

Performance Evaluation of Dehyari^{1*} in Achieving Rural Sustainable Development (Case Study: Central Part of Sanandaj City)

Rasoul Mohammad Rezaee¹, Hossain Raheli², Snour Ahmadi^{*3}, Atefeh Ahmadi⁴

1- Associate Professor, Department of economic and agricultural development, Tabriz University, Iran

2- Associate Professor, Department of economic and agricultural development, Tabriz University, Iran

3- Ph.D student of rural Rural Development, Tabriz University and General Manager of Governor General Office of Research and Education in Kurdistan, Iran

4- Ph.D Student of Geography and rural planning, Kharazmi University, Tehran, Iran

Abstract

At the present time, any organization requires careful assessment of its performance to achieve greater efficiency and effectiveness of their activities and especially to gain people's satisfaction. In rural areas, there are also organizations that are not exempt from the rule. This article aims to assess the role and performance of Rural Municipalities (in Iran called Dehyari) in rural development management in the rural areas of the central part in Sanandaj City. The applied research is done by descriptive – analytical method and the required data have been collected through library research, documents, field study and questionnaire. The research data were collected among twelve selected villages which are located in the central part of Sannandaj using simple random sampling and then the prepared questionnaires were completed by 330 family heads. Data analysis was performed by SPSS Software and Chi – square test. The results showed that considering the five used indicators, Rural Municipalities (Dehyari) performance in achieving to rural development goals have been somewhat successful. There is also significant relationship between village distance to the nearest city, Rural Municipalities (Dehyari) performances of health issues and of monitoring development projects.

Key word: rural management, rural sustainable development, performance evaluation, Dehyari, Sanandaj city

Corresponding Author: Snour Ahmadi (snour.ahmadi@yahoo.com)

¹: Dehyari: This word is municipality in rural areas.

Introduction

By the end of the twentieth century rural development is still facing with numerous problems in most countries including our country, due to the ineffective previous strategies, models and guidelines on rural development they has been failed to resolve various problems such as poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, lack of environmental sustainability and etc in rural areas. These issues have been considered in recent years once again and government's theorists, planners and executives are seeking to reduce rural problems with new solutions and strategies (Mahdavi, 2006: 2). Rural Management Reform is one of the newly considered strategies which is implemented in some countries and is produced desired outcomes.

Management is the most important factor in the life, growth or death of a community which controls the process of moving from the current situation to the desired outcomes (Eftekhari, 20007: 1). Village is the smallest unit of a social organization in Iran and obviously this social unit in terms of its social and economic relations and adhering to common laws and civil code is not free from management organizations' requirements (Mahdavi, 2004: 21). In fact, rural management is the process of organizing and directing the rural society and environment through establishment of organizations and institutions. These organizations and institutions are applied as tools to meet rural community goals. Rural management is a multilateral process which consists of three elements of people, government and public institutions. In this process, rural organizations and people's involvement are led to develop and implement the rural development programs and projects (Rezvani, 2004: 211). Rural municipalities (or Dehyari in Iran) as public, non – governmental organizations are seeking to manage local affairs supervised by the villagers. The main functions of rural municipalities (Dehyaris) are hygiene improvement, construction and maintenance of infrastructures (water, electricity, telephone, and gas), providing local green space, health centers, improving educational and cultural affairs , etc (Journal of Dehyari, 2003: 3). This study, considering the distance of village to the city is trying to review and assess the performance and efficiency of rural management in local associations such as rural municipalities (Dehyaris) and Islamic Councils of the villages located in the central part of Sanandaj City and the extent to which rural development goals are implemented by their administrators. Therefore, this study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How much rural municipalities (Dehyari)s have been successful to achieve rural development?
2. Does any relationship between the distance to the city and rural municipalities (Dehrari)'s performance?

Research Hypotheses:

1. It seems that rural municipalities (Dehyaris) have been successful in achieving rural development goals.
 - They have been successful in implementing health regulations and providing health centers in the villages.
 - They have been successful in the various fields of developmental, educational and cultural projects (advise the villagers on implementing Rural Guide Plans, construction of library , ...)
 - They have been successful in supervision and monitoring development and construction projects.
 - There is a significant relationship between rural municipalities' performance and identification of inadequacies and deficiencies and also providing logical solutions.
 - There is a significant relationship between rural municipalities' performance and coordination with the village's Islamic Councils.
2. There is a significant relationship between manager's performance and village's distance to city.

