

## **The Sociological Analysis of Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism on Regional Development**

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### **Abstract**

*The main objective of this study is to evaluate the socio-cultural impacts of tourism on regional development. The statistical population in this study is Rasht citizens which 200 of them selected using simple random sampling technique and Cochran's formula. The findings show that quality of life, public participation increase, lifestyle and cultural integration among the most effective socio-cultural factors of tourism on regional development. As the regression modeling confirmed, cultural integration with 0.46, lifestyle with 0.14, increasing the participation of local people with 0.52 and quality of life with 0.86 are among the most important socio-cultural impacts of tourism on regional development.*

**Keywords:** *Regional development, tourism, socio-cultural factors, quality of life, public participation increase, lifestyle, cultural integration.*

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### **Introduction**

Today, not only tourism is increasingly popular (Ori, 2001: 25), but the scale and scope of tourism has grown (Telfer and Sharpley, 2008: 1). Tourism is described as the peaceful movement of people around the world on cultural boundaries (Let, 1989: 265). In addition to the economic benefits of this industry-denominated, cultural interactions facilitated through cross-cultural communication, cultural patterns and ways of interaction behavioral development needs to be based on peaceful dialogue and in the form of eco-tourism activities also tired of urban life style and living in the lap of natural harbors and a large amount of aggression and excitement of urban environment eliminates false (Ibid, 268).

The main research question is what sociological effects does tourism industry have on the Rasht district development and what obstacles do we face in this process? Obviously, the effects of tourism are created throughout the tourism system. In addition, such works can be both positive and negative. However, usually in the context of tourism destination where tourists and local people make contact, the environment and tourism development occurs. The tourism impact assessment is a useful starting point to consider the destination as a global tourism environment. We mean the construction of the natural environment and human environment. The views considered in this research are of contemporary researches and development related to tourism. The researchers also agree that tourism is a complex industry, growing, dynamic and sometimes volatile and judging its role in the development process is not easy. However, a review of ways to explore the complexity of the relationships that exist between tourism and development emerges. Gilan, having abundant natural resources and eco-tourism, historical and cultural heritage enjoys a high tourism potential. Rasht city as the capital of the province and locating in the north of the country and close to Tehran as the greatest metropolis of the country and the most important tourist center of the transmitter position to attract tourists, and because of the proximity of rainforests and close to the Caspian Sea, Having a temperate climate, attractions, historical, cultural and religious dignitaries and national handicrafts market and has a high ability to attract domestic and foreign tourists, which results in regional development, and provides development at a

national level. According to tourist attractions (economic, natural, historical, social and cultural) of Gilan and influence of the industry on various aspects of social life that promote regional development, this research is executed to recognize the impact of social factors of tourism affecting regional development.

#### **The Importance and Necessity of Subject Matter**

The tourism industry on the one hand can be used as a tool for regional development (with special tourism attractions) and improve the economic situation of local people and works as a resource in order to eliminate poverty (Breindhann and Wickens, 2004). On the other hand, tourism is a smokeless industry (Mowforth and Monte, 2008: 8) that is considered as a bulk of the global economy and one of the world's largest industries (World Tourism Organization, 1999: 21). The tourism industry has a very significant economic role in the development of Gilan province because firstly, Gilan province has many tourist attractions. Secondly, given the high rates of growth and population growth and high demand for young jobseekers, creating new jobs seems necessary. Also the tourism industry is a useful industry and creates jobs in a wide scale. The multiplier effect implies that tourism spending new dollars in the national economy therefore the circulation of the new dollars effects appear multipliable (Azkia, 2009: 19). But what is certain is that the charming and historic area of Gilan region and the investigation area can recognize various aspects of economic and cultural strategies, in order to develop regional knowledge, and sustainable development.

#### **Research Hypotheses**

1. It seems that tourism development has a significant relationship with quality of life of the local community.
2. It seems that tourism development has a significant relationship with the local community in increasing public participation.
3. It seems that tourism development has positive impact on local life style changes.
4. It seems that the tourism development a significant relationship with cultural integration.
5. It seems that the tourism development has a positive direct influence on regional development.

