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Tourism and Rural Development

Hojat Ollah Sadeghi and Skandar Seidaiy

Abstract

Tourism development and the arrival of tourists have created new social and economic functions and opportunities for the residents of the villages. On the other hand, the development of residential constructions and changes in the type of traditional rural houses and their materials have created new jobs in rural areas. Although tourism has positive and favorable effects for rural areas in the recent decades, different negative effects have been imposed on the rural environment, especially in the environmental sector. Rural tourism as a subset of tourism can have effects in different dimensions not only for a country but also for rural communities. In order to this type of tourism to be in the proper process for the sustainable development of rural areas, the principles of sustainable development based on economic, social, and environmental dimensions and based on a systemic approach should be emphasized in all its stages and processes. In this chapter of the book, the relationship between tourism and rural development is emphasized through the approaches of entrepreneurship, participation, marketing, business, environment, and technology. Tourism has caused the mentioned economic and social approaches to be improved in the villages and various developments have taken place in this field.

Keywords: rural tourism, development, entrepreneurship, participation, environment, technology

1. Introduction

In the last century, tourism has developed so much that it has been noticed as an industry all over the world. This industry can easily compensate problems such as unemployment and lack of income in countries and cause income creation, job creation, private sector growth, and infrastructure development in countries. This is the reason why today governments are trying to expand tourism in their country with correct and calculated planning [1]. Tourism is a complex phenomenon and due to its activity, it has consequences in social, political, cultural, and economic fields. The large volume and complexity of providing tourist services has led to the development of the travel and tourism industry [2]. Through its content and role, tourism represents a distinct field of activity and an essential part in the economic and social life of most countries in the world [3]. The tourism industry generates significant economic benefits for the host community or tourist destination. Particularly in developing countries, one of the primary motivations for a region to introduce itself as a tourist destination is the expected economic improvement [4]. Therefore, tourism has economic, social, and cultural benefits for the host community and even the tourists

themselves, and these effects on a geographical area include job creation, income diversification [5]; participation, improvement of infrastructure, improvement of facilities, and environment [6].

There are various types of tourism, one of the most popular of which is rural tourism. The importance and popularity of this type of tourism is such that experts in the field of tourism believe that villages will become one of the most important destinations for tourists in the future [7]. This type of tourism shows the life, culture, art, and heritage of rural areas and benefits the local community socially and economically [8]. It also provides connections between tourists and local communities to enrich the tourist experience.

One of the most important strategies to solve the problems and challenges of rural areas is rural tourism resources. In recent decades, rural tourism has been considered as an approach for the economic development of sensitive places, especially in rural areas [9]. Tourism can have both positive and negative aspects on the livelihood of destination communities [10], which depends on various conditions and factors. Therefore, one of the strategies for the development of rural areas is to promote tourism activities, in such a way that the impact of tourism activities on rural communities and the environment has been recently noticed. The research results [11] show that if rural tourism is managed well, it can contribute significantly to the development of the rural community; otherwise, it brings negative results on the environment and the rural community. Therefore, today efforts are focused on supporting rural tourism in order to improve the quality of tourist accommodations and using information and communication technology to restore, protect, manage, and promote the great natural and cultural heritage in rural areas [12] and it is tried to use the tourism development strategy to solve rural challenges such as poverty [13], migration, improving income, diversifying jobs [14], reducing pressure on nature [15], improving the quality of life, improving the level of technology [16], improving environmental and physical conditions [17], population stability, improving public services, and socioeconomic stability [9]. Therefore, tourism as a rural development strategy, if planned and has a systematic framework, can have benefits and positive effects. Of course, what is more important in this field is knowing the important sources of tourism, because every rural area has its own capacities, tourism development should be planned based on these capacities.

In this research, an attempt has been made to point out some of the effects and developments of tourism in rural areas. Mentioning these issues can show the role of tourism in rural changes and development.

2. Research approach

The data collection method is divided into two types: theoretical literature review and based on the personal experiences of the authors. In the past years, the authors have had a large part of their studies on tourism and rural development. The result of their survey and theoretical research has formed the important and great part of this study. Mental exploration in authors' studies along with theoretical researches in this field forms the contents of this research. Tourism has highly dependent on the place and environmental attractions and cannot know the place well without field research. Therefore, in this research, the main emphasis is on the recognition and views of the authors on tourism, the village, and their relationship with each other according to previous investigations.

3. Rural tourism and development

3.1 The concept of rural tourism

In the definition provided by the World Tourism Organization, it emphasizes the link between the activity and experience of visitors with a wide range of products based on nature, agriculture, fishing, and the lifestyle of villagers [18]. Rural tourism can be defined as a tourism product whose approach emphasizes the importance of supply management and marketing activities. Rural tourism, as a tourism product, is a complex offering of a settlement (or a group of settlements) that includes special elements of hospitality and attractiveness, and these elements are organized into special products [19]. Based on this definition, we can enumerate the characteristics of rural tourism, one of the most important of which is the village-based activities and products of rural tourism, which must have certain characteristics. In this type of tourism, tourists are particularly interested in communicating with local communities and are interested in getting to know the lifestyle of local people [20]. Also, rural tourists tend to participate in the usual activities of the villagers' life. That is why small and home businesses are emphasized in this type of tourism. Rural tourism as an approach or concept is used when rural culture plays a key factor of its product. In fact, rural tourism depends on the characteristics of the region where the tourism activities take place [21].

