



An Analysis of Kashan Tourism Drivers with Emphasis on Social Capital Performance

Kiani Salm, S^a., Shaterian, M^{1,b}., Habibi Beiroun, F^c

^a Assistant Professor of Geography & Ecotourism, University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran.

^b Professor of Geography & Ecotourism, University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran.

^c MSc of Geography & Urban Planning, University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran.

Research Article

Extended Abstract

Objective: In recent decades, the notion of social capital as an interdisciplinary concept has played a significant role in the socio-economic analysis of development, especially tourism development and the role of local social structures such as interactions, networks and local institutions, attitudes, trust and cohesion as if, it emphasizes that social capital provides the opportunity to improve cooperation between individuals and coordinate the development of tourism and finally to improve tourism. Social capital can be understood as the product of relationships in society and refers to a set of resources that are inherent in the social relationships of organizations that make social life more desirable. In different societies, small local networks are part of the social capital that can be beneficial for region and increase the hospitality of tourists. Therefore, given the importance of the discussion, analyzing the relationship between social capital and tourism development with issues such as trust, awareness, participation, cohesion, solidarity, social security, development of cross-collaboration networks and etc, can be an appropriate context to provide socio-economic development for communities. Kashan city with tourist attractions such as historical houses, mosques and religious sites, Fin garden, Silk hills, Maranjab desert, traditional bazaar, ancient castles, historic baths, Niassar falls, Ghamsar gardens, poets including SohrabSepehri enjoys the privileged position of tourism in the geographical area of Isfahan province. Since improving effective categories in citizens' social capital can lead to tourism development, this study aims to investigate the role of social capital in Kashan tourism development.

Methods: The research is descriptive-analytical. Data collection was performed in two ways: library and field. The field method is questionnaire-based. As such, the research tool is a questionnaire consisting of three sections of tools, general questions, and specialized questions. The specialized questions are designed in two general dimensions: social capital and tourism development. Social capital has been assessed using 32 variables in five indicators containing social trust, awareness, social participation, cohesion and solidarity and social security. Tourism development has been operationalized in the form of seven indicators of technology, management, economics, physical, competitive and environmental using 48 questions. The validity of the research tool has been confirmed by experts. Alpha coefficient of 0.821 indicates the reliability of the research tool. The statistical population of the study is the citizens of Kashan. The sample size was calculated by using Cochran's formula for 320 samples and distributed among the statistical population through a simple random questioning process. SPSS statistical package

¹ Corresponding author at: University of Kashan, Kashan, Iran, P.C: 8731753153. E-mail address: shaterian@kashanu.ac.ir (Shaterian, M).

was used for processing and analysis and Amos structural equation modeling software was used for modeling.

Results: The results of t-test with significance level less than 0.05 assessed social capital status in Kashan as appropriate. Also the impact of indicators of competitiveness, information and communication technology, comfort, economic, social and cultural, environmental and physical management principles on tourism development with a significance level of less than 0.05 and positive and high boundaries and low levels of confidence, have been positive. The result of applying the structural Equations to identify the most influential factor in explaining social capital among the citizens of Kashan indicates the highest agent loadings of 0.99 for the social awareness index. Security with an agent load of 0.40 has the least correlation with the hidden variable of social capital. The result of identifying the most important contributing factors to tourism development indicates a higher effectiveness of the comfort index at a value of 0.94. A correlation coefficient of 0.34 at 99% confidence level indicates a direct and positive relationship between social capital and tourism development.

Conclusion: Confirming the relationship between improving social capital and tourism development warns of the need for planning to build trust in the performance of government employees in local communities and build people's trust in social institutions in order to strengthen social capital as a key driver in improving and developing tourism in Kashan.

Keywords: Social capital, tourism development, Kashan city.

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