

Review and identification of tourism potentials of Isfahan using SWOT model

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Abstract: Understanding of potentials and capabilities of each geographical area in all economic, human, and natural fields helps researchers and planners to identify and introduce the directions of development in that area according to current state and local strengths. Tourism is an effective part in the process of economic development. This industry is the world's largest and most popular service industry that inattention or less attention to its tacit and explicit achievements is inexcusable. Reasonably, this industry should be seriously taken into account in order to achieve short-term and long-term economic gains. This paper aims to study the tourism strengths of Isfahan Province. Isfahan is of great importance due to the many tourism attractions and its position in national and transnational level. The research was done in form of a survey and data were collected using questionnaires. Obtained data and information was analyzed using SWOT model. The results showed that Isfahan, given its unique environmental, historical, and cultural capabilities and talents, can become a national and regional tourism hub by proper planning with investment of public and private sectors.

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1. Introduction

In today's world, humans need rest and recreation more than any time. Recreation and fun are vital to reduce physical and mental stresses caused by working day and night. Travel and leisure have become a serious necessity since the 17th century. Human has always thought about visiting the new lands. Creation of IT, cultural, social, political, and economic infrastructures has caused tourism phenomenon an undeniable reality. Traveling with various incentives is one of the necessities of life in the 21st century. So, a current has come to existence which sweeps the national and international boundaries. Special look to tourism industry indicates that it creates a series of cultural, economic, social, and environmental effects and changes in each country. The approach of tourism towards geographical areas has created significant impacts in tourism destinations. Common behavior of human groups that have geographical and spatial dimensions and reflections of this behavior can affect geographical environment. Comparative studies on tourist attitudes and policies play an important role in national development of each country. Tourist movement between geographical areas as tourism destinations involves an exchangeable business. This industry has created a large economic process in cooperation with organized capitalism. Consequently, tourists achieve one of their most critical needs which is leisure activities. Nowadays, tourism has become one of the most job providing and profitable service industries. Tourism organizing in one place is a

critical and scientific necessity, since tourism planning involves understanding the behaviors of tourists in a place. Many believe that local communities and geographical areas are the central core of tourism destinations and a successful and healthy plan is an appropriate criterion to measure the success of tourism industry. Unique geographical and historical capabilities of Isfahan caused this region to be considered as one of the most attractive tourism destinations domestic and foreign tourists. Emphasizing on history and culture of Isfahan, this paper aims to describe the available evidence. The study of strengths of this area and literature, processing their content, information and data collection from internal and external resources, and the use SWOT model helped us to come to a conclusion. Isfahan is one of the most attractive areas of Iran. This article is adapted from a thesis centered on tourism potentials of Isfahan. SWOT model was used in this study to analyze the results. Firstly, the current situation and the past trends including the role and importance of tourism, tourism attraction and tourism development bottlenecks were reviewed by descriptive analysis of statistics related to the topic and then some issues such as development strategies of local and foreign tourism, credit policies, and administrative, executive, educational, research, and cultural investment were discussed.

1.1. Theoretical foundations of research:

Tourism is studied with certain diversity by experts and researchers due to its interdisciplinary

