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STUDYING THE ROLE OF TOURISM MARKETING IN TOURIST ATTRACTION DEVELOPMENT (A CASE STUDY: ARASBARAN REGION IN VARZEGHAN)

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ABSTRACT

Due to the technologic, cultural, political, social, and economic infrastructures created in 21st century, tourism phenomenon is called an inevitable reality. On the contrary to the potential capabilities of Iran and Arasbaran region located in Varzeghan in tourism, unfortunately it has not been able to gain a proper position in this industry. One of the factors that can develop and improve tourism industry in the country is to utilize effective marketing parameters. Thus, the present study is going to deal with the role of tourism marketing in developing the tourists' attraction in Arasbaran region located in Varzeghan in Eastern Azerbaijan province of Iran and four factors in novel marketing related to the attraction of tourists in Arasbaran region in Varzeghan have been posed. So, we tried to collect data and recognize the different aspects of the issue through a questionnaire and library studies and devised four theories to respond to the type of relationship between these factors and tourist attraction in Varzeghan. The statistical society for the present research consists of 150 tourists in Varzeghan selected with a random sampling method. The reliability of the questionnaire was approved by using SPSS software and Cronbach's alpha test. The results of statistical analysis showed that the first hypothesis (international tourists' attraction) was approved in an assurance level of 0.95, and the second hypothesis (domestic tourists' attraction) was approved in an assurance level of 0.95, and the third hypothesis (native tourists' attraction) was approved in an assurance level of 0.95, and the fourth hypothesis (national tourists' attraction) was also approved in an assurance level of 0.95. Also the results of Friedman test showed that from among the four tourism types, domestic tourism has had a priority over the others.

Keywords: *Marketing, Tourism, Tourism Marketing*

INTRODUCTION

In 21st century, the spread and development of technology has caused human beings to have much more free time and more wealth and spend more time for leisure. In fact the second half of 20th century should be entitled: "the age of tourism industry" (Papli and Saghaee, 2007).

Traveling other parts of the world in real and virtual formats (through film, video, CD, internet, and books) with different incentives would be a requirement of modern life in 21st century and it would form a trend that covers all national and international boundaries and would present an approach beyond the reach of governments and nations. Noticing tourism industry represents the fact that it would result in a series of influences and changes in different fields of economy, culture, society, and even the environment in each country (Preace, 1989).

Statement of the Problem

Iran is among 10 top countries regarding tourism attractions and it is ranked 5th regarding tourism variety in the world. Iran has different climates, locations, and seasons regarding tourism attractions. It is also equal to the developed countries regarding the ancient monuments, recreational centers, and natural beauties. It has plains, mountain laps, deserts, caves, lakes, waterfalls, museums, historical buildings, traditional workshops, unique handicrafts, and many more to help tourism flourish. Thus, it is one of the few countries that can achieve lots of financial and ethical profits by using an efficient management of the resources and facilities (Armaghan, 2007).

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Therefore it seems important to use these capabilities to develop tourism. One of the factors that can develop and improve tourism industry in the country is to utilize tools and effective marketing parameters (Sardi, 2001).

Thus, tourism marketing becomes very important because if we consider marketing as a managerial process, all planning activities, tourism products' supply, and tourist attraction requires operations and marketing activities (Van Beynen, 2007). Therefore, tourism marketing is considered as the recognition and prediction of tourists' needs and preparing the facilities to supply for the needs and to inform them and create the incentive for visiting. And this will result in tourists' satisfaction and the realization of organizational goals (Brown and Keith, 2009). In tourism marketing, the marketer should consider two dimensions. First, the satisfaction of local inhabitants to gain profits from tourism; Second, satisfaction from the trip should be realized for the visitors. Therefore, tourism marketing is related to "4p". Thus, the present study is going to investigate on and recognize this main issue that what type of role does marketing play in tourists' attraction in Arasbaran region tourism marketing?.

Theoretical Foundation of the Research

The theoretical framework for the present study is used to measure the variable tourism marketing in Varzeghan regarding the ideas posed by Les Lomesden. Les Lomesden defined tourism marketing depending on 4p. Les Lomesden considers price to be among marketing performances because financial welfare in a company is as effective as the qualitative and competitive factors in products/services. Les Lomesden suggests that product is the combination of services offered by a company and considers the location as a place where the customer is able to consume the supplied product. As Les Lomesden believes advertisement and announcements refer to all relationship levels of the producer and consumer in order to enhance the results of sales of services/products. Advertisement shows the composition of the relationship in a broad sense (Les Lomesden, 2001).

Research Goals

The overall goal of the present study is: to investigate on the role of tourism marketing in tourists' attraction in Varzeghan.

The following goals were considered along with the main goal of this research:

- 1- Studying the role of tourism marketing (mixed marketing) in attracting international tourists
- 2- Studying the role of tourism marketing (mixed marketing) in attracting domestic tourists
- 3- Studying the role of tourism marketing (mixed marketing) in attracting native tourists
- 4- Studying the role of tourism marketing (mixed marketing) in attracting national tourists

Research Hypotheses

Major Hypothesis

Tourism marketing has a role in attracting tourists in Varzeghan.

