

## **The role of infrastructures on sport tourists development in Mazandaran province**

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### ***Abstract***

*The purpose of this study was to identify and effective role of each of infrastructures related to sports tourism development in Mazandaran province. This study is based on a descriptive-survey method and is a type of field study. The statistical population included sport management professors, experts and heads of sport associations from Physical Education administration and the tourism experts of the Mazandaran province, which are all considered and targeted research were selected as examples. The tool used to collect data was a researcher-made questionnaire which its reliability was obtained by Cronbach`s alpha 86%. The questionnaire was design according to the Likert 5-point scale and 83 usable questionnaires were obtained. The friedman test and t-test was used for inferential analysis. Results showed that all the factors for the development of sports tourism infrastructure of a country is higher than average level 3, hence These factors affect the order of priority and importance in attracting tourists and in the management of marketing and advertising(4.72) is primarily important. It should be noted that the development of sports tourism, as may be that all the factors infrastructure and facilities affecting tourism, in the areas considered particularly sports tourism infrastructure And create appropriate strategies for marketing and tourism development, because of The weakness in tourism marketing and advertising of the backwardness of the country of the rising trend of the industry.*

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### **Introduction**

Nowaday tourism industry is one of the most important sources of acquisition in come and by power transferring of purchase from the urban and industrial areas to those regions that do not have considerable development, it make balance among these areas and metamorphose the countenance of local and regional trade, according to measure of its validity [17].

In order to make a comprehensive and stable development and also replacing new sources of acquisition in come instead of petroleum sources , we needs to use all the facilities and capabilities.In this direction , the project of developing tourism industry which economists knows it as a third on the progress and dynamic economic phenomenon after petroleum and automobile manufacturing industries , seems to be an essential affair[12].tourism counts as a main and chief occupational industry which has several effects on other industries such as:trade , nutritious industry , the services related to infrastructures which are the basic elements of developing tourism[8]. comparing Iran with the industrial and developed countries shows a big gap that filling it in today's world is somehow a dream that cannot be approachable with this in mind that all countries are proceeding with a high speed In allocated arena. Base on this matter, tourism can be attention as a lever for economic and social development in areas. This subject can be a reason (cause) for the relation between tourism and strategic chances for the purpose of regional development. Base on the commendation of worldwide tourism organization (WTO), tourism Consists of all activities that tourists done and there are somebody's whom spent some times on traveling and staying out of their own residences in order to spend their leisure times. On the other hand, in no other historical periods the sport was associated with the economy and culture of a nation and never gained popularity as an essential well as of today [1]. Given the importance of these two issues (tourism and sport), sport and tourism

authorities resorted to sport tourism [2]. According to the UN recommendation in 1993, WTO has accepted this definition: "Tourism entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment; provided that it does not last more than one year and is aimed for leisure, business and/or other intentions. Sport tourism means: "travelling to another place for non-commercial reasons in order to observe or participate in sport events" [9]. Jordan (2006) defines sport tourism as a fun travel which people go on with the intention of participating in physical activities, observing sport events and/or enjoying sports attractions [13]. Safabakhsh (2013) reported in his study that sport tourists is someone who travels outside of his/her habitat for a while (at least 24 hours and at most 6 months) and his/her main intention is either the active or inactive participation in competitive sports or amusements or even being in sport events for pleasure and cheer on athletes. In general, sport tourism includes three main actions: (1) participating (active sport tourism); (2) observing (inactive sport tourism); (3) visiting popular sports attractions such as visiting athletes, sports museums, important sport complexes and so on (sports memorabilia tourism)[19].

Also, Gratton and Henry believe that establishing sport complexes is one of the factors that improves the image of a city in the eyes of spectators. As mentioned earlier, holding sport events, whether internationally or regionally, is of high importance. Different countries compete for getting the privilege of holding sport events in advance[7]. The experience of the most of these countries show that the earned income for holding these tournaments is undeniable. At the end of tournaments, the host country will inherit all those establishments and equipments which were used during the competitions[14].

Sport, like the other appealing factors, is a tourism attraction; with the exception that it is a unique factor. Therefore, those events that encompass sport are somehow an attractive element. A survey which was conducted about the tourism in England showed that 26 per cent of respondents pointed to sport as the main intention of their travel[16].

Ghafuri et al. (2014), in their study, "effective factors in developing water sports tourism in coastal cities of Mazandaran", have recognized

the advertisement, marketing and management as the influential factors in developing tourism which appear to be the most effective ones in attracting tourists and developing water sport tourism[5].

Honarvar (2005), sees the following factors as the most significant elements in attracting tourists to the international tournaments: marketing and improving services of travel agencies, cooperation of sport and tourism agencies, access of host country to the sea and beaches, popularity of prevailing sports, nightlife, embellishment of the area, easy access to accommodations, quality of the accommodations and establishing the conference centers, hotels, restaurants, large shopping centers and landscapes in the host country[11].

Deenihan &Caulfield, 2015, In his research on " Do tourists value different levels of cycling infrastructure?" stated that in recent years, much research has been done in the field of sports tourism that Further research into the major sporting events like the Tour de-France races and adventure tourism trends and perspectives tourists, infrastructure development, systems design cycling competitions in tourist areas and rural areas was important [3].

