Feasibility Assessment for Tourism Development in Persian Gulf (A Case Study of Hendourabi Island)

mohammad hossein imani khoshkhoo
Mehrdad karami
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Mehrdad Karami
M.A Student in Regional Development Planning
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Allameh Tabataba’i
Shari’ati.Al, Ghol Nabi.Ave, Tehran, Iran, Postal Code: 1544915113
E-mail: Karami2888@yahoo.com
Tel: 00989196820612

M. H. Imani Khoshkho
Assistant Professor of Science and Culture University
Tehran, Iran

Abstract

Today, tourism industry is one of the fields that give diversity to the countries’ economy. Whereas, according to investigations of the Global Tourism Organization, tourism is a key to development in many developing and less developed countries. On the other hand, a brief review of the economical planning of our (Iran’s) neighbors and their general focus on tourism as one of the most important sectors of economy, further confirms the need to pay more strict attention to this competitive market. Therefore, it seems necessary to expand the tourism market of these islands and remove their deprivations via canonizing facilities and infrastructures there. The type of this research is explanatory-analytical. The outcome of the present study indicates that Hendourabi Island has a good potential for tourism development, but it needs investment and planning. The island has a unique situation because of being located near the strategic Hormoz strait, neighborhood with the capitalist Arab countries, nearness to the free commercial zones, good weather in autumns and winters, having beautiful coastal landscape, and nearness to small fragmented islands suitable for winter camps, etc.

Keywords: Tourism development, tourism economy, regional development, Persian Gulf, Hendourabi Island

1. Introduction

Today, tourism is among the important sources of revenue globally, being an effective factor in cultural give and takes among countries (Kazemi, 1386: 1, my translation). Therefore, local researchers and experts tend to investigate the role of tourism in economical and social development (Albalate & bel, 2009: 1). Additionally, as a smokeless industry, tourism is a cause and an outcome of the globalization process (Mowforth & Munt, 2003: 8). Tourism development is one of the most economical ways of job creation (Malekian & Naderi Bani, 1381: 1).

Tourism industry has created many jobs and revenues, especially in those market layers that suffer from undesirable economical variables such as low skill jobs and part time low skill jobs (Russo & Borg, 2002: 31). According to the reports of the Global Tourism Organization, the number of
international tourists reached 898 millions in 2007, and it is prognosticated that it will reach 1.6 billion in 2020 (World Tourism Organization, 2008). In 20 years (1980-2000), the number of tourists increased by 8 percents each year, a growth much faster than the global economic growth which is about 3 percent (Lanza et al, 2005: 1). By the same token, the United States has acquired 68.4 billion dollars from the industry in 2003, occupying the first place in it. France and Spain have acquired 29.3 and 27.3 billion dollars respectively, occupying the 2nd and 3rd places (Omidvar, 1387: 119). Furthermore, the international tourism income has comprised 6 percents of the global export of goods and services in 2003 (WTO, 2007). Currently, tourism plays a very important role in the economic welfare and social dynamicity of cities, convincing many European cities to develop their tourism in recent decades. For example, the number of tourists has increased by 85 percents in Barcelona in the years 2003 to 2007. That is, it has reached from 3.8 to 7.1 million tourists (City of Barcelona, 2008: 37). Berlin has also enjoyed a considerable growth in the same years, increasing from 5 to 7.6 millions. This means 52 percents of growth (SSIB, 2008: 201). According to the reports of the Tourism and International Trip Society, the contribution of tourism and travelling to the global economy amounts to 10.3 percents of GNPs in 2006, and it has created 234.3 million jobs which comprises 8.7 percents of all jobs (Holden, 2008: 13). The existence of strong touristic potentials along with great civilization history and countless tourist attractions has put Iran among the top chart of ten in tourist arrival potentials (Seyed hosseini, 1383: 1). Unfortunately however, the nation has failed to occupy the deserved stature in spite of all these capacities (Poorahmad, 1378: 1).

