

**Study of Tourism Development Planning in Tehran Province
(Case study: Northern Districts of Tehran)**

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Abstract

Today tourism has become so important that it is regarded as the biggest industry and annually millions of tourists travel throughout the world with different motivations. Basically, it is necessary to have a clear picture of perceptions, expectations and requirements of visitors in order to stabilize the markets and provide the most effective goods and services.

Tourism acts in a framework of certain spatial patterns. One of them is urban tourism. Urban areas are among the important tourism destinations due to their historical and cultural attractions. The cities have diversified attractions such as museums, historical architecture and places associated with prominent persons and important events which themselves attract many visitors. This approach points to generic characteristics of a place, such as natural beauty, climate, traditions, or social features. The second approach considers the spatial nature, capacity and being temporary of attractions in their segmentation. And the third approach encompasses the classification of attractions based on tourists' perceptions and experiences

Keywords: Tourism, Tehran Province, Urban attractions, Inequality of tourism spaces.

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Received Date: 29 November 2017 Accepted Date: 14 February 2018

Date of Print: Summer 2018

Introduction

Today tourism has become so important that it is regarded as the biggest industry and annually millions of tourists travel throughout the world with different motivations. Basically, it is necessary to have a clear picture of perceptions, expectations and requirements of visitors in order to stabilize the markets and provide the most effective goods and services. Therefore those who are engaged in tourism management and planning have to be informed of these factors in order to be able to make connection between tourism products and tourists. It enables marketers to target at potential customers and expand the markets by product diversification (Jeffery & Xie, 1995:858). The destination management would either promote attributes that best match meet tourists motivations, or concentrate on a different market where tourists motivations and destination resources match each other (Kozak, 2002:222).

Tourism acts in a framework of certain spatial patterns. One of them is urban tourism. Urban areas are among the important tourism destinations due to their historical and cultural attractions. The cities have diversified attractions such as museums, historical architecture and places associated with prominent persons and important events which themselves attract many visitors (Timothy, 1995:63). Along with the increase in tourism demand and the development of this industry, study of destination choice processes has become more important (Jiang et al, 2000:964). Each destination provides the tourists different products and services and each tourist has the opportunity to choose among a series of destinations (Crompton, 1992:430). As visitors become better educated and more informed about tourist destinations, it opens new choices and provides new opportunities for unique experiences (Mohsin, 2005:723).

Iran, in terms of tourist attractions enjoys appropriate climate diversification and in terms of ancient monuments, resorts and natural wonders this country is at the same level of developed countries in tourism industry. Moreover, Iran is amongst the top 9 nations worldwide in historic monuments and in terms of ecotourist attractions it comes in the world's top 10 nations list; it indicates capacity and high potential of this country in growth and development

of tourism industry (Zarei et al, 2013:75). However, the evidences suggest that there are many challenges and weaknesses in Iranian tourism industry. Investigation of Iranian tourism industry shows that with respect to share of tourism sector in GDP, Iran ranks 86th of total 174 countries in the world and among Persian Gulf countries it stands on the 3rd place following Emirates and Qatar. With respect to investment in tourism industry, Iran comes 172 of total 174 countries in the world and among the Middle East countries it stands in the last place. One again, with respect to value of tourism industry in 2005, Iran ranked 43rd worldwide (Abbasi, Makki & Kazemian, 2013:75).

Theoretical framework

Tourism

Today tourism has attracted attention of all planners as a major source of income in the world; even many governments are trying to exploit this profitable industry somehow. Economic influence of this industry is so clear that approximately accounts for 7% of global capital (Goharian & Ketabchi, 2005:48). Tourism is an integrated activity and entails participation of different parts of the society and at the same time affects them extensively, thus it needs planning and cooperation in each stage. Planning is a scientific instrument through which tourism practitioners can determine the best way for tourism development in a region, implement this development alongside development in other parts of economic development and finally achieve the urban development through a consistent scientific process. The most notable point in tourism planning is that it is a dynamic process; it means that while the situation is changed and new information is obtained planning will never be stopped and needs permanent revision and modification (Zangiabadi et al, 2004:3). Urban communities are of great importance in tourism industry: in one hand, urban centers due to population concentration and work related tensions and fatigue are considered origins of tourist travels. On the other hand, they are considered destination of tourist travels due to presence of subsistence facilities, economic, commercial, industrial, cultural, political activities, hygiene, communications, recreational opportunities as well as having tourist attractions and historic monuments. The popular cities for tourists usually provide some kinds of tourism services that are related to their role (Kordi, 2003:18).

Urban tourism

Urbanization is the most important factor in creation of tourism (Sharply, 2004). Following the industrial revolution, the urban life with new residents created a new space for living and work, apart from its traditional form. It was in this space that the cities retrieved their historic identity as a cultural heritage (Rahnamaei, 2011:13). The urban centers due to concentration of civil institutions and social infrastructure became the suitable places for attraction of domestic and foreign tourists (Gharakhloo & Janbabanejad, 2006) and attracted special visitors based on difference in travel type and their motivation for visit (Page & Barker, 2002). Nowadays urban tourism has attracted attention of tourism centers in one hand, and urban managers in other hand. It has different reasons including: having attractions and suitable infrastructure, concentration of transportation, elimination of unemployment and job creation, urban development etc (Botina Kolb, 2011). Accordingly, it is clear that the attractions and reputation of a city affects tourists' decisions to visit (Clark, 2004). Urban tourism encompasses an industry that manages and markets a variety of products and experiences to people who have a wide range of motivations, preferences and cultural perspectives and are involved in dialectic engagement with the host community (Gregory et al, 2011). Cities as tourist destinations have multifunctional role: they are the gateway to the country, accommodation center, and the origin for travel to nearby villages and destinations. Moreover, they are not only destinations consisting population with economic activities, cultural life and under control of political forces but also plays significant role as center of tourism activities (Seif-Aldini et al, 2011) and by investing in cultural attractions and infrastructure, the cities seek to secure a niche position in international tourism map (Russo & Borg, 2002). Today urban tourism is referred to an important factor in economic, social and welfare development of city and citizens. Given the impacts and benefits of tourism industry, study of urban tourism can be effective to reduce many problems including unemployment, recession of local industries etc and in cultural and social perspective can revive or reinforce national identity and protect cultural heritage in the cities (Movahed & Dolatshah, 2011). For this reason, tourism is one the social and economic arms of urban environment (Edward et al,

2008). There is complementary relation between cities and tourism because all kinds of tourism require urban centers and services. Therefore in every planning for tourism development, the attention must be paid to capabilities of urban centers in providing services (direct and indirect) (Nouri Kermani et al, 2009).

