Examining the Ways of attracting tourists to the city Maneh and Smlqan County

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A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T
	Today, tourism industry, as one of the top industries, is growing strongly. Because of its ancient and sustainable culture an ecological diversity and rich historic, cultural and natural attractions, our country Iran, in every respect is ready for this industry, but tourism is neglected. Tourism is an industry that its development requires adequate knowledge and recognition of the effective economic social and cultural issues and factors. Without the knowledge of facilities of any region the will be no scientific and proper planning and predicting in that region. In fact recognition of natural social and economic capabilities of the region, make it possible for the programmer to recognize and direct the development of the region, based on its capabilities and current status. This study has been prepared to find the ways of attracting tourists in mane and semelqan county, based on the findings and results of the questionnaire distributed among the experts in cultural heritage and tourism of the county and Province, in 1392, to find the ways of attracting tourist in Maneh and Semelqan county. This paper deals with necessary planning about the recognition of the tourism areas as well as with the role of the in frastructural facilities and amenities' and Position of the advertisement in attracting tourists. This study also includes some suggestion's in order to attract tourists and using of the existent capabilities and features of the areas. With the proper planning and preparation and implementation of the tourism comprehensive plan ,we can make it possible to attract more tourist as well as to reduce the harmful effects of tourism on the environment and culture of the society.

INTRODUCTION

Today, the tourism industry as a dynamic industry and its development – oriented features , has attracted a significant part of economic and productive activities of the developed and developing countries.

Growth of the tourism industry in the last years of the twentieth century ,has made it necessary to pay attention to environmental considerations and sustainable development indicator's. Today ,tourism which in the ancient world was limited to commercial affairs ,pilgrimage ,messaging ,exceptional travels of the spies and adventurers and also travels od the students ,is one of the most important and effective factors of the economy and as one of the leading factors in social and cultural communication ,is considerable and should be investigated.(shekuyi –1354. P. 5)

Today tourism income is one of the greatest sources of the countries income which is known as invisible exports in the world. Thus we try to avoid effective factors in reducing the flow of tourism and to provide opportunities for growth and development of tourism in the country. Tourism can be studied from different aspects for example in economic aspect expanding of employment an income in social and cultural aspects, contrasting of the cultures and displaying of proper models. Our planners and policy makers also in regard to the history of our country must try to establish tourism – bases sustainable development. Since Iran is known as a country of four seasons, with a variety of climates, we can use its natural attractions to attract tourists. By recognizing the needs and requirements of the tourists during their researching and sight seeming. In this article we have tries to investigate the strategies of attracting tourists and introducing the region from this point of view.

Statement of issue:

Statement of issue in the first draft of a research project, that makes us familiar with the whole of the problem which is under the investigation, the manner of its in reduction and to its evaluation. (Mirzayi. Etal, 1386)

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However, preparing the study researchers is in order to explain their purpose and for the awareness of others to know what they are doing and what is beyond their jurisdiction. (Haring, loid ,1377, p.22).

Increasing of leisure times and reducing of working times in comparison with previous times is one of the detractive aspects of the twentieth century. Today, the desire for domestic and foreign travels and visiting the landmarks of other territories, getting familiar with nature and culture of others, has become an integral part of people's normal life. (Nikbin etal,1378 ,p. 56)

A tourism activity has become a mass scale during recent decades, and the number of passengers who travel for different reasons, is increasing every year. Naturally, the sample areas for tourism, as one of the tourism capabilities, have a significant impact on the development these parts. Development of tourism in deprived areas with potential for expansion of tourism, is one of the strategies that have been discussed recently, in most countries of the world.(Padhazade and etal.1391. p.2)

Tourism has played an important role in encouraging people to invest in infrastructures, generating revenue for the government and direct and indirect employment across the world. Based on available statistics, 3.5 billion trips are taken every year that 700 million of them are demos tic travels. Iran's share of these travels is 1 million and 500 thousand people that are about 2% of the global share. Iran is one of the 9 top countries of the world in the terms of having historical buildings and monuments and also among the ten top countries of the world in terms of having eco- tourism attractions. (Zarqani and etal. 1397 p.3)

Iran in term of having cultural, historic and natural attraction and also having attractive regions and villages is one of the strongest countries of the world. Certainly, tourism can be the most suitable and best strategy to replace the revenue deprived from oil and exporting mineral raw materials and soon, in a single product country of third world.(Qasemi ,1385 p.726)

Every year, Mane and Semelgan with its rich natural resources and numerous monuments, in its different parts, and also being located tourism.(Tourism – entertainment pole of Mazendaran and Gillan provinces and Tourism – Pilgrimage pole of holy Mashhad)

Is receptive for more than ten million passengers through this channel of communication. Factors like ,the unique position of the county ,climate variability ,vegetation varies ,semi – arid areas ,forests ,water falls , enjoying the ethnic diversity ,unique hand crafts ,existence of historic – cultural places across the county ,can play an important role in attracting tourists and pilgrims and can lead to economic growth of the region and the country ,which to date ,little attention has been paid to them. In this study we examine ways of attracting tourists and Tourism development in Maneh and Semelgan County. This study aims to achieve good practices in order to attract and develop suitable in Fra structures for the development of this industry in the county achieve goals.

Achieve goals:

The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the strategies of attracting tourists and tourism development in Maneh and semelqan county.

Assumptions:

Hypothesis display certain directing shows about the realities and help researches and guide them to investigate the facts and experiences. Hypotheses is an explanatory suggestion, in other words, hypothesis is the solution which helps us to find the arrangement among the facts and leads to conclusion. (Hafeznia, 1387, p.111) with regard to this condition that success of a study desponds on choosing the right, measured accurate hypothesis (Mehraban, khomartash, 1387.p.6).

It seems that improving the in Fra structural facilities and leads to increase in tourism attraction.

It seems in traducing the historic and eco-tourism attractions through the press and media leads to increasing tourism attraction.

Range of study:

North khorasan with an area of about 28434 square kilometers has taken 1.7 percent of teetotal area of Iran. Area of Mane and Semelgan county is about 6053 square kilometers.(statistical year book of north khorasan, 1390 .p.28)

This county with the centrality of Ashkhaneh has located in 46 km north west of the province, between the Geographic circuit of 37 degrees and 17 minutes to 38 degrees and 7 minutes of the north latitude from the equator and has located 55 degrees and 59 minutes to 57 degrees

Picture 1: Location: North Khorasan Province in Iran Map
            Source: North Khorasan Governor ,1392

and 17 minutes from the Greenwich: Meridian. This county with the area of 6053 square kilometers and 21 percent of the total area of the province ,as the most extensive county of the province with central city of Ashkhane has located in the path of Asian read of Gorgan – Bojnurd This county has located between the Geographic circuit of 37 degrees and 17 minutes to 38 degrees and 7 minutes of the North latitude from the equator and has located 55 degrees and 59 minutes to 57 degrees and 17 minutes from the Greenwich meridian (statistical year book of North khorasan ,1390 ,pages 33 – 34.)

This county has 8 km common border with Turkmenistan and has been limited from the north to the Raze and Jar Galan county, from the west the Golestan province (Maravetape and kalale counties) ,from south to Game and Jajarm COUNTIES AND FROM THE EAST HAS BEEN LIMITED TO THE CENTRAL PART OF THE Bojnurd. (Motavali, haqiqi, 1387. P.263)

Picture 2: Maneh and Smlqan city status in Northern Khorasan
            Source: North Khorasan Governor, 1392

Objectives and characteristics of tourism:
A: tourism objectives:

Basically sustainable tourism has objective and characteristics which seperates it from other concepts. These objectives and characteristics can be out lined as follows:

- Improving the quality of life of the host society.
- Respect the quality between two generations and with in a generation.
- The quality of the environment through protecting the environmental system.
- Protecting cultural unity and solidarity among communities.
- Creating facilities and resources forvistors so that they can gain valuable experiences.

