

## **The Position of Tourism Industry and its Influence on Urban Sustainable Development**

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### **Abstract**

Tourism industry as an effective factor in developing countries has always been considered as one of the main bases in urban sustainable development. Sustainable development requires planning, management, and optimum exploitations of the resources. Tourism based on historical, cultural and environmental capabilities is one of the most important fields which can play a key role in national development process. This study is conducted through applying library studies, historical documents as well as case study of Shoshtar city. The study aims at providing appropriate solutions for exploitations of current potentials as well as accelerating it in all aspects in line with urban sustainable development and tourist attractions of the city. The findings of the study can be applied for making great policy for society, housing and urban development ministry, cultural heritage organization, municipality, educational groups, medias as well as urban sustainable development.

**Keywords:** Tourism, tourist, economic development, sustainable development, Shushtar

### **Introduction**

Tourism is now being considered as one the world's biggest and most various industries which its development has resulted in social, economic and environmental changes. That is why it is being considered as important educational areas among researchers. Iran is a country which east and west have been neighbored and its variety makes tourists to see the attractions of different counties in one country. United nation defines a tourist as a temporary visitor of a country or a region who is having fun or doing business. Accordingly, all issues which are analyzing such behaviors of human beings are categorized in tourism industry. Population increase, technology and science development, more free time and other different factors have made public to pay more attention to tourism industry. Hence, expertise of the industry believes that tourism development is not possible without developing its substructures as well as developing its bases.

### **Definition of Tourism**

In Moein Dictionary, tourism is defined as traveling the world and gaining knowledge. Tourism has also been defined as spending your free time somewhere different from where you live in order to enjoy and have fun (Baher). Hence, success in tourism industry, especially in an international level (attracting foreign tourists) requires a deep understanding of the bases and current capabilities in tourism industry as well as need analysis of the tourists and understanding the most important challenges which tourists see a head of themselves in visiting the country they want to visit(Hosseini, 2009).

### **Tourism industry in Iran**

Iran is a country which is having all attractions including natural, geographical, historical, cultural, and human in one place which fewer countries have such attractions all together. The talk about the tourist attractions of the country is beyond this work. As an example, in terms of geographical-natural features such as location, space, herbaceous covering and unique animals, various climates and topography and specific geomorphology the country has been located in such

way in order to increase its tourism capabilities. In terms of human, specific ways of village and urban life with history of more than thousands of years as well as specific culture are important factors in increasing the capabilities of the country in this regard.

Tourism industry is worth looking from two different aspects:

A- It familiarizes people with other cultures, kinfolks, regions as well as other dialects.

B- Economically, it is been considered as one of the main money making sources which its economic aspect is more important than other ones.

### **Main elements of tourisms**

The main elements of tourism industry are a mixture of activities, services, and other industries. Hence, it includes specific main elements which can be divided into two different categories:

a) Tourism resources

b) Substructures

Tourism resources include natural, cultural, and human made resources which all create different forms of tourisms.

Substructures include all substructures and outer structures' constructions of a country in a way which include connection systems, sanitary systems, transportations and its components, hotels, restaurants, shopping centers as well as amusement centers.

### **Tourism's position in economic development of Iran**

Tourism and traveling, visting from historical places as well as visiting kinfolks and cultures have been a great factor for economic development. Hence, countries can choose their expectations from tourism based on their needs and desires. All factors and elements which create desires in human beings to travel are called tourist attractions. A combination of such attractions based on dynamic and measured plans is an effective factor in creating a motivation, development as well as deployment of a tourism.

One of the main elements of tourism is its demand which has a complex structure. Since an increase or decrease of a country's share from international tourism income depends on different factors and variables which based on administrative and executive issues, the level of statistic and currents information can be varied. Iran has a lot of capabilities in order to turn into an international tourist destination due to its climate, natural attraction, ancient civilization and history, ancient and religious monuments, architecture attraction, handicrafts, and geographical and cultural attractions. But, Iran's share from world's tourism industry income is somewhat nothing. Economically, international tourism creates the most income, currency coming from international tourism is more provided from oil products, cars and connection equipment. Tourism has a central role in persuading investors to invest on substructures, creating income for the country and direct and indirect job opportunities in all over the world (Taghva, & Qulipour soleimani, 2010).

According to different tourist attraction in Iran such as cultural inheritance, natural and environmental sightseeing, and world's tourists are interested in traveling to Iran.

### **Development**

a- Definitions of development are different and various and its bases come from economic, political, cultural and human frameworks which mentioned definitions are entangled in such issue. Development is real way for accomplishing needs, demands, and desires of human beings.

b- Societies desired developments depend on simultaneous economic, political, cultural, and social developments.

