

The Role of Tourism in the Development of Rural Women Entrepreneurship (Gurab-Pass Village, Fooman City)

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Nowadays, rural tourism has an important contribution to the socio - economic development and play a significant role in providing independence and increasing of empowerment in rural women. Entrepreneurship development will be successful and sustainable when all sectors of society, participate in decision making and planning, particularly groups that have less influence. Women's participation is not only a step towards achieving the objectives of tourism development, but also makes them empowerment in society. The population in this study has potential in various aspects and good knowledge about their living environment. According to the tourism potential in studied area, the most important issue in this study, is that how can be used the capabilities of rural women towards self-sufficiency. Due to importance of tourism in rural women's income, according to the research findings of a case study entitled "The ability to prioritize, obstacles and strategies for the development of rural women entrepreneurship in rural tourism approach Gurab" the method "participatory rural appraisal" is written. The purpose of this study is to identify potentials, barriers and strategies to developing entrepreneurship of rural women and to know the impact of tourism in the studied area to increase their income and empowerment.

Materials and Methods

This research has been done quantitative and qualitative and the method of research is descriptive – analytical. For gathering data, library studies and method of “rural participatory evaluation” has been used. In this way, the various techniques of data collection include of: observation, recording audio and video interviews, interviews and color worksheet has been used. The population in this study is 37 capable and entrepreneur women living in the district of Gurab-pass .After completion of 357 questionnaires, identifying rural entrepreneurship and capable women in studied area were done.

Research findings

In this study, after completion of 357 questionnaires and field studies and identification of the number of women with ability, Collaborative assessment with the participation of 37 women “who had ability to become entrepreneurs” was held on. To obtain more information, in addition of oral participation, three colors sheets, “blue, orange and green”, has been delivered among women to note down their capabilities on blue paper, barriers to entrepreneurship and empowerment on orange paper and their approach on the green paper. In this session by using the mentioned methods, potentials, barriers and strategies and finally rural women’s empowerment strategies of Gurab-Pass, and in order to increase their income, was evaluated and prioritized with attention to the tourism opportunities in this district.

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Based on field studies, the range of the study contains actual and potential ‘‘natural and humanity’’ for tourism development and empowerment of women. Moderate climate, untouched forests, rice fields and beautiful tea gardens, springs and rivers, pilgrimage shrine, local games and festivals, Roodkhan-castle, Fooshe-cave, and etc are fitting for attraction of tourists and caused to many tourists and friends to nature to visit this area every year.

According to the results of this study, women living in this district are skilled in production of agricultural crops, livestock and poultry, honey, persimmon juice, handicrafts, mushroom, compost, and they are able to serve visitors well. But despite the considerable human and tourism abilities in the studied area, due to barriers, among 37 women, only four women, through the sale of handicrafts and renting of their house to tourists earn income and others do not had market to sell their product, however they can produce more than theirs need. Despite of good field of women entrepreneurship in studied area, we were examined barriers to entrepreneurship development in their villages.

The main barriers to entrepreneurship and empowerment group for their lack of participation, lack of exhibition and shopping center, capital and processing industries, deficient in awareness of rural women’s from visitors, requirement, import of foreign goods more attractive with lower prices, deficient in knowledge of labor market from abilities of women’s’ in this district, deficient in access to good roads, deficient in investment through government and private sector in the fields of tourism, and limitation from husband side for women activity to sale their products as a last barrier.

Finally, strategies for the development of entrepreneurship and empowerment of women in the study area was assessed, which include the following cases: formation of the women association in the rural, creating of exhibition and shopping center, Creating of industries, banking facilities with low interest and long repayment, increasing of awareness of women from the requirements of rural tourists; Learning of a new craft designs and models and computable in foreign markets, create a databases for capable women, widening and enhancing road safety, Increasing the residential facilities and services to attract more tourists, promote and encourage a culture of self-employed men and women for failing to prevent the economy was the most important strategies. Finally, after prioritize the strategies, introduced entrepreneur's women to attendance in the meeting. And the first step in the entrepreneurial women in the study area were reviewed and prioritized by them.

Conclusions

This study on the basis of ‘‘rural participatory evaluation’’ showed that rural women have good information from their home environment capabilities. They can help to identify and prioritize the capability and the various barriers and for their solutions offered suggestions. The result indicates that even though there are some barriers in the study area, there are natural and human capabilities that can lead to business growth, job creation and increased the income of women in this district. Also, data showed that among 37 women, due to barriers, only 4 women (11%) can earn through the selling of handicrafts and renting their rural homes to the tourists or visitors.

Therefore, we concluded that although, abilities and interests in women to participate in the development of rural tourism and entrepreneurship, on the one hand, and the requirement for employment, income, financial independence and empowerment on the other hand, rural tourism could not yet played a significant role in increasing employment, increasing income, improving social status and poverty reduction in the district. However, with attention to their potential and existing tourism development in this district, it can be achievable.

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