**ORIGINAL ARTICLE**

Examine of Urban Poverty in Ancient and Historic area of Ardakan city, Iran

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**ABSTRACT**

In this overview of Urban Poverty in Ancient & Historic area of Ardakan, We examine poverty in the area for the 2005 era, with a final out look to future. Retrospective analysis of urban poverty in Iran and Ardakan, current situation evaluation, opportunities, challenges and future improvement strategy is discussed in the paper. This article concludes that system of urban development and specifically in part of management in Ardakan needs a fundamental modernizing movement. Such a movement required many elements which cannot be achieved in isolation.

**Key words:** Historic area, urban poverty, Retrospective analysis.

**Introduction**

Understanding of urban poverty:

In recent years, the flight against poverty has become the main objective of development policies. The mixed results produced by two decades of stabilization and structural adjustment on the standard of living of households in developing countries have led many scholars to pursue on this subject. The poverty phenomenon has already been defined in different ways by different scholars with different nations even they are on the same subject, but one concept underlies all the definitions; ‘Some kind of deprivation of common living basis’ (SCI, 2004).

Moreover, the set of definitions reflect two general view points in recognizing the poor population; the absolute view point and the relative view point. Which these two conceptions affect policy making on the challenge of poverty alleviation differently (SCI, 2004). Obviously the outcomes of each study method will shows that the poverty line might accept a range of values with regard to the poverty definition and the measurement approach adopted. As statistical center of Iran, (SCI, 2004) reported, for any methods application in measurement of poverty line evidence that the urban poverty line stands above the rural poverty line and the absolute poverty line falls under the relative poverty line in Iran. Not to mention that, some researchers, believe that only 12.6 (Bagheri & others, 2007) of the total population could be reckoned as poor, on the other hand, some other states it is as high as 70% (Sadeghi, 2009) and this wide gap is caused to many reasons such as; different notions on the concept of poverty, different method of computing the data and naught of certain scientific procedure for poverty measurement.

**Introduce the case study:**

The case study area is a primary care texture of Ardakan as an organic & historic city where situated in the center of Iran. Ardakan has been emerged based on primary needs and in accordance with climate conditions and environmental capabilities.

First dwellers settled there more than 600 years ago when they have been evolved a habitat from mud brick / adobe and clay, compact together with narrow lanes which it has been in accordance with the climate and local material such Ardakan located at a desert flat with dry and hot climate. This part of the city is including 1211 houses which 79.7% (Ghaderi, 2006) of them have belonged to before six decades ago.

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Methodology:

Due to the lack of information on the poverty and poverty lines and to avoid unsubstantiated exaggeration on the magnitude of the poverty of the area of Ardakan, in this paper we use the data from the case study households income and expenditure survey implemented by Ghaderi (Ghaderi, 2006) to calculate the poverty and compare it to absolute as well as relative poverty lines for urban areas of the country which is computed and indicated by statistical research center of Iran’s members (Bagheri & others, 2007) as well as Najem (Najem, 2007) has reported.

To determine the factors that would affect poverty, we use central tendency measures for the analysis. Moreover the effects of explanatory variables on income are interpreted as to have the reverse effects on poverty. The dependent variable is literacy level of head family.

In most studies on poverty, such as those using household expenditure survey data, all families with different employment and difference income situations are considered. In our study, however, our sample includes only the household expenditure survey data. Hence, further research is needed to investigate the poverty of individuals with other circumstances.

We computed both absolute as well as relative poverty from the household cross-sectional data on the area and compared them with national poverty line for urban areas in Iran for the same era.

Data:

The study utilizes the family's income & expenditure cross sectional data of 2005 that were survey by Ghaderi (Ghaderi, 2006) through 120 questioner completion on the area. And also we used some papers which have drawn on the poverty line by some members of statistical research center of Iran and also the same is published by Najem, who is an expert of Central Bank of Iran.

Poverty and Poverty Line:

As it cited before poverty has defined different by scholars across time and place within last half century and that is due too. Poverty line is not a fixed exterior verity but rather it might rely on scientist's notion to the subject. But majority have a consensus that poverty is 'some kind of deprivation of common living basis' (SCI, 2004) as well two basic sublevel in this concept which are absolute and relative poverty.

