

## Designing and Managing the Tourists Information Centers in Iran Tourism Industry

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### ABSTRACT

*The Tourists Information Centers (TICs), as one of the major components of information provision and dissemination system, play an important role in fulfilling the information needs of tourists as well as in introducing and promoting the tourism potential and attractions of a tourism destination. The present paper aimed at presenting a practical model for designing and managing of TICs, studying at the same time their existing situation as well as their increasing role in Iran tourism industry. This was the first attempt to study the subject within a systematic and professional network.*

*The method that the research enjoyed was: from objective view, applied, from the data type: quantitative, from the method of data collection: descriptive from correlation type, and the method of implementation: survey. The results of the study showed that there was a meaningful difference between the current situation of TICs in Iran tourism industry and the optimal standard at the moment. To bridge the existing gap the implementation strategies were devised and put forward.*

**Key words:** Information in tourism, Tourists Information Centers, Iran Tourism Houses, Korea tourism industry.

### Introduction

Tourism is an information based industry from its nature perspective. Concerning to its importance, Sheldon J. Pauline, professor of University of Hawaii in United States refers to a contemplative simile; she compares the role of information in tourism industry with blood circulation in human body. As human being cannot live without blood circulation, the development of tourism industry is impossible without information (Pauline, 1993:639). For any trip, significance amount of information is necessary in different fields such as roads, maps, plans, flight scheduling, cost of trip, destinations, souvenirs and products, accommodation and hospitality services, health and hygiene centers and etc (Teymouri, 2012:26).

The recent studies show that the travelers use different resources like personal experiences, friend and relatives recommendations, travel agencies advertisements and guides, brochures, tourism guiding books, media and the new information technologies (Fondness et al, 1999:222). The manner of access to information is effective in planning, organizing and expenditures of travel and also interaction of the tourists with local communities. It plays a determinant role in assessment of customer satisfaction and success of a tourism destination. For more using of touristic and recreational facilities and hospitality, the visitors need to primary information on the destination.

Higher information provision level leads to positive consequences of visiting of the tourists in a place (Guy et al, 1987:420). Tourism information centers play important role in information provision required for tourists. The study on the current status

of the TICs in some destination indicates that any destination possesses specified number of such

centers based on expansion of the destinations, services and number of tourists plan. The size of these centers depends on the type of activities and it ranges from small and simple buildings to big complexes. Besides information provision and dissemination, other services are offered regarding to fulfilling tourists needs in selection of dwelling, providing tickets, visa and foreign exchange. Some of these centers are constructed in the target markets in order to provide information that facilitates journey and guide the tourists to the dependent destinations and organize marketing and propagandize activities of the private and public sectors. According to the role and importance of these centers, Iran tourism industry needs to designing of specified number of these centers to meet the tourists needs and introduce tourism attractions and targets in national and international levels.

This article has been organized in six sections. After introduction, the research literature review and the status of the TICs in Iran and Korea are presented. In section three, the data are analyzed. Section four proposes a model for establishing the TICs in Iran tourism industry. In section five, the article is concluded and finally, propositions are offered for improvement of tourism information in Iran.

### Literature review

Information provision and dissemination in tourism planning is in category of destination management factors. Effective organization structure, target marketing, procurement and assurance of high quality visit, provision and dissemination of

information, development of human resources, allocation of proportioned budget, effective management of the visitors, resources management and finally, the preparation for unpredicted crises management are in this category (Goldenberg et al, 2006:438). In recent years, several studies have been conducted on information management in tourism industry. Pauline (1993) investigated tourism organizational structure and information resources of some European countries and offered a proper model for designing of an information system.

Fesenmeier and Fodness (1992) have emphasized on the importance and necessity of different information resources and easy access ways to information in different tourism destinations. Kotler et al (1996) and Philips et al (2005) have referred to the important role of information in marketing and research in tourism markets.

