

# ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

## Mesleki Eğitim ve Uygulama Dergisi

### INVESTIGATING THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BORDER REGIONS (STRATEGIES, CAPACITIES, OPPORTUNITIES, CHALLENGES AND PROBLEMS OF TOURISM)

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#### ABSTRACT

The tourism industry is recognized as one of the largest and most productive economic sectors globally, capable of creating the highest amount of added value and directly and indirectly impacting other economic and cultural activities. This research examines the impact of tourism in border regions and examines objectives such as border development, sustainable tourism, tourism development strategies and capacities, prospects and opportunities in this region, as well as challenges and problems related to tourism. Also, the role of tourism in the economic development of border regions is the focus of this research. The research methodology used in this article is meta-synthesis and descriptive. The current study is based on the premise that the tacit knowledge of specialists and experts in the field of tourism can help identify opportunities, problems, and challenges in this region. It can also achieve a more comprehensive analysis of the state of tourism in border regions and provide effective solutions for improving and developing this industry. The results of this study show that the challenges and solutions related to the tourism industry can be divided into the categories of macro-management and policymaking, culture, human resources, infrastructure, advertising, and investment. Finally, improving the state of the tourism industry requires the country's policymakers and planners to be aware of the existing challenges and include them in national macro-plans, as well as the public's determination to develop this high-potential industry.

**Keywords:** Tourism, sustainable tourism, tourism challenges, tourism capacities, border regions

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## SINIR BÖLGELERİNİN GELİŞİMİNDE TURİZMİN ROLÜNÜN ARAŞTIRILMASI (TURİZMİN STRATEJİLERİ, KAPASİTELERİ, FIRSATLARI, ZORLUKLARI VE SORUNLARI)

### ÖZET

Turizm endüstrisi, küresel olarak en büyük ve en üretken ekonomik sektörlerden biri olarak kabul edilir, en yüksek katma değeri yaratma ve diğer ekonomik ve kültürel faaliyetleri doğrudan ve dolaylı olarak etkileme kapasitesine sahiptir. Bu çalışmada, sınır bölgelerindeki turizmin etkisini incelenmiş ve sınır geliştirme, sürdürülebilir turizm, turizm geliştirme stratejileri ve kapasiteleri, bu alandaki beklentiler ve fırsatlar ile turizmle ilgili zorluklar ve sorunlar gibi hedefleri incelemektedir. Ayrıca, sınır bölgelerinin ekonomik kalkınmasında turizmin rolü bu çalışmanın odak noktasıdır. Bu makalede kullanılan araştırma metodolojisi meta-sentez ve tanımlayıcıdır. Mevcut çalışma, turizm alanındaki uzmanların bilgisinin bu alandaki fırsatları, sorunları ve zorlukları belirlemeye yardımcı olabileceği öncülüne dayanmaktadır. Ayrıca, sınır bölgelerindeki turizmin durumu hakkında daha kapsamlı bir analiz elde edebilir ve bu endüstriyi iyileştirmek ve geliştirmek için etkili çözümler sağlayabilir. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, turizm endüstrisiyle ilgili zorlukların ve çözümlerin makro yönetim ve politika yapımı, kültür, insan kaynakları, altyapı, reklamcılık ve yatırım kategorilerine ayrılabilirliğini göstermektedir. Sonuç olarak, turizm endüstrisinin durumunu iyileştirmek, ülkenin politika yapıcılarının ve planlamacılarının mevcut zorlukların farkında olmasını ve bunları ulusal makro planlara dahil etmesini ve kamuoyunun bu yüksek potansiyelli endüstriyi geliştirme kararlılığını gerektirir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Turizm, sürdürülebilir turizm, turizm zorlukları, turizm kapasiteleri, sınır bölgeleri.

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism is recognized as one of the key contributors in improving the quality of life. In today's world, this industry, as an active economic approach with special characteristics, has become one of the largest and most profitable industries in the world. This activity is not only effective in improving the quality of life in border areas but also, as the largest service industry, plays an important role in the economic, social and political spheres (Yeghaneh et al., 2021). Increasing job opportunities, reducing unemployment rates, improving the quality of life of citizens, and upgrading infrastructure are among the positive and significant economic impacts of tourism. Due to the importance and key role of the tourism industry, many planners and policymakers in the field of development today consider it one of the main pillars of sustainable development (Kamangar & Davoodi, 2021). Tourism as an economic force is undoubtedly one of the most important and influential sectors globally, playing a significant role in the development of developing countries. It is recognized as the largest profitable export industry in the world and is considered one of the main sources of foreign exchange and sustainable employment (Modi ,2024; Zhao et al., 2023). Tourism has always been recognized as a key contributor in the development of countries, as the arrival of tourists can have significant effects on income, employment, prices and national trade balances, and thus affect the economies of

countries. In addition, many development planners and policymakers introduce the tourism industry as one of the main pillars of sustainable development. The importance of tourism is particularly dependent on its economic cycle, which has a high ability to stimulate and strengthen local and international economies.

In the present era, with the expansion of global communication and international exchanges between countries and people, the scope of tourism development have increased significantly. Although economic efficiency is considered one of the key aspects of competitiveness in the tourism industry, it is only one dimension of this competitiveness. Due to the specific characteristics of tourism, the ability of a destination to compete also depends on social, cultural, political, technological and environmental factors (Imani Khoshkhoo & Nadalipour, 2016). In today's world, where countries worldwide are striving to attract more tourists, one of the main challenges is the ability to compete with other tourist destinations. To advance the tourism industry, activities must be based on new competitive patterns. Competition is recognized as a key factor in achieving sustainable success. The primary objective of many tourism destinations worldwide is to enhance their competitiveness which leads to maintaining and expanding market share (Jafartash & Pouyanzadeh, 2015). The expansion of the tourism industry in areas that have the potential to attract tourists can be used as an efficient tool for the comprehensive and all-round development and promotion of host communities. Local, national and regional development will achieve greater revival and prosperity due to its significant economic impacts and profound effects on social, cultural and environmental fields (Masoumi et al., 2019; Shokouhi & Yazdanpanah, 2019).

