

## **The role of cultural and substructure components on decreasing sport tourism in Iran**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The purpose of this study was that the role of Iran' cultural and infrastructure on reduce traveling sports tourism to review. The research method in this study was Descriptive and field. For this purpose, Mahmoodi Yekta and et al' questionnaire (2012) was used. Reliability of questionnaires after a pilot study using Cronbach's alpha test, ( $\alpha=0.85$ ) was obtained. Statistical population of survey is all an active sport tourists from Russia, Turkey, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Greece, Sweden, Canada, Jordan, Kuwait, and India that traveled to Iran for doing sports competition ( $N=132$ ). The sample size was considered equal to the population. Descriptive and inferential statistics methods for data analysis were used. The results showed that according to the mean of tourism components, culture and infrastructure components in order of priority are effective in reducing active sports tourism in Iran. The research findings on the importance of cultural and structural as factors affecting attracting sport tourism have stressed. Thus, it is recommended that sport managers adopted an appropriate strategic planning to increase sport tourist.*

**Keywords:** Sport tourism, Culture and infrastructure components, Sport competition.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism has been one of the new fields studied in different sciences and today it has been received attention from various reasons by many Countries. Attention to tourism is on one side because of economic values and on the other side because of its cultural and social effects [1]. Today tourism industry is one of important source of getting income, and it adjusts among these areas by transferring strongly of buying the urban and industrial areas to less improved areas and changes the local and regional commerce face in attention to its credit value [2].

The Tourism effects are undeniable in improving the people's life quality, getting profit of exchange, Gross National product (GNP). Making work opportunities, the effects between parts and developing the other parts like agricultural and industry, improving and develop ping the substructures, balanced distribution of wealth, making the developing basis in retarded areas, cultural interactions, increasing the groups awareness level, making the peace and strengthening international [3]. The sports tourism is that; traveling for non- commercial reasons in order to watch or take part in sports activities that are far from living area [4]. Akhgar Eslamiye and et al (2012) Found the facilities, management, and other factors as vital factors in forming and choosing how to spend free times by person [5]. Mahmoudi Yekta (2008) found in his research as " finding the attractive factors and preventive for men active sport tourists travelling to Iran" the cultural and substructure works as effective factors to attract and decrease the sports tourism [6]. Honarvar (2002) in his research as "the effective factors in developing tourism from holding international sports events in country with the view of managers and sports assistants and tourism managers" Proceeded in studying and determining the attractive and preventive factors for sports tourists. He found about preventive factors that with the view of managers and sports assistants, no enough time to plan for trip, stressful sports events, unavailable tickets, limited rate for tourist women, religious are the most important preventive factors for tourists in international sports events [7]. Baher (1997) states problems and straitened circumstance of tourism industry in Iran in his research as: lack of suitable advertising for tourism inside and outside of Iran, lack of enough

velocity about tourist's visa and customs, transportation problems, the quantitative and qualitative problems of tourist's settlement places and problems about tourism budget and credit [8]. Salimi (1997) proceeded in his research as "Considering the mental, social and cultural problems of developing tourism in Iran" to the advertising role, tourist's awareness rate about Islamic laws and requirement and their view to Iranian people as problems for tourists traveling to Iran [9]. Moraseli (1995) proceeded in considering and evaluating and evaluation the offer and demand Functions for foreign tourism in Iran. He found that there are many problems in reviving the tourism industry in country and the most important of them are: A) cultural problems: lack of positive education on tourism among people and responsible, uncertainty the tourism policy. B) organizational problems: of single custodian, uncertainty the duty limitation of public and private parts active in tourism industry of the country, and enough disharmony among organizations and ministry assisting in tourism industry of country [10]. Naseri (1996) Found in his research as "identifying the efficient obstacles in developing Tourism industry of country" that disusing of suitable marketing methods, wrong and unreal advertising of Iran, costly travel to Iran, weak transportation system of country, changing the sufficiency of hotels and residential places, lack of residential installation, non – providing suitable services in residential installation, advertising, advertising problems are as important obstacles in developing the tourism industry of country [11]. Shaw and et al (1991) considered in his research the effect of preventive factors in participation rate in sports activities between men and women and regards to their social situation, they concluded that social – constructive obstacles like age, sex, lifestyle, job situation and income don't decrease tourist's participation in sports activities [12]. Um & Crompton (1992) found in considering the role of preventive factors and the facilitators factors in selecting the destination city or country for walking and or parting in event on some tourisms that financial expenses and possibility of death and security danger are the important preventive for trip [13]. Jackson (1993) identified a general pattern about sports tourism preventive in a research about trip preventive on tourists. He declared costs and facilities as important factors [14]. The results of Tapas and et al (2002) research showed that spending much time to other affairs, having not enough time and preferring to other activities for leisure are the most important sports tourism preventives [15]. In this research, the following questions has been tried to be considered:

1. What is the role of Iran' cultural component on decreasing the active sports tourism?
2. What is the role of Iran' substructure component on decreasing the active sports tourism?
3. Is there any different between active sports tourism view about tourism works (cultural and sub structural) according to the age?
4. Is there any different between active sports tourism view about tourism works (cultural and substructure) according to the responsibility?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The method of the research is descriptive which is conducted as a field study. The population of the study consisted of all active sports tourism Man (players, coaches, Supervisors, doctors and their entourage) from Russia, Turkey, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Greece, Sweden, Canada, Jordan, Kuwait, and India that traveled to Iran for doing sports competition. The subjects for participation in badminton, basketball, karate, handball, table tennis, athletics, wrestling and beach volleyball competition in 2012 had entered Iran. The sample size was considered equal to the population (N=132). The data was collected using affective factors on sport Tourism questionnaire developed by Mahmoodi Yekta and et al (2012). This questionnaire measures the factors influencing sports tourism in the two dimensions: cultural dimension (15 questions) and infrastructure dimension (17 questions). The content validity of the questionnaire was approved by five professors of sports management. To calculate the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted whereby a number of 30 questionnaires were distributed among a sample. The results showed a reliability coefficient of  $\alpha=0.85$  for research questionnaire, which indicated the consistency of measurement. As to the statistical measures, descriptive statistics including frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to describe the data. Inferential statistics including T test and F test were used to test the hypotheses. SPSS software (Ver. 13) was used to analyze the data.

## RESULTS

In this section, descriptive characteristics of the questionnaire' questions according to components (Cultural and Infrastructure) are discussed.

As shown in Table1, among the cultural factors, Religious and ideological differences Weighted Average are above average of other factors.

**Table 1. Weighted mean of sample questions related to cultural component**

Questions		Weighted Average
1	Religious and ideological differences	3.72
2	How to engage the audience in the stadiums	3.64
3	Negative attitudes and Inappropriate treatment with tourists	3.61
4	Cover and veil of tourists, especially women tourists	3.62

**Table 2. Weighted mean of sample questions related to infrastructure component**

Questions		Weighted Average
1	Failure to provide adequate welfare facilities and services at the international level	3.66
2	The low quality of competition and team sports	3.56
3	Costs of travel, accommodation and buy souvenirs and handicrafts products	3.55
4	The lack of a standard sports facilities and recreational facilities	3.51
	Poor air transportation system	3.49

As shown in Table2, among the cultural factors, Failure to provide adequate welfare facilities and services at the international level Weighted Average are above average of other factors.

Question 1: what is the role of Iran' cultural component on decreasing the active sports tourism?

**Table3. Results of univariate t test with medium level (M=3) in cultural component**

Statistic Variable	M	SD	t	Sig
Culture	3.66	0.91	3.73	0.001

According to the mean (M=3.66) and significant level (P<0.05) can be expressed that cultural component is involved in decreasing an active sport tourism in Iran.

Question 2: what is the role of Iran' substructure component on decreasing the active sports tourism?

**Table4. Results of univariate t test with medium level (M=3) in Infrastructure component**

Statistic Variable	M	SD	t	Sig
Infrastructure	3.60	0.80	3.83	0.001

According to the mean (M=3.60) and significant level (P<0.05) can be expressed that Infrastructure component is involved in decreasing an active sport tourism in Iran.

Question 3: Is there any different between active sports tourism view about tourism works (cultural and sub structural) according to the age?

**Table5. M values and SD in the components of sport tourism based on Age**

Tourism components	20 – 27 Years		28 – 34 Years		35 – 40 Years		41 and Up Years		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
Infrastructure	13.25	3.57	13.9	4.51	14.8	5.03	11.23	2.28	1.18
Culture	11.11	2.90	11.18	3.18	13.20	5.01	12.34	2.72	1.01

Question 4: Is there any different between active sports tourism view about tourism works (cultural and substructure) according to the responsibility?

