

Urban Tourism Spaces Management; with an Emphasis on Historical Attractions of Isfahan

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ABSTRACT

Tourism development as a cultural phenomenon develops the cultural exchange opportunities between tourists and host community. Form, structure and construction of public spaces and so on are elements which shape the historical identity of cities and the construction of these buildings and many other urban constructions make urban areas more appealing. Cultural tourism is a move from people to visit cultural attractions with the aim to obtain new information and experience in order to satisfy the cultural needs. Isfahan can be considered as one of the world's major cities and a unique exception due to the body of the city which can be regarded as a valuable solid unit carrying specific thinking and viewpoints. Isfahan is not only a crystallization of a worldview but because of its spatial variation, it is one of the most unique cities with dozens of historical, cultural, religious, and natural attractions. The current attempt is applied developmental. For the cultural- historical tourism analysis of Isfahan, we provided indices in five dimensions of economic, competitive, socio-cultural, facilities and services and attraction. The defined standards and criteria were implemented and evaluated in the AHP model. Results showed that Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) has the first rank and Hasht Behesht (the palace of eight paradises) has the second rank in the historical attractions of Isfahan. Also, based on paired comparisons between criteria, social-cultural criteria and attractions have got the highest priority; thus, they are influential in historical-cultural tourism development.

KEY WORDS: cultural tourism, historical attractions, Isfahan, AHP

INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry, in many countries, is a manifestation of the cultural identity of a country and is an important source of revenue. The development of the industry is very important for developing countries which face problems such as unemployment, limited financial resources, and the mono-cultural economy (Sabaghkermani and Amirian, 2000: 58).

Intercultural communication and the transmission of messages between cultures have a large impact on the individual's cognitive ability and his/her behavior and facilitate cross-cultural interactions in the future. Intercultural communication leads to broader interactions with less sensitivity. As a result of such interactions, tastes, desires, aspirations and expectations of people in different cultures have come closer together and relationships of subcultures and mass culture with each other are reinforced. A phenomenon such as tourism plays an important role in creating this situation and strengthening the common characteristics among people (Maghsoodi, 2009, p. 103). The development of tourism as a cultural phenomenon provides ample opportunities for cultural exchange between tourists and the host community; on this basis, they can understand each other better, and respect each other's culture more (Turner, 1999, 95).

The population and local residents can enjoy cultural benefits of tourism development in two ways: Firstly, tourism introduces the culture of the host community to other communities and cultures; and secondly, tourism provides an opportunity for residents to offer their culture directly, without intermediaries and in its actual form to their fans; this will especially foster pride and solidarity of the host community and increase their tolerance toward other cultures (Richards, 2000, p. 18). Introducing one's culture to others removes any alloy or incorrect preconceptions about the culture of the host community and tourists can see the real culture of their hosts. In addition, guests can identify and introduce some cultural traits of the host community that have been less attended before (Schneider and Barsoux, 2000, p.16). If local residents know that tourists have paid travel expenses for visiting cultural sites and attractions of the area, they would feel proud of what they have and try to preserve the language, customs, traditions, and primarily their historical and cultural background (Kazemi, 2002, p. 45). Thus, on the one hand, culture acts as a catalyst in the development of tourism and on the other hand, tourism will sustain the society's culture (Kazemi, 2006, p. 107).

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As the name cultural tourism suggests, in its most comprehensive definition it includes moral and material or spiritual culture; it is considered as the foundation of tourism programming. In the sense that on the one hand, efforts are made to attract cultural tourists and on the other hand, based on a comparative historical look, the society's material and spiritual culture is seen as the fundamental axis of tourism. In other words, three levels of macro, middle and micro come together in the discussion of cultural tourism (Karoobi, 2008, p.321). One of the incentives that attracts tourists to the city is memorial and historical attractions, especially for the old towns. Memorial and historical attractions in the city are caused by many different incentives. Some attractions are constructed to remind an important event or occasion or as a reminder of an important era in the history of the cities. However, the collection of actions performed for urban identity is subject to numerous factors. The most important factor, from the dimension of tourism applications, is the built component of urban identity from different historical periods. Instances such as the city image, the city structure, and the construction of public spaces, palaces, buildings and neighborhoods are the constituent parts of the historic identity of cities (Behzadfar, 2007: 58). Construction of monuments, squares, streets, bridges, caravanserais, holy places, mosques, churches and temples, markets, water reservoir, windward and many other urban constructions are among the measures that cause greater attractiveness for the cities (Rahnamaee, 2011: 41).