### Socio-cultural aspect of Rasht city in Gilan province



**Fig. 1: Gilan Province**



**Fig. 2: Rasht City**

Gilan province in Iran includes green areas northwest of the western part of Alborz Mountains and southern shores of the Caspian Sea. Gilan natural forest has a temperate climate and mild and humid. The evergreen Gilan is limited by Azerbaijan on the North Sea, south of the Alborz, from East to West and northwest province of Ardebil province. Gilan is associated with the south side by crossing the Alborz, Qazvin, and Zanjan. The province is located at 36 degrees 36 minutes north latitude and 48 degrees 38 degrees 27 minutes and 25 minutes to 50 degrees 34 minutes east of the Greenwich meridian. Gilan province, with an area of 14711 square kilometers is the northernmost province of the country and its capital city is Rasht. Gilan with general scope and humid temperate climate is the moistest area of the southern coast of the Caspian Sea. Factors affecting climate are: height and direction of western Alborz Mountains and Talesh, proximity to the Caspian Sea, air masses moving north and west, the local winds (Garmesh, Manjil wind...) and dense forest cover.

### **Rasht city**

Rasht is one of the metropolitan areas in Iran, the provincial capital of Gilan in northern Iran, and the center of the city of Rasht in Gilan province and parts of neighboring provinces and the metropolis. The metropolis is also the largest and most populous of the three provinces in northern Iran, the Caspian Sea and the largest city to stay Gilak. Caspian Sea is the largest settlement. Rasht is the third largest tourist city in Iran. Apart from the provincial capital Rasht, Gilan, another Rasht exists in Tajikistan, Russia. Rasht has five municipal districts, each of them divided into three zones. According to the Interior Ministry's population and standard of these areas must be increased in urban areas of Rash include:

- District 1 with 124368 inhabitants,
- District 2 with 123599 people,
- District 3 with 126307 people,
- District 4 with 127517 people
- District 5 with 123709 inhabitants (Population and Housing Census, 2010).

In the trenches, Koochesfahan and Khomam have borders with Rasht urban areas, with the ability to incorporate as city of Rasht independent areas such as urban areas Ray and Khorasgan in Tehran and Isfahan.

## **Conceptual Definitions**

### **Regional Development**

- ❖ In the literature on economy, aspects such as growth, wealth creation and employment throughout history exist in the focus of local and regional development. (Armstrong and Taylor, 2000)
- ❖ Achievement and well-being of local and regional sustainable depends on an increase in employment, income and economic production. (Beer et al., 2003)
- ❖ The economic domination in the definition of local and regional development continued until the mid-1990s and was tried gradually to include social concerns, ecological, political and cultural issues in the definition. (Geddes and Newman, 1999)
- ❖ Social inequalities reduction, improves environmental sustainability, promotes and strives for the government to recognize the cultural diversity of society and to some extent in local and regional development was defined. (Hegton and Cancel, 2004)
- ❖ Social and economic arguments move toward regional policy as a way to reduce inequality and improve the efficiency of the national economy and regional development and equitable distribution of their movement. (Armstrong and Taylor, 2000)
- ❖ Local and regional development refers to a set of holistic, progressive and sustainable activities cooperating with the government and civil society institutions in order to improve the health and quality of life for the present and no hazardous locations and regions cast needs of future generations are made. (Pike, 2006)

