



## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# The role of ecotourism, cultural and historic attractions in the tourism development of Langroud city

Masoumeh Amiry Lagmoj

<sup>1</sup>Department of Environment, Lahijan Branch, Islamic Azad university, lahijan ,Iran

### ABSTRACT

*Nowadays, tourism industry and tourist attraction is considered as the factors for economical success of any country such that a major part of many countries' income worldwide is captured through tourism industry. Increasing demand of tourist use to natural attractions and visiting historical-ancient, cultural and religious places has offered a suitable ground to provide welfare facilities and tourism development. Langroud city has adequate status for developing tourism activities in terms of location al status and having major elements of tourism attraction such as landscape and natural views, ancient places, climatic diversity, social traditions and ceremonies. Present study was performed to examine the role of ecotourism, cultural and historical attractions in tourism development of this city. This study is an applied article, given its objective in to consideration. Methodologically, it is descriptive-analytic and correlational. Data collection technique in this study was through observation and presence interviewing and questionnaire filling by tourists. Study population ware tourists visiting ecotourism, historic, cultural and religious attractions of Langeroud city. Study population was consisted of 75 individuals thus, due to low volume, overall population was selected as the sample and another sampling was not performed. Simple linear regression analysis was used for data analysis and for hypotheses testing. Results of this study indicates that ecotourism attractions are most important factors to attract the tourists following historical-ancient places of this city and religious-cultural attractions are major factors.*

**Key words:** Langroud city, ecotourism, cultural, historical attractions, tourism.

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### INTRODUCTION

Touring, traveling or tourism is generally considered as a recreational journey. Once tourists enter to a country, they are required to pay some costs within that country such as paying for food, residence, hotel and gust house, expenditures of recreations, transport, touring, inflations as well as the amount of money paying for buying the souvenir and indigenous goods of host country and the enterence charge for musum or visiting places. These expenditures, through the foreign exchanges entering to the destination country, will provide economic flourish ment for destination country. World tourist are also called as invisible exports. Tourism industry in Iran is of very great capacities for growth and development. According to the report of international tourism organization, Iran is ranked as tenth country is respect of ancient , historical attractions and has the fifth rank in the natural attractions world wide. This country is one of most safe countries of the region and world in respect of safety for foreign tourists. In 2006, about 750,000 foreign tourists had visited Iran. While, in the same year, 842 milion tourists traveled world wide [1-5].

H1: Eco tourist attraction (coastal and forest tourism, roads, houses and traditional rustic texture, springs, rivers and the country, mounterous areas) affect on the tourism development in Langeroud city.

H2: Historic attractions such as ancient and historic monuments, local and traditional ceremonies affect on the tourism development and tourist attraction in Langroud city.

H3: Culture and religions attractions (participation in national and religious ceremonies such as celebrations and festivals, wedding ceremonies and special events) affect on tourist attraction.

### Study area:

Langroud is located in eastern part of Guilan province. It leads from north to Caspian sea, from south to Siahkal city, from vest to Lahijan and from east to Rodsar and Amlash.

Langroud city with 438  $\text{km}^2$  area is located between  $49^{\circ} 55'$  to  $50^{\circ} 17'$  E longitude and  $36^{\circ} 56'$  to  $37^{\circ} 19'$  Northern altitude and based on the national divisions, this city has 3 districts, 4 cities, 7 villages and 211 oasis (202 populated oasis and 99 unpopulated oasis). (Guilan organization for management and planning, 1385)

Langroud city has 38626 families and 133,956 people, 40.2% of them are male and 50.8% of them are female. According to this fact, generic ratio of this city is 98.9 persons. That is, in Langroud city, there is 100 females per 98.9 males. Among total population of this city, 58.6% in habit in urban areas and 41.4% in habit in rural areas. Family size in this city is 3.5 persons and relative density of the population is 3.6 person per  $\text{km}^2$ .

