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## Role of questionnaire method in social geographical study- case study from Albania

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### Abstract

*The method of questionnaires is a practical method widely used in many discipline. Therefore, to conduct the study, was chosen to focus not only on the simply theoretical importance of method, but its concrete and practical training in the case study. Significant changes, which are located in Albania, after 1990 reflected everywhere in social and economic life of the country, where many areas and spaces, once the over-populated, be under continuous pressure of migration, bringing so, the loss of population, agricultural activities and livestock economy, but the depreciation of natural resources and the villages, such is the case study chosen. The aim of the study is that even to identify the role of questionnaires method in the social geographical study for specific areas, and to evidence the practical definition in a concrete area.*

Keywords: Questionnaires methods, Economic development, Social development, Rural development

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Role of questionnaire method in social geographical study

Social geography object represents directly clear expression of a close relationship that exists between these aspects of social and geographical space in which they are born developed and transform, thereby forming socio-geographical space (Axhemi, 2008). A questionnaire is a formalized set of questions for obtaining information from respondents (Malhotra, 2005). Geography has an early history of collaboration with the method of questionnaires.

Geographer as an individual connected to the mainland, can not complete studies without closely observing of the territories, but not only this; receive information from the observed territory. From one period to another geographical evolution of discipline and increased use of research methods, in particular that of the questionnaire, which is a kind of survey of the terrain, but it is carried out in collaboration with the residents of the area.

Within geography, the last decade has undoubtedly seen an expansion in qualitative work both in terms of the types of work and the topics addressed. Qualitative approaches have long had a

strong association with cultural and social and feminist geographies, in part as a reaction to quantified social geography (Crang, 2002).

The questionnaire method is a practical method which contains more information inside it, this information was taken directly from the field, by residents or citizens, who claim their opinion about certain issues.

Through questionnaires method can get very great information, which can be learned in use for many other studies, as it is gross information which gives the possibility of refining and revising it in several angles. In population geography an entrenched empiricism and a reluctance to engage in wider debates on theory and method within human geography have resulted in a degree of separate development. Such methodological complacency has, until recently, threatened to undermine population geography's role within the discipline as a whole.

Thus the discussion of multi-method research designs is of particular significance because it offers population geographers an opportunity to break out from the confines of a dominant research tradition and participate with other human geographers in an important methodological debate (Graham, 1999).

We emphasize that in various studies of a social nature methods of questionnaires are increasingly evaluated. Its rate of use is increasing more and more in the context of different themes included in the object of social geography as is the case of identification the amendment geographic conditions in space identified the current social problems, in the context of the presence and activity the diverse social groups, social effects that emerge, social planning(Axhemi, 2008:pp.35) .

In geographical studies, questionnaire method finds a substantial application, but mostly, it is in human geography sector one that needs to be continued for the method of questionnaires. In particular, population geography and social geography are those which relate closely to their target territory for studies of this view. Assisting the method of questionnaires in social geography studies and geography of the population lies in the fact of information obtained through questionnaires directly from residents. Besides researchers who evaluate the role of questionnaires in studies of the social and population geography, there are those who are skeptical of the results, the reliability of the study, etc. However, in this battle for many years it seems that the tradition for use method of questionnaires continues, and studies to withstand time by serving multiple disciplines and find use in different directions.

Through questionnaires and responses we identify some problems which we enter assistance, not only theoretical studies but also concrete applications. Studies of different socio-geographic space, serving the best to the process of social development policies, different plans or strategies, which drafted by local governments or governments, because the problems vary from one area to another; questionnaires contribute to rank acute problems which mostly concern the residents, but in addition by taking into consideration their thoughts on various topics treatment.

Availability of opinions and the sincerity with which people respond is based on the fact to anonymity of the questionnaire, though, when it comes to the concerns and problems that affect the community extent, being or not being anonymous, does not pose hindrance to express their opinion.

Through the questionnaire method, we can come out and other issues, which had escaped the eye and attention of the government or the previous researchers. Furthermore questionnaires are a very good indication of the result of the implementation of a project-, or different social and economic policies.

