

## Evaluating Families' Perspective and the Impact of Targeted subsidies (Based on Governmental Goals) on Related Points of View

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### ABSTRACT

Targeted subsidies payment is the foremost important part of economic development plan in Iran which contributes to change in subsidies payment. In this regard with phasing out fundamental goods' subsidies like fuel, food, water, electricity and etc. some part of cash income is paid back to people and other advantages of this process are attributed to constructive and economic infrastructures in the country. This in turn contributes to elimination of social gap among classes. Present study is to evaluate the level of satisfaction of implementing targeted subsidies, based on economic development plan and its different income levels, among Urmia city citizens. Related results indicated that only fuel consumption has decreased since the targeted subsidies operationalized. Data collection was done through researcher made questionnaire which was used after measuring its face value and reliability approved by different scholars and researchers in this field. In order to analyze collected data, inferential & descriptive statistical method was used. To analyze research hypothesis t test was used. Results indicated that from the point of view of Urmia citizens (research population) government has fallen short of achieving predefined goals in implementing targeted subsidies.

**KEY WORDS:** Economic Development Plan, Targeted Subsidies, Satisfaction, Family

### INTRODUCTION

Despite challenging economic difficulties during the past ten years, no serious step has been taken towards solving related issues in Iran. The Ninth government started editing a purposeful plan to overcome fundamental economic problems which resulted in "economic development plan". Comprehensive evaluations by related work group showed that in order to overcome existing economic problems and boost national economy tax system, custom system, banking system, national currency value rating, productivity, distribution of goods and services system and also subsidies allocation system need for total and structural amendments was urgent and obvious. Targeted subsidies is one of the foremost important seven dimensional programs in economic development plan which relates directly to individual citizens. It could be said that implementing targeted subsidies plan is one of the rare programs agreed upon by most of the economic experts and scholars in Iran. This may be because it brings about partial reforms on prices and hinders deviation from due resources. Since the main goal of this plan is to satisfy individuals and bring about more welfare for Iranian families it also helps better use of energy carriers, optimizes country revenues and introduces a competitive context in manufacturing lines. As such the present study is to evaluate the level of satisfaction of implementing targeted subsidies among Urmia city citizens.

### Subsidies Definitions

Today what is called as subsidies is in fact direct and/or indirect payment of some financial help, economic privilege or especial superiority to private institutions, families and or governmental agencies to achieve presupposed goals. Among the most important goals that developing countries including Iran want to achieve is to prevent poverty expansion and social crisis and also try to establish justice even if at the price of losing economic efficiency. However there are different and diversified definitions of subsidies namely to say as follow:

- A subsidy is a form of financial aid or support extended to an economic sector (or institution, business, or individual) generally with the aim of promoting economic and social policy.
- A benefit given by the government to groups or individuals usually in the form of a cash payment or tax reduction. The subsidy is usually given to remove some type of burden and is often considered to be in the interest of the public.
- Money that is paid usually by a government to keep the price of a product or service low or to help a business or organization to continue to function.

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## **The Importance of Targeted Subsidies from the Point of View of Ayatollah Khameneyi, Iran's Supreme Leader**

Targeted subsidies, as a step towards establishing social justice is the foremost important foundation that the government is ready to implement it. Therefore, the followings are what Iran's Supreme Leader has indicated in relation to the importance of targeted subsidies.

### **Social Justice Stands at far Distance to Reach**

We have great developments, but if you ask me I would tell you that I am not satisfied with existing level of development. There is a far distance to reach social justice that is indicated in Islam and we have not achieved the level of liberty that Iranians deserve. There are lots of obstacles in this path. However, we must not stop. Soldiers of social justice must be tireless. This is the way a nation would reach its goals and ambitions. No one would gain felicity through laziness.

### **Targeted Subsidies is to Observe below Mentioned Issues**

Water usage must be optimized. Today there is not an optimal use of water in country. Last year when I proposed the issue of modifying consumption patterns, our researchers found out that ten percent of consumed water must be saved and I believe that this rate is enough for domestic industrial and drinkable uses. It means that saving ten percent leads to increase in availability of water usage in needed places. As such the issue is very important. Electricity usage and also the issue of energy containers are very important. Targeted subsidies observes these issues.

