

# **The Role of Religious Tourism in the Development and Growth of Urban Metropolis: (In The Case of Mashhad, Iran)**

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine three dimensions of development, namely, economic, environment, and social-cultural issues caused by religious tourism in Mashhad. A quantitative method used to investigate 288 residents' perceptions who are settled around the Imam Reza holly shrine. Mean and standard division of the variable is calculated to understated to what extend respondents are agreed about positive impacts of religious tourism in terms of economic, environment, and social-cultural development. ANOVA performed to compare mean scores of economic, environment, and social-cultural dimensions by educational level, income level, and residency lengths. The results show that from perspective of residents, development of religious tourism provides economic contribution in Mashhad. In contrast, negative effects of religious tourism are reported by respondents. According to the findings of the study, there is a census about improvement of social-cultural issues caused by religious tourism in Mashahd. According to the ANOVA results, respondents with different educational level have significant different perception about economic impacts. Similarly, perception of respondents about economic, environment, and social-cultural effect of religious tourism varies based on income level and lengths of residency.

**Keywords:** Economic, environment, social-cultural, religious tourism

## ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Meşed'teki dinsel turizmin yol açtığı sosyal-kültürel, ekonomik ve çevresel sorunlar şeklinde adlandırılabilir gelişimin üç farklı boyutunu inceleme amacı güder. İmam Reza isimli kutsal mahfaza bölgesinin 288 sakininin görüşlerini incelemek için bir ölçüm metodu kullanılmıştır. Dini turizmin ekonomik, çevresel ve kültürel açıdan etkilerini ölçmek ve anlamak için bu yöntem seçilmiştir. Sonuçlar bölgedeki halkın bakış açısından yansıtılmıştır. Diğer yandan dini turizmin kötü etkileri de yaşayanlar tarafından belirtilmiştir. Bu çalışmanın keşfettiklerine göre Meşed'teki dini turizmin yol açtığı bir takım kültürel sorunlar vardır. Bir araştırmanın sonuçlarına göre ekonomik ve sosyal açıdan farklı seviyelerdeki insanların bu durumun ekonomiye etkisi konusunda oldukça farklı bakış açıları vardır. Doğal olarak araştırmaya katılan kişilerin dini turizm konusuna bakış açıları yaşadıkları çevreye, ekonomik durumlarına ve kültürlerine göre farklılık göstermektedir.

## **DEDICATION**

To my inspiring Mom and Dad(Taiebeh and Masoud) for nursing me with affections and love and their dedicated partnership for success in my life.

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# Chapter 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 introduction

Mashhad had always been discussed and mentioned as an influential city with political and economical stability in Iran, but mostly remembered as it hosts the 8th Shia Imam Reza. The city's substantial growth of population during the holidays and religious occasions, booked hotel reservations and increase of sales resembles the constant flourishing of religious tourism. It hosts pilgrims from a wide range of neighbor Muslim countries in addition to its greater domestic religious tourism. Since the late 90s, when Mashhad's Metro project began, the city has underwent dramatic changes, traditional districts are replacing with modern houses, apartments. Towers and sky scrappers are rising up to summits, increasing construction of starred hotels and emerging of high end medical facilities and hospitals with international guests are a few to name. As Mashhad renews and meets the new wave of foreign tourists, the commercial status has seen a divergence into its benefit with different city districts now stylizing with diverse tastes in business and commerce, from fashionable boutiques to brands, malls and hyper markets; Foreign religious tourists who are in business come and go, knowing they don't leave without an interest e.g. rising sales, contract signatures and happy smiles as the visage shows. in order to development of city so many plans and ideas has been presented and expanded in terms of tourism growth and development and necessity of positive tourist perception and attitude have been stressed by planners and experts. Due to positive attitudes of

tourists, destination and brand image will be reinforced and number of people who want to visit the place will be increased accordingly. Effect of tourism on peoples life have been categorized into 3 different ways as it is including socio-cultural, economical and environmental aspects and these concepts will be discussed in upcoming chapters accordingly. By appropriate knowledge about these concepts, suitable plans will be provided and accomplished. Multidimensional nature of tourism has influenced on residents life and standard of living so resident's perception towards concept of tourism and its impacts affect on tourism growth and development. Additionally, it should be mentioned that tourism conflict has been emerged while residents perceive that place values are threatened by tourist arrivals and the role of government will be critical in terms of place protection and local attachments.

## **1.2 Significance of the topic/problem statement**

Mashhad's policy towards religious tourism had always met commerce. The one factor that has brought more wealth and fair stability to its inhabitants, therefore, improvement and growth. The municipality's recent decision to restructure the foundations of streets, roads, sidewalks in accordance with international standards and more detailed urban designing was based upon this notion that tourists would have to enjoy much more of their stay within the city. This has also offered the citizens a new feel and confidence. The making of wide range of parks and museums on subjects of art, science, history, and amusement parks with added facilities had been welcomed by tourists who need entertainment as their visit extends. The Holy Shrine district is yet the noisiest part of the city, in case of commerce and hospitality. Luxurious hotels are booked daily with new business class sectors that come either for religious or business aims. The bazaar plays an active role in the hustle and bustle of this area. The main industry improvement rolls around construction business;

Holy Shrine of Imam Reza is an absolute pulse with new luxurious hotels such as Darvishi are stating themselves among 5 starred rankings, while further away districts such as Ahmad Abad, Sajjad and Vakil Abad has turned into places for sky scrappers and buildings that are used for corporations and agencies who represent industries and financial growth. These neighborhoods are meeting the highest construction rates for business and housing. Religious tourism has a verge of combination with medical tourism in Mashhad. The recent investments in hospitals and medical facilities have pointed Mashhad to tourist visitors, where they pursue their medical purposes as they can achieve more cost-effective services with high quality performance in the Middle East region. The circulation of money through the flow of religious tourism has flourishing effects on the city's banking economy. There are new ideas in the markets and new start ups who try to integrate themselves with tourists to provide efficient sales and marketing, in other words, better economical stability. Security, fighting with fraudsters is yet another well invested activity who was brought forth to ensure Mashhad's success in keeping its hospitality and reputation. Tourists require insurance for their comfort, and this kind of respect and trust, also improves the overall banking system improvements for monetary backing and circulations. As well as, insuring the satisfaction of tourists and their case of pilgrimage.

It should be noted that most of the studies in the term of resident's perception and attitude towards tourism have been conducted and published in the western countries such as Canada or US and necessity of these kinds of studies in Asian region have been felt and remained (Ko & Stewart, 2002).

However, in the past decades, the effects of tourism have been investigated in rural regions in order to enhance and reinforce local economy and only some few research studies were focused on urban communities and metropolis (Chen, 2001).

Additionally, the relationship between resident perception and attitude towards tourism growth and development and particular tourism such as religious tourism has not been studied appropriately and the necessity of this study has been felt on this period.

### **1.3 The purpose of study**

this study aims to examine three different dimensions of tourism development in accordance with residents perception and attitude and to understand in what extent these dimensions affect on local people attitude in term of tourism development in order to consistency of the development process. The aim is to explore how and in what way this kind of approach can be replicated. Another goal is to expand these cases for participation and further assistance in keeping the improvements on rapid pace. According to tourism growth and expansion, resident's attitude should be investigated and defined and also different facet of tourism impacts should be discussed as it is including social, cultural, economical and environmental aspects. Meanwhile effect of these components on people's life and standard of living will be considered and some resolutions will be emerged accordingly. Furthermore, resident's perception and attitude towards tourism development and growth based on some features like income and educational level will be discussed and scrutinized.

## **Chapter 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Tourism development**

Tourism is supposed to be one of the most significant forces which crystalized our world.in economical point of view, tourism brings prosperity and wealth for residents, it is the greatest earner of global export and foreign exchange and job opportunities will be provided by these phenomena. In addition tourism has influence on culture, environment and society. It helps to people to improve the sense of well being by travels and journeys and satisfy their human needs. Tourism has been contributed on cultural preservation and protection and environment conservation is another impact of tourism nature. Better Understanding between people and nations and peace are considered the most significant benefit of tourism industry (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2006).

According to report that was published by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), global economy benefited almost 5992 billion USD from tourism sector and tourism industry has created around 260 million job opportunity that is about 9% of worlds employment and also based on the recent report of World Bank Carbon Finance Unit (CFU) tourism sector has been recognized as the eco-friendly criteria in compare with other industries and it leads to sustainable growth and development (Su&Lin, 2014).

Based on WTO report tourism sector has been experienced a notable growth and development between 1995 to 2011 and the number of international arrival visitors has been increased that shows the growth of 4.6% per year (Su&Lin, 2014).

Tourism has been assumed as the industry of future which brings and provides unbelievable revenue. Protecting environment against human harms is considered as the fundamental responsibility of tourism and that's why it has been called beauty or green industry (Simon, 2012).

Years ago, noble and rich people travel to different areas of Roman Empire to visit and meet their families and relatives and it can be considered as a starting point for tourism and travelling. For this reason some roads were built and some facilities were provided next to these roads for families who wanted to stay on there. This sort of tourism quitted by terminating Roman Empire (Davis, 2003).

During 17th and 18th century some critical changes occurred and it leads to growth of tourism. Creating Grand tours is considered as one of the major reasons for tourism development. During 17th century, some wealthy people decided to travel over English Channel other destinations like France and they planed to stay for a long time on those places to enjoy their journey. Although this kind of tour (Grand tour) was specialized for rich people but it was a pave for tourism and tourism development (Davis, 2003).

In 18th and 19th century the new trends appeared and ordinary people travelled to different places to visit and enjoy natural resources and nature and it was much easier for average people to provide money for traveling rather than before. Also it should be mentioned that some technological development affects on tourism development



as well. For instance, by creating railways, people were able to visit different areas across the country. Davis (2003) listed some critical changes which affected on tourism development like invention of sewing machine, motorcycle, train, automobile and airplane and etc. one of the other factors which created some positive changes was weekly holidays. by 1951, almost more than half of the English labors have 2 week holiday during a year and it was good opportunity for these people to travel across country and it also flourish tourism industry more than past. This percent enhanced to 94% in 2000 and nowadays it became easier to travel to other parts of the country and even all over the world. Some factors have undeniable and critical impact on tourism and tourism development and technological development has made a revolutionary alternation in the process of tourism and tourism growth, some evolutions in the filed of industry, transportation and even in the level of income and population (Holloway,1998).

## **2.2 Definitions of tourism and tourism development**

According to WTO definition: tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their unusual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Some disparities exist in the two term of tourism and it is wrong to consider all the travels as tourism and there are some critical characteristics that should be involved in the tourism:

- Duration: overnight stay can be considered or not
- Purpose of journey: it should be done by variety of goals
- Displacement: it has to be outside of usual place and it is mentioned the most important factor of definition.

Holloway (1998) explains that a person who travels and visits any place with the purposes which are mentioned in the tourism definition is known as a tourist and also the duration of travel should be at least more than one night. The concept of tourism is assumed as the mixture of some serious factors like food and beverage or transportation system or facilities and also accommodation and there should be provided for tourist who wants visit a place .the industry of tourism is influenced by some changes and trends like fashion or even pleasure and it is necessary for tourism sectors to adopt themselves by these kind of alternations to survive in the market (Holloway, 1998).

Development of tourism has been considered as a multidimensional concept and it is not just focused on economical growth, some other concepts like social, cultural and even political impacts are included in this definition and also tourism development as a holistic definition should be addressed as a critical factor and also it is important to recognize and understand theories which are included in the term of tourism development. Critical ideologies which shaped and formulated tourism development should be investigated as well (Sharpley & Telfer, 2002).

Dieke (2008) describe that development of tourism is briefed in there different stages. The stage of finding and targeting a suitable place to visit by tourist, broadcasting some news about chosen place and response of community to this kind of interest which can be defined in some plans like development of services or buildings. Surely, tourism development should be considered as a holistic and homogeneous process that so many factors have been playing an important role on these criteria (Dieke, 2008).

