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Challenges facing post-war tourism development: the case of Iran

Jamal Mohammadi[a*] and Dariush Ahmadi[b]

[a]Associate Professor of Geography and City Planning, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran
[b]PhD student of Geography and City Planning, University of Isfahan, Isfahan, Iran

CHRONICLE	ABSTRACT
	This study presents an empirical investigation to study the post-war tourism in sought west region of Iran. This region is the host of many Iranian who wish remember the events of War between Iran and Iraq. Many high school or university students travel to the region through cultural as well as religious communities. This paper tries to analyze the challenges facing these people when they travel to province of Khozestan, Iran. The study designs a questionnaire in Likert scale and distributes it among some randomly selected people who visited the region. The implementation of Pearson correlation test has determined that "Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services" is to be blamed the most followed by "Underdevelopment of decision making centers". Moreover, path analysis has been implemented to detect direct and indirect effects of different factors on development of tourism in the region. In our survey, marketing, culture and weakness in infrastructures have been determined the most important factors influencing on development of the region.

1. Introduction

Tourism is an old phenomenon that existed in human societies for years and gradually, during different history periods, has delivered under present technical, economic, social and ecological conditions (Smith & Puczkó, 2008; Rita Kaur, 2006). This phenomenon is growing with more intensity in 20th century (Edgell Sr et al., 2008). One of the special types of tourism, which is getting popular among tourists and managers is associated with trips to the regions of a country, which was involved with war in the past. People from all over a country may wish to visit the regions involved in war, which creates an opportunity to develop tourism industry in the region. According to Weaver (2011), Weaver and Oppermann (2000) "The tourism industry and military-industrial complex may seem to possess qualities that are contradictory in nature but they are also complementary in various ways". There are different studies accomplished to study the countries, which were in War and the tourism circumstances after War. Wise (2011), for instance, studied post-war tourism and the imaginative geographies of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia. Ladki and Dah (1997) investigated different challenges facing

post-war tourism development in Lebanon. The study also offered some insight about the Lebanese government reconstruction plan and its role in shaping tourism policies. Winter (2009) applied social memory theory to explain the processes through which tourism could engage in perpetuating the memory of the Great War, and recommended how study could help us have a better understanding about tourists' experiences. Smith (1998) investigated the sequential development of the United States tourism from World War I and the effect of World War II in laying the foundations for modern mass and charter tourism. The survey implies that war stimulates promotional, emotional, military and political tourism, and that war-related tourism attractions were the biggest single category known. Strange and Kempa (2003) discussed how multi-hued types of interpretation were produced, not only through shifting priorities of memory managers, but also the expectations of tourists and the agendas of external interest groups.

2. The proposed study

The statistical society of the present study includes tourists of war regions mainly in Khuzestan province in south west of Iran visited during the year of 2012. According to tourism organization and Khuzestan's Iran-Iraq war foundation statistics 896,000 tourists visited war regions in Khuzestan province in 2012. In addition, tourism industry's experts, managers and experts of organization and offices in Khuzestan province were also invited to participate in this survey. In this study for choosing the population of tourists; random sample or samples available methods has been used. The sample size is calculated as follows,

$$ n = \frac{N \times z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}{\varepsilon^2 \times (N-1) + z_{\alpha/2}^2 \times p \times q}, \tag{1} $$

where N is the population size, $p = 1 - q$ represents the yes/no categories, $z_{\alpha/2}$ is CDF of normal distribution and finally ε is the error term. Since we have $p = 0.5, z_{\alpha/2} = 1.96$ and N=896,000, the number of sample size is calculated as n=385. Also the necessary data of study have been extracted from library and field methods (Questionnaires, interviews with tourists and authorities). For this survey, comprehensive information for research were provided and, through questionnaires, interviews and field studies, the research has been completed. Questions have been set with respect to research's purpose and key factors in analyzing of war tourism barriers in Khuzestan province. To analyze the data and to test the research hypotheses Pearson correlation coefficient test and Path analysis techniques have been used. Cronbach alphas for all components of the survey were calculated and they were all well above the acceptable level of 0.70.