Rural tourism refers to a structured form of tourism in which tourists stay for some time in villages and surrounding areas (often traditional villages in remote areas) and get information about villages, local culture, ways of life, and customs of the people. These tourists often participate in some rural activities as well. In this type of tourism, the villagers themselves are the owners and managers of the tourism facilities and in this way directly benefit from the benefits of tourism [22]. According to "the World Conference on Rural Tourism" rural tourism includes all types of tourism with facilities and welfare services in rural areas, which allow the use of natural resources and attractions along with participation in rural life (farm and agricultural work) [23]. Tourism village is an efficient solution to increase the income of villagers (**Figure 1**) [19].

3.2 The relationship between tourism and rural development

Rural tourism is one of the solutions for the social and economic development of rural communities. Due to the limitations of rural areas and the increase in the population of villages, the capabilities of rural tourism can be used to increase employment. Also, the natural and cultural attractions of the villages can attract the attention of tourists [24]. Rural tourism as a supplemental income can help increase the welfare of rural residents, reduce migration, and develop rural areas. Tourism increases the quality of life of residents and reduces the difference between rural and urban areas. It seems important to note that tourism cannot be the dominant part of the development of a region, but it may be a driving force with other branches of the region's economy [19].

According to the changes that have happened intellectually, culturally and socially in the world in the last few years, the needs of tourists have changed and unlike the past, today's tourists are looking to experience new spaces, among which nature tourism in rural spaces plays an important role [23]. Therefore, rural areas are considered a good field for the development of this type of tourism due to the abundance of

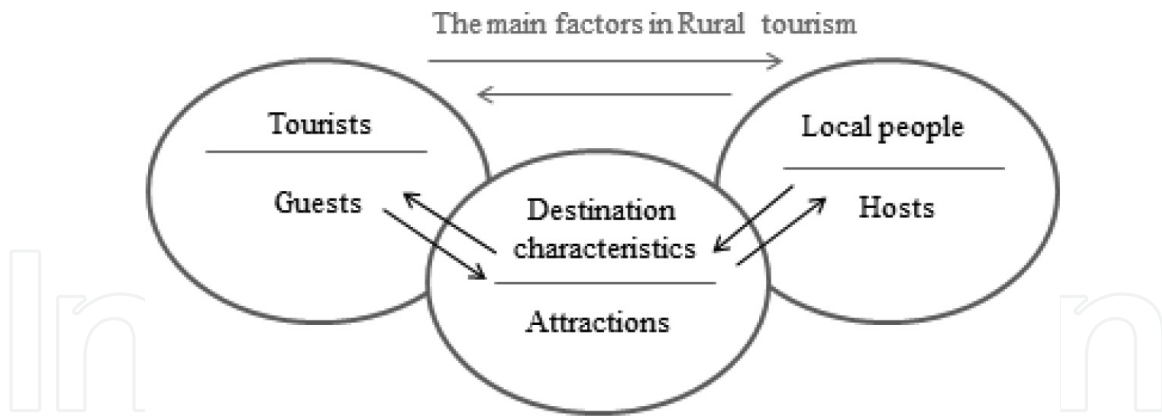


Figure 1.
The main factors in tourism.

natural and rich resources they have, and on the other hand, due to its nature, tourism is a very good opportunity for the development of rural areas and it can help to revitalize villages, create employment, and income for local people [7].

Rural tourism will help to preserve the natural and cultural heritage and provide opportunities for women and youth. Research indicates that the urban population is expanding both globally and within the country, and it is predicted that by 2050, around 86% of the world's population will be urban dwellers [25]. Therefore, according to the conditions of urban life, the need to travel in nature and rural areas will be much more. This is where rural areas become important in providing tourism opportunities to expanding urban communities. In addition, this urban population provides a very good market for rural tourism. Tourism can play an important role in diversifying the rural economy and its expansion in rural areas contributes to the stability of the population and economy of these areas and provides the basis for achieving sustainable rural development [26]. As the research of Premovic et al. (2018) also showed, the most interesting destinations for modern tourists are rural tourism destinations with untouched nature and special human values, and tourism can play an important role in maintaining and promoting rural destinations and rural development [27].

3.3 Tourism as a strategy for sustainable rural development

It can be said that tourism is a new approach (category) in rural development texts, including the approach of sustainable development, which like development, has various dimensions and effects. Therefore, the development and growth of rural tourism is often proportional to its contribution to the social and economic reform of rural areas [28]. Therefore, different views and theories can be expressed about tourism in rural areas and how it is related to rural development [23].

As some people consider tourism as the only way to grow and develop rural areas, they emphasize that the current direction of growth is led by tourism. Therefore, tourism is the main element of moving toward the revival and reconstruction of rural areas, and some people know it as a part of the tourism market and believe that it can be compared with other forms of tourism such as sun, sea, sandy beaches [29]. Some also believe that tourism can be considered as a philosophy for sustainable rural development and, from this aspect, can be presented three important views.

3.3.1 Tourism as a strategy for rural development

There are different approaches that use tourism as a strategy for rural areas in different texts. Considering the increasing trend of destruction of villages and the decline of agriculture, these approaches try to provide new strategies for revitalizing rural areas by creating complementary activities or transforming these areas according to their natural and human resources and provide the only way to revive these villages. They know that they can use their human and natural resources and generate income and increase the well-being of the residents of rural areas. Therefore, they believe that this can be achieved through the expansion of tourism as a substitute for agricultural activities in these areas. For this purpose, these strategies usually follow the following two approaches:

- a. Rural tourism as a development strategy.
- b. The transformation of less developed rural areas [23].

3.3.2 Tourism as a policy for the reconstruction of rural areas

In this strategy, tourism is emphasized as a main part for rural reconstruction, even in areas where tourism activities have not flourished in the past. Proponents of this theory believe that they are able to reduce the excessive reliance of rural producers on agriculture and use them in new economic opportunities. For example, in Eastern Europe, more emphasis is placed on tourism as a tool to rebuild villages after the decline of agriculture, while in Africa, more emphasis is placed on diversification of less developed rural areas.

