

Tourism Development in Coastal Cities and Social Security (Case Study: Tonekabon City)

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Security and tourism are two very important issues addressed by policy makers and planners. Regarding its outcomes in society, tourism development is considered by many institutions and scholars and it seems necessary to discuss about that. In addition to its positive social and cultural implications, tourism has also some negative implications which have fundamental importance in terms of sociological views. One of these consequences is the introduction of anti-social behaviors due to a flood of tourists in the region. Another consequence, to name, is the acquaintance of villagers with new ideas of tourists contrasting their own cultural values and causing antithetical identities. Social security could not be ignored in this regard since there is some sort of correlation between social order, security and tourism. While there is not social security in a region, tourism and its development could not make an effective role for its community. If tourism development undermines security infrastructures of society, it would make it nonsense. Therefore, all social systems in the world have tried to balance between tourism development and social security. By the way, tourism development has some negative consequences for society, of which we address to its effects on social security of destinations. Tonekabon city enjoys beautiful coastal line and fine weather conditions and other natural attractions. It is considered as a tourist destination in Iran. This city has been traditionally considered as a destination for tourists because of Caspian Sea in the north and the fertile plain in the middle and the rainforest in high mountains in south part of the sea and also because of having fine climate and beautiful nature. On the other hand, Tonekabon with an easy-access coastal line and residential and recreational facilities and proximity to tourism exit (Tehran) is nowadays welcoming many tourists. High volume of tourists in the coastal line has negative consequences in addition to its positive effects. Therefore, this paper aims at studying social security dimensions of the host community caused by tourism development. We try to answer two questions, A) how much is the level of satisfaction of host community from tourism development in the coastal city of Tonekabon? B) What effects has had tourism development on social security of local residents of coastal city of Tonekabon?

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Methodology

This is a descriptive-analytical study and has been conducted with field survey. We first collected our data with library studies and then defined accordingly the notion of security and tourism development as our main study variables. We also collected other required data with field method (questionnaire tool) and characterized the level of tourism development as our independent variable using such variables as number of incoming tourists, the economic dependence on tourism, job dependence on tourism and investments by private sector for establishment of infrastructures and amenities of tourism. Our statistical population includes 68163 citizens of Tonekabon. With high volume of our statistical population, we used simple stochastic sampling method and used Cochran formula to determine the sample volume. Thus, we calculated it up to 360 people. We also processed our collected data using SPSS software and used compare-means test, T-test, correlation test and regression analysis in terms of levels of measurement of variables.

Results and Discussion

Our findings suggest that from local community point of view, tourism growth is high because the results show the computed mean is bigger than theoretical median. Field observations of authors, sensible high traffic, sensible population growth in vacations, cars with non-local plate numbers and development of second homes all verify this claim that this region is a special destination for home tourism. Our findings, in this regard, show that the level of support of sample population from the future of tourism development has a suitable situation. Findings also suggest that there is a significant inverse relationship between tourism and social security so that the more tourism development we have, the less social security issues are appeared.

Conclusion

Coastal cities are the regions with fine weather that makes them destinations for many tourists. Tourism development in the destinations has various consequences including those affecting social security in local community. Thus, in this study, we studied the effects of tourism on social security of the host community. Our results show that tourism had its most effects upon corruption in the city of Tonekabon. In such a way that we could say an increase in tourism development in Tonekabon city has led to an increase in corruption (burglary, street molestation, promiscuity and moral perversion). The second affected area could be police control, i.e. with tourism development; police officials charge themselves to protect security and order of the city more than ever. The index of distrust is the third area of influence, and with tourism development it could be said that people in society become strangers to each other and the trust between them decrease. Therefore, it could be concluded that tourism development in the region has had a negative effect on security of the society and led to reduction of social security of the region. We noticed that progress in this process could increase the intensity of this reverse relationship and tackle tourism development. In this regard, it entails that planners and decision makers taking suitable managerial strategies, put plans in place that are in line with reduction of insecurity in this city.

Keywords: coastal tourism, social security, Tonekabon City.

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