

Tools for a geopolitics of tourism. Equality spatial analysis of tourism resources and attractions: the case of Tehran Province

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Abstract | This work stands out for its pioneering application of geopolitical analysis principles to the realm of tourism and its sustainable management. This groundbreaking approach contributes to a deeper understanding of the impacts of tourism on destinations and provides new perspectives for optimizing tourism management policies, while promoting sustainability in tourism destinations. The general objective of this study is to introduce the use of the integrated analysis of political, economic and social dynamics in a defined geographical area – characteristic elements of geopolitics analysis – for the identification of inequalities and spatial imbalances in the context of tourism. To this end, the specific aim of this research is the experimental use of geographic information systems (GIS) to understand the differences and variations in tourism services in the province of Teheran (Iran), chosen as case study. In this article, the primary resources of tourism in Tehran Province were examined, and the natural (northern mountain ranges of the province) and cultural-historical (the royal road of Khorasan in the east and the ancient region of Rey in the south of the province) capacities were identified. Equal and integrated zones were extracted with neighborhood provinces. The results indicate that political boundaries have weaknesses and damage in terms of political management of the tourism sector and will have negative geopolitical consequences for the tourism sector.

Keywords | Geopolitics of tourism, spatial equality, equality zone, tourism resources, Tehran Province.

1. Introduction

The Swedish political scientist Rudolf Killen used the term of geopolitics in 1899 (sharp, 2020). Classical geopolitics is the study of how geography affects international politics and power dynamics between nations. However, according to modern geopolitics, geography is not only an immutable destiny, but also geopolitics is a set of limitations and opportunities that affect the space of decision makers. Geographical factors, along with political choices, can lead to different results from one region to another (Klement, 2021, Raikes et al., 2022). Also, geopolitics deals with the spatial structure of politics and examines how political structures and actions are affected by geographical factors (Grasland et al., 2021). In Addition, geopolitics considers how power is applied and distributed, as well as the strategies and policies used by governments (Nitoiu & Sus, 2019). Geopolitical studies focus on issues that include

geographic factors such as borders, land masses, geographic resources, the effects of distance on politics (geographical location), and topographical features (sharp, 2020). Therefore, geopolitics is very popular in political and social issues and includes three elements of geography, politics and power. This concept is connected with economy in its two elements (geography and power) and pays attention to it (Moisio, 2018; Heininen, 2018; Flint, 2021). If economy is linked with power and politics and is mixed with geography, it is placed in the field of geopolitics. Therefore, a new concept will form that called "gloeconomy", which is known as the economic dimension of geopolitics and emphasizes the dimension of competition. Geoeconomics is actually the study of spatial, cultural and strategic aspects of resources with the aim of obtaining a sustainable competitive advantage (Klement, 2021). In general, geopolitics discusses about geoeconomics (growth, development, trade, investment, spatial aspects, etc.) or geoculture, which is less discussed (similarities and differences, cultural influences). From the point of view of this author, geoeconomy is everything that is related to the control of economic resources within the framework of existing governance structures, and any changes in the centres of commercial activities and changes in the mechanisms of distribution of material and financial resources within the scope of geoeconomy (Rozov, 2012). From the point of view of geopolitics, political superiority in the international system is not only related to the general power and human resources of a country, but also to the geographical infrastructure that a country exerts in the various sectors within it and geoeconomics and integrated economic policy is considered as an outstanding alternative and a powerful strategy to advance policies (Lami, 2017). In addition, the term of geoculture was used at first by Immanuel Wallerstein, which consists of two parts, "geography" and "culture", and its meaning is that elements of culture such as language, race, ethnicity, history, etc., show up in geopolitical functions. so that it shows the effect of cultural conflicts on political units (Rabiee et al., 2017). These approaches show that geopolitics often appear in the analysis of political, social and economic issues at multiple scales, including international, regional, national, regional and local areas (Flint, 2021). According to the above discussions about geopolitics and its concepts, it can witness the influence of geopolitics on spatial equality and how expand power relations and shape access to resources, opportunities and decision-making processes (Starr, 2013). The interaction between geopolitics and geoeconomics is the core of spatial inequalities that shape the distribution of power, wealth and resources within and between geographic spaces (Lambach, 2022). Therefore, one of the main indicators regarding geopolitics that deals with understanding the interaction between politics and space is the concept of spatial equality. Spatial or geographic equality is the relative equality of indicators in places and geographic spaces with different scales (national and local) based on the principles of need and equality (Hafeznia & Ghaderi Hajat, 2015). The space within the countries is not integrated, and each place has natural, cultural and historical differences in terms of the nature of development and economic opportunities (kavianrad et al., 2016). Therefore, the political organization of space at the national and regional level, which is known as country divisions, is one of the most important missions of geopolitics. Political intervention in the field of political demarcations is for the political management

of space in various issues with the aim of providing favorable conditions for balanced development of all regions of the country (Ahmadipour et al., 2014).

Therefore, the role of determining equal spaces for the purpose of political organization of space, in societies where there is cultural and territorial diversity, can play a role in creating territorial balance and coordinated and balanced development and, as a result, maintaining ethnic-cultural and territorial diversity. Proper organization based on accurate knowledge of space and by providing people's participation and fertilization of local capacities is the basis for local, regional and national development (Gholami et al., 2015) and this knowledge of space is possible with spatial planning studies. Therefore, in order to realize the desired organization of space and operationalize the division of equal spaces, it is necessary to proceed on the basis of geopolitical knowledge of space and practical planning in the relevant issues. Tourism is not excluded from this sector.

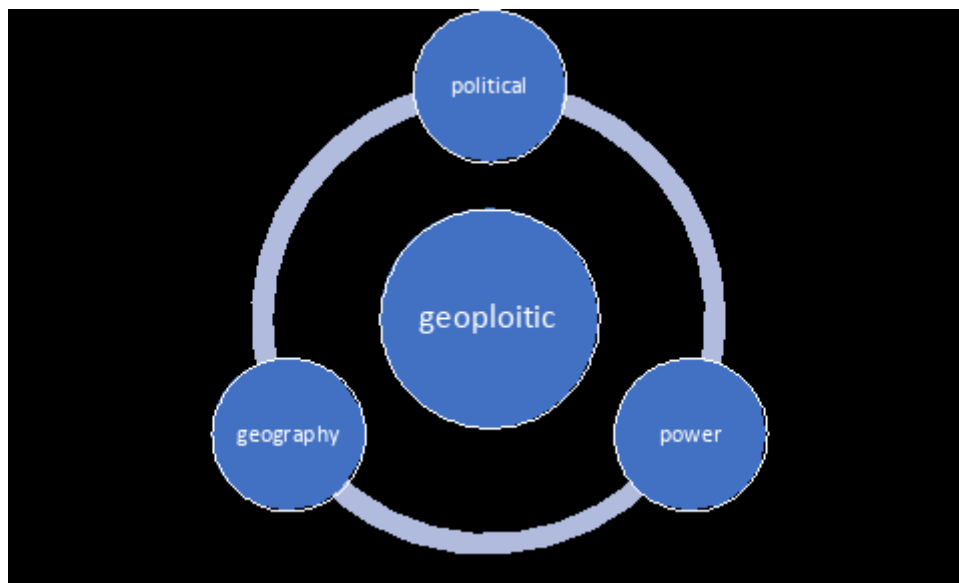


Figure 1 | Gheopolitics concept

Source: Mo시오 (2018), Heininen (2018), Flint (2021).

