

Qualitative Analysis of Tourism Difficulties in Yasechah Village: Going toward Rural Development in ChaharMahal VA Bakhtiary, Iran By using grounded theory

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Abstract: Sustainable development in Iran as well as many developing countries has been facing with several challenges over last decades; where, various obstacles have been hindering this sustainable development. Past strategies used in Iran have not properly addressed crucial matters like poverty, employment, hygiene, food security, and sustainability of environment. As a result, sustainable development status in Iran is still far behind the expectation of both scientists and policy makers. To reach a better situation, enhancing social, economical, and cultural aspects of development is obviously essential. One worldwide accepted approach is tourism development with a focus on agro-tourism. This could considerably accelerate rural development with turning potential villages to tourism attractions. Hence, the purpose of this study was to design a systematic model and determine major tourism obstacles/difficulties via assessment of different viewpoints about target village of Zayandeh River green margin located in CheharMahal Va Bakhtiari (Ch & Ba) province. The assumption was then to better underpin sustainable development in the province through recognition, prioritization, and determination of tourism barriers. A qualitative research methodology and Grounded Theory was used for data analysis. Snowball method, which is a purposeful sampling method, was operated. Research population consisted of three different groups: rural sciences professionals, provincial internal and external tourists, and cultural heritage experts of Ch & Ba province. The findings uncovered that provincial tourism centers suffer from various difficulties such as fundamental or sub-constructural problems, hygiene and health shortcomings, shortage of cultural attractiveness, lack of proper understanding of tourism phenomenon, lack of program planning, lack of consistent research and monitoring system, and finally dramatic climate change in the recent years.

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Introduction

It is largely accepted that tourism has many potential benefits for rural areas (Frederick, 1992). Tourism can be an important source of jobs for non-metro communities, especially for those that are economically underdeveloped. Because having jobs in the tourism industry often do not require advanced training, local residents with few skills can readily work as food servers, retail clerks, and hospitality workers. Tourism not only offers business opportunities to local residents, but also it can serve as a vehicle for marketing a place to potential residents and firms, as today's tourist may return later to retire or start a business locally (Brown, 2003). Stynes (2000, p.10) notes that most impact analyses are concerned with measuring changes in local sales,

income, and regional employment resulting from tourism activity, although specific economic effects are difficult to generalize since they depend on a variety of local factors. Goldman and Nakazawa (1994) provide a nine step process for determining income multipliers to estimate local economic impacts resulting from tourism, while Johnson and Thomas (1990, p.45) offer a framework for estimating local employment effects of a museum in England so the capitalization is really important for developing district tourism. The main purpose of this study is tourism difficulties of the Yasechah village(target village that located at Zayandeh River margin in Ch & Ba province of Iran) using a Grounded theory Technique.

Weaver (1986, p.442) notes that tourism can not only result in enhanced employment opportunities, increased income potential for local residents, diversification of the local economic base, and additional tax revenues for rural areas; but it can also raise community visibility, and add cultural opportunities for residents. These non-economic benefits are discussed by Jurowski (1996, p.112), who argues that tourism, if well planned, can enhance local environmental resources. Some have cautioned that while tourism has been a high-growth industry in recent years, it often produces low-paying, part-time, and seasonal jobs (Bontron and Lasnier, 1997, p.429). However, others pointed out that such part-time positions offer important opportunities for those rural residents lacking higher education and advanced training, since these individuals would generally not qualify for higher-paying, professional positions (Frederick, 1992). Moreover, in many places people may already have part-time or seasonal jobs and tourism can help supplement these workers' salaries. For example, many farm laborers and some farmers only work during part of the year and can use another job at a different time of the year to make more money. Part-time tourism jobs may also provide needed income to a parent who needs time off to care for family members. High school-age children may likewise prefer such jobs since their schedules would not accommodate full-time positions. Hence, part-time and seasonal jobs may make the most sense for important segments of the rural population.

As said earlier, the main objective of this article is to examine challenges of tourism development in Iran with special focus on Chaharmahal va bakhtiari province. However, obviously, it is not possible to understand and consider all influencing factors on tourism development. A Grounded theory was applied then as the research methodology.

According to the reports published by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), most countries' revenue has been rapidly increasing in the recent years. Tourism industry is the third dynamic growing phenomenon after oil industry and automobile industries and OECD has introduced it as the second service sector of international trade after banking industry (OECD, 2005).

Based on a twenty-year outlook document of socioeconomic development of Iran, until 2025, Iran is estimated to have about twenty million foreign tourists. Because unspoiled nature, varied picturesque landscapes, a thousand-year-old cultural and architectural heritage, a profusion of leisure opportunities and recreation, closeness to the urban centres as well as the authentic character and rural charm, all these are the most important factors for

development of rural tourism in Iran (Aref, F. & Sarjit S Gill, 2009).