Borders play a crucial role in facilitating the movement of people between countries. In some parts of the world, these geographical areas become tourist destinations, which is referred to as “border tourism”. Compared to other types of tourism, border tourism has its characteristics and developments due to the greater economic differences in these areas. (Del Río et al., 2017). Border regions are often neglected due to their location on the periphery and distance from the main centers, as the possibility of using the resources of these regions is much less than in areas closer to the center (Peña, 2005). In other words, these regions in developing countries, especially in Iran, face numerous challenges that threaten the sustainability of their populations to some extent. However, despite their limitations, border regions also have some advantages, including the fact that these regions are part of the political and governance landscapes of many countries (Ghanbri & Sardari, 2018). The specific features of these regions, such as cross-border cooperation, are considered a sign of extensive efforts for the development

and prosperity of these regions. Given the increase in communications and interactions between geographical spaces in the era of globalization, the ground has been prepared for the border regions to become more prominent than ever before. This trend can contribute to the prosperity of these regions in the coming decades, and certainly, the development and progress of border regions can also lead to the security and overall development of the country. Land planning, as a science with a spatial and regional approach, is of particular importance in identifying development capabilities concerning spatial characteristics (Lozano-Oyola et al., 2012).

Bringas and Verduzco (2008) define security as a key element in border purposes, which manifests itself in three main dimensions: population security, which refers to events and conditions that may endanger the lives of individuals and their property; urban and regional security, which is ensured through surveillance, control, and punishment; and national security, which addresses structural issues and international aspects that can threaten national life. Hence, borders are understood as the legal limits of the national sovereignty of a particular country or as the limits within which a state can exercise its sovereign power (Gelbman & Timothy, 2011). Many of these border regions are economically marginal and geographically isolated due to their distance from the central regions (Wastl-Walter et al., 2003). Differences between border populations and different economic, cultural or lifestyle developments are evident. In some cases, these differences can be positive and create benefits that influence border growth (Hoekman et al., 2009).

This study primarily aims to examine the impacts of tourism in border regions. In this regard, objectives such as border development, sustainable tourism, tourism development strategies and capacities, as well as the prospects and opportunities in this field, along with the challenges and problems related to tourism, are carefully analyzed. The present study is based on the assumption that the knowledge and experiences of specialists and experts in the field of tourism can help identify the opportunities and challenges in this field. This will lead to a more accurate analysis of the situation of tourism in border areas and, ultimately, will provide effective solutions for the improvement and development of this industry. Thus, this study can be considered a valuable resource for decision-makers and planners in the field of border tourism.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

The tourism industry has currently been considered and developed as a profitable economic activity and part of the global economy in the field of services. The positive effects

of tourism on increasing employment and foreign exchange earnings, strengthening domestic industries and developing international cooperation have changed the attitude of various countries towards this field and made it a key issue in government policies. Today, a lot of research has been conducted on the subject of tourism at the national and international levels and significant results have been obtained.

In recent decades, tourism has emerged as a vital component of economic growth and international cooperation, especially in the context of border regions. Numerous studies have explored various dimensions of tourism, including its challenges, development strategies, geopolitical influences, and socio-economic impacts. While some research has focused on infrastructural, cultural, or environmental barriers to tourism, others have emphasized the importance of safety, informal economies, and cross-border cooperation. The following table provides a comprehensive overview of key academic contributions to this field, summarizing their main findings related to general and border tourism.

Numerous studies in various political, economic, security and social fields have analyzed the importance of border regions, and the results of these studies have been used in the structure of the present study. What distinguishes this study from other studies is the comprehensive and in-depth study of border regions from various aspects such as tourism impacts, tourism security, border development, tourism development strategies and capacities, prospects and opportunities in this region, as well as challenges and problems related to tourism in border regions. In addition, the factors affecting border tourism have also been carefully examined.

**Table 1.** Overview of Key Studies on Tourism and Border Tourism Development

Author(s)	Year	Title of Study	Main Findings
Sharpley	2002	Rural Tourism and the Challenge of Tourism Diversification: The Case of Cyprus	Lack of financial and infrastructural support significantly hinders tourism development.
Baum & Szivas	2008	HRD in Tourism: A Role for Government?	Cultural and informational deficits are major challenges in attracting tourists.
Bhola-Paul	2015	Challenges and Opportunities of Tourism and Sustainability in the Regions of Grenada, Barbados and Tobago	Environmental preservation and addressing tourists' needs are crucial tourism challenges in these regions.
Khodadadi	2016	Challenges and Opportunities for Tourism Development in Iran: Perspectives of Iranian Tourism Suppliers	Main obstacles in Iran's tourism: negative Western perceptions and limited resources to counter these narratives.

Pashazadeh et al.	2018	Tourism Development in Khoy County and An Analysis of Its Existing Challenges from The Local Community' S Viewpoints (A Case Study of Shams Tabrizi' S Thomb in Khoy).	Challenges to tourism in Khoy: government infrastructure, health and environmental quality, tourist attractions, and urban management.
Wendt et al.	2021	Transport Infrastructure and Political Factors as Determinants of Tourism Development in Border Regions	Transport infrastructure directly facilitates cultural and economic exchanges across borders.
Zaki et al.	2019	Factors Affecting Security Approach in Kurdistan Region Affiliation with Emphasis on Border Regions of Kurdistan Province	Geopolitical, ecocultural, geoeconomic, and geostrategic factors influence security approaches in planning for Kurdistan border regions.
Vasegh et al.	2018	Analysis Of Effective Factors in The Improvement of The Border Regions of Iran and Afghanistan from A Geopolitical Point of View	Migration, drugs, terrorism, and Western influence are key geopolitical issues affecting Iran-Afghanistan border regions.
Nankali Kalabadi et al.	2021	An Analysis of the Informal Economy in Rural Economic Development	Border regions are politically and economically important; residents generally approve of informal employment and economy in Kurdistan's border regions.
Janparvar et al.	2022	Control And Maintenance of Borders Due to the Expansion of The Kurdish Ethnic Group on Both Sides of The Iranian-Iraqi Border	Identified ten variables influencing border control in Kurdish regions (e.g., cultural disunity, unemployment, political instability, topography, etc.).
Kővári & Zimányi	2010	Safety and Security in The Age of Global Tourism	Safety and security are vital prerequisites for tourism; more academic focus is needed on these topics.
Del Río et al.	2017	Analysis of Satisfaction with Border Tourism Using Structural Equations	Analyzed tourist behavior at the Dominican-Haitian border; found links between attitudes, perceived value, satisfaction, and loyalty in border tourism.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research examines the impacts of tourism in border regions and pursues goals such as border development, sustainable tourism, tourism development strategies and capacities, as well as identifying prospects and opportunities in this region. In addition, challenges and problems related to tourism have also been considered in this research. The effects and role of tourism in the economic development of border regions are other main focuses of this research.

In this study, the descriptive meta-synthesis method was used to systematically analyze, interpret, and integrate the findings of multiple qualitative studies in order to develop a comprehensive understanding of the role of tourism in the development of border regions.

