

A Comparative Study of Tourism Development Policies with Emphasis on Social Relations Between Host and Guest .Case study: Iran and Turkey

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ABSTRACT:

The development of appropriate socio-cultural contexts between host and guest communities is undeniably necessary for the development of the tourism industry. The most significant necessity of the present research includes the economic conditions of Iran and its fundamental need to create employment, on the one hand, and the relatively successful experiences of Turkey in the development and planning of tourism, on the other hand. The main objectives and axes of the present research include the comparative study of tourism development policies in Iran and Turkey, the evaluation and analysis of social relations between the host and guest community, and its impact on tourism relations in the country. The documentary and field research method has been used to achieve the objectives of this research, and eight important and effective factors have been identified based on the opinion of experts as the components of the evaluation of social relations between host and guest communities. The results of the present study indicate that the reasons for Turkey's successful experience in the field of tourism are as follows. These reasons include institutionalizing an appropriate conceptual framework of the tourism industry, providing an appropriate image of host communities to tourists, increasing social capacities of hospitality among them, using local culture potentials to increase tourist attractions, adopting effective advertising strategies, concluding independent contracts of the Ministry of Tourism with tour wholesalers, holding special cultural celebrations of international festivals. The findings of the research on Iran indicate that despite its privileged position in the global tourism map, Iran has a very small share of global tourism markets, which is mainly rooted in various social and cultural challenges. Iran can take the step as one of the attractive destinations in the region, with appropriate and purposeful policies for the development of tourism and reflection on the experiences of countries such as Turkey.

KEYWORDS: *Tourism development, Comparative study, Cultural and social factors, Iran, Turkey*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Various studies have reported that tourism can positively empower the living standards of residents by increasing income, creating new job opportunities, improving local infrastructure, enhancing the possibility of having access to recreational facilities, and promoting local identity, and so on. Tourism also has the potential to have a negative impact by increasing the cost of living, minor crimes, overcrowding, high volume of traffic, and alteration of the ecosystem (Choi and Sirakaya, 2006; Andereck et al., 2005; Gursoy Rutherford, 2004; Sheldon and Abenoja, 2001; Besculides et al. 2002).

Iran and Turkey are considered among the most attractive countries in the world due to their unique geographical and cultural features. According to the official statistics published by the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2014), in 2002, this country was ranked 17th in the world in terms of attracting 13.2 million foreign tourists, which in 2013 increased almost three times and reached 33.827 million and its rank improved to 6th in the world (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2014). While Iran attracted about 1.6 million foreign tourists during 2002, which reached 4.5 million in 2013, of course, according to the Tourism Organization, the real number of foreign tourists is about 1.5 to 2 million people (Official Portal of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization, 2014). In terms of International Tourism Receipts, Turkey also with its 11.9 billion dollars' receipts in 2002 and rank of 12th, reached the 9th rank with 25.322 billion dollars' receipts in 2013 (Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism 2014), but according to the statistics, Iran's tourism receipts were about 792 billion dollars in 2002, which reached about 7.2 billion dollars in 2010 (Blanke and Chiesa, 2013).

Proper social communication is the prerequisite for the stability and development of tourism. This connection with communities will lead to cultural exchange. Hospitality, like all human emotions, can be beneficial in attracting foreign tourists. In the best condition, if the host community does not welcome tourists

