

Studying the impacts of tourism from the perspective of residents (Case Study: Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province)

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Abstract: Tourism is becoming the largest industry in the world and a creator of jobs across national and regional economies. To investigate the status of tourism, the main question of this study is that whether residents are aware of the impact of tourism in improving their local situation? For this purpose, the analytical methods were used and much of the information has been obtained from field studies and SPSS software was used for data analysis. Studies showed that natural environment, particularly climate variability, provides favorable conditions for the development of tourism industry. Residents in all cases studied, were aware of the economic situation improvements influenced by tourism. So it seemed that failure to attract tourist lies in other factors such as deficiencies in infrastructure and overall effectiveness of tourism in the country.

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1. Introduction:

Tourism is becoming the largest industry in the world and a creator of jobs across national and regional economies. World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimates that tourism is responsible for about 10% of global GDP, and forming a significant portion of the economy (Srinivastan et al., 2012). In addition, tourism services exports includes about 6 to 7 percent of total exports and services (Reo et al., 2004).

The statistical evidence of (WTO) shows that, every year more than 600 million people visit the sightseeing places in countries, among this contribution of Iran with this reputation has been just two million people (WTO, 2011), which is observed that this number includes % 0/33 of total tourists in the world. So it's not surprising that the World Travel and Tourism Council report which examined the economic impact of tourism in 181 countries, including Iran in 2020, has predicted a not satisfactory future of tourism for Iran (world travel and tourism council, 2009).

Especially the situation of Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari Province, which is one of the provinces with great capabilities and potentials for development and has great potential for tourism development, is more inappropriate. As the statistics show, in 1999, less than 1% of Iranian tourists visited the province (Dehkordi and others, 2012). This issue shows the dismal state of the industry in the province. So finding ways to solve it seems necessary. So if we accept that one of the pillars of attracting tourists is local residents, the main question of the study is that whether residents are aware of the impact of tourism in improving their local situation? If the answer is

yes, strategies must be sought in other effective cases and, if negative, solutions should be provided.

2. Theoretical research:

World Tourism Organization (WTO) believes that sustainable tourism in today world is an approach that seeks long-term growth of tourism without affecting different aspects of sustainability (Eftekhari and others, 2011). However, the evidence from all over the world suggests that the development of tourism is shifted from economy-based development to sustainable communities-based development. In this new approach:

The concept of economic sustainability is mainly determined by criteria such as, the impact of tourism on poverty reduction (beyond poverty or anti-poverty), the distribution of income, wealth and economic power resources and sustainable livelihoods of local residents, etc.

The concept of environmental sustainability is determined by criteria such as, participation in nature conservation (biodiversity), access to and benefit from participation, and prevention of global warming, etc.

Finally, the concept of cultural and social sustainability determined by criteria such as, respecting rights of land and local people, respecting the dignity of life and increasing the satisfaction of the people, enrichment and active participation of people in development, respecting gender equality (women rights), and respecting labor conditions and rights (Duim et al., 2005, 172).

In this context, the World Tourism Organization, knows sustainable tourism development, as including quality of life for host communities, tourist satisfaction, maintaining the status quo of environment of human and social

resources, and trends in using in the tourism process (Alvani and Pirouzbakht, 2007).

As can be seen, the importance of the host society, is especially seen in the concept of economical and social-cultural sustainability. It is natural that without positive view of residents (hosts) actually a good flow of tourists there cannot be expected. It means that, on the one hand, there is no stable income stream and on the other hand, with the absence of this current, standard criteria of living cannot be created for the residents. It can be summarized that tourism stream can be defined as a win - win game for both parties. From this perspective the views of residents about tourism becomes more important, because the first step in a two-way cooperation is good mental foundations and optimism towards tourism.

In order to measure this situation certain indexes must be measured. Basically, considering the indexes as a tool for monitoring policies and practices, and measuring its effects and results, has a long history that initially emphasized only the economic aspects (Eftekhari and others, 2011). During the decade of the 60's and 70's some researchers objected the use of only economic measures until social indexes were also considered. In the early twentieth century statistical measures for monitoring social trends and changes were made (Choi & Siralcaya, 2006). This research has also benefited from the measurement of economic indexes from residents' point of view.

3. Materials and Methods:

This research was conducted through a survey. 400 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the inhabitants of the province and were completed. For data analysis SPSS software was used and to analyze data was used Chi-square test. This study analyzes the factors approach to tourism development and its applicability is limited. This study is practical, and its approach is quantitative, because it analyzes the factors affecting tourism development.