Theoretical Principles

Villages as one of the oldest organizational unit in Iran and the smallest unit of society in country subdivisions require their proper place in the cycle of development. Because of its social and economic relations and adhering to common laws and civil code, this social unit is not free from civil institutions (Qadiri & Riahi, 2003: 1). Before the Constitutional government in Iran, management system in villages was non – government and people with such titles as Kadkhoda, Salar, Sarboneh (Head, Chief) ... were responsible for rural management. In 1354 (1975) was removed Kadkhoda (Headman) from rural management system and Rural Councils were replaced. After Islamic Revolution in Iran were taken important actions in the field of rural management. Reform Act of Islamic Councils and the formation of Dehyari and also creation of Rural Development Office are examples of these attempts (Mahdavi & Najafi, 2005: 22). Formation of Councils was an effective action in the process of public participation in rural development. But since this advisory and supervisory entity without executive powers is incomplete, in the 1377 (1998) parliament's enactment gave permission to Ministry of Interior to establish an organization called "Dehyari" or Rural Municipality to administer rural affairs. Finally, in 1380 (2001) Statute of Dehyaris was approved by the Cabinet. Dehyaris are responsible for the implementation of rural projects and can implement rural development projects with public and other executive agencies' participation (Rezvani et al, 2013: 200).

Rural management is an intertwined set of possibilities and a variety of natural, human, institutional, structural and functional features. Rural management should conduct rural planning, organize rural

activities, and monitor the implemented activities and even undertake motivating, organizing, directing, and monitoring rural population to optimize the performance of rural affairs. The main objectives of rural management is to improve working and living conditions of the population considering their socio – economic difference, encourage to sustainable economic and social development and also protect the physical environment (Farahani, 2012: 120).

Development is a complex and multi – dimensional flow which is incorporated the reorganization and introducing different orientation the entire socio – economic system. In addition to improving of productivity and total revenue, it includes major changes in institutional, social and administrative structures and also public opinions. In many cases, development even encompasses people's habits, customs and beliefs (Azkia, 2005: 27). This definition of development emphasizes on improving and essential changes of traditional structures. But the important thing is that development and changes should consider unity in all aspects of the structure and also future generations and environment. This has attracted special attention in sustainable development.

Sustainable rural development is unity among the social, economic, cultural and environmental aspects in order to improve the living standards and welfare of rural people. Considering the environmental factors is of importance for sustainable rural development. In many literatures related to development is stated that rural development should be central to any discussion about the process of national development. In fact, rural development is the key to all developmental flows (Ake, 1996: 14 cited in Pur Taheri, 2012: 114).

In the 1970s, rural development is seen as something to improve people's living standards and decrease rural poverty. With the expansion of the concept of sustainable development in the 1980s opened new areas of development indicators especially in rural regions. In this regard, sustainable development is defined as a comprehensive approach to improving the quality of human life and achieving to economic, social, and environmental welfare of human settlements (Torman, 2000: 2).

Performance evaluation is "the process of assessment of executive agencies' performance in terms of their efficiency, effectiveness, empowerment and accountability in the framework of principles and concepts of management science to achieve the defined organizational goals and tasks in executive plans" (Haji Sharifi, 1992: 7). Previously, financial indicators were more often used as a tool to evaluate the organizations' performance. This was lead to inefficiency of performance evaluation's systems (Kaplan & Norton, 1992: 9). Since the financial indicators do not associated with organizational strategies, they may conflict with the goals of the organization and create problems in formulating organizational strategy (Rezvani, 2013: 201). **Lotman** and **Pierman** in 1999 and **Desander** in 200 have stated that personal prejudice, vague and biased performance standards,

insufficient documents, lack of education are among factors that reduce reliability and validity of performance evaluation's system (Nattavud Pimpa, 2005: 15).

Management and Sustainable Rural Development

During the past few decades in Iran, rural development in general and rural management in particular was not a thoughtful action and coherent process. This does not negate the previous significant and constructive measures in some rural communities, but it means failure of goals and programs and lack of clear guidelines for rural development (Saeedi, 1991: 4).

According to World Bank's article in 1975 titled Rural Development Policy, rural development is a strategy to improve social and economic life of the rural poors and since the objective of rural development is often poverty reduction, this strategy should lead to increase the production and purchasing power and obviously to achieve this goal it is essential an efficient management is essential (Mahdavi, Najafi Kani, 2005: 22).

