

Examining the Environmental Impact of Backpackers in Caspian Sea Region of Iran

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ABSTRACT

Tourism plays an urgent part in economic progress, and the social welfare of nations. Among various types of traveling, one form of travel that traveler carries only a backpack has become a universal aspect made up of people from different nationalities and a worldwide community including low, modern travelers. Backpackers are mostly both influenced and influential by each other and the places they visit. It is still emerging as an institutionalized and well-known form of travel. The backpackers in less developed countries affect economic, environmental, and sociocultural aspects. However, backpacker investigation on travel and tourism of Iran have not been well conducted in the literature. At first, the tourism structure and case study (Caspian Sea region) was discussed. Then, advantages and concerns of environmental impacts from tourists, especially backpackers have been identified. To reach these goals, this study aims to discover the process through impacts of backpackers, especially environmental impacts, in the Caspian Sea region, Iran. Accordingly, behavior amongst backpacker tourists in north coastal region of Iran are explored. The research found that, according to managers and experts, backpacking has not significantly affected the damage to natural sources, vegetation, water pollution, wildlife, and illegal fishing. The result also has been reported to not significantly affected the positive environmental impacts. Also, backpacking positive and negative significance effect in economics and socio-culture has been studied in this dissertation. At the end, weakness of the area in backpack tourism and suggestions had been discussed.

Keywords: Backpackers, Environmental impacts, Caspian Sea region.

ÖZ

Turizm, ulusların ekonomik anlamda gelişimleri ve ülkelerin sosyal refaha kavuşmaları konusunda çok önemli rol oynar. Çeşitli seyahat türleri arasında, turistin yalnızca sırt çantasıyla seyahat ettiği bir seyahat biçimi olarak sırt çantalı gezginler, farklı milletlerden ve dünya çapında insanlardan oluşan evrensel bir topluluk haline gelmiştir. Sırt çantalı gezginler çoğunlukla hem ziyaret ettikleri yerlerden hem de kendi topluluklarından sürekli etkileşim halindedirler. Sırtçantalı turistler Dünya turizm endüstrisi içinde önemli bir pazar dilimi haline gelmiştir. Sırtçantalı gezginler, az gelişmiş ülkeler için ekonomik, çevresel ve sosyokültürel yönleri açısından fayda ihtiva etmektedir. Buna karşın, İran'da şu ana kadar sırtçantalı gezginler hakkında yapılmış herhangi bir çalışma alanyazında bulunmamaktadır. Buradan yola çıkarak, tezin saha çalışması olarak Hazar Denizi Bölgesi seçilmiş ve ilk olarak turizmin yapısı incelenmiştir. Ardından turistlerin, özellikle sırtçantalı gezginlerin seyahat ettikleri bölgelerde yatattığı çevresel etkilerin avantajları ve dezavantajları tespit edilmiştir. Bu hedeflere ulaşmak için çalışma, İran'ın Hazar Denizi bölgesindeki sırtçantalı gezginlerin yarattığı çevresel etkileri anlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Buna göre, İran'ın kuzey kıyı bölgesindeki sırtçantalı turistlerin davranışları araştırılmaktadır. Araştırma, yöneticilerin ve uzmanların görüşlerine paralel olarak sırtçantalı turistlerin önemli ölçüde doğal kaynaklara, bitki örtüsüne, su kirliliğine ve yaban hayata zarar verdiği bildirilmiştir. Çalışma ayrıca sırtçantalı turistlerin çevreye karşı herhangi bir şekilde fayda sağlamadığı bildirilmiştir. Ayrıca, sırt çantasıyla ülkelere seyahat eden turistlerin ekonomik ve sosyo-kültürel anlamda getirileri bu tezde incelenmiştir. Sonuç olarak, sırtçantalı turistler hakkında yapılan bu çalışma, tezin yürütüldüğü Alana çeşitli öneriler sunmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: sırt çantalı gezginler, çevresel etkiler, Hazar Denizi bölgesi

DEDICATION

To my parents.

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Throughout the writing of this dissertation I have received a great deal of support and assistance. I would first like to thank my supervisor, Professor Habib Alipour, whose expertise was invaluable in formulating the research questions and methodology. Your insightful feedback pushed me to sharpen my thinking and brought my work to a higher level.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Tourism is considered as a modern industry and also a flourishing phenomenon appeared after invention of personal vehicles and mechanized transportation, in the mid-19th Century. Then, thanks to the advance of passenger airlines in 1945, the growth of tourism accelerated. At first, this phenomenon took place in local areas within the country, but over time it became a global phenomenon from developed nations going to see other parts of the world. Traveling, especially for leisure time, has been considered one of the basic needs of humankind, as this phenomenon has been attributed to the world's population; it is a significant peaceful shift in human history. For instance, coastal resorts due to the special advantages like the sea, sun, air, views, and beaches increasingly absorbed the attention of many visitors. The appearance of the new locations, exciting activities, and an availability to see wildlife have made the coastal resorts as both popular and favorite destination for every year; where 63% of Europeans tend to spend times there (EC, 1998). The registered records from 1950 to 2002 demonstrate the steady increase for number of international entrance from 25 million to over 700 million. In other words, this progress shows an average of 6.6 percent of growth rate, annually. Accordingly, number of 350 million visitors just for Mediterranean coastal region by the year 2020 is predicted (Welk, 2004). However, this amount greatly undervalues the entire vastness of tourism since both short long distance tourism within countries are neglected (Burger, 2002). The progression of

transportation and communication technologies, the growth of industrial production, globalization, the upturn of free time, the betterment of retirement services, the advancement of community health, and other factors have brought about significant changes in industrialized countries. In addition, the government has managed to make tourism as one of the most crucial economic elements, and one of the most critical income-generating industries like the oil and auto industry. In the developing world, operations that are socio-economic, in nature are increasingly being considered in many ways (opportunities, threats, power, and weakness). Tourism is an essential way of achieving regional development. For many regions, this is the best way to improve economic achievements. Tourism creates more relation with the outside world, increases the internationalization process, and puts the mutual flow of information. It also raises cultural exchange, leads to the export of more goods and services, and spreads the area of commerce and social communication (Webster & Ivanov, 2020). The emphasis of tourism in terms of economics and employment is such that it can be recognized as the economic variable of any country. It has many benefits and can be a necessary source of jobs because it does not need much skill and training in the industry and locals can work in different levels of this industry with little ability (Brown & Chalmers, 2003). The progress of sustainable tourism satisfies the requirements of the existing tourists and host areas, while not only protects but also increases the upcoming opportunities. Also it is encountered that supervision of all resources results in satisfying economic and social necessities along with preserving cultural integrity, ecological activities, biological variety (Inskip, 1998). According to the definition of WTO about an increase in sustainable tourism, there is a requirement to the equilibrium point between profits and expenses of tourism for the local communities while sustaining the expectations of tourist, simultaneously.

Likewise, both of the host and the tourists are the major performers for the sustainability of the destination. Assessing the perception of host and the tourist within a place is essential because it is considered as a the tool for developing strategies and measures to achieve the sustainability of a destination (Sroyetch et al., 2018). However, the majority of articles in influences of tourism literature are investigating the interpret of residents about tourism effects on their societies (Andereck & Vogt, 2000). There are limited researchers to study the understanding of hosts and tourists towards effects of tourism on a single journey's end or society (Hannam & Diekmann, 2010; Puczko & Ratz, 2000), revealed an important variance between the opinions of these players. Latest works on effects of tourism certify that travelers are unconscious of their influences on the host place (MacKay & Campbell, 2004). Van Winkle and MacKay recommended visitors not to regulate their behavior to lessen their adverse impacts on a journey's end if they are not aware or sure of their involvement to the whole impressions. The fragile link between environmental performances has been an frightening issue in the merchandizing of environmental goods (Schlegelmilch et al., 1996). This connection appears exclusively extensive in the tourism part, in which situational authorities affecting the choice of product responsible for the environment at the destination are often removed from those who affect environmental concerns outside the tourism experience. Buckley stated that customers do not usually purchase eco-labeled tourism products because of low penetration, low user awareness, and significant uncertainty about environmental outcomes (Buckley, 2001).

Backpacking is one of the cheapest sorts of tourism and its cost is considered as one of the essentials of travel. Most tourist today's turn to this type of tourism, planning their trip at the beginning of the trip, carrying their travel equipment and supplies in one bag and generally using cheap local transport systems and staying at local houses.

If they don't have a place to stay, they set up their tents and use their sleeping bags, in this way they try to make more contact with the local community and get their food out to get familiar with the culture of the local people. Backpacker tourism has attracted the attention of most tourism academics and is rapidly expanding and diversifying as a tourism subset. The term "backpacker" is commonly used for limited budget travel behaviors, such as the use of cheap housing and public means of transport. In addition, the creation of subculture with their strong social representations of the purpose of travel is a unique feature of backpack tourism (O'Reilly, 2006). According to Poon, backpackers are typically interested in discovering cultures of their destinations along with pursuing valid experiences. between (Poon, 1993). Turning to public demography, they are mostly young westerners with 18–35 years old. Annual estimations show that there are almost 200,000 the UK alone backpackers (Nieoczym, 2003). Commonly, backpacker in the past was an institutionalized type of tourism consistent with the backpacker motivation to follow trustworthy experiences through communication with destination surroundings. Backpacker tourists are classified as exclusive tourists motivated to explore and experience different culture, scenery, lifestyle, and seek freedom without organization. In addition, according to interactional model of the Cohen, they stand classified as "drifter" or "explorer" (Cohen, 1972). Considering the tourist model of Butler (Butler, 1980), backpackers prefer the stage of either "exploration" or "involvement" end points than the "development", "consolidation", "stagnation" or "decline" ones. The previous stages of tourist end points are known as the stages which the effects of entrances of the traveler on the economic and social life of local citizens are important. Moreover, the physical and public surroundings of the region changes due to relatively tourism.

