

A Perspective on the Role of Tourism in Determining Evaluation and Monitoring Patterns in Darab Rural Development

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Abstract

Any tourism activity which is done in rural areas shall make social and economic development which could be effective in evaluation and monitoring of the area. Although, in the recent years, great attention has been paid to the rural tourism from different aspects in different global levels, its nature and origin has not been fully and comprehensively studied. In the present study, the significant role of rural tourism in Darab rural development has been dealt with. The research method is analytical and descriptive based on four analytical relations, that first, the tourismability coefficient of the area was calculated, and upon proving its tourismability, the expected frequency tests were used through chi-square test, cronbach's alpha coefficient, and Likert scales. Based on the value of 4 relations, the results indicate the monitoring of structural tourismability value in the area.

Keywords: Tourism, rural tourism, rural development, tourism monitoring, Darab

Introduction

Tourism is a widespread activity that in addition to the economic impact, particularly in the areas of employment and increase of income, meets the growing need of the residents of cities and rural areas with regard to spending leisure time, rest and recreation as well. On the other hand, it has a parallel role in the cultural domain and our relation with other nations and political issues in international field. Although, in the recent years, great attention

has been paid to the rural tourism from different aspects in different global levels, the nature and origin of the rural tourism and its relation between different levels has not been fully and comprehensively studied. Today due to increasingly rapid changes in the rural areas of the world, attention to tourism as a physical element in revival of the modern development of rural tourism has shaped the need to understanding development parameters of this subsection more than the past.

Rural tourism is a very old phenomenon. In this area, it should be noted that rural tourism, as a social-recreational activity was first appeared in the second half of eighteenth century in Britain and then in the whole Europe. Also, before that rural areas were used for recreational activities. However, participating in recreational activities was limited to top classes of the society (Turner, 1993, 141). This type of tourism is done in rural areas, however the distinction between rural and non-rural areas are much less clear. But, considering its special cultural, social, economic and environmental conditions, it is a source for tourism, and this source can attract tourists to rural areas (Hoggart, 2005, 125). Rural areas are multipurpose sources which meet so many demands and different utilizations. In one of these demands, as rural tourism, multipurpose features and rural areas provide opportunities and obstacles for tourism development. Also, this type of tourism is one of the valuable types of land usage that if carefully planned and managed is the complement of other usages and has an effective role in the improvement of social and economic condition of the areas (Chanho, 1998, 132).

However, it is accepted that tourism can be a

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good stimulus for cultural, social and economic revival of rural areas (Dernori, 1991, 35). Given the small-scale and fragmented nature of rural tourism industry, long-term planning of that is essential so that the local community could benefit that. However, specifications and conditions that may initially attract visitors to these areas are not considered or disappeared due to improper tourism development (Stein, 1999, 123).

However, if tourism seek the enjoyment of all rural areas and tourists, taking a strategic approach to planning and management of tourism in rural development is essential. Tourism development policies and objectives will inevitably vary according to local conditions, so there is no single universal solution for implementation of programs and policies to be in agreement with all conditions. But, in general, it could be acknowledged that rural tourism, especially in traditional areas, requires realistic feasibility analysis based on local planning (Rezvani, 2008, 209).

In this regard, we should review the concept of sustainable rural development in the area of monitoring and evaluation as it has been used in different methods in the form of various concepts such as expressing perspectives and ideals (Lee, 2000), exchange of values (Clark, 1989), moral development (Rolston, 1994), social reorganization (Gore, 1992), or development process toward a better future (Viedereman, 1994). Since then this apparent and profound expression has been increasingly accepted and approved by governments, international institutions, organizations, business companies, academic and scientific institutions, and non-governmental groups (Gladwin, 2003).

Methods and Materials

In the present study, analytical-descriptive method was employed. First, using regional planning techniques, the area tourismability coefficient was calculated and accepted. Then considering the statistical population and through Cochran's formula, 220 questionnaires were distributed among visitors comprising of three groups: 1) tourists, 2) local families, 3) officials and authorities; then the correlation between variables was studied, and data analysis went through several stages in the process of which the data were obtained by employing collection instruments in the statistical population. So, first the data were summarized, and then they

were coded, and finally processed. Likert 5-degree scale was used to find the relation between variables, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for validity and reliability of questionnaires, and finally chi-square test for homogeneity of variables.