Langroud city topographically has 2 major geographic plain and mountainous regions. In the plain region, there is narrow coastal strip. Agricultural practices of this area are including hunting, paddy raising, husbandry and vegetable raising. Additionally, north-west to north-east connecting road also is located in this.

Area which led to the flourishing of servicing jobs such as restaurants, all kinds of repair shops and related activities. In the mountainous area, agricultural activities including tea growing, raising the citrus trees, walnut and apiculture, etc. are common. Climatic conditions of coastal and plain areas of this city is humid and it has very favorable conditions in various seasons of the year. In high altitudes, the climate is relatively humid with medium conditions. Precipitation rate in this city is 1000-1400 mm annually.

#### **Tourism attractions of Langroud city:**

1. Coastal tourism: consisted of the villages Chamkhale, Galeshkolam, Radar Komleh, ... at the sea level and coastal tourism encompasses the northern part of Langroud city.

Villages locating in the border of Caspian sea provide a suitable conditions for tourists to benefit from the coast and sea and it is a place to attract many tourist in the holidays which greatest effect was on Chamkhale village located along the sea coast.

2. Forest tourism:

In the southern and west-southern parts of study area, presence of dense forests and sparse beautiful villages of wood ment, which it is a suitable ground for tourism development in Langroud city.

Tourism of forest and veterinary villages occurs in the altitudes higher than 1000 meter from sea level such as Bolordokan, Chadasht, Khorma, Lat Lil, etc.

3. Village with beautiful paddy farm lands capes locating alongside the roads and between village and cities are called resting place (road) tourism.

They have beautiful tea farm, citrus and paddy farm landscapes, are locating along the connecting paths between the cities and village and are called resting place or road tourism. Presence of restaurants and service centers such as stores and repair shops related to the vehicles and automobiles are very noticeable. In some other minor roads also, native people sell their product beside the roads. These village are including Parashkooh, Leila kooh, Moridan and Saloosh.

4. Tourism of rural houses with specific architectural styles. Traditional houses with specific architecture and cultural styles which are based on climatic and cultural conditions and requirements of rural societies so that their dazzling beauty represent the life style of rural people forming in proportion to the needs of each region's people. Each rural family belongs a lands inside its own house yard for lateral agricultural practices. On these plots after usable products of the farmers are grown. In some regions such as the village of central part of this city, silk worm husbandry is very common, and certain stores are considered for this practice. Some barns and stables are created to keep the animals feed during the winter with an atmosphere different from other areas. Suitable geo ecologic conditions of the area has made possible various agricultural practices from hunting to animal husbandry, agriculture, horticulture, etc. this area, despite the economic aspects which are important for livelihood of human societies, accompanies great cultural-social burden.



Figure 1.Age sayad Hossein Kia.

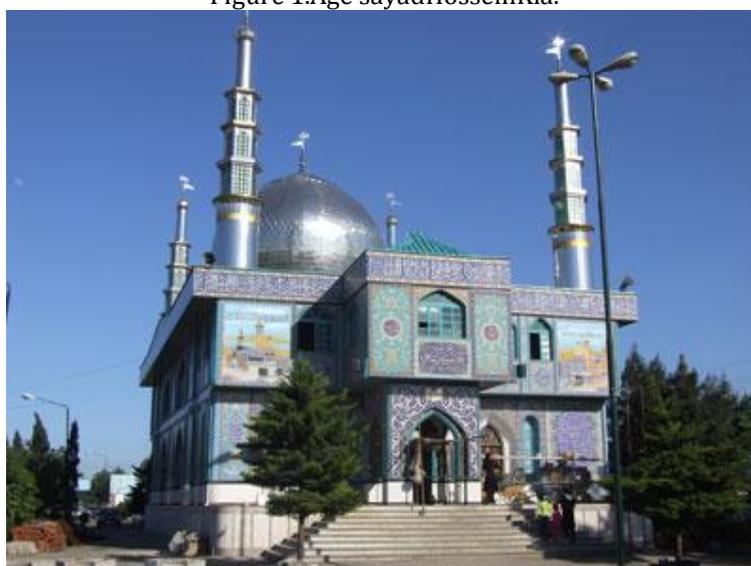


Figure 2.Age sayad Mohammad Kia.