About the first hypothesis, several main definitions will be given below:

- Development is an optimization in use of potential forces of materials and humans in a community (Sariolghalam, 1991).
- Development is defined as a process in which a society goes from inappropriate situations into appropriate ones. This process includes all aspects of the society, and its nature is to turn society's potential capacities and capabilities into actual ones. In other words, in development process all talents of organizing a society are blossomed in all economic, social, cultural and political aspects (Asadi, 1991).
- Development is turning to itself and achieving creative participants of people in total optimizing of the national productive forces and human capacities of a society (Asadi, 1991).
- Development can be defined as set of activities in order to guide and create an appropriate life condition based on value system of a society. Therefore, development can be considered as group of connected changes in line with providing society's need. In other words, development is a process which changes inappropriate conditions into appropriate ones (Ghaziyan,).
- Development in public's mind is to turn into something new. It relates to counties which are developed now (Mahmoudinezhad). In spite of different given definitions about development, all definitions have something in common which is reaching to a better life condition as well as needs to create an appropriate and suitable economic, political and cultural conditions. Development is a process which strengthens social relations, fosters talents, and provides optimal use of nature as well as development of all walk of lives. There is no place and time for it and it is for any society which demands it. The evolutionary process of development is different due to different conditions and facilities of countries. Appropriate planning and wise decision making plays an effective role in accelerating development.

### **Sustainable development**

Sustainable development is a concept which requires a change in bases which covers everything including: social and economic justice, protecting cultural inheritance and environment, healthy societies, providing needs and next generation. Concepts like human development, resource use, environment and technological advances are defined in cultural frameworks of a society. Therefore, all cultural bases of development needs to be identified and equipped (Borosi, 1998).

### ***Sustainable development of tourism***

Researchers have defined the concept of Sustainable development with different attitudes and points of views. Some have considered it as a connection between thoughts of environmental protection and development and others have considered a development sustainable in which development and economic development, environment and human society are having a mutual relationships instead of a competitive ones (Moshiri, & Syed Abu Saedi, 2011).

Sustainable development of tourism is a process in relation with quality of hosts' lives, providing visitors' demands as well as protecting natural and human resources. Some writers have defined sustainable tourism as an approach which requires a performance for life as well as long term quality either for natural resources or human ones.

Accordingly, sustainable tourism is defined as an alternative tourism framework for optimizing the quality of hosts' lives, providing a higher quality from the experience of visitors and protecting the local quality which both host society and visitors are dependent on (Lomosden, 2012).

Tourism sustainable development has three dimensions: a) protecting environment, b) protecting resources and cultural inheritance, c) respect to the societies.

Sustainability in tourism affects everything such as choosing a place, structure, facilities and in general the product of tourism for the offer and demand of tourists should be based on the protection of the environment both for the host and the guest.

The base of any society's movement toward development is its human factor. Humans are the developers. A development has to take place based on a respect to ecological system and based on humans and there has to be a systematic outlook in order to form a sustainable and human based process. Undoubtedly, human beings' participation forms a sustainable process and in most of the cases the great impact of natural resources is of a high importance respectively.

### **The impact of tourism on any country's development**

- a- Exporting the products and tourism consequences through visitors
- b- Creating different services for the use of the tourists
- c- Developing and improving all tourism facilities as well as all dependent industry
- d- Developing and improving the travel agencies
- e- Developing and improving the transportation system
- f- Using the income of foreign investments
- g- Developing and improving airports as well as the roads
- h- Forming institutions in order to take a good care of ancient and historical sightseeing
- i- Developing and improving the dependent institutions to tourism industry
- j- Creating different tourist attractions

### **The history of Shoshtar**

Shoshtar is located in north east of Khozestan province with geographical length of 48 degree and 20 minutes and with geographical width of 32 degree and 20 minutes respectively. This city is restricted to Dezfol (from north, 55 kilometers), Ahvaz (from south east, 95 kilometers), and to Masjed-soleiman (from east, 50 kilometers).

Shoshtar is like an island between two branches of Karoon River. These two branches are Gargar in right bank and Shatit in the left bank. These two rivers come together in south of Shoshtar and 3 kilometers away join to Dozbadan River.

According to historical accounts the history of the city dates back to Ailamian period which later was rebuilt by Achaemenid kings. Shoshtar was an important city in Sasanian period and Ardeshir and his son, the first Shapor had tried a lot for the development of the city through building and equipping the water installations. Esternege, an English orientalist who had traveled Iran in Qajar period, writes about Shoshtar that in the year 260 A.C "Valrin" a Greek emperor was captivated by the first Shapor (the second king of Sasanian) and was busy building a great Dam of Shadravan which is located in shoshtar about seven years, as some historians have pointed out. Arabs consider Shadravan Dam as one of the great wonders of the world. It is worth mentioning that it has not disappeared totally and people are calling it Caesar dam nowadays.

In the year 17 A.H, Shushtar was conquest by Abou-Mosa Ashari and regained its dignity due to the geographical as well as economic conditions in the Islamic period. But in Qajar period it did not have a good situation and in Pahlavi period it was totally ignored as Ahvaz was the center of the attention. Shoshtar with its complex structures such as bridges, dams, water falls, and water mills has turned into a museum of water installation which its similar can be found in fewer places.

"Amir Hamah", a historian points to Testar (shoshtar) as Khozestan's center. He said that people have taken the T out of the Testar and replaced it with Sh and Testar has turned into Shestar respectively. Abou-dolf Mosarin Mohalal in his book mentioned that there are many rivers passing by Ahvaz that one of which is Testar. Testar is passing by the city over which bridges have been built as well a great and beautiful mosque. There are also great water mills over this river. As mentioned earlier there is great historical sightseeing in Khozestan which its historical accounts date back to Sasanain period.