Kim et al, 2015, To " Evaluating the perceived social impacts of hosting large-scale sport tourism events: Scale development and validation ", and a six-factor model for perceived social impact assessment found that These include: 1) economic interests, 2) pride of 3) community development, 4) economic costs 5) Traffic problems and 6) security risks. This study showed that the multidimensional nature of perceived social impacts on local residents better understand the impacts associated with major events and sports tourism has helped[15].

Hingtgen et al, 2015, In a study entitled " Cuba in transition: Tourism industry perceptions of entrepreneurial change " in order to develop the tourism potential of tourism development in entrepreneurship cited which include the production of innovative products, improved Internet access, business development, financing and training as well as to create a climate conducive to entrepreneurial private sector is strong and stable, also noted [10].

Wäsche, 2015, in a study entitled " Inter organizational cooperation in sport tourism: A social network analysis " noted to the central

importance of networks, such as the sports tourism agencies and tourism cooperation between organizations in a network official [22]. Dolnicar & Ring, 2014, The study entitled " Tourism marketing research: Past, present and future " The results found that the ability to create a tourism development strategy, much attention has been substantial research and the use of experimental, semi experimental and non-structural quality of geographical special significance [4]. Razavi et al (2014) conducted a research entitled "reviewing natural attractions that effect development of Mazandaran`s sport tourism" and have concluded that natural attractions are determinative in developing sport tourism. Experts of physical education believe that summer sports and mountaineering have the highest average; but tourism experts and officials of sport associations have chosen hunting, fishing and summer sports, respectively[18]. Mahmoudi et al (2014) in a study points to culture and sport infrastructures as two fundamental elements in attracting active sport tourists to Iran and suggested that it is possible to persuade active sport tourists to come to Iran when in addition to the above-mentioned elements, officials take into consideration other factors such as management and political issues, too[16]. Soltan Hosseini et al (2013) in a research entitled "effective analytical index on attracting foreign tourists", identifies infrastructures as the most important factors in attracting tourists and from among them gives priority to the followings: (1) high quality of sport in the host country; (2) acceptable sport complexes and equipments[20]. Sorrentino (2012), based on his study titled "reviewing effects of major sport events on the tourism marketing strategies", have concluded that these events are important tools in destination marketing, and also paying attention to the image of destination and satisfaction of tourists are needed for developing strategies[21]. Giridhar (2007), in his study, "identifying strategic position of a touristic area by SWOT analysis", found that merely having the potential to attract tourists would not be sufficient for turning their attention to the destination and convincing them to come back. And, many tourists expect the availability of proper accommodations and facilities, decent food and water, and also infrastructural facilities such as hotels and transportation[6].

With an overview of the research conducted, we find that the development of sports tourism is expands current knowledge in this area and will create new partnerships between organizations involved in tourism and also between them and organizers of the events. Since the Mazandaran province is one of the sport tourism destinations in the country, implementing adequate strategies can form more integrated and targeted organizations for attracting tourists, and also due to the effects of natural attractions and geographical location on developments of sport tourism it is necessary to research about sport tourism[18].

Most of the researches that are carried out about the attractive factors, emphasize the importance of identifying required attractions for tourists. In this study, which is done with the intention of spotting sport tourism attractions of the Mazandaran, we endeavored to answer the following questions:

According to general aim of research that is recognition and effect of factors related to mazandaran province's tourism-sport infrastructures, this research is trying to consider following question.

1. Which ones the priority of infrastructural factors in developing tourism in mazandaran province?
2. Which factors are more effective in attracting sport tourists to the Mazandaran province?

### **Methodology**

This study is based on a descriptive-survey method. Statistics includes 95 people from the professors of sport management, experts and masters of sport councils from the administration of sport and experts of Mazandaran province's tourism. Sampling method was full reckoning and purposeful. Information collecting devices was a researcher made questionnaire that its shallow was gained by Alfa Cronbakh 0.86. It was asked and requested from responders to answer related question of buoy. 95 numbers of questions was spread out and after collecting them, 83 numbers of questionnaire were usable. Research analysis of data in two levels of deduced and descriptive statistics was done. In the level of descriptive of abundance, average and criterion deviation, and in the level of deduced statistic the test of only various and for ranking the factors of infrastructure in Friedman's

test were used. for data analysis SPSS software was used for either descriptive and inferential statistics.

### Finding

In this part, it is focused on considering the first question of research which is about factors of attracting tourists in sport to Mazandaran province and its works.