Absolute poverty line that is according to minimum calories requirement as well as minimum clothing and shelter (bized website, 2010) to a human being and peoples under this assumption line are incapable to access the minimum standard of living against the relative poverty which is defined as failure to obtain a standard level of living (SCI, 2004), that be recognized as necessary or ideal for the society members. Obviously, we can find out that relative poverty would be more various on societies and between researchers than absolute poverty, because the characteristics that are involve calculating relative poverty can be vastly greater than the other. Nowadays, in according to the last reorienting by global scholars and the United Nations, Poverty (relative poverty) is beyond on only shortage of housing & earning rather, some other social conceptualization, like advantage of social services & well being, malnutrition, illiteracy and etc are considered in this last emerged paradigm too (Frediani, 2007).

Such as Sen said ‘... Poverty must be seen as the deprivation of basic capabilities rather than merely as lowness of incomes...’ (Sen, 1999). And poverty line consists of all expenses mad by a person at a certain time in a certain place to enjoy the minimum level of welfare. The people who cannot afford it are considered poor, otherwise they are non-poor (SCI, 2004).

Absolute poverty line estimation based on the caloric requirement:

As cited before poverty line measurement based on the calorie requirements relies on the absolute concept of poverty and of course this is the lowest limit that human needs to being alive it will not support other requirement.

After going through similar study, especially, those are about same country, we have selected 2300 calories. Per person per day which is more common between scholars. Moreover, this amount of calories is assisted and announced by Food & Nutrition Research Institute of Iran for everybody per day (Bagheri & others, 2007) such is sufficient for urban dwellers and in fact, there are difference amount of calories for urban and rural individuals to keep themselves alive and active, of course human needs to many other essential items and costs.

Najem (Najem, 2007), who is an expert from the Central Bank of Iran used the same method and computed absolute poverty for Iranians who are living in urban areas and indicates that every Iranian urban individual needed 498518 Rials per month to achieve 2300 calories per day only on the 2005.
In the other hand, in according to the data from the case study area (Ghaderi, 2006), average household income was 1,25,000/- Rials per month on 2005 and then with refer to family dimension in the area from the same reference. Average of earned income per person has been 701465 Rials per month so after a simple calculate we can find out that 51.2% of the area individuals were under absolute poverty line in that era.

Relative poverty line estimation based on the 50% of average household expenditure:

In order to measure poverty line based on the relative concept, we can use the average household expenditure and allocate a certain percentage of it as the poverty line. Actually, the percentage is not based on certain scientific procedure and scholars have used different score to determine poverty in this method which is experimental and optional for every researcher to select a suitable percentage for the case as he thinks. One of the most popular percentages between researchers who are working in this field is 50% of the average household expenditure as the basis for estimation of poverty line. In this approach, the expenditure average is calculated at first, and then 50 percent of the result is taken as the poverty line. Najem (Najem, 2007), through the same method calculated the poverty line for urban areas in Iran and as her announced, poverty line based on 50 percent of average household expenditure for any urban individuals on 2005 was 819866 Rials per month. After going through the Data which has been collected from the case study on 2005, we can find out 75% of the area individual household were under this relative poverty line.

Conclusion:

As mentioned before poverty is not certain exist reality. But this assumes and then the estimation that has come out of that shall help to scholars as well as politician to find out inequality and lack of fortune through the community. Though, we are not surprised by the results of this study and have been guessed that rate of poverty in the area is higher than the other part of Ardakan city. But density of poverty is ever anxiously.

Especially whenever we compare percentage of people who are under absolute poverty in the area and the country. As the central Bank of Iran indicates (Najem, 2007), 18% of urban individuals were under absolute poverty line on 2005, whereas more than 50% of the area dwellers were under the same poverty line in the same era. In the other hand we know that this area is ancient and historic area of the city which we have seen more than 55% of his buildings are from before 60 years ago and almost 80% of them have made by mud brick and so more than 33.6% (Ghaderi, 2006) of dwellers are migrated to the area often from villages and rate of literacy on it is 15.4% less than average of other part of the city, obviously, we can find out that the area is becoming as a informal settlement and a poverty colony is growing there.

It is duty for government to make plan for reduce poverty and inequality as well as make plan to improve the area as other part of the city.

References

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