In Albania the questionnaire method, not only in the geographical discipline, but also in the other discipline in different fields of studies, has been implemented only in the last decade. Include questionnaire method, in the university practices for students in the Department of Geography, University of Tirana, in the disciplines such as Social Geography, Population Geography, Rural Geography, Regional Geography, Geography of Agricultural Economics, etc., is an indication which encourages students practical skills and deepen the analysis and logic thinking.

## **2. Methodology of work**

Paper is accomplished according to the method of questionnaires. In this questionnaire are included people of different ages and different social-economic groups and categories. The questionnaire is composed of four parts, each of which contains many questions with few alternatives. Specifically, the questionnaire is composed of: the first part of which contains personal information on passport, as age gender, marital status, etc. The second part which contains questions about the economy as the amount of land revenue, their profits roads and use, marketing of products etc. the third part goes to environmental issues by assessing its importance society, preservation, current situation, etc., and the fourth part which is about perspective of this village, which is his future, as has shifted population, which is its tendency.

## **3. Case study: Evaluation of social and economical condition in Commune of Kute through questionnaire method.**

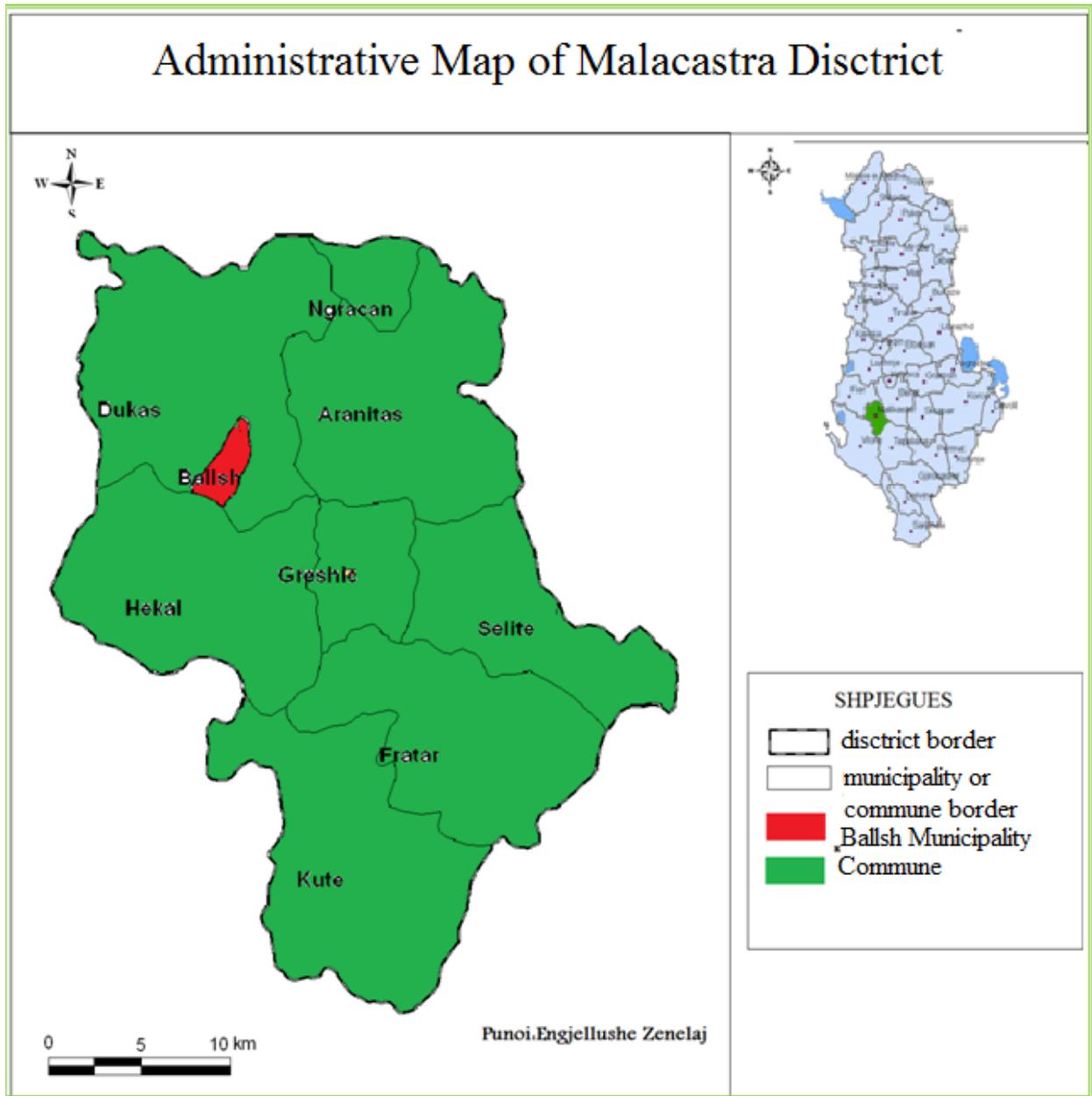
Kute Commune lies to the southwest of Mallakstra District, along the valley of the Vjosa river. Bounded on the north by the Commune of Hekal, northeast with Fratar Commune, in the southeast with Kras Commune of Tepelena District, and in west bounded by the District of Vlora where as the boundary, serves Vjosa River. Kute Commune consists of four villages, Kute, Çorrush, Drizar and Anebreg. The landscape of the area comes up from southwest to northeast, moving from 60-70 m up to 300 m above sea level. The field lies on the right side of Vjosa River, while settlements are located in the temperate hill that exalted above field.