features. The distance was emphasized in tourism and tourists were divided according to their distance from home. America's National Commission on Tourism (1973) defines domestic tourism as all trips that their distance is more than 50 miles except business trips. From the perspective of geographers, tourism is defined as the time to rest and do leisure and recreational activities which require overnight absence (Burkart, A., & Medlik, S. (1989)). This includes any activity such as travel planning, going to destination, accommodation, return, and even reminiscence of travel. World Tourism Organization (WTO) has proposed technical and comprehensive definitions of tourism which are based on differences in perspective and approach to the visiting places and parameters affecting tourism and also different perceptions of the concept of tourism. According to WTO, tourism is the activity of people who leave their home for leisure, work or other reasons and accommodate in the destination there for one consecutive year. WTO also defines domestic tourism as the travel of native people who travel within the borders of their country for less than 12 months for different reasons except business. This organization also defines international tourism as the travel of people to a foreign country for at least 12 months for different reasons except business. From a sociological perspective, tourism is a series of relationships that a tourist develops with people living in that area in his/her temporary accommodation. Honzicker Cruyff believes that tourism is the development of a series of relationships as a result of travel and accommodation of a non-indigenous people without permanent stay and employment in a place (Kotler, P., Bowen, J., and Makens, J., 1996). From a systematic and holistic view, tourism is a set of phenomena and relationships arising from mutual interaction between tourists, capital of host governments, host communities, universities of host countries, nongovernmental organizations in the process of attraction, transportation, reception, and control of these tourists and other visitors. The review of previous research on tourism industry indicates that limited but remarkable classical and academic studies have been carried out. The process of scientizing tourism was started from the 1960s. Tang and Rochanoud (1990) ranked top 32 countries. The results of this study showed that weather, natural attractions, social position, cultural situation, and life expanses are the most important factors in attractiveness of tourism destinations and trade facilities, transaction, and proximity of destination are less important, from the view of the respondents (Heath, E., Wall, G., 1992). Cloverdon (2002) studied the performance of tourism industry in developing countries of south of Africa and possible outcomes caused by effective factors in development and its

obstacles. He used statistics of tourists in south of Africa and descriptive statistics method to evaluate and compare tourism industry in these countries. Prof. Ehlers Descartes, lecturer of Geography Institute of Philips University of Germany, studied the touristic structure and importance of Imam Square of Isfahan and effects of this industry on the growth of Isfahan. Alireza Esmaeilian, in the Journal of Research and Economic Policies, introduced tourism attractions of Isfahan and evaluated the capabilities of this industry. This study calculated the amount of employment in the accommodation, transportation, visited places, and existing markets and proposed policies, general strategies, and executive strategies in order to overcome the current problems of this industry. This study was adapted from a research conducted by the organization for Economic Affairs and Finance. Faranak Seyef al-Dini, Associate Professor of the Department of Geography of Tehran University, conducted a study entitled *Assessment of quality and capacity of urban tourism based on behavioral pattern of tourists and host communities in Isfahan* with the help of a group of students of this university. In this research which was carried out in 2009, historical, cultural, and religious potentials of Isfahan and touristic, industrial, and agricultural role of Isfahan as a major tourism hub with multi-functional role were studied.

Cultural Heritage and Tourism Organization, Isfahan's Academic Center for Education, Culture & Research, Isfahan Municipality, and Islamic Azad University have published papers, books, and research projects on tourism and its capabilities in Isfahan.

2. Materials and methods:

Library findings and theoretical foundations of research were collected by content analysis method. Tourism potentials and attractions of Isfahan were studied using a combination of survey, descriptive, and analytic methods. Data were collected using interview, observation, and questionnaire. Questionnaires were handed out among 300 foreign tourists in Isfahan's hotels in 2011. SWOT model was used to analyze the obtained data and propose a strategy for tourism development. According to this model, an analysis aimed at evaluation of environmental opportunities and threats and strengths and weaknesses is needed. In fact, analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in the internal environment and analysis of opportunities and threats in the external environment are discussed. According to studies done on internal and external environment of the area, a list of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was prepared. Then, priorities were determined by asking the ideas of foreign tourists and finally appropriate strategies were proposed to reduce