## **2.3 Tourism Trends and Theories**

### **2.3.1 Life Cycle Theory by Butler: Comprehension of the Process**

The model of Walter Chistallars has inspired butler and later he presented life cycle model (TALC).chistallar stated that any single pattern has been followed by a particular expansion and development. Butler's theory tries to find an appropriate reply for some key questions such as what is destination and how and in what way it will be changed. Moreover theory has been contributed to accurate and meaningful information in tourism field of study. The main and primary idea of life cycle theory is shaped by product cycle theory. According to this concept (product life cycle), product sale experience a slow pattern in the first days and then it will be entered into new phase of product cycle and rapid paste of sale will be experienced and after that it will be stabilized and finally the product will go to decline stage. Based on this model butler provided life cycle of tourism as it is shown on the graph below:

Butler (2006) tried to expand his theory based upon product life cycle concept. Suspension, ambiguity and absence of accurate information are dominant characteristic of first stage of this model. The numbers of tourist who are going to visit the place are so low and amount of resources are limited (stage1: exploration/involvement). The tourist want to experience something new, exciting and unique, these kind of features take us to next stage of life cycle where destination is recognized by people and tourists and the number of arrivals will be increased (stage2: development).at this stage, destination will experience marketing activities, information release and propagation and preparation of facilities and accommodation (stage3: consolidation).at the third stage the number of visitors will be enhanced and if planners do not have a particular plan for destination, it will go to next stage where the number of tourist declined (stage4: stagnation).

The number of visitors will be declined according to wrong assumption of policy makers and planners that visitors are attracted by destination permanently and it brings prosperity and wealth for stakeholders all the times.as a consequence of this misunderstanding, some facts are ignored by these kinds of policies and destination will experience decline stage. Some changes in planners mind and attitude are needed and they should come to understanding about necessity of long term plans and this fact that resources are limited and also non renewable then, for being in competitive environment, destination and tourism products should be preserved and planned by them. This model has been criticized and fustigated for its oversimplified nature though it is considered as one of the basic principles of tourism expansion and development and it has been used in different theories and plans (Butler, 2006).

### **2.3.2 Comprehension of industry: tourism system industry by Leiper**

In contrast to Butler's theory which investigated tourism activities during particular period, Leiper has tried to apply his model in order to evaluate the process of tourism from the beginning (departure) to end (destination).his model focused on 3 different features. These are including visitor generating zone, visitor destination zone and route zone. Route region is considered as the secondary destination that tourists are transited. This region can be a city, village or public park or so on.

Leiper (2003) pointed out that route zone is considered as the connection area between departure zone and destination zone where the stop will be necessary for visitors for some vital activities (buying food or fuel) or even walking and experiencing something like taking a photo or etc. It will be necessary for community to picture its position within these 3 areas. For instance some motels are needed for tourists and it should be planned by policy makers to use these opportunities (Leiper, 2003)

### **2.3.3 Market system of tourism by Hall**

This model has been played a significant role on tourism growth. This model was crystalized based upon demand and supply and it mentioned that tourism is not just shaped by hotels, airlines, food and beverages or tourism industry itself and all the components should be linked together in order to customer satisfaction. Social and behavioral impacts of tourism are included in this model. Hall (2003) explained that tourist demand and tendency have been created experience and accordingly needed products should be provided for them. in order to visitor satisfaction different aspects of expansion should be accomplished by supply side of tourism and they should meet the costumer needs. Hall stressed that tourists experience has been shaped the balance between supply and demand and so it should be focused by policy makers and planners. This model has been criticized by experts for ignorance of host community and residents role on the model and another reason for these kinds of criticism backs to its market oriented nature of this model. Critiques believe that if it is based on the Murphy work, it should be community oriented as well (Hall, 2003).

### **2.4 Tourism types and forms**

Tourism can be categorized in different forms and kinds and it can be based on the number of visitors, age, goal, time, destination and etc. (Holloway, 1998).

if the number of tourists are taken into consideration it can be classified into individual tourism, mass tourism and group tourism and based on the age of visitor it will be divided into youth, adult and over 65 (third age) furthermore tourism grouped according to level of tourist income and wage that is named social-economic tourism and it is suitable for labors or retired ones. Another form of categorization of tourism is based on the season that could be winter or summer and sometimes it is grouped by dense scale and high or low season forms of tourism are described. Also some

other forms of tourism exist like health tourism or religious tourism, business and sport event which are formed based on the purpose of journey.

#### **2.4.1 Religious tourism**

As Travelling to sacred destinations is considered a composition of religious experience and journey, it can be characterize as religious tourism. If religious tourism just considered as the religious journey, it would be impossible to pay attention to other dimensions and impacts of tourism such as economical or cultural influences therefore, this concept will be one-dimensional.as it is suggested it can be ranged from secular to pilgrimage tourism (Dadpour & Sirat, 2009).

Tourism has been known as the suitable way for economy growth and development and in order to culture or religious and also peoples attitude, fundamental of tourism will be framed and formed (Khaksari et al., 2014).

Religious tourism has been considered as the physical travel for finding a truth and in search of some sophisticated answers for some important questions such as what is the meaning of life or even more specific questions like what is the meaning of my life. (Wilson et al., 2013).

According to Olsen & Timothy (2006) religious tourism has been assumed as the oldest form of non economic journeys and approximately 240 million of people visit holy places annually. Most of these people are Christian, Muslims and Visitors are interested to visit holy places for different reasons, as a contribution in heritage or culture, for sense of curiosity or even to enjoy the landscape of that place or site (Wong et al., 2013).Drule et al. (2012) pointed out that the concept of tourism happens based on two main reasons. The first one rooted on internal stimuli and that

force people to follow their motivations and try to gain what they desired such as pleasure seeking or recreation and etc.

The second one occurs when people are fascinated by external factors and expectations such as the natural sources and etc. Even so it should be mentioned that these two factors are intertwined and intertwined and they should be considered and defined simultaneously. However, motivation has an important role on the tourism process and travelling. In terms of pilgrimage and religious tourism, internal factors are considered as the main reasons and travel itself has fewer priorities for religious tourists (Drule et al., 2012).

Drule et al (2012) stressed that the sense of being a better human is the main factor of religious journeys.

The main importance of tourism and especially religious tourism has become manifest since human has been experienced the sense of curiosity in terms of knowledge about cultures, natures, shrines and etc. Necessity of tourism has been appeared based on the purpose of tourism and according to this concept; variety of this phenomena has been formed. The concept of travel helps people to gain a better understanding towards human values, common respect as long as economic growth and prosperity and religious tourism has been playing a deceive role for unifying humanity and bringing development in social scales and to build and reconstruct humans and human personality.

Religious tourism is almost known as the oldest form of tourism and travelling and pilgrimage is considered as the heart of this phenomenon. Although in the past years, travel to holy places did not have reasonable and strong support but the main reason

for such a movement has been considered faith and motivation (Tala & Padurean, 2008).

Nowadays ,the concept of religious tourism include a journey for making a strong relationship with others with like mind and strengthening and improving relationship and beliefs in a sophisticated way (Wong et al., 2013).

Religious tourism witch sometimes named as a spiritual tourism has been achieved determinant role all around the world. Income and technology are brought to countries which are planned in the field of tourism and people were abled to gain knowledge about other religious cultures (Tala & Padurean, 2008).

Tourist behavior can be influenced by tourism and religious tourism; for example, destination and visitor product will be determined by the aim of journey and also based on form of tourism facilities must be provided for tourists. Religious tourism as any other form of tourism are seeking for costumer and there should be competition for attracting more customers (Weidenfeld & Ron, 2008).

Maybe it is imagined that religious tourism is only about Hajj and Pilgrimage and some other religious issues but some other complicated concepts are included .in Islamic point of view, the Islamic and secular style of life are strongly twisted and related together (Jafari & scot, 2013).

According to Zamani-Farahani & Musa (2012), religious can be imagined as a sophisticated way to influence on peoples mind and their behavior.



The concept of pilgrimage is formed and recognized in any culture of religious countries all around the world for instance Hinduism or Islamic ideology; Judaism and Christianity are some of these well known religious ideas. The concept of pilgrimage is described as “A journey resulting from religious causes, externally to a holy site, and internally for spiritual purposes and internal understanding” (Barber, 1993), but nowadays this concept has been changed and it consists of deeper issues and characterized in different forms and defined as modern and new secular travelling or traditional and old pilgrimage and these kind of concepts are experiencing a serious rejuvenescence all over the world (Digance, 2006).

Nowadays, a very large number of people travel to holy places to achieve spiritual affection and holy soul and it is interesting that religious tourism is still known the most concentrated form of tourism. For instance, Hindu followers reach to 70 million (Tala & Padurean, 2008). Muslim who gathered for hajj ceremony in Saudi Arabia are approximately 3 to 5 million) and approximately 5 million people visit Lourdes in France (Collins-Kreiner, 2009). Based on the information which received from World Religious Travel Association (WRTA) almost 300 million visitors had a journey to sacred sites and it was estimated approximately 18 billion (Wright, 2007). Hence, many people have been attracted to visit these kind of sites every year.

In 2012, it is officially reported that the number of people who have made pilgrimage journey to Mecca for hajj is around 3.16 million that 1.7 million of these pilgrims went to Mecca from countries out of kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Jafari & Scot, 2013).

Based on the Islamic lessons, any healthy Muslim who has ability and afford for visiting Mecca should be a part of hajj at least once during life (Hanandeh, 2013).

Also during the past decades, the number of people who are fascinated to visit and attend on hajj increased. For instance, between years of 2000 to 2012, the number of religious tourist who visited mecca grew by 46% and by consideration of international pilgrims, it grew 34%.so many awareness of people and also economic growth in the source countries (Hanandeh, 2013).

Some critical factors have playing roles on this issue such as the growth of population and level of spiritual According to OIC (organization of the Islamic conference), most of the Muslim countries are located in Middle East and the number of member countries are around 57(Arasteh & Eilami, 2011).

Nowadays, almost 50000 religious organizations are serving the tourism and pilgrims and they are trying to organize religious ceremonies and pilgrims journeys (Wright, 2007).

## **2.5 Tourism and urban planning**

Nowadays the necessity of investigation and expansion of the concept of urban planning have been felt and policy makers and planners should be scrutinized these concepts for gaining a better comprehension of tourism growth and development.

Urban tourism is supposed to be a part of industry which manage and handle different articles and products for the purpose of satisfaction of peoples motivation and attitudes and also it should be stressed that residents and host community will be engaged in this process (Ashworth & Page, 2011).

the main purpose of urban tourism which can be a key distinguishable point from other sorts of tourism is its multidimensional nature that helps to gather people, place and also consumption in one area and it is considered as the mixture of different

features like culture, experiences, norms and values and it has been trying to provide a better environment for exploration purpose (Edwards et al., 2008).

Urban planning has been taken into consideration among the most important issues within tourism destination and this concept has been existed since Mesopotamian and Sumerian. People from different places visit cities and towns and environment. Cities and town have been crystalized by the complicated mixture of culture, music, Theater and art. People are attracted to visit the cities because of these kinds of phenomena.

Nowadays, considerable amounts of space have been consumed by tourism such as museums, historical places, theme and amusement parks and etc. Urban and urbanization have had a great influence on tourism and tourism expansion.it should be noted that the concept of urbanization and its significance have been underestimated and it does not consider tourism within itself (Edwards et al., 2008).

There are some features that distinguish urban tourism from other kinds of tourism. The primary goals of tourists in urban areas are some reasons such as business matters, conference, meeting friends and shopping rather than leisure. Residents and host community are supposed to be users of attractions and facilities which highly developed for non touristic reasons.it should be mentioned that the most important characteristic of urban tourism is the purpose of this kind of tourism and it should be well prepared to compete with other parts of industries to gain resources such as worker and land. During the process of planning variety of organizations should be involved for being competitive among competitors and necessity of urban design will

be critical and significant for better development and expansion (Edwards et al., 2008).