Theoretical Framework of the Research

Tourism is an ancient phenomenon that has existed in human societies from ancient times, and gradually in different historical stages, it has been changed into a technical, social, economic and ecological subject (Rezvani, 2005, 27). Today, sustainable approaches to rural tourism have been accepted by so many researchers who are more concerned about environmental conservation and economy saving (MC, Clinchy, 1999, 33). Rural communities can rarely sustain without economic structure and rural tourism, and rural tourism is more and more turn to a major part of these structures. This matter indirectly considers attention to sustainability in view of tourism opportunities, harmonization of these opportunities, and their capability in tourists attraction and its continuity (Butler et al, 1998, 249). On this basis, rural tourism could help cultural heritage and natural environment by creating job, increasing income levels, diversifying economic activities, raising the level of social knowledge, and providing extensive social relations between the host and guest community, and support rural development by preventing uncontrolled immigration and improving land utilization (Khayati, 2002, 43).

This strategy of rural tourism in third world is not a general solution for all pains and problems of rural areas, but it is one of the methods that can have significant economic impacts, and somehow slow down the evacuation of rural settlements and the migration of rural population. The growth of tourism as a strategy for rural development is a relatively new idea that local policymakers in rural communities have realized its significance (Ashhey, 2000, 123). By the way, rural development should consider tourism as a lope of policymaking chain set by private and public sector for rural development. Plurality, diversity of applications, needs and demand which are referred to rural areas should be harmonized so that the tourism could be efficient and potentially sustainable. As a result, rural development may also create various negative effects, but requires attention to make harmony between the economic, social and environmental conditions

to provide a full range of sustainable development objectives in rural areas (Sharply, 2002, 123).

However, given the problems of rural areas in so many countries of the world, specially since the early 1980, the essentiality of strategies to help economic and social revitalization of rural areas was felt. On the other hand, it is to be mentioned that tourism has a record in so many rural areas, and in some places it is the major source of income and employment, however, the required planning for supporting tourism and coordinating it with the rural development policies has not been made.

Introducing the Place of Research & its Tourism Features

Darab county is located in 55°, 27' of eastern longitude and 28°, 57' of northern latitude, with an area of 6562 sq/km which comprises 5.3% of the province area. Based on coupon climoscope, this county is placed in two climatic groups of temperate and humid, and hot and dry. Darab is located in the south east of Fars province. It is limited to Jahrom and Fasa from west, to Bandar Abbas from east, to Nireez and Estahban from north, and to Zarrindasht and Larestan from south. The average height of Darab from sea level is 1170m. that its highest point in north heights of the plain is about 3100m. Based on the census of 2011, this county has the population of 195481 people, 86903 of which are in the city and the rest are living in rural areas.

According to the statistics of Fars Planning and Management Organization, number of registered historical places of Darab County is 30 items, number of natural parks (ecotourism) is 29, and number of holy shrines is 85 items (Fars Planning & Management Organization, 2006, 7).

There is no opportunity in this paper to fully and comprehensively introduce all these historical and natural attractions. Some of these places are: Sahlak cave, warm waterfall, Kasetarashan waterfall, Fadami waterfall, Crane waterfall, Reghez Canyon, Ughlanfar pleasureground, Corsia Salt Dome, Masque of Darab, Shapour's Inscription, Azarjoo Temple, Mirror Palace, Bahram Palace, Royal Falcon Tower, Stone Mosque, Stone Castle, Vajihah Calabi grave, and Darab ancient city.