Therefore, three approaches are followed in this strategy:

- a. Rural tourism as a reconstruction policy.
- b. Reconstruction against the decline of agriculture.
- c. Developing and improving tourism products [28].

3.3.3 Rural tourism as a strategy for sustainable development and protection of natural resources

Sustainable tourism policy in today's world is a comprehensive approach that wants the long-term growth of the tourism industry without damaging the natural ecosystems. It also emphasizes that in the form of tourism development, humans will be able to modify or manipulate certain aspects of the environment in a positive or negative direction. For this reason, during the past few years, the concept of sustainable tourism has been advanced and common to some extent in order to respond to the threats of unorganized tourism. Sustainable tourism has studied tourism across most borders and has established a triangular relationship between the host community and its land on the one hand and the guest community (tourists) on the other hand. In the past, in this triangular relationship, the tourism industry had the first place. Currently, rural tourism aims to adjust the pressure and crisis between the three sides of the triangle and establish a balance in the long term. Also, this part of tourism

aims to minimize the cultural and environmental damages, provide the satisfaction of the visitors, and in the long term, provide the preparations for the economic growth of the region and a way to obtain a balance between the final growth of tourism and the needs of protection and maintenance of natural resources (Figure 2) [30].

3.4 Tourism and rural environment

Tourism activities have complex and extensive relationships with the environment; because one of the important features of the environment is that it is an attraction for tourists [31]. On the other hand, most of the activities related to the development of tourism infrastructure and services, such as roads, hotels, restaurants and camps, may be incompatible with the environment [32]. Also, the excessive development of tourism leads to increased pressure on tourist destinations and changes in the physical texture and socioeconomic structure of the host society [33]. In addition to the social and economic consequences of the development of tourism, positive and negative environmental consequences can also be seen in various regions.

Tourism boom in every rural area also brings environmental effects, which can cause irreparable damages if the negative effects of tourism continue. The presence of tourists in the rural environment can have two positive and negative aspects. The presence of tourists in rural areas will provide positive changes in increasing environmental awareness, improving the network of rural roads, increasing visual appeal and improving rural architecture, improving the quality of residential buildings, improving the quality of religious buildings, and improving the condition of sanitary waste disposal [34]. Also, the presence of tourists in rural areas causes negative changes in natural landscapes, water pollution, air pollution, change in microclimate or local air, soil erosion, loss of diversity of plant and animal species, destruction of natural

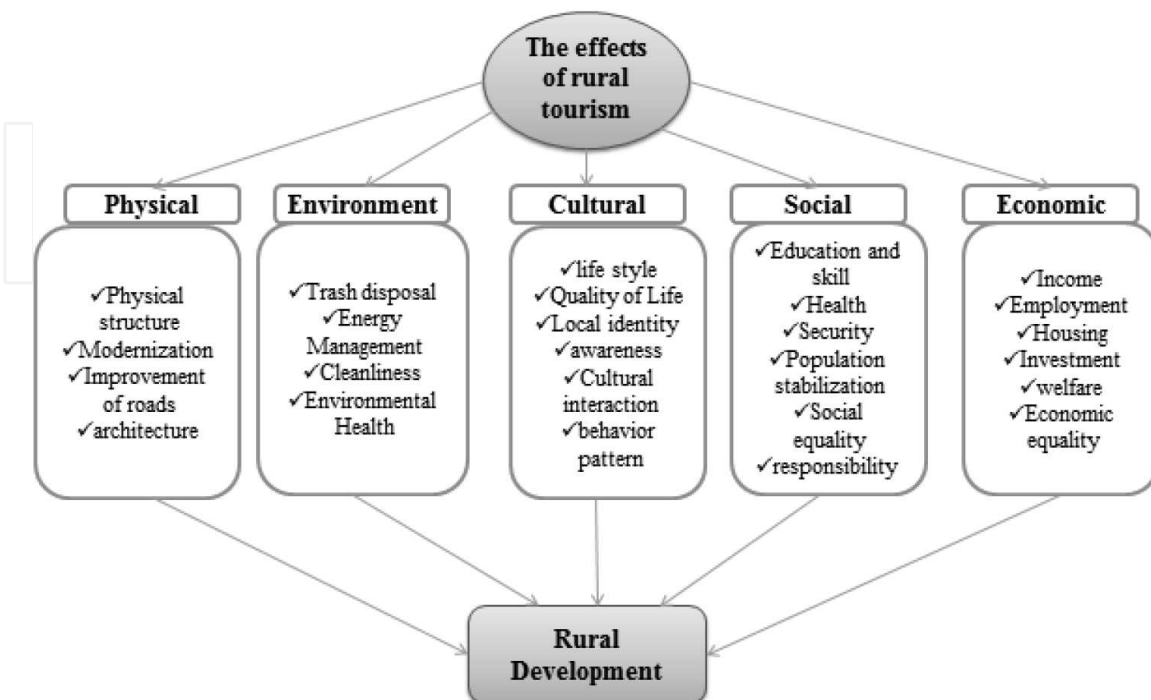


Figure 2.
The effects of rural tourism.

resources, increasing garbage and waste materials, and increasing illegal construction [35]. Therefore, tourism in rural environments can have extensive changes and transformations, which are from different aspects, including environmental, economic, social. These developments can have two positive and negative aspects, and its impact on the rural environment depends on various factors, including the type of tourism management.

3.5 Tourism entrepreneurship and rural development

In the tourism approach, entrepreneurship is very important. The role of tourism entrepreneurs can be vital for the development of rural areas. Therefore, it is necessary to find a new means of livelihood and an alternative for entrepreneurs. Environmentally responsible entrepreneurship can be presented based on resources and experiences derived from nature and should specially emphasize the extraordinary values of renewable natural resources [36]. Nature-based entrepreneurship can have the following characteristics: nature-based, native, local, handicraft, personal.

