

SAMPLE OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL:

“Rural Tourism Development for the Prefecture of Lassithi in Crete.”

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

Over the last two decades or so, the whole world has experienced rapid changes and socioeconomic transformations. The socioeconomic changes affected and caused severe stress mainly to isolated, peripheral and rural areas of the world. However, the changes in economic and social culture structure of the world caused decreased farm revenues, changing in the farmland values and high rates of unemployment, leading to mass exodus of the productive forces and lack of balance in the demographics of rural areas (Gannon, 1993).

It is obvious from the above that the need of rural areas for socioeconomic development and regeneration along with the need for diversification of their economic base so as to meet the changes is today greater than ever. In that sense, tourism is today a promising industry and one of the main sectors that national and local governments support and promote as a vehicle for revitalization of the rural areas.

The development of rural tourism was followed by the changes on tourist's demands and behavior. Tourism in rural areas offers the potentials for alternative, individual and more authentic tourism experiences satisfying the needs of the experienced and highly demanded “new” tourists. In addition there is a demand for tourism and recreation activities in the countryside that is different than that of traditional resorts and mass tourism destinations (Page et al., 1997).

The motivation behind of this project is based on the fact that during the last few decades the growth of Greek tourist industry has been dramatic. Traditional tourism development, concentrated in coastal and mountain resorts, urban and cultural centers, has proven that tourism can bring enormous benefits to the economy, society and environment of a certain area. However at the same time there is a realization that certain parts of the