2. Tourism geopolitics

According to geopolitical concepts, tourism as an economic sector is considered a geo-economic phenomenon that invests in places, people, goals and experiences and becomes attractions that should be considered and consumed. It does this through a range of tools such as marketing, branding and image building, infrastructure network provision, spatial zoning, labor organization and political decisions (MostafaNezad et al., 2021; Weaver, 2010). Geopolitics and Tourism explores the complex relationship between politics, geography and tourism to understand how geopolitical factors influence patterns of tourism destinations. By analyzing these intersections, researchers can reach an understanding of the effects of political dynamics on the spatial distribution of tourism elements (Polat, et al., 2021; Pimentel, 2022) and allows researchers to understand the complex interactions between tourism, politics and geography and how they shape tourism development (Niewiadomski, 2018).

Tourism cannot be separated from geopolitics on a managerial scale, and geopolitical tools should be paid more attention to future predictions. In fact, from a geopolitical point of view, tourism affects the spatial, social, political and economic arrangement throughout the region and it can be investigated. So that it reconstructs spaces and leisure economy, transportation infrastructure, popular political discourse and geopolitical hypotheses (Rowen, 2016; Pimentel, 2022; Cigale, 2019; Wulan & Ruhimat, 2019; Norum & Mostafanezhad, 2016). Tourism and geopolitics analysis uses concepts, frameworks, orientations, geographic locations, and spatial modelling techniques to examine various aspects of tourism (Yang, 2022; Fregonese & Ramadan, 2015). This field of study is concerned with the fact that tourism involves movement in space, including movement between accommodation and tourism destination, as well as movement between multiple destinations (Gozgor et al., 2022; Gosh, 2022; Korinth, 2021; Neascu et al., 2018). On the other hand, the concept of "geopolitics of tourism" has tried to justify the perceptions, effects and infrastructures of tourism and politics (Mostafanezhad et al., 2021). Understanding the geopolitical factors in tourism is vital for analyzing the political and geographical effects on tourism destinations (Šušić & Đorđević, 2019).

The geopolitical role of tourism is to eliminate the gap between developed and less developed regions, which for this purpose, creates a geopolitical conflict for economic development to eliminate the geographical inequality between privileged "core" and dependent "periphery" regions. Geopolitics of tourism emphasizes on correcting core-periphery imbalance and achieving equal space. Therefore, in the life cycle of tourism areas, if there is an imbalance between the core and the periphery, there is economic and geopolitical instability. Figure (2) (Weaver, 2010).

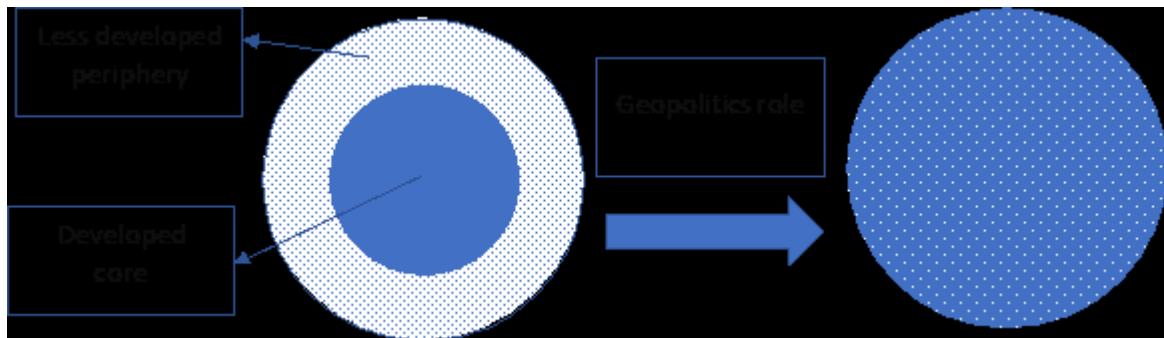


Figure 2 | The role of geopolitics in correcting the imbalance between the developed core and the less developed periphery

Source: Own elaboration.

So that in this section some previous literature review studies will be mentioned:

Authors	Title	Descriptions
Geopolitics		
Harvey Starr (2013)	On Geopolitics: Spaces and Places	the article emphasizes the need to incorporate the spatial context into the study of international relations and highlights the dynamic nature of space in shaping geopolitical dynamics. The author discusses the concepts of space and place and emphasizes the need to consider both