B : characteristics of tourism:

- Enhances social justice, considers participation of the host population in the affairs and their needs.
- Considers local people participation in planning and decision making and employs them (to create jobs).
- Works with in the limits of available resources, reduces the negative effects on these resources to the minimum transparency. Recycles wastes by using appropriate methods, thinks about necessary actions.
- Provides recreational and educational facilities for the present and future generation.
- Respects to the local culture and Activities way which reflects that culture.
- Brings valuable experience for the visitors, and provides facilities for them in order to understand the region and its facilities and encourages them to protect the culture and environment of that society.
- Tries to be careful, lest causes damage the society in the way of its development, expantion and guaranteed stability.
- Respects local, regional and national programs (chakway GI, 1377. P.353)

Examining the validity and reliability of measuring in strumpets:

Since, how a day, in many researches for calculating the validity of in strument, Cron bachs Alpha method is used; in this study we have used this method for calculating the questionnaire. In order to calculate the coefficient of the Chron bachs Alfa, spss software has been used and according to the quest ionnaire its coefficient is 76.2 witches shows a high reliability.

The validity test that has been applied in this study, is formal validity test, so that this questionnaire has been submitted to faculty advisors and consultants and experts of cultural heritage and tourism office in order to put to formal validity test and then according to their ideas ,this study had been corrected and modified.

Descriptive analysis of tourist's questionnaire:
sex of respondents:

According to data obtained from the questionnaires 86 percent of the respondents are male and 14 percent of them are female. As the figures show most of the respondents to the questionnaire are male.

Table1: Frequency and percentage sex of respondents

Female	Male	Explanation	Row
6	37	Number	1
14	86	Percentage	2

Source: author, 1392
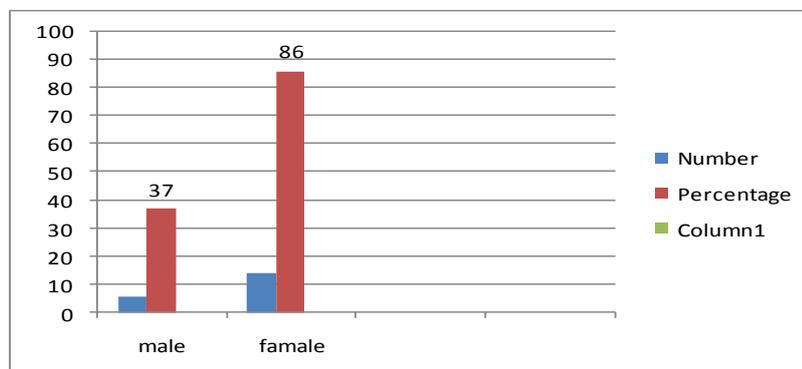
Fig. 1: Frequency and percentage sex of respondents
      Source: Author, based on Table 1

Age of respondents:

Most of the respondens are in the age category of 26 – 30. (32.56 percent) and 6.98 percent of the respondents are in the age category of 20 – 25 and 30.23 percent of them are in age category of 31 – 35. That is

the second rank among the respondents. And also 27.97 of the respondents are in the age category of 36 – 50.And 2.33 percent which includes the minimum number of the categories ,is in the age category of over 50 years. This amount is indicative of young population in examining the strategies of attracting tourists in the county.

Table 2: Frequency and percentage of the respondents age category.

Percentage		Frequency		Age categories	Row
Cumulative	Absolute	Cumulative	Absolute		
6.98	6.98	3	3	20 – 25	1
39.53	32.56	17	14	26 – 30	2
69.77	30.23	30	13	31 – 35	3
97.67	27.91	42	12	36 – 50	4
100	2.33	43	1	Over 50 years	5
----------	100	-----------	43	Total	6

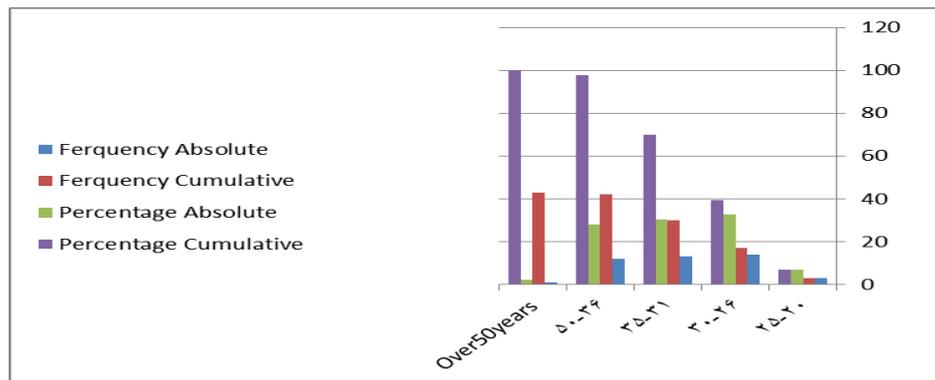Source: author, 1392

Fig. 2: Frequency and percentage of the respondents age category.
          Source: Author, based on Table 2