Results and discussion

In this study, as it has been stated in the research methodology as well, given the statistical

population of the study, the estimation of sample size for statistical population has been done separately for tourists, local families and authorities.

$$DC = \frac{PF}{NF} \quad (1)$$

Where:

DC = development coefficient (that in this paper tourismability has been calculated)

PF = favorable parameters for tourism

NF = Non-favorable parameters

The value of DC is 1.27, and as it is more than 1, it shows that if the investment is made in the field of tourism in the area, it would attract so many tourists.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^t \left(\frac{O_i - E_i}{E_i} \right)^2 \quad (2)$$

Where:

O_i = number of observed frequencies

E_i = expected frequencies

Based on chi-square, the expected frequencies should not be zero in any category. Therefore, there is no distribution in this test. Moreover, the total of categories, the observations of which is less than 5, should not be more than 20% of the total categories. On the other hand, this test is the only way for homogenizing tests with regard to nominal scale variables or more than two categories. In this study, chi-square test has been used for testing binominal and polynomial values.

$$RA = \frac{j}{j-1} \left(\frac{1 - \sum s_j^2}{S^2} \right) \quad (3)$$

Where:

j = number of questions in test questionnaire

S_j² = sub-test variance

S² = total test variance

In the present study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the whole questionnaire has been calculated 0.85, which indicates that questionnaires have appropriate coordination. This test has been separately done for three statistical population.

$$NO = \frac{Z^2 P(1-P)}{D^2} \quad (4)$$

Likert 5-degree scale was applied. The respondents to this scale have shown the rate of their agreement to each of the questions in the graded scale from 1 to 5. In this equation, having to-

tal number of each group, the level of confidence of 95% has been used.

Where:

NO = Sample size

P = Estimation (changeable attribute (0.5))

D = Possible time

Z = The value of normal change of the corresponding unit for which the level of confidence has been calculated based on P-1

Conclusions

Nowadays, rural tourism approaches are seen in different texts. These tourism approaches are employed as a strategy for rural areas. The only way of revitalization of these rural areas is known as the presentation of detailed programs and strategies which not only could benefit both their natural and human resources, but could cause the creation of income and the increase of life prosperity for the residents of these rural areas. Therefore, it is believed that development and expansion of tourism as an alternative for agricultural activities in these areas, this crucial point can be achieved.

Tourism development in this area could bring about rural development. Given that tourismability coefficient of the region is 127, or in other word, 1.27, it indicates that tourism flourishing in Darab County depends on the development of this industry. Of course, this crucial matter requires providing the ground and dealing systematically with infrastructures in tourismable rural areas. In this research, it has been determined that considering its tourism development parameters and present natural and human potentials, this county, as a suitable tourism pole, can be an appropriate choice for achieving rural development. Therefore, based on strategies and scales measured by different variables and four equations applied in this research, tourism monitoring is possible. These matters show all cultural, social, economic and environmental aspects which could be monitored. Also, concerning social and cultural aspects, the effects and consequences of tourism in the county confirm the fact that tourism can bring about major social and cultural changes. In environmental aspect, as the effective category of tourism, some reviews have been made on the process of tourism in the statement of the research. The results of the evaluations have shown that tourism can be able to create environmental changes, which are positive and promising in some cases. Therefore, it seems that in case of organiz-

ing tourism, removing some shortcomings, equipping the required infrastructures, and doing cultural works, we can further hope different investments, otherwise, in the not-too-distant future natural attractions would be lost, and a multitude of buildings, streets, and cement walls would replace that. In line with the realization of tourism monitoring and development objectives, the exact and systematic knowledge of different areas is required to determine strengths and weaknesses. For the purpose of achieving the goals and growing flourishing of rural tourism for its monitoring, it is required that a regularized, systematic and comprehensive program is developed by making coordination and getting the agreement of all the relevant authorities. On the other hand, given the very high potentials of the area, the infrastructure investments would be accountable provided that the tourism and ecotourism potentials and capabilities of the area do not put aside. As the result, the following solutions are presented for the improvement of the situation of that area, tourism monitoring and tourists attraction:

- Providing detail statistics from the related departments and institutions
- Establishing tourist information offices
- Providing facilities and offering regular services for tourists
- Establishing health facilities and services such as WC, drinking water, communication services specially along routes leading to roads
- Using appropriate bilingual sign for the centers of attraction

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