		time and space in analyzing international relations. The article argues for a possibilistic approach that focuses on the possibilities presented by the spatial, geographic, and geopolitical factors rather than geographic determinism.
Annamaria Poggi (2021)	Territorial and Geopolitical Discrimination: The Spatial Dimensions of Equality	This article explores the concepts of territory and equality. The author discusses the multifaceted nature of territory, emphasizing its normative and political aspects in relation to state sovereignty.
O'Loughlin, J. (2003)	Spatial Analysis in Political Geography	Spatial analysis plays a crucial role in political geography and other disciplines that examine geographic distributions of human phenomena. This article explores two fundamental concepts in spatial analysis: context (place) and nonstationarity (spatial autocorrelation). It highlights the importance of defining neighborhood and addressing the Modifiable Areal Unit Problem. The article also discusses the handling of spatial autocorrelation and how recent developments in data availability, data integration, and analytical tools have influenced spatial analysis in political geography. Finally, it provides an illustration of spatial analysis opportunities through a case study merging aggregate violent events and public opinion survey data from the North Caucasus region of Russia.
Moisio, S. (2015)	Geopolitics/critical geopolitics	This chapter discusses the contested nature of the term geopolitics and its various meanings in different contexts. Geopolitics is described as both a scholarly practice and a political practice that involves power, place, and subjects. The chapter explores the historical roots and recent developments of geopolitics, focusing on classical geopolitics and critical geopolitics.
Faraji, S. J., Zanganeh, A., Pirastefar, P., & Hedari, H. (2023)	Exploring the Effects of key Factors of Smart Urban Governance on Geocultural Relations	Cultural geopolitics involves complex interactions among government, power, culture, and the geographical environment, where the cultural factor, along with the spatial-locational processes formed by city governments, engages actors from various social strata. Understanding the relationships between the components of smart urban governance and cultural geopolitics is crucial for the political-regional development of metropolises and their globalization process. Through the analysis of the effects of neglecting Iran's geopolitical aspect and examining its historical course, the study reveals the importance and determination of Iran's geopolitics, emphasizing its precedence over political, ideological, and cultural aspects.
Zarei, M., & Sarparast Sadat, S. E. (2023)	Back to Geopolitics: The Problem of Ignoring Iran's Geopolitics	This article addresses the issue of neglecting Iran's geopolitical aspect in studies and analyses conducted on Iran's relationship with the world. Despite its geopolitical importance, Iran is often analyzed solely in terms of ideology and political Islam in the international arena. However, considering its current and future geopolitical advantages, Iran holds a significant position and importance at regional and international levels. The study aims to draw attention to the deliberate neglect of Iran's geopolitical aspect as a problem and highlight its effects. It also emphasizes the geopolitical nature of Iran.
Saeed Shokoohi and Morteza Hajiabadi (2019)	Failure of Geopolitical and Geo-Cultural Commonalities to Integrate Iran and Central Asian Countries	The study examines the failure of Iran and Central Asian countries to establish meaningful interactions and integrate despite their geopolitical factors and geo-cultural commonalities. While there are shared cultural, historical, and political elements between Iran and the region, these commonalities have not translated into effective integration. The research utilizes qualitative data analysis to explore the reasons behind this failure. The findings

		highlight the importance of mental connectivity, mutual values, and a shared way of thinking in fostering regional integration. The paper suggests that without such connectivity, regional convergence becomes challenging. The study also identifies factors at the trans-regional, regional, and domestic levels that hinder the formation of mental connectivity.
Mohammad Reza Hafeznia & Mustafa Ghaderi Hajat (2015)	Conceptualization of Spatial Justice in Political Geography	This article explores the concept of spatial justice in political geography. It emphasizes the interrelationship between politics and space and the dynamic mechanism that underpins spatial justice. The concept of justice in political geography has shifted from its objective level to its subjective level, becoming operational. Spatial justice, therefore, refers to the relative equality of comprehensive development indexes (economic, infrastructural, political, cultural, social, security, and healthcare) in different geographical places and spaces within a country.
Lambach, D. (2022)	Space, scale, and global politics: Towards a critical approach to space in international relations	The treatment of space in International Relations (IR) has been uneven, despite its importance in global politics. This article argues for a fuller engagement of IR scholars with spatial concepts and proposes a spatial approach to global politics based on four dimensions: spatial ontology, the constructedness of space, a scalar perspective, and the interaction of materiality and ideas.
Tourism Geopolitics		
David B. Weaver (2010)	Geopolitical Dimensions of Sustainable Tourism	This article explores the relationship between sustainable tourism and geopolitical dimensions at various scales. Weaver emphasizes the need to consider the geopolitical context that supports the outcomes of sustainable tourism, in addition to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural dimensions. The paper delves into the nature of the 'geopolitical' and its contested terminology, highlighting the interrelationships between space, territory, and power. It also discusses the geopolitical dimension at the super-state, state, and sub-state scales, proposing indicators relevant to each level. The discussion covers the role of tourism in world peace and economic equity, trans-boundary collaborations, and the use of tourism as a vehicle for supporting the economic and cultural self-actualization of minority groups.
Thiago Duarte PIMENTEL (2022)	Tourism as Geopolitical Strategy: The institutional trajectory of tourism public policies in Ecuador	Pimentel's study delves into the geopolitical strategy of tourism as deployed by the Republic of Ecuador, focusing on the institutional trajectory of tourism public policies between 1990-2020. In summary, Thiago Duarte Pimentel's study sheds light on the institutionalization and evolution of tourism policies in Ecuador, positioning tourism as a central axis of state policies and a key driver of the country's socio-economic development. The research underscores the complex interplay between government actions, institutionalization of policies, and the role of non-official forces in shaping the performance of the tourism sector, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of tourism as a geopolitical strategy in Ecuador.
Mary Mostafanezhad, Roger Norum (2016)	Towards a Geopolitics of Tourism	The article explores the connections between tourism and geopolitics, highlighting the need for a geopolitical perspective in understanding the relationship between tourism, representation, and place-making practices. The authors argue that tourism landscapes are spaces where geopolitical assemblages intersect with translocal social realities. The article concludes by emphasizing the importance of a geopolitical perspective in understanding the complex relationships between tourism, space, and

		power. It suggests that studying tourism through a geopolitical lens can provide nuanced insights into issues of territoriality, representation, and power dynamics in tourism destinations
Ian Rowen (2016)	The Geopolitics of Tourism: Mobilities, Territory, and Protest in China, Taiwan, and Hong Kong	This article examines outbound tourism from mainland China to Hong Kong and Taiwan, two territories claimed by the People's Republic of China (PRC), to explore the geopolitical implications of tourism. The author analyzes the interplay between tourism, state sovereignty, territoriality, and bordering. The case of China, being the world's fastest-growing tourism market, is highlighted to demonstrate the profound impact of tourism on spatial, social, political, and economic structures in the region. The article argues that tourism is not separate from state-scale geopolitics and emphasizes the need for further research on its political instrumentalities and unpredictable effects. The study sheds light on the cultural and geopolitical dimensions of tourism and highlights its role in new forms of protest and resistance.
Yan Huang and Yungang Liu (2023)	Encountering and Experiencing the Geopolitics of Tourism (Im)Mobilities: A Case of China's Tourism in the South China Sea	This research focuses on the geopolitical implications of China's tourism in the South China Sea (SCS) and its impact on tourists' geopolitical subjectivation. The study reveals that tourism plays a role in the mobile territorialization of the SCS. However, uneven mobility rights based on territorial geopolitics result in unequal experiences for tourists. This research sheds light on the inequity and geopolitical effects of selective mobility control in tourism, providing a nuanced understanding of the geopolitics of tourism (im)mobilities at a micro-scale.
Jamie Gillen, Mary Mostafanezhad (2019)	Geopolitical encounters of tourism: A conceptual approach	In this article, the authors present a conceptual framework for understanding tourism encounters as geopolitical encounters. They explore the intersection of tourism, geopolitics, and encounter to analyze how experiences in tourism reflect and shape power relations at national, regional, and global scales. The authors focus on three dimensions of the geopolitical tourism encounter: temporal encounters, bodily encounters, and identity encounters.
Jacob C Miller, Vincent Del Casino Jr (2020)	Spectacle, tourism, and the performance of everyday geopolitics	This article explores the intersection of geopolitics and spectacle in the context of tourism, focusing on the Yii Peng Festival in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Drawing on feminist political geography and non-representational theories, the study examines the embodied geopolitics of the festival and its tourist landscape. By analyzing the festival's multiple spaces, the article reveals the complex geopolitical relations at play and the forces that shape its contours. The study highlights the significance of tourism, citizenship, embodiment, and the festival in understanding geopolitical dynamics.