1.1. Research background

Cultural tourism in general and historical tourism in particular are among the important issues in tourism industry that were quite neglected in the previous attempts and in a country like Iran, which is the cradle of civilization with a well-recorded history, this is a good area of study. Karoobi (2005), in a study entitled "Investigating the role of folklore in the development of tourism in Iran" regards appropriate cultural encounters and reliance on specific cultural relations, especially Folklore, the most effective resources to attract tourists. Gharakhloo, and Shabanifard (2007) in another investigative attempt entitled "Job satisfaction of employees of Hajj and Pilgrimage Organization of Tehran city and its relation to cultural tourism" argue for the significance of studying human behavior in the workplace due to its importance compared to other resources within the organization and they conclude that job satisfaction can be regarded as one of the characteristics of behavior assessment in an organization and one of the factors that can check the status of an organization. Taghvaei, Mousavi, and Gholami Bimorgh (2010) in a study entitled "Analysis of the development of religious tourism" assess tourist powers of Noorabad mamasani and investigate its capabilities and limitations. Saei and Naeiji (2011) in another attempt entitled "Sociological analysis of attracting cultural tourism in Iran" believe that despite its numerous historical prospects with plenty of cultural attractions, Iran has failed to attract cultural tourists. Ghadiri Masoom et al. (2011) in a study entitled "Limited regional integration and cooperation" consider a strategy for the development of cultural tourism, international and domestic tourism as the most important means of cultural exchange that creates a personal experience, not only of what remains of the past, but from the contemporary life and community. This study differs from the previous attempts in that it has special attention to the development of cultural tourism, especially historical tourism, in Isfahan city that has considerable powers in this regard; for this purpose, Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan), Hasht Behesht, 33 pol bridge (the bridge of 33 arches), Khaju bridge and Folad takht were evaluated and assessed.

2. Theoretical background

Theories of tourism can be divided into three classes based on stimuli and incentives to attract: The first category includes those theories that refer to things in individuals themselves and make people travel to certain destinations; these factors are mainly psychological. The second category consists of theories that point to factors that are in the origin and make individuals travel to a particular destination. And the third category refers to motivation and factors in the destination that make the people travel to that certain destination, such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Martin Barber's Theory of absorption (Saei and Naeiji, 2011, 179).

Maslow's theory is one of the simplest models in explaining human motivation. Maslow has chosen a hierarchy that giving a list of human values and ranking them says that basic human needs starts with the low rank and goes to the top of the pyramid. Maslow's classification is as follows: a) Physiological needs which are the most basic needs such as food, water, air, rest and exercise; b) Safety requirements, including the need for security, the desire to get rid of physical and mental pressure and protect current and future threats; c) Social needs which include the establishment of friendship, love and a sense of belonging and acceptance in a social environment; d) Esteem and the need to be respected which is a person's desire to have a positive image of themselves and the focus is on getting recognition, respect and praise from others and e) The need for self-actualization or self-esteem need which enables individuals to actualize their talents (Singer, 1990, 445).

Barber (1970) refers to the three levels of interaction with others; in his view, individuals interacting with others enter into three levels of relationship: the relationship between me and he/she, the relationship between me and you

and the relationship between me and you. In Barber's view, when the tourist is interacting with the host, if the proper way is taken, the best results can be achieved. Avoiding having object-oriented view toward tourism is one of the crucial points in such interactions. Here, teaching the correct attitude towards the relationship between you and me is one of the basic steps in improving relations between tourists and the host (Keller, 2000, 61).

Cultures could affect attracting tourists in many different ways. Cultural elements can be considered both as a barrier to attract tourists and can play a positive role and be progressive in tourism and are suitable for the development and improvement of tourism attraction. The original and most important travel motives is culture. Tourism in any form brings cultural impact on the visitor and the host. Since tourism more than anything is a socio-cultural phenomenon, it should be free from economic thought to be in a larger system. Culture with a holistic orientation and perspective is an appropriate context for studying tourism (Ja'fari, 2000, 41).

2.1. Definitions and Concepts

Tourism is a collection of phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction of tourists, investors, governments and the host communities, universities and NGOs in the process of absorption, transport, reception and control of drawing tourists and other visitors (Weaver and Oppermann, 2000: 3).

