

Investigating the Relationship between Politics and Tourism in the Arvand Free Zone

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Abstract

Tourism in any society is influenced by complex and intertwined political, cultural, economic factors as well as geographical features that fascinate others. The main foundations of policy in this field go back to the historical, cultural, social and economic characteristics of each country. The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between politics and tourism in the Arvand Free Zone and has been done by descriptive-correlational research method. The statistical population of the study included tourists from Arvand Free Zone. The sample includes 384 tourists who were selected using random sampling method. The research tool is a researcher-made questionnaire. SPSS software and correlation coefficient and t-test were used to analyze the data. The results showed that the development and expansion of tourism in the Arvand Free Zone is influenced by political decisions and national and local policymakers. There is a significant relationship between tourism policy and economic growth of Arvand Free Zone.

Keywords: Politics, Tourism and Arvand Free Zone

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Introduction

Tourism is one of the most developed industries in the second half of the twentieth century and is seen as a key element for economic growth in the world. Tourism revenues are used to develop the region's infrastructure. Today, tourism is the mainstay of the economy of some countries. Gives and is the generator of economy and employment (Golzadeh et al., 2014). The tourism industry has been considered as a major and very effective economic factor in recent years, and for this reason we try to prevent the effective factors in reducing the flow of tourism as much as possible and provide the necessary facilities for the growth and expansion of the tourism industry. (Weiss, 1396). Tourism is associated with an increase in the number of tourists and an increase in their costs, and it is predicted that this situation will continue in the future (Dwyer, 2016). In the last 50 years, tourism has become one of the largest economic sectors in the world (Altman and Alexanian, 2016). Tourism in any society is influenced by complex and intertwined political, cultural and economic factors as well as geographical features that fascinate others and the main foundations of policy-making in this area are historical, cultural, social and economic features. Every country returns. Countries have sought solutions for the development of this industry by examining the reasons and factors of tourism development in their country in different fields. These problems can be examined from different economic, social, cultural, and political perspectives (Arendt and Lowe, 2016). One of the main activities of governments in the process of designing and formulating macro-tourism policies is to pay attention to these factors. Regarding tourism policy-making, the Encyclopedia of Tourism states: It is part of public policy; moreover, although there is no universal definition of tourism policy, it is possible to say what governments decide to do or not to do "(versus tourism). Saeedi et al., 2012). But in fact, policies are the product of the political environment, values and ideology, power, institutionalized principles, and decision-making processes. This is because many influential forces and factors are involved in the policy-making process; For example, people; Effective and important, institutions, laws, perceptions and perceptions, opinions, choices and power (Adjel et al., 2008). Pressure groups, local community leaders, bureaucrats, and other individuals and groups operating within or outside government rules

influence public policy in a variety of ways and change them. (Hall, 2001). Achieving the economic, environmental and social benefits of tourism requires understanding the developmental nature of the tourism industry from the past to the present, making the best possible decisions for the current situation and considering the thought trends for the future of this industry. However, the development of specific programs and guidelines for the management and foresight of the tourism industry is an unavoidable necessity; Unless we hope that everything will happen by chance (Zarghami Borujeni and Bazar Afshan, 2013). Achieving the economic, environmental and social benefits of tourism requires understanding the developmental nature of the tourism industry from the past to the present, making the best possible decisions for the current situation and considering the thought trends for the future of this industry. However, the development of specific programs and guidelines for the management and foresight of the tourism industry is an unavoidable necessity; Unless we hope that everything will happen by chance (Zarghami Borujeni and Bazar Afshan, 2016). In other words, for the sustainability of the tourism industry in the future, efficient and effective planning and policy-making is of particular importance today. Policymakers, planners and other stakeholders need to identify emerging trends in the tourism industry and put on their agenda measures that lead to the regular growth and quality of the industry's products and ultimately the benefit of tourists and the local community.