The goal of this article is to examine the tourism resources of Tehran Province and the conformation of political boundaries as one of the geopolitical factors with tourism potentials, and also identify equal and integrated zones of tourism capacities.

3. Methods

This article provides an analysis of the relationship between the political management of space in the tourism sector and the political divisions of the country and equal and integrated spaces for the development of tourism. This research is a developmental research type, and due to its practical aspect, it is an applied research type for the relevant organizations. Also, this research has an analytical-descriptive method. The data collected in documentary method, as well as by referring to the basic natural, political and human maps of Iran (including: topographic maps, desert regions of Iran, and maps of historical and cultural regions). The basic political border is the border of the divisions of Tehran province and neighborhood provinces. Based on the classification of attractions (Klaric, 2017; Opačić, 2017; Su et al., 2022), the environmental and cultural capabilities of Tehran province in different parts of the political border of the province investigated as the main indicators. After that it was checked the equality and integration of environmental and cultural capabilities as a tourism zone in the border area with neighborhood provinces. If the cultural and environmental capabilities in the intersection of the Tehran province's political border conformed with neighborhood provinces, it is determining equal and integrated zones.

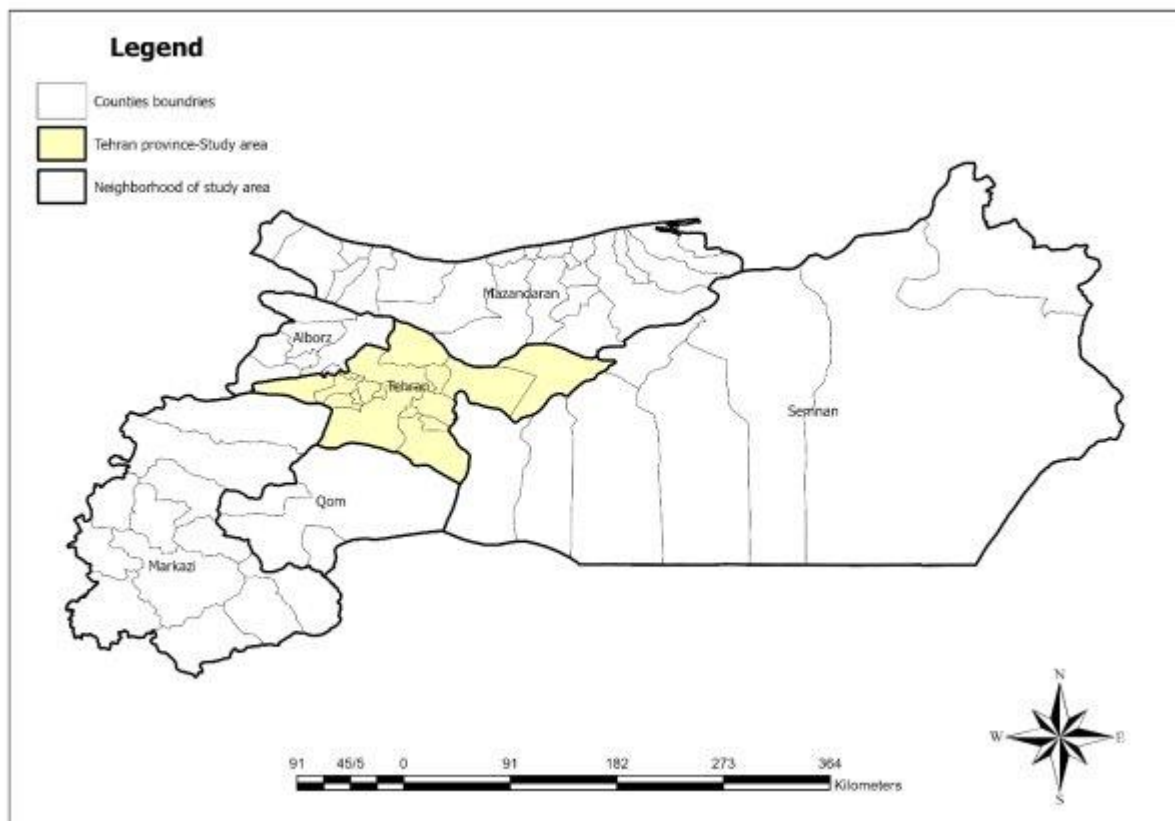


Figure 3 | Study area of the border of Tehran province and neighborhood provinces
Source: Own elaboration.

(i) Tehran Province location and tourism resources

Tehran province, that Tehran city is center of it and its area is about 13841 square kilometers. As shown in Fig (2), it is limited to Mazandaran province from the north, Qom province from the south, Markazi province from the southwest, Alborz province from the west, and Semnan province from the east. Tehran is the capital of Iran. Tehran province has an extraordinary role from the point of view of tourism development due to its special geographical location, its special political situation, its location on the major highway of the country and as the first border of entry of most of the foreign tourists to the country. Tehran province is located between the ridge of the central Alborz fold and the western edge of the desert plain. Therefore, the natural tourism resources of the province are important and valuable for the protection and sustainable exploitation of tourism in terms of their special environmental and cultural capabilities and values. Some of these resources are unique and attract a large number of international tourists every year.

4. Results

(i) Explanation of the geographical space of Tehran province and contiguous neighbourhood based on mountain tourism resources:

As it is observed in the Fig (4) *_Digital model of Elevation_* Tehran is spread across two mountains and the desert, on the southern slope of Alborz. The area of Tehran is opened from the south and southwest to the plains of Shahriar and Varamin, and it is surrounded by mountains in the north and east. At the northernmost point of Tehran, the Alborz Mountain range (specifically the Shemiranat mountains) forms a tall rocky mass that creates the northern boundary of the Tehran area. The height of the Alborz Mountain range increases towards the east, reaching its highest point at an elevation of 5500 meters (Mount Damavand). In the northeast of the province, the mountains of Savadkuh and Firuzkuh are located, connecting to the heights of Shahmirzad in Semnan province to the east. The natural boundary of the Tehran region, both in the mountains and in the plains, is defined by the Jajrood and Karaj rivers. These two rivers deeply cut through the central Alborz Mountain range, dividing it into three separate parts in the northern boundary of the Tehran area.