After many changes and challenges in the field of Rural Management, Rural Islamic Councils and Dehyari appeared in the area of the country's rural management. As the name of Council implies, the ability to create new meaningful collaborative and interactive relationships to facilitate the process of rural development is the key objective of the public entity. Therefore, sustainable rural development requires the relationship between Councils as a supervisory body and Dehyari as an executive body in the villages. In fact, strong and bilateral relationship and cooperation between these two areas lead to facilitate administration of rural affairs and will also accelerate the pace of rural development (Badri, 2011: 164). All governments and nations which are sought to organize sustainable development in their country should have a comprehensive view to provide the required action plans. A sustainable development considers all interests of different groups in order to manage the challenges and problems, it also must be reconciled differences and opposing expectations to balance and harmonize the present and future development.

During the management of sustainable development, managers are trying to achieve the goals of industrial and economic development, they also are not inattentive to human and social development; but they are seeking to comprehensive and continuous development. Although the expression of the mentioned goals is simple and beautiful, in practice, it's achieving is very difficult. In this regard, global willpower and determination, governmental and non- governmental, national and international organizations should try together to resolve the problems of sustainable development. Management of sustainable development needs a multi – dimensional, comprehensive, universal and prospective management. Management of sustainable development requires a political system to seek effective participation of citizens in decision – making and to coordinate and cooperate the people of all countries in order to preserve their environment. Management of sustainable development requires an

economic system to offer solutions to free from tensions resulting from heterogeneous and uneven development and reconcile economics with human expectations' culture. Management of sustainable development requires a production system to respect its commitments towards environment and conversation of the environment. Management of sustainable development requires a technological system to replace development technology with human technology for the sake of development (Shekari, 2005: 43).

Materials and Methods

Considering the subject and the purpose of the research, it is used descriptive – analytical method. In the first step to develop the theoretical principles of the research it is used library studies and documents. The statistical population of the research is residents of villages located in the central part of the Sanandaj City which according to the last census are 19024 people. The sample size was determined using Cochran Method among the villagers. Considering the total number of households living in 12 villages, a sample size of 330 people was calculated and then, using simple random sampling, the samples were selected. It was used questionnaire which has been developed according to the research objectives. The answer categories were on a five point Likert Scale (never to very often). In this rural district (Humeh) among 17 villages which have Council and Dehyari, 12 villages were selected as samples. In this analytical method according to research hypotheses and operational variables were considered indicators which are in accordance with Councils and Dehyari's performance in achieving goals of rural development and factors affecting the performance of village managers. To analyze the data it was used inferential statistical tests. According to data types and their scales, it was used Chi-square test and correlation coefficient with the help of SPSS Software. Questionnaire's validity is estimated 0/708 by Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Considering that we were at the beginning of the fourth Council elections and while the people completing the questionnaire they still did not reasonable and accurate assessment of the performance of new Councils and Dehyaris, thus the performance of the third period have been considered.

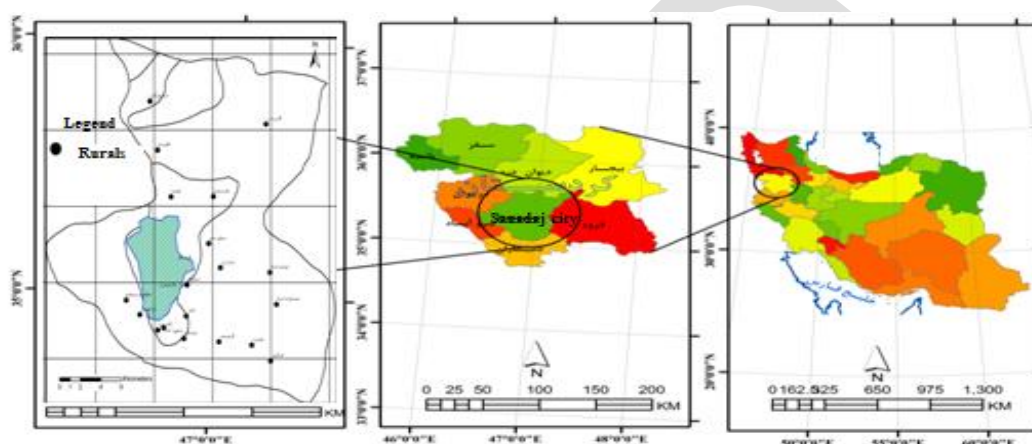
Table 1 – Indicators of performance evaluation of Dehyari

The degree of satisfaction of rural health issues
The degree of satisfaction of different educational fields
The degree of satisfaction of monitoring development projects
The degree of satisfaction of identification of inadequacies and shortcomings
Interaction and cooperation between Councils and Dehyari

Introduction of the under – researched Region

Sannandaj City is located at 46° and 59' East longitude from Prime Meridian, 35° and 47' North latitude from the equator and 5° West longitudes from Tehran meridian (Statistical Yearbook of Kurdistan Province, 2011). Sanandaj is the capital of the Province of Kurdistan and it includes two urban centers, three districts and 10 rural districts and rural district of Humeh is located in the central part of the city which has 19 villages.

