

## **Importance of Urban Tourism Planning in Tehran with Economic Approach**

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### **Abstract**

In world economic process, tourism plays a critical role and is deemed as a main element of development. One of mostly-used types of tourism is the urban tourism as the beginning of development of this industry, and attracts many tourists per year. This paper studies the urban tourism importance, then the role of urban tourism planning in metropolitan Tehran. The main purpose of this research is the analysis and recognition of position of tourism industry in economic growth and income resources of Tehran. The current research is practical in goal, and descriptive- inferential in the research performance methodology, and the data was collected using the documentary and questionnaire method. Statistical population of this research includes Tehran inhabitants among whom the researcher- organized questionnaire was distributed and collected. Using Cochran Formula, 384 people was chosen as sample of statistical population, and data was analyzed and the statistical tests were used by applying SPSS software. The results indicated that planning for attraction of more tourists and increase of their duration can be effective on economic development of Tehran. In this research, tourism industry includes two important factors, infrastructures and advertisement, which shall be considered as main priority and seriously pursued in Tehran tourism planning.

**Keywords:** Planning, Tehran, Urban Tourism, Economic Development

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### **Introduction**

Today, tourism development and promotion is widely accepted, especially in developing countries, and is on the government's agenda. However, tourism development can play a major role in national and regional development of Iran as an alternative to the oil-dependent economy. In developing countries, such as Iran, we need to utilize all the capacities and amenities in order to establish steady and holistic development as well as to replace new sources of income instead of oil (Khavarian Garmsir et al., 2013). The great impact of tourism on economic development can be noted in many aspects. Tourism, while creating a variety of activities in the community, has stimulated mobility in other sectors of the economy and can also have a positive impact on the currency balance (Jeffries, 2011). Tourism industry is one of the most important economic sectors in competition with other commercial products of each country and has a special place as one of the sources of income and the most extensive service industry in the world (Razvani et al., 1396). Tourism is a complex and contradictory phenomenon and a money-making industry which balances economic development at the regional level, establishes a fair distribution of income and has central role in the creation of direct and secondary income-generating jobs and sources (Etemadi Nia and Moslehi, 2012). The industry is still a new activity for many countries with little or no experience developing this sector of the economy. At the present time, tourism is the third largest economic industry in the world (Oila et al., 2012). Urban tourism has often received much attention in order to improve the quality of life in local communities and has become increasingly important in the process of globalization (Koushkhani et al., 2014). Understanding the relationship between tourism growth and its role in the economic and environmental development of the host regions needs further investigation. Tehran is one of the tourist areas of Iran which has welcomed a large number of domestic and foreign tourists in recent years. Therefore, proper and scientific planning in the tourism industry of this city can make it one of the most important tourist centers. On the other hand, in order to realize its economic potential, each city needs to provide specific city infrastructure and urban services. The lack of adequate revenue and financial resources and the excessive reliance of municipalities on the unstable revenues of

the municipality has engulfed citizens and city managers and has attracted a great deal of attention from local and foreign thinkers, managers and researchers. Surveys show that the unstable sources of revenue for the municipality of Tehran include: revenues earned from urban crime and construction violations, tolls, construction licenses, and congestion concessions (Danesh Jafari et al., 2014). In a general segmentation, the municipality's revenue sources can be divided into two general groups of internal and external. Internal revenue sources include two groups of sources of tax or non-tax revenue. Renovation duties, property tax and car tax are sources of tax revenue and revenues from the sale of services and penalties are examples of non-tax revenues. Sources of foreign income include two groups of government grants and borrowing. These sources of income are revenues received outside the municipality (Sharzeey & Majed, 2011). The municipality's great reliance on unstable incomes causes the city to experience major problems in all its dimensions, including the physical form and landscape of the city, resulting in a decline in quality of urban life. Therefore, focusing on sustainable income sources will reduce the consequences. Municipal revenue sources must be sustainable and not be affected by shocks, crises, changes in laws and regulations and economic fluctuations in order to main the first characteristic of sustainability. Tourism is somewhat more sustainable than the municipality's current sources of income (Nourbakhsh, Akbarpour 2010). Since Tehran has been the political, social and economic center of Iran, especially in the past few decades, it is faced with many challenges, especially in the social structure, due to the growing population trend. However, this city center, with its remarkable historical background, has various natural and historical potentials and attractions (Bouzari et al., 2013). Many studies have been done on the role of urban tourism in the urban economy, all of which agree on the fact that tourism income is one of the benefits of tourism in metropolises. Tehran has significant tourism resources and opportunities but lacks coherent and efficient management that can utilize this position for economic development and attraction with sound policy, planning and oversight. Valuable historical attractions such as the Golestan, Saadabad and Niavaran palaces, and natural attractions such as Tochal and Kolkata resorts, Farahzad, Chitgar Lake, attractive and