### **Life style**

Giddens in definition of the concept of lifestyle believes that "life can be a more or less comprehensive set of functions that the individual use because it applies not only in meeting their current needs, but also that they have chosen for their own identity against others, which is coherent. Lifestyle is a set of relatively coherent behaviors and activities of a given person in the course of everyday life (Mackrecher, 2003: 169). Pierre Bourdieu describes lifestyle as means of "tastes or habitus". Habitus is the principle of distinctive behaviors. That is, the set of monism style of choices that people, property and other things rather than specific actions. Sobel describes lifestyle as "the way of life is distinct and recognizable so it". Chani adds this to the above

definition, "the way life should be common among a large number of people. "Several definitions have been provided in the sociology of lifestyles. In general definitions of life style it is described as "a different way of life" and can be divided into two categories: 1. the definition of a lifestyle based on consumption patterns, ranging from objects and behavior (Veblen, Simmel, Sobel, Chani). In this definition, the index is different ways of life of individuals and groups based on "consumption pattern". 2. The definition of life, based on method of organizing life (Up & Crompton, 1993: 45).

### **Development**

The development concept is very complex and "it seems that the definition is elusive" (Cowen & Shanton, 1996: 3). In addition, according to post-school, development is a global concept that during the last half century has failed to achieve its objectives and therefore it must be ruled out (Rahnama & Bowtree, 1997). However, the development has a common use and is a word that either refers to the process the communities pass within or the purpose or result of that process in the community which may lead to the situation or conditions of development. Also, it is a very important term not only in developing countries but for every nation in the world. Formally called developed society that does not mean that the development process or change the nature of the release, but there may be different. In the definition of development must understand that first, we considered the development value category. Secondly, it is a multidimensional and complex process to know, thirdly, to improve communication and closeness with the concept note (Azkia, 2009: 24). Michael Todaro believes that development should be multi-dimensional process that requires fundamental changes in the social structure, attitudes of the public and national institutions, as well as accelerated economic growth, reduce inequalities and eradicate absolute poverty is (Todaro, 1987: 135).

Traditionally, economic development was measured on the basis of criteria such as GNP or GDP measure. In fact, over the decades 1950s and 1960s economic growth and development became synonymous. Furthermore, as Sears (1969) has argued it showed at the beginning, development had no views to improve the distribution of wealth, poverty reduction, employment and other factors such as education,

housing, health care, etc. Thus, the concept of development has been extended and includes at least the five following dimensions (Goulet, 1992):

- Economic dimension: the creation of wealth and equal access to resources;
- Social dimension: improving health, housing, education and employment;
- Political dimension: human rights and the establishment of political systems with appropriate verification;
- Cultural dimension: support or approval of cultural identity and self-esteem;
- Perfect paradigm of life: to protect and strengthen the symbols, beliefs and systems of meaning.

The ecological dimension should be added to these five dimensions which not only picture the emergence of environmental sustainability as a basic parameter in the development of contemporary approaches to the development of sustainable tourism but also the foundation of the concept as well. Therefore, the development of a complex and multidimensional concept which can be as continuous changes and positive economic, social, cultural, political and humanitarian conditions under the guidance of the principles of freedom of choice and define the limits of environmental capacity (Telfer and Sharpley, 2008: 6).

#### **Local and regional development**

About 250 years ago, in the late 19th century the idea of "development" as boosting per capita income came into social sciences and is a relatively new phenomenon in human history (Safer and Dates, 2004). In the 1940s, international institutions established after World War II and followed the policy of "development-oriented" in 1970s. Modern and progressive interpretations of "development" as an intellectual and social intervention to improve the human condition shaped in this period (Pitt, 2002). During this period, important questions largely focused on the development of Third World countries, and inflation annoying poor countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America (Scott & Stourper, 2003). Local and regional development almost entirely through national policies and purposes took place from top to bottom to create growth and redistribute



