

The Geographical Elements Adaptation in Touristic Projects: Study Area (Heet District, Anbar-Iraq)

¹Prof. Dr. Abdulnaser Sabri Shaher Alrawi

Abstract

Tourism is one of the important economic activities that contribute to increasing the national income of many countries of the world. It attracts a significant proportion of the workforce. Despite the availability of various capabilities required by the tourism activity, including deserts, topography, coasts, forests, climate diversity and cultural heritage, the tourism activity is still an activity. Limited in various regions of Iraq. From this standpoint, this topic was chosen to shed light on the natural and human components present in the place and how to invest them in order to be tourist centers at the local and international level. The Heet district of Anbar Province in Iraq was chosen as a study area because it is located within a desert area with a wonderful natural environment where it passes through Euphrates River. It represents one of the ancient places of human stability. It contains many archaeological sites, the most important of which is the Heet castle.

The researcher identified the problem of research in asking about the natural and human potentials that the Heet district enjoys and can be invested in establishing tourism projects. In order to answer what was mentioned in the scientific question, the research hypothesis was determined that the study area possesses a set of natural and human potentials that represent important pillars for undertaking various tourism activities to be a tourist attraction center at the local and international level.

The most important natural and human components and archaeological sites that constitute the raw material that can be invested in the tourism industry in the study area were reviewed. In light of the available data, the researcher presented a strategy for sustainable tourism development.

Keywords: Geographical Elements Adaptation, Touristic Projects

Introduction

There is no doubt that tourism is an important economic activity in various countries of the world, especially the developed ones, due to the economic resources it achieves that contribute to building and strengthening the national income. The development of infrastructure such as transportation networks, airports, electricity networks and other services. They represent a cultural phenomenon, a human activity and a tool for achieving the unity of humanity through friction that generates familiarity and rapprochement between peoples.

Due to the development of the number of tourists, the diversity of the types of tourism, the different features, functions and characteristics of most countries, the interest of most countries in tourism activities has increased. Tourism is seen as an industry and an important source of income in many countries of the world in addition to its role in providing job opportunities.

Therefore, all the available elements in the place, whether natural or human, should be exploited and used optimally as elements of tourist attractions, to achieve the maximum possible use, to secure all the requirements that achieve the development and sustainability of tourism activity.

¹ College of Education for Humanities/University of Anbar/ drabdulnaseralrawi@gmail.com

Problem of the Study

What are the natural and human potentials that Heet has that can be invested in establishing various tourism activities?

Research hypothesis

The Heet district is located within a desert environment. Its views extend on the banks of Euphrates River and Lake Tharthar. It has a cultural legacy represented in its ancient castle and the monuments that are distributed in different areas of the district, as well as the human data that can be invested in creating a distinct tourist activity.

The concept of tourism

Studies indicate that the researcher (Joyer Freeler) was the first to define tourism in the year 1905 AD as a phenomenon of our time. It stems from the increasing need for rest, to change the air, to the generation of the sense of the beauty of nature, the growth of this feeling, and to the feeling of joy and pleasure from living in the regions. Which has its own nature, also the growth of contacts between peoples and different human groups, these contacts were the fruit of the expansion of trade and industry and the fruit of the progress of transportation means (1).

In 1959, the Swiss researcher published a paper in which he pointed out that tourism represents (the group of relationships and phenomena that result from travel or temporary residence for a foreign person in a specific place as long as this residence does not turn into a permanent residence and is not related to work, even if temporary, for this foreigner) (2). It explained that temporary residence is the essential feature of the tourist.

The researcher (Douglas Pearce) has another definition of tourism as (a phenomenon followed by a group of relationships based on trips and temporary accommodation for travelers for pleasure and entertainment, and the length of stay may vary between twenty-four hours for domestic tourism and four nights for foreign tourism) (3).

Tourism is also one of the important links in the field of developing cities and regions. Therefore, the regions in which the tourism development and development process took place and became centers of tourist attraction witnessed economic and social changes and a clear urban development that included cities and countryside (4).

Based on the diversity of travel motives, the different desires of tourists and the diversity of the components and elements of tourism, different types of tourism activities appeared were classified spatially into internal tourism, i.e. within the country or region, and foreign tourism (international tourism). (5)

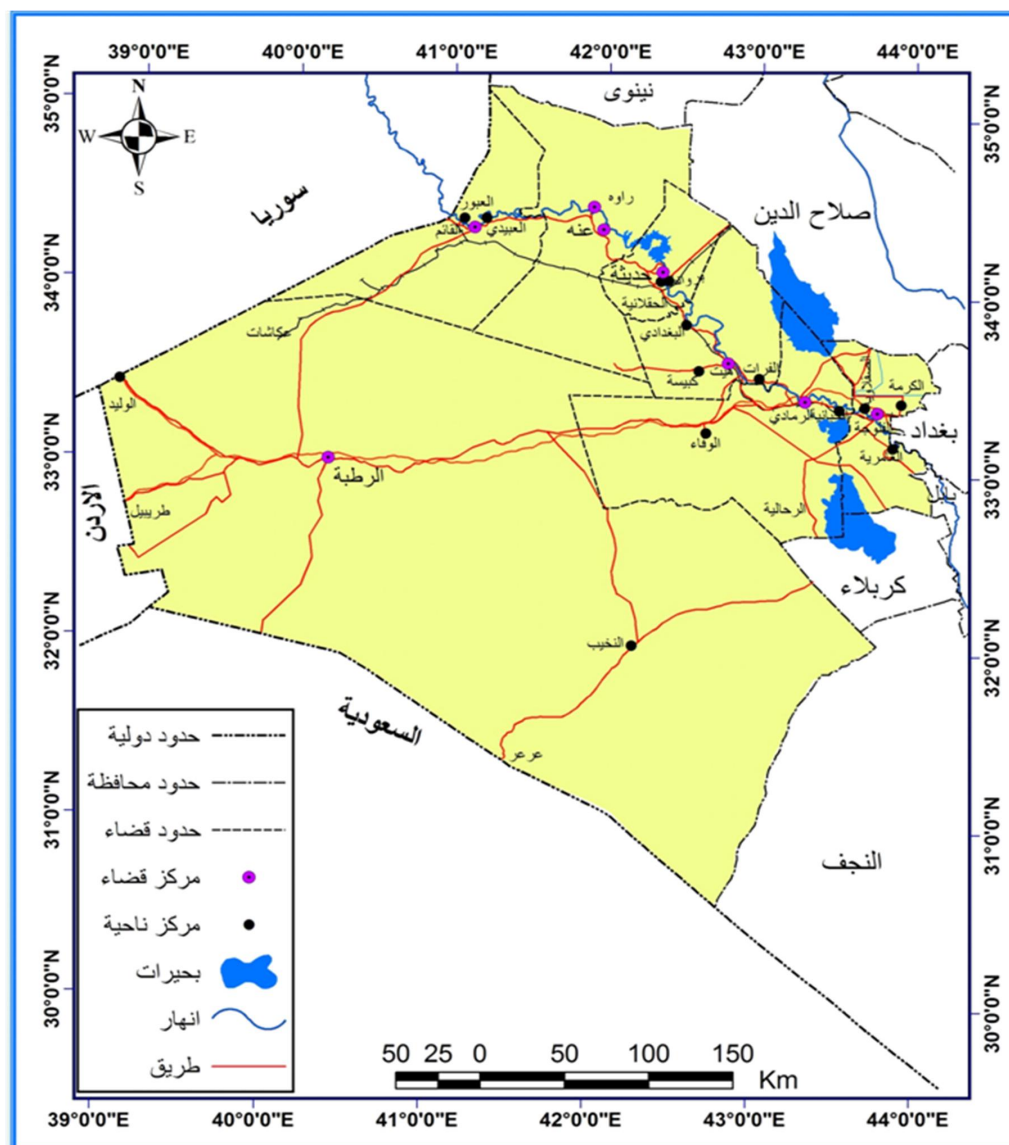
Natural constituents

The geographical environment is one of the factors affecting the establishment and success of the tourism project. It may be a catalyst for the emergence and development of tourism. It may reflect certain negative factors. In general, the natural elements available in the place represent basic raw materials for the establishment of tourism activity. These elements vary in their importance and influence on the establishment of tourism in Heet so we will review it briefly.

Geographical location

Heet district is located northwest of Ramadi, at a distance of (60) km. it is located west of Baghdad at a distance of (160) km. This is a suitable distance for the movement of tourist groups. It is noticed from Map No. (1) that the cities of the district are close to each other. The city of Heet is only 26 km