Evaluation the Role of Awareness by Tourism Attractions on Ecotourism Development (Case Study: Awareness Assessment of Experts and Tourists of Ardebil Province)

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction
Tourism is an economic engine for the developing and developed nations. The tourism industry accounts for 0.11 of the world's gross domestic product. In this regard, the media and awareness services as a major means of communication and marketing play a very important role in the development of this industry. In other words, the tourists' awareness of tourism attractions is one of the most effective means by which tourists can be attracted. Thus, tourism organizations should allocate 3 to 5 percent of their budget to the tourism advertising. Therefore, the use of tourism and its effects should benefit from various tools including advertising and awareness.

2. Review of Literature
Today, tourism in the world is one of the important sources of income and is an important factor in the cultural exchanges between countries; thus, it is of particular importance as the most comprehensive service industry in the world. The diversity of the dimensions and the complexities of the tourism industry according to the geographical areas have created special bases for planners and tourism management, which in susceptible development areas to this industry, should look for stimulating the flow of tourism. In this regard, Ardabil province is one of the provinces of Iran that has a comparative advantage of having ecotourism with unique attractions. It has 62 well-known mines known as paradise of mineral springs. It also has many natural and ecotourism potentials such as many natural and spectacular landscapes, numerous high altitudes with suitable tourist conditions, high vegetation and animal species and so on, as the inner strengths and proximity to tourism poles such as the north of the country and adjacent provinces, proximity to Azerbaijan country as tourists destination and so on are posed

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External opportunities. However, despite the potentials, the community has not led to the ever-increasing development of ecotourism in the province of Ardabil at the national and local levels due to the lack of knowledge, information, and awareness of tourists which entails further attention.

3. Method

It is an applied research using descriptive-analytical method. The method of collecting data and information in this research is based on library and field research. The questionnaire was prepared based on the Likert scale and the reliability of the questionnaire was measured by Cronbach's alpha method while the test was content validated as well. To analyze the hypotheses of the research, Pearson test, linear regression analysis, regression coefficient, and ANOVA were used. Statistical analyses were performed using Excel and SPSS.

4. Results and Discussion

According to the research findings, most respondents (35%) are between 20-30 years old. According to the extracted data, 63.3% of the respondents are men and 36.7% of them are women. Most of the respondents (41.1%) have diploma and postgraduate education. In other words, 58.9% of them had university education, which reflects the credibility of the responses. Also, according to the results of the surveys, only 25.3% of the people, planning and investing in the ecotourism sector is good and very good, 37.2% is medium and 37.5% of respondents mentioned it is unsuitable and very unsuitable, which represents problem and instability in ecotourism of the province.

5. Conclusion

Ecotourism is one of the most popular branches of tourism and is a tool for sustainable development. The results of the surveys indicated the following for each of the hypotheses:

- The survey showed that the tourists' awareness about the climate and therapeutic properties of the mineral waters of the province has a significant effect (0.43) on the ecotourism development.
- There is a significant relationship between ecotourism attractions of Ardebil province and the development of ecotourism (0.33). In other words, the attractions cognition factor for tourists is increased ecotourism development.
- There is a direct relationship between the development of the ecotourism of the province and the local people's behavior (0.38) as the behavior of its people is considered as a factor of ecotourism.
- Local people's interest in guest reception has little impact (0.25) on the development of ecotourism. Otherwise, this will be mutual no Harassment if no disturbance from ecotourists to the local people.
- The interest of tourists to visit the natural attractions of the province has the lowest impact (0.22) on the development of ecotourism, because other
things such as communication, recreational facilities, etc. are also necessary.

- There is a direct relationship between the awareness of tourism managers with the Ecotourism development planning in Ardebil ecotourism development (0.65). In other words, the managers cognition from ecotourism can be facilitate the other ecotourism of the province.

- There is a significant (0.63) relationship between local managers' interest in economic development and job creation through ecotourism with the development of ecotourism in Ardabil province. This has given more attention to ecotourism and in turn contributes to the development of ecotourism in the province.

- There is a strong relationship (0.65) between the development of ecotourism and the possibility of familiarizing indigenous people with the way other people live through ecotourism.

The final analysis of the data showed that increasing the optimal use of strengths, i.e. improving and increasing the efficiency of the strengths, makes the use of opportunities desirable. Regarding the independent variable hypothesis regression, only 21% predict the changes made in the opportunity variable, however, with regard to the correlation coefficient and the standardized coefficient, for each unit of change in the independent variable (improvement of strengths), 46 percent in the dependent variable (opportunity development and Creating) changes will occur.

Keywords: Ecotourism, Tourism attractions, Experts and tourists, Ardabil Province

References (In Persian)


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