Companies that are active in the field of nature-based entrepreneurship are usually small. Small-scale tourism enterprises have the potential to provide the necessary force in communities to help transform local resources into tourism products and services [37]. Tourism entrepreneurship in the rural sector has the following effects.

1. Increasing employment. 2. Increasing per capita income at the national and local level. 3. Increasing national production. 4. Developing exports. 5. Cultural and artistic effects [38].

In the field of rural economic development, the following resources can be utilized for entrepreneurship in handicrafts and tourism.

- Creation of handicraft production workshops for women, including carpet weaving, rug weaving, cloth weaving, etc.
- Creating industrial workshops for young people, such as making all kinds of equipment suitable for the environment, etc.
- Creation of special industries for packaging rural products in agriculture and industries.
- Setting up small industrial companies, women entrepreneurs in traditional sectors such as making and producing dolls and toys.
- Creating companies in the field of tourism villages.
- Setting up handicraft sales centers in tourist villages in line with entrepreneurship.
- Providing various services to tourists and creating service entrepreneurship, for example, in the field of accommodation, nutrition, health, tourist guidance [39].

The ability to discover opportunities, provide the necessary financial resources, identify the best places and sites, hire designers for physical development, provide human resources needed to manage physical facilities and services for the development of tourism is very important [40]. Due to the constant and successive changes in

the needs of tourists, the tourism industry needs innovative and creative solutions to survive and develop, which is achieved through entrepreneurship [41].

In today's world, entrepreneurship is one of the most important aspects of tourism, which is increasingly important [42]. Because the changes made in the combination of income generation and society's economy are among the factors that show the necessity of entrepreneurship in tourism more and more. It can be said that entrepreneurship in rural tourism means using creativity and innovation in tourism-related activities. It should be noted that simply having innovation and creativity alone will not lead to the emergence of entrepreneurship, unless it is combined with managerial capabilities and functions [43].

In rural tourism entrepreneurship, it is believed that economic, political, and social conditions exist as a motivating force for progress, and entrepreneurial activities must be supported by society and governing institutions [44].

Tourism entrepreneurship in rural development can have various uses and effects, including the following:

- Encouraging creativity, encouraging innovation and its development, increasing self-confidence, creating and developing processes, creating wealth in the tourism sector and finally in society and increasing public welfare.
- Increasing the profits and capital of investors and ensuring the well-being of the tourism sector and ultimately social well-being.
- Transformation of values and transformation of their nature in creating new values in tourism.
- Filling gaps in the labor market, that is, new decisions are made according to the transformation of the labor market conditions and the provision of new opportunities. Transition from economic stagnation, compensating for economic backwardness and facilitating the process of rural growth and development.
- Preventing the backwardness of the economy during the crisis and the inability of economic sectors to create employment.
- Cultural development and elimination of social anomalies by establishing communication with different tourists in rural areas [37].

3.6 Tourism and rural businesses

Business can be defined as a state of employment in general, including activities that include production, purchase of goods, and services with the aim of selling them in order to earn profit [45]. One of the topics that can be the basis for new jobs and businesses in villages is tourism business. Therefore, rural development is more dependent on the phenomenon of tourism businesses than in the past. Institutions and personalities promoting rural development consider new businesses as a strategic intervention that can accelerate the process of rural development, but it seems that they agree on the need to expand rural economic enterprises [37].

Tourism businesses are a central force for achieving economic growth and development. Without it, other development factors will be wasted. Accepting this point

alone cannot lead to rural development and promotion of economic activities. There are non-agricultural uses of existing resources such as tourism and examples of diversification into non-agricultural activities in the fields of water resources, forest lands, construction, existing skills, and local capabilities, all of which are appropriate for new rural businesses. This issue has a lot of power in the tourism issue, because both directly and indirectly, it creates new businesses in the field of tourism [46].

What can be used to define the category of rural entrepreneurship includes business. This definition can be put forward in this way “Innovative use of village resources and facilities in order to hunt business opportunities.” Due to the small size of the villages, these types of businesses are on a small scale and are often between 10 and 20 people, and due to the predominance of agricultural and workshop activities, they have special efficiency. According to the changes of the current era and the entry into the information society, rural tourism businesses have also undergone changes and transformations and all kinds of service, production, and industrial and information technology businesses can be seen in it [47].

Among the specific examples of business in the tourism sector, ecotourism can be mentioned. Ecotourism is one of the opportunities of sustainable tourism, the growing process of which is accelerating, and its enthusiasts are increasing day to day, both as hosts and as guests. In recent years, various ecotourism centers have been established. Ecotourism, in simple terms, is “creating and developing local and simple accommodation and catering conditions in different areas of old rural contexts, whose architecture is compatible with the natural environment, and has services such as providing traditional and local food and drinks [47]”.

Building a local residence or hotel is another example of tourism capacities in the field of business [36]. Rural tourism businesses include various cases, but in general, food, accommodation, medical and transportation businesses can be mentioned.

3.7 Technology in rural tourism

Information and communication technology or ICT plays a key and important role in the tourism industry and its integration with tourism is vital for its success [48]. ICT empowers consumers to identify, order, and purchase tourism products and supports the globalization of the industry by providing tools to develop, manage, and distribute offers.