and does not feel comfortable with the guests, tourism development programs will not be successful. Accordingly, the required arrangements must be made to attract the attention of residents, so that it can be said that meeting the environmental and social demands of the tourist is as significant as obtaining their satisfaction (Lumsden, 2001). The new form of the tourism industry, especially in developing countries, should always be studied and analyzed along with concepts such as globalization, sustainability, the new international division of labor (NIDL), political and social economics in a logical context (Mowforth and Munt, 1998: 322). This study is aimed to investigate and compare the manner and the extent of the socio-cultural orientation and support policies of the host from the guest, as well as to compare the behavior of the guest at the destination in the development of tourism in Iran and Turkey. One of the advantages of comparative study is reaching new ideas while conducting the research. The reason to choose Turkey for this study is having a cultural and ethnic background (for example, the life of different ethnic groups alongside each other in different languages, common Islamic values, etc.) and also the appropriate position of this country in the region and the world in terms of economic dimensions of tourism. According to the World Tourism Organization, currently, the net income from the global tourism industry in 2012 was about 75.10 billion dollars, which indicates 33 billion dollars' growth compared to 2011, and it had a 4% increase, but the growth rate in attracting foreign tourists to Turkey has exceeded 8% (United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO; 2013). In the present study, after the examination of the general policies adopted by Iran and Turkey, its real and perceived effects on the host and guest community have been studied and analyzed. The most significant questions of the present study are as follows: What are the most substantial socio-cultural components of tourism development in Turkey and Iran? What are the most important successful components of socio-cultural policies for the development of tourism in Turkey, and which one of its dimensions can be appropriate and efficient in the development of tourism in Iran?

According to the mentioned above issues, this research will pursue the following objectives:

- 1- The study and analysis of social relations between the host and guest community (Iran and Turkey)
- 2- Investigation of its effects on tourism development in these countries
- 3- Examination of the relationship between the recommended socio-cultural components of the research with the social relationship between the host and guest community

Theoretical foundations of the research

According to the objectives of this study, tourism is defined as follows: the phenomena and relationships resulting from the interaction of tourists, suppliers, and sellers of tourism products, host governments, and communities in the process of attracting and hosting these tourists and other visitors (McIntosh and Goeldne, 1990: 4). The development of tourism, especially in less developed countries, is an effective factor in dealing with poverty and leads to the enhancement of incomes of various groups, reduction of unemployment and economic prosperity, and thus improvement of the quality of life of people and social welfare. Of course, the significance and economic role of tourism should not lead to neglect its other dimensions, especially the cultural dimension. The emergence of new connections and intercultural interactions requires clearer and even a new recognition and comprehension of tourism in the world (Hall Vejkins, 2003). Tourism develops clients' communication with the outside world, strengthens the process of internationalization, and encourages and motivates the two-way information flows. It promotes cultural exchange, leads to more imports of goods and services, and generally develops the field of trade and communication (Dasville, 1999: 190). The tendency of the people of the world to find the easiest and most effective way for the dialogue between cultures has made the growing importance of tourism in these interactions to be more vital. The role of tourism is important politically because human beings use the bitter and sweet experiences of governance during history and in different civilizations, and while establishing emotional and human ties with each other, they look at other cultures with a broader perspective and make the political relationships of civilizations based on economics and understanding of nations to be more balanced. Since it is clear that the closeness and cultural relations of nations is the basis of peace and friendship and consequently economic relations between them, it also plays an important role in their comprehensive development (Kazemi, 2013: 7). As Heydari Chianeh et al. (2013) also argue, the policies of the development of the tourism industry should make fundamental changes in their approaches and consequently in their performance and attitudes towards the tourism industry at the level of international markets. The main reason to adopt the "localization of tourism components" approach in the international tourism sector is mainly rooted in socio-cultural reasons. At first, tourism was known as an individual activity that depended on leisure time for tranquility. Tourism was gradually considered as a social communication because of its cultural effects. Tourism is naturally a social phenomenon (Cohen, 1979), and previous researches have examined its social aspects, including the interaction between guest and host (Dogan, 1989), the reciprocal social influence (Murphy, 2001), tradable and consumer culture (Waite, 2000), and community-based tourism (Reed 6, 1997; Murphy, 1985) and volunteer tourism (Wearing, 2001). According to Smith (1989), tourism is a reciprocal

social influence in a tourism destination in which tourists are considered as "guests", and residents are considered as "hosts". Also, tourism performs as a social system for which three main actors are considered: the tourist destination region, the tourism and travel industry, and the tourist destination region (Leiper, 1979). There are two general perspectives considered to explain the reciprocal social influence between tourists and other institutions.

