THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT (RANDOM SAMPLE: SAREIN)

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ABSTRACT:

Tourism industry as an influential section in developing countries has always been one of the dominant bases in sustainable urban development. Sustainable development needs programming, management, and exploitation of resources. One of the important fields with respect to its potential of history, culture, and environment that can have vital role in national development is tourism. Sarein is located in west part of Ardabil which is a virgin nature away from the hustle and bustle of crowded cities and can turn into one of the main tourist hubs in virtue of environmental and natural characteristics as well as cultural and human attractions. From a systematic point of view, one of the notable features of this origin can be the minimal amount of time of 15 min to 1 hour needed to visit all tourist and ecotourism attractions which is unparalleled all over the world. These attractions include hot spas (more than 60 with different remedial traits), ski slopes, volcanic landscapes, forestall views, mountainous climate, and cultural relics and so forth. This work considers the ways of exploiting existent potentials as well as taking advantage of library studies and historical records and random sample of Sarein with the aim of introducing some suitable guidelines considering ecotourism and historical and cultural attractions of this city which will correspond with sustainable urban development. The outcomes can appear as groundwork for sustainable urban development in huge policy-makings of society, ministry of road, urbanism, cultural heritage organization and tourism, municipality, educational groups and so on.

KEYWORDS:

Tourism, Sustainable Development, City, Sarein

INTRODUCTION

However, urban milieus especially metropolises with some problems such as pollution, traffic, crime, felony and etc drive people away, they are manifestation of civilization, culture and society administration which are inseparable features of tourism and sometimes bear the most valuable resources of tourism (parks, sightseeing, rivers, monuments and so on) that appeals to people and attracts them. On the other hand in mechanical life in 21century with increasing tendency for technology and mechanization in social life and invention prevalence that gets people to rely on society as an axis of change the need for tourism section is widely felt [1].

In this era, importance of tourism mostly depends on economic cycle which has a massive potential in local and international mobility so that tourism consumerism, personal and governmental investments as well as exports in tourism industry in 2004 has shown a growth up to %5.9 which is 5.5 trillion dollars [2].

This important question is always asked that why tourism is called tourist industry?

The answer to this question is hidden in the fact that tourism acts essentially as export, which means Tourism industry plays a significant role in increasing society employment rate and money cycle, as well as expansion of transportation industry and other infrastructures, promotion of scientific and communications level, extension in perspectives, decreasing economic inequalities, creating common interests, familiarizing with culture and history and other nations and its positive

that exporting goods or services yields money at destination and brings it back to the origin. Tourism

as well Remarks exactly on earning such money,

even without exporting goods or services. With that

in mind, they have treated tourism as an export

system but the most important factor in tourism is in

its added value. It is obvious that considerable added

value accumulates in light of investments with no

expense and in tourism format which is in fact

caused by non-economic behavior along with high

economic benefits. Meanwhile, with entered capital

a part of purchase power in origin is transferred into

destination account which increases mobility in

production, stirs employment, heightens national

money power and so forth. Considering that, they

have introduced terms like income multiplier and

employment multiplier [3].

impacts can be introduced in numerous aspects [4].

From tourism point of view, Iran has variety of climates and seasons and is comparable with



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developed countries in case of having mountains, sightseeing, and entertainment locations. Iran possesses plains, mountains, deserts, caves, lakes, waterfalls, museums, monuments and ancient sites, traditional workshops, excellent handicrafts, and many other factors which causes tourism industry to prosper and from this point of view is one of the few countries that can progress both fiscally and spiritually in virtue of efficient management of aforementioned sources and amenities [4].

However Iran is a region with four seasons and thousands of years of civilization that holds several attractions which are historically, culturally and religiously unique and for this reason, it is one of the top ten countries, in global ranking, that possesses tourist attractions it fails to reach its real position in the world. Table 1 shows the level of increase in growth rate of tourist arrivals in country pre revolutionary, post revolutionary, and during the imposed war, and during first, second, and third economic-social-cultural development programs of Islamic republic of Iran. The level of growth rate of tourist arrivals in pre-revolutionary period was about %15.43. upheavals such as Islamic revolution, government debacle, political conundrums in the region, war between Iran and Iraq tended to decrease the growth rate of tourist arrivals sharply to % -9.18 during 1979-1988.with termination of war and at the beginning of first socioeconomic development programs (1989-1994) the amount of tourist arrivals increased in average to up to %28.83 each year and with little change, it has been %29.81 of increase every year during the development program (1995-1999).