However, the tourism can be seen as an industry (Or a set of related industries), it also consists of a set of complex social phenomena (Burns, 2006, 63). Tourism is one the largest, broadest and fastest growing industries in the world which is an important source of revenue, employment and investment in many countries. However, its rapid development has harmful effects on the environment in many parts of the world (Filipovic, 2007, 44). Tourism is one of the common tools to stimulate crisis economies and promoting the development level through businesses and assets that can be nurtured. Tourism experiences are different. Part of it is derived from the various tourism forms and part due to the different strengths of the destination to attract tourists and provide their needs (Ngamsomsuke, Hwang and Huang, 2011, 516). Cultural tourism is defined in two dimensions. In the conceptual terms, cultural tourism is defined as people's move toward cultural attractions and their separation from the usual place of residence with the intent of gaining new knowledge and experience to satisfy the cultural needs. In technical terms, cultural tourism is defined as human movement toward specific cultural attractions such as heritage sites, aesthetic and cultural symbols, arts and theater which are outside the usual place of residence (Bachleitner, 1999, 201).

3. Research scope

Isfahan can be considered as one of the world's major cities and a unique exception due to the body of the city which can be regarded as a valuable solid unit carrying specific thinking and viewpoints. In other words, in famous cities, it may be a building or a complex that follows such a concept, while in Isfahan, all the city carries such a philosophical concept. In general, it can be said that Isfahan is not only a crystallization of a worldview but because of its spatial variation, with so many minarets, pigeon tower, religious monuments such as churches, mosques, markets and mansions and gardens is one of the most unique cities (Ramesht, 1995, 18). Cultural and historical attractions of the city evaluated in this study include Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan), Hasht Behesht, 33 Pol Bridge, Khaju Bridge and Folad takht.

3.1. Methodology

The current attempt is applied developmental and the information was collected in two ways- field and library method. So that the library method was used to assess perspectives and theoretical approaches relevant to cultural-historical tourism as well as the evaluation criteria. In the field method, data were collected based on field surveys in the form of questionnaires and observations. For the cultural- historical tourism evaluation of Isfahan, indices in five dimensions of economic, competitive, socio-cultural, facilities and services and attraction were provided and according to the determined indices, the questionnaire was designed and the data were collected. The defined criteria and sub-criteria were implemented in the AHP model and evaluated based on multiple criteria. The evaluation criteria for the assessment of cultural-historical tourism of Isfahan are presented in Table (1).

Table 1 - Criteria and sub-criteria of evaluation of cultural tourism in Isfahan

| facilities and services | Proximity to tourist accommodation, proximity to business centers, access to public transportation, land use change, development of infrastructure services |
|-------------------------|--|
| socio-cultural | Indigenous hospitality, society's culture being consistent with attractions, the security of enhancing people's participation in management, increasing cultural diversity, providing opportunities for cultural exchanges |
| competitive | Availability, advertising attractions, proximity to nearby attractions |
| economic | Improving the quantity and quality of handicrafts, raising the quality level of welfare, increasing land prices, increasing revenue, creating jobs |
| attraction | Importance of attraction, retention rates of attraction, uniqueness of attractions |

4. Data analysis

Cultural-historical tourism assessment process of Isfahan in AHP model is as follows:

- Drawing the hierarchy and encoding parameters;
- Assessment of the main criteria in the model;
- Assessment of the sub-criteria of each criteria;
- Determining the importance of criteria and sub-criteria;
- Determining the ultimate significance of the main criteria and prioritizing them.

Drawing the hierarchy of cultural-historical tourism of Isfahan

Forming a hierarchy is the first step in the evaluation process and goal setting stands at the top and criteria and sub-criteria lies at the bottom of the hierarchy. To facilitate the process of evaluating cultural- historical tourism, the criteria and sub-criteria were encoded. The formed hierarchy and the encoding of criteria and sub-criteria for evaluating cultural- historical tourism in the collection of historical tourism of Isfahan in the AHP model are delineated in Table 2 and Figure 1.

Table 2 - Coding criteria and sub-criteria of cultural - historical tourism of Isfahan

| Afacilities and services A | | socio-cultural B | | Competitive C | | Economic D | | attraction E | |
|--|----|--|----|---------------------------------|----|---|----|-------------------------------|----|
| Sub-criteria | | Sub-criteria | | Sub-criteria | | Sub-criteria | | Sub-criteria | |
| Code | | Code | | Code | | Code | | Code | |
| Proximity to tourist accommodation | A1 | Indigenous hospitality | B1 | proximity to nearby attractions | C1 | creating jobs | D1 | uniqueness of attractions | E1 |
| proximity to business centers | A2 | society's culture being consistent with attractions | B2 | advertising attractions | C2 | increasing revenue | D2 | retention rates of attraction | E2 |
| access to public transportation | A3 | the security of enhancing people's participation in management | B3 | Availability | - | increasing land prices | D3 | Importance of attraction | E3 |
| land use change | A4 | increasing cultural diversity | B4 | - | - | raising the quality level of welfare | D4 | - | - |
| development of infrastructure services | A5 | providing opportunities for cultural exchanges | B5 | - | - | Improving the quantity and quality of handicrafts | D5 | - | - |

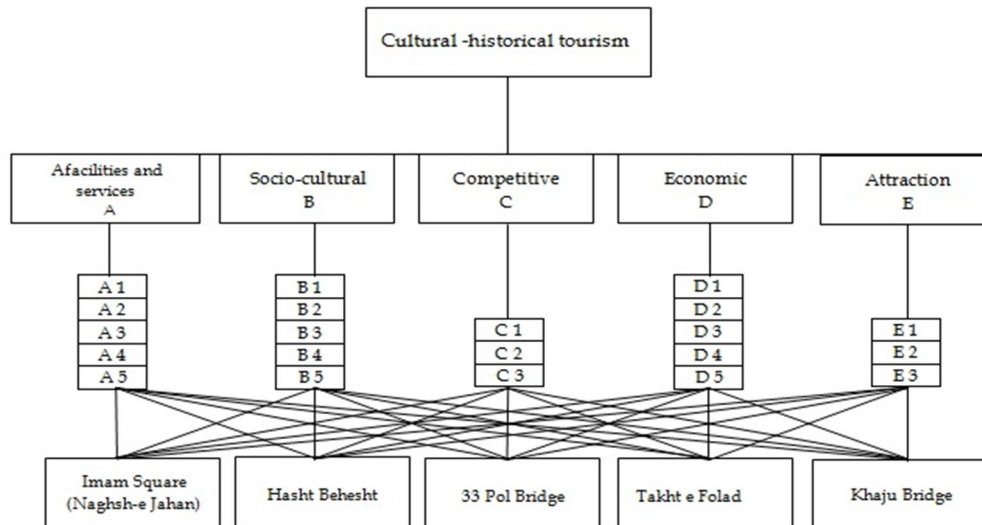


Figure 2- the hierarchy diagram of cultural - historical tourism of Isfahan

- Evaluating the main criteria

In this study, for the purpose of ranking cultural- historical tourism attractions of Isfahan, Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan), Hasht Behesht, 33 Pol Bridge, Khaju Bridge and Takht e Folad were firstly selected.

Then, the effective criteria were reviewed based on the Delphi method and five criteria were specified (Table 1).

After determining the main criteria for evaluating and ranking, each criterion is given a quantity degree in the range of 1-5 based on the quality indicator of each criterion. So that the numerical value of 1 indicates poor conditions and the numerical value of 5 indicates good conditions of the criterion and its effective role. Numerical values in the intermediate show moderate conditions for the criterion. After setting the quantity degrees of indices using Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), decisions were taken with regard to weighting the ranking methods. In order to determine the weights of criteria and indicators, the Shannon entropy weighting method was used. After determining the decision matrix containing the options and decision criteria according to valuating of 1-5 based on experts' opinion, the elements of the decision matrix were completed (Table 3). After setting the decision matrix, in order to calculate the weight matrix, the weight of each row and column of the matrix was calculated using Equation 1 and finally based on Equation 2, the uncertainty degree of (E), the weight of each index was calculated (Table 4).

Table 3- the decision matrix resulted from scoring

| | facilities and services | socio-cultural | competitive | economic | attraction |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| Hasht Behesht | 4 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3 |
| Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Khaju Bridge | 2.5 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3.5 |
| Takht e Folad | 4 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 |
| 33 pol bridge | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 4 |

Equation 1:

$$P_{ij} = \frac{a_{ij}}{\sum_{i=1}^n a_{ij}}$$

Equation 2:

$$E_j = -k \sum [P_{ij} \ln P_{ij}]$$

$$k = \frac{1}{\ln(m)} \quad (m = \text{number of zones})$$

Table 4- the uncertainty degree of Shannon original relation

| Results obtained from Shannon formula | facilities and services | socio-cultural | competitive | economic | attraction |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| E | 1 | 0.9 | 0.962 | 0.933 | 0.975 |

Also, by giving questionnaires to expert people, the possible values of the noted parameters were measured which resulted to the outcomes of the row λ_i in Table 5 (Total value of these indices is equal to the value of 1). The results of the entropy calculation (W_i) suggest that considering the noted attractions and the assigned importance, the most important indicators were related to socio-cultural and attraction issues and facilities and services and competitive factors are the least important indicators. Thus, since the socio-cultural factors and the attraction are the most important factors of the development of cultural - historical tourism of Isfahan, by giving importance to these two indices we would face with less uncertainty and thus would lower the risk in decision-making (Table 5).

