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## Impacts of Hazards on Tourism Development in the Town of Sarein

Seyed Mohammad Zamanzadeh<sup>a1</sup>, Mojtaba Gadiri<sup>b</sup>, Hasanali Faraji Sabokbar<sup>c</sup>, Homa Vaezi<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Department of Physical Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

<sup>b</sup> Department of Human Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

<sup>c</sup> Department of Human Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran.

<sup>d</sup> M.S. in Environmental Hazards, Faculty of Geography, University of Tehran, Tehran, Iran

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### 1. Introduction

Nowadays, tourism is internationally considered as one of the greatest economic sectors. Certainly, tourism is one of economically growing activities. In tourism systems, factors such as tourists, domestic people, the route and destination depend on external factors and the environment (e.g. socio-cultural, economic and political systems). Hence, the route which a tourist goes through from the residence to destination, tourism destination attractions, road network of the region, hoteling and fuel supply systems, visa issuing and official systems and many other factors are wholly considered as part of tourism system. For instance, the iron wall frontier between the North and South Korea in recent years has essentially halted the development of tourism system between these countries. Devastation of an airport in an island due to earthquake or storm possibly affects the development of tourism system.

Tourism hazards are defined as the possibility of occurring unpleasant events during the trip and especially at the destination. Tourism crises are defined as any event that may threaten usual activities and tourism-related operations and impact believes of tourists from fame, safety, attraction and tranquility point of view. These happenings increase cost of living and decrease entrance of tourists so that cause tourism economic loss and disruption of business activities in tourism sector. In the process of tourism development program, it is necessary to recognize and assess harmful factors exactly, so that we can prevent harming factors that cause losses in tourism system. Developing tourism is one of the issues which basically requires correct planning and management. In recent years, crisis management in tourism industry is considered as a basic requirement due to the increase of natural and political disasters in many destinations. Although crisis management researches are almost used in management and business for about 40 years, in 1990s, researchers and managers in tourism started to discuss this issue and presented methods to react against crisis in tourism industry. Generally

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<sup>1</sup> Corresponding author: Seyed Mohammad Zamanzadeh. Tel: +989124221899

Email:zamanzadeh@ut.ac.ir

speaking, tourism activities happen in a less-known environment and are susceptible to any event. Especial geographical environment of Sarein town has made this region as an important tourism destination in Iran. Generally, it is possible that development of tourism in this region is threatened by the hazards similar to the other tourism destinations. As a result, the aim of present research is recognition of hazards that affect the development of tourism in Sarein town and also cause crisis for development of this sector and as a result it is necessary to make suitable plan for them.

## **2. Material and Methods**

In this research a questionnaire was used to gather the necessary data. Indices that were used for gathering necessary data from previous studies include the possibility of political, legal, economic-financial, socio-cultural, environmental, technological, structural-operational and safety hazards. For each index some questions were determined and then gathered in a questionnaire.

## **3. Results and Discussion**

From tourist's viewpoint, the average for political risks is 2.43, from authorities viewpoint is 2.34 and finally the average for this kind of risk is 2.38. The average for legal risks from tourist's viewpoint is 2.78, from authorities viewpoint is 3.06 and finally the average for this kind of risk is 2.42. The average for economic and financial risks from tourist's viewpoint is 3.41, from authorities viewpoint is 3.17 and the final average for this kind of risk is 3.29. The average for socio-cultural risks from tourist's viewpoint is 3.01, from authorities viewpoint is 2.74 and the final average for this kind of risk is 2.87. The average for environmental and sanitary risks from tourist's viewpoint is 3.69, from authorities viewpoint is 2.66 and the final average for this kind of risk is 3.17. The average for technology risks from tourist's viewpoint is 2.85, from authorities viewpoint is 2.78 and the final average for this kind of risk is 2.81. The average for structural performance risks from tourist's viewpoint is 2.67, from authorities viewpoint is 3.20 and the final average for this kind of risk is 2.93. The average for safety and security risks from tourist's viewpoint is 2.46, from authorities viewpoint is 2.94 and the final average for this kind of risk is 2.70.

For analysis of tourists and authorities' view point with regard to risk possibility test (T), two independent samples were used. The test shows that there is not a meaningful difference between tourists and authorities' view point with regard to the sum of risk possibility in developing tourism system.

## **4. Conclusion**

Nowadays, tourism is interpreted as a system which is composed of different parts such as corporations, tourists, society and environment and each part of it is in relation with others. There are various factors that can threaten one or some parts of the system. This itself unfortunately has a negative impact on the whole system and causes problem for it. These threatening factors can harm tourists or the destinations. Also, occurrence of natural and social hazards in tourist regions through a decrease in the number of tourists

harms tourism industry and the development of touristic destination development. The result of this research represented that the possibility of sanitary and environmental hazards occurrence was high from tourists' point of view. Also, the possibility of structural-operational hazards occurrence was high from authorities' point of view active in tourism sector. However, calculation of total hazards possibility from both tourists and authorities' point of view represents that financial-economic hazards possibility with a value of 3.29 is the highest among all hazard categories. Consequently, if financial-economic hazard vulnerability of destination rises, this damages destination and causes problem for the town tourism development. The second and third highest hazards possibility values are 3.17 and 2.93 which are related to sanitary-environmental and structural-operational hazards respectively. As a result, to reduce these damages, we must make careful planning and reduce the vulnerability of tourism system. To show the difference between authorities and tourists' view point, T test of two independent samples were used. The results of this test indicate that there is a meaningful difference between tourists and authorities view point about the sum of hazards possibility in development of tourism system.

**Key words:** Hazards, Tourism development, Sarein town.

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