This village has been inhabited since antiquity, and proof of this are archaeological discoveries, and at all times has been, and continues to be the administrative center with a large number of population, but during the last 10 years is coming increasingly declining. The climate is Mediterranean southwestern hilly type, with mild winters and wet, and summers hot and dry. The hottest months are July and August, while the coldest months are January and February. Snow is a rare guest in this village. Top soil is the type of Ambergris brown and more medium sub-clay, with neutral or slightly alkaline reaction. Soils are poor in phosphorus but rich in potassium.

Regarding water resources river Vjosa is the great wealth that area has. From what understand, the area has suitable conditions for the development of agriculture and breeding, which have never been absent. Fertile areas, climatic conditions, create good opportunities for the cultivation

of many agricultural crops. But despite the very good and favorite conditions for development, area recently noted different problems, which there are several reasons.

Through the questionnaire method is required to emphasize an assessment of the social and economic situation in the socio-geographical space. Dynamics of the population has varied over the years. But there has been a tendency to 1990 always growing, while after 1990, has declined significantly, not only of the total population, but also indicators that influence significantly on demographic rate of fertility, and the rate of natural increase. The population is decreasing after 1992, which significantly decreases, and the main factor is the migration of population within and outside the country. Population removals increased significantly from year to year.



### 3.1 Questionnaires Results

#### 3.1.1 First Part -Personal passport of respondents

In this questionnaire, 140 people were involved, 70 males and 70 females, which means that 50% of the interviewed were male and 50% are female. Gender equality has deliberately chosen to have an equality of ideas, as the heads of men, as well as by female-headed households. In terms

of age structure, are trying to have inclusiveness in the questionnaire. According to age is divided into 5 groups; And according to specific groups of interviewees are as follows:

- 28.57% are less than 30 years old
- 14.28% belonging to age 31 – 40 years old
- 21.42% belonging to age 41- 50 years old
- 14.28% belonging to age 51 – 60 years old
- 21.42% belonging to age over 60 years old

Regarding the marital status of the 140 respondents, 90 individuals or 64.28% of them are married while 50 or 35.71% of them are single. The size of the family is a social indicator which affects in a household. Family size relates directly to: the number of children in each pair. In relation to the size of the families surveyed results are as follows:

- 7.1 % i of the interviewed with 1 child;
- 14.28% of the respondents are, with 2 children;
- 28.57 % of the respondents are, with 3 children;
- 21.42% of the respondents are, with 4 children;
- 14.28% of the respondents are, with 5 children;
- 14.28% of the respondents are, with 6 children.

**(Note:** for those who in the civil state are single, we have taken the number of the children who have their parents.)

But the size of the families not only evidenced by the number of the children, but following another indicator, which is the number of persons in the family. According to the number of persons in the family respondents results are as follows:

- 14.28% of the respondents or 20 of them are with 2 member of his family;
- 14.28% of the respondents or 20 of them are with 3 member of his family;
- 28.57 % of the respondents or 40 of them are with 4 member of his family;
- 21.42% of the respondents or 30 of them are with 5 member of his family;
- 21,42% of the respondents or 30 of them are with 6 member of his family.