This percent has systematically decreased to %4.74 in every year in average in comparison to first and second development programs [5].

Table 1: the average growth of tourists arrivals in Iran

[D]	
Pre-revolutionary (1959-1978)	15.43%
Post revolutionary & during the war (1979-1988)	-9.18%
First development program (1989-1994)	28.83%
Second development program (1995-1999)	29.81%
Third development program (2000-2004)	4.74%

Ardabil province with various features is one of the important provinces with regard to tourist attraction. it is transformed into one of tourist hubs not only throughout the province but also in country in light of beautiful natural sightseeing, clean air, mineral spas, with remedial traits, handicrafts, historical hills, temperate climate during hot seasons of year and mountainous climate, also being located on the slopes of Sabalan mountain which is one of the components for winter tourist as well as being placed by the side of the transit route and roads of province which attracts about 3.5 millions of people to come and visit Sarein. Once considered as a village till 1986, Sarein has advanced to a city today



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with reliance on tourism industry. According to the conference held in tourism organization on April of 2006, Sarein was selected as one of the top seven tourist hubs [6].

According to this fact, it seems necessary to introduce historical, cultural, artistic city attractions, which is important although once used to be considered as debrises and worthless relics.

Presentation of the discussion

Sustainable development is considered as one the development strategies. In this strategy, presented necessity to attract tourists and increase income and practical use of tourist and ecotourism, have been discussed. In this regard, studied region has shown a potential for tourist attraction; notwithstanding potential capabilities no optimal exploitation has been implemented with regard to sustainable urban development. Hence, the main question and operational inclination of this study is investigation in tourism and ecotourism, and functional challenges in the field of study (Sarein and villages in vicinity).

Purposes of the study

The main goal of this study is to know tourism potentials of Sarein in Ardabil province a well as following secondary goals.

- Identifying Sarein region as an important axis of tourism in Ardabil province.
- Study of communicational elements as well as natural and man-made phenomena as a source of attraction for tourism in the region.
- Exact planning for tourism development and suitable use of them to solve socioeconomic problems in the region.

The critical bases

The term "tourist" (traveler) was commonly used since 19 century. In that period, France gentlemen had to go on trips to accomplish their studies and acquire necessary experiences. These young people used to be called tourists and this term was used for those who traveled to France for the sake of entertainment and pleasure and then with some expansion was utilized for those who only traveled for such purposes. Little by little the word "tourist" incorporated into other languages and thereby the term "tourist" was developed [7].

Tourism is defined as activity or activities, that people do for relaxation or vocation or avocation or for other reasons, off the beaten track, and stay there for at least one night and at most one year. Right now with increasing city-dwelling, almost half of the population of the world and more than three-quarters of the population of high-income countries live in cities. On the other hand, city management and level of urbanization and considerable tendency to join global industrialization and economic growth are some of the noticeable changes and challenges faced with, in 21 century [8].

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Tourism includes activities that tourist does for personal and vocational reasons and out of his living or working place and does not last more than one year and the purpose is to have fun, relax, do sport, and such things [9].

Tourism types

- Recreational tourism; the most common tourism.
- Medical tourism: with taking advantage of mineral spas or for using diagnostic and remedial facilities in countries with such capacity.
- Religious tourism: pilgrimage; hajj; religious trip of Buddhist and the Hindu and etc.
- Market tourism: tour with secondary aim for buying and selling goods.
- Conference tourism: to take part in conferences and to visit sites.
- Electronic tourism: which is E-tourism and includes information mostly related to figurative life
 - Ecotourism: tour in nature
- Sport tourism: in order to do a special sport or international matches [10].

Today, necessity of special focus on tour and tourism as a new phenomenon in mechanical style of life in 21century is highly valued and day by day its importance is increasing because cities have been encountered with many problems at the expense of the process of technology growth and mechanical style of life and invention and discoveries expansion which have mankind to depend upon cities as an axis of change.

Sustainable urban development

Sustainable urban development is defined as tourism industry development and attracting tourists to sites using available sources in a way to meet legal, economic, cultural needs of society as well as to provide unity, cultural identity, environmental health and economic balance between destination and guests to an optimal degree [11].