beautiful parks of Eram, Jamshidieh, Mellat, Pardisan, Laleh and dozens of other gardens and commercial attractions such as the Old Bazaar of Tehran and shopping centers and religious attractions such as the shrines of Imamzadeh Saleh and Hazrat Abdul Azim Hassani alongside with therapeutic attractions, sports and important scientific, cultural, social and political events are special features that can play an important role in the development of tourism in Tehran. However, little has been done so far to make the most of these capabilities. Due to the capacities of this metropolis, with properly planned and scientifically managed urban tourism, Tehran will become one of the most important tourism hubs of the world and as a result, will attain economic growth and vast financial resources, and will enjoy job opportunities and a rise in the income level of citizens (Author's Comment, 2019). The present study intends to underline the importance of planning and point out its effects on the economic development of the city of Tehran and also propose some suggestions in this regard. The main question that this study seeks to answer is whether planning for tourism development in Tehran can lead to economic growth of this city or not.

#### **Research background**

Research have been conducted on the role of urban tourism in economic development, income generation and employment by local and foreign researchers whose results will be briefly mentioned here. In their research, Obeidi Zadegan and Haji Lou (2016) stated that each city needs to provide urban infrastructure and services in order to realize its economic needs. Revenues made by the municipalities is one of the things that has a major impact on providing services to citizens. The municipality's reliance on unstable incomes causes the city to face major problems in all its dimensions, including urban landscape, and consequently, to reduce the quality of urban life. Hatami Nejad and Sharifi (2015) conducted their research with the aim of examining the positive effects of urban tourism on four variables of sustainable urban development (social sustainability, physical sustainability, environmental sustainability and economic sustainability). The results of statistical tests used in this study indicate that urban tourism in Sanandaj has been able to effectively increase the sustainability of the city of Sanandaj and has the most impact on sustainable economic development. In his research aimed at analyzing the role of tourism on