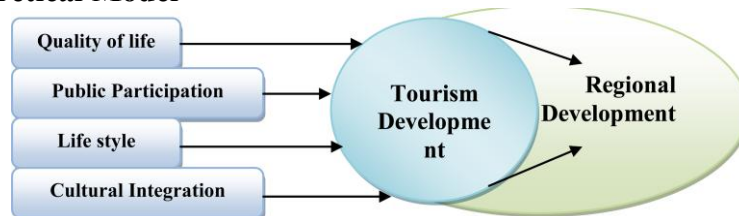
income among regions and backward areas will. The environmental impact and sustainability of development in this period was not considered. In this period it seemed important differences among regions and countries in terms of development. Economic and social arguments move their distribution for the policy area as a way to reduce inequality and improve the efficiency of the national economy and regional development of regions (Armstrong & Taylor, 2000). "First wave" of regionalism, particularly in Western Europe, emerged in political demands and grievances related to development levels within the structures of national government gave autonomy. The second wave of regionalism or "new" emphasis on the development and review of national development with a focus on political and social desires and wishes for himself also emerged (Keating, 1998). In the space and context of the Cold War and the "velvet revolution" in Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, a "third wave" in the 1990s and in the wake of dissatisfaction with the results of the trial uneven development of market-based programs of the 1980s and unwanted results began after the war (Giddens, 1998).

**Table (1): Top-down and bottom-up approaches to local and regional development**

Traditional development	Local and regional development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ top-down approach where the decision about the areas of national centers is done by planners</li> <li>✓ centers and the National Management Server</li> <li>✓ Take part in the development of (certain sectors, for example, the development of industry-heavy)</li> <li>✓ large industrial projects are looking at the effect of other economic activity strengthened</li> <li>✓ Fiscal stimulus packages and subsidies, the trend of economic activity are major factors.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Promote the development of all regions (developed and undeveloped) is often bottom-up initiatives undertaken in the area or place</li> <li>✓ of decentralized management and the public sector, private, local and regional cooperation</li> <li>✓ regional approach to development (the context of)</li> <li>✓ The potential of each region to make more consistent use of the local economy with the changing economic environment.</li> <li>✓ Provides the basic conditions for the development of economic activity.</li> </ul>

Source: (Pike et al., 2006: 17).

**Theoretical Model**



### **Research Background**

- Hashemnezhad, F. (2014) in his doctoral thesis entitled "Sociological Study of Domestic and multiple structures lay in Sari" came to the conclusion that the appropriate and expected factors such as mental picture of Sari as the destination Tourism, coordination between economic entities, social, cultural and political, the different structure of the welfare impact on tourism development.
- Salehi et. al (2012) in his study of coastal tourism and environmental protection, coastal tourism in the province's environmental behaviors studied. Using the survey, 330 questionnaires were distributed randomly between coastal tourism provinces. The results showed that coastal tourism that is more environmentally friendly attitude, show more environmental behaviors. Also, behaviors, environmental concerns and opportunities related to tourism environment, and on the other hand the concerns, values and environmental knowledge environmental attitude are associated with.
- Hafiz Zadeh and Daraee (2011) in a study entitled The role of urban tourism in the sustainable development of the island to the conclusion that to achieve sustainable development through the promotion, facilities, accommodation, facilities and services of modern and traditional markets, restoration of monuments and training of human resources can be achieved.
- Miller et. al. (2010) examined the public's understanding of the concept of sustainable tourism in England. Qualitative approach was used, and the group discussion that 14 people were present. The results showed that low awareness on environmental issues and misconceptions about warming and climate change existed, but their level of concern about the pollution caused by the tourism high (Miler, 2010).
- Yuzama (2008) with the presentation of a scientific article showed that tourism development at all levels, including the dimensions of individual, direct investments, the orientation of technological progress and structural and institutional changes that the present and future needs consistent tourists and the tourist attractions can be effective in tourism development (Yuzama, 2008).

**Research Method**

The method is survey with the technique of a researcher-made questionnaire. The statistical population in this study is citizens of Rasht which using a random sampling technique and Cochran's formula 200 individuals are selected. The internal consistency of the questionnaire is calculated by Cronbach's alpha and the alpha coefficient is calculated to 0. 74.

**Research findings**

**Hypothesis 1:** it seems that tourism development has a significant relationship with quality of life of the local community.

According to the tourism development and quality of life variables which are ordinal a Spearman correlation coefficient test can be used.