The theory of social exchange (Gursoy and Rutherford, 2004) which tries to comprehend the exchange of resources between individuals and groups in a social situation in which actors have valuable resources to present (Ap, 1992), and the theory of social representation, which depends on explaining and understanding what people think about their ongoing daily experiences and how a broad social reality affects these thoughts (Pearce et al., 1996: 39). This theory argues that social agents are created and developed through reciprocal social influence to help social communication (Moscovici, 2001). Tourism provides various opportunities for tourists to have effective communication with consumer and non-consumer groups. Tourists experience effective interaction with their travel companion, tour guide, other tourists, tourism service personnel, and residents during a tour. Reciprocal social influence and social interaction are very substantial for tourists because these groups have a significant role in reducing their anxiety to encounter the new country and conditions (White and White, 2009). Therefore, Reciprocal social influence during travel leads to great consumption motivation for tourists (Thyne et al., 2005). It has been seen that tourism consumers often travel together, go on vacation together, eat together in restaurants, and participate in physical activities (Hartmann, 2010). The reciprocal influence can happen between tourists before, during, and after the trip in an online or offline form. The opportunities for reciprocal social influence may play a significant role in choosing the type of trip. For instance, the anticipated opportunities for reciprocal social influence of travelers have been another important factor in choosing an exciting trip (Richards Wilson, 2004). The reciprocal influence of offline tourists towards each other can have a significant effect on their tourism experience during the trip. These effects can not only lead to giving meaning to the tourist's experience but can also be effective in sharing this information (offline or online). Tourist satisfaction sometimes happens under the influence of the presence of other tourists in the tourism destination (Tsiotsou and Goldsmith, 2012).

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method of this study is descriptive and analytical, and the documentary and field sources have been used to collect the data. The library resources were used mostly for the theoretical part of the research. Statistics and reports have been used in the section of the study of the understudy countries. Also, the field studies were conducted and a questionnaire was completed for the comparative study of the tourism development policies in Iran and Turkey, as well as the effects of social relations between the host and the guest. Then, the T-Student Anova and Chi-square tests were used to examine the hypotheses by extracting and analyzing the results. In the present research, according to the statistical population of the sample, based on the observance of the minimum sample in the descriptive survey research (Hafeznia, 2007), 300 questionnaires were considered, which have been completed in English. The data were collected from Iran and Turkey in 2013 based on 150 questionnaires related to foreign tourists present in Iran and 150 questionnaires among foreign tourists present in Turkey. The considered sample size is completed based on the simple random sample method from the two important airports in Iran and Turkey (Imam Khomeini International Airport in Tehran and Ataturk Airport in Istanbul) and hotels of the tourist. The statistical software of SPSS (version 17) and Excel (2013) was also used to analyze the obtained data. To achieve the objectives of the present study, by using the opinion of experts and active professors in the field of tourism, eight components were selected for evaluation that included cultural interaction, police behavior, hospitality, and appropriate welcoming, opportunities for direct cultural contact, special events and ceremonies, giving information about the culture and community of the host community, respecting the culture of the host community, the importance of a proportionate social factor between the host and the guest communities. The evaluation of the components was conducted based on the five-point Likert scale. Accordingly, the components, which had the highest weight, were selected for the questionnaire. By calculating Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire, the value of 0.763 was obtained, which confirms the validity and reliability of the questionnaire.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The demographic characteristics of the research

Table 1 indicates the general demographic characteristics of the research. Most of the respondents of the questionnaire were men (58% for Turkey and 83.3% for Iran) and married (62% for Turkey and 78% for Iran), in the age range of 26 to 35 years old (58.6% for Turkey and 30% for Iran), and engaged in the private sector (40% for Turkey and 62.7% for Iran) with Master degree and higher education 40% for Turkey, and 34% of an associate degree for Iran. Besides, most of the tourists preferred air travel (97.3% in Turkey and 71.3% in Iran) and travel with the family to Turkey (37.3%) and travel to Iran alone (33.3%).