the citizens' quality of life, Mohammad Pour jaberi (2014) while emphasizing on the subjective indicators, declared that urban tourism development has different social, economic, physical, and environmental effects and consequences and "the role it plays in the citizens' quality of life" can be referred to as an example of it. Ibrahim Nia Samakoush (2013) in his study aimed at evaluating the role of urban tourism in economic-environmental development in the city of Babolsar, concluding that tourism in the economic field has significant effects and in addition to creating job opportunities and generating higher income, it has driven up prices and speculated land. In their 2013 study called "Assessing the Impacts of Tourism Economy from the Viewpoint of the Host Community at Urmia Dam," Motiei Langeroudi and Azadi concluded that tourism for local residents had positive effects, such as job opportunities for young people and increased income. In their 2012 study called "An analysis on Economic, Social and Environmental Impacts of Sari Tourism Development", Nouri and Khorasani concluded that the region benefited from tourism from an economical point of view. In their 2011 study called "Investigating the Factors Affecting the Tourism Industry in the Kelardasht Area", Abdul Manafi and Azkia stated that the development of the tourism industry is subject to educating and informing the public and the way they deal with tourism through the development of relevant institutions and organizations and the development of publicity programs to introduce natural and historical attractions in the region. In their research, Kushkham et al. (2016) stated that urban tourism is often highly regarded in order to improve the quality of life in local communities and has become increasingly important in the globalization process and also leads to dynamic urban economies. Tirzedo and Stylidis (2015) in their study stated that citizens and communities affected by the economic crisis paid particular attention to urban tourism. In 2007 Turkey formulated strategies for tourism in 2023. One of these sections is urban tourism. In this section, ten cities are identified with the brands to promote urban tourism with strategies and programs developed based on tourism. Rosenthra and Joe (2008) examined the effect of different tourist locations on income and employment in 318 US cities between 2000 and 2006. The results of this study show that recreational places have a positive and significant effect on employment and income.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Tourism has long evolved in a variety of forms in human societies based on motivation, the principle of travel and relocation. On the other hand, tourism development is considered as one of the potentials of regional development along with other activities. And studies have shown that there is a positive significant relationship between the growth and development of the tourism industry and the economic growth and development of countries (Lee et al., 2013). The fundamental evolution in tourism can be identified with the industrial revolution that brought about a dramatic change in life, especially in transport. Today, tourism is considered an important part of human activity. Sustainable tourism management seeks to improve the quality of life of local residents in tourist areas by optimizing the benefits of the local economy, preserving the natural and man-made environment and providing visitors with appropriate experiences (Butler 2010). Tourism and its sub-branches are now one of the largest economic sectors in the world which are tended to in many countries all around the world and is also considered one of the most important activities in the national cycle of countries, especially in terms of employment, exchange and prosperity in different regions. In addition, it has certain communication, political, cultural and international benefits. For this reason, most countries in the world with rich cultural heritage as well as natural areas use this activity as a strategic tool for economic development (Droomers et al., 2012). Some governments use the tourism sector as a source of tax revenue. This revenue sometimes provides the governments' expenditures in this sector and is sometimes added to public revenue. These taxes can be divided into three categories: tourism product taxation, tourist taxation and user fees. In many ways, the great impact of tourism on economic development can be examined. Tourism, while creating a variety of activities in the community, has stimulated mobility in other sectors of the economy and can have a constructive impact on the currency. Also, transport, food, fuel and energy sectors, handicrafts, construction boom because of tourism. Tourism is widely known as a strategy to develop local economy. Businesses associated with tourism provide job opportunities, bring money and variety to local economy. However, numerous studies have been carried out that show that local communities in third world countries may not gain a lot from tourism

because they do not have a great deal of control over how this industry develops. They cannot compete against the foreign investors and their view points are rarely heard (Shields and Hughes 2006; Shafiei and Mohammadi, 2014). The economic impacts of tourism can include employment, income generation, taxation of various tourism activities and development of public facilities, preservation of monuments and natural attractions as sources of economic revenue, development of crafts and preventing them from being forgotten. The negative economic impacts of tourism can also be attributed to tourism costs and balance of payments, creating false and seasonal employment in society, the effects of tourism activities on land prices, inflation, etc. (Nourbakhsh and Akbarpour 2010). Urban centers can be a good place to attract domestic and foreign tourists, due to the existence of civil institutions and social infrastructure. The importance of this type of tourism industry itself is doubled when combined with the region's history and civilization or the special natural conditions of the area, and with the proper planning and location it will easily be able to become a major tourism hub (Yasuri et al., 1393). The concept of urban tourism has entered the tourism literature since the 1980s, when many cities were moving towards important destinations. Delays in addressing urban tourism can be justified by neglecting urban studies to assess leisure, recreation, and tourism in the urban environment (Dinari, 2005). This type of tourism takes place in the urban area and requires comparative theories, techniques and analytical methods for comparative studies. Urban tourism is an important issue and activity that has caused widespread spatial changes in major cities. On the other hand, the characteristics of cities have made urban tourists different from other branches of tourism because urban tourism is a complex combination of different activities that combine environmental characteristics and the amount of capability and attractiveness of the city to attract visitors and provide services (Sharply, 2011). A brief look at the top tourist cities reveals that these cities are sustainable places for citizens to live, meaning they have achieved their current progressive status within the framework of sustainable development concepts. On the other hand, the growth of the tourism industry in its top cities is a factor in moving within the frameworks of sustainable urban development. Ultimately, urban tourism and sustainable urban

development are mutually exclusive, and one cannot precisely determine which one precedes the other (Hatami Nejad & Sharifi, 2015). Cities as the destination of tourists, have multipurpose function. They serve as the gateway to the country, the centers of residence and the source of travel to their neighboring villages and destinations. In addition, cities are not only destinations where people are brought together by economic activity, cultural life and under the control of political forces, but also play an important role as centers of tourism activity. Therefore, tourism is one of the most important urban activities that should be prioritized for urban management due to its economic, cultural and social consequences in cities (Yasuri et al., 2014).