**Table (2): The theoretical framework derived from theoretical concepts on tourism and regional development**

Theory	Scholar	theory summary	variables	Measuring scale
Tourism as a modern form of leisure	Damazdear (1973) Pierce (1982) Nash (1981) Cohen (1979)	Tourism as a form of leisure and entertainment tourism know their meaning.	Change lifestyle	Ordinal
Tourism as part of culture	Gottlieb (1982) Grabrn (1983)	This view is now trying to understand the symbolic meaning and cultural tourism. And the basis of their work in terms of their attitudes and image are tourists.	Change personal relationships	Ordinal
Tourism as a factor in acculturation	Burns (1985) Tefler and Sharpley (2008)	This approach focuses on the effects of tourism on their hosts.	Cultural integration (Relations between host and guest) arrangements	Ordinal

Source: Research Findings

**Table (3): Spearman correlation coefficient between the tourism industry and quality of life**

Correlations			quality of life	tourism industry
Spearman's rho	tourism industry	Correlation Coefficient	1. 000	. 362
		Sig. (2-tailed)		. 043
		N	200	200
	quality of life	Correlation Coefficient	. 362	1. 000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	. 043	
		N	200	200

Source: Research Findings

**Table (4): significance level of the correlation between the tourism industry and quality of life**

Variables	N	correlation coefficient	significance level
Tourism development and quality of life	200	. 362	. 043

Source: Research Findings

According to Table 4, the correlation between tourism development and quality of life variables is equal to 0. 362 which indicates

relatively strong and direct relationship. This means that the increase (or decrease) in the amount of tourism development results in the quality of life increase (or decrease). Given the significance level of this relationship that is equal to 0.043 and smaller than 0.05, therefore null hypothesis is rejected and the hypothesis is confirmed. This means that there is a significant relationship between tourism development and quality of life.

**Hypothesis 2:** It seems that tourism development has a significant relationship with public participation in local community.

According to the tourism development and quality of life variables which are ordinal a Spearman correlation coefficient test can be used.

**Table (5): Spearman correlation coefficient between the tourism industry and public participation**

Correlations			public participation	tourism industry
Spearman's rho	tourism industry	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.278
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.037
		N	200	200
	public participation	Correlation Coefficient	.278	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	.
		N	200	200

Source: Research Findings

**Table (6): significance level of the correlation between the tourism industry and public participation**

Variables	N	correlation coefficient	significance level
Tourism development and quality of life	200	.278	.037

Source: Research Findings

According to Table 6, the correlation between tourism development and public participation variables is equal to 0.278 which indicates direct relationship. This means that the increase (or decrease) in the amount of tourism development results in the public participation increase (or decrease). Given the significance level of this relationship that is equal to 0.037 and smaller than 0.05, therefore null hypothesis is rejected and the hypothesis is confirmed. This means that there is a significant relationship between tourism development and public participation in local community.

**Hypothesis 3:** It seems that tourism development has positive impact on local life style changes.

According to the tourism development and life style changes variables which are ordinal and nominal a Chi-square test and likelihood ratio of the correlation coefficient test can be used.

Table (7): Chi-square test to measure the impact of tourism on lifestyle changes

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	68.115	4	.000
Continuity Correction	51.417	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	54.226	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	52.108	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Source: Research Findings

According to the results of the chi-square test, the chi-square is 68.115 with 4 degrees of freedom. With 95% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected canceled and research hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, the tourism industry has a positive impact on lifestyle changes.

**Hypothesis 4:** It seems that the tourism development a significant relationship with cultural integration.

According to the tourism development and cultural integration variables which are ordinal and nominal a Chi-square test and likelihood ratio of the correlation coefficient test can be used.

Table (8): Chi-square test to measure the impact of tourism on cultural integration

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	52.257	4	.000
Continuity Correction	50.216	4	.000
Likelihood Ratio	58.617	4	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	51.207	4	.000
N of Valid Cases	200		

Source: Research Findings

According to the results of the chi-square test, the chi-square is 52.257 with 4 degrees of freedom. With 95% level of significance the null hypothesis is rejected canceled and research hypothesis is confirmed. In other words, the tourism industry has a positive impact on cultural integration.

