour Township believe that economic components with rural

employment indicators and living costs are the highest average among the youth.

Bajema et al., (2002) consider the existence of suitable educational conditions, favorable economic situation and expansion of social activities to increase the motivation of rural youth to stay in rural areas and employment in the agricultural sector. Birgit (2006) in his research entitled "Youth Migration from Rural Areas: Ethical Principles of Supporting Youth and Rural Communities in Political Discussions" believes that if rural youth are deprived of the opportunity to study and work, they will be forced to leave their rural communities. Therefore, political interventions and allocation of more resources to rural areas should be considered and that by supporting justice and gender equality, rural youth should be supported and empowerment of youth and promotion of local community development should be a priority. Thissen (2010) in a study aimed at investigating the cause of rural youth migration in rural Belgium and the Netherlands showed that young people consider the lack of job opportunities in their place of residence as the most important reason. Benedict (2013) examined the effects of variables such as education, Internet use, family and neighborhood satisfaction, physical and mental health, and participation on quality of life and rural development. Wojewodzka et al., (2019) in a study entitled "A New Perspective on Living Conditions in Rural Areas" believe that the quality of life depends on living conditions and vice versa. Public services and the transport sector play key roles in living conditions.

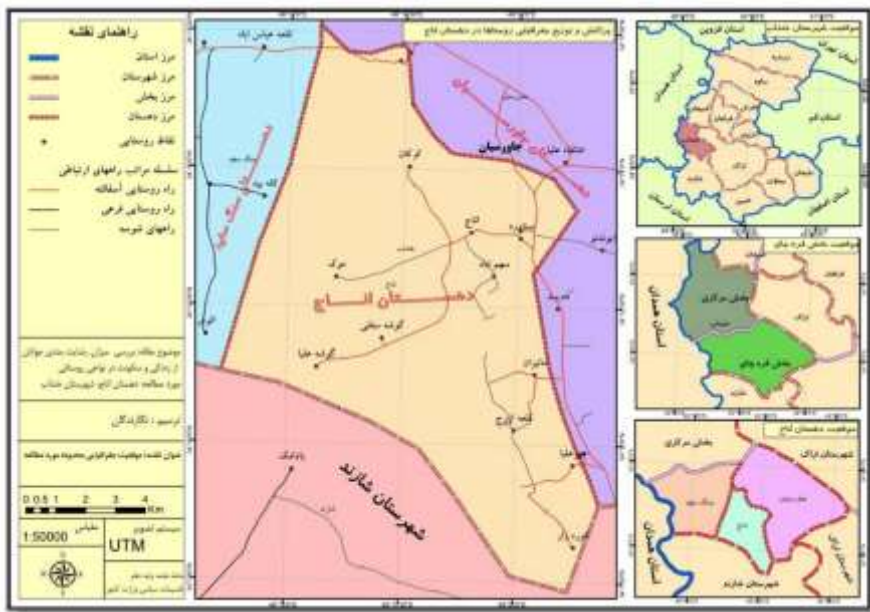
3. Methodology

The research method is descriptive-analytical and information collection is based on the library method and field operations (direct observation, and a questionnaire). The statistical population of the study is the villages of Anaj County of Qarachi District of Khondab Township, which in 2016 had 13 inhabited rural points. The total population of this village is 11224 people and 3310 families. The center of this county is Anaj village with a population of 1427 people with 411 families (Statistics Center of Iran, 2016). According to the resolution of the Supreme Youth Council in 2005, all Iranian men and

women aged 15 to 29 years old in the county were referred to as young (Asadi and Yaghoubi, 2015, p. 7), but in 2019, referring to the announcement of the resolution of the Supreme Youth Council by the Minister Sports and Youth, the age range of young people changed from 15 to 29 years old to 18 to 35 years old (<https://www.isna.ir>).

But in this study, the period of youth of the same 15 to 29 years was considered that based on Cochran's formula, the sample size of 371 young people in this age group was determined. The sampling method was simple random quota. The data collection tool was a researcher-made questionnaire.

Based on the theoretical and conceptual framework of the research in this study, in order to operationalize the variables, the items in this case are addressed to the considered variables. In this study, 4 dimensions and 8 indicators and different related items were designed for each variable, which are presented in Table 1.