By advent of information technologies concurrent to influence on industries in the world, the tourism industry was one of these industries that has been more affected by technology due to its particular structure and nature. In this regard, Buhalis (2003) and Rayman-Bacus (2001) investigated the role and position of information technologies and communications in fulfilling tourists information provision needs and their advantages in defining the data banks and TICs. Of course, besides theoretical studies, practical plans have been implemented in some destinations in designing and management of TICs. For example, Tourism Organization of Republic of Korea in 2009 published a report on the activities of TICs in this country. A very interesting report on the activities of TICs in Canterbury, in England could be referred also in this framework (Frew et al, 2003:477).

In Islamic Republic of Iran, the information service in tourism industry and TICs was studied for the first time within the national tourism development plan in 2001. This study was conducted by collaboration of consultants from United Nations World Tourism Organization and United Nations Development Program. The current status of tourism centers was reported and propositions for development of these centers were offered. This report has been used as base for designing questionnaires of the present study. Due to lack of access of national planners to comprehensive and correct information in this context, the conducted studies lack practical aspect.

### **The Tourists Information Centers in Republic of Korea**

There is possibility of fulfilling needs of international and domestic tourists, development of tourism industry in Republic of Korea by emphasis on indigenous and national standards and also availability of the required resources and systematic administrative structure, the activities of the KTO

Tourists Information Center in this country was studied as an optimal model in this research.

About 330 tourists information centers are active in South Korea. Of this amount, 6 centers is supervised directly by Korea tourism organization, 20 centers are dependent on Korea Association of Travel Agents, 110 centers are supervised by Korea Highway Corporation, 189 centers are supervised by Local Governments and 5 centers are managed by supervision of Korea Railroad Corporation.

KTO Tourists Information Center, as an important TIC, is located in a land in area of 1429 m<sup>2</sup> in Korea Tourism Organization Headquarter Building. This center was established in 1986 and it was renewed in 2000 and in 2005 some part of the main building was added in order to fulfilling foreign tourists' needs. Four staff employees speak English, 3 employees speak Japanese and one employee speaks Chinese. They work every day even in vacation from 9 am to 20 pm.

The role and function of KTO TIC:

- Serve as a standard TIC model
- A modern IT-based TIC model
- Coordinate TIC network
- Share expertise on TIC operation with other TICs
- Act as a leading organization in the drive to improve overall tourist information services
- Tourist information services (in English, Japanese, Chinese), train and flight tickets, local tour-booking, Korean Wave and traditional culture exhibitions and experiences, tourism-related seminars

### **KTO Tourists Information Center's overall structure**

1-Information desk: This unit is in charge of tour-route planning or providing the tourists with information on transportation, accommodations and provision of free brochures and maps.

2-Korean wave hall: This hall is used for showing movies, performing theater and music, exhibition of pictures and works of famous artists.

3- Auditorium: By construction in 215 m<sup>2</sup> and equipped with 149 chairs is proper place for monthly lectures, visual and auditoria programs on Korea.

4-Souvenir shop: The tourist products are sold in these shops for the tourists.

5-cultural property artisans' hall: Different artisans, cultural products, paintings and wood decoration of the Korean artists are offered in this hall.

6-Tourism technology library: more than 17000 books, articles and texts on tourism are available in this library.

7-Free internet access zone: This center is equipped to internet and tourism website by four computers that used freely.

8-Travel agent: This unit is responsible for preparing tickets of train and plane, scheduling of tours, visa and passports of the tourists and etc.

### Tourists Information Centers in Iran

Iran tourism industry has not have active and official information centers in the target markets since Islamic revolution. Although in recent years, designing and establishing of such offices have been gained attention of the policy makers in agenda of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization and this organization has taken some concrete action in this regard but, they have been unsuccessful due to shortages in designing, definition of duties and management of the affairs. Lack of familiarity of the tourists with Iran tourism capabilities particularly with Iran's today society, the negative image in the mind of western tourists due to the political challenges of the country with the World Powers, the political and social crises and insecurity in the region particularly in neighbor countries like Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq leading to insecurity in the borders (Teymouri, 2012) necessitate correct introduction of the tourism destinations and attractions and offering clear image of Iran as an attractive tourism destination in the region and introducing competitive qualities in the markets with optimal designing and information provision. According to the studies conducted by World Travel & Tourism Council in 2010, the share of tourism in gross production in Iran was %8.4, %7.4 in employment and %2.5 in export of goods through the international tourists. So, Iran tourism economic rank is 95 among 181 countries. The important point is that in next ten years (2020) according to descending trend of Iran tourism industry economic effects, this rank will be reduced to 135 (WTTC, 2010). Optimal utilization of facilities offered by Islamic Republic of Iran Missions and representatives in foreign countries, employing marketing institutes and counselors in the target countries, providing contexts for active attendance of private sector in the market, empowerment of the NGOs, employing Iranian residents in foreign countries for neutralizing negative propagandizes, improvement of the existing image of the country and achieve real share in international tourism market will be substantiated only by attendance in the main and target markets.