According to Edwards et al (2008) a city or town should have some features for being considered as the tourist destination such as large population for attracting tourists who want to visit their families and relatives, it should be easy to access for tourists by transportation systems or airports, considerable facilities and accommodations for tourists and visitors and also it should be close enough to some magnificent markets for tourist needs and demands.

## **2.6 Different perspectives of tourism development and growth**

Fair understanding of resident's perception and attitude towards tourism and tourism expansion contributes policy makers and planners to make better strategies in order to provide high quality service and society growth and development. Indeed, by understanding of residents concerns and problems, policy makers achieve a better support from host community and they will be able to improve the quality of resident's life (Chen, 2001).

Also Chen (2001) stressed that loyal hosts realize that positive impacts of tourism outbalanced its negative influences while land use and traffic jam has been considered as the most challengeable issues in nonloyal residents attitudes. Tourism impacts can be analyzed and investigated in different aspects and perspectives. Economical, cultural, environmental and social impacts of tourism have been considered as the main categories in term of tourism development and growth and tourism planners would be able to determine sophisticated policies in relation to these perspectives in order to gain success in term of tourism growth and development.

As Dyer et al. (2007) pointed out apart from working on alternative tourism growth, planners should be able to consider residents desires and ambitions for gaining positive response from them and as he mentioned development and expansion should be consistent with resident's attitude and values, in order to sustain tourism destination, local people should be involved in the process of decision making and planning as well.

Economic dimension of tourism has been known as the most important factor of these criteria and has a great influence on quality of life in some issues like employment level or tax revenues and also it is highly influenced by some events like ceremonies and festivals (Andereck et al., 2005).

Furthermore, Anderesk & Nyaupane (2011) believes that individuals quality of life has been impacted by variety of ways.as he mentioned products development that have been provided for visitors satisfaction can be used by residents such as variety of restaurants or cultural and local festivals or amusement parks.

Despite of having positive impacts of tourism some other negative influences has been recognized and appeared in different forms such as over crowding, traffic jams, lack of parking space or open space or even in term of crime increase and etc (Anderesk et al., 2005).

These negative impacts can results in dissatisfaction of residents and consequently it will be harmful for tourism destination brand image.in fact, effect of tourism on resident's quality of life is undeniable and it should be considered in tourism long term and short term plans.

Anderesk et al. (2005) pointed out that tourism effect has been emerged in different level and forms and resident community and perception has been influenced by these factors. These consequences could be divided into 3 categories. First, economic impacts of tourism that is appeared in different forms such as revenues of tax and job opportunities, inflation and recession. Second, environmental impacts of tourism that includes parks protection, noise and air pollution, over crowding, reduction of green and open space and etc. Third, socio-cultural impacts of tourism including quality of life, cultural exchange and sense of community, availability of recreational facilities, smuggling and prostitution and etc.

Most of the researches show that economical impacts of tourism are considered as the positive factors while socio-cultural and environmental impacts of tourism are imagined as negative or at least neutral (Tosun, 2002).

It should be mentioned that residents who benefits from tourism sector and its income will be more satisfied and they will show higher level of support and happiness. In addition, the structure of society will be changed by presence of tourists and tourism growth itself. Residents who are living far from touristic regions will show the high level of unhappiness and dissatisfaction because they benefit much less from tourism sector and tourism development (Tosun, 2002).

### **2.6.1 Socio-cultural impacts of tourism**

Understanding of importance of Social impacts of tourism has been recognized as the birth of recent trend of tourism phenomena. Neglecting social impacts of tourism is as impossible as ignorance of slavery or colonialism during 18th and 19th century. (Higgins-Desbiolles.2006).

Better comprehension and understanding about social influences of tourism on the host community is definitely significant for planners and governors and it will be helpful in order to reduce the level of confrontation between residents and tourists. As resident's attitude and perception have undeniable affect on tourism success, it should be considered as one of the fundamental parts of tourism products (Deery et al., 2012).

Tourism has critical impacts on community and living pattern of residents as tourist come to city for visiting and shopping and etc. These kinds of changes can be seen in resident's attitude and perception towards tourist as they try to be friendlier with visitors. These kinds of behaviors have direct impacts on resident's income especially those who are engaged with tourists directly. Moreover, some of the experts and planers strongly believe that the host community and residents should be highly involved in the process of planning and accomplishment. Residents have historical information about destination and how it should be adapted to different changes and also the main stakeholders of tourism are host community and residents. In addition, the host community is considered as the basic part of tourism product and it should be connected to tourism planning as well (Nyaupane, 2006).

Although some positive and negative impacts of tourism has been listed and observed but it is difficult to measure and evaluate these known impacts (Tosun, 2002).

It is obvious that Quality of life of residents and hosts will be affected by tourism activities and its impacts (Kim et al., 2013).

For creation of a desirable image of destination a satisfied host is needed and accordingly positive word of mouth will be generated. Tourist experience and repeat visitation are definitely influenced by host reaction and behavior. Therefore understanding of host perception should be prioritized by planners and governors (Zamani-Farahani & Musa, 2012).

According to Kim et al. (2013) for being successful in term of tourism development and growth some questions should be answered by the planners and governors such as whether residents understand the impacts of tourism (social, cultural, environmental and economical) on their life? If so, their sense of well being is influenced by their understanding and attitudes towards tourism impacts? (For instance, security, health or even emotional and ordinary life).

The significance of social influences of tourism expansion can not be overrated; all the agencies and sectors which are involved in the process of planning have to be able to figure out how people and host community perceive positive and negative impacts of tourism because these attitudes have been crystallized residents behavior towards tourists (Deery et al., 2012).

In relation to social impacts of tourism, positive and negative impacts should be discussed and scrutinized. Traffic jam and crowdedness could be included in negative perspectives of tourism development and social impacts of these phenomena, also tourism could influence on some other issues like crime, gambling or prostitution and also traditional culture could be endangered and destroyed by negative impacts of tourism. Also tourism has direct and positive influence on



facilities within the city or region such as foundation of roads and amusing parks (Kim et al., 2013).

It should be pointed out that resident's attitudes also depend on some features such as age, personal characteristic, language and etc. Moreover, native residents are more anxious about negative effects of tourism rather nonnatives (Harrill, 2004).

### **2.6.2 Environmental impacts of tourism**

The level of customer support can be influenced by environmental cues (Lee et al, 2014). Although tourism has been investigated and defined in different terms and forms but economical and social impacts of tourism have gained more coverage while environmental influences of tourism has been received poor attention from experts and it is confined to some general facts and issues and never explained and defined in details and most of the environmental studies have been concentrated on physical influences of tourism. It should be noted that as different and many environmental negative impacts of tourism has been known and recognized, a particular problem in term of environment should be received a great attention and focus. Environmental studies of tourism should be accomplished as long as other dimensions and it should be a holistic investigation as well (Kuvan&Akan, 2005).

The necessity of environmental impacts of tourism will be appeared when tourists are seeking for unique experiences and memories within nature and destination as tourism products are intangible and experience has a great role on these criteria.

Effect of tourism on physical environment is undeniable and these kinds of influences have been taken into consideration for decades but recently this focus has

been shifted to specific ecosystems and tourism role in climate change and some other related issues (Mckercher, 1993).

According to Mckrecher (2011) approximately 5% of CO<sub>2</sub> release and 14% of all gas emissions are contributed by tourism and transportation which are highly related to tourism sector .One of the key reasons for air pollution and environmental impacts of transportation is that tourists never pay attention to negative environmental impacts during their journeys and they are not interested to alter their travel patterns and also climate changes are ignored by them.

For solving environmental and climate changes issues a strong partnership between different sectors which are engaged in tourism process (government, consumer and industry) is needed. Although for protecting environment against different factors some policies are required but the consumer behaviors will not be changed without education and it will be time consuming process (Mckrecher, 2011).

In environmental aspects of tourism it should be noted that the concept of sustainability should be achieved a great emphasis and renewable resources should not be used excessively and it should be managed by planners (Mbaiwa, 2005).

Better understanding of tourism perception and attitude towards tourism concept and prediction of upcoming reactions will be helpful for planners to show an ideal reaction in order to preparation of reasonable service delivery and society growth (Chen, 2001).

Tourism has undeniable and critical effect on environment and then a reasonable comprehension of this concept looks necessary and useful. Environmental aspect of tourism has been defined and explained by scientist in different ways.

Chen (1981) pointed out tourism development as “a kind of environment in which people can engage in tourism activities, experience beauty, gain spiritual, physical enjoyment and knowledge and have fun. It involves natural, social, economic and political environments as well as scientific and technological conditions”.

Based on this definition some other explanations have been formed but tourism has been considered as the complex of some interrelated components centered on people especially visitors.

According to Zhong (2011) environmental definitions could be divided into two different categories. First one is narrow type which consists of the natural and ecological aspects of environment and Second one is Broad definition that emphasize on biophysical aspects of environment and also it considers social-cultural perspectives.

Tourism concept and development Is highly dependent on environmental impacts so this aspect should be focused by planners. Tourism could be imagined as the double edge sword which has positive (job opportunities and desirable brand image) and negative impacts (pollution, waste, noise) simultaneously (Zhong, 2011).

Bad understanding of residents about necessity of plans for tourism has been considered and defined as the greatest risk in term of development and growth.in

order to environmental sustainability of tourism, tourism attitude and perception about natural resources and preservation should be reinforced.

However some challenges exist in term of environmental dimensions, many visitors are attracted on nature beauties and then these kinds of natural places will be visited by tourists, while Residents are willing to keep these kinds of natural resources pure and safe and it creates some problems for planners and policy makers (Lee, 2008).

Furthermore, Hall (1974) conducted a survey that shows destructive impact of tourist visitation on vegetation cover of Sherwood Forest in England. Similarly, Filimonau et al. (2014) in assessment of carbon impact of short-haul tourism, using life cycle analysis, revealed that tourism significantly escalate share global carbon footprint. El Hanandeh (2013) reported negative impact of tourism in Hajj through GHG emissions of 60.5 kg CO<sub>2</sub>-eq per pilgrim day. Consequently, while tourism has many benefits, it is also one of the contributors to global warming and climate change.

These negative impacts can results in dissatisfaction of residents and consequently it will be harmful for tourism destination image. The impact of tourism on resident's quality of life is undeniable, something which should be considered in tourism long term and short term planning process. It should be mentioned that residents who benefits from tourism sector and its income will be more satisfied and they will show higher level of support and consent. In addition, the structure of society will be changed by presence of tourists and tourism growth itself. Residents who are living far from touristic regions may show a high level of unhappiness and dissatisfaction because they benefit much less from tourism sector and tourism development (Tosun, 2002). On the other hand, to create a desirable image of destination, a

satisfied host is needed and accordingly positive word of mouth will be generated. Tourist experience and repeat visitation are definitely influenced by host reaction and behavior. Therefore understanding of host perception should be prioritized by planners and governors (Zamani-Farahani & Musa, 2012).

### **2.6.3 Economic impacts of tourism**

Tourism economy growth has been taken into consideration these days and governors show a great attention on terms of economy and economical growth. Tourism growth is not all about foreign exchange income enhancement but job opportunities are created and it stimulates tourism sector development and growth and consequently economy will be evolved and that's the reason for attracting governor's and planners attention (Lee, 2008).

According to WTO, the number of international visitors will reach to 1602 million till 2020 and this shows the necessity of sophisticated tourism long and short terms plans (Lee, 2008).

According to researches, economical growth that has been achieved by tourism sector is not always assumed as sustainability or socio economic growth. Then it is sometimes in conflict with environmental or resources protection (Kuvan&Akan, 2005).

However, Tourism and tourism development have been considered as multidimensional phenomena and economical aspect of tourism brings prosperity and wealth for residents and hosts and it is imagined as the most determinant characteristics of tourism.