Graph 1. Geographical location of the study area

The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed based on the opinions of several experts and faculty members and the reliability of the questionnaire

was measured using Cronbach's alpha test, the value of which was 0.783, which is more than 0.7, which means that the questionnaire can be trusted.

Table 1. Dimensions, indicators and items of research

dimension	Indicator
Economic	Employment
	Income
	Cost
Social	Health and social security
	Communication and social ties
Physical - Infrastructure	Physical
	Infrastructure
environmental	Environmental quality

4. Findings

The description of the research findings shows that the statistical sample was characterized by an average age of 21 years. In terms of gender, 217 (58.5%) were male and 154 (41.5%) were female. According to the level of education, 14% had a fifth grade, 55% a cycle, 22% a diploma and 9% a diploma or higher. Also, 79% of people are married and 21% are single.

In order to measure youth satisfaction, the eight indicators presented in Table 1 were evaluated and analyzed. In this research, 5 degree Likert spectrum has been used in which from a lower spectrum with a value of 1 to very high spectrum with a value of 5 has been used. As stated in most of the studies related to satisfaction, a score higher than 4 indicates high satisfaction, scores between 3 and 4 indicate average satisfaction, and scores below less than 3 indicate satisfaction. Youth satisfaction range with the indicators of health and social security, communication and social ties, physical and infrastructure is moderate and the index degree of employment, income and expenses is low.

According to the above table, young people are satisfied with the income index at the lowest level and the environmental quality index at the highest level.

Table 2. Comparison of the average rank of research variables

Indicator	Average rating	The significance level
Employment	2/9	0/008
Income	2/5	0/000
Cost	2/8	0/000
Health and social security	3/2	0/000
Communication and social ties	3/6	0/006
Body	3/8	0/000
Foundation	3/9	0/000
Environmental quality	4/1	0/000
Overall Satisfaction Index	3/4	0/000

Source: Results extracted from the questionnaire

To evaluate the significance of the observed mean of one-sample t-test at 99% confidence level, ie with 1% error was performed.

Table 3. Calculation of One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	99 %Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Employment	-7/478	370	0/008	-0/0658	-1/524	-0/193
Income	-4/980	370	0/000	-0/4767	-0/905	-0/431
Cost	-0/465	370	0/000	-0/1983	-0/145	-0/310
Health and social security	5/712	370	0/000	0/2291	0/167	0/689
Communication	1/349	370	0/006	0/6025	0/322	0/692
Physical	0/981	370	0/000	0/8069	0/348	0/604
Infrastructure	5/720	370	0/000	0/8958	0/698	0/988
Environmental quality	13/670	370	0/000	1/1035	0/322	0/538
Total Satisfaction Index	8/754	370	0/000	0/4367	0/143	0/417

Stepwise regression has been used to measure the effect of different dimensions on satisfaction. According to the results of Table 4, after entering these eight indicators, the results showed that 84.8% of the changes in the dependent variable explain the satisfaction of rural youth with these eight indicators. Environmental quality has the greatest impact on satisfaction, which explains 39.3% of the changes in satisfaction.

Table 4. Coefficients for determining the indicators affecting satisfaction in the stepwise regression model

levels	Indicators entered into the model at each step	The correlation coefficient R	Determination coefficients R2	The share of each index in explaining the dependent variable (percentage)
step 1	Environmental quality	0/494	0/393	39/3
Step 2	Infrastructure	0/633	0/588	19/5
Step 3	Communication	0/685	0/632	4/4
Step 4	Health and social security	0/754	0/712	8
Step 5	Physical	0/791	0/793	8/1
Step 6	Employment	0/816	0/819	2/6
Step 7	Income	0/847	0/834	1/5
Step 8	Cost	0/865	0/848	1/4

Beta value shows the relative importance of independent variables among dependent variables. Based on the results of beta coefficients in Table 5, it can be seen that the environmental index with a beta value of 0.576 more than other indices affects the level of youth satisfaction.