**Hypothesis 5:** It seems that the tourism development has a positive direct influence on regional development.

Table (9): The variables included in the regression models and methods

model	The variables included in the regression models	method
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cultural integration</li> <li>- Lifestyle</li> <li>- Increasing the participation of local people</li> <li>- Quality of life</li> </ul>	Enter

Source: Research Findings

According to Table 9, all variables in the model as well as the method of regression model (Enter) are provided. In this way all variables are

in the model. The method used in the analysis of all the data is enter method. In other words, it indicates the researcher's method of all possible regressions.

**Table (10): The coefficient of determination fit**

model	Correlation Coefficient	coefficient of determination	adjusted coefficient of determination	standard error of estimate
1	0.43	0.184	0.215	0.7008593

Source: Research Findings

According to Table 10, the correlation coefficient of all the variables is 0.43 and adjusted coefficient which is the square of it is equal to 0.184 and the coefficient of determination and adjusted coefficient of determination is 0.215. In other words, in modified state of 0.21 percent of the regional development variance is predicted by these variables.

**Table (11): Analysis of variance**

Sig.	F	MS	df	SS	Correlation
0.000	12.753	1.709	26	47.045	Regression
		0.134	173	23.154	Residual
			199	72.216	Total

Source: Research Findings

Table 11 shows the regression analysis of variance where the sum of squares, mean squares, degrees of freedom, the amount F (12.753) as well as the significance level (0.000) of data is shown. Due to achieving a significantly lower level of 0.05 therefore, a significant regression model can be deduced.

**Table (12): Regression model coefficients**

Model	Un-standard Coefficients		Standard Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Standard error	Beta		
Cultural integration	0.341	0.042	0.465	5.029	0.032
Lifestyle	0.962	0.033	0.149	7.268	0.027
Increasing the participation of local people	0.0687	0.408	0.528	9.463	0.002
Quality of life	0.452	0.004	0.227	0.865	0.044

Source: Research Findings

Table 12 shows the regression coefficients. For example, the regression coefficient for the variable Cultural integration is 0.341, standard error is 0.042 and standard coefficient is 0.465. Given that the t-statistic is 5.029 and achieved significance level (0.032) is less than 0.05 therefore it can be a significant variable factor and its impact on tourism development variable is confirmed. For all other variables the result is the same. The results of the regression analysis, the variables in the equation can be found as standard in the following mathematical relationship:

$$Y = \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \varepsilon$$

This means:

Tourism development = (0. 46) Cultural integration +  
(0. 14) Lifestyle +  
(0. 52) Increasing the participation of local people +  
(0. 22) Quality of life +  $\varepsilon$

### **Conclusion**

The most logical reason in choosing tourism as a development strategy is the potential contribution of tourism to the local economy. However, tourism can be an important source of income transfer and social relations, as well as more tourism model's use industries to capital-intensive; resulting in the industry operating in the city of Rasht which includes a major job creation. Beyond economic stimulus, some of the reasons for choosing tourism as a development strategy of Rasht region include:

Tourism use free natural infrastructure, often based on natural and man-made attractions such as natural areas and heritage sites (historical), including Saravan forest park, houses a Mirza Kouchak Khan, treasure museum of Rasht and rural heritage Museum. Therefore marine tourism in historical, nature, urban areas of Rasht given the above factors provides a platform for development in the region. As a wider knowledge of the process of tourism development has been achieved, a broader approach to tourism development has also been created that tries to encompass the principles and objectives of sustainable development and finally a sustainable approach as "new tourism" is introduced. Subsequently the sustainable tourism development has requirements especially the requirements to adopt a new social model of tourism consumption and the emergence of global political and economic system with more equitable development and use of resources.

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