from the city of Kabisa, to the west of which is located and from the Euphrates city which is located to the southeast at a distance of 30 km, and from the city of Al-Baghdadi, which lies to the north Al Sharqi, with a distance of (45) km (6).

Map (1) Distribution of cities and roads in Al-Anbar Governorate



Source: Anbar Provincial Office, the administrative map of the cities of Anbar Province

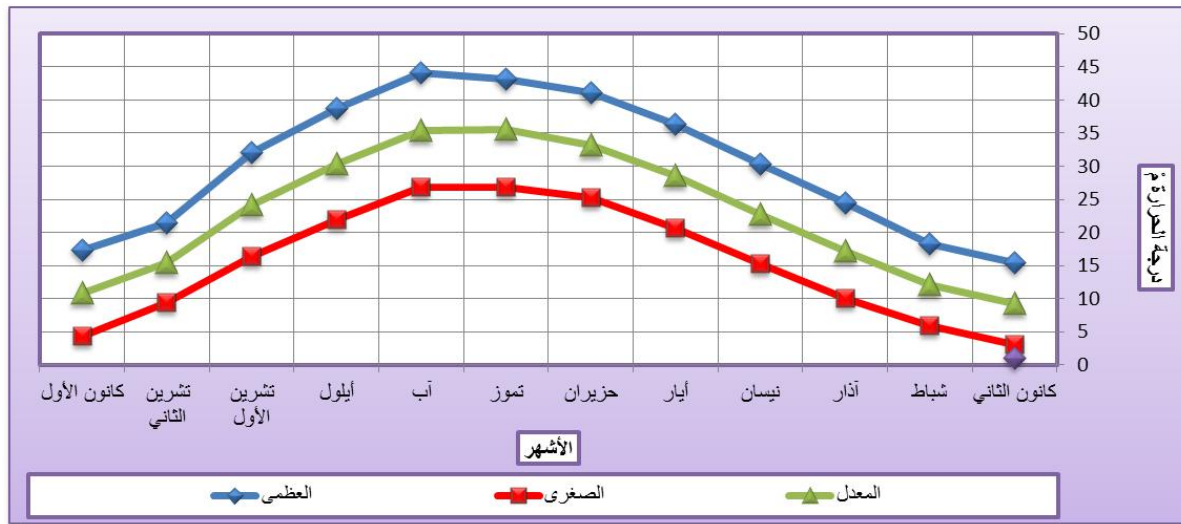
topography and geology of the area

The Heet district extends in the western plateau within the area where the valleys descend on the Euphrates River such as the Horan Valley and Wadi Al-Muhammadi. The region contains limestone layers that are characterized by their hardness and resistance to moisture as well as their bright colors, especially red, pink and yellow. So these rocks were used in the manufacture of cutting and brushing Stone. The city of Heet was famous for making shapes and colors from sculpted stone, such as the dome and the inscription, and most of the cities of Iraq became popular markets for them (7).

the climate

The city of Heet is characterized by a moderate climate with a decrease in temperatures in the winter season. While temperatures rise in the summer, the presence of orchards that extend on the banks of Euphrates River softens the atmosphere of the region compared with the regions of central and southern Iraq. It can be noted from the data of Figure (1). The average maximum temperature does not exceed 45 degrees Celsius during the summer.