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of the sample (percentage)

Gender	Turkey*	Iran**	education	Turkey	Iran
Male	58	83.3	Illiterate	0	2.7
Female	42	16.3	Undergraduate	6	30
Age			Graduated	8.7	2.7
5 to 15	4	2.7	Associate degree	5.3	34
16 to 25	14	3.3	Bachelor degree	40	7.3
26 to 35	58.6	30	Master degree or higher education	40	23.3
36 to 45	2.7	13.3	Employed		
46 to 55	16	26.7	Employed in private sector	40	62.7
56 or older	4.7	24	Employed in public sector	22.7	16.6
Marital status			Unemployed	11.3	2.7
Married	62	78	Housekeeper	10.7	4
Single	38	22	Student	7.3	4.7
Companions			Retired	8	9.3
Alone	2.7	33.3	Way of travel		
Family	37.3	25.4	Airplane	97.3	71.3
Friends and acquaintances	52.7	18	Train	2.7	14
Colleagues	7.3	23.3	Road going public vehicle	0	14.7

Source: present research

The analysis of statistics related to research components

In general, the results (Table 2) indicate that tourists find the selected components of the research between the two host and guest communities effective and enjoyable in the formation of an impressive and efficient social relationship. The level of tourists' satisfaction (perceived behavior satisfaction) from the behavior of the host community was evaluated to measure the socio-cultural components of the research. According to the statistics of the sample of the tourists that enter Turkey, the following components were evaluated as the most important components of the research, respectively: the importance of appropriate social interaction between the host and guest community (M = 3.83), opportunities for direct cultural contact (M = 3.74), respecting the culture of the host community (M = 3.66), appropriate hospitality and welcoming (M = 3.65), cultural interaction (M = 3.54), police behavior (M = 3.49), giving information about the culture and community of the host community (M = 3.47) and holding festivals and special events (M = 3.44). Also, the tourists that enter Iran have evaluated the following components as more important factors, respectively: the importance of appropriate social interaction between the host and guest community (M = 3.99), respecting the culture of the host community (M = 3.91), cultural interaction (M = 3.78), appropriate hospitality and welcoming (M = 3.65), police behavior (M = 3.62), opportunities for direct cultural contact (M = 3.49), holding festivals and special events (M = 3.38) and giving information about the culture and community of the host community (M = 3.22).

Table 2: Distribution of the opinions of the tourists on the selected components of research (percentage)

Frequency of the level of importance	Tourists entering Turkey	Tourists entering Iran
1) The importance of appropriate social interaction between the host and guest community		
Very much	30.7	36
Much	32	32.7
To some extent	30.7	27.3
Low	3.3	2
Very low	3.3	2
Average	3.83	3.99
2) respecting the culture of the host community		
Very much	40	10.7
Much	2	32.7
To some extent	44.6	49.3
Low	10.7	7.3
Very low	2.7	0
Average	3.66	3.46
3) giving information about the culture and community of the host community		
Very much	9.3	16.7
Much	39.4	31.3
To some extent	44	16.7
Low	4	28.7
Very low	3.3	6.6
Average	3.47	3.22
4) the level of the satisfaction of tourists from appropriate hospitality and welcoming		
Very much	12.6	20.7

Much	52	53.8
To some extent	28	24
Low	2.7	0.7
Very low	4.7	1.3
Average	3.65	3.91

The continuation of Table (2), distribution of the opinions of the tourists on the selected components of research (percentage)