In order to interpret and explain the relationship between tourism and economy, we have to analyse this criteria from two views and the pros and cons of tourism should be considered and included in this explanation. Tourism as any other industry has some positive and negative impacts on society and citizens. The positive dimension of tourism including increase in level of resident's income and providing job opportunities and also tourism growth has critical impacts on goods and services such as transportation system development and roads expansion. Furthermore, tourism imposes some cost to the economy as well such as increasing budget for security issues and crimes and improving residents' destination security and it should be noted that some other factors need more investment to be developed and handled such as pollution or traffic (Lee, 2008).

Apart from this fact, domestic tourism will be developed and expanded by foreign tourism and it leads to physical expansion of city. By tourism growth, the number of skilled people who are employed will be increased and job opportunities will be created for more volunteers. Then the tourism sector can contribute to growth and expansion of destination and it can influence on residents' life quality (Lee, 2008).

Also Schubert (2011) has listed the economic impacts of tourism; according to his statements, tourism has positive impacts on long-term economic expansion through a variety of ways. First, the destination place will be able to achieve foreign exchange earnings. Second, by the tourism sector, notable money will be invested on infrastructures. Third, tourism has direct or indirect influence on other parts of industries, fourth, tourism has created job opportunities and will increase the level of income. Fifth, by tourism expansion, new technologies will be imported to

country and it leads to more researches and investigations in terms of tourism development and growth.

Although according to Kim et al. (2013) usually economic forces are known as the positive factors and standard of living will be improved by economical expansion. Hence, by means of these economical impacts amount of investment and economical activities will be increased and consequently it will have positive influence on personal and community satisfaction. Property, land or goods or tax prices increases are named as negative aspects of tourism and government should try to minimize negative aspects of tourism.

## **2.7 Tourism, conflict and public interest**

Positive Resident's perception and attitude towards nature of tourism and its impacts on life and standards of living has been considered as one of the key components of being prosper in tourism growth and development and it can be seen in variety of concepts and definitions such as conflicts. Positive attitude of host community will be helpful in order to gain positive results in tourism expansion and growth and also brand image will be reinforced by these kinds of feelings and attitudes.

Without doubt residents' attitudes towards tourism expansion should be considered in any single stage of planning especially if the final aim of tourism has been known as sustainability. Moreover, the host community should be included in all the process of urbanization (Vargas, 2009).

As Vargas (2009) pointed out maximizing satisfaction and positive influences and minimizing disadvantages and negative effects should be considered as the final destination of any tourism expansion and growth.

As it is mentioned in social exchange theory, residents are looking for some benefits in return to what they offer to tourists. For instance, resources that are utilized in different sectors of tourism have been provided by residents and additionally being hospitable and kind is expected from them. Furthermore, they have to be patient towards some problems like pollution or traffic and etc. instead of dominant role of residents, they will never be involved in the process of management and decision making by policy makers and planners (Teye et al., 2002).

Conflict management and its consequences should be scrutinized by planners for better understanding about tourism nature and concept and by utilizing these kinds of information; management process will be much easier for planners.

## **2.8 Resident's attitude and tourism planning and development**

tourism has always been taken into consideration for positive economical impacts for host community and it has been discussed that it brings new job opportunities, income, foreign exchange advantages and etc. As a consequence other industries are motivated to invest on tourism industry. Recently negative impacts of tourism has been focused by planners and policy makers and harmful influences of this industry on society, culture and environment have been scrutinized and discussed. Moreover, people's relationship toward each other and community can be changed by negative impacts of tourism and planners should be aware of this negative potential impact on resident's attitude and perception toward tourism (Ko & Stewart, 2002).

It is suggested that stakeholders and host community benefits should be considered in early stages of any tourism expansion and growth as it has been stressed that whenever residents and host community are involved in the process of decision making and planning, the positive impacts will be increased (Ko & Stewart, 2002).



Models will be expanded in order to development and growth of tourism industry and residents play important role on this issue. The level of residents support will be helpful in reducing negative influences of tourism and reinforcing positive impacts.

Resident's attitude and perception towards tourism industry should be considered by policy makers in any plan and program. In fact, host community should be involved and respected in the process of tourism planning and expansion and their role should not be ignored or underestimated. The response of residents will be positive if these kinds of things happen and accordingly it affects on society attitude about tourism industry.

According to Vargas (2009) the features that affect on residents attitude can be categorized into different topics and subtitles such as demographic, social and personal characteristics and issues that are related to tourism concept. Some factors such as age, gender or employment situation or level of education are included in the term of demographic characteristics. Social factors are including some features such as the time of residency, the situation of property (owner or tenant) and etc. Meanwhile, the time that resident lived in the property is considered the most significant feature among this category. Residents who were living on their own property have been considered tourism development and expansion more negative than people who have lived in rented places. Another fact that has been scrutinized by experts is that rural areas are less interested on tourism expansion rather than people who are living in urban areas and metropolis.

In addition, resident's attitude and perception can be influenced by economy condition and house possession. Moreover, increasing the level of daily contacts of

host community with tourists can impact on their negative attitude towards tourism (Jackson&Inbakaran, 2006).

It should be pointed out that the great level of economical dependency of residents directly influence on their positive attitude and perception. Meanwhile, the perception of people who are living in less dependent countries in tourism is more positive rather than people in highly dependent ones (Vargas, 2009).

The significance of residence behavior towards tourism development should not be ignored as Lepp (2007) explained based on TRA model (reasoned action) behavioral intents has influence on behavioral content and behavioral intent is affected by norms and attitudes and both of these contents are affected by beliefs.

In this regard, Policy makers and planers should recognize the resident's behavior towards tourists. For instance, in the term of positive behaviors, residents can be volunteered to help tourists for visiting cultural or heritage sites and their behavior can be so friendly with them and etc. Or their behavior can be negative towards tourism development and tourists for example they try to disrupt local meetings about tourism development (Jackson&Inbakaran, 2006).

As lepp (2007) described that tourism development has different stages (exploration, involvement, development, consolidation and stagnation) and residents attitude highly depend on these stages. During the early stages of development resident attitude is positive and by passing the time these kinds of attitudes will be changed as destination is experiencing evolve stage, resident attitude will be more negative than first stages.it is considered that in early stages of destination development people

have no appropriate knowledge about tourism concept and it is accompanied by some fear, suspicious and doubt.

Moreover destinations in similar steps of growth and expansion may have variety of attitudes.

One reason can be the economical differences in destinations and most developed communities have shown more positive attitudes towards tourism development. Generally, it is stated that economical situation of community has a great influence on resident's attitudes and perception towards tourism (Lepp, 2007).

It should be noticed that negative attitudes about tourism impacts are focused on some issues like public services and lack of involvement in civic matters (Ko & Stewart, 2002).

Traffic congestion. Pollution and other factors which are named as the external factors will affect on tourism attitude of host community and their behavior and it influences on brand and image destination as well. Furthermore, planners should be cautious about resident perception toward tourism if it is intended to expand sophisticated plans in term of destination development and growth. Moreover, there is a positive connection between understanding of tourism and positive attitude towards this industry and it has been stressed that demographic characteristics play an important role in this process. As the residents with higher income and educational level or social and political position in the community have positive attitude towards tourism industry and they are more satisfied with tourism development and its impacts (Jackson&Inbakaran, 2006).

The level of satisfaction of society will be beneficial in order to evaluation of host community perception toward tourism in term of tourism growth and expansion (KO & Stewart, 2002).

Tourism impacts neither positive nor negative have influenced on the level of society satisfaction and tourism development is affected by these features accordingly (Ko & Stewart, 2002).

## **2.9 Tourism and sustainability concept**

Tourism development and growth have been achieved a great attention from planners and policy makers over the past decades. The industry has a great potential in term of destination development and this fact has caused some challenges as well for planners. Social, cultural and economical impacts of tourism should be focused and the necessity of being friendly in host community has to be stressed. The concept of sustainable tourism has been started since 90s and its early concentration was on the economical and political issues but nowadays this concept has been expanded into different facet of development such as social or environmental issues (Saarinen, 2006).

Sustainability is the rationale way of evaluation and assessment of progress, culture or any other term of development but also some significant question are remained and should be answered such as weather the goals of this concept are achievable or not? (Jenkins & Schröder, 2013).

# Chapter

## CASE STUDY

The city of Mashhad is chosen as the case of study and some necessary information will be mentioned about different dimensions of Mashhad. This information are including some features like economy, geography, tourism and also some policies which are taken into consideration in phenomena of tourism and tourism development.

### 3.1 Iran

The location where the study was undertaken is positioned in south-western Asia and it is second widest country in the region. Population of this country is around 74 million and its landmass is about 1,648,000 km. having the oldest civilization is another notable characteristic of this country. Some characteristics like natural resources and cultural attractions have been empowered Iran to compete with other countries in the field of tourism, although lack of long term planning and educated experts has created some problems for tourism sector (Khaksari et al., 2014).

Iran has around 2800 km coast lines and this factor makes the mentioned country as a major destination for tourism and tourism arrival. The boarder countries of Iran are included Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Pakistan, Turkey and Turkmenistan. Iran has different landscapes and amazing outlooks like Alborz and Zagros Mountains and also some noble deserts like Lut and Dasht-e-Kavir have been located on this country. This country is divided into different states (30 provinces) and there are different dialects which local people speak and communicate to each

other. The vastest province of Iran is considered Sistan and Baluchistan with the vast of almost 181,785 km and the population of Tehran is more than other states ([www.ichto.org](http://www.ichto.org)).

Four seasons of the year can be seen in Iran which it should be considered as one on the most notable characteristic of ecotourism in the mentioned country. It should be noticed that there are just 17 sort of climates characteristic all around the world which Iran has 12 kinds of them (Zolfaghari, 2007).

Khoarsen Razavi is assumed as the third largest state in Iran with 144,681 Sq.km and the numbers of citizens are around 5,620,770 which are considered as the largest population in Iran. This kind of characteristic turned Iran into a special case for tourists. Iran has ideal potential for taking better condition in region and also all around the world in the field of tourism. Iran has noticeable climate among other countries because it has four-season and different weather can be seen at the same time. During December and January the coldness and heavy snowfall are seen. While you can experience a mild temperature in the spring and fall, summer will be different from any other season in the term of temperature; it will be hot and sometimes intolerable. 10% of oil reserves in the world has been produced in Iran and almost 16% of natural gas belongs to mentioned country (indexmundi, 2013). The Iran's export is completely dependent to oil and natural gas which is estimated almost 80% of country's export and it means that the economy of Iran is decided and controlled by amount of gas and oil resources (Indexmundi, 2013).

The tourism trend on Iran is supposed domestic and the international tourism is not as developed as other similar countries in the region. Mashhad is assumed as a major attraction for both international and domestic tourists especially in the religious form.

According to O Gorman et al. (2007) highly dependency of Iran to natural resources has a bad effect on any other sector of system and it leads to weakness of Iran in term of tourism competition and also variety of political tensions is a common cause for tourist decrement. different sanctions on trade and investment has influenced on governmental economy of Iran and it has some negative effect on Iran's economical development situation Furthermore the unsafe image of Iran among international world leads to some problems for tourism private sector and investors. Also lack of appropriate management and foreign investment in the tourism is assumed as major and undeniable challenges for this sector.

Lack of intention among Iranian citizens for visiting historical and cultural places and sites has caused inconsiderable proportion of profit has been achieved by tourism sector and also Iranian people are not interested to buy or support handmade handicrafts.it should be mentioned that all the luxurious hotels belong to a governmental sector. Private sectors are just responsible and run small hotels and some tours as well. According to Baum, lack of foreign investment on the tourism and tourism development has some certain benefits in terms of dependency and development of tourism and tourism industry.

### **3.1.1 Iran's natural resources**

Tourism is a multidimensional concept and different factors are involved in the process of development and growth.one of these crucial factors is natural assets and Iran has been known for rich resources. The main resources are included gas and oil

and approximately Iran owns 10% of oil and 16% of gas resources. Furthermore some of main mineral resources are included on the rich natural resources of Iran. It seems that Iran's government hasn't had any suitable plan for the aim of tourism development by using of these kind of resources. Some other problems are directly or indirectly related to structures and functions. By tourism development and its growth, the number of labor forces who are employed on this industry will be increased.

