

**The Cultural and Social Effects of Cross-border Markets  
on the Lives of Indigenous People  
(Case study: Youth (25-40 Years) in Border Cities of  
Kermanshah Province)**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of the research is to study the cultural and social effects of cross border markets on the lives of indigenous people (Case study: youth of 25-40 years old in border cities of Kermanshah province) using central location theory, Neokinsey theory, growth pole theory, Jones and Wilde view as a theoretical framework. The present study is an applied research according to the existing goals. The research is based on the qualitative-quantitative paradigm and the technique used to collect information and survey data. The statistical population of the study includes young people living in border markets of Kermanshah province. The sample size was estimated 744 people based on Cochran's formula. The research tool in the first stage is an open-ended questionnaire (in the form of an interview) and in the quantitative stage is a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 86 questions. Formal validity method was used to evaluate the validity of the research instrument and Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability. The sampling method is multi-stage cluster. Factor analysis results show that the effect of cross-border markets on 4 variables; Social capital, quality of life, lifestyle and cultural change. Also, the results of regression test show that the effect of border market on cultural changes of youth in border cities of Kermanshah province has the highest regression coefficient (0.493) and lifestyle variable with regression coefficient (0.277) has the lowest regression coefficient. According to the research findings, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between border markets in the west of the country and cultural and social variables. But the extent of the social effects of markets is greater than the extent of its cultural effects. Therefore, in addition to the positive social effects in terms of job creation, improving health status and urban services, border markets have also affected the lifestyle, social capital and cultural changes of the youth of border cities in the cultural dimension.

**Keywords:** Border market, Social capital, Quality of life, Lifestyle, Cultural change.

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## 1. Introduction

Today, different countries, whether developed or developing, with regard to regional characteristics and to achieve goals such as national economic development are attracting foreign investment, using relative advantages, creating job opportunities, training young manpower, increasing human resources, training, manpower (Phangaphanga, 2017, 7). Therefore, planning such exchanges and currents of its kind will help to develop and expand border markets, create peace and stability in border areas, and ultimately improve the security and infrastructure and services required by the region (Maratab, 2016, p. 2).

Border regions as special geographical regions and their importance in convergence between countries in terms of political, social, economic, cultural, trade and security issues, both internationally and nationally, have long been considered by analysts and development planners. Therefore, it needs efficient and capable management to increase the security factor and expand economic, social and cultural relations at the borders. This is possible through border markets, and in addition to the exchange of products and goods, it is effective in the field of exports and imports, it becomes the bedrock for the development of areas far from the city center and the prosperity of industry and economic prosperity (Slitter & Tonks, 2016, p. 36).

Therefore, today, governments are guided by new ways of regional cooperation to improve border areas. Such cooperation in the form of common border markets is one of the most well-known methods of economic, cultural and social development in border areas. In its kind, a fundamental change in production, employment, stabilization of the frontier population, will increase income level and consequently welfare, prosperity and development of handicrafts and local and reduce the volume of smuggling, create security goals, including economic security and social security (Esmailzadeh, 2018, p.4).

Experts, however, point to the multiplicity of cross-border exchanges, the prosperity of trade, the acceptance of more bottlenecks for mutual passenger acceptance, the development of exports, strengthening of social and cultural relations, monetary exchanges, strengthening of tourism and use of technical knowledge. But at the same time, smuggling of goods, hurting domestic

production and causing problems for other traders and merchants are among the most important negative effects of cross-border markets. Young people as a social capital of any country have a significant role in the economic development of the country so that they are considered as operators of the economic cycle of each region and country. With the reopening of border markets, the role of youth in market equations becomes more colorful. In the meantime, most of the activists in this field are young people (Abdi, 2017, p. 48).

One of the goals of creating and expanding border markets in the western border areas of the country is to create jobs directly and indirectly for the unemployed, especially young people who live in the deprived border area. Young people living in border areas may engage in illegal activities such as smuggling etc. Due to their low educational status, unemployment, and lack of access to adequate industrial services in the area, border markets can be up to approx. Many reduce the problems of the youth of these areas. In recent years, the border markets of Kermanshah province have become an important element for the employment of young people in border cities, so that a large number of young people are living in this area with new job opportunities such as driving, hospitality, labor, trade and cocoon (Ghaderzadeh et al., 2016).

