

Cultural tourism: challenges and strategies

Seyed Reza Salehi Amiri¹

Head of Management and Cultural Planning, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research branch, Tehran

Saeed Sharifi²

M.A. in Cultural Management, Islamic Azad University, Science and Research branch, Tehran

Received 10 March 2011

Revised 27 May 2011

Accepted 5 July 2011

Abstract: *The purpose of this article is study of cultural tourism challenges in the country and presentation of related strategies. The main questions are: what are the most important cultural tourism challenges? What are the managing strategies? At first, motivation factors in tourism are studied and effective criteria in choice of destination are classified. Then, cultural and tourist impressionability, cultural tourism types and cultural views of tourism are being reviewed and cultural-social impacts of tourism, consequences of cultural tourism and development ways of cultural tourism are being studied. The related strategies are presented at the end. The research method is descriptive analytical. The research results show that cultural tourism is impossible without attention to economic and social impacts and governments role in a scientific and practical planning*

Keywords: *Cultural tourism, Cultural, tourism, challenges, strategies*

Introduction

Tourism as an ancient phenomenon has been in several types and in an evolutionary process in human societies from past to now. Today in one hand, modern technologies have made great changes so communication and transportation is became advanced. On the other hand, human life especially in urban societies has so many problems such as: division of labor, mass production and exhaustion. So journey is essential. On the basis of The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourists of the world would be up to 6.1 billion in 2020. It shows the development of tourism industry. Tourism is the third great industry after oil and automotive industry (Ansari, 1387:2). Iran as one of the counties that have several tourism potentials is not an exception. Iran, for historical background and being in Silk Road and being as a bridge between east and west worlds is one of the important poles of human civilization of the world. The ancient and Islamic culture of this country has made scientists, sociologists, researchers and tourists more curious about the study. Several historic traces and symbols of evolutionary process of Iranian culture and civilization can be as touristic attraction. Journey also is important in Iranian culture. The majority of scientists and philosophers have researches about spiritual effects of journey, in their viewpoints, it is important in formation of new view points about the world.

Motivation factors of tourism

Stanley Plog divided tourist's characteristics in two categorization: psychocentric and allocentric. Psychocentrics are conservative in travel pattern and prefer safe destination, allocentrics are adventurous and discover and prefer new destination. Recent researches show that journey motivation is depend on attractive and repulsive factors. Repulsive factors are about personal life and work and also have relation to mental situation and social attitudes and views. Attractive factors help passengers to choose a destination which is in harmony with social and mental appeals. These factors can be under the influences of advertisement methods; presentation of attractive views etc. (Ketabchi, 1383: 101-102).

The effective factors in destination choice of tourists that were divided by Herzberg in "motivation" and "hygiene" are presented in table 1. As it is shown, safety and ideal situation are in highest rank.

¹Corresponding Author, Email: Dr.salehiamiri@gmail.com

²Email: sharifi.mailbox@yahoo.com

Table (1): The effective factors in destination choice of tourists

rank	Motivation factors	rank	Hygiene factors
1	Safety	1	Ideal situation
2	View	2	Independency
3	hospitality	3	weather
4	Public health	4	Facilities
5	Good food	5	Price
6	History and culture	6	Easiness in finding direction
7	Traditional method	7	Tourist information
8	Architecture	8	Professional services

Cultural tourism

Tourism as a multifaceted industry is consist of different types and parts, such as ecotourism, sport tourism, adventurous tourism, medicine tourism, nostalgia tourism, rural tourism and historical- cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is one type of tourism that by means of a consistent program and goal can have an evolutionary process. Human societies by different cultures create several geographical spaces and views. So culture in geographical view is consisting of taught manner patterns. These patterns in framework of ideas and images transferring between generations and groups shape cultural view in geographical environments on the basis of mental and social reality and heritage (Hogget, 1375: 6-7). Culture is a ground for common understanding and interests and also is a device for mental relations and thought production. On the other hand, human not only live in culture (cultural ground), but also culture is as a food for human thought (Salehi&Heidarizade, 1388:4).

Culture is a sign of human society's dynamics and sympathy and cause of talents flourishing. Culture also creates ethnic, historical and social collection and geographical views and has an important role in shaping of human civilization. One of the ways of achievement of right culture is making familiar to cultural and historical heritage and achievement of international understanding. Tourism industry is one of the devices that can make this background. For making familiar to cultural tourism, definition of culture is necessary. Culture: a collection of thoughts, arts, rituals and life style that shape in the process of historical experience of ethnic groups and is transferable in generations (anvari:869). A framework is presented for determination of effective variables and social and cultural elements. These variables are shown in table 2 (Rezvani: 67).