5) Tourists' satisfaction with police behavior		
Very much	8	26
Much	52.7	33.3
To some extent	25.3	26.7
Low	8.7	5.4
Very low	5.3	8.6
Average	3.49	3.62
6) The level of tourists' satisfaction with cultural satisfaction		
Very much	13.3	23.3
Much	44	52
To some extent	12.7	10
Low	10.7	7.3
Very low	2	2
Average	3.54	3.78
7) Special events		
Very much	8	29.3
Much	35.3	28.7
To some extent	35.7	16.7
Low	52.7	1.3
Very low	1.3	24
Average	3.44	3.38
8) Opportunities for direct cultural contact		
Very much	8	14
Much	63.3	32.7
To some extent	24.7	44
Low	2.7	7.3
Very low	1.3	2
Average	3.74	3.49

Source: present research

Evaluation of tourists' opinions about the hospitality of hosts, the image of the destination, and the behavior of the host community to travel again

Table 3 shows the mental image of tourists towards the hospitality of Turkish and Iranian communities before and after their trip. The average of the perception of tourists entering Turkey before the trip ($M = 3.51$) compared to after the trip ($M = 3.54$) indicates a very small change that the result of the t-test does not show a significant relationship concerning the p-value ($P\text{-Value} = 0.619$). However, the tourists entering Iran before the trip ($M = 3.89$) compared to after the trip ($M = 4.33$) shows a significant change, and according to the mean and t-test, the existence of a significant difference is confirmed. The perception of tourists entering Iran towards the hospitality of the host community has been improved after the trip.

Table 3: mental images of tourists regarding the hospitality of Turkish and Iranian communities before and after the trip

	Average of the perception before travel	Average of the perception after travel	Result of the t-test
tourists entering Turkey	3.51	3.54	0.619
tourists entering Iran	3.89	4.33	0.000*

Source: Present research * Significance level $p > 0.5$

Table 4 discusses the distribution of the opinion of tourists based on the impact of the host community's behavior and travel renewal, the impact of advertisement, and their evaluation of the destination. The level of the impact of the host community's behavior on the travel renewal in tourists entering Turkey ($M = 4.13$) was evaluated to be more than tourists entering Iran ($M = 3.18$). The effect of advertisement on the selection of destination was evaluated to be more in Turkish tourists ($M = 3.04$) than Iranian tourists ($M = 3.40$). Also, the general opinion of tourists entering Turkey ($M = 5.06$) about the host country was better than the opinion of tourists entering Iran ($M = 4.30$).

Table 4: Distribution of tourists' opinions about going to travel again, the effects of advertisement and their evaluation of the destination (percentage)

The level of significance	Turkey	Iran
Tourists' opinions on the impact of host community behavior and going to travel again		
Very much	48.6	26.7
Much	26	21.3
To some extent	14.7	27.3
Low	10.7	10.7
Very low	0	10.7
Average	4.13	3.18
The impact of advertisement		
Completely positive	8.7	24
Somewhat positive	14	16.7
Ineffective	58	43.3
Negative	11.3	8
Somewhat negative	8	8
Average (m)	3.04	3.40

Source: present research

Continuation of Table 4: Distribution of tourists' opinions about going to travel again, the effects of advertisement and their evaluation of the destination (percentage)

The level of significance	Turkey	Iran
Tourists' opinions divided by their evaluation of the host country		
Very desirable	46	19.3
Desirable	34	35.3
Somewhat desirable	10	14
Undesirable	2.7	17.4
Very undesirable	4.6	10
Deplorable	2.7	4
Average (m)	5.06	4.30