In terms of job security for young people in the border areas of Kermanshah province, before the establishment of border markets, most of these young people were engaged in construction and agricultural work or migrated to larger cities such as Kermanshah, Tehran and Isfahan for livelihood in recent years due to the boom in agriculture and the lack of other jobs in the border markets provided a good opportunity for young people to work in the border areas. Although many residents of the border areas believe that most of the profits come from traders, but in this case the border markets in these areas have played a significant role in reducing unemployment and youth migration (Ibid: 2016). The border bazaars of Kermanshah province have also brought a new opportunity for the youth of the border cities where the bazaars are located. Kinship and intercultural kinship is considered as an important factor among the youth and families on both sides of the border. Due to the residential, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic geographical proximity, as

well as employment and livelihood affinities, the people of the surrounding cities have established kinship and marriage relations, and with the formation of extensive kinship networks in the region, gradually when there is a shortage of goods and required products, cross-border economic relations between the families of these young people have increased, which is the prelude to the emergence of trade between people on both sides of the border (Esmailzadeh et al., 2018 pp. 54 - 110).

One of the notable socio-cultural effects of the markets is the presence of non-native people in these areas, which has led to a closer acquaintance and closer relationship between the business community of the region and also more familiarity with the customs and culture of the region. Socio-cultural effects of border markets on communication between the two sides of the border, increasing the presence of domestic tourists, young people's desire to live and stay in the border area, forming family ties through youth marriage on both sides of the border, communication and interaction of indigenous people with non-indigenous people. People's literacy level, convergence in the type of clothing of the people, accelerating more cooperation between border areas, trade and cultural interactions, learning each other's language and dialect, improving the living standards of border youth, reducing poverty, proper distribution of income among youth have remarkable points (Abdi, 2017, pp.45-47).

Therefore, recognizing socio-cultural variables in border markets and which of these variables are effective as the most important factors in border areas and among indigenous youth. And which of the factors poses the greatest threats to the indigenous especially the youth of border cities? The researcher intends to study the cultural and social effects of border markets on the lives of indigenous peoples (Youth 25-40 years old) of border cities.

## **2.Review of Literature**

Chatalas et al., (2015) in an article explained "Study of the effects of the border market on the social and socio-cultural dimensions of the inhabitants of the cities of Montana and Vidin, Bulgaria". This research has been done descriptively-survey and 700 samples of residents of the border cities of

Montana and Vidin. The results show that the border market with a 99% probability has an effect on components such as reducing migration, increasing tourism, and increasing security, improving livelihoods, leaving the region out of isolation and ethnic and cultural ties across the border. Culture has not been effective. Ladhari (2009) in a study entitled "Assessing the role of cross-border markets in the development and welfare of border areas; A case study of the Kharogh and Ishkashim border markets of Tajikistan" uses a survey method. The results of studies and surveys indicate that the activity and establishment of markets in the region has been able to improve in many welfare variables such as employment, job mobility of border residents, increasing income, meeting the needs of border residents, nutrition, health, housing and environment. The establishment of a bazaar has also greatly reduced the informal economy in the region, but has not been able to reduce the large number of rural immigrants, especially young people, to the city. In addition, the Tamarchin market has been able to provide relative economic security in the region.

Miraeizadeh et al., (2016) has conducted a study entitled "Study of socio-economic role of border markets in the development of rural areas (case study of border markets in Mehran)". This research has been done by using the method of meta-analysis of researches related to border markets and market development statistics of the western border regions of the country. The results of this study show that the effects of the border market on the economic effects from the perspective of exhibitors and villagers are positive and in terms of social and infrastructural effects from the perspective of both groups are negative and in the field of migration are positive from the perspective of exhibitors and villagers.