Figure 3.Monajem Bashy's House.



Figure 4. Brick bridge.



Figure 5. Kiakalaye pond, Fajr Park.

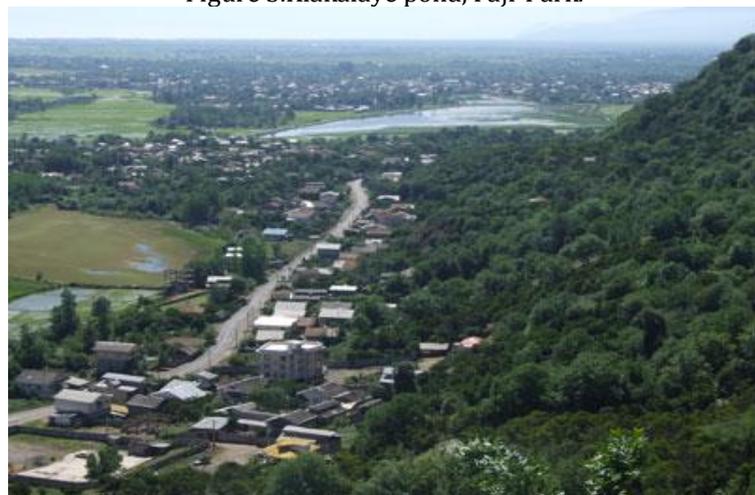


Figure 6. Beautiful area of Leila kooch.



Figure 7. Traditional architecture of rural houses of Langroud city.



Figure 8. A beautiful view of a paddy farm in the border of a connecting road in village.

5. Historical attractions: Brick bridge, monajemBashy's houses, ...

6. Cultural and religious attractions: agha sayed Hosseinkia, Agha sayedmohammadkiya, ...

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This study is a descriptive-analytical and correlational research.

Data collection methodology in this research was library and field study (questionnaire). Information was gathered through personal observation and interviewing and filling the questionnaires by tourists.

Study population were tourists visiting the ecotourism, historical, cultural and religious attractions of Langroud city. Study population were including 75 persons, thus, due to low number of population, all of them were selected as the sample and any other sampling was not performed.

Correlation and simple linear regression were used to analyze the data and hypotheses testing. Statistic analysis was performed using spss.

Fitness test implemental in this research was nominal and content fitness. Kronback alpha was evaluated for variables separately using spss software (Table 1). As table indicates, research tool is of high stability.

Table 1. Delining the questionnaire stability (with variables partitioning).

Variable name	Variable kind	Sample size	Number of questions	Chronbakh alpha coefficient
Tourism development	Independent	75	9	83%
Ecotourism attractions	Dependent	75	9	84%
Historical attractions	Dependent	75	8	73%
Cultural-religious Attractions	Dependent	75	6	72%
Total questionnaire	—	75	30	

**DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS**

Influence of natural attractions in the tourism development in Langroud city:

According to the study results , respondents mentioned the effect of natural resources on the tourism development as 16.8 % very high, 31.5 % medium, 20.4 % low and 1.4 % very low.

Influence of historic attractions such as historic and ancient sites and local, traditional ceremonies on Langroud tourism development:

According to the study results, respondents mentioned the effect of historic attractions mentioned the effect of historic attractions on the tourism development as 10.9 % very high, 26.6 % high , 30.8 % medium,

28.9% low and 2.8% very low.

Effect of cultural and religious attractions such as participation in the national and religious ceremonies such as festivals and celebrations, wedding ceremonies and particular events on the tourists attraction: 12.2% as very high, 26.4% as high, 28.7% as medium, 24.5% as low and 8.2% as very low.