The questionnaire identifies the level of education of household members, namely the head, spouse and children. These data are placed in a summary table which gives the data in percentage.

Table nr.1 The education level of the respondents

	head of household %	wife %	Children %
Elementary education	14.28	14.28	4.08
Second level of education( 9 - year school)	14.28	21.42	5.1
professional education	21.42	28.57	15.5
Gymnasium-high school	28.57	21.42	48.97
University	21.42	14.28	26.32
total	100	100	100

**(Note:** The accuracy of results stands that in this survey, were interviewed a total of 140 people, which means that the interviewed person, we have received information, for 140 families head, 140 spouses of family, while the number of children is associated with the data the previous question and the number of children per couple, which accounts resulting in its total 490 children.)

From the look, great part of the respondents belong to vocational education and general high school, fewer respondents, belonging to university education, while those who are heads and spouses with only primary education, belong to the old generation being over 60 years old, and this was related to the difficult time, lack schools. While the new age secondary education is it's because in commune opened high school since 1974, and the city that was found near the vocational school, which has conditioned the education of young people according to these directions. University education is not very high levels, but satisfactory for a rural area. Those who have a university degree, their profiles are mostly those in teaching, but also the profile as agronomy agriculture, fruit growing, economy, etc..

### 3.1.2 Second part- economy

The second part of the questionnaire, focus on the economy, which shows the family income, amount and manner of use of their property and to their activities in the surveyed families. The questionnaire aims to identify the routes of resources, economic income. We survey, there are several alternatives, such as working in the country, work in private, social assistance, etc.. She was the daughter in the eye, is that, in every family, and regardless of income activity and that is, it always has help from remittances. From the respondents, only 60 persons have income from work in the country, 50 of the respondents work in private, and 30 are those who have income only from remittances, not having any other activity or employment opportunities in the countryside. In connection with the income level the respondents are divided into:

- 30 persons or 21.42% belonging to the income level with 5000 – 10000 Leke (Albanian money);
- 30 persons or 21.42% belonging to the income level with 10000 – 15000 Leke;
- 60 persons or 42.85% belonging to the income level with 15000 – 20000 Leke;
- 10 persons or 7.1% belonging to the income level with 20000 – 25000 Leke;

- 10 persons or 7.1% belonging to the income level with 25000 - 30000 Leke;
- 10 persons or 7.1% belonging to the income level with 30000 Leke.

An important indicator is the fact that how revenues are used in the recent years. In fact, it is as social as economic a question, as it shows the standard of living apart, the possibilities and trends for the future. According to responses received from residents surveyed, income received during the last 15 years, have been used for food, to repair houses, furnished them with furniture, and to equip them with the necessary technology to home. Only 10 of them have used incomes to expand agricultural activity, while others for those mentioned above. After changing the system from communist to a democratic and free market, there are changes in the structure and funding of land belonging, because the system which entered Albania based on private property. The survey results highlight how they have benefited from the allocation of land to the implementation of Law no. 7501, for restitution and compensation of property, be all the respondents responded that they benefit from this legal reform, where the joint distribution of capital became the basis of family members. Residents of the area have received land in places where they had the first of their former property in the state. According to the law, in this village all individuals benefited from 2.5 - 3 dynyms, arable land, which was located in the area. So based on the number the family members, which have issued the first part of the survey, and the amount of land We highlight that these families possess. So families are divided as follows:

- 14.28 % of respondents possess 5 dy arable land;
- 14.28 % of respondents possess 5 – 10 dy arable land;
- 28.57% of respondents possess about 40 dy arable land;
- 21.42 % of respondents possess about 45 dy arable land;
- 21.42 % of respondents possess over 45 dy arable land.