Amanpour et al., (2015) have written an article entitled "Study and analysis of the effects of border markets on the socio-economic structure of cities (Javanrood city)". The economic reasons for the creation of border markets can be sought the nature of regional development models and the effects of bilateral or multilateral exchanges. The results of this study show that the unemployment rate in the city of Javanrood before the opening of the border bazaar was high and this issue creates many socio-cultural anomalies. The

creation of a border market in this city caused the young job seekers to work and consequently the city's economy to improve, which if properly planned in all urban and regional levels; this place can become one of the most economically active centers in the west of the country.

According to Jones and Wilde, border areas are known as marginal and undeveloped areas. Although this marginality can be due to the geographical conditions of the border areas, but the phenomenon of being a borderline destroys many of the facilities and capabilities of that area. They believe that with the establishment of the border between the two countries, the spaces that are principally connected to each other and provide space continuity, are separated from each other and become marginalized. This marginality is the reason for the backwardness of these areas (Andalib, 2011, p. 38).

According to Jones and Wilde, the following principles should be considered when planning for border development:

1. Understand the complexity, breadth, and diversity of variables and their effects on the boundary.
2. The need to provide conditions and infrastructure for the development of borders.
3. The need to get out of isolation and expand communication with inside and outside.
4. The need to connect the border with the center.
5. The need for special support from these areas to overcome constraints and achieve development (Jones et al., 1998, p. 23).

According to the basic economic theory, the increase in foreign demand for the basic sectors is a stimulus for the growth and movement of the region's economy and causes the basic sector to increase its foreign demand for goods and services; Not only will the income and employment of the basic sector increase, but also the income and employment of the non-basic sector will increase (Ziari, 2015). The most important weakness of this theory is its limited understanding of the concept of development and relying solely on the economy and equitable distribution, mass participation of people and the effects of growth on the environment and resource consumption (Sarafi, 2011).

According to the central location theory, central locations operate in isolation due to the low population density in the area. After that, with the increase of population in the region, the number of central places increases and causes the market area of the regions to contact each other. And at this stage, the market sphere of influence for the sale of goods, services will expand and its radius is equal and covers most of the area. Then, the continuous increase of population and its density in the region causes the market area of the central places area to be closer. As the markets of the districts interact with each other, at this stage consumers may use more than one center. Finally, people living in complementary areas try to minimize the cost of their transportation and for this purpose choose the center closest to them (Hosseinzadehdalir, 2011).

Based on the view of mutual understanding of development and security, it can be said that security and development in the border areas have a direct and two-way relationship with a high correlation coefficient. In other words, development and security have reciprocal effects on border areas; In such a way that any action in the process of achieving the development and welfare of the inhabitants of the border areas has a direct impact on the process of achieving security in that area and, consequently, national security and vice versa. Thus, areas with high development indices have higher security coefficients than less developed areas. The important point is that there is a relationship between the "development hierarchy" and the "security hierarchy" of the central and border regions. Establishing such a relationship will lead to the realization of "development equilibrium" and "security balance" (Andalib, 2011, pp.196-197). The economy can be cited as an ever-present factor in security policy, at various individual, regional and international levels, and finally, the economy is a very good and efficient tool that national governments use to achieve security goals (Eftekhari, 2016, pp. 295-394).

The most important factor that can minimize regional inequalities in relation to regional imbalances between regions is international cooperation between the two countries, so that the development gap between cities in central and border regions can be reduced only through the implementation of policies to expand international cooperation and relations. Cross-border is possible (Petraeus & Economo, 2017, p. 1). In this regard, the creation of

border markets can be considered in line with the expansion of regional cooperation and as part of an economic solution to reduce regional crises, stabilize border areas and expand productive and commercial activities. In this way, the welfare resulting from trade can be provided in these areas that are doubly deprived compared to other parts of the country (Office of Economic Studies, 2016, p.11).