Four-fifths of the world (i.e. more than 150 countries) tourism is one of the five main sources of foreign exchange earnings and in 60 countries, tourism is in the first place (Akbari and Gharkhloo, 1394). On the other hand, many countries have established free zones in order to achieve goals such as developing the national economy, attracting foreign investment, creating employment, increasing income and regional development. Therefore, the development of tourism activities in the free zones in order to create diversity in foreign exchange earnings as well as economic prosperity in these zones, is increasingly considered. Paying attention to the consequences of the tourism industry in the economic fields (its impact on the sustainable growth of the country's economy, its ability to create employment and increase government revenues, etc.), social and cultural (familiarizing tourists with Iranian culture and values

in the past and present Increasing national pride, reviving the country's indigenous arts and traditions, preserving cultural attractions, etc.), environmental (helping to preserve natural attractions, preserving historical and ancient sites, etc.) have greatly increased worldwide. Free trade zones with capabilities to increase exports, job creation, attract foreign investment and attract domestic and foreign tourists can play an important role in the country's economy and also the economic, political, social structure and laws governing them can be a good platform. To prepare for tourism development. Therefore, tourism in free zones plays an important role in how to plan and make decisions commensurate with the capabilities of these zones. In other words, although the basic nature of the emergence of these areas is based on economic components, but investing in infrastructure and using the potential of regional potential to develop tourism is of particular importance. (Borujeni and Shalbafian, 2013). So far, a lot of research has been done on tourism policies. Dehshiri Vafghihi (1398) in a study on the impact of tourism policy on cultural diplomacy of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Central Asia. Extraction of data from research data documents shows that Iran's tourism policies have been able to strengthen cultural diplomacy in Central Asia to a small extent, so that residents of countries with the Islamic Republic of Iran in Central Asia have civilizational, cultural and identity commonalities. Are, have little desire to travel to Iran. Sajjadi and Poor Reyhan (2015) in a study on tourism development strategies in the Arvand Free Zone. The results showed that the attraction of non-governmental capital, infrastructure and welfare facilities and tourism capabilities all have a very effective role in the development of tourism in this region. Fattahi (1397) addressed the issue of sustainability in the Arvand Free Zone. Some of these challenges affect the sustainability of this free economic zone, but others can not only affect the sustainability of the region as a free trade zone, but can also affect the environmental sustainability of Khorramshahr and Abadan. Be severely affected and face serious risks. Weiss (2017) in a study examined the policy-making of the tourism industry in the upstream laws of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The results of the research show that the category of tourism has been less considered by policy makers and macro planners of the Islamic Republic of Iran and in this way, with a reductionist and controlled

view, they have considered only a small dimension of tourism with a cultural perspective. Zargham Borujeni and Bazrafshan (2017) in a study developed a framework for developing tourism policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Based on the results, a framework consisting of economic-supportive, political-security, development-marketing and cultural policies was presented that can be used for future policies (especially the Sixth Five-Year Plan for Economic, Social and Cultural Development) and to achieve The objectives of the Vision 1404 document should be used. The findings also show that in the opinion of experts in the process of formulating tourism policies, development-marketing policies have the highest priority.

Kung (2020) This article provides an overview of the development of tourism policies and regulations in China. Finally, the study shows that in addition to formal politics and law, tourism intermediaries are also affected by illegal political rulings issued by the Chinese government. Peter et al. (2020) reviewed a new tourism policy for Rotterdam. . The municipality presented its new tourism perspective in early 2020. The starting point of this view is that tourism should contribute to the broader policies and development goals of the city and benefit the citizens of Rotterdam, the growth of tourism is secondary. The new vision is a positive step, but it leaves unanswered important questions about tourism policy and its implementation Jana et al. (2020) in a study examined that changes in political life as well as accession to the European Union (EU) had a great impact on the development of tourism and Slovak tourism research. Evidence shows that Slovakia did not receive the number of incoming tourists and domestic tourism expenditures it did before 1989. The main reason seems to be that tourism policy has supported the destination with highly advanced tourism, rather than those who strive for success after the Soviet Union. Peng et al. (2020) in a research to provide solutions to attract investment for tourism development in Tom Hoon Province, Vietnam. Local government policy to raise capital seems to be of the highest importance. This study had some political implications for increasing the attractiveness of investment funds in tourism development in the region. Lee et al. (2020) The central government in a highly centralized country, such as China, usually governs legitimacy, policy, and planning in its key social actions in tourism

Arvand Free Zone, while having hydrological and geomorphological diversity, having high potentials for agriculture and tourism, as well as capturing large industrial and demographic poles, plays a very important role in the economic and industrial structure of Khuzestan and the southwest of the country. Arvand Free Zone in terms of proximity to natural attractions (groves and beautiful villages, three rivers Bahmanshir, Arvandrud and Karun), urban-commercial, industrial, health and medical, cultural-historical tourist attractions, various communication routes, buildings and remnants The holy defense and being located at the edge of the Iranian-Iraqi border, has unique tourist conditions.