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Meta-synthesis aims to bring together emerging themes from different studies and produce a new, integrated perspective.

### **Literature search scope**

The scope of the research was limited to studies published from 2010 onwards, focusing on topics such as tourism, sustainable tourism, the impact of social media on tourism, border tourism, and the development of border areas. The keywords used in the search included: tourism, sustainable tourism, tourism challenges, tourism solutions, border tourism, border development, and social media and tourism.

The databases and search platforms used for the literature review included Google Scholar, Google, the Humanities Portal, and the National Library.

### **Inclusion and exclusion criteria**

The inclusion criteria for the study were as follows: Studies had to be published in 2010 or later; they needed to focus on tourism and/or the influence of social media on tourism; they had to address border areas either directly or indirectly; they were required to use qualitative or descriptive research methodologies; and they had to be published in either English or Persian.

Conversely, the exclusion criteria involved eliminating studies published before 2010, those unrelated to tourism or border development, research that lacked direct relevance to border regions, and purely theoretical studies that did not include empirical data.

### **Thematic coding and synthesis of findings**

After the relevant studies were identified and selected, the collected data were subjected to thematic analysis. During this process, the findings were organized into several key thematic categories, including the economic impacts of tourism in border areas, sustainable development and social integration, the role and influence of social media in tourism, tourism policies and strategic planning, the infrastructure and security aspects of border tourism, and the participation of local communities along with tourist satisfaction. Each of these themes was comparatively analyzed to identify patterns, similarities, and differences across the studies, thereby enabling the development of a comprehensive understanding of the subject.

### **Consistency and validity**

A review of the cited sources (e.g., Yeghaneh et al., 2021; Modi, 2024; Zhao et al., 2023; Del Río et al., 2017; Ghanbri & Sardari, 2018) confirms that the majority of the literature used

was published after 2010, in line with the stated methodological scope. Some sources also address the impact of social media and communication technologies on tourism, thereby aligning with the research objectives.

## **DEFINITION OF TOURISM**

Tourism refers to a set of activities and experiences related to a tourist's journey. This process includes various stages such as planning the trip, moving to the destination, staying there, returning, and also remembering the memories of the trip (Safdari Molan et al., 2021). The tourism industry is considered one of the key pillars in assessing the state of a nation. Because it can simultaneously showcase the best features of a country in the economic, social, environmental, cultural, political, and technological fields (Place, 1995; Lasaponara et al., 2017; Nolè et al., 2014).

Tourism, as a key form of human activity, can have significant impacts on local communities and the environment. These impacts are most clearly visible in tourist destinations, where tourists interact with the local culture, economy and community. These impacts do not simply fall into social, environmental or economic categories, but have multiple dimensions that are interdependent. Also, much of tourism planning and management is concerned with the impacts of the industry on destinations and recreational regions (Wall, 1996; Butler, 1991; Safdari Molan et al., 2021). The impacts of tourism can be both positive and negative, and these impacts are likely to change over time and as the destination region develops.

Sustainable tourism development, as a process, addresses the needs of current tourists and the host community while helping to enhance and support future opportunities. This approach leads to resource management in a way that meets economic, social, aesthetic, and ecological needs while ensuring the maintenance of integrity in the regions of energy, water, air, habitat, wildlife, ecology, and biodiversity (Safdari Molan et al., 2021).

Today, the concept of sustainable development is recognized as one of the main pillars in economic and social planning, and its goal is to improve the quality of life of the people of the society. One of the key indicators in this regard is sustainable security and a sense of security in society. When the necessary infrastructure is provided in such a way that economic and human activities can be carried out smoothly and without special obstacles, that society is considered a safe society. However, in situations where, despite various measures, achieving security and sense is difficult for individuals, the necessity of social order and fair implementation of laws are raised as vital factors for restoring a sense of security to society. In



addition, the existence of security as one of the fundamental factors in the prosperity of tourism, the development of this industry in a region and the presence of tourists in it will itself help to strengthen security in that region.

### **The main purpose of tourism**

Tourism, as one of the key pillars of the country's industry and economy, has become increasingly important in the era of globalization. With its ability to preserve and transmit ancient values, beliefs, and traditions, this field can represent the identity and values of communities at the national and local levels. Urban tourism not only creates job opportunities and income generation for residents but also provides the necessary platform for sustainable development and urban progress by encouraging the development of infrastructure (Dehghani Firozabad et al., 2021; Ruhanen, 2004).

The tourism industry is widely acknowledged as a fundamental driver of national economic development. Beyond its economic contributions, this sector plays a vital role in preserving and promoting local culture and traditions while also motivating communities to produce local goods such as handicrafts, traditional cuisine, and unique souvenirs. Overall, tourism functions as a dynamic and influential component of the national economy, significantly contributing to economic growth and prosperity. This multifaceted industry pursues a range of objectives, which are evident in various aspects of its development and implementation.

Economic sustainability is recognized as a key factor in strengthening the tourism industry and increasing competitiveness among countries active in this field. Local enrichment is also considered as another dimension of development related to the tourism industry. This industry aims to improve the employment situation and increase the income of local people, thereby helping to improve access to services and improve their quality of life. Also, strengthening local management and empowering local communities to increase creativity in job fields are other important goals of tourism. In addition, tourism contributes significantly to improving the social welfare and lives of local people. Preservation and maintenance of historical, natural and cultural monuments are also basic goals of the tourism industry. Also, preserving biodiversity and wildlife in different countries is another goal of this industry. Finally, increasing the cleanliness of the environment in various fields such as water, soil, waste management and air is another important goal of tourism, which always encourages tourists and travel enthusiasts to preserve and understand traditions, heritage, culture and religious aspects.

## **BORDER REGIONS**

Borders, as a geographical and spatial phenomenon, play a key role in the political and geopolitical management of countries and are considered a fundamental factor in sustainable development and national security. Optimization and intelligent management of border regions directly affect economic and social development as well as ensuring sustainable security. Borders act as a source of various opportunities and threats. Identifying these opportunities and reducing threats based on national interests and security in border regions paves the way for achieving sustainable development and establishing effective communication between the core of the country and border regions, and contributes to coherence and balance in the development process (Zaki & Ranjbari Chichoran, 2022). Currently, border studies are more focused on the development of these regions, the level of interactions, the permeability of borders, and the characteristics of border residents, all of which emphasize the importance and necessity of studying border regions in more depth (Janparvar et al., 2021).