Regional environmental strategy in sustainable urban development

Regional environment is equivalent to living environment which is a distinguishable geographical area that includes linked and self-retaining living systems (in term of natural reproduction) and as a result there is an organic connection between members of the region. in this regard, criteria such as catchment area, dispersion of living species, aboriginal culture, are applied for delineation in order to identify the main corresponding boundaries between societies and nature.

Since mid nineteen century and along with the oppositions that raises against common development strategies, a new philosophy with the title of regional environment gradually developed mainly in North America that concept of development in regional area had a considerable role

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in it. This philosophy has compiled harmonic components of beliefs and different thoughts in different social, cultural, economic, and ecology fields and developed a strategy for creating regional environment. To investigate the theories of regional environment it seems to be necessary to consider a special concept of society in which residents play a main role. To realize the strategic role following points needs to be considered:

- Paying social attention to development namely people
- Paying attention to the geography of behavioral and environmental concept. Developing mutual relation as well as balanced an equal relation between nature, mankind and society to acquire more power to lead mankind to his intimate atmosphere.
- Economically, global trade is indicative of no relation between mankind progress and current form of economic growth. Hence, it is necessary discard anti-social features and instead let ethical and cultural criteria of society to lead the economic agents.
- In connection with environmental life, common development strategies have had a worrisome performance. There is a long list of increasing destructive behavior.

Ecologic relations in development sketch have been disregarded because of following absolute economic growth and have had an irreparable negative impact on environment and natural resources. Therefore, instead of the recent development there is a need for sustainable development [12].

Some outlines about sarein tourist town

Sarein city is located in 48.04 degrees longitude and 38.9 degrees latitude with the area of over 128000 square meters in Ardabil province [13]. It is 28 km far from the west part of Ardabil and is at the north east of Sabalan hillside. Historical Relics and rock architecture in city and vicinity indicates the importance of the city over the years. Nonetheless, city's recent fame is in light of more than 12 different spas and various accommodations. Sarein in Persian dictionary means spring [14]. Sarein tourist city is attractive for tourists in the summer for possessing various spas which most of them have remedial usages and also for unique climate which has increased the number of tourists up to 30 thousand and even in holidays and favorable weather it rises up to 100000 [15].

Climate is considered as one of the important structural factors for tourism. And entertainment and tourist centers in past and even in present are indebted to different factors especially to climate. Pleasant and temperate climate is the first attraction that a tourist benefits before and after entering the city and is the main reason for tourists' presence in the city. It is noticeable about Sarein's climate that whenever temperature partially increases, foggy

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weather of Caspian Ocean enters Ardabil (and Sarein). Because of presence of Sabalan mount temperature falls sharply [13].

The average height of Sarein city above sea level is 1650 meter. Most part of the city is located in a bowl-shape valley extended from mild slopes of Sabalan mountain's hillsides. According to cushion classification, Ardabil city has four Mediterranean, warm and temperate, mountainous, cold and temperate climate. Ardabil has four regular seasons in virtue of Sabalan mount and its impact on climate, each having special features and also compared to most of the regions of Iran it has many climate attractions, geographically, Sarein leads to Sabalan namely Baba Maghsood mount with the height of 3801 meters and Aighar mount 3120 m, GharaBurun 3500 m, TakaleDaghi 3780 m, and so on .it also in north and north west leads to other popular mountains like Sabalan mount with a height of 4811 m, which every one of these mountains has its own attraction in every season. Local foods include Ashe dough, Sajichi, Boz Bash, and CalleJush and etc.

Exhibited handicrafts are products of rural people, nomadic tribes, and also artists of this city which popular ones can be Gilim, Verni, Jajim, Khurjin, local woolen socks and Namad. Honey is the most popular product and souvenir from Sabalan vicinity and Ardabil province. Hillsides and foothills in Sabalan vicinity have considerable potential for honey production and bee-keeping in light of plant diversity and climate conditions. The language that Sarein people talk to is Azarbaijanian Turkish. To study culture and art of Sarein people first we need to discuss culture and art of Azarbaijan people, in particular, Ardabil people. Azarbaijan people that include Ardabil and Sarein people are creators of one of richest verbal literature treasures in both Middle East and Iran. One who has visited this region is fascinated by its folklore [16]. Travel and access to Sarein is possible by bituminous road and air from the center of the province.



Figure1: Map of position of sarein in Iran [14].