#### **Materials and Methodology**

the purpose of the present study is practical and the method is descriptive-inferential. Theoretical information and research data were collected through documentary method using books, journals, articles, dissertations and web sites, as well as field studies and questionnaire tools. In fact, the necessary information has been collected in two ways: library research, for collecting information on the related literature and field research, to collect information to create questionnaires. Since the data collection tool in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire, its validity and reliability were first to be assessed. validity refers to whether the tool can measure the feature for which the tool is designed or not. expert opinion can be an effective aid to improve the validity of the measuring tool. For this purpose, after collecting the relevant factors, a preliminary questionnaire containing a number of specific factors was administered to 15 experts in the field of tourism in Tehran, including university professors, geography and tourism experts, and experienced and experienced industry experts. After validation, reliability coefficient was measured by Cronbach's alpha method and questionnaire was completed and quantified. Important questions in the questionnaire include the role of cultural and historical attractions for tourists while selecting Tehran, the suitability of facilities and infrastructure related to tourism in Tehran, the amount and quality of tourism information and advertising in Tehran, the impact of infrastructure, tourism and information facilities and advertisements for the attraction and sustainability of tourists in Tehran, the rate of adequacy of services for tourists and Health Facilities in Tehran, the



Rate of Adequacy of Tourism Costs for Tehran, the Impact of tourism development on employment and increasing the income of households living in Tehran, Tourism in promoting the standard of living in Tehran, the impact of tourism development on increasing the cost of living in Tehran, the impact of tourism boom on the rise on land and property prices in Tehran, the impact of tourism development on private sector investment in Tehran, the amount of planning a law-abiding and forward-looking principle in attracting tourism investment for the city of Tehran. The statistical population of the study includes citizens residing in Tehran. Since the number of statistical population is large and some are unattainable, some of this population was selected as sample so that the assigned sample represents the statistical population under study. According to what was said, the citizens living in Tehran are divided into five branches: north, south, east, west and center and since the statistical population is unlimited, at least 384 people were randomly selected according to Cochran formula and a researcher-made questionnaire was distributed among them. Then, the data from the quantitative visualization questionnaire (scores based on the Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5) were analyzed. To evaluate and test research questions from the questionnaire based on the Likert scale, rated very high, high, medium, low and very low. For very low 1 for low 2 for medium 3 for high 4 and for Very high score of 5 is considered.

#### **Scope of the Study**

Tehran, the capital of Iran, is spread between the two valleys of the mountain and the desert and on the southern slopes of the Alborz Range. The city is bounded on the south by the Ray and Bibi Shahrbanu mountains and the plains of Shahriar and Varamin and on the north by the mountains. The city has an area of about 2 square kilometers. According to the results of the last census conducted in 2016 the population of this city was 8, 693, 706. The municipality of Tehran has divided the city into 22 districts and 123 areas to meet the needs and better management of the city, including Ray and Tajrish.

#### **Results and analysis**

After evaluating and analyzing the quantitative data, the following results regarding the characteristics of the respondents were obtained:

Of the 384 participants in the questionnaire, 74% were female and 26% male making women the majority of the respondents. In terms of age,

33.3% were 25-35 years old, 44% were 36-46 years old, 13.9% were 46-55 years old, 9.89% were over 55 years old. Therefore, the highest prevalence is in people aged 36-46 with 44%. Regarding education, 40.4% had bachelor's degree, 33.1% had master's degree, and 26.6% had a doctorate degree. So most people are those with a bachelor's degree. Also, according to marital status, 73.4% were single and 26.6% were married.