Hypotheses test:

H1: Ecotourism attractions affect on the tourism attraction in Langroud city. To study the tourism and natural attractions development, simple linear regression analysis was used.

According to the hypothesis regression test, determination coefficient (R square) between two variables (Tourism development, natural attractions) is 11% (Table2).

That is, tourism development only predicts 11% change created I the dependent variable.

Table2.correlation coefficient and determination coefficient of regression.

Correlation coefficient	Determination coefficient	Adjusted coefficient	Mean standard deviation
0.321	0.114	0.087	0.88 400

Regression variance analysis table (Table3) also affirms the lirearity of the relationship between two variables, tourism development and natural attractions, since sig is lower than 5%.

Table3: Regression variance analysis (ANOVA).

	Sum of squares	Freedom degree	Mean of squares	Fisher distribution (F)	Sig
Total residual regression	4.77	1	3.89	5.127	0.015

According to table3, the significant relationship between these two variables with 0.015 significance level is affirmed, which standardized Beta coefficient is 0.43 representing there will be 0.43 change in dependent variable per unit change in the independent variable.

Regression distribution figure (Figure3) also indicates that two variables (ecotourism attractions and tourism development) have a medium relationship.

Table4: Regression analysis of natural attraction effect on tourism development.

Regression model	Un standardized coefficient		standardized coefficient	t	sig
	B	Standard deviation	Beta		
Constant rate	2.186	0.411		6.282	0.000
Tourism development	0.460	0.136	0.433	3.488	0.015

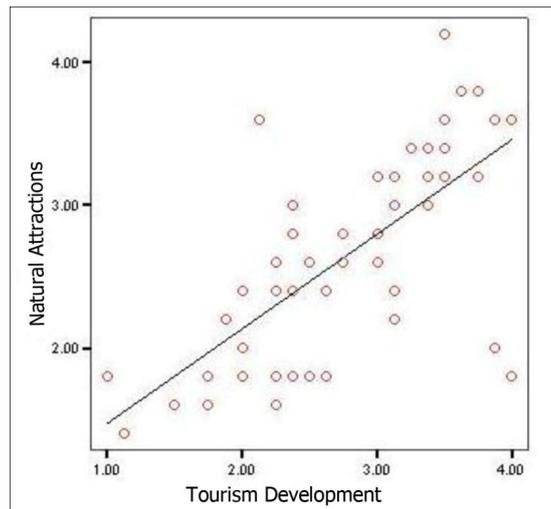


Figure3: regression figure for relationship between natural attractions and tourism development.

H2: historic attractions affect on tourism development of Langroud city.

Correlation coefficient and regression determination coefficient table (Table5).

Indicated that determination coefficient is 44% in other word, independent variable (Tourism development) predict 44% of change created in the dependent variable (historical attraction).

Table5: correlation coefficient and regression determination coefficient.

Correlation coefficient	Determination coefficient	Adjusted coefficient	Mean standard Deviation
0.678	0.443	0.531	0.621

Table6. involves regression variance analysis to study the certaintyof liner relationship between two variables. According to the fact that sig is 0.000 and lower than 5% then assumption of linear relationship between two variables is supported.

Table6. Regression variance analysis (ANOVA).

	Sum of squares	Freedom degree	Mean of squares	Fisher distribution (F)	sig
Total Residual Regression	12.14	1	12.14	43.42	0.000

Also, given the result of simple linear regression analysis, above mentioned hypothesis is supported, since significance level is 0.000. this result was achieved that there is 0.67 change in dependent variable per unit change in independent variable (Table7) regression figure also defines that historical attraction accompany tourism development (Figure4)

Table7. Regression analysis (Influence of historical attraction on tourism development).