Semnan province is situated in the southern foothills of the Alborz Mountain range, which its elevation decreasing from north to south, eventually leading to the desert plain. The mountainous regions of this province offer suitable tourist attractions. Mazandaran province, like as a bridge, connects this province to the capital of Iran, Tehran. Mazandaran, located in the vicinity of the Alborz Mountain range, is in the southern part of the province. Topographically, this province has three main regions: 1- mountainous region, 2- foothill region, and 3- plain region. The mountainous region of this province is in the southern part and borders with Semnan, Tehran, and Alborz provinces.

Based on expert opinions, a table has been prepared, indicating the environmental indicators necessary for the development of mountain tourism activities.

Table 1 | The suitable elevation for mountain tourism activities

Mountain activities type	elevation
Mountaineering	Up to 1700
Hiking	1700 - 2500
Winter Sports	Up to 2300
Nature Tourism	1200 - 2100

Source: Own elaboration.

Based on table (1), an appropriate zoning map for mountaineering activities that shown in Fig (2-4). The currently peaks used for mountaineering activities in neighborhood provinces are shown in Fig (2). Fig (4) shows equal zones among neighborhood provinces for mountaineering activities. This figure shows that the borders of the provinces have little compatibility for planning mountain tourism activities. In the current situation, for example, Tehran Province, for managing the political space of tourism and providing programs based on mountaineering activities, should cooperate with its neighborhood provinces in the north and east, including Mazandaran, Semnan and Alborz provinces, which have the s similar geographically mountainous area to reach a desirable common plan and model based on their capabilities for implementation.

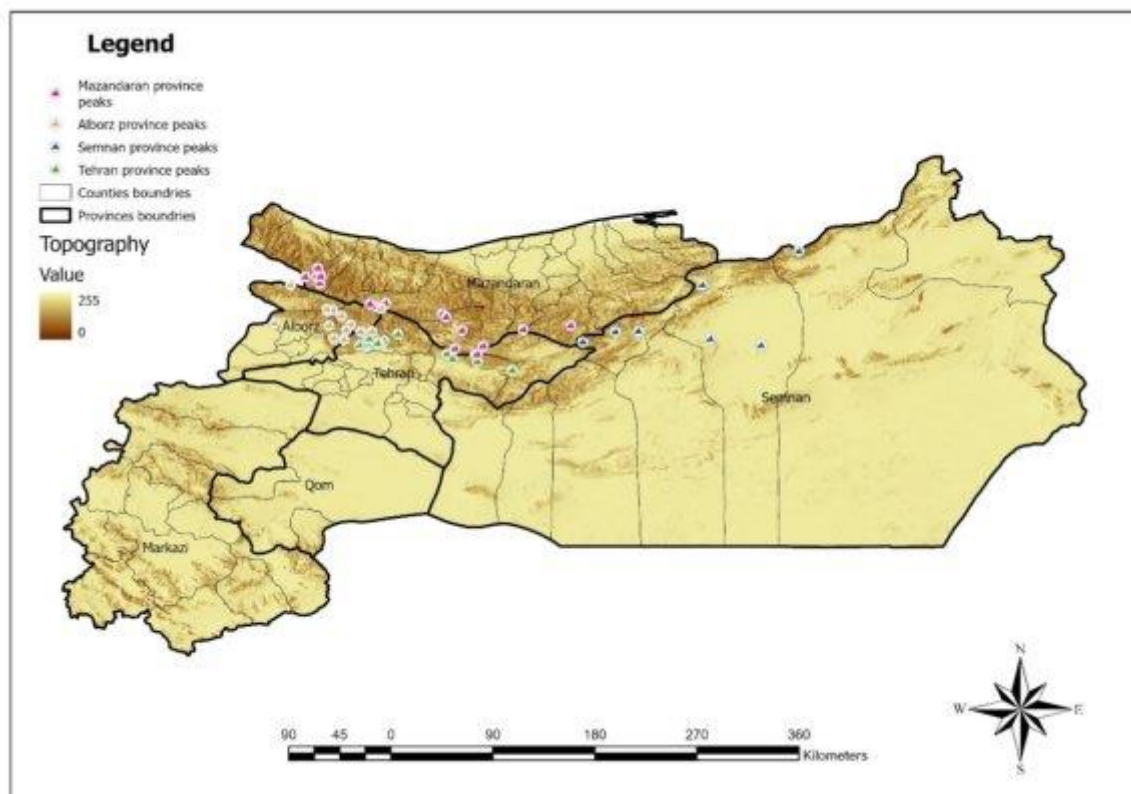


Figure 4 | Most important mountain peaks in Tehran province and neighborhood provinces

Source: Own elaboration.