Growth and development as a socio-economic category was first considered by economists and then by sociologists and researchers and some sciences. Development is not only as an economic growth, but also a multidimensional process that leads to organizational reorganization and orientation of the whole socio-economic system. Development of a country or region, increase in production, access to infrastructure and services, suitable job opportunities, use of new technology and increase the rate of investment is consumption. Regional development can be expressed as a dynamic aspect of a regional system or, more precisely, as changes that occur in different parts of the region over time. Spatial development studies in recent decades have been considered as attitudes for economic and social justice, optimal distribution of resources and facilities and prosperity and wealth, redistribution of resources, more balanced growth of areas and reduction of inequalities in areas. It is located in a city (Hadder, 2016).

The Hypothesis of this research are:

- 1) Border markets influence the social capital of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.
- 2) Border markets influence the quality of life of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.
- 3) Border markets influence the lifestyle of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.
- 4) Border markets influence the cultural change of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.

### **3. Methodology**

The present study is a combination of research (quantitative-qualitative). The statistical population of the study includes the indigenous youth of Kermanshah



province (Ghasreshirin, Thalab-Babajani, Sarpole- Zahab, Paveh and Gilane-Gharb), which have a population of about 321000 people. The sample size of the study was 744 people. Multi-stage cluster sampling method was used for sampling.

Data collection tools in the qualitative stage of the research include interviews (in the form of an open-ended questionnaire). Quantitative stage of the research is the use of a researcher-made questionnaire with a Likert scale. By approaching the results of Cronbach's alpha test, where the alpha coefficients of all variables are above 0.70, it can be concluded that the research tool has good reliability.

Steps of research are:

a. Qualitative stage of research: In this section, first, by interviewing university professors and experts in the field of cross-border markets and sociology, the most important variables and indicators of research that have been identified using theoretical foundations were selected. Then, using exploratory factor analysis, factors and variables were identified and all items were screened and selected for the final questionnaire.

b. Quantitative stage: In this stage, after preparing the final research questionnaire (using the results of exploratory factor analysis) and confirming its validity and reliability, quantitative research data were collected from the target community (residents of border cities with bazaars).

c. Statistical analysis: At this stage, we use Spss software version 22 and Amos software version 22. The research data were analyzed descriptively and inferentially, including correlation coefficient and multivariate regression, and then the identified factors were tested using confirmatory factor analysis.

#### **4. Findings**

According to the information obtained 60.5 in the 25-34 age group and 39.5 in the 35-34 age group. Findings of the study related to the marital status of the respondents show that 66.0% of the samples are married and 34.0 are solitary. The residence of 20.6 of the people are sala the \_ babajani, 38.4 are Gilane - Gharb, and 41 are Paveh. According to the obtained results, the education rate is 12.4 of the primary and cycle respondents, 47.3 of the diploma, 36.0 of the

postgraduate and bachelor and 4.3 of the graduate and above. According to the obtained results, 21.5 of the sample are self-employed, 20.2 employees, 7.9 discharges, 2.3% students, 6.3 cocoons, 2.3 university lecturers, 8.2 workers 4.2 food distributors, 0.5 bakers, 19.5 percent sellers, 3.6 drivers and 1.6 traders. According to the results, the employment period of 18.5 of the sample is 2 years and less, 23.9 3 to 6 years, 40.5 7 to 10 years, 6.3 11 to 14 years and 10.8 have been 15 years and older.

H1: Border markets influence the social capital of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.

According to the results of Table 1, the standardized regression coefficient (Beta) between the market and youth of border cities social capital variables is equal to (0.287) and its significance level is equal to (0.000) and less than the error level of 0.05, we can say that the market variable affects the youth social capital of indigenous peoples living in border cities. That is, by increasing a standard deviation in the market variable, the amount of youth social capital of the indigenous people of the region increases to 0.287 standard deviation.

**Table1. Regression test of the effect of market on social capital**

Variables	Regression coefficient	(Std. Error)	Standardized coefficients	t	sig
market	0.006	0.001	0.287	6.858	0.000

The results of factor analysis of structural equations related to this hypothesis is equal to 4.01 and the effect rate is 0.54. In other words, the test results of this hypothesis show that the activity of cross-border markets has a significant effect on social capital in its various dimensions. The effects of cross-border markets on the variables of social trust, social participation and social cooperation are also significant. The activity of the markets causes the prosperity of trade and the presence of young people from different places to the market, which increases the relations between the local youth and the sellers, buyers, traders, etc which to some extent takes the people of the region out of isolation and creates relationships. Reciprocity increases their social trust. Also, in order to do business, the solidarity and participation of the local people has increased and, of course, the social capital of the people of the region is affected by the existence of the market.