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Taking the relative vantage points of Iran can be the first step in diversifying the nation’s economy. Our country has been appointed one of the ten most resourceful countries in tourism by the United Nations since it benefits from innumerable historical monuments, cultural attractions, and natural characteristics. Thus, the relative vantage of tourism can be employed to diversify the economy. This fact is combined with the investigations of the Global Tourism Organization which contends that tourism is a key to economic development in the less developed and developing countries. A brief review of the economic planning in our neighbors and their predominant emphasis on tourism further highlights the need to pay more strict attention to this fully competitive market. If we only take a quantitative comparison of Iran’s current tourist flow (700 to 800 thousand people a year, which of course includes the working force from Afghanistan and elsewhere) with our neighbors such as Turkey (having about 21 million tourists annually) and United Arab Emirates who are having a much lower degree in tourist attractions, we will have a good indication of the significant gap we have with those countries. This will accentuate the serious necessity of planning and improving the infrastructures and products of this money making economic sector. Because of marginal situation and long distance from political, social, and economical centers, the south of Iran has not received the due attention. Except some important ports, other cities and areas have not received any attention in spite of their good potentials, and deserved development has not occurred there, making some of them dormant areas whose people get along in their traditional fashion and even have not considerable social development in comparison with the central areas of our country. Hormozgan is also a southern coastal province which has a climate similar to other southern areas. This had made obstacles against farming and ranching. In the present study, effort is made to introduce some other economic capacities of the region, the most important of which are:

The unique touristic situation of the province due to its proximity to Hormoz Strait, neighborhood with the capitalist Arab states, nearness to free commercial zones, fine weather in autumns and winters, having two of the seven registered unparalleled landscapes of the world, i.e. Harra jungle and Genow mountain, and having several small fragmented islands suitable for winter camps.
1.2. The Reasons of Choosing Hendourabi for the Case of This Research

In the mild weather of autumn and winter, you can see the waves and different sea animals roaming around the beautiful choral riffs and rocky shores. You can enjoy seeing the seabirds flying to hunt sea animals or flocking on water, or watch shrimping and fishing Lanjs. Last but not the least, the sunrise and sunset is extremely beautiful and exotic. The natural feature of the island in the beautiful Persian Gulf along with eye-catching choral riffs and the intact nature, sea turtles and sharks is attractive to any newcomer.

There is a village in the island called “Hendourabi”, near which are the ruins of another village called “Al-dowraat”. There are also other ruins 1 kilometer southwest of the village, its name being “Al-saraa”. In those ruins different antiques of a long past was found.

2. The Geographical Situation and Precincts

Hendourabi is one of the tributaries of Kish district under Bandarlengeh town, being located 8 KMs offshore the southern Iranian land borders. It is in front of Shibkouh coast between 53º 35’ to 53º 40’ longitudes and 26º 39’ to 26º 42’ latitudes. The northern extreme of the island zone riches Maqam village of Shibkouh district, the southeastern riches Kish Island and the western riches Lavan and Shidrou Islands. Having 22.8 square kilometers of area, it is located 325 KMs far from Bandar-Abbas and 133 KMs from Bandarlengeh, being located between Kish and Lavan Islands.

![Figure 1: The geographical situation of Hendourabi Island in the Persian Gulf Area](image)

The area of Hendourabi is 22.7 square kilometers vast. The east to west length is 7.5 kilometers and its width is 3.5 kilometers. The sea distance of the island to Bandar-Abbas is 325 KMs, 133 to Bandarlengeh, 28 to Kish, 24 to Lavan, 86 to Farou, 120 to siri, 166.6 to Tonb, and 8 to Chirouieh port. The highest point of it rises 33.9 meters above the sea level.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>District Center</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Subordinate Islands</th>
<th>Area</th>
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<td>Kish</td>
<td>Kish Island</td>
<td>Kish</td>
<td>Kish Island, Hendourabi</td>
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<td>Island</td>
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Table 1: The country division status of Kish district

References: Acquired from the Strategic Planning for Kish Island

1 Lanj is a kind of indigenously built small wooden ship for the purpose of transportation or fishing.
3. The Attractions of Hendourabi

3.1. Ebb and Flow Phenomenon

One of the most interesting phenomena in oceans and seas is their regular ebb and flow along coasts. This phenomenon occurs by the moon and to a lesser extent the sun’s gravity. Ebbing and flowing usually occur twice each during a day. Many tourists, researchers, the fans of natural sciences, and students have only read about ebb and flow, therefore seeing it can be interesting and beautiful for them. Being located in the middle of the Persian Gulf, Hendourabi Island has the best situation for ebb and flow; hence it has an excellent possibility to absorb nature surfers and tourists, especially the researchers interested in this phenomenon.

3.2. Beautiful Coasts and Geological Phenomena

In Hendourabi, erosion is the major factor in the creation and formation of geological phenomena. In areas far from the coast, wind erosion and seasonal showers have affected the low-resistance sediments, creating a diverse morphology. Flat terrains, coastal precipices, rocky coasts, sand hills, and choral riffs have created the magnificent geological landscapes of the area.

