

The role of Ecotourism in Rural Sustainable Development Case Study of the Javaherdeh Village, Ramsar, Iran

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ABSTRACT

Today, natural tourism not only as a source of endless income, but also as a model of sustainable development has become increasingly important. This study examines the natural potentials of Javaherdeh village in Ramsar and its role in achieving the aims of ecotourism in the area. Ecotourism with its potentials can be a major strategy in sustainable rural development which regards expanding opportunities and improving living conditions of the present and next generations of vulnerable people in rural communities as its main objectives. The methodology is descriptive – analytical and collection of information is from library research and author's observation from this region has been investigated. Religiousness, cultural advancement, religious obligation, public participation and respect to national sources will be cause cultural appendix in village. In the end some suggestions to accomplish and enrich of cultural annex is presented. Regional and national level to promote ecotourism, conservation and environmental management, villagers participation in rural development projects, build infrastructure for sustainable development of tourism, to prevent capital flight, coordination among agencies involved in nature tourism can be as possible factors in the development of ecotourism.

KEY WORDS: Ecotourism, Rural Development, Sustainability, Javaherdeh, Ramsar.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the role of tourism industry is increasing important in process of globalization. One of the most important reasons of government's attention to tourism industry is its economic effects in national development and growth (Sam Aram, 2008). Earning of income for native residents and creation of employment, possibility of protection and spread of belief, values and conventions of regions, creation of expansive social relations between host and guest society, prevention of recession and stagnation of special natural suitable regions are desirable effects of tourism. Iran is included in world's important ten countries because of its tourism facilities.

Lasting ecotourism is a kind of tourism which consider the protection and development of opportunities for continuance of their life for purpose of lasting ecology and also response to environment's present needs (Akbari, 2007). The meaning of sustainability is different based on time, Place and different society conditions should be considered three aspects for analysis of resistance situation: public politics aspect, historical aspect and replacement values aspect (Badri, 2004). Most important motive , which today encourage and incite tourism to visit the natural attractions, is their feeling of curiosity in recognition and study of rare herbal and animal species and natural recourses which cause their gratitude and increase to the nature which finally excite and strengthen their feeling of protection and preservation from natural environment (Jahanian , 2010).

Traveling for the purpose of visit the nature mainly include purposes such as weather change , amusement , mental and spiritual relaxation, and reinforcement for repeated activity , so natural attractions don't be never repetitive and should not remember that activity and leisure is accompanied always together and their performance is connected together .Lasting development according to BERATLAND report, it is a development which can provide current generation's needs without decrease of future generation's ability in meet the needs.

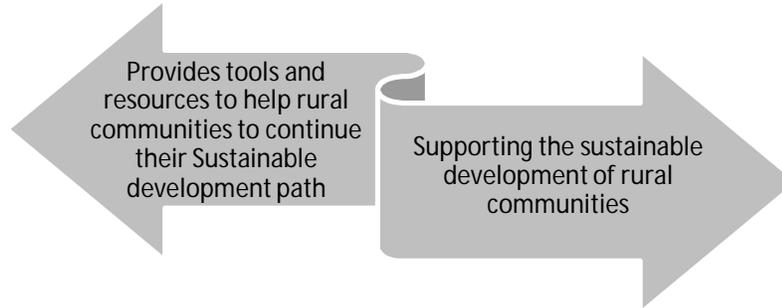
Indeed, lasting development is a process which combines environmental, social and economic purposes of society together in every by websites; perform the necessary actions and support operations. Lasting development has been accompanied with words like society, culture, economy, and environment, according to RIO statement that human is introduced axis lasting development, these titles with purpose of environment protection and transfer it to the future generations is going in the same direction finally. Rapid growth and development of cities in the last decades confronts most of the countries in the world with serious problems. One of the problems is pollution of environment that these changes are due of urbanism with no rudimentary principles. In this section Sustainable development is propounded (Farhadian, 2011).

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There are now currently major concerns for sustainable development, tourism and ecotourism from:

- A number of providers (owners of boarding houses, custodians of natural monuments, national parks and natural administration, stud owners, craftsmen and folk artists etc.).
- Local, regional and national. We estimate that currently do not develop sufficient local rural ecotourism activities; exception consists of a valuable tourist areas, especially where practical and rural tourism. In this respect we consider that the European experience can be of real help.