Border regions are increasingly recognized as emerging focal points in development planning in various countries. Although issues and challenges related to these regions have been intermittently studied, the formal integration of border region planning into national development frameworks remains limited, reflecting a gap in theoretical and practical approaches (Zhang & Cheng, 2020). These regions often possess significant tourism potential due to their unique cultural and ethnic characteristics, which can serve as a powerful draw for visitors. Expanding tourism in border regions not only promotes local economic development but also facilitates cultural exchange and international recognition. Consequently, such complex endeavors demand meticulous planning, with cultural and ethnic commonalities across borders acting as key factors in attracting tourists.

### **Development of border regions**

Border regions, due to their proximity to other countries and the geographical and political conditions prevailing in them, have unique characteristics that are an integral part of these regions (Saber et al., 2018). Economic development in border regions and improving the level of welfare and economic income of residents of these regions through healthy economic activities, with the support and investment of governments, will have a positive impact on border security (Bahramijaf et al., 2021). Increasing healthy economic activities and government investments in border regions, if there are no significant economic differences on

both sides of the border, can have a positive impact on the communication performance of the border.

Human experiences, especially in recent years, show that one of the effective methods for developing border regions is to diversify the economy to create job opportunities and increase income. In this regard, tourism is proposed as a suitable solution for the sustainable development of the country's marginal and border regions. However, the main challenge in this regard is how to be competitive, market and attract tourists (Bahramijaf et al., 2021).

The border economy and the development of businesses related to it are recognized as one of the key factors in creating employment and expanding economic activities. One of the prominent features of the formation of business clusters in border regions is the issue of ensuring security. Borders are considered a suitable platform for legal entrepreneurship. If this economic development and entrepreneurship are carried out based on documented and approved principles and methods, it can help businesses survive and ultimately ensure the security of the country's borders. Security can only be achieved through compliance with the law, and cooperation and interaction of border organizations, institutions, and residents with the border guard will not only enhance security but also contribute to the economic development of the region (Yeganegi, 2024).

### **Strategies and capacities for tourism development in border regions**

The tourism industry, as an important source of employment, has significant impacts on the political, economic, and social dimensions of countries. By creating job opportunities, this industry mobilizes economic capital and increases the travel demand. In this regard, the security of tourists is a key factor, because without security, travel will not be possible. When appropriate security conditions are provided globally, people will be willing to travel, and as a result, tourism activities will flourish. However, in some societies, including Iran, the lack of the necessary grounds for building trust between the government and society is a serious obstacle to the sustainable development of tourism.

Security and tourism are two components that are closely related to each other. Security is considered one of the main priorities in attracting tourists, and while travelers may adapt to the various challenges of their destination, they never want to travel to a place where there is no security. An increase in the number of tourists leads to business prosperity and increased income of institutions active in this field. Tourism development, especially in developing countries, can act as an effective solution to poverty reduction and help increase the income of

different groups, reduce unemployment rates, and improve economic and social conditions (Bagheriyan Jelodar et al., 2018).

Today, one of the key factors in achieving sustainable development is the income-generating effect of the tourism industry and attracting domestic tourists in different countries. This is highly dependent on the existence of a coherent national and territorial space and cities with optimal functioning. Success in the field of tourism depends on several factors, including the existence of historical monuments and attractions, beautiful and advanced cities, people with high culture and knowledge, statesmen who avoid instilling personal opinions, and an efficient planning system. Border cities can be effective in attracting tourists due to their security features and as gateways for goods and people. The creation of border markets, the existence of rivers and natural factors, as well as historical monuments such as castles and the type of border in these cities, are among the factors that help attract tourism (Shabani et al., 2022).

Border regions are known as geographical spaces with high potential, but sometimes these potentials are ignored due to their specific conditions. In recent years, tourism in these regions has been considered one of the important capacities and has brought with it competitive advantages in the field of tourism. From an economic point of view, tourism is one of the most important forms of labor force globally and is of particular importance for developing countries (Bahramijaf et al., 2021). Modern tourism has become one of the key economic and social phenomena in the modern world, as one of the largest sources of international trade. This industry acts as an effective tool for international understanding and escaping the challenges of underdevelopment, and it provides the opportunity to establish contacts between people from different parts of the world. Considering the numerous benefits of tourism, the development of this industry in countries with high potential can contribute significantly to increasing labor capacity, national income and foreign exchange inflows, and also help accelerate the circulation of money in the economy.

By carrying out detailed and principled planning and identifying the opportunities and challenges in the tourism sector, this industry can have a significant impact on expanding economic relations and ultimately on national and regional progress, as well as diversifying the national and regional economic structure (Goodarzi, 2019). Border regions are expected to benefit from their special position in the development of the tourism industry. These regions have a greater ability to attract tourists due to their unique social, economic and political

characteristics, as well as the presence of numerous historical and natural attractions (Safdari Molan et al., 2021).

Governments are recognized as one of the key elements in promoting tourism. Providing security, creating the necessary infrastructure, formulating appropriate laws, training specialized human resources, and establishing international relations are only some of the responsibilities of the government in developing tourism at various levels (Soltanei & Salamei, 2013).

### **Tourism prospects and opportunities in border cities**

Today, the tourism industry is considered one of the key factors in the development of relations between countries and plays an important role in creating job opportunities in the economic sphere as well as in strengthening social and cultural interactions (Sariisik et al., 2011). The contribution of the tourism industry to the national economy is constantly growing and is considered a stable and reliable source of income for countries (Fanni et al., 2015).

The distinctive features and diverse results resulting from the expansion of tourism, on the one hand, and the economic, socio-cultural, and political situation prevailing in developing countries, on the other, have led to the formation of different reactions and interactions between these countries and the tourism industry (Antonakakis et al., 2019).

One of the key steps in the progress and development of any country is the optimal utilization of all available facilities and capacities using scientific management and applied planning. The need to increase public revenues, reduce economic dependence, create job opportunities, and preserve the environment necessitates greater attention to the effective use of the country's biological capacities and the development of the tourism industry.

Humans are inherently interested in and attracted to beauty. In this regard, the natural environment acts as a key factor, creating beautiful landscapes in different parts of the world, and providing conditions for attracting tourists. Regions that have managed to attract large numbers of tourists can bring significant economic benefits to residents. However, if not managed properly, this tourist attraction may lead to irreparable damage to the environment and local society (Carneiro et al., 2015).