Information and communication technology, especially the Internet, empowers the new tourist to gain information with a special credit of money and time [37]. These searchers are not interested in crowded packages and are more interested in planning and making their own choices. Because packages containing tour information are lost through the production of dynamic packages produced by active companies in favor of independent organized tourism facilities. In a situation where people's patience is very low, permanent applicants do not want to delay and wait. The key to success is quickly identify the needs of the applicant and provide them with the daily services and facilities in a way that satisfies their needs [49]. Impact and high speed of ICT in rural tourism, infrastructure, and application software are critical. ICT allows customer relationship management and supply chain management to combine into one resource that facilitates a variety of operations, product selection, ordering, research, tracking and payment, and reporting with one of these. On the other hand, the development of ICT has caused a change in supply and demand. Unique options, quality of information, personal leisure time, and tourist behavior are among the factors that increase the functionality of ICT. Information and communication

technology has also increased the quality of travel, so that more searches are made about travel and more information is obtained in this field, which is possible to better understand the needs of customers and provide them with the required services.

Therefore, today's world has inevitably become a global village with wide and deep connections. On the other hand, with the passage of time, tourism has become an income generating and saving industry for different countries. In such a way that the incomes from it in some countries are several times the oil rich incomes of other countries [50].

The need to pay attention to tourism and use new technologies in order to expand it and use its countless economic benefits for countries and follow the relationship between the development of information and communication technology and the development of tourism has made it necessary [49]. Tourism, in relation to the technological and economic platforms resulting from globalization, is considered a solid principle in economic policies in the third millennium.

The developments resulting from the above discussions in relation to tourism have led to the formation of electronic tourism on the one hand, and on the other hand, to the formation of virtual tourism. With the rapid growth of information technology in the framework of the electronic exchange system, marketing and travel have become faster, more cost-effective and have opened up new markets in the tourism industry [51].

In general, the use of information and communication technology and its expansion in the field of tourism supply and demand caused tourists to evaluate and check the status of destinations before traveling and form a virtual experience in the framework of the tourist perspective. Also, this has provided the grounds for the democratization of choosing destinations for travel, which has been facilitated on the basis of liberalism resulting from globalization. This shows the flexibility of providing the tourism product in relation to the supply, which crystallizes the timely production of the post-Fordism production method. In other words, the tourism product in a special variety includes responding to the personal and high demand of tourists and enables tourists to choose tourist destinations for travel in line with their personal motivations and desires [23].

The development of information and communication technology in tourism can lead to the development of rural tourism [52]. The development of ICT in the rural tourism sector has been booming and expanding during the last two decades. ICT can be very effective in the sustainable development of rural tourism. This influence can be seen in various dimensions of information, advertising, introduction of tourist attractions, production of tourism database, marketing of rural products, protection of natural environment in line with tourism development, etc. In order to be able to use the development capacities of information and communication technology in rural tourism, first of all, different infrastructures in this field should be provided in the villages [51].

In general, information and communication technology in sustainable rural development and especially the development of rural tourism can bring about extensive social, economic, and environmental changes. The effects of this approach in rural areas lead to their economic prosperity. Because there are various capacities in the field of tourism and economy that technology can be useful in this field. Of course, there should be proper management in this field so that the negative consequences of technology do not disturb the life of the rural community and do not threaten the tourism of these areas. Information and communication technology can play a significant role in the prosperity of handicrafts, which is one of the sectors of rural tourism. This is because purchasing various products, including handicrafts, is one of the most important revenue-generating industries in tourism [23].

The first step in communication and information technology in rural tourism is to create a strong and usable database. This bank consists of objectives, products, and suitable facilities in this field. The existence of a database is one of the tools of this technology, and with its use and regular planning, extensive activities can be carried out at a high speed. The costs associated with creating a database can be very high compared to not establishing it and instead focusing on the growth and promotion of the industry.

4. The first step

Knowing government organizations related to the tourism industry, NGOs and tourism companies, recreational tours, student tours, people interested in tourism, and recording this information in the database is the first step. For example, assume the above groups are customers and the tourism organization is the marketer. The first activity of a marketer is to know the objectives, strong communication, and accurate identification of the market in order to be able to provide the best type of goods according to their demands by receiving the opinions and demands of the customers [23].

5. The second step

Accurately knowing the tourist attractions of rural areas and collecting their detailed information and registering them in the database. These attractions can be divided as follows: historical, natural, recreational, pilgrimage, industrial, scientific, research, sports, therapeutic, exhibitions and other natural factors such as weather, soil, mineral resources [23].

6. The third step

Collecting all the information available in rural areas such as hotels, restaurants, camps, streets, medical centers, banks, bank tellers, residences, accesses is the next step. After collecting information and registering them in the database, the first stage of this technology in the field of tourism has been completed [23].

6.1 Environmental approach in rural tourism

All human activities, including tourism, occur within and depend on the environment [7]. Therefore, tourism activity and the environment are two inseparable phenomena that will have diverse effects on each other. In fact, from this point of view, the relationship between tourism and the environment is not only a negative relationship, but its extent is emphasized by defining the acceptance capacity of the environment and environmental considerations. Of course, unreasonable population growth along with various problems in the field of sustainable development such as poverty and inequality, lack of proper education and health, environmental problems, desertification, soil erosion, weather, biodiversity extinction, problems related to waste materials exposed to destruction are all significant issues [23]. In order to avoid the absolute destruction of the environment, all people (both officials and people) at the global or national level, and especially at the local level, must understand the

important fact that progress and development in any sector, including tourism, must have a sustainable process and its fruits will benefit not only the current generations but also the future generations.

Tourism development policies should consider the principles and goals of sustainable development that can be considered in the concept of tourism projects. Another reason why the role of tourism should be examined is its complex relationship with the natural environment, which is stated in the 1972 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of the World's Cultural Heritage and Natural Environment. We must remember that heritage has a very broad concept that includes natural landscapes, archeological sites, and the built environment in addition to cultural and scientific behaviors and all of these are related to sustainable development and tourism management [53].