### **3.2 Tourism in Iran**

Iran has been assumed as one the most effective and powerful countries of the Middle East and it has many natural and cultural attractions for foreigners and also as well as other countries Iran has been encountered some challenges in the way of tourism growth and development.

It is notable that approximately 80% of revenue and income of Iran is depend on the fossil fuel selling and exporting to some foreign countries and it should be mentioned that the oil products and oil itself are considered as the unsustainable industry and foundation and highly dependence of economy to fuel will be unforgiveable mistake for countries which are producing oil products. Then necessity of existence of prospective alternative will be emerged and tourism as the green industry will be imagined as one of the best options in term of economy growth and development (Momeni, 2011).

WTO (world tourism organization) has published a report that Iran is ranked 10th place in terms of having historical and cultural magnets and 5th place in term of natural attractions and resources (Momeni, 2011).



Despite of having fabulous natural attractions and existence of more than 1,200,000 historical sites, Iran is not considered as one the top and pioneer countries in the tourism industry and just some Islamic countries like Saudi Arabia or turkey are included in the list of 25 top countries in tourism industry (Momeni, 2011).

This country is supposed to be as one of the ten effective countries in the filed of ecotourism and tourism but based on the studies, Iran has gained about 7 million out of 750 billion dollars total income of world tourism in 2005 (Zolfaghari, 2007).

Governor's negative view towards the concept of tourism and cultural and social effects of this criteria leads to regression of this industry. Therefore, the economical impacts of tourism have been neglected by tourism planners and ruling class (Khaksari et al., 2014).

Arab and some other neighbor countries are the basic market of tourism in Iran especially some countries that have Shiite Muslims such as Lebanon or Kuwait and Iraq (Aminian, 2012).

Based on the experts opinions, the major problem of tourism sector are related to lack of sophisticated plans for tourism future and development (Momeni, 2011).

The current tourism trend of Iran is domestic and the religious tourism is known as a major sort of tourism in this country as it will be discussed in the upcoming chapters. The form of dressing and some restricting roles for alcoholic drinks consumption has some negative effects on Iran's brand image towards international world (O Gorman et al., 2007).

As O Gorman (2007) described religious tourism has been played an important role on attracting of tourist from all over the world. Some of the international tourists are interested to visit Zoroastrian temples and Iran is known as a motherland for this religion. In the Islamic countries, pilgrimage tourism is considered as a major and most important phenomenon for the goal of tourism attraction.in Iran and especially the holy shrine of imam Reza in Mashhad, there is huge market for Arab pilgrims and also local people are eager to visit this shrine several times per year. There are some other cites which are known as a historical and cultural attractions like Shiraz and Isfahan.

### **3.2.1 Iran's tourism in different periods**

According to UNWTO, during the years of 1969 to 1977 the number of visitors who visited Iran was increased (200000 to 700000 per year).the major cause of such a enhancement was the Iran's political situation among the international community and some basic alternations in policies for the goal of attracting tourists and tourism development. They had built so many international luxurious chain hotels all over the country like Hilton hotel and supported the branch of these kinds of hotels in variety of cities like Tehran and Mashhad. These kinds of policies has a great and undeniable influence on the hotel and tourism industry and government tried to involve private sector on the process of decision making and fulfillment. After Islamic revolution the western countries and international community had imposed some tough sanctions on essential products and they tried to make some barriers in the way of Iran's growth and improvement. The number of tourists was decreased during imposed war between Iran and Iraq and on that period tourism planning was not on the top priorities of government.

Effect of tourism on the lifestyle and culture of Iranian people was characterized as one the main concerns of government whereas ordinary people had different perspective in the term of domestic and international tourism.

### **3.2.2 Domestic tourism in Iran**

According to WTO, domestic tourism is “...a form of tourism, involving residents of the given country travelling only within this country” (World Tourism Organization, 1995, p. 11).

Although the main focus and concerns of countries is on the international tourism and its impact but effect of domestic tourism is undeniable. Domestic some criteria's like job opportunities, heritage protection and cultural understanding can be influenced by domestic tourism (Alipour et al., 2013).

Alternation of population nature that accompanied by excessive use of private cars has influenced on the domestic tourism and its development (Alipour et al., 2013).

Religious and spiritual aims are known as the major reasons for domestic tourism in Iran and it is concentrated on religious site and cities like Mashhad.

Religious tourism is the main and major trend of Iran's tourism sector and almost 30% of people visited Iran for religious and pilgrimage goals whereas 30% belongs to business tourist and 26% are VFR tourists and Iran is visited just and only 10% by excursion tourists. Meanwhile Isfahan and Shiraz are known as the historical and cultural destinations for touristic goals and the main part of local tourists are living and operating in some metropolis like Tehran whereas Mashhad and Qom are considered as the most religious cities of Iran and local people are interested to visit

these destinations for pilgrimage goals. Almost 75% of Iranian people are about 30 and most of these people are somehow unemployed and government are responsible for the lack of work and they should create some job opportunities for youngsters that it is estimated almost 800,000 per year (Khajehpour, 2006).

being suspicious and pessimistic about foreigner investors is considered as one of the reason for lack of development in Iran's tourism and growth and also it should be mentioned that government monopolized hotel groups for themselves and private sector has not had opportunity to compete with governmental sectors and also foreigner investors are fully worried to invest on the tourism sector. O Gorman (2007) discussed that lack of permanent and long term view to tourism and tourism management leads to some problems and absence of training and experts are mentioned as the most challenges areas in tourism. Prohibition of alcoholic drinks and hijab requirement for ladies are mentioned as challenges for tourism development in Iran (O Gorman, 2007). 3.2.3 Iran's barriers in the way of tourism growth and development.

According to statistical information which are extracted in the filed of tourism and tourism development, in 1969, the number of people who had a journey to Iran was around 241,198, accordingly in 1975 has increased to 588,768 but after Islamic revolution of Iranian people and some upcoming events like imposed war with Iraq the number of arrival tourist has decreased as in 1982 just 68,595 tourist have visited Iran (Zolfaghari, 2007). Despite of having cultural potential for tourism, Iran couldn't get a notable success in the field of tourism attraction. Experts strongly believe that lack of suitable plan in term of tourism growth is one of the major recognizable reasons for tourism unsuccessfulness (Zolfaghari, 2007).

Zolfaghari (2007) pointed out there are some principles that should be considered in the process of tourism development such as:

- Local people should be weighted and involved during the process of tourism growth and development
- Tourist rights should be respected and considered by the host country
- Information technology has to be received notable attention in term of tourism
- It should be tried to gather and involve decision making organization in related to tourism
- World competition in tourism should be considered and suitable plans should be sketched in term of global market.

Experts strongly believe that the main source of problems in the field of tourism development has been emerged from the lack of quality of plans and decisions as long as investment and money in the system. Another problem is existence of disagreement in term of tourism development between government planners and visitors. Domestic tourists have limited choices in terms of facilities, food and beverages and also entertainment. Furthermore these kinds of things are so expensive and it is not easy to use for national tourists (Zolfaghari, 2007).

According to Zolfaghari (2007) there are some other barriers and difficulties in the way of tourism development. Some of these limitations and barriers will be listed below:

- Lack of educated experts in the field of tourism and tourism planning
- Existence of inflation and overpriced products
- Shortage in accommodation and hotels in different parts of the country
- Lack of cooperation and productive relation between government and private sector
- Existence of poor attitude and lack of knowledge in term of tourism among ordinary people (Zolfaghari, 2007).

According to forth development plan, it has been predicted that by attracting 20 million visitor till 2025, approximately tourism sector and government will gain 25 million dollars and it is imagined that for such a income and development the level of growth should be 30% in tourism sector and also it has been prognosticated that direct employment will be increased to 4% and indirect one will be 10% (Zolfaghari, 2007).

### **3.3 Mashhad as the case of study**

#### **3.3.1 Mashhad's history**

Mashhad is known as the holiest city of Iran and its name backs to the historical event which was the Imam Rezas martyrdom. The eighth imam of shies lived and buried on this place (Sanabad) .in Arabic language, Mashhad means rendezvous was located near to Tous which was the Khoarasan state capital on that period.in the Mansours.in 13th century of AD.mashhad was being attacked and looted by Mongols and the city was destroyed by them. Therefore some of the people immigrated to this area and lived on there.at the first days some Arabian tribes were living on there.in caliph Osman period, this place was conquered and occupied by Arabs and it was joined to Islamic territories (Aminian,2012) the main reason for being a magnet city should be considered imam Reza holy shrine. When the eighth imam of Shiite was murdered in the year of 203, his body was buried in Mashhad and it caused some growth and development in different terms and Sanabad turned to a large and great city and nowadays everybody know this place as Mashhad al Reza. After Islamic revolution (1989), the city was expanded and supported by the governmental sectors and shrine as long as city has been changed during the time (Aminian, 2012).

### **3.3.2 Geography and Location of Mashhad city**

Mashhad is determined as the case of study and this city is known as the capital of Khorasan Razavi state which is placed and positioned in the north east of country. Mashhad is positioned at latitude of 36.20 and east longitude of 59.35 near to Turkmenistan (Aminian,2012).

Mashhad is considered to be the second largest city of Iran with 27,478s.q.km extent and as long as some other metropolis like Shiraz and Isfahan and it hosts domestic and international tourists during the year and the most rate of facilities and accommodations belong to this holy city and it hosts almost 20 million visitor and pilgrims per year (Parstime, 2013).

The neighbors of this city are included Afghanistan and Turkmenistan and the population of city is about 2,778,287(Aminian,2012).

It is also located between mountains of Binalood and Hezar-masjed and having cold winters and enjoyable springs as long as mild summers are just and only some special characteristic of this city. According to statistical findings which are extracted by Municipality of Mashhad, the rate of population growth in Mashhad is around 2.5 % ([www.Parstimes.com/news/mashhad11022013](http://www.Parstimes.com/news/mashhad11022013)).

Religious tourism which is supposed the main factor for attracting local and international visitors is acting like an engine for growth and development of Mashhad and also it caused that this city is over populated as well. The role of imam Reza shrine, the eighth imam of Shiite, is undeniable and so many of visitors are desired and attracted by Imam Reza shrine and that is the reason which this city is

considered as the magnet for pilgrims and tourists from all Arab countries are interested to come and visit this holy shrine.

It should be mentioned that Islamic government of Iran place a great focus on the facilities and accommodations of Mashhad and it is received the most level of facilities amongst the all states of Iran (parstimes, 2013).

According to statistical data which are extracted by experts, 113 hotels are located on this city and also 488 Inns are functioning and around 255 hotel apartment are positioned in this region and more than 2.5 million of visitors are hosted during the year and the city accommodates around 14 million visitors from different regions annually (Parstimes,2013).

Due to unbelievable interest of international and local visitors for seeing this holy shrine, objective and pragmatic programs and plans should be determined for improving the level of facilities and accommodations of Mashhad and sustainable tourism should be considered as long as these kinds of functions. Furthermore, experts and professional planners should be hired and involved in the process of planning and private sector should be free to compete with governmental sectors and it leads to growth and development of city and holy shrine. Residents' attitude towards concept of tourism should be viewed as the critical factor in term of tourism expansion and growth and planners have to be aware of dominant role of host city and citizens.