2.1. The extent and location of the province

Khuzestan province with an area of 64057 kilometers of square is placed in South west of Iran and in North west of Persian gulf between 29 degrees and 57 minutes till 33 degrees and 0 minutes of North width from equator and 47 degrees and 38 minutes till 50 degrees, and 32 minutes East length from the time line. This province has common border with Lorestan province from north, Iraq from West, Kohkilooye and Boyerahmad province from East, Chaharmahal and Bakhtiari province from north east, Bushehr province from east and Ilam province from North West (See Fig 1). The land has two lands and water territorial. Its water territorial in the Persian Gulf coast is about 220 km and its drought territorial, which is one of the primary areas of the formation of human civilization in the world and central government of Elamis and Enzanis. There are two mountainous areas in the north and a desert in the south. This region, especially in the northern zone, mountainous territorial of Enzanis civilization, has been the cradle of civilization and culture in ancient Persia where we may observe many traces in Izeh, Baghmalek and Masjedsoleyman cities. The province in the first political division of the country in 1937 was known as the sixth province. Gradually the number of its cities increased so that in 1985

solar calendar it had 13 cities, in 1990 it had 15 cities, in the years 1995 till 2001 it had 16 cities, in the years 2005 till year 2007it had 20 cities, and recently it had 23 cities.

Fig. 1. Geometry of province

Presently, based on census Statistics of the year 2011 and the last Divisions in the country, the province has 24 cities. It appears that political and ideological differences between Iran and Iraq in 1976 took on a new dimension. Iraqi government had cancelled border treat and good neighborliness five days before the invasion of Iraq to Iran happened. Iraq invaded Iran on 22 September 1981and occupied the border and important cities of Khorramshahr, Soosangerd, Bostan, Dehloran, Ghasre Shirin, Hoveize, Naft Shahr, Somar and Moolian. Following the occupation of Iraq in Iran, Iran's various operations for the liberation of occupied areas did that actually the operation and the liberated areas are the main war tourism areas in the country.
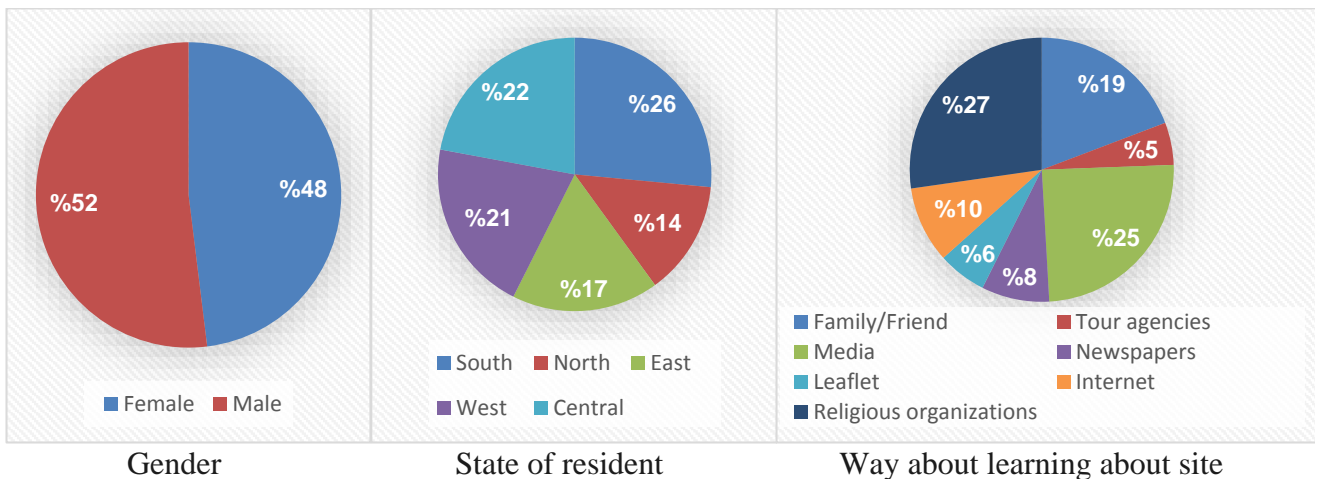
2.2. Descriptive statistics of tourist

