

## REVIEWING THE SPORT TOURISM, PUSH AND PULL FACTORS IN ZANJAN PROVINCE, IRAN

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### ABSTRACT

*Tourism is one of the important factors in the economy of the countries. Sport and physical activities are considered as the important issues on tourist's attraction. Today, the sport tourism is considered as a new kind of tourism. Culture plays an important role in improving health and economic conditions. Therefore, recognizing the potential of sports tourism considered as one of the priorities of national and international tourism industry. It is important for Zanzan, Iran which has the potential of tourism for the Zanzan province's sport to attract more tourists. In this descriptive cross-sectional study using books and documents related to attempts to introduce tourism potential, sport attraction and push factors for the development of sports tourism industry in Zanzan province, Iran for planning and further investment in this field. To identify the potential of sports tourism, tourists and sports lovers of proper planning can be attracted to the region and control its favorable impact on the economic, cultural and health of our province. The results revealed that Zanzan, Iran has a good potential in the field of sport tourism like maintaining, caving, ecotourism, rock climbing, and snow trekking, climbing and riding.*

**KEYWORDS** Push factors, Sports tourism, Tourism potential, Zanzan province, Iran.

### INTRODUCTION

Traveling and visiting new lands has long been important in the world's cultures and has sometimes been considered sacred. Islamic culture recommended the traveling very attentive (Forghani, 2006). Traveling and tourism have become important recently (Pirouzian, 2001). The tourism industry is considered important all around the world, especially in developing countries which do not have other economic resources such as production or extraction of natural resources. However, this source of income is equal for all countries (Moharam-zade, 2005). Sport is considered as one of the requirements of the contemporary life (Parks et al, 2003) and known as the world's largest social phenomenon (Kasasi, 200). However, sport tourism is as one of the most favorite tourism which is used by people all around the world (Alamdar, 2005). Also, in recent years, the need of people for sport has been increased and holiday travels have a lot of sports fans (Beraz, 2002). Some factors led people tended toward sport tourism such as increasing revenue, reducing working hours and working days, increasing holidays, inactivity, rising living standards, growth and development of communications technology development, development of roads and transportation and the needs of the people of the (Moeain-fard, 2008). At present, many countries around the world are trying in an effort to boost their tourism industry because this industry can be as exercise eminent role as an economic generator and creator of the political, social, cultural and

environmental communities. Today it has become a key instrument for developing countries (Takaliyoun, 2003). According to the WTO prediction, the number of tourists of the world in 2010 were about one milliard and it will changed to 1.6 milliard in 2020, their expenses will be changed to 6.7 percents per year in 2020 and will be reached to \$ 2 trillion (Adabi-firouzjah, 2006). This means that countries especially those with income problems can rely on this industry to get rid of the problems (Journal of Sport for all), hence, according to Vladamirandorf approximately 95 percents of hosting major sporting events have done in advanced countries and the rest 5 percents in developing countries. The benefits of hosting, tourism and income from these events are paid to these countries (Asgarian, 2004). Many factors are involved in the development of tourism in a country, for example Hinch & Higham noted the essential resources for the development of tourism such as exercise, environment, sport facilities, transportation, infrastructure and information services should be aware that the coordinated development an area long considered exercise to boost tourism (Hinch Thomas, 2006). On the other study, Honarvar tried to determine the push factors as festivals, ceremonies, traditional programs, interest in culture, art, etc and also, pull factors such as access to the sea and the beach and asked the host country of the most popular sports etc. Inhibiting factors such as insufficient time to travel planning and job engagement and so on tourism in the country due to hold international sporting events is effective (Honarvar, 2007). So with an overview of research literature in the field of sport tourism in this area, according to new research revealed that, a few studies have been done on this field so that there is no solution for this industry. Since Zanjan province has high potential in touristic attractions and because of the climate and many capacities, this study aimed to investigate the push and attractive factors in the field of winter sports development.