Although, primary centers have been established in cross sectional and dispersed forms in some cities in Iran, and the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization has designed and developed some tourism houses in international airports in some provinces. But in practice, these plans have been unsuccessful and problems like ill organization of the travelers and tourists in borders, insufficient information centers, dispersion and improper localization, lack of standard directions for tourist activities in an integrated and coordinated network confirm the results of the specialists' assessment in this context.

Meanwhile, in the recent years, the up-stream development plans of the country have stressed the need for the urgent establishment of TICs and there are even the good development proposals in this regard. The creation of Iran TICs in some tourist target markets in abroad as well as in some important cities of the country were known necessary for the introduction of the Iranian culture and civilization (ICHTO Research Center, 2007: 18). This subject was been emphasized also in I.R. of Iran Development Perspective in 2025 (The Office of the Leader, 2005: 2) and in the third Plan of Cultural, Economic and Social Development of the country (OPM<sup>1</sup>, 2000: Article 6). Some of the approvals and laws explained directly the establishment of tourists information centers are as follows (Nateg Elahi, 1999):

-Article 3 of the Iran Tourism and Tourism Industry Development Law approved by board of ministers in 1994/7/15:

“Airlines and Railway Administration of Islamic republic of Iran, ports and shipping Organization, municipalities, terminals and Iran Custom Administration are responsible for providing proper place for Ministry of culture and Islamic Guidance to construct tourism information centers in inlets and outlets of the cities” (Iran Third political, social and economic development program, 2000).

-Note of article 3 of Iran travel and tourism industry development law approved by board of ministers in 1999/10/23:

“All governmental administrations subjected to this article are responsible for discount in rent of the mentioned places minimum to %90”.

Meanwhile, these plans did not give a scientific and professional method for designing and managing of a systematic network for the Tourists Information Centers in Iran tourism industry.

### The research questions and Methodology

In such conditions for correct evaluation, the present research tries to respond to the following major question:

What is the optimal condition for information centers in Iran tourism industry?

In this regard and by the aim of investigation the different aspects of tourism information, secondary questions have been arisen:

- 1-What is the status of TICs in Iran?
- 2- What is the status of TICs in Iran tourism destination markets?
- 3-What is the status of TICs technology, equipment and infrastructure in Iran tourism industry?
- 4- What is the status of TICs in Iran tourism industry from structural integration perspective?

<sup>1</sup> Organization for Planning and Management (OPM)

5-What is the tendency toward establishing expanded and systematic information centers in Iran tourism industry?

The method that the research enjoys is applied from objective viewpoint, quantitative from type and descriptive from correlation and survey from method of implementation. The statistical population consists of 52 specialists that they were selected as purposeful and judgment method due to possessing of skillfulness and experiences in tourism and they responded to an author made questionnaire with 26 statements with Likert five scales scope. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by 5 experts of tourism and the reliability was confirmed by Cronbach alpha coefficient of %88.4.

**Data analysis**

Descriptive statistics was used for analysis of the data. Of 52 individuals responded to the questionnaire, 44 individuals are male (%84.6) and 8 individuals are female ( %15.4). 11 experts have

PhD degree (%21.2), 39 persons are MA (%75) and 2 individuals have BS (%3.8). 18 individuals have tourism studies (%34.6), 15 persons studied geography (%28.8), 7 with management studies (%13.5), 7 with foreign languages studies(%13.5), 2 with historical monuments maintenance and preservation(%3.8), 1 with degree in statistics(%1.9), 1 with sociology studies(%1.9) and 1 with information technology degree(%1.9). The mean of activity in tourism information was estimated 11.42 years.