Table 5. The effect of effective indicators on the level of satisfaction of rural youth

Imported index of a model	Beta	Amount T	The significance level
Environmental quality	0/576	3/28	0/000
Infrastructure	0/452	2/62	0/000
Communication and social connections	0/431	4/45	0/000
Health and social security	0/247	4/72	0/000
Physical	0/432	2/72	0/000
Employment	0/151	-4/08	0/000
Income	0/327	-2/69	0/000
Cost	0/298	-2/43	0/000

5. Conclusion

Due to the huge flood of migration from the countryside in recent years, the main reasons for which are the lack of welfare facilities; few or no employment and lack of services provided to villagers and their dissatisfaction with the rural environment. Considering that the quality and quantity of welfare at the village level in rural communities is inadequate due to the lack of social services and other services; Overall, the quality of life and the well-being and satisfaction of the villagers, especially the youth, is at a low level compared to urban life. Therefore, one of the most important duties of government officials is to be aware of the needs and desires of young people and strive to achieve this.

In this study, the status of indicators and analysis of the level of youth satisfaction with living in rural areas of Anaj district, the average rank of indicators and one-sample t-test and stepwise recursion have been used. In the first step, the amount of each of the research indicators was tested by using a one-sample t-test. The results of this test show that the average status of employment, income and expenditure indices was assessed as lower than average and this indicates that young people are in lower satisfaction with the status of economic indicators and this causes the migration of this group of rural residents. But the average indicators of health and social security, communication and social ties, physical, infrastructure and environmental quality are somewhat higher than the average of the items. In general, young people are moderately satisfied with the facilities and natural and social environment of villages and finally the overall satisfaction index. It was evaluated as above average, so it can be inferred that the villages of Anaj district are in a moderate situation in terms of research indicators.

The results of the average satisfaction of young people with the facilities and services of villages and the study of rural repulsions are that rural development officials should think about providing more facilities needed by villages, especially the facilities needed by rural youth, especially employment and youth participation in activities. Be economical, especially in matters of agriculture and sustainability in rural areas. Since job creation and income generation are two important parameters in the dominant discourses of rural development planners and policy makers; therefore, without a doubt, the most important factor accelerating the process of rural income generation is job diversification and also tourism is one of the tools. It is powerful for job creation and economic development in rural areas and diversifying the rural economy and providing capital for the formation of entrepreneurial activities and empowerment of local people by creating new job opportunities, educating villagers and documenting tourist attractions to development. Therefore, the results of this study in terms of the effect of physical, natural and social factors in increasing satisfaction are in line with the results of Shayan et al., (2010), Anabestani et al., (2015), Arghan (2017), Rostamalizadeh (2015), Bajma et al., (2002) , Theodori (2004) Wojudka et al., (2019) who believe that the physical,

natural and social dimensions have the greatest impact on residents' satisfaction. The migration of rural youth to cities is consistent with the results of Rostamalizadeh et al., (2013); Asadi and Yaghoubi (2015); Sajasi Gheidari and Saadati (2015); Birgit (2006) and Thyssen (2010).

According to the knowledge obtained from the studied villages to increase the survival of young people in these villages and prevent their migration and continued production, the following suggestions are presented:

- Provide the necessary bases for starting new businesses related to rural tourism and farm tourism and eco-tourism resorts.
- Equipping Mehr Shahr Hospital in Khondab, which is the only hospital in this city, and easy and cheap access to doctors and clinics, creation and development of health facilities and benefiting from health services.
- Providing cultural and sports facilities, as well as the construction of indoor sports facilities in large rural villages, especially for women in the villages of upper copper, Manizan, Dehsad and Anaj.
- Establishment of conversion industries related to agriculture and horticulture; including packaging, compote making, tomato paste factory.
- Providing appropriate facilities with special conditions for the purchase of agricultural machinery for young people.
- Construction of cold storage and warehouse to store agricultural products and present products to the market other than the production seasons to increase the income of gardeners and farmers.
- Providing facilities with easier conditions for the construction of better quality housing for young people.
- Encourage educated youth and use their knowledge for rural development planning.
- Creating the necessary infrastructure for the development of rural ICT centers and paving the way for jobs related to information technology and the Internet for young people.
- Assigning executive and managerial responsibilities to young people, especially rural educated women, in order to carry out matters related to women and other matters.

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