A big question about the phenomenon of contemporary backpacker tourism is how backpacker tourism affect their journey's end especially in less developed countries (LDC). less developed countries are generally refer to nations with low level of economic progress. Furthermore, the indexes like healthcare, vulnerable education, life expectancy, known as the Human Development Index (HDI) are related to social development. If the behavior of backpackers has a negative effect on their journey's end in LDC, understanding which behaviors to encourage or deny is essential. The way backpackers assess their behavior during travel, as responsible is necessary as well. Such these features have been overlooked in the studies of this context. The backpackers' sustainability plays a significant role in with its effects on local communities. Thus, the elites' automatic assessment of backpacking as "anti-tourist" is considered impractical, given that "their impact on Third World cultures is more stable than that of organized and spatial packaged tourism (Spreitzhofer, 1998). However, it is difficult to deny the significant economic share of the backpack market, particularly for marginalized societies in LDC with least resources and skills (Cooper et al., 2004; Kain & King, 2004; Oppermann & Chon, 1997). As a tourism option for small host societies, particularly those who don't have high-quality amenities, backpackers can make an important involvement to a local area, costing mainly for local goods, services and accommodation. The environmental, political, and social share of the backpacking tourism market in host societies is also essential. Though tourism on a small scale may not lead to more occupation, the type of job opportunities made thanks to backpacker tourism, such as housing, and local restaurants, will certainly lead to better self-sufficiency and self-determination in small societies. Otherwise, they depend on foreign tourists. Backpackers might use less resources due to their tendency to expend less money, and therefore have a lighter impact on the

surroundings rather than their more consuming tourist counterparts (Scheyvens, 2002). Since the critique of backpacking sometimes picks out the power of backpackers to affect travel forms (Cohen, 2003) and make tourist journey's end in previous environmental places in an unsustainable way (Butler, 1980), it calls for improved backpack stability and more accountability in its expanding. Covering environmental, sustainability goals, economic and socio-cultural dimensions, maybe attained by different methods as follows:

- Exploring methods to improve the economic profits of contributing host societies
- Contribute to restoration, protection natural environment, and wildlife through preservation measures
- contributing information and experience which can both meet the motivational requirements of backpackers and also possibly result in better informing and social engagement, not only in the host surroundings but also their arrival place, to reach more cultural understanding wealth/variety and communal unfairness concerns

In the research library on backpacking, although there are developing articles, debatable and inadequate works in the context of the effects of backpacking tourism still cannot be ignored. Especially in local societies in less developed countries (LDCs) (Cohen, 2003; Richards & Wilson, 2004; Scheyvens, 2002). In comparison, the domestic views of hosts and backpackers are relatively neglected. This study contributes to the existing literature, and clarifies the understanding of the environmental impact of backpack tourism in the Caspian Sea situated in north of Iran. The term "backpacker" is a social term and not precisely defined (Scheyvens, 2002).

To summarize the abovementioned points regarding the backpacker effects on journey's end in the Caspian Sea region, Iran: backpacking sort of tourists can be important sponsors to their destinations environment. Regarding the destination's environmental impressions, even though backpackers are considered as the best environmentally friendly sort among all kinds of tourists, the insufficiency of their LDCs destinations environmental means of carrying capacity, makes their environmental responsibility crucially essential.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The lack of backpacker tourists understanding issues in Caspian Sea region, Iran, and environmental impacts analysis are defined as a problem. Investigation on the significance of responsible behavior of tourists was originated by Krippendorf (Krippendorf, 1987). With cumulative studies regarding the harmful tourism influences on many destinations around the world, Krippendorf claimed that “every single traveler constructs or destructs social standards while traveling”. Up to now, the tourists' responsible behavior has not been emphasized, regardless of its importance in responsible tourists' context. Goodwin (Goodwin et al., 2002) states, about the responsibility of tourists:

“We are more expected to be a part of the answer if we learn to travel and spend our free times in such ways to maximize the positive impressions and mitigate the ones”.

Iranian Caspian Sea shorelines receiving tourists for holiday purposes such as the weather, sea, sun and sands, have provided active biological foundations for various financial actions in the area. While, these regions are vulnerable to serious losing attraction condition owing to imbalance tourism activities regarding biological surroundings activities. This study explores the ecological influences of backpackers in Iranian Coasts of Caspian Sea.

1.3 Significance of the Study

Since Iran is one of the cheapest destinations for all kinds of travel, primarily backpack travelers, and it has excellent social security for tourist arrivals and can be a place to meet the motivational needs of backpackers. Therefore, this study wants to explore the advantages and disadvantages of environmental impacts of backpacker tourism in Iran from the perspective of the middle and senior managers related to this field. Therefore, identifying these opportunities and weaknesses is essential for tourism development and prosperity.

1.4 Research Purpose

The concept of backpacker impacts in less developed countries seems to be somewhat contradictory in nature. Backpacker tend to show their confidence in helping their destination, which stems from the virtue of a “backpacking traveler” (Huxley, 2004; Welk, 2004). Despite the backpackers' confidence that they are participating in their destination, in fact, they seem to be experiencing many obstacles to responsible behavior. These problems are usually caused by intercultural communication problems, environmental mix-up, unpredicted problems (e.g. illness, double-dealing by natives or sexual annoyance), nostalgia or life surprises (Hottola, 2004). Therefore, this research aims to investigate environmental impacts among backpacker tourists in Caspian Sea region, Iran This study tries to explain the difficulties, problems and benefits of backpack tourism and to provide appropriate statistics for backpack tourism development in Iran.

1.5 Organization of the Presented Thesis

The present thesis is comprised of five chapters exploring the effect of backpacker tourists on environmental factors of Iran as an objective of the study. Initially, first chapter is dedicated to summarizing the research literature to explain the importance

of this research. Accordingly, exploring the environment and overview of backpacker tourists environmental impact especially in LDC is essential. Then, chapter two is studying the tourism and Caspian Sea region. Besides, the focus of this chapter is mainly on the features of tourism and each category's impressions on northern coastal area of Iran. Moreover, for the sustainable future of journey's ends in LDC, many other probable troubles especially spontaneous responsible behavior for backpacker kinds of tourists are required. Third chapter of the presented study is allotted to the problems concerning environmental impact among backpackers in LDCs. Also, this chapter analyses the theory of backpackers and environmental impacts of tourism literature. Then, serious concepts of the tourism's environmental impacts are also discussed here. Considering the mentioned steps, the proposed methods used in this study are introduced in chapter four. In other words, this section identifies middle and senior managers view of consequences of behaviors that backpacker tourists regarding the environmental influences of backpacker tourist in Caspian Sea region, Iran. Finally, conclusion and results are represented in chapter five.

Chapter 2

TOURISM IMPACTS IN CASPIAN SEA

2.1 Tourism: Overview

The main goal for this study was to find the procedure which tourism affected by the travel experiences of backpackers in the Caspian Sea region, Iran. Chapter two start with an overview in tourism, categories of tourism. The highest added value in the most countries goes to services, it has many sections and provides job opportunities in each part, one of them is the tourism sector. In fact, tourism plays the key role in economic development, and the social welfare of nations and it can be assumed as one of the cheapest method to reduce the unemployment rate. (ZEYN et al., 2009). World Tourism Organization (WTO) predict 1.6 billion tourists in a year for the year 2020, which means two billion dollars a year and about five million dollars a day that will cost travelers around the world. This is a few times the oil incomes of all the OPEC member countries. According to the statistics for the year 2001, about 2 million jobs related directly to the tourism industry in all over the world. In the year 2005, this number reached 338 million jobs, this means that one in eight jobs in the world is related to the tourism industry (Busby, 2005). Tourism means trip or travel to perform business or become happy; In addition, the concept of touring, the business of “interesting”, housing and accommodating, amusing visitors, and the commercial of working tours. WTO defines tourism further commonly, "beyond the usual opinion of tourism since being restricted just to free times actions ", as folks "taking a trip to and stop in destinations out of their typical surroundings for neither less than 24 hours nor

more than one following year for vacation, commercial and similar goals" (Kester, 2004).

2.2 Types of Tourism

2.2.1 International Tourism

International tourism includes the actions of both habitant and non-habitant travelers overseas (Baum, 2007). The international tourism industry is an industry that is known as a completely healthy and beneficial sector, and history have shown that commercial inequalities and societal issues have been because of a lack of planning, not to the basic nature of tourism itself.

It is not easy to say that the developing of this industry faced no problems, but the results and benefits of investing in it, must be compared with other sectors, especially in developing countries. Additionally, it should be added that in the recent era of combating environmental pollution, tourism can be categorized as a clean industry, which means that environmental protection and natural beauty are closely related to tourism.

Generally, the effects that tourism has on different countries are:

- Export of goods through purchase and transfer by tourists.
- Create various tourism services.
- Development of travel agencies and transportation companies.
- Increasing of foreign investment income.
- Development of airports and roads.
- Establishment of institutions and centers for the preservation of ancient and historical monuments and the environment.
- Development of other institutions related to the tourism industry.
- Creating various tourist attractions, (Ferguson, 2007)

The late 2000s, because of the recession, global tourism request declined sharply from the late of 2008 to the almost end of 2009. When the H1N1 (flu virus) epidemic turned to be controlled in some nations. As a result, there was a 4.2% decrease in international tourist arrivals worldwide in 2009 to 880 million, and a 5.7% decrease in international tourism arrivals (Ferguson, 2007). In 2010, global tourism increased to 919B US dollars, rising 6.5 percent compared to 2009, referring to an increase in real terms of 4.7%. In 2010, there were more than 940 million global travelers (Ferguson, 2007).

In recent years, international tourism keeps its rising according to the charts. In 2019, one and a half billion global tourists were registered worldwide. Four percent increase compared to the former year also projected for the year 2020, confirms tourism as a important and tough commercial part, particularly given the existing uncertainty. Similarly, it is required that such development to be controlled correctly in order to make the finest use of tourism chances for societies (Ferguson, 2007).

In 2018, Asia-Pacific saw a growth in inflows and outflows. Asia-Pacific saw the biggest growth in inputs, followed by Africa (Figure 1). Asia-Pacific and Europe experienced higher-than-average growth in tourism income (Figure 2). Europe expected the 50 percent of the world's global entrances, followed by Asia and Oceania with a quarter entrances (Figure 3). Europe accounts for about forty percent of global visitors arrivals, followed by Asia and the Pacific by nearly 30 percent (Figure 4, Ferguson, 2007).