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Volcanic Mountain -Savalan- one of the most beautiful and unparalleled mounts with a lake on its crater is one of the natural, cultural, and sport attractions which attract many fans from all over the world every year. In term of possessing many attractions Sabalan is one of the unique sites in Iran in field of mountain sports especially in field of ski and rock climbing, hiking, and mountain climbing. Alvars ski slope, one of the most equipped ski slopes, is one of the regions that welcome tourists in both summer and winter [16].

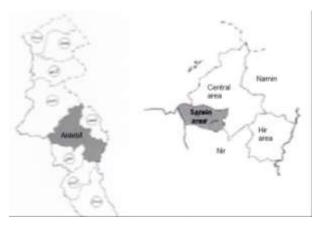


Figure 2: the position of sarein in Ardebil province [14].



Figure 3: the position of Sarein in Ardebil province [14].



Figure 4: Sarein city on bing map [17].

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Tourist attractions of the studied region are worth considering in some aspects compared correspondingly to those of other regions. This region is located in North West of the biggest lake (Caspian Ocean) in a very close distance, there are two mountainous and sea climate which as a result creates mountainous, forestall and sea landscapes. Being neighbor with Azarbaijan has multiplied the importance of this region. It is comparable to Switzerland and Sweden in term of having natural sightseeing and natural morphology dominant in the area. Because of presence of Sabalan volcanic mount in the region it has 60 mineral spas with remedial features and welfare facilities for tourists and from this point of view it is comparable to Luberon, France located in Santluier. With regard to its vegetation it can be compared to land of flowers in Netherlands. Importance of Tourism in this region is sizable when compared correspondingly to other regions in which it takes only 15 min. to 1 hour to visit and go sightseeing and utilize ecotourism and tourist potentials namely spas, ski slopes, volcanic landscapes, mountainous and for estall sight seeings [18].



Figure 4: The map of ways and availabilities in Ardebil province [19]



Figure 5: tourism map of Sarein city [17]



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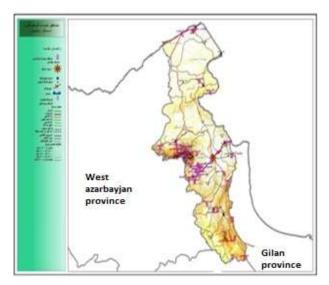
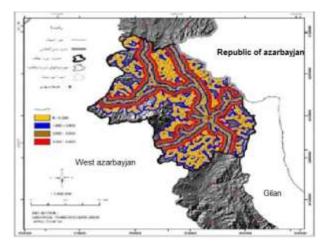


Figure 6: the position of tourism unique locations in Ardebil province [14].



Fifigure7: Distance from communication roads in vicinity ofmentioned region [20].

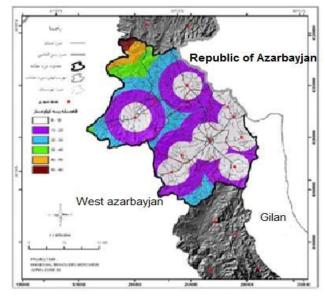


Figure8: distance from urban centers in vicinity of mentioned region [20].

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Main spas and tourist attractions in Sarein city are

as follows [14]:

Sabalan spa complex Anahita ancient hill BeshBajilar spa Alvars ski slope General spa Kanzag rocky village

Gavmishgoli spa Bile darag summer village

Shafa spa Viand rocky village Sari su spa Kalkhuran

Garasu spa Seiied Abolgasem shrine

Gahvekhane 1 spa Gara Dash Gahvekhane 2 spa Azarfarig alter

Pehenlu spa [18].

Sarein potential for different tourist functions

According to accomplished studies, following reasons and components can be introduced as potentials of the studied region for programming sustainable development with the emphasis on tourism industry:

- In virtue of bituminous roads it is easy to have access to city centers in vicinity, especially to Ardabil. In addition, studied region has access to airlines via Ardabil airport.
- Geographically, studied region is the center of the province and is linked to Gilan tourist city via Heir an beautiful bypass and Asalem with a morphology of jungle and grassland and Talesh beautiful sea sides and to east Azarbaijan via Tabriz and Sarab route with high traffic volume after passing Sarein by pass and Sarab grasslands, and to

Azarbaijan via Bilesavar customs (160 km) and Astaracustoms (100 km) and to Zanjan via Tehran-Ardabil highway.