**Findings**

Following results were drawn for questions based on the data analysis:

1-What is the current status of TICs in Iran?

Tables 1 and 2 depict that there is a significant relationship between research mean (2.06) and theoretical mean (3) by reliability of %99 in  $\alpha=0.01$ ,  $df=51$  and  $T=-12.06$ . Indeed, the current status of TICs in Iran is weak according to the subjects.

**Table 1: current status of TICs in Iran (one sample test)**

	No	Mean	SD	SD mean
TICs in Iran	52	2.0615	0.56087	0.07778

**Table 2: current status of TICs in Iran (one sample test)**

Variable	Test value=3				
	T	fd	sig	Mean difference	%99 confidence interval of the difference
	Lower	Upper			
TICs in Iran	12.066	51	0.00	-0.93846	-1.0946 -0.7823

**Resource:** research findings

**Figure 2:** current status of TICs in Iran

Resource: Iran tourism development national plan

2-What is the current status of TICs in Iran tourism destination markets?

Tables 3 and 4 depict that there is a significant relationship between research mean (1.96) and theoretical mean (3) by reliability of %99 in  $\alpha=0.01$ ,  $df=51$  and  $T=-10.83$ . Indeed, the current status of TICs in Iran tourism target markets in international level is very weak according to the subjects.

**Table 3: one sample test**

	No	Mean	SD	SD mean
TICs in destination markets	52	1.9615	0.69123	0.09586



**Table 4: one sample test**

Variable	Test value=3					
	T	fd	sig	Mean difference	%99 confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
TICs in destination markets	-10.834	51	0.00	-1.03846	-1.2309	-0.8460

**Resource:** research findings

3- What is the current status of TICs technology, equipment and infrastructure in Iran tourism industry?

Tables 5 and 6 depict that there is a significant relationship between research mean (2.16) and theoretical mean (3) by reliability of %99 in  $\alpha=0.01$ ,  $df=51$  and  $T=-11.88$  according to descriptive and t test. Indeed, the current status of TICstechnology, equipment and infrastructure in Iran tourism industry is weak according to the subjects.

**Table 5: one sample test**

	No	Mean	SD	SD mean
technology, equipment and infrastructure	52	2.1635	0.50756	0.07039

**Table 6: one sample test**

Variable	Test value=3					
	T	fd	sig	Mean difference	%99 confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
technology, equipment and infrastructure	-11.885	51	0.00	-0.83654	-0.9778	-0.6952

**Resource:** research findings

4- What is the status of TICs in Iran tourism industry from structural integration perspective?

Tables 7 and 8 depict that there is a significant relationship between research mean (1.84) and theoretical mean (3) by reliability of %99 in  $\alpha=0.01$ ,  $df=51$  and  $T=-11.9$  according to descriptive and t test. Indeed, the current status of TICs in Iran tourism industry from structural integration perspective is very weak according to the subjects.

**Table 7: one sample test**

	No	Mean	SD	SD mean
structural integration	52	1.8462	0.69886	0.09689

**Table 8: one sample test**

Variable	Test value=3					
	T	fd	sig	Mean difference	%99 confidence interval of the difference	
					Lower	Upper
structural integration	-11.909	51	0.00	-1.15385	-1.3484	-0.9593

**Resource:** research findings

5- What is the tendency toward establishing expanded and systematic information centers in Iran tourism industry?

Tables 9 and 10 depict that there is a significant relationship between research mean (2.92) and theoretical mean (3) by reliability of %99 in  $\alpha=0.01$ ,  $df=51$  and  $T=-0.77$ . Indeed, the tendency toward establishing expanded and systematic information centers in Iran tourism industry is medium according to the subjects.

**Table 9: one sample test**

	No	Mean	SD	SD mean
Attitude and culture	52	2.9231	0.71493	0.099914

**Table 10: one sample test**

Test value=3						
Variable					%99 confidence interval of the difference	
	T	fd	sig	Mean difference	Lower	Upper
Attitude and culture	-0.776	51	0.441	-0.07692	-0.2760	0.1221

**Resource:** research findings

**Proposed model**

In recent conditions, Iran tourism industry needs more than ever to build a nationwide TIC network as well as in the international tourism market destinations. TICs are one of the effective components in fulfilling tourists information needs. Different centers by different equipment in the form of integrated and coordinated networks have to be established in specified points for guiding and settlement of the tourists in inlet and outlets of the cities. These centers play also an important role in collection of information and introducing tourism destinations. They are first established by local authorities and tourism unions and they are transferred to private sector after providing equipment and supervision and continue their activities. It is clear that this activity at the international level should be done based on studies and research on the market according to short term marketing strategies.

**Localization of TICs construction in Iran**

TICs are established in following places based on priority and importance after investigation of the locations:

- In the main and international entrances (marine, air, road and railroad)
- In the provinces centers and national airports
- In the local destinations and important attractions
- In the touristic crowded locations

Iran TICs in the foreign countries should be constructed based on marketing researches based on the scientific and practical indicators as short term

and intermediate as Iran tourism destination markets. TICs targets are prioritized based on indicators like population, per capita, cultural and believing commonalities, and neighborhood and historical, political and economic relations, number of foreign traveling in the target particularly by destination of Iran. Powerful motivation for visit of Iran, relatively high average of visit, relatively high daily cost and expenditure, cultural and believing compatibility are some of these indicators. According to particular structure of tourism industry in any country, TICs are usually constructed by participation of the governmental organizations, local authorities, unions and private sectors. Therefore these centers are responsible for their costs in long term.

**Duties of TICs**

TICs are responsible for directing of the tourists, sending information for the customers address in the form of maps, brochures, guides, provision of information about festivals, exhibitions and other events. These centers are in charge of responding to the questions about tourism industry, selection of the local tour guides. In some cases they play an important role in diversification of their income resources and progress of interaction between host and guest by holding exhibitions, educational meetings in the regional level. Preparing and reporting on the tourists behaviors concerning to the attractions and services, their expectations and tastes, probable problems and periodical statistics on number and cost of traveling are carried by these centers besides their main duties.

The duties of the Iran tourists information centers in foreign countries:

- Organizing of private and public sectors activities in the target markets

- Marketing and information dissemination on Iran tourism industry in the target market
- Assurance of the tourism sent to Iran from the target market considering doubts on the journey
- Identification of the important real and legal entities in the target tourism market and introduction of them to Iran tourism industry
- Research on the desires, tastes and motivation of the customers in the target market
- Work relationship among private and public sectors active in both countries
- Offering required facilities for tourists sent from the target market to the destination

### **Equipment and main parts in tourism houses**

These centers are different in size due to type and activities. These centers are built with two administrative and services sections at first stage and they possess technical computer facilities, appropriate workplace for staff and holding sessions, warehouse and bathrooms. Due to necessities and current conditions for information provision and dissemination in Iran in international level, the offices established in foreign countries should be equipped by developed equipment. So, a proposed model is recommended for Iran TICs inside the country as follows:

- Reception of the referees unit: equipped with two computers connected to the country tourism information database, the region information bank, internet for guiding the tourists and access to information. Information provision is carried out in the scope of transportation, residency places, free marketing items like brochures and maps. It is necessary to use phone number, fax and furniture (table, chairs, shelf and etc) in these places.
- Investigation the orders and demands unit: provision and sending of propagandized items and information provision tools like book, CD, posters, movie, cassette, map and etc, guidance and aid to the researchers and activists in the mentioned places and respond to phone and email contacts.
- Traveling services unit: this unit offers services on providing tourists with train and plane tickets, planning of local tours, aid in insurance, visa and passports of the tourists, appointing of local tour guides, consulting on time and manner of traveling to Iran.
- Marketing unit: this unit is responsible for market researches, identification of the important real and legal identities in the target markets and introduction of them to the Iran tourism industry, research on the target markets regarding demands, desires and motivation of the customers, preparation and reporting of the technical and specialists consulting reports inside the country, working relationship among different private and public sectors in tourism, negotiation with actors of tourism industry of the target country for planning and inviting tourists to Iran.
- Expos hall and auditorium: these facilities can be used for introduction of Iran tourism capabilities, showing movies on customs,

diversity of country's cultures, theaters, performance of music, showing pictures of Iran tourism industry, cultural properties and artisans, artistic work, painting of the Iranian artists, holding meetings, lectures, performing visual and auditory programs, information and marketing items on Iran tourism industry.