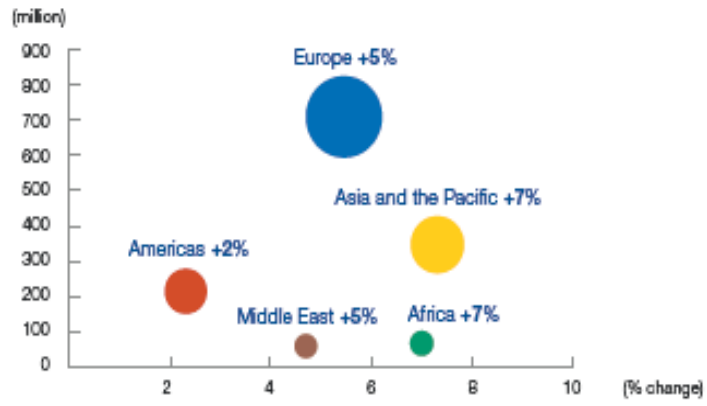


Figure 1: Global traveler entrances by districts, (Ferguson, 2007)

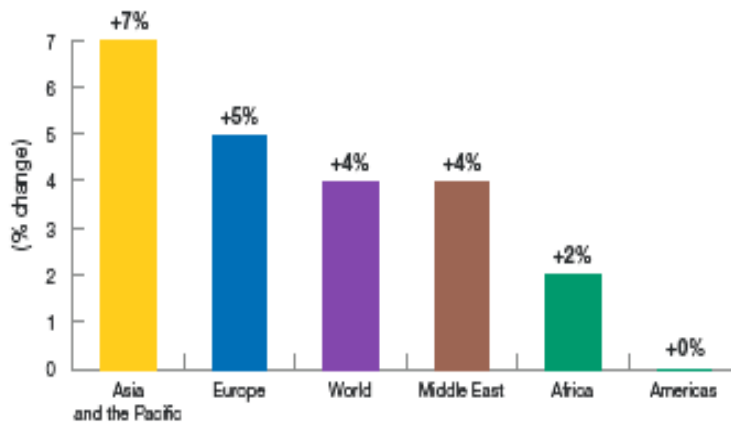


Figure 2: Global traveler entrances by districts, (Ferguson, 2007)

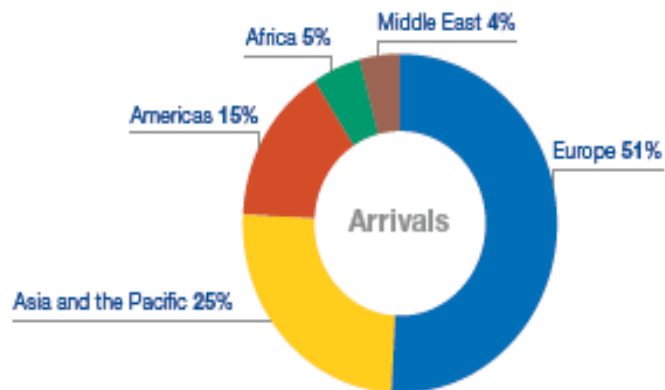


Figure 3: Global traveler entrances (Ferguson, 2007)

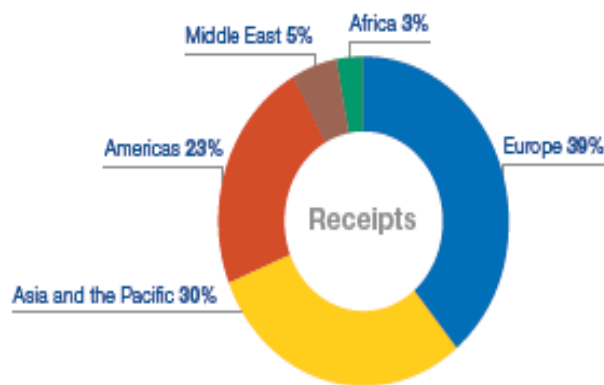


Figure 4: International tourism receipts, (Ferguson, 2007)

Table 1 shows the Statistical Annex of International tourist arrivals and table 2 illustrates the Statistical Annex of International tourism receipts in 2016, 2017 and 2018 in Europe (including North, West, Center/ East, South and Medit. Europe parts), Asia and the Pacific (including North-Eastern, South-Eastern, and Southern parts of Asia with regard to Oceania), America (including Northern, Central, and Southern parts of America regarding Caribbean), Africa (including North and Sub-Saharan parts of Africa), and finally considering the Middle East.

Table 1: Statistical Annex - Global visitors entrances (Ferguson, 2007)

	Global Tourist Entrances						
	(million)			Share(%)	Variation(%)		Av. annual growth(%)
	2010	2017	2018	2018	17/16	18/17	10-18
World	952	1329	1401	100	7.0	5.4	5.0
Advanced Economics	515	730	762	54.2	6.3	4.3	5.0
Emerging Economics	437	598	639	45.6	7.9	6.8	4.9
Europe	486.4	673.3	710	50.7	8.6	5.5	4.8
Northern Europe	57	78.4	78.9	5.6	6.0	0.5	4.1
Western Europe	154.4	192.7	200.4	14.3	6.1	4.0	3.3

East Europe	98.1	134.6	141.4	10.1	5.6	5.0	4.7
South	176.9	267.5	289.4	20.7	17.9	8.2	6.3
Asia and The pacific	208.2	324.0	347.7	24.8	5.7	7.3	6.6
North-East Asia	111.5	16.6	17.0	1.2	6.1	2.8	5.1
South-East Asia	70.5	120.5	120.7	9.2	8.8	6.8	7.8
Oceania	11.5	16.6	17.0	1.2	6.1	2.8	5.1
South Asia	14.7	27.5	32.8	2.3	6.2	19.4	10.5
American	150.4	210.8	215.7	15.4	4.7	2.3	4.6
North America	99.5	137.1	142.2	10.1	4.3	3.7	4.6
Caribbean	19.5	26.0	25.7	1.8	3.0	-1.4	3.5
Central America	7.8	11.1	10.8	0.8	4.6	-2.4	4.2
South America	28.6	36.6	37.0	2.6	7.7	1.2	5.8
Africa	50.4	62.7	67.1	4.8	8.5	7.0	3.6
North Africa	19.7	21.7	23.9	1.7	14.7	10.1	2.4
Subsaharan Africa	30.7	41.1	43.3	3.1	5.5	5.4	4.4
Middle East	56.1	57.71	60.5	4.3	4.1	4.7	0.9

Table 2: Statistical Annex - International Tourism Receipts (Ferguson, 2007)

International Tourism Receipts									
	(USD Billion)			(EUR Billion)			Share(%)	Change(%)	
	2010	2017	2018	2010	2017	2018	2018	17/1	18*1
World	975	1346	1451	736	1192	1229	100	5.2	4.4
Advanced Economics	638	869	937	481	769	793	64.6	4	3.7
Emerging Economics	337	477	514	234	422	435	35.4	7.6	5.7
Europe	422.	519.	570.	318.	459.	483	39.3	7.5	4.9

Northern Europe	60.6	88.6	93.9	46	78	79	6.5	5.7	1.1
Western Europe	152.	170.	187.	115	151	159	12.9	4.7	3.3
East Europe	48.5	60.7	68.7	36	54	58	4.7	7	8.8
South	161.	199.	220.	122	176	187	15.2	11.2	6.9
Asia and The pacific	254.	396	435.	191.	350.	368.	30	4.3	7.4
North-East Asia	123	168.	188.	93	149	160	13	-1.5	8.9
South-East Asia	68.5	130.	142.	52	116	121	9.8	9.1	4.7
Oceania	42.8	57.4	61.1	32	51	52	4.2	6.1	6.9
South Asia	20.1	39.9	43.6	15	35	37	3	13.9	10.4
American	215.	325.	333.	162.	288.	282.	23	0.9	0.3
North America	164.	252.	258.	124	223	219	17.8	0.7	0.1
Caribbean	23.3	31.8	32	18	28	27	2.2	0.5	-1.3
Central America	6.9	12.6	12.8	5	11	11	0.9	4.8	1
South America	20.5	29	29.9	15	26	25	2.1	1.1	3.4
Africa	30.4	36.4	38.4	23	32.2	32.5	2.6	7.7	1.6
North Africa	9.7	9.9	10.7	7	9	9	0.7	9.3	3.8
Subsaharan Africa	20.8	26.5	27.7	16	23	23	1.9	7.1	0.7
Middle East	52.2	68.4	73	39.3	60.5	61.8	5	14.6	4.2

The Middle East recorded the fast increasing district for global travel entrances during the year 2019, rising at nearly the dual international arrivals average with the positive amplitude of eight percent. In contrary, development speed in Asia and the Pacific decelerated while exhibited over the average development, with more than five percent (Ferguson, 2007).

2.2.2 Domestic versus International

Local travel contains some visitors' actions which is located in their own nation. Possibly, the local tourism stands as the first rank all sorts of common tourism in the early civilization time (Pierret, 2011). Nowadays, it still remains as a major sort of tourism with almost five or six billion expected traveler entrances, which seems to cover 74 to 86 percent of the entire visitor entrances. In other words, it covers almost 73 percent whole overnight tourists, 69 percent of overnight visitors who stay at hotels, and 7 almost five percent of overnight visitors who had rather none-motel housings.

Though local tourism stands as the highest subdivision of tourism, still it is not as important as international tourism in terms of research and policy. But, since global tourism is not very robust compared to the domestic ones and foreign environment elements, global tourism must be supplemented by local tourism to make successful and sustainable tourism. There might be some domestic tourism neglecting which led to an awareness deficiency of travelers, underestimation of the whole number of tourists, misunderstanding of the importance of tourism, and a generally distorted concept of tourism (ZEYN et al., 2009). Though generally tourism and tourist behavioral forecasters, in particular, are not in the scope of new research, academics' interest in international tourism outweighs domestic tourism. Hence, in most of LDC, there are no statistics, research, policies, and strategies related to domestic tourism, it is challenging to reach tourism marketing and management research that systematically analyzes the interrelationships between local tourism motivation, satisfaction, and behavioral goals. In general, such a gap makes it hard for policymakers to improve effective policies and approaches in the tourism management majors, marketing, and sustainable progress.