Table (2): The effective variables and social and cultural elements

Public factors	Cultural-social elements
Natural beauty	Job
Weather	Dressing
Social-cultural characteristics	Architecture
Public view about tourists	History
Sport/amusement facilities	Religion
Family and friends	Art and music
Infrastructure	regions
Shopping facilities	Traditions
Price levels	Education

In Persian culture, culture means "thought and ethic talents that are grown by teaching and development by means of thought and aesthetic training in human manner and belief (Kavoosi&Moghimi, 1388). On the basis of above definitions, there are two main attitudes in tourism market: mass market (which is consisted of mass tourism) and a market of especial interest in art, heritage and culture. Cultural tourism is in second group so it is a collection of places, traditions, arts, ceremonies and experiences that visualized by people of a country and is a reflection of their diversity. Cultural sources and historical sites for having signs of culture and rituals and architecture characteristics are as chances for tourist attraction.

Cultural impressionability and tourism

Attendance of tourists in a country is with cultural exchange. A tourist has influence on the environment and also is impressionable. Cultural richness of the country, relationship of native people and tourists and their view about tourists are influential in this mutual impressionability. Whenever the native culture is wealthier and full of

positive attractions and the interaction leads to enjoyment of tourists, the effects of positive cultural aspects on tourists would be increased. On the contrary, whenever pessimism is more in this interaction so the cultural characteristics are not effective on the tourists.

Cultural tourism types

1. cultural-historical tourism: in this type of tourism, tourists are in search and learn about the culture their society or the others. The experience of a cultural-historical tourist is a qualitative experience about the visited atmosphere. They have different motivations; some of them visit ancient and historical places because they are as symbols of their destinations, some tourists' purpose is to visit their family and friends and visiting of historical sites or cultural centers is as a mean of being with the family and friends, a group of tourists, especially educated ones, go to the journey for having experience and deep understanding, some people have personal interest in a land history. This diversity of motivation leads to different interpretation from a destination and satisfaction about the visit.

2. Special cultural patterns: special cultural patterns are traditions and life styles that are interesting for tourists. These patterns are consisted of rituals, dressing, ceremonies, life styles, religious beliefs and activities that are more common in rural life. The majority of tourists are so interested of observation of dressing styles and rituals of Iranian people in deserts. They are interested to know about religious beliefs, life style happiness etc. of Iranians.

Different types of arts

a. Handicrafts: it consisting of dance, music, theater and visual arts. Eastern art and beauty especially Iranian art is so attractive for the world.

b. Attractive economic activities: one of the special types of cultural tourism is observation, description and visualization of attractive economic activities such as hunting, fishing etc. ceremony of Rose Water extraction in Kashanis one of the instants. Today so many of tourists visit historical and traditional markets for shopping and being familiar them.

c. Cultural cities: cultural activities and artistic competitions are in cities with cultural and artistic organizations and valuable works of art. In these cities existence of national, public and cultural organizations, universities, museums, libraries, research institutes etc. make creation of all kinds of cultural and scientific works possible. Art fairs, book and theatre week, cinema and film festival, conferences and attraction of art lovers are of characteristics of cultural cities.

d. Museums: museums in cities are about different subjects such as archaeology, ethnography, natural history, art and Stories of old and antique objects can be in this category.

e. Festivals and cultural events: all kinds of art and cultural festivals, carnivals and ... are in this group. Many tours are designed to show these cultural events for the tourists.

Cultural tourist views

Culture is divided in two categories of traditional and modern that is so important in understanding of current tourism. But it should be noted that these categorizations are not definite. Transition of traditional culture to modern one make more complicated the planning and advertisement. People in developed countries are more interested about traditional cultures. On the contrary; in undeveloped countries modern culture is more favorable. All nations can present their cultures as modern goods. In traditional world, culture shapes in manner and thought forms that make foundation of collective living and is transferable between generations. The source of traditional culture's norms is the heritage of current generation. Traditional culture can be an attraction for tourists from postindustrial societies. Thus some writers emphasize on culture and its role in shaping, growth and development of tourism. Accepting of tourists in a region from social and cultural view is shaped by traditions and rituals and visit of tourists leads to tourist experience and memory. Kind of tourist-host interaction can be studied from three points of view:

- Interactional view: the way of contact is visualized by negative and positive consequences.
- Breaking view (negative): functionalism view is consisted of different elements of society which may in their view, all changes and especially abnormalities are direct results of tourism.

- Joining view (positive): in this view, positive aspects of cultural changes are important that are from influence of tourists in traditional customs such as law and order and public health (PapeliYazdi&saghaee: 86-87).

Cultural interaction and exchange

Tourism makes familiar people to other geographical spaces, people and cultures. This familiarity is a preface to more understanding of human. Culture is as a main attraction of tourism. Without culture which makes differences, all the places would be the same and there would not be a real tourism (Boniface, 1380:9). So development of tourism as a cultural phenomenon makes a chance for cultural exchange between tourist and the host society. Thus they can understand and respect to each other. Culture is a system of symbols which a society creates and applies and makes easy the mutual action and systematizes the manners by it. Thus tourism is one of the cultural mutual actions that show a mutual action by interpretation of tourist experiences and it depends on culture level of the host society. Defensive and aggressive cultures have led to deep cultural quarrels between tourists and the hosts in some societies. A dynamic culture is able to act culturally (Papeli: 88). The characteristics of these cultures are shown in table 3:

Table (3): Characteristics of cultures

Dynamic culture	Defensive culture	Aggressive culture
In search of new viewpoints	conservative	New viewpoints about cultural aggression
Responsible of the environment	Closed	Destruction of environment
Desirous	On call	Foresight & economic view
In search of luck	Avoid change	Calculating
flexible	Inflexible	Inflexible about thoughts
compatible	Incompatible	Incompatible -aggressive

Cultural-social impacts of tourism

Cultural and social impacts of tourism are the ways that tourism changes something in value systems, personal manner, family relations, collective lifestyle, traditional ceremonies and social organizations. So tourism industry has some advantages and problems for regional society and its patterns. Social-cultural impacts are the most important issues in tourism development. Entrance of tourists in a land not only has impacts on themselves, but also on the land. These impacts can be studied in several aspects. The number of tourists of a region is an important element. The more tourists lead to more impacts. Of course the number of tourists is not the important known factor. It is clear that tourism market has the variety of tourists. Tourists have several goals and different views about the destination society. For instance, cultural tourists that their goal is familiarity to the destination land and people and cultural characteristics, try to respect to cultural values. Cultural-social impacts of tourism industry are:

1. Development of thought, cultural, art and social relations between countries of tourists and their destinations.
2. Development of international exchanges and cooperation of Muslims of the world.
3. Knowing about other countries culture and civilization.
4. The other important social impact would be when a close relation is between tourists and the host countries. Visit of regional houses, attending in family parties and become familiar with native people are of important events of social tourism.
5. Collective attendance of tourists in a special region can be effective on life patterns of people.
6. Development of tourism in high level may has unfavorable impacts such as prostitution, noise, violence and other social problems (Alvani&Dehdashti, 1373:179).

Positive and negative consequences of cultural tourism development

Tourism managers must by applying of right methods increase positive impacts of cultural tourism development and decrease negative impacts of it. Whenever cultural tourism development is determined, there would be positive impacts in the society and cultural environment.

Positive consequences:

- The most important consequence is protection of cultural heritage, arts, traditions and rituals of nations. The host region had to manage the resources and apply some standards for protection of their qualification. By this method, they would be ready for constant use of tourists.
- The other positive consequence of cultural tourism development is reviving cultural and national pride. This leads to avoid of attitudes toward strangers and cultural inferiority, so a cultural self confidence would be shaped in the society. Thus the native people and host society will try to reviving of cultural aspects for this sense of pride.
- Tourism may leads to development and protection of museums, theatres and other cultural facilities of a society. These facilities are somehow in tourism support and also native people.
- Cultural exchanges are the other positive consequence of cultural tourism. This leads to people familiarity to other cultures and creation of civilization dialogues path. Certainly in future, the remainder cultures would that are in relation of the others.
- Also tourism can create an atmosphere in which tourism requirements are in long with ethic goals of global organizations and tourism is used for peace and understanding between nations and respect of cultural identities (Ketabchi, 1376:410).

Negative consequences:

- One of the negative consequences is too much commercialization and destruction of cultural origin. On the other hand, the host society for tourist attraction and more economic advantage overdo in presentation of their cultural resources and change them for tourist's interests. This may leads to destruction of traditional arts origin and finally their death.
- Lack of cultural interactions: development of cultural tourism may leads to cultural misunderstandings and paradoxes between tourists and native people. The reason is difference in language, customs, religious and social values and manner patterns.
- Economic consequences: too much population of tourists in some tourist destinations may cause to destruction of environment and life areas so this may leads to dissatisfaction of natives and negative economic consequences. This is against of constant development process.
- Destruction of cultural traces: too much visit of ancient and historical places leads to their destruction. This may be because of lack of attention to the location capacity.
- Social evils or abnormalities: tourism may lead to severity of social issues such as addiction.
- Cultural transformation: tourism development may lead to originality of cultural patterns. Natives live in traditional way and their nature may be changed forever.