Tourist attractions

The attractions of every country or each city provide the basis for tourism development. These are integral part of tourism product. Tourist attractions could be defined generally or based on specific goals. Lew (1987) defines tourist attractions as a non-home place that draws discretionary travelers away from their homes. These attractions include the prospects to view, the activities to participate and the experiences to memorize. He presents three approaches in order to classify the attractions: symbolic, organizational and cognitive approach. The symbolic approach is one of the most common approaches exist in classification of attractions. This approach points to generic characteristics of a place, such as natural beauty, climate, traditions, or social features. The second approach considers the spatial nature, capacity and being temporary of attractions in their segmentation. And the third approach encompasses the classification of attractions based on tourists' perceptions and experiences (Jahanian & Nadalipour, 2009:48 cited by Leeper, 1990). Tourist attraction is a permanently designed source that is controlled and managed for visitors' recreations, amusement, leisure and training (Ranjbarian & Zahedi, 2009:108). Just by investing in tourism sector and providing different kinds of transportation and accommodation facilities and other services without existence of appropriate attractions, cannot be hopeful to development of this industry. According to demand -oriented approach in tourism planning it is assumed that destination reflects feelings, beliefs and opinions that an individual has about a destination's perceived ability to provide satisfaction in relation to his/her special vacation needs (Hu & Ritchie, 1993:25). Therefore attractions and tourism sources are considered basic elements of this industry. Mc Konen defines tourist attraction as an empirical relation between tourist, site and handbook that presents brief information about it. The combination of these elements creates tourist attraction (Lumsdon, 2001:299).

The host community could be regarded as an important attraction for tourists too. Often manifestation of the cultural aspects such as handicrafts and artistic works, as well as less tangible factors like music, dance and religious festivals act as important attractions (Mason, 2011:147).

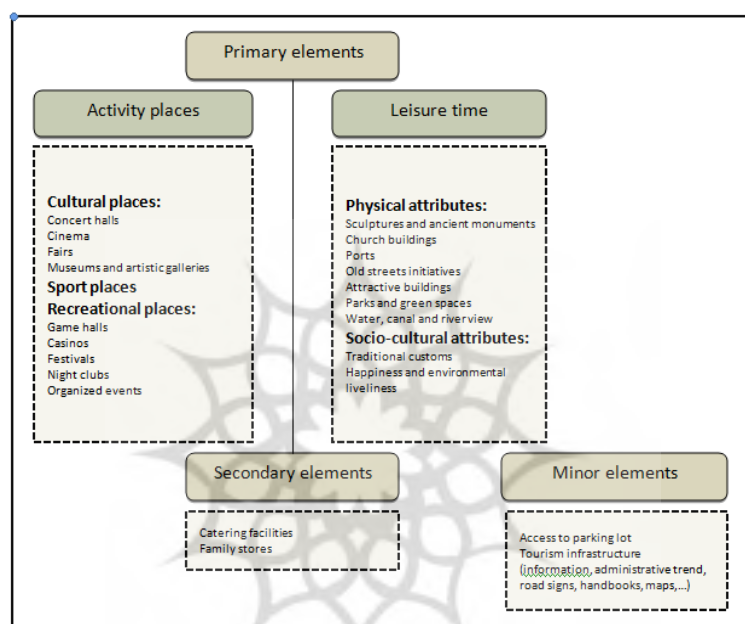


Figure 1. Classification of host community plans for tourism facilities
Source: Jensen – Verbeke, 1986

Tourism and development of local communities

Tourism has significant effects on local communities in tourist destinations. This industry could be main source of income and employment for local people and on the other hand, may involve the threats for social life in a region and its related cultural and natural heritage. If this industry is managed appropriately, however, it can act as a force to support these heritages (Local agenda, 2003:7).

Tourism as a service has one attribute: the place of production and consumption is the same and this place is tourist destination. However, this destination is not designed for tourists and in the first place it is where people live; tourist destination is place of local people's life (Sanchez, 2009:11). As it is stressed in global code of ethics in the World Tourism Organization, 'local populations should

be associated with tourism activities and share equitably in the economic, social and cultural benefits they generate, and particularly in the creation of direct and indirect jobs resulting from them' (Global Ethics, UNWTO). Tourism involves many players including tourists, those who have businesses relevant to this industry, tourism managers and host community (local population). For this industry to be successful and sustainable, all players need to gain benefits from tourism. Anyway, the inclinations of these groups are relatively competitive. Tourists seek to make the most of a destination in the cheapest way, whereas the businessmen and merchants seek to maximize their profit in short term. The host communities are interested in earning long term income and employment as particular benefits resulted from this industry. E Kepko (2002) states that in order to achieve sustainable tourism, all who are involved in this industry (i.e. government, private sector, non-profit organizations and local population) must be in full communication and integrity and participate in all parts of development (Titus et al, 2012:14).

Tourism has significantly recognized as a strategy for development of local economy. The businesses relevant to tourism create employment, enter new wealth into local economy, and help diversify the foundation of local economy. Due to reduction of extraction and production resources in long term, economic diversification is a requirement for long term success in marginal areas and villages (Shields & Hughes, 2006:20).

Nevertheless, there are a vast body of work that demonstrate local communities in the Third World countries may reap few benefits from tourism because they have little control over the ways in which the industry is developed, they cannot match the financial resources available to external investors, and their views are rarely heard" (Chheang, 2010:88). The only forms of local participation that are powerful enough to change the available force patterns and unequal development are those participations which are created inside the local community (Mowforth & Munt, 2003:240).