2.3 Study Case: Caspian Sea Region, Iran

The Caspian Sea is situated in the north of Iran. From west it is placed next to the Caucasus Mountains which dominates the smooth areas of western Central Asia. Almost one fifth of the southern coastline boundaries of Iran which comprised of the three provinces consist of Golestan, Mazandaran, and Guilan are included across the Alborz Mounts (Figure 5).

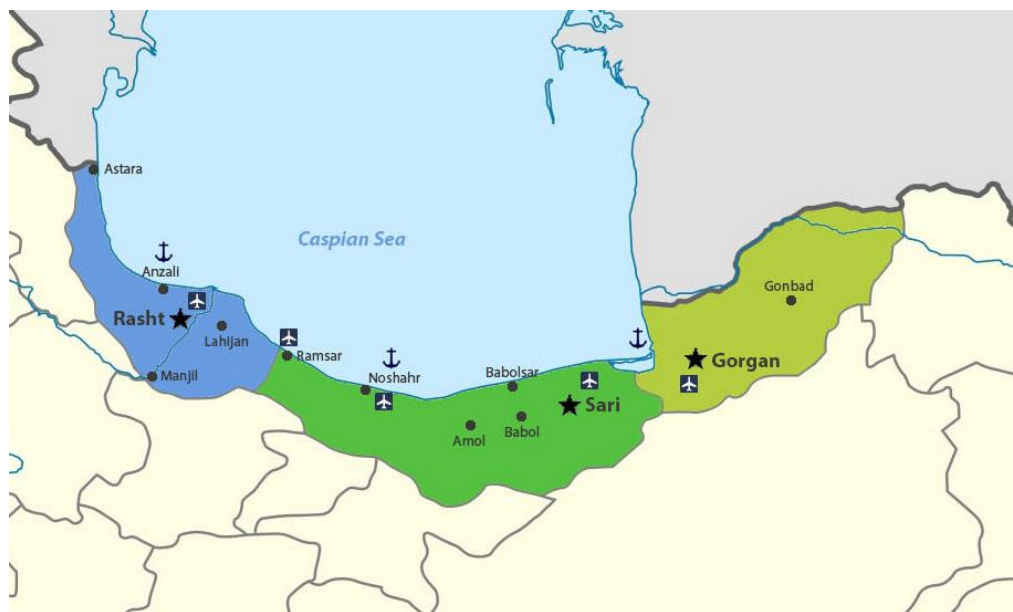


Figure 5: North of Iran, Source:<https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

This area situated between five different countries which include more than 245 million populations, approximately. Furthermore, this area benefits from too many oil and gas reservoirs. Profiting from a advantaged geographic place, as well, made this region of world, absorbed the attention of international powers and as a result, tournament arena for both local and global influences. The Caspian Sea connects Iran and Russia with Central Asia. As a result, nations placed in the Persian Gulf, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Black Sea regions, in addition to Pakistan and Afghanistan, can more easily join each other and Europe, as well (ZEYN et al., 2009). The mixture

of these environmental aspects made the investment possible. Therefore, the Caspian Sea is a sign of mutual chances both at the local and international levels. Many factors have targeted the environment around the Caspian Sea, in a way that any of them can result in loss. This might drive countries either not to take advantage their treasure or increase the cost of their procedure. Some of them are made from each other and may result in struggles with the purposes and welfares of nations in the area and stop their satisfaction. However, tourism industry is regarded as a key factor for the financial system both in the industrialized and the developing nations. it forces an tremendous and instant hazard to the environment of the Caspian Sea. Although surrounding should protect itself from a particular amount of pollutants, ecological misadventures begin as the quantity of pollutions growth and crash the natural washing procedures. According to the beliefs of some experts, the most significant issues with Caspian sea are as follows (Mola et al., 2012):

- The sea level oscillations and biological hazards which are made by the destruction of land and air pollutants
- ecological concerns and alteration in usages of land particularly in farming parts or construction and aesthetics depreciation
- actions associated with oil industry and drilling
- waste water due to farming or city and home dirt adjacent coastlines)
- the waste made by tourists

During the recent years, the tourism sectors of the economy seem rocket up. This intensification in tourism helps the economic development of nations, effectively and also the economic benefits of resident people (Osman & Sentosa, 2013). The whole quantity of tourists in the year 1980 was just 227 millions of people while this number increased to 677 and 1133 millions of people in the 2000 and 2014,

respectively. This fact is claimed by the World Tourism Organization via annual reports (Hoekman & Mavroidis, 2015). Furthermore, global earnings of travelers have reached 1245 billion US dollars. This amount of money covers thirty percent of international exports and also constitutes six percent of the whole global trades, leading to a nine percent progress in gross local manufacturing around the world. Increasing and fast tendency in tourism industry is indicated by statistics and figures. Analysis of the present work in the context of Caspian Sea countries from the year 2002 to 2013 approves this tendency. Accordingly, WTC issued a report by in year 2015 about the contribution of tourism on creating new employment chances showed a 7.6 and 5.6 percent for Azerbaijan and Russia, respectively. Similarly, this number were 5.3 percent for both Iran and Kazakhstan in the same period. It is worth noticing that the contribution of tourism on gross local goods of the Caspian Sea countries somewhat differ from each other. In this case, Azerbaijan and Iran recorded 8.4 and 6.3 percent, respectively. Additionally, Russia and Kazakhstan registered, 6.0 and 5.6 percent for the same condition. Long-term financial achievement in tourism needs the natural quality preservation of the surroundings to satisfy the visitors' requirements (Holden, 2007). This would not be out of mind to conclude that the income generated in protected areas can alter the awareness of resident people towards the surrounding, because tourism is known as a favorable economic support in such areas (Coad et al., 2008; Imran et al., 2014). The outline of "tourism concept as a system" creates a link between the surroundings of tourism destinations and resident people. Thus, the unique location of the Caspian Sea has provided suitable situations for visitors, especially ecotourism ones. While, ecological and variation of land application the Caspian Sea to promote tourism both in a direct and indirect way have destructed both natural habitations and shorelines.

Furthermore, the significance of diversity in the rich ecosystem of the Caspian Sea, containing forest ponds, vast plains, seashores, rivers, meadows, and estuaries, has created great potential for ecotourism. The present study tries to respond to these inquiries: whether the tourism response to environmental behavior positive or not? whether the response of the surroundings to the motivations of the tourism industry negative?



Figure 6 : Caspian Sea Region, Iran

Chapter 3

BACKPACK TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Understanding the backpacker traveling is circumstantial and to help the reader to have a better knowledge of this world the literature is studied. This is essential for a fair understanding regarding the motivation of this research, the study itself, and the succeeding assertions.

3.1 Defining Backpackers

Backpacking is a style of travel that was previously attributed to the fringes of the tourism industry. It is still emerging as an institutionalized and favored method of travel. Backpacking travel has increased greatly which has spawned “a mobile subculture of international travelers” and has become a symbol of globalization. In the past few years, backpacking can be called as an example of traveling lifestyle, having their own, and also a cohesive and intricate social distinctiveness. The Backpacking industry has received little observation from scientists before, and is still in the research phase and lagging from research on other types of travel. The

Backpacker Research Group (BRG), a division of the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS), designated “of the 76 dated references relating to backpacker and youth travel, only 11 were published before 1990” (Kanning, 2008). Meanwhile, there has been a substantial growth in backpacking research, which is directly and indirectly related to backpacking tourism. This was shown through an increase in articles and publications related to this subject. Cohen (Cohen, 2011) sees

the increase as a boost to backpacking study as a "recognized sub-specialty of tourism studies". The main Researches regarding backpackers are conducted primarily centered in Oceania, Europe, and a growing presence of academics in Asia and South Africa. Researches of Backpacking travel conducted in the United States are rather rare, but there are some exceptions (Kanning, 2008). The original typology established by Cohen, classifies travelers into two categories called institutional and non-institutional. Institutional travelers are the main tourists who are looking for familiar and good destinations. On the other hand non-institutional ones, are looking for unique and challenging destinations that are not out of the way. In Cohen's context, most backpackers today are a classy combination that reflects the characteristics and functions of institutional and non-institutional travelers. Although backpackers' indifference to mass tourism reflects the non-institutional behaviors of travelers, their actual travel behaviors are the same as traditional travelers. Welk shows that postmodern backpacks are more defined by what they are not thought to be, but by the tourist who is the antithesis of the backpacker (Williams & Lew, 2014).

Defining a backpacker it is still a developing discourse among backpacker researchers, without any agreement on the general definition of it. Vogt believes that wanderers realize their status and standing through three different criteria. The first one is achieved when the wanderer shows autonomy and freedom by actions or discourse. The second one is the exoticness of the visited locations. The third one is level of exoticness in the mode of traveling. mode of travel, which is constantly referred to as a pertinent part of defining backpacker travel has not been researched until recently (Nieoczym, 2003). In the 1980s, Riley defined wanderers as travelers with low budgets resulting from Lack of financial resources of these travelers which she branded in her study of the culture of road backpackers. The term of backpacker was

first used in 1990 in the literature, defining it as a stray, non-institutional low-priced traveler. Pierce coined the term of backpacker and this definition is currently the most recognized one, although the most controversial (Hannam & Diekmann, 2010). Pearce describe the Features of the backpackers as:

1. They favor economical accommodation
2. Reject a firm schedule and prefer an independent and organized journey
3. Long trips over short ones
4. Importance of socializing
5. Importance of informality and the wish to participate in adventure in a wide variety of events

Richards and Wilson stated: “defining backpackers by their behavioral features has a problem, which is that this does not expose how they see themselves”. Sorensen also argued that this description has a very wide scope. in his previous work he argued that backpackers should define themselves and should not be defined by other than themselves (Kanning, 2008).

As we all know, the modern frame backpack was conceived by Dick Colt in 1951. This design transfer weighty loads from the shoulders to the hips. The first designs of the colt add a hip belt to the existing wooden frame. Over the next years, bags were produced and lightweight aluminum, a cushioned waist, a zipper and a shoulder strap has replaced the wood. Redistributing the load helps the person's hips with agility and balance and stabilizes the load. Soon after the production of the Kelty bag, hiking, hiking, outdoor sightseeing, and enjoying the natural beauty increased the popularity of the backpack, which continues the modern love of adventure travel(Shallman, 1990).