### **Targeted Subsidies is Among Desires**

Do not turn your check from social justice. Elimination of corruption, protecting poor classes, simple life, paying attention to far reach places, and solving individuals' problems are principles that if observed and insisted on would both satisfy God and officials. Keep track of these matters.

Justice does not limit itself to economical dimension, but a great share is attributed to economy. In all aspects of judgments, views, opinions, statements and sidings you must observe justice index. The most important is economic justice and the issue of distributing public wealth justly among individuals. One example is targeted subsidies. Currently subsidy is not distributed justly among poor and wealthy. The wealthy gain more and the poor gain less. Targeted subsidies is very important.

### **Targeted Subsidies: Part of Economic Development Plan**

There are good works in economic fields. It is good to inform people about them. What I put emphasis on is the economic development plan proposed in the Ninth government. Targeted subsidies is a part of it which involved parties agree upon it- also there may be some disagreements on how to implement it- but the other parts of economic development plan dwelling with monetary, commercial and alike systems must not be neglected. Economic development plan was a great change that must be followed insistently.

### **Targeted Subsidies: More Things for the Poor**

The issue of economic development plan is among great works and venturing to do it is itself valuable. The issue of targeted subsidies was also proposed in previous governments, but has not practically been implemented and or progressed.

### **Targeted Subsidies is the Result of Long Term Experience Gained by National Elite**

Targeted subsidies is the result of long term experience gained by national elite. They concluded that national treasury belongs to people and must be directed more towards needy and poor, and middle classes in country rather wealthy classes. Making such decision is the consequence of long term experience gained through years of inquiry.

### **Analysis of Existing Conditions before Implementing Targeted Subsidies Including Threats, Opportunities, Advantages and Disadvantages**

Advantages of current system: Executive experience of governmental institutions: organizations and institutions like Department of Commerce, Presidential Department of Planning and Strategic Supervision, Petroleum Ministry, Energy Ministry, Welfare Organization and ... have the responsibility of some part of subsidies in country. Doubtlessly each of these organizations pertains to specific experience, infrastructure, coordination networks, policy making and strategy that would be useful.

#### **Disadvantages:**

- 1- Goal of targeted subsidies is to distribute revenues justly among the poor and needy. The following reasons show why current subsidy system is unable to reach predefined goals: public subsidy, lack of full identification of vulnerable groups (Sobhani and Steward, 1976), inappropriate identification of industries in need for subsidies, lack of needed infrastructures and conditions for subsidy payment.
- 2- Lack of clear amount of subsidies: it means there is not enough and clear information on the amount of payable subsidies. This originates from different sources namely to say, lack of clear budget row, considering the expenses of low efficiency as subsidy, lack of appropriate data bank regarding different pertaining activities, lack of vivid and comprehensive strategic policy, production fall and irregular increase in commodity consumption and subsidy based services (Tavakoli, 2007), smuggling

subsidized goods [1], inappropriate allocation of resources [2], unjust distribution of income and wealth (Ahmadian, 2007).

Subsidy policies must follow consistent strategy and be codified in accordance with documents like Iran Republic Islamic twenty-year outlook, principals of development plan, regulations of annual budget, comprehensive law of social welfare structure system.

- 3- Pressure on government budget: although having financial sources in national budget is an advantage, we must know that its irregular increase and elevating its share in governmental budgets introduce such consequences that count out as disadvantage; reducing governmental power in implementing infrastructural issues.
- 4- Number of decision making centers: since there are diversified commodities and services benefiting from subsidies and in turn different related organizations, therefore there has not been due coordination to adopt unified and comprehensive strategy.
- 5- Inconsistent price system and national production: governmental interference in market by applying subsidiary prices leads to deviation from relative prices and disturbs market system. Such manipulation in price system contributes to discrepancy in national production system in the way that manufacturing advantage is lost.
- 6- Problems in defining subsidy: One of the most important problems regarding subsidies is the lack of unified and clear definition in relation to its economic concept.
- 7- Smuggling subsidiary commodities: one of the most pertaining problems is smuggling subsidiary commodities, because of their low price to neighbor countries.
- 8- Unjust distribution of incomes: acquiring social justice is among the most important goals of targeted subsidies payment, but current subsidy system not only could not break a leg in this regard, but also has led to unjust distribution of incomes.