Map 1. Political Subdivisions of central villages of Sanandaj



Research Findings

Personal characteristics of respondents

The highest percentage of respondents aged between 25 – 34 years old, the highest percentage of respondent's education level, 38/6 percent have high school diploma, and among rural population 36/5 percent of respondents were employed in agriculture.

Analytical Findings

For the first hypotheses concerning performance evaluation of rural managers in achieving rural development goals was used the Chi – square test (Chi – square statistic compares frequencies or the number of categorical responses between two or more groups). So that according to Likert Scales respondents has announced the rate of their satisfaction to each five-choice questions (very high, high, medium, low, and very low). With such information we can answer the question whether there is any significant difference between the observed frequencies in the sample and the hypothetical frequencies or not.

People's Satisfaction with the Councils and Dehyari's performance

On Rural Health systems

To evaluate the performance of rural managers it was expected that from 330 respondents, 50 percent or 165 respondents choose "medium" option and the remaining 50 percent choose other options as the best option. Thus, with alpha 0/00 and confidence level of 95%, due to the significant difference between the observed and the expected distribution, H0 is rejected in favor of H1.

Table 2. The observed and the expected frequency related to rural health issues

satisfaction	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Sample Size
Observed (O _i)	53	89	126	35	27	330
Expected (E _i)	41/25	41/25	165	41/25	41/25	330

Table 3. Results of Chi – square processes related to rural health issues

Test Statistics			
			bhdshti
Chi-Square ^a			66.315
df			4
Asymp. Sig.			.000
Monte Carlo	Sig.		.000 ^b
Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000
		Upper Bound	.000
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 41.3.			
b. Based on 10000 sampled tables with starting seed 299883525.			

People's Satisfaction with the Councils and Dehyari's performance On different educational fields

It was expected that 50 percent of respondents choose the "high" option as the most appropriate answer to this question. According to the table the observed distribution related to "high" option is 99 people and the most frequencies are related to "medium" option. Thus, with alpha 0/00 and confidence level of 95%, due to the significant difference between the observed and the expected distribution, H0 is rejected in favor of H1. These figures show that Dehyari has failed to meet the expectations of rural people completely.

Table 4. The observed and the expected frequencies related to different educational fields

satisfaction	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Sample Size
Observed (O_i)	37	46	95	99	53	330
Expected (E_i)	41/25	41/25	165	41/25	41/25	330

Table 5. Results of Chi – square processes related to educational fields

Test Statistics				amuzeshi
Chi-Square ^a				167.727
df				4
Asymp. Sig.				.000
Monte Carlo Sig.				.000 ^b
Sig. 95% Confidence Interval				Lower Bound Upper Bound
				.000 .000
a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 41.3.				
b. Based on 10000 sampled tables with starting seed 926214481.				

People's Satisfaction with the Councils and Dehyari's performance

On Development Projects' Monitoring

Considering that the expected answer for "medium" option was 165 respondents among 330 people, thus with degree of freedom 4, confidence level of 95% and alpha 0/01, one can assume that research sample does not show the same level of satisfaction among respondents. Therefore in H_0 there is difference between the observed and the expected frequency, so H_1 is accepted.

Table 6. The observed and the expected frequencies related to the development projects ' monitoring

satisfaction	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Sample Size
Observed (O_i)	40	64	137	43	46	330
Expected (E_i)	41/25	41/25	165	41/25	41/25	330

Table 7. The obtained results of processes related to the development projects' monitoring

Test Statistics	
	nezarat
Chi-Square ^a	17.958
df	4
Asymp. Sig.	.001

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 41.3.

People's Satisfaction with the Councils and Dehyari's performance

On identifying the inadequacies and deficiencies

Here it was expected that 50 percent of respondents to choose the "medium" option. According to Table 8 more than 50% have chosen the "medium" option and these figures represent the majority of respondents are satisfied with the performance of Dehyari in identifying the inadequacies and deficiencies and providing solution.

Table 8. The observed and the expected frequencies related to the identifying the inadequacies and deficiencies and providing reasonable solution.

satisfaction	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Sample Size
Observed (O _i)	38	61	152	42	37	330
Expected (E _i)	41/25	41/25	165	41/25	41/25	330

Table 9. Results of Chi – square processes related to identifying inadequacies and deficiencies

Test Statistics			
	tavanai tashkhis		
Chi-Square ^a	66.315		
df	4		
Asymp. Sig.	.000		
Monte Carlo Sig.	.000 ^b		
Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	Lower Bound	.000
		Upper Bound	.000

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 41.3.

b. Based on 10000 sampled tables with starting seed 299883525.