Regression on model	Un standardized coefficient		standardized coefficient	t	sig
	B	Standard deviation	Beta		
Constant value	0.708	0.328	0.679	2.814	0.005
Tourism development	0.653	0.088		7.630	0.000

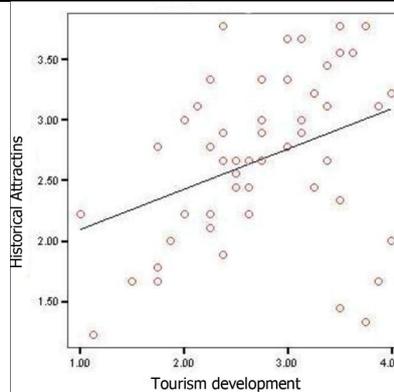


Figure 4. Figure of regression of the relationship between historical attractions and tourism development. H3 test: cultural and religious attractions affect on the tourism development and tourist attraction. Table of correction coefficient and regression determination coefficient (Table 7) indicates that determination

coefficient is 14%. In other word, tourism development only predicts 14% of dependent variable's changes.

Table8. Correlation and regression determination coefficient.

Correlation coefficient	Determination coefficient	Adjusted coefficient	Mean standard deviation
0.366	0.144	0.115	0.718

Regression variance analysis indicates that sig is 0.007 and lower than 5%. Then, assumption of linearity of the relation between 2 variables is supported.

Table9. Regression variance analysis (ANOVA).

	Sum of squares	Freedom degree	Mean of squares	Fisher distribution (F)	sig
Total Residual Regression	2.13	1	4.12	9.15	0.007

Regression analysis table (Table 10) indicates that cultural-religious attractions affect on tourism development with 0.07 significance rate. Standardized coefficient (Beta) also indicates that 0.38 change in dependent variable (cultural and religious attractions) are caused per unit change in independent variable (Tourism development). According to the results of regression analysis, figure of distribution of two variables was mapped representing the weak relationship between these two variables (Figure 4).

Table10. Regression analysis for relationship between culture and religious attractions and tourism development.

Regression model	Un standardized coefficient		standardized coefficient	t	sig
	B	Standard deviation	Beta		
Constant value	1.863	0.338	0.384	5.362	0.000
Tourism development	0.442	0.116		3.853	0.007

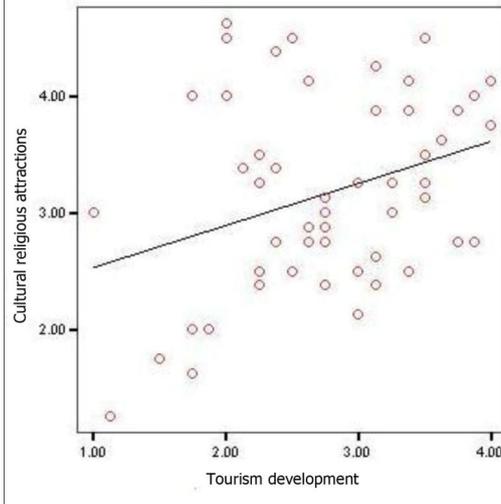


Figure4. Regression figure for relationship between cultural attraction and tourism development.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Tourism attractions of Langroud city based on its diversity are including natural, historical-ancient, cultural and religious attractions. Ecotourism attractions are considered as the factor to attract tourists followed by historical and ancient attractions of this city and them cultural and religious attractions are important to attract tourists. Among the reasons that montenous parts of this city despite having beautiful landscape, are not much interested by tourists is geographic separation and accessibility of this areas. Thus, it is necessary to provide a suitable road and creating confidence between tourist on the safety of this region.

Also, southern parts this city aremonterous which created some sparse small village between dense forest.

This leads to lack of consideration for service providing by authorities in this region. Since supplying the needs and facilities for tourist during the journey in tourist courses is very important and necessary, thus

it is fundamental to provide conditions such as residence facilities, food demands, local guides to attract tourists in these parts.

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