

Research Paper

Explanation of a Rural Tourism System Model by Using the Chaos Theory and the Butler Model: A Case Study of Mesr Village, Khur-biabank County

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ABSTRACT

Because of the great friability of ecologic-social systems in desert regions, planning for tourism development and use of its capabilities for rural development need an explanation of rural tourism systems. Mesr village is one of the most important rural tourist regions in Khur-biabank county that, in recent years, has experienced tourism activities development and its changes. This paper aims to recognize a tourism system development model in the village and explain it by approaches and theories related to the development of tourist destinations. For this purpose, qualitative data are prepared through interviews, conversations and surveying observations as well as using theoretical foundations, effective variables, processes and structures in the rural tourism system of Mesr village. After the system is recognized, a model is presented to explain the tourism system development processes. The results of the model show that effective introduction of tourism in the region attracts more visitors, for which the important role of entrepreneurs should be stressed. This role can be played in increasing the number of tourists in an organized manner, increasing the local participation, reduction of migration and so on. In another part of the study, the conformity degree of the model is enquired with chaos and tourism life cycle theories. The system being compatible with and based on the tourism life cycle theory, Mesr is found to be in a satisfactory development stage. Also, it appears that the creative destruction in the chaos theory is compatible with the satisfaction and development stage in the tourism life cycle theory.

Key words:
Rural tourism system, Tourism life cycle theory, Chaos theory, Mesr village, Entrepreneurship

Extended Abstract**1. Introduction**

Rural tourism focuses on active participation in a rural lifestyle. It can be a variant of ecotourism. Many rural areas can facilitate tourism because many villagers are hospitable and eager to welcome (and sometime even host) visitors. Iran's desert

regions have exclusive capabilities for tourist attraction and tourism development. Due to the great friability of ecologic-social systems in desert regions, planning for tourism development and using its capabilities for rural development need an explanation of rural tourism systems. Mesr village is one of the most important rural tourist regions in Khur-biabank county. Because the village is located in the south of a big desert, its weather is hot and torrid. Also, according to the latest census, its population is about 120 persons who earn their living by husbandry.

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In recent years, the area has experienced tourism activities development and some changes in this regard. Therefore, this paper aims to recognize a tourism system development model in the village and explain it by approaches and theories related to the development of tourist destinations. The paper deals with theories regarding the tourist area life cycle and the chaos system. Developed by Richard Butler in 1980, this life cycle is based on the product cycle concept. Basically, Butler described four stages that a destination (or a place) goes through in terms of tourism development, plotting them on a bell curve. Initially, visitors arrive in small numbers and are supported by limited facilities. In the second stage, awareness of the destination is growing, as does the number of visitors and facilities. Then, there occurs a stage of development, stagnation, decline, or reconstruction. The chaos theory is a field of study in mathematics that studies the behavior of dynamic systems that are highly sensitive to initial conditions and involve butterfly effects, dynamic adaption, self-similarity and strange attractors.

2. Methodology

The paper is a qualitative piece of research which uses qualitative methods. To this end, qualitative data are prepared through interviews, conversations, surveying observation, participative observation, and theoretical foundations. The analyses are conducted by the qualitative content analysis method. Then, a model is presented to explain tourism system development processes. The analytical method applied is qualitative. Also, the fundamentals of tourism area life cycle and chaos theories are adapted to do some analyses.

3. Results

According to the results of the study, the most important effective factors that should be paid attention to and improved in rural tourism system of Mesr village include eating accommodations, camel riding, cultural and artistic works, economic reconstruction in the village, economic ideas, local and native tourism activities, government performance, infrastructures, academic activities, organic and adventure tourist attractions and services, development of complexes in the rural environment, increase of non-native investors, relative reduction of migration, expansion of tourism economy, security challenges, and reduction of negative tourism impacts. By studying the interactions among these factors and recognizing the spatial processes and structures at work, the development rate of the rural tourism system in Mesr village is presented.

4. Discussion

In have an enquiry into the rural tourism system, it is essential to consider spatial processes and structures. The results of the model show the great effectiveness of introducing tourist attractions and the important role of entrepreneurs in initiating the tourism system development. In next stages, the role of increasing the number of tourists systematically, increasing the local participation, reduction of migration, and so on comes to be of significance. At the end of the research, the degree of the conformity of the model is investigated with chaos and tourism life cycle theories. This system is found compatible with the tourism life cycle theory. In this regard, Mesr is satisfactory, and it is at the end of the participation stage but at the beginning of the development stage. Also, it appears that the creative destruction in the chaos theory is compatible with the development stage in the tourism life cycle theory. Mesr village is located on a chaos edge, and entrepreneur activities create a link between the tourism area life cycle theory and the chaos system theory.

5. Conclusion

The results show that it is possible to explain rural tourism systems by spatial structures and processes. Entrepreneurship innovations are spatial processes that form different spatial structures, and these structures form spatial processes, such as camel-riding and safari, to cause the next spatial structures. The rural tourism of Mesr is a chaos system. Small inputs have given big outputs and butterfly effects, and creative destruction is obvious in the rural tourism system. Also, desert environment is effective in the chaos system. The rural tourism system is in the participation stage and at the beginning of the development stage; however, entrepreneurship is in the consolidation stage and innovation. To determine a future perspective for Mesr village, it is essential to consider the interactions among the factors in the development or stagnation system. Also, according to the findings of the study, entrepreneurship theories in a rural tourism system need to be improved based on the Butler model.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest