



“Gheorghe Asachi” Technical University of Iasi, Romania



COMPARING MULTI-CRITERIA DECISION-MAKING (MCDM) TOOL AND HUFF MODEL TO DETERMINE THE MOST APPROPRIATE METHOD FOR SELECTING MOUNTAIN TOURISM SITES

Jafar Nouri, Reza Arjmandi, Borhan Riazi, Ali Asghar Aleshekh, Saeed Motahari*

*Department of Environmental Management, Graduate School of the Environment and Energy, Science and Research Branch,
Islamic Azad University, Tehran, Iran*

Abstract

Population growth and urbanization in Tehran have increased the citizens demand for spending their leisure time in the nature; and the mountains near Tehran have created such opportunity. However, tourism management is facing two challenges in this regard. The first challenge is to determine sites capable of tourism development, and the second challenge is to select the optimal site among the alternatives. Therefore, this study aims to find the most appropriate method for identifying and prioritizing mountain tourism sites. To achieve this, two stages were employed. In the first stage, according to the constraint criteria, potential sites for mountain tourism with three land-uses of skiing, mountaineering, and accommodation facilities were identified using geographical information system (GIS). In the second stage, according to different approaches and by employing three methods of analytic hierarchy process (AHP), technique for order preference by similarity ideal solution (TOPSIS) and Huff, potential sites were prioritized; and then, by comparing the results, the most appropriate method among them was selected. Findings show that the prioritizing results of TOPSIS and AHP methods are close. However, AHP has prioritized the sites based on the expert opinions while TOPSIS has not privileged expert opinions as much as AHP. Even so, ranking results of the Huff model were different from the other methods. Therefore, it can be stated that each of these methods can be appropriate based on decision-makers viewpoints. However, TOPSIS method was preferred because of its greater capability in differentiating between the sites.

Key words: Huff model, mountain tourism, multi-criteria decision-making, site selection

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