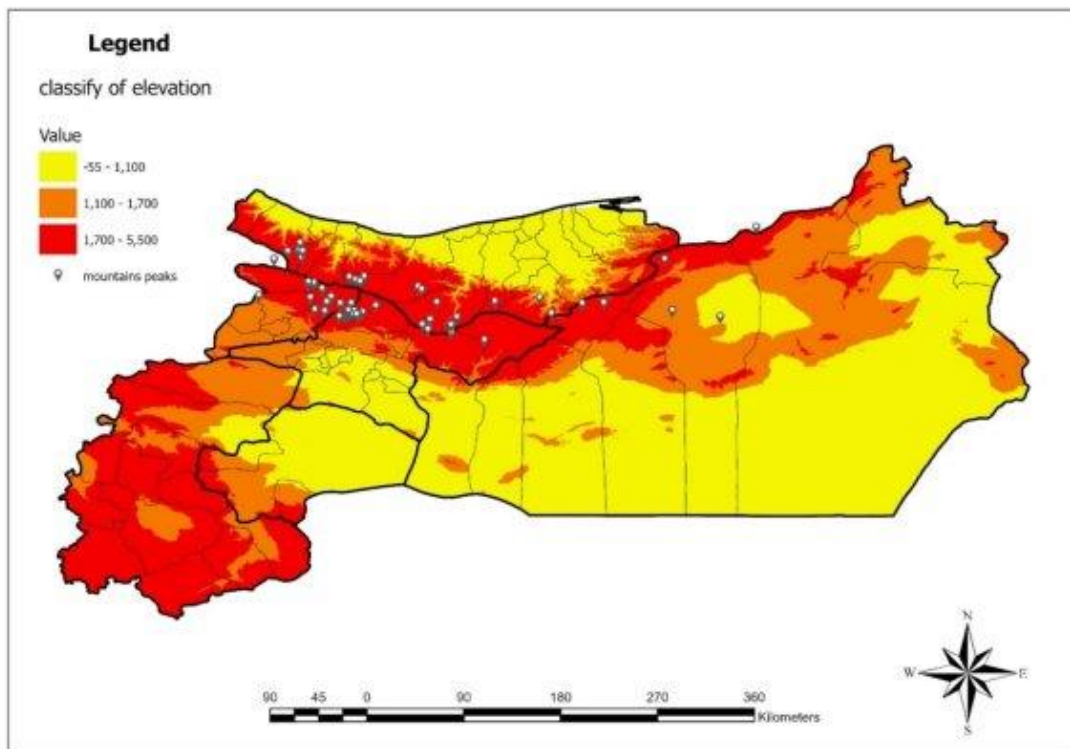


Figure 5 | Digital elevation model of Tehran province and neighborhood provinces

Source: Own elaboration.

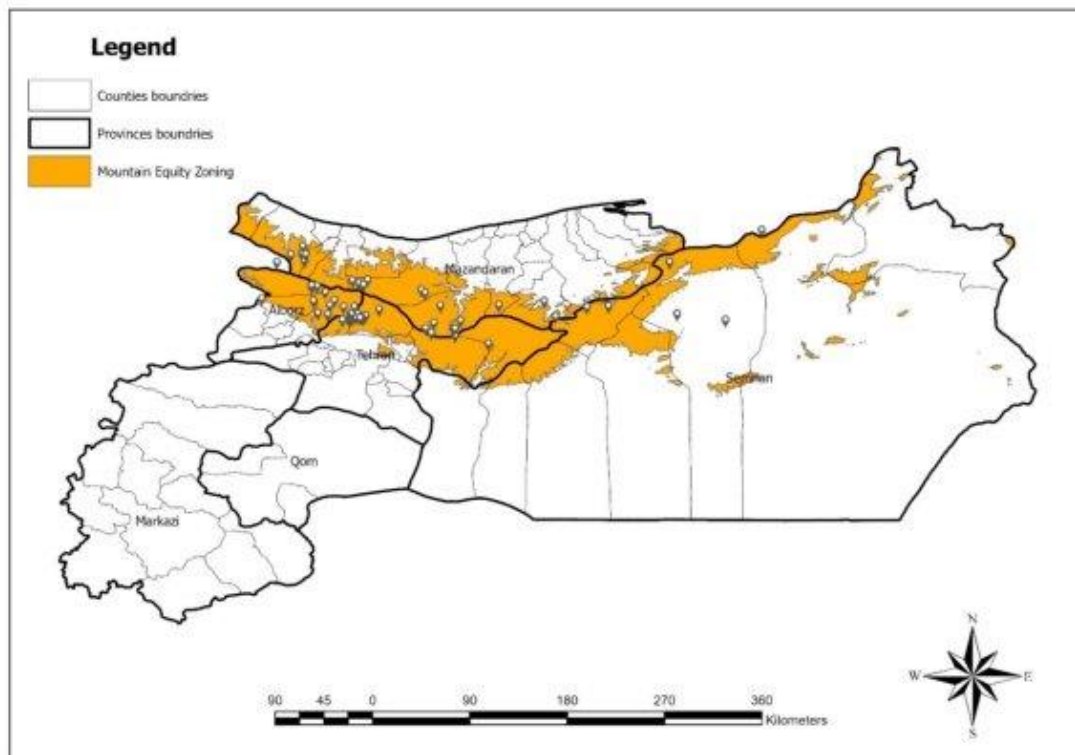


Figure 6 | Equal and integrated zone for mountain tourism development in Tehran province and neighborhood provinces

Source: Own elaboration.

(ii) Explanation of the geographical space of Tehran province and neighborhoods based on desert tourism sources:

Understanding environmental capabilities and capacities is a fundamental strategy for desirable regional tourism development planning. As seen in Fig (7), a vast area of Iran encompasses desert and arid regions. In this regard, the desert and arid areas, considering their environmental and geographical conditions, as well as the associated constraints and limitations, are considered a challenging domain in the field of tourism management and planning. Considering that the southern and southeastern parts of Tehran province have a warm and arid climate, creating a desert region that extends into its neighborhoods provinces, "desert tourism" is an important strategy in this area of the tourism sector. In the southeast of Tehran province, Varamin plain and Qalae Boland village is an ancient area located on the edge of the central desert of Iran and contains the beauty of the desert. Bahram Palace Caravanserai in this village is one of the sights of the desert route. After the beginning of the desert region in the southeast of Tehran province, in the neighborhood's provinces, the presence of special landscapes such as the desert national park, Rig Jen, Marsi hills, Haj Ali Qoli desert, etc. can be seen. Qom province is located in a arid and desert area, and the eastern, central and northern parts of this province have vast deserts. Qamroud desert, West Siahkoh desert, Qara Chai desert, Namak desert, Mesila desert and Chahartagi desert are spread in this province. Also, a major part of Dasht Kavir is located in Tehran and Qom province. Masileh desert is located from the north to Saveh desert (Markazi province) and at a distance of 100 km from Qom province. In this regard, it should be noted that these landscapes are created due to the climatic and geological conditions of the desert which created an equity and integrated spaces. This is shown in the Fig (8). This map shows that the political management of the space for the planning of the desert tourism should be according to integrated and equity desert zoning and not based on political province boundaries.