Educational level:

     16.28 percent of the respondents level of education is diploma and lower than it ,4.45 percent of them have post diploma ,53.49 percent of them hold BA degree and 25.58 percent of the respondents have M.A degree and higher than it. According to the figure we can say that 83.72 percent of the respondents are educated which indicates thoughtful and better idea for tourism development and providing appropriate strategies to attract tourist in this county.

Table 3: number and percentage of educational level of the respondents.

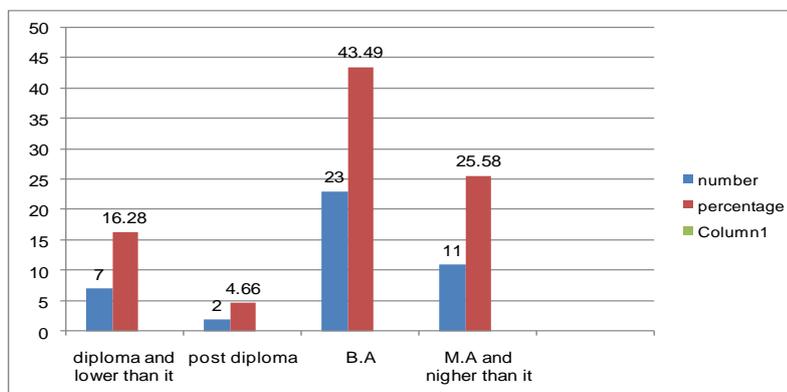| Percentage	Number	Explanation	Row
16.28	7	Diploma and lower thanit	1
4.65	2	Post diploma	2
53.49	23	B . A	3
25.58	11	M.Aand nigher thanit	4
100	43	Total	5

Source:author,1392

Fig. 3: number and percentage of educational level of the respondents.
          Source: Author, based on Table 3

Employment status:

Employment status of respondents about the strategies of tourist attraction, In the county is as following: 48.84 percent are officials, 27.91 percent are contract employees and 23.26 percent of them are conditional employees. Aso in terms of organizational post we can say that majority of these respondents are in expert and executive posts in the field of tourism and its related activities.

Table 4: number and percentage of the respondent's employment status.

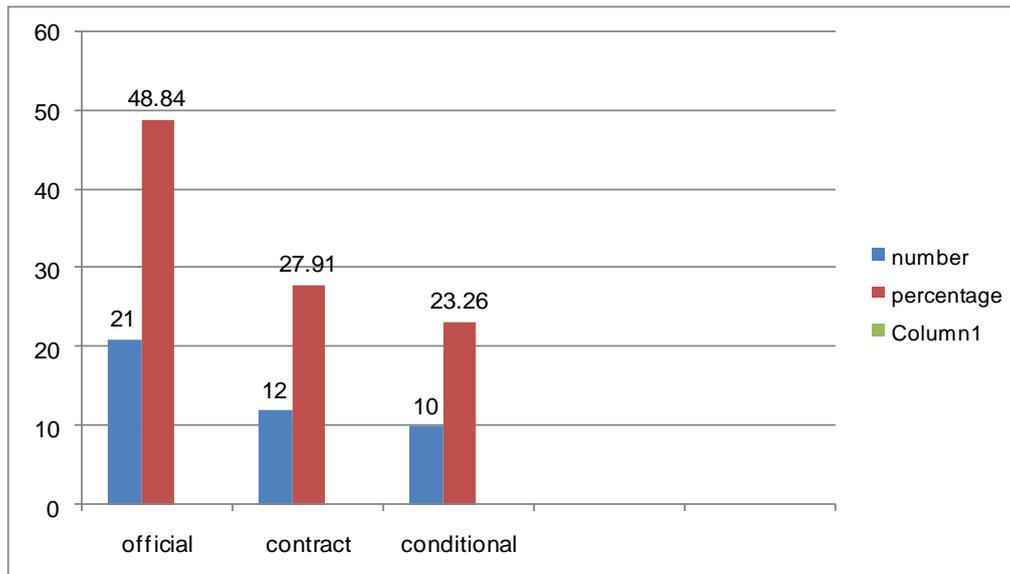| Percentage	Number	Employment status	Row
48.84	21	Official	1
27.91	12	Contract	2
23.26	10	Conditional	3
100	43	Total	4

Source: author, 1392

Fig. 4: number and percentage of the respondent's employment status.
        Source: Author, based on Table 4

Other tourism-related questions:

Table 5: frequency and percentage of respondents'age category.

