

**Islamic Azad University-Ahar Branch**

**Geographic Space**

**An Approved Scientific, Research-based Quarterly**

***Vahid Shojaei***[[1]](#footnote-1)

***Farshad Tejari [[2]](#footnote-2)***

***Bahare Soleymani***[[3]](#footnote-3)

***Mortaza Doosti [[4]](#footnote-4)***

**Strategic Planning of Sport Tourism in Mazandaran Province**

Date received: 13 December 2010 Date accepted: 28 September 2011

**Abstract**

Tourism in general and sports tourism in particular, having a clear industry feature, is considered as a source of income in some countries. Obviously, in order to exploit this area of the sports industry, managers and practitioners require careful planning at the strategic and operational level. That is the subject rarely considered in the province Mazandaran. The purpose of this study, is to identify and prioritize strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, subsequently, strategic planning for sports tourism in this area based on SWOT analysis. For this purpose, 89 people including senior managers of the province's sports executive, managers, guides and individuals familiar with tourism affairs, sports specialists and experts also sports management to a non-random example research were selected who completed voluntarily adjusted questionnaires related to research subject. Results of binomial test showed that the 13, 29, 20 and 23 variables were identified respectively as the factors strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Data analysis using the Friedman test showed favorable climatic conditions and transportation systems were respectively considered as the most and least important of strengths. The lack of holding good quality competitions and international sports tournaments in the province and sport tourists' security are considered respectively as the most and least of weaknesses. Also a favorable background of native-local sports festival here and high risk taking power to enter the industry are considered respectively as the most and least important opportunities. In a similar manner, lack of effective supervision on sport tourism development and a comprehensive plan for designing, constructing and maintaining sport places and spaces are considered as the most important and least important threats. Overall results showed that through planning desirable strategies after identifying these four areas of sport tourism, development can be realized in the field.

Some of these strategies include: Utilizing the capabilities of indigenous human resources, communicate uninterrupted with cities and neighboring countries to conduct events, tournaments and..., develop and prosper water sports in the athletics and universal areas, create appropriate procedures to avoid spreading invasive and cultural contrasting, create strategic economic approach to market stability and prosperity, given the need to compete with regional and international competitors with long-range plans, stablish for media the perspective to support sports tourism, revenue funding to develop this industry through income locations, encourage private sector investment in this sector and not confrontation of government through its development projects, trying to create harmony between the various institutions involved, to determine having the advantages of coordinating macro policies to develop this section and to request parliament lawyers in order to develop clear and strong legal policies.

**Keywords**: Sports tourism, Strategic planning, SWOT Analysis and Mazandaran Province.

1. - Academic Member, Sports Management Department, Islamic Azad University, Sari Branch. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. - Associate Professor, Sports Management Department, Islamic Azad University, Tehran Branch. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. - A Member of Youth Researchers Club, Islamic Azad University, Sari Branch. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. - Academic Member, Sports Management Department, Mazandaran University. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)