### **3.4 Mashhad's economy and policies**

Mashhad is recognized for having a flourish economy among different regions of Iran and farming and gardening products are center of attention among any other characteristics of city for example fruit juices and tomato paste are included in this category. Furthermore the major proportion of saffron is cultivated in this region and noticeable annual revenue is achieved in term of tourism sector and its activities. Exporting handicrafts to countries which have the same borders with Iran is another way of making profit for Mashhad. Also carpets and leather of Mashhad are well known and available all over the world. the most luxtirious hotels are located in Mashhad and hoteliers are making noticeable profit by these kinds of accommodations and facilities which aid Mashhad economy simultaneously. in term of policy, Mashhad as well as other provinces of Iran are governed and controlled by central government and accordingly, government has taken all the responsibilities. Although some institutes and effective figures affect on the process of decision making and accomplishment. in Mashhad, Astan-e Quds Razavi is responsible for any kind of managerial decisions and fulfillment. In addition, Astan-e Quds Razavi is not only responsible for running the holy shrine but also they own and run some other businesses and associations .the history of this organization and its establishment backs to 1200 years ago while Imam Reza was martyred and buried in this city and they managed this institution by endowments which have been achieved by pilgrims and it Is estimated that their proportions worth about 15 billion US dollars (Aminian, 2012).

In fact, this organization works in different fields like economy, culture and etc. And after Islamic revolution they gained more political power and increased their expansion and nowadays more than 19000 people are functioning and working in

this institute and they own variety of businesses like magazines, educational and cultural organizations, universities and foundations and so on and so forth. Also majority of real estates are owned and leased by this organization. Bread production and health care institutes are some other activities of Astan-e Quds Razavi.

### **3.5 Demography of Mashhad**

Almost whole people who are living in Mashhad are Persians and some other minorities can be seen in this region like Kurds or Turkmens who immigrated from northern part of province in order to find better occupation and facilities. It is also notable that there are some nationalities that moved to Mashhad to acquire a guaranteed future. Majority of these immigrants are coming from Afghanistan and Iraq, another reason for this migration is that Iran has same borders with these countries such as Golshahr. During last years, Mashhad has faced some natural disasters like floods and earthquakes and 30 out of 42 of these natural events had happened in this region (Aminian, 2012).

### **3.6 Religious tourism in Mashhad**

Religious tourism in relation with Islamic roles and policies in variety of levels is the most sophisticated sort of tourism in Iran, especially Mashhad. So many of foreign tourists are welcomed to Mashhad and the number of domestic tourists who visit Mashhad is unbelievable (Dadpour, 2009).

Tourism growth and development and related marketing matters will be influenced by religion in Islamic countries and also effect of religion on visitor behavior is undeniable. It includes some questions that should be answered by tourists like which destination will be chosen by tourist or which product are preferred by tourist (Arasteh, 2011).

In Middle East region, the form of tourism has been influenced by religious and spiritual attitudes of people and people are interested to visit holy shrines and related ceremonies. These holy cities which are the most favorable cities of Muslims are located in countries like Saudi Arabia (Mecca, Medina), Iraq (Najaf and samara) and Qom and Mashhad in Iran (Khaksari et al., 2014).

Mashhad is considered as the second religious metropolis of the world and the most holiest city of Iran and also it is supposed as the jumping off point for entry of Khorasan state and the most available way to Turkmenistan and Afghanistan then it has to received a great attention from planners and managers in terms of tourism and tourism development and it could be encountered some challenges and problems in the way of sustainability.

There are some critical factors which are assumed as the effective ones in term of tourism development in Iran for instance life style of Iranian people and level of income has been changed and it has got better situation rather than past decades.in 2005,approximately 20 million pilgrims have visited Mashhad and especially imam Reza shrine and it could be shown the level of importance of tourism in Mashhad and also million of pilgrims from neighbor Muslim countries like Pakistan or Iraq has been visited the holy shrine of Imam Reza and Iran's economy could be influenced by this industry. Also based on the governor predictions and some statistical facts, in next 20 years, the number of people who visit Mashhad and especially Imam Reza shrine will be enhanced to 46 million annually (Zolfaghari,2011).

Astan - Qhods – Razavi has been trying to encourage people and pilgrims (mostly Shiite) to come to Mashhad and visit this ancient and historical city. After Islamic

revolution of Iran, Mashhad has been applying variety of facilities in term of tourism attraction and they have tried to expand metropolis by using different strategies and policies.it should be mentioned that after revolution and war the number of local people who visited Mashhad has been increased to 32,808,213 and almost 694, 473 international tourists came to Mashhad in 2006.Mashhad is not only considered as the most important touristic city of Iran, but also it has been received great attention for religious tourism in Islamic countries (Momeni, 2008).

According to statistical reports approximately 20 million people come to Mashhad annually (international and domestic tourists) and it leads to tourism and urban expansion and growth. Historical, cultural and educational attractions of Mashhad are assumed as other main factors which absorb tourist from all over the world (Moradi, 2010).

Mashhad has been experiencing some challenges in the way of sustainability and sustainable tourism and policy makers are trying to keep it in the minimize level. Unbelievable growth of population and absence of integrated and sophisticated plan management has caused some problems in the term of urban planning. Lack of cooperation between governmental organizations and private sectors has been known as other challenges for urban planning (Momeni, 2008)

## Chapter 4

### METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Sample and procedure

A quantitative approach has been applied to answer research questions of this study. Convenient sampling technique used to collect data of the questionnaires that composed of two sections. The first section was about 43 attributes of resident's attitude that have been focused and monitored by developed questionnaire (Chen, 2001). All of these attributes have centered on different facets of resident's attitude towards tourism in order to assess economical (12 attributes), environmental (12 attributes), and socio-cultural (15 attributes) perspectives of tourism impact.

Items of this variable measured using the 5-point Likert scale; they examine the range of respondent's consent about positive impact of religious tourism, which are varied from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The second section captures demographic variables such as age, gender, educational level, income and time of residency. In order to prevent ambiguity of questions, 15 respondents were first selected and questioned as a pilot study; the practice indicated that the content of items were clear and understandable. Reliability of study variable was checked by Cronbach alpha. For data analysis SPSS version 22 was utilized (<http://en.softonic.com/s/spss-20-full-version-free-download>).

The study was conducted in city of Mashhad including areas of Sayyad, Ahmadabad and neighboring zones around Holy Shrine of Imam Reza. Back-translation method used to translate questionnaires from English to Persian (McGorry, 2000).

Anonymity issue was assured to prevent social desirability and other source of common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2012). Questionnaires distributed among 300 residents who settled around the Holly shrine and 288 valid questionnaires returned. Hence, response rate is 96 %.

## **4.2 Data analysis**

Means and standard divisions of the variables are calculated to understated to what extend respondents are agreed about positive impacts of religious tourism in terms of economic, environment, and social-cultural development. ANOVA performed to compare mean scores of economic, environment, and social-cultural dimensions by educational level, income level, and residency lengths.

## Chapter 5

### RESULTS

#### 4.1 Results of reliability analysis

Results of Cronbach alpha coefficient for internal consistency of items of economic, environmental, and social-cultural issues are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of alpha coefficient for reliability test

No.	Variable	Number of items	Cronbach alpha coefficient
1	Economic	12	0.74
2	Environment	12	0.85
3	Social-cultural	15	0.72

According to results, alpha coefficient for economic is 0.74, environment 0.85, and social-cultural 0.72. Since, coefficient more than 0.7 is good, there are internal consistency among items of three variables (Table 1).

#### Factor analysis

Factor analysis performed to check validity of the measurements and the result outlined in Table 2 Principal Component analysis and Varimax method employed to conduct item extrication and rotation, respectively.

**Table 2: Results of factor analysis**

*Environmental Dimensions of Tourism Impact*

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Tourism contributes to the conservation of the natural environment	.92
Tourism contributes to the preservation of historic buildings	.91
Tourism contributes to the improvement of the area's appearance.	.87
Tourism increases the traffic congestions	.86
Tourism does not result in overcrowding	.86
Tourism does not result in noise pollution	.81
Tourism does not result in air pollution	.73
Tourism does not result in litter and waste	.69
Tourism causes the increase of green space	.68
Tourism causes the increase of open space	.63
Tourism does not cause water shortage	.62
Tourism does not cause water pollution	.55

*Economic Dimensions of Tourism Impact.*

Tourism contributes to the income and standard of living	.87
Tourism Improves the local economy	.86
Tourism Increases employment opportunities	.83
Tourism Improves investment and development	.82
Tourism improves infrastructural spending in the economy	.8
Tourism reduces tax revenues	.78
Tourism improves public utilities infrastructure	.75
Tourism improves transport infrastructure	.71
Tourism increases shopping opportunities.	.63
Tourism reduces the price and shortage of goods and services	.61
Tourism increases the price of land and housing	.55
Tourism reduces cost of living and property taxes	.52

*Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Tourism Impact*

Tourism improves the quality of life	.95
Tourism increases the availability of recreational facilities	.93
Tourism improves the quality of police protection	.92



Tourism improves the cultural activities and opportunities for cultural involvement	.89
Tourism improves the sense of community and community activities.	.85
Tourism improves understandings and appreciations of different cultures and communities.	.84
Tourism promotes cultural exchange.	.81
Tourism causes the crime reduction	.77
Tourism facilitates meeting visitors (an educational experience)	.73
Tourism preserves cultural identity of the host population.	.72
Tourism reduces prostitution	.61
Tourism reduces the consumption of illegal substances.	.58
Tourism does not contribute to smuggling.	.53
Tourism reduces tension	.48

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*Note:* 8 is the coefficient of the factor loading.

According to factor analysis, all items loaded on relevant dimension and there is not any cross-loading among the items of the variables. Furthermore, all coefficients are more than 0.4, which is the acceptable cutoff (Kline, 2014). Therefore, there is not serious trouble about the validity of the constructs.

## **4.2 Effect of Religious Tourism**

Mean and standard deviation of residents' statement regarding effect of religious tourism in three dimensions of development, namely economic, socio- cultural and environmental calculated and demonstrated in Table 2. These results show that to what extend religious tourism causes to economic, environmental and social-cultural development in Mashhad.

Table 3: Average perspective of resident about economic, environmental, social-cultural impact of religious tourism

Dimension of development	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Economic effects	4.19	.61	
Environmental effects	2.65	.94	288
Social-cultural effects	3.86	.61	

*Note:* Residents rate the positive effect of religious tourism from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). N is number of the respondents.

According to the results, respondents confirm the positive economic impact of religious tourism in the Mashhad ( $Mean= 4.2, SD= .61$ ).

In contrast, there is a census among the residents that growth of religious tourism negatively affected Mashhad in terms of environmental issues ( $Mean= 2.65, SD= .94$ ).

Like, economic effect, religious tourism led to improvement of social and cultural nexus in Mashhad ( $Mean= 3.86, SD= .61$ ).

To test hypotheses of the study, ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) test performed to compare perception of the different groups of residents about economic, environment, and social- cultural impacts of religious tourism in the study area. Respondents with different educational level, income level, and residency lengths are compared that outlined as follows:

### 4.3 Educational level

To understand whether residents with different educational level have different perception about three dimensions of development (economic, environment, and social- cultural) caused by religious tourism, results of ANOVA interpreted (Table 3).

Table 4: Compare mean of residents' perception with different educational level about positive economic impact of religious tourism

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Educational level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Economic effects</b>	High school	85	3.97	0.61	5.17**
	Diploma	44	4.22	0.58	
	Bachelor	114	4.32	0.58	
	Master	33	4.37	0.55	
	Doctoral	12	4.09	0.73	
	<i>Total</i>	288	4.20	0.61	
<b>Environmental effects</b>	High school	85	2.40	0.99	2.24
	Diploma	44	2.79	0.95	
	Bachelor	114	2.73	0.94	
	Master	33	2.84	0.83	
	Doctoral	12	2.71	0.85	
	<i>Total</i>	288	2.65	0.95	
<b>Social-cultural effects</b>	High school	85	3.82	0.57	0.70
	Diploma	44	3.93	0.55	
	Bachelor	114	3.92	0.66	
	Master	33	3.76	0.60	
	Doctoral	12	3.88	0.66	
	<i>Total</i>	288	3.87	0.61	

Note: \*\* is significant at level of 0.001.