Very low	low	medium	High	Very high	Questions	
2	2	1	12	26	number	Status of commercial and tourist guide facilities.
4.65	4.65	2.33	27.91	60.47	percentage	
1	2	0	14	26	number	Availability rate of transport facilities.
2.33	4.65	0	32.56	60.47	percentage	
1	1	0	15	26	number	The role of good management in tourist places.
2.33	2.33	0	34.88	60.47	percentage	
0	0	3	18	22	number	Appropriate health and cure facilities.
0	0	6.98	41.86	51.16	percentage	
0	0	3	13	27	number	Existence of natural attractions.
0	0	6.98	30.23	62.79	percentage	
0	0	10	19	14	number	Existence of historic attractions.
0	0	23.26	44.19	32.56	percentage	
1	6	14	19	3	number	Development of the agriculture in the region.
2.33	13.96	32.56	44.19	6.98	percentage	
0	2	5	16	20	number	Attraction and support of private and public investors.
0	4.65	11.63	37.21	46.51	percentage	
0	1	10	15	17	number	Existence of religuscand pilgrimage attractions.
0	2.33	23.26	34.88	39.53	percentage	
0	1	2	17	23	number	Existence of tourism equipment and facilities.
0	2.33	4.65	39.53	53.49	percentage	
0	1	4	16	22	number	Introducing of the historic attractions and eco-tourism through press and media.
0	2.33	9.3	37.21	51.16	percentage	

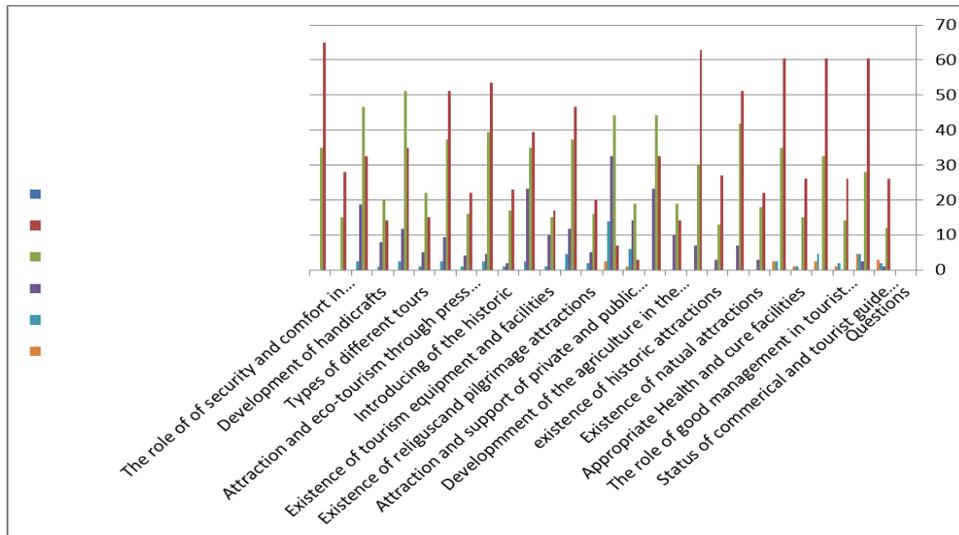| 0	1	5	22	15	number	Types of different tours.
0	2.33	11.63	51.16	34.88	percentage	
0	1	8	20	14	number	Development of handicrafts
0	2.33	18.6	46.51	32.56	percentage	
0	0	0	15	28	number	The role of security and comfort in tourism regions
0	0	0	34.88	65.12	percentage	

Source: author, 1392

Fig. 5: frequency and percentage of respondents'age category.
Source: Author, based on Table 5

Priority of tourism attractions:

Prioritization about the top and important attract on of the region according to the obtained results, shows that eco – tourism attracts (natural attractions) with 69.77 percent are in the first place and historic attractions with 20.93 percent and also cultural attractions with 9.30 percent are in next places. Over all results of the examining the respondents opinion about the most effective attraction in attracting tourist to the region, are as follows:

Picture 3: hill of ghale khan
Source: cultural Heritage and Tourism office of the county, 1392.