Local communities have a key role in tourism development as they are crucial in providing a good environmental condition for tourists. McIntyre states that local communities must organize themselves at all levels to play a more effective role in development, and interact

with government and role-players at all levels. Kepe states that local communities should play a proactive role to ensure positive benefits from tourism. Local communities should work closely with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) to educate others in the community concerning tourism development projects (Aref et al, 2010:155). Overall, it is believed that a participatory development approach may facilitate the implementation of sustainable development principles through granting the control and management to local community, decision making in unanimity and equal flow of benefits to those who are influenced by development (Lorio & Wall, 2012:1440).

Concept of sustainable tourism

The way of sustainable development is crucial in tourism planning, because of the fact that most of tourism development is relied on attractions and activities that are associated with natural environment, historic heritage and patterns of cultural regions. If these resources are vanished, the tourist regions will not be successful in tourist attraction and tourism activities (Holden, 2008:532). In general, tourists are seeking a high quality experience in safe and attractive environments. They love travel to attractive, clean places with low population and devoid of pollution. Moreover, it is worthwhile to note that residents of tourist destinations should not suffer from environmental destruction and social problems (WTO, 2005:17).

Butler in 1993 defined sustainable tourism as development of tourism in a manner that ensures its long term survival within a destination. It doesn't harm the environment physically or by humans and should be so active that doesn't cause loss to development of other processes and social activities. Hence, sustainable tourism is that form of tourism which can facilitate sustainable development' (Zahedi, 2003:91).

According to announcement of international conference of sustainable development (2002) held in August and September, sustainable tourism encompasses tourism and its relevant infrastructure which in present and future:

- works in limits of natural capacities and capabilities in order to revive or exploit the natural resources in the future;

- affirms the cooperation between people and communities, traditions and life style which enhance the attractiveness of tourism;
- people should have fairly share in economic benefits resulted from the tourism
- demands of local populations and communities of the host regions should guide it (Altinay & Kashif, 2005:275).

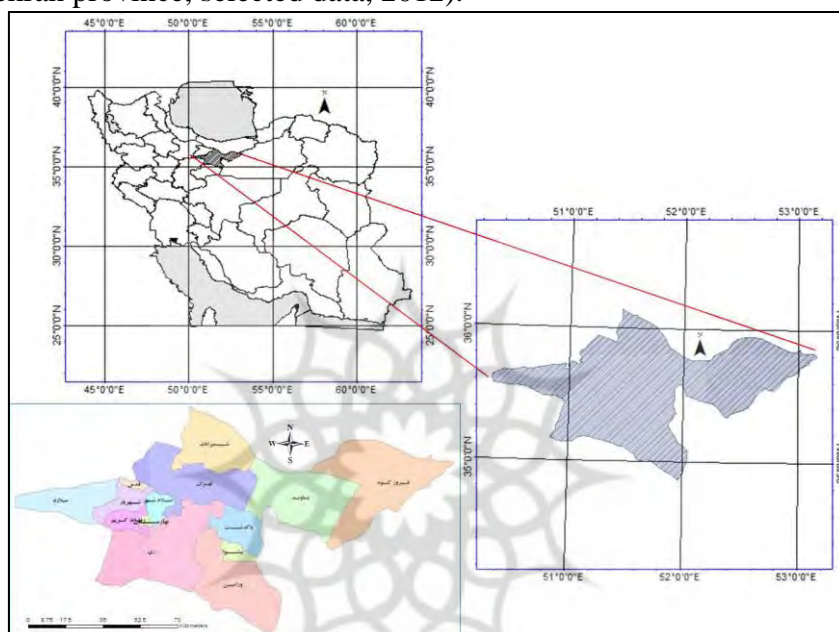
Sustainable tourism is emphasized on making balance in tourism development through modern policies and approaches adopted by private and public sectors in the future. Application of sustainable principles in tourism development means that for example, coastal hotels should not cause pollution of coasts and destruction of natural prospects; slopes of mountain should not be polluted by trashes; and scarce natural resources and wild life should be exposed to risks of visitors. The government has the responsibility to protect natural – cultural resources and tourist destinations seriously by enactment of legislations. Moreover, the tourists should utilize the attractions of tourism destinations in limits of regulations and by observing the terms and conditions. Just it is in this condition that the quality of tourism product could be guaranteed (Kazemi, 2007:128).

Study area

Tehran province is located in the west of Kavir Desert region and in southern slopes of Alborz range. This province covers an area more than 13/6 thousand square kilometers and is located in 34^o to 36^o N, and 50^o20 to 53^o9' E. Tehran province borders Mazandaran province in the north, Semnan Province in the east, Qom province in the south-east, Markazi province in the south-west and Alborz province in the west.

In 2013 this province included 16 townships, 33 divisions, 44 towns, 71 rural districts and 1026 villages. According to the 2011 census, the population of Tehran province is equal to 12183391 (50/4 percent male and 49/6 percent female), comparing the 2006census, the average annual growth of population has been equivalent to 1/44 percent. In the 2011 census, a total of 3732190 households live in Tehran province of which 93.7 percent live in urban regions and 6.3 percent in rural areas. Sex ratio in the province is 102, i.e. there are 102 male per 100 female. This ratio in urban regions and rural areas is 101 and 115, respectively. Household size (number of persons in each

household) in Tehran province is 3/26. This value for urban regions and rural areas is 3/23 and 3/73 respectively. Tehran province with population density of 890 persons per square kilometer is the most populated province of Iran in the 2011 census (Statistical yearbook of Tehran province, selected data, 2012).



Methodology

This study is in group of developmental – applied studies with respect to its objective, and regarding the methodology it has the analytical – descriptive nature. Data collection is conducted through documentary and survey research method using available documents (books, articles, reports, plans). After theoretical explanation of the problem, status of tourism development in Tehran province is analyzed.

Findings

Having performed comprehensive studies, 164 attractions are identified and investigated in Tehran province. Of course, number of monuments is more than this value, but they are not included in attraction list.

Meanwhile, tomb sites (shrines) have the maximum frequency. It should be noted that investigation of attractions status in Tehran

province and analysis of their spatial – temporal dispersion performed in terms of townships and then based on their performance level.