Considering the strategic position and strategic potentials on the one hand and paying attention to other actual and potential capabilities of the region on the other hand in line with appropriate operational policies in the form of local, regional and national planning can be the starting point for proper planning. To provide tourism and, by its nature, economic prosperity in the region. Based on this, Azadavand region can play a more colorful role in the political, economic and social management of Khuzestan province. It is clear that different countries have not benefited equally from the large table of the tourism industry, and even countries that are relatively similar in terms of characteristics are very different in terms of tourism (such as Iran and Turkey) and the reason for the fundamental differences. It is in policy-making and planning, and based on this, the efficiency and optimal use of tourism capacities of each country requires strategic and macro-policy and long-term and long-term planning (Weiss, 1396). In this regard, the creation of a free zone is one of the tools of economic development that can attract capital, transfer human resource training technology, connect to the global market, and so on. One of the industries that increase foreign exchange earnings and foreign investment in free zones and introduce Iranian civilization and culture to the world, etc., is the tourism industry (Farzaneh, 2011). Whereas the tourism development policy in the Arvand Free Zone must be based on simultaneous and realistic scientific and practical management, environmental holism and the principles of sustainable development and land management; In this study, the impact of policy on tourism development is examined as one of the important and

influential factors. This research is a descriptive-survey of correlation type with applied nature and in terms of cross-sectional time. In this research, a survey method has been used to collect information, so it can be included in the field of field research. The method of data collection is library and field studies. The data collection tool is a questionnaire. The method of data analysis will be done at both descriptive and inferential levels, and according to the level of data measurement and data distribution, parametric statistical tests will be used. The statistical population of this research consists of two parts: one is all experts and experts of urban management of Arvand Free Zone and professors of geography and urban management of the university and the other is citizens and tourists of Arvand Free Zone. According to the 2016 census, 79926270 people were reported.

The sample size of citizens and tourists each was determined based on Morgan table equal to 384 people. Due to the fact that usually a percentage of distributed questionnaires are not returned, 450 questionnaires were prepared and distributed among citizens, of which 400 questionnaires were returned and finally 384 acceptable questionnaires were the basis of the research. The geographical area of the present study is Arvand Free Zone. A free trade area is a specific territory, often located within or adjacent to a port, where free trade with other parts of the world is permitted. If the goods can be exported or imported to these areas without paying customs duties and taxes, they can be stored in a warehouse for a while, packaged and re-exported if necessary. It is located in a coordinate latitude with a longitude of 30 degrees and 18 minutes north latitude to a distance of 30 degrees and 32 minutes north latitude 48 degrees and 1 minute east longitude to 48 degrees and 19 minutes east longitude. This region is located in a total distance of 18 latitudes and 14 latitudes. Arvand Free Zone with an area of 37,400 hectares in the northwest of the Persian Gulf includes the cities of Abadan, Khorramshahr and Minoshahr (Mino Island), which is located at the confluence of the Arvand River and Karun. This region is adjacent to Iraq and Kuwait, which has a special importance with its capacity such as road, rail, sea and air transportation (Arvand Free Zone Organization, 2015).

Geographical features of Arvand Free Zone

Arvand Free Zone in the northwest of the Persian Gulf with an area of 37,400 hectares in the northwest of the Persian Gulf, including the cities of Abadan, Khorramshahr and Minoshahr (Mino Island), which is located at the confluence of the Arvand River and Karun. This region is adjacent to Iraq and Kuwait and has a special importance with its capacities such as road, rail and air transportation. Figures 1 to 3.