Also, enhancement of Iran's share of global tourism revenue from 2004 to 2025 is expected. Therefore, Iran should gain nearly 25 billion dollars in 2025 as annual revenue from tourism industry (Darvazeh News, 2011). Statistics show that tourism revenue in 2010 has been approximately 2.4 billion dollars in Iran which is equal to 2.5 percent of total Iranian exports. This will reach up to 5.1 billion dollars in 2020 according to the prediction of global travel (WTO, 2011). Tourism has almost twice benefits comparing oil industry, and the proper use of Iran's tourism capacities is obviously very beneficial (Aftab News, 2010). Based on WTO, on average more than 600 million persons visit the landmarks of various countries annually; where, Iran's share is only two million annual visitors. This report clearly reveals the extent to which Iran's status with all its unique climate and historical characteristics is left behind and needs to be enhanced up to its ideal level (WTO, 2008). World Travel and Tourism Council has also examined tourism impact on economy in 181 countries including Iran until 2020 and has estimated undesirable situation for the future of Iran's tourism industry (World travel and tourism council, 2009). Tourism can be assumed a developmental tool for rural areas; because, it can serve as a new outsourcing strategy, improving local economic situation approach and also as a way for poverty alleviation (Breidenhann & Wickens, 2004; Fossati & Panella, 2000; Giaoutzi & Nijkamp, 2006; Lee & Chang, 2008). Tourism development can play a role in employment increase and enhancing villagers' income (Sebele, 2010).

Tourism and rural development are two closely related phenomena and have interactions together (Arntzen, Sethhogile et al., 2007). It is greatly confirmed that tourism has many potential advantages for rural areas (Frederick, 1992). Tourism can provide employment opportunities for non-metro-communities, particularly for those that are economically underdeveloped. Because having jobs in the tourism industry often do not require sophisticated training, local residents with only basic and little skills can willingly work as food servers, retail sellers, and hospitality workers. Tourism not only presents business opportunities to local residents, but also serves as a facilitator for marketing a place to potential residents and firms, as today's tourist may return later to the village for retirement or possibly wants to start a business locally (Brown, 2003).

Calculating the economic influences of tourism is a common topic in the literature. Stynes (2000, p.10) indicates that most impact analyses are related

to measuring changes in local sales, income, and regional employment resulting from tourism, though, It is hard to generalize specific economic effects since they very much depend on a variety of local parameters. Goldman and Nakazawa (1994) have provided a nine step procedure to determine income multipliers and estimate local economic impacts derived from tourism, while Johnson and Thomas (1990, p.45) offer a framework for estimating local employment effects of a museum in England and conclude that the capitalization is really vital for developing district tourism. The main purpose of this study is finding a model of tourism difficulties' qualitative assessment of Yasechah village (target village located at Zayandeh Rood margin) In Ch & Ba province, Iran

Weaver (1986, p.442) notices: "tourism can not only result in enhanced employment opportunities, increased income potential for local residents, diversification of the local economic base, and additional tax revenues for rural areas, but it can also raise community visibility, and add cultural opportunities for residents". These non-economic benefits are also discussed by Jurowski (1996, p.112), who argues that tourism, if well planned, can enhance local environmental resources. Some others have cautioned that while tourism has been a high-growth industry in the recent years, it has its own disadvantages and often produces low-paying, part-time, and seasonal jobs (Bontron and Lasnier, 1997, p.429). Strategic development enterprisers, in the light of the findings, suggest for the future development of the tourism industry in the area to include tourism product development with a focus on attractions; the identification of key market sectors such as budget tourists and the family market; destination and product marketing; investment in tourism infrastructure and ensuring the responsible management of tourism development in the area (Booyens & Visser, 2010, 379). Tourism infrastructure is the transport supply chain, social and environmental infrastructure cooperating at a regional level to generate a target including:

- Transport facilities which provide visitor's access from national and international market sources to target areas; and they consist of airports, main roads and rails.

- Social facilities which include available/reserved rooms to accommodate visitors and physical structures for exhibitions, events and services that catch the attention of tourists. This infrastructure includes hotels, convention centers, stadiums, galleries and tourist precincts in a destination.

- Environmental facilities which encompasses national parks, marine and reserved parks, including visitors' facilities.