Jarvis and Peel showed that the popular 1995 Australian Government “National Backpacker Tourism Development Strategy” was directed by academic researchers with dedicated backpacker research programs and consequently countywide plans and research programs to support backpack researches. This backs up the claim of Ateljevic and Doorne that funding from governments boosts backpackers research and also advanced advertising of its destination while \ endorsing financial participation of backpackers (Duncan, 2007).

Generally Backpackers does not always include: more travel by public transport. Backpacker tourism may also include short-term work in different countries, depending on the work permit rules. It can also be done by digital nomads, people who use technology while living a nomadic lifestyle. The motivations behind the backpacking trip include opportunities to learn., a local lifestyle experience (Hannam & Diekmann, 2010), and opportunities to meet other travelers. Backpackers travel independently on very flexible trips with their own management, and the difference between them and other travelers and tourists is that they are less inclined to luxury trips. Backpackers travel less on the main routes to experience special travel-related backpacking trips. Chiti Ward and Chewar found that backpackers spend more time staying and visiting different places than other tourists.

3.1.1 Cultural Perspective of Backpackers

Talking about the cultural landscape is essential for a cheap way of traveling, accommodation and reference books for backpackers. It is clear that the movements of backpacker tourists are tangible over time and have different trends, and acknowledges that this is an important social and financial phenomenon in the travel business. Yet, Riley and colleagues assert that, generally, over the decades, the gap amid backpacking and other types of tourism has narrowed, and this could lead to

different types of tourism. Backpack tourists are independent travelers, with high adaptability and low growth numbers. They travel internationally as poor people, absorbing and integrating with the host community. Backpackers visit there based on their motives, which means they search for a dissimilar destination from their environment. The flourishing and experience of new things often plays a key role in driving backpack tourists to travel. Explore new cultures, experience delight and increase understanding, and evading from everyday life has been seen as a motivation for backpackers. Backpackers are often young, low-budget and have long vacations (Hannam & Diekmann, 2010). Backpackers are cheap travelers who usually travel more than usual in addition to having minimal means of transportation, and this type of tourism is for adventure and educational purposes. A large group of backpack tourists are between 25 and 35 years old. [102]. Backpackers are most likely business travelers or family and vacation travelers. Pearce and Foster [103], It turned out that backpackers are a group that should not be considered as homogeneous tourists, but rather those who seek diversity. Many researchers have argued that the various materials provide little information about the nationality, age and sex, life cycle, and major travel plans of backpackers. Conclusions The motivation of tourists and backpackers is not discussed in the book (Pearce & Foster, 2007).

Given the increasing importance of backpack tourism and its effect on Third World communities, the environment and the economy, more study is needed. Due to the convenient opportunities and comprehensive local benefits of its economic profits and how to produce products and facilities for them, particularly in local places, local people should be more and more familiar with this form of tourism (Scheyvens, 2002).

3.2 Impacts of Backpackers

Backpacker tourism has multiple effects on countries with less developed economies. These effects—economic, sociocultural and environmental—are defined in the following parts:

3.2.1 Economic Impacts

The essence of the backpacking tourism budget which is low and its dominance over the young people has led some people to believe that backpackers has a low economic result on the communities. Tourism planners consider backpacking tourism as negligible and frivolous, with typical images like superficiality, stinginess and seclusion. The interests of most national governments in tourism are limited to international collective tourism, and they have a preference to overlook the informal segment of tourism (including backpacking tourists). Yet, numerous researches show that backpacking tourists make a constructive impact to the native economy, especially in nations which are less developed. Small tourism companies which target backpackers, such as hostels, restaurants and marketplace stalls, usually do not need significant resources or specialized preparations. The reason behind this is that backpack travelers do not anticipate advanced services (Scheyvens, 2002). Thus, the backpacking tourism industry delivers decent prospects for native people to partake. In terms of backpacking tourists' behavior, they often buy local products than other tourists. Backpacking tourists has different effects. Financial profits were transferred to native farmers, food providers, transporters. Consequently, backpacker tourism plays a role in reducing poverty. The nature of backpackers is to be adventurous and stay for a longer period of time in the country. This usually for backpackers, means that they will spend their money in varied places, as well as marginal areas such as mountains and isles. Hampton claims that backpacking tourism might reduce several

of the excesses of conventional mass tourism in dearth of foreign direct incomes and problems of native control, ownership and involvement. Both of the backpacking tourism and conventional one has the problem of seasonality. Which means that travelers tend to go to some places at an specific time of the year to have the most enjoyable experience. (Hottola, 2004).

3.2.2 Socio-Cultural Impacts

Backpackers in less advanced states are frequently criticized for their look and behavior, particularly their sexual behavior, alcohol drinking and drug abuse. Numerous studies have acknowledged such adverse behaviors among backpackers. In a study of backpacker travelers in Koh Phi Phi (the beach resort in southern Thailand specially famous with backpackers), 32% of them acknowledged unusual sex and 12% of them acknowledged drug use as an essential travel experience (Dodds et al., 2010). So, one among three backpackers in Koh Phi Phi believe sex as an important experience, and one among eight viewed illegal drugs as a great experience. Furthermore, 61% of them in Koh Phi Phi considered the nightly experience (i.e., drink and party) as central. In a study half of backpackers (57.5%) stated that they took drugs or drank alcohol in cases that were not approved by the locals. About 10% said that they regularly engage in such behaviors (most often: 6.4%, always: 2.7%). In addition, hunting or bargain between backpack tourists is frustrating for local communities. While hunting behavior is because of budget limits, some backpackers are thoughtlessly stirred to travel with the lowest cost and are assumed to be "enjoy poverty." The behavior of backpackers who are "enjoying poverty" is contingent on their anarchist and ridiculous attitudes (Mowforth & Munt, 2015).

3.2.3 Environmental Impacts

Undoubtedly, the biggest environmental threats posed by mass tourism are in the infrastructure and transportation measures needed to support it, especially when the number of tourists is under slight control. fuel needs of buildings, Physical advance of resorts, air planes, trains, buses, taxis and cars, extensive consumption from water resources, pollution from car emissions, sewage and waste lead to significant damage. It is often irreparable. Environmental consequences as well as social impact.

3.3 Environmental Impact in Coastal

Most of the discussed individual actions have substantial ecological effects in seaside regions but they are usually contemplated individually despite their similarity. Numerous of these nations are advancing substantially and receiving high revenue from the dealings. This is predominant for islands or nations with large coasts: in these countries, usually a large amount of domestic gross is of tourism. For example, Caribbean nations depend on tourism four times higher than other part of the world (Gormsen, 1997). Tourism has many benefits for countries financially, nonetheless they come with considerable socio-economic and ecological problems. Such costs can affect larger areas that are more resilient. Holder suggested the 'self-destruct theory of tourism'. The theory explains that a nice-looking natural luxury location that is formed for a monopoly market and a low-density settlement which is keen to pay higher fees will become an endpoint for mass tourism after additional investors come and rivalry begin. Because rates and standards go down in proportion. Then, elite will find better places. What happened on the island of Cancu'n (Mexico) is a good image of this event (Wiese, 1996). Cancun Island which is 17 km long and 100e400 m wide with and have a shallow lagoon surrounded in a shallow fence, conserved diverse types of marine life before development. This island was a large nesting site for turtles and seabirds. There

were several openings to the lagoon. Many untrained labors immigrated to the island. Development of mines started, which connected the mainland to the island, and restricted the current of fresh water. Golf courses filled the lagoon and amusement parks have been developed. Lack of treatment for Wastewater and other waste disposals grow into huge problems. Eventually tired heavy mines were applied for landfills and groundwater sources were contaminated. After Cancun was effected by Hurricane Gilbert in 1988, entrance of tourist weakened. Hotels prices were reduced to increase the tourist, but these tourists spent less money. This has reduced the income of the local people and consequently the income of the nation considerably. Ironically, these hotels on the island were selected for the World Trade Organization venue on hunger and poverty at 2004.

3.3.1 The environmental concern/behavior in tourism

In a research on German tourism, Swarbrook and Horner acknowledged the environmental quality of a tourist destination as an effective feature in fulfilment of tourist (Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). Nevertheless, this does not reflect the effects of tourists for the destination area environment. Even if you consider the environmental problems, there is not much evidence to show these environmental worries have become practical. Simonson and Jorgensen (Simonson, 1974) found that many tourists who go on unpolluted vacations, such as cycling tours, do so out of a desire for entertainment and sport rather than a natural environment. Hjalager claimed that ‘green consumerism’ in tourism is controlled by restricted ease of access and ease of use in comparison to the other green goods. Besides, actually, the environmental issues might be exaggerated in investigations because of a tendency in study focuses on environmental concerns in a diplomatically right way. Swarbrook and Horner stated that the population is associated with environmental concerns and there is a link

between them. German visitors took environmental considerations into account when choosing a journey's end, whereas British travelers seem to have less fondness for "green" holidays. The significance of this attitude was in the claim that "green sightseers only existed wherever green consumers previously existed"(Swarbrooke & Horner, 2007). A survey of Singaporean students showed a tendency to purchase "green" tourism goods because they are very aware of environmental concerns and tend to purchase "green" tourism goods. Watkins (Thyne et al., 2020) examined the attitudes of tourists (American travelers) towards environmentally sensitive accommodation and their knowledge. Watkins claimed that environmentally conscious customers are not essentially environmentally conscious travelers.

3.3.2 Host and tourist perceptions of environmental impacts of tourism

Some studies suggest that tourists don't have a fully awareness of their environmental impact on their destination than inhabitants. Among these studies, Lucas (Lucas, 1979) found that inhabitants (especially managers) and tourists understood recreational effects of tourism activities in the United States differently. In addition, by studying residents 'and tourists' insights of the effects of tourism on Lake Balaton in Hungary, Puczko' and Ra'tz reported significant differences between the insights of the two parties (Puczko & Ratz, 2000). Outcomes show that tourists (as seekers of natural attraction) attribute their behavior to less harmful environmental effects at the destination than is observed by their host. While non-tourism inhabitants were worried about environmental safety, both tourists and tourism inhabitants were less interested in beach protection. In contrast, some researchers have claimed that tourists are more keen than their hosts. For instance, Kavallinis and Pizam found that tourists on the Greek Island observed the environmental impacts of tourism more damagingly than their host parties (Kavallinis & Pizam, 1994).

