

THE AGE OF THE RURAL LABOUR FORCE AND LAND REFORM

Research Group in Agricultural Economics

In the last issue of *Tahqiqāt-e Eqtesādi*, Ahmed Kooros published an excellent and most interesting article entitled "Economic Growth and Labour Participation in Iran".¹ In one part of his argument, while comparing the level of labour participation of various age groups of the Irānian population with that of a number of developed countries on the one hand, and developing countries on the other hand, the writer drew the following conclusion: "It seems that the Land Reform has been more influential on the older people in the rural areas than the younger ones and it is something of a paradox that younger people in the rural areas are less responsive to social changes than older ones." The Research Group in Agricultural Economics felt that an analysis of the reasons for the better effect of the Land Reform Law on the older rural population was necessary for its own current statistical studies of various areas of the country, and, since the writer makes a plea for an explanation of this phenomenon, it decided to print its findings.

The person legally entitled to benefit under the terms of the Land Reform Act, is the *nasaq*-holder. The *nasaq*-holder is defined by the law as a person who does not own the land but who, being in possession of one or more factors of production, either alone, or in conjunction with members of his household, directly farms the landlord's land and gives a quantity of his product, either in the form of cash or goods, to the landlord (Act I). This means that the *nasaq*-holding farmer, who is also the head of the household, and generally its oldest member, is the beneficiary of the law and that his wife or wives, and children, have no legal rights under the Land Reform Act until he dies.

However, this is a legal view of the situation. In reality the young labour force is the basic foundation of the various types of production organisations in Irānian villages, and it is this section of the

1. *Tahqiqāt-e Eqtesādi*, Vol. VII No. 17, Winter 1970.

population that bears the major burden of work. But the tables in the Appendix, which show the age of the legal household head, or *nasaq*-holder, demonstrate the relationship between age and the Land Reform better.

The third column of figures shows the age of the beneficiaries of the Land Reform and it can be seen that the majority of these are old men when compared with the average age of the Iranian population and its extreme youthfulness (about 54 per cent of the total population are less than twenty years old). The fourth column shows the number of male members of the family aged between fifteen and twenty-five. Here the small proportion of persons in this age group is demonstrated, and this phenomenon has a direct relationship with the age of the father. The age of marriage for males in the villages is between eighteen and twenty years which means that, in general, fathers in the over fifty years age group have no children aged between fifteen and twenty-five unless they married late or took a second wife. The majority of children in this age group belong to fathers between the ages of thirty and fifty or, most particularly, between forty and fifty. These tables are based on statistics for five different regions in various parts of Iran, and since, from the point of view of the present argument, they show the same thing, the results can be quite easily extended to the whole country.

There are also a few more points that can be made about the tables. Firstly, many farmers either do not know their own age, or tend to report it in round figures so that the statistics which show age are, for the most part, approximate. In its present project the group has tried to solve this problem by requesting the farmer's identification card or some other certificate which records his age. Secondly, the mere existence of sons, whatever their age, does not mean that they are necessarily engaged in agricultural work. Certainly the *nasaq*-holder normally carries out his farming tasks with the help of members of his household, but when agricultural activities do not make the family self-sufficient or other more lucrative work is available, the children are liable to take other jobs. It is for this reason that the statistics show the majority of emigrants from the villages to be the young. Thirdly, the strong ties involved in the rural Iranian family mean that emigration does not involve an economic break with the kinsmen who remain. Even if the emigrant takes his wife and children with him, he is liable to send some of his savings to his relatives in the village at regular intervals.