Gender	State of resident	Way about learning about site

Fig. 2. Personal characteristics of the participants

Fig. 2 demonstrates personal characteristics of participants. As we can observe, 52% of the participants were male and 48% of the remaining were female and they were from different regions of the province. Moreover, people have learnt about tourism in this region through various facilities such as Newspapers, Internet, Tour agencies, etc. Fig. 3 demonstrates different facilities used for their accommodation in province.
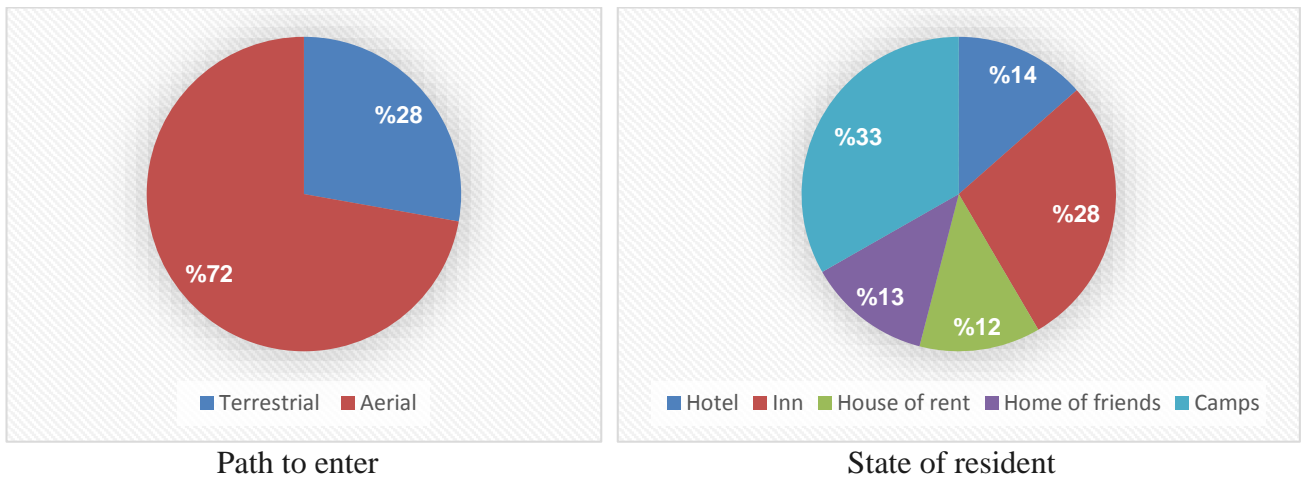
1094

Path to enter   State of resident

Fig. 3. Facilities offered to visitors

Finally Fig. 4 shows the level of tourism's satisfaction on trip to the province. According to Fig. 4, many tourists have satisfied about the services they received but some had little satisfaction.
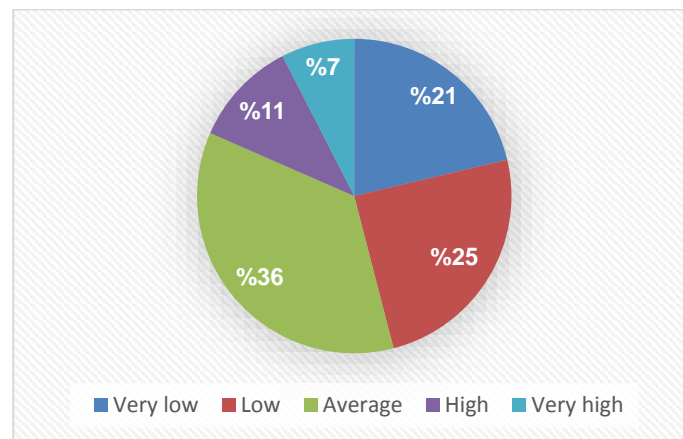

Fig. 4. The level of tourism's satisfaction on trip to the province

In this survey, the effects of five factors influencing on development of tourism activities in province of Khozestan are examined, which are as follows,

1. Numbers of Decision-making centers
2. Marketing Weakness
3. Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services
4. Tourist culture

2.3 Inferential statistics

To use statistical method, information were checked with The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for normality to determine the type of statistical methods (parametric, non-parametric) that should be used. Table 1 shows the results of the implementation of Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. As we can observe from the results of Table 1, all five components of the survey are normally distributed when the level of significant is one percent. Therefore, we use Pearson correlation test to study the relationships among different components of the survey.