Despite the existence of numerous tourist attractions, some countries face numerous challenges and problems in attracting tourists and developing tourism. To solve this problem, it is necessary to carefully examine the potentials and limitations of tourism development and

make efforts to remove these limitations. Achieving tourism development goals requires strengthening management to promote tourist attractions, properly introduce regions, and improve infrastructure. Identifying the tourist attractions of each region and providing practical solutions to improve the tourism situation can greatly contribute to the development of this industry and the economic prosperity of the region (Khademi et al., 2023; Jenkins & Fan, 2025).

### **Impacts of tourism in border regions**

Tourism, as one of the key industries in generating income and employment at the national level, can be considered an effective solution for economic development. Today, the importance of the tourism industry in the economic and social development of countries is so great that economists have introduced it as an invisible export (Hassanvand & Khodapanah, 2014). One of the main challenges of developing countries is to achieve sustainable development, comprehensive security and social justice. Looking at the current situation, it can be seen that border and marginal regions have a weak position in the national and regional development process compared to the central regions of the country. This situation is due to factors such as geographical isolation, distance from industrial and economic centers, as well as lack of development in social, economic, political and cultural dimensions.

Tourism in border regions can provide opportunities that contribute to the development and progress of these regions (Hoekman et al., 2009). As a positive factor, tourism helps create job opportunities (Gu & Ryan, 2008), strengthens the local economy (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004), and helps improve the standard of living of the local community (Ahmed & Krohn, 1992). It also promotes culture and enhances cultural heritage (Stronza & Gordillo, 2008), and by developing natural parks and increasing recreational facilities, it provides more opportunities for leisure and interaction between visitors and hosts.

Tourism development, especially in developing countries, is recognized as an effective tool in combating poverty and can lead to increased incomes of different groups, reduced unemployment rates, and improved economic and social conditions. Focusing on regional tourism at the national level, taking into account the specific capacities of each region, can contribute to the growth and development of those regions. In addition, with government support and in line with regional interests and line with national development plans, the necessary infrastructure for the development and localization of tourism can be provided (Nargesi et al., 2018). Establishing a balance in the balance of payments, economic diversification, increasing incomes, and creating job opportunities are important outcomes of

this industry. The need to increase the country's public revenues and reduce the economy's dependence on oil revenues necessitates greater attention to biological capacities and the preservation of natural resources, as well as the development of the tourism industry (Movagharpak & Ghorbani, 2018).

Tourism can lead to negative attitudes, which clearly show the increase in the cost of living, including the rise in land and housing prices, as well as the shortage of goods. This phenomenon may have negative effects on local cultures and traditions, causing unwanted changes in the cultural identity of communities. In addition, the local community may develop a negative view of tourism, which can lead to increased crime rates, traffic congestion, increased environmental degradation, reduced biodiversity, pollution and waste production (Del Río et al., 2017).

### **Problems of tourism in border regions**

The present century can be described as a period of tourism-based developments. In this period, facilities and amenities, along with social challenges and issues such as urbanization and increasing depression in human societies, have created new needs, the most prominent of which is the formation of human flows under the name of tourism. One of the spaces that easily provides these conditions for tourists is unknown and pristine regions such as border regions. These regions can be considered attractive destinations due to the capacities and challenges they have to attract tourists. With the increasing desire for tourism with a taste of risk and excitement, the ground for the development of tourism in these border regions is significantly prepared.

Tourism, as an economic and social phenomenon, has profound and widespread impacts on physical structures and the environment. In the past few decades, especially until the 1970s, this activity was seen as a golden opportunity without negative consequences (Ghanian et al., 2014). However, in the 1980s, various studies showed that tourism faced numerous economic, social, and environmental challenges, mainly resulting from the way the industry is managed. These challenges have prevented regions from effectively taking steps towards profitability in this industry, despite having high tourism potential (Rahmati et al., 2021).

Border regions are recognized as regions of particular importance at the national and international levels and have potential and challenges for attracting tourists. These regions are always among the deprived regions of the country due to lack of infrastructure and insufficient

investment (Nasiri al., 2023). In today's world, the tourism industry has emerged as a key goal in urban development, and each city may face specific challenges in achieving its goals.

Economic problems, unequal competition, lack of effective advertising, marketing failures, cultural and social issues, negative reactions from the host community, lack of public awareness, security concerns, weak infrastructure, organizational failures, and lack of management and training skills. In addition, the shortage of specialized human resources, problems in planning and legislation, and challenges related to seasonal tourism and environmental issues are also considered to be other effective factors in this field.

Insufficient support for the private sector and lack of incentives to invest in the tourism industry, along with inappropriate economic policies, and increasing tax rates, fees and insurance, are among the main challenges in this region. The continuous emergence of tourism destinations and competition among them has caused some destinations to have more incentive to compete, while others have less incentive. Weakness in advertising is also another important challenge in the tourism industry. The existence of false and negative perceptions about tourists, weakness in the advertising structure and the lack of effective methods of communicating with tourists are among the problems that need to be addressed. Market factors such as income levels, fuel costs, job security and travel incentives have a direct impact on the development of the tourism industry. Tourism destinations usually do not have the necessary ability to manage these factors and require planning and flexibility to attract tourists in the long term. Therefore, to formulate an effective strategy, comprehensive research on the market situation is essential (Farhoudi et al., 2023; Rahmati et al., 2021; Amiri Fahlyiani & Maleki, 2020; Hashemi Dizaj et al., 2024). Local indigenous tourism has always faced serious challenges in the field of marketing tourism products and services. Marketing as a management process includes planning, producing tourism products and attracting tourists and requires effective activities in this field. Lack of accurate understanding of market needs and responsible institutions in regulating the process of marketing tourism products leads to failure in this region (Mitchell & Hall, 2005). Also, cultural differences between tourist regions and insufficient awareness of hosts about tourists' needs and desires, along with tourists' ignorance of the host culture, create numerous problems and act as a major obstacle to the development of the tourism industry (Master & Prideaux, 2000). Tourism development has profound effects on the social life of host communities. When a region becomes a tourist destination, the quality of life as well as the values and traditions of its resident's change. The arrival of tourists can lead to problems such as increased crime and social disorders. If the capacity of the host community is ignored and



the number of tourists exceeds the environmental carrying capacity, the risk of harm to both parties, the host community and the tourists, increases. Cultural differences between residents and tourists accelerate the occurrence of cultural changes (Sari, 2010). Tourism development depends to a large extent on the goodwill and positive behavior of the host community. Hospitality and welcoming tourists are of great importance because any negative feelings such as anger, indifference or pessimism from the host community can be transmitted to tourists and create an unpleasant experience for them. This situation can not only lead to a decrease in tourists' willingness to return but may also lead to negative publicity (Vossoughi et al., 2012). The lack of awareness among citizens and local authorities of the potential for business development and the associated benefits in their region is a major challenge. This lack of awareness or insufficient awareness of the impact of tourism on income generation and employment can lead to the isolation and economic stagnation of cities that have potential (Sharpley, 2002). Identifying similar strengths, challenges and issues can help accelerate and improve the development process of regions.