#### **Opportunities**

- 1- Development and dominance of targeted subsidies discourse: with subsidy discourse dominance over national economic atmosphere we may hope the acceptance of adopted policies by families and institutions.
- 2- Corresponding geographical distribution of income deciles: by corresponding distribution it means appropriate geographical distribution of different income deciles i.e. the possibility of providing poverty plan. Corresponding geographical distribution of income deciles possess following functions: geographical concentration of the needy: it means that vulnerable classes in some regions could be identified relatively and with acceptable accuracy through geographical identification (e.g. villagers)-correspondence between some systems and banks with geographical distribution of income deciles: as some services and or commodities are distributed by geographical distribution like address or postal code (such as water, electricity and gas) there is simultaneous reduction possibility in first and second error (Faghih Nasiri, 2008).

#### **Threats**

- 1- Separation from social justice: benefiting from the same rate of subsidy is one of the consequences of general and aimless subsidy payment. This is in contradiction to the basic purposes of subsidy payment.
- 2- Subsidies disturb market structure, and supply and demand system: subsidy payment as manipulation in prices contributes to change in usual supply and demand system which would be more effective regarding the same commodity and/or service in market (supplementary and alternative commodities).
- 3- Waste and overuse of subsidiary commodities and services: unconditional subsidy payment impacts efficiency both at consumption and production phase and it brings about waste of resources, overuse, low efficiency and ....
- 4- Environmental pollution: subsidy payment in current conditions contributes to increased consumption of subsidiary commodities and services.
- 5- Low participation of nongovernmental organizations: in spite of nongovernmental organizations' activities and their due reliability, there is a big gap between the rate of their participation in assisting problems and the amount of budget allocation to them.
- 6- Reduction in resources or in petroleum price: with petroleum price reduction in recent months there have been descending trend in availability of resources at hand.

#### **Review of Related Literature**

According to what Office of Economic Studies (2004) reported if export subsidies are paid efficiently and purposefully the ground for non-oil export would be provided. According to WTO suggestions on limiting export subsidies, this payment should be in the way that beside protecting and increasing export competitive capability, does not introduce any barrier at the face of it. Hence, it is better to substitute payment of export subsidies in cash with non-financial supports like paying some part of expenses of marketing and supply; holding exhibitions, advertising and or giving cheaper loans and preferable conditions to export section.

Therefore it is better that export subsidies take the form of non-cash support such as covering some part of expenses of supply and marketing, holding exhibitions, advertisement and or giving cheaper loans rather cash payment which has greater consequences.

Farajzadeh [3] in a paper "the effects of reducing food subsidies on Iranian consumers" to cash food subsidies suggests that first of all income deciles in rural and urban regions must be identified and subsidy distribution must be done among deciles below poverty line.

Pazhooyan and Amin [1] defend targeted subsidies by declaring that protective system must operate purposefully to be efficient at all levels.

Ghaderi et al. [4] in a research "evaluating the effect of direct energy subsidy payment on macroeconomic indexes with systemic view" reports that gradual change from indirect subsidy to direct subsidy from the point of view of two indexes- inflation rate and inflation ratio to income increase rate of low income classes- is better than conversion at once, but from the point of view of per capita consumption indexes gradual conversion is weaker in practice than conversion at once. As such from economic perspective applying conversion at once is better than gradual change because in short time due system would be optimized. However, in decision making at macro levels we must observe all pertaining dimensions to introduce the least possible consequences.

Ghaderi et al. [4] in their work "evaluating the effect of direct energy subsidy payment on micro economic indexes with systemic view" proposed a model for direct energy subsidy payment.