Residents claim that the amount of they own land is enough for them. This is related to the direction of the activities and perspectives they have. In general, the level of production in the territory of each of their response varies between average and high, but very average. An important element for the development of rural areas, the irrigation system is that land, the significance opportunities that they have, for you irrigate their lands. All the answer to consist a point: partially. This is not because there is no water or channels, but since the 1990s the irrigation canals were damaged too, and no one has put hand to fix them. Despite living in rural areas, residents surveyed were not all working individuals who have basic or priority in farming or agriculture. According professional structure, the respondents are individuals who work as follows:

- 50.28% have primary agriculture activity
- 7.1% have primary livestock
- 28.57% serving in Public Administration.
- 14,82 dealing with trade and private services

Delicate point and the biggest problem that exists in rural areas in general is finding a market for livestock and agricultural products. In connection with the sale of products and the ease of finding market the respondents declare as follows:

- 50% or 70 of the respondents did not trade any product;

- 28.5% or 40 of the respondents trade up 25% of the quantity produced;
- 21.42% of the respondents' trade up 50% of the quantity produced.

Regarding the marketing of domestic products of all people understood which traded say that they sell their products where they have opportunities within areas, in another municipality in urban centers etc. Finding market is closely related to the transport mode which people use to transport their products through countries where they sell them. From all those that trade, only 10 of the people interviewed, personal use private vehicles, along with other tools that provide transit service the rural residents, while others use tools like bus minibuses etc. Estimates regarding infrastructure are original, when each resident gives his opinion. In the table below we present the results for the evaluation of infrastructure by residents:

Table nr.2 Evaluation of infrastructure

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
Road			<b>14.28%</b>	<b>71.43%</b>	14,28%
Energy			<b>57.14%</b>	<b>28.57%</b>	14.28%
Water		<b>18.5%</b>	<b>24.28%</b>	<b>32.1</b>	2.5%
Health			<b>78.57%</b>	<b>21.42%</b>	
Education			<b>68,92%</b>	<b>28.57%</b>	2.5%
culture					100%

- **Note:**
  - Level 1 -very good
  - Level 2 -good
  - Level 3 -somewhat
  - Level 4 -bad
  - Level 5 -very bad

### 3.1.3 Third part –environmental issue

Part three focuses on the environment resident's interest, the risk of contamination if it is present, various injuries as a result of illegal actions on the environment, and the importance they attach environment. So at this point, the first question reveals the interest that they have on the environment, how involved and interested they are in this matter:

- 47.14% are less interested
- 35.71% somewhat interested
- 17.1% very interested.

Residents of respondents reply that the environmental situation, where they live is very good, because they do not take note of contamination, fires or injuries activities to bring negative impacts on the surrounding environment of the area where they live. Interviewed residents show and appreciate the importance of the conservation of the environment and how important is it for the life, for next generations to come. Environmental and heritage protection is everyone's duty.

### 3.1.4 Forth part :Perspective

The fourth part of the questionnaire holds as editorial the perspective, which means that focuses on events that present to predict the future. It is built on four simple questions, but that in itself, are very important and essential to analyze the current situation, and to predict the future..

How do you see the future of the commune?	of all responses received the main part of inhabitants declare that the future is without perspective;
What is the trend of population movement?	removal of the population is going towards urban areas and abroad;
Will you change the family residence?	Over 80% of interviewed inhabitants declare that they would change their place of residence, and some of them have bought houses in urban centers, but will stay and less time there, and then will leave, or leave during the winter season in towns and spring return still there. even those who are employed or who have had any activity expressed that they would like to leave, because their workplaces are not long term as a result of removal of the population, closing of schools, lack of infrastructure,,
What are the problems that preoccupy you?	The problems afflicting more are: unemployment, migration, non-attention of local and central government, of course, the demand for a better life, to go where their children have a better chance to live, to work, of education etc..

## 4. Conclusions

The questionnaire method it's a productive methods in social geography identifying some of the problems that accompany the inhabitants in area. The connection between geographical study and questionnaire methods are really closed.

So from the questionnaires we have discovered what going on in this area. even the fact that Kute Commune has many suitable conditions for the development of agriculture, optimal weather conditions for many crops and significant area with pastures and meadows for livestock, fertile farmland and ancient tradition of agriculture and livestock development. Currently hinder the development of agriculture several factors:

- Isolated geographical position
- Distance from major markets of city
- Poor Infrastructure

- Emigration to other areas of population
- The emigration of youth
- The low level of agricultural mechanization
- Lack of treatment and inform farmers about new crops and methods of cultivation,
- Lack of financial subsidies for farmers and substrates, etc.

Finding problems through interviewed with inhabitants can help government, institutions, and investitures, to intervene with many project or different policies helping inhabitants, to confront the challenges.

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