Table 5- a comparison of cultural - historical tourism criteria in Shannon entropy

| Shannon entropy indicator | facilities and services | socio-cultural | competitive | economic | attraction |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| λ_i | 0.15 | 0.25 | 0.1 | 0.15 | 0.1 |
| W_i | 0 | 0.242 | 0.0168 | 0.061 | 0.0915 |
| $\lambda_i * W_i$ | 0 | 0.0605 | 0.00168 | 0.00195 | 0.00915 |

Then, by using analytical hierarchy process, paired comparisons of cultural - historical tourism criteria options and priority and ranking of each attraction were performed. Paired comparisons of indices were performed based on the range of scores 1-9, 1 indicating the least importance in comparison to other criteria and 9 indicating the most important criteria. The between numbers (the intermediate conditions and score of 5) indicate the equality of importance of the two options. Like before, using entropy weights, paired comparisons and weight matrix of comparisons, the criteria were compared (Table 6). Also, after paired comparisons, comparisons of cultural

attractions were separately performed based on cultural - historical criteria. As an illustration, the weight matrix of socio-cultural criteria is presented in Table 7.

Table 6- Paired comparison of cultural – historical tourism criteria based on AHP model

| Criteria | facilities and services | socio-cultural | competitive | economic | attraction |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------|
| facilities and services | 1 | 5 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 1 |
| socio-cultural | 0.2 | 1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.2 |
| Competitive | 5 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Economic | 5 | 10 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Attraction | 1 | 5 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 1 |
| Sum | 12.2 | 31 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 12.2 |

After the calculation of paired comparisons and attraction options, based on the results of AHP, attractions were analyzed, selected and ranked.

Table 7- The weighted matrix of Socio-cultural factor

| Socio-cultural factor | Hasht Behesht | Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) | Khaju Bridge | Takht e Folad | 33 pol bridge | Average |
|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------|
| Hasht Behesht | 0.877 | 0.37 | 0.43 | 0.43 | 0.37 | 0.496 |
| Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) | 0.877 | 0.37 | 0.43 | 0.43 | 0.37 | 0.496 |
| Khaju Bridge | 0.0175 | 0.037 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.037 | 0.0355 |
| Takht e Folad | 0.0175 | 0.037 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.037 | 0.0355 |
| 33 pol bridge | 0.088 | 0.185 | 0.043 | 0.043 | 0.0185 | 0.108 |

The results of Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) Method are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 - Matrix of AHP paired comparisons to determine the final priority

| | facilities and services | socio-cultural | competitive | economic | attraction | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|----------|------------|--------|--------|
| Hasht Behesht | 0.2 | 0.496 | 0.0552 | 0.394 | 0.238 | 0.0622 | |
| Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) | 0.2 | 0.496 | 0.314 | 0.394 | 0.347 | 0.0192 | 0.2043 |
| Khaju Bridge | 0.2 | 0.0355 | 0.324 | 0.058 | 0.238 | 0.2631 | 0.3315 |
| Takht e Folad | 0.2 | 0.0355 | 0.0522 | 0.058 | 0.238 | 0.2631 | 0.1557 |
| 33 pol bridge | 0.2 | 0.108 | 0.152 | 0.294 | 0.238 | 0.0622 | 0.1105 |
| | | | | | | 0.2631 | 0.1644 |

| priorities of historical and cultural attractions in AHP model | 1 st rank | 2 nd rank | 3 rd rank | 4 th rank | 5 th rank |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) | Hasht Behesht | 33 pol bridge | Khaju Bridge | Takht e Folad |

Results of the AHP show that Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) has the first rank in comparison to other historical tourism attractions of Isfahan and Hasht Behesht (the palace of eight paradises) has the second rank in the historical attractions of Isfahan. Also, based on paired comparisons between historical-cultural tourism criteria with the AHP model, it was found that socio-cultural and attractions criteria have got the highest priority; thus, they are influential in historical-cultural tourism development. These results partially confirm the results obtained from entropy. Overall, the combined results point to the significance of the socio-cultural, attractiveness, economic, competitive and facilities and services criteria in the historical development of tourism.