-Souvenir shop and purchase services: these shops sell touristic and artisans' goods, souvenirs and offer services for visit and purchase of the tourists.

-Education and investigation on the complaints unit: this unit collects the data from referees and contactors, designs needed forms and questionnaires about satisfaction and dissatisfaction of tourists, investigate the complaints and probable shortcomings, holds workshops, lecture and etc in the mentioned region.

### **Qualifications of the TICs staff**

For establishing a TIC, minimum three or four employees are necessary at first time with following qualifications:

- BSc in one of the humanities sciences related to tourism industry, complete familiarity with Iran tourism, attractions and target tourism capabilities and etc
- Speaking English and in case of necessity other language like Arabic, French, Chinese, Japanese and etc according to the geographical place and its customers
- Familiarity with tourism research, marketing and information provision principles
- High public relations ability, good natured with capability of attract the tourists and analysis and rapid responsiveness
- Wearing local costumes in case of necessity
- Primary educations and in-job training

**Iran TICs staff in foreign countries** should have following qualifications:

- Complete acquaintance with Iran and the target country tourism industry, its structure, main actors and components in private and public sectors
- Familiarity with tourism research, marketing and information provision
- Complete familiarity with the target language and Persian
- High public relations, good natured with ability to attract the customer and analysis and rapid responsiveness
- Credible legal and real identity and attendance in the target market, responsibility taking, commitment and independence, lack of attachment on particular group and associations regarding to Iran tourism industry
- Although the salary is paid based on the agreement signed between Iran tourism industry and the employee, but it is better to receive salary for encouragements based on the efficiency by actors of the Iran tourism industry. According to necessity of

the close relationship with tourism industry, these individuals are invited to participate in programs and important shows on tourism within FAM tours.

### Conclusion

Based on the questionnaires statements, the specialists have concluded that the current status of the TICs within the country as well as in Iran tourism target markets in international level is very weak. The information and communication technology capabilities are not used in proper way. Shortage of specialist human resources in information provision and dissemination particularly in tourism organization, lack of electronic and non-electronic information data base and archives on tourism attractions and facilities, insignificant income of the country tourism industry and as a result reluctance of the private sector for investment in this industry can be mentioned as problems and shortage of establishing Iran TICs.

Generally speaking, information provision and dissemination in Iran tourism industry does not have regular and occupational structure and there are no effective factors and components in process of information provision and dissemination and some of them are primitive and inefficient (Teymouri, 2010:25). This subject is true in tourists information centers.

According to the findings and assessment of the specialists in Iran tourism industry as the statistical population in this research, there is a significant gap between current status and optimal status of TICs in Iran. Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism organization has taken actions toward designing of such centers. This subject has also been considered in the macro level development plans in the country. In addition to management and marginal problems, implementation of this plan encounters the authorities with problems from scientific and occupational perspective. For improvement of current conditions by considering tourism industry structure in Iran, equipment and foundations and development regulations and rules, it is necessary to revise the TICs from initiation, localization, arrangement, management perspective with introduced model in this research and design new centers based on the tourism industry needs and market studies in proper locations. In this case, by appointing a technical working group in Iran tourism organization, it can be begun interactive and coordinated activities of TICs in a connected network. The Iran TICs have to use in optimal way the possibilities and capacities of the new information and communication technology, to interact well with the global reservation and distribution systems. The management of TICs should be transferred to the private and non-governmental sectors in inside and outside of the country. This plan offers successful employment opportunities even in remote places and local communities. The proposed model is capable of conformity and application in other tourism

destinations particularly with governmental tourism structure for designing and management of TICs due to possessing theoretical and practical foundation and proper scientific and practical aspects and employing international experiences.