**Table (1). Prioritizing the factors of infrastructure related to sport-tourism development based Freidman's test and the result of test t.**

infrastructures	Average weigh	Criterion deviation	Average	T	Prioritizing(Ranking)
Advertisement & marketing Management	4/83	0/83	4/72	4/63	1
Putting policy & planning & Connecting rules of tourism	4/65	0/89	4/53	4/44	2
Existence of facilities& Capabilities for training	4/41	0/90	4/31	4/22	3
Using of modern technology In holding sport races	4/18	0/84	4/06	3/98	4
Welfare, recreational, Facilities services with low price	3/93	0/82	3/84	3/72	5
Supporting the investments of private parts.	3/82	0/88	3/70	3/66	6
Using police for tourists Security	3/70	0/91	3/59	3/51	7
Using human capital Who are skilled & specialized	3/59	0/83	3/48	3/47	8
Transportation system With good quality , road net	3/48	0/88	3/36	3/27	9
Having universal credits System In the country banks.	3/41	0/92	3/29	3/23	10

According to the result of table (1), prioritizing the infrastructure of tourism-sport development of mazandaran based on average weigh that was illustrated and in considering second question, and based on average cropped from deduced analysis test of (t) in virtual level ( $p \leq 0/05$ ), we can understand that all factors of infrastructure was bigger than average level and all of them had effect on prioritizing and developing mazandaran province's tourism & sport. In among advertisement and marketing management claimed as an important factor of tourism development in mazandaran.

### Discussion and conclusion

Research finds illustrated that from the professors, managers and expert's point of view in infrastructure factors of tourism-sport

development, the most important factor of tourism development of a country is advertisement and marketing management. Advertisement's aim is to effects changes on look, insight, knowledge and behavior of addressers so, for obtaining this aim, needs new thinking, inventory and professional skill. There for, first step in preparation advertising program, is distinguishing aims. In setting advertisement program, we have to put purposes according to previous decisions on aim of market, market's topic and elements of marketing. Main agent of success in advertisement activities is the content of message and its effectiveness. Wrong information or exaggerated and seduced ones will incline the tourists and even it may cause some civil and legal problem. for contrasting with wide negative advertisement ; inviting analysts , journalists , photographers , TV and radio indexes and indicators , work agency management , tour leaders , famous tourism advertisement agencies to the country can be effective , in order to make acquaintance with facilities and capabilities of tourism industry and using of advertisement in media at unnerve level which is a suggested actions thus , existence of a powerful , cohesive and aware manager in country can be effective for attracting tourists. Consequently, advertismnt and marketting management can be an effective factor to attract sport tourists either by holding miscellaneous and new sport events and acquaintance with tourism marketing strategies in different sports categories. The sport tourism marketing is important because it establishes a better and broader relationship with sport tourists, influences the process of buying decision, and meets their requirements in order to convince them to travel to the country once again. Sport tourism marketing can, also, result in development of sport tourism at the national level regarding to sports potential of the country.

Framework and structural existence in tourism part, is unqualified, in the light of management and execution of policy and strategies of national developing plan. present structural organization is free from the frame of a long term plan that is missing specialized workers and connection between governmental and private parts for easing harmony of tourism development policies and do not have so much effect in rein for cement and structure of governmental and private parts for the purpose of making policies and executing it does not

reflects the wanted and visions of tourism industry .evidently if executing of goals and strategies of tourism development is the case of attention , existence a structure that is qualified will be unavoidable . requirement for a qualified structure in tourism part is to be connected with a long term policy frame and have enough power to reach the necessary sources such as using of cooperation with ministries for supplying infrastructures , statutes and instructions , and easing reaches and like that .

sports infrastructures of a country such as state-of-the-art technologies are very important. because taking advantage of such technologies can reduce the number of errors, especially referee errors, and therefore avoid many injustices and, as a result, the several years of the athletes` efforts would not be futile.

Advanced exercise equipments and facilities, as infrastructural elements, were emphasized by the sport tourists. Today, exercises are done with advanced equipments and the athletes use them to reach a good level of preparation. Accordingly, using these equipments during the tournaments is vital in order to keep athletes in good shape and may protect them against the probable injuries. Also, utilities, facilities and recreational services at an affordable price and the air, road and sea transportation systems are other important infrastructures that play a key role in attracting sport tourists. Using international credit card systems (MasterCard & Visa card) in country`s banks so that the tourists can pay without any need for carrying cash.

concentrating private part`s vulnerability , and also presence of semi privates , compilation codified law in a way that investment of investigators of private part be guaranteed and granting needed authorities in tourism part and creating skilled unions and creating formal harmony among private and governmental parts will cause briskness and flourish in this industry.

Another management-related item is to create special tourist police to maintain their security which is approved by them. In fact, security can assure athletes and they, in turn, can confidently do their activities. Now, psychological charectrisitics and mental prepration are significant factors for the atheletes and any decline in mental prepration may reduce the chance of winning championship.

Accordingly, the absence of security in the host country is a substantial factor in declining the mental status of the athletes.

lack of expert and knowledge among hotels manager and residing centers specially in governmental part , lack of suitable employment right side in the most center of presenting tourism services , lack of organized system for developing training level of workers in this industry , and lack of developed system of human sources in almost all parts and centers , low level of workers skills specially in townships , lack of existence of skill standards , shortage of training-tourism institutes and superior training institutes in this part , training shortage and so on, are some problems of human forces in tourism part. On the other hand we should improve human's relations skill in responsible people in races, for having good encounter with tourists. The findings of this research about the infrastructure factors are in line with research findings of Mahmoudi (2014), Soltan Hosseini (2013), Ghafuri et al. (2008), Giridhar (2007), Honarvar (2005), Kim(2015).

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