

The Key Propellants Affecting Rural Tourism Development (Case Study: The Tourist Destination Village of Dizbad Olya)

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Today, tourism has become one of the most rapidly growing industries in the world that plays an influential role in sustainable development. Rural areas have always been in the center of sustainable development. Planners in this field also seek a secure framework to develop the tourism industry in different rural regions and gain a correct understanding of futuristic and effective strategies in line with the growth of the industry. One of the ways to identify and evaluate the status of tourism is the use of foresight approach. For many years, tourism development planning in Iran has been devoid of such futuristic analyses. In the majority of studies, rural tourism fields have been regarded as unsustainable areas with weak economy and a lack of specific policymaking. Accordingly, there are major challenges with respect to the rural environment, economy, and community; challenges that can also be traced in processes of planning and implementation present in Khorasan Razavi planning records. Having more than 57 tourist destination rural areas in different regions, this province has a special potential to raise incomes generated from this field. Subsequently, the present study was conducted on Dizbad tourist destination village located in the Eastern Zebarkhan section of Khorasan Razavi province to provide answers to the following question: What are the key propellants affecting rural tourism development in Dizbad?

2. Review of Literature

Rural tourism and its development process refers to any event or process through which a considerable population from surrounding areas or outside the region would relocate and move to observe and enjoy historical, cultural, economic, and untouched natural attractions, while their presences can generate a suitable amount of income for locals and residents. The importance of this industry in rural areas are very significant, to the extent to which the decline in traditional rural industries

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such as agriculture, mining, and forestry during the past three decades have led rural communities to seek alternatives so as to strengthen their own economic bases. One alternative in this respect is tourism (Sajjadi and Ahmadi, 2013).

Kadaver (2017) identified 59 rural fields with tourism capabilities in Khorasan Razavi in the form of tourism products and demand markets using MS-SWOT. He concluded that the investigated rural areas involve maximum attractions and at the same time, maximum structural deficiencies which required modifying invasive strategies in this context for their mitigation.

In another study titled, Karami Dehkordi, Mirakzadeh, and Ghiyasvand Ghiyasi (2015) showed that seven factors including governmental planning, participation, culture and society, economy, health and environment, security, and promotion and utility explain 72.04% of the variance in effective factors on tourism development in the province.

3. Method

The present, descriptive-analytical study was conducted using documents-library studies, field observations, questionnaires designed under the Delphi model, and cross impact analysis matrix in MicMac foresight software. To this end, 20 individuals were selected among the scientific and executive experts who had sufficient knowledge on the subject of the study and the tourist area of Dizbad Olya as the sample population using non-random purposive sampling. In the first step, studies conducted in this area were used to collect variables. Next, 20 questionnaires were distributed among the sample population who were asked to rate variables from a score of 0 to 3 based on their effectiveness under the cross impact analysis matrix (a 20x20 matrix was drawn in this regard). In this rating system, scores of 0, 1, 2, and 3 respectively showed “no impact”, “low impact”, “average impact”, and “high impact”. The letter “P” was used to denote potentially direct and indirect effectiveness. Then, ratings were placed inside the cross matrix. The MicMac software was used to evaluate the effectiveness (direct and indirect) of each variable and their subordinate variables with other factors; ultimately, the required output charts were obtained by specifying the key propellant forces.

4. Results and Discussion

According to the results of analyses, the highest direct effectiveness on examined variables in the study belonged to indices including the L5 index (the commitment of responsible institutions to their legitimate duties in the area of rural tourism and refraining from administrative bureaucracy) with a final score of 50 and L3 (lack of enforcement of the present law and selective treatment of development rules and policies), L4 (lack of belief in innovations in policies and regulations related to rural tourism), C2 (limited investment from the public sector and the private sector’s unwillingness due to the undesirable profitability of this sector), and C5 (unwelcoming reception of tourists by local residents) factors, each with a score of 48. Furthermore, following the calculation of the probability of variables’ dislocation across the tourism development system within the target rural area, indices including L5, L3, L4, C4, and C5 (the commitment of responsible institutions to their legitimate duties in the area of rural tourism and refraining from

administrative bureaucracy, lack of enforcement of the present law and selective treatment of development rules and policies, weak transportation and parking infrastructure, and unwelcoming reception of visiting tourists by local residents) were found to be the first five priorities in the extent of direct effectiveness at the state of dislocation.

5. Conclusion

An examination of variable distribution in analyzing the direct and indirect effect-dependence along with an explanation of key propellants showed that the tourism system in the area is unsustainable and parameters are unsuitably distributed. Accordingly, the following recommendations can be presented:

- Correcting and enhancing the promotion approach to attract tourists in the area;
- Providing infrastructure for accommodation, reception and parking to improve and develop tourism;
- Increasing public and private investments in rural tourism;
- Editing legal upper documents of rural tourism development in Khorasan Razavi province.

Keywords: Propellants, Rural Tourism, Foresight, Dizbad Olya

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