### **Historical constructions of Shushtar**

Some historical constructions of Shoshtar are as follows: Mizan Dam, Kolah Farangi, Gargar Dam, Shushtar's bridge dam (Shadravan), Lashgar's bridge dam, water falls, Salasel Castle, Emam zade Abdollah holy shrine, Great Mosque of Shoshtar, Mostofie's house and other great buildings.

#### ***Mizan Dam***

Mizan dam is located in north east of Shoshtar which its direction is east- west. Mizan dam divides Karoon River into two parts which are Gargar and Shatit. Its constructions date back to first Shapor period which was frequently rebuilt and repaired in different periods later. It was repaired in Nader shah period but later after a short time was destructed by flood. In Fath-Ali shah time (1220 to 1230 A.H) it was repaired as well which the current building has been remained the same since then.

#### ***Gargar Dam***

This dam is being constructed on Gargar River and its first constructions dates back to Sasanain period. This dam has also been repaired in different periods respectively. Its Crest length is 50 and it is 20 meter high. The canals of water mills come from this dam.

#### ***Shoshtar's bridge dam***

This bridge is constructed on the main branch of Karoon River which hereby is referred to as Shatit. Its construction dates back to Sasanain period which was also repaired later on in different periods. This bridge dam is known as Shoshtar's Shadravan, Shadravan Bridge and Shoshtar's dam which included a dam, bridge, water installation as well as water transfer and it also had an important role in agriculture and flood control of that time. Unfortunately some parts of it are remained nowadays. There is no evidence about the time and date of its construction but all historians believe that the first Shapor had built this bridge after defeating "Valrin", the Greek emperor.

#### ***Water falls***

Water falls which local people call them Sica are some of the tourist attractions of this region. After Mizan dam construction and due to great amount of water in this river the mentioned dam was destroyed. Therefore, in the year 1233 A.H and after blocking the entrances and drying the Garhar River, Garagar dam was constructed and holes were situated in its two sides which water could find its way out of those holes which finally resulted in current water falls. There are about 16 water falls in each side of the dam as well as water mills on some of these water falls.

#### ***Salasel Castle***

Salasel Castle is located on a stone cliff besides one of Karoon's branches (Shatit) which is in north part of Shoshtar. Although there is no sign of any great castle there, the little signs points out a complex and great building.

#### ***Emam-Zade Abdollah Holy Shrine***

This shrine is located on a hill toward Shoshtar and besides Lashgar Bridge. The stone inscriptions claim that the shrine was constructed in Abasian period. According to Donal Vebler and Andre Gedar its dome dates back to 669 A.H.

### **The objectives of tourism development in Shoshtar**

- To stop the destruction process of valuable and natural resources
- To help the public and the economic improvement of the region
- To improve the quality of the tourism development management as well as its organizations
- To promote the appearance and rebuild its space
- To promote the quality, safety, and environmental conditions of Shoshtar
- To develop balanced, sustainable and natural tourism of the region



- To increase the safety and improve the transportation systems of the roads
- To increase the quality and diversity of tourist attractions as well as turning the region into permanent vacation spots
- To systemize the performance capabilities of the city (tourism, industry, gardening, agriculture and animal husbandry)

### **Conclusion**

Tourism industry and its consequences are seriously discussed in economic, social and cultural meetings and each is referred to tourism industry according to their won specific points of views. Therefore, considering the below priorities and guidelines can be effective in attracting more tourists to Shoshtar.

- Designing and developing sightseeing based on aesthetics principles , cultural and local models around the river, the historical bridge of Shadravan, water falls
- Stopping erosion process and destruction of natural resources of the region water installations of Shoshtar
- Providing a special design of development in order to promote the quality of the environment with a focus on natural values, tourism capabilities and environmental sensitivities
- Preventing sewage, rubbish, from getting into the river and changing its direction
- Increasing the safety of the roads and improving public transportation systems
- Creating a special lane for bike riders as well as the pedestrians along the roads and separating them from car and motor lanes
- Selecting one or some tourist attractions in intact regions to balance the development process of constructions
- Protecting the lands of local people and their sustainable presence in development process of tourism.
- Stopping residential constructions in historical localities.
- Providing tourism-welfare and other services as well as appropriate substructures (terminals, airports and hotels)
- Sustainable protection of historical, cultural buildings through specifying their functions and exploitations.
- Promoting cultural and historical tourism based on cultural and historical potentials of Shoshtar.
- Developing and mending private sector and promoting the capabilities and expertise in this regard such as Mostofie's house
- Identifying cultural and historical buildings and mending them
- Specifying the functions of cultural and historical buildings based on their capacity as well as their economic measurability
- Introducing and creating an appropriate situation for the private sector to participate and exploit the buildings as well as their transfer
- Strengthening the government control capabilities in mending, organizing, protection and sustainable exploitations of cultural and historical buildings

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