3.3.3 Environmental Impacts of Backpackers

Due to the environmental impact of backpacks, this intermittent form of tourism, which is found to have a relatively low resource consumption when traveling, is more environmentally responsible than tourists. Lu's study found that most locals in China's Lijiang said that backpacks were more environmentally responsible than tourists in terms of place, nutrition and transportation. They also use resources with caution and organize their waste appropriately (Luo et al., 2014). Similarly, Noronha observes that environment damage from backpackers are less than tourists (Noronha, 1999). The backpacking tourism literature and its effects on inhabitant societies have shown that backpackers tend to believe that they are real in hosting the destination and have little negative impact on the destination (Bradt, 1995; Wheeler, 1991). Backpacks may escape some aspects of society that are negatively affected by their daily lives, while at the same time moving to destinations and / or societies that offer shelters of different lifestyles that fit their interests. There are those who may not encounter them at home. McCannell argued that tourists are looking for a genuine way to mark their place in the world (MacCannell, 1973). Sorensen made the term nostalgic evolutionism, that is based on McConnell's ideas about originality. Nostalgic evolutionism "believes that the current world has lost the originality of what it has acquired in goods, but somewhere outside of it, beyond the current world, the originality of pre-modern life has yet to be taken into consideration" (Sørensen, 2003).

Chapter 4

RESEARCH METHODS

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the type of research, statistical population, methods of estimating sample size and number of samples and sampling method, tools for measuring research variables and measures taken to ensure the validity and reliability of tools and research process and statistical analysis method data provided.

4.2 Type of Research

Regarding the nature of this study, in terms of purpose, it is among the basic researches and in terms of implementation method, it is in the group of retrospective descriptive-analytical researches. In fact, without intervening in the research process, the researcher has merely measured the research variables simultaneously.

4.3 Statistical Community

The statistical population of this study consists of all backpackers in 2020 in Mazandaran, Gilan and Golestan provinces. According to the Tourism Organization, the number of these backpacks has been reported to be 190 people.

4.4 Sample and Sample Volume

Krejcie and Morgan table was used to estimate the sample size. Based on this, 127 backpackers have been appointed. From 6 cities of the Caspian coastal provinces, District 7 of Tehran, 6 hospitals have been selected through cluster random sampling

as shown in the table below, and based on the number of nurses in these hospitals, the sample size has been determined.

Table 3: Sample size to provinces and cities

	Golestan		Mazndaran		Gilan		
Cities	Gorgan	Sari	Babol	Nowshahr	Rasht	Anzali	Total
Number	23	21	12	21	32	18	127
Percent	.18	.17	.09	.17	.25	.14	

4.5 Sampling Method

In the first step, sampling is done in clusters among the cities of the coastal provinces, and in the second step, after randomly selecting clusters of selected cities, inside each city from among the backpacks to the desired amount (sample size for each city) Sample units were selected at random.

4.6 Data Collection Method

After completing the administrative steps and identifying the sampling units, which was done by simple randomization, first, while providing an oral explanation about the purpose, method and possible results of the study, the selected backpacker was asked to agree to participate in the study. After this stage, the questionnaires have been provided to the backpacker individually.

4.7 Research Tools

The variables of this study were measured by the following questionnaire: Questionnaire for measuring the environmental impact of backpackers: This questionnaire was designed by Khazaei and Akbari in 2017 with the aim of representing the environmental impacts of backpackers in Iran. This 58-item questionnaire is a self-report tool that is applicable to the age range of 20 to 95 years and the answer to it is based on a five-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly

disagree. The scale consists of five subscales that measure economic, socio-cultural, environmental, advertising and development impacts. The scale is easy to implement and takes an average of 30 minutes to respond. This scale has been standardized by the above researchers and Cronbach's alpha coefficients for subscales have been reported between 0.80 to 0.92 for the whole test of 0.96.

4.8 The Realm of Research

The spatial territory of this study consists of the coastal provinces of the Caspian Sea. In terms of time domain, this research was conducted in the first semester of the 2019-2020 academic year. In terms of subject matter, it is also related to the field of tourism.

4.9 Methods of Data Analysis

The following two methods have been used to analyze the data and information obtained in this study:

- 1.Descriptive statistics: In this section, frequency calculation, frequency percentage, mean, variance, standard deviation, charting and table compilation were used.
- 2.Inferential statistics: To analyze the data and information obtained and test the research hypotheses after testing the basic assumptions using parametric tests, one-group t-test was used.

Table 4: Distribution of participants by age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-25	12	9.4	9.4	9.4
26-30	30	23.6	23.6	33.1
31-35	42	33.1	33.1	66.1
36-40	11	8.7	8.7	74.8
41-45	20	15.7	15.7	90.6
46-50	3	2.4	2.4	92.9
51-55	9	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

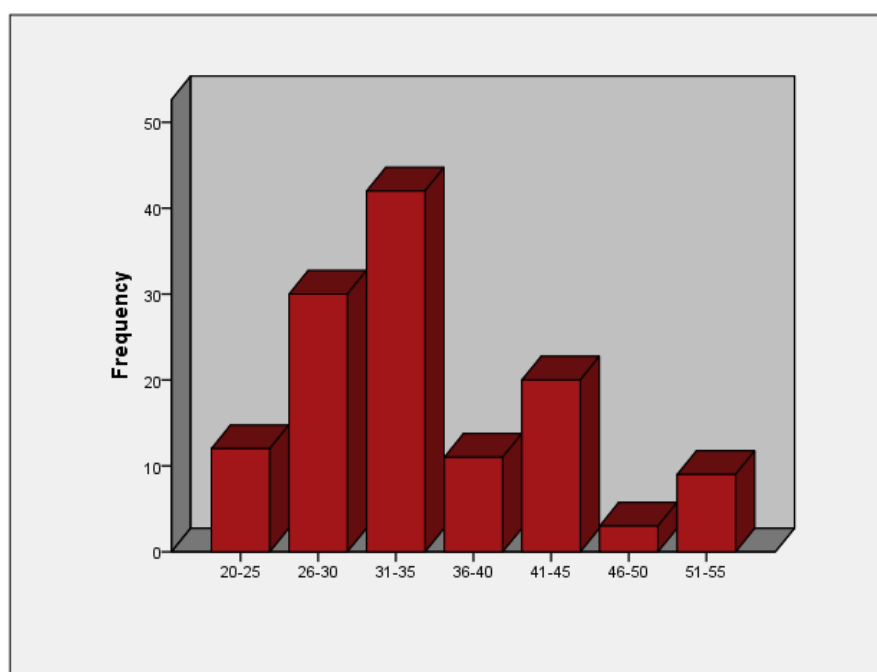


Figure 7: Chart of participants' distribution bars based on their gender

Table 5: Distribution of participants by gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
man	100	78.7	78.7	78.7
woman	27	21.3	21.3	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

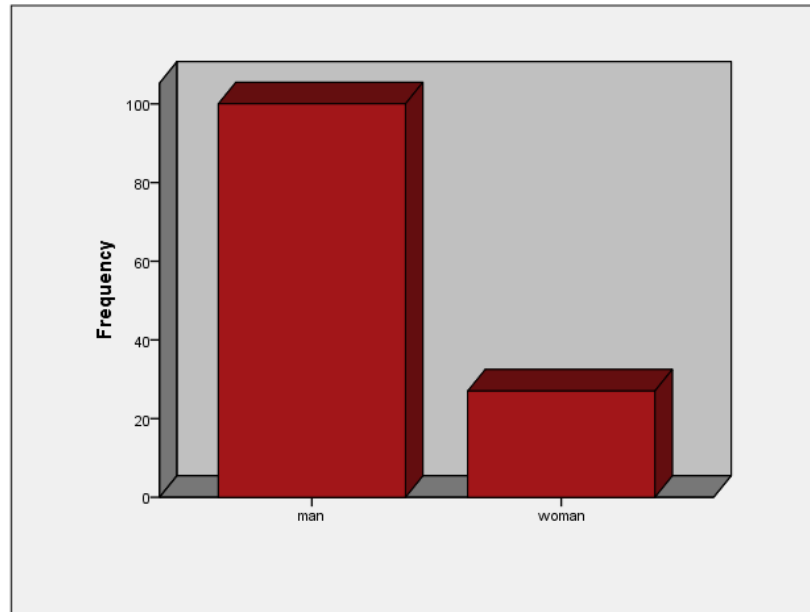


Figure 8: Distribution of participants by gender

Table 6: Distribution of participants by Nationality

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Iranian	99	78.0	78.0	78.0
Foreign	28	22.0	22.0	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

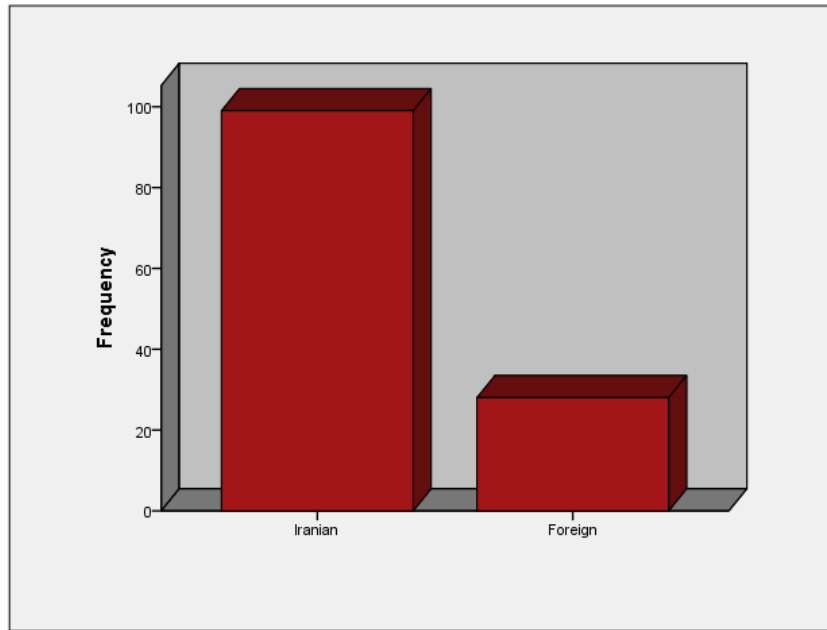


Figure 9: Distribution of participants by Nationality

Table 7: Distribution of participants by Occupational status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Employed	99	78.0	78.0	78.0
Unemployed	19	15.0	15.0	92.9
Retired	9	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