Minor Hypotheses

- 1- Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting international tourists.
- 2- Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting domestic tourists.
- 3- Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting native tourists.
- 4- Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting national tourists.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Methodology

Research Type and Research Method

The present study is a correlation type regarding the study method and the types of goals set. Data collection was done using a measurement method (field study) using closed end questions. Library study referring to the books, magazines, internet, and note taking comprised our research literature. Also based on its goal, the present study is an applied one because it is the one whose findings can be used by other organizations too (Sarmad et al., 2004).

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Population and Statistical Sample of the Research

The statistical population of this research is all tourists that have visited Varzeghan. Due to lack of information about the number of tourists we have used the following sampling formula posed by Cochran:

In this formula we have:

P = the probability of having the intended feature

P = 0.5

P - 1 = the probability of lack of having the intended feature

P - 1 = 0.5

$$n = \frac{(Z_{\alpha/2})^2 \times P (P - 1)}{\epsilon^2}$$

€ = the amount of authorized error that was supposed to be 0.07 using the similar researches

€ = 0.05

Z = standard distribution statistic in an assurance level of %95

Z = 1.96

$$n = \frac{(1,96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{(0/07)^2} = 196$$

The sample in this study was estimated to involve 196 tourists. From the total 196 questionnaires distributed, 150 questionnaires filled were used to make data analysis. In this research we have used a simple random sampling method.

Research Tools and Validity and Reliability of the Research

In the present study the tool for data collection was a researcher made questionnaire including 16 questions based on Likert's 5 score scale, where 9 first questions were used to measure tourism marketing and the remaining 7 questions were used to measure the tourism variable. To test the validity of the questionnaire we used face validity and to test the reliability of the questionnaire we used Cronbach's alpha test.

Based on this method and with the primary sample of 40 tourists using SPSS statistical software we achieved the reliability of tourism marketing (mixed marketing) and tourist attraction to be 0.952 and 0.835, respectively. The amount of these statistics showed that first the questionnaire's questions have had a high correlation, and second the research questionnaire has had a high reliability.

Statistical Analysis Methods

In the present study we have used Pearson's test (Pearson's correlation coefficient) to find the amount and the degree of the relationship between the two variables to analyze the data and to reject or approve the research hypotheses after data collection. Also we have used a simple linear regression test to determine the size and to predict the dependent variable calculated based on the independent variable. Finally to rank different tourists, we have used Friedman's test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The first research hypothesis: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting international tourists.

H₀: Tourism marketing (4p) does not have a role in attracting international tourists.

H₁: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting international tourists.

The regression analysis: since the meaningfulness level of the test is equal to 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H₀ is rejected in an assurance level of %95. Thus, regarding the data gained we can claim that tourism marketing has had a role in attracting international tourism.

Additionally, due to the identification coefficient R² in the regression model above that is gained from the ratio of changes described by the independent variable to total changes, it can be stated that about %86 of the changes in dependent variable can be justified by changes in independent variable.

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Table 1: The variance analysis table related to the regression model of the variables of tourism marketing and international tourism

R	Identification coefficient (R ²)	Adjusted identification coefficient	Standard error
0.925	0.856	0.855	0.15159
Changes' source	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	of Average squares
Regression	1	20.154	20.154
Residual	148	3.402	0.23
Total	149	23.554	-----
			F
			877.055
			Assurance level
			0.95
			Meaningfulness level
			0.000
			Test result: H₀ was rejected

The second research hypothesis: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting domestic tourists.

H₀: Tourism marketing (4p) does not have a role in attracting domestic tourists.

H₁: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting domestic tourists.

Table 2: The variance analysis table related to the regression model of the variables of tourism marketing and domestic tourism

R	Identification coefficient (R ²)	Adjusted identification coefficient	Standard error
0.874	0.763	0.762	0.19637
Changes' source	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	of Average squares
Regression	1	18.415	18.415
Residual	148	5.707	0.039
Total	149	24.122	-----
			F
			477.546
			Assurance level
			0.95
			Meaningfulness level
			0.000
			Test result: H₀ was rejected

The regression analysis: since the meaningfulness level of the test is equal to 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H₀ is rejected in an assurance level of %95. Thus, regarding the data gained we can claim that tourism marketing has had a role in attracting domestic tourism.

Additionally, due to the identification coefficient R² in the regression model above that is gained from the ratio of changes described by the independent variable to total changes, it can be stated that about %76 of the changes in dependent variable can be justified by changes in independent variable.

The third research hypothesis: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting native tourists.

H₀: Tourism marketing (4p) does not have a role in attracting native tourists.

H₁: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting native tourists.