- Collaborative facilities which is the regional networks, state and national tourism organizations that support marketing activities in the area and dispense tourism products. (TTF, 1989)

Fallon and Kriwoken (2002) discuss resolutions for ecotourism problems through preparation of visitors' centers that reflect public attitudes, expectations and consciousness (Fallon and Kriwoken, 2002). While many researchers have acknowledged the need for well-organized transportation means in a successful development program, little empirical studies support this hypothesis. The effect of transport assets on total entered visitors and on arrivals from Europe/America, Asia, and Africa into the island of Mauritius was probed in a panel data scaffold. This paper discovers that the transport infrastructure of the island has been influencing positively the number of tourists, particularly from Europe/America and Asia. Moreover relative prices, distance, and income level in the origin countries are important factors in the demand equation.(Khadaroo & Seetanah, 2007)

Some scholars (Chew, 1987; Gunn, 1988; Inskeep, 1991; Martin & Witt, 1988) have often debated that a country's infrastructure base is a determinant factor for tourism attractiveness of the specific area. Furthermore, transportation means are presumed to be important determinant for tourism industry (Khadaroo & Seetanah, 2008)

So, in short, this article is going to examine tourism development challenges in Iran with a focus on Ch & Ba province. However, is it is not claimed in the paper that all tourism development determinant factors have been addressed. Because of unavoidable difficulties to obtain information about tourism and unavailability of required tourism documents in the province, this research was accomplished principally based upon author's observations and interviews with experts, external tourism, internal tourism and provincial responsible.

Methodology

This study's design is a qualitative method and specifically a Grounded Theory, which focuses on population of three groups or communities. The main purpose of this study is finding a model of tourism difficulties' qualitative assessment of Yasechah village located at Zayandeh Rood margin In Ch & Ba, Iran. Grounded theory is a qualitative method that is used for Social and Economics processes. It was developed by Glasser and Stratus, and has systematic and regular steps (Adibhajibagheri, 2010).

This paper provides a model from Yasechah village that is derived from the tourism difficulties of target villages and provincial tourism centers model of Ch & Ba province.

The statistical population consisted of three different groups:

- Key informants selected from the target tourism villages and provincial tourism centers. These respondents were chosen using snow ball method and in-depth interviews were implemented.
- Group were experts (experts of cultural inheritance organization, responsible for target tourism villages and provincial tourism centers, governors mayors, and demarches)
- The third group was consisted of external and internal tourists from Ch & Ba province.

Data collection process was accomplished with in-depth interviews, focus groups and direct observations. This process was continued up to the theoretical saturation point.

After data collection, the data were categorized and analyzed with the application of coding system. First of all, open coding, and then axial coding and finally selective coding were used respectively. This information were complemented and adjusted with recommendations received from experts' panel and a general model was presented for tourism difficulties of target villages and provincial tourism centers of Ch & Ba province.

Results

Analyzing the data (video tapes, interviews, photos and papers) were done during three steps of Grounded theory technique. These three steps can be clarified as following:

Open coding step

In this stage with the use of open coding and line by line analysis system (Ghobadi and Papzan, 2010, p.76) the data was analyzed. In order to do that, one code was given to each phrase. For example "E" code was allocated to experts' viewpoints and "P" code was dedicated to the viewpoints of villagers, external and internal tourists.

Axial coding step

After open coding procedure, the data were compared with each other. The reason was to find any reasonable link between the items (Danayefard, 2005, p.23). In axial coding system, different layers are developed where each layer has its own sub-layers as well (Papzan, 2003).

Selective coding step

In this step, the coded data are integrated in order to explore any reasonable relationship among them and then model's chart is designed (Mehmetoglu, 2006, p.217). The main function of this phase is combining layers and sub-layers which is supposed to

cover all data. Figure 1 illustrates this combined model in a pie chart.