The results revealed that residents with different education level have different perception about economic impact of religious tourism  $F(4, 287) = 5.17, P < 0.001$ . It means that educated respondents, comparing less educated one, have different idea about economic impact of religious tourism in Mashhad. Figure 1 shows means of economic impact of religious tourism that rated by respondents with different education level.

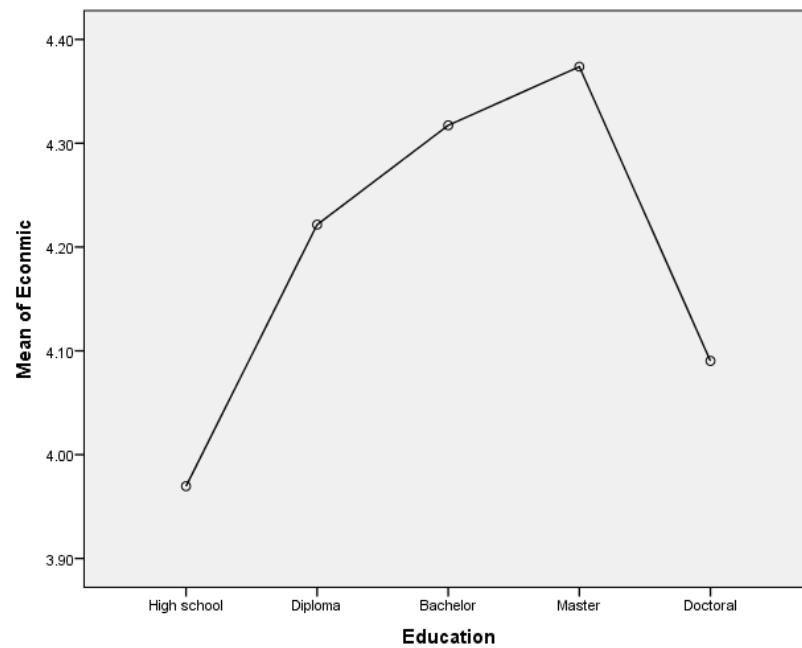


Figure 1: Compare mean of economic impact of religious tourism rated by residents with different educational level

As illustrated in Figure 1, respondents with master degree strongly agree to improvement of economic caused by tourism. As aforementioned, all respondents believe that religious tourism results in economic development, but those who passed high school less rated to positive economic impact of religious tourism (Figure 1).

According to the results, there are not significant differences among respondents with different educational level about environmental  $F(4, 287) = 2.24, NS$ . And social-cultural impact  $F(4, 287) = 0.70, NS$  of religious tourism in Mashhad (Table 3).

#### 4.4 Income level

Results of ANOVA for mean comparison of respondents with different level of income that opined regarding economic, environmental, and social-cultural impacts of religious tourism are presented Table 4.

Table 5: Compare mean of residents' perception with different income level about positive economic, environmental, and social-cultural impacts of religious tourism

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Income level</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Economic effects</b>	0-1 m	151	4.34	0.60	6.74**
	1-3m	52	4.15	0.60	
	3-5m	54	3.92	0.54	
	5-10m	21	3.91	0.56	
	>10m	10	4.36	0.60	
	<i>Total</i>	288	4.20	0.61	
<b>Environmental effects</b>	0-1 m	151	2.37	0.97	8.58**
	1-3m	52	2.90	0.98	
	3-5m	54	3.09	0.70	
	5-10m	21	2.67	0.71	
	>10m	10	3.17	0.65	
	<i>Total</i>	288	2.65	0.95	
<b>Social-cultural effects</b>	0-1 m	151	3.99	0.60	7.27**
	1-3m	52	3.93	0.54	
	3-5m	54	3.62	0.55	
	5-10m	21	3.44	0.59	
	>10m	10	4.00	0.71	
	<i>Total</i>	288	3.87	0.61	

Note: \*\* is significant at level of 0.001. "m" stands for Million Toman (1 Million Toman = 300\$).

According to the results, there is a significant difference among people, with different income level, who rated items of economic impact of religious tourism in Mashhad ( $F(4, 287) = 6.74, P < 0.001$ ).

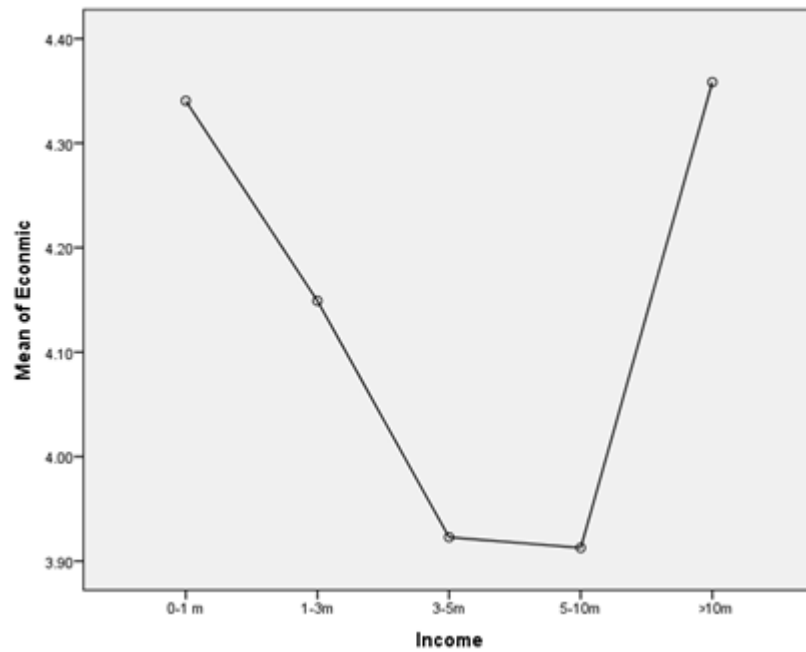


Figure 2: Compare mean of economic impact of religious tourism rated by residents with different income level

As shown in Figure 2, residents with 3-10 Million Toman income reported less rate of economic benefit of tourism rather than other groups.

The results show that residents with different income level have different perception about environment ( $F(4, 287) = 8.58, P < 0.001$ ) and social-cultural impacts ( $F(4, 287) = 7.27, P < 0.001$ ) of religious tourism on the study area (Table 4).

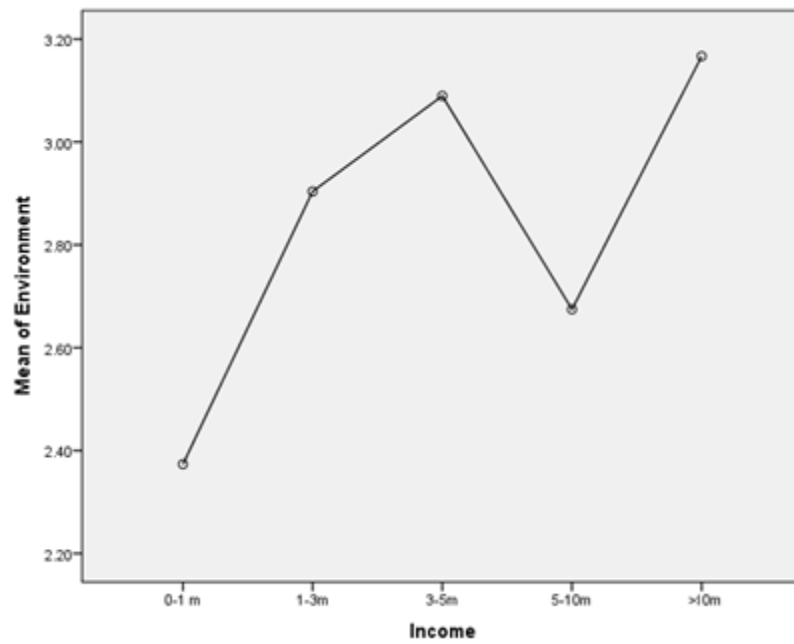


Figure 3: Compare mean of environment impact of religious tourism rated by residents with different income level

As shown in Figure 3, resident with less than one million Toman and 5-10 million Toman less than other groups are less optimistic to positive impact of religious tourism on environment of Mashahd.

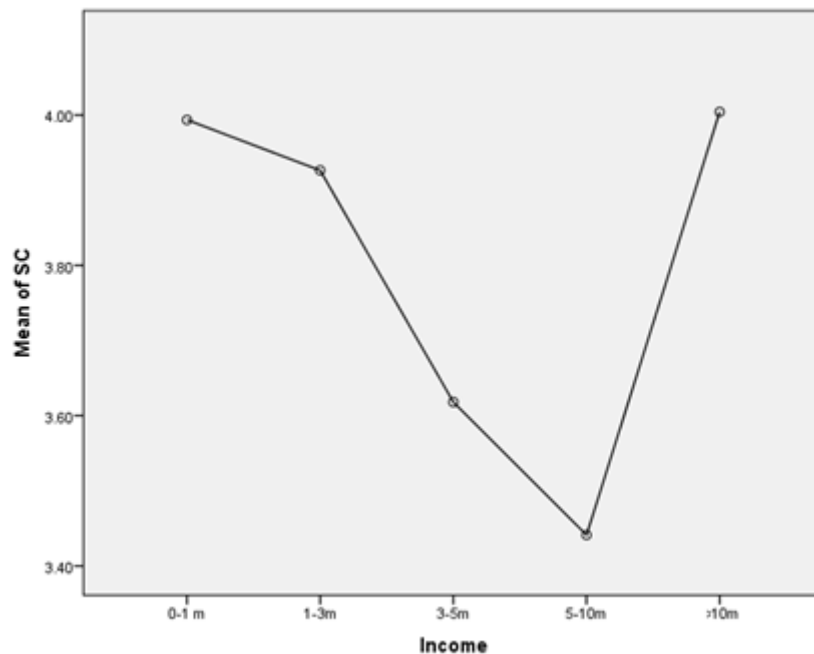


Figure 4: Compare mean of social-cultural impact of religious tourism rated by residents with different income level

People with 5-10 million Toman comparing to other classes less amount of positive impact of social-cultural impact of religious tourism reported (Figure 4).

#### 4.5 Residency lengths

Results of ANOVA for mean comparison of respondents with different length of residency that evaluated economic, environmental, and social-cultural impacts of religious tourism are outlined in Table 5.

Table 6: Compare mean of residents' perception with different period of residency regarding positive economic, environmental, and social-cultural impacts of religious tourism

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Residency lengths (Year)</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>F</b>
<b>Economic effects</b>	0-5	75	3.66	.55	7.31**
	5-10	63	3.92	.46	
	2.6	3	3.08	.00	
	10-20	76	3.65	.37	
	20-40	53	3.97	.49	
	>40	18	3.56	.41	
	<i>Total</i>	288	3.76	.49	
<b>Environmental effects</b>	0-5	75	3.11	.67	2.48*
	5-10	63	3.18	.74	
	2.6	3	2.67	.00	
	10-20	76	2.94	.80	
	20-40	53	3.16	.92	
	>40	18	2.60	.46	
	<i>Total</i>	288	3.05	.77	
<b>Social-cultural effects</b>	0-5	75	3.48	.42	7.30**
	5-10	63	3.69	.51	
	2.6	3	2.87	.00	
	10-20	76	3.27	.42	
	20-40	53	3.49	.53	
	>40	18	3.29	.36	
	<i>Total</i>	288	3.45	.48	

Note: \*\* is significant at level of 0.001. \* is significant at level of 0.05.

Perceptions of respondents who have different lengths of residency statistically are different in terms of economic impact ( $F(5, 287) = 7.31, P < 0.001$ ), environmental



impact ( $F(5, 287) = 2.48, P < 0.05$ ), and social-cultural effect ( $F(5, 287) = 7.30, P < 0.001$ ) of religious tourism in Mashahd (Table 5).

Mean score of economic impacts of religious tourism based on lengths of residency of the respondents depicted in Figure 5.