Fig.1: The contribution of ecotourism in Sustainable Development

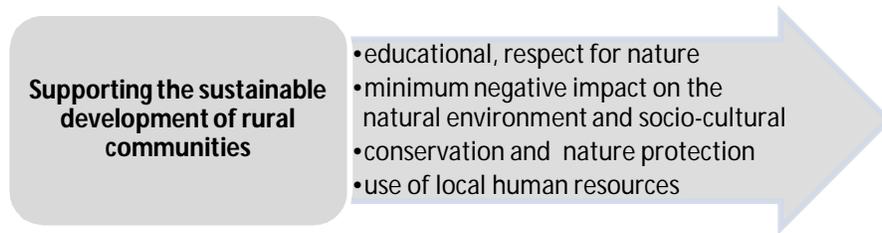


The way of rural societies encounter with life affected by physical (material) resources, which are possessed of facilities and possibilities and evolutions of this resources and facilities will be caused change in way of their encounter with life. Villagers use natural environment for construction of shelter, subsistence, industry, prayer, recreation, and gathering. village have several dimensions , so study and investigation of village include relatively extensive scope from science and university fields such as sociology , economy , geography , political since , anthropology and psychology .

Development of tourism industry for developing countries which encounter problems such as high rate of unemployment, limitation of exchange sources and mono production economy, is very important.

The greatest profits caused by ecotourism industry should be expended for public and introduction of features of places in brochures, advertising websites and books (Stronza, 2008).

Fig.2: Some Essentials of Sustainable Development



METHOD

The methodology was descriptive - analytical and preparation of information and documents had been performed with documentary and field Methods. In documentary part necessary information has been collected through books, maps, and internet base and field studies, photographs, videos and surveys from residents has been performed in field of paper subject by the author. 70 of villagers and tourists were selected to survey about natural resources, the role of tourists in economic development, presence of tourists and air and water pollution, cultural problems.

The aim is to reach to strategic solutions to reach rural sustainable development, said in general features in below:

- To attract Ecotourists for eliminate the problems and the improvement of economic and social conditions
- To encourage the rural people to protect the nature resources
- Design the sustainable buildings with vernacular values

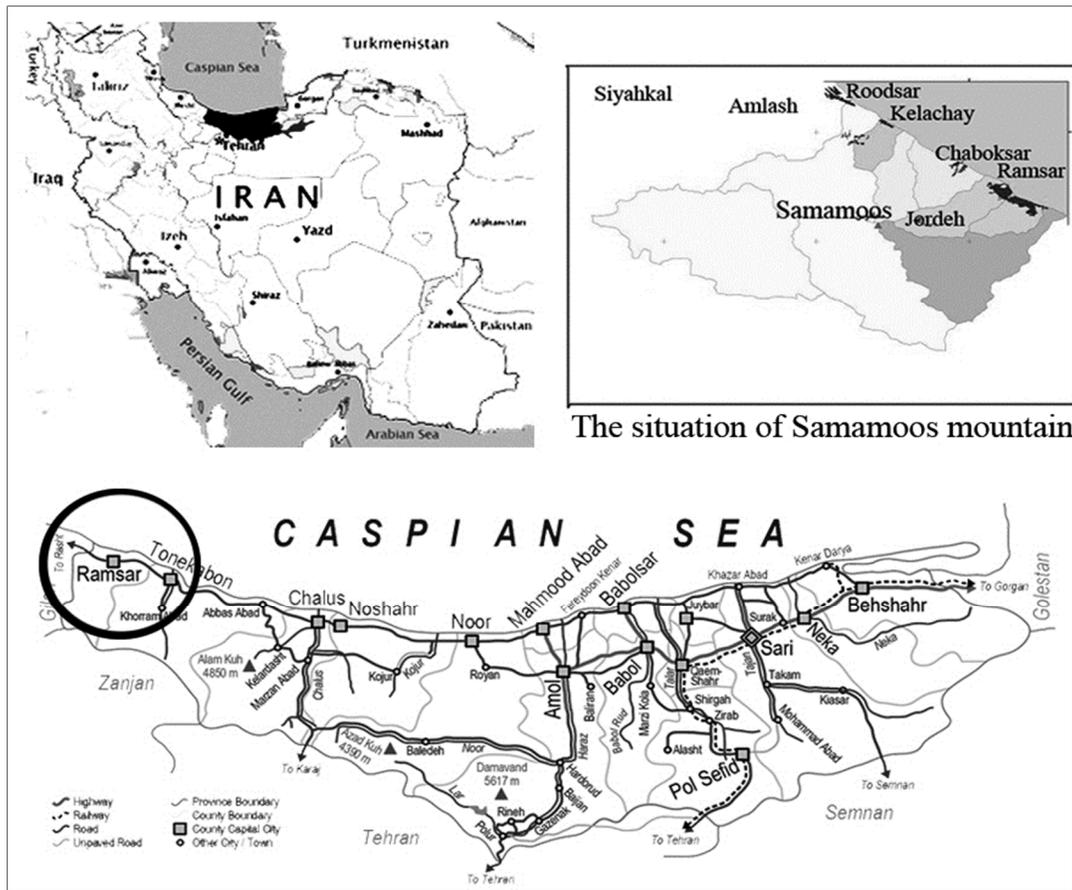
- To increase the social and cultural levels of rural people that live and work in the village
- To presentation the IRAN and cities and villages more attractive potentials