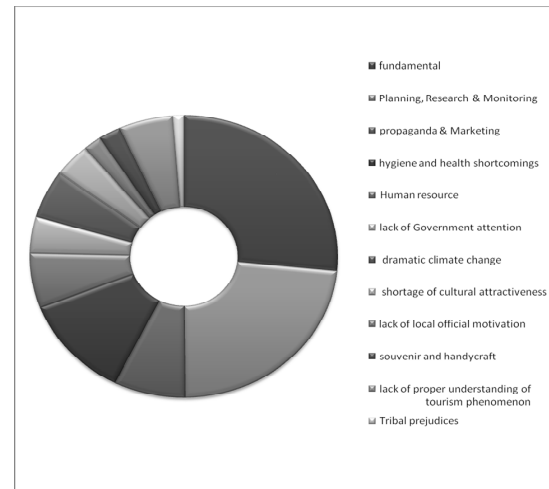


Figure1: Conceptual model of tourism difficulties in Ch & Ba

General chart of conceptual model

After data analysis, 84 items were distinguished (all of the items have introduced in the article entitled: "qualitative analysis of tourism problems in Ch & Ba province using grounded theory" (karamidehkordi & Kalantari, 2012) in Persian; and they have been shortened in this paper) in which they were coded and categorized in 12 main layers with the title of "propaganda & marketing", "hygiene and health shortcomings", "souvenir and handy craft", "human resources", "lack of program planning, and consistent research and monitoring system", "Tribal prejudices", "dramatic climate change", "lack of local official motivation", "lack of proper understanding of tourism phenomenon", "shortage of cultural attractiveness" and finally "fundamental or sub-constructural problems" that their frequency were Respectively: 9, 8, 2, 4, 5, 16, 4, 4, 2, 5, 3 and 20. To design the model (according to the frequencies), each layer were entered with its indicators to excel software, were analyzed and its conceptual model was designed.

Figure 2, shows the percentage of each layer. As it is seen in that chart, "fundamental or sub-constructural problem items" with 24%, is the highest priority and "program planning and consistent research and monitoring system" 20%, "propaganda & Marketing" 11%, "hygiene and health shortcomings" 10%, "Human resources" 6%, "lack of Governmental attention", "Tribal prejudices", "dramatic climate change", and "lack of local official motivation" collectively 5%, "shortage of cultural attractiveness" 4% and finally "souvenir and hand

craft" item with 2% was located at the lowest priority.

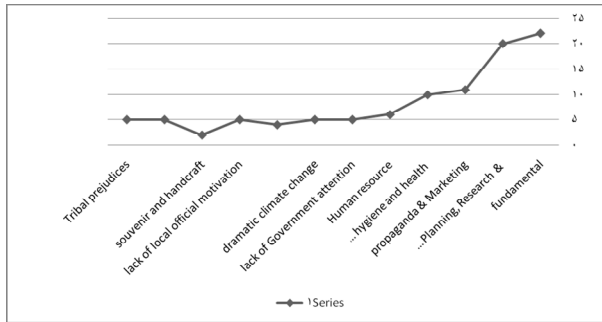


Figure 2: the percentage of each layer in conceptual model

This study was accomplished in 12 target tourism villages and 6 provincial tourism centers, and each location has special and unique characteristics. A conceptual model of tourism difficulties of the Yasechah village that located at Zayandeh River

margin was prepared in order to appropriately visualize the situation.

Conceptual model of the Yasechah village

The best marginal part of Zayandeh River could be found in Ch & Ba province. Across this beautiful route many beautiful villages, gardens and plenty of eye-catching sights are located. Also, this way includes a historical and beautiful bridge named "Zaman Khan" which makes surrounding district attractive and possesses a great potentiality for tourism purposes. Likewise, this area has a lot of fascinating villages identified as target touristic areas by cultural inheritance organization. These villages are: Horeh, Yasechah, Chelivan, Savadjan and ... that selected Yasechah for this study. After data analysis it was revealed that the target village (Yasechah) have problems and therefore its model is applicable.

Figure 3 shows the tourism difficulties of the Yasechah village that located at Zayandeh River Margin in Chaharmahal va bakhtiari Province.