People's Satisfaction with Dehyari's performance

On Interaction and Coordination with the Rural Islamic Councils

It was expected that 204 respondents choose the "No" option as the most appropriate answer to the question about bilateral coordination between Dehyari and Islamic Councils. Considering the observed distribution it is specified that there is a difference between the observed distribution (204)

and the expected distribution (200), that is Dehyari does not interact with Islamic Councils completely.

Table 10. The observed and the expected frequencies related to interaction between Dehyari and rural Islamic Councils

satisfaction	Yes	No	Sample Size
The observed	126	204	330
The expected	130	200	330

The Second Hypothesis

This hypothesis has pointed out that there is a significant relationship between village's distance to the city and rural Dehyari's performance. Correlation Test Correlation Test was used to test this hypothesis. According to the following table village's distance to the city has correlated with Council's performance on the rural health system, and development project's monitoring, but in other cases there is no correlation.

Table 11. The correlation coefficient between village's distance to the city and Dehyari's performance

performances	correlation	Significance level
Rural Health Issues	0/193**	0/005
Different Educational Fields	0/038	0/570
Development Projects' Monitoring	0/230**	0/00
Identifying Inadequacies and Deficiencies	0/68	0/309
Interaction between Council and Dehyari	0/006	0/934

Conclusions

If the performance evaluation is done correctly, accountability of executive agencies will bring about public trust, customer satisfaction, development new capabilities, stability and national development. Villages as social units are not exempt from this rule. Dehyari's officials are a group of administrators who have recently entered the field of rural management in Iran. Dehyaris like other management bodies need to assess their performance, thereby to become aware of their strengths and weaknesses in their way to attain determined objectives (Rezvani, 2013: 213). The followings are research results related to two mentioned hypotheses: According to the sample society, the most frequency of performance of Dehyari's staff in rural health issues is related to "medium" option. According to the findings, it is clear that Dehyari role in rural health issues is average. It was expected that 50 percent (165) of respondents to the question of D²ehyari's success in various educational and training fields

².

choose "high" option, but the observed distribution is 99 people and there is a significant difference between the expected and the observed distribution. Thus, they were not entirely successful in this regard.

Studies show that in sample villages, the most respondents were satisfied with Dehyari's performance in identifying rural deficiencies and inadequacies and providing reasonable solutions. Considering the observed significance level of alpha 0/00, the hypothesis that Dehyari's staff has been successful in monitoring development projects and plans was confirmed and sample respondents were satisfied with Dehyari's performance. Concerning the interaction between Dehyari and Islamic Councils and the observed confidence level 95% and the Chi – square, it can be concluded that the most of the respondents have been chosen "No" option. In order to achieve rural development, interaction and coordination between Dehyari and Islamic Council in the areas of planning, implementation and monitoring is necessary and as long as this problem has not been resolved, the rural development will not take place. There is a significant relationship between village's distance to the city and performance of Dehyari's staff regarding rural health issues and monitoring of development projects at the alpha level of 1%. In other cases has been identified a significant correlation.

Recommendations

- Dehyari's staff should be given comprehensive training in order to familiarize with the evaluation criteria. This is one of the factors improving their performance. Among the effective strategies that can help the staff familiarity with principles of organizational performance evaluation are training classes, in – service training, and preparation of educational booklets.
- Taking part in trainings courses to familiarize with participation and attraction techniques is essential to attract the cooperation and collaboration of the rural population. Indeed, if Dehyari's staffs learn to implement rural development programs with participatory approaches, it gives the guarantee that their plans will be implemented successfully and will affect social development positively.
- Continuous and careful monitoring of Dehyari's performance and their activities which is done by organizations such as district and provincial governing, governor general office and also developing incentive and motivating policies for Dehyari's staffs can be effective steps to encourage them in the performance of their duties.
- Establishment of rapport and interaction between the Islamic Council and Dehyari: in this regard, it is necessary the council and Dehyari members be aware of their responsibilities. They should strengthen the spirit of brotherhood, understanding and providing services among them.
- Considering that in the sample villages the establishment of some educational and infrastructural facilities (such as Internet Cafes, computer training, etc) could create major changes in physical,

economic and cultural areas. Thus, Dehyaris and Councils can implement such plans with help of public participation and other related financial assistance.

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