Before introduction of attractions list, it is necessary to investigate their spatial distribution and performance and thus in the following, we investigate this situation in Tehran province.

Dispersion status of attractions based on their level of performance

By spatial dispersion based on performance we mean weighting analysis and spatial dispersion of such monuments to which tourists are interested. As it is shown in the following table, of total of 164 identified attractions in terms of performance, 43 have international level of performance, there are 48 attractions with national level of performance and rest of 73 attractions have local level performance.

Status	Local	National	International
Number	73	48	43
Percent	44.51	29.3	26.22

Source: Research findings

Dispersion of attractions in terms of townships

Tourism attractions are not distributed uniformly in Tehran; in fact it can be claimed that spatial distribution of Tehran’s attractions in the townships are a function of climatologic and geomorphic conditions as well as political, administrative, industrial, service and hygienic situation of every township. As it is evident in the following table, Tehran has the maximum share of required elements for tourism activities possessing 60.4 percent of total available attractions, other townships are seen following Tehran. The share of each township from tourist attractions of the province is presented beside each name in percent: Karaj 7/32 percent, Shahriar 3/05 percent, Pakdasht 3/05 percent, Varamin 6/71 percent, Shemiranat 6/71 percent, Firouzkooh 1/83 percent and Damavand 11 percent.

Township	Number of attractions	Percent
Karaj	12	7.32
Shahriar	5	3.05
Pakdasht	5	3.05
Varamin	11	6.71
Shemiranat	11	6.71
Tehran	99	60.4
Firouzkooh	3	1.83
Damavand	18	11
Total	164	100

Source: Research findings

Having investigated the dispersion of Tehran attractions in all townships, it is necessary to examine performance and typology of these attractions.

Dispersion of international attractions in terms of townships

The most important and effective attraction identified in the Province are recognized worldwide. The maximum number of attractions with international performance are located in Tehran and this prevents other townships from international tourism activities. In Tehran province, approximately 86 percent of international attractions are collected in Tehran city and share of other townships is less than 5 percent. The following table presents share of each township from international attractions.

Township	Number of international attractions	Percent
Karaj	1	2.33
Shahriar	0	0
Pakdasht	0	0
Varamin	2	4.65
Shemiranat	2	4.65
Tehran	37	86
Firouzkooh	0	0
Damavand	1	2.33
Total	43	100

Source: Research findings

The important reason why international attractions are centralized in Tehran is associated with administrative, political, industrial, service and finally transit role of tourist distribution in Tehran city and this centralization will lead to increase of international attractions especially those man-made attractions which have ability of new localization.

Dispersion of national attractions in terms of townships

Again, the maximum numbers of national attractions are centralized in Tehran. In this case, the centralization of Tehran city in the country and needs of other provinces' residents to services available in Tehran play the important roles too. In fact, 79.2 percent of total of 48 national attractions are centralized in Tehran, and Shemiranat and Damavand stand in the next places each with 6.25 percent share of national attractions. The order of other townships with percent of national attraction is as follow: Karaj 4.17, Shahriar 2.08, Pakdasht and Varamin 0, firouzkooh 2.08 percent.

Centralization of national and international attractions in Tehran has limited competitive capacity of other townships in total effective demand of tourism in this province and thus they turn to other activities with local performance. Of course with respect to typology of attractions, fortunately, other townships due to endowment of natural resources have a good chance to attract city-dwellers who are

seeking to escape urban life and resort to the nature. This will be discussed later.

Township	Number of national attractions	Percent
Karaj	2	4.17
Shahriar	1	2.08
Pakdasht	0	0
Varamin	0	0
Shemiranat	3	6.25
Tehran	38	79.2
Firouzkooh	1	2.08
Damavand	3	6.25
Total	48	100

Source: Research findings

Dispersion of local attractions in terms of townships

In the field of local attractions, again, it is Tehran that appropriates the most absolute and relative frequency to itself, however, in this case the difference between Tehran and other townships is not in significant level and this city contains 32.9 percent of local attractions. Here the share of other townships has been increased but it should be noted that although the market size and local demand from Tehran for attractions of these townships is considerable enough, it is not possible to supply infrastructures including hotels in the margins and sphere of influence of these attractions, because length of the trips is generally one day or less, at the same time, other services such as handicrafts, food and drink services could be provided in the vicinity of these attractions. The following table presents status of townships in local tourist attractions. In fact, share of Karaj, Shahriar, Pakdasht, Varamin, Shemiranat, Firouzkooh and Damavand from local attractions is, 12.3, 5.48, 6.85, 12.3, 8.22, 2.74 and 19.2 percent, respectively.

Township	Number of local attractions	Percent
Karaj	9	12.3
Shahriar	4	5.48
Pakdasht	5	6.85
Varamin	9	12.3
Shemiranat	6	8.22
Tehran	24	32.9
Firouzkooh	2	2.74
Damavand	14	19.2
Total	73	100

Source: Research findings

Dispersion of attractions in terms of typology

In view of typology, the attractions have been classified in different forms and based on different functional approaches. One operational classification in tourism development planning is such that physical attractions located in a place are classified to 3 groups: natural, cultural – historic and man-made attractions. In this sense, Tehran

enjoys a wonderful diversity in a limited geographical space that rarely is seen in some countries which cover the surface area more than Tehran province. With respect to typology, however, the man-made attractions are dominated over two other groups in Tehran and most of these attractions act in international and national level of performance centralized in Tehran city. Indeed in terms of typology, 46.4 percent of Tehran's attractions are the man-made attractions, 37.8 percent belongs to cultural attractions and rest of 15.85 percent which are the most visited by one-day tourists resided in Tehran city are natural attractions with local level of performance.

Status	Natural	Cultural	Built
Number	26	62	76
Percent	15.85	37.8	46.34

Source: Research findings

Dominance of the man-made attractions, generally with national and international performance in Tehran city reveals the fact that development of tourism activities in destinations is quantitatively related to environmental assets and geographical space and a wisely planning in establishment of man-made elements in the townships results in the development of tourism and taking advantage of its various benefits. Therefore, it is possible to enhance role of other townships in tourism industry and to reduce the concentration of population and density of activities in Tehran city through a precise spatial planning. Due to importance of this matter, in the following, the dispersion and spatial analysis of natural, cultural and the man-made attractions are examined independently.