Another issue that should be considered in the development of tourism is the security of tourist destinations. By examining the spread of international terrorism and its relationship with the increase in tourism, researchers have concluded that terrorism can have short-term effects on attracting tourists. Such a way that only five percent of the countries studied have the long-term effects of terrorism on the tourism industry visible (Liu & Pratt, 2017).

Among the fundamental challenges in tourism development are issues related to infrastructure and infrastructure. Research shows that communication facilities and access to recreational services in small settlement regions are in an inadequate state. In other words, although many of these settlements have significant natural potential, they lack proper transportation infrastructure such as railways and roads and are extremely difficult to access. In addition, the quality of services provided in tourist regions has a direct impact on attracting tourists, as it is related to the satisfaction and comfort of tourists. The lack and poor quality of public transportation, inadequate roads, shopping malls, and accommodation facilities, as well as water, electricity, telecommunications, sewage and sanitation networks in these regions are among the major obstacles that negatively affect tourism development (Bakhshi & Atri, 2024; Rahmati et al., 2021).

The absence of a specific organization or ministry as the custodian of the tourism industry, due to the existence of parallel institutions, leads to inconsistency and interference in

various tasks. On the other hand, the existence of several different organizations and the lack of designing and implementing a comprehensive and integrated program for tourism development face this industry with numerous challenges (Madhoushi & Naserpour, 2003). Because tourism, as a complex system, is influenced by the behavior and performance of different individuals and institutions. The existence of parallel organizations and the presence of non-specialists at the upper management levels can lead to significant irregularities in this region (Baum & Szivas, 2008). Unfortunately, due to the nascent nature of this industry, there is a shortage of specialized human resources in many developing countries. Even training centers for the development of this human resource are either non-existent or severely limited (Madhoushi & Naserpour, 2003).

The lack of effective planning for tourism development leads to ignorance of tourists' needs (Clarke, 2005). Also, the lack of proper management and planning can lead to reduced capacities, weakening attractions, loss of customers and tourists, and delays in the development process (Motiee Langrudi & Nosrati, 2011).

Another challenge in the development of tourism is the seasonality of this industry. In other words, seasonal limitations in tourism prevent the potential of some tourist regions that do not have suitable weather conditions in some seasons from being fully exploited throughout the year. Regions with diverse weather require more investments to compete with regions with uniform weather, such as tropical regions. Also, regions with four-season climates are only able to attract more tourists on certain days of the year when weather conditions are suitable (Rahmati et al., 2021).

Among the major environmental challenges in tourism are pollution from transportation and greenhouse gas emissions. In addition, environmental degradation by tourists is also a key obstacle to the sustainable development of this industry (Nikbin & Karami, 2012).

Today, in any program, there is a possibility of facing challenges on the way to achieving goals. The tourism industry is no exception to this rule and faces challenges such as infrastructural, social, cultural, managerial, organizational and legal problems that can act as serious obstacles to the development of tourism. These challenges may be different in different geographical regions and have different impacts. In general, for the sustainable development of the tourism industry, there is a need for coherent and effective planning and research that can identify challenges and provide appropriate strategies for development. (Rahmati et al., 2021; Madhousi & Naserpour, 2003).

Most developed countries, despite having abundant economic resources and income, are inclined to invest in the field of tourism. The direct presence of tourists and visitors in border regions not only contributes to economic development and cultural exchange but also turns these regions into safe places for living and tourism. The specific characteristics of border regions are such that they can provide the necessary attractiveness for tourism development despite the existing risks.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

In today's world, tourism has become one of the most profitable activities, and its growth can bring about positive social, economic, and environmental changes. Also, tourism, as a factor in strengthening relationships and interactions, can lead to the convergence of this sector with the main structure of the country.

Tourism is recognized as a source of income as well as a factor in strengthening infrastructure and creating job opportunities. With proper management and identification of tourism capacities in each region, it can be effectively effective in attracting tourists and attracting new investments. Tourism is a growing activity that has significant economic impacts and can also strengthen cultural and social ties between residents of different regions and other citizens. This activity can not only increase the sense of belonging to a place but also play a significant role in strengthening national unity and improving security in the border regions of each country.

The tourism industry is highly dependent on communications, security, and infrastructure investments, and these factors mutually reinforce each other. Security in tourist environments is one of the essential elements for attracting and maintaining people, facilitating social interactions, and creating economic prosperity in any tourist region. Failure to provide this security can lead to the failure of tourism projects. Security in tourist spaces also has a significant impact on improving the social well-being of citizens. In other words, tourism, as one of the key factors in the development and security of a region, plays a significant role, and the presence of tourists in various destinations helps to increase the sense of security.

Tourism is currently recognized as one of the new and profitable economic industries for countries with potential. Some regions are beautiful to tourists due to their specific characteristics and potential. In particular, border regions, which can act as connecting points and links between two countries due to their cultural and economic characteristics, such as the interaction of two cultures and their pristine nature, are of particular importance.

Border regions are known as one of the country's most sensitive regions from the perspective of political geography and political organization within the country, and the status of these regions directly impacts the country's political, economic, and security stability. Political borders act as criteria for identifying and separating political territories from each other. One of the main goals of tourists in crossing these borders is to benefit from new experiences, learn, and pay attention to the cultural and social differences on both sides of the border. In this regard, political and international borders are known as one of the main attractions of tourism due to their high capabilities. Borders are considered an effective factor in the tourism industry in today's world, and border regions are considered a factor in attracting tourists due to the existence of political differences, diverse customs and traditions, and natural and human attractions.

The tourism industry and security in border regions are closely interrelated. In other words, in the absence of security, the possibility of growth and development of the tourism industry is severely limited. Security, as a macro concept, is one of the key factors that affect the willingness of tourists to travel to different regions. Therefore, it can be said that security is a major factor in the development of tourism in any geographical region.