**Table12. Indicators of social capital variable fitting**

Indicator	Observed value
RMR	0.045
SRMR	0.02
Df	3.8
GFI	0.97
NFI	0.92
NNFI	0.92
IFI	0.92
CFI	0.90
RMSEA	0.053

H2: Border markets influence the quality of life of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.

According to the results of Table 3, the standardized regression coefficient (Beta) between the market variable and quality of life Youth of border cities is equal to (0.488) and its significance level is equal to (0.000) and less than the error level is 0.05, we can say that the market variable affects the quality of youth life of indigenous peoples living in border cities. That is, by increasing a standard deviation in the market variable, the quality of youth life of the indigenous people of the region increases to 0.488 standard deviation.

**Table 3. Regression test the effect of market on quality of life**

Variables	Regression coefficient	(Std. Error)	Standardized coefficients	t	sig
Market	0.119	0.002	0.488	9.631	0.000

The results of factor analysis of structural equations related to this hypothesis are equal to 6.81 and the effect rate is 0.75. In other words, the test results of this hypothesis show that the activity of border markets has a significant effect on the quality of life of the indigenous people of the market and other border towns around it. Increasing the income from the activity of the market has increased the quality of life of the young people living in these areas for the residents of the region, so that the bazaar has established health centers, educational centers, development of intra-city and inter-city transportation, and improved the condition of urban facilities. Of course, the

quality of life of people, especially young people working (directly or indirectly) has led to markets and suburban cities in the studied cities.

**Table 4. Indicators of quality of life variable fitting**

Indicator	Observed value
RMR	0.046
SRMR	0.06
Df	5.1
GFI	0.97
NFI	0.96
NNFI	0.94
IFI	0.95
CFI	0.96
RMSEA	0.037

H3: Border markets influence the lifestyle of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.

According to the results of Table 5, the standardized regression coefficient (Beta) between the market variable and youth lifestyle is equal to (0.277) and its significance level is equal to (0.000) and less than the error level is 0.05, we can let say that the market variable affects the youth lifestyle of indigenous people living in border cities. That is, by increasing a standard deviation in the market variable, the youth lifestyle of the indigenous youth of the region increases by 0.277 standard deviation.

**Table 5. Regression test the effect of market on Lifestyle**

Variables	Regression coefficient	(Std. Error)	Standardized coefficients	t	sig
Market	0.006	0.001	0.277	6.608	0.000

The results of factor analysis of structural equations related to this hypothesis are equal to 5.73 and the effect rate is 0.69. In other words, the test results of this hypothesis show that the activity of border markets has a significant effect on the youth lifestyle of the indigenous people of the market and other border towns around it. Improving the economic situation of the market, in addition to increasing the quality of life, has also affected people's youth lifestyles and the type of entertainment. And leisure time has led to attention to the body and fitness. Especially due to the import of foreign goods related to obesity, slimming and fitness, hair loss in the markets and the

availability of such products, have increased the attention and consumption of residents to such products.

**Table 6. Indicators of Lifestyle Variable fitting**

Indicator	Observed value
RMR	0.05
SRMR	0.05
Df	3.4
GFI	0.98
NFI	0.96
NNFI	0.97
IFI	0.91
CFI	0.96
RMSEA	0.046

H4: Border markets influence the cultural change of the youth of the border cities of Kermanshah province.

According to the results of Table 7, the standardized regression coefficient between the market variable and the changes is equal to (0.493) and its significance level is equal to (0.000) and less than the error level is 0.05, we can say that the market variable it affects the changes of indigenous peoples living in border cities. That is, by increasing a standard deviation in the market variable, the rate of change of indigenous people in the region increases to 0.493 in standard deviation.