Abunoori et al. [2] in "evaluating economic effects of fuel subsidy on its consumption rate in Iran; an empirical research" investigate the impact of subsidy payment on fuel consumption increase in country. They concluded that targeted subsidies in order to reduce fuel consumption and gain optimal usage, and also preventing financial sources' waste is so important.

Ebadi and Ghavam (2009) in their research "targeted medicine subsidy, from the points of view of justice and efficiency" investigated the process of targeted medicine subsidy during 1997-2005 from the points of view of distribution justice in medicine section and efficiency changes in drug industry. Results indicated that in spite of efficiency increase in country's drug industry during past years which has been reflected as more competitive drug market and increase in drug manufacturing, and the condition of distribution justice in medical sector from the point of view of individuals' access to drugs has not been differentiated significantly.

Masoumzadeh [5] in "the impact of targeted subsidies on municipal incomes and expenses" concluded that implementing related law contributes to 11% reduction in municipal earnings.

Gholamian [6] declares that added tax value without benefiting from targeted subsidies would have negative growth in comparison to budget prediction. However benefiting from targeted subsidies this difference reduces significantly which in fact proposes that targeted subsidies may result in achieving predefined goals in budget prediction.

Razini et al. [7] in "evaluating the impact of implementation of targeted subsidies on fuel consumption in Iran" investigated the impact of fuel price on its consumption during 1971-2008 in Iran. They used self-regression method and analyzed their model based on variables of fuel price, fuel consumption, gross production without fuel and the number of automobiles. Results indicated that fuel consumption because of its price showed reduction in short term, but increased during time pass.

Damghanian [8] in "the role of banking system in targeted subsidies plan" suggests that banking system has the foremost important role in successful implementation of this plan. In the way that liquidity must be injected at once in society to help the project progress. Therefore, banks are to propose their plans, projects and advertisement accordingly to fulfill above mentioned goal as soon as possible. Rendering banking facilities with special conditions to economic sites to prevent probable problems and continuance of their economic activities, adopting due tactics to provide required liquidity at the time of subsidy payment is among suggestions proposed by the writer to implement subsidies plan more effectively.

Parvaniet al [9] in "the impact of targeted subsidies on economy and drug consumption pattern" suggest that: amending consumption pattern and preventing from self-prescribed medical use is possible through related educational programs via media, adding medical education to school lessons, public education and allocating due budget to fulfill it, gradual information access and awareness in medical universities, reducing drug items and physician prescription, expanding more serious monitoring and severe punishment for irregular drug sellers. Mirzamohamadi and Karimi (2011) investigated the issue of subsidies and the way of it allocation in Iran and its effects over different economical sections in the country. They concluded that if the plan is implemented appropriately energy and electricity market would undergo significant changes and high price of energy may contribute to the use of low energy consuming machines and vehicles by diversified industries. Also change in energy use price and individuals' purchase capability is effective in energy consumption by people. In addition relative amendment of prices and increasing economic boost would increase industrial and agricultural production and consequently electricity usage in the country. They also add that one part of targeted subsidies plan is to increase alternative products' price such as gas price. Therefore, regarding the counter interaction of gas and electricity it could be said that increase in gas price would result in high consumption of electricity in the country.

Berimani [10] in “ economic evaluation of the impact of eliminating governmental subsidies and protection on electricity production via renewable energy sources in Iran” declares that as privatization and assignation of electricity industry property in Iran is passing its preliminary phases governmental support of private section investing in fossil technology is essential. Therefore it is suggested to provide justifiable economic grounds for private section by applying suggestive tariffs for electricity production and replace fossil energy production by electricity production through creating more competitive and advantageous atmosphere.

Rezaeipoor and Khundabi [11] in “ the impact of subsidiary expenses shock on real consumption of private section in Iran” investigate short term and long term relationships between real consumption of private section and existing subsidiary shocks. Results indicated that in recession conditions current inflation introduce negative subsidiary shocks to private section consumption which contributes to reduction in consumption rate in short term. That is because real income rates reduce. But it is hoped that the impact of such shocks be modified during time pass and the condition of private section real consumption rate returns its optimal conditions in long term.