The relationship between rural tourism and the environment seems complicated, but this relationship includes activities that can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these effects are related to the creation of public infrastructure such as roads and different facilities such as residences, hotels, restaurants, shops [54]. The negative effects of rural tourism development can destroy environmental resources. But the tourism industry has a high potential to create beneficial effects on the environment with various cooperations in preserving the environment. It is a solution to increase awareness of environmental values and can act as a tool for financial protection of natural resources and increasing economic importance [7].

This industry has a high potential in increasing the protection of the environment and spreading the awareness of environmental problems, because rural tourism puts people in closer contact with nature and the environment. This communication itself can increase the awareness of environmental values and cause environmentally conscious behavior and activities to protect it [55].

Therefore, it is very important to mention that tourism does not always cause environmental problems. These problems are due to lack of proper management. In addition, in some cases where sustainable management of environmental resources has been carried out in rural areas, tourism has had positive effects on sustainable rural development and has also contributed to the economic prosperity of rural areas. The development of ecotourism in a number of tourist villages has not only harmed the environment there, but has also helped to preserve the environment and strengthen the economy of the villages. In general, tourism can have both positive and negative effects on the environment.

6.2 Tourism marketing and rural development

Currently, tourism and tourism marketing are becoming one of the main pillars of the rural economy. Also, development planners and policymakers refer to the rural tourism marketing industry as the main pillar of sustainable development [56]. In this regard, rural tourism is considered to be a part of the tourism industry, which can play an effective role in the development and development of villages and, as a result, development and diversification of the village economy, with proper planning and identification of opportunities.

One of the effective factors in marketing is advertisement. In general, lack of centralized advertising and marketing can be one of the obstacles to the development of the tourism industry [57]. Today, in the tourism industry, advertising should be used professionally as the most important tool. Because professional advertisement can be considered as a winning tool for the advancement of cultural goals inside and outside. Otherwise, it is a waste of time, capital, and energy [57].

For advertising activities in the tourism industry in today's world, we should pay attention to advertising with the belief and faith that advertising is not costly, but is a kind of fundamental and principled investment to advance organizational and national goals, and in case of correct and principled implementation, it can bring valuable achievements. In this regard, the purpose and duty of advertising is to increase marketing, and any neglect and lack of proper use of this tool will not only result in failure, but will also lead to lagging behind tourism marketing competitions and ultimately failure [56]. The topic of advertisement can be examined from several points of view, including the following:

- Advertisements at the macro-level and relying on internal and external policies
- Advertisements at the individual level and based on thematic issues
- Advertisements at the macro-level and based on different devices of communication
- Advertisements on a large scale and using the assistance provided by the government
- Advertisements on a macro-level based on business needs from the private sector [23].

The tourism industry is a low-cost and quick-return industry. In the discussion of marketing and advertising and its consequences in the tourism industry in written, visual, and audio formats, each has its own impact in a stage of tourism programs. In the context of increasing the attraction of tourists of any country, it is generally necessary to check the ability of that country to plan and the interest and need of that country for the growth and development of the tourism industry, and then implement the planned strategies and then the approved strategies. So, by accepting this principle and with a correct understanding and complete familiarity with the target markets, you should keep these things in mind:

- Determining the objectives of the advertisement
- Avoiding tasteism and designing expressive and expressive form and content
- Identifying suitable media for advertising
- Allocation of sufficient funds
- Applying innovative and new methods, in sync with today's values and technology
- Identify ways to reach effective advertising
- Correct exploitation of advertising centers after choosing them [23].

So it is true that in today's world, marketing efforts are much more important than production and sales. If a country has tourist facilities and attractions, but does not

include the methods of introducing these attractions and potentials and offering them to the target market in its grand plan, it will definitely not be successful. On the other hand, considering the many problems that exist in some countries on the way to the growth and development of the tourism industry and attracting tourists, the role and importance of using professional and modern marketing and large investments in this regard becomes much more visible [58].

Of course, marketing is also true in the field of rural tourism, because rural tourism is a type of tourism. Taking a close look at the state of this type of tourism and the challenges facing it, it can be concluded that one of the main factors in rural tourism not being able to have a proper place is the lack of advertising and marketing in this field. Because rural geographical areas are virgin and attractive areas for tourists, but due to the weakness of marketing and the lack of extensive advertising with various methods of internet, media, television, etc., significant growth and development has not been formed in this field. Therefore, adopting favorable policies and laws in the field of rural tourism marketing is essential, because it can play a major role in the prosperity of this industry.

Rural tourism marketing cannot be evaluated properly. Because, firstly, marketing has not happened as it should for different products and different sectors, and what we have seen has been limited. Secondly, in other economic sectors of the village, including the agricultural sector, the villagers are currently facing different problems in selling their products. Therefore, tourism is also considered a part of the rural economy and is affected by its developments. Therefore, when there is no change in the marketing of other economic sectors of the village, tourism is not excluded from this situation [23].

As mentioned earlier, rural areas relying on their social, cultural, natural, handicraft, agricultural, animal husbandry, etc., capacities and attractions can bring about various developments in the field of tourism, and in order to form its basic and systematic framework, various factors should be considered. Marketing is one of the first actions and influencing factors [59].

To promote rural products, enhance the capacity of rural and nomadic communities to welcome and host tourists, ensure that local customs and cultures align with the development of tourism, establish a clear market for product sales, provide necessary services to tourists, carry out effective advertising and information campaigns to promote rural areas and address other related factors, are all crucial for attracting tourists to rural destinations.