To use statistical techniques, it must first be determined whether the data collected has a normal distribution. Parametric tests can be used to test hypotheses if the distribution of data is normal, and non-parametric tests can be used if abnormal. For this purpose, the skewness-kurtosis test was used in this study. Data are parametric (normal) when their skewness-kurtosis test is in the range (2, -2), otherwise the data are nonparametric (abnormal).

**Table 1. Test results for normal distribution of data**

	Kurtosis		Skewness	
	Standard error	statistic	Standard error	statistic
Sources of income	-1.001	0.248	1.083	0.125
Economic Development	-0.121	0.248	-0.979	0.125
Income stability	-0.654	0.248	0.315	0.125

Source: Research findings, 2019

As shown in the table above, the skewness value specified for all variables is in the range of (2, -2). Therefore, the variables normal and their distribution is symmetric. The skewness value of all variables is also in the range of (2, -2). This shows that the distribution of variables has normal kurtosis. The present study has a basic hypothesis as follows:

- Tourism growth and income sources are one of the important factors influencing economic development and income sustainability of Tehran.

**Table 2. Summary of Regression Coefficient Model and Watson Camera Test**

Model Summary						
Model	Simple correlation coefficient	linear coefficient	R <sup>2</sup> The coefficient of determination	R <sup>2</sup> <sub>adi</sub> Adjusted coefficient of determination	Standard error estimation	Watson Camera
1	0.515		0.265	0.261	0.532	1.602

Predictive variable: tourism revenue sources  
 Criterion variable: economic development - income sustainability

Source: Research findings, 2019

To determine whether the remainders are independent in the regression, the Watson camera test was used to correlate the remainders. If the Watson camera test statistic is between 1.5 and 2.5, the null hypothesis (independent of errors) is accepted, otherwise the null hypothesis is confirmed. According to the table above, the value of Watson's camera (1.602) is stated to be between 1.5 and 2.5, thus assuming the

independence of the errors is accepted. Also, based on the estimated values in the table above and the value of simple linear correlation coefficient, it can be said that there is a significant relationship between growth of tourism income sources and economic development and income sustainability of Tehran. ( $R = 515/0$ ). On the other hand, the adjusted coefficient of determination ( $R^2_{adj} = 0.261$ ) shows that 0.261% of total changes in economic development and income sustainability of Tehran are predicted by the growth of tourism revenue sources.

**Table 3. The results of variance analysis test**

Model	The sum of the squares	Degrees of freedom	The mean of square	F	Sig
Regression	38.889	2	19.445	68.704	0.00
Remainder	107.831	381	0.283		
Total	146.720	383			

Source: Research findings, 2019

According to the values estimated in the table above, it can be said that the value of F test is less than 0.05, which means that the research regression model consists of a predictor variable and an acceptable model criterion variable.

**Table 4: Results of regression coefficients of predictor variables on the criterion variable**

Model 1	B	Standard Error	Beta	t	Sig
Sources of income	0.746	0.102		7.312	0.000
Economic Development	0.327	0.047	0.416	6.916	0.000
Income stability	0.203	0.029	0.421	3.991	0.000

Source: Research findings, 2019

Based on the estimated values in the table above, it can be said that tourism revenue growth has a positive effect on economic development and income sustainability of Tehran and there is a significant relationship between tourism revenue growth and economic development and income sustainability of Tehran. ( $R = 515/0$ ). In other words, for the increase of a standard deviation in the growth component of tourism revenue sources, the standard deviation of economic development increases by 0.416 percent and by 0.421 percent, respectively.

**Table 5. Summary of the research hypothesis**

Hypothesis	Result
Tourism growth and income sources are one of the most important factors affecting economic development and income sustainability of Tehran	Proving the hypothesis