weaknesses and threats and enhance strengths and opportunities. Isfahan has a surface of 15263 Km² and is 1570 m above sea level. Isfahan which is placed in the center of Iran consists of 6 counties, 19 villages, and 14 cities and has a population of 1986542 people. Relative population density of this area is 123 persons. Historically, this area has been a bridge between low-lying parts of the East of Iranian plateau and western mountainous lands and has long been a haven for the frostbitten coming from West and those tired of dry and hot air of East. The position of Isfahan plain in the deserts of central Iran and central mountainous block and the importance of its particular communicative situation in the Central Iranian Plateau have associated the history of this area with the history of Iran. Isfahan has been shining on the darkness of human civilization for centuries with a wealth of art and culture and the shining of its minarets and tiles has caused the admiration and wonder of the world. Historically, Isfahan is the place where art, technology, and spirituality were created in. Natural attraction such as deserts, Zayanderud River from origin to catchment, Gavkhouni Swamp, Sofeh Mount, protected areas, sand dunes, and etc alongside cultural and historical attractions including mosques, minarets, churches, historic bridges, dovecotes, squares, fire temple, the large market, historic schools, traditional architecture, and unique crafts annually attract thousands of domestic and foreign tourists to this area. Central position of Isfahan and being the intersection of north, south, west, and east and having a good network of roads, highways, railroad, and international airport have caused Isfahan to be the host of a huge number of domestic and foreign tourists every year. Daily traffic from all parts of the country in this area has made Isfahan an important passage intersection. A brief reference to the natural, cultural, and historical capabilities and potentials of this area is presented here. Zayanderud River is one of the largest rivers of Iran which flows from west to east and is the main cause of verdure and fertility of this region. After a 360-km journey through mountains, valleys, plains, orchards, woods, marshes, and farmlands, Zayanderud reaches its tomb in Gavkhouni Swamp and is the only river that does not end to the sea. Sides of the river are a lovely place to rest for travelers, tourists, and local residents. More than 28 bridges have been constructed on the river that besides the beautiful landscape, many of these bridges have an ancient history which attracts tourists. Gavkhouni Swamp is the catchment of Zayanderud River and a protected treasure of natural and cultural landscapes of the past. Touristicaally, Gavkhouni Swamp is interesting for both ecotourism enthusiasts who are in search of pollution-free and fresh air and tourists who love pristine natural landscapes of desert areas and observation of stars in

desert nights. This swamp is a good recreational place and has interesting fields for research. Unique plant species, salt marshes, animal species, glider flight, camel riding, motorcycling, and wilderness hiking are some attractions of this area. Isfahan city, located in the center of this area and the heart of Iran, is a historic city that its monuments and architectural style has a global reputation. After Tehran and Mashhad, Isfahan is Iran's third populated city. Isfahan is known by different titles such as "Half of The World", "Paradise", "Museum of the Middle East", and the best, most comprehensive, and most prosperous region of Persia, according to Nasser Khosrow, a famous tourist. Valuable historic collections of Isfahan include the oldest and most valuable monuments which are architecturally unique. Isfahan has a high capacity to attract international tourists in order to present a better understanding of the history, culture, and natural environment of Iran to the world.

Naqshe Jahan Square had been one of the world's largest square in the 17th century AD. Jean Chardin, a French traveler, called this square the most beautiful square of the world. This square was a place for official ceremonies, Friday market, playing Polo, and so on during the Shah Abbas Safavi. European travel writers and tourists have written as lot about the greatness and functions of Naqshe Jahan Square. Sheikh Lotfollah mosque, situated on the eastern side of Naqshe Jahan Square, was the exclusive mosque of Shah Abbas family. This mosque is the most beautiful valuable architectural, artistic, and religious masterpiece of the world. The dome of this mosque is 32 meters high and its construction took 17 years. Qeysarieh portico is located at the main entrance of Great Market and north of this square. Since this portico was inspired from a building in Kayseri city of Turkey, it is called this. This complex is considered one of the attractions of Isfahan. Ali Qapu (Turko-Persian word for Imperial Gate) mansion is a building which had been originally the entrance of State House of Safavids. Its height is 36 meters and has 6 floors. Ali Qapu Palace is located on the west side of Naqshe Jahan Square with a area of approximately 1800 m². Churches are other tourism attractions of Isfahan. Armenians have lived in Iran from very past and mostly and most of them are living in the neighborhood of Julfa in Isfahan. They have constructed many churches for their ceremonies prayer. Vank Cathedral is one of the oldest and most famous of them. Building materials and architecture of this church is different from stone churches of Armenia. The building of this church was built by local materials and raw clay. The dome of church is circular and like the dome of mosques. There are 8 windows around the dome that images of the creation of Adam and Eve, eating the forbidden fruit, and the