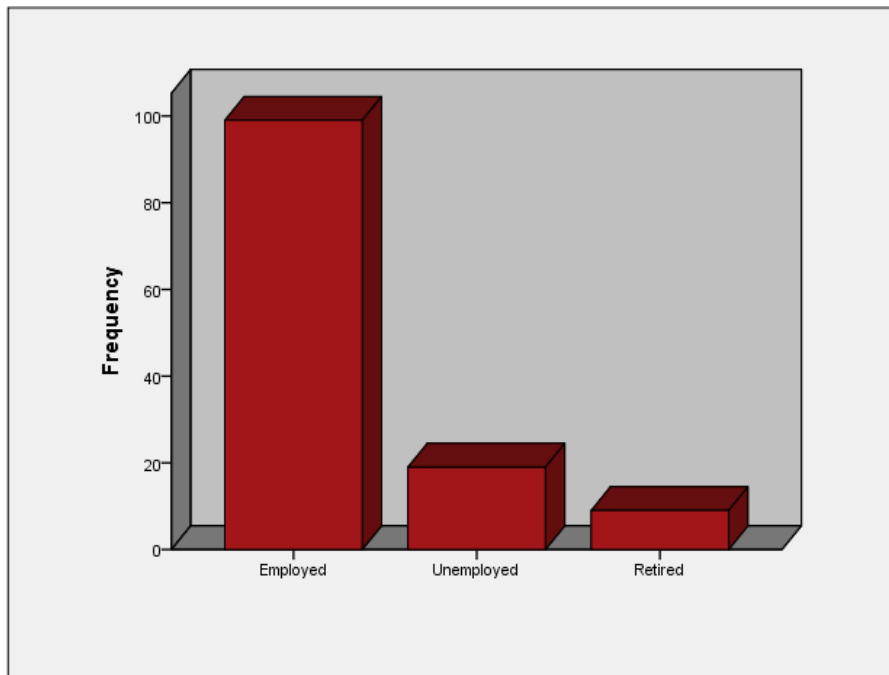


Figure 10: Distribution of participants by Occupational status

Table 8: Distribution of participants by Educational status

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Primary	5	3.9	3.9	3.9
Secondary	21	16.5	16.5	20.5
Bachelor	96	75.6	75.6	96.1
Ma	5	3.9	3.9	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

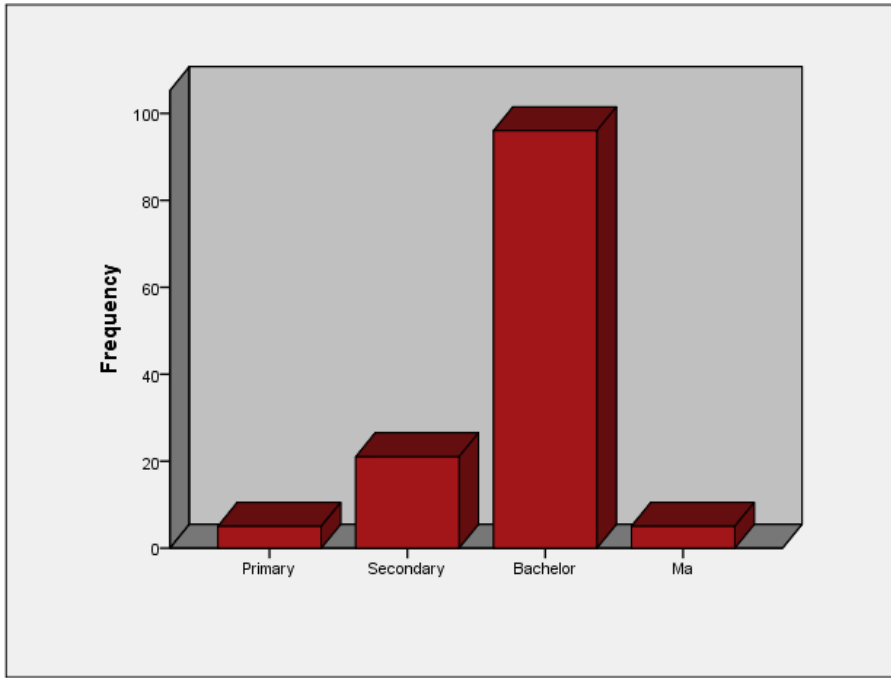


Figure 11: Distribution of participants by Educational

Table 9: Distribution of participants by Travel time

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	68	53.5	53.5	53.5
2	33	26.0	26.0	79.5
3	26	20.5	20.5	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

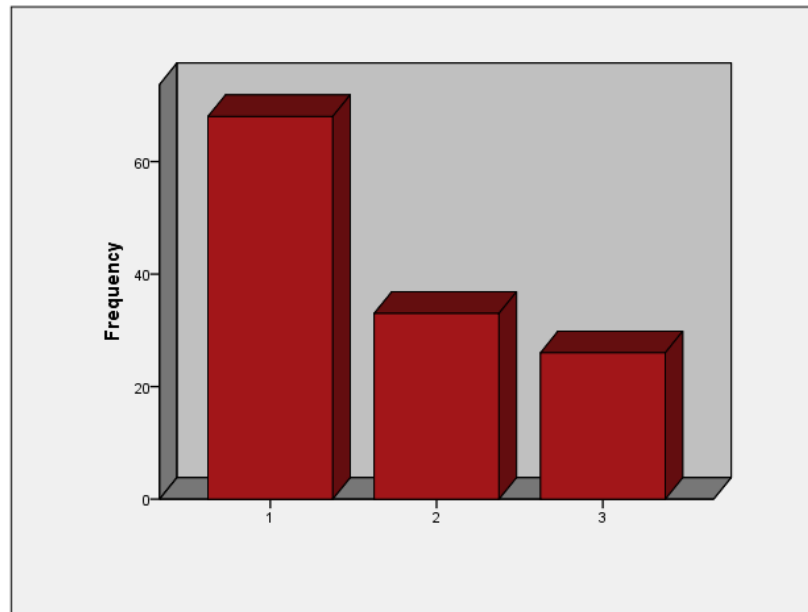


Figure 12: Distribution of participants by Travel time

Table 10: Distribution of participants by province

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Tehran	22	17.3	17.3	17.3
Esfahan	7	5.5	5.5	22.8
Yazd	3	2.4	2.4	25.2
Khorasan.Razavi	5	3.9	3.9	29.1
Fars	19	15.0	15.0	44.1
Western Azerbaijan	20	15.7	15.7	59.8
Semnan	13	10.2	10.2	70.1
Zanjan	8	6.3	6.3	76.4
foreign	30	23.6	23.6	100.0
Total	127	100.0	100.0	

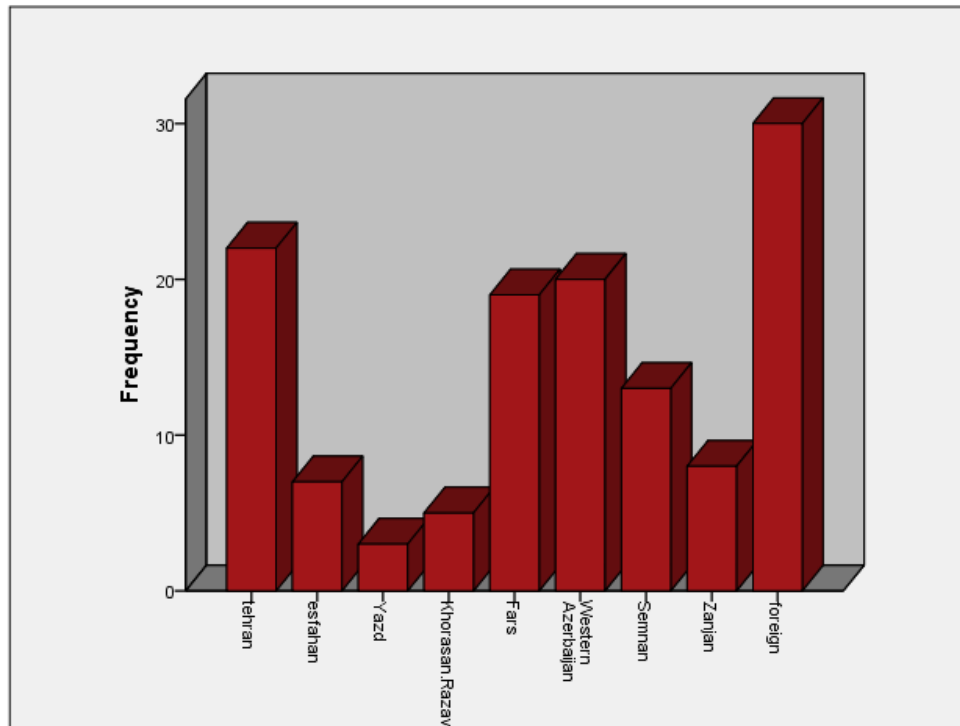


Figure 13: Distribution of participants by province

According to the results of the data extracted from the questionnaires and the descriptive results obtained from them, a one-sample t-test was used to examine and test the research questions. Therefore, using the mentioned test the analyzes related to each of the research questions are presented separately below.

Question 1: How many positive economic effects did backpacking have on the Caspian coast?

A total of 27 questions are considered as variable scores of "positive economic effects". Therefore, a one-sample t-test was used to examine the participants' opinions. The average of 5 numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5) is equal to 3. Therefore, number 3 is the average of the test (with a test ratio of 50%) and a total of 27 questions is the number 81 as the evaluation criterion. The higher the average score of the participants than the score of 3, indicates the greater the frequency of very positive and agreeable answers to the dissenting and very dissenting opinions. Therefore, t-test was used to evaluate

and compare the participants' responses and the results are presented in the following tables.

Table 11: Descriptive statistics on positive economic effects

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Positive economic effects	127	22.275	4.22892	.37526

Table 4-9 shows that participants scored 27 questions out of 127 answers in one column, equal to 22,275, which is less than 81.