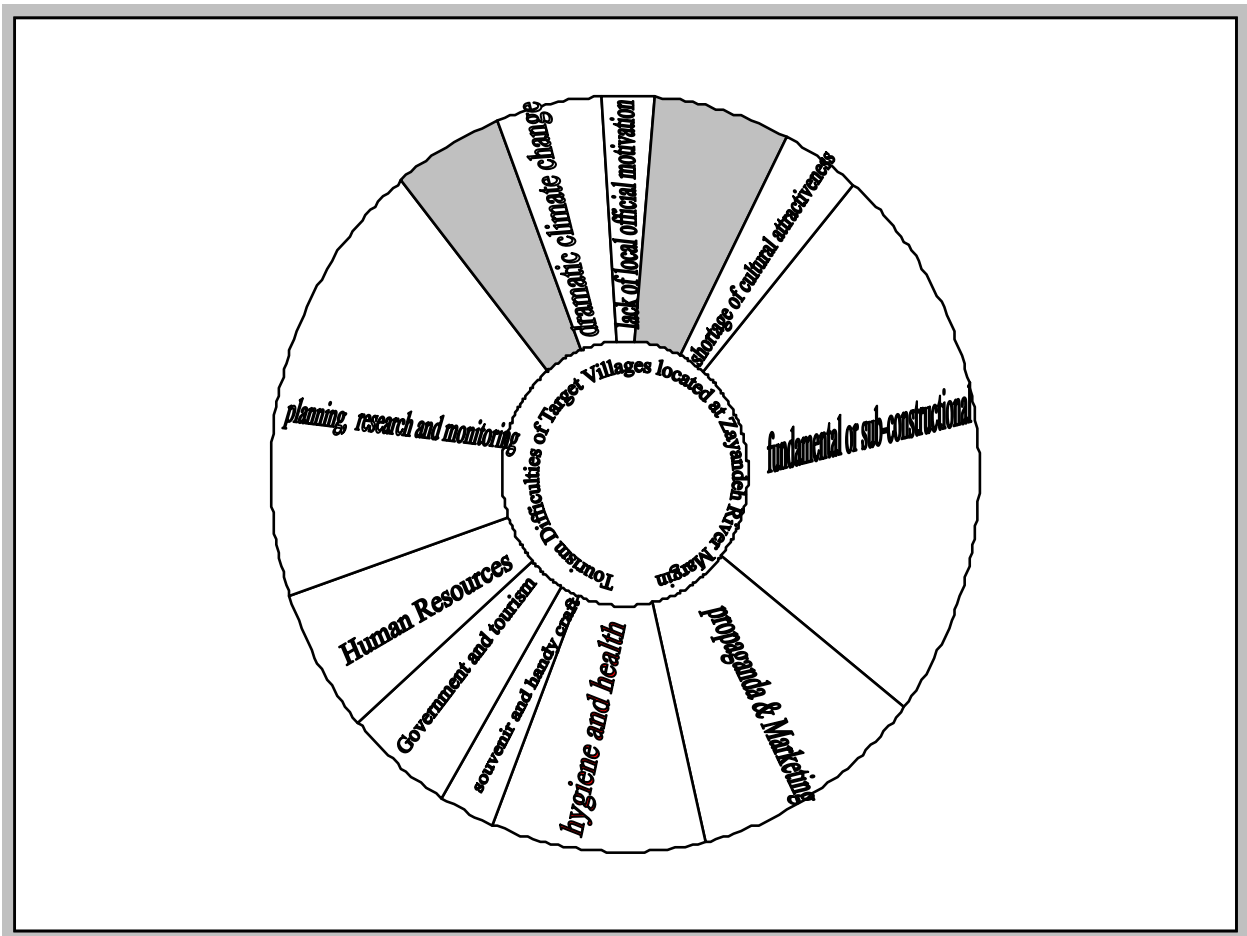


Figure 3: tourism difficulties of the Yasechah village

Figure 4 presents most important problems of the Yasechah village in percentages as following: fundamental and sub-constructural problems 28%, lack of program planning and consistent research and monitoring system 22%, propaganda & Marketing 12%, hygiene and health shortcomings 11%, Human Resources 7%, dramatic climate change & lack of Governmental attention both 5%, shortage of cultural attractiveness 4% and finally souvenir and hand craft & lack of local official motivation both 3%.

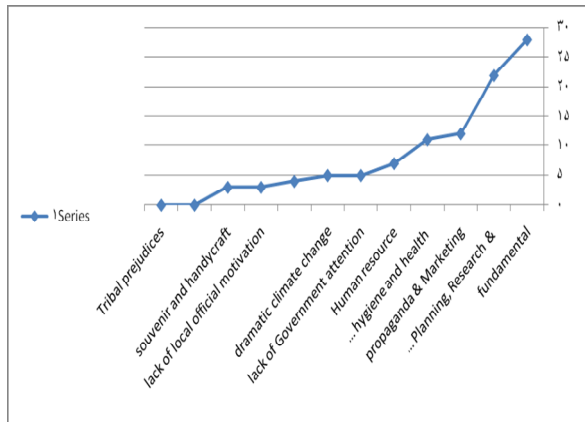


Figure 4: most important problems of Yasechah village in percentages

Conclusion

The findings of this study exposed that Yasechah village (According to the provincial basic model) suffer from common problems and only problems like Tribal prejudices, hygiene and health are not widespread. Despite the fact that Ch & Ba province has tremendous capacity for development (specially in tourism area), it lacks appropriate attention to factors such as: propaganda and marketing, sufficient research in the field, proper planning and monitoring system, local handcrafts and indigenous souvenir. It is hoped that the findings of this research can pave the way of other studies in tourism area and helps further development in agro/eco-tourism in Ch & Ba province. As a final comment, based on the findings of this research, besides execution of systematic studies, more investments in marketing and advertisement in tourism phenomenon either by government or NGOs, establishment of sightseeing tours and supporting financially or politically tourism corporations, more attention to hand crafts and local souvenir are proposed.

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