Dispersion of natural attractions in terms of the townships

Natural attractions of Tehran province accounts for 16 percent of all attractions in the province and well endowed with diversity So that it ends to desert morphology and arid climate in the south east; semi-arid climate starts in the south and leads to mountain morphology of central Alborz and mild climate in the north. Existence of limestone caves such as Yakh Morad cave, morphotectonic formations like Tochal toward east Damavand creates the opportunity to develop ecotourism activities extensively and provides the tourism industry of the province with eco activities in a more constrained format.

Spatial dispersion of natural attractive elements for tourists in Tehran province offers a lever to develop all tourist activities in other areas except Tehran and enhancement of natural attractions may help shift

the heavy concentration in Tehran city toward other areas. With regard to the fact that maximum per capita cost belongs to Tehran market tourists and by emphasis on vicinity of this market to natural tourism destinations the province, it is possible to exploit tourist activities in territory of Tehran province.

In case of natural attractions, share of townships is considerable. The following table presents dispersion of natural attractions in Tehran province.

Township	Number of natural attractions	Percent
Karaj	3	11.54
Shahriar	2	7.692
Pakdasht	0	0
Varamin	1	3.846
Shemiranat	6	23.8
Tehran	0	0
Firouzkooh	1	3.846
Damavand	13	50
Total	26	100

Source: Research findings

The table shows that the most density of natural attractions (approximately 50 percent) is concentrated in Damavand followed by Shemiranat 23.8 percent and Karaj 11.54 percent. Pakdasht and Tehran without any natural attraction stood at the end of table. Therefore with regard to non intervention of Tehran in tourist activities in the form of ecotourism in one hand, and concentration of other tourist activities in this city on the other hand, it could be inferred the crucial deduction about the fairly spatial distribution of activities which are relied on natural attractions.

The following chart represents the spatial dispersion of natural attractions in the townships of Tehran province. The weight of these activities in Damavand, Shemiranat, Karaj and Shahriar is clearly seen in this chart. It is noted that some of the man-made attractions in international and national level of performance are closely dependant on natural conditions in these townships. The most notable instances include Dizin and Shemshak ski resorts in Shemiranat and Abali ski resort in Damavand.

Dependence of this category of the man-made attractions to morphoclimatologic and natural conditions of the important townships with respect to nature and ecotourism may enhance developmental capacity and the potential to attract and distribute the centralized demands of Tehran city to other points of the province. Therefore the development of effective fundamental strategies for equitable

distribution of tourist activities in the way that other regions can take advantage of these activities requires the operational attention to natural attractions of the province and thus by incorporating the attractive man-made elements in these regions, the spatial planning-oriented development could be achieved.

Dispersion of cultural attractions in terms of townships

Cultural attractions account for 28 percent of all attractions in Tehran province and generally are separated in two groups: those attractions which are physically established in different regions and have been generally influenced by historical events in the province, and those attractions which have non-physical and intangible nature. The latter refers to social behaviors which have been developed uniquely along the development of historical personality of the province through past events; the popular customs of the province, folklore or public culture common in the province are included in this category that unfortunately are beginning to decline due to the social behaviors with tendency to modernization in the manner of western countries.

More than half of the physical attractions identified in category of cultural attractions are localized in Tehran city (approximately 53.2 percent). The second place belongs to Varamin by approximately 14.5 percent of cultural attractions and share of other townships is less than 10 percent and thus they are not strong enough to compete with Tehran city. The following table presents this situation clearly.

Township	Number of cultural attractions	Percent
Karaj	6	9.68
Shahriar	1	1.61
Pakdasht	5	8.06
Varamin	9	14.5
Shemiranat	3	4.48
Tehran	33	53.2
Firouzkooh	2	3.23
Damavand	3	4.84
Total	62	100

Source: Research findings

The above table indicates that with respect to concentration of cultural attractions, Karaj (9.68%), Pakdasht (8.06%), Damavand and Shemiranat (4.48%), Firouzkooh (3.23%) and Shahriar (1.61%) followed Tehran and Varamin. Once again intense centralization is seen in Tehran city where a large number of cultural attractions are based. Due to level of these attractions, it seems difficult to improve the general conditions of other townships in tourist activities.

One reason for this concentration is related to role of Tehran city in contemporary historical events. It dates back to Qajar era when Agha Mohammad Khan Qajar, the first king of Qajar dynasty selected this city as capital of Iran and continues until now. This proximity to the time when these attractions were made has caused creation of more attractive, lively and available cultural attractions for visitors. On other hand, the historical – cultural attractions established in other townships such as Rey and Varamin, generally belongs to historical and social events before the Qajar dynasty and even before advent of Islam in Iran and thus they have been suffering from erosion and destruction in most parts and also they have lost their competitive power and the ability to transfer socio-historical events of their period. As it was stated, the main factors affects tourists attract to historical – cultural attractions of Tehran city, in addition to volume, quantitative intensity and level of these attractions, is a function of making communication between tourist and the dominant atmosphere in time of construction and exploitation of these attractions, in other words, mental scene-setting potential of the attractions. Therefore in order to modify this heavy concentration in Tehran city, it is necessary to improve mental scene setting potential of other cultural – historical attractions in transferring the conceptual experience of the social atmosphere dominant on dynamic period and visual function of the attraction to the tourists and hence reasonably increase the total volume of visits and number of revisiting by inducing the enthusiasm to experience the past atmosphere in tourists without any loss in visiting Tehran's cultural – historical spaces.

Dispersion of the man-made attractions in terms of townships

The man-made attractions of Tehran province accounts for 46 percent of total of all attractions in the province and well endowed with functional diversity. These attractions which are usually established in Tehran city come in different forms such as museums, ski resorts (absent in Tehran city), cinemas, theaters, cultural centers, sport complex, even hospitals and commercial – administrative centers that attracts tourists from all over the country and the world in any way whatever.