Figure (1) Temperature averages in Heet city station for the period 2009-2019



Source: Ministry of Transport and Communications, General Authority of Meteorology and Seismic Monitoring, Climate Division, (unpublished data). Baghdad, 2016.

Waterbodies

Water resources are the most important factor affecting the emergence of tourism. The waterfronts are desirable places with an aesthetic dimension that brings joy to the soul, as well as their role in tempering the climate. Among the most important bodies of water is Euphrates River. It passes through the region and its banks have been exploited for agriculture. The city is famous for its orchards and its abundant production of dates and fruits. Vegetables, as there are good areas on its banks that can be used in the construction of cornices, tourist centers, swimming pools and sports squares.

Heet district also has a coastline of more than (110) km long on Lake Tharthar, which is located to the east of the district at a distance of (35) km. However, this coast has not been invested and there are no human settlements in it except for some gatherings of fishermen. It is a promising area for the establishment of tourist facilities in it.

In the city of Heet, there are hot sulfur springs that spring in abundant amounts throughout the year and are among the landmarks that can appeal to tourists in their sounds and heat, as well as their use in medical tourism. There are also springs in Kabisa, whose waters take different colors.

3: - Natural plant

The study area covers two types of plants: the first of which is the plants that extend on the banks of Euphrates River and are in the form of trees, shrubs, and dense weeds due to the availability of water, such as willow trees, tamarisk and licorice trees. It also spreads annual plants that grow during the spring.

Human Constituents

They are represented in the elements related to the population and their demographic, social and cultural characteristics, as well as the economic activities and available financial capabilities, whether provided by the government sector or the private sector.

1: - Population

There is no doubt that the population represents the main element in the tourism activity as they are the means and the goal. Table No. (2) shows that the population of the Heet district reached (169,245) people distributed in the cities and its countryside in varying proportions. It is also noted that the rate of urbanization is high in the city of Heet. It acquired more than a third of the district's population, as the urbanization rate reached (78.24).

Table No. (1)

The size of the population of Heet district and the rate of urbanization, according to 2017 estimates

T	Unit	Urban population	Rural population	Total	Urban ratio
1	Heat Center	66164	18405	84569	78,24
2	Kibisa area	16890	1601	18491	91,3
3	Al-Baghdadi Area	6982	29174	36156	19,3
4	Euphrates	3247	26781	30028	10,8
	Total	93283	75961	169245	55,11

Source: Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning, Central Bureau of Statistics, Anbar Governorate Population Census, 2017 estimates.

2: - Economic activities and local and folkloric industries

It was pointed out that the city of Heet is one of the ancient cities and was famous for its agricultural products and various handicraft industries. Heet district is still famous for growing fruits and vegetables, which are distinguished by their quality, such as dates, citrus, apricots, apples and pomegranates. Tourism, such as food industries such as canning dates, making molasses, making brashish, making pottery, making textiles, and reducing baskets and mats.

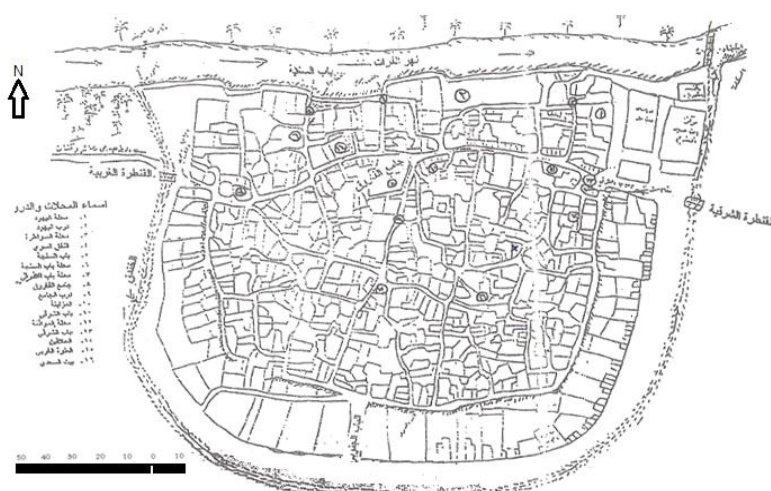
Archaeological sites in Heet district:

In the district of Heet there are a number of ancient historical monuments that extend to historical eras, some dating back to pre-Islam and some extending to Islamic times (8), and the most important monuments are:

1: - Ancient Heet Castle

The castle occupies a distinct location from the city of Heet, with its extension on the right bank of the Euphrates River and its high altitude. Despite the neglect that afflicted them, some families still live in the old housing units and are distinguished by their narrow alleys. Al-Rashidi Omar bin Al-Khattab, may God be pleased with him, in (16) AH. Its minaret is still tall (See the figure of Map (3)). It also includes the shrines of the saints, including the companion Abdullah bin Mubarak and the shrine of our master Al-Khader and Sheikh Saud, the grandson of Musa al-Kadhim, may God's peace be upon them all.

Map (2): Pattern distributed streets and plots of land in the ancient city of Heet



Source: City Plan of Heet Al-Qala District, General Survey, Iraqi Registration Department in Heet

Sectoral Design Map (1: 500) for the year (1971).

Picture No. (3) the Al-Farouq Mosque lighthouse



Waterwheels

The waterwheels' buildings (al-Daliya or al-Jariya) are still standing on the banks of the Euphrates River (See Figure 4). Unfortunately, the movement of waterwheels stopped after relying on pumps to raise water from the river to the agricultural lands.

Photo No. (4) A photograph of the water wheels buildings



Maamoura and Maqlouba

On the outskirts of Heet, there are a number of archaeological sites, the most important of which are Al Mamoura and Al Maqlouba, which are among the old settlements, and the remains of its walls and buildings are still, especially the famous Al-Maqlouba Minaret. Note Figure No. (5).

Photo No. (5) the al-Maqlouba Minaret



Saada Canal

It is a canal that was constructed from Heet and connected to the city of Basra, and it is reported that one of the princes of Basra married a girl from Heet, and he dug this river for her to move through it on her wedding day.

4- Baker's palace

It is located 9 km west of the city of Kubaisa on the desert convoy road that connects Baghdad with the Levant.

5: The ruins of King Seshin (Talul Seshin):

In the district of Al-Baghdadi, there are many archaeological sites. The most important of which is in the monuments of King Shchin. It is located in the village of Barotha. It is a large hill called (Mount Seshin). There is also the Zuwair tower, which is 15 meters high. In the village of Marwanayah, located in Al-Baghdadi sub-district (9).

Figure (6) a picture of the Zwair tower



Anchor structures

It is represented in the regional and urban transport networks, electricity and water supply, garbage and wastewater disposal services. They are basic pillars for the establishment of tourism activity and their importance for human settlements is no different. It is known that the study area suffers from great shortcomings and the lack of infrastructure, especially as it was destroyed. So, it can be considered as one of the obstacles that should be taken into consideration.

Strategy for the development of sustainable tourism in Heet district

By reviewing the natural and human potentials available in the Heet district, a strategy can be developed that includes the most important mechanisms. It can be adopted for the development of sustainable tourism during this stage, including:

First: renewal and rehabilitation

1: - Reconstructing the wall that surrounds the city. It also requires restoring the four entrances to the city and putting in place the appropriate doors because the wall is one of the important cultural features of the castle.