- Considering studied region as a tourist hub with high unique potential for tourist and ecotourism.
- Possessing largest and the most diverse spas and cold springs and also remedial-sportive capabilities and related facilities as a main tourist attraction.
- Cold climate (cold and semi-arid) provides a favorable condition for development and progress of tourism in both winter and summer.
- Various landscapes namely mountains, glaciers, grasslands, waterfalls, and animals' biodiversity.
- Possessing cultural, historical and ancient relics as wide as 60 km, promotes the condition for upgrading level of resorts.
- Possessing grasslands with different degrees of value and prepaired conditions for nomadic life and sheep handling, provides the condition for nomadic tourism.
- Possessing handicrafts and traditional works in the studied region as well as agricultural products with various kinds of foods.
- Having religious position in the region, can be another attraction in programming for sustainable development.

Table 2: presentation of results using SWOT model to improve and reinforce tourism industry in the studied region		
Strengths	Accommodation-Ardabil airport-reception facilities-mosques-natural waterfalls of Bile Daragh- historical places like historical hill of Shahr-SeiiedAbolghasem shrine-mineral spas-natural attractions-unique handicrafts-varieties of souvenirs-cultural attractions like rituals and feasts and various receptions-honey and dairy with high quality	
Weaknesses	shortage of parking lots-traffic in tourist sites-lack of public transportation for tourists-shortage of car agencies-lack of international flights-lack of tour leader with mastery in English-lack of advertisement throughout the world-inconsistency between region culture and tourists culturs-lack of cooperation of different organizations for improving tourism condition-lack of special tours for people in different age ranges for example mountain climbing, hunting, rock climbing for young people, and hiking for old people-lack of market for Islamic tourism-lack or shortage of efficient management of city-lack of constant exhibits for goods even in holidays-cold climate of the region especially in fall and winter-lack of monuments in Sarein city.	
Opportunities	Taking advantage of nature-market of Islamic tourism-holding exhibitions-especial tours for different people-efficient management-holding conferences-especial tours for spas-micro and huge investments in line with tourism goals-expansion of different sports according to the region climate and establishment of ski slopes-establishment of chairlifts-the possibility of visiting different tourist landscapes in different dimensions of tourism components in 15 min to 1 hour.	
Threats	Rush hours-destruction of monuments-cultural invasion-discouragement of tourism section in sustainable development-seasonal tourism.	

CONCLUSION

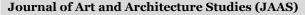
Standards and strategies for sustainable development needs to be accomplished by scientifically identifying potentials and barricades and also by reconstruction of regions systematically from regional point of view (rural-urban). Sarein

region and villages in vicinity is embedded a combination of man-made and natural attractions. One of the main features of this combination from a systematic point of view is that you can visit all tourist and ecotourism attractions in 15 min to 1 hour which is unique in the world.



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These tourist attractions and centers are namely spas (more than 60 spas with various remedial features, ski slopes, volcanic landscapes, volcanic lakes, jungles, mountainous climate, cultural relics and etc.

To reach such an important goal, some aspects such as structure of status co tourist patterns, tourists' satisfactions, and economic impact of tourism were studied in Sarein region. Results show despite high tourism potentials and meaningfulness of the impact of tourism activity on positive economic changes in the region there is a low satisfaction with regard to infrastructural services and facilities. The more educated tourists the less satisfaction. This situation shows that a promotion in tourism elements seems necessary for programming sustainable development reconstruction of studied region. In this regard, strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats were discussed by swat method and necessary strategies and recommendations were presented.

Recommendations and operational strategies

- Establishing and implementing electronic tourism in the studied region nationally and internationally.
- Increasing the capacity of accommodations, reception units, and standardizing them in global scale.
- Upgrading and modernizing of tourism facilities especially sanitizing spas.
- Establishment of entertainment parks in the studied region.
- Planning and implementing of winter tourism like ski.
- Creating sewer system and conducting surface waters via channels.
- Increasing employment opportunities, that completes tourism activities such as handicrafts, honey, dairy, carpet and so on.
- Educating personnel of inns, hotels, villas, spa centers, business centers, to observe health patterns and learn how to treat a tourist.
- Notifying potentials in the region for domestic or international investments.
- Holding festivals with regard to tourism components in the region.
- Getting familiar with nomadic culture and provision of possibility of visiting and tourism reception in nomadic tents.
- Providing condition for attracting people association in all cultural, social, regional-environmental, and management aspects.

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