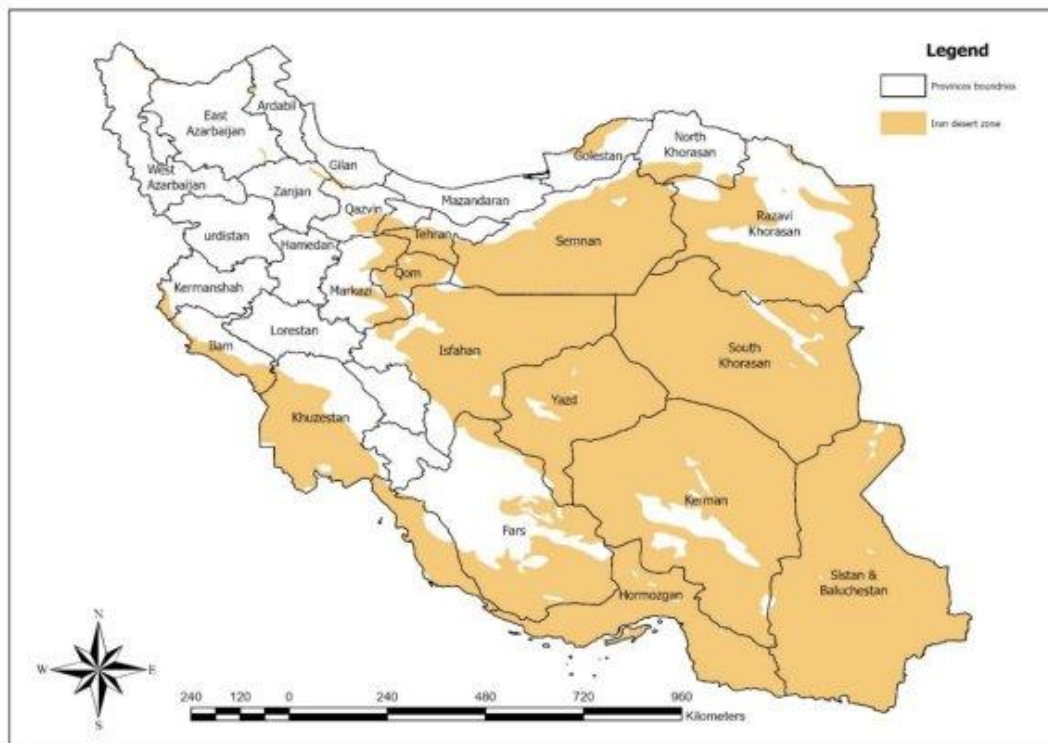


Figure 7 | Geographical space of Tehran province
Source: Own elaboration.

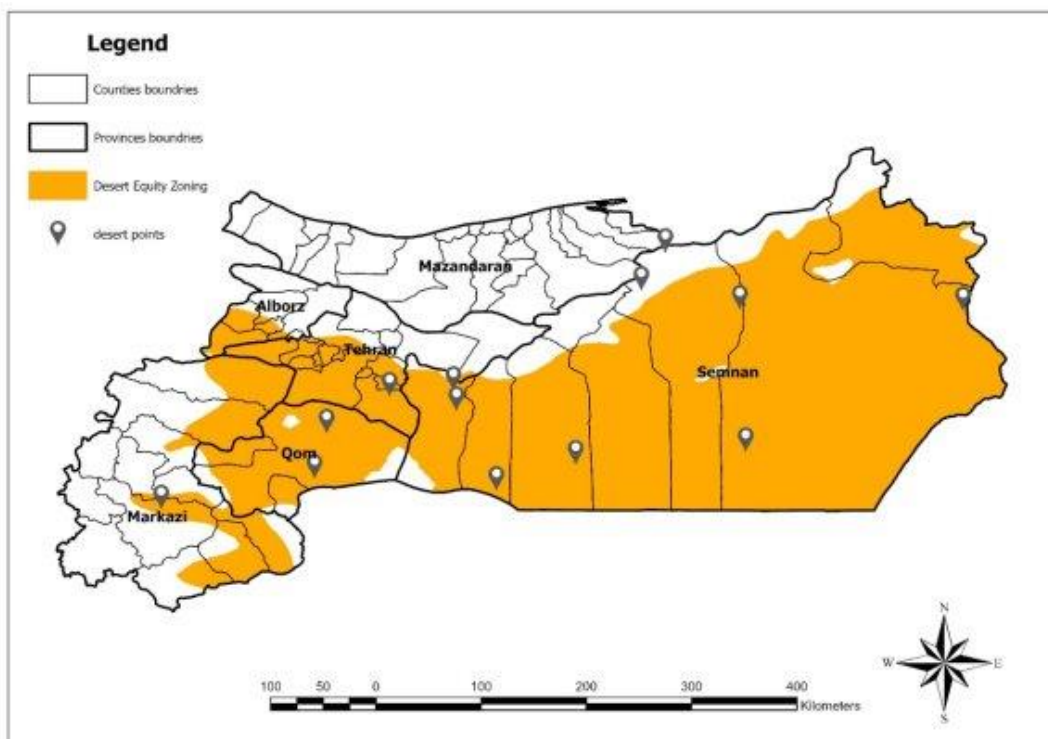


Figure 8 |
Source: Own elaboration.

(iii) Explanation of the geographical space of Tehran province and neighbors based on historical-cultural tourism resources

One of the tourist attractions of Tehran province is the cultural and historical heritage. Tehran province boundary is limited to Alborz Mountain from north and ancient Rey from south. Therefore, it can be concluded that when the low plains of Tehran used the water of heights mountains, so this environment was suitable for the formation of farmer communities. In particular, in the earliest surviving written records, the south of Tehran is described as a fertile environment with gardens and abundant trees. On the other hand, the existence. In Tehran Province, the plains of Rey and Varamin are among the areas in the central plateau of Iran that have a high archaeological value. The city of Rey has been one of the important commercial centers of the Iranian plateau and one of the cities along the Silk Road and the Royal Road of Khorasan. The Silk Road from the city of Rey is divided into several branches. According to historical texts, prehistoric settlements have been linked to these routes. The Silk Road is divided into several branches from the city of Ray. According to historical texts, prehistoric settlements are limited to the fertile border of the land of Damghan, Semnan, Ray, Karaj, Qazvin Plain, Saveh, Qom and Kashan. According to Pir Nia's research (1370), the road map of Khorasan is shown in figure (9). The route from Rey to Saveh from the west side and from Rey to Semnan from east side and also, the presence of ancient and historical monuments on this route highlights the need for equal and integrated tourism planning in the route of ancient Khorasan Road.

What it is witness currently is the non-equal and non-integrated tourism planning in Tehran province and neighborhood provinces which is located in the historical route. This is while the cultural and historical elements of the same period are scattered within the boundaries of the historical path between the different current provinces. Therefore, the lack of integrated plans between different political boundaries caused to the weakness of geographical justice and marginalization of some cultural and historical elements. According to the figure (10), Tehran province should coordinate with neighborhood provinces including Semnan Province in east side and Markazi province in south side for the political management of the tourism space within historical and cultural zone to have desired common plans, programs and events.