One reason for intense concentration of tourist activities in Tehran city is high level of services, welfare and infrastructure as well as political

centrality of this city in the country where acts as the main transit point to transfer tourists to the farthest regions of the country and all over the world. The man-made attractions are popular among tourists due to their availability and practical objectivity; in particular, those who come from the less developed regions are more interested in the man-made attractions whereas the tourists coming from the developed regions tends to visit cultural – natural and historical attractions besides spending time in theatres, museums and so on.

The following table presents spatial dispersion of the man-made attractions which play essential role in conducting tourism flows and enhancing the attractiveness of a destination.

Township	Number of man-made attractions	Percent
Karaj	3	3.95
Shahriar	2	2.63
Pakdasht	0	0
Varamin	1	1.32
Shemiranat	2	2.63
Tehran	66	86.6
Firouzkooh	0	0
Damavand	2	2.63
Total	76	100

Source: Research findings

The above table proves that the highest concentration of the man – made attractions has occurred in Tehran city. Tehran stands at the first rank containing 86.6 percent of total of the man – made attractions in the province and followed by Karaj (3.95%), Damavand, Shemiranat and Shahriar (2.63%) and Varamin (1.32%).

One advantage of tourism development focusing on the man-made attractions is less environmental, spatial and temporal limitation compared to other attractions. Establishment of the man – made attractions in all townships in sagely manner has two advantages: 1. they can satisfy a considerable amount of local demands, and 2. they can reduce the intra-province travels made by purpose of using these attractions.

As the input travel to Tehran city is reduced and the man-made attractions are distributed in other townships, it not only creates a good opportunity for them to take advantage of tourism but also in broader sense it contributes in reduction of pressures and environmental stresses in Tehran city and thus rate of erosion in physical infrastructure and environmental pollution will be lowered.

However, the development and establishment of the man – made attractions in a fair spatial distribution and territory planning needs a goal oriented planning, time, capital, human resource and so on.

Tourist attractions profile of Tehran province separated by townships

No.	Name	Historical era	Location	Type of attraction	Level of performance
Karaj					
1	Meydanak tower	7 th century AH	Karaj – Chaloos road, Meydank village	Cultural	Local
2	Amir Kabir Dam	Pahlavi	Karaj	Man-made	Local
3	Shahrestanak	Qajar era – Nasser-din-Shah	Karaj – Chaloos road, Shahrestanak	Natural	Local
4	Shams Palace	Pahlavi	Karaj	Man-made	National
5	Agh-Tappe ancient hill		Karaj	Cultural	Local
6	Shah Abbas Caravanserai		Karaj	Cultural	Local
7	Pearl History		Karaj	Natural	Local
8	Emamzadeh Hassan	Safavi	Karaj	Cultural	Local
9	Emamzade Shah Soleiman Eshtehard	Safavi	Eshtehard	Cultural	Local
10	Emamzadeh Abdolghader	Safavi	Karaj	Cultural	Local
Pakdash					
1	Sarma Malu	Contemporary	Pakdash	Man – made	Local
2	Yurdshah		Pakdash	Natural	Local
3	Towchal village		Pakdash	Natural	Local
4	Emamzadeh Mohammad		Pakdash	Cultural	Local
Shahriar					
1	Joghin Hill		Vahidie, Shahriar	Cultural	Local
2	Takht Rostam	Sasanian empire	Qajar village	Cultural	Local
3	Emamzade Bibi Sakine		Shahriar	Cultural	Local
4	Faramarz Castle		Khoostenam village, Shahriar	Cultural	Local
5	Emamzade Abdollah		Yousef Abad village, Shahriar	Cultural	Local
Varamin					
1	Jameh Mosque of Varamin	Ilkhanate	Varamin	Cultural	International
2	Emamzade Yaha	Mongol	Varamin	Cultural	Local
3	Ala-eddin (Ala-o-dole) Tower	688 A.H – Mongol	Varamin	Cultural	International
4	Emamzade Mohammad Ijedoan	Qajar era – 1924	Ijedoan village, 8 km south west Varamin	Cultural	Local
5	Mil Hill	Sasanian	10 km north of Varamin	Cultural	International
6	Emamzadeh Shah Hossein	Mongol – 819 AH	Varamin	Cultural	Local
7	Emamzadeh Jafar	Mongol & Qajar	Pishva, Varamin	Cultural	Local
8	Game & Recreation Park	Contemporary	Varamin	Man – made	Local
9	Seyed Fathollah tomb		Varamin	Cultural	Local
10	Pachenar Neighborhood		Varamin	Natural	Local
Shemiranat					
1	Emamzade Saleh	7 th century AH. Reconstructed by Shah Tahmasb, Safavi era	Tajrish, Tehran	Cultural	Local
2	Emamzadeh Davoud	7 or 8 th century AH	Tajrish square	Cultural	Local
3	Emamzade Ghasem		South west of Tochal and 15 km of Farahzad road	Cultural	Local
4	Tochal mountain – 3960 m		Shemiran, Tehran	Natural	National
5	Kharsang Kouh mountain - 4100 m		Shemiran, Roudbar	Natural	Local
6	Kholeno mountain – 4375 m		Roudbar Ghasran district	Natural	Local
7	Sarkachal mountain – 4150 m			Natural	Local
Tehran					
1	Mellat Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
2	Mellat Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
3	Chitgar Forest Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
4	Sorkhe Hesar Forest Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
5	Qeytariéh Park		Tehran	Man -made	National