#### **Data Collection Tools**

Present research is by nature applied and analytical. The purpose of the research is to investigate the rate of individuals' satisfaction from targeted subsidies plan and rendering due feedback to government based on related criteria. Data collection tool is use of questionnaire encompassing goals of targeted subsidies plan.

#### **Reliability and Validity**

Validity is one of the technical features of any measurement tool. Related concept means that measurement tool present the same criteria in the same conditions. Present research benefits from Cronbach's alpha to establish research validity. In this way the sample (including 35 questionnaires) was first pretested and then using collected data, benefiting from these questionnaires and SPSS software the coefficient index was tested by Cronbach's alpha resulting in 74% which indicated research tool's appropriate validity.

Validity means the extent to which a measuring device measures what it intends or purports to measure. Content validity of the present research was approved by some scholars and economists from public organizations.

#### **Statistical Methods of Analyzing Data**

In the present research at the level of descriptive statistics frequency, percent, mean, deviation and at the level of inferential statistics regarding the normality of data distribution single sample t test and Anova test was used to compare archived means.

Economic development plan includes three major goals concerning targeted subsidies plan as following:

- 1- To help activities which show high efficiency in comparison to increasing index (public commodities)
- 2- To help activities with positive external effects.
- 3- To improve income distribution and assist targeted classes and move towards establishing social justice.

#### **Research Hypothesis**

- 1- Targeted subsidies at the face of activities which show high efficiency in comparison to increasing index was effective.
- 2- The perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning activities with positive external effects was the same.
- 2-1- Targeted subsidies to improve income distribution and assist targeted classes was so effective.
- 3- Targeted subsidies plan was effective at the face of activities with positive external effects.
- 3-1- The perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning the improvement of income distribution and assisting targeted classes was the same.

#### **First Hypothesis**

Table 1 shows the level of meaningfulness. T test evaluates the equality of means in two different societies.

$H_0$ : targeted subsidies plan at the face of activities with high efficiency in comparison to increasing index (public commodity) was effective.

Table 1: single sample t test results

(t).sig	Deviation	T test	Variance	Mean	Satisfaction=3
0/00	5%	-5.430	0.75	2.79	Public Commodity

Evaluating the relationship between variables shows normal distribution and is in accordance with central limit theorem. Resulting statistical analysis from single sample T test shows less than 5% meaningfulness (sig) which indicates that ( $P < 0.05$ ),  $H_0$  is rejected. That is targeted subsidies in assisting activities with high efficiency in comparison to increasing index (public commodity) was not effective. There is a great difference with the rate of effectiveness test (3) that shows the mean efficiency of public commodity, 1.79 is less than 3.

**First Sub-Hypothesis**

In table 2, T test is attributed to the distribution showing the difference between two random variables.

$H_0$ : there was not a great difference between the perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning activities with positive external effects.

Table 2: independent t test results

Independent T Test		Levene Variance equality test		Standard Deviation	Mean	Quantity	Public Commodity
Sig	Statistic	Sig	Statistic				
3%	-2.14	0.18	1.76	0.77	2.73	268	Equal and less than 4 members
				0.71	2.92	109	More than 4 Members

According to statistical analysis of independent t ( $P > 0.05$ ) and meaningfulness level (sig) from t test for equality of variance between two groups ( $P < 0.05$ ) show that  $H_0$  is approved. That is there is not a great difference between the perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning activities with positive external effects.

**Second Hypothesis**

In table 3 meaningfulness level for T test and Leven test have been calculated.

$H_0$ : Targeted subsidies plan was effective at the face of activities with positive external effects.