Table 12: Test statistics related to the positive economic effects of backpackin

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Positive economic effects	59.361	126	.000	22.27559	21.5330	23.0182

The results of Table 4-10 show that the test statistic is equal to 59.361 and the degree of freedom is equal to 126 and the mean difference is equal to 22.27559 and the significance level is 0.01. Therefore, the difference between the mean of the participants and the number 81 is significant. Therefore, from the point of view of managers and experts of tourism departments, backpacking does not have significant positive economic effects.

Question 2: How many positive economic components effects did backpacking have on the Caspian coast?

In order to test this hypothesis, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for The comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 13: Descriptive statistics on Impact on economic components

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Economic development	127	8.32	1.803	.160	9
investment	127	2.83	.664	.059	3
Employment	127	2.65	.671	.051	6
Efficiency	127	8.50	1.736	.154	9

The descriptive results of the above table show that among economic components, only in terms of job creation, the calculated average is significantly higher than the average. The inferential results of the single group t test are presented in the table below.

Table 14: Test statistics related Impact on economic components of backpacking

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Economic development	52.011	126	.000	8.323	8.01	8.64
investment	48.121	126	.000	2.835	2.72	2.95
Employment	52.232	126	.000	2.646	2.55	2.75
Efficiency	55.203	126	.000	8.504	8.20	8.81

The test results show that according to tourism managers and experts, backpacking has only a significant effect on the component of job creation and has not significantly affected the three components of economic development, investment and productivity.

Question 3: How many positive socio-cultural components did backpacking have on the Caspian coast?

In order to test this hypothesis, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for The comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 15: Descriptive statistics on Impact on positive socio-cultural components

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Modeling for youth	127	8.37	1.680	.149	9
Optimal social functioning	127	9.65	2.238	.199	12

The descriptive results of the above table show that among the socio-cultural components, only in terms of job creation, the calculated average is significantly higher than the average. The inferential results of the single group t test are presented in the table below.

Table 16: Test statistics related Impact on positive socio-cultural

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Modeling for youth	56.1 48	126	.000	8.370	8.08	8.67
Optimal social functioning	48.5 72	126	.000	9.646	9.25	10.04

The test results showed that the t-statistic was significant for the pattern of youth modeling and desirable social functioning at the alpha level of 0.01, therefore, strolling did not affect the patterning of youth and the desired social function of the Caspian coast.

Question 4: How many negative socio-cultural components did backpacking have on the Caspian coast?

In order to test this hypothesis, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for The comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 17: Descriptive statistics on Impact on negative socio-cultural components

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Damage to antiquities	127	8.03	1.939	.172	12
Damaging cultural traditions	127	9.62	1.511	.134	9
Promoting immorality	127	6.28	1.541	.137	12

The results of the above descriptive table indicate that the calculated averages for damaging antiquities and promoting immorality were lower than the standard average, but for damaging traditions, they were higher than the standard. The inferential results of t-test are presented in the table below.

Table 18: Test statistics related Impact on negative socio-cultural components

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Damage.to antiquities	46.672	126	.000	8.031	7.69	8.37
Damaging cultural traditions	49.373	126	.000	6.622	6.36	6.89
Promoting immorality	45.883	126	.000	6.276	6.00	6.55

The results indicate that t-statistic has been reported to be significant for all three components, therefore, according to managers and experts, backpacking has not significantly affected the damage to antiquities and the promotion of immorality. Therefore, according to managers and experts, backpacking affects cultural traditions. Question 5: What are the negative effects of the bio-environmental components of backpacking on the shores of the Caspian Sea?

In order to test this Question, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for the comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 19: Descriptive statistics on negative effects of the bio-environmental components of backpacking

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Damage to natural resources	127	5.79	1.378	.122	18
Damage to vegetation	127	4.17	1.037	.092	6
Water pollution	127	3.80	.952	.084	6
Damage to wildlife	127	1.21	.411	.036	3
Illegal fishing	127	1.09	.282	.025	3

The results of the above descriptive table indicate that the calculated averages regarding damage to natural resources, vegetation loss, water pollution, damage to wildlife and illegal fishing are reported to be lower than the standard average. The t-test is presented in the table below.

Table 20: Test statistics related Impact on negative effects of the bio-environmental components of backpacking

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Damage to natural resources	47.330	126	.000	5.787	5.55	6.03
Damage to vegetation	45.261	126	.000	4.165	3.98	4.35
Water pollution	45.043	126	.000	3.803	3.64	3.97
Damage to wildlife	33.268	126	.000	1.213	1.14	1.28
Illegal fishing	43.365	126	.000	1.087	1.04	1.14

The results indicate that t-statistic has been reported to be significant for all five components, therefore, according to managers and experts, backpacking has not significantly affected the damage to natural resources, damage to vegetation, water pollution, damage to wildlife, illegal fishing.

Question 6: What are the positive effects of the bio-environmental of backpacking on the shores of the Caspian Sea?

In order to test this Question, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for The comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 21: Descriptive statistics on positive effects of the bio-environmental components of backpacking

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Positive environmental impacts	127	8.85	1.638	.145	9

The results of the above descriptive table indicate that the calculated average for environmental damage is less than the standard average, the inferential results of t-test are presented in the table below.

Table 22: Test statistics related Impact on positive effects of bio-environmental effects of backpacking

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Positive environmental impacts	60.882	126	.000	8.850	8.56	9.14

The results indicate that t-statistic has been reported to be significant for all positive environmental effects, therefore, according to managers and experts, backpacking has not significantly affected the positive environmental impacts.

Question 7: How much has backpacking played a role in the development of the Caspian Sea coast?

In order to test this Question, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for The comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 23: Descriptive statistics on positive effects of the bio-environmental components of backpacking

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Developmental effects	127	19.64	3.771	.335	21

The results of the above descriptive table indicate that the calculated average for Developmental effects is less than the standard average, the inferential results of t-test are presented in the table below.

Table 24: Test statistics related Developmental effects of backpacking

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Developmental effects	58.694	126	.000	19.638	18.98	20.30

The results indicate that t-statistic has been reported to be significant for Developmental effects of backpacking, therefore, according to managers and experts backpacking has not significantly affected the Developmental effects of backpacking.

Question 8: How much has backpacking played a role in the development of the Caspian Sea coast?

In order to test this Question, one-group t-test has been used. Descriptive statistics are presented in the table below. Also, according to the number of questions related to each component and calculating the score of 3 as the average score in each question, the average criterion for the comparison is presented in the table below.

Table 25: Descriptive statistics on positive effects of Advertise of the Caspian Sea coast

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Average criteria
Advertise of the Caspian Sea coast	126	19.44	2.341	.209	18

The results of the above descriptive table indicate that the calculated average for advertise of the Caspian Sea coast is More than the standard average, the inferential results of t-test are presented in the table below.

Table 26: Test statistics related Advertise of the Caspian Sea coast

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Advertising effects	50.044	125	.000	10.437	10.02	10.85

The results indicate that t-statistic has been reported to be significant for advertise of the Caspian Sea coast, therefore, according to managers and experts backpacking has significantly affected advertise of the Caspian Sea coast.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Tourism is now the largest single economic sector in the world. The impacts of transportation and leisure tourism on the coastal environment are significant, have increased nonlinearly, and are very difficult to manage or limit. The purpose of this study was to explore environmental attitudes of backpackers in Caspian Sea region, Iran. The relationship between environmental awareness, intent and behavior is very small. The gap between awareness, intention and behavior is a significant challenge for the future of the ecotourism industry. The review of the literature and qualitative evaluation of chapters two and three in this study has important illustrations in advantages and concerns of environmental impacts from tourists, especially backpackers. Backpacking abroad is considered a relatively vague kind of travel for Iranians.

Limitations of this research is the biased view of the relevant experts and the lack of a reliable and sufficient database related to backpacking in government centers. Experts' biased views are due to lack of familiarity with the concept of backpacking culture or having a strange and foreign view of backpackers. This behavior is very small among the people of this region, but the government centers do not have the same attitude like the people towards the tourists. Other problem of this study were the emergence of this phenomenon in this region and the lack of official statistics related to backpacking. The northern cities of Iran are very close and the traffic and backpacking behaviors are not taken into consideration. The development of

backpacking in Iran requires the creation of platforms from government institutions. This area needs to establish control centers for backpackers. Centers that meet not only entry and exit, but also the basic needs of a backpacker. Providing camping centers, picnics, and beach resorts for backpackers brings many benefits such as having accurate statistics, monitoring backpacker behavior, identifying environmental impacts, minimizing damage, and maximizing benefits. In addition, education and advertising can improve the attitude of the people of this region towards this industry.

According to results of data extracted from the questionnaires and descriptive results, a one sample t-test was used to examine the research questions. After examination, from managers and experts of tourism department point of view, backpacking has only a positive significance effect in job creation and a negative effect on cultural traditions, but has not affected the damage to antiques and promotion of immortality. According to managers and experts, backpacking has not significantly affected the damage to natural sources, vegetation, water pollution, wildlife, and illegal fishing. The result also has been reported to not significantly affected the positive environmental impacts. In contrast, backpacking has significantly affected advertise of the Caspian Sea region, Iran.

Contribution of this study in this regard, managers, and experts in the field of tourism as a statistical community was asked to answer the questionnaire on the environmental impact of backpacking. The results of collecting and analyzing the t-test showed that only the two elements are affected by backpackers, negative effect on the cultural traditions and the Caspian Sea coastline advertisement. Regarding the comparison of the findings of this study with the results of previous studies, it is necessary to state that in Iran, no research has been done in the field of backpacking impacts.

Regarding the explanation of these findings, it is necessary to state that due to the fact that the phenomenon of backpacking in Iran does not have a long history and people do not have enough information about it, so there is ambiguity in the effects. Therefore, in this dissertation, research questions are used instead of hypotheses. Another point is that in recent years, tourism and backpacking, in general, are at their lowest level, and now due to the corona pandemic conditions, it has increased the challenges. At the same time, factors such as poverty, unemployment, inflation, social and individual security of backpacking have decreased. Two significant issues affect managers' perspective of early judgment, and this study should be repeated in the time after the lifting of sanctions and the end of quarantine.

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