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6	Park-e Shahr		Tehran	Man -made	National
7	Jamshidieh Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
8	Lavizan Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
9	Pardisan Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
10	Taleghani Park		Tehran	Man -made	National
11	Moshirieh		Tehran, district 15	Man -made	Local
12	Tughrul tower		Tehran	Man -made	Local
13	Meraj		Tehran	Man -made	Local
14	Javanmard Ghasab		Tehran	Man -made	Local
15	Sohanak		Tehran	Man -made	Local
16	Farahzad		Tehran	Man -made	Local
17	Ghazal		Tehran	Man -made	Local
18	Vard Avard		Tehran	Man -made	Local
19	Loghma kan		Tehran	Man -made	Local
20	Sa' dabad complex		Tehran, Shahid Taheri Street, Zaferanieh, Valiasr St	Man -made	International
21	Niavaran complex	Qajar & Pahlavi	Niavaran, Tehran	Man -made	International
22	Sahebgharianeh Palace	Qajar era - 13 th century	Niavaran, next to the Niavaran park	Man -made	International
23	Museum of contemporary art	Pahlavi - 1977	North Kargar street, next to the Lale Park	Man -made	International
24	Reza Abbasi museum	Contemporary - 1977	Shariati street, before Seyed Khandan bridge	Man -made	International
25	Golestan palace	Safavi & Qajar	15 Khordad street, Tehran	Man -made	International
26	Tehran anthropology museum		Inside Golestan Palace	Man -made	International
27	National arts museum	Contemporary - 1930	Ministry of culture and Islamic guidance, Kamal-al- molk st, Baharestan sq.	Man -made	International
28	Carpet Museum of Iran	Contemporary - 1977	North Kargar St. next to the Lale Park.	Man -made	International
29	National museum of Iran	Pahlavi, 1935	30 tir St. Tehran	Man -made	International
30	Abgineh museum	Second Pahlavi era	30 tir St, Jomhuri Eslami St, Tehran	Man -made	International
31	National jewelry museum		Front Germany embassy, Ferdowsi Street	Man -made	International
32	Fatemi museum		Enghelab Avenue	Man -made	National
33	Geological survey museum		Meraj Blvd, Azadi St.	Man -made	National
34	Dar Abad Wildlife and Nature Museum	Contemporary	Darabad	Man -made	National
35	Haftchenar Museum of Wildlife and Natural Monuments	Contemporary	Haftchenal st, Beryanak	Man -made	National
36	Cinema museum	Contemporary	Pirnia Alley, Lalezar St.	Man -made	National
37	Money museum	Contemporary	Mirdamad Blvd, Valiasr St.	Man -made	International
38	History museum	Contemporary	After Mirdamad Blvd, Valiasr St.	Man -made	International
39	Time museum	Contemporary	Fallahi St.	Man -made	National
40	Natural history museum	Contemporary	Ghaem Magham st. Hafte-Tir Sq.	Man -made	National
41	Coin museum	Contemporary	Bank Sepah, Imam Khomeini St.	Man -made	National
42	Museum of under - glass painting	Contemporary	Intersection of Hedayat St and Tonekabon St.	Man -made	National
43	Arabzade Carpet museum	Contemporary	No 7, 1 st Boostan st, Pasdaran	Man -made	National
44	Saba museum	Contemporary	No 97. Zahir-al- eslam St. Baharestan	Man -made	National

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45	Dr Hesabi museum	Contemporary	Tajrish, Tehran	Man -made	National
46	Azadi cultural complex	Contemporary	Azade square	Man -made	National
47	Martyrs museum	Contemporary	Corner of Forsat St, Taleghani St.	Man -made	National
48	Iranian Electrical Industry Museum	Contemporary	Piroozi St, Shohada Sq.	Man -made	National
49	Air Force museum	Contemporary	Karaj highway, Azadi Sq.	Man -made	National
50	Post museum	Pahlavi	Imam Khomeini St.	Man -made	International
51	Mausoleum of Imam Khomeini		Tehran	Cultural	International
52	Imam Khomeini Musalla		Tehran	Cultural	International
53	Tatavos Church	Qajar era	Mousavi St, inside Seyed Ismail tomb, Bazaar, Tehran.	Cultural	Local
54	Qabr Agha Tomb	Qajar era	Sirus St, Tehran	Cultural	Local
55	Sepahsalar Mosque (Shahid Motahhari School)	Qajar era – 1295	Baharestan Sq, Tehran	Cultural	International
56	Seyed Ismail Tomb	9 th century. Reconstructed in Qajar era	15 khordad, Mousavi St, Chale Meydan Neighborhood, Tehran	Cultural	Local
57	Emamzadeh Yahya	895 AH	Emamzadeh Yahya Alley, Rey St, Oudlajan Neighborhood, Tehran	Cultural	Local
58	Emamzadeh Zeid	902 AH, Qajar	Bazaar, Tehran	Cultural	Local
59	Shrine of Seyed Nasiruddin	Qajar era	Khayyam street	Cultural	Local
60	Emezadeh Hassan		Amin-al-molk St, district 17, Tehran	Cultural	Local
61	Marvi School	Qajar era	Nasser khosro St, Tehran	Cultural	Local
62	Imam Khomeini Mosque (Soltani)	Qajar era	15 khordad street, Bazaar, Tehran	Cultural	International
63	Old sepahsalar Mosque		Nasser khosro St, Tehran	Cultural	Local
64	National Garden	Qajar era	Tehran	Cultural	International
65	Damavand – Tar		East of Tehran, Damavand county	Natural	Local
66	Firoozkuh		East of Tehran, firoozkuh county.	Natural	Local
67	Roodbar Ghasran		East of Tehran, shemiranat	Natural	Local
68	Karaj		Chaloos Road, Karaj	Natural	Local
69	Taleghan		Savojbolagh county, taleghan district	Natural	Local
70	Lavasanat		North east of Tehran, Shemiranat	Natural	Local
71	Kordan		Savojbolagh county	Natural	Local
72	Eshtehard		Eshtehard district	Natural	Local
73	Varamin		Rey county	Natural	Local
74	Eslamshahr		Eslamshahr	Natural	Local
75	Shahriar		Shahriar	Natural	Local
76	Abali ski resort	Contemporary	Abali, Damavand, Tehran	Man -made	International
77	Shemshak ski resort	Contemporary	Roudbar Ghasran, Shemshak, Shemiranat	Man -made	International
78	Dizin ski resort		Dizin, Karaj	Man -made	International
79	Khour	Contemporary	Chaloos road, Karaj	Man -made	Local
80	Tochal	Contemporary	Tochal slopes, Shemiranat	Man -made	National, international
81	Khojir national park		Tehran	Natural, Man -made	National
82	Shorkh Hesar national park		Tehran	Natural, Man -made	National
83	Jajroud protected area		Tehran	Natural	Local
84	Varjin protected area		Shemiran	Natural	Local