Source: present research

IV. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The present research is conducted to analyze the importance of social relations between the host and guest communities and study their effects on tourism development in Iran and Turkey. The impacts of these relationships can be analyzed in the form of theories of social exchange and social representation. The theory of social exchange is based on the belief that human relationships are formed by using the analysis of subjective cost-benefit and comparison of alternatives. Sometimes human beings feel there is no point in forming a relationship in their social relations because there is no reward (benefit) for it. The theory of social representation believes that each individual can be effective in forming social relations independently and with freedom of action in decision making. As it was discussed in the Theoretical Principles section, the concept of globalization in tourism refers to global forces and components that try to harmonize tourism components, but it seems that some societies, including the Middle East region, especially Iran, are in contrast with it. One of the most substantial reasons for the insignificant share of Middle Eastern countries, including Iran, in tourism markets is adopting an approach through which, for various reasons that are mainly socio-cultural, the creation of appropriate changes consistent with global conditions of tourism is avoided (Alipour and Heydari Chianeh, 20). It can be concluded from the results of the present study that the various socio-cultural policies that Turkey has followed in recent years in its tourism programs compared to other Middle Eastern countries, especially Iran, have been effective in its successful experience of tourism development. These effective approaches include institutionalizing an appropriate conceptual framework of the tourism industry, providing an appropriate image of host communities to tourists, increasing social capacities of hospitality among the community, using local culture potentials to increase tourist attractions, adopting effective advertising strategies, concluding independent contracts of the Ministry of Tourism with tour wholesalers, holding special cultural events and international festivals. The findings of research on Iran indicate that, despite its privileged position in the global tourism map, Iran has a very small share of global tourism markets, which is mainly rooted in various socio-cultural challenges. However, Iran's current position in the UN tourism ranking indicates that Iran has avoided creating appropriate changes consistent with global tourism conditions. In other words, instead of making its internal conditions, destinations and attractions, and tourism products to be in line with the global conditions of this industry, Iran has tried to make international tourism consistent with its domestic conditions and tourism destinations. As one of the attractive destinations in the region, Iran can take more effective steps towards the development of this industry with appropriate and targeted policies for the development of tourism and reflection on the experiences of countries such as Turkey. According to the results, the present study suggests

that Iran can take very effective steps in developing the tourism industry by prioritizing the socio-cultural components of tourism, such as teaching appropriate social interaction to residents in dealing with foreign tourists, respecting tourists as guests, which has always been considered in Iranian culture, and appropriate welcoming hospitality to satisfy the tourists and improve their mental image of the destination, training the police force to have a desirable interaction with them in face-to-face interaction with tourists, creating direct cultural opportunities for more communication between the host and guest community. Increasing the satisfaction of tourists about the hosts will lead to their better and more effective word of mouth about the destination. Today, this strategy is one of the most influential and efficient methods of tourism development in the socio-cultural dimension in the pioneer countries and is of great importance. The Researches conducted by Litvin and Goldsmith (2008) and Lam and So (2013) confirm this result. The results of this research are useful and practical for both managers and those involved in the tourism industry. Given that creating and recreating long-term relationships with customers is considered one of the most important tasks of marketing managers today, apart from the fact that their product is tangible, intangible services or a combination of the two, the creation and recreation of relationships with customers in tourism has many benefits for the tourism of destination. Three main subjects can be mentioned among them: 1) the cost of maintaining existing customers is less than the cost of attracting new customers. 2) Managers who know about the thing that their customers are most interested in are better able to satisfy them. 3) Committed customers can give their positive comments through word of mouth better than others. Therefore, relationship marketing should be the guiding principles for managers and those involved in the hospitality and tourism industry, not only to gain certain benefits from the return of visitors to the destination but also to profitably use the possibility of a tourist's one-time visit to become a good long-term relationship and even their positive attitude to recommend it to others. It is normal that this research, like most academic researches, has some limitations. The limitation of the data to tourists due to their high volume and limited time was one of the limitations of the present research in terms of content. Future researchers can try to collect data from the residents of the destinations. The analysis of this data can also reveal interesting and efficient results. One of the executive limitations of the research is the difficulty of collecting data from incoming tourists and having access to them. The present study investigated the offline social relationship between the host and guest communities in the development of tourism between the two countries of Iran and Turkey. Given the significant development of social networks and the determination of their influence on tourists' decision to choose their travels, it is recommended to evaluate the online reciprocal social influence of tourists on their travels in these tourism destinations.

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