death of Abel can be seen between them. This church today is more a cultural-religious complex and tea house, library, museum, and offices have been created there. Vank Cathedral is one of the most beautiful and famous churches of the world and one of the most spectacular tourism attraction of Isfahan that clearly demonstrates the peaceful coexistence of different ethnic and religious groups in this city. Dovecotes are another tourism attraction of this area. Dovecotes were built by farmers in the desert for pigeons to rest in. There were more than 3000 dovecotes in this region but in 2011 only 300 of them were identified and 65 of them has been recorded in the national index of cultural and tourism heritage. Dovecotes were built for many reasons such as keeping pigeons away from farms, the use of pigeon's droppings as fertilizer, and preying on harmful insects. They are artistic masterpieces and were built by clay, straw, and salt which were resistant against heat and cold and also were thermal and sound insulation.

1.2. Typology and type classification of tourists that visit Isfahan:

Due to favorable natural condition, being located in the geographical center of Iran, ability to communicate with other parts of the country, and cultural and civilization manifestations, Isfahan has long been a good place to attract tourists. Throughout the history, Isfahan has repeatedly been the capital of Iran and now is an architectural treasure that magnificent works of historical period's especially Islamic civilization can be seen in a corner of it. These buildings and attractions are the resultant of some arts like tiling, brickwork, plasterwork, woodcarving, decorative arts, painting, calligraphy, etc. There are a variety of tourism attractions in this area. Historical, artistic, and religious attractions and natural landscapes have been combined in such a way that is unique in the country. According to previous studies and considering environmental condition and capabilities of Isfahan areas, 10 touristic categories are active in this area that will be briefly described (Figure 2). Some believe that Isfahan is the kiblah of historical and cultural tourists, because Isfahan is a collection of historic buildings with architectural styles of various historical periods. Historic monuments, religious buildings, traditional architecture, historic cemeteries, museums, palaces, mosques, churches, and old houses are some of these attractions. Those who travel to know about culture and civilization of nations and see cultural patterns, rituals, traditional economic activities, architectural styles and visit the museums are called cultural tourists. Numerous university students, many museums, theaters, cinemas, population diversity, special local dishes, souvenirs, and unique handicrafts

are some features that attract many historical and cultural tourists to Isfahan (Table 3). In urban tourism, travel and movement of people is intended to gather information, gain experience, meet the wishes that are the incentives of travel. This can include visiting a historical site like a mosque or church, attending a fair or a scientific, athletic, and artistic festival, or travel in order to enjoy places such as parks, a new monument, and watching a sporting event. Isfahan is one of the Iranian cities which have a global reputation. Isfahan city, the center of this area, is adopted sister of 15 cities of the world due to cultural conditions. Isfahan has been introduced as the cultural capital of the Islamic world by Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Shores of Zayanderud, numerous parks and gardens, four-season weather, and beautiful landscapes attract many tourists from all parts of country that travel to this area for rest and doing leisure activities. Additionally, due to the central location of Isfahan and as thousands of passengers from north, south, west, and east pass through this area every day, they usually have a layover in this area to rest and visit tourism attractions of Isfahan. Large populations of people that sometimes reach a few million visit this area at different time and in all seasons, especially during March, April, and May. Desert hiking is one of the types of ecotourism in Isfahan. A large part of this region is covered by desert. These areas have the potentials of ecotourism and geotourism. Nowadays, these attractions have a lot of fans in the world. Unlike physical violence, deserts have extraordinary potentials such as moonlit nights, starry and smooth sky, ability to produce clean energy, and so on which have made deserts an appropriate place for excursion and scientific trip for nature lovers. Walking on the desert soil is the easiest sport that can be enjoyable. Bicycling, motorcycling, camel riding, skiing, and Rally racing are sports that have many strong supporters in this area. Existence of several centers for specialized and super specialized health care and medical and laboratory equipment have promoted health tourism in Isfahan. Existence of Alzahra, Dr. Shariati, Kaveh, and Milad hospitals and also construction of a large Health Town promise the development of health and medical tourism in this region. Historical-religious monuments from the reign of Safavids era, mosques and religious schools, and Armenians churches have given a special cultural and religious diversity to this area. This ethnic diversity and cultural and religious richness provide a variety of capabilities to adopt an appropriate strategy in order to organize different aspects of religious tourism which is a kind of cultural tourism. Takhte Foolad Cemetery is the second important cemetery of Islam world, because of it has a very old history and the tombs of many famous philosophers and mystics are located

there. This cemetery has an area of 175 Km² and is located in southeast of Isfahan. It was recorded as an historical-religious monument in the national index of cultural and tourism heritage in 1996. Several books have been written about Takhte Foolad Cemetery.