Figure 1: Location of the Arvand Free Zone in Iran

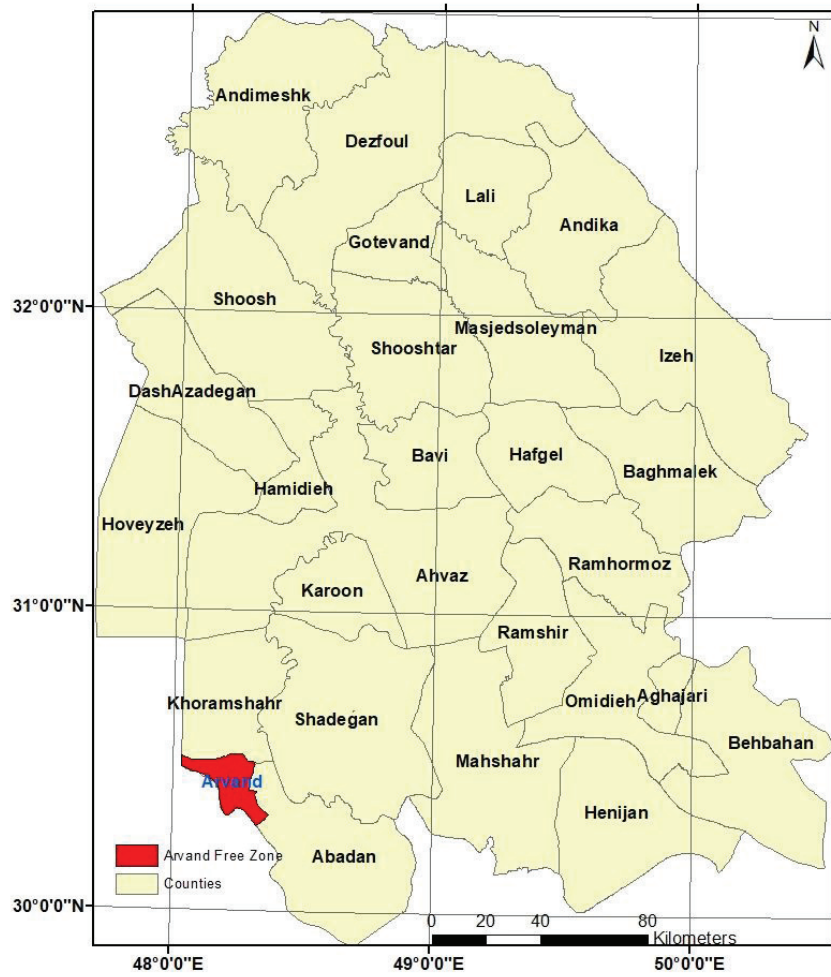


Figure 2: Location of Arvand Free Zone in Khuzestan Province

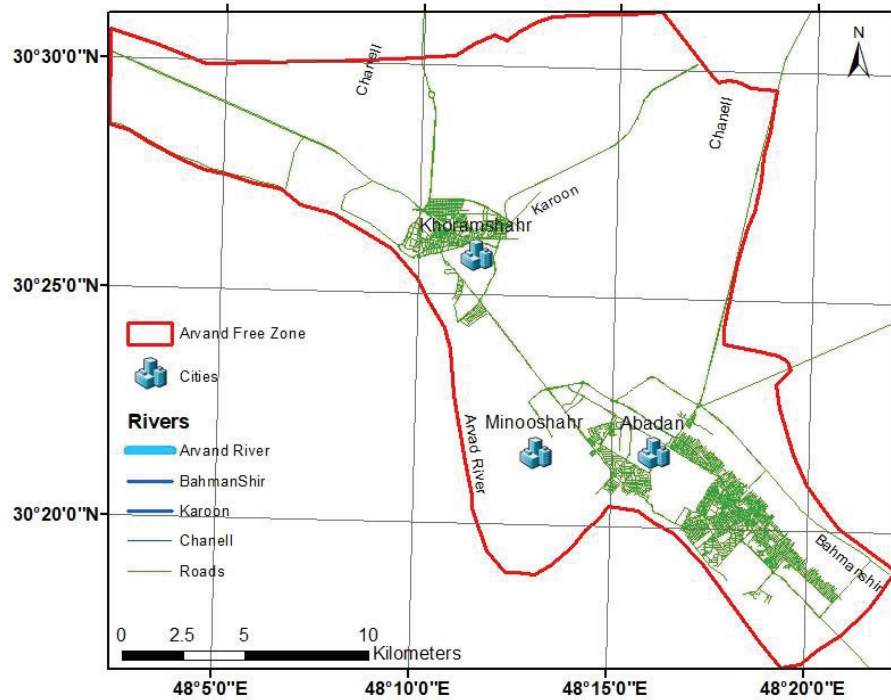


Figure 3: Arvand Free Zone Limited

Data analysis

In this research, the most common statistical tools and techniques available in the statistical collection of social sciences and computer software (SPSS) have been used to analyze the information. However, the final analysis has been the responsibility of the researcher based on the results of computer operations.