Table 1
The summary of Kolmogorov- Smirnov test

Factors	Kolmogorov-Smirnov test	Significant level	Result
Numbers of Decision-making centers	0.113	0.000	Normal
Marketing Weakness	0.074	0.000	Normal
Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services	0.143	0.000	Normal
Tourist culture	0.152	0.000	Normal
Underdevelopment of decision making centers	0.123	0.000	Normal

In our survey, the Pearson correlation is positive and meaningful between different pairs of the survey with underdevelopment of tourism activities. Table 2 demonstrates the results of the implementation of the Pearson correlation. As we can observe from the results, "Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services" is to be blamed the most followed by "Underdevelopment of decision making centers". In our survey, we use Path analysis to study the effects of various factors on underdevelopment of tourism. Fig. 5 shows the results of standard coefficients on the effects of factors.

Table 2
The results of Pearson correlation between different components and underdevelopment of tourism

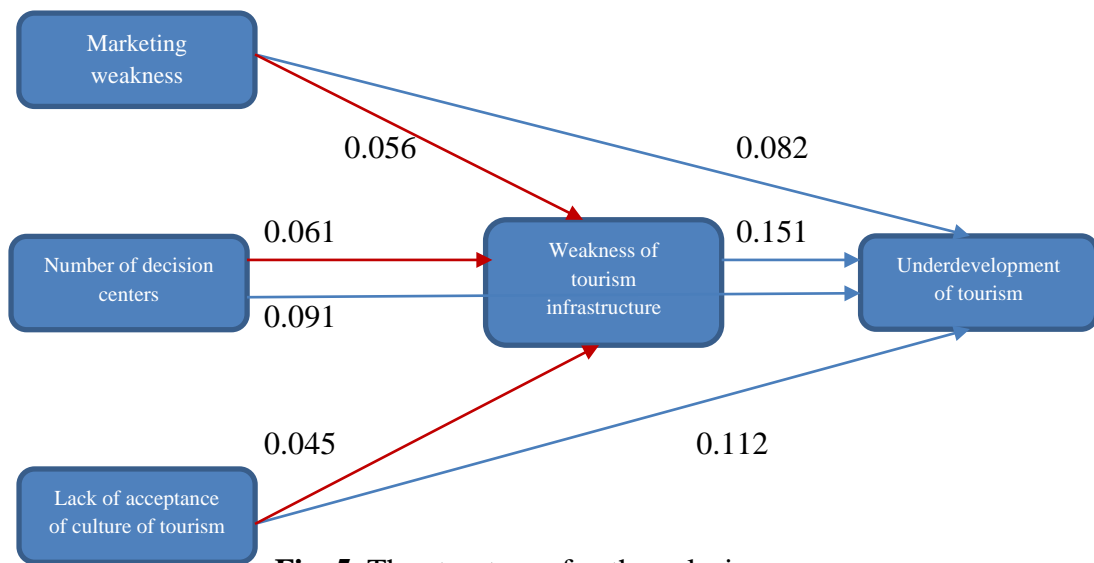| Parameters	Pearson	Significant level
Numbers of Decision-making centers	0.34	0.000
Marketing Weakness	0.43	0.000
Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services	0.56	0.000
Tourist culture	0.49	0.000
Underdevelopment of decision making centers	0.51	0.000

Fig. 5. The structure of path analysis

Fig. 1 demonstrates the results of direct as well as indirect effects of various factors on underdevelopment of tourism in the region. Here blue colors represent direct effects and red colors represent indirect effects. Table 3 summarizes the effects of direct and indirect effects.

Table 3
The summary of the effects of direct and indirect effects

Parameters	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total
Numbers of Decision-making centers	0.091	0.009	0.1
Marketing Weakness	0.112	0.006	0.118
Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services	0.151	-	0.151
Tourist culture	0.112	0.006	0.118
Total	0.436	0.023	0.459

3. Discussion and conclusion

In this survey, we have tried to determine different factors influencing on development tourism in west region of Iran, which was involved in eight-year Iran-Iraq war. Many Iranians travel to this region to commemorate the events happened in the region. The purpose of this survey was to determine the barriers on development of the region. The implementation of Pearson correlation test has determined that "Weakness of tourism infrastructure facilities and services" is to be blamed the most followed by "Underdevelopment of decision making centers". Moreover, path analysis has been implemented to detect direct and indirect effects of different factors on development of tourism in the region. In our survey, marketing, culture and weakness in infrastructures have been determined the most important factors influencing on development of the region.

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