APPENDIX

Number of Village Households, Age of Household Head and Male Members Aged 15-25

Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25	Village	Pop. by household	Age of household head	Sons aged 15-25	Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25
2. Hayskābur											
Mushān	5	32	-	Baahinaj	5	26	-	Sahlābād	9	50	1
"	6	27	-	"	7	30	-	Laklakshien	5	25	-
"	7	40	-	"	8	30	-	"	4	43	-
Filxāneh	6	32	-	Sahlābād	6	28	-	Kavkesh	6	40	-
"	5	45	1	"	9	50	1	"	5	52	-
"	5	38	-	'Eshqābād	5	50	-	"	10	45	-
Dāneh	9	35	-	"	5	36	-	"	9	58	3
"	7	21	-	"	8	37	-	Xeirābād	12	50	1
"	9	37	2	Amanābād	7	36	-	Taqiābād	6	46	-
Shādmehrak	9	40	1	"	7	40	-	"	7	37	-
"	9	45	3	"	3	27	-	"	4	27	-
"	9	32	-	"	9	38	1	Barzanun	5	32	-
"	2	65	-	Suqand	3	29	-	"	12	60	-
"	10	48	3	"	6	70	2	"	10	50	1
"	13	62	1	"	3	48	-	"	10	35	-
Kābuli	10	40	2	"	4	27	-	Fuabenjān	8	38	-
"	4	27	-	Dizbād Soflā'	4	45	-	"	3	27	-
"	6	70	-	"	3	24	-	"	8	40	-
"	9	45	1	"	3	35	-	"	7	50	-
Khomar	5	32	-	"	7	50	-	"	5	32	-
Vazirieh	5	25	-	"	4	58	1	Darusalan	6	35	1
"	5	35	-	"	2	22	-	"	6	30	-
Deh-e Nowxali	5	35	-	"	5	45	-	"	7	44	1
"	6	30	-	"	4	52	-	Baqshen	6	34	-
"	7	43	1	"	5	46	-	"	5	45	-
Anjidan	6	32	-	Taxtmashk	5	32	-	"	6	30	-
"	9	45	2	"	8	60	1	'Eshraqābād	5	34	-
"	7	36	-	"	3	80	-	"	8	40	2
Xājehbacheh	6	50	2	"	4	42	1	"	6	50	1
"	9	60	-	Hesarnow	5	25	0	Hamidābād	4	30	-
Qatanābād	7	45	-	Yussefabād	2	20	0	"	7	35	-
"	8	40	-	"	6	27	0	"	8	35	-
"	7	42	1	"	4	35	0	"	4	55	-
Bozquchan	4	22	-	Ateshgah	7	45	2	Mojdābād	3	35	-
"	4	27	-	"	7	30	-	"	5	35	-
"	10	34	2	"	4	70	1	Dahnehshur	5	35	-
"	8	45	1	Dasht	7	35	-	"	7	40	1
Rostanābād	4	65	1	"	5	45	-	"	5	50	1
"	5	57	2	"	6	35	-	"	6	60	2
"	9	58	1	Sahlābād	6	28	-	"	4	34	-
Kermān											
Sarāsiābshesh	1	60	-	"	2	70	-	"	8	62	1
"	3	35	-	Mohammadābād	8	-	-	"	7	36	-
"	3	45	-	"	6	63	-	Hutak	4	65	-
"	3	20	-	"	8	42	1	"	8	60	-
"	5	60	2	Dehbāla	3	59	-	"	5	57	1
"	6	50	1	"	6	46	-	"	8	42	-
Sadeqābād	3	45	3	"	4	30	-	"	4	60	-
"	4	30	-	"	5	35	-	"	3	65	1
Momenābād	10	70	2	"	8	50	2	"	7	70	1
"	7	40	-	"	6	70	0	"	5	38	-
Huseiniieh	7	55	1	"	6	63	1	"	10	44	2
Qā'emābād	6	55	1	"	7	51	1	Dehulieh	8	47	1
Bahnābād	8	44	-	"	4	70	1	"	8	76	2
"	9	44	-	Mahmudābād	10	60	2	"	1	58	-
"	9	50	-	"	5	32	0	"	5	65	1
"	6	40	-	Kusarxiz	5	70	1	Charuk	7	47	1
"	2	28	-	"	7	55	1	"	9	52	2
Abbasābād	2	50	-	"	8	75	2	"	8	38	-

Appendix continued.

Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25	Village	Pop. by household	Age of household head	Sons aged 15-25	Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25
Charuk	7	40	-	"	5	40	-	Ebāsheik'ali	3	25	-
"	8	40	-	"	10	55	1	Hojarābād	5	37	-
Ebrahimbād	9	56	2	"	4	38	-	Mohābād	5	75	-
"	7	47	1	Sa'adi	6	40	-	"	6	36	-
"	7	34	-	"	8	65	1	"	7	40	-
"	4	26	-	Taherābād	5	60	1	"	5	70	-
"	6	45	-	"	5	60	1	Kutāfābād	8	68	1
"	13	65	1	"	5	47	-	"	8	45	1
Bāgin (Ebrahimbād)	4	50	-	"	5	60	0	"	5	55	1
"	6	38	-	" (Rāghbeh)	8	60	4	"	4	46	-
Qanāteqestān	8	43	1	(Hassanābād)	6	70	1	Hosseinābād	5	40	-
"	6	60	2	Taherābād	7	55	1	"	5	29	-
"	6	60	-	Sekanj	6	50	-	"	3	20	-
"	8	58	2	"	7	53	-	Darrehgas	7	30	-
"	4	50	-	"	7	35	-	Darrestān	11	-	-
"	7	40	-	"	6	50	1	"	5	37	-
3. Borujerd											
Shirvān	8	34	-	"	4	25	-	Fahlehvankal	6	65	1
"	4	28	-	Bardehsareh	9	48	1	Arza	6	40	-
"	5	30	-	"	6	40	-	"	8	36	-
"	5	38	1	"	7	45	-	"	4	-	-
"	8	31	-	'Alābād	11	60	1	Papelek	7	36	-
Boxāna	10	52	2	"	7	43	-	"	9	34	-
"	8	55	-	"	6	50	1	'Asisābād	9	41	-
"	3	35	-	Sayehbān	8	43	-	"	8	50	-
Rahimbād	5	60	1	Valanjerd	10	-	-	Shishah	10	40	1
"	4	50	-	"	4	25	-	"	6	33	-
"	9	50	4	"	3	28	-	"	9	40	-
Geojineh	12	70	-	"	9	26	-	Bādah	4	27	-
"	5	36	-	Darrehvallah	6	43	-	"	6	23	-
"	6	34	-	"	5	30	-	"	10	40	-
"	6	55	1	Qal'ehkareh	7	65	-	Qashlaq	5	32	-
"	2	48	-	"	11	63	1	"	8	33	-
Hassanābād	9	40	-	"	3	40	-	"	8	42	-
"	4	27	-	Qal'eh Natān	8	32	-	Karkixān	5	32	-
"	7	32	-	"	8	44	2	"	8	48	2
"	3	40	-	"	6	29	-	"	8	45	1
"	9	45	1	Gushki Sofla	12	58	3	"	4	44	-
Mulxān'Olya	6	55	1	"	12	43	1	Bābāshāmal	6	30	-
"	9	30	-	"	8	48	1	"	8	27	-
"	7	35	-	"	9	43	1	"	7	60	3
"	8	63	1	Karimbād	9	50	2	Chōqavul	7	36	-
"	8	45	2	"	5	32	-	"	9	50	-
Hemmatābād	6	38	-	Gushch-e Mohsen	4	51	-	"	8	29	1
"	5	45	-	Ebn'ali	6	30	-	Yekdāng	8	27	-
Magasān 'Olya	7	40	1	"	6	30	-	"	7	23	-
"	6	80	-	"	6	32	-	"	9	45	-
"	11	60	1	"	3	82	-	Quleh Bahā'addin	8	50	1
Fathābād	8	50	-	"	6	70	1	"	8	45	0
"	2	80	-	Fahlevankal	7	28	-	Kamareh	4	48	1
Sheikmirikalhor?	39	-	-	"	8	36	-	"	5	26	-
"	8	54	-	"	8	50	-	"	9	45	1
4. Fozz											
Nasirmahalleh	8	45	1	Galfpoast	2	68	-	Rudpish	5	28	-
"	10	40	-	Pansar	12	37	1	"	8	75	-
"	5	35	-	"	6	38	-	"	8	60	-
"	11	50	-	"	6	34	-	"	3	65	1
"	8	26	-	Rudpish	7	47	2	"	7	60	2
"	13	50	3	"	5	30	-	"	8	40	-
Galfpoast	9	40	-	"	7	45	-	"	4	63	1
"	6	21	-	"	11	40	1	"	4	30	-

Appendix continued.

Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25	Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25	Village	Pop. by household	Age of head	Sons aged 15-25
Rudpish	12	54	1	Gigasār	6	60	-	Xatibgurāb	13	55	2
"	8	45	1	"	7	70	1	"	6	32	-
"	7	39	-	"	15	60	-	"	12	60	-
Mālvan	6	63	1	"	5	40	-	Sanbehbāzār	9	50	1
"	9	40	-	"	13	50	-	"	6	38	1
"	7	63	-	Ālāsār	20	70	1	"	6	45	2
"	7	63	-	"	9	44	1	"	9	42	3
Ganjār	7	46	3	"	11	40	2	"	7	46	-

5. Bīrjand

Qluk	4	36	-	Firuzābād	7	50	1	Xunikpayegodār	4	42	1
"	5	37	-	Mohammadābād				"	6	40	-
"	6	46	1	'Alam	3	70	-	Xunikzirak	8	55	1
Eatānest	5	55	-	"	5	60	1	"	7	50	-
"	5	35	-	Firouzābād	6	32	-	"	2	26	-
Kāhi	7	40	2	Hariband	8	37	-	"	7	42	-
Fonud	6	35	-	Siyujan	9	42	1	Firouzābād	5	40	-
"	6	30	-	"	9	50	3	Shārzilāh	10	45	1
Chāj	3	30	-	"	6	60	-	"	4	27	-
"	7	37	-	Mehdiābād	7	35	-	"	4	68	-
"	5	37	-	Cheshmeh	4	60	1	Gasak	10	35	1
"	7	56	-	Nuk	3	24	-	"	4	25	-
Xanikzirak	9	53	1	Bīdoxatgāsār	6	42	1	Rum	3	50	-
"	5	41	-	'Aliābād	6	35	-	"	6	30	-
"	3	42	-	"	10	45	1	"	6	30	-
								Xunikpayegodār	6	48	1

پژوهشگاه علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی