

Research Paper

A Qualitative Analysis of Rural Tourism Challenges of Kermanshah Province

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ABSTRACT

Rural tourism is a new approach in development theories for building empowerment and capacity for rural areas. The present research was done in a spring and summer of 2017 to identify the challenges of rural tourism of *Kermanshah* province by applying qualitative paradigm and fundamental theory method (Grounded theory). Tourism experts and specialists of *Kermanshah* province make the study population in which 15 subjects were selected using purposeful combination sampling method. Data collection was carried out through an in-depth and semi-structured interview, which continued to reach theoretical saturation level. Data analysis was performed through three open, axial and selective coding steps. The phenomenon of the environment in rural tourism of *Kermanshah* province remaining unknown was the main issue that the researchers repeatedly encountered in reviewing and revising their field notes. Moreover, the underlying conditions; causal conditions (the inefficiency of the process of guiding investors and entrepreneurs in rural tourism and the lack of infrastructure facilities in rural areas); interventional conditions (aging and rural population decline, land ownership and security problems); strategies and outcomes related to this phenomenon, such as an increase in urban migration, demands for unprofitable or false jobs, rural depopulation, dissatisfaction with living conditions and economic inhabitancy, and unidentified natural, cultural and tourism potentialities of the villages were explored by the use of the paradigmatic model in this study.

Key words:
Rural Tourism,
Entrepreneurship,
Kermanshah
province, Grounded
theory

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Extended Abstract

1. Introduction

Rural Tourism, is a new strategy in development theories for empowerment and capacity building in rural areas to

reduce urban-rural gap and create economic, social, environmental and institutional equality. Besides, it is an important tool to achieve sustainable development. This new strategy in developing rural areas can create temporary employment for villagers, productive employment for seasonal unemployed, and facilitate shelter in rural areas due to the high nature of employment. Despite the

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importance of rural tourism, no coherent program has not been devised yet to develop in rural areas and the plans that have been implemented in this field have not been successful. The present paper aims at conducting a Qualitative study of rural tourism development in *Kermanshah* province using Granded' s theory.

2. Methodology

The information and data collection was done using a deep and semi-structured interview. The population of this study is the research of *Kermanshah* regional experts and experts who were selected by using purposeful combination sampling method (from the type: typical cases, Snow balling, Opportunistic), 15 of them were selected. In this study, the sampling and data collection process continued to the level of theoretical saturation or the usefulness threshold of available information. Data analysis was performed in three stages: open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

3. Results

59 concepts were obtained from the original interviews. Then, one category appeared as the central (nuclear) category from the extracted categories and along with 23 others, they form the components of the theory derived from the research. Subsequently, since the task of linking the main categories with the secondary to the axial coding process was complicated and difficult, the researchers used the paradigm model to sort out and structure the relationships that emerged. In this way, by identifying the features and dimensions and identifying the patterns, the framework and the initial structure of the paradigm model were provided. Paradigm components in this study include phenomena, causative conditions, background conditions, interventional conditions, actions / reactions, and outcomes. The findings show that the rural tourism in the community under study have several problems. The unknown phenomenon of rural tourism was identified in this study and the context, interventions and strategies related to this phenomenon were spotted. In this study, the contextual conditions (presence of human, natural, cultural and tourism capital in the studied villages), causal conditions (inefficiency of the process of investor guidance and entrepreneurs in the field of rural tourism, inefficiency of the process of investors guidance and entrepreneurs in rural tourism lack the adequate support from public, private and local organizations, shortage or lack of infrastructure and welfare facilities in villages, lack of knowledge and skills in tourism, weakness of advertising and accurate and timely information network in rural tourism), intervention conditions (aging and declining

rural population, private ownership land issues, security issues and problems, the diminution of indigenous and local attractions of villages, the existence of some tribal and tribal prejudices and cultural constraints, the existence of some unsuccessful experiences regarding the presence of tourists in rural areas, the existence of seasonal tourism restrictions, Geographical isolation), strategies)Act/ interact ((lack of motivation in the locals, lack of attention to the potential of other areas of tourism and the halt of development in the tourist centers, the reduction of economic activity and investment of villagers in rural tourism, increasing urban migration, increasing demand for inappropriate and false occupations and consequences associated with the phenomenon of rural depopulation (poverty and unemployment), dissatisfaction with living conditions, and the economics of the natural and cultural capacities of villages remained unknown.

4. Discussion

Many studies (e.g, [Karami Dehkordi et al., 2016](#); [Papzan et al., 2011](#); [Hadipour et al., 2015](#); [Ghobadi et al., 2010](#); [Saraei & Shamshiri, 2013](#)) have indicated that inadequate policy making and planning process in rural tourism, inadequate process of guiding investors and entrepreneurs in rural tourism, lack of adequate support and support of public, private and local organizations, weak advertising and timely information network, weak knowledge and skills in tourism are the most important causes of rural tourism development.

5. Conclusion

The findings indicate that *Kermanshah* province is not described well in the field of rural tourism with its unique collection of historical, natural and human capital attraction in villages; its high capacities are still neglected. Failure to organize the existing situation will make tourism problems of *Kermanshah* in near future; consequently it will have devastating effects on the tourism of the rural community.

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Conflict of Interest

The authors declared no conflicts of interest