2: - Rehabilitating some old houses and using them to make them as resting stations and hotels for tourists, especially housing units that are distinguished by their architectural characteristics such as chinks, Iwan and other architectural elements that go back to ancient historical stages.

3: - Developing the Al-Farouq Mosque which is the most important landmark in the castle. The shrines of the saints should be rehabilitated to be among the tourist facilities.

4: - Rehabilitation of the old markets surrounding the castle and the use of appropriate architectural styles in designing their façades and limiting their use to display local products that are sold to tourists, especially the shops near the entrances of the old city.

5: - Rehabilitation of King Shchin Palace which is located in the village of Barotha in the city of Al-Baghdadi. It becomes one of the historical monuments that tourists can visit.

6: Rehabilitation of Khabbaz Palace which is located northwest of Kubaisa.

7: - Rehabilitation of the Al-Maglouba lighthouse as one of the important landmarks dating back to the Abbasid era.

Second: - Qualifying workers in the tourism sector

Human cadres working in the tourism sector should be prepared and qualified. Whether in the field of administration or other services because tourism is an urban profession with cultural and social dimensions that require a distinct type of workers who possess the art of dealing with tourists of different ages and classes.

Third: Providing the requirements and elements of tourism

A: - Tourism facilities such as hotels and other tourism services should be provided. The building of the Al-Baghdadi Hotel can be rehabilitated and future. Plans should be drawn up for the establishment of appropriate buildings for this purpose.

B: - Exploitation of hot sulfur springs

By establishing a recreation center that contains swimming pools and baths for men and women. Making use of the fumes for recreation and various treatments, and in this field, the private sector can be encouraged to invest in this project.

A: - Putting in place the appropriate mechanisms to perpetuate and restart some of the waterwheels buildings and make use of the water they raise to irrigate the gardens and nearby plants.

D: - Providing all the necessary facilities that the tourist needs, especially food and drink services, hiking, easy access and transportation, in order to achieve the satisfaction and comfort of tourists.

Fourth: - Media and propaganda

1: - Directing the media to educate society about the importance of tourism activity and the role of tourism in enhancing national income and achieving sustainable economic and social development for the population.

2: - Harnessing the media to promote and advertise the tourism activities in the study area.

3: Encouraging cultural tourism by holding an annual conference in the city to which scholars, thinkers, writers and artists are invited.

Fifth: - local industries

Encouraging local industrial establishments and workshops that produce folkloric industries such as ceramics, pottery, baskets, carpets, and dishes made from palm fronds. The food industries for which the city of Heet is famous, such as making molasses, sprinkle and canning dates. These products are displayed in the tourist sites, the shops that market them are distributed in a way that guarantees the movement of tourists between the tourist sites within the district.

Conclusions and recommendations

1: The Heet district possesses a set of assets (natural and human) that can be invested in establishing a tourism activity of regional and international dimensions.

2: - The natural components are represented in the geographical location that the district enjoys. Whether in terms of distance from Baghdad and the center of Anbar Governorate, or the location on the banks of Euphrates River and the extension of water fronts on the river and on the shores of Lake Tharthar, as well as the springs of hot water and sulfur waters, and the marginal position in relation to the Western Sahara. It made them important elements that can be invested in the establishment of tourism projects.

3: - The district owns many archaeological sites that are important elements that can be invested in tourism projects whether in Castle Heet or in other sites.

4: - The judiciary possesses human resources represented in the presence of a large percentage of university degree holders, in addition to the experiences that the population possesses in the field of craft industries that support tourism activity.

Recommendations

1: - Activating the laws aimed at developing tourism and protecting tourism sites.

2: Encouraging investors to establish tourism projects and providing them with the necessary facilities according to a plan based on a database in which the sites of tourism projects are shown and the type of tourism in which they are held.

3: - Rehabilitation and development of infrastructure for cities that have been subjected to sabotage, and attention to city entrances and connecting roads, and to pay attention to their aesthetic dimension.

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