Picture 4: Emamzade Golzar of keshanak.
            Source: Author, 1392.

Table 6: number and percentage of responses to the priorities of tourism attractions.

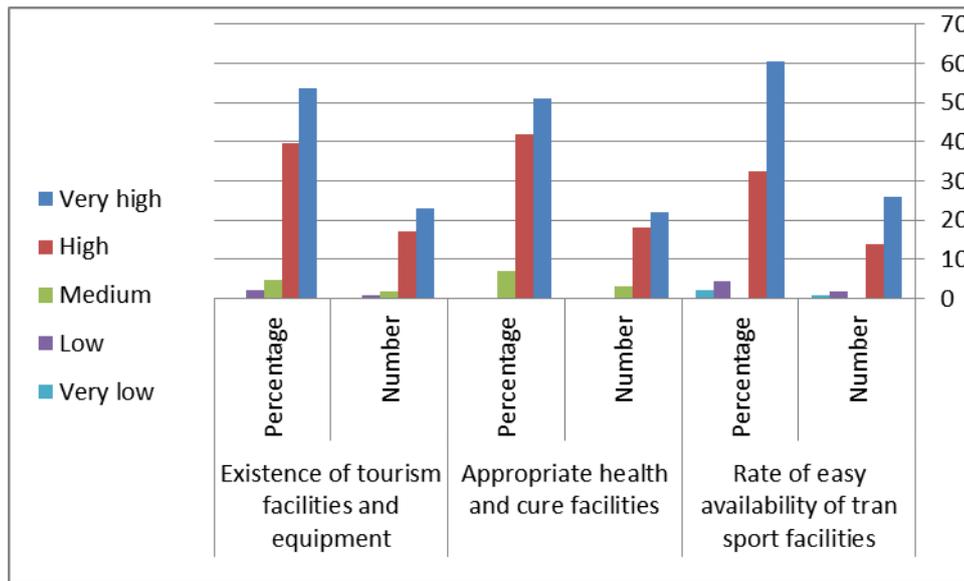| Cultural attractions	historic attractions	Eco-touristy attractions(natural)	Priority	Explanation	Row
4	9	30	First	Number	1
9	24	10	Second		2
30	10	3	Third		3
9.30	20.93	69.77	First	Percentage	4
20.93	55.81	23.26	Second		5
69.77	23.26	6.98	Third		6

Source, author, 1392

Fig. 6: number and percentage of responses to the priorities of tourism attractions.
          Source: Author, based on Table 6

Test of hypothesis:
First hypothesis: It sees that improving the in frastructural facilities and amenities leads ti increasing in tourism attraction:

Since the measure levels of the discussed variables in the considered hypothesis is in the for mof distance – distance, Pearson's correlation efficient «R» test has been used. Because the calculated level of significance (sig =0.01) is lower than the desired level of signify cance (a = 0.05) There for the hull hypothesis which is based the lake of redation ship between in dependent and dependent variable, is rejected and research hypothesis is confirmed. The obtained Pearson's correlation coefficient is: 0.012.

Formula number 1, Pearson's correlation coefficient.

$$ r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n(\sum x^2) - (\sum x)^2][n(\sum y^2) - (\sum y)^2]}} $$

Proper access to roads ,existence of health and cute facilities in tourism places ,existence of types of cheap ,medium or expensive hotels and affordable catering units ,are basic infra structural facilities by which we can increase the number of tourists and visitors.

Table 7: response rate of infra structural and amenities facilities of tourism regions.

Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Rate	Explanation	ROW
1	2	0	14	26	Number	Rate of easy availability of tran sport facilities	1
2.33	4.65	0	32.56	60.47	Percentage		
0	0	3	18	22	Number	Appropriate health and cure facilities	2
0	0	6.98	41.86	51.16	Percentage		
0	1	2	17	23	Number	Existence of tourism facilities and equipment	3
0	2.33	4.65	39.53	53.49	Percentage		

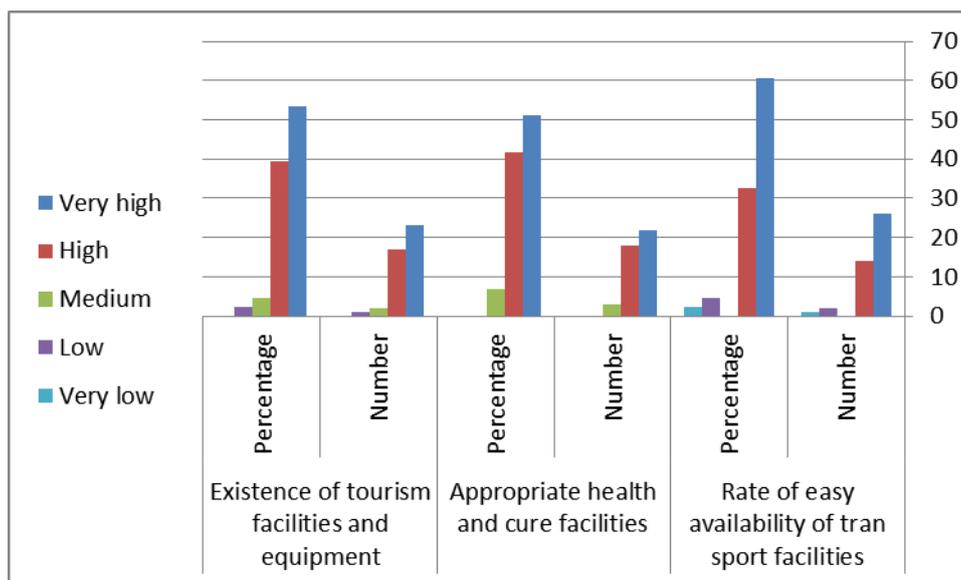Source: Analysis of questionnaires data, 1392

Fig. 7: response rate of infra structural and amenities facilities of tourism regions
          Source: Author, based on Table 7

According to the table 7 we can say that more than 50 percent of the respondents answers to the questions related to infra ctural ficilities and amenities such as : access and tran sport roads and health and cure facilities and equipment (hoteland catering units) ,are «very high» and more than 30 percent of them have chosen the answer «high».

So by this description of the answers of the respondents who are the experts in cultural heritage and tourism and also according to the correlation coefficient between infra structural facilities and omenities we can conclude that existence and improvement of the facilities, whether infra-structure or amenities will lead to increasing attraction of tourist in tourism regions of the county and vice versa.

Every year ,Maneh and Semelqan county with its natural resources and numerous monuments ,in its different parts and also being located in the path between two poles of tourism of the country (Tourism – Entertainment pole of Mazandran and Gillan provinces and Tourism – Pilgrimage pole of the holy Mashhad). Is receptive for more than ten million passengers through this channel of communication. Factors like The unique position of the county , climate variability vegetation varies ,semi – arid areas ,forests ,water falls enjoying the ethnic diversity ,unique handicrafts ,existence of historic – cultural places across the county ,can play an important role in attracting tourists and pilgrims and also can lead to economic growth of the region the country. With regard to issues such as infra structural facilities and amenities which can be used as a potential for growth and development.

With these conditions we can say that the first hypothesis which says improvement of the infra structural facilities and amenities lead to increasing in tourism attractions, **is accepted and approved**.

Second hypothesis: It seems that the lack of a good introduction of historic and eco – tourism attraction through press and media is one of the obstacles to attracting tourists in Mane and Semelqan County:

In recent years, tourism as a major and effective economic faction has been focused on ,and because of this fact ,we try to provide necessary facilities for its growth and development ,this industry ,economically ,has had great results in the terms of employment ,development and also increasing the G.D.P of the region.

Advertising is one if the major factors in regard to the tourism of the region. So that more than half of the tourists have evaluated the advertising ad on important factor and also they have evaluated the mass media and distributing the advertising the region.

