

Inequality in development of tourism industry with emphasis on Iran

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Received: 2014/02/14 Accepted: 2015/12/25

Extended Abstract

Introduction

This paper has a philosophical and epistemological view to examine inequality in tourism development and studies. This research emphasizes on the debates underlying perspectives and paradigms for exploration of weaknesses of tourism knowledge and studies in methodological change. The purpose of this paper is to study inequalities in development of tourism industry and to understand the effects of tourism in Iran, in combination with agency and structure in the tourism industry in Iran.

The growing synergy of tourism and culture has been one of the major themes in tourism development and marketing in recent years. The tourism industry, one of the fastest growing industry at the global scale, generates jobs and income especially in those layers of the job market that are most severely disadvantaged by economic conjuncture of variables including non-specialised work, reputedly low-skills part-time jobs and female works. By investing in cultural attractions and infrastructure, the cities seek to secure a good position in the international tourism map, developing an industry that is sustainable and plentiful in synergies with other strategic sectors of the urban economy. Tourism also represents an indispensable source of financial resources for the preservation and restoration of the heritage that otherwise faces shrinking budgets and state transfers.

According to cultural statue of Iran, the country has to pay attention to tourism policy-making in national and regional levels. The main goal of this paper is to study the role of tourism policies in inequities in tourism industry. The central issue is: urban management using the tools of development planning, by expansion of social justice for all populations to increase economy growth rate.

Methodology

Critical realism presents a methodological perspective which takes a critical stance towards positivism and hermeneutics in one hand and tries to integrate strong points from both theories of science on the other hand. Contemporary critical realism is formulated by Roy Bhaskar and his like-minded circle of British colleagues. If we take explanation to be the core purpose of science critical realism, it seems to emphasise on thinking instead of experiencing, and especially the process of

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abstraction from the domains of the actual and the empirical world to the transfactual mechanisms of the real world. This kind of thinking made Bhaskar talking about 'transcendental realism' in his early writings, emphasising the crossing of the division between the empirical and the speculative activities of scientific works. The experienced world of events is not explainable in terms of the empirical facts, but they can be incorporated in non-experienced mechanisms incorporated in objects which may be within or outside our domain of investigation.

In this study, relationships between the agents that are producer of development are classified based on critical realism into two categories and three levels: mechanisms or policies for tourism (the real) provides guidelines for the tourism industry as well as the agents and stakeholders (the actual). The instructions in different ways to produce different results have already been experienced in the cities (the empirical).

Results and discussion

This shows that Positivism Approches in the study of tourism inequities in Iran ignore participation of stakeholders in urban policy and considers governmental power as a referee for several stakeholder groups and ignore great sociospatial forces. In this respect, these approaches ignore economic-political processes and structures and slures formal and informal relations between governmental and non-governmental actors to prepare urban tourism planning. Since such agents reflect dominant forms of economic and social inequalities and reproduce inequality in nature of tourism spaces.

To borrow useful ideas from three explanatory paradigms, it is clear that a comprehensive explanatory theory can be created that can simultaneously meet experimental, interpretational and structural requirements. With the proper combination of these three approaches, critical realism can achieve their merits based on the integration.

The relation between the actors who produce results of development categories on the basis of critical realism: 1) mechanisms and policies of tourism in national level in tourism industry; 2) stakeholders in local level (Actual) who suggest agendas in defferent ways to produce various results. Cities play an intermediate role between wider national policies and their results in local level.

There is close relations between tourism activities and geographical places in their historical background. Since 1977, tourism in Iran was changed to reflect decisions of authorities in cities on framework of government's policies.

Conclusion

The plans and policies for national development (the real) has played considerable role in development procedure after and before Islamic Revolution in Iran. On the other hand, it needs to pay more serious attention to importance of participation (the actual) in nature of developmental plans that can be effective on life people. In this paper, development plans and policies are as an example of social mechanisms in realistic approach. We can discuss about the values of sustainable tourism with philosophical and epistemological assistance of tourism. This study is based on the idea that opportunity from policies of tourism development has the ability to maximize products and other needed elements to promote sustainable tourism. This can be concluded that the cities aspiring international destinations for cultural tourism should not neglect the quality of human capital and training, not only in the lower grades of the job market but also for tourist entrepreneurs and public and private managers. The desired pattern of inequality in the tourism industry for Iran's society is sustainable for critical tourism model and policy-making in this Framework.

Keywords: tourism, inequality, critical realism, sustainable tourism, Iran.