The study area:

With an Area of 16,532 square kilometers, the province of Chahar Mahal and Bakhteyari is located in south-western Iran, between 31 degrees and 9 minutes to 32 degrees and 48 minutes north latitude and 49 degrees and 28 minutes to 51 degrees and 25 minutes east longitude, in the center of the mountain chains of Zagros Mountains. Map 1 shows the status of the province. The Center of province (Shahrekord) is the highest province with the height of 2066 meters above sea level and for this reason the province is called the Roof of Iran. It has an area of 1% of Iran. At present the province has a population of over 900,000 people, with 7 towns, 18 districts and 31 cities, respectively. Presence of numerous mountain

ranges, river springs, inverted tulip plains, protected areas, mark natural attractions of the province. Also 923 plant species and 294 animal species is identified in it. The nomadic culture, historical places and monuments are other tourist attractions (www.osta-chb.ir, 2012).

4. Tourist Attractions:

Chahar Mahal and Bakhteyari region with becker and beautiful nature, in spring, winter and summer, welcomes passengers and domestic and foreign tourists and ecotourism of this province is one of its obvious attractions.

Tourism centers in Shahre Kord: the castle Dezak - Paul Zamankhan - Domasoum Shrine - Sotoudeh Fort - Shalamzar Castle - Shams Abad Castle - Khan Mosque Kian Mosque - Chalesh tar Mosque- Farokh Shahr Mosque - Atabakan Mosque - Castle Sourak - Mohammadiyeh Ineh Khaneh - Dastgerd Shrine.

Ardal city: Mola Spring- Rostam Abad - Sulqan Wetlands - Sarkhoun Spring - Hakimeh Khatun Sar Pir Shrine - Dehnuha Forty Springs - Duplan bridges - Ismaiel Shalil Shrine - Canaan Spring - Love Valley spring - Green Mountain region - Rah Part tribe - Kordi Sabz Kooh waterfall -Forest Park.

Brojen city: Hamzeh Ali Shrine - Siah Sard Spring - Chafakhor - Mother and daughter Shrine- Oregon Garden - Sheikh Ali Mosque - Grand Mosque.

Farsan City: Dimeh - Chylgard Ski - Pir Ghar Esplanade - Koohrang tunnel - fields of tulips - Shrine of Syed Ahmad Baba Haider - Sardar Asad Junqan Castle - Hyrbon Malek shrine - Bazyaft River - Parak Spring - G. Abad Sardab spring - Koohrang Dam - Morvarid Bid abad spring - Sarab cave (<http://www.chbnews.ir/gardeshgary.htm>).

5. Results:

Based on the results of the questionnaire and choosing the items, it is tried to confirm the assumption that ecotourism in the area has caused employment and regional development. The data were analyzed using Chi-square test. Quantities of each item, the amount of degree of freedom, and significance level tests are shown in Table. Since the significance level of the test is equal to zero, we confirmed the hypothesis H0 with confidence.

Since the items were ranked according to the mean, increased employment opportunities for various ages was with a first rank of 3.79, increased employment opportunities for the youth with a second rank of 3.77, income of residents of the district with third rank about 3.70, the role of tourism in regional development with forth rank of 3.69, increased general revenue was equal to 3.65. Table 1 shows the summarized results.



Map 1: The status of the study area in the country (Reference of Maps: Z, Setting: the author)

Table 1: Selected items of questionnaire, and frequencies of each of them.

Items	Mean	Significance level test	Degree of freedom (Df)	Chi-square	Very high	High	Average	Low	Seldom
Increased employment opportunities for various ages	3.79	./000	4	92.07	31	33.3	25.8	3.8	6.3
Increased employment opportunities for the youth	3.77	./000	4	138.42	31.5	32.8	23.5	6	6.3
Income of residents	3.70	./000	4	112.47	29.3	30.5	24.3	13.5	2.5
Role of tourism in regional development	3.69	./000	4	112.60	29.8	28.5	27.3	10.3	4.3
Increased general revenue	3.56	./000	4	95.57	24.5	30.3	27.3	13.5	4.50

Table 2: Shows summary of data analysis using the chi-square test

	Increased income of tourism	Income of residents	Increased general revenue	Role of tourism in regional development	Increased employment opportunities for the youth	Increased employment opportunities for various ages
Chi-Square(a)	95.575	112.475	92.075	112.600	138.425	156.550
df	4	4	4	4	4	4
Asymp. Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a: 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 80.0.

6. Conclusion:

As was noted, in all studied items it was seen that residents believe tourism had positive effects on the business environment within the province. It seems that negligible contribution of tourism of province must be searched in other factors that could be helpful for future research.

It seems research study on tourists will clarify other factors that can improve the present situation. Factors such as unknown tourism potential and inadequate infrastructure can be effective. On the other hand, failure to attract foreign tourists may be due to overall situation of the country in failing to attract foreign tourists. The factors that confirm this at first glance, are considering 1% share of province of foreign tourists that is equal to the ratio of the total area of the province of country which confirms impressibility of tourism business of this province from overall situation of the country.

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