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85	Karaj protected area		Karaj	Natural	Local
86	Lar national park		Damavand	Natural	National
87	Kavir national park		Varamin	Natural	International
88	Telo protected area		Tehran	Man-made	National
89	Khargoosh Dare protected area		North west Tehran,	Natural, Man-made	National
90	Jahan Nama protected area		Tehran	Man-made	National
91	Eram park		Tehran	Man-made	National
92	Tehran amusement park		Tehran	Man-made	National
93	Daneshjoo park		Tehran	Man-made	National
94	Wonderland		Tehran	Man-made	National
95	Azadegan water park		Tehran	Man-made	National
96	Al-Mahdi boating		Tehran	Man-made	National
97	Narges amusement park and boating		Tehran	Man-made	Local
98	Razi Sport – Recreation Complex		Qazvin St, Qazvin sq, Tehran	Man-made	Local
99	Ekbatan water park		Ekbatan, Tehran	Man-made	Local
100	Bibi Shahrano Shrine	4 th century, Daylamites	North of Amin Abad, Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	Local
101	Tughrul tower		Ibn-e Babvie, Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	International
102	Shah-Abdol-Azim shrine	Second half of 3 rd century- Seljuq - Buyid- Safavi- Qajar Contemporary	Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	International
103	Sassanid fire temple or Haroon prison	Before Islam	Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	International
104	Javanmard Ghassab tomb	Qajar era	Mansour Abad village, Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	Local
105	Bibi Zobeide tomb		Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	Local
106	Cheshmeh Ali	Qajar era		Cultural	International
107	Emamzadeh Abdollah	11 th century Safavi dynasty	Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	Regional
108	Ibn Babawayh Cemetery		Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	Local
109	Castle Gary		Shahr-e Rey	Cultural	Local
110	Fiروزabadi Mosque			Cultural	Local
Fiروزkoooh					
1	Jeliz Jand Watchtower	Islamic era, end of 8 th century and first of 9 th century	4 km north of Jeliz Jand village	Cultural	Local
2	Old Reza Shah Bridge	Pahlavi	10 km of Fiروزkoooh – Tehran main road over Hable Rud River	Cultural	Local
3	Savashi	Qajar era			
Damavand					
1	Cheshmeh A'la		North west of Damavand county (3500 m)	National	Local
2	Old plane tree	600 years ago	Chilard, Damavand county	National	Local
3	Emamzadeh Hashem	7 and 8 th century- building: contemporary	Emazadhe Hashem Pass, Haraz Road	Cultural Tomb	Local
4	Jameh Mosque of Damavand	5 th century	Damavand	Cultural Material Mosque	Local
5	Emamzadeh Abdollah tomb	6 and 7 th century	Damavand	Cultural Material Mosque	Local
6	Emamzadeh Abdollah & Obeydollah	Seljuq dynasty	Damavand	Cultural Tomb	Local
7	Emamzadeh Abdollah & Khalilollah	6 and 7 th century			Local
8	Historic bath	Safavi	Damavand	Cultural Material Services	Local
9	Shebeli tower	4 and 5 th century	Damavand		

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10	Jewish cemetery	From Islamic period (5 and 6 th century) until contemporary era	Damavand		
11	Emamzade Abdollah (Ayene Varzan village)	Mongol – safavi – Qajar era	Tehran – Firouzkook road, 70 km of east Tehran, 17 km of Damavand, Ayene Varzan village	Cultural Religious Tomb	
12	Seyed Getmir tomb (Mir Mazhar)		Absard in 18 km of south east Damavand	Cultural Tomb	
13	Jameh Mosque of Kilan	Ilkhanate or Timurid empire	Kilan, 26 km of south east Damavand, 8 km of south Absard	Cultural	
14	Namirad bridge (Zanjir)	Maybe Safavi era	Roudehen	Cultural Service General	
15	Historic bridge of Firouzkooch in Roudehen county	Pahlavi	Roudehen	Cultural Service General	
16	Caves of Havir village		Havir village	Natural	
17	Roud Afshan cave	Second geological period			
18	Jeliz Jand Watchtower	Islamic era, end of 8 th century and first of 9 th century	4 km north of Jeliz Jand village	Cultural	Local
19	Old Reza Shah Bridge	Pahlavi	10 km of Firouzkooch – Tehran main road over Hable Rud River	Cultural	Local

Source: Research findings

Conclusion

Coupled with having been the capital city for over 200 years, Tehran has the good capacity in attracting tourists. Tehran is home of historical buildings, old textures and recreational places (including museums, artistic exhibits, galleries, art halls etc), this matter together with the specific environmental and climatic conditions (for example presence of Alborz range, the rivers, valleys, gardens and natural places around Tehran), as well as abundance of sport – recreational complexes has enabled it to attract a significant number of tourists in recent years. These factors have guaranteed urban tourism development in this metropolitan. It is an incontrovertible fact that the tourist arrival will be together with money injection to economy of the city. The investigations suggest that dissemination of information and good advertisement, providing security of tourists and reasonable planning to meet transportation needs of the tourists for travel inside the city and transfer to attractive sites is among the most effective factors in urban tourism development.

In this paper a total of 164 attractions located in Tehran province are identified and analyzed. Meanwhile, it should be noted that number of

monuments is more than this value but they are not classified as attraction.

The dispersion of attractions were investigated based on level of performance; the results indicated that of total of 164 identified attractions, 43 had international level of performance, there were 48 attractions with national level of performance and rest of 73 attractions had local level performance.

Tourism attractions are not distributed uniformly in Tehran; in fact it can be claimed that spatial distribution of Tehran's attractions in the townships are a function of climatologic and geomorphic conditions as well as political, administrative, industrial, service and hygienic situation of every township. As it was shown in this paper, Tehran has the maximum share of required elements for tourism activities possessing 60.4 percent of total available attractions and other townships with respect to physical tourist attractions are as follow: Karaj (7.32%), Shahriar (3.05%), Pakdasht (3.05%), Varamin (6.71%), Shemiranat (6.71%), Firouzkooh (1.83%) and finally Damavand (11%).

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