THE CASE STUDY

Javaherdeh which its name was Jurdeh before Pahlavi era and is well-known to Jorjy in local dialect, is located in 25 kilometer of southwest of Ramsar and in the height approximately 2000 meter of sea level and in the province of Mazandaran and is one of ancient regions with alpine ocular attractions of Alborz mountain and its antiquity goes back to past millennium. Consist of Jor (+) deh which means upper village and because it is last and most high village of southwest Ramsar and there is no village there, it is named Jurdeh (Sajjadi, 2004).

Its interconnecting path is of furthest west of Ramsar and this rural region is located in transit path of wooded mountain and river Safarood. Javaherdeh is inclined places for planning in field of ecotourism in Mazandaran because of enjoyment of many natural potential. The presence of tourists in historic Javaherdeh village can result in process improvement of development of village through creation of supplementary activities in field of agriculture, cultural, employment, and income increase of villagers and cause possibility of their enjoyment from lasting living. In many of countries, only village is source of cultural and natural heritage.

Fig.3: The Situation of RAMSAR City in MAZANDARAN province



There are several natural attractions in this village which is as follow:

Safaroodriver and Javahershad waterfall: Safarood river is one of natural blessings of this region and rise out of east mountain side of Somamoos mountain which pass through the forest and flows into the Ramsar sea in addition to passing the Javaherdeh village, Tang Dare and Seiqal quarter. Safarood waterfall or first Javaherdeh waterfall is located in 15 kilometer of south of Ramsar and in the path of Javaherdeh .several other waterfall has increased on this region's attractions.

Wooded mountains: wooded mountains with pine and ever green trees and also zones covered with deciduous trees give many glitters to the regions in the autumn.

Safarood forest: Access path to this forest is with passing the natural blessings such as forest, river and much pleasant weather has given a special glitter to it.

Mineral (water) spring: In 1350, this spring endowed to organization by director road construction. Water of this spring is diuretic and effective in excretion of kidney stone. Other spring of this village are Soleyman spring, Bertel spring, Boreshy, Peyam spring.

Valleys and mountains: valleys and mountains covered with fog have especial visual perspective in whole seasons.

Peaks covered with natural ices and snow: High peaks which are covered with snow in the half of year. Accept inside climbers every year, in path of climbing to the summit and Samamoos Shrine, natural ices is determined.

Medicinal plants : There are many wild medicinal plants such as chamomile , violent , primrose , caraway , fennel , hollyhock , borage , acanthus , nettle , cow parsnip , barberry , locoweed , and Oberon in this region .

Somamoos summit: In Javaherdeh plan 1:5000 on behalf of geographical organization of armed forces, height of Somamoos summit is 3693 and in plan 1:25000, country's cartography organization, is 3703.

One of two path of climbing to this summit by climbers is through Javaherdeh village. Somamoos has proper and enough sources from snow for feeding the many rivers in this region because of its high summits and near the Caspian Sea, snow rain in cold season. most important basins of somamoos mountain rivers are Pol rood (the second Gilan big river) , samoosh, khoshkerood, Acha rood , Kuku rood , Safa rood , Chalek rood , Zileh rood , Ezhdeh rood , and kakrood .

Birds : this village due to existence of basins , lakes , wild rivers , grasslands and virgin forest has many diversity of birds such as , part ridge , cuckoo , rook , mountain raven , robin , pigeon , cuckoo , and variety of nightingale .