### **Views on sports tourism**

**Gamon and Robinson's views (1997):** They presented two definitions on sport tourism:

**Sport Tourism:** Individuals or groups of people who travel to or reside in a place outside of the life, actively or passively participated in competitive sport or recreation (sport as the first purpose of travel).

**Sport tourism:** people who live outside of their living place and stay there for the competitive or recreational sports activities participated as a secondary objective (Gamon Robinson, 1997)

### **Hall's view (1992)**

Hall did not only noted sports tourism as the main issue raised, but as a tendency of sport tourism, including the "Index events", "fun in the open air" and "tourism related to health and fitness" (Hall, 1992 ).

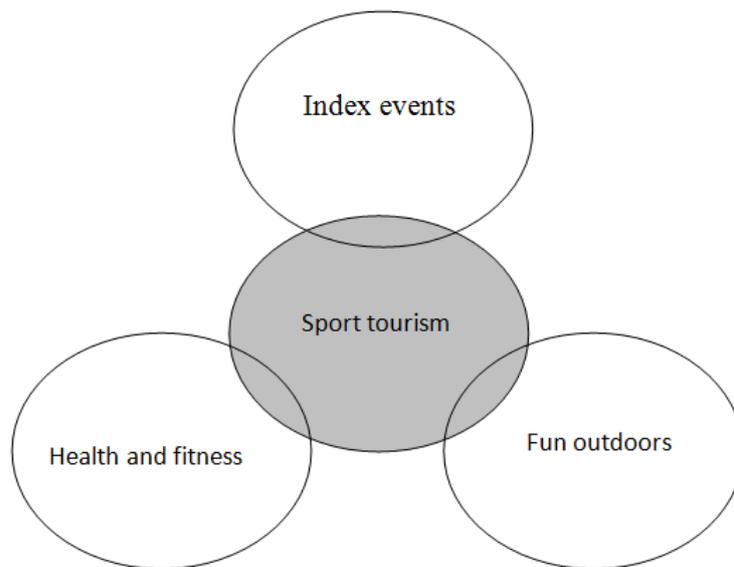


Figure 1. The areas of application related to sport tourism from the perspective of Hall, 1992

#### ***Sport tourism from Gibson's view (1998)***

Gibson (1998) defined sport tourism in the journal of parks and recreation as «travel based on leisure time which people travel to play or watch physical activities on their leisure time or visit the attractions of these activities were temporarily out of their lives. In the general he arranged the sport tourism into three behaviors:

1. Watching (event sport tourism)
2. Participation (active sport tourism)
3. Visiting famous attractions or respecting famous sport attraction (memories of sport tourism) (Gebson, 1998).

#### ***Sport tourism from De Knop and Standeven's view (1998):***

In 1986, in one of the first sport tourism conference which was held in Wingate Institute, De Knop and Standeven presented one of the most effective things about active sports tourists in 1990 and was amended to provide that later.

Astandion and dicanop in 1998 were defined sport tourism as "Traveling for non-commercial purpose (holidays) or commercial (business / business) to participate or watch sports" (Dicanop, 2004). Based on this definition, they have identified eight kinds of sports tourism which is shown in Figure 2

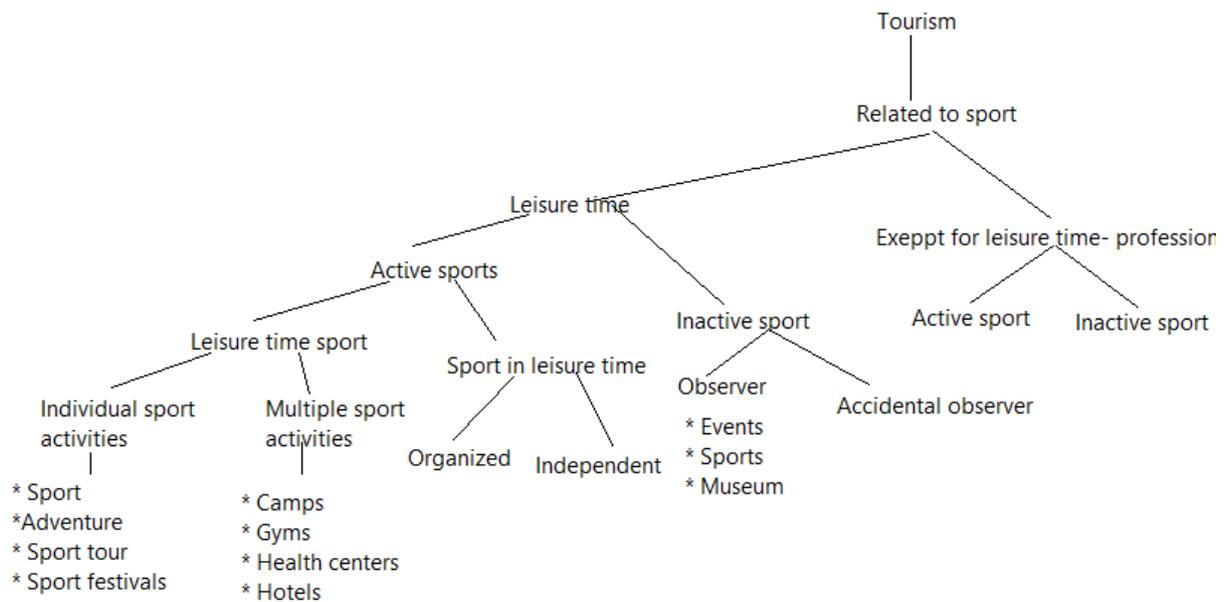


Figure 2. Sport tourism from the perspective of Astandion and Dicanop (1998) (Dicanop, 2004).

As it is evident in this figure, sport tourism is shown from the perspective of Astandion and Dicanop and far-reaching and wide range of human activities on the natural environment. This view may be help the growth of invisible to clarify many aspects of sport tourism based on natural attractions, sport.

#### *Sport tourism from the perspective of Faulkner and Getz (1998)*

Faulkner and Getz (1998) declared that "sports tourism" (tourism, which is as a secondary motivation exercise) is very broad. For example, activities such as walking, recreational activities should not be classified as sport tourism. In the Dictionary of Sociology, fun Thorkildsen defined it as "any activity that performed during the leisure time, either individually or in mass and is free and enjoyable has its own attractions and have not done for rewards». This definition is different from sports entertainment (Getz, 1998). According to Tourism British sports industry, the sports and tourism are distinct. Sports and recreation are in row of sporting events as fun physical activities, adventure and nature tourism (Tabarganji, 2009). In new studies by Getz (2003) this theory has been strengthened as the concept of "sport tourism event at the international level as an important market and was highly desirable".

#### *Walmsley's view on tourism (2008)*

Walmsley stated that from the industry experts' view the awareness of the different sectors of the market infrastructure division's strategy is successful in sports tourism and lack of understanding of the requirements of the lead characters and a good profitability target, despite having the best position to identify and understand the factors that prevent the development.

***Push factors, pull factors of sport tourism***

Pull factors were divided into two groups in a natural and artificial attractions and other studies have been divided into two groups-transferable and non-transferable (Hinch, 2003) in pull features there are many events involved like facilities and special conditions of the region and sporting events. Sports' attractions are as the unique attractions. Uncertain nature of the exercise and expiry led a sporting event as a product of the unique characteristics of sport which added to the attraction of physical activity and are the events regarded as attractive and important source of income for a country or region. It was estimated that about 27 million dollars achieved annually by sporting events also, was reported that two-thirds of adults in the US business income were related to sports events. The attraction of sport was known as an important factor (Gibson, 2004). In addition to the attractiveness of sport, culture, traditions, monuments, weather, condition of housing, food and transportation are other factors which are among the pulling factors (Honarvar et al, 2007).