Development ways of cultural tourism

Cultural development may lead to self-confidence of society and plays an important role in cultural identity. Cultural development must reply to material and spiritual needs. One of the development ways of cultural progress in societies is determination of cultural heritage and native values. Tourism development also can make chances for cultural exchanges between tourists and natives, so it leads to their familiarity and respect. Cultural exchanges may cause to human closeness. Culture is so important in tourism development. Old and ancient traces are as indicators of countries. They have so values that attract people so may lead to attract of tourists. There are two important points about know of cultural development and tourism relationship:

1. Individual culture

2. Public culture

Individual culture is personal trainings and skills; a person creates something by help of individual talent and skill which is so important in the community and culture. Public culture is shaped from gradual evolution of thought and public development. The relationship of cultural development and tourism is not only limited to relation of people and objects or types of cultures, but also a kind of spiritual relation of culture that is consisted of being informed from manners and methods of life and human relation of different ethnics and adventurous journeys are so important in development of cultural progress of nations (Rezvani, 1374:52).

Also supports of governments and international organizations from cultural tourism in economic, social and cultural development process are in this progress. In tourist countries that the major part of government income is from tourism industry, policy makers and governments are on the basis of support system of this industry. These supports are in two categorizations:

a. none material support:

- Making the foundation and development of tourism culture in the society.
- Showing the spiritual and material impacts of tourism industry in life of all citizens.
- Showing the importance of related educational courses for young people and its possibility to create new jobs.
- Improvement of social and scientific place of professors and trainers of tourism industry courses.
- Holding of international, national and professional seminars.
- Exchanges of professor, students and technology of tourism industry between countries and nations.

b. material supports:

Investment for structural formation or reform in tourism issues

Planning, making policy and overall control about industry process and lack of interference in tourism industry programs by the state (real privatizing).

Appropriation of enough value and budget for research in this industry

Suggestions

Ancient and historical monuments not only needs to be protected because of national values, but also can develop the cultural tourism. Although these traces and buildings would not have their former applications, by presentation of cultural-traditional application on the basis of attitudes of tourist aspects they can have economic advantages. On the basis of municipality role as responsible of urban management and Cultural Heritage Organization as a responsible and policy maker of historical monuments, it seems that a common community is necessary for following the problems.

Historical structures are the centre of Iran's historical cities and these cities have been the foundation of so many customs and even the culture and also economic flourish of cities and regions. Urban historical spaces are responsible of protection from objective and subjective identities of city and apply it in life. So the urban activities must be on the base of this goal.

Conclusion

On the basis of cultural tourism study and its aspects in the development, the scientific and practical planning is not correct without study of economic and social aspects and role of governments. Thus it is necessary to pay attention to mutual impacts of these categories in this process to reach an ideal model. These are the examples:

- Role of cultural tourism and its place in macro economics of countries.
- Participation of government in supply of cultural tourism infrastructures in constant development.
- Amount of expenditures of cultural tourists
- Employments that are the results of cultural tourists incomes
- Impacts of cultural attractions in cultural tourists entrance in countries
- Responsibility and the role of economic institutions in cultural tourism

References

1. Alvani, Mahdi & Zohre Dashti, Principles of Tourism, 1373.
2. Amir Entekhabi, Shahram, Cultural approach in regional planning, social and cultural research department, No. 37, summer 1388.
3. Ansari, Hasan, cultural tourism development, revival of national pride, 1388, Internet.
4. Anvari, Hasan, Today Sokhan Dictionary, Tehran: Sokhan, 1383.
5. oraji, Ardeshir, The Obstacles of Tourism Development, 1388, internet.
6. Boniface, Priscilla, Cultural Tourism Management, translation: Mahmud Abdolazade, Cultural research office, 1378.
7. Papeli Yazdi, Mohamad Hosein, Mahdi Saghaee, Tourism: Nature and Concepts, 1385.

8. Rezvani, Ali Asghar, Geography and Tourism Industry, Payamenour University, 1386.
9. Rezvani, Mohammad Reza, Development of Rural Tourism, Tehran University, 1387.
10. Ranjbarian, Bahram, Mohammad Zahedi, Understanding of Tourism, Isfahan, 1388.
11. World Tourism Organization, Mahmud Abdolazade, national planning and regional tourism, 1379.
12. Shaham, Afshin & Hilda Dadfar, Geography of Iran's Tourism, Islamic Azad University, 1386.
13. Salehi, Amir & Heidarizade Elahe, the requirement of cultural planning in development programs, social and cultural research department, No. 37, summer 1388.
14. Kavusi, Ismaeil & Alireza Moghimi, assessment of cultural activities in Tehran's Farhang House on the basis of quantitative model, social and cultural research department, No. 37, Summer 1388.
15. Geranpaye, Behruz, Culture & Society, Tehran: Sharif, 1377
16. Ketabchi, Mohammad Mahdi, Principles of tourism marketing, Fors, 1383.
17. Hogget, Peter, The new combining Geography, ShapurGudarziNejad, SAMT, 1375.