Table 3: single sample t test results

(t),sig	Variance	T test	Standard Deviation	Mean	Effectiveness = 3
0/49	5%	0.68	0.745	3.02	Positive External Effects

Evaluating the relationship between variable we can see that there is normal distribution between variables. Statistical analysis obtained from single sample t test ( $P > 0.05$ ) shows that  $H_0$  is approved i.e. targeted subsidies plan was effective at the face of activities with positive external effects. There is a meaningful differences with the value achieved from effectiveness test (3) which indicates that effectiveness mean of external positive effects is equal to the value of effectiveness (3).

**Second Sub-Hypothesis:**

As it can be seen from table 4, to compare families' perspective on assisting activities with positive external effects variance analysis and independent t tests was used.

$H_0$ : there is not a meaningful difference between the perspective declared by families with 4 members and less with perspective declared by families with more than 4 members on assisting effective activities with external positive effects.

Table 4: independent t Test Results

Independent T Test		Levene Variance Equality Test		Standard Deviation	Mean	Quantity	Positive External Effects
Sig	Statistic	Sig	Statistic				
9%	-1.68	8%	3.04	0.79	2.98	268	Equal and less than 4 members
				0.61	3.12	109	More than 4 Members

With statistical analysis from Levene's test ( $P > 0.05$ ) and since there is variance equality between two groups and according to the results of t test with more than 5% value, it shows that  $H_0$  is approved. That is there is not a meaningful difference between perspectives declared by two groups in this regard.

**Third Hypothesis**

In table 5 the meaningfulness level of Levene's test and T test is presented.

$H_0$ : targeted subsidies plan was effective at the face of activities with positive external effects.

Table 5: Single Sample T Test Results

(t),sig	Variance	T test	Standard Deviation	Mean	Effectiveness = 3
0.001	5%	-22.64	0.56	2.34	Public Commodity

Analyzing the relationship between variables shows the normal distribution between them which is in accordance with central limit theorem. Meaningfulness level resulting from single sample test is less than 5% meaningfulness level which indicates  $H_0$  is rejected. That is targeted subsidies regarding improvement of income distribution and assisting targeted classes was not effective.

### Third Sub-Hypothesis

As it can be seen from table 6 in order to evaluate families' perspective on positive external effects variance analysis test and independent t test was used.

$H_0$ : There is not a meaningful difference between perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning the improvement of income distribution and assisting targeted classes.

Table 6: Independent T Test Results

Independent T Test		Levene Variance Equality Test		Standard Deviation	Mean	Quantity	Public Commodity
Sig	Statistic	Sig	Statistic				
0.12	-1.55	0.55	0.35	0.55	2.31	268	Equal and less than 4 members
				0.58	2.41	109	More than 4 Members

According to the results of independent t test which shows meaningfulness level of Levene's test more than 5% and regarding the equality of variance, and also as the value of t test for variance equality is more than 5% ,  $H_0$  is approved. Therefore, there is not a meaningful difference between perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning the improvement of income distribution and assisting targeted classes.

### Conclusion

According to the results of the second hypothesis which shows meaningfulness level more than 5% ( $P>0.05$ ) it is believed that targeted subsidies was effective at the face of activities with positive external effects. Also it can be said that there is not a great difference between the perspective presented by families with 4 members and families with more than 4 members regarding the effectiveness of targeted subsidies plan concerning activities with positive external effects. There is not a meaningful difference between the perspective declared by families with 4 members and less with perspective declared by families with more than 4 members on assisting effective activities with positive external effects.

Results indicated that government could succeed in assisting positive external effects of targeted subsidies plan. That is the rate of energy consumption was reduced among citizens of Urmia city, bread quality was improved, and people believed that traditional methods for fuel consumption must have been replaced by new emerging and optimal facilities. Hence, it is believed that appropriate implementation of targeted subsidies may improve manufacturing sections and help eliminating unemployment. Regarding inflation rate originating from implementation of targeted subsidies plan in late 1391 (32%) and uneven balance of currency rate at the same time there was problematic issues facing raw material supply for factories and manufacturing sections. As such applying fiscal contractionary policies and stabilizing balanced currency rate would enhance decreasing inflation rate in country. Generally it could be said that targeted subsidies plan in order to achieve predefined goals by government was effective from the point of view of individual citizens.

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