3. Results

1.3. Evaluation of tourism income for the area:

Costs that are paid by tourists, including the cost of meals, recreation, accommodation, local transportation, sightseeing, tours, internet, telephone, and souvenirs are like the export of goods and services to the country of tourists which is calculable as invisible exports and increase national income. Many countries acquire large incomes from tourism and tourism's share in national income is growing in some countries. Tourism revenues in an area can be calculated by different methods which depend on statistical data. Tourism income of Isfahan in one year is calculated in this paper. Total amount of money spent by tourists or the income of suppliers of tourist services besides the request to use accommodations, restaurants, recreation centers, historical monuments, transportation, and so on.

Revenue from tourism is calculated using the following equation

$$X = X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + \dots + X_N$$

Each of these variables is one of the above capabilities. Although this calculation is not free of error, incomes were calculated by this formula in order to present a defensible conclusion of tourism revenues.

1- Income from accommodation (hotels and guesthouses): According to available statistics, more than 90% of foreign tourists were staying in hotels and guesthouses of Isfahan in 2010. The income of this part was calculated 33600000 dollar.

2- Income from the purchase of souvenirs: If 50000 tourists (from 75000) arrived in Isfahan in 2010 have bought souvenirs (about 500 dollar), an income of 5000000 dollar must have been obtained.

3- Income from visiting tourism attractions: If any of the 75000 foreign tourists have visited tourist attractions for 5 times, 375000 tickets are sold and the revenue obtained from this part is 11250000 dollar.

4- Income from food: Foreign tourists have paid almost 7 dollar for both lunch and dinner meals which exceeds 2940 million dollar during the occupancy.

5- Income from transportation: If it is supposed that any of 75000 tourists stay in Isfahan for one week and if transportation cost for each person a day is 35 dollar, income obtained from this part will be 18375000 dollar.

So, the following equation includes all income of tourism in a year in Isfahan:

$$X = X_1 + X_2 + X_3 + X_4 + X_5 + \dots + X_N$$

$$X = X_1(33600000) + X_2(5000000) + X_3(11250000) + X_4(29400000) + X_5(18375000) = 61040000$$

4. Discussions

1.4. Analysis of findings:

The results of this study show that 75% of the respondents have a university degree and 70% of them were more than 40 years old. About 78% of tourists stated visiting historical and architectural monuments as their first incentive of their travel. So, this hypothesis that cultural and historical potentials attract many foreign tourists to Isfahan has been confirmed. Naqshe Jahan complex, Vank Cathedral, Isfahan Bazaar, and shores of Zayanderud are mostly visited by visitors. From the perspective of tourists, the facilities provided in tourism sites were investigated 45% favorable and 40% unfavorable. 52% and 45% of the respondents evaluated the accommodation facilities favorable and unfavorable, respectively. Travelers and tourists visiting Isfahan include 50% European, 18% from the Middle East, and others were from other parts of the world. More than 52% of tourists had planned a more-than-2-week trip which is a positive point. About 35% of tourists have traveled to Isfahan more than once. More than 90% of tourists had no problems with the police. More than 80% were satisfied with the behavior of local people. 72% have stated that they like to travel to Isfahan again. Travel agencies and friend and acquaintances were the information resources of 35% and 30% of tourists, respectively.