All these actions are done if marketing is emphasized in rural tourism, Because all these things can be solved in the field of marketing. What can be inferred in rural tourism today is that marketing does not have such a strong position in this field and it seems that there was no accurate planning and foresight based on the sustainable development approach for this important factor in the field of tourism. Therefore, it is an undeniable necessity to pay attention to this issue in the discussion of rural tourism today.

6.3 Participation approach in rural tourism

In tourism in general and rural tourism as a service and human-oriented industry, the constructive role of people for development should not be overlooked. Looking at the people in this industry should not only look at the consumer and that only a certain group of society is responsible for production and supply. People should be involved in the development of this industry and decision-making and policies so that they participate in the implementation of programs and get to know the problems, obstacles, and benefits

of this industry well. Among the various factors and elements in the development of this industry, people's participation should be considered as the axis and indicator of development [60]. The importance of participation is especially evident in rural areas, and this issue depends on the views of the officials of each region, both public and private [61]. Attracting the participation of local people, as a visa for the youth of the region, will not only contribute to economic development and job creation in each region, but will also strengthen the cultural development and awareness of local values in the local people of the region. Also, since sustainable rural tourism seeks to improve the quality of life of local residents, enhance the experiences of tourists and protect the environment of the destination, it is inseparably related to people and society, and the participation of local communities is essential for the continuation and development of fundamental planning for the development and management of the tourism industry [23].

The participation of rural people in the development of tourism is part of a global movement, and for this reason, global programs such as the Comprehensive Tourism Program emphasize the development of tourism at the regional and local levels with the participation of local people. Experience has shown that the output of a large part of the tourism effects of studies of the attitudes of residents in host communities is the need to increase public participation and especially the attitude of developing the destination with a greater focus on the community. Of course, to achieve this, we need new cooperative attitudes in tourism [62].

Some consider rural community participation simply as the public's ability to participate in decision-making for tourism development planning in order to gain profit from tourism development. Community participation in the tourism development process can be examined from two perspectives: participation in the decision-making process and profit from development. The participation of communities in the development of tourism in a number of developing countries is only to help people to increase financial benefits due to increased employment and encouragement for small businesses, and not to create opportunities to participate in the decision-making process [63]. The most important reasons for rural community participation in tourism development are as follows:

- Participation of the local community is a real element in the realization of tourism plans and solutions.
- The participation of the local community contributes to the sustainable development of tourism in several aspects.
- The participation of the local community increases tourism satisfaction and the continuation of tourism.
- Local community participation is a way for tourism professionals to prepare better tourism programs.
- Local community participation helps in fair distribution of tourism costs and benefits among community members.
- Local community participation provides local needs.
- The participation of the local community leads to the strengthening of the process of establishing democracy in tourism destination [23].

So, in general, the participation of rural people in the tourism process, from planning to executive and operational stages, is essential for the development of this sector. The presence and participation of local communities can solve problems and obstacles in this direction and provides the basis for maximum use of the capacities of the tourism sector in rural areas. The experiences of different countries, especially in East Asia, from the discussion of people's participation in the development of rural areas confirm this issue well. In fact, achieving the sustainable development of rural tourism can only happen through the cooperation and active participation of people and officials of all institutions. Perhaps the biggest reason for the failure of rural development and tourism programs is the lack of people's participation [23]. Therefore, the current situation of planning and development of tourism in rural areas on the one hand and the lack of proper results from these plans on the other hand, doubles the necessity of attention and emphasis on participatory planning.

6.4 Tourism development in sample villages

In the end, two tourism villages in Iran are introduced as examples, which have accepted changes and developments in terms of economy, infrastructure, culture, etc., as a result of the development of tourism.

6.4.1 Shayvand village in Khuzestan Province, Iran

Shayvand village is located in Khuzestan Province in the southwest of Iran. Shayvand village has unique attractions for tourism due to its proximity to the dam lake and the Karun river on one side and the Zagros mountain range with its oak forests, rivers, waterways, waterfalls, rocks, and the favorable nature on the other hand.

Shayvand region is a part of Shalo- and Mongasht-protected areas. Shayvand waterfall is one of the most important attractions of this village. The height of this waterfall is 90 meters and it is located on the eastern slopes of Mongasht Mountain. Although the existence of the waterfall has made Shayvand village known as a tourist village, in addition to all these beauties, there are ancient monuments in this village that prove its historical antiquity. Among these tourist attractions, you can visit an old caravanserai from the Safaviyeh period, a cemetery, a castle belonging to the third and fourth millennia BC, as well as Mohammad Imamzadeh, an old dungeon (it was once used as a prison and is 25 meters deep) and also mentioned prominent inscriptions around the village.

The tourist attractions of this village have attracted tourists and developed its tourism in such a way that part of the economic structures of the village have moved toward tourism and tourism plays an important role in the economy of this village. In addition, culturally and socially, due to the arrival of tourists, this village has received various impacts.

Among the most important changes in this village with regard to tourism development, we can mention the diversity of employment, handicrafts development, women participation, the improvement of the village environment, entrepreneurship, the improvement of the village road and technology development in the village (**Figure 3**) [23].

6.4.2 Ziarat village in Golestan Province

Ziarat village is located seven kilometers from Gorgan city in Golestan Province of Iran, which is connected to Naharkhoran by a beautiful forest road. Ziarat village



Figure 3.
Shayvand village.

attracts tourists with its tourist attractions such as Imamzadeh, hot mineral water, waterfall, towering and green mountains, pleasant weather. Tourism development in this village has caused developments and changes in terms of facilities and services. Today, there are all kinds of services such as shops, local residences, hotels, repair shops, restaurants, banks, and other centers in this village and different needs of tourists are provided in different dimensions. Another noteworthy point about this village is the change in the architectural style of the houses, which are almost similar to urban houses in terms of architecture. In other words, its texture is close to urban texture.