***Sports tourism attractions of Zanjan, Iran***

Fortunately, in recent years some activities were done by the efforts sports' boards (climbing , alpinism, sailing and skiing on snow) to use the natural proper potential, but because of those involved in amateur sport bodies, FAST demanded actions by athletes were poor. The following has been presented physical attractions of the province along with the description of the potential and actual as 5 and the work done by the relevant sports bodies:

1. Mountaining and climbing
2. Slopes climbing
3. Water sports
4. Winter sports
5. Hunting and fishing

***Hiking and slopes climbing***

They are fun sports in this province due to the high peaks and hills plenty of exercise can attract tourists to the province. Considering the above, some of the high peaks of the province, ancient castles and tombs to remain behind, athletes can climb and walk to the peaks and ranges of interest, the monuments and visit their sport. Below are mentioned some of the areas identified in point: the mountains (Abdal 3099 m), Babagildar (2850 m), Belghis (3332 m), Chal (3050 m), Sender's Fund (3214 m), Ghobe dagh (3205 m. ), Lal Kahn (3050 m), Mount Teke ghisi (2920 meters), Yanbelagh (2972 m), Daghi (2861 m), Sandan dagh (2850 meters), Argon (2924 m), Janghourtaran (2850 m), Khatoon hole (2993 m), Chenobashi (2950 m) and white (2933 meters) are the other mountains in the province of Zanjan.

***Water sports***

Zanjan, Iran has many lakes due to high altitude above the sea level and away from free water and closed water bodies, no major sources of water such as rivers, lakes and coastal wetlands and water bodies, but small in that the biological value of ecosystems have developed valuable. The

most important lakes and ponds of this province are Shurgol-khandaghlou lake, Abbandan Homayoun, Saremasaghlou lake water, Abbandan Gharechian lake and Ghameshlou congestion. Sadegavazng, Hasan Abdal, Sadetahm river, Sadegolabrou, Kinevarz and Ghezoulouzan river which provide better conditions for athletes interested in water sports. Rowing Board of the province started its work in the spring of 2004 to determine the feasibility of the potential provinces and now on water bodies Gavazng and reservoir near Zanjan. In this river Kanopolo, kayaks, Roying are exercised and they are sometimes for the public to become familiar and water sports in the province.

### ***Winter sports***

Because of the number of tourists entering the province decrease in the winter, facilities in the winter sports of the province will help to attract tourists. Climbing is one of the prominent features of this province which is located in 24 kilometers of Zanjan-Bijar road and it has been established the mountains with the height of 2150 and ski resort area of 22 hectares with a slope of 22 degrees.

### ***Hunting and fishing***

Today, in the world with proper planning of every opportunity to attract tourists used with different species of birds such as partridges and quails province and animals such as deer hunting halal meat, rabbit, goat, wild etc. Haunting plains of Shreyn, Sadtahm and Ghezoulouzan, trout and other fish types can be one of the poles of fishing and hunting in the area for tourists (tourism master plan for Zanjan province).

### ***Recognition of tourism flows of the Province***

Tourism Master Plan in 2012 was decreased according to the latest statistics, the number of incoming foreign tourists to the province in 2013 than in 2011, 28 percents in this year the number of domestic tourists decreased 7.5 percent. According to the statistics, Iran Tourism and Touring in 1999 and 2000 had the maximum number of domestic tourists in the summer, particularly in August and foreign tourists prefer to travel to Tehran, Iran in the summer and early fall than to travel to Zanjan, Iran . According to the Statistics Department of Customs Branch, in 2000, the number of foreign tourists entering the province was estimated 354,912 people while this number of foreign tourists staying in accommodations in the province had been estimated that 18,196 people in this year showed that only 1.5% foreign tourists have traveled to the settlements of the province and the rest of them were tourists.

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