### **Investment and economic development in border regions**

Investment in border regions is now recognized as a key factor in the development of these regions and increased border security. This process initially requires the development of infrastructure and the assessment of economic capacities along with the identification of the potentials available in that region. For this reason, investment in these sensitive regions of the country requires compliance with specific economic and political principles and policies to demonstrate the interrelationship between development and security. Tourism is recognized as an effective factor in creating new job opportunities, developing handicrafts, increasing residents' income, improving the quality of life, reducing unemployment rates, and developing local markets in border regions. Currently, the tourism industry is one of the most important and profitable economic sectors globally and is linked to various industries and sectors. The main players in this industry play an important role in the economic development of countries. Awareness of the characteristics of the tourism industry helps managers and owners of related businesses to adopt effective strategies in the field of marketing and pricing. As a new field with special and unique characteristics, this industry has wide economic effects, including

increasing employment, reducing unemployment, improving people's living standards, and improving infrastructure.

### **Managing tourism competitiveness in border regions**

Today, regional balances and the improvement of social and economic conditions in border regions are recognized as key factors in the national development of any country. Border regions are recognized as geographical spaces with great potential, but sometimes these potentials are ignored due to their specific conditions. In recent years, tourism in these regions has been considered one of the important capacities, and this has contributed to the formation of a competitive advantage in the tourism industry of these regions.

The lower price of imported goods compared to other parts of the country, the presence of numerous shopping malls, a strategic location on the border, and high social security have made this region a strategic strength and have brought it a significant competitive advantage. However, negative publicity against border regions, lack of infrastructure necessary for tourism development, international sanctions, and government discrimination in allocating resources to these regions are recognized as the most important obstacles to tourism development in border cities.

### **Sustainable tourism in the development of border regions**

Issues related to tourism sustainability and urban development have become one of the main priorities of public policymakers worldwide. Currently, the need to manage sustainable tourism development is more evident than ever before, and this is not possible without considering environmental challenges and global dimensions. By transforming cities into attractive tourist destinations, it is possible to solve various problems and needs of society and develop urban regions. Sustainable tourism is recognized as a key factor in the economic development of border cities. This approach is implemented to preserve the environment, culture and local communities, as well as create positive interactions with the local economy. The arrival of tourists to border regions increases the demand for welfare services, and local products and creates job opportunities in various sectors. Also, the interaction of tourists with local culture and customs contributes to cultural exchange between different ethnic groups and at the same time has positive social effects by increasing the economic income of the region. Other benefits of sustainable tourism in border regions include balancing trade flows, reducing poverty and developing tourism infrastructure. However, careful planning is necessary to

manage the pros and cons of tourism to establish a balance between economic development and preserving the region's resources and culture.

Strategic planning is used as a key tool to improve the performance of activities and achieve future goals. This type of planning can also be used as a solution to the challenges in the tourism industry. In tourism planning, promoting and improving social security in the target community is considered one of the key elements. The relationship between tourism and security can be considered as a reciprocal relationship; meaning that on the one hand, security can help develop tourism and on the other hand, the presence of tourists in any region can lead to increased security in that region. In addition, increasing the number of tourists helps businesses thrive and increases the income of companies and institutions operating in this field.

Border markets are known as a key element in the economic fields, attracting tourists and ensuring security. The activities of these markets help develop tourism in border cities and lead to creating security in these regions. By setting up markets, smuggling of goods can be prevented and security in border regions can be strengthened. The existence of these markets has positive effects, including improving the socio-economic situation and reducing migration. If these activities are expanded with careful and systematic planning, they can become one of the main pillars of the economy in border cities. The creation of border markets not only has economic, social and cultural effects but also helps develop border regions and strengthen cultural and economic ties between people on both sides of the border. This can lead to the formation and expansion of various types of tourism, especially urban tourism.

Nature and business tourism not only contribute to economic growth but also provide a variety of facilities and services in a region. In general, there is a close relationship between tourism and business, so that each can be a stimulus for the other. Therefore, it is essential to facilitate the entry of trade and improve reliability and services in these regions so that economic development can flourish. This type of development, taking into account environmental capacities, is directed towards sustainable development.

By developing commercial, eco-tourism, and historical tourism, as well as increasing interactions between residents of the two countries' borders and other cities, the necessary conditions will be created for establishing sustainable cultural, economic, and political connections in various fields. This is especially important because residents on both sides of the border have deep historical roots and common lifestyles and cultural characteristics such as language and religion.

## **Capacities and challenges of border regions**

Despite having significant capacities and potential, the border regions of the country face numerous challenges. Among these challenges are the lack of infrastructure and facilities, security issues in some regions, and negative publicity surrounding these regions. To address these problems, it is necessary to take diverse and effective measures to minimize existing problems on the one hand. On the other hand, the necessary conditions are provided for the development of tourism in these regions to flourish.

Paying attention to the potential for tourism development in border regions and emphasizing these capacities can help improve the economic and social situation of these regions. On the other hand, it is necessary to identify and solve the existing challenges in this field in various ways to reduce these problems. In this regard, by removing obstacles, suitable conditions will be provided for the growth and development of tourism in these regions.

Border regions, like other geographical regions that attract tourists, face specific challenges and limitations that can have a significant impact on the development of tourism in these regions. These challenges include security issues, lack of amenities and facilities, lack of public awareness of these regions, lack of coordination in interactions and space-building with neighboring countries, insufficient advertising about these regions, economic deprivation, lack of service infrastructure, the weak authority of local authorities, and lack of specialized personnel in the field of tourism. These factors directly affect the ability to attract tourists and the sustainable development of these regions.

There are several factors in the tourism industry, each of which has an impact on the development and progress of this field in some way. Security, as one of the fundamental pillars, plays a key role in attracting tourists; in such a way that efforts to ensure internal and external security can prevent unfortunate incidents such as terrorism and kidnapping of tourists, and as a result, lead to the prosperity and development of tourism and an increase in national income. Also, effective information and appropriate advertising to the public to familiarize themselves with the tourism industry are other vital factors in the progress of this industry. Raising public awareness through correct advertising methods is considered one of the most important factors in the growth and development of the tourism industry. In addition, improving transportation infrastructure and utilizing experienced and capable tour operators can also contribute significantly to increasing the number of foreign tourists.

Among the key factors in achieving sustainable development is the importance of generating income from the tourism industry and attracting domestic tourists in different countries. This is directly dependent on the existence of a coherent national and territorial space, as well as cities with optimal functioning. Success in the field of tourism depends on the existence of historical monuments and attractions, beautiful and advanced cities, people with high culture and knowledge, statesmen who avoid instilling personal thoughts, and an efficient planning system. In this regard, it can be said that the role of cities in attracting tourists is more important. Border cities can effectively attract tourists due to their security features and as gateways for goods and people. The creation of border markets, the existence of rivers and natural factors, as well as historical monuments such as castles and the type of border in these cities, are among the factors that help attract tourism.