3.3. Wildlife

Due to the relatively high temperature of water and existence of planktons, the coasts and coastal waters of Hormoz strait is a good habitat for different kinds of aquatic life. Around Hendourabi, whales and carnivorous mammals such as sharks and dolphins that are physiologically so close to whales thrive.

In waters surrounding the island different kinds of fish, turtles, and such birds as lapwing, swallow, little green bee-eater, sterna repressa, Socotra cormorant, heron, striated heron, great crested tern, sterna bergalensis, sterna sandvicensis, tern, sterna anaethetus, Kentish plover, greater sand plover, osprey, falcon, etc, and such reptiles as sand lizards, braid snake, saw-scaled viper, scorpion, and varanus thrive. There are also 5 types of sea snake around Hendourabi coasts.

The mammals of the island comprise porcupine, weasel, bat, rat, and some donkeys that have become semi-wild. Due to nearness to the northern coasts of Persian Gulf, the island accommodates many types of land birds. It also has great sea-bird diversity since it is on the route of the immigrant birds and it is near to Shidrou Island which is the reproduction site of massive numbers of different sea-birds.

3.4. Plant Life

Hendourabi does not have a magnificent plant life, inasmuch as it generally has seasonal and permanent tropical fluorine in which the Sahara-Sandi and Sudan-Dokani types persevere. The general plant feature of the island is considered to be semi-tropical jungles. The plants prefer Halufit salty soil. This planting capability can be used for creating man-made forests.
Figure 2: The usage of the lands based on the comprehensive plan of the Hendourabi Prosperity and Development institute

1. The location of the new harbor with a breakwater and the relevant facilities
2. The location for tall buildings and residential areas and hotels
3. The location for creating a park
4. The location for sea sport resort
5. The location for industrial buildings
6. The space preservation area and airport

4. The Plans and Programs for Tourism Development in Hendourabi
As a subdivision of Kish, Hendourabi Island will have a beautiful and different visage in the near future, because having such natural potentials as water, soil, weather, and the special commercial condition of Kish and Hendourabi, it can be a tourist active area after the following facilities are provided:

- Executing the village guide of Hendourabi
- Creating roads and infrastructures in the island
- The health and education coverage by the respective ministries
- Creating waterline, power line, telecommunication and other infrastructures for the island
- Developing the social services
- Planning for the prosperity and development of the islands
- Planning for the environmental, touristic and cultural-services’ development
- Planning to create resorts in the beautiful coasts of the island

Table 2: Evaluating the environmental yardsticks and tourism planning for Hendourabi Island

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<td>Water fineness</td>
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<td>Ground water fineness</td>
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<td>Solid garbage recycling</td>
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<td>Historical and archeological sites</td>
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<td>Visual pollution</td>
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<td>Wild plants</td>
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<td>Wildlife</td>
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5. Conclusion
Considering the unique situation of Hendourabi Island in Persian Gulf, its proximity to the strategic Hormoz strait, its neighborhood with the affluent Arab countries, its nearness to free commercial zones, fine weather in autumns and winters, magnificent costal landscape, and nearness to small scattered islands suitable for winter camps, the island has good potentials for tourism development; this goal can be achieved by attracting domestic and foreign investment and creating a comprehensive regional plan. The tourist attraction diversity of the island can also absorb domestic and foreign tourists. The ecologic characteristics of it and its surrounding islands can create the ground for the
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regional development of the ever being Persian Gulf. Benefit can also be driven from the successful experiences of the Persian Gulf side dwellers such as the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Oman.

It is also recommended that by constructing recreational and touristic facilities and equipments, the grounds for absorbing tourists and nature surfers and also the economic blooming of the island be created.

- Constructing different dwelling places
- Opening restaurants that use the island’s possibilities
- Creating beach clubs and closed island-like pools
- Making quays for sport boats and leisure yachts
- Creating sea sports clubs such as water skiing, diving, swimming, kite running, etc.
- Constructing sport stadiums
- Building a big amusement park that has a pc-game hall
- Providing the necessary vessels for 1 day tours around the island
- Buying a helicopter that can take off from and land on water
- Constructing a sea aquarium
- Buying submersible devices suitable for leisure
- Making a botanic garden of the regional plants
- Constructing gathering halls and cinemas

References


[6] The comprehensive strategic plan of Kish