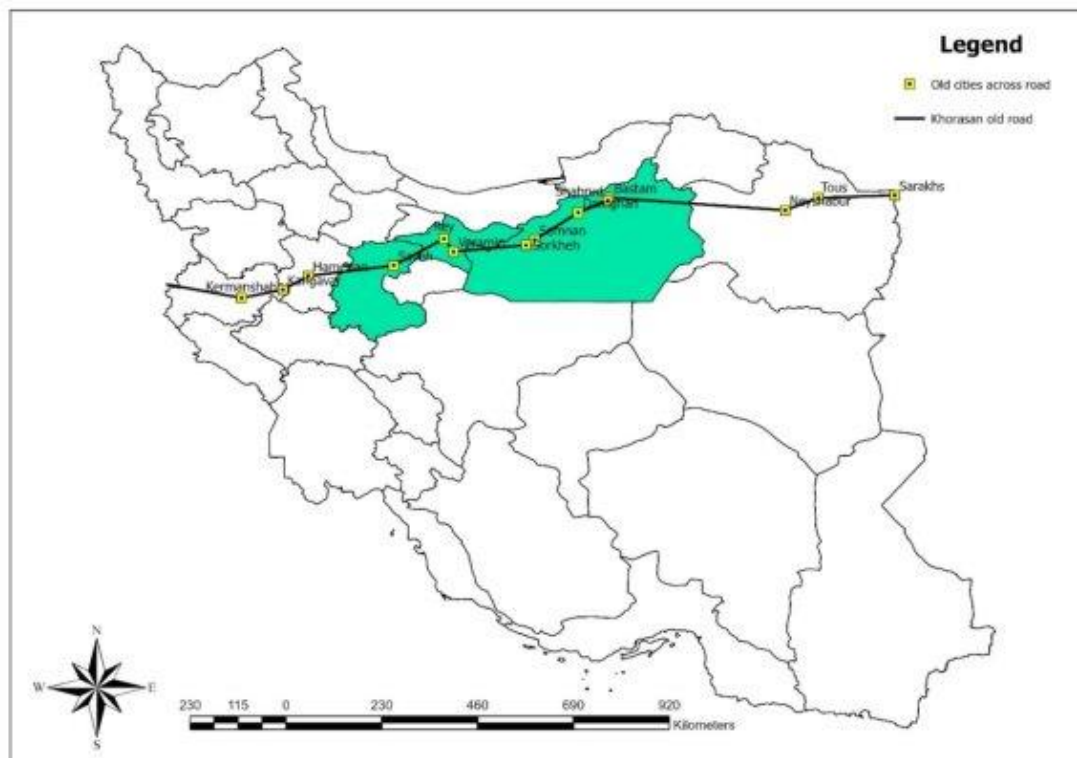


Figure 9 |
Source: Own elaboration.

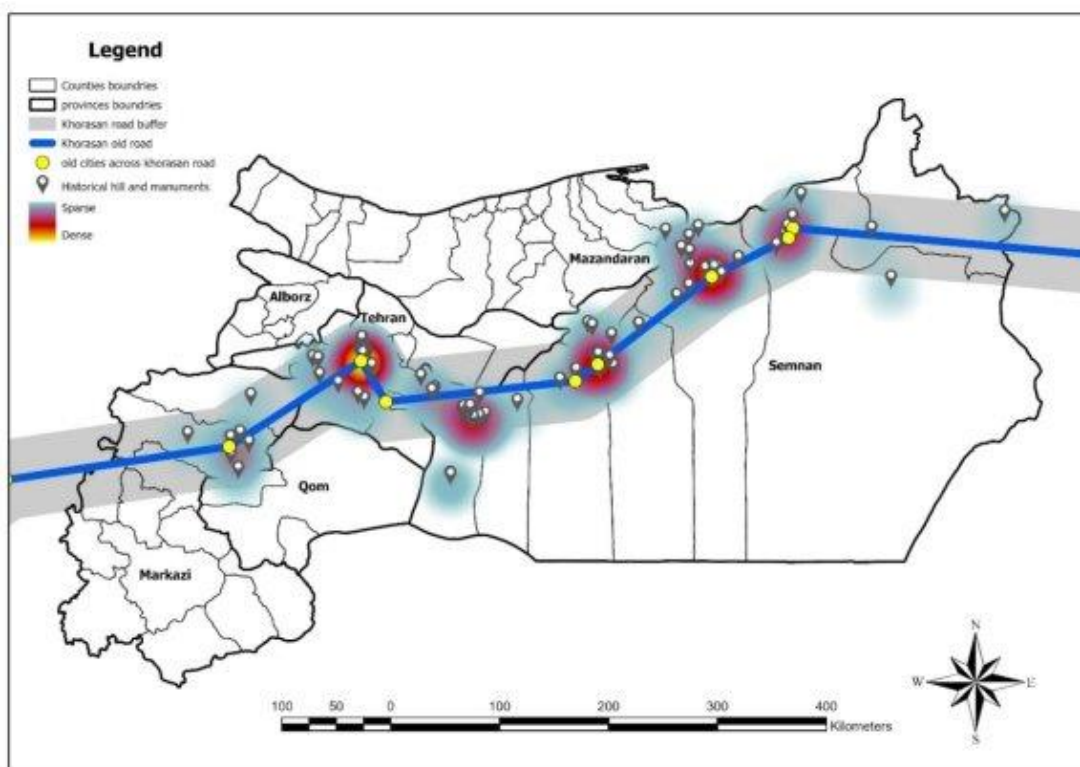


Figure 10 |
Source: Own elaboration.

4. Conclusion

According to findings of paper, it can be concluded that the boundaries of political divisions of the provinces have weaknesses due to political managements of space and the planning of tourism. Therefore, there are some negative geopolitical consequences for the tourism planning in Iran. One of the weaknesses is related to the conformity of the country's political divisions with equal and integrated historical cultural areas for the development of tourism that it has issued in tourism political management. Therefore, the non-conformity of political divisions with tourism zone in terms of the classification of homogeneous tourist attractions (both natural attractions and historical-cultural attractions) is worthy of investigation.

As explained in this research, the current political boundaries in many provinces are not conform with the political management of space and tourism planning. This has resulted in ineffective political management of spaces for tourism in regions that have equal and integrated capacities among provinces. Additionally, this issue has hindered the formation of integrated and cohesive management in homogeneous areas concerning tourism-related topics. Furthermore, this issue has led to the lack of formation of integrated and coherent management in homogeneous tourism zones. Moreover, the lack of conformity of political boundaries in the tourism sector has resulted in land inequality and geographical injustice in tourism development. Indeed, areas with equal valuable potential for tourism development have faced different levels of development in various provinces. Some provinces have experienced significant development in utilizing their tourism potential, while others have remained underdeveloped. This situation is the result of disregarding the homogeneity of geographical spaces in terms of tourism development objectives. Therefore, from the perspective of geopolitical tourism, one of the existing weaknesses in political space management is the lack of attention to boundaries that incorporate geographical and cultural components. Therefore, it is essential to shift from territorial and spatial boundaries to sectoral, geographical, cultural, and typological boundaries in the political space management of the tourism sector.

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