2.4. Analysis using SWOT model:

SWOT model assesses opportunities, capabilities, weaknesses, and threats. This assessment is derived from strategic planning of Harvard model which is applicable in both public and private sectors. According to this model, which emphasizes on capabilities of an organization, strengths and opportunities should be used to overcome weaknesses and threats. Emphasis on opportunities and strengths as the most important factor to achieve an effective strategy overcoming shortcomings and minimizing threats is the most positive aspect of this model. Analysis based on this model is a brief summary of the strategic analysis. External environment (opportunities and threats) and internal environment (strengths and weaknesses) are studied in this model. Recommendations and operational solutions for proper use of tourism potentials of Isfahan are proposed by prioritization of strategic issues.

Table 1: Analysis of tourism potentials (internal factors) of Isfahan using SWOT model

weaknesses	Strengths
Lack of scientific and expertise planning Seasonal dryness of Zayanderud Intense migration to Isfahan Inadequate accommodation and welfare facilities Weak information systems The need for reconstruction and restoration of monuments Inconsistency between decision makers and enforcement agencies Low quality and high price of handicrafts Inconsistency in historical part of city Low qualitative and quantitative capacity of facilities Lack of trained and skilled manpower Vague objectives and policies of executive officials	Central position of Isfahan High natural potentials Unique historical potentials Ethnic and religious minorities and churches Unique handicrafts Gavkhouni Swamp and deserts The historic city of Isfahan Grand Bazaar in Isfahan More than 300 dovecotes High physical and financial safety High level of culture and hospitality of people Zayanderud River Land and air transportation Big steel industries Being adopted sister of 15 cities in the world Birds, flowers, and butterflies gardens

Table 2: Analysis of tourism potentials (external factors) of Isfahan using SWOT model

Threats	Opportunities
Tremendous and non-normative growth of urbanization Loss of old part of Isfahan city Loss of quiet atmosphere of region Environmental pollutions Improper exploitation of the bed of Zayanderud High density of population in this region Instability and multiplicity of prices Fuel rationing High cost of domestic tours Cynicism towards tourists Negative propaganda against Iran Seasonal drought of Zayanderud	Government assistance and support in investment Much enthusiasms for travel to Iran Easy access to Isfahan from all parts of the country Global reputation of Iran's and Isfahan's art and culture Cultural, artistic, and scientific festivals Increased private sector investment Construction of appropriate highways, railway, and airport Development of appropriate ways to access areas Deployment of trained guides Introducing tourism as a scientific subject

Table 3: Matrix of strategic analysis of tourism potentials of Isfahan using

Strategies for utilizing opportunities to eliminate weaknesses	Strategies for utilizing the strengths to take advantage of opportunities
Conducting studies and scientific research on tourism Reducing or eliminating the strict rules of tourists' entry Training courses for tourist guides Avoiding improper administrative and disciplinary treatments Appropriate advertising in abroad through Iran's executive agencies especially Cultural attaché of embassies Establishment of an agency to attract tourists in cultural department of all embassies Review the services provided to foreign tourists Changing the negative views to tourists Unified decision making and serious accountability	Reconstruction, maintenance, and restoration of monuments Providing conditions for cultural tourism Holding cultural, scientific, and athletic festivals Exploiting the potential of natural attractions Ecotourism potentials of deserts Ecotourism potentials of Gavkhouni Swamp Benefiting from the increased motivation of people to travel Enjoying the beautiful landscapes Planning for low-momentum tourism Securing investment in tourism sector Easy and cheap access Creating incentive for travelling again Desert tourism facilities

Table 4: Matrix of strategic analysis of tourism potentials of Isfahan using

Reducing weaknesses to avoid threats	Using strengths to avoid threats
Paying attention to the capacities of historical, cultural, and architectural sites Reducing environmental pollution in the area Introducing the capabilities of Isfahan through internet, television, and satellite Allocation of funding for tourism development Discussing tourism as a scientific subject in the academic centers Supporting the tourist agencies and private institutions Efficient management between agencies involved in Tourism Pathology the way the local communities deal with tourists	Avoiding unnecessary construction around the historical sites and the river shore Removing the cultural effects of negative advertisement of competitors Treating tourists with hauteur and generosity Serving tourists as guests Diversification of tourist services in order to satisfy the tourists Preventing the uncontrolled growth of prices of goods and services Preventing any physical and mental cause of insecurity