5. Conclusion

Tourism in many countries it is a symbol of cultural identity and an important source of revenue. Development of this industry for developing countries which have problems such as unemployment, limited financial resources and are facing mono-cultural economy is very important. One of the incentives that attract tourists to the city is the memorial and historical attractions of the city. Instances such as the city image, the city structure, and the construction of public spaces, palaces, buildings and neighborhoods are the constituent parts of the historic identity of cities. Construction of monuments, squares, streets, bridges, caravanserais, holy places, mosques, churches and temples, markets, water reservoir, windward and many other urban constructions are among the measures that cause

greater attractiveness for the cities. Isfahan can be considered as one of the world's major cities and a unique exception due to the body of the city which can be regarded as a valuable solid unit carrying specific thinking and viewpoints. In other words, in famous cities, it may be a building or a complex that follows such a concept, while in Isfahan, all the city carries such a philosophical concept. Isfahan is not only a crystallization of a worldview but because of its spatial variation, with so many minarets, pigeon tower, religious monuments such as churches, mosques, markets and mansions and gardens is one of the most unique cities. The current attempt is applied developmental. For the cultural- historical tourism analysis of Isfahan, we provided indices in five dimensions of economic, competitive, socio-cultural, facilities and services and attraction. According to the determined criteria, the questionnaire was designed and the data were collected. The defined criteria and sub-criteria were implemented and evaluated in the AHP model. Comparison of attractions based on defined criteria for measuring cultural-historical tourism of Isfahan and its results are presented in Table (9).

Table 9 – Comparison of ratings of cultural- historical attractions of Isfahan

| | Criteria | economic | Competitive | Socio-cultural | Facilities and services | attraction |
|------------------------------|--------------|--|--------------|--|---|--|
| Historical Attractions | Sub-criteria | increasing revenue creating jobs increasing land prices Improving the quantity and quality of handicrafts raising the quality level of welfare proximity to nearby attractions advertising attractions | Availability | Indigenous hospitality providing opportunities for cultural exchanges increasing cultural diversity society's culture being the security of enhancing people's participation in | Proximity to tourist development of infrastructure services land use change proximity to business centers access to public transportation | uniqueness of attractions retention rates of attraction Importance of attraction |
| Hasht Behesht | | 0.394 | 0.0522 | 0.496 | 0.2 | 0.238 |
| Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) | | 0.394 | 0.314 | 0.496 | 0.2 | 0.347 |
| Khaju bridge | | 0.058 | 0.324 | 0.0355 | 0.2 | 0.238 |
| Takht e Folad | | 0.058 | 0.0522 | 0.0355 | 0.2 | 0.238 |
| 33 pol bridge | | 0.294 | 0.152 | 0.108 | 0.2 | 0.238 |

- With regard to economic sub-criteria, Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) and Hasht Behesht are more superior to other attractions of the city; this is due to the their state of being in cultural and business centers and their historical importance in the city;

- With regard to competitive sub-criteria, Khaju bridge and 33 pol bridge are more superior to other attractions of the city due to their placement which is in the city framework and their being in the commercial center;

- With regard to socio-cultural sub-criteria, Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan), Hasht Behesht and Folad takht have the highest ranks; important elements surrounding Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan)- Imam mosque, Ali Qapou palace and Sheykh Lotfolah Mosque because of advertising in the national and international levels are highly important. Also, Folad takht is particularly important for its fans because of its religious and historical values.

- With regard to facilities and services sub-criteria, Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan) and Hasht Behesht because of their proximity to most tourist attractions and having tourist accommodation with different service levels and business centers, providing services to tourists, and the ease of access to most urban areas have a higher priority

- With regard to attraction sub-criteria, Imam Square (Naghsh-e Jahan), Hasht Behesht followed by 33 Pol Bridge, Khaju bridge and Folad takht due to specific historical - cultural and architectural style and construction are of paramount importance.

Overall planning should be conducted based on priorities to attract tourists to cultural- historical attractions and there should be an enhancement in facilities and attractions that have lower priority. Moreover, conditions and appropriate schedule for visiting attractions of high level, while maintaining the current condition and strengthening the future should be considered.

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