

IMPACT OF LOCAL VALUES ON DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN IRAN

Zahra Mohebbi

PhD, Department of History, University of Pune
zahramohebbi@gmail.com

Umesh Ashokrao Kadam

PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of History, University of Pune
umeshkadam1@gmail.com

Mehri Mohebbi

MSc, Head, Department of Architecture, University of Semnan
mehri_mohebbi@yahoo.com

SHORT ABSTRACT

As one of the world's largest industries and one of its fastest growing economic sectors, Tourism has a multitude of impacts, on nation's lives and on the environmentⁱ. The impact of local values on tourism development of a country is inevitable. One of the important values associated with world heritage sites are strong elements of history, tradition, spiritual inspiration and politicsⁱⁱ. Iran, as one of the most historical places in the world, associated with unique architectural and archaeological features that provide a powerful experience for tourists. Local values of Iran could be one of the most effective elements to development of tourism in the country.

KEYWORDS

Tourism, Development of Tourism, Local Values, Cultural Heritage, Iran.

1. OBJECTIVE

The present research tries to highlight the impact of local values on development of Tourism in Iran. Local values of an area could be an important factor for growth of Tourism and tourists attraction. Iran has a large number of historical and cultural heritages which could be considered as a base in any tourism planning, and consequently the development of tourism industry process will go the right way while respecting all the country has and what the country need to gain to develop and improve its potentials. In the present study, authors tried to make a debate about tourism and its progress while respecting local values; especially in Iran.

2. METHODOLOGY

“Individuals never write in a blank slate, community provides them with history, traditions, culture, all what is our deeply imbued with values.”ⁱⁱⁱ But what is our responsibility about these values?

Iran is one of the world’s oldest continues major civilizations, with historical and urban settlements dating back to almost 7000 B.C. according to the 7500 years old Sialk Ziggurat in Kashan. The Ziggurat is a testament to ancient civilizations which flourished in Iran long before the Egyptian or Greek cultures blossomed^{iv}, making it a possible candidate for the earliest human civilization. Iran, like most countries in the Middle East has a natural competitive advantage in the global tourism industry. However, the potential of this competitive advantage has not been reached. Iran could and should capitalize on its rich history and tradition as well as Local Values to ensure bright economic future. When we consider Local Values and its role on development of Tourism in an area, it has effect on economic life of the local people too. The economic significance and potential of Travel and Tourism is particularly prominent in the developing world. Travel and Tourism helps diversity of economic activities and enables the creation of wealth and jobs in rural and local areas.

Developing countries have greater need for Tourism research. Iran, as one of the developing countries needs more effort on Tourism research and to consider her values as an extraordinary way of development of Tourism in the country. Iran with attractive natural and historical sites is rated among 10 most touristic countries in the world. Iranians are famous for their hospitality and it is one of the unique and distinctive features of its people. Tourism is one of the many external forces influencing the direction and options for local development.

The modern countries are so successful to attract tourism with the help of the local equipment and modern technology as well. In addition to the local inputs, the modern creations can help the society to show its values of local inputs to the visitors. Focusing on the local values in every place and discovering its position could help the planners and researchers to find the best way to attract tourism; as a result the heritage will show itself to the visitors as it is.

Tourism, especially cultural tourism, is a crucial sector for the sustainability of traditional patterns which evaluates the cultural, architectural and historical heritage. In every great civilization with ancient history, Tourism is the best way to improve the economy of locals and the native’s families, and consequently the economic condition of the country. The quality of life should be the first goal in any social and economic growth. The life quality is defined with its three main dimensions, i.e. identity, welfare and health.^v In any social and economic movement, these three dimensions should be considered as the first local characteristic to improve, especially in this era with the main characteristic of global presence. “To be Global is to find ourselves in an environment that promises us adventure, power, joy, growth, transformation of ourselves and the world- and, at the same time, that threatens to destroy everything we have, everything we know, and everything we are. But what we intend in this study is to avoid melting in the global fact, is to be ourselves as well as trying to be part of the whole world.”^{vi}

3. CONCLUSION

Iran, despite having a considerable historical background and unique local values, its tourism industry is not as successful as other countries in Asia. The local impacts of the tourism industry are diverse and often unique to the tourism sector. Tourism industry has no clear and strong role in the economic and

cultural movements of Iran, so it seems logical trying to find out the exact meaning of this factor in this traditional context. But in this way one characteristic is the most noteworthy: “some local values which defines the culture of this country, seems unbelievable but unfortunately are ignored through the passage of time”. In this case, according to the strong cultural values, the best explanation is: along with any economic development, cultural growth should happen to make the natives be adapted to the new cultural conditions after the economic movements. Thus, to create a better place for the tourists and visitors is the usage of these local values which could lead us to the best solution for retrieving the forgotten context.^{vii}

Iran has a large number of historical and cultural heritages which it could be considered as a base in any tourism planning, and consequently the development of tourism industry process will go the right way while respecting all the country has and what the country need to gain to develop and improve its potentials. In this way, applying comparative methods of tourism condition in successful countries could help us to make the best decisions about effective way of using the cultural inputs and local values of such a country like Iran.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ⁱ . SINGH, P.K. (2008), *Medical Tourism “Global Outlook and Indian Scenario”*, Kanishka Publishers, New Delhi, India, 141.
- ⁱⁱ . EDROME, E.L. (2003), “Linking Universal and Local Values for the Sustainable Management of World Heritage Sites”, *World Heritage Papers*, 13, 36.
- ⁱⁱⁱ . ETZIONI, A. (1997), *The new Golden Rule*, Basic Books, New York, USA, 96.
- ^{iv} . <http://www.chn.ir/english/eshownews.asp?no=961>
- ^v HERNANDEZ, A. (2002), “Ciudadanos fecund: participacion y calidad de vida”, *Boletin CF+S 24, DUOT*, Escuela Tecnica Superior de Arquitectura de Madrid, Spain.
- ^{vi} . BERMAN, M. (1982), *The Experience of Modernity, All that is Solid Melts into Air*, Simon and Schuster, New York, USA, 15.
- ^{vii} . MOHEBBI, M. MAHMOODI, A.S., (2004), “The role of economic growth in coastal culture: a case-study in Qeshm Island, Persian Gulf”, *Human Perspective in the Internet Society*, WIT Press, Southampton, UK, 345.