Tourism in this village has had various effects, the most important of which are women employment, the development of handicrafts and indigenous crafts, income improvement, the increase of facilities, the increase of ecotourism houses, health promotion, youth entrepreneurship, Internet expansion, and people participation in tourism projects [23] (**Figure 4**).

7. Conclusion

Rural tourism is one of the main structural and functional indicators of development programs in many countries of the world and is an important part of economic activities and creating infrastructure to achieve sustainable development. Rural tourism is a type of tourism in the rural environment that emphasizes the



Figure 4.
Ziarat village.

traditional culture and texture of the village, rural arts and industries, and traditional customs and it can play an effective role in the development of rural areas by proper and principled planning, identifying its advantages and limitations. Rural tourism brings benefits to the society of rural areas. When tourists visit rural areas, they support the local economy and contribute in different ways. Rural tourism contributes to the development of rural areas and the standard of living of host communities.

Rural tourism is a type of growing tourism and it is not just about staying at a farm or visiting rural areas, it is more than that. Rural tourism works for the benefit of the host community of rural areas as well as the surrounding natural environment through the preservation and protection of natural resources. Creating diverse jobs, improving income, improving services and facilities, cultural interactions, modifying behavioral patterns, improving infrastructure, creating suitable housing, environmental changes, women's participation, entrepreneurship, marketing, growth of local handicrafts, selling products, etc., are the most important the effects of tourism development in rural areas.

Tourism can be very effective in rural development through various drivers. The relationship between tourism and rural development can be improved through entrepreneurship, partnership, marketing, business, environment and technology approaches. In other words, rural areas have various economic and social capacities,

and adopting the appropriate approach and framework for their exploitation is considered an important issue. In this direction and for rural development based on tourism, appropriate approach should be adopted according to local conditions and natural and human characteristics. Therefore, tourism has caused the economic and social approaches mentioned in the villages to be improved and various developments have taken place in this field. Therefore, entrepreneurship can provide favorable platforms for the development of tourism through the creation of diverse economic and social structures in the tourism sector, because entrepreneurship is based on creativity and innovation, and considering that tourism is also moving toward creativity in the current era, and these two approaches, entrepreneurship and tourism, can complement each other. Also, we cannot ignore the important role of technology in this field, because technology also plays an important role in accelerating various services and processes of tourism and rural development. Community-based participation, importance to environmental issues, and creating businesses suitable for tourism in rural areas are also other economic and social approaches to tourism development in rural areas. The result of adopting and implementing these approaches in rural areas with a focus on tourism can lead to the development of rural areas.

In other words, the result of these changes and effects can lead to sustainable tourism development and the framework of rural sustainable development with regard to tourism can be very effective. Therefore, rural tourism can be a very important factor in shaping sustainable rural development, and this issue is realized through various social, economic, and environmental factors and indicators (**Figure 5**).

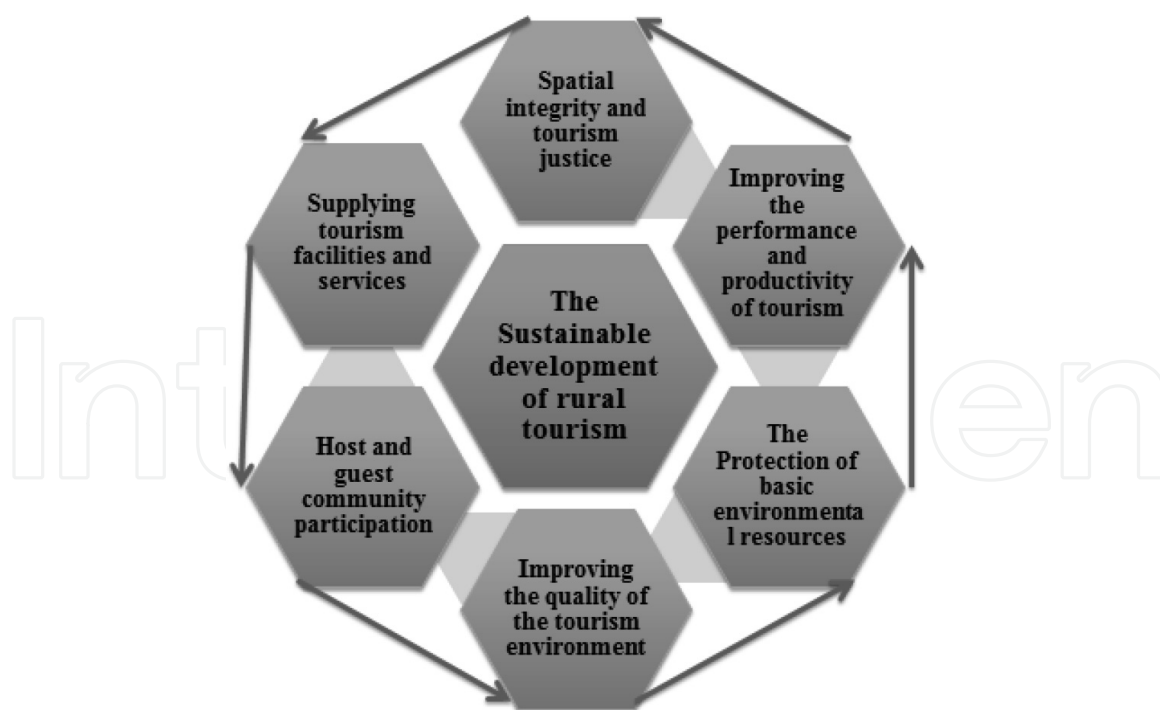


Figure 5.
The sustainable development of rural tourism.

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