Table 5: Matrix of SWOT model of tourism potentials of Isfahan

SWOT analysis	Opportunities Government assistance and support in investment Much enthusiasms for travel to Iran Easy access to Isfahan from all parts of the country Global reputation of Iran's and Isfahan's art and culture Cultural, artistic, and scientific festivals Increased private sector investment Construction of appropriate highways, railway, and airport Development of appropriate ways to access areas Deployment of trained guides Introducing tourism as a scientific subject	threats Tremendous and non-normative growth of urbanization Loss of old part of Isfahan city Loss of quiet atmosphere of region Environmental pollutions Improper exploitation of the bed of Zayanderud High density of population in this region Instability and multiplicity of prices Fuel rationing High cost of domestic tours Cynicism towards tourists Negative propaganda against Iran Seasonal drought of Zayanderud
Strengths Central position of Isfahan High natural potentials Unique historical potentials Ethnic and religious minorities and churches Unique handicrafts Gavkhouni Swamp and deserts The historic city of Isfahan Grand Bazaar in Isfahan More than 300 dovecotes High physical and financial safety High level of culture and hospitality of the people Zayanderud River Land and air transportation Big steel industries Being adopted sister of 15 cities in the world Birds, flowers, and butterflies gardens	Competitive strategies Reconstruction, maintenance, and restoration of monuments Providing conditions for cultural tourism Holding cultural, scientific, and athletic festivals Exploiting the potential of natural attractions Ecotourism potentials of deserts Ecotourism potentials of Gavkhouni Swamp Benefiting from the increased motivation of people to travel Enjoying the beautiful landscapes Planning for low-momentum tourism Securing investment in tourism sector Easy and cheap access Creating incentive for travelling again Desert tourism facilities	Diverse strategies Avoiding unnecessary construction around the historical sites and the river shore Removing the cultural effects of negative advertisement of competitors Treating tourists with hauteur and generosity Serving tourists as guests Diversification of tourist services in order to satisfy the tourists Preventing the uncontrolled growth of prices of goods and services Preventing any physical and mental cause of insecurity
Weaknesses Lack of scientific and expertise planning	Revised strategies Conducting studies and scientific research on tourism	Defensive strategies Paying attention to the capacities of historical, cultural, and architectural

Seasonal dryness of Zayanderud Intense migration to Isfahan Inadequate accommodation and welfare facilities Weak information systems The need for reconstruction and restoration of monuments Inconsistency between decision makers and enforcement agencies Low quality and high price of handicrafts Inconsistency in historical part of city Low qualitative and quantitative capacity of facilities Lack of trained and skilled manpower Vague objectives and policies of executive officials	Reducing or eliminating the strict rules of tourists' entry Training courses for tourist guides Avoiding improper administrative and disciplinary treatments Appropriate advertising in abroad through Iran's executive agencies especially Cultural attaché of embassies Establishment of an agency to attract tourists in cultural department of all embassies Review the services provided to foreign tourists Changing the negative views to tourists Unified decision making and serious accountability	sites Reducing environmental pollution in the area Introducing the capabilities of Isfahan through internet, television, and satellite Allocation of funding for tourism development Discussing tourism as a scientific subject in the academic centers Supporting the tourist agencies and private institutions Efficient management between agencies involved in Tourism Pathology the way the local communities deal with tourists
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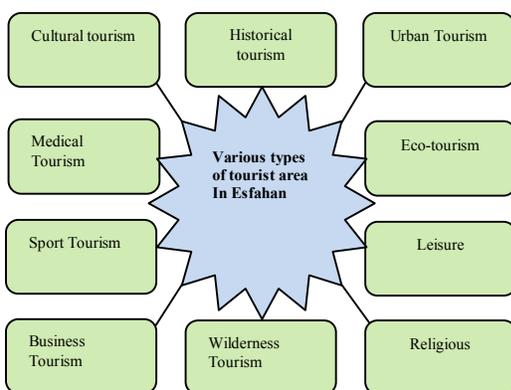


Figure1: Various Types of Tourist in Esfahan

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