Table 1 Comparison of the distribution of scores of research variables with the normal distribution

Significance level	Kolmogorov-Smirnov	Variables
0.22	1.11	Political decisions
0.34	0.87	Special attention of the public sector
0.098	1.32	Tourism policy
0.054	1.45	Economic Growth
0.071	1.76	Insufficient attention of officials

Table 1 shows the Kolomogroph test to check the normality of the data, which according to the level of significance, which is greater than 0.05, the data has a normal distribution.

Table 2 One-sample t-test to examine research variables

Significance level	Degrees of freedom	T	Variable
0.0001	383	76	Attention of government departments involved
0.0001	383	74	Political decisions and local and national policy
0.0001	383	78.2	Insufficient attention of officials and managers

Table 2 of the t-test for the research variables shows that all three variables had a significant effect on tourism policies with respect to the significance level of 0.001.

Table 3 Correlation between tourism policy indicators and economic growth

Number	The significance level	Pearson coefficients	Variable
384	0.0001	0.75	Tourism policy and economic growth

Table 3 shows the correlation between tourism policy indicators and economic growth. The correlation coefficient is equal to 0.75 and according to the significance level of 0.001 which is less than 0.05, there is a positive and significant relationship between these two variables.

Discussion and conclusion:

Tourism is an important activity in the life of nations because it has a direct impact on the environmental, economic and social aspects, which is supported by the development and promotion of tourism in developing countries, where the amount of planning, policy and policy, voluntarily Leads to a reduction in social risks. In planning Iran's tourism development, the structure of the government system with the prevailing ideology plays an important role and paying attention to the general policies of the government in this field will be helpful. Policies are a set of legal, technical, executive, monetary and

financial criteria and measures, the adoption of which provides the necessary facilities and facilities to achieve the goals of the program. Planning is defined as the process of setting goals and finding and predicting ways and means to achieve set goals. Today, governments are determined by the extent to which they have the ability and power to use their natural and human resources. The most advanced countries are those that have the most power politically, militarily, culturally, economically and socially. Among the factors that affect the economic, cultural and ... development of countries are the tourism industry and the ability and power of governments to attract tourists. At present, "the location and geographical distribution of tourists and tourist destinations is fully justified by security. In fact, strategic countries and regions have ensured their security by attracting more tourists and attracting capital to provide tourist facilities and services. The development of tourism in the Arvand Free Zone, in addition, can play a potential and valuable role in achieving cultural understanding and peace between countries (sustainability). It can attract foreign capital, attract and transfer technology into the economy of the region and the country, create employment opportunities, increase production and added value of economic sectors, especially industry, help enter global markets, expand and diversify exports. Economic efficiency and training of skilled manpower will increase the country's income from service activities. The results of this study showed that the development and expansion of tourism in the Arvand Free Zone is influenced by political decisions and national and local policy makers. Special attention is paid to government departments and agencies involved in the management of such areas through strategies and policies in line with the development of tourism in the Arvand Free Zone. There is a significant relationship between tourism policy and economic growth of Arvand Free Zone. Lack of attention of officials and managers is one of the political obstacles affecting the growth of tourism in the Arvand Free Zone. Between external and internal factors, external factors including opportunities and threats have a greater impact on the tourism industry and there is a relationship between the expansion of political relations in the regional dimension (neighboring countries) with the development of tourism in the

Arvand Free Zone. Considering the role of politics in tourism in the Arvand Free Zone, the following suggestions can be made:

Possessing and adhering to a comprehensive policy model, long-term and sequential planning, the existence of systematic and systematic views, coherence and integration of decisions, focus and convergence in decisions, anticipation or desire for the accountability process, the existence of a plan and Special programs and follow-up from the beginning of the process to achieve the result, change the attitude of policymakers and planners of the Arvand Free Zone from a skeptical and threatening point of view of tourism to an opportunistic and developmental perspective in the field of tourism and its reflection in subordinate programs. Avoiding a reductionist view of tourism and developing programs and investments in various fields of cultural tourism, rural, coastal and maritime, ecotourism, hydrotherapy, health, winter, etc., policy design and integrated tourism management and avoiding parallel work and the application of contradictory policies in the field of tourism and the implementation of incentive policies and facilitation of affairs to attract domestic and foreign investment in the tourism industry.

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