Table 3: The variance analysis table related to the regression model of the variables of tourism marketing and native tourism

R	Identification coefficient (R ²)	Adjusted identification coefficient	Standard error
0.869	0.755	0.753	0.20821
Changes' source	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	of Average squares
Regression	1	19.779	19.779
Residual	148	6.416	0.043
Total	149	26.195	-----
			F
			456.222
			Assurance level
			0.95
			Meaningfulness level
			0.000
			Test result: H₀ was rejected

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The regression analysis: since the meaningfulness level of the test is equal to 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H_0 is rejected in an assurance level of %95. Thus, regarding the data gained we can claim that tourism marketing has had a role in attracting native tourism. Additionally, due to the identification coefficient R^2 in the regression model above that is gained from the ratio of changes described by the independent variable to total changes, it can be stated that about %75 of the changes in dependent variable can be justified by changes in independent variable.

The fourth research hypothesis: Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting national tourists.

H_0 : Tourism marketing (4p) does not have a role in attracting national tourists.

H_1 : Tourism marketing (4p) has a role in attracting national tourists.

Table 4: The variance analysis table related to the regression model of the variables of tourism marketing and national tourism

R	Identification coefficient (R^2)	Adjusted identification coefficient	Standard error
0.772	0.596	0.593	0.30077
Changes' source	Degree of freedom	Sum of squares	Average squares
Regression	1	19.715	19.715
Residual	148	13.389	0.090
Total	149	33.104	-----
		F	Assurance level
		217.935	0.95
			Meaningfulness level
			0.000
			Test result: H_0 was rejected

The regression analysis: since the meaningfulness level of the test is equal to 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H_0 is rejected in an assurance level of %95. Thus, regarding the data gained we can claim that tourism marketing has had a role in attracting national tourism. Additionally, due to the identification coefficient R^2 in the regression model above that is gained from the ratio of changes described by the independent variable to total changes, it can be stated that about %60 of the changes in dependent variable can be justified by changes in independent variable.

The priority of the four types of tourism described above:

The results of Friedman's test related to the four types of tourism described above are shown in the table below:

Table 5: The results of Friedman's test related to the four types of tourism

Description	Amount
Number	150
Chi2 statistic	8.214
Degree of freedom	3
Meaningfulness level	0.002

No.	Factors	Rank Average
1	International tourists	2.48
2	Domestic tourists	2.71
3	Native tourists	2.51
4	National tourists	2.30

As it can be seen in table 5, due to the fact that the meaningfulness level of Friedman's test is less than 0.05, there is a meaningful difference between the effectiveness of each of the four tourism models above in a way that the domestic tourists have the priority and more importance compared to the other types.

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Conclusion

The goal of the present research was to study the role of tourism marketing in attracting tourists in Varzeghan. Here the authors like to discuss about the hypotheses based on the results of the statistical analyses of the data.

Results of testing the first research hypothesis showed that regarding the meaningfulness level of the test that equals 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H_0 is rejected with an assurance level of %95, and H_1 (the researcher's claim) is approved.

Results of testing the second research hypothesis showed that regarding the meaningfulness level of the test that equals 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H_0 is rejected with an assurance level of %95, and H_1 (the researcher's claim) is approved.

Results of testing the third research hypothesis showed that regarding the meaningfulness level of the test that equals 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H_0 is rejected with an assurance level of %95, and H_1 (the researcher's claim) is approved.

Results of testing the fourth research hypothesis showed that regarding the meaningfulness level of the test that equals 0.000 (P-value = 0.000), H_0 is rejected with an assurance level of %95, and H_1 (the researcher's claim) is approved.

Also the results of Friedman's test related to the four types of tourism described above showed that since the meaningfulness level of Friedman's test is less than 0.05, there is a meaningful difference between the effectiveness of each of the four tourism models above in a way that the domestic tourists have the priority and more importance compared to the other types.

Thus, regarding the results of this research and analyzing the findings, the following strategies and suggestions can be proposed to increase tourism due to the factors involved in mixed marketing:

1) Paying attention to marketing in tourism industry: marketing and proper advertisement are the main parts of tourism industry and they are required to develop tourism. Thus, using techniques and skills of marketing in different areas related to tourism and appointing professional managers in marketing seems to be absolutely necessary.

2) Enabling active institutions in tourism industry: the reduction of government's control over the issues and leaving the administrative activities over to the private sector regarding the priorities such as infrastructures, enabling firms working in tourism industry considering the global success patterns and presenting educational and counseling programs by the authorities in tourism industry can have outstanding effects on consistent development of tourism and the parallel and permanent development of the city.

3) Creating a common outlook and systemic perspectives in the minds of the beneficiaries in tourism industry: the consensus among the beneficiaries of tourism (including local society, active entities in the field of tourism, and the management of tourism destinations) regarding the future perspectives can result in convergence and strengthening the efforts and lead to the achievement of an appropriate status in g

4) Acknowledging the attractions and tourism facilities in the city as a 'different destination': this can be realized through using appropriate and varied advertisement programs and active participation in festivals, fairs, and tourism seminars through using scholars that have the required skills in efficient and fundamental advertisements.

It should be noted that regarding the status of tourism industry in Varzeghan, the model introduced by Bohalis is in its introductory stage and thus all advertising programs should be accompanied with acknowledging perspectives to flourish it. Also some devising strategies should be utilized to develop this industry in our province on the part of the programing authorities and policy makers based on growth strategies.

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