### Propositions

In order to improvement of the current status and completion of the plans implementing by office of marketing of Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization by the subject of establishment of the Iran Tourism Houses following propositions are recommended:

- 1-Improvement of the existent Tourism Houses selected based on the required standards and criteria
- 2- Localization and construction of the Tourism Houses in all main inlets in centers of the provinces, local destinations and crowded places
- 3-Compilation of the proper working direction for these centers
- 4-Using predicted legal capacities in the programs and up-stream development plans of the country for employing the different administrative systems tools and capabilities
- 5-According to the current status of the tourism industry in Iran, it is recommended to establish these centers with governmental investment by Iran Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization (ICHTO) and they are supervised based on the rules and allocation of the budgets and facilities by other administrative organs. By increase of the number of the tourists to Iran and providing cost and expenditures of TICs by information provision and offering services, the tourism organization transfer these Houses in long term to private sector
- 6- For establishment of the Tourism Houses and arrangement of these centers it is better to use the same national architecture model in all over the country as well as in the target markets in case it is possible.
- 7-Among common forms of establishing TICs in the target markets, ICHTO has chosen offering privilege of establishment of the tourism houses to private sectors in the target markets. In spite of confirmation and assessment of the generalities of such approach, it is recommended to be sensitive and careful about choosing real and legal entities for these posts. Reliability in the market, having related qualification and skill, coordination with actors in tourism industry in the target and destination are the main indicators in selection of the responsible for these houses in foreign countries. It is clear that reliability and trust on the political and cultural representative in the target market are not only elements in this regard. Defining specialist and



proper guides beside required supervision is effective in success of the information centers.

8-ICHTO portal encounters with serious problems. Lack of comprehensive information on the tourism attraction and capabilities in all over the country, inefficiency of information for usage of the tourists and other active groups in international level due to lack of proper translation in other languages, lack of census on tourism industry for introduction of this portal as an official and specialist portal are the main defects (Teymouri, 2010:29).

So, solving of the problems and reviewing of the content and organizing of the English and Arabic sectors and even translation to other languages, up to dating and principle planning for its introduction in different national and international levels are recommended.

10-According to the current status of the human resources in technology, information provision and marketing sections in Iran tourism industry and lack of the possibility of employment of new resources, the concerning problems could be eliminated by holding specialist courses for the experts and careful appointment of the staff. Providing appropriate directions on the duties of TICs and continuous distribution in these centers, adoption of the plans for fixation of the selection forces and prevention of the replacements, correct supervision, designing of the educational workshops should be considered in agenda of the marketing office of ICHTO.

11-Tourism information archives and banks should be organized in regional, national and international level as a connected electronic network (Teymouri, 2012:28). Recently, the primary cores of such archives and information banks are seen in the province representatives of ICHTO. However, at first, this information is unreliable and secondly, there is no organized relationship among sectors. "Although, Iran is rich and diverse from tourism resources and able to progress in this regard but there is no comprehensive information database on Iran tourism resources" (National Tourism Development Plan, 2001). According to advantages of the information databases in information industry, it is recommended to establish such banks and databases in lower ranks such as cities and even in attractions.

12-ICHTO considers allocations and ownership of the physical infrastructures defined in the constitutional law as development plans for establishment of TICs and provides required legal conditions.

13-It is recommended to constituent specialist working group in national level in order to establish close relationship among the centers and supervise by the aim of work integration and activity in a systematic network. In this working group, attendance of the representatives of governmental

and non-governmental sectors (unions, hotel associations, travel agencies, tour guides and etc) is necessary. According to the Iran tourism industry, establishment of this working group facilitates related administrative regulations and provides other advantages like governmental authorities, reduction of expenditures and training specialist human resources. It assures systemic performance by approval of regulations of TICs in regional, national and international level (Teymouri, 2008).

Technical support, easy access on primary and secondary information resources, compilation of standards and plans are duties of this working group.

14-ICHTO's province representativeness act as intermediate of the mentioned working group in provinces and facilitates expanded relationship. Iran Tourism Houses should be related with this working group.

15-The current status from tendency and participation culture perspectives is a chance for legal, financial and legislative arrangement for establishing TICs in Iran tourism industry. However, such conditions should not be considered as ignorance of the effective and main factors. Fulfillment of public expectation on development of tourism industry information provision causes to progress in management and supervision. In other case, research and scientific centers and experts of public and private sectors disappointed.

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