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

One of the effective ways to develop border regions is to diversify the economy to create employment and increase income. In this regard, tourism is considered a suitable solution for the development of the country's marginal and border regions. Investment and expansion of this industry can help secure and guarantee the economy of any city and region. With proper planning, investment in the tourism industry is possible, and this industry can act as a dynamic and profitable sector to reduce social, economic and cultural inequalities.

Communication infrastructure, along with other factors, can lead to insecurity and lack of development. The lack of adequate investment and security directly affects the development process of tourism. Also, communication, as a key factor, has a direct impact on the growth and progress of the tourism industry. One of the effective and low-cost ways to increase security is to optimally utilize facilities and capacities in a way that is accompanied by scientific management and planning and pays attention to the economic, political, social and cultural development of the targeted regions. On the one hand, this approach helps reduce the problem of unemployment by creating job opportunities, and on the other hand, by increasing cultural interactions between different ethnic groups, it leads to greater understanding and understanding. These interactions can help reduce political tensions and pave the way for mutual respect, peace, friendship and national solidarity.

The only solution to ensure security in border regions is not to employ military and security methods; rather, planners and policymakers can establish security in these regions by implementing development programs that include improving economic, social, and cultural



functions, without the need for the presence of military and security forces. One of these solutions is the development of the tourism industry.

The improvement and expansion of facilities and resources in border counties can have a significant impact on strengthening and developing the social and economic conditions of these regions and ultimately contribute to the realization of sustainable national development. The development of tourism, especially in less developed regions, is recognized as an effective tool in combating poverty and can help increase the income of vulnerable groups. This industry is not only effective in creating new job opportunities and promoting handicrafts but also helps to improve the quality of life of residents, reduce unemployment rates and develop local markets in border regions. Border cities, as key points in trade exchanges, play an important role in local and regional trade, and business tourism can act as a key factor in the development of these regions. To achieve sustainable development in economic and social dimensions, it is necessary to adopt appropriate policies and programs in the field of business tourism to achieve this goal.

Border cities can help attract tourists and increase the country's income in various ways. The presence of domestic and foreign tourists not only leads to economic prosperity but also to cultural and intellectual exchange among the people of the community. Many cities located in border regions have a high potential for the development of commercial tourism due to their geographical location and the existence of border markets. In this regard, the creation of communication infrastructure and facilities is considered the first step in the development of trade and tourism. Communications, as a key factor, play a significant role in facilitating economic development in any region, and it can be clearly said that many industries, especially in the fields of trade and tourism, depend on these communications.

Despite their great potential and capacities, border regions also face challenges, including a lack of facilities and amenities, security issues in some regions, and negative publicity about these regions. To reduce these challenges and create a suitable environment for tourism potential to flourish, it is necessary to take various measures. If special attention is paid to the capacities for tourism development in border regions and at the same time the existing challenges are resolved in various ways, the necessary grounds for the growth and development of tourism in these regions can be significantly provided.

Tourism promotion leads to improved economic conditions such as reduced unemployment and increased quality of life for local people in many countries. In other words,

the flourishing of the tourism industry leads to the enrichment of cultures, the preservation and care of ancient monuments, and the enhancement of the value of information and social awareness. Therefore, in formulating economic strategies, policies such as improving and upgrading tourism infrastructure, information and advertising at national levels, and the use of modern methods and techniques in advertising are proposed to attract tourists, create security, and create and develop tools for hospitality.

The findings of this article align with and expand upon several previous studies that have addressed the role of tourism in border and marginal regions. For example:

Wendt et al. (2021) emphasized that the establishment of transportation infrastructure plays a critical role in facilitating cross-border interactions, both cultural and economic. The current study supports this view by highlighting communication infrastructure as a foundational step in promoting border tourism and regional trade.

Nankali Kalabadi et al. (2021) found that residents of border regions often rely on informal economies due to limited employment opportunities. Similarly, this article underscores the importance of tourism as a sustainable economic solution that can reduce poverty and unemployment, especially among vulnerable groups.

Del Río et al. (2017) analyzed satisfaction levels of tourists in border regions and linked them to improved destination loyalty and socio-economic development. This aligns with the present study's emphasis on increasing tourism not only for economic gains but also to foster cultural interactions and national solidarity.

Khodadadi (2016) noted the importance of countering negative international perceptions and addressing local resource limitations in Iran's tourism sector. The present article also touches on similar challenges, particularly the impact of security concerns and insufficient amenities in some border regions.

Pashazadeh et al. (2018) identified infrastructure, urban management, and environmental quality as key challenges in tourism development. These factors are echoed in this study, which stresses the need for scientific planning, investment, and proper use of existing capacities to achieve balanced and inclusive growth.

What distinguishes the current research is its holistic approach, covering not only the economic benefits of tourism in border regions but also its potential to improve security, cultural integration, national unity, and sustainable development. By addressing both structural

issues (e.g., infrastructure, employment, policy) and intangible outcomes (e.g., peace, social awareness, cultural respect), this study provides a multidimensional understanding of how tourism can be leveraged as a strategic tool for regional development and stability.

### **Suggestions and solutions**

- Investment and planning to improve welfare and recreational facilities in border regions, and to develop border tourism, is of particular importance.
- Establishing friendship houses and holding exhibitions with neighboring countries will help introduce the tourist and cultural attractions of these regions.
- Efforts to expand international relations between neighboring countries can lead to a boom in tourism in these regions.
- Coordination with neighboring governments to abolish visas can also help increase communication and promote cross-border tourism between these countries.
- Creating incentives for the private sector to invest in the tourism industry in border regions, as well as effective government guidance and support for this region, are among the necessary measures. It is necessary to seriously consider the marketing and promotion of tourism products in these regions and use appropriate and effective advertising tools to introduce tourist attractions to attract more tourists.
- The quantitative and qualitative development of accommodation and catering facilities, as well as the improvement of services provided to tourists in these places, are other requirements. Also, optimal management of border markets and preventing the monopoly of profits in the hands of certain people can contribute to the economic development of these regions.
- Improving the development infrastructure in border regions, especially in villages and small towns, is of great importance. Also, the development of land, air and rail routes between border cities and the center of the country can contribute to greater cultural, social and economic exchange.
- Creating trust between the government and local elites and facilitating their activities in various fields are other effective measures.
- Allocating more budget to border regions to create jobs and income should also be on the agenda.

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- Finally, establishing diplomatic and friendly political, cultural and economic relations with neighboring countries can contribute significantly to the sustainable development of these regions.

## Ethics Statement

There is no unethical situation and/or conflict of interest in the study.

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