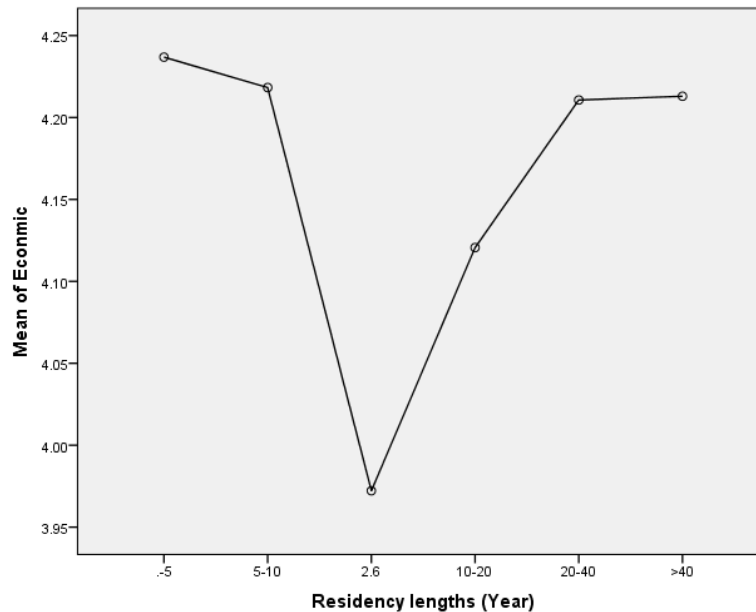


Figure 5: Mean score of economic impacts of religious tourism based on lengths of residency of the respondents

Residents who settled in the area of holly shrine for 2-6 years, comparing to others, reported low degree of economic contribution of religious tourism (Figure 5).

People who have are resident for longer time exposure high degree of distasifactory about environmental impacts of religious tourism in Mashahd (Figure 6).

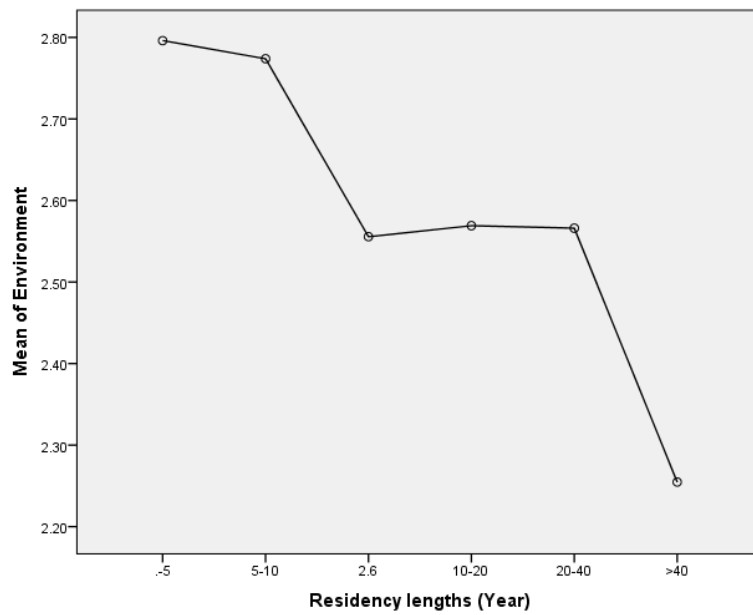


Figure 6: Mean score of environmental impacts of religious tourism based on lengths of residency of the respondents

The pattern of social-cultural effects of religious tourism by different lengths of residency is similar to mean score of environmental impact (Figure 7).

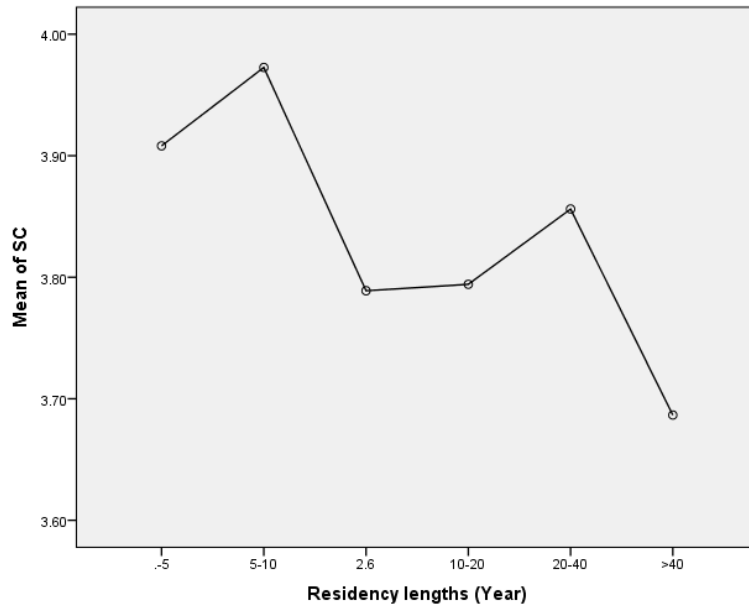


Figure 7: Mean score of social-cultural impacts of religious tourism based on lengths of residency of the respondents

Respondents who are resident for less than 5 years reported high level of positive effects of social-cultural impacts of religious tourism in Mashhad.

There are not significant difference about economic, environment, and social-cultural impact of religious tourism among respondents with different age and gender.

## Chapter 6

### CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

#### 5.1 Main findings

The relationship between resident perception and attitude towards tourism growth and development and particular tourism such as religious tourism has not been studied appropriately and the necessity of this study has been felt on this period. According to evaluate the environmental dimension of tourism development, this study examine role of some demographic information such as income and educational level of residents and time of their residency in residents' perception about consequences of tourism development. As Kim et al. (2013) argued when a society become as the visitor destination, the lives of citizens will be affected by tourism in variety of bad or good ways and their life style will be changed and influenced accordingly.

The results of this empirical study revealed that from perspective of residents, negative effects of religious tourism are reported by respondents. In this regard, Bubloz et al. (1980) and Kim et al. (2013) pointed out the environment should be protected and preserved in order to provide suitable resources in term of residents needs and if it happens, the sense of health and safety on residents attitude will be increased and reinforced. However, environmental dimension of tourism have been known as the most challengeable and discussable aspect of this phenomena and as Kim et al. (2013) stressed natural and cultural resources and heritages can be endangered and demolished by tourism development furthermore, more pollution

(waste and garbage) will be created by tourism development and the necessity of long term plans have been felt on this criteria.

Mean comparison of environment development by different educational level shows that residents with different level of education have not different perceptions regarding environmental impacts of religious tourism in Mashhad.

Respondents who have different income level have different perception about environmental effect of religious tourism development in Mashhad. Such findings are consonant with findings of Jackson (2006) who found that there should be a positive relationship between the high level of residents' income and their positive attitudes towards tourism in the community (Jackson & Inbakaran, 2006).

Similarly, people with different time of residency in study area have different perspectives about environmental impact of religious tourism. In terms of residency lengths, some authors (e.g., Allen et al. 1988; Allen et al. 1993; Clements, Liu & Var 1986; Schultz & Lime 1993) demonstrated that there is no significant linkage between time of residency and resident's perception and attitude towards tourism development. Whilst, some researchers (e.g., Brunt & Courtney 1999; Cavus & Tanrisevdi 2003; Um & Crompton 1987; Mansfeld 1992; McCool & Martin 1994; Ryan & Montgomery 1994; Stynes & Stewart 1993) urged living longer in a particular place cause more unfavorable and negative attitude towards development of tourism and empirical results of this study supported this view which represents old residents espoused high degree of dissatisfaction about environmental impacts of religious tourism in Mashhad. Life cycle of tourism development, based on Butler's model calibrated for Mashhad that depicted in Figure 3. However, there are some fluctuations in number of tourist arrival in Mashhad, which mostly caused by

political issues (such as presidential election and so on), exploration stage in last cycle occurred in 2002. Because Mashhad is well-known destination and cause of reduction is temporary, immediately involvement step emerged in 2003. Mashhad experienced development phase from 2003 to 2004, followed by consolidation process from 2004 to 2007. There is a stagnation period from 2007 till 2010 (Figure 3). In this stage, if policy makers plan to rejuvenate the system, more efforts and attention needed to improve environmental issues in the study area. The reason behind of this recommendation is that residents are aware about negative environmental effects of tourism growth, which adversely affects their attitude and behavior. The stagnation period has been accompanied by some fundamental changes in planners mind and they came to understanding about the necessity of long term plans. Making of wide range of parks and museums on subjects of art, science, history, and amusement parks with added facilities had been welcomed by tourists who need entertainment as their visit extends. Tourists would have to enjoy much more of their stay within the city. This has also offered the citizens a confidence.

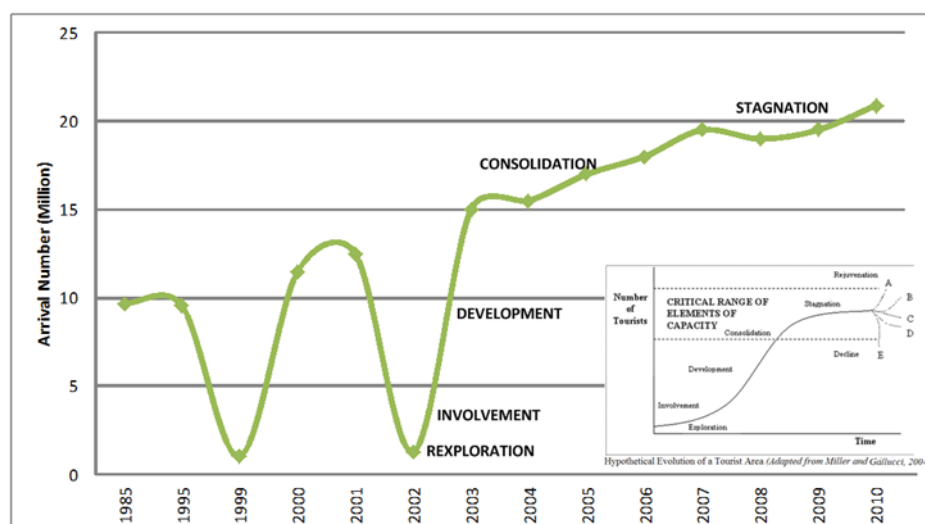


Figure 8: Trend of tourism development in Mashhad based on Butler's life cycle model

## **5.2 Managerial implication**

This study recommends important implications for tourism managers that should address their planning processes. Economic benefits of tourism development are an inevitable issue which should not be taken for granted and decision-makers and managers should be cautious about the well-being and livelihood of residents. In other words, to support tourism, local people need to get benefit directly and indirectly through development of tourism. Continuing negative environmental impacts and growing dissatisfaction among residents may have a significant impact on tourism industry by reducing the number of annual tourists. Residents will not support tourism in their town unless they benefit from the process.

The second managerial implication is that planners should be careful about the health of the environment, which is negatively impacted by the growth of tourism industry in Mashhad. It is important for planners to consider the sustainability of tourism development by minimizing the negative environmental impacts of tourists. As this study has indicated the environmental degradation has been a major issue recognized and identified by residents of Mashhad, who are main contributors to tourism growth and development. It has negatively impacted the residents' view of tourism and tourists. So, it is very important that the planners take the residents dissatisfaction and negative views seriously and show sensitivity towards meeting their needs and expectations.

The results of mean scores rated by residents about environmental impacts of tourism development revealed that there are harsh problems in terms of overcrowding, air/noise/water pollution, water shortage crisis, and litter and waste management, which caused by development of religious tourism in Mashhad. Hence, the last

managerial implication is that these environmental issues have priority for being addressed by managers and decision-makers within the process of sustainable religious tourism development in the study area.

### **5.3 Limitation and research direction**

Like every research, this thesis suffered from limitations. Firstly, this study focuses on perception of local residents. It is suggested as a direction for further studies to obtain managers, stakeholders and other parties who have key role in the process of religious tourism. The second limitation is that this study examines three dimension of tourism development including economic, environment, and social-cultural effect. In fact, political and technological aspects of religious tourism are ignored, which can be addressed in future researches.



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