**Table6. M values and SD in the components of sport tourism based on Responsibility in Team**

Tourism components	Players		Coaches		Supervisors		doctors and Entourage		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
Infrastructure	13.38	3.73	15.44	4.27	11.77	3.84	11.52	4.01	0.61
Culture	11.04	3.02	12.90	3.43	12.51	3.74	10.51	3.01	0.71

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Findings about cultural works showed that the average of Sports tourists' opinions (3.66) is more than the average level (3). So, if the Culture Factor was weak, it can be a decreasing Factor. The Findings showed that presence of negative view and unsuitable relation of host country with sports tourist can decrease the athletics number and

motivation to compete again. In other words, If the athletics don't see suitable behavior from the host country, the security feeling will be decrease among them and They have no desire to participate in that country. Belief and religious differences of the host country will also be reduction of the Sport tourism, because the belief and religious differences may make harshness in the country and make insecurity feel for the foreign tourists. As there is this subject in Iraq and all international competitions are forbidden, and Pakistan is also among countries that there are a lot of belief and religious differences among its people, for this reason a few competitions are held in this Country. So the presence of belief differences among people may cause war and harshness, insecurity feel may be made in athletics and consequently they don't desire to take part in competitions. Unsuitable relation and audience's quarrelling in stadium can also be a negative factor for sports tourists. Sometimes these kinds of behaviors may be led to harshness and this can make insecurity feel in athletics. This subject is sometimes seen in Football matches that presence of security police of stadiums will partly prevent of this insecurity and harshness. Severity of tourists wear and ceil (specially woman tourists) can also prevent foreign women athletics to compete in matches, because some countries don't believe to veil (hejab), So they declare veil (hejab) keeping as a prevention in taking part in competitions and using of own maximum ability, consequently, their motivation to take part in competition will be decreased. This research Finding is similar to Mahmoudi Yekta' (2008), Honarvar' (2002), Salimi' (1997), Moraseli' (1995), Baher' (1997) Findings. These results indicate that negative cultural factors and tribal and religious bigotries are as an important decreasing factor of sports tourism. Findings on substructures factors showed that the average of Sports tourists' opinions (3.60) is more than medium level (3), So with a view to sports tourism the lack of Suitable sports substructures in host country can prevent of taking part athletes and holding the sports matches in that country. Lack of standard facilities, equipments, and leisure and sports foundation is one of samples that was studied and was known as a decreasing factor. The presence of standard and efficient facilities and equipment makes the athletes don't come out of match form and keep their fitness before beginning the match, so lack of these standard facilities and equipment makes them decrease and maybe will cause their failure in matches. So if the host country has no such facilities, the foreign athletes will not tend to take part to compete in that country. Weakness in aerial and land transportation is on of other prevention that has been confirmed. Traveling by other devices and other ways except aerial way, can make much tiredness for athletes and decrease their power and ability for competing. So lack of these facilities can be prevention in presence of foreign athletes and holding international matches. Not presenting the suitable welfare facilities and services in international level was also one of factors that were studied and sports tourists have also reported it as a preventive factor. Lack of desired and suitable welfare facilities and services causes sports tourists not to have relaxation. How much lack of suitable sleeps and relaxes can have undesirable effect on their ability and energy and causes their failure in competitions. High travel and residence expenses is one of other factors in decreasing sports tourists because high expenses will not lead to any income for the host country (from buying goods by tourists) in addition to increase the host country expenses. Therefore, high expenses not only lead to any income for host country, but also will cause foreign athletes to escape from competition of that country. Low quality competitions and low quality sports teams can also cause to decrease the sports tourists' motivation to take part in that country s competition, because that country isn't professional, and they imagine the competition level low and don't desire to compete in matches. So, it is necessary to lead country sport in different fields, with a basic and fast program towards professionalize for attracting sports tourism and making different international competitions. Findings of present research about substructure factor effect on preventing sports tourists are similar to Mahmoudi Yekta' (2008), Honarvar' (2002) Naseri' (1996), Moraseli' (1995), Baher' (1997), Jackson' (1993), Um & Crampton' (1992) findings, because they have reported the substructure factor as a prevention factor of tourists.

Findings about tourism (cultural and sub structure) works effect based on age variable showed that average opinions of sports tourism between 20 to 35 years is almost some about cultural and substructure works effect in decreasing sports tourism and the average of group 35 to 40 years is bigger than the average of three other groups' opinion about cultural and substructure woks. Finding about tourism (cultural and substructure) works effect based on responsibility variable in team showed that there isn't meaningful difference between sports team players, coaches, supervisors , assistants and doctors average opinions about cultural and substructure works. In other words, sports tourism knows similar both of these works effect and believers each one of them can effect almost similarly on preventing sports tourists. Based on studying the average of four groups, the average of coaches' opinions is the biggest of other groups about cultural and substructure works in decreasing active sports tourism.

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