**Table 7. Regression test the effect of market on cultural change**

Variables	Regression coefficient	(Std. Error)	Standardized coefficients	t	sig
Market	0.124	0.002	0.493	11.635	0.000

The results of factor analysis of structural equations related to this hypothesis, which is equal to 4.70 and the effect rate is 0.68. In other words, the test results of this hypothesis show that the activity of markets has a significant effect on the youth cultural changes of the indigenous people of the bazaar and other border towns around it. The existence of different ethnic groups with different rituals, customs, languages and dialects in the market and the daily communication of these ethnic groups and ethnicities have caused youth cultural changes among the inhabitants of the market and some specific ethnic customs are declining or are performed secretly. The influx of Iraqis or

sometimes Turks into markets has led some markets to become familiar with Arabic and other Kurdish dialects, exacerbating cultural and linguistic changes.

**Table 8. Indicators of cultural change variable fitting**

Indicator	Observed value
RMR	0.05
SRMR	0.04
Df	3.0
GFI	0.97
NFI	0.92
NNFI	0.96
IFI	0.91
CFI)	0.90
RMSEA	0.052

## 5. Conclusion

Despite having 16 provinces along the borders with a population of over 40 million people, the lack of proper investment in recent decades, the lack of job-creating industries and the concentration of investment in some central provinces of the country have forced thousands of people to migrate to central cities and the country in the hope of finding work and access to better facilities. A large part of these immigrants are young people in the area.

The unbalanced distribution of opportunities and investments made in recent years to create industries and employment in the provinces has not only forced the migration of hundreds of thousands of people from different provinces to metropolitan areas, but also left the remaining population in less privileged provinces without effective investment opportunities.

The establishment of border markets are mainly formed with the aim of creating employment and livelihood for the residents of these areas, controlling the smuggling of goods and increasing border security; but it cannot be acknowledged that these goals have been achieved so far and the management of these markets has led to economic and social prosperity in urban and rural areas of the border areas. But the important point is that, unfortunately, these markets have practically become strategic import points, and in fact, the government facilitates and approves the increase of imports to the country by providing permission to create the mentioned markets. However, many people

in the border areas and especially young people are not able to exchange across the border due to economic problems, and it is the intermediaries and brokers who make huge profits by abusing the people of the border.

For this reason, in recent years, these markets have forgotten their main goals and prospects and have not been able to contribute significantly to the economic and social situation of border residents.

In many border areas, border residents have cultural, kinship, ethnic and social relations with people across the border. The existence of a common language and close social customs has caused the residents of these areas to be close to each other. This makes the markets on both sides of the border indigenous for the residents of both sides, the parties to exchange with each other with more confidence and knowledge; the common language has brought these communications closer. For example, border markets in the Kurdish region of Iraq have a great tendency to trade with the Kurdish regions of our country. One of the reasons for the prosperity of markets in this region can be considered the existence of cultural and ethnic commonalities.

After the establishment of the border market and its prosperity in the border cities, the provision of new job opportunities has led to the retention of the youth of this region and the reduction of the migration process and sometimes reverse migration. The development of border areas and the creation of employment in these areas in order to reduce poverty and unemployment make it possible to avoid the psychological and economic costs of youth migration and to use natural resources and capital equipment and social infrastructure, and ultimately reduce divergence.

According to the researcher of markets, economic prosperity and strengthening of markets by increasing employment in border areas and tourism boom, in addition to job creation, have led to business boom in these cities and this has caused a relative improvement in the economic situation of residents. With the improvement of the economic situation, the quality of life of the residents especially the youth, who are the main operators of the border markets has also increased due to the construction of health centers, easier access to vehicles, and living facilities, as well as more importance to health. But the effects of cross-border markets on cultural characteristics, especially in

terms of cultural capital, are much less than social characteristics. According to the researcher, if we want to draw economic and social indicators in the form of a pyramid, economic indicators are located at the bottom of the pyramid that have been most affected by the market prosperity, but cultural indicators such as cultural capital at the top of the pyramid have not received much market impact.

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