Source: Research findings, 2019

According to the results of data analysis, planning for development of tourism industry in Tehran can be an effective factor in economic

growth and income sustainability of this city. Of course, this effect is not an absolute one hundred percent, but it can be seriously argued that tourism is an important step towards capital injection and strengthening the local economy of the metropolis of Tehran. The development of urban tourism in Tehran, which is the source of new developments in the economic field, will lead to an increase in the inflow of international and domestic tourists and injecting new currency into the business cycle of Tehran, an Increase in the production of goods and services. It will also increase the income level of citizens and creates new job opportunities and investments in the tourism sector and tax revenues from tourism related activities (Author's analysis, 2019). Certainly tourism and its place in economic development are of particular importance. The industry is now becoming one of the key pillars of the economy and many development planners and policymakers refer to the tourism industry as a key pillar of sustainable development. In terms of the special status of the city, especially the metropolises, in many successful countries in this industry, the city is the foundation of tourism development. In fact, tourism for cities with tourist attractions such as Tehran can become one of the most important sources of income and the realization of this important goal in the metropolis of Tehran is achieved through efficient urban planning and management.

#### **Discussion and conclusion**

Because of the widespread urban management in metropolises like Tehran, utilizing tourist attractions can have an effective role in introducing cities as a global tourist attraction and have a great impact on the economy and sustainability of these cities. The purpose of this study was to investigate the importance and role of urban tourism planning in Tehran and its impact on economic development of this metropolis. According to the results, urban tourism development in Tehran can have a significant role in economic development and income sustainability of this city. Therefore, it can be argued that the growth of tourism in Tehran is achievable due to its extensive capacities, and this requires sound scientific planning, policy making and oversight. Targeted and motivated participation of the private sector in completing and upgrading urban tourism infrastructures, information and publicity tailored to the type and interests of tourists, and full association of citizens residing in Tehran with tourism programs can make this

metropolis a major tourism destination. And bring economic development to the city and provide sustainable income sources for Tehran. Many capitals and metropolises of ancient civilizations such as Paris, London, Madrid, Rome and Beijing have been able to inject tens of millions of significant tourists into the urban economy annually and dramatically raise citizens' incomes but Tehran, with similar capabilities, has not benefited much from it, and has not even attracted ten percent of the funding from the tourism industry. If the tourism development plan is to be carried out in Tehran with the historical, cultural, natural, commercial, therapeutic, sporting attractions as well as the important opportunities and events of this city that have already been mentioned and discussed taken into account, one can hope for a significant growth in the tourism industry in Tehran. If provided for the development of urban tourism in Tehran, attracting international and domestic tourists to the city will increase and as a result, new money will be injected into the urban economy. Activities and investments in the tourism sector will expand and produce goods and services. For many unemployed youth, employment will be directly and indirectly created, and the income and quality of life of households in the city will somewhat improve. Therefore, if tourism growth and attraction of tourists in Tehran and the injection of foreign currency and money from this place continue steadily, it can play a valuable role in contributing to the economic development and income sustainability of Tehran and while meeting part of today's generation's financial needs, part of tomorrow's generation's financial needs will also be guaranteed in this metropolis. Without the necessary infrastructure such as accommodation, standardized transport systems, internet communication systems, efficient banking network, etc., the development of tourism will not be possible. Therefore, in order to achieve tourism development in Tehran and to achieve its positive economic effects, Tehran's development and completion of tourism infrastructure, as well as accurate and comprehensive information and publicity is inevitable and it should definitely be a top priority for city managers and tourism planners (Author's Analysis 1398).

In order to better plan for urban tourism development in Tehran with economic approach the following suggestions are offered:

- Development and completion of the tourism infrastructure of Tehran, especially standard accommodation, catering and service facilities, with the participation of the private sector, providing the necessary facilities and facilitating the process of providing related authorizations.
- Completely handing over the management of the tourism industry to the nongovernmental sector and playing a purely governmental, policy and regulatory role in the Tehran metropolis.
- Launching comprehensive tourism portal of Tehran and providing internet booking for all hotels and accommodation of this city from inside and outside the country.
- Establishing airlines between Tehran and the major cities of the tourist destination countries of which the tourist outlet is significant.
- Developing and implementing public tourism education programs for the citizens of Tehrani in order to increase the willingness and create a positive attitude towards tourism development and promoting a culture of exposure to tourists.
- Properly introducing and promoting Tehran's tourist attractions, including cultural, historical, natural, therapeutic and so on in the world's leading media and avoiding the one-dimensional introduction of Tehran.

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