Since the scale variable of this hypothesis is also in the form of distance – distance, pear sons correlation coefficient test has been used.

According to this test, the calculated level of significance (sig=0.01)is lower than the desired level of significance (a=0.05) therefrom the hull hypothesis ,which is based on the lake of relationship between the independent and dependent variable is rejected and research hypothesis is confirmed. The obtained Pearsons correlation coefficient is 0.33

According to the table (1 – 5) we can say that more than 60 percent of the respondents answers to the questions which are related to the status of commercial and tourist quid facilities in order to attracting tourists are «every high» and also 27 percent of them has chosen the answer «high» ,In general 85 percent of the

respondents have evaluated ,the existence of good advertising ,use of commercial and tourist guide facilities in order to familiarize the tourists with area and attracting them to the region ,as effective ,factors.

However according to the answers of respondents to the questionnaires and correlation coefficient between advertising and tourist attraction ,we can conclude that the more advertising we have about the tourism areas the more tourists will enter to the county and vice versa.

According to above conditions and explanations we can say that the second hypothesis accepted and approved.

General depiction of Mane city identity Smlqan:

Depicting of the total identity of the county Geographically, Maneh and Semelqan County is divided in two, mountainous and plain parts. Mountainous part of the county is located mainly in the south and south west, and Qorkhord and Hassan Bag Mountains are located in this area. Plain part of the county is located in the west of the county and includes some parts of north and center of the county and population centers are located in this part. Attract river flows constantly in the southern part of the county. In general permanent water sources and fertile soil of the county have changed it to one of the major agricultural region in the province. High relative humidity and springs have created dense forests and lush meadows in southern parts of the county and in the slopes of YamanDaghi Mountain. Existence of so many natural resources in this county attracted human populations and nurtured many brilliant cultures in the region. Existence of monuments from the prehistoric period to the contemporary period, in different parts of the county shows a continuing settlement of human beings in this territory. According to archae a logical researches some parts of Maneh and Semelqan, for the first time has been residential place, about eight thousand years ago. Which its amenities can be seen in Ghale Khan hill, which is located in semelqan plain. This county has been as a segment of the police of Part, during the Achaemenid period and during the Parthian and sasanian periods was also considered. Dispersal of settlement areas, defensive fortress, religious centers, and Sassanid coins discovered in different parts of the county, are evidence of this claim.

Picture 3: forests of Darkesh
          Source: author, 1392

Conclusion:

Today tourism is one of the most prolific human activities of the twenty – first century. Therefore, with strategic planning for tourism development with the aim of improving the quality of services we can hope for the cultural and economic development of the Maneh and Semelqan County.

Strategic planning as a systematic approach to decision making and implementation of constructive measures ,a system can help the programmers operation and foundation in order to achieve the goals of tourism development planning. Strategic planning can help programmers in order to develop practical strategies for tourism development. Findings of this study can provide a basis for planning and strategy of thematic and regional projects in the field of tourism in Maneh and Semelqan County.

Guidelines and Recommendations:

Due to the multiple capacities of the county which in addition to recreation opportunities for its citizens, it provides services to travelers who are passing through the area and special tourists of the province. There is always the possibility of attracting tourists, but this number is reduced due to the cold air of winter and in the summer the county has the largest number of tourists. Maneh and Semelqan is considered as gateway of the

North Khorasan Province when coming from Golestan province and every year many travelers and tourist are seen in it. Looking at the history of the county ,we realize that Maneh and Semelqan has a history of thousand years and however there are more than 1500 amenities in it ,the county has not benefited from the tourism industry. While we can develop and revive the tourism industry in the county by attracting investment and supporting the private sector. There are good capacities including, monuments, pristine and untouched nature, different customs, traditional food and handicrafts for the development of tourism in Maneh and Semelqan. Below some good practices of attracting tourists to the country have been points out which are:

Development of handy crafts- constructing of dams-creation and setting up traps an cab – Development of ornamental and medical plants – expansion of local sports – development of In Fra structures – development of facilities – development of transport facilities holding of Different festivals – development of commercials in tourism areas – setting up local markets Attracting and supporting of private and public investors – building the museum – establishing   Recreation complexes and camps – developing and supporting of typical areas of tourism – reconstructing the tourism center- developing of water treatment facilities.

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