Fig.4: JAVAHERDEH Village in RAMSAR (Picture by author, spring, 2012)



History and cultural attractions of this village is ADINEH mosque with antiquity about 800 years, Zoroastrian graveyards with antiquity about two to three thousand year, stony lion, stony cradle, Vanamzi castle and handicraft mall. Difference of this village temperature in comparison with city is 10 to 12 °c and accept thousands domestic and foreign tourists due to enjoyment of cool weather. Javaherdeh is part of a few mountain regions which its height is more than 2000 meter despite the very small distance from the sea.

The residents of the village work in farming, agriculture, and horticulture and its handicraft include felting , ceramics , forging , hat making .hand king , dyeing , and coppersmith .local cultures which is real identify of rural societies , is considered indeed a regime for continuance and strength of societies identity (Brennan, 2005) .

RESULTS AND SUGGESTIONS

The presence of villagers in area is required for protection of natural resources. The term ‘participation’ has been used to justify the extension of control of the state and to build local capacity and self-reliance; it has been used to justify external decisions and to devolve power and decision-making away from external agencies; it has been used for data collection and for interactive analysis (Pimbert and Pretty, 1995). The volume of responsibility and participation of villagers is in mediocre level. To establish the beneficiary groups in existent social systems and to organize the councils can be reliance point in sustainable development, promotion in cultural levels.

The implementation of partnership of people is in 4 directions:

- Cleanup the roads and natural spaces in crowded in noisy days
- Veneration and back to cultural and social values of area
- Production of vernacular products
- Recognition of Sustainable development and effects in Comprehensive development of country

Table1: The rate of tendencies in villagers with participation in sustainable development of area

Type of inclination	quantity of family	percent
Agree with participation	53	75.7
Disagree with participation	8	11.4
Others	9	12.9

Rural regions include the large group of population which has main role in social, cultural and economic life.

* development of natural tours for different experts and labels of country's high education system like experts in fowl, forest management and natural resources, nature's professional photographers, environment's designers and architects, experts in traditional medicine and physical education in north of Iran's rural regions and scientific achievements of this inspections will have much effects in promotion of knowledge in different levels of education in country.

* Launching of information centers and round – the – clock services to nature tourist like climbers, fisherman, cameraman, and photographers in entrance or village, information to tourist in field of culture, conventions and especial places can reduce the damages caused by tourists unawareness in related to natural, cultural values in addition to effect on villagers return to own entity.

* Allocation of validity on behalf of government for agriculture and organize the existing lands for the purpose of cultivation of medicine plants, establishment of research laboratories and centers, preparing the herbal products in addition to creation of employment for youth .Will be caused more prosperity and tourist's proper density in whole seasons.

* Performance of athletic competitions like motorcycling in the height of region, riding, climbing, snow skiing in winter season, festivals, local plays, ceremonial traditions and creation of attractions and other various amusements in addition to attract the tourist and economizing for villagers, will entail the culture and belief of domestic tourism and existence of more potentials in country and prevention of investment in tourism sector to foreign country.

* organization and mobilization of religious centers like mosque as a cultural center, village nurse as a manager and coordinator of orders for the purpose of protection of village's organic and origin frame, environment as a national capital, carefulness and effort in enactment of laws related to lands separation , structure permit and visual perspective of village , and development of activities based on ecotourism to residence places will close villagers to their real identity and culture.

CONCLUTIONS

Tourism as one of income resources and creation of employment in national level can be approach for economic development in national territory. Tourism especially in time that activities profit of other economic sectors is decreasing, is a proper replacement for them and strategy for development. Iran have kind of regions, spaces and seasons from tourism aspects and equal with developed countries in tourism industry from ancient relics, recreational regions and natural beauties aspects. Expansion of ecotourism industry by recognition and presentation of country attractive environ mental sources. Performance of justice among people, development of lasting tourism, recognition of issues related to environment, increase of people's social, political and cultural awareness and education, training of expert forces in country's different sections and expansion of science and technology and

foresight and planning to control the sources is performed for future generation and it can be mentioned that element such as destruction of natural sources, lack of people culture , pollution and decrease of environmental sources quality, lack of investment for people substructures and management of environmental sources and expert forces deficiency in field of analysis and cultural, social and economic planning of existing obstacles are in the course of accomplishment of lasting tourism in country. In a country, the way of organization of natural and manmade environments should be reflection of national development in that country.

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